論　文

To Use or Not to Use: Authentic Materials in a Reading/Writing Lesson; A Study

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要　旨

本論文は英語の授業に実物の教材の使用についての是か非かを述べる。実物の教材はどういうものなのか，また多くの学者や講師などの実物の教材の実用性に対する意見を考察する。更にスキーマなどの認識学習，また思考と知識の処理の仕方の定義と概念も説明する。このような概念や学者の意見がEFLの授業に実用的に執行され，その過程や結果が詳細に述べられる。本論文中，実物の教材の効果も考察される。

キーワード：authentic materials（実物の教材），non-authentic materials（実物でない教材），schemata（スキーマ），top-down processing（トップダウン処理），bottom-up processing（ボトムアップ処理），ESL/EFL, language acquisition（言語習得），SLA（第二言語の習得），second language learning（第二言語の学習），TESOL

Abstract

This paper studies the use of authentic materials in the classroom. It introduces the concepts of what defines authentic materials, and presents various points of view of researchers, teachers and academics on their usefulness. In addition, it defines and illustrates cognitive learning concepts such as schema and ways of processing thought

and knowledge. These concepts and points of view are practically applied to an EFL class, and the process and results are discussed. The effect of using authentic materials is also explored throughout.

Keywords: authentic materials, non-authentic materials, schemata, top-down processing, bottom-up processing, ESL/EFL, language acquisition, SLA, second language learning, TESOL

Authentic materials come in many shapes and sizes. Within the ESL/EFL field, there is no one criteria for deciding just what defines material as authentic (for differing views, see, Fanselow & Crymes, 1976; Hadley, 2001; Nunan, 1989, Morrow, 1977, Widdowson, 1978; Breen, 1985 as cited in Taylor, 1994; Day & Bamford, 1998). Nor is there a clear consensus on the actual benefit to the learner (Fanselow & Crymes, 1976; Day & Bamford, 1998). Many writers hold the viewpoint that authentic and simplified texts work in conjunction with one another to enhance learner development, and that *simplified texts* and *simplified originals* are not without authenticity (Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 59). Hadley (2001, p. 190) writes that "simulated authentic" (materials pedagogically derived or created with the intent of providing realistic situations of communication) *and* "unmodified authentic" (communicative material not specifically designed for language learning purposes) are both of use in aiding student comprehension. This writer holds the same position.

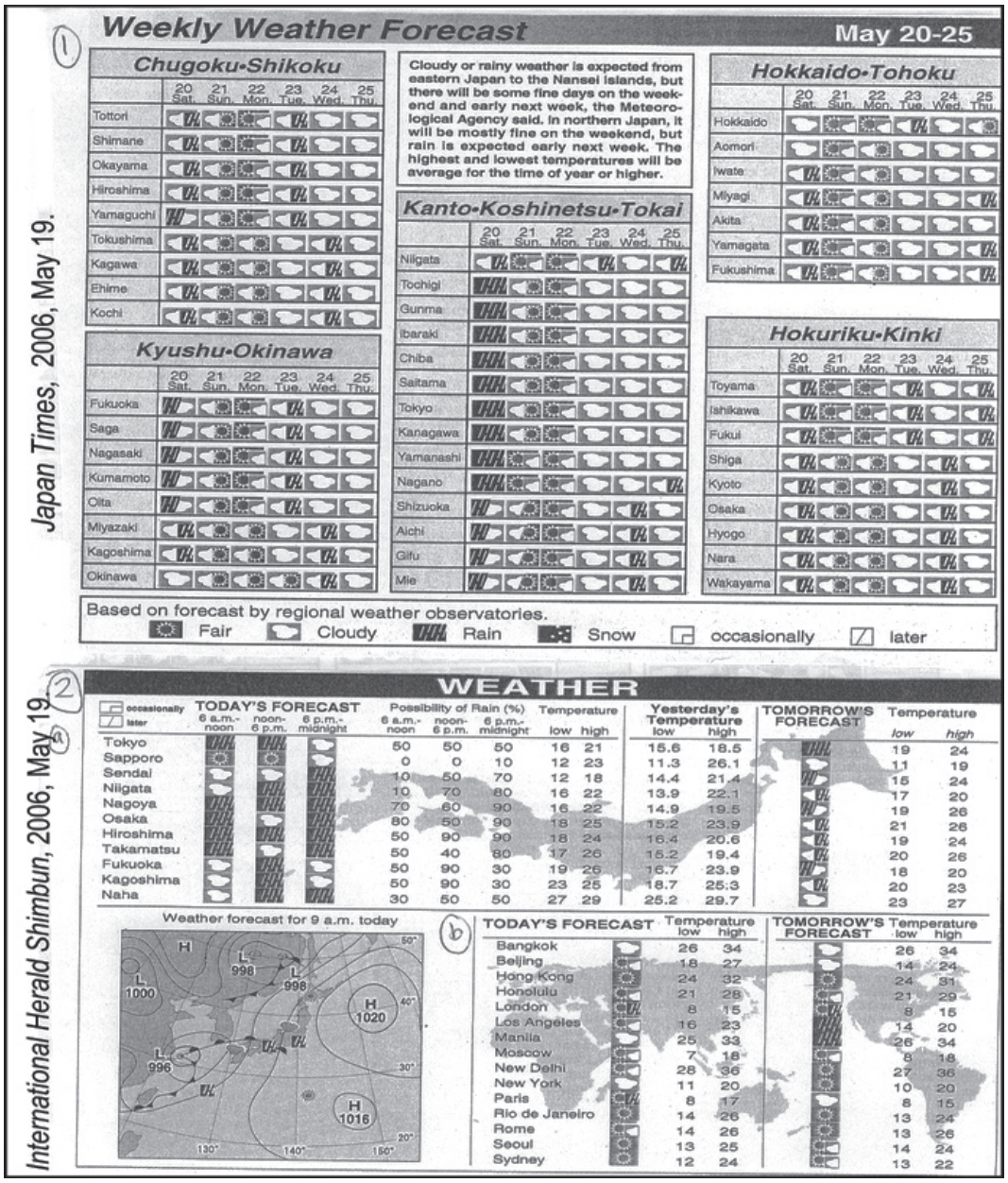
In 2006, two reading and two writing lessons centred on the use of authentic materials in an EFL Japanese tertiary classroom were developed by the author of this paper[(1)]. Within the four activities, unmodified authentic material, simulated authentic material, and simplified original material (see above) were used. This paper will focus on the use of one of the activities designed, which utilised unmodified authentic material. The authentic material used can be seen below, and following this, the worksheet given to the students for the activity, a copy of the answers, and samples of student language use pertaining to the activity. Please refer to these throughout the reading of this text. How the materials should ideally be used, how they were used, and reasons for the choice of activities made to complement the material chosen will be explored. There is also a discussion of student interaction

