

中国学习者英语反身代词的习得研究

# **The Study of the Acquisition of English Reflexives by Chinese EFL Learners**

吴明军 著

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Finally, I would like to thank my mother, my wife and my daughter for their unwavering support and enduring love, care, and encouragement which inspire me in all endeavors.

## 摘 要

英语反身代词(如 himself, herself)和汉语光杆反身代词“自己”都没有独立指称能力,语义解读依靠其先行语。两种语言反身代词的消解有相同之处,也有相异之所。相同之处在于其先行语都必须处于成分统领(c-command)位置,非统领位置上的限定词短语(DP)不能约束反身代词。例如,在 [Annie<sub>j</sub>'s sister]<sub>i</sub> told the doctor something about herself<sub>i,j</sub> 中,英语及其对应汉语的反身代词都只能与 Annie's sister 和“安妮的姐姐”共指,因为 Annie's sister 和“安妮的姐姐”成分统领 herself 和“自己”,而不能受 Annie 和“安妮”约束。英、汉语反身代词的差异凸显在局部性和主语倾向性两个方面。英语反身代词必须在约束域内受约束,而汉语反身代词既可近位约束,也可远程约束,即可与约束域外的 DP 共指。英语照应语的约束域是汉语的子集,但它的主语倾向性是汉语的母集(Wexler & Manzini 1987)。英语中的主语和宾语都可以充当先行语,而汉语中只有主语能够约束反身代词,宾语则不能。鉴于上述英、汉语反身代词的约束特性,中国学习者能否正确地消解英语反身代词?他们在确定英语反身代词所指时,不同约束特性的难度是否相同?随着英语水平提高,不同约束特性的发展模式是否相同?

本研究的测量工具是基于故事的真值判断任务。每个故事由 2—5 句组成,后面有一个含有反身代词的句子。故事为受试的判断提供语境,在他们阅读故事后,判断故事和句子是否相符。研究中的 40 个实验句,分别考察反身代词的主语倾向性、局部性和成分统领等三个约束特性,分为五种句型:考察主语倾向性的单子句、考察成分统领的单子句,以及考察局部性的限定性双子句、非限定性双子句和含有具象类限定词短语(PRNP)的单子句。为了克服传统的纸笔答题的缺点,我们采用 E-prime



对测试内容进行编程,实验中的40个故事完全随机呈现,受试只需按Y键(代表相符)和N键(代表不符),即可做出判断。根据E-prime自动记录的正确率,研究三组学习者在不同句型及其子类型中反身代词的约束特性习得。

为了保证受试的英语水平能够完成实验内容,我们以一所重点大学和一所二类本科院校的一年级206名大学生为研究对象。根据他们参加的牛津英语分班考试的成绩,选取高分段的40名受试组成高级组,中间的40名为中级组,低分段的40名为低级组。单因素方差分析结果表明,三组受试的英语水平差异非常显著( $F(2, 117) = 495.555, p = .000$ ),根据在单因素方差分析后做的Games-Howell检验,初级组和中级组、中级组和高级组之间的差异都非常显著( $p = .000$ )。

混合的重复测量方差分析结果表明,水平、句型和距离三个因素之间的交互效应不显著,表明三个水平组在五种句型中对先行语与反身代词之间的距离判断相同。句型和距离交互效应显著( $F_{3.295, 385.488} = 49.936, p < 0.005, \text{partial eta-squared} = 0.299, \text{power} = 1.000$ ),表明在五种句型中,学习者不是全部在接受近位先行语的同时,拒绝远程的先行语。水平和句型的交互效应显著( $F_{6.285, 367.656} = 2.285, p = 0.033, \text{partial eta-squared} = 0.038, \text{power} = 0.809$ )。不同约束特性的习得难度分别为:成分统领 < 主语倾向性 / 局部性(低级组);成分统领 < 局部性 < 主语倾向性(中级组和高级组)。局部性在三种条件下的难度顺序分别为:限定性双子句 < 非限定性双子句 < 具象类单子句(低级组);限定性双子句 / 非限定性双子句 < 具象类单子句(中级组和高级组)。五种句型的难度顺序分别为:句型1和3 < 句型2和4 < 句型5(低级组);句型1、句型3和句型4 < 句型2和句型5(中级组和高级组)。增加语篇变量后,10个子类型的难度顺序分别为:子类型1A、1B、2B、3A、3B和4A < 2A、4B、5A和5B(低级组);子类型1A、1B、2B、3A、3B和4A < 4B、5A和5B < 2A(中级组);子类型1A、1B、2B、3A、3B、4A和4B < 5A和5B < 2A(高级组)。约束特性在三个不同水平组间的四种发展模式分别为:三组之间都显著(子类型4B)、三组之间都不显著(子类型2A和2B)、只有低级组和高级组之间显著(5A和5B)和或低—中组或中—高组显著。



