The Effect of Text-book Dialogue Memorization on Iranian EFL Learners' Vocabulary Knowledge

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Abstract: The present study attempted to investigate the effects of text-book dialogue memorization on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge. To achieve this purpose, Nelson's proficiency test (1970) was administered to a population of forty female students of guidance school third grade classes of Mourmouri city who participated in the present research. Then, the sample was randomly divided into two groups of control and experimental groups, based on their proficiency test scores. Both experimental and control groups worked on the same text- book content. Students were exposed to text- book dialogues and they were forced to memorize them. Also, the investigator used pre- test and post- test for testing her hypothesis. The experimental group subjects were instructed on the special method of memorizing the dialogues and their vocabularies and noticed the functional patterns which were embedded in them in order to use them communicatively. However, the control group received placebo treatment during the course. The treatment took eight weeks. The results of the post-test showed that the dialogues memorization proved beneficial on improving the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian guidance school students. The researcher selected this problem to investigate and prove the effectiveness of dialogues memorization on vocabulary slope. There were some reasons to make it clear that why the researcher chose dialogues. First, dialogues included grammatical points and the way to use them in different types of question, statement, and so forth. Second, they were presented in real life situations, like, (watching TV) which are interesting. Third, they embraced the new words which students might not have been heard them, yet. Finally, memorization was an effective way for better recalling and retaining words, specially, when they were presented in context like dialogues which were samples of real life situation. The present study presents some pedagogical implications for both teachers and students of Iranian guidance school. The dialogue memorization and its impact on vocabulary knowledge was useful in the speaking skill and its domain and also it was beneficial on improving comprehension ability of students and by memorizing more dialogues and vocabularies they can communicate easily.

1.1 Introduction

Language is captured either througlearning or acquisition. If language learning involves the activity of learning into unconscious process and relax environment, it is termed language acquisition, but if language is learned through learning a language consciously and in a formal environment, this is called language learning. Actually the first on is concerned with child language acquisition which takes place as the child grows besides his or her parents, unconsciously without any stress formality. Moreover, they acquire their mother tongue not any other language. Also, the latter, language learning, refers to learning a language in a formal situation and conscious process, they learn a language other than their mother tongue. In turn, this language learning is divided into two other parts: ESL and EFL which their definitions are introduced in the following paragraphs.

English language learning, from the point of view of the formal and informal learning situation is divided into two types, ESL and EFL. ESL is defined as English as second language, and EFL, English as foreign language. According to this matter, English language learners who learn a foreign language through learning in the formal situation, like, classrooms and language institutions are called foreign language learners because they have no out of class situations and are not exposed to real native situations or speakers of that foreign language.

So, this is the case with any language learners who learn a foreign language other than the language of their community who live in, nor that of his or her job, are even with those who teach English to people for whom it is not their first language, both of the above mentioned are the domain of EFL teaching and learning.

Every language teaching and learning focuses on the four major language skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking skills. Of these, reading more specifically, vocabulary learning is connected with the memorization of words and specially, dialogues. In turn, the present researcher believes that the vocabulary extent is connected to the productive skills (speaking and writing) and also vocabulary to some

extent contributes to the receptive skills (reading and listening), as well. So, the more the vocabulary extent is, the more the success will be in the four language skills domain, specially, in the receptive ones.

Although, there are more researchers who worked on the effect of word and dialogues memorization on improving the vocabulary extent, still it was interesting and eye- catching for this present researcher. There are many types of educational text- books to be selected by the researcher but she is interested in guidance school text- books of Iranian schools in this study. These books are written by local authors and professors (specialists). It might be possible that all researchers, readers of this research don't agree on the effectiveness of this topic and memorizing the dialogues for improving vocabulary slope.

Although these text- books were not written based on the culture and literature f the Americans or British English, they are used to teach this language for nonnative Iranian Guidance school students who were intended to learn this language as a foreign language. One part of these text books dealt with the dialogues which mostly were presented in the beginning of each lesson as a source of vocabulary learning, functional and grammatical patterns of English language for Iranian students. The present researcher attempted to do this research through an experimental study as follow.

The study used dialogue memorization technique within an EFL environment. So, it is in line with Grammar Translation Method and Audio-lingual approach. According to Celce Murcia (2001), the results of language learning following these two approaches is usually an inability in the part of language learners to use language for communication. Mimicry and memorization of dialogue was the start point of audio-lingual approach which was dominant in 1940s to 1960s. Because of its lack of emphasis on oral skills and communication, it was replaced by communicative approach whose basic view was seeing language as a system for communication, and ability to communicate in the target language (Celce- Murcia, 2001).

