

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Kasdi Merbah University- Ouargla

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Letters and English Language



Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Master's Degree in the Field of English Language and Literature

Domain: Letters and Foreign Languages

Major: Linguistics

Investigating the Use of Context Clues in Word Comprehension in EFL Reading

The Case of Second Year Licence Students at the Department of Letters and English

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Publicly defended on June 13th, 2022

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Academic Year: 2021/2022

Dedication

To my beloved parents, for teaching me how to shoot for the stars while staying rooted,

To my dear brothers and sisters, who never stopped giving of themselves in countless ways,

To my lovely nephews: Raid and Mohammed, whom I could not but to love,

To every student who is working hard to get to the excellence in life,

To my tree, Ghalya, the silent beauty, for providing me with continuous inspiration to lessen my stress and boost my strength all along my five years of education,

I dedicate this work.

Maria

To Mom and Dad, thank you for helping me shape my life with positivity and passion. Without you I would never be the person I am today.

To my sisters and brother, you are the greatest gift I could have asked for.

To all who have been there for me,

I dedicate this work.

Rayel

Acknowledgements

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. All thanks to Allah, the Lord of both worlds, and may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet, Muhammad and upon his companions. We would like to express our gratitude to our supervisor, Dr. Halima Benzoukh who guided us throughout this work.

Our grateful thanks go to all the board of examiners for reading and evaluating the present work. We wish to extend our thanks to all the staff in the Department of English at Ouargla University. Last but not least, we would highly appreciate the efforts devoted by second year licence students for their participation and patience during the experimental study.

Abstract

Vocabulary comprehension is one of the most critical, but challenging tasks for EFL learners. One way to ease the burden is to aid students to become independent EFL vocabulary learners. This could be achieved through providing them with vocabulary learning strategies. Instructing students to apply context clues can be one of the strategies that guide them to find out the meanings of unfamiliar words in the reading process. This study, therefore, aims at investigating the impact of context clues strategy on enhancing learners' word comprehension in EFL reading. In the current research work, a quasi-experiment was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of context clues strategy instruction to infer words' meaning . The findings revealed that utilizing context clues' strategy has a positive effect on students' word comprehension level. This strategy can make learners comprehend the meanings of unfamiliar words, and thus many EFL teachers need to implement this strategy in their classrooms.

Keywords: vocabulary, word comprehension, reading comprehension, context clues, EFL context.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

List of Tables

Table (1) : What is Involved in Knowing a Word (Nation,2001,p. 27)	12
Table (2): Types of Context Clues.....	24
Table (3): The Pre- test Scores	38
Table (4): The Students' Scores in the Pre-test	40
Table (5): Descriptive Statistics of the Pre-test	40
Table (6): The Post- Test Scores	41
Table (7): The Students' Scores in the Post-test.....	43
Table (8): Descriptive Statistics of the Post- test	43
Table (9): The Result of Hypothesis Test.....	46

List of Figures

Figure (1): Defining Unknown Words Using Context Clues(Antonacci& O’Callaghan, 2011, p. 33).....	29
Figure (2): The Experiment’s Procedures	36
Figure (3): Scores’ Frequency of the Pre-test.....	40
Figure (4): The Score Frequency of the Post-test.....	44
Figure (5): Scores in the Pretest and the Post-test	45
Figure (6): The Pre-test and The Post-test Scores Distribution.....	45

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	1
Acknowledgements	II
Abstract.....	III
List of Abbreviations.....	IV
List of Tables.....	V
List of Figures.....	VI
Table of Contents	VII
General Introduction.....	1
1 Background of the Study	2
2 Research Motivation.....	3
3 Statement of the Problem	3
4 Aim of the Study	3
5 Research Question	4
6 Research Hypothesis	4
7 Methodology and Research Design.....	4
8 Organization of the Dissertation.....	4
Chapter One: Teaching Vocabulary in the EFL Context	6
Introduction	8
1.1 Definition of Vocabulary.....	8
1.2 Types of Vocabulary	10
1.2.1 Receptive Vocabulary Knowledge.....	10
1.2.2 Productive Vocabulary Knowledge	11
1.3 Vocabulary Teaching Techniques in EFL Classes.....	12
1.3.1 Techniques of Presentation.....	13
1.3.1.1 Visual Techniques.....	13
1.3.1.2 Verbal Techniques.....	14
1.3.2 Techniques of Practice	14
1.3.3 Techniques of Training	15

1.4 Strategies for Teaching and Learning Vocabulary	15
1.4.1 Teacher-Centered Strategies	15
1.4.1.1 Unplanned Vocabulary Teaching Strategy.....	16
1.4.1.2 Planned Vocabulary Teaching Strategy.....	16
1.4.2 Learner-Centered Strategy.....	17
1.4.2.1 Word Ignorance.....	17
1.4.2.2 Dictionary Use.....	18
1.5 The Importance of Teaching Vocabulary in EFL Classes.....	19
Conclusion.....	20
Chapter Two: Context Clues in EFL Reading.....	21
Introduction	22
2.1 Definition of Context Clues.....	22
2.2 Types of Context Clues	24
2.2.1. Definition/ Explanation.....	24
2.2.2 Experience Clues.....	25
2.2.3 Contrast Clues	26
2.2.4 Synonym Clues	27
2.2.5 Restatement Clues.....	28
2.2.6 Inference Clues	28
2.3 The Process of Teaching Context Clues.....	28
2.4 Implementing the Use of Context Clues in the EFL Classroom	29
2.5 The Effectiveness of Using Context Clues Strategy	32
Conclusion.....	33
Chapter Three: Quasi-Experimental Investigation on Using Context Clues in EFL Reading..	34
Introduction	35
3.1 The Sample.....	35
3.2 Research Variables	35
3.3 The Method.....	35

3.4 Overview of the Procedures.....36

3.4.1 The Pre-test Procedures.....37

3.4.2 The Treatment Procedures.....37

3.4.3 The Post-test Procedures.....38

3.5 Descriptive Analysis.....38

3.5.1 Analysis of the Pre- test Results38

3.5.2 Analysis of the Post-test Results.....41

3.6 Results of the Pre-test and the Post-test Scores.....44

3.7 Testing the Hypothesis46

3.8 Findings and Discussion.....46

Conclusion.....47

General Conclusion.....48

List of References.....51

Appendices.....59

General Introduction

- 1- Background of the Study
- 2- Research Motivation
- 3- Statement of the Problem
- 4- Aim of the Study
- 5- Research Question
- 6- Research Hypothesis
- 7- Methodology and Research Design
- 8- Organization of the Dissertation

1- Background of the Study

Word comprehension ability is an essential skill in academic settings, where EFL learners are required to read to understand. Reading comprehensively can pose a significant challenge for those whose native language is not English, especially when they read books, journals and articles. A book is a mine; it contains a great deal of information, and the English language is rich and vibrant; it is arguably the richest in vocabulary. The compendious Oxford English Dictionary lists about 500,000 words, and a further half-million technical and scientific terms remain uncatalogued. Twenty percent of the world's population speak English as a native, second, or foreign language, which makes the English language vibrant. Inevitably, every reader of English texts and books encounters hitherto unfamiliar words on a regular basis due to the lack of adequate vocabulary knowledge. It is not uncommon for even the most advanced English speakers to encounter unfamiliar words while reading an article or skimming through the pages of a book. In such cases, the first reaction is to turn to a bilingual dictionary to help them learn its meaning, but the use of dictionaries and glossaries is not permitted on the examination.

Some students feel they cannot continue reading because they are unable to understand the meaning. In fact, words are considered as the basic unit of language since, without sufficient vocabulary, students cannot learn a foreign language (Fengning, 1994). The ability to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words using context clues is a powerful tool that can help students understand and boost their interpretive abilities. It is also important for students to remember that they do not have to understand all the words in a text to become effective readers.

However, there are times when an unfamiliar word may play a crucial role in their understanding of a particular reading passage. In these cases, students should use a set of strategies to help them make an educated guess at the meaning of unfamiliar words.

2- Research Motivation

As students of English, and through our experience of teaching in private schools, we have realized that one of the primary issues that EFL students have is that they are unable to communicate their thoughts as clearly as they wish, and they struggle to grasp ideas presented to them. The reason behind this obstacle is that EFL learners lack adequate word identification skills or adequate vocabulary knowledge. This strategy should take place in the curriculum since reading comprehension requires less exposure to unknown words. Therefore, context clues is a compensation strategy to assist reading comprehension in the EFL context.

3- Statement of the Problem

Reading is regarded as an integral part in developing a reader's use of language. Students' reading comprehension may fail if they have word comprehension difficulty. They will need to fix their understanding, which will not be an easy task unless they are provided with appropriate reading strategies to help them manage the reading tasks they are involved in. The problem can be alleviated to the extent that EFL teachers can equip their students with tools to improve their reading comprehension level.

4- Aim of the Study

The aim of the present study is to investigate the effectiveness of using context clues strategy on enhancing learners' word comprehension in EFL reading, taking the second year licence students at Kasdi Merbah University as a sample. The investigation also tries to help students to be able not only to extract information, but also to understand the material fully.

5- Research Question

This research seeks to address the following research question:

-To what extent can the use of context clues strategy develop students' word comprehension ability?

6- Research Hypothesis

We hypothesize that if the context clues' strategy is instructed to second-year licence students of English at KMUO, while reading, their word comprehension ability will improve.

7- Methodology and Research Design

To conduct the present study, we have chosen the quasi-experimental method. This method allows us to determine the effectiveness of using context clues strategy on enhancing students' word comprehension in EFL reading. The research data is drawn from: a pre-test, treatment and a post-test. The sample consists of Forty (40) Second-Year Licence Students who were randomly selected, and they were subjected to a multiple-choice vocabulary tests.