with the material, especially focussing on the role of authenticity in relation to developing reading and writing skills.

In addition, within reading comprehension (which can overflow into writing comprehension), "awakening" the appropriate schemata is seen as particularly important, and authentic materials can be well-suited to encouraging this. Therefore, this paper will also focus on an explanation of this concept (after the teaching materials). Further aspects of the schemata-theory, such as the interaction of "top-down" and "bottom-up" processing, and the cyclical nature of a reader's comprehension of a text (and it can be argued, a writer's process of production) (Hadley, 2001, pp. 323–329; Taylor, 1976, p. 317), will be discussed within the later sections

1. The Authentic Materials

The students who participated in this activity were pre-intermediate to lower-intermediate Japanese learners of English studying at Kanagawa University, Kanagawa. The objectives of the lesson were reading for specific information to introduce and consolidate weather vocabulary/knowledge and future forms, leading to the writing of a forecast using some future forms and some of the vocabulary learnt or already known. Weather maps and charts from *Japan Times*, 2006, Friday, May 19, and *International Herald Shimbun*, 2006, Friday, May 19 were used.



Weekly Weather Forecast

May 20-25

Japan Times, 2006, May 19.

Chugoku・Shikoku

	20 Sat.	21 Sun.	22 Mon.	23 Tue.	24 Wed.	25 Thu.
Tottori						
Shimane						
Okayama						
Hiroshima						
Yamaguchi						
Tokushima						
Kagawa						
Ehime						
Kochi						

Kyushu・Okinawa

	20 Sat.	21 Sun.	22 Mon.	23 Tue.	24 Wed.	25 Thu.
Fukuoka						
Saga						
Nagasaki						
Kumamoto						
Oita						
Miyazaki						
Kagoshima						
Okinawa						

Cloudy or rainy weather is expected from eastern Japan to the Nansei islands, but there will be some fine days on the weekend and early next week, the Meteorological Agency said. In northern Japan, it will be mostly fine on the weekend, but rain is expected early next week. The highest and lowest temperatures will be average for the time of year or higher.

Kanto・Koshinetsu・Tokai

	20 Sat.	21 Sun.	22 Mon.	23 Tue.	24 Wed.	25 Thu.
Niigata						
Tochigi						
Gunma						
Ibaraki						
Chiba						
Saitama						
Tokyo						
Kanagawa						
Yamanashi						
Nagano						
Shizuoka						
Aichi						
Gifu						
Mie						

Hokkaido・Tohoku

	20 Sat.	21 Sun.	22 Mon.	23 Tue.	24 Wed.	25 Thu.
Hokkaido						
Aomori						
Iwate						
Miyagi						
Akita						
Yamagata						
Fukushima						

Hokuriku・Kinki

	20 Sat.	21 Sun.	22 Mon.	23 Tue.	24 Wed.	25 Thu.
Toyama						
Ishikawa						
Fukui						
Shiga						
Kyoto						
Osaka						
Hyogo						
Nara						
Wakayama						

Based on forecast by regional weather observatories.

