

**THE EFFECTS OF AN INTENSIVE READING
PROGRAMME ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
OF POST-MATRIC ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE
STUDENTS IN SCIENCE**

by

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ABSTRACT

Reading is considered to be a vital skill for academic success, yet it is seldom taught to or practised with students. Students begin to 'read to learn' during primary and secondary schooling. However, at tertiary level the academic demands are much greater than before and involve more extensive reading of conceptually more complex texts. This study investigates the implementation of an intensive reading programme for post-matric English Second Language Science students, based on the assumption that reading improves reading. In addition, this study investigates the effect that reading ability has on academic performance in Science, which relies inter alia, on the ability to read, comprehend and interpret word problems. An intervention group and a control group were used to ascertain the effects of an intensive reading programme and the findings suggest that any reading (intensive or extensive) improves reading and language skills. This in turn impacts on academic performance in Science, if students have an ability in Science to begin with.

Key terms: Reading, reading intervention programme, academic performance in Science, intensive reading, extensive reading, ESL students, bridging course, vocabulary strategies, reading strategies.

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