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Éditorial

Bien chers toutes et tous,

Nous revoilà ! Á nos retrouvailles semestrielles !! Avec Germivoire, notre Revue vôtre ! OÙ, de vous à nous et de nous à vous, des échanges sont faits. Dans le cadre scientifique !! OÙ sciences humaines ou d'autres sciences entrent en communion et exposent des résultats de certaines de leurs quêtes générales ou particulières. Résultats qui seront vus et appréciés, espérons-le, par d'autres personnes intéressées par les sujets traités. Puisque Germivoire est une Revue en ligne/online.

Dans le labour de ce cadre ou périmètre cultivable à diverses couches, les récoltes semestrielles présentes se sont révélées variables de saveurs. Et la variété des saveurs donnent un bon goût particulier à ce numéro de Germivoire.

Et ce bon goût particulier vient des récoltes mises ensemble des champs aux parcelles différentes que sont l'anglais, l'histoire, les lettres françaises modernes, les sciences du langage et de la communication et la sociologie. Pour s'en faire une idée selon son intérêt à l'instruction, tout esprit curieux pourrait se référer aux différentes étiquettes de ces récoltes dans notre table des matières.

Á vos plaisirs solaires !!

Brahima Diaby

ASSESSING THE USE OF CONTEXTUAL CLUES TO INFER WORD MEANINGS IN READING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT: This quasi-experimental study assesses the use of contextual clues to infer EFL unknown/unfamiliar word meanings in reading comprehension. In fact, the study is concerned with synonymous clues, antonymous clues, morphological/derivational clues, definitional clues, example clues, L2/French-related clues and thematic/collocational clues. A pre-test, a post-test and a classroom observation protocol are used to collect the data. The teaching materials are reading texts and two types of vocabulary lesson plans combined with formative vocabulary tests. The study involves a sample of 110 1^{ère} A students in Boussé in 'la Région du Plateau Central', Burkina Faso. This sample is chosen using single-stage random sampling technique by considering the alphabetical list of the students. Then, it is divided into experimental (55) and control (55) groups. Qualitative method, quantitative method and mixed-methods approach are used to analyse the data. The Statistical Package for Social Services (SPSS), version 17.0 (2008) is deployed to process the quantitative data. The results indicate that students can successfully learn EFL vocabulary through reading relying on contextual clues. The results also reveal positive impact of the exploitation of contextual clues on word meaning inferencing in reading comprehension.

Key words: Contextual clues, Vocabulary teaching/learning, Word meaning, Reading comprehension, English as foreign language (EFL).

RESUME: Cette étude quasi-expérimentale évalue l'impact de l'exploitation des indices contextuels sur la déduction du sens des mots non-connus/non-familiers de l'anglais comme langue étrangère pendant la lecture. L'étude s'intéresse aux indices de synonymie, indices d'antonymie, indices morphologiques/dérivationnels, indices définitionnels, indices d'exemples, indices liés au français comme langue seconde, et indices thématiques/collocationnels. Un pré-test, un post-test et un protocole d'observation de classe ont servi d'instruments de collecte de données. Des textes de lecture et deux types fiches pédagogiques avec des évaluations formatives sur le vocabulaire ont servi de matériels didactiques. Un échantillon de 110 élèves la classe de 1^{ère} A, à Boussé dans la Région du Plateau Central au Burkina Faso, a été utilisé pour l'étude. Cet échantillon a été obtenu à travers la technique simple à étape unique ou technique du quota en considérant la liste alphabétique des élèves. Ensuite, les 110 élèves ont été repartis en groupes expérimental (55) et de contrôle (55). Les données ont été analysées suivant les méthodes qualitative, quantitative, et l'approche mixte. Le logiciel SPSS (2008), version 17.0, a été déployé pour le traitement des données quantitatives. Les résultats indiquent que les élèves peuvent bien apprendre le vocabulaire de l'anglais comme langue étrangère à travers la lecture en se référant aux indices contextuels. Les résultats révèlent aussi que l'exploitation des indices contextuels a un impact positif sur la déduction du sens des mots non-connus/non-familiers pendant la lecture.

