

EFFECTS OF TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION ON READING COMPREHENSION OF TURKISH EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT: *This action research paper aims to investigate the effects of task based instruction on reading comprehension and new vocabulary learning in Turkish EFL setting. Participants of the study are preparatory school students in one of the private universities in İstanbul, Turkey. They were placed into classes according to results of English proficiency exam that they took at the beginning of the semester. Among already assigned 55 beginner classes, two beginner groups whose quizzes and midterm results are quite similar were chosen and they became experimental and control group for this study. In the first step, mean scores of reading part of the ELAT exam, which is a kind of final exam and administered twice in a semester, were taken. This was accepted as a pre-test. In the second step, in a 2-hour reading lesson, experimental group received task-based instruction while control group went on their traditional reading lesson. After the lessons, both groups were given comprehension and vocabulary questions. After 2-week interval, both groups received a recall-test to check the long term effect of task-based instruction on new words that were learned in the lesson. The findings of the study revealed that both groups showed an improvement with instruction however there is a significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group and control group in post-test in terms of comprehension. Experimental group was more successful in post-test. Moreover, results of recall test showed that task-based instruction has a positive effect on vocabulary learning, as well.*

KEYWORDS: Task-Based Teaching, Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary Knowledge

INTRODUCTION

Reading as a receptive skill is maybe one of the most important skills that should be developed for being better at the target language. Throughout the years, main focus of many teaching approaches has been mainly on reading and it is accepted as the core of many classroom activities. Because reading lessons enable teachers to employ a variety of activities, they contribute a lot to a learner's language development in both short and long term process. As a receptive skill, reading is like a treasure in second language learning because grammar, punctuation, vocabulary or paragraph construction and more can be taught over reading activities. Even a simple reading text can be a model for many writing activities, starting point for many discussions or a source of motivation. However, in previous years, reading lessons was not so popular and the functions of reading were just limited with teaching grammar and translation. In the last few decades, new approaches that attribute different meanings to it have started to come out. Different approaches that emerged after 1980s such as Natural approach, Communicative Language Teaching, Content-based or Task-Based approach changed the perception and the role of reading in second language learning. The aim has shifted from teaching a structured language to a meaningful one. It is somehow true that students learn what they find meaningful and task-based approach is one of the approaches that put students into meaningful

contexts and make them produce as much English as they can.

Statement of the Problem

Throughout the years, many prominent linguists such as Ellis (2003), Nunan (2004) or Willis (2007) have discussed the effects and importance of a lesson which is constructed by a task-based approach in second language learning. They have all stressed that the language which is found meaningful by students and includes interaction promotes language learning. Working on an issue, trying to solve a problem with others and having an aim to accomplish a task, for instance, make this process more meaningful. As one of the countries of Asia, Turkey is a very rich country which includes many different cultures and languages in itself. Although English is not spoken in the country, it is the language that is required most in many situations such as job applications or university entrance exams and schools and some language courses are the only places where this language can be learned. Because students are not exposed any English outside of the classroom, the quality of the education given in the schools is significant. In Turkey education system, teachers are generally middle-aged or old and they usually apply traditional techniques while teaching because of either busy working hours or course books which are not qualified enough. Classrooms are still teacher-centered and meaningful interaction in the target language is limited with just some chunks or drills provided by the teacher. Student-centered classrooms and natural classroom instruction in the target language are essential in this process. Because students don't actively take part in classroom activities, reading comprehension especially becomes a big problem for them. Therefore, task-based approach which supports active participation of students in activities might be an alternative to traditional instruction in teaching language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Task

Before focusing on the characteristics of Task-based approach, the word "task" and its role in language learning should be defined clearly. The definition of task is made by many different linguists, and each linguist defines task according to their own views by touching on important aspects of language learning process. While Ellis (2003) stresses that a task enables students to use the language to reach an outcome, Richards (1986) also defines task as an activity in which students process and understand the language. In addition to these definitions, Nunan (2004) touches on another aspect of task and expresses that when tasks are transformed from the real world to the classroom, they become pedagogical in nature. According to his definition, a task should be a pedagogical task which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is on expressing meaning. So new language is learned unconsciously and students almost construct their own knowledge. Drawing attention to meaning is also the other important aspect of a pedagogical task. According to Skehan (1996), tasks should have a focus in which students obtain feedback and develop their interlanguage. Because of that reason it is also important to prepare focused tasks that can improve students' language knowledge. In his article, *Second language acquisition and task based instruction*; Skehan (1996) draws attention especially to meaningful interaction. During the tasks students should have the chance of getting the pieces together, learning by experiencing, in other words, they must find themselves in a meaningful interaction. In this regard, he sees instruction which is given through tasks more beneficial than traditional Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) approach.

