

New Trends and Issues on Fostering Collocation Competence of Chinese Language Learners: Innovation on Pedagogy, Methods and Analysis

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Abstract – Along with the rapid development of computer and information technology, computer-aided language teaching has become a new trend in the development of foreign language teaching. They show the teaching content in multiple levels and in all directions, which is conducive to teachers' lectures and attracts students to actively participate and stimulate Learning interest has also brought about major changes in foreign language teaching materials, teaching methods and the entire teaching process. In addition to the great praise for multimedia-assisted Chinese teaching. On this course of learning and teaching, the new problem that arise should be addressed attentively in order to make it better for teaching.

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INTRODUCTION

Computer-aided language teaching is fundamentally different from traditional teaching models. While computer-aided language teaching emphasises the use of computer as a means to learn language, through teaching content, teaching process and computer-assisted organic integration in order to get the best learning effect. Nowadays, multimedia and network technology are used more and more in teaching. They show the teaching content in multiple levels and in all directions, which is conducive to teachers' lectures and attracts students to actively participate and stimulate The interest in learning has also led to major changes in foreign language teaching materials, teaching methods and the entire teaching process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The new trend in language teaching date backs to 1950's-60's, in order to carry out educational processes the development of communicative theory has been served as the foundation. The major parts of this educational process were the teacher, the learner, the teaching methods and techniques and the teaching materials. Dudeney & Hockly (p.7.2007) argued that "Technology has been around in language teaching for decades"[1]. There has always been a need to make foreign language learning more inclusive and it demanded the use of technology on the process of foreign language learning and now the relationship between foreign language and

technology became inseparable. However, some important implications have also been registered in the field of applied linguistics, it also draw the attention of those who are concerned for different purposes of foreign language acquisition (SLA) [2].

Computer Assisted Language Learning drew attention of many researchers who are interested in foreign language pedagogy. Results of many studies have reflected that students taught foreign languages through CALL programs gave better results than those taught using traditional programs [4]. Moreover, CALL allows to have an individualised instructions while providing students' own pace to work on. As Graham Davis [5] pointed out that on the educational process of presentation, reinforcement and assessment of study materials of foreign language to acquire, the CALL is considered to be as an instructional or learning approach as an aid or assistance, moreover, it also equips students and teachers to have substantial interactive element [6].

Lee stated that a learner's goal should be to effectively use the foreign language as their first language in their daily life and the ins needs. And CALL and network based instructional methods are conducive to it suggested by research and practice [7]. A vivid instructional method coupled with CALL enhances students learning, motivation, achievements. The authentic CALL materials encourages greater interaction, individualisation, independence from a single source of information and socio-cultural understanding of the foreign

langue. In that “Arnheim (1994) stressed that visual learning uniquely enhances students’ cognitive understanding of abstract concepts. His argument was that a student’s perception of ideas such as causality can be enriched by a visual example [8]. Thus visuals can lead to development of perceptual thinking.” [9]. Various studies have supported that learning if the information is perceived in two modalities namely vision and hearing rather than a single one of it Dwyer, 1978 [10]; Hannafin, 1983 [11]; Kobayashi, 1986; Levie, 1987 [13]; Arnheim, 1994). “Arnheim (1994) emphasized that visual learning uniquely enhances students’ cognitive understanding of abstract concepts. His argument was that a student’s perception of ideas such as causality can be enriched by a visual example. Thus visuals can lead to development of perceptual thinking.” [9]

Recently computer-assisted language learning (CALL) invited many researchers to research on the topic. Different studies have reflected that instructional approach with CALL in order to teach a foreign language is more beneficial to the learners than the traditional instructional approach with books and role play [14]. Many studies results showed that students taught foreign languages through CALL programs gave better results than those taught using traditional programs [15].