Mots clés: Indices contextuels, enseignement/apprentissage du vocabulaire, sens des mots, lecture, l'anglais comme langue étrangère. 40

INTRODUCTION

This paper is interested in the following research questions: What are the vocabulary learning outcomes when students have to infer EFL word unknown meanings through reading relying on contextual clues? What is the impact of using contextual clues on EFL vocabulary performance in reading? The growing classroom-centred research points out vocabulary as the priority of students learning a foreign language (Y. Senoo and K. Yonemoto, 2014). Research also supports that learners need to know around 98% of the running words in a text for vocabulary not to be a major issue in comprehension (P. Nation, 2015). Students consider insufficient vocabulary knowledge as the most important factor impeding their progress in writing tasks as pointed out by authors such as R. S. Layera (2020), S. Niwa (2019), Susana (2017), V. Mansouri (2015), Z. Shen (2013) and M. Amiryousefi and S. Ketabi (2011). The students' limited vocabulary knowledge becomes a serious problem since they are expected to read texts relating to various domains of language (N. S. A. Ostovar and S. Malekpur, 2015). They face difficulties to use spoken and written language in some situations due to lack of adequate vocabulary or lack of self-esteem (S. Khalui and J. Langroudi, 2016). According to M. Riska *et al.*, (2019), F. Tajik (2018) and M. Alqahtani (2015), vocabulary knowledge constitutes one of the main challenges for language learners. Students' difficulties in both receptive and productive language use stem from inadequate vocabulary knowledge (D. Tan, 2016; L. K. Jahromi and A. Marzban, 2015). They depend too much on the dictionaries (Ahmad *et al.*, 2018) and cannot learn all the vocabulary they need in the classroom (N. S. A. Ostovar and A. Malekpur, 2015). Hence, they need the best strategies to manage their own vocabulary learning (E. J. Pretorius, 2000). The problem of vocabulary should be taken seriously because, according to the results of a preliminary study, with the highest percentage (44.9%), poor vocabulary knowledge is pointed out as the major learning problem among several other problems.

The inexistence of specific solutions to extend lexical knowledge (B. Nematollahi *et al.*, 2017) combined with diverse learners' outlooks and manners (M. B. Yazdi and T. S. Kafipour, 2014) makes it difficult to know the best approach for vocabulary learning (L. K. Jahromi and A. Marzban, 2015). The less familiar, more low-frequency words encountered by the independent readers in literary text used for reading (E. J. Pretorius, 2000) obliges the readers to be skilled at word meaning inferencing (K. Cain *et al.*, 2004). Thus, this study assesses the impact of using contextual clues to infer word meaning in reading. The rationale for being interested in contextual clues is that inference skills support vocabulary development and

helps students move away from dependency on dictionaries (S. N. Ahmad *et al.*, 2018, M. Riska *et al.*, 2019). Besides, there is an increasing willingness to help EFL students become independent or autonomous learners of vocabulary because M. Alqahtani (2015) argues that any learning process that focuses on the teacher is no longer suitable.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Experts of English as a foreign language demonstrated the effect of reading on vocabulary learning. Not only did D. A. Al-Jamal's (2018) study show that medical students seem to use different types of contextual clues at word level and sentence level but also, it revealed that the use of linguistic clues plays a role in reading comprehension. A study by D. Oktan and S. E. Kaymakamoglu (2017) revealed that there is consistency between EFL students' and EFL teachers' perspectives in all the categories of literary texts including vocabulary enrichment. This implies that using literary texts help especially students' vocabulary learning in a beneficial way. Not only did the findings of S. A. Shahrokni's (2009) empirical study demonstrate that a combination of text and images improve incidental vocabulary learning but also, they confirmed that multimodal annotations support components of reading conducive to incidental vocabulary learning.

