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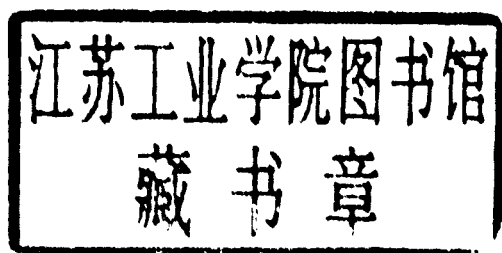
崔艳嫣 著

中国
英语专业学生
词汇能力
发展研究

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外国语言学与应用语言学博士文库

An Exploration into the Development of Lexical Competence of Chinese Tertiary English Majors

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中国海洋大学出版社
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总 序 一

语言学博士在 20 世纪 80 年代还是凤毛麟角,但随着国家的不断发展和富强、高等教育的飞速发展、学科建设的不断提升,外国语言文学和语言学及应用语言学的博士点在全国不断涌现,培养的语言学博士越来越多。中国海洋大学出版社看到这个契机,决定向这些毕业的博士征稿,推出语言学博士文库出版计划,陆续出版学术水平高、写作质量好的博士论文。我认为这是一个极其明智之举,将会对语言学基础理论和应用语言学理论的研究起到很大的推动作用。

博士论文出版后通常按专著对待,作为专著的一种,也无可厚非。但博士论文与一般专著相比有它自己的特点。它更强调学术性,重点放在理论的创新上,以解决理论问题为主,而专著虽然必须是学术性很强的,但它还要考虑应用性,例如,要考虑适合一定的读者群,致力于解决当前社会上亟须解决的问题,或者在某个领域普及相关的理论知识等。

从学术的角度讲,博士论文与其他著作相比有它的优势。首先,它的选题经过严密的论证和讨论,又有导师的指导,是学术界所关心的研究题目。第二,它研究的重点更加集中,要解决的理论问题更加明确,通常整个研究只围绕一个论题展开。第三,它研究的方法更加明确和恰当,而且研究方法通常得到突出,从而使研究结果更具说服力和实证性。第四,也是最重要的一点,作者通常要倾三年之力,专心研究这个题目,这样,他对相关的前沿理论和所使用的方法都会十分熟悉;同时他还要考虑专家提出的问题,对每个理论点进行反复研究、琢磨和探讨,填补所有的漏洞,使论文从理论体系和体例上更加完善。另外,他要特别突出他的创新点,得出更有价值的结论等。

本《文库》的推出不仅可以吸收优秀的博士论文成果,同时对作者本人的发展和提高也起着极其重要的作用。作者要使自己的博士论文达到出版的要求,不仅要做文字和格式上的修改,还要在理论的

建构和论述上完善自己的论文,这对作者既是一个挑战,也是一个提高的过程。

　　本《文库》的读者应该大部分是从事语言学理论和应用研究的工作者,包括专业研究人员、大学教师等,但更大而且更加迫切的读者群应该是全国的从事语言学和应用语言学学习和研究的硕士生和博士生。他们不仅可以通过阅读《文库》的论文接触到前沿的语言学理论和应用语言学理论,还能学到博士论文写作的思路、方法和程序,应该说受益更大。

　　我们希望《文库》有越来越大的读者群,同时我们也希望更多的博士学位获得者加入我们《文库》作者的行列,为提高我国语言学和应用语言学研究的水平贡献自己的力量,但同时也应该知道,本《文库》是精选的博士论文,所以必须把自己的论文精心修改,达到可以出版的水平再拿出来出版。

　　感谢中国海洋大学出版社以其对学术事业的追求和热爱,以敏锐的洞察力和与时俱进的思路策划和设计了这个文库。感谢出版社在语言学和应用语言学的教学与研究中所做出的突出贡献。我也希望我们的广大作者也和出版社的领导和编辑们一起为推动我国语言学研究、语言教学和语言学习理论的进一步发展而继续努力。