Detailed description of the New Trend of the Instructional Approach

The relevant theoretical studies on intercultural collocational difference and foreign language vocabulary acquisition stated that collocation along with vocabulary is teachable to some extent and explicit instruction has positive effects on the development of L2 learners’ collocational competence [16]. According to previous research, collocational instruction is also extremely necessary, moreover, it has been emphasized for those learners who don’t learn in the environment of the target language. Therefore, the learners who are learning a foreign language in their home or a 3rd different set up, have a very limited exposure to appropriate cultural input to their Chinese language learning process, in addition it only provides scant chances to do communicative practice [17]. Moreover, classroom in foreign language settings is not able to offer an ideal environment for students’ collocation learning due to the restricted human interaction and the decontextualized teaching materials [18]. Traditional methods of collocational instructions, such as textbook-based teaching and role-play exercises, could not solve these problems effectively. On the contrary, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), by using visuals as collocational input, seems to be an effective option of L2 learners.

Taking this into account, my paper is to focus on the importance of collocational competence in order to foster learners’ full communicative competence in

Chinese language. As Seelye (1968) argued, most of learners’ awkward mistakes, due to the impact of L1, could be avoided by introducing cultural knowledge to the L2 pedagogy [19]. In fact, due to a mismatch between grammatical competence and collocational competence showed by some studies [20], other researchers argue that both competences should be treated as equally important, since collocational competence develops in line with proficiency level [21]. For example, the Chinese verbs 下 (xia) and 落 (luo) both mean ‘falling’. However, even if the English translation is the same, the actions of the verbs ‘rain falling’ and ‘a leaf falling’ differ in their collocational imaginary visuals. On the contrary, the verb ‘打’ has got more than 15 different collocational usage. CALL, with its visual features, can convey the collocational visuals of the verbs which will definitely help the learners to distinguish their collocational objects. Since the research on collocational instruction in L2 acquisition is still at initial stage, my research aims to explore collocational instruction and specifically to understand how multimedia might help learners of Chinese as L2 to develop collocational competence.

For instance, the presence of ambiguous verbs in a given situation is often confusing for L2 Chinese learners. Ambiguous verbs are defined as all those verbs which have got different collocational usage as per the context. Ambiguous verbs, according to the context, can have various kind of objects which are different from each other, hence, these verbs lend themselves more to visual representation than verbal explanation.

Example:

我的最好的朋友给我 打 电话了，他说，在家 打
家具时忽然有人进来 打
他了。所以，他不能拜访我。那现在我要拜访他了
。他还对我提醒说，现在下大雨，我应该 打
着雨伞到他家去。我挂了他的电话后我开始 打
我的行李。

My best friend telephoned me and said, when he was making furniture, suddenly someone came in and beat him. So, he can’t visit me, now I must visit him. He also reminded me that it’s raining heavily so I should take an umbrella with me.

The verb 打, has got 15 different usages and 5 have been shown below.

打 (Verb) 电话 (Call-object) - to make a phone call



打(Verb) 家具(furniture - object)- to make furniture



打(Verb) 他 (him-object)- to beat



打 (Verb) 雨伞(Umbrella-object) to hold an umbrella



打 (Verb) 行李 (luggage - object) – to pack up a luggage



Another elusive verbs qǔ 娶 and jià 嫁, both mean to marry. Here, taking the limitation of pictures into account, we can visually represent these two verbs like below. The character of qǔ 娶 is consisted of qǔ 取 means to fetch and nǚ 女 means woman. So, the deduction of the character would be a male person gets a woman and the character of woman nǚ 女 is dominated by qǔ 取.



E.g.- nánrén qǔle nǚrén 男人娶了女人。The man married the woman.

The character jià 嫁 is consisted of nǚ 女 means woman and jià 嫁 means home. Hence, it can be deduced as the woman is shifting her home as woman used to do in a traditional Chinese family or even till date.



E.g. – nǚrén jiàle nánrén 女人嫁了男人。The woman married a man.

