

TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH POETRY IN AN EFL CLASSROOM

Baki Özen

Cyprus International University Faculty of Education
Lefkosa, via Mersin 10, Turkey
bakizen@hotmail.com

Assist. Prof. Dr. Behbood Mohammadzadeh
Cyprus International University Faculty of Education
Lefkosa, via Mersin 10, Turkey
behbudm@ciu.edu.tr

ABSTRACT

This study has been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of using poetry to teach vocabulary in a foreign language classroom. It aims to find answers to two research questions (1) “Do the learners enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities than the traditional coursebook activities?” (2) “Is there a statistically significant difference between male and female students in the experimental group considering the vocabulary test?” (3) “Do the learners enhance more extensive grammar knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities than the traditional coursebook activities?”. This experimental study took place in Çorlu Private Trakya College. In order to test the above given two hypotheses, two groups were selected, an experimental group and a control group. Totally forty-eight pre-intermediate level 7th grade students participated in the study, twenty-four of them were in the experimental group and the other twenty-four were in the control group. Before carrying out this experimental study, a pre-test was applied to both the experimental group and the control group to determine their knowledge of the target vocabulary items and English grammar. The target vocabulary items were taught through poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities to the students in the experimental group, and the same vocabulary items were taught through the traditional activities stated in the coursebook to the students in the control group. After the treatment, in order to measure the students’ vocabulary and grammar expansion in both groups, the same pre-test was applied to both groups as a post-test. Data analysis results revealed a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group students receiving vocabulary instruction through the poems. In addition, the experimental group had higher scores of posttest than control group especially in terms of vocabulary knowledge. Furthermore, at the end of the study it was observed that the posttest scores of students in the experimental group were higher than the posttest scores of students in the control group even though they were equal before the study. Based on these findings, the current study shows that it is possible to use poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities instead of vocabulary activities in the coursebooks used in the EFL classrooms.

Keywords: vocabulary teaching, poetry, poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities.

INTRODUCTION

Until recently vocabulary has not been considered as an important factor in language teaching. Vocabulary was not as important as it is and vocabulary teaching was positioned in the secondary importance in foreign language teaching. Moreover, vocabulary instruction was considered as unimportant, useless and time-consuming. The required importance was not given to the vocabulary instruction at all in foreign language teaching all over the world. Fortunately the last few decades have witnessed a considerable interest in vocabulary teaching. (Nunan 1999, Coady & Huckin 2000, Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Today the importance of vocabulary for language teaching is admitted by all second language theorists and practitioners. Although it was believed that vocabulary could be taught only in isolated word lists for a long time, nowadays there are lots of ways to teach vocabulary. The most common idea among them is the crucial importance of vocabulary in communication and in language teaching ; it is believed that the more words we know, the more fluently we can communicate. (Schmitt 2000, Coady & Hucking 2000, Richards & Renandya 2002).

Furthermore, vocabulary has gained so much importance that it is now the most important component of learning any foreign language. Vocabulary is important because it carries the meaning. In this day and age, the value of vocabulary in learning a foreign language is approved and it is accepted as the most important element of language. Some scholars such as Carter & McCarthy 1997, Nation 2002,

Thornbury 2005, Harmer 2009 advise that knowing vocabulary is essential in the target language for learners.

The importance of vocabulary has been accepted by many scholars, but now techniques of teaching vocabulary are controversial. There are some different views about how to teach vocabulary, teaching vocabulary through literary texts is one of the essentials. Even though some researchers believe that many literary texts are not suitable for teaching a foreign language, some scholars such as Brumfit et. al. 1997, Duff & Maley 2002, Burke 2003 advise using literary texts such as poetry in EFL classrooms to develop language skills of the learners, of course, by choosing them carefully with the consideration of the students' needs, levels and ages, etc.

Many studies have been conducted on poetry in Turkey in recent years. For example, Özal (2006) conducted a study in order to show the effects of the poetry-based instruction on the students' attitudes towards foreign language learning. According to the questionnaire results, it was concluded that poetry-based instruction created a positive effect on the students' attitude towards foreign language learning. It was proved that poetry-based instruction created an encouraging classroom environment with activities and materials, and this decreased the level of the students' anxiety.

