

Strategies to Expand EFL Learners' Word Retention through Story Retelling vs. Story Role-playing

Abstract

Teaching new words is indispensable to every EFL teacher's teaching experience. This is because of the importance of expanding word knowledge that no one can deny as a tool for efficient communication. First, this study aimed to investigate intentional word-list learning and incidental word learning inside stories. Moreover, the significant impact of role-playing and retelling strategy on students' retention of the words and meaning was assessed. Additionally, productive and passive retention of vocabulary enhancement was investigated to judge the effectiveness of different storytelling methods in improving learners' retention of new words. Thus, 24 pre-intermediate L2 learners were randomly assigned to 3 equal groups. The control group was exposed to word-list learning, and the treatment groups were instructed on new words through role-playing, narrating the stories, and word-list learning through learning words by L1 translation. The 2 methods of role-playing and narrating stories demanded the learners to practice the new words by memorizing the exact dialogues and paraphrasing the dialogues. Final assessments were used to check which of the 2 vocabulary learning methods best-promoted word retention. The findings provide implications for introducing and implementing storytelling with role-playing strategies and narrating for teenage groups from the starting point to enhance word retention compared with word-list learning.

Keywords: *Vocabulary retention, Word-list learning, Retelling the story, Role-playing the story.*

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1. Introduction

A successful communication in new language is always accompanied with the vast knowledge of the Vocabulary. (Hunt & Beglar, 2005; Knight, 1994); therefore, there is a positive connection between lexical competence and second language proficiency. That is, meaning can be conveyed without the exact grammatical structure but not without the correct words; and successful vocabulary teaching must be integrated with any types of language curriculum. Hence, it is not irrelevant to prioritize vocabulary teaching to the other language learning skills due to EFL learners' difficulties in reminiscing new words.

However, the best teaching method of vocabulary has been deputed (Rassaei, 2017; Yusuf, Sim, & Su'ad, 2014) because of the difficulties in terms of interference from subsequent learning and insufficient recycling of new words. As Harmer, 2015 argues, what helps learners to acquire words is to recycle them in different ways, such as stories, movies, songs, etc. Likewise, numerous studies have brought evidence to support this view that recalling new English words creates severe problems for learners of English. According to (Ramezanali, 2017, p.6), recalling the word or word retention is the learners' competency to produce the meaning and the spelling of the new words after a given time. Consequently, to deal with the challenges of recalling the recently learned vocabularies, learners require to expose L2 vocabulary in diverse contexts technically (Schmitt, 2008). As Harmer

(2015) assert, employing the interactive strategies of word learning, by far, will assist learners to cope more effectively with unfamiliar words and recall the acquired words promptly over a long time and apply them in communicative contexts correctly.

Besides the direct method of word-list learning, there have been various strategies assisting teachers to benefit from the storytelling inside the classroom to suit learners' needs in real-life situations. As Harmer (2015) mentions task effectiveness is determined by the learners' level of involvement, which directly pertains to the process of word retention. The most commonly reported strategies involving learners in the learning process are retelling and role-playing, which are the most practical strategies to be employed; as they direct learners to active participation in language acquisition.

According to Gambrell, Kapinus, and Koskinen (1991), retelling is an effective instructional technique for increasing the comprehension of both proficient and less-proficient readers through the verbal reconstruction of the text, which assists readers in organizing their processing capacity more efficiently. Brandi-Muller (2005) also states that story retelling lets learners analyze the stories and present them differently from their originals to build oral language as they acquire related vocabulary.

Coupled with the narrating approach, employing the interactive technique of role-playing the story can effectively

develop learners' involvement in the learning process. The performance-like nature of role-playing pushes learners to memorize the exact dialogues of the story characters to enable them to best deal with the real interaction.

Previous empirical studies (e.g., Hsu, 2010; and McDrury & Alterio, 2003) discussed the effects of storytelling on the development of language skills in L2. Similarly, in the area of vocabulary teaching (e.g. Mall-Amiri & Ghanbari 2014; Özdemir, 2015; Raghibdoust & Taheri, 2017), findings reported by Ehri and Wilce (1980), Randall (2007), and Fitzpatrick (2008), showed deciding on the best method of teaching word is a demanding job. However, the paucity of research on the contrast between the effectiveness of storytelling and the traditional method of word list learning on the vocabulary retention as well as the relationship between improvement of vocabulary knowledge of the L2 learners through the story retelling and role-playing was so demanded.

It is hoped that the results would throw light on the most effective methods of teaching which provide the greatest feedback on the language learning process through detailed portfolios of L2 learners, then finds their area of weakness or strength, and acts accordingly by finding the best-suited methodologies, materials, and activities to be presented. The result of this study might provide evidence that students who are frequently exposed to stories develop their oral language proficiency more easily than those who are not, thanks to achieving a higher level of lexicon knowledge through active participation in language learning and interacting with the other students.

