LINGUISTICS

当代语言学研究文库

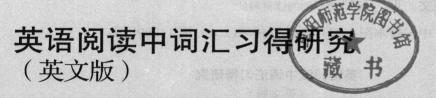# 英语阅读中词汇习得研究（英文版）

A Study on Vocabulary Learning through English Reading

王哲希 著

当代语言学研究文库

英语阅读中词汇习得研究
（英文版）

A Study on Vocabulary Learning through English Reading

王哲希　著

上海交通大学出版社

内 容 提 要

本书以中国大学生为研究对象,通过两项实验比较了添加于英语阅读的目标词注释和文本强化等输入强化、使用目标词填空和翻译句子等输出任务以及同时使用输入强化和输出任务对于不同词汇量水平的学习者英语词汇习得的影响。本书以二语习得的信息加工模型为理论框架讨论了实验结果,提出了输入强化和输出任务作用下阅读中词汇加工和习得的模型,证实了输出在二语习得中的注意功能,特别指出了注意形式-意义关联问题在词汇习得中的重要性,其研究发现为大学英语泛读课程的教学和阅读材料的准备提供了启示。

本书可供第二语言习得研究者和外语教师参考使用。

序

英语作为一门国际性语言,已成为人们生活中不可缺少的工具。尤其在中国加入 WTO 之后,对英语人才的需求无论在质量上还是在数量上飞速增长。回顾近 20 年中国英语教学的发展,我们已经取得了很大成就:教学大纲日臻完善与成熟,课程设置日趋合理,教材编写发展迅速,呈现一派百花齐放,百家争妍的大好局面。为中国的科学技术、社会经济发展和文化交流培养了大批英语人才。但是"我国目前的外语水平不高,教学方法普遍存在费时较多、收效较低的问题。"(李岚清)需要进一步拓宽我们的研究范围,探索新的研究途径,以提高中国英语学习者的学习效率,满足中国迅猛发展的需要。

长期以来,中国教师所受的培训主要侧重于如何教,教什么,而我们的研究也侧重于各种教学法、具体的教学方法、教材的编写和大纲的设计,而很少从学习的角度去研究中国的英语教学所面临的问题。近年来国际上二语习得研究的发展迅猛,取得了令人瞩目的成果。我国也有越来越多的学者从学生的视角研究中国的英语教学所面临的问题。中国英语学习者的二语习得研究在过去十多年间也得到了迅速的发展。

二语习得领域的研究系统地探索二语习得的本质和习得的过程。其主要任务就是揭示和描述学习者是如何获得第二语言的,并解释为什么学习者能够获得第二语言。Gass 在讨论二语习得的研究范畴时指出:二语习得的研究是对非母语习得的研究,也就是对除母语以外任何语言习得的研究。它研究学习者在有限接触目标语的条件下如何构建新的语言体系。目前,尽管二语习得研究已取得很大成果,我们还远远没有建立起一套完整的二语习得理论。学者们正试图从不同的学科视角来认识和研究二

语习得。因此,二语习得研究与语言学、心理学、心理语言学、社会学、社会语言学、教育学等等有着密切的关系。同时,由于二语习得与这些相邻学科之间的紧密关系,研究者们采用了不同的方法、不同的工具、从不同的学科视角来审视所采集的数据和样本。实际上,不同的方法和不同的学科视角又决定了研究者会采取不同的数据采集方法,运用不同的数据分析工具。因此这也决定了二语习得研究的交叉学科研究的本质。

人类的语言学习可分为母语习得和二语习得,前者指儿童在自己的生活环境中对母语的自然而然的习得。后者指人们习得母语后对第二门语言的学习。目前国外的二语习的研究的对象基本上为在目标语的环境中学习目标语。而中国的英语学习者则是在母语的大环境中学习其他民族的语言。换言之,中国的英语学习者是在课堂上学习英语的。他们是有意识地去学习一门语言,了解其语言结构、语法规则、词汇等等。离开了教室,他们接触目标语的机会非常有限。因此,中国英语学习者习得英语的过程及目标语的发展有可能有其自身的特征。研究中国英语学习者英语习得的过程对促进和提高中国英语教学效率有重要意义。本丛书的研究将涉及中国英语学习者的词汇习得、时体发展、语用能力发展、一语认知资源对二语学习的影响,交际策略的应用等诸多方面,希望能为读者较全面了解中国英语学习者二语发展提供帮助,为其他学者研究二语习得提供一些参考和启示。