Kadıoğlu (2005) investigated the effects of the poetry-oriented learner centered activities on the students' overall communicative abilities and the vocabulary repertoire of the students at elementary level. According to the results of this study, the study depicted that the poetry was an effective means of enhancing communicative abilities of the students at elementary level. And also, the use of poetry was contributive to the improvement of the communicative abilities and effective vocabulary learning of the students at elementary level for communication.

Atay (2007) did a study in order to show the effects of analyzing poetry with the principles of Language Based Approach on the students' language awareness and critical thinking skills. The results revealed that the language awareness and critical thinking skills of the students were affected positively with the help of analyzing poetry. There was an increase in participants' language awareness and critical thinking skills by means of analyzing poetry.

Gültekin (2006) studied the effects of using poetry in EFL speaking classes. It was indicated that using poetry in speaking courses was useful because it created meaningful situations for the learners to be able to communicate with each other in a 2nd language.

In these studies, the researchers used authentic poems for their studies but in this study, poems were written for the purpose of using in EFL classrooms. In this study, it is hypothesized that language teachers need to find various techniques for vocabulary instruction and this study investigates the effects of teaching vocabulary through poetry in an EFL classroom.

Statement of the Problem

Generally, students study English in order to pass the exams at schools in Turkey, they may be successful at these exams most of which focus on grammar more than vocabulary or language skills. The students pass the English exams but unfortunately they are unable to communicate. They know the dictionary meanings of the words, but they do not know how to use it in a sentence, how it is pronounced and how it collocates with other words and so on. Furthermore, the students may forget what they know a short time after the exam; the reason of such situations is that they memorize the words by heart in isolated lists. Most of English teachers use traditional vocabulary teaching techniques and vocabulary items are learnt through translation technique, so they are forgotten in a short time.



Studying a foreign language with the same kind of activities in a coursebook becomes boring in time for the students, so the teacher should find new and interesting techniques for the purpose of teaching vocabulary in a more meaningful way to motivate and encourage the students. In this study it is believed that poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities are new and interesting for the students, and they will motivate and encourage the students to use the target language in a more meaningful way because students' motivation is one of the important factors in an EFL classroom. In this context, literary texts might be regarded as appropriate sources which offer wide range of interesting and motivating topics for the foreign language students.

Teachers teach vocabulary by only using coursebooks without preparing any extra vocabulary teaching activities. The coursebooks seem optimum source for the teachers; they can be exactly best source at the beginning but later on there is a need for extra materials which are more interesting and motivating for the students who are getting bored because of seeing the same coursebook every English lesson. Since the function of poetry is generally disregarded in the coursebook, poetry should be a good choice for motivating the students while improving their vocabulary knowledge.

In this study, the importance of using poetry is emphasized, and it is an ideal way to help the students to improve their vocabulary knowledge in a motivating classroom environment. This study offers lots of ideas to the language teachers about different kinds of interesting poetry-based activities.

Aim and Significance of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate if teaching vocabulary through poetry will result in more extensive vocabulary knowledge than teaching vocabulary through the traditional activities in the coursebook.

This study is important in that poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities might be one of the useful materials to solve the problem in vocabulary teaching by offering a wide range of texts for teachers and students and ideas for using in the classroom as vocabulary teaching materials. This study will analyse the effects of using poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities on vocabulary learning. As Duff and Maley (2002) state, literary texts such as poetry offer wide range of interesting and practical language development materials for both teachers and students at different ages and levels.

Vocabulary has a crucial role in both language teaching and communication. It is impossible to communicate without words, so learning vocabulary is the most important aspect of learning any foreign language. While teachers are presenting new vocabulary items, they should be aware of all aspects of vocabulary such as synonyms, antonyms and collocations etc. And also they should know how to present new vocabulary items in different ways such as using a literary text which is interesting and motivating for the students. For this reason, an effective language teacher should know how to adapt himself/herself into the new techniques.

The Scope of the Study

This study was applied on 48 students in the 7th grade classes of Çorlu Private Trakya College during the fall semester of 2010 – 2011 academic year. The students in the experimental group were exposed to 5 poems which had the same vocabulary items that the students in the control group were learning in the coursebooks at the same period. The students mostly focused on the vocabulary items in the poems with different kinds of activities during the study. The development of the students was analysed with the comparison of the tests made at the beginning and at the end of the treatment.

Statement of the Research Questions

This study will investigate the following research questions:

1. Do the learners enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities than the traditional coursebook activities?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference between male and female students in the experimental group considering the vocabulary test?
3. Do the learners enhance more extensive grammar knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities than the traditional coursebook activities?

