



新世纪外国语文论丛

俞 希◎著

中国英语报章用词 的本土化特征



Nativized Lexical Use in
China's English Newspapers



南京大学出版社

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总 序

进入新世纪,南京大学外国语学院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

2009年5月28日

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Y. X.

中文提要

近二十多年来,语言学家对于英语国际化和本土化合理性的态度已逐渐趋于一致,然而却始终没有解决如何确保本土化英语的可理解性和可接受性这一问题。另外,通过语料库数据分析具体词类的研究屈指可数,对扩展圈(以英语为外语的国家)的本土化特点更是少有涉及。与此同时,国内的焦点则集中于界定中国英语概念,或只是笼统地概括英语在各个层面的使用规律,而相关的实证研究却寥寥无几。

针对这些研究背景,笔者以中国英语报章中的评价性形容词(例如 *great*, *rich*, *exquisite*)作为英语在中国本土化使用的一个重要维度展开讨论,并提出了分析本土化特征的描述性框架。该框架融合了本土化特征的表现方式、与本族语使用的差异程度及其对可理解性和可接受性的影响这三个参数。本研究主要试图回答两大问题:

1. 中国英语报章中的评价性形容词在语义和句法层面呈现出哪些本土化特点?
2. 中国英语报章中评价性形容词的本土化在多大程度上为本族语使用者和接近本族语使用者所理解和接受?

本研究包括两个部分。第一部分的文本分析基于一个一百万词的语料库 CCELN(中国英语报章语料库),取自于三份具有代表性和权威性的中国英语报纸,以及用于对比参考的本族语使用者语料库 NBNC[英国国家语料库(BNC)的新闻分支]。通过检索软件 WordSmith 工具提取出与 NBNC 相比在 CCELN 中出现频率异常之高的 2 000 个词语,并从中筛选出前 20 个评价性形容词,然后依照《新牛津英语词典》中的释义对其各义项、搭配特点以及句法功能进行标注和分析。在此基础上还开展了一项有关语言态度的问卷调查,考察 30 名美国

和加拿大大学生对一系列含有高频评价性形容词语句的理解和接受程度。通过数据处理得到以下主要发现:

在 CCELN 出现频率排名最前的 20 个评价性形容词中, 18 个是褒义词, 一个是中性词, 只有一个是贬义词。这些特点显示出中国英语新闻语境下的正面报道倾向。义项分析的总体趋势表明, 评价性形容词在 CCELN 中使用的义项类别比 NBNC 中明显要少, 且分布较不均匀。其中 11 个词的核心义项出现次数多于衍生义项或边缘义项; 而在各种扩展义项中, CCELN 的比喻性义项偏多。有 13 个评价性形容词的使用集中在某一个义项上, 这种集中性倾向虽然在 NBNC 中也存在, 但在 CCELN 中更加显著。

语义变异的表现形式有两种, 即在某些特定语境下的语义扩展和语义转换。但在 20 个评价性形容词中只有 5 个的使用显示出了这两个特点, 因此语义变异不构成中国英语本土化的主体因素。

从搭配规律来看, 这些评价性形容词在 CCELN 中的搭配范围比在 NBNC 中要小, 多用于修饰抽象名词, 而且和某些名词的共现率较高。其中, 相当一部分带有中国特色的评价性形容词与名词的固定搭配在 CCELN 中的使用频率远远高于 NBNC, 有些甚至在 NBNC 中乃至整个 BNC 中从未出现过。

从句法功能角度来看, 评价性形容词的定语用法在 CCELN 中占据的比例高于 NBNC, 而表语用法则略少于 NBNC。其他句法功能(如后置修饰、名词词组中心词等)在 CCELN 中使用的频率较低。

通过问卷数据得出的结果, 中国英语报章中评价性形容词的本土化特征在总体上具有较高的可理解性和可接受性。参加调查的本族语使用者和接近本族语使用者表示, 他们在很大程度上借助上下文基本顺利地领会了问卷中带有强烈中国色彩的高频搭配, 而多数人之所以也能接受这些表达, 则源自于他们对全球背景下各种英语规范的容忍度。同时, 受试者在问卷中还提出了增强可理解性和可接受性的建议, 例如使用简单而更加直接的词语, 并强调了语境和用法在语言使用中的重要性。

