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厦门大学

硕 士 学 位 论 文

英汉在线词典中英语网语标注的优化模式

An Optimized Model for English Cyberspeak Labeling in Online English-Chinese Dictionaries

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Abstract

With rapid development of the Internet and the increasing number of netizens, cyberspeak, as a new variety of language, has emerged and been put into use in people's daily life. English cyberspeak has such unique linguistic features that it needs to be studied seriously. The fact that traditional printed dictionaries do not include English cyberspeak as main entries causes inconvenience for English learners. Online English-Chinese dictionaries provide explanation for some English cyberspeak terms, but their treatment is far from satisfactory in terms of accuracy and consistency of the usage labels.

Considering that dictionary labels serve as guidance of correct understanding and use of language, the goal of the thesis is to propose an optimized model for English cyberspeak labeling in online English-Chinese dictionaries. To achieve this goal, the thesis investigates linguistic properties of English cyberspeak and carries out a general survey of dictionary labels and current cyberspeak labeling in online English-Chinese dictionaries. The results of the present study show that major problems exist in current English cyberspeak labeling in online English-Chinese dictionaries. The proposal of the model will solve these problems to a large extent, and thus make online English-Chinese dictionary a better learning tool.

Besides, this thesis furthers the study on English cyberspeak by analyzing it with the Register Theory and lexical category theory and makes contribution to the standardization of online dictionaries.

Key words: English cyberspeak; online English-Chinese dictionaries; dictionary labeling; optimized model

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摘 要

随着互联网的迅速发展以及网民队伍的急速扩充，网络语言作为一种新的语言变体应运而生，且越来越多地被人们用于日常生活中。英语网络语言具有独特的语言特征，因此有必要对其认真研究。传统的纸质词典不在正文部分收录英语网络语言，对英语语言学习者造成不便。英汉在线词典为部分英语网络词汇提供了解释，但是从词典用法标注的准确性和系统性来说，这些英汉在线词典对英语网络语言的标注难以令人满意。

本论文的研究目标是要为英语网络语言在英汉在线词典中的标注提出一个优化模式，因为词典用法标注对语言的理解和正确使用起到实际的引导作用。为了实现此目标，本论文对英语网络语言、词典标注和现有的英汉在线词典中英语网络语言的标注进行了研究。研究结果显示，现有的英汉在线词典中英语网络语言的标注存在诸多问题，而上述模型的提出将很大程度上解决这些问题，从而使英汉在线词典成为更好的学习工具。

另外，运用语域理论和词汇范畴理论对英语网络语言进行分析深化了对英语网络语言的研究。本论文也为如何使在线词典更加规范提供了有效的启发。

关键词：英语网语 英汉在线词典 词典标注 优化模式

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Full Names
CMC	Computer-Mediated Communication
OALD6	Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 6th edition
OALD7	Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 7th edition
OALD online	Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary online
LDOCE online	Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English online

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Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Research Background

"The Internet is one of the most remarkable things human beings have ever made. In terms of its impact on society, it ranks with print, railways, the telegraph, the automobile, electric power and television", John Naughton (1999) comments in his book *A brief history of the future: the origin of the Internet*. Up to now, there is no denying the unprecedented scale and significance of the Internet which has already almost dominated our daily life.

The effect of the Internet's global scale and intensity of use on language and languages is obvious. As David Crystal (2000: viii) states in his published book *Language and the Internet*, "If the Internet is a revolution, therefore, it is likely to be a linguistic revolution." Netizens, regular citizens of the Internet, spend appreciable amounts of time online. Their communication online is different from real life communication in that they communicate by typing on the keyboard. On the Internet, the principle of economy plays an important role, so the most important feature of any writing style in online communication is that it must be fast enough to save time and space. To keep up with the multiple interactions, the typing must be a nearly automated process, on account of which a new form of language has been created.