虽然汉语迁移能够解释低级组中成分统领显著好于局部性和主语倾向性,但无法解释三个水平组的局部性在不同条件下存在的差异。修正的约束理论对此也不能给出令人信服的解释。本研究运用“语段理论”和“接口假说”从两个不同视角对局部性差异进行了合理的解释。语段中心语 *v* 和 *D* 的语类不同,以及语段完整性是导致局部性差异的原因,这是语段理论首次在二语习得中的应用。不同条件下的局部性分别涉及纯句法、句法—词汇和句法—语义等不同的接口范畴,是局部性差异的另外一个原因。此外,本研究还运用接口假说对很多中国学习者不能习得宾语约束进行了解释。研究的结果表明,低级组不能区分接口,而中级组和高级组能区分内接口和外接口,发展了接口假说。

关键词:反身代词、约束理论的 A 原则、普遍语法、语段理论、接口假说

## Abstract

This dissertation explores the developmental pattern observed in Chinese EFL learners acquiring the three binding properties of English reflexives, c-commanding constraint, subject orientation and locality condition.

It is generally acknowledged that the c-commanding constraint is universal cross-linguistically. In both English and Chinese, reflexives are bound only by the DP which occupies the c-commanding position in the sentence configuration. Therefore, in English sentences as “ [Annie<sub>j</sub>'s sister]<sub>i</sub> told the doctor something about herself<sub>i,j</sub>,” and their counterpart Chinese sentences, *herself* is coreferential with *Annie's sister*, a c-commanding DP, but not coreferential with *Annie*, a non-c-commanding DP.

However, it is widely known that reflexive pronouns in English and Chinese differ with respect to subject orientation and locality condition. On the one hand, English reflexives can take local DPs as their antecedents and long-distance DPs are not legitimate antecedents whereas Chinese monomorphemic reflexive ‘*ziji*’ can be bound either to a local DP or to a long-distance (LD) DP. On the other hand, in English, DPs functioning as subject or object can be legitimate antecedents; in contrast, in Chinese, reflexives can take only subject as their antecedent and sentences with coreferential dependencies between reflexives and object are ruled out.

Given the differences in referential characteristics between English and Chinese, an interesting question arises in the case of Chinese learners' acquiring English reflexives: is it possible for them to acquire the coreference properties of English anaphors? There is positive evidence in the acquisition of the corefe-

rence between reflexives and the nonsubject, but in the acquisition of locality requirement, the logical problem holds in adult second language acquisition (White 1989). Furthermore, if binding properties are acquirable, how do they develop with the gain of English proficiency by Chinese EFL learners?

A truth-value judgment task is employed in this dissertation in that this methodology offers a relatively direct and efficient means of evaluating competence rather than preference. The test format is a story consisting of 2 to 5 sentences followed by a comment sentence. Participants are required to read the 40 stories and then indicate whether the subsequent comment sentence matches or mismatches the situation provided in the story by pressing either 'y' or 'n' key on the keyboard. The comment sentences following the stories fall into five sentence types to investigate the Chinese speakers' acquisition of three binding properties, c-command, orientation and locality, respectively.

