Teaching the Novel in a University English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Context: An Exploratory Study in Lebanon

Nahla Nola Bacha
Lebanese American University
Lebanon

Abstract. Research indicates that EFL students find it difficult to read literary texts in English mainly due to the vocabulary which is culturally bound and thus may be unfamiliar to them. Studies in the development of students' vocabulary indicate that there is a minimum number of academic vocabulary required for success at the university level. However, even though students may have this level, they may still find it difficult to read literature especially the novel in a foreign language context. It is the author's contention that with carefully selected texts and methods, the cultural-language challenge can be addressed. The aim of the present study is to explore the preliminary effect of selected novels combined with film and student oral presentations on L1 Arabic EFL learners' use of vocabulary in one 20th Century American Novel course at an English medium university in Lebanon. Two literary essay tests were administered to 25 students, one at the beginning and another at the end of the semester, holistically scored and qualitatively analyzed for vocabulary variety. Main findings indicated that although the holistic scores may not show a more diverse vocabulary variety on highly scored essays, the qualitative analysis indicated a development in the vocabulary on Test 2. Recommendations are made for classroom practice and future research.

Keywords: Vocabulary, novels, EFL learners, teaching, Lebanon

Introduction

As I enthusiastically enter class each semester with a novel on the required reading list, I hear sighs from the room. As I assign a few chapters for the next class session, I hear students call out that they are finding difficulty, one of which is their understanding of the vocabulary.

Researchers agree that literature is culture and language bound which raises challenges for the EFL learner (see Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Kachru, 1986; Seidlhofer, 2005). In our global world with more communication among peoples of different cultures, it is important that these differences be understood for better communication among peoples whether for social, political, educational, economical, or religious purposes (Crystal, 2003). Including literature in the EFL classroom can help towards this end (Bacha, 2010; Carter & Long, 1991; Carter &

McCrae 2014). It is the contention of many researchers that through the literature of the target language, students can develop their language and be better informed of the target culture (Coxhead, 2011; Seidlhofer, 2005; Saigh & Schmitt, 2012).

Studies carried out on L1Arabic speakers of English have indicated that students' texts show weak lexical-grammatical features (Al-Khairy, 2013; Doushaq, 1986; Hayes-Harb, 2006; Khachan, & Bacha, 2012 among others). Other studies have shown that the students' texts do not conform to those required in academic institutions (Khachan & Bacha, 2012; Hyland, 2016 among others). Research indicates, however, that with the teacher's input in selecting the appropriate texts and activities, students can participate more actively in literature classes (e.g. Coxhead, 2014; 2016; Coxhead, & Bytheway, 2015; Sturrock, 1990) and produce better writing. Literature, despite this, continues to be taught in high schools in Lebanon mostly through traditional methods which rely on memorization and teacher's lectures, that do not give them an active productive vocabulary repertoire when entering university (e.g. Khachan & Bacha, 2012). It is hoped that the present study in the use of literature in the EFL classroom will contribute to an effective strategy in raising students' use of vocabulary. But this is not without its challenge that Cook (1986) states below when using literature and where vocabulary can be quite different from academic vocabulary posing more difficulty for the learner than that in the regular academic English texts.

> "The study of literature in English is suited to the foreign learner's needs, and the mastery of literary texts had little bearing on the learner's needs to understand or produce more functional written or spoken forms of language. It is, moreover, often in its deviation from the norms of English grammatical and lexical usage that literature achieves excellence. While such deviation may please the native speaker by the freshness they may bring to his or her linguistic world, they can do little but confuse the foreign learner" (p. 155).

He further states that even though this is the case as stated above there should not be any changes to simplify the lexical-grammatical morphological and semantic features of the words in the literary text. There is a large body of EFL research that indicates this difficulty with vocabulary. Often times, the requirements are long texts in which vocabulary terminology used by the author impedes students' understanding and thus their motivation and consequently their performance (Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Elgort & Coxhead, 2015). In light of the above, this study outlines one method of teaching a literary text, the novel, in a university literature course focusing on students' vocabulary development over a fifteen week semester.

It is known that a certain level of passive and active vocabulary knowledge is pre-requisite to understanding literary works of which many are culture bound (Widdowson, 1975; 1982). It is also known that vocabulary is one significant indicator of both reading and writing proficiency (e.g. Khachan &

Bacha, 2012; Carter & Mccarthy, 2014; Coxhead, 1998; 2016; Elgort & Coxhead, 2015). There are also studies on how students' vocabulary can be widened through various literary reading strategies (e.g. Clandfiel 2016; Lazar, 1993; Sengupta, 2003). However, very little if any has been done with L1Arabic university students in the Lebanese context. Therefore, this study contributes to the field in offering one instructional method in one university literature classroom as to how students' literary vocabulary can be developed. In light of the above, therefore, this study outlines one method of teaching a literary text, the novel, in a university literature course focusing on students' vocabulary development over a fifteen-week semester. That is the situation of our students who are required to take a minimum of one literature course at the time of the study. The challenge is helping them to overcome the hurdle of the many words that they find difficult.

First, the author claims that the appropriate choice of the novel can help students widen their vocabulary repertoire and in so doing have a better understanding of the novel being read. Since students' vocabulary level has been found to be limited on entrance to the university where the present study is carried out (Khachan & Bacha, 2012), resources and instructional models need to be selected to help students widen their vocabulary (Coxhead, 2011; Coxhead & Bytheway, 2014). Literature has been found to be one effective way.