8- Organization of the Dissertation

The present dissertation is divided into two main parts: the theoretical part and the practical one. The first one is divided into two chapters. Chapter one serves as background information that is essential for the study. It consists of three main sections: the first provides a definition of vocabulary, and the second deals with types of vocabulary, and the third part covers vocabulary teaching techniques in EFL classes, the fourth part tackles strategies for teaching and learning vocabulary. The remaining part lays out the importance of teaching vocabulary in EFL classes. Chapter two is composed of five main sections. They proceed as follows: Definition of context clues strategy, types of context clues, the process of teaching

context clues strategy, implementing the use of context clues in EFL classes, and the effectiveness of using context clues. Chapter three serves as the practical analysis of context clues. It looks at the effectiveness of contextual clues. The findings will lead us to reach a conclusion about vocabulary strategies adopted by students while reading in a context.

Chapter One: Teaching Vocabulary in the EFL Context

Introduction

1.1 Definition of Vocabulary

1.2 Types of Vocabulary

1.2.1 Receptive Vocabulary Knowledge

1.2.2 Productive Vocabulary Knowledge

1.3 Vocabulary Teaching Techniques in EFL Classroom

1.3.1 Techniques of Presentation

1.3.1.1 Visual Techniques

1.3.1.2 Verbal Techniques

1.3.2 Techniques of Practice

1.3.3 Techniques of Training

1.4 Strategies for Teaching and Learning Vocabulary

1.4.1 Teacher-Centered Strategies

1.4.1.1 Unplanned Vocabulary Teaching Strategy

1.4.1.2 Planned Vocabulary Teaching Strategy

1.4.2 Learner-Centered Strategies

1.4.2.1 Word Ignorance

1.4.2.2 Dictionary Use

1.5 The importance of Teaching Vocabulary in the EFL Classes

Conclusion

Introduction

Vocabulary knowledge is one of the most crucial components of learning any foreign language. It is recognized as the essence for a comprehensible reading; the understanding of the spoken or written text depends heavily on the level of vocabulary mastery that students have. As stated by Wilkins (1972), without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.

In learning a foreign language, vocabulary has been a major concern for both teachers and learners. Students are taught vocabulary by introducing them to new words found in a text by providing them with lists of new words that go along with the meaning of their native language. Vocabulary, on the other hand, is a subject that is neither covered in class nor included in the curriculum. According to Thronburry (2002), vocabulary instruction has not always been responsive, and has not entirely realized the enormous communicative benefit in developing a large vocabulary.

1.1 Definition of Vocabulary

The term ‘vocabulary’ was given several definitions by many linguists and researchers.

According to Neuman & Dwyer (2009), vocabulary is defined as words that the individual must know for a successful communication. Having good vocabulary knowledge has been linked with students’ success. It plays a potential role in the ability to comprehend what is written or said.

Beck et al. (2008) defined vocabulary as a set of words that a person can recognize and extract meaning from in both written and spoken language. In another definition, vocabulary is ‘a list or set of words that an individual speaker of a language might use’ (Hatch & Brown, 1997, p 244).

Moreover, Jackson (2002) describes vocabulary as a set of words in a language that a person knows or uses or that are associated with a specific activity. Synonym like sick and ill, antonym, such as: happy and sad, short and tall, hyponym e.g. tennis is hyponym of sports ,and metonym like: crown is a metonym of royalty. These are examples of vocabulary that can be distinguished from their meaning.

In addition, according to Roget (1980), vocabulary is the collection of words that a person can translate or define; it is also all the words that a language contains, and it is the specialized terms that are related to a specific field, subject, culture, subculture, or trade. While according to Pribilova (2006), vocabulary is the words that are taught in a foreign language.

Furthermore, Hornby (1974) defines vocabulary in three ways: the total number of words that make up a language, the range of terms a person knows, and the presence of a list of words with definitions or translations. Nunan (2003) then breaks down vocabulary into three categories: multiword units, word families, and fundamental meanings.

In addition, Mackey (1964) states that EFL learners are always in need of vocabulary. Thus, they must learn and develop a strong level of vocabulary before forming grammatical sentences, i.e. vocabulary is more than a list of words with a comprehensible meaning; it is a system of its own that functions as one of the main components in which language lies. Further, Rivers (1970) claims that learning a language without vocabulary is impossible; learning a language entails knowing its vocabulary.

Thus, from the preceding statements, it is worth noting that second language learners need to enrich their vocabulary since no language can be construed without vocabulary.

1.2 Types of Vocabulary

Language entails skills and aspects. The four basic skills are listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The essential aspects of language are grammar, function, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Vocabulary is the pivotal component of teaching and learning a foreign language. It affords and enables learners to engage in meaningful and productive communication. It is also useful in understanding and expressing one's feelings and thoughts.

Vocabulary is an important aspect of literacy skills (Pulido & Hambrick, 2008). A second language learner must comprehend the vocabulary knowledge and work to enrich it in order to give rise to the language. Therefore, knowing a word entails comprehending a plethora of facets of vocabulary knowledge, which is a diverse and complicated construct. Tozcu and Coady (2004) point out that learning vocabulary is a crucial component of language acquisition as well as academic performance. It is critical to comprehension and fluency, which are tightly related.

The vocabulary knowledge agreed to be divided into two types; receptive and productive vocabulary (Nation, 2001). However, Oller (1980) argues that there is no need to distinguish between the two types because learners should first acquire the vocabulary knowledge and then use it productively.

1.2.1 Receptive Vocabulary Knowledge

A number of ESL/EFL researchers determine receptive vocabulary as the ability to recognize and understand a term encountered by the learner during reading or listening in context. It is to be highlighted in the literature that a synonymous dichotomy has been utilized the term 'passive' to denote listening and reading. Passive vocabulary is the type of vocabulary that is used for comprehension.

According to Nation (2001), receptive knowledge is associated with listening and reading processes that entail perception of the form of the word and its meaning. Knowing a student's receptive vocabulary size allows teachers to evaluate whether or not students will be able to comprehend a text or a listening activity.

Palmer (1921) states that receptive vocabulary implies the idea that learners receive comprehensible input via listening or reading and attempt to understand it.

As stated by Corson (1995), passive vocabulary contains active vocabulary as well as three other types of vocabulary: words only partially known, low frequency words that are not readily available for usage, and terms avoided in active use. He sees that the three types of vocabulary overlap to some extent. His description is built on the basis of use rather than levels of knowledge.

1.2.2 Productive Vocabulary Knowledge

The term 'productive vocabulary' or 'active vocabulary' refer to language items that the learners can retain and apply appropriately in speaking and writing (Nation, 2001). It is the ability to produce and pronounce words correctly while speaking or writing.

Sok (2017) defines productive vocabulary as 'the ability to produce a word's form and meaning to express oneself in speech or writing'. Productive vocabulary can be viewed as an active word process because students can form words as a way to express their thoughts to someone else. Knowing a student's productive vocabulary size can help the teacher indicate how well the student is competent in speaking and writing.

The following table presents a summary of what is involved in knowing a word according to receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge:

Table (1): What is Involved in Knowing a Word(Nation, 2001, p. 27)

Form	spoken	R	What does the word sound like?
		P	How is the word pronounced?
	written	R	What does the word look like?
		P	How is the word written and spelled?
	word parts	R	What parts are recognizable in this word?
		P	What word parts are needed to express the meaning?
Meaning	form & meaning	R	What meaning does the word form signal?
		P	What word form can be used to express this meaning?
	concept & referents	R	What is included in the concept?
		P	What items can the concept refer to?
	associations	R	What other words does this word make us think of?
		P	What other words could we use instead of this one?
Use	grammatical function	R	In what patterns does the word occur?
		P	In what patterns must we use the word?
	collocations	R	What words or types of words occur with this word?
		P	What words or types of words must we use with this word?
	constraints on use (register, frequency, ...)	R	Where, when, and how often would we expect to meet this word?
		P	Where, when, and how often can we use this word?

1.3 Vocabulary Teaching Techniques in EFL Classes

Teaching vocabulary is a daunting task. Harmer (1991) stated that vocabulary instruction is not just about presenting and explaining new words to learners. Hence, to teach new vocabulary, teachers must have strategic vocabulary to help students learn and even enjoy the process of vocabulary learning. That is to say, the journey of instructing students to enlarge their vocabulary requires specific techniques. Techniques are considered as tools that the teacher relies on to instruct students' tasks in order to fulfill the learning main objective (Gerlach, 2006).

Gerlach and Brown (2001) define techniques as a wide range of exercises, activities, and tasks implemented in language classes that are in coherence with a method and thus in harmony with its approach.

Many scholars and researchers, such as Gairns and Redman (1986), Nation (1990), and Cross (1991), have described several techniques concerning teaching vocabulary.

1.3.1 Techniques of Presentation

The title of this initial stage plainly indicates its function in introducing new terms as well as their meaning. The following are some vocabulary presentation techniques that can be implemented in language classes.

1.3.1.1 Visual Techniques

Using visual techniques is a way of teaching vocabulary. These techniques involve the use of realia. Visual vocabulary instruction can function effectively to help learners recall vocabulary since the memory for objects and pictures is trustworthy (Gairns and Redman, 1986).

Using objects means using things when teaching vocabulary. According to Harmer (2002), objects that are interesting can provide an excellent strategy for a range of interactions and opportunities to work. Realia can also make the learning process more enjoyable (Harmer, 2002). In addition, the benefits of applying realia are to engage, stimulate, and motivate the learners (Ngaroga, 2006).

Using pictures can be used to help students learn and enhance their understanding of new words. There are numerous vocabularies that can be presented through the use of pictures. They can be regarded as an effective way to clarify a new word's meaning, such as posters, magazine pictures, and photographs taken from a newspaper. The implementation of visual and colored materials can capture the students' attention into the lesson.

