

ABSTRACT

The Effect of Thematic and Semantically Unrelated Grouping on Learning Efficiency and Retention of Vocabulary

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This study investigated the effects of teaching vocabulary in thematically related sets versus unrelated sets in the context of various forms of rich vocabulary instruction. Data were collected through the administration of 32 words over five lessons, to two Standard 4 classes, comprising 65 students, at a primary school in Trinidad and Tobago. The two classes were assigned randomly to the Thematic and Unrelated Sets treatment. The findings showed significant differences between the groups on knowledge of word meanings. Students who were taught using Thematic Sets outperformed those who received instruction through both the Unrelated Sets and traditional instruction in vocabulary breadth and vocabulary depth measures. Students in both groups also performed better than those receiving traditional instruction.

Keywords: Vocabulary development; Teaching techniques; Primary school students; Reading instruction; Language education; Trinidad and Tobago