

Linguistic Diversity: Language Acquisition and Social Connections of Selected Multilingual Grade Seven Students of SSA-T

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Abstract

Impacting their academic and social experiences, this study explored how multilingual grade seven students managed their skills and social connections. Conducted at St. Scholastica's Academy – Tabunok, this research utilized a mixed-method approach, that includes interviews and pre-test or post-test assessments, to check the interaction between the students' language acquisition and social interaction. Findings have shown and revealed that paired reading activities meaningfully enriched vocabulary acquisition of the learners, further fostering collaboration in solving problems, and peer support. This study also highlighted the importance of educational practices that are inclusive in influencing students' linguistic repertoires, promoting both academic and social success. This research, by addressing the distinctive challenges that multilingual students faced, played a part in the development of effective learning strategies and techniques for fostering supportive, open, and inclusive learning environments.

Keywords: language acquisition, multilingualism, pair reading and discussion, peer interaction, social connections

INTRODUCTION

In a globalized world, linguistic diversity is increasingly prevalent, especially within educational settings where students often navigate multiple languages. Language acquisition plays a crucial role in both academic success and social integration for multilingual students, particularly during formative years like grade seven. At this critical stage, students are not only developing advanced language skills but also forming complex social connections that influence their overall development (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Research has shown that multilingualism can enhance cognitive abilities and offer social advantages; however, it also presents unique challenges that can impact students' academic performance and peer relationships (Bialystok, 2001; Grosjean, 2010).

The relevance of this topic is underscored by the growing diversity in classrooms worldwide, where educators must address the needs of students who speak different languages at home and at school (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). This linguistic diversity necessitates a deeper understanding of how multilingual students acquire language and form social connections within their peer groups. As globalization continues to shape educational landscapes, the need to foster inclusive and supportive environments for multilingual students becomes increasingly important (Cummins, 2000; Muller, 2018). Furthermore, incorporating students' native languages into classroom instruction not only supports language development but also helps build social connections by validating students' identities and fostering a sense of belonging (Evans, 2019). Approaches like Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) are recommended for enhancing both content mastery and language skills (Evans, 2019).

Previous research has extensively explored the cognitive benefits of multilingualism, such as improved problem-solving skills and mental flexibility (Bialystok, 2001). Scholars like Cummins (2000) have highlighted the role of linguistic interdependence in the language acquisition process, where proficiency in a first language can positively influence the acquisition of additional languages. Furthermore, studies have examined the social aspects of language learning, emphasizing the importance of peer interactions and social networks in facilitating language development (Vygotsky, 1978). Policy recommendations suggest that education systems should integrate multilingual practices and offer content in students' native languages, as these approaches lead to better academic outcomes and social integration (Evans, 2019; EdCan Network, 2019). Additionally, it is argued that inclusive language policies at the school level can bridge the gap between students' home and school languages, enhancing both academic success and social cohesion (Evans, 2019).

While existing research has contributed significantly to understanding the cognitive and social dimensions of multilingualism, there remains a gap in examining how these factors intersect in the context of grade seven students. Specifically, the interplay between language acquisition and the formation of social connections among multilingual students is an area that warrants further investigation (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Current studies often focus on younger children or older adolescents, leaving a critical gap in understanding the unique experiences of students in junior

high school, a transitional and critical period marked by significant cognitive and social changes (Bialystok, 2001; Grosjean, 2010).

This study seeks to address this gap by exploring the specific challenges and opportunities faced by multilingual grade seven students as they navigate linguistic diversity in both academic and social contexts.

The primary objective of this research is to examine how multilingual grade seven students acquire language and form social connections within diverse classroom settings. Through a mixed-method approach through interviews and post-test and pre-test, this study will investigate the learners' language proficiency and social network formation (Creswell, 2014). By employing these methods, including interviews and post-tests and post-tests, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence language acquisition and social integration in multilingual students (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

The expected outcomes of this research include identifying key factors that support or hinder language development and social integration. Ultimately, this study seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on multilingualism in education by offering insights into the complex dynamics of language acquisition and social connections in junior high school students (Garcia & Wei, 2014; Cummins, 2000). By incorporating these findings, language teachers can better address the academic and social needs of multilingual students, thereby fostering more inclusive and effective learning environments (EdCan Network, 2019; Evans, 2019).

