

совершению определенных действий для изменения сложившейся ситуации.

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CHINESE AND RUSSIAN INTERJECTIONS

СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ КИТАЙСКИХ И РУССКИХ МЕЖДОМЕТИЙ

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In this paper, we describe and compare every characteristic of interjections between Chinese and Russian from the perspective of phonetics, meanings, syntactic and pragmatic functions. We can draw the conclusion that in spite of different forms and meanings of interjections in two different languages, there are similarities between them in syntactic and pragmatic functions.

Keywords: interjection; exclamation; attention-getting word; responding word; Chinese; Russian; contemporary.

В данной статье описываются и сравниваются различные характеристики междометий в китайском и русском языках с точки зрения фонетики, значений, синтаксических и прагматических функций. Делается вывод о том, что, несмотря на различные формы и значения междометий в двух языках, между ними существуют сходства в синтаксической и прагматической функциях.

Ключевые слова: междометие; восклицание; привлекающее внимание слово; ответное слово; китайский; русский; современный.

As a special part of speech, interjections have the following characteristics: 1) syntactic independent and context dependent; 2) phonetic imitated and supra-systemic; 3) lexical semantic fuzziness and stability; 4) primitiveness and motivation of the relationship between its form and meaning; 5) occurs when stimulated or intentional; 6) heterogeneity of internal members. In this paper, we'll combine the above aspects to describe and compare the characteristics of interjections in Chinese and Russian.

Similarities between Chinese and Russian Interjections

2.1 Syntactic independent and context dependent

In Chinese, the independence of an interjection is very strong, and it can be used as a sentence alone. In Russian, interjections can constitute exclamatory sentences separately, too. For instance:

——你七点能到家吗？(Can you get home at seven?)

——嗯[ŋ⁵¹]。(Yes, I can.)

Командир роты крикнул: "За мной! Ура! "(The commander shouted: "Follow me! Hurrah!")

As a responding word, “嗯[ŋ⁵¹]” is used to express positive attitude, which acts as affirmative sentence. Responding words are ubiquitous in various languages, like “да/нет” in Russian, “はい/いいえ” in Japanese, “yes/no” in English. All of them can constitute a sentence alone. “ura/ypa” is used when the army rushes into the front, cheers in praise, or used as the slogan during the military parade. Words used to boost morale and show loyalty can be seen in other languages, like “万岁” in Chinese, “万歳[ばんざい]” in Japanese, “hurrah” in English.

In general, interjections are independent syntactically, which means that interjections do not act as a sentence constituent. Interjections usually appear before/after a sentence, or in the middle of a sentence. According to this characteristic, some linguists call interjections sentence words (“句子词”). Yuen Ren Chao [1, p. 815] called it “Ever-Free Forms”.

Though interjections are syntactic independent, it doesn't mean that interjections are completely independent. The meaning of an interjection mainly depend on its context and context situation. For instance, “bravo” used for cheering usually appears in the scene of watching performance. “эй” is used when speaker wants to greet, warn or remind somebody. When native

Chinese speaker uses the attention-getting word “喏[no^{55/53}]”, he/she usually uses the corresponding gestures, eye contact, etc.

2.2 Phonetic imitated and supra-systemic

This feature mainly refers to primary interjections. Some interjections have special pronunciation. In Chinese, there is the feature of ingressive air

flow, like “啧[ts<]” “咝[s<]”. In Chinese phonetic system, almost all the pronunciations of the words are consist of three parts – initials, finals, and tones. According to the phonetic rules of Chinese, there are usually vowels and consonants in one syllable. If there are only consonants, they can't become a syllable alone. However, there are syllables composed of consonants in Chinese interjections, like “哼[hng³¹]” “嗯[m/n/ŋ³¹].

There are many interjections in spoken Russian that cannot be expressed in written language due to their abnormal phonetic structure. For example, when speaker gives a snort of contempt, in the written language the interjection is often expressed in occasional continuous letters, such as пф, пш, фф. In this way, the pronunciation of the interjection can be roughly reflected.

Пф, да кто это тебе сказал такую глупость! (Who told you such nonsense!)

2.3 Lexical semantic fuzziness and stability

Interjections express complex and delicate human emotions, and are influenced by factors such as syntax independence and poor phonetic stability. Therefore, the meaning of interjections is not precise enough and has ambiguity. Because interjections are “Ever-Free Forms”, they usually act as a sentence component, relying only on the phonetic features such as intonation and length. We cannot accurately judge the meaning of the interjection without the related context, like “啊[a⁵¹]”, may express several meanings in different contexts. It can express compliment, which usually appears in front of a sentence. It also can be an expression of surprise, relief, or even realization all of a sudden. We can only get the meaning of the interjection according to the context. In Russian, the situation is the same as in Chinese. For example, the interjection “ax” can express happiness, fear, surprise, regret, admiration, or dissatisfaction, etc. It can also used to express the mental state of the speaker.

啊[a⁵¹], 原来是你! (Ah, it turned out to be you!)