Statement of the Hypotheses

In this study the following are hypothesized:

1. The learners enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities than the traditional activities.
2. There is not a statistically significant difference between male and female students in the experimental group considering the vocabulary test.
3. The learners do not enhance more extensive grammar knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities than the traditional activities.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

At Çorlu Private Trakya College, an experimental and control group were selected in order to test the hypotheses of the study. There were twenty four 7th grade students in each group at pre-intermediate level. Before the experiment, a pre-test was given to both the experimental and the control group to determine their levels before the treatment. The pre-test included forty vocabulary and forty grammar questions in the form of multiple choice test with three options. (see Appendix F)

A pilot study was carried out at Çorlu Primary School in order to determine the reliability of the items in the test. It is the only school in Çorlu which has more than 100 students in 7th grade so this school was selected for the pilot study and the test was applied after the implementation of pre-test because of waiting a few weeks for the required formal written permission of Çorlu District National Education Directorate. The written permission was taken and attached on the appendix. (see Appendix G) If some of the items had not been reliable in the test, they would have been omitted in the analysis of the items in pre-test and post-test.

Treatment materials were carried out in five sessions (two class hours=80 minutes for each one) during the fall semester of 2010 – 2011 academic year in the experimental group while the control group practiced vocabulary items through the traditional activities in the coursebook of which name is *Access 3* published by Express Publishing.

After the treatment process, the same pre-test was given as a post-test to the both experimental and control group. The analysis of the post-test results was used to verify the research questions.

Subjects

While the pilot study was conducted on 131 students who studied 7th grade at Çorlu Primary School, there were forty eight students at the 7th grade classrooms at Çorlu Private Trakya College in this study. Students were placed to the classrooms randomly and actually there were only two 7th grade classrooms in which *Access 3* was used at the school, so one of them was selected as control and the other one was selected as experimental group randomly and they had equal number of students in the classrooms. The treatment was conducted on 7A (experimental group) and the 7B was the control group. The ages of the students in both groups ranged between 13-14 with the similar social and education backgrounds.

Materials

The multiple choice vocabulary test, which was used as pre-test and post-test through the study, involved forty vocabulary and forty grammar questions including the target vocabulary items (see Appendix F). It was prepared by Express Publishing that is the publisher of *Access 3* which is used as a coursebook in the both control and experimental group.

The materials used in the experimental group were five poems written by the researcher and for these poems there were different kinds of vocabulary teaching activities which were prepared by the researcher, too. (see Appendix A,B,C,D,E). These poems were written by considering the vocabulary items studied in the first five units of *Access 3*. The poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities were prepared by considering some important factors explained in the literature review part. Most of the activities were formed in consideration of *the types of necessary vocabulary development activities* listed by Scrivener and explained in the part of “Activity Types” in this study. The content of the activities was formed in the consideration of suggestions of some scholars such as Nation, Schmitt, Cameron, and Hedge etc. explained in the part of “Necessary Aspects of Word Knowledge” in this study.

Data Collection Procedures

In order to analyse the effects of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities on the vocabulary development of the subjects, this study was conducted. For this reason an experimental group was exposed to do poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities while the control group was not.

The experiment was implemented on the 7th grade pre-intermediate level students at Çorlu Private Trakya College in the first semester of the 2010 – 2011 academic year. By analysing the curriculum and the vocabulary items in the coursebook, five poems were written for the experimental group and some poetry-based activities were prepared by considering the contemporary techniques.

The test was piloted to 131 students on the 7th grade pre-intermediate students at Çorlu Primary School. The reliability was analysed as 0,944 according to the results of analysis which was done with the programme of MicroCAT Iteman. The indexes of item facility and discrimination of 80 items were analysed. According to results, all of the items were reliable and suitable for this academic study.

The pre-test was applied by the teacher and the duration of the pre-test was fifty minutes. The aim of the pre-test was to determine the difference between control and experimental group in terms of eighty items in the test. Both of the groups were equal according to analysis of the pre-test results.

The treatment was started at the beginning of the first semester and conducted on equal intervals until the end of the semester in 2010 – 2011 academic year. The treatment process had five sessions for the groups and the duration of each session was 80 minutes. The experimental group and control group practiced the same target vocabulary items at the same period with different techniques.

The post-test was applied at the end of the treatment to the groups at the same time. The aim of the post-test was to verify the research questions of the study. The results of the tests were analysed between groups and between pre-test and post-test. The results of the analyses were reported in the lists.

