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THE IMPACT OF VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION ON VOCABULARY SIZE LEVELS OF STUDENTS *

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the difference between two groups of students as regards to vocabulary size levels after the implementation of vocabulary enhancement activities. While the students in control group followed the regular curriculum including the second one thousand most frequent words in English, the students in experimental group had a fourteen-week schedule of vocabulary implementation with enhancement activities consisting of the second one thousand most frequent words in English integrated into the regular curriculum. The sampling of the study consists of the students from a vocational school in Yalova. A total of 88 male, second-grade students participated in the study in the academic year of 2010–2011. This study adopted Version 1 of the Vocabulary Levels Test (Schmitt, 2000) as an instrument to examine the students' general vocabulary size levels. After the implementation period, it was observed that there was a significant difference between the experimental and the control groups in favor of the experimental group in terms of vocabulary size levels.

Keywords: vocabulary size, vocabulary enhancement activities, vocabulary teaching.

SÖZCÜK ÖĞRETİMİNİN ÖĞRENCİLERİN SAHİP OLDUKLARI SÖZCÜK SAYI DÜZEYLERİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacını sözcük geliştirme aktiviteleri sonucunda, iki grup öğrenci arasında sözcük sayı düzeyleri bakımından bir farklılığın olup olmadığının belirlenmesi oluşturmaktadır. Kontrol grubunda yer alan öğrenciler ek bir kelime çalışmasının yapılmadığı İngilizcede en sık kullanılan ikinci bin sözcüğü içeren normal müfredatı takip ederken, deney grubundaki öğrenciler ise İngilizcede en sık kullanılan ikinci bin sözcüğü içeren sözcük geliştirme aktivitelerinin normal müfredata entegre edildiği on dört haftalık programı izlemişlerdir. Bu araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, Yalova ilinde bir meslek yüksekokulunda 2010–2011 eğitim-öğretim yılında ikinci sınıfta öğrenim gören 88 erkek öğrenci oluşturmıştır. Bu çalışmada, Schmitt (2000) tarafından geliştirilen Sözcük Seviye Belirleme Testinin birinci versiyonu veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır. Uygulamanın ardından, deney grubu ile kontrol grubu arasında, sözcük sayı düzeyleri açısından deney grubu lehine anlamlı bir fark oluşmuştur.

Anahtar sözcükler: sözcük sayısı, sözcük geliştirme aktiviteleri, sözcük öğretimi

* This study was derived from Mert Topkaraoğlu's master of arts thesis which was counseled by Hakan Dilman at Maltepe University in 2012.

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1. INTRODUCTION

People who are learning English as a foreign language in a non-English environment can achieve a good command of English language. However, due to their limited vocabulary, they still have problems in understanding the texts written in English and the utterances they are exposed to in their communication with native or non-native speakers of English (Nation, 1993). It is probable that limited active and passive vocabulary could be the real source of the problems related to production and comprehension of the target language.

Learners who live in a non-English environment learn English in a classroom setting. They follow a pre-planned curriculum mostly based on a course book written by a group of writers who are native speakers of the target language. Most of those learners have no chance to use the target language outside the classroom (Laufer, 2003). For most of them, actual input sources are the course books and the instructor they follow in their classroom. Those learners' limited opportunities to use the target language also limit their ability to communicate. That's why a large number of learners actually learn about the language that they study due to the grammar based teaching in the classroom setting (Sokmen, 1997). They hardly achieve to be an efficient and effective language user, and they always stay as language learners even after spending years and huge amount of money in the process of learning a target language (Sener, 2009).

In order to be an efficient and effective language user, to know and to use the grammar rules per se is not the only prerequisite. All other things considered equal, learners with huge amount of vocabulary are more competent in a wide range of language skills than learners with smaller vocabularies, and there is some evidence to support the view that vocabulary skills make an important contribution to almost all aspects of L2 proficiency (Meara, 1996). Learner must have acquired a large repertoire of the target language, and had a schematic organization of the target language concepts in his mind; target language repertoire and schematic organization of concepts can only be obtained through exposing large amount of vocabulary in target language (Miller & Gildea, 1987).

