



ISSN: 1817-6798 (Print)  
Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities



available online at: [www.jtuh.org/](http://www.jtuh.org/)

Ali Abdulghafoor Razouki

Jawher Brk Muter (Ph.D.)

\* Corresponding author: E-mail :  
[aa221412ped@st.tu.edu.iq](mailto:aa221412ped@st.tu.edu.iq)  
07710600491

**Keywords:**

For semantic reading ,  
strategy,  
English is a foreign language,  
Literature, literary texts.

**ARTICLE INFO**

**Article history:**

Received 15 July 2024  
Received in revised form 25 July 2024  
Accepted 17 Aug 2024  
Final Proofreading 1 Nov 2024  
Available online 2 Nov 2024

E-mail [t-jtuh@tu.edu.iq](mailto:t-jtuh@tu.edu.iq)

©THIS IS AN OPEN ACCESS ARTICLE UNDER  
THE CC BY LICENSE

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



**The Effect of Semantic  
Mapping Strategy on EFL  
Preparatory School Students'  
Achievement in  
'Literature Focus'**

**A B S T R A C T**

Literary text usually begins with a writer's need to convey his or her personal vision to reader. Even when a writer uses factual material, historical documents newspaper stories, personal experience his or her primary purpose is not just to convey information but to give a unique view of experience, one that has significance beyond the moment. Literature is the news that stays news. To convey his or her view of experience, invents characters, and creates dialogue. In order to solve this problem, the teacher should have creative activity, and semantic mapping strategy can be an alternative way as a learning and make students enjoy and easy to write. The present study aims at; 1) finding out the effect of SMS on EFL preparatory school students' achievement in teaching 'literature focus'. 2) finding out whether there is any significant difference between students' achievement at the recognition level on one hand, and their achievement at the production level, on the other hand. 3) Finding out EFL preparatory school students' ability to identify figurative language, recognize and be aware of other cultures, and higher thinking skills. A sample of (60) students has been randomly selected from Iraqi EFL fourth year preparatory school students who study 'Literature Focus' at Al-Manahil school for boys in the city of Tikrit during the academic year 2023/2024. The sample represents (25.60%) percent of its original population and is divided into two equal groups,

© 2024 JTUH, College of Education for Human Sciences, Tikrit University

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.25130/jtuh.31.11.2024.24>

**تأثير استراتيجية رسم الخرائط الدلالية على تحصيل طلاب المرحلة الإعدادية للغة الإنجليزية كلفة  
أجنبية في التركيز على الأدب**

علي عبدالغفور رزوقي حسين

جوهر برك مطر/جامعة تكريت/ كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية

**الخلاصة:**

يبدأ النص الأدبي عادةً بحاجة الكاتب إلى نقل رؤيته الشخصية إلى القارئ. حتى عندما يستخدم الكاتب مادة واقعية، أو يوثق قصصًا صحفية تاريخية، أو تجربته الشخصية، فإن هدفه الأساسي ليس مجرد نقل المعلومات، بل إعطاء رؤية فريدة للتجربة، رؤية لها أهمية تتجاوز اللحظة. الأدب هو الخبر

الذي يبقى خبيراً. أن ينقل وجهة نظره عن التجربة، ويخترع الشخصيات، ويخلق الحوار. ومن أجل حل هذه المشكلة، يجب أن يكون لدى المعلم نشاط إبداعي، ويمكن أن تكون استراتيجية رسم الخرائط الدلالية وسيلة بديلة للتعليم التي تجعل الطلاب يستمتعون وكذلك تسهل عليهم الكتابة. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى: (١) معرفة تأثير استراتيجية رسم الخرائط الدلالية على تحصيل طلاب المرحلة الإعدادية للغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية في تدريس "التركيز الأدبي". (٢) معرفة ما إذا كان هناك فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية بين تحصيل الطلاب على مستوى التمييز من ناحية، وتحصيلهم على مستوى الإنتاج من ناحية أخرى. (٣) معرفة قدرة طلاب المرحلة الإعدادية للغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية على تمييز اللغة المجازية، والتعرف على الثقافات الأخرى والوعي بها، ومهارات التفكير العليا. تم اختيار عينة مكونة من (٦٠) طالباً بطريقة عشوائياً من طلاب الصف الرابع الإعدادي الدارسين في العراق اللغة الانكليزية في مدرسة المناهل للبنين في مدينة تكريت خلال العام الدراسي ٢٠٢٣/٢٠٢٤.

- الكلمات المفتاحية:
- الخرائط الدلالية،
- استراتيجية،
- اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية،
- الأدب، النصوص الأدبية.

## Introduction

### 1. Statement of the Problem

English is the most widely spoken language in the world, and it crosses cultures, countries, and industries. It is often used as a "common tongue" if neither person is a native speaker. Teaching people English can be truly rewarding, as students of English have many new opportunities and doors open to them thanks to their skills (Tunstall, 2023). The relationship between language and teaching literature is a symbiotic one. Literature is a great tool to approach English language and culture, also language is more relevant to students if they can connect it to other disciplines like art, history, math, or instruction in their native language. By facilitating these connections through literature, instructors are able to instruct students holistically rather than solely on language skills (Ihejirika, 2014).

According to research on the Semantic Mapping Strategy (henceforth, SMS) it has been determined to be an effective strategy for structuring concepts and visual representations in the context of utilising the strategy to compose a

paragraph. According to Gibbons (2002) SMS is one way of collecting and organizing information using brainstorming whereby the students recall what they already know about a topic, find words or concepts related to the topic and display the relationships of the words using a mental map. Through these activities, they are expected to be able to improve their vocabulary and their knowledge and find the meaning of words based on their context. Zaid (1995) explains that this strategy motivates and involves the students in thinking and learning to read. It also enhances their development of vocabulary by helping them link new information with previous experiences.

