

The Importance of Using Authentic Materials in Prospective Foreign Language Teacher Training

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Abstract: Constructivist learning approach asserts that the individual constructs information actively and in a way peculiar to himself or herself interacting with his or her environment rather than just waiting for the information to be transmitted to him or her directly. In constructivist learning environments, students should interact with authentic activities and materials representing the real life. As the authentic learning environments include the problems and complexity present in real life, they provide the students with real life experiences. Moreover, students work cooperatively and communicatively with friends, parents or more advanced others, such as teachers, in school and non-school settings. Consequently, they continue learning both in and outside school. Authentic materials, if used properly in authentic learning environments, can have lots of uses in foreign language teaching though they are not specifically designed to teach a foreign language. For this reason, foreign language teachers should act as a guide for the students to interact with the authentic materials in constructivist learning environments. In addition, learning environments in which authentic materials are used should be organized when training prospective foreign language teachers to set an example for the teachers of the future to use authentic materials in their own classrooms. In that way, prospective teachers will have a chance to see and experience, themselves, the advantages of these materials and points to consider when using them. The aim of the present study is to focus on the importance and the uses of authentic materials in foreign language teacher training program and to come up with some suggestions concerning the matter. As a result of the literature review done, it was found out that using authentic materials in foreign language teacher training program has an important role in their making use of such materials in their future professional lives.

Key words: Foreign language teaching, teacher training, constructivism, authentic learning, authentic material

INTRODUCTION

The necessity to equip individuals with the modern qualifications today makes it compulsory to increase the quality of education presented to the students. To meet this need, more creative, different and effective teaching-learning strategies must be used in and out of class. One way of achieving better understanding is to create an authentic learning environment and to use authentic materials in class. Newmann and Wehlage (1993) say that the more there is a connection to the real world students live in, the more a lesson gains authenticity. For this reason, it is crucial that authentic learning environments be organized in pre-service teacher training and prospective teachers be educated in authentic environments which have a connection to the real world and in which they have a chance to experience using authentic materials.

The aim of this study is to investigate how authentic materials can be used in the prospective foreign language teacher training and to present the advantages of using these materials in this process. In respect of this aim, first, the characteristics of authentic learning environments are pointed out and then, the uses of authentic materials in general and how these materials can be used when educating the prospective foreign language teachers in specific are discussed. Lastly, some suggestions related to their use in the teacher training program are made.

CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND AUTHENTIC LEARNING

There are multiple views about learning and learning environments each of which certainly has a lot to contribute to learning. One of the learning-related

approaches stressed a lot recently is constructivism. According to constructivist approach, learning is constructed by the learner in an active, meaningful, cooperative and authentic way. In constructivist learning environments, learner should take the responsibility of his or her own learning and cooperate with the other individuals. The student is not responsible for storing the presented information in his or her memory, but for unifying information with his or her background knowledge meaningfully (Gagnon and Collay, 2000). As Tynjälä (1999) states, in constructivist learning the student does not need to memorize or reproduce information. He describes the acquisition of knowledge as a building process in which individuals actively construct and reconstruct their own conceptions.

When thought at a basic level, teaching is viewed on two extremes: either as knowledge transmission or as assisting the students to discover knowledge and facilitating this discovery. That is, teacher is either 'the sage on the stage' or 'the guide on the side' (Underhill, 2006). While, the former puts the teacher in the center of the teaching environment, the latter puts the learner in the center of the learning environment. When viewed from a constructivist perspective, the teacher's roles as a guide, a facilitator and a supporter for the students to construct knowledge are in the forefront. In constructivist learning environments, information is not learned via the transfer from the teacher and the teacher's aim is not to cover the material, but to help the students to make sense out of out of the presented material by giving them some tasks that facilitate this process. Moreover, each student constructs information actively based on his or her background knowledge and in a way peculiar to himself or herself. In this respect, a constructivist teacher should organize activities suitable for the individual, encourage cooperation and organize the learning environments in which opinions can be expressed and questions can be asked without any hesitation (Brooks and Brooks, 1999). Furthermore, one of the principles that a teacher should take into consideration when planning constructivist teaching is to give place to real situations and real objects as much as possible (Acikgoz, 2002).