Fair　Cloudy　Rain　Snow　occasionally　later

International Herald Shimbun, 2006, May 19.

WEATHER

TODAY'S FORECAST

occasionally / later

	6 a.m.-noon	noon-6 p.m.	6 p.m.-midnight	Possibility of Rain (%) 6 a.m.-noon	noon-6 p.m.	6 p.m.-midnight	Temperature low	high	Yesterday's Temperature low	high
Tokyo				50	50	50	16	21	15.6	18.5
Sapporo				0	0	10	12	23	11.3	26.1
Sendai				10	50	70	12	18	14.4	21.4
Niigata				10	70	80	16	22	13.9	22.1
Nagoya				70	60	90	16	22	14.9	19.5
Osaka				80	50	90	18	25	15.2	23.9
Hiroshima				50	90	90	18	24	16.4	20.6
Takamatsu				50	40	80	17	26	15.2	19.4
Fukuoka				50	90	30	19	26	16.7	23.9
Kagoshima				50	90	30	23	25	18.7	25.3
Naha				30	50	50	27	29	25.2	29.7

TOMORROW'S FORECAST

	low	high
	19	24
	11	19
	15	24
	17	20
	19	26
	21	26
	19	24
	20	26
	18	20
	20	23
	23	27

Weather forecast for 9 a.m. today

TODAY'S FORECAST

	low	high
Bangkok	26	34
Beijing	18	27
Hong Kong	24	32
Honolulu	21	28
London	8	15
Los Angeles	16	23
Manila	25	33
Moscow	7	18
New Delhi	28	36
New York	11	20
Paris	8	17
Rio de Janeiro	14	26
Rome	14	26
Seoul	13	25
Sydney	12	24

TOMORROW'S FORECAST

	low	high
	26	34
	14	24
	24	31
	21	29
	8	15
	14	20
	26	34
	8	18
	27	36
	10	20
	8	15
	13	24
	13	26
	14	24
	13	22

2. The Worksheet Given to the Students and the Answers

What's the Weather Like?

Work with your partner and answer these questions.

1. Look at the Number **1 Weekly Weather Forecast:**

A. Which day was **predicted** to be the sunniest day of the week?

B. I wanted to have a barbeque on the twentieth of May. Why couldn't I?

****

2. Look at the Number **2 Weather** map **a**:

A. Which areas will have the most rain at 8pm tonight?

B. What is the best city to visit today? (hint, I want to go walking outside)

C. What was the coldest city yesterday?

D. Which will be the hottest city tomorrow?

****

3. Look at the Number **2 Weather** map **b**:

A. What will be the hottest Asian city tomorrow?

B. What will be the coolest European city today?

C. In which cities will it rain but be **warm** (↑17°c) tomorrow?

D. Today, which cities will be **fine** and warm?

E. Which cities will be **partly cloudy** tomorrow?

****

Challenge: Look at Number **2 Weather** map **b**. Look at the weather for Seoul and Sydney. What season is it in Seoul (the month is May)? What season is it in Sydney? What could you say about the weather in the two countries at this time of the year?

3. Answers To the Worksheet:

• Teacher's Answers to exercises **1, 2** and **3**:

1. **A**. Sunday, Monday. **B**. It rained, or was cloudy in all areas.

2. **A**. Sendai, Niigata, Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima, Takamatsu, Naha. **B**. Sapporo. **C**. Sapporo (11.3c) **D**. Naha (27c).

3. **A**. New Delhi (36c) **B**. Moscow (8c) **C**. Los Angeles (20c) [Manila at 34c might be considered hot]. **D**. Rio de Janeiro (26c) Seoul (25c) Sydney (24c) **E**. Honolulu, Moscow, Seoul and Sydney.

Challenge: From the chart, it would seem that autumn in Sydney and spring in Seoul are quite similar, even though one country should be getting hotter and the other should be getting colder.

4 Samples of Student Language Use: Authentic Materials 1 (Reading exercise)

Student 9 What's the Weather like? Worksheet

What's the Weather Like??
Work with your partner and answer these questions.
1. Look at the Number **1 Weekly Weather Forecast**:

A. Which days were predicted to be the sunniest day of the week? Sun, Mon

B. I wanted to have a barbeque on the twentieth of May. Why couldn't I? rainy

****

2. Look at the Number **2 Weather** map **a**:

A. Which areas will have the most rain at 8pm tonight? Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima Takamatsu, Niigata

