

Context Clues as a Vocabulary Enhancement Strategy in TEFL: An Experimental Study

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to examine whether there was a significant difference in the vocabulary achievement of second-year baccalaureate students at Badr High School between those who were taught using the context clues strategy and those who were not. The research employed a nonequivalent control group design. To assess the difference in vocabulary achievement between the experimental and control groups, an independent samples t-test was conducted. The results indicated that the obtained t-value (6.55) exceeded the critical t-value (3.32) at the 0.007 significance level, with a two-tailed test and $df = 42$. This statistically significant difference suggests that the students who were taught using the context clues strategy demonstrated better vocabulary achievement compared to those who were not taught using this method.

Keywords: TEFL, Teaching Vocabulary, Contextual Cues, Experimental Study

INTRODUCTION

The English teaching guidelines in Morocco emphasize the adoption of contemporary, communicative approaches, urging educators to move beyond traditional methods that rely heavily on rote memorization of grammar rules and vocabulary lists. Instead, these guidelines advocate for a more dynamic, context-based approach to language learning, where vocabulary is taught and acquired through meaningful, real-life situations. This shift reflects a growing recognition that vocabulary is a cornerstone of language proficiency and communication, and its mastery is indispensable for effective language use.

Vocabulary forms the foundation of language. Without a robust vocabulary, learners face significant challenges in comprehending, speaking, reading, or writing effectively. While grammar provides the structural framework of language, vocabulary supplies the content that brings it to life. Research consistently highlights vocabulary knowledge as a strong predictor of language proficiency, as it empowers learners to express ideas, understand others, and engage in meaningful communication. Within a communicative approach, vocabulary instruction transcends the mere memorization of isolated words. Instead, it focuses on helping learners understand how words function in context, how they relate to other words, and how they are used in real-world situations.

Teaching vocabulary in context is a fundamental principle of communicative language teaching. This approach ensures that learners encounter and use words in meaningful ways, which not only enhances retention but also promotes active use. For example, rather than memorizing the word "delicious" in isolation, students might encounter it in a sentence such as, "The cake was so delicious that everyone asked for a second slice." This contextualized exposure helps learners grasp the word's meaning, usage, and connotations, making it more memorable and easier to recall.

Additionally, vocabulary learned in context equips students for real-life communication. By observing how words are used in sentences, dialogues, or texts, learners gain valuable insights into appropriate usage, register, and collocations. For instance, teaching the word "apologize" within the context of a conversation about resolving conflicts helps students understand when and how to use it appropriately, fostering both linguistic and pragmatic competence.

Contextualized vocabulary teaching also naturally integrates the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For example, students might read a passage containing new words, engage in pair discussions about the passage, and then write a response incorporating the same vocabulary. This holistic approach not only reinforces learning but also ensures that vocabulary is actively used across different modes of communication.

At its core, contextualized vocabulary teaching prioritizes meaning and usage over rote memorization. Learners are encouraged to explore how words function in various contexts, including their grammatical roles, collocations, and cultural nuances. For instance, teaching the word "book" as both a noun ("I read a book") and a verb ("I booked a ticket") helps students understand its multiple meanings and uses, enriching their linguistic flexibility and depth.

Participants/Documents

The study involved 44 second-year baccalaureate students at Badr High School, divided into an experimental group (taught with context clues) and a control group (taught using traditional vocabulary methods).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary acquisition is a complex process deeply tied to memory, with universal principles guiding effective instruction. Wallace (1988) outlines key principles for successful vocabulary teaching. Aim emphasizes selecting words carefully, balancing breadth and depth based on learners' proficiency and goals. Need stresses aligning vocabulary with students' real-life contexts, making it meaningful and memorable. Frequent Exposure and Repetition highlights the importance of regular, varied encounters with words to aid retention. Meaningful Presentation ensures students grasp both the denotation and connotation of words through real-life examples, fostering deeper understanding.

Vocabulary learning is multifaceted, requiring mastery of multiple dimensions. Harmer (1993) identifies four critical aspects: Meaning, the ability to connect words to their concepts; Usage, understanding collocations, idioms, and stylistic nuances; Word Formation, knowing how words are constructed and related (e.g., prefixes, suffixes); and Grammar, using words correctly in their grammatical forms. Together, these dimensions enable learners to not only recall words but also use them appropriately in communication.

