UNIVERSITY KASDI MERBAH-OUARGLA

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Foreign Languages

English Section

Dissertation

Academic Master

Domain: Letters and Foreign Languages

Field: English Language and Literature and Civilization

Speciality: Applied Linguistics and English for Specific Purposes

Presented by: BENHAOUED Hakima

Title:

Teaching Business English Vocabulary through Reading: A Discourse Analysis Perspective

Publically defended

On: 15/06/2013

Before the jury

Mr. Abdelmadjid DOUFENE	President	UKM-Ouargla
Dr. Noureddine CHAOUKI	Supervisor	UKM-Ouargla
Mrs. Farida SAADOUNE	Examiner	UKM-Ouargla

Academic Year: 2012-2013

Dedication

To my dear parents…

Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to my supervisor **Dr. Chaouki** for his help, guidance and patience. Without **Dr. Chaouki**'s thoughtful comments, advice and encouragement, this work would have never been completed.

I would also like to thank the board of examiners for accepting to read this work and for any remarks they would make to refine it.

My mother, who suffered with me through this work, deserves thanks, apologies and respect.

My deep gratitude goes also to my friend Fatma Zahra who helped me in typing the script. I really thank her for her efforts.

I owe a lot of thanks to Dr. Gharib and Miss. K. Bensaci who helped me in finding the appropriate sample and Dr. Korichi for accepting to apply the present inquiry on his students.

Finally, I must also thank all the students who have taken part in this study. Their contribution has been great in the fulfillment of this project. I am very grateful to them.

Abstract

Inferring meanings of unknown words when reading texts is one of the most important vocabulary learning strategies students of BE need to master. Learners, however, seem to miss the skills that this strategy provides as they depend heavily on translation in understanding unfamiliar words when reading. This is a consequence of language teachers' emphasis on translation in explaining newly introduced vocabulary items in reading. The present inquiry investigates whether teaching explicitly the different strategies of inferring word meanings would lead the involved participants to gain the skill of inferring the meaning of unknown words from their context of use. An experiment is carried out to investigate the effectiveness of the method of direct teaching of the different inferring strategies. One group of learners was taught following this method. A pre-test and a post-test were administered and the results of the two tests were analysed and compared. The results confirm that the proposed method of teaching the inferring strategies of word meanings helped the sample to improve.

List of Abbreviations

BE: Business English

BET: Business English Teaching

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EAP: English for Academic Purposes

EBE: English for Business and Economics

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

EOP: English for Occupational Purposes

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

FL: Foreign Language

GE: General English

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

MBA: Master of Business Administration

MT: Mother Tongue

SL: Second Language

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TL: Target Language

TOEFL: The Test of English as a Foreign Language

List of Diagrams, Figures and Tables

Diagrams

Figures

Tables

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Research Background

Introduction

1. 1. Statement of the Problem

1. 2. Aim of the Study

1. 3. The Hypothesis

1. 4. The Procedure

1. 5. Limitations of the Study

1. 6. Structure of the Study

Chapter One: Research Background

Introduction

Vocabulary learning is one of the most important tasks FL learners are asked to accomplish. Indeed, without vocabulary knowledge, it is impossible to communicate in the TL. To this end, word lists were created as it was assumed that memorizing TL vocabulary items with their equivalents from the learners' MT was the students' haven (Read, 2000). With the advent of CLT and discourse analysis, in particular, with their focus on learners' needs, however, word lists proved not helpful for learners who seek to acquire communication skills rather than an abstract knowledge of linguistic elements (Hatch & Brown, 1995; Nunan, 1995). In this regard, Wilkins (1972) posits that *"the learning of word-lists is faulty not only because each word is usually associated with its mother-tongue equivalent, but also because each word is linguistically and situationally isolated"* (p. 130). In this connection, researchers believe that vocabulary is better taught in context because learners will experience words in their context of use, which is likely to result in some learning of those words.

Since reading constitutes one of the most important sources of vocabulary (Hunt & Beglar, 2002), researchers think that exposing students to reading texts where they have to deal with vocabulary in context is the best solution.

In the context of ESP, vocabulary is the corner stone of the course. In most of the cases, ESP learners need to read materials related to their area of interest. In so doing, they are likely to be confronted with unfamiliar words that are very important to understand a given document. In this case, they need to be skillful in deriving word meanings from their context of use. To achieve this, students need to be instructed on how to deal with new vocabulary in context (Sedita, 2005). BE students make no exception in this regard.

1.1. The Problem

This study is an attempt to tackle one of the major problems faced by BE students at the University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla. We noticed that when these learners are exposed to reading passages, they are unable to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words from context. Rather, they seek for equivalents from their MT. This makes their reading process slow and tedious.

1.2. Aim of the Study

In light of this problematic issue, the main aim underlying the present study is to find out how learners succeed after being explicitly instructed on the strategies that are used to infer word meanings from context.

1.3. The Hypothesis

The main hypothesis put forward in this study is that explicit instruction of different strategies used in inferring word meanings from context can be beneficial to learners in gaining the skill of inferring meanings from context. For this reason, an experiment was conducted to prove the improvement this explicit instruction can bring to learners' performance in inferring meaning from context.

1.4. The Procedure

In order to test the hypothesis stated above, we have adopted an experimental design where one group of students is pre-tested, taught and then post-tested. These are first year-MA students of Economics at the University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla. Prior to the experiment, a needs analysis was carried out to see whether our investigation matches to the communicative needs of learners. After analysing needs, subjects were administered a pre-test to evaluate their level in inferring meanings from context. Then they received some training in how to exploit contextual cues and background knowledge of the topic at hand in inferring word meanings. This training lasted for two weeks during the academic year 2012-2013. In the end, a post-test was given to this group. Finally, the scores were analysed and compared to see if any improvement occurred in the inferring skills of participants after the teaching sessions.

1.5. Limitations of the Study

Like any other study, the research work we have conducted has certain limitations. The most important ones are stated below:

- Finding texts in the learners' subject area of study (BE) that contain appropriate information for inferring meanings of words was the most challenging. In this case, we were obliged to omit many parts of texts and take only those that provided enough contextual clues. This, in fact, was argued by McKeown and Beck (2004) as they

acknowledge that using contextual clues to infer word meanings is not always successful since contexts are not often "transparent" or "fully informative" (p. 22).

- The time allocated to the training period or the teaching of the subjects is too short. We think that if the subjects are trained in using the strategies of inferring word meanings from context for longer periods, their scores will be better than those obtained, as they will be introduced to more texts and more contextual clues.

1.6. Structure of the Study

This research work falls into four chapters. Chapter One is an introduction. It starts with a brief account of the importance of presenting vocabulary in written texts and the importance of dealing with word meanings in context. The importance of this in the context of ESP and BE in particular is also dealt with. After that, a brief statement of the problem at hand and aim behind the study are given. Then, the hypothesis was put forward. To test this hypothesis, an explanation of the procedure followed is given. The discussion is concluded by the limitations that we faced in carrying out the present investigation.

Chapter Two is devoted to BE. The chapter falls into two sub-sections. In the first sub-section, we define ESP, discuss its main types, namely EAP and EOP. In the second sub-section, we define BE, discuss its main characteristics, see the role of needs analysis in BE, and finally we talk about the importance of vocabulary in BE.

In Chapter Three, we attend to discourse analysis and vocabulary. It is divided into two main sub-sections. In sub-section one, we give a brief account of discourse analysis, define discourse analysis, talk about its main units *viz.* cohesion and coherence and about the importance of developing discourse competence.

Chapter Four provides the basic information about the two-week experiment conducted at the Department of Economics, University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla. It also tells how needs analysis could yield information as to the communicative needs of participants. In addition, it shows how the 'pre-test/treatment/post-test' formula is applied to provide the information about the statistical analyses of the results of the subjects involved in the experiment. The statistical information aims at assessing the success of direct teaching of the different inferring word-meaning strategies.

Chapter Two: Business English

Introduction

2. 1. Business English and English for Specific Purposes

- 2. 1. 1. Definition of English for Specific Purposes
- 2. 1. 2. Types of English for Specific Purposes
- 2. 1. 3. Categorization of Business English Teaching

2. 2. Business English

- 2. 2. 1. Definition of Business English
- 2. 2. 2. Characteristics of Business English Teaching
- 2. 2. 3. The role of needs analysis in Business English
- 2. 2. 4. Business English and Vocabulary

Conclusion

Chapter Two: Business English

Introduction

English is, nowadays, the *lingua franca* of the world and the source language to many specialist disciplines, such as the field of business (Čepon, 2005). This means that English with that feature of internationality seems to occupy every single part in human life, and this is no doubt due to the advent of more and more communication tools that attempt to render our world one community. All the disciplines are dominated by the English language and the field of business makes no exception in this regard. In fact, the majority of sound research and project conducted in this area is carried out through the English language.

BE is most needed either by adults working or preparing to work in a business context, or by BE students preparing to work in a business setting or because they study this language as a module at their university (Sim, n. d.). So, BE is that variety of English which can be taught for three different purposes. Firstly, it is taught for the purpose of improving the communication skills of job-experienced people who seek their efforts to bring better results to work as they communicate successfully through the English language. Secondly, it is taught to those people preparing to work in a company for example and who see their success to be related to their ability to use English. Lastly, it is taught as a module among others to university students who will be eventually examined on what they have taken in class concerning this type of English.

The present chapter attempts to give a brief introduction to BE, where we will clarify its relationship to ESP. The chapter falls into two main sub-sections. In the first sub-section, entitled BE and ESP, we attempt to review some definitions of ESP, to look at its main types and to show the existing relationship between BE and ESP through categorizing BE within the area of ESP. The second sub-section is devoted to BE. In this section, we will define BE, state its main characteristics and show the role of needs analysis in the area of BE, and finally we will conclude the section with our main concern in the area of BE, *viz.* vocabulary.

2.1. Business English and English for Specific Purposes

ESP has emerged as a recognizable discipline in the mid-to late 1960s (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). This period of time was characterized with the growth of business (ibid.). People all over the world needed to exchange goods and services, and because English was the dominant language at that time, people wanted to learn that language so as to achieve their

various purposes (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). From these facts, it became clear that people involved in the field of business with their various needs constituted one of the strongest motives that gave rise to a new discipline called ESP. Nowadays, BE occupies the most important place within the area of ESP (Ellis & Johnson, 1994).

2.1.1. Definition of English for Specific Purposes

ESP has been the subject of many definitions. In what follows, we will review some of the most currently cited definitions:

Munby (1978) sees that *"ESP courses are those where the* ***syllabus and materials*** *are* ***determined*** *in all essentials by the* ***prior analysis*** *of the* ***communication needs*** *of the* ***learner****"* (Emphasis added) (p.2).

The words *"****syllabus****"* and *"****materials****"* imply that ESP is a kind of ELT. This kind of teaching is described as being *"****determined****"* which means that behind this kind of teaching, there are conditions. These conditions represent the *"****communication needs****"* which imply those specific language abilities that allow someone to communicate adequately in the situation(s) s/he seeks to perform in. This 'someone' in the area of ESP is the *"****learner****"*. These needs of the learner should receive a *"****prior analysis****"* which means that the learner's needs are the starting point of any ESP course.

To sum up all these ideas, one can say that ESP, for Munby, is a kind of ELT which is conditioned by the analysis of learners' needs that are supposed to stem from the communicative setting(s) learners are to perform in, and that should be taken into consideration from the very beginning of the course.

McDonough's (1984) definition of ESP seems to strengthen Munby's when he claimed that *"…ESP is a focus of language teaching activity which certainly has its own range of emphases and priorities"* (as cited in Li, n. d., BET and ESP section, ¶ 2).

So, for McDonough, as well, ESP is a kind of ELT. This kind of teaching tends always to focus on learners' needs and prioritize them as they constitute the most essential criterion against which an appropriate syllabus is designed and appropriate materials are selected.

Other researchers like Strevens (1988), Robinson (1991) and Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) have been looking at ESP as something that can simply be defined in terms of absolute and variable characteristics (as cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, ibid.). Strevens

(ibid.) has assigned four absolute characteristics and two variable characteristics to ESP (as cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, ibid.). The absolute characteristics are that ESP is a kind of ELT which is:

- designed to meet specified needs of the learner;
- related in content (that is in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities;
- centered on language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics and so on, and analysis of the discourse;
- in contrast with 'General English'.

The variable characteristics are that ESP:

- may be restricted as to the learning skills to be learned (for example reading only);
- may not be taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

(as cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, ibid., p.3)

Through this definition, Strevens (ibid.) argues that ESP as a language teaching area is characterized by essential elements that any ESP course tends to reflect. First, the ESP course is the one that takes into account the learners' needs. Second, it is the one that tackles only those topics that are dealt with within the field of study/work of learners. For example, if learners are business people, the ESP course should deal only with business topics like 'companies', 'suppliers', 'markets', 'finance' and so on. Third, an ESP course analyses the discourse of the discipline it serves to discover what distinguishes the language in this discipline in terms of grammar, vocabulary and any other language component that reveals the way language is used in this specific discipline of language use. Last, the ESP course is different from the GE one. Beside these four essential properties, the ESP course may have two other characteristics that are not absolute. The first one is that the ESP course may not tackle all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) but only that/those which is/are dictated by the target situation where learners are to use language. The second variable characteristic is that ESP teachers with their focus on learners' needs are not necessarily obliged to adopt a previously set methodology, but they can adopt any one that is more convenient to learners' needs.

Dudley-Evans (2001) provides a simpler definition to ESP. For him, ESP is the teaching of English which is based upon the results of needs analysis. These results usually tend to give answers to the following questions: "What do students need to do with English?", "Which of the skills do they need to master and how well?", "Which genres do they need to master, either for comprehension or production purposes?" (ibid., p.131).

Frendo (2005) points out that "***English for Specific Purposes*** *(ESP) is a term often used to describe language that is inaccessible to people who are not members of a particular* ***language community****"* (p. 6). Frendo's definition, no doubt, seems to share one of the absolute characteristics mentioned previously in Strevens' (1988) definition the fact that ESP is centered on those language forms and discourse features that are specific to a given activity or as Frendo (ibid.) calls language community. These linguistic characteristics of the language community are usually not common to outsiders.

