

The Effect of Using Authentic Materials on Iranian EFL Learners' Vocabulary Learning

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Abstract—Vocabulary learning is one of the most important aspects of second language learning. One controversial way of teaching vocabulary is using authentic materials. The current study focused on teaching vocabulary using authentic materials and its influence on learners' vocabulary achievement. To this end, a population of 80 female Iranian EFL learners aged 17 to 20 from an institute in Bushehr were selected. All of them received Oxford Proficiency Test (OPT). Following the administration of OPT, those whose scores ranged between 105 and 119 (elementary level) were chosen for the purpose of the study. After the OPT only 66 participants were left for both experimental and control groups. Both groups received a pretest at the first session. After that the participants attended the English classes 3 times a week for a month. Every session took one hour. The control group received new vocabularies through their textbook (English Result) in each session and the experimental group received the same vocabularies through The New Straits Time online paper in each session. The students were asked to read and talked about the topics. After a month post-tests were run among all of the participants in both control and experimental groups. The analysis of data showed that the vocabulary knowledge of the participants developed in both groups but the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group.

Index Terms—authentic material, vocabulary learning, textbooks, vocabulary achievement

I. INTRODUCTION

The knowledge of words includes explanations of word meanings. A word is a combination of sounds or written symbols which communicates a meaning (Ying, 2010). In the world of language, words play a fundamental role. Words are the building blocks of languages because they help their users convey their desired meaning (Lotfi, 2007).

Experience shows that communication will be meaningful if learners have enough knowledge of the vocabulary and use it appropriately. It is believed that vocabulary acquisition is one of the fundamental and significant components for foreign and second language comprehensibility (Lewise, 1993). Richards and Renandya (2002) held that the core component of language proficiency is vocabulary and it makes the basis for how well learners of a language speak, listen, read, and write. Language skills cannot be acquired and proceed appropriately without vocabulary acquisition (Wilkins, 1972).

Different theorists and researchers in the field have emphasized the significant role of vocabulary knowledge in second or foreign language learning. Therefore, great numbers of approaches, techniques, strategies, exercises and practice have been introduced to teach vocabulary (Hatch & Brown, 1995). Ellis (1985) defined learning strategies as the mental processes of acquiring and using the L2 and the ways that learners accumulate new L2 rules and automate existing ones; this process could be conscious or subconscious. Learning strategies referred to the techniques, approaches, methods, or intentional actions which learners take to learn the target language (Ying, 2010).

In the mid-1970s, communicative approaches to language teaching mentioned that language learners needed skills to be able to encounter the real world. Most language institutes and teachers tried to make their teaching communicative in order to be suitable for real situation. To this end, students needed to have an adequate knowledge of vocabulary in addition to other language skills. The use of authentic materials in EFL classes started in 1970s as a result of the spread of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. Authentic materials became the main part in syllabus design, task based approaches, materials development and the main Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Bax, 2003). Communicative language teaching approach changes the view of syllabus designers toward English subjects, from just a language to be learned like other subjects in the school, to a very important tool of communication inside and outside the classroom (Al Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014). Freeman (2000) stated that one of the characteristics of communicative language teaching is using authentic materials.

According to what has been said by Krashen (1987) learners should be in an acquisition rich environment and in natural exposure to language. Nunan (1999) mentioned that learners should listen and read authentic data as much as possible in order to prevent difficulty in their learning task. In addition to bringing reality to classrooms, authentic materials can present motivation, cultural awareness, giving real exposure, creative teaching (Peacock 1997). Authentic materials help and motivate the learners by bringing the content to life for them, and giving them the opportunity to connect the classroom world to the outer world (Peacock 1997).

The necessity for the development of intervention programs that boost vocabulary in students with poor vocabulary knowledge seems inevitable. Despite the importance of vocabulary acquisition which has been mentioned by different scholars, there is no general agreement on how vocabulary should be taught. Vocabulary knowledge, despite its prominent roles which play in language production and recognition, has been ignored in some language learning programs.

