Research meets practice
Holding off and holding on

ZhaoHong Han
Teachers College, Columbia University

At the recent CLTA-S2 conference, a spirited debate occurred between critics of second language acquisition (SLA) research and researchers who embraced it. Fascinating as it was, neither camp appeared to have convinced the other, but, more important, the debate left much of the audience flummoxed. In this paper, I intend to provide a follow-up, attempting to clarify a) the relationship between research and teaching in the context of Chinese as a second language (CSL), b) misunderstandings on the part of critics over research findings, and c) potential pitfalls in interpreting the SLA literature. My goal is to encourage, as well as contribute to, further communication between the two camps, for the ultimate good of CSL instruction and learning.

Keywords: second language acquisition, teaching, research, Chinese as a foreign language, corrective feedback, practice

“[W]e need to know enough about learning before we start making assumptions on the efficiency of teaching. The literature on language teaching methodology is full of examples of how the supposed excellence of a certain method or approach is actually based on unfounded assumptions of how learning comes about.”

(Ringbom 2007: 107)

Introduction

At the recent CLTA-S2 conference held at the University of Maryland in the U.S, the conference organizers fittingly and thoughtfully brought together 8 panelists to debate the relationship between second language acquisition (SLA) research and the teaching of Chinese as a second or additional language (CSL, hereafter). As is true of most debates, the goal of this one was not for one side to convince the

---

1. For information on the conference, please check out the website: http://clta-us.org/clta-s2/
other, and hence it ended on a note of discord. While it was clear that many panelists left with much food for thought, what was less clear was whether the audience left with some understanding of what the issues were, or with total confusion. This paper is, therefore, intent on providing a follow-up to that discussion, but also more generally, a way to think about the relationship between SLA research and CSL teaching.

I will begin with a brief sketch of the field of SLA, focusing, in particular, on key recommendations for instructed learning or learning as it occurs in the classroom. After that, I will point out misunderstandings critics exhibited at the CLT-S2 panel, and call for improved dialog between critics and SLA researchers. To illustrate the need to “apply with caution” (Hatch 1978), I then offer an analysis of a study presented at the conference, Yuan (2016), unpacking its motivation, design, results, interpretation, and pedagogical relevance. I will conclude with a number of pointers for potential synergy between research and practice.

SLA at a glance

The study of second language acquisition (SLA) concerns itself with processes, mechanisms, and outcomes pertinent to the learning, naturalistic or instructed, of an additional language — generically referred to as a second language (L2). It is “the study of how second languages are learned … the study of what is learned of a second language, and importantly, what is not learned” (Gass 2013: 1).

Although the field of SLA began in the late 1960s with a strong pedagogical impetus (see, e.g., Corder 1967), over time it has bifurcated into basic SLA research (or so-called ‘pure research’) and applied SLA, now known as Instructed SLA (ISLA). ISLA, as characterized in Loewen (2014: 2), “attempts to answer two questions: (1) is instruction beneficial for second language learning, and (2) if so, how can the effectiveness of instruction be optimized?” The two subfields of SLA are interrelated and mutually supportive, with one feeding the other. Together, they comprise a vibrant scholarly discipline, where theoretical and empirical endeavors have coalesced behind major facts of L2 acquisition.

With regard to development of ‘interlanguage’ (Selinker 1972) or L2 learner language, five broad facts have been firmly established:

1. There is transfer of properties of the L1 [first language] grammar into the L2 grammar.

---

2. As the section heading suggests, the content of this section is cursory. Readers, especially those unfamiliar with SLA research, are strongly encouraged to check out the original sources for a more elaborate understanding of the facts and generalizations.
2. There is staged development in second language acquisition.
3. There is systematicity in the growth of L2 knowledge across learners.
4. There is variability in learners’ intuitions about, and production of, aspects of the L2 at certain stages of development.
5. Second language learners stop short of native-like success in a number of areas of the L2 grammar. (Towell & Hawkins 1994)

In line with these, ISLA research has further enabled the following 10 generalizations about instructed learners:

