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Is *Authentic* Equal to *Motivating*? Authenticity and Motivation in Second Language Education

An Overview of 30 Years of Research

Abstract 1

Authenticity and especially the predicate *authentic* serve in many areas of everyday life as selling points and as positively connoted attributes for the individual's self-presentation. Authenticity as a concept has also gained increasing importance in foreign language education in recent decades. In this context, authenticity is often associated with the texts integrated into textbooks since authentic materials are generally considered attractive and motivating. The current article critically examines this assumption by reviewing research on the relationship between motivation and authenticity of the past 30 years. Special attention is given to the motivational potential of authentic texts. As the literature review shows, authenticity and motivation have a very close relationship and are intertwined with learner autonomy. While previous research largely affirms the positive effects of authentic materials on learner motivation, it becomes evident in the current article that there are few empirical studies on the relationship between authenticity and motivation and that they mostly focus on English as a second or foreign language. Consequently, there is a significant gap in research on authenticity and motivation in languages other than English, including Slavic languages.

Keywords: authenticity, motivation, authentic materials, L2 education, second/foreign language education

Abstract 2

Authentizität und insbesondere das Prädikat *authentisch* dienen in vielen Bereichen des Alltags nicht nur als Lockmittel und Verkaufsstrategie für Waren, sondern auch als positiv konnotiertes Attribut zur Selbstdarstellung von Individuen. Authentizität hat als Konzept in den letzten Jahrzehnten auch in der Fremdsprachendidaktik zunehmend an Bedeutung gewonnen. Dabei wird sie häufig an den in den Lehrwerken integrierten Texten festgemacht, da authentische Materialien allgemein als attraktiv und motivierend angesehen werden. Der Artikel wirft einen kritischen Blick auf diese genuine Annahme, indem er die Forschung der letzten 30 Jahre betrachtet und der Frage nachgeht, welcher Zusammenhang zwischen Motivation und Authentizität, vor allem in Hinblick auf das motivierende Potenzial authentischer Texte, besteht. Wie der Literaturüberblick zeigt, sind Authentizität und Motivation sehr eng miteinander verbunden und auch die Lerner*innenautonomie spielt eine wichtige Rolle. Während bisherige Forschungen die positiven Effekte authentischer Materialien auf die Motivation der Lerner*innen weitgehend bekräftigen, wird im Artikel deutlich, dass es nur wenige empirische Studien hierzu gibt und diese meist Englisch als Zweit- oder Fremdsprache in den Fokus nehmen. Als Fazit des Artikels kann daher festgehalten werden, dass dringend mehr Forschungsarbeiten zu anderen Sprachen, vor allem zu den slawischen Sprachen, in Bezug auf Authentizität und Motivation notwendig sind.

Keywords: Authentizität, Motivation, authentisches Material, Zweit- und Fremdsprachenunterricht

1. Introduction

There is common agreement on the fact that *authentic* is a positive term. In recent years, authenticity has become more and more important in second and foreign language education, especially regarding the materials used in textbooks and in the classroom. Subsequently, a whole industry in L2 education using authentic as its selling point has developed. The attribute *authentic* is not only used by textbook writers. Private schools such as British Hill in Japan advertise that they offer their students a real, "'authentic' English-speaking environment" by simulating and reconstructing Britishness (McKay, 2011).

Furthermore, *authentic* is often associated with motivation in language education, although empirical evidence seems to be rare. For this reason, this article brings together current research on the relationship between authenticity and motivation by paying particular attention to the following question: Is *authentic* equal to *motivating*, and if yes, what evidence is provided in the literature? In order to answer this question, I will critically review already existing publications on authenticity and motivation of the last 30 years, and identify future directions for further research.

2. Defining Authenticity in Second Language Education

Although the term *authentic* is "often used in an allegedly self-explanatory way" (Stadler & Dreher, in press) and seems to be self-evident for many researchers and experts in the educational field, there are a lot of ambiguities surrounding its definition. This is why Gilmore (2007, p. 98), for example, calls it a "slippery concept".

