

Analysis of Non-English Major Students' English Writing Vocabulary based on Corpus

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Abstract: Writing is one of the four basic skills in foreign language learning, and verbs have always been a major problem for Chinese English learners due to their variety and complexity in usage. This paper analyzes the verb errors in the composition of Chinese learners' corpus, and finds that among all the writing words, the verb has the highest error rate. This shows that Chinese learners have a lot of problems in verb usage learning, which is worthy of our study. Meanwhile, the method of corpus and error analysis is adopted to analyze the verb usage in order to find out the frequency and cause of these errors and provide some help for English teaching.

Keywords: Verb error; Writing vocabulary; Corpus analysis

1. Introduction

as a required course for college students, English writing strives to improve the writing ability of all students. The main purpose is also to train students' ability of expression and improve their thinking.

However, in the actual writing course, we find that there are some problems in college students' writing, such as vocabulary disorder, improper grammar and unclear sentence expression. Due to the systematic differences between English and Chinese languages and cultures, as well as the deep-rooted differences in English and Chinese thinking habits, Chinese college students are relatively weak in English writing and slow in improving their English writing skills. Many problems such as grammar, wording and logic have become a major problem hindering their writing progress. These will directly affect students' writing level and indirectly affect their ability to use language.

Therefore, we will explore the errors and problems existing in the writing of non-English majors, and put forward relevant effective countermeasures, which will be applied to the whole college English writing course.

2. Theoretical Basis of English Writing Vocabulary

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are the four basic skills of language learning. Writing ability is a goal of foreign language teaching. It has its own characteristics and permeates almost all aspects of language learning. Nowadays, Chinese students' writing is not satisfactory. One of the problems with student writing is that these

mistakes hinder the expression of higher language and hinder their English learning.

Sentence is the basic unit of language communication. So, in a way, we can say that learning a language is about learning to make sentences. Some grammarians believe that verbs are the core of sentences, and verb studies are an important issue in foreign language learning." Learning a language is, in a way, learning how to use the linguistic forms of the language "(Palmer, 1965:5). There are verb inflections of tense, sound, state and body in English, while there are no verb inflections in Chinese, so some linguists believe that there are no tenses in Chinese (Lyons, 1977:23). Due to the non-equivalence between English and Chinese, the relationship between time and verbs has always been a perplexing problem in foreign language acquisition (SLA). In the past ten years, people have made extensive linguistic analysis on tenses, but there are few studies on tenses errors, mainly focusing on the distribution of tenses errors in Chinese students based on corpus.

3. Background of Vocabulary Research based on Corpus

At present, corpus linguistics has developed vigorously in both theory and technology. The research based on corpus has three characteristics: real corpus data, calculable corpus data (Pu, 2000) and qualitative and quantitative analysis. The application of corpus is embodied in lexicography statistics, language frequency, lexical collocation research, natural language processing and language teaching. In addition, according to strict standards, corpus is created (Kennedy, 2000:45), which makes it easier for me to teach in English. Teachers can choose

some corpus to assist language teaching. Second language learners can improve their second language gradually by analyzing and correcting their mistakes. As Gui Shichun, Yang Huizhong and others said in A study of Ancient Chinese Literature, among all types of errors, verb errors are easy to avoid but difficult to reduce. This paper will analyze the characteristics and errors of non-English majors' vocabulary usage in English writing based on corpus, explore its characteristics and possible reasons, and find out solutions.

In this paper, qualitative and quantitative research methods are adopted to make the research results more reliable and provide references for future research. The corpus-based approach will enable us to make a relatively accurate and detailed study of the verb vocabulary, which will have certain guiding significance in the future English teaching.

4. Analysis of Students' Writing Vocabulary

4.1. Issues discussed

Based on error analysis and corpus linguistics, this study examines verb errors in Chinese non-English major learners. This study will address the following questions:

- (1) what are the most common verb mistakes in college English writing?
- (2) how do these errors relate to learners' English writing skills?
- (3) what are the causes of these errors?

