



## The effect of semantic Clustering on The Acquisition of English Vocabulary by EFL Learners

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### Abstract

Vocabulary is a key element in the second language class while grammar is important for meaning, without vocabulary no message is conveyed. Language learners are faced on a daily basis with the task of acquiring and retaining new vocabulary. One of the main tasks of a language teacher, then, is to help students develop sufficient large Vocabulary. Nevertheless, some language teachers ignore this fundamental fact, assuming that the Vocabulary will take care of itself through repeated exposure and classroom activities. Not surprisingly, vocabulary development is especially important for English-language learners. Poor vocabulary is a serious issue for the students (Calderon et al., 2005).

Within the last few years, vocabulary has become viewed as an important aspect in second language learning, in fact, many believe just as important as the main skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In this paper, the aim is to answer to the question that if "semantic clustering has any effect (positive or negative) on the acquisition of words?" in order to answer to this question two groups of English learners were chosen at the elementary level. The instrument is to teach different semantic classified words in the first group and semantic sporadic vocabulary for the control group. The results revealed that learners, who have been taught classified semantic words, did better than the second group that have been taught unclassified semantic word.

**Key words:** vocabulary, semantic clustering, acquisition, sporadic

### 1- Introduction

Broadly defined, vocabulary is knowledge of words and word meanings. as steven stahl (2005) puts it," vocabulary knowledge is knowledge ; the knowledge of a word not only implies definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world." Vocabulary is not something that can ever be fully mastered; it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a life. Instruction in vocabulary involves far more than looking up words in a dictionary and using words in a dictionary and using words in a sentence. However, vocabulary is more complex than this definition suggests. First, words come in two forms: oral and print. Oral vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in listening and speaking. While print vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in reading and writing. Second, word knowledge also comes in two forms receptive and productive. Receptive vocabulary includes words we recognize when we hear or see them. Productive words vocabulary consists of words that we use when we speak or write. Receptive vocabulary is typically larger than productive vocabulary, and may include many words to which we assign some meaning, even if we do not know their full definition and connotation – or even use them ourselves as we speak