

# Exploring Female Saudi EFL Teachers' Instructional Practices in Using Authentic Texts for Teaching Reading Comprehension

Sarah Abdulgani Alzaidi<sup>1</sup> & Abeer Sultan Althaqafi<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English Language Institute (ELI), King Abdulaziz University (KAU), Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Correspondence: Abeer Sultan Althaqafi, Associate Professor at the English Language Institute at King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Received: April 15, 2022

Accepted: May 31, 2022

Online Published: June 6, 2022

doi:10.5539/jel.v11n4p103

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v11n4p103>

## Abstract

This research study explored EFL teachers' instructional practices (e.g., adaptation, selection, elaboration, and simplification) in using authentic texts for teaching reading comprehension. In fact, a considerable amount of research has been devoted to investigate the use of authentic texts in teaching reading comprehension. However, there is an academic and professional need to explore how teachers exploit authentic texts while teaching reading comprehension. The study employed a mixed method research design. Teachers' instructional practices were explored through a self-reported questionnaire. Also, the study examined teachers' perspectives on these practices and how their Personal Practical Knowledge (PPK) affects their practices by conducting semi-structured interviews. From two Saudi universities, 50 female EFL teachers responded to the questionnaire, while additional five teachers were interviewed. The questionnaire results revealed that EFL teachers adapt authentic texts for advanced students more than beginners. In contrast, most of the teachers in the interviews highlighted that authentic texts are applicable in teaching beginners with the use of technology. The quantitative and qualitative results showed that teachers select authentic texts that match students' language level, their cultural background, and course book objectives. It was also found that the aspects of PPK knowledge affected teachers' instructional practices in using authentic texts. Based on the research findings, several suggestions and recommendations were presented to enhance the effectiveness of authentic texts in the EFL classrooms.

**Keywords:** authentic texts, adaptation, selection, text modification, personal practical knowledge

## 1. Introduction

Authentic texts can be defined as the materials that are produced to fulfill social and communicative purposes in the real world such as newspapers, novels, poems, magazines, and recipes (Little et al., 1994). The availability of these materials appears to be continually growing due to the diverse and extensive resources available in internet content (Clavel-Arroitia & Fuster-Márquez, 2014). However, several researchers have proposed that authentic materials are difficult to implement in the classroom context (Ellis, 1999; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Widdowson, 1998; Woodrow, 2017). This view may explain why authentic texts are not frequently utilized in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom despite the availability of resources. Therefore, exploring instructional practices that may support the effective implementation of authentic texts in EFL classrooms is significant for enhancing learning outcomes. Specifically, this study aims to explore multiple instructional practices (e.g., text modification, adaptation, and selection) that EFL teachers employ when using authentic texts and their perspectives on such practices. Moreover, this research endeavors to highlight the aspects of knowledge that may affect teachers' use of authentic texts in their instructional practices.

### 1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

Previous research studies have generally demonstrated that teachers and learners have positive attitudes and beliefs regarding using authentic texts in the classroom context (Al-Musallam, 2009; Israelsson, 2007; Peacock, 1997; Rusmawaty et al., 2018). However, there is a lack of research focusing on exploring teachers' instructional practices in using these texts. For example, Clavel-Arroitia and Fuster-Márquez (2014) revealed that "we are still in the dark as to how those genuine texts are actually handled by individual teachers" (p. 126). Moreover, Tomlinson (2017) indicated the importance of investigating how authenticity can be effectively utilized in learning contexts. Therefore, it is important to draw attention to the implementation process, including the instructional practices that teachers can adopt in exploiting authentic texts in EFL classrooms. Notably, the few

research studies that have investigated the specific instructional practices for employing authentic texts, such as text modification, adaptation, and selection, have provided a variety of useful empirical evidence and valuable discussions regarding the usability of these practices (Kim, 2006; O'Donnell, 2009; Oh, 2001; Peacock, 1997). However, teachers' perspectives on these instructional practices remain relatively unexplored and warrant considerable attention. Overall, this research study aims to address these gaps in the current literature in order to enhance knowledge regarding the use of authentic texts and, ultimately, enhance learning outcomes for EFL students.

### *1.2 Research Questions*

Based on the aforementioned research gaps in the available literature, the following research questions are proposed:

- **Question 1:** What are the instructional practices that EFL teachers use in employing authentic texts for teaching reading comprehension?
- **Question 2:** What are teachers' perspectives on the implementation of these instructional practices in using authentic texts for teaching reading comprehension?
- **Question 3:** What are the aspects of knowledge that impact EFL teachers' instructional practices when employing authentic texts to teach reading comprehension?

### *1.3 Significance of the Study*

Since this study partially focuses on EFL teachers' perspectives on several instructional practices, exploring their perspectives may contribute to the discussion concerning the inclusion of teachers in the formation of instructional practices at the decision-making level. Notably, articulating the perspectives and reflections of teachers could provide new insights into ELT practices. In particular, this research presents a holistic understanding of the aspects of knowledge that affect EFL teachers' instructional practices in employing authentic texts. In addition, this holistic understanding may provide key insights for researchers who are seeking to determine the most influential aspects shaping and underpinning teachers' practices in the classroom context when teaching reading.

Furthermore, a key strategic plan at the English Language Institute (ELI) of King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia, is to increase students' 21st-century skills, one of which is problem-solving, at all levels. Indeed, according to Lombardi (2007), offering an authentic learning experience prepares students to solve real-world problems. As a result, using authentic texts in English language classes may effectively support students to acquire 21st-century skills through increased engagement with and awareness of current issues. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to contribute to a better understanding of instructional practices that may enhance the use of authentic texts in EFL classrooms.

Finally, Saudi Arabia has witnessed significant development projects across all areas, such as the Human Capability Development Program, which is part of the Vision 2030 framework. This program aims to promote citizens' capabilities to ensure their competitiveness in the global labor market. Consequently, as English is the dominant language in the global community (Rao, 2019), one can state that Saudi students must learn English in a way that allows them to communicate for real-life purposes. Al-Seghayer (2019) supported this view by stating that "Saudi people [need] to be equipped with the means to convey Saudi Arabia's vision and needs to the outside world" (p. 491). Specifically, one of the key benefits of authentic texts is connecting students with real-life situations in which the language is used (Ahmed, 2017); therefore, effectively implementing the use of authentic texts in ELT in Saudi Arabia is necessary. Moreover, this effective implementation is not possible without exploring and discussing the instructional practices that may enhance the utilization of authentic texts in the classroom context. The results of this study may be useful for supporting the effective implementation of authentic texts. Thus, this work is in line with the goals of the Human Capability Development Program of Saudi Arabia.

## **2. Literature Review**

This chapter reviews the previous research studies related to the use of authentic texts in the ELT field. It displays and analyzes the common definitions that have been widely used in prior research studies to clarify the meaning of authentic texts. In this chapter, the terms "authentic material" and "authentic text" are used interchangeably to refer to all written authentic materials. This chapter also highlights some of the most salient instructional practices used in the field of ELT. Finally, it presents the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the current research study.

### *2.1 Authentic Texts*

This study focuses mainly on written authentic texts. According to a definition provided by Morrow (1977), an

authentic text is “a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort” (as cited in Gilmore, 2007, p. 98). Morrow’s definition highlights the authentic text’s core components: real input, sender, and receiver. Although this definition did not establish where authentic text can be found, Little, Devitt and Singleton (1994) distinguished the source and purpose of authentic texts by saying that “authentic text is a text that was created to fulfill some social purpose in the language community in which it was produced” (p. 45). Thus, it can be argued that Little et al. (1994) identified the language community as the source of authentic texts. They also provided examples for authentic texts such as newspapers, novels, poems, magazines, and recipes.

Kramsch, A’Ness and Lam (2000) specified the language community’s population by claiming that authentic texts are utilized by native speakers in culturally authentic contexts. Although it may be true that native speakers are the producers of authentic texts, they are not the only source for them. For example, Trabelsi (2014) clarified that any language used for social purposes could be categorized as authentic language. Therefore, Trabelsi argued that authenticity is nowadays considered as an international property instead of attributing it exclusively to native speakers.

Some researchers assumed that authentic texts are not designed for pedagogical purposes. For example, Harmer (2007) claimed that authentic texts are written in a natural language that is not made for foreign speakers. However, language learners can benefit from authentic texts’ content to learn the English language, and researchers such as Mishan (2005) have supported using authentic texts for language learning purposes. She considered that an authentic text is the text that transfers the language culture to the readers. Therefore, this presentation of the language culture inserted in authentic texts can increase language learners’ cultural awareness (Mishan, 2005).

Considering the definitions mentioned above, authentic texts may be defined as texts that are produced to fulfill social and communicative purposes in the real world (Little et al., 1994), and several instructional practices can be implemented to make authentic texts accessible and beneficial for language learners. The point of instructional practices is an underlying assumption in the present research study, as discussed further in the upcoming sections.

## *2.2 The Emergence and Development of Authentic Texts in the ELT Field*

The use of authentic texts in the field of ELT has an extended historical trajectory beginning more than a century ago, when Henry Sweet published the seminal work on authenticity in 1899; he is regarded as the first linguist to praise natural or authentic materials over artificial ones (Gilmore, 2007). Later, the use of authentic texts flourished in the 1970s after the English language achieved a prominent position by becoming the primary language of communication in fields such as technology, economy, and education (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). As a result, English has become the language that connects people from different countries and plays a vital role in people’s daily lives, often in professional contexts.

As a response to these dramatic changes, Richards and Rodgers (2014) posited that English language teaching programs required a new teaching method that enhances language learners’ communicative abilities and links them with real-life situations that occur beyond the classroom context. For instance, Gilmore (2007) argued that the development of the CLT method facilitated the expansion of authentic materials. This development of authentic materials and CLT occurred for two reasons. First, one of the CLT method’s guiding principles is to include real and meaningful communication in language teaching (Richards, 2006). Second, authentic texts constitute original or real language input that exists in the external world. Due to that integration between the CLT method and authentic texts, these texts have assumed a pivotal role in the development of ELT materials. The following section illustrates how language learners can benefit from authentic texts, particularly in learning L2 reading comprehension.

