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A Review of Chinese as Second Language in Pragmatic Acquisition

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Abstract: The study of second language pragmatic acquisition has shown a good momentum of development in recent years. This paper will analyze and sort out the general situation of Chinese as second language pragmatic acquisition from the perspectives of theoretical basis, research perspective and literature analysis, and discuss the future research trends, in order to provide valuable reference for future research and promote the development of research in this field.

Keywords: Chinese as Second Language Acquisition, Pragmatics Acquisition, Pragmatic Competence.

1. Introduction

Second language pragmatics, also known as Interlanguage Pragmatics in China, mainly studies the development, performance and acquisition of learners' second language pragmatic competence (He Ziran, 1996). Pragmatic acquisition is an indispensable aspect of second language acquisition, especially in intercultural communication. Unfortunately, there are few studies on pragmatic acquisition in the field of Chinese as second language acquisition. This paper mainly studies the development trend of second language pragmatic acquisition, focusing on the current research topic and dynamic models, so as to having an overall grasp and understanding of the general situation of second language pragmatic acquisition.

2. Theoretical Basis and Research Perspective

Second language pragmatics focuses on "the study of the patterns of second language use and acquisition by non-native second language operators." (Kasper,1999) 。 Second language pragmatics is an interdisciplinary field of pragmatics and second language acquisition, but up to now, second language pragmatic acquisition is still on the edge of the field of second language acquisition research.

On the basis of the research theory, the study of second language pragmatic acquisition mainly comes from two categories of pragmatics and second language acquisition. Pragmatic content mainly draws on speech acts, conversational implicature, politeness principle, and Geert Hofstede's scale theory of cultural values, and some studies also involve sociological theories such as sociolinguistics and sociocultural science. Most of these theories are applied to contrastive analysis to analyze the differences in speech acts between second language learners and native speakers. In the book named “Principles of Pragmatics”, G. Leech(1983) divides Halliday's three functions of language into two parts: grammar and pragmatics. On the other hand, H. P. Grice(1967) proposed that in order to ensure the smooth progress of conversation, both sides of the conversation should abide by some basic principles, namely "cooperative principles". Leech supplements and develops Grice's cooperative principle and puts forward the principle of appropriateness. This principle consists of six principles: decency, generosity, recognition, humility, consistency and compassion. At the same time, Leach also pointed out that "Some cultural communities in the East (such as China and Japan) attach more importance to the principle of modesty than Western countries." English-speaking cultural communities (especially in the UK) pay more attention to the maxims of strategy and irony; Mediterranean countries place more emphasis on the rule of generosity and less on the rule of modesty. Such cultural differences will be reflected in pragmatics, especially in the pragmatic aspects of second language acquisition.

In terms of research perspective, most of the existing studies focus on specific pragmatic knowledge and speech acts, and more on learners' pragmatic use, discussing whether learners can carry out appropriate communicative acts in the process of communication. Qi Haifeng and Li Xiaorong (2011) focused on the compliment response strategy of using Chinese, compared the survey results of 40 students in the advanced Chinese class of Carnegie Mellon University in the United States with 30 students in Fudan University in Shanghai, and proposed that both the design of textbooks and the teaching of teachers should attach importance to the cultivation of students' pragmatic competence. At the same time, there are also studies on the influencing factors of second language pragmatic use. These factors include individual factors, language proficiency, identity and so on. Dai Weidong and Chen Liping (2005) focus on the factors that affect the development of second language pragmatic competence, and explore the acquisition of second language pragmatics from three aspects: grammatical competence, pragmatic transfer and social interaction. Liu Shenjun (2013) discusses the causes of pragmatic failure in second language acquisition and intercultural communication from three aspects: differences in values, differences in thinking patterns, and differences in cultural backgrounds. Ding Ting (2020) chooses the field of second language pragmatic acquisition and identity research to analyze, and explains the new features of second language acquisition research under the social turn.

In the study of classroom pragmatics, Xiao Yan and Li Min (2017) made a preliminary analysis of the factors affecting the development of pragmatic competence from the perspective of classroom pragmatic knowledge input, and the data were mainly questionnaires. He Yang Weiyun and Mou Lei (2020),

based on the traditional classroom form, focus on teaching activities such as listening, speaking, reading and writing through case studies, and clarify the significance of teachers' and students' use of discourse in the classroom environment for the improvement of second language acquisition and pragmatic theory.

Looking at the existing research results, it is a pity that the research on pragmatic acquisition of foreign language as a second language is obviously more than that of Chinese, among which English is the most popular. At the same time, we also see that scholars in various fields and disciplines try to learn from each other and analyze from the perspectives of sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, which is a positive practice.

3. Future Research Directions

Firstly, from the perspective of the dynamic development of research, future research should pay more attention to the discussion of language socialization. The earlier Anglo-American school regarded pragmatics as a branch of linguistics, and lacked the consideration of social factors in the study of pragmatics. The study of second language pragmatic competence from the perspective of language socialization reflects the development trend of second language research, which should regard learners, culture and language as a trinity process and systematically study second language pragmatics.

Secondly, from the perspective of the core theory, the study of second language pragmatic acquisition should focus on the study of overlapping. The existing studies have explored the linear relationship between the development of learners' pragmatic competence and a certain influencing factor from a single perspective or discipline. Under the background of "new liberal arts construction", future research should not only focus on linguistics, but also combine the achievements of sociology, psychology, pedagogy, and other disciplines, so as to learn from each other and integrate them. On November 3, 2020, the New Liberal Arts Construction Conference sponsored by the Ministry of Education issued the Declaration on the Construction of New Liberal Arts. The new liberal arts is based on the foundation of the existing traditional liberal arts to reorganize the professional courses in the disciplines. Second language pragmatics is an interdisciplinary field, and it should draw on the scientific research achievements of other disciplines.

Thirdly, from the perspective of research span, the current research on second language pragmatic acquisition focuses on the horizontal perspective, and the proportion of vertical follow-up research is relatively low. As pragmatic competence is characterized by dynamics, complexity and diversity, the same learner's pragmatic competence will change accordingly at different learning stages. In order to ensure the scientificity and rigor of the research, the future research on second language pragmatic acquisition should not only focus on the synchronic contrast, but also trace its diachronic evolution from the dynamic perspective, so as to reveal the process of the development of second language pragmatic competence. Of course, such a vertical follow-up survey objectively requires more human, material and financial support.

Last but not least, from the perspective of research tools and technologies, the study of second language pragmatic acquisition should be based on big data and Internet technology. As an interdisciplinary research, the multi-disciplinary nature of second language pragmatics determines the diversity of research tools and techniques. In today's era of information and big data, it has become a major trend to collect and collate interactive corpus in real context as much as possible in combination with new technologies. Most of the existing studies focus on elicitation data, but the data in natural situations are equally important, or even more important and valuable. We can draw lessons from the experience of other fields of linguistics and collect and collate them in the form of corpus.

4. Conclusion

This paper gives a brief introduction to second language pragmatic acquisition and makes a general analysis of second language pragmatic acquisition papers. The analysis of the existing research is to better guide the subsequent development of the discipline. If second language pragmatic acquisition can attach importance to the study of language socialization, absorb the achievements of other fields and disciplines, focus on longitudinal research, and make use of big data and Internet technology, it is believed that it can effectively promote the development of second language pragmatic acquisition.

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