According to the constructivist approach, learning situations, environments, skills, content and tasks must be real-like and authentic and must represent the complexity of the real world. To show this complexity, primary sources must be used (Murphy, 1997). Authentic materials used in the constructivist environments enlighten a matter from various perspectives and give the learner a chance to acquire information about life (Terhart, 2003). In such an environment, each individual constructs information himself or herself rather than

waiting passively for the information to be transmitted to them from the book or the teacher. So, as Isman *et al.* (2005) says emphasis is not on the teacher, but on the student. Students educated in a constructivist environment should be encouraged to find solutions for the problems, cooperate with the other learners or experts, test their hypotheses, review their thoughts and lastly come up with the best solution they can in real life contexts (Can, 2004). In that way, authentic learning takes place as in real life.

One of the views which constructivists believe to be the most effective way for students to acquire knowledge is authentic learning in authentic learning environments which foster learning. Authentic learning is an approach to learning in which students work on realistic problems, participate in activities that solve real-life problems, or create products that have real-life purposes (<http://www.ndtwt.org/Blackboard/P2SST2/authenticlearning.htm>). So, it can be said that authentic learning has four main characteristics (Ozkan, 2001):

- Structuring information completing some tasks.
- Relating learning to students' real lives and experiences.
- Keeping on learning in non-school settings such as home, workplace etc.
- Cooperation and communication.

Thus, it can be inferred that authentic learning leads to student creativity, discovery, awareness and development in and outside the classroom. Students not only learn from the teachers in class, but also from the other teachers and students, friends or parents in that way. So, students cannot be passive in authentic learning environments. That is, social interactions with the other people and various authentic materials are a crucial part of learning process. Moreover, as Akar and Yildirim (2000) state, it is important that students participate in the decision making process actively for a lesson to be authentic.

Students in the authentic learning process can carry out real-life activities. The activities which are the usual practices of a culture and which are alike what actual practitioners of that culture do are authentic activities, as defined by Taylor *et al.* (2004). In other words, the activities which direct the students to real-life contexts and tasks can be defined as authentic activities (Ozkan, 2001). If learning activities are authentic, students understand the importance of what they are learning as the tasks mirror real-life experiences. Moreover, they learn to think critically and creatively, analyze information, express ideas, come up with logical conclusions and solutions and cooperate with others when trying to

explore, discover, discuss and construct concepts doing the authentic activities. Then, the goal of authentic learning is to help students relate and apply their in-class learning to what they have learned in the world (<http://www.ndtw.org/Blackboard/P2SST2/authenticlearning.htm>). Thus, it can be said that authentic activities prepare students to be lifelong learners (Taylor *et al.*, 2004).

The above mentioned goal can be achieved better if learning takes place in an authentic learning environment as it provides a context which reflects the way knowledge and skills will be used in real life. This environment-be it a physical or a virtual one-resembles the real world with its complexities, limitations, options and possibilities also present in real life and provides a context to an authentic task. When learned in such an environment, the information will be more meaningful and long-lasting for the students. Furthermore, they will be motivated and stimulated to develop competencies for their future professional or daily lives (Herrington and Herrington, 2005). Authentic materials used in such a learning environment are not prepared specifically to be used in class, but they are the materials already existing in real life so they reflect real life and its cultural values. For instance, a cartoon, a photograph or a song sung in a festival, news or articles in magazines or newspapers or a politician's speech on TV can be brought into class to be used for instructional purposes. In the present age in which technology is developing very fast, modern technology such as computer, internet, or CD Rom make it easier to access authentic learning materials. Such technological media as databases, information banks, computer conferences, or multimedia/hypermedia provide the students with multi-perspectives. Moreover, they enable the students to be active, develop their higher-order thinking skills and to get information in the expertise level (Tezci and Gurol, 2001). As well as making use of authentic learning materials in various courses, they can be used as effective learning tools in foreign language teaching (Karaduman, 1990).

USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

One of the most challenging tasks language teachers face is about how to motivate the students to learn, stimulate their imagination and capture and maintain interest. One way of accomplishing this can be supplementing the course book with some authentic materials (<http://www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio.pdf>). For example, in English language classes, TV programs broadcasted in English can be used as authentic

materials (Boran, 1999). In that way, students can have the chance to enjoy learning a foreign language. Authentic materials as spoken or written language data produced in the course of genuine communication, not specifically for language teaching (<http://www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio.pdf>). So, it can be inferred that they are created not for language teachers, or language teaching, but for the native speakers of that language.

