**AUTHENTIC MATERIALS: EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS FOR LISTENING IN EFL CONTEXT**

**Fitria Aprilia**

**Lecturer of Binadarma University**

**Jalan Jenderal Ahmad Yani No.3 Palembang**

**email:** **fitria\_aprilia@binadarma.ac.id**

***Abstract:*** *Listening was previously considered as passive skill but now that assumption has been neglected. Lack of adequate exposure to listening and dearth of attention with regard to these issues sets the ground for authentic listening materials to fill the gaps in EFL context. Authentic materials – unsolicited, spontaneous, natural and covering a wide spectrum of styles from formal to very informal, can truthfully reflect the real life language, narrow the distance between the learners and the target language used in reality, it becomes increasingly attractive to language experts, classroom practitioners and the learners. The fundamental purpose of this paper is to present the power of authentic materials as effective solutions for listening ability in students of English as a foreign language. The authentic materials could be a great help in reaching the goal of improving listening skill and is going to be discussed in greater detail in this paper.*

***Key words:*** *listening skill, pragmatic appropriateness, authentic materials*

***Abstrak:*** *Kemampuan mendengar tidak lagi dianggap sebagai suatu kemampuan pasif. Kurang memadainya latihan dan tidak adanya perhatian dalam kemampuan mendengarkan menjadi dasar timbulnya materi/bahan otentik sebagai solusi dalam mengisi kesenjangan yang terjadi dalam konteks EFL tersebut. Materi/bahan otentik – dibuat bukan untuk tujuan pembelajaran, spontan dan natural, serta meliputi jenis formal dan informal, mampu mencerminkan bahasa yang sesungguhnya, memperkecil jarak antara siswa dan target bahasa yang digunakan dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, dan menjadi sesuatu yang sangat menarik bagi para ahli bahasa, praktisi kelas/pendidik, dan siswa. Artikel ini memaparkan tentang fungsi dari materi/bahan otentik sebagai solusi efektif untuk meningkatkan kemapuan mendengar bagi siswa EFL. Materi/bahan otentik mampu menjadi penunjang dalam mencapai tujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan mendengar siswa.*

***Kata Kunci:*** *kemapuan mendengar, kesesuaian pragmatis, materi autentik*

**INTRODUCTION**

Listening is a language skill that can be developed through practice. It is drawing more and more of people’s attention in recent years. People recognize its important role in the language learning and communication in the target language. According to Miller (2003), more than forty percent of our daily communication is spent on listening, thirty-five percent on speaking, about sixteen percent on reading, and only nine percent on writing. However, listening is usually the weakest point for most EFL students due to the less and incompatible practice of listening itself.

In regard to the process of language learning and daily communication, it is important that students are provided with the suitable materials to listen to. In most cases, what students listen to is conversations and stories, but in reality they listen to far more things. The listening exercises, which are often prepared in advance and are often in the forms of true or false questions, multiple-choice and short question answering, are usually recorded on the tape, and don’t provide students with the kind of practice needed. Conducting this kind of class is an easy job for teachers, but it does not provide learners with realistic preparation for real life listening.

 The gap between what students learn and how the language is used in everyday life clearly exists. Miller (2003) claims that the aim of all listening lessons should allow the learners to reach a greater degree of interdependence when confronted with listening to the foreign language in a real world context, and that means using authentic materials. Nowadays, many classroom teachers turn to the authentic materials for help. They are trying their best to equip learners with limited target language knowledge to meet the challenge of real life listening.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this paperdiscusses the issues concerning the power of the authentic materials as effective solutions to the teaching of listening in EFL context.

**DEFINITIONS AND LISTENING PROCESS**

 In teaching listening comprehension, teachers must be careful not to go too extremes, either by being concerned too exclusively with theories without thinking about their application to teaching or by obstinately following monotonous routines-opening the textbook and explaining new words, playing the tape recorder, and asking/answering questions. It is essential for a teacher to have an overall understanding of what listening is and why it is difficult for foreign-language learners.

Listening and hearing is not the same thing. Hearing can be compared to listening just like seeing can be compared to reading. A person who is dyslexic can see the letters on a page, but unless s/he receives proper training, s/he can not really understand their meaning. Studies describe most people are poor and not natural listeners even though much of our day requires this skill. Most of us can speak up to 125 words per minute, but we have the ability to understand the spoken word at gusts of up to 400 words per minute (Islam, 2012). In general, we understand and retain only one-fourth of what we hear.