Data analyses

In this chapter, the results of the pilot test, pre-test and post-test are presented and evaluated and the findings are reported.



In this research, in order to analyse the research data the averages of the groups were analysed by SPSS to find out whether there are any significant differences between the two groups in terms of the levels of grammar and vocabulary knowledge as the aim was to test if the learners would enhance more extensive vocabulary and grammar knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities.

In this investigation, a test was administered as a pre-test and post-test to both the control group and experimental group. In order to investigate whether there was a significant difference between the learners in the control and the experimental groups in the sample, this test was administered as the pre-test and post-test after the vocabulary items of the study were taught to the subjects. It was administered as a pre-test before the beginning of the experimental study in order to check the knowledge of the learners in both groups. The test was administered as the post-test after the experimental study in order to check how much they had learned about grammar and vocabulary items.

The aim of administering the pre-test was to find out whether the subjects were familiar with the grammar and vocabulary items that were used in this study. It was found out that the familiarity of the learners with these items was low since the Pre-test results were low. This provided us with evidence that they had not learned the words before. The data obtained in this study were evaluated by means of the SPSS.

As stated in Chapter One, this study addresses the research questions, the findings of which are presented in this chapter in the following order.

The Analyses of Vocabulary Pre-test and Post-test Results

Are there any differences between the vocabulary pre-test results of the experimental group and the control group?

The following table presents the independent t-test results for the two groups of the vocabulary pre-test.

Table 1: The Comparison of the Vocabulary Pre-Test Results of the Experimental Group and the Control Group.

	N	M	sd	t	p	Level of Significance
Vocabulary Pre-test	Experimental	24	9,87	4,65	1,166	0,250
	Control	24	11,33	3,98		

N: Number of participants, M: Mean, sd: Standard deviation, p:p-test value, p: level of significance $p > 0.05$

Table 1 shows whether there is a significant difference between the vocabulary pre-test results of the control group and the experimental group.

The vocabulary pre-test results reveal that statistically there is not a significant difference between the learners in the experimental group and those in the control group.

As can be seen in Table 1, the mean of the pre-test on the grammar items in the experimental group is 9,87 and 11,33 in the control group. The standard deviation of the experimental group test results is 4,65 and that of the control group is 3,98.



The mean value shows that the learners in the experimental group had lower mean scores when compared with those of the control group, and the t-test result shows that there is not a significant difference between the two groups at the $p > 0,05$ significance level, and this indicates the learners in the groups had similar averages in terms of vocabulary items before the treatment according to the results of pre-test.

The data was analysed with independent t-test. According to the results obtained, the vocabulary pre-test test results of the experimental group are lower than the control group. Yet as a result of the analyses, statistically there is not a significant difference at the level of $\alpha = 0,05$ between averages of control and experimental group in terms of vocabulary items ($t = 1,166, 46, p > 0,05$). The experimental group had the same level of vocabulary knowledge as the control group at the beginning of the study before the treatment.

Are there any differences between the vocabulary post-test results of the experimental group and the control group?

The following table presents the independent t-test results for the two groups of the vocabulary post-test.

Table 2: The Comparison of The Vocabulary Post-Test Results of the Experimental Group and the Control Group.

Vocabulary Post-test	N	M	sd	t	p	Level of Significance
	Experimental	24	33,91	4,64	3,664	0,001
Control	24	28,58	5,41			

N: Number of participants, M: Mean, sd: Standard deviation, p:p-test value, p: level of significance $p < 0.05$

Table 2 shows whether there is a significant difference between the vocabulary post-test results of the experimental group and the control group.

The vocabulary post-test results reveal that statistically there is a significant difference between the learners in the experimental group and those in the control group.

As can be seen in Table 2, the mean of the post-test on the vocabulary items in the experimental group is 33,91 and 28,58 in the control group. The standard deviation of the experimental group test results is 4,64 and that of the control group is 5,41.

The mean value shows that the learners in the experimental group had higher mean scores when compared with those of the control group, and the t-test result shows that statistically there is a significant difference between the two groups at the $p < 0,05$ significance level, and this indicates the learners in the experimental group had more averages in terms of vocabulary items than the control group after the treatment according to the results of post-test.

