外国语

○主編:崔东夏锡化



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> 外国语研究文集

◎ 主 编:崔 东 夏锡华

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前言

进入21世纪以后、外语教学遇到了新的困难与挑战。

在城市,学生从幼儿园的双语教学课堂到走进大学校园,外语学习已经进行了 12—14 年,用过数不清的教材,参加过数不清的培训班,经历过中外教师不同的教学方式,模仿过英国、美国、澳大利亚、新西兰、新加坡等多国英语语音和语调,其结果有些却是画虎不成反类犬。

在农村,特别是在边远山区,由于教学条件和师资条件的限制,绝大多数学生在进 人大学学习前从未接受过外教,从未体验过规范的英语教学。面对这类群体,大学外语 教学该选用何种教材?如何确定教学方法的应用?如何应对教学难度的取舍?如何使得 教与学更加密切结合?这一切,都摆在了外语教师的面前。

一方面,外语教师要按照教学计划完成教学任务,另一方面,还要结合不同学生不同的外语水平进行调节。从学校到外语教师,先后使用过免修、免听、分级教学、外教授课等方式,并且结合目前大量采用的学生自主学习的方式,试图解决以上的问题。

但这一切的结合是否真正满足了不同外语水平学生的要求?是否真正符合外语教学的教育规律?是否真正让学生认识到中学英语学习和大学英语学习的异同?是否真正发挥了外语教师的主观能动性和创新能力?是否真正达到了因材施教、培养创新型人才的目标?这些给外语教学和外语教师提出了一个更大的课题。

对于有些学生来说,大学外语教学并不能满足他们的需求,在遇到大学英语四、六级考试,英语专业四、八级考试,研究生入学考试,雅思、托福、GRE等考试的时候,他们转而投向了社会培训机构,以求得帮助。

大学外语教师和外语教学遇到了前所未有的挑战。

还有更深层次的外语语言学教学、语言学理论研究、外国文学素养培养、外国文学 理论研究、中外语言对比翻译研究、中西方文化研究等等。

大学外语教学的路究竟该怎样走?

大学外语教学是否该认真反思一下近30年来所走过的路程?

大学外语教师是否应该认真研究校内英语教学和社会英语教学的利与弊?

为什么有些学生忽视课堂外语教学而青睐社会培训?问题在哪里?

所有这些,需要我们认真地思考和解决。

在信息时代拜金主义、文化快餐、浮躁心理等强烈冲击的今天,外语教师依然做着自己的努力。

韩愈在《师说》中提出: 古之学者必有师。师者, 所以传道授业解惑也。

那么,教授外语的师者呢?是否在传外道、授异业、解洋惑乎?

实际上,21世纪的外语教师承担着更加神圣的使命。他们应当是传播文化的宣言书,是传承文化的宣传队,是传授知识的播种机。

为此,他们在努力着。

崔东 夏锡华 2010年6月18日

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语言与文学研究

On Pragmatic Functions of Cognitive Context in Utterance Inference

Bao Mingjie

Abstract: Linguistic communication is a type of social behavior. In human society, people carry out all kinds of social activities by language and realize different social purposes. Pragmatics just researches that how human communication with language takes place effectively in specific context. This article, from the view of pragmatics, discusses the roles which cognitive context plays in mutual manifestness, utterance relevance and utterance inference. It also emphasizes that in a certain cognitive context both sides of communication depend on corresponding contextual factors, choose appropriate expressing forms and achieve communicative goals.

Key words: cognitive context, contextual assumption, utterance relevance

I. Introduction

Language is a mysterious and powerful tool of information transmission. It can not only load syntactic and semantic information, but also carry pragmatic, social and cultural contents. In the late 1930s, American philosopher Charles Morris first used the term "pragmatics" in his book *Mark Fundamental Research Foundation*. He pointed out that semiotics should include three parts, namely syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Linguist R. Montague pointed out that the difference between pragmatics and semantics lies in: the former not only focuses on semantic explanation but also takes utterance environment into consideration. In fact pragmatics is a special discipline that studies the role of context in the process of communication. Especially it researches how to understand and apply languages in specific context. Thus it can be seen, context plays an important role in the research of pragmatics. This article, from the view of pragmatics, discusses the roles which cognitive context plays in human communication.