The significance of using literature in the English as a Foreign Language (henceforth, EFL) classroom is highlighted by the scholars. Van (2009) states that literature useful in the EFL classroom. It provides context similar to real life situations. According to (Healy, 2010), reading literature texts enhance the creative capability of learners and develop in them awareness of the culture of the target language. Healy (2010) mentions four valid reasons for using literature in the EFL classroom.

The majority of EFL course materials are often perceived as lacking in inspiration and motivation by learners. Literature serves as a medium through which pupils experience a sense of engagement and enjoyment, deriving pleasure from the consumption of well-crafted narratives. The act of engaging in discussions throughout the process of reading literature serves as a catalyst for students to actively participate in the exchange of their thoughts, ideas, sentiments, and emotions. Significant relationships with their fellow students cultivate a more profound degree of participation. Students have the ability to engage in class activities while simultaneously narrating the story and demonstrating an appreciation for the characters. The act of instructing students in the field of literature facilitates the cultivation of more positive dispositions through the process of contemplating the concepts and ideas conveyed within the literary works authored by various individuals. The use of literary texts into EFL classroom environment serves to bolster learners' self-assurance in utilising the language with increased confidence (Yimwilai, 2015).

A significant number of Iraqi EFL students have challenges when it comes to acquiring proficiency in the field of literature. For instance, when it comes to the study of literature, there exists a lack of knowledge among students regarding several aspects pertaining to the pedagogy of teaching literature. Furthermore, students exhibit a deficiency in generating imaginative thoughts. They are experiencing difficulty in expressing their ideas in written form due to a deficiency in grammar skills. The additional challenges arise from the

instructional approach employed by the teacher. The teacher employs the free creating style within the classroom setting.

## 1.2 Aims of the Study

This study aims at:

1. Finding out the effect of SMS on EFL preparatory school students' achievement in teaching 'literature focus'.
2. Finding out whether there is any significant difference between students' achievement at the recognition level on one hand, and their achievement at the production level, on the other hand in the posttest.
3. Finding out EFL preparatory school students' ability to identify figurative language , recognize and be aware of other cultures, and higher thinking skills.

## 1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses are put forward in order to be verified throughout the experiment of the current study:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group's achievements and that of control group's achievement in the posttest.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of students' achievement at the recognition and production levels of the posttest.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of students' performance in figurative language, recognize and be aware of other cultures, and higher thinking skills.

## 1.4 Value of the Study

The value of this study could be itemized as follows:

- 1-It equips students with authentic instructional material through studying literature which increases their critical thinking , engagement, and participation .
- 2- It informs syllabus designers and specialists with necessary information about the role of SMS in the process of learning and teaching EFL.
3. It improves the ability of students to realize the structures and rules of English easily and smoothly.

## 1.5 Limits of the Study

This study is limited to Iraqi EFL fourth year preparatory school students who study 'Literature Focus' at Al-Manahil School for Boys in the city of Tikrit during the academic year 2023/2024.

## 2.1 Theoretical Background

## 2.1.1 Semantic Mapping Strategy

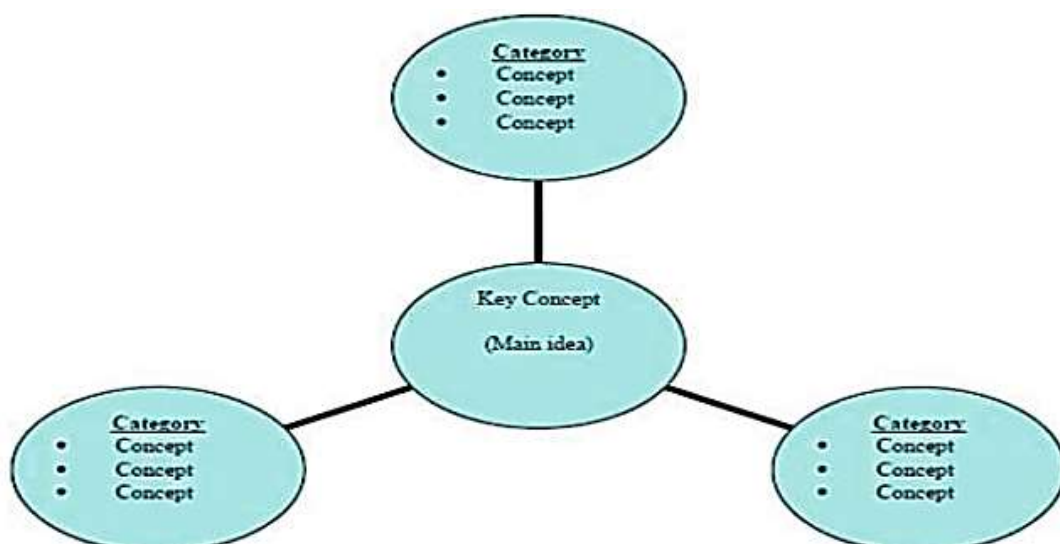
### 2.1.1 Concept of Semantic Mapping

Semantic Mapping is derived from the words semantic and mapping. In Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the word of semantics is defined as branch of linguistics concerned with studying the meanings of words and sentences (Hornby *et al.*, 2000).

