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The Impact Mother tongue on Reading Comprehension & Vocabulary

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ABSTRACT

Most academic views of teaching theory have speculated that, it would be better to allow learners to state themselves when they are learning a second language it is usual to occasionally flash back into their first language which it can be helpful for them to learn better. According to this, mother tongue might be affect on the process of learning reading comprehension (decoding and interpreting) via translation into the first language. This paper aims to teach reading comprehension toward the use of mother tongue. Having expressed the problems of the topic and the limitations in chapter one, I reviewed the literature of the topic in chapter two. This study will be examined reading comprehension by using L1. After homogenizing via pre-test, forty Iranian girls with treatment and twenty without it who will between the ages of 20 to 30 will be carried out with the Nelson Proficiency Test. The result of the study will be obtained via analysis variance (ANOVA).

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Introduction

These days, ordinary using of mother tongue, L1 among EFL teachers became as an instrument for transferring the meaning. Investigations revealed that removing L1 in L2 situation is not possible completely. (Schweers, 1999; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nation, 2003; Butzkamm, 2003). If the mother tongue is used in a suitable situation, it can be given positive issues. Brown (2000, P.68) asserts that "first language can be a facilitating factor and not just an be a facilitating factor" and Schweers (1999) makes the educators motivated to cooperate L1 language into units to effect on the activity of classroom, and proposal that "starting with the Novitas-ROYAL, 2008, Vol: 2(2), 138- 1539 L1 provided a sense of security and validates the learners' lived experiences and themselves" (P.7). Results from the student's mother tongue or first language in learning English as a second language has been changed differently, and from the application of mother tongue in learning target language in the EFL classroom. In last recent years, for a long time, teachers and researchers instruction have paid attention to the monolingual strategy or English- only approach in second reading comprehension. Particularly, promoting the field of study English for purposes was as an issue of accepting of great goal and needs of language learners. There are so many oddity discovered into the target language that have directed to promoting from investigators who attempt to make possibility to classify English for different topics among others such as business, law, truism. Linguists have noticed that because languages are uniformly administered to shift according to its descriptive state. Nobody can know their mother tongue completely. (Nzary, 2014)

Almost around 120 years, all FL teachers were not allowed to use of mother tongue and they had to discourage their students to not use of L1 in language teaching (Cook, 2001). The main purpose for FL teaching was monolingual or intra- lingual, rather than cross-lingual (Cook, 2001). The main method of

education was the Direct Method, that was forbidden to use of comparative analysis between the MT and the FL. MT-Free lessons were a "badge of honor" (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009, P.24). The role of translation was teaching. Recently, researchers claimed that "translation provides an easy avenue to enhance linguistic awareness" (Cook, 2001). They realized that analysis of comparing between the MT and the FL are how important and the FL cannot be an aim on proposing for the MT. Recently, this pattern move to the linguistic interdependence Hypothesis has happened (Butzkamm & Caldwell,2009; Cummis,2007) and suggests a pleasing behavior to teacher usage of teacher's MT teaching. Although, this practice the "Politic and theory usage" of MT (Turnbull, 2001, P.536) endures a problematic issue; teacher's opinion is that they feel guilty for chancing from the way of teaching using only the FL and feel of the MT is skillfully not appropriate. (Littlewoods & Yu, 2011, Swain, Kirkpatrick, & Cummins, 2011).

One of the model of attitudes circumstance have switched overtime could be found out in the English Curriculum for All Grades (Spolsky, Ben Meir, Inbar, Orland, Stiner, & Vermel, 2001), a basic fragment of English language instruction. The present program includes of "Four realms of language skills and awareness function cooperation, availability of information, awarding [of information], and knowledge of literature, and language (P.8). Researchers prepared a perfection chance to recognize the nature structuring, and the contrast between languages (P.11). Therefore, learners could arise on the knowledge into their own MT by the instructor's exchanges in behavior; this program does not prepare precise educations with regards to the allowable length of teacher use of learner's MT. (T. Timor, 2012)

The idea of avoiding the mother tongue in language teaching dates from around the turn of the century with the appearance of the Direct Method. The development of ELT as casual career for young people visiting Europe encouraged

teachers to make a virtue of the necessity of using only English. Added to this, the subsequent growth of British-based teacher training movement out of the need to provide training for teachers working with multilingual classes served to reinforce the strategy of mother tongue avoidance. (Harbord, 1992)

“At present it would seem to be true, in general, that in teacher training very little attention is given to the use of the native language. The implication, one assumes, is often that it has no role to play” (Atkinson, 1987)

Atkinson (1987) in his article about mother tongue use in EFL identifies four main reasons for this lack of attention.

