

EFFECT OF CONCEPT MAPPING STRATEGY ON ACHIEVEMENT IN ORGANIC CHEMISTRY OF CLASS XII SCIENCE STUDENTS

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Introduction

Chemistry is often full of abstract concepts resulting from its inherent complex nature. It may lead to extensive misconceptions among students (Gable, 1999). It is also a common problem in chemistry that even if students do well in examinations, they still may fail in solving basic textbook problems, which is a sign of rote learning (Pendley et al., 1994).

It is important to find various new as well as interesting ways that can lead towards meaningful chemistry learning. One way to accomplish this, is to apply Ausubel's theory of meaningful learning. Concept maps were devised as a device of meaningful learning which can be regarded as the counter and effective replacement of rote learning.

The use of concept map has been widely investigated in the field of chemistry. According to Francisco et al., (2002) and Nicoll et al., (2001), concept maps are a useful learning tool in chemistry. Concept maps can improve understanding of chemical concepts and help build connections among abstract concepts. Concept maps can also be used as a misconception correction tool. These concept

maps bind concepts with linking words that help students see connections among them and organise their knowledge hierarchically, based on scientific knowledge. (Francisco et al., 2002; Nicoll et al., 2001)

Concept maps are spatial representations of concepts and their interrelationships that are intended to represent the knowledge structures that human stores in their minds (Jonassen, Beissne and Yacci, 1993). The use of concept maps as teaching strategy was first developed by Joseph D. Novak of Cornell University in the early 1980's. His Work was based on important idea in Ausubel's (1968) assimilation theory of cognitive learning which places central emphasis on the influence of students' prior knowledge on subsequent meaningful learning.

Concept maps are diagrammatic representations which show meaningful relationships between concepts in the form of propositions which are linked together by words, circles, and cross links. Concepts are arranged hierarchically with the super ordinate concepts at the top of the map, and subordinate at the bottom which are less inclusive than higher ones. "Cross links" are used to connect different segments of the concepts

hierarchy which indicate syntheses of related concepts, a new interpretation of old ideas, and some degree of creative thinking.

This research paper presents the outcome of an investigation to study the use of concept mapping as a teaching strategy to enhance meaningful learning and to improve achievement of students in Organic Chemistry.

Objectives of the Study

- To develop Concept maps of 2 concepts from selected one unit of Organic Chemistry syllabus prescribed by the C.B.S.E. Board for Class XII science students.
- To study the effectiveness of Concept Mapping Strategy in comparison to the Lecture Method in terms of achievement of Class XII science students in Organic Chemistry.
- To study the effectiveness of Concept Mapping Strategy in comparison to the Lecture method in terms of concept retention of Class XII science students in Organic Chemistry.

Design and Sample of the Study

The study was quasi-experimental in nature where Pre-test Post-test Non-equivalent Groups Design was used. The total 80 science students of two intact sections that is 'A' and 'B' of Class XII from Central Hindu Boys School of Varanasi city, were chosen as the sample of the study. Out of these two sections, section 'A' was randomly assigned as the experimental group ($n_1=40$) and other section 'B' as the control group ($n_2=40$) for the study (see Table 1).

Table 1 : The groups involved in the study and the number of students

Groups	Number of Students (N)
Experimental Group (Concept Mapping Strategy)	40
Control Group (Lecture Method)	40
Total	80

Tools Used in the Study

Twelve Concept maps of 2 concepts from selected one unit of Organic Chemistry syllabus prescribed by the C.B.S.E. Board.

Mixed Group Test of Intelligence (Hindi Version) by Dr P.N. Mehrotra, Verbal and Non-verbal Test was used for equating the both groups i.e. experimental and control groups on the basis of their intelligence scores.

An Achievement test consisting of 25 multiple-choice questions based on 2 concepts from selected one unit of Organic Chemistry syllabus prescribed by the C.B.S.E. Board for Class XII science students was developed by the investigator to measure the students' achievement and concept retention in Organic Chemistry. In this test each question carries one mark. The achievement test served as both pre-test and post-test (post-test I and post-test II).

Procedural Details of the Study

In the present study the investigator introduced 2 concepts of selected one unit namely; Phenol and Ether through 12 concept maps regarding various aspects such as preparation, properties, reactions and interconversions were developed by the investigator.

