

SỬ DỤNG TÀI LIỆU NGUYÊN BẢN ĐỂ PHÁT TRIỂN KHẢ NĂNG ĐỌC HIỂU CHO SINH VIÊN CHUYÊN NGÀNH TIẾNG ANH: NGHIÊN CỨU THỰC NGHIỆM TẠI MỘT TRƯỜNG CAO ĐẲNG

Nguyễn Thị Minh Trâm*, Phạm Thị Hồng Hiếu**

Nghiên cứu thực nghiệm với 30 sinh viên chuyên ngành tiếng Anh được chia đều vào nhóm đối chứng chỉ sử dụng giáo trình và nhóm thực nghiệm được tiếp xúc với tài liệu nguyên bản (TLNB) trong 8 tuần được thực hiện nhằm điều tra hiệu quả của TLNB với kỹ năng đọc hiểu. Bài kiểm tra trước và sau thử nghiệm với cả hai nhóm, và phỏng vấn với nhóm thử nghiệm đã được thực hiện. Kết quả cho thấy những sinh viên làm việc với TLNB đạt kết quả tốt hơn trong việc đọc hiểu và theo ý kiến của sinh viên nhóm thử nghiệm những lợi ích quan trọng của TLNB là nội dung cập nhật, phong cách viết thú vị, các giá trị văn hóa đa dạng, kiến thức toàn cầu và kỹ năng hợp tác. Dựa trên các kết quả chính, nghiên cứu đã đưa ra khuyến nghị về việc giáo viên cần đa dạng hóa thể loại TLNB kết hợp với phương pháp giảng dạy theo đường hướng giao tiếp, và sinh viên có thể thực hành đọc hiểu không chỉ tại lớp mà cả ngoài giờ như thảo luận về các bài đọc mà mình quan tâm với bạn bè.

Từ khóa: Đọc hiểu, tài liệu nguyên bản, sinh viên chuyên ngành tiếng Anh

This experimental research study aims at investigating the effectiveness of authentic materials (AM) in reading comprehension. The participants include 30 English - majored students, evenly divided into two groups: a control group using only coursebook and an experimental group using AM in eight weeks. Both groups took a pre-test and a post-test, and then the experimental group was interviewed. The findings showed that the experimental group exposed to authentic materials achieved better results at reading comprehension. They also mentioned some benefits of authentic materials such as updated contents, interesting writing style, various cultural values, global knowledge and cooperative skills. Some recommendations were provided, including teachers' implementation of various AM genres with the communicative teaching method, and students' involvement in reading activities such as discussing reading texts of interest with their peers.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, authentic materials, English - major students.

* TS., Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ - Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội

** ThS., Trường Trung học cơ sở Trần Đăng Ninh, thành phố Nam Định

Email: minhtramsv@yahoo.com, honghieue4u@gmail.com

USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS TO IMPROVE ENGLISH - MAJOR STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION: AN EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH PROJECT AT A VIETNAMESE COLLEGE

1. Introduction

Nowadays, reading comprehension is one of the most important factors in English language learning for all students because it is the basis of instruction in all aspects of language learning (Mikulecky, 2008). Particularly, the ability to read efficiently is critical for successful academic pursuit among students (Alvermann, 2002; Bernhardt, 2011; Grabe, 2010). Guthrie (2004) asserted that reading is the window to all knowledge. This means acquiring excellent reading comprehension skills is crucial as it can significantly contribute to not only academic, but also professional and personal growth.

However, effective reading teaching and learning can be a challenge since reading texts in the course book does not seem adequate. Regarding this issue, authentic materials (AM) can be an efficient tool in reading lessons because with real language and content used outside the classroom, they can capture the interest and enhance the students' linguistic capacity so that they will be more motivated to learn (Nuttall, 1996, Martinez, 2002; Peacock, 1997, Berardo, 2006). Therefore, the application of AM in the reading process can be considered one of the effective ways to develop students' reading ability and knowledge of real life.