Silberstein (1994) defines semantic map as a Strategy that allows students to demonstrate their understanding of the relationships between ideas within a text by drawing a semantic (mental) map. Duffy (2009) defines it as one way to explain how to categorize word meanings. It can help students to distinguish one word from another. Vaughn and Edmonds (2006), as cited in Manoli and Papadopoulou (2012), explain that semantic mapping offers an overview of key vocabulary and concepts providing a link between what students know and what they will learn when they read.

Semantic mapping is a process for constructing visual displays of categories and their relationships. It is a categorical structuring of information in graphic form. It is an approach leading students to relate new words to their own experiences and prior knowledge. Semantic maps as Jonassen (1993) indicates "are type of graphic organizers that visually represent relationships among categories of concepts". Figure 1 displays the structure of a semantic map. It includes a key concept, or main idea, with categorized concepts related to the key concept. The categories related to the central concept and the associations among words are indicated visually in a diagram or map.

Fig. 1. The Structure of Semantic Maps (Heimlich and Pittelman, 1986)



Semantic mapping is not new, it has been used for many years under the labels "semantic webbing", "semantic networking," or "plot maps" (Heimlich and Pittelman, 1986). It has been regarded as a successful and helpful teaching strategy based on the creation and evaluation of the learner's background knowledge or schemata. Sinatra, *et al.*, (cited in Zaid, 1995) describe semantic mapping as "a graphic arrangement showing the major ideas and relationships in text or among word meanings". Semantic maps can be used to underline the relationships between items, and they are an extremely practical framework for storage of terms.

### 2.1.1.2 Nature of Semantic Mapping Strategy

According to Al-Khasawneh and AlHawamde (2023) Semantic mapping is a visual strategy, which shows the major ideas of a certain topic and how they are related. Semantic mapping could be a helpful reference for students to use in clarifying confusing points as they are read. In Teaching and learning, using semantic mapping strategy, can be reference for students when they reading. While expands students' vocabulary they will think more creative and help the other skill of English. According to Antonacci (1991) Semantic mapping is "a visual representation of knowledge, a picture of conceptual relationship" to learn about vocabulary the students need some image to imagine and know what they should done when study about vocabulary mastery, which to be able in vocabulary students need understand first what kinds of words that they should understand to make and cried other words from the topic or tittle.

Simanjuntak & Simanjuntak (2018) state that semantic mapping strategies are valuable instructional tools. They do not like many tools that just have one purpose, semantic mapping is flexible and endless in application. A strategy that is flexible in teaching and, in the knowledge, acquired, where it is said that it is valuable because it helps students, which greatly helps students to further expand their vocabulary to the equivalent of their first language vocabulary.

### 2.1.1.3 Procedures of Semantic Mapping Strategy

The use of semantic mapping in the classroom may be divided into five phases in general, introducing the topic, brainstorming, categorization, personalizing the map, post-assessment synthesis" (Zaid, 1995), as follow;

- Introducing the topic: The teacher declares the topic by drawing a large oval on the blackboard and writes the topic inside of it. This topic is about the passage students will read. Through this, the students can guess the purpose of the reading passage.

- **Brainstorming:** The teacher wants the students to think about keywords and ideas which are interrelated to the topic. This fact enables the students to use their background knowledge and experiences. Brainstorming is an application of the schema theory, which is necessary for connecting known and unknown concepts. Thus, prior knowledge can be used as a stepping block to new knowledge. The brainstorming part of semantic mapping gives an opportunity to observe each of the students' schemata so prior knowledge. The keyword and ideas are listed to the one side of the blackboard. In this phase all responses are accepted as they relate to the topic (Dilek & Yürük, 2013).
- **Categorization:** The teacher supports the students to make connections among their offers. "Category clusters" (Antonacci, 1991) are formed by the students and the teacher together according to the students' ideas. Then the teacher and students decide suitable headings or labels for each of the clusters or categories of words. When this clustering finishes, the teacher wants the students to make their own copies. In this phase According to Zaid (1995) the students grow experience in practicing some valuable cognitive skills, particularly categorizing and exemplifying and they also learn comparing and contrasting, cause and effect relationships and making inference. This part also can be termed as pre- assignment.
- **Personalizing the map:** After each student makes his/her own copy, a material such as a reading passage which is about the key concepts of the map, is given. This reading passage consists of more related concepts than the students have listed. As they read, students are to decide what to add or eliminate from the map they have created. In this step, new information is integrated with prior knowledge (Dilek & Yürük, 2013).
- **Post- assignment synthesis:** The last part of this procedure is used to record the students' suggestions from their personal maps on the pre-assignment. After they read the passage and add or eliminate some items, the whole class decides the final shape of the map. The new version, serves as a visual image of the knowledge they gained from the map (Zaid, 1995).

#### 2.1.1.4 Types of Semantic Mapping Strategy

The three of the most commonly used applications of the SMS are (Heimlich and Pittelman, 1986); general vocabulary development, pre and post reading, as a study skill strategy; as follows;

### • Semantic Mapping in Vocabulary Development

Perhaps the most widely known use of semantic mapping as an instructional strategy is in general vocabulary development. In this strategy, semantic mapping procedure prepares students to understand, learn, and assess the information to be read. Johnson and Pearson (1984) adapt a semantic mapping procedure for vocabulary development:

1. Choose a word or topic related to classroom work.
2. List the word on a large chart tablet or on the chalkboard.
3. Encourage the students to think of as many words as they can that are related to the selected key word and then list the words by categories on a sheet of paper.
4. Students then share the prepared lists orally and all words are written on the class map in categories.
5. Students can gain further practice in classification by labelling the categories on the semantic map (cited in Heimlich and Pittelman, 1986).