4.2. Analysis results and analysis

We used Antconc3.4.4w to retrieve the following five verb errors in STS and ST6: non-predicate (vp5), tense (vp6), voice (vp7), gerund collocation (cc3) and verb adverb collocation (c5).

By comparing the two corpora, we find that the maximum number of temporal errors is 453 and 263 respectively. Among them, 109 non-predicate errors were detected in the STS sub-library. 162 gerunds collocation errors were detected in ST6. These two kinds of mistakes are also common mistakes of English majors. There are at least 6 and 8 wrong collocations between verbs and adverbs in the two sub-corpora. In order to explore the main causes of errors, this paper will take tense errors and gerunds collocation errors as examples to analyze the causes of errors. Using AntConc to retrieve vp6 (temporal error), on line 77 of the STS sub-library, extract the following example sentences:

To solve this big problem, in the 1990s, many job markets appear [vp6, s-1 in our countries (np6, 1-]. In this sentence, the action (appear) took place in the 1990s, which should use the past tense. The reason of this error may be affected by the negative transfer of mother tongue, English and Chinese are different in encoding of the concept of time, the concept of time coding for English

syntactic "time", or. The combination of "time" and "tense", and Chinese vocabulary and discourse means that the only time of the incident, and there is no change in the predicate verb. Chinese English learners, who have been using Chinese for a long time and are influenced by the Chinese language environment, have formed a fixed Chinese thinking, which is not immune from its influence in the use of English. Secondly, the corpus selected in this study is mainly from the compositions in TEM-4 and TEM-8 exams. The pressure faced by learners in the exams must also be one of the reasons we should consider.

In the two sub-corpora ST5 and ST6, we used AntConc to search for gerund collocation errors, and extracted sud11a//. Knowledge (study), teach knowledge, practice one's body, manage the social work, see all kinds of wonderful performances, etc. Literal translation can be seen as an important source of verb misuse in learners. Learners tend to resort to the literal translation of their mother tongue when they have insufficient knowledge of the collocation of the target language, ignoring the expression habits of native speakers. Therefore, second language educators should pay attention to the influence of the target language environment. According to statistics, we can clearly see that college students' English writing errors are mainly grammatical errors, accounting for about 30% of the total; Mismatched words followed, accounting for about 16%. Abbreviations and punctuation errors were less common, is 3.6% and 3.4% respectively. Other errors were semantic ambiguity (6.4%), capital letter error (8.8%), Chinglish (9.0%), redundant (4.9%), missing (7.7%), and spelling (9.5%).

1) grammatical errors. Grammatical errors include singular and plural, tense, pronoun, juxtaposition, and so on.

① Watching too much soap opera seriously affect children's understanding of love between men and women, grammatical errors in subject-verb inconsistencies occur in sentences. "Watching too much soap opera seriously" is the subject acted by participle - guided phrasal verbs, so the verb "affect" should be "affects" in the third person singular.

② children who addicted to TV show less attention in class and join in fewer activities after class. The use of verbs is also a common mistake in student writing. "be addicted to doing" can indicate enthrallment. The correct way to use it is "children who are addicted to TV show".

2) Vocabulary errors. Including the misuse of words, wrong collocation of preposition-object and verb-object, etc.

Children who addicted to TV show less attention in class and joined in fewer activities after class. "show less attention in" is a wrong collocation. It should use phrases like "pay attention to" or "show interest in."

5. Problems Sources of Students' English Writing Vocabulary

The typical mistakes mentioned directly reflect the obvious problems in the mastery and application of English knowledge by Chinese non-English majors. This paper attempts to explore the causes of these problems from the following aspects:

5.1. Poor command of English vocabulary and grammar

On the one hand, due to the great differences between English and Chinese in terms of vocabulary and grammar, some conventional and unwarranted expressions are difficult to remember in Chinese. On the other hand, English grammar has the changes of part of speech, quantity, genitive, tense, voice, mood and so on.

