

WAR 15 THE IMPACT OF USING CONSTRUCTIVE LEARNING ON NINTH GRADE STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT AND CREATIVE THINKING DEVELOPMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT AL - KARAK GOVERNORATE.

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ABSTRACT

At the present days, education in Jordan is facing different challenge because of educational paradigm shift, where education is not ready to meet learners' needs and the demands of the industrial and information society. In addition, the current educational practices don't encourage students to perform creative thinking and problem solving tasks. The education process is the most important step in any country to create conscious generation of youth, through enabling pupils to gain basic knowledge and skills. In this process the pupils are gaining basic knowledge, skills and values to make them live harmoniously with other citizens in the society and enable them to solve the life problems (Karaduman, and Gultekin, 2007). In addition, importance of education has led to further research regarding the nature of learning, in order to develop the education process, these researches have prompted new procedures and concepts for discussion, such as theories of learning, which helped in change education behavior and knowledge.

Keywords: Education, Learners needs, creative thinking, problem solving, Constructivism, theories of learning

Introduction

Constructivism theory has taken the limelight within the field of education, so that has turned the focus of researchers to how knowledge is constructed (Heath,2001). Constructivist learning is based on that learning occurs as learners are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction rather than passively receiving information. It also fosters critical thinking and creates motivated and independent learners, with constructivist learning, learners are the makers of knowledge and meaning (Wilson, joireman and Stroh, 2002).

The method of constructivist teaching is a conception with a very broad sense and has various theoretical origins such as individual psychological constructivism (Piaget) and social constructivism (Vygotsky). In essence, Piaget believed that a developing child was busy constructing cognitive structures and would experience through different developmental stages (Martin and Jeffrey, 2003).

In addition, there are many differences between constructivist teaching method and traditional teaching. Where constructivist teaching method is typically student-centered discovery learning instead of teacher-based "facts" dissemination, and the primary difference is that in constructivist teaching, students participate in hands-on activities and extended to acquire or construct their own knowledge (Bashandy, 2011).

The way of learning that explains how learners learn by constructing understanding for themselves, and allows teachers to rethink how students learn and to focus on process and provide ways of documenting change and transformation, called constructivism theory, which

by using it, teachers will seek for different ways to engage individual student, develop rich environments for exploration (Kim, 2005).

On the other hand, English language has great reach and influence; it is taught all over the world under many different circumstances, English as a Second Language is also known as English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), by the way, most of the difficulties that learners face in the study of English are a consequence of the degree to which their native language differs from English (Bashandy, 2011).

In addition, academic achievement is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. Academic achievement is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment (Alshatnawi and Alobaidi, 2006). While creative thinking is the forked thinking, where the person thinks in multiple directions and not limited to one direction. It is also rich thinking that gives you many ideas about a single topic, or is the ability to see what is not visible to others (Akinbobola and Folashade, 2009).

Statement of the problem

Classes are usually driven by (teacher-talk) and depend heavily on text books for the structure of the course. There is the idea that there is a fixed world of knowledge that the student must come to know. Information is divided in to parts and built in to a whole concept. The goal of the learner is to regurgitate the accepted explanation expostulated by the teacher (Caprio, 1994). It is common idea the conventional method is ineffective in qualitative learning, and because the importance of English all over the world we need to prepare students to become good adaptive learners. That is, students should be able to apply what they learn in school to the various situations in real-life. For this reason, in the present study we aimed to examine the impact of constructive learning on ninth grade students' achievement and creative thinking development in English language at Al-karak governorate.

Questions of the study

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Are there any statistically significant differences in the students' achievement due to the teaching strategy; constructive and Conventional strategy?
2. Are there any statistically significant differences in the students' creative thinking due to the teaching strategy; constructive and conventional strategy?
3. Are there any statistically significant differences in the using of the constructive learning due to student gender (male and female)?

Significance of the study

The importance of the study emerges from the Instructional influences for the constructivism theory by encouraging discovery learning, experiential learning, collaborative learning, and task-based learning. In addition, this study may be highly significant for:

1. This study might attract the attention of English language teachers to the importance of using the constructivism learning in education.
2. This study might attract the attention of English language teachers to the importance of using constructive learning in their classroom.
3. To the best of the researcher knowledge, this study is one of the very few studies, which dealt with the impact of constructive learning on student achievement and creative thinking development in English language in Jordan.