Sketching vocabulary is an easy technique when it comes to presenting new words to students. This technique helps students recall the meaning of new vocabulary in a certain context. The teacher should not spend much time drawing in details. He can make simple sketches that make sense and help students retain the meaning and get a clear idea of new

words. This technique will work well if the teacher asks his students to draw their own sketches in order to reinforce their comprehension of the words.

1.3.1.2 Verbal Techniques

Demonstrating a word's meaning can be an effective technique in teaching vocabulary. Students may be more cognitively involved because they get engaged in a mental activity when trying to comprehend the meaning of a word (Thornbury, 2002). When defining the meaning of a word, teachers must use simple words that match the students' level.

Translation is one of the most commonly used techniques in teaching vocabulary. Applying this technique can save the teaching time and provide learners with the opportunity to acquire more vocabulary in a short period of time.

1.3.2 Techniques of Practice

This technique entails both previously presented vocabulary and homework. Thornbury (2002) implies that this type of practice reinforces the assumption that 'practice makes perfect'.

Vocabulary games are useful for practicing and revising vocabulary. They demonstrate the benefits of learning vocabulary in a variety of ways. First, vocabulary games are enjoyable for students and enable them to retain words in specific contexts. Second, they keep them interested and entertained.

Repetition drill is a good technique for teaching vocabulary as well. The teacher plays music or says words, and students repeat them after him. He can make students acquire proper pronunciation, stress rhythm, and intonation of the words they encounter.

1.3.3 Techniques of Training

These techniques aim at making students independent vocabulary learners.

Using a dictionary can be a tool in teaching and learning vocabulary. Students should be encouraged to look up words from the dictionaries. Thus, the idea of using dictionaries must be cultivated from the beginning. Learners can ask others as a way to learn vocabulary. With this technique, the teacher can ask students to work in pairs or in groups to do the exercise, so that each student can learn new words and fill in his vocabulary gap while exchanging knowledge with his classmates.

1.4 Strategies for Teaching and Learning Vocabulary

One of the challenges that students encounter during reading is how to cope with difficult vocabulary in a text that is essential for understanding. Researchers in the field of vocabulary teaching and learning, such as Nuttal (1982), Seal (1991), Hatch & Brown (1995), Nation (2005), and Gu (2003), propose some strategies to deal with this experienced problem. Teacher-centered and learner-centered strategies.

1.4.1 Teacher-Centered Strategies

In every class, it is inevitable for students to face difficult vocabulary. Therefore, teachers should apply a range of effective strategies to overcome the word-comprehension difficulties. This covers unplanned and planned teaching vocabulary.

1.4.1.1 Unplanned Vocabulary Teaching Strategy

Seal (1991) defines this term as the ‘teaching of problem vocabulary that comes up without warning in the course of a lesson’. This occurs when students are in need of words’ meanings or when the teacher sees that more clarification about the presented vocabulary is

required. In this case, he will improvise an explanation. According to Seal (1991), the unplanned vocabulary teaching strategy involves three stages.

In the first stage, the teacher attempts to communicate the meaning of words through various means, such as providing synonyms, using visual aids, or miming. In the second stage, the teacher makes sure that the meaning of the difficult word is comprehended. This can be accomplished by asking students to put the word in a sentence or through other kinds of activities. In the last stage, the teacher tends to consolidate the knowledge by urging students to practice using the word in different contexts.

1.4.1.2 Planned Vocabulary Teaching

Planned vocabulary teaching has been defined as explicit and direct vocabulary instruction. It concerns the use of teaching strategies, which are methods by which teachers introduce and present the meaning and forms of new lexical items; encourage learners to review and practice what is known; and examine the level of acquisition of vocabulary knowledge. Such instruction necessitates devoting a sufficient amount of time to deal with vocabulary, including ‘exploration’ of various facets of vocabulary knowledge, as well as motivating learners to actively process lexical items (Nation, 2005).

1.4.2 Learner-Centered Strategies

There are several strategies that learners adopt to deal with unknown lexis in the absence of teachers’ instructions. In this sort of situation, many students respond differently to the word ‘problem’ depending on their Lexical ability and general knowledge. They use various strategies that help them understand and overcome the vocabulary problem. As a result, many researchers, such as Grellet (1981), Nuttall (1982), Smith (1985), Baudoin et al. (1997), Read (2000), Langenberg et al. (2000), have proposed certain strategies for dealing with unknown terms. These strategies encompass word ignorance and dictionary use.

1.4.2.1 Word Ignorance

In accordance with Smith (1985), the most preferred and efficient strategies for competent readers when encountering unfamiliar words are to skip or predict from context. As a result, the astute reader should not stop reading every time he comes across an unfamiliar word and continue to look for its explanation. Instead, he should continue reading while attempting to skip and ignore the new vocabulary item so that the learners' comprehension is not disrupted. In addition, Smith (2004) maintains that it is not obligatory for every reader, especially beginner readers, to grasp the meaning of everything they attempt to read. They can always skip passages and ignore many little details, either because they are understandable or because they are irrelevant to their interests or demands.

Grellet (1981) likewise supports the technique of skipping unknown words and states :

When we read, our eyes do not follow each word of the text one after the other at least in the case of efficient readers. On the contrary, many words or expressions are simply skipped: we go back to check something, or forward to confirm some of our hypotheses. (p.62)

As an explanation of what Grellet has said, ignoring unfamiliar words and expressions is natural as long as the understanding is not disrupted. But which words can the reader skip when reading? Surely, not all the unfamiliar words will be ignored; the reader can skip the words that carry unimportant meanings, but in that case, how can the reader know that their meaning is essential to the aim of reading the text?

To answer the previously raised question, several techniques can be employed by the reader. One strategy for determining whether the meaning of a certain word is crucial to the general meaning of a sentence is to omit that word from the sentence that the reader is willing to read and see if the general meaning is conveyed. One more strategy is to look at the word's grammatical function. Readers can manage to read without the unknown word. If it appears as

an adjective or an adverb, In contrast, if the ambiguous word appears multiple times in the text, it is considered a key word to the overall idea and must be treated accordingly. Nouns and verbs are essential to the core meaning of the text; readers are unable to grasp the entire idea unless they comprehend what they signify.

1.4.2.2 Dictionary Use

The dictionary is the best reference book for students to learn how lexical items function. Dictionaries can be helpful for students in comprehending key terms. In general, students look up a dictionary to verify spelling and find out the meaning of novel words. Learners benefit greatly when using a dictionary; it makes them independent and confident learners. However, students must be taught how to utilize a dictionary, and teachers should provide opportunities for their students to use it effectively and to become more familiar with it.

Gu (2003) and Graves et al. (2004) propose the following technique for training learners to use a dictionary:

To begin, the students must first know which words they must look up in a dictionary and keep the number of words to a minimum. The next step entails determining how to locate this word, because many students spend a long period of time finding a word in a dictionary. Therefore, teaching students how to use the alphabetical order as well as the guide words at the top of each dictionary page is necessary. The last step is for students to practice identifying the appropriate word meaning for which they are searching. This can be accomplished by providing students' texts that contain unknown words and asking them to select the most suitable meaning from a list given. This kind of practice will make them accustomed to the use of dictionaries .

Despite their significance, in understanding the meaning of unfamiliar words, dictionaries are not always reliable. When using them, learners may get confused, especially if the difficult word has multiple entries (Hunt and Begler, 2005). Also, using a dictionary may take time and may interrupt the reading process.

1.5 The Importance of Teaching Vocabulary in EFL Classes

Vocabulary is fundamental in language teaching. Learners with insufficient vocabulary can face obstacles that impede their ability to communicate, exchange information, and express thoughts or ideas. According to Wilkins (1976), ‘while without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed’ . That is to say, there is no sense in being able to generate grammatical sentences if one lacks the vocabulary required to convey what one intends to say. In addition, Lewis (1993) goes on to say that ‘Lexis is the core or heart of language’ (p.89). The objectives that lie behind teaching vocabulary in EFL classes vary. One objective is that teachers seek to simplify reading comprehension for their students. Another objective for teaching vocabulary is to increase the level of students’ vocabulary that they can use in various situations.

Researchers placed more emphasis on teaching vocabulary. Laufer and Nation (1999), Read (2000), and Nation (2011) all stress the importance of vocabulary acquisition in the production of spoken and written texts. Furthermore, Krashen (1989) argues that ‘a large vocabulary is, of course, essential for mastery of a language. Second language acquirers know this; they carry dictionaries with them, not grammar books, and regularly report that the lack of vocabulary is a major problem’ (p.440). As a result, the importance of vocabulary development has been acknowledged by language teachers and linguists, and they are investigating new ways to promote it more effectively.

Conclusion

In the current chapter, the literature relevant to this study has been reviewed. First, we introduced the possible definitions of vocabulary and its types, which are receptive vocabulary knowledge and productive vocabulary knowledge. Second, the different teaching techniques for EFL learners were tackled. Then, we discussed the vocabulary strategies adopted by teachers and learners, which are teacher-centered strategies and learner-centered strategies that include word ignorance and dictionary use. Finally, the importance of teaching vocabulary in EFL classes has been exposed. To sum up, vocabulary is considered the essence of reading comprehension.

Chapter Two: Context Clues in EFL Reading

Introduction

2.1 Definition of Context Clues

2.2 Types of Context Clues

2.2.1 Definition/Explanation

2.2.2 Experience Clues

2.2.3 Contrast Clues

2.2.4 Synonym Clues

2.2.5 Restatement Clues

2.2.6 Inference Clues

2.3 The Process of Teaching Context Clues

2.4 Implementing the Use of Context Clues in the EFL Classroom

2.5 The Effectiveness of Using Context Clues Strategy

Conclusion

Introduction

Context clues are one of the language features that have a relationship with the ability to figure out words' meanings. Furthermore, they may actually be quite valuable in terms of expanding the learner's linguistic repertoire. In this chapter, the literature relevant to this study will be reviewed. First, the definition and types of context clues will be tackled. Second, the process of teaching context clues will be highlighted. Third, implementing the use of context clues in the EFL classroom will be demonstrated. Finally, the effectiveness of using the context clues strategy will be exposed.

