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个体差异与学习自主性

郝 玫 编著

Individual Differences of Foreign Language Learners and Learner Autonomy

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外语学习者个体差异与学习自主性

Individual Differences of Foreign Language Learners and Learner Autonomy

本书旨在通过英语学习者个体差异应用研究，加强对学习者自主学习能力培养，达到较好的外语学习效果。本书针对我国大学生英语自主学习能力总体不强的现状，分别探讨英语学习经历和自主学习能力的关系；元认知策略训练对促进学习者自主学习能力作用；师生关系对英语自主学习的影响；英语课堂互动和大学生自我效能感关系；通过任务教学法促进自主学习；全脑教学策略对英语学习情感变化的影响；激发学生自我调解式学习的动机策略等。本书适合大学外语学习者，大学外语教师、英语专业研究生和对外语教育感兴趣的读者。

本书为山西省回国留学人员科研资助项目“二语习得个体差异理论与实证研究”(2012-042)的部分成果，同时是山西省教育厅“独立学院学生英语自主学习模式”研究项目(2009--44)。

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PREFACE

The individual difference (ID) research has formed an independent sub-discipline within the field of second language acquisition. Individual difference is a prominent feature of Second language acquisition because a great deal of the variation in language learning outcomes is attributable, either directly or indirectly, to various learner characteristics. Autonomy is a legitimate and desirable goal of language education. Wenden (1991) believes that there is a connection between learner autonomy and success in language learning. There are many definitions of autonomy. Holec (1981)believes autonomy is the ability to take charge of one's own learning. Little (1991) presents his descriptions as "Learner autonomy is essentially a matter of the learner's psychological reaction to the process and content of learning. I would prefer the definition of Benson (2001) that "Autonomy is the capacity to take control of one's own learning and that autonomy is not a method of learning but an attribute of the learner's approach to the learning process".

According to Benson (2001), Individual learner differences can be approached from two directions in the context of the theory and practice of autonomy. On the one hand, since learners are individuals with different preferences and needs, they should be given the freedom to learn in the way that suit them best. On the other hand, they are open to change through reflection and training. They are able to recognize the disabling or enabling influence of certain individual variables and exercise control over them.

For both practical and theoretical reasons, there is a pressing need for empirical research on the relationship between the development of autonomy, individual learner differences and the acquisition of language proficiency. However, to date, research does not provide conclusive evidence on the mutability of individual variables in learning, their interrelationships, or the role of experience, role of teachers, training and self-control in change. Therefore, teaching learners how to carry out self-directed learning would be counter-productive as learner training can lead to greater autonomy (Holec 1981).

This book consists of empirical research of many years. The conclusions about the nature of autonomy and the practices associated with it are all drawn from classroom-based training. In this book individual learner differences are treated mainly in the context of practice of autonomy with focus on different levels of learner control and classroom-based, teacher-based approaches.

Section I looks at learner autonomy from learner control which is regarded as a natural attribute of learning as learners tend to excise control over psychological factors influencing their learning. On the control of psychological factors, the training of motivational strategies and whole brain teaching strategy are implemented.

The strong relationship between motivation and autonomous learning is theoretically supported. Researchers agree that motivation is an essential part of learners' autonomy. So the first rationale to promote learners' autonomy is to promote their motivation. Self-regulated learning (SRL) is regarded as the highest level of students' cognitive participation in the class and as the target for all the efforts made to stimulate learning motivation.

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Chapter 1 *Motivational Strategies to Stimulate English Self-regulated Learning of Independent College Students* is an experimental study in which motivational strategies were applied in English classroom to enhance the students' self-regulated learning ability through changing their use of motivational regulation strategies and their motivational components. This study finds that (1) students with high English proficiency are more adept at taking advantage of the motivational strategies taught by teachers to regulate their motivation in order to enhance their abilities to self-regulated learning. (2) motivational strategies that can relieve students' leaning anxiety should be encouraged to use. (3) monitor students' progress and give them positive feedbacks is a very effective strategy to promote students' control of learning belief.

Educators and neuroscientists are now attempting to apply the research findings of brain and cognitive neuroscience to classroom teaching. Chapter 2 *The Influence of Whole Brain Teaching Strategies on Affective Changes of College Students* is an attempt to explore the whole brain English teaching. The study finds that the whole brain teaching strategy-based EFL instruction can affect learners' hemispheric preference. The subjects' intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and learning goals in the experimental group all increased and meanwhile, their anxiety in language learning decreased significantly. The instruction does influence and enhance their learning behaviors in class and after class and the students in the experimental group become more autonomous in English learning after training.