In the researchers' personal experience, Vietnamese learners, especially English -

major students, face some issues in reading lessons such as a lack of various sources, vocabulary and background knowledge and motivation to learn due to outdated reading course books. Consequently, with the approval from faculty and participants in the research context, the researchers conducted an experimental research project to investigate the effectiveness of AM on the development of students' reading comprehension with a hypothesis: Using AM improves students' reading comprehension.

2. Reading comprehension

According to Klinger, Vaughn and Broadman (2007, p8), reading comprehension is a process of interaction between readers and what they bring to the text, such as their prior or background knowledge and strategy use. This process also includes the variables related to the text, for example the readers' interest of the texts and their understanding of the genres of the texts. It means that what the readers learn and how they respond and comprehend the text is individualistic. The process of constructing meaning depends on the individual competencies, such as experience and how to interpret the text.

According to Nuttall (2000, as cited in Berardo 2006), in a reading lesson, the language is used to derive messages from texts, or in reading lesson, the concentration of using language is not

merely on the vocabulary or structure and the meaning of the text becomes subordinate. In reading lessons, the meaning is central and any language item learnt is incidental benefit and therefore, the students have good strategies to comprehend texts while there are various types of written text.

Specifically, several types of reading may occur as suggested by Brown (2001, p.312), which are classified into oral and silent reading comprehension. Oral reading is occasionally for beginner and intermediate levels because it is aimed to check pronunciation and bottom-up processing skill, while silent reading is for advanced level of students because it is a very authentic activity. Within the category of silent reading, it may also be categorized into intensive and extensive reading. For example, intensive reading focuses on linguistic or semantic details on a text and also be content-related reading because of subject-matter difficulty. In intensive reading, the reader will read with concentration and a great care to the text to understand its exact meaning. Unlike intensive reading, extensive reading is aimed to achieve general understanding in reading longer texts. It often becomes a pleasure reading and reading technical, scientific or professional materials. This type of reading may involve two specific reading skills, scanning for details and skimming for the essential meaning to provide global or general meaning of the text.

3. Authentic materials

Harmer (1991) defines that authentic texts are written by native speakers; they

are real text, designed not for language learners but for the speakers of the language. Similarly, Wallace posits that authentic texts can defined as "...real-life texts, not written for pedagogic purposes" (Wallace, 1992, p.145). Nunan (1999, p. 54) also regards AM as "spoken or written language data that has been produced in the course of genuine communication and not specifically for purposes of language teaching". This means AM contain "real" language used in "real communication".

Types of authentic materials

Geoffrey (2010) classifies AM into three categories, namely audio, visual, and printed materials. Audio materials that include those that learners can listen to consists of television programming (e.g. commercials, quiz shows, interactive talk shows, cartoons), radio programming (e.g. interviews, and radio advertisements), and taped conversations (e.g. meetings, short stories, poems and novels). Visual materials, on the other hand, are those that the learners can see such as photographs, paintings and drawings, wordless road signs. The third type is printed materials, which may include newspapers, restaurant menus, tourist information brochures and travel guides.

Criteria for selecting authentic materials

Nuttall (2000, as cited in Berardo 2006) gives three main criteria in choosing AM to be used in classroom.

Suitability of content

The texts should not only be relevant to the students' needs but they also should be

exciting and motivating. AM which have been carelessly chosen can be extremely de-motivating for the students (Harmer, 2001, p.205).

Exploitability

This criterion involves the potentials of the texts. In other words, the texts can be used and exploited so as to increase the competence of the learners in the teaching and learning process. When dealing with AM, one should remember that it should be done with a purpose, particularly a clear pedagogic goal for what precisely the teacher wants the students to learn from the materials.

Readability

Readability or the difficulty level of the texts refers to the appearance of new vocabulary and new structure contained in the texts. Instead of increasing the students' motivation, the difficult texts can decrease the level of the students' confidence and lead to failure.

