

*Making It 'Authentic': Egyptian EFL Student Teachers' Awareness and Use of Online Authentic Language Materials and Their Learning Motivation*

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### **Abstract**

*This paper reports a research study that sought investigating Assiut University College of Education (AUCOE) EFL student teachers' awareness and use of online authentic materials on the basis of their actual language leaning needs, and how this relates to their language learning motivation. To accomplish this, a mixed-method research methodology was employed for data collection and analysis to provide both contextual understanding and quantitative evidence. In particular, the following tools were used: (1) a semi-structured interview (a qualitative method) for identifying the particular language-learning needs of EFL student teachers at AUCOE and compiling a list of those needs; (2) a qualitative analysis of some online language materials based on the compiled list of needs to identify the authentic materials that can be used to meet EFL student teachers' language learning needs; (3) a questionnaire administered to EFL student teachers to investigate their awareness and use of online authentic language materials; and (4) a questionnaire administered to EFL student teachers to identify their*

*language learning motivation level. Results reached a list of EFL student teachers' language learning needs, and a subsequent list of those authentic language materials available online which would meet those needs. Also, analysis of learners' responses to the Online Authentic Language Learning Questionnaire revealed that learners were aware of online authentic materials and use them frequently in their language study. Moreover, Pearson's Product Moment indicated a positive relationship between EFL student teachers' awareness and use of online authentic materials and their language learning motivation.*

**Keywords:** *Authentic language learning; online authentic materials; awareness and use of authentic materials; EFL student teachers; language learning motivation.*

## **1. Background & Research Problem**

### **1.1 Research Questions**

The study attempts to answer the following questions: (a) What are the actual language-learning needs of EFL student teachers at AUCOE?; (b) Which online authentic language materials are to be used for involving EFL student teachers in realistic and meaningful use of the English language based on their actual needs?; (c) How far do EFL student teachers acknowledge and use online authentic materials?; and (d) How do EFL student teachers' awareness and use of online authentic language materials relate to their language learning motivation?

The present study is limited to the Egyptian context, with specific reference to Assiut University College of Education (AUCOE) and second-year EFL student teachers as the main target and research group. It is also limited to investigating their English language

learning needs and the materials they have been using during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester in 2014-2015.

## **1.2 Theoretical Background & Literature Review**

Gilmore (2007) defines authenticity as 'the language produced by a real speaker/writer for a real audience, conveying a real message'. For Richards and Schmidt (2002), it indicates the degree to which materials have the natural speech or writing qualities; thus it is 'synonymous with genuineness, realness, truthfulness, validity, reliability, undisputed credibility, and legitimacy of materials or practices' (Tatsuki, 2006: p1). The word 'authentic' refers to anything that was originally produced for a non-classroom audience (Tennant, 2011).

More specifically, Nunan (1999) defines authentic materials as spoken or written language data produced in the course of genuine communication, and not specifically written for purposes of language teaching. They are 'samples that reflect a naturalness of form and an appropriateness of cultural and situational context that would be found in the language as used by native speakers' (Rogers & Medley, 1988: p468).

Accordingly, authentic materials (e.g. magazines, newspapers and songs) were not originally developed for pedagogical purposes; they contain more realistic and natural examples of language use than those found in textbooks, and hence, enable learners to interact with real language and content rather than form. Therefore, learners feel that they are learning the target language as it is used outside the classroom (Kilickaya, 2004).

According to McGrath (2002), eight criteria should be followed when selecting authentic texts: (a) relevance to syllabus & learners' needs; (b) intrinsic interest of topic; (c) cultural appropriateness; (d) linguistic demands; (e) cognitive demands; (f) logistical considerations; (g) quality; and (h) exploitability.

There are many classifications and examples of authentic materials in English language learning (ELL). Gebhard (1996), for example, identifies 4 main categories: (a) Authentic Listening/Viewing Materials (e.g. TV commercials, quiz shows, cartoons and news clips); (b) Authentic Visual Materials (e.g. slides, photographs, paintings and stamps); (c) Authentic Printed Materials (e.g. newspaper articles, movie ads, astrology columns); (d) Realia or real objects (e.g. coins, folded paper and puppets) (see also Oura, 2001)

Modern ELL approaches tend to attach more value to authentic materials than those deliberately created for classroom use. They tend to make ELL a functional enterprise rather than a purely linguistic endeavour (Richards, 2006; Savignon, 2006; Kramsch, 2008; Nicanor, 2013). Hence, it sounds reasonable to assume that the use of authentic materials in classrooms can fit into a constructivist approach called, Contextualized Teaching and Learning (CTL), a 'conception of teaching and learning that helps teachers relate subject matter content to real world situations' (Berns & Erickson, 2001: p2). Thus, CTL might help students to make connections between learned content and real-life contexts.