1. Adults and adolescents can ‘acquire’ a second language.
2. The learner creates a systematic interlanguage which is often characterized by the same systematic errors as a child makes when learning that language as his/her first language, as well as others which appear to be based on the learner’s own native language.
3. There are predictable sequences in L2 acquisition such that certain structures have to be acquired before others can be integrated.
4. Practice does not make perfect.
5. Knowing a language rule does not mean that one will be able to use it in communicative interaction.
6. Isolated explicit error correction is usually ineffective in changing language behavior.
7. For most (adult) learners, acquisition stops in certain domains and subsystems before the learner has achieved native-like mastery of the target language.
8. One cannot achieve native-like (or near native-like) command of a second language in one hour a day.
9. The learner’s task is enormous because language is enormously complex.
10. A learner’s ability to understand language in a meaningful context exceeds his/her ability to comprehend decontextualized language and to produce language of comparable complexity and accuracy. (Lightbown 2000)

These L2 generalizations have, in turn, provided fodder to theories in SLA, notably input processing (VanPatten 2015), skill acquisition (DeKeyser 2015), the interactionist approach (Gass & Mackey, 2015), and sociocultural theory (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner 2015), among many contemporary theories (VanPatten & William 2015).

The robustness of the empirical facts, buttressed by theoretical accounts, has motivated ISLA researchers to propose guiding principles for L2 grammar instruction. One set of such principles is found in R. Ellis (2005):

1. Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.
2. Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.
3. Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.
4. Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the L2 while not neglecting explicit knowledge.
5. Instruction needs to take into account the learner’s ‘built-in syllabus.’
6. Successful instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input.
7. Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.
8. The opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency.
9. Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.
10. In assessing learners’ L2 proficiency it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.

A similar set of principles is offered in Doughty and Long (2003):

1. Use task, not text, as the unit of analysis.
2. Promote learning by doing.
3. Elaborate input.
4. Provide rich input.
5. Encourage inductive “chunk” learning.
6. Focus on form.
7. Provide negative feedback.
8. Respect learner syllabi and developmental processes.
10. Individualize instruction.

The two sets of principles overlap considerably, due to their shared psycholinguistic orientation. Of note, they both underscore the need a) to expose learners to large amounts of input, b) to respect learners’ internal program of learning, c) to stimulate inductive learning and learning through experience both in the form of input exposure and output production in meaningful contexts, and d) to provide corrective feedback as needed. Epistemologically, both sets of principles stem from the view of language learning as essentially a psycholinguistic process and, therefore, of the role of instruction as primarily about working with that process.3

These principles offer broad guidelines for the teaching of any L2, Chinese included. Doughty and Long (2003) made the point that although the setting of instruction and the target language (TL) may very well vary, the psycholinguistic processes of learning are universal, a point to which I will return. And yet they were quick to point out that methodological principles and pedagogic

---

3. The field of SLA features miscellaneous theoretical perspectives (for an accessible account, see VanPatten & Williams 2015), but the generalizations presented here transcend theoretical boundaries.
procedures are distinct, the latter pertinent to what transpires in the classroom. It follows that methodological principles are to be applied only judiciously in the classroom. Similarly, R. Ellis (2005) cautions that the principles should neither be construed as “prescriptions” nor as “proscriptions,” but as “provisional specifications” (Stenhouse 1975), subject to classroom circumstances or contingencies.

Doughty and Long (2003: 53) wrote:

Whereas MPs [methodological principles] are putative language teaching universals, pedagogic procedures (PPs) are quite the reverse. They comprise the potentially infinite range of local options for realizing the principles at the classroom level, choice among which is determined by such factors as teacher philosophy and preference; learner age, proficiency, literacy level, aptitude and cognitive style; the class of target linguistic features for which the procedures are to be used; and the nature of the learning environment ....

This differentiation between theoretical generalities and practical contingencies has often eluded critics of ISLA research.

Critics misfiring on ISLA

Critics at the recent CLTA-S2 conference vented their frustration with the ‘intrusion’ of SLA research into the field of CSL teaching, mocking, in particular, at two of the ten ISLA generalizations from Lightbown (2000), mentioned earlier and repeated here for convenience.

- Practice does not make perfect.
- Isolated explicit error correction is usually ineffective in changing language behavior.

Apparently, to critics neither generalization makes any sense — in the light of their years of experience working with CSL learners.

Granted, I suspect that if these colleagues had cared to do even a cursory reading of the ISLA literature, they would have withheld some of their ammunition. A brief unpacking of the two generalizations follows.

