

國立清華大學 104 學年度碩士班考試入學試題

系所班組別：外國語文學系 乙組（語言認知與教學組）

考試科目（代碼）：外語教學 (3502)

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Part 1: Write a few sentences to explain the following terms by giving a definition and at least one example. (30%) (Each question has three points.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Audiolingual Method | 6. Intake |
| 2. The Natural Approach | 7. Code-switching |
| 3. Rote learning | 8. Fossilization |
| 4. Sociocultural Theory | 9. Focus on Form |
| 5. Language ego | 10. Language Learning Aptitude |

Part 2: Write one or two paragraph(s) to answer the following questions. (30%) (Each question has six points.)

1. Explain what “transfer,” “interference,” and “overgeneralization” have in common and explain how they differ from each other. Also give some examples.
2. Choose a grammar point to teach. How would you teach this specific grammar point to children vs. teens vs. adults? Briefly justify your choices.
3. In your opinion, what are some impacts of World Englishes and globalization on both English language teaching and learning?
4. What is corpus linguistics? Give an example of how a teacher can use corpus linguistics in an EFL classroom.
5. Sometimes, it is better for a teacher to use pair and group works instead of simply lecturing. Do you agree with this statement? Why (not)? Cite some second language acquisition theories that will support your position and give some real-life examples to support your answer.

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Part 3: Read the article by Minhui Lu on the next pages and use the information from the article to answer the questions that follow. (25%)

Citation:

Lu, M-H. (2013). Effects of four vocabulary exercises on facilitating learning vocabulary meaning, form, and use. *TESOL Quarterly*, 47 (1), pp. 167-176.

*Effects of Four Vocabulary Exercises on
Facilitating Learning Vocabulary Meaning,
Form, and Use*

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doi: 10.1002/tesq.79

■ Empirical studies on vocabulary learning have confirmed the advantage of reading with a vocabulary task over reading without the task (e.g., Keating, 2008; Laufer, 2003; Paribakht & Wesche, 1997; Zimmerman, 1997). However, researchers have not come to an agreement as

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to whether blank-filling tasks or composition tasks facilitate vocabulary learning more effectively. Laufer (2003) conducted three experiments to compare the meaning retrievals in four conditions: reading only and reading plus one of the three written tasks (blank filling, sentence making, or composing). Results showed that reading plus a written task led to better meaning retention than reading plus a blank-filling task. However, the benefits of the written tasks dramatically decreased on the delayed posttests held 2 weeks after the immediate posttests. In the third experiment, the sentence-writing condition scored significantly lower than the blank-filling condition in the delayed posttest (2.80 versus 5.36). Keating (2008) found that completing a sentence-writing exercise after reading led to better retention of meaning and form than completing a blank-filling exercise after reading. However, the sentence-writing condition scored slightly lower on the delayed form-retention posttest than the blank-filling condition. In contrast to the findings in Laufer's and Keating's studies, Folse (2006) found no significantly different results between the single blank-filling and sentence-making conditions. Nevertheless, given equivalent time for participants to complete their task, the triple blank-filling group outperformed significantly the sentence-making group on the tests of word form and use.

In addition to these conflicting results, the issues of time for task completion and learners' perceptions of task effectiveness were under-explored. Time and learners' perceptions are important issues, considering that most foreign language teachers face the challenge of the class time constraints and often have to leave vocabulary exercises for students to complete outside of the classroom (Lu, 2004). This alternative approach would not be feasible if students did not perceive the tasks as beneficial to learning and are not motivated to complete them (cf. Dörnyei, 1998; Nation, 2001). Therefore, when investigating the effectiveness of vocabulary tasks in foreign language classrooms, researchers should also consider the time demanded by the vocabulary task and students' perceptions of its effectiveness.