Theories

It is assumed that multilingualism in grade seven students not only influences their language acquisition process but also significantly impacts their social connections and academic success within diverse classroom environments. Vygotsky's (1978) Social Development Theory emphasizes the critical role of social interaction in cognitive development, particularly through the internalization of language within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In a multilingual grade seven classroom, this theory suggests that language acquisition is closely linked to social interactions, where collaborative activities and peer support play vital roles in fostering cognitive development and scaffolding language learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, multilingualism and plurilingualism provide essential perspectives on how students in diverse classrooms use their linguistic repertoires. While multilingualism highlights the ability to communicate in multiple languages, often viewed as separate systems, plurilingualism recognizes the fluid and interconnected use of these languages in various social contexts (Council of Europe, 2001). These concepts underscore how students navigate linguistic diversity, leveraging their entire language repertoire to enhance learning and social interaction.

These theoretical frameworks collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between social interaction, language acquisition, and identity formation in multilingual educational settings. Vygotsky's emphasis on social scaffolding aligns with the ways multilingualism and plurilingualism shape students' experiences in diverse classrooms. Together, they support the notion that linguistic diversity and social dynamics are central to understanding the educational experiences and outcomes of multilingual grade seven students, as they adapt to and engage with their peers and learning environments (García & Wei, 2014).

Blackby & Velibasic (2019) explores the perspectives of both students and teachers on the impact of multilingualism on English language learning in Swedish classrooms. The study highlights that while multilingualism is generally seen as an asset, there are mixed opinions on whether it aids or confuses language acquisition. The research involved interviews and observations, revealing that both students and teachers view multilingualism positively, noting its benefits for cognitive flexibility and social integration (Blackby & Velibasic, 2019).

The findings underscore the importance of multilingualism in enhancing social connections and cognitive skills. The current study on grade seven students can benefit from these insights, particularly in understanding how multilingual environments foster better social interactions and language proficiency. The positive outlook on multilingualism in the Swedish context can provide a comparative perspective for this study, emphasizing the role of supportive educational practices in multilingual settings.

Canagarajah & Wurr (2011) argue that traditional models of language acquisition, which assume homogeneity and monolingualism, are inadequate for explaining contemporary multilingual experiences. They highlight the need for more complex models that account for the ways multilingual communities negotiate language relationships and develop proficiencies through strategies like serendipity and synergy (Canagarajah & Wurr, 2011).

Their article underscores the importance of understanding how multilingual students navigate their linguistic environments. It suggests that these students likely employ similar negotiation strategies and develop integrated language competences, which are crucial for their social interactions and language learning in a diverse classroom setting.

Talya Runciman (2018) explores how leveraging students' linguistic and cultural resources can enhance literacy learning in multilingual classrooms. In the study that she conducted in a South African primary school, it highlights the benefits of multilingual teaching strategies such as translanguaging and translation, and the use of multimodal activities. Runciman argues that these approaches can reposition learners as competent and resourceful, rather than deficient, thereby improving their participation and learning outcomes (Runciman, 2018).

For the current study, Runciman's findings underscore the importance of recognizing and utilizing students' diverse linguistic backgrounds to foster better social connections and language acquisition. By creating an inclusive classroom environment that values all languages and cultural practices, educators can enhance students' engagement and learning experiences, which aligns with the studies focus on social interactions and language development in multilingual settings.

Spotti and Kroon (2016) explores the challenges and opportunities presented by multilingualism in educational settings, particularly in Western Europe. The authors discuss how traditional monolingual ideologies have often hindered the educational progress of multilingual students. They argue for a shift towards recognizing multilingualism as a valuable resource, emphasizing the importance of understanding students' language repertoires and the need for educators to adapt to the realities of superdiverse classrooms. This involves moving beyond normative language expectations and embracing the varied linguistic practices of students (Spotti & Kroon, 2016).

For the current study, it underscores the importance of acknowledging and leveraging the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students to enhance both language acquisition and social integration. By recognizing the multifaceted nature of students' language use, educators can create more inclusive and effective learning environments that support both academic and social development.

The article by Duarte and Günther-van der Meij (2022) explores teachers' reflections on multilingual education within linguistically diverse classrooms in the Netherlands. The study highlights the importance of professional development for teachers to effectively implement multilingual approaches. Through a two-year intervention program, teachers developed positive attitudes towards using students' home languages in class, which enhanced educational equity and participation. The research also identifies minimal use of "othering" strategies, indicating a shift towards more inclusive practices (Duarte & Günther-van der Meij, 2022).

