

Silent Reading and Self-Access Reading Aloud: A Comparison of the Impact on EFL Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the effects of a reading aloud (RA) strategy on ESP college students' incidental vocabulary acquisition. The purposes of the study include (a) exploring whether extensive reading will improve students' vocabulary knowledge, (b) investigating whether a reading aloud strategy has more impact on students' incidental vocabulary acquisition, and (c) examining the relationship between different word features and incidental vocabulary acquisition. The subjects were thirty-four engineering majors enrolled in two ESP classes at Dayeh University in Taiwan. The experiment was conducted using quantitative methods to collect data. The instruments included vocabulary translation pretest, vocabulary translation posttest, reading materials in which the 24 target words were embedded, and "distractor" reading materials containing no target words. Participants read the reading materials over a six-week treatment period between the pretest and posttest. The results of the study revealed that extensive reading, whether through reading silently or reading aloud, helped students learn new words incidentally. Moreover, the reading aloud strategy was found to be more effective in promoting incidental acquisition than silent reading. Finally, in this study word length was found to play a crucial role in determining students' vocabulary acquisition. On the basis of the research findings, some pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research were proposed. First, extensive reading may help students increase vocabulary knowledge incidentally. Students should be encouraged to read aloud when reading because the reading aloud strategy is even effective than the reading silently strategy in incidental vocabulary acquisition. The reading aloud strategy even help students to remember the meaning of longer words.

Keywords : Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition、 Reading Silently、 Reading Aloud、 Word Features

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