The present study aims to answer the questions concerning whether composition tasks or blank-filling tasks better facilitate vocabulary learning, which aspect of vocabulary knowledge is enhanced, whether the benefits can be retained over two weeks, and which task is more suitable to foreign language classrooms facing the challenge of time constraints. The four vocabulary tasks examined in this study are single blank filling, triple blank filling, blank filling of a summary, and summary writing. Three aspects of vocabulary knowledge (meaning, form, and use) were detected through three test forms (passive recall, active recall, and sentence production) conducted on two test schedules (immediately after a reading instruction and 2 weeks later). The time

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each task demanded for completion and students' perceptions of the tasks' benefits were also investigated.

METHOD

Participants

Participants in this study were 122 students who came from two classes of 11th graders and one class of 10th graders who were taking English classes with the researcher in a Taiwanese vocational high school. On average, the 122 students had studied English for 6.8 years. Based on their most current English grades, the students in each class were assigned to one of the four conditions. Students whose grades were ranked in the 1st, 8th, 9th, 16th, 17th, 24th, 25th, 32nd, 33rd, and 40th places in each class were assigned to the first condition (writing a summary). Students ranked in the 2nd, 7th, 10th, 15th, 18th, 23rd, 26th, 31st, 34th, and 39th places were assigned to the second condition (completing triple blank-filling exercises). The 3rd, 6th, 11th, 14th, 19th, 22nd, 27th, 30th, 35th, and 38th were assigned to the third condition (completing one blank-filling exercise), and the 4th, 5th, 12th, 13th, 20th, 21st, 28th, 29th, 36th, and 37th to the fourth (filling out the blanks in the summary). In this way, each of the conditions had 10 or 11 students from each of the three classes. The averages of the 30 or 31 students' English proficiencies across conditions were approximately equivalent.

Materials

Each student was given a reading passage with a vocabulary glossary and a worksheet for his or her assigned condition. The passage was adapted from the story "A Long Way Home" in *Chicken Soup for the Soul* (Bocarro, 2004). The percentage of the learned words (according to the wordlists of students' textbooks) in the 469-word reading was 95% for the 10th graders and 96% for the 11th graders, achieving the condition for learning vocabulary from meaning-focused input (cf. Nation, 2001).

Using the textbook wordlists as a reference, the researcher screened out untaught words from the reading. The results of the pretests confirmed that these nine words were unknown to the participants. They were four verbs (*confess*, *immerse*, *plead*, and *relent*), two nouns (*tardiness* and *protest*), two adverbs (*feebly* and *intently*), and one adjective (*distressing*). These nine target words (TWs) were highlighted in bold print and numbered in the reading passage. The vocabulary glossary listed the English meaning, Chinese translation, and part of speech of each

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TW, in addition to two example sentences using the TW. The presentation of the vocabulary glossary was identical to that in the participants' textbooks. Below is the entry for the word *immerse*.

1. immerse (v.) [T] to involve deeply 沉溺於

Miranda became so **immersed** in her study that she did not hear the phone ring.

Tim **immersed** himself in the book and forgot everything around him.

The worksheet for the condition of summary writing (SW) required its group to summarize the reading passage and use the TWs in their summaries. The worksheets for the blank-filling conditions required students to choose an appropriate TW for each blank. The worksheet contained nine separate sentences with nine blanks for the blank-filling (BF) condition, three sets of nine separate sentences for the triple blank-filling (3BF) group, and a summary of the reading passage with nine blanks for the condition of filling in the blanks of the summary (BFS). That is, the 3BF group was required to use each of the nine TWs three times to fill in the 27 blanks in 27 separate sentences. The BF task differed from the BFS in that the latter consisted of a coherent text with transitional phrases. All of the sentences in the vocabulary glossary and exercises were written by the researcher, using the *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* as a reference, and proofread by three English native speakers who were teaching English in the universities. Below are the three sentences for *immerse* in the worksheet for the 3BF group:

4. Joel became so _____ in the TV show that he forgot the appointment with his dentist.
15. I was totally _____ in my study in my last year in high school.
20. He _____ himself in the music so much that he did not see her signal.

