## EXPLORING HOW TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS HAVE INFLUENCED THE DEFINITION AND USE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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INTRODUCTION

Authentic materials are defined as a range of resources not specifically created for language teaching but are actual texts, audio, or video materials produced for native speakers in real-life contexts. These materials include but are not limited to: newspapers and magazines, books and literature, TV shows and movies, radio broadcasts and podcasts, websites and social media content, menus, brochures, and other printed matter, real-life signage and advertisements.

The defining characteristic of authentic materials is their origin: they are created for communicative and informative purposes within a native-speaking community, not for pedagogical aims. As such, they offer learners exposure to language as it is naturally and currently used, encompassing idiomatic expressions, colloquialisms, and cultural references. This real-world usage contrasts with the more controlled, structured language often found in traditional educational texts and materials. Over the years, perspectives on the use of authentic materials in language education, including for philologists, have evolved, reflecting broader trends in language teaching and learning. While the core value of authentic materials has been consistently recognized, the emphasis and approaches to their integration in language education have seen some changes.

In the contemporary educational landscape, marked by rapid technological advancements, modern language instructors increasingly turn to digital platforms to enhance learning. YouTube, despite its longstanding presence, continues to stand out as the preeminent video hosting platform and the second most frequented website globally. It serves as a vital resource for authentic content, allowing educators to expose learners to real-world language in diverse contexts. Similarly, podcasts, which have surged in popularity, are harnessed as significant sources of authentic audio content. These platforms are not just popular among users for entertainment but are strategically utilized by educators to provide varied linguistic and

cultural exposure to non-native English speakers, facilitating a more engaging and effective learning experience. The use of such materials is intended to provide language learners with exposure to genuine language usage, including idiomatic expressions, colloquial language, and cultural nuances that are often sanitized or simplified in materials specifically crafted for language learning.

Despite the recognized value of authentic materials in enhancing language learning, the integration of these resources within formal education systems has been uneven. In this paper, we investigate how technological advances have affected the identification and use of authentic materials in English language teaching.

## 1. Evolution of authentic materials in language teaching

In the 1990s and early 2000s, there was a growing acknowledgment of the importance of authentic materials in language teaching, influenced by communicative language teaching and task-based learning approaches. These paradigms emphasized real-world language use and the significance of context in language learning. Scholars and educators advocated for the use of authentic materials to provide learners with real-life language exposure, believed to enhance linguistic competence and cultural understanding. However, they also recognized the challenges associated with using authentic materials, particularly regarding their complexity and the need for careful selection and adaptation to match learners' proficiency levels. Peacock supported the idea that "authentic materials are items written for purposes other than teaching language, often having real-life contexts and offering a true flavor of the language"[1]. Gilmore noted, "Authentic materials are made up of real language and are designed for native speakers; they are ungraded and often complex"[2].

There is a greater focus on learner autonomy, where students are encouraged to engage with authentic materials outside the classroom, fostering self-directed learning. Phil Benson's work often emphasizes the importance of autonomy in language education, highlighting how self-directed learning can significantly enhance the language acquisition process. He has explored various facets of autonomy, including how learners engage with materials, the strategies they use to learn independently, and the role of the environment and tools in supporting autonomous learning. In the context of authentic materials, Benson's research suggests that when learners actively engage with real-world

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[1] Peacock M. The Effect of Authentic Materials on the Motivation of EFL Learners. *ELT Journal*. 1997. № 51(2). P. 145.

[2] Gilmore A. Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*. № 40(2). P. 98.

materials on their own, they can tailor their learning experiences to their interests and needs, leading to more meaningful and effective language acquisition[3]. While Benson is a key figure in this field, other researchers, including David Little[4] and Lienhard Legenhausen[5], have also significantly contributed to our understanding of learner autonomy and authentic materials within various educational frameworks and contexts.

Tomlinson's discussions typically emphasize the benefits of using authentic materials in language teaching, such as increased learner motivation, enhanced cultural knowledge, and improved language acquisition through engagement with real language in context[6]. In the context of language education, Brian Tomlinson and similar scholars often define authentic materials as those that are not specifically designed for language teaching purposes but are real-life texts, audio, or video content created for native speakers in everyday contexts. These might include newspapers, magazines, TV shows, movies, radio broadcasts, podcasts, websites, and social media content – essentially any material that a native speaker would encounter in their daily life. The use of such materials is intended to provide language learners with exposure to genuine language usage, including idiomatic expressions, colloquial language, and cultural nuances that are often sanitized or simplified in materials specifically crafted for language learning.

