

A Study of the Sense Division for Word “Jin” in NCCED Based on Corpus

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Abstract: Using qualitative and quantitative analysis method, this paper analyzes the sense division of item for word “jin” in A New Century Chinese-English Dictionary. After analysis, some problems are found: treatment on the sense division are vague and unprecise; some overlapping phenomenon exist between senses; some senses aren't included in the dictionary. The reasons can be counted on: under the influence of the Modern Chinese Dictionary, the bilingual dictionary lost its flexibility in sense arrangement which resulting the compilers pay more attention on the characteristics of the source language. Then, without the support of the corpus, the job of the sense division cannot achieve more precisely. This paper mainly focus on changing the traditional method of sense arrangement and do more contribution in changing the domestic situation: filling the gap between the dictionary-making and the support of linguistic corpus.

Introduction:

During the process of sense description, one of the most challenging parts facing dictionary compilers is sense division of the polysemous words; and actually, the problem of polysemy has also been puzzling other linguistics interested in lexical semantics. Traditionally, semantics and lexicographers tended to tackle this problem basing partially on certain linguistic data and partially on their instinctive judgements. The results of such interpreting, therefore, may be more of the individual scholars' subjective reflections, instead of the objective descriptions of the polysemous words under consideration. It becomes even more problematic when dealing with the issue of describing polysemous words in Chinese-English dictionary. However, bilingual dictionaries, in practice, may do their sense discrimination based on the sense division of the referential monolingual dictionaries. That is where the problems arise. With the monolingual reference, the attention of the compilers of bilingual dictionary may mainly focus on the characteristics of the source language instead of target language. The result showed that Chinese monolingual dictionaries are less precise in dealing with the sense discrimination. (see 李仕春, 2016¹⁾) Situations in the domestic development of linguistic corpus were not so good until the 1990s when the technology had been widely used in English dictionary-compilation like: Collins COBUILD English Dictionary based in the COBUILD English corpus (the Bank of English)、Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary、Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English、Chambers Essential English Dictionary. (see 张志毅, 2012) Therefore, followed the method of compiling the Chinese monolingual dictionary, situations of Chinese-English dictionary is beyond the optimism. It is necessary to change the traditional sense arrangement which merely based on the Chinese characteristics and sufficiently adopt the linguistics corpus in sense description. What we are going to introduce here is that through the analysis of the corpus which is based pragmatic use of language, the sense division of the bilingual dictionary not only need the monolingual dictionary as reference but with the supplement of the linguistic corpus.

What we are going to do is to change the existing situation in China: that is combine the lexicography with the technology of corpus in Chinese dictionary-making.

Literature Review:

Bilingual dictionaries, in practice, may build their new entry through sense discrimination based on the sense division of the

referential monolingual dictionaries. However, referential materials are not limited in the dictionary, and bilingual dictionaries should pay more attention to the costumed senses supported by the majority of a language community, rather than focusing on the individual uses sharing by only a small group of speakers. (HUANG&CHEN, 2001: 190-191) That calls for the support of the corpus which are more authoritative with rich practical sources of language.

Research Methodology:

What we use here is the Center for Chinese Linguistic PKU as well as the Contemporary Chinese Dictionary (CCD) as the reference. When we texted the “进” into the corpus, we got 11805 results from which we selected randomly 300 results as the research targets. Since monolingual dictionary is the basic reference material in sense discrimination for bilingual dictionary, we consulted the CCD to examine how it deal with the sense division under the support of the CCL. We tagged the senses for the 300 results in according to the CCD and then we found some problems. Here are part of the tagging results.

ID	Example	Sense number	Source	Article Type	Author
19	有个23岁的姑娘, 75年进商店当营业员。	??	《他们渴望得到社会的理解》	文章标题	李秋芳
20	加之, 他们进书一般都是现金支付。	③	《淫秽书刊为何屡禁不止》	文章标题	龙文彬
21	家长把他们投入进这个漩涡, 却无法代替他们去“受苦受难”, 只有靠他们自己去拼搏、去争雄	⑤	《独立意识, 悄悄走进家庭》	文章标题	霍刚
22	他瞒着父母, 放弃了进重点高中的机会, 报了一所旅游服务职高, 父亲气得背过气去。	②	《独立意识, 悄悄走进家庭》	文章标题	霍刚
23	他知道父亲饶不了他, 那些天他总是在外晃荡到深夜才回家, 猫进厨房吃上几口饭。	⑤	《独立意识, 悄悄走进家庭》	文章标题	霍刚

Analysis of the Entry “Jin”

进 jìn ① 〈动〉 advance; move/march forward; go ahead; ~步; ~取; 不~则退; 前~ ② 〈动〉 present; submit; ~献; ~言 ③ 〈动〉 enter; come/go/get into; 考~大学 enter a college || ~医院 be sent to hospital; be hospitalized || 请~! Come in, please! || 我们~屋吧。Let's go into the house. ~城; ~站 ④ 〈动〉 recruit; receive; admit: 今年我们单位不~人。We will not recruit the staff this year. || 我们系~了一名博士。Our department has taken on a new faculty member with a doctoral degree. ~货; ~款; ~项 ⑤ 〈动〉 [used after a verb] get into/in; 掉~水里 fall into the water || 走~办公室 walk into an office ⑥ 〈量〉 any of the several rows of houses within an old-style residential compound ~。

【进逼】jìn bī, 〈动〉 close in on/upon; advance on; press on towards; press hard; 步步~ press forward steadily || 敌人正向

我军 The enemy troops were pressing on towards/ closing in upon our troops.

