

Article

The Output and Application of Food Vocabulary Teaching in College English Classrooms Based on the "i+1" Theory

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Abstract: The purpose of English teaching is to improve learners' listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities. This paper mainly focuses on vocabulary teaching which is the most basic and important link. Based on the i+1 theory, this study explores the practical applicability of vocabulary classification memorization methods for learners. This so-called memorization method emphasizes the intervention of images and the introduction of cultural knowledge in classroom teaching. Moreover, the instructor designed an in-class questionnaire covering 7 questions to further learn about students' learning status. With data feedback from the classroom survey reports, the instructor can more dynamically judge whether learners are more suitable for non-traditional memorization forms. In light of students' learning conditions, they are encouraged to take an active part in classroom tasks. This study verifies that the teaching and memorization strategy can effectively alleviate students' learning anxiety, optimize classroom vocabulary teaching effects, and provide a practical reference for College English vocabulary teaching practice.

Keywords: English teaching; food vocabulary; output and application; memory strategies

1. Introduction

The "i+1" theory, proposed by the linguist Krashen, posits that "i" represents the current level of a learner's language knowledge, while "1" signifies the gap between the learner's current language knowledge state and the next stage. "i" is a linguistic condition, and the presence or absence of this condition directly affects the learning outcomes of beginners. Effective accumulation of English vocabulary is the foundation of English learning. In the course of English classroom teaching, teachers categorize vocabulary according to students' level so as to ensure the practical application of "i+1" theory. Classroom practice has been proven to effectively improve students' learning efficiency. It can reduce the emotional anxiety, which is consistent with the Affective Filter Hypothesis proposed by Krashen. It is worth noting that learners are interested in food-related vocabulary. Through output and application in classroom teaching, this approach can effectively help students memorize such vocabulary [1].

2. Cultural Output of Food Vocabulary in Classroom Teaching

As is known to all, language and culture are inseparable and mutually complementary. Language, as the carrier of culture, has become a basic tool of cultural communication. Food vocabulary is a category that easily attracts students' attention in English class, which is not only accepted quickly, but also easy to master. The main reason is that the cultural information embedded in it guides students to explore further.

2.1. Evolution of Food Vocabulary

The vocabulary concerning food has a long history, beginning to evolve gradually in the 16th century. Through the continuous development and evolution of specific

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vocabulary, learners can gain a better understanding of the living habits and cultural characteristics of local people. In the context of social history, students' interest in food vocabulary stems from the Chinese cultural notion that "food is the necessity of the people." As a part of cultural exchange, food also promotes the continuous progress of human society. We can observe the development and evolution of various food-related vocabulary expressions. In classroom teaching, a notable observation is that when students translate the term "black tea," many will translate it as "red tea" rather than "black tea." Consequently, students often question why the word "black" is used. To review its historical development, it is necessary to mention the concept of "tea culture." Since China is the birthplace of tea, there has been a habit of drinking tea since ancient times. By the mid-17th century, the United Kingdom began to import tea in large quantities, and the tea imported from Fujian (Wuyi black tea) was dark in color, thus earning the name "black tea." Another example is the egg tart, which students enjoy in their daily life and can be bought in KFC stores as a popular dessert. The first Portuguese egg tarts were originally made in the convent of Ronimus in Portugal, where they were created to help the poor. Pastéis de Belem has become the most famous shop in Portugal. However, custard tarts are believed to have originated in England, and Catherine, the wife of Charles II of England, introduced them to Portugal. Another example is ice cream. In the 1770s, the British tasted a unique flavor of dessert, and it is said that the first Italian ice cream was transmitted to the United Kingdom by the French. Nevertheless, its origin is traced back to China, where ancient people made ice and food to quench their thirst, which was later brought back to Italy. Finally, different Western cultures showcase distinct food traditions. When students think of the Christmas meal, they often associate turkey with being the main course, but roast goose is also a traditional staple, especially for poorer families. With the changes of the times, sauce has gradually become a necessary traditional food in British and American families [2].