Principles of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Task-based approach is actually a communicative approach which provides students with meaningful tasks including problems, questions or puzzles and makes them communicate to find out a solution.

This makes the class a student-centered class in which students are encouraged to use all language they know and get prepared for many occasions that may happen outside of the classroom like canceling a reservation in a restaurant. Task-based approach has some significant characteristics and steps that should be followed for an effective teaching. In general, Nunan (2004) defines 7 main principles of this approach as the following:

1. **Scaffolding:** There should be a framework which will make the process easier for students. Students should not be expected to use the language that they are not explicitly taught.
2. **Task Chains:** Each task must come after each other and all previous tasks must be ground for coming task.
3. **Recycling:** Recycling provides opportunities to practice more for learners.
4. **Active Learning:** When students are active in the learning process, they learn better.
5. **Integration:** Learners should be taught the connections between the functions, semantic meanings and grammatical features.
6. **Reproduction to Creation:** Students are asked to reproduce the language model which was shown by their teacher. Tasks must be designed as creative tasks which will allow students to work on meaning, grammar, function and vocabulary.
7. **Reflection:** Learners reflect what they have learned and how well their performance

The role of students in the classroom is also different when it is compared with some other teaching approaches like grammar-translation. Teacher is just the source of the task and creates an environment in which students work, explore, and learn with their team mates. Tasks prepared by the teacher include a problem-solving element and students gain opportunity to use language in different ways with each task. Although teacher is a kind of facilitator during the task, he or she plays an important role in integration part. He/she helps students make connections between the meaning and a grammar form, or between a word and its function. Students explore all these things while doing the task. As Jing and Mingjun (2013) state, TBLT is obviously an effective way of teaching a language since it provides a purpose for using and learning a language other than presenting language items simply.

Basic Task-Based Model Lesson

Unlike PPP approach, task-based approach does not expect teacher to present the language that students will study. The focus of the lesson is the task that students have to complete. Students can use any form of target language they want. A basic task-based lesson includes following stages:

Pre-task: This is the stage in which students are given the task that they are exposed to do. Basquille (N.D) states that this stage serves as an introduction to the topic and task and it may involve brainstorming. He stresses that new structures should not be pre-taught in this stage.

Task: In this stage, students work on their tasks. They use any language they know. They try to reach an aim or a result. Therefore, the type of the task should be determined very carefully. A filling-gaps activity is not accepted as a task in TBLA. There must be a goal and students should try to accomplish it. Willis, (1996), defines 6 different types of task which can be used for this purpose: Listing, Ordering and sorting, Comparing, Problem solving, Sharing personal experiences and Creative tasks. While students are doing one of these tasks, teacher just helps them when they need help, he or she does not interrupt or correct their mistakes. Another important thing is that students focus on the meaning to solve the problem, they do not concentrate on grammar or punctuation.

Report: In this stage students are supposed to prepare a report about what they have done during the task. Students are still free to use any language they know, however they have to be more careful about organization of their reports. If they need help while writing, teacher should be ready to help as a facilitator. Students are asked to tell their classmates what they have written on their report, so this part also includes preparation for presentation

Presentation: after students finish writing their reports, they present it orally to share their findings with their classmates. Teacher or classmates of the group may make some comments about their report. If teacher detects any grammar mistakes, he or she may repeat that phrase or sentence in a correct way. If there are more than one group that work on the same tasks, they can compare and contrast their results or findings.

Analysis: This stage is the awareness stage for students. Teacher draws students' attention to some parts to analyze or students are asked to find some important features. They may work on some language features, as well.

Practice: Teacher notices what goes well and wrong in his/her class, and finds the parts that students need to practice more. He/she creates other opportunities to recycle the things that students have difficulty in doing.