First, the generalization on practice by no means suggests that practice is not necessary or helpful to developing an L2, only that the quality of practice matters. In particular, ISLA research has shown that certain types of practice such as mechanical drills (which is still prevalent in many a CSL classroom), which involves isolated repetition of structural elements, is of little use and may even have adverse effects on learning (Wong & VanPatten 2003; Gass 2013). For one, what is practiced in the classroom gives rise to pseudo-learning, with little thereof
transferable to performance in genuinely communicative situations. For another, the over-accentuated practice may engender overuse on the learner’s part of the structural elements practiced, leading to persistent, inappropriate usage that will prove difficult to unlearn even in an acquisitionally-rich environment. Relatedly, the artificial chunks customarily imposed by the drills instructor may potentially attenuate the learner’s sensitivity to their components, should these components be encountered in other contexts in the future.

In contrast, what ISLA research has shown to be critical to L2 development is meaningful practice, not the least the need to give learners abundant opportunities to decode (comprehend) and encode (express) real meanings, using their current linguistic resources and aided by the teacher’s judicious provision of corrective feedback, something critics have taken issue with as well. And here again, the criticism is emotional and cavalier, misconstruing research as suggesting abandonment of error correction.

The generalization on error correction from ISLA research, de facto, projects a qualitative understanding that the efficacy of error correction is limited and its usefulness curtailed if conducted in isolation. To wit, rather than negating the role of error correction, research has presented a granular understanding thereof, that while explicit, isolated correction may provoke instant behavioral changes, the changes either do not take or are not transferable to real language use (Gass 2013; Spada & Lightbown 2008). Thus, the research-based understanding does not temper the general conclusion that corrective feedback, as a whole, is facilitative of learning (see, e.g., Li 2010). Rather, in keeping with their general goal of achieving a qualitative understanding of the role of corrective feedback, ISLA researchers have been avidly pursuing such questions as: to what extent is correction useful, to whom and at which stage of development. Additionally, given that correction may assume a variety of forms — explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests, elicitation, recasting, and repetition (Lyster & Ranta 1997) — the questions of which option to use and for whom are also relevant. In a nutshell, as with the role of practice, rather than treating correction as all or nothing or seeing correction as monolithic, ISLA research pursues a finer-grained understanding of its role in L2 development.

That critics continue to throw jabs at ISLA research exposes an increasing chasm between their approach to CSL teaching, which is in the main experience-based and anecdotal, and a more rational approach pursued by ISLA researchers. A laisser-faire attitude towards the ontological and epistemological differences would have it that it is incumbent on neither side to convince the other. A more responsible attitude, on the other hand, would seek to reconcile differences through dialogue. Obviously, I strongly second a ‘unifying’ approach, lest perpetuating the chasm would result in permanent stagnation of the status quo of CSL teaching;
pursuing a dialogue may potentially rally the disparate constituents around a common goal: maximizing the efficacy of CSL instruction and learning.

Opening a dialogue

To my mind, a candid and productive conversation between the two camps should begin by recognizing differences. One among many concerns two polarizing views on CSL teaching and learning, one of which can be dubbed “essentialism” and the other “universalism.” In the essentialist view, which is held by critics of ISLA, the Chinese language is unique and so is its learning and teaching. In contrast, in the universalist view taken by ISLA research, the learning of Chinese, for all its particularities, fundamentally enacts the same set of psycholinguistic processes underlying the learning of any additional language (R. Ellis 1989; Robinson 2001; Han 2007a; Long 2009; Loewen 2014), and it follows that the teaching of Chinese must respect those universal processes. Another marked difference stems from distinct perceptions of the role of grammar in learning and teaching, with critics espousing a teacher-centered, grammar-based approach, on one hand, and ISLA researchers a learner-oriented, meaning-based, and focus-on-form approach (see, e.g., Doughty & Williams 1998), on the other. Reconciling these differences is certain to be a long haul, though not necessarily a long shot.

That being said, there is not just one pathway to that end. Just as has happened in the teaching and learning of a number of other foreign languages such as English and Spanish, where practice and research have more or less synergized, the process of narrowing the chasm in CSL can be sped up through empirical research on the effects of intervention. This amounts to suggesting extending the scope of ISLA to CSL instruction and learning.

Research on CSL has been ongoing for many years, but has largely remained nascent — limited in quantity, scope, and relevance to instruction (Han 2014; cf. Jiang 2013; Yang 2015). Consequently, caution must be exercised when attempting to extrapolate from extant research to CSL teaching (cf. Han 2007b). By way of illustration, an analysis is provided next of a sample CSL study.