2.1 Definition of Context Clues

There are a variety of strategies that can be used to teach new vocabulary. One of these strategies is context clues. The latter was given different definitions by many linguists and researchers. According to Boushey and Moser (1956), context clues are 'words, phrases, and sentences surrounding an unfamiliar word that give clues or hints to its meaning' (p.188). This means contextual clues are cues that can be single words, phrases, or complete sentences that precede or follow ambiguous words to help learners decode and figure out their meaning.

Context clues are clues that the author gives intentionally or incidentally in the text to help the learners understand a difficult or an unfamiliar word (Loyola& Parveen, 2017). Most importantly, learners do not only understand the meaning of the unfamiliar words but also how they are used in context.

Moreover, context clues can offer direct insight to the reader to deduce the meaning of the unknown word. Clear clues may give an explanation of the word's meaning ('My brother is a workaholic person; he works all day long. '), the opposite of the word ('Unlike her sister, who was very talkative, Sara was quite taciturn'), or definition, as in 'The story must be written in chronological order; the plot events are lined up in temporal sequence'. A reader

can infer the meaning of difficult words by using context clues paired with logic or prior knowledge. An example of the previous mentioned idea is ‘The fireman ascended the tree and brought the little girl’s kitten back down to her.’(Hartman, & Blass, 2007). If the reader knows that trees are tall and that kittens like to climb high to feel safe, then the reader can infer that ‘ascended’ means to climb.

Context clues can also be indirect and unclear, and they provide the reader with little chance of comprehending the correct meaning (Reardon, 2011). The availability of inferring the meaning from context clues is not always certain; ambiguous context clues make the reader unable to understand the appropriate meaning of a new word (Reardon, 2011). For example, in ‘Macaques’ (little furry rascals), when they are raised in isolation, they exhibit various behaviors. The context clue ‘little furry rascals’ does not present sufficient information to assist the reader comprehend the word ‘Macaques’ (Reardon, 2011).

Different scholars have suggested that various context clues can be used to derive the meaning of new words in context. The types of context clues are presented in table (2).

Table (2): Types of Context Clues

References	Number of clues	Clue types
Nist & Mohr (2002)	Four (4)	Examples, Synonyms, Antonyms and General sense of a sentence .
Blanchard & Root (2006)	Six (6)	Examples synonyms, antonyms, general sense of sentence, definition and word parts.
Elder (2008)	Seven (7)	Examples synonyms, antonyms, general sense of sentence, definition, word parts and clue from another sentence.
Sattayatham (2007)	Seven (7)	Examples, punctuation marks, restatement, contrast, common sense, context clues and synonyms.
Chatprakarn & pongpan, 1990; Parault et al., 2014)	Two (2)	Cause and effect.

2.2 Types of Context Clues

Based on the aim of this research, four types of context clues will be studied.

2.2.1 Definition/ Explanation

The unfamiliar word may be formally defined, or enough explanation can be given in the passage to help readers or learners comprehend the sense of new words and make the meaning apparent. The definition clues include ‘that is’, commas, dashes, and parentheses (Paul, 1943).

Taking the following example:

- The **dudeen**- a short- stemmed pipe- is found in Irish folk tales.

Dudeen means, ‘a short pipe found in Irish folk tales’

Clue: the dashes

- Raid, my sister's son, is my **nephew**.

Nephew means ‘a son of a person's brother or sister’.

Clue: definition structure

- The two last paragraphs were **illegible**; no one could read those scribbles.

Illegible means ‘impossible or hard to read.’

Clue: No one could read those scribbles.

2.2.2 Experience Clues

When students encounter an unknown word, they rely on their past experience or background knowledge to make the meaning of a new word clear (McCullough, 1945).

Example:

- Tobacco companies are accused of trying to **lure** young people into smoking with ads that feature hip cartoon characters or attractive young people smoking.

Lure means tricking someone into doing something that they should not do.

Clue: Students must piece together the clues with their own knowledge that they already know to infer the meaning of the word **lure**.

2.2.3 Contrast Clues

In this case, writers use contrast cues, which is a type of context clue that tells the opposite meaning to reveal the meaning of an unfamiliar word. The reader or the student will be able to determine the meaning of a new word if he/she looks within a sentence or a text for terms that indicate contrast, such as: ‘but’, ‘unlike’, ‘although’, ‘however’, ‘in contrast’ or ‘on the other hand’(McCullough, 1945).

Example:

Reading books is a journey from darkness to **enlightenment**.

- **Enlightenment** means, ‘When a new kind of thinking arose to reach great understanding or knowledge.’

Clue: Darkness

- Sara is quiet **portly**, unlike her sister is very thin.

Portly means ‘fat.’

Clue: thin

2.2.4 Synonym Clues

As an additional type of context clues, writers include a known synonym to help explain the sense of the unknown word. A synonym is a word that has a similar meaning to an unfamiliar word (Nist & Mohr, 2002).

Example:

- The young girl was very **aloof**. She always seemed unsociable, unapproachable, and uninterested.

Aloof means distant or reserved.

Clue: If the learner is unfamiliar with the word **aloof** in this sentence, he or she should avoid it and continue reading. Students could use words they already know as hints to figure out which words they do not know. In the above-mentioned example, the author used the words unsociable, unapproachable, and uninterested to describe **aloof** in a different way. The student could substitute the unfamiliar word with the words he or she does know, and the words would work in either sentence.

2.2.5 Restatement Clues

Writers may provide the meaning of an unfamiliar word by expressing it with known words that restate the meaning differently. In this case, students can infer the meaning of an unfamiliar word because it has been formulated with different words (Sattayatham, 2007). Some key terms that indicate restatement, such as ‘ i.e.’, ‘that means’, ‘that is to say’, ‘ or’, ‘in other words’.

Example:

- If you visit Alaska, you will likely see many **glaciers**, or slow moving masses of ice.

Glaciers means ‘a slow moving masses of ice.’

Clue: In this sentence, the word **glaciers** is defined by phrase that follows the signal word or, which is slow moving masses of ice.

- The man got arrested and sent to the **penitentiary**, or prison, for stealing cars.

Penitentiary means ‘A prison.’

Clue: If the student did not know what the word **Penitentiary** meant the word ‘prison’ will give him/her an idea about its meaning.

2.2.6 Inference Clues

An unfamiliar word may be surrounded by simpler terms as a way to help the reader understand the new word's meaning. This type of clue is different from the others because students have to rely heavily on both prior knowledge and the context in which the word exists. Students must look for clues within, before, and after the sentence in which the word is used. Therefore, the meaning of the unfamiliar word can be assumed (Artley, 1943).

Example:

- Sunlight is an accepted **germicide**, for even the most hardy bacteria will die in a short time under its direct rays. Not only will the sunlight kill germs, but it will prevent them from growing.

- **Germicide** means any substance that kills germs or other microorganisms.

Clue: The meaning of '**germicide**' inferred from the flowing sentences through such words as 'die', 'kill' , 'prevent'

2.3 The Process of Teaching Context Clues

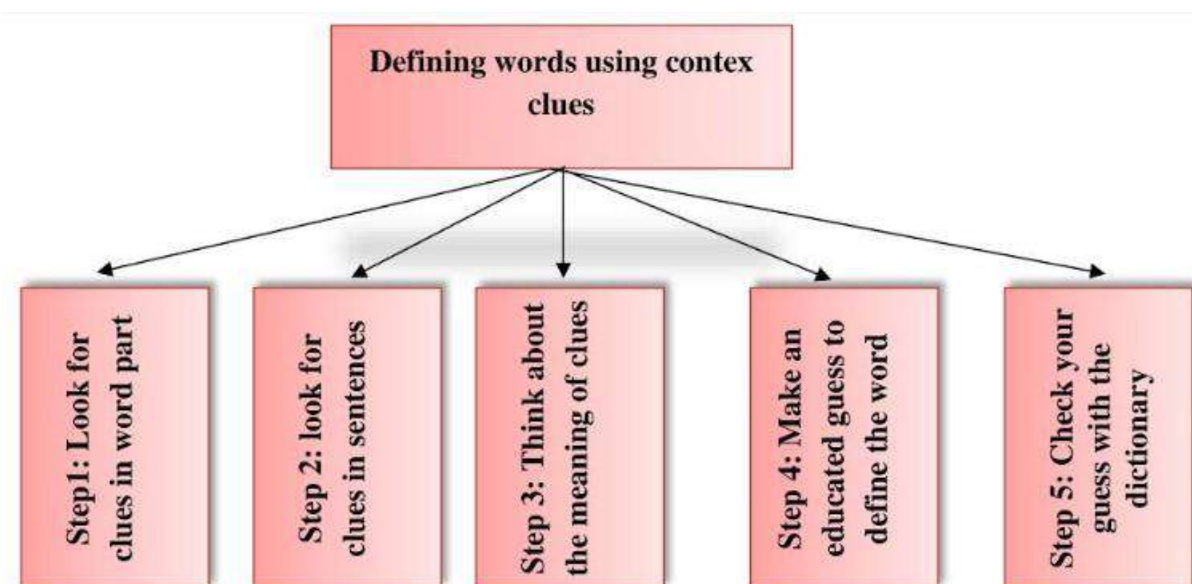
Contextual cuing strategy is considered a sub-skill of reading and listening that must be instructed in classrooms. Learners should be trained in how to use this strategy effectively whenever they come across an obscure word. Boushey and Moser (1956) and Antonacci and O'Callaghan (2011) have developed a set of effective procedures for teaching context cues to students.

