



Using vocabulary as an instructional scaffolding technique to boost English language skills

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Abstract

In the current trends of communication and globalization, the knowledge of vocabulary is of paramount importance. With a vocabulary package, people can read any texts and understand them. Additionally, it is easy to communicate when people have enough vocabulary. The present study is a class enquiry. It involved 30 students doing English for Specific Purposes at the University of Rwanda, College of Business and Economics, Business Administration option. Facing the challenge of getting students to effectively communicate in English and understand reading materials, the purpose of the study was to investigate into the role of vocabulary to the understanding of reading texts, speaking and writing activities. Data collection tools were individual evaluations, debates, a questionnaire and class observations. Findings revealed that vocabulary activities prior to reading provide students with many benefits. As students reported, vocabulary increased their understanding of the text and helps them exchange ideas and increase language skills while discussing vocabulary related exercises. Findings also indicated that the vocabulary activities helped students write in an effective way, applying new terms and writing freely. Therefore, it is recommended that vocabulary should be worked on thoroughly in order to foster reading comprehension, speaking and writing.

Key words: Communication, instructional scaffolding, English language skills