In recent years, there has been an increased emphasis on integrating digital media and online resources as authentic materials. The internet has made a vast array of authentic materials readily accessible, broadening the types of resources that can be incorporated into language education. Pedagogical approaches have become more sophisticated, with a better understanding of how to scaffold learning using authentic materials to address the varied needs of learners[7]. The concept of authenticity has expanded. It's not just about the materials themselves being 'real-world' but also about creating authentic learning experiences where learners use language in meaningful, purpose-driven ways. In this context, Radmila

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[3] Benson P. Teaching and Researching Autonomy in Language Learning. London: Routledge. 296 p. DOI: 10.4324/9781315833767

[4] Little D. Language Learner Autonomy: Some Fundamental Considerations Revisited. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*. 2007. № 1(1). P. 14–29.

[5] Legenhausen L. The effects of context on the use of learner strategies: An example from autonomous learning. *Learning and Teaching in the Self-Access Centre*. 2001. Vol. 8. P. 43–56.

[6] Tomlinson B. Materials development for language learning and teaching. *Language Teaching*. 2012. Vol. 45(2). P. 143–179. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444811000528

[7] Нипадимка А. С., Сарновська Н. І. Роль автентичних текстів в навчанні іноземним мовам майбутніх фахівців-міжнародників. *Молодий вчений*. 2016. № 4.1 (31.1). С. 84–86.

Ronios Mara and Maslawati Mohamad highlight the utility of authentic materials in reading, noting that "the use of authentic materials in reading among the students could be useful as the students are introduced to real discourse such as in video interviews with famous people where intermediate students listen for gist and the reading text provides various patterns of reading text that are ideal to teach the mini-skill like scanning"[8]. This approach exemplifies how authentic materials can be strategically employed to develop specific reading skills, illustrating the practical application of sophisticated pedagogical strategies in language learning.

According to Pujainda Mandarsari's research, the significance of authentic materials in English language education stems from their flexibility and applicability to real-world contexts. These materials, including various online resources such as YouTube videos, podcasts, and online articles, can be tailored to meet educational objectives and needs. This adaptability not only aligns the materials with the curriculum but also caters to the diverse requirements of students. Mandarsari highlights that by providing exposure to genuine language use, authentic materials significantly enhance the learning experience, improving students' language comprehension, motivation, and engagement. This demonstrates the crucial role of authentic materials in creating a more dynamic and effective educational environment[9].

According to Egitim and Price's research, authentic materials are defined as supplementary resources that include various media formats such as films, TV clips, internet sources, and relevant newspaper stories. These are intended to provide exposure to authentic language used in professional and occupational settings (EP/OP) alongside traditional EAP coursebooks. The role of these materials in English lessons is significant, enhancing student engagement and motivation, providing real-life language exposure, and connecting the classroom environment to the professional world[10]. This definition emphasizes the specific application within EAP contexts, underlining the importance of these materials in preparing students for real-life professional communication. This focus on professional and occupational relevancy distinguishes their approach from more general interpretations of authentic materials, which might not always emphasize

[8] Mara R., Mohamad M. The Use of Authentic Materials in Teaching Reading to Secondary School Students in Malaysia: A Literature Review. *Creative Education.* 2021. Vol. 12. № 7. P. 1698. DOI: 10.4236/ce.2021.127129.

[9] Mandarsari P. Online authentic materials in teaching English for EFL students. *International Journal of Research on English Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. 2023. Vol. 4(1). P. 65–78. DOI: 10.30863/ijretal.v4i1.5013

[10] Egitim S., Price G. Japanese university EFL teachers' perspectives on EAP coursebooks and authentic EP/OP supplementary materials. *Professional and Academic English: Journal of the IATEFL ESPSIG*. 2020. № 54. P. 4–8. DOI: 10.31234/ osf.io/q327j

alignment with career-oriented objectives. According to the researchers some of the main challenges associated with using authentic materials in EFL teaching include adaptability issues, cultural relevance, technological barriers, increased preparation time[11].

While authentic materials provide real-world relevance, the need to adapt these materials to fit the classroom context and student language levels can be challenging. Teachers must often modify the language and content to make it comprehensible and appropriate for their students, which requires additional effort and expertise[12].