Effects of Designing Reading Class according to TBLT

Most of students have difficulty in understanding while reading a text or passage in the target language. The problems they have sometimes set a block and hinder the comprehension. The first step to be able to overcome this situation is to determine the problems students suffer from. 3 years ago, Mao (2012) prepares a questionnaire for students to find out the problems they have in reading lessons. He defines that some students have difficulty in comprehending because of unknown words in the reading text while some students can not figure out the meaning of a word in a sentence because it has more than one meaning. Answers of the test also reveals that some students want to read faster, however when they read faster they are not able to understand the text. They comprehend better if they read the text slowly. Moreover, Mao (2012) stresses that some students can not overcome the long sentences that include some complex structures, without help of a teacher. In this regard, TBLT provides teachers with quite active learners who learn by working on a task actively to reach an aim. Students explore language patterns on their own and this process makes the learning more meaningful for students. There is also another question that should be asked. What is the effect of TBLT on students' reading comprehension? Studies show that instead of simply reading a text, having tasks or activities that make students read the text to find out some information to reach an aim may increase the comprehension of the students, because of the fact that they will concentrate more on the written text to reach their goal.

In 2013, three researchers, Kolaeil, Yarahmadi and Maghsoudi, conduct a research in Iran context. The aim of researchers is to find out effects of task-based instruction on reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL students. As an experimental research, it includes both pre-test and post-test to see the difference between the mean scores of experimental and control group. Students receive pre-test at the beginning of the course. To see the development of students over time, post-test is given at the end of the course. Results of this long-term research show that reading comprehension of both groups improved significantly. There is no significant difference between two groups. Without treatment, control group also did quite well in the post-test. However, the effects of task-based instruction in short-term process can not be underestimated. In 2011, a similar research conducted by Iranmehr, Erfani and Davari (2011) to find out the effects of task based approach on Iranian students' reading comprehension when compared to grammar translation method reveals important information for teachers. The researchers conduct their research on an experimental and control group that are quite similar. While experimental group receives tasks within task-based framework in reading lesson, control group just reads the same text and answer reading comprehension questions. The results of the research show that task-based instruction has a significant effect on reading comprehension.

In terms of perception of students about reading, Pi-Ching Chen and Chien-Ying Chen (2005) conduct

a research to see whether TBLT affects students' attitudes towards reading and writing. The subjects of the research were 37 high school students who study in Taiwan. After instruction and a questionnaire survey, it is seen that EFL learners express positive attitude toward the collaborative task-based reading-to-writing English instruction because it creates more engaging classroom environment.

Başaran and Tilfarlıoğlu (2004) conduct a similar research in Turkish context. They use task-based writing activities as tasks and try to find out whether or not these activities have a positive effect upon reading comprehension in English as a foreign language. In their research they also expect an improvement in control group because they also received traditional instruction; however there is not a significant difference between pre and post-test in this group. On the other hand, research reveals that when students are given such tasks they comprehend the passage better.

As the research of Mao (2012) shows, unknown words are the biggest obstacles for EFL learners to comprehend a text properly. Besides, vocabulary learning is a harder process when compared with grammar and this process make most of students unmotivated towards target language. Being motivated to learn new words is a significant factor in vocabulary knowledge development. Two researchers from Vietnam, Thanh and Huan (2012) investigate the effectiveness of the use of text-based tasks to enhance students' vocabulary while investigating the effects of TBLT on students' motivation in Vocabulary learning, as well. They collect data from a questionnaire and vocabulary tests and arrange interviews with students to examine their attitudes. Results of the study show that students' both motivation in vocabulary learning and vocabulary knowledge improved significantly.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researcher employs a quasi-experimental design in the research. Sampling process of the research lacks randomization. Researcher used intact classes. However, subjects were chosen among the classes whose quiz and mid-term results were quite similar. These classrooms became the experimental and control group of the study. In the second step, in a 2-hour reading lesson, experimental group received task-based instruction while control group went on their traditional reading lesson. After the lessons, both groups were given comprehension and vocabulary questions. After 2-week interval, both groups received a recall-test to check the long term effect of task-based instruction on new words that were learned in the lesson. The independent variable of the research is task-based instruction while dependent variable is students' performance in reading comprehension.

