

The Role of Nonverbal Activities in Foreign Language Classrooms in Preschool

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The Role of Non-Verbal Activities in Foreign Language Classrooms in Pre-School

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The approaches to teaching foreign languages in Ukrainian preschools:

- **Based on imitative skills** (Opal Dunn, Penny A. Freppon, Ellen McIntyre, M. Williams, Ji Yuhua, Polons'ka, T., Chernyakova, O., Shkvarina, T.);
- **grammar-oriented** (Futerman, Z.);
- **as part of everyday practical activities of preschoolers, such as drawing, learning number skills, participating in game like activities** (Bahtalina, O., Brumfit C., Feunteun A., Imedadze, N., Moon J., Negnevitskaya, O., Shachnarovich, O., Shkvarina, T. Tongue R., Vale D., Vrons'ka, I.)

Research questions:

- (1) Is there any difference in learning efficiency between preschoolers who are taught with the emphasis on imitative skills (Control Group) and those whose teaching – learning process is covered by non-verbal activities that are based on children’s actual interests and needs (Experimental Group)?
- (2) How did young learners’ motivation change in the course of study in both groups?

Participants:

- 120 preschool children, randomly divided into Control and Experimental groups;
- Parents of the learners;
- Kindergarten teachers;
- Psychologist.

Research Methods:

Quantitative:

- 1) calculating the mean number and percentages of recalled words for both immediate and delayed recall;
- 2) Student's t-test;
- 3) sorting students by high, medium and low average scores;
- 4) k-cluster analysis to regroup all children into two clusters with high and low memory scores.

Qualitative:

- 1) observation charts, based on Bale's Interactive Process Analysis (IPA);
- 2) parent questionnaires about the learner's attitudes to foreign language classes.

The Structure of a Typical Lesson

- I. Pre-test
- II. Introduction
- III. a) Control Group: Observe and Learn
b) Experimental Group: Act and Learn
- IV. Dynamic Games
- V. Immediate Recall Test
- VI. Delayed Recall Test

Claim 1: Quasi-experimenting (n = 11)

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Immediate Recall	4.78 (43.45%)	7.3 (66.4%)
Delayed Recall	4.48 (40.7%)	7.01 (63.7%)

Claim 2: Intellectual Activities

(n = 11)

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Immediate Recall	4.6 (41.8%)	8.3 (75.45%)
Delayed Recall	5 (45.45%)	8.6 (78.2%)

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Claim 3: Everyday Routines (n = 10)

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Immediate Recall	4.63 (46.3%)	6.23 (62.3%)
Delayed Recall	4.7 (47%)	6.53 (65.3%)

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Claim 4: Stimulating Attention (n = 13)

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Immediate Recall	3.7 (28.5%)	5.71 (43.9%)
Delayed Recall	4.1 (31.5%)	6.1 (46.9%)

Claim 5: “Intensifying” Memory Traces (n = 11)

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Immediate Recall	5.6 (50.9%)	6.8 (61.8%)
Delayed Recall	5.3 (48.18%)	6.46 (58.73%)

