Chapter One

1.1 Problem of the study and its Significance

Vocabulary is one of the key elements in learning English as a foreign language , particularly at low level of communicating meanings. Though vocabulary is of highly importance,EFL learners face great difficulties in acquiring it. One of the prominent problems is that those EFL learners do not know how to learn vocabulary in an effective way. The other problem lies in the fact that techniques used in teaching might be inadequate to such an extent that they may be attributed to their ineffectiveness of motivating students to learn vocabulary as they should be .

In learning a foreign language , learners are exposed to the language in written and / or in speech. Such language exposure or input may either be comprehensible or incomprehensible to the learners .Since vocabulary is a sizable component in learning process, learners across proficiency levels will encounter situations where they can understand only part of the written text or a sentence due to the fact that they do not know all the words. Encountering some unknown words might not hinder the overall understanding of the text, but if too many words or the most essential ones are unknown, then comprehension will lag   .

Developing students' strategies for handling unknown words has always been one of the principal challenges of English reading classes. The usual approach to this challenge is to have students read only passages in which every word is known , or else allow them to consult a bilingual dictionary or the teacher for the definition of every new word in the passage .The drawbacks of this approach are obvious. Too much dictionary work can kill all interest in reading and even interfere with

comprehension, because readers become more concerned with individual words and less aware of the context , which gives them meaning .It also results in a very slow and inefficient reading (Ying , 2001: 5).

Guessing vocabulary from context is the most frequent way to discover the meaning of new words .Honeyfield (1977:18) stresses the importance of context by arguing that even with a functional vocabulary of the 3,000 most frequently occurring items in English , learners may not know approximately 20 percent of the items they will encounter in an unsimplified text .

Researchers (Kruse 1979; Nation 1980; Grains and Redman 1986; Oxford and Crookall 1988:18) agree that to learn words in context and not in isolation is an effective vocabulary learning strategies. A word used in different context may have different meanings; thus simply learning the definitions of a word without examples of where and when the word occurs will not help learners to fully understand its meaning. Learning an isolated list of words without reference to the context is merely a memorization exercise which makes it difficult for learners to use the words in spoken and written language. Looking at the context in which the word appears seems to be the best way of learning vocabulary. Good readers also take advantage of their background knowledge in processing the context and in creating expectation about the kind of vocabulary that will occur in the reading .

The researcher hopes that the investigation of this problem may help fill a gap in knowledge concerning the way the Iraqi EFL College students learn vocabulary through context free and context dependent .

1.2 Aims study

The study aims at:

1- assessing the ability of EFL College students in context free and context dependent vocabulary   .

2- comparing the achievement of the students in both Colleges of Education/ Ibn-Rushd and of Arts   .

1.3 Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis will be tested :

There are no statistically significant differences between the achievement of students at the College of Education ,Ibn Rushd and College of Arts.

1.4 Procedures

To fulfill the aims of this study , the following steps are applied :

1- Presenting a survey of available literature in order to provide the theoretical   background concerned with vocabulary, context free and context dependent .

2- Constructing and administrating an achievement test to assess the ability the meaning of words of EFL students in using context clues to infer in context free and context dependent   .

3 - Ensuring the validity and reliability of the test .

4- Using appropriate statistical means adopted for drawing the results of the study.

5 - Discussing the results of the analysis and drawing some conclusions

6- In the light of the results , some recommendations and suggestions for further research will be put forward.

1.5 Limits

The population of the study is limited to EFL second year college students of Education –Ibn Rushd and of Arts for the academic year 2005-2006.

1.6 Value

The study to be undertaken has both theoretical and practical values. Theoretically, the value of the study lies in presenting a detailed analysis of all aspects of vocabulary including context free and context dependent.

Pedagogically , the study is expected to be useful for syllabus designers as it concentrates on a vital aspect of language, i.e. vocabulary.This study may also be of some significance to language examiners who assess learners' mastery of vocabulary in appropriate context.

1.7 Definitions of Basic Terms

The researcher has adopted the following definitions to be used in the study.

1- Assessment :

It refers to a systematic approach to collecting information and making inferences about the ability of a student or the quality or success of a teaching

course on the basis of various sources of evidence (Richard and Schmidt 2003:35).

2- Achievement :

It is the accomplishment or proficiency in a given in a given skill or body of knowledge (Good ,1959:7).

3-Vocabulary :

Richard and Schmidt (2002:580) define it as " a set of lexemes including single words, compound words and idioms".

4- Context :

Good (1959:126) defines context as " the contextual material in which a particular word, phrase or statement is found " .

5- Context –free :

It is defined as " The forms which occur in an independent of context, in which the rules apply regardless of context " (Crystal, 1992:82).

6- Context –dependent :

Context dependent is defined operationally in this study as the meaning of the linguistic item has in context i.e. the meaning of words are determined not only by the literal meaning of the words used but the context in which they occur   .

7- Context clue :

Lehr et al. (2004: 2) defines context clue as " the information from the immediate setting surrounding an item in a text and which provides information that can be used to understand the meaning of an item".

Context clues are hints about the meaning of unknown words that are provided in the words, phrases and sentences that surround the word . It may be lexical or grammatical (Ibid:3).

Chapter Two

2.1. Introductory Note

This chapter attempts to present a theoretical background concerning vocabulary in general and vocabulary in context in particular .The information provided is mainly related to what this particular part of the study handles. The chapter is divided into four main interrelated parts. The first part deals with the term 'vocabulary', its types , vocabulary in language teaching approaches and types of meaning .The second part sheds light on sense relationships .The third part is a discussion of vocabulary into context, word consciousness and context and comprehension . The final part presents an overview of some of previous studies related to the present work .

2.2. General Perspectives

The term 'vocabulary' refers to the "stock of words which are at the disposal of a speaker or writer . It may be used to refer to all words in the whole language , or the words and phrases manipulated in a particular variety of language such as dialect,→ register, or→terminology" (Hartmann and Stock, 1972:250).

In the past , much attention was given to aspects of teaching such as grammar, reading or speaking whereas learning and teaching vocabulary had been given little priority in foreign language studies . Recently researchers have become more interested in vocabulary acquisition and there has been a renewed interest in the nature of vocabulary and its role in learning and teaching .This fact is affirmed by both Decarric (2001:285) and Coady (1997) (cited in Wa-Mbaleka 2002:1-2) who consider vocabulary the 'center' and the

heart to language acquisition and communicative competence. Therefore , a lot of research exploring vocabulary issues have been conducted .

Though vocabulary constitutes a very essential part of foreign language skills ,learning vocabulary is not an easy task .In fact , it is a highly complex process since it requires accurate mastery of form, meaning and usage. It also requires a frequent use of vocabulary in different types of contexts.

Learning and teaching words are important in the four language skills, namely; speaking ,listening ,reading and writing .The development in vocabulary requires constant practice on the part of learners and the continuous assessment on the part of the teachers .

2.2.1 Vocabulary Classification

A distinction between two types of vocabulary is sometimes made: the former refers to lexical items people habitually use whereas the latter refers to words they understand but do not themselves use. In this regard, Al- Hamash and Younis (1985:67) maintains that :

> **to make a word part of active vocabulary, much practice is needed . A word usually has to be introduced into the passive vocabulary before becoming part of the active . One sign of progress in learning the vocabulary of a language is the transference of words from the passive vocabulary into the active .**

Expressed in another way , learning vocabulary thoroughly involves two levels: recognition (passive level) and production(active level).That is, when someone comes across a

word he may recognize it by looking it up in a dictionary and then knowing its meaning or sometimes having the meaning by the teacher. Learning vocabulary cannot be achieved fully without using this word in a context (speech or writing).

A word first exists in the passive vocabulary level, then it would be integrated in the active one, when it is used in an ordinary speech or writing.

Ignoring vocabulary at the first stage of learning may be owing to the specialists' belief that :

Language is not a collection of words, but a system, i.e. set of patterns . Words are comparatively unimportant in the early stages of learning so that teachers and textbook writers are faced with the task of minimizing their use until the learners have mastered the sound system and the grammatical system of the language or the notions or language functions.

(Ibid : 71)

Thus , the teacher's task in this respect is to bring words from the unknown to the recognition level and to give learners a chance to practise those new words helping them to transfer these words from the recognition (passive level)to the production (active level).

2. 2.2 Classification of Al Mutawa and Kailani

Al- Mutawa and Kailani (1989:50) have adopted a rather different five –dimensional classification of vocabulary that the FL teacher has to distinguish. They add that the relationships overlap among them. These groups are :

a - ESP

Since ESP is associated with special interests (professional or technical) ,its vocabulary helps learners to focus on the use of the content words .This type of vocabulary is preferred to be learned in connection with the job or profession involved .As for as the classroom situation concerned , learners are required to learn the forms and to understand the concepts behind words away from a real situation.

b - Productive (or Active)Vocabulary

Active vocabulary is utilized in everyday situations for the performance of communication act , therefore ; active words should be taught through focusing on the pronunciation , correct form , suitable collocation and meaning. Hence ,learners can easily recall them.

C- Passive (or Receptive Vocabulary)

Passive vocabulary is needed for recognition and comprehension (not for production in speaking and writing).Learners are not required to use it in everyday speech but, to recognize it as it occurs in context. Here, the teacher is required to focus on the most useful and common items for the learners to help improve their recognition and understanding.

Active and passive vocabulary are often called 'content words' since they carry lexical meaning in themselves .

d- Content Vocabulary

Content words are related to one's everyday activities and experience. They have lexical (or dictionary) meanings, and their

meanings can be predicated from or /out of context .They are unlimited in number in the sense that they accept any new classes as they are often referred to as 'open-ended 'words .

e- Structure or Function Words

The main function of this group of words which constitutes part of the grammatical system is grammatical function .These types of words are limited in number which belong to a 'closed class' that accepts no new member i .e , no new words is added .Their meaning is often derived from the function they offer .This class covers conjunctions, prepositions, articles ,etc.

2.2.3Types of Vocabulary

According to Al –Hamash and Younis (1985:108-9) ,three different types of vocabulary are distinguished :speaking vocabulary , writing vocabulary , and reading vocabulary .

a- Speaking Vocabulary :

This group of vocabulary constitutes the smallest one, and it refers to those words that one understands and uses without effort in one's speech.

b- Writing Vocabulary :

This group is rather larger than speaking vocabulary as it covers both the items of the speaking vocabulary and those items in the writing that are deemed more formal .

c- Reading Vocabulary :

This group includes both the previous two and other words that are predicated from their contexts, and whose meanings are still not completely precise or clear to the reader to be used with confidence whether in speech or in writing .

A fourth type of vocabulary is proposed by Davis (2002:1) .This kind of vocabulary is referred to as
d-Listening Vocabulary :

This group covers those words that one understands, more or less, when he hears them.