 Ghaderpanahi (2012), states that listening is probably the least explicit of the four language skills, making it the most difficult one to learn. Students who are fine with speaking at their own pace may have trouble in listening to a recording that is a regular-speed conversation. Vandergrift emphasize that listening is a complex, active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they already know, while listening comprehension is an interactive, interpretive process where listeners use both prior knowledge and linguistic knowledge in understanding messages (as cited in Liubinienė, 2009, p. 89). In this case, the prior knowledge includes the knowledge of the topic, familiarity with the discipline, awareness of the listening context, the text-type, and the culture or other information held in long-term memory. Furthermore, Ronald and Roskelly define listening as an active process requiring the same skills of prediction, hypothesizing, checking, revising, and generalizing that writing and reading demand (as cited in Islam, 2012, p. 206).

During the listening activity, there are two distinct processes characterize listening comprehension. When learners rely on prior knowledge in order to understand the meaning of a message, they are using “top-down” processes. Top-down processing refers to how we use our world knowledge to attribute meaning to language input and how our knowledge of social convention helps us understand meaning, meanwhile, “Bottom-up” processes are also used by learners when they rely on specific components of the L2 for aural comprehension when the meaning is constructed from morphemes to words to grammatical relationships to lexical meanings until the message is decoded (Liubinienė, 2009, p. 89).

**LISTENING PROBLEMS**

Listening is often confusing for an English learner. There are a number of reasons for this. According to Ghaderpanahi (2012), the reasons why listening is difficult comes mainly from six sources: layers of sound, accents, intonation, methods of teaching, bound to the written word, and the last is the teacher’s own accent.

* Layers of sound

Unlike reading in which the learner is given a single text to follow, in real-life situations, native speakers speak over each other at different volumes and speeds and often with frequent interruptions. The written equivalent is having two or three texts mixed up with some writing bigger and some smaller and sentences interrupted by comments and other sentences.

* Accents

While written English is pretty much the same all over the world, there are a myriad of accents in spoken English which can make it even more difficult for the learner to follow a conversation. The written equivalent is having different handwriting plus having the same words spelt differently depending on who is writing them.

* Intonation

Intonation is the way in which a sentence is sounded. Native speakers do not speak in monotone but raise or lower the pitch of an utterance as they speak. The most common example is when they make a simple question. There is no one-stop solution to this problem. However, in the classroom there are a number of strategies a teacher can use to help students to listen well.

* Methods of teaching

Once the teacher has an idea about the problems a learner faces, s/he can better find solutions and effective methods of teaching. Thus it is important to explain to the class how the written sentence can differ from the spoken sentence because of the reasons above.

* Bound to written word

Many students are bound to the written word. When doing a listening exercise, the teacher can have all books closed so the students only listen rather than try to match the sounds to words on the page.

* Teacher’s own accent.

The teacher can introduce accents into the class. The teacher can have the students listen to a "neutral" text and then the same in an accent and have them point out and analyze the differences in pronunciation.

**MAIN PARTS OF LISTENING EXERCISES**

In the teaching and learning process of listening, it is crucial for the teachers to understanding that listening exercises could be divided into three main parts: Pre-listening, While-listening, and Post-listening activities. The following example made by Miller (2003), may contribute a vivid procedure about the teaching of listening:

* Pre-Listening activities

A teacher can initiate a short discussion with the learners in the pre-listening stage as to what they think of the topic before they listen to the text (activating world and personal knowledge).

* While-Listening activities

Learners can be helped to focus on their listening by careful selection of tasks that are meaningful and that cater to developing specific listening skills rather than on constantly measuring performance through test-like exercises.

* Post-Listening activities

Learners can be asked to use whatever information they gathered from a text to have an extended discussion in a post-listening stage (allowing for more individualization and critical comments to be developed).

**AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AND ITS CLASSIFICATIONS**

The definitions of authentic materials are slightly different in literature written by different researchers of language. However, there is a common point in these definitions which is exposure to real language and its use in its own community (Kilickaya, 2004, p. 1). He argue that since authentic texts donates the learner the feeling that he or she is learning the real language – the target language as it is used by social colonies that speak it their use is now regarded as one way for enhancing students’ motivation for learning. The notion of authenticity itself has been much discussed. Nunan (1989) thinks that a rule of thumb for authenticity here is any material which has not been specifically produced for the purposes of language teaching. In EFL contexts, the classroom is the major, or even the sole source of input and the only opportunity for interaction. It is also important for teachers to find ways to make out of class hours potentially conducive to language learning as well as to promote language awareness. Grundy stated that it is especially important to encourage the development of pragmatic knowledge because pragmatic errors are judged more strictly than grammatical ones, and it is therefore crucial for teachers to help learners develop *pragmatic competence*, particularly for global communication (as cited in Shomoossi & Ketabi, 2007, p. 152).

