Integrating Authentic and Adapted Materials in English Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the use of authentic materials and adapted materials in English as a foreign language (EFL) or English as a second language (ESL) teaching (ELT). The discussion focuses on the definitions, characteristics, pedagogical values, and challenges of applying these two types of teaching materials, particularly in the context of education in Indonesia. Based on a review of the literature, this article demonstrates that authentic materials play a crucial role in enhancing student motivation, engagement, and communicative competence by exposing them to real-world language. In contrast, adapted materials serve as a learning support that provides structured input tailored to the students' level of ability. This article emphasizes that the effectiveness of ELT learning does not depend solely on one type of teaching material, but rather on the balanced and contextual integration of authentic and adapted materials in accordance with learning objectives and student readiness.

Keywords: authentic materials, adapted materials, English language learning, material development, Merdeka Curriculum, contextual teaching materials

INTRODUCTION

Learning materials are a crucial component in teaching English as a foreign language (English Language Teaching/ELT). Materials not only provide input in the form of vocabulary and language structures, but also serve as a means to stimulate student engagement, connect learning to real-world contexts, and foster practical communicative skills. Tomlinson (2011) emphasizes that effective learning materials must facilitate students' cognitive and affective engagement, making the learning process meaningful and authentic.

In ELT practice, teachers often face the choice between using authentic materials and adapting them to suit their needs. Authentic materials are those that originate from real-life situations without being specifically designed for language learning. In contrast, adapted materials are materials that have been modified to suit the needs and abilities of students. The choice between these two types of materials is often a crucial consideration, as it directly impacts the success of the teaching and learning process. Authentic materials are considered to increase students' motivation and readiness to engage in real-world communication, while adapted materials provide the structure and regularity needed, especially for beginner students.

Numerous studies demonstrate that the use of authentic materials has a positive impact on student motivation and skills. For example, a survey by Edi Sukmojati and colleagues found that integrating authentic materials, such as magazine articles, films, and songs, can increase students' interest in learning and vocabulary mastery in junior high school (Sari et al., 2025). Meanwhile, other studies highlight the challenges in selecting authentic materials that are appropriate for the students' level and the need for supporting strategies when using them (Putra et al., 2024).

However, in the context of formal education, especially in Indonesia, adapted materials are still necessary because overly complex materials can pose obstacles for learners, especially at the early levels. Adapted materials help provide more comprehensible input and can be tailored to curriculum objectives, allowing the learning process to occur gradually and

systematically (Hanifa et al., 2024).

From this description, the main question in this study arises: when should ELT teachers use authentic materials, and when should these materials be adapted? It is essential to answer this question so that teachers can select and design learning materials that are effective and appropriate to the needs of students, as well as contextual to the curriculum objectives.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach, utilizing a library research design, to investigate the use of authentic and adapted materials in English Language Teaching (ELT). The study aimed to synthesize theoretical perspectives and empirical findings related to material development, pedagogical value, and instructional challenges in EFL contexts, particularly in Indonesia.

The data consisted of secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and relevant policy documents obtained from reputable academic databases. Literature published between 2000 and 2025 was selected to ensure theoretical relevance and contemporary applicability. The sources were identified using keywords such as authentic materials, adapted materials, material development in ELT, and communicative language teaching.

Data analysis was conducted through a thematic content analysis, which involved identifying recurring themes, comparing key arguments, and synthesizing findings across studies. The analysis focused on how authentic and adapted materials support language learning in relation to learner proficiency, instructional objectives, and communicative competence. To ensure credibility, the study relied on well-established theoretical frameworks and cross-referenced findings from multiple sources to support its conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The development of language learning theory over the past decade has shown a paradigm shift from an approach that focuses solely on linguistic form to one that emphasizes the

communicative use of language in real-world contexts. The communicative approach places language as a tool for interacting and constructing meaning, rather than merely an object of formal learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This shift has led to increased interest in the use of authentic learning materials, i.e., materials that reflect the real language used by native speakers in everyday life.