## *2.3 The Advantages of Using Authentic Texts on L2 Reading Comprehension*

Investigations into the effect of using authentic text as a material to develop fundamental reading comprehension skills have demonstrated authentic text use to be effective in EFL reading classes. One of the fundamental skills in reading comprehension is vocabulary knowledge, which several prominent researchers have accepted as a necessary cognitive skill contributing to L2 reading comprehension (Grabe, 2009; Verhoeven, 2000). For instance, Pellicer-Sánchez and Schmitt (2010) stated that EFL learners’ vocabulary knowledge had improved after reading an authentic novel, or as they described it, “a reader-friendly” material (p. 45). Consequently, they recommended inserting authentic materials because they were effective in extensive reading programs. In the same manner, Guo (2012) concluded that adapting authentic texts in teaching extensive reading significantly expanded students’ vocabularies.

Furthermore, a plethora of research has indicated how authentic texts enhance student motivation, which is a crucial factor that correlates significantly with reading comprehension (Guthrie et al., 2006). For example, Guo (2012) found that students were motivated to read authentic texts because these texts were associated with their real lives. Similarly, Albiladi (2019) determined that students perceived authentic texts as enjoyable, real-life materials that they felt motivated to read extensively during reading classes. Based on Guo and Albiladi's findings, it can be assumed that authentic texts foster student motivation and thereby increase reading comprehension.

The aforementioned studies collectively summarize the vital and positive role of authentic texts in enhancing multiple skills (e.g., vocabulary knowledge and motivation) that increase student reading comprehension. However, it should be acknowledged that several difficulties have been encountered while using authentic texts in reading classes, such as lexical and syntactical complications (Crossley et al., 2007). To overcome such linguistic obstacles, text modification techniques—such as simplification and elaboration—are recommended by several researchers as instructional practices to increase authentic texts' comprehensibility. These practices are further discussed in Sections 2.5.2.1 and 2.5.2.2.

#### *2.4 Teachers' Perspectives Toward Authentic Materials*

In teaching, "perspective" is defined as the term that comprises a group of inter-related beliefs about teaching, learning, and instructional intentions (Jarvis-Selinger, 2002; Pratt, 2002), which vary from one teacher to another (Collins, Selinger, & Pratt, 2003). Pratt (2002) claimed that teaching perspectives justify teachers' practices. Similarly, Clarke and Jarvis-Selinger (2005) demonstrated that teaching perspectives give meaning to teachers' behaviors and educational practices. Consequently, these researchers viewed perspectives as a fundamental element in exploring pedagogical practices. The importance of demonstrating teaching perspectives was also supported by Borg (2006), who claimed that exploring teachers' mental dimensions, such as perspectives, grants us an understanding of instructional methodology. Accordingly, it is possible to claim that understanding teachers' perspectives is pivotal in exploring practices because it justifies their language teaching practices.

A growing body of literature has examined EFL teachers' perspectives toward using authentic materials to teach reading comprehension. Al Asmari and Gulzar (2016) maintained that EFL teachers stressed the importance of adapting authentic materials in the classroom context as supporting materials to develop students' language skills. This finding is consistent with Mukhalladun, Nidawati, and Muhammad (2020), who found that teachers utilized authentic materials as supplementary materials to teach reading comprehension. Akbari and Razavi (2016) indicated that EFL teachers had a more positive perspective toward employing authentic materials in teaching reading compared to listening, due to a lack of technical support. This result may explain why authentic materials are more frequently adopted in teaching reading comprehension than other language skills (i.e., because of its applicability in reading classes). In general, EFL teachers positively perceive authentic materials as effective supplementary resources in teaching reading comprehension. However, the issue of exploring the instructional practices that EFL teachers follow to implement authentic materials in reading classes still needs to be addressed. Additionally, further exploration is needed to identify EFL teachers' perspectives on different instructional practices (e.g., text modification, adaptation, and selection) that are associated with the process of implementing authentic materials.

#### *2.5 Instructional Practices Using Authentic Texts*

"Instructional practices" or "classroom practices" are described as the behaviors and actions that teachers take in the classroom to assist students (Schuetz, 2002; Tay & Saleh, 2019). Existing literature uses a wide range of terminology to identify teachers' classroom behaviors, such as their decisions, classroom practices, teaching strategies, and behaviors. However, this study employs the term "instructional practices" to describe the practices and decisions that can be associated with using authentic materials.

Three instructional practices are repeatedly discussed in the research of authentic texts: text modifications, such as simplification and elaboration (O'Donnell, 2009; Oh, 2001); adaptation, for beginning or advanced students (Unver, 2017; Widdowson, 1998); and selection (Al-Musallam, 2009; Berardo, 2006). Research into these instructional practices has primarily focused on developing empirical evidence or critical discussions rather than exploring teachers' perspectives on choosing these practices. The following section defines these instructional practices in using authentic texts and presents the researchers' perspectives on them.

##### *2.5.1 Adaptation*

Several researchers have agreed on the effectiveness of adapting authentic texts for advanced learners in the ELT field (Bakhshizadeh Gashti, 2018; Beresova, 2015; Kim, 2000). However, there has been considerable debate

regarding whether it is appropriate to adapt authentic texts for beginners, primarily because of authentic texts' linguistic and cultural complexity, which has been acknowledged by various researchers. For example, Widdowson (1998) argued that learners may have difficulty understanding the local language that is included in authentic texts. For Widdowson, the local language includes cultural words with double meanings that are not explained even in dictionaries. As a result, because foreign language learners do not have adequate cultural knowledge, they will not be equipped to learn the language through authentic texts (Widdowson, 1998). Similarly, Shook (1997) suggested that authentic literary texts are usually implemented with unfamiliar cultural norms and situations; this unfamiliarity causes linguistic misunderstandings. Young (1999) also found that students significantly misunderstood one of the given authentic texts due to a lack of familiarity with the cultural background.

Contemporary views have supported adapting authentic texts for advanced and beginning learners alike. As justification, Tomlinson (2012) suggested that every text should be authentic because learners need to be prepared to use the English language in real-life situations. This perspective indicates that beginners should not be denied an authentic learning experience. The use of authentic text for beginners was also empirically supported by Peacock (1997), who demonstrated that appropriate authentic materials developed beginners' concentration, motivation, and participation. Thus, a number of researchers have proposed possible solutions to adapt authentic texts for beginners. For example, Brandl (2008) suggested creating a balance between employing textbooks and authentic materials. This reasonable suggestion is echoed by Peacock (1997), who recommended providing authentic material as a supplement for the coursebook content, finding them useful and manageable when teaching beginners.

Unver (2017) hypothesized that combining effective teaching techniques with well-prepared authentic text can help beginners acquire the language content meaningfully and authentically. Unver's point of view encourages us to consider simplification, elaboration, and selection as potential instructional or teaching techniques that make authentic texts comprehensible and usable for beginners.

### 2.5.2 Text Modification

Developing the comprehensibility of the L2 input, whether written or spoken, is a primary concern in second language acquisition research. Therefore, researchers have developed various theories that form the cornerstone for multiple instructional principles and result in improved learning outcomes. One of these is the input hypothesis that Stephen Krashen put forward in 1985, when he suggested that learners will not effectively acquire the second language input unless it is comprehensible (as cited in VanPatten & Williams, 2015). He added that comprehensible input should contain content that is slightly beyond the current level of the L2 learners. Due to the apparent value of the input hypothesis, the notion of input modification was presented as a method to enhance L2 input comprehensibility (Oh, 2001). "Input modification" or "text modification" refers to decreasing the linguistic complexity to prevent learner comprehension breakdown (O'Donnell, 2009). According to Yano, Long and Ross (1994), text modification has tended to fall into two methods: simplification and elaboration. They also concluded that simplification and elaboration positively impacted L2 learners' listening and reading comprehension after reviewing 15 studies. Thus, the following two sections shed light on simplification and elaboration. It is essential to mention that researchers have not been consistent in their methods of simplifying or elaborating L2 texts (Yano et al., 1994). However, the common patterns that have emerged from the literature are defined below and accompanied by concrete examples.

#### 2.5.2.1 Simplification

"Text simplification" can be explained as reducing the syntactic and lexical difficulty in a text by eliminating uncommon grammatical constructions and vocabulary (Urano, 2000). Long (2015) described simplified texts more precisely as a group of sentences that are "written (or re-written) using relatively short utterances or sentences, a limited range of relatively high-frequency vocabulary, a low ratio of dependent to main clauses, and a narrow range of syntactic constructions and verb tenses" (p. 250).

Text simplification is commonly divided into two methods: lexical simplification and syntactic simplification. "Lexical simplification" or "lexical substitution" refers to replacing the uncommon words with high-frequency words (Siddharthan, 2014). As an example of lexical simplification, Oh (2001) simplified a text by replacing the low-frequency words with common alternatives; for instance, *less credulous* was replaced by *less believing*.

"Syntactic simplification" is the procedure of minimizing the complexity of the grammatical rules in a text (Siddharthan, 2006). De Belder and Moens (2010) established a set of syntactic simplification rules that encompass replacing relative clauses and using subordination. In terms of relative clauses, they suggested that the *wh*-word should be replaced with the main word of the sentence. The example below from De Belder and

Moens (2010, p. 21) illustrates the replacement of relative clauses:

**Baseline sentence:** The mayor, who recently got a divorce, is getting married again.

**Simplified sentence:** The mayor recently got a divorce. The mayor is getting married again.

They also added the rule of subordination, which can be used to simplify the syntactical structure of a sentence, as shown in the example below (De Belder & Moens, 2010, p. 21):

**Baseline sentence:** Although it is raining, the sun is shining.

**Simplified sentence:** It is raining. But the sun is shining.

Additionally, Candido Jr et al. (2009, p. 38) presented passive voice transformation into the active voice as a method in syntactic simplification:

**Baseline sentence:** More than 20 people have been bitten by gold piranhas.

**Simplified sentence:** Gold piranhas have bitten more than 20 people.

Finally, Siddharthan (2014) stated that the primary goal of simplification is to make L2 text more comprehensible for learners at a lower level. He also clarified that the main information and meaning in the text do not change, even after the process of simplification. This clarification aligns with Shardlow (2014), who emphasized that simplified text should convey the same meaning as the original version. The following section highlights elaboration, which is a method that may be substituted for simplification.

