

## КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНАЯ КАРТА КАК ИНСТРУМЕНТ ДЛЯ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ СЛОВАРНОГО ЗАПАСА

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### Аннотация

**Краткое введение.** Язык является важным средством общения, с помощью которого можно выражать свои мысли, чувства, передавать информацию устно или письменно. Изучение словарного запаса языка чрезвычайно важно, потому что без его достаточного знания невозможно общение. Задача состоит в том, как сделать изучение словарного запаса более эффективным и сложным, поскольку учащиеся изо всех сил пытаются запомнить словарный запас. Проблемы при чтении, письме, в разговорной речи и аудировании в основном связаны с недостаточным знанием словарного запаса. Чтобы решить эту проблему и сделать изучение словарного запаса более интересным и приятным, необходимо искать новые методы, облегчающие обучение. Мы считаем, что таким эффективным средством является использование концептуальной карты. Концептуальные карты более эффективны, чем традиционные подходы к изучению словарного запаса, поскольку помогают учащимся приобрести способность использовать слова в предложениях и определять значение слов.

**Ключевые слова:** концептуальное картирование, изучение словарного запаса, усиление мотивации, тестирование.

### ՀԱՍՏԱՅՈՒՑՑԻ ՔԱՐՏԵԶԱԳՐՈՒՄԸ ՈՐՊԵՍ ԲԱՌԱՊԱՇԱՐԻ ՈՒՍՈՒՑՄԱՆ ՄԻՋՈՑ

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### Ամփոփում

Լեզուն հաղորդակցման կարևոր միջոց է, որի օգնությամբ կարելի է արտահայտել իր մտքերը, զգացմունքները, տեղեկատվությունը փոխանցել բանավոր կամ գրավոր: Բառապաշարի ուսուցումը չափազանց կարևոր է, քանի որ առանց բառապաշարի բավարար իմացության անհնար է հաղորդակցվել: Խնդիրն այն է, թե ինչպես կարելի է բառապաշարի ուսուցումն ավելի արդյունավետ ու բարդ դարձնել, քանի որ աշակերտները դժվարանում են անգիր անել բառացանկը: Ընթերցանության, գրելու, խոսելու և լսելու գործունեության ընթացքում առաջացած խնդիրները հիմնականում պայմանավորված են բառապաշարի անբավարար իմացությամբ: Այս խնդիրը լուծելու և բառապաշարի ուսուցումն ավելի հետաքրքիր ու հաճելի դարձնելու համար անհրաժեշտ է փնտրել նոր մեթոդներ, որոնք կհեշտացնեն բառապաշարի ուսուցումը: Կարծում ենք, որ նման արդյունավետ միջոց է հասկացողի քարտեզի գործածությունը: Հասկացողի քարտեզներն ավելի արդյունավետ են, քան ավանդական մոտեցումները բառերի ուսուցման համար՝ օգնելով աշակերտներին ձեռք բերել նախադասություններում բառեր օգտագործելու, բառի նշանակությունը որոշելու կարողություն:

**Բանալի բառեր:** Հասկացողի քարտեզագրում, բառապաշարի ուսուցում, մոտիվացիայի բարձրացում, փորձարկում:

### CONCEPT MAPPING AS A MEANS OF TEACHING VOCABULARY

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*Language is an important means of communication with the help of which one can express his ideas, feelings, convey information either orally or in a written form. As Rupley, Logan and Nichols(1999) mentioned, vocabulary*

*is the glue that holds stories, and content together making comprehension accessible for learners. Vocabulary teaching is of utmost importance as without sufficient vocabulary knowledge it is impossible to communicate. The problem is how to make vocabulary teaching more effective and challenging as students have difficulty in memorizing lists of words. The problems encountered in reading, writing, speaking and listening are mainly because of insufficient vocabulary knowledge. To solve this problem and make vocabulary teaching more interesting and enjoyable it is necessary to look for new techniques which will make vocabulary memorization easier. We think that such an effective way is the concept map usage. Concept maps are more effective than conventional methods for teaching new words to help students acquire the ability to determine word meaning use words in sentences.*

**Keywords:** *concept mapping, teaching vocabulary, increasing motivation, experiment.*

**The topicality** is dictated by the role of the vocabulary in the process of learning foreign languages. The vocabulary teaching requires the application of various techniques for memorizing the meaning of a word to make vocabulary learning more challenging and effective.

**The aim** of our article is to show that the use of concept mapping makes the process of vocabulary learning more productive and learner-centered.

**The objectives** of the article are as follows:

- determine the effectiveness of the use of concept maps in vocabulary instruction to enrich learners' vocabulary;
- highlight the techniques based on concept mapping that will make vocabulary acquisition more engaging and productive;
- present an experimental study based on concept mapping usage to make learners more motivated and active in vocabulary learning process.