According to Boushey and Moser (1956), the teacher must first present context clues as a lesson for the whole class. He should give a clear explanation of the definition of context clues, their types, and most importantly, the steps they should take to decode the meaning of strange words. While reading, it is inevitable for EFL learners to encounter word

comprehension difficulties. To overcome this, the students should first decide the part of speech of the unknown word and look for clues within the sentence. They will be asked to make an educated guess concerning the unknown word and to reread the sentence with the new term processed in mind. After that, they should generate ideas about the whole meaning of the sentence using that context cue. As a last step, the teacher should confirm and discuss the appropriate answer with his students.

Antonacci and O’Callaghan (2011) put together the following diagram that explains the main steps of using context clues:

Figure (1): Defining Unknown Words Using Context Clues (Antonacci & O’Callaghan, 2011, p. 33)



To sum up, teachers should place more emphasis on how to make L2 learners well trained when using context clues’ strategy through good planning and explicit instruction.

2.4. Implementing the Use of Context Clues in the EFL Classroom

In a study conducted to see if the use of context clues increases the word meaning, Hibbard (2009) noted that context clue is a strategy which helps learners pick out the meaning of unfamiliar words within statements or larger pieces of writing. Students can also be

purposeful in developing word correspondence and reinforcing word meaning. This implies that students can use context clues to help them figure out the meaning of unfamiliar terms or phrases that they do not realize, by looking at their function in the sentence or at the overall meaning of the sentence to reinforce the meaning of difficult words.

Teaching students to derive meaning from context is an activity that relies on a range of skills and types of knowledge that should be elaborated and emphasized upon by teachers in order to make students take full advantage of context clues in content area materials. Morphological knowledge is one of these requirements that can be defined as the individuals' 'conscious awareness of the morphemic structure of words and their ability to reflect on and manipulate that structure'(Carlisle, 1995). The knowledge of the morphemic structure of a word in a text can facilitate both the word and text comprehension. Furthermore, students need to learn how to use context effectively by providing lengthy excerpts from textbooks and guidelines for using them to practice context and other vocabulary skills. In addition to that, focusing only on linguistic context as 'the words surrounding the unfamiliar words within a sentence' is not sufficient to comprehend difficult words in a text. Therefore, cultural information and knowledge of the genre are also required (Morgan, 1983).

Comprehending words from context needs to be instructed in EFL classes. Cohen and Byrnes (2007) stated that with effective instruction from the teacher, learners can develop their recent term understanding and improve their comprehension. Hence, EFL teachers are supposed to be trained on how to provide students with methods on how to deal with unknown words during the reading process. Moreover, when students are able to use context clues' strategy, they will be able to deal with longer texts to decode obscure words' meanings.

During the instructional time in classrooms, teachers should not assume that all students will achieve the identification of strange words' meanings (Reardon, 2011). Some will succeed in doing so, and some will struggle, because decoding meaning is a cognitive

process that facilitates comprehension. This mental activity differs from one student to another (Cain et al., 2011). Besides, students have different levels of vocabulary knowledge; students with a larger vocabulary will be more successful at using context clues than students with poor vocabulary knowledge. For these reasons, the teacher should maximize the chance for his/her students to make sense of novel words. The latter can be achieved when the teacher makes a combination strategy, i.e., overlapping context clues strategy and other strategies (The National Reading Panel, 2000).

The first combination strategy is using cognates to scaffold context clues for second language learners. In this combination strategy, EFL students should first identify the type of context clue that is presented within the sentence. Then, they should deliberately read the surrounding words of the unknown word (Reardon, 2011). While searching for cognates, learners should use their knowledge of the first language. EFL learners adopt the meaning of the cognates associated with context clues to infer the meaning of the obscure word.

The second combination strategy is stated by Greenwood and Flanigan (2007). They wrote about combining context clues strategy and semantic gradients in teaching students to understand a new vocabulary. Semantic gradients are a way to broaden and deepen students' understanding of related words. Students consider a continuum of words by order of degree. Semantic gradients often begin with antonyms, or opposites, at each end of the continuum; for example: 'freezing', 'cold', 'cool', 'warm', 'hot', 'roasting', and 'sweltering' are semantic gradients for temperature. The teacher leaves a gap in the removed word to mean to the student that they need to fill in the blank. Then, students are asked to select the most appropriate word for the gap from a provided list of semantic gradients, i.e. despondent, 'upset', 'sad', 'happy', 'ecstatic', 'elated' and 'jubilant'. This kind of practice develops the use of specific context clues, information may enable students to identify the exact word from the list offered. Greenwood and Flanigan (2007) believe 'the real benefit of overlapping these

two strategies is enabling students to reconnect individual words meanings to the text, helping them bridge the divide between vocabulary and comprehension.’

2.5 The Effectiveness of Using Context Clues Strategy

Many researchers have considered the application of the context clues’ strategy as one of the most practical vocabulary learning strategies. Its effectiveness has been stressed by several researchers in the field of vocabulary teaching.

(Nuttall, 1982) mentioned two reasons in favor of this strategy. The first reason is that using context clues enables readers to cope with vocabulary difficulties independently without asking the teacher or consulting a dictionary when they face an unfamiliar word, and thus they try to decipher its meaning. However, the second reason is to use this strategy to make students react positively towards new vocabulary items.

The process of using context clues strategy can stimulate students' critical thinking. As described by Chelsa (2005), the first step to take during reading is to locate the unknown word. Then, the second step is to identify the type of context clues, and finally, to infer the meaning of the unfamiliar word by using carefully the information offered by the teacher, such as punctuation and keywords. Following these steps to deal with the obscure word will surely lead the student to think critically and logically, so this will stimulate him to adopt a kind of critical thinking, and as a result, he will be able to infer and comprehend the meaning of a novel word.

The use of context clues can activate the skill of interpreting, predicting, and checking predictions while reading (Gal, 2009). Furthermore, it eliminates the need for a dictionary that obstructs the flow of reading. In addition, this strategy is encouraged because EFL students do not have the ability to acquire all the English words (Hamilton, 2012). The English language has an enormous number of words, which is a hard obstacle to overcome by second language

learners using other strategies. Thus, using context clues is the only feasible way to learn adequate vocabulary.

Apart from increasing the students' vocabulary knowledge, the context clues' strategy aids learners to be more mindful of learning new words and using them in a specific context (Iltter, 2019). It makes students develop a holistic approach towards reading. Moreover, the use of context clues is helpful in 'increasing and enriching the meanings of already known words' (McKeown & Curtis, 1987, p. 172).

Alderson (2000), too, puts more emphasis on the effectiveness of the context clues strategy by arguing that comprehending the meaning of unfamiliar words can be an easy task if the words are presented in context, and this task can be easier if the context clues are not far from the target word. Thus, using context clues to comprehend the meaning of an unknown word is an effective strategy to enhance the students' vocabulary that leads to a better understanding of unfamiliar words' meanings.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have tackled the definition of context clues' strategy and we have provided some types of these clues. We also discussed the process of implementing this strategy in the EFL classroom. Then, we have shown the effectiveness of using context clues. In short, we can maintain that using context clues is one of the most encouraged strategies used when dealing with unfamiliar words in EFL reading.

Chapter Three: Quasi-Experimental Investigation on Using Context Clues in EFL Reading.

Introduction

3.1 The Sample

3.2 Research Variables

3.3 The Method

3.4 Overview of the Procedures

3.5 Descriptive Analysis

 3.5.1 Analysis of the Pre-test Results

 3.5.2 Analysis of the Post-test Results

3.6 Results of the Pre-test and the Post-test Scores

3.7 Testing the Hypothesis

3.8 Findings and Discussion

Conclusion

Introduction

The present chapter describes the methodological design of the current study. This research demonstrates the implementation of the context clues' strategy to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words encountered during reading in the EFL context. The focus of this study is to investigate if training EFL students in using this strategy enhances their ability to derive meanings of unknown words from context. The procedure for this experimental work consists of three major stages: the pre-test stage, in which the participants are tested on their ability to comprehend word meaning from context; the treatment stage, which is completely dedicated using various context clues within examples to construct the meaning of new vocabulary; and the final stage is the post-test, for which the participants' guesses at the meaning of target terms are examined.

3.1 The sample

A sample of forty (40) students of English at the University of Ouargla during the academic year 2021-2022. The students are randomly selected in this study. This number of students was chosen since it represents nearly half of the total population.

3.2 Research Variables

In this research work, the context clues strategy is the independent variable that can be used to improve students' word comprehension ability. The dependent variable is the ability of students to comprehend unknown words in EFL reading since it may be affected by the context clues strategy.

3.3 The Method

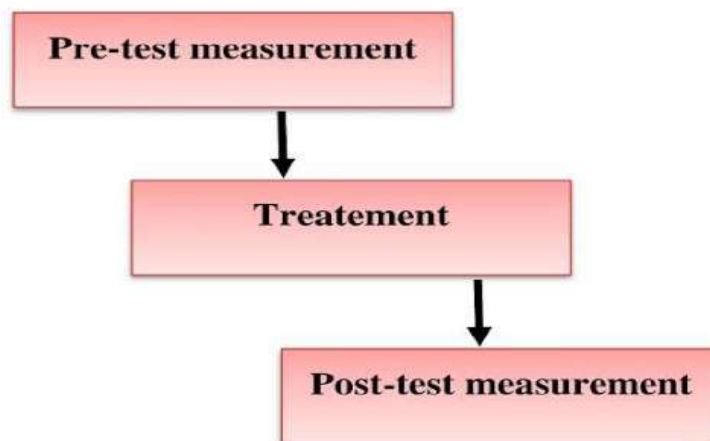
Due to the nature of this research, one method, quasi-experimental, was chosen to answer the research question of the current study. The quasi-experimental design is useful

because it aims to establish a relationship between variables in terms of causation; the dependent variable (students' word comprehension ability) changes when the independent variable is introduced (context clues strategy). A pre-test, treatment, and post-test are used in the experimental investigation. The experiment allows the researchers to identify the impact of context clues' strategy on the level of word comprehension performance of the students.