2.2. Loanwords of Food Words

Loanwords related to food reflect the globalization of culinary culture. The word "yogurt" originates from the Turkish language. Historical records indicate that as early as 3000 BC, nomadic people living on ancient plateaus allowed fresh goat milk to ferment naturally, resulting in yogurt. Similarly, tofu is a transliterated word from Chinese, recognized as a classic Chinese delicacy since ancient times. It gained fame in the 19th century at the World's Fair in Vienna, with Mapo Tofu becoming a well-known Sichuan dish. The invention of the sandwich is attributed to John Montagu, the 4th Earl of Sandwich, who reportedly enjoyed playing cards and had his servants place dishes, eggs, and sausages between slices of bread when he was hungry. This eating habit is similar to the ancient Romans' preference for sandwich bread. Additionally, the French word 'macaron,' renowned for its costly production and often hailed as the 'Hermès of desserts,' is widely regarded as a pinnacle of French confections. It was initially introduced to the French royal family by an Italian noble family. By the mid-19th century, the macaron's flavor profile had incorporated the popular taste of chocolate [3]. Many French words are found in the English vocabulary. Besides French, Italian contributes culinary terms like pasta, tiramisu, and pizza, which are widely recognized. Notably, pizza's origins are diverse, tracing back to regions such as Persia, Greece, and Rome. The etymology of the word 'pizza' may derive from the Roman Jewish Passover cookie known as Pizzarelli. Although its origin remains uncertain, its diverse flavors have spread and gained popularity among an ever-growing number of people.

2.3. Classification of Food Vocabulary

Students may encounter difficulties in memorizing vocabulary due to ineffective methods and limited exposure. The most effective method is pronunciation memory, which involves reading while remembering [4]. Since English words are primarily phonetic, mastering some necessary spelling rules can help recall the meaning of many

English words through phonetic stimulation. However, students who struggle with phonetic symbols should try to classify food-related vocabulary as follows:

Fruit category: passion fruit, durian, dragon fruit, kiwifruit

Meat: drumstick, sausage, ham, beef

Vegetables: broccoli, sweet potato, edible amaranth, garlic scape

Alcohol: cider, whiskey, vodka, tequila, brandy

Beverage Category: tea (green tea), chamomile tea, tea with lemon, mint tea, orange juice, apple juice, pineapple juice, chocolate milkshake, coffee, etc.

Apart from emphasizing pronunciation, teachers can introduce extracurricular knowledge into the class. For instance, the words "dragon fruit" and "kiwi fruit" have interesting backgrounds. "Dragon fruit" is a proper noun, similar to the Chinese English expression, and its common name "pitaya" comes from Spanish, originally referring to the Mexican cactus fruit. The types can be divided into red dragon fruit and white dragon fruit. Students can quickly find the corresponding expressions "red dragon fruit" and "white dragon fruit" based on vocabulary characteristics. "Kiwi fruit," originating in China, was introduced to New Zealand in the early 20th century. Initially thought to be gooseberry, it was later renamed kiwifruit. This approach makes the content more vivid and understandable [5]. Therefore, effectively teaching this vocabulary is a challenge for the lecturer.

3. The Application of Food Contexts in English Vocabulary Teaching

3.1. In-Class Questionnaire on Food-Related Vocabulary

The teacher uses the visual modality, combining lexical items with pictures, to create authentic learning contexts that meet the criterion of Krashen's "i+1" comprehensible input. Classroom practice in various professional classes has demonstrated that one purpose of using games is to energize the classroom atmosphere, while the more important goal is to encourage most students to engage in classroom interaction, which has a very significant effect [6]. To assess the students' understanding, the teacher designed an in-class questionnaire and selected unfamiliar food words as practice objects. The questions are shown in Figure 1.

How many food-related words do you know about?

