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on Markedness and Language Transfer
in the Acquisition of
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英语冠词系统习得中的 标记理论和语言迁移研究

赵海艳 著

山东大学出版社

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前言

本书是根据我的博士论文《英语冠词系统习得中的标记理论和语言迁移研究》修改而成的,全书共分为7章。本研究以二语习得理论中的母语迁移理论和标记理论为基础,运用定量研究和定性研究相结合的方法,对不同母语背景下的语言学习者在英语冠词系统习得过程中标记性差异与母语迁移产生的关系,即母语迁移何时产生以及如何产生的情况进行了探索性研究。

在理论上,本研究从一个全新的角度,即在标记理论的框架下对英语冠词系统习得过程中的母语迁移现象进行了分析。英语冠词作为限定词的一种,与名词或名词词组连用,在语言交际中使用频率较高,对语言交际能否成功起着一定的限定作用。因此英语冠词系统习得是二语学习者英语语言习得中的重要组成部分。冠词主要存在于印欧语系及闪语当中,而汉语属于汉藏语系,并没有冠词系统,因此不同母语背景下的语言学习者可能会由于母语迁移的作用,对冠词的习得出现差异。对于冠词系统的研究,在国外著述颇多,包括冠词系统的分类、指称意义、冠词的习得顺序以及学习者第二语言对冠词系统习得的影响等。在国内,近年来对英语冠词的研究主要分为三类:对英语冠词语义功能的研究、英语冠词的教学研究和英语冠词的习得研究。对于冠词的研究,前人多注重于学习者母语与目的语之间句法和语义的比较研究,而这种研究多建立在对比分析的基础之上,而对比分析无法解释为何母语与目的语之间的差异并不总是产生习得困难的现象。因此,本

研究从标记理论的角度对英语冠词系统习得中的母语迁移现象进行研究,试图探索英语冠词习得过程中标记性差异与母语可迁移性的关系。本研究将以国外二语习得环境中不同母语背景下的语言学习者作为研究对象,就二语学习者在相同的语言环境下由于母语体系中是否存在冠词系统的差异,对英语冠词系统的习得所产生的影响进行研究,并从标记理论和语言迁移的角度出发,就可能存在的差异进行分析,以期能够找到英语冠词习得中标记理论与母语迁移所产生的作用,并找出相应的解决办法。

在研究方法上,本研究运用了定量研究和定性研究相结合的方法。通过对试题成绩的统计分析、冠词频数的语料库分析以及试后回访等定量与定性研究相结合的方法,从标记理论的视角,就不同母语背景下的语言学习者在冠词习得过程中所存在的母语迁移现象进行分析,将思辨性、理论性研究与实证性研究方法相结合,从而进行多层次的横向对比研究。首先,本研究采用实验研究的方法,通过单项选择和短文填空对语言学习者冠词的习得情况以及其他限定词与冠词成绩的对比进行分析。按照 Huebner 对冠词以二项对立特征,即名词词组语义环境特指(specific reference)和听者知识(assumed known/not known to the hearer)为参照的分类方法将冠词分为四类:定指,类指,不定指,无指。实验运用 SPSS 统计软件,对相同母语背景下的语言学习者在不同的冠词词类中的成绩是否存在差异以及不同母语背景下的语言学习者对于相同的冠词词类的掌握是否存在差异进行定量分析。其次,其他限定词在名词短语中起到了与冠词相似的对名词的限定作用,从而加大了冠词习得的复杂性。因此,本项研究将其他限定词的研究也包含在内,主要研究了冠词的使用与其他限定词的掌握是否存在差异;语言学习者为了避免错误的产生,在习得冠词的过程中是否存在避免使用冠词而缺省冠词的现象,或由于学习者知晓冠词使用频率较高而存在过度使用的现象。此外,本研究还通

过试后回访了解学生选择不同冠词或其他限定词的原因,从而进一步了解不同母语背景下的语言学习者对冠词的掌握情况,对冠词系统习得中标记理论和母语迁移产生的心理因素进行定性分析。试后回访通过对学习者提供答案的内在心理原因进行划分,探知标记理论视角下母语迁移的心理认知是随意发生的,还是选择性的、系统性的。这种定量研究和定性研究相结合的研究方法使研究者得以更好地掌握和分析不同母语背景下语言学习者对英语冠词的习得情况。