The following **research questions** were formulated:

1. Is teaching vocabulary more effective by using traditional or contextualized method in terms of learners' vocabulary knowledge?
2. Does concept mapping affect and enhance students' vocabulary acquisition?

**Our hypothesis** is as follows; if we use concept mapping strategy in vocabulary teaching process, it will make learners' vocabulary acquisition more purposeful and interesting.

In vocabulary learning, it is important for the learner to make an effort and show the required interest. If the task does not involve enough effort, the learner may not be interested in it and may not show enthusiasm. Instead of traditional techniques that are not challenging enough, more effective and enjoyable techniques should be used to make word meaning memorization easy and productive. The learners are getting tired of the routine traditional teaching methods in the classroom and they are looking for something new and enjoyable. In this respect, concept mapping can be defined as one of the effective vocabulary teaching techniques.

Vocabulary is not just a list of words to be learnt by heart. Words do not exist on their own, they depend on each other. Therefore teaching vocabulary is a very important element in language learning and effective vocabulary instruction involves vocabulary selection, word knowledge and the right technique. Nation( 2008) suggests that a new word needs to be met at least five or six times, before it has any chance of being learnt.

Many methods and techniques have been recommended for teaching vocabulary. Among them concept map is considered to be as more effective and productive. Concept maps have long been used as a model or strategy in various fields of learning. The use of concept maps as a teaching strategy was first developed by J. D. Novak (1980) of Cornell University. It was derived from Ausubel's (1986) learning theory which places central emphasis on the influence of students' prior knowledge on subsequent meaningful learning. A concept map is a diagram showing the relationships among concepts. They are graphical tools for organizing and representing knowledge. A concept as defined by Novak is the regularity in objects or events designated by a specific label. Novak and Gowin (1984;15) describe a concept map as "a schematic device for representing a set of concept meanings embedded in a framework of propositions". In this view, we think and learn with concepts by linking new concepts to what we already know. In addition, concepts are stored hierarchically and differentiated as learning grows. Learning via concept maps means that the learner is making an intentional effort to link, differentiate and relate concepts to each other.

Apparently, it can be said that concept mapping has set its role as an extremely effective strategy because the benefits it brings about are seen in language learning. The benefits of, concept map serves several purposes for learners, such as;

- helping students brainstorm and generate new ideas;
- encouraging students to discover new concepts and the propositions that connect them;
- allowing students to more clearly communicate ideas, thoughts, and information;
- helping students integrate new concepts with older concepts;
- enabling students to gain enhanced knowledge of the given topic and evaluate it;

Tierney, Readence and Dishner (1995) suggested the following concept map usage strategies;

- determine a target concept;
- ask learners to record the word for a larger group into which the word fits;
- instruct learners to write several words around the target word and draw a line from the key vocabulary item to each associated words;
- tell learners to write associated words around each of the words they have just recorded;

We had an **experimental study** in order to identify the use of concept mapping as an effective technique in vocabulary learning. The experimental study includes two lessons; the first lesson was based on traditional language teaching methods, the second one based on vocabulary teaching with the help of concept mapping. There are 22 students involved in the study. They are divided into two groups that are experimental group and control group. First, both groups were given a pre-test. **They should mention the difficulties they have in learning vocabulary.** After the experimental study, both groups were given post-test to see how well they have memorized vocabulary after applying concept mapping.

Experimental lesson seeks to provide answers to the following questions relevant to using concept mapping;

1. Can the pupils easily recognize the written/spoken forms of a word?
2. Can the pupils use the words in right context?
3. How well do the pupils memorize the words after the lesson?
4. Is the lesson effective?

Lesson with Control Group

Grade – 7

Number of pupils – 22

Time allocation – 25minutes

Teaching Material – *Cinderella*

The Aim of the lesson – To enlarge students vocabulary

### ***CINDERELLA***

*Once there was a rich man. He had a little girl. His wife was dead. The man found a new wife. She had two girls. The girls were very mean to their stepsister. They called her Cinderella. Cinderella worked hard. She had to wash and clean and cook all day. But she was still kind and beautiful. After work she sat by the fire. One day, an invitation came. The King was having a ball at the castle. But Cinderella was not invited. The King didn't know her. Cinderella's stepsisters talked and talked about the ball. Cinderella was so kind. She helped her stepsisters with their hair and make-up. She watched them set off for the castle. Then Cinderella burst into tears. She wanted to go to the ball. And a good thing happened. Her Godmother came. Godmother could do magic! Cinderella told Godmother, "Everyone has gone to the ball. I want to go as well." "You shall go," Godmother said and she went into action! "We need a big pumpkin," Godmother said. Cinderella was surprised. But she ran off to get one. Godmother's magic made the big pumpkin into a coach. There was much more magic! Six mice turned into horses. A rat became the coachman. But Cinderella was still upset. "I haven't anything to wear," she cried. Godmother had not finished. She gave Cinderella a lovely dress and glass shoes. Godmother had a warning: "Listen to me very carefully! You must leave before 12! At midnight the magic stops." Cinderella said, "Okay." And off she went to the castle. Cinderella had a grand time. She danced with the Prince. They ate a splendid dinner. He invited her to another ball the next night. Cinderella remembered to go before midnight. BUT the next night, Cinderella didn't remember. She was dancing when— suddenly—the clock struck 12. Cinderella ran. Her magic coach had gone. Cinderella had to run*