Procedures

The intervention was composed of three phases: pretest, reading instruction and treatment, and posttest and questionnaire. At the onset of a 50-min class, participants completed the passive-recall and sentence-production pretests, which required participants to write down a Chinese equivalent for each TW and use it to make a sentence (cf. Folse, 2006; Laufer, 2003; Laufer & Goldstein, 2004; Paribakht & Wesche, 1997). The class continued following the regular syllabus to minimize any short-term memory effect. Three min before the class was dismissed, students received the active-recall pretest, which

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required them to spell the TWs. Below are the instructions of the passive-recall, sentence-production, and active-recall tests.

Write the Chinese meaning of the given word or its English synonym and then use the given word to make a sentence.

5. immerse

中文意思或英文同義字: _____

造句: _____

Spell out the English word according to its Chinese meaning and first letter.

2. 沉溺於 i _____

The second phase started with the reading instruction on the following day when there were 100 consecutive min of class time. In a similar approach of teaching the readings in students' textbooks, the researcher led the students through the story with a focus on comprehension, pausing at each TW for its lexical information in the glossary. After the instruction, each student was given a worksheet for his or her assigned condition. Students were required to record the time upon completion of their task.

After all the worksheets were collected, posttests were administered, using the same procedure as pretests. Additionally, a survey was conducted with a brief questionnaire asking the participants to choose the most conducive task and the least conducive from a list of nine vocabulary tasks. Two weeks after the immediate posttests, delayed posttests were administered.

One point was given for each correct Chinese translation in the passive-recall tests, each correct use of the TWs in the sentence-production tests, or each correctly spelled word in the active-recall tests. The test scores of the four conditions on the three kinds of tests underwent statistics procedures. Students' responses to the questionnaire were tallied.

Results

Overall, the four tasks led to positive effects on vocabulary learning, particularly on meaning retrievals, as Table 1 shows. After performing any of the four vocabulary tasks, participants could remember the meanings of at least four TWs, spell at least two TWs correctly, and use at least one TW in composing a sentence.

The 3BF condition produced the highest scores on the immediate posttests. After completing the triple blank-filling task, the students

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TABLE 1
Immediate Posttest Scores

Condition	<i>N</i>	Passive recall	Active recall	Production
SW	30	4.48 (1.65)	2.74 (2.13)	1.45 (1.23)
BFS	30	5.15 (2.48)	2.30 (2.25)	1.00 (1.66)
BF	31	4.41 (2.64)	2.00 (1.78)	1.07 (1.39)
3BF	31	6.29 (2.18)	3.79 (2.15)	1.82 (2.06)
Total	122	5.09 (2.36)	2.71 (2.16)	1.27 (1.24)

Note. The numbers in the third, fourth, and fifth columns are the average scores (mean), with standard deviations (*SD*) in parentheses.

could remember the meanings of at least six TWs (70%), spell at least three TWs (42%) correctly, and use at least one TW (20%) in composing a sentence. These scores were compared with those produced by the other conditions, using the Bonferroni method to test the significance level of the differences ($\alpha = .05$). Results of the analysis show that the 3BF task led to significantly more meaning retrievals than the SW task ($p = .016$) or the BF task ($p = .023$).

On average, the SW group spent the longest time completing their task ($M = 31.04$ min, $SD = 8.87$ min), three times as much as the BF group ($M = 10.48$, $SD = 3.80$) or BFS group ($M = 9.63$, $SD = 3.13$) did. The 3BF group spent 23.85 min ($SD = 7.88$), slightly more than twice the amount needed by any of the single blank-filling tasks.

The data of the participants who spent an approximately equal amount of time in completing the two overarching tasks (3BF and SW) were compared. Table 2 indicates that only when the SW participants spent twice as much time as the 3BF participants could they score slightly higher on the immediate posttests. The SW subgroup, who spent more than 37 min writing the summary, still scored lower on the immediate posttests than the whole 3BF group, who spent approximately 24 min.

