LOCAL FOLK TALES AS AN COMPELLING DEVICE FOR MEMORIZING LEXICON

Kadirova Nargiza
Phd, associate professor
Bukhara state pedagogical institute
https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10164548

1.Introduction

Teaching language is a complex and time-consuming procedure. For many centuries specialists have developed and implemented various methods to simplify this process and make it more effective. The diversity of approaches for teaching English is currently so wide, that it’s sometimes quite difficult for young teachers to decide which strategy to choose, and is takes years of experience before they figure out which methods work and which don’t.

This presentation is dedicated to a vocabulary teaching strategy that might help students to memorize words faster and understand their meaning in context better. The core idea of the presentation is based on an assumption that familiarity of a text in native language, along with its cultural content, to students makes it easier to memorize the sentence and phrases in its English translation through drawing parallels and reflecting the plotline.

2. Background

- Absolute majority of language teaching programs are based on parsing texts that are originally written on the language being taught. That seems logical, since along with the language, learners become acquainted with the speech culture, traditions and patterns. Such approach has proven effective for decades.
- However, to minimize the load on students, and focus on learning the language itself it might be effective to combine the traditional methods with the ones involving texts familiar to learners and translated from the local language. That might incur additional costs, but at the end it could result in faster vocabulary memorizing, better understanding of phrases in the context and increase the students’ engagement *(during the experiment described in this presentation students demonstrated much higher levels of enthusiasm and interest, probably because the lesson seemed much easier to them due to the familiarity of the analyzed text).*

Research purpose

- To check the effectiveness of using English translations of local folk tales familiar to students within the process of memorizing vocabulary.
- To compare the mentioned method with the traditional one, involving texts written in English originally.

Research methodology

- For the purpose of the first part of the research a well-known Uzbek folktale (Ur-tuqmoq) was translated and printed bilingual on one paper;
- The text was examined with a group of students at the beginning of the lesson;
- New words of average complexity were written out on the blackboard, analyzed and deleted;
- Students were told not to copy the words;
- At the end of the lesson students had a quiz requiring them to write a translation of the 11 new words analyzed at the beginning of the lesson;

- For the purpose of the second part of the research a text originally written in English was printed out (King Midas);
- The story was examined at the beginning of the lesson on the other day with a group of students of the same level as the first one;
- New words of average complexity were written out on the blackboard, analyzed and deleted;
- Students were told not to copy the words;
- At the end of the lesson students had a quiz requiring them to write a translation of the 11 new words analyzed at the beginning of the lesson;
- The Quiz was repeated a week later and all the results were analyzed and compared.

Figure 1

- Number of students in each group (1)
- Students’ year of study (2)
- Time provided for 11 questions (3)

	Group 1	Group 2
1	14	14
2	1	1
3	10 min	10 min

Figure 2
Quiz 1 Outcomes

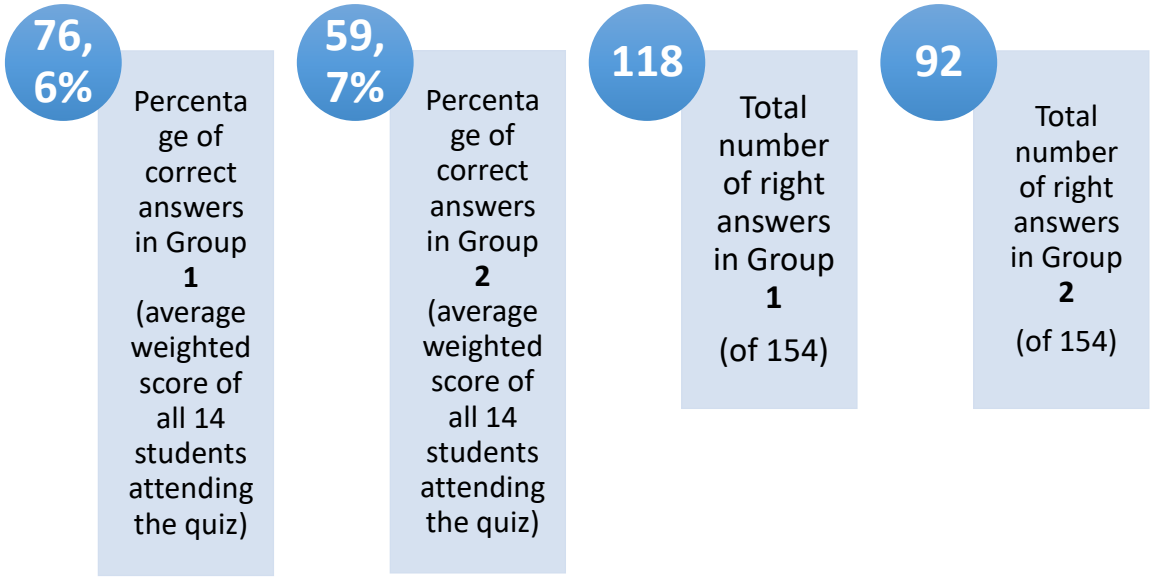


Figure 3
Quiz 2 Outcomes (One week later, with the same Groups)

