

REFLECTION PAPER ON A UBIQUITOUS ENGLISH VOCABULARY LEARNING SYSTEM: EVIDENCE OF ACTIVE/PASSIVE ATTITUDE VS. USEFULNESS/EASE-OF-USE

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ABSTRACT

A ubiquitous English vocabulary learning system: evidence of active/passive attitudes vs. usefulness/ease-of-use introduces and develops “Ubiquitous English Vocabulary Learning” (UEFL) system. It introduces to the memorization using the video clips. According to their paper the video clip gives better chance for students to memorize vocabulary. There are few positive aspects on the paper. Firstly, how they brought entertainment with the learning was interesting. Secondly, the use of “Near-Synonyms and Similar-Looking (NSSL)” technology to help students memorizing was thoughtful and refreshing. However, the UEFL system could have been developed more efficiently and effectively, if it was approached differently. The developer/authors could have used the image instead of the video clip, and adding drawing pad for students to draw the image. Drawing the image is the blend of the visual memorization and the Bloom’s taxonomy. Evaluation and creating are at the top of the learning process according to Bloom’s taxonomy, By drawing the image the evaluation and creating occurs which helps student to memorize vocabulary not only in the short-term memory system but also in the long-term memory system. The biggest potential can be found in this program is how students can learn without realizing. Students can start the program because of the entertainment but the education occurs without students realizing their education. Therefore, the passive students can be also attracted to the education and turn into a active learner without knowing.

KEYWORDS

Ubiquitous English Vocabulary Learning (UEVL), Near-Synonyms and Similar-Looking (NSSL), Bloom’s taxonomy

1. INTRODUCTION

“Ubiquitous English vocabulary learning” (UEVL) is a system developed to help students to experience the Systematic Vocabulary Learning process in ubiquitous learning contexts. To explore the perspectives of students on the UEVL system, an experiment based on the technology acceptance model was constructed (Davis, 1989; Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989). “Near-Synonyms and Similar-Looking” (NSSL) is a technology developed in order to find NSSL words and further offer the definitions of the NSSL words being considered. They indicated that NSSL words easily lead to confusion, especially when similar-looking words have similar translated meanings, such as “transform” and “transfer”. (Huang 1, Huang 2, Huang 3, & Lin, 2011, p. 4). “Bloom’s taxonomy” is a classification of learning objectives which contains contains (a) remembering, (b) understanding, (c) applying, (d) analyzing, (e) evaluating, and (f) creating (Forehand p. 4).

I found *A ubiquitous English vocabulary learning system: evidence of active/passive attitudes vs. usefulness/ease-of-use*, written by Yueh-Min Huang, Yong-Ming Huang, Shu-hsien Huang, and Yen-Ting Lin, very interesting. Although I agreed with many of ideas and suggestions they presented, there were also a few methods that I would have approached or developed in a different manner. Authors of this research paper impressively approached developing their “Ubiquitous English Vocabulary Learning” (UEVL) system by approaching the system in a “partial least square” (Huang 1, Huang 2, Huang 3, & Lin, 2011) way for the students’ entertainment while they study.

Also, the UEVL worked as one of the most important factors in their learning system, by how it helped people to memorize vocabulary definitions easier and in a more enjoyable way than most of the common educational systems. However, there were some things that I would have approached differently than they did in their paper, such as how they wrote about the process of how their UEVL system works effectively. I would have approached this in a more cognitive psychological way. They used “Systematic Vocabulary Learning” (SVL) process to explain how their UEVL works effectively (Huang 1, Huang 2, Huang 3, & Lin, 2011, p. 4). The SVL process is what they created. The idea of SVL is similar to the most popularly proven cognitive psychological way of learning process, Bloom’s taxonomy. I would have used Bloom’s taxonomy to prove how the UEVL system works in regards to cognitive psychology. The evaluation in terms of lower-order and higher-order cognitive skills in Bloom’s taxonomy would have been a more trustworthy way of evaluating the UEVL system. It would have been better if they explained the process of learning also in regards to neuroscience as well. In other words, they should have explained how visual memorization works in the brain.

