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Mother Tongue Interference in Japanese Passive Sentence Teaching — Analysis Based on Functional Grammar

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ABSTRACT

For foreign language learners, whether Chinese people are learning Japanese or Japanese learning Chinese, if they can eliminate the interference of basic knowledge of the mother tongue, the efficiency of foreign language learning will be greatly improved. This paper mainly analyzes the problem of mother tongue interference encountered by Japanese learners who use Chinese as their mother tongue in the study of "passive sentences". It focuses on introducing Japanese functional grammar on the basis of traditional grammar to eliminate these interference problems.

1. Introduction

In a passive sentence, the object of action and action is generally used as the subject. Japanese uses "に, から and によって" to indicate the main body of the action, while Chinese uses "被, 叫, 受 and 让" to indicate the subject of the action. The use of passive sentences in Japanese is very high. Nakajima (1995) believes that the use of passive sentences in Japanese is three times that of Chinese passive sentences. This is difficult for Chinese-speaking learners to understand. The following example sentences are taken from the typical Japanese primary textbook "Preliminary Japanese".

A: 昨日は嫌なことばかりありました。

B: どんなことがあったのですか。

A: ①友達に誕生日に招待されて、夕方家へ帰るときのことです。遅くなったので急いで駅まで行きまし

た。ところが、電車の事故があって、②駅で三十分くらい待たされてしまいました。やっと電車が来たのですが、込んでいて③隣の人に足を踏まれてしまいました。それから、駅の階段を下りようとした時、今度は④後ろの人に押されて、転びました。

B: それは災難でしたね。怪我はしませんでしたか。

A: ええ、幸い怪我はしませんでした。しかし、駅を出ようとする切符がないのです。

B: おとしたのですか

A: いいえ、⑤財布と一緒に電車の中で盗まれたらしいんです。

B: ⑥すりにすられたのですね。駅の人に話しましたか。

A: ええ、駅の事務室へ行って、財布と切符を盗まれたと話しました。すると、駅員はすぐ警察に連絡してくれました。ところが、なかなか警察が来ないのです。⑦事務室で十五分くらい待たされました。

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B: それからどうしましたか。

A: やっと駅を出て、⑦家へ帰ろうとすると途中で雨に降られてしまいました。

B: それは気の毒でしたね。

① 朋友生日时(我)被邀请。

朋友过生日时邀请我。

② 在车站, 我被等了三十分钟左右。

在车站, 我等了三十分钟左右。

③ (我)被旁边的人踩了脚。

④ (我)被后边的人推倒了。

⑤ 好像在电车里, (车票)和钱包一起被偷了。

⑥ 被贼扒去了。

⑦ (我)被在办公室等了十五分钟左右。

在办公室里, 我等了十五分钟左右。

回家时, 在路上下了雨。

The underlined parts of the above Japanese conversational text are passive sentences. When observing the Chinese passive sentences corresponding to these passive sentences, it will be found that the direct translations into passive sentences are very unnatural in the ①, ②, ⑦, ⑧ Japanese example sentences, and they are not established as Chinese. Why are the Japanese passive sentences established, and half of the Chinese passive sentences are not established? In addition, why are the subjects "私" (I) in the ①, ③, ④, ⑦ Japanese example sentences omitted naturally? The author holds the above questions, mainly from the perspective of functional grammar to analyze the differences between the pragmatic conditions of the two, in order to be able to apply to Japanese teaching.

2. Viewpoint Relationship

People use language to convey information. The active sentence is described by the subject of the action, that is, the person who performs the action. Correspondingly, the position of the subject of the passive sentence appears as the passive person or the recipient of the action.

(1) a. 次郎は 太郎を 殴った。(Active)

b. 次郎 打了 太郎。

(2) a. 太郎は 次郎に 殴られた。(Passive)

b. 太郎 被次郎 打了。

The example sentences (1a, b) and (2a, b) are all about what happens between the two characters "Jiro" and "Taro". (1a, b) are the active sentences; (2a, b) are the passive sentences, the two sentences are expressed in the same way in theory, but different grammatical forms are used. The difference between (1) and (2) is that the viewpoints of the speakers' descriptions of the matter are different. The speaker uses the verb "殴る" (打) in the example of active sentence (1a, b). The action side of this action (the person who beats) is the subject, and the pas-

sive side (the person who is beaten) is placed in the object position. In the active sentence here, the speaker falls on the agent side. In contrast, in the example of passive sentence (2a, b), the viewpoint falls on Taro (the patient side). Here, the speaker uses the passive sentence and the passive person as the subject, so the speaker will fall on the passive side.