Literature is often times taught and learned through the lecture and memory method, one reason which has made many students avoid such courses at the university level (personal communication with students, 2015). It is the author's view that if novels are selected according to the students' interests, related to life situations, coupled with film study and their involvement in giving, for example, an oral presentation based on a part of one of the required class novels in which they are interested, they will use the vocabulary they learn from the novel.

Review of Literature

Improving Language
Research indicates that undergraduate EFL students in university settings often have weak language proficiency to cope with their university course work (Coxhead & Bytheway, 2015). Further, teaching and learning of literature can help them to develop their language skills along with awareness of other cultures and develop their own personal profiles through critical thinking and reflection (Al Alami, 2014; Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014; Muir-Herzig, 2004; Yilmaz, 2012). Students' active vocabulary repertoires have expanded from the readings and have helped to improve their written texts (Yilmaz, 2012; Elgort & Coxhead, 2016). Having said that, however, some researchers find giving literature in the classroom, specifically long texts, too difficult and unnecessary. They report that literature is an art and has no or little effect on language development (see Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014 for an account). Yet, in a study carried out in Tawain with EFL learners of English, Tsai (2012) states that

> "Analysis of the pretest and post-test shows that after a semester-long novel-reading process, students demonstrated improvement in attitudes, confidence, interest, and their own perceived reading ability. The results

>are of pedagogical significance to EFL teaching in that they present how
>well a novel was received in an EFL class, the benefits it offered as well
>as the difficulties it entailed to the reading process" (p.103).

Researchers, nonetheless, are in agreement that literature is studied for two main purposes: language development and cultural awareness besides personal growth that the above quotation shows. It is through words that meaning is expressed and thus it is important for students to expand their vocabulary repertoire and reading novels is one way in which they can do so. Related to this is Yeibo and Akerele's (2015) statement that

>"Lexical [vocabulary] items help the writer to crystallize his thoughts,
>express certain emotions and create images all of which give literature
>its peculiar expressive beauty. In this regard, writers depend on lexical
>items and their connotative implications to convey their intended
>messages." (p.2)

Hişmanoğlu (2005) in his article on the benefits of literature in language study, argues how the novel helps students widen their vocabulary and in turn improve their reading and writing skills in EFL contexts. He, however, states that the teacher's role is crucial in selecting the novel to the students' linguistic level and interests in the sense that there is a story they can relate to their lives and characters that they may identify with. Pashangzadeh et.al (2016) also report how reading narratives help students in developing their reading skills. In another vein, Rimi, & Zabeen, (2016) also agree that EFL students' reading comprehension skills will improve through literature and especially those that are read outside the class such as novels. Interestingly, they found through an action research study that diaspora literature helped with students' language skills more than those written by authors of the target language. The students could better understand the vocabulary and relate to the cultural background.

Theory and Practice
Several theories have given rise to different approaches to the teaching of literary analysis. These include (1) New Criticism, (2) Structuralism, (3) Stylistics (4) Reader-Response, (5) Language-Based, and (6) Critical Literacy with a focus in each either on language, culture, personal responses and involvement with the literary elements in the text. However, Thi My Van, (2009) advocates an eclectic approach where the teacher draws on different approaches according to the students' needs, but notes that students' language would best improve if they are personally involved with the text. There have been positive results gained in reading comprehension and vocabulary when teachers consider their students' reading interests which could be compiled before the start of the semester through surveys and/or interviews (Lee, 2006; Bacha, 2010).

Further studies offer theoretical frameworks for the teaching of literary analyses (e.g. Thi My Van, T. (2009). Others outline activities that tap students' engagement with the texts such as those with the use of the computer, films, theatrical plays, role play, and dramatic readings to help in raising students' interest and involvement with the text to develop their language especially vocabulary (e.g. Muir-Herzig, 2004; Shao- Wen Su, 2010). Moreover, significant to the present study is Maley's (1989) categorization of the approaches to

teaching literature in the classroom, which are in line with the above approaches and which Bobkina and Dominguez's (2014) further stress on in the language and the personal growth approaches.

Carter and Long (1991) add a third model, cultural, suitable for teaching literature in the EFL programs. This cultural model helps in transmitting various authors' ideas on history, theories, biographies and so forth.

Moody (1984) visualizes these three models in the figure below (in Bobkina &Dominguez, 2014) where the three parts, language, personal growth and culture can be seen and in the way they overlap. The classroom method in teaching literature in the present study is based on this model focusing on language and personal growth.
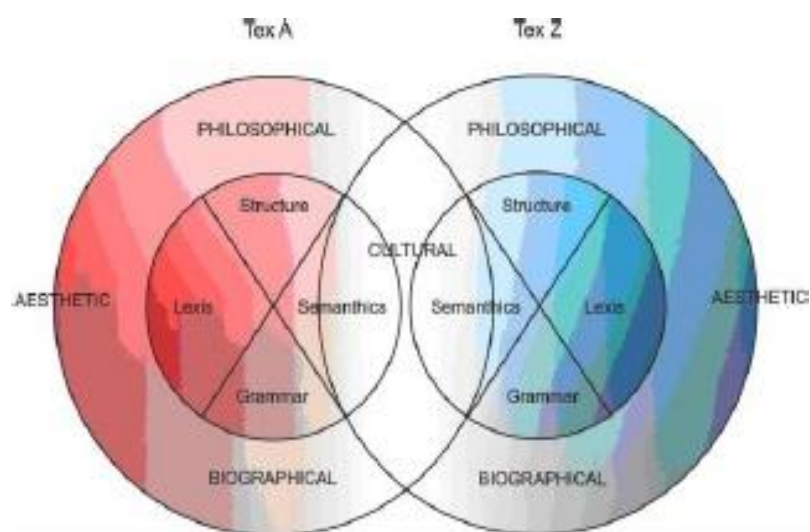