Rules of a language do not change so rapidly. It takes a longer time compared to vocabulary development in any language (Aitchison, 2001). Till we die we may not learn a new grammar rule but we keep going on learning new concepts and new words that are shaping our life and thinking both in our native language and in target language. However, almost in all foreign language learning settings, priority is given to teaching grammar rules of the target language and vocabulary is seen secondary in importance especially by traditional teaching approaches and methods (Harwood, 2002). The main reason is it is generally considered with the idea that learners can learn vocabulary on their own with implicit strategy, guessing and inferring from the context (Conzett, 2000).

As the studies of vocabulary teaching and learning develop, teaching vocabulary in ESL and EFL has been an area of interest in vocabulary research (Schmitt, 1994; Melka, 1997; Laufer, 1998; Read, 2000; Nation, 2001; Lee, 2003; Mondrea & Wiersma, 2004; Lee & Muncie, 2006; Meara, 2010). In the way that Shen (2008) claims, second language vocabulary acquisition has been an increasingly interesting topic of discussion for researchers, teachers, curriculum designers, theorists and others involved in second language learning. All these researchers see vocabulary as being a very important element in language. But when we scrutinize the classroom practices, the class hours devoted for vocabulary teaching within the curriculum is quite limited and just covers the

words given in the course book. In addition to this observation, teachers' attitudes towards teaching vocabulary also show differences (Lewis, 1993).

As Hatch and Brown (1995) say, natural learner interest or motivation may cause learners to pay more attention to some words than others. In addition to interest, actual need may make a difference in whether encountered words are learned. We seem to learn words more quickly if we have felt a need for them in some way. That's why especially non-native English language teachers have a great responsibility for building their learner's vocabulary through clarifying their students' both practical and academic needs in L2 use.

Valesco (2007) defines the basic dimension of vocabulary knowledge as size. Those who have a huge amount of vocabulary size are more proficient in wide spectrum of language skills, traditionally called as reading, writing, listening and speaking. They are more prolific and feel themselves more comfortable in situations where the target language is used as a medium of communication. However, the number of words that should be needed by an L2 user is not so clear.

Many scholars (Nagy & Anderson, 1984; Graves, 1986; Schmitt, 1994; Read, 2000; Nation, 1990, 2001) who are dealing with vocabulary instruction in a second language have confronting ideas about the size of the vocabulary knowledge necessitated by an L2 learner. As Nation (2008) claims, a non-native learner may not need as big vocabulary as listening while speaking in target language. According to Nation the most frequent 2,000 words of English cover around 90% of the running words in most colloquial spoken text which is much higher coverage than the same number of words provided for written text. However, in case of extensive reading, a non-native learner must have a huge amount of vocabulary.

When the students who learn English as a foreign language are considered, it could be seen that by and large they have a hard time attaining new vocabulary. Mostly, L2 learners have a tendency to learn the grammar rules and neglect the lexicology (Celik & Toptas, 2010). And most of the time if they are not familiar with their monolingual dictionary prepared in target language, they have difficulty in learning and enlarging their knowledge on words (Hamzah, Kafipour & Abdullah, 2009).

Nonetheless, in foreign language classes, a specific time is not devoted for vocabulary studies. Vocabulary teaching activities are realized as part of a reading activity in related course books (Schmitt, 2000; Gu, 2003). Teachers have a tendency to teach new words through direct teaching either giving their meanings in native language or giving their short definitions or synonyms in target language (Walsh, 2006). Especially pragmatic and sociocultural aspects of words are mostly neglected, spelling is corrected only in exam papers and pronunciation is given without using IPA (Nation, 2001).

To sum up, it would not be wrong to say that vocabulary knowledge is of crucial importance in L2 learners' performance. In order to make L2 learners efficient and effective target language users, in addition to grammatical knowledge, their vocabulary size level could be developed within the process of foreign language teaching through activities specially designed for vocabulary building.

