

## **Effect of the Keyword Strategy on Lexical Semantic Acquisition: Recognition, Retention and Comprehension in an English as Second Language Context**

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**Abstract :** This study seeks to investigate the effect of the keyword strategy on lexico-semantic acquisition, recognition, retention and comprehension in an ESL context. The aim of the study is to determine whether the keyword strategy can be used to enhance acquisition. As a quasi- experimental research, the objectives of the study include: To determine the extent to which the scores obtained by the subjects, who were trained on the use of the keyword strategy for acquisition, differ at the pre-tests and the post-tests and also to find out the relationship in the scores obtained at these tests levels. The sample for the study consists of 300 hundred undergraduate ESL Students in the Federal College of Education, Kano. The seventy-five lexical items for acquisition belong to the lexical field category known as register, and they include Medical, Agriculture and Photography registers (MAP). These were divided in the ratio twenty-five (25) lexical items in each lexical field. The testing technique was used to collect the data while the descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for data analysis. For the purpose of testing, the two kinds of tests administered at each test level include the WARRT (Word Acquisition, Recognition, and Retention Test) and the CCPT (Cloze Comprehension Passage Test). The results of the study revealed that there are significant differences in the scores obtained between the pre-tests, and the post-tests and there are no correlations in the scores obtained as well. This implies that the keyword strategy has effectively enhanced the acquisition of the lexical items studied.

**Keywords :** keyword, lexical, semantics, strategy

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