In his thorough overview of the history of authenticity, Gilmore (2007, p. 98) provides eight inter-related definitions of authenticity and shows that the "concept of authenticity can be situated in either the text itself, in the participants, in the social or cultural situation and purposes of the communicative act, or some combination of these." Will (2018), in contrast, identifies six different concepts of authenticity, namely textual authenticity, real-world authenticity, authenticity of text reception, cultural authenticity, authenticity of individual behavior and classroom authenticity.

As providing an in-depth explanation of each of the different concepts of authenticity in the literature would go beyond the scope of the current article, I will concentrate on the definition of real-world authenticity, i.e. task authenticity, and textual authenticity since according to Will (2018, p. 58), they are the most "wide-spread" concepts.

2.1 Text Authenticity

In foreign language education, authenticity is a concept that became increasingly important with the development of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the 1970s. In the beginning, CLT was primarily concerned with text authenticity, that is, that the texts or materials used in the classroom were supposed to be "real" or "authentic." This is also what is often called the classic definition of *authenticity*, i.e. a description of "materials which were not originally designed for

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the purpose of language learning, but that were designed to have some purpose within the target language culture, such as a newspaper or novel" (Pinner, 2014, p. 22). However, the problem with this widespread classic definition is, according to Pinner (2014, 2016), that it is closely linked to the target language community and culture, and thus implies the native speaker as the ultimate role model of authenticity.[1]

Moreover, this classic definition of authenticity, and especially CLT's focus on authentic texts, have been criticized. For example, Widdowson (1998) took a rather radical position concerning text authenticity by questioning the extent to which a text can remain authentic once it is taken out of the specific context in or for which it was produced. Hence, Widdowson (1998, p. 715) assumes that it is not possible to use authentic language in the classroom because the latter "cannot replicate the contextual conditions that made the language authentic in the first place." For this reason, he proposes to speak of "appropriate" instead of "authentic" in the context of the classroom.

A further critique of defining authenticity exclusively in terms of the materials or texts used in the classroom, i.e. of text authenticity, is summed up by Arnold (1991, p. 238): "[The] [u]se of authentic materials does not imply that the tasks will be authentic." The focus of authenticity in language education thus shifts from text authenticity to so-called "task authenticity" or "real-world authenticity" which has emerged in the context of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT).

2.2   Real World or Task Authenticity

Real world or task authenticity acts on the assumption that authenticity does not emanate from the text itself but from the task/activity, which should promote not only the learner's involvement and interaction with the text (cf. Nosonovič & Mil'rud, 1999, p. 12; Mishan, 2005, p. 70; Roberts & Cooke, 2009, p. 622; Pinner, 2016, p. 77) but also resemble the "real word" outside the classroom (Guariento & Morley, 2001, p. 350). In this respect, task authenticity overlaps with text authenticity in that authentic texts are produced for the target language community and hence for being used in the "real world" (Will 2018, p. 59). Accordingly, the concept of the native speaker is also present in task authenticity, which is confirmed by the definition of "authentic task" in the methodological dictionary *Современный словарь методических терминов и понятий* by Azimov and Ščukin (2019). They state that an authentic task may occur in the life of native speakers, for example, when finding necessary information or responding to a message (cf. Azimov & Ščukin, 2019, p. 27).

In terms of the connection between text and task, interestingly, some researchers claim that it is not the text that should be simplified or adapted to the learners' level, but the task, which is why it would be no problem if learners understand only some parts of a text (cf. Guariento &

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[1] Whereas the concept of and the term "native speaker" have been heavily criticized in applied linguistics as well as in foreign language education in the last decades, especially in the field of English as a second and foreign language (cf. e.g., Paikeday, 1985; Davies, 1991; Kramsch, 1997; Cook, 1999; Bonfiglio, 2010; Dewaele, 2018), the native speaker (*носитель языка*) of Russian is still "very much *alive*" as Stadler and Dreher (in press) show in their study of Russian as a foreign language (RFL) discourse. They conclude that in the RFL literature, authenticity is "closely associated with the role of the idealized and infallible Russian native speaker and the concept of native-speakerism" (Stadler & Dreher, in press).