### • Semantic Mapping in Pre and Post Reading

In addition to being effective for vocabulary development, semantic mapping has been demonstrated to be a good alternative to traditional activities used before reading a new passage, as well as after reading a passage (Heimlich and Pittelman, 1986). In this application, before reading the certain passage, students work on the key concept and think as many words as they can about the key concept by the help of their prior knowledge. After reading the story, students can add words and new categories to their knowledge. Semantic mapping as a pre and post reading strategy is effective with basal as well as with other reading materials and has been successfully adapted content instruction as well (Heimlich and Pittelman, 1986).

### • Semantic Mapping as a Study Skill Strategy

Semantic mapping is not new; it has been around for years under the labels "semantic webbing", "semantic networking," or "plot maps" (Heimlich and Pittelman, 1986). It has been regarded as a successful and helpful teaching strategy based on the creation and evaluation of the learner's background knowledge or schemata. There are many different definitions of semantic mapping strategies described by different researchers. Sinatra, et al., (1984) describe semantic mapping as "a graphic arrangement showing the major ideas and relationships in text or among word meanings". Semantic maps can be used to underline the relationships between items, and they are an extremely practical framework for storage of terms. Heimlich and Pittelman (1986) define semantic

maps as "diagrams that help students see how words are related to one another". According to Stoller and Grabe (1993) "semantic mapping leads to better vocabulary retention because new lexical items are introduced in semantic networks". In short, semantic mapping displays graphically information which is related to a topic or concept and stimulates meaningful word relations.

### 2.1.1.7 Teacher's Role in Semantic Mapping Strategy

Maggard (2000) describes the role of teacher in semantic mapping used by Johnson & Pearson (1984) as follows:

First, instructors choose a core concept of a text and display it visually so that all students can see it. The core concepts might be written on a blackboard, on an overhead transparency, on a large sheet of paper, or even displayed from a computer which has an overhead projection system. Next, students are encouraged to write down a series of words or phrases associated with the core concept. After brainstorming and generating lists of words or phrases relevant to the topic, students are asked to compare their lists with their peers. Then students are asked to illustrate relationships between each word on their list by linking the words or phrases together with lines.

During the process of constructing a semantic map, instructors can identify what is in and what is outside their learners' level of awareness in regards to core ideas and supporting details. This can provide instructors with important diagnostic information which can help them lead the class in an appropriate direction. It is only after students have completed the pre-reading maps that they read the text.

Recently, semantic mapping has been used in various ways, including the following (Maggard, in Muhtar 2010):

- a) As a Strategy for increasing vocabulary and improving reading comprehension
- b) As a means of improving the teaching of study skills
- c) As a framework for identifying the structural organization of texts
- d) As a means of teaching critical thinking skills
- e) As a link between reading and writing instruction

Sinatra *et al.*, (1986) describe different formats of semantic map; (1) the narrative sequence, format arranges information in several parallel hierarchical strands, (2) the thematic or descriptive map displays elements and details about people, places, or things around a central theme, and (3) the comparative and contrastive map; relationship among concepts by displaying how class, examples and attributes are related.

### 2.1.1.8 Advantage of Semantic Map Strategy

According to Zaghlool (2004), maps are useful for describing we already know about a subject. It can help to improve the transfer of knowledge for one area or discipline to another and teacher created maps can be especially helpful in getting an overview of a topic or even a whole course. Semantic maps providing students with a systematic means to integrate their new knowledge with their prior understanding, activating students' prior knowledge and stimulating them to use that knowledge to interact with the text and promoting semantic mapping as a pre reading activity that encourages students to map out their ideas. Al-Debes (2005), states that the advantage of semantics maps as follow:

1. Semantics maps provide the additional benefit of helping students visualize how word meanings can be categorized.
2. Semantics maps as a strategy to allow students to record what they are learning during assignment.
3. The semantics maps Strategy as being used to motivate and involve students in the thinking, reading, and writing aspect.
4. Semantics maps may also be used after reading to summarize and review key terms and ideas and to informally assess students understanding.

### 2.1.2 Concept of Literature Focus

Real-world circumstances and social contexts are mirrored in literature, which is inextricably linked to our language and culture. It is their conviction that literature cultivates in students as appreciation and comprehension of ideologies and cultures that are distinct from their own. Therefore, by exposing students to a variety of worldviews and cultures, the incorporation of literature into the curriculum could assist in preparing them to approach global issues with a fresh perspective. The phrase "the window to the world" is frequently applied to literature (Sidhu *et al.*, 2010).

Stevenson & Waite (2011) define Literature "as works whose worth is derived from their aesthetic appeal or emotional impact." The term "book learning" originates in the early 15th century and is derived from the Latin *literatura/litatura*, which means "learning, writing, grammar." Originally, it meant "writing formed with letters" and was derived from the alphabetic letters *litera/litatura*, which also meant epistle, writing, document, literature, famous books, and science.

According to Khatib *et al.*, (2011), literature plays a crucial role in enhancing critical thinking, emotional intelligence, language development,

cultural and pragmatic awareness, and ultimately, the motivation of high school pupils worldwide. Literary text comprises any written material, including but not limited to a fictional novel, that serves the purpose of narrative expression or entertainment. While aesthetics is typically the primary purpose of the text, it may also convey political ideologies or messages (Nawaz, 2019).

As stated by Moody (1971), a literary work conveys a linguistic and psychological reality through the placement of words within its context, thereby minimizing interference and providing support. A literary work significantly contributes to the process of English language acquisition, particularly by fostering students' motivation, promoting cultural awareness, and enhancing their communication skills.

