

The Impact of Corpus on EFL Pre-Service Teachers Self-Directed Learning and Oral Proficiency

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Abstract

In light of the impact of professional and personal skills of teachers on their students, the purpose of this paper was to delimit the efficiency of corpus on pre-service teachers' self-directed learning and oral proficiency. It was anticipated that pre-service teachers receiving training on corpus would reveal greater gains in self-directed learning and oral skills. Questions formulated to achieve the purpose of the study focused on: (1) Finding out differences in self-directed learning scale scores regarding experimental and control group. (2) Determining oral skills suitable for the EEL pre-service teachers. (3) Finding out differences in oral skills test regarding experimental and control group. Four instruments -designed by the researcher- that include: (oral skills checklist, self-directed learning scale, oral skills test and scoring rubric for oral skills) were used for collecting data. Findings indicated that the regular procedure used for teaching oral proficiency is not as significant like the corpus approach that developed self-directed learning and oral proficiency. Pre-service teachers of experimental group outclassed their equivalents of the control group in self-directed learning as well as oral proficiency.

Keywords: *Self-Directed Learning, Oral Proficiency, Corpus Approach.*

Introduction

Lifelong education is connected to the practices of teachers and their students (Hager & Haliday, 2006). Consequently, professional development of teachers is prerequisite. Teachers should be active learners in the teaching situation (Marcelo, 2009). Accessing to available information and using it and implementing professional development and new technology inside classrooms are among factors related to teachers' personal development. Moreover, teaching English language skills include effective use of innovative technologies (Krecic & Grmek, 2008). A profound

examination of reforms in teacher roles was implemented, moving from what to teach to how to teach. Since teachers' performances affect their students, one of the crucial elements for accomplishing a superiority teaching process is skillfully qualified teachers (Martinez & McGrath, 2013; V. Zuljan & Vogrinc, 2011). Teachers are the core element of providing students with ample and skillfully education (Ministerial Council for Education, 2008). As being the base of education restructuring and reform, teachers should be always prepared for new educational approaches and strategies. Consequently, there should be a scheme of teacher specialized preparation and training.

Life-long learning process is a part of a teacher's professional development. Moreover, it is a part of refining the quality of teaching, and improving teacher performance (Bicaj & Treska, 2014). The emphasis of the teaching profession is not basically to facilitate the process of knowledge acquisition. The core aim of teaching profession is to make students self-directed learners. Consequently, teachers should be trained how to be self-directed learners since they have impact on their students. Therefore, teachers should be taught and trained how to cope with new challenges in order to apply and implement these responsibilities inside classroom (V. Zuljan & Vogrinc, 2011). Self-directed learning or learning to learn is a basic feature of the future of teaching. Learning how to learn is a far-reaching perception which incorporates independence, meta-cognition, self-regulation, self-esteem and self-efficacy. Self-directed learning enables learners to take responsibility of their own learning and enable them to realize their potential (Higgins, 2009). Corpus approach provides resources and tools needed for learners to construct their knowledge and develop their cognitive and metacognitive processes. Moreover, it enhances learner autonomy and self-directed learning (Granath, 2009 and Nam, 2010). Furthermore, teaching that leads to better-quality students necessitate different methodologies and strategies including personal improvement and professional learning (Goe, 2013). Hence, it is commanding for teachers to enhance their skills (Elliott, 2015). Oral skills are learners' leading method of communicating and main part of the teaching process (Palmer, 2010). It is through oral communication, teachers and students can send and receive information and develop their language skills (Skolverket, 2011). Students can easily develop their language skills if they received proper training by their teachers (Wiliam, 2010). Teaching process emphasis should be directed to oral skills since students' oral communicational skills lead to the development of all language skills. For teachers of languages, oral language is very imperative since it is the students' most operational means of communication (Palmer, 2010).

Using corpus approach in language teaching is a modern vision that concentrated to English language. Corpus approach is based on authentic usage of language as spoken, and used by native speakers in various situations. Being a computer-based mechanism, corpus approach provides a resource of authentic material for language learning (Reppen, 2010). Using corpus approach in teaching has renewed EFL instruction with its authentic source. Corpus tools enable teachers to explore authentic practices and develop curriculum scheme (Johansson, 2009; Lenko-Szymanska, 2014; Almutairi, 2016). Intended for EFL learners to make use of corpus approach, teachers need to be well trained on using corpus approach. Students will be able to depend on

themselves and make benefits of corpus and continue their language development with the presence of well-equipped and prepared teachers for using corpus approach. Teachers tailor and transfer their language learning experience to their students. Unlike traditional teaching that is teacher-centered where the teacher presents linguistic rules and tests students' ability to memorize those rules, corpus approach provides language learners with unlimited degree of independence that enables them to explore authentic spoken and written material by native speakers (Dazdarevic et al., 2015).

