

当代外国语言文学学术文库

中国语境中的 英语报章变革动词研究

高 超 著

A Corpus -based

Study of the Use of Creation and
Transformation Verbs in China's
English Newspapers



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总 序

对外经济贸易大学出版社最新推出了大型外语学术专著系列——《当代外国语言文学学术文库》，邀请我为文库写序，借此机会，谈谈我个人对外国语言文学研究的一些认识和感受。综观21世纪的外国语言文学研究，就语言学研究而言，形式语言学理论和功能语言学理论继续对抗和对话，认知语言学理论和社会文化理论发展迅速，各种语言学的理论思潮试图从不同的角度解释语言事实；在应用方面，语言学更加广泛地与多学科交叉，运用和借鉴包括数理逻辑、计算机科学、心理学、神经科学、认知科学、生态科学、经济学等各学科在内的研究成果和方法，不断凸显出语言学作为人文科学和自然科学交叉学科的地位。就文学研究而言，英美文学研究受经济全球化浪潮的冲击，文学及文论研究都关注文化全球化与本土性的关系。文化全球化的研究引发了文学现代性、后现代性和后殖民性的思考，文学和语言学的研究相互影响和交融日益明显，文学研究越来越多地引入语言学研究的方法，如话语分析等，反之亦然。我国的外国语言文学研究在全球化和中国入世以后与国际学术界的交流更加密切，发展更加迅速，同时，我们仍清楚地看到，国内的外国语言文学研究依然存在“三张皮”现象，第一张皮是“汉语与外语”研究的合作与交流不够；第二张皮是“语言与文学”研究的沟通与对话不够；第三张皮是“英语与其他外语”研究的来往和交叉不够，“三张皮”极大地阻碍着外国语言文学学科的发展。

这套文库的设计体现了兼收并蓄、博采众长、学科融通的

思想，是一个开放和创新的学术平台，是各种研究的阵地，各位学者的家园，进入文库的研究成果都经过精心挑选，出自有专长的博士和学者。我衷心地祝愿这朵“原创的小花”在繁花似锦的学术花园里开得绚丽灿烂，愿更多的学者关心和呵护它。

对外经济贸易大学英语学院

教授、博士生导师

王立非

2007年6月1日于北京望京花园

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no materials previously published or written by another person or material which has to a substantial extent been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or other institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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最由衷感谢我的导师文秋芳教授，她的一言一行，举手投足都充满着个人魅力，给了我精神的力量；她的谆谆教导和无私帮助，让我不轻言放弃。她耿直的人品、广博的知识、敏锐的洞察力，以及她谈话时智慧的火花都使我受益颇深。特别是我在北京学习期间，她和李德荣老师帮助我排除生活上的困难，使我专心向学。不论我做得好还是不好，导师一直鼓励我前行，使我离梦想越来越近。可以说，没有导师的鼓励，不可能有这本论文的完成。

丁言仁教授善良而含蓄，智慧而幽默，对我宽容而爱护。特别是在我的论文题目确定、研究设计等方面，他循循善诱、耐心指导，不断地提出宝贵的建议和修改意见，使论文不断完善。

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李文中教授和河南师范大学语料库团队在我需要帮助的时候向我伸出了无私的援助之手。受李文中教授的启发，我才对“中国英语”产生了浓厚的兴趣。本文所使用的语料库由河南师范大学语料库团队提供，特此感谢。

此项研究还得到其他很多专家的关心和指导，上海交通大

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中文摘要

近年来,随着世界英语研究的迅速发展,英语的本土化现象已经得到学界的普遍承认,然而英语在中国的本土化问题还一直备受争议。争议的焦点是中国语境中的英语(即所谓“中国英语”)是否形成一个规范的体系。但是,大多数有关“中国英语”的研究集中在概念层面的讨论,少有大规模的实证研究。此外,学界对于本土化英语的可理解性和可接受性的认识仍然模糊不清。

本研究试图以中国国内英语报章中能够反映中国社会现实的变革动词作为研究对象探讨英语在中国语境下的使用特征,旨在回答两个问题:第一,在中国语境下,英语变革动词的语言特征是什么?第二,这些变革动词的本土化特征能否被英语本族语者和非英语本族语者所理解和接受?