Furthermore, the findings might be useful for other researchers, teachers, syllabus designers, and materials developers who want to come up with the most effective strategies that direct learners to acquire new vocabularies in an L2 to get the greatest feedback from their learning and use them in their real conversations effectively, as much as possible.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Types of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is regarded as a means of language carrier that assists speakers and learners in communicating and utilize in the four skills of the language (listening, speaking, writing and reading) (Nation ,2001; and Schmitt, 2004). while Lehr, Hiebert, and Osborn (2004) believe that vocabulary knowledge consists of two forms of verbal and written. Verbal words are recognized and utilized in listening and speaking; While written words are recognized and deployed in reading and writing. Eventhogh, based on the recent research was devided into productive (active) and receptive (passive) in terms of its use in different skills of writing, reading, listening, or speaking (Read, 2000 and Schmitt, 2014, as cited in Akbari & Jahangard, 2012).

2.1.1. Passive or Receptive Vocabulary

Receptive vocabulary are often regarded as less well-known and less frequently used. Students may not use receptive words in writing or speaking; rather, they may assign meanings to this group of words while listening or reading a text. These words are recognizable by students, despite of not distinguishing them elaborately. However, receptive words are partially considered passive knowledge of the words as they are not hard to recognize when someone encounters them, even if imperfectly. Learning receptive vocabulary usually could be assessed by multiple choice questions given by the teacher inide sthe sentences and asks them to recognize the correct words to fit the given sentences (Anderson, Herman, & Nagy, 1987; Webb, 20013).

2.1.2. Active or Productive Vocabulary

Harmer (2001) has identified productive (active) knowledge of vocabulary as those words that are well-known, familiar, and frequently used when an individual writes or speaks. Laufer (1997) divides productive vocabulary knowledge into the *controlled and free vocabulary*. Ability to construct words with given cues is considered a controlled productive vocabulary knowledge; free productive word skill incorporates the word production naturally in writing or speaking tasks.

2.1.3. Correlation of Receptive and Productive Vocabulary Knowledge

Production competency of the right words grammatically, formly, and meaningfully associates with the receptive vocabulary knowledge . Therefore, since the main goal is to activate vocabulary learning to utilize the new words in real communication, either orally or written, differentiation between receptive and productive knowledge is in demand. Although Oller (1979) argues that there is no precise separation between vocabulary knowledge from receptively and productively, students need to learn words practically (Oller, 1979).

According to Webb (2013), the study of words receptively only impacts the meaning identification; acquiring vocabulary productively will develop lexical competence and language efficiency. Consequently, studying the aspects of vocabulary knowledge and its learning process may assist both instructors and learners.

2.2. Vocabulary Learning

According to Grauberg (1997), the vocabulary learning process does not occur at the first meeting of the word; rather, it consists of four stages discrimination, understanding meaning, remembering, and consolidation by extending meaning.

As Grauberg defines, in the basic discrimination stage, the learners can distinguish sounds, letters of similar words, or those close words audibly and literally to use them specifically verbally or literally. The secondary stage of understanding the meaning involves perceiving the notion of

the second language. Comprehending the meaning often consists of coupling the word to the exact meaning in the learner's first language. The third step of remembering the word, which will be achieved through defining, presenting, and exemplifying. Ultimately, the word will definitely be forgotten if it is not paid enough attention to after finding out the meaning. The last stage accompanies the consolidation of knowing new words. Learning new words effectively and practically is not conceived anymore as an instantaneous process that merely deals with the presentation level; rather, it needs the association of new words to the previously learned vocabulary.

Therefore, as Grauberg (1997) states, new words will be integrated into the word knowledge of the learners effectively if they are received gradually and respectively after the presenting word-form with its linguistic description of vocabulary learning, meaning, pronunciation, and spelling combined with the relation of the morphological forms and syntactic links, which come after understanding the meaning. Eventhough, It is not a big deal how to approach the meaning of the second language, consolidation stage of new words and their forms can facilitate memorizing process (Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997). According to Waring (2000), absorbing new words deeply would be more successfully gained by any types of post-task activities which focus on collocations and usage of the word within text not just separately.

2.3. Vocabulary Acquisition through Practice and Elaboration

The explicit method of word list-learning requires learners to focus on the form, and meaning repeatedly, loudly or silently. whereas, learning by role-playing or retelling the story demands to practices and use precise target words grammatically and semantically flawless.