The materials used may not always be culturally appropriate or relatable for all students. This can make it difficult for students to engage with the content effectively. Accessing authentic materials often relies on technology, which can be a limitation in environments where resources are scarce or internet connectivity is unreliable[13]. Teachers may need to spend considerable time preparing and customizing authentic materials to ensure they are pedagogically effective and suitable for their students' needs. These challenges reflect the complexities involved in integrating authentic materials into EFL courses, highlighting the need for careful planning and consideration to leverage their benefits effectively.

Hevin Mayarega et al. emphasize that when teachers use authentic texts in EFL reading classes, students can be motivated because these texts can improve reading comprehension, increase knowledge, introduce the culture of native speakers' countries, spark curiosity about the content, and present challenges. However, students often struggle to understand the contents of authentic texts and do not perceive the benefits that could be obtained. This difficulty can lead to anxiety when reading authentic texts because students encounter many uncommon words and complex language and sentence structures[14]. Similarly, vocabulary acquisition is a fundamental aspect of language learning, and Treve noted that the use of authentic materials positively impacts vocabulary acquisition, facilitates a more

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[11] Egitim S., Price G. Japanese university EFL teachers' perspectives on EAP coursebooks and authentic EP/OP supplementary materials. *Professional and Academic English: Journal of the IATEFL ESPSIG*. 2020. № 54. P. 4–8. DOI: 10.31234/osf.io/q327j

[12] Treve M. Examining the impact of using authentic materials on ESL/EFL learners. *International Journal of Empirical Research Methods*. 2023. Vol. 1(1). DOI : 10.59762/ijerm205275791120231005151352

[13] Mandarsari P. Online authentic materials in teaching English for EFL students. *International Journal of Research on English Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. 2023. Vol. 4(1). P. 65–78. DOI: 10.30863/ijretal.v4i1.5013

[14] Mayarega H., Rahmawati H., Azami M.I. Portraying the use of authentic materials in EFL reading classes: a study on students' perception. *Premise Journal of English Education*. Vol. 12. № 2. P. 10. DOI: 10.24127/pj.v12i2.7473

extensive and meaningful acquisition of new words and expressions, enhances listening comprehension, reading comprehension, writing skills, and overall language proficiency[15].

We believe that using authentic materials in the education of future philologists, who are non-native English speakers, is immensely beneficial, despite the challenges highlighted by Gilmore[16] and Peacock[17]. Authentic materials expose students to language as it is used in real-life contexts, not just the idealized or simplified versions often found in textbooks. For philology students, understanding the nuances, variations, and actual use of English is crucial. This real-world exposure equips them with a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the language, essential for their future roles as language experts and educators. Additionally, authentic materials play a vital role in the education of EFL students by providing them with practical language skills that are directly applicable in everyday situations. These materials help EFL learners develop better listening and speaking abilities through exposure to natural speech patterns, idiomatic expressions, and colloquialisms. By engaging with authentic content, EFL students can improve their cultural awareness and gain insights into the social and cultural contexts in which the language is used.

## 2. Technological integration and learner autonomy: advances in utilizing authentic materials

Authentic materials often carry cultural nuances and contextual information invaluable for students. Understanding a language involves more than just grammar and vocabulary; it includes grasping the cultural contexts in which it is spoken. For Ukrainian students aiming to teach English or work in English philology, an in-depth understanding of these cultural aspects is essential for both their own comprehension and their ability to teach English effectively.

The complexity and ungraded nature of authentic materials challenge students to develop their critical thinking and analytical skills. Engaging with such materials requires students to interpret, analyze, and contextualize language in ways that simplified texts do not demand. These skills are crucial for philologists and teachers, who must be able to navigate complex texts and teach their students to do the same.

[15] Treve M. Examining the impact of using authentic materials on ESL/EFL learners. *International Journal of Empirical Research Methods.* 2023. Vol.1(1). DOI: 10.59762/ijerm2052757911202031005151352

[16] Gilmore A. Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning. *Language Teaching.* № 40(2). P. 98.

[17] Peacock M. The Effect of Authentic Materials on the Motivation of EFL Learners. *ELT Journal.* 1997. № 51(2). P. 145.

Working with authentic materials can significantly enhance students' language proficiency, providing them with the confidence and ability to engage with native speakers and authentic texts in their professional lives. Forfuture teachers, this proficiency is not just about their own communication skills; it's also about their ability to teach English effectively to others.