Some research was conducted on authentic language learning pedagogy that helps with effective second language learning (e.g. Petersen, 2008;

Pinsonneault, 2008; Power, 2010; Oura, 2011; Andrew, 2012). For example, Oura (2011) argues for a task-based ELL approach to be used for introducing authentic materials so as to link the classroom with the wider world. Also, Pinsonneault (2008) employed an authentic material method to examine whether authentic input would lead to acquisition of lexicon in Spanish; participants learned lexical chunks after being introduced to L2 via some authentic materials.

Petersen, Divitini & Chabert (2008) considered a socio-constructivist authentic language learning approach to mobile language learning. Their interactive learning design revealed mobile blogs as effective tools that facilitated interaction and created authentic opportunities for students to interact with native speakers. Also, Power (2010) employed 'social engagement' as well as 'service learning' as an authentic learning pedagogy vehicle in teacher education that combines both learning objectives and real-world practices. Andrew (2012) employed a similar approach (i.e. community placement) for mediating linguistic practice.

Many researchers highlighted benefits of using authentic materials, especially in language learning contexts (e.g. Brinton, 1991; Gebhard, 1996; Nunan, 1999; Berns & Erickson, 2001; Berardo, 2006; Gilmore, 2007), which range from simple modelling of the target language to increasing learners' motivation and establishing appropriate contexts for meaningful language learning and practice.

In particular, such materials can: (a) provide a natural model that encourages students to be better readers/ listeners (Nunan, 1999; Berns & Erickson,

2001), and create a comfortable, stress-free ELL environment (Gilmore, 2007); (b) reinforce direct relationship between classroom language and the outside world (Brinton, 1991); (c) affectively work as a means to overcome the cultural barrier to ELL (Bacon & Finnegan, 1990), and increase learners' motivation if they are interesting (Gilmore, 2007); (d) facilitate active learning, and lead to increased student engagement (Pierluigi, Gopalakrishnan, Hobbs & Liu, 2011); (e) allow for dealing with different tasks; (f) work as a means to contextualise ELL (Gebhard, 1996; Berns & Erickson, 2001); (g) lead to the 'true production' that teachers usually aim at, especially when meaningful, authentic activities are repeated (Kapur, 2011); and (h) support a more creative approach to teaching and inform students about real world (Berardo, 2006).

Many studies investigated the process of creating an authentic ELL environment in the classroom (e.g. Hegelheimer & Tower, 2004; Jones, Squires & Hicks, 2008; Kraemer, Ahn, Hillman & Fei, 2009; Al-Shehri, 2011; Nikitina, 2011; Bahrani & Sim, 2012). For example, Bahrani & Sim (2012) aimed at discovering the effectiveness of exposure to news, cartoons, and films as types of authentic audiovisual programmes (which proved to be a great source of language input) on improving some low-level language learners' proficiency.

Jones, Squires & Hicks (2008) employed an interactive online learning environment for improving spoken language skills, combining natural language processing with 3D environments to create distributed authentic-situated spoken language learning. Purcell-

Gates, Degener, Jacobson, & Soler (2002) found out that using real-life materials and authentic activities in adult literacy classes impacts learners' literacy practices. Similarly, Chuo & Kung (2002) reported positive results using a variety of EFL/ESL websites as supplementary material with college students in Taiwan; Campbell (2004) described how web-logs and Flickr can enhance learning potential in EFL classes; and Lin (2004) compared the effects of using authentic materials, web-based authentic and non-authentic materials, on motivation and reading achievement.

There is increasing evidence that learning environments incorporating the Internet (i.e. any digital media) can facilitate 2<sup>nd</sup> and foreign-language acquisition (Blake, 2011; Pierluigi, Gopalakrishnan, Hobbs & Liu, 2011). Moreover, using authentic materials allows students to experience foreign language-learning rewards; they might have an interest in it and become more willing to master its forms. Benefits of using authentic materials are also extended to teachers: they are likely to make students more motivated and goal-oriented. Further, using authentic materials can make curriculum stimulating for both teachers and students. Besides, English language teachers are continually searching for better ways of accessing authentic materials to improve their students' learning. Technology in general contributes to authenticity of learning by enabling the approximation of 'real life' situations and exposure to authentic cultural artefacts (Warschauer, 1996). An Internet search, for example, provides almost unlimited resources for profession-based or specific topics (e.g.

websites searching on a specific topic, making questions, and posting to students online).

As Web technologies have transformed communication around the world, it is natural to play a major role in authentic ELL (Hafiz, 2013). Internet tools have provided easy access to authentic materials from anywhere (Leloup & Ponteiro, 2000; Berardo, 2006), and thus could offer students with authentic learning experiences (Lombardi, 2007). The Web enables various forms of input (e.g. texts, images, and videos), and therefore, seems distinctively adapted to helping students to gain access to authentic language (Blake, 2001). Besides, it can successfully replace authentic printed materials, and thus makes the ESL classroom significantly livelier (Vaičiūnienė & Užpalienė, 2010). Moreover, employing Web-based activities permits teachers to address ELL interactivity and engagement problems. Websites are purposely interactive and user-friendly, and are consequently more engaging. Thus, the Web constitutes a very useful tool for teaching vocabulary and cultural content (Pierluigi, Gopalakrishnan, Hobbs & Liu, 2011).

