
The role of vocabulary acquisition in English language

Vocabulary acquisition plays a dominant role in English learning process and it is also highly interactive and complex. In other words, we can see that vocabulary acquisition has a strong correlation with a person's English ability. Thus, for every English learners, it's inevitable to experience vocabulary acquisition.

To be excelling in English, vocabulary plays a very important role, but recognizing a lot of words, does not mean you will have a strong communication skill. How to accurately and precisely use the words is the key to language learning. When it comes to acquiring a new word, we shouldn't just focus on its Chinese meaning. Instead, we need to moreover understand its accurate definitions, collocations, derivations, part of speech, and pronunciations. That is in the case, all sorts of learning strategies are available for every learner to adopt. Take learning in context for example. It illustrates that it is one of the most effective ways to acquire a new word. Since everyone may have different learning styles for vocabulary acquisition, we can figure out the pros and cons of every methods to seek the best way for ourselves.

In the past, we usually use paper materials to acquire a word. We learn a word by heart and utilize so-called "vocabulary books." For instance, in Taiwan, high school students generally are supposed to acquire at least 7,000 vocabularies before graduation. Generally speaking, students will learn the words via vocabulary books provided by instructors. However, some people regard that acquiring a word by using paper materials is out of date and inefficient. Therefore, lots of experts begin to come up with different methods. At the same time, technology is usually applied to education. As such, nowadays lots of applications are available for people to make the best use of when they want to acquire a word. Quizlet is one of the iconic example. It provides learners to revise and practice vocabulary whenever they want, and it is also equipped with "Flashcard" function, quizzes, pronunciation, etc. However, are those applications like Quizlet actually effective and efficient? Even though, the apps have their considerable advantages, I doubt their actual effects on English learners' vocabulary ability. As a consequence, I conduct this research in order to figure out whether or not apps aid vocabulary acquisition effectively and efficiently and I would like to know whether or not a learner's personal English ability will be a factor to influence them to use apps to learn the vocabulary.

To begin with, I start my research by analyzing the pros and cons of using apps to acquire vocabulary. Speaking of advantages, the first one is that most mobile apps often provide a great deal of visualization which can be very useful for learners to learn a word or acquire important sentences. For example, many apps will illustrate the words by giving images. It shows that the

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apps learning can actually catch learner's attention to some degree. Moreover, basically, the so-called "vocabulary books" cannot be edited anytime. However, applications, unlike traditional paper learning materials, can be regularly and easily updated as new vocabulary enters the language or usage changes. Thus, we can know pronunciation is significant in terms of vocabulary acquisition. That's why many apps are equipped with pronunciation function, which becomes one of the advantages.

As we all know, there are two sides to every question and using apps to acquire a word has no exception. For its disadvantages, the first one is that learners are easy to become distracted when they use apps to acquire a word. It is easy to switch to other programs, like Instagram and Facebook. Subsequently, most apps require a working internet connection so that the users can access all significant functions. In other words, if the learners' device doesn't have internet connection, it's hard for him or her to learn a word via applications. Lastly, it may be time-consuming for some particular people, for digital literacy skill is a prerequisite for using apps to acquire a new word. You may need to spend more time understanding the device before you begin to study. Judging from those pros and cons, I then designed some concrete questions to ask people who are a college student or a high school student in Taiwan, At the same time, I also require them to fill out their general English ability so as to examine the correlation between using apps to learn a word and the English proficiency factor. The first question is "With the help of apps, do you think you can use and acquire the words comprehensively and accurately, including using the correct collocations, part of speech, or derivations, compared to the traditional way?." The result (Fig.1.) show?s that both groups of people hold different views toward the question. Meanwhile, it demonstrates that English ability is not a factor to dominate people's opinions in this question. Besides, some respondents also in survey express that they think they can recognize the word, but the apps don't provide an opportunity for them to use the word (Fig.2.)

The second question is "With the help of apps, do you think the apps speed up the process of vocabulary acquisition, compared to the traditional way?." For people who generally don't excel in English, the result (Fig.3.) shows that half of people agree the statement, but the other half of the people hold an uncertain attitude. On the other hand, for people who have a good command of English, more than half the people agree with the statement. Among people who disagree with the idea, they also mention that using apps to acquire vocabulary is inefficient since they may get distracted (Fig.4.). Thus, it is obvious that using apps for learning may not always be efficient and effective if the learners don't concentrate on the study. Lastly, the third question is "Do you think the apps help your English pronunciation and improve your English listening?." The result (Fig.5.) shows that the majority of people in both groups agree that the apps help their English pronunciation and listening. As for the rest of people, they also mention that some apps don't provide the authentic pronunciation of the words; therefore, they disagree with the statement.

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As I have said before, English pronunciation plays an important role in vocabulary acquisition. It's reasonable that people may take it into consideration when they use the apps to acquire a word. In conclusion, vocabulary acquisition is an important part of language learning. With more and more student's struggle with special learning needs, many people come up with all sorts of learning strategies and methods. Clearly, using apps to acquire vocabulary has pros and cons respectively. It's hard to tell whether or not it is useful for an individual. After all, everyone may have different learning habits and strategies. At the same time, English ability doesn't influence a people to use apps to acquire the vocabulary. All in all, using apps to acquire a word is effective for some people but it meanwhile has some disadvantages which make other people refuse to adopt this method. I believe that only by understanding its properties and our own learning experiences will we seek a feasible way to acquire vocabulary.

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