Atkinson (1987) believes that it is not difficult to think of general advantages of judicious use of the classroom which Harbord (1992) classifies them as: (1) A learner preferred strategy; (2) A humanistic approach; and (3) An efficient use of time.

Dangers of overuse mother tongue

It is obvious that in any situation excessive dependency on the mother tongue is to be avoided; otherwise some or all of the following problems may ensue:

1. The teacher and/ or the students begin to feel that they have not “really” understood any item of language until it has been translated.
2. The teacher and/ or the students fail to observe distinctions between equivalence of form, semantic equivalence, and pragmatic features, and thus oversimplify to the point of using crude and inaccurate translation.
3. Students speak to the teacher in the mother tongue as a matter of course, even when they are quite capable of expressing what they mean.
4. Students fail to realize that during the mother tongue in the classroom it is crucial that they only English. (Atkinson, 1987)

Question researches:

Based on what was said above, this study is designed to answer these questions:

1. Do the uses of mother tongue and vocabulary have a significant impact on reading comprehension?
2. Does the use of mother tongue and background knowledge of vocabulary have any remarkable effect on reading comprehension?

Mother tongue

The controversial discussion about mother tongue or L1 in foreign language teaching hasn't been settled yet. There are some teachers who reject the use of mother tongue or fail to realize any remarkable potential in it. Some teachers use of it extremely. Both of them are using of this great, important resource in a wrong way. Using the target language in the appropriate time and place when it is necessary is the best. The suitable use of L1 can be advantageous. (Romania corresponding author: voiceucristina 2004@yahoo.fr)

The role of mother tongue

One of the best reasons for using a mother tongue in English classroom is essentially specified by improving language accuracy, fluency and clarity. While English grammar in contrast with the mother tongue's grammar. Novices will likely advance at a speedier step if the use of the native language is permitted in the classroom. (C. Georgiana, 2004).

Reading comprehension

During last decades, the view of reading shifted as a bare course of clearing up. Goodman (from the mid-to total 1970s) looks to reading as a “guessing game” in which the “Reader

reconstructs, as best as he can, a message which has been encoded by a writer”. One of the reading methods is Think-aloud which readers revealed their thoughts when they are reading, via this method educators can achieve the better view of mental from readers.

Factors in reading comprehension

- 1) Type of educational methods
- 2) Self-monitoring
- 3) Components reading incorporated
- 4) Fidelity of instruction
- 5) Group size (S. Linan- Thompson, R. Misquitta, 2012)

Different reading

1) Bottom-up model: This model is focusing on the understanding of linguistic knowledge.

2) Top-Down model: The readers' draws throw the text in order to be able to guess the meaning of the words or phrases in the text. Top-down model occurs as the predictions based on higher level.

3) Interactive model: In this aspect of these models divided into three parts: 1. the interaction between lower-level skills 2. Between bottom up process and top down process 3. Between the background knowledge supposed in the text and the background the readers.

(Carole Benson, 2004)

Methodology

Participants

To accomplish the present research, 90 students who are taking English classes at Daneshmand English language institute were selected. The age of the participants ranged from 20 to 30, but the gender and the age of the participants were not considered in this study. For the researcher to make sure that the participants were at the same level of proficiency, a language proficiency test including grammar (30) items, vocabulary (10) items and reading comprehension (10) items were administered to subjects. After analyzing the data, 60 participants were selected. Finally, they were divided into three groups. So, in this study the researcher had three groups of 20 students.