In English, this new type of language contains words and phrases like "AFK"(away from keyboard), "AYSOS"(are you stupid or something), "BRB"(be right back), "CU"(see you), "GR8"(great), etc. David Crystal (2001: 48) has claimed that the new type of language is neither spoken language nor written language nor sign language, but a new CMC (Computer-mediated Communication) language. The term *cyberspeak* is adopted in this paper to refer to this new type of language.

"People seem to have begun to sense that they are dealing with something new, as far as their linguistic intuitions are concerned. They are realizing that their established knowledge, which has enables them to survive and succeed in spoken and

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written linguistic encounters hitherto, is no longer enough to guarantee survival and success on the Internet."(Crystal, 2001: 66)

With the popularization of computer and internet, and also because of the unique advantages of cyberspeak, it is unavoidable that people have to know, understand, and use cyberspeak to keep up with the world and people around us. So it is necessary to conduct a serious study of cyberspeak.

So far, cyberspeak has not been largely included as main entries in traditional printed dictionaries. But the fourth edition of *A New English-Chinese Dictionary* released in July 2009 does give cyberspeak several pages in the appendix part, which lists out 297 frequently-used abbreviations on the Internet or in texting. However, people need to find some reference sources where cyberspeak can be looked up so that they can use appropriately this new form of language in their daily life.

One solution to the problem is for them to turn to online dictionaries. Online dictionaries are often compared with traditional printed dictionaries. Online dictionaries have advantages that printed dictionaries can never have. It has been pointed out that novelty is the dominant feature of online dictionaries (Huang Jianhua, 1998). Online dictionaries include neologism way faster than printed dictionaries do. Some scholars (Lv Yuankang, 2003; Meng Weigen, 2006; Si Jingxin，2005; Zhang Jinwen, 2001) have studied the features of online dictionaries. One common feature they have all concluded is that online dictionaries are kept up-to-date, reflecting rapid social changes. This is the reason why cyberspeak can be looked up in online dictionaries.

However, treatment to English cyberspeak in the current online English-Chinese dictionaries is far from satisfactory in terms of accuracy and consistency of the usage labels. Dictionary labels serve as guidance of correct understanding and use of language. Ways of labeling of English cyberspeak in online English-Chinese dictionaries vary from one to another. Even in the same online dictionary, labeling is inconsistent and chaotic, which causes much trouble for dictionary users.

In view of the abovementioned facts, it is essential to conduct a research into cyberspeak labeling in online English-Chinese dictionaries in the hope of seeking an

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identity for English cyberspeak and standardizing cyberspeak labeling in online English-Chinese dictionaries.

1.2 Research Objective

The aim of the thesis is modest: it is to investigate linguistic properties of English cyberspeak and carry out a general survey of dictionary labels and current cyberspeak labeling in online English-Chinese dictionaries, and consequently, by utilizing all the study, propose an optimized model for cyberspeak labeling in current online English-Chinese dictionaries in order to make the lexicographical representation cyberspeak labeling in online English-Chinese dictionaries more efficient.

1.3 Data Collection of the Thesis

Cyberspeak examples employed in this thesis are mainly selected from the Internet, as the Internet is where the cyberspeak appears and exists. Websites consulted include *www.netlingo.com* and *www.abbreviations.com*. *www.netlingo.com*, one of the largest online dictionaries of cyberspeak, contains valuable resources for the study of cyberspeak such as The List of Chat Acronyms & Text Message Shorthand, etc. *www.abbreviations.com* provides 3735 entries for chat abbreviation.

The list of 297 abbreviations frequently used on the Internet and in texting in the appendix of *A New English-Chinese Dictionary, 4th Edition* and A List of Network Abbreviations in English in the appendix 10 of *The English-Chinese Dictionary, 2nd Edition* are also used as important reference sources.

There are also data that come from the writer's first-hand experience of communicating with English-speaking people through instant messenger where cyberspeak terms are frequently used.

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