Looking at all the above mentioned definitions, one can come out with the conclusion that ESP is a kind of ELT which places more emphasis on learners' needs. This, in fact, was best explained in Hutchinson and Waters (1987) who consider ESP as an approach rather than a product. This implies the fact that although ESP is one branch of ELT, it should not, however, be thought of as a product of ELT with specific language forms, materials and methods (ibid.). In fact, ESP is an approach to language learning and teaching which seeks first to analyze the learners' reasons for learning English, the kind of language they need, the learning context they are involved in and any other thing that is related to learners so that ESP teachers can then design their specific courses and methods (ibid.).

2.1.2. Types of English for Specific Purposes

ESP is usually divided into EAP and EOP (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). These two branches are in their turn divided into a number of sub-fields (Goddard, 2007). This sub-division is either on the basis of discipline or on the basis of professional area (ibid.). EAP is the English needed in educational or academic settings, usually at the university (Dudley-Evans, 2001). For example, to get their MBA (Master of Business Administration), non-native students should take academic courses in English for Management, Finance and Economics (Goddard, 2007). EOP, on the other hand, is the English needed for professional purposes (Dudley-Evans, 2001). For example, the English needed by doctors, engineers or business people (*ibid.*). This class is the largest one within ESP (ibid.).

2.1.3. Categorization of Business English Teaching

Looking at the "Tree of ELT" suggested by Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 17), one can see that BE is represented as English for Business and Economics (EBE) which constitutes only one part of ESP besides others. ESP, in its turn, is only one part of EFL besides GE. EFL in itself is a part of ELT. This means that BE is to be put within the area of

ELT. In addition, EBE, like any other variety of ESP, is to be divided into two main types: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (for example, English for Economics) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) (for example, English for Secretaries).

2.2. Business English

2.2.1. Definition of Business English

Because it constitutes the most growing area within ESP, BE has attracted the attention of many researchers interested in providing a clear definition for this interesting field. In what follows, we will examine some of these definitions:

Ellis and Johnson (1994) define BE as a variety with a specific linguistic system and specific communication purposes. It implies a mixture of specific content (related to a particular job) and general content (referring to the ability to communicate successfully in general) (ibid.). So, for Ellis and Johnson, BE comprises only those language forms that are specified by a given group of learners as being relevant for them. For example, if the 'passive voice' is the most often used form in their specialty, then the syllabus of their course should place more emphasis on this form. These specific language forms are at the service of specific communicative purposes. For example, if learners need to write reports about their company's products, the language forms they have focused on in class should help them perform this communicative task. In addition, BE for Ellis and Johnson (ibid.), includes specific content that is represented in the main topics and themes dealt with in the learners' area of interest, on the one hand, and general content that means learners' general ability to use language for communication, on the other.

According to Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), BE is difficult to define. As a result, they have adopted the following diagrammatic representation that Pickett (1986 as cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, ibid.) gave as a reference in defining BE:

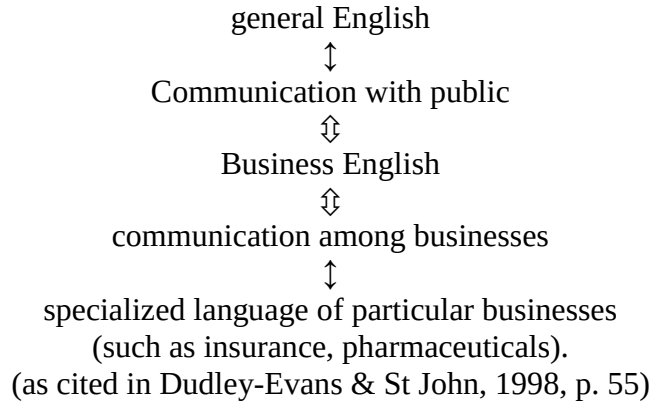


Diagram 2. 1. Definition of BE

For Dudley-Evans and St John (ibid.), the diagram shows that business communication has two faces. Firstly, it seems that a part of BE is similar to GE, and this occurs when people involved in BE communicate with the public (ibid.). Secondly, BE comprises that specific part of the language that occurs when business people communicate with each other within a company or across companies (ibid.). Dudley-Evans and St John (ibid.), however, claim that Pickett's definition is not enough because of the complexities involved in the business context.

Another definition offered to BE is that by Donna (2000), who argued that BE contains GE; but, what is significant with the former is that the aims of the course are different from those of the GE course (ibid.). These aims are taken from the subject area of study/work of learners (ibid.). They can be skills that are associated with preparing presentations, taking notes or any other task the target situation requires (ibid.). In fact, this definition confirmed the two preceding ones in that BE interferes in some cases with GE. With learners' needs being more clearly focused on in BE, however, the two varieties are distinguishable. The more learners' needs are clear, the more adequate, specific and better identified is the set of communication purposes, and so is the case in BE.

The last definition of BE in our list is the one put forward by Frendo (2005). He sees that BE is a *lingua franca* variety of language which is used with business communication skills in order to do a particular job (ibid.). To him, BE is a combination of three varieties of language (ibid.):

1) Everyday English that is understood by all people,
2) General BE that is understood only by proficient users of English,

3) Specific English that is understood only by the members of
a particular business community (for example, community of accountants).

So, in addition to being partly similar to GE and partly specific only to the business community, BE, according to Frendo, includes a mediating portion that is called general BE which may be accessible only to those proficient users of English.

It is noticeable from what precedes that BE with its specificity in terms of language and communication purposes remains similar to GE in many aspects. What remains special about this kind of English is that its teaching is "*a needs-directed teaching in which as much as possible must be job-related, focused on learners' needs and relevant to them*" (Čepon, 2005, p.46). So, it is always the learners' needs, like in any other variety of ESP, which are focused on in this particular area and which help concentrate only on those language forms and communication purposes that serve the target situation learners are going to perform in.

2.2.2. Characteristics of Business English Teaching

According to Carter (1983), BET, like teaching any other variety of ESP, is described as being authentic-material based, purpose-relation orientated and self-directed (Wang Jin, Jin Min, 2007 as cited in Xiarong & Lili, 2010). Authentic-material based implies the use of authentic materials which, according to Richards and Schmidt (2010), constitute those materials which are not designed for the purpose of classroom use, like newspapers and advertisements. Language in such kind of materials tends to be more natural than in those used in the classroom, like textbooks (ibid.). Whereas purpose-relation orientated implies the use of communicative tasks that simulate real-life business matters, for example, to ask learners to design company brochures or conference memos (Xiarong & Lili, 2010). Self-directed, on the other hand, means that learners are led through the course content into a state of being able to use the language in their subject area of interest (ibid.). When learners are frequently exposed to real-life materials, involved in communicative tasks that simulate those in their target situation and are prepared to be autonomous in manipulating the language they need in their area of interest respectively, the BE course no doubt will be more enjoyable and more motivating for learners as it matches up very well with their communicative needs.

2.2.3. The Role of Needs Analysis in Business English

No doubt, needs analysis is the distinguishing feature of ESP courses (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1996; Frendo, 2005). Several researchers, however, claimed that the needs analysis

process is not a novel thing that is applied only in the field of ESP, but it can also be applied with GE students if CLT is adopted (Dudley-Evans, 2001). For instance, GE students may need English to pass English exams at their school because it is a subject in the curriculum; or they may need it as a means to get a better job (Goddard, 2007). Moreover, it has been found that GE teachers tend always to make restrictions on the language, topics and activities chosen according to the level of the particular group of learners they have (ibid.). In this case, GE courses can also be called ESP courses (ibid.). What is then the key defining feature of ESP courses?

In trying to draw a clear distinction between GE courses and ESP ones, Goddard (2007) claimed that all GE syllabi tend to take the language system as a starting point, and thus they always manifest language in a form of lists: "a list of functions", "a list of themes and topics", "a list of vocabulary" and "a list of tasks and activities" (p. 10). Within an ESP situation, however, courses always begin from the learners' specific needs that are conditioned by the target educational or occupational setting these learners are to use language in (Dudley-Evans, 2001; Goddard, 2007).

It was the need of business people to acquire the skills needed to be successful communicators that has had an influence on BET (Ellis & Johnson, 1994). At the time BE courses were centered on learners' ability to master language structures, students felt that their communication needs were not genuinely targeted as the mere linguistic knowledge they have acquired served them very little in their target situation. For this reason, BE courses were rehabilitated to concentrate more on the communication purposes for which learners need to respond adequately and where language is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Accordingly, the process of needs analysis constitutes nowadays the corner stone of any BE course (Čepon, 2005). When the syllabus is based on learners' needs, the course content will be more motivating for learners (Basturkmen, 2006).

2.2.4. Business English and Vocabulary

One of the most important language components ESP teaching is concerned with is vocabulary (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). In BET, vocabulary is a key distinctive feature (Sim, n. d.). Research into the area of register analysis revealed the fact that there are no lexical forms that are specific to the English language used in business contexts (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1996). In an attempt to establish some language norms that are specific to BE, Pickett (1986), however, shows that there are some lexical words and phrases which are

not technical and that can be used in GE, but that their frequency of occurrence is higher in BE (as cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, 1996). For example, it has been found after some analyses carried out on GE texts and texts used in the economic field that the word "supply" is most commonly used as a verb in GE; whereas it rarely functions as a verb in the economic discourse (Basturkmen, 2006, p.63).

Any specific field has two types of vocabulary: technical vocabulary and semi-technical vocabulary which is sometimes called sub-technical vocabulary (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). It may also be called specialized non-technical lexis (Cohen, Glasman, Rosenbaum-Cohen, Ferrara and Fine, 1988), frame words (Higgins, 1966) or academic vocabulary (Martin, 1976; Coxhead, 1998) (as cited in Coxhead & Nation, 2001). In BE, it is called core-business vocabulary (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Technical vocabulary includes specialized words and phrases of the language (specialized vocabulary) relating to a specific subject (Sim, n. d.). It is so called because it carries special meanings in the discipline where it is used (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001). The nature of this vocabulary was best illustrated by Coxhead and Nation (2001) who argued that this kind of vocabulary can be classified into four categories, from the most technical to the least, as shown in what follows[1]:

Category 1

The word form appears rarely if at all outside this particular field.
Computing – wysiwyg, rom, pixel, modem

Category 2

The word form is used both inside and outside this particular field but not with the same meaning.
Computing – execute, scroll, paste

Category 3

The word form is used both inside and outside this particular field, but the majority of its uses with a particular meaning, though not all, are in this field. The specialized meaning it has in this field is readily accessible through its meaning
Computing – memory, drag, window

Category 4

The word form is more common in this field than elsewhere. There is little or no specialisation of meaning, though someone knowledgeable in the field would have a

[1] We take only the discipline of computing as one of the fields exemplified by the authors.

more precise idea of its meaning.
Computing – print, programme, icon.

(Coxhead & Nation, p. 261-262)

For Coxhead and Nation (ibid.), words in category 1 seem to be so highly technical that they cannot be accessible to those who had not studied the field before. Words in category 2 are technical as well since when used outside the field, they do not provide access to their technical use in a particular area (ibid.). Whereas words in category 3 and 4 are the less technical since their meanings are easily accessible by outsiders (ibid.). By looking at a list of words from category 4, one can recognize the field being addressed (ibid.). For example, in one study carried out by Sutarsyah, Nation and Kennedy (1994) on an economic text, some words identified as belonging to category 4 were the following: "Price", "Cost", "Demand", "Supply", "Firm", "Wage", "Quantity", "Market", "Economy", "Income", "Produce", "Consume", "Labour", "Capital", "Profit", "Revenue", " Output", "Trade" and the like (as cited in Coxhead & Nation, 2001, p. 263)[2]. According to Coxhead and Nation, any English language user who is not an economist or does not study economics (an outsider) coming across such words will easily realize the words as being related to the economic field. The two researchers, however, admitted that words from category 2 downwards have created a controversy among scholars on what exactly technicality of words means. Should the technical word have a special meaning that is not like its general meaning outside the particular field? And if so, how different should this meaning be from outside use? (ibid.).

In contrast to technical vocabulary, the semi-technical vocabulary, sometimes called core vocabulary (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001), constitutes that class of lexical items the specific discipline shares with GE, but which has a high frequency of use in this specialist area (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Academic or semi-technical terms may be words like "**assume**", "**achieve**", "**concept**", "**community**" and "**proportion**" (Coxhead & Nation, 2001, p. 253). For Olshtain and Celce-Murcia (2001), there exists a third kind of vocabulary in addition to the two kinds mentioned above. It is a more specific vocabulary which is related to some sub-fields, for instance, the vocabulary used in microbiology – a sub-field of biology (ibid.).

In fact, technical vocabulary is the most important category ESP learners are required to master (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). If learners ignore some technical terms in their

[2] For the complete list, see the same reference.

discipline, the teacher should devote some time for the teaching of this kind of vocabulary (ibid.). However, ESP teachers are more concerned with the teaching of semi-technical or core-business vocabulary (ibid.). As to the technical vocabulary, the teacher can provide little help because of three reasons (Coxhead & Nation, 2001). First, the teacher may not have background knowledge about the learners' subject area (ibid.). Second, learners are supposed to acquire such a kind of vocabulary while they are learning the content of their subject area (ibid.). Finally, it may be due to the different subject specialists learners come from (ibid.). In a study conducted by Cohen, Glasman, Rosenbaum-Cohen, Ferrara and Fine (1988) on the potential difficulties that L2 learners may face in reading academic texts, non-technical vocabulary such as: "**essential**", "**maintain**" and "**invariable**" has been found to constitute the largest unknown part by learners compared with technical vocabulary (as cited in Coxhead & Nation, 2001). The same study has been conducted by Anderson (1980) on her learners, and she found out that her learners very often identify the semi-technical terms as the unknown words for them (ibid.). Meyer's (1990) categorization of this type of vocabulary seems to represent a clear illustration of the nature of words this sort of vocabulary may underlie (ibid.). He has classified the semi-technical vocabulary into three categories (ibid.):

1 Vocabulary relating to the domain of the text and the linguistic acts performed in it. This includes words like argue, examine, survey, recommendation which tell us "what the authors are doing in their texts and what they ascribe to other authors" (Meyer, 1990:5).

