

Incidental Learning Acquisition of English Language Vocabulary through CALL: A Study

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Introduction

English is the most established foreign language to learn in India while it does not function as a means of communication and education in high school or tertiary levels across the country. English is considered as a means to progress in one's education and career. In learning English, incidental acquisition of English vocabulary plays a major role. Incidental vocabulary acquisition, through targeted language reading, has shown to increase encounters with vocabulary that allows the learner to deduce contextual meaning (Maghsoudi, Talebi & Mirkamali, 2014). Vocabulary is the first phase of the target language to which learners have a tendency to pay responsiveness. Learners also tend to understand the vocabulary as they learn the story simultaneously upon which their language development is assessed by the researcher.

The intentional and incidental learning were originally introduced within the twentieth century by behaviorist psychological science, conceptualizing learning in terms of stimulus-response contingencies (Postman & Keppel, 1969). Incidental learning is a term used in applied linguistics, to refer to the acquisition of words without the conscious effort. It stresses on how people 'incidentally learn' or 'pick up' factual knowledge, such as words, names, dates,

events, descriptions, or explanations easily without effort. It differs from intentional learning, which states, it's a cautious effort to feed information into memory, like the use of rehearsal techniques, preparing for a test in school or learning a song by heart. This type of learning brings about a concept where inactive learning intermingles fluidly with active learning (Alemi & Tayebi, 2011).

This research paper examines the incidental acquisition of English vocabulary by Tamil-speaking (EFL) learners. Employing reading comprehension exercises as an experiment, the researcher adopted the experimental method and conducted pre-test and post-test. Modern research has continually increased frequency in seeking to highlight the use of reading for vocabulary retention, comprehension and production through multiple reading mediums (Choo, Ai Lin, & Pandian, 2012). The researcher examines the participants based on multiple choice questions, as well as through writing sentences, to determine the effectiveness of the experiment on the participants' incidental acquisition of English vocabulary. For the purpose of the study, the researcher divided the participants into two groups, one is the experimental group, who engaged in reading comprehension as well as CALL program. The control group who did not take part in the CALL program focused on reading comprehension. The researcher used multiple-choice based test to measure the participants' receptive and production of English vocabulary. The researcher also conducted an introspective session with the experimental group after finding the areas of difficulty by their performance of the post-test. The results of the study mainly point to that reading accompanied by CALL exercises resulted in better incidental achievements in the acquisition of English vocabulary.

The Study

The findings of the present study comprise the analysis of the incidental learning by the third year Bishop Heber College students. Totally 120 students participated in the task. 60 students participated in the control group, another 60 students participated in the experimental group. The analyses of the pre test and the post test results are given. Findings and discussion are summarized as follows.

Control Group

Mean value of Pre-test and Post-test					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	Control Pre test	19.92	60	3.346	.432
	Control Post test	22.00	60	3.420	.441

Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
	Control Pre-test & Control Post test	60	.890	.000

T-Value of Pre-test and Post-test								
		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			

	Control Pre test - Control Post test	-2.083	1.587	.205	-2.493	-1.673	-10.169	59	.000
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Experimental Group

Mean value of Pre-test and Post-test						
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
	Experimental Group Pre test	19.18	60	3.301	.426	
	Experimental Group Post test	23.90	60	3.413	.441	

Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
	Control Pre-test & Control Post test	60	.890	.000

T-Value of Pre-test and Post-test								
		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			

Experimental Group Pre test - Experimental Group Post test	-4.717	1.860	.240	-5.197	-4.236	-19.639	59	.000
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Comparison of Control Group Post-test and Experimental Group Post test

Mean value of comparison					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	Control group post test	22.00	60	3.420	.441
	Experimental Group Post test	23.90	60	3.413	.441

Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
	Control group post test & Experimental Group Post test	60	-.030	.817

T-Value							
	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
				Lower			

Control group post test - Experimental Group Post test	-1.900	4.905	.633	-3.167	-.633	-3.001	59	.004
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Number of students: 120; Experimental subjects - 60; Comparisons - 60

Conclusion

The result of the tasks is meaningfully stimulating and worth stating. The tasks delivered a new learning atmosphere and unlocked opportunities to involve learners in activities. Comprehension as well as language lab activities enabled everyone to involve themselves in active learning, which is the best way to learn vocabulary. The visual as well as traditional teaching method, made every learner to contribute to the task and became a forum for active participation. It directed the learners to progress to a great degree. Though learners, in a new learning condition, were able to focus on the tasks. Fear and inferiority complex were dismissed and helped learners to improve their confidence level.

References

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