### 2.1.2.2 Literature in the Academic Setting

The degree of achievement in language acquisition is frequently assessed by the students' level of engagement and pleasure, their perseverance with the learning process, and their interest and enthusiasm for the subject matter covered in the language class (Crook and Schmidt, 1991). Literature has the capacity to materialize the future into a tangible notion that can be philosophically examined through the establishment of a link between the human realm and the grand concepts that propel history. Literature has the capacity to be transcendental and hyper-current (Hulst, 2017).

Khatib *et al.*, (2011) argue that the insufficient amount of empirical research has resulted in the neglect of the significance of literature. The primary objective, according to Liach (2007), is to determine whether literature can facilitate enhanced communication in language classes. Language serves as a medium of expression through which the author and the reader communicate, transferring meaning. There are three primary justifications for employing literature as a tool for teaching L2. Literature in the classroom is justified according to the first criterion because it furnishes pupils with genuine illustrations of language in action. Students can benefit from contrasting registers, styles, and text types because they are challenged to broaden their perspectives and query the very concept of language.

The second criterion adopts a more interaction-oriented perspective, considering literature as a subject that is susceptible to interpretation and discussion. This results in learners who are engaged and motivated, which is the ultimate objective of an EFL instructor communicative approaches to language instruction (Liach, 2007).

The third criterion pertains to motivation and is predicated on the reader's individual experiences and motivations. Engaging in activities that incorporate the student's learning and offer supplementary cultural context facilitate the reader's sense of connection with the texts. When students can establish connections between a literary work and their individual emotions and experiences, their motivation to learn is enhanced (Liach, 2007).

### **2.1.2.3 Literature in Teaching English**

Implementing English literature as an intrinsic component of programming languages represents an enduring dedication that predominantly capitalizes on the pedagogical benefits of literature. The viewpoint that EFL students, who are "intellectually and emotionally prepared to examine literary works, if not linguistically and culturally", should not be denied the opportunity to engage in literary experiences is evidently growing among educationists (Spack 1985).

Literature use in EFL classrooms has been severely overshadowed in recent years due to the proliferation of language teaching methodologies in second language instruction and the emphasis on the study of English for specific practical purposes, technical or otherwise (Carter and Long, 1991).

### **2.1.2.8 Important Criteria for Teaching Literature in EFL Classroom**

Khatib *et al.*, (2011) emphasize the following requirements for using literature in language classrooms:

- i) linguistic,
- ii) methodological, and
- iii) motivational.

The significance of literature as a collection of authentic, genuine texts that offer learners concrete instances of diverse registers, styles, and text types is upheld by the linguistic criterion, according to Maley (1989). In this way, he demonstrates that literature encompasses a wide range of subject matters and language varieties, including vernacular and formal terms.

Collie and Slater (1987) say that literature shows many real aspects of written language, including how words are put together and what they mean, the different patterns that can be used, and the different ways that ideas can be linked. Van (2009) says that writing uses a wide range of words, phrases, and sentences. By reading literature works, students are introduced to real language that was written for native speakers. This helps them get used to the target language's forms and functions for communication. Also, knowing a lot of different registers, styles, and types of language is very important because they

are not only grammatically different but also serve different social communication purposes.

In this case, the methodological guideline is the idea that literary works can lead to different readings and points of view. Widdowson (1982) says this makes students connect with the book, with each other, and with the teacher in a real, driven way. It's also important to remember that in literature-based classes, the reader is an active participant who works with and makes sense of the literary language (Brumfit, 1986). The student has to use content-based useful learner talk in English and be active, independent, and important to the learning process. The student also has to grow as a person and in his or her relationships with others and with the institutions (Carter and Long, 1991).

### **2.1.2.11 Teaching Literature by Using Semantic Mapping Strategy**

Semantic mapping helps the students develop prior knowledge by seeing the relationship in a given topic. It is a visual representation of particular concept (Cecil *et al.*, 2017). This strategy is most effective when it is used before, during, and after reading and when the teachers serve as the guide or facilitator to their students who contrast own semantic maps. When semantic mapping is as pre-reading, it helps to active students' prior knowledge (schemata). Further, the teacher may use students' pre-reading semantic maps to determine how much knowledge building is required before students read the text (Antonnci, 2011).

Using semantic reading in whilst-reading helps students to record the information obtained from the text. By making a semantic map during reading a text, the students' prior knowledge is complicated with the new information (Muhtar, 2010). When using semantic mapping as post- reading, teachers can use students' discussions to help them organize information by connecting to words or concepts related to topic (Antonnci *et al.*, 2014).

Semantic mapping is a strategy used to teach literature by visually displaying the connections between words, phrases, or concepts. It helps students identify, understand, and recall information when they read a text. Semantic maps can be used as a pre-reading strategy to activate prior knowledge and as a post-reading activity to connect words, categories, and new concepts. It is a versatile strategy that can be adapted for different age groups in literature teaching. For elementary students, teachers can use concrete words and concepts, adjust the number of words being compared and/or the number of traits, and use picture representations of items or traits (Uchida, 2012).

## **3.0 Methodology**

### 3.1 Experimental Design

The experimental design is a “traditional approach to conducting quantitative research or test an idea (or practice or procedure) to determine whether it influences an outcome or dependent variable “ (Creswell, 2012).