2 Vocabulary describing scientific activities. This includes words like analyse, examine, survey, implementation.

3 Vocabulary referring to the subject matter of scientific activities. This includes technical vocabulary but is by no means restricted to that. Meyer describes three main groups as examples:

(a) Lexical expression of tense, aspect, modality, etc.: current, present, recent, ability, impossibility, likely.

(b) Classification of states of affairs: change, development, process, structure, quality

(c) Relations between states of affairs: this is a very diverse group. It can include quantitave changes expansion, increase, decline, reduction, causal relations arising, affecting, contribute, set inclusion include, comprise, and many others.

(Coxhead & Nation, 2001, p.257-258)

Through this description, it becomes clear that the semi-technical vocabulary seems to include most of the words that allow ESP learners to manipulate freely the language they need

in their area of interest. That is why most of the learners find this subclass of vocabulary the most problematic and challenging. For this reason, the ESP teacher needs to make great efforts on ways this vocabulary can be best handled. We will have more to say about this in the next chapter. Our focus will be only on vocabulary that is presented to learners through written texts.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have reviewed some definitions of ESP, discussed its main types and categorized BE in the area of ESP in an attempt to understand the nature of the relationship between ESP and BE. After that, we have focused our attention on BE where we have examined some of its definitions, talked about the properties that should be linked to its teaching. Also, we have seen the role of needs analysis in this area and concluded the chapter with one of the most important language components BET is concerned with, namely vocabulary. In this last part of the chapter, we have seen the main types of vocabulary and discussed the kind which is worth-being focused on in ESP teaching.

Remember that one of the most important characteristics of BET is that it takes into account learners' needs. We have seen that whatever the needs are, the need to be a good communicator in the business target situation is always a priority. This, in fact, is impossible to achieve if the teacher does not adopt the appropriate approach to this situation. It is to this point that we turn now.

Chapter Three: Discourse Analysis

Introduction

3.1. Discourse Analysis

- 3.1.1. Definition of Discourse Analysis
- 3.1.2. Elements of Discourse
  - 3.1.2.1. Cohesion
  - 3.1.2.2. Coherence
- 3.1.3. Developing Discourse Competence

3.2. Discourse Analysis and Vocabulary

- 3.2.1. Vocabulary and Reading
  - 3.2.1.1. Strategies to Vocabulary
  - 3.2.1.2. Inferring Skills
  - 3.2.1.3. Assessment Procedures

Conclusion

Chapter Three: Discourse Analysis

Introduction

Discourse analysis is now occupying a prominent place in SLA research (McCarthy, 1991). This research is in search for the most convenient ways to handle an SL programme. Indeed, *"paying attention to discourse does not mean that teachers and learners must sacrifice the traditional emphasis on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. These are essential elements in communication"* (Goddard, 2007, p. 390). So, according to Goddard (ibid.), no one can deny the usefulness of teaching the language system, but it should be accompanied by a focus on how this linguistic system (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation) operates within the social environment. To put it another way, FL learners, in mastering the language system (language usage), need to experience this abstract knowledge in its context of use (language use).

It is around this relationship between discourse analysis and the language system that this chapter is centered. With reference to our hypothesis, the target language component of the present study is vocabulary. To clarify the existing relationship between discourse analysis and vocabulary, the present chapter is divided into two sub-sections. In the first sub-section, we will concentrate our attention on discourse analysis where we will attempt to define this term, the notion of discourse competence and talk about units of discourse, namely cohesion and coherence. In the second sub-section, we will tackle the main concern of the present study, *viz*. discourse analysis and vocabulary. In this section, we will examine only vocabulary that is manifested through reading passages. Under vocabulary and reading, we will review the main type of strategies to deal with vocabulary, discuss the various techniques used in inferring word meanings from context, and finally we end the discussion with the way learners exposed to vocabulary through reading are assessed.

3.1. Discourse Analysis

3.1.1. Definition of Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis has been the subject of many definitions. In what follows, we will review some of these definitions:

Riley (1985) reports that

> There has been a widening of the field of research to include the external functioning of the verbal code as well, what people *do* with words. The emphasis in such an approach shifts from structure and grammar to function and communicative competence, from assembling sentences to doing things with utterances, from the sentence in isolation to the utterance in context. This, then, is the domain of discourse analysis…the description of the process whereby we create and relate, organize and realize meaning. (pp. 1-2 as cited in Yalden, 1987, p. 14)

This good explanation of the way discourse analysis has been integrated into language teaching clarified with what discourse analysis means and what it aims at. According to Riley (ibid.), discourse analysis is an approach to language in use. In other words, discourse analysis is the study of the language we communicate with; the language through which we produce and receive meaningful messages. Riley (ibid.) argued that this approach has led teachers to revise their teaching situation and discover that they have missed one more essential ingredient in a successful language programme; the study of language in its context. It is not enough to master language structures and grammar; learners need to be able to use this abstract knowledge in their interaction with others. And this, Riley (ibid.) explains, is the aim of discourse analysis; to develop the communicative competence of learners. Moreover, discourse analysis has removed the notion of 'sentence' from its studies and substituted it with the notion of 'utterance' which according to discourse analysis signifies 'the sentence in relation to context'.

In the same way, researchers like Cook (1989), McCarthy (1991), Hatch (1992), Jordan (1997), Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), McCarthy (2001), Trappes-Lomax (2004) and Richards and Schmidt (2010) have been looking at discourse analysis as the study of language in context. We now briefly review views.

For Cook (1989), discourse analysis pays attention to all that surrounds a sentence i.e. to context (the participants, the setting, the purpose of communication and any other factor outside the language that helps us to interpret meanings). So, according to Cook (ibid.), the external environment to language constitutes the context upon which discourse analysis is based. That is to say, discourse analysts look at how the setting affects a given communicative behaviour.

Similarly, McCarthy (1991) and Hatch (1992) see discourse analysis as the study of language in use. To them, discourse analysis is concerned with the way the context of use affects language that is used for communication. To put it another way, discourse analysis seeks to identify those contextual elements that help language users express various meanings.

Jordan (1997) notes that discourse analysts are interested in studying the language structure usually of longer texts like conversations, paragraphs and whole texts. They study the way utterances are linked, for example, they study cohesive devices and discourse markers that are used to link utterances and organize discourse (ibid.). As well, they seek to find out the way social contexts affect language use, for example, the extent to which the existing relationship among participants affects their discourse (ibid.). Jordan's (ibid.) definition has emphasized the fact that describing the sentence in isolation has gone out of fashion as soon as discourse analysis has been introduced to both language description and language teaching. Discourse studies look at the sentence as one entity in a whole i. e. as one element in a whole textual and social context.

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), in their turn, pointed out that the novel view of language in discourse analysis is to discover how meaning can be generated between and beyond sentences. This confirms the above mentioned definitions and Jordan's in particular that studying the sentence in isolation no longer exists in discourse analysis. Dudley-Evans and St John (ibid.) add that the same sentence may have different meanings in different contexts. This, as well, confirms the fact that context does play a significant role in one's choice of language.

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) claimed that *"discourse analysis is…the study of language in use that extends beyond sentence boundaries"* (p. 4).

In the same way, for Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, discourse analysis is concerned with studying the language above the sentence level. They (ibid.) look at context_ the situation where interaction takes place_ as being those non-linguistic and non-textual elements that have an impact on the interactive message.

McCarthy (2001) offers no different view when he pointed out that

> The study of **discourse** is the study of language independently of the notion of the sentence. This usually involves studying longer (spoken and written) texts but, above

> all, it involves examining the relationship between a text and the situation in which it occurs. So, even a short notice saying *No Bicycles* can be studied as discourse. (p. 48)

Through this definition, McCarthy hints that discourse analysis looks at what is beyond a sentence. This involves discourse analysts to approach longer stretches of language like paragraphs in order to examine the different relationships among sentences. But, what is more important in discourse studies is the study of the context in which a given communicative behaviour has occurred in order to see its effects on that communicative behaviour. For this fact, McCarthy has given the example of the notice saying *'No Bicycles'* which according to discourse analysis is considered as discourse since it is analyzable with reference to the context in which it is used. For sentence- grammarians, the notice *'No Bicycles'* is analyzed as a noun phrase which can function as a subject, object or any other part of speech that addresses the same message: 'a well- or ill-formed sentence' (ibid.).

Trappes- Lomax (2004) claimed that discourse analysis is the study of language as a means of communication. This underlies concepts such as "language *in use*", "language *above or beyond the sentence*", "language as meaning *in interaction*" and "language in *situational and cultural context*" (ibid., p. 134).

Similarly, Richards and Schmidt (2010) see that discourse refers to language use, language that is used for the sake of communication. It is usually used to refer to longer stretches of language like paragraphs, conversations and interviews (ibid.). Thus, discourse analysis represents the study of these types of discourse that identify the ways sentences in these spoken and written genres are combined in order to produce meaningful instances of language (ibid.). As to context, Richards and Schmidt (ibid.) pointed out that it refers to the linguistic patterns surrounding a word, phrase or text. Also, it represents the social situation where a given linguistic item is used (ibid.). Be it linguistic or social, context helps arriving at the particular meaning of a given utterance (ibid.). An example of the linguistic context can be shown through the phrase *"loud music"* and *"a tie with a loud pattern"* where the word *"loud"* means "noisy" in the first example, whereas it means "unpleasantly colourful" in the second one (ibid., p. 127). An example of the social context can be manifested through the word "*spinster*", which in everyday use means "an older unmarried woman", whereas in the legal context, it refers to "*any unmarried woman*" (ibid.).

To sum up, one comes out with the simpler definition that discourse analysis is the study of language in use where context is the core of focus.

3.1.2. Elements of Discourse

Cohesion and coherence are the most important constituents in discourse analysis (Nunan, 1993). In fact, they are the key defining features of a well-formed text (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain 2000; Celce-Murcia 2001). In this connection, Halliday and Hasan (1976) posit that the question of whether a set of sentences make a text or not is very related to the cohesive relationships among the sentences and which result in 'texture'. They (ibid.) point out that *"a text has texture, and this is what distinguishes it from something that is not a text….The texture is provided by the cohesive RELATION"* (p. 2). However, in addition to cohesion which is realized via linguistic resources, a well-formed text is still in need of one more ingredient that helps us to interpret what a writer/speaker intends to convey through a given linguistic message (Brown & Yule, 1983). This meaning-based process is what we know as 'coherence' (ibid.). We now turn to what cohesion and coherence mean, and to what extent they are helpful for the language user in general and for the reader in particular.

3.1.3.1. Cohesion

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) see that 'cohesion' is the use of different surface cohesive devices which help link the sentences together in a text. The same idea has been expressed by the same authors in 2001 when they argued that "***cohesion*** *refers to those overt features of a text which provide surface evidence for its unity and connectedness"* (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2001, p. 718).

Similarly, Nunan (1993) pointed out that cohesion is the use of certain words and phrases that help bound the sentences and utterances of a text together, creating certain relationships among them.

With reference to all these definitions, the notion of cohesion seems to be related to the formal aspect of language or linguistic signposting items. It is reflected in the use of various cohesive ties that can render a jumble of sentences one unit.

In fact, the importance of cohesion has been neglected for a long time by language teachers, when the sentence was approached in isolation from other sentences (Cook, 1989). This neglect had a negative impact on learners as they try to process language (ibid.). The problem was that they bothered themselves to understand the structure of each individual sentence with no effort to understand the whole (ibid.). In response to this problem, Halliday and Hasan (1976) published the book 'Cohesion in English' which has been widely accepted

by language teachers. This happened by the time discourse analysis began to have influence on language teaching in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), there exist two types of cohesion: grammatical cohesion (reference, ellipsis, substitution and conjunction) and lexical cohesion. For the purposes of this study, we will be concerned with lexical cohesion and which will be further discussed in the next section.

In addition to cohesion which is realized by means of the linguistic system, effective discourse is still in need of one more essential component, namely coherence (Cook, 1989). So, what does coherence mean? And how important is it for the language user?

3.1.3.2. Coherence

For Widdowson (1978), coherence is related to those illocutionary meanings like *persuasion, declaration, suggestion* and the like which both the writer and the reader seek to establish in their discourse (as cited in Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). Unlike cohesion which is related to form, coherence is related to meaning, the meaning (s) a writer is tries to encode through his/her text and which a reader is struggles to decode.

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (ibid.), in their turn, note that coherence of a text is the network of relations a sentence can make with previous and subsequent sentences in a way that helps the reader to better interpret the meaning of the text. So, the act of coherence or meaning generation of a given text is carried out through the sentences' inter-relationships as they make one meaningful unit to the reader.

From the two-above mentioned definitions, we conclude that, unlike cohesion, coherence is the main purpose of both the writer and reader. In other words, it is the meaning-construction which is the core of the communication process. So, in what ways does coherence serve the communication process? McCarthy (1991) emphasizes that cohesion is only an instrument to arrive at coherence. This means that the linguistic system is at the service of coherence or meaning creation which is the purpose of communication. That is why learners need to be able to exploit their language resources for the sake of creating meaningful instances of language so as to communicate successfully.

It is argued that it is the writer/reader who creates the act of coherence as s/he attempts to produce/understand a given text (ibid.). To put it another way, the process of meaning generation of a text is related to the writer's appropriate choice of the linguistic devices that

better convey the meaning(s) s/he seeks to establish through his/her text and to the reader's appropriate interpretation of that text (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001). Nunan (1993) claims that *"... interpreting discourse and thus establishing coherence, is a matter of readers…using their linguistic knowledge to relate the discourse world to people, objects, events and states of affairs beyond the text itself"* (p. 64). So, according to Nunan (ibid.), interpreting meanings in a given text involves the reader to fully exploit his/her linguistic knowledge and goes with it outside the text itself where s/he looks for the addressed people, objects, events and the like in the real world and sees their characteristics and behaviours in this reality. Then, s/he puts the situation or context of use of the text in the real world so as to better interpret it. Nunan's view is also held by Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) as they hold that *"…coherence is not only text-based it is also reader-centred"* (p. 126). This means that it is the reader who creates coherence of a given text by relating his/her own schemata (prior knowledge) of the world, structure of the text and topic at hand to the schemata of context and form presented in the text. So, for Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (ibid.), the reader's background knowledge which consists of information about the world, the different structures a text may take and the topic at hand can help him/her to establish the coherence of a given text[3]. Now we move on to see how all these features discussed under discourse analysis are to be applied to vocabulary when encountered in reading.