Visual instructional method, thanks to CALL, has been proven to be more efficient instructional method on the aspect of yielding the long term retention, especially for conveying the complex and abstract ideas. Now an important question is 'what does it mean to know a word?' Or in other words, 'How can we use them as a native does?' As observed by the various researchers, Knowing a word may be seen in operational terms as a continuum ranging from vague recognition of its character to (semantically, syntactically, stylistically) correct and contextually appropriate productive use [22]. Repetitive use demands for a higher degree of accessibility or a solid integration, it's also beneficial for retrieval of words from the mental lexicon for productive use.

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The biggest advantage of multimedia foreign language teaching is that it is conducive to the true establishment of a student-centered teaching model. The whole teaching process takes students as the main body of learning. Under the guidance of teachers' incisive and concise explanations, students use multimedia to create teaching content. Language scenario.

Potential advantages:

Firstly, both visuals and texts can stimulate students' interest. According to Shu Dingfang, the specific implementation process of foreign language teaching is mainly in the classroom, which is also the main place for teachers and students to communicate [23]. In the process of classroom teaching, proper use of multimedia means such as projection, recording and video recording can make the teaching process more vivid, intuitive, visual and fast, effectively promote the overall optimisation of teaching, realise the synchronous output of text, image and sound and other information, have strong dynamic simulation function and the advantages of two-way interaction between human and computer, and make the teaching content more vivid. A Combination of a comprehensive package to achieve the effect that traditional teaching media lacks.

Secondly, CALL with its audio and visual features is able to improve the teaching efficiency. Multimedia and network technology can store a lot of information, which will bring high-density and fast-paced classroom teaching, make students' Chinese practice large and wide. A classroom equipped with practicing conversion with the help of CALL, learning words and expression from real life scenario of videos, will create a relaxed, happy and moderately tense atmosphere. It is useful to utilize the maximum potential of CALL in order to help students. Moreover, bring into play the image, film, background music and cultural background knowledge provided by multimedia and network to improve the quality and effect of teaching [24].

Third, create scenarios to stimulate students' innovative thinking. It is the duty of every teacher to cultivate students' innovative ability. In most of the universities' courses the Chinese curriculum itself is the combination of knowledge of the culture and language and the skills of translation and interpretation. In teaching, teachers should pay more attention to the cultivation and training of students' innovative ability, so that students can show proficiency and flexibility in Chinese communication. By using information technology, teachers can design various forms of questions or situations to train students' divergent and innovative thinking, problem and situation creation in combination with the content of the text or the author's point of view. Attention should also be paid to changing from shallow to deep, from easy to difficult, meeting the requirements of "the nearest development zone". It should be challenging and stimulating to enable students to maintain a positive state of thinking and constantly upgrade and develop, thus forming a stable and lasting learning motivation and enthusiasm, from "hard learning" to "happy learning" and "good learning" [25].

The new trend of any sort is always coupled with new challenges. In the face of new problems, we also should not overlook its shortcomings, so that it can serve teaching better.

First, it is not encouraged to rely entirely on computer-aided language teaching, the CALL should be regarded as a socio-cultural input. Various studies have proved that the proper and reasonable use of computer or multimedia assisted instruction can indeed bring a qualitative leap to Chinese classroom. However, in computer-assisted language teaching, teachers should still play a leading role. Teachers' role in Chinese classroom is irreplaceable and irreplaceable by some functions of computers. In order to blindly pursue the display of multimedia courseware in the classroom, we should change part of the content told by teachers into multimedia demonstration; face-to-face question and answer between teachers and students, students and students, into information exchange through the network. Oral communication amongst students should be encourage while teachers can confirm the quality and right collocation [26].

Even the evaluation of high-quality courseware takes the availability of multimedia-assisted instruction as a necessary condition. But they must clearly realize that Chinese is a highly practical language subject, and students' communicative competence can only be cultivated through a large number of Chinese language exchanges between teachers and students in the classroom, while computer media is only a tool for assisted instruction, because even the most advanced modern teaching tools can only serve as teachers. The role of teaching itself can not completely

replace teachers' teaching assistance such a CALL, rather it should be treated as a complement in the classroom.