Lots of authentic materials can be made use of in foreign language teaching. These materials can be classified depending on their characteristics. Authentic materials into four categories (<http://www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio.pdf>):

- Authentic Listening-Viewing Materials: Songs, documentaries, radio and TV ads, or broadcasts, quiz shows, cartoons, movies, soap operas, sit-coms, professionally audio-taped short stories and novels, web pages.
- Authentic Visual Materials: Photographs, paintings, postcards, pictures, stamps, stick-figure drawings, wordless street signs, wordless picture books, posters.
- Authentic Printed Materials: Newspaper articles, song lyrics, restaurant menus, tourist information brochures, leaflets, receipts.
- Realia (Real Objects) Used in EFL-ESL Classrooms: Masks, dolls, puppets, etc.

As seen above, though lots of authentic materials are mentioned, it must be paid attention to their choice and use. For example, for listening comprehension activities authentic materials can be used in foreign language classes (Karaduman, 1990). However, the materials used in one environment may not work to realize another aim. To develop the students' four language skills, sometimes auditory, sometimes visual or tactile authentic materials can be used in class using active teaching techniques taking the objectives of the lesson into consideration. When used properly in the learning environment, authentic materials may have a lot of gains both for teachers and students.

THE ADVANTAGES OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Using authentic materials in language learning environments has lots of advantages. Firstly, they engage both the learners' and teacher's attention in the language being taught. They have a high interest value because of their relevance to the real world keeping the students

informed about what is happening in the world they live. So, it can be said that they have an intrinsic educational value (Martinez, 2002). The studies done on authentic materials show that these materials are very influential in increasing the students' motivation and teaching a foreign language (Akar and Yildirim, 2000). Authentic activities that are realized in constructivist learning environments with the active participation of the students enable them to become the thinkers and problem solvers of today and the future. They provide the teachers with the necessary linguistic and structural basis for them to form a highly qualified teaching atmosphere (Taylor *et al.*, 2004).

Authentic materials have at least three layers of learning embedded within them: language (the structure and vocabulary), cultural insights (cultural norms and values of the community this language is used) and practical application (using the item in the way it was intended) (Spelleri, 2002). These layers motivate the students intrinsically because students have the chance to enjoy both learning the language and the culture where this language is spoken and putting what they have learned into practice as used in real world. Saito (1994) say that in that way, they can understand the value of learning a language.

An authentic material is a way to contextualize language learning (<http://www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio.pdf>). When used in class, students get the chance to read, rehearse, listen to, practice, use and learn the language via the materials that they can see, examine, touch and listen to. They can enjoy learning about the museums in London watching a related documentary, watching their favorite cartoon in English, following the lyrics of their favorite song, viewing the photographs of famous places in America, participating in a quiz show etc. without going to the country where the language they learn is spoken.

Authentic materials are available everywhere. A vast amount of materials can be accessed on the net. Teacher can take these materials to the class, or integrating the technology into the class, he or she can cooperate with the students to access them in class on the net. Also, he or she can collect small pieces of materials like travel guides or brochures, menus, train tickets, receipts, postcards, or newspaper articles when traveling. Moreover, newspapers and magazines in English are available in the newsagent's and music CDs, movies, documentaries in the book and music stores. In that way, teacher can enrich his or her class with the materials rich in content.

Books, articles, newspapers and so on include a variety of text types and language styles; however, it is

difficult to find this variety in conventional teaching materials, particularly in textbooks, which include only the proper and fluent language (Martinez, 2002). Providing the students with a variety of authentic reading materials will encourage them to read and enjoy reading. Also, the same material can be used several times for different purposes. To illustrate, an authentic text-a dialogue between a teacher and a student or a husband and a wife- can be accompanied with a listening task after being used as a reading material for the students to become familiar with the pronunciation and intonation of native speakers. Such authentic materials give the students a chance to be aware of various accents used by different English speakers living in different English speaking countries and become familiar with these accents instead of just listening to the proper English in the textbooks.

POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

For the authentic materials to be effective, they should not be chosen randomly. There must be an aim in using them and the chosen materials should meet the objectives of the lesson. Similarly, for the learners to enjoy dealing with the authentic materials, it should be paid attention to whether they are appropriate to the learners' age, language level, interests, needs, expectations and goals. Choosing and using authentic materials haphazardly is detrimental rather than advantageous. In authentic tasks, which enable meaningful learning, students' maturity and skills and the content must be taken into consideration. Shortly, a material should not be used only for the reason that it is real, but also the students' level and interests must be considered.