Many studies have been done on vocabulary learning in ELT, some of which are partially related to investigating the vocabulary size levels of students and the benefits of

integrating vocabulary enhancement materials into the curriculum. In this context, Ördem (2005) carried out a study whose aim was to find out whether teaching vocabulary via collocations would contribute to retention and use of foreign language; Bozkurt (2007) investigated the effectiveness of vocabulary notebooks on vocabulary acquisition; Aksoy (2008) also conducted a study to analyze the effects of phrasal verbs on speaking skills of students within the framework of Lexical Approach; Ward (2009) employed a formative intervention to expose children to a variety of words to increase the size of their vocabularies, and to repeatedly and supportively expose children to words to increase the depth, or semantic understanding of vocabulary. Hamzah, Kafipour and Abdullah (2009) conducted a research study entitled “vocabulary learning strategies of Iranian undergraduate EFL students and its relation to their vocabulary size”. They found that Iranian EFL learners are medium users of VLS. In the same way, Chen (2009) examined how EFL students’ vocabulary knowledge and syntactic knowledge relate to their reading comprehension, and Sener (2009) investigated the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) and vocabulary size of Turkish EFL students. Her study revealed that there is a positive correlation between VLS and vocabulary size of students. Apart from these, Tran (2011) conducted a study to explore EFL teachers’ perceptions of vocabulary acquisition and instruction and to identify their use of vocabulary strategies. Despite all, a study that researches the effects of the integration of the vocabulary enhancement activities consisting of the second one thousand most frequent words in English into the curriculum as regards to the vocabulary size levels of the students has yet to be found in our country or abroad. In this respect, it is assumed that this study could contribute significantly to the literature in English Language Teaching.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Method

The aim of this study is to put forward the results whether studying vocabulary with additional vocabulary activities consisting of the second one thousand most frequent words would increase the vocabulary size levels of the students in foreign language classrooms. It is assumed that studying vocabulary with additional vocabulary activities enhances vocabulary size of the students in a positive way. For this purpose, a quasi-experimental design was formed. Dependent variable of the experimental design is vocabulary size, as for the independent variable, learning-teaching input is employed. Thus, the study seeks to find answer to the following question; “Is there a significant difference in their vocabulary size levels between the students in the experimental group that had a vocabulary implementation schedule integrated into the regular curriculum and the control group that followed the classical methods used in the traditional vocabulary teaching?”

2.2. Participants

The sampling of the study consists of the students from a vocational school in Yalova. The students were 2nd graders in the academic year of 2010–2011. A total of 88 students participated in the study. The experimental group consisted of 43 and the control group consisted of 45 male students. Turkish was the only native language of the participants. The participant students’ ages ranged between 18 and 20. The school is a boarding school

and its population consisted of students from different parts of the country with different ethnic and economic backgrounds. This vocational school is an institution which accepts students that have scores between 210 and 230 from YGS-1 and YGS-2 in the nationwide held university entrance exams.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

