

Study on Effective Learning Strategies of English Normal Students in Applied Universities under the Background of Professional Certification

-- A Case Study of Vocabulary Learning

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Abstract

In this study, 176 English normal University students in Yibin University were selected as the research objects. Through questionnaire survey and interview, the basic situation of vocabulary learning and the current situation of using strategies were explored. According to the survey results, relevant suggestions are put forward: 1) attach importance to teachers' active guidance, 2) optimize vocabulary strategies to diversify language input channels, 3) actively promote language output and encourage cooperative learning.

Keywords

English Normal Students; English Vocabulary; Learning Strategies.

1. Introduction

Teacher professional certification adhering to the "student-centered, output-oriented, continuous improvement" concept, tries to promote university normal students constantly change, constantly innovate. Application-oriented undergraduate colleges mainly focus on application, aiming at cultivating high-quality application-oriented talents with strong social adaptability and competitive ability. In terms of the teaching system of the application-oriented undergraduate colleges, it takes the cultivation of application ability as the core and vocational post ability as the guidance to cultivate the professional talents needed by the society. The cultivation of university normal students in application-oriented universities attaches importance to the organic combination of professional ability cultivation and teacher vocational skills training. Under the background of teacher professional certification, the training of application-oriented undergraduate normal students strengthens the individual needs of students and highlights the suitability of talent training specifications and social actual needs.

Vocabulary is the most basic component of language and the prerequisite for the smooth learning of other language knowledge and language skills. However, in many years of teaching, the author found that vocabulary has always been a difficult problem in normal students' language learning, and the lack of vocabulary has become the bottleneck to improve their language level.

In order to better reflect the student-centered teaching, this study intends to investigate from the perspective of students' vocabulary learning strategies. Learning strategy is one of the topics that has attracted attention in the field of educational psychology in recent years. A lot of research focusing on strategy teaching show that learning strategy is an important factor affecting students' learning efficiency [1]. Wilkins once pointed out that no matter how good students are at grammar and pronunciation, if they cannot master vocabulary, they will not be able to communicate meaningfully in a second language. [2] Vocabulary learning is a process

that requires great patience and effort. "Learning is a dynamic process in which different people use different information and strategy processing modes to process information". [3] After mastering correct learning strategies, students can break away from teachers, control their own learning process, change their own learning methods, and enhance their learning confidence and ability. Studying in university is an important stage to lay the foundation for a lifetime career. If a good English vocabulary learning method can be formed, normal students will benefit for a lifetime, and even influence more learners after employment.

2. Organization of the Text

O'Malley & Chamot proposed, Learners can use such recognition strategies as search (for basic meaning and multiple meaning), repetition/memorization (memorizing word lists and reading and writing repeatedly), practice, note-taking, context, reading, classification (by meaning, morphology or pronunciation), conjecture, association, translation/parent language, etc. Metacognitive strategies such as pre-planning, selective annotation, self-monitoring, delayed expression, self-regulation, and social/emotional strategies such as communication/cooperation with peers and self-motivation are employed in vocabulary learning [4]. This study intends to discuss students' vocabulary learning from three dimensions: metacognitive strategy, cognitive strategy and emotional/social strategy.

3. Investigation on Learning strategies of English Normal students

3.1. Survey objects

The survey objects of this study were 176 students in the second grade of English (Normal) major in Yibin University. The survey lasted from the first semester to the end of sophomore year. The reason why sophomore students were selected as the research object was that, on the one hand, after one year's study in college, students have already had a preliminary understanding and mastery of vocabulary learning method of English as their own learning major, which was different from the basic education stage. On the other hand, most of the subjects have signed up for the subject competition this semester, so they consciously paid attention to the improvement of English vocabulary. Therefore, this study believes that the investigation of students' vocabulary learning strategies at this stage can accurately grasp students' vocabulary learning status, so as to provide active guidance and help them establish effective vocabulary learning strategies.