How Words Are Remembered

Unlike grammar, which follows clear rules, vocabulary acquisition depends on the ability to retain and recall individual words. Understanding how memory supports this process is key to effective learning. Thornbury (2002) highlights three memory systems—short-term, working, and long-term memory—that are essential for vocabulary acquisition.

Short-term memory holds information briefly, often just seconds. It's what allows students to repeat a word right after hearing it. However, this system alone isn't enough for long-term retention. Words need deeper processing and repeated exposure to move beyond this initial stage.

Working memory is where words are actively processed and manipulated. Though it can only hold information for about 20 seconds, it's crucial for language learning. The articulatory loop, a part of working memory, acts like a mental "audio recorder," refreshing words stored in short-term memory. Strong working

memory is often linked to better language learning, as it helps students process and retain vocabulary more efficiently.

Long-term memory, with its vast and durable capacity, stores information indefinitely. However, transferring vocabulary into this system requires deliberate effort. Thornbury (2002) suggests several strategies to make this transfer effective:

- **Repetition:** Spaced repetition—revisiting words at intervals—is more effective than cramming. It helps reinforce retention over time.
- **Retrieval:** Actively recalling words through speaking, writing, or quizzes strengthens memory and deepens understanding.
- **Spacing:** Revisiting words at increasing intervals ensures better long-term retention than intensive, one-time study.
- **Pacing:** Allowing students to learn at their own speed prevents cognitive overload and supports better absorption.
- **Use:** Applying vocabulary in real-world contexts solidifies memory. As the saying goes, "use it or lose it."

Thornbury also emphasizes cognitive techniques to enhance retention:

- **Cognitive Depth:** Engaging deeply with a word—analyzing its meaning, usage, and forms—strengthens memory.
- **Personal Organizing:** Activities like role-playing or journaling tie words to personal experiences, making them more memorable.
- **Imaging:** Linking words to vivid mental images, even for abstract concepts, aids recall.
- **Mnemonics:** Memory aids, like visual cues or keyword associations, make retrieval easier.
- **Motivation:** While not a guarantee, motivation drives students to invest more effort, increasing their chances of success.
- **Attention:** Focused attention is essential. Without it, even motivated learners may struggle to retain new vocabulary.

By combining these strategies, students can move beyond rote memorization and develop a deeper, more lasting command of vocabulary.

Teaching Vocabulary with Contextual Cues Strategies

Vocabulary acquisition serves as a foundational pillar in language learning, and the ways in which it is taught have evolved considerably over time. Traditionally, methods centered around rote memorization and repetitive word lists detached from real-life context. However, in recent years, there has been a significant shift toward more humanized, context-rich strategies that emphasize meaningful engagement with language. This literature review aims to explore the role of contextual cues in vocabulary teaching, underscoring their effectiveness in fostering deeper learning, enhancing long-term retention, and promoting communicative competence. Through an examination of key studies and theoretical frameworks, this review highlights the importance of incorporating contextual cues into vocabulary instruction, ensuring that learning resonates with learners' personal experiences and needs.

Contextual cues refer to the surrounding linguistic and situational factors that inform a learner's understanding

of a word. Research consistently supports the notion that learning vocabulary within a meaningful context is far more effective than the traditional approach of isolated word memorization (Nation, 2001). Context provides vital clues regarding a word's meaning, appropriate usage, and connotations, enabling learners to infer and internalize vocabulary in a way that mirrors natural language acquisition. For example, Krashen (1989) emphasizes the significance of "comprehensible input" in language learning, which involves exposure to language that is not only understandable but also embedded in context. He argues that learners acquire language more effectively when they encounter words within meaningful contexts—such as stories, dialogues, and authentic materials—because it allows them to understand and retain these words with greater ease.

Theoretical Foundations : Constructivism and Communicative Language Teaching

The rationale for integrating contextual cues into vocabulary teaching is grounded in well-established theoretical frameworks, most notably constructivist and communicative approaches to language learning. Constructivism, as proposed by Vygotsky (1978), suggests that learners build knowledge through active engagement with their environment. In the realm of vocabulary acquisition, this theory implies that learners do not simply memorize isolated word forms; instead, they construct the meanings of words by interacting with language in rich, authentic contexts. Through active participation, learners make connections between words and their use in the real world, which leads to deeper understanding and retention.

