Recognition vocabulary knowledge and intelligence as predictors of academic achievement in EFL context

Ahmed Masrai
Swansea University, United Kingdom

Research has shown that vocabulary knowledge (e.g., Milton & Treffers-Daller, 2013) and general intelligence (e.g., Laidra et al., 2007) are good predictors of academic achievement. However, the effect of these factors has mostly been examined separately, so in this study we examine these factors as part of an overall predictive model of academic performance. It will present findings of L1 vocabulary knowledge, L2 vocabulary knowledge, L2 academic vocabulary knowledge, and intelligence (IQ) as predictors of overall academic achievement among learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). Performance on these measures was correlated with Grade Point Average (GPA) as a measure of academic achievement for Arabic L1 users (N= 43) at an English-medium College of languages and translation in Saudi Arabia. The findings show positive significant correlations between all the measures and academic achievement. However, academic vocabulary knowledge shows the strongest correlations ($r = .77$). To further explore the data, multiple regression analyses were performed. The results show that only academic vocabulary knowledge was included in the model, and explained about 60% of the variance per se. The findings, thus, suggest that, in addition to L1 and L2 vocabulary size, and IQ, knowledge of academic vocabulary is an important factor that explains academic achievement.

References


Keywords: Intelligence, academic achievement, vocabulary knowledge.