5.2. Negative transfer of mother tongue

According to the theory of "mother tongue transfer", the negative transfer of mother tongue is the negative interference of the learner's mother tongue in the acquisition of the second language due to its different components. Due to the long duration of native language intermediaries in English learning, most learners still use the conceptual representation of Chinese equivalents even when using English high-frequency words, not to mention the acquisition of low-frequency words (Chen Wanhui, 2008). Chinese and English have great differences in the way of thinking and expression and culture.

5.3. Influence of thinking expression

The difference between English and Chinese often leads to grammatical errors in writing. Chinese is a paratonic language: the intuitive way of thinking in Chinese makes no morphological changes in the use of Chinese, and there are no definite related words in Chinese sentences. The sentence structure is relatively simple and has the characteristics of using meaning to control the form. However, English thinking has the opposite characteristics: English logical thinking is reflected in the sentence pattern, that is, there are a large number of conjunctions in English sentences, and their rational use makes each component of the sentence connected by logical relations, so the sentence structure is very rigorous and a large number of cohesive words are used to ensure the coherence. Every grammatical meaning in English is expressed in a definite form.

5.4. Influence of generalization rules

"Generalization", also known as "overgeneralization", refers to the phenomenon that students tend to overuse the usage rules when they do not fully understand the collocation of English words. In general, the more grammar a student learns, the higher the probability of generalization. According to the analysis of collected corpus, the verbs such as do, take, make and give are frequently used in students' compositions. However,

when these verbs are used with nouns, the meaning of the verbs is weakened, and the usage varies with the context, which is somewhat arbitrary, so it is easy for students to use these verbs in a wrong collocation. In addition, verb distortion is one of the common overgeneralization mistakes, such as drank (drank), wrote (wrote, written).

5.5. Language environment

At present, most English major learners still have fewer opportunities to live in a full English language environment. The main way of contact is still through film and television works or the Internet, but this is far from meeting its needs.

6. Teaching Inspiration from Students' English Writing Vocabulary

Based on the classification of typical errors in college students' English writing and their causes, this paper draws the following teaching enlightenment.

6.1. Strengthen the English input, strengthen the Use of students' grammar rules

English teaching curriculum should promote cultural teaching, strengthen the dailywriting training and grammar guidance to improve their English expression level. Combine the ability to receive information with the ability to use it. In the normal learning process, we should pay more attention to the way of expression and thinking voice of English-speaking countries, so as to learn their grammar rules, improve the accuracy of second language use, and make the expression more authentic.

6.2. Strengthen the teaching of writing skills and improve students' ability to Use English

In classroom teaching, teachers can strengthen the teaching of writing skills, including sentence making and translation, so as to improve the expression level of translating Chinese into English, and encourage them to create corresponding dramas, stories, poems and other plots in their own English writing, so as to fully improve their ability to convert Chinese into English.

6.3. Do a good job of evaluation and feedback to enhance the enthusiasm of students in English learning

Teachers can encourage students to take an active part in the evaluation of homework and take part in the teaching of writing by means of mutual correction and evaluation. In the process of students' mutual assessment, to find out other people's mistakes in the composition, so as to strengthen their own grammar accumulation, consolidate the corresponding writing skills. The teacher should guide the students to think about the mistakes in the compositions that have been corrected by others and deepen their impression.

7. Conclusion

Through this paper, we discuss the use of non-English majors in English writing vocabulary and methods. By discussing the errors in the use of vocabulary and their causes, the effective countermeasures in teaching methods can be obtained. To sum up, we can not only strengthen the English input effectively, but also improve students' ability to use writing vocabulary. Developing students' writing skills in the daily teaching at the same time, Practicing more to overcome unnecessary writing mistakes. So as to fully mobilize the enthusiasm of students in English writing.

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