

Review on Vocabulary Teaching Strategies: Study Case: Effect of Learners' Lexical Recall

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ABSTRACT

This study's goal was to contrast the results of various vocabulary teaching methods, such as using context, dictionary definitions, and synonyms to teach vocabulary, on both transient and persistent vocabulary memory. Three groups of 90 intermediate EFL students were chosen at random and divided into: context, definition, and synonyms (thirty learners in each group). They received instruction in 30 vocabulary words over the course of two sessions. Two post-tests were administered, the first four weeks after the lesson and the second eight weeks later, to gauge student retention of vocabulary words. One-way ANOVA was used to evaluate the results. When compared to the other two approaches, the context method outperformed them in both postponed tests, according to the data. The study's conclusions have pedagogical ramifications for EFL instructors, students, syllabus designers, content creators, and language test creators. The study's findings also offer useful details on the best method for teaching vocabulary that results in longer-lasting retention of L2 terms.

Key Words: Effectiveness, Vocabulary, Learning Strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

A set of single words, compound words, and idioms are considered to be part of a person's vocabulary (which is defined as the smallest unit in a language's meaning system that can be distinguished from other comparable units) (Bamford & Day, 1998). A crucial component of studying a second language is learning vocabulary. The most effective method of vocabulary instruction is still unclear, and most teachers and students have frequently disagreed on how to proceed. The fact that textbooks and curricula don't pay attention to this reinforces this ambiguity. (Macaro et al., 2018).

(Nam, 2010) using The following strategies have been ranked according to how frequently they are used: using a monolingual dictionary, guessing meaning from context, studying new words repeatedly, connecting the word to its synonyms and antonyms, using new words in sentences, using English-language media, taking notes or highlighting, studying the sound of a word, making lists of new words, writing paragraphs using several new words, studying the word with classmates, and asking classmates.

Vocabulary acquisition has always been a challenging undertaking for students, even though some teachers may make it appear simple. To acquire the vocabulary they require, students use a variety of methods, including dictionaries,

flash cards, synonyms, and antonyms. Despite their efforts, individuals still find managing the task of vocabulary learning to be difficult (McCarten, 2007).

The practice of choosing and presenting words (lexis) for learners is called vocabulary teaching. (Asyiah, 2017) considered Researchers at the time had disregarded vocabulary acquisition as a component of the psychology of learning a second language. This was partially caused by a lack of theory and a set of guiding principles. A word's lexical entry needs to have details on both its form and meaning when it is encountered by learners. The term "point of one-to-one match between a word encountered in voice or writing and a word in the mind" is used to describe lexical recognition. (Pan & Xu, 2011). Retrieving Word retention requires a lexical entry from the lexicon, which provides details about a word's structure and meaning. (Zhang et al., 2016).

Factors that have a "lexical influence" have an impact on how simple it is to retrieve a lexicon. Two of these causes could be referred to as the frequency effect (frequent words are recognized more rapidly than uncommon ones) and the degradation effect (words that are clearly presented are recognized more quickly than those that are not) (Elmahdi & Hezam, 2020).

(Mukoroli, 2011) studied benefits and drawbacks of the inferring approach, comparing the retention of inferred and given word meaning in incidental learning, and discovering that meaning explained by synonyms was less effective than meaning selected from a variety of alternatives of multiple choice, concise context, and no control. (Schmitt, 2007) studied the methods that students employ to process unfamiliar L2 language. The results showed the potential for vocabulary learning through reading as well as the distinction between different lexical processing strategies in terms of retention rates.

Numerous investigations into similar works in the field of vocabulary instruction have been conducted. (Nattinger, 2018) studied the elements influencing vocabulary inference in context. The findings demonstrated the words in the light-weight text were simpler to guess (1 unknown word in 25) than high word density text (1 word in 10). Additionally, it was easier to guess verbs than nouns, which in turn made it easier to guess verbs than adverbs and adjectives.

(Jaikrishnan & Ismail, 2021) looked at Using a paired-associate training method, experienced FL learners can learn and forget foreign language knowledge. Investigated were the impacts of word concreteness, cognate status, and word frequency. The results showed that concrete and cognate words were simpler to acquire and less likely to be forgotten than non-cognates and abstract ones. Word frequency had minimal impact on performance, and receptive rather than productive testing showed better memory.