### 3.2 Population and Sample of the Study

Population refers to all the subjects that the researcher wants to study and it comprises all persons, objects or events (Ary *et al.*, 2006). The population of the current study consists of EFL fourth year preparatory school male students in Tikrit City, Salah Al-Deen. The total number of the fourth year male students is 293, divided into five preparatory schools for boys in the center of Tikrit, as shown in table (1).

*Table (1)*  
*The Population of the Study*

No.	Names of School	Number of Students
1.	Al-Turath Al-Araby Preparatory School for Boys	54
2.	Ibn Al-Atheer Preparatory School for Boys	55
3.	Al-Alam Preparatory School for Boys	48
4.	Al-Qabas preparatory School for Boys	61
5.	Al-Manahil preparatory School for Boys	75
<b>Total</b>		293

The sample is a subset of the target population that the researchers are intending to evaluate in order to generalize the target population. Ideally, a survey is selected to represent the population as a whole (Creswell, 2012).

The whole sample of the present study includes seventy-five at Al-Manahil Preparatory School for Boys in Tikrit City, Salah Al-Deen, during the academic year 2023-2024. The students are grouped into three sections: (A, B and C). Sections (A) and (B) have been randomly selected to be the experimental and control groups whose total number is seventy-five. Section (A) consists of thirty-seven students while section (B) consists of thirty-eight students. Seven students are excluded from section (A) and eight students are excluded from section (B). Fifteen of those students are employed for the pilot study. Thus, thirty students have been selected from section (A) as an experimental group and thirty students from section (B) as a control group. Therefore, the total number of the involved sample is sixty who represent 25.60% percent of its original sample, as shown in table (2).

*Table (2)*  
*The Sample of the Study*

Groups	No. of Students	No. of Pilot Students	No. of Sample Students
Experimental	37	7	30
Control	38	8	30
Total	75	15	60

### 3.7 Validity of the Achievement Posttest

Validity is the extent to which deductions made from assessment results are suitable, useful, and meaningful in terms of the objectives of the assessment (Gronlund, 1970).

#### 3.7.1 Face Validity

A test is said to be valid if it measures what it claims to measure (Al-Hamash and Younis, 1975). Heaton (1988) states that face validity is "the extent to which the test measures what is supposed to measure and nothing else." To ensure the face validity of the test, it has been exposed to a jury of specialists in the field of linguistics, methods of teaching English, linguistics and English literature. All the notes and modifications stated by jurors have been considered.

### 3.9 Reliability of the Achievement Posttest

Reliability is a critical characteristic of a good test. It is said that a test is trustworthy if the degree of accuracy of the exam is stable and consistent each time it is administered under the same conditions to the same sample of pupils (Veram and Beard, 1981). One of the necessary characteristics of a good test is reliability. Alderson (1995, p.112) states that "reliability is the extent to which test scores are consistent". Alpha- Cronbach formula is used to measure the reliability of the posttest. The coefficient correlation is found to be 0.92, which refers to the homogeneity of the test questions.

## 4.1 Findings of the Study

### 4.1.1 Results Related to the First Hypothesis

#### Comparison between the Mean Scores of the Experimental Group's Achievement and that of Control Group's Achievement in the Posttest

In order to verify the first hypothesis which states "*there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group achievement and that of control group achievement in the posttest*". The mean scores as well as

the standard deviation of the two groups are obtained. Statistics show that the mean scores of the experimental groups is 69.36 and those of the control group are 56.30, with standard deviation 11.70 and 9.23, respectively. By using the t-test formula for two independent variables, the calculated t-value is found to be 4.801, while the tabulated t-value is found to be 2.000 at the degree of freedom (58) and level of significance (0.05). This means that there is a significant difference between the achievements of the two groups, and in favour of the experimental group. Thus, the first hypothesis is rejected, as shown in table (4).

*Table (4)  
Means, Standard Deviation, and t-Values of the Two Groups  
In the Achievement Test*

Groups	No. of students	Mean	SD.	T-Value		DF	Level of Significance
				Calculated	Tabulated		
EG.	30	69.36	11.70	4.801	2.000	58	0.05
CG.	30	56.30	9.23				

#### 4.2 Results Related to the Second Hypothesis

##### Comparison between Experimental Groups achievement at Recognition and the Production levels of the Posttest

In order to verify the second hypothesis which states “*there is no significant difference between the mean scores of students' achievement at the recognition and production levels of the posttest*”. The mean scores of the experimental group's performances at the recognition as well as production levels are obtained. It is found that the mean scores the students at recognition level is 36.36 with a standard deviation of 5.99, and their performance at production level is 33.00 with a standard deviation of 7.35. The calculated t-value is 2.812, which is found to be higher than the tabulated t-value, which is 2.045. The degree of freedom is (29), with a level of significance of (0.05). This means that there is a significant difference between the student's achievement at the recognition level, on one hand and the production level, on the other hand. Thus, the second hypothesis is rejected, as shown in the table (5).

*Table (5)  
The T-test Value of paired samples, Experimental Groups' Performance at  
Recognition and the Production levels of the Posttest*

Group	No. of students	Mean	SD.	T-Value		DF	Level of Significance
				Calculated	Tabulated		
Recognition	30	36.36	5.99	2.812	2.045	29	0.05
Production	30	33.00	7.35				

### 4.3 Results Related to the Third Hypothesis

#### Comparison between the mean scores of experimental group students at three components of literary text

In order to verify the third hypothesis of this study, which states "that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of experimental groups' achievement at three components of literary text," a one-way analysis of variance is used, as shown in the following table;

*Table (6)*  
*One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)*

Groups	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F-value		Sig.
				Calculated	Tabulated	
Between Groups	116.267	2	58.133	6.436	3.45	0.05
Within Groups	785.833	87	9.033			
Total	902.100	89				

Results shows, that the calculated f-value 6.436 is higher than the tabulated f-value of 3.45 at the 0.05 level of significance and 2, 87 degrees of freedom. This indicates that there is no significant difference between students' achievement in three components of literary text.