Setting

The research was conducted in one of the 47 private universities located in Istanbul, Turkey. The university chosen for this study is also one of the most preferred universities because of its affordable prices and scholarships. Subjects of this study have been studying in preparatory school in this university for 4 months because they couldn't be successful enough in English proficiency exam which is held online at the beginning of the semester. There are 3 elementary, 2 intermediate and 55 beginner classes. There are 28 hours courses in a week. Each semester consists of 2 tracks. Each track includes 2 pop quizzes, 1 mid-term and a Final exam. In addition, students are provided with a library, regular remedial classes in case they miss any lesson, a speaking club which is carried out by native instructors and an English theatre club during whole year.

Subjects

Participants are 50 EFL Turkish students who study in the prep school. Nearly half of them are scholarship students. Their age ranges from 18 to 21. Each class has students from 3 different departments. The classes chosen for the study include mostly students who will study in the departments of computer, software and industrial engineering. Number of boys is quite higher than girls, because these professions are generally preferred by males in Turkey. Their English level is measured by an online proficiency test which has 100 multiple-choice questions. Subjects of this study are beginners because they couldn't solve more than 25 questions in this test.

Data collection Instruments

English proficiency exam

The exam is held online at the beginning of the semester. Students take the exam in the computer labs of the university. The exam includes 100 multiple-choice questions which are mostly reading, grammar and vocabulary questions. Students who can answer more than 75 questions pass the exam and start to study in his or her department. Proficiency exam was accepted as an data collection instrument in the study because it is the instrument that enables the researcher to choose beginner level students.

Quizzes and Midterms

Quizzes are held as pop-quizzes. They include the questions from certain units that they have studied in the lessons. They have 4 pop quizzes in a semester. Mid-terms include whole units that students have studied by that time. There are 2 reading passages, a cloze-test for vocabulary, a function part, listening comprehension questions and a writing part. Students have 2 mid-terms in a semester. The average of mid-term and quiz results of the target groups are as the following:

	Mean Score of Pop Quizzes:	Mean Score of Midterm Exam:
Class A:	72	62
Class B:	74	61

Table 1

Reading scores of ELAT Exam:

Group A:	12 /20
Group B:	12 /20

Table 2

Open-Ended Comprehension Questions

Based on the reading that students read in the class, 10 open-ended questions were written by the researcher. To measure reading ability properly, it is very important to prepare variety types of questions. As the main data collection instrument, the instrument includes questions measuring the ability of getting the meaning of certain words, ability to summarize text, ability to infer information from the text, and the ability to reach conclusions. Grammar mistakes weren't taken into consideration while analyzing results. Each question was 2 points.

Vocabulary test

Vocabulary test was the second main data collection instrument in the study. Students were given 7

vocabulary questions in the test. Questions were presented in the sentences to measure both vocabulary and comprehension knowledge. They were asked to put the words into the correct sentences. Same test was applied after 2 weeks interval to see the long term effect of task based instruction on vocabulary learning.

PROCEDURE

Treatment Procedure

To measure the effects of task-based approach, a task-based reading lesson plan which was prepared by Jane and Dave Willis and based on comparative grammar structure was used to teach experimental group by making some adjustments on it like adding or omitting. After reading passage was chosen and activities were arranged according to task-based approach, the researcher prepared 10 comprehension and 7 vocabulary questions for each group. During the experiment, the researcher became the instructor for both groups. While task-based instruction was being used in experimental group, traditional instruction was used in the control group. Because the aim of the research is to find out the effects of task-based activities on reading comprehension, control group didn't receive any task-based instruction. In control group, teacher made students read the text, touched on unknown words. They studied text by translating some sentences and afterwards they were given reading comprehension questions. In experimental group, the lesson started with a task and students worked on this task to reach an aim. Then, they were given the same reading text given to control group to see how well they did. They had a purpose to read the text. After conscious rising activities, this group was also given same comprehension and vocabulary questions.

