The effects of pre-teaching academic and technical vocabulary visually and cognitively on learners’ retention

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The field of cognitive psychology has indicated that lexical activities which require deeper processing and manipulation of information can enhance retention of the target words (Schmitt, 1997). On the other hand, the results of incidental vocabulary learning in second language acquisition may have been overestimated (Horst et al. 1998). Jenkin et al. (1984) emphasized on the importance of distinguishing the learners’ ability of guessing of the correct meanings of the contextualized words and their ability of retaining such meanings afterwards.

The researcher proposes to develop an explicit and cognitive strategy for teaching non-concrete academic and technical lexis in an ESP course. This study investigates strategies for teaching non-concrete academic and technical words. This is a 2*2 design: items are either taught before or after the relevant class activity and are either presented visually or in a written form. A pre-test was conducted to check the learners’ knowledge of the target words before the start of the experiment.

The control groups are being taught the target vocabulary implicitly whereas the experimental groups are being taught the target vocabulary explicitly. The control and experimental groups are being tested through two levels of vocabulary knowledge tests (meaning recognition, and meaning recall). Results are being analysed comparatively to answer the research questions. Recommendations and conclusions will be based on the initial results of the study.

References


Keywords: cognitive learning, vocabulary, pre-teaching, explicit teaching.