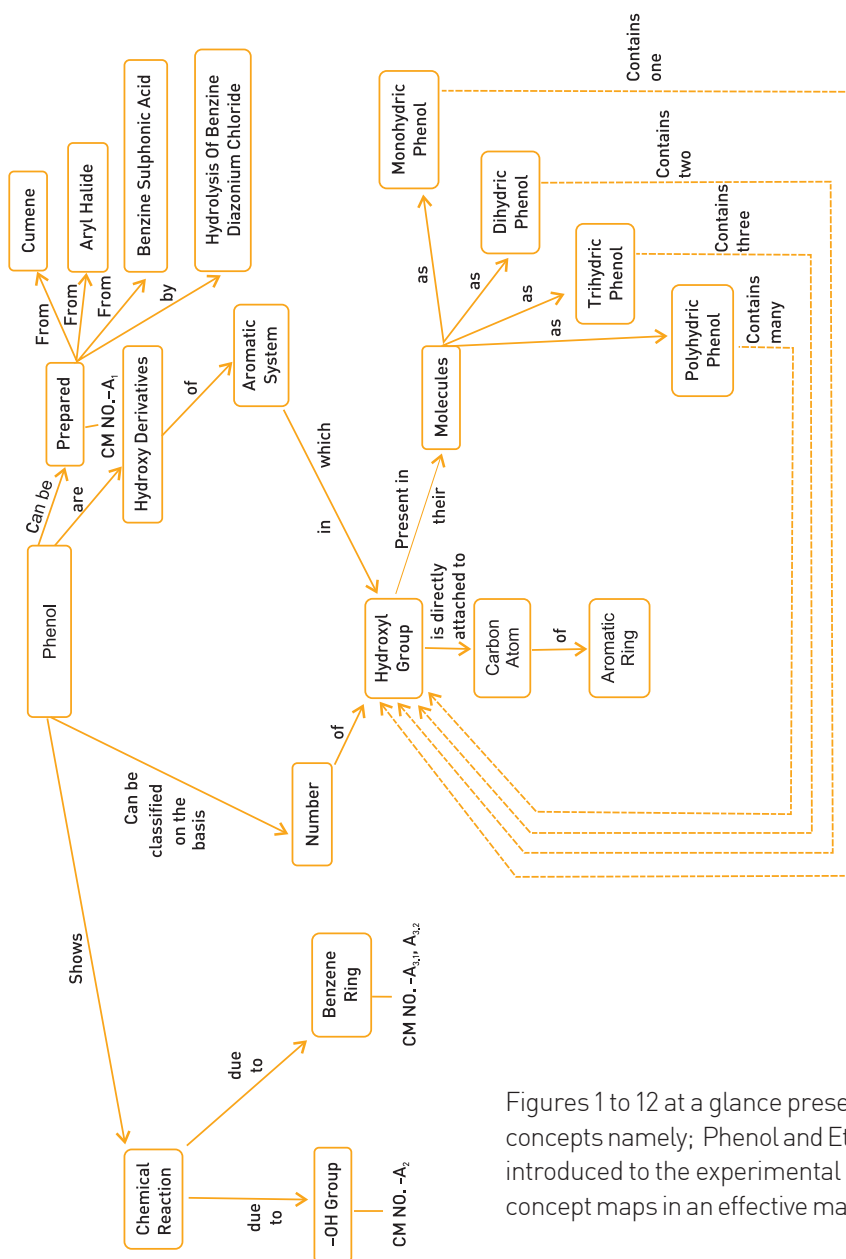


Fig. 1

Figures 1 to 12 at a glance present, how 2 concepts namely; Phenol and Ether were introduced to the experimental group through concept maps in an effective manner.

