

Investigating The Impact of Extensive Reading on Improving Sudanese University students' Vocabulary Learning

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Abstract:

The study aimed to investigate the impact of extensive reading on improving Sudanese university students' vocabulary learning. Vocabulary is very important for students to practise the language as a mean of communication. Therefore, extensive reading is one of vocabulary learning strategies as extensive reading enables students to enrich their vocabulary and to overcome the difficulties and their weakness of vocabulary. The researcher used descriptive analytical method to achieve the objectives and aims of the study and questionnaire is used as tool for data collection_which showed the opinions and views of students. The population of the study was chosen from students who are studying in the second year, college of Languages – English language section at Sudan University of Science and Technology. The study findings showed the importance of extensive reading for learning and improving vocabulary and it is an effective way for learning vocabulary, in addition to the skills and techniques that are important students to learn language. So, the researcher recommended students to read extensively in order to widen their choices for improving their vocabulary and to overcome the weakness of vocabulary as extensive reading encourages and help them to avoid the boredom of reading process.

Key words: Extensive reading, improving vocabulary, variety of texts, multiple exposure and repetition of words, reading a lot of texts, knowledge of spelling and meaning of words.

المستخلص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة تأثير القراءة الشاملة المكثفة في تحسين تعلم المصطلحات اللغوية لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية. وتتمثل العينة لهذه الدراسة بطلاب السنة الثانية - قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية اللغات بجامعة السودان للعلوم والتكنولوجيا. وقام الباحث باستخدام المنهج الوصفي التحليلي للبيانات و المعلومات ، وكذلك استخدم الباحث الاستبانة كأداة لجمع البيانات و المعلومات لمعرفة آراء الطلاب للتحقق من فرضيات الدراسة و أهدافها. و بعد تحليل و مناقشة البيانات و المعلومات التي أجاب عليها الطلاب توصلت الدراسة إلى أهمية دور القراءة الشاملة المكثفة في تحسين تعلم المصطلحات اللغوية وفقا للمعاني و الإملاء . و من ثم وصى الباحث ببعض التوصيات أهمها أن يقوم الطلاب بالاطلاع والقراءة على مختلف أنواع المواضيع التي توفر لهم الفرصة لتحسين و تطوير و استخدام المصطلحات اللغوية. وكذلك القراءة الشاملة المكثفة توفر فرصة للتعرض للعديد من المصطلحات بصياغات مختلفة بما يمكنهم من استخدام هذه المصطلحات للتعبير عن أنفسهم. و تجنب الطرق المملة لتطوير تعلم المصطلحات اللغوية مما يؤدي إلى تعلم غير مباشر .

Introduction :

Extensive reading has a great role in learning vocabulary as it's creates an

academic environment for language learner to learn the terms indirectly and implicitly.

Through extensive reading, the students come across with words in different contexts as well as the multiple exposure of words by repetition of these words within the reading text enable students to remember the meaning and spelling of the words .The relationship between vocabulary and reading is believed to be reciprocal. That is, the greater knowledge of vocabulary words a reader has, the greater the speed at which a person is able to comprehend a particular written text, which leads to a greater sense of personal accomplishment. This sense of accomplishment may likely motivate the person to read more , which, in turn, causes him/her to encounter and acquire more words.

Statement of the problem:

The problem which faces language learner to practise language skills is the weakness of vocabulary , so learning vocabulary is inevitable for the language learner in order to deal with the language as a mean of communication. Extensive reading enables language learner to solve this problem by many ways such as the knowledge of the meaning and spelling of the word indirectly and avoid the bored process of learning vocabulary. .

Objectives of the study:

The study aimed to:

- 1- To draw the attention of students to the importance of extensive reading
- 2- To show the advantages, skills and techniques for language learning by extensive reading.
- 3- To show how extensive reading enables students to improve their vocabulary
- 4- To encourage students to read extensively in order to improve and enrich their vocabulary

Questions of the study:

The study tried to answer the following questions:

1. How extensive reading helps students to enrich and improve their vocabulary?
2. What is the importance of extensive reading for improving vocabulary?
3. What are the advantages of extensive reading for learning and improving vocabulary?