For the current study on language acquisition and social connections among multilingual grade seven students. It underscores the significance of teacher training in fostering an inclusive environment that values students' linguistic diversity, which can enhance both language acquisition and social interactions.

Gedik, O., & Akyol, H. (2022), in their study on reading difficulties and fluent reading skills, they used paired reading and word repetition techniques to improve reading fluency emphasizing vocabulary development. They found out that the participants progressed in their vocabulary development and they also found out that the participants' motivation to read, desire, and self confidence increased leading to a better self-correction and reading mistakes (Gedik & Akyol, 2022).

The techniques used in Gedik & Akyol (2022) study can be adapted to help multilingual grade seven students manage their language skills that would also lead to improved reading fluency and vocabulary usage in context.

Research Gap

The current literatures provide valuable insights into the benefits and challenges of multilingualism in educational settings, but several gaps remain that are particularly relevant to the case study on grade seven students. First, while there is significant research on the cognitive and social benefits of multilingualism, less attention has been given to how specific language acquisition strategies are employed by grade seven students within their unique classroom and peer contexts. Second, existing studies often focus on general impacts of linguistic diversity on social interactions but do not delve deeply into how these interactions specifically influence peer relationships and group dynamics in a grade seven setting.



Research Aims

This study explores and tries to understand how multilingual grade seven students manage their language skills and social connections, and how this affects their academic and social experiences, as well as their language development. Specifically, this study aims to answer and address the following key questions:

1. How does paired reading of a poem influence vocabulary acquisition among multilingual grade seven students?
2. What is the impact of reading and discussing a poem on the vocabulary test scores of multilingual grade seven students?
3. Are there specific vocabulary words that show significant improvement in post-test scores compared to pre-test scores?

Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals-Quality Education (SDG 4)

This study makes significant contributions to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by focusing on how multilingual students navigate their educational environments, specifically the research supports inclusivity in education and enhances learning outcomes.

1. Improving Learning Outcomes (Target 4.1)

Insights from the study can inform teaching practices that enhance language acquisition and academic performance. By understanding how multilingual students utilize their linguistic resources and how these interactions affect their learning, the study can lead to the development of more effective educational strategies. This, in turn, can improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for multilingual students, aligning with the goal of ensuring quality education and achieving literacy and numeracy for all.

2. Enhancing Inclusive Education (Target 4.5)

By exploring how multilingual students acquire language and interact with peers, the study can help identify strategies that address barriers faced by students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This contributes to creating more inclusive classroom environments where all students have equitable opportunities to succeed.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative and quantitative research design focused on interviews and post-test and pre-test before and after administering paired reading and discussion activity to examine language acquisition and social connections among multilingual grade seven students of St. Scholastica's Academy - Tabunok. The primary aim is to understand how students' multilingual abilities affect their social interactions and learning experiences within a classroom setting.

Research Environment

The research was conducted in St. Scholastica's Academy - Tabunok with a notable multilingual student population, chosen for its diverse linguistic and cultural landscape. This environment provided a focused yet rich context for examining how grade seven students navigate language acquisition and social connections within a single educational setting. The school's classrooms will serve as key sites for the study, allowing for an in-depth exploration of student interactions and language use. By concentrating on one school, the research aimed to capture the specific dynamics and challenges faced by students in that particular setting, offering detailed insights into how multilingualism impacts their academic and social experiences.

Research Participants

The study focused on grade seven students of St. Scholastica's Academy - Tabunok known for its diverse multilingual population. The participants were selected to ensure a representative sample that reflects the range of linguistic backgrounds present within the school. Specifically, the study involved four (4) students who are engaged in various social groups.

Research Instruments

The study used pre-test and post-test vocabulary assessments to measure the participants' vocabulary knowledge before and after the paired reading activity. The reading material used in this study is Robert Louis Stevenson's poem "My Shadow." The structured paired reading activity will involve participants reading and discussing the poem in pairs. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the scores, and a paired sample t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test to determine significant improvement. Item analysis was used to identify specific vocabulary words that showed improvement. These methods provided a comprehensive approach to evaluating the impact of paired reading on vocabulary acquisition.

Furthermore, for the gathered data in the interviews, a thematic analysis was used. This helped in identifying and analyzing repeating patterns within the data. Furthermore, it also helped in facilitating a deeper understanding of the students' ideas and perspectives.