综上所述, 目前中国语境下的英语只在一定程度上呈现出本土化的特征, 然而许多搭配的惯例化表明, 规律性差异正在逐步形成。其中, 质上的差异(即独特用法)较之量上的差异(体现在频率分布上)而言, 更加鲜明地折射出本土化特点, 并

可能会影响其可理解性。但这种可理解性能够通过交际双方共同努力而得以提高。可接受性则建立在可理解性基础之上,需要读者采取积极宽容的态度。只有这两者有机结合,才能促进跨文化交流以及各种本土化英语的和谐共存。

该研究是对现有文献的补充,具有一定的理论和实践意义。具体说来,构建了全球英语本土化的系统性模型,并从各个角度深入细致地考察评价性形容词在中国英语报章中的使用,为英语在中国的本土化提供了实证依据;同时阐明了可理解性和可接受性的标准及其相互之间的关系。此外,本研究采用了定量和定性相结合的语料库对比研究法,并对中国英语报章的可读性和跨文化交际提出了设想。

当然,本研究还存在一些不足之处,例如语料本身的局限性和语言态度调查的简单化等,其结论也有待于进一步验证和推广。后续的研究可以扩大样本,或延伸至其他语言特点,以期在方法上得以改进,在理论上得以升华,更好地从扩展圈视角回顾和展望英语的国际化和本土化问题。

Abstract

While much consensus has been reached on the legitimacy of globalization and nativization of English, the issue of how to guarantee intelligibility and acceptability remains unsettled. Empirically, relatively little research has probed into particular lexical items on a corpus basis, especially in the Chinese context. Against this background the current study examined evaluative adjectives in China's English-language newspapers, and proposed a descriptive framework for this subtle dimension of nativized use, relating its manifestation, extent and effects on communication. It aimed to answer questions concerning the nativized use of evaluative adjectives at lexical, semantic and syntactic levels, as well as the extent to which they are intelligible and acceptable to native and near-native speakers of English.

The study was composed of two parts. In the textual analysis, the top 20 evaluative adjectives were sorted out from 2,000 most outstandingly frequent words in CCELN, a corpus representative of English in China, with a native speaker corpus (NBNC) as reference. Their senses, collocational features and syntactic roles were then tagged and analyzed. To supplement the corpus study, a questionnaire survey was conducted among 30 respondents on the intelligibility and acceptability of the most frequent evaluative adjectives in CCELN, mainly through

5-point scales and tasks of modifying and/or paraphrasing. The data processing yielded the following results:

Overall, the majority of the evaluative adjectives under discussion are positive in nature, which may indicate the relatively more optimistic perspective of CCELN in comparison with NBNC. The senses of these evaluative adjectives are less widely and less evenly distributed in CCELN than in NBNC, with core meanings used more often. On the whole, the inclination of sense domination is more noticeable in CCELN than in NBNC. The modification of senses, manifested in semantic shift and extension, occurs in some instances, but does not contribute significantly to nativization.

As to collocational features, the use of these evaluative adjectives is characterized by a smaller collocational range, abstractness of noun collocates and above all, more occurrence of recurrent collocations typical of the Chinese language and culture. Three patterns for recurrent collocations were identified with regard to the variation in frequency between the two corpora, of which more frequent and unique uses are the most abundant in CCELN.

Syntactically, the evaluative adjectives appear more often in the attributive position and less as predicatives in CCELN, yet exhibit less diversity in other roles.

In addition, statistics from the questionnaire survey revealed relatively high degrees of intelligibility and acceptability of frequently and creatively used collocations in CCELN involving evaluative adjectives, largely determined by the context and respondents' tolerance for global norms. The respondents also suggested using simpler and more direct expressions for the ease of communication.

To conclude, this study argued that the English used in China has so far been nativized to a limited extent, but the institutionalization of many features is indicative of the beginning

of systematic variation. Generally speaking, it is qualitative variation, i.e., unique uses, rather than quantitative variation chiefly exhibited in frequency distribution, that better explains nativized use. Such qualitative variation may reduce intelligibility, which, however, could be promoted through interactional efforts on the part of both the addresser and the addressee to clarify and contextualize the usage. Furthermore, this study called for the integration of intelligibility with acceptability in facilitating cross-cultural communication and the coexistence of various Englishes.

List of Abbreviations

CCELN; the Corpus of China's English-Language Newspapers

BNC; the British National Corpus

NBNC; the Newspaper branch of the British National Corpus

TTEAs; Top Twenty Evaluative Adjectives

NODE; the *New Oxford Dictionary of English*

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