

VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN SHAOXING UNDER COGNITIVE THEORY

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Abstract: Vocabulary is the foundation of language learning and an indispensable part of language learning. In teaching Chinese as a foreign language, vocabulary teaching is the focus and difficulty of language teaching. Chinese vocabulary is vast and complex, so teaching Chinese vocabulary is not an easy task. This article mainly starts from the perspective of cognitive psychology, based on the actual teaching of Chinese vocabulary in foreign language classrooms, examines the current situation of teaching Chinese vocabulary in foreign language classrooms, and based on the observation results of actual classrooms, develops a questionnaire survey. Based on this, ideas are proposed and teaching experiments are conducted to try to find a teaching principle and method suitable for implementation in specific classrooms, in order to improve the effectiveness of classroom vocabulary teaching.

Keywords: Cognitive psychology; Vocabulary teaching; Overseas student

1 INTRODUCTION

With the expansion of Belt and Road exchanges, the influence of Chinese language is also growing and spreading faster, and many foreigners come to China to learn Chinese. Statistics show that the number of people taking Chinese language examinations in various countries has also increased year by year in recent years. Chinese has also become the most popular second language with the largest number of participants, next to English. The Ministry of Education and the Chinese government have provided policy support to create more opportunities to learn Chinese. As a result, the number of international students in China has increased in recent years, and the number of international students from Southeast Asia in particular is growing year by year. The state actively introduces policies to support the education of international students, which has a positive effect on promoting the development of Chinese language teaching and the dissemination of Chinese vocabulary, not only optimising the allocation of educational resources, providing convenient conditions for diversifying Chinese language teaching modes, but also meeting the requirements of cultivating innovative talents.

2 REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH

By searching for the keyword "Cognitive Psychology and Vocabulary Teaching" on CNKI, Wu Shixiong[1] first discussed English vocabulary teaching by applying cognitive psychology theory. In his paper "Research on Cognitive Psychology Memory and Enlightenment of English Vocabulary Teaching", he believes that word memory cannot exist in isolation from the psychological domains of human perception, attention, and thinking.

Xu Ziliang [2] was one of the earliest scholars to conduct cognitive and psychological analysis on foreign students after Wu Shixiong. In his article, he recorded the cognitive and psychological processes of foreign students during their learning process, providing a wealth of teaching materials and a large amount of classroom experimental data for Chinese language teachers studying foreign students' learning strategies. Xu Ziliang conducted research using a questionnaire survey method. By organizing and analyzing survey data, he combined cognitive theory to derive language learning strategies for international students and described and analyzed the process of human brain processing language data using psychological theory. Wu Qianlong[3] analyzed the relationship between information processing and cognitive ability and analyzed the cognitive psychological processes of second language learners from two aspects: the characteristics of language itself and the connection between language and thinking. At the same time, he also sorted out and analyzed the vocabulary accumulation and language expression problems encountered by international students studying in China. Through analysis, he believes that cognitive theory has indeed played an important role in teaching Chinese as a foreign language and has provided practical and feasible suggestions for teaching Chinese as a foreign language based on theoretical foundations.

The academic community has long recognized the important role of cognitive psychology theory in vocabulary teaching. The discussion of vocabulary teaching from the perspective of cognitive psychology started relatively early in China, and the scope of research is also relatively broad. However, there are still many problems in vocabulary research from the perspective of cognitive psychology. Some scholars are only at the stage of theoretical verification. Some scholars have used questionnaire surveys and corpora to verify whether cognitive psychology is helpful for students' vocabulary learning, without verifying it from actual classroom teaching. Although some scholars combine practical vocabulary teaching, the experimental teaching process is incomplete and lacks experimental data support. So it is necessary for us

to combine specific classroom vocabulary teaching, guided by cognitive psychology theory, carefully arrange experimental steps, improve experimental data, and use experimental data as a basis to verify whether cognitive psychology theory is helpful for vocabulary teaching.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Analysis of Relevant Problems Faced by Teachers in Teaching

3.1.1 Neglecting students' perception and experience

In classroom teaching, teachers usually focus on the arrangement of the curriculum and teach according to the order of the textbook. It is found that few teachers pay attention to students' inner perception of the content of the lesson. Neglecting the students' feelings will result in the teachers' inadequate design of the overall classroom teaching, which is superficial vocabulary learning and ignores the content behind the vocabulary.