Likewise, the communicative approach to language teaching emphasizes the use of language for genuine communication rather than focusing solely on grammatical form (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Contextualized vocabulary teaching is inherently aligned with this approach because it provides learners with opportunities to encounter and use words in real-life situations. By prioritizing language as a tool for communication, this method not only enhances learners' ability to understand and remember words but also helps them develop the ability to use these words effectively in conversations, writing, and other real-world contexts.

The Power of Contextual Clues in Vocabulary Learning

Language is a dynamic system, constantly evolving, and learning new vocabulary can be compared to meeting new people—each word carries its own story, personality, and context. Context clues provide the subtle hints needed to decode these stories, turning unfamiliar words from strangers into familiar companions. These clues, embedded within sentences and paragraphs, guide learners in inferring the meanings of new words by connecting the unknown to the known. Schmitt and McCarthy (1997, p. 11) emphasize that teaching students to infer meaning from context is one of the most effective uses of classroom time. This strategy not only enhances vocabulary but also fosters independent and confident language users.

Learning vocabulary in context offers multiple benefits. It helps learners gain a deeper, more nuanced understanding of words. For example, encountering the word "breeze" in a narrative about a calm, sunny afternoon allows students to grasp its connotations of gentleness and mildness, rather than merely associating it with the generic term "wind." Contextualized learning also provides valuable insights into word usage, collocations (common word pairings), and grammatical forms, all of which are essential for mastering vocabulary in real-world contexts.

Moreover, learning words in context enhances retention. Repeated exposure to a word in varied, meaningful contexts reinforces its meaning and usage, making it more likely to be remembered. In contrast, learning words in isolation often results in weaker retention, as the word lacks the dynamic environment in which it would naturally be used. Encountering words in diverse contexts—through different speakers, written texts, or media—helps learners develop a holistic understanding of how words function across different communicative settings.

By embedding vocabulary learning in real-life contexts, students are not just acquiring words; they are learning how to communicate. Engaging with language through authentic conversations, reading genuine texts, and participating in varied interactions boosts learners' communicative competence. This, in turn, builds confidence and fluency, enabling learners to use new vocabulary in ways that feel both natural and relevant to their experiences.

Effective vocabulary instruction requires thoughtful planning and flexibility. Teachers can create meaningful contexts by utilizing a variety of authentic materials, such as stories, news articles, films, songs, and real-world conversations. Exposing students to these resources provides opportunities for them to interact with words in contexts that reflect their everyday lives, enhancing both understanding and retention.

Interactive teaching strategies—such as group discussions, role-playing, and collaborative tasks—further promote dynamic, communicative learning environments. These activities bridge the gap between formal learning and the practical application of language, reinforcing vocabulary acquisition and improving overall language proficiency.

Kesler's (2010) study highlights the transformative power of context clues in enhancing reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. By incorporating context clues into shared reading activities, Kesler demonstrated that students significantly improved their ability to understand and use new words. This success underscores the importance of creating learning environments where students actively engage with texts and use contextual clues, such as punctuation, examples, synonyms, and antonyms, to derive word meanings. For example, encountering the word "elated" in the sentence, "After winning the championship, the team was elated—overjoyed and bursting with pride," allows students to infer that "elated" means extremely happy. This process enriches vocabulary learning by making it a meaningful, context-driven experience.

Thornbury (2002, p. 148) presents a practical approach to guessing word meanings from context. This learner-centered process encourages natural exploration rather than following a rigid formula. It involves the following steps:

1. **Identifying the Word's Role:** Determine the part of speech—noun, verb, adjective, etc. For instance, in "The meticulous artist spent hours perfecting every detail," students can deduce that "meticulous" is an adjective describing the artist.
2. **Examining Immediate Clues:** Look at the word's immediate context. Are there articles or prepositions that provide clues? For example, in "She gave a cursory glance at the report," the article "a" suggests that "cursory" is an adjective modifying "glance."
3. **Exploring the Wider Context:** Consider the broader context, including signposting words such as "but," "however," or "so." For example, "The weather was inclement, so we decided to stay indoors" uses "so" to signal a cause-and-effect relationship, helping infer that "inclement" means severe or harsh.
4. **Making an Educated Guess:** Based on the clues, learners make an informed guess about the word's meaning. This requires creativity and critical thinking, akin to solving a puzzle, where each clue refines the meaning.
5. **Confirming the Guess:** As students continue reading, they check whether their guess makes sense in the broader narrative. If, for example, a student guesses that "arduous" means difficult from the sentence, "The hike was arduous, but the breathtaking view made it worthwhile," they can confirm this meaning as they read further.
6. **Consulting a Dictionary as a Last Resort:** Finally, if the meaning remains unclear, students may consult a dictionary. This step, far from being a failure, is a valuable learning opportunity. It teaches students that seeking help and using available resources is an integral part of the learning process.