#### 2.5.2.2 Elaboration

Elaboration is considered an alternative technique in text modification. The term was first introduced by Parker and Chaudron (1987), who defined “elaboration” as the technique of adding redundancy to clarify the thematic structure in a text. This redundancy includes multiple elaborative instruments such as paraphrases, definitions, parallelisms, and synonyms. Kim (2006) categorized these redundancy instruments into two main categories. First, explicit lexical elaboration involves adding definitions and synonyms. Second, implicit lexical elaboration uses paraphrase and parallelism. The following example from Oh (2001, p. 76) illustrates how two sentences can be elaborated by adding various redundancy instruments and signaling the thematic structure:

**Baseline sentence:** We are less credulous than we used to be. In the nineteenth century, a novelist would bring his story to a conclusion by presenting his readers with a series of coincidences—most of them wildly improbable.

**Elaborated sentence:** We are less credulous than we used to be in the past. We don’t easily believe in coincidences or accidental happenings. In the nineteenth century, a novelist would bring his story to a conclusion by presenting his readers with a series of such coincidences, though most of them were wildly improbable.

The ultimate purpose of text elaboration is similar to that of text simplification: making the reading text more comprehensible for L2 learners. However, the linguistic features of elaborated texts differ from those of simplified texts. For instance, in simplification, sentences are shortened and omitted. In contrast, elaboration retains the original text with additional linguistic items. This means that elaborated texts are longer than simplified and unmodified texts (O’Donnell, 2009; Oh, 2001; Long, 2020).

#### 2.5.3 Selection

The internet has significantly increased the availability of authentic materials (Clavel-Arroitia & Fuster-Márquez, 2014). That is why Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) emphasized the importance of evaluating materials before selecting them. Nuttall (1996) developed three criteria for selecting texts: suitability of the content, exploitability, and readability. “Suitability of content” means that the selected text should be related to the learners’ interests and real-life needs (Nuttall, 1996). Mishan (2005) argued that having a connection between learners’ interests and authentic texts is an influential element in creating a successful language learning process. “Exploitability” involves exploiting a text to achieve teaching outcomes and developing students’ reading skills competence (Nuttall, 1996). Oguz and Bahar (2008) argued that the chosen authentic material should align with the lesson objectives. “Readability” refers to the difficulty level of a particular text in terms of the grammatical structure and new vocabulary; furthermore, readability is expressed as the criterion of creating a match between the text difficulty level and the learner’s language proficiency level (Nuttall, 1996). Al-Musallam (2009) found that teachers regarded the text language level as the most significant factor in selecting authentic texts. Overall, Berardo (2006) considered these three criteria to be essential elements in selecting authentic materials. Accordingly, these criteria have been frequently employed to select the appropriate authentic texts in the

previous research studies. It is worth noticing that the results of research studies have not been consistent in identifying the most significant criterion for authentic text selection. Nevertheless, all of the criteria discussed above could produce a practical guide for EFL teachers in selecting authentic texts.

### *2.6 Aspects Affecting Teachers' Instructional Practices*

Theories about teacher knowledge or cognition are used most often as a theoretical guide for understanding the aspects that affect L2 teachers' work, such as their practices in the classroom context (Johnson, 2006). "Teacher knowledge" is defined by Johnson (1999) as a term that encompasses the experiential and professional knowledge constituting teachers' classroom practices (as cited in Abdelhafez, 2010). Teacher knowledge also involves a personal aspect (Elbaz, 1981). According to Connelly and Clandinin (1987), teacher knowledge evolves according to the teacher's personal and professional experiences. Thus, personal practical knowledge (PPK) is a model that was first proposed by Elbaz (1983); Connelly and Clandinin (1987) later developed it to explore how teacher knowledge—whether personal or practical—informs and shapes their instructional practices. PPK can be defined as the "knowledge which is experiential, embodied, and reconstructed out of the narratives of a teacher's life" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1987, p. 490). Later, Golombek (1998) elaborated on the concept of PPK by categorizing it into four aspects of knowledge: self, subject matter, instruction, and context—with the caveat that these aspects may not be comprehensive or prescriptive views of teachers' knowledge. Nevertheless, they can provide a holistic picture of the reasoning behind teachers' decisions for selecting particular practices (Borg, 2003). The following sections explain each aspect of PPK.

#### *2.6.1 Knowledge of Self*

"Knowledge of self" refers to how teachers construct their practices from their experiences as learners or teachers (Golombek, 1998). Several studies have emphasized the impact of this aspect of PPK. For example, Borg (2003) found that teachers' experiences as learners have an impact on their practices in teaching the language. Similarly, Windschitl (2002) posited that teachers extract their instructional practices from their personal experiences as learners because they are more likely to be influenced by familiar norms and images. Indeed, these findings are likely to correspond to the case of EFL teachers who experienced learning English as a second language and then taught this language.

Accumulated teaching experience is also regarded as an influence on teachers' practices. Crookes and Arakaki (1999) found teaching experience to be the primary source of teaching ideas because teachers were able to distinguish between effective and ineffective practices from their teaching experience. Similarly, Valencia (2009) concluded that teachers' decisions in the classroom are a product of their experiences in their teaching careers. Overall, it can be hypothesized that teachers' learning and teaching experience can provide further interpretations of, and justifications for, their instructional practices.

#### *2.6.2 Knowledge of Subject Matter*

Borg (2006b) recognized that defining "subject matter" is complicated. Golombek (1998) defined knowledge of subject matter as the "input from readings, classes, professors, and other experiences that these teachers had filtered through their interpretive frameworks to shape their understandings of L2 learning and teaching" (p. 451). Highlighting the importance of subject matter knowledge, Pachler, Evans, and Lawes (2007) declared that subject knowledge is a fundamental element in a teacher's professional experience, and Tsui (2013) pointed out that teachers with extensive subject matter knowledge could effectively explain multiple concepts in teaching the English language. Additionally, Farrell and Richards (2007) concluded that knowledge of subject matter enables teachers to use authentic materials effectively in the classroom because they can access different language resources (as cited in Richards et al., 2013). Therefore, it can be assumed that knowledge of subject matter may affect teachers' instructional practices in using authentic texts.

#### *2.6.3 Knowledge of Instruction*

"Knowledge of instruction" reflects the pedagogical knowledge that teachers hold about the role of teacher, student, lesson plan, task, and assessment (Golombek, 1998). However, the term "pedagogical knowledge" is used more frequently to describe this aspect of teachers' knowledge in the literature. More specifically, Gathbonton (1999) defined teachers' pedagogical knowledge as "the teacher's accumulated knowledge about the teaching act (e.g., its goals, procedures, strategies) that serves as the basis for his or her classroom behaviors and activities" (p. 35). Therefore, the knowledge of instruction in the present study is conceived of as the knowledge about adapting effective teaching methods and goals. An increasing number of studies have indicated that teachers' pedagogical knowledge correlates with their instructional practices. For instance, König and Pflanzl (2016) found that teachers' instructional quality correlated significantly with their general pedagogical

knowledge. Furthermore, after analyzing the teaching of grammar, Borg (1998) found that teachers' pedagogical systems framed their instructional decisions in teaching grammar. Thus, the current study considers teachers' knowledge of instruction as a potential influence on their instructional practices in using authentic texts.

#### 2.6.4 Knowledge of Context

"Knowledge of context" refers to recognizing contextual aspects in the institutional setting, such as time and place (Golombek, 1998). In terms of time, Serrano (2011) noted that teachers in long sessions use various audiovisual materials more often than teachers in short sessions. Al Nooh (2013) also found that teachers face difficulties in applying effective methods for teaching reading due to the limited timeframe. These findings explain how long and short class duration may influence teachers' instructional practices. In addition, the context or place of teaching also involves the educational facilities (Barkhuizen, 2008), which may include technical support, such as the availability of internet connections, which improves the instructional efficacy of EFL teachers (Chen, 2008). Overall, Barkhuizen (2008) maintained that being aware of the teaching context enables teachers to make informed decisions regarding their practices. However, it is quite rare that the effect of knowledge of context been tested on teachers' instructional practices in using authentic texts. Thus, the current research seeks to fill this gap in the literature.

An overall comment about these aspects of knowledge is that teacher knowledge can be a useful analytic concept that accounts for language teaching practices (Johnston & Goetsch, 2000). Therefore, these aspects of teacher knowledge may offer an insightful lens into teachers' instructional practices when using authentic texts.

#### 2.7 Conceptual Framework

The instructional practices in using authentic texts are conceptualized in *Figure 1*. These instructional practices are collected according to the aforementioned research studies that examined the usage of authentic texts in the classroom context, particularly in reading classes. The reason for bringing these concepts together is to construct a conceptual framework that includes all related concepts to understand the phenomenon of this study (Imenda, 2014).