Contemporary research indicates that authentic materials have the potential to enhance student motivation, engagement in learning, and specific language skills, including vocabulary comprehension and reading comprehension. For example, research on the use of authentic materials in improving vocabulary mastery has demonstrated that authentic materials, such as magazines, films, and songs, are effective in enhancing student engagement and vocabulary acquisition (Sari et al., 2025). Meanwhile, other studies show that the use of authentic materials is also positively related to reading skills when supported by appropriate cooperative strategies (Siti Nurlela, 2025).

Furthermore, in the Indonesian context, empirical studies on the use of authentic materials have also shown positive perceptions among teachers and students towards authentic materials. Research conducted in English classes has revealed that authentic materials are considered more engaging and effective in increasing student learning compared to non-authentic materials (Gufron & Azmin, 2025). Similar results were found in a study examining the relationship between authentic materials and students' listening comprehension, which demonstrated an increase in understanding and learning motivation through the use of authentic materials, such as professional videos and podcasts (Manurung & Yusriati, 2025).

On the other hand, the use of adapted materials remains essential in the context of learning in schools and universities because it provides a structure and order that can be tailored to the national curriculum and the varying ability levels of students. Recent studies on material adaptation reveal that teachers often modify materials by adding, replacing, simplifying, or rearranging content to suit the local context and learner needs (Hanifa et al., 2024). This approach is considered

essential to help students understand language concepts gradually before being exposed to more complex material.

In the context of the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia, the challenge of selecting materials has become increasingly complex, as this curriculum requires contextual and communicative learning that fosters 21st-century competencies. Teachers are required to be more creative in selecting, developing, and evaluating learning materials to provide meaningful learning experiences that align with curriculum objectives. Therefore, research that examines authentic and adapted materials is essential to provide insight into how these two types of materials can be effectively integrated into ELT learning, thereby supporting the overall development of students' language skills.

1. Authentic Materials

Authentic materials refer to materials that originate from the real world and are not explicitly created for language learning purposes. According to Gilmore (2007), authentic materials are spoken or written texts used by native speakers in everyday communication contexts. These materials reflect natural language usage, including variations in vocabulary, structure, and pragmatic expressions.

Theoretically, the use of authentic materials is rooted in the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes that language is best learned when used for meaningful communication purposes. With authentic materials, students not only learn about language, but also learn to use language in real social contexts. Research over the past decade shows that authentic materials can increase learning motivation, student engagement, and their readiness to face communication situations outside the classroom (Wulandari et al., 2025; Gufron & Azmin, 2025).

Bacon and Finnemann (1990) emphasize that authentic materials provide a more realistic learning experience because students are exposed to language as it is used in real life. Thus, authentic materials have the potential to increase students' motivation and cultural awareness, while helping them understand the function of language in real social contexts.

In the communicative approach, the use of authentic

materials is considered vital because it supports the primary objective of language learning, which is to communicate effectively. However, the use of authentic materials also has its own challenges. Authentic materials often contain idiomatic vocabulary, complex sentence structures, natural speech rates, and cultural references that are unfamiliar to EFL students. Therefore, teachers need to provide adequate scaffolding, such as pre-teaching vocabulary activities, task guides, and reflective discussions, so that students can effectively access authentic materials (Putra et al., 2024).

2. Adapted Materials

Adapted materials are materials that have been modified or redesigned to suit students' ability levels, needs, and learning objectives. Adaptations can be made by simplifying vocabulary, reducing text length, changing sentence structure, or adjusting cultural context (McGrath, 2013). This material is typically used to ensure that the language input received by students is comprehensible and supports the learning process in a structured manner.

Tomlinson (2012) explains that adapted materials enable teachers to provide the scaffolding necessary for students to understand language input more easily. These materials are particularly beneficial in the early stages of learning, when students require firm support in understanding language structure and meaning.

In the context of formal education, adapted materials are often found in commercial ELT textbooks, teacher-made worksheets, and graded listening or reading materials. Research shows that adapted materials play a crucial role in providing scaffolding, particularly for beginner and intermediate learners, and help teachers maintain a focused learning approach, for example, by targeting specific grammatical structures or vocabulary (Hanifa et al., 2024).