In another study, (Nur & Ahmad, 2017) studied the effects of rote, context, keyword, and context/keyword techniques on vocabulary memory in EFL classes. Results showed that the context/keyword technique produced superior recall to any of the other three methods after one week, indicating a very promising instructional value for this strategy. (Lee & Heinz, 2016) examined the hypothesis that L2 lexical forms often correspond to the already-existing semantic content of their first language translations rather than to entirely new semantic specifications. The findings demonstrated that L2 word pairs that shared the same L1 translations received higher rating scores from nonnative speakers than L2 word pairs that did not, but not from native speakers, who replied more quickly.

(Yusri et al., 2018) studied the effects of inferring, verifying, and remembering on the retention of L2 word meanings and found that the meaning inferred method

took longer regardless of whether their meaning was provided by, or inferred from, context. (Pawlak & Oxford, 2018) the effect of repetition on vocabulary learning on 1, 3, 7, and 10 occasions and discovered that while some learning could occur after ten repeats in context, complete mastery of a term would require more than ten repetitions. Finally, (Shabir, 2017) studied the impact of deliberate translation and contrastive analysis exercises on haphazard word and collocation learning The comparison involved three groups: non-contrastive form-focused education, meaning-focused instruction, and contrastive analysis and translation. The outcomes revealed that the translation and contrastive analysis groups fared much better on all of the tests than the other two groups.

In a similar vein, the current study seeks to determine whether there are any differences between the impact of teaching vocabulary through context, dictionary definitions, and synonyms on the retention of vocabulary words over the long term.

II. METHODOLOGY

For this study, 30 Pre-advance level EFL students from Indonesia were chosen. They were enrolled at the Mediatech Language Institute in Pagaralam city and were taking English classes. Each of the three groups, which each had ten pupils, dealt with synonyms, definitions, and context. They were all male and aged between sixteen and eighteen. Each participant took a placement test, and based on their results, they were all assigned to a pre-advanced class.

These resources were utilized to conduct this study:

- a. A total of 30 vocabulary words were chosen to be taught to the students. The vocabulary words were chosen such that they would be slightly over the students' skill level because they were studying the book *New Interchange 1*, not *New Interchange 2*. They were really motivated to learn them as a result.
- b. Vocabulary handouts: Each group received its own set of materials. The set of synonyms was compiled using words from the *Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms* (Manser, 1990). For definition group, *The Narcis electronic lexicon* and *Both the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* and several dictionary sentences were used, books, newspapers, and other sources were chosen for the context group. The chosen vocabulary words were separated into two groups (of 15 words). In the course of the treatment sessions, three handouts were created and distributed to the pupils. The handouts for each group contained the same vocabulary words, but the teaching methods varied.
- c. Delayed tests: To examine how teaching strategies affected Two postponed exams were given to gauge students' memory of vocabulary words in this study. Two tests with 15 multiple-choice questions each were created as study delayed posttests. After four and eight weeks, respectively, the first and second treatments were given. The participants were not informed that the items will be used to evaluate them. because the goal of the study was to gauge how well participants could recall terminology in a subconscious and organic manner.

First, Three groups made up of context, definition, and synonym students were chosen at random. Each group contained 30 students. The pupils then acquired thirty vocabulary words during these two sessions (15 items in each session). The handouts were unique to each group. The *Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms* was used to

derive synonyms for the group (M Bambang Purwanto, 2020), for group definition The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary was employed, and different sentences from dictionaries, novels, and newspapers were chosen for the context group. These sources employed fresh vocabulary from students' textbooks, and the settings were simple enough for students to understand.

The three groups received vocabulary instruction. For the instruction of each group, two meetings were held. The pupils learned 15 vocabulary words in each lesson. As the first level of word knowledge, the participants in the synonyms group were told to construct the form-meaning link and associate the supplied word with its synonym. Participants in the definition group were informed that the definitions given were drawn from a dictionary. The learners were shown the words and given their definitions.

For each word in the context group, students were given three sentences that served as the term's context. The teacher gave explanations on the sentences after the participants were asked to read them so they could understand what the intended word meant. Every participant received handouts for teaching the target language at each session. The vocabulary pieces were the same for each group, but the meanings were written in their preferred style on the handouts. They were not made aware of the posttests.

