

# Improving Upper-intermediate EFL Learners' Communicative Competence through Authentic Materials

Mohammad Hossein Keshmirshekan  
Department of English, Faculty of humanities, Yazd University, Yazd, Iran

**Abstract**—The present study aimed to investigate the effects of authentic materials on enhancing Iranian English as a foreign language learners' communicative competence. To this end, 106 upper-intermediate participants out of 136 were selected based on their performance on an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and randomly assigned to two equal groups- one experimental group and one control group. Then a pre-test was administered to assess the participants' communicative competence at the beginning of the course. Then, the experimental group received the treatment. The control group was taught the course content using the regular communicative method through which students received teacher-course from the textbook. After the treatment, the two groups took the post-test. The data analysis through paired and independent sample t-tests revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group on the posttest. In other words, teaching authentic materials showed to have a significant effect on improving learners' communicative competence. The implications, limitations, and suggestions of this study are explained at the end of the study.

**Index Terms**—authenticity, authentic materials, communicative competence, upper-intermediate EFL learners

## I. INTRODUCTION

The ratification of the communicative competence in second- or foreign-language instruction has set more significant errand on the accomplishment of practical capacities in the target language. More obviously, language teaching has moved from a syntactic perspective to an informative perspective that underscores understanding and proper utilization of language in communicative contexts. In other words, the major concern in second and foreign-language educational programs has changed from cultivating students' semantic/syntactic precision to upgrading students' communicative competence that is important for real life communication. Continually, there is a requirement for including parts of communicative competence in the English as foreign language classroom (Littlewood, 1992).

Bataineh and Hussein (2015) pointed out that in earlier decades, researchers attempted to plan models of communicative language proficiency and recognized the segments of communicative competence. Additionally, Canale and Swain (1980) proposed the informative fitness model, which contains three essential portions: linguistic skill, sociolinguistic capability, and vital ability. Syntactic skill implies the data that prompts predominance of the language itself. Sociolinguistic ability alludes to how much enunciations are made and saw reasonably in different sociolinguistic settings. Vital skill is the authority of verbal and non-verbal correspondence methodologies that could be actualized to make up for breakdowns in correspondence coming about because of constraining conditions in real correspondence or deficient ability in at least one of different regions of informative fitness, and to upgrade correspondence viability (Hussein & Elttayef, 2016). Also, this is a major intention to distinguish three parts, so as to demonstrate that even those language students who know sentence structure and word implications still neglect to pass on their intended messages since they do not have the essential segments of communicative competence. Each segment is utilized for communication. In real-life communication, everyone utilizes segments of communicative competence to express what s/he mean. In any case, language is more than a device for communication, it also represents social, pragmatic and cultural background. Learning just the target linguistic knowledge cannot effectively connect with students into real-life communications in the target culture.

Hymes (1972) was among the first to utilize the concept of communicative competence. For Hymes, the capacity to talk skillfully not just involves knowing the linguistic tenets of a language, yet in addition realizing what to state to whom in what conditions and how to state it (Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, & Hashemifardnia, 2018). More clearly, a language user should have just a precise learning of phonetic utilization but instead to have a compromise of linguistic competence as communicative competence joining sociolinguistic and relevant skill. Comparability, with improvement of communicative competence, foreign language instructors have come to concur that to have the capacity to collaborate properly with individuals from the target culture, pragmatic, social learners need to likewise learn the principles of language use and the social setting inside which the language is talked.

The wide variety of credible materials ranges from writing, CDs, DVDs, news, movies, TV programs, even to flyers and menus. Floris (2008) points out the requirement for joining real materials in the course structure since they are furthermore moving, and connecting with, and relevant to students' lives. This implies that it is exceptionally important

to teach a foreign language with its legitimate material, since educators discover inconvenience when they show reading materials without authentic forms. EFL students learn lessons without including authentic materials are truly impaired if they attempt to collaborate with individuals from the target language society. This shows that knowledge into stance, development, outward appearances, eyes management, signals, and distancing as they influence communication not only produce sensitivity to other people, as well as extend unavoidably learners' comprehension of their own nonverbal frameworks. Regarding authentic materials, Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, & Hashemifardnia, (2018) express the significance of authentic materials, since when at a sufficient dimension they hoist students' affectability to and ability in the language.

