主编 徐真华

全球化背景下的外国语言文学研究丛书

中国英语学习者合作输出中的词汇习得

CHINESE EFL LEARNERS' LEXICAL LEARNING THROUGH AND WITHIN COLLABORATIVE OUTPUT

牛瑞英 著

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总序

外国语言文学学科的发展是与国运衰微、西学东渐、现代大学勃兴紧密联系在一起的。随着1840年鸦片战争的爆发，东西方文明在古老中国不断冲突、碰撞、磨合以及融汇，其剧烈之程度在中国对外交往史中前所未见。西方列强的坚船利炮使东方老大帝国的羸弱暴露无遗。清政府内洋务派为了挽救清廷的统治危机，主张引进、仿造西方的武器装备和学习西方的科学技术，兴办洋务，创设近代企业，将发展重点放在“器物”层面，“师夷长技以制夷”。1894年，中国在甲午海战中惨败，民族危机空前深重，引起思想文化教育界强烈震动，“中学为体，西学为用”受到空前挑战，“制度”革新摆上核心日程，变法维新运动持续高涨。

此时，时代需要中国与西方之间的“翻译者”，从一开始，外语就承担了读懂历史变迁、推动民族奋起自强的重任。中国一批最早接受西方思想的知识分子，如魏源、郑观应等，为译介西书和传播西方的政治体制、科学知识，发挥了很大的作用。1862年，被誉为近代第一所国立外国语学院的京师同文馆应运而生，恭亲王奕䜣等人在给清政府的奏折上阐明了建馆的意图：“欲悉各国情景，必先谙其言语文字，方不受人欺蒙。”作为清代最早培养译员的洋务学堂和从事翻译出版的机构，同文馆为推动中国近代化作出了积极而重要的尝试。此后，得益于外语的译介作用，西学在中国的发展步伐不断加快。曾负笈海外的严复翻译了一批重要的西方著作，他的译著（如亚当·斯密的《原富》、斯宾塞的《群学肄言》、孟德斯鸠的《法意》，尤其是赫胥黎的《天演论》，以“物竞天择”、“适者生存”、“优胜劣汰”的生物进化理论阐发救亡图存的观点）启蒙与教育了一代国人，产生了振聋发聩的影响。戊戌变法之年，中国第一所国立综合性大学——京师大学堂创立伊始，即开设英、法、德、俄、日五个语种的课程。1902年，京师大学堂复学，且随即合并了京师同文馆，次年更名为译学馆。随着现代高等教育在中国的兴起，外语专业作为一门独立学科在我国建立并逐步发展。揭橥“民主”和“科学”两面旗帜的“五四”新文化运动，为外语学科的发展增添了动力和活力。

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适值“三千年未有之大变局”,以促进中国近代化为宗旨的海外留学热潮激情涌动。1872 年到 1875 年间,由近代中国留美第一人容闳提议,清政府先后派出四批共120 名幼童赴美国留学。这些留美幼童是中国历史上最早的官派留学生。此后,旨在寻求真知的官派和自费留学逐波激荡。这些留学生归国后分布在政界、军界、实业界、教育文化界等各个领域,不少人成为中国近代历史上的知名人物。及至民国时期,一批既饱览西学又具有深厚国学根底的“海归”执掌大学外文系或者从事外文教学研究工作。作为“睁眼看世界”的文化精英,他们学习和借鉴西方先进的理念、模式和方法,制订学术范式,建立课程体系,名师俊彦辈出,学术声誉远播。从当年北京大学、清华大学、西南联大等高校外文系的一流学术阵容可见一斑。在外文界,前辈不懈开拓进取,后学奋力继承创新,学术薪火相传,在短短数十年内为外语学科奠定了较为厚实的基础。.1949 年以后,由于国内、国际形势的嬗变,外语学科的持续发展受到很大干扰和破坏。1978 年中国实行改革开放政策,长期以来对外封闭的坚冰开始消融,外语学科又受到重视,得以焕发新的生机和活力。