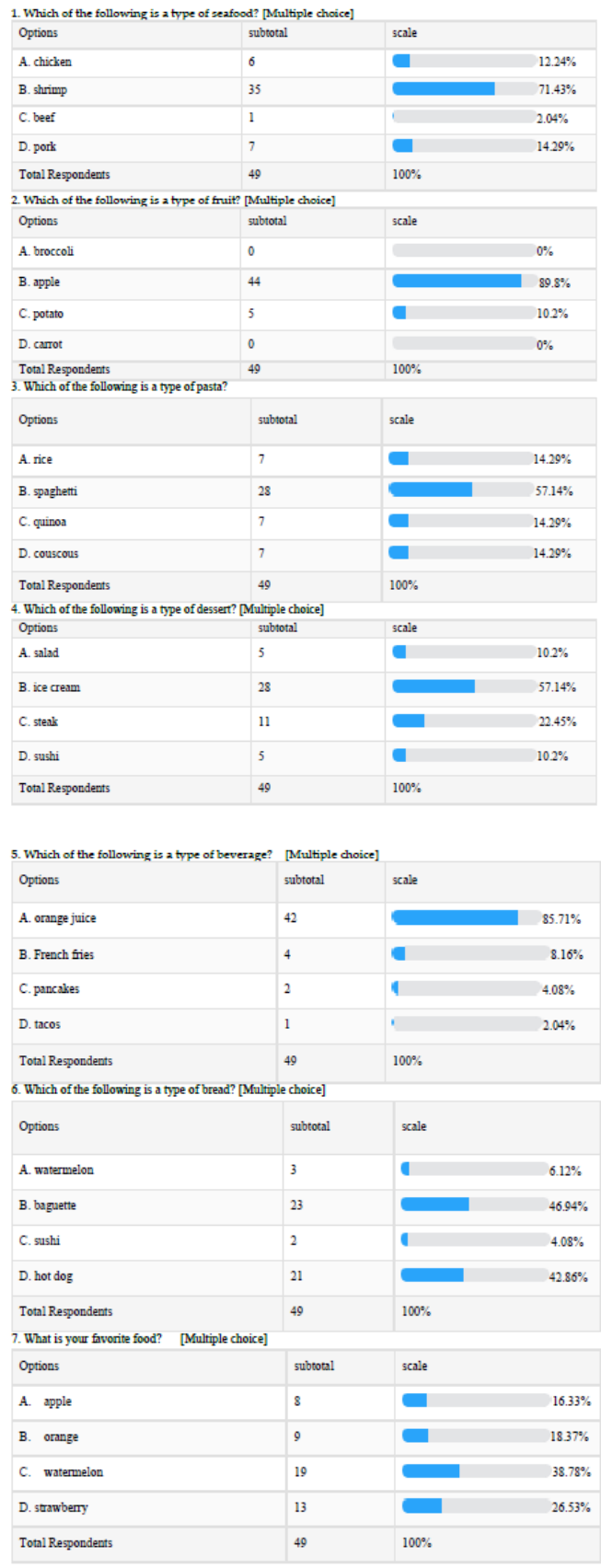


Figure 1. Visualization of students' responses to the food vocabulary questionnaire.

A total of 49 students participated in this survey, which provides an overview of the students' mastery of food-related vocabulary and assists instructors in determining the direction of future teaching.

3.2. Pictorial Memory of Food Vocabulary

Based on the questionnaire data, two aspects on food preference and degree of difficulty in mastering are analyzed [7]. In the course of teaching, some students are not familiar with the words "strawberry" and "watermelon", while the terms "apple" and "orange" can be blurted out. The reason is that the long and difficult words have become an obstacle for students to memorize vocabulary. Two teaching models are adopted for reference:

First, food is introduced into English classroom teaching, such as fruit items, and teachers display them to help students connect with corresponding English expressions. Visual representations of fruits facilitate this process. Second, the teacher believes images enable learners to comprehend unfamiliar vocabulary, thereby lowering the difficulty to an acceptable range (As shown in Figure 2).



Figure 2. Pictorial aids for learning fruit-related vocabulary.

Strawberry and watermelon were combined by two words. When explained with the aid of pictures, most students can quickly associate them with the English word "blueberry." To check the above words, a classroom questionnaire was conducted (As shown in Figure 3):

What is your favorite food?...[Multiple-choice]

Options	subtotal	scale
A. apple	8	16.33%
B. orange	9	18.37%
C. watermelon	19	38.78%
D. strawberry	13	26.53%
Total Respondents	49	100%

Figure 3. Students' responses to the question on food preference

This group of 49 students participated, and the data showed that 38.78% of the students chose watermelon, while 26.53% chose strawberry. It is possible to assume that students are unfamiliar with these two fruit words; they may choose the words apple or orange that are more familiar to them, but it does not mean that these are their favorite fruits, which is contrary to the question's intention. Thus, it has been proven that remembering food words in the form of picture memory is intuitive and accurate. Additionally, students struggle to distinguish meat-related words, such as cow/beef;

sheep/mutton; pig/pork; deer/venison; chicken/chicken, etc. The corresponding questionnaire results are shown (As shown in Figure 4):

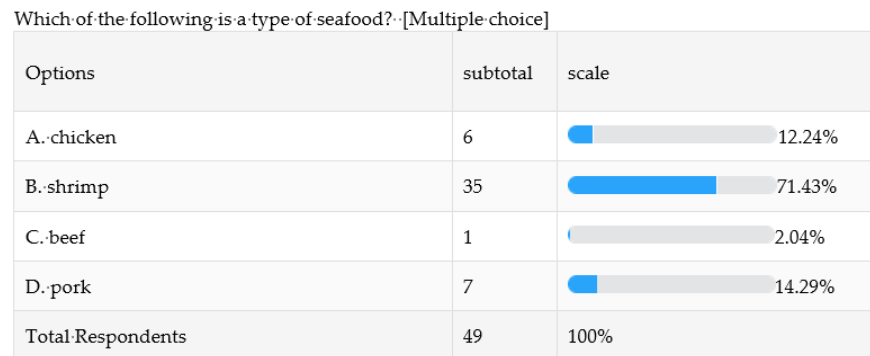


Figure 4. Students' responses to the question on meat-related vocabulary.