In other words, generally speaking, if the speaker places the viewpoint on the agent side, the active sentence is used; if the viewpoint is placed on the patient side, corresponding to the active sentence, the passive sentence is used.

From the perspective of functional grammar, Hisano (1978) 7-9 introduced the concept of Empathy:

E (subject) >E (object) >E (the previous subject of the passive sentence)

Empathy (Pragmatic Empathy), in pragmatics, refers to the emotional communication between the two sides of speech communication, which can imagine and understand the other side's intentions. This means that it is easier for the speaker in Japanese to put the viewpoint on the subject. The next step is to drop the viewpoint on the object. It is the most difficult to make the viewpoint fall in the previous subject of the passive sentence. The person who is spoken to also understands the other side's words by defaulting on this knowledge. In addition, Nakajima (1995) believes that Japanese is a "speaker-centered" language. Correspondingly, Jianming Lu (1996)^[8] and Nakajima (1995)^[11] believed that Chinese is a language that is "fact-centered and values the theme".

(3) a. 私たちが ご主人に 一番早く案内された部屋は お気に入りの書斎だった。

b. 主人 首先带我们参观了 他最喜欢的书房。

(ご主人が 一番早く私たちに案内した お気に入りの書斎を)

In the example sentence (3a), the speaker is the recipient of the act of leading (visiting). The viewpoint falls on the side of the speaker (recipient) and the speaker "we" is the subject. In the translation process, if the Chinese of the example sentence (3a) is to be translated, in general, the active sentence of (3b) is more appropriate, as there is no need to put the viewpoint on the speaker in Chinese.

(4) a. 那苹果 我已经吃了。

そのリンゴ 私は すでに 食べた

b. 我已经吃了 那苹果。

私は すでに 食べた そのリンゴ

c. 我已经把那苹果吃了。

私は すでに そのリンゴを 食べた

d. 那苹果 已经被我吃了。

そのリンゴ すでに 私に 食べられた。

In the normal Chinese order, the sentence that expresses the meaning of Japanese meaning "私はそのリンゴを食べた", if translated literally into Chinese, becomes "我已经吃了那苹果". But according to Chinese habits, this sentence is not very natural. If the analysis is based on the view that Chinese is a language that emphasizes the theme, the viewpoint of this sentence is not the speaker "我" (私), but the "那苹果" (そのリンゴ). Therefore, the sentence "那苹果" (そのリンゴ) is not the subject, but the theme. According to the general Chinese habits, if you want to emphasize "那苹果" (そのリンゴ), then put the "那苹果" at the beginning of the sentence like (4a) to emphasize. Therefore, when teaching Japanese passive sentences to Chinese-speaking learners, the author believes that the viewpoint relationship in functional grammar should be introduced first to clarify the similarities and differences between Chinese and Japanese viewpoints.

3. When the Action Side IS First Person

As mentioned above, the viewpoint relationship between Japanese and Chinese is different, so that Chinese-speaking learners will have an understanding problem of "when the action side is first person" when learning Japanese passive sentences.

(5) 僕はジョンに殴られた。

I was hit by John.

我被约翰打了。

(6) ジョンは私に殴られた。

John was hit by me.

约翰被我打了。

In the example sentence (5), the viewpoint falls on the speaker 我 (僕, I), this is more natural; And as in the example sentence (6), the viewpoint is placed on the passive side, thus the Japanese and English are not natural. In Chinese here, because 约翰 (John) is the subject, it is usually placed at the beginning of the sentence. Therefore, Chinese-speaking Japanese learners often create problematic sentences like "~は私に ~(~被我~)". Therefore, when learning Japanese passive sentences, if the viewpoint relationship in the functional grammar is introduced on the basis of the basic grammar, it is also possible to avoid the occurrence of the error that the "when the action side is first person".

4. Subject Omission

As described above, Japanese is a "speaker-centered" language, and Chinese is a language that is "fact-centered and values the theme". Chinese-speaking Japanese learners have problems with subject omission when learning passive sentences.

(7) (僕は) 学部長に推薦された (留学できるようになった。)

(我) 被院长推荐
院长推荐了我。

(8) (私は) 友達に頼まれたんですが...

朋友请求我...
被朋友请求...

(我) 被朋友请求...