Vocabulary knowledge seems to be one of the most important language components that Iranian students need to achieve to be able to communicate well. It is supposed that the lack of vocabulary knowledge can cause communication failure. Unfortunately, it seems that Iranian students are still weak in learning vocabulary and experiences have shown that many students have problem in learning vocabulary in Iran. Iranian learners live in an EFL environment, lacking the opportunities to acquire through exposure to authentic materials. It is found that the teachers focus only on textbooks and workbooks in teaching vocabularies.

Therefore, it is important to provide Iranian EFL classes with programs which prepare students with suitable vocabulary knowledge in such contexts by implementing authentic vocabulary materials in the EFL classes.

It is believed that vocabulary knowledge plays a significant role in daily communication and educational process. This study aimed to contribute to the literature on material development in EFL classes. It focused on teaching vocabulary with the use of authentic materials and its influence on learner achievement and improvement of vocabulary. Hopefully, this study could present a framework for vocabulary teaching in EFL classes.

Learners might benefit from the results because it is believed that authentic material can bring autonomy in learning. The findings might help the teachers design and develop their new program and curricula in vocabulary teaching in order to be able to provide the learners with the best vocabulary achievement. It would be helpful for general English teachers to apply authentic materials in ESL/EFL classrooms. Syllabus designers and course planners can rely on the results of this study to design a course syllable and teaching methodology focusing on the authentic materials in order to help students in English vocabulary. Authentic vocabulary materials can give an extra capacity to teachers, learners, schools and educational policy makers to encounter vocabulary learning more effectively.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to contribute to the literature on material development in EFL classes. It focused on vocabulary teaching with the use of authentic materials and its influence on learner achievement and improvement of vocabulary. This study was conducted to investigate the effect of using authentic materials on vocabulary learning among Iranian EFL learners. Therefore, the following research questions and hypothesis were presented:

1. Does using authentic material affect students' vocabulary acquisition?
2. Is there any difference between using authentic materials and the traditional way of teaching vocabulary on vocabulary acquisition among Iranian EFL learners?

Based on the above research questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated in this study:

H01: using authentic materials does not affect vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners.

H02: there is no difference between using authentic materials or the traditional way of teaching vocabulary on vocabulary acquisition among Iranian EFL learners.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Different studies have been conducted in different parts of the world and in Iran as well. The researcher chose very few of them to mention.

Karimi and dolatabadi (2014) investigated the effect of authentic materials on listening comprehension of lower intermediate Iranian learners. They conducted a survey of 50 Iranian students at Arak University, Iran. The design of the study was quasi-experimental in which one experimental group and one control groups were involved. After the treatment, the test scores of two groups were compared. The results revealed that the EFL students frequently used paying attention when someone was speaking English, and asking the other person to say again if they did not understand something as their main metacognitive strategies. It was also shown that implementing authentic materials in EFL listening class improved the students' attitudes towards language learning. Moreover, the listening comprehension in EFL students improved after they listened to authentic listening materials in class.

Zoghi, Moradian, and Kazemi, (2014) investigated how authentic materials facilitated vocabulary development. 50 IELTS student were randomly selected. IELTS classes were observed several times and then a self-reported questionnaire was distributed to all students of chosen classes. The findings indicated that majority of the students preferred using authentic materials for vocabulary acquisition because by using authentic material students dealt with

outside, real world, they became interested when dealt with real language, became familiar with the culture of target language, and authentic materials increased their motivation for learning second language.

Norafkan (2013) investigated the effect of exposure to authentic and computer assisted language learning-based English materials on learners' metaphorical competence and conceptual fluency in Iranian foreign/second language (L2) classrooms. For this research 53 Persian learners of English were divided into two groups with different experiments. The control group used textbook-based materials whereas the experimental group used authentic materials and instruction by trained native speakers as online teachers through the mediation of computer assisted language learning techniques. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected based on questionnaires as well as pre-, post- and delayed post-tests. Both control and experimental groups improved in their English language proficiency based on the statistical main effects. The results of the study at the post-test stage also indicated that L2 learners' written and oral discourses had improved more compare to the conceptual skill and metaphorical structure after being exposed to the authentic materials compared to the control group. This claim was based on the significant difference between the textbook-based and authentically-based approaches reflected in the data analyses. Delayed post-test data analysis showed differences between oral and written discourses. Oral discourse metaphorical density felt back to a limited extent though still degrees of improvement were visible. Participants in the experimental group produced less marked discourse with a higher metaphorical density. Also, the study showed that conceptual fluency and metaphorical competence were two related phenomena and the development of one affects the other.

