THE EFFECT OF TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH SEMANTIC MAPPING ON EFL LEARNERS' AWARENESS OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE AT AL IMAM MOHAMMED IBIN SAUD ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT_ *The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of semantic mapping as an instructional strategy for teaching vocabulary items to EFL learners at Al Imam Mohammed Ibin Saud Islamic University and to explore the effect of this strategy on EFL students' achievement of lexical items. The sample of the study consisted of 50 male students enrolled in two sections, which were randomly selected from four sections and were randomly assigned to both experimental and control groups. Therefore, a quasi-experimental mode of inquiry was adopted in this study since the sample was chosen intentionally, but its assignment on the groups was carried out randomly. The experimental group studied the lexical items via semantic mapping strategy, and the control group studied them in the traditional method. A vocabulary pre-test was given to both groups at the beginning of the study to make sure that they were equivalent and homogenous. At the end of the experiment, the same test was given to the experimental and control groups to investigate the effect of semantic mapping strategy on EFL students' achievement of lexical items. The results revealed significant differences between the experimental and control groups in favor of the experimental group. The experimental group received semantic mapping, but the control group did not receive this treatment. The results of the study, based on statistical analysis, indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control group in vocabulary learning. It can be suggested that semantic mapping can be used as an efficient methodology for teaching vocabulary, a technique which is effective for EFL learners. The researcher reached some conclusions and suggested some recommendations.*
Keywords: *Semantic mapping, direct translation, vocabulary learning strategy, teaching vocabulary, traditional techniques*
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