*Table (7)*  
*Comparisons of Means between the Three Components of Literary Text (Scheffe<sup>a</sup>)*

Groups	N	Subset For Alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Higher Thinking Skills	30	8.1667	
Identify Figurative Language	30	8.4333	
Recognize and Be Aware of Other Cultures	30		10.7000
Sig.		0.943	1.000
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 30.			

According to Table (7), the comparisons of means show that the mean scores of the Higher Thinking Skills is 8.1667, Identify Figurative Language is 8.4333, recognize and be aware of other cultures is 10.7000, with a harmonic mean sample size of 30. This means that there is a significant difference between students' achievement in the three components of literary text and in the benefit of recognize and be aware of other cultures component at a level of significance 1.000. Thus, the third hypothesis is also rejected.

### 4.2 Discussion of the obtained Results

The outcomes of the study show that the achievement of the experimental group who has been taught by using SMS is better than that of the control group

who has been taught by using the conventional method. This means that SMS proves to be more effective and a helpful tool than the conventional method, in teaching “Literature Focus” to preparatory school students.

The improvement of students' achievement in English by using SMS could be attributed to the following factors:

- 1- Semantic mapping strategy helps students to understand, comprehend and memorize new vocabularies better.
- 2- Semantic maps allow students to categorize information, making it easier to remember and understand.
- 3-EFL preparatory school students find that SMS is enjoyable and flexible which allows them to express their own opinions freely and to communicate with other students interactions related to the real-life situation.
- 4- Semantic mapping strategy increases students confidence in their learning ability and encourages them to familiarize themselves with their partners cooperatively.
- 5- Semantic mapping strategy encourages students to communicate in different situations in the classroom, organize, create and better connect relationships between ideas.

## 5.0 Conclusions

In the light of the obtained results and the theoretical material concerned with the use of contextual teaching-learning approach it is concluded that:

- 1- Semantic mapping strategy engages students in learning English, and increasing students' motivation to participate actively in the learning process.
- 2-The use of SMS in teaching and learning approach in an English class is responded positively by the students.
- 3- By Semantic mapping strategy, the teacher can create a representative and interesting teaching and learning process in the classroom because the students can develop their ideas freely.
- 4- In context-based teaching environments, scientific concepts are presented to students with examples related to daily life, and it is aimed to increase students' interest, attitude, motivation and success towards the course and to improve their language
- 5- Semantic mapping strategy is a visual representation that enables the connection of newly learned concepts with the previous ones, and also contributes to the realization of meaningful learning by linking the topics with each other and with daily life.

## 5.1 Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward in the context of the obtained results and drawn conclusions:

- 1-Teachers are recommended to encourage and to adopt modern strategies, methods, activities and techniques to enhance students' participation and interaction inside their classroom.
- 2.Teachers should design different lessons that can be presented by using SMS to raise students' motivation.
- 3-Teachers of English should be trained on using SMS in teaching English literary texts, to increase their students' achievement.
4. Curriculum designers and EFL methodologists should recommend using SMS in teaching English to improve students' language.
5. In teaching English, teachers are advised to focus on the procedures and steps of SMS rather to use the conventional method.

## 5.2 Suggestions for Further Studies

The following points are suggested, for further research:

1. The role of using SMS in teaching EFL speaking and listening skills to Preparatory School Students.
2. The effect of using SMS on university students' achievement in English short story, drama and novel.
3. The role of using SMS to improve primary as well as intermediate school students' achievement in various English skills.

## Reference

- Al-Debes, I. M. (2005). The effect of using Reciprocal Teaching and Semantic Mapping Reading Strategies on the development of English Reading Comprehension of upper basic stage students. *Unpublished doctoral dissertation*). Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies, Amman, Jordan.
- Alderson, C. (1995). *Dictionary of Language Testing*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Al-Hamash, K.I and Younis, Hamdi (1975). *Principles and Techniques of Teaching English as a Second Language*. Baghdad Middle East Printing Press.
- Al-Khasawneh, F. and AlHawamde M. (2023). The Potential Of Semantic Mapping Strategy To Enhance Vocabulary Learning. *Journal of Southwest Jiaotong University*, 58(1).
- Antonacci, P. A. (1991). Students Search for Meaning in the Text through Semantic Mapping. *Social Education*, 55, 174-194.
- Antonacci, P. A., O'callaghan, C. M., & Berkowitz, E. (2014). *Developing content area literacy: 40 strategies for middle and secondary classrooms*. Sage Publications.
- Ary, D.; Jacobs, L. C. and Sorensen C. (2006). *Introduction to Research in Education*. Cengage Learning.
- Brumfit, C. J. and Carter, R. A. (1986). *Literature and Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- C. Ihejirika, R. (2014). Literature and English Language Teaching and Learning: A Symbiotic Relationship. *English Language Teaching*, 7(3). <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v7n3p85>
- Carter, R., & Michael, N. Long (1991): *Teaching literature*. Harlow: Longman.
- Cecil, N. L., Gipe, J. P., & Marcy, M. E. (2017). *Literacy in grades 4-8: Best practices for a comprehensive program*. Routledge.
- Collie, J., & Slater, S. (1987). *Literature in the language classroom: A resource book of ideas and activities*. Cambridge University Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative*, Boston: Pearson.
- Crook, G., Schmidt, R. (1991). "Motivation: Reopening the Research Agenda". *Language Learning*, 41 (4): 469–512.
- Dilek, Y., & Yürük, N. (2013). Using semantic mapping Strategy in vocabulary teaching at pre-intermediate level. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70, 1531-1544.
- Duffy, G. G. (2009). *Explaining Reading: A Source For Teaching Concepts, Skills And Strategies*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Gibbons, P. (2002). *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning: Teaching Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Gronlund, N. (1970). *Measurement and Evaluation*. 2nd edition. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Healy. S (2010). Literature in the EFL Classroom From theory to practice [https://ksurep.kyotosu.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/10965/347/1/AHSUSK\\_HS\\_42\\_178.pdf](https://ksurep.kyotosu.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/10965/347/1/AHSUSK_HS_42_178.pdf)
- Heaton, J. B. (1988). *Writing English Language Tests* (2nd Ed). New York: Longman Group.
- Heimlich, J. E. and Pittelman, S.D. (1986). *Semantic Mapping: Classroom Applications*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.
- Hornby, A. S., Wehmeier, S., & Ashby, M. (2000). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*: Oxford University Press. *New York City, US A.*