近 30 多年来,科学技术迅猛发展,社会思潮与思想观念更趋丰富多元,学科既深度分化又高度综合,这些变化既拓展了外国语言文学的外延,又深化了其内涵。尤其是20 世纪 90 年代后,全球化趋势深入发展,国与国之间的相互依存明显增强,对人类社会的影响涉及经济、政治、教育、社会及文化等各个领域,为外国语言文学创设了新的发展环境和条件。在这个进程中,我国外语界就全球化背景下外国语言文学的使命和责任、外语教育规划、外语学科发展路径、外语人才培养模式等理论和实践问题进行了积极的探索,为推动我国经济社会发展、促进中外文化交流、培养高素质国际化人才作出了重要贡献。在全球化背景下,我们面临进一步提升高等教育国际化水平、繁荣发展哲学社会科学、扩大中国学术的国际影响力和话语权、增强国家文化软实力、增进国际理解的艰巨任务。哲学社会科学要繁荣发展,既要“请进来”,也要“走出去”,对本国传统文化精髓,既不狂傲自大,也不妄自菲薄;对外国优秀文明成果,既不全盘照搬,也不一概否定。在纵横捭阖的大时代面前,我国学术发展更需要世界眼光、国际视野和“海纳百川、有容乃大”的广阔胸怀。面对新形势、新任务,外语院校和外语系学科有独特和不可替代的优势,有责任、有义务、有能力推进内涵发展、质量提升、品牌建设,服务于整个国家学术的发展,服务于国家外交战略能力的大幅提升。

国学大师、清华研究院“四大导师”之一陈寅恪先生曾经说,“读书必先识字”,他自己就精通梵语、英语、法语、德语、巴利语、波斯语、突厥语、西夏语,还修习过中亚古文字和蒙古语。时至今天,要了解古希腊、古埃及、古印度、古巴比伦文明的历史,要感受罗马帝国的辉煌和文艺复兴的灿烂,要领略工业革命和西方哲学的魅力,要把握当前国际社会发展的律动和人类进步的脉搏,外国语言文学仍然是一种十分重要而必不可少的工具、载体和媒介。在全球化背景下,普世价值往往更易超越民族、文化、宗教、局域认知等,通过外语这座桥梁得以交流和沟通、发扬和传播,从而提升人类社会的福祉。

高等学校的根本任务是培养人才。为适应全球化和高等教育国际化的需要,外语院校和外语学科一项很重要的使命和责任,就是要践行“立足平凡、追求卓越”的教育理念,创新人才培养模式,着眼于培养全球化、高素质公民。这种人才,具有较高的公民素养,“不能仅仅是语言、翻译方面的专家,更要在此基础上成为对象国研究和区域研究的专家,成为外语精湛、专业突出、高素质的复合型、复语型的国际化人才”(教育部副部长郝平)。简而言之,全球化、高素质公民的内涵可以用“中国灵魂、世界胸怀、现代意识”十二个字来表述,它包含了人与自我、人与国家、人与世界三个命题。第一,大学生要追求自我完善,务求“格物、致知、诚意、正心”,修身自持,赋予个体生命实际意义。第二,大学生要理性爱国,正确理解与认同传统文化,自觉参与现代中国的社会—文化转型进程。第三,大学生要用全人类而非单一国家民族的眼光关注诸如气候变化、核扩散、大规模传染病等国际性难题,不断提高跨文化交际能力,对外具有独立的品格和开放的心态。

在全球化语境下,外国语言文学需要遵循学科发展规律,顺应国家政策安排,不断加强自身建设,逐步提升学科的影响力和话语权。推进外国语言文学基础理论研究,密切追踪国外学术前沿,注意学习和借鉴,但不能满足于“跟随”和“阐释”,要力争取得有突破性的、具有国际影响的原创性外文理论成果。充分发挥外语学科优势,整合相关学科资源,开展全球问题、国际区域和国别问题的长期跟踪研究,为国家外交战略服务。积极主动对接国家和地方战略需求,就外语教育教学和对外交往的重大理论和实践问题,鼓励个人自由探索,支持学科集体攻关,为党和政府提供高水平的决策咨询服务。比如,广东外语外贸大学在广东省政府的鼎力支持下组建的广东国际战略研究院,近年来就国际金融危机、中国—东盟自贸区成立、日本地震海啸等重大问题对广东的影响及对策,组织外语专

家和相关学科学者进行专题研究，向有关方面提交了高质量的调研报告，对政府施政和企业决策产生了积极的影响。“走出去”，是繁荣发展我国哲学社会科学的重要环节。外语院校和外语学科可充分发挥自身独特优势，健全高端国际型人才培养体系，重点培育一批高水平、专业化的翻译团队，培养造就一批造诣高深的翻译名家，翻译并向海外推介一批中国文化经典和学术精品。要适应学科分化与综合的趋势，加强外语与经济、管理、法律、文化、军事、信息技术等学科的交叉和融合，在保持传统语言文学学科优势的基础上，努力催生出一批能与国际学术界直接对话、具备学术话语权的新型特色交叉学科。加强与港澳台外语界的交流与合作，积极参与国际学术活动和学术组织，积极参与和推动国际学术组织有关政策、规则、标准的研究和制定。