B. What is the best city to visit today? (hint, I want to go walking outside) Sapporo

C. What was the coldest city yesterday? Sapporo

D. Which will be the hottest city tomorrow? Naha

****

3. Look at the Number **2 Weather** map **b**:

A. What will be the hottest Asian city tomorrow? New Delhi

B. What will be the coolest European city today? Moscow

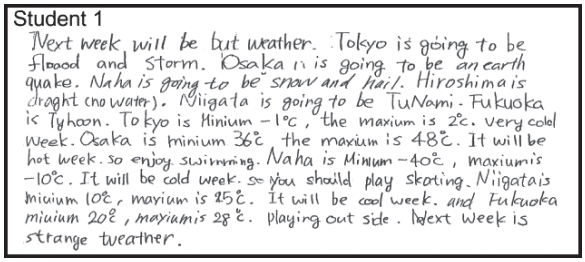
C. In which cities will it rain but be warm (↑ 17° c) tomorrow? Los Angeles

D. Today, which cities will be fine and warm? Seoul, Sydney

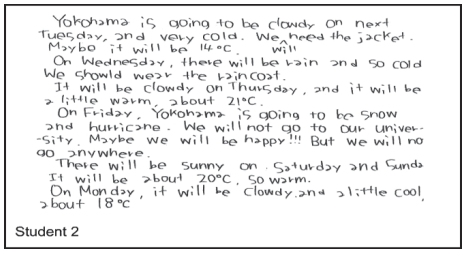
E. Which cities will be partly cloudy tomorrow? Honolulu, Moscow, Seoul, Sydney

****

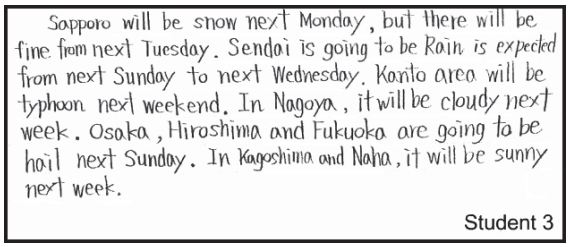
Challenge: Look at Number **2 Weather** map **b**. Look at the weather for Seoul and Sydney. What season is it in Seoul (the month is May)? What season is it in Sydney? What could you say about the weather in the two countries at this time of the year?


Student 1

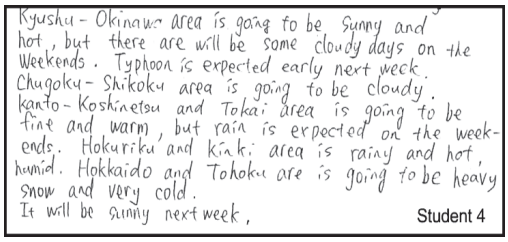
Next week will be but weather. Tokyo is going to be flooad and storm. Osaka is is going to be an earth quake. Naha is going to be snow and hail. Hiroshima is draght (no water). Niigata is going to be TuNami. Fukuoka is Tyhoon. Tokyo is Minium −1°c, the maxium is 2°c. very cold week. Osaka is minium 36° the maxium is 48°c. It will be hot week. so enjoy swimming. Naha is Minum −40°c, maxiumis −10°c. It will be cold week. so you should play skating. Niigata is miuium 10°c, maxiumis 25°c. It will be cool week. and Fukuoka miuium 20°, maxiamis 28°c. Playing out side. Next week is strange tweather.


Yokohama is going to be cloudy on next Tuesday, and very cold. We need the jacket. Maybe it will be 14°c. will
On Wednesday, there will be rain and so cold We should wear the rain coat.
It will be cloudy on Thursday, and it will be a little warm, about 21°c.
On Friday, Yokohama is going to be snow and hurricane. We will not go to our univer-sity. Maybe we will be happy!!! But we will no go anywhere.
There will be sunny on Saturday and Sunda It will be about 20°c. So warm.
On Monday, it will be cloudy and a little cool, about 18°c

Student 2


Sapporo will be snow next Monday, but there will be fine from next Tuesday. Sendai is going to be Rain is expected from next Sunday to next Wednesday. Kanto area will be typhoon next weekend. In Nagoya, it will be cloudy next week. Osaka, Hiroshima and Fukuoka are going to be hail next Sunday. In Kagoshima and Naha, it will be sunny next week.

Student 3


Kyushu - Okinawa area is going to be Sunny and hot, but there are will be some cloudy days on the Weekends. Typhoon is expected early next week.
Chugoku - Shikoku area is going to be cloudy.
kanto - Koshinetsu and Tokai area is going to be fine and warm, but rain is expected on the week-ends. Hokuriku and kinki area is rainy and hot, humid. Hokkaido and Tohoku are is going to be heavy snow and very cold.
It will be sunny next week,

Student 4

5. Authentic Material in Developing Reading and Writing Skills in a Second or Foreign Language Learning Environment in Relation to "Instantiating" Schemata

It is claimed that texts which are recognisable to students in terms of content, form and culture, can help them overcome any reading comprehension difficulties they may encounter with less common vocabulary, and with words specific only to the subject presented (Paulston & Bruder, 1976, as cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 226). A suggestion why this may be so is that familiarity of content and/or form allows the readers to relate the written word to knowledge they already possess, or to "a pre-existing scheme" (Widdowson, 1984, p. 221). One should also be able to expand this idea to writing, listening and speaking. Within the reading process, readers, the content of texts, and the form of texts do not exist in separate vacuums which only merge at the time of reading. Readers do not gain only author-driven knowledge from the information presented. Rather, as Clarke and Silberstein (1977) state, the information the reader brings to the act of reading is wider than the textual information that he or she is presented with (as cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, pp. 136–137; see also Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 219; Hadley, 2001, p. 45; Widdowson, 1984).

