

TEACHING ENGLISH VOCABULARY FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

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Abstract

In all aspects of college English listening, speaking, reading and writing, vocabulary learning is the foundation, and its important role is beyond doubt. College vocabulary teaching mainly includes teaching objectives, teaching contents, teaching methods, teaching evaluation and so on. According to the survey, there are many problems in college English vocabulary teaching: teachers have some extreme views on vocabulary teaching; teachers' vocabulary teaching methods are not reasonable enough; teachers neglect to guide students' vocabulary learning strategies; there are some difficult problems in vocabulary teaching. This study analyzed and discussed college English vocabulary teaching in detail, and put forward corresponding countermeasures so as to provide reference for future teaching.

Keywords: College English, English Vocabulary, English Teaching

Абстракт

Во всех аспектах аудирования, разговорной речи, чтения и письма в колледже изучение словарного запаса является основой, и его важная роль несомненна. Преподавание лексики в колледже в основном включает в себя цели обучения, содержание обучения, методы обучения, оценку обучения и так далее. Согласно опросу, в обучении лексике английского языка в колледжах существует много проблем: у учителей есть некоторые крайние взгляды на преподавание лексики; методы преподавания лексики учителями недостаточно обоснованы; учителя пренебрегают стратегиями изучения словарного запаса учащихся; есть некоторые трудности в обучении словарному запасу. В этом исследовании подробно анализировалось и обсуждалось преподавание лексики английского языка в колледже, а также



были предложены соответствующие контрмеры, чтобы обеспечить основу для будущего обучения.

Ключевые слова: студенческий английский, английская лексика, преподавание английского языка.

Izoh

Universitetda ingliz tilini tinglash, gapirish, o'qish va yozishning barcha jabhalarida so'z boyligini o'rganish asos bo'lib, uning muhim roli shubhasizdir. Kollej lug'atini o'qitish asosan o'qitish maqsadlari, o'qitish mazmuni, o'qitish usullari, o'qitishni baholash va boshqalarni o'z ichiga oladi. So'rov natijalariga ko'ra, kollejda ingliz tili lug'atini o'qitishda ko'plab muammolar mavjud: o'qituvchilarning lug'at o'rgatish bo'yicha o'ta keskin qarashlari bor; o'qituvchilarning lug'at o'rgatish usullari etarlicha asosli emas; o'qituvchilar o'qituvchilarning so'z boyligini o'rganish strategiyalariga rahbarlik qilishni e'tiborsiz qoldiradilar; lug'at o'rgatishda bir qancha qiyin muammolar mavjud. Ushbu tadqiqot kollejda ingliz tili lug'atini o'qitishni batafsil tahlil qildi va muhokama qildi va kelgusida o'qitish uchun ma'lumot berish uchun tegishli qarshi choralarni ilgari surdi.

Kalit so'zlar: kollej, ingliz tili, ingliz tili lug'ati, ingliz tilini o'qitish

1. Introduction

Vocabulary teaching is an important part of English teaching, and mastering a certain amount of vocabulary is the basis of learning English well. Canal and Swain (1980) pointed out that the cultivation of language ability is a crucial link in the cultivation of communication ability, and vocabulary is one of the core parts of language ability that makes communication possible. Vocabulary ability directly affects a person's ability to listen, speak, read, write and translate. Only by mastering sufficient vocabulary can we understand and read other people's words and articles, express our thoughts freely and be at ease in communication. On the contrary, people's difficulties and obstacles in communication are mostly caused by the lack of vocabulary. In a sense, vocabulary level is one of the parameters to measure a person's language level. Therefore, vocabulary teaching should play an important



role in English teaching, especially in the college stage. Students have learned basic English grammar rules in senior high school, and vocabulary begins to restrict the further improvement of students' English level. Therefore, strengthening vocabulary learning should be one of the characteristics of college English teaching different from senior high school English teaching. Vocabulary teaching is one aspect of English teaching that is worth our time and energy to study and explore. This is not only the requirement of reality, but also the need of development. The foreign language teaching syllabus and all kinds of language examination syllabus take the vocabulary as the important assessment goal and the basis of the proposition and material selection. For example, the difficulty of the short passages in the reading comprehension test is mainly based on the amount of vocabulary, and the proportion of the reading part is very large. The lack of vocabulary greatly restricts the accuracy of the reading comprehension of the examinees, which is a major reason why most examinees lose marks. The composition part more prominently shows that most of the examinees have poor ability to use vocabulary, use words inappropriately, and cannot express their thoughts accurately in English. Therefore, vocabulary learning and vocabulary teaching play an important role in college English teaching.