3.1.2. Developing Discourse Competence

In addition to grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence, discourse competence constitutes one of the components of communicative competence (Yalden, 1987 based on Canale, 1983). Hai, Econ and Ed. (2004) argue that *"with an understanding of the characteristics of discourse analysis, language teachers can use discourse analytical techniques to help students investigate their patterns of interaction so as to improve their communicative competence"* (p. 36). This means that introducing learners to the way discourse analysis works and making them apply this knowledge to the process of communication is likely to raise their communicative competence and their discourse competence in particular. So, what is discourse competence? And how do learners build up this competence?

[3] We will see the ways in which this background knowledge of the reader helps him/her to infer word meanings when we deal with the top-down approach to vocabulary.

According to Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), *"discourse competence …involves the selection, sequencing, and arrangement of words, structures, and sentences/utterances to achieve a unified spoken or written whole with reference to a particular message and context"* (p. 16). For them, discourse competence constitutes the ability to choose from a large linguistic repertoire those patterns that best convey a given message in a given context. These patterns are then put in a sequence that is closely connected and meaningful enough to make the message get across in that particular context.

Similarly, Shumin (2002) claims that discourse competence is concerned with "intersentential relationships" (p. 207) which, for productive purposes, implies the ability to use the rules of cohesion and coherence that help create closely connected and meaningful utterances. For receptive purposes, this implies the ability to process meaning depending on referents from previous sentences and coming ones (ibid.). So, according to Schumin (ibid.), discourse competence is that language ability which allows learners to produce and process cohesive and coherent instances of the language in a given context.

3.2. Discourse Analysis and Vocabulary

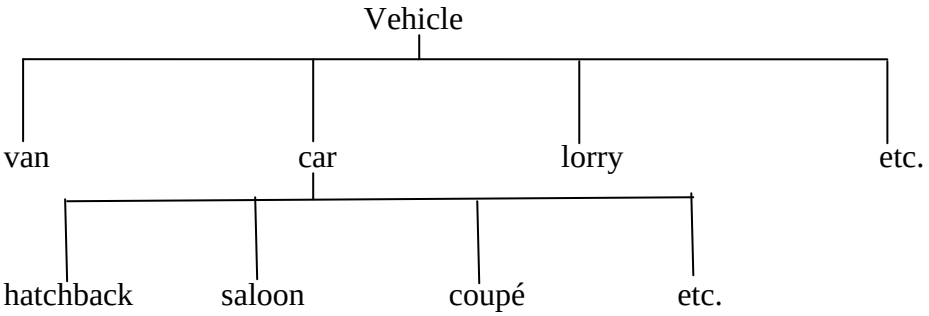
In addition to studying grammar and phonology, discourse analysis is also concerned with vocabulary (McCarthy, 1991). McCarthy (ibid.) points out that

> Bringing a discourse dimension into language teaching does not by any means imply an abandonment of teaching vocabulary. Vocabulary will still be the largest single element in tackling a new language for the learner and it would be irresponsible to suggest that it will take care of itself in some ideal world where language teaching and learning are discourse-driven. (p. 64)

Through these words, McCarthy (ibid.) tries to draw attention to the fact that adopting a discourse approach to language teaching does not prevent teachers from teaching vocabulary since it is considered the corner stone in learning a language.

McCarthy (ibid.) continues to explain that dealing with vocabulary above the sentence level (i. e. at a discourse level) was best explained in Halliday and Hasan's work on lexical cohesion in 1976. Lexical cohesion in a text refers to the use of some words that relate to one another by means of semantic relations (Nunan, 1993). According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), these semantic relations are either carried out by means of reiteration or by collocation. Reiteration means either the direct repetition of words or the use of one of the semantic relations of synonymy, antonymy and hyponymy (ibid.) which respectively signify

relations of *"... sameness, oppositeness, and inclusion"* (McCarthy, 1990, p. 16). The relationship of inclusion or hyponymy tends to organize words in a hierarchy so that we have superordinate words and subordinate ones as in the following (Hedge, 2000; McCarthy, 1990):



(McCarthy, ibid., p. 19).

Diagram 3. 1. Definition of Hyponymy

Collocation signifies those words which are related structurally and semantically in a way that makes them form what is known as lexical chunks or simply combinations that become one of the standards speakers of a particular speech community can make use of in their communication (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). For example, native speakers of English if asked to complete the sentence *"John——— money,"* they will choose from a small set of verbs such as "earns", "makes", "saves", "has", "likes", "wants", "spends" and "needs" (Seal, 1981 as cited in Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, ibid.).

In fact, vocabulary items which are related by means of such lexical relations tend to distribute along a given text, and they help hold the text elements together (McCarthy, 1991). For example, consider the following text where lexical cohesion is carried out by means of hyponymy

> There was a fine old *rocking chair* that his father used to sit in, a *desk* where he wrote letters, a nest of small *tables* and a dark, imposing *bookcase*. Now all this *furniture* was to be sold, and with it his own past. (ibid., p. 66)

In this text, the word *'furniture'* is a superordinate whereas the other italicized words are subordinates. Indeed, language teachers need to understand the ways lexical cohesion is to contribute to the coherence of a given text, because when learners recognize the lexical relations in a text, they are likely to develop their reading skill in effect (Nunan, 1993). That is

why it is necessary, sometimes, that learners benefit from an explicit instruction in manipulating these lexical relationships (Wilkins, 1972).

Learning to observe lexical links in a text as such allows learners to group vocabulary items as being synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms or collocates with reference to particular contexts (McCarthy, 1991). Moreover, knowing about a word's different synonyms, antonyms and hyponyms can be the only way to arrive at the full meaning of that word (Wilkins, 1972). And the same thing applies to collocation as Nattinger (1988) puts it *"the meaning of a word has a great deal to do with the words with which it is commonly associated"* (p. 69 as cited in Decarrico, 2001). Furthermore, Decarrico (ibid.) emphasizes that words having such a kind of relation (collocation) are easily learned compared by those which have not. We will have more to say about the ways these lexical relations can be exploited in inferring word meanings when we deal with inferring skills.

Some researchers argued that lexical relations are so tied to the text and context where they are used (Nunan, 1993). Many words seem to be related in one text, whereas not at all in another (ibid.). Take, for example, the two words of *"neighbour"* and *"scoundrel"* which have no relationship to each other; in the following example, however, they are synonyms: *"My neighbor has just let one of his trees fall into my garden. And the scoundrel refused to pay for the damage he has caused"* (ibid., p. 30). This makes it somehow difficult to use these lexical links as ways of teaching meaning (Wilkins, 1972). This problematic issue, however, does not by any means underestimate the importance of lexical cohesion (Nunan, 1993). Cohesion by means of lexis remains the most important among the other cohesive devices (ibid.).

Approaching vocabulary at a discoursal level has also included the different patterns a text may take. Researchers argued that it is important that teachers and learners know that special vocabulary is used with special text patterns (McCarthy, 1991)[4]. For example, the problem-posing part of an expository text will contain words like *"difficulty" "dilemma"*, *"hamper"* and *"hinder"* whereas the solution/result part will include words like "answer", "consequence", "outcome" and "(re) solve" (ibid., p. 79). The more learners are aware of these text patterns and the lexical items associated with them, the more successful they will be in reading (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). And this happens when a top-down strategy to

[4] For details, see the same reference.

vocabulary is adopted[5] (McCarthy, 1991). In the present study, we focus only on the way lexical cohesion carried out by means of the different lexical relations is to be exploited in inferring word meanings and hence improving the reading skill of learners. We now turn to the importance of teaching vocabulary through reading.

3.2.1. Vocabulary and Reading

To learn the lexical system of a given language is to learn each word's "extralinguistic" and "intralinguistic" relations i.e. how a word relates to the external physical world and how it relates to the other words in that language (Wilkins, 1972, p. 133). Wilkins (ibid.) explains that *"so complex is the semantic structure of a language that it can be acquired only through wide exposure and this in turn can probably only be provided by extensive reading"*. So, according to Wilkins (ibid.), vocabulary learning in a given language is a complex process that needs large exposures to the language and this can be achieved only through reading and only extensive reading. Indeed, *"through reading the learner…is exposed to the lexical items embedded in natural linguistic contexts, and as a result they begin slowly to have the same meaningfulness for him that they have for the native speaker"* (ibid., p. 132). In this quote, Wilkins (ibid.) highlights the fact that exposure to the TL through reading allows the learner to explore words in their natural contexts of use and, as a result, words begin to dress their appropriate meanings for him/her as they do with the native speaker. Moreover, encountering words in their contexts helps the learner not only in deriving word meanings but also in experiencing the word in its natural environment where it collocates with other words and where its grammatical function is well-identified (Thornbury, 2002). So, for Thornbury (ibid.), in addition to having a chance to arrive at the meaning of a given word, the learner, in experiencing that word in its appropriate context, will gain knowledge of any collocates to that word and of the grammatical slot that word can fill. Furthermore, Thornbury (ibid.) adds that a text will allow learners to gain knowledge of other related words to a given target word by means of topic. And it has been proved that words related by means of topic are probably easier to learn than words related by means of hyponymy (ibid.). Similarly, Olshtain and Celce-Murcia (2001), as advocates of presenting vocabulary through reading, note that it is impossible to teach or learn vocabulary out of context. Words, for them, acquire their full meaning only when used in larger stretches of discourse.

[5] We will discuss this in detail when we deal with strategies to vocabulary.

In fact, lexical competence can be improved not through extensive vocabulary instruction but through extensive reading (Nagy, 1988) because through extensive reading, learners will experience words in their contexts of use (Thornbury, 2002). Moreover, they will benefit from intensive exposure to the target words since it has been argued that for a word to be learned through reading, it needs to be encountered six or more times (ibid.). Similarly, Wilkins (1972) explains that the learner as s/he reads in a large quantity in the target language, s/he begins gradually to strengthen his/her knowledge of the convenient use of a given word after it had been shaking. This has been further argued by Decarrico (2001) who claimed that since contexts are not always rich enough in contextual clues that help infer word meanings, a single exposure to a given word in a given single context is not sufficient for grasping the full meaning of the word. That is why multiple exposures to that word in a variety of contexts is recommended (ibid.). Nagy (1988) in his turn points out that in order for a word to be well-learnt, the learner needs to be exposed to multiple different reading contexts where the target word is presented. Frequent exposures to written texts where the unfamiliar words are presented will increase learners' lexical competence which in turn increases learners' ability to deal with more complex texts (ibid.). For this reason, one of the most important strategies for effective vocabulary instruction is to encourage learners to read as much as possible (ibid.).

In search for the most effective way to vocabulary instruction, word lists, dictionaries and translation have been evaluated against reading. As to word lists, Schouten-van Parreren (1989) argues that they are not helpful for the learner because of the following:

1) Words presented in the list are quickly forgotten,

2) Words in the list when presented alphabetically or thematically cause confusion for the learner,

3) Meanings of words in the list are not so clear since they are decontextualized (Beheyadt, 1987 as cited in Hedge, 2000),

4) Words in the list presented as such do not transmit a message and thus do not involve the learner in a psychological environment (Leontjew, 1979 as cited in Hedge, ibid.) (Schouten-van Parreren, 1989 as cited in Hedge, ibid.).

In favour of vocabulary instruction through reading, Schouten-van Parreren (ibid.) maintains that *"…texts, in contrast, present a linguistic and psychological reality, and that*

presenting words in the context of a text will provide support and reduce interference" (as cited in Hedge, ibid., p. 120). In the same way, Graves and Rein (1988) see that the use of dictionaries or translation in teaching certain vocabulary items should be a last resort, after a context has been found not providing ample support to get the meaning of a given word (as cited in Nunan, 1995). Dictionaries and translation should not be overused because they are likely to prevent learners from benefiting from the skills that contextual analysis provides (ibid.). These skills are considered the target teachers seek their learners to achieve (ibid.). So, reading remains the most important source for vocabulary development.

We now move to see what techniques a reader needs to use in order to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words, exploiting any contextual clues. But before that, we need to know about the different approaches to vocabulary.

3.2.1.1. Strategies to Vocabulary

Like any other language component, there exists two types of learning strategies that can be applied to vocabulary; they are the bottom-up and top-down strategies (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000).

The bottom-up strategy to vocabulary is used when the learner does not know the meaning of a word (ibid.). To put it another way, the bottom-up strategy to vocabulary is adopted when the learner takes the word(s) that is/are unknown for him/her as his/her starting point in understanding a given text. In this way, the learner will be heavily dependent on his/her formal knowledge of the language in analyzing the text.

In contrast, the top-down strategy to vocabulary is adopted when a particular topic, about which the reader has background knowledge, activates the lexical competence of this reader (ibid.). In this case, all words and phrases associated with that particular topic tend to gather in the reader's mind as soon as s/he confronts the topic at hand. For example, a text tackling the topic of "Banks" can call for the following phrases: "cheque book", "transfer money", "withdraw money", "cash card", "credit card", "to get into debt" and the like (Mascull, 2006, p. 58).Unlike the bottom-up strategy, learners draw upon their background knowledge of the topic at hand and pay little attention to the analysis of linguistic forms (Lynch, 1996). Indeed, the context supplies the keys that help in comprehension (ibid.). So, according to Lynch (ibid.), it is contextual analysis which is the core element in this type of strategy. The learner, in addition to exploiting background knowledge s/he holds about the

topic at hand, can benefit from the contextual clues that the text provides. For McCarthy (1991), a top-down strategy is also used with certain texts which tend to have special patterns. McCarthy (ibid.) explains that the background knowledge which is supposed to help the reader to comprehend does not contain only information about the world (phenomena, real-life events and behaviour), but also information about the way texts are structured and organized. And we have seen before under discourse analysis and vocabulary that a text can have different conventional patterns and that when learners recognize the discourse pattern of a given text, they will remember that there is a specific set of vocabulary items that can realize that pattern (ibid.). Our attention, however, will be on the way background knowledge of the topic at hand contributes to the reader's perception of the lexical relationships in a given text and thus helping him/her to work out the meaning of unknown words. In this connection, Nunan (1993) argues that this type of background knowledge seems to be more beneficial to the perception of lexical links than to the other kinds of cohesion. Combinations by means of collocation, for example, will be noticeable only to those readers who are knowledgeable about the topic at hand (ibid.).