II. The Category of Context

The origin of the study of context can be tracked back to the year 1875 when the linguist

William D. Whitney first used the term "context" in his book *Life and Growth of Language*. In the book, he used the term "context" referring to the meaning of "circumstance" and "situation" in discussing language acquisition by children (1901: 13-28). Although he used the word "context" with an unclearly-defined meaning, he realized that context must play a role in children's acquisition of language. Besides, he was probably the first person who drew people's attention to the significance of context in language studies. Then, Malinowski, an English anthropologist, coined the term "context of situation". He concluded that "the meaning of any single word is to a very high degree dependent on its 'context' and living language must not be treated like dead ones, nor torn from their context of situation" (1923: 306-309).

Although Malinowski created and used the term "context of situation" widely in English, he did not provide the basis of any workable semantic theory of it. It is J. R. Firth who had made it a key concept in the technique of the London School of Linguistics. As a linguist, J. R. Firth felt that Malinowski's context of situation was not satisfactory for the more accurate and precise linguistic approach to the problem. For Malinowski's context of situation was "a bit of the social process which can be considered apart" or "an order series of events in rebus" (Firth, 1957a: 181). Firth believed that "all branches of linguistics are concerned with meaning, even phonetics" (1957a: 225) and that all elements of a language should be studied with reference to situation.

Based on the Malinowski's statement and the Firth's idea, Halliday made a remarkable progress in the study of context. As early as 1961, when discussing categories of a grammatical theory, Halliday claimed that linguistic events should be accounted for at three primary levels: substance, form and context. The substance is the material of language that can be phonic or graphic. The form is the organization of the substance into meaningful events. And by context he meant the relation of the form to non-linguistic features of the situations in which language operates, and the relation of form to linguistic features other than those of the item under attention (Halliday, 1961). He also stated that language consists of two meanings: formal meaning and contextual meaning. The formal meaning refers to the operation of a linguistic item in the network of formal relation while contextual meaning of an item refers to its relation extratextual features, i.e. the context. For Halliday, context is a very general term that designates the relation of form to non-linguistic features of the situation as well as the relation of form to linguistic features other than those of the item under attention. That means, context includes not only the utterance, but also the external physical objects, the observable actions, and all of the conventions and presuppositions accepted in the society in which the participants live, as long as these non-linguistic features are relevant to the understanding of the utterance.

For Lyons, the notion of context includes: (1) knowledge of role and status (where role covers both role in speech event, as speaker or addressee, and social role, and status covers notions of relative social standing); (2) knowledge of spatial and temporal location; (3) knowledge of formality level; (4) knowledge of the medium (roughly the code or style appropriate to a channel, like the distinction between written and spoken varieties of a language); (5) knowledge of appropriate subject matter; (6) knowledge of appropriate province (or domain determining the register of a language) (1977a: 574).

For Guy Cook, context is defined as "knowledge of relevant features of the world and cotext, rather than the world and co-text themselves". As such, context in the broad sense consists of knowledge of (1) co-text, (2) paralinguistic features, (3) other texts, (4) the physical situation, (5) the social and cultural situation, (6) interlocutors and their schemata (knowledge about other people's knowledge) (1995: 25).

Grice's theory of conversational implicature views context as a cognitive contribution to utterance interpretation. Thanks to Grice's theory, we came to realize the dependence of implicatures upon the cognitive context of shared beliefs and assumptions. But Grice's theory does not offer any suggestions about how to analyze those contexts. It only compartmentalizes context into different sources of background knowledge without grouping specific types of knowledge into labeled units (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 243-254).

From the logical and cognitive point of view, Relevance Theory analyzes context in a quite different way. Sperber and Wilson hold that the context for the comprehension of an utterance consists of the assumptions expressed and implicated by preceding utterances, plus the encyclopedic entries attached to any concepts used in these assumptions and in the utterance itself.

The above scholars give the different definitions of context from different angles and standards. Although they are not the same, they connect and remedy each other.

III. Cognitive Context and Mutual Manifestness

Mutual manifestness refers to the contextual intersection of two organisms in cognitive context. This intersection enriches coexisted cognitive context through original contexts of the two individual organisms including different understandings and assumptions of the same context. That's to say, both of them can understand a set of existed facts. Relevance Theory thinks that the communication between human beings is not only a coordination but also a process of mutual manifestness. For example: Mary saw a church when she was enjoying the scenery with Peter. Then she said:

(1) I have been to that church.

Mary is a communicator, a speaker. Before she said Sentence (1), she had not thought whether Peter had noticed the church she referred to and she hadn't asked herself whether Peter knew the church.... All these assumptions enriched and strengthened the cognitive context. So Mary thought when she asked Peter to see the church he could recognize that the house was a church. In fact, before Mary said Sentence (1), Peter thought that was a castle. That's to say, with the help of Mary's promotion Peter knew that the house was a church. Mary continued to say:

(2) That is the place which makes Mariannne Dashwood so happy to be fainting.

