

## THE IMPACT OF VERBAL WORKING MEMORY ON VOCABULARY ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study is the examination of the role of verbal working memory in vocabulary acquisition in second language learners of English. Previous studies have shown that verbal working memory positively affects the acquisition and learning of new words. In the present study we tested the receptive vocabulary knowledge of the students, followed by feedback, when needed; then it was a fifteen-minute interval, where a verbal working memory task was administered. Afterwards, we asked them to name the words presented in the *Receptive Vocabulary Task* in order to detect how many of the unknown words do they remember and a week after we run the same expressive vocabulary task so as to check how many of the unknown words were acquired. Our findings have shown that (a) our students have scored higher during the re-administration of the *Expressive Vocabulary Task* and (b) a correlation was detected between the *Receptive Vocabulary Task* and the re-administration of the *Expressive Vocabulary Task* a week after. We may deduce that the finding manifests the impact of the feedback and repetition, in line with the working memory skills of the participants, as significant factors in vocabulary acquisition. The finding also suggests the inclusion of the aforementioned factors in our teaching methods.

**Keywords:** Expressive and receptive vocabulary knowledge, verbal working memory, English as a second language.