Wu, et al., (2011) investigated the effect of aural authentic materials on second or foreign language learners' motivation. The research made an attempt to find out how aural authentic materials help to enhance learner motivation in a process - oriented conceptualization. In the main study, two advanced English classes which used aural authentic materials participated. The results of the questionnaires and post- questionnaire interviews indicated the positive effect of aural authentic materials on initiating and sustaining learner motivation. The findings also suggested the benefit of aural authentic materials to learning.

Erbaggio, et al., (2010) investigated how the application of online technologies brought opportunities to provide access to authentic material that was engaging, appropriate, and affordable. The multi-media capabilities of a Course Management System (CMS) were used to deliver authentic materials online. Therefore, the instructors of French, Italian, and Chinese were able to both positively impact student attitudes toward the subject matter and to design learning and evaluation activities that increased student engagement. They pointed out that using technology to deliver authentic materials could reduce student anxiety associated with being exposed to authentic foreign language. Furthermore, students became active participants in the learning process and were able to employ their own learning style. They also showed that how the meaningful use of instructional technology could help create learning environments that engage students.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. *Design of the Study*

The design of the research is quasi-experimental. This particular research design has been chosen to conduct this research because the researcher manipulates independent variables (here vocabulary teaching through authentic materials and textbooks) and measures dependent variables (here the amount of vocabulary learning) in order to establish cause-and-effect relationships between them (Yount, 2006). However, since the study follows a convenient sampling procedure, it is called a quasi-experimental.

B. *Participants*

To collect the required data for the research questions, a total of 80 Iranian female EFL learners, aged 17 to 20, studying in a language institute in Bushehr, were asked to participate in this study. All of the participants had studied English for 6 years in junior and senior high schools. The sample was chosen theoretically (judgmentally). In other words they were selected just because they seemed appropriate for the purpose of the study. The researcher needed elementary level learners and therefore, an OPT test was run and finally 66 out of 80 students were chosen. Randomly they were divided into two 33 member groups of experimental and control group.

C. *Instruments*

This section discusses the instruments which include OPT, a pre- and post-tests, authentic material, and a textbook (courses) used in this study.

1. Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

To determine homogeneity of the students Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered (See Appendix, A). The OPT proficiency test is divided into two main sections (Listening Test and Grammar Test), each section contains 100 items. The proficiency level required for the research was elementary. The scores needed for this level of students were 105 to 119 out of 200. Participants whose scores were lower or more than the required scores were excluded from the study.

2. Authentic materials The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad online

To conduct the study, the researcher went through the news and found some paper that were nearly in the same line with the course book (Result) and included the vocabularies that were in the wordlist of unit seven, eight and nine of result book. The selected authentic material was The New Straits Time online which is a daily newspaper. It is the leading print media with innovative products and comprehensive media solutions.

The chosen papers had an eye catching topic that was interesting for the learners at the first look. The researcher provided copies of them and they were presented to the participant in experimental group.

3. The text book

English Result is one of the most impressive English course books of Oxford University Press. Learners can use it to learn and develop their English. It focuses largely on speaking, language production and interaction. Two prominent professors in teaching English Mack Hancock and Annie McDonald have designed Result series course books. Each level provides materials to help learners progress from one level to another in all 5 skills; reading, writing, listening, spoken interaction and spoken production.