However, adapted materials also have potential weaknesses. If adaptation is excessive, the materials may lose their authenticity and no longer reflect natural language usage. In addition, inappropriate adaptation—for example, without careful consideration of students' needs—can result in overly mechanical and unchallenging learning. Therefore, adapted

materials should be viewed as a supplement, not a complete replacement for authentic materials.

3. Examples of Authentic Materials

Examples of authentic materials in ELT learning are diverse and readily available to students. Some commonly used examples include news articles from newspapers or online sites, English songs, movie or series clips, podcasts, interviews, restaurant menus, advertisements, and social media posts. These materials present language that is lively and relevant to real life.

First, news articles from online media. Articles from newspapers or international news portals can be used to train students' reading and critical thinking skills. In addition to training text comprehension, this material also introduces students to global issues, formal language styles, and real informative text structures.

Second, English songs and movies. Songs and films offer rich language exposure, featuring emotional expression, idioms, and intonation variations. This material is often used to increase student motivation and engagement while helping them understand the use of language in popular cultural contexts.

Third, podcasts and videos from native speakers. Podcasts from various English-speaking countries allow students to hear different accents and speaking styles. Research indicates that the use of authentic podcasts can enhance listening comprehension skills, as students become accustomed to the natural speed and intonation of speech (Wulandari et al., 2025).

Fourth, social media content. Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube posts can be used as classroom discussion material to understand informal language, everyday expressions, and the pragmatic functions of language in modern communication. This content is highly relevant to digital generation students and can significantly increase engagement.

Although they come from different cultural contexts, authentic materials can still be used contextually if teachers provide guidance, thought-provoking questions, and activities that are relevant to students' experiences (Mishan, 2005).

Through the use of authentic materials, students not only learn language as a system but also as a living, contextual, and communicative tool.

4. Examples of Adapted Materials

Adapted materials are commonly found in the form of textbooks, worksheets, controlled dialogues, or simplified reading texts. For example, narrative texts that have been modified with simpler vocabulary and shorter sentence structures for beginner students. Another example is dialogues specifically designed to practice specific grammar patterns or language functions.

In the context of school learning, adapted materials are often used to ensure that students achieve the basic competencies necessary for assessment preparation. Teachers can also adapt authentic materials into adapted materials. Some examples of its application in ELT include:

First, learning units in ELT textbooks. Books from publishers such as Cambridge, Oxford, and Thomson provide materials that have been graded according to student levels. These materials are designed to support the systematic achievement of specific competencies, ranging from basic vocabulary to more complex language structures.

Second, simplified reading texts. Articles or stories adapted with simpler vocabulary and sentence structures enable students to understand the content of the text without being burdened by excessive linguistic complexity. This type of material is beneficial for beginner and intermediate students.

Third, teacher-made worksheets. Teachers often adapt material from various sources to create worksheets that focus on specific objectives, such as grammar, vocabulary, or functional expressions. This adaptation enables teachers to tailor the material to the particular context of the class and the individual needs of the students.

Fourth, controlled listening scripts. Adapted listening materials typically feature slower speech rates, a limited vocabulary, and clear sentence structures. This helps students build confidence before tackling authentic listening materials.

The use of adapted materials provides students with a sense of security because the language used is more controlled

and suited to their abilities. This is important for building confidence before students are introduced to more authentic and complex material.

The Pedagogical Value and Challenges of Authentic Materials

Authentic materials occupy an essential position in English Language Teaching, as they bridge classroom learning with real-world language use, rather than artificial, created materials (Richards, 2001). Their real-world relevance allows learners to engage with language as it is genuinely used in social, academic, or professional contexts. By exposing learners to naturally occurring vocabulary, grammar, and discourse, authentic texts support the development of communicative and pragmalinguistic competence, as well as intercultural competence through the reflection of cultural norms, values, and perspectives embedded in real texts (McKnight, 1995; Sayi, 2024). Learners often perceive such materials as supporting motivation for real-life communication, as they reflect the language encountered outside instructional settings (Alamri, 2025). In addition, authentic materials frequently provide up-to-date and topical content, which can increase learner engagement and sustain interest in the learning process (Gilmore, 2007). In this sense, authentic materials contribute not only to linguistic development but also to learners' confidence in using English for genuine communicative purposes. In practice, authentic materials support real-world language learning but also present challenges that require careful selection and appropriate pedagogical support.