2. Literature Review

Craik and Lockhart's (1972) theory of processing levels is closely related to Atkinson's and Shiffrin's three-tier processing model of memory information. To understand the theory of processing levels, we must first understand the three-tier processing model of memory information. According to this theory, memory is divided into three stages, namely: sensory memory, short-term memory and long-term memory. If information is to be transferred from short-term memory to long-term memory, it should be realized through retelling. The longer the retelling time is, the better the retention effect of memory is. However, the theory of processing levels believes that the key to memory retention is not the length of retelling time, but the difference in processing methods, that is, the deeper the processing level, the better the memory retention. Therefore, it is proposed that there are two different levels of cognitive processing. The first level is the level of formal processing, which is equivalent to what Atkinson and Shiffrin call retelling; The second level is the semantic processing level, which refers to the connection between a word and other



words. According to the theory of processing level, the level of information processing determines the memory effect. The deeper the processing level is, the more skillful the memory effect is. Craik and Tulving (1975) further proposed that semantic coding is not enough, but also needs to be refined, including grammatical categories, contextual meanings, etc. On the basis of fine processing, Wittrock (1974) proposed productive processing, emphasizing that students should actively construct information in their original knowledge, experience and ability, so as to strengthen the memory effect.

3. Research on English Vocabulary Teaching Abroad

Allen, V. F.'s (1972) "Vocabulary Teaching Skills" discusses vocabulary teaching skills in non-native English courses. Based on years of successful experience in English teaching, the author expounds vocabulary teaching skills in detail, and provides rich examples and suggestions for classroom activities. The first chapter of the book reviews the changes in the status of vocabulary teaching, which was once ignored until the 1980s and has become the focus of linguistic research and language teaching. Chapters 2 to 9 respectively discuss vocabulary teaching for beginners, intermediate learners and advanced learners, pointing out that beginners should pay attention to word meaning understanding and its communicative role, and intermediate learners with increasingly obvious degree differences should be taught in accordance with their aptitude and pay attention to teaching the social meaning of vocabulary in the target language. The emphasis of vocabulary teaching for advanced learners is to cultivate students' ability to learn vocabulary independently, and the teaching of advanced vocabulary is discussed from the aspects of the use of dictionaries and the learning of word formation. The book Vocabulary Teaching and Acquisition by Nation systematically discusses vocabulary teaching, learning, evaluation and many other issues. The vocabulary teaching introduced in the book Vocabulary, Semantics and Language Education by James Coady and Thomas Huckin is divided into planned and unplanned vocabulary teaching, and focuses on planned vocabulary teaching. The author puts forward two criteria to distinguish vocabulary teaching and training: one is time efficiency, the other is the content learned. The author discusses two common vocabulary learning methods in detail, one is to use vocabulary, the other is to classify words according to semantic field.



And in N Schmitt and M McCarthy's book *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition* mainly discusses the problems of vocabulary teaching in second language teaching. In the first part, the author makes a historical review and in-depth discussion on the methods of vocabulary teaching in the second language. By analyzing the problems that hinder the second language reading comprehension, such as insufficient vocabulary, confusing misunderstanding of word meaning, and weak ability to guess word meaning, the author puts forward a minimum vocabulary standard for smooth reading, and points out the necessity of elaborately arranging vocabulary teaching in the classroom by comparing the effects of the morphological differences between the mother tongue and the second language on vocabulary understanding. The fourth part focuses on the methodology of vocabulary teaching. In the fifth part, the author reviews the reasons for neglecting vocabulary teaching in the past and the remedies, discusses the problems in the empirical research fields such as context acquisition, individual learning strategies, direct guidance, vocabulary scale, dictionary use and conventional learning theories, and finally concludes the basic principles of the second language vocabulary teaching theory.

4. Instruments

Research Tools

The study adopted questionnaire and interview methods. The tools are questionnaires and interview outlines. The questionnaire was adapted by the author according to the questionnaire of Chen Luoyu [13], another researcher in the same research field. The reason for this adaption is that her questionnaire covers most of the items that the researcher wanted to cover and they are suitable for collecting the data in the teaching and studying context. It is divided into two questionnaires, namely, the "Questionnaire on Teachers' Vocabulary Teaching" and the "Questionnaire on Students' English Vocabulary Learning". The teacher questionnaire is composed of questions, respectively involving college teachers' vocabulary teaching concepts, contents, methods, means and evaluation. The student questionnaire is composed of questions, respectively involving college students' vocabulary learning concepts Strategy. After the questionnaire survey, teachers were further interviewed. The outline of the teacher interview involved teachers' vocabulary teaching concepts, contents, methods, means and evaluation.