Authentic material reading activities

Bernardo (2006) gives possible solution which is to give text related tasks. Three basic types of reading activities are as follows.

Pre- reading: This activity is used to activate the students' existing schemata or background knowledge. It also provides linguistic or social-cultural inadequacy to prepare students for reading the text.

While- reading: It encourages the students to be flexible and active reader. In addition, it promotes an interaction between reader and writer.

Post- reading: This activity often comes as questions that follow a text used to test understanding.

In brief, when applying AM in the classroom, rather than simplifying and making the text less authentic, it can be made more approachable with appropriate tasks related to the texts, and teachers' pedagogic support through facilitation and interaction. The reading tasks can be divided into pre-, while- and post- reading activities to help the students so that they can make sense of the AM more effectively.

Benefits and drawbacks of authentic materials

According to Sweet (1899), a great advantage of natural, idiomatic texts over pedagogy-oriented materials is that they do justice to every feature of the language. In addition, Murdoch (1999) claims that AM are supposed to help students improve their comprehension in real situations; therefore provide another advantage of becoming a part of the language learning process. Regarding writing and speaking skills, Savignon (1991) emphasizes the importance of authentic language data in context in presenting written and spoken materials. Being provided with various kinds of language experiences from different language functions, they are stimulated to create their own modification of expressions. Teachers are expected to understand how to fit in the materials through students' need, interest, language levels and the objective (Mestari, 2012). Both Watthanaboon (2017) and Khoshbakht and Gorjian (2017) share the same arguments that AM improve student's reading ability. It can be said that

the students who use AM read more effectively. The same result was also found out in Apsari's (2014) experimental research, which recommended the use AM. Different research methods were used by Kabilan, Seng and Kee (2010), Albiladi (2019), and Shokrpour and Jafari (2012) but same results were observed. The three researchers used qualitative method, i.e., observation and interviews, and also some questionnaires to collect the data. However, those studies had the same result: AM could motivate and improve students' reading skills.

Despite the enormous advantages of AM in language teaching, it is undeniable that teachers can face some issues when applying them. According to Dumitrescu (2000), because textual aids do not accompany the wide range of contents and topics of AM, they might be too challenging and discouraging to some students. Some authors, namely Williams (1984), and Morrison (1989, as cited in Peacock 1997) have acknowledged that students might be discouraged by AM owing to their difficulty. This argument is considerably reasonable, especially in terms of pragmatics and a cultural aspect, which means AM may generally exceed the students' language level or prior knowledge. In addition, Underwood (1989) asserts that AM cannot be arranged before they are produced. Therefore, teachers must carefully select the materials to match the course book's topics.

4. Review of the previous related studies

In this part, recent studies in both Vietnam and overseas on the use of AM to

improve students' reading comprehension are reviewed. These studies share a common purpose in discovering the effects of using AM in reading lessons.

Many researchers have suggested that using AM gives students a number of benefits. For example, after practicing teaching with AM for more than a decade, Kelly, Kelly, Offner, and Vorland (2002) argue that real-life materials energize the class and create positive feelings about learning, increasing students' interest and creating motivation for learning. Likewise, Floris (2008) points out the necessity for integrating AM in the course design because they are more motivating, engaging, and relevant to students' lives. In other words, these studies have emphasized the important role of AM as a motivation for students to learn. However, they have not clearly analyzed their contribution to improving students' language skills.

Similarly, Beresova's (2015) experiment through enhancing language acquisition and cultural awareness indicates that AM influence the reader in a modified text with college students as the subject. Even they admit that using AM is their favorite. AM are excellent for university students, and they will be aware of the issue. It is one of the solutions to develop their critical thinking.

Regarding reading skills, Cho and Ahn (2005) conducted a study on the effects of authentic text on narrow reading to improve the interest and reading ability of 37 fourth-grade Korean students. Their findings indicated that the students in the

experimental group show improvements in their reading and reading and vocabulary. Nevertheless, a drawback of this study is that it only investigates the general improvement in reading without analyzing some detailed aspects of reading.

