



An Analysis of Chinese English Varieties from the Perspective of Eco-linguistics——A Case Study of Pidgin English

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the nativization of English in China, using Pidgin English as a case study to put Chinese English variants under the theoretical framework of eco-linguistics, and put the ecological environment such as species competition, coexistence and co-evolution, etc. The natural phenomenon is compared with the existence of language phenomenon in the development process of China English represented by Pidgin English.

The study found that as the spark of the collision of the two mainstream languages of Chinese and English, the Chinese English varieties play a very important role in the exchange and enrichment of the two languages and cultures. Although academic circles have different attitudes and opinions on Chinese English variants, their existence and development conform to the law of the development of things and are also inevitable in historical development. Blindly ignoring their objective existence will definitely bring adverse effects on the ecological balance of the language. We should face up to the existence of Chinese English variants, comply with the law of language development, and allow it to develop naturally, and make efforts to protect the ecological balance of the world's languages.

1 Introduction

The internationalization of English will inevitably bring about the development of nativization, and all kinds of English with regional characteristics emerge in an endless stream (Du, Ruiqing, Yajun, Jiang 2001:37)^[1]. Therefore, the phenomenon of Chinese English variant has also aroused controversy among many domestic scholars. Huang Jinqi (1988)^[2] and Jia Delin (1990)^[3] not only affirmed the objective existence of Chinese English, but also affirmed the positive side of the phenomenon of “Western translation into Chinese” in the translation process, which can promote cultural exchanges and improve Chinese culture in the world. Status. Later, Li Wenzhong (1993)^[4], Jia Guanjie, Xiang Mingyou (1997)^[5], etc. all discussed

the objective existence of Chinese English with optimism and affirmation. Scholars such as Xie Zhijun (1995)^[6] and Lin Qiuyun (1998)^[7] also affirmed the existence of Chinese English, but at the same time stated that they must be cautious in dealing with Chinese English. It is not objective and unrealistic to compare Chinese English with American English and British English. It is easy to cause confusion in theory and practice.

The debate on the issue of Chinese English has not stopped to this day. I believe that with the integration of the global economy, the nativization of English in China has become increasingly obvious. The status of China English as a national variant of English is beyond doubt. Like other English variants, the language system of China English has grown from germination, emergence, devel-

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opment to gradual improvement, following an ecological law from scratch. Especially since the 1990s, the development of **ecolinguistics**, a new subject, has provided a new perspective for the study of Chinese English as a national variant, and has injected new vitality into the development of Chinese English.

2 Overview of Ecolinguistics

According to the views of Einar Haugen and other linguists, ecolinguistics uses the theory and methods of ecology to metaphor and analogize the language environment and the ecological environment, study the interaction between language and environment, and reveal the theory of the influence of the ecological environment of language on the survival, development and evolution of language. Eco-linguistics is not only used to deal with the crisis of language ecology, but also plays an important role in maintaining the balance and coordination of language ecology (Han Jun 2013)^[8].

Eco-linguistics believes that, just as biological systems have their own ecological environment for survival and development, language also has its own ecological environment for survival and development. This environment mainly includes the psychology of language users, the history of language development, culture, and economic and political situations. The formation, development and evolution of language have gone through thousands of years. Therefore, different regions, natural conditions, customs, and historical changes have had a great impact on the evolution of language.

At present, there are more than 4000 languages in the world, and many languages are inextricably linked. According to these similarities and correspondences, languages are divided into different languages, language families, and language families. This is the inter-language relationship. Pedigree relationship. Just as the research of basic ecology involves the cascades of individuals, populations, communities, and ecosystems, the basic theoretical research of ecolinguistics can also be summarized into a cascade from micro to macro, that is, the various levels of language subsystem-language type-language family-language system. From left to right, these levels determine the relationship, and from right to left influence the relationship.

Eco-linguistics believes that language and its ecological environment constitute a language ecosystem. Among them, the ecological environment of language includes two parts: outer ecological environment and inner ecological environment. The outer ecological environment is composed of four parts: natural environment, social environment, cultural environment and crowd environment.

The inner ecological environment refers to the various components of language (phonetics, semantics, vocabulary, grammar) and their mutual organic combination (Na, Meta, & Hu, Shujin 2005)^[9]. Just as changes in the natural environment cause changes in biological species, changes in the ecological environment of language can also cause changes in language. Due to the changes of the inner and outer language environment, a certain language produces variation, which will form different language variations. All new English variants can respond adaptively to new races and other cultural and social ecology.

Variation is an important social ecological factor within language. When the external conditions change, it may lead the structure of language (variants) to produce new development directions, or under new conditions, there may be new variations. The Chinese English variation is the English variation caused by the changes in Chinese society and cultural environment. The important reason why Haugen compares the language environment with the biological environment as a metaphorical analogy is that the most significant feature of the language system is the diversity of languages. The diversity of languages depends on the living environment of languages, which is similar to the biodiversity of nature. Biological diversity also depends on the living environment of organisms; language is in a relatively stable and constantly changing dynamic balance state in the social environment. This dynamic balance is the result of competition and coordination of various languages. All kinds of living things are also in this state; language has a remarkable openness, that is, a strong ability to accept and exchange the external world to maintain and develop its own life and vitality. The biological system in nature is also the same.

Biology also maintains a mutually stable, interpenetrating, and interdependent relationship. Therefore, examining the succession of English variants in China from the perspectives of ecology and ecolinguistics will provide a new perspective for exploring the relationship between Chinese English variants and standard English and their position and influence in the world English system.