Spelleri (2002) states that the level of language complexity must be just slightly beyond the learners current ability. If they are too complex for the learners, rather than increasing motivation, awareness, curiosity to learn, development and so on, they can work the other way. For example, if a text about the parts of a car is given to young learners, it will not be appropriate not only for the learners' age or interests, but also for their language level because that kind of a text would include terms that the learners would most probably be unfamiliar with. Or it would not be suitable to give materials about football to the learners who aim at practicing business English. In short, the materials should match the learners' goals and expectations and should contribute to their language development. Thus, it can be said that a teacher should be aware of different kinds of authentic materials, what these materials can offer and

how he or she can make use of them in the best way to develop the students' foreign language skills.

Everything boils down to comprehensibility. If the input is not comprehended, regardless of how applicable and adaptable it is, it appears to serve no greater purpose to the learner than does language that is never heard (Spelleri, 2002). The teacher should not expect the students to understand everything at once since these materials are prepared for native speakers rather than language learners or teachers. Bayir (2000) complains that even the advanced students have difficulty in understanding the authentic materials since they are used to dealing with the texts written for learners. He also adds that learners have difficulty in relating these materials with their life. As the focus of the authentic materials is the message, rather than the structure, the teacher can take on the role of an interpreter between the authentic material and the learner and can make use of paraphrasing, synonyms, quick sketches, miming and pictures to get the message across and for the learners to comprehend the material better (Spelleri, 2002). So, it is essential that a teacher develop his or her skills in using authentic materials and make them a part of their teaching and teaching environment.

Guariento and Morley (2001) claim that authentic materials can be used at post-intermediate level, but at lower levels, they lead to de-motivation, confusion and frustration. However, according to the findings of the survey conducted by Kilickaya (2004), learners enjoy handling authentic materials as they enable them to interact with the language used in real life, but they need to be provided with pedagogical support when dealing with these materials. Shepherd says that at lower levels, such materials as leaflets, timetables, menus, short headline type reports, or short news broadcasts can be used and the task should be simple (http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/resources/authentic_materials.shtml). Also, it is important to teach the necessary vocabulary beforehand to prevent frustration and panic. At more intermediate levels, longer articles, 4 or 5 min TV or radio news reports, or even whole TV programs (as long as the copyright agreements allow it) can be included in the lesson. Though the intermediate level learners should be able to deal with unknown vocabulary to some extent, it is still important to pre-teach them the words they do not know. At an advanced level, students should be able to use some tactics to deal with the unknown words, but again the teacher can provide the students with a few quick definitions when they feel the need working on the material.

The authentic materials should be up-to-date. If so, learners will have a chance to transfer their existing

knowledge from their mother tongue to the foreign language being learned when dealing with various materials in the foreign language. In that way, the material will be more meaningful and easier to understand rather than just being a mean for achieving school success. Also, the possibility of the learners to enjoy the material, learn a foreign language and expand their world knowledge will increase. If the students interact with the authentic materials with interest and without having difficulty, their motivation for learning a foreign language will increase and they can participate in the authentic learning environments actively. In a research, it was found out that the use of authentic materials in class with a constructivist approach is meaningful and useful in increasing the students' motivation and developing the reading skills (Akar and Yildirim, 2000). The findings of another study carried out by Tynjälä (1999) show that the learning outcomes produced in a constructivist environment correspond to the demands of working life. Most of the students in the constructivist group in this study stated that they acquired an ability to put knowledge into practice and their thinking and communication skills developed. That is, their writing became more fluent and they learned to act as a member of a team and learned to explain their opinions. In addition, they became more critical thinkers and more aware of various scientific ways to explaining phenomena.

Rogers and Medley (1988) and Karaduman (1990) point out the importance of activities accompanying the materials and say that 'appropriateness' of the task should be taken into consideration before using the authentic material in class. By the concept of 'appropriateness', they mean appropriateness of text, appropriateness of task and appropriateness of sequence. Firstly, texts should be accessible to learners and appropriate for the task and learners' language level. Secondly, task should be suitable for the students' cognitive and linguistic competence. Lastly, tasks and the steps of a task should be staged properly. Similarly, the questions accompanying the text must be well constructed to give the learners a chance to practice English, to help them gain confidence in using the language, expose the learners to cultural norms of that language and to help them develop their ability to find related information quickly (Kelly *et al.*, 2002).

