

การศึกษาเจตคติของนักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรีที่มีต่อการใช้ สื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริง*

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บทคัดย่อ

รายงานการวิจัยนี้มุ่งศึกษาเจตคติของนักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรีที่มีต่อการใช้สื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริงที่ผู้สอนนำมาใช้ในการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ โดยใช้แบบสอบถามเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลจากกลุ่มตัวอย่างซึ่งเป็นนักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรี หลักสูตรศิลปศาสตรบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ มหาวิทยาลัยหัวเฉียวเฉลิมพระเกียรติ ที่ลงทะเบียนเรียนในรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ ซึ่งผู้สอนใช้สื่อการสอนแบบเอกสารจริง ในปีการศึกษา 2559 จำนวน 230 คน โดยแบ่งเจตคติออกเป็น 3 ด้าน คือ เจตคติด้านความคิด เจตคติด้านความรู้สึก และเจตคติด้านพฤติกรรม

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า นักศึกษามีเจตคติที่ดีต่อการใช้สื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริง โดยมีความเฉลี่ยเจตคติเท่ากับ 3.88 นอกจากนี้ เมื่อพิจารณาเปรียบเทียบค่าเฉลี่ยเจตคติเป็นรายข้อ จากแบบประเมินเจตคติของนักศึกษามีต่อการใช้สื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริง จำนวน 18 ข้อ พบว่าข้อที่มีค่าเฉลี่ยเจตคติสูงสุดที่สุด คือ สื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริงมีประโยชน์ต่อการดำเนินชีวิต และการประกอบอาชีพในอนาคต รองลงมาคือสื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริงช่วยพัฒนาทักษะด้านการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ และสื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริงช่วยเสริมสร้างความรู้ความเข้าใจในวัฒนธรรมของเจ้าของภาษา ตามลำดับ ส่วนข้อที่มีค่าเฉลี่ยเจตคติอยู่ในระดับไม่เต็มมีจำนวนสองข้อ คือ สื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริงใช้โครงสร้างไวยากรณ์ที่ซับซ้อน และสื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริงใช้คำศัพท์ยาก ซึ่งเป็นข้อที่มีค่าเฉลี่ยเจตคติต่ำที่สุด ผู้วิจัยยังได้วิเคราะห์สาเหตุและปัจจัยที่ทำให้เกิดผลการวิจัยดังกล่าว อีกทั้งเสนอแนะแนวทางในการนำผลวิจัยไปปรับใช้เพื่อพัฒนาการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษให้เกิดประสิทธิผลสูงสุด

คำสำคัญ : สื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริง เจตคติ

* บทความนี้สรุปจากงานวิจัยเรื่อง “การศึกษาเจตคติของนักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรีที่มีต่อการใช้สื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเอกสารจริง” ซึ่งเป็นงานวิจัยที่ได้รับทุนสนับสนุนจากมหาวิทยาลัยหัวเฉียวเฉลิมพระเกียรติ

** อาจารย์ประจำสาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ คณะศิลปศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยหัวเฉียวเฉลิมพระเกียรติ

A Study of Undergraduate Students' Attitudes toward English Authentic Teaching Materials

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Abstract

This study aims at investigating undergraduate students' attitudes toward authentic teaching materials exploited in English classes. The sample group consisted of 230 English-major undergraduate students of the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University who enrolled in English courses in which instructors used authentic teaching materials for their classes in the academic year 2016. Questionnaires were applied as research instruments. In order to investigate the students' attitudes toward English authentic teaching materials, the term "attitude" was categorized into three aspects; cognitive, affective and behavioral attitude.

After analyzing the results, it was found that in general the students had positive attitudes toward English authentic teaching materials with the average attitude score of 3.88. Most students agreed that authentic teaching materials are beneficial for their lives and future careers with the highest average attitude score out of the 18 items in the questionnaires. Also the students stated that authentic materials can improve their English reading skills, and increase the knowledge and understanding of native speakers' cultures. However, a number of students expressed low average attitude toward English authentic teaching materials in the points that such materials contain complicated grammatical structures and difficult vocabulary. Possible factors underlying these results were discussed and recommendations for the highest effectiveness of English language teaching were provided.

