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二语写作探究：
遣词造句的困惑与策略

徐　昉◎著　　　　　新世纪外国语文论丛

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总　序

　　进入新世纪,南京大学外国语学院的师资队伍结构不断优化,拥有博士学位者已超过全院教师队伍人数的一半。新一代青年教师受过严格的专业训练,外语基本功扎实,在各自的专业领域学有所成,成为人才培养和科学研究的骨干力量,是学科可持续发展的生力军。

　　为了展示南京大学外国语学院青年教师的学术风采,加强学科建设与学术队伍的建设,经过充分的酝酿和准备,我们决定编辑出版《新世纪外国语文论丛》。编进论丛中的论著,大多为获得博士学位并在南京大学外国语学院任教的青年教师的博士论文,在内容上涵盖外国语言、文学与文化的研究,基本上反映了青年学者丰富而活跃的学术思想,代表了南京大学外国语学院青年教师的学术水平。

　　南京大学作为一所研究型大学,注重学术研究,有悠久传统。早在 20 世纪 30 年代,南京大学外国语学院的前辈学者范存忠先生和陈嘉先生分别于 1931 年和 1934 年获美国哈佛大学和耶鲁大学博士学位,他们对南京大学外国语言文学研究特色的形成起到重要作用。百年南大培育了"严谨、求实、勤奋、创新"的学风和浓厚的学术氛围。无论是写博士论文,还是写一般的论文或专著,我们都追求学术的质量和水平,要求研究工作能经得起时间考验,真正能为现有知识体系做出新的贡献,真正能创造知识,真正能促进学术的发展。这三个"真正"也是对入选《新世纪外国语文论丛》论著的原则和标准。

2006 年南京大学获得外国语言文学一级学科博士学位授予权,这标志着南京大学外国语言文学的学科建设进入了一个新阶段,工作思路要向内涵发展转变。一流的学科要由一流学者来建设,要靠一流学术成果来支撑。编辑出版《新世纪外国语文论丛》,有助于促进新生学术力量的成长,培养青年学术骨干,推动学科建设,是内涵发展的一项重要举措。我衷心希望论丛越办越好,不断扩大其学术影响,努力提升我国的外国语言文学研究的学术水平。

王守仁

Acknowledgements

No book is ever the product of its author alone. To those who have made this project possible, I feel obliged to express my genuine gratitude. Each note of gratitude is a sparkling pearl. I am now trying to recollect and connect them into a whole piece that will be preserved for a life-long precious memory.

First and foremost, to my advisor, Professor Ting Yenren at Nanjing University, I am very much in debt for his three years' worth of guidance, criticisms and support. Without his help this book would never have been completed. Many ideas in this study came from numerous discussions with him and from his comments on my written work. Many of the findings proved his great powers of intuitive perception about second language processing in writing. Even during the writing-up phase, Professor Ting helped me understand how to compose something of book length and spared no efforts in correcting language mistakes in my multiple drafts. What is more, I am deeply impressed by his noble character and meticulous scholarship. I understand that these have been more important to my learning than completing the book.

I owe a special note of gratitude to Professor Wen Qiufang at China Foreign Language Education and Research Center. Through her courses she motivated my research interest in

second language acquisition by not only introducing classic and frontier theories but also educating my critical eye in reading academically prestigious works. In addition, she was always ready to offer invaluable comments and suggestions about my research. I hold in deep esteem for her exceptional vision, wisdom and perceptions in the research work.

I am equally thankful to Professor Wang Haixiao, Professor Chen Xinren and Professor Don Snow at Nanjing University, and Professor Ma Guanghui at Nanjing Normal University. From the time this book began as a very brief idea to the time it became a final draft, they have been patient and gracious enough to tolerate my weaknesses and helped me a great deal in shaping the research project. I have benefited tremendously from communication with all these supervisors and my gratitude is beyond words.

Special thanks are given to Dr. Wang Wenyu at Nanjing University, who shared with me her research experience on second language writing, gave me practical guidance on how to train the participants to do compose-alouds, and read my first draft and made valuable comments.

