

Abstract

Many students in the middle years of primary school read at an age appropriate level but experience difficulties in comprehension.

The hypothesis of this study is that **teaching students in years 3 and 4 to use synonyms and read on to search for contextual clues will increase vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension.** The research suggests that there is a clear link between vocabulary knowledge and understanding written text.

In this study the students were taught strategies to help them visualize, read on to look for contextual clues and then cross check for meaning. They were taught to use self talk as a strategy to work out word meanings and practiced saying *"I read on, I listen to what I am reading, I have a picture in my head, and then I think of a word that might make sense, Then I go back and reread to check it makes sense."*

The study compared the results of two groups of five students, an intervention group who was taught the strategy and a control group who wasn't. The findings of the study indicate significant gains in using synonyms as well as improvement in comprehension for the students in the intervention group compared to the control group who showed little improvement .

The results suggest that teaching students to use synonyms and reading on to search for clues using self talk as a prompt is a strategy that is successful and explicit instruction using these strategies will lead to increased vocabulary knowledge and improved reading comprehension.

Introduction

There are many students in the middle years of primary school who decode at an age appropriate level but experience difficulties in making meaning of what they read. These students often lack fluency in their reading and would appear not to use information that is in the surrounding text to help them bring meaning to the text. They can be quite competent at decoding but struggle with the complexity of the texts at this level because of their poor vocabulary knowledge .

Vocabulary development has been recognized as a strong determiner of reading success. Joshi (2005) says that "a well developed meaning vocabulary is a prerequisite for fluent reading, a critical link between decoding and comprehension. Peggy Hickman(2004) sites(Grabe,1991;McLaughlin,1987) that a students level of vocabulary knowledge has been shown to be an important predictor of reading ability. This notion that vocabulary development is important in comprehension is not new and Joshi(2005) talks about research studies by (Madden,Slavin,Karweit,Dolan &Wasik 1993 ; Pinnell, Lyons, Deford, Byrk & Selzer 1994) suggesting that early gains in reading was impeded by poor vocabulary development. Biemiller (2003) also says that there have been a number of studies demonstrating that while you can successfully teach children to decode it doesn't automatically lead to greater reading comprehension. He sites (Becker 1977) as noting that disadvantaged children who were taught to successfully decode words did not reach reading comprehension beyond grade two. He suggested that disadvantaged children's declining reading comprehension in grade three and four was from a lack of vocabulary knowledge.

The focus of school in the early years of schooling has been on the ability to decode and while it is crucial for reading success it is not enough. According to Juel, Biancarosa, Coker & Deffes (2003) after students learn to decode, further development of their reading depends on their word meaning knowledge. They also talk about the importance of having a knowledge of the vocabulary that occurs in books that would occur rarely in oral conversations. Students need to understand “book language” otherwise their comprehension will suffer. This lack of word knowledge can have a direct impact on the development of reading comprehension because of the words that regularly appear in books.

Joshi (2005) suggests that there is a correlation in vocabulary development, between how much you read and how challenging the texts are because of the opportunity to learn new vocabulary. Poor readers tend to read easier materials and fewer books and vocabulary acquisition is at a slower pace whereas students who have “robust vocabularies, read more, comprehend better, and thus read more still improving their vocabularies. This is often referred to as the Matthews effect.. Joshi (2005) cites (Carver 1994) who found students that read moderately challenging books had more opportunities to learn new words.

Children who have difficulties in bringing meaning to what they read could benefit from explicit instruction in vocabulary development. Juel, Biancarosa, Coker & Deffes (2003) cite (Stahl & Fairbanks 1986) say “that teaching vocabulary skillfully can increase students reading comprehension”. Research suggests that vocabulary has been taught by looking at dictionary meanings. Joshi (2005) suggests that “effective instruction using meaning based approaches to learning vocabulary are the most effective, resulting in more lasting memory and better understanding”. He goes on to suggest that cloze activities where students supply missing words by guessing from the context or suggesting synonyms for targeted words all focus on the meaning.

Peggy Hickman (2004) talks about the practices highlighted in literature that support development in the area of vocabulary and comprehension:

1. Activating prior knowledge
2. Teaching word meanings in context as well as challenging vocabulary
3. Engaging students in guided discussions, encouraging high level responses to the vocabulary structure
4. Promote comprehension, text concepts and new vocabulary by drawing on students life

We should be developing strategies which develop their ‘meaning making motors’. The explicit teaching of synonyms using practices that were meaning based would be an integral part of instruction to enhance vocabulary development.

A good reader uses a range of strategies to build meaning of a text. It has been suggested in the research that our teaching in the early years of schooling focuses on decoding strategies and neglects vocabulary development. Good readers need to be able to understand words to comprehend a text and use their knowledge to make meaning of unknown words from the context of the text. This vocabulary knowledge is the critical link between decoding and comprehension. Many students will not have the range of strategies required to become proficient readers and need to be explicitly taught these strategies.

This present study aims to examine the effect of teaching vocabulary knowledge to six year three -four students, by learning to use synonyms and looking for contextual clues. This will assist students to work out the meanings of unknown words in a text. Some of these students have a history of learning difficulties. They are able to decode at an age appropriate level but have difficulty in making meaning of what they have read. They experience difficulties when completing comprehension tasks.

It is predicted that explicitly teaching students in years 3 and 4 to use synonyms and reading on to search for contextual clues ,will increase vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension .

Method

Design

The study uses a case study OXO design in which the improvement in reading comprehension following explicit teaching in using synonyms and looking for contextual clues, when reading fictional and factual texts is monitored for year three and four students. The study compares two groups of students, a control group and an intervention group.

