

Language Teaching and Testing
Selected Works of Renowned Applied Linguists

世界知名语言学家论丛 (第一辑)

Series Editor: Rod Ellis

Patsy M. Lightbown

第二语言的课堂教学

LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM

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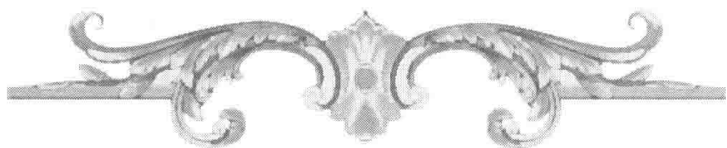
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出版说明

“世界知名语言学家论丛(第一辑)”由上海外语教育出版社约请国际知名学者、英语教育专家Rod Ellis教授担任主编。丛书作者均为国际应用语言学领域耳熟能详的权威专家。丛书中的每一本聚焦应用语言学领域的一个特定主题,收录一位在该研究领域最有建树和影响力的语言学家一生中最重要经典文章,如: Rod Ellis :《语法学习与教学》; Paul Nation :《词汇学习与教学》; Charles Alderson :《语言测试》,等等。书中的每篇文章经由精心挑选,既有对某一领域理论主题的深入阐述,又探讨了对第二语言教学和测试颇具意义的话题;除了作者一生的代表性作品外,还有不少新作,体现了作者的思索过程和研究轨迹,也展示了应用语言学领域发展历程中理论和研究逐步完善的一个个精彩镜头。

相信本套丛书的出版定能为国内应用语言学研究提供一个新平台,带来新的启示,进一步推动我国语言学研究的发展。

Preface

This book is a collection of articles for the series *Language Teaching and Testing — Selected Works of Renowned Applied Linguists*. This series collects articles written by a number of leading applied linguists. Each collection focuses on a specific area of research in applied linguistics — for example, on grammar learning and teaching, vocabulary language learning and teaching, language testing, and task-based language teaching. The aim of each book is to bring together older and more recent articles to show the development of the author's work over his/her lifetime. The articles are selected to address both theoretical issues relevant to a particular area of enquiry and also to discuss issues of significance to the teaching or testing of a second language (L2). As a whole, the series provides a survey of applied linguistics as this relates to language pedagogy and testing.

Each book begins with an autobiographical introduction by the author in which he/she locates the issues that have been important in his/her lifetime's work and how this work has evolved over time. The introduction also provides an outline of the author's professional career. The rest of the book consists of chapters based on articles published over the author's lifespan.

Each book, then, will contain articles that cover the author's career (over thirty years in some cases). Not surprisingly there are likely to be shifts (and possibly contradictions) in the author's positioning on the issues addressed, reflecting the changes in theory and research focus that have occurred in the specific area of enquiry over a period of time. Thus, the articles will not necessarily reflect a consistent theoretical perspective. There is merit in this. Readers will be able to see how theory and research have developed. In other

words, each book provides a snapshot of the kinds of developments that have occurred in the applied linguistic field under consideration.

This book brings together a collection of articles about how languages are learned in a second language classroom. This topic will be of immediate relevance to language teachers, teacher educators and language researchers. I have known the author — Patsy Lightbown — for more than twenty-five years. Many of the issues she addresses are close to my own heart — the relationship between instruction and language learning, the classroom as a source of input to learners, and the contribution that second language acquisition research can make to language teaching. Patsy's research has enormous breadth. Over the years she has conducted studies in a variety of language teaching contexts — core ESL programs, two-way bilingual education programs, and comprehension-based programs. The chapters in this book address all these contexts. In addition, Patsy has include chapters that examine the central issues relating to instructed language learning — the role of classroom input, the effect of instruction on the sequence of acquisition, focus on form, the timing of instruction and, most recently, the crucial issue of transfer appropriate processing. The book is a goldmine for anyone interested in the relationship between classroom instruction and second language learning.