3 An Ecolinguistic Analysis of A Variant Of Chinese English——Pigin English

3.1 The Law of “Natural Selection in Competition, Survival of the Fittest” and the Evolution of Competition Among English Varieties

In the same biological community, various species naturally have a competitive relationship for survival. Competition promotes the differentiation of species ecological characteristics, and as a result, the competitive relation-

ship between them is eased, and the biological community produces a certain degree structure. For example, in the forest there are tall trees that are sun-loving and short and shade-tolerant shrubs, each has its own place; the animals in the forest may come out day and night, or have different eating habits, and they do not interfere with each other. There are also potential competing relationships in the process of language use. The result of competition is not only the decline and extinction of weak languages, but also the diversification of the “ecological characteristics” of existing languages.

For example, under the condition of severe shortage of standardized media for Sino-foreign trade, the transitional language variant-Pidgin, which is mainly used as the “interface” for Sino-foreign business and affairs exchanges, is mainly in spoken form and often in English. Once exported, it becomes fragmented, prone to misinformation, has great instability, and is difficult to form a system on its own. Therefore, once the standardized media can meet or basically meet the actual needs, this weak language will gradually lose its reliance. To survive in the soil. Under the combined action of subjective and objective factors, the pidgin language gradually faded out of the historical stage at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, showing a trend of “depidginization” (depidginization). Vocabulary such as *chunam*, *corshuns* in Maruhan vocabulary and *quisi* in Lyland’s “Pidgin-English Singsong” have disappeared (Qiu, Zhihong 2005)^[10]. But it is undeniable that in order to meet the actual needs of trade in modern times, Pidgin has absorbed a large number of foreign words, which greatly enriched its own language. For example, some “Indian English” such as *chop* (a steal or a stamp), *maison* (seasonal winds or rains) are borrowed, and some are from “Malay” such as *paddy* (rice in the field) (Gu, Weixing 2008)^[11].

3.2 Mutualism among Species and Coevolution between Languages

In the biological community, there is a kind of mutual influence and mutual benefit between some species, which is called mutualism in ecology. For example, the rhino with its head down to eat grass and the bird on its back can peck at the lice on the rhino’s back, while the bird can also act as a sentinel to keep watch for the rhino who is concentrating on eating grass.

Then there are the large herbivores and the parasites in their gastrointestinal tract. The herbivores provide food for the parasites, and the parasites help the herbivores digest. These two examples are typical of mutualism in ecology. Unlike mutualism between species, language variants tend to be an “intermedia chain’s relationship”.

Pidgin English has existed in China for nearly three centuries. It is produced in the collision and contact between Chinese and English mainstream cultures and plays the role of cultural intermediary carrier. It also plays a certain role in the enrichment and development of both Chinese and English languages. On the one hand, Pidgin English has become the slang and idiom in the English system, which enriches the English vocabulary. “Shanghai”, in English slang, means to knock (someone) unconscious (with alcohol or narcotics) and then abduction him onto a sailing ship to work as a sailor. There is a very popular idiom in contemporary English: “Long time no see!”, with obvious pidginEnglish marks. The Pidgin Chopsticks also remain in the English dictionary.

On the other hand, Pidgin English also affects the basic word formation and usage habits of Chinese. Although much of Pidgin English is now a memory of the past, the irregular grammatical forms have eventually fallen into disuse. But words like “yanshu” have been widely popular as the transliteration of *insure* before or even at the same time as the new term “*baoxian*” appeared in China. Today’s popular transliteration words such as *cacocalo*, *shampoo*, *e-mail*, *bus*, etc. almost all leave behind the shadow of pidgin English vocabulary.

3.3 The Enlightenment of Biodiversity on the Development of Chinese English Variant

An important point in maintaining the sustainable and coordinated development of ecosystems and thus protecting the ecological balance is to maintain biodiversity. Biodiversity is the basic species attribute of collective organisms in an ecosystem. Insist on biodiversity in the same ecological area is the fundamental method to maintain the effective link of the species food chain in the area, and it is also an important means to protect the existing species in a specific area and maintain the ecological balance of the area. The internationalization of English will naturally cause the localization of English, because each nation has its own unique historical, cultural, political, environmental and psychological background (Du, Ruiqing, Yajun, Jiang 2003). As a communicative tool, English will inevitably bear the stigma of each nation in the process of continuous internationalization.

The emergence of Chinese English variants has realized the effective “grafting” of Chinese native culture and English language, exerting the powerful “dual species advantage” of grafted plants, and its existence conforms to the development law of things^[12]. With the further development of China’s reform and opening up, China’s English variants will grow from germination to further growth, and will eventually develop into a mature English

country variant. We know that biodiversity is the basis for maintaining ecological balance, and linguistic diversity is the basic means of effectively storing human knowledge. If you blindly ignore Chinese English or artificially oppose its objective existence, just like ignoring the existence of a certain biological species in the ecosystem, the result will definitely have an adverse effect on the development of Chinese English, a new thing, and even lead to this English. The “extinction” of the variant will eventually destroy the diversity of the world’s language and culture, thereby destroying the ecological balance of language.

4. Conclusion

Since the 1990s, ecolinguistics has gradually developed into a new subject. The development and maturity of ecolinguistics provides us with a new perspective for language research, and at the same time provides a new way of thinking for the study of Chinese English variants. Chinese culture is extensive and profound. With the continuous deepening and expansion of contacts with other countries in the world, the influence of Chinese culture and Chinese on English has become more and more profound. Therefore, China needs a set of world-language publicity and communication with its own country flags. We should face up to China’s English as a country variant and provide a good language ecological environment for its development, so as to protect the ecological balance of world languages.

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