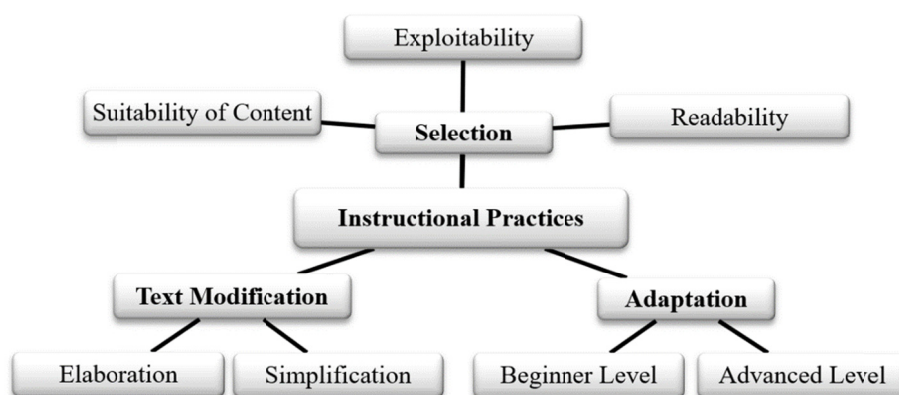


Figure 1. Conceptualizing teachers' instructional practices in using authentic texts

#### 2.8 Theoretical Framework

Contemporary research studies view teachers as active agents and decision-makers who establish their practices according to interrelated knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs (Borg, 2003). Therefore, this study aims to explore teachers' perspectives toward several instructional practices in using authentic texts. To achieve this aim, the reflection theory is used to illuminate teachers' perspectives toward following particular instructional practices (Schön 1983, 1987). Dewey (1933) defined "reflection" as "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (as cited in Jay & Johnson, 2002, p. 74). Thus, it can be said that reflection provides a comprehensive overview of teachers' practices. For example, through reflection, we can access multiple dimensions that affect teachers' work, like "beliefs, experiences, attitudes, knowledge, and values and the opportunities and constraints provided by the social conditions in which the teacher works" (Zeichner & Liston, 1996, p. 20). Reflective teachers are able to define difficulties, analyze purposes, understand contexts, determine possibilities, and employ their educational experiences to assist learners (Baleghizadeh & Javidanmehr, 2014). Therefore,



employing reflection as a tool to investigate teachers' perspectives toward instructional practices can establish deeper insights regarding the usage of authentic text in EFL classrooms.

The PPK model is used as a lens to explore the influences that lead teachers to follow particular instructional practices (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986, 1987; Elbaz, 1983; Golombek, 1998). This model posits that several social and professional elements determine teachers' decisions in choosing practices for teaching. For example, teachers' decisions on particular instructional practices might reflect their knowledge of self, subject matter, instruction, and context (Golombek, 1998). The roots of this model are based on the interpretative approach. The interpretative approach does not merely view teachers' instructional practices as a product of their cognitive knowledge, but rather as a group of social and contextual aspects that interact simultaneously to make teachers decide on their practices (Johnson, 2006). Overall, this study collects data on teachers' perspectives and PPK to examine how their knowledge and perspective influence their instructional practices in using authentic texts.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Paradigm

Research is an organized process that explores phenomena, considers issues, and seeks answers—all of which contribute to the existing knowledge (Dörnyei, 2007). Researchers are generally required to follow a research paradigm that guides any research process. A “research paradigm” is defined by Guba (1990) as a “basic set of beliefs that guides actions” (p. 17), and a number of research paradigms are distinguished in educational research, such as positivist, interpretivist, and pragmatist (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This study utilizes the pragmatist paradigm to achieve the research aim. The pragmatist paradigm combines positivism and interpretivism underpinned by ontological and epistemological assumptions (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Ontology refers to exploring the nature of reality (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012), whereas epistemology is concerned with how knowledge can be acquired and understood (Solem, 2003). From an ontological stance, positivism views reality as one measurable and objective fact that exists in the external world that is independent and detached from the researcher (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Healy & Perry, 2000). Interpretivism clarifies reality as a subjective entity that can be found in a social context; the researcher can reach this reality through the personal interpretations of their participants (Schwandt, 1994). In contrast to positivism, interpretivism views the researcher's role as interactive with the research data (Cohen et al., 2007). The following section explains how the pragmatist paradigm was followed in designing this research study.

#### 3.2 Research Design

Because positivism treats reality as a quantifiable element, it is linked to quantitative methods (Shah & Al-Bargi, 2013). One part of this research study follows the positivist paradigm because this research employs a questionnaire to collect quantitative data about the common instructional procedures that EFL teachers follow in applying authentic texts. In contrast, the interpretivist paradigm is attached to qualitative methods, such as interviews (Shah & Al-Bargi, 2013). Following the interpretivism paradigm, this research study seeks to explore teachers' perspectives toward various instructional practices in using authentic texts as well as the aspects of knowledge that affect their instructional practices. Therefore, semi-structured interviews are used to gain qualitative data to achieve these objectives.

#### 3.3 Participants and Context

A total of 50 female Saudi EFL teachers participated in the present study. The participants were working at two Saudi universities, teaching English language to female foundation-year students. English is a mandatory requirement for students in their first year of university. Teachers were required to follow a particular curriculum for teaching English at the two universities. The first university curriculum consists of four modular courses over one academic year. This university also uses the quarterly system, which means that students must study one book every six weeks. *Unlimited English* and *Unlock* by Cambridge University Press are the main course books used for Arts and Science tracks. Regarding the second university, the curriculum consists of two modular courses over one academic year. The second university uses the half system, which means that students must study one book every 13 or 14 weeks. *National Geographic Learning* is the primary course book used for Arts and Science tracks. At the two universities, each student must attend 18 hours divided into five days per week. The table below illustrates the distribution of teachers among the two universities as well as their teaching experience, qualification, age, level, and track of teaching.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants in the questionnaire

Variable	Groups	N	%
University	University 1	34	68.0%
	University 2	16	32.0%
Teaching Experience	0–5 years	8	16.0%
	6–10 years	26	52.0%
	11 years and above	16	32.0%
Qualification	Bachelor's degree	9	18.0%
	Master's degree	19	38.0%
	Doctor of philosophy degree	22	44.0%
Age	25–29	6	12.0%
	30–34	9	18.0%
	35–39	15	30.0%
	40–44	12	24.0%
	45 or more	8	16.0%
The track you are teaching in	Arts	29	58.0%
	Scientific	21	42.0%
The level you are teaching in	Beginner	8	16.0%
	Intermediate	21	42.0%
	Upper-intermediate	10	20.0%
	Advanced	11	22.0%
Total		50	100.0%

### 3.4 Sampling Strategy

A convenience sampling strategy was used in the quantitative phase. According to Dörnyei (2007), “convenience” or “opportunity sampling” refers to selecting the participants based on their availability, willingness to share, and time. The researcher used this type of sampling strategy to access various participants within the provided time. Maximal variation sampling was used in the qualitative phase. Creswell (2015) indicated that maximal variation sampling allows the researcher to collect many perspectives. Therefore, this sampling strategy was employed to elicit a wide range of perspectives from EFL teachers.

### 3.5 Research Instruments

#### 3.5.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was used as an instrument to collect quantitative data to answer the first research question; it was designed by the researcher after the literature review was complete. The content of the questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section 1 was designed to obtain demographic data about the participants, as is illustrated in Table 1; Section 2 contained 19 items to explore teachers' instructional practices in using authentic texts. Table 2 below summarizes the division of section two. All of the 19 items were measured using a five-point frequency scale, ranging from Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Often (4), to Always (5). Table 3 shows the weighted means for five-point Likert scales.

Table 2. Section 2 items

Instructional Practices	Description	Items
<b>Adaptation</b>	The practice of adapting authentic texts for beginner or advanced students.	<b>2</b>
<b>Selection</b>	The practice of selecting authentic texts according to Nuttall's (1996) criteria: suitability of content, exploitability, and readability.	<b>8</b>
<b>Elaboration</b>	The practice of elaborating authentic texts, whether explicit or implicit elaboration (Kim, 2006).	<b>5</b>
<b>Simplification</b>	The practice of simplifying authentic texts, whether lexical or syntactical simplification (Oh, 2001; De Belder & Moens, 2010).	<b>4</b>

Table 3. The weighted means for answers

Answer	Scale	Weighted Means
Never	1	$1 \leq 1.80$
Rarely	2	$1.80 \leq 2.60$
Sometimes	3	$2.60 \leq 3.40$
Often	4	$3.40 \leq 4.20$
Always	5	4.20 to 5

### 3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews are a research instrument that allows the researcher to explore a particular phenomenon in depth (Creswell, 2015; Dörnyei, 2007). Dörnyei (2007) divided research interviews into three types: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. He also demonstrates that a semi-structured interview contains pre-prepared guiding questions that enable the interviewee to elaborate further on a particular issue. Thus, to best answer the second and third research questions, this study used semi-structured interviews. An interview guide was developed by the researcher after revising basic guidelines and rules from Dörnyei (2007). This interview guide consists of nine questions asking the participants of the study to provide their perspectives on instructional practices and demonstrate the aspects of knowledge that affect such practices. Five teachers participated individually in the interviews. Table 4 below summarizes the demographic information of each participant in the interviews.

Table 4. Demographic information of the interview participants

Pseudonym	Experience	Education	Level of Teaching	Track of Teaching	Age
Teacher 1	6–10 years	MA	Intermediate	Arts	30–34
Teacher 2	0–5 years	BA	Beginners	Scientific	25–29
Teacher 3	11 years and above	PhD	Advanced	Arts	45 or more
Teacher 4	11 years and above	MA	Upper-intermediate	Scientific	25–29
Teacher 5	6–10 years	MA	Upper-intermediate	Scientific	30–34

## 3.6 Procedures

### 3.6.1 Questionnaire

The first phase of data collection was collecting the quantitative data through a questionnaire, which was designed electronically using Google Forms. Before distributing the questionnaire, a pilot was conducted to ensure that the items were clear. First, two assistant professors reviewed the content of the questionnaire, and the content was modified according to their comments. Next, the questionnaire was piloted on a small group of female Saudi EFL teachers. Their feedback after answering the questionnaire was taken into consideration. Next, the internal consistency of the second section was measured by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient test in IBM SPSS software version 24. As shown in Table 5, the result was 0.948.

Table 5. Reliability statistics

Cronbach's alpha	No. of Items
.948	19

According to Dörnyei (2007), a Cronbach's alpha coefficient that exceeds 0.70 indicates an acceptable range of reliability. Finally, the questionnaire was distributed to the target sample via WhatsApp and Telegram groups.

### 3.6.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The second phase of data collection involved collecting the qualitative data. Before starting the interviews, the researcher sent the interview guide and a consent form to each participant via email to ensure clarity. Each participant was individually interviewed after signing the consent form. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the interviews were conducted on Zoom, an online platform for virtual meetings. All of the interviews were audio-only to ensure the participants' privacy. Each interview took from 25 to 30 minutes.