By engaging with authentic materials, students are better prepared for the challenges they will face in their professional lives, whether in teaching, translation, or other fields of philology. Understanding and interpreting complex, real-world texts is a skill that will serve them throughout their careers. Authentic materials can be more engaging and motivating for students, as they provide a sense of connection to the real world and the practical use of the language they are studying. This relevance can increase students' interest and investment in their learning process. Beyond YouTube channel videos, there are numerous other types of authentic materials that can be effectively incorporated into the curriculum.

Literary works: original novels, poems, short stories, and plays can provide students with rich language and cultural insights. These can be particularly useful for students specializing in literature. News articles: articles from reputable newspapers and magazines expose students to varied writing styles, vocabulary, and current events, which are crucial for developing advanced reading and analytical skills. Movies and TV shows: films and series in the target language can be excellent resources for understanding conversational language, slang, and cultural references. Music lyrics: songs in the target language can be a fun and engaging way to teach language, rhythm, rhyme, and cultural expressions. Social media content: posts, comments, and discussions on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram provide insights into informal language use and contemporary societal issues. Interviews and talk shows: these sources offer unscripted speech, providing students with examples of natural dialogue, including interruptions, colloquialisms, and non-verbal communication cues. Academic journals and articles: for advanced students, these materials can introduce specialized vocabulary and complex sentence structures, which are crucial for academic and professional proficiency. Government and legal documents: these sources can be used to teach formal language and specialized terminology related to law, politics, or administration. Cultural artifacts: this can include museum guides, brochures, or exhibition catalogs, which can help students learn specialized vocabulary and cultural context. Podcasts and radio broadcasts: these audio materials can offer diverse dialects, accents, and discussions on a wide range of topics, which are beneficial for listening comprehension and cultural literacy.

There were 29.64 million internet users in Ukraine at the start of 2024, when internet penetration stood 79.2 percent. Ukraine was home to

24.30 million social media users in January 2024, equating to 64.9 percent of the total population. TikTok had 16.47 million users aged 18 and above in Ukraine in early 2024[18]. TikTok is a social media platform that allows users to create, share, and discover short videos. The app provides a wide array of tools that enable users to add music, filters, and other effects to their videos, making it highly engaging and popular among a diverse, global audience. Its content ranges from entertainment and comedy to educational material, making it a versatile medium for expression and information sharing.

TikTok can be considered a rich source of authentic materials for English language learners for several reasons. The primary rationale for using TikTok is its demonstration of real language in use. TikTok videos often feature everyday language, slang, idioms, and expressions not typically found in textbooks. This exposure helps learners understand how English is used in various informal contexts by native speakers, enhancing their ability to comprehend and use the language naturally.

Another significant reason for using TikTok in EFL is cultural exposure. Since TikTok is used globally, it provides insights into the cultural nuances of different English-speaking countries. Learners can experience how English varies across cultures and settings, which is crucial for developing a deeper understanding of the language and its cultural context.

The third reason is engagement and relevance. The platform's format of short, captivating videos aligns with the attention spans of modern learners, making it an engaging way to learn and practice English. The content is often updated with current trends and topics, keeping the material relevant and interesting to learners.

Additionally, TikTok has diverse content. TikTok's algorithm tailors content to users' interests, offering a personalized learning experience. English learners can follow accounts that create content ranging from informal chats to structured language lessons, allowing them to choose material that matches their learning preferences and needs. Furthermore, regular exposure to TikTok videos can improve listening skills, as learners process various accents, speeds of speech, and colloquial language used by native speakers. This practice is invaluable for enhancing auditory comprehension and preparing learners for real-world English communication.

Humor in TikTok is often one of the reasons why students watch this platform. Therefore, finding light and humorous material related to the topic being studied can help teachers capture students' attention and aid in retention. Humor plays a significant role in learning English as a foreign language, making the process more enjoyable and memorable. While participants primarily engage with TikTok for personal reasons, they often

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[18] Kemp S. Digital 2024: Ukraine. DATAREPORTAL. Website. URL: https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-ukraine (Last accessed: 10.05.2024).

encounter content that positively influences their professional knowledge and practice, highlighting the importance of humor and engagement in educational contexts[19]. Humorous content can also facilitate better understanding by providing memorable contexts and examples. Additionally, humor can enhance the teacher-student relationship, fostering a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere. In the context of TikTok, humorous videos often go viral, increasing exposure to diverse language uses and cultural references. This exposure helps students to develop a more nuanced understanding of English. Finally, incorporating humor in learning activities can cater to different learning styles and preferences, making lessons more inclusive and engaging.