Furthermore, Martinez (2002), defined that Authentic would be material designed for native speakers of English used in the classroom in a way similar to the one it was designed for. Besides, Mishan claims that the focal pedagogical rationale for using authentic materials in FL teachingoriginates from what is called ‘the 3 C’s’, that is to say, culture, currency, and challenge. He explicates that culture in that authentic texts incorporate and represent the culture/s of speakers of the target language;currency, in that authentic texts offer topics and language in current use, as well as those relevant to thelearners; challenge, in that authentic texts are intrinsically more challenging yet can be used at allproficiency levels (as cited in Sabet & Mahsefat, 2012, p. 218).

Based on these definitions, the real meaning of authentic materials: they are real language, produced for the native speakers; designed without the teaching purposes. In this sense, there are a large amount of authentic materials in our life such as newspaper and magazine articles, TV and radio broadcast, daily conversations, meetings, documents, speech, videos and films.

To introduce authentic materials in language teaching, it’s important to classify them first, because some of them are suitable for the teaching of reading and writing, and some are effective when prepared for the teaching of listening and speaking. Authentic materials can be classified into four categories (Gebhard, 1996):

* Authentic Listening-Viewing Materials: TV commercials, quiz shows, cartoons, news clips, comedy shows, movies, soap operas, professionally audio-taped short stories and novels, radio ads, songs, documentaries, and sales pitches.
* Authentic Visual Materials: slides, photographs, paintings, children’ artwork, stick-figure drawings, wordless street signs, silhouettes, pictures from magazine, ink blots, postcard pictures, wordless picture books, stamps, and X-rays.
* Authentic Printed Materials: newspaper articles, movie advertisements, astrology columns, sports reports, obituary columns, advice columns, lyrics to songs, restaurant menus, street signs, cereal boxes, candy wrappers, tourist information brochures, university catalogs, telephone books, maps, TV guides, comic books, greeting cards, grocery coupons, pins with messages, and bus schedules.
* Realia (Real world objects) used in EFL and ESL Classrooms: coins and currency, folded paper, wall clocks, phones, Halloween masks, dolls, and puppets, to name a few. Realia are often used to illustrate points very visually or for role-play situations

Here, the mainly focus is on the authentic listening materials. In literature, phrases like: real speech, the spontaneous speech, live or natural language, genuine instanced of language use, natural conversation, what people say in real life, what native speakers say when they are talking to each other, have been used to define authentic listening material. Bringing authentic materials into the classroom can be motivating for the students, as it adds a real-life element to the student’s learning experience.

**PRAGMATIC APPROPRIATENESS**

Curriculum reformers and syllabus designers may have to rethink what is meant by authenticity in terms of appropriateness. Finding authentic materials (produced only by native speakers and for non-teaching purposes) is a major preoccupation in ELT, and publishers’ claim that their materials are authentic in the narrow sense of authenticity have been inevitable issues in the past (Shomoossi & Ketabi, 2007, p. 153). For current practice, however, pragmatic and pedagogic appropriateness should be the primary consideration in syllabus design.

The materials adopted in a teaching situation may not contain the tone or details of utterances. It is up to the teacher to enliven the situation by providing sufficient information to the learners. Materials designers also need to consider the effects or outcomes of *what* is said to *whom*, *when* and *how* in terms of complying with the demand of being ‘real’, in a sense that materials presented can be perceived as ‘real’ examples of communication in the classroom setting. Anew dimension in the teaching of English will be added in interactions between two speakers ofdifferent first languages in unpredictable contexts, and in situations where speakers need to managecross-culturalcommunication. Therefore, new approaches to materials development will needto avoid culturally loaded formulas once borrowed from the native speaker variety of English, becausethe shared knowledge between interlocutors is not necessarily a copy of the native speakernorms; Rather, new approaches are likely to focus more on materials where the context is createdimmediately by the human participants in interaction, the key role being assigned to the teacher –whether native speaker or nonnativespeaker. Ultimately, the best resource of genuine materialscould be the learners themselves, and in particular those who have been exposed to real-lifesituationsand tasks.