The interviews started with asking the participants about their instructional practices in using authentic texts. The participant was then asked to provide her perspectives toward these instructional practices. After that, the

participant was asked to demonstrate the aspects that affect her instructional practices. Following that, all of the participants answered the interview guide questions. Throughout the interview, the researcher asked probing questions to gain further information that emerged during the interview.

### 3.7 Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using IBM SPSS software version 24. The analysis began with coding the data in SPSS. Then, frequency, descriptive, and inferential tests were employed to analyze the obtained quantitative data. As for the qualitative data, the interviews were transcribed using Otter software. Then, all of the transcripts of the interviews were organized by inserting them into Microsoft Word software, and the analysis was started with the initial coding process. Next, the codes were generated according to the research objectives and questions. Then, the thematic analysis technique was employed to analyze the qualitative data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is the process of identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes. After analyzing the data thematically, the codes were grouped together to present meaningful themes. Finally, general conclusions were made to explore the perspectives and aspects of knowledge that affect teachers' instructional practices using authentic texts. Further results are presented in the next chapter.

### 3.8 Ethical Considerations

This research considered several ethical concerns. Before collecting data, the researcher obtained approval from the administrations of both universities. All participants were required to sign a consent form to answer the questionnaire and conduct the interview. After conducting the interviews, all of the records were stored in a password-protected device. Participants' anonymity was ensured while collecting the qualitative and quantitative data. Their real names were not required, and they were assigned pseudonyms in reporting the interview data. Finally, the interview records and questionnaire responses were deleted immediately after completing the research project.

## 4. Data Analysis and Results

This study aims to explore female Saudi EFL teachers' instructional practices in using authentic texts to teach reading comprehension, their perspectives toward these practices, and the aspects of knowledge that affect their practices. This section presents an analysis of the collected quantitative and qualitative data from the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

### 4.1 Authentic Texts Used to Teach Reading Comprehension

Before exploring teachers' instructional practices, the first set of analyses investigated the most commonly used types of authentic texts, as shown in Figure 2. The figure shows that the authentic texts types most often used by teachers are emails, at 56%; restaurant menus, at 52%; advertisements, at 46%; and short stories, at 42%. Those used least are Facebook posts, poems and novels, at 6%, 10%, and 12%, respectively.

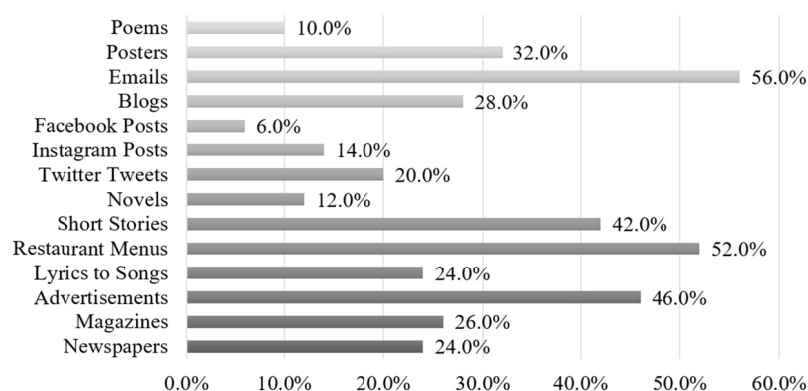


Figure 2. Types of authentic texts used

### 4.2 The Statistical Difference Between Experienced and Novice Teachers

Before selecting the appropriate inferential statistic test, a test of normality was conducted to determine whether the research data were normally distributed. As shown in Table 6, the data do not follow the normal distribution because the significance value is less than 0.05.

Table 6. The distribution of data

Tests of Normality							
Teaching Experience		Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
The Overall of	0–5 years	.238	8	.200*	.921	8	.439
Instructional	6–10 years	.190	26	.017	.916	26	.035
Practices	11 years and above	.156	16	.200*	.874	16	.031

Note. \*. This is a lower bound of the true significance; a. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

For that reason, the non-parametric Kruskal–Wallis Test was used to find the differences among teachers in all instructional practices according to their experience in the teaching profession. According to Dörnyei (2007), non-parametric tests are alternatives to the parametric tests in the case of non-normal distribution. Table 7 below indicates that there was no significant difference among teachers in all instructional practices according to their experience in the teaching profession, because the p-value is greater than 0.05.

Table 7. Kruskal-Wallis test results

Test Statistics <sup>a,b</sup>	
	The Overall of Instructional Practices
Chi-square	1.138
df	2
Asymp. sig.	.566

Note. a. Kruskal–Wallis Test; b. Grouping Variable: Teaching Experience.

#### 4.3 Results of the First Research Question

##### **Research Question 1: What are the instructional practices that EFL teachers use in employing authentic texts for teaching reading comprehension?**

To answer the first research question, the items of each instructional practice were analyzed by calculating frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The following sections present the quantitative data related to the first research question.

##### 4.3.1 Adaptation

Table 8 shows the frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for each item in adaptation, which is the first instructional practice in using authentic texts. The total score for adaptation is 3.27 of 5.0 and falls into the range of  $2.60 \leq 3.40$ , which denotes a response of “Sometimes” on the five-level Likert scale. For Item 1, the mean is 2.86 with a standard deviation of 1.26, which shows that teachers sometimes adapt authentic texts for beginners. This result suggests that few teachers adapt authentic texts for beginners. However, Item 2 indicates that teachers often adapt authentic texts for advanced students, as the mean is 3.68 with a standard deviation of 1.30. Overall, it can be said that teachers view authentic texts as more appropriate teaching materials for advanced students than beginners.

Table 8. The practice of adaptation

Items	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1. I adapt authentic texts for beginners because these texts are appropriate for them	11	22	4	8	22	44	7	14	6	12	2.86	1.26
2. I adapt authentic texts for advanced level	5	10	4	8	10	20	14	28	17	34	3.68	1.30
<b>Total</b>											3.27	1.28

##### 4.3.2 Selection

Table 9 below presents the frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for each item in selection, which is second instructional practice in using authentic texts. The total score for selection is 3.75 of 5.0 and

falls into the range of  $3.40 \leq 4.20$ , which denotes a response of “Often” on the five-level Likert scale. Item 6 shows that most of the teachers select authentic texts based on the students’ language level, as the mean is 4.14 with a standard deviation of 1.13. This result suggests that readability is the most important criterion in selecting authentic texts. Items 4 and 5 indicate that teachers select authentic texts to achieve the lesson objectives and develop reading skills, as the means of these items are 3.96 and 3.82, respectively. The results suggest that teachers rank exploiting authentic texts as the second most important criterion in selecting authentic texts. Item 1 has a mean of 3.48 and a standard deviation of 1.22. This result suggests that teachers rank the suitability of authentic texts as the third most important criterion in selecting authentic texts.

Table 9. The practice of selection

Items	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1. I choose authentic texts according to the students’ interests	6	12	2	4	14	28	18	36	10	20	3.48	1.22
2. I choose authentic texts based on the students’ real-life needs	5	10	3	6	12	24	14	28	16	32	3.66	1.27
3. I choose authentic texts based on the students’ academic needs	4	8	1	2	14	28	17	34	14	28	3.72	1.14
4. I choose authentic texts that align with the lesson objectives	3	6	2	4	9	18	16	32	20	40	3.96	1.14
5. I choose authentic texts that develop the students’ reading skills	3	6	1	2	14	28	16	32	16	32	3.82	1.10
6. I choose authentic texts that are suitable for the students’ language level	3	6	1	2	7	14	14	28	25	50	4.14	1.13
7. I choose authentic texts that contain easy grammatical structures	5	10	2	4	13	26	20	40	10	20	3.56	1.16
8. I choose authentic texts that contain highly frequent vocabulary	3	6	3	6	14	28	17	34	13	26	3.68	1.12
<b>Total</b>											3.75	1.16

#### 4.3.3 Elaboration

Table 10 illustrates the frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for each item in elaboration, which is the third instructional practice in using authentic texts. The total score for elaboration is 3.41 of 5.0 and falls into the range  $3.40 \leq 4.20$ , which denotes a response of “Often” on the five-level Likert scale. Item 3 indicates that the majority of the teachers elaborate authentic texts by adding further examples, as the mean is 3.64 with a standard deviation of 1.41. Similarly, Item 4 also shows that teachers elaborate authentic texts by paraphrasing, as the mean is 3.62 with a standard deviation of 1.35. However, teachers’ responses in Item 5 indicate that few teachers (2.88) elaborate authentic texts by unifying grammatical tenses. Regarding Items 1 and 2, the former produced a mean of 3.36 and a standard deviation of 1.40, whereas the latter produced a mean of 3.54 and a standard deviation of 1.31. In sum, it can be hypothesized that teachers more often employ explicit—rather than implicit—lexical elaboration.

Table 10. The practice of elaboration

Items	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1. I add more synonyms in authentic texts to clarify the difficult vocabulary	9	18	4	8	8	16	18	36	11	22	3.36	1.40
2. I add extra definitions to define the difficult vocabulary in authentic texts	6	12	4	8	11	22	15	30	14	28	3.54	1.31
3. I add examples to clarify/explain the difficult vocabulary in authentic texts	8	16	1	2	10	20	13	26	18	36	3.64	1.41
4. I paraphrase the sentence in authentic texts to make it easy to understand	7	14	2	4	10	20	15	30	16	32	3.62	1.35
5. I unify the grammatical tense of the sentence in authentic texts (For example, making the sentence in the present tense only)	13	26	7	14	11	22	11	22	8	16	2.88	1.44
<b>Total</b>											3.41	1.38

#### 4.3.4 Simplification

Table 11 shows the frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for each item in simplification, which is the fourth instructional practice in using authentic texts. The total score for simplification is 2.56 of 5.0 and falls into the range of  $1.80 \leq 2.60$ , which denotes a response of “Rarely” on the five-level Likert scale. This result suggests that the majority of the teachers rarely practice simplification when using authentic texts to teach reading comprehension. Item 1 clarifies that some teachers practice simplification by replacing difficult words, as the mean is 2.86 with a standard deviation of 1.26. In the same range, the responses to Item 3 have a mean of 2.66 and a standard deviation of 1.27. Finally, Items 2 and 4 have the same mean of 2.36, but Item 2 produced a standard deviation of 1.16, and Item 4 produced a standard deviation of 1.31. In general, teachers practice lexical simplification more than syntactic simplification.