Therefore, as one of most useful and updated resources for authentic materials, the Web has become an excellent means for ELL. It thus can be used in the classroom (e.g. online newspapers and magazines, etc.). YouTube, for example, has become an online store of language learning videos. Compared with costly printed materials, the Web is more interactive and visually stimulating. Practically, it is a modern-day reality used by most students and teachers, where there is easier access to endless amounts of many different types of materials (Vaičiūnienė & Užpalienė, 2010).



Although many researchers (e.g. Berardo, 2006; Vaičiūnienė & Užpalienė, 2010; Blake, 2011; Pierluigi, Gopalakrishnan, Hobbs & Liu, 2011; Yücel, 2011) argue that anything can be used as authentic material, the Web alone, from a practical-economical standpoint, is currently regarded as the most useful resource; it provides large amounts of different text types, language styles, and interview videos not found in textbooks, and which would normally become very up-to-date. Further, this variety of online resources indicates the feasibility of finding something interesting and motivating to learners.

As an international language, English has become a prerequisite that everyone needs to master and learn. Learners who have motivation in language learning outperform other less-motivated learners (Brown, 2000; Guilloteaux & Dornyei, 2008). In this regard, learners' motivation for ELL and their attitudes towards it are the most important predictors of success in ELL (Wang, 2007; Melendy, 2008).

Language learning motivation refers to the attempt and desire to learn the language, and the positive attitudes towards learning it. It is thus a process that starts with a need, and leads to a behaviour that directs learners to achieve a goal (Gardner, 2006; Melendy, 2008). In social psychology, motivation has been viewed differently: while the behaviouristic approach viewed motivation simply as the anticipation of reward, the cognitive approach viewed it as more related to learners' decisions concerning the selection of the goals they tend to achieve or avoid, and subsequent efforts. However, the constructivist school focused more on social contexts and individuals' decisions. The three

schools of thought agree on the central idea that needs fulfilment is a rewarding process that demands choices, and must be interpreted within a social context (Brown, 2000). This means that in order to make learners motivated, they need some kind of reward or need fulfilment while interacting with other peers in the classroom . Further, using authentic materials would expose EFL student teachers to real language; this is very important in the pre-service teacher education programm- es. The social and functional role of language becomes more evident when such materials are employed appropriately as a means of both proper language learning and teacher training.

Incorporating authentic materials in teaching a foreign language provides - along with the linguistic advantages - the motivating power to learn and increase students' motivation. Some studies (e.g. Thanajaro, 2000; Otte, 2006) have confirmed that students' motivation and self-satisfaction increased after exposure to authentic aural texts.

Many studies dealt with authentic materials and how they relate to language learning motivation (e.g. Peacock, 1997; Vaičiūnienė & Užpalienė 2010; Chen & Brown, 2012). Chen and Brown (2012) examined the impact that targeting an authentic audience within a task-based, computer-mediated environ- ment may have on L2 learner motivation toward ELL writing. In the same vein, Peacock (1997) investigated whether authentic materials would increase the classroom motivation of learners; and Vaičiūnienė and Užpalienė (2010) explored ESP students' attitude towards different authentic materials on their motivation to

identify advantages and disadvantages of using these authentic resources for learning purposes.

Further, some studies (e.g. Morton, 1999; Dumitrescu, 2000; Porcaro, 2001; Baghban, 2011; Vaičiūnienė & Užpalienė, 2010) dealt with integrating and using authentic materials within the area of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). These included: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (e.g. Morton, 1999); English for Science and Technology (EST) (e.g. Porcaro, 2001); and English for Pharmacy Instruction (EPI) (e.g. Filice & Sturino, 2002).

Many studies employed Internet tools for authentic ELL purposes (e.g. LeLoup & Ponterio, 2000; Mishan & Strunz, 2003; Pierluigi, Gopalakrishnan, Hobbs & Liu, 2011; Yücel, 2011). For example, Pierluigi, Gopalakrishnan, Hobbs and Liu (2011) investigated how using online technologies offers opportunities to access authentic material that is engaging, appropriate, and affordable. In Yücel's (2011) study, interviewed pre-service teachers emphasised the crucial role the Internet plays in education and authentic ELL viewing it as a useful resource that provides many opportunities (e.g. authentic study samples reflecting the target culture); thus, it fosters contemporary approaches, such as individualised self-directed language learning.

Lack of motivation can cause students to lose attention in lectures, and hence fail to live up to the targeted university standards. Authentic materials might increase learners' motivation because they are inherently more interesting and stimulating than artificial ones (Hyland, 2003; Wang, 2004; Usun & Komur, 2009), bringing learners closer to the target language and culture (Chapple & Curtis, 2000).