1.2 Statement of the problem

This study has been selected to be administered because the researcher has observed that Iranian teachers always don't cause the students, specially the guidance school ones, to memorize the dialogues which are presented in each lesson. Despite the mentioned drawbacks of these text- books, the content and the words included in them are pertaining to the grammar and functional patterns and rules which are useful and required to communicate with each other as learners. So, the present investigation attempted to test the effectiveness of this topic. Mostly Iranian English

teachers used traditional methods such as grammar translation method for teaching English in the state and private schools.

Moreover, these traditional teaching methods which were used to teach every part of the lesson, specially, dialogues and vocabulary lead to unsuccessful learning. So, students did not have enough vocabulary extent to use in their communication with each other as EFL learners who are at the same level.

1.3 Significance of the study

To a large extent the study of using the memorization of dialogues to improve the vocabulary slope is not a new area of research. The past researchers might have used the dialogues or other texts for improving the vocabulary extent to be able to speak, to write, to read or even to communicate better, and also this was the case with the present researcher.

The researcher selected this problem to investigate and prove the effectiveness of dialogues memorization on vocabulary slope. There were some reasons to make it clear that why the researcher chose dialogues. First, dialogues included grammatical points and the way to use them in different types of question, statement, and so forth. Second, they were presented in real life situations, like, (watching TV) which are interesting. Third, they embraced the new words which students might not have been heard them, yet. Finally, memorization was an effective way for better recalling and retaining words, specially, when they were presented in context like dialogues which were samples of real life situation.

1.4 Research Question

The current part dealt with the research question of the study:

Does memorizing text book dialogues technique have any effect on improving vocabulary knowledge of Iranian guidance school students?

1.5 Hypothesis

The null hypothesis of the present study was:

Hypothesis 0:

Memorizing text book dialogues technique does not have any significant effect on improving vocabulary knowledge of Iranian guidance school students.

Research Hypothesis:

Memorizing text book dialogues technique has a significant effect on improving vocabulary knowledge of Iranian guidance school students.

1.6 Definitions of key terms

1. Dialogues: Dialogues memorization is a chance to practice the pronunciation and get it really in to month, without having to think about what I was saying, but

long enough to bald really saying it with accent and everything.

2. Vocabulary: all the words that a person, here a student, knows in a particular language. And also another definition is: a list of words with their meanings, specially, those which are in a book for learning a foreign language.

1.7 Delimitations and limitations

It was designated that delimitations referred to those measures that the researcher used to narrow down the research. The delimitations of this study were as follow:

1. The present researcher focused on guidance school students who learn English language as a foreign language. These learners, in turn, were one small part of a narrow age in only one area in Iran.

2. Moreover, because of some problems regarding the handling and manageability of the test teacher randomly eliminated ten students of two above- mentioned classes.

Limitations

The limitations of this study were the followings:

1. The researcher was not the teacher of the classes involved in the study, hence they don't cooperate with the researcher as she desires. But, the researcher administered the instruction and the tests by the students' their own teacher to decrease the effect of this limitation.

2. The present researcher didn't have enough time to administer the test perfectly and so she couldn't cover all the dialogues of the book.

Review of literature

English language learning in Iran is a mechanical process of learning. Since, students live in their own country and learn English language in a foreign environment. So, they are not exposed to any native speakers or to any real situations to learn the language through functional or communicative approach Yule (1996).

In this study, learners were memorizing dialogues of their textbooks. They were written by nonnative speakers of Persian language and did not provide students with suitable tasks and how to use language to do language functions. So, these dialogues lead learners to mechanical process of habit formation. They memorized dialogues through repeating dialogues lines and expressions. Although, the technique of memorizing textbooks dialogues developed students' vocabulary knowledge, it did not necessarily result in an inability to use language.

As the researcher claimed, this wasn't a novel area of investigation. Duong (2003) investigated good and bad memorization topic, observing that some English learners believed that they sought ways to achieve good memorization to help them in learning English. She found that good memorization seemed to play a significant role for students in learning English. Also, Adamson (1990) noted that when the know-by-heart is repeated many times, it may begin to make sense, structures, and vocabulary analyzed and separated out, become available for creative and original use. Kovecses and Szabo (1995) found positive learning effects for students who memorize phrasal verbs.

La Garanderie (1997) defines memorization as an act of learning through which the evocation of the object of knowledge becomes available for future access and utilization. In other words, memorization is a path or bridge to the future that carries the past learning into the future. La Garanderie stated that this is the essence of memorization and what characterizes this learning act is the future. For so many people it could be defined as learning by heart or learning a text and saying it with the same exact words. But it could also be stated as learning and remembering the summary of the information. In another expression, one remembers the information in his or her own words.