Table 11. The practice of simplification

Items	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1. I replace less frequent vocabulary items with highly frequent ones in authentic texts	10	20	7	14	19	38	8	16	6	12	2.86	1.26
2. I change the tense of the sentences in authentic texts from passive voice to active	14	28	14	28	15	30	4	8	3	6	2.36	1.16
3. I shorten long sentences in authentic texts to decrease the grammatical complexity	13	26	8	16	16	32	9	18	4	8	2.66	1.27
4. I change relative clauses in authentic texts to main clauses	17	34	13	26	9	18	7	14	4	8	2.36	1.31
<b>Total</b>											2.56	1.25

#### 4.4 Results of the Second Research Question

##### **Research Question 2: What are teachers’ perspectives on the implementation of these instructional practices in using authentic texts for teaching reading comprehension?**

To answer the second research question, the teachers were asked in the interviews to reflect on three instructional practices: adaptation, selection, and text modifications (i.e., simplification and elaboration). In the practice of adaptation, four main themes have emerged, as shown in Figure 3. The practice of selection has three main themes, as presented in Figure 4. Finally, in terms of text modification (i.e., simplification and elaboration), two main themes emerged, as illustrated in Figure 5. The following sections explain each theme further.

#### 4.4.1 Adaptation

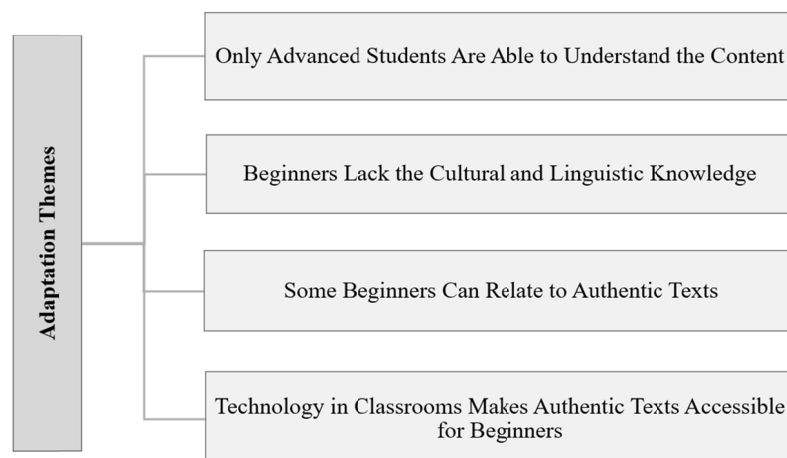


Figure 3. Generated themes of adaptation

##### 4.4.1.1 Only Advanced Students Are Able to Understand the Content

During interviews, two of five teachers reported that only advanced students could comprehend the content of authentic texts. For example, one teacher stated that advanced students are able to understand the complicated grammatical structures used in authentic texts: “For advanced level [...] they will be able to understand the meaning of the grammar” (Teacher 1). She also stressed that advanced students could successfully resolve content difficulties while using authentic texts: “I found it easier on them and on me, even if I found some difficulties or challenges. Sometimes I can solve it quickly” (Teacher 1). Providing a justification for this idea, another teacher reported that advanced students are more engaged in the social media content; therefore, they are more familiar with the content of authentic texts. “I think for the advanced levels, especially these days, they are more into the social media things, and they consider it may be more popular for them. They would understand it more, so we can relate to them” (Teacher 4). Overall, both teachers highlighted the advanced students’ ability to overcome authentic text challenges.

##### 4.4.1.2 Beginners Lack Cultural and Linguistic Knowledge

Teachers 1 and 4 emphasized that, in contrast to the advanced students, beginners lack the cultural and linguistic knowledge needed to comprehend authentic text content. For example, Teacher 4 said, “The beginners sometimes need to realize more of the context and understand more from the words; if I use these authentic texts, maybe they will be a bit confused.” She attributed the lexical confusion that beginners might face while using authentic texts to a lack of contextual or cultural knowledge. Similarly, Teacher 1 explained that beginners “would not be able to comprehend the meaning of the text or anything [...] without huge help sometimes.” According to Teacher 1, the absence of linguistic knowledge—such as understanding the general meaning of the text—forces teachers to make extra efforts in explaining authentic texts for beginners. For these reasons, Teachers 1 and 4 did not prefer adapting authentic texts for beginners.

##### 4.4.1.3 Some Beginners Can Relate to Authentic Texts

Although some teachers did not agree that using authentic texts is appropriate for beginners, three of five accepted adapting authentic texts for more advanced students; these three teachers believed that authentic texts may play an essential role in developing beginners’ language learning. For example, Teacher 2 confirmed that authentic text is beneficial because beginners could relate to such texts, and Teacher 5 further explained why that may be: “When we talk about tweets, songs, YouTube videos, TV shows, for the majority of the time, they can relate to them because they use them on a daily basis”. In other words, authentic texts or materials are part of students’ daily lives. Moreover, Teacher 3 expressed that the availability of internet content nowadays connects beginners with a wide range of authentic texts such as Twitter posts (“tweets”). She continued: “Internet access has become available for each and every student,” thus confirming that the internet gives beginners unprecedented opportunities to recognize the content of authentic texts.



#### 4.4.1.4 Technology in Classrooms Makes Authentic Texts Accessible for Beginners

During interviews, two of five teachers emphasized that technology helps them to adapt authentic texts for beginners: “We are living in the age of technology. So, it is really very beneficial” (Teacher 3). She also remarked that students are more familiar with technology due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which saw face-to-face classes replaced with virtual classes. For this reason, she considered such familiarity with technology as an excellent chance to adapt authentic texts for beginners. Teacher 2 also reported that using technology eases the process of adapting authentic texts for beginners. Both teachers mentioned using different apps, such as Kahoot, Padlet and Quizlet, to integrate authentic texts into beginners’ classes. Furthermore, they acknowledged that these apps present reading comprehension activities in an innovative and attractive way in the classroom context. Such feedback strongly supports the notion that beginners will better understand the content of authentic texts with the aid of technology.

#### 4.4.2 Selection

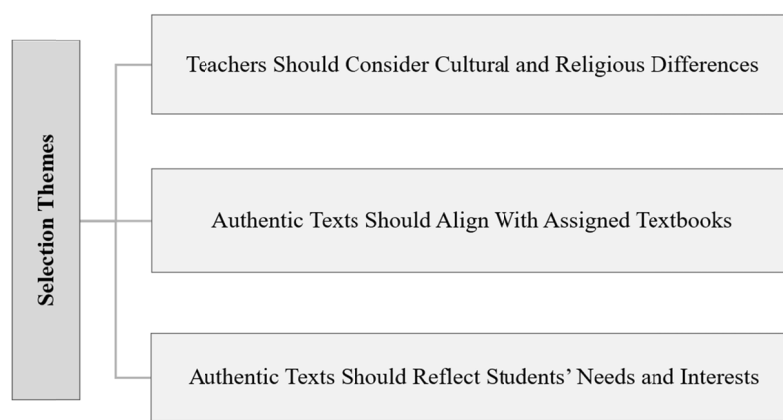


Figure 4. Generated Themes of Selection

##### 4.4.2.1 Teachers Should Consider Cultural and Religious Differences

Three of five teachers cited cultural and social content—including religious boundaries—as important considerations when selecting authentic texts. For example, Teacher 5 mentioned that authentic text topics should be “appropriate for the students’ cultural backgrounds and Islamic boundaries.” Because of these cultural and religious boundaries, she generally avoids authentic texts that mention prohibited topics or issues in the students’ social context. She continued: “We have a lot of restrictions compared to Western culture; for example, topics related to alcohol.” Teacher 3 corroborated this point about the need to select authentic texts with care, because some “do not match your students’ cultural background.” To explain this careful selection in terms of culture and religion, Teacher 4 stated that students may reject inappropriate content on cultural grounds, thus rendering such authentic texts useless in language learning.

##### 4.4.2.2 Authentic Texts Should Align with Assigned Textbooks

It was evident from the interview data that authentic texts are mostly used as additional and supportive materials in the classroom. Therefore, three of five teachers indicated that the selected authentic text should align with the textbook, including learning objectives and skills. Teacher 2 expressed that in selecting the authentic text, “The most important thing is to find the relationship between the textbook or the curriculum, or the SLO [student learning objectives], and authentic material that I am going to use with the students.” Having the same perspective of matching authentic texts with the textbook, Teacher 3 mentioned, “If I am teaching them writing, I will choose something related to writing; if it is speaking, listening. It depends on the language skill that I am teaching in that specific lesson.” Thus, they all viewed the textbook as the main material in the classroom, and the selection of authentic texts should be based on the textbook content.

##### 4.4.2.3 Authentic Texts Should Reflect Students’ Needs and Interests

Three of five teachers tended to select authentic texts that match their students’ needs and interests. For example, Teachers 1 and 5 preferred to explore student interests by gathering their opinions from a survey before selecting

authentic texts. Teacher 5 said, “Taking the students’ perspectives about the material that you use with them, that gives you a kind of an impression, a kind of a view of what students prefer and what they do not.” Evidently, exploring students’ interests and needs is a necessary criterion in the practice of selection, because if the students are interested in the texts, “they get excited, they just do not feel bored,” as Teacher 2 explained.