以“工程”、“项目”和“课题”等名义对高等学校发展实行管理和调控，是我国高等教育体制的重要特色。目前，少数外语院校进入国家“211 工程”建设高校行列，外国语言文学学科也拥有一批国家级重点学科、教育部人文社科重点研究基地、教育部特色专业建设点、国家精品课程、国家教学名师等，这些总体上构成了外语学科领域的学术制高点。2008 年，广东外语外贸大学“全球化背景下的外国语言文学研究”入选广东省“211 工程”三期重点学科建设项目，其系列专著凝聚了“语言·文学·文化”、现代技术与语言教学评估、跨文化交际与管理、翻译研究与实践等研究方向，来自政府的支持为广外外语学科的创新发展提供了新的机会和平台。出版“全球化背景下的外国语言文学研究丛书”，一来可作项目成果的初步展示，二来以此就教于同行专家学者。

慢工出细活，厚积才能薄发。全球化背景下外国语言文学学科的发展，与中国改革开放与现代化建设事业一样，依然任重而道远。是为序。

徐真华①

2011 年 6 月

① 徐真华，广东外语外贸大学教授，博士生导师；广东省人民政府文史研究馆馆员，文史馆文学院名誉院长。

Contents

Preface 1

Chapter 1 Introduction: An overview of the book 3

1.1 Justification for doing the research 4

1.2 Theoretical underpinning of the study 6

1.3 Problems with EFL learners' vocabulary learning 7

1.4 Collaborative output and SLA 15

1.5 The conceptual framework of the study 17

1.6 A mixed model research approach 20

1.7 Organization of the book 20

Chapter 2 Literature review 22

2.1 The theoretical underpinning of the study 22

2.2 Language output and second language vocabulary acquisition 54

Chapter 3 Research design and data collection methods 108

3.1 Research design 108

3.2 Research methodology and data collection methods 128

3.3 Study 1: A quasi-experimental study 134

3.4 Study 2: An exploratory study 152

3.5 Use of the data collected 159

Chapter 4 Data processing and data analysis methods 160

4.1 Analyzing vocabulary posttests in Study 1 160

4.2 Analyzing task-elicited oral data in Study 2 180

4.3 Analyzing task-elicited oral data in Study 1 196

4.4 Validity and reliability of data analyses 200

Chapter 5 Effects of collaborative output on L2 lexical learning: Confirmative findings from Study 1 202

5.1 Answering research question 1 204

5.2 Answering research question 2 219

5.3 Summary of findings and reflection on using multiple scoring methods 234

Chapter 6 Task performances, cognitive word processing, and lexical learning within collaborative output: Exploratory findings from Study 2 239

6.1 Answering research question 3 – 1: Overall task performances 240

6.2 Answering research question 3 – 2: Cognitive word processing 275

6.3 Relationship between word processing and lexical learning: Qualitative exploration 299

Chapter 7 Correlations between cognitive word processing and lexical learning within collaborative output: Exploratory findings from Study 1 333

7.1 Correlations between word processing and lexical learning: Quantitative exploration 334

7.2 Relations between word processing and lexical learning: Further quantitative exploration 345

7.3 Comparing correlations for collaborative written output and collaborative oral output 355

Chapter 8 Relationship between interactional processes and cognitive word processing: Further exploratory findings from Study 2 358

8.1 Answering research question 5 – 1: Interactional processes 359

8.2 Answering research question 5 – 2: Connecting interactional processes and cognitive word processing 376

Chapter 9 Discussion of the findings 385

9.1 Findings about effects of collaborative output on lexical learning

..... 385
9.2 Findings about effects of task roles on lexical learning 402
9.3 Findings about word processing and its relationship with lexical learning 411
9.4 Findings about correlations between word processing and lexical learning 424
9.5 Findings about interactional processes and their relationship with word processing 444
9.6 The conceptual framework and the theoretical rationale revisited 447