In Vietnam, several studies on AM have been conducted. Tran (2010) and Hoang (2010) reveal the positive effects of extensive reading utilizing AM on students' reading proficiency and attitude toward reading. For eight weeks, Tran (2010) applied AM as supplementary materials for extensive reading to 30 second-year students at a college of technology. Hoang (2010) used AM for the 3rd year English-major students at a University. However, Hoang (2010) did not review them in the literature, and no considerations for selecting materials were proposed.

Based on the studies in both Vietnam and abroad, it can be summarized that AM influence and stimulate students' reading motivation through more exposure to English language. Despite the undoubted advantages of AM, most of the previous studies only make use of AM for extensive reading. This remains a shortcoming that teachers cannot observe or control well the process that students learn from the materials. to the current study was an attempt to apply AM directly during reading lessons in an experimental research study to investigate the effectiveness of AM on students' reading comprehension.

5. Research methodology

The study employed experimental research methodology that collected both

quantitative and qualitative data to investigate the effectiveness of AM on developing students' reading comprehension. The quantitative data were collected through the pre-test and post-test. This helped to explore the differences in the performances between the control and experimental groups by comparing pre-test and post-test results. In addition, the qualitative data from follow-up semi-structured interviews with students were obtained to gain in-depth interpretations of the quantitative results. The research hypothesis was: *Students supplied with AM make better results at reading comprehension.*

5.1. Participants and sampling

The participants were recruited to serve the research purpose, e.g. voluntary participation in the experimental research, being in the same English group of the college cohort. As a result of the sampling process, thirty second-year English major students from an English class of a College of Education were selected. All of them are females from the rural areas of a province, and aged 19 to 20 years old. They were deemed to have a similar cultural background and social status.

The pre-test results were used to assess students' reading comprehension and check the homogeneity at the beginning of the study. A pre-test was administered to both groups one week before the experiment. In order to ensure the equal level of both groups, the teacher put students into groups according to their pre-test marks: The students with odd numbers belonged to the experimental group (Group A), while those with even numbers belonged to the control

group (Group B). Each group consisted of fifteen students.

After that, the experimental group was exposed to AM for eight weeks. Both groups received the same class instructions; the only difference was that the experimental students were delivered with AM to read and do some exercises related to the class. The control group only used the texts in the course book.

5.2. Data collection instruments and procedure

Two data collection instruments, namely reading tests and interviews, were used to collect data from both groups.

Reading tests

Two reading tests, namely the pre-test and the post-test with the same duration of 90 minutes, were designed by the teacher and then consulted by an expert in test design. Both tests had the same format, and the students from two groups (experimental group and control group) took the same tests.

Five tasks in the test were designed in line with course learning outcomes and the descriptive level of B1 according to Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001). The first three tasks were adapted from the Internet to satisfy B1 level. Task 1 was a true/false exercise to assess a student's ability to determine whether a statement is correct with scanning skills. Task 2 was a word form test to check students' lexical comprehension. Task three had ten multiple choice gap-filling questions with the choices designed to

meet the two criteria set by Wolf (1993): (a) all items are passage dependent, and (b) some of the items require the reader to make inferences. The difficulty level of these tasks was checked based on the website Text Inspector. Task 4 and task 5 were designed based on the Preliminary English Test (PET) format. Specifically, task 4 was about sign comprehension (e.g., authentic notices and signs, packaging information and communicative messages) to test students mostly on functional language and synonyms to assess their paraphrasing ability. The last task was matching, which required students to read five descriptions and match a short text's content to each of the descriptions, which helps students focus on detail and read for detailed comprehension.