Methodology
3.1 Methodology

This researcher designed the present research to examine the effect of memorization strategy as an independent variable on improving vocabulary knowledge as a dependent variable. More detailed information of method and population come at the following parts. The researcher used an experimental design, in which she randomly chose two third grade guidance school classes among four existed ones and then she assigned the two groups to experimental and control group. This design was a blue print of the procedures which enabled the present researcher to test the hypothesis by reaching a valid conclusion about the relationship between the independent variable (dialogue memorization) and the dependent variable (improving vocabulary knowledge).

3.2 Population and sample:

Among the eight third grade classes of Mourmouri city, four of which were considered as the population of the present study. The investigator narrowed down the research by involving the sex factor as an intervening one, because she chose only two classes of four female students of guidance schools. So, the population was broad and the participants were forty female students who participated in the research. So, the sample involved forty students.

3.3 Instrumentation

In general, this study employed guidance school third grade text-book and some tests (Nelson's proficiency test (1970) as pre test and a reading achievement test as post- test) as the material and instrument of the investigation. Actually, students were exposed to text- book dialogues and they were forced to memorize them. Also, she used pre- test and post- test for testing her hypothesis. She administered the pre- test at the beginning of the research, before applying any instruction. Then, after giving the instruction to the experimental group, she administered the post- test, in order to measure the impact of the independent variable on the improvement of the vocabulary knowledge. Both test types were vocabulary type tests. In turn, vocabulary test were simple completion ones and multiple choice question test. The researcher used twelve dialogues which were the material of instruction for both experimental and control group and lasted for about eight weeks. During the treatment, the control group followed the traditional way of grammar translation method and read the dialogues in the conventional way of teaching and were not forced to memorize them or focus on the vocabulary and patterns of them, but the experimental group memorized the dialogues and their vocabularies and noticed the functional patterns which were embedded in them in order to use them communicatively.

3.4 Procedure

At the beginning of the research and after randomly assigning the sample to experimental and control groups, the researcher administered the pretest to make the groups equivalent and having a strong evidence (Pretest scores) to judge the differences between experimental and control groups later on. The dialogues of their previous grade text-book provided the pretest items. After applying the pretest with an identical condition for both groups, she calculated the means of each group and keeps them to be used when they were needed in later stages. Then, she started the instruction and chose the 6 dialogues of the students' text-book to be worked on and to be memorized by the experimental group, but the control group received no instruction and attended their classes as the past. During an interval of 3 weeks, students of experimental group memorized 2 dialogues per week and still 2 groups weren't informed of the matter of survey. Then, when its time was ripe and the instruction period was up, the researcher administered the posttest to two groups. Finally, she computed the means of two groups and kept them for future use in the following section and their interpretations came in the result and discussion part along with related tables.

3.5 Data Analysis

The present study was experimental and surveyed for the effect of an independent variable (dialogues memorization) on a dependent variable (vocabulary knowledge), dealt with scores and interval measuring scale. So, it was necessary to calculate the means of the both groups on both pre and posttest. In this part, the researcher scored the papers of two groups on two tests and having the raw scores of students, the researcher calculated the means of the two sets of scores. Since here, there were two sets of scores, the researcher dealt with the interval versus interval scale of measurement. By adding the all scores of a group and dividing by the number of students, the pre-test mean score of experimental group was 8.60 and the mean of control group is 9.05. Also, the mean of experimental group on post- test is 17.70and the mean of control group on the post- test was 8.75. After computing the means, the present researcher computed the standard deviation, t- test, level of significance, degree of freedom, using the SPSS software, and then compared the groups' mean scores to each other to see the differences between them and to see whether the null hypothesis was be rejected or not of which their more details came in the result and discussion part.

Results and discussion

4.1. Group Statistics

Group	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental group	20	17.7000	1.49032	.33325
Control group	20	8.6000	2.41487	.53998

4.2 Inferential statistics of post test

	Levene's Test for Equality of variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95%Confodence Intervals of the Differences	
	F	sig	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Differences	Std. Error Differences	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	3.780	.059	-15.424	38	.000	-8.95000	.58027	-10.12469	-7.77531
Equal variances not assumed			-15.749	34.055	.000	-8.95000	.58027	-10.12918	-7.77082

Using the SPSS software, the present researcher entered the raw scores of the pre and post-test of the control and experimental groups and then calculated the following measures: means, variance, Standard deviation and standard error difference, t-test, and the level of significance of pre-test and post-test. The results of these measures were shown in the above tables at the beginning of the current chapter.