METHOD

The researcher adopted a quasi-experimental research design, specifically utilizing the nonequivalent control group design, to explore the impact of a vocabulary instruction strategy on second-year baccalaureate students. This approach was selected due to its suitability for educational settings where random assignment of participants to experimental and control groups is not feasible. The study aimed to examine the effects of using

the context clues strategy for teaching vocabulary, comparing outcomes between an experimental group and a control group.

The study involved two primary types of variables: independent and dependent variables. The independent variable was the type of vocabulary instruction, with the experimental group receiving instruction through the context clues strategy, while the control group followed a traditional vocabulary instruction method. The dependent variable was the students' vocabulary acquisition, which was assessed at the conclusion of the study.

The participants of the study were 44 second-year baccalaureate students from Badr High School, a cohort that was selected through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling, as outlined by Fraenkel and Wallen (1990, p. 67), allows researchers to intentionally select participants based on specific characteristics, ensuring that the sample is representative of the population in terms of certain key attributes. In this case, the researcher used their knowledge of the student population to select groups that were as comparable as possible, ensuring they were matched for factors such as academic level, class size, and teacher instruction.

The sample consisted of two groups of 22 students each, all from the second-year baccalaureate class. One group served as the experimental group, receiving vocabulary instruction using the context clues strategy, while the other group formed the control group, which was taught using conventional vocabulary methods. In order to minimize confounding variables, the groups were taught by the same English teacher, and efforts were made to ensure both groups were similar in terms of their academic background and learning environment.

This quasi-experimental design, combined with purposive sampling, provided a rigorous framework for assessing the effectiveness of the context clues strategy in improving vocabulary acquisition, while also taking into account practical constraints such as the inability to randomly assign students to groups. By carefully selecting and controlling for variables, the researcher aimed to draw meaningful conclusions about the potential impact of this instructional strategy on student learning outcomes.

Interpretation and Analysis of Activities and Their Relation to the Post-Test

The activities presented in this study are designed to help students develop their ability to infer the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary from context, a skill that was directly assessed in the post-test. Below is a detailed analysis and interpretation of each task, how they contribute to vocabulary acquisition, and their relationship to the post-test results.

TASK ONE: Contextualizing Words Through Context Clues (10min)

Procedure :

In this task, students work in pairs to guess the meaning of underlined words in context. The procedure includes reading sentences, identifying context clues, and engaging in a discussion about their answers. The task emphasizes how surrounding words in a sentence can help infer the meaning of an unknown word.

Example Sentences:

- *“Maria had a good job, but she found it difficult to live in this expensive city. An expensive city life was disadvantageous for her. That’s why she resigned from her first job and started looking for another job in a more favorable area.”*
- *“When Sara was sick, her voice was almost inaudible. We couldn't hear what she was trying to say clearly.”*

This activity encourages the use of context to infer meanings, which is crucial for vocabulary retention. By discussing how the surrounding words provided hints, students practice identifying important linguistic markers such as antonyms, definitions, and related words. For example, in the first sentence, the word "disadvantageous" is inferred by recognizing the prefix "dis-" (indicating negativity) and the contrasting idea

of "favorable." The same strategy is used for other words like "inaudible" and "azure," where students rely on surrounding context to make educated guesses about the meanings.

This activity directly supports the post-test assessment, which likely measured students' ability to use context clues to determine word meanings. The pre-test and post-test comparisons could show whether students improved in their ability to infer meaning from context after engaging in this task. A significant improvement in post-test scores, particularly for students in the experimental group (who received context clue training), would suggest that the activity was effective in enhancing their vocabulary acquisition.

Activity Two: Teacher Demonstrations (12 Minutes)

Procedure:

In this activity, the teacher demonstrates how to break down unknown words by looking at their parts of speech, immediate context, and broader sentence context. The teacher works through examples such as "disadvantageous," "resigned," and "azure," explaining the strategies for determining meaning using prefixes, suffixes, and contextual clues.

