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硕 士 学 位 论 文

英语习语词典的语用信息研究

A Study of the Pragmatic Information in
Idiom Dictionaries

李得卉

指导教师姓名: 吴建平 教授
专 业 名 称: 英语语言文学
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Abstract

The English language is rich in idioms. We would define English idioms as a special kind of conventionalized fixed expression, allowing dual semantic meanings and little variation, with a special meaning on the whole which in most cases, cannot be deducted from the meaning of component part. Different from idioms in Chinese, English idioms cover larger range of expressions, including non-literal, semi-literal and literal idioms and may be in the form of phrase or sentence.

Pragmatics, a newly independent linguistic branch, is a comprehensive research on language in use of all levels—pronunciation, lexicon, syntax and discourse—from the perspective of cognition, society and culture. By employing the five pragmatics theories—Context theory, Speech Act theory, the Cooperative Principle, Conversational Implicature theory and discourse analysis, we've found in our research and analysis that English idioms are characterized by great variety, rich context implication and pragmatic functions of many kinds. The main contextual functions of English idioms are deictic context and cultural context; most English sentence idioms can perform some indirect speech act through illocutionary force; the social and cultural information implicated by English idioms are important prerequisites to discourse interpretation; English idioms, especially relational idioms, can act as logical and temporal coherence in discourse. To sum up, the pragmatic functions of English idioms are contextual function, communicative function, education function, evaluation function, emphasis function, rhetorical function, and cultural heritage and culture identification. As successful communication calls for some consensus which can be interpreted as context, the rich context and pragmatic functions of idiom should be fully acknowledged by interlocutors. An ideal idiom dictionary providing sufficient pragmatic information is, without any doubt, a useful tool available at any time for English learners.

In addition, we've found in practice that the teaching and learning of English idioms have been neglected all the time even in the classes for English majors. Although it is possible to converse correctly in non-idiomatic English, a student with only a superficial knowledge of English idioms will find himself at a serious

disadvantage in his reading, even more so when he takes part in discussions and debates. To make things worse, idiom dictionaries at hand for college students are less satisfying and user-friendly in the offering of pragmatic information. The status quo of the pragmatic information of idiom dictionaries is in no way comparable with the monolingual English learners' dictionaries in a time of calling for the "productive" ability of learners.

Considering this necessity and urgency, this thesis aims to make a little contribution to the idiom dictionary-making. The thesis is constituted by seven chapters. The first four chapters are the theoretical preparation for the study of pragmatic information in idiom dictionaries, whereas the last three chapters deal with the application of pragmatic theories into dictionary-compiling. The five pragmatics theories—Context theory, Speech Act theory, the Cooperative Principle, Conversational Implicature theory and discourse analysis offer some enlightenment on the pragmatic research of English idioms. On the basis of previewing the mainstream idiom dictionaries, each of which has some advantages to be drawn from, we've given our own tentative approach on the systematic treatment of the pragmatic information in idiom dictionaries, not only in macrostructure, but also in microstructure—definition, illustration, pragmatic label, cross-reference and pragmatic note.

Keyword: idiom; Pragmatics; pragmatic information; idiom dictionary

摘要

英语里含有丰富的习语。我们将英语成语定义为一种约定俗成的固定表达方式，其表现形式很少发生变化，语义经常具有双重性，并且习语作为一个整体的语义不是各组成部分之和。英语习语与汉语习语有所不同，英语习语涵盖的范围更广，既包括非字面意义习语、半字面意义习语和字面意义习语，也包括词组式习语和句式习语。

语用学作为语言学里的新兴的独立分支学科，从认知的、社会的和文化的整体角度对语言的语音、词汇、句法和语篇层次进行综合研究。通过五大语用学理论，即语境理论，言语行为理论，合作原则，会话含义和语篇分析，我们发现英语习语在语境，类型种类和语用功能上具有多样性的特征。比如，英语习语的两大主要语境功能是指示语境和文化语境；多数英语句式习语能够通过其自身的施事力来实行间接言语行为；英语习语所蕴含的社会文化信息是进行语篇解读的重要前提条件；英语习语，特别是关系习语能够在逻辑和时间上连贯衔接语篇。最后，本文总结了英语习语的八大语用功能——即语境功能，交际功能，教育功能，评估功能，强调功能，修辞功能，文化遗产和文化身份识别。成功的语言交际需要交际双方的“共识”，即语境的共知，因此交际者应当熟知习语的丰富语境和语用功能。在实际学习中，英语习语词典毫无疑问是英语学习者“随叫随到”的工具。另外，在实践中我们发现即便是英语专业也在教学中忽略了英语习语。虽然学生用不太地道的英语也能保证交谈时使用的语言正确，但是这样会令他阅读，讨论和辩论时遇到难题。更糟糕的是，目前市面上面对大学生的英语习语词典远远非令人满意，目前的英语学习倡导“产出型”学习，英语单语学习词典已经开始注意到语用知识的重要性，并且已有优秀的单语学习词典问世，这些远非英语习语词典所能及。