Interviews

At the end of the course, individual semi-structured interviews were implemented with students from the experimental group face-to-face in Vietnamese to explore the students' opinions about the interventions and their difficulties in reading the AM. Each interview within around fifteen minutes consisted of five questions which required both open and close answers to ask about different aspects of using AM: Preference towards the AM, which reading comprehension skills they made best progress; difficulties in reading AM for adjustments or adaptations; and finally students' recommendations about the implementation of AM. All the interviews were recorded with the approval of the participants. The researcher also took note of the main ideas during the interviews.

Intervention: *The reading materials*

Thirty students of the investigation were at elementary English level and the course book “*Interaction 1-Reading*” by Elaine Kirn and Pamela Hartmann was used. The experiment was designed to match the current teaching in the way that implemented AM texts were selected to suit the week topics (e.g., Week 1-Education and Week 2-Nature, and difficulty (pre-intermediate level); and the tests used during the experiment conformed to the test description as required by the curriculum.

As a result, eight online articles of around 600 to 800 words at pre-intermediate level or B1 according to CEF (Council of Europe, 2001) were selected from trustworthy websites, namely some blogs and advertisements. To check the difficulty level of AM, a website Text Inspector joined with Cambridge University Press which allows its users to identify the level of each word, phrase, idiom and collocation found in the text according to the CEFR on a scale of A1-C2 was used.

During the treatment, the researcher delivered one article to the students every week and asked them to do the accompanying tasks. The tasks were divided into pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. The activities related to the AM took around 30 to 40 minutes. For pre-reading, students were often required

to brainstorm ideas about the topic and introduced with its new words for about seven minutes. In the while-reading stage, they were asked to answer the questions of different tasks related to a text of AM for about 20 minutes. In the final stage, they could discuss the relevant issues of the topic.

5.4. Data analysis

The test results were analyzed based on descriptive analysis and paired sample t-test using SPSS version 22.

The data collected from interview transcripts was analyzed qualitatively using qualitative data analysis techniques suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Sugiyono (2014). The steps were data reduction (i.e., summarizing, focusing on important things, looking for themes and patterns), data display (i.e., organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action), interpretation and conclusion drawing (i.e., noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, casual flows, and propositions). Then, the cited quotes were translated into English for the report.

6. Findings and discussion**6.1. Results from tests**

The results of the pretest which were used to assess students' reading comprehension and check the homogeneity at the beginning of the study are presented as follows.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CtrlPretest	15	4.0	8.0	5.667	1.2344
ExPretest	15	4.0	8.0	5.467	1.2459
Valid N (listwise)	15				

Table 1. *Descriptive statistics for pretest's results*

The analysis for mean, maximum and minimum scores and standard deviation from Table 1 shows that students of control group (M=5.667, Min=4, Max=8, SD=1.2344) and experimental group (M=5.467, Min=4, Max=8, SD=1.2459) performed similarly in the pre-test.

Besides, the tests were run to check the violation of assumptions underlying a parametric. It can be seen from Table 2 that the differences between pairs were normally distributed.

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
CtrPosttest	.186	15	.170	.924	15	.225
ExPosttest	.169	15	.200*	.936	15	.335

Table 2. *Tests of Normality*

The participants' scores of the control and experimental group in the pretest and posttest were analyzed and compared using

paired samples t-test. The results are reported in Tables 3 and 4.

		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Pair 1	CtrPretest	4.0	8.0	5.667	1.2344
	CtrPosttest	4.0	8.0	6.267	1.2228
Pair 2	ExPretest	4.0	8.0	5.467	1.2459
	ExPosttest	5.0	9.0	6.800	1.1464

Table 3. *Paired samples statistics of tests*

Table 3 shows that students of the control group and experimental group performed almost the same in the pre-test (M= 5.667 and 5.467; SD =1.2344 and

1.2459 respectively) with the same maximum score (Max= 8) and minimum score (Min= 4).