Despite these pedagogical benefits, the use of authentic materials also presents significant challenges. Because authentic texts are not designed for instructional purposes, they often contain linguistically complex structures, idiomatic expressions, and dense information that may exceed learners' current proficiency levels, particularly among lower-level learners. This lack of linguistic grading can increase cognitive load and hinder comprehension. Regarding this issue, cultural references embedded in authentic texts may be unfamiliar to learners, potentially leading to misunderstandings or the

overlooking of background knowledge if not explicitly addressed (Alamri, 2025). Furthermore, authentic materials may not always align closely with specific curriculum objectives or prescribed learning outcomes, making systematic integration into a syllabus more difficult (Gilmore, 2007). On the other hand, selecting and preparing suitable authentic materials can be time-consuming for teachers, as texts often require adaptation, task design, and additional support. Therefore, the effectiveness of authentic materials depends heavily on carefully designed tasks and appropriate pedagogical scaffolding.

Adapted Materials as Pedagogical Scaffolding

Adapted materials serve a complementary pedagogical function by providing learners with structured and accessible input that aligns closely with instructional goals. Adapted materials can enhance accessibility by simplifying and reorganizing language input, thereby reducing cognitive load and enabling learners to focus on specific linguistic features (Rathert & Cabaroğlu, 2022; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2004). In addition, adapted materials are often carefully aligned with curriculum requirements and assessment demands, making them particularly effective in beginner and lower-intermediate classrooms, as well as in exam-oriented contexts (Islam & Mares, 2003; McGrath, 2013; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2018; Zheng & Davison, 2008). Through this structured support, adapted materials also contribute to confidence building, as learners are more likely to experience successful comprehension and gradual progress in language learning (McGrath, 2013; Tomlinson, 2018). In instructional contexts, adapted materials function as pedagogical scaffolding by providing structured, level-appropriate input that supports comprehension and accuracy, while requiring careful use to ensure learners progress toward authentic language use.

Despite these advantages, the pedagogical use of adapted materials is not without limitations. One key concern is the reduction of authenticity, as modified texts may remove the natural discourse features and variability found in real-world language use (Mishan, 2021; Rathert & Cabaroğlu, 2022).

Excessive simplification can lead to oversimplified language that fails to accurately reflect how English is used beyond the classroom, potentially limiting learner engagement and interest (Maley, 2018; Tomlinson, 2018). Furthermore, prolonged reliance on adapted materials may restrict learners' exposure to authentic language input, making it more difficult for them to cope with unmodified texts in real communicative situations (Littlejohn, 2012; McDonough et al., 2013; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2018). For these reasons, adapted materials should be regarded not as an end in themselves but as a temporary pedagogical scaffold. Their primary role is to support learners in developing the linguistic and cognitive foundations necessary to engage confidently and independently with authentic language use (Islam & Mares, 2003; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2018).

When Authenticity Enhances Learning

Authentic materials enhance language learning when learners are developmentally and linguistically prepared to engage with real-world input (Mishan, 2021; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2018). Their use is particularly suitable for higher-proficiency learners who have developed sufficient foundational knowledge to process meaning without relying on complete linguistic control (McGrath, 2013). At this stage, exposure to unmodified texts encourages learners to interpret language holistically, tolerate ambiguity, and develop fluency rather than focusing exclusively on accuracy.

The pedagogical value of authentic materials becomes especially evident when instructional objectives prioritize communicative competence and meaningful language use (Richards, 2017). In learning contexts that emphasize functional communication, pragmatic awareness, and intercultural understanding, authentic texts provide rich and realistic input that mirrors how language is used beyond the classroom (Mishan & Timmis, 2015; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2018). Due to their real-world relevance, authentic materials often increase learner motivation and engagement, enabling learners to see clear connections between classroom activities and real-life communication.