Figure 1: Linguistic side of literary texts. Adapted from *Approaches to the study of literature: a practitioner's view* **(Moody, 1984 in Bobkina &Dominguez, 2014)**

Aim
The aim of this study is an exploratory one to examine any development in language specifically the type of vocabulary used after a fifteen week semester of teaching the novel. The type of vocabulary is operationally defined by use of more 'sophisticated' nouns and adjectives in a corpus of Test 1 literary essays written at the beginning of the semester and another on Test 2 at the end of the semester. For example, the adjective 'good' is used quite a lot by students to mean a great many positive things. Words that would better reflect the situation in question might be 'appropriate', 'suitable' and so forth. In the use of nouns, students may use 'boy' or 'girl' or 'man' when the word 'lad' or 'maiden' or 'gentleman' or 'lady' might be more specific and give a more accurate picture of the character. As for the personal development, students learn about other people's conflicts and how they resolve them which can raise their awareness of life's problems and lessons which could enable them to reflect and make wise decisions in their own lives. This would be seen in their oral presentations and interviews at the end of the semester.

Significance

Since a liberal arts education is of importance today in many educational institutions of higher learning, literature has become a significant vehicle for both language and personal and cultural development and studies have found the three inextricable in this endeavor (e.g. Tsai, 2012). Although novels as 'textbooks' do not lay out subject content and language as other discipline related texts and language texts do, they have a great advantage of providing authentic material and a mirror of real life whether in the world around us or that of the author's.   The significance of the present study is stated well by Tsai (2012).

> " When using a novel in the class, the teacher assumes the role as a narrator and facilitator rather than a lecturer; the students are no longer passive language learners but active readers of authentic texts that provide them a genuine perspective of the real world" (p.104).

Method

The research is an exploratory one in one literature class using students' graded essays, (Samples in Appendix A) student oral presentations (Appendix B) and film. Twenty five Literary Test 1 student essays administered at the beginning of the first semester 2015, and 25 literary essays at the end of the semester were holistically scored and qualitatively analyzed through content analysis to find the frequency of adjectives and nouns over a 15 week semester. Topics for Test 1 and Test 2 were similar in that they focused on character analysis. It was not necessary to have the exact same topic for purposes of this study to control for vocabulary.

Specifically, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do students' use of vocabulary increase as operationally defined by the use of nouns and adjectives used in the novels?

2. Are students engaged in interacting with the novels as operational defined by the oral presentations and the focus group interviews?

Participants

Twenty five students, registered in a 20th century American novel course at the time of the study, participated. Their ages ranged from 18-20 with ten males and fifteen females, and were undergraduates following different majors such as business, engineering, computer science, biology and nursing. The literature course is part of the general university requirements. The students are L1 Arabic speakers of English.

Procedure
There were three procedures carried out in the study.

1. Selection and discussion of the novels

Clandfield (2016) offers advice on how to select and deal with the difficulty of teaching literature in an EFL classroom. Although the focus is for high schools, the method recommended is also quite relevant and adaptable in tertiary institutions. A more important factor pointed out by Clandfield (2016) than the selection is the teachers' role in using the text and providing appropriate tasks in the EFL classroom. Issues in selecting an appropriate literary texts included the texts' relevance to the students' lives, suitable linguistic level, sufficient time to complete the texts, and cultural background within the students' understanding. These factors were taken into account in the choice of the novels for the fifteen week semester in the present study.

During the semester, four novels were assigned: *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway, *The Great Gatsby* by F.S. Fitzgerald, *To Kill a Mocking Bird*, by Harper Lee, and *Tuesdays with Morrie*, by Mitch Albom. These novels were part of the 20th century American novel course and spanned from the beginning of the 20th century with Hemingway's novel set during first world war (WWI), to its aftermath and the great depression of the 20's with Fitzgerald's novel to the midcentury concerning racial discrimination of blacks with Lee's only novel, *To Kill a Mocking Bird*, to the end of the century with Mitch Albom's story *Tuesdays with Morrie.* The latter novel is most significant in that it is a true story on how a disease of one professor brought him and his student together after sixteen years to discuss topics of death, marriage, love, regrets and other topics. Characters portrayed those of real life, the culture in which they lived, and often that of the authors'. Themes centered on issues of the times giving the students a historical, political, social and individual perspectives in which they engaged during the discussions. Problem situations were discussed and recommended solutions were made. Unfamiliar vocabulary was discussed and emphasized in relation to the modern world and the students' personal experiences.