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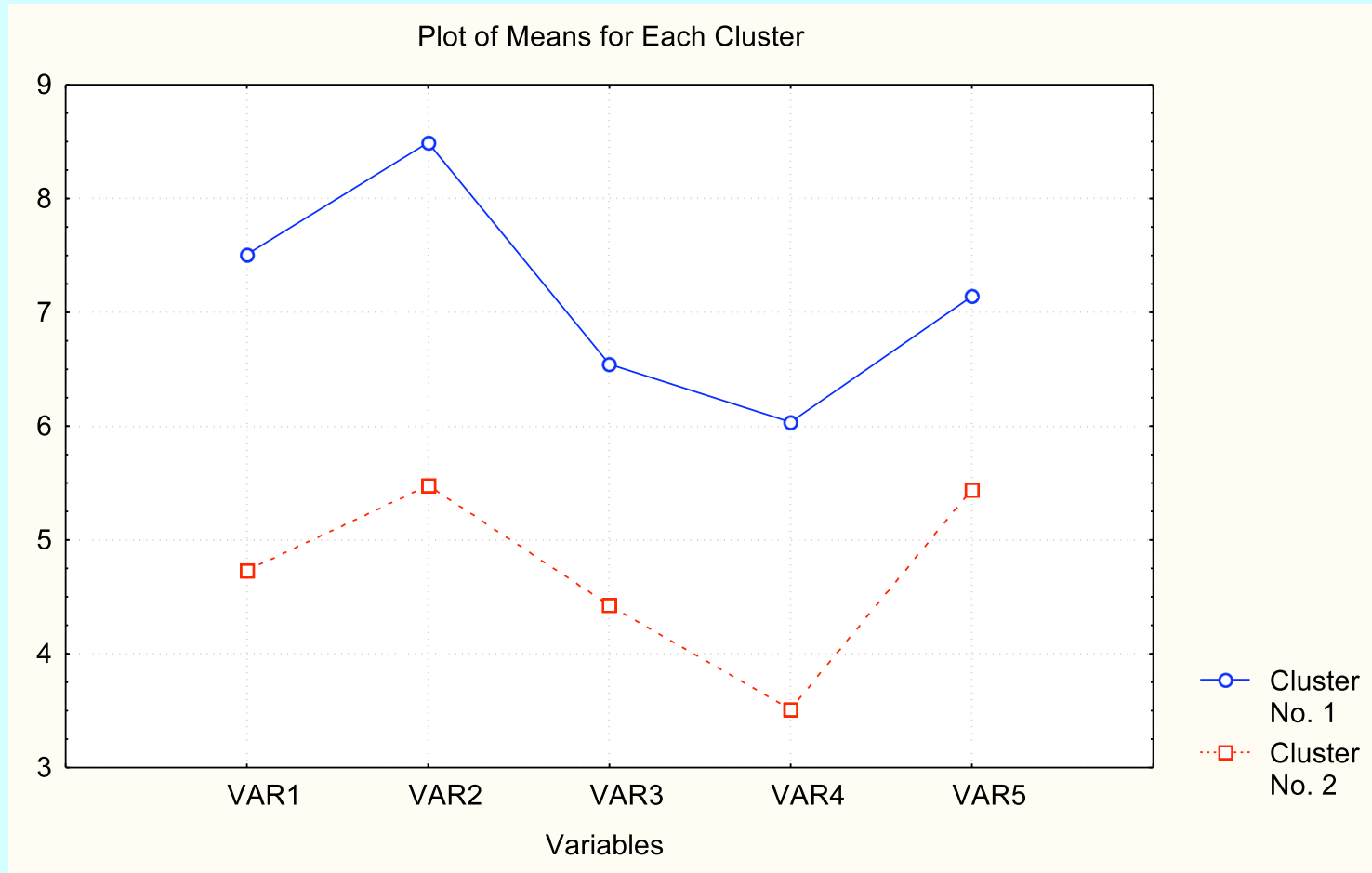
Comparative Analysis of Statistical Significance:

Activity	Immediate Recall		Delayed Recall	
	t value	p value	t value	p value
Intellectual Game	13.37	p<0.001	12.65	p<0.001
Quasi-experiment	9.89	p<0.001	7.65	p<0.001
Routine Activity	5.72	p<0.001	6.38	p<0.001
Dynamic Games	4.59	p<0.001	4.6	p<0.001
Coloring Activity	4.32	p<0.001	3.87	p<0.001

