

基于英语词汇教学中 策略训练的行动研究

戴家琪 著

A STUDY OF
ACTION
RESEARCH
ON STRATEGY TRAINING
IN EFL VOCABULARY
TEACHING & LEARNING



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Acknowledgments

I used to hear frequently that the enormity of Ph.D. dissertation was so overwhelming that pulling it through could even cause one to 'shed a layer of skin'. Yet as a firm advocate of the *can-do spirit*, I took it lightly and embarked on my own journey of writing. Right at the moment, after months' hard work I am still struggling with a few unfinished parts, along with a lot more that await to be refined and polished. But luckily for me, the ship inlaid with the mission of Ph.D. dissertation is to be anchored soon. After navigating the 'uncharted waters' all by myself, I have to admit that above-mentioned remarks are not groundless. A perfect example to serve is that, for the sheer calculation of students' lexical breadth and depth, round by round I have bare-handedly checked 30,240 testing items in total. Very overwhelming indeed, isn't it? Now with the finish line in sight, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to express heartfelt gratitude.

Thanks first go to my esteemed supervisor, Prof. Zhuang Zhixiang. It just feels like yesterday that, during the oral test of Ph.D. entrance exams, he asked an abrupt question that caught me off guard, 'Young man, why do you choose to seek my supervision?' With a stroke of luck, I was admitted and began my part-time doctoral studies. During seminars, from time to time we found ourselves jaw-dropped at the profundity of Prof.

Zhuang's specialist and encyclopedic knowledge. Feeling inferior by comparison, we all felt the impetus to develop into a similar scholar. From the initial selection of topic to the arduous process of writing, his thoughtfulness, supportiveness and resourcefulness are always there, ready to be tapped into whenever need be. By taking into account his solemn responsibility of running a large-scale publishing company, his generosity with us students becomes all the more precious and valued.

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In the meantime, I am indebted to my students whose voluntary contribution matters all along. If I am the director, then all of them, 72 in all, are dedicated actors and actresses. Even if there are no leading roles whatsoever, they have conscientiously fulfilled their own supporting part to make the project a success. Through writing reflective journals, sitting rounds of vocabulary assessment, making up personalized sentences, their full cooperation needs to be duly appreciated and acknowledged.

In addition to professional support, the emotional and

practical support from family can be counted on as the dim light at the end of a dark tunnel. Truth to be told, obstacles were surmounted one after another throughout the whole project, with time and energy being the major issue.

In the capacity of a full-time teacher, I am obligated with a heavy teaching load and some administrative duty. And in the capacity of a new father, I have a little daughter to attend to, who requires her father's constant company. Despite all these disadvantages, I have succeeded in pedaling my tiny ship toward the destined shore and left on the sands of time my academic footprints. I should thank my parents for bringing me up and molding me into a well-read person. I should also thank my wife for sacrificing so much personal time on our daughter and not grudging about it. Last but not least, I should thank Ruby for her unique magic of erasing her daddy's fatigue after one day's work. In 2014, in commemoration of her birth I published my first book on lexical acquisition. Two years later, this Ph.D. dissertation is likewise dedicated to her—a god-sent angel whose giggle contains the true essence of life.

前言

在全球化的大背景下，中国正以积极的姿态不断融入全球的政治、经济和文化版图。从这个角度出发，作为外语的英语教学（本处“教学”涵盖了“教”与“学”，下同）具有重大的战略意义，足以在全球范围的竞争过程中扮演“或扬或抑”的重要角色。遗憾的是，虽然我国拥有全世界最多的英语学习者，但英语教学的总体成效并不算高。历经长达十年的学校教育，多数学生仍难以用英语进行有效交际，从而削弱了他们在世界舞台上的竞争优势。需要指出的是——即便该问题成因众多，学习者低下的词汇习得效率却始终难辞其咎。本书作者基于教学实践认为：在构成交际能力的各类维度中，词汇能力是值得进一步探究的重要议题。