Secondly, the growing emergence of the trend of teaching foreign language with the help of CALL influences a group of teacher who predicted that CALL would completely replace traditional teaching methods. Another view language teachers emphasise multimedia teaching will make the chalk, blackboard and other traditional teaching tools disappear from the classroom. They use the projection screen as a blackboard and use the mouse instead of chalk. Lesson preparation is to input all the teaching materials, questions, answers and pictures into the computer, click on the mouse in class, and display them one by one through the big screen. We know that in the process of making multimedia courseware, teachers usually refer to the doubts, difficulties and key content set in the textbook, and decide the content of the courseware according to the supervisor's prediction of the students' learning situation. In Chinese class, teachers should set up situations according to the teaching progress at any time, guide students to practice, and adjust teaching according to the questions raised by students and the reflection of specific problems, so as to help students master knowledge and use language better. Teachers can also interact with students in the process of adjusting and modifying blackboard according to the actual situation. Some researchers worried that if the blackboard is completely replaced by projection screen, it will affect students' understanding of some specific problems and weaken the interaction between teaching and learning. In this way, the use of multimedia instead of traditional teaching tools will affect the advantages of computer multimedia in helping us solve difficult teaching problems.

Thirdly, the courseware is too fancy. Some teachers make too fancy courseware to distract students' awareness and attention. Although the content of the courseware is displayed vigorously, with pictures and voices. But sometimes the content selection of some courseware is not very appropriate, which disrupts the order and habit of students' normal acceptance of knowledge, violates the cognitive rule that students can only accept their main information in a certain period of time when they know things, diverts students' attention, dilutes students' attention to the key points and difficulties of learning, and ultimately affects the practical effect of teaching.

Fourth, a new type of cramming teaching could potentially realize the information exchange of large capacity and high density, teachers can easily increase the amount of classroom exercises excessively, so that computer mechanically replaces teachers and instills knowledge into nursing students under the condition of enlarged enrolment. It has become a new type of "modern" injection teaching. Although the use of teaching courseware saves a lot of time for teachers to write on the blackboard in

class, it is easy for teachers to ignore students' thinking intensity and rhythm, excessive input of knowledge and information, and inadequate training. In this way, the "human irrigation" is changed into "machine irrigation" teaching, which is more harmful. Therefore, we should pay attention to proper content, even if we listen to feedback, and pay attention to the students' thinking process [27].

CONCLUSION

To conclude, in order to understand this new trend of vocabulary acquisition can be understood in three stages. The vocabulary acquisition process can be divided into two parts, first part is to learn a word's various properties and amongst which, the most important is to learn with the context and its semantic properties [28] and storing the vocabularies in the memory.

The second section is "Usage". In order to further secure and consolidate the vocabulary in the memory, its potential collocations and its exact meaning, making different examples helps students to be confident about the usage of a vocabulary. The theoretical rationale for this multi-modal presentation is its supposed positive effect on the retrievability of a word. It would be able to give learners a more efficient retrieval routes [29].

The third section of the programme, "reading passages or watching a video" is likewise designed to reinforce consolidation and thus ensure long term retention. A text or a video conversation are a flow of many vocabularies and grammars, it helps the learners to stabilise not only the new vocabulary also revise the old ones [30].

Appropriate implementation of the vocabulary acquisition is expected to leave a long lasting impact on learners mind and embed the word in metal lexicon, which is necessary for the productive and efficient communication. Negligence to a single stage could cause a superficial understanding which will not conducive to properly fix vocabulary in the internal mental lexicon. The habitual associations and links with the other words is equally important to have an efficient retrieval. Craik and Lockhar's theory of "levels of processing" (1972) discusses about different ideas about the importance of in-depth vocabulary acquisition [31] in a semantic fashion and this trend of Chinese vocabulary acquisition on CALL context also confirms the same.

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