To determine the effect of two different learning-teaching methods on vocabulary size, Vocabulary Levels Test Version 1 was conducted. The original Vocabulary Levels Test (hereafter, VLT) was designed by Paul Nation (1983, 1990) in order to measure language learners' vocabulary size. In Nation's design, the VLT is composed of versions A through D. Nation's versions have been frequently used for assessing students' vocabulary sizes as well as in language research. In 2001, Schmitt, Schmitt, and Clapham developed two new versions of VLT to present valid evidence for the tests. These two versions were designed with equivalent questions and expanded on the previous versions. The two revised forms of VLT are called Version 1 and Version 2; however, there are no differences between both versions. Schmitt and his colleagues (2001) conducted a study on VLT which showed item discrimination and item facility. The study results proved the VLT to be reliable and valid tests of vocabulary size. The reliability of the different levels of version 1 ranged from .92 to .95. This study adopted version 1 of the VLT (Schmitt, 2000) to examine the students' general vocabulary size. In addition, Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficient was measured as 0.92 which indicated a satisfactory level of internal consistency and reliability. The Vocabulary Levels Test is divided into five levels, including the 2000-, 3000-, academic, 5000-, and 10,000- word levels. There are 60 words at each level in the vocabulary levels test. The 60 words at the second 1000 level were grouped into blocks of six words according to part of speech. The words in each block were then checked to make sure that they were not similar in form or related in meaning. Definitions were made for the target words using words from the most frequent 1000 words of English for the 2nd 1000 words, and words from the 1st 1000 and 2nd 1000 words for all the remaining levels. The definitions thus made use of words that were more frequent than the words being tested (Schmitt, Schmitt and Clapham, 2001). If the learners had partial knowledge of a word, they should be able to choose the correct answer. The aim of the VLT is to get an accurate as possible record of what the learners know even of the words that they have not yet fully learned. In the second 1000 Vocabulary Levels Test, the students were expected to match three English Definitions among six vocabulary words, and each correct match was scored as 33.33 points. For example, if he scores 24 out of 30, that means, he knows 800 words and 200 words are not known at this level. In the test, the total scores obtained by the students can be ranged between 0 and 1000. Thirty minutes was given to the students to complete the test.

2.4. Procedures

The study took place during the second semester of 2010-2011 and lasted for fourteen weeks. Table 1 describes the schematic representation of the design of the study. While the students in the control group followed the regular curriculum, the students in the experimental group had a vocabulary implementation schedule integrated into the regular curriculum. The English Language Teaching lessons in the vocational school that the study took place are administered as follows: Students are exposed to 5 hours of English every week. They study their main course books for 3 hours. They are taught grammar

rules, and they do grammar activities in these lessons. In addition to that, two hours of laboratory classes provide students opportunity for self-study. Students can listen to the reading passages in a native speaker's voice, or check their own answers to grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation exercises on the computer. It is compulsory for the students to attend these classes.

Table 1.

The schematic representation of the design of the study

Implementation in the Experimental Group	Implementation in the Control Group
Pretest (VLT)	Pretest (VLT)
Find The Synonym	
General Service List Verbs	
Match Them Up	
Smurfy Verbs	
Boost Up Your Vocabulary	
Criss-Cross	Traditional Vocabulary Learning
Find Them Up	
Fill In The Blanks	
Improve Your Vocabulary	
Unscramble These Words	
Posttest (VLT)	Posttest (VLT)

The control group followed the regular school curriculum. The second one thousand most frequent words in English were also included within the books in this curriculum but there were no additional activities conducted for their teaching. In 5 hours of English class every week, the students encountered many vocabulary words. The target words that were encountered in the main course and its different forms, such as verb form and adjective form were written on the board. Sometimes the students were asked to make sentences with the words, and sometimes the sentences were made for the students. When the word was not difficult to understand in English, its meaning was said in the target language, but if it was difficult, the native language, Turkish was used. In this study, the researchers named all of these practices applied in the control group as "traditional method" shortly. Apart from these regular procedures, no vocabulary enhancement activities were performed for vocabulary teaching within the curriculum.

On the other hand, in the experimental group, students were exposed to approximately 80 words in four activities every week. Three of these activities, such as fill in the blanks, find the synonyms and matching-ups took place in each week of the schedule but the fourth activity changed. For example, the fourth activity of the first week was a crossword puzzle named smurfy verbs. In the second week, it was a find them up activity which was based on searching the words and marking them on different designs. In each "find them up" activity, different designs were created and presented to the students to increase their interest and motivation and by this way to enhance the retention of the newly learned vocabulary. For example in the "find them up 2" activity conducted in the fifth week of the implementation, the activity was presented in a heart design, in the "find them up 3" activity carried out in the seventh week, it was introduced in a clover design. By the help of these activities, the students were exposed to different aspects of word knowledge of target words. The vocabulary activities created by the researchers were designed to reinforce the form and meaning connection. Studying vocabulary was not adequate alone, recycle and revisit strategy (revision of the vocabulary of the previous week) were also administered throughout the implementation period and this enhanced learning and