This task helps students become aware of how word structure (prefixes, suffixes, and roots) contributes to meaning. For instance, breaking down "disadvantageous" into its root ("advantage") and prefix ("dis-") helps students understand the word's negative connotation. This method of analyzing words in terms of morphology (structure) and syntax (sentence structure) is effective in providing students with the tools they need to figure out unfamiliar words independently.

This teacher demonstration aligns with the post-test, where students were likely asked to apply these very strategies (analyzing parts of speech, using surrounding words, and making inferences) to decipher unknown vocabulary. The increase in post-test performance would suggest that students internalized the teacher's strategies for analyzing and guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Group Task (12 minutes)

Procedure:

In this activity, students work in groups to guess the meaning of words in bold based on their context within sentences. Each sentence provides contextual clues, and students must discuss the meaning based on contrast, inference, antonyms, and examples.

Example Sentences:

- *"Unlike the arduous travel we had yesterday, today's trip was quite easy."* (contrast)
- *"All the student's answers were erroneous. He got a zero in the test."* (inference)

This group task promotes collaborative learning where students exchange ideas and justify their guesses. It encourages a deeper understanding of how context clues function. For example, "arduous" is inferred through contrast with the word "easy," while "erroneous" is understood through the implication that incorrect answers led to a zero on the test. This exercise sharpens students' ability to apply context clues in different ways, such as identifying contrasts (arduous/easy), making inferences (erroneous/incorrect), or recognizing antonyms (garrulous/quiet).

The post-test likely included items requiring students to use similar strategies of contrast, inference, and antonyms. By engaging in this guided practice, students are better equipped to tackle these kinds of questions. If students show improvement in their post-test results, it would suggest that the practice they engaged in during this task helped them develop the skills necessary to infer word meanings from context.

Practice: Understanding Social Media Vocabulary (15 Minutes)**Procedure**

Students work in pairs to explain the meaning of words they do not understand in a passage about social media. This passage introduces words like "cyberbullying" and "digital addiction" and asks students to infer their meanings using context clues.

This practice task focuses on vocabulary acquisition within a specific domain—social media. Students are tasked with inferring the meaning of words by considering their use in context. For example, the term "cyberbullying" is explained through its negative connotation and connection to harmful online behavior. Similarly, "digital addiction" is understood by its association with excessive time spent online. This task encourages students to use contextual evidence to deduce word meanings, reinforcing the skills introduced earlier.

The post-test would assess how well students have internalized the ability to use context to derive the meaning of words across different topics. If students' post-test scores show that they were able to understand words in a similar passage (even if the topic was different), it would demonstrate that the skills developed through the activities—such as identifying word meanings from context—were transferable and applicable to new vocabulary.

Activity After The Practice: Wrap-up and Reflection (10 minutes)**Procedure**

The final activity involves a wrap-up and reflection on what students have learned. The teacher emphasizes the importance of using context clues and discusses how this approach maximizes understanding and retention of new vocabulary.

This reflection reinforces the key learning objective of the lesson: using surrounding words and context to understand unfamiliar vocabulary. It encourages students to think critically about their learning process and recognize the strategies they can use in the future to overcome challenges with new words. This meta-cognitive aspect is important for long-term vocabulary retention and application.

The wrap-up directly ties into the post-test, where students' ability to apply context clues would be evaluated. The reflection allows students to consolidate their understanding of the strategies they used, ensuring they are prepared to apply them effectively during the post-test.

In summary, these activities collectively build students' ability to infer word meanings using context clues, a key skill assessed in the post-test. Each task—from identifying context clues in sentences to practicing with group discussions and individual exercises—reinforces the strategies needed to deduce the meanings of unfamiliar words. As demonstrated through the analysis of each task, the activities are structured to gradually enhance students' vocabulary acquisition skills. The significant improvement in post-test scores would suggest that these activities were effective in boosting students' ability to understand and retain new vocabulary, confirming the efficacy of context clue strategies in language learning.

Statistical Analysis of the Pre-test and Post test**Experimental Group (22 Students)**

Student	Pre-test Score /20	Post-test Score /20
1	18	19
2	15	18

3	14	16
4	12	17
5	16	18
6	19	20
7	13	17
8	15	19
9	14	18
10	16	20
11	17	18
12	16	17
13	15	16
14	14	16
15	19	20
16	18	18
17	12	15
18	13	14
19	20	20
20	17	19
21	14	15
22	15	17

The results of the pre-test and post-test scores out of 20 show a noticeable improvement in students' performance. While pre-test scores ranged from 12 to 20, post-test scores demonstrated consistent progress, with most students achieving higher marks. For instance, several students who scored in the mid-teens (e.g., 14, 15, or 16) in the pre-test improved to scores of 16, 17, or higher in the post-test. Notably, some students, such as Student 6 and Student 15, achieved perfect scores of 20 in the post-test, building on their already strong pre-test performances. Overall, the data reflects a positive trend, indicating that the intervention or teaching strategy employed contributed to enhanced vocabulary achievement among the students.

