

The Impact of Vocabulary Based Retention Strategy of Mind Mapping in ESL Classroom

D. Loyola Innaci

Assistant Professor

Department of English, St. Joseph's College (Autonomous), Trichy -2, Tamilnadu, India.

loyolainnaci@gmail.com

Dr. John Love Joy

Assistant Professor

Department of English, St. Joseph's College (Autonomous), Trichy -2, Tamilnadu, India.

Abstract

This research was performed in an Arts and science college of Indian ESL learners to explore the impact of mind mapping of vocabulary based retention strategy use. First year general English students were chosen. An experimental method was conducted; forty students have been taken as the subject. They were subjected to therapy in which the use of mind mapping approach instructed vocabulary selection through miming. The findings of the post-test acquired through the SPSS software showed at the end of instructions find that students can retain the words what they learned before. The findings of a delayed post-test after sometime disclosed that the long-term impact of the mind mapping approach was considerably effective in retaining the vocabulary by ESL learners in teaching this activity. One significant pedagogical implication of this research is that a more focused mind mapping approach of vocabulary can be very efficient at the general English classroom of ESL learners.

Key Words: ESL Learners, Mind Mapping, Vocabulary Strategy, Retention.

1. Introduction

English is the most dominant language used for international communication by individuals of distinct indigenous languages around the globe. It is used in a multitude of fields, such as schooling, science, company and tourism. The need for studying and mastering its distinct abilities and sub-skills is therefore deeply felt. However, among the four linguistic

teaching abilities–Vocabulary, as one of its most important and difficult parts, is discovered to be a complicated, boring and devastating job for L2 students to master. Vocabulary is widely regarded to be one of the primary variables needed for L2 skills. Vocabulary understanding comprises of a spoken form of a word. The grammatical function of a word, the placement of a word, the degree of frequency, the stylistic limits of a word, the conceptual significance of a word, and the association of a word with other associated phrases (Nation, 2001). Among the several approaches suggested for the preservation of vocabulary, mind mapping was the most important pedagogical method involving the creation of a diagram for the visual presentation of concepts.

Some specialists have regarded mind maps to be very useful learning instruments. According to Hofland (2007), mind mapping is a way to give L2 learners more meaningful repetition and retention of fresh phrases in any target language. By using visual and graphic design, mind mapping can provide a more vibrant learning atmosphere that encourages memory retention as well as the motivation of learners (Liu, Zhao, & Bo, 2014).

2. Literature Review

Mind mapping is a pedagogical method that includes the creation of a diagram for visual presentation of concepts. The mind mapping diagram focuses on the primary idea that is positioned in the middle and therefore certain concepts, words or even sentences linked to the primary idea can be linked (Rabeka, 2014). In other words, it is a graphic organizer in which the main categories radiate from the central idea and the subcategories are depicted as branches of the bigger branches. A visual tool that can be used to create thoughts, to take notes, to organize thinking and to create concepts. It is useful for visual learners to improve learning as an illustrative instrument. As a skill, it cuts across capacity levels and covers all subjects. It allows learners to better organize, prioritize and incorporate the materials submitted in the course.

Al-Jarf (2011) defined the concept of mind as follows:

A mind map is a graphic organizer in which the major categories radiate from a central idea and sub-categories are represented as branches of larger branches. It is a visual tool that can be used to generate ideas, take notes, organize thinking, and develop concepts. Teachers can use it to enhance learning. It is helpful for

visual learners as an illustrative tool that assists with managing thought, directing learning, and making connections. It is a skill that cuts across ability levels and encompasses all subject matters. It enables students to better organize, prioritize, and integrate material presented in a course. (p.4)

Leyden (2015) proposed the following brain mapping approaches for educators: pre-class, in-class and out-of-class strategies. This three-phase paradigm can be used to teach a foreign or second language. Pre-class thinking approaches include strategies such as planning, organizing, preparing materials for teaching, setting the stage for debate in the classroom, encouraging learners to study before attending the class, and activating prior understanding on a particular subject that will be the focus of the L2 class for the upcoming session (Buzan, 2005; Hofland, 2007). In-class learning strategies can also be intended on the basis of mind maps. There is a wide variety of other in-class approaches to improve L2 learners' acquisition of a target language that promotes creativity, motivation, enthusiasm, collaboration, peripheral and centered learning, and genuine communication between learners. Outside class strategies include cooperation, evaluation, and understanding. Students can readily work together on group projects or tasks using free internet research instruments such as Exam Time, where they can share their mind map with friends or a group of individuals.

Liu, Zhao and Bo (2014) studied the role of mind mapping in teaching and learning. To this end, a meta-analysis of associated research has been performed and experimental and quasi-experimental studies have been evaluated. The meta-analysis demonstrates that mind mapping has a beneficial impact on teaching and learning. Horst (2005) performed an inquiry into the effect of extensive reading on the growth of foreign language vocabulary and discovered that extensive reading not only encourages the amount of L2 vocabulary, but also improves the amount of understanding of vocabulary.

3. Methodology

Research Question

Does mind mapping have any important impact on the growth and retention of English vocabulary by general learners in the first year?

Participants

The sample of this research consisted of 40 1st year learners who were conveniently chosen from two periodic class schedules. They were between 17 and 16 years of age. The chosen respondents came from distinct social strata and their mother tongue is Tamil. They had no other language teaching experience based on their own accounts except the training they had received during their studies.