张德禄

教授、博士生导师

中国海洋大学外国语学院

2007 年 6 月 7 日

总 序 二

中国海洋大学出版社拟出版《外国语言学与应用语言学博士文库》，为我国外语学界的科学研究摇旗呐喊，这是一件大好事，我感到由衷的高兴。

外语学界与语言相关的学术研究，大体可以分为四类。第一类是个别语言研究，例如英语语言研究、法语语言研究、日语语言研究等，通常放在相应的专业，如英语语言文学、法语语言文学等等里面，一般不属于外国语言学与应用语言学这个学科。第二类是关于人类总体语言的研究，也就是一般称之为普通语言学或理论语言学的研究，它虽然从某一具体语言如英语、法语等出发，但想探讨的是适用于人类所有语言的普遍规律，这是"外国语言学及应用语言学"学科的核心内容。正是在这个问题上，有人对"外国语言学"这个名称表示质疑，认为"语言学"不应有中国、外国之分。这个质疑当然是有道理的，我们也期望有关方面日后在条件成熟时能作出调整。但这个名称的产生有其历史原因，而且人们在实际操作时一般不会发生混淆，人们会把在国外产生的、或从外语研究中生发的理论研究归之于"外国语言学及应用语言学"，而把在国内产生、主要关注于汉语的理论研究归之于中文学科下的"语言学及应用语言学"。第三类是关于外语的教学研究，这可以是涉及具体语言的，如英语教学、法语教学等，也可以是涉及总体外语教学的，我们现在通常称之为"第二语言教学"或"二语教学"。一般情况下，我们把具体语言的教学放到相应的专业里，如英语教学放到英语语言文学专业里、法语教学放到法语语言文学里，而把更具普遍性的"二语教学"放到"外国语言学及应用语言学"专业里。这是名称中"应用语言学"的核心内容。第四类研究是关于语际翻译的，同样有具体的和一般的两个层次，但由于具体翻译也总是涉及至少两种语言，如英汉翻译涉及英语和汉语，放在具

体语文学科里虽然也可以,但不如放在语言学及应用语言学里比较合适;至于翻译的理论研究就更应属于这个学科了。事实上,这正是"应用语言学"的第二大的重要内容。由于翻译学近年来在我国发展很快,已经蔚成大国,出版了好几套丛书,我们就不再把它作为本文库的重点。"应用语言学"下面按理还有些其他内容,如语言政策、语言规划、社会语言运用等,但外语界目前在这些方面着力不多,今后如果有人研究,我们还是很愿意收入的。

这样看来,本文库收集的论文首先是下面两类。一类是关于国外语言学理论的研究,一类是关于二语教学理论的研究。第一类属于所谓的"语言学",第二类属于所谓的"应用语言学"。

但还应该有第三类,这就是介于"中国的"和"外国的"之间的语言研究,也就是对比语言学研究,这也是我国近些年发展得很快的领域,但相应的丛书还不多见。从理论上来说,就好像双语翻译涉及汉语和外语,因而中文学科和外文学科都可以管一样,对比语言学也可以分属中文和外文两个学科下的"语言学",但实际上由于对比研究和翻译研究都要求有相当高的外语水平,因而习惯上更多地放在"外国语言学"的研究里。这也因此成了我们这一文库收录的又一类重要研究。近年来,随着消除"两张皮"呼声的高涨,一些有眼光的研究者在取得外语的相关学位以后,往往跟随中文学科的高水平导师攻读博士学位或做博士后研究,以求双语双文化的真正会通,出了许多令人瞩目的成果。我们也将很乐意地收入这套文库。

本文库是一个开放性的文库,第一辑我们预期收录七种,其中第一、二类各三种,第三类一种。今后还将不断扩大收录范围。我们也希望外语界的,以及招收外语博士生的中文界导师,将符合上述内容的优秀博士论文推荐给我们,共同为繁荣"外国语言学及应用语言学"这一学科作出我们的贡献。

潘文国

2007 年 11 月 9 日于上海寓中

Acknowledgements

I

Abstract

This dissertation constitutes an attempt to explore the developmental features of lexical competence on the part of tertiary English majors in China. Built on the collective strengths of previous theoretical and empirical studies, a tentative conceptual framework of lexical competence in the foreign language classroom setting has been specifically constructed for the present research, which consists of four measurable dimensions, viz. vocabulary size (receptive and productive), depth of vocabulary knowledge (receptive and productive), lexical organization, and lexical semantic autonomy. Then research efforts have been made to investigate the developments of the four aforementioned dimensions and the relationships among them.