Several studies on ELL motivation have distinguished between two main types of motivation, namely integrative and instrumental (e.g. Gardner, 2001; Salvin, 2003; Liu, 2007; Wang, 2007; Feng & Chen, 2009; Babae, 2012). A learner is integratively motivated if s/he learns a language to know more about the culture and values of the target language group, to communicate with native speakers, or to live in the target language country. According to Finegan (1999), integrative motivation underlies a successful acquisition of the target foreign language and a native-like pronunciation. In contrast, instrumental motivation is related to direct benefit; more specifically, it is distinguished with the desire to obtain a practical/concrete reward from studying the target foreign language (Dornyei, 2001; Salvin, 2003; Wang, 2008). Studying motivation is necessary for ELL researchers; without ample motivation, foreign language learners cannot achieve long-term goals. Good teaching and courses alone might not guarantee success as learners still need a degree of motivation to learn a language and communicate successfully (Lamb, 2007; Ebata, 2008; Guilloteaux & Dornyei, 2008).

### **1.3 Research Problem & Objectives**

Since they do not always provide a realistic format of how language is used, traditional textbooks alone are no longer sufficient as ELL resources. Thus, learners should be directed to real authentic language as spoken today (Kramersch, 2008; Nicanor, 2013). When English is taught as a foreign language, teachers always modify it to sound more comprehensible to learners; they employ non-authentic texts which are artificial, unvaried, and too focused on certain aspects to teach.

This artificial nature of the language and structures used in classrooms make language different from reality, especially in terms of how it is really used by native speakers (Berardo, 2006).

From a modern ELL approach, language becomes realistic when attached to current real-life events, problems, and issues, which makes it easy to acquire. According to Brown (2002: p28), using authentic language requires from teachers designing the tasks based on students' abilities, interests and experiences. The less authentic the materials used in class are, the less prepared the learners will be for the real world (McGrath, 2002). Thus, deeper authentic learning occurs in social, active, contextual and engaging contexts (Carmean & Haefner, 2002). Such learning maximises students' internalisation of knowledge and skills, and results in a meaningful understanding of material and content.

Content analysis of the English courses (e.g. Conversation & Speaking, Discourse Analysis, Reading and Writing) studied by EFL student teachers at AUCOE, triangulated with open interviews conducted with some of those student teachers, revealed that they study a de-contextualised language that does not reflect authentic English as used by native speakers. Many of the forms, structures, and uses they encounter are too old-fashioned. Moreover, these courses tend to be more theoretical (i.e. focusing on knowledge about language) and less practical (i.e. not focusing on pragmatic language use). Thus, textbooks include merely texts to be fully memorised by learners, and hardly include any authentic materials that expose learners to the actual target language.

In Egypt, as a non-English speaking community, opportunities to practise English outside the classroom are rare. This has influenced ELL at public schools, and even language teacher education at academic institutions. In their pre-service education programmes, prospective English language teachers (i.e. EFL student teachers) at AUCOE need to state clearly their particular language learning needs based on which online authentic language materials can be identified. This way, their English courses would connect with real English, which might in turn increase language learning motivation. It is assumed that the new literacy practices and language skills that EFL student teachers develop within their pre-service education programme can be easily transferred to future classroom situations and language practices at schools (Abdallah, 2011). Therefore, it is essential to identify the current language learning needs of EFL student teachers and how they might employ online authentic language materials to meet these particular needs, to subsequently improve both their language learning and future teaching practices.

Moreover, these materials should be created from learners' views since students are the ones who will eventually benefit most from them. Unfortunately, as Pietila (2004) notes, previous studies did not take learners' views into account, and thus ignored the most fundamental component (i.e. personal opinions) required when dealing with supporting learning tools/materials.

Moreover, reviewed literature (see above) includes a few related studies carried out among Arab students to investigate using online authentic materials,

especially within language-learning situations. Further, no studies were particularly employed for investigating any correlation that might exist between student teachers' awareness and use of online authentic materials on one hand, and their ELL motivation level on the other. Thus, this rarity of previous studies tackling this important topic, especially as far as the Egyptian context is concerned, acts as a strong motive to conduct the current research study.

In a nutshell, there is a persistent need to identify realistic language learning needs required for EFL student teachers based on which online authentic language materials (e.g. appropriate search engines and websites) can be suggested. Accordingly, it is important to explore EFL student teachers' awareness and use of online authentic language materials based on their particular language learning needs, and how this relates to their language learning motivation as a fundamental factor that significantly influence and direct the language-learning process.

Therefore, this research study aims at accomplishing the following objectives: (a) Identifying the particular language learning needs of EFL student teachers at AUCOE; (b) Determining the online authentic language materials useful for EFL student teachers in the light of those needs; (c) investigating EFL student teachers' awareness and use of online authentic materials; and (d) exploring the relationship between EFL student teachers' awareness and use of online authentic language materials and their language learning motivation.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Design of the Study**

To accomplish research objectives, a mixed-method research design (involving both quantitative and qualitative methods) was employed for data collection and analysis to provide both quantitative results and contextual understanding of the investigated phenomenon. According to this mixed-method approach, the research problem and objectives act as the starting point, which determine the choice between various quantitative and qualitative methods to accomplish specific research goals (Creswell, 2003; Tashakorri & Teddlie, 2003).

