语言形式与英语词汇教学

郭文英　著

The Effects of Three Instructional Options (FonFS, FonM, FonF) on Chinese Non–English Majors' Vocabulary Learning

语言形式与英语词汇教学

郭文英◎著　Guo Wenying

PREFACE

Long has proposed that instructional options can be of three types, depending on whether instruction requires learners to focus on meaning, forms, or an integration of both meaning and forms. According to Long, instruction that is based on a focus on meaning (focus-on-meaning or FonM instruction, abbreviated to FonM) posits that exposure to rich input and meaningful use of the second language (L2) can lead to incidental acquisition of the L2 system. Instruction that expects learners to focus on forms in isolation (focus-on-forms or FonFS instruction, abbreviated to FonFS) assumes that the target L2 forms can and need to be taught one by one in a sequence externally orchestrated according to linguistic complexity. Finally, instruction that seeks to make learners focus on forms integrated in meaning (focus-on-form or FonF instruction, abbreviated to FonF) capitalizes on brief, reactive interventions that, in the context of meaningful communication, draw learners' attention to formal properties of a linguistic feature which appears to cause trouble on that occasion, is learnable given the learner's internal developmental state, and is likely to be useful in future communication.

The present study attempts to investigate the effects of the above stated instructional options on Chinese non-English majors' vocabulary learning in terms of the comparison between these three instructional options. The experimental questions of the present study are stated as follows:

(1) What are the effects of the tasks concerning FonM and FonF respectively on L2 learners' retention and retainment of the target words? Is L2 vocabulary really learnt by purely FonM?

(2) What are the effects of the tasks concerning FonF and FonFS respectively on L2 learners' retention and retainment of the target words? Can L2 vocabulary be best learnt without FonFS?

Altogether 107 freshmen participated in two experiments (FonM versus FonF in Experiment 1; FonF versus FonFS in Experiment 2) and they were randomly assigned to four groups. These four groups conduct four concerning tasks: reading comprehension in FonM group, reading comprehension with relevant glosses in FonF group, reading comprehension with relevant glosses to fill in target words in exercises for FonFS1 group, and sentences-making with target words for FonFS2 group. The material used in the present study was adopted from Huang's (2003) study for the purpose of validity.10 important content words were selected as the target words but were replaced by corresponding non-word made by Gathercole and Papagno, to ensure every participant could have no chances to encounter these target words before. All the materials were collected when tasks were finished and participants had no idea to take a test on target words. Short- and long- term retention of ten target words was investigated on two (immediate and delayed) posttests at an interval of two weeks.

In our design, we had two independent variables (task and span between the two posttests) and one dependent variable (subjects' scores of vocabulary tests carried out after the experiments). Results and analyses of significant difference by SPSS 11.5 were presented respectively for the two experimental questions in the paper. The results getting from the present study are summarized as follows:

(1) Both FonM and FonF instructional options for L2 vocabulary learning are effective in actual classrooms, but FonF is more effective, and L2 vocabulary is not really learnt by purely FonM. FonF, an instructional option which adopts an integration of forms and meaning can help L2 learners more effectively in their vocabulary learning than FonM which stresses only on the meaning alone.

(2) Contrary to what some proponents of FonF suggest, treating words as objects of study rather than as tools for communication, i.e. the instructional option of FonFS, is quite effective as a teaching method. Consequently, it is reasonable to say that L2 vo-

cabulary can not be best learnt without FonFS. The results and analysis getting from the vocabulary learning strategies also indicate that L2 learners are actually preferable to use such vocabulary learning strategies as using word card, rote retention, practice and review, and memorizing word lists, all of which are featured as FonFS.

(3) The present study has explored the necessity and possibility of a more balanced teaching approach: FonF integrates the traditional FonFS and FonM as well.

This paper is composed of six parts. Following the introduction (Chapter 1) is the literature review (Chapter 2), in which researches relevant at home and abroad con-cerning the effects of three instructional options in L2 vocabulary learning will be stated, and the strengths and limitations of the previous researches will also be dis-cussed. Chapter 3 offers the theoretical framework of the present study by reviewing some relevant theoretical justifications. Chapter 4 introduces the research design and procedure of the current study and Chapter 5 discusses the data and presents the re-sults of the study. In the final chapter (Chapter 6), a conclusion is made, which sum-marizes the major findings of the study and provides some implications for language teaching in college English context.