4. Pre- and post-tests

The instrument used to assess whether students would gain more vocabulary and had a better understanding of the word was a thirty-item vocabulary test, consisting of the target words designed by the researcher from the Elementary Result student book (2010) word list. The test (pre and post) was also created by the researcher in order to meet purpose of the study and subject's needs. A pretest of vocabularies was conducted to check the existing knowledge of vocabulary of the participants. Vocabularies were chosen according to the level of students and from the wordlist of text books. These were some of the words which the students were required to master. Test contains 30 multiple-choice items. In order to be sure that the vocabularies were really new to them and they were not aware of their meanings and they were appropriate for the purpose of the participants took the pretest. The results of the pretest indicated that the vocabularies were appropriate for the purpose of the research; fortunately it was proven that they did not know their meanings.

The post-test was similar to the pre-test and contained 30 vocabulary items and had the same items as the pretest. The test included 30 items, i.e. one item for one or two target vocabularies (See Appendices A). Reliability is an important aspect to be computed and reported in any study, thus internal consistency reliability test was carried out to determine the Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Reliability coefficient of .80 or higher is considered as acceptable in most social sciences. The reliability of our test was .85.

The validity of the test was confirmed by some experts; in other words, to validate the vocabulary test, the test was administered to a group of experts. They were asked to comment on different aspects of the test including language, content, and format. Following the experts' feedback, the test items were modified. The revised test was assumed to be content valid and as the result it was safely used as the pre- and post-test measure in this study. The researcher also checked the items by the advisor in order to achieve content validity, clarity and conciseness of instruction, the appearance and the sequence of questions. The maximum possible scores for the test were 30 because the participants received one score for correct answers and zero for incorrect answers. The test required students to answer 30 items with one blank space in each item. The participants were asked to choose the correct vocabulary between the four options.

D. Data Collection Procedure

Generally, the present study aimed to investigate the effect of using authentic material (the cutting news of The New Straits Times online) on vocabulary learning of elementary level students. For this aim, a body of 80 female Iranian EFL learners aged 17 to 20 from a language institute in Bushehr took part in this study. All the participants were asked to take the OPT test which consisted of 200 items (100 listening items and 100 grammar items). 200 score was assigned to the test for 200 items. After the OPT only 66 participants remained in the study. Participants were randomly divided into control and experimental groups. In order to be sure that the vocabularies were really new to them and they were not aware of their meanings and is appropriate for the purpose of the study a pilot test was carried out. Pilots testing by population of 10 female were chosen and then they were asked to take the pretest for 30 minutes. The results of the pilot study validated that the instruments were appropriate for the purpose of the research; fortunately it was proven that they did not know their meanings. Both groups received the same pre and posttests at their first and last sessions. The test consisted of 30 items, with one score for each item. The participants were given 30 minutes to choose the correct vocabulary.

The participants attended the English classes 3 times a week for a month. Every session took one hour. The materials were taught in 12 sessions. The control group was taught the new vocabularies through their textbook (English Result) in each session. The experimental group received the same vocabularies in the same conditions as the control group through The New Straits Time online paper in each session.

For both groups, the researcher read the authentic material (newspaper) or the course book (English results) and talked about the topic and explained the words that were not familiar to learners or were difficult to them. Students were asked to read and talk about the topic. The target vocabularies were highlighted by the researcher and received more attention and they become the keyword of learners' speech. They were practiced in group and individually. The new words were written on the white board, and the participants looked them up in dictionaries. As mentioned before, the participants in the experimental group used cutting newspapers and those in the control group studied only their textbook. They could look them up in their dictionaries. It is worth mentioning that the target vocabularies were

common in the textbook (English Result) and the cutting newspapers (The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad online).

During the twelve sessions of English classes, three units were taught by the researcher. These three units centered on topics such as how to talk about our free time activities, how to talk about weather, how to talk about abilities, how to describe actions, how to ask for transport information, how to ask and describe a holiday.

After a month, the post-test was distributed among all participants of both control and experimental groups. They were asked to take the post-test. The post-test included 30 items vocabulary the same as pretest, represented with multiple choice items for the participants to choose the appropriate vocabularies. The participants had 30 minutes to answer the questions.