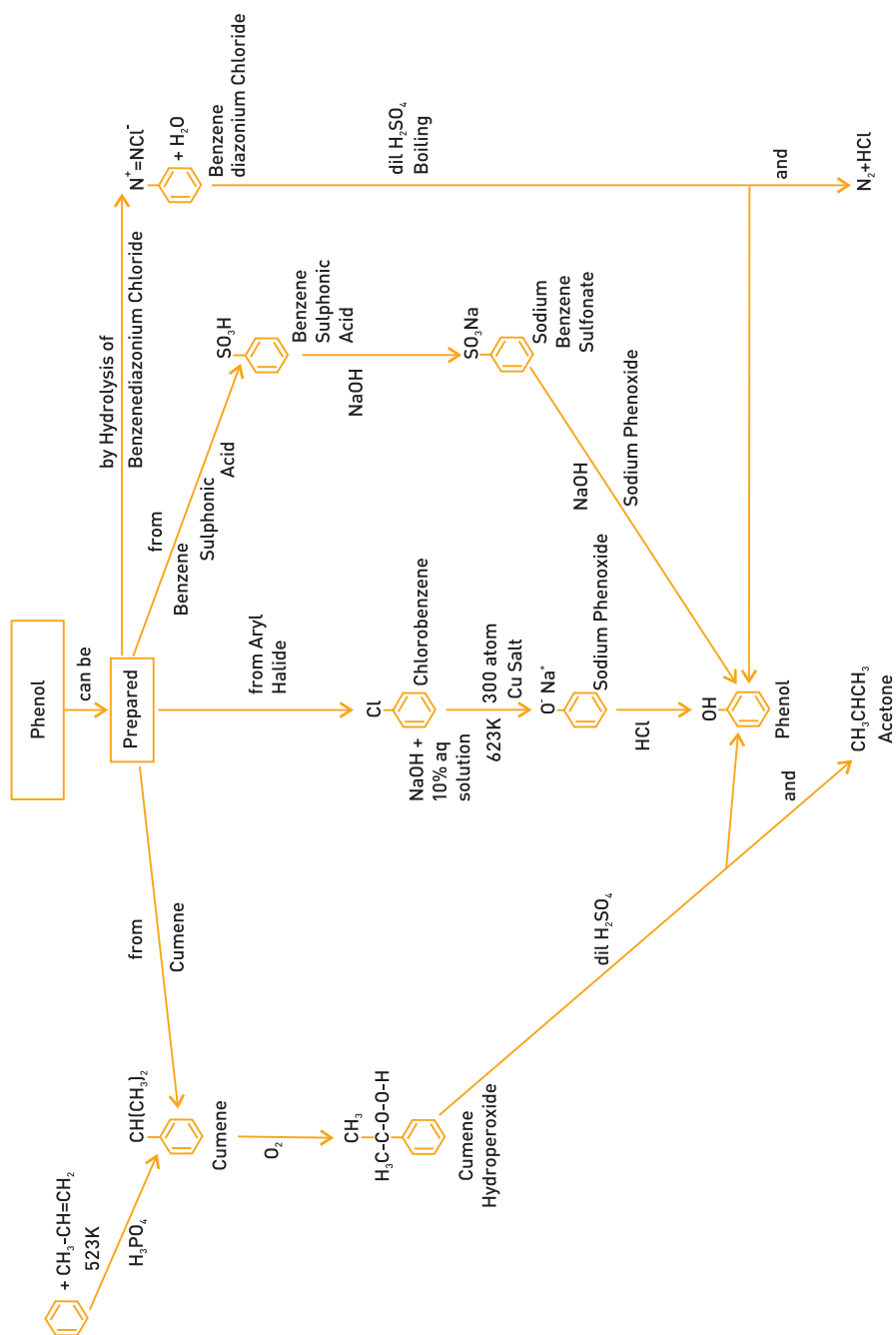


Fig. 2

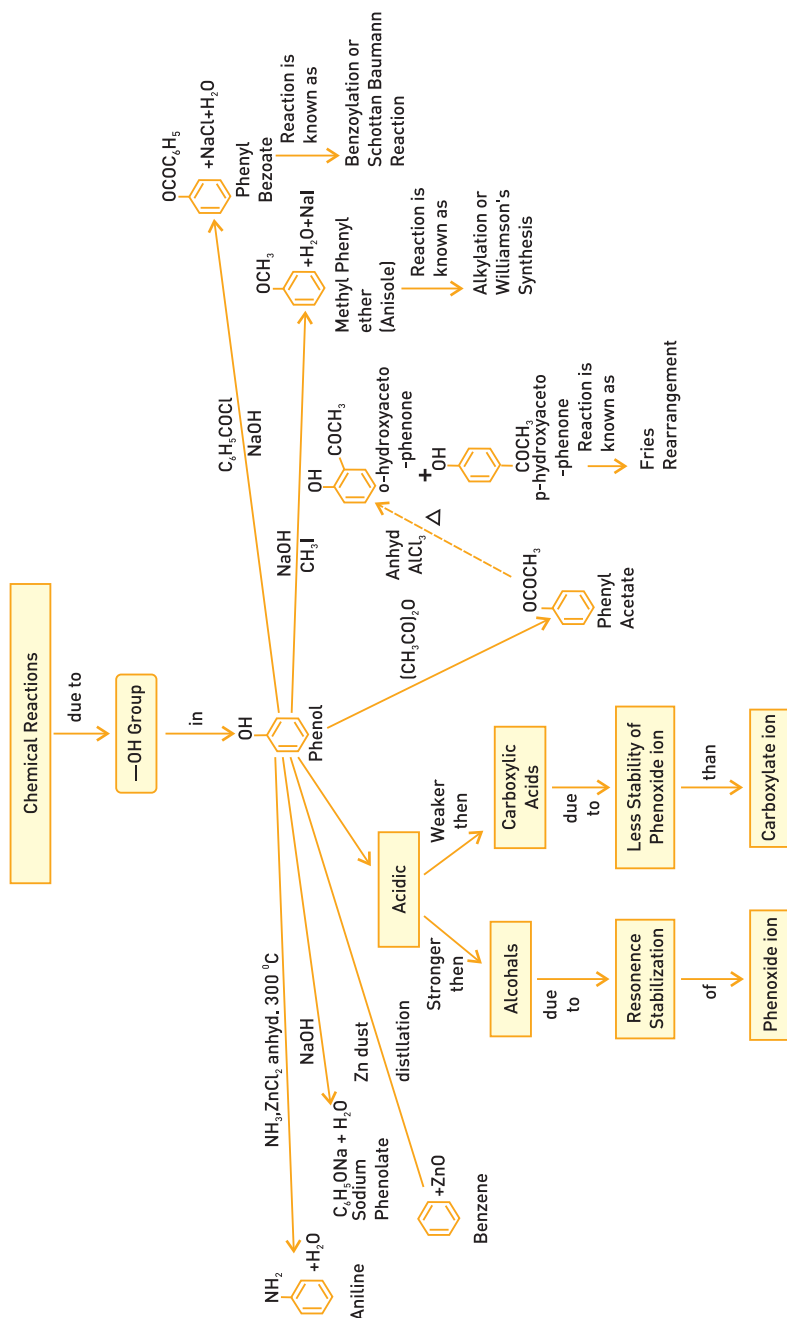


Fig. 3

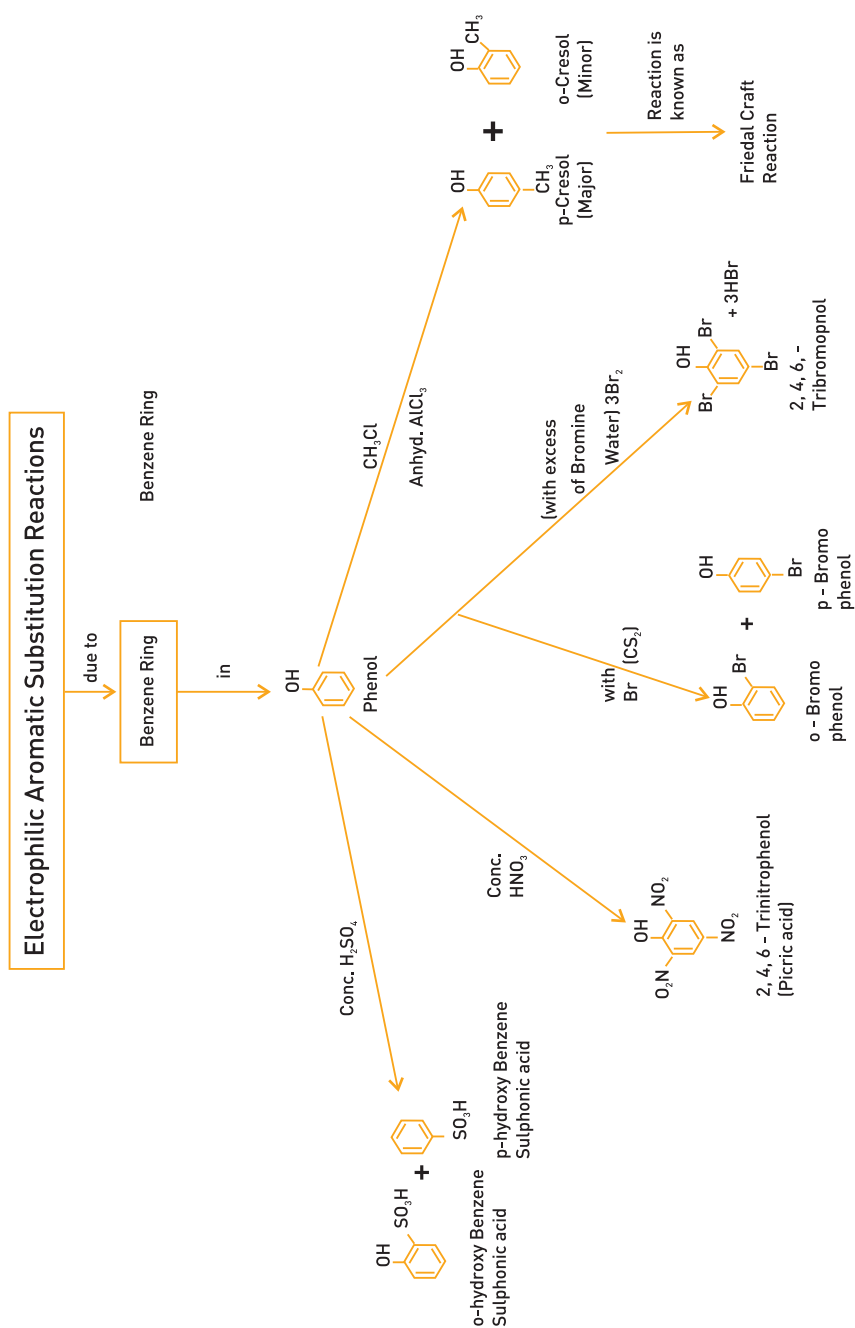


Fig. 4

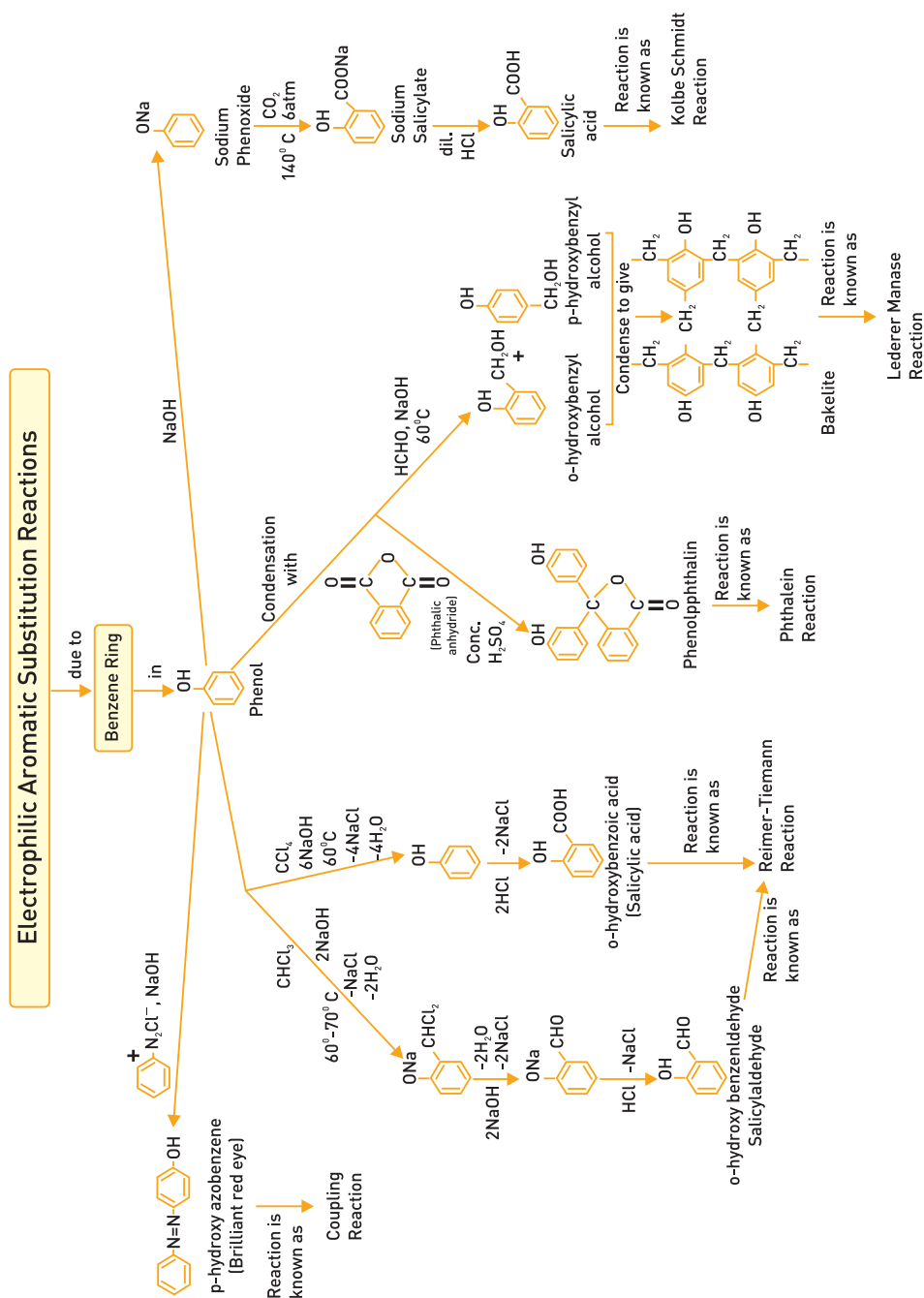


Fig. 5

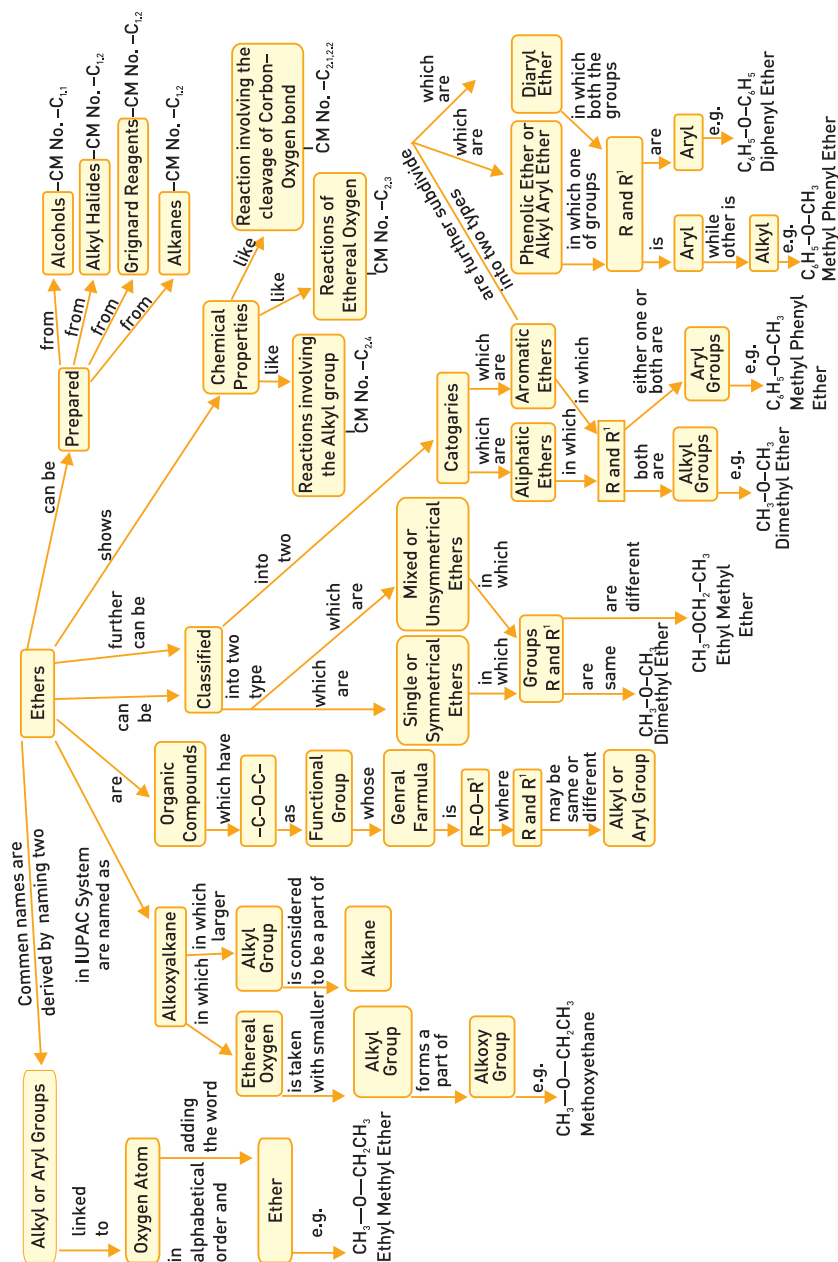


Fig. 6

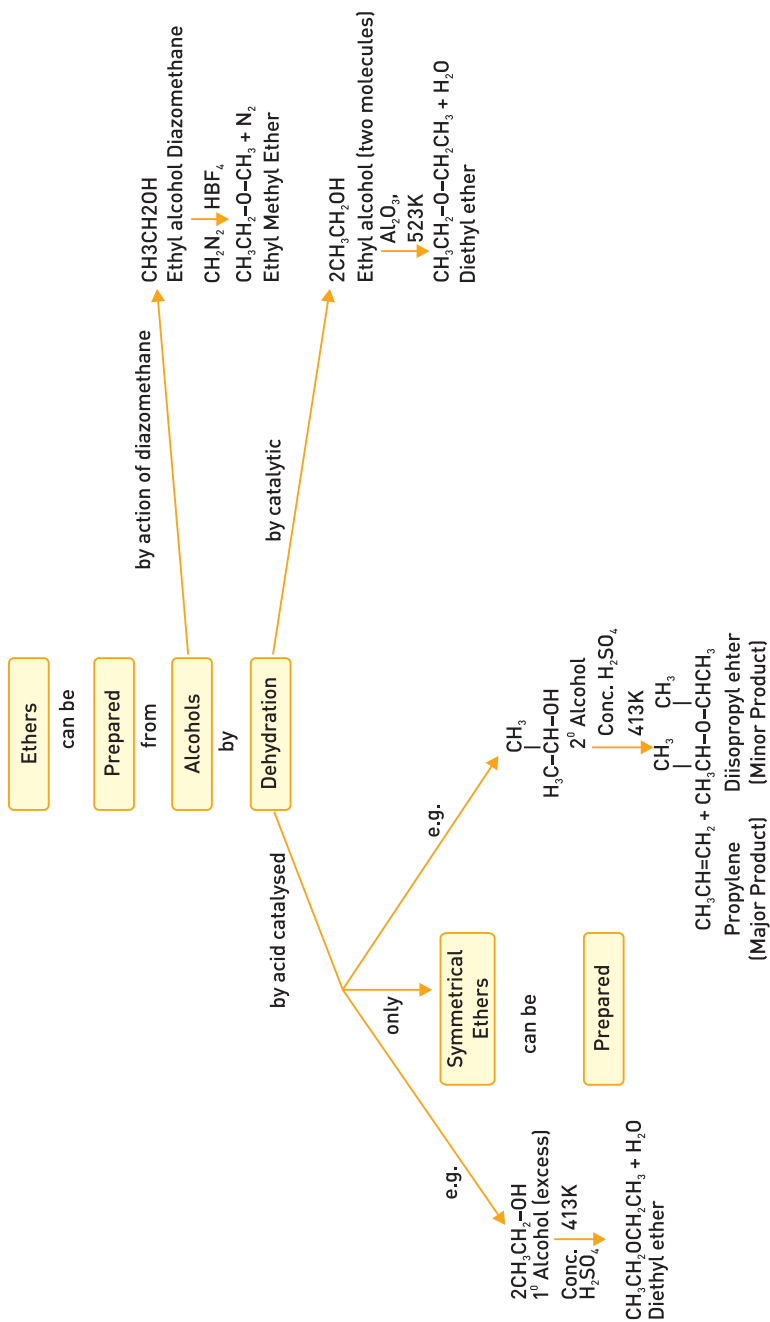


Fig. 7