Ах, как красиво! (Oh, how beautiful!)

In the above example, “啊[a⁵¹]” shows that the speaker realized something all of a sudden. “Ax” expresses the praise of the speaker.

2.4 Primitiveness of the primary interjections

The utterance of an interjection is usually an instinctive reaction from people, which is mainly derived from human genes and physiology. It is biologically and primitively characterized. Therefore, the expression of the interjection is usually excitable, and it is often the case that people blurt out under environmental stimuli, which is an immediate and emotional response. Because of the primitive characteristic, there are similarities between interjections in different languages, which are obvious in the pronunciation of interjections. For instance, when speaker wants to express disgust or anger, Rus-

sian native speakers may use “тъфy” “фy”; English native speakers may use “phooey” “phew” “faugh”; Chinese native speakers may use “呸[p^hei³³]” “啐[s^huei³¹]”. All of these interjections have one thing in common in pronunciation. They all belong to aspiration—when we mark them in International Phonetic Alphabet, we usually add [h] to represent this phonetic feature.

2.5 Heterogeneity of internal members

The heterogeneity of the internal composition of the interjection, or openness, mainly refers to the different sources and rationale of the constituent members. According to its phonetic forms and origination, Jespersen [2, P. 60] divided interjections into two categories: 1) only used as interjections; 2) formed by common vocabulary, like well, why. Both of them can be used as independent utterance. Later, some linguists followed this standard to classify interjections, like Zandvoort [3, P. 250]’s regular interjections and occasional interjections, and Ameka [4, P. 245-271]’s primary interjections and secondary interjections. Here we adopt the terms from Ameka [4, P. 245-271]. The most obvious difference between primary and secondary interjections probably is in phonetics. As for phonetic aspects, primary interjections meet the second characteristic-- phonetic imitated and supra-systemic.

Primary interjections are related to human intuition reaction, which we can’t analyze them from the internal system of language. We can only analyze the rationale of these words from the physiological and physical points. For example, the interjections that express the original emotions such as joy, anger, sorrow, and fear. All of these emotions are biological and instinctive catharsis [5, P. 482– 496]. In Chinese, there are a lot of primary interjections, such as “啊[a⁵¹]” “哇[ua⁵¹]” “呀[ia³¹]” “呸[p^hei⁵⁵]” “哼[hng³¹]”. The same situation exists in Russian interjections. There are various primary interjections, like “ох” “увы” “фи” “ба” “эй” and so on.

In contrast, secondary interjections are exactly the opposite. It is mainly transformed from various types of content words and phrases. Its original form has the inner rationale of language, but when it enters a specific occasion and derives the usage of independent and fixed emotional expression, it turns out to be an interjection.

From the perspective of vocabulary productivity, the primary interjection is basically a closed category, and the secondary interjection is relatively open because it accepts words from different parts of speech and different forms of expressions. In general, secondary interjections are much more numerous than primary interjections.

There are interjections which are commonly transformed from a noun, such as “老天爷[lao²¹⁴ t’iæn⁵⁵ ie³⁵]” which means surprise or mourning, but its original meaning is “God”. Another example in Chinese is “我的妈呀[uo²¹⁴te

ma⁵⁵·ia³¹]” which express fear, surprise, but its original meaning is “my mother”. This is the same in Russian. For instance:

Генерал схватил себя за щеку и заходил по комнатам. — Ой, **батьюшки!** — вопил он. — Ой, **матушки!** Ох! (The general grabbed his cheek and walked through the rooms. - Oh, my God! He cried. - Oh, my God! Oh!)

Here, “батьюшки” “матушки” don't refer to “father” and “mother”. Both of them act as interjections to express the speaker's body reaction. Other examples like “господи” “боже мой”, both of which have the same meaning of “oh my God” and “我的天啊 [uo²¹⁴·te t^hien⁵⁵ a]”.

2.6 Pragmatic functions

Many linguists have discussed the function of language, among which the language function has been discussed systematically, such as Jakobson [6, P. 350-377] and Halliday [7]. In the case of Jakobson [6, P. 350-377], he attributes speech events to six elements: addresser, context, message, contact, code, and addressee. Jakobson pointed out that, like any system of signs, language is first used for communication to convey information, but at the same time, the transmission of information is not the only, or even the most important communicative purpose of language. Based on the six elements of speech events, Jakobson established a framework for language functions, including emotive function, referential function, poetic function, phatic function, metalingual function, and conative function. The six elements of a speech event usually correspond to a special function of the language. For example, the emotive function corresponds to the speaker, and mainly expresses the attitude and emotion of the speaker to the things he is talking about, and is expressed in the language, such as the intonation and the use of interjections. As another example, the conative function is mainly for the addressee, and the so-called imperative sentence is a typical embodiment of such a function. In addition, specific speech events usually have more than one function.

Attention-getting words are usually directed at a particular hearer. Speakers use these interjections to get the attention of the hearer and achieve his aim. For instance:

灵佑在地上捡起一粒米，说：“你说没有抛散，哪，这个是什么？”

” (Lingyou picked up a grain of rice on the ground and said, “You said that there is no dispersal. 哪[nā⁵¹], what is this?”)