#### **3.2 Data Collection**

Some quantitative and qualitative research tools were designed and administered: These are (a) a semi-structured interview (see Appendix A) for identifying the particular language learning needs of EFL student teachers (a quantitative tool); (b) a list of EFL student teachers' language learning needs (see Table 1) that was obtained through qualitative analysis of some website content (a qualitative tool); and two quantitative tools: (c) Authentic Language Materials Questionnaire (see Appendix C); and (d) Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire (see Appendix D).

#### **3.3 Research Group**

To evaluate reliability of tools of the study, a group of 20 second-year EFL student teachers at AUCOE were randomly selected to participate in the pilot study. Then, a group of 50 second-year EFL student teachers at AUCOE were randomly assigned to participate in the main study.



### 3.4 Research Procedures

To answer the research questions, some procedures were followed. They are logically stated below under each corresponding research question.

To answer the first research question, '*What are the actual language-learning needs of EFL student teachers at AUCOE?*', semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 EFL student teachers; before implementation, the designed interview protocol (Appendix A) was submitted to some jury members specialised in TESOL (n=10) to check validity and consistency with research purposes. Based on jury's suggestions, some amendments were made. Then, the interviews were piloted on 25 EFL student teachers. Based on a test-retest procedure, the resulting reliability value was 0.6. After that, a sample of 2<sup>nd</sup>-year EFL student teachers (n=20) was randomly selected for the interview. Then, data was recorded and analysed with the assistance of qualitative Word-processing. Based on this analysis, a list of EFL student teachers' language learning needs was compiled (see Table 1 below).

As for the second question, '*Which online authentic language materials are to be used for involving EFL student teachers in realistic and meaningful use of the English language based on their actual needs?*', the needs list was consulted for guidance during the process of identifying the appropriate online authentic materials. This was followed by a review and screening of some Web-based resources to identify those relevant websites, which included any authentic materials that should meet EFL student teachers' language-learning needs. Again, during this stage, reference was made to

the already-compiled needs list as the main guideline. Then, a list including some online resources was compiled, combined with a detailed explanation of why they might be useful and relevant, and for which purposes they might be used, and why. The composed list was divided into 3 main sections: (a) main categories of relevant websites; (b) specific details of websites; (c) the rationale underlying importance and usefulness of those websites under each category (see Appendix B).

Concerning the third question, '*How far do EFL student teachers acknowledge and use online authentic materials?*', literature review on 'online authentic language materials' was made (e.g. Petersen, Divitini & Chabert, 2008; Pinsonneault, 2008; Power, 2010; Oura, 2011; Andrew, 2012) to build up the questionnaire. This was followed by designing the Online Authentic Materials Awareness and Use Questionnaire to be conducted with 50 EFL student teachers (see Appendix C). The draft questionnaire was submitted to some jury members specialised in TESOL (n=10) to check validity and convenience with the research purposes; any necessary modifications were made based on jury's suggestions. Then, the questionnaire was piloted with 20 EFL student teachers to check and assess its reliability. Based on a test-retest procedure, the resulting reliability value was 0.6. To administer the final question-naire to target participants, a representative sample of 2<sup>nd</sup>-year EFL student teachers (n=50) was randomly selected. Following administration, a code book to guide SPSS statistical analysis was created; the code for negative statements was reversed while inserting codes and values on SPSS

(i.e. 1= Strongly Agree to 5= Strongly Disagree) to obtain accurate and valid data. Then, data was recorded, and analysed with the assistance of SPSS.

Regarding the fourth question, 'How far do EFL student teachers' awareness and use of online authentic language materials relate to their language learning motivation?', first, a review of literature was made on foreign language-learning motivation (e.g. Gardner, 1985; Tamimi & Shuib, 2009; Chalak & Kassaian, 2010) in order to construct the questionnaire. Then, a Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire was designed, and then administered to EFL student teachers (see Appendix D). While constructing the questionnaire, literature was reviewed for some relevant questionnaires (e.g. Gardner, 1985; Hyland, 2003; Wang, 2004; Lamb, 2007; Guilloteaux & Dornyei, 2008; Tamimi & Shuib, 2009; Usun & Komur, 2009; Chalak & Kassaian, 2010). A Five-Point Likert Scale ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree' was used to indicate student teachers' preferences. The questionnaire was submitted to jury members to judge the validity of statements and their appropriateness to research purposes. Accordingly, suggested modifications were made, and the final version of the questionnaire included 35 statements.

After piloting it to a random group of second-year EFL student teachers (n=20) at AUCOE, the final questionnaire (see Appendix D) was submitted to 15 TESOL jury members to check validity and convenience with the research purposes. Based on a test-retest procedure, the resulting reliability value was 0.7. To test the coherence and internal reliability of all items in both questionnaires, the Cronbach Alpha was used. For

the AUTH (Authentic materials) variables, the Cronbach Alpha was 0.91, which counts as excellent, showing that the rating scale used was quite coherent. For the MOT (Motivation) variables, the Cronbach Alpha was 0.85, which was regarded as an excellent score, again showing a strong scale.

