**Abstract**

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effects of intentional versus incidental vocabulary instruction on reading comprehension among Iranian young EFL learners. The design Being experimental, the participants of the study comprised 60 students (30 girls and 30 boys) who were chosen randomly from a foreign language institute in Mashhad. They were randomly assigned to three groups, namely incidental, intentional and control. As the next step, the participants were asked to sit for a pretest and a posttest which was designed based on Nelson proficiency test and reading task. Then, in order to ascertain the homogeneity of the subject in term of vocabulary instruction prior to treatment, the multiple choice test was administered to all the groups. During the eight instructional sessions, the intentional group received semantic mapping strategy after reading the passage and then did the exercises. In control group students were not taught how to use semantic strategy and they were exposed to the conventional vocabulary instruction. Incidental group reading the passage then guessing the meaning from context and did the exercises. At the end of the experiment, the post-test was administered, the result of which indicated that there was a significant differences among means of the incidental and intentional, control groups. Hence it is concluded that implicit instruction (incidental group) had a significant impact on reading comprehension of intermediate EFL learners.

***Keywords***: *Intentional Vocabulary Learning, Incidental* *Vocabulary Learning, Vocabulary* *Instruction, Reading Comprehension.*