Participants : Ten year three /four students from two different year three/ four classrooms were selected for this study. Students were chosen based on their scores on the Torch test which took place in the classroom of two year three/four classes. Students were required to complete a cloze exercise following the reading of the texts “Lizards love eggs”. Students were chosen according to their TORCH stanine level. Participants had significant difficulty comprehending texts for their reading age and there was some variability in their word decoding abilities and fluency . Group A consisted of five year three/four students, two girls and three boys, who would receive intervention and Group B consisted of five year three/ four students, four boys and one girl who would be in the control group. Group A participants were selected from one grade and Group B were selected from another grade.

Personal information outlining students age, sex and previous intervention are shown in Table 1

Table 1: Student Information

Students	Group Teaching - 0 Control- 1	Grade	SEX Male-M Female - F	Age in YEARS	Age in MONTHS	Earlier Intevention 0-No 1-Yes
A	0	3	M	9yrs.1m	109	0
B	0	4	M	9yrs.5m	113	0
C	0	3	M	8yrs.9m	105	1
D	0	3	F	8yrs.6m	102	1
E	0	3	F	9yrs.0m	108	1
F	1	4	M	9yrs.4m	112	1
G	1	3	M	8yrs.9m	105	0
H	1	3	M	9yrs.4mt	112	0
I	1	4	M	9yrs.4m	112	0
J	1	3	F	8yrs.9m	105	0

MATERIALS

Materials used include the following:

- ❑ **Torch, Tests of Reading Comprehension**(1st Edition ACER 1987) was used to **find out the extent to which readers gain meaning from text.**
- ❑ **Synonyms Task(Munro,2005)**- used to test students ability to bring meaning to words and generate synonyms.
- ❑ **Teaching Sequence**- small group intervention
- ❑ **Texts**- 3 Big books(1 non fiction 2 fiction), 4 sets of guided reading texts to be used for guided reading during the last 4 lessons
- ❑ **Prepared Cloze sentences** taken from the reading of each lesson.
- ❑ **Synonym chart**- to record new words
- ❑ **Flash cards for new words from each session for review in following sessions**
- ❑ **A teacher journal** to keep anecdotal information for each of the 10 lessons

Procedure.

In Pre and Post testing for this study students were assessed , with their whole class using the TORCH (tests of Reading Comprehension, Mossenson.Hill & masters ACER 1987) . The TORCH tests provide measures of reading ability on a common scale from zero to one hundred. The test requires the reader to read a text then retell the passage using different words by filling the gaps with their own words. The text chosen “Lizards love eggs” has a text difficulty suitable for students in years two to five which suited the range of students that were being tested. This same text was administered for the Pre and Post test.

Students selected had a stanine score of 4 or below.

Students were then individually pre and post tested using the Synonym test (Munro 2005).This test measures the students ability to bring meaning to words by generating synonyms.

Students in the Intervention group were withdrawn from their classrooms during their literacy sessions for 45 minutes for four sessions a week. The ten teaching sessions were conducted in a small room off the classroom.

The aim of the project was to work with students on a strategy that moved from a high level of teacher support and scaffolding to students using the strategy individually and independently. Texts that were chosen would move from having a high level of redundancy to a lower level of redundancy.

The strategy being used was for students to be able to identify synonyms for key words in sentences supported by surrounding information in the text. Students would articulate the strategy they will use to help them work out word meanings.

”As I read I am going to listen to what I am reading, make a picture in my head, read on then think of a word that might make sense”. I will reread to check that it makes sense

During each session the students reflected on the new words they had learnt from the previous session and revised the strategy they were working on.

Students were then introduced to the new text by discussing the topic and what prior knowledge they could bring to the text. They were then exposed to new text and possible unknown vocabulary they would come across when reading the text. In the first three sessions the teacher and students participated in shared reading sessions with shared texts. In sessions four to ten students worked with individual guided reading texts

In sessions one to three, after reading the text the teacher focused on the sentences where the targeted words were located. In sessions four to seven, students read the text individually and silently after discussing targeted words . In the final three sessions

students identified words that they didn't understand ,discussed them with the group and generated possible synonyms.

Students were asked to make a mental picture(visualize) of what they think the sentence is about and think of another word(synonym) for the unknown word. They were asked to read on and look for clues to help them work out what the unknown word might mean. Students then shared their synonyms and what clues helped them choose a particular synonym. These synonyms were recorded on flashcards and also added to the chart..

In all sessions students were given the opportunity to apply the strategy using cloze activities. Each session involved a cloze activity that was initially an oral activity where the students orally retold part of the text and used a synonym discussed . Later sessions involved students reading written retells of the text and choosing the appropriate synonym to fill the gap. Students needed to practise reading on and looking for clues then choosing the appropriate synonym. These cloze activities initially had text that were of a high redundancy (less support) moving to text that had text of a low redundancy(less support) as the sessions progressed

At the end of each session the students reflected and verbalised on what they had learnt in that session.

In sessions three, five, seven, nine and ten students participated in written cloze activities where they had to insert (write)a word that made sense in the retell of the story they had read. Their responses were collected and recorded as interval data to ascertain how well they were implementing the strategy.

These Observations of students responses and their reflections were documented in the teaching journal. This data informed how students were applying the strategy and helped inform the teaching focus for the next session

Students were asked to articulate how they worked out word meanings .

Following the three weeks of intervention the Intervention and Control group were assessed again using the same materials and procedures used for pre testing.

RESULTS

The results indicate support for the hypothesis that explicitly teaching students in years 3 and 4 to use synonyms and reading on to search for contextual clues ,will increase vocabulary knowledge and comprehension .

The comprehension and vocabulary knowledge scores for all students in the intervention group indicate significant improvement in these areas. The control group scores indicate some improvement for some students in these areas. These results are shown in Table 2

Table 2: Pre and Post test data

Students	Group Teaching -0 Control- 1	Synonyms Pre	Synonyms Post	TORCH raw PRE	TORCH raw POST	TORCH SCORE PRE	TORCH SCORE POST	TORCH percentile PRE	TORCH percentile POST	Stanine Pre	Stanine Post
Student A	0	4	18	6	12	24	35	26	53	4	5
Student B	0	13	25	6	14	24	39	18	49	3	5
Student C	0	8	14	2	8	13	28	7	37	2	4
Student D	0	4	16	4	15	20	42	16	72	3	6
Student E	0	13	20	4	13	20	37	16	58	3	5
Student F	1	8	11	3	4	17	20	6	9	2	2
Student H	1	8	13	2	5	13	22	7	21	2	3
Student I	1	10	16	8	11	28	34	37	49	4	5
StudentJ	1	8	10	8	4	28	20	26	9	4	2
Student K	1	8	10	4	8	20	28	16	37	3	4

The Pre test scores for reading comprehension indicate that the students in the intervention group scored well below the average. The Torch percentile score indicates how a student performs in relation to a norm group. An average percentile score would lie between 23% and 76%, a below average percentile score would lie between 4% and 22%. The data as displayed in Table 2 shows that one student in the intervention group scored above 26 and the rest were below 20 which indicates that students in the intervention group were below the average. (see Table 1)

The control group had two students who had a percentiles score of 37 and 26 which are in the average range and the other students scores were all well below average . This would suggest that the control cohort of students was on average slightly stronger than the intervention group (see Graph 1)

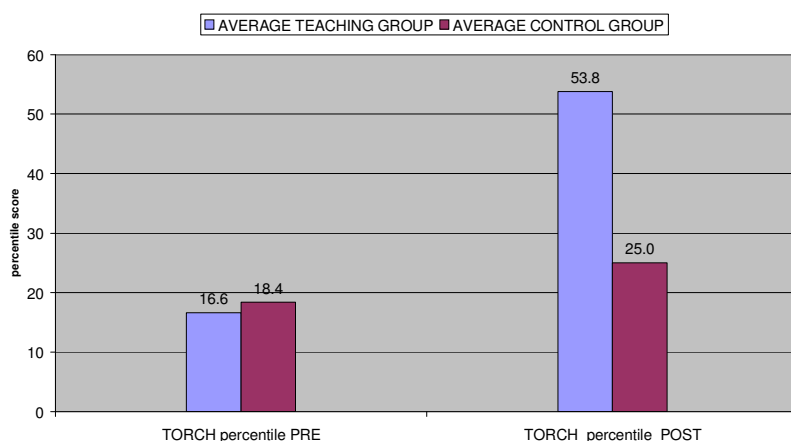
The Synonym Pre test scores also shows students in both groups with similar scores and a couple of students in the intervention group having slightly better vocabulary knowledge than the control group.

In the Post testing it showed that all the students in the Intervention group made gains in comprehension with the average percentile post testing score increasing from 16.8 to 50.5. The students in the control group also made some gains but the increase in their average percentile post testing was not as great . The average percentile in the control group went from 15.8 to 25.8.

It was noticeable that in the TORCH post testing students in the intervention group were using the strategy of reading on to search for information that would help them fill in the gaps, whereas in the Pre test they inserted words that did not make contextual sense. Students in the control group continued to insert words that did not make sense and did not consistently use strategies to check meaning.

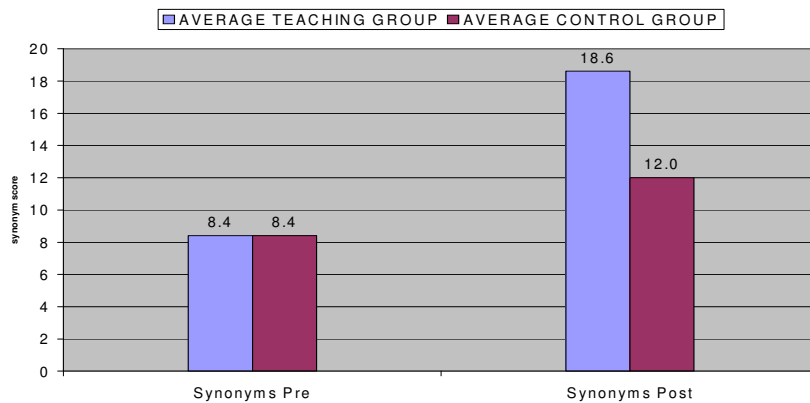
These post testing results showing more improvement in the intervention group than the control group (Graph 1) would suggest that the intervention strategies have contributed to this improvement.

Graph 1: TORCH Average Percentile Scores



During the post testing the scores for the synonym test indicated that all students in the intervention group had all made significant progress in their vocabulary knowledge. Graph 2 shows that the average synonym score for the Intervention group shows an improvement from 8.4 to 18.6 compared to an improvement of 8.4 to 12.0 for the control group. These results suggest that the teaching of synonyms does increase vocabulary knowledge.

Graph 2: Average Synonym Scores



Another aspect of the Pre and post testing data is the standard deviation results for the Synonyms test data and the TORCH Percentiles data. (Table 2)

The synonym test data shows that for the Intervention group the standard deviation decreased slightly and doubled for the Control group. This indicates that the improvements in vocabulary knowledge was significant for all students in the Intervention group compared to the control group where only two students made improvements of 50% .These results indicate that the explicit teaching of synonyms over a short period of time does increase students vocabulary.

The TORCH Percentile data shows that for both the Intervention and Control groups the standard deviations increased significantly for both groups. While the average scores for students in the Intervention group increased significantly the standard deviation also increased which suggests that the intervention strategies had a greater impact on some students reading comprehension than others. The control groups TORCH standard deviation Pre test score was greater than the Intervention group and had increased at the Post test , however the average score did not increase significantly .This control group data indicates that there is not consistent improvement for all students in this cohort. The consistent improvement for students in the Intervention cohort suggest that the intervention strategies over a short time have increased students reading comprehension.