The data was analysed with independent t-test. According to the results obtained, the vocabulary post-test test results of the experimental group are higher than the control group. Yet as a result of the analyses, statistically there is a significant difference at the level of $\alpha = 0,05$ between averages of control and experimental group in terms of vocabulary items ($t = 3,664, 46, p < 0,05$). The experimental group had higher level of vocabulary knowledge than the control group at the end of the study after the treatment.

**The Analyses of Vocabulary Pre-test and Post-test Results of Male and Female Students in the Experimental Group****Are there any differences between the vocabulary pre-test results of male and female students in the experimental group?**

The following table presents the independent t-test results for male and female students of the vocabulary pre-test.

Table 3 shows whether there is a significant difference between the vocabulary pre-test results of male and female students in the experimental group.

The vocabulary pre-test results reveal that statistically there is not a significant difference between male and female students in the experimental group. Although, female students have a higher mean than male students but it does not mean any significant difference.

Table 3: The Comparison of the Vocabulary Pre-Test Results of Male and Female Students in the Experimental Group.

Vocabulary Pre-test	GENDER	N	M	sd	t	p	Level of Significance
	Male	11	8.90	4.63			
Female	13	10.69	4.69				

N: Number of participants, M: Mean, sd: Standard deviation, p:p-test value, p: level of significance p>0.05

As can be seen in Table 3, the mean of the pre-test of male students is 8,90 and female students is 10,69 in the experimental group. The standard deviation of male students is 4,63 and that of female students is 4,69.

The mean value shows that male students had lower mean scores when compared with female students in the experimental group, and the t-test result shows that statistically there is not a significant difference between male and female students in the experimental group at the p>0,05 significance level, and this indicates that male and female students had the same scores before the treatment.

The data was analysed with independent t-test. According to the results obtained, the vocabulary pre-test test results of male students are lower than those of female students in the experimental group. Yet as a result of the analyses, statistically there is not a significant difference at the level of $\alpha= 0,05$ between averages of male and female students in terms of vocabulary items ($t=0,932$, $p>0,05$). Male students had the same level of vocabulary knowledge as female students in the experimental group at the beginning of the study before the treatment.

Are there any differences between the vocabulary post-test results of male and female students in the experimental group?

The following table presents the independent t-test results for male and female students of the vocabulary post-test.

**Table 4: The comparison of the vocabulary post-test results of male and female students in the experimental group.**

Vocabulary Post-test	GENDER	N	M	sd	t	p	Level of Significance
	Male	11	33.09	4.63			
Female	13	34.61	4.71				

N: Number of participants, M: Mean, sd: Standard deviation, p:p-test value, p: level of significance $p>0.05$

Table 4 shows whether there is a significant difference between the vocabulary post-test results of male and female students in the experimental group.

The vocabulary post-test results reveal that statistically there is not a significant difference between male and female students in the experimental group. Although, female students have a higher mean than male students but it does not mean any significant difference.

As can be seen in Table 4.7, the mean of the post-test of male students is 33,09 and female students is 34,61 in the experimental group. The standard deviation of male students is 4,63 and that of female students is 4,71.

The mean value shows that male students had lower mean scores when compared with female students in the experimental group, and the t-test result shows that statistically there is not a significant difference between male and female students in the experimental group at the $p>0,05$ significance level, and this indicates that male and female students had the same scores before the treatment.

The data was analysed with independent t-test. According to the results obtained, the vocabulary post-test test results of male students are lower than those of female students in the experimental group. Yet as a result of the analyses, statistically there is not a significant difference at the level of $\alpha= 0,05$ between averages of male and female students in terms of vocabulary items ($t=0,795$, $p>0,05$). Male students had the same level of vocabulary knowledge as female students in the experimental group at the end of the study after the treatment.

The study examined directly the effectiveness of using poetry to teach vocabulary in a foreign language classroom. The results of the data analysis revealed a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group students receiving vocabulary instruction through the poems. However, we examined indirectly the effectiveness of using poetry to teach grammar in a foreign language classroom. The results of the data analysis depicted that there is not a significant difference between the groups in terms of grammar. This is related to the lack of grammar activities in the treatment, since the main focus of the study was on vocabulary. The following descriptive statistical analysis depicts the results of the effectiveness of poetry-based activities on grammar in both groups.

The Analyses of Grammar Pre-test and Post-test Results

Are there any differences between the grammar pre-test results of the experimental group and the control group?

The following table presents the independent t-test results for the two groups of the grammar pre-test.