Respectively, rehearsal is often defined as repetition. The mental technique of rehearsal assists learners in remembering information. According to the psychological view, Baddeley (1997) classifies rehearsal into two kinds: retaining and elaborative . First, maintenance rehearsal accompanies memorizing lexicon without elaborating on deep meaning, like rote learning. Even though forgetting will not happen if the word is processed by maintenance rehearsal, this word skill will not give rise to long-term word knowledge.

On the other hand, practice new words elaboratively supplies deep meaning and Linguistic rehearsal, such as sentence writing, summarizing or paraphrasing, and role-playing tasks, which leads to long-term memorization (Baddeley, 1997, p. 123). The complex elaboration process aids learners to connect previously acquired knowledge to the new one which consequently enters to the long-term store, as well (Sousa, 2006).

2.4. Strategies Employed in Acquiring New Words

Though, according to Webb (2013), the study of words receptively only impacts the meaning identification,

acquiring vocabulary productively will develop lexical competence and language efficiency. Due to insufficient knowledge of effective vocabulary learning, English language learners frequently employ intentional and incidental learning approaches to remember and produce new words and thus create certain types of errors.

2.4.1. Intentional Vocabulary Learning or Learning by Word Lists

The most commonly reported strategy language learners use learning by word list. As Laufer and Shmueli (1997) define, learners are made to memorize the intended list of new words in the target language with one translation of each word into their first language through repetition. Some researchers maintain that there is insufficient evidence to support the idea that vocabulary learning through the context is the most effective way to learn new vocabulary (see Tudor and Hafiz, 1989; Hulstijn, 1992). Having said that, Coady (1997) and Milton (2009) believe that learning words from a list (intentional study) are a necessary and quick process in L2 learning. Far from being unfriendliness and ineffectiveness of word-list learning, it could be considered as a necessary and fast way of acquiring large amounts of vocabulary.

2.4.2. Incidental Word Learning through Authentic Text

A huge mass of research has been conducted to prove that learners acquire words much more practically through the story (Abrahamson, 1998; Roney, 1996; Sundmark, 2014).

Researchers in the field of language teaching characterize storytelling in terms of how/what the story does to foster communication between storytellers and listeners. Roney (1996) characterizes storytelling as a procedure in which a teller communicates effectively with audiences, using several devices such as vocalization, narrative structure, mental imagery, body language, and facial expression in an ongoing communication cycle. This could indicate that storytelling promotes spoken language skills by enhancing learners' motivation and interests.

2.5. Approaches to Employ Story in EFL Teaching

Among the all interactive method of communicative approach in language teaching, role-playing and retelling the story promotes long-term retention of words drastically; as they assist learners in consolidating new words inside their minds and recalling them in their real conversations (Mall-Amiri & Ghanbari, 2014; Özdemir, 2015; Thornbury, 2002). In retelling or narrating strategy, the teacher helps learners imagine the theme as a shot film or associated images, then directs them to restate the story in their own words. The technique of narrating (or retelling) a story provides an opportunity for learners to activate their memory to recycle new words that they have just learned to improvise a story to create a new version. Retelling, on the one side, can apply to the recognition of learners' comprehension, assessment, and comprehension in the teaching or learning process. In line

with the studies mentioned above, Han (2005) mentioned three eminent findings about retelling in his thesis:

1. By retelling, learners can involve in their language learning through the reconstruction of text merging with the interaction between learners (Morrow, 1985).
2. Comprehension and recalling development are the other consequences of the oral retelling of what has been listened to or read to (Gambrell, Koskinen, & Kapinus, 1985; Lipson & Wixson, 1997).
3. Retelling, on the other hand, assists learners in personalizing and integrating language description into their personal life (Gambrell, Pfeiffer, & Wilson, 1985).

On the other hand, there have been a considerable amount of studies and research (e.g., Alabsi, 2016; Dolzhykova, 2014; Han, 2005; Özdemir, 2015) on the importance of role-playing as an effective strategy to aid literacy growth as well as the oral language fluency.

Many studies and research have been conducted (e.g., Alabsi, 2016; Mall-Amiri & Ghanbari, 2014; Özdemir, 2015; Sadeghi & Sharifi, 2013) that argue for the higher level of vocabulary knowledge of second language learners after the role-play activities. Complementary to these observations on the comparison between the effectiveness of different strategies for storytelling (e.g., Mall-Amiri & Ghanbari 2014; Raghibdoust & Taheri, 2017; and Özdemir, 2015) and studies in the area of vocabulary teaching which were reported by Ehri & Wilce's (1980), and Randall (2007) deciding on the best method of teaching word is a demanding job.

Lack of the specification on the most practical and beneficial method of using storytelling in EFL classrooms became a starting point for the researcher to do this research and to find and contrast a relationship between the effectiveness of implementing various strategies in storytelling and learners' lexical recognition and retention; as EFL learners' main challenge is how to recall the new words in their real conversations.