The survey focused on seafood, and the data showed that eight of the 49 participants chose meat-related words (1 for beef, 7 for pork), accounting for 16.33%. Therefore, picture-based memory is one of the effective teaching methods that benefit learners.

4. Classroom Exercises on Food Vocabulary

4.1. Expression of Taste in Food Vocabulary

In the English-speaking world, the vocabulary for describing food tastes is very detailed. While students are already familiar with common terms such as sour, sweet, bitter, and spicy, the focus of this lesson is to expand their vocabulary [8]. To effectively convey the information displayed in the PPT slides, the teacher encourages students to identify the corresponding tastes of the food in the pictures through random roll call using classroom platforms, so that learners can participate more actively in class activities. To help students recognize common taste-related vocabulary, several examples were provided in class, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Examples of Taste Expressions in Food Vocabulary

Lemon: sour	Candy: sweet	Coffee: bitter	Pepper: spicy
Rice: bland	Cheese: rich	Meat: greasy	Watermelon: water

Because some students are not adept at English, they choose simple sentences to construct sentences and memorize vocabulary. The example sentences are as follows:

- 1) The pork is greasy/ tender.
- 2) The watermelon is juicy.
- 3) The black tea is too strong.

It is worth noting that most of the students' comments on the food are expressed as "delicious", but there are many ways to express delicious. "Delicious" generally refers to something that has a very pleasant taste. "Yummy" belongs to children's language. People tend to express themselves using words like "palatable", "authentic", "delectable" and "sweet".

4.2. Role Play

In class practice, students are encouraged to communicate freely in English by using functional sentences to promote dialogue [9]. Appropriate classroom bonus points are given to active participants, which arouses students' enthusiasm for learning and enhances their self-confidence. For example:

- 1) What looks good to you?
- 2) What about...?
- 3) Could I get/ have...?

A face-to-face exchange in which a short dialogue exercise is as follows:

Ordering Food Conversation:

Situation 1:

Kevin: What looks good to you?

Debra: Well, the ribs sound good, but they're pretty expensive.

Kevin: Hmm, what about the grilled chicken?

Debra: Still a bit out of my price range.

Kevin: You're such a bum!

Debra: I think I'll just get a burger.

Situation 2:

Waitress: What can I get for you?

Kevin: Could I have the fish and chips, please?

Waitress: And for you?

Debra: Could I get a burger?

Waitress: Alright. Thank you very much!

5. Feedback on Food Vocabulary Teaching

5.1. *The Effectiveness of Vocabulary Teaching Methods*

The previous sections discussed several dimensions of food vocabulary teaching. Based on practical teaching experience, starting with the textbook and fully understanding the students' foundation, adjustments are dynamically made according to the "i+1" principle for different classes [10]. Situational teaching and other methods are adopted to maintain learning progress.

In the online classroom, teachers often use the "TPR" (Total Physical Response) method for beginners, engaging in role-playing, performances, and games. These activities are intuitive, enliven the classroom atmosphere, and stimulate students' interest in learning [11]. This method is also applicable to adult English teaching, with proper control of classroom time. Most teachers envision the students' learning state during lesson preparation and explore suitable teaching strategies.

Tips from a Cambly teacher:

1. Visuals help a lot but reading helps with pronunciation.
2. Pick out 5 to 6 words and give definition and examples using the word.
3. If the students are up for it, you can encourage them to create their own sentences after you teach them these words.
4. If the word is dessert, you can show pictures like a piece of cake or pie.
5. If the word is puree, then you can show applesauce.

Throughout teachers' educational experience, vocabulary is emphasized as the core of language learning in classroom instruction, with teachers empowering and always centering on the learners as the main focus.

5.2. *Learner-Supported Vocabulary Teaching Methods*

The current English vocabulary exceeds one million words, including terms from Old English, Middle English, and Modern English, which presents a significant challenge for learners. During the teaching process, students may encounter discontinuities in learning, making systematic progress difficult and hindering the achievement of desired outcomes [12]. The food vocabulary discussed here is part of the basic vocabulary category. With the advancement of digital technologies, applications such as Baicizhan, a popular Chinese vocabulary learning app, have gained widespread popularity due to their illustrated format [13]. By leveraging the features of such vocabulary memorization tools, integrating the visual presentation of classroom content with post-class exercises can significantly enhance learning effectiveness. The following are common food vocabulary items, accompanied by exercises designed to assess students' learning outcomes (As shown in Figure 5).