Morley, 2001; Nuttall, 2005; Skiada, 2021). This stance, however, completely contradicts Bergmann's demand (2021), who thinks that one should question the general request for authenticity because it is often necessary to adapt, shorten or restructure a text to use it in the foreign language classroom. As Stadler (2021, p. 199) points out in this context, it is unclear if Bergmann's demand implies only text authenticity or if other concepts of authenticity, for instance, individual or cultural authenticity, are to be rejected, too.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that while authenticity is often defined and classified in accordance with the different concepts listed at the beginning of this chapter, Pinner (2014, 2016), for example, goes beyond these single taxonomies. He speaks of an "authenticity continuum", which he portrays as a process between the use domain or reality, the community, the learning context, and the individual. The continuum also "incorporates autonomy and identity which […] is vital in motivating learners" in that it tries to bridge the individual identity of the learner "with the often distant reality of the target language culture" (Pinner, 2014, p. 26). Consequently, Pinner (2014, p. 26) underlines the close relation between authenticity and motivation in assuming that if learners can relate to authentic material as individuals, they may find it more motivating. Stadler (2021) also goes beyond simple categorizations by highlighting that authenticity depends not only on the materials and authentic communication situations, but also on the authenticity of teachers. Like Pinner (2014), he pleads for moving the individual language learner towards the center of interest in second language education.[2]

Although these publications (Pinner, 2014, 2016; Stadler, 2021) recognize the complexity of authenticity, which consists of multiple aspects, and emphasize the role of the individual, it is the classic definition and association of authenticity with materials that persists. The same is true for the connection between authenticity and motivation, in particular the claim that authentic materials have the potential of motivating learners without providing empirical evidence (cf. Nosonovič & Mil'rud, 1999; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Savinova & Michaleva, 2006; Berardo, 2006; Salwa, 2013; Artamonova, 2016; Kazakova & Evtjugina, 2016; Epur' & Sucholuckaja, 2019; Rao, 2020). In this respect, Peacock (1997, p. 144) speaks already at the end of the 1990s of an "untested" claim at which this article will have a closer look. Before that, however, the concept of motivation in second language education is presented.

3.   Motivation in Second Language Education

Since the late 1950s, motivation has been at the center of second language research and since then, has become a scientifically well-established field with "its own unique constructs" (Lamb et al., 2019, p. 3).[3]

One of the major approaches to L2 motivation research in the 1950s was made by the social psychologists Gardner and Lambert and their associates in Canada (cf. Gardner & Lambert, 1959). For many decades, their dual concept consisting of instrumental and integrative motivation "has tended to dominate all other ways of looking at the idea in the SL field" (Crookes &

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[2] See also Bondarenko and Kogan (2021) in the current issue.

[3] For a detailed overview of scientific research on L2 motivation, see for example, Crookes and Smith, 1991; Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011; Lamb et al., 2019.

Smith, 1991, p. 478). In the 1990s, however, there was a shift in L2 motivation research, moving from social attitudes to looking at classroom realities, that is, at the micro-level of motivation (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 117). In the following decade, research focus was mainly based on process-oriented models concentrating on learner motivation. More recently, L2 motivation research has taken a dynamic approach (cf. Dörnyei et al., 2015), which frames motivation as "a general theory that applies to many phenomena" and puts the individual at the center of research (Schumann, 2015, p. xvi).