Instrumentations

In this survey the researcher had utilized the following instruments. First, a 250A, a language proficiency test including; (30) grammar items, (10) vocabulary items and (10) reading comprehension items, was administered to all groups, to find out the homogeneity of the groups. This test was administered to the participants as a standard measure to determine their level of proficiency for providing three groups in the research then all groups had received pretest of vocabulary proficiency through reading comprehension, the third test was a post-test of vocabulary proficiency through reading comprehension, which was developed by the researcher.

Nelson Proficiency Test

A 50-item Nelson English Language Proficiency Test was used for ninety students in order to find out the participants' homogeneity and also to reduce their number to sixty students. Then according to this test, students' language proficiency and the scores they had got, they were divided to three groups, first group were named "control group", second group were "experimental group A", and the last one were "experimental group B". This multiple-choice test comprised Nelson 250A proficiency test.

Post-Test of Vocabulary Proficiency

To collect data about the learners' knowledge in the area of vocabulary, a test was administered. This test was developed by the researcher. Its questions were in two types of multiple choices and short answers. Multiple choices are questions which consist of a stem and four options from which only one is correct. The examinee has to choose the right answer (Ur 38). The form of the multiple choices can also vary; here the researcher tried to design a test that consists of question about vocabulary. Experimental group A which was dealing with the Multiple-choice Exercises had received 16 sessions with 40 minutes treatment, including three sessions in a week studying top-notch 2 part A. In this class teacher was trying to prepare learners for Multiple-choice activities on the vocabulary, which were existed in the top-notch 2 part A. And the teacher gave the students explanation about the Multiple-choice Exercises and was trying to prepare the students about Exercises in which the students were presented with a question along with four or five answers from which one must be selected.

The subjects, in the experimental group B which is dealing with short-answer questions Exercises received 16 sessions with 40 minutes treatment, including three sessions in a week. In this group, students are expected to associate the entries on one list with those given in a second list in order to improve vocabulary. Short-answer questions are open-ended questions that require students to create an answer. They are commonly used in examinations to assess the basic knowledge and understanding (low cognitive levels) of a topic before more in-depth assessment questions are asked on the topic. The researcher made questions of vocabulary's definition, opposites and synonyms. This test evaluated students' vocabulary proficiency at a normal level. It contained 20 multiple-choice questions and 20 short answer questions. This test was after students' treatment and 16-session classes.

Procedure

In order to conduct the research and to verify the research hypothesis the following steps were taken: first Nelson language proficiency test was administered to the subjects to find out the homogeneity of the groups. The test was applied to eighty- eight students to find out their homogeneity. Nelson Test was 250A language proficiency test and included 50 items. After analyzing data and according to their scores the participants were 60 students and their level of proficiency was described as intermediate. These sixty students according to their scores they had got randomly were divided into three classes or groups. The first group was "control group"; the next was "experimental group A", and the last one was "experimental group B". Then the post test of vocabulary proficiency, which had developed by the researcher, after any treatment or classes from all participants, was taken.

The post-test, which had developed by the researcher, got after 16-session treatment. So participants, after the treatment, answered the questions post-test. This test contained forty questions of vocabulary. The posttest contained 20 questions in short answer and 20 questions in multiple-choice format. Multiple-choice questions' advantage was that we did not have to worry about subjectivity because only one answer should be correct. Secondly, it was very easy and quick for the examiner to correct this test because he or she just put ticks or crosses. So it can add that the researcher gained results sooner and the results were more exact.

Experimental group A and B

The students in the experimental group A which were dealing with the Multiple-choice Exercises had received 16 sessions with 40 minutes treatment, the classes including two sessions in a week studying top-notch 2 part A. In this class teacher was trying to prepare learners for Multiple-choice activities on the Vocabulary, which were existed in the top-notch 2 part A. And the teacher gave the students explanation about the Multiple-choice Exercises and was trying to prepare the students about Exercises in which the student was presented with a question along with four answers from which one must be selected.

The subjects, in the experimental group B which was dealing with the short answer Exercises, received 16 sessions with 40 minutes treatment, including two sessions in a week. In this group, students were expected to associate answers such as complete the sentence, supply the missing word, short descriptive or qualitative answers, diagrams with explanations etc. The answers were usually short, from one word to a few lines. Often students might answer in bullet form.