Evaluating Reliability

Reliability, also known as reliability or consistency, refers to the stability and consistency of the results measured by measuring tools. The greater the consistency and stability of the measurement tool, the higher the reliability. In this study, Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the student questionnaire is 86.6% and the teacher questionnaire is 87.9%, which is acceptable as long as it is above 0.6, was used to test the internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire, providing empirical support for the use of the second language awareness questionnaire.

Evaluating Validity

After reviewing the literature related to this study, the researcher chose the questionnaire and items. They were judged and revised by professionals in the academic field.

The Data Collection and Analysis of Questionnaire for the Teachers

This analysis of this questionnaire can be summarized as follows:

- 1) The necessity of bridging vocabulary teaching from high school to college
According to the questionnaire, when asked about the attitude of high school and college English vocabulary teaching, 86.2% of the surveyed teachers think it is necessary to improve the cohesion of English vocabulary teaching. This indicates that most college teachers have a high level of identification with the link between high school and college vocabulary teaching.
- 2) Methods of vocabulary teaching
The results showed that 36.1% of teachers still explained vocabulary in the order of the vocabulary list. To some extent, this reflects that these teachers' methods of dealing with vocabulary in vocabulary teaching practice are relatively simple. The teaching method of explaining vocabulary in a word list takes vocabulary learning away from the support of context. The use of vocabulary is difficult to reflect in the context, and the continuous explanation of vocabulary is easy to make students feel boring. The proportion of teachers explaining vocabulary and sentences reached 26.4 percent. This method affects students' overall cognition of the article and is not conducive to improving students' reading ability.
- 3) The cultivation of independent learning ability



As can be seen from the fourth question, 40.2% of the surveyed teachers only occasionally require students to conduct independent learning, indicating that teachers do not pay attention to the cultivation of students' independent learning ability.

The Data Collection and Analysis of the Interview

The author investigated and analyzed teachers and students through interviews, and found that the current problems in vocabulary teaching cohesion mainly include the following aspects: from the comparative analysis of the vocabulary requirements of the syllabus and the vocabulary presentation of the textbooks, it can be seen that the syllabus and textbooks have indeed considered cohesion, but there is a certain degree of disjunction. First, as far as the syllabus is concerned, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the three levels of vocabulary requirements, which reflects the gradualness. However, the vocabulary requirements of the first level vary greatly. Those students who have difficulties in vocabulary learning in high school may be difficult to adapt to the rapidly increasing learning pressure. Second, as far as the textbooks are concerned, the proportion of old words should be controlled within a reasonable range, which is conducive to students' vocabulary learning step by step. However, some new meanings of old words lack the support of context, and they still repeat students' usage in high school, with poor cohesion. Third, from the survey of teachers and students in middle schools and colleges and universities, we can see that there is a gap in the cohesion of English vocabulary teaching in senior high school. From the perspective of teachers, most teachers have not formed the awareness of vocabulary cohesion teaching, and the teaching methods of the two learning stages are out of touch: the teaching methods of senior high schools tend to be exam oriented, and the teaching methods of universities tend to develop students' autonomous learning ability. At the same time, university teachers also put more emphasis on the cultural awareness of vocabulary. Therefore, students must pay a certain amount of time for self-adjustment. In just two years of college English learning, if students spend a long time to adapt, then the effect of English learning is bound to be greatly reduced. On the other hand, from the perspective of students, many high school students still cannot effectively use vocabulary learning strategies, especially classification strategies and other memory strategies and use strategies,



which leads most students to believe that vocabulary memory and use are the main problems in vocabulary learning. Some students are easy to lose heart when they face learning difficulties, which will greatly dampen their English learning motivation in college. At the same time, many high school students do not have the ability to learn independently, and it is difficult to adapt to the situation that students accumulate vocabulary independently in universities, and the language foundation is poor. They also have poor pronunciation skills, because their high school learning was exam-oriented neglecting speaking. As a result, they couldn't memorize new words according to pronunciation. To sum up, the vocabulary requirements of the syllabus, the vocabulary presentation of the teaching materials, and the factors of both teachers and students together lead to the fault of vocabulary teaching.

Conclusion

By using the tools of questionnaires and surveys, the researcher has identified the five problems existing in College English vocabulary teaching which have seriously interfered with students' learning and also affected teachers' teaching efficiency. According to these findings, the researcher put forward some practical strategies for both students and teachers to overcome these problems.

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