Data Collection Procedure

In this research, average scores of reading parts of the ELAT exam were accepted as pretest. Reading part of this exam includes 5 multiple-choice comprehension questions about a reading passage. Each of the questions equals 4 points. Among 55 pre-intermediate classes, 2 classes whose average scores were same were chosen for the study. Comprehension questions and vocabulary test were accepted as post-test. The results of these instruments were compared with students' reading scores of ELAT exam and their improvement was measured. Then results of 2 groups were compared and effect of task based instruction was measured by looking at the difference between the mean scores. After 2 weeks interval, students were given a vocabulary test which was similar but not same with previous one to measure the effects of task based activities in long term process. Students had their exams in their own classrooms. While comprehension test lasted 20 minutes, students were given 15 minutes for vocabulary test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As the table 2 shows, students were able to answer 3 questions out of 5 in average in reading part of ELAT (Each question is 4 points, $3 \times 4 = 12$). While some students get all questions correct, some of them get none of them correct and lose many points and this is the situation which both demotivates them and changes their attitude towards reading. With treatment, researcher aims to overcome this case and see how well long term knowledge can be provided by task-based instruction.

After the treatment session, both groups were given the test which includes 17 questions in total. The results of these post-test is as the following:

	Average Scores of Comprehension Questions	Average Scores of Vocabulary Questions	Total Score

Experimental group	18/20	6/7	24/27
Control Group	14/20	4/7	17/27

Table 3

It is seen that, there is an improvement in both groups when the results of post-test is compared with pre-test's. Even control group shows improvement because they studied the text with the help of their teacher and many ambiguous part of the reading text were clarified by the instructor. Experimental group, on the other hand, did quite well in post-test and showed a significant improvement. It clear from the results that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group and control group in terms of comprehension. This shows that, task-based approach in which students are more active and learn by doing is more effective for students to comprehend a reading passage better.

The next table shows the mean scores of vocabulary test. Experimental group which did many tasks with these words in the treatment session is well ahead of control group that learned words with translation and filling in the blanks exercises. Vocabulary learning process is also affected highly in a positive way with task based activities. It is seen that students were sometimes unaware about what they learn actually, they just tried to do their best to finish the task and learned many words subconsciously.

To see the long-term effect of task based instruction on vocabulary knowledge, a recall test was given to both groups after 2 weeks interval. In this recall test, similar but a parallel test was used to eliminate the memory effect. Words that are measured were same; however sentences were different from the previous one. The results of this recall test were as the following:

	Average Scores of Vocabulary Questions
Experimental group	5/7
Control Group	2/7

Table 4.

As it is clearly seen, the words that are learned by task-based activities are easier to remember even after 2 weeks than the ones learned by translation or some drill exercises. While there is a decrease in both group's results, this decrease rate is higher in control group.

Reliability and Validity Issues

It is very important to have equal subjects in terms of English proficiency level to be sure that all students understand all questions properly. Therefore, subjects were chosen among the students whose proficiency exam results are almost equal and study in the same class. To choose most appropriate testing items, all questions and instructions were evaluated with 2 native and 2 nonnative English teachers who are experienced ones and know the problems well that second language learners have. Taking their opinions into consideration, 20 open ended questions were selected to use both in post-test and recall- test. A pilot study was also conducted to be sure about whether all instructions and questions are clear for the subjects who are beginners. For pilot testing, another beginner prep class of the same university was chosen. According to their comments about the tests, items that need changes were changed and made clearer. Not having an ambiguous question or instruction for subjects enhanced the creditability of the research. Then, these questions were divided into two; half of them was used in post-test while the rest was used in recall- test. different but parallel questions were used to subjects to eliminate the memory effect. Otherwise the memory factor might have a negative effect on the reliability of the research results. Moreover, different instructors might have affected the test

performance of the students, therefore the researcher became the instructor for both classes.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study to find out the effects of task-based activities on reading comprehension of Turkish EFL learners who are students in prep school. Results of the data collection instruments reveal that there is a significant difference between the control and experimental group. Secondly, it is seen that, task-based activities have a positive effect on vocabulary learning, as well. It is also inferred from the classroom atmosphere that students develop a positive attitude towards reading lessons. The source of this motivation comes from the ambitious they have to finish the task. It is obvious that students like activities

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APPENDIX 1

TASK-BASED LESSON PLAN

NORTH POLE, SOUTH POLE

1 Introduction

Basically the lesson starts with a discussion. The question for discussion is:

WHICH IS COLDER: THE NORTH POLE OR THE SOUTH POLE?