Hypotheses of the study:

* Extensive reading is the most effective way for learning and improving vocabulary

* Extensive reading enables students to acquire linguistic skills and techniques as language learners.

* Reading variety of texts enables students to overcome the difficulties of using vocabulary as they come across with words frequently in different contexts.

Significance of the study:

The importance of extensive reading for language learner refers to the great impact of extensive reading on learning and enrichment of vocabulary . Extensive reading is one of vocabulary learning strategies and it is an effective way for learning vocabulary indirectly (spontaneously). Also there are many language skills and techniques are acquired by students during the process of reading

Limits and scope of the study:

This is descriptive analytical study concentrated on the impact of extensive reading on improving vocabulary learning for university students of the second year –English language section – College of Languages – SUST and the study showed their views and opinions about the impact of extensive reading on improving vocabulary learning .



Literature Review:

In extensive reading, quantity of reading is emphasized, with attention given to student choice over reading material. Priority is placed on fluency over accuracy, and on overall comprehension rather than detailed understanding of every word and syntactical structure. Extensive reading is more autonomous than the teacher-centered intensive reading approach, and puts the responsibility on students to monitor their own progress and strive to become life-long L2 readers.

As a result of these revisions in thinking about the place of extensive reading in L2 reading methodology, current best practices in EFL teaching now assume a balanced approach of intensive and extensive reading. ESL teaching methodology specialist Harmer states that in order to get maximum benefit from their reading, students need to be involved in both extensive and intensive reading. Reading specialist Anderson believes that good readers do more extensive reading than intensive reading. But what makes the reader a good reader is that he/she has developed the strategies and skills through intensive reading that are transferred to extensive reading contexts.

Krashen (1989) claimed that the most effective way for learners to acquire new vocabulary and develop their spelling ability is through exposure to large amounts of “comprehensible input” via extensive reading. Since free reading of materials that students like is also a low-anxiety activity, Krashen argues that such reading activities are the most efficient means by which a learner can acquire new vocabulary.

Extensive reading as defined by some authors it is one’s engagement in reading for pleasure about a wide range of subjects that are linguistically /culturally relevant

and appropriate. Taking different forms, e.g. sustained silent reading (SSR) in class, collaborative literacy clubs and voluntary reading outside school, extensive reading has the potential to help learners acquire good reading habits, increase their knowledge of vocabulary words, and gain a lifelong love of reading. Primarily, in an ER program, learners receive no direct instruction, nor will they be assessed or excluded

Kweon and Kim (2008) states that second language vocabulary can be learned incidentally while the learner is engaged in extensive reading or reading for meaning, inferring the meaning of unknown words. Many scholars have agreed that much second language (L2) vocabulary is learned incidentally while learners are engaged in extensive reading (ER) or reading for meaning and in inferring the meanings of unknown words

Ghanbari & Marzaban (2013) explained the role of extensive reading on vocabulary retention. Much has been written, on both theoretical and empirical levels, about the idea of extensive reading and the suggestion that some kind of extensive reading activities need to be incorporated into second language (L2) communicative contexts.

Davis (1942) described comprehension as comprised of two skills : word knowledge, or vocabulary, and reasoning. Words represent complex and, often, multiple meanings. Furthermore, these complex, multiple meanings of words need to be understood in the context of other words in the sentences and paragraphs of texts. Not only are students expected to understand words in texts, but also texts can be expected to introduce them to many new words. The vocabulary of written language is much more extensive and diverse than the vocabulary of oral language.

The National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) identified the components of reading as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Vocabulary holds a special place among the other components in reading .