Not all the studies on vocabulary learning strategies have produced the same results as far as the effect of contextual clues on vocabulary learning is concerned. E. Sinyashina (2020) found that there are no significance differences in the performance of the incidental-intentional and intentional-incidental conditions. By contrast, S. R. M. Ahmadi (2017) discovered a significant difference between the effects of incidental vocabulary learning in extensive reading and intentional vocabulary learning than intensive reading and incidental vocabulary learning. The results also showed a significant difference between the effects of the form-focused task and meaning-focused task. A. Karami and F. A. Bowles (2019) showed that the intentional-incidental condition was effective and that it enabled the vocabulary retention. B. M. Cetinavc (2014) found that unknown words in a rich context were guessed more successfully than unknown words presented in a poor context. Similarly, S. N. Ahmad *et al.* (2018) discovered that the participants with accurate words meaning guessing and accurate selection of the most suitable contextual strategy were successful. The controvert is that other participants were unsuccessful in making correct guesses of word meanings despite similar strategy choice. With regards to these contradicting results, it is difficult to claim with certainty which strategy is the most effective for new vocabulary learning or state that this or

that category of contextual clues are the best facilitators of contextual vocabulary learning during reading.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The theory used in this study is the inferential approach to vocabulary learning including R. Oxford and D. Crookall's (1990) fully contextualizing strategies. This theory indicates that learners can gain self-reliance in the process of vocabulary learning (S. N. Ahmad *et al.*, 2018). It establishes a link between the constructionist theory which accounts for the knowledge-based inferences that are constructed when readers attempt to comprehend a narrative text (A. C. Graesser *et al.*, 1994) and current reading theories which assume that readers construct a coherent mental representation of the meaning of the text (E. J. Pretorius, 2000) and that reading enables vocabulary mastery (K. Suzuki, 2016).

Students' proficiency level, their needs and interest in the target language are important for the use of literary texts to present new vocabularies (A. Fehaima, 2018). A total number of fourteen texts and eight different paragraphs containing unknown/unfamiliar words are used for this quasi-experimental study. The unknown/unfamiliar words are selected on the basis of the Oxford's (2000) levels of vocabulary. The levels of the vocabulary words selected as unknown/unfamiliar words are checked referring to Cambridge English Preliminary for School: Handbook for teachers (2015). Except for the word *position* which is part Level A2, the rest of the words are suitable for learners at B1, B2, and C1 levels. Levels A1 and A2 correspond to beginners, B1 and B2 levels to intermediate, and C1 and C2 level to advanced learners. Lower-sixth formers/SHS2 students (1^{ère} A students) are advanced learners. Therefore, the words they need to know are part of B1, B2, and C1 levels. It is known that graded readers typically go up to the 3000-word level. The mid-frequency readers go from the 4000 to 8000-word levels. The development of mid-frequency reading texts is an attempt to make material at the right level of difficulty available even for learners of high proficiency (P. Nation, 2015).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This quasi-experimental study is conducted in Boussé, the head-quarter of the Kourwéogo province in 'la Région du Plateau Central', Burkina Faso, a West African country. Two secondary schools, located in Boussé a predominantly Mooré-speaking area, are selected purposively and conveniently. The study population is composed of 118 students who were learning English as foreign language and they had already spent at least 6 years in its learning.

These students are composed of 26 non-repeaters and 33 repeaters in the experimental group. The control group is represented by 13 non-repeaters and 46 repeaters. Their ages range between 16 and 24 years old. As students of the Arts option, they speak French (L2/second language) in addition to their first languages. They were also learning German as another foreign language. They were very familiar with reading comprehension and translation activities which were the main tasks to perform during the treatment.

The sample population is restricted and composed of students of lower sixth formers (SHS2 students) doing the Arts option. They are chosen through a simple and single-stage sampling technique also called quota sampling technique by considering their alphabetical list. It is one of the techniques used to determine a sample from the population which has certain criteria as amount desired. With an error margin of $\pm 4\%$, a confidence error of 95%, and a 50/50 chance that the sample contained the characteristics needed, the global sample is estimated at 110 student-participants are, then, divided into experimental group (55) and control group (55).

