

The Effects of Using Dictionary Notebook in Native Language Education on Students' Social Lives

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Abstract

Word activities are very important for improving language ability in native language education. If children learn more words, they could read books thoroughly by enjoyment. Teachers use “Dictionary Notebooks” because they are new ways for step by step improvement while students are learning new words.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate student’s opinions about “What is the importance of ‘Dictionary Notebooks for them?’”. The study was carried out with sixth-grade students in a middle school in the fall and spring semesters of 2015-2016 academic year at Yenice district of Çanakkale province. The research follows the qualitative research paradigm and the data was collected via semi-structured one-on-one interviews with 10 students. Case study design was employed in the current study. One of the researchers is Turkish Language Teacher in the target school. For this reason she interviewed her own students. On the light of our study it can be noted that as a habit

formation it is better to start that unknown vocabulary note taking process as much early as possible.

Keywords: Dictionary Notebooks, native language education, qualitative research.

1. Introduction

Mother tongue is a miracle of the nature. If a person wants to be a good speaker he/she should have a prosperous thesaurus. For a good vocabulary, one should learn a lot of words and read as much as possible. In this research, we planned to discuss Dictionary Notebooks and how can we use them more effectively.

In Turkey, teachers use Dictionary Notebooks whenever students read a text and they don't know the meaning of any word in their native language. Dictionary Notebook is a kind of writing and repetition of unknown words in a special notebook. First, teacher start reading and then students begin to read one by one. This reading process proceeds with harmony.

Vocabulary has an important place in Native Language Education and Second Language Education. When students read a difficult text and unknown words aren't understood. It is a real problem for communication. Thus, teachers need to implement new methods. For this reason, teachers should widen their perspectives. For vocabulary education Dictionary Notebook is another option.

“Successful vocabulary curricula increase children's word knowledge by approximately 300 words a year (Stahl & Fairbanks cited from: Carlo, August, Mclaughlin, Dressler, 2004:191). While such gains are not unimportant, they are hardly sufficient to close the gap between the vocabulary skills of lower socioeconomic status (SES) and middle SES children, which is estimated to be as high as 6,000 words at school entry (Hart & Risley, 1995 cited from: Carlo, August, Mclaughlin, Dressler 2004:191).”

Nathaniel Hawthorne has a nice adage: “Words, so innocent and powerless as they are, standing in a dictionary; how potent for good and evil they become in the hands of one who knows how to choose and combine them.” (Pikulski, 2003:1) Using the correct word in place gives meaning to our conversations. It is highly essential that the texts used in Turkish textbooks should be appropriate for the level of the students. The words used in daily life

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should be considered in the first place. Provided that the unknown words are used in different reading texts then it can be easier to acquire and retain than permanently (Duran, 2010:17).

According to research done by Pikulski (2003:2) “Young children naturally learn to communicate through listening and speaking. In order to make the transition to communicating through reading and writing, they need a large meaning vocabulary and effective decoding skills. There is an abundance of research evidence to show that an effective decoding strategy allows students not only to identify printed words accurately but to do so rapidly and automatically (Pikulski and Chard, 2003 cited from Pikulski & Templeton, 2004:2).”

According to Pikulski & Templeton (2004:10); Research is evident regarding implications for instruction that will ensure the development of large, useful thesaurus: extensive reading plays a critical role in developing knowledge. Teachers should also directly teach important words, and they should develop and sustain students' interest and curiosity about words.

1.1. Purpose

Native Language Education aims to develop reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

In this study researchers tried to answer the questions below:

1. Does the dictionary notebook make improvement for the students' vocabulary?
2. Does the dictionary notebook affect student's social lives positively and favorably?

2. Method

In this study qualitative research method was used. Research design is an example of the event (case study). As a means of data collection interviews were used and data collection tool is document analysis.

2.1. Participants of the Survey

The universe of the research constitutes middle school students in Yenice district of Çanakkale province in Turkey. The participants of the study are 10, 6

grade students who were selected randomly in the target school. The research was conducted with 10, 6 grade students in target secondary school in Yenice/Çanakkale during 2015-2016 academic year. The students who accepted to attend the study and continue to use dictionary notebooks in their school studies are selected, besides sampling pattern was used as criterion of the study.

Additional Personal Information:

Table 1. Personal Characteristics of Students :

Person	Age	Gender	Class Grade	Duration of Dictionary Usage
1M*	12	Male	6	1,5 years
2M*	12	Male	6	1,5 years
3F*	12	Female	6	1,5 years
4M*	12	Male	6	1,5 years
5F*	12	Female	6	1,5 years
6F*	12	Female	6	1,5 years
7F*	12	Female	6	1,5 years
8F*	12	Female	6	1,5 years
9F*	12	Female	6	4 months
10F*	12	Female	6	1,5 years

*F: Female M: Male

2.2. Data Collection

Semi- structured questionnaire form was prepared as means of data collection medium for grade sixth students in this study. The questions were compiled by scanning literature. The questions in the form were reedited by consultation with two Turkish Education experts and one science of education expert.