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS**

According to Martinez (2002), using authentic materials in the classroom, even when not done in an authentic situation, and provided it is appropriately exploited, is significant for many reasons, amongst which are:

* Students are exposed to real discourse, as in videos of interviews with famous people where intermediate students listen for gist. They provide exposure to real language.
* Authentic materials keep students informed about what is happening in the world, so they have an intrinsic educational value.
* Textbooks often do not include incidental or improper English.
* They can produce a sense of achievement, e.g., a brochure on England given to students to plan a 4-day visit.
* The same piece of material can be used under different circumstances if the task is different.
* Language change is reflected in the materials so that students and teachers can keep abreast of such changes.
* Reading texts are ideal to teach/practice mini-skills such as scanning, e.g. students are given a news article and asked to look for specific information (amounts, percentages, etc.)
* The teacher can have students practice some of the  micro-skills mentioned by Richards (1983), e.g. basic students listen to news reports and they are asked to identify the names of countries, famous people, etc. (ability to detect key words).
* Books, articles, newspapers, and so on contain a wide variety of text types, language styles not easily found in conventional teaching materials.
* They can encourage reading for pleasure because they are likely to contain topics of interest to learners, especially if students are given the chance to have a say about the topics or kinds of authentic materials to be used in class.

Furthermore, Tamo (2009) proposes some more advantages of using authentic materials; for instance, authentic materials have a positive effect on learner motivation and support a more creative approach to teaching.

In addition, authentic texts which have been mentioned before are often regarded as more interesting to the students than textbook materials because they can be more up-to-date, and relate to everyday issues and activities. This would suggest their relevancy is increased and therefore student motivation naturally follows. To summarize, we can say that learner-authentic materials are mainly learner-centered, and they can serve effectively to promote learner’s interest in language learning.

**POTENTIAL PROBLEMS OF USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS**

Martinez (2002), added that authentic materials may be too culturally biased, so unnecessarily difficult to understand outside the language community. The vocabulary might not be relevant to the student's immediate needs. Linguistically, they tend to be more difficult, being unsimplified, with more complex syntactic patterns and vocabulary. Too many structures are mixed, so lower levels have a hard time decoding the texts. In news stories, novels, and other authentic texts, grammatical items show up unexpectedly, and without warning, which require students to have mastered core knowledge of grammar, and this generally means more sophisticated understanding beyond the intermediate level of understanding. The special preparation is necessary which can be time consuming.

For authentic listening materials, the students might deal with too many different accents form different native speakers. Moreover, the material can become outdated easily, e.g. News. And the last, there are many headlines, adverts, signs, and so on that can require good knowledge of the cultural background. Instances of this abound in the media, such as headlines that many times use abbreviations (P.O.W., M.I.A., G.O.P. and so on).

**CONSIDERATIONS OF SELECTING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS**

In choosing materials effectively, there should always be an aim in using them and chosen materials should meet the objectives of the lesson. The criteria such as learners’ age, level, interests, needs, goals, and expectations must always be met. Laamri (2009) proposed some criteria for selecting authentic materials:

* Authenticity: The selected material should serve communicative goals.
* Accessibility: The material should be easy for the learner to understand and suitable for the teacher.
* Appropriateness: It should suit the learner’s age, level needs and interests.
* Applicability: It should suit the teaching context and makes the objectives attainable.
* Adaptability: It should be adapted to the learners’ level, needs and interests.

Moreover, he also suggested some special considerations for audio and video material. Those are:

* How long is the clip or segment?
* How is the sound quality? The rate of delivery? The register?
* How many speakers are involved?
* Do the visuals support the audio? Do they give everything away?
* Is this a timeless clip, with a universal topic?

In addition, there are also basic principles of receptive skill lesson development proposed by Laamri (2009):

* We do not necessarily simplify the text, we simplify the tasks.
* We should always define the task before listening/viewing, so that students can look/listen for and find vs. look at/listen to and get lost.
* We should bear in mind that most tasks require a separate reading/listening, since our purpose for listening determines how we listen.
* We should design a hierarchy of tasks: pre-activities, global activities, specific information activities, linguistic activities, and post-activities.

In relation to learner’s proficiency level and the linguistic demands of the listening, Lingzhu and Yuanyuan (2010) proposed the following questions that teachers need to bear in mind:

* Is the critical vocabulary in the recording (words central to an understanding of a topic) likely to be familiar to the listener?
* To what extent does the task rely upon the ability to decode the linguistic content?
* To what extent can the task be achieved without a full understanding of the linguistic content?