home. The Prince ran after her but she had gone. He did see some mice running away. He found just one glass shoe. He was so sad. Cinderella got home before her step-sisters. They told her a girl had run off. Cinderella didn't tell them it was her! The Prince had a good idea. He gave the shoe to a helper. "Take this," he said. "Go and find the girl who can wear it!" The mean step-sisters tried on the shoe. It was too small. But it fitted Cinderella! And in a little while, the Prince and Cinderella were married and lived happily ever after.

Procedure:

- At the beginning of the lesson, students were questioned about *Cinderella* in order to know their initial knowledge about the fairy tale.
- Before starting reading the text, the pre-selected vocabulary was presented to the students ; *Coach, glass slipper, unhappy, stepsister, prince, hard work, pumpkin, Cinderella, godmother, ball, stepmother, happily ever after.*
- Students were asked to read all the words aloud with their Armenian equivalents.
- Then, each student was asked to make up his/her own sentences with at least two words.
- Getting familiar with new words, students read and translated the text « Cinderella» part after part.
- Then, new vocabulary with the translations was written in students' dictionaries.
- Students were given some exercises with the new words as homework.

Lesson with Experimental Group

Grade – 7

Number of pupils – 22

Time allocation – 25minutes

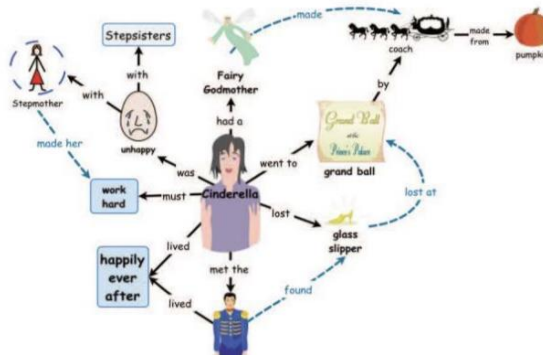
Teaching Material – “Cinderella”

The Aim of the lesson – To enlarge students vocabulary via concept map

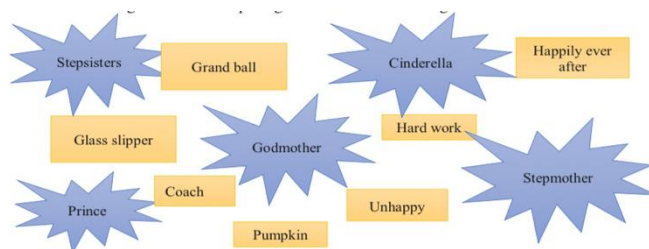
Procedure:

- At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher wrote the word Cinderella on the blackboard and asked students to come and write anything they know about the fairy tale. Then what they have written was shown in the following diagram;

Figure 1



- Before the lesson, the teacher printed copies of the fairy tale *Cinderella* which were given to each student to read.
- The students were asked to describe the characters linking their names with the appropriate adjectives
- Then students identified some of the concept words in the fairy tale and some of the linking words;
- The students were asked to prepare some concepts which they think express the main message of



*Cinderella.*

- The discussion began about students' list and then construction of a concept map for the fairy tale was made by them.
- The students were asked to enlarge on the concepts of love and kindness generally.
- The concepts of the story suggested by pupils are **love and kindness**.

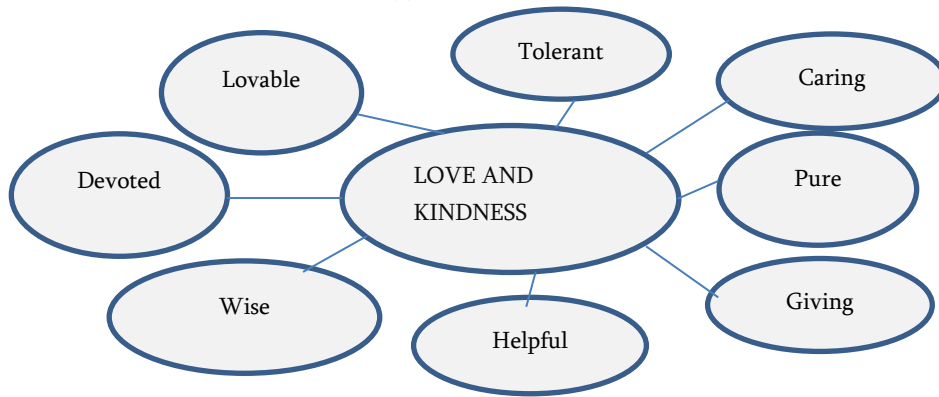


Figure 2

In order to find out the differences between two lessons and the effectiveness of using concept maps in vocabulary teaching, the experimental and control groups were given the same *post-test* and were analyzed.