We now turn to see what inferring skills researchers have proposed to be used side by side with the background knowledge we have been looking at in order to infer the meaning of newly introduced vocabulary items.

3.2.1.2. Inferring Skills

Inferring meanings of unknown words using clues available in the text is considered as one of the discourse skills used when processing language (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). Indeed, this will minimize learners' dependence on dictionaries and increase their decoding speed (ibid., 2001). Moreover, learners when encouraged to use context will develop their independent vocabulary learning (Edwards, Font, Baumann & Boland, 2004). In what follows, we review some of the currently proposed inferring strategies:

For Kruse (1979 as cited in Nunan, 1995) the following five contextual cues can be taught to learners to help them infer word meanings:

1) *Word elements such as prefixes, suffixes and roots.* Learners being able to recognize component parts of words as such will reduce the number of newly introduced words to them through reading,

2) *Pictures, diagrams and charts.* Learners need to be able to exploit such illustrations in understanding difficult words for them,

3) *Clues of definition*. Learners need to be shown the different types of definition clues. Some of these are the following:

(a) Parentheses and footnotes,

(b) Synonyms and antonyms which can occur with other clues like *that is* and *is* clauses (X, Y,; X-Y-; X, which is Y,; X or y),

4) *Inference clues from discourse* which tend to distribute along the text and which can be:

(a) Example clues, where the meaning of a given word can be inferred from the example available in the text, which is physically represented by *i.e., e.g.,* and *for example*,

(b) Summary clues, where the meaning of a given word can be reached through a summary in a sentence or paragraph,

(c) Experience clues, where the meaning of a given word can be inferred as the reader remembers a similar situation s/he has experienced,

5) *General aids*, which do not help give an exact meaning to the unknown word but rather narrow the possibilities. These possibilities can include determining the part of speech of the unknown word and the subject being dealt with (Kruse, 1979, p. 209 as cited in Nunan, 1995, p. 121).

Having examined these inferring skills, one can note that contextual clues are not limited only to the sentence containing the unfamiliar word, but all the sentences in the text even the physical representations do provide the necessary clues for inferring word meanings. And this is what we have seen before under cohesion and coherence when we said that a text in discourse analysis is that bound and meaningful unit we use to communicate a certain message.

Clarke and Nation's (1980) and Nation's (1990) recommended inferring strategy involves that the learner first identifies the part of speech of the unknown word (noun, verb, adjective, etc.) (as cited in Decarrico, 2001). Then, he looks at the context of the sentence containing this unknown word (ibid.). For example, if the unknown word is a noun, which adjective modifies it? Which verb is it used with? Which adverb modifies it? And so on

(ibid.). Finally, he examines the broader context of the sentence containing the unfamiliar word (ibid.). That is, the learner should look at the relationship between this sentence and the surrounding ones (ibid.). So, following this strategy as well, the whole text is exploited in working out the meaning of a given unfamiliar word.

Hunt and Beglar (2002) argue that before inferring the meaning of a given word from context, the learner should decide first whether this word is important i.e. the learner needs to understand. Once a word has been identified by the learner as worth being inferred, the suggested steps of inferring by Nation and Coady (1988) can be used (as cited in Hunt & Beglar, 2002). In fact, these steps are similar to those mentioned above by Clarke and Nation (1980) and Nation (1990), but what is significant with the work of Nation and Coady (1988) is that having inferred the meaning of the unknown word, using the mentioned strategies is not enough since the learner needs to carry out a further step, which is to check his/her infer (as cited in Hunt & Beglar, 2002). As to this step, it is necessary that the learner's infer should have the same part of speech as that of the target unknown word (ibid.). In addition, if the unfamiliar word is analyzable into parts (for example *"unlock"* is to be *"un+lock"*) (ibid., p. 263), the learner needs to be able to do so and to try to see if the meanings of those parts as isolated match the meaning of the word they compose (ibid.). Finally, learners need to examine their infer against the context at hand to see if it makes sense, and in this case a dictionary can be consulted to confirm the infer (ibid.). If it happens that a learner's infer is incorrect or particularly correct, learners need to analyze the correct answer to see how it best fits into the context (ibid.). And it is better that this final process is done with the whole class than with individuals (Liu & Nation, 1985 as cited in Hunt & Beglar, 2002). Williams (1986) suggests that this process of analyzing the correct answer is better clarified on an overhead transparency or a chalkboard where the unfamiliar word is highlighted and arrows from other words in the text that make clues to the meaning of this unknown word are linked to it (as cited in Hunt & Beglar, 2002).

Basing the work of Clarke and Nation (1980) and that of Grellet (1981), Dunmore (1989) suggests the following context cues as the most beneficial ones in helping students to be successful guessers and in being good resources for teachers who aim to design exercises that teach rather than test the skills needed in inferring word meanings (Dunmore, ibid. as cited in Jordan, 1997):

1) Equivalence, where the meaning of a given word can be inferred through a synonym mentioned in the text. Take, for example, this context "*the immediate **cause** or **trigger** of the [financial] crisis [of 2007] was the bursting of the United States housing bubble which peaked in approximately 2005-2006* (Emphasis added) ("Financial crisis of 2007", 2012, Background section, ¶ 2), where the meaning of ***"trigger"*** as the unknown word can be inferred through its synonym ***"cause"*** which is mentioned in the same sentence.

2) Contrast, where the meaning of a given word can be inferred through another word in the text that is opposite in meaning. For example, consider the following context *"the financial crisis [of 2007] has caused the **'emerging'** and 'developing' economies to replace **'advanced'** economies to lead global economic growth"* (Emphasis added) (ibid. Emerging and developing economies drive global economic growth section, ¶ 1), where the meaning of the word ***"emerging"*** can be arrived at through the word ***"advanced"*** which is opposite in meaning.

3) Cause, where the meaning of a given word can be arrived at because it serves as the cause of an event in the text. For example, in the sentence *"family **breakdown** or mal-adjustment is the most cited reason for an employee to have to be repartriated"* (Emphasis added) (Pilbeam, 2000, p. 69), the meaning of ***"breakdown"*** as the unfamiliar word can be easily inferred because it is the cause behind the employees' repartriation.

4) Consequence, where the meaning of a given word can be arrived at because it serves as the consequence of an event in the text, especially of a known cause. For example, *"with each culture favouring different training and development practices, it may be difficult to **integrate** these into a coherent or consistent policy within an international organization"* (Emphasis added) (ibid., p. 53). In this sentence the meaning of ***"integrate"*** can be inferred because it is the consequence of cultures' unsameness.

5) Purpose, where the meaning of a given word can be inferred because it is related to an object whose purpose is described in the text. Take, for example, this context "*with each culture favouring different training and development practices, it may be difficult to integrate these into a coherent or consistent policy within an international organization. However, **standardizing** training methods may be important if the company needs to communicate specialized knowledge quickly across different units, or if the special quality of the company training programmes is regarded as a major source of attracting new recruits"* (Emphasis added) (ibid.), where the meaning of ***"standardizing"*** as the potential

unknown word can be inferred because it is related to a purpose companies intend to achieve behind unifying the cultural differences at work as possible as they can.

6) Explanation/Illustration, where the meaning of a given word can be figured out through an explanation of its meaning in the text or through an available example. For example, in this context *"French managers look at organizations as an authority network where the power to organise and control others comes from their position in the* ***hierarchy****. French managers focus on the organisation as* ***a pyramid of differentiated levels of power****"* (Emphasis added) (ibid., p. 33) the meaning of ***"hierarchy"*** is explained in the next sentence as ***"a pyramid of differentiated levels of power"***.

7) Generalization/Specification, where the meaning of a given word can be inferred because it constitutes a specific element of a general idea in the text or because it constitutes the general part of some specific instances. For example, in this context *"twenty-five years ago, one in five US workers was employed by one of the top 500 companies. Today,* ***the ratio*** *has dropped to fewer than one in ten"* (Emphasis added) (ibid., p. 25) the meaning of ***"ratio"*** can be inferred because it constitutes the general idea of the statistical information given in the text.

(Dunmore, 1989 as cited in Jordan, 1997, p. 159)

Edwards *et al.* (2004) point out that context clues may include anything like pictures, graphics and the like, but that their focus will be only on the two types of linguistic clues, which are the syntactic clues and the semantic clues. Exploiting syntactic clues for inferring word meanings requires the reader to depend on the word order of the sentence (ibid.). This will be very beneficial to readers since English is one of the languages which are affected by the word order of the sentence (ibid.). In this way, meanings of words constituting the sentence are changed as soon as the word order of the sentence changes (ibid.). So, according to this type of clues, the learner, as s/he relies on the word order of the sentence, s/he may get some help as to the meaning of a given word since it takes a particular position in the sentence (subject, verb, object, adjective, etc.). Whereas semantic clues require the reader to depend on meanings generated in the text that can provide some support as to the meaning of a particular word (Johnson & Pearson, 1978 as cited in Edwards *et al.*, 2004). For this kind of clues, the following five context clue types are worth focusing on in language teaching (Edwards et al., 2004):

1) *Definition*. For example*, "individual families, whether rich or poor, must decide how to divide their expenditures out of income in some proportion between present and future consumption.* ***That part of income which is not consumed*** *is called* ***savings*** (Emphasis added) (Mead, 1985, p. 25). In this context, ***"savings"*** as the unfamiliar word is clearly cued by its definition ***"income which is not consumed"*** which is given in the same sentence,

2) *S*ynonym. For example, consider the following context *"in an economy it is the scarce resources that are the limiting* ***factors*** *or* ***constraints*** *on growth and development"* (Emphasis added) (ibid., p. 18), where the meaning of ***"constraints"*** as the potential unknown word can be easily inferred because there is the word ***"factors"*** in the same sentence which is closest in meaning to it,

3) *Antonym*, For example, in the sentence *"every child born has both a mouth and a pair of hands, and, on average, it is perfectly possible to speak of overpopulated and underpopulated economies, depending on whether the contribution to production of additional people would* ***raise*** *or* ***lower*** *the level of per capita income"* (Emphasis added) (ibid., p. 60) where the meaning of ***"raise"*** as the unfamiliar word can be figured out because there is the familiar word ***"lower"*** in the same sentence which is opposite in meaning to it.

4) *Example*. Take, for example, this context "*the* ***co-ordination technologies*** *of the industrial era_* ***the train*** *and* ***the telegraph***, ***the car*** *and* ***the telephone***, ***the mainframe computer*** *and* ***the fax machine***_ *made transactions within the company not only possible but advantageous"* (Emphasis added) (Pilbeam, 2000, p. 25), where the meaning of the phrase **"co-ordination technologies"** as the unknown expression can be easily puzzled out because it is exemplified by the words ***"train"***, ***"telegraph"***, ***"car"***, ***"telephone"***, ***"computer"*** and ***"fax"***.

5) *General*. For example, *"as long as each employee* ***carries out the orders*** *of his immediate* ***superior***, *he is relatively* ***free from criticism***, *which makes* ***for harmonious working conditions****"* (Emphasis added) (Mead, 1985, p. 35). In this context, the expressions ***"orders"***, ***"superior"***, ***"free from criticism"*** and ***"harmonious working conditions"*** seem to give some general hints as to the meaning of the word ***"carries out".***

(Edwards et al., 2004, p. 167)

In spite of efforts on trying to discover all what can constitute as a contextual clue to unknown words, some researchers have something to say against vocabulary learning through context. They argue that readers really use contextual clues in learning new words, but that this learning tends to be limited (Nagy, Anderson, & Herman, 1987; Swanborn & de Glopper, 1999 as cited in McKeown & Beck, 2004). This means that learning unknown words from written contexts may happen, but it is with a limited number (McKeown & Beck, 2004). And it has been found that among 100 unknown words in reading passages, only 3 to 15 words may be learnt (ibid.). With this limited number of words, however, people will be able to learn hundreds of words in a year if they manage to read so much (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998 as cited in McKeown & Beck, 2004). It has been found that students with vocabulary problems are usually those who do not read so much (ibid.). So, as we argued before, reading remains that single important source through which learners can expand their vocabulary knowledge.

After reviewing some of the inferring skills learners can make use of in learning new words and make sure that vocabulary learning through reading can be fruitful as long as learners read a lot, we now move to see the way teachers can test their learners on vocabulary that is encountered in reading.

3.2.1.3. Assessment Procedures

Assessing learners' TL lexical competence is very important in that it reveals their progress in vocabulary learning as well as the adequacy of this knowledge to their communicative needs (Read, 2000). To assess learners' ability to infer word meanings from context, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) has been found the most convenient (ibid.). With respect to vocabulary assessment, TOEFL has undergone many changes in its attempt to satisfy the needs of both language teachers and applied linguists (ibid.). The aim of these needs is that vocabulary testing is better to be integrated into a larger language ability and be context dependent (ibid.). To this end, TOEFL considered vocabulary assessment as one of the targets in assessing reading after it had been considered as a separate element in the test for a long time (ibid.). It was in 1995 that this element was incorporated in the reading comprehension section, where it is presented in a whole passage, and learners' inference of its meaning in this context is assessed through a multiple-choice item like the following: *"'the word "[ ]" in line [ ] is closest in meaning to' "*, followed by four usually single-word options, as in the following example:

E.g. the word ‘tardy’ in line 3 is closest in meaning to

(A)——
(B)——
(C)——
(D)——

(Read, 2000, p. 145).