2. Films and Oral Discussions

Films based on the novels were screened after the novel was discussed or before to arouse curiosity and for the students to 'live' the events they were viewing and reading. They quickly made connections to their own lives. Reading parts of the novels done in class in a creative performance with students taking roles were also carried out. The films and the activities helped the students to use some of the vocabulary they found difficult. For the oral presentations, students were required to choose two chapters from any of the novels read in class and to which they related or found interesting and, individually, give a three minute power point presentation to the class. The presentation would provide a summary of the chapter, identify and interpret two memorable quotes, ask two critical thinking questions and interpret two literary elements such as similes, metaphors, personification related to each of the two selected chapters by the student. This engaged the class in problem solving life's issues and to interact with the text in relation to real life. Students' answers were considered by the speaker, and the student with the best answer, according to the presenter, would

be rewarded with points or some type of reward such as chocolate or candy which made the assignment fun. (Sample in Appendix B).

3 Focus Student Interviews

The researcher met with a random group of seven students after the semester ended but before the final exam so that the final grades would not influence their opinions. It was an open interview in which the students voiced their views on the selection of novels, the film, the oral presentation and the vocabulary.

Data Collection and Analysis

The essays were quantitatively scored according to the ESL Composition Profile with both holistic and analytic scores of content, vocabulary, language, sentence structure and mechanics (Jacobs, et.al, 1981). Although the profile has a part on vocabulary, it does not allow for a record of which words were used. To strengthen the study, it, therefore, was necessary to qualitatively examine the essays and note the differences. *Wordsmith tools (2016)*, a software to examine the frequency of words was used.   A random sample of twenty students (10 from Test 1 and 10 from Test 2) were input into the software and analyzed.

Results and Discussion

1.   Evaluation of Essays

The essays 1 and 2 were holistically scored by the researcher (see Figure 2 scores on essay 2 below) according to the rubric (Jacobs et. al 1981). Inter-rater reliability was not necessary as correlations between holistic and qualitative evaluation of the essays were not part of the study.

The results indicated 10% of Test 1 essay scores were below the 60% pass whereas 0% were of that level on essay Test 2 (see Figure 2). However, these holistic scores do not indicate whether the students progressed in the use of vocabulary. The present research focuses on the vocabulary, and thus the students' use of vocabulary was evaluated in their essays written at the beginning and end of the semester for any differences**.**

Average Performance in 20th century American Novel

90% to 100% (20.83%)
80% to 89% (29.17%)
< 60% (12.50%)
60% to 69% (37.50%)
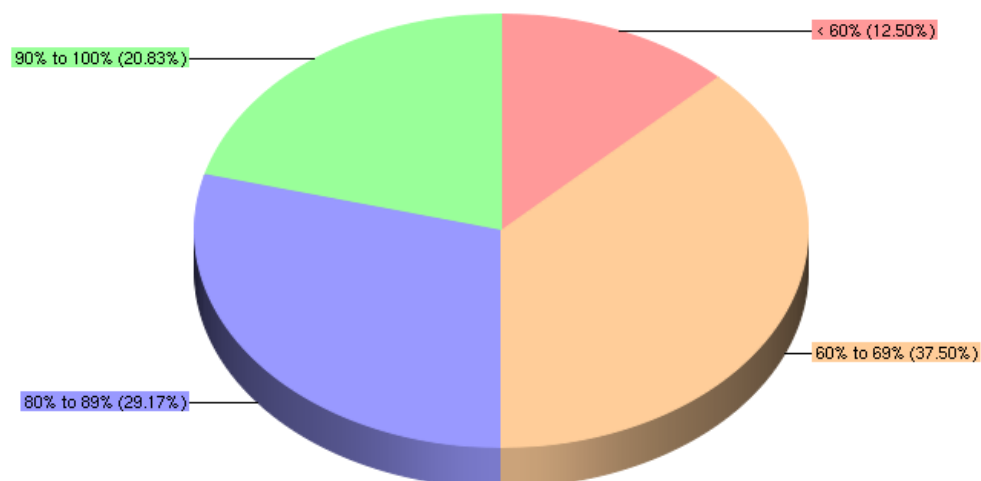
Figure 2: Essay 2 Holistic Scores

The vocabulary in Test 1 and Test 2, increased in adjectives and nouns used over the fifteen weeks in the use of more 'sophisticated' vocabulary. Students would select and use some words that they had read in the novel or had come across in class during the discussions. The sample Test 1 and Test 2 (Appendix A) written by the same student exemplifies this (in bold type). Sample Test 2 also shows an attempt to quote passages from the novel concerned. Test 1 (Sample in Appendix A) indicated use of less 'sophisticated' adjectives and nouns which gave less of a literary flavor to the text.

There is sufficient qualitative evidence that a wider vocabulary repertoire had been achieved. Tables 1 and 2 below indicate the results represented in the statistics and qualitative sample of words showing that there was improvement in the use of nouns and adjectives on Test 2. This confirms the literature in the field (Khatib, Rezaei, & Derakhshan, 2011) which proposed that literature is a great exercise in language. Although Widdowson (1982) among others, argued that literature might confuse students and be ineffective in language development for EFL learners, since then researchers have noted the positive influence of literature in the EFL classroom. The novel is one literary genre that is of significance in the students' expanding their vocabulary repertoire.