When authentic materials are used taking the above mentioned rules into consideration, they will be beneficial for the students at all levels. One of the important points in creating authentic learning environments is the teacher's ability to use authentic materials in a way that the students can benefit from them. For this reason, in teacher training programs it is crucial to give importance

to providing the prospective teachers with sufficient information about when and how to use authentic materials.

USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS

The situations in which we learn and the way we learn influence what is learned and how it is transferred to new situations (Tynjälä, 1999). If, in the education process, prospective foreign language teachers are provided with the opportunities to interact with the problems faced in real life, it will be easier for them to adapt and transfer their knowledge to similar areas or situations. The use of authentic materials in foreign language teacher training programs is useful both for developing the prospective teachers' foreign language skills and developing knowledge related to teaching profession adapting to real learning environments.

Instruction is learner-centered in a constructivist process (Taylor *et al.*, 2004). That is, knowledge is constructed by the learner with his or her active engagement in the learning process which is supported by meaningful and authentic tasks so learning is controlled by the learner himself or herself. In this process, both students and teachers learn to construct knowledge rather than just receive it. So, both the constructivist learning theory and its practices should be integrated into higher education staff development program (Tynjälä, 1999) both for the development of lecturers, particularly teacher educators and students.

As transfer and reconstruction of information are important in constructivist approach, it is essential that a learner transfer and apply the pre-learned information to new situations (Demirel, 2006). In foreign language teacher training programs, in Classroom Management course for example, such authentic materials as a newspaper news about teacher-student interaction, or a real TV news about a discussion between a teacher and the principle of the school, lesson plans prepared by foreign language teachers, or recorded materials showing the foreign language teachers' in-class behaviors can be examined in classroom environment. Using such materials in class is useful for the development of the prospective teachers' teaching skills.

The problems faced in real life are authentic problems and according to constructivist teaching, they enable students participate in the lesson if used in class. However, one must bear in mind that interesting activities must be planned for the class besides authentic problems. Generally, the activities which involve contrasts, unexpected surprises and emotional intensities are

interesting for the students (Saban, 2000). Authentic learning environments that prospective teachers can interact need using the authentic materials with active teaching methods and techniques. For example, discussion, brainstorming, or group-work can be done about the problems in a letter that is really written by an English teacher to the parents of a student. Later, students can be asked some such questions as 'How would you reply this letter if you were the parent of that student?' or 'What kind of a letter would you write to the parents if you were the teacher?' and using the active teaching techniques, students can be directed to making some comments, analyses, or evaluations on the covered material. In that way, prospective teachers' motivation and participation in the class increases. Moreover, the prospective teachers who interact with authentic materials in teacher training programs can use such materials when they start teaching.

Teacher educators should demonstrate the model behaviors regarding the teaching strategies to the prospective teachers (Loughran, 1997). Instead of just telling the constructivist activities, it is critical that teacher educators set a model for the prospective teachers to teach student-centered teaching strategies (Goubeaud and Yan, 2004). Setting the good examples as a model to the prospective teachers help them acquire the theory and teacher competences and see both the theory and its application (Casas, 2004). So, to teach prospective foreign language teachers how to use the authentic materials, sample applications must be done in teacher training programs.

By creating authentic learning environments in Foreign Language Teaching courses, prospective teachers can be provided with opportunities to acquire foreign language information and skills effectively. Moreover, in the courses regarding the teaching profession, some activities to enrich the students knowledge on and develop their skills for the use of authentic materials can be done with a constructivist point of view. Authentic learning environment should be as complicated as the real world for the students to gain experience about it. In such an environment, learning takes place by creating the learning processes and content taking the individual competences into account (Terhart, 2003).

Kesal and Aksu (2005) state that the prospective teachers who are educated in a constructivist learning environment have the chance to experience teaching, to observe and reflect both on their own and other prospective teachers' teaching and also put their theoretical knowledge into practice in that way. For example, in English Language Teaching Methodology

course, prospective teachers can design a session in which authentic materials are made use of and can make a micro-teaching practice in class. In this process, they can search the suitable or relevant authentic materials, analyze and evaluate them and decide on which one(s) to use in which class. Lecturers should guide the prospective teachers for planning and applying such a session. Besides the lecturers' support, it is important that prospective foreign language teachers be given the opportunity to make their choices and construct their knowledge and skills themselves. In that way, prospective teachers are given a chance to experience creating an authentic learning environment and observe the other learning environments that the other prospective teachers created. This enables them to learn the ways for developing authentic materials themselves and for developing their skill for using these materials.