The students were given two delayed posttests in order to examine the impact of the chosen techniques of meaning communication on retention of the vocabulary items. Four weeks after the items were taught, the first posttest was given, and four weeks later, the second posttest. 15 items, or 50 percent of the total, were assessed to look for overlaps between each post-test. Because having the same items on both tests may aid students in remembering the meanings of the vocabulary words. Finally, a statistical analysis was performed on the posttest data to confirm the study's hypotheses and provide answers to the research questions.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

a. Investigation of the first delayed post-test

To assess the trustworthiness of the findings, a delayed post-test was carried out. To test the first null hypothesis derived from the initial study question—asking whether there were any differences in the impact of various methods of conveying meaning on vocabulary item retention—two delayed post-tests with 4-week and 8-week delays were administered.

In Table 1, descriptive information on the groups' performance on the first delayed post-test, which was administered after a 4-week delay, is shown. The context group outperformed the definition group and the synonyms group with a mean of 10.23 out of 15. The definition group beat the synonyms group in terms of performance, scoring an average of 8.63 out of 15. The group that dealt with synonyms obtained the lowest marks, with a mean score of 6.67 out of 15.

Table 1. Descriptive Information For The Groups On The First Delayed Post- Test

Groups	N	Mean	Std.Deviation
Synonyms	10	6.67	1.882

Definition	10	8.63	2.220
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Table 2. Testing The Differences Among The Groups On The Delayed Post-Test 1

	Sum of	df	Mean Square	F	Si
Between Groups	191.489	2	95.744	22.697	.0
Within Groups	367.000	87	4.2		
Total	558.489	89			

A one-way ANOVA was performed, as shown in table 2, to evaluate the short-term impact of teaching vocabulary using context, dictionary definitions, and synonyms. The short-term memory of vocabulary words was significantly affected by vocabulary teaching methods [F (2,87) = 22.69, p0.05]. The alternative hypothesis is therefore supported, and The initial null hypothesis, according to which there are no discernible differences between groups, is disproved. Since the mean differences in the delayed post-test 1 were significant, post hoc comparisons were made.

Table 3. SPSS results among the groups (delayed post-test 1)

MULTIPLE						
(I) group	(J) group	Mean	Std.	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
Difference (I-J)			Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Synonyms	Definitions	-1.967*	.530	.001	-3.23	-.70
	Context	-3.567*	.530	.000	-4.83	-2.30
Definitions	Synonyms	1.967*	.530	.001	.70	3.23
	Context	-1.600*	.530	.009	-2.86	-.34
Context	Synonyms	3.567*	.530	.000	2.30	4.83
	Definitions	1.600*	.530	.009	.34	2.86

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The average scores for the definition group (M=8.63, SD=2.22), the synonym group (M=6.67, SD=1.88), and the text group (M=10.23, SD=2.04) were all substantially different from one another, according to post hoc comparisons using the SPSS 20 test. However, the context group outperformed the other group by a wide margin.

b. Investigation of the second delayed post-test

8 weeks after instruction, the second delayed posttest was given (four weeks after the first delayed posttest). The same vocabulary questions from the first delayed posttest were assessed again using 15 multiple-choice questions for each group using the chosen techniques.

The descriptive data for groups based on the outcomes of the second post-test that was given after an 8-week delay is shown in Table 4. The table shows that the context group performed better than the definition group and the synonyms group, with a mean of 8.07 out of 15. This is similar to the delayed post-test 1. The definition group surpassed the synonyms group with a mean score of 6.47 out of 15. The latter group obtained the lowest mean score—5.43—out of a possible 15.

Table 4. Descriptive information for the groups on the second delayed post-test.

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Synonyms	10	5.43	2.012
Definition	10	6.47	2.209
Context	10	8.07	1.837

The one-way ANOVA-calculated mean variations between groups on the delayed post-test are shown in Table 5.. As can be seen, the chosen strategy had a substantial impact on vocabulary item long-term retention [F(2.87)=12.88, p0.05]. Post hoc comparisons were used As a result of the considerable mean differences in the delayed post-test. The SPSS 20 analysis is shown in Table 6.

