

THE IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL LEXEMES ON READING COMPREHENSION AND EXPLICIT,IMPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS

Zokirova Elinura Jasurovna

Qarshi State University

Abstract; Educational texts are densely populated with lexemes that range from high-frequency general words to specialized academic and instructional vocabulary. This study investigates how educational lexemes—particularly those used in instructions—affect students’ reading comprehension under conditions of explicit and implicit instruction. Using a mixed-method design, the study reveals that students’ comprehension improves significantly when key lexemes are explicitly introduced and explained prior to reading. The findings highlight the importance of vocabulary instruction in content learning and suggest pedagogical strategies for scaffolding both general and discipline-specific lexemes to enhance reading comprehension.

Keywords: educational lexicon, reading comprehension, explicit instruction, implicit learning, academic vocabulary, pedagogy

Reading comprehension in academic contexts involves more than decoding words—it requires interpreting complex lexemes, often loaded with disciplinary meaning or instructional functions. Educational lexemes, such as analyze, compare, infer, and evaluate, are often assumed to be understood by learners, yet they represent significant cognitive demands, especially for second-language learners and novices.

Previous research has emphasized the importance of vocabulary knowledge in supporting comprehension. However, less attention has been given to how the **type and treatment of educational lexemes**—particularly those used in instructions—impact student understanding. The distinction between **explicit instruction** (where words are directly taught or clarified) and **implicit exposure** (where understanding is inferred from context) is particularly critical.

This study aims to explore:

- How educational lexemes influence reading comprehension;
- The comparative effects of explicit vs. implicit instruction on processing these lexemes.

Participants

The study involved 90 upper-secondary students (ages 16–18) from three schools, divided into three groups (n=30 per group).

Materials

- Three academic texts (science, social studies, and literature) were selected, each containing 10–15 high-frequency educational lexemes.
- Pre-tests and post-tests were designed to measure reading comprehension and lexical recognition.

Procedure

- **Group A** received **explicit instruction**, where educational lexemes were pre-taught and discussed.
- **Group B** received **implicit instruction**, where no prior explanation was given; students inferred meaning during reading.
- **Group C** (control group) read the texts with no instructional intervention.

Data Collection

Data were collected through comprehension quizzes, vocabulary recognition tasks, and short-answer written responses.

Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using ANOVA to compare group performance. Qualitative insights were drawn from students' written explanations and self-reflections.

The results of the study clearly indicate that explicit instruction of educational lexemes has a significant positive impact on students' reading comprehension.

Students in **Group A**, who received **explicit instruction** on key educational lexemes before reading, demonstrated the **highest comprehension scores**, with an average of **82% accuracy** on post-tests. They were able to understand task instructions better, identify the purpose of questions more precisely, and use academic vocabulary accurately in written responses.

In contrast, **Group B**, which experienced **implicit instruction** (no prior explanation of terms), scored an average of **68%**. Although some students were able to infer the meaning of the lexemes from context, their understanding was often inconsistent, particularly when encountering abstract verbs like justify, evaluate, or contrast. Errors in interpreting question prompts were frequent.

Group C, the **control group**, which received **no vocabulary support**, scored the lowest, averaging **55%**. These students often misunderstood instructions entirely or provided irrelevant answers, suggesting a clear gap in understanding academic terms essential for task completion.

Qualitative data from student reflections and short-answer responses further confirmed that **explicit exposure to educational lexemes increased student confidence and task clarity**. Students in Group A frequently expressed that pre-learning the vocabulary helped them focus on content rather than struggle with instructions.

Overall, the results demonstrate that:

- Educational lexemes play a **crucial role in shaping comprehension**.
- **Explicit instruction** leads to more accurate understanding and use of academic terms.
- **Implicit learning** alone is insufficient for consistent comprehension, particularly for less proficient readers or second-language learners.

These findings suggest that **educational lexemes function as both cognitive and instructional anchors** within academic texts. Without understanding key terms—particularly those used in question stems or reading prompts—students may misinterpret entire tasks.

The data supports **explicit instruction** as an effective strategy for enhancing reading comprehension, especially in subjects that rely heavily on academic command words (infer, critique, evaluate, interpret). Such instruction appears to reduce cognitive load, clarify expectations, and improve learner confidence.

Conversely, reliance on **implicit instruction**—though potentially useful for more advanced learners—risks alienating students who lack metalinguistic awareness or prior exposure to academic discourse.

Therefore, instructors should:

- Identify high-utility educational lexemes in learning materials;
- Pre-teach and reinforce them across contexts;
- Use scaffolding strategies such as glossaries, sentence frames, and modeling.

These steps foster deeper comprehension and enable students to engage more critically with academic content.

The findings of the study support the growing body of research that highlights the essential role of academic vocabulary—particularly **instructional lexemes**—in successful reading comprehension. The significantly higher performance of students who received explicit instruction suggests that vocabulary teaching cannot be treated as incidental or secondary in content learning.

Educational lexemes such as analyze, evaluate, justify, and compare are not only linguistic tools but also **cognitive triggers**. They guide learners in how to approach, process, and respond to a reading task. When students are unfamiliar with these terms, their ability to carry out reading or assessment tasks is compromised—not due to lack of content knowledge, but because of misunderstanding the task’s requirements.

In this context, **explicit vocabulary instruction** acts as a scaffold, helping students recognize:

- The **function of the lexeme** within a task (e.g., analyze signals a deeper breakdown than describe);
- The **expected response type**, such as explanation, evaluation, or comparison;
- The **disciplinary conventions** associated with those lexemes (e.g., what it means to evaluate in science may differ from in literature).

In contrast, **implicit instruction**, where students are left to deduce meanings from context, relies heavily on prior knowledge and inferencing skills. This method may work for high-performing or experienced learners, but it disadvantages those who are still developing academic literacy—especially **second language learners, students with limited academic exposure**, or those from **linguistically diverse backgrounds**.

Moreover, the findings stress the **importance of teacher awareness**. Educators often assume that students understand basic instructional vocabulary, yet as shown in the control group, many learners misinterpret common terms, which negatively impacts their academic performance even when they know the content.

To improve outcomes, instructional strategies should:

- Include **pre-teaching of educational lexemes** before text reading or assessment;
- Reinforce the **functions** of these lexemes through modeling and guided practice;
- Provide **multimodal exposure**, such as visual aids, sentence frames, and real examples in context.

Ultimately, academic success depends not just on learning content but on understanding how that content is presented, structured, and assessed through language. Educational lexemes are the **bridge between knowledge and its demonstration**.

Conclusion. Educational lexemes are not merely linguistic elements; they shape how learners understand and respond to academic texts. The research demonstrates that explicit instruction of key academic vocabulary significantly enhances reading comprehension, especially for learners at transitional academic levels.

Educators should integrate vocabulary instruction into content teaching, with a focus on instructional verbs and academic discourse markers. By doing so, they can build stronger foundations for comprehension, critical thinking, and academic success.

References:

1. Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2013). *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*. Guilford Press.
2. Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Nagy, W., & Townsend, D. (2012). Words as tools: Learning academic vocabulary as language acquisition. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 47(1), 91–108.
4. Marzano, R. J., & Pickering, D. J. (2005). *Building Academic Vocabulary: Teacher's Manual*. ASCD.
5. Stahl, S. A., & Fairbanks, M. M. (1986). The effects of vocabulary instruction: A model-based meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 56(1), 72–110.