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Abstract

Lexical-phonological errors in Mandarin normal and agrammatic speech

Subfield: Psycho-phonology

Keywords: speech errors, agrammatic speech, Mandarin

This study tries to present various patterns in lexical substitution errors from naturally-occurring speech-error corpus and from left-brain damaged patients in Mandarin. Using the error data to test some linguistic hypotheses is a long tradition, and these errors have been taken as important evidence regarding the units and structures involved in the cognitive representation of language. Recently, a few reports in the literature have started to examine some issues of the representation in Mandarin by looking at these speech-error patterns (e.g., Chen & Dell, 2003, 2006a, 2006b; Chen, Lin & Ferrand, 2003; Wan, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c; Wan & Jaeger, 1998, 2003).

It is found that in English and Germanic languages, the incorrectly selected words in speech errors are almost always the same part of speech as their target words, and the lexical substitution errors often involve semantically related associates (e.g., Fromkin,1973; Dell & Gordon, 2003; Dell et al., 2004; Dell et al., 2007; Baron et al., 2008; Oppenheim & Dell, 2008). This is not a surprising fact that the lexical errors share grammatical categories with their targets since the grammatical patterns of the specific phrase impose important restrictions on the selection of words. In addition, those researchers also observed phonologically related lexical selection errors in their speech-error corpus. They found that the target-error pair in lexical substitutions shows some phonological associations in terms of initial segments, number of syllables, vowels/rhymes, and suprasegmental patterns. Therefore, the purpose of this study is twofold. First, the researcher will catalog all the various influences which may be factors

in causing errors involving whole lexical items and rank-order them in terms of their importance. Second, these various influences and the rank-ordering will both be explained in terms of the content and organization of the lexicon.

A total of 421 relevant lexical errors from native speakers of Mandarin and 286 errors from Mandarin aphasic patients, both collected by the author and the research team in a naturalistic setting, are provided to present the following findings.

1) Semantically-related errors could be classified in terms of the semantic relationship between the target and intended utterance. According to the five criteria (antonyms, hyponyms, near-synonyms, coordinates and associates), the rank-ordering for the normal subjects is the following: Hyponyms (32%) > Near-synonyms (25%) > Associations (21%) > Antonyms (12%) > Coordinates (10%); however, for aphasic patients, the data do not show the same rank-ordering.

2) Lexical errors that also share phonological similarities are found in normal subjects and aphasic patients. The target-error pair in lexical substitutions shows some phonological associations in terms of initial segments (25% for normals, 34% for aphasics), syllables (29% for normals, 34% for aphasics), tones (28% for normals, 25% for aphasics), but in both normal and aphasic patients, the target-error pair sharing the same vowel (1% for normals, 1% for aphasics) or rhyme (17% for normals, 6% for aphasics) is not quite common. This suggests that the incorrectly selected words and their intended words could share semantic relationship as well as phonological relationship. Some cases also show that the target-error patterns bear phonological relationship alone without any semantic association, and cases like this show that the initialness, syllables and tone effects are all prominent.

Evidence from normal speakers' slips and aphasic patients' errors shows that the two interacting words tend to have a semantic relationship, a phonological relationship, or the semantic plus phonological relationship, suggesting some phonological facilitation in the Mandarin lexicon.

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參加會議經過及會議心得

今年第十七屆國際中國語言學學會是在法國巴黎「國家科學院東亞語言研究所及高等社會科學院」所舉辦。本次會議發表論文數量眾多,論文品質具有一定的國際水準,主辦單位為法國巴黎一間頗具盛名的研究學院,這間研究學院僅收法國或是國際研究生,平日修習期間是以法文進行研究交流。不過在這次整個會議進行中,是以英文做口頭書面報告。在這麼多場的會議中,主辦單位以非常有組織有計畫的安排好每篇論文發表的時間及場次順序,展現出此研究單位富有經驗的專業舉辦國際會議。整個會議表現出高度的專業水準,讓遠道的與會人士感到非常的開心,若要說是美中不足的,大概就是參加了那麼多次的國際會議中,此次是唯一一次所有大會會場,包括做主題報告(keynote speech)必須容納 300 位學者的大會會廳,完全沒有任何空調系統,正巧會議幾天天氣悶熱難耐,在氣候大約 36 度左右的環境下,與會人士非常耐熱的撐完三天會議,也說是一件了不起的任務。對此大會主席 Hilary Chappell 及 Redouane Djamouri 兩位教授也向與會學者致歉,由於參與會議這三天正巧碰到巴黎有史以來最炎熱的夏天,也因為巴黎夏季並不是太長,大部分古老的學校或是研究機構並沒有提供冷氣空調,這讓在亞洲習慣在空調的大廳開會的學者顯的有些不適應。不過整體而言,大會提供了相當大的幫助,不論是在交通及其他生活項目,展現出非常友好的一面。