To guarantee that participants are proficient enough to accomplish the experiment task, 206 freshmen were selected from 6 natural classes of a top-ten key university in China and a non-key university. Three proficiency levels were set up according to Quick Placement Test administered to all the participants. The top 40 participants are considered as the high scoring group, the 40 in the middle as the mid group, and the 40 at the bottom as the low group. There are big differences among the three groups' mean proficiency scores, with means scores of 49.8, 41.7, and 33.9, respectively. According to a one-way ANOVA, the differences among them are statistically significant ( $F(2, 117) = 495.6, p = .000$ ), with post hoc Games Howell procedures showing significant differences between the high group and the other learner groups ( $p = .000$ ), as well as between the low and mid groups ( $p = .000$ ).

The results of Mixed RM ANOVAs indicate that the largest three-way interaction between types of sentences, distance of antecedents, and proficiency is not statistical, using the Huynh-Feldt correct ( $F_{6.59, 385.488} = 0.556, p = 0.781$ , partial eta-squared = 0.009, power = 0.234). This means that participants from the different groups performed similarly on different types of sentences, and they also performed similarly in spite of the distance of antecedents.

However, the two-way interaction between the sentence type and proficiency and between the sentence type and distance is statistically different. The difficulty order of the three distinct binding properties is that c-command is easier than locality and orientation for the low group whereas for the mid group and the high group c-command is easier than locality, which in turn is easier than orientation. When locality is instantiated in finite embedded clauses, nonfinite embedded clauses and monoclauses with possessed representational noun phrases (PRNP), the difficulty order is that the resolution of reflexives in PRNPs is more demanding than that in nonfinite clauses, which in turn is more demanding than that in finite clauses for the low group. For the mid group and the high group, the difficulty order is that the PRNP condition is more challenging than the biclausal condition. Of the five sentence types, Types 1 and 3 are the easiest while Type 5 is the most difficult for the low group; Types 1, 3 and 4 are easier than Types 2 and 5 for the mid group and the high group. With discourse information taken into consideration, the difficulty order for the low group is 1A/1B/2B/3A/3B and 4A < 2A/4B/5A and 5B; for the mid group 1A/1B/2B/3A/3B and 4A < 4B/5A and 5B < 2A; for the high group 1A/1B/2B/3A/3B/4A and 4B < 5A and 5B < 2A.

There are four developmental patterns of each binding property and each condition of locality exhibited by the three proficiency groups. First, there is significant improvement both from the low-level group to the mid-level group and from the mid-level group to the high-level group. Second, there is no improvement either from the low group to the mid group, or from the mid-level group to the high-level group, or from the low group to the high group. Third, there is no improvement from the low group to the mid group, or from the mid group to the high group; however, there is improvement from the low group to the high group. Fourth, there is only significant improvement either from the low-level to the mid-level group or from the mid-level to the high-level group, but not both.

Though transfer can account for better acquisition of c-command than orientation and locality in the low group, it cannot explain the differences in the same binding property of locality under the three different conditions. The explanation

by the extension of the standard binding theory is inadequate and unsatisfactory as well. Two proposals are suggested in the dissertation to account for the differences between binding properties and the three conditions of locality. It is argued that head category and completeness of phases play an important role in the interpretation of English reflexives, which give rise to the differences in the locality property. This is the first attempt that the phase theory is applied to SLA research. Alternatively, the involvement of distinct interface categories in identifying antecedents results in differences in the three conditions of locality. Additionally, the Interface Hypothesis makes an adequate account for the differences between the distinct binding properties, namely, c-command, orientation and locality. The results indicating that orientation is as demanding as locality implicate that interpretations of reflexives involving interfaces are all challenging no matter whether the interfaces are internal interfaces or external interfaces. This is the new extension of the Interface Hypothesis in that previous studies exclusively include advanced or near-native learners of a second language.