Humor can break down barriers and create a more relaxed classroom atmosphere and open learning environment. It can reduce anxiety and stress, making students more willing to participate and take risks in using the language. When students find the material amusing, they are more likely to pay attention and remember the content. This ability to convey the human element of education through the spoken word and humor enhances the learner's connection to the material and can foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the content. By integrating humor effectively, educators can create a dynamic and stimulating learning experience that promotes both language proficiency and a love for learning. Additionally, using platforms like TikTok can further enhance vocabulary acquisition. Even though users primarily engage with TikTok for entertainment and to stay updated with current trends, they also benefit from improved vocabulary usage by observing words in context. This suggests that TikTok can positively influence language learning by providing real-life examples of word usage and context[20].

When selecting authentic materials from TikTok for English language learning, teachers should consider several potential disadvantages.

TikTok hosts a wide range of user-generated content, not all of which is appropriate for educational settings. It is essential for teachers to meticulously curate content, carefully screening videos for suitability and ensuring they are free from inappropriate language, sensitive topics, or controversial content that may not be suitable for the classroom. Some videos may contain grammatical errors, slang, or colloquial expressions that are contextually incorrect or misleading for learners. This requires teachers

[19] Jeffrey P. Carpenter, Scott A. Morrison, Catharyn C. Shelton, Nyree Clark, Sonal Patel, Dani Toma-Harrold. How and why educators use TikTok: Come for the fun, stay for the learning? *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 2024. Vol. 142. 104530. DOI: 10.1016/j.tate.2024.104530

[20] Roshdi N. I. A., Rahmat N. H. Exploring the relationhsip between motivationand vocabulary use among TickTock users. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 2023. Vol. 13. № 3. Pp. 1334–1346.

to select content that accurately represents standard language use or to use discrepancies as teaching points. Instead of presenting these videos as perfect examples, teachers should highlight these discrepancies and explain to students why they are incorrect or informal. This approach can help students learn to recognize and avoid these mistakes in their own language use. Educators have to choose videos from creators who consistently provide quality content that demonstrates the correct and accepted forms of a language as typically used in formal writing and speech. This includes proper grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and context that align with educational and linguistic norms. At the same time, some native speakers may naturally provide good models of language use, even if they are not language teachers. Their videos exhibit proper sentence structure, correct use of tenses, appropriate vocabulary, and clear pronunciation that students can model their own language use after. Finding these reliable sources also requires time and discernment.

It is necessary to keep in mind that the short format of TikTok videos can lead to the oversimplification of complex language concepts or cultural nuances, which might not provide learners with a deep or accurate understanding. Additionally, the highly visual and dynamic nature of TikTok videos, often enhanced with filters and rapid scene changes, might distract from the learning objectives. Such features can overshadow the linguistic content, especially for learners who are easily distracted.

The next disadvantage of this format is its unreliability and lack of source verification. Videos on TikTok are user-generated without editorial oversight, raising concerns about the accuracy and reliability of the information presented. For students studying English as future philologists, this can be particularly harmful. The oversimplification of complex language concepts and cultural nuances, combined with potential inaccuracies, can lead to a superficial or incorrect understanding of the language. Such misunderstandings can impede their ability to analyze and appreciate the depth of English literature and linguistics. Moreover, exposure to incorrect language usage and unverified cultural references may hinder their academic development and critical thinking skills. The distraction caused by the highly visual and dynamic nature of TikTok videos can further detract from their focus on nuanced language study. Ultimately, relying on unreliable sources can undermine their preparation for advanced scholarly work and professional expertise in the field of philology.

Furthermore, TikTok content is influenced by popular trends and cultural norms prevalent among its major user demographics. This bias can lead to skewed cultural representations, reinforcing stereotypes and providing a limited view of the cultural contexts in which the language is used. For future philologists, such cultural biases can result in a constrained understanding of

the diverse linguistic landscapes they must study. This limited perspective can affect their ability to engage deeply with the cultural dimensions of language, essential for their future roles as experts in the field.

