Mandarin Vocabulary Attainment through Semantic Mapping: Focus on Malay Adult Learners

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Abstract

Studies which shed light on how non-native adult learners learning a foreign language attain higher levels of vocabulary through specific learning strategies are important. Such studies can empower practitioners and academicians with the appropriate skills in teaching foreign language learners and equip learners with the appropriate learning strategies. However, most studies only emphasise on learners learning English either as a second or foreign language. This study attempts to fill in the gap by looking at the effectiveness of semantic mapping in the learning and acquisition of Mandarin vocabulary by adult Malay learners of a public institution of higher learning in Malaysia. The quasi experiment was applied on 40 adult learners who were separated into the experimental and the control group respectively. Both groups were given pre and post tests to determine their outcome. They were taught by the same teacher with one group getting input on Semantic Mapping strategies while the other group was given traditional teaching input. The study was conducted in 2010 for three months. They were tested on writing and SPSS was used to analyse data. The findings shows that there is a significance difference between the experiment group and the control group in the post-test. The outcome of the study suggests that Semantic Mapping effectively increases the Malay learners' attainment in Mandarin vocabulary.