IMPROVING LEARNERS' VOCABULARY THROUGH STRATEGY TRAINING AND RECYCLING THE TARGET WORDS

ÖĞRENCİLERİN SÖZCÜK BİLGİSİNİN STRATEJİ EĞİTİMİ VE SÖZCÜKLERİN TEKRARLANMASI İLE GELİŞTİRİLMESİ

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study was to determine whether an approach combining creating strategy awareness and recycling words will result in better vocabulary learning (delayed recall) of selected words than teaching vocabulary following the course book alone, for intermediate level English language learners. Two English language classes, a total of 51 students at Hacettepe University Preparatory School participated in the study. The study followed a pre-test post-test control group design. The comparison of the means of the pre-test scores of both control and experimental groups showed that the two groups were not significantly different in terms of their vocabulary proficiency on the tested items. After the treatment however, the post-test scores of the two groups showed significant differences. The results indicated that the treatment the experimental group received contributed to students' vocabulary recall of the selected items positively.

Keywords: vocabulary learning, strategy training, recycling words.

ÖZET: Bu çalışmada, strateji eğitimi ve sözcüklerin tekrar edilmesi yöntemleri kullanılarak sözcük öğrenen orta düzey İngilizce bilgisine sahip öğrencilerin bu yöntemi izlemeden sadece kitaptan sözcük öğrenen öğrencilerle karşılaştırıldığında sözcük öğrenmede daha başarılı olup olmayacakları araştırılmıştır. Çalışmaya Hacettepe Üniversitesi hazırlık okulunda 2 ayrı sınıfta İngilizce öğrenen toplam 51 öğrenci katılmıştır. Araştırmanın deseni öntest-sontest kontrol grubu şeklinde kurulmuştur. Öntest sonuçlarının ortalamalarının karşılaştırılması sonucu kontrol ve deney gruplarının öntestte ölçülen sözcük bilgisi açısından farklılık göstermediği anlaşılmıştır. Uygulama sonrası verilen sontest puanlarının ortalamaları karşılaştırıldığında ise deney grubu lehine istatistiksel olarak farklılık bulunmuştur. Bu da deney grubuna verilen eğitimin hedef sözcüklerin öğrenilmesinde olumlu etkisi olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: sözcük öğrenimi, strateji eğitimi, sözcüklerin tekrar edilmesi.

1. INTRODUCTION

"If language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh" (Harmer, 1994, p. 153). To get a message across the language, one should use the appropriate vocabulary; otherwise the communication comes to an end. "Most teachers will remember cases where students clam up during speaking activities, claiming that they do not have the vocabulary to continue," as Baykal and Daventry (2000, p. 168) remind us. It is doubtless that vocabulary teaching is one of the indispensable components of language teaching (Schmitt, 2000; Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997). With reference to the importance of vocabulary in learning a language, Wallace (1987) states that "it is possible to have a good knowledge of how the system of a language works and yet not to be able to communicate in it; whereas, if we have the vocabulary we need, it is usually possible to communicate after a fashion" (p. 9). Taylor (1990) also states that "vocabulary permeates everything we do in an English class, whichever skill or language point is being practised" (p. 3).

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Though vocabulary has frequently been stated as one of the major problems in learning a foreign language, especially by the learners themselves, there seems to be very little effort made by the teachers to deal with the problems related to vocabulary learning (Meara, 1982). Usually vocabulary teaching is neglected because teachers tend to have "a kind of 'Forget the vocabulary – they'll pick it up anyway' attitude" (Baykal & Daventry, 2000, p. 168). When we look at the vocabulary presented in course books, we see that "a wide selection of vocabulary is available to be learned. But perhaps it is not learned. Or it is not learned in the 'right' way. The 'right way' to learn vocabulary is probably some way from being discovered" (Baykal & Daventry, 2000, p. 168). What is usually done with the vocabulary items in language classes is to present them either in context or as individual items and expect the students to put these words into their long term memory and be able to use them in appropriate contexts when needed. Teachers usually spend so much time either explaining the new words or expecting the students to get the words from context that there seems to be no time for practice and recycling opportunities. However, "one of the most frequent questions that learners ask their teacher is "How can I learn vocabulary?" as Yazar (1997, p. 79) acknowledges. When learners want to practice the learned words outside the class, they usually do not have the necessary learning strategies to continue learning vocabulary on their own. Thus, "when students ask this question what they really want the teacher to do is to explain/demonstrate to them some strategies that they can use in order to practice the newly learnt vocabulary in class" (Yazar, 1997, p. 79).