Table 3 Standard Deviation

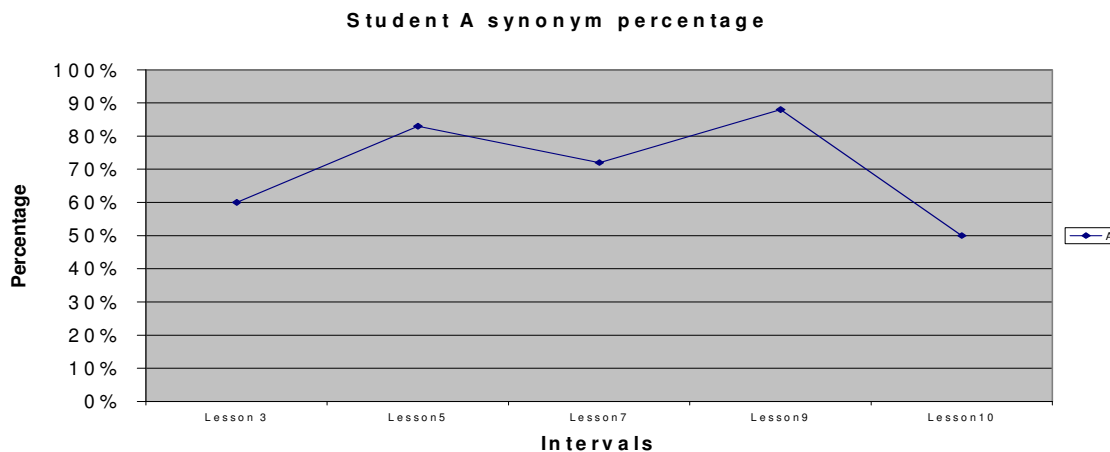
Tests	Synonyms Pre	Synonyms Post	TORCH Percentile Pre	TORCH Percentile Post
Standard deviations Intervention Group	8.4 ± 4.5	18.6 ± 4.2	16.6 ± 6.8	53.8 ± 12.8
Standard deviations Control Group	8.4 ± 0.9	12.0 ± 2.5	18.4 ± 13.2	25.0 ± 17.7

Student A

Student A (graph 3) made significant gains in the area of synonyms and comprehension. In the pretest he had the lowest synonym test score and made the most significant gains out of the intervention group . He was always very enthusiastic about learning new vocabulary. He was able to recall synonyms and use them when retelling but often had to return to the text a second time in order for him to retell part of the text . He sometimes didn't check that his synonyms made sense by checking the contextual clues . In the written cloze activities Student A was observed to be reading on most of the

time but not always rereading to check for meaning. He was able to articulate the strategy we were going to use from session three. He was more confident in the oral group work than in the written activities. His use of synonyms in session ten was only 50% and this suggests that he still needs more support to generate these synonyms and use contextual clues independently.

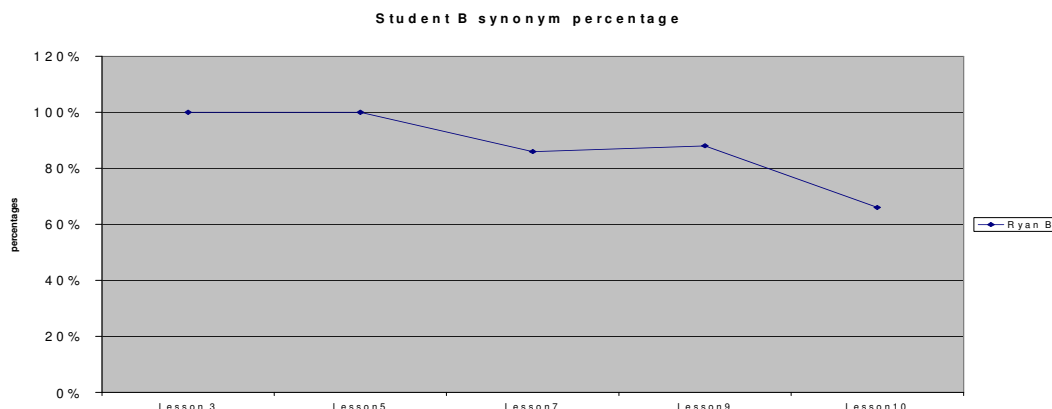
Graph 3: Synonyms used by Student A



Student B

Student B (Graph 4) was able to use synonyms in the pre testing, continued to make progress during the teaching sessions and made the biggest gains in the Post test. He was able to generate a number of synonyms for each was not evident in the pre test. He was absent for the first two sessions but he quickly learnt the new strategy and was able to retell and use the synonyms effectively by the fourth session. He sometimes used synonyms in the early sessions that did not make sense but it was evident in the final sessions and the TORCH post testing that he was reading on and rereading to check that what he read made sense. He was always very quick to generate synonyms and always brought a great deal of experience and knowledge to the oral discussions. The first two written cloze activities showed that his use of synonyms was 100% and as the texts became more difficult (low redundancy) his use of synonyms was not as high. His reading comprehension improved significantly from Pre to Post testing .

