Authenticity as a continuum in the global context:
Identity and empowerment for L2 teachers of English

Richard Pinner

FAAPI 2017 | Posadas, Misiones

31/08/2017
Reality is not always probable, or likely.
- Jorge Luis Borges
Charlie Chaplin came third in a Charlie Chaplin lookalike contest.
“Don’t believe everything you read on the internet just because there’s a picture with a quote next to it.”

- Abraham Lincoln
Paradox of Authenticity
What is authenticity in language teaching and learning?
Two Basic Strands

existential
• interactions

practical
• materials

Gilmore’s (2007) 8 ‘inter-related’ definitions

1. “the language produced by native speakers for native speakers in a particular language community

2. the language produced by a real speaker/writer for a real audience, conveying a real message

3. the qualities bestowed on a text by the receiver, in that it is not seen as something inherent in a text itself, but is imparted on it by the reader/listener

4. the interaction between students and teachers and is a ‘personal process of engagement’

5. the types of task chosen

6. the social situation of the classroom

7. assessment

8. culture, and the ability to behave or think like a target language group in order to be recognized and validated by them”

What is authenticity?

“native speaker”
What is a native speaker?
Native-speakerism

Native speakers may feel the language ‘belongs’ to them, but it will be those who speak English as a second or foreign language who will determine its world future.

Overall average 4.40 (9/9)

(4) “He’s Korean” [Chinese student]

(8) “His English is formal and like native speakers!”

(2) “He is not good at speaking English natively.”

(4) “He speaks English fluently. But he doesn’t make eye contact with people. Because his speech isn't persuasive.”

(5) “I don't think he is poor at speaking English. However, he is a Korean.”
Overall average 5.54 (7/9)

(3) “Chinglish” [Chinese student]
(3) “He is a suspicious-looking person.”
(1) “I don't like him. I think he isn't a gentleman.”
(7) “I feel his English is not good. His English is similar to mine.”
Overall average 8.65 (2/9)

10) “I love Arnold Schwarzenegger and He is native English speaker.”
9) “He is native and it is easy to hear.”
10) “He is a native speaker.”
9) “He is very nice guy”
8) “The speed and rhythm of his English was closer to native speakers but I sometimes felt his "ur" sound and "or" sound unnatural.”
“I want like Queen Elizabeth II. I want to go to England someday.”

“Hers is royal.

“Se [sic] is more 'authentic' because she must speak collect [sic] English.”

“She is queen”

“She is the queen”

“She's a Queen”

“Because It is official British movie”

“Her native language is English, and her end of a word is not clear”

“Because she spoke dispassionately, so I felt it is difficult to understand what she wanted to say.”
AVERAGE EL1 OR EL2

EL2: 6.20
EL1: 9.00
All Englishes are equal, but some varieties are more equal than others

authentic materials are real, as in “not originally developed for pedagogical purposes, such as the use of magazines, newspapers, advertisements, news reports or songs”

(Richards & Schmidt, 2013: 43).

Materials and Authenticity
‘Classic’ Definition
Anglo-American-Global View (AAG)
'native' + 'real' = 'classic'
Extrapolation
Useful Definition

“Authentic materials are ‘designed not to transmit declarative knowledge about the target language but rather to provide an experience of the language in use.’

(Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2010: 400)
Genuineness is a characteristic of the passage itself and is an absolute quality. Authenticity is a characteristic of the relationship between the passage and the reader and it has to do with appropriate response.

(Widdowson, 1978: 80)
Authentication is basically a personal process of engagement, [...] it is reasonable to suggest that a teacher’s authenticity may stimulate authenticity in the students as well.

(van Lier, 1996: 128)
Alborotar el avispero
Authenticity comes from the Greek word *authenteo* which meant ‘to have full power’.

The word is made of two parts; *auto-* means ‘self’ and *hentes* refers to the doer or being, and thus has etymological roots with autonomy (self and *nomos* as in law, self-governing).

Authenticity Continuum

- Use domain
- Individual
- Social/contextual
- Learning context
- Community
Working on what really matters

We actually tried to live on $1.25 (150 yen) in order to have similar experience of those people.
If you seek authenticity for authenticity’s sake you are no longer authentic.

Jean-Paul Sartre
Summary

You can download the slides and additional resources at www.uniliterate.com

Please email me!

rpinner@sophia.ac.jp