A simple survey was conducted after the immediate posttests. Participants chose the most conducive vocabulary exercise and the least conducive from nine exercises, which were most commonly included in the English textbooks for Taiwanese students. The nine vocabulary exercises were (1) writing the Chinese meaning of the TW, (2) spelling out the TW, (3) choosing a TW from a word bank to complete the sentence, (4) choosing a TW from four options to complete the

TABLE 2
Immediate Posttest Scores of the Subgroups

Condition	<i>N</i>	Task time	Passive recall	Active recall	Production
SW	10	37.20 min	4.90 (.74)	2.20 (1.23)	1.60 (1.08)
3BF	10	18.55 min	4.50 (1.65)	2.10 (1.10)	1.50 (.85)

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TABLE 3
Delayed Posttest Scores

Condition	N	Passive recall	Active recall	Production
SW	29	2.00 (2.28)	1.92 (2.24)	.17 (.38)
BFS	30	1.90 (2.29)	1.44 (2.15)	.15 (.49)
BF	31	2.32 (2.87)	1.15 (2.21)	.11 (.32)
3BF	30	2.00 (2.00)	1.96 (2.32)	.05 (.23)
Total	120	2.03 (2.33)	1.59 (2.22)	.12 (.36)

Note. Two participants were absent from the delayed posttests.

sentence, (5) filling in the blank with the TW and completing the sentence, (6) making sentences according to the Chinese translations and using the TWs, (7) making sentences and using the TWs, (8) writing a summary and using the TWs, and (9) composing a text and using the TWs. Results of tallying the 108 students' responses indicate that most participants did not recognize the benefits of the composition tasks to vocabulary learning. More than half of the participants (62) chose the composition tasks (items 6 to 9) as least conducive to vocabulary learning, whereas only 19 participants chose them as most conducive and the type used in this study (item 8) obtained fewer tallies (only 4) than any other exercises did. In contrast, up to 56 participants chose blank-filling tasks (items 3 to 5) as most effective. The type used in this study (item 3) obtained more tallies (29) than any other exercises did.

The attrition of the vocabulary scores during the two weeks after the learning session was noteworthy. Table 3 indicates that the average test scores on word meaning, form, and use dropped to 2.03, 1.59, and 0.12, respectively. No significant difference was found across the four conditions, and the 3BF did not always outperform other tasks in the delayed posttests.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined the benefits of four vocabulary tasks to recalling the meanings and forms of nine newly learned words and using them to make sentences. Analyses of the scores on posttests held immediately after the learning session and two weeks afterwards and students' responses to the questionnaire regarding their perceptions of the effects of the tasks on vocabulary learning yielded four main findings. First, the 3BF performers scored higher on four of the six vocabulary posttests and led to significantly more immediate meaning retrievals than the other task groups. Furthermore, the needed time for blank-filling exercises decreased as students became familiar with

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the TWs through the repeated exercises. The 3BF group, who completed three blank-filling exercises, spent only twice as much time as the BF or BFS, who completed single blank-filling exercise. These benefits make the 3BF task a better choice for foreign language classroom teachers to enhance vocabulary learning after the reading instruction.

In contrast, the SW task required more time to complete, produced less vocabulary retention, and was perceived by most of the students as less conducive to vocabulary learning than the 3BF task. The time consumption may prevent teachers from adopting the SW task in class. On the other hand, the students' low rating of its effectiveness may diminish its feasibility as homework outside of the classroom.

Third, the structure of the text for the vocabulary exercises may affect vocabulary learning. The BFS group, who completed the summary of the reading by filling the TWs in the blanks, had slightly higher scores on the immediate posttests of meaning and form than the BF group, who completed nine separate sentences. This finding implies that a blank-filling task with a coherent text may benefit vocabulary learning more than a blank-filling task with incoherent, separate sentences.