Chapter 10 Conclusions 458
10.1 A summary, conclusions, and contributions of the study 458
10.2 Implications of the study 467
10.3 Limitations of the study 472
10.4 Recommendations for future research 478
10.5 A final synthesis of the study 481

References 483
Appendices 507
1. A survey on background information 507
2. The input passage of the study 509
3. Reading comprehension task used in the study 511
4. The collaborative oral output task used in Study 1 514
5. The collaborative written output task used in Study 1 516
6. Cued words for output tasks 518
7. The vocabulary pre-test used in the study 519
8. Productive vocabulary posttest 1 521
9. Receptive vocabulary posttest 1 523
10. Stimulated recall questions for Study 2 527
11. Symbols used for data transcribing and data coding 528
12. The coding scheme for AS-units involved in collaborative output 529
13. The coding scheme for cognitive word processing involved in

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collaborative output 531
14. The coding scheme for interactional processes involved in collaborative output 534

Preface

Vocabulary acquisition is one of the essential components of foreign language learning. One critical problem for Chinese EFL learners' lexical learning is the distance between their receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. The gap is so large that it even affects learners' effective communication. Researchers suggest that the effective way to reduce the gap should be pushing learners to put newly-learnt words into productive use. In light of the lexical learning problem and the suggested solution, I investigated Chinese EFL learners' lexical learning through and within collaborative output, which constitutes the present book.

In the book predicated on the literature, I delineated the scope of my study and set up the study by adopting a dual theoretical perspective and using a mixed model approach. Particularly, two empirical studies — a quasi-experimental study and an exploratory study — were carried out in order to examine both lexical learning outcome and lexical learning process. A total of 240 Chinese EFL majors participated in the quasi-experimental study by forming three groups and performing three respective tasks, namely, a collaborative written output task, a collaborative oral output task and a reading comprehension task. All three groups took productive and receptive vocabulary posttests four times after task treatment. Eight pairs of Chinese EFL majors, who were counterparts of the quasi-experiment participants, took part in the exploratory study. Among them, four pairs conducted the collaborative written output task while the other four pairs performed the collaborative oral output task, with their task performances being videotaped. Following task treatment, all eight pairs received a stimulated recall on their task performance. The data resulting from the two studies were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Results of data analysis revealed the following findings: 1) Collaborative output tended to lead to significantly more vocabulary learning than reading comprehension did, but collaborative written output and collaborative oral output did not bring about significantly different vocabulary learning. 2) The output task participants engaged in four categories of cognitive word processing. These

categories of cognitive word processing were able to cultivate lexical learning because they incorporated various lexical learning conditions. 3) Six categories of interactional processes were involved in participants' collaborative output. 4) A comprehensive examination of the six categories of interactional processes and the four types of cognitive word processing revealed that participants' interactional processes mediated and contributed to their greater and deeper cognitive word processing. Pooled together, these findings indicate that collaborative output could lead to lexical learning because it was able to push learners to do greater and deeper cognitive word processing via stimulating learners' lexical learning mechanisms and creating lexical learning conditions through the mediation of interactions.

The book is structured in ten chapters:

Chapter 1 *Introduction: An overview of the study*
Chapter 2 *Literature review*
Chapter 3 *Research design and data collection methods*
Chapter 4 *Data processing and data analysis methods*
Chapter 5 *Effects of collaborative output on L2 lexical learning*
Chapter 6 *Task performances, cognitive processing, and lexical learning within collaborative output*
Chapter 7 *Correlations between cognitive word processing and lexical learning within collaborative output*
Chapter 8 *Relationship between interactional processes and cognitive word processing*
Chapter 9 *Discussion of the findings*
Chapter 10 *Conclusions*

My completion of the book would be impossible without the help and support of my teachers, colleagues, students, friends and families. Here I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of them.

Because of the limitation of individual knowledge and cognition, the book may contain errors and/or inappropriate expressions, which should be all my responsibility. I look forward to readers' suggestions and criticisms.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: An overview of the book

This book reports a study investigating the effect of collaborative output on second language (L2) vocabulary learning. Here L2 refers to English as a foreign language (EFL) rather than English as a second language (ESL). In the book, L2 and EFL will be used interchangeably, except when they are distinctively specified. Collaborative output refers to both collaborative oral output and collaborative written output, resulting from EFL learners' pair work. L2 vocabulary learning denotes both L2 productive and L2 receptive vocabulary acquisition and retention. Following the practice in second language acquisition (SLA), vocabulary learning and vocabulary acquisition are used interchangeably in the book except where they are distinguished.