Then, a sample of 2<sup>nd</sup>-year EFL student teachers (n=50) was selected for questionnaire administration. Data was recorded, and then quantitatively analysed with SPSS. After that, the students' scores on the Online Authentic Materials Awareness and Use Questionnaire were compared with their scores in the Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire to explore the relationship between student teachers' awareness and use of authentic materials and their foreign language learning motivation level. Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was employed to identify correlation between AUTH and MOT variables.

#### **4. Results**

The answer of the 1<sup>st</sup> research question, a list of needs was compiled (see Table 1 below). It was obtained based on analysis of the semi-structured interview data obtained from 20 participants. The obtained list consists of 43 skills organised under 5 main categories (i.e. themes).

**Table 1: List of EFL Student Teachers' Realistic Language Learning Needs**

Dimensions	Particular Needs
1. Linguistic Communication Needs	1.1 Communicating effectively in English with other s around;
	1.2 Having more chances to express themselves in English in relaxing situations;
	1.3 Getting more opportunities to interact with native speakers online;
	1.4 Employing effective teacher-student and student-teacher communication strategies;
	1.5 Exchanging linguistic content (e.g. knowledge and information) online to improve language learning;
	1.6 Recognising linguistic demands of various situations.
2. Phonological Needs	2.1 Speaking English fluently and appropriately;
	2.2 Pronouncing English correctly and accurately;
	2.3 Using various language patterns, utterances and structures easily, smoothly and correctly;
	2.4 Having more space for listening and language practice;
	2.5 Doing more training in listening to identify correct pronunciation of phonemes, syllables, morphemes and to understand connected speech;
	2.6 Integrating the main 4 language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing).
3. Academic Study & Learning Needs	3.1 Filling in the existing gap between academic study at university and realistic teaching/learning situations at schools;
	3.2 Studying more direct pragmatic-practical courses (e.g. Conversation, Translation, Phonetics, and Grammar) than literature (e.g. Novel and Drama).
	3.3 Creating a more effective and positive link between theory and practice;
	3.4 Reviewing a wide range of tests guidelines (e.g. model questions and answers) to be trained on final exams in some courses;
	3.5 Getting following-up and immediate feedback to help them with improving their writing;
	3.6 Practising individualised instruction and personal support so as to resolve individual differences and meet personal language learning needs;
	3.7 Doing more drilling and elaboration on specific components, types and genres of writing (e.g. comparing and contrasting, cause and effect, argumentative and expository writing);
	3.8 Hearing only one accent/dialect (either British or American English) to be used by tutors/lecturers;
	3.9 Being exposed to an orientation before joining the English section;
	3.10 Developing critical thinking strategies, especially because they do not have chance to discuss topics with each other;
	3.11 Experiencing more focus by tutors on practical skills than on academic-theoretical knowledge;
	3.12 Having flexible teachers/tutors who selectively focus on quality rather than quantity; they should not teach every single word in the textbook;
	3.13 Getting more realistic examples/samples, especially while learning old literature;
	3.14 Having clear standards to guide course delivery; in particular, tutors

Dimensions	Particular Needs
	<p>should abide more by course specifications;</p> <p>3.15 Being exposed to new teaching methods/techniques for delivering some difficult literary courses, which are usually hard and dry by nature;</p> <p>3.16 Integrating all courses together through creating a thematic connection that should link them with each other;</p> <p>3.17 Receiving continuous revision and new content that build on prior linguistic knowledge;</p> <p>3.18 Enjoying the language learning process and having more fun.</p>
4. Contemporary Career and Recruitment Needs	<p>4.1 Acting as good and successful models to their prospective students;</p> <p>4.2 Meeting current job market requirements;</p> <p>4.3 Mastering the required professional teaching skills;</p> <p>4.4 Developing a strong knowledge base that involves academic, educational, cultural and professional components;</p> <p>4.5 Developing current and contemporary functional skills (e.g. time management, effective presentation, research, eclectic reading, and planning skills).</p>
5. ICT Literacies & Authentic Language Learning Needs	<p>5.1 Learning English effectively to cope with new advancements in technology which have recently imposed great burdens on language teachers and learners;</p> <p>5.2 Employing different online facilities (e.g. YouTube, Google, and Wikis) as spaces for language learning and practice;</p> <p>5.3 Getting useful authentic materials online (e.g. online conversations, TV programmes, and online tutorials or lectures) that should meet some of their particular realistic needs;</p> <p>5.4 Using and employing authentic materials that can compensate for any shortage in practice and allow for more opportunities for real interaction outside the classroom, and thus increase language learning motivation;</p> <p>5.5 Having updated materials that should be conveniently displayed and presented instead of the old-fashioned - and sometimes obsolete - materials usually delivered every year;</p> <p>5.6 Dealing with effective teaching/learning equipments and tools;</p> <p>5.7 Overcoming the hindrances that obstruct authentic materials use (e.g. cultural factors and individual differences);</p> <p>5.8 Understanding the reciprocal relationship between languages and societies.</p>

Thus, the 5 main categories represented in the list stand for the major underlying aspects of the actual language learning needs that EFL student teachers require. Also, the list acted as the main guideline or resource that was referred to while compiling the subsequent list of the 'Online Authentic Language Materials' needed by EFL student teachers.