考虑到当前的英语习语词典编纂的必要性和紧迫性，本论文旨在为习语词典编纂做出微薄的努力。本论文由七章组成。前四章是为后来研究习语词典中的语用信息做理论准备，而后面的三章将语用学理论应用于习语词典编纂。本文

前半部分对于五大语用学理论，即语境理论，言语行为理论，合作原则，会话含义和语篇分析的分析对于我们研究英语习语的语用研究有所启发。继又有对目前主流英语习语词典的分析，每部词典在处理语用信息上有优点，这对于我们后来的习语词典编纂提供了宝贵的借鉴。论文最后是我们关于习语词典语用信息处理的一些尝试性建议，覆盖词典的宏观和微观方面，其微观方面包括释义，例证，语用标签，参见和语用标注。

关键词：习语 语用学 语用信息 习语词典

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Table of Contents

Abstract	I
摘要	III
Table of Contents	V
目录	IX
Chapter One An Introduction to the Researches on the Pragmatic Information in Idiom Dictionaries	1
1.1 The Significance of the Idiom Study and the Idiom Dictionary Study	1
1.2 The Currency of Idiom Dictionaries	2
1.3 The Methodology of My Study	3
Chapter Two The Definition of Idioms	4
2.1 Definition of English Idiom Given by Dictionaries	4
2.2 Definition of English Idiom Given by Scholars and Linguists	5
2.3 The Definition of Idioms in this Thesis	6
2.3.1 Characteristics of idioms.....	7
Chapter Three Pragmatics and The Research on English Idioms	10
3.1 Brief Introduction of pragmatics and its development	10
3.2 The Significance of Idioms' Pragmatic Researches	11
Chapter Four The Study of Idioms from the Perspective of Pragmatics	14
4.1 Idioms and context	14
4.1.1 Context and its Importance on Idioms Research	14
4.1.2 Context.....	15
4.1.3 The Contextual Analysis of Idioms.....	17

4.1.4 The Restriction of Context upon Idioms.....	19
4.2 English Idioms and Speech Act Theory.....	22
4.2.1 Speech Act theory and the Speech Act of Idioms.....	22
4.2.2 The Illocutionary Act of Idioms.....	25
4.2.3 The Indirect Speech Acts of English Idioms.....	27
4.3 The Conversational Implicature and English Idioms.....	29
4.3.1 The Conversational Implicature Theory and pragmatics Principles.....	29
4.3.2 The Features of the Idiom' s Conversational Implicature.....	31
4.3.3 English Idioms and Pragmatics Principles.....	32
4.4 Discourse Analysis and English Idioms.....	35
4.4.1 Features of Discourse and Coherence.....	35
4.4.2 Idioms and Discourse Coherence.....	37
4.5 The Pragmatic Functions of English Idioms.....	40
Chapter Five The Pragmatic Information in Idiom Dictionaries.....	51
5.1 The General Introduction of the Pragmatic Information in English Learner's Dictionaries.....	51
5.2 The Pragmatic Information in the Mainstream Idiom Dictionaries in China.....	55
5.2.1 Idiom Dictionaries in China.....	55
5.2.2 The General Introduction of Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English (I , II).....	56
5.2.3 The general introduction of Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Idioms.....	60
5.2.4 The General Introduction of Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms.....	62
5.2.5 The General Introduction of NTC's English Idioms Dictionary.....	64
5.2.6 The General Introduction of A Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English....	64
5.2.7 The Summing-up of the Pragmatic Information in Current mainstream Idiom Dictionaries in China.....	65
Chapter Six My Tentative Approach to the Treatments of the Pragmatic Information in Idiom Dictionaries.....	68
6.1 The Amount of Pragmatic Information in the Idiom Dictionary.....	68
6.2 The Treatment of Pragmatic Information in the Idiom Dictionary.....	69