Case in point

At the CLT-S2 conference, Dr. Boping Yuan, a prolific CSL scholar, presented a study on conditions governing L1 transfer. The motivation for the study was part of a universal grammar (UG)-based hypothesis called Full Transfer and Full Access (Schwartz & Sprouse 1994, 1996) which posits that the initial state of L2
acquisition is full transfer of L1 features, and, as learning progresses, where L1 features fail to guide the L2 learner’s representation of input, UG shall fill the gap. Yuan questioned the alleged status of L1 transfer and set out to explore conditions that might constrain it. Using the adverb placement parameter (Pollock 1989) as a touchstone, Yuan pitted Chinese against French, German, and English: Chinese and English assume a negative value of the parameter in that neither language allows a verb to raise past an adverb of frequency (e.g., *他喝常常啤酒; *He drinks often beer); conversely, French and German allow verb raising (e.g., Marie boit souvent de la bière; Er trinkt oft Bier). Previous research has established that the crosslinguistic difference often trips English speakers learning French or German, resulting in their production of such structures as *Marie souvent boit de la bière or *Er oft trinkt Bier. However, whether such transfer is reciprocal with German or French speakers of Chinese — hence producing *他喝常常啤酒 — remains an empirical question.

Participants in Yuan’s study were 166 adult CSL learners, split into three clusters according to their L1 and level of proficiency in the L2: French (3 groups), German (4 groups), and English (4 groups). In addition, a control group was composed of 10 native speakers of Chinese to provide a baseline for the sake of comparison. The CSL learner participants had various amounts of learning experience (3–54 months) and length of residence in a Chinese-speaking region (1–32 weeks). During the study, they were presented with pairs of sentences to judge, all revolving around adverb placement (e.g., a. 我哥哥喝常常德国啤酒; b. 我哥哥常常喝德国啤酒; c. I don’t know). Participants across the learner groups, regardless of L1, demonstrated a high accuracy rate, 88%-98%, while the control group showed 100% accuracy. In addition, when the same participants were subsequently subject to an oral production task on which they were given sentence fragments to put in correct order (e.g., 李明/买英文报纸/一年一次), results again showed a similarly high accuracy rate, with participants across the board scoring within and above the native speaker control group, 92% for native speakers, and 88%-100% for CSL learners. Taken together, the results suggest that in spite of crosslinguistic differences, L1 transfer did not seem to occur for French-speaking and German-speaking CSL learners; their performance was almost indistinguishable from English-speaking CSL learners and Chinese native speakers. This set of results is in stark contrast with previous research that reported L1 transfer in, for example, French speakers learning English as the L2.

In order to validate the discrepancy, Yuan extended the study, by comparing five proficiency groups of English-speaking CSL learners (N=152) with a group of native speakers of Chinese (N=20) vis-à-vis wh-word fronting in question formation, another locus of crosslinguistic difference, with English requiring fronting (e.g., What do you want to eat?) and Chinese not (e.g., 你想吃什么?). Again,
grammaticality judgments were solicited, using sentences involving wh-fronting or in-situ. Results displayed high accuracy across the proficiency groups, overwhelmingly rejecting wh-fronting, hence evincing little L1 transfer.

The two sets of results, respectively focused on adverb placement and wh-fronting, reinforce the understanding that crosslinguistic differences do not result in L1 transfer in CSL, as they do elsewhere. For instance, French speakers transfer verb-raising features in their L2 English — with a strong tendency to fossilization (Han 2009), while English speakers transfer non-verb-raising features into their L2 French or German.

Yuan offered an insightful take on these results: first, the CSL results offer counter-evidence to the Full Transfer hypothesis, but support for Yuan’s (2001, 2004, 2007) view that although L1 transfer is pervasive in L2 learning, it is not ubiquitous, not even in the early phase of learning. Second, the presence of transfer in one context (e.g., French speakers learning English or vice versa) but not in another (e.g., French or English speakers learning Chinese) points to an underlying principle of economy. Simply put, the syntactic operation of movement, whether it involves a verb or a wh-word, is cognitively taxing. Citing Chomsky (1995, 1998), Yuan argued that L2 learners follow the principle of economy when using language. Thus, verb raising in French and German as well as wh-fronting in English are relatively non-economical and therefore consume greater mental effort than the non-verb-raising and non-wh-fronting features in Chinese.