Amir and Bulca (2012) mentioned that while developing the second language, one of the most valuable and encouraging skills is the reading skill. In fact, it is an indispensable part of language acquisition. It is through this receptive skill that many students become aware that they can become competent in terms of comprehending and responding to form an opinion and infer hidden ideas in a text. Reading can also help students develop a stronger self-confidence in using the second language as well.

Extensive reading is described as an approach of teaching and learning a foreign language through reading texts or books that are chosen personally by the students guided by the instructors. In this approach, the main aim is to develop a reading habit on the part of students, let them enjoy their reading, and have a general comprehension of what they read without using dictionaries. That is to say, through this type of foreign language exposure by reading and freedom of choice, the students can experience a new practice that might have a motivating impact on their language learning.

According to Lee and Mallinder; there are several characteristics of ER likely have contributed to these positive results in EFL vocabulary development . The first characteristic is the variety as the majority of daily speech employs merely 2000 basic words ; extensive reading exposes language students to a wider selection of vocabulary that may not be available in spoken discourse. The reading materials should deal with a wide range of subject

matter. While narrow reading focuses on in-depth studying of one topic, extensive reading instead stresses exposing students to different subjects and genres in order to construct / expand their word schemata. The second characteristic, repetition as previously discussed, multiple meetings of a given word increase the chance of learning. Through extensive reading, students can retain and deepen their recently acquired knowledge. The third characteristic flexibility as teachers cannot possibly teach every single word in the classroom. Extensive reading, an activity which students can continue to do and enjoy after school, encourages as well as ensures that students become more independent and responsible learners of new vocabulary . The fourth characteristic readability that means reading materials should be short and not far beyond students' current linguistic levels . The improvement comes from reading a lot of easy material. The sixth characteristic appropriateness and authenticity that prior background knowledge has an essential impact on reading comprehension, the selected materials should be culturally familiar and authentic .The seventh characteristic, attraction that means materials need to be appealing to the students. When supplied with materials of high interest, students not only read more but they also apply more reading strategies .

Vocabulary knowledge has long been seen as an indicator of power and wisdom because it enables people to express thoughts, comprehend messages and exchange ideas both orally and in writing .

Methodology of the study:

The researcher used descriptive analytical method to conduct this study . Also, the researcher used questionnaire as a tool for collecting data.

The population of the study was the students of English language who are studying in the second year – College of Languages – Sudan University of Science and Technology. The researcher distributed the questionnaire to students in order to achieve the goals of the study .

The following questions were answered by students (as language learners) which reflected their opinions and views about the impact of extensive reading on learning vocabulary The replies were transferred to statistic results as showed the effectiveness of extensive reading on learning vocabulary.

Statistical Results:

Statement .(1) . Extensive reading enhances learning vocabulary implicitly (spontaneously)

Students' Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Number of students	18	19	9	9	1
Percentage	32.14%	33.92%	16.07%	16.07%	1.78%

According to the table 65% of students agreed with researcher suppose that extensive reading enhances learning vocabulary implicitly. As we noticed that most of students consider extensive reading enable them to learn vocabulary implicitly not intentionally as the

students known the meaning and spelling of the word indirectly in addition how the word is used in terms of context and structure. We can say that extensive reading helps students to learn vocabulary spontaneously, even those who don't intend to learn vocabulary.

Statement .(2). Extensive reading enhances the multiple exposure of words

Students' Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Number of students	13	19	21	2	1
Percentage	23.21%	33.92%	37.50%	3.57%	1.78%

From the above table over half of the students (56%) agreed that extensive reading enhances multiple exposure of words. If we ignore the neutral students, most of students see that extensive reading gives them opportunity to come across with words frequently when they

read a lot as some students don't know the meaning or the correct spelling from the first time, therefore when they come across with the word many times while reading in a text that consolidate the spelling and enable them to understand the meaning.

