

THE DIRECTION OF LANGUAGE CONTACT AND THE ANALYSIS OF LINGUISTIC TYPOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

This paper mainly discusses two questions about language contact, first, what is the direction of language contact, and two, what is the change of linguistic typology caused by language contact. According to language contact between Dai and Southwest Mandarin, mother tongue interference and lexical borrowing are two important mechanisms of language contact,

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and they clearly have different directions. Words usually diffuse from the strong language to the weak one by borrowing, and the structures usually diffuse from the weak to the strong by interference. In consideration of the feature of language contact, we have proposed an inverse principle of lexicon-structure. According to our long-term research of language contact, both mother tongue interference and lexical borrowing can make the structures of the mother tongue and the target language isomorphic. Mother tongue interference can change language more easily, resulting in the disappearance of a large number of typological features.

KEYWORDS

Language contact Mother tongue interference Lexical borrowing
Direction of languages contact Typological feature

When two languages meet at the same time and space, natural language contact begins. As a result of continuous contact, all levels of the languages in contact would change, the most extreme phenomena are the formation of the so-called mixed language, where the structures belong to language A, while the kernel words belong to language B, or, even one language is replaced by another. In talking about language contact, we must pay great attention to a key issue, namely the direction of language contact.

1. MOTHER TONGUE INTERFERENCE AND LEXICAL BORROWING

Most scholars have believed that many contact-induced language changes are caused by borrowing; some famous linguists, such as Meillet ([1925]2008), Sapir (1921), Bloomfield ([1933]1962), Hockett ([1958]2002), Trask ([1996]2000) and others, have discussed at considerable length about language borrowing in their classic works. “The borrowing goes predominantly from the upper language to the lower, and it very often extends to speech-forms that are not connected with cultural novelties” (Bloomfield 1962:461). At the same time, they also talked about another contact mechanism different from borrowing; for instance, as Sapir stated (1921:211), “Nevertheless, we know that languages do influence each other in phonetic respects, and that quite aside from the

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语言接触的有向性及其类型学分析

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提要

本文主要讨论了两个方面的内容，一是语言接触的有向性机制；二是语言接触导致语言类型的改变。从傣语与汉语接触的现象来看，母语干扰与词汇借贷是语言接触的两种重要机制。它们都有极强的方向性，词汇通常是以借贷的方式从强势语言向弱势语言扩散，结构通常是以干扰的方式从弱势语言向强势语言扩散，这两种过程是逆向的，可称为接触的逆向对立原则。母语干扰和词汇借贷能使母语与目标语形成同构，尤其是语言接触中的母语干扰最能够改变语言的类型特征，导致大量少数民族语言及独特语言类型特征的消失，这些现象在语言深度接触中可以观察到。

关键词

语言接触 母语干扰 词汇借贷 有向性 类型特征