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Eta squared
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
					Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	CtrPretest - CtrPosttest	-.6000	.8281	.2138	-1.0586	-.1414	-2.806	14	.014	0.06
	ExPretest - ExPosttest	-1.3333	.8165	.2108	-1.7855	-.8812	-6.325	14	.000	0.25

Table 3. *Mean scores of pretest and post-test of control and experimental group*

As can be seen from Tables 3 and 4, there was a statistically significant increase

in the students' scores from Pretest (M=5.467, SD=1.2459) to Posttest

($M=6.800$, $SD=1.1464$) of the experimental group than those of the control group from Pretest ($M=5.667$, $SD=1.2344$), to Posttest ($M=6.267$, $SD=1.2228$); and in the two intervals namely CtrPretest- CtrPosttest, and ExPretest- ExPosttest: $t(15) = -2.806$ and -6.325 respectively; and the mean increase in the scores was $-.6000$ and -1.3333 respectively; $p < 0.0005$ (two-tailed). In summary, both groups gained improvement in their reading comprehension, but the experimental group achieved more significant progress at the end of the treatment.

Notably, the value of Eta squared obtained in the control group is 0.06, while that in the experimental group is 0.25. Using the commonly used guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988, pp. 284–7) (.01=small, .06=moderate, .14=large effect), this result suggests a moderate effect size in the control group and a very large effect size in the experimental group. In conclusion, the results of the tests provide strong evidence for the hypothesis that: Students who used AM made a more significant improvement in their reading comprehension than those who did not.

6.2. Results from the interview

In this section, the participants' perspectives on the use of AM are presented. Individual undergraduates were interviewed regarding the main themes: their overall opinions, the specific improved aspects of reading, the benefits and difficulties in using AM.

Regarding the opinions on AM, none of the students revealed negative attitudes

towards the use of AM; one had neutral perspective, though. Specifically, eight out of 15 students thought the implementation was useful, and six students found it practical, which means that most students were excited about AM. Some stated:

"I think it is amazing. I have never read AM before and this is the first time. I find these texts more exciting than the texts in the book, and they gave me a lot of useful information." (Student 4)

"I think this method is new and useful. I am interested in the articles because they look new to me. They are different from the texts in the book. I want something new and different." (Student 7)

Related to the effectiveness of AM, all 15 students confirmed that AM have a positive effect in improving students' reading skills and that they were making progress. Some students even added that they felt that they had more passion for studying reading skills, which they had found so dull before. For example

"Yes, definitely. The texts encouraged me to learn a lot. Well, in the past, I used to feel bored at reading lessons, which were rather silent and passive. But when reading the authentic texts, I concentrated more and did the task better. That's wonderful." (Student 6)

The aspect of reading they improved most was also explored from their perspectives for more details. Four students found that they had a better vocabulary about the topic. Five students gained better skills for reading for details, while gap-filling skill was the choice of

four students. Additionally, one student shared that:

"Well, I think that reading for main idea will be my answer. When reading AM, I can get an overview of the text quite easily." (Student 15)

Furthermore, six students showed interest in the reading communicative activities, which increased their ability to cooperate with others or developed their teamwork skills. Finally, it reveals that the use of AM became more effective when it was combined with communicative reading activities such as pair and group works activities.

Regarding the benefits of AM, the participants mention its wide range of benefits, including updated content, enjoyable writing style, various cultural values, knowledge, better reading comprehension, and cooperative skills with others. First, in terms of the content of AM, one student shared that:

"I enjoy the authentic texts very much because they help me keep updated. They include latest news that is closely related to daily life." (Student 3)

It can be seen that AM were considered to be close to their daily life and could keep readers updated with the latest news all over the world. Second, the manner of writing in the text was also varied, which made students interested as shared by a student:

"I like the writing form in the article. It is free and friendly." (Student 2)

Third, AM were significant in widening students' knowledge about considerable

fields in life. Twelve out of fifteen participants said that all the texts were valuable but they liked authentic texts best. For example, four students showed great concern about the authentic text about health, which gave them surprising and precious information related to health according to the latest surveys and researches of doctors and scientists. From this, they could gain better awareness of protecting their health. One student said:

"Well, I like the text about health because it gave me much information in order to have a good health. I think it is extremely useful for all people." (Student 9)

In short, AM are an apparently advantageous tool in the reading lessons because they motivate students to learn with multiple benefits, which justify for the significantly higher marks in the posttest of the students in the experimental group.