Control over cognitive processes is understood as a matter of the psychology of learning, rather than directly observable learning behaviors. Attention, reflection and metacognitive knowledge are concerned in this regard. They offer the possibility of a concise account of the psychological factors understanding control over learning behavior. On this level of control over cognitive processes, two researches are included: metacognitive strategy training in developing learner autonomy and using memory working principle in English vocabulary teaching.

It is generally agreed that metacognitive strategies are closely related to language learning and contribute to the promotion of learner autonomy. If learners have strong metacognitive awareness in learning process and are able to use appropriate metacognitive strategies, they are more likely to be autonomous learners.

Chapter 3 *Promoting Learner Autonomy through Matacognitive Stratrgy Training* is an experimental study based on independent college students. The study proves that metacognitive strategy training does have positive effects on raising students' metacognitive awareness, promoting their learner autonomy, and improving their language proficiency.

Chapter 4 *Using Memory Working Principle in College English Vocabulary Learning* lays emphasis on the training of eight vocabulary learning strategies. The implications of the study for English teaching and learning are: teachers are obligated to do planned, organized, conscious and long-term vocabulary memory training to students. Learners, based on individual differences, should find out certain effective vocabulary memory strategy that is applicable for them to learn. Vocabulary memory strategies training should focus on the five key steps, among which, the enhancement of the first step of selective attention has a great effect on the improvement of vocabulary memory.

Section II focuses on autonomy in practice. If autonomy is the goal of language education, teachers and educational institutions should attempt to foster autonomy through practices that will allow learners to engage in modes of learning in which learning capacity can be developed. The practices associated with the development of autonomy are broad. Benson classifies the practices related to learner autonomy development into 6 categories:resource-based,technology-based,learner-based,classroom-based,curriculum-based and teacher-based approaches. Here we will deal with learner-based approach, classroom-based approach and teacher-based approach.

Learner-based approaches emphasize the direct production of behavioral and psychological changes in the learner that will enable them to take greater control over their learning. In this approach, a research on the relationship of learners' English learning experience and autonomy learning is introduced.

Classroom-based approaches to autonomy concern the extent to which control over management of classroom activities lead to the development of control over cognitive and content aspect of learning. Any classroom learning focusing on learners and empowering them to decide for the learning factors can foster autonomy. In classroom-based approach, we look at two empirical studies. One is promoting learning autonomy through task-based language teaching, the other is the effect of classroom interaction on students' self-efficacy.

Teacher-based approaches emphasize the role of the teacher and teacher education in the practice of fostering autonomy among learners. Therefore, teachers' involvement does not suggest a hindrance to learner autonomy but a facilitator. In this approach, we will discuss the influence of teacher-student relationship on college students' autonomous English learning.

"For most of us, important learning experiences are likely to be remembered at least partly in terms of our relationships with one or more other learners or with a teacher" (Little, 1991). Chapter 5 *English Learning Experience of Non-English Majors and Learning Autonomy* finds that learners' language learning experiences affect their competence of autonomous learning. The internal and external factors interact in the learners' language learning experiences. If anyone of these factors change, their autonomous learning will be influenced. Among the suggestions given are: teachers should know of the learners' learning experiences and plan successful learning experience for the learners.

Task-based approach should set some concrete goals of real communication, provide some problem-solving tasks and encourage learners' self-evaluation and reflection, which should be effective to cultivate learner autonomy. Chapter 6 *Promoting Learning Autonomy of Students in Independent College through Task-based Language Teaching* reveals from both quantitative and qualitative data that task-based language teaching has some positive effects on cultivating learners' intrinsic motivation, promoting learner autonomy, raising the awareness of cooperation and strengthening confidence.

Self-efficacy can influence our thoughts, emotions and choices, persistence and efforts in second language learning. Interaction increases the opportunities of language practice and it contributes to the development of students' communication, relaxed and harmonious classroom atmosphere and motivating students to learn harder (Long & Porter, 1985).

Chapter 7 *The Relationship between University English Classroom Interaction and Students' Self-efficacy* indicates that there is a positive significant relationship between self-efficacy and English classroom interaction. Moreover, the students' self-efficacy has improved and their performances in English class have greatly changed, which in return has promoted English classroom interaction. Only when college students have high self-efficacy, will they devote themselves to English learning actively and positively.