这几本著作仅仅是本丛书出版计划的第一批。我们对纳入丛书的著作有着明确的要求:一是入选的著作力求具有相当的理论深度和原创性,能为中国英语学习者二语习得研究和中国英语教学起到推动作用;二是研究力求具有系统性,研究设计合理,研究方法科学,数据翔实,分析可靠,能把握二语习得研究前沿。我们真诚感谢上海交通大学出版社的领导和编辑人员对这套丛书的出版提供的支持和努力。我们也真诚地希望广大研究工作者和研究生提出批评、建议和帮助。

王同顺

2008 年 10 月

前 言
Foreword

　　一直以来,词汇的重要性为广大第二语言学习者们所认识,但是词汇教学直到近 20 年来才受到二语习得研究领域的重视。之前,受交际法的影响,有的研究者认为,正如一语词汇大多是通过泛读等活动附带习得的,二语词汇也可以以同样的方式习得。20 世纪 80 年代后期,词汇教学重新引起了人们的兴趣,而通过泛读附带习得二语词汇的效率也受到了质疑。

　　作者在大学英语泛读课程的教学过程中,发现虽然词汇学习是该课程的主要目的之一,实际上学生们能够附带习得的词汇是非常有限的,需要教学干预来提高词汇习得的效率。教学干预及其有效性的研究可大致分为基于输入和基于输出的教学干预两类。作者选择了目标词汇注释和文本强化作为前者的代表,使用目标词填空和翻译句子作为后者的代表,探索了两类教学干预以及两者相结合对于大学生阅读中词汇习得的作用。

　　本书分为八个章节。第一章为导论,阐述了本研究的背景、目的和意义。第二章为理论框架,介绍了二语习得的信息加工模型、言语产出模型和二语理解与产出中的词汇加工模式以及词汇知识的定义和词汇知识深度的测试方法。第三章在指出成年外语学习者通过泛读附带习得词汇所存在的问题以及可能的解决方法之后,回顾了对阅读中词汇习得教学干预手段的研究。第四章介绍了本研究的总体设计。第五章和第六章分别汇报了本研究的两项实验:实验一探讨了目标词注释和使用目标词填空完成句子对阅读中词汇习得的作用,实验二探讨了文本强化和使用目标词翻译句子的作用。第七章就两项实验的发现进行了讨论,得出了输入强化和输出任务作用下阅读中词汇加工和习得的模型。第八章为结论,总结了本研究的主要发现和理论及教学实践意

义,并指出了进一步的研究方向。

研究背景

在二语习得的诸多研究角度中,基于信息加工模型的认知理论能够较有效地解释输入、学习者因素和输出机制在习得和使用语言的过程中如何交互作用,更重要的是,认知理论认为学习过程中的直接教学干预不仅可能实现,而且可能起到积极作用,尤其是对成年学习者。因此,在研究大学生的二语习得问题时,作者采用了信息加工模型作为本研究的理论框架。

二语习得研究的信息加工模型一般涉及输入、吸收、中介语体系和输出。其中,输入和吸收的区别对于二语习得的认知理论尤为重要,它强调了学习者在学习过程中的主动性。为促进二语的习得,Sharwood Smith 提出了"输入强化",即提高输入的质量以促进学习者对输入的加工,进而促进输入向吸收的转化。

输入在二语习得中的重要性得到普遍的认同,相对而言,研究者们对于输出的作用却持有不同观点。比如,VanPatten 认为输出可能促使语言的使用更为流利和准确,但它并不直接作用于中介语体系的发展,只是间接地影响二语习得;而 Swain 则认为除此之外,输出还具有注意/触发、假设验证和元语言等功能,可以直接影响中介语体系的发展。

尽管如此,两者都认同输出能够促使学习者认识到自己二语知识中的不足,从而促使学习者对输入进行更好的加工。Izumi(2003)从心理语言学的角度阐释了输出的这一作用。心理语言学研究发展,我们的阅读理解依赖于 3 种信息:语言输入、上下文信息以及我们自己的语文知识和对客观世界的知识。如果其中某种信息缺损,我们会更多地依赖于其他两种信息来补偿。因此,二语学习者在阅读时,可以利用上下文信息和对客观世界的知识来补偿二语知识对语言输入加工的不足。相反,语言产出过程涉及用于输出的语言形式的提取,如果有关该语言形式的知识缺损,这将促使学习者对输入中的相关形式给予更多的注意。

事实上,大多实证研究都发现输出任务对词汇习得有促进作用,而输入强化的作用较不确定。目前尚欠缺的是对输出任务、输入强化以及两者结合使用对阅读中词汇习得作用的综合比较研究,尤其是结