Regarding the difficulties in reading AM, the participants reported to have faced some. The two most common challenges were new vocabulary and lack of background knowledge, which is reasonable because of the fact that students are rarely exposed to real life language when they study at school. One student explained:

"Well, um I see that there are many new words which I find unfamiliar with. Moreover, some contents in the texts seem exceptionally strange to me. I have never known about them before. Maybe I should read more to get more information." (Student 14)

Another issue mentioned in the interview is that they are unfamiliar with

the writing styles in the authentic texts, which are relatively different from the academic texts in the course books. Consequently, it can be difficult for students to understand the content of the authentic texts. This is stated by one student:

“The written form is free. It is not as formal as academic writing which I get used to. Sometimes I have difficulty in identifying the structures of some sentences.” (Student 9)

It can be inferred from the students' responses that AM should satisfy the readability criteria, which is used to describe the combination of structural and lexical difficulty of a text, as well as referring to the amount of new vocabulary and any new grammatical forms present.

Regarding students' suggestion for future implementation of AM, all of them emphasized the importance of integrating AM when teaching and studying reading English. They also gave some recommendations about the difficulty level and the length of the texts and access to various types of AM such as online newspaper, stories, postcards, even audios and films. Student 4 shared her view:

“In the future, I think that teachers should use more AM in class. In addition to printed articles, I prefer something different such as audio or visual materials. I like something like songs, postcards, or films.”

6.3. Discussion

The study's findings from the tests and interviews show a significant effect of AM

on students' reading comprehension, bringing two main issues into the discussion: the benefits and challenges of adapting AM.

Regarding the benefits of AM, the students in the interviews disclosed the novelty of AM, which motivated them to learn and develop reading strategies. This finding is in line with Guariento and Morley (2001) and Geoffrey (2010) that extracting real information from an authentic text in a new/different language can be enormously motivating and consequently increase students' motivation for learning by exposing them to 'real' language. Likewise, Nuttall (1996) comments that authentic-based materials are proof that the language is used for real-life purpose by real people. This helps the students become more familiar with and consequently use those strategies to guess new words' meaning from the contexts and practice scanning and skimming. Importantly, in the communicative activities, they could use their ideas, pass and receive ideas, widen vocabulary, enrich knowledge because authentic texts are real texts for the language speakers, as stated by Harmer (1991) and Savignon's (1991). Next, it can be seen from in-depth interviews that when exposed to AM, students can find it helpful and practical because they gain enormous benefits such as updated content, enjoyable writing style, various cultural values, etc. In addition, a great variety of AM that are comprised of audio, visual, and printed materials can be adapted for varied language functions. Specifically, AM can include different

genres such as articles from newspapers and magazines, songs, TV programs and films, radio and podcasts, leaflets, menus. Therefore, besides the in-class materials, learners are recommended to share and discuss these available AM of interests with peers outside the classroom to enhance their reading strategies.

Besides the benefits, the participants faced some issues such as lack of vocabulary, background knowledge, and writing style as reported from the interviews, which are in line with the findings by Williams (1984), Freeman and Holden (1986), and Morrison (1989). This means that the teachers should consider making the best use of AM: First, when selecting materials for students, it is important to select materials suitable for the average of students' reading ability and interests. For example, the teacher should consider whether the factors such as new words, grammar, and topics are suitable to their students' level. Thus, a needs analysis with learners is highly recommended to prepare materials appropriately for an effective reading course in the context (Brown, 2001). Besides, before AM are integrated into lessons, their text difficulty should be checked carefully. Teachers can make use of the website Text Inspector as a useful and reliable tool. Second, it can be observed from the experimental group that thorough instructions and interactions during authentic material application were also essential. Finally, some possible issues with the learners' understanding of the texts while doing related tasks require regular interaction with their teacher for

consultation, which can help teachers ensure that the students are involved in the activities. Therefore, it is advisory that the teachers should see reading as a passive and solidarity activity and focus on the final test and consider the efficient language use, emphasizing context, learners with their needs and interests, verbal interactions among students and communication situations.