Mary used a metaphor from the book *Emotion and Reason*. The reason why she used a metaphor was that she thought Peter had read the book. What's more, she didn't ask herself whether they had different reactions to the book. She expected that her utterance could be an act of prompt and that could cause his recollection to this book. Then he could understand her metaphor.

IV. Cognitive Context and Utterance Relevance

Utterance Relevance means that an assumption is relevant and the assumption has a contextual effect. Some assumptions have large relevance and some assumptions have small relevance. The degree of an assumption has direct proportion with contextual effects. Examples like

- (3) a. People who are getting married should consult a doctor about possible hereditary risks to their children.
 - b. Two people both of whom have thalassemia should be warned against having children.
 - c. Susan has thalassemia.
- (4) Susan, who has thalassemia, is getting married to Bill.
- (5) Bill, who has thalassemia, is getting married to Susan.
- (6) Bill, who has thalassemia, is getting married to Susan, and 1967 was a great year for French wines.

In the context of Sentence (3a—c), Sentence (4) and (5) can have a contextual inference: Susan and Bill should consult a doctor about possible hereditary risks to their children. But Sentence (5) has a contextual inference that Sentence (4) hasn't. That's "Susan and Bill should be warned against having children". Because Sentence (5) has larger contextual effect than Sentence (4), the degree of relevance is deeper than that of Sentence (4). In the context of

Sentence (3a—c), because the extra information of Sentence (6) has no contextual effect, Sentence (6) and (5) have equal contextual effects. Understanding Sentence (3) needs some processing efforts, so the degree of relevance is not as deep as that of Sentence (5). Another example:

- (7) a. Mike: Shall we go to the movies?
 - b. Mary: I have to study for an exam.

From the literal meaning, Mary's response is irrelevant to the question because in fact Mike's utterance is a suggestion. He expects Mary's response is an acceptance, a refusal or other suggestions. How to understand Mary's response? It is evident that Mary expects Mike can understand her utterance and get her real meaning through inferences. Before Mike heard Mary's response, he had a common assumption. For example:

- (8) a. Going to the movies takes some time.
 - b. Studying for exams takes some time.
 - c. The cinema is not far from here.
 - d. There are at least two exams in a term.
 - e. Generally one cannot both go to the movies and study for an exam at the same time.

Many of the assumptions are relevant to a film. But all the assumptions have different degrees of relevance. The assumption in Sentence (8c) cannot result in a new assumption, so the degree of relevance is smaller. While Sentence (8e) is different, it can cause a new assumption to Mary's response.

- (8e) Generally one cannot both go to the movies and study for an exam at the same time.
- (7b) I (Mary) have to study for an exam.
- (9) I (Mary) cannot go to the movies.

Sentence (9) changes Mike's cognitive context and needs fewer processing efforts, so the degree of relevance of Sentence (7b) is a little larger. If there is no more relevant assumption, Mike will think that is Mary's real meaning.

V. Cognitive Context and Utterance Interpretation

Utterance Interpretation is a process of finding the best relevance through understanding utterances. Cognitive context is not determined before the process, it is a result of continuous choices in the process of understanding utterances. When a hearer makes an inference, he has an initial context to deal with the next new information. The hearer can extend the initial context according to the principle of Relevance. The hearer can infer an assumption. Example like:

(10) Mary: What I would like to eat tonight is an osso-bucco. I'm ravenous. I had a great day in court. How was your day?

Peter: Not so good. Too many patients, and the air conditioning is out of order. I'm tired.

Mary: I'm sorry to hear that. OK. I'll make it myself.

In order to understand Mary's utterance "I'll make it myself", Peter needs to use the information "What I would like to eat tonight is an osso-bucco" to extend his cognitive context. Then he can infer the contextual inference: "I'll make it myself".

VI. Conclusion

The process of human's cognition development is the process of knowing new things and is a leaning process. Each utterance interpretation can have a new understanding to the existing cognitive context. Then the new understanding affects next utterance inference. In summary, cognitive context plays a key role in mutual manifestness, utterance relevance and utterance interpretation. In a certain cognitive context the two parts of communication depend on corresponding contextual factors, choose appropriate expressing forms to achieve communicative goals. Otherwise, people will make pragmatic mistakes, which will have communicative barrier.