The first scientist who invented and defined mind mapping as a strong visual aid, reflecting the structure of our brain, was Buzan (1993), and the inspiration for this approach came from the notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci (Gelbe, 2009). Some specialists (Budd, 2003; Fiktorius, 2013; Hofland, 2007; King, 2007; Murley, 2007; Pishgadam & Ghanizadeh, 2006) regarded mind maps to be very useful in assisting ESL learners to enhance their vocabulary retention. By using visual and graphic design, mind mapping can provide a more vibrant learning atmosphere that encourages memory retention as well as the motivation of learners (Liu, Zhao, & Bo, 2014). Research (Spencer, Anderson, & Ellis, 2013) has already discovered that mind maps are creative methods for learners to participate in a distinctive teaching technique that can not only expand memory recall of important subjects, but also help build a fresh data handling environment. The following research question was suggested: does vocabulary-based retention approach of mind-mapping have any important impact on the implementation of suitable vocabulary recall for ESL learners?

Mind mapping: Brainstorming

In this activity, students form groups and work on different ideas and come out with other words related to the ideas. As they are in groups, this activity enables them to participate in discussions and articulate their ideas. This gives them an opportunity to use the central ideas or words a number of time, and if the given word or idea is new to some in the group, others in the group will help them understand the idea or the word. This, in turn, results in retention of the words. The following is a sample of this activity:

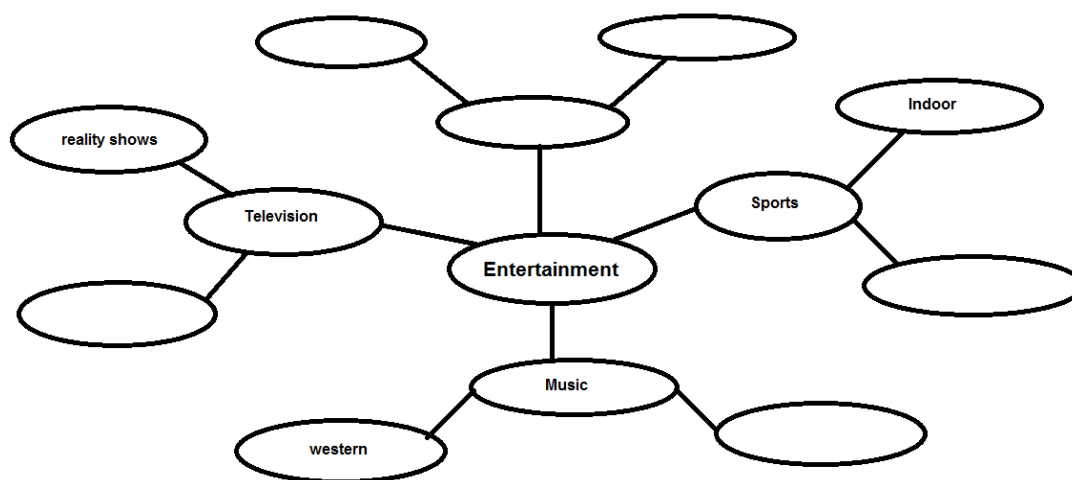


Figure: 1 Mind mapping: Brainstorming

Table-1 Classification of the respondents based on their marks in Mind Mapping

Marks	Before Using Retention Strategy		Marks	After Using Retention Strategy	
	No. of respondents	Percent		No. of respondents	Percent
5	13	33.5	7	3	7.5
6	16	39.5	8	15	37.5
7	6	14.5	9	14	35.0
8	5	12.5	10	8	20.0
Total		100.0	Total	40	100.0

The above table mentions that when the researcher conducted test, before using vocabulary based retention strategy and after using vocabulary based retention strategy students got the score ranging between 5-8 and the average. 13 students were able to get 5 marks, only five students got 8 marks. It showed that students were not able to use any strategy and they cannot retain the words what they have already learned.

When the researcher analysed and used vocabulary based retention strategy to students during the class hour. After sometime students were asked to do mind mapping activity, the

students were able to retain words and they got the scores range between 7 and 10. The average score of this activity is 8.67. The performances of the students were found to be considerable.

Finding

Students who used mind mapping approaches to retain vocabulary incorporated the freshly gained phrases with the old ones that had already been taught. Integrating and linking fresh words with the previously defined vocabulary repertoire encourages profound semantic processing and directly encourages the learning, storage and retrieval of these words (Al-Jarf, 2011; Nation, 2001).

As a result of their visual appeal, students obtain and maintain English vocabulary immediately and very strongly. Also mind mapping in the current research was colourful and with its colourful constructions, and one tree diagram can offer learners the right incentive to participate in building blocks of this map, that is, the chain of associated words. This activity encouraged learners to engage at a high point of concern as it dealt with the creation of fresh concepts based on a central idea. The method of finishing this activity helped them learn and maintain many fresh words. Apart from learning words, learners also recognized brainstorming as a strategy-creating concept. Some learners came up with concepts such as integrating mind mapping into teaching and understanding other topics. This is one of the operations that has had an impact on students' cognitive potential. Based on the central idea, they were able to come up with concepts linked to the central idea.

Conclusion

The results of this research indicated that the impact of mind mapping strategy could be useful for learners, educators, scientists and curricula designers in language teaching and learning. In reality, this research may motivate scientists and academics to carry out further analytical and experimental research in the field of studying distinct elements of English through mind mapping.

First, the use of mind mapping to present vocabulary objects is efficient in helping the English teacher to make English words and their significance clear. It means that the use of elements in mind mapping, such as main images, main phrases, colors, word categorization, etc., can make the presentation of vocabulary items simpler. This demonstrates the benefit of using mind mapping as a vocabulary-based retention method used in classrooms. This research can

therefore assist educators use their mind mapping approach as a means of retaining vocabulary instead of traditional techniques. In addition, mind mapping is efficient in helping learners memorize vocabulary items in a short time.

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