合定量分析和定性分析的研究,而如何更高效地设计泛读材料和课堂教学活动,使之更有效地帮助学习者通过阅读习得词汇,将通过此类研究得到启示,同时我们也将更好地认识基于输入和基于输出的教学干预如何作用于二语习得。

基于上述原因,本书以大学生为研究对象,通过两项实验比较了输入强化、输出任务和两者同时作用下不同词汇量水平的学生英语词汇习得的结果,实验二还融入了对学习者词汇策略使用情况的研究。研究证实了输出在二语习得中的注意功能,特别指出了注意形式-意义关联问题在词汇习得中的重要性,也为教学实践提供了启示。

王哲希

ABBREVIATIONS

L1：first language 第一语言
L2：second language 第二语言
FL：foreign language 外语
SLA：second language acquistion 第二语言习得
LTM：long-term memory 长时记忆
STM：short-term memory 短时记忆
WM：working memory 工作记忆
SAS：supervisory attentional system 监控注意系统
VKS：Vocabulary Knowledges Scale 词汇知识量表
VLT：Vocabulary Levels Test 词汇等级测试
LP：low-proficiency 低水平
HP：high-proficiency 高水平

Abbreviations for treatments in experiments：
C：control 对照
I：input enhancement 输入强化
O：output task 输出任务
IO：input enhancement＋output task 输入强化加输出任务
G：glossing 注释
B：blank-filling task 填空任务
GB：glossing＋blank-filling task 注释加填空任务
E：textual enhancement 文本强化
T：sentence translation task 句子翻译任务
ET：textual enhancement＋sentence 文本强化加句子翻译任务
translation task

Abbreviations for strategies for dealing with target words：
IG：ignore 忽略

DM: consult the dictionary for meaning   查字典获取词义

WF: guess meaning from word form   根据词形猜词义

CM: guess meaning from context   根据上下文猜词义

DU: consult the dictionary for grammatical use   查字典获取语法信息

CU: analyze the original sentence for   分析原句获取语法信息

       grammatical use

Contents

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The importance of vocabulary in second language (L2) learning has always been recognized by learners (Coady, 1997a), but vocabulary learning and teaching had not reached its due position in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) until about two decades ago. In the earlier days, SLA researchers and L2 teachers typically prioritized syntax and phonology as more central to both linguistic theory and language pedagogy (Zimmerman, 1997) under the influence of structuralism and the Chomskyan school of linguistics. Later, in the communicative approach, it was assumed that, since first language (L1) vocabulary development mostly occurs incidentally through exposure to natural, contextualized language, mainly extensive reading (Nagy, Herman & Anderson, 1985), L2 vocabulary can develop in the same way. Krashen's Input Hypothesis provided the theoretical basis for incidental L2 vocabulary learning. As a result, vocabulary remained an area deprived of due attention in SLA research.

Since the late 1980s, there has been a renewed interest in vocabulary learning and teaching due to theoretical advances in the linguistic study of the lexicon, psychological investigations into the mental lexicon, the teaching trend that brought the learner into focus, and developments in computers (Carter & McCarthy, 1988). The efficiency of incidental learning for L2 vocabulary through extensive reading has also been questioned. On the one hand, there

have been suggestions to complement it with direct vocabulary teaching or strategy training (e. g. , Nation, 1990, 2001; Sokmen, 1997); on the other hand, drawing on theories from cognitive psychology, researchers have argued that learning can be made more efficient by forcing deeper processing of the words (e. g. , Paribakht & Wesche, 1997; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

As a teacher of the English extensive reading course for Chinese college students, the researcher has found that, although vocabulary learning is set as one of the major purposes of the course, vocabulary that is learned incidentally through extensive reading is in fact very limited. Quite a number of students just read for general comprehension of the texts without paying much attention to new words, while those who wish to learn new words from the reading are often at a loss as to how to achieve that purpose. According to surveys with Chinese non-English majors on extracurricular English extensive reading (Wang & He, 2001; Li, Zhang & Cheng, 2004), most of the students agreed that extensive reading helped them with English learning. However, they also claimed that they had difficulties in reading extensively in English by themselves after class. The most prominent ones were that they did not have time for it and that they did not have appropriate materials to read.

Robb (2002) has argued against one of Day and Bamford's (2002) top ten principles for teaching extensive reading, namely, learners should be free to choose what they want to read and also free to stop reading if they find it too difficult or not interesting, in the institutionalized Asian context. As the priorities of the students may favor other activities over learning, teachers have a responsibility to see that the students learn despite other distractions, probably through reading and reading-related assignments. Green (2005), in Hong Kong, also argues that the failure of the Hong Kong Extensive Reading Scheme in English to achieve the goal of improving the students' general proficiency can be attributed to the isolation of the extensive reading program from the main curriculum and the lack of a

clear purpose assigned to the reading task to help focus the students' attention on language form.