In this study the questions below were asked to the students while interviewing.

Usage of dictionary notebook:

- 1.1 Was it effective for improvement of your vocabulary?
- 1.2 Was it useful for understanding of the materials that you read and listened to?
- 1.3. Did it make an effect on the reflection of the acquired vocabulary to your speaking?
- 1.4. Was it effective to express your decisions through oral and written ways?
- 1.5. Does preparing vocabulary alphabetically make any effect on your Turkish dictionary usage?
2. Do you have any suggestions in terms of using dictionary notebook?

2.3. Analysing the Data

While doing interviews with the students the participants were asked to complete the interview forms. Each student is numbered from one to ten and also by gender as 1F (female), 2M (male) and so on. The themes were determined according to the basis of the questions asked. Depending on the similar answers the results were compiled and identified. It is indicated as in the figure. Realizing the questions asked was based on themes. Data collection tool is the analysis of documents. In the document analysis, content analysis technique was used to analyze the data. "On the content analysis similar data put together in accordance with certain concepts and themes and interpret then by organizing in a way that the reader can understand." (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013: 259).

2.4. Validity and Reliability of the Survey

The help of another researcher was taken to determine the reliability of the code generated from the answers given by the students in Turkey. The results obtained from each of the researchers were compared with the reliability formula by (Miles and Huberman 1994 : 64) and accordingly calculated and shown below.

Reliability = Consensus / (Consensus + Dissidence) = 57 / (57 + 3) = 0.95. The reliability of the research was found to be 0.95 after the analysis of the results. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) coding reliability must be at least 0.80 reliability level so that it can be accepted as reliable (cited Creswell , 2013).

Results and Comments

Table.2. The Effect on Vocabulary

- a) It was effective. (1M, 2E, 3K, 4E, 5K, 6K, 7K, 8K, 9K, 10K)
 - b) It wasn't effective (Null).
-

All students who participated in the study think that there is an effect on their vocabulary. This suggests that using dictionary notebooks improve students' vocabulary.

Table.3. The Effect on Reading And Listening

- a) It was effective. (1M, 3K, 5K, 6K, 8K, 9K, 10K)
 - b) It wasn't effective (2E, 4E,)
 - c) It was effective on reading, not on listening (7K)
-

Most of the students think that using dictionary notebook makes an effect on both on reading and on listening.

Table.4. The Effect on Speaking

- a) It was effective (1E, 2E, 3K, 4E, 5K, 6K, 7K, 8K, 9K, 10K)
 - b) It wasn't effective (Null)
-

Majority of the students thinks that there is an effect on speaking.

Table.5. The Effect on Oral and Written Expression

- a) It was effective (1E, 2E, 3K, 4E, 5K, 10K)
 - b) It wasn't effective (6K, 9K)
 - c) It was effective on oral but not on written expression. (7K)
 - d) It was effective on written expression. (8K)
-

Students think that dictionary usage contributes particularly to oral expression.

Table.6. The Effect on Using Glossary

- a) It was effective (1E, 3K, 4E, 5K, 6K, 10K)
- b) It wasn't effective (2E, 7K, 8K, 9K)

Students who believe that there is an effect on using glossary and the ones who don't are approximately equal.

Table.7. The Recommendations on Using Dictionary Notebooks from Students

- a) It must be used (7K)
 - b) Younger students should use (8K)
 - c) It wasn't necessary (9K)
 - d) No recommendation (1E, 2E, 3K, 4E, 5K, 6K, 10K)
-

Most students did not make any recommendations about the use of the dictionary notebooks. However, a single student gave a suggestion in the form of a proposal that “if the words are written they can be more memorable so dictionary notebooks should be used from the early ages.”

2.5. Result

According to the results of our research dictionary notebook use is particularly useful in terms of developing vocabulary. Students also think that there is a positive impact on their speech as well. Nonetheless, it is noted by most of the students that there is no effect on using glossary. Yet, the students think that it would be beneficial to use dictionary notebooks particularly as long as when they are started to be used in early ages for themselves.

According to (Yağcı E.& Katrancı M.& Erdoğan Ö.& Uygun M., 2012); class teachers didn't get any information about teaching words in their education period. But they tried to improve their vocabulary teaching skills themselves as personal efforts in Turkey. By getting Dictionary Notebooks and acquiring unknown words in their mother tongues students can gain social expertise in their lives with that capacity. On the light of our study it can be noted that as a habit formation it is better to start that process as much early as possible. Besides, some attractive visuals can be used for augmenting student's interest.

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