Additionally, the use of TikTok in the classroom requires reliable internet access and suitable technological devices. This dependency on technology can be a significant limiting factor in environments where such resources are not readily available or where there is resistance to using social media in educational settings. Such limitations can hinder the effective integration of TikTok as a teaching tool and restrict access to its potential benefits for language learning.

Teachers need to consider these disadvantages carefully and implement strategies to mitigate them, such as providing context, supplementing TikTok videos with additional materials, and fostering critical viewing skills among students. This approach ensures that the use of TikTok as a source of authentic materials enriches the learning experience rather than detracts from it.

### 3. Experimental insights and practical applications of TikTok as a tool for enhancing English language learning

The didactic possibilities of TikTok and their effectiveness in teaching the English language were demonstrated during experimental work in practical classes of English as a foreign language. The pedagogical experiment took place during the second semester of the academic year 2023/2024 at the SUTE. The experiment involved 26 first-year students from two groups studying English as a foreign language. The number of students in the two groups was the same; they shared the same background and culture, and their age and level of English proficiency were approximately equal. The groups included students with high, medium, and low levels of language proficiency. The teaching of English in Group 1 utilized not only the standard set of textbooks but also teacher-selected short clips from TikTok. In Group 2, only the standard set of textbooks was used. The teacher considered several principles when selecting TikTok videos for teaching English in Group 1.

1. Relevance to Curriculum. The videos aligned with the topics and objectives of the English curriculum to ensure they supported the learning goals.

2. Language Level. The videos were selected to match the proficiency levels of the students, providing content that was neither too easy nor too challenging.

3. Engagement and Interest. The videos needed to be engaging and interesting to capture students' attention and motivate them to learn.

4. Authentic Language Use. The videos featured authentic language use, including everyday vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and natural speech patterns.

5. Educational Value. The selected videos had educational value, potentially including explanations of cultural contexts, grammatical structures, or specific language functions.

6. Clarity and Quality. The videos were clear in both audio and visual quality to ensure students could easily understand and follow the content.

7. Appropriateness with ethical, cultural and educational standards. The videos needed to be appropriate for the classroom setting, free from inappropriate language, sensitive topics, or controversial content.

The steps used in working with the TikTok videos were: pre-viewing stage, viewing stage, and post-viewing stage. The pre-viewing stage involved preparing students for the content they were about to view. This stage could include different activities such as discussions, predictions, and vocabulary preview. During the viewing stage, students watched the TikTok video, focusing on specific tasks or questions to ensure active viewing. It was essential to provide them with specific tasks or questions to focus on to ensure active viewing. Activities during this stage included focused watching (students were asked to watch for specific information or answer guided questions), note-taking (students were encouraged to take notes on key points, interesting phrases, or cultural references), and multiple viewings (depending on the video's length and complexity, students watched it multiple times to catch different details). The post-viewing stage involved activities that helped students process and reflect on the video's content. It was a time for analysis, discussion, and application of what they had learned, sharing their thoughts and insights. Students were engaged in critical thinking activities, such as evaluating the video's message or comparing it with other sources. Additionally, the video's content was used as a basis for various language activities, such as role-playing, writing summaries, or creating dialogues. Moreover, students created their own TikTok-style videos on a similar topic, applying what they learned from the original video. At the end of the semester, both groups completed a comprehensive assessment that included grammatical and lexical tasks, as well as assignments designed to evaluate socio-cultural knowledge. As a result of the pedagogical experiment, there was a notable increase in the number of students in Group 1 who achieved grades "A" (excellent) and "B" (very good), as well as an increase in those who performed at the "C" (good) level. Importantly, there were no students in Group 1 who received low marks, such as "D" (satisfactory) or "E" (sufficiently). In contrast, Group 2 did not exhibit significant changes; students in this group received the full spectrum of grades on the assessment.

According to the findings, students emphasized the positive effects of using TikTok videos as arousing interest in the class (90%), concentrating during class (75%), improving pronunciation (85%), enriching vocabulary (78%), enhancing cultural understanding (83%), fostering critical thinking (77%), boosting creativity (89%), increasing overall engagement (90%), and providing a fun learning experience (92%). These effects underscore TikTok's role as a versatile and engaging educational platform, providing students with real-life language exposure and enhancing their learning experience through authentic materials.