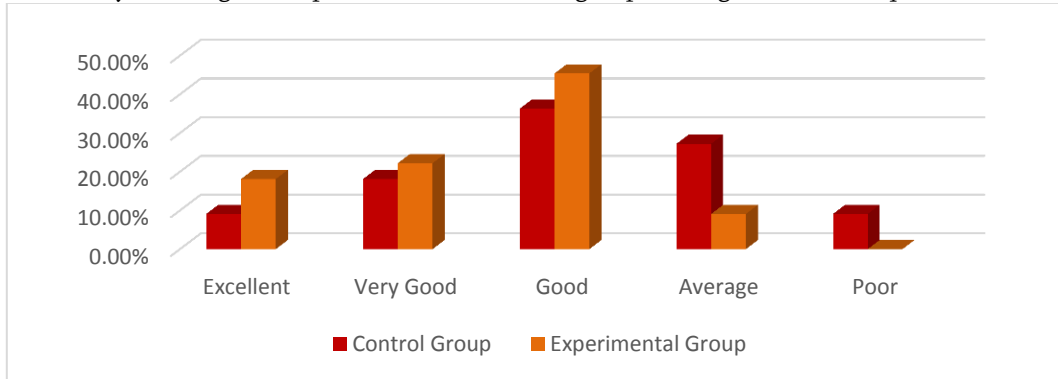


Figure 3

The findings obtained from the post-test show score differences between the experimental group and the control group. According to the post-test results, 1 student (9,09%), from control group got mark 9 classified as excellent, 2 students (18,1 %), got marks 7 and 8 accordingly classified as very good, 4 students got mark 6 classified as good (36,3%), 3 students got marks 3 and 4, 2 students 3 and 1 student 4, classified as average and 1 student got mark 2 classified as poor. What is about experimental group, 2 students (18,1%) got marks 9 and 10 classified as excellent, 3 students (22,2%) got mark 8 classified as very good, 5 students (45,4%) got mark 6 classified as good, 1 student (0,9%) got mark 4 classified as average and finally there was no one getting an insufficient mark.

*Comparative analysis of the lessons*

The experimental results show that the students who learned vocabulary based on concept mapping technique revealed significantly superior performance in terms of their vocabulary acquisition and retention. Experimental lesson results mainly depend on the fact that concept mapping technique is interesting as well as the topic *Cinderella*. Like all fairy tales, *Cinderella* teaches us the basic concepts of life - *love and kindness*. Compared with the learning approach for the control group, the concept-mapping approach provided a more efficient memorisation tool for the students to organise and represent vocabulary knowledge. The differences between vocabulary teaching lessons with the traditional method and concept mapping strategy is as follows;

Table 1. Comparatives between traditional and concept mapping lessons

Traditional Lesson	Lesson Based on Concept Mapping
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Short-term memorisation	Long-term memorisation
Narrow variety of interaction	More engaging learning form
Not suitable for introverted learners	There is greater motivation for learners
Teacher focused learning	Student focused learning
No chance for developing critical thinking	Best way for enhancing critical thinking

Descriptive statistics has indicated that the experimental group that received concept mapping treatment outperformed the control group that received traditional method treatment. Therefore, it can be concluded that concept mapping has been effective for enhancing vocabulary learning. Thus, English teachers should find effective pedagogical tools to help students learn vocabulary.

**Conclusion:** Thus we can see that the use of concept mapping strategy in the process of vocabulary teaching facilitates middle school learners' vocabulary acquisition and makes lessons more interesting and enjoyable. We see that concept mapping had positive effect on students' vocabulary learning strategy use.

We can say that the results shown by experimental group are better in achievement than the controlled group. It is shown that concept maps are more effective for teaching vocabulary from the point of helping students acquire the ability to determine word meaning.

By using concept mapping strategy in teaching vocabulary, several benefits were found:

*Concept mapping*

- helps visual learners grasp the meaning of the words and transform the class into a more cheerful and colorful environment;
- helps students see relationships between the concepts;
- helps in developing higher-level thinking skills and encourages students to think creatively.

The use of concept map will keep learners interested and help them memorise new words much easier. The more vocabulary words pupils know the better they are able to communicate. A rich vocabulary improves the learners ability to communicate which is the goal of every language learning.

**Recommendation:** We recommend that the educational system should include more effective, interesting and non-standard ways of teaching vocabulary, such as the concept mapping usage.

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