In a complete awareness that teachers carry reforms to the schoolrooms making their students part of these reforms, the current study main goal is to develop teachers self-directed learning and oral skills through corpus based approach in order to be able to train their students to be independent learners since independence is the main features of lifelong learning.

The Context of the Problem

Torky (2008) highlighted that EFL speaking skill is ignored in Egyptian classes that resulted in learners' inability to communicate. Yousef, (2004), EL-Ebyary, (2005), Newton, (2009) and Lackman (2011) confirmed that oral proficiency is neglected skill because of the teaching method. In EFL classes, learners are not given sufficient chances to practice speaking. Besides, it is not incorporated in the tests. As well, the lack of self-directed learning weakens the students' ability for life-long learning (McWilliam, 2005 and 2011). Thus, the challenge remains to improve and promote the effectiveness of teachers' self-directed learning and oral proficiency in an effort to increase their students' academic achievement. The positive influence of teachers on their students' achievement has been confirmed by a number of studies (e.g., Hassan (2014) and Koura and Zahran (2017)). Moreover, a number of studies (e.g., Lenko-Szymanska, 2014; Dazdarevic et al., 2015 and Almutairi 2016) assured the efficacy of using corpus based approach as an educational tool that help in learning grammar, vocabulary and other aspects of English language. Additionally, it enhances learner autonomy and self-directed learning. Therefore, it is anticipated that using corpus based approach can develop teachers' self-directed learning and oral proficiency.

Statement of the Problem

Pre-service teachers lack the ample training needed for effective self-directed learning and oral proficiency. Therefore, the researcher proposes that using corpus might develop pre-service teachers' self-directed learning and oral proficiency.

Research Questions

The current research attempts to examine the following questions:

- 1- What are the oral skills appropriate for pre-service teachers?
- 2- What are the characteristics of the corpus program that helps developing self-directed learning and oral proficiency?
- 4- What is the effect of using corpus in developing pre-service teachers' self-directed learning?

5- What is the effect of using corpus in developing pre-service teachers' oral proficiency?

Significance

The current research goes to undertake the following:

1. Preparing pre-service teachers for increasing self-directed learning through using innovative schemes.
2. Aiding pre-service teachers to study novel approaches for enhancing oral proficiency.
3. Directing EFL researchers, professors, teachers and courses designers to the significance of making use of corpus-based approach.

Hypotheses

1. There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of experimental group and the control group on the post- administration of self-directed learning scale favoring the experimental one.
2. There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group on the pre- and post- administration of self-directed learning scale favoring the post administration scores.
3. There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of experimental group and the control group on the post- administration of oral proficiency test favoring the experimental one.
4. There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group on the pre- and post- administration of oral proficiency test favoring the post administration scores.

Review of Literature

Nowadays, there is a need for teachers who are able to cope with new challenges, make students independent learners and help them to become responsible for their learning. For the full implementation of these skills inside classrooms and in light of the ability of teachers to handover their skills to their students, having professionally trained teachers is a pre-requisite (V. Zuljan & Vogrinc, 2011). The university professors modify their approaches to successfully train learners for future professions and responsibilities (Taylor et al., 2011). Regularly, this preparation and training achieved by using active learning performances that involve learners more than the traditional lecture-based methods (Diamond, Koernig, & Iqbal, 2008; Young, 2005 & 2010; Taylor et al., 2011). One of the active learning practices that proved positive effect on students is self-directed learning. Studies revealed that self-directed learning is completely connected to several educational concepts: academic performance, desire, creativity, curiosity, and life satisfaction (Edmondson, Boyer, & Artis, 2012). In the teaching situation, the teacher is an active learner (Marcelo, 2009). Educational development process is fully related to teachers' professional development (Krecic & Grmek, 2008). Serin (2017) explained that better quality education is a part of teachers development process that allow them to enhance their teaching

practices and skills and lead to positive changes within their students. Lenko-Szymanska (2014) assured that teachers need training on using corpus based approach inside classrooms. Boulton and Cobb (2017) confirmed that corpus is an operational and resourceful approach to language teaching as it leads to major learning achievements than traditional teaching techniques. Moreover, corpus helps learners to use authentic material and explore the language features. Using corpus, learners get a wider view of English language and promote autonomy (Lenko-Szymanska, 2014).