To answer the first research question then as to what extent do students' use of vocabulary increase as operationally defined by the use of nouns and adjectives used in the novels, it can be said to a large degree. Table 1 below shows that the tokens (different words) are higher in number on Test 2. Also, the words are

longer on Test 2 showing use of more 'sophisticated' use of words. Only part of the results, top and lower ends of the data from the software could be included in the present article due to the length. These results are encouraging and confirm the literature in the field (e.g. Yilmaz, 2012; Elgort & Coxhead, 2016 among others).

Table 1 Statistics of Vocabulary Features on Tests 1 and 2
Using *Wordsmith Tools* (2016)

	Test 1	Test 2
tokens (running words) in text:	4,815	5,575
tokens used for word list:	4,438	5,564
type/token ratio (TTR):	29.61	22.25
standardised TTR:	36.70	38.26
STTR std.dev.:	46.29	50.35
STTR basis:	1,000	1,000
mean word length (in characters):	2.46	4.40
word length std.dev.:	2.70	2.40
mean (in words):	554.75	19.52
std.dev.:	1,151.21	10.20
1-letter words:	3,454	219
2-letter words:	29	1,001
3-letter words:	192	1,254
4-letter words:	199	1,033
5-letter words:	192	598
6-letter words:	174	368
7-letter words:	178	441
8-letter words:	150	243
9-letter words:	99	193
10-letter words:	63	112
11-letter words:	45	56
12-letter words:	19	27
13-letter words:	15	24
14-letter words:	2	2
15-letter words:	4	4

**Table 2 Use of Vocabulary on Test 1 and 2 Using *Wordsmith Tools*
(2016) Showing minimum and maximum use of words**

Test 1	Frequency	Test 2	Frequency
The	285	The	200
And	201	Love	160
To	180	A	130
Of	152	That	120
A	142	For	70
Love	139	because	65
He	131	Or	60
In	118	Is	58
His	114	Her	56
Is	111	Him	50
That	98	Those	50
Rinaldi	78	although	45
widespread	1	Wind	1
Worthy	1	wholesome	1
strange	1	suitable	1
Vain	1	awesome	1
Wind	1	uplifting	1
widespread	1	compassion	1
upcoming	1	Thrive	2
unstable	1	Inflict	2
unchanged	1	sufficient	2
stronger	1	superfluous	2
State	1	unaffected	2
superior	1	frivolous	2

2. Oral Presentations

On checking the written oral reports done at the end of the semester, it is also apparent that there is more vocabulary variety (See sample in Appendix B). Although no comparison can be made with an oral report done at the beginning of the semester, it is apparent that there is an attempt to use a variety of words.. This also confirms studies in the field where well selected activities can help students improve their vocabulary (Clandfiel 2016; Lazar, 1993; Sengupta, 2003; Widdowson, 1975).

3. The Focus Group Interview

The focus group interviews aroused much interest among the students. Many students mentioned that they like to read novels, contrary to what is claimed by some faculty at the university where the study was done (personal communication 2015) and view the inclusion of novels as helping them learn new words. Students saw the relevance of the novel to their lives and became aware that the novel is not a subject matter to be studied, but a 'mirror of life' and life's lessons. This was very revealing and many students commented that

if they had 'studied' literature this way in high school, they would have read more novels.

   Part of the 30 minute interview, the researcher carried out with the students, is given below:

Teacher (T) Tell me about the literature course?

Student 1 (S1) The vocabulary is difficult.. A farewell to arms is easy .. I understand the words

S(2) I liked gatsby – but daisy was not very kind.

S(3) I enjoyed the course –the films … amazing and I could understand better

S(4) We memorize in high school … I like to talk. I loved speaking about two chapters I loved with the class – seeing myself like Mitch – always rushing around – I may organize my studies now.

S(5) I learned new words … but I like short stories

S(6) I like this way … I like talking about what I think

S (7) I had more words … I liked giving my idea in the report

   The short extract above from the interview indicates that EFL students find the vocabulary difficult and confirms the research that teachers need to play an important role in the selection of the novel in terms of language and content. Films make the novel come to life once visualized for some students. Activities are better substitutes for the 'traditional' method of memorization and writing essays strictly according to the teachers' lecture notes. They also give the students the opportunity to learn and produce in a non-threatening context. The findings from the focus interview confirm the results in the literature (Tsai, 2012; Clandfield, 2016 among others).

To answer research question 2 then as to whether students are engaged in interacting with the novels as operationally defined by the oral presentations and the focus group interviews, it is apparent that although a few of the students still find the vocabulary difficult, students voiced personal interest with the text and learning some of the words in the novels (Carter and Long, 1991). The results confirm the literature in the field especially the theories and approaches on teaching EFL students language and contributing to personal growth (e.g. Maley, 1989; Carter and Long, 1991; Bobkina &Dominguez, 2014).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The aim of this study is to see the effect of one method in teaching the novel in a literature university class in an EFL context in expanding students' vocabulary. Although some research has indicted that literature is difficult for students and

often confuses them with its stylistic terms, it has been shown that with wise selection of the literary text, the use of films, student presentations and discussions related to real life as support, students become engaged and their vocabulary improves.   The preliminary results are promising.   It is recommended that further research be carried out with more literature classes and larger samples and to investigate in more detail different types of words. Implications of the preliminary results in this study are significant for EFL contexts where teachers can contribute in the selection of literary texts and activities to help in the development of their students' vocabulary.