本研究采用了定量和定性相结合的方法。首先通过语料库方法研究中国语境中英语变革动词的语言特征,所使用的语料库是中国国内英语报章语料库(CCEN)和英国国家语料库的新闻部分(NBNC);然后以问卷的方式调查变革动词语言特征的可理解度和可接受度。该项研究的主要发现如下:

第一,变革动词的主要语言特征有:在语义方面,1)大部分变革动词在中国的英语报章中覆盖的义项种类与英国报章有区别,例如, *create* 在中国的英语报章中覆盖的义项种类多于英国报章,而 *grow* 在中国的英语报章中覆盖的义项种类少于英国报章,少数变革动词(如 *produce*)的义项种类与英国报章完全一致;2)中国国内英语报章高频使用的义项多表现

出积极的涵义,低频使用的义项可能是中国的英语使用者不熟悉的义项;3)某些变革动词(如 *build* 或者 *develop*)在中国的英语报章中发生三种形式的意义变异,即意义特指,意义扩展和意义褒贬色彩的变化;4)大部分变革动词在中国的英语报章和英国报章中表现为中性语义韵,少数(如 *develop*)在中国的英语报章中表现为积极语义韵。

在搭配方面,中国国内英语报章高频使用和创新使用的搭配反映了中国目前的社会现实,它们表现了中国政治、经济、教育等方面的改革和发展。中国国内英语报章没有使用或者低频使用某些搭配可能由于这些搭配在汉语环境中没有对应的表达方式。

在语法方面,大多数变革动词在中国国内英语报章中的不及物用法多于英国报章,而它们的及物用法少于英国报章。变革动词在中国国内英语报章和英国报章中的类联接也有区别,中国国内英语报章高频使用的类联接比较符合汉语习惯(如 *V n prep n: build sth. into sth.* “把……建设成为……”)。

第二,有关变革动词本土化特征交际效果的主要发现有:变革动词的本土化特征总体上具有较高的可理解性和可接受性,但受访者的群体内部差异也很明显,并不是所有的受访者都能理解和接受本土化英语。另外,一些表示理解本土化搭配的受访者可能没有真正理解或者理解有所偏差。

从受访者内部差异来看,1)英语本族语者和非英语本族语者对于可理解度的评价没有显著差异,但他们对于可接受度的评价有显著差异,英语本族语者更容易接受本土化英语;2)男性受访者和女性受访者对于可接受度的评价没有显著差异,但他们对于可理解度的评价有显著差异,女性受访者更容易理解本土化英语。

研究还发现,可理解度和可接受度呈正相关。英文水平是

影响可理解度的首要因素，可理解度又是影响可接受度的首要因素。受访者建议，增加对世界不同语言和文化的熟悉度有助于提高可理解度，增加容忍度有助于提高可接受度。

本研究是对以往文献的补充，具有理论和实践的意义：在理论上，相对全面地描述了变革动词在中国语境中的使用特征，重新阐释了可理解度和可接受度，加深了学界对“中国英语”的认识；在实践上，本研究也有助于跨文化交际能力的培养。

ABSTRACT

The past two decades have witnessed the emergence of numerous studies on world Englishes, most of which focus on the identification and description of global varieties of English (e. g. Ahulu, 1995a; Anchimbe, 2006; Arua, 1998; Baik, 1994; Bamiro, 1994a; Bamiro, 1995; Bao & Wee, 1999; Baskaran, 2002; Bhatt, 1995; Bobda, 1994; Carless, 1995; Goh, 1998; Kosciielecki, 2006; Mesthrie, 1993; Peng & Ann, 2001) . With the rapid development of world Englishes, nativization is generally acknowledged.

However, “ China English, i. e. English used in China’s Context”, has still been controversial in research. Scholars in China have focused on the concept of “ China English” with different attitudes and the disputes over Chinese English (Bolton, 1991), Sinicized English (Cheng, 1982), Chinish (Jin, 2004), Chinglish (Pinkham, 2000), or China English (Wang, 1991) have lasted for twenty years.

It was Ge Chuangui who first put forward the concept of China English in publication in 1980. Ge (1980) noted that China English referred to all the words that expressed the unique Chinese things, and when we spoke and wrote English, there were special things to express such as *Han Linyuan* (翰林院), *Four Books* (四书) . Wang (1991) defined China English as “ nativized English used by the Chinese people in China, being based on

Standard English and having Chinese characteristics” . Li (1993) defined that “China English is based on the normative English, expresses Chinese culture, has Chinese characteristics in lexis, sentence structure and discourse but does not show any L1 interference” . Gao (2001) noted that “China English is a legitimate member of the World Englishes family, which results from the localization of English in the Chinese context” . He also noted that “Chinglish is a consequence of the interference from the Chinese language during the process of English learning; it is characterized by errors and mistakes that represent the acquisition deficiency in phonology and grammar of the English language” . Sinicized English (Cheng, 1982) and Chinish (Jin, 2004) are similar to China English. However, no agreement has been reached on the meaning of Chinese English. Ge (1980) used Chinese English to signify imperfect learner language, while Huang (1988) used it to refer to “Chinese-coloured English” which was correct and positive semantically.