remembering the vocabulary. The researchers listed the words that were included in the vocabulary enhancement activities from the second 1000 words of the General Service List according to the syllabus of the main course. After that, the draft of the fourteen-week schedule of the vocabulary implementation period, together with the activities of the first week that were incorporated into the schedule was created. The vocabulary activities were not prepared in advance. They were designed and prepared each weekend before the foreign language lessons during the vocabulary implementation period. Experimental group were exposed to fourteen-week intensive vocabulary schedule. The 14th week of the implementation period was used for general revision. The same kind of vocabulary activities were presented to the students in the revision week, but this time the least frequent 80 words of the 2000 words were selected and included in the activities to check the overall learning and to improve the retention. Since the institution that the study took place is a boarding school, it was highly unlikely for the students in the control and experimental groups to attain vocabulary other than the ones that the researcher attempted to teach during the fourteen-week period.

2.5. Data Analysis

The aim of this study was to find out whether studying vocabulary with additional vocabulary activities consisting of the second one thousand most frequent words would make significant differences between two groups in terms of vocabulary size levels of the students. The study included quantitative data. Quantitative data was gathered through Vocabulary Levels Tests. The data was analyzed through Independent Samples t-Test and Paired Samples t-Test by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 17.

3. FINDINGS

At the beginning of the implementation period, in order to determine whether there was a significant difference in the groups, VLT was conducted as a pretest. In order to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the total VLT Pre-Test results of the students in the experimental and control groups, independent samples t-test was conducted. When Table 2 is observed, no statistically significant difference is found between the total scores the students in the experimental and control groups had from the VLT Pre-Test ($p>0.05$). This situation was interpreted as “with regard to the VLT Pre-Test scores, the vocabulary size levels of the students in the experimental and control groups were equal to each other”.

Table 2.

Comparison of the VLT Pre-Test scores of the students in the control and the experimental groups

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	t	p
Control	45	355.64	97.44	14.53	.12	.904
Experimental	43	353.21	91.87	14.01		

Paired samples t-test was applied in order to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the total scores the students in the experimental and control group had from the VLT conducted before and after the vocabulary implementation period. When Table 3 is observed, it can be clearly seen that there is a

statistically significant difference between the VLT Pre-Test and VLT Post-Test scores of the students in the control group ($p < 0.05$). This situation was interpreted as “with regard to the VLT Pre-Test/Post-Test scores of the control group, the classical approaches used in the traditional vocabulary teaching methods affected the vocabulary size of the students in a positive way”. If Table 3 is observed, it can be seen that there is a statistically significant difference between the VLT Pre-Test and VLT Post-Test scores of the students in the experimental group ($p < 0.05$). This situation was interpreted as “with regard to the VLT Pre-Test/Post-Test scores of the experimental group, the vocabulary implementation schedule integrated into the regular curriculum affected the vocabulary size levels of the students in a positive way”.

Table 3.
Comparison of the VLT Pre-Test / Post-Test Results of the Groups

Group	Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	r	t	df	p
Control	Pre-Test	45	355.64	97.44	14.53	.72	-12.44	44	.000
	Post-Test	45	481.87	60.46	9.01				
Experimental	Pre-Test	43	353.21	91.87	14.01	.75	-41.64	42	.000
	Post-Test	43	742.16	69.23	10.56				

After the implementation period, in order to determine whether there was a significant difference in the groups, VLT was conducted as a posttest. To analyze the data, independent samples t-test was used and the results were shown in Table 4.

Table 4.
Comparison of the VLT Post-Test Scores of the Students in the Control and the Experimental Group

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	t	p
Control	45	481.87	60.46	9.01	-18.81	.000
Experimental	43	742.16	69.23	10.56		

When Table 4 is observed, a statistically significant difference is found between the VLT Post-Test scores of the students in the experimental and control groups ($p < 0.05$). This situation was interpreted as “regarding the vocabulary size levels of the students, the vocabulary implementation schedule integrated into the regular curriculum increased the vocabulary size levels of the students more than the classical methods used in the traditional vocabulary teaching”.

4. DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to determine whether studying vocabulary with additional vocabulary activities consisting of the second one thousand most frequent words would increase the vocabulary size levels of the students in foreign language classrooms. In respect to the VLT Pre-Test results, the vocabulary size levels of the students in the experimental and control groups were equal to each other. In terms of the VLT Post-Test scores, it was observed that there was a statistically significant increase in vocabulary size levels of the students both in the control group that studied the second one thousand most frequent words in traditional way within the curriculum and in the experimental group that studied vocabulary with enhancement activities consisting of the second one thousand most frequent words in the implementation period within the curriculum. The significant increase in the vocabulary size levels of the students in the control group that studied vocabulary in traditional way within the curriculum turned out to be as expected because during the 14 week period, the students also encountered this vocabulary in the textbooks in the curriculum. Independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference as regards to the vocabulary size levels of the students in the experimental and control groups at the end of the implementation period. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in favor of the experimental group. It was seen that studying vocabulary with additional activities consisting of the second one thousand most frequent words in English integrated into the regular curriculum increased the vocabulary size levels of the students much more than the traditional vocabulary teaching including the second one thousand most frequent words in English followed in regular curriculum. This result in the experimental group was foreseen because intensive vocabulary activities and gaining awareness about the words led to significant difference between the groups. Studying vocabulary was not adequate alone; recycle and revisit strategy were also administered throughout the implementation period and this enhanced learning and recalling the vocabulary. The length of the implementation period was also effective in recycle and revisit strategy because if the length of the implementation period had been shorter (3 or 4 weeks), this result might not have emerged positively. The above findings are also in line with the previous research results (Farahani, 2006; Ordonez et al, 2002) in that they put emphasis on stronger vocabulary knowledge as one of the best predictors of achievement in inferring the meaning of unknown words. Moreover, the literature related to this research question also supports this result by putting forward the idea that vocabulary size is sensitive to L2 proficiency development, meaning that there is a close link between vocabulary size and L2 proficiency (Zareva et al., 2005). Zareva (2005) also found that vocabulary size increases as L2 proficiency develops; thus, the development of L2 proficiency in relation to vocabulary learning should be understood as a function of the enlargement of vocabulary size and the degree of vocabulary knowledge. As it is reiterated by Meara (1996), “all other things being equal, learners with big vocabularies are more proficient in a wide range of language skills than learners with smaller vocabularies, and vocabulary skills make a significant contribution to almost all aspects of L2 proficiency”. It might not be wrong to claim that a large and rich vocabulary is the hallmark of an individual as Beck, McKeown, and Kucan found that large vocabulary repertoire facilitates becoming an educated person to the extent that vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to school achievement in general (2002). The results in this study showed that the students who studied vocabulary during the intensive fourteen-week vocabulary implementation period with various kinds of enhancement activities attained significantly higher scores in the receptive (Vocabulary Levels Test) tests than the students who did not

engage with this kind of learning period and were taught vocabulary in a traditional way. When preparing the vocabulary enhancement activities, the researcher also took the syllabus of the main course into consideration while deciding which words to include in order to harmonizing the target words and the curriculum. Because repetition, recycle, revisit and memorization have been vital in acquiring vocabulary, which changes production for the better (Jiang, 2000), the possibility of the recognizability of the words in the tests was increased. The significant difference clearly shows that the experimental group remembered vocabulary more precisely than the control group because their level of retention became higher than the latter. The most frequent 2000 word families of English provide 80% to 95% coverage of a text depending on what kind of text it is and Hwang and Nation (1989) postulate that when learners know the most frequent 2,000 words and all proper nouns they will reach about 90% coverage of newspaper texts and have a fairly competent language proficiency level. As a result, there is a close connection between vocabulary size, coverage of the vocabulary in a text, and the ease a learner will have in coping with the language of the text. Therefore, by learning the second one thousand most frequent words in English, the students in the experimental group also seized the opportunity to have an important asset which could help them to become talented and proficient language users in the target language. To conclude, specifically prepared activities for vocabulary teaching within the curriculum not only proved to be valuable in increasing the vocabulary size levels of the students in the target language but also helped them in achieving to be efficient and effective language users in the target language.