Purpose of the study

This study investigates the effect of using constructive learning on ninth grade students' achievement and creative thinking development in English language at Al-Karak governorate.

Definitions of operational terms

Students Achievement: The difference in the performance between each student, it's also the educational process goal that is achieved by a student, teacher over a certain period. This is measured either by examinations or continuous assessments (Alshatnawi and Alobaidi, 2006).

In this study, it defined procedurally as a mark was obtained by the student in the achievement test, which prepared by the researcher for this purpose.

Creative thinking: reveals the kind of thinking that leads to new insights, novel approaches, fresh perspectives, and whole new ways of understanding and conceiving of things. It also includes some obvious things like music, poetry, dance, dramatic literature, inventions, and technical innovations (Eragamreddy, 2013). In this study, it defined procedurally as a mark was obtained by the student in the Torrance creative thinking test, which prepared by the researcher for this purpose.

Constructive Learning: constructivism is a synthesis of multiple theories diffused into one form, it is the assimilation of both behavior and cognitive ideals; it is how people learn making sense of their experience. Where, knowledge is constructed by learners through an active, mental process of development; learners are the builders and creators of meaning and knowledge (Wilson, Joireman and Stroh, 2002).

In this study, procedurally, it is the model we used to test the level of achievements and creative thinking development of the students.

Ninth Grade: In this study, procedurally, it is the class which we used it to test student's achievement and creative thinking development.

Limitations of the Study

Objectivity limits: This study limited to students' achievement, and the level of creative thinking.

Spatial limits: This study limited to students in ninth grade in Al- Karak governorate.

Temporal limits: This study limited to students who are involved in school of the first semester of the academic year of 2014/2015.

Review of related of Literature

The purpose of this study, aimed to investigate the impact of using constructive learning on ninth grade students' achievement and development of creative thinking in English language at Al-Karak governorate, so this section will discuss the theoretical framework , constructive theory , Constructive Learning Characteristics of constructivist teaching Theoretical Framework Conventional education refers to long-established elements which found in schools since ancient times, where teachers are the instruments by which this knowledge is communicated and these standards of behavior are enforced on students (Chung, 2004).

In addition most forms of education reform promote the adoption of progressive education

practices, a more holistic approach which focuses on individual students' needs and self-expression. From the standpoint of reformers, the conventional teaching methods (teacher-centered), which focused on rote learning and memorization, must be abandoned in favor of student-centered and task-based approaches to learning (Neo and Neo, 2010).

Constructivism theory relies on observation and scientific study, about how people learn, people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. When we encounter something new, maybe we will change what we believe, or discarding the new information as irrelevant (Bashandy, 2011).

The main theme of constructivist theory's is that learning is a process in which the learner is able to build on present and previous information, also student is able to earn more information, create ideas and make choices by utilizing a thought process, student will be able to build knowledge actively through the interactions with environmental stimuli (Karaduman, and Gultekin, 2007).

In addition, Constructive learning can point towards a number of different teaching practices. In the most general sense, it usually means encouraging students to use active techniques such as: real-world problem solving, to create more knowledge and then to reflect on and talk about what they are doing and how their understanding is changing (Kim, 2005).

Teachers with constructive learning will encourage students to constantly assess, through the activities which helping them gain understanding. This way gives them ever-broadening tools to keep learning. With a well-planned classroom environment, the students learn how to learn. The teacher makes sure to understand the students' preexisting conceptions, and guides the activity to address them and then build on them (Martin and Jeffrey, 2003).

Creativity is a mainly a factor of human endeavor, where individuals need to have creative thoughts especially in an environment such as education, because of its positive impact. Creative thinking knows no bounds and is not restricted by possibilities. It also bridges the gap between what are wishes and desired goals (Eragamreddy, 2013).