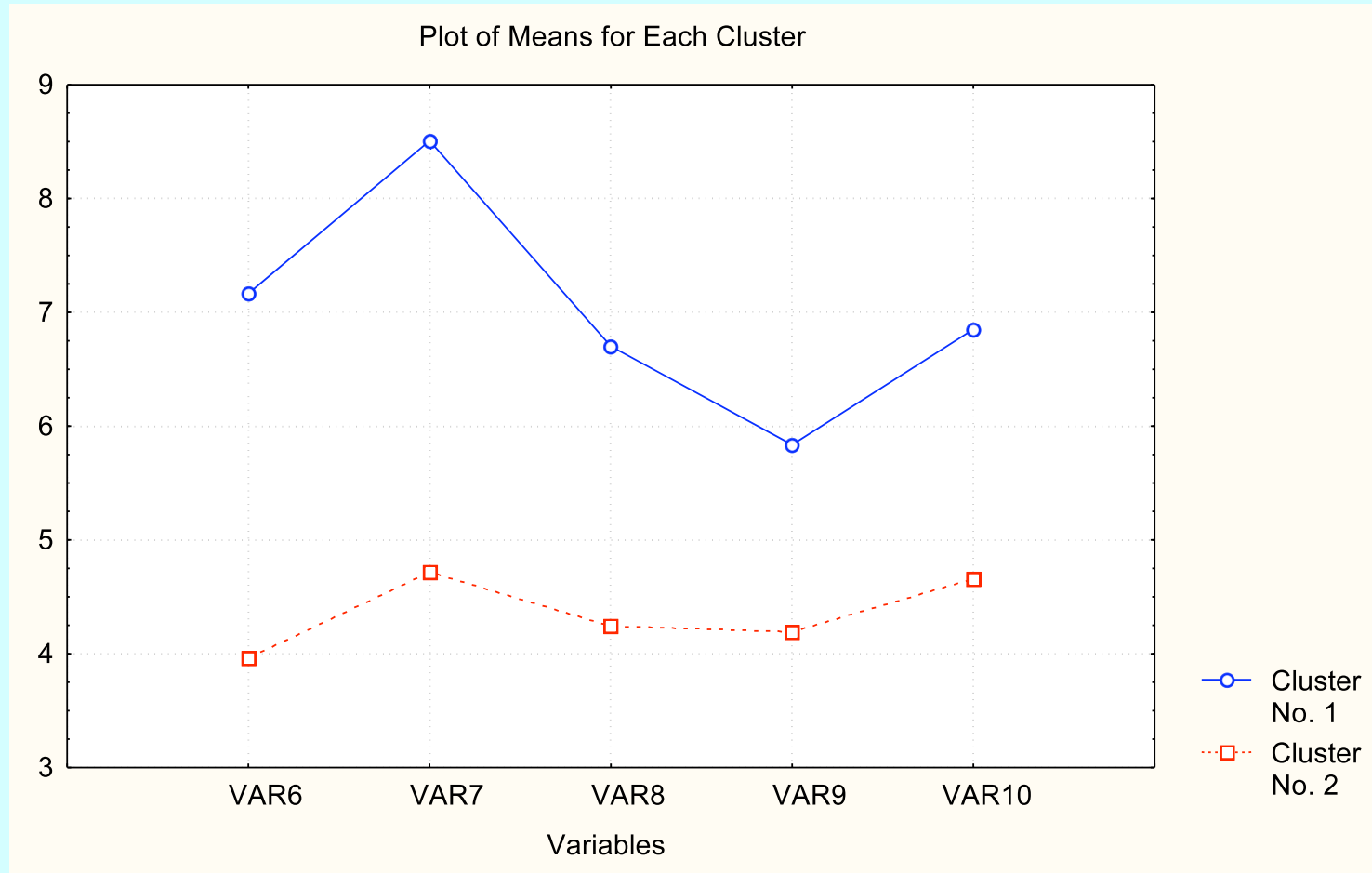
Distribution of Learners into Groups according to the Number of Correctly Recalled Scores (in per cent)

Level	Immediate Recall	Delayed Recall		
	Control group	Experimental group	Control group	Experimental group
High	4.94	35.98	6.3	35.96
Medium	67.6	55.04	64.64	56.74
Low	27.46	8.98	29.06	7.3

Means for Immediate Recall:
Cluster 1 – 81.6% Experimental group
Cluster 2 – 86.6% Control Group



*Means for Delayed Recall:
Cluster 1 – 90% Experimental Group
Cluster 2 – 78.3% Control Group*



Note:

var 1, 6 = quasi-experiment

var 2, 7 = intellectual game

var 3, 8 = routine activity

var 4, 9 = dynamic game

var 5, 10 = coloring activity

Cluster 1 = the learners with high memory scores

Cluster 2 = the learners with low memory scores

Motivation Study

- **The Distribution of Learners into Groups according to their Level of Interest to Learning a Foreign Language (in per cent)**
- **Notes:**
 - I. high motivation during the course;**
 - II. loss of interest by the end of the course;**
 - III. negative attitude to classes that has not changed**

Group	Control	Experi mental
I.	30	70
II.	40	15
III.	30	15

The range of interesting activities

- Control Group:
 - 1) coloring activity (80%),
 - 2) dynamic games (66.7%),
 - 3) quasi-experiment (45%),
 - 4) learning animals (35%),
 - 5) completing routine activities (35%)
- Experimental Group:
 - 1) quasi-experiment (91.7%),
 - 2) coloring activity (88.3%),
 - 3) dynamic games (66.7%),
 - 4) intellectual games (55%),
 - 5) story telling (51.6%),
 - 6) completing routine activities (45%).

Summary

- The learning efficacy results from the activity approach where non-verbal activity covers the teaching-learning process;
- It is important to view a foreign language as ***a means of*** completing a variety of game-like activities not an objective of the course;
- The provided activities help to create and maintain preschoolers' interest in learning a new language (that is really difficult outside the primary language community);
- It can be used for teaching foreign languages both in groups and individually.

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Thank you!

Questions?