3.4 Overview of the Procedures

To put the theoretical review of the literature discussed in the previous chapters into practice, we conducted a pre-test, treatment, and post-test with one single group. In this case, neither consulting a dictionary nor asking the teacher are permissible. The pre-test is about the first treatment, while the post-test is the first observation done after the treatment. Thus, in this type of design, a single case is studied twice: once before the treatment and once after it. Changes in outcome are considered to be the result of the intervention. Figure (7) shows the steps of the procedures.

Figure (2): The Experiment's Procedures



3.4.1 The Pre-test Procedures

The pre-test measures the students' word comprehension level before applying context clues' strategy. In this light, the forty (40) participants were pretested individually, in which we passed out the worksheets of the test to all the participants in the classroom. The type of the test is multiple-choice and consists of 10 items. The subjects were asked to read the sentence carefully and circle the best answer (a, b, c or d) that explains what the underlined word means. The time allocated for the test was 20 minutes to complete the pre-test. The scale for evaluating is two scores for a successful inference and no score for an incorrect one.

3.4.2 The Treatment Procedures

After submitting the pre-test, we asked the subjects whether they had encountered any difficulty in comprehending the meaning of the underlined words while answering the pre-test, and most of their answers were 'yes'.

In presenting the context clues' strategy, the participants were introduced to six (06) sentences that were written on the board and represent the six types of context clues that were presented in the second chapter. Then, we asked a volunteer from the subjects to read the first sentence and identify the unknown word and draw his/her attention to what comes before and after the unfamiliar word to infer the words' meaning (read around the word). After doing so, we introduce and explain to them the clear definition of context clues and how this strategy can be important in comprehending unfamiliar words in the reading process. The same process went with the rest of sentences. This treatment required one hour to be conducted.

3.4.3 The Post-test Procedures

The post-test was set up after conducting the treatment to know the subjects' improvement in word comprehension ability after applying the context clues' strategy. The

evaluation scale of the degree of success in lexical inferencing is followed as in the case of the pre-test. The number of sentences and target words are also the same. The test took 20 minutes; the instruction was mentioned on the test without providing any explanation because the students were accustomed to this type of questions.

3.5 Descriptive Analysis

In this section, the frequencies, the percentages and the means' scores of the tests are explained relying on the results of the test before and after giving the treatment.

3.5.1 Analysis of the Pre-test Results

The scores of the pre-test can be seen in table (3).

Table (3): The pre-test Scores

Students	Pre-test Scores
1	16
2	12
3	16
4	10
5	4
6	4
7	2
8	12
9	2
10	4
11	4
12	16
13	12
14	4
15	16
16	2
17	10

18	2
19	4
20	14
21	16
22	6
23	14
24	14
25	18
26	16
27	12
28	18
29	16
30	16
31	18
32	2
33	18
34	16
35	16
36	14
37	18
38	16
39	14
40	16
Total	460
Mean	11.50

The data of the students' pre- test were obtained from the results of the test. They were calculated by using SPSS 25. All the data can be described as follows:

Table (4): The Students' Scores in the Pre-test

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	5	12.5	12.5	12.5
	4.00	6	15.0	15.0	27.5
	6.00	1	2.5	2.5	30.0
	10.00	2	5.0	5.0	35.0
	12.00	4	10.0	10.0	45.0
	14.00	5	12.5	12.5	57.5
	16.00	12	30.0	30.0	87.5
	18.00	5	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

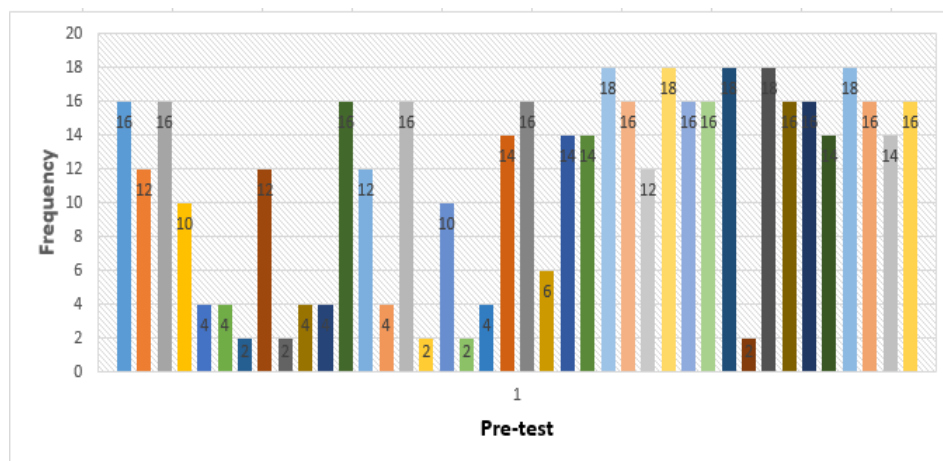
The results of the pre-test before the treatment showed that the lowest score is 2 and the highest score is 18, while the mean score is 11.50.

The statistical description of the data of pretest can be presented in the following table:

Table (5): Descriptive Statistics of the Pre-test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Pre-test	40	2	18	11.50000	5.79767

The frequency distribution of pretest scores can be described in the following bar chart:

Figure (3): Scores' Frequency of the Pre-test

Based on the calculation in table (4), it can be said that the mean score of the pre-test is 11.50. From the 40 students, there was a percentage of 12.5% from the students who got 2, 15% who got 4, and 2.5% who got 6, 5% who got 10, 10% who got 12, 12.5% got 14, then 30% who got 16. Finally, there were 12.5% who got 18. This success rate is much lower than the average reached by other subjects in other researchers' works. A remark worth mentioning about the pre-test scores is that the group of participants is heterogeneous as there is a large difference between the lowest and highest score.

3.5.2 Analysis of the Post- test Results

The post-test participants' results have witnessed a significant change both globally and individually. In table number (6), the mean score has reached 14.15. So, it is obvious that progress has been made.

Table (6): The Post-Test Scores

Students	Post-test Scores
1	18
2	16
3	18
4	14
5	20
6	08
7	06
8	16
9	08
10	04
11	06
12	20
13	14
14	08
15	18
16	4

17	14
18	6
19	8
20	12
21	18
22	6
23	20
24	16
25	18
26	18
27	16
28	20
29	18
30	18
31	20
32	14
33	16
34	18
35	16
36	16
37	20
38	20
39	14
40	14
Total	574
Mean	14.35

The data for the students' post-test was obtained from the result of the test. All the data was calculated by using SPSS 25. The data can be described as follows:

Table (7): The Students' Scores in the Post-test

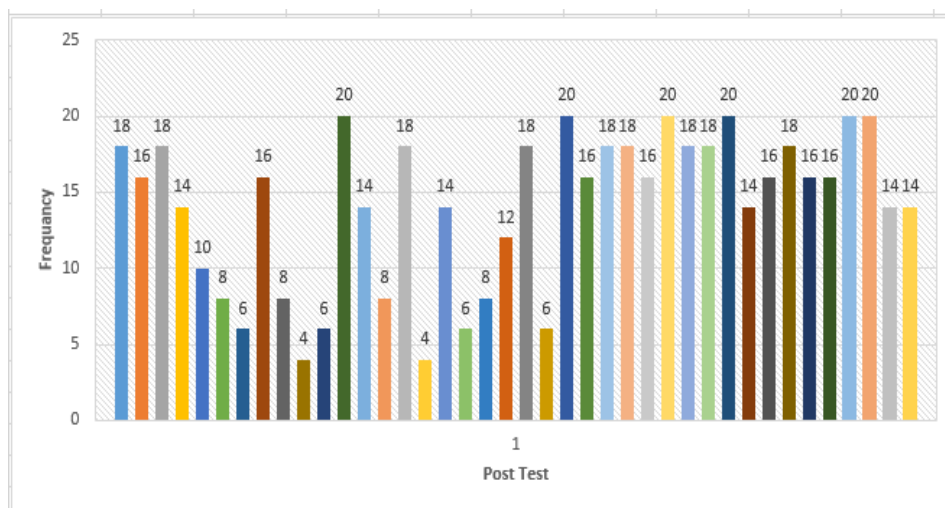
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4.00	1	2.5	2.5	2.5
	6.00	4	10.0	10.0	12.5
	8.00	5	12.5	12.5	25.0
	10.00	1	2.5	2.5	27.5
	12.00	1	2.5	2.5	30.0
	14.00	6	15.0	15.0	45.0
	16.00	7	17.5	17.5	62.5
	18.00	10	25.0	25.0	87.5
	20.00	5	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

The post-test was conducted to measure the impact of the context clues' strategy on the student's word comprehension ability. After the treatment, the scores of students' word comprehension improved. The result of calculation using SPSS 25 on the data after the post-test obtained standard deviation was 4.86, the lowest score was 4, and the highest score was 20.

Table (8): Descriptive Statistics of the Post- test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Pre-test	40	4	20	14.35	4.86510

The frequency distribution of the post-test scores can be presented in figure (4) :

Figure (4): The Scores Frequency of the Post-test

The data in table (7) showed that after giving the intervention, the scores of the students' word comprehension varied. Based on the calculation of 40 students, there was a percentage of (2.5%) who got 4, four students (10%) who got 6, five students (12.5%) who got 8, (2.5%) who got 10. Next, (2.5%) who got 12, six students (15%) who got 14, seven students (17.5%) who got 16, and ten students (25%) who got 18, and five students (12.5%) who got 20.

3.6 Results of the Pre-test and the Post-test Scores

Figures (5) and (6) reveal the improvement in students' scores from the pre-test to the post-test, the scores were obtained after evaluating students' vocabulary tests after the intervention was given. The mean score increased from 46% in the pre-test to 57.4% in the post-test. From these results, it can be said that the improvement was proven by evidence that using context clues' strategy can improve students' word comprehension ability in EFL reading.