前　言

　　长期以来，在第二语言习得和外语教学领域存在着三种教学途径。它们分别是全形式(focus-on-forms instruction,简称 FonFS)、重意义(focus-on-meaning instruction, 简称 FonM)和重形式(focus-on-form instruction, 简称 FonF)。全形式 FonFS 是一种对单独的语言项目进行系统教授的传统教学途径，学习者在这种教学途径下把注意力完全集中在某个特定的语言形式上以便学会该形式；重意义 FonM 是指在交际活动中将学习者的注意力完全集中在语言意义之上的一种教学途径，学习者在这种教学途径下通常都忽视对语言形式的学习和掌握；重形式的教学途径 FonF 则指在以意义为主的教学活动中把学习者的注意力暂时切换到语言形式上，学习者对语言形式的注意是在以表达意义为基础的教学活动中自然发生的。

　　本书试图用对比的方式分别调查以上三种教学途径对我国非英语专业大学生的词汇学习（尤其是对他们的词汇记忆和保持效果）所产生的作用和影响。本文提出的两个研究问题分别是：

　　1. FonM 和 FonF 对第二语言学习者的词汇记忆和保持效果分别有何影响？单纯的 FonM（尤其是阅读的方式）是否是第二语言学习者学习词汇的最佳途径？

　　2. FonF 和 FonFS 对第二语言学习者的词汇记忆和保持效果分别有何影响？对词汇形式的注意是否必须要在 FonF 所要求的交际环境下才能够实现？

　　本研究包括实验一和实验二两个实验，实验一针对 FonM 和 FonF 对学习者二语词汇学习效果进行比较，实验二针对 FonF 和 FonFS 对学习者二语词

汇的学习效果进行比较。本研究抽取兰州理工大学非英语专业一年级的两个平行班作为受试对象，共有107名本科非英语专业一年级学生参加了本次实验。所有受试被随机分为四组: FonM组，FonF组，FonFS1组，FonFS2组。在实验正式开始之前，所有的受试都接受了一次词汇水平测试。该测试的结果表明所有受试的词汇量处于同等水平，各组间的词汇水平没有显著性差异。实验正式开始后，所有受试被随机分配到以下四种不同的任务形式中参加实验。FonM组采取既无目标词注释又无目标词选项练习的任务形式；FonF组采取有目标词注释但无目标词选项练习的任务形式；FonFS1组采取既有目标词注释又有目标词选项练习的与任务相关的FonFS任务形式 (task-related FonFS)；FonFS2组采取使用目标词造句的纯粹的FonFS任务形式（pure FonFS）。为保证实验的有效性，实验所选用的阅读材料选自黄燕 (2003)。根据Gathercole & Papagno (1991)，书中出现的10个目标词被加工为伪造词，其目的是保证所有受试在接受实验之前没有接触过这些目标词。各项任务结束后，收集整理了所有实验数据。同时，在未被告知的情况下，所有受试都接受了一次即时测试和一次延时测试。即时测试在实验任务结束后马上进行，其目的是考察受试对目标词的即时记忆效果；延时测试于实验任务结束后的第三周进行，其目的是考察受试对目标词的长时记忆和保持效果。为了了解学习者实际采用的二语词汇学习方法和方式，本研究同时还设计了一份英语词汇学习策略问卷调查。所有受试于延时测试后参加了本次问卷调查。

本实验涉及两个自变量（实验任务和前后测试时间间距）和一个因变量（受试的词汇测试成绩）。实验结束后，通过词汇知识分级测试题（Vocabulary Knowledge Scale, 简称VKS）检测受试对目标词的掌握情况。所有的数据经过SPSS 11.5社会学统计软件分析、讨论和验证，最后得出的实验结论如下：

1.FonM和FonF对于第二语言学习者的词汇教学和学习都是有效的，但相比之下FonF的效果更为显著；FonM，尤其是阅读的方式，并不一定是第二语言词汇学习的最佳途径。因此，FonF是一种有效的词汇教学和学习方式。

2.与大多数FonF的拥护者所持观点正好相反，将第二语言中的词汇当作

学习的目标而并非交际的工具，即 FonFS，是一种极为有效的词汇教学和学习方式。词汇学习策略问卷调查的结果分析也证实，学习者偏爱背生词卡片、复习和练习、死记硬背等属于浅层次加工的有明显 FonFS 倾向的词汇学习策略。

3.在第二语言词汇教学和学习过程中，FonM, FonF 和 FonFS 三种教学途径相辅相成，将以上三者结合起来，使教师和学习者对语言意义和形式的注意力保持平衡，最大限度地发挥学习者的自主性，是促进学习者词汇学习和提高他们词汇能力的一种较好的选择。

本研究共分 6 章。第一章是引言，主要介绍本研究所涉及的三种教学方式产生的背景、研究目的、研究意义和术语界定等。第二章专门研究国内外专家学者对于不同词汇教学方式对非英语专业大学生词汇学习所产生影响的论述，并总结分析了前人研究的利弊，同时提出了本文的创新之处。第三章主要讨论和三种教学途径相关的概念及其内涵，论述其定义、特征和分类等，为本文的研究提供一定的理论支撑。第四章主要介绍本研究的设计和实施过程，包括研究目的、研究假设、研究方法、研究工具等。第五章主要介绍研究的结果和发现，并对其做详尽地分析。最后一章是全文结论和对本研究可能会给当前英语教学带来的启示。文后为附录部分，主要收录本研究过程中使用的研究材料和问卷调查等，以及笔者这几年发表的两篇论文。