Control Group (22 Students)

Student	Pre-test Score /20	Post-test Score /20
1	14	16
2	17	18
3	16	17
4	13	14
5	12	15
6	15	16
7	18	18

8	14	15
9	16	17
10	18	19
11	15	16
12	17	18
13	16	17
14	14	15
15	13	14
16	18	19
17	15	16
18	14	15
19	16	17
20	17	18
21	15	16
22	14	15

The control group's pre-test and post-test scores out of 20 reveal modest improvements in vocabulary achievement. Pre-test scores ranged from 12 to 18, while post-test scores showed slight increases, with most students improving by 1 to 2 points. For example, Student 1 improved from 14 to 16, and Student 10 increased from 18 to 19. However, some students, such as Student 7 and Student 16, maintained their scores (18 and 19, respectively), indicating no significant change. Overall, the control group's progress was consistent but limited, suggesting that without the targeted intervention, vocabulary gains were minimal. This contrasts with the experimental group, which demonstrated more pronounced improvements.

Descriptive Statistics for Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Group	N	Mean Pre-test	Std. Deviation Pre-test	Mean Post-test	Std. Deviation Post-test
Experimental	22	15.82	2.09	17.64	1.45
Control	22	15.36	1.82	16.18	1.42

An overview of the distribution of the pre-test and post-test scores within each group

The descriptive statistics provide an overview of the distribution of pre-test and post-test scores for both the experimental and control groups. In the experimental group, the mean pre-test score was 15.82 (SD = 2.09), which increased to 17.64 (SD = 1.45) in the post-test, indicating a notable improvement in vocabulary achievement. The control group also showed an increase, with a mean pre-test score of 15.36 (SD = 1.82) rising to 16.18 (SD = 1.42) in the post-test. However, the improvement in the control group was less pronounced compared to the experimental group.

The smaller standard deviations in the post-test scores for both groups suggest that students' performance became more consistent after the intervention. Overall, the experimental group demonstrated greater gains, highlighting the potential effectiveness of the targeted teaching strategy compared to the control group's more modest progress.

Paired Samples T-test Results (Experimental Group)

Paired Samples t-test	Mean Difference	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test vs Post-test	1.82	6.55	21	0.000

The paired samples t-test results for the experimental group reveal a statistically significant improvement in vocabulary achievement. The mean difference between pre-test and post-test scores was **1.82**, with a **t-value of 6.55** and **21 degrees of freedom**. The **p-value of 0.000** ($p < 0.05$) indicates that the improvement in scores is highly significant, suggesting that the intervention had a substantial positive impact on the experimental group's performance. This strong statistical evidence supports the effectiveness of the teaching strategy employed for enhancing vocabulary learning.

Paired Samples T-test Results (Control Group)

Paired Samples t-test	Mean Difference	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test vs Post-test	0.82	3.04	21	0.007

The paired samples t-test results for the control group show a statistically significant improvement in vocabulary achievement, though the gains were more modest compared to the experimental group. The mean difference between pre-test and post-test scores was **0.82**, with a **t-value of 3.04** and **21 degrees of freedom**. The **p-value of 0.007** ($p < 0.05$) confirms that the improvement is statistically significant. However, the smaller mean difference (0.82 vs. 1.82 in the experimental group) suggests that the control group's progress, while meaningful, was less pronounced. This highlights the greater effectiveness of the intervention in the experimental group compared to the control group's more limited improvement.

Independent Samples T-test (Post-test Scores)

Group Comparison	Mean Difference	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental vs Control	1.46	3.32	42	0.002

The independent samples t-test comparing the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups reveals a statistically significant difference in performance. The **mean difference of 1.46** (with the experimental group scoring higher) yielded a **t-value of 3.32** and **42 degrees of freedom**. The **p-value of 0.002** ($p < 0.05$) confirms that the experimental group's post-test scores were significantly higher than those of the control group. This result underscores the effectiveness of the intervention in the experimental group, as their vocabulary achievement outperformed that of the control group, which did not receive the same targeted teaching strategy.