**Key words:** Reflexives, Principle A of the binding theory, Universal Grammar, the phase theory, the Interface Hypothesis

## 序

2010年9月,吴明军考入上海交通大学外国语学院,攻读外国语言学及应用语言学博士学位。他入学前对英语句法和二语习得感兴趣,虽然在硕士阶段选修过二语习得这门课程,但是二语习得的基础较薄弱,缺乏对这门学科的系统了解。入学后,我们经常进行二语习得学科体系的交流,寻找句法和二语习得的可能结合点。他悟性较高,善于独立思考,所以进步很快,在第二学期的语言哲学课上,他受到启发,打算以约束理论为基础,做二语照应成分的习得。第三学期,他在美国进行了一个学期的访学,收集了很多2010年以前的相关理论和实证研究的文献。在向我汇报所阅读的文献后,我们商量决定做英语反身代词的习得研究。之后,当他在 *Second Language Research*、*Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 等第二语言习得的期刊上找不到更新的文献时开始犹豫,想更换研究方向。但在我的鼓励下,他最终还是坚持了我们当初的决定。其后的研究过程则比较顺利,他第四学期完成了先导研究,撰写了小论文,发表在《外语教学与研究》杂志上。

明军能顺利完成博士阶段的学习和研究,研究成果陆续发表在《外语教学与研究》《外国语》等外语类的 CSSCI 期刊上,可以归因以下三点。首先是勤奋好学。上海交通大学的外国语言学及应用语言学博士点的强项之一是实证研究,实证研究需要一定的统计知识。明军是在第一学期选修统计课程时才开始学习运用统计软件 SPSS,到毕业时已经能够非常熟练地进行不同的统计检验。在博士论文研究中,为克服文献中传统的纸笔测试方法可能引起的被试修改答案,以保持相同句型中反身代词的指代相同,他学习了 e-prime 软件编程,并熟练掌握,运用自如,为完成博士论文研究提供了技术保障。其次是刻苦钻研。明军的钻研精神表现在他的专注和韧劲上。在认定了研究的目标和方向之后,他心无旁骛,刻苦钻研,每天都在阅读思考和总结,每周

都和我交流一到两次。他高度的专注力和持久的韧劲给我留下深刻印象,高度钻研的精神成就了他长足的进步。第三是善于和他人交流。明军在校学习期间善于和老师同学交流。他不怕出错,敢于表达,谦虚热情,不断向他人学习,这也是做研究所必须具备的。我们每周交流,他总是很有想法,思维活跃而敏捷。在研究的过程中,他还不断向国内外这个领域的其他专家学者请教,不断丰富明晰自己的学术思路。

近半个世纪以来,照应成分的习得和加工一直是国际上的一个研究热点。通过照应成分的习得,可以验证二语习得中普遍语法的可及性,二语中的不同约束特性参数能否得到重置,以及在普遍语法可及情况下句法、语义、音系、词汇等不同语言模块之间的接口,语言模块与外部世界或认知系统之间的接口。明军的博士论文通过基于故事的真值判断任务,采用 e-prime 编程,考察高、中、低三组水平不同的中国学习者如何确定英语反身代词 himself 和 herself 在单子句、限定性双子句、非限定性双子句等五种句型中的先行语。该研究发现,学习者在五种句型中不是全部在接受近位先行语的同时,拒绝远程的先行语。不同句型中的不同约束特性的习得难度不同。相同的约束特性,即局部性,在限定性双子句、非限定性双子句和含有具象类限定词短语等三种句型中存在的差异表明,语段中心语 v 和 D 的语类不同,以及语段完整性是导致局部性差异的原因,这是语段理论首次在二语习得中得到应用。不同约束特性之间也存在差异,表明反身代词的先行语指派涉及纯句法、句法—词汇和句法—语义等不同的接口范畴。此外,研究结果还表明,低级组不能区分接口,而中级组和高级组能区分内接口和外接口,他的研究发展了接口假说。

短短几年,勤奋好学,刻苦钻研,善于和他人交流的他形成了自己独到的学术见解,取得了不错的成就,让我倍感欣慰,也倍感骄傲。衷心祝贺吴明军博士的论文付梓出版。希望他未来的事业人生一切顺利,永远保有上海交大赋予他的勤奋、刻苦、独立思考的精神和实事求是做学问的气质。

是为序。

王同顺

2017年3月26日于上海交大闵行校区



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