Keywords : English authentic teaching materials, attitude

Introduction

English is taught as a foreign language in Thailand. Students are provided with limited opportunities to use the language outside classrooms. Kiliç and Ilter (2015) stated that teaching a language is difficult to deal effectively with, especially when the language is taught as a foreign language. As a result, teachers in EFL contexts should focus on encouraging students to learn the language in various real-world situations. Besides, teaching materials should be up-to-date, relevant to daily life and serve students' interests. This idea is consistent with some studies (Kiliç & Ilter, 2015; Al-Musallam, 2009; AbdulHussein, 2014) suggesting the use of authentic teaching materials in English classes proving that such real-life materials attract learners' interests and motivate them to learn English because the learners will feel that they can really use the language for real-life purposes.

Using authentic materials in English classes is not a new idea. It has been widely known as a result of the Communicative Approach of Language Teaching (Al -Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014, p. 249). In the current world of globalization, preparing learners for the real world outside classrooms is what teachers have to take into account. This has made authentic materials widespread and popular. Ahellal (1990) defined authentic teaching materials as any texts or materials produced by native speakers to communicate among themselves by using real language for real-life situations. This kind of materials is designed for communication among speakers of the language, not for pedagogical purposes.

As shown in many studies (eg. Kiliç & Ilter, 2015; Shu-Chin, 2008; Al-Musallam, 2009; AbdulHussein, 2014), authentic teaching materials make English classes interesting, motivate learners to learn the language, as well as bring them closer to the real world and target language cultures. Furthermore, using everyday life authentic materials can improve learners' reading skills (Pairin, 2011, p. 40). When teachers bring authentic materials into classes, learners will see how the language is used for real communication in different contexts and can later apply the language in their own lives. This adds value to the teaching and learning of the target language (Pairin, 2011, p. 2).

Despite many positive effects on language learners' achievement, authentic teaching materials have also been criticized as causing difficulties among teachers and learners. Miller (2005) and Guariento and Morley (2001) (as cited in Al-Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014) claimed that authentic materials may include too difficult language so learners with low linguistic competency can be frustrated, confused and demotivated. When teaching materials are too difficult for learners to comprehend, such materials will become ineffective and the learning of language will be unsuccessful as explained by Krashen's Input Hypothesis (Krashen & Terrell, 1983) that learners have to understand an input provided by teachers so that their linguistic knowledge will be developed to another level and the target language will be acquired. Moreover, regarding the difficulty of vocabulary and structures authentic materials may contain, Kilickaya (2004) stated that it is a burden added on teachers to explain or simplify difficult contexts in order to make authentic teaching materials appropriate for learners.

Aside from appropriate teaching materials, learners' attitudes are also a significant factor for the effectiveness of language teaching. Kiliç and Ilter (2015) emphasized that teachers must keep in mind all the time that learners are human beings with likes, dislikes, and moods. Teachers should regularly

observe learners' attitudes, motivations, readiness, and willingness to learn in order to facilitate learning and provide appropriate learning conditions. The term "attitude" was defined by AbdulHussein (2014) as positive or negative evaluations of people, objects, events, ideas, or anything in a person's environment. Krashen (1985) described attitudes as essential ingredients which can act as bridges or barriers to language learning. Likewise, Chambers (1999) confirmed that the learning of language will be easier if learners have positive attitudes toward the target language and the learning process.

As mentioned earlier that authentic materials are beneficial for language learning and learners' attitudes are important factors influencing learning achievement, this study consequently explored undergraduate students' attitudes toward English authentic teaching materials exploited in the teaching and learning process. The attitudes were examined on the ground that they can be categorized into three aspects of cognitive, affective and behavioral attitudes. Research outcomes are expected to be applied for a better way of exploiting English authentic teaching materials and a higher achievement of language learning.

Objective of the Study

This study aimed at investigating undergraduate students' attitudes toward English authentic teaching materials exploited in English classes.

Research Methodology

To achieve the research objective, a quantitative method was conducted by using questionnaires as research instruments. The overall target population of this study consisted of 539 English-major undergraduate students from the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University (Data from Office of the Registrar, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University) and the sample size was calculated by using Taro Yamane's (Yamane, 1973) formula. The representative sample size turned to be 230 English-major undergraduate students. They were randomly selected from students who enrolled in English courses in which instructors used authentic teaching materials for their classes in the academic year 2016. Freshmen students were excluded because there were no English courses for 1st year students in which teachers used authentic teaching materials. Obtained data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics in terms of means and percentages.

Research Results

According to the obtained data, the majority of participants were female students (83.5%) aged 21-23 with lower intermediate to intermediate levels of English competency (Cumulative Grade Point Average from 2.00 – 3.00 out of 4.00) who enrolled in one of the seven English courses in which instructors used authentic English teaching materials as shown below.

