

# SEMANTIC MAP FOR ENHANCING MALAYALAM VOCABULARY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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## Introduction

Language teaching involves the development of language skills. The learning and teaching of language skills put different demands on both the teacher and students. . Acquisition of language skills are normally expected from a child at the primary level of education. In order to develop the language skills development of vocabulary is essential. Vocabulary expansion is the base of reading, writing, and speaking. Once a firm educational foundation is laid in the child's first language, the child can expand her experience and learn more even through other languages spoken in her wider environment. That would be especially true in a multilingual setting.

Semantic Mapping is a technique developed by Johnson and Pearson in the year 1978. It is a graphic arrangement of words and it shows how words and ideas are related to each other within a text. It is "a graphic arrangement showing the major ideas and relationship in text or among word meanings"(Sinatra, et.al., 1984)

The purpose of creating a Semantic map is to visually display the meaning-based connections between a word or phrase and a set of related words or concepts. Semantic Maps help students, to identify, understand, and recall the meaning of words they read in the text. With direct instruction and repeated practice, students find that using Semantic Maps is a very good way of expanding their vocabulary.

Procedure adopted in semantic mapping is given below:

1. **Introducing the topic:** The teacher studies the topic and determines lessons where semantic mapping strategy can be adopted. Then the teacher announces the topic and writes it on the chalkboard.
2. **Brainstorming:** The teacher asks students to think of ideas that might be related to this topic.

This brainstorming allows students to make use of their prior knowledge or experience. The brainstorming

phase of semantic mapping gives the teacher insight into the schemata of each of her/his students, thus revealing interests, level of readiness, gaps, misconceptions, and errors (Pearson & Johnson, 1978). Typically in brainstorming, ideas from one student will trigger ideas from other students “in chain reaction thought process” (Heimlich & Pitleman, 1986).

3. **Categorization:** Once the teacher completes the list of words on the blackboard, the words are grouped by category. Students discuss why certain words go together and category words are named.
4. **Class Map:** A class map of the words is created on the chalkboard by putting the information. The map is discussed. At this time, students are encouraged to add items to the categories or even to suggest new categories.
5. **Revision of Map:** Also the new words that are related to the topic are discovered through there adding of the text; additions are made to the map.

## Review of literature

Yagoubi and Mortaza (2012) conducted a study on the effect of semantic mapping strategy on EFL learners' vocabulary learning. The finding of the study revealed that Semantic mapping is an effective strategy for enhancing the vocabulary of students.

Al-Ghazo (2015) conducted a study on the effect of two vocabulary strategies on reading comprehension. She examined the effect of SQ3R and semantic mapping on reading comprehension. The findings of the study showed a positive effect of the two strategies on teaching reading comprehension.

Nation (2001) examined the interaction between the teacher and his learners when using Semantic Mapping. He indicated that Semantic Mapping involves the teacher and learners working together to build up on the blackboard a visual framework of connections between ideas.

## Need and significance of the study

It becomes more and more difficult to provide direct experiences with new words because, instead of learning words by directly experiencing them, it is much more typical for new concepts to be learned through vicarious experiences. That is, we read about the new words and talk about the new words, but we do not directly experience them. Semantic Map is one way to explain how to categorize word meanings. It remains essential to identify key attributes distinguishing one word from another. Semantic Maps facilitated the additional benefit of helping students visualize how word meanings can be categorized.

In the case of Malayalam language learners vocabulary acquisition is a challenge for language learners. Most of the students in CBSE AND ICSE stream are excellent in English, but much behind in the learning of mother tongue. Teachers find difficult to teach Malayalam words to the students in English stream. Writing Malayalam is also not so easy. Being a Malayalam teacher, the investigator felt the need to enhance

Malayalam vocabulary of these primary school students. Semantic Maps are helpful for enhancing vocabulary and hence the investigator decided to take up this study.