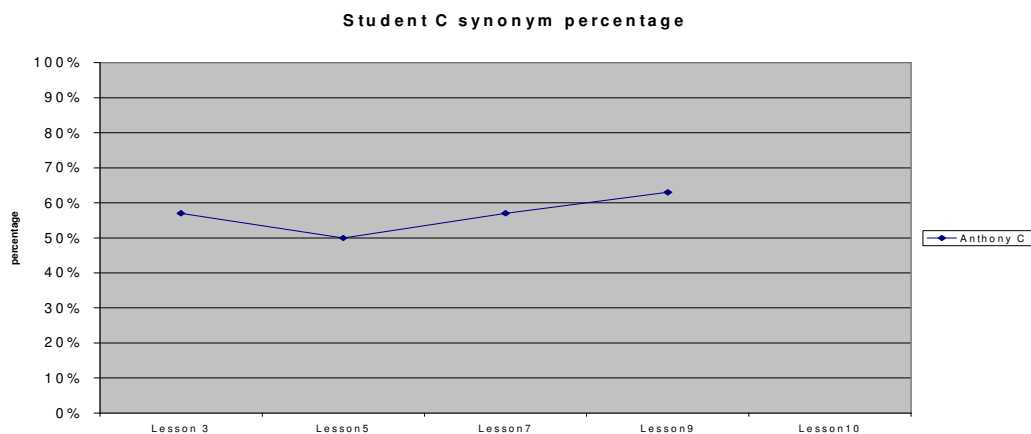
Graph4:Synonyms used by Student B



Student C

Whilst Student C (Graph 4) made improvements in the use of synonyms and comprehension he struggled during the sessions to stay focused and not be distracted. He struggled initially to visualise words and articulate what he saw . He lacked the confidence to say what he was thinking in case he got it wrong. He would often blurt out an answer before thinking what he wanted to say. He responded to working with a partner rather than working individually. When reviewing synonyms from previous sessions he would have difficulty recalling what they meant. He benefited from the games where he had to sort the synonyms from previous sessions into groups . Throughout the sessions he was able to articulate that he needed to have pictures in his head as he read and by session seven he was able to say that he needed to read on and search for clues to help him work out words. He wasn't able to articulate at what point he had found the clue and read enough. Initially when we worked with sentences that had a missing word he would make a guess then as we practised the strategy over consecutive sessions he started to read on , think of the appropriate synonym, reread and check that it made sense. He struggles with his reading fluency which meant he was much slower than the other students to process and respond. His Post test comprehension score would suggest that he is making gains in being able to apply this strategy although observing him during sessions and the post testing, he still requires prompting . His post test synonym score also suggest gains in his ability to generate synonyms and it appears that he is thinking(visualising) the word rather than blurting out a connection he has made .. The impact of this intervention over a short period of time is significant and student D's trends support the prediction of the study .

Graph 5: Student C

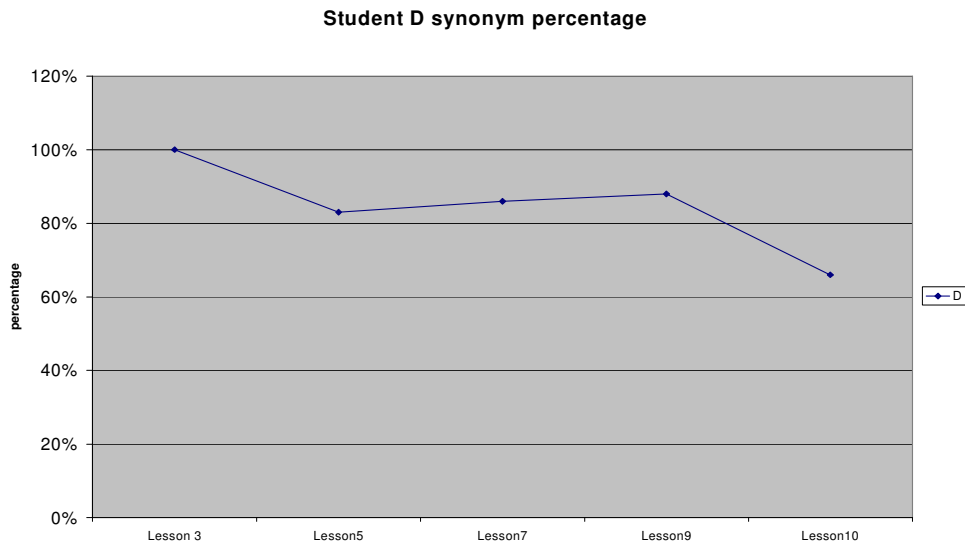


Student D

Student D (Graph5) was a very enthusiastic participant in all sessions. She had a lot of prior knowledge and experiences that she brought to the discussions. She was able to generate synonyms in all sessions although she was very hesitant to retell stories using targeted vocabulary. She often needed some modelling by the other students before she would attempt to retell and use synonyms discussed. She was attempting to use the strategies learnt in other situations as she articulated in session three that she was using the strategy at home and her mum had asked her about it. She made significant improvements in her pre and post testing for synonyms and reading comprehension. She improved 3 stanines in her reading comprehension. Her use of synonyms in the written

cloze activity sessions was between 80% and 100% for sessions three to nine and dropped to 66% in session ten which indicated she is able to generate synonyms using contextual clues and apply the strategy with some support but is not able to do this independently with more challenging text.