感谢甘肃科学技术出版社的大力帮助。正是由于他们独具慧眼，热情支持本书的出版，本人多年的愿望才得以实现。借此机会，也特别感谢一直以来支持、关心和鼓励我成长的家人、朋友和同事。正是由于他们多年来的无私帮助和支持，才使得我能够在学业上不断取得进步，并最终有了本书的问世。

由于本人学识浅薄，书中不妥和错误之处在所难免，恳请广大读者批评指正。

郭文英

2014 年 6 月

Contents

Chapter 1   Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Long (1991, 1997; Long & Robinson 1998) has proposed that instructional options can be of three types, depending on whether instruction requires learners to focus on meaning, forms, or an integration of both meaning and forms. According to Long, in-struction that is based on a focus on meaning (*focus-on-meaning or FonM instruc-tion, abbreviated to FonM*) posits that exposure to rich input and meaningful use of the second language (L2)[2] can lead to incidental acquisition of the L2 system. Instruc-tion that expects learners to focus on forms in isolation (*focus-on-forms or FonFS in-struction, abbreviated to FonFS*) assumes that the target L2 forms can and need to be taught one by one in a sequence externally orchestrated according to linguistic com-plexity. Finally, instruction that seeks to make learners focus on forms integrated in meaning (*focus-on-form or FonF instruction, abbreviated to FonF*) capitalizes on brief, reactive interventions that, in the context of meaningful communication, draw learners' attention to formal properties of a linguistic feature which appears to cause trouble on that occasion, is learnable given the learner's internal developmental state, and is likely to be useful in future communication (Norris & Ortega 2000:420).

Partially due to the influence of the Universal Grammar assumption proposed by Chomsky, FonFS lost its favor in second language acquisition (SLA). With this belief, the teaching of grammar or forms is increasingly seen as neither a necessary nor suffi-cient condition for learners' language acquisition (Terrell 1991). Therefore, many

teachers tend to develop a mistrust of form−oriented teaching and simply turned to the widely popular "communicative or meaning−focused approach" (Doughty & Williams 1998a). Communicative language teaching emerged in the 1970s and 1980s and has prevailed as the dominated teaching approach in second language classroom since then. Only in recent years did some researchers and teachers reexamine its all−powerful position. Meanwhile, responses to the recently emerged instructional op−tion, *FonF instruction*, differ greatly. Teachers adhering to communicative language teaching reject it; traditional grammar−oriented teachers take it as a justification for a return to grammar. In fact, many educators might think that a focus on form is exactly what learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) do not need, since their major problem is not the lack of instruction on grammatical features, but the lack of opportu−nities for communicative language use. However, Long (1991, 1997; Long & Crookes 1992) contends that FonF instruction is likely to be more effective than FonM and FonFS instructions because it is consonant with what L2 researchers know about how second languages are acquired. A number of studies have also pointed to the effec−tiveness of instruction that includes some focus on form, relative to that which does not (Day & Shapson 1991; Doughty 1991; Fotos 1993; Harley 1993; Lightbown 1991, 1992; Lightbown & Spada 1990; Lyster 1994; Trahey 1996; Trahey & White 1993; White 1991; White, Spada, Lightbown, & Ranta 1991).

As far as L2 vocabulary learning is concerned, it is stressed because of its impor−tance in all aspects of language learning. Wilkins (1972:111) aptly declares that "while without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (cited in Li & Ren 2001:40). Virtually all L2 learners and their teach−ers know the fact that learning a second language involves the learning of large num−bers of words. Not surprisingly, many learners are somewhat apprehensive when faced with such an enormous task, and teachers as well as learners have always shown a keen interest in finding out in which ways instructional programs might foster the ac−quisition of so many words. Traditionally, the old−fashioned grammar−translation ap−proach and vocabulary−based examination system have been practiced in China; lan−

guage teaching has always emphasized FonFS. However, the argument that most vo-
cabulary is acquired from input only, mainly reading only, has been professed by
Krashen and his followers for the past two decades. Now, some FonF researchers still
believe that "vocabulary is best acquired in purely meaning-focused instruction"
(Doughty & Williams 1998b) even though they admit that FonF can enhance it. Con-
sequently, FonF research has been concerned with grammatical, not lexical instruc-
tion, and studies of vocabulary learning have been neglected in the FonF research.
Even De Keyser (1998), whose position towards grammar is very much like that of
FonFS, believes that vocabulary is mainly acquired through meaning-focused instruc-
tion (MFI) 3.