The findings in this study offer some pedagogical implications for teachers and students to improve students' reading comprehension. Teachers are recommended to carefully consider the use of other AM to improve students' reading ability. These may include authentic songs, TV programs and films, radio and podcasts, leaflets, menus, etc. In addition, they should not only exploit newspapers and magazines; and, more importantly, through clear instructions on using AM application with the communicative teaching method. As for students, mastering reading comprehension would be easier to familiarize themselves with in-class reading and outside, such as discussing reading texts of interest from various available sources with friends.

7. Limitations of the study

In spite of providing some pedagogical implications of applying AM in reading comprehension, this study had several limitations. The first limitation is that this study was carried out only in eight weeks, which is a short period of time. Future intervention should be longer in order to obtain richer data, and increase validity.

Secondly, the study was conducted on only thirty female students, which is a small sample size. The next limitation is that the results come from a homogeneous group of same gender and a similar background in culture and learning experiences, which limits the generalization of the study. Future studies could involve students in a larger group and from more diverse backgrounds.

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APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Week 6: Topic *Entertainment and the media*

Authentic text: Smartphone Use May Lead to Addiction, Loneliness, Depression

Source: <https://learningenglish.voanews.com/>

I. Pre-reading (7mins)

1. Brainstorming: Drawbacks of smartphone (4mins)

2. Pre teach new word (3mins)

• double-edged sword – <i>n.</i>	• anxious – <i>adj.</i>
• ping – <i>n.</i>	• neurological – <i>n.</i>
• vibrate – <i>n.</i>	• alert – <i>v.</i>
• access – <i>n.</i>	• push notification – <i>n.</i>
• addiction – <i>n.</i>	• manipulate – <i>v.</i>

II. While-reading (20mins)

Task 1: Work individually. Answer the following questions (8 mins)

1. What is one health problem the article says phones can cause people?
2. Why does the article say that overuse of smartphones is just like substance abuse?
3. How do the researchers suggest people train their brains to lessen their phone addictions?
4. How did Erik Peper's students change their use of technology?
5. What is the cause of users' technology addiction according to Peper and Harvey?

Task 2: Work in pairs and decide whether the following statements are True or False. (7mins)

1. The prices of smartphone are getting higher which leads to the result that users no longer can afford.
2. Expensive brands such as Apple and Samsung become more unaffordable due to high cost.
3. Tablet producers are not in favor of the popularity of smartphone.
4. The Asia-Pacific region will increase most in number of Internet users.
5. By the end of 2019, approximate 50% of population will become Internet users.
6. In China, only young people can get access to the Internet, even in urban areas.

Task 3: Work in pairs and explain the following numbers. (5mins)

10.8%, 1.2 billion, 8.8%, 3.5bn, 39%

III. Post-reading (13mins)

1. **Interview:** Interview partners about their smartphone usage.
2. **Suggested questions:**
 - How long?
 - When use?
 - What for?
 - Use for study? Give examples.
 - How to make good use of smartphone?

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you think about using authentic materials in reading lessons?
2. Do you think authentic materials help you improve your reading comprehension?
3. Which reading comprehension skills do you develop best with authentic materials? (Hint: reading for details, main ideas, gap-filling, word forms, reading postcards, etc.)
4. Do you have any difficulties when reading authentic materials? If yes, what are they?
5. What is your opinion of integrating authentic materials in reading lessons in the future?

(Ngày nhận bài: 25/11/2020; ngày duyệt đăng: 15/02/2023)