My interest in the study can be traced back to my experiences of teaching English writing to EFL learners. Up to now, I have been teaching English to EFL major students at a tertiary institution for eleven years. For nine out of the eleven years, I have been mainly teaching English composition to university freshmen and sophomores. The uniqueness about our teaching is that apart from lecturing the methods and strategies of English writing, we (my colleagues and I) practice a "Length Approach" (C. Wang, Niu, & Zheng, 2000). This approach takes "write to learn" as its aim. That is, students are supposed to learn both English writing and English language through writing. The means to achieve "write to learn" is the "Length Approach", according to which students are encouraged to write compositions as long as possible. We believe that long compositions are able to push students to make full use of their potentials in the knowledge about a topic and the language for talking about the topic. Hence, the aim of "write to learn" can be attained. In order to achieve

the language learning aim through writing, one of our measures is to require students to use and underline newly-learnt words in their compositions because of the importance and the difficulty of vocabulary acquisition for EFL learners. However, no empirical studies have examined how students would use and process the newly-learnt words in their composition writing and what could be the effect of using newly-learnt words, though our "write to learn" teaching have been successful (C. Wang et al., 2000). Thus, the original idea for the present research arose.

Although individual writing is the common practice in the EFL composition course, in the present study, collaborative written output rather than individual writing is included for two reasons. First, students' learning process can be easily and reliably observed in a collaborative writing activity, because their conversations arising from the activity can be recorded and carefully examined. Second, it is believed that examining the learning process involved in collaborative writing can shed light on the process involved in individual writing.

This chapter mainly focuses on presenting an overview of the study. First, it justifies how the study has been conceptualized followed by an introduction to the theoretical underpinning of the study and an elaboration of the problem with EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition. Then it focuses on the research concerning collaborative learning in second and foreign language teaching and learning. Afterwards, it gives a brief account of the conceptual framework and the research methodology adopted in the study. Finally, this chapter is concluded with an outline of the content in the remaining chapters of the book.

1.1 Justification for doing the research

The conceptualization of the study mainly arose from two factors, one pedagogical and the other academic. Pedagogically, vocabulary acquisition is both critical and difficult for L2 learners. Academically, there are still relatively few researches on the effect of collaborative output on L2 vocabulary acquisition

in spite of the current prevalence of collaborative work in ESL and EFL teaching and learning.

As vocabulary is an indispensable component of a language, vocabulary acquisition is an essential part of language learning. This could be evidenced in at least three respects. First, the lexicon is the driving force in sentence production because it mediates the conceptualization and the encoding of grammar and phonology; that is, it mediates language production (Gass & Selinker, 2001; Levelt, 1989). Thus, vocabulary development has been recognized by researchers, as well as learners, as a major aspect of learning a new language (Ellis, 1999a). Second, some researchers (e.g., Gass, 1988b; Johansson, 1978; Politzer, 1978, cited in Gass & Selinker, 2001) have discovered that lexical errors constitute most L2 errors and both learners and native speakers view lexical errors as the most serious and disruptive obstacle to communication. Third, studies also reveal that learners' lexical knowledge is positively correlated with their reading comprehension (e.g., Laufer, 1992; Mecartty, 2000), listening comprehension (e.g., Kelly, 1991; Mecartty, 2000), and overall writing quality (e.g., Engber, 1995; Raimes, 1985).

However, lexical learning is no easy job for L2, especially for EFL learners, as evidenced by the constant complaints of my students. My students always complain that English words are easy to forget and they cannot use the words that they memorized. This, in fact, relates to one of the biggest problems with L2 vocabulary learning, that is, the gap between learners' productive vocabulary and receptive vocabulary. This gap is particularly true for EFL learners, as found in Laufer (1998) and Li (2000). Laufer (1998) and Li (2000) further speculated that the reason for the gap should not be that EFL learners are not exposed to enough vocabulary, but that they do not have access to adequate opportunities of using newly-learnt words productively.

As a matter of fact, language output has been attended to both theoretically and pedagogically in the last 20 years or so. Theoretically, the importance of output for language learning has been emphasized since the postulation of the comprehensible output hypothesis (COH) (Swain, 1985, 1995). Pedagogically, language production, including collaborative output, is common in ESL and EFL teaching and learning because of the spread of communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based teaching and learning (TBTL). However,

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