Utilizing authentic material in language educating is maintained among references and various specialists in the field of language instructional strategy. Authentic material gives the understudies various huge focal points and advances their inspiration and excitement for language learning and lead to upgrading informative ability (Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, & Hashemifardnia, 2018; Omid & Azam, 2015). This implies that authentic materials in FL class can be propelling because that they are evidence that the language is utilized for real-life reason by real individuals, and valid writings will convey them closer to the objective language culture. In addition, authentic materials are utilized for learners' communicative competence, learners will have a feeling that the real language for communication is being educated, instead of classroom language itself. They are created to satisfy some social, cultural, and realistic purposes in the language network. In this way, this authentic material will result in them making the learning procedure in general a significantly progressively pleasant and hence, motivating.

Furthermore, Bataineh and Al-Abdali (2015) revealed that socio-cultural capability is vital to create EFL students' English language skill and competences. Throughout Bataineh and Al-Abdali's study, they inferred that innovation particularly web-cam talk is a vital apparatus to progress English language teaching and learning. Rogers and Medley (1988) communicated "the legitimate materials should be qualified the extent that goals, understudies' needs and nature of the huge correspondence" (p. 467). Furthermore, Dornyei (2003) has shown that students' motivation and learning accomplishment are influenced by the teachers' mindsets. Moreover, the utilization of authentic materials assists learners in bridging the gap between classroom learning and their' ability to take part in real occasions (Hussein & Elttayef, 2016). In other words, incorporating materials enables learners to gain a compelling communicative competence in the target language. In this regard, a lot of researchers recommend utilizing authentic so as to enable students to learn better data especially in teaching language in FL classroom. Along these lines, they respect the utilization of this sort of authentic materials as a valuable way to propel students, excite their advantage, and expose them to real language, they will face in the real world. Continually, authentic materials encourage students to learn a specific language viably because they are dealing with the language in real life situation. Furthermore, authentic materials have made a perceptible commitment in foreign language teaching and learning, there are additionally a few researchers who are against the utilization of this sort of materials asserting that they have no esteem. In help to this view, the schedule designers are encouraged to consider the students' needs and furnish them with the chance, to have the capacity to impart the educated language in real circumstances by means of the utilization of authentic materials which is viewed as one of the qualities of communicative language teaching.

#### A. *The Objective and Significance of the Study*

The goal of the study was to examine the impact of utilizing authentic materials on improving upper-intermediate EFL learners' communicative competence. This study is significant since it helps the existing literature on pedagogical intervention in the improvement of EFL learners' communicative aspects via utilizing authentic materials.

#### B. *Research Question and Null Hypothesis*

This study endeavored to answer the following question:

**RQ.** Do authentic materials have any significant impact on upper-intermediate EFL learners' communicative competence?

Based on the preceding research question, the following null hypothesis is formulated:

**HO 1:** Authentic materials do not have any significant impact on upper-intermediate EFL learners' communicative competence.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### **Communicative Competence**

The hypothesis of communicative competence was presented because of the Chomskyan revolution in linguistics. A response to Chomsky's to some degree restricting meaning of the extent of linguistic theory left the route open for Hymes (1972) to propose the complementary notion of communicative competence, in which the attention is not on a well-formed sentence but on one which is suitably utilized in an explicit setting. The term communicative competence was defined by Dell Hymes (1972) who characterized it as the learning of the two guidelines of syntax and tenets of language standards of utilization in a given setting. His work plainly showed a move of accentuation among etymologists, far from the investigation of language as a framework in isolation - found in the work of Chomsky (1965)- towards the investigation of language as a system of communication.

As indicated by Chomsky (1965), linguistic competence is the information of language that empowers the speaker-audience to deliver and comprehend a boundless number of articulations and recognize linguistic and ungrammatical sentences. He believes that linguistic competence can be isolated from communicative competence and concentrated in disengagement. However, Hymes (1972) disagrees with Chomsky in this point, he thinks about that linguistic competence and communicative competence are indistinguishable and trusts that the thought of linguistic competence is stunning and there is no advancement without examining types of language alongside the manners by which they are utilized. In another sense, Hymes (1972) did not claim that a language user does not need an exact information of linguistic forms or use, yet rather, he asserted that the ideal learning of phonetic shape is not sufficient to make him/her communicatively competent language user. Wolfson (1989) bolsters Hymes as he would like to think and focuses that grammatical competence is an indistinguishable piece of communicative competence and demonstrates that Hymes accentuates that "Communicative competence is the thing that empowers the individual to perform properly in discourse occasions. It incorporates not just linguistic skill, which enables a person to make a decision to what degree something is formally conceivable, yet in addition the ability to pass judgment on feasibility, appropriateness, and to what degree something is in actuality done" (Cited in Riley, 1996, p. 115). Along these lines, Communicative capability for Hymes incorporates the entire of linguistic competence in addition to the information of the tenets and traditions for utilizing language items in settings.