1.1 Strategy Use

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in how individual learners approach and control their own learning as part of the movement away from a predominantly teacher oriented perspective to the one which considers the role of the language learner as an active participant in teaching/learning processes. The interest in the learner's active role in the learning process has resulted in the rise of importance of strategy use in second/foreign language learning and it has become clear that "much of the responsibility for success in language learning rests with individual learners and with their ability to take full advantage of opportunities to learn" (Oxford, 1990, p. vii).

It cannot be assumed that all learners have the ability and the necessary strategies to continue learning outside the classroom. Therefore, according to Knowles (1975) "one mission of the adult educator can be stated positively as helping individuals to develop the attitude that learning is a life long process and to acquire the skills of self directed learning" (p. 23). That means learners should be trained to be more autonomous by taking more responsibility for their learning through setting their own goals, planning practise opportunities or assessing their progress.

Rubin (1987) states that successful learners manipulate their learning processes in many ways and they are the ones who know how to learn. Most researchers also agree that a good learner is an independent one, that is, one who can carry on learning when the teacher is absent or when their attention is focused elsewhere. In order to be able to make learners more independent, those researchers believe that teaching students how to learn must be a component of teaching/learning processes. Ellis and Sinclair (1986), for instance, believe that

> An important part of the language teachers' role is to help the learner discover how to learn effectively so that she is then in a position to be able to learn independently. Such learning training activities may include, for example, giving tips and suggestions for organising vocabulary notebooks, for using dictionaries effectively, etc. This type of help and guidance help the learner become more aware of what is involved in learning a foreign language and that, for example, language learning does not only take place inside a classroom. It may also increase motivation in the learner. (p. 71)

In the classroom although they are exposed to the same teaching material under the same teaching conditions, students learn differently and they use different learning strategies. Individual differences among

students with regard to their learning styles and preferences make it necessary for language teachers to help learners discover different learning strategies so that they can choose the ones that suit them the best. As Nunan (1995) points out, "it is a mistake to assume that learners come into the language classroom with a natural ability to make choices about what and how to learn. Whatever the language or the level, the point is that we cannot assume that learners will acquire strategies automatically." It is, therefore, important that learners recognise there are various ways of vocabulary learning so as to be able to select the strategies that suit them the best both in and outside the class.

There are several studies, the results of which indicate that learners who are able to use various strategies and therefore control their own vocabulary learning effectively are more successful than the ones who are not. One such study was conducted by Sanaoui (1995). She investigated into vocabulary learning approaches of learners of French as a second language and found out that her subjects fitted into two major categories, as the ones who used a structured approach and the ones who did not. The learners in the first group planned and organised their way of vocabulary learning and they took their control of learning rather than relying on the teacher or the course book itself. They created opportunities like listening to the radio, watching films, speaking with friends, doing self-study to practise the words. They also kept systematic records of the words they had learned and reviewed what they had done several times a week. The learners who followed an unstructured approach, however, did not create any opportunities to practise the words they had learned but relied mainly on the course material. They did not review what they had learned, either. The result of the study showed that the first group made better progress than the second group.

Another study related to vocabulary learning strategies was carried out by Moir (1996, as cited in Nation, 2001). He examined the vocabulary learning behaviour of 10 adult learners who were all committed, hardworking students of English and who spent several hours a week outside class working on vocabulary. He found that only one student had awareness of what was involved in learning vocabulary. The others were less effective because of several reasons, some of which were as follows: They had a limited control of language learning strategies; they focused on the meaning of the words in copied sentences rather than also exploring the range of collocations and using their own sentences; and they did not revise the words anymore after the weekly test.

Gu and Johnson (1996) also investigated vocabulary learning strategies and distinguished five different types of learners according to their scores on the vocabulary size measure. The most successful group in terms of vocabulary size and proficiency were, respectively: readers, active strategy users, non-encoders, encoders, and finally passive strategy users. The 'readers' were a small group and they learned through careful study and natural exposure as in reading. They chose the words that they considered to be useful and tried to deal with the words in context. The next best students were 'active strategy users' and they used a variety of strategies to learn the words that they considered to be important. The following groups were 'non-encoders' and 'encoders'. Both groups made average use of some strategies but 'encoders' used more deliberate memorisation strategies. The last group was 'passive strategy users' and they were the least successful. They strongly believed in memorisation but they did not use a lot of strategies.

