蔡　晖◆著

英语学习

电子词典增强下的词汇学习模式

DEVELOPMENT OF AN E-DICTIONARY-BASED ENHANCERS FOR VOCABULARY LEARNING MODEL FOR ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS

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内容提要

EFL学习者词汇匮乏是一个亟待解决的问题。为帮助外语学习者学习词汇，本书描述了作者博士论文的研究成果：设计一个电子词典增强下的词汇学习模式（EDEVOL Model）。该词汇学习模式旨在：(1)帮助学生学习目标词的词义；(2)帮助学生学习目标词的拼写形式。本研究表明EDEVOL Model可以作为帮助外语学习者学习词汇的词汇学习工具而广泛应用于外语教学实践中。

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摘 要

EFL学习者词汇匮乏是一个亟待解决的问题。为帮助外语学习者学习词汇,本研究致力于设计一个电子词典增强下的词汇学习模式(EDEVOL Model)。本研究旨在调查:①该词汇学习模式对帮助学生学习目标词的词义的作用;②该模式对帮助学生学习目标词的拼写形式的作用;③其中一项增强技巧即预先警告的阅读理解正误测试对学生学习文章内目标词之外的生词的作用;④学生的字典查阅频率及其词汇学习成绩之间的关系;⑤学生对 EDEVOL Model(体现为一个词汇教学程序)的满意度。

本研究的实验对象为100名中国贵州省财经学院的2010级研究生新生。根据他们的研究生入学考试英语成绩,把他们划分为实验组和控制组。词汇教学实验在语言实验室以考试的形式进行。实验组能使用英汉电子字典而控制组则没有字典提供。为调查 EDEVOL Model 对词汇学习的作用,词汇教学后当即对学生进行两个未提前告知的词汇测试和问卷调查。为充分调查该词汇学习模式的作用,一个月后还对受试者进行了两个未提前告知的延迟词汇测试和一个开卷问卷调查。描述性频率、独立样本T检验和双变量相关等方法用于分析定量数据,内容分析法用于分析定性数据。

实验结果显示,实验组和控制组在学习生词词义上存在高于0.05显著水平的区别性差异。结果还表明此词汇学习模式能帮助受试者学习目标词:他们记住了38.15%的目标词拼写形式和57.59%的目标词词义。一个月以后受试者还能记得26.67%的目标词拼写形式和43.24%目标词词义。这说明 EDEVOL Model 能有效帮助学生学习包括目标词在内的生词。然而,在对受试者查字典行为的观察中,没有发现受试者字典查阅频

率和词汇学习之间存在有意义的相关。问卷调查结果表明实验组中82.2%的学生对 EDEVOL Model 程序持肯定态度。本研究表明 EDEVOL Model 可以作为帮助外语学习者学习词汇的词汇学习工具而应用于外语教学实践中。

Abstract

Learners' lack of sufficient vocabulary is always an important problem calling for solutions in EFL teaching and learning. In order to help EFL learners learn vocabulary, this study aims to develop an E-dictionary-Based Enhancers for Vocabulary Learning Model. This study is to examine ① the effect of the EBEVOL Model on helping students learn the meaning of target words, ② the effect of the model on helping them learn the written forms of these words, ③ the effects of the forewarned T/F comprehension test, one of the enhancers, on helping them learn the unknown words besides target words, ④ the relationship between learners' lookup frequency and learners' vocabulary learning achievement, and ⑤ students' satisfaction to the EDEVOL Model (implemented by a vocabulary instruction program).

One hundred graduate first-year students participated in the experiment which was in a form of a test in two language labs at a provincial university in Guizhou Province of China. They were assigned to an experimental group and a control group according to their scores on the nationwide standardized matriculation English test for graduate students. The experimental group was enhanced by a bilingual dictionary while the control group was provided with no dictionary. The study was carried out in two phases in order to give a holistic picture to the effects of the EDEVOL Model on vocabulary learning. Two vocabulary tests and a five-scaled Likert questionnaire were given to the participants immediately after instruction in Phase One. In Phase Two, a month later, two delayed vocabulary tests and an open-ended questionnaire were administered. Descriptive frequency, independent samples t-test, and bivariate correlation were applied to analyse quantitative data and content analysis was applied to qualitative data.

The results revealed that significant differences of 0. 05 were found between the experimental group and the control group in learning both the meaning of new words. The results also demonstrated that the model helped the subjects in the experimental group learned 38. 15% of the written form and 57. 59% of the meaning of the twelve target words immediately after the treatment and remembered 26. 67% of the written form and 43. 24% of the meaning of them after one month. The EDEVOL Model was proved effective for vocabulary learning. In the observation of the participants' lookup behavior, however, no significant correlation was found between their lookup frequency and learning of the target words. 82. 2% of the participants in the experimental group showed their preference towards the experiment program. This study suggests that the EDEVOL Model may be applied in the TEFL practice as a vocabulary-learning tool to help learners learn vocabulary.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning
EBEVOL Model	E-dictionary-based Enhancers for Vocabulary Learning Model
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
FL	Foreign language
L1	The first language
L2	The second language
LUB	Lookup behavior
RC	Reading comprehension
TW	Target word
VGPT	Vocabulary Gain Productive Test
VGRT	Vocabulary Gain Receptive Test
VRPT	Vocabulary Retention Productive Test
VRRT	Vocabulary Retention Receptive Test

