



Language Form, Meaning and the Language Learner

语言的形式、意义与语言学习者

常新萍◎著



中山大學出版社
SUN YAT-SEN UNIVERSITY PRESS

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藏书章

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前 言

第二语言发展过程涉及的因素纷繁复杂，且各因素内部或自成体系，或与其他因素交织互动，形成更具影响力的动态系统，并以不同方式影响着第二语言习得的过程和效果。应用语言学家 Diane Larsen-Freeman (1997) 曾经把第二语言习得研究与基于自然科学研究的复杂性理论 (complexity theory) 和混沌理论 (chaos theory) 联系在一起来尝试解读第二语言习得过程中的非线性特征。由此我们看到，虽然世界上千千万万的人在学习和研究第二语言发展过程，然而至今，它对于学习者和研究者而言仍然是一个难解之谜。本书正是针对这个谜团所做的一个尝试性探索。

本研究从十多年前就逐渐开展，其主题和内容融合了我个人感兴趣的多个话题。作为外语学习者和研究者，一直以来我最为着迷的问题就是：同样是语言，为什么我们学习第二语言的时候就会显得那么困难？为什么不同的语言符号会带给我们那么大的交际障碍？第二语言学习过程到底有什么因素在起作用？语言的表现形式与它的意义的关系在学习过程中是如何体现出来的？各种影响学习的因素又是如何互相交织影响到学习过程的？作为学习过程主体的学习者在这个过程中扮演的是怎样的角色？等等。这类问题长期凝结不散，推动着一代又一代的研究工作者步步深入。本研究也是对此类基础问题探讨的一种尝试。

本书所谈到的语言的形式指的是语言的外在表现，如语言的发音、拼写、单项词汇和句子结构等。如英语中 “It is cold today.” 这个句子，如果我们纯粹从形式上看，看到的是四个单

词组成的简单句子，听到的是/it iz 'kəuld tə'dei/的发音。但是，这个句子的意义在使用中却会带来不同的效果，因为除了符号本身的意义，它还有在使用中的具体语境的意义，即语用意义。语言的意义产生于语言符号与语境在使用中的互动过程。由此，我们这里谈到的意义是语言使用者结合具体语境选择形式和概念进行组织而构成的结构在使用中产生的意义。除此之外，无论我们对语言如何精细地研究，然而，当我们把语言学理论用于解读第二语言发展时就会发现，没有对学习者的完整的人的理解和关注，就很难真正理解第二语言的学习过程，因为学习者才是整个学习过程的主体参加者。因此，第二语言学习过程研究如果没有对语言学习者相关因素的关注，就会感觉与我们的实际语言学习过程有很远的距离。正是基于此种想法才引出了本书的标题。

本书的主要读者对象是对第二语言学习过程感兴趣的研究工作者、教师和学生。写作角度尝试把第二语言习得领域中的基础问题诸如隐性学习与明晰学习、以规则为基础的学习与以意义为基础的学习等过程与应用语言学中长期关注的能力、知识等概念，通过实际研究概念框架结合起来讨论，以期对第二语言发展过程中的各种因素交织关系和影响有一定的解读，从而启发和推进中国环境下的外语教学课堂干预模式探讨。

本书以报告一个研究项目为切入点展开讨论，共涵盖八章内容。虽然整本书内部内容联系紧密，但读者若对不同方面感兴趣，也可以单独分章阅读。第一章主要是对本书基本主题和主要概念及布局的介绍。第二章主要围绕着语言能力内容的演变展开讨论，从语言学和应用语言学的不同角度详细探讨了第二语言学习过程中所追求的语言能力的本质。第三章则注重从第二语言习得过程出发，分析了基于不同角度对第二语言习得过程的各种解释以及这个过程所涉及到的各种因素，并结合本书所汇报的研究

