Effects of Spaced Versus Massed Teaching on Religious Vocabulary Learning

Considering the Impact of Hekmi Governance: A Review Study

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Abstract

Governing the general direction of a society is one of the areas associated with state and society administration. An emerging pattern of governance based on Islam and society's values has gained special attention in recent years, known as Hekmi governance. A society's higher education system and universities are important organizations, in which Hekmi governance must be conducted. This review study aimed to examine the effects of teaching Islamic vocabulary using spaced or massed instruction by searching in Google Scholar, Scopus, Elsevier and ISI databases. The findings indicated the positive effect of spaced instruction over the massed one in teaching religious English vocabulary to university students. The focus on Hekmi governance policies was of great significance.

Key words: Spaced Teaching, Massed Teaching, Hekmi Governance, Religious Vocabulary

تاثیرات آموزش فاصله‌دار و متمرکز بر یادگیری واژگان مذهبی با محوریت تاثیر حکمرانی حکمی: مقاله مروری

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چکیده

حاکمیت در یک جامعه مسیر کلی حرکت یک جامعه را مشخص و مسائل جامعه را مدیریت می‌کند. در سال‌های اخیر توجه ویژه‌ای به حکمرانی حکمی شده است که استدلال آن مبنی بر لزوم ایجاد الگویی از حکمرانی است که منعکس کننده‌ی ارزش‌های اسلام و کل جامعه باشد. همچنین دانشگاه‌ها و نظام آموزش عالی، سازمان‌های مهم جامعه هستند که باید حکمرانی حکمی در آنها مورد توجه قرار گیرد. معادل انگلیسی واژگان مذهبی را می‌توان با رویکرد آموزش فاصله‌دار یا آموزش متمرکز به دانشجویان آموزش داد. این پژوهش با هدف بررسی تاثیر تدریس واژگان اسلامی با استفاده از آموزش‌های فاصله‌دار یا متمرکز با محوریت الگوهای حکومت‌داری حکمی و با جستجو در پایگاه داده‌های اطلاعاتی گوگل‌اسکالر، اسکوپوس، الزویر و آی‌اس‌آی انجام شد. این پژوهش از نوع مروری است و یافته‌های آن حاکی از تاثیر مثبت آموزش فاصله‌دار نسبت به آموزش متمرکز معادل واژگان انگلیسی مذهبی با محوریت حکمرانی حکمی می‌باشد.

واژگان کلیدی: آموزش فاصله دار، آموزش متمرکز، حکمرانی حکمی، واژه مذهبی

Introduction

Universities as higher education systems and institutions are responsible for the training of human resources needed for different parts of the society. Necessarily, they have a dual role: On the one hand, they should serve a large population of different stakeholders, including students, professors, companies, and other social institutions, and on the other hand, be accountable for

budgets, credits and other services that they receive from the government or their private shareholders. These two roles; serving the stakeholders and the larger society, on the one hand, and being accountable for the services they receive on the other hand, face the policy makers and managers of this important institution with the issue of a good, efficient, effective and Islamic governance as Hekmi governance.

The 21st century began with a renewed interest in language learning. As the International language of the world, people throughout the world use it to achieve different goals like getting to know new people and customers and connecting to other people from different countries, as well as having knowledge exchanged in English. Meetings on international business, college courses in English, and travelers all use English as a language of communication. Communication in science, aviation, computer science, and diplomacy is all conducted in English. You are more likely to be hired at a multinational company in your own country or abroad if you know how to speak English well (Vandergrift, 2011).

1. Importance of Learning English for EFL Learners

English may not play an essential role for EFL learners, and they will not need it in daily activities if they never travel abroad, yet they will face it when working on their universities' projects, with computers, smartphones, and the internet. In life, if someone knows second language alongside his mother tongue it will be counted as a great skill that may provide many opportunities in his personal and professional life. Currently, in most jobs, people need English and there are a few jobs in which people do not need to use English. As an example and because of the role of computers and technology in people's lives, there are many English terms that cannot be translated into other native languages (Sneddon, 2003).

Companies which have international ties and relations have to work with clients or suppliers overseas and it is almost impossible not to use English. International companies also need to use English in their business communications and they prefer English as their official language. Imagine how many new people one can meet who speak English. If one is able to speak

English, s/he can have different social interactions while traveling and visiting foreigners and then they will not need someone else to assist in communication (Casale, & Posel, 2011).

2. Learning vocabulary

A foreign language's lexicon is one of its major features. Learning foreign vocabulary occurs slowly. Sometimes to learn a new word, a learner needs many encounters. So more the learners have exposed to the new vocabulary, the more that lexicon is probable to be learned (Bilican & Yesilbursa, 2015).