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the statement of the problem, the rationale, the research hypothesis, the purposes, the research questions, and the significance of this study. Definitions of main terms are given, too.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Vocabulary is regarded as an essential element in language learning by both teachers and learners. Learners' lack of sufficient vocabulary is always an important problem calling for solutions in EFL (English as a foreign language) teaching and learning. As Nation (1990, p.2) says, "Learners feel that many of their difficulties in both receptive and productive language use result from an inadequate vocabulary". If learners are short of words, they cannot communicate properly with others, nor can they express ideas clearly when speaking or writing. With many unknown words, it is also difficult for learners to make out what they are told or what they are reading. How to help students learn vocabulary is a question language teachers have to consider. Vocabulary enlargement is the key for solving this problem.

1.2 Rationale of the study

With the advent of computers and the Internet, a new possibility to enhance vocabulary learning is brought into the filed of EFL language learning. Because acquiring or learning new words while reading a text is an important practical

method of vocabulary enlargement, the availability of authentic materials on the Internet and the access of electronic dictionaries provide two helpful conditions for learners to learn vocabulary. First, the World Wide Web is not only one of the most efficient channels for global communication but also a huge and abundant language-learning source for EFL learners. Second, electronic dictionaries appear with computer technology combined with dictionary information. Integrated with computer technology, dictionaries assume more importance for text comprehension and vocabulary learning with its technical benefits.

For learners, electronic dictionaries are no longer as troublesome as paper dictionaries are with the characteristics of being able to show the explanations of a new word promptly. They overcome the disadvantages of a paper dictionary in the sense of saving the time used for searching for the word in a thick dictionary, which has several hundred pages or more. In the past, many educators and researchers discouraged the practice of paper dictionary use. They worried that looking up words frequently in a printed dictionary interfered with learners' memory and thus disrupted the comprehension of text (Knight, 1994). Now, in its new form, an electronic dictionary became an important instrument for learning a language, especially for learning vocabulary. The searching process for a word in an electronic dictionary is greatly shortened by the computer advantage of speed. Except for time consuming, looking up a word in a paper dictionary is a process of switches, first switching from a reading material to dictionary and then from the dictionary to the reading material. It is a disruptive process. Now with the help of e-dictionaries, learners' thought flow is no longer disrupted as much as before, especially with the function of instantly obtaining the explanation when putting the cursor on a word. With the merits of saving time and not disrupting the thought flow as much as paper dictionaries do, the e-dictionaries make it possible for learners to read more fluently; therefore, they increase the learners' chance of acquiring the looked up words while reading. Leffa (1992) compared the efficiency of an e-dictionary and a conventional dictionary in a translation task and found that the computer dictionary enabled the students to "understand 38% more of the passage, using 50% less time" (p. 63). Many studies (Hulstijn,

1993; Knight, 1994; Chun & Plass, 1996, Chun & Plass, 1997; Hulstijn, Hollander & Greidanus, 1996; Hulstijn & Trompetter, 1998; Laufer & Hadar, 1997; Laufer & Hill, 2000; Chun and Payne, 2004, Peter, 2007; Peters, Hulsijn, Seru & Lurjeharms, 2009, etc.) show that looking up an e-dictionary (containing computerized glosses) has a positive effect on word learning. This provides evidence to the value of e-dictionary use for vocabulary learning while reading a text, especially an authentic one on the Internet or on a computer.

However, using an e-dictionary alone may accompany shallow processing of word information since the flow of reading is not disrupted much (Laufer & Hill, 2000). When the e-dictionary was used alone to help learners read a text, it was found that the retention of new words was not as high as when the e-dictionary was combined with one enhancement technique or two or three enhancement techniques (Hulstijn, 1993; Laufer and Hill, 2000; Peters, 2007; Peters et al., 2009) (for more details see Section 2.2.2 in Chapter 2). The three enhancement techniques investigated in the previous studies are word relevance, vocabulary task and vocabulary test announcement. Among them, the two enhancement techniques/tasks, i.e., word relevance (Hulstijn, 1993) and a vocabulary task (Peters, et al, 2009), play an important role in boosting vocabulary gain by directing learners' attention to target words from reading and making learners elaborately process the form and meaning connection of the words.

Word relevance is the most frequent task researchers used to make learners focus on new words to be learned. In Hulstijn's (1993) study, "relevance of words to reading comprehension questions is found to increase the chance of dictionary consultation". Laufer and Hill (2000) point out the indispensability of a word relevance task for studies on e-dictionary, i.e., "the task which cannot be carried out without the knowledge of the words targeted for investigation". The RC task with the factor of word relevance (called task-induced word relevance by Laufer and Hill) makes learners pay attention to the relevant new words and look them up. Learners have to look up relevant words in order to answer the questions. In fact, the effects of word relevance task are more than making learner consult a dictionary, what is more significant is "retention was very high on the