Self-Directed Learning

Due to the rapid technological, cultural and educational change, learners need to be able to continue lifelong learning (Candy, 2000). According to McWilliam (2011) the skills required for lifelong learning are the skills that help students to become self-directed learners. Self-directed learning (SDL) is a technique of teaching used progressively within grown-up learners. It is considered as an imperative educational objective throughout all learners' life. SLD is very beneficial in saving training charges and developing people's efficacy in their professions (Chien 2004). SLD is defined as a procedure in which the learners become responsible for defining their learning aims, choosing the educational material, deciding the appropriate methods and evaluating their academic achievements (Loyens et al., 2008). Self-directed learning operationally defined as pre-service teachers' responsibility for defining their learning goals, choosing resources, implementing techniques and developing their oral proficiency using corpus-based approach.

Self-directed learning found to be a broader notion than self-regulated. In self-regulated learning the tasks are set and decided by the teachers, whereas in self-directed learning, learners select the material, decide the tasks and learning goals, assume the educational approaches and evaluate their performance (Loyens et al., 2008). There are two features of self-directed learners that include: a continuous determination by the learners to take learning decisions and the learners' ability to select from accessible resources (Brockett and Hiemstra, 1991). Subsequently, self-directed learners become interested and prepared to try innovative schemes, able to deal with new challenges, willing to change and appreciate every learning opportunity (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Kazlauskienė et al., 2010, Gaucaite et al., 2012). Self-directed learning as an educational goal especially for college students helps in achieving all kinds of organizations requirements and aims since self-directed college students adapt and transfer their learning techniques, skills and knowledge to their organizations (Tobin, 2000; Cron et al., 2005; Artis & Harris, 2007). Teaching practices that encourage students to engage in lifelong learning and practice self-management stimulate SDL (Robinson, 2000 and Conole & Alevizou, 2010). The main emphasis in self-directed learning is on skills, practices and procedures rather than exams. Consequently, learners improve the required skills for achieving the learning goals successfully (Caffarella, 2006). Readiness for self-directed learning includes effective communication, self-regulation, autonomy and self-evaluation (Merriam, 2001).

Benefits of Self-Directed Learning

Technology based education is given a great importance inside classrooms nowadays. It is proved that students achieve academic gains when their learning is self-directed. In such learning environment, teachers are required to be self-directed learners to train, motivate, support and help their students acquire the skills that enable them to continue their lifelong learning (Jaleel and Anuroofa, 2017). Deacon et al., (2017) proved that students score high grades on SLD scale. Furthermore, the study proved that SDL is a successful educational tool for perusing lifelong learning. According to Abdullah (2007), self-directed learners are able to learn new skills, face challenge and adapt new learning strategies. As being self-directed learners, students become the maker of their own learning goals. Subsequently, there is a change in the role of teachers. By giving sufficient chances for the development of SDL for the students, it correspondingly increases the achievement of students in information technology. Furthermore, the availability of internet on mobile devices has put extra expectations on learners to be responsible for their own learning. SDL helps learners to experience a great sense of independence while learning (Jaleel and Anuroofa, 2017). A number of studies (e.g., Merriam, 2001; Guglielmino & Guglielmino, 2006; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Kazlauskiene et al., 2010, Gaucaite et al., 2012) confirmed the effectiveness of practicing self-directed learning. They assured that adult learners are able to apply the features of self-directed learning that independently include: setting goals, planning and implementing learning process, solving problems and evaluating their own learning. Additionally, they found that self-directed learners practice a great deal of independence as the control moves from teachers to students. SDL proved to be an educational cornerstone factor that narrows the gap between faculty knowledge and actual world challenges which in turn considered the base for lifelong learning.

Given the above facts about SDL, the current study leading aim is promoting school students SDL in order to continue their lifelong learning through improving their teachers SDL since teachers transfer their skills, knowledge and experiences to their students. According to Kazlauskiene, Gaucaite and Pocevicene (2015), teachers can improve students' independence and motivate them to be initiative. Likewise, based on teachers' reflections, SDL teachers positively change the teaching practice to promote SDL within their students.

