To study the effect of cognitive linguistics on teaching English prepositions in the EFL classroom

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English prepositions possess only a small proportion of language but play an important role. Despite their frequent use in English textbooks for secondary school, students fail to acquire them and often show low achievements in using prepositions properly. In this paper, we use a quasi-empirical study to examine the effect of cognitive-inspired instruction on learning in, on, and at, which are known to pose tremendous difficulty to English language learners due to their language-specific features and polysemous nature. The participants were learners at several schools in Saqez province. They were divided into cognitive and rule group. The cognitive group was presented with pictorial representations of the prepositions and cognitive tools used to motivate non-spatial uses, while the rule group received materials based on rules. Although the cognitive group was significantly improved in the post-test, the positive effect did not last until the delayed post-test. On the other hand, the rule group gained little progress in the immediate post-test, but the performance of the group dropped significantly in the delayed post-test.

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