本研究以行动研究为理论框架，旨在通过假设验证实现“先诊后治”的写作目的。在第一步准备阶段，三轮“英语词汇广度测试”（VST）的结果证实了第一个假设，即：参与学生的整体被动词汇量比较有限（平均为4250）。接下来，通过撰写关于策略使用的反思日志，大多数学生称“死记硬背”为记忆单词的唯一手段，同时指出策略训练在英语课堂中的缺位。有鉴于此，另外两个假设得以成立。首先，参与学生对词汇习得策略认识模糊、难以运用，这很好解释了学习者在词汇学习中经年累月苦苦挣扎的原因。其次，从策略训练的标准出发，效率不高的词汇讲授至少要对同样效率不高的词汇习得负部分责任。第二步执行阶段在两个班级之间开展了为期两轮的准实验。

以“英语词汇知识量表”(VKS)为手段,实验得出如下结论:两个班级差异显著,其中基于策略训练的创新教法在数据上优于传统教法。第四个假设,也是最为重要的一个假设检验为真,即:策略训练确能有效提升词汇教学的整体成效,因为它有助于加深学生所习得的词汇知识。

本研究在以下几方面有创新之处:

(1) 研究范式的创新

行动研究作为教学研究领域的传统范式之一,在本研究中得到了进一步的继承与发扬。首先,基于对各类模式的充分比较,王蔷教授提出的版本因其更适用于中国本土而被采用。随后,对该模式原有的线性顺序作出调整——十一个步骤聚合为三个阶段,每个阶段再由三个分步骤构成。这种对于原有研究顺序的重新解读和分类,保证了研究步骤得以按计划顺利开展。

(2) 研究内容的创新

本研究在内容上兼收并蓄,不仅关注词汇教与学的两端,而且涉及词汇的被动与主动知识。更为重要的是,在实验数据支撑下,策略训练被认为是提升词汇教学整体成效的助推器。这无疑向广大学生、教师(或是教研人员)和教材编写者传递了一个强烈的信号:在英语教学中,词汇习得策略的意识培养与应用培训不可或缺。

(3) 研究对象的创新

本研究中的两个班级均为大二学生。实验在2014-2015学年的第二学期进行,这恰好是他们十数载学校英语学习的最后阶段。无论广度还是深度,词汇测试的结果理应具备一定代表性,理应反映出课堂英语词汇教学的整体成效。可以说,类似的研究对象选择并不多见。

本书共分八章。第一章从宏观视角探讨研究的背景、缘由、观点及意义,并扼要介绍了整体结构。作为文献综述,第二章先确立以行动研究作为理论框架,细致地比较了多个版本的定义、理论价值以及

实施过程。另外，还梳理了词汇习得中的若干重要领域，包括本科生英语词汇习得现状、（词汇）学习策略、策略训练步骤和词汇深广度测试工具。第三章承上启下，既是理论的延伸，又是实践的过渡——从各个层面详尽解释了研究设计。王蔷教授的行动研究模式共分三个阶段，最终被确立为整个项目的研究范式。随后，有关实验参与者、研究伦理、教材教法的讨论得以具体展开。结尾处还就如何逐步搜集、分析数据进行了描述。第四至第六章是对行动研究详尽步骤的文字记录，希望以此告知读者先前假设如何成功地转化为研究定论。第七章尝试将研究成果直接运用于教学改革。本书以词汇输入、理解、输出的三个视角作为出发点，对我国今后英语教材开发提出了一系列有价值的建议（主要围绕词汇习得策略的意识及应用）。第八章重新概括了研究全貌，并谈及教学启发、研究局限和进一步的研究建议。

Preface

Against the backdrop of globalization, China is vigorously seeking to integrate into the global political, economic, and cultural landscape. EFL(English as a Foreign Language) teaching & learning, in this sense, is of such a strategic significance that it can either facilitate or undermine the ongoing course of China's worldwide competition. Nonetheless, as the country with the largest population of EFL learners, China has regrettably underachieved in the overall efficiency of EFL teaching & learning. After the decade-long school education, most students still fail to possess the communicative competence that allows them to compete with advantage in the world arena. It must be noted here that, even if the problem is a manifestation of various causes, the undesirable lexical acquisition definitely constitutes one of them. On the basis of regular teaching practice, the author claims that, of all the dimensions that consist in communicative competence, lexical competence is one prominent issue worthy of a close-up investigation.

