

Abstract

This study is an attempt to explore the difference between acquiring new words with different semantic fields to which they belong. In other words, the purpose of this study is to scrutinize the contribution of semantic field theory in learning new vocabulary items in an EFL setting. Thirty-eight students of three different levels of education took part in this research. They were exposed to some new words from four different semantic fields, and then they were tested on their acquisition of the words meaning. This exposure was through reading texts and the aim of reading was just comprehension, therefore the words were acquired incidentally. The outcome showed significant differences between groups with different levels of education regarding retention of words from different semantic fields.

Keywords: semantic network, incidental vocabulary learning, semantic field theory