As for the 2<sup>nd</sup> question, a review of a big number of online resources (approximately 90 documents) guided

by the previous list of needs, resulted in an online authentic language materials list (see Appendix B below). What was particular about this list was that included - along with the online resources - a rationale that explained why each category and resource was important for the target learners as far as authentic language learning was concerned.

As for the 3<sup>rd</sup> research question, descriptive statistics on SPSS were employed (see Appendix C). Except for 8 items only, the highest two responses on the positively-stated items (i.e. Strongly Agree and Agree), and subsequently the highest ones on the negatively-stated items (i.e. Strongly Disagree and Disagree), occupied more than 50% of total responses on all the 44 items (35 positive + 9 negative items). Moreover, these responses occupied more than 60% on 33 items (75% of the whole questionnaire). Also, they occupied 72% on 23 items (around 52%) of the whole questionnaire.

For some items (n=11), the highest response alone (Strongly Agree for positive items, and Strongly Disagree for negative ones) occupied between 42% and 50% of total responses. What was common among these items is that they highlighted the main idea that EFL student teachers' use of online authentic materials would make a difference in their language learning. For example, it would make them more active, motivated, and involved.

On the other hand, the percent of the lowest two responses on the positively-stated items (i.e. Strongly

Disagree and Disagree), and subsequently the lowest ones on the negatively-stated items (i.e. Strongly Agree and Agree), never exceeded 20% on most items (n = 29, which is 65% of total responses). The only item that was noticeably exceptional in this regard is item number 5 (I can't usually decide precisely on which online authentic materials are beneficial, and which are not), and which exceeded 62% of total responses. This indicates that the target student teachers needed some guidance and direction into choosing/selecting which online authentic materials that could be used while language learning.

The percentages and frequencies above indicated a high degree of awareness and use of online authentic materials by EFL student teachers. In particular, EFL student teachers seemed to be aware of the importance of these materials in their language learning contexts, and how they would make a difference compared with traditional paper-based materials adapted for classroom uses. It was evident that they were using the Internet regularly for authentic language learning purposes because they believed that it would expose them to updated resources (e.g. useful websites) that could facilitate for them authentic language learning.

Therefore, the demand for using more authentic materials in foreign language learning is getting stronger as language learners should be given opportunities to learn the language the way it is actually used in the real world. Authenticity is



considered to be significant since it offers learners a sense of real world (see also McGrath, 2002).

Data also reflects participants' main reasons for using online authentic materials, which can be represented in: (a) easy access to the Internet; (b) intrinsic language-learning motivation; (c) accessing diverse online services; (d) developing their communication, thinking, and self-expression skills; (e) accessing modern and updated English language; and (f) getting some useful materials/objects (e.g. pictures and images from Google) that can be employed for many language learning purposes.

As for the 4<sup>th</sup> research question on the relationship between 'awareness and use of online authentic materials' and 'language learning motivation', the researchers employed Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (see Table 2 below)

**Table 2: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient**

Correlations			
		AuthTotal	MOT-Total
AuthTotal	Pearson Correlation	1	.479**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
MOT-Total	Pearson Correlation	.479**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Thus, the statistical processing of data indicates a positive, and statistically significant correlation ( $r=0.479$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) between the two variables. This means that the more EFL student teachers are aware of (and use) online authentic materials in their academic study,

the more likely that their language learning motivation increases. Conversely, the less EFL student teachers are aware of (and use) online authentic materials, the less is the level or degree of their language learning motivation. Further, approximately 23% of the variation in the variable 'Language Learning Motivation' among individuals is explained by the variable 'Online Authentic Materials Awareness and Use': 'r' is a symmetric measure, and thus one of the two variables can be an independent (i.e. explanatory) factor, while the other becomes the dependent (i.e. to-be-explained) factor.

This finding is contradictory to other researchers' findings; for example, Kelsen (2009) reported that students rated the use of YouTube as slightly less favourable with regard to being motivating within and outside the classroom. Similarly, some scholars did not see the value of using authentic materials, such as Millar (2005) and Kilickay (2004) who stated that learners - especially lower-level students - may experience frustration and become de-motivated when confronted with an authentic text. However, Guariento and Morley (2001) declared that such difficulties can be overcome. However, others suggested that using authentic materials is one way to effectively increase students' motivation to learn English in general. According to Hyland (2003), authenticity in a foreign language classroom will increase learner motivation and thus improve the learning results as learners who work with authentic materials have an interest in the

language based on what they know it can do for them in the future.