References

Al Alami, S.E. (2014). Promoting communicative competence within EFL contexts: A UAE case study. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *5*(6), 1245-1255.

Albom. M. (2007). *Tuesdays with Morrie*. Random House Inc.: New York.

Al-Khairy, M. (2013). Saudi English-major undergraduates' academic writing problems: A Taif University perspective. *English Language Teaching, 6*(6), 1–12.

Bacha, N. N. (2010). Teaching literature in an English as a foreign language classroom: A study of student attitudes. *International Journal of the Humanities, (8)*1, 47-64.

Bobkina, J. & Dominguez, E. (2014). The use of literature and literary texts in the EFL classroom: Between consensus and controversy. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature, 3*(2), 248-260.

Brumfit, C. & Carter, R. (1986). *Literature and language teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Carter, R. & McCarthy, M. (2014). *Vocabulary and language teaching*. London: Routledge.

Carter, R. & Long, M. N. (1991). *Teaching literature.* New York: Longman.

Carter, R. & Mcrae, J. (2014). *Language, literature and the learner: Creative classroom practice*. London: Routledge.

Clandfield, L. (2016). Teaching materials: using literature in the EFL/ ESL classroom. Retrieved http://www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-articles/teaching-materials/teaching-materials-using-literature-in-the-efl/-esl-classroom/146508.article

Cook, G. (1986). Texts, extracts and stylistic texture. In C. Brumfit & R. Carter (Eds.). *Literature and language teaching.* Walton: Oxford University Press.

Coxhead, A. & Bytheway, J. (2015). Learning vocabulary using two massive online resources: you will not blink., In D. Nunan & R. Richards (Eds.) *Learning beyond the classroom* (pp. 65 - 74). London: Routledge.

Coxhead, A. (1998). *An academic word list.* Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington.

Coxhead, A. (2011). *Using vocabulary in writing in a second language: Writing from sources.* Koln : LAP Lambert Academic Publishing.

Coxhead, A. (2016). Acquiring academic and discipline specific vocabulary. In K. Hyland & P. Shaw (Eds.). *Routledge handbook of English for academic purposes* (pp. 177-190). London: Routledge**.**

Coxhead, A. (Ed.) (2014). *New ways in teaching vocabulary*. Alexandria, Virginia: TESOL Inc.

Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2nd ed.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1093/elt/cci064

Doushaq, H. H. (1986). An investigation into stylistic errors of Arab students learning. *English for Academic Purposes, 5*(1), 27–39. doi:10.1016/0889-4906(86)90005-0.

Elgort, I. & Coxhead, A. (2016). An introduction to the vocabulary size test: description, application and evaluation. In J. Fox & V. Aryadoust (Eds.). *Trends in language assessment research and practice* (pp. 286 – 301). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Fitzgerald, F.S. (2000). *The Great Gatsby.* Penguin Books Ltd.: New York

Hayes-Harb, R. (2006). Native speakers of Arabic and ESL texts: Evidence for the transfer of written word identification processes. *TESOL Quarterly, 40*(2), 321–339.

Hemingway, E. (2003). *A Farewell to Arms*. Scribner Publishers. New York: N.Y.

Hyland, K. & Shaw, P. (Eds.). (2016). *Handbook of English for academic purposes*. London: Routledge**.**

Jacobs, H.J. et.al (1981). *Testing ESL composition: A practical approach*. Rowley, House. Mass: Newbury.

Kachru, B. (1986). Non-native literatures in English as a resource for language teaching. In C. Brumfit & R. Carter (Eds.). *Literature and language teaching.* Walton: Oxford University Press

Khachan, V. & Bacha, N.N. (2012). A vocabulary corpus-based analysis of L2 academic writing: A case study. *Asian ESP Journal, 8(1),* 53-74.

Khatib, M., Rezaei, S. & Derakhshan, A. (2011). Literature in EFL/ESL classroom. *English Language Teaching*, 4(1), 201 – 208.

Lazar, G. (1993). *Literature and language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lee, H. (2003). *To Kill a Mockingbird.* Penguin Publishers. New York: N.Y.

Lee, W.-L. (2006). Teaching English through the novel: A case study on the use of Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice* with non-English-major EFL students at National Cheng Kung University. *Proceedings of the 23rd International Conference on English Teaching and Learning in the Republic of China (ROC-TEFL)* (pp. 724-734). Kaohsiung, Taiwan: Kaun Tang International Publications Ltd.

Maley, A. (1989). Down from the pedestal: Literature as resource. In *literature and the learner: Methodological Approaches.* ELT Documents 130*.* London: Macmillan.

Muir-Herzig, R.G. (2004). Technology and its impact in the classroom. *Computers & Education*, 42, 111-131.

Pashangzadeh, A, Ahmadian, M., & Yazdanim, H. (2016). From narativity to criticality: Developing EFL learners' critical thinking skills through short narratives/stories Reading. *Education and Linguistics Research, 2*(1), 98-119. DOI: 10.5296/elr.v2i1.8952

Rimi, R.N. & Zabeen, S. (2016). Extensive reading: Using diaspora literature to develop learners' reading comprehension skills. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences***,** 3, 1-7.

Saigh, K. & Schmitt, N. (2012). Difficulties with vocabulary word form: The case of Arabic ESL learners. *System, 40*(1), 24–36. doi:10.1016/j.system.2012.01.005

Seidlhofer, B. (2005). English as a lingua franca. *ELT Journal.* 59 (4), 339-341.

