

认知、互动、自主学习： 课外环境中大学英语学习现状研究

◎ 刘 萍 著

*Learner Perception,
Interaction
and Autonomy:
College English Learning
in Extracurricular Contexts*



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College English Learning in Extracurricular Contexts

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This study investigated the dynamics of tertiary students' English learning experience in extracurricular contexts (LEC) in China. Informed by Vygotsky's social constructive theory (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978), particularly the concepts of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978), scaffolding (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976), interaction (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978) and autonomy (Holec, 1981), the research examined learner perception of English learning in a non-target language environment beyond the classroom.

Learning in extracurricular contexts (LEC) involved a range of extracurricular activities which were non-credit bearing programs designed by teachers to "entertain, instruct, and/or provide exercise of interests and abilities" (Taylor & Chiogioji, 1988, p. 102). This study provided a detailed analysis of LEC materials and tasks, levels of scaffolding, interaction patterns and ways to promote autonomous learning. The triangulation of data sources was achieved using the mixed methods of document collection, questionnaires, interviews and learner diaries. Quantitative data from 304 questionnaires were analysed via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 18.0 and qualitative data from related curriculum programs, interviews and learner diaries were transcribed, analysed and categorised by opening and axial coding.

Findings from the data analysis were consistent with studies from relevant research (Li, An, & Sun, 2005; Sanprasert, 2010; Tian, 2014), such as extracurricular activities could serve as an effective supplement to College English teaching and could have an effect on students' perceptions of English language learning in the aspects of students' confidence, interests and motivation. Furthermore, the provision of a good range of engaging activities could better motivate learners to learn the target language in an informal linguistic environment. Learning structured in a relaxed setting might help lower the affective filter and enhance learners' language interest. This, in turn,

could effectively consolidate the students' language ability in the short term and allow them to develop their communicative competence in the long term. Nevertheless, it was observed that Chinese EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students tended to participate more in mechanical English learning activities instead of communicative tasks. Moreover, one salient feature of the data was that students' extracurricular activities participation (EAP) frequency was closely related to their personality and English proficiency. There was a correlation between the changes in students' EAP and changes in their perceptions of English language learning. For example, a high EAP frequency of LEC could lead to increased learner interest and confidence in English extracurricular activities, improved motivation for their English studies and an enhanced understanding of how language should be learned.

The results helped establish an empirical and theoretical base for developing a conceptual framework, informed by learner autonomy, interaction, the ZPD and scaffolding, to guide College English learning and teaching in China. Based on the findings, a dynamic language learning framework was developed to better inform the design and delivery of College English learning in the EFL extracurricular context. The study concluded that LEC could positively impact students' English learning perceptions. Suggestions for the development of extracurricular activity programs were provided. A key implication for the English curriculum in the Chinese EFL context was to develop a framework for EFL pedagogy that included extracurricular activities as an integral part of English teaching and learning in China. The framework might also be replicable in teaching and learning English in similar educational contexts.

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Glossary of Abbreviations

BALL	Blog Assisted Language Learning
CALL	Computer-assisted Language Learning
CEBI-CEBVI	College English Band I—College English Band VI
CERP	College English Reform Program
CET	College English Test
EAP	Extracurricular Activity Participation
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELL	English Language Learners
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
GPA	Grade Point Average
IRF	Initiation – Respond – Feedback
LEC	Learning in Extracurricular Context
LRE	Language-related Episodes
LSRW	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing
MKO	More Knowledgeable Other
NCELTR	National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research
NLE	Networked Learning Environment
OEDA	Online Educational Delivery Applications
PLEC	Proactive Learning in Extracurricular Context
RLEC	Reactive Learning in Extracurricular Context
SES	Socioeconomic Status
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science

SUIS	Skilled Use of Interaction Strategies
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
ULE	Universal Literacy Environment
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
WTC	Willingness to Communicate
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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