Oral Proficiency

The cornerstone of communication is oral skill. It is through oral skills learners can send and receive messages. Moreover, oral proficiency enables learners to improve all language skills (Palmer, 2010). According to Wiliam (2010), English language improvement is the main reason that should make teachers concentrate on oral skills inside classrooms. Oral skills as defined by Al-Ruhaily (2011) are the capability of using pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary and national visions to communicate. Oral proficiency is operationally defined as the ability of pre-service teachers to make use of the authentic material provided by corpus to develop the four oral skills (vocabulary, grammar, comprehensibility and oral fluency). Before the spread of using online educational material, the idea of practicing the language was through traveling abroad.

Krashen (1982) advocated improving oral proficiency through practicing natural and real-life situations abroad. Palmer (2010) recommended that the best method for developing students oral proficiency is through building students confidence. Teachers can build their students confidence through giving them challenging tasks and assignments. According to Skolverket (2011), using society current topics as educational material are of a great significance for improving oral proficiency. Furthermore, practicing speaking with native speakers enhances oral proficiency. According to Boonkit, (2009), EFL students ought to comprehend the way by which words and sentences are used in different situations to be able to develop their oral proficiency. They should also listen to native speakers in order to understand how words stressed and pronounced. In a study that was implemented on EFL pre-service teachers, Ramirez (2010) clarified that motivation help learners develop their oral skills. Likewise, Patil (2008) stressed the significance of developing motivation by teaching methods and ample resources for developing speaking skills.

The Principles of Teaching Oral Proficiency

According to Jondeya (2011), there are some principles that help teachers in planning and teaching oral proficiency. These principles include: teachers should give learners the opportunity to practice oral proficiency, using resources and material that enable learners comprehend and negotiate the meaning of spoken topics, designing speaking activities that involve learners in and outside classrooms, and decreasing instructors talk inside classrooms. Ali, Mukundan, Ayub, Baki (2011) emphasized that when learners take control and responsibility of the learning process, they manage to develop their academic skills. Lan, Hsiao & Chiang (2010) and Genç & Aydın (2010) demonstrated that learning approaches that depend on using technology have positive impact on language learning. Riahipour, (2012) examined the features that impact the development of oral proficiency. The results proved that teachers' material and approaches are among the factors that impact the development of oral proficiency.

In light of the principles of teaching and developing oral proficiency, it might be determined that the teachers teaching methods besides learners' responsibility of their own learning are the main features of developing oral proficiency. Subsequently, using corpus approach might be effective in developing oral proficiency. Moreover, it helps learners to be self-directed which in turn develop the skills required for lifelong learning.

Corpus-Based Approach

The rapid changes and improvements in the field of computer science have affected the language methodology. Teachers can make use of the material that produced by native speakers of English to teach their students how native speakers use vocabulary, grammar, expressions and all language skills. Therefore, integrating authentic material in classrooms is better than using examples made up by the teachers. Corpus-based tools can be very advantageous in teaching English language for students of different levels however; corpus approach has not been frequently used or examined (Lenko-Szymanska, 2014). Corpus is an advantageous source of

meaningful and authentic material that teachers can use for planning teaching activities (Reppen, 2011). Corpus is a collection of realistic manuscripts that are computerized. Corpus is an educational tool that is suitable for second language acquisition and foreign language teaching purpose (Sinclair, 2004; McCarten, 2007). Granger (2002) defined it as an effective teaching method that is based on using authentic materials. It is operationally defined as educational tool that help teachers develop their self-directed learning and oral proficiency. In order for all learners to make use of corpus, teachers should primary trained and well-prepared for using corpus-based approach. The result is that all students will be able to use corpus and develop their language (Dazdarevic et al., 2015).

A number of researchers (e.g., Seidlhofer, 2000 & 2002; O'Keeffe & Farr, 2003; Kaltenbock and Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2005; Braun, 2007; Chambers, 2007) agreed that teachers need training on using corpus-based approach in order to be aware of using it inside classrooms. They assured the importance of integrating corpus-based approach in teachers' education for improving their research and language skills so they can transfer these tools and skills to their students. According to Gabrielatos (2005), besides the change of the teachers' role as the only source of learning inside classrooms, corpus has strengthened learner-centered practices. Moreover, students become independent learners who are mindful of language usage (Krieger, 2003). Additionally, corpus helps learners to improve their autonomy and practice a great deal of independence (Willis, 2011). Tsui (2004), Binkai (2012), Heremans & Cuyckens (2012) and Vyatkina, & Boulton (2017) assured that corpus-based approach is effective than the traditional method of teaching. They added that teachers can depend on materials that teach students the usage of language in different real-life situations.