Figure (5): Scores in the Pretest and the Posttest

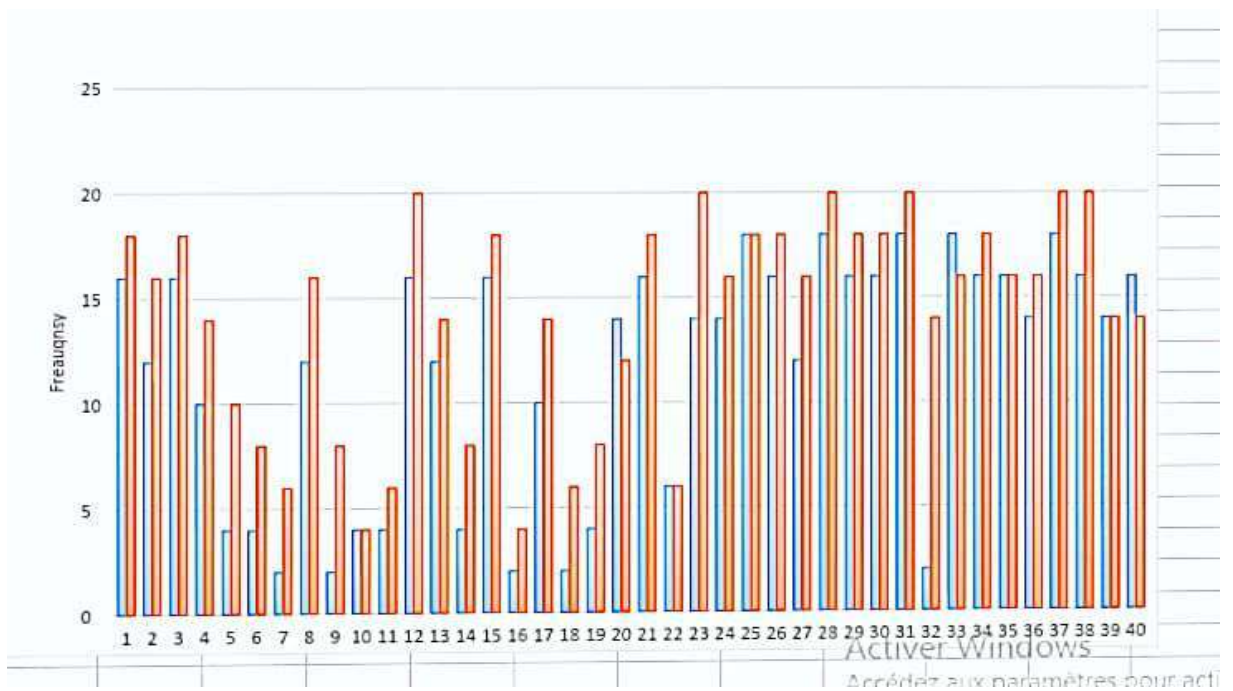
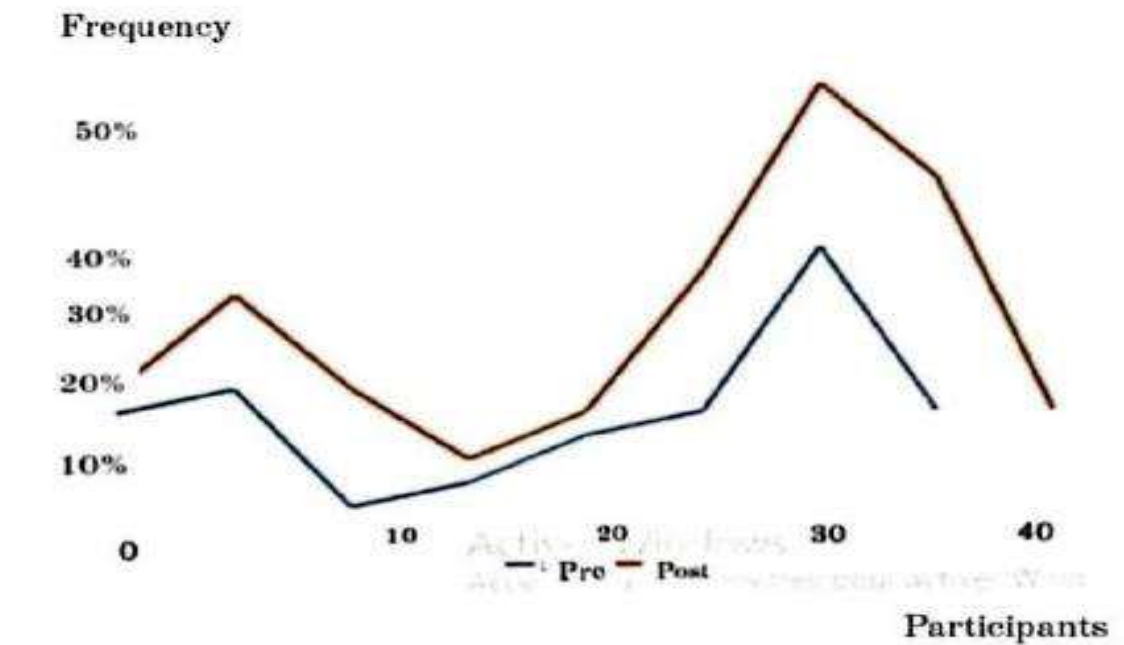


Figure (6): The Pretest and Post-test Scores Distribution



3.7 Testing the Hypothesis

To make the significance of the pre-test and the post-test, we used t-test, which is a test for the same population group before and after applying the intervention.

Table (9): The Result of Hypothesis Test

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error. Mean	Lower	Upper	T	Df	Sig.(2.tailed)
Pair 1	VAR00001 - VAR00002	-2.65000-	2.57752	40754	-3.47433	-1.82567	-6.502	39	.000

As shown in table (9), the results are based on the comparison of the t-test (-6.502) and the level of significance (0.05). The plus and minus signs are not taken into account in the t test. So that the value of $-6.502 < 0.05$ (p). Therefore, it is fair to conclude that the context clues' strategy can improve students' word comprehension ability in EFL reading.

3.8 Findings and Discussion

In this research work, the problem was set to determine the implementation of the context clues' strategy in improving the students' word comprehension ability in EFL reading. The experiment design used was one group pretest-posttest. The results of the post-test revealed a significant increase in the participants' progress. Based on the results obtained, the score in the pre-test is 46 % and in the post-test is 57.4 %.

In comparison to other studies on the context clues' strategy, such as Ames (1966), Liu and Nation (1984), the participants' success rate in inferring word meaning is quite comparable to the rate observed in the present research work.

According to Nation and Coady, the participants' success in making correct inferences goes from 60% to 80%. In this research work, the participants' average score is 57.4%, which is quite similar to the percentage estimated by Nation and Coady (1988).

Another conclusion that can be drawn from the current work is that strategy training is feasible and yields positive effects, as evidenced by the pre-test and post-test scores. This conclusion supports the findings of Carnine et al., who proved that instructing learners in the context clues' strategy enhances their word comprehension ability.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we carried out an experimental study which aimed to examine the effects of using the context clues strategy on word comprehension in EFL reading. This could be done by comparing the students' ability before and after using the context clues strategy, in which the selected subjects were pre-tested in implementing the context clues' strategy and then went through an intervention. These participants passed a post-test that is similar to the pre-test. From the results of the statistical analysis, we have found that there was a difference in scores between the pre-test and the post-test. The mean score of the post-test is higher than the mean score of the pre-test. Before the participants were exposed to the context clues' strategy, their total score on the pre-test is 460 and the mean of the pre-test is 11.50. After using the target strategy, the total score on the post-test is 574, and the mean of the post-test is 14.35. As for the findings between the students' pretest and posttest scores, the result in this study confirmed the hypothesis which states that the instruction of context clues' strategy can improve EFL students' word comprehension ability.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The main objective of the current study was to investigate the use of context clues strategy in word comprehension in EFL reading, taking as a case study second year LMD students at the Department of Letters and English Language, Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla. This study is intended to answer the research question: To what extent can the use of context clues' strategy develop the students' word comprehension ability?

To answer the research question, we developed the design of this study, which includes two chapters concerning the theoretical background, and one chapter for the experimental investigation.

The first two chapters were mostly devoted to the theoretical review of teaching vocabulary in the EFL context and context clues in EFL reading, while the third chapter of methodology discussed the sample, the method, the overview of the procedures, the descriptive analysis, and the findings.

Based on the results of the experimental work that we conducted, we draw the conclusion that the training of context clues' strategy is achievable and that a significant improvement in word comprehension has taken place.

This study highlighted one of the teaching vocabulary strategies that both students and teachers have overlooked. Therefore, it is time to pay attention to the context clues strategy since it helps learners become more independent while battling with word comprehension in EFL reading.

The findings of this study were gained through a series of challenges. Despite the importance of the current investigation, the two researchers encountered many obstacles that hampered the research and influenced its findings. The lack of external validity can be

General Conclusion

mentioned because the study was conducted at a single university and so the results cannot be generalized.

A set of recommendations can be suggested based on this research. First, EFL students can use the context clues' strategy to comprehend unfamiliar words without consulting a dictionary. Second, teachers of English may implement the context clues' strategy in their classrooms. Finally, researchers can use the findings of this study to improve their understanding of how to apply this strategy in studying other skills.

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39/1: 18

Appendices

Appendix A: The Pre-test 60
Appendix B: The Post-test..... 61
Appendix C: The Answer Sheet of Student Number 37 (Pre-test)..... 62
Appendix D: The Answer Sheet of Student Number 37 (Post-test)..... 63
Appendix E: The Answer Sheet of the Pre-test..... 64
Appendix F: The Answer Sheet of the Post-test..... 65

Appendix A: The Pre-test

PRE-TEST

Number:.....

Instruction : Circle the best answer (a, b, c or d) that explains what the underlined word means.