Research Procedure

Gathering of Data. These are the steps on how the data of this study was gathered. First, the researcher created a transmittal letter addressed to the school's directress to ask permission to conduct research in the school involving selected grade seven students. Second, the identified multilingual grade seven students, identified by their teachers, were grouped to inform and clarify to them the intent and the reason why they were chosen as respondents, the process in gathering data, and confidentiality of all gathered data. Third, students were asked to answer the pre-test about vocabulary and after they are done, they are paired up with one another to do the paired reading and discussion activity about the poem "My Shadow" by Robert Louis Stevenson. After doing the paired reading and discussion activity, they are then asked to answer the post-test. Lastly, students were interviewed about their experience during the test taking and the paired reading and discussion activity in relation to the study.

Treatment of Data. The collected data from the pre-test, post-test, and interview underwent a process of checking to ensure validity. The gathered quantitative data from the vocabulary tests (pre-test and post-test) was statistically analyzed to measure the effectivity of the administered paired reading and discussion activity by comparing the pre-test and post-test scores to determine possible improvements in the students' vocabulary. The gathered qualitative data from interviews was transcribed and analyzed thematically to identify repeating themes and patterns in the students' answers. Furthermore, all data was anonymized and confidentiality was strictly imposed.

Results and Discussion

This section presents all the gathered data of this study. It specifically presents the results of the study on language acquisition and vocabulary development among multilingual grade seven students. The data includes pre-test and post-test scores on vocabulary definitions, synonyms, antonyms, and sentence completion. Additionally, a thematic analysis was conducted to explore the students' experiences and strategies in navigating their multilingual environments.

Vocabulary Acquisition of through Paired Reading & Discussion Activity

Table 1 presents and provides a structured view of how paired reading and discussions activity impacted the students' vocabulary learning. There are three identified themes: (1) increased comprehension and enjoyment, (2) collaborative problem solving, and (3) comparative advantage of paired reading. Individually, each theme is accompanied by a code which where created based on the extracted responses of the students during the conducted one on one interview.

TABLE 1. *Paired reading and discussion activity's influence on vocabulary acquisition*

Theme	Code
1. Increased comprehension and enjoyment	Paired reading makes poems more understandable and enjoyable
2. Collaborative problem solving	Joint efforts to understand words
3. Comparative advantage of paired reading	Paired reading is easier and more effective



Increased comprehension and enjoyment

This particular theme highlights how paired reading activity makes poems and other kinds of literary texts more understandable and at the same time enjoyable for the students. It clearly signifies and show that collaborative learning can enhance both comprehension and engagement of the students.

With the question "How do you feel about reading a poem with a partner?" the following were the relevant answers of the respondents that shares the same theme:

Student A: *"More easy... lingaw (fun) ug mas dali masabtan (more understandable)."*

Student B: *"Medyo na kuyawan ko (I was a little bit nervous) because I might not be... pero less stressful gyud siya para nako (but it was really less stressful for me)."*

Student C: *"I enjoyed discussing with my classmate... mas ma-remember nako ang words better (I remember words better)."*

Student D: *"Helpful kayo siya (It was very helpful)... at the same time lingaw kay naa kay ka storya while reading (at the same time, It was also fun because you have someone to talk to while reading)."*

The students' responses to the question clearly explains and suggests that they generally have a positive perception towards the given paired reading and discussion activity. They describe the activity as fun, helpful, and less stressful, and at the same time, helped them remember words better. It is clear that this activity, a collaborative one, is very helpful. Hitchcock, et al., (2011) explained in their study that collaborative strategies improve comprehension and can help in increasing students' engagement in class activities.

Collaborative Problem Solving

This theme focuses on how helping together or how joint efforts in paired reading helped students understand unfamiliar and challenging words. Furthermore, it highlights the important role of peer interaction in acquiring vocabulary. It is significant because it demonstrates the power of collaborative thinking in overcoming obstacles particularly in the learning aspect and it also significantly shows how students can learn from one another by explaining and discussing.