Teachers as well as students can make use of corpus-based approach through two methods: (a) they can use the online software and (b) they can plan activities based corpus tools (Bernardini, 2002 & 2004). Among the methods by which teachers can integrate corpus approach into their teaching are: (a) they can collect materials from corpus and use them inside classroom so students can explore these materials, and (b) they can incorporate online corpus and train students how to make use of it (Reppen, 2011). Lenko-Szymanska (2014) confirmed that teachers responded positively towards a training course on corpus-based material in language teaching. The result of two questionnaires that the researcher used proved that teachers could make use of corpus tools.

Features

A number of studies (e.g., Aston, 2001; Lorenz, 2000; Mair, 2000; Bernardini, 2001&2004; Keck 2004) described the two leading features that corpus-based tools develop which include: what to teach and how to teach. Concerning what to teach, unlike the English school books that teach texts which are not exist outside classrooms, corpus-based approach depends on authentic materials produced by native speakers that enable learners to explore different forms and usage of language. As for how to teach, corpus-based approach positively changed the role of teachers who become facilitators, learners who become involved in discovery learning in which they are

autonomous, active and responsible for their own learning. According to these features, learners who use corpus-based approach are self-directed learners who are motivated to learn and improve their language skills. According to McCarthy (2004), types of corpus-based tools are categorized into different classifications such as spoken vs. written, monolingual vs. bi/multilingual. Written manuscripts are taken from newspapers, or magazines that have been downloaded electronically. Spoken language materials are taken from recorded conversation or TV shows that indicate how language is used in different situation.

Difficulties and Problems

In spite of the above mentioned benefits of using corpus-based approach in language teaching, Widdowson (2000) clarified some restrictions that are represented in: (a) corpus tools are designed for specialists not for teachers and learners, (b) the authentic materials are taken from different contexts that may be not relevant to learners and (c) using corpus-based tools require a good training and preparation for teachers. Tribble (2000), Keck (2004), Granger (2004) and Mukherjee (2004) added that teachers as well as learners may be not motivated to use corpus. Therefore, research is needed to examine their attitudes towards using corpus. In a study by Maddalena (2001) that examined using corpus for teaching English synonymous words, it was found that learners were not familiar with using corpus. Moreover, since learners concentrated on passing the exam, their main goal was to know the meaning of words rather than its usage. Therefore, corpus-based approach was not effective as a teaching tool. The study assured the significance role of well-trained teachers during applying corpus-based approach. Breyer (2008) reinforced Maddalena's observation concerning the essential of well-trained teachers in order to be able to implement educational activities using corpus that suit the learners' proficiency level.

Taking these limitations into consideration, taking into account the rareness of corpus-based tools publications and considering the benefits of using corpus-based approach in teaching that have been confirmed by the literature, the time has now come to reexamine this area.

The Effect of Corpus Based-Approach on Self-Directed Learning and Oral Proficiency

In the traditional method of teaching the teachers are the leaders of the learning process in side classrooms where they present the new vocabulary and grammar then examine the students' ability to memorize these rules. Varley (2009) examined the impact of corpus on students' language proficiency. It was found that corpus tools were effective in improving students' grammar, vocabulary and attitude. Following the same line, Jezo (2013) agreed with Varley that corpus helped learners to develop their vocabulary learning. Koosha & Jafarpour (2006), Farr (2008) and Binkai (2012) added that corpus helps learners to recognize the usage of grammatical forms in several authentic texts examples. Furthermore, it helps learners to increase their sense of independence and to be involved in the learning process. Bardovi-Harlig, Mossman and Su (2017) assured the influence of using corpus on developing oral proficiency. Furthermore, they confirmed that corpus made learners involved in self-directed searches outside the schoolroom.

According to a number of studies (e.g., Johansson, 2009; Reppen, 2010; Lenko-Szymanska, 2014; Dazdarevic et al., 2015; Almutairi, 2016), corpus-based approach gives learners a great sense of independence that helps them to be self-directed learners who are able to continue their learning. They added that corpus can effectively impact the planning of the academic books, dictionaries, activities and exams. Moreover, it helps the teachers and learners to get a wider view of the language features since it helps them to examine the actual usage of language in real-life different situations. Yoon & Hirvela (2004) studied students' attitudes towards using corpus in teaching. It was found that corpus improved students' self-confidence and independence. Girgin (2011) assured that corpus enhanced learners' autonomy. Saeed and Waly (2009) claimed that using corpus-based approach in teaching language enable learners to turn out to be independent researchers while their teachers turn into coordinators. Levchenko (2017) investigated the impact of corpus-based activities on academic language awareness of doctoral students. The study proved the effectiveness of corpus besides it developed students' confidence. Many researches (e.g., Cheng et al., 2003; Chambers, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2007) clarified that well-training on using corpus tools result in increasing autonomy that help them to be independent learners.

