

ESP Vocabulary Acquisition and Retention through Reading Aloud: Incidental vs. Intentional Learning

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ABSTRACT

A quasi-experimental study was conducted to examine the effects of reading aloud strategy on ESP students' vocabulary acquisition under incidental and intentional learning modes. The purposes of the study therefore include (a) investigating whether reading aloud strategy results in more learners' vocabulary acquisition than reading silently strategy under incidental and intentional learning modes and (b) understanding students' attitudes toward the reading aloud strategy. Participants were two classes of ESP students, 72 in total, in a university of Central Taiwan. One class acquired vocabulary via reading under an incidental mode and the other under an intentional mode. The experiment was conducted 2 hours per week for six weeks. Twenty-four lexical items were selected as target words and dispersed in the reading passages. A general vocabulary level test was administered in the first two weeks for pairing students to the two reading strategies. Vocabulary pretests were conducted before the treatment. During the six-week treatment, students were instructed to read six narrative passages silently and read six narrative passages aloud every week. Four comprehension questions followed the reading to guarantee that students did read those narrative passages. A posttest was administered immediately after the treatment. Results of the two-way ANOVA simple main effects indicate that reading aloud strategy results in more learners' vocabulary acquisition than reading silently strategy under both incidental and intentional learning modes. However, the difference does not reach the significance level ($p = .05$). Students' answers to the questionnaire signify that students hold positive attitudes toward the reading aloud strategy.

Keywords : Incidental vocabulary acquisition ; Intentional vocabulary acquisition ; Reading silently ; Reading aloud

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