Table 5. Testing the differences among the groups on the delayed post-test 2

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	105.622	2	52.811	12.881	.000
Within Groups	356.700	87	4.100		
Total	462.322	89			

Table 6. SPSS results among the groups (delayed post-test 2)

		Multiple Comparison				
(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Synonyms	Definitions	-1.033	.523	.124	-2.28	.21
	Context	-2.633*	.523	.000	-3.88	1.39
Definitions	Synonyms	1.033	.523	.124	-.21	2.28
	Context	1.600*	.523	.008	-2.85	.35
Context	Synonyms	2.633*	.523	.000	1.39	3.88
	Definitions	1.600*	.523	.008	.35	2.85

According to the table, post hoc comparisons made with the SPSS 20 test revealed that the context group's In terms of standard deviation, the mean score (M=8.07, SD=1.83) was significantly different from both the definition group's (M=6.47, SD=2.20) and the synonym group's (M=5.43, SD=2.01). The definition group (M=6.47, SD=2.20) and the synonyms group (M=5.43, SD=2.01), however, showed no appreciable difference.

When the context technique was compared to definition and synonyms, delayed post-tests revealed better gains for this method, indicating long-lasting learning. The obtained results showed that When compared to synonyms, the context strategy had a statistically significant effect and dictionary definition methods. This suggests a potential benefit for this strategy in terms of vocabulary retention and can be read as evidence of true and lasting learning.

IV. DISCUSSION

This study evaluated the impact of meaning being conveyed male pre-advance level EFL learners' short- and long-term retention of English vocabulary items through context, dictionary definitions, and synonyms.

If there were if there are The first research question asked whether there are any statistically significant differences in how teaching vocabulary through context, dictionary definitions, and synonyms improves students' short-term memory of vocabulary terms. In light of the analyses covered in the first paragraph, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, according to the study's findings, there was a statistically significant difference between the effects of synonyms, dictionary definitions, and context on vocabulary items' short-term recall. According to the findings, the context group did better than the definition group and the synonyms group. Additionally, the definition group outperformed the synonyms group in terms of results. The group using synonyms received the lowest marks.

The results obtained imply that the learners' ability to build an association network for the meanings was aided by the context that was made available. Learners construct the event or circumstance that has been described in the context by linking words and phrases from one context to other words, phrases, or images. This image helps with memory recall.

In this study, vocabulary knowledge was examined at the recognition level, with multiple-choice questions asking students to select the meaning (rather than recall or produce the target words). A lexical entry for a word must give learners information of two different types when they encounter it: its form and meaning. "The stage at which a one-to-one match is achieved between words encountered in speech or writing and words in the mind," according to the dictionary, is known as lexical recognition. (Leba et al., 2021). (Agustinasari et al., 2022) argues "The majority of existing models presuppose those words are connected in a complicated network that reflects semantic relationships such partial synonymy, antonymy, and hyponym. Lexical terms are also connected by form. This is obviously advantageous for language comprehension." (Muhammad Bambang Purwanto & Hidayad, 2022). Elaboration aids in the creation of a mental representation, which is defined as "a nonverbal construct that shapes a reader's/interpretation listeners of a text and which is constantly updated as new information is processed in comprehension." (Melvina et al., 2020), and It can benefit the student and aid information retention (Lee & Heinz, 2016).

The length of definitions placing a heavier cognitive strain on memory (without much association) may account for the definition method's lower mean, while the influence of the provided word's discreteness may account for the lowest mean for synonyms (in the form of rote rehearsal).

The first study question examined the impact of various teaching strategies on students' ability to recall vocabulary words in the short term. The findings demonstrated the value of training additionally, the context method generally outperforms the other two strategies.

The context group outscored the definition group on the long-term delayed post-test, Compared to the other groups, the synonyms group achieved a mean score of 8.07 out of 15, showing a very promising instructional value for this tactic. The definition group beat the synonyms group in terms of performance, scoring a mean of 6.47 out of 15. The synonym group scored the lowest, with a mean of 5.43 out of 15.

V. CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, teaching vocabulary through context is more effective than the other two methods (i.e. definition and synonym). The context surrounding a

word helps the learner create an image of the situation or condition that has been spoken, which leads to a longer and more potent memory. The results of this study also demonstrated that the definition group outperformed the synonym group in terms of performance. The group that dealt with synonyms received the lowest grades, indicating that learning word lists by heart will not help students retain their meanings for very long.

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