在研究对象上,本研究中的实验对象选取了不同母语背景下的语言学习者。国外对于冠词系统的研究较多,但鲜有把中国学生作为研究对象的研究;相反,国内的研究多以国内外语环境下的语言学习者作为研究对象,研究汉语对英语冠词习得的影响。本论文中的实验对象为来自英国中兰卡郡大学的43名非英语专业本科生,包括母语中包含冠词系统的西班牙语和法语的学生以及母语中缺乏冠词系统的汉语的学生。本研究通过对国外二语习得环境下母语中有无冠词系统的语言学习者对英语冠词习得的差异情况进行分析,进而探索在标记理论框架下英语冠词习得过程中的母语迁移现象,对于进一步了解母语迁移的可行性,以及如何促进母语的正迁移、减少母语的负迁移具有一定的研究意义和参考价值。

本研究对今后二语习得研究中通过标记理论和母语迁移理论分析英语冠词系统的实证研究以及国内英语冠词系统的教学研究具有一定的参考意义。例如,对不同英语冠词指称类别掌握的差异进行的研究,对于教师在指导学生类指、回指等不同类别的学习中采用不同的教学方法,从而有效地提高学生对冠词的掌握具有一定的促进作用;通过促进教师在教学中对英语冠词系统标记性差异进行对比,尽量减少母语负迁移等等。

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赵海艳

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List of Abbreviations

ACP	Article Choice Parameter
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BPH	Biological Program Hypothesis
CAH	Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
CC	Creative Construction
CR	Contrastive Rhetoric
CUP	Common Underlying Proficiency
DP	Determiner Phrase
EFL	English as a foreign language
ESK	Explicitly Stated Knowledge
ESL	English as a second language
FA	Full Access Hypothesis
FH	Fluctuation Hypothesis
FT	Full Transfer Hypothesis
HK	Hearer's Knowledge
MDH	Markedness Differential Hypothesis
MSIH	Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis
MTH	Minimal Trees Hypothesis
NCEE	National College Entrance Examination
NL	Native Language
NMP	Nominal Mapping Parameter

NP	Noun Phrase
RDH	Representational Deficit Hypothesis
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SR	Specific Referent
TL	Target Language
UG	Universal Grammar

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This book aims to explore the L2 acquisition of the English article system from the perspective of mechanics and language transfer in the hope of contributing to the research of second language acquisition and foreign language teaching.

Articles are functional words and play an important part in second language research. There is a lot of evidence that articles are among the most frequently used words in English (Gather, 1992). A, an, and the, along with the zero article (Ø), account for 2.5% in the whole English discourse (Hart, 1992). Therefore, it is of great significance for second language learners to master the usage of articles. What's more, it is difficult to manipulate the English article system in the complex semantic classification and specific usage of the English articles. Just as Master (1997: 461) claimed, "the English article system is one of the most difficult aspects of English grammar for nonnative speakers and one of the hardest to be fully acquired". Master (2002) summarizes three main difficulties

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Goals

This book aims to explore the L2 acquisition of the English article system from the perspective of markedness and language transfer in the hope of contributing to the research of second language acquisition and foreign language teaching.

Articles are functional words and play an important part in second language research. There is a lot of evidence that articles are among the most commonly used words in English (Butler, 2002). *A*, *an*, and *the*, along with the zero article ($\emptyset$), account for 8.5% in the whole English discourse (Berry, 1993). Therefore, it is of great significance for the second language learners to master the usage of articles. What's more, it is difficult to manipulate the English article system due to the complex semantic classification and specific usages of the English articles. Just as Master (1990: 461) claimed, "the English article system is one of the most difficult aspects of English grammar for nonnative speakers and one of the latest to be fully acquired". Master (2002) summarizes three main difficulties

language learners encounter in the process of article acquisition. Firstly, the high frequency of articles presented both in speech and text description makes it difficult to identify a rule from too many usages. Secondly, function words are not usually taken for emphasis, which makes them harder to notice. And thirdly, the article system has only one morpheme for many different uses in English. This one-to-many mapping contributes to the complexity of the article acquisition. Therefore, the complexity of articles poses a great challenge to English language learners, especially to those whose native languages, like Chinese, do not have article system.

Many languages which contain articles belong to the Indo-European language family, whereas Chinese belongs to the Sino-Tibetan family which is acknowledged as a language without article system. In other words, there are no functional equivalents in Chinese of the English article system. "Definiteness and specificity are marked in Chinese by word order or the use of determiners." (Robertson, 2000: 140) For Chinese learners, English articles are a category of zero contrast (Zobl, 1982). Therefore, Chinese language learners may, due to the typological difference and the role of language transfer, frequently make errors in the process of acquiring the article system. Ample evidence shows that Chinese learners find it particularly difficult to acquire English articles.

High frequency of articles in discourses and the difficulty of fully acquiring them have aroused researchers' interest. They have investigated the articles from many aspects: the classification of the article system (Christopherson, 1939;