There has been an increasing tendency to focus on the teacher's role in autonomous learning. Terms to describe the role of the teacher include facilitator, helper, coordinator, counselor, consultant, adviser, knower and resource. Creating a relaxed and enjoyable learning climate and cultivating harmonious teacher-student relationship can not only ease students' emotional obstacles and learning anxiety, but also can promote students' learning motivation and autonomous learning consciousness. This is proved by The Influence of Teacher-Student Relationship on College Students' Autonomous English Learning in Chapter 8.This study identifies that teacher-student relationship has obvious

impact on the students' motivation, attitude and self-efficacy in their autonomous English learning. Effective teacher-student relationship can promote autonomous English learning, which requires teachers to have the ability to bridge the emotional connectedness with students, and then the meaningful learning can be achieved in a supportive setting.

I hope what is presented and discussed in this book will empower students in foreign language learning and a wider range of educational context. I also hope this book could contribute to the process of language learning and teaching to help learners become autonomous and more effective. The intended readers for this book include language teachers and learners, educational researchers, teacher trainers. I wish, last, but most important, to acknowledge the previous researchers for their insight into our present resesrch. I wish to acknowledge all the teachers, students and individuals who participate in those activities for challenging us for this meaningful practice.

郝　玫

2012 年 7 月 8 日于太原理工大学

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Section I Autonomy from Learner Control

1. MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES TO STIMULATE ENGLISH SRL OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGE STUDENTS

1.1 Introduction

Self-regulated Learning has received increasing attention from language researchers and the student's ability to regulate one's own learning is now increasingly recognized as a major goal within language education. The highest level of students' cognitive participation in the class is Self-regulated Learning (SRL) — learning positively, in which students take the responsibility of impelling themselves to learn and comprehend (Rohrkemper & Corno1988, 1985).

Many language learners may have shared the impression that learning another language is an effort-demanding task and, more often than not, a long-term process as well. To continue developing their language proficiency levels, language learners not only have to equip themselves with the necessary skills for successful learning but also need to have a strong desire to learn the language. Motivation is consistently viewed as a critical determinant of students' language learning and achievement (e.g., Dornyei, 2003; Gardner, 1985). However, a lack of motivation is a frequent problem experienced by language learners. Regulation of motivation has been regarded as an important aspect of SRL and is thought to have an impact on academic learning and achievement (Boekaerts, 1995, 1997; Pintrich, 2000; Wolters, 1998, 2003).

In previous studies, motivational regulation strategies have been proposed by many researchers. Wolters (2003) distinguished five motivational regulation strategies. In China, LiKun (2007) conducted initial research to explore Chinese college students' use of motivational regulation strategies which include eight strategies. Inspired by LiKun's study on motivational regulation, the present study is aimed to explore the motivational strategies taking effects on motivational regulation.

Certain motivational components have been proved to be related with SRL. Six motivational components proposed by Pintrich (1990) are also important factors influencing SRL, which will be analyzed in the present study as complement to motivational regulation strategies.

Motivational regulation and motivational components concerning SRL have been explored in many of the previous studies, but few researches have been conducted to explore how to use motivational strategies to promote students' SRL. As is known to all, independent college students are relatively low in English proficiency and are not good at SRL. Hence, it is meaningful to explore motivational strategies taking effects in stimulating SRL especially in stimulating students' motivational regulation. The present study is aimed to provide both theoretical and practical references to English teaching.

1.2. Literature Review

1.2.1 L2 Motivation

L2 motivation is an important factor to influence the effects of second language learning. Dornyei (2001) pointed out that all the other factors in SLA are in the prerequisite of motivation,

without which it is difficult for even the language leaner with strong learning ability to complete a long-term goal.

Inevitable links between motivation and learner autonomy have also been found in the field of L2 learning (Dickinson, 1995; Spratt et al., 2002; Ushioda, 2001).

1.2.1.1 Conceptualization of Motivation

As maintained by Dornyei, "motivation is one of the most elusive concepts in applied linguistics and indeed in educational psychology in general" (Dornyei, 1999: 525).The concept of motivation is complex and it is difficult to conceptualize it. Although numerous definitions of motivation have been proposed, there is little agreement in the literature with regard to the exact meaning of this concept (Dornyei, 1998).