Thus practicing as much as possible and being exposed to both the familiar and unknown words can facilitate learning. As native speakers pick up vocabulary this way, it is known as incidental learning. Even incidental learning may not be sufficient for EFL students, and more deliberate approaches are needed. On the other hand, to assist incidental learning, some intentional methods can be used, whenever the teacher introduces new vocabulary in class or a student studies new words by studying word lists, flashcards, or vocabulary books. There is another form of intentional learning which is highly useful, and it is recording and reviewing vocabulary in a vocabulary notebook (Chen, Chen, & Yang, 2019).

According to Cavus and Ibrahim (2009), in vocabulary learning, there are two key features. The depth of the learning process and the learner's involvement are two factors in learning. These terms are taken from two hypotheses on vocabulary learning. The first hypothesis posits that how much effort is put into learning new vocabulary can influence how well it is remembered. The second hypothesis states that learning happens easier when the learner is involved more. This is comprised from three areas: the need of studying the new vocabulary, looking for the meaning, and the assessment of the findings. Searching and assessing are similar to the depth of processing which emphasize the need for studying the new vocabulary and if it is done by the learners it will have a greater result.

Manipulating new vocabulary items during speaking or writing is a particularly important aspect. Based on previous points explained above, remembering and learning new words, need time, and the learners may make many mistakes by then. By manipulation, however, more

learning opportunities are provided. In the first phases of studying the vocabulary, it will be useful to use simpler ways of manipulating words, ways like exercises in a textbook or classroom exercises. There are also other features affecting vocabulary learning such as attention and time. The term attention refers to focusing on vocabulary and may encompass practices used by teachers to emphasize vocabulary and teach words. For learners, by attention, we mean noticing unfamiliar vocabulary and trying to study and learn it, and by the time, we mean the duration of learners studying vocabulary. Increasing the spent time, cause learners to learn more. As it was highlighted by Basoglu and Akdemir (2010), in learning new vocabulary, there are factors involved as delineated below:

• Exposure, reading or listening more, paying attention to vocabulary, rereading taken notes

• Depth , using dictionary or teacher's explanation

• Involvement, paying much more attention to the essential words

• Manipulation, using the word in writing/speaking, doing exercises

• Attention, focusing on new words

• Time, practicing, studying vocabulary

3. Breadth, Depth, and size of Lexical Knowledge

3.1 Breadth of lexical knowledge

According to Nagy and Anderson (1984), between 88.500 and 114.000 word families are estimated to exist in the English language (Goulden, Nation, & Read, 1990). Nation (2001, 2006) estimates that native speakers use approximately 1000 additional words each year. It was estimated by Hirsch and Nation (1992) that 5,000 word families are needed for reading, approximately 6,000 to 7,000 for listening, and then again revised to 8,000 to 9,000 for reading (Nation, 2006). Hulstun and Hasenberg (1996) state that a student is required to have around 10,000 word families to perform well in academic English. However, few foreign language learners, in the same period as native speakers, can add more than 250 of these word families (Nation, 2001).

By examining the examples above, we understand that lexical breadth is the extent of a person's knowledge and is capable of doing in a particular competency level (Nation, 2001a; Qian, 2002); Daller, Milton, and Treffers-Daller (2007). This is "... number of words a learner knows regardless of how well he or she knows them "and in an article by Wang (2009), he describes vocabulary size (or breadth of vocabulary knowledge) as the "estimated number of words that a learner knows". A person's lexical knowledge is mainly determined by how many words (size) they know; despite this, little attention has been paid to the quality of the lexical items acquired. In order to promote mutual understanding between communicative purposes and lexical choices, as part of their courses, activities, and curriculum, EFL teachers should plan to expand the lexicon continuously. To realize those goals, the lexis must be expanded continually.

3.2 Depth of lexical knowledge

Lexical knowledge goes beyond mastering its spellings and pronunciations. There are several dimensions to this knowledge, and it is multidimensional. In light of current literature, the following definitions and analyses are provided; Read (1993) argued "the level of the student's lexicon knowledge (whether certain words are well understood)." Zhang (1998) discusses the spelling, pronunciation, meaning, register, morphological properties, or discourse features of words along with their frequency of use.

In Depth of Knowledge, Shen (2008) argues using more frequent words effectively; students need a deeper understanding of the meanings of higher-frequency words than a shallow understanding. According to Moghadam et al. (2012), depth of knowledge is defined by the connections between words. Their association and interaction with each other, and use may be limited by their register and context". As Rashidi and Khosravi (2010) outline, since it strengthens reading comprehension, knowing the lexicon of a text is a key element of understanding it. For learners to achieve their greatest level of competence, lexical knowledge instruction should be explicitly designed to have the possibility of lexical growth and a deeper understanding of language development (Qian, 1999).