Authentic materials are most productive when introduced after learners have been supported through more controlled or adapted input (McDonough et al., 2013). When used as the main task in a lesson, they allow learners to apply previously learned language to complex, meaningful contexts. Alternatively, authentic materials can serve as adequate supplementary resources that enrich textbook content and extend learning beyond controlled practice (McGrath, 2013; Ur, 2015). In both roles, they support real-world language practice and reinforce learners' confidence in using English independently.

Nevertheless, authenticity alone does not guarantee learning. The effectiveness of authentic materials depends on careful selection, clear task design, and appropriate scaffolding (Cunningsworth, 1995; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2018). When learners are guided to focus on communicative purpose, overall meaning, and achievable outcomes, authentic materials can successfully bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world language use.

When Adaptation Supports Learning

Adapted materials support learning most effectively when learners require structured input and clear pedagogical guidance to engage with new language. Their use is particularly suitable for beginner or low-proficiency learners who may struggle with unmodified texts and therefore need level-appropriate input to develop basic comprehension skills. In such contexts, adaptation helps reduce cognitive overload, allowing learners to focus on essential language features without experiencing frustration or a loss of confidence (Islam & Mares, 2003; McGrath, 2013; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2018). Therefore, adapted materials support learning most effectively when learners need structured, level-appropriate input to develop accuracy, build confidence, and prepare for more complex and authentic language use.

Adaptation becomes especially valuable when instructional goals emphasize grammar, structure, and accuracy, or when learners are preparing for assessments. In lessons that introduce new grammatical forms, controlled

vocabulary, or test-related skills, adapted materials provide clarity and predictability, supporting systematic progression in language development (McDonough et al., 2013; Richards, 2017). Because adapted materials are often closely aligned with curriculum objectives and assessment requirements, they are well-suited to exam-oriented contexts and institutional settings that demand measurable learning outcomes (Cunningsworth, 1995; Richard, 2001; Zheng & Davison, 2008). They are also particularly effective in time-constrained teaching situations, where simplified input allows teachers to manage lesson pacing more efficiently (McGrath, 2013; Ur, 2015).

Additionally, adapted materials play a crucial role in addressing cultural and contextual issues that may hinder comprehension. By modifying or explaining culturally specific references, teachers can help learners focus on the meaning rather than being confused by unfamiliar contexts (Mishan, 2021). Adapted materials are therefore beneficial as pre-task activities and as sources of initial language input, providing scaffolding that prepares learners for more complex communicative tasks (Zheng & Davison, 2008).

Adapted materials are also effective when used as a preparatory stage before learners encounter authentic input, as they build background knowledge and familiarize learners with key vocabulary and structures. This enables learners to approach authentic materials with greater confidence (Richards, 2001). In this role, adapted materials serve not as an endpoint, but as a bridge toward more independent engagement with real-world language use (Tomlinson, 2018).

Nevertheless, adaptation must be applied judiciously. Excessive reliance on simplified input may limit learners' exposure to natural language patterns and reduce opportunities for meaningful engagement. For this reason, adapted materials are most beneficial when integrated strategically and gradually combined with authentic materials, ensuring that learners move beyond supported input toward genuine communicative competence.

Integrating Authentic and Adapted Materials

In the English language teaching (ELT) context, both types of materials are implemented simultaneously to form an integrated teaching approach. Adapted materials are used first because they have a lower level of difficulty and are suitable for the preparatory stage in the classroom. After that, authentic materials can be used as the core of the material being taught and as a basis for communicative practice. This integration technique provides a transition for students in understanding the core material presented by the teacher. They begin their understanding with simplified material, then continue with concepts that apply to real-world contexts. Not only that, but the integration of authentic and adapted materials is also adjusted to the students' readiness, where adapted materials are more suitable for students with low to moderate abilities because they have an easy level of difficulty. In contrast, authentic materials are ideal for students with higher abilities because they also have a higher level of difficulty.