A new version of vocabulary assessment of this kind has occurred in 1998 when TOEFL has been given an electronic form (ibid.). Indeed, there is no such significant difference that can be mentioned between this new version and that of 1995; what is new is only the appearance of the reading passage and the multiple-choice item (ibid.).

Through this short account of the stages vocabulary testing has undergone, we notice that learners should be assessed with reference to the approach that had been adopted in teaching. Because vocabulary teaching as a formal component of language went out of fashion, teachers were obliged to construct vocabulary tests that go in line with the new discourse approach that emphasizes the importance of context in deriving the meaning of vocabulary items.

Conclusion

In this chapter we examined the nature of relationship existing between discourse analysis and vocabulary. In so doing, we first concentrated on discourse analysis, where we defined the term, talked about discourse competence and dealt with the main units of discourse; cohesion and coherence. Then, we talked about discourse analysis and vocabulary. Under this, we saw the importance of reading as the major source for vocabulary learning, described the two standard strategies to vocabulary (namely, the bottom-up and top-down strategies), reviewed some of the inferring skills, and finally we concluded with the way vocabulary learning is assessed, on the basis of the approach we hold for this study.

Having all this theoretical background in mind, we now need to see the extent to which this knowledge is applicable as we attempt to apply it to the sample of learners of BE.

Chapter Four: The Experimental Study

Introduction

4. 1. The Sample

4. 2. The Procedure

- 4. 2. 1. Needs Analysis
- 4. 2. 2. The Pre-test
- 4. 2. 3. Analysis of the Pre-test Results
- 4. 2. 4. Training in Lexical Inferring
- 4. 2. 5. The Post-test
- 4. 2. 6. Analysis of the Post-test Results

4. 3. Discussion

Conclusion

Chapter Four: The Experimental Study

Introduction

Through this study, we intend to check the extent to which participants can benefit from an explicit instruction in the different strategies used in inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words when encountered in reading. For reasons we will mention later, the training course covered only some of these strategies where inferring from context is adopted.

The procedure followed in this experimental work goes through three main stages: a pre-test stage where subjects are assessed on their ability to infer word meanings from context, a treatment stage where participants receive some kind of training in using the intended inferring strategies, and finally a post-test stage where subjects are reassessed to see whether any improvement has occurred in their inferring skills after the formal training. Prior to all this, a needs analysis has been carried out to check whether what we are investigating is one of the communicative purposes our sample of students seek to achieve in their area of interest.

4. 1. The Sample

The experiment took place in the Department of Economics, Management Section, University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla. Participants are first-year Master students of Economics, during the academic year 2012-2013. A group of thirty (30) out of a total number of fifty (50) _volunteer students has participated in this study. For this group of learners, English is one of the subjects students are interested in, after having studied it for about eight years (2 year-university education and 6 year pre-university education). Students are judged to be upper-intermediate. The choice of this sample of learners has been motivated by the fact that inferring from context strategy is assumed to work only with proficient learners (Hunt & Beglar, 2002). After the administration of the needs analysis sheet, twelve (12) students were excluded because of their absence during the rest of the experiment. There remain eighteen (18) students (12 female students and 6 male ones), aged are between 22 and 26.

4. 2. The Procedure

4. 2. 1. Needs Analysis

As a first step in the needs analysis process, we have informally consulted the teacher of English of the subjects to see if in reading texts students need to cope with unknown words is one of the target needs of the sample. The teacher told us that the most important objective behind this course was to improve the reading skill of learners in preparing their research papers for the following year. They need to consult English references related to their subject area of study where it will be more fruitful for them if they manage themselves to understand the unfamiliar words as they occur in the text.

As a second step, we have attended some sessions to observe how successful the teacher is at handling this issue. What we observed is that when the teacher gave his students texts to read in their speciality, he asked them to consider context in understanding unknown vocabulary items. However, when it came to action, students were not given the chance to read alone and infer the meaning of the unknown words to them as the teacher directly explains and translates every single word in the text. Moreover, students were not supplied with the ways to deal with unfamiliar words in context. This motivated us to carry out a further step by administering a questionnaire to the participants themselves to see the extent to which they appreciate the course methodology. Our questionnaire entitled 'Needs Analysis Sheet' (see Appendix A) comprises the following six questions:

Question 1. Do you think that learning English words that are related to your speciality, for example, the word **'finance'** are important to you?

-Yes

-No

This question has been devised in order to know the importance of teaching vocabulary to this category of learners. Responses were as follows:

Importance of Learning Vocabulary	N	%
Yes	30	100
No	0	0

Table 4. 1. Importance of Learning Vocabulary

Table 4.1 indicates that 100% of the respondents have answered 'Yes'. This means that vocabulary learning constitutes one of the most important language elements this group of learners need in communicating.

Question 2. If the answer to the previous question is 'Yes', do you understand words that you did not meet before when they are given to you in a written text?

-Yes
-No

This question seeks to check whether learners are able to figure out the meaning of newly introduced vocabulary when reading texts. Answers were as follows:

Understanding New Words When Reading Texts	N	%
Yes	3	10
No	27	90

Table 4. 2. Understanding New Words When Reading

For the second question, 90% of the respondents answered 'No', while 10% answered 'Yes'. Since a large proportion of students answered 'No', one can conclude that learners have really problems in understanding new words when reading texts.

Question 3. If the answer to question two is 'Yes', do you use contextual clues in understanding unknown words? For example, in the following text, where you may not know the meaning of **'balance sheet'**, the word **'company'** can help you to infer that **'balance sheet'** is a kind of document which is used within companies: *"To complete the **balance sheet**, the **company** name has been added to the top of the **sheet** along with the date. The **balance sheet** shows a company's health or how it stands at a particular point in time"* (Emphasis added) (Gill & Chatton, 1999, p. 6).

-Yes
-No

This question is addressed only to those who answered 'Yes' in the second question. This aims at discovering whether respondents rely on the context in understanding new words in reading. The results were as follows:

Using Context	N	%
Yes	3	100
No	0	0

Table 4. 3. Using Context

Table 4.3 shows the results obtained in question three (3). 100% of respondents have 'Yes'. This small portion of the sample (3 students) claimed their ability to make use of the available contextual clues to deduce word meanings.

Question 4. If the answer to question two is 'No', what do you do to understand a word that is unknown to you? (Several answers are possible).

a- Look it up in a dictionary.
b- Ask your teacher to explain it in English.
c- Ask your teacher to translate it into Arabic.

This question is addressed only to those respondents who answered by 'No' in the second question. This fourth question attempts to see which of the other options listed in the question these respondents make use of in dealing with unfamiliar words when reading. Because learners may use more than one strategy, the note 'several answers are possible' was added. Answers were as follows:

Look it up in a dictionary	Ask your teacher to explain it in English	Ask your teacher to translate it into Arabic
3 11. 11%	3 11. 11%	9 33. 33%
The dictionary + translation into Arabic	The dictionary + explanation in English	The dictionary + translation into Arabic + explanation in English
8 29. 62%	2 7. 40%	2 7. 40%

Table 4. 4. Other Strategies in Dealing with Unknown Words

Table 4.4 shows that 33. 33% of the respondents prefer that their teacher translates the unknown words into their MT, while 29. 62% of them claimed that in addition to translation, they consult the dictionary in understanding unknown words. As to the two strategies 'look it up in a dictionary' and 'ask the teacher to explain in English', they have received 11. 11% of the responses. The other strategies 'the dictionary+ translation into Arabic' and 'the

dictionary+ translation into Arabic+ explanation in English' received a percentage of 7. 40%. So, for this large proportion of the sample (27 students) who claimed before that they are unable to infer meanings of new words when reading, they rely totally on their teacher's translation of unfamiliar words. In this connection Prince (1996) notes that knowing about L2 words equivalents from the learners' MT does not *"guarantee that they will be successfully accessed for use in an L2 context"* (Prince, 1996, p. 488 as cited in Hunt & Beglar, 2002, p. 261).

Question 5. What do you think of the way your teacher teaches you vocabulary?

a- Very helpful
b- Little helpful
c- Not helpful

By asking this question, we intended to elicit students' opinions about their teacher's methodology in dealing with newly introduced items in reading. The results were as follows:

Options	N	%
Very helpful	21	70
Little helpful	9	30
Not helpful	0	0

Table 4. 5. Students' Opinions as to the Teacher's Methodology

Table 4.5 shows that 70% of the respondents see that their teacher's methodology is very helpful, whereas 30% of them find it little helpful. So, for most of the students, translation into their MT makes a good source for acquiring new vocabulary when reading. No doubt, these learners are unaware of the fact that overusing translation can lead to their being unable to develop an independent L2 vocabulary and their dependence on their L1 in accessing the meanings of L2 words (Thornbury, 2002). Moreover, because these learners make no effort in acquiring meanings through their L1, TL words are likely to be easily forgotten (ibid.).

Question 6. If your answer is 'Very helpful' or 'Little helpful', does the way your teacher teaches you help you to understand words in a text by yourself (Without using a dictionary or your teacher's help)?

a- A lot

b- A little

c- Not at all

This question concerns those respondents who answered the preceding question by saying that their teacher's methodology is 'very helpful' or 'little helpful'. The aim is to elaborate whether this methodology benefits them in understanding unknown words as they occur in the text, exploiting the context. Results were as follows:

Options	N	%
A lot	3	10
A little	27	90
Not at all	0	0

Table 4. 6. The Benefits of the Teacher's Methodology

Table 4.6 indicates that 90% of the respondents answered 'A little' while 10% answered 'A lot'. So, for a large number of subjects, the teacher's methodology, which consists of translating unfamiliar words for them, does not help them very much to infer word meanings from a written text by themselves.

The analysis of the students' questionnaire enabled us to understand learners' needs. It showed that the final objective of the course, which is to be able to engage in individual readings where unfamiliar words are likely to occur, has not completely been attained.

4. 2. 2. The Pre-test

As we have mentioned before, the aim of this pre-test is to see what level of inferring students have before being trained.

Taking Read's (2000) testing procedure of vocabulary encountered in reading[6], our pre-test (see Appendix B) is composed of a text[7] with a topic known to participants. Participants are asked to read the text silently and infer the meanings of ten (10) vocabulary items. Before assigning the task to the students, some explanations are given as what to do. The task is to read the text carefully and try to infer the meaning of each of the italicized

[6] For details, see Chapter three, section 3.2.1.3 in our theoretical part.

[7] The text is adapted from Robinson *et al.* (2009), Chapter 5, pp. 165-213.

vocabulary items by choosing one of the four (4) suggested meanings for each word. Participants are given the line number of each target word.

Since words on which learners will be assessed should be unfamiliar to them (ibid.), our choice of words suggested for inferring has been taken from a chapter that has not been covered yet in one of the books the teacher is taking as a reference. The time allocated to the test is 40 minutes. The scale of evaluating the degree of success in lexical inferring is a two-point scale (0 to 1: one point is allocated for successful inferences while no point is allocated for unsuccessful ones).

4. 2. 3. Analysis of the Pre-test Results

From results on Table 4.7 bellow, we notice that the average number of correctly inferred words is 5. 11 out of 10 words, that is, a percentage of 51. 1%. We also notice that the participants' rate of success varies from two (2) correctly inferred words to eight (8) correctly inferred words. In terms of percentage, they are between 20% and 80%.

Taking the pre-test scores distributions into account as mentioned in figure 4.1 below, we find that there are four categories: the first category has achieved 20% of correct inferences, and they are two (2) students. The second category has made 40% of correct inferences, and they are three (3) students. The third category reached the stage of 80% of correct inferences, and they make five (5) students. The final and largest category is the one which has scored about 60% of correct inferences, and it comprises eight (8) students.

Participants	Correctly Inferred Words	% Correctly Inferred Words
1	8	80%
2	3	30%
3	2	20%
4	8	80%
5	7	70%
6	7	70%
7	7	70%
8	6	60%
9	6	60%
10	6	60%
11	6	60%
12	5	50%
13	5	50%
14	5	50%
15	5	50%
16	4	40%
17	2	20%
18	3	30%
Mean	**5, 11**	**51, 1%**

Table 4. 7 Number and Percentage of Correct Inferences in the Pre-test

4. 2. 4. Training in Lexical Inferring

The treatment sessions are given to participants as extra sessions not included in the official time table. So, participants who attended the treatment sessions were volunteers. This treatment period took only two weeks: each week they had a session of one hour and a half.

In fact, the training course has covered only some of the inferring strategies we dealt with in our theoretical part, that is: *synonymy*, *antonymy*, *collocation*, *word family*, *definition by means of footnotes* and *generalization*. This random choice of the different inferring strategies proposed by different researchers has been constrained by the text of the pre-test. This text is a collection of different parts of texts from the chapter we consulted. This adaptation is due to our search for contexts that are full of appropriate information for inferring meanings of words.

Because we found it difficult to find texts in the students' subject area of study (BE) where unfamiliar words are clearly cued by the surrounding text, we kept the same text of the pre-test as a model for the training course. Before analysing the text for contextual clues, participants were introduced to the general framework as to how to infer word meaning from context (see Appendix C). At this point, students are informed of the importance of using their background knowledge as a support in working out the meaning of newly encountered

words in their reading. After that, students were asked to link this knowledge to the inferring strategies mentioned above in order to bring about the most appropriate inferences. An explanation of how each strategy works is given. Then, we moved to the model text that was analysed according to the framework given (see Appendix D). In so doing, we relied on McKeown and Beck's (2004) point of view as they hold that since students often do not know how to exploit contextual clues in deriving word meanings, teachers need from time to time to introduce samples of contexts where they loudly read and explain the processes of thinking involved in order to help students be acquainted the with way contexts are better used in inferring word meanings. Finally, participants were given an exercise (see Appendix E) where they were given the chance to practice the activity of inferring meanings using their background knowledge and the intended inferring strategies. At the time of checking their inferences, participants showed positive feedback as to the content of the training sessions. For a few unsuccessful inferences, a detailed explanation of how to make successful is given.