Rod Ellis
Auckland
August 2013

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Acknowledgements

Rod Ellis invited me to create a collection of publications that would provide an overview of my classroom-based research, and I am grateful to him for suggesting it. In reviewing the pieces to include and in writing the autobiographical first chapter, I have enjoyed remembering many people who have made my life so rich and my work so rewarding.

Although the publications included in this volume are “single authored”, they all reflect my work with students and colleagues. One of the great benefits of life in academia is the opportunity for networking and learning from others. I wish I could acknowledge by name all the mentors, colleagues, graduate students, and research associates, as well as the classroom teachers and learners whose collaboration and support have made me a more productive scholar and a happier person. Many of their names appear as my co-authors in the reference list. Others appear in the acknowledgements section of individual chapters. Still others are mentioned in the professional autobiography in Chapter 1. I hope that those whose names are not mentioned will know nevertheless how much I value their contributions to my academic, professional, and personal life.

There is one name that must be mentioned in connection with the classroom-based research that is the focus of this volume. Since the 1970s Nina Spada and I have worked together on research projects, conference presentations, and more than 20 publications, including *How Languages Are Learned*. I continue to benefit from her scholarship and energy and,

above all, her friendship.

Finally, at every step, I have been sustained and delighted by my children Lucy, Randall, and David, and their growing families. They are the center of my universe. And at the heart of it all is my husband who started telling me in Paris fifty years ago, “Of course you can.” And more than telling me, he has always found ways to help me make it so.

Pasty M. Lightbown
September, 2013

A Note on Formatting

The chapters in this volume are collected from journals and edited books that were published as long ago as 1983 and as recently as 2014. Many of the early ones were retrievable only as hard copies and were scanned, using optical character recognition software. I have tried to find all the odd and incorrect texts that arose from this process, but I am sure that some have escaped me. In addition, where there were errors in the original documents, I have corrected the ones I found. Inconsistencies in capitalization conventions or in section headings reflect the original documents although I have tried to make them more uniform.

Finally, after all these years, some stylistic conventions have changed and I have had to make a decision about whether to make old documents conform to new ideas or to let them stand, representing the conventions that were acceptable at the time of their original publication. For that I have had to make some arbitrary decisions. For example, for early publications, I have not tried to change the fact in the 1970s and early 1980s we used to use “he” as a neutral and universal referent, even though it sounds very odd now. Nor did I change “subjects” to “participants” when speaking of the students and teachers whose learning and teaching we studied. On the other hand, where I used to use “which” and would now use “that”, I have made changes to improve readability. I have not been able to achieve consistency in the use of conventions of punctuation and capitalization or in headings across all the different chapters. I ask the reader’s indulgence.

Pasty M. Lightbown
September, 2013

Chapter 1

From Language Learner to Language Learning Researcher

The hours that teachers and students spend in classrooms represent a huge investment of energy as well as time, and the outcomes should make it all worthwhile. Most teachers want to create the conditions in which students achieve success, remain motivated, and prepare for using what they've learned beyond the classroom. Research on language acquisition is one source of knowledge that can help second- and foreign-language teachers create these conditions. There is no direct line from research findings to classroom practice. However, knowing more about the findings of SLA research, especially classroom-based research, can lead teachers to reflect on their own experience. This reflection can help them gain a better understanding of what they can do and what their students can do in the classroom.

Doing classroom-based research and communicating with teachers have defined my professional life. My commitment to research on second- and foreign-language teaching and learning has evolved — sometimes in unexpected ways — through my own experiences as a language learner, a language teacher, and a researcher in early childhood language acquisition. From the mid-1970s, my major focus has been

on the relationship between students' language development and the way language is used and the samples of language students are exposed to in the classroom. This classroom language includes what teachers intentionally teach, the language teachers use for classroom management or informal conversation, the language that comes from films or audio resources, and — crucially — the language students hear from each other.

Teachers teach and some students learn in a great variety of settings, using different instructional approaches, with a range of materials and resources. However, the work that I have done over the years has convinced me that when teachers want to maximize learning opportunities and to create conditions in which the greatest number of students can succeed, they can benefit from an awareness of the findings of classroom-based research on second language learning. Those findings show that the best recipe for success includes sufficient time for instruction, teachers who know and love the language they are teaching and care deeply about their students, and — above all — pedagogical activities that motivate students and prepare them to keep learning outside the classroom.