A few language linguists and sociolinguists categorized communicative competence components into: linguistic component; discursive component; socio-cultural component; and strategic component.

**A. Linguistic component:** It is the domination of language code itself (syntactico-morphological, semantic, and morphological) rules. Shohamy (1996, p.143) defined it "linguistic component includes knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, semantics and phonology."

**B. Discursive component:** It is an information and comprehension of various kinds of discourse (formal/informal speech) and of their association as an element of the circumstance of correspondence inside which they are delivered. In addition, it is the authority of how to consolidate syntactic structures and implications to accomplish a skilled social circumstance. For Shohamy (1996, p.143) "discursive component is identified with authority of how to join syntactic structures and implications to accomplish a bound together spoken or composed content in various classes." Schachter (1983, p. 144) relates her definition to cohesion and coherence in written or spoken text, "discourse knowledge is viewed as cohesion and coherence."

**C. Socio-cultural component:** It is the learning of the social principles and standards of collaboration between people, including information of social history and of the relations between social articles. It is additionally the capacity to utilize and react to language appropriately given the setting and subject and the connection between individuals communicating. Shohamy (1996, p.143) defines it "knowledge of socio-cultural rules of use."

**D. Strategic component:** it is concerned with the strategies of communication and how to utilize them. For Van EK (1995), "it is the ability to use compensatory to resolve communicative problems and deficiencies (break downs in communication)" (p. 18).

With regards to the role of authentic materials in the language classroom, both Omid and Azam (2015) and Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, and Hashemifardnia, (2018) agree that they are not made for language showing purposes and don't have "thought up or disentangled language." papers, magazines, accounts, or maps are clear occurrences of legitimate materials. Regardless, Morrow (1977) goes further and ensures that "a bona fide content is a stretch of genuine language, made by a certified speaker or creator for a real gathering of individuals and expected to pass on a genuine message or something like that" (p. 13). This last definition totally supplements that language realness and true materials should be understood inside the outside/second language getting the hang of setting as any kind of spoken or composed act which does not contain any pursues or signs of language showing mediation, and rises up out of the maker's very own first language, culture, and prerequisites for correspondence. Given the appreciation and qualities of authentic materials, various scientists have regarded and criticized their use in the remote/second language study classroom. From one perspective, Omid and Azam (2015) claim that authentic materials are proper means for learners to adapt to the authentic language of this present reality. Likewise, Peacock (1997) comments that authentic materials "may build students' dimensions of on-undertaking conduct, fixation, and association in the objective movement more than counterfeit materials" (p. 152).

So as to conquer these troubles, Namaziandost, Sabzevari, and Hashemifardnia (2018) recommended that when students are tested by the intricacy of some genuine dialect highlights, it is important to give instructive help by pointing out learners' equal articulations that are different in linguistic structure or wording/expressing in the languages that are found out. Consequently, since authenticity does not really signify "great," similarly as creation does not signify "terrible" (Namaziandost, Sabzevari, & Hashemifardnia, 2018), this investigation put the utilization of authentic materials as a system to supplement the utilization of non- authentic materials, and with the objective of satisfying the students' communicative needs.

Soliman (2013) endeavored to perceive Libyan EFL instructors' attitudes and convictions with respect to the utilization of authentic reading materials at college level in Libya. Ensuing to using frame of mind and trusts poll toward the use of bona fide materials to EFL teachers from the University of Gareuness in Libya the results demonstrated that EFL Libyan instructors had a rousing demeanor towards the use of credible material. Additionally,

the examination demonstrated that a perfect perusing class ought to use a mix of both bona fide messages and course books. Accordingly, language programs should consider carrying real materials into the instructive modules as a gadget to improve the present learning condition. The possibility of valid material in homeroom outfits students with opportunities to get introduced to and practice a language that typically occurs outside the study hall. Regardless, the impact of valid materials on language execution at various measurements has exhibited upgrade in language execution because of presentation to real language in the classroom. In this way, real material furnishes the students with numerous huge preferences and advances students with high inspiration and enthusiasm for language learning and Students' accomplishment in learning EFL is constantly affected by educators' demeanors.