2 Discussion of relevant questions

Teacher puts learners into groups to discuss these statements and decide if they are true or false:

- 1 There is no land at the Antarctic – only an ice-cap.**
- 2 The polar regions get very little sunshine compared with other latitudes.**
- 3 The ice is several metres thick in the middle of the Arctic Ocean.**
- 4 For six months in the year there is no sunshine in the Arctic.**
- 5 Water keeps in the heat of the sun better than dry land.**
- 6 The Antarctic is by far the highest of the five continents, rising to more than two thousand metres above sea level.**

Teacher begins by looking at the questionnaire with the class as a whole and making sure they understand the questions. He/she helps with unknown words. Then he/she lets them discuss the questions in groups.

In order to maintain interest in the coming discussion, teacher leaves these questions unanswered for the time being. He/she listens to what students say and leads discussion without confirming or denying what they say.

3 Discussion

Teacher puts learners into groups and asks them to reach a decision. Teacher appoints one member of the group to act as *spokesperson* and speak for the group after the discussion and asks one learner to act as group secretary, taking notes but not taking part in the discussion. Once the discussion begins, teacher leaves learners to get on with it by themselves as far as possible. They may ask teacher for help with vocabulary, but in general they should express things for themselves. They will probably not be too concerned with grammatical accuracy at this stage. They will be involved in the discussion and trying hard to make their opinions heard. This means they will be speaking spontaneously and in these circumstances grammatical accuracy is a secondary consideration. The communicative situation is spontaneous and informal, so they will not be giving careful consideration to the form of what they are saying.

4 Preparation

Teacher tells the groups that in five minutes their spokesperson may be asked to report the group discussion to the class as a whole. They have five minutes to help the spokesperson prepare for this.

During this preparation phase they will be more concerned with grammatical accuracy. The spokespersons are going to speak to the class as a whole as a representative of the group. They have had time to consider what they are going to say. In these circumstances they will be expected to speak formally, and part of this is grammatical accuracy. Because of this they may ask teacher for help with formulating their message and teacher should be prepared to help.

5 Report

Teacher asks one or two of the spokespersons to present the views of their group. What was their decision? Was it unanimous? What were the reasons for their decision? After each report teacher can summarize what has been said.

6 Decision making

Teacher takes a final vote on the question. He/she asks one or two people if they have changed their minds, and if so, why?

7 Reading

Teacher gives learners this text to read:

WHICH IS COLDER: THE NORTH POLE OR THE SOUTH POLE?

The North and South poles are both very cold because they get very little sunshine compared with the rest of the earth. The sun never rises more than 23.5 degrees above the horizon, and for six months of the year the poles get no sunshine at all. Also most of the sunlight is reflected back by the bright white surface. So both poles are very cold, but the South Pole is much colder than the North Pole because it sits on top of a very thick ice sheet, which itself sits on dry land, on the continent of Antarctica. The top of the ice sheet near the South Pole is more than 3,000 metres above sea level – more than a mile and a half high, so Antarctica is by far the highest continent on earth. In comparison the North Pole rests in the middle of the Arctic Ocean, where the surface of the ice is only about a foot above the sea. Water keeps in more heat than dry land so the Arctic Ocean retains the heat, making it less cold in winter and warmer in the summer.

They will be reading with a real purpose – to find out whether they are right or wrong in their conclusion and their arguments.

8 Review

Ask learners to put away their texts and summarize the passage orally. You could ask them to prepare this in groups.

9 Language Study

9.1 Consciousness raising- Vocabulary

9.1.1 Labelling:

Teacher asks students to write the words which has missing letters according to the given definitions.

- **S _ f _ e**: The outer or the topmost boundary of an object.
- **_ _ n _ in _ t**: One of the principal land masses of the earth, usually regarded as including Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America.
- **_ e _ o _**: A portion of the earth's surface distinguished from others by some characteristic:

9.1.2 True-false:

Students Read the statements and write true or false in this part.