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英语对汉语不良影响的应对之策®

杨惠芳

摘要:英语对汉语的不良影响愈演愈烈,必须有效加以应对。首先,要正确估价英语的强势地位及其对汉语的不良影响,从而避免对英语语言文化的盲从和不加分辨的吸收。其次,要切实增强维护汉语纯洁和完整的责任感,树立中华民族文化的主体意识,提高维护汉语纯洁性的自觉意识,增强汉语将会越来越强大的自信意识。再次,准确把握汉语借鉴英语的基本原则,慎重对待并严格限制进入汉语文本中的英语表达,并坚决防止英语构句方式和语法习惯对汉语的影响。

关键词: 英语、不良影响、汉语、应对策略

1. 引言

随着英语全球化进程不断加快,英语对汉语的影响已是不争的事实。我们必须承认这一点。目前,英语对汉语的影响越来越广泛和深入,表现在口头语言、网络语言、文本语言等各个方面。可以说,英语对汉语的影响已经到了泛滥的地步,虽有一些积极的因素,但更多地表现为消极的一面。正视英语对汉语的不良影响,努力维护汉语的纯洁性,已成为摆在我们面前的一个重要课题。

2. 正确估价英语的强势地位及其对汉语的不良影响

随着英语全球化进程不断加快,英语对汉语的影响已是不争的事实。我们必须承认 这一现实,但承认现实并不等于不加分辨地采取拿来主义。而现在重要的不是探讨英语 对汉语的不良影响达到什么程度,而应是从如何避免的角度加以认真的分析和辨别。

2.1 英语的强势地位不等于英语的优越地位

英语在传播的过程中日益呈现出全球化与本土化的两面性。一方面,英语正在迅速向全球传播,并对其他语言产生影响。继英国之后,美国又在世界上处于强势地位,直

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接带来了英语在世界上的强势地位。目前,英语已成为 50 多个国家或地区的母语、官方语言或通用语言,成为几乎每一个国家学习二语的首选。英语在为接受国人群所接受的过程中,同时对当地的民族语言带来不同程度的影响。另一方面,英语也在接受国发生变异,并在当地民族语言的影响下开始出现本土化。亚洲、非洲的英语中已经夹杂着大量本地词汇和句法,具有鲜明的地方特色。在中国,越来越多的人开始了英语中国化的探讨。由此看来,语言的影响是相互的,英语的强势地位并不等于其优越地位。基于这一点,就不能认同英语在全世界的统治地位,从而认为他们是源,我们是流,他们是中心,我们是边缘,他们是主,我们是从。相反,应该把英语和汉语放在同等重要的位置。

2.2 接受和学习英语不等于用英语来改造汉语

中国人接受和学习英语,绝不是为了推崇英语而贬低汉语,而是为了更好地与英美国家人民交流,从而借鉴其政治、经济、文化中的合理因素,促进中国经济社会又好又快发展。需要特别强调的是,语言是民族性的典型反映和根本体现,也是一个民族为保持自身特性而必须坚守的底线,如果这个底线消失,该民族的政治、经济、文化必然会被异族化。中华民族之所以能生生不息,最关键的一个因素就是汉语的绵延不绝,以及汉语在借鉴外来语合理因素的基础上始终维护其纯洁性。因此,我们可以学习并使用英语,但绝不能用英语来改造我们的母语——汉语。生吞活剥地音译英语单词,直接将英语单词带入汉语文本,在汉语文本中充斥英语句子或者进行没有任何必要的英汉对照,甚至用英语的构句方式和语法习惯来改造汉语,都是不可取的。

2.3 英语对汉语的不良影响乃人为消极因素所致

英语与汉语本是各不相同的两种语言体系,并按照其自身规律不断向前发展。就语言发展本身而言,即使英语在中国广泛传播,汉语维护其纯洁性,也根本不是一个问题。正是由于人为消极因素的推波助澜,才使得英语对汉语的不良影响愈演愈烈。一些人看到英语不仅在世界上使用最广泛,而且为英美等发达国家的人群所使用,就心甘情愿地认可英语在全球语言交流与影响中的主导地位,并视在汉语中夹杂英语为适应潮流和趋势。有些人甚至把能说几句英语看成是一种教养的象征,因而通过在汉语表达中夹杂英语来聊以自慰。在日常生活中,常常可以听见小孩开口"Are you ready"、闭口"see you",在网络对话中,可以看到"GF"、"BF"、"CU"和"伤痛ing"的表达,在汉语文本中,经常夹杂着英语单词、词组甚至完整的句子。