On the whole, the findings of this research study suggested that it is obviously in the best interests of L2 learners to allot special time and consideration for vocabulary instruction within the process of foreign language teaching. There is no doubt that teachers have an important role to play in the vocabulary learning of students. They are the ones to offer opportunities for students to learn and practice their knowledge. If EFL teachers are encouraged with institutional support by means of manageable workload, they might most probably be more aware of the importance of vocabulary knowledge and thereby motivated to design and deliver vocabulary instruction and training accordingly. As Nation (2001) points out, vocabulary instruction has been proved to be very useful in broadening students' perspective in foreign language learning. As a result, it might be argued that vocabulary instruction could also prove valuable for learners in becoming multi-taskers in the target language.

This study was mainly based on quantitative data to investigate the impact of vocabulary instruction on vocabulary size levels of students. It is recommended that future research take into consideration qualitative data collection to triangulate the data. It may as well create a space for the students to voice their opinion and to contribute additional topics of concern that was not covered in the study. Furthermore, as there was limited time frame for carrying out the research, it was conducted with 88 students. The results would be more generalizable if future researches were conducted with more students in a longer time period.

It is hoped that research be continually undertaken to shed further light on enquiries related to vocabulary teaching. All in all, this is the only possible path to gain better insight into different ways of vocabulary instruction within the process of foreign language teaching.

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GENİŞ ÖZET

1.Giriş

Dil öğrencisinin yabancı dilde etkili ve yetkin bir dil kullanıcısı olabilmesi için kaç sözcük bilmesi gerektiği ile ilgili kesin bir sayı yoktur. Ancak sözcük bilgisi zengin olan dil kullanıcıları hedef dilde daha etkili bir iletişim yetkinliğine sahip olduklarından dolayı duygu ve düşüncelerini çok daha kolay ve doğala yakın bir şekilde ifade edebilmektedirler. Dil kullanıcılarının sahip oldukları sözcük sayı düzeylerinin belirlenmesine yönelik, sözlüğe dayalı oluşturulan metottan, sözcük frekans sıklığına göre oluşturulan sözcük listelerine kadar birçok farklı teknik kullanılmıştır. Sözcük frekans sayıları sözcük öğretimine yönelik programların tasarlanmasında ve sözcük seviye belirleme testlerinin hazırlanmasında temel teşkil etmektedir. Bu nedenle dil kullanıcılarının sahip oldukları sözcük sayı seviyeleri ile sözcük öğretimi arasında yakın bir ilişki olduğu ve yabancı dil öğretiminde sözcük öğretimine özel bir önem verilmesi gerektiği giderek artan bir şekilde kabul görmektedir. Yabancı dil öğretiminde sözcük öğrenimine yönelik, öğrencilerin sözcük sayı seviyelerini ölçmeye ya da sözcük geliştirme materyallerinin müfredata entegre edilmesinin faydalarını araştırmaya yönelik bazı çalışmalara rastlanılmıştır. Ancak yapılan literatür taramasında gerek ülkemizde gerekse yurt dışında İngilizcede en sık kullanılan ikinci bin kelimeyi içeren sözcük geliştirme aktivitelerinin müfredata dahil edilmesinin öğrencilerin sözcük sayı düzeyleri üzerindeki etkisini araştıran bir çalışma bulunamamıştır. Bu kapsamda, çalışmanın konusunun yabancı dil öğretimi alanındaki literatüre olumlu bir katkı yapacağı değerlendirilmektedir.

