

## **1 Pre-Reading Activities and EFL Reading**

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### **Abstract**

There is a close relationship between instructional methods and reading outcomes. However, there exists very limited empirical research that would support or verify hypotheses concerning a reader's application of English vocabulary and cultural background knowledge, at the same time considering a subject's proficiency and length of English study. For this study, 199 second-year and 189 fourth-year students from a five-year junior college in Taiwan were selected. Students from both groups were randomly assigned to four different groups: the first group received both pre-reading vocabulary instruction and cultural background knowledge activation; the second concentrated on cultural background knowledge activation; the third worked on vocabulary instruction, and the fourth received none of these. Test materials included English reading texts, vocabulary tests, and reading comprehension tests. Study results suggest that both pre-reading vocabulary instruction and the application of cultural background knowledge are vital to Chinese junior college students' English reading comprehension. Subjects' different lengths of English study and their proficiency levels also affects their learning from pre-reading activities.

**Key Words:** vocabulary instruction, cultural background knowledge, EFL reading