The materials of the study are 14 vocabulary lesson plans based contextual clues and text reading, 14 classical vocabulary lesson plans, 14 selected reading texts and 7 formative vocabulary tests. The research instruments are a pre-test, and a post-test adapted from Pretorius (2000) and a classroom observation protocol. The pre-test and post-test serve to measure the participants' performance of lexical inferencing. They can generate quantitative data in relationship with each of the seven contextual clues. The pre-test and post-test are graded over 20 by 2 different graders. Then, the sums of the two graders' marks on each copy of the pre-test and post-test are divided into 2 to have a final grade. The rationale for having two graders is to reach objectivity during the grading.

The treatment consisted in placing the experimental group and control group in two different vocabulary learning conditions. The experimental group was trained how to infer the meanings of unknown /unfamiliar words using contextual clues. The vocabulary lesson plans based on contextual clues and text reading were used with this group. During the treatment and even when performing the follow-up activities, the participants were forbidden to consult dictionaries or ask for the meanings of the unknown/unfamiliar words to the teacher or peers. The participants in the control group learnt unfamiliar vocabulary words which⁴⁴ were withdrawn from the texts and taught in isolation through the classical vocabulary lesson plans. The meanings of the words were provided by the teacher as the contents of the lessons. The only difference was that they could ask questions to the teacher, peers or consult dictionaries.

The participants of the control group received the texts at the end of the classes for reading at home. The treatment took place from October 25th 2021 to January 21st 2022 and lasted seven weeks.

The pre-test and post-test data are analysed quantitatively using comparative statistics with special focus on the mean scores of the experimental group and control group. The SPSS (Statistical Package in Social Services) software version 17.0 (2008) is deployed for the data analysis. The units of measurement are the scores obtained by the participants in the experimental group and control group. The data of the classroom observation protocol are analysed using qualitative approach. The results are validated by triangulating the finding from the pre-test and post-test with those from the observation protocol.

4. RESULTS

Table 1: Pre-test and Post-test Results on the Participants' Vocabulary Performance

| Participants' performance | Number | Experimental group | | | | Control group | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|---------------|---------|--------|--------------------|
| | | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Standard Deviation |
| Pre-test | 55 | 00 | 6.00 | 2.2917 | 1.67083 | 00 | 6.50 | 2.3148 | 1.48036 |
| Post-test | 55 | 00 | 7.50 | 3.9815 | 1.76433 | 00 | 6.50 | 2.6250 | 1.82730 |

Source: Field data, 2022

The intergroup analysis the data shows that, in the pre-test, the mean score of the experimental group is 2.2917 and that of the control group is 2.3148. These mean scores are approximately similar and this implies that the participants in both groups had approximately the same level before the treatment. They were predisposed to guessing word meanings relying on contextual clues. In the post-test, the experimental group (MS = 3.9815) outperformed the control group (2.6250). Whereas the mean score of the experimental group significantly increased in the post-test that of the control group remained approximately constant in post-test. These results prove that using contextual clues to derive the meanings of unknown/unfamiliar words positively impacted EFL vocabulary performance.

Table 2: Classroom Observation Results on the Exploitation of Synonymous Clues

| Question items | Lessons | Observer 1 | Observer 2 |
|--|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. How do you estimate the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 1 | Less than 30 students | Less than 30 students |
| | Lesson 2 | Less than 30students | Less than 30 students |

| | | | |
|---|----------|--|---|
| 2. What comments can you make about the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 1 | Unfinished activity due to insufficient time as students wanted to copy the activity before performing it. | Activities were not performed from the easiest to the most difficult one. |
| | Lesson 2 | Students still encountered related to sentence structures which rendered the activity more difficult for them. | Students are unable to understand the message conveyed by the sentences used in the activity. |

Source: Field data, 2021-2022

The observers pointed out failure from the majority of the participants failed in the activity. Their observations on lesson 1 show that they failed because of insufficient time allotted to the activity and the degree of difficulties in the activity itself. The observations on lesson 2 indicate that the participants' failure was due to the level of language used in the activity as the sentences caused difficulties to them. Basing on these observations, it should be recommended that the instructions be clear enough and the activities be organised in hierarchy going from the easiest to the complex ones for an effective training on synonymous clues.