3.1   What is Motivation?

It is generally agreed that motivation is "one of the key factors that determine learning achievement" (Dörnyei et al., 2006, p. vii). As with authenticity, motivation is a term frequently used in education and research, but there is little consensus on its exact meaning: "[E]very different psychological perspective on human behavior is associated with a different theory of motivation and, thus, in general psychology it is not the lack, but rather the abundance of motivation theories which confuses the scene" (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 118). Due to the "multifaceted nature" of language itself, the motivation to learning a second or foreign language is particularly complex and unique. Therefore, Dörnyei (1998, p. 118) describes L2 motivation as "a multifaceted construct."[4] Salak and Ordulj (2020, p. 92) and Paiva (2011, p. 63) adopt the more recent dynamic model by speaking of motivation as a "dynamic construct/force"(*dinamični konstrukt*) that according to Paiva (2011, p. 63) involves "social, affective and cognitive factors manifested in desire, attitudes, expectations, interests, needs, values, pleasure and efforts." By contrast, Vasil'eva and Fedotova (2019, p. 937) regard motivation at a more global level by describing it as a system of "goals, needs and motives" (*система целей, потребностей и мотивов*).
Although there is no generally accepted definition of motivation, there is a lot of research dealing with the question of what promotes learner motivation.

3.2   Motivational Theories and Some Factors Enhancing Motivation

Various theories and psychological constructs of motivation are closely related to what increases or enhances learners' motivation. According to Dörnyei (1998, p. 121) and Drackert (2018, p. 34), one of the most successful and well-known theories in L2 motivation research is the self-determination theory as developed by Deci and Ryan (1985). This theory distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and considers learner autonomy as a prerequisite and critical factor for motivation (cf. Dörnyei, 1998; Wu, 2003; Murray et al., 2011; Ditta et al., 2020). In this regard, learner motivation may increase when the learners perceive that they have some control, freedom, and responsibility in their learning (e.g., selecting the type of homework, choosing specific topics, etc.) (cf. Wu, 2003; Ditta et al., 2020).

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[4] Note that Kreber et al. (2010, p. 383) define authenticity in a similar way, namely as a "complex and multi-dimensional construct."

Another theory concerning learner motivation is the so-called self-efficacy theory, which assumes that learners who are confident in their ability show more interest in learning and are thus more motivated (Wu, 2003, p. 511; Dörnyei et al., 2006, p. 14).

One further motivational theory emanates from two factors of motivation: the person's expectancy of success in a given activity, and the value the person puts on this activity. Being composed of these two factors, this theory is called expectancy-value theory: "The greater the perceived likelihood of goal-attainment and the greater the incentive value of the goal, the higher the degree of individual's positive motivation" (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 119). In relation to the expectancy of success, and thus the possibility of reaching specific goals, stands the goal orientation theory, which assumes that setting goals and subgoals may generally be useful for motivating students in the classroom. This is especially true for long-lasting activities such as language learning (cf. Dörnyei, 1998, pp. 120–121).

Elaborating on already existing theories, Dörnyei himself developed an influential theory in the motivational field—the so-called "L2 Motivational Self System" (Dörnyei et al., 2006). Ushioda (2011, p. 20) summarizes one of the basic assumptions of this theory: "[I]f proficiency in the target language is part and parcel of one's ideal or ought-to self, this will serve as a powerful motivator to learn the language because of our psychological desire to reduce the discrepancy between our current self and possible future selves." The problem with this theory is that Dörnyei et al. (2006, p. 92) again view the native speaker of a particular L2 as the ultimate goal, being "the closest parallel of our L2-speaking ideal self." Reaching a native-like competence in a particular L2 and being accepted by the L2 (imagined) community of speakers is nearly impossible for the majority of L2 learners (Davies, 2003, p. 212), and can even have demotivating effects on learners. For this reason, the "native speaker" nowadays no longer figures in the top levels in the *New Companion Volume of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR), and is no longer seen as the CEFR's reference point (cf. Council of Europe, 2018).