Nunan (2002) conducted a small scale action research study to find out whether learner strategy training would lead to greater sensitivity to the language learning process on the part of his students. He provided strategy training to 60 first year liberal arts students at the University of Hong Kong over a 12-week period. He collected the data for the study through guided feedback journals that students used to monitor and report on their strategy use and personal goals for strategy development. He concluded that "strategy training, plus the systematic provision of opportunities for learners to reflect on the learning process, did lead to greater sensitivity to the learning process over time. By the end of the course, the learners who took part in the action research project were much more likely to exploit opportunities that existed for language learning and use beyond the classroom than they were at the beginning" (Nunan, 2002, p. 143).

Strategy training is most effective when students have an idea of why and when specific strategies are important, how these strategies can be applied and how they can be transferred into new situations. Wenden (1991) argues for the following principles for strategy training:

1. *Strategy training should be informed:* When students are given information about where and how often a strategy can be used, they can transfer this information into new tasks and they should be able to continue to use the strategy on their own.

2. *Strategy training should include training in self regulation*: Students should monitor their own learning by planning or deciding what they are going to learn and by what means. They should also evaluate the outcome of their learning as to whether they are successful or not, and they should be able to deal with their problems by choosing the appropriate strategies to cope with.

3. *Strategy training should be contextualised*: A strategy should be trained in the context of the language skill being practised. For instance; if it is a pre-reading strategy, it should be practised together with the text that students are going to read. When training is contextualised in this way, the relevance of the strategy is emphasized.

4. *Strategy training should be interactive:* Teachers should monitor the use of a strategy among students and supply them with guidance by giving them opportunity to observe the use of a strategy and by giving them feedback on their attempts to use it until they are able to use the strategy being taught. In fact, this is in line with what Nation (2001) suggests when designing a syllabus for strategy development. He lists several options to choose from, all of which require some sort of interaction between the teacher and learners:

   a. The teacher models the strategy for the learners.

   b. The steps in the strategy are practised separately.

   c. Learners apply the strategy in pairs supporting each other.

   d. Learners report back on the application of the steps in the strategy.

   e. Learners report on their difficulties and successes in using the strategy outside the class time.

   f. Learners consult the teacher on their use of the strategy, seeking advice where necessary. (p. 223)

5. *Efficient training should be based on a diagnosis of learners' entering proficiency:* Teachers should determine which strategy/strategies learners already know and how well they use it/them. This makes it possible for teachers to focus on what learners actually need ignoring the unnecessary points.

1.2 Processes That Lead to a Word Being Remembered

Learning a word will not help very much if you promptly forget it. Research shows that it takes up to 20 repetitions to really make a word part of your vocabulary (Sheppardsoftware, 2004). Nation (2001) mentions three important processes that need to be taken into consideration when practicing vocabulary learning activities as they will make it possible for the words to be remembered later. They are 'noticing', 'retrieval', and 'creative use,' respectively.

1.2.1 Noticing

Noticing means giving attention to an item, that is, learners should be guided to notice the word and be aware of it as a useful language item. It requires decontextualisation but that does not mean that the word does not occur in a sentence (Nation, 2001). It means the word is taken from its message context to be focused on as a language item because "learners need to consciously see language items as parts of the language system rather than as only messages" (Nation, 2001, p. 64). Some examples of helping learners notice a word can be listed as follows: teachers' highlighting a word while writing it on the board or explaining a word for the learners by giving a definition, a synonym etc., the learners' negotiating the meaning of a word either with each other or with the teacher. Learners may also notice a word while listening or reading thinking that 'I have seen that word before' or 'that word is used differently here.'

Nation (2001) believes that motivation and interest are important enabling conditions for noticing. Hence, teachers need to observe the students carefully and seek their opinions about what sort of topics or activities they find interesting because "without the engagement and aroused attention of the learners, there can be little opportunity for other conditions favouring learning to take effect" (Nation, 2001, p. 64).