2.5.1 Theoretical Background of Using Storytelling in EFL Teaching

The storytelling strategy of second language teaching was first developed based on two of Krashen's (1987) theories: The comprehensive Input hypothesis and the Affective Filter theory of language learning. This chapter is going to develop these two theoretical justifications for the use of stories in language learning. Firstly, it focuses on comprehensible input theory and affective filter theory, which integrate language teaching with literature because of its richness in providing more authentic language use and its embedded motivational benefit. Second, the Cognitive Development theory of Piaget provides more evidence on the significance of teaching

language in context. At last, the output theory of Swain (1985) authenticates that language learning does not merely occur by the provision of language input; rather, the learners need to practice the target language through the most practical and effective methods due to better and longer acquisition.

Previous studies (e.g., Ozdemir, 2015; Milton, 2009; Scott & Ytreberg, 1990) have explored three major theories concerning the significance of teaching vocabulary in context, namely Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis (1987), Krashen's affective filter hypothesis (1987), and Piaget's cognitive development theory of learning (1971). Scott and Ytreberg (1990, as cited in Ozdemir, 2015) explicate how contextualization promotes lexicon competence. They maintain that learning language in context helps to understand and associate words, functions, structures, and situations with a particular topic. In addition, Ozdemir (2015) notes that teaching a new language incorporated with storytelling can promote the feeling of well-being and relaxation while encouraging active participation and cooperation between students in which verbal proficiency would be increased.

Moreover, the input processing model of Van Patten (2002) also provides theoretical justifications for using input-based tasks of learning vocabulary by memorizing the word list. According to this model, exposure to explicit instruction and input-processing activities assist language learners in creating a connection between form and meaning. This leads to learning new words with their L1 meaning (Van Patten, 2002). On the other side, Swain's (1985, 1995) output hypothesis mainly provides theoretical justifications for using output-based tasks. According to this hypothesis, engaging learners in language production can enhance language learning. According to the output hypothesis, the L2 acquisition is not supported by comprehensible input and semantic elaboration; rather, it requires the syntactic processing associated with language production through collaborative output tasks.

2.5.2 Krashen's Comprehensible Input and Affective Filter Theories

In the comprehensive input theory, Krashen (1987) asserts that language fluency is mainly developed by subconscious learning through comprehensible messages or receiving, meaning that language learning only occurs by receiving input without any output practice (Lightbown & Spada 1997). Moreover, Krashen's affective filter hypothesis asserts that acquiring language will take place effectively if learners feel relaxed and open to learning. Rather than being definitely complicated to the learner's level. For this reason, storytelling is a perfect tool to provide understandable authentic language input in the foreign language classroom. At the point of the affective filter hypothesis, stories can link learners' previous knowledge with the new information by using different clues

and information, whereby the affective factors will be decreased, consequently. On the other hand, L2 words learned by word lists can provide a comprehensible input as they link L1 concepts to L2 words with L1 translation or L2 definition.

2.5.3. Learning Definition by Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory

In addition, according to *Piaget's Cognitive Development theory* of learning (1971) which assigns the crucial tasks of analyzer, evaluator, and interpreter to the learners' minds, there is no room for such a traditional theory of behaviorism that focuses on language learning through repetition. Piaget (1971) considers humans as thinking beings that go through the developmental stages of language learning. Developmental stages of language learning, as Piaget (1971) categorizes them, include four stages in the third level of developmental stage, the young learners are capable of doing logical processing. Regarding the logical stage in second language learning, the language learning process would be accelerated if it were supplemented with more deliberation and association. Furthermore, following Cognitive development theory, Kersten (2010, as cited in Liu, 2011) asserts that learning new words does not occur at the first meeting; rather, it demands the general process of vocabulary memorization.

2.5.4. Output Hypothesis

Swain (1985: 159) believes that language acquisition will only take place through language production, either spoken or written. As Swain (1985) lists, the SLA process can be facilitated according to the output hypothesis through some important aspects. The aspects are as follows:

1. The noticing/Triggering function
2. Hypothesis testing
3. Metalinguistic function (Cook & Seidlhofer, 1995).

Kitajima (2001) and Barcroft (2006) argue that the vocabulary learned based on the assigned tasks (such as sentence writing) will conclude in long-term memorization than the vocabulary learned by just providing words and meanings (such as learning by word lists). Similar studies were carried out by Izumi (1999) and Yu (2011). They attested that the learners' output promotes the noticing of the linguistic form as appropriate input provided, i.e., restating the story or paraphrasing the story's messages to carry out the role-playing or retelling the story tasks, respectively.