1.2.1.2 Studies on Motivation

L2 motivation research has been a productive field of study in L2 research. The best-known constructs concerning motivation for L2 learning are those of integrative and instrumental motivation, based on the work of Gardner and his colleagues (Gardner, 1985; Gardner &Lambert,1972; Gardner&MacIntyre,1991;Gardner&Tremblay,1994). More than twenty years after 1960s, Gardner's social education model has taken a dominant position.

In 1980s the dichotomy of motivation began to be questioned by many researchers. In order to test whether integrative motivation is the only one internal motivation, Kruidenier & Clement (1986) and Belmechri & Hummel (1998) have conducted some researches in Quebec area of Canada. Through analysis to statistics, they have found that language learners have many orientations in language learning, like tourism, friendship and obtaining knowledge.

After 1990s Oxford & Shearin (1994), Williams (1997), in psychology and neurobiology field, have extracted some factors, influencing motivation like self-efficacy, valence, attribution etc. and through which, they have modified and expanded model of language learning motivation.

A more recent line of investigation of motivation is the temporal dimension of motivation, that is, the way in which motivational processes happen in time. The most complex process-oriented construct in the L2 field has been put forward by Dornyei and Ott ó(1998), who devised a process model of L2 motivation. This perspective fits in well with the recent emphasis on the study of students' self-regulation (Dornyei,2001b).The action control mechanisms in the process model of L2 motivation, as conceptualized originally by Kuhl (1985),can be seen as a subclass of self-regulatory strategies concerning learners' self-motivating function. Therefore, the processes of the action control in the process model of L2 motivation are similar to the processes concerning regulating motivation in SRL.

The limitations in researches on motivation so far lie in first, the research methods are too single and simple, most of which are questionnaire and test. More investigation methods like interview, observation could be used in researches on motivation. Second, the application of the fruit of researches is insufficient. In previous researches on motivation, the enlightenment and reflection on language teaching is relatively more, while the concrete available methods and suggestions are less. It is suggested that more attentions should be paid to how foreign language teachers help students cultivate and stimulate learning interest and motivation.

1.2.2 Self-regulated Learning in SLA

Self-regulated learning (SRL) is the extent to which the learner is a metacognitively, motivationally and behaviorally active participant in his or her own learning process (Zimmerman, 1986). Although the phrase "SRL" is rarely used in the field of SLA, the concept is very much alive in terms like "self-direction", "self-directed learning", "self-instruction" and "autonomous learning" (McDonough, 2001). Knowles (1975:18) defines self-directed learning as a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing

and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. Holec (1981: 3) defines autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning". In spite of the underlying conceptual differences between these terms, in practice the distinctions are often blurred.

Although the term of "SRL" is mainly used in educational psychology, the present study has also employed it mainly because the SRL model has made specific descriptions of various components of the successful learning process and motivational regulation was also mainly studied in the framework of SRL. Furthermore, SRL is employed in this study because it is most often used in formal educational settings. In the field of FL education, scholars have also begun to focus their attention on self-regulation and its importance in language learning (Ehrman & Dornyei, 1998).

However, as an important factor influencing self-regulated language learning, motivation is not static but dynamically evolving and changing, as Ushioda (1996:240) summarizes, "within the context of institutionalized learning especially, the common experience would seem to be motivational flux rather than stability." Students' ability to maintain and increase their motivation has also been regarded as an important aspect of SRL (Pintrich, 2000; Wolters, 1998). In view of this, students' regulation of their motivation should be particularly important for self-regulated language learning and success in language learning.

1.2.3 Motivational Regulation

1.2.3.1 Wolter's Five Motivational Regulation Strategies

Motivational regulation strategies originating from SLA theory mainly refer to the strategies that are used to enhance learning motivation through monitor, regulate and control motivation, emotion and learning environment when learners demotivate. It is Wolters (2003) who first did the systematic researches on university students' motivational regulation. He distinguished five motivational regulation strategies: (1) Interest enhancement (2) Mastery self-talk (3) Performance self-talk (4) Environment regulation (5) Negative-based incentive.

1.2.3.2 Schwinger's Eight Motivational Self-regulation Strategies

Building on the work by Wolters (1998, 1999, 2003), Schwinger et al. (2007) constructed a German questionnaire consisting of eight motivational strategy scales. Based on an analysis of the psychometric properties and an examination of the open responses, eight motivational regulation strategies were distinguished in his study.