4. 2. 5. The Post-test

The post-test is set after the training period is ended. It aims at assessing the subjects' progress in inferring vocabulary meaning using contextual cues. As in the case of the pre-test, the same scale of evaluating the degree of success in lexical inferring is used. The size of the text and number of target vocabulary items are also the same. The text is a collection of parts of texts that are adapted from Mead (1985, p. 78-81) and Robinson *et al.* (2009, pp. 165-213).

As in the case of the pre-test, this is because we faced difficulties in finding parts of texts that provide ample cues to the meaning of unknown words. The test takes 40 minutes, and no explanation is provided because students are judged to be aware of what to do.

4. 2. 6. Analysis of the Post-test Results

In the post-test, the participants' scores witnessed great changes globally and individually. Table 4.8 below shows that the mean of correct inferences has reached 7. 22 which yields a percentage of 72. 2%. The lowest score achieved by the participants is four (4) correctly inferred words; that is, 40% and the highest score is ten (10) correctly inferred words which make a percentage of 100%.

Participants	Correctly Inferred Words	% Correctly Inferred Words
1	9	90%
2	10	100%
3	4	40%
4	8	80%
5	10	100%
6	8	80%
7	9	90%
8	7	70%
9	6	60%
10	8	80%
11	9	90%
12	6	60%
13	7	70%
14	8	80%
15	5	50%
16	5	50%
17	4	40%
18	7	70%
Mean	**7, 22**	**72, 2%**

Table 4. 8 Number and Percentage of Correctly Inferred Words in the Post-test

4.3. Discussion

Table 4.7 shows the degree at which the students are able to infer the meaning of the target words given in the pre-test. Out of the suggested ten (10) words, the participants successfully inferred 5. 11 words which gave a percentage of 51. 1% of correct inferences. The participants' scores varied from two (2) to eight (8) correctly inferred words; that is, from 20% to 80%. After the students were taught strategies as to how to infer word meanings from the context, a post-test was delivered. From the scores of this test (see table 4.8), we notice a remarkable change in the subjects' success in inferring the meaning of unknown words. The mean of correctly inferred words in the pre-test is 5.11 i. e. 51. 1%. In the post-test, this mean rose to 7. 22; that is, 72. 2%. This progress (more than 20%) is due to the formal training that students received in using the different intended inferring strategies.

If we take individual subjects into consideration, we see that the lowest score in the pre-test is only two (2) correctly inferred words out of ten (10) words. This score has improved to four (4) words out of ten (10). The same thing happens to the best score in the pre-test which was eight (8) correctly inferred words and rose to ten (10) words out of ten (10) (for details, see figure 4.1 below).

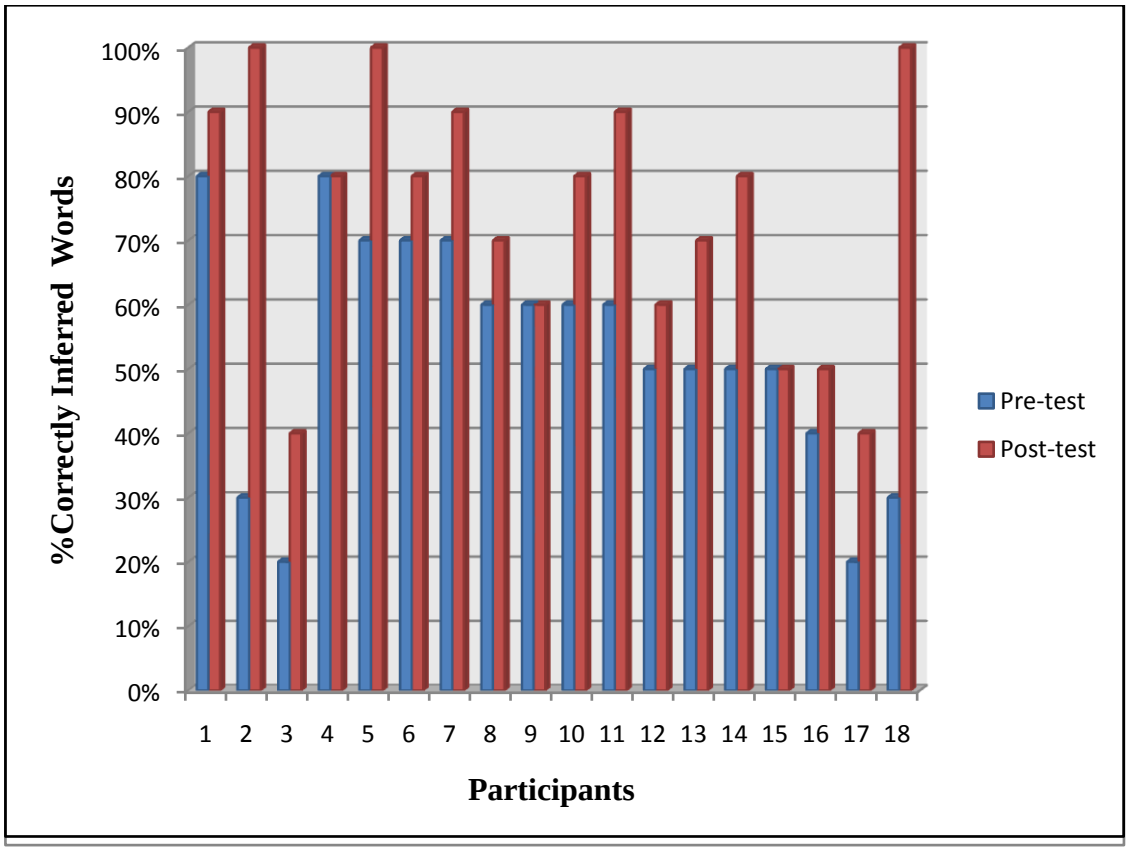


Figure 4. 5 Pre-test and Post-test Scores Distribution

Conclusion

In this chapter, we conducted an experiment where we first analysed learners' needs through an informal consultation with teachers, observation and a questionnaire administered to learners. After that, we went through an experimental design where learners were first pre-tested on their ability to infer meanings of words from context, then they were taught how to exploit contextual clues and their background knowledge in deriving word meanings. Finally, they were set to a post-test which is very similar to the pre-test. In the analysis of the different scores, we noticed that there was a considerable improvement in learners' correctly inferring unfamiliar words, using contextual clues. This improvement is the result of the formal training that learners undertook in inferring word meanings.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

In this study, we aimed to demonstrate that training BE students in using contextual clues for inferring the meaning of unknown vocabulary items is possible. To this end, we began by reviewing literature to pave the ground to the experimental work. The First Chapter sets some theoretical background to the area of BE. In this Chapter, two main sub-sections were included. In the first sub-section, we attempted to explore the existing relationship between BE and ESP where we saw what ESP is, what types of ESP are there and finally categorized BE within the area of ESP. The second sub-section concerns BE. In this sub-section, we reviewed some of the currently-cited definitions of BE and accounted for the characteristics of BET. We showed the importance of needs analysis to BE, and, finally, discussed the importance of vocabulary in BE and its main types. The Second Chapter was devoted to discourse analysis and vocabulary. This Chapter, as well, falls into two main sub-sections. The first sub-section sets the theoretical background to discourse analysis. In this sub-section, we defined discourse analysis, discussed the units of discourse, namely *cohesion* and *coherence*, and then we saw the importance of developing discourse competence of learners. The second sub-section concerns our main topic *viz.* discourse analysis and vocabulary. In this sub-section, we saw the importance of presenting vocabulary in reading passages. Under this point, we discussed the main strategies to vocabulary i. e. the *bottom-up* and *top-down* strategies, the different inferring strategies proposed by different researchers. We concluded this Chapter with an assessment component. The model states how learners can be assessed on their inferences of the meaning of unknown words encountered in reading.

Applying this theoretical account to our sample of BE students was our main concern in this study. The results obtained in this experimental work confirmed to a large extent the hypothesis which stated that explicit instruction of different strategies used in inferring word meanings from context can be beneficial to learners in gaining the skill of inferring meanings from context. In other words, after giving extra activities on the way to infer word meanings from their context of use, the majority of students gave positive feedback. This was very clear from the comparison of the scores of the pre-test and the post-test where we had an average rate of improvement of more than 20%. In fact, this improvement level varied from one participant to another, and this was mainly due to the level of participants.

In the end, we think that this study sheds light on one of the most important vocabulary learning strategies that has been neglected by both learners and teachers in the

area of BE. Therefore, it is high time to give it attention since it makes BE learners more independent when struggling for the comprehension of vocabulary.

References

References

Basturkmen, H. (2006). *Ideas and options in English for Specific Purposes*. USA: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Brown, G., & Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Celce-Murcia, M., & Olshtain, E. (2000). *Discourse and context in language teaching: A guide for language teachers*. USA: Cambridge University Press.

Čepon, S. (2005). *Business English in practical terms*. Retrieved October 24, 2012, from http://www. Sdutsj. edus. si/…/2005-1/Cepon.html

Cook, G. (1989). *Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Coxhead, A., & Nation, P. (2001). The specialized vocabulary of English for Academic Purposes. In J. Flowerdew & M. Peacock (Eds.), *Research perspectives on English for Academic Purposes* (pp.252-267). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Decarrico, J. S. (2001). Vocabulary learning and teaching. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* (3rd ed.) (pp.285-299). USA: Heinle & Heinle.

Donna, S. (2000). *Teach Business English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dudley-Evans, T. (2001). English for Specific Purposes. In D. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages* (pp. 131-136). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M. J. (1996, July). Report on Business English: A review of research and published teaching materials. *TOEIC Research Report, 2*. Retrieved November 2, 2012, from http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/TOEIC-RR-02.pdf

Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, E. C., Font, G., Baumann, J. F., & Boland, E. (2004). Unlocking word meanings: Strategies and guidelines for teaching morphemic and contextual analysis. In J. F. Baumann & E. J. Kame'enui (Eds.), *Vocabulary instruction: Research to practice* (pp. 159-176). USA: The Guilford Press.

Ellis, M., & Johnson, C. (1994). *Teaching Business English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Financial crisis of 2007. **(2012).** Retrieved March 15, 2013, from http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_crisis_of_2007-2010

Frendo, E. (2005). *How to teach Business English*. Malaysia: Pearson Education Limited.

Gill, J. O., & Chatton, M. (1999). *Understanding financial statements: A primer of useful information* (Rev. ed.). USA: Axzo Press.

Goddard, R. J. (2007). *Teaching English for International Business*. England: Authors Online Ltd.

Hai, N. T. H., Econ, M., & Ed., M. (2004, March). *The importance of discourse analysis in teaching oral English*. Retrieved October 24, 2012, from http://www. greenstone.org-NTH Hai

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. Hong Kong: Longman.

Hatch, E. (1992). *Discourse and language education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hatch, E., & Brown, C. (1995). *Vocabulary, semantics, and language education*. USA: Cambridge University Press.

Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hunt, A & Beglar, D. (2002). Current research and practice in teaching vocabulary. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. (pp.258-266). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A learning- centered approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Investopedia staff. (2012). *Reading balance sheet.* Retrieved April 15, 2013, from http://www.investopedia.com/articles/04/031004.asp

Jordan, R. R. (1997). *English for Academic Purposes: A guide and resource book for teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Li, L. (n.d.). *Theoretical base and problems in Business English Teaching in China*. Retrieved November 25, 2011, from http://www.esp-world.info/...8/Li.html

Lynch, T. (1996). *Communication in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mascull, B. (2006). *Business vocabulary in use: Elementary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCarthy, M. (1990). *Vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McCarthy, M. (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCarthy, M. (2001). Discourse. In D. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages* (pp. 48-55). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McKeown, M. G., & Beck, I. L. (2004). Direct and rich vocabulary instruction. In J. F. Baumann & E. J. Kame'enui (Eds.), *Vocabulary instruction: Research to practice* (pp. 13-27). USA: The Guilford Press.

Mead, R. (1985). *English for economics*. London: Longman.

Munby, J. (1978). *Communicative syllabus design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nagy, W. E. (1988, August). *Vocabulary instruction and reading comprehension* (Tech. Rep. No. 431). Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, Center for the Study of Reading. Retrieved January 27, 2013, from http://www. ideals. Illinois. edu/…/ctrstreadtechrepv01988…

Nunan, D. (1993). *Introducing discourse analysis*. London: Penguin.

Nunan, D. (1995). *Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers*. Great Britain: International Book Distributers Ltd.

Olshtain, E., & Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Discourse analysis and language teaching. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen & H. E. Hamilton (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 707-724). Great Britain: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Pilbeam, A. (2000). *Market leader international management: Business English*. UK: Longman.

Read, J. (2000). *Assessing vocabulary.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. (4th ed.). Malaysia: Pearson Education Limited.

Robinson, T. R., van Greunding, H., Henry, E., & Broihahn, M. A. (2009). Understanding the balance sheet. In T. R. Robinson, H. van Greunding, E. Henry & M. A. Broihahn (Eds.), *International financial statement analysis* (pp. 165-213). USA: John Wiley & Sons.

Sedita, J. **(2005)**. *Effective vocabulary instruction.* Retrieved January, 27, 2013, from http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/.../files/links/effective_vocabulary_instr.pdf

Shumin, K. (2002). Factors to consider: Developing adult EFL students' speaking abilities. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. (pp.204-211). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sim, M. A. (n.d.). *Ups and downs of teaching Business English terminology*. Retrieved October 30, 2012, from http://www.theroundtable.ro/.../Monica-Sim-Ups-and-D...

Trappes-Lomax, H. (2004). Discourse analysis. In A. Davies & C. Elder (Eds.), *The handbook of applied linguistics* (pp. 133-164). UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to teach vocabulary*. Malaysia: Pearson Education Limited.

Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. London: Athenaeum Press Ltd.

Xiarong, Y., & Lili, Z. (2009, October). The application of Communicative Approach in Business English Teaching. *The Asian ESP Journal*, 101-106. Retrieved March 28, 2013, from http://www.asian-esp-journal.com/2010-ESP-China.pdf

Yalden, J. (1987). *Principles of course design for language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendices

Appendix A

Needs Analysis Sheet

Background information

Sex: Age: ……years old

Male	
Female	

Dear student, would you please answer the following questions by putting a cross (**X**) next to the appropriate answer?