I would like to thank Ms. Yan Xiaoqin at Beijing Foreign Studies University for her generous help on several occasions when I went to Beijing to photocopy materials from the State Library, my classmate Ms. Chen Lianjie for her conscientious note-taking during each of my presentations at the seminar, Dr. Qi Yan, Dr. Wang Wenyu and Mr. Li Bin at Nanjing University for their help in searching for references during their academic visits abroad, and my subjects for their cooperation in data collection.

My hearty thanks also go to Professor Don Snow at Nanjing University. At the time I became a faculty member at School of Foreign Studies of Nanjing University, he gave me a

warm welcome by offering the help to proofread the book.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to my family who taught me not to separate research from life. It was their love and support that helped to transform the painstaking research journey into a sweet and unforgettable experience.

X. F.

中文提要

在二语写作研究中存在两个相关的问题。一是在二语写作能力的研究中,有研究者发现词汇能力具有重要的作用。但是现有研究对二语写作中的词汇能力多从结果入手,很少从产出过程来看词汇能力的问题,二语写作者解决词汇问题的过程与写作能力的关系尚属研究空白。二是母语写作理论认为,写作过程的本质是一个解决问题的过程,即写作者设定并设法达到预期目标的过程。把心中所想用语言表达出来的这个过程,在母语写作中是自然而然的。由于二语写作理论主要受到母语写作理论的影响,现有研究大都假设二语写作中的这个过程与母语写作不存在本质差别,因此没有针对此过程进行系统研究,对二语写作过程中解决问题的实质尚缺乏足够认识。

对上述两个问题的探讨,一种有效的办法是观察并描述二语写作者在把思维转化为词汇时,他们是如何解决词汇问题的。在理论层面,通过对二语写作者解决词汇问题具体过程的研究,将有助于更深入地了解二语写作过程与写作能力;在教学层面,将有助于教师帮助学生应对写作中的词汇问题,提高他们的写作能力。

由于现有实证研究对二语写作词汇问题解决过程缺乏一个综合的描述框架,本研究以 Dörnyei 和 Kormos(1998)关于二语口语词汇问题的解决机制的描述框架为出发点,并对此框架进行修改,以便于从以下三个方面进行研究:

1. 词汇问题,即不同语言水平的学生在产出词汇的过程中遇到哪些类型的问题?

2. 应对机制,即在产出词汇的过程中学生一般使用哪些机制来应对这些问题?

3. 解决路径，即不同语言水平的学生通常经过什么样的路径来解决词汇问题？

本研究主要采用写作者有声思维和即时回顾性访谈的研究方法，追踪写作者在应对词汇问题中的思维过程。六名英语专业本科生参与了本项研究。研究材料的收集来自他们在写作过程中的有声思维、写作结束后即刻进行的回顾性访谈、半开放式的访谈和写作文本。通过定性分析，本研究的主要发现包括：

第一，在把思维转变为词汇的过程中，学生可能遇到各种问题，尤以词汇提取中的问题居多。从学生设定的目标角度看，学生在词汇提取与形式整合的过程中分别遇到三类问题。在提取过程中，他们想找到一个词汇、想提取整个词汇、想使用更合适的词汇（该类问题又具体细分为三类：使得该词更准确表达意义、该词更符合语体要求、避免该词与上下文重复）。在形式整合过程中，学生也遇到三类问题，包括词汇结构中虚词的运用、词的形态、词的拼写。此外，语言水平高的学生比语言水平低的学生在词汇提取过程中设定更多目标，而语言水平低的学生更多地是在形式整合阶段考虑词汇形式本身的问题。