E. Data Analysis

To address the research questions, the scores of the pre and posttests of both control and experimental groups were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Both pre and post-test scores were compared using an Independent-Samples T-test to find out any significant differences between the two groups. Also, two paired-samples t-tests were used to compare the pretest and posttests in each of the experimental and control groups respectively.

V. RESULTS

A. Pre-test Results for the Control and Experimental Groups

In order to prove that both experimental and control group were homogeneous with regard to their information about the meanings of the selected vocabularies, a pretest was run and all of the participants in the two groups took part in this test. The results of the pretest were presented in the following tables.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PRE-TEST

Authentic		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	With authentic material	33	12.64	1.365	.238
	no authentic material	33	12.76	1.501	.261

Based on the descriptive statistics in Table.1, mean of the both groups were almost similar and it showed that both groups were the same with regard to their knowledge about the meanings of the selected vocabulary items. Accordingly, an independent samples t-test was run to ensure the equality of variances and means.

TABLE 2.
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR THE PRE-TEST

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Pre-test	Equal variances assumed	.303	.584	-.343	64	.733	-.121	.353	-.827	.584
	Equal variances not assumed			-.343	63.435	.733	-.121	.353	-.827	.584

The results of the above Table showed that the two groups were not aware of the meanings of the selected vocabularies. Therefore, the treatment started and after a month the participants took part in posttests which would be mentioned in the next parts.

B. Results of Post-tests

In this section, the descriptive statistics and the inferential statistics of the collected data related to the posttests are presented. Regarding the first research question concerned with the effect of using authentic material on students' vocabulary acquisition, a pretest and two posttests were run. The results of the posttests for both groups are as follows:

1. Results of analysis in the experimental group

Table 8.3 below presented the descriptive statistics for the posttest in the experimental group.

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE POSTTEST IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	12.64	33	1.365	.238
	Post-test	17.58	33	2.208	.384

According to the descriptive statistics presented in Table 3 above, it was clear that the mean of the experimental group changed significantly compared with the result of their pretest. In order to determine whether this difference was significant or not a sample t-test was run. The results of paired-samples t-test are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4.
PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

	Paired Differences	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
					Pair 1	Pre-test Post-test			

Table 4 indicated that the difference within experimental group at the beginning and the end of the study was significant. The t-test gave a t-value of -20.405 and $p < .000$ which was statistically significant. The results indicated that the mean value obtained from the post-test was significantly higher than the mean value obtained from the pre-test in the experimental group. The mean value increased from 12.64 to 17.78. This showed an improvement in vocabulary acquisition for the participants in the experimental group.

2. Post-Test Results for the Control Group

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics for the posttest results in the control group.

TABLE 5.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE POST-TEST FOR THE CONTROL GROUP

Pair 1	Pre-test	12.76	33	1.501	.261
	Post-test	16.33	33	2.131	.371

According to the descriptive statistics presented in Table 5, it was clear that the mean of the control group changed significantly compared with the result of their pre-test. In order to determine whether this difference was significant or not a paired-sample t-test was run. The results of the test were presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6.
PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST FOR CONTROL GROUP

	Paired Differences	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
					Pair 1	Pre control post control			

Table 6. indicated that there was a difference within control group at the beginning and at the end of the study. The t-test gave a t-value of -21.936 and $p < .000$ which was statistically significant. The results indicated that the mean value obtained from the post-test for the control group was higher than the mean value obtained from the pre-test. The table showed that the mean value had increased from 12.76 to 16.33. This showed an improvement in vocabulary acquisition for the participants in the control as well.

C. Comparison between the Post-test Results of the Control and Experimental Groups

With regard to the second research question which is concerned with any difference between using authentic materials or traditional way of vocabulary acquisition among Iranian EFL learners, a comparison between the posttest results of both groups was made.