Writers create their texts with the assumption that the reader will have some

form of knowledge of the text, and also with an ideal reader in mind (Carrell, 1987, as cited in Mangubhai, 2006, p. 4.12). This ideal may be that the reader is, for example, a primary school student who knows what an apple is (in the case of a children's reader that is being used to teach the alphabet), or is a biology student who knows a science textbook will be written in a certain way.

The reader, too, draws upon previously acquired formal and informal knowledge, experience, points of view, mindset, and thinking in regards to the content and form of the text he or she is presented with, and also in regards to the actual act of reading. All of the preceding will influence the conclusions readers draw in relation to meaning and comprehension (Clarke and Silberstein, 1977, as cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, pp. 136–137).

This background knowledge, tempered with interactive cognitive skills that come into play when students are involved in acts of discourse, is known as the "schema theory" (Hadley, 2001, pp. 146–147). "Schematic" knowledge is not held at the forefront of a student's mind, but is "stored in memory" (Clarke & Silberstein, 1977, as cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 220), and this background knowledge is not always triggered in the course of a lesson, but can remain, accordingly, dormant, despite the possibility that the students possess a pre-existing area of knowledge pertaining to subjects studied (Clarke & Silberstein, 1977, as cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 223; Carrell & Wise, 1998, as cited in Hadley, 2001, p. 156).

Therefore, as implied in the first paragraph of this section, it stands to reason that class activities which incorporate authentic materials which are familiar to students culturally and/or formally, have a better chance of "awakening" or instantiating the students' schemata, and of thereby being useful in "harvesting" appropriate ideas, concepts and knowledge which might otherwise lie fallow. This pre-existing student knowledge can be used towards easing the understanding of materials and concepts presented, and therefore used towards enriching the development of language (Hadley, 2001, p. 161).

The importance of this awakening, or utilisation, of schemata-knowledge, can be seen in the fact that materials that are familiar and known to students are better comprehended (Grabe, 2004, p. 50; Rivers, 1968, as cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 225), and in the observance that very little can be achieved to further reading (and other) skills without interesting material (Coady, 1979, as cited in Carrell & Eisterhold,

1987, p. 220; Williams, 1986, as cited in Day & Bamford, 2002, p. 1).

To expand upon the last points, an assumption is made that if readers and learners are not able to match their pre-existing knowledge to the text or task at hand, frustration and disinterest will occur and very little will be achieved. Carrell & Eisterhold state that if text and instructor-assumption of reader knowledge does not actually match the reader's knowledge, or it fails to provide enough "clues" to instigate the correct schemata, comprehension will not occur (1987, p. 223). For example, a Japanese student may look at a picture of the formerly cited apple in a children's alphabet reader and at the symbol 'A' (written to represent the phoneme/ae/—the first sound of the word 'apple') and may draw on knowledge of the Japanese writing system, where symbols have whole meanings (for example 雨, part of the kanji alphabet, is literally the symbol for rain), and may think that 'A' means 'apple', and 'E' means elephant, and so on, as opposed to these symbols being a way of introducing the phonetic sounds of these letters. Confusion might occur.

6. Reasons Given for the Selection of Activities Made to Complement the Material Chosen

Grabe states that texts have many ways of aiding readers in understanding material on the page (2004, p. 54) and Cziko (1980, as cited in Mangubhai, 2006, p. 4.6) writes that at the lower levels of second language reading development, student attention is drawn more readily to graphics or visuals than written text. Graphics and visuals (weather maps) were a large component of the authentic material used in the lesson under discussion, as seen in the examples above.

Weather maps and charts can be adapted to suit the purposes of all levels and learning styles of students, depending on the complexity of the charts, as they tend to contain both graphic and textual information, and are usually within the background experience of the reader.

These particular weather charts (see prior) are well-suited for lower-level learners with little exposure to English. There are many visual cues and clues to support and explain the text that accompanies them. In addition to the weather symbols, which represent cloudy weather, rainy weather, fine (fair) weather and so forth, the weather charts also include graphics of the islands of Japan. Visuals of the world, of a high

and low-pressure system and Japanese area names written in Roman script are also evident.