1.2.2 Retrieval

After a word is noticed and comprehended in the textual input, it has to be subsequently retrieved in order for it to be strengthened in the memory. If retrieval is in the form of perceiving the form and meaning when the word is met in listening or reading, it is receptive; but if it involves communicating the meaning of the word in speaking and writing, it is, then productive retrieval (Nation, 2001). To enhance retrieval, specifically the productive retrieval, as it is the one that learners usually state to have lacked, teachers need to do some sort of recycling activities in the classroom in order for the learners to revise the words because not all the words a student hears during any lesson become a part of his/her active vocabulary during that lesson or in later lessons. The vocabulary for active use should be systematically presented and practised. Nation (2001) clearly states this fact:

> Repetition is essential for vocabulary learning because there is so much to know about each word that one meeting with it is not sufficient to gain this information and because vocabulary items must not only be known, they must also be known so well that they can be fluently accessed. Repetition, thus, adds to the quality of knowledge and also the quantity or strength of this knowledge. (pp. 74-75)

Wallace (1987) also states that "there has to be a certain amount of repetition until there is evidence that the student has learned the target word" (p. 29). There has been a great deal of research on how items should be repeated, specifically on the spacing and the number of repetitions. It is not easy to state a specific number of repetitions for learning to occur since students differ in their abilities and preferences to learn a language but there are some studies which can give teachers a general idea about the number of repetitions required for vocabulary items to be learned.

Kachroo (1962, as cited in Nation, 1990) reported that most learners could remember and use the words which were repeated 7 times or more. Crothers and Suppes (1967, as cited in Nation, 2001) also found that most vocabulary items were learned after 6 or 7 repetitions. However, Tinkham (1993, as cited in Nation, 2001) stated that learners differed greatly in their ability to learn the vocabulary items with regard to time and the number of repetitions necessary for them to learn, and concluded that most students needed 5 to 7 repetitions whereas a few required quite more than that sometimes over 20. Thus, the learners of a language need to recycle the words as much as possible in order for them to store those words into their long-term retention.

Literature survey in memory research in general and in second language vocabulary learning indicates that spaced repetition results in more secure learning than massed repetition. In massed repetition, a word is studied for a continuous period of time, for example for 15 minutes. However, spaced repetition involves retrieving a word over a longer period of time but not spending more time in total on the study of words (Nation, 2001). Research shows that repetitions need to be increasingly spaced. There should be a short break between early meetings and much increasingly spaced gap between later meetings (Baddeley, 1990). Then, the number of previous exposure to a word will influence the length of time it remains in the memory.

The rate at which learners forget a new piece of information clearly has some implications for revision and recycling. Gairns and Redman (1989) state that "it is generally believed that of the information we forget, eighty percent is lost within the twenty-four hours of initial learning. This may help to explain why testing activities carried out the day after input yield rather distressing results, while further testing activities carried out a week later appear quite satisfactory" (p. 90).

Russell, in *The Brain Book*, (1979, as cited in Gairns & Redman, 1989) sets out a revision schedule to ensure that new material is permanently recorded:

1. A five-minute review five to ten minutes after the end of a study period

2. A quick review twenty-four hours later

3. A further review one week later

4. Final reviews one month later and then six months later. (p. 94)

Nation (2001) also puts forward a general principle which lies behind the spacing of repetitions:

> The older a piece of learning, the slower the forgetting. This means two things. Firstly, after a piece of learning, the forgetting is initially very fast and then slows down. Secondly, on the second repetition a piece of learning is older than it was on the first repetition and so the forgetting on the second repetition will be even slower. The right probability or recall level is one where the learner has forgotten enough to feel that repetition is worthwhile attending to and yet not forgotten too much so that there is still a good chance of recalling and thereby strengthening the form-meaning connection. (p. 77)

1.2.3 Creative or Generative Use

Creative use of words occurs when previously met words are subsequently met or used in ways that are different from the previous meeting(s). There are degrees of generative use. It is 'low' if the linguistic context of the word is only slightly different from the first input as in '*chronic pain*' becomes '*very chronic pain,*' but it is 'high' if it is used in a quite different context, for instance, '*chronic pain*' becomes '*chronic illness*' (Nation, 2001). Creative use of a word is stated to be very important by Nation (2001) as the new meeting with the word forces learners to reconceptualise their knowledge of that word and it can apply to variations from inflection through collocation and grammatical context to reference and meaning.

2. METHOD

The purpose of this study was to determine whether an approach combining creating strategy awareness and recycling words will result in better vocabulary learning (delayed recall) of selected words than teaching vocabulary following the course book alone, for intermediate level EFL learners. This study seeks to answer the following research question:

> Will EFL students at the intermediate level who are exposed to an approach creating strategy awareness and recycling words learn the selected vocabulary items better than the students who are exposed to the same vocabulary items following the course book alone?