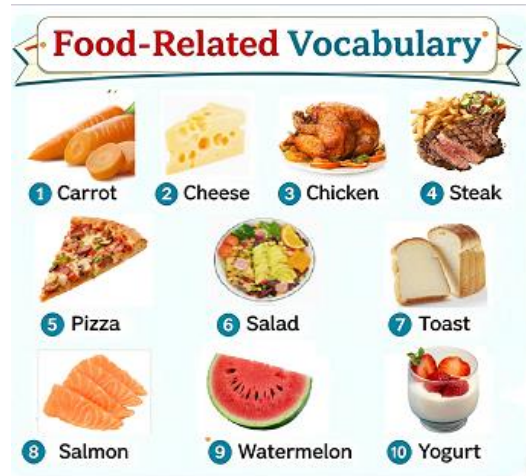


Figure 5. Common Food-Related Vocabulary with Visual Illustrations.

Part One:

1) Fill in the Blanks:

I like to eat _____ and _____ for breakfast. (Fill in any two foods)

2) Multiple Choice:

Which of the following is not a food item?

A. Salmon - B. Car - C. Cheese - D. Carrot

Translation:

3) Please translate the following Chinese food names into English.

Xigua

Suannai

Shala

Sanwenyu

Note: The food names above are provided in pinyin, which represents the pronunciation of the Chinese characters. Please translate these food names into their correct English equivalents.

4) Matching:

Match the English food vocabulary with their corresponding pictures, as shown in Figure 6.


Watermelon	
Steak	
Carrot	
Cheese	
Chicken	

Figure 6. Matching exercise on food-related vocabulary.

5) Writing: Describe your favorite foods and explain why you choose them.

Part Two:

Watch movies about gourmet food recommended by the teacher, briefly introduce the content of the movies, and highlight the food vocabulary lines. The list of movies is as follows:

1. *Ratatouille*: This animated film tells the story of a rat named Remy who dreams of becoming a chef. It showcases the charm of gourmet food and conveys the message that cooking is accessible to everyone, regardless of their status.
2. *Chef*: The story of a chef who leaves a traditional restaurant, starts his own food truck, and embarks on a road trip across the country.
3. *Chocolate*: The story of a mysterious chocolate shop owner who uses her chocolate to transform a French town, where gourmet food plays an important role.
4. *Toast*: A biographical film about British chef Nigel Slater, which explores how his love for cooking influenced his growth and life.
5. *Julie & Julia*: A movie about two women who discover their true selves and realize the joy of life through cooking.

Gourmet movies display food culture across the globe, allowing students to learn regional food vocabulary [14]. The movie *Ratatouille* covers a wide range of vocabulary, including *ratatouille* (a dish made by stewing vegetables such as eggplant, bell pepper, onion, zucchini, and tomato); *foie gras* (a French delicacy made from the liver of a goose or duck); *pike* (a type of fish); *salade composée* (composed salad); eggplant; summer squash; bell pepper, etc. Learners also experience the charm of food through interpreting movie lines. As shown below:

"It's strange to thrill at the sound of someone biting into a piece of toast." Even simple toast can bring a pleasant auditory experience. (From the movie "Toast")

"The only time to eat diet food is while you're waiting for the steak to cook." Eating diet food is only appropriate when you are waiting for the steak to be cooked. (From the movie "Julie & Julia")

It can be confirmed that food vocabulary is indispensable in movie lines, serving as the basic element of sentence structure. By adopting such exercises, learners can more flexibly use the words they have learned, learning to convey ideas with different structures and combinations [15].

6. Conclusion

Vocabulary is the foundation of any language learning. A certain amount of vocabulary is essential for effective communication. The development of English vocabulary has a long history. How can vocabulary be memorized efficiently while stimulating students' interest in learning? Classifying vocabulary is a highly valuable approach, as it aligns with learners' cognitive processes and sustains their motivation. Using food-related vocabulary as a practical example, instructors can categorize words into different types and design interactive activities such as role-playing or group discussions on food cultures. This study demonstrates that targeted classification can enhance students' memorization efficiency and foster their interest in vocabulary learning. This practice introduces a new, practical model for vocabulary memorization, providing valuable insights for optimizing English vocabulary teaching and promoting learners' comprehensive language competence. Therefore, through the discussion of food vocabulary, a new model for students' vocabulary memorization can be established.

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