2. POSITIVE ASPECTS

There are also many parts of their paper that I appreciated. I liked how they approached the UEVL system (Huang 1, Huang 2, Huang 3, & Lin, 2011, p. 1.) Yueh-Min Huang, Yong-Ming Huang, Shu-hsien Huang, and Yen-Ting Lin tried to come up with most intriguing way of students to study vocabulary. Thus, they used video clips related to each vocabulary word. The UEVL system had an important role in bringing entertainment to studying. Also, they developed “Near-Synonyms and Similar-Looking (NSSL)” technology in order to find NSSL words and further offer the definitions of the NSSL words being considered. They indicated that NSSL words easily lead to confusion, especially when similar-looking words have similar translated meanings, such as “transform” and “transfer”. (Huang 1, Huang 2, Huang 3, & Lin, 2011, p. 4). NSSL technology was brought by the technology from word net (Huang 1, Huang 2, Huang 3, & Lin, 2011, p. 3). In this way, visual memorization occurs in your brain and helps you to memorize the vocabulary easier. NSSL is a good example of combining other’s innovation with their own.

3. NEGATIVE ASPECTS

On the other hand, I have a few ideas that I would have approached differently. The authors created the SVL process to explain how effective of a process it is in memorization. The SVL process is very similar to the cognitive psychology theory Bloom’s taxonomy. On one hand, SVL contains five phases: “(a) encountering, (b) getting, (c) understanding, (d) consolidating, and (e) using.” On the other hand, Bloom’s taxonomy contains (a) remembering, (b) understanding, (c) applying, (d) analyzing, (e) evaluating, and (f) creating (Forehand p. 4). They are similar but different in some ways. On the other hand, SVL is more like an old version of Bloom’s taxonomy. Using a more proven, more popular, and more recent theory would have given better information to readers and would be more credible. Also, the way of describing the SVL was neither very scientific nor very related to cognitive psychology. Showing how it works in the brain in a cognitive way would have given better delivery and trust to the readers. Especially, how the eye movement has a relationship with cognition and memory. Although the process of eye movement to the final memorization of the word with a video clip in long term visual memory system, it is not written anywhere in the paper. The relationship between the posterior parietal cortex, visual cortex, occipital lobes, hippocampus and limbic system play an essential role in visual memorization, so a scientific explanation would have been nice. (Brady, Konkle, & Alvarez, 2011 p. 23) Moreover, in the program, creating part of Bloom’s taxonomy should have been developed more. The part about using their NSSL does not satisfy Bloom’s taxonomy.

4. SOLUTION

The final phase of the process of Bloom's taxonomy is creating. Which means you have to recall your memory and apply it into something. The best way to get better at it is to create a drawing pad and image that is related to vocabulary. If you make students to draw the image on the phone while learning the definition, because of visual memorization it will not just stay in short term memory but in long term memory system. By drawing the image, you focus more than just looking at the video clip or image. Moreover, because an image automatically immediately goes to your memory system, if you are drawing an image, when you look at the word again, you can recall the image that you drew. Even if you do not remember the definition of the vocabulary word, since you remember the image that is related to the word, you can infer from the image and figure out the definition. Even if you do not get the exact, correct definition, you can get similar definition from the mood of the image. Currently on the market, there are many educational mobile phone applications and educational programs that make you look at the image that is related to a vocabulary word, but there few to no programs that make you draw the image. By drawing the image, you are basically automatically forced to memorize the definition of the vocabulary word. In this way, we can fix the biggest problem of *A ubiquitous English vocabulary learning system: evidence of active/passive attitudes vs. usefulness/ease-of-use*. The biggest problem in this paper is that the authors did not address the problem of students who have passive attitudes toward education. The paper says that "the passive students were interested in perceived ease of use" (Huang 1, Huang 2, Huang 3, & Lin, 2011, p. 2). However, by making them draw an image, even the passive students can learn easier with higher chance of memorizing the word. Also, the entertainment in the system can bring the passive students into the active students. The student can start out the program for an entertainment, but the fact that the vocabulary can be memorized unconsciously and automatically by a visual memorization mixed with Bloom's taxonomy based learning method. For this reasons, this system has so much potential in it.

5. CONCLUSION

A ubiquitous English vocabulary learning system: evidence of active/passive attitudes vs. usefulness/ease-of-use is research that possessed a great concept of putting entertainment and making it easier to memorize vocabulary. It contained a lot of clever devices to help study words and make language learning easier through means such as NSSR technology and usage of SVL process. However, some downfalls include not utilizing Bloom's taxonomy and not explaining the cognitive psychological way of how visual memorization works. Most importantly, the biggest flaw was how "passive students were interested in perceived ease of use" (Huang 1, Huang 2, Huang 3, & Lin, 2011, p. 2) therefore leaving passive students at an educational loss as they are not learning. Thus, if the approach to visual memorization in the program changes, images rather than video clips and drawing the image, the problem of the passive students' attitude could be changed because of the entertainment and education occurring students even realizing it. The ubiquitous educational programming has huge potential. Therefore, if the program can be developed after fixing the flaw, the potential could be limitless.

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