2.2.4 Vocabulary in Language Teaching Approaches

As mentioned earlier ,little attention has been given to the aspect of vocabulary .Perhaps the teaching of vocabulary has been flourished by the communicative approach as it is more concerned with what people do with language than with what they know of it   .

The teaching of vocabulary has suffered much in the Grammar–Translation approach since the stress is on knowing grammatical rules and exceptions . This approach places a great burden on learners, i.e. learners are required to learn by heart grammatical rules and tables of conjugation and to memorize a number of vocabulary items and to translate them with the help of a dictionary .

This approach aims at providing the learners with a wide literary vocabulary which may not be important to him, and which is taken from texts of great authors. In this method , much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of separate words. Thus , the teaching of vocabulary is

insufficient since the choice of words is not made on a scientific basis. Words are used in sentences for the sake of clarifying grammatical rules and are presented out of contexts. The focus here is on the explanation of the words and the structures of the foreign language but not on the meaning and use of words as presented in contexts (Mutawa and Kailani 1989:15).

In the Direct Method , since the new material is presented orally , words and expressions are believed to be best taught through direct associations with actions, dialogues, objects, situations or even pictures. Teachers are advised to use pictures in the classroom environment to help the learners understand the meaning of words through the direct association between the object or concept and the foreign symbol . Native language is not permitted in class, i.e. teachers are not allowed to translate words and expressions in their mother tongues (Freeman 2003:18-22).

Other types of devices are utilized for teaching vocabulary .They include the use of (i) synonyms and antonyms , (ii) gestures and facial expressions , (iii) explicatory contexts[1](iv) objects involved .But this approach shows one defect which presents vocabulary on the basis of demonstrability in class rather than frequency. Many essential and necessary words for learners might be neglected in this respect (Al-Hamash and Younis 1985:70-2) .

Vocabulary has not also been given due consideration by the Structural Approach, since the emphasis lays here on the acquisition of the grammatical rules and exceptions of the language rather than other aspects of language (among them vocabulary).Structuralists believe

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(1) Explicatory context means that a word can be used in more than one sentence to express its meaning.

that if a learner is able to understand the basic patterns of a language , he can construct a great deal of vocabulary later.In other words, the structure of the language is seen more essential than the acquisition of vocabulary .Thus , specialists , particularly , textbook designers have shown undue (or perhaps minor) attention to the aspect of vocabulary (See Al-Hamash and Younis 1985:74)   .

The aspect of vocabulary has been flourished by the development of a new approach to FLT known as the Communicative Approach. The reason behind this flourish is that this approach gives priority to the semantic content of language learning i,e, students learn the grammatical form through meaning .Moreover, grammatical forms are taught as a means of carrying out meaningful communication .The focus here is on vocabulary correctness rather than grammatical complete accuracy. Words are treated as entities that their meaning become clearer when they are used in suitable linguistic structures and in appropriate social contexts (Thirumalai and Mallikarjum, 2002 : 13).

It is important to note here that the teaching and learning of vocabulary should be stressed since vocabulary plays a great role in language learning and the acquisition of an accurate vocabulary is essential for successful second language use , because without an extensive vocabulary a learner will not be able to use the structures and functions required for the process of successful communication. Furthermore , the mastery of adequate English vocabulary will enable learners to communicate effectively in the language , and any ineffective vocabulary teaching and learning of the target language may lead to undesirable results in the acquisition of a FL .

2.2.5 Types of meanings

Generally , four types of meaning can be distinguished : lexical , grammatical , connotational and idiomatic meaning (Muttawa and Kailani 1989:55).

a- Lexical Meaning

This type refers to the sense a speaker attaches to linguistic elements as symbols of actual objects and events .For example , the words girl , hit , ball have lexical (or denotation)meanings found in dictionaries , i.e. their meanings are the things they refer to .Teachers are required , in teaching lexical items , to develop their learners' awareness of the meaning of the items associated with it .

b- Grammatical Meaning

Grammatical meaning refers to the relationships existing between linguistic elements such as words within a sentence. This type of meaning is associated with three sub- types of meaning (1) the meaning of grammatical items ; (2) the meaning of such grammatical ' functions ' as 'subject of ' 'object of ' or 'modifier of ' and (3)the 'meaning' associated with notions such as 'declarative', 'interrogative' or 'imperative ' in the classification of different sentence types (Lyons 1968:435).

It is strikingly important to note here that the total linguistic meaning of any utterance consists of the lexical meanings of separate words in addition to structural (grammatical) meaning (ibid).To make the point clearer, consider the following sentence

- The man killed the dog.

The total meaning of the sentence is determined by the meanings of the words constituting this sentence plus the syntactic relationships between the units of the sentence.

C- Connotational Meaning

Connotation has to do with the communicative value of a word ,i.e. with meanings that are socially acquired . This type of meaning is subjective since it is associated with personal feelings, judgment or experiences .Thus lexical items may possess different senses from one person or community to another. This is why connotative meanings are less stable than lexical meanings.

Connotations refer to the emotional associations (personal or communal) suggested by , or are part of the meaning of a linguistic unit (lexical item). For example , the connotations of the lexical item 'December' might include   'bad weather' , 'dark evening' , 'parties' or 'Christmas' ,etc(Crystal 2003:97-8).

d- Idiomatic Meaning

Idioms, proverbs and clichés have transparent meanings .They constitute special connotation that their meanings can not be predicated from their individual words.

Moreover , the literal meaning of the words does not contribute to the whole meaning of the idiom, proverb or cliché , therefore, they cannot be translated literally into another language without the special meaning being lost. In brief, they constitute an expression whose meaning is non-compositional . Also , their meanings are problematic because they carry cultural content with them (Hartmann and Stork 1972 :106-7).

In this connection, Crystal (2003:225)defines idioms as " a sequence of words which is semantically and often syntactically restricted , so that

they function as a single unit ". Accordingly , idioms (as well as proverbs and clichés) must be taught as individual lexical items and presented in suitable relevant context since they constitute an integral part of language ,i.e. an essential part of the vocabulary system .

There are other types of meaning in addition to the aforementioned four types , such as collocation , stylistic meaning , reflected meaning , etc. (For more information on different types of meaning see Finch 2000:151)

2.3 Sense Relationships

The term 'sense' strictly refers to the meaning that a word or a group of word has for a speaker/writer or a hearer/reader ,e.g, the word <u>bank</u> has different connotations, i.e. either as a financial building or a part of a river (Hartmann and Stork 1972:206).

On the other hand , the term sense relationships are often used to indicate the system of linguistic relationships which a lexical item contracts with other lexical items such as the paradigmatic relationships of synonyms, antonyms and the syntactic relationships of collocation (Crystal 2003:414).

It is worth noting here that the lexemes of a language are arranged and organized according to well-defined linguistic rules and relations and any account of semantic structure should recognize several kinds of sense relations between lexemes. Sense relationships have formed an important part of the study of language since it is concerned with the fundamental aspect of language component ,i.e. meaning .

In this respect , Palmer (1981 : 30) asserts that although the dictionary is usually concerned with relating words to words , most dictionaries present such relation in a most unsystematic way . The

importance of sense relationships lies in the fact that the meaning of the lexical items results from the systematic relationships those items enter with other lexical items in the same language .

However , the two main types of sense relations lexemes exhibit are: syntagmatic relationships between lexemes occur in sequences, and paradigmatic relations when the lexemes substitute for each other . These two notions are attributed to the Swiss linguist de Saussure .

2.3.1 Syntagmatic Relationships

Syntagmatic relations are those that " a unit contracts by virtue of it co-occurrence with similar units " (Palmer 1981:68). In this respect, a sentence is seen as a sequence of linguistic signs, and each sign contributing something to the meaning of the whole sequence .In other words , the horizontal relationship between linguistic elements forming linear sequences in the sentence is known as the syntagmatic relationship. In a red door and a green door, red and green are related to each other while each enters in a syntagmatic relation with door.

One of the best examples of syntagmatic relationships is collocation whereby words are associated with other words in a specific combination. This association implies association of ideas in a specific context.For example, it is often said white paint but not white milk (Ibid.:75-6).

Nevertheless, learners may sometimes face difficulty in predicting the meaning of collocation because associated words may have more specific meanings in particular collocations . Thus , abnormal or an exceptional weather means that there is a heat wave in November, but an exceptional child is not an abnormal child . This shows that

<u>exceptional</u> is used for greater than usual ability and <u>abnormal</u> is related to some kind of defect. More importantly , although collocation is generally "determined by meaning , it is sometimes fairly idiosyncratic and cannot easily be predicted in terms of the meaning of the associated words ". For example, <u>blond</u> can collocate with <u>hair</u> but not with <u>door</u> or <u>dress</u>(Ibid :76-7).

   Like collocations , other types of syntagmatic relationships such as idioms, proverbs and clichés ,to some extent , can be treated in the same way since the association of words constitute a linguistic unit whose meaning can not be easily derived from its components .

2.3.2 Paradigmatic Relationships

   Paradigmatic relationships are "those into which a linguistic unit enters through being contrasted or substitutable , in a particular environment , with other similar units "(Ibid:67) .Paradigmatic relation refers to the vertical relation of substitutability ,for example, in

He comes slowly
                    quickly
                    as fast as he can

a paradigmatic relationships exists between <u>slowly</u> , <u>quickly</u> and <u>as fast as he can</u> .

   Each word in a language can enter in a paradigmatic relationship with a whole set of possible alternatives .This phenomenon of substitution would be so useful in language teaching .However , lexemes can enter in various paradigmatic relationships .The most common ones are synonymy, hyponymy , incompatibility ,antonym , gradation, complementarily and converseness.

2.3.2.1 Synonymy

Synonymy can be defined as the paradigmatic relationships that exist between two or more lexical items that have the same meaning. Accordingly, two items are synonymous if they have the same sense .

Sometimes,synonymy can be identified in terms of interchangeability, that is, two or more lexical are said to be synonymous if they are interchangeable in any given context (Ullman 1957: 108-9).Such type of synonymy is known as context – dependent synonymy .The two items <u>buy</u> and <u>get</u> appear to be synonymous in the context I' ll go to the shop and <u>get </u>some bread (Lyons 1968:452-3).

It has been often argued that there is no total (or complete) synonymy in language , that is , no two words have exactly the same meaning .It is true that <u>kingly</u> and <u>royal </u>are synonymous , but not complete synonymous, since total synonymy is impossible(Ullman 1962:74). There are usually stylistic, regional , emotional ,or other differences to consider and context must be taken into account . " Two lexemes might be synonymous in one sentence but different in another".(Crystal 1987:105).For example , <u>range</u> and <u>selection</u> are synonyms in:

What a nice range/ selection of furnishings.

but not in:

There's the mountain range.