Apart from learner autonomy, self-confidence, expectancy of success, value given to a task, and goal setting, there are several other, often-cited factors enhancing L2 motivation. One of these factors is learning itself, in that an interesting topic can encourage students to learn more about it (cf. Ditta et al., 2020). Teachers and their skills are another motivational factor (cf. Dörnyei, 1998; Lamb & Wedell, 2013; Stadler, 2021). In their study, Lamb and Wedell (2013) investigated inspirational teaching and its effect on learners' long-term motivation. Lamb and Wedell (2013, p. 17) define "inspirational teaching" as "the kind that learners remember for positive reasons years later." According to their investigation, teaching may be inspirational if teachers can establish a personal connection with learners, have professional qualities, are patient and kind and have profound knowledge of their subject (cf. Lamb & Wedell, 2013, p. 17).

In her study of adults' motivation attending distant-learning language courses, Murphy (2011) demonstrates that in addition to the overlap of personal interests and goals with the course tasks and activities, it is also important for teachers to provide feedback to motivate learners. Murphy (2011) also identifies negative influences on motivation: course content, ambiguity of tasks, technical problems, workload, unhappiness with tutors, and difficulties with understanding audio material. One of the most demotivating factors is the "lack of contact with other stu-

dents" (Murphy, 2011, p. 114)—a result which should be particularly thought-provoking, especially nowadays in times of the Covid-19 pandemic and an increasing promotion of distance learning.

Based on the above-said one can conclude that the following factors[5] are relevant when it comes to motivation: autonomy, self-confidence, setting goals, value given to the task, overlap between personal interest and course content, teachers' skills, feedback, and contact with other students.

Another important motivational factor that has not yet been mentioned in this subchapter is often claimed to enhance motivation *per se*: authentic materials. In the following Section (4), I will focus on authentic materials and answer the questions if *authentic* is equal to *motivating* and, if yes, which empirical evidence is provided in the literature.

4. Authenticity and Motivation—Is Authentic Equal to Motivating?

This chapter reviews theoretical and empirical studies which have examined the relationship between authenticity and motivation. The first Section (4.1) focuses on authentic material because this is, as stated in Section 2.2, what *authentic* is commonly referred to. The second Section (4.2) looks at the effects of authentic materials on learners' language skills. The third and last Section (4.3) presents some studies that consider other aspects of authenticity that can enhance L2 motivation.

4.1   The Motivational Potential of Authentic Materials

Although there are a lot of articles promoting the use of authentic materials in the L2 classroom (cf. Nosonovič & Mil'rud, 1999; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Savinova & Michaleva, 2006; Berardo, 2006; Salwa, 2013; Artamonova, 2016; Kazakova & Evtjugina, 2016; Epur' & Sucholuckaja, 2019; Rao, 2020), there appears to be a large gap regarding empirical research on their actual effect on learners' motivation. According to Gilmore (2007, p. 107), this lack of empirical research is due to the ambiguities in the definitions of authenticity and motivation. In addition, Gilmore (2007) draws attention to the shortcomings of previous investigations, including: the appropriateness of authentic materials, the tasks provided and the teacher's work; the quality of authentic materials; learners' location and goals; learners' familiarity with authentic materials; the length over which motivation is measured, and the accurateness of measurement in the classroom.

Notwithstanding Gilmore's (2007) reasonable concerns, it is worth bringing together already existing studies to get a more detailed picture of the relation between motivation and authentic materials.

Traditionally, it has been argued that authentic materials are more interesting, stimulating and entertaining than artificial materials produced for language learners (cf. e.g., Peacock, 1997;

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[5] The factors and motivational theories mentioned here do not claim to be exhaustive.