The Saints and Strangers argued about how they would live in the New World. After much discussion, they came together and signed the Mayflower Compact .			
a. a container for makeup	b. a small item	c. a machine	d. an agreement
Removing seeds from cotton plants was a slow job until Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin .			
a. drink	b. a book	c. a machine	d. a cloth
If you do not curtail your spending , you will be broke in no time at all !			
a. reduce	b. follow	c. behind	d. buy
The reporter insisted that the letter he used was authentic . He said that he had shown it to many experts before he used it in his story.			
a.genuine, or real	b. follow	c. behind	d. buy
If you do not conquer your fears, they will beat you.			
a. lose	b. win	c. talk about	d. to take control
We walked slowly down the trail with great trepidation . No one who had gone this way had ever been heard from again. Had they simply found a better place to settle on this dark planet? We doubted that.			
a. movement	b. worry	c. enjoyment	d. laughter
"It would be an egregious mistake to wear a dirty t-shirt and shabby blue jeans to a funeral".			
a.dramatic	b. wired	c. extremely bad	d. Suitable
As the summer sun sent scattered rays through the maple and oak leaves overhead, the young deer stood frozen , making it almost impossible for the hikers to see her.			
a. very cold	b. Visible	c. not moving	d. not me
Put this medicine on your arm and rub it into your skin until it is invisible. It will inhibit the infection's attempt to spread.			
a. live in a certain place	b. block or slow down	c. itch or burn	d. help to do something important
The store specializes in cutlery , such as forks and knives, that has unique designs.			
a. spices and seasonings	b. plates, bowls	c. Silverware, eating utensils	

Appendix B: The Post-test

POST- TEST

Number:

Instruction : Circle the best answer (a, b, c or d) that explains what the underlined word means.

1- Most of America's Founding Fathers did not believe in women's <u>suffrage</u> . Only men could vote in the United states until 1920. a. an early flag b. The election c. The right to vote d. The right to work
2-No word must ever leak out about this military action! It has to be a <u>clandestine</u> operation in order to succeed. a. family b. useful c. dangerous d. Secret
3-Your plan looks good. I hope it will really work. It's time to <u>implement</u> it and see if it's as brilliant as you claim. a. Instrument b. take apart c. change d. carry out
4-We have rather <u>lofty</u> expectations for you, son. You will attend college. You will become rich and famous. You will be elected president of the United States before you turn forty. a. high b. good c. Small d. lower
5- I like that store. All the employees <u>strive</u> to make the customers feel right at home. a. Complain b. try c. fail d. clean
6-Our baseball team's pitcher has a few <u>eccentric</u> habits, such as throwing exactly thirteen warm-up pitches and never wearing socks a. normal b. strange c. messy d. good
7-The coach takes every opportunity to <u>censure</u> his players, yet he ignores every opportunity to praise them. a. approve to b. criticize c. close d. tell
8-The newlyweds agreed to be very <u>frugal</u> in their shopping because they wanted to save enough money to buy a house. a. profusely b. economical c. wasteful d. interested
9-Slaves were <u>prohibited</u> from learning to read and write . a. encouraged b. allowed c. suffered d. not permitted
10- My sister <u>loathes</u> broccoli, but she loves spinach. a. dislikes intensely b. eats eagerly c. prepares and cook d. Bought

Appendix C: The Answer Sheet of Student Number 37 (Pre-test)

02/20

PRE-TEST

Number: 37

Instruction : Circle the best answer (a, b, c or d) that explains what the underlined word means.

- 1 The Saints and Strangers argued about how they would live in the New World. After much discussion, they came together and signed the Mayflower Compact.
 a. a container for makeup b. a small item c. a machine d. an agreement
- 2 Removing seeds from cotton plants was a slow job until Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin.
 a. drink b. a book c. a machine d. a cloth
- 3 If you do not curtail your spending , you will be broke in no time at all !
 a. reduce b. follow c. behind d. buy
- 4 The reporter insisted that the letter he used was authentic. He said that he had shown it to many experts before he used it in his story.
 a.genuine, or real b. follow c. behind d. buy
- 5 If you do not conquer your fears, they will beat you.
 a. lose b. win c. talk about d. to take control
- 6 We walked slowly down the trail with great trepidation. No one who had gone this way had ever been heard from again. Inhibit y simply found a better place to settle on this dark planet? We doubted that.
 a. movement b. worry c. enjoyment d. laughter
- 7 "It would be an egregious mistake to wear a dirty t-shirt and shabby blue jeans to a funeral".
 a.dramatic b. wired c. extremely bad d. Suitable
- 8 As the summer sun sent scattered rays through the maple and oak leaves overhead, the young deer stood frozen, making it almost impossible for the hikers to see her.
 a. very cold b. Visible c. not moving d. not me
- 9 Put this medicine on your arm and rub it into your skin until it is invisible. It will inhibit the infection's attempt to spread.
 a. live in a certain place b. block or slow down c. itch or burn d. help to do something important
- 10 The store specializes in cutlery, such as forks and knives, that has unique designs.
 a. spices and seasonings b. plates, bowls c. Silverware, eating utensils

Appendix D: The Answer Sheet of Student Number 37 (Post-test)

18/20

POST- TEST

Number : 37

Instruction : Circle the best answer (a, b, c or d) that explains what the underlined word means.

-
- 1 Most of America's Founding Fathers did not believe in women's suffrage. Only men could vote in the United states until 1920.
a. an early flag b. The election c. The right to vote d. The right to work
-
- 2 No word must ever leak out about this military action! It has to be a clandestine operation in order to succeed.
a. family b. useful c. dangerous d. Secret
-
- 3 Your plan looks good. I hope it will really work. It's time to implement it and see if it's as brilliant as you claim.
a. Instrument b. take apart c. change d. carry out
-
- 4 We have rather lofty expectations for you, son. You will attend college. You will become rich and famous. You will be elected president of the United States before you turn forty.
a. high b. good c. Small d. lower
-
- 5 I like that store. All the employees strive to make the customers feel right at home.
a. Complain b. try c. fail d. clean
-
- 6 Our baseball team's pitcher has a few eccentric habits, such as throwing exactly thirteen warm-up pitches and never wearing socks
a. normal b. strange c. messy d. good
-
- 7 The coach takes every opportunity to censure his players, yet he ignores every opportunity to praise them.
a. approve to b. criticize c. close d. tell
-
- 8 The newlyweds agreed to be very frugal in their shopping because they wanted to save enough money to buy a house.
a. profusely b. economical c. wasteful d. interested
-
- 9 Slaves were prohibited from learning to read and write .
a. encouraged b. allowed c. suffered d. not permitted
-
- 10 My sister loathes broccoli, but she loves spinach.
a. dislikes intensely b. eats eagerly c. prepares and cook d. Bought
-

Appendix E: The Answer Sheet of the Pre-test

1- d

2- c

3- a

4- a

5- d

6- b

7- c

8- c

9- b

10- c

Appendix F: The Answer Sheet of the Post-test

1- c

2- d

3- d

4- a

5- b

6- c

7- b

8- b

9- d

10- a

Résumé

Comprendre le vocabulaire est l'un des aspects les plus importants et les plus difficiles de l'apprentissage pour les apprenants de langue anglaise. L'un des moyens les plus efficaces pour faciliter la compréhension du vocabulaire est d'aider les apprenants à devenir indépendants. Ceci peut être réalisé en les entraînant à acquérir des stratégies d'apprentissage du vocabulaire. Une stratégie efficace consiste à enseigner aux élèves comment utiliser les indices du contexte pour trouver un sens à de nouveaux mots dans le processus de lecture. Cette étude vise donc à étudier l'effet de la stratégie de l'utilisation des indices du contexte sur l'amélioration de la compréhension des mots par les apprenants en lecture dans une langue étrangère. Dans cette étude, nous avons utilisé une méthodologie quasi-expérimentale pour évaluer l'efficacité des instructions de la stratégie de l'utilisation des indices du contexte pour déduire le sens des mots. Les résultats ont révélé que de la stratégie de l'utilisation des indices du contexte a un effet positif sur le niveau de compréhension des mots des élèves. Cette stratégie peut amener les apprenants à comprendre la signification de mots inconnus. Les enseignants d'EFL doivent donc s'appuyer sur cette stratégie dans leurs cours.

Mots-clés : vocabulaire, compréhension de mots, compréhension de lecture, indices du contexte, contexte de l'EFL

المخلص

يعد فهم المفردات أحد أهم وأصعب جوانب تعلم اللغة بالنسبة لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية، ومن أحد أنجح الطرق لتسهيل عملية استيعاب المفردات هو مساعدة المتعلمين على أن يصبحوا مستقلين حيث يمكن تحقيق هذا من خلال تدريبهم على اكتساب استراتيجيات تعلم المفردات، وإحدى الإستراتيجيات الفعالة هي تعليم الطلبة كيفية استعمال دلالات السياق لإيجاد معنى للكلمات الجديدة في عملية القراءة، وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى البحث في تأثير إستراتيجية استعمال دلالات السياق في تعزيز فهم الكلمات لدى المتعلمين في القراءة في اللغة الأجنبية. اعتمدنا في هذه الدراسة على المنهجية الشبه تجريبية لتقييم فعالية تعليمات إستراتيجية استعمال دلالات السياق لاستنتاج معنى الكلمات. كشفت النتائج أن استخدام إستراتيجية دلالات السياق له تأثير إيجابي على مستوى فهم الكلمات لدى الطلاب. و يمكن أن تجعل هذه الإستراتيجية المتعلمين يفهمون معاني الكلمات الغير المألوفة، وبالتالي يجب على أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية الاعتماد على هذه الإستراتيجية في تدريسهم .

الكلمات الرئيسية:

المفردات ، فهم الكلمات ، فهم القراءة ، دلالات السياق ، سياق اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية .