

Authenticity and Students' Motivation and Perception of Usefulness

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Abstract

This paper explores the effects of authentic materials, or lack thereof, in three different English classes over the course of a semester. These classes are taught to third-year high-school students who are enrolled in a specialized English program in Japan. The three English classes vary in the degree of utilization of authentic materials. The study sought to examine whether the class with high authentic materials usage would be the most motivating and most useful from the perspective of the students. The study also examined the relationship between motivation and perceived task usefulness by students.

Introduction

Authenticity in the classroom has been lauded as beneficial for students' motivation since communicative language teaching became popular in the 1980s. Teachers often claim they are teaching using authentic materials and authentic tasks. However, how often do teachers reflect to examine whether this is true as they develop their curriculums? This paper examines and reflects on three classes: a writing class, a conversation class and an elective movie course. It aims to discover whether these classes are being taught using authentic materials and tasks, how the presence or lack of authenticity affects motivation, and whether motivation is linked to perceived task usefulness by students. I will begin first with a literature review of authenticity in language learning and teaching.

Authenticity in Language Learning and Teaching

The conceptualization of authenticity that is best suited for the purposes of this paper is from Bachman and Palmer (1996), who defined authenticity in the context of testing as “the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test task to the features of a TLU [target language use] task” (p. 23). Although they defined authenticity for the purpose of assessment, their idea can easily be extended to language teaching tasks. This definition is useful for this paper because it specifies the linkage between classroom language and target language. While it is expected that any classroom task will not genuinely replicate real-life tasks in the target language, it is vital for teachers and examiners to craft TLU tasks which closely correspond to those found in daily life.

Although there have been numerous calls for the use of authentic materials to motivate students (e.g., Dornyei and Ciser, 1998; Melvin & Stout, 1987), there have been few



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studies investigating the actual linkage between authentic materials and students' motivation. One of those few studies is Nikolov (1999), in which it was shown that children who were exposed to authentic materials in a story-based syllabus were motivated to learn English because of the attractive cultural meanings in the stories. In a notable study, Peacock (1997) tested the effects that authentic materials have on the motivation of EFL learners. His study compared two classes, one containing 16 students and one containing 15 students. Both classes were beginning-level university students. The students' motivation to study English was tied to their occupational and educational needs. The authentic materials used in this study were poems, TV listings, pop song recordings, an advice column from a local English newspaper and English magazine advertisements. The study concluded that authentic materials were more motivating for the students with statistical significance. However, students also found authentic materials to be less interesting than artificial materials. This finding is puzzling and further research is needed to shed more light on students' motivation level regarding the use of authentic or non-authentic materials.

Another study was conducted by Gilmore (2011) on sixty-two second-year university students in Japan in order to find out whether authentic materials would help boost their English communicative competence. In Gilmore's study, one group of second-year Japanese university students learned through authentic materials and the other group learned from two EFL textbooks. Communicative competence was tested through eight different tests: a listening test, a pronunciation test, a C-test,² a grammar test, a vocabulary test, a discourse completion task, an oral interview, and a student-student role-play. Gilmore found that the use of authentic materials showed a positive change in the students' communication skills.

It is important to keep in mind that there are scholars, such as Richard Day (2004), who challenged what Day described as the "cult" of using authentic materials. Day believed the practice of employing authentic materials and tasks became more popular due to the rise of Communicative Language Teaching. According to Day, appropriateness of materials is more important than authenticity, but he also recognizes that artificial materials can be inappropriately drafted. He also pointed out that not all teachers and scholars agree on what authenticity really means. He further reasoned that teachers should pay attention to the dimensions of material appropriateness instead of being obsessed with attaching the label "authentic" to materials. Importantly, he pointed out that authentic materials that are inappropriate can be frustrating to learners. In addition, taking a strict view on authenticity, Widdowson (1998) argued that it is logically impossible to have authenticity in the classroom because learners are not in the context for that language to be authentic. He stated that for language to be authentic, learners need to be an insider to that language. Since language learners are by definition outsiders and not yet part of the target language community, he concluded that the materials that are authentic for native speakers will not be authentic for language learners. He concluded that material development in TESOL should concentrate on crafting appropriate materials rather than using authentic materials.

While it is reasonable to acknowledge that once a set of materials intended for non-classroom use is repurposed for the language classroom, it ceases to serve the function it was intended to serve and is thus no longer authentic according to Widdowson's conception of authenticity, it is important to draw a line between contrived materials for language practice and real-life materials that are appropriated for the classroom. For this practical reason, in this paper, I take the view on authenticity that was forwarded by Bachman and Palmer (1996) reviewed above.

Finally, when considering students' motivation in a class or activity, it is important to also pay attention to their perception of how useful the class or activity is. This is because a student's motivation is linked to their belief about its usefulness (Deci & Ryan, 1985, cited in Dorneyi, 2009). Particularly for motivation on the language level, Dorneyi found that discussing the potential usefulness of the L2 with students can help raise student's instrumental motivation (1994). While Dorneyi's research found a relationship between usefulness of the language itself and motivation to learn, this research will focus on the relationship between usefulness of the means to learn and motivation to learn. This study will therefore investigate students' levels of motivation and perceptions of usefulness in different classes and activities with different degrees of authenticity.

Research Questions

Informed by the literature on the effects of authentic materials, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between the degree of authenticity of materials and activities in a class and students' self-reported motivation?
2. What is the relationship between the degree of authenticity of materials and activities in a class and students' perceived usefulness of the class, activities, and materials?
3. What is the relationship between student motivation and their perception of the usefulness of a class?

Methodology

Participants

This study was conducted at a private high school in Japan. Fifteen third-year students were the participants. The participants were part of the English course program at this high school, which means they received more English instruction than other students. These students were selected because they were enrolled in three different English classes taught by the same teacher. The three classes were an English conversation class using an EFL textbook, *Let's Chat!* by John Pak (2007), an English writing class using an EFL textbook, *Topic Talk Issues Second Edition* by Kirsty McLean (2009), and an English elective class using a number of movies.

The Three Classes

The English Movie Class is an elective class, and thus it has a more relaxed atmosphere. Unlike the other two classes, it is also open to all third-year students, not only for specialized English-course students. However, this study will only focus on the fifteen specialized English students in this class, since they are the same students in the other two classes. In this class, students are not explicitly taught any language forms. Instead, they watch English movies and perform various related tasks, such as discussing the movies, practicing and singing songs from the movies, planning their own travel itineraries, creating their own game shows and teaching other students about their field of interest in a certain city (e.g., fashion in New York City). Due to the varied levels of the students in the class, tasks are assigned in a way that does not require high fluency so that all students can accomplish them. This class's content and tasks are the most authentic among the three studied. Students engage in various task-based assignments, such as: performing a movie song in front of the class and creating a travel plan

to an unfamiliar country and presenting on it. These projects have been designed such that the students research independently in groups to complete each activity.

The English Conversation Class is a required course and is only for English-course students. Its content is based on *Let's Chat!* by John Pak (2007), which often has a grammar focus. The class textbook contains seemingly authentic dialogues and many speaking activities that naturally occur outside the classroom, such as conversations about exercise, health habits, travel interests, romantic relationships, sports and so on. The chapter always start with a dialogue between two characters, one foreign male and a Japanese female character, who speak naturally. While the dialogue was no doubt scripted to fit the theme of the chapter, it does not adjust or slow down the language for the EFL learners' ears. Nevertheless, the dialogues were created for the purpose of the EFL textbook, lessening its authentic value. It also contains some activities that have an explicit language focus in every chapter, such as when students are instructed to use *'Have you ever...?'* repeatedly in the *'Experience'* chapter and make numerous comparisons in the *'Sports'* chapter. Other activities in this class include listening to authentic dialogues, asking questions of their partner on various topics, performing an activity called *'We asked 100 students.'* (a textbook activity that has surveyed 100 Japanese students on various questions related to the chapter topic wherein students must guess what they think the most popular answer was), and completing information gap exercises. Overall, this class's content and tasks attain some measure of authenticity, but they involve less authentic materials than the Movie Class.

Like the English Conversation Class, the English Writing Class is a required course for English-program students. It focuses on developing the students' writing skills and uses *Topic Talk Issues Second Edition* by Kirsty McLean (2009). This textbook is actually a speaking textbook, not designed to teach writing. The students are taught some grammar explicitly by teachers, and the writing activities are based on the speaking topics in the textbook, such as health, culture, movies and TV, and travel. While conversations in the textbook could be considered slightly authentic due to their use of naturally occurring language, the writing activities that are based on the textbook topics are not always authentic. The purpose of the class is to help students acclimate to writing lengthier pieces of writing with more fluency. It is not as authentic as it could be partially because students do not read any authentic examples of writing. Therefore, the authenticity of writing assignments has not been properly considered or introduced in this class. The textbook conversations on which students base their writings can be considered slightly authentic due to their use of natural language and natural speed. However, the textbook is still embedded with conversations that were purposed for EFL learners and not real-life conversations. Therefore, not only is there a lack of authentic writing samples, the authenticity of the speaking textbook is also low. Due to this lack of highly authentic material in both the textbook and writing samples, the introduction of authentic writing samples would have been helpful for the writing task. Considering Bachman and Palmer's (1996) definition of authenticity, then, writing assignments should correspond to features of a target language use task. However, assignments for this class have so far been limited to writing about a classmate's health, study abroad destination, and reasons for that location. While the topics sound authentic, students were not given an idea of whom to write for, which is an important aspect of writing to establish it as an authentic language task. Teachers assigned these essay topics with the sole motivation being to have students write more, not because it would mimic a target language use task. Perhaps it can be assumed that the teacher would be their audience, but possibly due to the pressure to form a

writing habit, students and the teachers neglected to address for whom the writing assignments were meant. Students have had to be reminded that the teachers do read their writing, which reflects that they are not thinking of writing as a means of communicating their ideas to the teacher. Rather, the writing assignments are a tool not to mimic a target language task but to purely practice their writing skills. Classroom activities have involved: flash writing (free writing for fluency), speaking to their partners about what they wrote in their flash writing, interviewing classroom peers on various topics and writing essays on the aforementioned topics. This class requires the most work in class and at home for the students.

Instrument

A survey using a five-point Likert scale was given to the fifteen third-year high school students. The scale for the survey questions was labeled as: “*very motivated*,” “*motivated*,” “*neutral*,” “*not really motivated*” and “*not motivated at all*.” Students were first questioned about their overall level of motivation for studying English. Then they were asked about their level of motivation for the exercises used in their classes and how useful they found the exercises to be. The class activities surveyed are summarized in Figure 1.

Movie Class (M)	Conversation Class (C)	Writing Class (W)
Watching movies and discussing them	Answering textbook questions in pairs	Writing essays about different topics
Creating a travel plan and presenting it	Playing game activities from textbook, such as “We asked 100 students”	Flash writing
Listening to English music and performing a song in front of class		

Figure 1. Class Activities

The next part of the survey asked students how motivating and useful the students found each class to be as a whole. Lastly, the students were asked to write why they felt motivated or unmotivated for each class and the extent to which they found each class to be useful.

Data Collection

The survey was administered by the teacher during the elective movie class in late June 2017. The teacher explained the survey in English and questions were also asked in English. The students were instructed not to put their names on the survey so as to be anonymous. Students were allowed to write their answers in Japanese, and more than half did so. These comments were later translated into English by the author with the help of an English-Japanese bilingual speaker. It took students about fifteen minutes to fill out the survey. Since this was a small group of participants, students' comprehension was established verbally by going through questions together as a class and assessing if they were able to produce answers. Students responded in a way which indicated that they understood, and the teacher was able to walk

around to check if they had any further questions. These students were also participants in another teacher’s study, so they were fairly familiar with the Likert scale. Fifteen students completed the survey in its entirety, although there were seventeen students in the class. However, two were absent, and finding class time for them to fill out survey proved to be difficult. So, the effort was abandoned.

Results

Students’ Self-Reported Overall Motivation Level to Study English

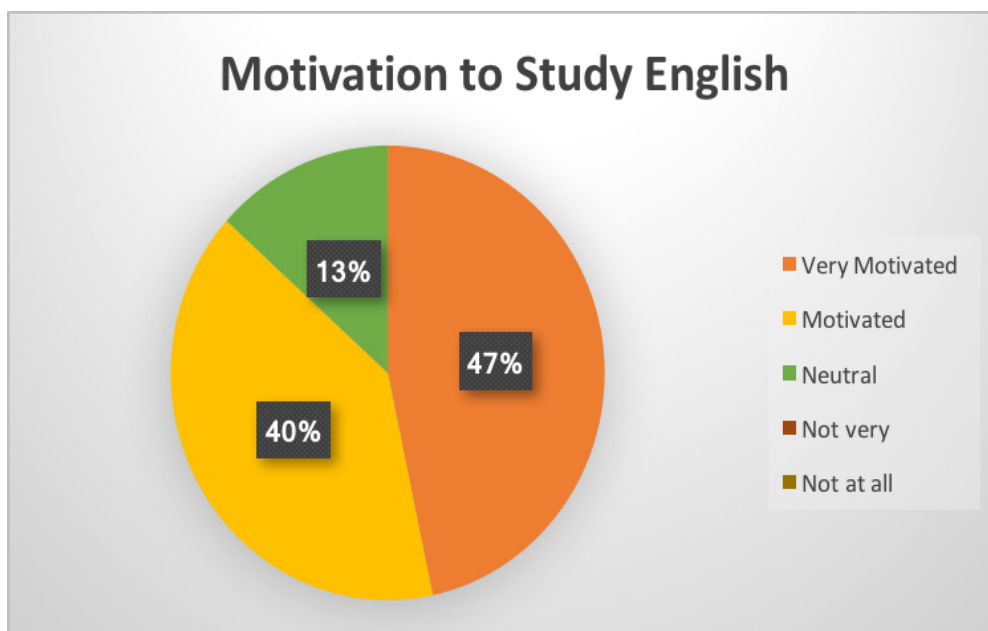


Figure 2. Students’ Overall Motivation to Study English

Regarding the first question, “How motivated are you to study English overall?”, students appeared to be motivated, with 47% saying they were very motivated, 40% saying they were motivated and 13% being neutral. No students selected “not really motivated” or “not motivated at all” (Figure 2). This is not surprising, given the fact that these students have been selected to be in the specialized English program, which means that they generally do well in English studies. There is also a general sense of pride in being selected to this group, which could positively affect their overall motivation level.

Students’ Motivation in Each Class and their Respective Activities

English Movie Class

The movie class as a whole was rated at 85% in motivation (Figure 3). It is a project-based class utilizing alternative assessment, while the other two classes used traditional assessment. Most likely, a combination of the relaxed atmosphere, authentic task-based assignments and the exposure to authentic English from their teachers and the movies, put this elective class high in authenticity and motivation for students. However, it was also the only class to be marked as “not motivated at all” by one student. Students explained the reasons for their motivation to be the cultural content of the movies and the enjoyment they obtain in the class, as the following comments illustrate.

“I can watch a lot of movies. And I can know about different countries like when we made a travel plan, I could know how much it is. It is very useful for me.” [response to motivation question]

“I’m motivated because we can learn about other countries.” [response to motivation question]

“We can use English while doing games so it is fun.” [response to motivation question]

Through movies, students were presented with the most authentic form of English language among the three classes, and their comments highlight how authenticity had an impact on their motivation. Students used the words “*fun*” and “*learn about other countries*” often in their comments to describe why they felt motivated by this class and why they thought it was useful. From these comments, it can also be inferred that they have enjoyed watching and discussing movies and learning about other countries through projects. They do not have that opportunity in other classes, so this class is a good way for them to learn about other countries in such a social way.

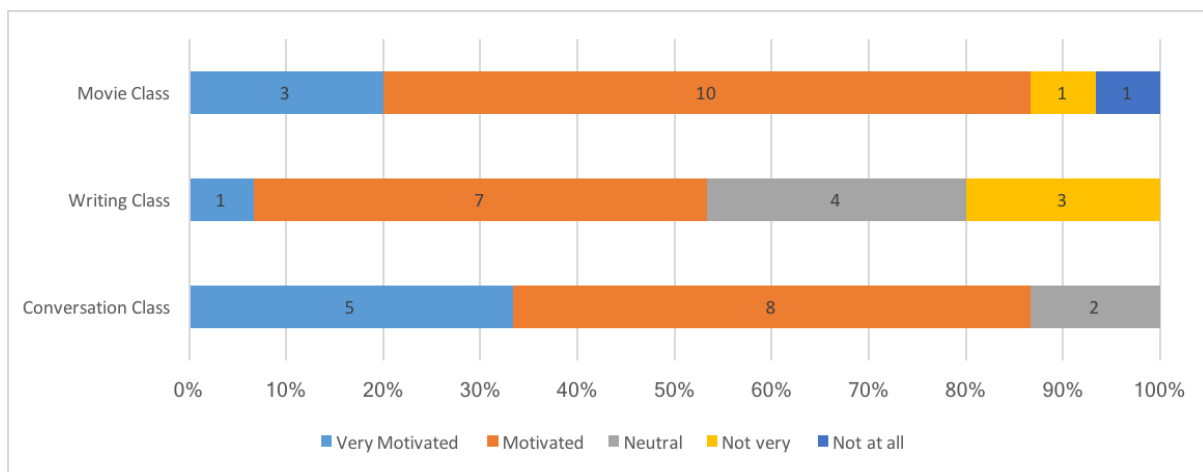


Figure 3. Students’ Self-Reported Motivation Level in Each Class

On the movie classes’ activity level, watching movies and discussing them was perceived as the most motivating activity by students at 86% (Figure 4). Twelve students chose “very motivated” and one student chose “motivated,” showing that, combined, thirteen out of fifteen students believed that this was the most motivating activity. Out of all activities, this most closely resembles a real-life task, making it highly authentic and showcasing a positive relationship between authenticity and motivation.