Berardo, 2006; Wu et al., 2011; Shirai, 2013; Sample, 2015; Epur' & Sucholuckaja, 2019). However, the studies cited here do not provide empirical evidence for this claim. An exception to this is Peacock's seminal study (1997) which, while confirming that the use of authentic materials significantly increases motivation, contradicts general assertions in the literature: The learners in Peacock's investigation (1997, p. 148) estimated authentic materials "to be significantly less interesting than artificial materials." Therefore, Peacock's study indicates that authentic materials and interest are not interconnected *per se* but that learners' interest in the material is only one component of motivation. For this reason, Peacock (1997, p. 152) suggests separating different components of motivation to get "a clearer understanding of the meaning of the construct 'motivation'." However, it is worth noting that a possible explanation for Peacock's results might be the relatively short period of study (seven weeks) as well as the study's limitation to beginners.

Some researchers also agree on the difficulty of authentic materials, thereby challenging their effectivity in the classroom (cf. e.g., Widdowson, 1998; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Salak & Ordulj, 2020). Especially at lower proficiency levels, authentic materials may frustrate and even demotivate learners (Guariento & Morley, 2001, p. 348). Salak and Ordulj (2020, p. 103) even think that the use of authentic cultural or literary elements is "not possible" (*nije moguće*), as at lower levels the communicative competence is "still poorer developed" (*[je] još uvijek slabije razvijena*). By contrast, other researchers do not share this view. Shirai (2013, p. 438), for example, argues that the difficulty of authentic materials can also be motivating in that learners realize that they can already cope with "real" language (cf. also Gilmore, 2007, p. 107). Shirai's (2013) point of view is comparable to that of Skiada (2021, p. 92) who criticizes that judging authentic texts "on the basis of the problems they pose for students and not on whether they pose a challenge for them" leads to avoiding authentic input. Consequently, this "precludes lower level students from accessing subject matter which meets their interests or needs" (Skiada, 2021, p. 92).

Aside from the ascribed quality of being interesting, a second reason why authentic materials are motivating is that they are "real." Nuttall (2005, p. 172), for instance, states: "Authentic texts […] can be motivating because they are proof that the language is used for real-life purposes by real people." Similarly, Gilmore (2004, p. 371), in his comparison study of textbook and authentic interaction, concludes that students should be confronted with "the true nature of conversation" and, thus, with unmodified texts. Nuttall (2005, p. 192) adds that because "[a]uthentic material is the ideal," it is the task that should be adapted to the text: "The general idea is that the more difficult the text, the easier you should make the tasks."

Dörnyei et al. (2006) give the third reason why authentic materials are motivating: They are cultural products and, as such, can enhance motivation. According to Dörnyei et al. (2006), L2 motivation consists of several components, one of them being cultural interest, which is mainly stimulated by the learners' exposure to L2 cultural products and artefacts, including films, videos, books, magazines, music, and so forth. These products play a "salient role in familiarizing learners with the L2 community," and thus shape learners' attitudes towards the L2 (Dörnyei et al., 2006, p. 15). Where no direct contact with the target language community is possible, cultural products constitute the primary source of contact with L2 speakers (cf. Dörnyei et al., 2006). In this regard, Kessler et al. (2021) point to the importance of learners' needs analysis

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because, as they demonstrate in their study of Chinese students' use of English outside the classroom, learners use this language every day (e.g., computer games, social networks, online products, etc.). This, however, contradicts the belief of teachers who think that their students have neither the possibility nor the need to use English outside the classroom in China.

Furthermore, as Gilmore (2011) and Wagner and Ockey (2018) state, authentic materials are motivating because they provide rich input. They therefore have significantly more positive effects on learners' progress in the target language. In this respect, Wagner and Ockey (2018, pp. 24–25) also highlight the importance of using "texts with real-world language characteristics" in language tests because they maximize construct validity and have positive washback effects on test stake-holders.

The following Section will look at the positive effects of authentic materials on learners' language competences in more detail.