Sengupta, S. (2003). Developing academic reading at tertiary level: A longitudinal study tracing conceptual change 1. *The Reading Matrix*, 2(1)

Shao-Wen, S. (2010). Motivating and justifiable: Teaching Western literature to EFL students at a University of Science and Technology. *TESL-EJ,* 4(1)

Sturrock, J. (1990). *Culture and the language classroom.* Hong Kong: Modern English Publishers and British Council.

Thi My Van, T. (2009). The relevance of literary analysis to teaching literature in the EFL classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, 3, 2-17.

Tsai, C. (2012) Students' perceptions of using a novel as main material in the EFLreading course. *English Language Teaching*, *5*(8), 103 – 112.

Widdowson, H. (1975). *Stylistics and the teaching of literature*. New York: Longman.

Widdowson, H. (1982). The use of literature. In M. Hines & W. Rutherford (Ed.). *On TESOL 81.*Washington, D.C.: TESOL

Wordsmith Tools (2016). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yeibo, E. & Comfort, A. (2015). A lexico-semantic reading of Chimamanda Adichie's purple hibiscus. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, *3*(2), 144-155

Yilmaz, C. (2012). Introducing literature to an EFL classroom: Teacher's instructional methods and students' attitudes toward the study of literature. *English Language Teaching*, *5*(1) 86-99.

Appendix A

Test 1 Essay Score 70%

Ernest Hemingway once said:" When writing a novel a writer should create living people; people not characters. A character is a caricature". Looking closely in each person involved in *Farewell to Arms* and *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald definitely followed Hemingway's advice with the identity he gave for Daisy Buchanan. Daisy was the center of the story which made her the most interesting part of it. What made her "character" so **good** is the end of the novel. At the beginning of his novel, Fitzgerald draws Daisy as an angel and links her to the white color too many times (white dress, white flowers, white car…) He tries to make her high. He carefully builds her as a beautiful young lady filled with light, passion, **good** and innocence. Daisy is the ideal lady who was always fashionable, always spoke in a delicate matter and always chose her words **good.** He wanted to show the reason Gatsby was about her. She belonged to the Elite class of the twenties. The rich class that any girl loves to belong to. She's the "dream girl". Young, fresh, beautiful and lightened just like a Greek Goddess. The contrast between how Fitzgerald introduces Daisy and how Hemingway introduces Catherine is good. Catherine was the "crazy" girl who had suffered a lot in her life and now she is suffering more during war with the loss of her fiancé. So while Daisy was enjoying her fancy and great life, Catherine was on the edge of pain and out of her mind.

As the story moves on however, the true Daisy is comes out. Chapter after chapter, she becomes less of an ideal and more of a picture Gatsby created of her in the past. The contrast in her personality starts to show. Yet, he can't actually see what she really is now. Gatsby does not accept the fact that he can't repeat his past with the "idea" of Daisy. Daisy knows of her husband's Tom **badness** does not do much about it. Why? Because she preferred money and security over love. As the story goes on, Daisy adds about her daughter:" I hope she will be a fool, that's the best thing a woman could be". This shows the mentality of the 20's but also shows how Daisy thought that all a woman should do is try to survive and act **bad**. Her beauty was more important to her than her moralities or culture. The materialistic in her soul from the past had not changed. So maybe all the purity that surrounded her was fake for her to get what she wants. All the white that surrounded her was void and emptiness; emptiness of morals and convictions. Compared to Catherine again, Catherine was a flat character. She does not develop much through the course of the novel but rather stays **good** to pure love of Henry. She was submissive and reflects the pain of the typical Hemingway hero traits.

The carelessness in Daisy's character after she hit Myrtle's car was the climax of her development. And to make it **bad,** she **left** Gatsby in his most important mark of his life: his death. She betrayed him three times. The end of the novel, reflected the betrayal, unconsciousness and carelessness of her character. In Farwell to arms, the love story was too pure for betrayal. So while Henry stood by Catherine in the last minutes of her life, Daisy **left** Gatsby without looking back. This is what makes Daisy so **good.**

A novel character should be a real person not a caricature. Fitzgerald drew Daisy as the beautiful innocent girl at the beginning of the novel. But then, he shows more of her. He shows greed, foolishness, betrayal, carelessness and infidelity. Her lust for money made her what she is. Other characters in the novels had a **good** growth but they grew bigger and better. With Daisy, her change was to the dark side. **Good** girl gone bad. And once a good girl goes bad …. She's gone forever.