As what have been discussed before, spoken language is too complex to be introduced in the classroom in the first stage of foreign language learning, but in the second or intermediate stage of foreign language learning, all the factors of the spontaneously spoken language come into action. So, for the lower level learners, teacher should provide easier materials such as the short headline type reports, audio and radio advertising, or short news broadcasts or children’s songs. For the intermediate levels, there is a wider range of choices. Four or five minutes TV or radio news reports, the slightly adopted movies, or even whole TV programs can be included.

As for the advanced level students, they have learned the target language for years and have the ability of dealing with the possible difficulties with their linguistic competence and world knowledge. Teachers now can choose some political speeches, ceremonial formulae, gossip, family quarrels etc. as the teaching materials. These materials are either very formal (ceremonial formulae, political speeches) or fairly informal (gossip, family quarrels), which are considered very difficult for foreign language learners.

 In line with the criteria mentioned before, Galloway (as cited in Vahid-baghban, 2011, p. 11) also recommends the following criteria in authentic material selection:

* Topic should be accessible to learners.
* Length of material should not be intimidating to beginning readers.
* Linguistic level should be slightly above the reader’s own level unless the tasks are closely structured to involve focused reading.

In this case, teachers have to think how easy it is to create interest in the topic at a pre-listening stage and how familiar the topic is to the students. Learner’s interest is another important factor that should be taken into consideration when selecting authentic listening materials.

It’s necessary for teachers to know students’ likes and dislikes on listening materials and it’s wise for them to make a survey among students before the selection. In this way, the selected materials may be accepted by most of the students and successful listening teaching may achieve.

For the cultural appropriateness, if there is any cultural specific content in the recording, the teachers should consider whether they can reduce its comprehensibility to the listeners from other cultural backgrounds or whether it can potentially cause cultural offence. How complex are the ideas in the recording? How dense are they? How complex are the relationships between the ideas? How complex is the overall argument structure? Can you design any learning tasks based on the text to ensure the learners’ comprehension? There are other factors need to be considered: the information density, the accent, the speed of the speaker, the relevance of the listening material to the syllabus and the students etc (Lingzhu & Yuanyuan, 2010).

To sum up, it be can concluded that although authentic materials are abundant, the selection to fit them into the learning/teaching context is not accomplished effortlessly. First and foremost, learners’ language level must be considered in selecting the listening material and they must be carefully examined for their lexical and structural difficulty. Moreover, to choose appropriate themes and topics, learners’ needs and interests are required to be reflected on.

**APPLYING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS**

Authentic materials have many advantages compared to inauthentic materials. However, it does not mean that choosing and using appropriate authentic materials in teaching listening can really improve students listening ability. The most important thing is what kinds of methods are adapted to utilize these materials. As for the question of utilizing, different people have different opinions.

According the study done by Lingzhu and Yuanyuan (2010), the following ways of using authentic materials are effective to improve students’ listening ability:

A. Integrating target culture with language teaching

Language and culture are closely related with each other. Language is a part of culture and plays an important role in it. On one hand, without language, culture cannot be transmitted. On the other hand, language is influenced and shaped by culture. Language and culture interact with each other and the understanding of one influences the understanding of the other.

In the teaching of listening comprehension, we can find that listening materials, especially authentic materials, often have much cultural content that is closely related to the knowledge of American and British culture, society, and economy. If students lack this kind of knowledge, there will be difficulties in their listening comprehension. Maybe many of us have this experience: when we are listening to something familiar to us, whatever is concerned, we usually find it easy to understand. Even if there are some new words, we are able to guess their meanings from the context. However, if the materials are unfamiliar to us, or too culturally based, we may feel very difficult. Even if there are no new words in the materials, we can only get the literal meaning. We don’t understand the meaning in depth, because of the lack of cultural information. For instance, here is a sentence from a report, “The path to November is uphill all the way.” November literally means “the eleventh month of the year”. But here it refers to the presidential election to be held in November. Another example is “red-letter-days”—which is a simple phrase and easy to hear, meaning holidays such as Christmas and other special days. Without teachers’ explanation, students are usually unable to understand them. In order to solve the problems in this respect, teachers are suggested to pay attention to culture teaching in listening comprehension

1. Introducing background knowledge

Some listening materials are too culturally based, thus not easy for students to understand. A good suggestion for teachers is to introduce some background information before listening. For example, if what the students are going to listen to is a piece of BBC or VOA news, the teacher had better explain the names of countries, places, people’s names and ages etc. appeared in the news, which are a little difficult for second language learners. If the materials are on western customs, the possible way for the teacher is to ask students to search the relevant information in advance and then share what they have found with the whole class. If teachers prepare original English films for students, it’s wise for them to introduce the characters, the settings, and the general plot and tell students how to watch these original films. In this way, students may feel easier to listen to the authentic listening materials.

