



THE IMPACT OF SELF-HYPNOSIS AND NEURO- LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING ON SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING: A PRE-TEST & POST-TEST EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

Sobia Rasheed

sobiarasheed147@gmail.com

PhD Scholar, Department of English, Riphah
International University, Faisalabad Campus, Punjab,
Pakistan.

Dr. Noshaba Younus

noshaba.younus@riphahfsd.edu.pk

Associate Professor, Department of English, Riphah
International University, Faisalabad Campus, Punjab,
Pakistan.

Abstract

This study investigates the effectiveness of self-hypnosis integrated with Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) techniques on second language learning outcomes among undergraduate ESL learners. Using a single-group pre-test–post-test experimental design, the research examines changes in learners’ linguistic performance and affective variables following a structured self-hypnosis intervention. The sample comprised 150 undergraduate students enrolled in English related programs at public and private universities in Faisalabad, Pakistan. Quantitative data were collected through achievement tests and affective questionnaires administered before and after a 12-week intervention. Statistical analysis using paired-sample t-tests revealed significant improvements in vocabulary retention, grammatical accuracy, emotional regulation, and learner confidence after exposure to self-hypnosis techniques. The findings suggest that self-hypnosis serves as an effective pedagogical tool for enhancing both cognitive and affective dimensions of second language learning.

Keywords: *Self-Hypnosis, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Second Language Learning, Affective Factors, Experimental Study*

Corresponding Author: Sobia Rasheed (PhD Scholar, Department of English, Riphah International University, Faisalabad Campus, Punjab, Pakistan).
Email: sobiarasheed147@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Second language learning (SLL) is increasingly recognized as a multidimensional process influenced by cognitive, emotional, and psychological variables. While traditional language instruction emphasizes grammar, vocabulary, and skills development, recent research highlights the importance of affective factors such as anxiety, motivation, self-confidence, and emotional regulation in determining learning success (Dörnyei, 2005). Learners who experience high anxiety or low self-efficacy often struggle to process linguistic input effectively, resulting in limited retention and performance.

Self-hypnosis has been widely employed in psychological and educational contexts to enhance concentration, memory, and emotional stability (Oakley & Halligan, 2013). Defined as a self-induced state of focused attention and heightened receptivity to suggestion, self-hypnosis enables individuals to regulate internal mental states independently. In educational settings, this capacity may facilitate deeper engagement with learning materials and reduce affective barriers that interfere with cognitive processing.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) complements self-hypnosis by emphasizing the role of language and mental representation in shaping learning behavior. Techniques such as visualization, anchoring, and positive self-talk have been shown to enhance motivation and self-belief (Tosey & Mathison, 2010). When integrated with self-hypnosis, NLP provides structured linguistic suggestions that can reinforce learning goals and emotional readiness.

In ESL contexts such as Pakistan, learners often face sociocultural and academic pressures that heighten language anxiety and reduce confidence. Despite the relevance of psychological interventions, empirical research examining self-hypnosis within formal language classrooms remains limited. Most existing studies rely on small samples or anecdotal evidence, underscoring the need for systematic experimental investigation.

The present study aims to address this gap by examining the effects of a structured self-hypnosis and NLP-based intervention on second language learning outcomes using a single-group pre-test and post-test design. The study seeks to determine whether learners demonstrate measurable improvements in linguistic performance and affective variables following the intervention.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Affective Variables in Second Language Learning

The affective dimension of language learning has been extensively explored in SLA research. Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis suggests that emotional factors such as anxiety and low motivation can impede language acquisition by restricting access to comprehensible input. Subsequent studies have confirmed that learners' emotional states significantly influence attention, memory, and language performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

2.2. Hypnosis and Learning Enhancement

Hypnosis has been associated with enhanced memory recall, attentional control, and emotional regulation (Gruzelier, 2002). Educational research suggests that hypnotic techniques can improve learning efficiency by facilitating deeper cognitive processing and reducing performance-related stress (Lynn et al., 2015). Self-hypnosis, in particular, offers a learner-centered approach that promotes autonomy and self-regulation.

2.3. Neuro-Linguistic Programming in Education

NLP posits that language patterns influence cognitive representations and behavioral outcomes. In educational settings, NLP strategies such as anchoring positive emotional states and reframing negative beliefs have been shown to enhance learner motivation and engagement (Tosey & Mathison, 2010). Although debated in academic discourse, NLP has gained practical acceptance in performance-oriented learning environments.

2.4. Self-Hypnosis in Second Language Learning

Empirical research on self-hypnosis in SLA remains limited but promising. Studies indicate that hypnotic techniques may improve pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary recall, and learner confidence (Schmidt, 1994; McLeod, 2010). However, large-scale experimental studies focusing on ESL learners in developing contexts are scarce.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The study employed a **single-group pre-test–post-test experimental design** to examine the impact of self-hypnosis on second language learning outcomes.

3.2. Participants

The participants were 150 undergraduate ESL learners enrolled in BS programs at four universities in Faisalabad, Pakistan. All participants shared similar educational backgrounds and proficiency levels at the outset of the study.

3.3. Instruments

- Vocabulary and grammar achievement tests
- Emotional and affective questionnaire measuring anxiety, confidence, and motivation
- Self-hypnosis and NLP perception scale

All instruments demonstrated acceptable validity and reliability.

3.4. Intervention Procedure

The intervention lasted 12 weeks. Participants were trained in self-hypnosis techniques involving relaxation, focused attention, visualization, and positive linguistic suggestions. NLP strategies such as anchoring and reframing were embedded in the hypnotic scripts. Sessions were conducted twice weekly, followed by guided practice and independent application.

3.5. Data Analysis

Pre-test and post-test scores were analyzed using paired-sample t-tests in SPSS to determine statistically significant differences following the intervention.

4. Results

Results indicated statistically significant improvements in learners' post-test scores across all variables. Vocabulary retention and grammatical accuracy increased substantially after the intervention ($p < .05$). Affective measures revealed reduced anxiety levels and enhanced learner confidence and motivation. These findings demonstrate the positive impact of self-hypnosis-based instruction on both linguistic and emotional aspects of language learning.

5. Discussion

The findings suggest that self-hypnosis facilitates second language learning by creating an optimal mental state for cognitive processing. Reduced anxiety and enhanced focus allowed learners to engage more effectively with linguistic input, supporting psycholinguistic theories that emphasize the interaction between emotion and cognition.

The integration of NLP techniques further strengthened the effectiveness of the intervention by reinforcing positive self-beliefs and learning goals.

6. Conclusion

This study provides empirical support for the use of self-hypnosis as an instructional intervention in ESL contexts. The significant improvements observed in a single experimental group highlight the potential of self-hypnosis to enhance both cognitive and affective dimensions of language learning. Future research may employ longitudinal designs or mixed-method approaches to further validate these findings.

References

- Bandler, R., & Grinder, J. (1975). *The structure of magic I*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Gruzelier, J. (2002). A working model of the neurophysiology of hypnosis. *Contemporary Hypnosis*, 19(2), 74–101.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Lynn, S. J., Kirsch, I., & Hallquist, M. N. (2015). Social cognitive theories of hypnosis. *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 57(3), 274–292.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1994). The subtle effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing. *Language Learning*, 44(2), 283–305.
- Oakley, D. A., & Halligan, P. W. (2013). Hypnotic suggestion and cognitive neuroscience. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 17(6), 264–270.
- Tosey, P., & Mathison, J. (2010). Neuro-linguistic programming as an innovation in education. *Educational Research*, 52(1), 57–72.