1. *English for Journalism* : Printed and online English news articles
2. *Translation for Business* : Economic news articles from newspapers and journals

3. *English for Public Relations* : Advertising posters, magazine articles, video clips from internet, PR news articles, brochures
4. *Introduction to Linguistics* : Video clips from internet with phonetic pronunciation and reading practices
5. *Sociolinguistics* : Video clips from internet showing cultural differences and the diversity of English usage
6. *English Morphology and Syntax* : Short stories, articles from books and internet
7. *Principles of Translation - English to Thai* : Articles from books, journals, magazines, and internet as well as short stories and novels

Research findings indicated that in general the participants had positive attitudes toward English authentic teaching materials with the average attitude level of 3.88 as shown in Table 1. Out of the 18 items of the questionnaires, it was found that 16 items showed positive attitudes. The three items with the highest levels of average attitudes were *item 6: “English authentic teaching materials are beneficial for students’ lives and future careers.”*, followed by *item 2: English authentic teaching materials can develop students’ reading skills.”* and *item 1: “English authentic teaching materials can increase the knowledge and understanding of native speakers’ cultures.”* respectively.

One item was analyzed as showing a medium level of attitude (*item 18*) stating that *after classes, students do not want to read any more authentic materials in daily life*. Besides, there were two items indicating low average attitudes stating that *“English authentic teaching materials use complicated grammatical structures.”* (*item 5*) and *“English authentic teaching materials contain difficult vocabulary.”* (*item 4*) with the latter having the lowest average level of attitude.

Table 1 Students’ Attitudes toward English Authentic Teaching Materials

	Absolutely Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Absolutely Disagree	Average Attitude	SD
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	\bar{X}	
Cognitive Attitudes							
1. English authentic teaching materials increase the knowledge and understanding of native speakers’ cultures	78 33.9%	125 54.3%	26 11.3%	1 0.4%	-	4.22	.65
2. English authentic teaching materials develop my English reading skill.	83 36.1%	125 54.3%	22 9.6%	-	-	4.26	.62
3. English authentic teaching materials develop my English writing skill.	56 24.3%	140 60.9%	32 13.9%	2 0.9%	-	4.09	.64
4. English authentic teaching materials contain difficult vocabulary.	45 19.6%	108 47%	67 29.1%	10 4.3%	-	2.18	.79
5. English authentic teaching materials use complicated grammatical structures.	38 16.5%	91 39.6%	87 37.8%	14 6.1%	-	2.33	.82
6. English authentic teaching materials are beneficial for my life and my future career.	96 41.7%	102 44.3%	30 13%	2 0.9%	-	4.27	.71

Affective Attitudes							
7. I like it when teachers use English authentic teaching materials.	81 35.2%	107 46.5%	41 11.8%	1 0.4%	-	4.16	.72
8. English authentic teaching materials make lessons more interesting.	76 33%	108 47%	46 20%	-	-	4.13	.72
9. English authentic teaching materials allow me to realize the importance of English language learning.	87 37.8%	103 44.8%	37 16.1%	3 1.3%	-	4.19	.75
10. English authentic teaching materials motivate me to study English.	73 31.7%	98 42.6%	55 23.9%	4 1.7%	-	4.04	.79
11. English authentic teaching materials make me feel closer to the use of English language in daily life.	90 39.1%	101 43.9%	34 14.8%	5 2.2%	-	4.20	.77
12. I would like teachers to use more English authentic teaching materials in classes.	82 35.7%	107 46.5%	40 17.4%	1 0.4%	-	4.17	.72
Behavioral attitudes							
13. I pay attention to class lectures when teachers use English authentic teaching materials.	65 28.3%	109 47.4%	54 23.5%	2 0.9%	-	4.03	.74
14. I participate in class activities willingly when teachers use English authentic teaching materials.	65 28.3%	115 50%	50 21.7%	-	-	4.06	.70
15. I take notes from lectures when teachers use English authentic teaching materials	63 27.4%	112 48.7%	53 23%	2 0.9%	-	4.03	.73
16. I ask questions when I don't understand lessons in classes that teachers use English authentic teaching materials	53 23%	96 41.7%	74 32.2%	7 3%	-	3.85	.81
17. I do assignments with attention when teachers use English authentic teaching materials	64 27.8%	132 57.4%	33 14.3%	1 0.4%	-	4.13	.65
18. After classes, I do not want to read any more authentic materials such as signs, articles, news articles in daily life	6 2.6%	46 20%	62 27%	56 24.3%	60 26.1%	3.51	1.15
Mean Average Attitude						3.88	0.75