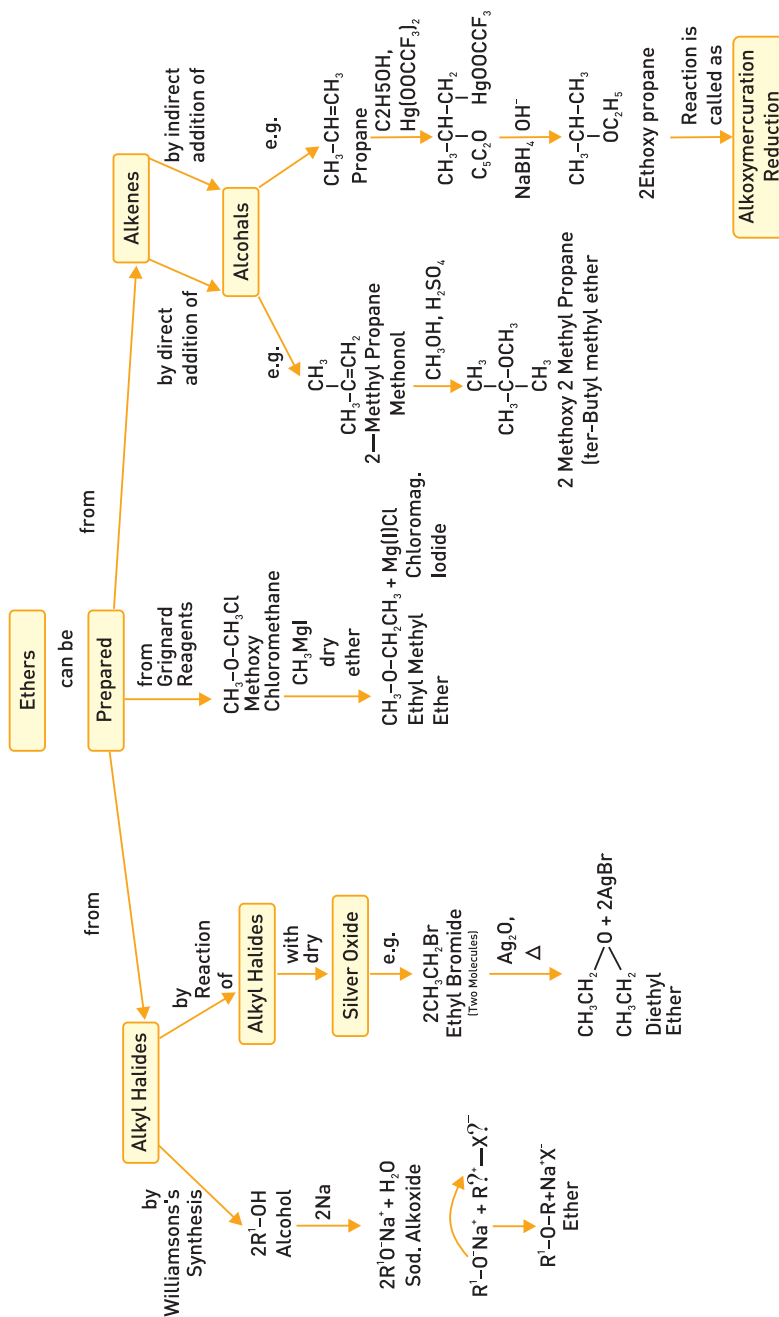


Fig. 8

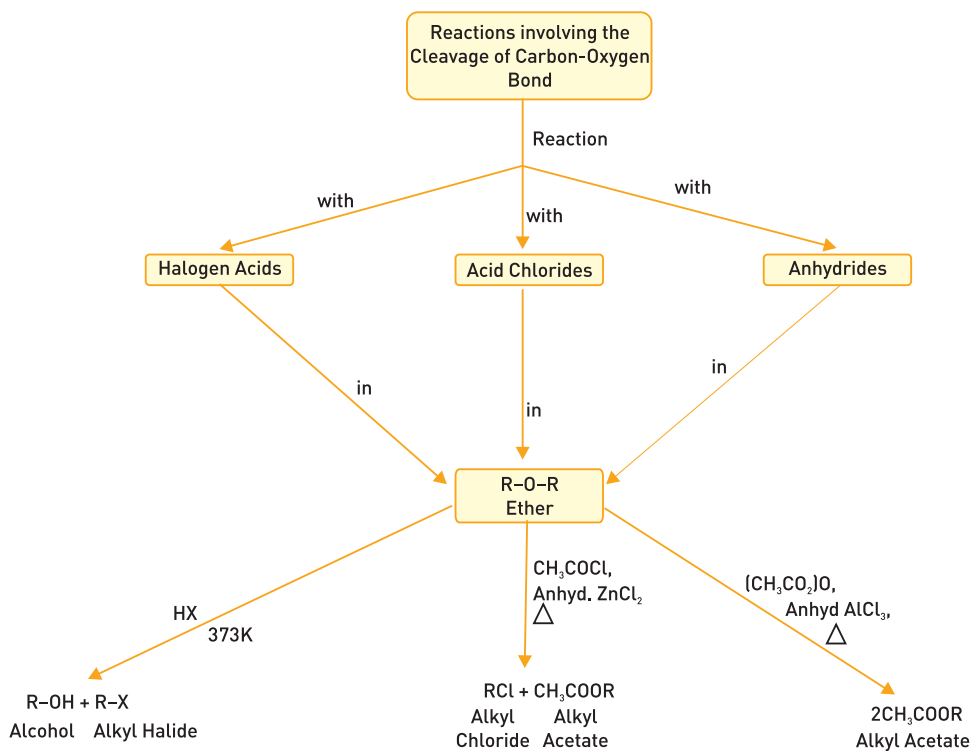


Fig.9

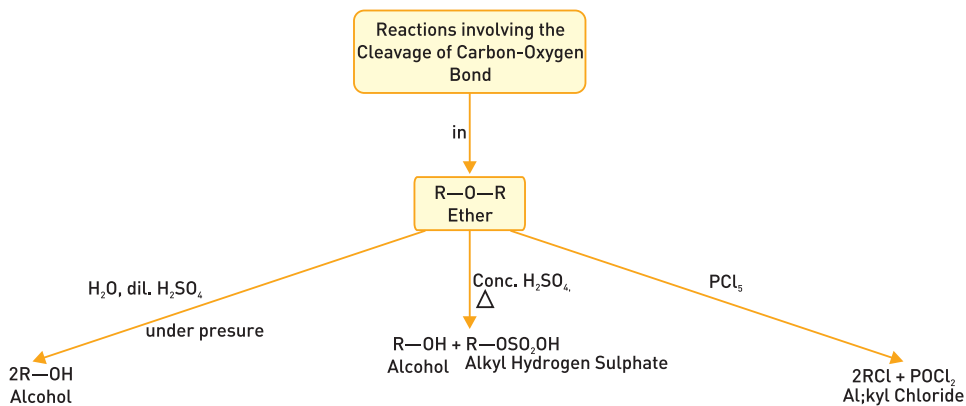


Fig.10

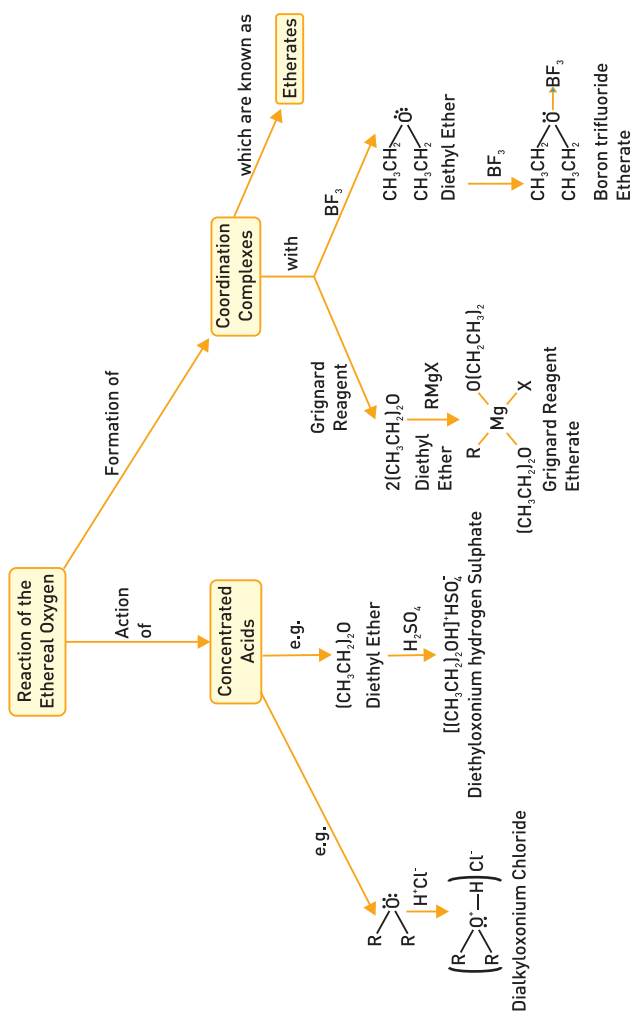


Fig. 11

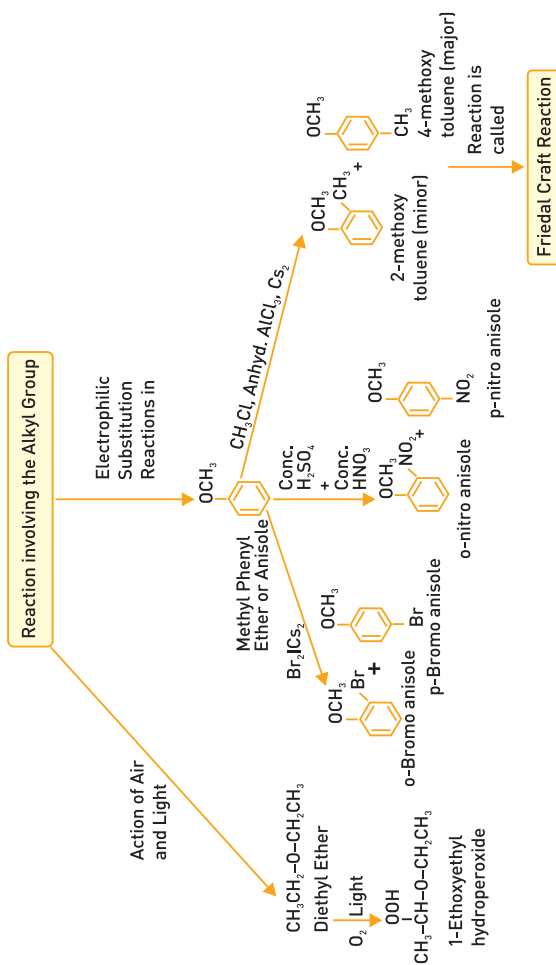


Fig. 12

The tool was tried out and item analysis was carried out in case of achievement test. The study's research pattern is given below in Table 2.

Table 3 reveals that "t" value of 0.258 for intelligence scores were not significant at 0.05 level. It meant that the both groups had almost the same intelligence level. After this the standardised

Table 2 : The Study's Research Pattern

Groups	Pre-Treatment	Treatment	Post-Treatment	Delayed Post-Treatment (After a gap of six weeks)
Experimental Group	I, T	Taught the selected concepts through Concept Mapping Strategy	T T	T T
Control Group	I, T	Taught the selected concepts through Lecture Method	T	T

The experimental group in Table 2 represents the group of students which was taught through Concept Mapping Strategy (CMS) and the control group represents the group which was taught through Lecture Method (LM). I shows the Intelligence Test, T shows the Organic Chemistry Achievement Test (Pre-test and Post-test (I and II)).