1. Adapted Materials as Preparation Stages

In teaching practice, adapted materials serve as scaffolding to support learning. Teachers deliberately prepare these materials by simplifying existing authentic materials. The simplification can take the form of deleting, reducing, adding to, or rearranging authentic materials into new materials with the duplicate core content but a lower level of difficulty. Not only that, but teachers can also adjust the material by adding supporting elements, such as pictures, glossaries, or guiding questions, to the adapted material (Hanifa, R., & Yusra, S. R., 2023). The purpose of teachers doing this is to provide easier access and understanding for students in understanding the basics of the material being taught (Ebrahimpourtaher & Hamidi, 2015).

As explained earlier, adapted material serves as a bridge, making it suitable for use in the preparation stage of ELT. By applying adapted material during the preparation stage, students can build confidence in participating in learning. This aligns with Hanifa and Yusra's (2023) assertion that students learn effectively through gradually modified materials that encourage them to learn a new language, enhancing their

understanding and motivation. This can happen because adapted materials have a lower level of difficulty and are certainly tailored to the abilities of students.

2. Authentic Materials as Core Communicative Task

Once learners have grasped the basics of the material taught through adapted materials in the preparation stage, authentic materials can be introduced as core or primary materials. These authentic materials provide learners with a real-world context. News clips, songs, and websites are some examples of authentic materials that can be used in ELT learning. These materials can be considered genuine because they have strong relevance to real life, which makes learning more meaningful and relevant. (Latifah et al., 2025)

In a study conducted by Latifah et al. (2025), it was found that integrating blog posts and TED Talks into project-based lessons provided a deeper understanding of language use in real-life contexts, not only in the classroom but also beyond it. This makes learning more meaningful and authentic because students can understand the application of language in everyday life contexts. This finding aligns with Hoang's (2022) research, which suggests that providing authentic audio-visual material and tasks, such as films and songs, increases confidence and communicative ability in English. This demonstrates that incorporating authentic material can enhance student motivation and ability, providing students with meaningful exposure to real-world contexts.

3. Gradual Transition from Controlled to Real World Input

The integration process between adapted materials and authentic materials provides a structured approach to learning. These stages begin with the provision of low-difficulty material using adapted materials, which is then gradually continued to more difficult levels with authentic materials. This is very important because the process of improving students' abilities cannot begin directly with genuine material, which is often of a high level of difficulty. This integration process also facilitates a transition in understanding, where initially, students have a limited or local experience. Still, gradually, they expand their knowledge to a broader, global perspective within the context

of the real world. This is a crucial process for students to grasp new material.

In their research, Latifah et al. (2025) found that integrating adapted and authentic materials shifts students' understanding in the classroom from local to global, from easy to challenging, and from familiar to unfamiliar. By using these two types of materials, teachers bridge the gap where all students are taught using materials with a low level of difficulty first, then gradually given materials with an increased level of difficulty, so that all students have the same level of ability and are not overwhelmed by new content with a high level of difficulty.

4. Alignment With Learner Readiness and Objective

The integration of adapted and authentic materials can be effective if the content presented is tailored to the learners' readiness and aligns with the learning objectives. Hanifa et al. (2024) explain in their research that adapted materials must contain topics, content, and key skills that align with the syllabus used in the learning process. In addition, Ebrahimpourtaher and Hamidi (2015) also explain that adapted materials must be tailored to the learning objectives designed to keep learning relevant and meaningful. The alignment between the materials and the learners' readiness, as well as the learning objectives, can support meaningful learning and make the materials used effectively.

Pedagogical Decision Factors

Several factors influence the choice between adapted and authentic materials, including learner proficiency level, learning objectives, cultural relevance, and task difficulty. The learner's proficiency level primarily determines whether to choose adapted or authentic materials. The use of adapted materials is more suitable for learners with lower proficiency levels because these materials have a lower level of difficulty. In contrast, the use of authentic materials is more appropriate for learners with higher proficiency levels, as these materials present a higher level of difficulty compared to adapted materials. The selection of materials is crucial because it significantly impacts learners' understanding and confidence

(Ebrahimpourtaher et al., 2015).