According to above statistics and calculations, the results of the post-test of the experimental group members differed significantly from their scores and the means on pre-test but the scores and the means of the control group members didn't differ so significantly from their pretests scores and means. Based on the results of table 4.2, the difference of the two means of pretests for control and experimental was .45 however, the means difference for posttest of both groups was 8.95.Concerning the value of F in Levene's Test (F: 3.780) and also the level of significance (sig: .059), we can say that the variance of the two groups was equal. So, we should observe the equality of variance in order to consider and describe the results.

Regarding the amount of observed t (t: -15.424), the degree of freedom (df: 38) and also significance level (sig: .059), there was a significant difference between the post-test mean scores of the experimental and the control group. In other words, there was enough evidence to prove the research hypothesis and refuse the null hypothesis. And this was all due to the effect of the instruction or treatment which caused a significant change in experimental group students. But the control group didn't change so significantly in comparison to the experimental group and all this was due to the fact that control group did not receive any instruction like the experimental group students.

After comparing the pretest means, it was indicated that the students' vocabulary knowledge in both groups, more or less, were the same and equivalent. They weren't so significantly different, but by comparing the posttest means of the two groups, it was proved that the dialogues memorization was beneficial on improving the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian guidance school students who were anticipated in this study. So, this study accepted the research hypothesis which stated that the dialogue memorization technique has a significant effect on improving vocabulary knowledge of Iranian guidance school students.

Conclusion
5.1. Summary of the findings

As it was mentioned in the previous part, the posttest mean score of the experimental group students, who were exposed to the instruction and dialogue memorization, was better than the posttest mean score of the control group students which received no instruction. Also, the results of the t-test revealed that there was a significant difference between the two groups of experimental and control. So, the null hypothesis was rejected. The present researcher believed that there were some reasons that experimental group did better than control group students. First of all, the experimental group had the exposure of memorizing the dialogues of which the posttest items were drawn, so they did better than control group students who didn't memorize them. Moreover, all the control group and experimental group students didn't let to know about why they are participated in the present study, if they knew, it could change the results of control group like experimental group and so there wasn't such a significant difference between Experimental and Control group members. Finally, she made the condition (time, temperature of the class, sketching the test items of their school text-books and so forth) of the tests identical for both groups. Therefore, no other factor except than independent variable affected the results of the study.

Finally, the findings of the present study reported that the in addition to the differences between the post-test means of control , experimental, the differences between the pretest mean score and posttest mean of the experimental group showed the effect of the treatment. Comparing the t-test of the means of the pre and post, and the significance level for experimental post-test, it was indicated that because the significance level of the present study was smaller than a: %5, the research hypothesis was proved. According to all of the above mentioned results, the researcher proved her hypothesis and claimed that there was a significant difference between the mean of vocabulary knowledge of the experimental group and mean of control group on post-test.

Therefore, all these findings were alleged that the treatment and instruction of dialogue memorization was beneficial for Iranian guidance school third grade students to improve their vocabulary knowledge. But English language learning doesn't summarize in pure dialogue or vocabulary memorization. So, the present researcher recommended other researchers and teachers to mingle this strategy with others to promote English language learning among Iranian students who learn English as a foreign language.

5.2 Pedagogical implications

The present study presents some pedagogical implications for both teachers and students of Iranian guidance school. The dialogue memorization and its impact on vocabulary knowledge was useful in the speaking skill and its domain and also it was beneficial on improving comprehension ability of students and by memorizing more dialogues and vocabularies they can communicate easily. But each student should

memorize the dialogues which are more to his/her own language level.

Pedagogical implications for Learners:

Learners can use the strategy of the dialogue memorization to improve their vocabulary knowledge, in order to improve their communicative proficiency. Mostly dialogues embrace the new vocabularies which can be useful in their daily routines and education.

5.3 Suggestion for further research:

The present investigation provided evidence that the text-book dialogue memorization had a direct and positive effect on Iranian students' vocabulary knowledge. However, it could be involved more dialogues to memorized by students and even it could be administered on a larger sample with a longer period of time to have more reliable and generalize able results. In addition, the present investigator believed that if the dialogue memorization can be used along with vocabulary lists memorization, or even along with the students' mother tongue equivalents of those vocabulary, will be easily remembered and associated.

Therefore, this study was conducted to reveal both the benefits of dialogue memorization among Iranian EFL learners and to show that this technique was not merely suitable and enough to improve the communicative competence and ability to use language communicatively. So, this study aimed to provide Iranian teachers and learners with some helpful points about the influence of textbooks dialogue memorization. Also, this study showed researchers a direct path to do some researches in the domain of communicative approach, functional approach and task-based approach in the future.

To sum up, the present researcher recommends other investigators to work on these above mentioned matters and it has the more capacity to be worked on.

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