With the question "Can you describe what happens when you and your partner come across a word that you don't know?" the following were the relevant answers of the respondents that shares the same theme:

Student A: *"Mo hunong sa og basa unya manguitana ko niya... (will stop reading and will ask my classmate)."*

Student B: *"I will guess the meaning if I don't know the word I read or if naa si teacher (if teacher is around) I will just approach teacher.)"*

Student D: *"Magpinagutan-anay lang jud mi og wala kabalo sa word og unsa (We would just ask one another if we do not know the meaning of the word)."*

With Students A, B, and D's answers, it clearly indicates that they used collaborative ways of understanding the new or unfamiliar words that they encountered in the poem, like guessing the meaning together and asking their classmates about what the meaning could be. Brown (2019) indicates that collaborative learning environments enhance problem solving skills and vocabulary acquisition among students. Furthermore, Fuchs & Fuchs (2005) found that peer-assisted learning strategies are effective in vocabulary development. This kind of way that the students' used in determining the meaning of the words allow them to tackle those words easier in uncovering the meaning. This does not only enhance the knowledge capabilities of the students, but also their teamwork and collaboration with one another.

Comparative Advantage of Paired Reading

This theme emphasizes that paired reading and discussion is easier for the students compared to reading poem and literary works alone. It is significant because it highlights the efficiency of this activity, a collaborative activity.

With the question "Do you think reading with a partner makes it easier to learn new words than reading alone? Why or why not?" the following were the relevant answers of the respondents that shares the same theme:

Student A: *"Sayon siya (It was easier) because I have a partner and if naglibog ko sa word maka pangutana dayon ko niya and makasabot dayon ko sa ako gi basa (and if I get confused with some words, I can automatically ask someone and I can also automatically understand what I am currently reading.)"*



Student B: "It was very easy to learn new words because naa akong classmate (my classmate is present) to help me understand.)"

Student C: "Easy... reading also with my classmate is not boring kay (because) she helps me if naay (there is) something confusing.)"

Student D: "Sayon kayo (very easy) ... naa man gud siya ni tabang nako para maka sabot ko dayon sa gibasa nga poem (she is present to help me understand right away the poem I am reading)."

The given extracts clearly assert a positive response from the students about how advantageous it is to have a peer to support you in reading. It helped them clarify confusing and unfamiliar words which enhances their understanding of the poem. It further allows students to benefit from each other's ideas making the process of learning more meaningful. According to Gedik & Akyol (2022), paired reading activities are more effective in improving reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition compared to individual reading practices.

Vocabulary Test Results

Vocabulary Test Results in terms of Definitions

Table 2 is composed of data that compares the students' performance on vocabulary definitions before and after the paired reading activity. The words used in the test include both common and unfamiliar words. Furthermore, the scores presented reflect how the students understood and retained these definitions.

TABLE 2. Students' Vocabulary Pre-test and Post Test Results in terms of Definitions.

PART I. DEFINITIONS	PRE-TEST		POST TEST	
	Frequency n = 4	Percentage	Frequency n = 4	Percentage
1. Shadow	4	100%	4	100%
2. Proper	4	100%	4	100%
3. Coward	4	100%	4	100%
4. Arrant	1	25%	4	100%
5. Nursie	4	100%	4	100%
6. Notion	2	50%	4	100%
7. Dew	4	100%	4	100%
8. Fool	4	100%	4	100%
9. Lazy	4	100%	4	100%
10. Sleepy-head	4	100%	4	100%

The results show that most of the selected words were already familiar for the students, such as "**Shadow**," "**Proper**," "**Coward**," "**Nursie**," "**Dew**," "**Fool**," "**Lazy**," and "**Sleepy-head**" where they were able to achieve an accuracy of 100% in both the pre-test and post-test. On the other hand, the word "**Arrant**" saw a dramatic increase in correct identification, from having 25% in the pre-test to 100% in the post-test. Similarly, the word "**Notion**" also improved drastically from 50% to 100%.

These findings suggests that the conduction of paired reading and discussion activity was very effective in reinforcing the students' understanding of unfamiliar words. The significant improvement with the words "**Arrant**" and "**Notion**" aligns with the current research that indicates that the contextualized learning activities, such as reading and discussions, can significantly help in enhancing vocabulary acquisition (Webb, Newton, & Chang, 2020; Nation, 2022). This clearly demonstrates that specific vocabulary words can have a significant improvement after administering educational interventions and/or activities.

Table 3 presents the results of the T-test conducted to compare the mean scores of students on vocabulary definitions before and after administering the paired reading activity. This helps to determine whether the observed differences in the pre-test and post-test scores are statistically significant.