### **Hypotheses of the study**

1. There will be significant difference between Pre and Post assessment scores of primary school students on Vocabulary when the group is exposed to instruction using Semantic Maps.
2. There will be significant difference between Post assessment scores of CBSE and ICSE stream students on Vocabulary when the group is exposed to instruction using Semantic Maps

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To test the effectiveness of Semantic Map for enhancing Malayalam Vocabulary of students at primary school students.
2. To test whether there is any significant difference between CBSE and ICSE students in their Malayalam Vocabulary enhancement when the group is exposed to experimental teaching based on Semantic Map.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Semantic Map for enhancing Malayalam Vocabulary of Primary School Students

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

**Semantic Map:** Semantic maps portray the schematic relations that compose a concept. It assumes that there are multiple relations between a concept and the knowledge that is associated with the concept. This strategy for graphically representing concepts is known as Semantic mapping.

**Vocabulary:** Vocabulary is all about words — the words in a language or a special set of words you are trying to learn.

**Primary School Students:** The students studying in standard 1 to 7

### **Sample Selected for the Study**

60 Primary school students (Std.V) of Ernakulam District were selected as sample. Among them 30 were CBSE students and 30 were ICSE students.

### **Tools of the study.**

- (1) Lesson transcripts based on Semantic Mapping
- (2) Vocabulary test in Malayalam

## Methodology in brief

It is a pre-test post-test non- equivalent single group study. Pre assessment on Vocabulary was administered using Vocabulary test. Then the group was exposed to experimental treatment using Semantic Mapping. The content used for the preparation of lesson transcript was taken from the Malayalam text book of Std. V of both ICSE and CBSE streams. After experimental treatment, vocabulary test was again administered and scored. Same tests were used for Pre and Post assessment.

## Statistical Techniques Used

Mean

Standard Deviation

Critical Ratio.

## Analysis of the data

Means and Standard Deviations were calculated for Pre assessment and Post assessment scores of vocabulary test. The  $t$  value was also found out using the data. The values obtained are given in the table below.

table – 1

**data and result of the test of significance of the difference between mean scores of pre test and post test scores of the experimental group on vocabulary test**

Group	Test	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Critical ratio	Level of significance
Experimental	Pretest	60	7.95	2.1	4.98	0.01
	Post test	60	25.2	2.68		

Statistical analysis of the data revealed that there is significant difference between the means of pre assessment and post assessment scores of the total sample. The difference is in favor of post test mean score. The  $t$  test between the means of pretest and post test scores revealed that these scores differ significantly. Hence the hypothesis formulated (H1) is accepted.

To determine whether there is any significant difference between the CBSE and ICSE students in Vocabulary Acquisition using semantic map, the differential effect was studied. The means and standard deviations of the variable, syllabus were calculated and the difference between the means was tested for significance.

The details are given in table 2

table 2

data and result of the test of significance of the difference between post test scores of the experimental group on vocabulary for the variable syllabus

Variable	Category	Mean	Standard Deviation	Critical Ratio	Level of significance
syllabus	CBSE	19.75	1.91	0.43	Not significant
	ICSE	19.2	2.42		

It is evident from the table that the critical ratio obtained for the variable syllabus is not significant. The t-test between the means of post test scores revealed that there is no significant difference between post test mean scores with regard to the variable Syllabus. Hence the hypothesis formulated H2 is rejected.

### Findings of the study

Based on the aforesaid calculations, the following important findings have been derived.

- 1) Semantic mapping is an effective strategy for enhancing Malayalam Vocabulary of students at primary level
- 2) Semantic map as a tool for instruction for the primary school students is good for enhancing Malayalam vocabulary irrespective of the syllabus followed by the students.

### Suggestion

The major findings of the study revealed that semantic map is an effective strategy for developing Malayalam vocabulary students at Primary level. So the curriculum should be flexible and more oriented to the new strategy semantic mapping and make the students more independent and confident in Malayalam learning.

### Conclusion

Vocabulary learning strategies may help students learn and remember words in learning language. By using Semantic Mapping technique for different vocabulary items, students can increase their abilities on vocabulary learning.. By this way, students will be able to learn the required words in an easy way, and minimum lack of retention and recognition will be obtained.

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