

Enhancing French Vocabulary Acquisition: The Impact of Explicit Instruction on Productive Non-Cognate Suffixes for Beginner Learners

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Abstract

This research delves into the effectiveness of explicitly teaching productive non-cognate French suffixes to English beginner learners of the French language. It is widely accepted that cognates, especially orthographic ones, can be inferred by learners from their first language (in this case, English). The same is the case for derived French words with cognate suffixes, provided the learner is familiar with the lemma which can either be a cognate or non-cognate. However, the same cannot be said for derived French words with non-cognate suffixes. These suffixes often pose challenges to learners, even when the base word is familiar to them. The primary goal of this research is to enhance the vocabulary comprehension and expansion of English-speaking beginners in French by focusing on the recognition of derived French words that may not align with their L1 knowledge.

The methodology employed in this study of derivational morphology involves an experimental group receiving explicit instruction on productive non-cognate suffixes, while a control group does not. By utilizing confidence ratings and other analytical tools, the analysis aims to measure the impact of this targeted instruction on the learners' ability to understand and incorporate non-cognate suffixes into their French vocabulary. Through this experimental approach, the research seeks to provide valuable insights into how explicit instruction on non-cognate suffixes can benefit beginner French learners, ultimately aiding them in navigating the intricacies of French derivational morphology.

Keywords: Vocabulary Acquisition, Non-cognate suffixes, Cognate Suffixes, Derivational Morphology, French Language Learners