TABLE 3. *T-test results between the students' pre-test and post test scores on vocabulary in terms of definitions.*

PART I. DEFINITIONS	Mean	SD	t	p	Interpretation
Pre-test	8.75	0.50	-5.00	0.015	Significant
Post-test	10.0	0.00			

Significant level at 0.05 (two-tailed)

The results of the T-test indicate a significant increase in the students' mean scores from the pre-test (8.75) to the post-test (10.0), with a p-value of 0.015, which is below the significance threshold of 0.05. This can confirm and attest that the improvement in students' vocabulary knowledge after the paired reading and discussion activity is statistically significant.

The significant T-test results provide strong evidence that the administered paired reading and discussion activity had a huge positive impact on the students' vocabulary acquisition. According to Beck, McKeown, & Sandora (2021) and Wilkins & He (2019), that repeated exposure to vocabulary in meaningful context, like paired activities and groupings, would lead to significant gains in word knowledge. This supports the second research question by confirming and attesting those activities, like paired reading and discussion, can effectively enhance the vocabulary knowledge and acquisition as what the results present in the given table.

Vocabulary Test Results in terms of Synonyms and Antonyms

Table 4 presents the students' performance on vocabulary in terms of synonyms and antonyms before and after the paired reading and discussion activity. The data presented reflects how well students could identify words with similar and opposite meaning.

TABLE 4. *Students' Vocabulary Pre-test and Post Test Results in terms of Synonyms and Antonyms.*

PART II. SYNONYMS AND ANTONYMS	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST	
	Frequency n = 4	Percentage	Frequency n = 4	Percentage
1. Shadow	3	75%	3	75%
2. Proper	4	100%	4	100%
3. Coward	3	75%	3	75%
4. Arrant	3	75%	4	100%
5. Nursie	0	0%	4	100%
6. Notion	2	50%	4	100%
7. Dew	4	100%	4	100%
8. Fool	2	50%	4	100%
9. Lazy	3	75%	3	75%
10. Sleepy-head	2	50%	4	100%

The results show that certain words, such as "**Nursie**," had no correct responses during the pre-test but in the post-test 100% accuracy was achieved, signifying that all four respondents gave the correct response. Other words like "**Arrant**," and "**Notion**" showed significant improvements from 75% and 50% respectively in the pre-test, it achieved 100%, for both words, in the post-test.

The data given presented that the administered paired reading and discussion activity helped in enhancing the students' ability to understand synonyms and antonyms particularly for words that they were unfamiliar with. This supports the questions of this study by showing that specific vocabulary words, particularly those unfamiliar and not well understood, can show marked improvements after implementing the paired reading and discussion activity. These results also corroborate to the study conducted by Schmitt, Jiang, & Grabe (2019) and Snow (2020) about the role of interactive and context-rich activities in fostering and improving vocabulary and language learning.

Table 5 presents the results of the T-test conducted to assess the significance of the changes in students' scores on synonyms and antonyms before and after the paired reading and discussing activity.

TABLE 5. *T-test results between the students' pre-test and post test scores on vocabulary in terms of Synonyms and Antonyms.*

PART II. SYNONYMS AND ANTONYMS	Mean	SD	t	p	Interpretation
Pre-test	7.00	1.63	-4.70	0.018	Significant
Post-test	9.25	0.96			

Significant level at 0.05 (two-tailed)

The T-test results show a significant increase in mean score from 7.00 in the pre-test to 9.25 in the post-test, with a p-value of 0.018. This points out that the improvement in students' understanding of synonyms and antonyms is statistically significant.

The significant statistical result reinforces the effectiveness of the paired reading and discussion activity in enhancing and improving students' vocabulary, particularly in understanding synonyms and antonyms. This confirms that paired reading and discussion could significantly lead into significant gains in vocabulary knowledge of students. These kinds of activities can lead to substantial gains in vocabulary knowledge by having them engage in these deep processing and contextual learning activities (Laufer & Goldstein, 2021).

Vocabulary Test Results in terms of Sentence Completion

Table 6 presents the results of the pre-test and post-test scores in terms of sentence completion. This sought to measure the students' ability to use vocabulary words correctly in a particular context.