(9) バスに乗ったとたん、(私は) ガイドさんにいきなり売り込まれて、買うしかなかった。

刚上大巴, 就被导游推销她的商品, 只好买了。

刚上大巴, 导游就来给我推销她的商品, 只好买了。

(10) 急いでるのに、アシスタントにしつこく謝られて、困った。

正忙的时候, 被助理一个劲儿地殷勤得道歉, 真麻烦。

正忙的时候, 助理一个劲儿地殷勤得向我道歉, 真麻烦。

(11) 給与があまりにも少ないから、(我が社が) また有能な社員に逃げられた。

因为待遇不好, 又被有能力的职员跳槽了。

因为待遇不好, 我们公司又有有能力的职员跳槽了。

(12) PK 戦で (ゴールが) 決められた。

在点球大战时被定了胜负。

在点球大战时定了胜负。

For example sentences (7-12), these statements use passive sentences in Japanese, while the corresponding Chinese uses active sentences to express. Passive sentences in Chinese are understandable, but they do not conform to Chinese speaking habits. Here what we should pay attention to is that even if the subject of the Japanese example sentence "私, 僕, わが社 and ゴール" (我, 我, 我们公司 and 胜负) is omitted, it does not affect the expression of meaning, which is more in line with Japanese speaking habits. It can be said that when teaching Japanese passive sentences to Chinese-speaking learners, it is not difficult to understand that these sentences are used to explain the omissions of the subject by placing the viewpoint on the side of the speaker. Unlike Japanese, whether the active or passive sentence is used in Chinese, the subject on the side of the viewpoint cannot be omitted.

5. When the Subjects Is Non-creature

From the perspective of functional grammar, Hisano (1978)^[4-6] put forward the following viewpoint: People's viewpoint hierarchy is: It is easier for the speaker to put the viewpoint on the human side^[4]:

E (human) > E (creatures except human) > E (non-creature)

Viewpoint hierarchy of the surface structure: The speaker is more likely to focus on the subject side.

E (subject) > E (non-subject)

Consistency of viewpoints: In a single sentence, theoretically, there can be no contradiction in the relationship of pragmatic empathy.

With regard to something, when people and things are involved, it is easier to describe the sentence in which the viewpoint falls on the person than on the object in the Japanese. In addition, it is easier to describe the person or object on the side of the viewpoint in the position of the subject.

- (13) a. The apple was eaten by John.
 b. そのリンゴは太郎に食べられた。
 c. 那个苹果被太郎吃了。

The subject of (13a-c) is the non-creature (the apple, そのリンゴ and 那个苹果), The action side is (John, Taro). According to the human personality hierarchy, the speaker is more likely to obtain "pragmatic empathy" from the latter. On the other hand, the viewpoint hierarchy subject (the apple, そのリンゴ and 那个苹果) according to the surface structure is more empathetic than the non-subject (John, Taro), which violates the consistency of the viewpoint, so the Japanese passive sentence of (13b) is very unnatural, but the sentences of Chinese and English are established.

There are very few sentences in non-biological language in Japanese. People tend to use the sentence pattern of "human" as the subject. Correspondingly, there are many sentence patterns in Chinese that use "non-creature" as the subject.

- (14) a. 衣服被花子穿走了。
 b. この洋服は花子に着られて行った。
 c. This dress is worn by Hanako.
 (15) a. 灯被太郎关了。
 b. 電気は太郎に消された。
 c. The light was turned out by Taro.
 (16) a. 这间屋子让花子打扫得干干净净
 b. この部屋は、花子にきれいに掃除された。
 c. This room was cleaned by Hanako.

In the example sentences (14-16), the subjects are dress, light and room (洋服, 電気 and 部屋), all of which are non-creatures, and the actions of 太郎, 花子 (Taro, Hanako) and her are humans, because both the contradiction of the viewpoint is contradictory, the Japanese sentence is not established. However, Chinese and English sentences are appropriate under the same conditions. Because Chinese non-creature subjects^[14] are very common. Therefore, when teaching passive sentences to Chinese-speaking learners, it is necessary to consider from the viewpoint that there is few non-creature subjects in Japanese. On the basis of the basic grammar, functional grammar is introduced as a supplement.

5. Conclusion

Based on functional grammar, this paper analyzes the problem of mother tongue interference in Chinese-speaking learners when learning Japanese passive sentences. Focusing on the viewpoint relationship, Japanese is the language of "speaker-centered", while Chinese is a language that is "fact-centered and values the theme". This not only greatly affects the frequency of use of passive sentences, but also makes Japanese has no first person action side; more subject omissions of passive sentences; does not use non-creatures as action sides. The author believes that if there is a certain functional grammar on the basis of traditional grammar introduced in Japanese teaching, it will help students understand. In addition, there are many places in the Japanese language teaching^[15] that can be introduced in the functional grammar. This article is only a glimpse of the huge Japanese grammar teaching system.

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