Therefore, reconsidering the role of the traditional FonFS instruction, the effective-
ness of the presently widely-used FonM instruction, and the necessity of a FonF in-
struction in L2 vocabulary learning, it is of great need to compare the effects of these
three instructional options from the vocabulary learning perspective.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The study aims to investigate the effects of three instructional options, i.e. FonFS,
FonM and FonF, on Chinese non-English majors' vocabulary learning. Specifically,
it reports a comparison of three tasks (the FonM task, the FonF task and the FonFS
task) respectively related to the above stated three instructional options in terms of
their effectiveness for vocabulary learning. Accordingly, the writer attempts to answer
the following two experimental questions by one vocabulary size test, one vocabulary
learning strategies questionnaire and two posttests as well:

(1) What are the effects of the tasks concerning FonM and FonF respectively on L2
learners' retention and retainment of the target words? Is L2 vocabulary really learnt
by purely FonM?

(2) What are the effects of the tasks concerning FonF and FonFS respectively on L2
learners' retention and retainment of the target words? Can L2 vocabulary be best

learnt without FonFS?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The present study is of both theoretical and pedagogical significance.

Theoretically, first, within the reach of the author's knowledge, very few studies have investigated EFL learners' ways of vocabulary learning from the perspective of different instructional options, especially from the perspective of comparing the effectiveness of all these three instructional options (FonFS, FonM and FonF) at the same time. Most previous researches on vocabulary learning have been carried out from such perspectives as EFL learners' vocabulary size (VS), their depth of vocabulary knowledge (DVK), the relationship between VS and DVK, EFL learners' vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) and so forth. Secondly, most advocates of FonF have proscribed FonFS. They claim that the attention of language learners to linguistic forms should be aroused in a communicative context. Therefore, apart from the need for an investigation of FonF in vocabulary learning, it is also necessary to investigate the relevance of FonFS to the L2 vocabulary learning. Last but not the least, few previous similar studies all have taken place in settings that appear to be well—funded, adequately supplied with teaching and learning materials, and generally free of classroom discipline problems. Moreover, most studies of FonF have taken place in a few countries, notably the United States, New Zealand, and Japan (Poole & Sheorey 2002), but no study supporting FonF appears to have taken place in a developing country, where the socioeconomic, political, and pedagogical realities may differ significantly from those in more developed countries (Poole 2005). Even fewer FonF research on vocabulary learning have been carried out in Chinese college English context. Accordingly, in some degree, it will be a meaningful attempt to investigate the effects of the instructional options on L2 learners' vocabulary learning in China.

Additionally, Laufer and Nation (1999) state that gaining the state of learners' vocabulary knowledge is of considerable value for diagnostic placement and curricu-

lum-design purpose, and it can also help teachers decide where learners should be given help with vocabulary learning. Hence, at the pedagogical level, the present study is of significance to some extent for L2 learners, teachers and curriculum designers as well. For L2 learners, the study will help increase learners' noticing of the target forms and their corresponding meaning, and consequently affect their way of learning vocabulary. For L2 teachers, the study will be meaningful for them to reconsider the ways of teaching vocabulary and find suitable ways to teach L2 vocabulary effectively. Finally, for the curriculum designers, the study tends to arouse their awareness of the importance in keeping a balance between context meaning and linguistic forms and leaving more space to linguistic forms in their syllabus designing.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of the present study is restricted as follows:

(1) Since the notions of learning and acquisition4 are different in many aspects, and one can hardly know whether he has really acquired a new word or learned it unless examining his vocabulary knowledge from the perspectives of accuracy, fluency and complexity. The present study examines the foreign language learners' vocabulary learning, particularly the retention and retainment of vocabulary, rather than their vo-cabulary acquisition.

(2) The subjects of the investigation are first-year non-English majors with inter-mediate L2 level chosen from Lanzhou University of Technology.

(3) The vocabulary tests selected for this investigation are based on Nation's (1990b) *Word Level Test*, Laufer and Nation's (1999) *Vocabulary -Size Test of Controlled Productive Ability*, Paribakht & Wesche's (1997) Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS), since their reliability and validity have been proven and they are used widely in the research of vocabulary learning.

(4) The statistics tool for the data analysis is SPSS 11.5 (a software package for so-cial statistics).

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is composed of six parts. Following the introduction (Chapter 1) is the literature review (Chapter 2), in which researches relevant at home and abroad concerning the effects of three instructional options in L2 vocabulary learning will be stated, and the strengths and limitations of the previous researches will also be discussed. Chapter 3 offers the theoretical framework of the present study by reviewing some relevant theoretical justifications. Chapter 4 introduces the research design and procedure of the current study and Chapter 5 discusses the data and presents the results of the study. In the final chapter (Chapter 6), a conclusion is made, which summarizes the major findings of the study and provides some implications for language teaching in college English context.