Furthermore, Omid and Azam (2015) carried out a study on the impact of utilizing authentic materials in the foreign language classrooms. The outcomes uncovered that the majority of the educators had positive attitudes toward giving authentic contribution to their classes, paying little notice to their nationality, showing foundation, and educational degree. The clarification behind such a frame of mind was to upgrade students' capacities and open them to the genuine English language. What's more, educators demonstrated that they would in general utilize more authentic materials in perusing as opposed to listening classes. Moreover, the outcomes showed that the web and TV would be the most utilized hotspots for acquiring authentic materials. As indicated by this examination, the educators differ on the reasonable dimension of learners for exhibiting such materials. The majority of the instructors believed that the language dimension of the content and the course destinations are the managing criteria for choosing suitable writings. At long last, most members showed a requirement for extra preparing in utilizing authentic materials, especially in planning suitable tasks. The consequences of this examination could be seen as a beginning stage for further investigation into the utilization of authentic materials in EFL educating.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

The participants of this study were 106 upper-intermediate language learners who were selected through availability sampling among 136 EFL learners at a private language institute in Yazd, Iran. The selected institute was purposefully chosen by the researcher for the following reasons: Firstly, it has up-to-date Internet connected laboratories. Secondly, it has enough number of students. The participants' age range was from 19 to 22. The selected participants have been studying English as a foreign language for at least six years. Their level of English language proficiency was determined on the basis of their scores on the Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT). The learners were randomly divided into two groups, the experimental group (n=53) who used authentic materials, and the control group (n=53) who used the regular communicative method.

#### B. Instruments

The primary instrument which was utilized in the present investigation to homogenize the members was the OQPT. It helped the scientist to have a more prominent comprehension of what level (i.e., elementary, pre-intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advance) her members were at. Based on OQPT standards, the learners whose scores were between 38 to 47 (out of 60) were considered as the upper-intermediate learners.

The next and the most important instrument for gathering the needed data to answer the research question was Key English Test (KET) which was administered as both pre-test and posttest. There was no distinction between the pre-test and posttest regarding time and the quantity of things. The main contrast of posttest test from the pre-test was that the request of inquiries and options was changed to crash the plausible review of pre-test answers. The pretest was administered before the treatment to decide the actual level of communicative competence of both groups. The KET evaluates language execution through three papers: perusing and composing (R&W), which gauges 50; tuning in (LIST), which conveys 25 points; and (talking), which conveys 25 points. The test is intended to keep going for two hours around and during its execution, members are required to comprehend straightforward composed data, produce basic composed messages, and get declarations and other spoken material when individuals talk sensibly gradually. Then, after 20 sessions of treatment, the posttest was administered to see if authentic materials have an effect on upper-intermediate EFL learners' communicative competence. To avoid subjectivity, students were interviewed by a team of six external native examiners of English, each one evaluates their level of English and the average score of each examinee was calculated.

What is significant before utilizing any instrument of examination is to ensure that it meets all the necessity of a decent test i.e., it ought to be legitimate, dependable and with a satisfactory level of trouble. In this manner, the test was tested to make sure of its validity, accuracy, clarity and the appropriateness of the tool. Although KET is a standard test and its validity was previously confirmed, the validity of the test was confirmed by 5 English experts who were familiar with second language research and were taught English for more than 18 years. Moreover, to establish the reliability of the test, scores were calculated after testing and re-testing with two weeks between them. The researcher calculated the reliability coefficient of the results of the test and it was ( $r=0.986$ ).

#### C. Instructional Treatment

Various authentic materials were utilized by the researcher as contemporary instructional technology. The sources of authentic materials that used in the classroom were infinite, but the most common were newspapers, magazines, Brochures, Greeting Cards, Wall Papers, Television programs, films, tunes, and writing. A standout amongst the most valuable was the Internet. Though papers and some other written word date all around rapidly, the Internet was ceaselessly refreshed, all the more outwardly animating just as being intelligent, in this manner advancing a more dynamic way to deal with showing instead of an aloof one. Moreover, authentic materials like CDs, DVDs, and YouTube videos were used that present an authentic image of everyday life of the English language community.

#### D. Data Collection Procedure

In the first step, 106 upper-intermediate students from a private language institute were selected through administering an Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT). Then the chosen participants were randomly divided into two equal groups; an experimental and a control group. The learners were pre-tested in order to know their actual level of English before starting the treatment. After the participants were all pre-tested, the treatment was practiced on both groups. At then end of the study, to ensure the effectiveness of instructions and to assess learners' communicative competence, a posttest was administered. The scores were tabulated and prepared for statistical analysis.