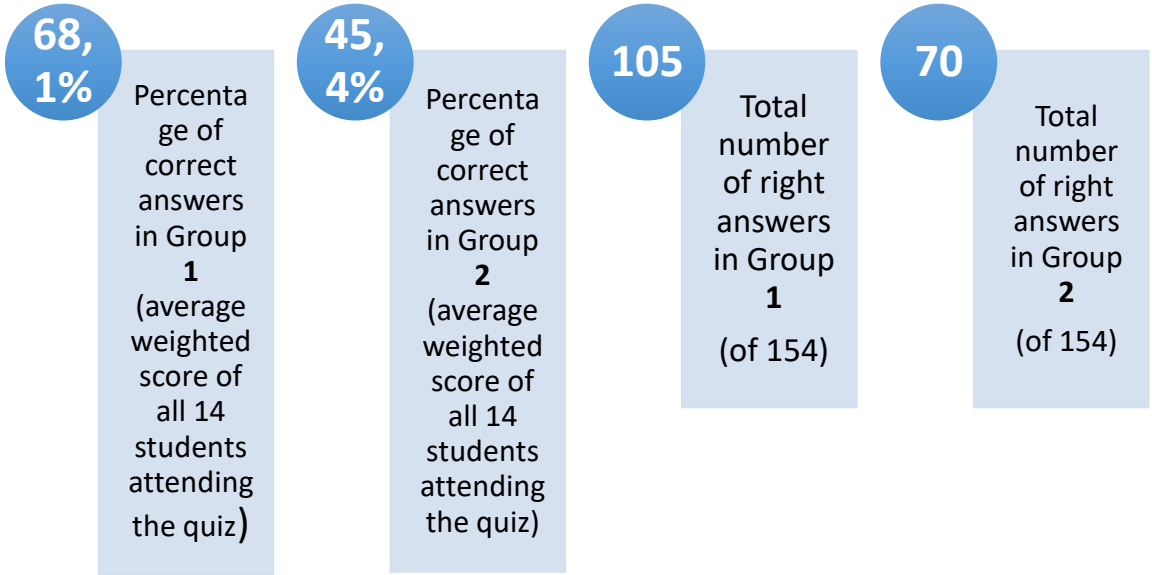
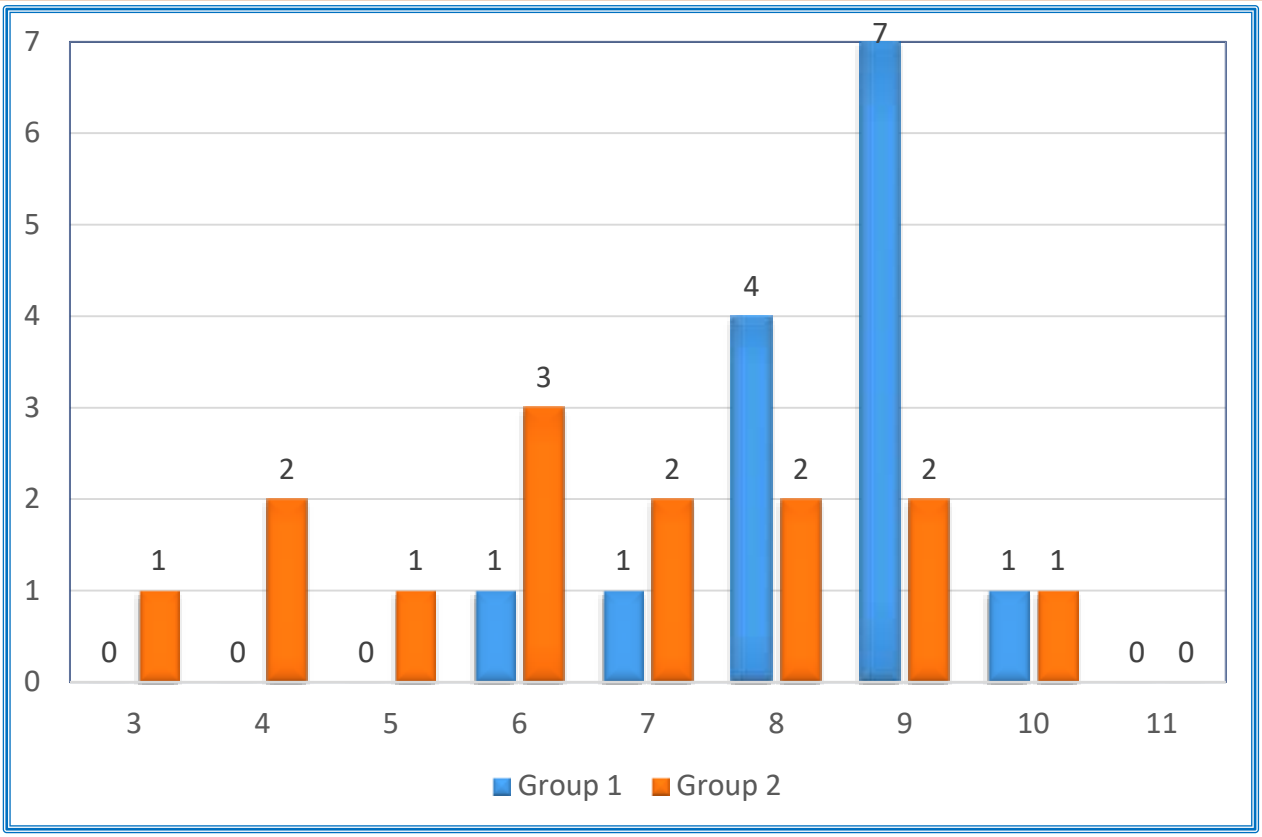