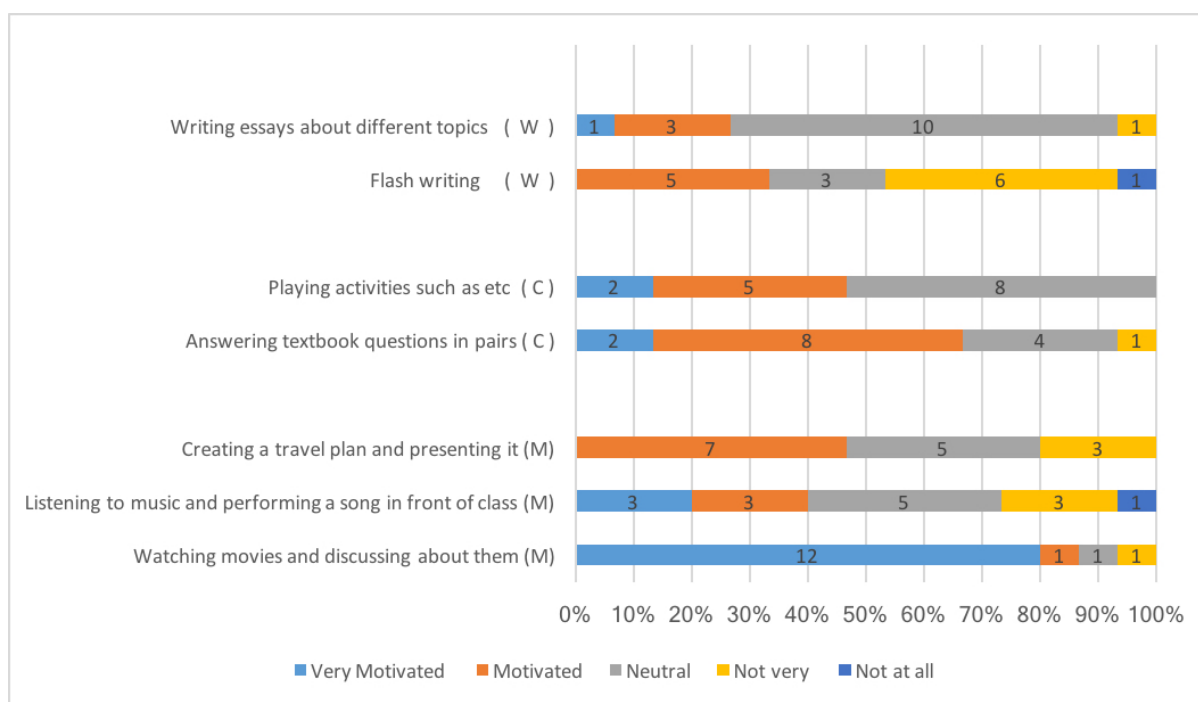


Figure 4. Students' Motivation by Class Activity

English Conversation Class

The English Conversation class, which is considered in the middle of the authenticity spectrum among the three classes studied, scored the same in motivation as the Movie class with a rating of 85% (Figure 3). Here are some students' comments on the reasons for their motivation and usefulness ratings.

“Speaking to everyone in English is fun.” [response to motivation question]

“I’m motivated because I can talk about a topic in English.” [response to motivation question]

The fact that this class's focus is on discussion, which in of itself, is a highly authentic task relevant to real-life, lends further support to the finding that there is a positive relationship between authenticity and motivation. The students seemed to find the activities useful for enjoyment, content, and opportunities to learn authentic language forms in their context. The English Conversation Class is the only class in which these students have been enrolled for all three years of their high school life (the movie class and writing class are only for third-year students). This could have made them more comfortable in the class, which may have led to their higher level of motivation.

The English Conversation class also had the second most motivating activity to students. Answering questions in pairs, which is an activity from the *Let's Chat* (Pak, 2007) textbook, was rated highly in motivation. Overall, when responses for “very motivated” and “motivated” are added together, this activity received a 65%, as shown in Figure 4. The crucial common factor between these activities is the authentic discussion component, which could be the reason for the high motivation response when compared to other activities on the list. It seems that students felt motivated by the opportunity to talk about various topics that students felt could naturally occur in everyday life.

English Writing Class

The English Writing class, considered to have the lowest level of authenticity among the three classes surveyed, was also rated to be the lowest in motivation at 55% (Figure 3). Students following comments reflected this trend.

“I don't like flash writing so I don't feel motivated.” [response to motivation question]

“I don't have motivation much cuz I have to write a lot.” [response to motivation question]

Furthermore, the activity that was deemed the least motivating by students was flash writing (Figure 4). Five students chose “motivated,” but six students choose “not very motivated” and one student chose “not motivated at all.” It received the highest number of negative responses. It is a fluency building activity with no specific audience, and there is no defined purpose except for writing as much as possible within the allotted timeframe. Therefore, this activity is not high in authenticity because it does not replicate a real-life task outside of the classroom (not involving a context, purpose, or audience). Whether the lack of authenticity of the activities affected motivation or not is difficult to establish, since students’ dislike of the flash writing activity and writing essays needs to be taken into account.

Students’ Perception of Class Usefulness and their Respective Activities for their English Improvement

English Movie Class

The English Movie class received an 80% in usefulness (Figure 5) placing it in second place for usefulness out of the three classes. However, it was the only class to receive a “not at all” useful by one student. It could be that traditional students consider a class with no explicit language building exercises and no exams as useless. Thus, this result draws attention to the possibility that authenticity might not be the only factor when students consider how useful a class is. Students commented in the following ways.

“I think this class is useful because we can talk to other people that is not our classmates. And we can practice our listening of English from movies.” [response to usefulness question]

“I can see how America and other countries use English in their daily lives so it is useful.” [response to usefulness question]

“Through games, our knowledge of other countries has increased.” [response to usefulness question]

It appears that similar to motivation, students found the cultural information of other countries useful. They also found it to be a chance to practice their listening to authentic English. Curiously, for class activities, watching movies and discussing them was perceived as the most useful at 86% (Figure 6), making it the most motivating and most useful activity for students. This suggests that authenticity and perception of usefulness may have a positive relationship, and we may be able to explain away the skewing of students’ perception of usefulness of the overall class in terms of other variables.