3.1.2 Ignoring the connotation and context of vocabulary

Chinese vocabulary is not only numerous, but also rich and colorful in its connotations. Teaching Chinese vocabulary in conjunction with the unique background of Chinese culture can not only ensure the smooth progress of teaching, but also deepen students' understanding of vocabulary. However, in the actual teaching process, teachers often neglect the unique connotation and context of Chinese vocabulary. The single explanation of vocabulary not only makes the vocabulary class lack of interest, but also leads to the students' lack of understanding of vocabulary, which has a significant impact on their learning of Chinese vocabulary.

3.1.3 Insufficient practice of Chinese vocabularies

Repeated training can constantly reproduce the vocabulary learnt and deepen students' understanding and memory of the vocabulary. However, the vocabulary practice in the classroom is basically inseparable from the textbook, and the vocabulary drill is mainly based on the teacher's leading and students' following, repeating the vocabulary from the textbook. In this case, the new knowledge learnt in the classroom is not strengthened, and the students cannot flexibly use the vocabulary they have learnt in the classroom to communicate with each other, which is a kind of confinement to the students' thinking in their learning.

3.1.4 Can't use the taught words repeatedly

Due to the limitation of curriculum arrangement, teachers are eager to arrange new contents in classroom teaching, so the classroom teaching is mostly based on new knowledge, lacking in re-recognition and reappearance of the old knowledge, neglecting the coherence of teaching and learning, which makes students' cognition of Chinese vocabulary divided, and this is extremely unfavourable to the vocabulary learning of the students.

3.2 The Analysis of The Related Problems Faced by Students' Acquisition

3.2.1 Low interest and heavy burden

According to the survey of international students in Shaoxing, students' interest in learning Chinese vocabulary is not too high in Chinese language learning and teaching, and a small number of students are not interested in the vocabulary teaching part of the classroom, and they think that grammar is more important.

3.2.2 Inadequate understanding of vocabularies

As the Chinese language programme progresses, students need to master more and more Chinese vocabulary, and the increase in the amount of memorization leads to students' poor understanding of Chinese vocabulary. On the one hand, teachers' design of vocabulary teaching is not in place in the limited classroom time; on the other hand, due to the large cultural differences between China and foreign countries, each Chinese vocabulary word contains unique cultural meanings, and students' lack of understanding of Chinese culture affects international students' understanding of Chinese vocabulary, which results in vocabulary not being stored permanently in the brain's mental lexicon as a long-term memory, and this affects the recognition and reproduction.

3.2.3 Single way of vocabulary accumulation

At present, international students in Shaoxing learn vocabulary mainly from textbooks, teachers mainly focus on the vocabulary lists in the textbooks, and students rely on the vocabulary lists in the textbooks to remember and the way of remembering vocabulary is still based on rote memorisation. In this case, students have a single way of accumulating Chinese vocabulary, and teachers do not provide students with other ways to remember vocabulary in class. Rote memorisation can help students to remember a large amount of vocabulary in a short period of time, but since students do not have a deep understanding of the meaning of the vocabulary itself and the significance behind the vocabulary, they can easily forget it in a long time.

4 CONCLUSION

4.1 Suggestions for Teachers' Teaching

4.1.1 Build vocabulary networks and construct word-to-word links

The mental lexicon emphasises that words stored in the lexicon are interwoven with each other at certain nodes to form a huge vocabulary network. Therefore, in actual classroom vocabulary teaching, teachers should use different teaching methods to help students connect the words they have learnt as much as possible, so that students can understand and

master the words in a short time, and then enlarge the vocabulary stored in the mental lexicon, which is easy for students to retrieve and reproduce at any time. The students' mental lexicon can be enlarged so that they can extract and reproduce the words at any time.[4] However, according to our survey, the cultivation of metacognitive coding ability has not been given enough attention in both teachers' Chinese vocabulary teaching and students' Chinese vocabulary learning. Metacognitive coding refers to the fact that students have a clear understanding of the process of learning vocabulary, and that they are able to comprehend the meaning of vocabulary and improve their ability to use it, so the cultivation of students' metacognitive coding ability is important in the actual teaching of vocabulary in classrooms. Therefore, the cultivation of students' metacognitive ability is essential in the actual teaching of vocabulary in the classroom. Teachers should pay attention to students' metacognitive coding ability, train students to apply and extract vocabulary, and increase students' interest in learning.