The chapters in this book represent some of the classroom-based research that my colleagues, students, and I have done in primary and secondary schools in five different sociocultural and pedagogical contexts. In the first two sections, each chapter is based directly on that research. The first section focuses on how time interacts with language acquisition in classrooms. The theme in the second section is the relationship between the language that students are exposed to in the classroom and their developing knowledge and use of the language. Chapters in the third section are overviews that bring together classroom-based research and studies of learning in general and language learning in particular.

Before describing the five contexts for my classroom-based research, I'll take a step back to recall how my experiences as a language learner, language teacher, and graduate student led me to the research on classroom-based language learning and teaching that have been my focus

for almost forty years. It is a story of discovery, of unexpected turns in the road, and of networking and sharing.

Learning My Own Languages — English, French, and Hausa

Language has always fascinated me. My earliest memories include listening as my parents read my favorite books over and over again. Like many children, I memorized them and then loved to hold them, pretending to read, even knowing when to turn the pages. By the time I started school, I really could read and my teacher decided I needed to advance to the next grade level. As an older child, I read insatiably and took great pleasure in learning new words. I remember getting in trouble sometimes when I tried to use words I had read but didn't really know the pronunciation or meaning of! I was also intrigued by the structure of language, and I would sit with my grandfather, diagramming sentences. Identifying each part of a sentence and putting it in the appropriate space on the diagram seemed like a wonderful game. At school, the classes I enjoyed most were those that focused on English language and literature.

I grew up in rural North Carolina in the 1950s. Even though I lived near a military base and had classmates who came from all over the U.S., languages other than English were virtually absent from the environment. Indeed, I don't remember hearing another language spoken when I was a child. My school, like most schools at the time, offered only one foreign language — French in our case — and it was taught for only two years at the end of high school. Thus, in my junior year (at age 15), I started to learn French. The enjoyment I had always felt in studying my own language seemed to double when I began to hear and read a new one.

Everything about French appealed to me: the sounds that were so challenging to imitate, the grammar that offered a new kind of sentence to diagram, and the culture that was revealed through colorful classroom posters and the texts we read. So many things about the French class were new and exciting. The teacher, Elaine Lewandowski, was a tall, blonde,

brilliant woman from Connecticut, whose husband was posted at the nearby military base. Since I had never been outside North Carolina, Connecticut seemed distant and exotic to me! France was beyond imagining! I could not have anticipated that I would eventually live in Connecticut and France, and even more distant places.

In the summer following that first year of French study, I was thrilled to find, in my grandparents' attic, a high school textbook that had belonged to my mother's elder sister. Published in the 1920s, it was called *A Simplified French Reader*. It was full of fairy tales and familiar stories. I discovered that even though my French was rudimentary, I could read with understanding. I have never forgotten how I felt when I realized I could *understand French* without explanation or translation.

Looking back from the perspective of many years of experience with second- and foreign-language instruction, I recognize Mrs. Lewandowski's pedagogy as based on a modified grammar-translation approach that involved reading and translating, vocabulary lists, grammar exercises, and some oral practice. Because of my keen interest in language, this approach had suited me very well. I didn't realize how much the skill and personality of the teacher herself had contributed to the joy and achievement I had felt in that first year. The following year, another teacher took over the class. The textbooks and approach were similar, but the teacher lacked proficiency in the language and did not communicate the same excitement about the language and culture. The disappointment was terrible, but the experience foreshadowed my interest in the relationship between what happens in the classroom and the learning outcomes that students can achieve. I had been inspired by Mrs. Lewandowski, and I resolved to continue studying French when I went on to post-secondary education.

As a university student, I chose to major in French and, after two years of study, I spent an academic year in France, joyfully soaking up the language and culture surrounding me as a student in Biarritz and in Paris. The teachers in the Sorbonne and the *Institut britannique* were inspiring,