這次與會學者發表論文中,跟往常一般,大量的研究報告是與漢語語法學有關,與本人研究領域相關的如音韻學或是心理語言學相關的議題雖不如語法學多,但數量也不算少。其中,第一天會議本來一直渴望聽到的,由香港中文大學的兩位教授,Eric Zee 及 Wai-sum Lee,所發表的漢語方方言中有關子音的所有介紹,最後並未出席。在下午的會議上,總共有 4 位即將獲得博士學位的學生做一場論文競賽,在這場競賽中,四位同學針對自己擅長的主題報告 20 分鐘,與會在場人士便根據報告的內容一一提出問題,誰能答題答的優異的,到了隔天的晚宴便會發佈獎項,這項活動行經已久,每次均能吸引許多學者參與。這四位學生中,有一位是政大英語系畢業的同學,不過最後是由一位大陸的語法學者獲得獎項。

第二天的論文報告,除了主題報告之外,有幾篇是與音韻學相關的。主題報告是由香港中文大學的教授 Thomas Lee 所發表的研究,論文題目是研究以漢語為母語的孩童他們對於學習母語中的字序(word order)的排列方式,以及名詞、動詞之間的排序關係做一系列的分析研究。之後,另一個主題報告,是由美國威斯康辛大學的張洪明教授所講述,他主要研究在中國詩歌中的律動現象是否能有

語言學的韻律分析可以獲得解釋,而加拿大維多利亞大學的林華教授則是提供與過去一般音韻學者不同的觀點,來重新探討漢語聲調的音韻表現。緊接著,元智大學的王旭教授,則是利用實驗音韻學的原理,設計了一些實驗,提供給母語為國語及台語的大學生,讓他們參與是否這兩種語言中的聲調能與國外 Autosegmental Phonology 的聲調現象達到吻合效果,實驗結果顯示音韻學家常在使用的音韻理論似乎未能成功的反映在語言使用者的表現上。對此,張洪明教授及香港籍的教授均提出糾正與不同的看法。最後,美國 Ohio State Univ 的 Marjorie Chan 教授則是生動的放出許多很早期香港流行的名謠,利用名謠來探討廣東話的入聲字與其韻律的律動現象。由於鮮少有會議會播放廣東歌曲,因此吸引許多法國人士及與會學者觀看。到了第二天下午,來自大陸的學者楊若曉及孔江平教授報告了漢語語言使用者對於聲調中接收的區塊概念。他們一致認為漢語的聲調是成一區塊而並非一階一階的由語言使用者所接受,這點與國際上的觀點大略吻合。接下來則由本人所發表的心理音韻論文。這篇論文最主要是從一般語言使用者所犯的語意口誤及左腦受損的失語症病人所產生語意方面的口誤兩大語料庫來研究,探討詞性(名詞、動詞、形容詞)的多寡數量之外,還有在子音、母音及聲調是否對於語意的代換錯誤會造成強烈的影響。目前研究顯示,如果是一個健全完整的大腦,語言使用區的語意儲存,應該很有可能聲音也會影響語意的排列方式,然而從失語症的病患中,似乎病患在此方面,聲音的元素受到了許多干擾,因此與正常人的表現,顯示出許多差異。最後,則由一位大陸學者 Nie Na 她提到目前國內外非常受到重視的統計研究,如何將統計學的方式運用到音韻學的觀察研究上可說是一項重要的議題,不過她並未詳細舉例證明,因此會中有多位學者提問,並提供許多參考。

此次會議由於參與會議人士眾多,因此能有機會聽到許多與音韻研究有關的論文,在諸位學者發表論文後,能夠跟他們一起討論,彌補到論文不足或有缺失的地方,可以說是參加學術會議最豐富也是最滿足的收穫。尤其是會後國外學者問的疑問中,可以更確切的再追加一些音韻實驗,推演出是否也會得到相近似的結果。本人覺得光獲得這些寶貴的建議,就是參加會議最值回票價的地方了。

這次本人非常開心能有機會參加這一年一度的學術盛會,並且發表論文。本人也在此向政治大學研發處致上最高敬意,感謝研發處能以最快的速度核准本人旅費補助的申請,而使得這次參加會議如此的圓滿成功順利。