【进兵】jìn bīng 〈动〉 dispatch troops to attack; (of troops) march on (a place)

【进补】jìn bǔ 〈动〉 take extra nourishment; take tonic

【进步】jìn bù 〈动〉 improve; progress; advance; make progress: ~快/慢 make rapid/slow progress; progress rapidly/slowly || 学习~make progress in one's studies || 人类在~。Mankind is progressing. || 他数学~很快。He is making much headway in maths. ② 〈名〉 progress; improvement; advancement: 妨碍~bar/hinder the progress (of) || 激励/加快~stimulate/quicken the progress (of) || 继续努力以求更大~strive for more progress || 渴望~desire advance/progress/improvement; be eager about one's progress || 没有~make no progress || 取得明显~make decided/ marked progress || 阻碍~block/delay/stunt the progress (of) || 不断/很大/极大/惊人

的~continued/considerable/tremendous/amazing progress || 显著的~marked/remarkable progress || 科学的~advancement/progress of science; scientific progress || 农业技术的~advancement of agricultural technology || 为了社会的~for the advancement of the society ③ 〈形〉 progressive: ~力量/思想/团体 progressive forces/ ideas/organizations || ~人士 progressive personage/element

【进餐】jincān 〈动〉 have a meal; 按时~take meals on

Sense division of Chinese-English was greatly influenced under Chinese monolingual dictionary and lost its own flexibility and features. Admittedly, we should adhere to the Chinese monolingual dictionary as criteria because it has achieved its own systematicity in many aspects including the sense division. Just as the six senses arrangement of entry “进” in the NCCED, it was totally correspond with that in CCD. However, the result is that the senses are arranged vaguely and unprecisely. Take the sense ④ as example, “进款” has the meaning of “profit or harvest”, just as we found examples in CCL:

某报周末版在名人专访一栏里,记述了一位当今歌坛大红大紫日进斗金的女歌星,极翔实地描绘了她出生时的“盛况”

But it was arranged under the sense ④ without split it out as another sense. If we students make Chinese translation or English production, we consult the sense ④, we cannot get the precise sense and may make some wrong.

Therefore, bilingual dictionary, as the tool for the English learners as second language or foreigners with English as mother tongue, should not ignore the consideration of English features: sense division is more precise and detailed. (see 李仕春)

Take the phrase “进餐” as the example. The analysis of the corpus CCL tell us that “进” is supposed to have another sense “eat or drink or take” because the examples with this sense count a large part in the research data almost 7%:

a. A组有16个小时未进食, B组有4个小时未进食, C组则只有1个小时未进食。

b. 每次进餐、饮酒, 都要往火里投一点酒肉, 孝敬火神。

c. 药须由众医配合, 进服时需人先尝。

d. 每遇太后有恙, 忧急异常, 甚至不进饮食, 太后疾愈, 仍复常度。

But the NCCED didn't give the sense in the entry rather than present it in the phrase “进餐”. The problem arise: how the dictionary treat the other phrases: “进服” “进食” “进饮”? If the compilers just give every phrase sharing the same sense “take” a place in the dictionary, this way maybe against the economical principle. On the other hand, one of the criteria that what kind of phrases beginning with “进” can gain the place in the dictionary is that the phrase have the collocational potential. However “进餐” doesn't own this kind of feature.

The last problems: Some senses are not included in the dictionary. According to our analysis on the corpus, some examples cannot find their senses in the dictionary. Those examples without sense in the corpus count most 12.7%. For example:

a. 这屋子进风, 王玲身体不不适, 便匆忙离开。

b. 暴雨过后, 家门进水三尺, 孩子们赶忙那盆接水。

c. 他眼里进沙, 急忙喊叫, 旁边女生羞涩着, 还是帮忙看了看。

Here we give them a new sense “have” rather than just satisfy the existing sense ③ and reasons are followed:

Different with verb “进” in examples like: “他走进图书馆”(he entered into the library), “进” in here serves as a stative verb. Meanwhile, from the semantic perspective, the agent of the action holds the predicate place instead of subject like “他走进图书馆”. Thus, we give them a new sense: “have or contain”.

Another examples in corpus like these count almost 14.3%:

a. 1928年, 任光回到阔别的祖国, 不久就进了上海百代唱片公司, 从此揭开了他的生命史上最见光彩的一页。

b. 1964年初中(学蒙文)毕业就进了内蒙古歌舞团, 开始了自己的艺术生涯

c. 有些社员, 尤其是年青小伙子们, 认为生产是苦事, 他们想参军, 当机关干部或进工厂, 页俚就常同他们说: “没人种庄稼, 人们吃什么?”

Without any proper sense in the dictionary, we attribute a new sense to them: “be employed; be promoted”.

Conclusion:

NCCED as a bilingual dictionary aims at the second language learning and should keep flexible in sense setting instead blindly follow the old-fashioned method as traditional Chinese monolingual dictionary do.

Western English dictionaries (Big Four) made fully use of corpus, and it was proved that the sense division in those dictionaries is more precise thus senses much more than our domestic learner's dictionaries. Although our domestic corpus-using process has got great process, we still have a long way to go. This paper maybe far from in data collection to demonstrate the problems existing NCCED in sense division and we are not sure that if the conclusion is accessible to other Chinese-English dictionaries. The purpose here serve as a clue to explore further in this research field and hope make some contribution in changing the domestic situation: filling the gap between the dictionary-making and the support of linguistic corpus.

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