4.2 The Effect of Authentic Materials on Various Language Skills

Although there are not many studies that empirically investigate if authentic materials are more motivating than artificial materials, several studies explore the effect of using authentic materials on learners' language skills. For example, Gilmore (2011) examined wether there was a positive change in students' communication skills when authentic materials were used. He found out that "authentic materials and their associated tasks were more effective in developing a broader range of communicative competencies in learners than the textbook materials" (Gilmore, 2011, p. 786). This positive effect on learners was due to the richer input of authentic materials, which raised students' awareness and made them acquire "a wider variety of linguistic, pragmatic, strategic, and discourse features" (Gilmore, 2011, p. 810). Despite the beneficial effects of authentic materials, Gilmore (2011) also highlights the difficulties that the use of authentic materials entails, such as the access to these materials and the time spent to design effective tasks.

In addition to the positive effects on communicative competence, which can be referred to as linguistic competence in general since Gilmore (2011) used, for example, a listening test, a pronunciation test, a C-Test, a vocabulary test, and a role-play, other studies examine the effects of authentic materials on reception activities, especially listening and reading comprehension. In their study, Wu et al. (2011) report that authentic aural material, such as BBC news, is beneficial to initiating and sustaining learner motivation. Besides, they can also "encourage the development of autonomous learners" (Wu et al., 2011, p. 93). Similar to Gilmore (2011), Wu et al. (2011) point out the additional effort and assistance authentic materials require from the teacher because they are not designed for language learners. Wu et al. (2011) remind us, however, that the material used in the classroom is only one aspect enhancing learner motivation; they also stress the influence of the teacher.

Another study examining the listening skills of learners comes from Wagner (2018). He investigates the performance of test takers who had scripted texts (scripted group) in L2 listening tests, and compares their results to test takers who received authenticated texts (authenticated

group). Wagner's study (2018) indicates that the scripted group scored higher than the authenticated group. One possible explanation lies in the different speech rate, which was significantly higher in the authenticated texts. Notwithstanding these negative results concerning learners' test performance, Wagner and Ockey (2018, p. 24) emphasize the importance of using authentic aural texts in L2 listening and testing.

Some studies have investigated the effect of authentic materials on reading skills. For example, Marzban and Davaji (2015), as well as Namaziandost et al. (2021), conclude in their analysis of the reading performance of Iranian English learners that authentic texts positively affect learners' reading comprehension and their motivation. Namaziandost et al. (2021, p. 10) even found out that reading authentic texts increased learners' motivation "to the extent that they were willing to share their acquired knowledge with other people" and that these materials were effective in improving learners' "reading fluency and reading ability." In the same vein, Belet Boyacı and Güner (2018) report that authentic materials had a positive effect on learners attending Turkish language courses in Turkey; specifically, authentic materials increased learners' reading and writing skills and their overall motivation.

Thus, the studies cited in this subchapter clearly illustrate that authentic materials are beneficial to developing learners' language skills. However, when reviewing existing literature, it becomes clear that most of the studies focus on English as a second/foreign language and that empirical research on languages other than English is missing.

4.3 Autonomy, Authentic Voice and Self-Authenticity

Even if authentic materials are the focus of previous and current research, several studies concentrate on other aspects concerning authenticity and motivation. One central factor for motivation as well as for authenticity is, as stated in Sections 2.2 and 3.2, learner autonomy. As Pinner (2016) notes, autonomy is "twinned" with authenticity and motivation, and it is also important in his concept of the authenticity continuum.

Research in this field, however, is still rare. One study that addresses motivation and learner autonomy is Drackert (2018). Although learner autonomy and motivation are often said to "go hand in hand" (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 124), the results of Drackert's study indicate that this might not be true for every learner. In her investigation of beginning learners of Russian at a German university, Drackert (2018) provides evidence that a high degree of autonomy and self-determination can have detrimental effects on learners' activity and task motivation. However, the main limitation of this study is that it concentrates on beginners and therefore, further studies are needed to confirm Drackert's findings.