Table 3: Classroom Observation Results on the Exploitation of Antonymous Clues

| Question items | Lessons | Observer 1 | Observer 2 |
|---|----------|---|---|
| 1. How do you estimate the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 3 | More than 30 students | More than 30 students |
| | Lesson 4 | More than 30 students | 30 students |
| 2. What comments can you make about the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 3 | The number of the students who got the good answers in this activity is acceptable because it more than average. It means the antonymous helped the students. | The students who got the good answers paid attention to the whole sentence to get its meaning. |
| | Lesson 4 | The number of the students who got the good answers in this activity is acceptable on the whole meaning that the antonymous clues played a role. | Through the teaching method deployed, most of the students found the good answers but some did not finish before the allotted time. |

Source: Field data, 2022

The observations made on the activity in lessons 3 and 4 slightly differ. However, they indicate that many participants could provide the good answers because the exploitation of antonymous clues helped them derive the word meanings. Basing on these observations, it can be asserted that the participants' good performance is linked to the exploitation of the antonymous clues to the understanding of the word meanings.

Table 4: Classroom Observation Results on the Exploitation of Morphological Clues

| Question items | Lessons | Observer 1 | Observer 2 |
|---|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. How do you estimate the number of students who got the good answers in | Lesson 5 | Less than 30 students | Less than 30 students |

| | | | |
|---|----------|---|--|
| the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 6 | Less than 30 students | Less than 30 students |
| 2. What comments can you make about the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 5 | The morphological or derivational clues did not enable students to discover the word meanings. | A pre-teaching on word formation processes would have helped students understand the lesson. |
| | Lesson 6 | The morphological or derivational clues did not really help students to learn the words meanings. | The students slightly improved but they have problems with word formation processes. |

Source: Field data, 2022

The observers' corroborating remarks on the activity indicate that the majority of the participants failed to get the good answers in the activity because the morphological/derivational clues did not enable the understanding of the word meanings. Basing on the observers' remarks, it can be deduced that the use of morphological/derivational clues in text reading was not efficient for the understanding of unknown/unfamiliar word meanings.

Table 5: Classroom Observations Results on the Exploitation of Definitional Clues

| Question items | Lessons | Observer 1 | Observer 2 |
|---|----------|--|--|
| 1. How do you estimate the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 7 | More than 30 students | Less than 30 students |
| | Lesson 8 | More than 30 students | More than 30 students |
| 2. What comments can you make about the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 7 | The learning of the words in context combined with contextual clues enables learning for a great number of students. | Seventeen students got the average and that is due to the fact the method deployed in the lesson is new to them as it is the first time for them to discover it. |
| | Lesson 8 | The definitional or restatement clues helped a lot of students in the understanding of the word meanings. | Most of the students knew how to apply the method deployed in the lesson to understand the meanings of the selected words and gave good answers. |

Source: Field data, 2022

The observers' remarks on the activity in lesson 7 do not corroborate. For the first observer, more than 30 students got the good answers in this activity. As for the second observer, less than 30 students got the good answers. It is difficult to make objective judgements basing on such observations on the activity in lesson 7. For the same activity (individual and written activity) in lesson 8, the observers' remarks are in perfect agreement. They indicate that the majority of the students got the good answers as a result of the contribution of definitional/paraphrasal/restatement clues to the understanding of the meanings of the words. Considering the participants' performance in lesson 8 as a learning improvement, it can be concluded that using definitional/paraphrasal/restatement clues was helpful for the understanding of the meanings of the unknown/unfamiliar words.

Table 6: Classroom Observations Results on the Exploitation of Examples Clues

| Question items | Lessons | Observer 1 | Observer 2 |
|---|-----------|---|---|
| 1. How do you estimate the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 9 | More than 30 students | 30 students |
| | Lesson 10 | More than 30 students | 30 students |
| 2. What comments can you make about the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 9 | Example/explanation clues contributed to clarify the word meaning in the text for the students. | Half of the students got the good answers. The method helped them learn the word meanings. It was satisfactory because after assessment the least number expected to claim that the students succeeded is the average number of them. |
| | Lesson 10 | Example/explanation clues in the text helped students a lot in deciphering the meanings of the words. | Half of the students got good answer. This corresponds to the average number of them. Then, the method was helpful. |

Source: Field data, 2022

The observations made on the activity in lessons 9 and 10 slightly differ but they denote the participants' success. They also support the fact that the participants' success is an effect the good understanding of the words whose meanings were clarified thanks to the example/explanation clues provided in the texts. These observations demonstrate that the understanding of the word meanings was possible thanks to the example/explanation clues.