Yuan went on to hypothesize the conditions for selective transfer: When the operation of a given linguistic feature is less effortful in the L1 than in the L2, L1 transfer will occur. Conversely, if the corresponding form in the L2 is more economical, then L1 transfer will not occur.

Without a doubt, this study, like many other studies Yuan has conducted since the 1990s, makes a noteworthy contribution to the general understanding on crosslinguistic influence in SLA. His insight on the principle of economy as potentially responsible for selective transfer is nothing but a strong testament to his perceptiveness and analytic ability, as is the design of this study to his dexterity in carrying out experimental research.

Still, a number of observations can be made about the study per se. The first is that conceptually, the study took on only part of the original Full Transfer and Full Access Hypothesis (Schwartz & Sprouse 1994, 1996), and did so without recognizing that the hypothesis was originally made about the SLA initial state. In Yuan’s study, cross-sectional samples were employed, including learners at the early stage of learning. This, however, is different from validating the hypothesis in true ab initio learners (see, e.g., Han & Rast 2014). The phenomenon of selective transfer has received sustained attention in SLA research dating back to the 1970s, albeit primarily outside the UG framework (see, e.g., Kellerman 1978, 1979, 1983, 1995;
Andersen 1983; Odlin 1989, 2014), and most of the studies targeted learners who had achieved at least an intermediate level of proficiency. Yuan’s study, therefore, could have filled multiple gaps by virtue of testing a UG-based hypothesis on the initial state of SLA in CSL learners.

Another noteworthy weakness of the study lies in its design. It may be recalled that part of the data collection for adverb placement involved having CSL learners sequence sentential elements. As aptly pointed out by someone in the audience of Yuan’s presentation, the design of the task unwittingly gave away the expected sequence. This may have mitigated the results.

Furthermore, as Yuan himself duly recognized at the end of his presentation, his hypothesis on the conditions of selective transfer has yet to be subject to further investigation, not the least with a greater number of linguistic structures.

All things considered, then, it would be fair to say that this study has yielded interesting results and an important heuristic, but that it would be premature to extrapolate from it to CSL instruction. Further research is warranted to, first of all, validate the findings. Replication research, which is almost non-existent in current CSL research, would be particularly pertinent. Secondly, studies with a similar design but targeting a wider array of structures would help delimit the generalizability of Yuan’s hypothesis.

Conclusion

There are at least five reasons why CSL teachers (and for that matter, teachers of any additional language) must pay attention to ISLA research. The first is that it provides for an understanding of the learning process (Loewen 2014). Second, it may sensitize teachers to their students’ socio-cognitive needs in the classroom, and accordingly enable them to attempt individualized instruction (Doughty & Long 2003). Third, it would help teachers set appropriate expectations for themselves and for their students (Lightbown 2003). Fourth, it would allow teachers access to an important source of new ideas, should they seek to innovate in their classrooms. And, last but not least, it might even spur teachers to conduct studies in their own classrooms, as a way to validate their own beliefs, intuitions, and anecdotal observations (Van den Branden 2006).

As teachers increasingly tune in to ISLA, it is nevertheless paramount to stay wary of pitfalls. True to the nature of research, empirical findings are more often mixed than uniform. Thus, one pitfall to avoid is skewed reading of the literature, as it may lead to accidental ‘revelations,’ which might otherwise have been erroneous if the reading had been more extensive and balanced.
By way of example, the ISLA literature offers a bounty of corrective feedback studies, especially on oral feedback. This can lead to a false understanding that oral correction is more important than written correction, or, by extension, that output is more important than input. But written output is equally important (see, e.g., Kang & Han 2015). And this is not to mention that output, albeit necessary, is insufficient. One limitation of an output-heavy approach, for example, is that “it is not possible to attend to those structures that learners do not attempt to use (i.e., avoidance)” (R. Ellis 2005: 217). Another limitation is that conversational output may not provide the in-depth practice that some structures may require before they can be acquired. Thus, input-based instruction, engaging learners in listening to, and reading authentic materials, is paramount (Ortega 2007; N. Ellis 2009). Large amounts of input are needed for learners to develop “the highly connected implicit knowledge that is needed to become an effective communicator in the L2” (R. Ellis, 2005: 217).