These features should support the background knowledge students possess of their own country; knowledge of the weather their country is experiencing, or can experience in certain seasons; and weather symbols (which are also used in Japanese language weather charts).

These cues should serve to activate or heighten concept-driven top-down processing, which includes students' broad general knowledge, in this case of Japan, the world and weather maps (Smith, 1971, Goodman, 1972 as cited in Hadley, 2001, p. 146; Smith, 1971, Goodman, 1972, as cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 221). Knowledge of Japan and the world and the actual weather, through this processing, will help fill out the students' content schemata, whereas their familiarity with the format of reporting the weather should serve to instantiate their formal schematic knowledge, which deals with background knowledge of rhetorical and organisational structures, and may include pre-existing knowledge of the use of future forms in English (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 223).

Both combined will ease the facilitation of student understanding when presented with the reading activities that accompany the authentic materials (Hadley, 2001, p. 145, p. 161). If similar maps of another country were given to the students, it can be argued that the students' formal schemata and their general schematic knowledge would assist them in comprehension and completion of task, but there is perhaps more chance of this knowledge coming into play if material that is up to date (at the time of the lesson), easily personalised and directly relevant is used.

The scanning/extracting specific information questions included on the worksheet given to the students (see prior) will hopefully bring together both top-down and bottom-up processing as students look for visual and textual cues to factually answer questions (bottom-up). Bottom-up skills then work "bi-directionally" with top-down processing skills to address the questions which require more skills of inference (for example, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B—see worksheet, prior), all of which helps develop reading skills (Carrell, 1998, as cited in Hadley, 2001, p. 149).

Japan-specific weather charts, particularly those that are unmodified, should also serve to collectively address the concept of students' individuality (as a nation and a nationality) which Hadley states is an important precept of teaching (2005, p. 205).

The questions on the worksheet are particularly guided towards general queries incorporating fairly easy to infer/locate (for this level) 'Japan-centric' answers, gradating to slightly more complex world weather questions which provide students with a chance to easily incorporate the new into that which they already know (both cognitively and academically) (Ausbel, 1968, 1978, as cited in Hadley, 2001, p. 144), and a chance to "modify schemata" as schemata is not static (Widdowson, 1984, p. 224).

This leads to broadening the learner's scope of interest and learning, and may provide a conducive environment for acquisition of language and new schema, which could lead to further future acquisition of language and schema, as the "old informs the new", which illustrates both the ongoing cyclical nature of the process of reading, and of language learning itself (Neisser, 1976, as cited in Widdowson, 1984, pp. 224–225).

Brainstorming weather words in pairs and then "boarding" them under nouns and adjectives was chosen as a way to begin this lesson in the preparation stages in order to build up students' "expectancy of what they [are] about to read" (Phillips, 1984, as cited in Hadley, p. 207) and to help facilitate the retrieval of the most suitable schemata for the task.

It also introduces the students to new vocabulary and might extend their vocabulary beyond that presented on the weather chart, which does not contain words such as celsius, maximum, minimum or degrees. Hirsh and Nation, drawing on Laufer (1989) and Liu and Nation (1985) argue that students need a ninety-five percent comprehension level of vocabulary to read something comfortably (as cited in Hirsh & Nation, p. 690, 1992). Day (2008) lists the percentage as lower, ranging from 75% to 83%, but this is still a significant figure. Accordingly, it is worthwhile pre-teaching/eliciting appropriate lexis. It is also a further argument in favour of using appropriate authentic material, as that which is more easily recognised is more easily named and remembered (Paulston & Bruder, 1976, as cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 226).

For a lower level class, teachers may also like to brainstorm continents and their relevant countries/cities so that questions 3A and 3B (see prior) are not beyond the students' cultural/content experience, and for all classes, may like to run through their definition of just what constitutes as "warm" day, so that students know what is expected of them for question 3C and 3D (for example, a New Zealand teacher from the South Island may feel that warm is sixteen to seventeen degrees celsius, whereas

an Indonesian student may feel that twenty-five degrees is cool). This will ensure that students' and teachers' schemata-expectations are not at odds with one another, and, so saying, comprehension is more likely to occur.

This type of observation also promotes the development of sociocultural knowledge, as does the challenge at the bottom of the worksheet (Dashwood, A., 2006, personal communication), which is an important aspect of communicative English (Hadley, 2001). Authentic materials are the perfect tool for nurturing this type of awareness in students.

Questions are answered and feedback given in "lots of three" to gauge and monitor comprehension. For questions 2C and 2D students can also provide the temperature using a form similar to, "Sapporo was the coldest city yesterday. It was eleven-point-three degrees celsius". This indicates their grasp of the material (an important part of the reading and classroom process) (Mangubhai, 2006, p. 4.9; Phillips, 1984, as cited in Hadley, 2001, p. 208) and helps to transfer the knowledge they have gained to vocabulary skills, further comprehension skills and oral skills (Phillips, 1984, as cited in Hadley, 2001, p. 208). Teachers could also use this part of the lesson to incorporate "maximum/minimum" vocabulary.