4. Spacing Effect

The spacing effect (distributed practice effect; lag effect) refers to a memory advantage that occurs when people learn material on several separate occasions, instead of a single massed study episode. Numerous studies have demonstrated spacing benefits for long-term retention of verbal information, including vocabulary learning (e.g. Bloom & Shuell, 1981), memorizing facts (e.g. DeRemer & D'Agostino, 1974) and word list learning (e.g. Zechmeister & Shaughnessy, 1980). Spacing effect benefits in verbal learning are ubiquitous and well documented (Cepeda, Pashler, Vul, Wixted, & Rohrer, 2006) in an adult population.

There is a common explanation for the spacing effect that indicates that, counter-intuitively, spacing can actually enhance learning when the interval between presentations is long enough for forgetting to take place. Throughout history, this initial instance has repeatedly been forgotten for improved encoding of subsequent instances (Bjork & Allen, 1970; Cuddy & Jacoby, 1982; Bjork, 2014).

Theoretically, this could happen due to forgetting, items are less accessible in memory, when we successfully retrieve an item from memory (learned), its memory is further strengthened (Bjork & Bjork, 1992). A strong finding of the spacing effect was not only found in associates paired together which were contacted or other typical laboratory situations as well as in real-life situations for training and learning (Baddeley & Longman, 1978; Bahrick & Phelps, 1987; Smith & Rothkopf, 1984).

It appears that even though spacing can be beneficial to learning, its effects depend heavily on two factors: Online memory and attention. When a spacing interval occurs, it is acceptable to forget some things; however, forgetting too much can hurt (Appleton-Knapp et al., 2005). When an individual forgets his previous categorical instances during a spacing interval, often, it is problematic to abstract relevant characteristics of categories (Gagné, 1950). In addition, it may depend on how strong the encoding is when it comes to how quickly something is forgotten (Bjork, 2014). A feature that isn't strongly encoded may be forgotten more quickly.

Lotfolahi and Salehi (2017), in their article studied different schedules of spacing in young EFL learners. They taught young EFL learners English–Farsi word pairs using different spacing

schedules (massed vs. spaced). In the massed condition, learners studied five-word pairs in session one and five-other word pairs one week later. In the spaced condition, the learners studied 10-word pairs in session one and restudied them one week later. To amplify the benefits of spacing, they combined tests (with corrective feedback) into different schedules of spacing. In other words, EFL learners were instructed to test each other on their knowledge of the vocabulary and to give each other feedback. One week and five weeks later learners' recall was assessed. The results showed that spaced practice produced better long-term retention than massed practice. To summarize, this study used spacing and retrieval practice techniques (with corrective feedback) to offer a pedagogically powerful approach for learning vocabulary.

In another study Namaziandost, Nasri, Rahimi Esfahani and Keshmirshekan (2019), investigated the effect of spaced and massed distribution instruction on vocabulary learning. To fulfil this objective, 68 Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners (14–16 years) participated in 16 sessions. The participants were randomly divided into two experimental groups; spaced distribution group (n = 34) and massed distribution group (n = 34). The massed distribution group had one intensive session on learning the target vocabulary; the spaced distribution group had three sessions at irregular time intervals. Using a before and after design, students were retested after 8 weeks. To collect data, a vocabulary test was performed as the pretest and posttest. The results of the paired samples t test and One-way ANCOVA indicated that the spaced distribution group significantly outperformed the massed distribution group on the posttest (effect size .75). The results propose that EFL practitioners can synthesize spacing as a beneficial teaching technique into the curricula and educational materials to promote vocabulary learning.

Hamouda (2021) studied on the effectiveness of massed and spaced practice in authentic EFL classroom settings at tertiary level. In this study 66 Saudi EFL learners were selected among 86 students based on the results of Oxford Quick Placement Test. The selected participants were then non-randomly divided into two equal experimental groups - spaced group and massed group. Both groups were taught the meaning of 50 new words in a massed learning condition and in a spaced learning condition. The massed group had one intensive session on learning the target vocabulary and the spaced distribution group had three sessions at irregular time

intervals. Two vocabulary tests (pre-test and post-test), were conducted, obtained results revealed that there was a significant difference between the post-tests of spaced and massed groups. The findings indicated that the spaced group significantly outperformed the massed group (p < .05) on the post-test.

Conclusion

The key role of vocabulary in language acquisition is acknowledged by many L2 researchers. Religious vocabulary learning and lexical development in general, needs repetition. There are different types of repetition which are categorized as spacing methods. Two of the most prevalent modes of spacing are spaced and massed instructions or repetitions. Types of spacing should help EFL learners to learn, remember and use the instructed lexicon in exams and real-life situations. To develop their English lexicon, students should be provided with an effective, more natural, and more applicable method of instruction that enables them to remember learned vocabulary and use them in context.

Considering the Hekmi governance poliocies in selecting and teaching the religious words to university students, it is now possible to state that applying spaced instruction affects the development of religious vocabulary among Iranian EFL learners. The learning style that is right for the students depend on Hekmi governance policies as we work toward our language learning goal.

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