**Table 5: The Comparison of the Grammar Pre-Test Results of the Experimental Group and the Control Group.**

Grammar Pre-test		N	M	sd	t	p	Level of Significance
	Experimental	24	11,87	3,69	0,328	0,744	P>0,05*
Control	24	12,20	3,32				

N: Number of participants, M: Mean, sd: Standard deviation, p:p-test value,
p: level of significance $p>0.05$

Table 5 shows whether there is a significant difference between the grammar pre-test results of the control group and the experimental group.

The pre-test results of the grammar test reveal that statistically there is not a significant difference between the learners in the experimental group and those in the control group.

As can be seen in Table 4.8, the mean of the pre-test on the grammar items in the experimental group is 11,87 and 12,20 in the control group. The standard deviation of the experimental group test results is 3,69 and that of the control group is 3,32.

The mean value shows that the learners in the experimental group had lower mean scores when compared with those of the control group, and the t-test result shows that there is not a significant difference between the two groups at the $p>0,05$ significance level, and this indicates the learners in the groups had similar averages in terms of grammar items before the treatment according to the results of pre-test.

The data was analysed with independent t-test. According to the results obtained, the grammar pre-test test results of the experimental group are lower than the control group. Yet as a result of the analyses, statistically there is not a significant difference at the level of $\alpha= 0,05$ between averages of the control and experimental group in terms of grammar items ($t=0,328, 46, p>0,05$). The experimental group had the same level of grammar knowledge as the control group at the beginning of the study before the treatment.

Are there any differences between the grammar post-test results of the experimental group and the control group?

The following table presents the independent t-test results for the two groups of the grammar post-test.

Table 6: The Comparison of the Grammar Post-Test Results of the Experimental Group and the Control Group.

Grammar Post-test		N	M	sd	t	p	Level of Significance
	Experimental	24	27,91	5,95	1,695	0,097	P>0,05*
Control	24	24,79	6,78				

N: Number of participants, M: Mean, sd: Standard deviation, p:p-test value,
p: level of significance $p>0.05$

Table 6 shows whether there is a significant difference between the grammar post-test results of the experimental group and the control group.

The grammar post-test results reveal that statistically there is not a significant difference between the learners in the experimental group and those in the control group.



As can be seen in Table 6, the mean of the post-test on the grammar items in the experimental group is 27,91 and 24,79 in the control group. The standard deviation of the experimental group test results is 5,95 and that of the control group is 6,78.

The mean value shows that the learners in the experimental group have higher mean score when compared with those of the control group, and the t-test result shows that there is not a significant difference between the two groups at the $p > 0,05$ significance level, and this indicates the learners in the groups have similar averages in terms of grammar items after the treatment according to the results of post-test.

The data was analysed with independent t-test. According to the results obtained, the grammar post-test test results of the experimental group are higher than the control group. Yet as a result of the analyses, statistically there is not a significant difference at the level of $\alpha = 0,05$ between averages of the control and experimental group in terms of grammar items ($t = 1,695, 46, p > 0,05$). The experimental group had the same level of grammar knowledge as the control group at the end of the study after the treatment.

As a conclusion, Table 5 shows that the first research question is verified that the learners enhance more extensive grammar knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities than the traditional coursebook activities. Table 4 shows that the second research question is not verified that statistically there is a significant difference between male and female students in the experimental group considering vocabulary test. Table 6 shows that the third research question is not verified that the learners enhance more extensive grammar knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities than the traditional coursebook activities.

As a result of analysing these data obtained from the results of pre-test and post-test conducted to the experimental group and the control group, according to the results of the pre-test; at the beginning of the study, control group had higher average in terms of vocabulary and grammar, but there is not a statistically significant difference between the groups. The treatment was conducted to the experimental group and then a post-test was conducted in order to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the groups in terms of grammar and vocabulary knowledge. Averages of both groups increased when the result of the post-tests are compared with the pre-tests, but it is clearly seen that the experimental group had higher averages in terms of vocabulary in comparison with the control group when the results of the pre-test and post-tests are analysed and so there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in terms of vocabulary. The analysis of these data verifies that experimental group enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities than the traditional coursebook activities.

CONCLUSION

Findings and Discussions

This study investigates the effects of using poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities on vocabulary development. Therefore, it aims to find out the difference between the experimental group who learns new vocabulary items through poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities and the control group who learns vocabulary items through the traditional coursebook activities.