2.3.2.2 Hyponymy

Hyponymy is a fundamental paradigmatic relationship of sense in terms of which the vocabulary is structured .It has been known as one of the constitutive principles in the organization of the vocabulary of a language .It is often used to " refer to the notion of the inclusion of a

more specific term in a more general one". For example , the 'meaning' of <u>scarlet</u> is said to be 'included' in the 'meaning' of <u>red</u> ; the 'meaning' of <u>tulip</u> is said to be 'included' in the 'meaning' of <u>flower</u> (Lyons 1968:453).In this way, it can be said that <u>scarlet</u> can be put under the umbrella <u>red</u> , and the same is true with <u>tulip</u> which can be put under the umbrella <u>flower</u>.

Löbner (2002:85) adds that " an expression A is a hyponym of an expression B, the meaning of B is part of the meaning A and A is a subordinate of B" . In other words , hyponymy constitutes a kind of a relationship between words that results from a relationship between their meanings and leads to a relationship between their denotations. Thus, <u>elephant</u> , <u>dog</u> , etc are subordinates of the superordinate term <u>animal</u> .

2.3.2.3 Incompatibility

In accordance with membership of a class , the term 'incompatibility' is used to refer to the sets of lexemes " that are mutually exclusive members of the same superordinate category" .For example , <u>red</u> , <u>green</u> ,etc. are incompatible lexemes within the category <u>colour</u> .So it would not be possible to say "I am thinking of a single colour , and it is green and red " (Crystal 1988:105).

2.3.2.4 Antonymy

The term 'antonymy' refers to the relationship of oppositeness of meaning, and words that are opposite are antonyms .Like synonymy , true or pure antonyms are rare (Hartmann and Stork 1972:15) .For example <u>hot</u> and <u>hope</u> are antonyms of <u>cold</u> and <u>despair</u> respectively.

However, there are different types of 'oppositeness ' and a distinction between them seems to be important here as they are seen as components of antonymy .They are gradation , complementarity and converseness.

a- gradation

Pairs such as <u>big</u> / <u>small</u> , <u>old</u> / <u>young</u> , <u>wide</u> / <u>narrow</u> are adjectives that " have in common the fact that they may be seen in terms of degree of the quality involved" (Palmer 1981 : 94).Thus ,it can be said that <u>This road is very wide</u> or <u>Road A is wider than road B</u>. Here , the gradation of width is indicated by the adjective 'wide' and 'wider'.

It is strikingly essential to state that all adjectives are gradable[2] in a context but not in another .A small elephant is bigger than a big mouse (Ibid:95).

b- Complementarity

The term 'complementarity 'indicates a category of sense relationship between lexical items that show a type of oppositeness of meaning illustrated by pairs such as <u>single</u> /<u>married</u> , <u>boy</u> / <u>girl</u> , <u>male</u> / <u>female</u>. <u>Single</u> is the complementary of <u>married</u>, and vise versa. The complementary relationship shows that the assertion of one of the items implies the denial of the other ; an entity cann't be both at once. This relationship is also characterized by the lack of any gradability between the items involved (Crystal 2003: 89).That is, these items do not permit degree of contrast.So ,it is not possible to say * <u>very male</u> , or * <u>quite married</u> except in jest (Crystal 1988:105).

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(2) For an adjective to be gradable, it must occur in the comparative form and be preceded by the qualifiers <u>very</u> ,<u>too</u>, <u>so</u> ,etc.

c- Converseness

Converseness refers to a type of oppositeness of meaning illustrated by such pairs as buy /sell , parent/child . etc.<u>Buy</u> is said to be 'the converse of ' <u>sell</u> and vice versa . In such a relationship there is an interdependence of meaning , such that one member of the pair presupposes the other , and in this respect converseness seems to contrast with complementarity, where there is no symmetry of dependence (Crystal 2003: 109). In other words, 'converse' terms are two –way contrasts that are interdependent (Crystal 1987:105).

2.4 Vocabulary in Context

Vocabulary is a core component of language and provides the essential basis for a learner to speak , listen , read and write. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary , learners fail or may be discouraged from making effective use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to the native speakers , using the language in different context , reading and watching television (Richards and Renandya 2002:67).

It is often known that knowing a word requires a large amount of information such as : frequency , register , collocation , morphology , semantics , polysemy and the mother language equivalent .Words evoke the issue of pronunciation and word stress besides emotional connotations in certain contexts .With such a considerable amount of information attached to each lexical item , it can be said how well learners need to know a particular word in relation to their needs and current level(See Taylor,1990 :1-2).But the most effective word-learning strategies , according to Blachowicz and Fisher , 2000: 503 ff)

use context clues, and how to use word- part information (morphological analysis).

2.4.1 Using Dictionaries

Dictionaries help learners look up words and write definition , and thus , they are important aids to word learning. Teachers should instruct learners how to use the definitions they find in a dictionary. Effective dictionary instruction (as observed by Graves ,et al .,2004) (cited in Ibid :13)includes teachers modelling of how most effectively to look up unknown word and thinking aloud about how to select which is the most appropriate definition for a particular context.

In their article "Using Dictionaries and Other Reference Aids :An Example of Classroom Instruction", Armbruster et al .(2001: 38) (cited in Ibid :13) note that as learners read a text , many of them do not know the meaning of the word <u>board</u> ,as in the sentence (The children were waiting to broad the buses) . The teacher demonstrates how to find <u>broad</u> in the classroom dictionary , showing learners that there are four different definitions for the word. He or she reads the definitions one at a time , and the class discusses whether each definition would fit the context of the sentence .The learners easily eliminate the inappropriate definitions of <u>broad,</u> and focus on the definition , " to get on a train , an airplane , a bus, or a ship".

The teacher next makes learners substitute the most likely definition for <u>broad </u>in the original sentence to ascertain that it is "The children were waiting to get on the buses " that makes the best sense.

2.4.2 Using Context Clues

To start with , Fengning (1994:39) states that "using context clues to infer or deduce the meaning of unfamiliar word is an effective way to develop the students' vocabulary and increase their reading

comprehension". Context covers the morphological , syntactic and discourse information classified and described in terms of general features.

By context clues , it is often meant clues to the meaning of words that are in the text and the illustrations that surround them. Context clues can contain definitions , examples , and restatements , as well as charts, pictures, and type features . In a study conducted by Baumann, et al (2003) (cited in Lehr et al 2004 :14), it has been found out that middle school learners who were taught to identify and use specific types of linguistic information (words, phrases , sentences) and non-linguistic information (illustrations , typographic features) were then able to use the information to guess meanings of unfamiliar words in text .

In this respect , Twaddell (1972:264)has aptly stated that "the habit of guessing from context, using both grammatical and pragmatic clues " .

In another experiment conducted by Liu and Nation (1985)(cited in Armellini 1997:1)which focuses on the percentage of unknown words that learners are able to guess, they conclude that learners are expected to guess between 60 and 80 percent of the unknown words in a text, as long as the density (the ratio of unknown to known words in a text) of the unknown words is not too high.

In all these experiments , it has been noticed that context is seen as a tool that can be effectively used to enhance vocabulary learning. These studies have shown that learners succeed in guessing meaning through the use of context .That is , contexts help learners to effectively guess the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary .

Not all contexts are helpful. Sometimes , the context can be of little assistance in guiding learners to the specific meaning of a word. Such

types of contexts are known as "nondirective contexts"Beck et al., 1983 (cited in Lehr et al.2004 :14) .An example of a nondirective context is :

" The police arrived to arrest him for the <u>dastardly</u> deed of bringing donuts and coffee to the homeless people in the park " .

Here , the context is unhelpful because <u>dastardly</u> is used sardonically. Hence, the context offers no clue to help determine its meaning .

To sum up , context clues are words and phrases which help learners reason out the meaning of unfamiliar word. Often , a learner can figure out the meanings of new or unfamiliar vocabulary by paying attention to the surrounding language .

2.4.3 Using Word- Part Clues / Morphology

In addition to context clues are word parts : prefixes , roots and suffixes (word- analysis) .These come into the English language from several other languages (oldest languages such as Greek or Latin).

Learners can identify the meaningful word parts and put them together to arrive at the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Knowledge of morphology or word structure plays a great role in word learning from context because   learners can use such knowledge to examine unfamiliar words and guess their meanings (Carlisle , 2004)(cited in Ibid:14).

It is proposed that more than 60 percent of the new words that learners encounter have easily identifiable morphological structure i.e., they can be broken into parts (Nagy et al :1989)(cited in Ibid 14)Considerable attention has been paid to the teaching roots , prefixes and suffixes for purposes of vocabulary development .

In a study related to the importance of root words in determining the meaning of unfamiliar words, Nagy and Anderson (1984)(cited in Ibid: 15) have found that a large number of words that native language learners encounter in reading are derivatives or inflections of familiar root words. Another study (Anglin 1993)(cited in Ibid:15) suggests that learners acquire about 1,200 root word meanings a year during the elementary school years. Yet a third study (Biemiller and Slonim , 2001)(cited in Ibid :15) affirms that a child acquires at about 600 root word meanings per year from infancy to the end of elementary school. Therefore, they have shown that focusing vocabulary instruction on acquiring root words is an effective way to address the number of words that a learner can learn each year.

As for prefixes , the presence of a prefix (at the beginning of a word) requires that a learner attend to it immediately .Fortunately, a relatively small number of prefixes are used in a large number of words (they are nine prefixes). Since prefixes are spelled consistently and have a clear lexical meaning , prefix instruction and learning (particularly at grade 3 through 5) can be made both fairly straightforward and useful (White et al . 1989)(cited in Ibid).

Researchers show less agreement on the value of teaching suffixes. For example , Stahl (1999)(Ibid:15) asserts that because many suffixes have unclear or unhelpful meanings , they can confuse more than help learners . For example , the suffix –ious meaning 'state' or 'quality' seems to be unhelpful ; it may not help learners learn the meanings or much about words such as ambitious or courageous . Nevertheless , some suffixes , such as –less (meaning without) and – ful (meaning full of) , are more consistent or obvious in meaning and thus are easy for learners to understand.

In accordance with word –parts , learners should be taught word-part instruction which helps them predict the meanings of particular word –parts , as well as being a strategy for when and why to use them. In a project carried out by Baumann et al.(2003)(cited in Ibid:15) , it has been proved that the successful instruction did not require learners to recite the meanings of word parts they encountered .Instead , it enabled them to read texts with words that utilize word parts and gave them opportunities to learn about the origins , derivations and usage of the words .

It has been noted that the three above-mentioned strategies are procedures which teachers should   model and teach obviously to learners to show them how to get about determining the meanings of unknown words .

2.5 Word Consciousness

The term " word consciousness " is defined by Anderson and Nagy (1992)(cited in Lehr et al 2004 :16) as " an awareness of and interest in words , their meanings and their power . It involves knowing that some words and phrases can simultaneously feel good on the tongue and sound good to the ear ". Therefore , learners who are word conscious enjoy words and are eager to learn new words , and their histories (i.e. the origin of words as coming from other foreign languages such as Hindi (e.g., dungaree, pundit , Khaki) , Russian (e.g., tundra , sputnik) , etc.