The final writing activity consolidates all aspects of the lesson.

7. Activities, Student Langue Use and Further Discussion of Authentic Material Use and its Application within the Classroom

Though it is argued that second language learners may rely too heavily on graphic cues and therefore not open schemata fully (Mangubhai, 2006, p. 4.6), the reverse seemed to be true in this activity where, for question **2A** which asked the students "Which areas [of Japan] will have the most rain at 8pm tonight?" (see worksheet), the students' reading skills were more thorough than the teacher's, in that they retrieved the answers from the information listed under the heading "Possibility of Rain" on the weather chart, meaning that they had three correct place names for this answer, whereas the teacher had seven. Maybe this indicates that the teacher was reliant on visuals, and too dependent on top-down processing skills, but the students seemed to use both, top-down and bottom-up skills, looking for specific information to support their assumptions.

This is also, in part a proofreading problem, and indicates some of the impracticalities associated with authentic materials, particularly when time constraints are involved. Another problem is the sheer logistics of photocopying authentic materials for thirty-five students (similar problems are reported by Geddes & Whites) (1978, as cited in Hadley, 2001, p. 188). This is possible, and really the only practical way to present the material if computer access is not viable, but clarity is lost and the material loses its absolute "hands-on" authenticity, thereby "nulling" and voiding, to a degree, its worth as authentic. This was evident in the fact that one student read the times in Map 2 as noon–8pm, and 8pm–midnight (instead of noon–6pm and 6pm–midnight), due to a poor copy, which led her to answering question 2A incorrectly, and is also evident in the fact that the layout chosen does not immediately make it clear which maps the questions on the weather sheet are referring to (this problem stems from this writer's lack of layout expertise, but it is a problem that most teachers who use authentic materials will face at one time or another).

It was chosen not to pre-teach or prepare students for questions 3A and 3B, which is an option, if the class is particularly low or has a limited knowledge of world geography, as it was thought that the students probably had enough background knowledge to answer the questions which related to a general knowledge of English names and concepts for continents and cities.

While answering these questions, the students were heard asking each other where New Delhi was, and if it was a part of Asia, and, likewise, if Russia was a European or Asian country, and which continent Moscow lay in. All of this showed that the students comprehended the questions, and were using their own knowledge and experience in conjunction with the information on the map, to answer them. This shows a convergence of top-down and bottom-up processing to activate further schema as they were needed (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 221), resulting in an integration of skills. This process, and the results of this process, can lead to a concept of English as a communicative tool whose use extends beyond the classroom and across cultures. Hadley (2001, p. 182) states that the last is an important aspect of language learning.

"As in real life…" where one action/skill supports another, the reading exercises gradually evolve into exercises incorporating writing (Byrne, 1985, p. 25). A variety of

tasks presented and skills explored is important in maintaining students' interest and in fortifying and expanding skills covered (Byrne, p. 26), which also ties into the cyclical and "spiral" (Taylor, 1976, p. 317) nature of language learning. Therefore, within the next exercise, which was a writing and speaking exercise, students went back to, but expanded from, the questions the teacher had set, to make their own, which they then directed to their classmates.

Fanselow & Crymes (1976, p. 164) argue that we as teachers need to guide learners to a realisation of authentic production and processing of target language via pedagogical intervention. Keeping this in mind, if students at this level were presented with weather charts "neat" and were expected to write comprehension questions and a weather report without any guidance, they might not have enough knowledge of the code to produce anything (p. 165). This is one of the major criticisms of the use of authentic materials in the classroom (1976). However, the activities preceding the writing ones were geared to the students' predicted reading and comprehension capabilities (as suggested by Hadley when using authentic materials, 2001, p. 206) and work to provide "adequate means" for students to reach goals which are satisfactory for them and the instructor both (Fanselow & Crymes, 1976, p. 164).

It is often argued that simplified materials are lacking in the natural redundancy that occurs in authentic materials (Honeyfield, 1977, pp. 433–436), which can result in a loss of meaning and cohesion both in the text, and for the reader (pp. 433–436; Hadley, 2001, p. 206 among others).

The weather charts are not lacking in repetition or redundancy, but are perhaps a little too redundant, in that the weather in Japan for this timeframe was fairly homogenous. Therefore, not too much time was spent on the student generated comprehension questions, for fear of waning interest. Perhaps this writer should have selected the weather report with a little more forethought. Within this class, due to time constraints (and therefore lack of time to teach a more complex code), the students' questions tended to focus on easy-to-locate, factual varieties.

Examples of student use were similar to: "Map 2B, yesterday. It's 25.2 degrees minimum. Which city (is it)?", although one student did incorporate the time of the weather as an important element for others being able to answer his question accurately, which forced students to draw on inference as well as factual information (Carroll, 1976, 1985, p. 30, states that inference is an important first language reading

skill. It is also a good skill to develop in second language learning).