According to table 4.4 both experimental and control group had lower vocabulary knowledge before the treatment. After the treatment, according to the post-test results the experimental group had more extensive vocabulary knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities. Therefore, the findings of the study verify the first hypothesis mentioned above.

There is not a significant difference between the groups in terms of grammar knowledge because the activities do not focus on the grammar knowledge much. However, the students in the experimental group have a bit more extensive grammar knowledge than the control group. The findings of the study do not verify the second hypothesis mentioned above.

This findings support the idea that poetry offers a great benefit in terms of vocabulary teaching and learning.

Implications of the Study

The findings of the current study show that teaching vocabulary through poetry in an EFL classroom is useful for the students in terms of developing their vocabulary knowledge because using poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities help the learners enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge.

Poetry is an ideal and practical teaching material for both the teacher and learners in an EFL classroom in terms of vocabulary development. This study indicates that it is worth investigating the use of poetry alternatively in an EFL classroom to make the learners enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge.

Language teachers should make use of the findings in the study while preparing and applying materials by using poetry in order to practice vocabulary items. This study sheds light on the way of the teachers and offers practical ideas in order to improve the language learners' vocabulary knowledge.

Therefore, the idea of teaching vocabulary through poetry in an EFL classroom may bring a change to the traditional coursebook activities and the use of poetry may be helpful for course designers to add poems into the programme, for teachers to prepare different kinds of activities and for language learners to practice the second language with these poems and different kinds of activities.

Limitations of the Study

While the current study successfully supports the effect of the implementation of the poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities in vocabulary teaching in order to enhance the learners' vocabulary development in English, some limitations of the study should be addressed.

This study aims to investigate whether the learners enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities in a pre-intermediate 7th grade EFL classroom. The number of the participants was limited to forty-eight, besides the number of the poems was limited to eight. Larger samples and more poems are needed in order to have more reliable findings. Not only the participants and poems but also the duration was limited to one semester. Making a longer implementation may give more reliable results.

Another limitation about the implementation is that there was only one pre-test and one post-test in this study. It would be better to have progress tests for indicating the effectiveness of each poem and poetry-based activities, but there were not suitable tests for it. A retention test would show a result about the effectiveness of the poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities on storing the vocabulary items in long-term memory, but there was not enough time for it.

This study is applied on the pre-intermediate 7th grade learners, so it is impossible to generalize the findings for the adult groups or other language levels. The findings are commented just for the young learners at the ages of 13-14. The level of the students was pre-intermediate, so it is limited with this language proficiency level.



Suggestions for Further Research

In this study there are limited number of participants, limited time and limited poems. There are only pre-intermediate level young learners who study at the 7th grade in a private school. Only one of the literary text types is used for the implementation. There is only one pre-test and one post-test. The implementation pays more attention to vocabulary knowledge in this study.

In order to have more reliable results,

- Since the focus of this study was on vocabulary knowledge, a similar study can be implemented by preparing poetry-based activities focusing on grammar knowledge.
- A similar study can be implemented on more number of participants.
- A similar study can be implemented in a longer period of time.
- A similar study can be implemented by using more poems and more activities.
- A similar study can be implemented on elementary or advanced level of language learners.
- A similar study can be implemented on adult language learners.
- A similar study can be implemented by using other types of literary texts such as short story, drama etc.
- A similar study can be implemented by applying progress test to see the development of the participants in a more detailed way.
- A similar study can be implemented in order to indicate the effectiveness of poetry on different genres.
- A similar study can be implemented in order to indicate the effectiveness of poetry on the learners' motivation.

CONCLUSION

This study was implemented in order to investigate the effectiveness of the poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities on the learners' vocabulary knowledge. According to the results of the tests applied before and after the treatment, it is verified that the learners enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities.

It is clear that vocabulary knowledge is essential in an EFL classroom and in communication, so it must be surely improved in all possible ways. The most important role about it belongs to the teachers who should offer materials to help learners enhance more vocabulary items and knowledge. Poetry is a practical source for the teacher to use as a tool in language classrooms and it is easy to access, applicable and ready-to-use. As it is seen there are lots of reasons why teachers should use poetry in an EFL classroom.

As a conclusion it is hoped that this study has highlighted the importance of using poetry and poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities in an EFL classroom to teach vocabulary; this study will also shed light on researchers, course designers and teachers who want to use poetry in an EFL classroom in order to make learners enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge.

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