Table 7: Classroom Observations Results on the Exploitation of L2/French-related Clues

| Question items | Lessons | Observer 1 | Observer 2 |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. How do you estimate the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 11 | More than 30 students | 30 students |
| | Lesson 12 | More than 30 students | Less than 30 students |

| | | | |
|---|-----------|--|---|
| 2. What comments can you make about the number of students who got the good answers in the activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 11 | Similar French words contributed to the understanding of unfamiliar English words as they were true friends. | Many of the students got the good answers because the teaching method deployed in the lesson helped them. |
| | Lesson 12 | French related clues influence the learning of English vocabulary positively. | Less students got the good answers because the sentences used in this activity were too difficult for the students to understand. |

Source: Field data, 2022

The observations on the activity in lesson 11 slightly differ. However, they point out the participants' success in relationship with the French-related clues. The observations on the activity in lesson 12 are quite different. The first observer estimated that more than 30 participants succeeded because French-related clues positively the learning of the words. For the second observer, less than 30 participants got the good answers because the sentences used in the activity were too difficult for the participants to understand. It is therefore difficult to state, relying on the observations on the activity in lesson 12 that the participants succeeded or failed. Considering the observations on lesson 11 which attest success from the participants, we can conclude that French-related clues can contribute to the learning of vocabulary in context.

Table 8: Classroom Observations Results on the Exploitation of Thematic Clues

| Question items | Lessons | Observation 1 | Observation 2 |
|--|-----------|--|---|
| 1. How do you estimate the number of students who got the good answers in the individual and written activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 13 | Less than 30 students | Less than 30 students |
| | Lesson 14 | Less than 30 students | Less than 30 students |
| 2. What comments can you make about the number of students who got the good answers in the individual and written activity in relationship with the vocabulary teaching method deployed in the lesson? | Lesson 13 | The thematic or collocational clues did not serve for the learning of the unfamiliar words. | The students could not fill in the gaps correctly because they could not understand the sentences used to construct the activity. |
| | Lesson 14 | The thematic or collocational clues did not help the students decipher the meanings of the unfamiliar words. | The students' poor vocabulary knowledge did not allow them to understand the sentence of the activity. |

Source: Field data, 2022

The observers remarked that the participants failed in the activity in lessons 13 and 14. They noted that the participants failed because they could not use thematic/collocational clues to derive the meanings of the words in the text. These observations imply that the participants could not learn the meanings of unknown/unfamiliar words in the texts by resorting to thematic/collocational clues.

5. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In the pre-test and post-test, the intergroup analysis and intragroup analysis of the data after the experiment revealed the following findings. First, the results indicate that the exploitation of contextual clues to infer the meanings of unknown/unfamiliar words in reading has positively impacted the participants' vocabulary performance. This finding supports existing findings by authors such as E. J. Pretorius (2000) that lexical inferencing is one of the good strategies that can help their students increase their vocabulary knowledge. This strategy can also contribute to creating independent learners of vocabulary and decrease students' reliance on teachers and dictionary use as recommended by scholars such as S. N. Ahmad *et al.* (2018) and G. T. Molina *et al.* (2006).

The observations made on lessons 1 and 2 show that the objective of learning vocabulary using synonymous clues to infer the meanings of unknown/unfamiliar words. They corroborate with the results obtained after the analysis of the data in the pre-test and post-test. The pre-test and post-test revealed that synonymous clues are the fourth of the most effective vocabulary learning strategies. These findings are in line with those by D. L. Innaci and D. P. Sam (2017). However, it should be known that the sessions on the exploitation of synonymous clues must be intensified to familiarize the students with them. The instructions need to be clear and the activities need to be organized into a hierarchy going from the easiest to the most difficult for an effective training on synonymous clues. These observations demonstrated that the participants did not feel at ease when the unfamiliar or unknown words were presented to them in isolation.