Dumitrescu (2000), Nonaka (2001) and Martines (2002) also confirmed that authentic materials not only provide learners with a wide range of useful information, but also can play part in enhancing learners' motivation, adding more stimulation to language learning. Seeking an effective way to teach mixed-level language classes, Shirai (2013) reached similar results concerning the significant and positive effect of authentic materials on raising learners' motivation. In line with this, Zengin (2007) and Mayora (2006) stressed that using technology, especially Internet, authentic materials and videos, can be one of the good and effective solutions to overcome students' motivational problems in the classroom. Otte (2006) and Thanajaro (2000) have confirmed that students' motivation and self satisfaction increased after exposure to authentic aural text.

## **5. Discussion**

The obtained list of language learning needs (see Table 1) seems comprehensive and realistic. It is a contextualised list that would definitely help with composing a subsequent list of those specific online authentic language materials. The list presents the main categories of those needs, of which the 'ICT and authentic language needs' within student teachers' language learning context might be the most important ones. More specifically, they highlight the bad need for accessing authentic language materials from specific

websites, and how this can be employed usefully and efficiently.

Reviewing literature, a stress was noticed on the importance of including learners' language learning needs since those learners are the ones whose views should be extremely important when planning for language learning methods and materials (e.g. Pietila, 2009). However, earlier studies did not consider individual learners' opinions, and hence lacked the most essential component that should drastically influence the decision-making process on the specific learning materials to use. Moreover, ESL students are not taught based on their own needs, but based on what ESL instructors are able to teach (Su, 2008). This highlights the importance of the needs list reached by the study for foreign language teachers who are willing to offer the materials for their students.

To identify which online authentic materials to use, the study reached a list of useful resources/materials which can be easily accessible online. The variety of categories composing the list, along with the big number of websites reached (see Appendix B), indicate the great potential of the Web as a mine of resources for authentic language learning. For example, there were many online encyclopaedia and dictionary websites, which would help EFL student teachers with meaningful learning. Similarly, YouTube – as the number-one video-sharing website all over the world – opens many horizons for authentic language learning and practice. Results imply that EFL instructors should

recognize their learners' interests in using a variety of authentic materials relevant to their needs so as to make learning more interesting, effective and productive. Moreover, students should have the right to participate in planning and selecting the materials that work to make the learning process easier provided that they know the best way to learn (Miller, 2003; Pietila, 2009).

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> question on how far EFL student teachers acknowledge and use online authentic materials in the course of their academic language study, participants' responses mostly indicate that using online authentic materials has become an indispensable part of their everyday language-related practices (e.g. watching authentic language videos on YouTube and listening to live streaming on some news websites/channels). This high level of acknowledging and using online authentic materials marks as a rationale for integrating them into the pre-service language teacher education programme in Egypt. Further, it is consistent with arguments made in the literature review section on the necessity of including modern electronic devices through which learners can independently access relevant and useful learning resources.

For the 4<sup>th</sup> question, there was a positive relationship between 'awareness and use of online authentic materials' and 'language learning motivation. This finding was consistent with other researchers' study results (e.g. Peacock, 1997; Thanajaro, 2000;

Hyland, 2003; Otte, 2006; Vaičiūnienė & Užpaliene 2010; Chen & Brown, 2012) who reported that using authentic materials is one way to effectively increase students' motivation in learning English, and thus improve the learning results. On the other hand, this result contradicts those of other researchers (e.g. McNeil, 1994; Kilickaya, 2004; and Miller, 2005) who reported that language in the authentic texts might be too difficult for learners and could decrease their motivation for language learning.

## **6. Conclusion**

Based on reached results, some conclusions in the form of 'aspects of benefit' were reached. First of all, there is a bad need to encourage and promote a Contextualized Teaching and Learning (CTL) pedagogy/approach that utilises online authentic language materials for effective teaching and learning. This also necessitates adapting instruction to meet learners' needs and motivation in order to become successful and fluent speakers since students' motivation to language learning has been found to be a leading predictor of success in ELL.

Second, it is very important to adduce the opinions and thoughts of EFL student teachers about their knowledge and use of online authentic materials since they are the ones who are learning. Besides, it is necessary to provide foreign language teachers with important information about learners' needs so that they can design and deliver their instruction accordingly.

Fourth, it is necessary to direct the attention of curriculum developers, intervention specialists, and teachers to the impact of online authentic materials on learners' motivation in foreign language learning. Similarly, it is vital to direct teachers' and learners' attention to the importance of using online authentic materials as they support learners' language learning needs by providing them with up-to-date knowledge, and exposing them to the world of authentic target language; this would bring the real world into the classroom, which will eventually enliven the class (Dumitrescu, 2000; Martinez, 2002; Leloup & Ponterio, 2000).

Finally, it has become necessary and urgent to provide EFL learners with a list of online authentic materials that would promote effective language learning and motivate them by offering more stimulation in ELL.

Also, further research is needed to experiment with the reached list of online authentic language learning materials, and how they can improve students' language skills and practices at different educational stages. Besides, more research is needed on increasing learners' motivation by contextualising the language learning process to make it sound real and relevant, and how to train EFL student teachers and language learners on obtaining authentic materials and using them for independent language study.

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