Fourth, the dramatic erosion of vocabulary retentions over the period of 2 weeks highlights the importance of repeated rehearsals (cf. Baddeley, 1997). The fact that the 3BF group did not always outperform other groups in the delayed posttests suggests that three repeated rehearsals were not sufficient for the newly learned words to enter long-term memory and that distributed practice is as important as repeated rehearsals (Atkins & Baddeley, 1998; Bahrnick, Bahrnick, Bahrnick, & Bahrnick, 1993; Nation, 2001).

Recommendations for Teachers

These findings point to pedagogic recommendations for foreign language classroom teachers. Teachers should offer sufficient vocabulary exercises to help students remember the target words and design an optimal memory schedule to prevent against forgetting (Nation, 2001; Pimsleur, 1967). These memory-enhancing strategies can be achieved through multiple blank-filling exercises. After the reading instruction, teachers can give a summary blank-filling exercise for students to complete in class; a manageable number of blank-filling exercises of different language contexts as homework on the same day; and more blank-filling exercises on the following day, on the third day, in the following week, and so on. Given that the class time is limited and that sufficient exposure to the target language is the key to successful learning, teachers may recommend effective vocabulary software or websites which offer plenty of blank-filling exercises with various language con-

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texts and instant automatic feedback to their students for independent learning. The online vocabulary programs *CAVOCA* (Groot, 2000) and *REAP Project* (Heilman, Collins-Thompson, Callan, & Eskenazi, 2006) have proven beneficial to vocabulary learning.

This study shows that the composition task was less beneficial to vocabulary learning than the triple blank-filling task and seemed unsuitable for foreign language classrooms under the time constraints. However, this is not to say writing instruction or composition tasks should be abandoned. Teachers may utilize multiple blank-filling exercises as scaffolding to prepare students to write a composition (cf. Schmitt, 2008). The use of a summary for the blank-filling exercise is a practical approach to preparing students to use the target words in a coherent text. Another approach is to incorporate single words in the blanks for beginner learners and gradually increase the length of the blanks requiring phrases and then sentences. After remembering a certain number of words and being familiar with making sentences and using words in coherent texts through multiple blank-filling exercises, students may be more prepared for composition tasks.

In considering the findings and implications arising from this study, one should take into account the teaching and learning context in Taiwan. The constant neglect of writing instruction might be the cause of the low scores on the sentence-production posttests and the unsatisfactory effect of the summary writing task. The limitation of measuring only nine words points to another worthy research direction to measure more words as well as phraseology.

Despite the contextual and methodological limitations, this study has answered the underexplored research questions concerning the effects of the four vocabulary exercises on facilitating learning vocabulary meaning, form, and use. The findings better our understanding of vocabulary learning and point to feasible pedagogic strategies for foreign language teachers, particularly those facing the challenge of classroom time constraints.

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Her research interests include materials for English as a foreign language learners and intercultural learning.

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Questions for Part 3:

1. What are the gaps left by the literature to be fulfilled by this study?
2. What are the research questions that this study asked? (*Write the questions as QUESTIONS.*)
3. What are the three aspects of vocabulary knowledge explored in this study and how was each of them tested?
4. What were the number of participants and their backgrounds?
5. Explain how the participants are grouped and why (the rationale for grouping).
6. Explain the reading passage used in this study.
7. Explain the target words (*You don't need to list the actual words. Just describe the words, how they are chosen, and how they are taught.*)
8. Descriptions of the four vocabulary tasks (worksheets) used in this study
9. Explain the study's data collection procedure.

9.1) Pre-test stage	9.4) Survey
9.2) Treatment stage	9.5) Delayed post-test stage
9.3) Immediate post-test stage	

10. Summarize the findings.
11. What are the author's conclusions?
12. What are the author's suggestions for teachers?

Part 4: Write a short essay to comment on the article by Minhui Lu that you have just read. You can support or criticize the articles' ideas, add more evidence from your knowledge and experience to support or argue against the ideas, appraise the study's contributions to learning and teaching, etc. The essay does not have to be long, but make sure that it has a clear thesis statement and a conclusion. (15%)

This is the end of the exam. Thank you.