The strategy of Enhancement of Situational Interest refers to the imaginative modification of a boring activity to make it more exciting. A second strategy which also aims at interest enhancement is Enhancement of Personal Significance. The focus here is more on assembling relations between the task and the person's individual interests and preferences (Leutner et al., 2001).The next three strategies emphasize goals, which include Mastery Self-talk, Performance-approach Self-talk and Performance-avoidance Self-talk (Schwinger et al., 2007). The sixth strategy is named Self-consequating and relies on the principles of behavioural reinforcement. A person can motivate oneself by self-reinforcement for having reached a particular goal such as the daily amount of homework in mathematics. Many students report to combine Self-consequating with the seventh strategy of Proximal Goal Setting (Schwinger et al., 2007; Wolters, 2003). This strategy consists of breaking a long-term goal (e.g., completing an extensive and complex task) into smaller sub-goals which are more easily achieved. The eighth and final motivational strategy is Environmental Control, which refers to beneficial arrangements of the working environment (e.g., to work in a quiet place such as a library; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1986).

1.2.3.3 Studies on Motivational Regulation in SLA in Chinese Context

In China, researches on motivational regulation mainly include the following four: Cheng Binglin (2002) investigated motivational regulation strategies used by Taiwan university students including external motivational regulation like self-reward, getting high scores as well as internal

motivational regulation including mastery, interest and task value. Borrowing the research methods by Wolters and Cheng Binglin, Li Xiaodong (2006) distinguished motivational regulation strategies used by university students in Chinese mainland. Qu Ran (2005) adopted modified MRS to investigate motivational regulation strategies used by middle school students. Li Kun (2007) did a research on non-English major university students which is endowed with pioneering significance in that it is the first research that has combined motivational regulation to Chinese students' English learning.

Looking back on all the researches on motivational regulation strategies and SLA, it is not difficult to conclude that there is little research that has combined motivational regulation strategies and motivational strategies used by teachers together which aimed to stimulate students' motivation. The present study inspired by Li Kun's research, is aimed to discuss the usage of motivational regulation strategies by independent college students who are non-English majors and try to find out motivational strategies that can be used by teacher in order to help students enhance motivation.

1.2.4 Dornyei's Motivational Strategies

1.2.4.1 Classification of Motivational Strategies

In recent years, researchers of motivation for SLA (Dornyei 1994, 2001; Dornyei & Csizer, 1998; Guillo Teaux & Dornyei 2008) did theoretical and empirical study on teaching strategies in classes which may take effects on SLA motivation and definitely proposed the concept of SLA motivational strategies. Dornyei (2008) pointed out that Motivational Strategies refers to: instructional intervention applied by the teacher to elicit and stimulate student motivation and self-regulating strategies that are used purposefully by individual students to manage the level of their own motivation.

1.2.4.2 Four Level Motivational Framework

Motivational strategies began to be focused on since 1990s, many scholars proposed them by creating appropriate class environment to simulate motivation (Oxford & Shearin 1994, Willim and Burden 1997). However, there has been no systematic theoretical frame till Dornyei (2001) proposed a systematical frame of motivational strategies, which includes four stages: (1) create the basic motivational conditions (2) generate initial motivation (3) maintain and protecting motivation (4) encourage positive self-evaluation.

1.2.4.3 Studies on Motivational Regulation Strategies

So far, the empirical studies on motivational strategies mainly include the following four: Cheng & Dornyei (2007) did an investigation to the usage of SLA motivational strategies of the teachers in Taiwan and compared their result to that of Dornyei & Csizer's (1998). The research found that the usage of motivational strategies of the teachers in two countries is not completely the same. As a result, they proposed that cultural difference influences the usage of the teachers' motivational strategies. Guillo Teaux & Dornyei (2008) firstly proved the effective effects of SLA motivational strategies on learning motivation through an investigation on the subjects of middle school students and teachers in Korea, which is of important significance to the researches on motivation. Bernaus & Gardner (2008), building on the background of Gardner's expanded motivation theory, analyzing the statistics through path analysis and hierarchical linear model, found different correlations among sensations to motivational strategies of teachers and students, learners' motivation and learning achievement and concluded that students' sensation to motivational strategies does positively predict their learning achievement. Bernaus, Wilson & Gardner (2009), accepting process model of motivation proposed by Dornyei & Otto (1998), led an empirical study on the correlations among teachers' motivation, motivational strategies and learners' motivation whose statistical analysis indicated that there is correlation between teachers' motivation and motivational strategies as well as between motivational strategies and learners' motivation.

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