In connection with learner autonomy, there is also agreement in previous studies that students need to develop their "authentic voice." Ushioda (2011), for instance, argues that in order to become autonomous learners, students should "speak as themselves." More specifically, she refers to the often simplistic and pseudo-communicative texts and tasks in textbooks and the classroom, which emphasize language practicing instead of the expression of personal ideas or identities. However, learners should "through the medium of the target language […] express their own preferred meanings, interests and identities" (Ushioda, 2011, p. 17).

Likewise, Roberts and Cooke (2009) and Ramezanzadeh and Rezaei (2019) highlight how important it is for learners to find their "authentic voice." Both articles criticize the often "oversimplified" and smooth interactions in textbooks and the classroom. In this respect, Henry (2013) speaks of an "authenticity gap" between English in the classroom and English outside the classroom. This is why Roberts and Cooke (2009) suggest integrating real linguistic, "authentic" data into the classroom to confront students with "real" conversations. Henry (2013) proposes to concentrate on creative activities that involve, for example, personal expression and student discussion.

In contrast to Roberts and Cooke (2009), Ushioda (2011), and Ramezanzadeh and Rezaei (2019), Henry (2013, p. 133) does not plead for enhancing learners' authentic voices but for acknowledging "self-authenticity." He defines the latter as engagement with language and with activities congruent "with core self-conceptions" and which, according to him, can have motivating forces (Henry, 2013, p. 141). This "personal engagement" is also inherent in Pinner's authenticity continuum (2014) cited at the beginning of this article, which emphasizes that authenticity does not exclusively belong to the target language community but that the students' language production "is valid and authentic" as well (Pinner, 2014, p. 26).

With this identity perspective on authenticity and motivation, which accentuates "a dimension of student motivation that is specifically concerned with self-expression" (Ushioda, 2011, p. 22), it becomes evident that, in conclusion, it is the individual learner who should be at the center of language education and that authenticity and motivation together form a continuum.

5. Conclusion

In the present article, I have attempted to provide an overview of the concepts of authenticity and motivation, and to investigate whether authentic is equal to motivating. The article retraces the importance of authenticity and motivation in L2 education because both are considered central to learning. It has been shown that authenticity and motivation share many similarities, such as the ambiguities in their definition, which is why they are often described as "multidimensional" and "multifaceted." Furthermore, both concepts are deeply intertwined with identity and learner autonomy, which is why the individual's relationship to the authentic material is central to enhancing motivation (see 2.2). For this reason, it is necessary not to separate these two concepts but to see them, following Pinner (2014, 2016), as an authenticity-motivation-continuum.

Since these two concepts belong together, the question of whether authentic equals motivating can clearly be answered in the affirmative. However, if we look at single aspects of these two concepts, for example at the question whether authentic *materials* are more motivating than artificial ones, there is no simple answer. Whereas most of the sources cited in this article confirm the positive effect of authentic materials on learners' motivation and/or their language skills, there are not enough empirical studies to make clear statements. Moreover, the majority of these studies focus on English as a second/foreign language which is why studies about other

languages, i.e. Slavic languages[6], are still rare. Besides, many studies concentrate on beginning learners; only few studies focus on intermediate or proficient learners. What has become evident from reviewing the literature is that it is never the material alone that enhances motivation, but also the task and the teacher, and the personal interest and engagement of learners themselves.

For this reason, authenticity and motivation remain a very interesting research area in L2 education. Empirical research in languages other than English is urgently needed to provide further evidence on the positive effects of using authentic materials on learner motivation, individuals' needs and the relation of authenticity and motivation as a whole.

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[6] When it comes to Russian, most of the studies (Savinova & Michaleva, 2006; Artamonova, 2016; Epur' & Sucholuckaja, 2019) cited in the present article do not engage theoretically with motivation or authenticity and use these terms in a self-explanatory way (cf. Stadler & Dreher, in press).

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