4.1.2 Creating Vocabulary Contexts to Improve Vocabulary Application Skills

Contextual teaching refers to the use of vivid language and imagination to recreate text scenes according to the needs of the curriculum. Students can deeply understand the meaning of vocabulary in the context, understand the specific scenes of vocabulary use, and improve their practical application ability. Therefore, when vocabulary is taught in the classroom through the context, students will concentrate on perceiving the vocabulary, so that they can grasp the meaning of vocabulary well. By projecting a suitable language environment, the teaching process changes from a static language environment to a dynamic one, in which all the senses of the students are fully mobilised, and the students are able to understand the meaning of the vocabulary and in what kind of situations the vocabulary is used. From the statistics of the previous questionnaire survey, we can see that teachers do not encode enough information about vocabulary in the classroom, which leads to the students not being able to perceive the new vocabulary they are learning, and not being able to relate to the context in which they are learning the new vocabulary. Therefore, contextualised teaching is very important. On the one hand, it can help teachers to design vocabulary sessions better, and on the other hand, it can help students to understand the scenarios of vocabulary use and improve their ability to apply it.

4.1.3 Increase the ways of practice and remember vocabulary through various channels

It is very important to master a learning strategy that suits oneself. When learning a second language, international students seldom have the chance to practice with students of the target language.[5] There are many nationalities in the world, and due to the influence of history and geography, each nationality has formed its unique way of thinking in the course of time, and there are big differences in language and culture among nationalities, so it is almost impossible to master all the vocabularies in one class, and it is necessary to listen to them more, read them more and speak them more. Therefore, rote learning is not the best way to master vocabulary. In the actual learning environment, teachers should help students to master more vocabulary learning strategies, and students should explore their own vocabulary learning methods according to their own learning habits. To deal with this situation, on the one hand, teachers can build up a vocabulary bank of vocabulary extended in the classroom, so as to make it easier to remember in the future. On the other hand, teachers should design a variety of vocabulary practice methods to extend the scope of vocabulary practice from the classroom to the classroom. By practicing vocabulary in multiple ways and through multiple channels, students' practical vocabulary application can be enhanced.

4.2 Suggestions for Students' Learning

4.2.1 Clever vocabulary memorization and increase interest in learning Chinese vocabulary

Interest is the driving force behind language learning. Language learning itself is boring and tedious, so if we cannot arouse students' interest in learning, it will easily lead to slackness in vocabulary learning and affect the learning state in the classroom. To learn a language, it is not only necessary to remember vocabulary unilaterally, but also to remember the cultural and background knowledge of the vocabulary. Each vocabulary word has a unique cultural connotation behind it. Therefore, in the process of vocabulary teaching, teachers should explain the meaning behind the vocabulary words to arouse students' interest in vocabulary learning, and the more students master the origin and meaning of the vocabulary words, the more confidence they have, the more interest they have in vocabulary learning, and the more they are inspired to explore more vocabulary words, so as to understand the vocabulary words and improve the ability to use them. The students will be more interested in vocabulary learning.

4.2.2 Cultivating metacognitive strategies and choosing appropriate learning strategies

As one of the most commonly adopted strategies, cultivating students' metacognitive awareness is crucial to their proper learning of Chinese. Students should be encouraged to develop their own learning plans based on their unique circumstances, and teachers should assist them in setting their own learning goals. In addition, it is important to monitor and guide the learning process and to help students find solutions to the problems they encounter in learning self-cognitive strategies, so that they can choose which methods are better for remembering vocabulary, which are better for improving forgetting, and which are better for expanding their vocabulary.

4.2.3 Expanding reading paths and increasing vocabulary learning methods

Since interest is the compass of students, learning and can determine the direction of students' learning, we should not limit ourselves to remember vocabulary from textbooks, but also broaden the paths of learning, and extracurricular reading is undoubtedly one of the best ways to increase vocabulary.

According to the results of the survey, international students in Shaoxing are more influenced by their interests and hobbies when learning Chinese vocabulary, so interests and hobbies are very important when instructing students to learn Chinese vocabulary.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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