Four hundred and twelve English majors from 16 intact classes from Year One through Year Four in a university in China participated in the cross-sectional investigation, and data were collected on the four dimensions of lexical competence. The Vocabulary Levels Test developed by Schmitt et al. (2001) was employed to measure the learners' receptive vocabulary size. RANGE and WordSmith Tools were exploited to process the timed compositions produced by the students. Lexical frequency profile and lexical diversity obtained from such analysis were considered as the indicators of the development of productive vocabulary size. An established test constructed by Read (1998) was used to assess the participants' depth of vocabulary knowledge. Lexical organization was gauged by a word association test containing 40 stimulus words strictly selected from Kent-Rosanoff word association list. Lexical semantic autonomy was tackled by a semantic relatedness judgment task, which characterized the specific semantic information in an L2 lexical entry in the mental lexicon. On a stratified-random sampling basis, 200 students (50 freshmen, 50 sophomores, 50 juniors, and 50 seniors) were selected from a population of 397 students who finished all the five test instruments.

After analyzing the data obtained from the 200 subjects, the present research yields the following important findings:

(1) In respect of receptive vocabulary size, the present research has revealed that it develops in a linear pattern from Year One to Year Four. There is a significant increase in each academic year, and the average gain of vocabulary per year is approximately 1,200 word families. The higher the learning stages, the larger the variation of receptive vocabulary size. From Year One to Year Two, the subjects increase their vocabulary in the five word frequency levels addressed in the Vocabulary Levels Test while the growth of receptive vocabu-

lary size for the Year Three and Year Four subjects mainly occurs in the low frequency word levels like 5,000 word level or 10,000 word level. Another feature is that the subjects increase their receptive vocabulary size in the diverse word frequency levels simultaneously. The Year Three and Year Four learners gain word families in the low frequency word levels as well as word families in the high frequency word levels, though the increase in some word levels does not reach statistical significance.

(2) The development of productive vocabulary size has been investigated by adopting a corpus-based approach. The lexical frequency profile yielded by RANGE shows that Year Three and Year Four subjects use significantly more low frequency word families in the "beyond 2,000" category while Year One and Year Two subjects employ more high frequency word families in the "basic 2,000" category. Compared with the development of receptive vocabulary, the expansion of the productive vocabulary is slower in rate and prone to fossilization in the course of improvement. The lexical diversity yielded by WordSmith is in congruence with the lexical frequency profile produced by RANGE. The standardized type/token ratios from Year Three and Year Four are larger than those from Year One and Year Two. However, the differences between Year Three and Year Four and that between Year One and Year Two are not so pronounced. With regard to word length, the subjects at higher learning stages surpass those at lower learning stages in their ability of producing long words with 7 or more letters.

(3) The development of depth of vocabulary knowledge differs from that of receptive vocabulary size and productive vocabulary size in rate and pattern. From Year One to Year Three, the subjects increase their depth of vocabulary knowledge significantly while such development stagnates from Year Three to Year Four. In contrast to the subjects at lower learning stages, those at higher learning stages are more homogeneous and less varied in their depth of vocabulary knowledge. The results also indicate that meaning and collocation, two components of depth of vocabulary knowledge, are interrelated and interdependent in their developmental routes.

(4) As an important dimension of lexical competence, the development of lexical organization has been gauged by the word association test in the present research. The general developmental pattern is that the subjects at higher learning stages produce more semantic associations than those at lower learning stages. The opposite is true for the non-semantic responses, and the subjects with less learning experiences yield more such responses than those with more learning experiences. A hasty conclusion, however, is untenable that the development of lexical organization is exclusively determined by language proficiency. Other factors such as word frequency, abstractness, and cultural strangeness exert influence on the organization of L2 mental lexicon. A close inspection of the clang-other responses shows that L2 learners often misperceive some stimulus words and thus produce unclassifiable responses. Another noticeable feature is that the L2 subjects tend to make responses belonging to

the same word families as the stimuli, irrespective of their learning stages. Nevertheless, Year Three and Year Four subjects produce more sophisticated and abstract paradigmatic and syntagmatic associations than Year One and Year Two learners, indicating the possession of considerably larger and better-developed mental lexicon. Furthermore, some encyclopedic responses exhibit the influence of L1 semantic or conceptual system on the organization of L2 mental lexicon.