#### 4.4.3 Text Modification

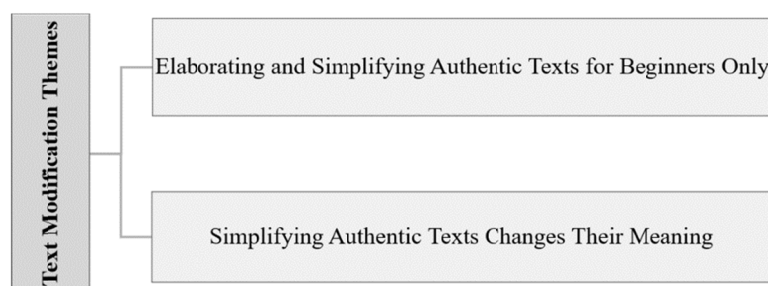


Figure 5. Generated themes of text modification

##### 4.4.3.1 Elaborating and Simplifying Authentic Texts for Beginners Only

Teachers tended to employ the practices of elaboration and simplification to modify authentic texts for beginners more. For example, Teacher 2 clarified that lexical elaboration could assist beginners: “Especially for beginners, sometimes it is difficult for them to understand that it is related to themselves. So sometimes they need another word.” Providing a reason for that, Teacher 3 emphasized that elaboration might be necessary if the students need further clarification because “Some authentic texts, they have expressions that are not very common, very popular for the beginner students.” In contrast, Teacher 5 stressed that advanced students are “supposed to be more exposed to this kind of difficult wording, vocab items in order for them to advance more and more.” Therefore, it can be assumed that some teachers do not prefer the option of elaboration or simplification of the text in teaching advanced students.

##### 4.4.3.2 Simplifying Authentic Texts Changes Their Meaning

Two of five teachers shared their thoughts on the simplification of authentic texts. Teacher 5 recognized that simplifying the vocabulary in authentic texts can change their meaning in multiple ways: “Maybe the writer wrote it in a specific way because he wanted a certain point to be clear; maybe I could miss that point.” Teacher 2 had the same perspective, remarking that to simplify an authentic text is to risk changing its meaning, thereby rendering it incompatible with Student Learning Objectives (SLOs).

#### 4.5 Results of the Third Research Question

Research Question 3: What are the aspects of knowledge that impact EFL teachers’ instructional practices when employing authentic texts to teach reading comprehension?

The qualitative data revealed how teachers’ knowledge of self, subject matter, instruction, and context affected their instructional practices in using authentic texts. The following sections demonstrate the impact of each aspect on their practices separately.

##### 4.5.1 Knowledge of Self

###### 4.5.1.1 Learning Experience

Some teachers described how their learning experience impacted their practices using authentic texts. Teacher 1 reported that when she was a student, translation helped her to understand the content of authentic texts. Applying this experience later as a teacher, she now advises her students to use the translation method to understand the meaning of authentic texts. Similarly, Teacher 5 reported that she had a self-centered learning experience, which encouraged her to use authentic texts frequently. She elaborated: “We learned that focusing on authentic texts and materials are more prominent and efficient than just relying 100% entirely on the textbook that we have.” For this reason, she often uses authentic texts as supplementary material in her lessons.

However, three of five teachers reported that their learning experience did not affect their practices in using authentic texts. They all agreed that they had traditional learning experiences that focused on learning through

textbooks. For example, Teacher 3 recalled, “When I studied English, I studied it in very old methods—old learning and teaching methods.” Evidently, authentic texts were not used in these three teachers’ traditional learning experiences.

#### 4.5.1.2 Teaching Experience

All teachers agreed that their teaching experiences affected their practices. For example, Teacher 3 reported that she taught different levels during her long teaching experience. Consequently, she was able to adjust her practices in using authentic texts according to the students’ language levels. In addition, Teachers 1, 3, and 5 observed that, in their teaching experience, students are excited to learn through authentic texts. This finding motivated these teachers to develop their practices using authentic texts. For example, Teacher 5 mentioned, “I was lucky enough that every year I use authentic text, and find something more beneficial and makes the students more active, I would keep advancing with it.” It is worth noticing that all teachers, whether experienced or novice, cited the impact of their teaching experiences on their instructional practices when using authentic texts.

#### 4.5.2 Knowledge of Subject Matter

It was clear that knowledge of the subject matter has a significant impact on teachers’ instructional practices. Teachers 2, 3, and 4 indicated that reading different resources motivates them to update their instructional practices in using authentic texts. For example, Teacher 3 said, “Every day we have new teaching strategies when we teach authentic texts, so reading actually empowers my ability as a teacher specifically in this field of authentic texts.” Teacher 5 also stated that diverse resources, such as educational YouTube videos, improve her practices.

#### 4.5.3 Knowledge of Instruction

The notion of Knowledge of instruction refers to teaching goals and methods. Teachers 1, 2, and 5 stated that communicative language teaching is their preferred method to teach the English language. Moreover, they declared that developing students’ communicative skills is their primary goal in teaching. For example, Teacher 1 said that her teaching goal is to allow students to “*communicate with each other and speak up about their thoughts.*” Accordingly, they all reported adjusting their practices when using authentic texts to achieve their teaching goals and methods. For instance, they adapt the methods of group and pair work with their students to use authentic texts in the classroom.

Teacher 3 stated that her main teaching goal is encouraging her students to be autonomous learners and empowering their learning responsibility. For example, she usually asks her students to search autonomously for authentic texts to use in the reading lesson. Overall, it can be assumed that teachers’ knowledge of instruction affected their practices in using authentic texts because these teachers affirmed that they adjust their practices using authentic texts to achieve their teaching goals and learning outcomes for their students.

#### 4.5.4 Knowledge of Context

The interview data identified multiple aspects of the knowledge of context, such as allocated time and institutional facilities, that affected teachers’ instructional practices in using authentic texts. It was clear that teachers have different perspectives regarding the impact of time on their instructional practices. For example, Teacher 1 reported that a longer class time allows her “to practice any new sources that the teacher can bring from outside the curriculum.” Evidently, Teacher 1 perceives more time to be a good thing, because it improves her instructional practices in using authentic texts. In contrast, two teachers clearly articulated that long class time may negatively affect their practices. For instance, Teacher 5 reported that “the long duration of classes that extend for four hours is another factor that sometimes eliminates the opportunity to have a kind of effective practice.”

Regarding the institutional facilities, some teachers regarded providing internet access as an important factor facilitating their practices in using authentic texts. They reported that providing a good internet connection allows them to present authentic texts in the classroom in an effective way. Furthermore, having access to technical support (e.g., projectors and data shows) helps them engage all students in discussing authentic texts. Evidently, they viewed these institutional facilities as an enhancing factor that promotes their practices of using authentic texts.

### 5. Discussion

This section is divided into three sections that discuss the results of the three main research questions in relation to the literature.

#### 5.1 First Research Question: What Are the Instructional Practices that EFL Teachers Use in Employing

### *Authentic Texts for Teaching Reading Comprehension?*

The main aim of this research question was to identify teachers' instructional practices for using authentic texts in the classroom context. Four instructional practices were identified and labeled: adaptation, selection, elaboration, and simplification. First, the quantitative results showed that, on average (mean: 3.68), teachers adapt authentic texts more often for advanced students than for beginners. However, some of the teachers (mean: 2.86) find authentic texts to be appropriate and effective teaching tools for beginners. Thus, it can be concluded that teachers—albeit a minority—do adapt authentic texts for beginners. This finding is not surprising, because the linguistic difficulty of authentic texts was acknowledged by several researchers (Shook, 1997; Widdowson, 1998; Young, 1999). Second, it was found that teachers select authentic texts according to their students' language level (e.g., beginner, intermediate, and advanced). This is consistent with the findings of Al-Musallam (2009), who concluded that teachers rank language level as the most important criterion when selecting authentic texts. Third, in terms of elaboration, the quantitative results indicated that most teachers preferred to elaborate on authentic texts by providing additional examples to illustrate or contextualize difficult words in authentic texts. At the same time, the quantitative results also indicated that teachers avoid the practice of simplifying authentic texts. This finding (i.e., that teachers prefer elaboration over simplification) is supported by O'Donnell (2009), who conceptualized elaboration as a text modification practice that preserves the main features of authentic texts. The next section discusses the reasons for employing such practices.

### *5.2 Second Research Question: What Are Teachers' Perspectives on the Implementation of These Instructional Practices in Using Authentic Texts for Teaching Reading Comprehension?*

The aim of the second research question was to obtain in-depth perspectives of the four instructional practices employed by the teachers: adaptation, selection, elaboration, and simplification. In contrast to the questionnaire results, which showed that teachers mostly use authentic texts for advanced students, three of five teachers in the interviews were in favor of using authentic texts for all levels. Only two teachers preferred adapting authentic texts for advanced levels rather than beginners; both cited the linguistic and cultural difficulties of authentic texts, especially for beginners. This finding corroborates the ideas of Shook (1997) and Widdowson (1998), who highlighted that students at low levels lack the cultural and linguistic knowledge needed to comprehend an authentic text.

The teachers who agreed to use authentic texts for all levels posited that technical apps like Quizlet, Kahoot, and Padlet make these texts accessible for beginners, and they also use such apps to present reading comprehension tasks. The notion that these technical applications can simplify reading comprehension tasks for beginners is supported by Guariento and Morley (2001), who argued in favor of simplifying tasks when presenting authentic materials to beginners. Thus, the present study contributes additional assumption that simplifying reading comprehension tasks through technology makes authentic texts more accessible for beginners.

Overall, the interview results indicate that the teachers' perspectives toward adapting authentic texts for beginners tended to be positive. Several teachers appeared willing to try new practices to make authentic texts accessible for beginners, such as utilizing technology in presenting reading comprehension tasks. This indicates that adapting authentic texts for all levels may depend on a teacher's willingness to combine and discover distinctive teaching styles and strategies. Furthermore, the majority of teachers interviewed stated that internet access continuously exposes beginners to authentic text content. This perspective is consistent with the findings of Clavel-Arroitia and Fuster-Márquez (2014), who concluded that authentic language materials have developed due to the internet development.

This study indicates that most teachers regard authentic texts as supplementary materials in the classroom context; this finding is in agreement with those of Al Asmari and Gulzar (2016) as well as Mukhalladun, Nidawati, and Muhammad (2020), who observed that teachers view authentic texts as supplementary materials that support the main textbook. The majority of teachers interviewed for this research emphasized the importance of selecting authentic texts based on the main textbook content as well as learning objectives. This is consistent with the findings of Brandl (2008), who argued in favor of making authentic texts compatible with course objectives and textbooks. Indeed, such alignment appears likely to help teachers cover the assigned textbook content and use authentic texts simultaneously without a feeling of distraction.