3.2. Research Tools

This study intends to adopt questionnaire survey and interview method for data collection, in which the main information is obtained mainly through questionnaire survey. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part mainly examines the basic situation of students' vocabulary learning. The second part studies the application of students' vocabulary learning strategies. The questionnaire was made based on O'Malley & Chamot's classification system of vocabulary learning strategies and the questionnaire on Chinese college students' learning strategies in Wen Qiufang and Wang Lifei's Empirical Research on English Learning Strategies [5], and adapted according to the actual situation of the students.

3.3. Analysis and Discussion of Survey Results

In order to ensure the objective preparation of the research results, this survey adopts the form of anonymous. A total of 176 questionnaires were sent out, 174 were recovered, 3 were invalid, and 171 were recovered with a recovery rate of 96%.

3.3.1. Basic Information of Students' English Vocabulary Learning

Table 1. Students' approaches to vocabulary learning

Textbooks	Original English works	Newspapers and magazines	Specialized vocabulary books	Apps and websites	Film and television works or songs	Others
33.92%	17.54%	8.19%	15.79%	12.28%	10.53%	1.75%

Table 2. The average time students spend on vocabulary learning

>2h	1.5-2h	1-1.5h	0.5-1 h	0-0.5h	0
12	23	31	54	43	8
7.01%	13.45%	18.13%	31.38%	25.15	4.68%

From Table 1, it can be seen that English majors in the second year of normal university have diversified vocabulary learning channels. 58 people learned vocabulary from textbooks, accounting for 33.92%; 30 people, or 17.54%, learned vocabulary from original English books; 14 people learned vocabulary from various periodicals, accounting for 8.19%; The number of people who learned vocabulary from specialized vocabulary books was 27, accounting for 15.79%; 21 people learned vocabulary from various applications and websites, accounting for 12.128%; 18 people, or 10.53%, learned vocabulary from various English movies or songs; The number of people who learned vocabulary in ways other than those mentioned above was 3, accounting for 1.75%. The ways of vocabulary learning in descending order according to the number of users are textbook learning, original book reading, specialized vocabulary books, various applications and websites, various films and movies and songs, newspapers and magazines, and others. It is obvious that the highest proportion of students' study through textbooks. Through the in-depth interview, it is found that the main reasons why so many students choose textbooks for learning are as follows: 1) The volume of new words in textbooks is large and it takes time to digest. 2) The vocabulary in the textbook covers the vocabulary required for TEM-4 as well as TEM-8. 3) The vocabulary usage in the textbook is classic and authentic. 4) To learn the vocabulary in the textbook could strengthen the understanding of the text, etc. In addition, according to the data in Table 2, 12 people spend more than two hours a day on vocabulary learning, accounting for 7.01%; 23 people spend 1.5-2 hours on vocabulary learning, accounting for 13.45%; 31 people spend 1-0.5 hours on vocabulary learning, accounting for 18.13%; 54 people spend half to one hour on vocabulary learning, accounting for 31.38%. A total of 43 people, or 25.15 percent, stayed within half hour. A total of 8 students, accounting for 4.68%, did not spend time on vocabulary learning. It can be seen that the number of students who spend an average of half an hour on vocabulary learning every day is the largest. More than half of the students spent less than one hour on vocabulary learning every day, accounting for 56.53%. The average daily vocabulary learning time of the majority of students within two hours, accounting for 88.31%. Through the interview, the author learned that most students expressed that vocabulary learning was very important and difficult, and it was very necessary to spend time on vocabulary learning.

3.3.2. Application of Vocabulary Learning Strategies for English Normal Students

According to the survey, cognitive strategy was the most frequently used strategy by students. Among them, repetition > discourse > reading > translation > guessing words > association > classification > dictionary > writing > Recitation. Of the 171 students surveyed, 108 students, or 63.2 percent of the total, said that repetition is helpful for word reinforcement. According to the interview, most students think it is necessary to repeat this process to promote the internalization of vocabulary. Even when learning words in discourse or guessing words through word formation, they need to consolidate their memory repeatedly. The survey found

that some students had a strong sense that rote memorization was not the most ideal method for vocabulary accumulation, and memorization should be carried out in the context of specific texts. The survey also found that some students still learn vocabulary through translation. And the number of this type of students is significantly higher than the students who use word guessing, association and classification. Through the interview, it is found that although most students pay attention to learning strategies such as word guessing, association and classification, few students actively and effectively try them. The reason why they choose translation method for word memorization was that some students believed that this method was a word learning habit developed over the years, and some students believed that this method can have immediate effect on word memorization. In addition, some students thought that this method does not require basic English. It can be seen that the use of vocabulary strategies in learning was relatively scarce.