Two intermediate level EFL classes at Hacettepe University Preparatory School participated in the study. In the experimental group, there were 27 students, 13 females and 14 males. The control group was composed of 24 students, 10 females and 14 males. The ages of the participants both in the control and experimental groups ranged from 18 to 20. A quasi-experimental research design was followed since random assignment of subjects to groups was not possible.

The study lasted for 6 weeks. At the beginning of the study a vocabulary pre-test based on the items the students would be expected to learn in the proceeding units of their textbooks was given to both groups. The pre-test served two aims: 1) to be able to determine whether the experimental and control groups were comparable in terms of students' knowledge of the selected vocabulary items, 2) to be able to identify the vocabulary items to be included in the study. After the vocabulary items that were not known by both groups were selected through the pre-test, the experimental group followed special instruction on these vocabulary items for 3 weeks while the control group was given regular instruction following the textbook only. To create strategy awareness and to recycle the selected vocabulary items, the students in the experimental

group were exposed to different vocabulary learning strategies for 3 weeks during which they also kept feedback journals. The journals helped them review the words they had learned and gave them opportunities to reflect on the processes underlying their vocabulary learning and decide on the vocabulary learning strategies that suits them the best. It also helped the researcher get clues about the learners' learning processes Their reactions were taken into consideration and necessary changes were made in the treatment, if needed, when carrying out the research. Then, at the end of the 6th week, after a 3-week interval following the 3-week treatment period, the same test, excluding the words which were proved to be known by the students in the pre-test, therefore covering the 46 vocabulary items studied, was given to both groups as the post-test.

2.1 Development of the Pre-test

In order to select the words to deal with, the researchers looked through the first 8 units of the students' book (*New First Certificate* by Haines and Stewart, 1996) and the accompanying workbook the students were going to follow and selected 87 vocabulary items from the unstudied units of their course books. When selecting the words, the researchers tried to choose among different parts of speech of words in the book to be followed such as adjectives, nouns, collocations, idioms, and phrasal verbs. Then, a 87 item vocabulary test was prepared by the researchers.

2.2 Pilot Testing of the Pre-test

After the pre-test had been developed, it was given to 2 native speakers of English, and 5 intermediate level students studying at Hacettepe University Preparatory School who were in neither the control nor the experimental groups. The native speakers and the students were asked to do the test writing down all possible answers to all the items. They were also asked to comment on the face and content validity of the test. On the basis of their responses and comments, the items that were not clear were either rewritten or eliminated.

2.3 The Treatment

The treatment provided to the experimental group involved incorporating the following two aspects outlined below into the instruction:

1. Students were made aware that there were different techniques and strategies that could be used to learn words and to keep them in their memories for delayed recall and they were provided with opportunities to explore the strategies that suit them the best.
2. The target words were practised and recycled as much as possible through various activities both in and outside the class so that students had these words available in their memories for delayed recall and production.

Based on the results of the pre-test, 46 vocabulary items that the students in both groups missed in the pre-test were selected to be dealt with during the course of this study. The control group then continued to follow regular instruction without receiving any special treatment. They were presented the 46 target vocabulary items as they appeared in the textbook, and words were practised as they were integrated into other skills in the book and they were usually not recycled after they had been practised in a specific unit. The treatment provided to the experimental group, however, followed a vocabulary instruction which integrated strategy training and recycling of selected words.

In designing and implementing the activities for strategy development, the following principles outlined by Wenden (1991) for strategy development were followed:

• Strategy training should be informed.
• Strategy training should include training in self-regulation.

- Strategy training should be contextualised.
- Strategy training should be interactive.
- Efficient training should be based on a diagnosis of learners' entering proficiency.

Moreover, the suggestions offered by Nation (2001, p. 223) were followed so as to make the strategy training interactive:

- The teacher models the strategy for the learners.
- The steps in the strategy are practised separately.
- Learners apply the strategy in pairs supporting each other.
- Learners report back on the application of the steps in the strategy.
- Learners report on their difficulties and successes in using the strategy outside the class time.
- Learners consult the teacher on their use of the strategy, seeking advice where necessary.

During the study, the selected words were practised and revised regularly at different intervals, sometimes on the same day, sometimes one or two days later, or even a week later with the experimental group. In planning and implementing the recycling activities, the three processes (i.e., noticing, retrieval, and creative or generative use) that lead to a word being remembered, as proposed by Nation (2001) were taken into consideration.

