The Effect of Text Length on Iranian EFL Learner's Learning and Retention of New Vocabulary Items Presented Through Pictures and L1- Equivalents

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The aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of text length on the acquisition of vocabulary through picture and L1 equivalent glosses. Moreover, it was intended to find out the long term effect of vocabulary glosses on incidental vocabulary learning. To these ends, through an OPT, 100 female EFL high school senior students in lower intermediate level were selected out of 150 students studying at two high schools in Isfahan (Parto Danesh and Haj Hossein Navaee) and randomly assigned to four groups. One week prior to the main instruction a vocabulary pre-test was administered to make sure that these four groups had no pre-knowledge of the vocabulary items. Students in four groups read a passage called "A scary Night". Two texts (long/short) were utilized in this study. One of these two texts was a shortened version of the original text that was shortened based on crounchene's (1995), Riazi and Mehrpour (2004) criteria. The instruction was implemented through a reading text given to the groups under one of these four conditions: group A) long text with picture, group B) short text with picture, group C) long text with L1 equivalent, group D) short text with L1 equivalent. An immediate post-test was given to the participants after reading the texts and after 2 week span a delayed post-test was given to examine the long term effect of instruction. SPSS version 21 was used to analyze the data. The results of independent- samples t-test and two-way ANOVA indicated that text
length had no significant effect on learner's incidental vocabulary learning through picture glosses and Persian equivalents. However, the results showed the meaningful effect of picture glosses on vocabulary learning. The results of the delayed post tests revealed no significant difference between the performance of long text and short text groups, therefore, it was learnt that the time of test made no change in the relative effect of presenting the word glosses. Two-way ANOVA results indicated no significant interaction between picture gloss or L1 equivalent gloss and text length. The findings of the study imply that presentation of picture glosses is an efficient method of vocabulary learning, but text length is not a determining factor in incidental vocabulary learning neither with picture gloss nor with L1 equivalent