2.6. Strategies to Employ Story in EFL Teaching

Among all the activities teachers can employ in language learning, role-playing and dramatically narrating stories help vocabulary learning automatically. As the research results showed (Lee & Muncie, 2006), the storytelling method, which can be designed in language curriculum as followed, is of the most important as enables learners to produce unknown words more spontaneously:

1. Role-playing task compels learners to memorize the exact dialogues of different characters to act inside the classroom. The exact target new words must be used.

2. Retelling the story of what we have read or listened to, as Joe (1995) asserts, greatly improves vocabulary acquisition for unknown words through the narrating the story from their tongues using the target words without the obligation to memorize the exact dialogues of the story characters; that is, the retelling activity lets learners use paraphrasing whenever they need.

2.6.1. Theoretical Background of Retelling vs. Role-playing the Story

Swain's (1985, 1995) output hypothesis mostly provides theoretical rationales for using output-based tasks and a generative model of retelling and role-playing. According to the *output hypothesis and generative model*, target words will be learned effectively if output practice involves learners in language production instead of semantic elaboration. Moreover, the depth of processing hypothesis also supports whether tasks are efficient for acquisition and evoke learners to use target words to produce the target language or not.

2.6.1.1. The Generative Model

The generative model of Wittrock (1974) defines long-term vocabulary learning by interrelating old and new vocabulary knowledge. The generative model adapted the depth of the processing model as well as the involvement load hypothesis. Bjork and Hirshman (1988) assert that the target word production bears the spelling, pronunciation, or semantic relation to a stimulus word. Consequently, the later recall will be enhanced by the called generation effect. That is, using the real target words to play the role or paraphrasing in narrating tasks are two kinds of generation tasks that connect the target word and the whole speaking task, i.e., acting the role of narrating the story.

2.6.1.2. The Depth of Processing Theory

The depth of processing theory, which was first coined by Craik and Lockhart (1972), argues that different ways to process input promote different levels of memory. Different types of memories depend on the different levels of processing. The short-term memory knowledge only remains for a short time and will be forgotten by the learner after a while. However, some activities like analysis, organization, production, and recognition of meaning assist in long-term knowledge memory.

The advocates of the depth of processing model dispute the durability of memory traces. They propose that retention is closely related to encoding, on one hand (e.g., Lefrancois 2006), and cognitive effort, on the other hand (Thornbury, 2002). That is, better understanding and deeper learning are directly related to the more cognitive efforts of the learners. Both role-playing and narrating the story are two kinds of learning vocabulary in depth.

2.7. Rationale of the Present Study

According to previous studies, L2 learning (particularly vocabulary learning) involves correct recognition and retention of target sounds, which is not easier than any other language learning skill. Thus, despite the importance of knowing a large mass of target words attached with their correct spelling, meaning, and the difficulty attributed to their retention after a long time, this notion has rarely been examined for Iranian EFL learners.

In this sense, testing methods of L2 teaching and learning to improve the recognition and retention level of words of EFL learners have not even been carried out completely. The current study examined the three methods of teaching words inside the stories, role-playing, and narrating in one hand, and teaching words outside the text and by word list to Iranian EFL learners to fill the current gap in Linguistics studies.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The subjects were 24 Iranian female intermediate learners from 30 language learners in Esfahan language institute. The researcher selected the participants non-randomly, based on Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The selected subjects was divided randomly into two experimental groups in two classes and one control group in another class.

3.2. Materials

The materials used with the experimental groups throughout the teaching process were 10 stories adapted from the book *Anecdotes in American English* and its activities. The target new words were written in boldface to raise learners' awareness. There were also three types of tests used to collect the data:

1. An Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was run to determine the subjects' proficiency level and select intermediate learners.
2. A pretest was given one week before the learning sessions to three groups of learners to assess the existing word skill level of the learners in three classes to recognize and control the preexisting differences.
3. Post-tests were administered in two forms: the active retention test, which assessed learners' productive knowledge of words in terms of their abilities to recall acquired L2 new words, and the passive retention test, which examined the participants' receptive competence in remembering L1 equivalents of new words.

3.3. Procedure

The OPT test was conducted to 30 learners with the same age, sex, and level of language competency to homogenize the participants in terms of proficiency. Then 24 teenage learners, whose scores fell one standard deviation above and below the mean, were selected as the sample groups. In the second stage, the researcher measured the participant's current level of vocabulary knowledge of learners by a teacher-made vocabulary test, which consisted of 40 intended new words.

In the treatment stage, two tasks of role-playing and narrating the story were practiced in two experimental groups. In contrast, the control group learned the target new words by the word list presented through the L1 translation, L2 definition, and the exact pronunciation. Each group consisted of 8 female learners who had 90-minute classes thrice a week. In these three groups, the teacher wrote the new vocabularies on the board presenting the correct pronunciation, definition, and translation of the words.