#### E. Statistical Analysis

The collected data through the aforesaid procedures were analyzed and interpreted according to the objectives of the study. Firstly, Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was run to check the normality of the gathered data. Then, descriptive statistics were calculated through using SPSS software, version 25. Finally, Independent and paired Samples Test were run to determine the effectiveness of authentic materials on Iranian EFL learners' communicative competence.

### IV. RESULTS

The gathered data were analyzed through using SPSS, version 25. Firstly, the normality of the data was checked.

TABLE I.  
ONE-SAMPLE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV TEST (GROUPS' PRE AND POST-TESTS)

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
EG. Pretest	.169	53	.121
EG. Posttest	.160	53	.082
CG. Pretest	.167	53	.139
CG. Posttest	.123	53	.065

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

In data analysis, the normality of distribution was investigated. For normality, Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was used. Based on Table 1, the distribution of all scores on pre and post-tests is normal. Indeed, the significance values in Table 1 (.121, .082, .139, and .065) indicate that the *P* value has been higher than .05 ( $P > .05$ ) and therefore the normality assumption was met. This made it feasible for to run the independent samples t-test and paired samples t-test, the results of which are given below.

TABLE II.  
GROUP STATISTICS (PRE-TEST OF BOTH GROUPS)

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	Experimental Group	53	43.56	2.28	.31
	Control Group	53	42.94	2.17	.29

In Table 2, the descriptive statistics of both groups is illustrated. The means of both groups are almost equal. The control group's mean score is 42.94 and the experimental group's mean score is 43.56. This means that both groups had almost an equal performance on the pre-tests.

TABLE III.  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST (PRE-TEST OF BOTH GROUPS)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.005	.944	1.43	104	.154	.62	.43
	Equal variances not assumed			1.43	103.77	.154	.43	.43

Table 3 illustrates that the *Sig* (.154) is greater than 0.05, therefore there is no significant difference between the experimental and control groups at the beginning of the study ( $p < 0.05$ ). In fact, they performed the same on the pre-test.

TABLE IV.  
GROUP STATISTICS (POST-TEST OF BOTH GROUPS)

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	Experimental Group	53	65.09	1.99	.27
	Control Group	53	43.52	2.79	.38

Table 4 indicates the descriptive statistics of the post-test of the both groups. The control group's mean score in posttest is 43.52 and the experimental group's mean score in posttest is 65.09. This means that the experimental group performed better than the control group on the post-test.

TABLE V.  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST (THE POST-TEST OF BOTH GROUPS)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	8.28	.005	45.70	104	.000	21.56	.47
	Equal variances not assumed			45.70	93.95	.000	21.56	.47

Table 5 indicated that the difference between EG and CG posttest scores was of statistical significance due to the fact that the *p* value under the *Sig*, (2-tailed) column was less than the significance level (i.e.  $.000 < .05$ ). In fact, the experimental group outperformed the control group on the post-test. This implies that using authentic materials was effectual in assisting EFL learners acquire the communicative competence.

TABLE VI.  
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS (PRE AND POST-TESTS OF BOTH GROUPS)

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Experimental Group. Posttest	65.09	53	1.99	.27
	Experimental Group. Pretest	43.56	53	2.28	.31
Pair 2	Control Group. Posttest	43.52	53	2.79	.38
	Control Group. Pretest	42.94	53	2.17	.29

As table 6 shows, the mean scores of the control group on the pre and post-tests are 42.94 and 43.52, respectively. The experimental group's mean scores on the pre and post-tests are 43.56 and 65.09, respectively. Table 6 actually shows the amount of progress each group had achieved. The experimental group got an increase of 21.53 in their mean score on the post-test compared with their mean score on the pre-test. On the other hand, the control group got an increase of 0.58 in their mean score on the post-test compared with their mean score on the pre-test. To figure out whether the differences among these mean scores were significant or not, one needs to check the *p* value under the *Sig*. column in the paired samples t-test table below (Table 7).