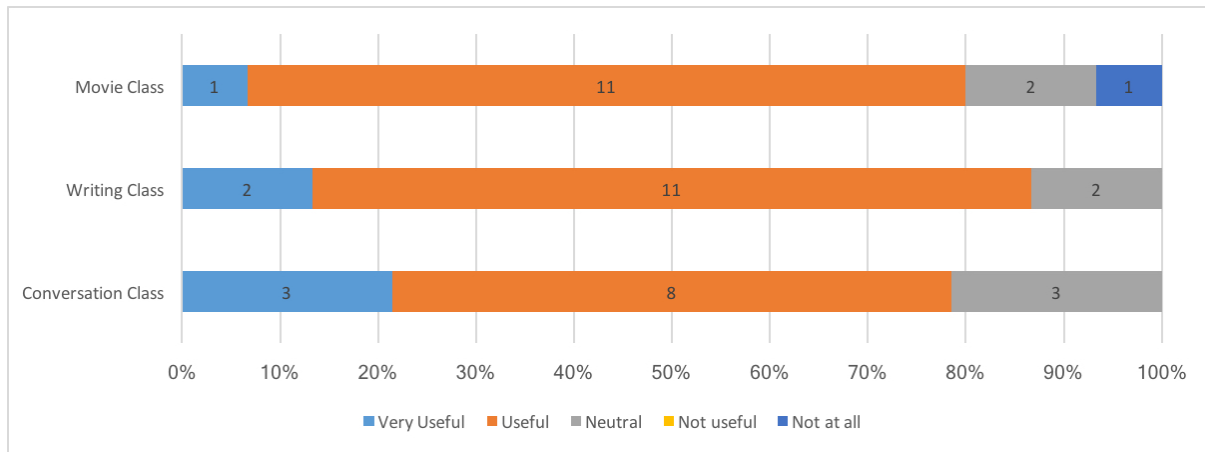


Figure 5. Students' Rating of the Classes' Usefulness for their English Improvement

It should also be noted that this class also contained the least useful activity from the students' perspective. Listening to English music and performing a song in front of class was rated positively at a mere 35% (Figure 6). One possible reason for this outcome was that they perceived little value in learning to sing in English. Another possible reason relates to the teacher's observation that students enjoy singing English songs at karaoke or in their choice class. Thus, it could be that it was singing in front of the class part of the activity that made them feel it was not useful. Singing in English can be considered a highly authentic task, especially in Japan, where karaoke is popular. However, the singing in front of the class part lessens the authenticity of the activity, which could explain why they rated it so low. They did not see it as related to a real-life task; thus, it was not useful for them.

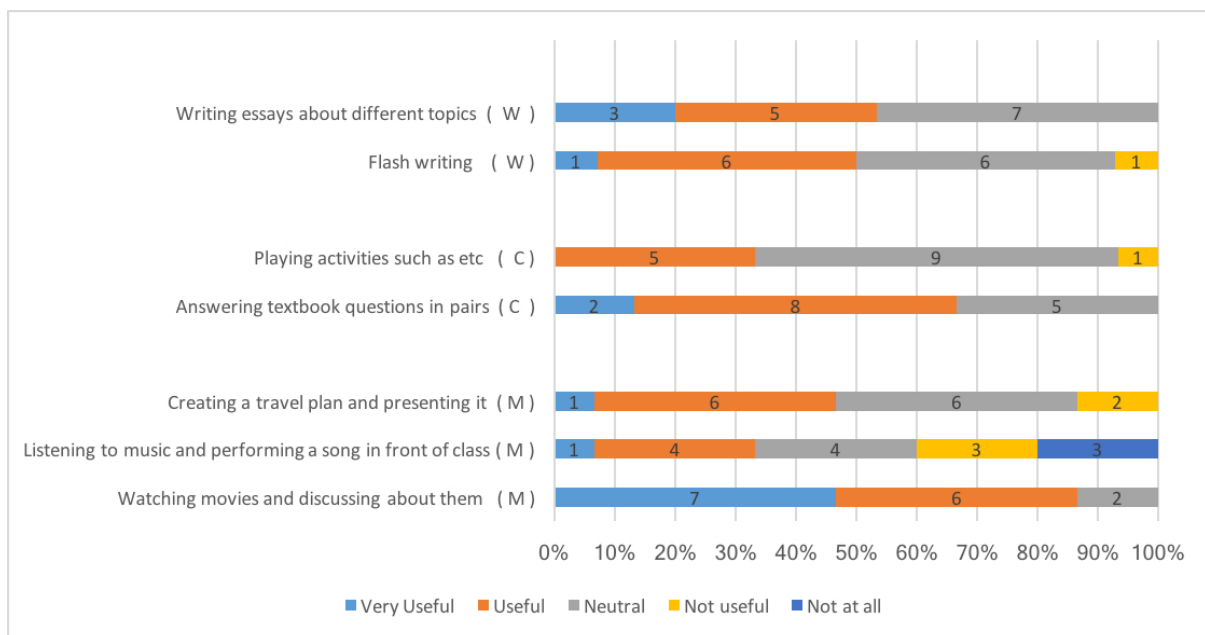


Figure 6. Students' Rating of the Usefulness of Class Activities for their English Improvement

English Conversation Class

The English Conversation class was rated the lowest in usefulness among the three classes at 77% (Figure 5), although it received the highest number of participants to choose the rating of 'Very Useful' compared to the other two classes (Figure 5). It appears that for the few students who found this class to be useful, they felt very strongly about its usefulness. The following comments stress this.

