

Wang, Z. (2017). Investigating the effects of a mobile-assisted vocabulary learning activity on vocabulary retention and motivation among Chinese University EFLS (Doctoral Dissertation, Towson University, 2017).

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Abstract

Despite its significance in language acquisition, vocabulary learning is often considered one of the most difficult obstacles learners must overcome in the initial stage of language learning. In recent years, the difficulty of vocabulary memorization has also been reported as an important factor that has caused the decrease of motivation to learn English among Chinese university EFLs (English as a Foreign Language). Numerous research studies indicate that motivation plays a critical role in L2 learning: It forecasts learners' long-term effort in language learning and can even predict their learning success in this regard. Therefore, it is paramount to integrate a learning approach that not only improves students' vocabulary learning effectiveness, but also enhances their motivation. This study investigated the effect of a mobile-assisted vocabulary learning activity with contextualized imagery on students' vocabulary retention and motivation to learn English. Eight classes of freshmen (N = 221) from two universities in northeastern China participated in the study. A linear mixed model with repeated measures was used to detect the activity's effect between experimental and control groups, and the results indicated that overall there was a positive effect of the intervention on students' vocabulary retention and motivation, though with inconsistent statistical significance values, suggesting that other factors might be in effect, and future research with recommended designs are needed to draw more definite conclusions.