The second factor is that the materials used in learning must support the learning objectives. Teachers must determine the materials that are appropriate for what they want to achieve at the end of the learning process. If the materials used are not suitable or do not support the learning objectives, they can be considered ineffective, rendering the learning process meaningless. Therefore, the choice between adapted or authentic materials must be adjusted to the learning objectives (Hanifa et al., 2024).

The suitability of the material to the cultural background is the third factor in selecting ELT teaching materials. The material given to students should contain a context that aligns with the culture understood by the students. If the material used is not culturally relevant to the students, it can cause difficulties in understanding. According to Latifah et al. (2025), teachers often struggle to incorporate cultural relevance into their materials when using authentic resources. This can be overcome by using adapted materials, such as comparing local and international news texts. Thus, there is cultural relevance in the materials used.

The final factor is task difficulty, which is related to the complexity of the task. Authentic materials often feature dense and complex vocabulary, so the task must be well-managed to ensure comprehension. Hanifa and Yusra (2023) found that the use of well-adapted authentic materials can still cause an inappropriate level of difficulty for students. To control this, teachers can use tasks from adapted materials that are easier to manage. Teachers must calibrate difficulty by combining task complexity with linguistic support.

Classroom Implementation Examples
1. **Example using authentic materials**

In the Indonesian context, specifically in senior high school, teachers can use authentic materials that are relevant to real-life contexts. For example, when teachers want to train students' listening and speaking skills, they can play English news recordings that discuss Indonesian culture or events in Indonesia. For example, news from the BBC discussing

Indonesian cuisine is presented, and then the teacher asks students to discuss it in groups. In the initial stage, teachers can provide transcripts of the news as a guide, but gradually, teachers ask students to listen to it without using transcripts and then discuss and summarize the news.

A similar approach to the example above is also used by Latifah et al. (2025). In the initial stage, the teacher asks students to listen to a TED Talk about nutrition while completing sentences, and then they are asked to discuss it in an open forum. On the other hand, Hoang (2022) found that activities involving films and songs can increase the motivation of Indonesian students. Thus, the use of authentic materials, selected contextually and accompanied by appropriate scaffolding, not only helps to improve students' English language skills gradually but also encourages engagement, motivation, and fundamental communication skills relevant to their lives as learners in the Indonesian context.

2. Example using adapted material

In the same context, at Indonesian Senior High Schools, adapted materials can be used, for example, when teachers use texts from books that have been shortened or supplemented with illustrations to make the content easier for students to understand. The texts are made easier to read and understand for students through a process of adaptation carried out by teachers, which involves shortening them, replacing some vocabulary with simpler words without altering their meaning, and adding illustrations. This process aligns with the explanation provided by Hanifa and Yusra (2023) in their research, which describes the process of adding and modifying content in adapted materials. These adaptation steps prepare students for fully authentic tasks in the future.

CONCLUSION

Authentic and adapted materials play essential and complementary roles in English Language Teaching. Authentic materials expose learners to real-world language use, cultural contexts, and meaningful communication, thereby enhancing motivation and communicative competence. However, their linguistic complexity and cultural density may pose challenges

for learners who are not yet developmentally or linguistically ready. In contrast, adapted materials provide structured, level-appropriate input that supports comprehension, builds confidence, and aligns closely with curricular and assessment goals. Despite these benefits, excessive reliance on adapted materials may reduce learners' exposure to natural language use and limit opportunities for authentic communication. For this reason, no single type of material can be considered universally superior. The effectiveness of materials depends largely on informed teacher judgment, particularly in relation to learner proficiency, learning objectives, cultural relevance, and task difficulty. Teachers play a crucial role in selecting, adapting, and sequencing materials to ensure that learning remains both meaningful and achievable. A balanced and strategic integration of adapted and authentic materials, where adapted materials function as preparatory scaffolding and authentic materials serve as core communicative tasks, allows learners to transition gradually from controlled input to real-world language use. Such an approach not only reduces cognitive overload but also fosters confidence, engagement, and communicative competence. Ultimately, a thoughtful combination of both material types supports more effective, contextual, and meaningful ELT learning experiences.

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