"Since many topics are involved, many new words are learned." [response to usefulness question]
"I can study daily life English so it is useful." [response to usefulness question]

Although it scored lower in usefulness on a class level, on the activity level, answering questions in pairs was perceived as the second most useful at 65% (Figure 6). This is an authentic activity related to having a conversation which mimics a real-life task. The English Conversation class did ultimately rate at 77%, which is significant for usefulness. This also may point toward a possible positive relationship between authenticity and perceived usefulness.

English Writing Class

The English Writing class was the highest in usefulness, at 85% (Figure 5). It seems that while the students were not motivated by the class or activities and did not find the activities as useful as other activities, they believed that the class overall is the most useful, especially for their future. Students comments reflected this.

"I believe it is useful but I don't like it." [response to usefulness question]
"It will be good for me when I go to university." [response to usefulness question]

Many students considered flash writing difficult; however, they also recognized that it has helped them to write better. Students acknowledged that they would need English writing skills for their future, and that is probably why it was considered the most useful class for them. The results of this study seem to indicate that the relationship between authenticity and perception of usefulness can possibly be skewed by other factors, making it difficult to find a linear relationship.

Correlation Between Student Self-Reported Motivation and Usefulness in Class Activities

English Movie Class Activities

In this class, watching movies and discussing them received an 87% rating for motivation, but creating a travel plan received a 45% rating, while singing a song was rated at 40% (Figure 4). The latter two activities both had presentation components, so it could be that students felt unmotivated by the presentation aspect rather than the activity itself. Further studies are needed to determine this.

The correlation coefficient between motivation and usefulness for watching movies and discussing was moderate, at 0.65, with students rating its usefulness at 87% (Figure 6). This is perhaps the most authentic activity of all three activities and it was rated as the most motivating and most useful (Figures 4 and 6). Movies are a medium through which students

can listen to everyday English and also experience different cultures. The exposure to these English movies probably pushed students to want to be able to understand more in English. Creating a travel plan and presenting it scored a 45% in usefulness (Figure 6). The correlation between motivation and usefulness for this activity was moderately strong at 0.86. From students' comments, the travel plan activity seemed to be interesting to them, but it was probably the presentation component of this task, which lacked an authentic audience besides classmates and posed some challenges to students who were not used to speaking in front of class, that led students to rate this activity lower than expected.

Listening to movie music and singing it in front of the class was rated rather low on motivation level, at 33% (Figure 4). The correlation with usefulness rating was weak, at .28. Through feedback from various other projects, students have expressed their desire to have more music in their lessons. Similar to the activity above, the presentation component of this activity is probably the cause of this activity rating low in motivation and usefulness to the students.

As seen in Figures 4 and 6, students' perception of their motivation with respect to class activities and their perception of the usefulness of class activities seemed to be related overall. The Movie Class and Conversation Class were rated high in motivation and perception of usefulness by students. The Writing Class, however, was rated lower in motivation but the highest for usefulness. It would seem to be an outlier or to imply that the correlation between motivation and usefulness is not high. Once the correlation is calculated, though, it would seem that the correlation between motivation and usefulness in the Writing Class is positive with a .86 coefficient. This implies that if students felt more motivated by the writing class, the perceived usefulness of the Writing Class could be even higher.

English Conversation Class Activities

The English Conversation class's two activities were practicing with activities in the textbook, such as '*We asked 100 students...*' and answering conversation questions from the textbook in pairs. Practicing activities in the textbook rated low in motivation at 45% (Figure 4) and low in usefulness at 35% (Figure 6). These low ratings are perhaps the result of most students voting neutrally: the students did not find these activities to be particularly motivating or useful for their learning. On the other hand, answering conversation questions in pairs was rated at 65% in motivation (Figure 4). The students seem to enjoy the '*Let's Chat*' (Pak, 2007) textbook since it has many interesting speaking and listening topics that involved authentic materials. This suggests that the students enjoyed speaking to one another when they had an authentic audience and could talk about contents that were relevant to their personal lives. Both activities in this class had strong positive correlations between motivation and usefulness. The activity of answering conversation questions in pairs had a correlation coefficient of 0.98 and practicing activities in the textbook had a perfect correlation coefficient of 1.0.

English Writing Class Activities

In this class, writing activities scored lower in motivation than the activities of the other two classes. The reason students do not feel motivated by flash writing or writing essays might be because these activities are not authentic. It could also be due to the fact that these writing tasks were difficult for them since it was their first time in a writing class. Further research is needed to tease apart authenticity and difficulty of materials and tasks. Students also found the primary writing activities in that class to not be as useful as activities in other classes. The

students rated the flash writing at around 35% for motivation and 50% for usefulness. Writing essays fared worse in motivation at a 25% rate and fared better in usefulness at 55%. (Figures 4 and 6). The correlation between motivation and usefulness for writing essays on different topics was a strong positive correlation of 0.95. This revealed that motivation for writing essays and usefulness are closely tied together.