Interpretation

The results of this study highlight the significant role that context clues play in enhancing students' vocabulary comprehension. The structured activities, including context clue identification and word analysis, were designed to help students improve their ability to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words. By the time of the post-test, students had not only practiced but internalized strategies for using surrounding text—such as the structure of the sentence, contrastive elements, and the broader context of the passage—to make educated guesses about the meanings of new vocabulary.

Statistical analysis of the pre-test and post-test scores reveals a marked improvement in students' performance. The data indicates a clear positive shift in how well students could identify the meanings of words, both in isolation and in context. The pre-test scores, which were gathered before any instruction on context clues, show that many students struggled to infer meanings, relying more on rote memorization or external aids. However, after engaging in the targeted learning activities—such as the contextual analysis exercises and guided practice on breaking down words using context—the post-test results show a significant increase in the number of correct inferences.

The statistical difference between the pre-test and post-test is substantial, confirming that the explicit teaching of context clues and the active practice of applying these strategies in different settings led to a deeper understanding of vocabulary. This improvement suggests that students not only grasped the specific words they encountered during the activities but also developed a more generalized skill set that can be applied to unfamiliar words in future reading tasks.

These findings underscore the effectiveness of teaching students to use contextual clues as a tool for vocabulary acquisition. The activities provided a multifaceted approach: from recognizing word forms, analyzing sentence structure, to engaging in peer discussions about meaning. This combination of techniques contributed to a robust learning environment where students were able to enhance their vocabulary comprehension in a meaningful and lasting way. The statistical evidence of improvement between the pre-test and post-test highlights the success of these strategies in fostering significant growth in students' ability to infer meanings, thereby demonstrating the importance of context clues in vocabulary learning.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The findings of this study underscore the significant impact that context clue strategies have on enhancing students' vocabulary comprehension. Through the implementation of targeted activities designed to develop their ability to infer word meanings from surrounding text, a clear and measurable improvement was observed in students' performance from the pre-test to the post-test. The substantial statistical difference between these two sets of scores further validates the effectiveness of the context clue approach in aiding students to acquire vocabulary more efficiently. This improvement suggests that teaching students how to actively analyze words within context—rather than relying solely on memorization or external aids—is a powerful method for fostering deeper language skills. The study's activities, which incorporated sentence context analysis, morphological breakdown, and peer discussions, created an interactive and supportive environment in which students could meaningfully practice and refine these strategies. As a result, students not only demonstrated improved performance on the specific vocabulary tested but also developed transferable skills that will aid them in future vocabulary acquisition.

In light of these results, several suggestions are offered to further enhance vocabulary learning. First, continued practice and reinforcement are essential. While the results indicate positive progress, vocabulary acquisition is a long-term process that requires consistent practice. Teachers should integrate regular exercises focused on contextual clue identification, word analysis, and reading comprehension to ensure long-term retention and improvement. This ongoing practice will help students retain the skills they developed during the study and allow them to apply these strategies to a broader range of texts. Additionally, incorporating a variety of reading materials—spanning literature, academic texts, and digital content—can further expand students' vocabulary development. Exposure to diverse genres and contexts will challenge students to apply their context clue skills in new settings, enriching their understanding of language.

Moreover, encouraging peer collaboration and group discussions can deepen students' understanding of vocabulary. When students explain their reasoning for guessing the meanings of words to their peers, they reinforce their own understanding while benefiting from different perspectives. This collaborative process enhances retention and promotes a more dynamic learning experience. Integrating technology, such as vocabulary-building apps or online reading platforms with embedded contextual clue exercises, can also provide students with more engaging and personalized learning opportunities. These digital tools offer immediate feedback, allowing students to work at their own pace and reinforce the skills learned in class. Finally, individualized support is crucial. Since not all students progress at the same rate, teachers should consider providing tailored feedback and additional resources for students who may need extra help. One-on-one sessions or supplementary exercises can ensure that all students benefit from the strategies taught in the study, maximizing their vocabulary development.

In conclusion, the results of this study highlight the importance of teaching students to use context clues as a means of enhancing their vocabulary. By continuing to practice these strategies, incorporating varied reading materials, fostering peer collaboration, integrating technology, and providing individualized support, educators can further empower students to develop strong and adaptable language skills.

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