Word consciousness also involves learning about the ways in which words are exploited figuratively such as idioms (e.g. , get a head of one's self) and learning the pleasures of playing with words such

as jokes , puns, riddles , and so on .This would be one of the ways whereby learners can develop their learning of vocabulary .

In an activity in which rhyming words (such as <u>rude</u> <u>dude</u>) or homophones (such as <u>flower</u> <u>flour</u> or <u>brake</u> <u>break</u>) are employed , learners have been demonstrated to play with words and understand underlying concepts(Johnson,1999).Thus,word consciousness can be considered a fourth strategy, if followed properly and accurately, it can develop learning and teaching vocabulary .

2.6 Context and Comprehension

Most educators and EFL specialists agree that learners should eventually know how to employ linguistic forms they have learned in real language use situations, i.e. these forms should be introduced and practised in communicative contexts where focus on meaning and content is primary. Accordingly, it has often suggested that second language learning and teaching programmes should supply learners with sufficient opportunities to use language in its appropriate communicative context and apply their background knowledge to coping with everyday language use (Hadley 2003 :125).

In this respect, Widdowson (1978:22) (cited in Hadley 2003:125) writes "normal linguistic behaviour does not consist of the production of separate sentences but in the use of sentences for the creation of discourse".Therefore,it is recommended that classroom activities, instructions and testing procedures should be made to resemble real language in use .

Slager (1978:11)(cited in Ibid :126) agrees with Jespersen as both emphasize the need for context and "sentence connectedness" in order

to learn a language through sensible communications .Sensible communications involve connection in the thoughts communicated which implies that language lessons should be built upon chosen lists of connected sentences.

Likewise, Allen et al (1990:77)(cited in Ibid :127) explicate that :

> **There is no doubt that students need to be given greater opportunities to use the target language . But opportunities alone are not sufficient . Students need to be motivated to use language accurately, appropriately and coherently**

In other words , the focus in language learning should be on practice activities , not only grammatical rules , but also on functional , organizational and sociolinguistic aspects of the target language. Learning and teaching a foreign or a second language can be effective if it implies practicing language in meaningful contexts rather than learning isolated bits of language through memorization and drilling .In brief , to achieve a successful learning , language use in the classroom ought to be contextualized .

A lot of research have been conducted to reveal the role of context in comprehension .In one study conducted by Bransford and Johnson (1972) (cited in Hadley 2003:138-146) , it has been obviously noted that the relevant contextual knowledge is a prerequisite for comprehending prose passages in the native language .Their study included experiments in which subjects listened to an ambiguous passage in their native language(English). In each of these experiments, some of the subjects listened to the passage once without being told the topic , others were given the topic as a short statement before hearing the passage , and a third group was given the topic after hearing the passage .

The test resulted in the fact that subjects who had received the topic of the passage before hearing it rated it more comprehensible than those who had not received the topic or who had received it after hearing the passage .

Bransford and Johnson (cited in ibid :147) also observed that recall was significantly better in the topic before condition than in others.

In accordance with what has been mentioned above , it has been clearly shown that meaningful contexts and familiarity of second language materials do play a great role in learners' comprehension .

2.7. Previous Studies

This section is devoted to presenting some relevant studies that the researcher has passed through while making a review of literature. They may show certain similarity (with the present study) either in the problem concerned, the type of sample, procedures followed or any other aspects. These studies seem to be beneficial in the sense that they provide a certain background for the researcher to cope with the present study . The presentation of the studies concerned will be from the less relevant to the more relevant. They are three Iraqi postgraduate studies and two foreign studies.

2.7.1 Ledford(1980) " The Relationship of Synonymy Within and Outside of Sentence Context "

The purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship exists between the synonymy of words when presented without surrounding context and the synonymy of those words when embedded in a sentence context.

The subjects of the study consisted of 46 junior and senior students enrolled in introduction to educational psychology classes at Southeastern University .

Two instruments were designed to measure the synonymy of word pairs within and outside the context .The first was the semantic similarity in context test which was consisted of 40 sentence pairs .The subjects were asked to replace the omitted word with another such that the meaning conveyed by the second sentence would be identical to that conveyed by the first sentence.

The second instrument was the student synonymy Rating Scale consisted of 480 word pairs formed by pairing the underlined words the (semantic similarity in context test) with each response to those words . Subject were asked to rate the synonymy of each word pair on a seven point scale .

A Pearson Product- moment technique was used to account for the relationship between the frequency with which words were interchanged in context on the (semantic similarity in context test) and the synonymy ratings of those same words presented without context on student synonymy Rating scale. Utilizing Haagon(1949) measure, analyses were made to account for this relationship.

The results of the study suggested that the synonymy relationships varied by degree and that words which were highly synonymous outside the context were also highly synonymous when their meanings were constrained by sentence context .

2.7.2 Pickering (1982) " Context – Free and context – Dependent Vocabulary Learning :An Experiment "

This experiment was carried out to demonstrate how FL words may be acquired or learned by a group of young learners .The aim was

to test that learning FL words in context is inferior, i.e. fewer words are learned – to learning words in associated pair with NL words .

The sample of the experiment consisted of 13 subjects in each of the two experimental groups. About 80 words taken from a text-book of the appropriate level (upper secondary) were presented to five university students of the FL who estimated the value of each word on a five point scale with " abstractness " and " concreteness " as poles. The purpose of this division was to determine whether concrete or abstract words were better learned under either of the two conditions : words pair and context.

In the word-pair condition the subjects received a list of the 20 FL words in a different order .In the context condition the list of NL sentences was given with a similar variation in the order of presentation.

Statistical analysis showed that word- pairs versus contexts had no significant effect. Moreover, there was no significant difference between concrete words in context and abstract words in context .Word lengths appeared not to be significant in either condition. But concrete words were better learned than abstract words in both conditions as a by-product hypothesis.

2.7.3 Al- Sady (2000) "The Effect of Teaching Homonyms and Synonyms on the Expansion of Pupils' Vocabulary"

This study aimed at investigating empirically the effect of teaching homonyms and synonyms on the expansion of pupils' vocabulary. The subjects of the study were female pupils of the second year of preparatory stage .

After conducting an achievement test, the results showed that the mean of the experimental group was found to be (33.67), whereas the

mean of the control group was found to be (28.4). This meant that the achievement of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group .

The T- test technique revealed that there were significant differences in favour of the experimental group .Thus , the results of the study show that teaching homonyms and synonyms could expand pupils' vocabulary and enable them to infer the meaning of words in terms of the contexts in which they are presented .

2.8 Discussion of the Previous Studies

2.7.1 Bany Weis (2004) " The Effect of Multimeaning Words on Iraqi   EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension "

The aim of the study was to empirically investigate the effect of teaching multimeaning words on learners' reading comprehension .

The sample of the study consisted of 60 second –year College students of the Department of English, distributed into two groups (30 each): experimental group and control group .The experimental group has been taught reading comprehension with special emphasis on multimeaning words through different proposed techniques , whereas the control group received no such a type of teaching (taught by traditional techniques).

To fulfill the objectives of the study , an achievement test was carried out and exposed to a jury of experts to verify its validity .Alpha Cronbach formula was used to account for the reliability of the test .Item analysis was also utilized to determine the effectiveness of the items involved. Through statistical means , it had been found that

the mean of the experimental group was (30.405), whereas the mean of the control group was (12.733)

By using T- test formula , the results of the test revealed that the achievement of the experimental group was superior to that of the control one .Thus , the study concluded that training in multimeaning words has a positive effect on learners' comprehension and expanding their vocabulary stock .

2.7.2 Al-Bayatee (2003) " The Effect of the Context Clues in Teaching Vocabulary on EFL Students' Achievement"

The aim of this study was to empirically investigate the effect of context clues in teaching vocabulary on EFL students' achievement.

The subjects of the study were female pupils of the second year of preparatory stage .

The T-test technique revealed that there were significant differences in favour of the experimental group .Thus, the results of the study show that teaching context clues could expand pupils' vocabulary and enable them to infer the meaning of words in term of the contexts in which they are presented.

2.8 Discussion of the Previous Studies

In relation to the present study , four main aspects of the previous studies will be focused on and discussed .They are :

- The objectives (aims)
- The population and sample .
- The procedures followed
- The conclusions

2.8.1 The objectives

Although the five mentioned studies generally aimed at investigating the development of vocabulary by learners, each one tackles this problem differently:(i)Bany Wies(2004)studied the effect of teaching multimeaning words on learners' reading comprehension; (ii) Al-Bayatee (2003) dealt with the effect of context clues on the expansion of pupils' vocabulary: (iii)Al-Sady(2000)dealt with the effect of teaching homonymy and synonymy on the expansion of pupils' vocabulary,(iv)Ledford (1980) wanted to determine the relationships between synonymy of words used outside context and those words embedded in context ; (v) Pickering (1982) revealed that learning FL words in context is inferior to learning words in associated pairs with NL words .

It seems to be that the last two studies are more related to the present study (as they aim at assessing EFL college students' achievement in context –free and context –dependent vocabulary) since they all aim at investigating vocabulary within and outside context .

2.8.2 Population and Sample

Bany Weis' (2004) population involves second year students at university level which resembles the type utilized in the present study.The differences the number of the subjects involved. Whereas, both Al-Bayatee and Al -Sady sample is female pupils of the second year of preparatory stage ; Ledford's (1980) sample is junior and senior students of the educational psychology class. The last study (Pickering, 1982) involves two groups of learners : young and adult .

2.8.3 Procedures

Nearly, all of Bany Wies (2004),Al-Bayatee(2003)and Al-Sady (2000) employ the same procedures with slight differences .They all conduct an achievement test ascertained by a jury of experts. Some statistical means and other techniques are involved to account for the validity , reliability and results of the test .

The present study will make use of the same procedures to those mentioned above to verify the hypotheses proposed by the researcher .

2.8.4 Conclusions

The aforementioned studies arrive at the following findings ,Bany Wies (2004) has reached at the conclusion that training in multimeaning words plays a significant role in comprehension and expansion of vocabulary stock. Al-Bayatee(2003)concludes that teaching context clues can expand pupils' vocabulary,also Al -Sady (2000)concludes that teaching homonyms and synonyms can expand pupils' vocabulary. Ledford (1980) affirms that there is a relationship between the synonymy of words outside and inside context . The last study (Pickering , 1982) asserts that learning words in context condition has no difference with learning words in word-pairs condition. Hence , the researcher will benefit from these results and conclusions for the matter of relevance and comparison .

Chapter Three

3.1 An Introductory Note

Generally , to achieve the aims of the study certain procedures are required. Therefore , this chapter is allotted to the description of the population and sample selection , the construction of the test and its validity , reliability and analysis of items, application and statistical tools used in this study .