It thus seems that supervision by the teacher on extensive reading is necessary. In China, there is a special course designed for extensive reading in the curriculum for English majors. Non-English majors may also be assigned extensive reading work in addition to the regular reading course. To enlarge the students' vocabulary is set as one of the major purposes of English extensive reading for both English majors and non-majors in the Chinese higher education system (Dong, 1997; He & Dong, 2000). Admittedly, knowing a word involves various aspects of knowledge and development of the knowledge has to go through several stages before the word can be used actively in production. Extensive reading may contribute little to development in the depth of vocabulary knowledge, but it can at least help with development in its breadth. That is to say, the students are supposed to learn to recognize more words and understand their common meanings through extensive reading. Nevertheless, problems have been found with both the materials used and the usual practice for teaching extensive reading, in particular, for vocabulary learning through extensive reading.

In some cases, no particular textbook is used; instead, students are given a list of books by the teacher. The arrangement of the books may lack systematicity (He & Dong, 2000) in terms of difficulty and the order and frequency of occurrence of words. Using a well-organized textbook may solve the problem to some extent, but there may still be a mismatch between the textbook for extensive reading and the textbooks for other English courses (Zhou, 1999). Moreover, the textbook (not to say the books not prepared as textbooks) may lay greater emphasis on improving reading comprehension than vocabulary learning so that it may include few vocabulary-related activities (Feng, 2004). In most of the extensive reading textbooks that are currently available, textual enhancement and glossing are comparatively commonly used techniques, but text-based vocabulary

exercises are less common, probably because they are more demanding in preparation.

As for the usual practice for teaching extensive reading, there may be two equally unfavorable tendencies (Shou, 2000). One is to teach extensive reading in the same way as intensive reading, that is, to focus on language forms. This would slow down the reading process and affect the amount of reading that can be done. More importantly, as the reading process becomes less smooth, reading becomes a less pleasant experience for the students, who are likely to devote less time to it subsequently. This actually works against the purpose of extensive reading as a way to learn vocabulary because incidental vocabulary learning depends on the accumulation through a large amount of reading. On the other hand, the teaching of extensive reading may go to the other extreme by focusing exclusively on meaning. The students are instructed to read the text and answer reading comprehension questions with their attention seldom directed to particular words. This is particularly so under the influence of the view that language teaching should aim at developing communicative skills (Zhou, 1999) and vocabulary learning can be handled by the students themselves (Feng, 2004). When students are required to do additional reading after class, the assignment is likely to focus on general understanding of meaning, taking such form as a brief book report.

The researcher believes that vocabulary is very important in L2 learning and, though the learner plays the central, active role in the learning process (as in the learning of any other aspects of the language), the teacher should try to help with it. In the extensive reading activity, which is an important way for learners to expand their vocabulary, measures can be taken to make learning more efficient. In view of the characteristics of both learner-internal and external factors, such measures are particularly necessary for adult learners of a foreign language (FL), i. e. an L2 that is not used as the community language where the learner lives, such as the college

students learning English in China.

Instructional interventions, and research into their effects, can be roughly divided into two strands: input-based and output-based (Izumi, 2002; Rott & Williams, 2003). The former rests on manipulation of input, or input enhancement, to make target forms more salient so that they may get attended to and further processed (Sharwood Smith, 1993), while the latter adopts output tasks to draw learners' attention to what is lacking in their interlanguage and needs more processing (Swain, 1995). In the current study, two experiments were carried out to investigate the effects of both approaches and their combination on vocabulary learning through reading. In particular, the input enhancement treatment involved glossing the target words and visual enhancement of the target words by boldface and output-based tasks involved sentence completion and sentence translation using target words. It was hoped that the study would provide practical implications for the teaching and material preparation for the English extensive reading course and at the same time expand our understanding of the role of input- and output-based instructional intervention in SLA.

The theoretical framework for the current study will be introduced in Chapter two. Issues about the topic of the current study, i. e. vocabulary learning through extensive reading, will be discussed in Chapter Three. Chapter Four will present an overview of the design of the research, followed by a detailed report of the two experiments in Chapters Five and Six. General discussion on the findings from the experiments will be conducted in Chapter Seven. Finally, the conclusion, implications from and limitations of the research will be presented in the last chapter.