- Hulst, A. (Ed.). (2017). *Als dit zo doorgaat: let's make literature great again, with all the best words!*. Ambo-Anthos.
- Johnson, D. D. and Pearson, P. D. (1984). *Teaching Reading Vocabulary (2nd Ed.)*. New York: Holt, Rinehart Winston.
- Jonassen, D. H. (1993). *Structural Knowledge: Strategy for Representing, Conveying, and Acquiring Structural Knowledge*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Khatib, m., Derakhshan, a. And Rezaei, s. (2011). Why and why not literature: a task-based approach to teaching literature. *International journal of English linguistics*. Pp. 213-218.
- Liach, P.A. (2007). Teaching Language Through Literature: The Waste Land in The ESL Classroom. *Odisea, 1(8)*, 7-17.
- Maggard, J. (2000). *Semantic Mapping and Lexical Acquisition: Are CAI Methods Effective?* Comparative Culture (6). (<http://www.miyazakimic.ac.jp/other/pdf/journal/2000.html>) retrieved March 15th, 2014.
- Maley, A. (1989). A comeback for literature. *Practical English Teacher, 10*, 59.
- Manoli, P., & Papadopoulou, M. (2012). Graphic organizer as reading strategy: Research finding and issues. *The Journal of Creative Education, 3(3)*, 348- 356.
- Moody, H. B. (1971). *The Teaching of Literature*. London: Longman.
- Muhtar, K. (2010). *Improving Students' Reading Comprehension through Semantic Mapping Strategy*. ([www.digilib.uns.ac.id](http://www.digilib.uns.ac.id)) retrieved June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014.
- Nawaz, M. A. (2019). Teaching Literature Using Task Based Approach in Bangladeshi Tertiary EFL Classroom. *UITS Journal, 3(2)*, 13-19.
- Sidhu, g. K., Fook, c. Y. And Kaur, s. (2010). Instructional practices in teaching literature: observations of ESL classrooms in Malaysia. *English language teaching*. Pp. 54-63.
- Silberstein, S. (1994). *Techniques and Resources in Teaching Reading*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Simanjuntak, O. V., & Simanjuntak, D. C. (2018). Students' Vocabulary Knowledge: Comparative Study Enhancing between Semantic Mapping and Diglot Weave Techniques. *Acuity: Journal of English Language Pedagogy, Literature and Culture, 3(2)*, n2.
- Sinatra, R. C, Stahl-Gemake, J. & Berg, D. N. (1984). Improving Reading Comprehension of Disabled Readers through Semantic Mapping. *The Reading Teacher, 38*, 22-29.
- Spack, R. (1985). Literature, reading, writing, and ESL: Bridging the gaps. *Tesol Quarterly, 19(4)*, 703-725.
- Stevenson, A., & Waite, M. (Eds.). (2011). *Concise Oxford English Dictionary: Book & CD-ROM Set*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Stoller, F. L. and Grabe, W. (1993). Implementations for L2 Vocabulary Acquisition and Instruction from L1 Vocabulary Research. In T. Huckin, M. Haynes and J. Body (Eds.), *Second Language Reading and Vocabulary Learning*. (24-45). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Tunstall, A. (2023, June 29). *7 Reasons Why I Love Teaching English*. <https://www.internationalteflacademy.com/blog/7-reasons-why-i-love-teaching-english>

- Uchida, L. (2012). Allo-repetition in English Narratives: Functional Distribution and Collaboration between Storytellers and story-recipients. In *Research Gate Conference Paper*.
- Van, T. T. M. (2009). The relevance of literary analysis to teaching literature in the EFL classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, 47(3), 2-9.
- Verma, G. K. and R. M. Beard (1981). *What is Educational Research? Perspectives on Techniques of Research*, United Kingdom: Gower Publishing Company.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1982). The Use of Literature. *On TESOL '81*, 203-214.
- Yimwilai, S. (2015, January 20). An Integrated Approach to Teaching Literature in an EFL Classroom. *English Language Teaching*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n2p14>
- Zaghlool, Z. D. (2004). The Effect of an Instructional Programme Based on Semantic Strategies on the Learning of Lexical Items by Jordanian Secondary Stage Students. *Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation, Amman Arab University, Amman, Jordan*.
- Zaid, M. A. (1995). Semantic Mapping in Communicative Language Teaching. *English Teaching Forum*, 33, 6-7.