One of the principles that a teacher should take into consideration to be able to create a constructivist learning environment is to design authentic learning tasks and to reflect the complexity of real life to realize meaningful learning. In that way, students are provided with a chance to cope with real life problems (Yurdakul, 2005). While, the prospective teachers learn by memorizing in a teacher-centered traditional learning environment, they learn by interacting with the authentic materials in a student-centered constructivist learning environments. So, to prospective English teachers, some tasks that will enable them to think like the English or behave like an English teacher must be given.

It is important that the prospective teachers educated in a constructivist learning environment where authentic materials are used bear the characteristics of a constructivist teacher as Brooks and Brooks (1999) point out: they should try to understand the students' viewpoints and value them. They should design the classes in a way to challenge students' prejudices. They should be aware of the fact that students must see the relevance between the learned material and the curriculum.

Freda encapsulates the use of authentic materials for language learning as 'the 3 c's', culture, currency and challenge. That is, authentic texts include and represent the culture of the people speaking the target language, offer up-to-date subjects and current language and are internally more challenging. So, for prospective English teachers to understand the culture of the society the language of which they learn and will teach in the future and to be aware of the current events and the language used by its people, it is important that challenging authentic texts are used when educating them.

Though, it is easy for a teacher to access authentic materials, he or she may not prefer to use them in class all

the time. It is important that the prospective teachers get the idea that they can support their teaching materials with authentic materials. Prospective teachers should be educated in the environments where they can come up with creative teaching strategies, develop the skills to be aware of the students with different learning needs and strategies and choose the teaching materials and activities accordingly when they become teachers.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

One way of making foreign language teaching effective is to create authentic learning environments with a constructivist approach. Authentic learning environments have the students experience the real life events or situations. In these environments, students interact with the authentic materials and get the chance to comprehend the learned foreign language better and to use it as in real life.

In foreign language teaching a variety of authentic materials can be used. The materials which can be obtained from various resources can attract students' attention and increase their motivation towards learning a foreign language. As these materials connect the students to the social world and enable them to put their theoretical knowledge into practice, they open a way for positive transfer of learning. So, authentic materials can increase the quality of foreign language teaching. However, these materials should be chosen and used taking the instructional objectives and student characteristics into account. For example, having the beginner level language learners listen to English radio broadcast may decrease their motivation as they may have difficulty in understanding it. Similarly, asking the students who are not interested in politics to examine an article on politics written in English may arouse negative feelings in them. At this point, foreign language teachers have important roles for not using any authentic material randomly.

The competency level of foreign language teachers in using authentic materials is dependent on the education they have taken. For this reason, in foreign language teacher training programs, learning environments in which authentic materials are used must be organized. However, it is crucial that teacher educators show the model behaviors to the prospective teachers in this process. Prospective teachers must be given the opportunities to choose the authentic materials and experience active learning using the materials in various learning situations. Students can gain experience in using these materials both in the classroom environment in various courses at the faculty and at the practice schools. For example, a

prospective teacher can bring a fairy tale into the classroom or can evaluate the teacher-student relationship in a film when teaching the simple present tense. The use of authentic materials in various courses in teacher training programs develops students' competences regarding when and how to use these materials. If the prospective foreign language teachers are educated in authentic learning environments with authentic materials, it becomes more probable that they create such environments and use that kind of materials when they start teaching. In this respect, the following suggestions can be made:

- It should be given importance to the use of authentic materials in foreign language teacher training programs. For this, the necessary materials, tools and technological facilities should be supplied.
- Prospective foreign language teachers should be encouraged to plan constructivist learning environments and practice using authentic materials in these environments.
- Various researches can be conducted to examine the influences of using authentic materials in prospective foreign language teacher training programs with respect to various variables.
- Using one or several authentic materials, comparative researches can be conducted between the foreign language teacher training and the other training programs.
- The influences of authentic materials together with various teaching methods on learning can be examined. This study may encourage the teachers or teacher educators to use authentic materials in their teaching environments to arouse the students' interest and curiosity for the lesson and to facilitate their learning.

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