TABLE VII  
PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST (PRE AND POST-TESTS OF BOTH GROUPS)

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	EG. Post – EG. Pre	21.52	3.08	.42	50.78	52	.000
Pair 2	CG. Post – CG. Pre	.58	2.23	.30	1.90	52	.062

In Table 7, the single most important piece of information is the *p* value under the *Sig*. (2-tailed) column. This *p* value should be compared with the pre-specified significance level (i.e.,  $.05$ ) to see if the difference between the pretest and posttest scores had been statistically significant or not. A *p* value less than  $.05$  would indicate a significant difference between the two sets of scores, while a *p* value larger than  $.05$  would imply a difference which did not reach statistical significance. As the *p* value under the *Sig*. (2-tailed) column in Table 7 was smaller than the significance level ( $.00 < .05$ ), it could be construed that the difference between the pretest ( $M = 43.56$ ) and posttest ( $M = 65.09$ ) of the experimental group learners was of statistical significance. Hence, it can be concluded that there is a statistical impact of authentic materials on the learners' communicative aspects of language, in which the experimental group got higher scores than the control group. Moreover, the *p* value under the *Sig*. (2-tailed) column in Table 7 was smaller than the significance level ( $.00 < .05$ ), it could be understood that the difference between the pretest ( $M = 42.94$ ) and posttest ( $M = 43.52$ ) of the control group learners was not statistically significant.

## V. DISCUSSION

The main research question of this study is answered below.

### **RQ. Do authentic materials have any significant impact on upper-intermediate EFL learners' communicative competence?**

In view of the consequences of the present examination, the experimental group would be advised to execution than the control group on the post-test. As indicated by the information examination, the experimental group and control group had nearly similar scores on the pre-test yet their scores on the post-test were unique. Therefore, authentic materials helped Iranian EFL learners to develop their communicative competence.

As the researcher observed, the students of the experimental group were very eager to learn. The authentic materials were very interesting to the students. The effectiveness of using authentic materials were obvious in the experimental group's post-test.

The major reason behind the attained results is using authentic materials. There is a general accord among scientist in language instructing that "the utilization of real materials in the study hall is helpful to the learning procedure" (Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, & Hashemifardnia, 2018, p. 9). They are full of feeling as they are certifiable in time, area and individuals. As it were, they advise about recent developments in reality and in this manner, it is simple for learners to relate the occasions to their very own understanding, to what they know, and to what is commonplace to them. Legitimate materials are viewed as the most appropriate methods for demonstrating the authentic utilization of English for communication instead of materials which were planned particularly to educate purposes.

The significance of utilizing real materials is commonly recognized as they may be "a method for keeping up or expanding understudies' inspiration for learning as they give the student the inclination that they are in contact with a living substance and the objective language as it is utilized in the network which talks it" (Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, & Hashemifardnia, 2018, p. 9). Most researchers additionally share the supposition that "students ought to be presented to credible content so they may have direct contact with info information which reflects authentic correspondence in the objective language" (Breen, 1985, p.63). Another explanation behind utilizing true materials is that they speak to a boundless hotspot for arranging and sorting out instructing and learning exercises. Bona fide materials are very useful in upgrading students' involvement in adapting new vocabulary so as to utilize them in day by day discussion, and improving them comprehended in genuine correspondence. "Acing even a little level of cognizance of bona fide writings gives understudies the trust in managing perusing for genuine purposes" (Omid & Azam, 2015).

One other advantage worth considering is that real materials help understudies stay aware of the "living" language. No language is stationary and solidified; all dialects are in a ceaseless procedure of advancement: they change, advance and create. Certifiable materials record these changes, helping the understudies stay in contact with the language truly utilized in the individual language network. In addition, genuine materials open understudies to a huge scope of content kinds and language styles, which they won't regularly run over in course readings, helping them get progressively intricate information of the language being referred to. Last, however not least, these materials may demonstrate to have an inherent instructive esteem ((Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, & Hashemifardnia, 2018) as they help the students be informed and learn more about that particular culture.

More importantly, by being in contact with these materials, students are exposed to real discourse. These materials can be utilized in class by requesting that the understudies hear them out and expecting them to number the means incorporated into a graph gave. Sources like these and numerous others, are exceptionally valuable as class material as "bona fide writings will incorporate the kind of language which the student may should be presented to, to create aptitudes for comprehension, and conceivably even to deliver." (Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, & Hashemifardnia, 2018, p. 8).

Authentic material may likewise serve to get ready EST understudies for genuine target language informative association. Significantly increasing, genuine materials mirror the progressions created in language, being the two understudies and instructor refreshed of such changes, since as Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, and Hashemifardnia (2018) designate "the data passed on is probably going to be progressively exact and to have high validity, and will most likely be more exceptional" (Namaziandost, Rahimi Esfahani, & Hashemifardnia, 2018, p. 9). As a result, genuine materials have a surprising instructive incentive since they keep understudies educated about what's going on the planet.