2.Yöntem

Araştırmanın modeli ön ve son test kontrol gruplu yarı deneysel desendir. Çalışmada uygulanan deneysel desende, bağımlı değişken sözcük sayı düzeyi, bağımsız değişken ise uygulanan öğrenme-öğretme yaklaşımıdır. Bağımsız değişkenin İngilizcede en sık kullanılan ikinci bin sözcüğü içeren sözcük geliştirme aktivitelerinin normal müfredata entegre edildiği on dört haftalık programı izleyen deney grubu ile müfredatta yer alan sözcük öğretimine ek bir kelime çalışmasının yapılmadığı, normal müfredatın izlendiği kontrol grubu olmak üzere iki işlem grubu vardır. Bu araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, Yalova ilinde bir meslek yüksekokulunda 2010–2011 eğitim-öğretim yılında ikinci sınıfta öğrenim gören 88 erkek öğrenci oluşturmuştur. Bu çalışmada, Sözcük Seviye Belirleme Testinin (Vocabulary Levels Test) birinci versiyonu, veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır. Çalışma 2010-2011 eğitim-öğretim yılının ikinci yarısında toplam 14 hafta sürmüştür.

3.Bulgular

Deney ve kontrol gruplarının, çalışmanın başlangıcında sahip oldukları sözcük sayı düzeyleri arasında bir farklılığın olup olmadığının belirlenmesi amacıyla her iki gruba da ön test olarak Sözcük Seviye Belirleme Testi uygulanmıştır. Ön test sonuçlarına göre kontrol ve deney gruplarındaki öğrencilerin sahip oldukları sözcük sayı düzeyleri arasında istatistiksel açıdan anlamlı bir fark bulunamamıştır. Deney ve kontrol gruplarının, uygulanan öğrenme-öğretme yaklaşımı neticesinde, sahip oldukları sözcük sayı düzeyleri arasında bir farklılığın olup olmadığının belirlenmesi amacıyla her iki

gruba da son test olarak yine Sözcük Seviye Belirleme Testi uygulanmıştır. Son test sonuçlarına göre hem deney grubundaki öğrencilerin hem de kontrol grubundaki öğrencilerin sözcük sayı düzeylerinin çalışmanın başlangıcına göre istatistiksel açıdan anlamlı seviyede arttığı görülmüştür. Yine son test sonuçlarına göre deney grubu ile kontrol grubu arasında, sözcük sayı düzeyleri açısından deney grubu lehine anlamlı bir fark oluştuğu görülmüştür.

4.Tartışma

Sonuç olarak İngilizce dersinde, klasik müfredatta yer alan sözcük öğretimine entegre edilmiş İngilizcede en sık kullanılan ikinci bin kelimeyi içeren sözcük geliştirme aktiviteleri, klasik müfredatta yer alan İngilizcede en sık kullanılan ikinci bin kelimeyi içeren sözcük öğretimine göre öğrencilerin sözcük sayı düzeylerini daha çok artırmıştır. İngilizcede en sık kullanılan ikinci bin kelime zaten kontrol grubundaki öğrencilerin takip ettikleri 14 haftalık klasik müfredat içerisinde yer almaktadır. Bu nedenle kontrol grubundaki öğrencilerin sözcük sayı düzeylerinde istatistiksel açıdan anlamlı derecede bir artışın gözlenmesi beklenen bir sonuçtur. Deney grubunda gerçekleştirilen yoğun sözcük geliştirme aktiviteleri öğrencilerin sözcüklere daha çok hakim olmasını ve farkındalık kazanmasını sağlamış bu da deney grubundaki öğrencilerin kontrol grubundaki öğrencilere göre sözcük sayı düzeylerini daha fazla artırmıştır. Araştırmadan elde edilen bu sonuç literatür ile örtüşür niteliktedir. Sözcük sayı düzeyi ile yabancı dil yetkinliği arasında sıkı bir ilişki olduğu, sözcük sayı düzeyinin artması ile yabancı dilde yetkinliğin de arttığı dolayısıyla sözcük sayı düzeyinin artmasının sözcük bilgisi düzeyini belirlediği yapılan araştırmalarla kanıtlanmıştır.