Before starting the experiment the investigator administered a Mixed Group Test of Intelligence on both experimental and control group. These two groups (experimental and control) are naturally assembled groups as intact classes, which may be similar. The subjects were not matched on the previous achievement in organic chemistry but were equated on the basis of their intelligence scores. "t" test was applied for matching the groups and results have been given below in Table 3.

Table 3 : Mean, S.D., and 't' values of Intelligence scores for Experimental group and Control group

Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	't'	p
Experimental Group	40	59.34	11.34	0.258	→0.05
Control Group	40	60.02	12.22		

achievement test was administered as pretest on both experimental and control group.

However, after the pretest the control group was taught through Lecture method and the experimental group was taught through Concept Mapping Strategy. In order to avoid the impact of teacher effectiveness both groups were taught by the same teacher (The investigator). After teaching all 12 concepts Post-test I was administered on both groups and after a gap of six weeks from the treatment each group was posttested again on Post-test II (delayed posttest) for measuring their concept retention. The data obtained was analysed descriptively and inferentially by calculating ANCOVA, Mean_{Gain}, S.D., & "t" values.

Result and Discussion

Effect of Concept Mapping Strategy on Achievement in Organic Chemistry

Ho1 : There is no significant difference between means of achievement scores of students taught through Concept Mapping Strategy and students taught through Lecture Method.

Table 4 : Summary Table of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) showing Pre-test Post-test scores of Experimental and Control groups with respect to Achievement

Groups	Pre-test mean	Post-test Mean	Adjusted mean Difference	Source of Variation Squares	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Sum of	$F_{y.x}$	p
Experimental Group	6.22	13.63	0.1	Among Means	504.40	1	504.40	117.30	$\leftarrow 0.01$
Control Group	6.12	8.48		Within Groups	330.74	77	4.30		

A reference to Table 4 reveals that the obtained $F_{y,x}$ ratio after adjusting pretest differences into posttest was found to be 117.30 at dfs 1/77. which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence. It meant that experimental group differ from pretest to posttest on achievement test in Organic Chemistry. The above Table further shows that the mean post-test scores of experimental group was found to be higher than that of post test scores of control group. So, it can be concluded that the Concept Mapping Strategy is significantly more effective than the Lecture Method in the improvement of achievement in Organic Chemistry of Class XII science students. The findings of this study is on the same track as Kumuda (2000), Aparna (2002), Rao (2004), Candan, Turkman and Cardak (2006), Chiou and Chang (2008) and Demirdover et. al (2008). These researches have also studied the comparative effectiveness of Concept Mapping Strategy with respect to the traditional method in different subjects and at different levels.

Effect of Concept Mapping Strategy on Concept Retention in Organic Chemistry

Ho2 : There is no significant difference between the means of concept retention gain scores of

students taught through Concept Mapping Strategy and students taught through Lecture Method.

Table 5 : Mean_{Gain}, S.D. and 't' values obtained on Pretest and Delayed Post-test (Post-test II) Achievement in Organic Chemistry by Experimental group and Control group

Groups	N	Mean _{Gain} (Posttest II - Pretest)	S.D.	't'	p
Experimental Group	40	4.275	3.33	6.02	<0.01
Control Group	40	0.975	0.973		

A reference to the Table 5 reveals that there is a significant difference between the means of concept retention gain scores of students taught through Concept Mapping Strategy and students taught through Lecture Method. The above Table further shows that the mean concept retention gain score of experimental group is greater than the control group and the 't' value is significant at 0.01 level of confidence. On the basis of this result we can say that the Concept Mapping Strategy is significantly more effective than the Lecture Method for concept retention in Organic Chemistry.

To some extent, these results are supported by Gupta (1999), Ahuja (2006) and Parsa and Nikbakht (2004).

Gupta (1999) while specifically compared the relative effectiveness of the Concept Mapping Model, the Inductive Model and the Conventional Method to foster concept learning and concept retention in terms of comprehension and application of concepts in chemistry. She concluded that Concept Mapping Model and Inductive Model are significantly more effective than the Conventional Method to foster concept learning and concept retention in terms of comprehension and application of concepts in Chemistry.

Where as Heinze-Fry and Novak (1990) carried out a study on 40 students adopting Concept Mapping Strategy for one month covering three instructional units found that the mapping group achievement was high though not significant, in measure of initial learning, retention and learning efficiently.

Conclusion

Based on the result of this study, it can be concluded that the Concept Mapping Strategy is more effective for improving the achievement of students in Organic Chemistry and also more effective for concept retention in Organic Chemistry of Class XII science students when compared to the Lecture Method. Hence there is a

need to include Concept Mapping Strategy with the constructivist basis as one of the major approaches to teach Organic Chemistry in schools at 10+2 level. Use of Concept Mapping Strategy as a main route of teaching or as a complementary strategy for traditional teaching method may improve the students' achievement in Organic Chemistry and knowledge retention capability.

In the teaching learning process of Organic Chemistry, the use of Concept Mapping Strategy will be beneficial for teachers and as well as for students too. Students can use concept maps in Organic Chemistry for learning concepts, which they think are not clear, at the grass-root level. They can also use concept maps for summarising materials when preparing for examinations, for revision of content, for highlighting key concepts and for understanding relationships among them, for helping them to identify gaps in their knowledge, if any, and hence convincing them about the continuity of subject matter.

In Organic Chemistry remedial teaching can also be done by the teachers with the help of concept maps for example, students can be assigned the task of preparing the concept map on the topic to be discussed in subsequent classes. From these students based concept maps, the teacher can get the idea of students' previous knowledge and the existing misconceptions in Organic Chemistry. Once misconceptions in students' cognitive structure are diagnosed, remedial teaching in this direction can be done.

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