中涉及的主要因素进行了讨论。第四章是在第二、三章讨论的基础上提出了一个指导本书汇报的一项研究的理论框架。该框架以图示方式勾勒了影响第二语言学习过程中内外各种主要因素之间的关系以及不同互动方式产生的不同结果,同时也可以作为今后课堂语言实践中的课堂干预理论指导框架。第五、六章重点汇报了基于这个理论框架而开展的一项具体实证研究的设计和发现。该研究是在理论指导下的一项涉及面较广的针对中国青少年英语学习者的课堂学习过程和效果的深层调查分析研究。第七章针对这项研究所提出的具体问题、假设以及研究发现展开理论讨论。本书的最后一章第八章一方面对本书的研究内容和发现进行了归纳和总结,另一方面,讨论了本研究成果对英语课堂干预方式及对第二语言习得过程理解方面带来的启发,并在此基础上提出了可行性操作建议。该章还对全书主题进行了总结。

本书的写作过程由于各种繁杂工作而不得不反复中断,推延至今。但是,凡事都有利弊。可能正是由于没有速成,才使得我有机会对一些问题反复思考、研读,从而使得自己的一些想法更趋成熟。不求完美,但求进步。本书在成稿过程中得到了来自多方面的启发和帮助。感谢书中所引文献的作者所给予的各种启迪。由衷感激曾经培养过和帮助过我的许许多多师长们,他们的教诲已经融入此书的字里行间。感谢曾经给予我无私帮助的同学和朋友们,许多感激已经在鸣谢(Acknowledgements)部分一一列出,此处不再赘述。同时,感谢同事廖海青教授对此书出版所给予的支持。除此之外,非常感谢出版社的责任编辑熊锡源先生以及编排人员为本书的出版所付出的努力。本书虽几经修改,但限于水平,舛误之处、言未尽意之处在所难免,敬请读者批评指正。

写作作为语言产生的过程之一实际上是一个不断探索、发

现、自我修正和学习提升的过程。直到这一刻，我依然对自己的作品不甚满意，但是也不得不强行暂停于某一个思维点上，靠读者的理解和智慧来补充了。

常新萍

2014年4月22日

于中山大学康乐园

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I would also like to record here their names and express my

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Preface

Second language acquisition (SLA) has been a discipline of deep mystery and enchantment ever since its inception. Although much has been learned about it, a clear understanding of this “complex, dynamic non-linear process” (Larsen-Freeman, 1997) is still far from us. The complexity of SLA process can be perceived from the proposed factors such as the source language, the target language, the amount and type of input, the amount and type of interaction, the amount and type of feedback, the cognitive styles of the learner, age, motivations, learning strategies, interests, the instructor factors, the social and cultural contexts, etc. and various ways of interactions among them. It is just because of this complexity that renders this field so much enduring appeal.

This book is an exploration of the interrelationship among some of the identified factors and how the different interactions among the factors work to facilitate or inhibit EFL learners’ acquisition of the targeted language system on the basis of an empirical study of a group of Chinese EFL learners in Guangzhou. The focus of the discussion in this book is centered around the nature of the latent knowledge that the learners under study have constructed and how different types of input together with other factors exert their impact on the learners’ final attainment.

The research reported in the book was motivated by the following considerations. Firstly, second language acquisition research is in want of a better understanding of whether, when and how learning takes place among different groups of learners’ learning processes and the role the EFL learners’ attained

knowledge plays in their pragmatic use. An investigation into the nature of Chinese EFL learners' English language attainment can provide further evidence to assist our understanding in this regard and help us pinpoint the problems of different sources involved in the learning process. Secondly, it was motivated by the paucity of studies on EFL learning in Chinese secondary schools (*Henceforth* CSS) and by the urgent need to determine the status quo of the teaching and learning in CSS so as to propose constructive suggestions for classroom practice in CSS.

The data employed in this book come from two parts in the research, i.e. an experiment which aims to examine the learners' performance in contextualized tasks and decontextualized tasks, and a follow-up investigation into the learning experiences of the same group of participants. The research was conducted based on a working conceptual framework which hypothesizes the possible relationships among different types of learning process, performance and possible factors undergirding the learning processes. The framework assumes that learners' differences in their language performance are brought about by the different types of knowledge represented in their minds which result from the different interacting factors in the learning process.