1) - Do you think that learning English words that are related to your speciality, for example, the word '**finance**' are important to you?

Yes	
No	

2) - If the answer to the previous question is 'Yes', do you understand words that you did not meet before when they are given to you in a written text?

Yes	
No	

3) - If the answer to question two is 'Yes', do you use contextual clues in understanding unknown words? For example, in the following text, where you may not know the meaning of '**balance sheet**', the word '**company**'can help you to guess that '**balance sheet**' is a kind of document which is used within companies: *"To complete the **balance sheet**, the **company** name has been added to the top of the **sheet** along with the date. The **balance sheet** shows a **company**'s health or how it stands at a particular point in time"* (Emphasis added) (Gill & Chatton, 1999, p. 6).

Yes	
No	

4) - If the answer to question two is 'No', what do you do to understand a word that is unknown for you? (Several answers are possible).

Look it up in a dictionary	
Ask your teacher to explain it in English	
Ask your teacher to translate it into Arabic	

5) - What do you think of the way your teacher teaches you vocabulary?

Very helpful	
Little helpful	
Not helpful	

6) - If your answer is 'Very helpful' or 'Little helpful', does the way your teacher teaches you help you to understand words in a text by yourself (without using a dictionary or your teacher's help)?

A lot	
A little	
Not at all	

Appendix B

The Pre-test

Background information

Full name: Age: ……years old

Sex:

Male	
Female	

Dear student, would you please read the following text then answer the subsequent questions?

Understanding the Balance Sheet

The starting place for analyzing a company's financial position is typically the balance sheet. Creditors, investors, and analysts recognize the value of the balance sheet and also its *limitations*. The balance sheet *provides* such users with information on a company's resources (assets) and its sources of capital (its equity and liabilities/debt). It normally also provides information about the future earnings capacity of a company's assets as well as an *indication* of cash flows that may come from receivables and inventories.

However, the balance sheet does have limitations, especially relating to how assets and liabilities are *measured*.

The **balance sheet** *discloses* what an *entity owns* and what it *owes* at a specific point in time; thus, it is also *referred to* as the **statement of financial position.**[1]

As noted above, the balance sheet presents the financial position of a company. The financial position shows the relative amounts of assets, liabilities, and equity *held* by the enterprise at a particular point in time.

[1]The balance sheet is also known as the **statement of financial condition.**

(Adapted from Robinson *et al*., 2009, pp. 165-213)

Questions

1. The word *'limitations'* in line 3 is closest in meaning to

(A) Positive aspects
(B) Negative aspects
(C) Importance
(D) Advantages

2. The word '*provides*' in the same line is closest in meaning to

(A) Gives
(B) Prevents
(C) Stops
(D) Takes

3. The word '*indication*' in line 6 is closest in meaning to

(A) Type
(B) Goal
(C) Sign
(D) Game

4. The word 'measured' in line 9 is closest in meaning to

(A) Put
(B) Divided
(C) Named
(D) Counted

5. The word '*discloses*' in line 10 is closest in meaning to

(A) Shows
(B) Excludes
(C) Helps
(D) Closes

6. The word '*entity*' in the same line is closest in meaning to

(A) Restaurant
(B) Cafeteria
(C) Company
(D) School

7. The word '*owns*' in the same line is closest in meaning to

(A) Borrows
(B) Has
(C) Lends
(D) Needs

8. The word '*owes*' in the same line is closest in meaning to

(A) Money that a company has
(B) Money that is paid to a company
(C) Money that a company should pay back
(D) Money that a company uses

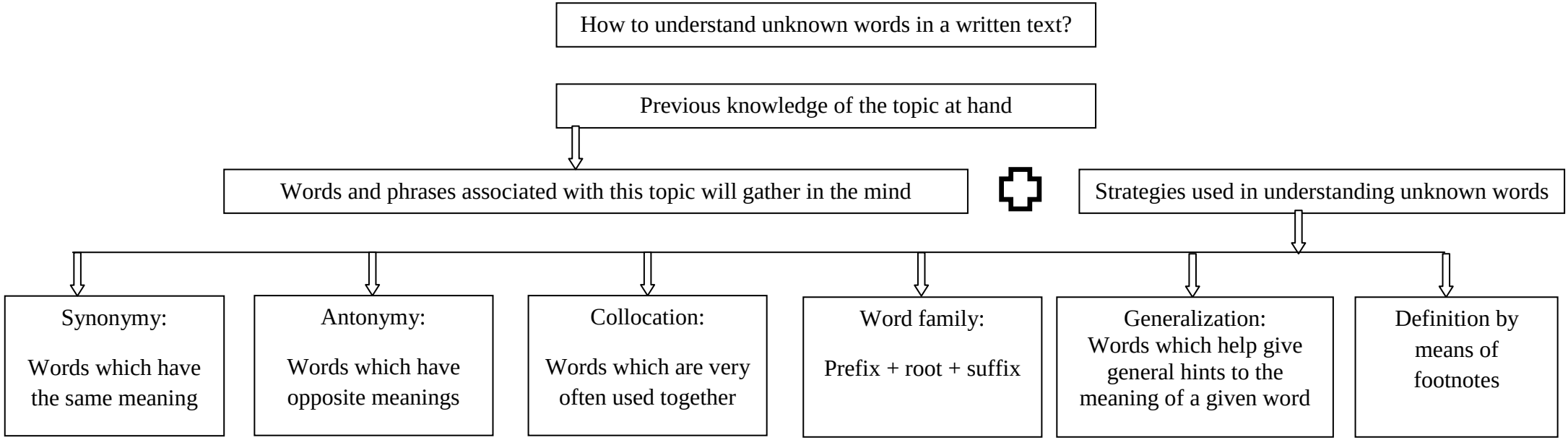
9. The word '*referred to*' in line 11 is closest in meaning to

(A) Thrown
(B) Spoken
(C) Written
(D) Known

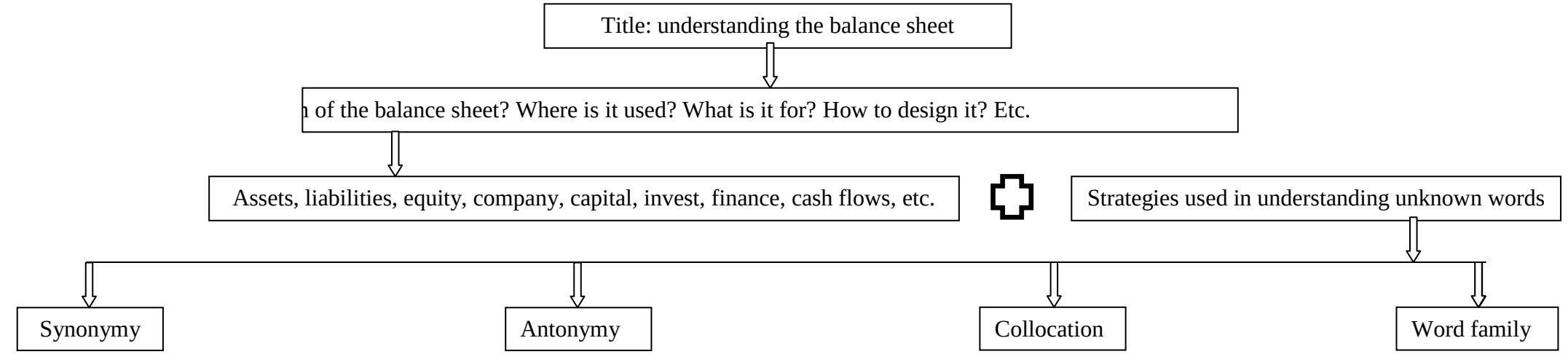
10. The word '*held*' in line 14 is closest in meaning to

(A) Owned
(B) Given
(C) Finished
(D) Purchased

Appendix C


How to understand unknown words in a written text?
Previous knowledge of the topic at hand
Words and phrases associated with this topic will gather in the mind
Strategies used in understanding unknown words
Synonymy:
Words which have the same meaning
Antonymy:
Words which have opposite meanings
Collocation:
Words which are very often used together
Word family:
Prefix + root + suffix
Generalization:
Words which help give general hints to the meaning of a given word
Definition by means of footnotes

Appendix D
A model text



Appendix E

Exercise: Look at the following extracts on the left about 'the balance sheet'. Match the underlined word (s) in each with its /their meanings from the list of words in the middle. Then tell which of the strategies listed on the right you used in understanding these words.

1-	Through the analysis of the liabilities and equity of an entity, the analyst is able to **determine** how assets are acquired or funded (Robinson *et al.*, 2009, p. 168).	a- Pay money	Synonymy
2-	Equity is the residual interest in the assets of an entity after **deducting** its liabilities (ibid., p. 169). Assets, therefore, equal liabilities plus capital (Mead, 1985, p. 81).	b- Decide	Definition by means of footnotes
3-	The key purposes of equity capital are to provide **stability** and to **absorb** losses, thereby providing a measure of protection to creditors in the event of liquidation (Robinson *et al.*, 2009, p. 170).	c- Security	Generalization
4-	Current liabilities[1] are those liabilities that are expected to be settled in the entity's normal operating cycle, **held** primarily for trading and due to be settled within 12 months after the balance sheet date (ibid., p. 184).	d- Intended	Antonymy
	[1]current assets are expected to be realized or intended for sale or consumption in the entity's normal operating cycle (ibid., p. 181).	e- Prevent	Collocation
5-	Liabilities expected to be **settled** or paid within one year or one operating cycle of the business, whichever is greater, are classified as current liabilities (ibid., p. 210).	f- Minus	Word family
6-	Liabilities are the financial obligations a company **owes** to outside parties (Investopedia staff, 2012, Learn the different liabilities section).	g- Should not be considered of no value.	
7-	While non-current assets are not physical in nature, they are often the resources that can make or break a company–the value of a brand name, for instance, should not be **underestimated** (ibid., Non-current assets section, ¶ 1).	h- Money that a company should pay back	

Appendix F

The Post-test

Background information

Full name: Age: ……years old

Sex:

Male	
Female	

Dear student, would you please read the following text then answer the subsequent questions?

The Balance Sheet and the Income Statement

Accounting[1] data is *categorized* and summarized in the form of statements, of which the income statement and the balance sheet are the most important.

The **income statement** summarizes the firm's income and expenses over a *stated* period of time. It *reflects* the results of business operations *conducted* over that period, and shows how far the firm (or department) has succeeded in *achieving* its objectives.

The **balance sheet** is a statement of the financial condition of the firm on the specific date when the balance sheet and income statement are calculated. Whereas the income statement is dynamic, and reflects the relative success or *failure* of the business within the period of time under consideration, the balance sheet is *static*. That is, it does not show how the firm's fortunes have changed.

It is usual that a balance sheet shows the firm's assets on the left- hand side, and *confronting* them, the firm's liabilities. In *portraying* an asset or liability on the balance sheet, the question *arises* as to how it should be measured. For example, an asset may have been acquired many years ago at a cost of $1 million but may have a current value of $5 million. Should this asset be listed at its historic cost or its current value?

[1]Accounting is the process of classifying, summarizing and interpreting of transactions and events which have already taken place.

(Adapted from Mead, 1985, pp. 78-82; Robinson *et al.*, 2009, pp. 165-21)

Questions

1. The word *'categorized'* in line 1 is closest in meaning to

(A) Named
(B) Classified
(C) Finished
(D) Completed

2. The word *'stated'* in line 3 is closest in meaning to

(A) Specific
(B) General
(C) Large
(D) Short

3. The word *'reflects'* in line 4 is closest in meaning to

(A) Works
(B) Knows
(C) Shows
(D) Uses

4. The word *'conducted'* in the same line is closest in meaning to

(A) Gone
(B) Written
(C) Spoken
(D) Done

5. The word *'achieving'* in line 5 is closest in meaning to

(A) Arriving at
(B) Doing
(C) Helping
(D) Writing

6. The word *'failure'* in line 8 is closest in meaning to

(A) Study
(B) Change
(C) Stability
(D) No success

7. The word *'static'* in line 9 is closest in meaning to

(A) Changing
(B) Not changing
(C) Successful
(D) Not successful

8. The word *'confronting'* in line 10 is closest in meaning to

(A) Giving
(B) Guiding
(C) Facing
(D) Taking

9. The word *'portraying'* in line 11 is closest in meaning to

(A) Listing
(B) Excluding
(C) Working
(D) Eating

10. The word *'arises'* in the same line is closest in meaning to

(A) Answers
(B) Plays
(C) Finishes
(D) Emerges

مُلخّص الدراسة

يُعدّ استنتاج معاني الكلمات غير المعروفة من خلال السّياق أثناء القراءة من أهم تقنيات تعلّم المفردات اللّغوية التي يحتاج طلبة إنجليزية الأعمال إتقانها. مع ذلك فإنّه يبدو إن هؤلاء الطلبة يُضيّعون المهارات التي تمنحها هـ اته التقنية حينما يعتمدون بشكل كبير على الترجمة في فهم المفردات غير المألوفة أثناء القراءة. في الواقع يُعتبر هذا الاعتماد الواسع على التّرجمة نتيجة لاعتماد الأساتذة هذا المنهج في شرح المصطلحات المطروحة لأوّل مرّة في القراءة. تبحثُ الدّراسة الحاليّة في ما إذا كان التّدريس المباشِر لمختلَف تقنيات استنتاج معاني الكلمات من خلال السّياق سيُؤدي بالعيِّنة قيد الدّراسة لاكتساب هذه المهارة. لِبحث فعاليّة هذه المنهجيّة التي تُقرّ بالتّدريس المباشِر لمختلف التّقنيات المستعمَلة في استنتاج المعاني من خلال السّياق, أُجرِيت تجربة حيث تم تدريس مجموعة من الطلبة على ضوء هذه المنهجية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك أُجري اختبار أوّلي و اختبار نِهائي ثم تمَّ تحليل و مُقارنة النتائج. أكَّدت النتائج إنّ المنهجية المقترحة للتدريس المباشِر لِتقنيات استنتاج معاني الكلِمات من خلال السّياق ساعدت العيّنة على التَّحسُّن.