Test 2 Essay Score 80%

In his *Tuesdays with Morrie* masterpiece, Mitch Albom enriches our souls with moving life lessons and makes us question our existence in this modern world. One of the most touching quotations was: **"Death ends a life, not a relationship"**. This simple yet complicated statement reflects the power of love in fighting death and maintaining life eternally. **Comparatively**, the aspects of death and love are well maintained all through Ernest Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms*. Matter of fact, the story takes place during World War I where death was just another habit of the characters daily life. Furthermore, *The Great Gatsby* by Scott Fitzgerald asserts on how death does not put an end on life but life cannot continue without true love. Addressing literary critics, this paper will develop how death, life and love is **visualized** in all three novels. Even though death, life and love are represented in different manners with different characters in the three novels, they all assert on Morrie's magnificent idea on how life is eternal in the heart of the loved ones. **Addressing literary critics, this paper will develop how the three themes are visualized in all three novels.**

First, in Tuesday's with Morrie, Albom does not really focus on death and what is after it even though the whole novel goes on with his expected death in mind. He rather focuses on the how to live life successfully. He repeatedly advices Mitch not to cling to material things but rather build relationships. Because to him love is the ultimate source of satisfaction to human kind. Death to Morrie does not mean the end of a road. **Especially if that road was paved with love, compassion and ideal intentions**. When we live with love, not only we will give a better meaning to our lives but when we return to the ground, we will still remain in the hearts and minds of the people we shared love with. Love here is described as an energy that will never be lost. Morrie died at the age of 78 but he was confident that his knowledge will not die with him. The relationship he built with Mitch went too strong to let go of his words and knowledge. He wanted to teach the world how to give and receive love more freely. To him, the competition for money, fame and materialistic values were **impoverished.** In summary, after death, relationship struggles on the minds of the survivors toward some resolution that they might never find but will always continuously chase.

On the other hand, death was continuously repeated all through Farewell to Arms. The story goes on during a time of war where everything seemed fading. Death symbols like rain and statues were repeated many times though the novel. Love however accompanied death everywhere. Matter of fact, it is the love and loyalty of the soldiers towards their country that made them fight for it until the last drop of their blood. Equally, Catherine's love to Henry made her

fight to stay alive until she surrendered at the end. The title of the novel (A Farewell to Arms) shows how the death of soldiers and the death of Catherine were parallel tragedies of equal importance to Henry. He memorializes both of them and keeps going; hoping to heal his pains with time. But he never forgot them. They survived in his memories which only asserted on Morrie's quote. For instance, Hemingway's novel is written in a ways of diaries. Like Henry is telling the story at a later time. This shows how his story in the war and his story with Catherine remained immortal in his mind. **Death here again killed life but did succeed in killing love.**

In the third novel, characters do not really discuss themes like death and what is after it. But death was **hindered** behind symbols all through the novel. In fact, there was a **constant thrive** for Gatsby to kill James-Gatz, the real him. He fought hard to build the man he is in order to win the love of his life: Daisy. And that what humans someone do. They are ready to kill their true personality in order to gain love or **the allusion** of love they create for themselves. Equally important is the actual death of Gatsby at the end of the novel. The only person who cared was Nick. And that is of course because of the true relationship they built through their lives. Daisy, the one who was supposed to care did not. Why? Because she was clinging to the material world she chose to devote to a long time ago. This example only **sheds** more light on the importance of Morrie's quote on how we should not make the material world sacred. Only love can bring the best humans in us. Gatsby's death revealed how he lived in the mind of Nick rather than Daisy because their relationship was not materialistic nor was it based on fake golden bases. True love will only lead to true life.

Memories are kept in the hearts of the people **filled with love seeds even after death**. Morrie's statement deserves to be called **aphorism** because it must be a principle of life. Hemingway showed it through the story Henry kept in his mind about his love to Catherine and in the same manner Fitzgerald expressed it through the great of Gatsby after knowing that his love for Daisy was only built on materialistic fading rhinestones. **We are a part of the ocean**, we will never disappear but we will always remain a part of a bigger entity: a loving world.

Appendix B Sample Student oral presentation
A Farewell to Arms by Ernest Hemingway

CHAPTER 6 Summary
• After being away for two days at the post, Henry goes to visit Catherine.
• Catherine, feeling sad having been without him these few days, asks him if he loves her while they walk through the garden.
• He lies and says yes.
• She goes on **expressing** her love for him and asking him not to leave again.
• Henry, in complete awareness that he does not and will not ever love Catherine
feels like he is involved in a **complex** game like "bridge" which she then admits as being a **miserable** game.
• She tells him that he does not have to pretend to love her.

They kiss and she goes off.
• Back home, Rinaldi **senses** the uncertainty coming from Henry and admits that he himself is glad he did not get involved with any British nurse.

CHAPTER 6: QUESTION 1
In the plot, an object is introduced
in this chapter that will **prove significant** later on in
the book.
What do you think is this object?
What does it indicate?
A: The narrator is forced to wear the "pistol".
This is the obligatory object.
It reminds us that we are at a short distance from
war.
Its presence along with other objects are
mentioned in minor details in these **tranquil**
chapters, that set a reminder of the closeness of
war.

QUESTION 2
"Thank God I did not become involved with the British."
- Rinaldi, Chapter VI
It is another skillful Hemingway mode to end the chapter
Why does Hemingway use this mode and what does this quote Signify?
A: Hemingway expresses the way his characters are
feeling by showing the reader the reactions these
characters **inflict** on others.
He doesn't quote their conversation nor describe
their every move or read out their thoughts.
Indirectly, we can sense that the narrator is
perturbed and upset after he was with Ms. Barkley.
This is shown through Rinaldi's response:
"Ah, ha! It does not go so well. Baby is puzzled."

Note: Permission was received from the students to print their essays and novel oral presentation in this study.

An adaptation of this article was presented at the International Educational Conference, Orlando, U.S.A. January 7, 2016. A travel grant was received from the University Research and Development Center, Lebanese American University to attend and present at the conference.