(5) Research findings point to the fact that receptive vocabulary size, productive vocabulary size, depth of vocabulary knowledge and lexical organization are significantly and positively interrelated with each other, denoting the interdependent developments of the different dimensions of lexical competence.

(6) Despite the obvious developments of receptive vocabulary size, productive vocabulary size, depth of vocabulary knowledge and lexical organization, the lexical semantic autonomy has not been achieved by the subjects at the four learning stages, confirming the view that L1 semantic involvement in L2 word processing is a long and constant state of L2 lexical development. Appropriate instructional interventions complemented by contextualized input from corpora can be an invaluable way to overcome semantic fossilization and promote the development of lexical semantic autonomy in L2 vocabulary acquisition.

This research has theoretical, methodological and pedagogical implications. Theoretically, the conceptual framework of L2 lexical competence constructed and substantiated in this research can act as guidelines of vocabulary research and teaching. Methodologically, the multiple-test approach adopted in this exploration may be an insightful way to gauge the development of lexical competence. Pedagogically, Chinese EFL syllabus designers, material developers, classroom teachers and learners should be informed of the multidimensional nature of lexical competence and the developmental features of the different dimensions. Consequently, vocabulary teaching and learning can be improved through raising consciousness of lexical competence and designing balanced vocabulary courses aimed at the development of receptive and productive vocabularies as well as the construction of a well-structured mental lexicon. In addition, explicit vocabulary teaching complemented by data-driven learning can be adopted to trigger the semantic restructuring and overcome the L1 semantic mediation in L2 word processing.

In short, this dissertation reports on a tentative exploration into the development of lexical competence of Chinese tertiary English majors, which is carried out in different ways and from different perspectives compared with previous research ever conducted at home and abroad. It is expected that the findings of this research will lead to a better understanding of the progress of L2 lexical competence and an improvement in vocabulary teaching and learning.

摘　要

本研究的主要目的在于揭示中国大学英语专业学生词汇能力的发展路径与特点。基于前人的理论与实证研究,本文提出了二语词汇能力的概念框架,该框架包括四个维度:词汇量(产出性与接受性)、词汇深度知识(产出性与接受性)、词汇组织模式、词汇语义自主。本研究重点考察以上四个维度在大学英语专业学习阶段的发展模式以及发展过程中四者之间的相互关系。

中国某大学一至四年级 16 个自然班的 412 名英语专业学生参加了本次调查。接受性词汇量采用 Schmitt 等人设计的词汇水平测试测量。本文使用词汇频率概貌分析软件 RANGE 和语料库分析软件 WordSmith,考察学生限时作文中的词汇使用情况,揭示产出性词汇量的发展特点。词汇深度知识的测量采用 Read 开发的测试。词汇组织模式的发展使用自由词汇联想测试考察,试卷中的 40 个刺激词选自 Kent-Rosanoff 联想词表。词汇语义自主使用语义相关性判断测试测量。397 名学生完成了全部测试项目,按照分层随机抽样方式,每个年级抽取 50 名学生作为本文的研究对象。

通过分析从一至四年级 200 个研究对象中取得的数据,本研究得出以下主要结论:

一、英语专业一至四年级学生的接受性词汇量呈现出线性发展的趋势,每个学年词汇量都有显著增长,平均每年增加 1 200 词族左右。与低年级学生相比,高年级学生接受性词汇量的组内差异较大。此外,低年级学生接受性词汇量的增长主要体现在高频词族的习得上,而高年级学生的词汇增长主要集中在低频词族上。这一结果从一定程度上揭示出词汇习得与词频的关系,即高频词族优先习得,然后学习低频词族。当然,这并不意味着学生把某个层次的高频词族全部学会后再学习低频词族,而是在一定程度上交叉进行,只是在某些词频层次上的增长达不到统计学上的显著意义。

二、产出性词汇量的发展采用语料库研究方法分析学生作文中的词汇频率概貌与词汇丰富程度。研究结果表明:一、二年级与三、四年级在使用低频词族上有显著差异,高年级学生在作文中使用低频词族较多。而一年级与二年级、

