AN ANALYSIS OF "起因" AND "原因" IN TEACHING CHINESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Abstract:
This article takes the teacher's answer to students' analysis questions about "起因（qǐyīn）" and "原因（yuányīn）" in second language teaching practice as an example to illustrate the teacher's shortcomings in the analysis of content words in synonyms, that is, the traditional introspection method has strong subjectivity in words analysis. Then, combined with the advantages of the corpus, method and suggestions for synonym analysis of "起因（qǐyīn）" and "原因（yuányīn）" are put forward, reflecting the theoretical framework, methods, principles and other achievements of existing research on synonym analysis.

Key words: qǐyīn, yuányīn, synonyms, analysis, corpus, method suggestions.

1. Introduction

Synonym analysis is a major focus and difficulty in teaching Chinese as a second language. Many scholars believe that the scope of synonym analysis in second language teaching is wider than that in Chinese vocabulary ontology research (赵新and李英, 2001; 李绍林, 2010; 陆方喆, 2016), because the synonym analysis in the ontology is mostly synonyms with the same part of speech or containing the same morpheme. However, in Chinese second language teaching, the focus of analysis and research mainly focuses on function words. In contrast, the meaning and usage of content words are generally not very abstract, but this does not mean that teachers do not have problems in analyzing content words.

2. "原因" and "起因" in the analysis case of content words in synonyms

In a pre-recorded Chinese teaching video uploaded on Youtube , a student asked the teacher on the message board the difference between "原因" and "起因" . The teacher replied that "原因,起因" are both nouns and synonyms. "起因"is the reason why something happened, and shows the example sentence "这次大火的起因是有人在床上抽烟 。"; "原因"is the condition that causes a certain result or the condition that causes another thing to happen. As opposed to "result", an example sentence is "他迟到的原因是摩托车坏了 。" Then explain that "迟到" is the result and "the car broke down" is the "原因".

The teacher clearly introduced the word class of the two words and gave corresponding example sentences, but there were also some problems. First of all, as a native Chinese speaker, the author has some difficulty in understanding the meaning explanations of "原因" and "起因" given by the teacher. explanations in Chinese of the two are very similar and there is ambiguity. Although the teacher pointed out that "起因" is a kind of reason at the beginning, later the explanation of "原因" does not reflect the inclusive relationship between the two.Secondly, "起因" and "原因" in Chinese have the same word-forming components , which itself affects learners' ability to distinguish the difference between the two words.

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Next, the examples provided are not rich enough. Both words provide an example sentence each, which makes it difficult for learners to basically grasp the meaning and usage of the vocabulary, and it cannot enhance learners' perceptual understanding of the specific use of new words in different contexts. Finally, there is a lack of analysis of the stylistic aspects of synonyms.

Overall, this teacher's explanation can temporarily solve some of the problems in teaching. However, the introspection method is easily affected by the researcher's experience, sense of language, quantity of corpus, etc., and the conclusions drawn are highly subjective (陆方喆 2016). Therefore, the analysis of "原因, 起因" needs further analysis. This article supports the view of combining traditional analysis methods with the use of corpus to improve the efficiency and accuracy of synonym analysis. The following is the use of corpus to analyze "原因, 起因" specific strategies.

3. Using the corpus to find the word combinations of "原因" and "起因"

Searching for "a (的) 原因" and "a (的) 起因" in the BCC corpus yielded some modifiers that are often paired with "原因" and "起因" respectively. The results are as follows:

Regardless of whether the attributive contains "的" or not, "原因" is modified much more often than "起因", and the predicate words that modify "起因" can basically be replaced by "原因". Such abstract evaluative attributives such as "重要(important), 根本 (fundamental), 客观(objective)" not only modify the "起因", but also tend to modify the "原因", and often omit "的". Therefore, in teaching, teachers can show students the attributive words that often match "原因,起因" according to their level, and even show relevant example sentences. If students match words such as "重要, 根本, 客观" with "起因" in the process of writing and expressing, the teachers must base their judgment on the corpus and not just on the sense of language.

Secondly, although statistics show that there are very few commonly used modifier words paired with "起因", it does not mean that "起因" has no modifiers. Because "起因" mainly focuses on finding the focus conditions in the details of the event or the conditions of the specific plot, "起因" generally modified by an event or behavior. In contrast, "原因" include both the description of the focus conditions of specific events and focus on logical analysis.Therefore, using more evaluative words such as "重要、根本、直接、客观" can reflect the logical level.

4. Using the corpus to obtain the genre distribution information of "原因" and "起因"

By using the BCC corpus retrieval, more detailed genre distribution information can be obtained. "起因" is most commonly used in the fields of Micro-blog and Newspapers, but its frequency distribution in the fields of Literature, Newspapers, Micro-blog, and Science and Technology is less than that of "原因", which is different from it. Among them, "原因" appears more frequently than "起因" in Science and Technology field, which further reflects that "原因" is more focused on rigorous and logical expressions than "起因".

5. Using the corpus to find special collocation forms of words

Through the corpus collection of the CCL corpus, this article quickly discovered that among the 500 corpora about "起因", "起因于"was present in 50 corpora, and this article believed that the usage of this structure in sentences is similar with "verb +于" . It can be used as the head of the predicate. It can be modified by an adverb in front and followed by an object. But "原因" cannot be followed by "于".

The expression "noun + 于" oes exist, and its special usage is also contrary to the part of speech of the noun. If the content of the analysis is extended to advanced level learners in synonym analysis, the teacher only tells the students that "起因 + 于" can be regarded as a

verb. , then students may deduce similar usages of "原因 + 于". Therefore, the special form from corpus can be explained with the help of linguistic knowledge.

This article believes that "于" as a preposition can be placed after the verb to express "from/from... (beginning)", such as: 青出于蓝， 出于自愿 . Just because "于" has the meaning of "starting from...", it can be paired with verbs that express the initial meaning, such as "起源于originates from, 来源于originates from, 开始于starts from". "起因 + 于" can also express the meaning of "the original cause started from". Here, the noun "起因 is temporarily used as a verb, but "起因" is still a standard noun.

From the perspective of modern Chinese, "起因于" is a quasi-preposition and can no longer be regarded as a simple combination of "noun + 于". It is mostly used in formal language to induces the initial cause of a certain result.

In teaching, this article believes that teachers should explore and understand the origin of the collocation of "起因于", but avoid super class language terms in explanations, which mainly reflect the meaning inheritance relationship and different usage characteristics between "起因" and "起因于" . If students ask whether "起因" can be regarded as a verb because of the form of "起因于", teachers should help students distinguish the difference between words and phrases between "起因"and "起因", and use example sentences to show the verb phrase "起因于" is different from the noun "起因". For example, "起因于" can be preceded by adverbs such as "全、都、就". After introducing the usage, the teacher reminds the students that the "起因" from "起因于" has the same meaning as the "起因" originally learned, but the "起因" plus "于" in the sentence means "the reason why things happened started from ".

6. Conclusion

The "quantitative" information provided by the corpus can continuously improve the "qualitative" information determined according to the introspection method, but at the same time, teachers must rely on their own accumulated experience to judge whether there are problems with the information in the corpus. In addition, the corpus only displays words' expression forms, for the special forms, teachers still need to use language ontology knowledge to make reasonable analysis. With the advent of the big data era and the development of teaching technology, the combination of the application of corpora and traditional analysis methods in synonym analysis has gradually become a trend.

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