Furthermore, the interviewed teachers emphasized the importance of considering students' interests and needs before selecting authentic texts. One teacher explained the reasoning behind this approach by hypothesizing that creating a match between authentic texts and students' interests boosts their motivation to read and learn. Indeed, Mishan (2005) argued that student interest is the fundamental element in developing high motivation and rapid progress while using authentic texts. Nevertheless, making an alignment between the authentic text and textbook

should be regarded as the most important criterion in the practice of selection. Also, it is essential to recognize that students' interests may not always align with the topics covered in their textbooks—in which case, it would be more realistic to say that teachers ought to select authentic texts based on their students' interests in order to achieve their overriding goal—to enhance their learning.

The most remarkable finding to emerge from the interviews is that teachers agree on the importance of considering cultural and religious differences to avoid selecting authentic texts that may contain taboo topics. After all, authentic texts are not created with foreign speakers' cultures or religions in mind. However, this does not mean that cultural and religious boundaries necessarily limit teachers' options when selecting authentic texts; rather, it suggests that cultural appropriateness may enable teachers to make the use of authentic texts more acceptable in various contexts. Similarly, Mishan (2005) proposed that considering the native culture of language learners could be a reference point to select authentic texts that are relevant to the teaching context. Shah and Elyas (2019) called for cultural relevance in English language course books, arguing that it has a motivational effect on EFL learners; this notion can likely be seamlessly extended to the selection of authentic texts.

Regarding teachers' perspectives toward elaboration and simplification, it was evident from the interview results that teachers perceive elaboration and simplification as modification processes that should be used only for beginners. As one teacher explained, advanced students should be exposed to complex vocabulary. However, the data suggest that the practice of elaborating authentic texts can be used with beginners and advanced students alike. For example, Oh (2001) used elaborated reading passages for both low and high proficiency levels. Their study revealed that elaborated input significantly developed the reading comprehension of both low- and high-proficiency students.

As for simplification, it was clear from the questionnaire results that teachers tend to eschew this practice when modifying authentic texts. Interview responses corroborated these results. For example, some teachers opined that simplification corrupts the text's original meaning. This finding is in line with those of previous research studies that discussed the issue of meaning derivation in authentic texts after simplification (O'Donnell, 2009). In general, the results indicate that elaboration is preferred to simplification when modifying authentic texts.

### *5.3 Third Research Question: What Are the Aspects of Knowledge That Impact EFL Teachers' Instructional Practices When Employing Authentic Texts to Teach Reading Comprehension?*

The third research question examined the aspects of knowledge that affect EFL teachers' instructional practices to employ authentic texts for teaching reading comprehension. The contents of PPK—knowledge of self, subject matter, instruction, and context—which were developed by Golombek (1998), were used as a lens to comprehensively cover the aspects of knowledge that may impact teachers' instructional practices. Remarkably, all of the PPK aspects were confirmed to affect teachers' instructional practices in using authentic texts. Most surprisingly of all, however, is the observation that knowledge of self—particularly learning experiences—did not affect the practices of some teachers, who recalled having traditional learning experiences that did not use authentic texts. In this same vein, Windschitl (2002) posited that teachers may tend to adapt familiar instructions from personal learning experience when they teach in the classroom. On the other hand, one teacher recalled a self-learning experience involving authentic texts; consequently, she preferred to use authentic texts as supplementary materials rather than focusing exclusively on the textbook in teaching reading comprehension.

Teaching experience was consistently cited as an influence on teaching practices. For example, during the interviews, both experienced and novice teachers reported that the repeated use of authentic texts helped them to improve their practices over time by increasing student motivation. This result corroborates the finding of Crookes and Arakaki (1999), who concluded that accumulated teaching experience is regarded by many ESL teachers as a fundamental resource for identifying effective teaching ideas and practices.

Regarding knowledge of subject matter, the participating teachers evinced awareness of the continuous changes and developments in teaching practices and methods within the ELT field. More specifically, the majority of teachers reported that subject matter resources such as books, research studies, and communicating with experts in social media help them to update their practices in using authentic texts. This finding supports the conclusions and recommendations of Abdelhafiz (2010), who emphasized the importance of training EFL teachers to use subject matter resources to improve their teaching practices.

The aspect of knowledge of instruction in this study referred to teaching goals and methods; it was found that knowledge of instruction affected teachers' instructional practices in using authentic texts. For example, most teachers reported that their favorite teaching method is communicative language teaching (CLT) and asserted that their main teaching goal is improving their students' communicative skills; moreover, they reported

adjusting their instructional practices accordingly—for example, by encouraging group discussion—when using authentic texts to achieve their teaching goals. This impact of the CLT method on teachers' practices in using authentic texts was not surprising, given that the emergence of authentic texts as a teaching material was strongly linked with the CLT method (Gilmore, 2007). Both authentic texts and the CLT method are fundamentally concerned with developing communicative skills. Furthermore, one teacher stated that her teaching goal is to make her students into autonomous learners—which she strives to achieve by encouraging her students to search online for authentic texts themselves. This reinforces the notion that knowledge of instruction influences teachers' instructional practices in using authentic texts.

Finally, in this study, aspects related to context i.e., the allocated time as well as available institutional facilities. Unexpectedly, the allocated time was found to impact teachers' instructional practices both negatively and positively. For example, one teacher reported that four-hour lectures exhausted her as well as her students, thereby undermining her ability to teach authentic texts. In contrast, another teacher reported that longer class hours enabled her to integrate a larger and more diverse selection of authentic text resources. These contrasting results regarding the impact of time may be related to students' level of competency. For example, a longer class time may be helpful for beginners who benefit from intensive instructional practices, whereas advanced students may tend to benefit from shorter classes. In any case, it is encouraging to compare these findings with those of Mitton-Kükner and Orr (2018), who likewise concluded that time shapes teachers' instructional practices as enough time allows teachers to set up various activities.

Finally, we consider the role of institutional facilities—such as reliable internet connection—which teachers found to increase the effectiveness of their instructional practices in using authentic texts. One potential explanation for this finding is that teachers need to be updated with the newest topics and trends to present attractive authentic texts that motivate their students to learn. The relationship between internet access and teachers' instructional practices has been established by multiple research studies. For example, Chen (2008) found that teachers are more likely to utilize internet tools to discover creative teaching practices. Overall, both institutional facilities and time have an influence on teachers' instructional practices.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The aims of this research study were threefold: (1) to investigate teachers' instructional practices when using authentic texts to teach reading comprehension; (2) to explore teachers' perspectives toward these practices; and (3) to examine the aspects that may impact teachers' instructional practices.

The first research question was answered using a questionnaire to investigate how frequently teachers employ four instruction practices—adaptation, selection, elaboration, and simplification—and to rank their relative importance. It was found that teachers are more likely to adapt authentic texts for advanced students than for beginners. As for selecting authentic texts, students' learning level and lesson objectives were the most important criteria. Moreover, teachers prefer elaboration over simplification when modifying authentic texts.

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore teachers' perspectives toward these instructional practices in service of answering the second research question. In contrast to the questionnaire results, the interviews indicated that most teachers agreed unanimously that adapting authentic texts was an effective teaching practice for all student levels. Cultural and religious boundaries emerged as a significant criterion in selecting authentic texts. Like the questionnaire results, the interview responses also emphasized the importance of selecting authentic texts according to lesson objectives and student interests. Finally, the teachers added that simplification and elaboration methods should be used for beginners only because advanced students need to be exposed to higher-level vocabulary. Some teachers observed that simplification may change the meaning of a text, which explains why the teachers in this questionnaire sample rarely employ simplification.

The third research question drew upon the PPK model—knowledge of self, subject matter, instruction, and context (Golombek, 1998)—and semi-structured interviews to analyze the aspects that may affect teachers' instructional practices. All four were found to influence instructional practices.

### 6.1 Pedagogical Implications

Based on these findings, the following pedagogical implications are put forward to improve instructional practices in using authentic texts:

- 1) Many teachers viewed the use of technical applications as a valuable method to adapt authentic texts for all levels. Therefore, integrating technology may be a way to make authentic texts accessible to learners at all levels.
- 2) The quantitative and qualitative results indicated that teachers mainly select authentic texts according to the

lesson objectives. Therefore, developing a database that categorizes authentic texts based on lesson objectives or textbook topics may help teachers to select more appropriate texts.

3) According to the qualitative and quantitative results, elaboration is more effective than simplification when modifying authentic texts. Therefore, elaboration can serve authentic texts modification more effectively.

4) Most teachers acknowledged the importance of ELT educational resources to develop their practices. Accordingly, providing teachers with unlimited access to these resources could enhance their instructional practices in using authentic texts.

5) It was clear that context significantly impacts teachers' instructional practices. Consequently, enhancing the technical infrastructure—including internet speed—is essential to facilitating the search for authentic texts.

## 6.2 Limitations

This research study has several limitations. First, it examined a limited number of practices: adaptation, selection, simplification, and elaboration. Second, it was unable to analyze all aspects of knowledge that may affect teachers' instructional practices, thus limiting its scope. Third, the sample size of participants was relatively small; this limitation could not be overcome at the time of data collection because the teachers were exceptionally busy. Finally, the sample of this study included only female Saudi participants at the university level, as the study used convenience sampling.

## 6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

This research study highlighted several areas that call for further investigation. For example, an experimental research study should explore how the adaptation of authentic texts can be enhanced through the integration of technology. Furthermore, future research should undertake classroom observation as a data collection tool to explore additional instructional practices in using authentic texts. Instructional practices using authentic texts for different language skills—such as listening, writing, and speaking—should be explored. In addition, future research should involve a larger population in order to yield findings that can be more plausibly generalized. Further, including native language teachers and teachers of multiple nationalities may reveal new practices and perspectives toward authentic texts. Finally, exploring teachers' instructional practices in different contexts—such as public schools, private schools, and different institutions—may be of value in exploring additional instructional practices in using authentic texts.

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