Graph 6: Student D

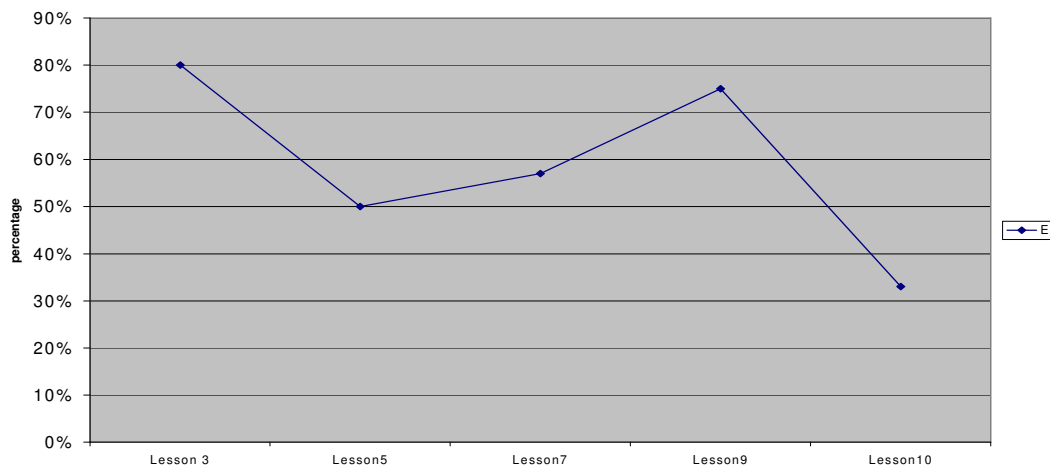


Student E

Student E (Graph 7) was a very enthusiastic member of the group. She was quick to generate synonyms and remembered them from previous sessions . and performed better in sessions three and nine when the texts read were fiction texts. While she participated confidently in the oral and group sessions she became hesitant in the written testing situation. She would say she couldn't do it and would need prompting to continue. She was absent for part of sessions four and six and that meant she missed out on practising the strategy. In session 10 where she was completing the activity independently her generation of synonyms was only 33% because she refused to attempt some synonyms in the the activity.

She did articulate the strategy from session three and was able to implement the strategy more confidently when the text was at an instructional level. The written cloze texts that had low redundancy did not offer her enough contextual clues to generate synonyms and she became frustrated . However the data from the Pre and Post testing for synonyms and reading comprehension indicate that she has improved in both of these areas and the improvement in reading comprehension is significant. She has improved 2 stanines in her reading comprehension which indicates that the intervention strategy has contributed to this improvement.

Student E synonym percentages



Discussion

The aim of this study was to determine if teaching students to use synonyms and read for contextual clues would improve their reading comprehension. To measure change in comprehension students performance, data from pre and post tests was collected from an intervention group and compared to students from a control group. Students in the intervention improved significantly in the use of synonyms and looking for contextual clues and demonstrated an improvement in reading comprehension. The intervention took place over a short period of time and indicated that significant improvement can be achieved with explicit teaching that targets vocabulary development in context.

The results are supported by the research of Juel, Biancarossa, Coke and Deffes(2003) Beimeller(2003), Nichols and Rupley (2004), and Hickman 2004 who suggest that the teaching of vocabulary skills can increase students reading comprehension. It isn't however limited to teaching vocabulary in isolation but very important to teach it in the context in which it is used. Hickman (2004) and Nichols and Rupley(2004) both suggest the importance of relating vocabulary to content areas and making connections with their background knowledge .

Students A,B and E were students that during sessions were able to bring a great deal of knowledge and experience to the discussions and I would suggest that this contributed to the bigger gain that these students made in vocabulary development. During four of the sessions these students had all experienced the topic that they were reading about and were able to make connections with the vocabulary being discussed. Nicholas and Rupley(2004) support this by suggesting that background experiences are what learners rely on to develop, expand and refine concepts of spoken and written words.

Two of the students C and E were not as fluent readers as the other three students and when reading texts independently they found it difficult to gain meaning from what they were reading. Joshi (2005) notes while the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and fluency has not been assessed it is reasonable to assume that vocabulary knowledge facilitates fluency in reading .While an increased vocabulary knowledge may support students fluency these students would benefit from developing develop strategies that enable them to quickly recognize and name words(RAN) , then they can visualize and attach a meaning to the word. In shared sessions where these students were supported with reading the text their ability to generate synonyms was much better . They were also more confident at retelling what had been read and using targeted synonyms.

During teaching sessions there was a lot of oral discussion about the meaning of the words in text and modeling of retelling of the text using synonyms. Students actively participated in these activities and the synonyms used were varied and interesting. The number of synonyms used in the written cloze activities did not always reflect their use of synonyms in the oral activities. An example of this was in session three where the synonyms used were *lofty*, *towering*, *high*, *big* and all the students used *big* in their written activity. It is important that students are given the opportunity to develop vocabulary knowledge in a range of ways. Hickman (2004) talks about the importance of developing oral competencies that are critical to language and comprehension skills by orally responding to texts and encouraging students conversations about text.

Part of the strategy in generating synonyms was to search for contextual clues in the text to help work out what the meaning of words were. While there was a definite improvement in students being able read on and look for those clues students were not confident in articulating at what point in the sentence they had enough information to generate a synonym that made sense. Often reading to the end of the sentence was enough. It was apparent in the in the post test for Reading Comprehension, that students had improved in using this strategy as they were reading on and looking for these contextual clues and then checking the synonym they generated by rereading. The written cloze activities showed that students were using this strategy as well. However for students A,C and E it wasn't used consistently and they often needed prompting. Student B demonstrated in session nine that he was using the strategy independently when he articulated "that doesn't make sense" as he reread one of his Cloze activities and proceeded to generate a new synonym and reread it to check that it now made sense.

This projects purpose of increasing comprehension through explicit teaching of using synonyms and contextual clues would appear to be successful. The ability to generate synonyms was very successful and it was apparent that the students used the visualizing strategy to help generate the synonyms. While the post test scores for the reading comprehension test showed significant improvement , the improvement was mainly in the area of literal comprehension and further focus and development of comprehension strategies may further improve these students reading comprehension.

Revisiting new words through games and follow up discussions helped to reinforce student vocabulary knowledge. There is a need to provide many opportunities to practice apply and discuss their word knowledge in order to retain it, so providing opportunities throughout the day for students to revisit and use these words would be beneficial to their vocabulary development and would be something I would recommend if this strategy was to be developed further.

Many other students would benefit from explicit teaching of strategies such as developing vocabulary knowledge through using synonyms. While this intervention was an intense small group instruction it could easily be incorporated into a classroom situation where all students would benefit from this explicit teaching.

There is a need for these cognitive strategies to be taught to all students so that they have as many strategies as possible to engage with texts in a more meaningful way.

Further investigation could be carried out using these explicit teaching strategies but conducted over a longer period of time to see if the students continued to make further improvements in their comprehension. It could also be included in the classroom as a small group strategy to all students. It would be interesting to investigate how such a strategy would influence the vocabulary development and reading comprehension of all students regardless of their abilities.