三年级与四年级并无显著差异。这意味着与接受性词汇量的发展相比,产出性词汇量发展较缓慢,要经历两年左右的时间才能达到显著增长(例如从大学一年级到三年级),而且容易出现"高原现象"。为了从更多层面分析学生产出性词汇的特点,我们运用 Wordsmith 考察了四组学生作文综合文本的标准型/次比与词长。三年级和四年级的标准型/次比明显高于一年级与二年级,这说明高年级学生的作文中词汇重复性小;而低年级的学生则有较多词汇重复现象。研究还发现二年级与四年级的标准型/次比并不分别高于一年级与三年级,这样的结果与使用 RANGE 分析的学生低频词族产出情况是一致的,即:一、二年级之间没有显著差异,三、四年级之间也没有显著差异。平均词长随着年级的升高有所提高,从七字母词开始,三、四年级使用长词的频数逐渐增加,超过了一、二年级。

三、词汇深度知识的发展有别于接受性词汇量与产出性词汇量的发展,从一年级到三年级词汇深度知识逐年增长,而从三年级到四年级这种发展趋势渐渐消失。低年级学生词汇深度知识的组内差异较大,而随着年级的升高,组内差异逐渐缩小。可见,接受性词汇量、产出性词汇量与词汇深度知识发展路径和速度是不同的,词汇深度知识的发展在三、四年级之间出现了"僵化"现象与停滞趋势。研究还发现,词汇意义与搭配作为词汇深度知识的两个组成部分,其发展过程具有相关性。

四、本研究采用自由词汇联想调查二语心理词汇组织模式的发展,总的发展趋势是高年级学生能产出更多的语义联想,说明其心理词汇的组织主要基于词汇的概念意义;而低年级学生的语音联想与无反应的比例超过高年级学生,说明语音在其心理词汇组织中还起着较大的作用。语言水平固然影响心理词汇的组织模式,词汇频率与词汇本身具有的语义与文化特征也对词汇组织模式产生一定的影响。低频词、抽象词与具有特定文化内涵的词容易引发学生的语音反应,同时词汇误认现象也经常发生。四个学习阶段的学生都产出了数量不等的与刺激词属于同一词族的反应词。与低年级学生相比,高年级学生能产出更多较为复杂、抽象的组合与聚合反应词。

五、考察词汇能力各维度之间的关系也是本研究的重点,研究结果显示接受性词汇量、产出性词汇量、词汇深度知识与词汇组织模式在发展过程中具有显著正相关。据此我们认为在词汇能力的发展过程中,四者之间的发展相互联系、相互制约。换言之,某一维度能力突出,其他维度也会相应地发展。

六、尽管从一年级到四年级接受性词汇量、产出性词汇量、词汇深度知识与词汇组织模式都有不同程度的发展,但四个年级研究对象的词汇语义并没有获

得自主性,他们在提取二语词汇时还无一例外地受母语语义系统的干扰。这一结果揭示了二语词汇发展中克服母语语义系统的影响是一个漫长的过程,应采用适当的教学手段,结合质优量足的语言输入与数据驱动的学习方式,消除词汇习得过程中的语义僵化现象。

本研究对词汇习得的理论建设与研究方法以及教学实践具有一定的启示意义。本文构建的二语词汇能力的概念框架可以指导词汇研究与教学,综合利用多种成熟的测试手段考察词汇能力的发展也为今后的研究提供了新的思路。在教学实践中,大纲设计人员、教材开发人员、教师与学生应该认识到词汇能力是个多维概念,词汇能力的发展是指多个维度的平衡发展。因此,要设计平衡的词汇课程,鼓励学生在语言产出中及时使用新学到的词汇,加深词汇深度知识,加速接受性词汇向产出性词汇转化的进程。采用显性的词汇教学与数据驱动的学习方式,帮助学生建立合理的心理词汇组织模式,克服母语语义系统的干扰,促进二语词汇能力的发展。

总之,本研究是对中国大学英语专业学生词汇能力各维度发展的一次尝试性探索,无论是研究角度,还是研究方法,都有别于国内外的相关研究。作者希望本研究发现能在一定程度上揭示出我国英语专业学习者词汇能力发展的特点与规律,以便在教学中不断寻找适宜的方法,使课堂环境下英语词汇教学更具有系统性、目的性与实效性。

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