Figure 4
Distribution of Correct Answers, Quiz 1

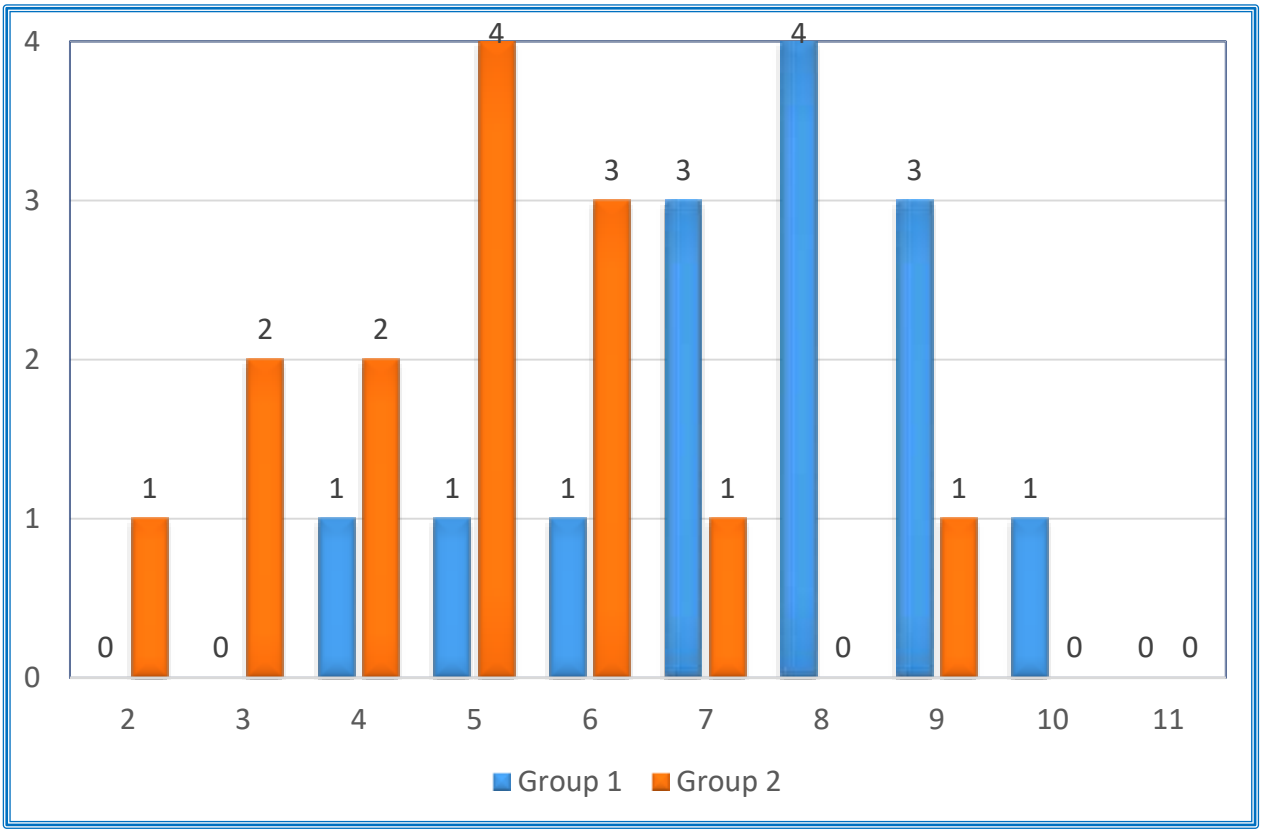


As can be seen from the diagram, 7 students of the Group 1 correctly answered 9 out of 11 questions and 4 students answered 8 questions correctly.

Meanwhile, the majority of the Group 2 gave correct answers only to 7 or less questions.

Figure 5

Distribution of Correct Answers, Quiz 2 (One week later, with the same Groups)



A week later, the results a repeated Quiz changed a little and declined, since students were not given the texts and had no chance to prepare. However, Group 1 once again significantly outperformed Group 2 by almost 23%.

3. Conclusion

The data above shows that parsing texts in English for the purpose of enriching students’ vocabulary might be more effective if those texts are not originally written in English but translated from local texts preliminary familiar to students (such as fairy tales or folk tales). Definitely, such a small analysis can’t be enough to draw a full- fledged conclusion, however, its main task is to provide general overview, draw attention to the issue and entail further, more detailed and professional investigation by scholars.

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