

# *The Effect of Reading Purpose on Incidental Acquisition and Retention of Vocabulary from Reading*

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*The main aim of this study was to determine whether different purposes for reading can result in more or less incidental vocabulary acquisition from reading. Three intact classes of Grade 7 junior high school students from Mainland China were recruited and oriented to read for different purposes: interest (n = 42), exam (n = 45), and baseline (n = 45). After reading, the three groups completed an unexpected receptive form and productive meaning test, followed by an unexpected receptive meaning test as an immediate posttest. Two weeks later, the participants were given the same assessments as the delayed posttest. The posttest results for all types of vocabulary knowledge showed that the interest group outperformed the exam group, which outperformed the baseline group. However, on the delayed posttests, the same pattern of results as for the posttest was shown only for receptive form knowledge. The productive meaning and receptive meaning assessment outcomes showed that the exam and interest groups had similar performance and outperformed the baseline group. The implication is that teachers should clearly orient learners prior to giving them any task that intends to promote vocabulary learning, especially those that involve reading.*