_____ **land**: such a piece of furniture specifically used for serving food to those seated at it

_____ **horizon**: the line or circle that forms the apparent boundary between earth and sky.

_____ **mile**: a unit of distance on land in English-speaking countries equal to 1.609 kilometres

9.2 Consciousness raising- Grammar

Teacher asks learners to go through the text underlining all the expressions to do with *comparison*. Go through and hear their contributions. In general they will identify phrases with a comparative or superlative adjective, but there are also a couple of useful phrases: *compared with* and *in comparison*. Here is a list of the expressions that I identified:

1. ***Which is colder***: the North Pole or the South Pole?
2. They get ***very little sunshine compared with*** the rest of the earth.
3. The sun never rises ***more than 23.5 degrees*** above the horizon.
4. The South Pole is ***much colder than*** the North Pole.
5. The top of the ice-sheet is ***more than 3,000 metres*** above sea-level, more than a mile and a half high.
6. Antarctica is ***by far the highest continent*** on earth.
7. ***In comparison*** the North Pole rests in the middle of the Arctic Ocean....
8. Water keeps in ***more heat than*** dry land.
9. The ocean retains the heat, making it ***less cold in winter*** and ***warmer in the summer***.

Teacher then removes the italicized words and sees if they can recall them.

9.3 Recycling Vocabulary (optional)

Instructions: Write the correct word in the space before its definition. There may be more than one definition for each word.

- bright ● continent ● heat ● horizon ● land ● sunshine ● surface
1. _____ ● the exterior boundary of something.
 2. _____ ● the bright light of the sun unobstructed by clouds.
 3. _____ ● filled with, reflecting, or emitting much light; shining.
 4. _____ ● the form of energy that one feels as warmth, or the state of being warm; warmth; hotness.
 5. _____ ● the juncture of the earth and the sky as perceived by the observer.
 6. _____ ● the solid portion of the earth's surface.
 7. _____ ● one of the earth's major land masses, such as North America, Australia, or Antarctica.

9.4 Original story:

Students write a story about anything, using all the given words.


Bright, sunshine, ice, cold, warm, heat, surface

APPENDIX 2

WHICH IS COLDER: THE NORTH POLE OR THE SOUTH POLE?

The North and South poles are both very cold because they get very little sunshine compared with the rest of the earth. The sun never rises more than 23.5 degrees above the horizon, and for six months of the year the poles get no sunshine at all. Also most of the sunlight is reflected back by the bright white surface. So both poles are very cold, but the South Pole is much colder than the North Pole because it sits on top of a very thick ice sheet, which itself sits on dry land, on the continent of Antarctica. The top of the ice sheet near the South Pole is more than 3,000 metres above sea level – more than a mile and a half high, so Antarctica is by far the highest continent on earth. In comparison the North Pole rests in the middle of the Arctic Ocean, where the surface of the ice is only about a foot above the sea. Water keeps in more heat than dry land so the Arctic Ocean retains the heat, making it less cold in winter and warmer in the summer.

Answer the following questions according to the passage?

 What is the passage is about?

.....

.....
✚ Why both The North and South poles are not hot?
.....
.....

✚ How many months of the year do poles get sunshine?
.....
.....

✚ Why South Pole is much colder than North Pole?
.....
.....

✚ A mile and half equals to...?
.....
.....

✚ Which pole is higher above the sea-level?
.....
.....

✚ What is the effect of sea water on North Pole?
.....
.....

✚ What is special with Antarctica?
.....
.....

✚ Is it true that they get much sunshine when compared with the rest of the earth?
.....
.....

APPENDIX 3

VOCABULARY

Put the words into correct sentences

Sunshine horizon bright surface continent heat land

1. The weather was _____ and sunny
2. In this lesson, students will identify characteristics of the physical geography of each _____ of the world.
3. Ice needs _____ to melt
4. Nearly 10 percent of the Earth's _____ is covered by ice

5. The closer the sun is to the _____, the more of the circle we see.
6. After 21 days at sea, we saw _____.
7. With water and _____, it can grow tall and strong.

Appendix 4

VOCABULARY

Put the words into correct sentences

Sunshine horizon bright surface continent heat land

1. We had three days of spring _____.
2. The _____ of Asia and Africa are quite big when compared with restaurant
3. We could see a ship on the _____.
4. How many _____ does a cube have?
5. It was a _____ autumn day
6. When the milk comes to the boil, turn off the _____.
7. The crocodile lives both in the sea and on _____.