Methodology

Participants

A sample of pre-service teachers from Mansoura University was nominated and allotted erratically to an experimental group (N =33), and a control one. Their age ranged from twenty to twenty- one years. The mentor of the experimental group was the researcher herself.

Design

Implementing the quasi-experimental design, the experimental and control group received pre application of self-directed learning scale and pre-tested on the oral proficiency skills. The experimental group was taught using corpus-based approach, whereas the control group received the regular teaching. Both groups received the post application of self-directed scale and oral proficiency test and to measure the enhancement in pre-service teachers' self-directed learning and oral proficiency.

Instruments

Planned for realizing the aim of the research, the following instruments were designed by researcher:

- 1)- Self-directed learning scale.
- 2)- Oral proficiency skills checklist..
- 3)- Oral proficiency test.

Validity of the tools was established through jury validation. Alpha Cronbach was used to size the extent of internal stability for the self-directed learning scale and oral proficiency test. The value of alpha coefficient for the scale was 0.720 that indicates reliability of the scale. The

value of alpha coefficient for the oral proficiency test was 0.709 that shows an adequate rate of the test consistency.

The Treatment: Corpus-Based Approach for Developing EFL Pre-Service Teachers Self-Directed Learning and Oral Proficiency

Objectives

Bearing in mind the review of correlated research, a training program was constructed that targets the enhancement of the following skills:

- 1- Increasing pre-service teachers' self-directed learning skills.
- 2- Increasing pre-service teachers' oral proficiency skills.
- 3- Increasing lifelong learning skills.

Description, Duration and Content

Based on corpus approach, the program was planned for pre-service teachers of the experimental group. The program consisted of ten sessions. Each session was 45 minutes. The program continued for 10 weeks (February, March and April) during the academic year 2018/2019 from 17/2/2019 till 28/4/2019.

Evaluation

According to their involvement and partaking in corpus approach, pre-service teachers were assessed. They were given comments, suggestions and questions that helped and encouraged them to write problems they encounter.

Results and Discussion

To examine the first hypothesis, t-test was used to compare the mean scores differences of the pre-service teachers experimental and control group in the self-directed learning scale as revealed in table 1.

Table 1

Comparing the post administration of the self-directed learning scale of the control and experimental group.

	Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value	Sig.
Self-Directed Learning Scale	Experimental	19.610	1.64703	7.035	0.001
	Control	15.709	2.18635		

Results in table 1 shows that there is statistically significant difference at 0.001 level between the attained mean score of the control group and that of the experimental group in favor of the experimental group on the post administration of the self-directed learning scale. The increase in pre-service teachers' scores of the experimental group may possibly be explained that they explored corpus educational tools that encouraged them to practice the features of self-directed learning. Corpus made them independently define their learning goals, plan the learning process

and evaluate their learning. This result goes in line with those studies of Merriam (2001), Guglielmino & Guglielmino (2006), Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner (2007), Kazlauskiene et al. (2010) and Gaucaite et al. (2012) who confirmed that the features of self-directed learning include setting the learning goals and implementing and evaluating the learning process independently. They also assured that self-directed learning decrease the gap between the faculty academic learning and actual world knowledge and challenges which help learners to continue their lifelong learning. Corpus approach is based on using authentic materials. Consequently, it helped pre-service teachers to examine language in real life situations which in turn encouraged them to be autonomous and independent learners who are able to continue their lifelong learning. This result supported by Willis (2011) who assured that corpus-based approach helps learners to be independent and develop their autonomy.

To examine the second hypothesis, t-test was used to compare the changes between the mean scores of pre-service teachers in the self-directed learning pre and post-scale in the experimental group as presented in table 2.

Table 2

Comparing the self-directed learning of experimental group on the pre and post-scale.