The observations made on lessons 3 and 4 insinuate that the objective of learning vocabulary using antonymous clues to infer the meanings of unknown/unfamiliar words can be achieved and is compatible with the results obtained after the analysis of the data in the pre-test and post-test. These findings corroborate with those by D. L. Innaci and D. P. Sam (2017). It has been demonstrated that through the different activities that the participants were able to derive the meanings of unknown/unfamiliar words using antonymous clues.

Based on the observation made on activities performed in lessons 5 and 6, it appeared that the exploitation of morphological/derivational clues in text reading was efficient for the understanding of unknown or unfamiliar word meanings. This corroborates with the ⁵⁰ results obtained after the analysis of the data in the pre-test and post-test. In fact, the pre-test and post-test yielded results showing the category of morphological/derivational clues as one of

the effective vocabulary learning strategies in reading. It is also indicated from the observations made on some of the activities that the exploitation of morphological or derivational clues was too difficult to exploit and time-consuming for the understanding of the unknown or unfamiliar word meanings in text reading. Besides, the decomposition of a word does not automatically enable the understanding of its meaning. Basing on the facts, it can be concluded that the objective of teaching vocabulary using morphological clues in reading cannot be achieved.

The observations made on lessons 7 and 8 in relationship with the activities performed by the participants implying that the objective of learning vocabulary in context using definitional/paraphrasal/restatement clues can be achieved are in line with the results obtained after the analysis of the data in the pre-test and post-test. The pre-test and post-test results proved the category of definitional/paraphrasal/restatement clues to one effective vocabulary learning strategies in reading. These observations provided evidence that the participants could learn vocabulary resorting to the definitional or restatement clues in the text corroborate with the results obtained after the analysis of the data in the pre-test and post-test.

The observations made on the different activities conducted in lessons 9 and 10 demonstrated that the objective of learning vocabulary cannot be achieved resorting to example/explanation clues for the understanding of word meanings. These observations are in contradiction with the results yielded by the pre-test and post-test. Exception is made on the pair and written activity which was not conducted in lesson 9 and which probably affected the participants' performance in lesson 10. It should be known that lesson 9 served to discover the use example or explanation clues for the understanding of word meanings and lesson 10 was used to consolidate what was discovered in lesson 9.

The analysis of the observations made on the activities in lessons 11 and 12 showing that the objective of learning EFL vocabulary in context referring to L2/French-related clues can be achieved are not compatible with the results obtained after the analysis of the data in the pre-test and post-test. Not only did the observations indicate that the participants were favourable at resorting to French/L2-related clues to discover the word meanings they also proved that the participants got the good answers in the different activities assigned to them.

The observations on the different activities conducted in lessons 13 and 14 revealing that it difficult to reach the objective of learning EFL vocabulary using thematic/collocational

clues are in contradiction with the results obtained after the analysis of the data in the pre-test and post-test. Some observations indicated that thematic or collocational clues were too difficult to exploit by the participants for the understanding of word meanings in context.

The congruence between the observations made concerning the achievement of the objective of learning vocabulary using synonymous clues to infer the meanings of unknown/unfamiliar words and the results obtained after the analysis of the data in the pre-test and post-test implies that EFL teachers should train and encourage students to use synonymous clues for the understanding of unknown/unfamiliar word meanings in reading. However, it is important to know that the sessions on synonymous clues need to be intensified in order to facilitate their exploitation for the students.

The incompatibility between the observations regarding the achievement of the objective of learning vocabulary using antonymous clues to infer the meanings of unknown/unfamiliar words can be achieved and the results obtained after the analysis of the data in the pre-test and post-test insinuate that EFL teachers should be careful when training and encouraging students to use antonymous clues for the understanding of unknown/unfamiliar word meanings in reading. Even if it is established that the participants reacted positively about using antonymous clues to discover the meanings of unknown/unfamiliar words EFL teachers should draw their students' attention on the limits of this category of contextual clues.