3.2 Population and Sample Selection

The population of this study comprises the whole (212) second year college students, at the Department of English ,College of Education, Ibn Rushd and College of Arts[3], Baghdad University(100) of them represent the pilot study. The reason behind choosing college students is that those students have already been taught the course " Reading Comprehension " at both the first and second levels. The material covered in the first and second year syllabus is supposed to be enough to develop learners' vocabulary. Furthermore, they are supposed to achieve sufficient level in their learning of vocabulary .

The sample is randomly chosen from the population during the academic year 2005/2006 .The total number of the sample is one hundred and twelve students, whereof eighty students are from College of Education, Ibn Rushd and thirty two ones from College of Arts. Whereas the repeaters of the years are excluded(the sample represents 52 percent of the population) .   .

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_(3) Eight students are excluded ,four of them are absent and the other four are discarded   because of the unsuitability of their forms .

3.3 Construction and Description of the Test

Essentially , the main procedure adopted in the present study is to construct an achievement test that determines the progress of the students as it measures how much of a language the students have learnt with reference to the subject of the study ,i.e. Reading Comprehension in order to achieve the aims of the study(Mousavi 1997: 1)   .

Technically , the test consists of two parts of testing techniques where each part consists of four techniques .Part one deals with the context- free vocabulary, while part two deals with the context – dependent one   .

In order to ensure the elicitation of the two types of data specified by Corder (1986: 59) , namely intuitional data and textual data , the four techniques have been employed for this purpose. Two of the four technique are of the recognition ones which will ensure the elicitation of the former type of data. These techniques consist of (14) items. The other two are geared towards eliciting the latter type of data ,i.e. the productive type , in which the subject is left free to answer with any vocabulary s/he finds suitable, and these techniques consist of (11) items .This is supposed to lend support to whatever evidence is discovered in the other part of the test.The table below illustrates the description of the test   :

Table (1) Description of the Test

	Techniques	Items
1-context- free	1- True / false	6
	2- Odd one out	8
	3- Regrouping	6
	4- Giving the category	5

Context – dependent	1-Multiple choice	8
	2- Fill in the blank	6
		6
	3- Giving the equivalent	5
	4- Completion	
Total		50

3.4 Selection of the Test Items Material

Concerning the two types of vocabulary ,i.e. the context – free and context–dependent vocabulary, it is worth stating that both types of vocabulary are found in textbooks which are taught to students at the Department of English .

Therefore , the items of the tests are constructed depending on familiarity of the words to students , so as to enable them to make decisions as accurate as possible . The items have been selected from different sources , these include "English Vocabulary in Use – upper intermediate" written by Michael McCarthy and Felicity O'Dell (2001)," "Vocabulary in Use – pre-intermediate and intermediate " written by Stuart Redman (2003),"Oxford Word Power Dictionary " written by Helen Worn (2003), "Guessing Vocabulary in Context -1", "Guessing Vocabulary in Context -2 " by English –Zone.Com (the best English learner's) (2003)Created with Half-Baked Software's JBC   .

3.5 Face Validity

Validity is the most important notion in test evaluation (Baker,1989:318).Validity as defined by Brown (2004:4)is , " the degree to which the test actually measures what it is intended to measure ".To achieve face validity of the test, the items should be given to a jury of specialists in English language (Harris,1969:21).

"A valid test measures what is supposed to measure"(Baker 1989: 318). The test items are approved by the supervisor of this thesis and by Dr. Layla Yousif Al-Haj Naji , a specialist in Measurement and Evaluation. Besides ,the test draft has been exposed to a jury of (12)university teaching staff members[4] who are known for their long experience in the field of : English Language Teaching, Linguistics , Language Testing, and Measurement and Evaluation. It has been given to them to point out their remarks and suggestions concerning the suitability of the test items to the level of the sample, and to find out whether they achieve the aims of the present study or not .They agreed that the first version of the test is higher

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(4)The Jury members are:

1-Prof . Abdul Latif AL- Jumaily, Ph.D . College of Arts , University of Baghdad.

2- Prof. Abdul Wahid Muslit, Ph.D. College of Languages, University of Baghdad

3-Asst.Prof.Firas Awad, M.A.College of Education/Ibn-Rushd,University of Baghdad

4-Asst.Prof. Abdul Jabar Darwish, Ph.D. College of Basic Education ,University of Al-Mustansiryah.

5-Asst.Prof.Munthir AL-Dulaimi,Ph.D .College of Languages,University of Baghdad

6-Asst.Prof.Abdul Karim Fadhil AL-Jumaily ,Ph.D ,College of Education /Ibn -Rushd , University of Baghdad.

7- Asst.Prof .Najat AL-Juboury .M.A ,College of Education for women ,University of Baghdad.

8-Asst.Prof.Fatin AL- Rifai, Ph.D, College of Education / Ibn –Rushd ,University of Baghdad.

9-Instructor.Radhia AL-Khafajy.Ph.D .College of Education for women ,University of Baghdad.

10- Instructor Shaima'a AL-Bakri.Ph.D .College of Education /Ibn-Rushd,University of Baghdad.

11-Instructor.Salam AL-Temimi,Ph.D. College of Education / Ibn -Rushd, University of Baghdad.

12-Instructor. Abbas Lutfi. Ph.D, College of Education / Ibn – Rushd , University of Baghdad

than the level of the second year students(See Appendix 2).Hence, a second version of the test is conducted and exposed to the same jury members(See Appendix 3).All of them   agreed that the test items are within the accepted standards of the learners' knowledge of English at the second year and that it tests vocabulary aspect moreefficiently . So, the test items as a whole are judged to be valid by all jurors and this means 100% agreement.   .

3.6 Pilot Study and Item Analysis

It is highly desired to run a pilot –study testing on the design and to revise it according to the result of the test .Pilot– study is defined as "an important means of assessing the feasibility and usefulness of the data collection methods and making any necessary revisions before they are used with research participants "(Mackey and Gass 2005:43).So, it is conducted to find out exactly whether the test is well constructed or not. This includes finding out the (DP) and the (DL) of each item, estimating the time needed to answer the test, determining the reactions of the testees to the material, and determining the reliability coefficient of the whole test, as well   .

For the purpose of conducting a pilot- study ,one hundred students are assigned to be the members of the pilot study. All are randomly drawn from the second year ,Department of English , College of Education ,Ibn Rushd and College of Arts ,University of Baghdad (fifty students are from College of Education and the other fifty are from College of Arts).Instructions concerning what the testees are to do during the test are explained by the researcher herself so that no misunderstanding could occur. The testees are requested to answer the context- free techniques first; the time given to answer the context-free

techniques , is free . After one day only the same testees are requested to answer the context –dependent techniques with a free time , as well.

The average time needed to answer the context-free ones is forty minutes, while the average time needed to answer the context-dependent ones is 45 minutes, which means that the appropriate amount of time needed for each is forty five minutes each. It also shows that the directions of the test are clear and easy to be understood.

3.7 Item Discriminating Power

Item discriminating power refers to "the degree to which a test or an item in a test distinguishes among stronger or weaker test takers" (Richard and Scmidt 2002 :163) .   .

Theoretically speaking , calculating the discriminating power (henceforth DP) of the test means separating the high-scoring and the low-scoring groups who answer the items correctly and which should constitute about 25 percent of a group (Madsen 1983:108). By ordering the papers according to the scores on each part of the test , the papers are divided into three groups: the high scores (25 papers), the middle scores (50 papers) and the low scores (25 papers) . If the discriminating power of an item is 0.30 and above, the item is accepted and if it is less than o.30 it is weak and should be changed (Harris, 1969:106) .

Results of applying the DP formula to the test items are shown in table (2)below. The DP of the context-free test items ranges between 0.32- 0.75,so they are considered acceptable, while the DP of the context-dependent test items ranges between 0.33-0.86;therefore , they are also considered acceptable   .

Table (2)
The DL and the DP Values of the Testees in the Context- free and Context –
dependent Vocabulary Test

Parts of test	Technique	Item No	DL	DP
Context – free	True/ false	1	0.26	0.32
		2	0.35	0.35
		3	0.72	0.33
		4	0.28	0.32
		5	0.74	0.39
		6	0.77	0.36
	Odd one out	7	0.28	0.32
		8	0.60	0.54
		9	0.63	0.35
		10	0.29	0.32
		11	0.63	0.34
		12	0.26	0.62
		13	0.69	0.34
		14	0.27	0.70
	Regrouping	15	0.74	0.45
		16	0.68	0.35
		17	0.28	0.36
		18	0.60	0.55
		19	0.62	0.35
		20	0.68	0.34
	Giving the category	21	0.29	0.39
		22	0.28	0.38
		23	0.26	0.68
		24	0.28	0.75
		25	0.26	0.32
Context – dependent	Multiple choice	1	0.29	0.39
		2	0.28	0.33
		3	0.69	0.67
		4	0.54	0.34
		5	0.77	0.53
		6	0.44	0.35
		7	0.68	0.33
		8	0.53	0.40
	Filling the blanks	9	0.27	0.37
		10	0.55	0.66
		11	0.28	0.37
		12	0.43	0.69
		13	0.68	0.35
		14	0.69	0.39
	Giving the equivalent	15	0.65	0.39
		16	0.72	0.57
		17	0.42	0.39
		18	0.53	0.42
		19	0.75	0.38
		20	0.79	0.86
	Completion	21	0.77	0.35
		22	0.55	0.60
		23	0.45	0.75
		24	0.35	0.49
		25	0.70	0.39

3.8 Item Difficulty Level

The benefit of items difficulty level (henceforth DL)is that it " permits the identification of items which are too difficult or too easy (outside the range of 0.25-0.75)or which fail to discriminate strongly enough between candidates" (Baker 1989:54)   .

Item difficulty as defined by Richard and Schmidt (2002: 276),is"a measure of the test item, it is the proportion of the test takers who answered the item correctly"   .

Accordingly , the optimum rate of the DP of all items range between 13 % -100 % .On the basis of the results of using the DL formula , the DL of the context-free items range between 0.26- 0.77 , while the DL of the context –dependent   items   range   between   0.28- 0.79 (see table 2). Below is an index of both context free and context dependent vocabulary test items difficulty and discriminating power   .

Table (3)
Discriminating Power Index of the Context –free and context dependent
Vocabulary Test Items

Parts of test	Q.No	0.19 below Low discriminating		0.20-0.29 Edge discriminating		0.30-0.39 Good discriminating		0.40 up Very good discriminating	
Context - free		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
	1	0	0	0	0	3	50	3	50
	2	0	0	0	0	5	62	3	38
	3	0	0	0	0	3	60	2	40
	4	0	0	0	0	4	67	2	33
Context - dependent	1	0	0	0	0	5	63	3	37
	2	0	0	0	0	4	66	2	34
	3	0	0	0	0	3	50	3	50
	4	0	0	0	0	2	40	3	60

Table (4)
Item Difficulty Index of the Context free and Context dependent Vocabulary
Test Items

Parts of test	Q.No	0.19 below Very Difficult		0.20-0.29 Difficult		0.30-0.96 Moderate difficult		0.70-0.79 Easy		Test Items.80 up Very easy	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Context - free	1	0	0	2	33	1	17	3	50	0	0
	2	0	0	4	50	4	50	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	5	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
	4	0	0	1	17	4	66	1	17	0	0
Context- dependent	1	0	0	2	25	5	62	1	13	0	0
	2	0	0	2	33	4	67	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	3	50	3	50	0	0
	4	0	0	0	0	3	60	2	40	0	0

3.9 Reliability

It is necessary for any good test to be reliable . Reliability as defined by Mackey and Gass(2005 :364) is" the degree to which there is a consistency in results ".