第二，为解决这些问题，学生主要使用四类（共 19 种）词汇应对机制：刻意提取机制（即重组、拖延、回溯、翻译、搭建），该机制能够帮助学生在一定时间内找到更多的词汇而提高词汇产出的流利度；修正词汇机制（即索词修正、并列选择、修正重复），该机制能够帮助学生在拟使用更合适词汇的过程中提高词汇产出的复杂度；在线形式修正机制（即虚词选择、形态修正、拼写检查），该机制能够帮助学生在把词汇转化为书面形式并融入文本中时提高词汇产出的准确度；避免问题机制（即内容削减、替代），该机制是学生无法产出词汇时的解决方法。在这四类机制中，学生最频繁使用的是刻意提取机制；而且，此机制中的搭建在以往写作研究和口语研究中未曾发现：学生先提取词汇的中心词，然后再逐步提取词汇的其他部分。不同语言水平的学生在使用的主要机制方面表现出一些差异：高水平学生主要用修正词汇机制来使得词汇表达更符合心中所想，而低水平学生主要用在线形式修正机制来确保词汇形式不出错。

第三，不同语言水平的学生走不同的路径解决词汇问题。在提取路径中，高水平学生由于能够找到更多的翻译对应词，把刻意提取机制与修正词汇机制结合起来使用，因此在词汇提

取阶段的思维路径较为复杂循环,以准确表达心中所想为目标而逐步递进完善;又由于他们能较自动地产出词汇的书面形式,在形式整合阶段的路径表现为简洁直线,通常直接趋向词汇产出的终止状态,即流利地把词汇的正确书面形式嵌入文本之中。相反,低水平学生在提取到一个词汇后,通常不再循环于语义表达的准确与合适性,直接进入形式整合阶段,但是在这个阶段他们需要反复努力,使得此部分的路径表现出循环的特征。

本研究发现在理论、方法论和教学实践三个方面具有一定的启示意义。

在理论上,首先,本研究尝试提出二语词汇问题解决过程的模型,细化了二语写作中从思维到一个词汇产出的过程中可能经过的路径,深化了对二语写作过程的认识。本研究尤其结合学生在词汇产出过程中遇到的问题,来界定和区分应对的机制。这些机制的界定,对前人关于二语口语词汇问题处理机制是否完全适用于写作过程进行了验证,并进一步在写作过程中发现了与口语词汇问题不尽相同的其他解决机制。

第二,本研究通过对词汇问题解决过程的细化,深化了对二语写作中问题解决实质的认识。研究不仅证实了学生在二语写作过程需要努力处理各种语言问题,而且发现,自上而下的解决问题的过程也包含了自下而上的语言搭建机制,这说明二语写作不完全是受高度控制的达到预期目标的过程,也包含逐步生成搭建语言的过程。此外,研究证实二语水平在词汇问题解决中起重要作用,它决定着学生在这个过程中是否能够灵活操纵和使用各种知识资源。

第三,本研究从词汇问题解决过程的角度,探索性地提出了二语写作中的词汇能力的主要构成,深化了对二语写作能力的认识。研究发现,写作词汇能力的主要构成包括学生的词汇资源、词汇问题解决机制的使用能力和词块使用能力。

从方法论的角度,本研究尝试从心理语言学角度对写作词汇产出过程进行区分,把词汇的语义提取阶段和形式整合阶段结合起来,全面研究中国英语学习者的写作词汇问题的解决过程。另外,所采纳的有声思维和回顾性访谈等研究方法亦是对写作词汇研究方法的补充,有助于解释以往关于学生写作词汇使用特征的部分研究结果。

在教学实践上,首先,写作教师可以从词汇资源、词汇问题

应对机制与词块使用能力这三个角度来提高学生的写作词汇
能力。教师如果帮助学生增加二语词汇知识和鼓励他们保持
母语词汇资源、提高学生对词汇问题解决机制的使用意识、鼓
励在写作中多使用词块,从而使得他们注意到语言以外的更高
层面的写作问题,将有可能提高学生的写作(词汇)能力。其
次,研究发现词汇问题解决过程受到学生写作观与学习经验的
影响,所以,教师必须树立合适的写作词汇使用标准,从而帮助
学生构建正确的词汇使用观念。