This book aims at sketching a rough picture of the secondary school EFL learning in China, diagnosing some of the problems in these schools, and exploring how the factors under study work together to manipulate the trajectory of the learners' second language development. It is hoped that the findings of the study and the discussion carried out in the book can spark further research and more thinking around Chinese EFL teaching and learning at different levels.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADJRCG:	recognition of the forms of comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives and adverbs
ADJRCL:	recalling of the forms of comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives and adverbs
Aexp:	expect to learn English well
Affect1:	talking with others about one's own feeling in learning
Affect2:	constantly encouraging oneself in learning English
Alike:	like English
Aprepr:	always prepare for English class
ATITD:	total scores for attitude variables
CA:	the Communicative Approach
CAC:	Cognitive and affective capacity
CC:	Communicative Competence
CCP:	CC-based performance
Cogn1:	training mental processes by summarizing ideas in reading
Cogn2:	training mental processes by attempting to understand materials directly in English
Comspt1:	compensating with gestures when failing to converse
Compst2:	compensating by guessing when failing to understand
DC:	Discourse Competence
E1:	exposure in listening
E2:	exposure in reading
E3:	exposure in speaking
E4:	exposure in writing
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
ELK:	Explicit Linguistic Knowledge
ESP:	English for Specific Purposes
EXPTL:	total scores for outside classroom language exposure
FLL:	Foreign Language Learning

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GC:	Grammatical Competence
GCP:	GC-based Performance
GL:	the grammatical forms and lexical items needed to encode the essential ideas contained in the WT
ILK:	Implicit Linguistic Knowledge
KT:	Knowledge Task (i.e. the decontextualized task)
KTCONT:	the basic grammatical concepts in the KT
KTFCT:	the function words in the KT
KTMPH:	the morphological forms in the KT
KTPRON:	the pronouns in the KT
KTRCGTL:	the total scores for the recognition of the morphological forms in the KT
KTRCLTL:	the total scores for the recalling of the morphological forms in the KT
KTTOTL:	the students' total attainment in the KT
KTVFS:	the verb forms in sentences in the KT
KTVOC:	the vocabulary in the KT
LAD:	Language Acquisition Device
LS:	Learning Strategies
MC:	Multiple Choice
Mem1:	memorizing words by means of association with sounds
Mem2:	memorizing words by associating the old with the new
MET:	the Matriculation English Test
Metacog1:	trying to arrange more time to learn English
Metacog2:	always paying attention to one's own progress
M1:	memorize words and learn grammar after class
M2:	read textbooks after class
M3:	do exercises after class
M4:	review lesson notes after class
M5:	listen to tapes after class
M6:	write compositions or diaries after class
M7:	practise speaking with classmates after class
Minst1:	learning English helps one find a good job
Minst2:	learning English helps one raise his social status
Minst3:	learning English helps one pass the MET to universities and colleges
Mintgl:	learning English helps one understand the people and

	their life in other countries
Mintg2:	learning English helps one contact with different people and talk with them
Mintg3:	learning English helps one think and behave like foreigners
NEE:	the National Entrance Examinations to universities and colleges
NMET:	the National Metriculation English Test
NPLRCG:	recognition of noun plurals
NPLRCL:	recalling of noun plurals
QL:	Questionnaire for Learners
QT:	Questionnaire for Teachers
SA:	the Structuralist Approach
SC:	Strategic Competence
SLA:	Second Language Acquisition
SLC:	Sociolinguistic Competence
SLL:	Second Language Learning
SLLner:	Second Language Learners
Social1:	often attempting to speak with others in English
Social2:	often learning with others and asking questions in English
TA:	the Traditional Approach
UG:	the Universal Grammar
VCRCG:	recognition of verb conjugations
VCRCCL:	recalling of verb conjugations
WT:	Writing Task (i.e. the contextualized task)
WTK:	the grammatical forms and lexical items generated by the learners for their accomplishment of the WT
WTKVOC:	the vocabulary produced correctly by the students in the WT
WTKMPH:	the morphological forms produced correctly by the students in the WT
WTKFCT:	the function words produced correctly by the students in the WT
WTKPRON:	the pronouns produced correctly by the students in the WT
WTKCONT:	the basic grammatical concepts produced correctly by

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- the students in the WT
- WTKVFS: the verb forms in sentences produced correctly by the students in the WT
- WTKTOTL: the students' total scores for their correct production of the WTK in the WT
- WTTOTL: the students' total scores based on holistic scoring methods

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