Discussion

This study explored undergraduate students' attitudes toward English authentic teaching materials. Participants were English major students at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University who enrolled in English courses in which instructors used authentic teaching materials in their classes. Research findings showed that students had positive attitudes toward English authentic teaching materials which were consistent with AbdulHussein's (2014) and Al-Musallam's (2009) studies investigating the attitudes of EFL learners in Iraq and Saudi Arabia toward authentic reading materials, and Shu-Chin's (2008) exploring the attitudes of ESL adult students in the United States toward authentic materials. Findings from these studies indicated that EFL and ESL learners had positive attitudes toward authentic teaching materials. Possible factors contributing to these results were discussed as follows;

1. The participants' English competency levels were at lower intermediate and intermediate levels so they had adequate English knowledge to understand authentic materials. This supported the claims of Kilickaya (2004) and Kim (2000) (as cited in Al-Azri, & Al-Rashdi, 2014) that authentic teaching materials should be applied with learners of intermediate English level or higher. Having enough vocabulary and grammatical knowledge to understand contexts in the teaching materials, these

learners would be capable of acquiring the knowledge and have positive attitudes toward the teaching materials.

2. Authentic teaching materials used in this study such as video clips from internet, short stories, advertising posters, and news articles were of various kinds and suited learners' preferences. Berardo (2006) pointed out that various kinds of teaching materials made reading activities more interesting and according to Su-Chin's (2008) study, learners like a variety of authentic materials. Besides, from Al-Musallam's (2009) research, short stories were favorite reading materials among EFL college learners in Saudi Arabia, and from Shu-Chin's (2008), internet materials were considered as favorite authentic materials among ESL students in the United States. Using various kinds of materials which served students' preferences led to positive attitudes toward the authentic teaching materials.

3. Authentic materials used for English courses in this study were up-to-date and locally relevant to learners' real lives allowing them to catch up with new information and feel familiar with the context. Sample materials included daily news articles from local newspapers in *English for Journalism* class, and popular advertising campaigns in Thailand in *English for Public Relations* class. This supported Spelleri's (2002) idea that using up-to-date authentic materials aroused learners' interest as well as Thomas's (2014) claim that locally relevant authentic materials made students feel engaged and understand the context easily. Additionally, according to Shu-Chin's (2008) finding, students were not interested in learning knowledge unrelated to their daily lives. Feeling updated and engaged to the selected contexts, learners therefore indicated positive attitudes toward authentic teaching materials.

4. Learners were provided with opportunities to select materials they liked to use in classes. In *Principles and Translation: English to Thai* class, students were assigned to select a piece of English literature or article they liked to analyze its Thai-translated version and in *English for Public Relations*, students were assigned to choose their favorite advertising slogans to study the use of vocabulary and writing style. This confirmed Swaffar's (1985) claim that allowing learners to help selecting learning materials could enhance their interests. Hence, positive attitudes toward learning materials were shown.

When considering average attitudes of each item in the questionnaire, it was found that *Item 6* stating that *English authentic teaching materials are beneficial for students' lives and future careers* showed the highest average level of attitude. This result supported Tanasavate and Chinwonno (2013) who investigated EFL learners' perceptions toward the use of authentic materials and revealed that learners positively perceived the use of authentic materials for realistic English use and its benefit to increase communication in real contexts. Furthermore, it was consistent with Al-Azri and Al-Rashdi's (2014) finding that authentic materials enhanced learners' confidence to use the target language in their real lives.

Item 2 of the questionnaires had the second highest average level of attitude stating that *English authentic teaching materials can develop students' reading skills*. The finding supported Plungsangmas (2006) and Pairin (2011) who examined the using of English authentic materials in reading classes for junior high school and high school students in Thailand and proved that authentic teaching materials helped improve their reading skills significantly. However Saleh (2017) argued this claim with his

study investigating Libyan university students' attitudes toward English authentic reading materials and showed that more than half of the students (52%) did not agree that using authentic materials developed their reading skills. Whether reading texts were appropriately selected and class activities were well-planned to suit learners' competency or not probably be reasons for these findings. In this research, the participants were English major students with lower-intermediate and intermediate levels of English so they could comprehend and acquire knowledge from reading texts well and reading materials were selected appropriately. As a result, the students expressed positive attitudes toward authentic materials by agreeing that these materials could improve their reading skills.