	Scale	Mean	SD	t value	Sig.
Self-Directed Learning	Pre-scale	19.610	1.64703	6.789	0.001
	Post-scale	26.013	2.39052		

Results in table 2 shows that experimental group achieved higher score in the post scale. A great number of researches (e.g., Cheng et al., 2003; Chambers, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2007; Saeed and Waly, 2009; Levchenko, 2017) assured that receiving well-training on using corpus tools result in increasing independence, autonomy and confidence that enable learners to become self-directed learners. Pre-service teachers in the current study received training on using corpus tools that enable them to make use of corpus-based approach in and outside the classroom. They also were responsible for their own learning. This responsibility included: putting learning aims, using the online corpus software, making use of the authentic material and evaluating their progress. Taking control over the learning process enabled pre-service teachers to experience autonomy that helped them become self-directed learners. This result supported by Girgin (2011) who confirmed that corpus-based approach enriches learners' autonomy.

t-test was used to examine the third hypothesis as displayed in table 3. It compared the variances between mean score of experimental and control group in the oral proficiency test.

Table 3

Comparing the oral proficiency of the control and experimental group on the post test.

	Groups	Test	Mean	SD	t value	Sig.
Oral Proficiency Skills	Experimental	Pre-test	12.78	3.02	6.849	0.001
		Post-test	21.52	2.86		
	Control	Pre-test	13.01	2.63	2.374	0.405
		Post-test	19.26	3.90		

Results in table 3 shows that the higher mean score of the post-test is for the experimental group. The development in pre-service teachers' level of the experimental group might be described that they received training on corpus tools while the control group did not get training on corpus. So, They could enhance their grammar, vocabulary, comprehensibility and oral fluency since they realize the actual use of grammar and vocabulary in real-world conversations and contexts. Moreover, they did not trained on the usage of grammar and vocabulary in real conversations. As a result, they could not enhance their comprehensibility or oral fluency. This result also goes in line with Heremans & Cuyckens (2012) and Vyatkina, & Boulton (2017) who confirmed the effectiveness of using corpus than the traditional method of teaching EFL. This result also supported by Varley (2009) and Jezo (2013) who confirmed that corpus has an effective impact on developing learners vocabulary and grammar. Therefore, the enhancement in the level of the experimental group is a reasonable consequence that occurred as a result of using corpus-based approach that helped them to develop their comprehensibility and oral proficiency.

t-test was used to examine the fourth hypothesis. It measured the changes in the oral proficiency scores of pre-service teachers' pre and post-test as presented in table 4.

Table 4

Comparing the oral proficiency of experimental group on the pre and post-test.

	Groups	Test	Mean	SD	t value	Sig.
Oral Proficiency Skills	Experiment	Pre-test	12.78	3.02	6.849	0.001
		Post-test	21.52	2.86		

Results in table 4 shows that the mean score of the experimental group post-test is higher than that of the pre-test. The improvement in pre-service teachers' level in the post-test may be occurred as a result of using corpus-based approach. They made use of the corpus materials and understood how grammar and vocabulary are used by native speakers in different contexts. Therefore, they could develop the four oral proficiency skills that are examined in the current study: vocabulary, grammar, comprehensibility and oral fluency. This result is supported by Boonkit (2009) and Jondeya (2011) who assured the significance of using resources that enable learners to know the way by which grammar and words are used in different contexts. Besides, the literature about corpus-based approach concerning oral proficiency is parallel to the outcomes of this research. Sinclair (2004) and McCarten (2007) assured that corpus is appropriate educational tool for foreign language learning. As a final point, it was confirmed by Farr (2008) and Binkai (2012) that corpus-based approach helps learners to be independent learners who are involved in the learning process. Consequently, using corpus-based approach in the current study confidently impacted pre-service teachers' self-directed learning and enabled them to independently develop their vocabulary, grammar, comprehensibility and oral fluency.

Discussion

The results of this research revealed that the experimental group outclassed the control group which states that the corpus-based approach has a positive effect on the teachers' self-directed

