Investigating the Effect of Graphic Organizer Strategy Instruction on Iranian Auditory and Visual learners' Vocabulary

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of graphic organizer vocabulary instruction on Iranian visual and audio elementary EFL learners' vocabulary learning. For this purpose, 80 learners of English participated in this study. All the groups were taught the same textbooks. Oxford Placement Test which included vocabulary, grammar, and reading items was used in order to get homogenized groups of participants. They were also given a vocabulary pretest, the purpose of which was to measure the learners' initial knowledge of the target words. The treatment procedure took ten sessions with thirty-minute each session. During each session, the students in the experimental groups were presented with 10 new words' pictures on A4 papers. In the control groups, the learners got the list of the new vocabulary with the synonyms and definitions. Finally, at the end of the course all the groups sat for the posttest of lexical knowledge. Then the statistical analysis was run through two-way ANOVA. The results of the study indicated that the learners' who were provided with visual input outperformed the other groups.

Keywords: Auditory style, graphic organizer, visual style, vocabulary learning

Introduction

Employment of appropriate styles and strategies in different learning situations, like a lever, can help learners to perform energetically demanding task with less effort and energy. In addition, it can contribute to the enhancement of internal motivation. The student's style of learning, if accommodated, can result in improved attitudes toward learning and an increase in thinking skills, academic achievement, and creativity (Irvine & York, 1995). Information about students' different learning styles can help those involved in their education particularly their teachers become more sensitive to their students' general preferred style of learning (Zhan-Xiang, 2004).

Among the difficult tasks which language learners face in their long journey to learn a L2 is its lexical component. L2 learners have to internalize hundreds of L2 words which bear arbitrary relationship with the objects or concepts they are associated with, they have to learn a great deal of lexical items to be able to understand and make themselves understood in real situation tasks. These words are not only different from those of learners' L1, but also in many cases show internal inconsistencies. For example, the plural form of child is children and the past form of go is went. They do not follow the conventional rule for making plural and past tense (s and ed) respectively (Yongqi Gu, 2003).

Teachers should determine the general preferences of their learners and prescribe appropriate methods of language learning based on that understanding. Having determined the general preferences of learners, teachers will be in a better position to guide learners toward more efficient learning in general and vocabulary learning in particular. Teachers in the post method era do not and should not concern themselves exclusively with the delivery of knowledge. As part of their job as a facilitator, teachers are required to get learners familiar with the learning style they bring with them to the language learning context and recommend appropriate activities that match with them, as another duty, they are required to administer different styles to make sure that they respond to varying styles of learning (Mohammadi, Moenikia & Zahed-Babelan, 2010).

Learners differ in their learning styles and strategies. Learning styles and their effects on learning in general and in vocabulary learning in particular is a field of study of great significance. Having considered different parts of learning styles, visual and auditory are of high importance in vocabulary learning. Another problem that most learners complain about is how to get an acceptable command of vocabulary retention. Teachers and researchers should provide learners with a better way to help them with different learning style to come over such a problem. To increase vocabulary retention, graphic organizer strategy instruction can be used. In so doing, the present study aims at