Control group

For the control group, based on the explanation which is existed in the teacher's book of top-notch, the teacher introduces vocabularies, which were the same as those chosen by experimental groups. The students were expected to learn vocabulary without any kind of Exercises and reading comprehension, in which there was no Multiple-choice Exercises or short-answer questions Exercises among students.

Design

Based on Hatch and Faradays testing, the design which is selected for this study was quasi-experimental design. In a posttest design, a single group of participants is measured on the dependent variable, Multiple-choice, both before and after the manipulation of the independent variable, short answer. The problem with posttest designs is that you cannot be completely sure that a change in the dependent variable was caused by the manipulation of the independent variable.

The basic posttest design can be argued by adding a control group. In this design, we were considering the research with the help of pretest and the post-test pattern, therefore (T1) was the test before applying the treatment and (T2) was the test after treatment ,first (T1) was administered and after applying the treatment a post-test (T2) was administered in order to consider the effects of treatments in the research.

(T1) X (T2) in experimental groups

(T1) (T2) in control group

Consequently it may add that Quasi Experiments were also effective because they use the "post testing". This means that there were tests done before any data was collected to see if there was any person confounds or if any participants had certain tendencies. Then the actual experiment was done with post test results recorded. This data can be compared as part of the study or the test data can be included in an explanation for the actual experimental data. Quasi experiments had independent variables that already exist such as age, gender, eye color. These variables can either be continuous (age) or they can be categorical (gender).

Data Analysis

The data in this study is consisted of three sets of score which will be obtained from administering three types of test, a language proficiency test pilot group, and Vocabulary proficiency for posttest. To interpret the results of the tests administered, the difference between the mean of the post-test

of control group score and the mean of the post-test of experimental group scores was used for statistical significance and the researcher used the ANOVA, which is an excellent statistical procedure to use in comparing three means in order to get any possible relationship between three set of scores and final logical answered to the research question. At last, the researcher collected all scores including; proficiency test, pretest and posttest, pilot group, to analyze them and see the results.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was a collection of statistical models used to analyze the differences between group means and their associated procedures (such as "variation" among and between groups). In ANOVA setting, the observed variance in a particular variable is partitioned into components attributable to different sources of variation. In its simplest form, ANOVA provides a statistical test of whether or not the means of several groups are equal, and therefore generalizes t-test to more than two groups. For this reason, ANOVAs are useful in comparing (testing) three or more means (groups or variables) for statistical significance.

Results

Homogeneity Process through Nelson Proficiency Test

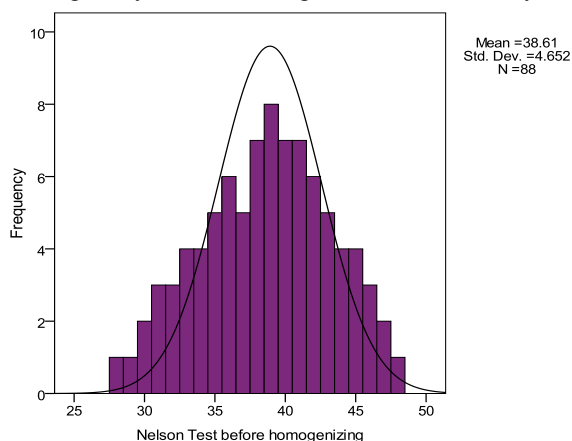


Figure 4.1. Distributions of Nelson Test scores before homogenizing

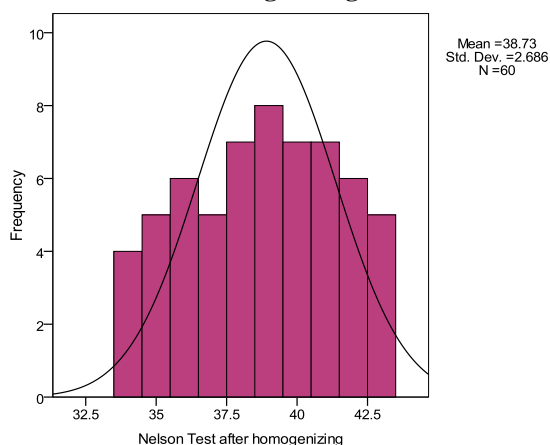


Figure 4.2. Distributions of Nelson Test scores after homogenizing

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used to test the normal distribution assumption of scores for Nelson Test before and after homogenizing. Table 4.2 displays the results of this analysis.

