



The Effectiveness of Conceptual Mapping Instruction on Improving Reading Skills and Motivation of Persian Language Learners

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1. INTRODUCTION

One of the major problems that language learners face when reading a text is that they often do not engage with the text while reading it and therefore do what they usually do. They read but they do not understand. This causes their academic failure and lack of motivation to learn. Disabilities, failures and weaknesses in learning and teaching have always been a concern for experts and researchers in second language teaching, as well as teachers and language learners. Learners' academic achievement is influenced by various factors that if these factors and how they affect students' academic achievement are identified, the teaching-learning goals can be achieved well. When problems such as learning disabilities and depression occur in the educational system, learner motivation is mentioned as one of the important causes. From the psychological point of view of language, apathy has a negative effect on language learning and causes a negative self-concept in the person, and as a result, the person has a negative attitude towards all his abilities, and this has a negative effect on all aspects of the person. Leaves undeniable. Different educational factors can be effective in motivating the learner such as teacher, classroom, educational facilities, teaching method, emotional relationships, etc., but one of the factors affecting learning motivation is the appropriate teaching method and the use of effective strategies. One of the new and effective learning strategies that allows to show the interrelationship between elements in terms of content and the relationship between new and previous knowledge is the concept map technique (Novak, 1990). The theoretical framework of the concept map method is based on the theory of learning absorption by David Azubel (Asubel, 1968). A concept map is a graphical representation of knowledge material produced that is used to understand the key concepts of that knowledge and the relationships between them. Using this strategy can change the role of teachers and learners and make learners the main players in

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the learning process. Considering that study and learning strategies are very important and effective in strengthening the reading and learning skills of language learners, and on the other hand, such strategies can be taught and learned, by teaching these strategies to language learners, increasing their level of comprehension. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of concept maps on strengthening reading skills and motivation; Therefore, the present study is designed to answer the following questions:

- 1- What is the relationship between applying the concept map strategy and strengthening the reading skills of foreign Persian learners?
- 2- What is the relationship between using the concept map strategy and strengthening the motivation of foreign Persian students to read?

2. METHOD

The statistical population of the study is 84 students of Persian Language Training Center of Imam Khomeini International University of Qazvin and International College of Tehran University of Medical Sciences. Among them, by available sampling method and randomly divided into 2 experimental groups and 2 control groups. The selection of the statistical population was completely random. Because the educational level of reading texts was for language learners who are somewhat proficient in reading skills, a pre-test was conducted among language learners who had completed the intermediate level. In this study, 4 pre-test tools, researcher-made courses, post-test and motivation questionnaire have been used. Pre-test: After random selection of intermediate language learners in order to standardize the subjects, a pre-test was designed and performed which included 40 questions in three sections. The word section, which includes 20 questions of experimental text words and another 20 questions of comprehension type. Researcher-made texts. In this research, ten educational texts focusing on Iranology were prepared. In selecting the texts, two criteria were considered: the newness of the texts and the relevance of the content to the level of knowledge of the language learners. The reason for emphasizing the novelty of the texts was that the previous information of the subjects did not affect the results. Lessons begin with pre-reading. Pre-reading consists of a few questions about the subject of the lesson that learners practice with each other and answer orally. In fact, by introducing the subject of the lesson and presenting the keywords to the learners, the teacher helps the students to activate whatever they have in mind about the subject under discussion so that they can use it during the teaching and the words that may be new for learners and helps learners to find the meaning of each word and use their previous knowledge to make their minds more prepared to receive content and learn new words. Post-test: At the end of each lesson, post-test was taken from both experimental and control groups. The questions of both groups were the same and they were tested in the same way. Based on the content of the experimental texts, questions were prepared to assess the subjects' comprehension. The questions of this test were prepared based on and using the test specification table and the revised classification of educational objectives. Farhady *et al.*, (1999, pp. 250-251) have listed three important methods for reading comprehension tests: multiple-choice questions, close-up or text completion test, and short test. Response. Among these three methods, for this study, the multiple-choice question method is used for various reasons, including the fact that these questions have a lot of flexibility and a wide range of capabilities. Language learners prefer them to other tests, and most importantly, they can be

selected with high objectivity. After designing the comprehension test, the test was again given to 7 professors of the Imam Khomeini Persian Language Training Center in Qazvin to check its face and content validity, and they also reminded the researchers of important points that led to modifications in the test. At the end of this process, the reading comprehension test was prepared for the initial test in one of the reading classrooms, which had almost the same conditions as the main language group of students (in terms of language proficiency level). Ready for final performance.

3. RESULTS

According to descriptive statistics, comparing the comprehension motivation of teaching language learners with concept map and without concept map in each of the four methods of individual presentation, group presentation of individual drawing and group drawing separately, indicates that the concept map in strengthening Motivation has the effect of reading skills. The results of this study with the results of Charsky & Ressler (Charsky & Ressler, 2011), Hong et al. (Hwang et al., 2011), Jegede & Aliyemola (1990), Beitz (Beitz, 1998), Chularut and DE Backer (2003) and Talebinezhad & Negari (2007), who have shown that concept maps have a positive effect on emotional characteristics. But it is not in line with Mehrabi Pari (Mehrabi Pari, 2011) research. In his research, he showed that the use of concept maps is not effective on the components of motivation (self-efficacy, internal evaluation, test anxiety, learning strategies and self-regulation). Therefore, it can be said that since a kind of hierarchy is observed in the preparation of a concept map and clearly shows the connection between the concepts, it causes the organization of the content in the minds of the learners and as a result, meaningful learning takes place.

Keywords: Conceptual Map; Improving Reading Comprehension Skill; Motivation; Teaching Persian Language