TABLE 7:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE POSTTEST FOR BOTH GROUPS

	Authentic	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-vocabulary score	with authentic material	33	17.58	2.208	.384
	no authentic material	33	16.33	2.131	.371

According to the descriptive statistics in Table 7, it was clear that the mean of the experimental group was different from the mean of the control group. In order to determine whether this difference was significant or not an independent-sample t-test between the two groups was run. The results of the sample t-test were presented in Table 8:

TABLE 8.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR BOTH GROUPS

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Post-vocabulary score	Equal variances assumed	.171	.681	2.326	64	.023	1.242	.534	.175	2.310
	Equal variances not assumed			2.326	63.919	.023	1.242	.534	.175	2.310

The results of t-test showed that the posttests' mean scores between the two groups were statistically significant as $t=2.326$ and $p<.05$. The mean score for the experimental group was 17.58 and for the control group was 16.33. The Independent-samples t-test showed that the difference between the two groups was significant and the experimental group outperformed the control group. Therefore, the second null hypothesis which claimed that there was no difference between the two groups could be safely rejected. The next part presents the discussion for all the above mentioned results.

VI. DISCUSSION

The results of data analysis indicated that following the presentation of the results in the last section, the outcomes will now be discussed with reference to the research questions and hypotheses put forward earlier. Relevant findings from other studies and theoretical concepts mentioned in the literature review will also be taken into consideration when interpreting the results.

In this section a particular discussion for each research hypothesis is provided and the researcher tries to link the findings to the existing literature. Addressing the first hypothesis it was revealed that an improvement occurred in vocabulary acquisition of experimental group students who learned vocabulary through exposure to authentic materials. This result could be added to the results of other studies which would be mentioned here. As mentioned in the literature review, in some studies the positive effects of authentic materials on language learning were confirmed. One of these studies was Zoghi, et al., (2014) investigated how authentic materials facilitated vocabulary development. Fifty IELTS student were randomly chosen. IELTS classes were observed several times and then a self-reported questionnaire was distributed to all students of chosen classes. The results showed that most of the students preferred using authentic materials for vocabulary acquisition because by using authentic material students dealt with outside world and real language. Students became familiar with the culture of target language and their motivation increased.

Rodengam (2011) investigated the effect of authentic materials on enhancing vocabulary for listening comprehension and the influence of authentic materials on students' attitudes towards learning English vocabulary for listening comprehension. The participants were 45 high school students in the English Japanese program (EJP) at Winituksa School, Thailand. The results indicated that the use of authentic materials had a positive effect on students' performance, comfort and self-confidence when listening to the target language. The answers to the questionnaire showed that the authentic materials had a positive effect on students' attitudes and motivation to learn the language. The results also implied that instructors could promote positive attitudes of the students toward language learning by providing materials and activities that satisfy the needs of the students.

In another study Pellicer-Sánchez and Schmitt (2010) investigated incidental vocabulary acquisition from an authentic novel called *Do Things Fall Apart?*. The researchers investigated the degree to which relatively advanced L2 readers could learn spelling, word class, and recognition and recall of meaning from reading the unmodified authentic novel *Things Fall Apart*. The results showed the positive effect of authentic material on all variables.

All the above mentioned studies and some other studies have confirmed the positive effects of authentic materials on vocabulary learning. The findings of these studies are in line with the findings of our study.

It is also worth mentioning that some studies were contradicted to our study and the reported no positive effects of authentic materials on language learning. Some of these studies were (Clark, 1983; Kienbaum et al., 1986; Mihwa, 1994). Kilickaya (2004) claimed authentic texts were random in respect to vocabulary, structures, language functions, content, and length, thereby causing a burden for the teacher and he believed that the use of authentic materials at lower levels caused students to feel frustrated and demotivated since students at these levels lack many lexical items and structures used in the target language. McNeil (1994) and Miller (2005), faced challenges regarding access to authentic materials, the expense of purchasing them, and the time required to find an appropriate authentic text and design suitable pedagogical tasks. Martinez (2002) stated that authentic materials were too culturally biased and difficult to understand outside the language community.

As it is clear from the above mentioned studies, they were in opposition of our results.

Addressing the second hypothesis it was revealed that using authentic materials affect the EFL learners' vocabulary learning because the results of post-tests showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups at the

end of the study. Again the result of our study was in line with the results of some studies such as Demircan (2004) who investigated the impact of authentic materials on the development of grammar knowledge, retention and opinions of ninth grade students as English language learners, in comparison with traditional materials and textbooks or course books.