The results of this study are in line with what investigated by Omid and Azam (2015) who adopted a study to explore the effect of using authentic materials in the foreign language classrooms. The outcomes uncovered that the majority of the educators had uplifting dispositions toward giving genuine contribution to their classes, paying little mind to their nationality, showing background, and scholastic degree. By a similar token, real materials were observed to be a decent instrument for making a persuasive domain. This finding concurred with Soliman (2013) who found that genuine material gives the students numerous noteworthy focal points and advances students with high inspiration and enthusiasm for language learning.

Moreover, the consequences of this examination are in accordance with Marzban and Davaji (2015) who led an exploration concentrate to research the impact of real messages on inspiration and perusing perception of EFL understudies at middle of the road dimension of capability. After organization the exploration, they presumed that "perusing real messages has beneficial outcome on the perusing cognizance of halfway understudies. Directing the inspiration poll on the bona fide gathering indicated positive changes on four areas of inspiration" (p. 85).

Similarly, Habouti, Mohammad, Mahmoodi and Ziaei (2015) have researched the impact of legitimate listening materials on EFL students' listening perception. The results demonstrated that there were noteworthy contrasts among EFL students in connection to their listening appreciation capacity since the true materials were while learning. In another examination, Alijani, Maghsoudi, and Madani (2014) have analyzed the impacts of bona fide materials on listening capacity of sixty female language students. To this point, sixty Iranian EFL students in upper-middle dimension who concentrated in two organizations in Esfahan were taken an interest to this examination. "Toward the finish of the examination it was reasoned that utilizing bona fide materials in language classes would be more productive for EFL students than non-legitimate ones. Obviously, in light of the upsides of genuine materials, we concluded they are valuable and relevant. Anderson and Lynch (1988) trusted that if understudies need to a fruitful audience, in actuality, should be progressively dynamic in listening process. As you probably are aware the essential explanation behind learning another dialect is to turn out to be nearer to its way of life and individuals " (p.156).

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study was designed to investigate the effect of authentic materials on developing the learners' communicative competence. In view of that, future research could examine the effectiveness of authentic materials to enhance other major and sub-skills of the Iranian learners such as reading, writing and listening. It was noted that this research studied male upper-intermediate learners. Hence, future studies could study female EFL learners. Because of the limitation of the present study, this study was done with a restricted number of EFL learners. Therefore, future researchers could be carried out on large number of the learners.

In summary, the present study which aimed to examine the effectiveness using authentic materials on communicative competence showed that authentic materials in teaching the communicative aspects of language and in teaching English language is one of the best chances for language learners to interact and improve their learning and the communicative aspects of language outside/inside classrooms whenever and wherever they desire. Language learners would be able to expand their learning chances and take part in a various kind of learning. In other words, authentic materials aided learners' findings, that was because of their motivational and developed features, easiness, and new method of teaching and learning. This new orientation created a motivated and healthy atmosphere which in terns helped students to study freely, without fear and hesitation, and they could get rid of their shines.

The findings of the present study may be effective for materials and curriculum developers in designing and preparing authentic materials that are more adaptable with those communicative and learner-centered approaches in order to help EFL/ESL learners to utilize language communicatively. Nowadays, the field of communicative and pragmatic competence is very vital specifically in the present condition of need of English in Iran so, changes from the traditional teaching methods which utilize non-authentic based materials to novel and communicative teaching methods which utilizes authentic materials are needed to make sure learners' engagement in pragmatic competence process. Developing pragmatic competence of language learners is very paramount for academic education. Therefore, EFL/ESL teachers should pay particular attention to this area in their teaching and improve their learners' ability in pragmatic competence in order to lessen their pragmatic failure.

This study also has a number of limitations. Firstly, in the present study, the number of the participants were limited to 106 students. However, working with bigger groups is more difficult and time-consuming. Secondly, only one level (upper-intermediate) of English students were participated in this study. Thirdly, only male students were included in this study, therefore; the results may not be generalizable to the female students. Fourthly, only 19 to 22 years old students were included in this study.

In order to complement the findings of the present study, the next researches can be suggested:

1. Much empirical research is needed world-wide to further our understanding of the positive effects of the authentic materials on communicative competence.
2. It would be beneficial to look at a larger sample of participants across a broader age range.
3. Next studies are advised to include both genders in order to gain more reliable results.
4. The future studies are offered to examine the effects of authentic materials on other skills and sub-skills of English language.
5. Future studies can be done on other proficiency levels, namely pre-intermediate, intermediate and advanced.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Alijani, S., Maghsoudi, M., & Madani, D. (2014). The effect of authentic vs. non-authentic materials on Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension ability. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, 3 (3), 151-156.
- [2] Anderson, A., & Lynch, T. (1988). *Listening*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [3] Bataineh, A., & Al-Abdali, A. (2015). The Effect of Using Web-Cam Chat on Undergraduate EFL Learners' Socio-cultural Competence. *International Journal of Education*, 7(2), 1-18.
- [4] Breen, M. (1985). Authenticity in the language classroom. *Applied linguistics*, 6(1), 60 - 70. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/6.1.60>.
- [5] Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.