Richard and Scmidt (2002:268) state that " reliability is a measure of the degree to which the items or parts of a test are homogenous, equivalent or consistent with each other ".In the sense that every item measures the same general factor…,as do the other   .

To obtain reliability of the test items Alpha Cronbach reliability coefficient is used."It is a mean to determine internal consistency when only one administration of a measure exists. It is used when the number of possible answer is more than two[5] " (Mackey and Grass 2005 :353) and it requires no equal difficulty of the test item   .

_____

(5) In question four of both test parts more than two answers are suitable , in context –dependent part (angry ,crazy , nervous),(problem, topics, things), (discuss, solve destroy) all are correct to fill the context .In context free part(school , education), (shapes geometry) are also right to fill the blanks.   .

Generally speaking, the test reliability coefficient would be accepted if it is not less than 0.90(Davies 1990 :22). As a result, the reliability coefficient of the context free items is found to be 0.96 and the context – dependent is found to be 0.94 which indicate that the consistency of the test items is accepted, i.e. all the items of the test measure the same factor which is recognition and production .   .

3.10 Final Application

The test was applied in May 2005/2006 ; it has been administrated to (112) testees of the second year , Department of English , College of Education, Ibn Rushd and College of Arts   at the University of Baghdad. The testees are required to answer all the context –free questions in 40 minutes, i.e. within one lecture then after one day only , the same testees are requested to answer the context –dependent one in 45 minutes. Finally   , the papers of the testees are gathered by the researcher   herself   .

3.11 Scoring Scheme

"A test is scorable when each item is given a definite mark. Items equal in importance should be given equal marks "Al-Hamash and Younis(1985:204)   .

In respect to the objective test techniques , the testees' answers are scored according to a specific key . A score of 1 is given for each item answered correctly and 0 for each item answered incorrectly or not answered at all. If two choices are picked as response to one word , then a score of 0 is given as shown in the following table: :

Table (5)
The Scoring Scheme

Types of test	Techniques	Marks	Items	Distribution of Marks
Context free	True /False	6	6	1 mark for each correct answer and zero for each incorrect answer or unanswered item
	Odd one out	8	8	
	Regrouping	5	5	
	Giving the category	6	6	
Context dependent	Multiple choice	8	8	1 mark for each correct answer and zero for each incorrect answer or unanswered item
	Filling the blanks	6	6	
	Giving the equivalent	6	6	
	Completion	5	5	
Total		50	50	

3.12 Statistical Tools

The following statistical tools are used:

1- Item discriminating power to calculate the DP of each the context free and context dependent vocabulary items. The following formula is used :

$$DP= \frac{Ru - Rl}{1/2\,T}$$

Where

DP= discriminating power

Ru= the number of testees in the upper group who answered the item correctly.

Rl= the number of testees in the lower group who answered the item correctly.

T= the total number of testees included in the item analysis.

(Grunland, 1976: 211)

2-Difficulty level formula is used to calculate the DL of each the context free and context dependent vocabulary items .The following formula is used:

$$DL = \frac{HC-LC}{N}$$

where

HC= high correct

HC= low correct

N= total number of testees

<div align="right">(Bloom , 1971:181)</div>

3-Alpha Cronbach reliability coefficient is used to estimate the reliability of the context free and context dependent vocabulary test .The following formula is used:

$$\infty = \frac{n}{n-1}\left(1 - \frac{\sum Si^2}{S_X{}^2} \right)$$

Where

n = number of items in a test .

$\sum$=summation sign indicating that variance is summed over item

Si^2 = the variance of the total test.

$S_X{}^2$ = variance of the total test.

<div align="right">(Mehrens and Lehmann 1991: 255)</div>

4-T- test for one dependent sample is used to find out the level of the achievement of the EFL College students in the context free and context dependent vocabulary testing techniques .

$$t = \frac{X - \mu}{S\sqrt{n}}$$

Where

X = the mean of the sample.

μ = the mean of the population

S = standard deviation of the sample

n= the number of the sample

(Hinkle 1971:173)

5 - T-test for two dependent samples is used to find out the significant differences between the Education College students' achievement and Arts College students' achievement . The following formula is used:

$$t = \frac{d}{sd / \sqrt{n}}$$

where

d = the mean difference .

sd / √ n = the standard error of the mean difference.

(Downice and Heath, 1983 : 176)

Chapter Four

4.1 Introductory Note

This chapter is devoted to the presentation of the results of the tests and their discussion .The analysis of the collected data is computed by using suitable statistical tools to achieve one of the aims of the present study. Conclusions are drawn in the light of the results and recommendations are presented , and finally suggestions for further studies are proposed .

4.2 Presentation of Results

After administering the test which consists of the context free and the context dependent vocabulary , testees' responses are analyzed to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in the achievement of testees when taking the test .

Consequently, the results of the testees indicate that there are no statistically significant differences in the achievement of students in context free and context dependent vocabulary and there is no statistically significant difference in the achievement between the Education and Arts College students.

4.2.1 Achieving the First Aim

The first aim of the present study is assessing EFL college students' achievement in the context free and context dependent vocabulary concerning the recognition and the production levels in both types of the test. T- test formula for one sample is used and results are computed as shown in the following tables:

Table (6)

Result of t–Test in Respect to the Students' Achievement Level in the Context – Free Vocabulary Part

Type of technique	No.of Sample	X	SD	Theoretical Mean	t-Value		Level of Significance p >
					Computed	Tabulated	
Context –free	112	6.826	25.080	13	-2.432	1.658	0.05

As seen in table(6) , the computed mean scores for the context –free vocabulary test technique is (6.826),whereas the theoretical mean is (13). This shows that the computed mean is lower than the theoretical one , which signifies that the testees' total mean in the context –free is lower than the degree of success which is (13) out of (25) .

By comparing the computed t-value which is(-2.432) with the table t-value which is (1.658) , it is found out that the former is lower than the latter. This signifies that there is no statistically significant difference at (p<:0.05) with a df =(111).

Table (7)

Result of t–Test in Respect to the Students' Achievement Level in the Context –Dependent Vocabulary Part

Type of technique	No.of Sample	X	SD	Theoretical Mean	t-Value		Level of Significance p >
					Computed	Tabulated	
Context – dependent	112	5.787	22.102	13	-2.434	1.658	0.05

Table (7) shows that the computed mean scores of students of Arts in the context –dependent vocabulary test technique is (5.787), whereas the theoretical mean is (13). This shows that the computed mean is lower than the theoretical one, which signifies that the testees' total mean in the context –free is lower than the degree of success which is (13) out of (25) .

By comparing the computed t-value which is (- 2.434) with the table t-value which is (1.658) , it is found out that the former is lower than the latter. This signifies that there is no statistically significant difference at$(p< :0.05)$ with a df =(111).

This result shows that the level of EFL College students in the context free and context dependent vocabulary is of a weak one .

Table (8)

Result of t–Test in Respect to the Students' Achievement Level in both Parts of Test at the Recognition Level

Type of technique	No.of Sample	x	SD	Theoretical Mean	t-Value		Level of Significance p >
					Computed	Tabulated	
Context – free and Context dependent	112	12.637	24.669	14	-4.582	1.658	0.05

Also in table (8) , the computed mean scores for the context – free and context dependent vocabulary test is (12.637) , whereas the theoretical mean is(14). This shows that the computed mean is lower than the theoretical one , which signifies that the testees' total mean in the Context - dependent is lower than the degree of success which is(14) out of (28).

By comparing the computed t- value which is (–4.582) with the table t-value which is (1.658) , it is found out that the former is lower than the latter.This signifies that there is no statistically significant difference at (p< :0.05) with a df =(111).

Table (9)

Result of t–Test in Respect to the Students' Achievement Level in both Parts of the Test at the Production Level

Type of technique	No.of Sample	X	SD	Theoretical Mean	t-Value		Level of Significance p >
					Computed	Tabulated	
Context – free and Context dependent	112	11.600	21.055	11	-2.928	1.658	0.05

Table (9) shows that the computed mean scores for the context –free and context dependent vocabulary test is (11.600) , whereas the theoretical mean is (11). This shows that the computed mean is higher than the theoretical one , which signifies that the testees total mean in the context – free and context dependent is higher than the degree of success which is (11) out of (22).

By comparing the computed t- value which is(–2.928) with the table t-value which is (1.658), it is found out that the former is lower than the latter. This signifies that there is no statistically significant difference at(p< :0.05) with a df =(111).

Accordingly , the null hypothesis is accepted which states that " there are no statistically significant differences between the achievement of students in context free and context dependent vocabulary .

4.2.2 Achieving the Second Aim

The second aim of the study focuses on comparing the achievement of the students at College of Education and College of Arts , and finding out whether there are any statistically significant differences in the achievement of students between students at both Colleges .This aim is achieved by using the t- test formula for two dependent samples and the computed results shown in table (10) .

Table (10)

The Differences in the Sample achievement in both Parts of the Test between College of Education and College of Arts

Type of technique	No.of Sample	X	The Standard error of the Mean differences	T-Value		Level of Significance p>
				Computed	Tabulated	
Context free and Context dependent	80 / 32	-2.950	0.466	-6.323	1.684	0.05

Table (10) shows that since the computed t- value, which is (– 6.323) , is found to be lower than the table t- value which is(1.684) at a level of (0.05), there are no statistically significant differences between the two mean scores .

Accordingly , the null hypothesis is accepted which states that"there are no statistically significant differences in the achievement of EFL College students at the colleges of Education , Ibn Rushd and of Arts.

4.3 Conclusion

In the light of the analysis of the results of the study , the fact that the difference in the students' achievement in the context –free and the

context dependent vocabulary has turned out to be statistically insignificant may be attributed to one or more of the following factor :

1- The insufficient strategies for acquiring new vocabulary , make students achieve less than their potential and be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them such as : listening to native speakers , using the language in different contexts , reading, and watching television .

4.4 Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions drawn , the researcher has arrived at the following recommendations:

1- Incorporating vocabulary in the college syllabus should be a first component of the course. If this is not possible ,hours should be devoted to vocabulary teaching during the reading comprehension subject to enhance vocabulary learning. This leads to increase the hours of reading comprehension from two to three or may be four.