Control group test

Group Statistics					
	treatment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Grammar	Before treatment	20	3.5845	.39463	.08824
	After treatment	20	3.5065	1.00314	.22431
Vocab	Before treatment	20	3.5650	.56501	.12634
	After treatment	20	3.5450	1.20371	.26916
Compreh.	Before treatment	20	3.1150	.46484	.10394
	After treatment	20	3.3060	1.07698	.24082
multiple	Before treatment	20	3.6400	.56629	.12663
	After treatment	20	3.2625	.70354	.15732
Short answer	Before treatment	20	3.1750	.48680	.10885
	After treatment	20	2.9200	.49215	.11005
a. group = Control					

Table 4.6 above illustrate that, the average mean score of control group of the multiple choice after treatment was 3.2 with the standard deviation of .70, on the other hand, the mean score of before treatment was 3.6 with the standard deviation of .56. The mean score of short answer after treatment of the group was 2.9 with the standard deviation of .49. The scores before treatment for the same questions were 3.1 and .48. These results show that there are significant difference between the after and before treatment scores of the control group.

As obvious in Tables 4.6 and 4.7, the t value for the multiple choice test was 1.86 and the t value for the short answer questions for the control group was 1.64. Moreover average mean score of control group's multiple choice test was .37 with the standard deviation of .20; the mean score of short answer questions for the control group turned out to be .15 with the standard deviation of .25. According to this table there are significant difference between the short answer and multiple choice questions for the control group. P- value for multiple choice was 0.07 and for the short answer was .66; both of which are more than .05.

Experimental group A test

Group Statistics					
	Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Grammar	Before treatment	20	3.5795	.40829	.09130
	After treatment	20	4.5330	.26402	.05904
Vocab	Before treatment	20	3.3750	.41151	.09202
	After treatment	20	4.4435	.26765	.05985
Compreh	Before treatment	20	2.9400	.55574	.12427
	After treatment	20	4.1550	.57535	.12865
multiple	Before treatment	20	3.8900	.46470	.10391
	After treatment	20	4.4500	.39967	.08937
Shortanswer	Before treatment	20	3.2326	.43442	.09714
	After treatment	20	4.1975	.73886	.16521
a. group=Experimental group A					

Table 4.8 above illustrates that, the average mean score of experimental group A of the multiple choice before treatment was 3.8 with the standard deviation of .46, on the other hand, the mean score of after treatment was 4.4 with the standard

deviation of .39. The mean score of short answer before treatment of the group was 3.2 with the standard deviation of .43. The scores after treatment for the same questions were 4.1 and .73. These results show that there are significant difference between the after and before treatment scores of experimental group A; especially in the multiple choice questions.

As obvious in Tables 4.8 and 4.9, the t value for the multiple choice test was -4.0 and the t value for the short answer questions for the experimental group A was -5.0. According to this table there are significant difference between the short answer and multiple choice questions for the experimental group A. P- value for multiple choice was .36 which is more than .05, so it is seen that the treatment for this group was effective. And for the short answer was .002 that in less than .05 level of significance; but the Mean Difference and Std. Error Difference are the same.

Experimental group B test

Table 4.10 Descriptive Statistics for Experimental Group B's Vocabulary Retention on posttest

Group Statistics ^a					
	Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Grammar	Before treatment	20	3.4805	.31572	.07060
	After treatment	20	4.5110	.27949	.06250
Vocab	Before treatment	20	3.4790	.35538	.07946
	After treatment	20	4.4890	.31001	.06932
Compreh	Before treatment	20	3.2650	.48696	.10889
	After treatment	20	4.2705	.40722	.09106
multiple	Before treatment	20	3.9000	.42084	.09410
	After treatment	20	4.4525	.33343	.07456
Shortanswer	Before treatment	20	3.1850	.92111	.20597
	After treatment	20	3.8350	.67573	.15110

	Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Grammar	Before treatment	20	3.4805	.31572	.07060
	After treatment	20	4.5110	.27949	.06250
Vocab	Before treatment	20	3.4790	.35538	.07946
	After treatment	20	4.4890	.31001	.06932
Compreh	Before treatment	20	3.2650	.48696	.10889
	After treatment	20	4.2705	.40722	.09106
multiple	Before treatment	20	3.9000	.42084	.09410
	After treatment	20	4.4525	.33343	.07456
Shortanswer	Before treatment	20	3.1850	.92111	.20597
	After treatment	20	3.8350	.67573	.15110

a. group = Experimental Group B

Table 4.10 above illustrates that, the average mean score of experimental group B of the multiple choice before treatment was 3.9 with the standard deviation of .42, on the other hand, the mean score of after treatment was 4.4 with the standard deviation of .33. The mean score of short answer before treatment of the group was 3.1 with the standard

deviation of .92. The scores after treatment for the same questions were 3.8 and .67. These results show that there are significant difference between the after and before treatment scores of experimental group B; especially in the short answer questions.

As obvious in Tables 4.10 and 4.11, the t value for the multiple choice test was -4.6 and the t value for the short answer questions for the experimental group B was -2.5. According to this table there are significant difference between the short answer and multiple choice questions for the experimental group B. P- value for multiple choice was .96 which is more than .05, and for the short answer was .096 that in more than .05 level of significance; and the Mean Difference and Std. Error Difference are the same.

Conclusion

The results of the study show that mother tongue is more important when it comes to helping second language learners improve their reading comprehension as suggested by other re-searchers (Alderson, 2000; Nagy & Scott, 2000; Pressley, 2000). As Nation (2001, p. 196) observes, "[a]cademic vocabulary needs to be used productively as well as receptively so it is important to monitor learners' productive knowledge of these words." It may also be useful to explore the students' text coverage in order to estimate the text coverage of EFL students in the Social Sciences. Furthermore, since findings from the present study did not clearly establish that students with higher vocabulary size outperform those with smaller vocabulary on the reading comprehension test.

It can say that mother tongue is an essential part of language learning. According to the results reading comprehension and the ways of its teaching can be effective in mother tongue for EFL learners. Consequently, it can say that if the ways of teaching reading comprehension is balanced in the curriculum, students will better improve their mother tongue skills through experiencing reading process as well as realizing the meaning of new vocabularies. Joshi and Aaron (2000) find that mother tongue is a strong predictor of reading ability when factoring reading speed with decoding and comprehension. Martin-Chang and Gould (2008) find a strong correlation both between vocabulary and reading comprehension and between reading rate and primary print knowledge from mother tongue. Mother tongue is essential in reading comprehension because it has a similar function to back-ground knowledge in reading comprehension. Mother tongue helps students in decoding, which is an important part of reading (Qian, 2002). Garcia (1991) finds that a lack of familiarity with vocabulary in the test passages and questions is a powerful factor affecting fifth and sixth grade Latino bilingual learner on a test of reading comprehension.

The findings of this study also have certain implications for both L1 and L2 teachers and learners. The findings might imply that both L1 and L2 language teachers and learners should pay special attention to the concept of meta-discourse while teaching or learning language. In this way, teachers can enable their students to become better readers and also writers.

Comprehend the texts better by following the writer's line of argument more smoothly, and also write more comprehensibly by anticipating their reader's interaction with the content.

Discussion

Mother tongue needs to be developed from a combination of direct vocabulary instruction, vocabulary-learning strategies, extensive reading and word learning from context,

heightened student awareness of new words, and motivation to use and collect words. Instruction needs to provide opportunities for practice using words and multiple encounters with words over time. There needs to be a continual effort to recycle words into new lessons. A number of researchers have generated important principles for mother tongue instruction (Anderson, 1999; Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002; Nation, 2001; Stahl, 2005; Stahl & Nagy, 2006). Teachers should be more aware of what they choose for their students to read in the reading classes, especially if the teachers are using English learning course books. In a foreign language learning classroom, reading in the reading class should not simply be just practice. Instead, it should be treated like reading in a native language, which is to gain knowledge. With proper textbooks and reading materials, students will be able to develop their mother tongue as well as back-ground knowledge.

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