After presenting the new words and meaning, three different types of tasks were practiced during the 10 sessions of treatment. First, in rote learning, the target words were rehearsed by repeating the L1 equivalent and L2 definition of new words. Second, in narrating, learners reconstructed the new sentences with target words to retell the story. Third, in role-playing, learners practiced using the new words by playing each character's role by memorizing the exact dialogues of the story. Finally, the three sample groups were given the retention vocabulary tests to compare and contrast the reason within the three groups.

3.4. Data Analysis

To evaluate the assembled data, SPSS 24 was used. Data was scrutinized both descriptively and inferentially. To judge accurately, this assessment gave an account of the methods selected to investigate the research questions; and reports on the results obtained from the analyses carried out on the scores. For this reason, firstly, the homogeneity test of the participants is checked. Secondly, an independent *t*-test was run on the findings from the tests to investigate and compare the performances of participants of each group in the pretest and post-test. Third, three sets of independent sample *t*-tests between students' performance in word list learning, role-playing story, and narrating groups were run to determine the relationship between each classification of vocabulary teaching method and the participants' retention level. Finally, the one-way ANOVA test was applied to compare the scores obtained from the control and two treatment groups to explore the significant differences between them.

The retention or recall tests are conducted into two forms of a receptive and a productive test asking to write down the English and Persian translation of different words.

4. Results

4.2. Descriptive Data

4.2.1. Testing the Participants' Homogeneity

As mentioned earlier, 24 pre-elementary-level EFL learners were chosen from some 30 EFL learners based on the OPT test, who were then classified into two experimental groups and a control group. The homogeneity of the three groups in terms of their proficiency level, their OPT test scores were compared through an ANOVA test:

Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics for the Oxford Placement Test

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Oxford Placement Test	Word List Learning	8	20.3750	2.38672	.84383
	Role-playing	8	19.6250	2.97309	1.05115
	Narrating	8	19.5000	3.58569	1.26773
	Total	24	19.8333	2.91423	.59487
					2.23950

Table 4.1 displays that the word list learning mean score on the OPT test equaled 20.37, while the two experimental groups of learners' mean scores amounted to 19.62 and 19.50. To determine the difference among these three mean scores. Thus the three groups on the OPT test were statistically significant or not. The researcher had to examine the

p-value under the *Sig.* (2-tailed) column in the ANOVA test table. In this table, a *sig.* value less than .05 would indicate a statistically significant difference between the two groups, while a *sig.* value larger than .05 indicates a difference that failed to reach statistical significance.

Table 4.2

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances on Oxford Placement Test

Levene Statistic	<i>df</i> 1	<i>df</i> 2	<i>Sig.</i>
.558	2	21	.581

Table 4.3

ANOVA Test of Oxford Placement Test

	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between Groups	3.583	2	1.792	.196	.823
Within Groups	191.750	21	9.131		
Total	195.333	23			

Based on the information presented in Table 4.2 and 4.3, there was no statistically significant difference in the proficiency test scores. Leven's homogeneity test showed that the OPT test variances with the *F* (2, 21) = 0.196, *sig.* = 0.823 has greater *sig.* value than the significance level (*sig.* > .05). Thus, it could be construed that the learners in the three groups were at the same level of proficiency.

Table.4.4.

Tests of Normality of Oxford Placement Test

Methods of Teaching	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>

4.2.2. Testing the Normal Distribution

The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality of distribution was done to examine the assumption that the dependent variable will have normal distributions for all groups. The results of the normality test are reported in Table 4.4 below.

Equal Variance Assumed	4.160	.054	-4.887	22	0.00	-16.43750	3.36358	-23.41313	-9.46187
Equal Variance Not Assumed			-6.392	20.938	0.00	-16.43750	2.57143	-21.78605	-11.08895

Table 4.6 shows that the *sig.* value corresponding to the groups' row was not larger than the alpha level of significance .05 (*Sig.* < .05). This *sig.* value turned out to be smaller than the alpha level of significance, which indicates the difference between the learners in the storytelling ($M = 54.25$, $SD = 9.12$) and word list learning ($M = 37.81$, $SD = 3.35$) on the word retention test was statistically significant. It could thus be inferred that the storytelling method was found to be more effective than the word list learning method in recalling new words after a long time.

Table 4.7.

Descriptive Statistics of Role-playing vs. Narrating Group for the Participants' Performance on Retention Test

	<i>N</i>	Mean Std. Deviation		Std. Error Mean
Role-playing	8	52.6875	5.79370	2.04838
Narrating	8	49.4375	6.37202	2.25285

As the descriptive statistics of table 4.7 delineates, the retention test score of the role-playing ($M = 52.68$) is slightly larger than the retention test mean score of the narrating learners ($M = 49.43$). In order to figure out whether this difference between the Table 4.8.