2- Encouraging the learners to take advantage of their background knowledge in processing the context and in creating expectations about the kind of vocabulary that will occur in the reading . Looking at the context in which the word appears seems to be the best way of learning vocabulary .

3- It is recommended that learners should work out the meaning of difficult sentences or unfamiliar words by being involved in the process of inferring the meaning of the unknown words by using an active searching and thinking process.

4- The task of EFL college teachers' is to organize the teaching so as to facilitate learning. . They are supposed to help learners and draw their attention to cue words and phrases, signals of connection , enabling learners to drive meaning with the help of context clues which are effective to increase vocabulary .

5- Leading questions can be used as a modern technique to direct the students in step by step search for context clues.So more care, attention and time should be given to such a technique to help student spot cue words or other indicators.

4.5 Suggestions for further Studies

On the basis of the findings and conclusions of the present study, the researcher would like to put forward the following suggestions for further research:

1- A study is needed to the context –based approach which has a positive effect on learning vocabulary . It helps the students build up confidence in their learning .

2- A study is suggested to emphasize the strategies the learners apply and the useful cue words and phrases they can find in the passage that help them in the process of inferring the meaning .

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<u>Appendix 1</u>

University of Baghdad

College of Education for Women

Department of Education

and Psychological Sciences

Higher Studies

A Letter To Jury Members

Dear Sir / Madam

The researcher intends to conduct a study entitled " Assessing EFL College Students' Achievement in Context- Free and Context- Dependent Vocabulary ". The aim of the study is to assess the ability of EFL learners to acquire vocabulary through context –free and Context –dependent .

" Context " in this study refers to " the contextual material in which a particular word, phrase or statement is found " Good (1959:126). Context clues help the learners reason out the meaning of unfamiliar words.

As a specialist in the field of Linguistics and EFL, you are kindly requested to assess the suitability of the test for the second year college students.

Your comments and modifications will be fully appreciated and taken into consideration .Thank you most profusely in advance for your substantial assistance and cooperation .

Yours,
The researcher
Huda. M.Hassan

<u>Note :</u> The students will attempt the first type of test , the context –free vocabulary technique first , then after one day they will attempt the context –dependent vocabulary one .

<u>**Appendix 2**</u>
The First Version of the Context Free and Context Dependent
Vocabulary Test
<u>**Context- Free Vocabulary Test**</u>

Q1/ Put the following pairs of words into two different sentences:

 1- decay /stabilize
 2- develop/ regress
 3- altruistic/ selfish
 4- anecdote/ joke
 5- erudition /rudeness
 6- decorum / decoration
 7-enormousness/ enormity
 8-famine / famish
 9- zealous/ zany
 10- road /ride

Q2/ Give the opposite meaning of each of the following words:

 1-prudent
 2-infamous
 3- talented
 5-predator
 6-satisfy
 7- distraught
 8- cyberphobia
 9-popular
 10-departure

Q3/Give the alternative meaning of each of the following words:

 1- giggle
 2- tome
 3- rare
 4- mammoth
 5- readable
 6- chattering
 7- vanished
 8- destiny
 9- drain
 10-bizarre

App.2

Context –Dependent Vocabulary Test

Q1/ Circle one of the words in italics that best completes the meaning of each sentence:

1- Does she realize the *enormousness* / *enormity* of her offence ?

2- Mrs. Christopher volunteers many hours in the emergency ward of the hospital.
  She is indeed *altruistic* / *selfish.*

3- The word *famine* / *famish* is used to describe being hungry.

4- The patient's condition began to *decay* / *stabilize.*

5- Languages *develop* / *regress* over time .

6- One *anecdote* / *joke* I was told about my father was how he cried with joy when
  I was born .

7- My grandfather finds that our *erudition* / *rudeness* frightens him .

8- It is refreshing to see students so *zealous* / *zany* in doing their homework.

9- When going to an office party you should show your best *decorum* / *decorations*.

10- I went for leisurely *road* / *ride* .

Q2 /Read the following pairs of sentences and write (T) if the second one gives the same meaning of the first .If it is not , write (F) and change the underlined words to give the same meaning :

1-(a)- The decision Veronica made to study instead of going out for shopping
    with friends was <u>prudent</u> .
  (b)- The decision Veronica made to study instead of going out for shopping with
    her friend was <u>careful and wise</u> .

2- (a)- He is <u>infamous</u> .
   (b)- He is <u>popular</u> .

3-(a)-We thought that the mother would be very <u>distraught</u> at hearing of her
    husband's accident .
  (b)- We thought that the mother would be very <u>angry</u> at hearing of her
    husband's accident.

4-(a)- Whenever something bad happens to Jane , she says it's the fault of
    <u>destiny</u>
  (b)-Whenever something bad happens to Jane , she says it's the fault of <u>poor
    planning</u>

App.2

5- (a) - The little girls began to <u>giggle</u> when they saw the boys walk by .

  (b) - The little girls began to<u> cry</u> when they saw the boys walk by .

6-(a)- All the <u>furniture</u> had been completely removed .

  (b)- All the <u>antique disks </u> had been completely removed .

7-(a)- I'm really hungry ! that apple didn't <u>satisfy</u> my hunger .

  (b) I'm really hungry ! that apple didn't <u>frustrate</u> my hunger .

8- (a)- Each elephant has <u>two tusks</u> .

  (b) – Each elephant has <u>two very long teeth</u> .

9- (a)- Jerry is more <u>talented</u> than Ivan .

  (b)- Jerry is more <u>versatile </u> than Ivan .

10-(a) – The wolf is a <u>predator .</u>

  (b)- The wolf is a <u>wild animal</u> .

Q3 - Fill in the gaps in these sentences with an appropriate words from the list below :

  (vehicle , tome , rare , mammoth , readable , chattering , disappeared , bizarre , drain , cyberphobia)

1- The museum contained almost every type of -----------------.

2- She has ---------------.

3- John loves to buy ----------- food .

4- I look the --------off the shelf opened it to page 94.

5- The ancient ---------------- is a type of elephant .

6- I found the book very ---------------.

7- The teacher asked his students to stop --------------.

8- The plane suddenly ---------- behind a cloud .

9- This virus has really --------- my angry .

10- The coach observed his team's ------------ behaviour.

Appendix 3

The Second Version of the Context Free and Context Dependent Vocabulary Test
Context- Free Vocabulary

Recognition

Q1/ Determine if the following statements are true or false.   (6 Marks)

1- Infamous means unknown.

2- Giggle means crying .

3- Chattering means talking .

4- Plain means simple.

5- Satisfy means appease.

6- Break means rest .

Recognition

Q2/Encircle the " odd one out " in each group.   (8 Marks)

1- scene	spectacle	sight	view	look
2- check	ignore	examine	test	investigate
3- path	road	course	tower	way
4- run	manage	disperse	direct	operate
5- let	prevent	allow	permit	authorize
6-destiny	lot	fate	choice	luck
7- break	smash	build	crash	destiny
8- normal	simple	compound	clear	frank

App.3

Production

Q3/ Write the related words into groups under the given headings .

(5 Marks)

Weapons , airplane , story , bomb , boat , clinic , sand , thriller , doctor ,

river, solider, artillery , receptionist , classic , prescription ,novel , tent , ticket

cure , hotel

War	Camper	Travel	Fiction	Medicine

Production

Q4 / Each group of words is related to a particular subject –write down
in the given boxes the particular subject which is connected with
each group of words .

(6 Marks)

Mouse	tour	apple	windy	teacher	Circle
floppy disk	picnic	orange	sunny	book	rectangle
Keyboard	journey	banana	foggy	pencil	Square
Monitor	trip	lemon	hot	rubber	triangle

App.3

Context – Dependent Vocabulary Test

Recognition

Q1/ Choose one option that is equivalent in meaning to the underlined words as it is used in the context of its sentence .   (8 Marks)

1- The government is determined to <u>check</u> the growth of public spending

    a-stop   b- control   c- examine   d- change

2- He <u>views</u> holidays as a waste of time .

  a- considers   b- intends   c- looks   d- points

3- She felt it was her <u>destiny</u> to be a great singer .

  a- fate   b-choice   c- lot   d- luck

4- We ran indoor when the storm <u>broke</u> .

  a- blew   b- reduced   c-began   d- escaped

5- The college <u>runs</u> summer courses for foreign students .

  a- hurries   b- operates   c- provides   d- makes

6- He threw himself into the <u>path</u> of oncoming vehicle .

  a- trail   b- course   c- street   d- footpath

7- I ' ll be <u>plain</u> with you , I don't like the idea .

  a- simple   b- clear   c- frank   d- complex

8- The unexpected <u>course</u> of events aroused consideration alarm .

  a- way   b- road   c- program   d- development .

Q2/ Encircle the letters that best complete the following text.   (6 Marks)

Paul Lee :Can you tell me what time the doctor's (1)------------ opens ?

Mrs King: It's open now. The (2)------------- will help you.

Paul Lee: Excuse me .I just want to collect a (3)----------------.

Mrs King: Is it for some (4)----------------- for a headache?

Paul Lee: No, it's for some cough(5)-----------------.

Mrs King: Here it is. This should soon (6)------------- your bad cough

(1) a- office   b- clinic   c- hospital   d- ward

(2) a- porter   b- hostess   c- waitress   d- receptionist

(3) a- prescription   b- recipe   c- cure   d- direction

(4) a- prevention   b- liquid   c- medicine   d- solution

(5) a- mixture   b- drink   c- wash   d- compound

(6) a- prevent   b- treat   c- refresh   d- cure

App.3

Production

Q3/ Give the equivalent meaning of each of the underlined word as it is used in the context of its sentence. (6 Marks)

1- He is <u>infamous</u> for his bad behaviour.

2- The little girls started to <u>giggle</u> when they saw the clown .

3- The children are <u>chattering</u> continuously .

4-We work all day without a <u>break</u> .

5-There is a house to <u>let</u> in our building .

6- This apple didn't <u>satisfy</u> my hunger .

Production

Q4/ Fill in the blanks with words that most suitably complete the following text .

(5 Marks)

A young housewife told me :"My husband and I never argue , no matter how (1)--------------- we may be. Instead we sit down (2)--------------- discuss both sides of the (3) ------------ .Then I make a list of the (4) ------------- I intend to (5)--------------.

University of Baghdad

Assessing EFL College Students' Achievement In Context Free and Context Dependent Vocabulary Learning

A thesis

Submitted to the Council of the College of
Education for women /University of Baghdad in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of
Arts in Education (Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign
Language)

By

Huda Mohammed AL-Amiry

Supervised by

Asst.Prof.