A way to mitigate biased reading is through systematic reading of the literature. This can be done starting with general introductory books on ISLA such as R. Ellis (2012), Ellis and Shintani (2013), Loewen (2014), Long (2014), Leow (2015), and Cook (2016), to name just a few recent monographs, before delving into individual research syntheses and primary studies.

Just as the learning of an additional language happens most robustly via inductive processing, to wit, via learners’ own engagement with the TL input, so a solid understanding of research can only come about via systematic and sustained processing of the research literature. This, coupled with frequent participation in high-caliber professional conferences, can go a long way in contributing to teachers’ ability to ground their instructional practice in a rational basis, and may even turn teachers into empiricists seeking to validate their own practice in their own arena, thereby upending a practice driven solely by intuition (cf. Van den Branden 2016).

Another likely pitfall in applying research to practice lies in taking any and every reported finding for granted. As noted earlier, the field of SLA has evolved into two subdomains, the basic research and the applied research. Teachers should therefore tune in more to the latter than to the former, simply because of its greater relevance to their world. Even when parsing the ISLA research, caution must be exercised as some findings are robust and some are emergent and hence premature.

Yet the most important awareness teachers should have is that published studies were done in contexts different from the situations teachers find themselves in, and, therefore, what appears to be effective under one set of contingencies may not be under another set. The different realities may include, but are not limited to, “differences in both the opportunity and the need to use the language outside of school, differences in L1 literacy experiences, differences in L1-L2 language
distance, differences in the organization of the school and classroom” (Lightbown 2003: 11). And this is not to mention that teachers themselves tend to behave differently from day to day. Long (2014: 326) aptly notes:

Language teachers and learners feel, behave, and interact differently from day to day, and the language and tasks they work on vary, making every lesson unique. Global prescriptions and proscriptions, therefore, are unwarranted and doomed to failure. Teachers will have lesson plans, but they will need to react differently in real time to situations as they arise.

These contextual differences reinforce a two-pronged need. On the one hand, teachers must “apply with caution” (Hatch 1978; see also Lightbown, 2003; R. Ellis 2005; Han 2007b); on the other, CSL researchers ought to conduct more classroom-based research, including carrying out replicational studies, to make their findings more relevant to teaching.

Ultimately, teachers themselves should not be content with being consumers of research. In his recent work on the role of teachers in task-based language teaching (TBLT), Van den Branden (2016) discusses three essential roles: the teacher as mediator of the students’ language development; the teacher as a key figure in the implementation of TBLT; and the teacher as researcher contributing to the development and further refinement of TBLT as a researched pedagogy. These roles arguably extend to teachers at large, regardless of their pedagogical inclination. In truth, the classroom provides a natural site for all kinds of data collection, from video and audio recording teacher-student interaction to surveying students’ attitudes, styles, and strategies, and to eliciting students’ guided versus free comprehension and production. Indeed, the best recipe for maximizing students’ learning in the classroom would be for teachers themselves to be empirically minded, practicing so-called “empirical pedagogy” (Han & Selinker 1999).

In closing, to critics, my advice is to hold off bashing ISLA research. Haines’ (2011) words resonate well here: “By understanding and empathizing with others first, you have then earned the right to disagree with them as a royal skeptic” (loc. 1370). To all teachers, I would encourage holding on to ISLA research as a major source of inspiration and creativity.

Acknowledgments

I thank the editor and the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments on an earlier version of this paper. Any errors that remain are exclusively my own.
References


提要

在不久前的 CLTA-S2 大会上，会议组织者就二语习得研究和对外汉语教学的关系主持了一场辩论。参加辩论的学者们情绪高涨，各抒己见。但由于时间的关系，辩论很快就结束，学者之间没达成任何共识，而在场的听众得到的可能更多是迷惑。本文旨在深化关于研究与教学的讨论，陈述二者之间的关系，更正某些对二语习得研究的误解，指出在阅读理解二语习得研究文献时值得注意的地方，呼吁增强对中文二语习得研究与教学的讨论。
的研究，并鼓励研究者和教学者之间展开更多更深入的交流。作者认为，这样的互动对提高对外汉语教学的质量至关重要。

关键词：二语习得，教学，研究，对外汉语，纠错，练习

Author’s address
ZhaoHong Han
Center for International Foreign Language Teacher Education (CIFLTE)
Teachers College, Columbia University
Box 66, 525 W. 120th Street
New York, NY 10027
han@tc.columbia.edu