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厦门大学

硕 士 学 位 论 文

概念隐喻理论视角下非英语专业大学生英语隐喻能力研究 —— 现状、原因和对策

College Non-English Majors' Metaphoric Competence in English: the Status Quo, Causes and Strategies from the Perspective of Conceptual Metaphor Theory

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Abstract

According to the conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), metaphor is not only a rhetoric device, but also a matter of human thought and action. The cultivation of students' metaphoric competence (MC) in English is regarded as an effective way to avoid Chinglish expressions and improve their English proficiency.

This research is aimed at studying the status quo of college non-English majors' MC, exploring the causes of low MC in English and searching for suitable strategies to improve students' MC and remove unidiomatic English production. It's expected that the results of the research can provide some insights for reference to the college English teaching reform.

This thesis explores the status quo through an empirical study with the form of MC test. The results show that the students' MC is not high in nearly all the aspects of MC that include identification, interpretation and production and that the MC in English is lower than that in Chinese. Great efforts are made to explore the main causes which include differences between Chinese and English in conceptual systems and thinking patterns; differences between Chinese and English in cultures; negative transfer of the Chinese concepts and conceptual system; teacher factors; and individual factors.

Coping strategies are proposed to solve these problems. First, college English teachers should accumulate more knowledge of CMT and enhance metaphoric awareness and competence for the purpose of properly guiding and inspiring students in classroom. Second, students should be guided to cultivate metaphoric awareness which can be achieved by helping them form the habit of metaphoric thinking, and meanwhile their English cognitive thinking pattern will be built therein. Third, English culture input should be strengthened to provide students with more real English contexts. Fourth, metaphor teaching should be implemented. Teachers along with scholars of metaphor study can develop a new metaphoric syllabus and its corresponding series of textbooks, and based on that, the most basic teaching activities, such as the teaching of

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vocabulary, reading and writing could be performed and thus exert influence on the students. English course assessment should also be reformed to highlight the test of students' MC.

Key words: metaphoric competence; status quo; causes; strategies

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摘 要

概念隐喻理论表明隐喻不仅是一种修辞手法，更是一种认知手段和思维方式。培养学生的英语隐喻能力可以有效改善学生英语不地道现象，提高学生的英语水平。

本论文致力于研究中国非英语专业大学生隐喻能力发展状况，英语隐喻能力低的原因以及提高学生英语隐喻能力的策略。力求改善学习者英语学习中的不地道现象，以便为大学英语教学改革提供一些有益的参考。

本论文通过实证研究的方法，调查了非英语专业大学生隐喻能力发展现状。研究表明学生整体的隐喻能力不高，具体表现在隐喻识别、解释和产出等方面，而且学生的英语隐喻能力低于其母语的隐喻能力。通过学生访谈和文献研究，得出学生英语隐喻能力低的原因，具体如下：汉英概念系统和思维模式的差异、汉英文化的差异、汉语概念和概念系统的负迁移、教师的因素以及学生个体差异等。

针对上述造成英语隐喻能力偏低的原因，具体对策如下：首先，教师应扩充隐喻理论知识的储备，提高隐喻意识和隐喻能力，以保证其在教学中的引导、启发作用。其次，帮助学生提高隐喻意识，让隐喻思维成为一种习惯。帮助学生建立隐喻性认知思维模式，努力克服汉语的负迁移。第三，加强英语国家的文化输入，给学生提供更多真实的文化语境和氛围。第四，实施隐喻教学。制定全新的隐喻教学大纲和系列教材，从词汇教学、阅读教学和写作教学等最基本的方面进行隐喻概念的熏陶和引导，同时制定突出考查隐喻能力的课程评估方式等。

关键词：隐喻能力 现状 原因 对策

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List of Abbreviations

CET	College English Test
CMT	Conceptual Metaphor Theory
MC	Metaphoric Competence
TEM	Test for English Majors

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Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Research Background

For more than 2000 years metaphor has been regarded as a rhetorical device, a linguistic flourish and a thing that is not necessary for language. In the 1980s, Lakoff and Johnson put forward conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), which defines metaphor from a totally new perspective, i.e., a cognitive point of view. They believed that metaphor is not only a figure of speech, but a matter of thought and action, and a means to understand the world. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 3) This new theory stimulates scholars to do further studies on metaphor from different perspectives in different fields. The application of CMT to practical teaching is one of them. It has been proved that cultivating metaphoric competence (MC) is an effective way to help students to learn the target language better. (Wang Lu [王璐], 2011: 124-126)

Traditional teaching methods such as grammar-translation teaching method, communicative approach, have greatly improved students' linguistic skills. College students not only have possessed sufficient knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, but have gained fluency of their oral English. However, Danesi (1993) argued that discourses produced by students are acceptable either in the aspect of linguistic form or aspect of communication, yet they sound unnatural. The cause of this phenomenon in his opinion is that students only learn linguistic structure of the target language, but lack the ability to think in terms of conceptual schema of the target language. In other words, students speak and write in the linguistic form of the target language, but think in accordance with the conceptual structure of their native language.

In order to solve this problem better, some scholars suggest that the cultivation of MC is of great importance. (Hu Zhuanglin [胡壮麟], 2004: 79； Wang Ping [王平], 2011: 74-79) By cultivating students' MC , we can help them understand the conceptual system and thinking patterns of the target language. Then they can better understand

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the cultural background information and linguistic forms of the target language, so that their language proficiency will be infinitely close to that of the native speakers. In order to improve students' MC, we need to study the following questions urgently: 1) What is the status quo of MC of college non-English majors in China? 2) Assuming that the MC of the students is low, what are the causes? 3) What strategies can be explored to solve this problem?

1.2 Objectives and Significance of the Research

The key to acquiring a language is to learn the conceptual system and thinking patterns of that language. (Chen Lang [陈朗], 2010: 47-49) It is of great significance for students to be able to understand, interpret and produce metaphors from the cognitive point of view, because the conceptual system is constructed by the way of metaphoric organization. Improving MC in the target language is the key to enhancing students' language proficiency. The production of unidiomatic English by college non-English majors is mainly caused by unfamiliarity of the conceptual system and thinking patterns of English. (Jiang Meng [姜孟] , 2006a: 44-53) This view has been accepted by more and more scholars, who have suggested some solutions to the problem. (Wang Ping [王平], 2011: 74-79; Wang Wei, et al., [王薇 等], 2012: 96-98; Sun Qiong [孙琼], 2013: 687-689) However, all the studies are still in the phase of theoretical exploration, and the cultivation of students' MC in practical teaching is often overlooked by teachers. This thesis aims to arouse teachers' attention to cultivating students' metaphoric awareness and encourage them to exercise metaphor teaching in order to solve problems such as "production of unidiomatic English", "being time-consuming and inefficient in education", "lack of interest in English learning", etc.

As a branch of metaphor, MC has been studied for more than three decades. Scholars mainly focus on the relationship between MC and its related variables, such as linguistic competence and cognitive competence, and the internal factors that affect the development of MC, such as age, gender, intelligence and so on, but few scholars have studied the factors that hinder the cultivation and improvement of MC in the target

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