To compare the experimental and control groups in terms of achievement, retention and perception about the implementation units, a pretest posttest control group design was carried out. For the purpose of this study, two authentic material based grammar units were designed and developed and implemented to experimental group students. Three instruments; tests, opinionnaires and unit feedback forms were used. Seventeen (15 and two) teachers and 54 students at TED Ankara college foundation high school participated in the study. As for the data analysis, the quantifiable data in the pre, post and retention tests were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. To indicate the differences between the experimental and control groups in consideration with achievements and retention, independent sample t test was conducted. Additionally, opinionnaires and unit feedback forms were analyzed to obtain information about the students' and teachers' opinions about grammar teaching in general and according to the treatment. The results indicated that most of the students were more successful in developing and retaining grammar knowledge while using authentic materials in class.

In opposition, this result of our study was against the result of Clark's (1983) study who claimed that media did not affect learning under any conditions (authentic versus non-authentic). Similarly, Kienbaum et al., (1986) found no special differences in the language performance of children using authentic materials or traditional classroom context.

In sum, the results revealed that the authentic materials were found effective in learning vocabulary. In the next chapter the findings of the study and suggestion for further research would be present.

VII. CONCLUSION

Authentic materials have been discussed many times as beneficial in teaching English for different skills. The operationalization of the two research questions involved the study into an integration of two significant issues (authentic materials and vocabulary learning) in contemporary language teaching pedagogy. Hypotheses were based on the assumption that there are no relationships between authentic materials and vocabulary learning. Scores from the pretests and posttests provided answers to the research questions mentioned in the beginning of the study. As the results showed, there was a significant relationship between these two. In other words the learners who exposed authentic materials learned better than those who exposed textbooks. It was explained that previous studies concluded mixed results. Some of the results were for using authentic materials in language teaching and learning and some others were against using them. Although, more of the related literature showed that the use of authentic materials in language teaching was supported by many researchers. In other words, despite some negative attitudes, the pros of using authentic materials in teaching learners in EFL/ESL classrooms outweigh its cons (Thanajaro, 2000; Kilickaya, 2004; Otte, 2006). Moreover, our results supported the idea of using authentic materials in order to enhance vocabulary learning.

Supporters of the idea of using authentic materials regard these kinds of materials as helpful ones to encourage and motivate learners, arouse their interest and expose them to real language they will face in the real world. Authentic classrooms and materials are available for native speakers (Taylor, 1994; Widdowson, 1978). Since language learners are ambitious for native like language proficiency, it is a good idea to add authentic materials to their text books in different educational places. According the positive effects of authentic materials which have been confirmed by many researchers, it is believed that even simplified texts should be judged in terms of whether they have the natural qualities of authenticity or not (Day & Bamford, 1998).

This study showed that using authentic materials in vocabulary teaching can be an effective method for increasing the vocabulary knowledge of the students. The most suitable authentic texts for the students should be selected. In this selection, students' level, age, gender, interests, and needs should primarily be considered. Authentic materials are used to fill the gap between the unreal situations of classes and the real world situations. Therefore, the activities which are designed for these materials and classes should be related to real life and include some communicative tasks which can be achieved by the mixture of authentic materials with communicative activities.

Based on the outcomes of the current study, the following suggestions identify possible areas for future research. The number of participants and their kind of authentic exposure was limited in this study; therefore, a replication of the study with more participants and authentic exposure is suggested to obtain more reliable results. In addition to their vocabulary knowledge their other skills, and features such as motivation and attitudes can be taken into account. Participants' level of knowledge and gender differences can also be regarded as variables in future studies. The effect of authentic materials on ESP and EAP can be investigated thoroughly

Similar to other studies, present study also suffered from some limitations. The first one is concerned with the limited number of participants. With more participants the generalization of the results can be easier. The researchers selected only one authentic material, and she believed that the finding might be different with more variant authentic materials.

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