The experiment highlighted the effectiveness of integrating TikTok videos into English language teaching, showing that such digital tools can significantly enhance student engagement and learning outcomes when selected and used appropriately. The pre-viewing activities, such as waiting for videos and predicting their content, also played a crucial role in activating prior knowledge and setting a purpose for watching, which likely contributed to the enhanced engagement and better results in Group 1.

An example of how the TikTok platform can be used in a practical English lesson is to integrate video editing tasks into the curriculum to encourage critical thinking and enhance student engagement. In this practical study, the researcher designed a lesson focused on the theme of 'Cultural Diversity and Language Use', the objectives of which were to analyze cultural representations in media, create and edit TikTok videos, and critically evaluate their content for accuracy and bias. The class started with a brief discussion on cultural diversity and its representation in media; the importance of understanding different cultural contexts and the potential biases present in user-generated content on platforms like TikTok was highlighted. Students were divided into small groups, and each group was given a set of TikTok videos that showcased various cultural practices and language use. The students were instructed to watch the videos and identify any cultural stereotypes, biases, or inaccuracies. Each group recorded their observations and presented their findings to the class, discussing the cultural representations and potential biases they had observed in the videos. The teacher facilitated the discussion, encouraging students to think critically about how media influences their perceptions of different cultures.

After that, each group was assigned a specific cultural topic to research further. Students had to create a short video that accurately represented their assigned culture. The videos had to be free from stereotypes and biases, include proper language use, and be educational. Students were encouraged to incorporate creative elements, such as music, text overlays, and transitions, to make their videos engaging. Once the videos were completed, each group presented their edited short video to the class. The students participated in a peer review session, where they provided constructive

feedback on each group's video, focusing on cultural accuracy, language use, and creativity. The role of the teacher was very important at that part of the lesson because she guided the discussion, highlighting key points and providing additional insights. To wrap up the lesson, students were asked to consider what they learned about cultural diversity and media representation, and how the critical thinking skills they utilized in this exercise could be applied to other areas of their studies and everyday life. As a result of this contemplation, students wrote a brief reflection on the importance of accurate cultural representation in the media.

This lesson provided students learning English as a foreign language with several significant educational benefits. By integrating TikTok video editing tasks into the curriculum, students were encouraged to engage deeply with cultural diversity and media representation. The exercise fostered critical thinking skills as students analyzed and identified cultural stereotypes, biases, and inaccuracies in media content. Through group collaboration and the creation of culturally accurate and educational videos, students not only improved their language proficiency but also developed a more nuanced understanding of different cultural contexts. The peer review sessions further enhanced their analytical abilities and creativity, as they provided and received constructive feedback focused on cultural accuracy, language use, and creative expression.

Moreover, the reflection activity at the end of the lesson enabled students to internalize the importance of accurate cultural representation in media. They also considered the broader applications of their critical thinking skills in both their academic pursuits and everyday lives. Overall, this lesson successfully combined language learning with critical media literacy, providing a holistic approach to developing both linguistic and cognitive skills in students.

Research has shown that TikTok can be an effective medium for teaching speaking skills, aligning well with students' interests and learning preferences. Its use in educational settings, highlighting its suitability and high quality in terms of content and media application[21]. This underscores the potential of TikTok videos as valuable supplementary sources of authentic materials for students learning English as a foreign language when used appropriately. They not only provide real-life language exposure but also promote critical thinking and engagement, thereby supporting various speech activities and making learning a shared and ongoing activity that extends beyond the classroom.

Educators should remember to use TikTok videos as a supplementary tool, not as primary material. If necessary, they may provide additional

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[21] Agting O., Suhartatik S., Pusparini I. The challenges of using Tik-Tok media in ELT. *Journey: Journal of English Language and Pedagogy.* 2022. 5(1). P. 24–29.

explanations or clarifications to correct any inaccuracies or to clarify colloquialisms and slang that may confuse or mislead students.

When using sociocultural videos with humorous content, the teacher should provide commentary and explanations about the traditions, customs, and events related to the joke in the video. The teacher's commentary can not only enrich their general knowledge of the target language country, but also make the learning process more enjoyable by focusing students' attention on the material and enhancing group interaction and communication.