Furthermore, in terms of metacognitive strategies, the frequency of students' use of metacognitive sub-strategies was ranked as follows: making plans (53.22%) > selective attention (30.40%) > self-examination (8.19%) > self-evaluation (5.26%). O'Malley & Chamot believe that among all learning strategies, metacognitive strategies are superior to others, which is the key to ensure learners' learning efficiency. According to the survey, 53.22% of the students have clear goals and plans for their vocabulary learning. Through further interviews, it is found that most of the students' plans are linked to the vocabulary requirements of TEM-4 exam and the final exam, and most of their learning behaviors are controlled by the exam. 30.40% of students can use the selective attention strategy, but there were deficiencies in the learning process of conscious supervision and self-assessment strategies.

In emotional/social strategies. 68.42% of the students showed that they had no bad emotions such as nervousness, and they could successfully restrain their anxiety in lexicology. However, 42.10% of the students believed that they were not good at encouraging themselves and adjusting their status in time to build up confidence when they encountered difficulties. In addition, the survey shows that only 18.71%, or less than 20% of the students, have adopted cooperative learning for vocabulary learning. Moreover, through the interview, it is found that the scope of students' cooperation is mostly based on the dormitory unit, and the diversified cooperation method is still insufficient.

4. Cultivation of Vocabulary Learning Ability of English Normal Students

Based on the above survey results, the author puts forward the following suggestions on how to improve the vocabulary learning ability of English normal students.

4.1. Attach Importance to Teachers' Guidance and Optimize Vocabulary Strategies

Through the investigation of students' learning strategies, it is found that there is still a lack of vocabulary learning. For example, in cognitive strategy, fine processing strategy, organization strategy, etc., in metacognitive strategy, monitoring strategy, reflection strategy, etc. Therefore, teachers can consciously explain, analyze and give examples on the use of student strategies, guide students to make active attempts, and apply them in practice according to the actual situation of individuals, so as to broaden the options of vocabulary learning strategies. In addition, supporting teaching activities can improve students' interest in vocabulary learning and build up their confidence in vocabulary learning. Optimize vocabulary learning strategies to promote students to learn vocabulary more efficiently.

4.2. Diversified Language Input Channels

Sufficient input is crucial for learners in the process of language learning. Through the above survey, it is found that more than half of the students take texts as the main source of vocabulary

accumulation. However, the vocabulary capacity of textbooks is limited, and the updating of textbooks is slow, so it is difficult for students to keep pace with the times in terms of vocabulary content and usage. Therefore, taking textbooks as the only vocabulary channel limits students' vocabulary accumulation to a large extent. That is to say, most students whose vocabulary comes from textbooks have a single language input channel. Therefore, it is imperative to broaden the channel of vocabulary input. The survey shows that although some students have formed the habit of learning vocabulary by reading classics, newspapers and magazines, the proportion is still small. In addition, with the popularization of the Internet, the access to online resources is becoming more and more convenient. Rational use of online and offline resources makes the language input channels more diversified and expands the vocabulary input.

4.3. Actively Promote Language Output and Encourage Cooperative Learning

The English vocabulary acquired by learners in reading comprehension and listening comprehension is receptive vocabulary. In order to transform receptive vocabulary into productive vocabulary, which means learners can freely use it in writing or oral expression, a lot of practical output exercises are needed. Teachers can actively construct the second classroom activities, such as oral English corner, English speech and so on, to actively promote language output. In addition, the Internet platform can be used to promote vocabulary input. For example, wechat, QQ and other chatting tools can be used to build English chat rooms, where students can talk freely and share the life details in English, etc., so as to encourage students to cooperate with each other and jointly promote vocabulary output.

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