Opinions have also varied as to whether China English was a variety or not. Some scholars (Huang & Xie, 2006; Jia & Xiang, 1997; Jiang & Du, 2003; Li, S H, 2006; Li, 1993; 2006; Pan, 2005; Wang, 1991; Yang & Yan, 2002; Yuan, 2006b; Zhang, 2003; Zou, 2006) were in favor of regarding it as a legitimate variety. Linguists like Li (2006), Wei & Fei (2003) and Zhang (2003) believed that there was a developing variety of English in China. Others from opposing site (Cheng, 1999; Hao, 2004; Qiu & Ning, 2002; Xu, 2005; Zhang, 1995; Zhu, 2004), however, either regarded China English as “interfering deviations” or mentioned that it was not a variety.

Scholars have not reached an agreement about the concept and status of China English. China English is a variety by one criterion, but is not a variety by another (Yu, 2006). A variety should be fully described, and with defined standards observed by the state institutions. And there is no sense resting on disputes about whether there is a variety in the Chinese context, at least not for the time being (Yu, 2006: 38). The important issue remains as to what are the nativized features of English in China's context, and whether the nativized features of English are intelligible and acceptable. With this argument having been made, more empirical studies on English in China's context are called for.

This dissertation is an attempt to reveal the use of English in China's context. The study examined the top eight Creation-and-Transformation verbs (TECVs) in China's English newspapers. Most Creation-and-Transformation verbs are transitive verbs, taking, in the argument, an agent that creates or transforms an entity (Levin, 1993). It is hypothesized that the use of English verbs in China's English newspapers differs from the native speakers' production in terms of semantic, lexical and grammatical features. This study thus addresses the following research questions: 1) What are the linguistic features (semantic, lexical and grammatical features) of TECVs in China's English newspapers? 2) To what extent are the nativized features of TECVs in China's English newspapers intelligible and acceptable to native and non-native speakers of English?

The main method includes a corpus-based study and a brief questionnaire survey. The corpora adopted in the study were China's English Newspaper Corpus, a sub-corpus of China's English

Corpus constructed by Dr. Li Wenzhong and the corpus team in Henan Normal University in 2003 (CCEN) and the newspaper part of the British National corpus (NBNC). CCEN includes 1860 texts (1, 058, 961 tokens and 20, 120 types) from three English newspapers *China Daily*, *Shanghai Star* and *Beijing Weekend* published in 2002. It is divided into 11 subject categories such as agriculture, communication, culture and life, economy, education, environment, industry, law, politics, science, and sports. CCEN was revised by Yu Xi and Gao Chao, so it only includes domestic news articles written by Chinese reporters. NBNC (the newspaper part of the British National Corpus, with 456 text files totaling 7, 086, 842 tokens and 99, 165 types) includes seven British newspapers (such as *The Guardian* and *The Independent*), covering arts and culture, commerce and finance, editorial, home and foreign news, etc. Wordsmith, PowerGrep and Claws were used in the present study to process data. The design of the corpus-based research was specified as the following: 1) text cleaning; 2) automatic tagging; 3) generating wordlist database; 4) selecting the top eight Creation-and-Transformation verbs; 5) generating concordance lines of the TECVs; and 6) manual annotation.

The questionnaire survey consisted of two parts. Part A was about personal information. In March 2007, 30 subjects from nine different countries (the U. S. A., France, Italy, Germany, Japan, Korea, Russia, Mexico and Venezuela) responded to the questionnaire. Their ages ranged from 19 – 30 with the average being 22. The majority have been in China for several months (half of them for one or two months). The average English

proficiency of the respondents was intermediate, and the average Chinese proficiency of the respondents was low. Part B was about intelligibility and acceptability. There were seven sentences taken from China's English newspapers with verb-noun collocations in bold-type. There were two five-point scales indicating the degree of intelligibility and acceptability (from definitely intelligible/ acceptable to definitely unintelligible/unacceptable) .

The major findings are summarized as follows:

1) In relation to linguistic features of TECVs in China's English newspapers, the distribution of senses varied in CCEN and NBNC. For instance, the senses of *grow* covered in CCEN are not more than those in NBNC, but the senses of *create* covered in NBNC are not more than those in CCEN. Only a few TECVs (such as *produce*) in CCEN and NBNC are semantically similar. Semantic specification (such as *build*), semantic broadening (such as *develop*) and subtle semantic variation can also be found in CCEN. In addition, with regard to semantic prosody, both CCEN and NBNC show the tendency of neutral prosody. However, positive senses of the TECVs are more frequently used in CCEN than they are in NBNC.

Distinctive evidence of Chinese characteristics can be found through the detailed analysis of collocations. On the whole, CCEN tends to use more recurrent collocations than NBNC. These high-frequency collocations in CCEN are often restricted in the grammatical pattern of Verb + Noun. The high-frequency collocations (such as *develop constructive and co-operative relation*, and *create an open and transparent market environment*) in CCEN reflect China's social reality (the development of politics,