Video as a source of authentic material and an effective learning tool has long been used in teaching. Thus, by giving students the opportunity to comment on and edit TikTok videos, the teacher engages students in a productive and creative learning process, which, along with the visual component, contributes to positive changes in the organization of lessons. This approach can enhance student motivation and participation, making learning more interactive and enjoyable. Additionally, it allows students to develop digital literacy skills, which are increasingly important in the modern world. By integrating video editing tasks, teachers can also encourage critical thinking and collaborative learning, further enriching the educational experience.

By utilizing a diverse array of authentic materials, educators can provide philology students with a comprehensive and immersive learning experience that not only enhances their language skills but also deepens their cultural understanding and critical thinking abilities.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, while the core value of authentic materials has always been recognized, the advent of digital platforms like TikTok has revolutionized their application in language education, as the approaches to their use and the types of materials considered authentic have evolved, reflecting broader trends in educational theory and the availability of new technologies.

For philology students, in particular, the use of authentic materials is increasingly seen as essential for a deep, contextual understanding of language and culture. In an era dominated by graphical interfaces, most data is displayed on computer screens. Educators, however, are experimenting with innovative formats such as TikTok and podcasts, recognizing their didactic potential for relevance and authenticity. One of the challenges facing educators today is adapting to the changing ways in which content is consumed. Therefore, teachers of English as a foreign language consider TikTok and podcasts as multifunctional supplementary sources of authentic materials. These platforms can be used to develop various speech activities in English language teaching, including reading, speaking, writing, listening

and interacting with their audience. This ease of access and the ability to listen to educational content on-demand makes podcasts (TikTok) a highly flexible and convenient learning tool[22].

The integration of authentic materials in English language teaching, driven by technological advancements, has significantly evolved over the past decades. These materials provide learners with invaluable exposure to real-life language usage, enhancing linguistic competence and cultural understanding. Digital platforms like YouTube and TikTok have expanded the accessibility and variety of authentic materials, making them an essential component of modern language education. Despite the challenges, such as the need for careful selection and adaptation, the benefits of using authentic materials–ranging from increased learner engagement to improved language proficiency–underscore their importance in preparing students for real-world communication. The empirical evidence from the pedagogical experiment at SUTE further validates the effectiveness of incorporating digital authentic materials into the curriculum, demonstrating improved learning outcomes and heightened student motivation. Moving forward, educators must continue to harness the potential of these resources, adapting to technological advancements to create more dynamic and effective language learning environments.

SUMMARY

The digital age has introduced a plethora of new media formats that serve as valuable resources for engaging with real-world language and culture. This has expanded the scope of authentic materials and thereby significantly broadened the concept of 'authentic materials' in language learning and philology. Before the rise of the internet, authentic materials were primarily confined to print media, broadcasts, and recorded audio. Now, digital platforms provide a vast array of formats, from blogs and podcasts to social media posts and TikTok videos. This variety caters to different learning styles and interests, making language learning more accessible and engaging not only for future philologists. Modern authentic materials often combine text, audio, and video, catering to various learning preferences and helping to develop a range of linguistic skills. For example, podcasts can improve listening comprehension, while TikTok videos can enhance understanding of non-verbal cues and colloquial language.

Technology has democratized access to authentic materials. Learners no longer need to be in a specific locale to access materials in the target

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[22] Campbell G. There's something in the Air: Podcasting in Education. *Educause review*. 2005. Vol. 40. № 6 (November/December 2005). P. 32–47. URL: There's Something in the Air: Podcasting in Education | EDUCAUSE Review (Last accessed: 10.05.2024).

language. From podcasts produced in one country to YouTube channels from another, students can access diverse content from around the globe, enhancing their understanding of regional dialects, accents, and cultural nuances. Digital platforms often allow for interactivity, whether through commenting on blog posts, participating in forum discussions, or engaging with content creators on social media. This interaction provides a more dynamic and participative learning experience than traditional materials.

The internet allows learners to tailor their exposure to authentic materials according to their interests, proficiency level, and learning goals. Whether it's following a science podcast for specialized vocabulary or a travel vlogger for cultural insights, learners can personalize their learning journey.

In summary, technology has not only expanded the definition of authentic materials but also transformed how we access, interact with, and learn from them, making language learning more relevant, engaging, and aligned with how language is used in real-world digital contexts. TikTok is an excellent example for illustrating the challenges and prospects of intercultural communication in the era of digital transformation. Its use allows for a deep dive into how language and culture intersect in the digital environment and how this affects the perception and understanding between people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

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