Shatha Kadhim AL-Saadi

2007 A.D   **1428 A.H**

TO MY:

Father , Mother,

Sisters and Brothers,

With
Affection
and Love

Huda

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

اقرار الخبير اللغوي

أشـهد بـأني قد قرأت هـذه الاطروحـة الموسـومة بـ (تقويم تحصيل طلبـة أللغـة إلإنكليزيـة في الكليـة في المفردات خارج النص وتلك المعتمدة على النص)التي قدمتها الطالبة (هدى محمد حسن) الى كليـة التربيـة للبنـات /جامعـة بغداد ، وهـي جزء مـن متطلبـات نيل درجـة الماجستير في التربيـة (طرائـق تدريس لغـة انكليزية) وقد وجدتها صالحة من الناحية اللغوية.

أ.م. د . مؤيد انوية

اقرار الخبير العلمي

أشـهد بـأني قد قرأت هذه الاطروحـة الموسـومة بـ (تقويم تحصيل طلبـة أللغـة إلإنكليزيـة في الكليـة في المفردات خـارج النص وتلك المعتمـدة على النص)التي قدمتها الطالبة (هدى محمد حسن) الى كليـة التربية للبنات /جامعة بغداد ، وهي جزء من متطلبات نبل درجة الماجستير في التربيـة (طرائق تدريس لغـة انكليزية) وقد وجدتها صالحة من الناحية العلمية .

أ.م.د. ناهدة الناصري

I certify that this thesis has been prepared under my supervision at the University of Baghdad as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

Signature:

Name : Asst. Prof. Shatha AL-Saadi

Date: 13th March, 2007

In view of the available recommendation, I forward this thesis for debate by the examining committee .

Signature:

Name : Dr. Layla Yousif Al-Haaj

Head of the Department of Education

and Psychology

Date: /   / 2007

-

Examining Committee Certification

We certify that we have read the thesis entitled **" Assessing EFL College Students' Achievement in Context Free and Context Dependent Vocabulary Learning "** by Huda Mohammed Hessan , and as an examining committee examined the student in its content and that , in our opinion , it is adequated as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Education(Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language) . .

Signature: **Signature:**

Name :   **Name :**

Member   **Member**
 Date: / / 2007   **Date: / /2007**

Signature:

Name :

Chairman

Date : / / 2007

This thesis is approved by the Council of College of Education for Women

Signature:

Name :Dr. Nadhim Rasheed

Dean of the College of Education for Women

Date : / / 2007

Acknowledgments

It is impossible for words to describe my sincere gratitude and extensive indebtedness to my supervisor the assistant professor **Shatha Al-Saadi**, whose student I, fortunately , had the honour to be .Not only her patient guidance and scholarly remarks, which brought this work to fruition , deserve thanks , but also her sisterly and friendly kindness , revealed in her highly cooperation and her mentality which never got bored with my continuous questions .**To her** as a scholar I owe a great debt.

.   Thanks and highly respect are due to Dr.Abdul- Kareem Fadil Al-Jumaili who, as one of the seminar members ,read and commented on the first draft of the proposal ;and ,then personally helped me in administering the test. In fact he is always ready to offer help and consultations.   I would like to thank Dr.Abbas Lutfi for the unfailing intelligence of his comments on my test and his fabulously   cunning   solutions   to   all   my   test   problems.

Very special thanks are extended to all my friends for their continuous encouragement and help in one way or another.   .   I must acknowledge my father's assistance during the writing of the work, and I owe a great deal to my mother for her support and boundless help.I hope this work will give her pleasure she has always been awaiting   Finally, the greatest gratitude of all goes to my brothers Hydar ,Ali, my brother in Law Raad and my sisters Layla,Suha and Zeinab**.** I shall never forget their backing me up throughout the years.   .

Huda.M.Hassen

2007

Abstract

Owing to the importance of the context free and context dependent vocabulary in EFL the present study aims at:

1- assessing the ability of EFL College students in using context free and context dependent vocabulary .

2- comparing the achievement of the students in both Colleges of Education / Ibn Rushd and College of Arts.

One null hypothesis has been posited as follows   :

There are no statistically significant differences between the achievement   of student at College of Education / Ibn Rushd and College of Arts.

The sample of the study consists of (112) second year students of the Department of English at the College of Education /Ibn Rushd , and College of Arts, University of Baghdad, where (80) students from College of Education/ Ibn Rushd, and (32)ones from College of Arts.

To verify the hypotheses, the researcher has conducted a diagnostic test, which contains the context free vocabulary at both levels of recognition and production , and the context dependent vocabulary at the above- mentioned levels , as an instrument of the present study.   .

Concerning the instrument used in the present study, face validity of the test has determined, after it has been given to a jury of specialists in

English Language Teaching and the test items are judged,valid by all the jurors.

Discriminating power and difficulty level of each item are determined after administering the pilot study in which one hundred students are assigned. All are randomly drawn from the second year,

Department of English , College of Education ,Ibn Rushd and College of Arts, University of Baghdad.(50)students are from College of Education and (50)students from College of Arts .Reliability of the test has been computed using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient after administrating the pilot study as well   .

Finally, the test has been administered to a sample of(112)students studying at second year in the Department of English, College of Education/ Ibn Rushd and College of Arts. For the analysis of data, T-test formula is used and the results reveal that:

1- the second year students at both Colleges of Education /Ibn Rushd and Arts encounter serious difficulties in both of context free and context dependent vocabulary at both levels of recognition and production.

2- The achievement of the students at the College of Arts and College of Education are nearly equal, as there is no difference in their level of achievement.

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List of Abbreviations

APP.	Appendix

DF	Degree of Freedom
DL	Difficulty Level
DP	Discriminating Power
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
FL	Foreign Language
FLT	Foreign Language Teaching
L2	Second Language
L1	Native Language
LS	Level of Significance

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and
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Bibliography

تقويم تحصيل طلبة أللغة الأنكليزية في الكلية في المفردات خارج النص وتلك المعتمدة على النص

رسالة

مقدمة الى مجلس كلية التربية للبنات في جامعة بغداد وهي جزء من متطلبات نيل درجة الماجستير في طرائق تدريس اللغة الانكليزية لغة أجنية

للطالبة

هدى محمد حسن

إشراف

الاستاذ المساعد

شذى كاظم السعدي

٢٠٠٧ م   **1428 هـ**

المستخلص

نظراً لأهميـة المفـردات المنصوصـة وغيـر المنصوصـة في اللغـة الانكليزيـة لغـة أجنبيـة ،
تهدف الدراسة الحالية الى :-

١ـ تقويم تحصيل الطلبة الدارسين للغة الأنكليزيـة لغـة أجنبيـة فـي المفـردات المنصوصـة
وغير المنصوصة .

٢ـ مقارنة تحصيل طلبة كلية التربية / أبن رشد مـع تحصيل طلبة كليـة الآداب / جامعة
بغداد في المفردات المنصوصة وغير المنصوصة .

ولغرض تحقيق الأهداف أعلاه تم وضع فرضيتان صفريتان وكما يأتي :

١ـ لا توجـد فـروق ذات دلالـة أحصـائية بيـن تحصيـل الطلبـة فـي المفـردات المنصوصـة
وغير المنصوصة .

٢ـ لا توجد فروق ذات دلالة أحصائية بين تحصيل طلبـة كليـة التربيـة / أبن رشد وكلية
الآداب ــ جامعة بغداد .

تتألف عينة الدراسة من (١١٢) فرداً من طلبة المرحلة الثانية في قسم اللغـة الأنكليزيـة ــ
كلية التربية / أبن رشد وكلية الآداب / جامعـة بغداد . (٨٠) فرداً من كليـة التربيـة أبن
رشد و(٣٢) فرداً من كلية الآداب .

ولأثبات صـحة الفرضيات ، تم صياغة إختبـار تحصيـل من قبل الباحثـة والـذي يحتوي
على المفردات المنصوصة وغير المنصوصة عند مستوى التمييز والإداء كـأداة الدراسـة
الحالية.

ولقد تم تحديد الصدق الظاهري لأداة الدراسة بعد عرض الإختبار على عدد من الخبراء
من المتخصصين في تدريس اللغـة الأنكليزيـة وأجمـع الخبـراء على إنَّ فقرات الإختبـار
جميعها ذات صدق ظاهري .

وتم تحديد مستوى الصعوبة ومعامل التمييز لكل فقرة بعد إجراء الدراسة الإستطلاعية والتي شملت (١٠٠) فرداً تم اختبارهم عشوائياً من طلبة المرحلة الثانية ، قسم اللغة الانكليزية ، كلية التربية / أبن ر وكلية الآداب / جامعة بغداد (٥٠ فرداً من كلية التربية / أبن رشد و ٥٠ فرداً من كلية الآداب) وتم إحتساب ثبات الفقرات بأستخدام معادلة الفاكرونباخ.

وأخيراً ، تم إجراء الإختبار على العينة ، ولتحليل البيانات فقد تم أستخدام معادلة الإختبار التائي وأظهرت نتائج الإختبار ما يأتي :

١ـ يواجه طلبة المرحلة الثانية في كلية التربية /أبن رشد وكلية الآداب صعوبات حقيقية في كل من المفردات المنصوصة وغير المنصوصة عند مستوى التمييز والأداء .

٢ـ تحصيل طلبة كلية التربية / أبن رشد يساوي تقريباً تحصيل طلبة كلية الآداب / جامعة بغداد وذلك لعدم وجود فرق ذو دلالة أحصائية في مستوى تحصيل الطلبة .

تثبت النتائج أعلاه فرضيات البحث المذكورة أنفاً ، وبناءً على النتائج ، تم التوصل الى الأستنتاجات ووضع التوصيات والمقترحات لدراسات مستقبلية .

Appendix 3

The Second Version of the Context Free and Context Dependent Vocabulary Test

Context- Free Vocabulary Test

Recognition

Q1 / Determine *if the following statement is true or false* **.   (6 Marks)**

1-Infamous means unknown .

2- Giggling means crying .

3- Chattering means talking .

4-Plain means simple

5- Satisfy means appease.

6- Break means rest .

Recognition

Q2/ Encircle the " odd one out " in each group.

**   (8**

Marks)

 1- scene   spectacle   sight   view   look

 2- check   ignore   examine   test   investigate

 3 -path   road   course   tower   way

4-run	manage	disperse	direct	operate
5- let	prevent	allow	permit	authorize
6- destiny	lot	fate	choice	luck
7- break	smash	build	crash	destroy
8- normal	simple	compound	clear	frank

App.3

Production

Q3/ Write the related words into groups under the given headings .

(5 Marks)

Weapons , airplane , story , bomb , boat , clinic , sand , thriller , doctor , river ,solider, artillery , receptionist , classic , prescription ,novel , tent , ticket cure , hotel

War	Camper	Travel	Fiction	Medicine

Production

Q4 / Each group of words is related to a particular subject –write down

   in the given boxes the particular subject which is connected with

   each group of words .

                                                                        (6 Marks)

mouse	tour	apple	windy	teacher	Circle
floppy disk	picnic	orange	sunny	book	rectangle
keyboard	journey	banana	foggy	pencil	Square
monitor	trip	lemon	hot	rubber	triangle