- [6] Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- [7] Dörnyei, Z. (2003). Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning: Advances in theory, research, and applications. *Language Learning*, 53(1), 3–32
- [8] Floris, F. (2008). Developing English for general academic purposes (EGAP) course in an Indonesian university. *K@ta*, 10 (1), 53-62. Retrieved on 2019.05.11 from <http://puslit2.petra.ac.id/ejournal/index.php/ing/article/shop/16759/16740>.
- [9] Habouti, M., Mohammad, H., Mahmoodi, H., & Ziaei, F. (2015). The effect of authentic listening materials on improving Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension. *Academie Royale Des Sciences D Outre-Mer Bulletin Des Seances*, 4(2), 143-148.
- [10] Hussein, N. & Elttayef, A. (2016). The Impact of Utilizing Skype as a Social Tool Network Community on Developing English Major Students' Discourse Competence in the English Language Syllables. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(11).
- [11] Hymes, D. H. (1972). On Communicative Competence. In Pride, J. B., & Holmes, J. (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics*, 269-293. Baltimore, USA: Penguin Education, Penguin Books Ltd.
- [12] Littlewood, W. T. (1992). *Communicative language teaching: An introduction* (4th ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- [13] Marzban, A., & Davaji, D. (2015). The effect of authentic texts on motivation and reading comprehension of EFL students at intermediate level of proficiency. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5 (1), 85-91. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0501.11>.
- [14] Morrow, K. (1977). Authentic texts in ESP. In S. Holden (Ed.), *English for specific purposes* (pp. 13-15). London, UK: Modern English Publications.
- [15] Namaziandost, E., Rahimi Esfahani, F., & Hashemifardnia, A. (2018). The impact of using authentic videos on prosodic ability among foreign language learners. *International Journal of Instruction* 11(4), 375-390.
- [16] Namaziandost, E., Sabzevari, A., & Hashemifardnia, A. (2018). The effect of cultural materials on listening comprehension among Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners: In reference to gender. *Cogent Education* 5(1): 1560601, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2018.1560601>.
- [17] Omid, A., & Azam, R. (2015). Using authentic materials in the foreign language classrooms: Teachers' perspectives in EFL classes. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, 5(2), 105 - 116. DOI: 10.5861/ijrse.2015.1189.
- [18] Peacock, M. (1997). The effect of authentic material on the motivation of EFL learners. *ELT Journal*, 51(2), 144-156.
- [19] Riley, P. (1996). Well don't blame me! - On the interpretation of pragmatic errors. In W. OLeksy (Ed.), *Contrastive pragmatics* (pp. 231 - 249). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- [20] Rogers, C., & Medley, F. (1988). Language with a purpose: Using authentic materials in the foreign language classroom. *Foreign Language Annals*, 21, 467 – 478.
- [21] Schachter, J. (1983). A New Account of Language Transfer. In S. Gass and L. Selinger (Eds.), *Language Transfer in Language Learning*. (pp. 98-111). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- [22] Shohamy, E. (1996). Language testing: Matching assessment procedures with language knowledge, in M. Birenbaum & F. Dochy (eds.), *Alternatives in Assessment of Achievements, Learning Processes and Prior Knowledge*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston, MA, 143-159.
- [23] Soliman, S. (2013). Libyan teachers' Attitudes and Believes Regarding the Use of EFL Authentic Materials within Reading Lessons at Universities Levels in Libya. *International Journal of Learning & Development*, 3(5), 18-42.
- [24] Van Ek, J. A. (with contributions by Alexander, L G.). (1977). *The threshold level for modern language learning in schools*. London: Longman.
- [25] Wolfson, N. (1983). Rules of speaking. In J. C. Richards and R. Schmidt, eds. *Language and Communication*. New York: Longman.



**Mohammad Hossein Keshmirshakan** was born in Yazd Province of Iran in 1981. He holds an MA degree in TEFL from University of Yazd. His main interests of research are second language acquisition, EFL teaching, sociolinguistics, contrastive analysis, and language learning strategies. His research papers have been published by various international journals.