Students in the experimental group were also required to keep a feedback journal where they noted their reactions to the recycling activities and the learning strategies explored in the classroom in order to help them develop a self-directed orientation towards learning in general and vocabulary learning in specific. Requiring students to keep feedback journals made the students review the words they had learned, and more importantly, provided them with opportunities to focus on the processes underlying their vocabulary learning and decide on the vocabulary learning strategies that suits them the best. It also helped the researcher get clues about the learners' learning processes.

2.4 The Post-test

At the end of the 6th week of the study, after a 3-week interval following the 3-week treatment period, the same test used in the pre-test, assessing the 46 vocabulary items studied, was given to both groups as the post-test.

3. RESULTS

At the beginning of the study, a pre-test of vocabulary was given to both groups, and the mean score of the pre-test results was calculated for each group of students. The difference between these mean scores of the control and experimental groups were compared by employing an independent samples t-test. The means of the pre-test scores for both groups are presented in Table 1. The mean of the pre-test scores of the experimental group is 8.1 out of 87 points; the mean of the pre-test scores of the control group is 8.2. When these two means are compared through an independent samples t-test as shown in Table 1, the difference does not appear significant at a confidence level of .05.

Table 1: Independent samples t-test results for the pre-test mean scores of the experimental and control groups

	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Control group	8.2	1.08			
			.399	49	.692
Experimental Group	8.1	1.97			

p>.05

The mean score of the post-test results was calculated for each group of students. The difference between these mean scores of control and experimental groups were compared by employing an independent samples t-test. Table 2 presents the means of the post-test scores for both groups. The mean of the post-test scores of the experimental group is 36.19 out of 46 points; the mean of the post-test scores of the control group is 11.08. When these two means were compared through an independent samples t-test as shown in Table 2, there was a statistically significant difference found between the control and experimental groups' scores. The difference was in favor of the experimental group.

Table 2: Independent samples t-test results for the post-test mean scores of the experimental and control groups

	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Control group	11.08	1.35			
			-31.242	49	.000
Experimental Group	36.19	3.72			

$p<.05$

The comparison of the means of the pre-test scores of the control and experimental groups showed that the two groups were not significantly different in terms of their vocabulary proficiency on the tested items. After the treatment however, the post-test scores of the two groups showed significant differences. Those students in the experimental group scored significantly higher than those in the control group. In response to the research question, the results indicated that the treatment the experimental group received contributed to students' vocabulary recall of the selected items positively.

4. CONCLUSION

It was hypothesized that provided an approach which combined creating strategy awareness and recycling words, students would learn the selected vocabulary better. The treatment provided to the experimental group involved two dimensions: 1) The students were made aware that there are different techniques and strategies that could be used to learn words and to keep them in their memories for delayed recall, and provided with opportunities to explore the strategies that suit them the best, 2) The target words were practised and recycled as much as possible both in and outside the class so that the students could have these words available in their memories for delayed recall. The results indicated that the treatment the experimental group received contributed to students' vocabulary recall of the selected items positively.

While the results of this study can not be generalized to all settings or all language learners, it does indicate that an approach combining creating strategy awareness and recycling words results in better vocabulary learning (delayed recall) of selected words than teaching vocabulary following the course book alone, for the intermediate level EFL learners who participated in this study. Thus, it is suggested that these components be incorporated into the syllabus of Hacettepe University Preparatory School or other institutions with similar learner groups. Some recommendations can be made, however, if a similar study is carried out. First of all, creating strategy awareness requires quite a lot of time. Equipping students with the strategies they need to learn vocabulary in 3 weeks is a very difficult target to reach. Such a training period should be longer.

Vocabulary is essential to language learning. It is also one of the most difficult areas to master. Learners of a language need to broaden their vocabulary to express themselves more clearly and appropriately in a variety of situations. Therefore, a systematic rather than an incidental approach to the teaching of vocabulary should be an essential part of every language course (Nation, 2002). Yet, vocabulary

teaching can never cover all the words that EFL students need as the time devoted to vocabulary learning in classes is usually very limited and the students are not provided with opportunities to practise the words of the target language. Thus, students need to take some responsibility for their vocabulary learning, which makes it necessary for the teachers to introduce the learners to vocabulary learning strategies so that they can improve their vocabulary on their own as well. As Nation (2001) states, "it is important to make training in strategy use a planned part of a vocabulary development program" (p. 222).

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