Independent Samples t Test of Equality of Mean Scores on Retention Test for Role-playing vs. Narrating Groups

Levene's Test of Equality of Variances			<i>t</i> Test for Equality of Means						
Retention Test	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper

4.4. Answering the Second Research Question

According to the findings of the previous section, the storytelling method of vocabulary learning can impressively increase the learner's retention level. In order to figure out whether there is any difference between the effectiveness of using storytelling through role-playing and narrating, the researcher had to compare the vocabulary retention test scores of the learners in the role-playing and narrating groups. This could be done via an independent-samples *t*-test, the results of which are displayed in Tables 4.7 and 4.8:

retention test scores of the two groups was large enough to reach statistical significance or not, the researcher had to look at the *Sig.* column and in front of the Groups row in Table 4.8, where the relevant *p*-value could be pinpointed:

Equal Variances Assumed	.101	.756	1.067	14	.304	3.25000	3.04487	-3.28059	9.78059
Equal Variances Not Assumed			1.067		.304	3.25000	3.04487	-3.28610	9.78610

First, Table 4.8 tested the null hypothesis for the inequality of mean scores across both groups. The *Sig.* value represented in this table 4.8 displays the equality of means (*Sig.* = .304). That is, there was no significant difference between the obtained score of role play group ($M = 52.68$, $SD = 5.79$) and narrating group ($M = 49.43$, $SD = 6.37$); $t(14) = 1.06$, *sig.* = 0.304. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected and there is no significant difference between the vocabulary retention levels of EFL learners instructed through story retelling and role-playing.

5. Conclusion

This study began with a teacher's intention to assist learners who are disappointed in acquiring L2 new words effectively and are unable to retain the new words in their target language production. Various strategies of incidental vocabulary learning such as role-playing, narrating the story, and intentional vocabulary learning by word list were used to moderate forgetting and fortify recalling extensively. The mean values of the experimental groups were assessed to prove the significant difference among the groups.

Findings indicated that the word retention level of learners is affected by the different methods of word teaching. That is, the words acquired through the context recall are easier and longer than those learned outside the text and just memorized by rote learning. Moreover, varied vocabulary teaching strategies through stories, such as role-playing and retelling the story, affect vocabulary retrieval in receptive and productive mode after a long time. That is to say, the role-playing strategy, which involves learners producing the target language by memorizing the exact new words inside the sentences or phrases rather than paraphrasing the sentences in retelling the story, assists learners in retention the meaning and the spelling of the new words after the time interval. Nevertheless, the findings of this research do not indicate the meaningful differences between the effectiveness of

role-playing or narrating on the productive or passive retention level of the word.

Contrarily, although application of word lists learning has been doubted, it can be regarded as a direct method of word learning benefits learners in terms of learning by more concentration. That is, the classroom tasks which are based on learning new words more productively could provide more information for teachers to design befitting instruments to assess the learners' word skills, its form, and use.

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Appendix A

Pre TEST

Please choose the best answer and mark on your answer sheet. Do not write on your questionnaire.

1. It's to talk with your mouth full of food.
a. polite b. well c. not easy d. rude
2. There is no need to! I can hear you.
a. cry b. shut c. shout d. shoot
3. "Hush, hush..., don't wake the baby": Jenny.....
a. said b. whispered c. laughed d. told
4. Speaking with smile can leave a good on people.
a. imprecision b. sense c. feel d. impression
5. The suitcase was for the child to move on his own.
a. too high b. too load c. too heavy d. too light
6. The patients that they have to wait a long time to see the doctor in this hospital.
a. complain b. complaint c. company d. compare
7. The subway is, and we have to stand.
a. empty b. really empty c. really crowd d. really crowded
8. Laughter is the best..... for any diseases.
a. way b. thing c. suggest d. medicine
9. The nurse is going to give an injection to that.....