最后,必须指出本次研究的样本较小,所得结果只能作为
今后研究的假设。在研究设计上,学生的二语水平和母语水平
没有得到严格控制。今后的研究可增加研究对象的规模和类
型,丰富研究手段。该课题还可以从以下几个方面进一步深入
探讨:(1)跟踪研究学生语言水平的提高对于写作中词汇问题
处理的影响;(2)研究写作的不同任务对于学生解决词汇问题
的影响;(3)定量研究写作者解决词汇问题的过程与写作质量
的关系。

Abstract

This study reports an attempt to investigate the process of lexical-problem-solving (LPS) in L2 writing by examining the problems student writers encounter in the psycholinguistic process of producing a lexical unit, identifying the LPS mechanisms, and depicting their paths for solving the problems. Six Chinese English majors at two proficiency levels participated in a timed narrative writing task. Data were collected from compose-alouds, stimulated recall, interviews and the written products. The study yielded the following findings:

Multiple problems, especially in lexical retrieval, may occur in the process of converting thoughts into written lexical units in L2 writing. In lexical retrieval, writers may encounter problems when they aim to find a unit, retrieve a complete unit, and/or upgrade a unit. The problems of upgrading a unit are most frequently met by writers who aim to achieve lexical precision, stylistic appropriateness and/or avoid repetitions. In order to integrate the unit as part of the written text, writers may meet problems with function words, morphology and/or spelling. Proficiency-related differences emerge in terms of types and proportions of the lexical problems. Higher-proficiency (HP) writers encounter a larger proportion of

problems in lexical retrieval than lower-proficiency (LP) writers do, while LP writers meet more problems in formal integration than the HP writers do.

In order to tackle the problems, the writers mainly employ four types of LPS mechanisms. Generally, effortful-retrieval mechanisms (i. e. , reconceptualization, stalling, backtracking, translation and piecemeal construction) are most frequently used by the writers and seem to help with lexical fluency in terms of retrieving more units in a given time. Lexical-upgrading mechanisms (i. e. , sequential search with repair, parallel choice-making and repetition-perception with repair) might help with lexical variation. Online-editing mechanisms (i. e. , selection of function word, morphological repair and spelling check) seem to help with lexical accuracy. Finally, problem-avoiding mechanisms (i. e. , content reduction and substitution) seem to be solutions to failures in lexical production. Of the 19 specific mechanisms, piecemeal-construction has never been found in previous studies of writing strategies or LPS mechanisms in L2 speaking. The writers might generate the headword first and construct the rest of the multiword unit bit by bit. Moreover, the HP writers mainly cluster effortful-retrieval and lexical-upgrading mechanisms to improve expressions; and the LP writers mainly cluster effortful-retrieval and online-editing mechanisms to help with formal accuracy.

The writers at different proficiency levels appear to go through different paths to solve the problems. A greater ability to produce L2 equivalents and a higher degree of automaticity in formal integration make the HP writers' LPS paths appear recursive in lexical retrieval and linear in formal integration. By contrast, the LP writers may proceed to formal integration immediately after retrieving a unit but go through formal

integration recursively.

The study has some theoretical and pedagogical implications. First, it proposes a model of the LPS process as well as a comprehensive framework of LPS mechanisms in L2 writing. Second, it enriches our understanding of the problem-solving nature of L2 formulation. Third, a more detailed description of the LPS process makes it possible to show that lexical resources, employment of LPS mechanisms and chunking capacity constitute lexical ability in L2 writing competence. Pedagogically, if teachers improve students' vocabulary knowledge, raise their awareness of various LPS mechanisms, and encourage them to use chunks more frequently, the students will be more likely to improve their lexical ability as well as their general L2 writing competence.

List of Abbreviations

EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as Foreign Language
ESL	English as Second Language
HP	Higher-Proficiency
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LP	Lower-Proficiency
LPS	Lexical-Problem-Solving
PSM	Problem-Solving Mechanisms
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TOT	Tip of the Tongue