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BIPOLAR SYNERGIES: THE ROLE OF DIACHRONIC AND SYNCHRONIC STUDY OF WORDS IN CONTENT COMPREHENSION AT TERTIARY LEVEL

Abstract

The present study was conducted to investigate the use of etymology and semantic grouping as cognitive vocabulary learning strategies in professional colleges like engineering colleges to enhance the L2 learners' reading comprehension of academic texts. Despite a plethora of research in ESP, specific vocabulary learning strategies in relation to multilingual student population elude ESP practitioners entrusted with the task of providing the learners with enough lexical knowledge to read and understand the textbooks written in English. Hence a diagnostic study was conducted among 370 students of an engineering college in India, a country where students receive school education through 42 languages. Based on the results, an experimental study was conducted among 80 students. The experimental group was provided with vocabulary strategies at cognitive level to enhance reading comprehension. A paired samples t-test was conducted to find the difference in the means of the post-test and the pre-test of the experimental group. The *t*-value was 15.43 and when the standardized difference between the means was calculated in terms of Cohen's *d*, the value was 2.4, which was very large (>0.8). Thus, the study underscored the assumption that more than word meanings, the word meaning processes are causal components of comprehension skill.

Key words

ESP, L2 learners, content vocabulary, cognitive learning, reading.

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