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APPENDICES

1. TORCH Test- “Lizards Love Eggs”

2. Synonym Test

3. Activity sessions 1-10

4. Sample written cloze

Appendix 1

NAME.....

YEAR.....

Lizards Love Eggs

It was the first day of the family's camping holiday. Something crawled into the tent and thought it was a snake. 1

Mother grabbed up the baby because she thought the snake might Tony laughed because he knew the 2

animal was a He said it was called 3
a 4

It went into the tent and crawled over Tony's airbed but when Tony touched his sleeping-bag, it ran quickly onto the next one. This one belonged to It reared its head 5

and The baby yelled because he 6
was 7

The lizard then ran in to hide in the 8
Because Mother made a mistake about the lizard, she

felt and she was annoyed at 9
the that Tony was making. 10

Mother called out to Tony to look out for the eggs but it was too late because Tony had already Tony 11

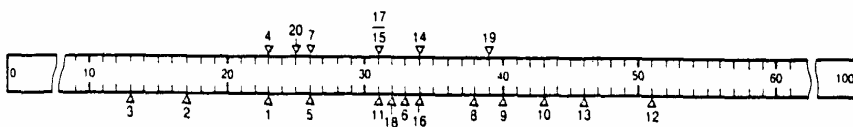
felt because he 12
had the lizard. His feet were goldy-yellow 13

because he had Tony had 14
to the eggs. He wished the lizard 15

was a because they love eggs and 16
would 17

He mopped up the mess and put it in the 18
with the lizard. The lizard's tongue flicked in and out

as it all the broken eggs. So Tony found out 19
that it's not just goannas who like eggs, so do 20



TOTAL

TORCH SCORE

± ERROR

Sample of Synonyms

mixture	Mix, blend, combination, hotch potch, concoction
fog	Cloud, mist
harmless	Safe, innocent
baby	Infant ,child, young one, toddler
shrink	Tiny, small, wither, shrivel
squashed	Stepped on, flattened, trampled
invisible	Unseen, hidden
lofty	High.big,soaring,tall, towering,
coaxed	Persuade, charm,entice, tempt
conferred	Talked ,discussed
subjects	People, friends, <i>topics</i>
loyal	Trusting, caring,
Swell,	wave, water, rolling,surge, <i>great,good</i>
prefer	Like, want, choose
playground	Play area, play equipment
hulled	Bottom,base
foreshore	Sand,shallow water, edge
craze	Fad,fashion
skim	Skip,glide,skate
paddle	Oar,pull,move
adventurous	Exciting, extreme, challenging,
competitors	People, participants, groups, teams
vowed	Promise,pledge, swore
ordeal	Hard, difficult
mutual	Shared, same,alike
evacuate	Escape,get out, leave,move
extreme	Dangerous, tough, challenging
energised	Pumped, revved up, eager,
clues	Evidence,signs,ideas
disappeared	Vanished,gone,left
suspicious	Unusual,different,mysterious
unusual	Different,changed,mysterious
burgulary	Robbery,theft,stealing

ACTIVITY LESSON 1	TASK	TIME
Introduction and clarify terms	Explain to students what they are going to be doing at these sessions. They will be working out meanings of words by using synonyms or surrounding information. Clarify what a synonym is. We are going to make a list of Synonyms that we will build on at each lesson.	5min
Shared Reading of Text	Read the text to students as a shared reading	5min
Reread text	<p>Reread the text and choose 3 sentences with words that have been targeted and identify these words. Ask students:</p> <p>“ How could I work out what the word means ? Teacher models reading on and thinking about the meaning. What picture have I got in my mind(visualisation) <i>“ This is what I do . I read on... I listen to what I am reading,I have a picture in my head and then I think of a word that might make sense..”</i> <i>Then I go back and reread to check that it makes sense.</i></p> <p>Teacher lists possible words for each sentence. Ask for suggestions from students. Add to list Model this for each sentence this for each sentence.</p>	15min
Oral Cloze activity	Using sentence from text, omit one word. This is a high redundancy sentence. Practice with students reading on and looking for clues. Make suggestions about what words might make sense. List words. Revisit text to find out what the actual word was used. Discuss which words listed have the same meanings- put these on our synonym list	10 min
Reflection	Ask the students what they have learnt today. Students articulate how they work out meanings “As I read , I am going to.....”	5 min

ACTIVITY LESSON 2 &3	TASK	TIME
Revise	Have flashcards of words from last session . read and explain what they mean. Revise what students will do to work out meanings “ I will.....”	5min
Book Introduction	Read high redundancy text at instructional level. Make predictions about the text from the title and front cover. Introduce some new words that they might come across in the book. List these on Synonym chart	5min
Text reading	Read the Big Book together	5 min
Building synonyms and meanings	Go back to text and locate targeted words. Firstly teacher revisits the model: reading on and thinking about the meaning. What picture have I got in my mind(visualisation), what word would make sense? Students would practise this as a group. Who came up with the best response. Then students individually identify targeted words and possible synonym while guiding them to practise-“ <i>reading on, listening to what they are reading, having a picture in their head and then thinking of a word that might make sense.,,</i> ” <i>List words on synonym list</i>	10 min
Cloze activity	Session 2 (oral activity) Session 3 (written cloze) Students complete a Cloze activity using a sentence from the text and inserting a word from our synonym list that makes sense. Share these.	5 min
Reflection	Ask the students what they have learnt today. Students articulate how they work out meanings “As I read on I am going to.....”	5 min