The fact that the observations as far as the achievement of the objective of learning vocabulary relying on morphological/derivational clues in text reading and the results of the data in the pre-test and post-test corroborate suggests that EFL teachers should train and encourage students to use morphological or derivational clues for the understanding of unknown/unfamiliar word meanings in reading. However, the EFL teachers should raise their students' awareness on the fact that the exploitation of morphological/derivational clues is too difficult to exploit and time-consuming for the understanding of the unknown/unfamiliar word meanings in text reading. The teachers should keep in mind that the decomposition of a word permit to identify its basic constituents/components but it does not automatically enable the understanding of the word meaning.

The agreement between the observations regarding the achievement the objective of learning vocabulary in context using definitional/paraphrasal/restatement clues and the results of the pre-test and post-test. Here also, the pre-test and post-test results proved the category of

definitional/paraphrasal/restatement clues to one effective vocabulary learning strategies in reading implies that EFL teachers should train and strongly encourage students to use definitional and restatement clues for the understanding of unknown/unfamiliar word meanings. According to the observations, not only did the participants reacted positively about learning vocabulary in context resorting to definitional, paraphrasal or restatement clues but also, they also succeeded in figuring out the meanings of the unknown or unfamiliar words in the texts referring to definitional or restatement clues.

The contradiction between the observations considering the achievement of the objective of learning vocabulary resorting to example/explanation clues for the understanding of word meanings and the results yielded by the pre-test and post-test entails that EFL teachers should be cautious when training and encouraging students to use example/explanation clues for the understanding of unknown or unfamiliar word meanings. The teachers should acknowledge the limits of example/explanation clues even if, according to the observations, the participants were favourable at exploiting these clues for the learning of vocabulary in context.

The disagreement between the observations regarding the achievement of the objective of learning EFL vocabulary in context referring to L2/French-related clues and the results produced from the pre-test and post-test appeals the EFL teachers being careful when training or encouraging the students to use L2/French-related clues for the understanding of unknown or unfamiliar word meanings. This means they should inform learners about the limits of L2/French-related clues for vocabulary learning even the observations indicated that the participants were favourable at resorting to French/L2-related clues to discover the word meanings.

The incongruence between the observations in relationship with the achievement of the objective of learning EFL vocabulary using thematic/collocational clues and the results obtained from data of the pre-test and post-test signifies that EFL teachers actually need to be careful when training or encouraging the students to use thematic/collocational clues for the understanding of unknown/unfamiliar word meanings. It is revealed, according to the observations, that thematic/collocational clues were too difficult to be exploit by the participants for the understanding of word meanings in context. In addition, thematic/collocational clues did not help the students to decode the meanings of the

unknown/unfamiliar words in the texts. The students also encountered a lot of difficulties to rely on the thematic/collocational clues to learn the meanings of the words in the texts.

CONCLUSION

The results of this quasi-experimental study indicate that students can successfully extend their vocabulary knowledge through reading by resorting to contextual clues and that using contextual clues to infer unknown/unfamiliar word meaning in reading has a positive impact on their vocabulary learning performance. These findings imply that one can reach the objective of teaching vocabulary through reading by resorting to contextual clues. However, these findings need to be supported by future studies which investigate the students' ability of deriving unknown word meaning in listening comprehension since all the activities are based on reading comprehension written tests. Therefore, it is important to do research on learners' lexical inferencing ability in listening using oral tests. This can develop a complete understanding of the impact of using contextual clues on EFL vocabulary learning process. In addition, some sources serving as clues for lexical inferencing are not directly addressed in this study. Research has focused on linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge sources that learners use when performing a reading task. It would be interesting to investigate other knowledge sources such as grammatical knowledge, discourse knowledge, and world knowledge proposed by H. Nassaji (2003) or M. B. Wesche and T. S. Paribakht (2009) in English as a foreign language in order to gain a deeper understanding of EFL lexical inferencing.

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