6.2.1 Micro-structure and Meso-structure	69
6.2.2 Macro-structure.....	73
Chapter Seven Conclusions on the Pragmatic Information in Idiom	
Dictionaries	74
7.1 The Main Contribution of this Study	74
7.2 The Limitations of this thesis.....	76
7.3 Some Suggestions for Further Study	76
Appendix: A List of Abbreviations Used in the Thesis.....	78
References	79
Acknowledgements	82

厦门大学博硕士学位论文摘要库

目 录

英文摘要	I
中文摘要	III
目录	IX
第一章 英语习语词典语用信息研究简介	1
1.1 习语和习语词典研究的重要性	1
1.2 习语词典的现状	2
1.3 本文的研究方法	3
第二章 英语习语的定义	4
2.1 词典中对于英语习语的定义	4
2.2 学者和语言学家对于英语习语的定义	5
2.3 本文对于英语习语的定义	6
2.3.1 习语的特征	7
第三章 语用学和英语习语研究	10
3.1 语用学及发展简介	10
3.2 英语习语语用研究的重要性	11
第四章 英语习语的语用学研究	14
4.1 英语习语与语境	14
4.1.1 语境以及其在英语习语研究中重要性	14
4.1.2 语境	15
4.1.3 英语习语的语境研究	17
4.1.4 语境对英语习语的限制	19
4.2 英语习语与言语行为理论	22
4.2.1 言语行为理论和英语习语的言语行为	22

4.2.2 英语习语的施事行为	25
4.2.3 英语习语的间接言语行为	27
4.3 会话含意理论与英语习语	29
4.3.1 会话含意理论和语用原则	29
4.3.2 英语习语的会话含意特征	31
4.3.3 英语习语和语用学原则	33
4.4 语篇分析与英语习语	35
4.4.1 语篇特征与语篇连贯	35
4.4.2 英语习语与语篇连贯	37
4.5 英语习语的语用功能	40
第五章 英语习语词典的语用信息	51
5.1 英语学习者词典中的语用信息介绍	51
5.2 中国主流习语词典中的语用信息	55
5.2.1 中国的习语词典	55
5.2.2 牛津当代牛津英语成语词典简介	56
5.2.3 柯林斯英语成语词典简介	60
5.2.4 剑桥国际英语成语词典简介	62
5.2.5 NTC 英语成语词典简介	64
5.2.6 当代英语习语大词典简介	64
5.2.7 中国主流习语词典中语用信息概述	65
第六章 关于习语词典中语用信息处理的探讨	68
6.1 习语词典中的语用信息量	68
6.2 习语词典中的语用信息处理	69
6.2.1 微观结构和中观结构	69
6.2.2 宏观结构	73
第七章 关于英语习语词典的语用信息研究结论	74
7.1 本研究的主要贡献	74
7.2 本研究的局限性	76
7.3 给后来者研究的建议	76
附录：本文中的缩略语表	78

参考文献.....79

致谢.....82

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Chapter One An Introduction to the Researches on the Pragmatic Information in Idiom Dictionaries

1.1 The Significance of the Idiom Study and the Idiom Dictionary Study

English idioms are a special group of vocabulary in English. They are mostly concise, vivid and figuratively, forceful and expressive but not easy to catch their real meanings for foreign students. Many English learners often face a frustrated situation that they cannot fully appreciate the works of well-known writers or excellent television shows even though they've learned English for more than ten years. Idioms are the identification card distinguishing English native speakers and foreigners. Even English majors hesitate to use idioms and always speak with foreigners in a very formal and bookish way which seems to be less friendly and frigid for foreigners. Idioms in whatever language are the crystallization of people's intelligence and experience of life and work; hence idioms are full of wits and presented in short, brief and sometimes aesthetical forms. Native English-speakers often talk and write with idioms. Therefore, mastery of English idioms offers an easier access to the understanding of the native idiomatic English, both in speech and written English.

A good understanding and grasp of English idioms could also help cross-cultural communication smooth and successful. English idioms are not only carrier and reflection of culture and social life in western countries but also performer of some pragmatic functions. English idioms typically convey education and evaluation such as approval, criticism and emphasis. In other cases, English idioms can perform pragmatic functions in texts and interactions, such as organizing discourse or conveying thanks and refusals. However, many English idioms are non-literal which means that it cannot be drawn from the literal meaning of individual component of idioms, not to mention the application of idioms in

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