ACTIVITY LESSON 4-5	TASK	TIME
Revise	Review flashcards of words from last session . read.Play sorting game- children Revise what students will do to work out meanings “ I will.....	5min
Book Introduction	Small guided reading book with high redundancy. Orientate guided reading book. Discuss what we know about the Topic. Teacher points out that this text does not offer as many obvious clues to help work out word meanings.Teacher models how you may need to read on further or reread to find supportive clues.	5min
Text reading	Teacher models scanning a paragraph identifying new words .Teacher lists these words.Teacher models out loud “ these are the words I will apply the strategy to” I read on... I listen to what I am reading,I have a picture in my head and then I think of a word that might make sense..”	5 min
Building synonyms and meanings	Students have a go at scanning a paragraph and identify new words. List these words . Students say what they will do to work out meanings. Students read paragraph out aloud applying strategy. Each student retells paragraph in own words using synonym for targeted words. As a group refine words to choose best synonyms. Discuss clues in the text that help predict words. Repeat for next paragraph	15 min
Cloze activity	Session 2 (oral activity) Session 3 (written cloze) Students complete a Cloze activity using a sentence from the text and inserting a word from our synonym list that makes sense. Share these.	10 min
Reflection	Ask the students what they have learnt today. Students articulate how they work out meanings “As I read on I am going to.....”	5 min

ACTIVITY LESSON 6&7	TASK	TIME
Revise	Have examples of keywords discussed last week on flashcards. Play sorting game with cards – children group words that mean the same Revise orally what these words mean, using other words that mean the same Revise what you are going to do to help you work out word meanings. I am going to.....	5 mins
Book Introduction	Orientate small guided reading book with lower redundancy – discuss what we already know about topic. Teacher introduces new words that children may come across in book Teacher points out that text does not offer as many obvious clues to help work out word meanings. Teacher models how you may need to read on further , or re read to find supportive clues.	5 mins
Text reading	Teacher models how to scan a paragraph and identify new words. Jot words down. Teacher models ‘These are the words I’ll apply the strategy to....’ This is what I do....I read on..... I ‘listen to what I am reading’ ...I have a picture in my head....Then I think about what word might make sense.... to help me think about meaning	5 mins
Building synonyms and meanings	Students have a go at scanning a paragraph and identifying new words. List these words Students say what they will do to work out meanings. Students read aloud and practise applying strategy. Each student retells paragraph in own words, using synonym for targeted words As a group refine words to choose best synonyms. Discuss clues in text that helped to predict words Repeat for next paragraph.	15 mins
Cloze activity	Written paragraph cloze task based on retell of text. Students use synonyms to make meaning. Cloze task offers less redundancy.	10 mins
Reflection	What have you learnt today? How did you work out word meanings? Children articulate how they worked out word meanings ‘As I read on I am going to....’ How did we decide the best synonyms to use?	5 min

<p>Session 8&9 Review the action Cathy</p>	<p>Have examples of keywords discussed last week on flashcards. Play sorting game with cards – children group words that mean the same Revise orally what these words mean, using other words that mean the same Revise what you are going to do to help you work out word meanings. I am going to.....</p>	<p>5 mins</p>
<p>Book Introduction</p>	<p>Orientate small guided reading book with high redundancy – discuss what we already know about topic. Teacher introduces new words that children may come across in book</p>	<p>5 mins</p>
<p>Text reading</p>	<p>Teacher read first paragraph aloud, and models meaning making strategy using self script. Teacher models oral retell, substituting targeted word with a synonym. Ask students, ‘What will you do in your mind when you get to the targeted word?’ This is what I do....I read on..... I ‘listen to what I am reading’...I have a picture in my head....Then I think about what word might make sense.... to help me think about meaning</p>	<p>5 mins</p>
<p>Building synonyms and meanings</p>	<p>Students read next paragraph silently, apply learnt strategy to work out targeted word. Students take turns to retell orally, substituting targeted word with a synonym. List words on synonym sheet Now as a group decide which synonyms are the best. Repeat action with a few paragraphs</p>	<p>15 mins</p>
<p>Cloze activity</p>	<p>Written paragraph cloze task based on retell of text. Students use synonyms to make meaning. Cloze task offers less redundancy.</p>	<p>10 mins</p>
<p>Reflection</p>	<p>What have you learnt today? How did you work out word meanings? Children articulate how they worked out word meanings ‘As I read on I am going to....’ How did we decide the best synonyms to use?</p>	

<p>Session 10 Review the action Cathy</p>	<p>Have examples of keywords discussed last week on flashcards. Play sorting game with cards – children group words that mean the same Revise orally what these words mean, using other words that mean the same Revise what you are going to do to help you work out word meanings. I am going to.....</p>	<p>5 mins</p>
<p>Book Introduction</p>	<p>Orientate small guided reading book with high redundancy – discuss what we already know about topic. Teacher and student discuss the concepts that students will come across when they read the text</p>	<p>10 mins</p>
<p>Text reading and cloze activity</p>	<p><i>Students are to read the text independently and silently and complete the cloze activity. They articulate the strategy they will use when they come to unknown words</i> <i>This is what I do....I read on..... I 'listen to what I am reading'...I have a picture in my head....Then I think about what word might make sense.... to help me think about meaning</i></p>	<p>15mins</p>
<p>Reflection</p>	<p>What have you learnt today? What have you learnt in the sessions that you will use when you read</p>	<p>10</p>

Written cloze activities

The Kings cat (lesson 3)

The Kings cat climbed a tree and the king ..got.....
the cat to come down.

The queen told the cat to come down from the ..big.....
tree.

The wizard ..read..... his spell loudly and told the ..cat..
to come down.

The kings wise mencame..... together about the
problem and decided to chop down the tree.

Wet n Wild lesson (5)

Parasurfing is when a surfers feet is stuck to a surfboard,
they hold onto a parachute and ..skim.....across the
water.

Sea kayaks are good for seeing lots of animals in the sea
as you can ...go.....quietly without them hearing you.

Snorkelling is a great way to see the....wild.....
life that ..live...under....the water near Perth.

When people want tofind..... prawns to eat
they ...dive.....through the water dragging a net.