Creative thinking is a specific thought processes to improve the ability to be creative, think deeply in ways that improve the likelihood of new thoughts occurring, in order to maximize the ability of the brain to think of new ideas. It's also a series of mental actions which produce developments of thought, like a process of exploring multiple avenues of actions or thoughts (Ibrahim, 2014).

From the above we see that there is a relationship between constructive learning and creative thinking. In which constructive learning fosters creative thinking and created motivated and independent learners.

Constructive Theory

Constructivism theory main challenge is to change the way of control over learning from the teacher to the student, which contravenes with what we know now about the nature of learning and about the nature of knowledge. It's rely on student at the first level, based on their own objectives and needs, where students should work together with peers in the social construction of personally significant meaning (Caprio,1994).

Formalization of the theory of constructivism is generally attributed to Jean Piaget, who articulated mechanisms by which knowledge is internalized by learners. He suggested that through processes of accommodation and assimilation, individuals construct new knowledge from their experiences (Taber, 2011).

Constructivism theory depends on four main principles: learning, in an important way, depends on what we already know; new ideas occur as we adapt and change our old ideas; learning involves inventing ideas rather than mechanically accumulating facts; meaningful learning occurs through rethinking old ideas and coming to new conclusions about new ideas which conflict with our old ideas. A productive, constructivist classroom, then, consists of learner-centered, active instruction (Wilson, Joireman and Stroh, 2002).

When individuals assimilate, they incorporate the new experience into an already existing framework without changing that framework. This may occur when individuals experiences are aligned with their internal representations of the world, but may also occur as a failure to change a faulty understanding; for example, they may not notice events, may misunderstand input from others, or may decide that an event is a fluke and is therefore unimportant as information about the world (Lee, Waxman, Wu, Michko, and Lin, 2013).

In contrast, when individual's experiences contradict their internal representations, they may change their perceptions of the experiences to fit their internal representations. According to the theory, accommodation is the process of reframing one's mental representation of the external world to fit new experiences (Caprio, 1994).

Accommodation can be understood as the mechanism by which failure leads to learning: when we act on the expectation that the world operates in one way and it violates our expectations, we often fail, but by accommodating this new experience and reframing our model of the way the world works, we learn from the experience of failure, or others' failure (Qarareh, 2012).

In addition constructivism is not a particular pedagogy. In fact, constructivism is a theory describing how learning happens, regardless of whether learners are using their experiences to understand a lecture or following the instructions for building a model airplane. In both cases, the theory of constructivism suggests that learners construct knowledge out of their experiences (Juniu, 2006).

Characteristics of constructivist teaching

One of the primary goals of using constructivist teaching is that students learn how to learn by giving them the training to take initiative for their own learning experiences. According to Audrey Gray, the characteristics of a constructivist classroom are as follows (Neo and Neo, 2010):

1. The learners are actively involved.
2. The environment is democratic.
3. The activities are interactive and student-centered.
4. The teacher facilitates a process of learning in which students are encouraged to be responsible and autonomous.

Constructive Learning

During the last two decades of the 20th century, the constructivism is considered as one of the most influential views of learning, constructivist perspectives on learning have become increasingly influential in the past twenty years, and can be said to represent a paradigm shift in the epistemology of knowledge and theory of learning (Chung, 2004).

The field of education has undergone a significant shift in thinking about the nature of human learning, and the conditions that best promote the varied dimensions of human learning. As in psychology, there has been a paradigm shift in designed instruction; from behaviorism to cognitivist and now to constructivism (Alshatnawi and Alobaidi, 2006).

The theoretical framework of learning always builds upon knowledge that a student already knows; this prior knowledge is called a schema. Because all learning is filtered through pre-existing schemata, constructivists suggest that learning is more effective when a student is actively engaged in the learning process rather than attempting to receive knowledge passively (Bashandy, 2011).

Education mainly aims to help students learn better and acquire higher order thinking skills that they are going to use throughout their lives. These skills include inquiry-learning skills and critical and creative thinking skills. Therefore, it is of great importance to create learning environments based on the constructivist approach to ensure that students play an active role in their own learning process and access knowledge through investigation and questioning. Constructivism is a student-centered learning approach, which maintains that students construct newly encountered information using the learning environments in which they are actively engaged (Juniu, 2006).

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