In contrast, flash writing had a negative correlation coefficient of $-.75$. The negative correlation showed that while students found flash writing to be not motivating at all, some recognized it to be useful. Many students indicated that they did not like flash writing, and that was why they are not motivated. For example, a student wrote, “*I don't like flash writing so I don't feel motivated*” [response to motivation question].

Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study suggest that there is a positive relationship between students' motivation and the use of authentic materials. The movie class, the most authentic of the three classes, was rated the highest in motivation. Students comments highlighted how they felt motivated by having enjoyment and gaining new knowledge about other cultures. These comments would suggest that students felt the most motivated by how movies connected them with English in real-world contexts. The conversation class was the second highest in authenticity and was rated second highest in motivation. Students comments described how they felt motivated by the chance to discuss a topic in English. On the other hand, the writing class, which was considered the least authentic class, was also the least motivating class to students. At the activity level, the most motivating activity was watching movies and discussing them, followed by answering questions in pairs. Both activities stimulated conversations through authentic materials such as the English movies or the personal questions used in *Let's Chat* (Pak, 2007). The activity of engaging in dialogues in class is the most motivating for students because they can take an active role and express their own ideas based on real-life materials. They were not reading responses but were instead creating their own conversations. Further, they had the opportunity to reproduce language expressions from those materials, thus making the speaking task more manageable. The result is that they became more confident and could probably feel the progress of their English language development. Regarding the writing activities, the students rated their motivation low at around 25% for writing essays and 34% for flash writing (Figure 4). Not to rule out the possibility that this was due to the fact that students found writing difficult, the results could suggest that less authenticity in the classroom affected motivation. Also, students' like or dislike of certain class activities could also have affected motivation, as students mentioned their comments on flash writing.

In terms of the relationship between authenticity and usefulness, the results also suggest a possible positive relationship. The movie class, which is the highest in authenticity, scored the second highest in perceived usefulness. While the conversation class, which is the second highest in authenticity, scored the lowest out of the three in perceived usefulness. Students comments display that these classes increased their knowledge and helped them practice their language skills in a way they believed was useful. However, the least authentic class, the writing class, was rated as the highest in perceived usefulness. Students comments reflect a belief that writing will be useful for them in the future. This hints that there are possibly other factors that can influence the relationship between authenticity and usefulness, so it is difficult

to determine if this relationship is truly positive. In terms of usefulness, writing essays was rated at 55% and flash writing at 50% respectively (Figure 6).

Interestingly, it was found that students' reported motivation levels in a given class did not correspond directly to their perception of its usefulness. The English Writing Class, which was rated as the lowest level of motivation, was considered the most useful from the students' perspective. While students reported being more motivated in the English Conversation Class, they considered it less useful than the English Writing Class. It is possible that there was a third variable causing the mismatch between motivation and perception of usefulness, such as the nature of the activities in these classes. The correlation coefficient for writing essays was positive, while the correlation coefficient was negative for flash writing. Flash writing was the only activity with a negative correlation, suggesting that students found the activity useful but not motivating. There are two possible reasons. One reason could be students' progress in the writing fluency activity. They may not have found the activity motivating, but as they completed the activity every week, they could observe their word count increasing week by week. The quantitative log of their improvement could possibly have led students to believe that it is a useful activity even though it was not motivating for them. In contrast, writing essays did not take place as often as flash writing and students probably could not as closely see a difference in their writing abilities. Essay writing may have also been more challenging to many students than flash writing. It is interesting to note that even though the English movie class was considered an easy elective class where students watched movies and completed projects, it had the types of tasks that motivated students to take an interest in their learning. Watching movies to learn new knowledge, create something interesting, and interact with other students were activities that motivated these students. Teachers should then incorporate cultural content and interactive and creative activities to motivate students. While these relaxed classes are sometimes dismissed for not producing numeric grades for students, they can be a great source of motivation for language learners to continue English study. It is refreshing to see this kind of result in a high school in Japan, which is known for its test-driven education system.

This study was only carried out over the course of a semester, and students' academic progress was not assessed. As they were taught by multiple teachers, it would be difficult to isolate their progress relating only to these classes. Further, this study also involved a small sample of students. In future research, a larger sample size with a longer time span could help better investigate the relationship between authentic materials and students' motivation. Further, qualitative classroom observations and in-depth interviews may help shed light on questions such as why students do not feel motivated in the writing class. The lack of authentic materials is only one possibility. Other possible factors may have been the lack of improvement, task difficulty, and a dislike of these activities in any language. Future studies should make efforts to separate these factors as much as possible. Finally, more research is needed in the future which focuses on what happens to students' motivation when they have more authentic materials introduced to them.

Notes

¹ A C-test, similar to a traditional cloze test, is an integrative testing instrument that measures overall language competence by utilizing an authentic text. It differs from a cloze test in that the second half of every other word is deleted.

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