learning and oral proficiency. The present results agreed with a number of research findings (e.g., Yoon & Hirvela (2004) Johansson, 2009; Varley, 2009; Reppen, 2010; Girgin, 2011; Jezo, 2013; Lenko-Szymanska, 2014; Dazdarevic, Fahreta and Izeta, 2015; Almutairi, 2016) who revealed that corpus-based approach supports learners autonomy, self-confidence and independence, and enable them to continue their lifelong learning since it helps them to be self-directed learners. They added that corpus-based approach helps teachers to comprehend language features. They also proved that corpus developed learners' grammar, vocabulary, and attitude. The literature about corpus-based approach in relation to self-directed learning and oral proficiency is consistent with the outcomes of this study. Bardovi-Harlig, Mossman and Su (2017) confirmed the impact of using corpus on increasing oral proficiency. Additionally, they assured that corpus involved learners in self-directed explorations outside the classrooms. Koosha & Jafarpour (2006) Farr (2008) and Binkai (2012) proved that corpus helps learners to recognize the grammatical forms in authentic texts examples. Furthermore, it helps learners to increase their sense of independence. The high mean score of the pre-service teachers of the experimental group in self-directed learning and oral proficiency was due to the implementation of corpus-based approach for a number of reasons: First, in the current study self-directed learning operationally defined as pre-service teachers' responsibility for defining their learning goals, choosing resources, implementing techniques and developing oral proficiency using corpus-based approach as educational tools. Pre-service teachers used corpus as a research tool outside the classroom. They show a great sense of independence, self-confidence and autonomy through the oral discussion on different topics organized by the researcher during the experiment. Consequently, they developed the skills required for continuing their lifelong learning. They were responsible for their own learning. Furthermore, they independently set their learning goals, choose the material, apply the search, and evaluate their achievement. Second, pre-service teachers make use of the authentic material provided by corpus tools and manage to develop the four oral proficiency skills (vocabulary, grammar, comprehensibility and oral fluency). They realize how to use vocabulary and grammar in different real-life conversations and situations. The belief about developing oral proficiency according to Krashen (1981) was to travel abroad and communicate with native speakers. According to Samuelsson and Nordgren (2008), Boonkit (2009) and Skolverket (2011), developing oral proficiency depends on practicing speaking on current topics with native speakers to understand how grammar, words and sentences are used in actual speech. Using corpus tools, pre-service teachers did not have to travel abroad to practice speaking with native speakers. They comprehend the use of language features in different real-life contexts through several texts and conversations that are written and spoken by native speakers. Third, in the traditional method of teaching EFL, the instructors are the leader of the teaching process while the learners' role is to memorize the new vocabulary and grammar rules. Tsui (2004), Binkai (2012), Heremans & Cuyckens (2012) and Vyatkina, & Boulton (2017) confirmed that corpus-based approach is effective than the traditional method of EFL teaching. Boulton and Cobb (2017) confirmed that corpus is resourceful tool for teaching language than the traditional method. According to Bernardini (2002 & 2004), corpus-based approach can be

used through two ways: (a) planning tasks and activities based corpus tools or (b) using the online software. In the current study, the researcher planned activities based corpus tools for the first two sessions of the experiment as training for pre-service teachers in order to get familiar with corpus tools then for the rest of the experiment, pre-service teachers were encouraged to take the responsibility of their own learning. Subsequently, they started to use corpus authentic material. Additionally, they become independent learners who are able to continue their learning. As being independent learners who are able to use corpus tools, pre-service teachers manage to develop their self-directed learning and oral proficiency.

Conclusions

As literature about corpus-based approach clarified that the central emphasis of corpus is on using authentic materials of several contexts and conversations that help them comprehend the actual use of grammar, vocabulary, structure and other language features in real-world situations. As assured by related studies, corpus-based approach is a mean to develop language learning. Therefore, the impact of corpus on self-directed learning and oral proficiency is explored in this research. According to the findings of this study, corpus equipped pre-service teachers with the skills required for lifelong learning. Therefore, they successfully developed their self-directed learning and oral proficiency. This study revealed that self-directed learning and oral proficiency can be developed if learners were taught using corpus-based approach. The development of pre-service teachers' self-directed learning and oral proficiency took place for some bases: (a) they independently used corpus tools, (b) they were responsible for their own learning, (c) they applied the research in and outside the classroom, and (d) the sense of independence that they practice enable them to promote autonomy, self-efficacy, confidence and become self-directed learners who are motivated to continue their learning. Consequently, with respect to the conclusions of the current research, course designers ought to consider the integration of corpus-based approach in teachers' educational courses as well as training. EFL researchers should hold symposiums, workshops, and conferences to share experience and views on teaching using the new technology techniques. Additionally, EFL teachers need to plan activities that motivate their students to be self-directed learners in order to be able to continue their lifelong learning. Furthermore, future researches are required to examine the effect of corpus on students' different language skills. Likewise, future research is required to examine the appropriateness of implementing corpus-based approach with students.

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