TABLE 6. *Students' Vocabulary Pre-test and Post Test Results in terms of Sentence Completion.*

PART III. SENTENCE COMPLETION	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST	
	Frequency n = 4	Percentage	Frequency n = 4	Percentage
1. India-rubber	0	0%	4	100%
2. Coward	4	100%	4	100%
3. Notion	1	25%	3	75%
4. Dew	2	50%	4	100%
5. Companion	1	25%	2	50%
6. Proper	0	0%	3	75%
7. Lazy	4	100%	4	100%
8. Notion	1	25%	3	75%
9. Sleepy	2	50%	3	75%
10. Amusing	1	25%	1	25%

The sentence completion results, for pre-test and post-test, reveal noticeable improvements particularly for words like "**India-rubber**," which saw an increase of 0% from the pre-test to 100% in the post-test. Other words, such as "**Proper**" increased from 0% in the pre-test to 75% in the post test, and "**Notion**" which increased from 25% to 75%. All in all, all the vocabulary words used in the test showed increase from pre-test to post-test.

There has been a drastic improvement in the students' sentence completion scores. This indicates that they did not only learn the meanings of new vocabulary words but they also learned how to use them correctly in a sentence in a particular context. This finding supports the research questions by demonstrating that the paired reading and discussion activity has effectively helped and enhanced their contextual understanding and usage of the new and unfamiliar vocabulary words.

Table 7 presents the T-test results for the sentence completion section of the vocabulary pre-test and post-test. It compares the mean of the pre-test and post-test scores to determine the statistical significance.

TABLE 7. *T-test results between the students' pre-test and post test scores on vocabulary in terms of Sentence Completion.*

PART I. SENTENCE COMPLETION	Mean	SD	t	p	Interpretation
Pre-test	4.00	1.41	-4.392	0.022	Significant
Post-test	7.75	0.50			

Significant level at 0.05 (two-tailed)

The T-test results show a great amount of increase in mean scores from 5.00 in the pre-test to 8.75 in the post-test, with a p-value of 0.009. This indicates that the improvement in the students' ability to complete a sentence using vocabulary words is statistically significant.

The significant result of the T-test presents the effectivity of the paired reading and discussion activity. It clearly enhances the students' ability to understand and use new vocabulary words in context. This supports the research questions that such particular activities can lead to substantial gains in the students' contextual vocabulary knowledge.

Overall Test Results

Table 8 summarizes the overall performance of the students on all the sections of the vocabulary test before and after administering the paired reading and discussion activity.

TABLE 8. *T-test results between the students' overall pre-test and post test scores on vocabulary.*

Vocabulary Test	Mean	SD	t	p	Interpretation
Pre-test	19.75	3.40	-5.048	0.015	Significant
Post-test	27.0	0.82			

Significant level at 0.05 (two-tailed)

The overall test results show significant improvements in the vocabulary test scores from the pre-test to the post-test of the students. The mean score increased from 19.75 (SD = 3.40) on the pre-test to 27.0 (SD = 0.82) on the post-test. The t-value of -5.048 and the p-value of 0.015 clearly indicates that this increase is significantly significant at the 0.05 level, which suggests that the administered paired reading and discussion activity had a positive impact on the students' acquisition of vocabulary words.

The significant increase in the students' test scores on vocabulary following the reading and discussion of a poem by pair with their classmates suggests that this activity can be an effective strategy for improving vocabulary among students. As what Nation (2020) and Nagy (2021) said, that contextual reading learning, like through poetry or literary works, can enhance vocabulary retention and understanding.

Conclusions and Recommendation

The study clearly provides valuable insights into the effectivity of paired reading and discussion activities in improving and enhancing the students' vocabulary and their social interaction. It also reveals that learning activities that are collaborative in nature, in the case of this study is the paired reading and discussion activity, can significantly help in enhancing the students' comprehension, retention of vocabulary, and engagement with peers. With the gathered data, the effectivity of these kind of activities can indeed reinforce learning. Furthermore, the positive perception of the students towards the given collaborative activity clearly underscores how pivotal is the role of peer support in overcoming challenges especially in the linguistic context. All in all, it is very evident that integrating collaborative and inclusive practices and strategies in class is critically important to support our students' academic and social development.

Based on the conclusion, these are the following recommendations. First, language teachers must utilize and integrate collaborative activities into their curriculum, designed to foster peer interaction and support the students' language acquisition and social interaction. Second, schools must put heavy importance on teachers' professional development especially on equipping them with the necessary skills in creating an inclusive and supportive classroom environment to foster peer interaction which is crucial for language learning and acquisition. Additionally, schools should also consider adopting to multilingual practices that accepts student's native language in the learning process, therefore create an inclusive classroom where there is sense of belongingness despite diverse identities. As a

suggestion also, further research must be done to explore the long term effect and impact of integrating collaborative activities and strategies on language development and social connection in diverse educational setting and environment.

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