1. Explaining idioms

Idioms are important in any language and culture. They are often hard to understand and hard to use appropriately. We know that it’s usually impossible to understand them without the context. Some English idioms mean much more than the literal meanings. Authentic materials are likely to contain many idioms, especially in films. The teacher should explain the idioms and ask students to accumulate them. Students can benefit from this in the long run.

1. Encouraging students’ self-learning

Time in class is limited. Teachers’ teaching is just one of the learning resources for the students. Teachers should raise students’ cultural awareness, and encourage them to learn the target culture by themselves. Here is a long term plan of culture learning: the teacher asks the students to learn the target culture in their spare time in group. Students are supposed to have discussions on their interested topics with their group members and prepare a report for the whole class. In this way, they can accumulate their information and learn more. It’ better for the teacher to give the students one hour to report each week. This plan emphasizes students’ self-learning.

B. Helping students to adapt to authentic listening situation

The goal of listening teaching is to help students to understand the “real speech” to communicate in real life. Listeners must be able to understand natural listening speech to meet their own needs as members of the English-speaking community. However, many learners complain that authentic listening situations are in most cases out of their control. To solve this problem, Mendolsohn put forward that teachers should provide listeners with strategies training. His way is to train listeners’ ability of starting listening from the middle. For example, if students listen to a conversation from the middle, they are expected to attune to the conversation while simultaneously trying to understand it (as cited in Lingzhu & Yuanyuan, 2010).

C. Predicting

In listening practice, some students tend to believe that unless they understand everything, they will understand nothing. They always want to gain the total and thorough comprehension. In fact, even native speaker do not impose a standard of total comprehension on themselves, and they indeed tolerated a certain degree of vagueness.

In using authentic listening materials, we should learn to tolerate vagueness. It is necessary to encourage students to make most of their incomplete comprehension, and predict what they will hear next. Understanding is not something that happens because of what a speaker says, the listener has a crucial part to play in the process by activating various types of knowledge applying what he knows to what he hears and trying to understand what the speaker means.

D. Integrated skills on activating students’ authentic response

It is important to integrate listening with other skills because listening is not an isolated skill. According to Oxford (as as cited in Lingzhu & Yuanyuan, 2010), most of the time in real life, listening occurs together with speaking and it also occurs with writing, for example, note-taking while listening to a lecture. Therefore, activities require such techniques as note-taking, discussing, role-play, or summary writing etc. can be introduced in listening comprehension, and activate students’ authentic response to authentic materials.

It is said that the activities based on authentic materials are generally the same as the traditional listening class activities, except that these activities require more productive responses. The most common listening activities proposed by Rixon (as cited in Lingzhu & Yuanyuan, 2010) are:

* Posing of problems (pre-questioning or discussing work sheet)
* The class listens and gives individual answers on worksheet;
* The class discusses their results in pairs or small group. The teacher withholds “correct” answers at this stage;
* The class listen again as necessary to solve anomalies or settle disputes as far as possible;
* Whole-class discussion of results, elicited by teacher.
* Teachers play back tapes to whole class. Final discussing of language points that have lead to dispute or misunderstanding.

The main focus is on the skill of discussing. In fact, in teaching practice, teachers have many choices. After seeing a film, they can ask students to do the role play of certain scenes or make oral comments on some characters; after listening to a lecture, help students to organize an interview; they can also use discussing, retelling, etc. All of these are effective ways of using authentic materials in listening comprehension.

**CONCLUSIONS**

To conclude, some teachers think that listening is the easiest skill to teach, whereas most students think it is the most difficult to improve. This contradiction tells that there are some things about teaching listening that need to be explored. This paper has tried to explore the issues of some implications of using authentic materials for listening skill in the classroom. Authentic materials can do some things that other materials are not capable of. However, inevitably they have to be used in small doses, must be carefully selected and controlled, and need well-thought out teaching exercises to be fully exploited. Therefore, applying authentic materials with the right teaching methods would possibly become an effective solution to the students’ listening skill in EFL context.

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