На, возьми! (Here, take it!)

The functions of Chinese interjection “哪” and Russian interjection “на” are similar. The speakers use these interjections intentionally to draw a par-

ticular hearer's attention at something. What's more, their pronunciations are the same coincidentally.

Responding words can show the speaker's attitudes and reactions to the other one's information. We usually use these interjections to express approval and denial, and to act as information receiving words. In Russian, the typical responding word that expresses affirmative attitudes is “да”. The corresponding interjections in Chinese are “是 [ʃ^h ʅ⁵¹]” “对[tuei⁵¹]”. Both can express approval, or reflect the speaker's information acceptant status. In addition, they have the function of textual organization.

Да, это замечательный доклад. (Yes/ Indeed, this is a wonderful report.)

是，他不但快活，而且可爱！(Yes/ Indeed, he is not only happy, but also cute!)

Both “да” and “是 [ʃ^h ʅ⁵¹]” are used in the beginning of a sentence to indicate the conclusion of thinking. The preceding discourse unit usually states a series of facts.

3. Differences between Chinese and Russian Interjections

3.1 Onomatopoeia

In Chinese, we usually view interjections and onomatopoeias as two different parts of speech. The relationship between interjections and onomatopoeias is parallel. In contrast, in the Russian system, they are not parallel. Onomatopoeia is a subcategory of interjections, such as “мяу-мяу” (meow), “бух” (boom), and “диль-дон” (ding-dong), which belong to interjections. However, the corresponding words in Chinese like “喵[miaʊ³³]” “咚[tɔŋ⁵⁵]” “叮咛[tɿŋ⁵⁵ tɔŋ³¹]” are not part of interjections. Onomatopoeia is an independent part of speech.

3.2 the range of secondary interjections

The semantic content and range of Russian interjections are much wider than Chinese.

Стоп! (stop somebody or something)

Вон! (to let somebody out)

Брысь! (scat: to drive away a cat)

All of the above words can be viewed as interjections in Russian, the meanings of which refer to the speaker's volition. Speakers usually use these words intentionally to certain hearer and want the hearer to do related actions or reactions. In Chinese, there are interjections that also can express the speaker's volition, such as “嘘[ʃɿ]” to ask others to keep silence, which is similar to “шшш” in Russian both the meaning and the pronunciation. The corresponding words of the above examples in Chinese are usually classified

into verb. What's more, these sentences are viewed as imperative sentences rather than exclamatory sentences.

In Russian, words that express politeness and courtesy may also be seen as interjections.

Пожалуйста! (Please!)

Спасибо! (Thank you!)

Алло! (Hello!)

In Chinese, these are not interjections, and the sentences formed by these words are non-subject-predicate sentences.

3.3 the flexibility of interjections' functions

One of the most important characteristics of interjections is syntactic independence, that is to say, interjections can constitute a clause or sentence by itself. If an interjection acts as a sentence constituent, we call this phenomenon deinterjectionization [8, P. 3-13]. For example:

我努力让自己平静下来，在她骂我的时候，一直笑着在电话里嗯嗯[η^{31} ɲ]着，表示对她的话很感兴趣。（《中国北漂艺人生存实录》）(I tried to calm myself down. When she scolded me, I kept laughing on the phone and said that I was very interested in her words.)

Here, “嗯嗯[η^{31} ɲ]” acts as a verb in the sentence. It is not an interjection any more.

In contrast, Russian interjections can be accompanied with complement or adverbial modifier. For instance:

Вон отсюда! (Go away!)

Спасибо тебе! (Thank you!)

Ну тебя! (Come on!)

Moreover, In spoken Russian, interjections can be added to the sentence to enhance the expressive power of the attached words, so as to strengthen the tone. For example:

Жилось **ой** как туго. (It was oh so tight.)

Устал я, **ох** как устал. (I'm tired, oh so tired.)

While in Chinese, interjections cannot be in a sentence like the above examples. Generally speaking, the syntactic function of Russian interjections is more flexible than Chinese.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, Chinese and Russian interjections have similarities in many aspects. Both are syntactic independent, while the meanings of which mainly depend on context. The pronunciations of the primary interjections mainly imitate human being's voice, and some of them even beyond the normal phonetic system of the languages. The lexical meanings are vague, but are accepted by their language communities stably. There are not only primary in-

terjections, but also secondary interjections in the language system, which makes this part of speech heterogeneous. In terms of pragmatic functions, there is conformity between each subcategory of two languages' interjections.

Though there are many similarities between them, the characteristics of the interjections in the two languages are not exactly the same. They have different views on the onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia is a subcategory of Russian interjections. However, in Chinese onomatopoeia is a separate part of speech. Onomatopoeia and interjection are the same level of language unit. As for the membership of interjections, the rang of Russian interjections is much wider than the range of Chinese. In addition, the syntactic function of Russian interjections is more flexible than Chinese.

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