Having adopted action research as the theoretical framework, this Ph.D. dissertation intends to serve both diagnostic and therapeutic purposes through hypothesis-testing. During the first stage *Preparation*, by administering three rounds of the *Vocabulary Size Test* (or VST), the first hypothesis is verified that, averaging

4,250, the overall receptive vocabulary size of students is relatively small. Then, by keeping reflective journals concerning strategy use, the majority of students have reported rote memorization as their sole resort in encountering new lexical items, and subsequently have made mention of the fact that strategy training is long absent in EFL classrooms. Two more hypotheses are thus validated: For one thing, students have a vague idea and poor use of lexical acquisition strategies, which may well account for their years-long struggle with vocabulary learning; for the other, by the standard of strategy training, inefficient vocabulary teaching is at least partially held responsible for inefficient vocabulary learning. During the second stage *Execution*, a two-round quasi-experiment is implemented between two classes. By means of the *Vocabulary Knowledge Scale* (or VKS), it is found that two classes have manifested significant differences—the innovative strategy-based instruction (or SBI) is statistically at an advantage over the traditional lexical pedagogy. To save the best for the last, the fourth hypothesis, which is also the most valued, can be established that strategy training proves to be very effective in facilitating the overall efficiency of vocabulary teaching & learning, because it can help students to gain a deeper lexical knowledge.

The dissertation is deemed to be innovative in the following aspects:

(1) Innovation in research paradigm

Action research is an old fine tradition in pedagogical research, whereas it has been inherited and developed in the dissertation. First, after comparing and contrasting various models, Wang Qiang's version is finally chosen for its practicality in Chinese contexts. In the next place, alterations are made to the original linear sequence of conducting action research. Eleven steps are

rearranged into three stages, under each of which there are three sub-steps. Reinterpretation and reclassification of the research cycle becomes the prerequisite for research procedures to actualize one after another as scheduled.

(2) Innovation in research content

The study is inclusive in that it attaches unbiased importance to vocabulary teaching & learning, and that it is concurrently concerned with receptive & productive lexical knowledge. More important, strategy training is statistically proven to be an efficiency booster for vocabulary teaching & learning. It conveys a strong message to students, teachers (or teacher-researchers) and textbook compilers alike that the awareness and application of lexical acquisition strategies in EFL pedagogy are mandatory other than voluntary.

(3) Innovation in research subjects

The two classes involved in the study are college sophomores. Experimentation spans the second semester, 2014-2015, which happens to be the finale of their decade-long EFL school education. The outcome of vocabulary testing, be it breadth or depth, ought to be somewhat representative of the overall efficiency of vocabulary teaching & learning in school settings. Such kind of subject selection is not commonly seen.

The dissertation is constituted by eight chapters. Chapter One offers a bird's-eye view by macroscopically discussing the study background, rationale, viewpoint and significance, followed by a brief introduction to the dissertation organization. As literature review, Chapter Two first constructs the theoretical framework and explores action research through meticulously comparing various versions of definition, significance and process. In addition, some crucial areas of lexical acquisition are reviewed, including

the current situation among undergraduates, learning strategies, strategy training and testing instruments (breadth and depth). Chapter Three is a connecting link as the extension of theory and the transition to practice. Research design is explained and illustrated from all sides. Wang Qiang's AR model is designated as the final research cycle that consists of three stages. Participants, ethical considerations, textbook and pedagogy are then referred to in minute detail. Last but not least, how data are collected and analyzed is described stage by stage. From Chapter Four to Six, complete procedures for conducting the AR project are put down into words, with the hope of enlightening readers on how research findings are hypotheses-turned. Chapter Seven is an immediate attempt to transform research findings to educational reforms. From the perspectives of lexical input, intake and output, invaluable suggestions extracted from the project (mainly about the awareness and application of strategies) are made for China's EFL teaching material development in future. Chapter Eight briefly recaps the study and elaborates on its implications, limitations and suggestions.

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