Statement .(3). Extensive reading has an impact on the guessing of meaning

Students' Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Number of students	19	24	4	7	2
Percentage	33.92%	42.85%	7.14%	12.50%	3.57%

From the above table about 87% of the students agreed with researcher suppose, that means reading skills enhance guessing of meaning. So the large majority of students thought that reading skills help them to guess the meaning of the new words from the

context. Also, it is important for students to focus on reading texts as they come across with new words while reading and the contexts of these new words enable them to guess the meaning when they concentrate on the sentence structure and they can develop the cognitive abilities.

Statement. (4). Extensive reading enhances the enrichment of vocabulary

Students' Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Number of students	18	19	9	7	3
Percentage	32.14%	33.92%	16.07%	12.50%	5.35%

From the above table about 66% of students consider extensive reading enrich vocabulary while about 18% of students disagree with researcher suppose and 16% of students are not sure. This shows that extensive reading

helps students to increase their vocabulary by reading lots of texts which contain large number of vocabulary as well as the multiple exposure of words by extensive reading consolidate the spelling and meaning.

Statement .(5) . The frequency of a word during reading consolidates spelling

Students' Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Number of students	8	28	12	7	1
Percentage	14.28%	50%	21.42%	12.50%	1.78%

From the above table the majority of students agreed with researcher suppose that reading skills consolidate spelling . The majority of students think that the frequency of a certain word in a text consolidates the spelling of this word

which has reflection in the using of the word by students when they express themselves. So extensive reading and the variety of reading texts are so important for students as expose certain words to students many times while reading texts

Statement . (6) . The multiple exposure of a word through reading facilitate the use of the word in different contexts

Students' Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Number of students	10	20	11	11	4
Percentage	17.85%	35.71%	19.64%	19.64%	7.14%

From the above table over half (53%) of students agreed the frequency of words during reading facilitate the using of words in different contexts . This shows that multiple exposure and repetition of a word while reading particularly in various texts that enable students to know how a word is used and contextualized in reading texts.

The survey results showed that there is a strong relationship between extensive reading and vocabulary learning . Extensive reading enhances and consolidates the meaning and spelling of the word by frequency and multiple exposure of words during the process of reading texts , Also, it enriches vocabulary by reading a lot of texts .

Results of Discussion :

The study results show the advantages of extensive reading for students to improve their vocabulary. Extensive reading enables students to overcome the difficulties that they might face and the weakness of vocabulary. The students can learn strategies and techniques that help them to improve their vocabulary by extensive reading.

It is clearly that extensive reading is an effective way for learning vocabulary as the survey showed. So, it is important for students to improve and enrich their vocabulary by making an effort to read extensively and independently. The results showed that extensive reading encourages students to enrich their vocabulary, as it enables them to learn vocabulary spontaneously and they avoid ridiculous way of learning vocabulary. Through reading various texts, the students come across with words frequently which consolidate the meaning and spelling of words. Also, the multiple exposure and repetition of words in different contexts show how these words are used, so students learn how to use these words to express themselves.

Conclusion:

The study was intended to investigate the impact of extensive reading on improving vocabulary learning for university students. To conduct and achieve the goals of the study, the researcher used questionnaire as a tool for collecting data and distributed to the students of the second year – English language section – College of Languages at Sudan University of Science and Technology. After the analysis and discussion of results, it is found that most of students consider extensive reading has a great role in improving vocabulary learning as it enhances the process of learning vocabulary implicitly and

spontaneously and it consolidates the meaning and spelling of words by multiple exposure and repetition of words in different contexts.

Recommendations :

According to the findings of the study the researcher suggested the following recommendations:

1. University students should read extensively to widen the choices for improving their vocabulary
2. Students have to vary reading texts as help them to avoid the boredom of reading process
3. The students should read a lot which enable them to learn skills and techniques to improve their vocabulary.
4. Students should read extensively as it helps them to overcome the difficulties of using vocabulary
5. Students have to focus and concentrate on the contexts of words during reading which has reflection on the guessing of meaning

Suggestions for further studies:

1. the weakness of vocabulary in Sudanese secondary schools
2. The Impact of availability of library books for students

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