As for the item showing the third highest average level of attitude in this study, students believed that *English authentic teaching materials can increase the knowledge and understanding of native speakers' cultures (item 1)*. The finding was consistent with studies by Saleh (2017) and Al-Musallam (2009) investigating the attitudes of EFL students in Libya and Saudi Arabia toward English authentic reading materials and found that the majority of students agreed that authentic materials improved their understanding of target language cultures.

Although the results mentioned above showed that the participants had positive attitudes toward English authentic teaching materials, *item 18* of the questionnaire was analyzed as indicating a medium level of attitude ($\bar{X} = 3.51$) stating that *after classes students do not want to read any more authentic materials in their daily lives*. This implied that authentic teaching materials could motivate learners to use English in real life only at a medium level. Some students were uncertain whether they wanted to try using the target language outside the classroom walls or not. This finding was against Al-Musallam's (2009) study revealing that many EFL college learners in Saudi Arabia (70.8% of the research participants) strongly agreed that authentic materials motivated them to do more reading outside classes, yet in consistent with Saleh's (2017) stating that a number of EFL university students in Libya (61% of the research participants) disagreed that being exposed to authentic materials could enhance their motivation to learn English. As for this study, the medium level of learners' attitudes as mentioned earlier might be because authentic materials selected by instructors and class activities were not appealing enough to motivate learners to apply the target language outside classrooms. Besides, the difficulty of vocabulary and the complexity of grammatical structures contained in real-life authentic materials might be possible causes discouraging students from reading such texts outside classrooms.

Regarding the difficulty of English authentic materials, this study appeared to support such claim with two items of the questionnaires (*items 4 and 5*) indicating low average attitudes toward authentic teaching materials. A number of students agreed that *English authentic teaching materials contain difficult vocabulary (item 4)* and *English authentic teaching materials use complicated grammatical structures (item 5)*. The findings were in contrast to Al-Musallam's (2009) study showing that EFL college students in Saudi Arabia believed that authentic materials were not difficult to comprehend. Nevertheless, according to Tanasavate and Chinwonno's (2013) research, EFL learners in Thailand agreed that authentic materials were difficult for them to understand. Thomas (2014) confirmed this claim by mentioning that authentic teaching materials might contain too difficult language, too

specialized vocabulary, too complex grammatical structures and require too much time for instructors to prepare the materials.

However, using difficult materials in language teaching is not always a bad idea considering Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis that learners need to be provided with comprehensible input which is one level more difficult than learners' current language levels so as to develop their English to a higher level of competency. This view accepts authentic materials and comprehensible input which is a bit beyond learners' current levels of target language. Scaffolding through authentic materials with more capable peers or adults would help the learners comprehend such materials (Pinsonneault, 2008, pp. 43-44).

Recommendation

Based on the participants' attitudes toward English authentic teaching materials shown in this research, recommendations for English language teaching and future research are provided as follows;

Recommendation for English language teaching

1. As mentioned earlier that authentic materials provide not only advantages for language learning but also challenges which can be disadvantages for teachers and learners; therefore, using both textbooks and authentic materials might be an ideal way to reach the highest effectiveness of language teaching

2. In order to enhance students' motivation to learn the target language outside classrooms, more homework assignments related to learners' daily routines are recommended to encourage students to read more texts in their daily lives such as checking weather reports before leaving home, scanning food product labels before eating, or reading product catalogs before going shopping.

3. As for the difficulty and complexity of languages in authentic materials, a careful selection of teaching materials to suit learners' competency is important. Providing materials containing some vocabulary and grammatical structures learners have seen before can facilitate their understanding. In addition, when the authentic materials get more difficult, class discussions, group works and less complicated assignments are recommended, so learners will realize that they do not have to know all vocabulary or grammatical structures to understand the main content of such materials. This may prevent learners from experiencing boredom, frustration, and demotivation in language learning.

Recommendation for Future Research

1. Research studies on attitudes of students toward different types of English authentic teaching materials are recommended so as to help teachers select teaching materials which best suit EFL learners' interests.

2. This study focused on English-major undergraduate students whose English competency levels were at lower intermediate and intermediate levels. The same study can be conducted with students who have lower background of English or those of non-English majors.

3. Other aspects on the use of English authentic teaching materials can be explored, such as the achievement of using authentic materials in classrooms or the attitudes of students toward English authentic teaching materials for other related language skills courses, especially listening and speaking.

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