- a. pedestrian b. patient c. patrician d. people
10. Byyou can keep the sound and play it back whenever you need again.
a. DVD player b. TV stereo c. USB d. tape recorder
11. The first step to play the game with this computer is to the CD on the computer.
a. put b. play c. put in d. put on
12. My brother can't remember what happened immediately before the accident. Immediately means.....
a. exactly b. really c. right away d. clearly
13. Her son were crying over a long time and heon buying a new toy car.
a. shouted b. insisted c. screamed d. wanted
14. The chief is really careful about his of the kitchen to be clean all the time, because he used it for chopping the vegetables.
a. counter b. desk c. board d. knife
15. I can't Which shoes are nice on me, the black ones or red ones?
a. agree b. buy c. decide d. find
16. If the students want to give answer to the teacher's question, they shouldtheir hands before the speaking.
a. hold b. raise c. let d. shake
17. God will help those people who try hard to be
a. fortunate b. lucky c. rich d. successful
18. Electricity travels faster than the sound
a. Light b. beam c. wave d. X-ray
19. He is always late for the class without any
a. explanation b. reason c. answer d. a and b
20. When the parentswith their children, they cannot accept their ideas.
a. disagree b. agree c. dislike d. like
21. Jack's fatherhis business, that is, he is free to open or close his shop whenever he wants.
a. owes b. owns c. directs d. ovens
22. The seller persuaded us to buy that bag which was on the sale. Persuade means
a. wanted b. liked c. talked d. made us to buy
23. The customer should visit the Before talking to the office manager.
a. boss b. secretary c. principal d. chief
24. He a letter from his company that invited him for the interview next week.
a. received b. arrived c. resided d. reached
25. The shy people are of talking in public place.
a. scare b. afraid c. fear d. fan
26. The ship didn't accept to take the control of ship on such a windy day.
a. driver b. pilot c. captain d. rider
27. The passengers got on the ship and the ship left the
a. seaside b. beach c. coast d. port
28. Yearly, Iranian travel to the North of Iran in order to swim in the sea and enjoy resting on the
a. coast b. coach c. cough d. caught
29. No need to hurry, you've got time.
a. no b. little c. plenty of d. few
30. For the skillful swimmer it won't be difficult to swim in theriver.
a. deep b. shallow c. shadow d. empty
31. That boy was not able to walk on the beach because he had on his shoe.
a. sand b. stone c. soil d. oil
32. If you are new comer in a city and don't know the route, it's better to follow thepeople to get around the city.
a. nice b. friendly c. local d. guide
33. In English the letter Q is always by the letter U.
a. came b. followed c. told d. repeated

34. The ship stopped those drivers who drove at the highways.
 a. carefully b. fast c. dangerously d. quickly
35. The ship was waiting to at the new port.
 a. get b. load c. land d. stand
36. By the end of education year, all the students need to pass thein every subjects.
 a. quiz b. examination c. course d. contest
37. A pregnant woman her child over the nine month.
 a. has b. holds c. walks d. carries
38. Standing in a long line reallyme, so I prefer to leave the place.
 a. problematic b. hates c. bothers d. boring
39. She forgot to bring her book but her brother will go home and get it.....
 a. now b. right now c. right away d. after
40. If someone offers you a good job, never turn it down. It is so hard ...a well-paid job.
 a. finds b. tofind c. leads d. to offer

Appendix B

Receptive Retention Test

Translate these words into Persian Words.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Rude | 22. Raise |
| 2. Shout..... | 23. Waves..... |
| 3. Whisper..... | 24. Load..... |
| 4. Impression..... | 25. Follow..... |
| 5. Heavy..... | 26. Put in..... |
| 6. Complain..... | 27. Tape recorder..... |
| 7. Crowded..... | 28. Right away..... |
| 8. Examination..... | 29. Insist |
| 9. Medicine..... | 30. Patient..... |
| 10. Receive..... | 31. Disagree..... |
| 11. Bother..... | 32. Explanation..... |
| 12. Afraid..... | 33. Own..... |
| 13. Carry..... | 34. Persuade..... |
| 14. Immediately..... | 35. Port..... |
| 15. Decide..... | 36. Secretary..... |
| 16. Offer..... | 37. Plenty of |
| 17. Counter..... | 38. Sand..... |
| 18. Coast..... | 39. Shallow..... |
| 19. Captain..... | 40. Local..... |
| 20. Dangerous..... | |
| 21. Successful..... | |

Appendix C

Productive Retention Test

Write English equivalent for these Persian words.

1. پیشنهاد و تعارف کردن...
2. پیشخوان.....
3. ساحل دریا.....
4. کاپیتان کشتی.....
5. خطرناک.....
6. بی ادب.....
7. فریاد زدن.....
8. پیچ کردن.....
9. تاثیر.....
10. سنگین.....
11. موفق.....
12. نصب کردن برنامه.....
13. دنبال کردن.....
14. بارگیری کشتی.....
15. امواج.....
16. بالا بردن.....
17. شکایت کردن.....
18. امتحان.....
19. دارو.....
20. دریافت کردن.....
21. تصمیم گرفتن.....
22. فوراً.....
23. حمل کردن.....
24. ترسیدن.....
25. آزار دادن.....
26. محلی.....
27. کم عمق.....
28. صاحب بون.....
29. ماسه.....
30. بسیار زیلد.....
31. منشی.....
32. بندرگاه.....
33. تشویق کردن.....
34. توضیح.....
35. مخالف بودن.....
36. بیمار.....
37. پافشاری کردن.....
38. ضبط کننده صدا.....
39. شلوغ.....
40. بلافاصله.....