Once the speaking activity wound up, the students wrote their own weather reports. Drawing on Taylor's arguments (1994) that students are aware that they are students participating in a language classroom, and that within itself holds its own authenticity, it can be fun for the students to use their imaginations when it comes to writing the weather report, especially as the examples provided have similar weather patterns, and are not necessarily good models for learners to use to illustrate their understanding of content, new vocabulary and form.

As the authentic forecast provided (see prior) is mostly passive, it is probably a good idea to remind students of other future forms such as: "**It** will/is going to **be rainy**" and, "**There** will/is going to **be rain**" and "**Sapporo** will/is going to **be rainy**", but "**Sapporo** will/is going to **have** snow". Unfortunately, this writer did not foresee the linguistic challenges using the authentic model would cause, as outlined below. If the teacher has time, and wants to spend time on the aforementioned forms, they could be a good language focus for a follow-up class, or a rewriting exercise.

Further to the above, the passive should be allowed if students want to treat their writing as a basic copying/substitution exercise. Some students asked if it was all right for them to write like this, thereby showing their own knowledge of, and comfort in, learning the code, coupled with a wish to revise their writing in the future. Taylor (1976, p. 317) and Zamel (1987, p. 267) state that these are important elements in developing writing skills.

Reflecting one of the acknowledged potential problems of authentic materials in regards to the randomness of its structure (Geddes & White, 1978, as cited in Hadley, p. 188), some students wrote sentences similar to **Student 3's**: *"Sendai is going to be Rain is expected from next Sunday to Monday," (see Samples of Student Language Use Pertaining to the Activity). This was a problem that the teacher did not predict, as mentioned above. Another being the combination of place name + active future form + have (as opposed to be) + noun, which is reflected in the students' writing (which uses be + noun). This also shows, though that new knowledge was in the process of merging with the old, albeit not with one hundred percent accuracy.

Even so, the writing produced was within the instructor's expectations for accuracy at this level (for a first draft) and feedback was given on the writing as a

form of intervention, (as Zamel, 1987, p. 267 suggests is beneficial to the process), in response to students' questions. The instructor also felt that students mostly comprehended the global notion of writing a weather report (see Samples of Student Language Use Pertaining to the Activity).

Though, unfortunately, time constraints and curriculum requirements did not allow it, this final writing exercise was a perfect opportunity to scaffold pre-learnt skills to new ones (as implied by Taylor, 1976, p. 317) in the mode of a focus-on-form activity, and the opportunity for students to rewrite in following classes.

The use of authentic materials and the accompanying exercises seemed to arouse and maintain the students' attention. They also contextualised and gave relevance to the language students were exposed to and drew upon, which seemed to make the activity both comprehensible and enjoyable for them. All of the above elements aid the acquisition of language through the development and use of reading and writing skills.

Conclusion

There is the authentic classroom (Taylor, 1994; Widdowson, 1978, as cited in Taylor, 1994), the authentic material designed for the native speaker, and the simulated authentic designed to give the learner the illusion of authenticity (Hadley, 2001). There is authenticity that lies in learner response (Fanselow & Crymes, p. 161, 1976) and simplified texts which "can be judged in terms of whether [they have] the natural qualities of authenticity" (Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 61).

Authentic material can make learning relevant and exciting for students (Hadley, 2001), and it can make it frustrating and confidence-draining (Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 55). A lot is dependent upon the task which is selected to accompany the material (Hadley, 2001, p. 140), but even so, the selection of task can be fraught with practical concerns as unperceived classroom problems arise, or the logistics of sharing authentic materials with large classes is faced.

Authentic materials are found in most text books, as are simulated authentic exercises, and teachers themselves produce material authentic in design to support, or be the focus of their lessons. As such, given that "authentic" contains any number of definitions, it is extremely hard to say whether one is for its use or against it.

Hadley's endorsement to use authentic materials whenever possible (p. 188) is a good one, but not necessarily a practical one, especially in an EFL situation with large class sizes. However, again, returning to the broad scope of the meaning of authentic, maybe teachers are using such materials without ever realising it.

Though only unmodified authentic materials were illustrated in this paper, the broader study looked at the successful use of authentic, modified authentic and simulated authentic materials in conjunction with textbook and form exercises to help develop students' reading and writing skills, and the writer of this paper uses all the above in a teaching context. Just as the nature of reading and writing is not a linear process whereby students master one skill at a time, materials used, including authentic, are not all of one type. However, all materials work towards balancing, supporting and stimulating learner development, when appropriately applied.

Notes

1. This paper deals with only one of the exercises, however, four were developed and used in the classroom with learners of English as Kanagawa University in Japan. Further discussion on the other activities is available and can be obtained by emailing the author at flowerclip62@hotmail.com

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