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**АНАЛИЗ ОШИБОЧНОГО УПОТРЕБЛЕНИЯ ЧАСТЕЙ РЕЧИ  
В СОЧИНЕНИИ НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ  
КИТАЙСКИМИ УЧАЩИМИСЯ**

*Аннотация:* в данной статье с точки зрения отрицательного переноса родного языка анализируется ошибочное употребление китайскими учащимися частей речи в письме на английском языке, авторами также выясняются основные причины возникновения недоразумений. На основе исследования и анализа в работе выдвигаются два предварительных предложения с той целью, чтобы помочь китайским учащимся избежать такого рода ошибок. Авторы отмечают, что как преподаватели, так и студенты должны уделять достаточное внимание данной проблеме и применять правильные и эффективные методы обучения английскому языку.

*Ключевые слова:* письмо на английском языке, ошибочное употребление частей речи, отрицательный перенос родного языка.

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**ANALYSIS OF MISUSE OF PARTS OF SPEECH IN ENGLISH WRITING  
BY CHINESE ENGLISH LEARNERS**

*Abstract:* this paper analyzes from the point of view of a negative transfer of the native language the misuses of parts of speech by Chinese students in a letter in English; the authors also find out the main causes of misunderstandings. Based on the research and analysis two preliminary proposals are made in order to help Chinese people avoid such kinds of errors. The authors point out that both teachers and students should pay enough attention to this kind of mistake and apply correct and effective methods to teach and learn the English language.

**Keywords:** *English writing, misuse of parts of speech, mother tongue negative transfer.*

## 1. Introduction

Part of speech is the basic type of the word and the grammatical classification of the individual word in language. Every English word belongs to a certain part of speech. If words have the same meaning but different forms, they shall belong to the different parts of speech. English words can be classified into ten categories according to the grammar: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, conjunction, preposition, interjection, article and numeral [1]. However, the Chinese characters can generally be classified according to morphological standard, lexical standard and distribution standard [2]. The classification according to the meaning of words is not the grammatical part of speech, so the lexical standard is only a reference standard. The grammatical features of the classification of parts of speech are the position of the word in the sentence and their syntagmatic ability, which means the context where the word appears as well as its meaning and grammatical function. Since there is no one-to-one correspondence between the part of speech and the meanings of Chinese and English words, it is difficult for Chinese students to accurately grasp and apply the part of speech of all English words. From the perspective of the mother tongue negative transfer, this paper analyzes and explains the misuse of part of speech in the college English writing in order to provide some help for further English teaching.

## 2. Research Method and Results Analysis

This paper mainly studies the sub-corpus (ST3) in the Chinese learner English corpus (CLEC), which is the writing part of college English test band 4 for non-English majors, collectively known as propositional composition, whose main purpose is to test students' ability to express their ideas in written English. In this paper, we specifically study the misuse of part of speech. For the 10 parts of speech in English, we mainly study the content words. Misuse of part of speech refers to the words with correct phase root but wrong parts of speech [3]. In English, some words may have similar forms or meanings but actually belong to different parts of speech. So the students often misuse these words in writing. The judgment of the misuse of the part of speech should be

based on the word meaning and grammar. Individual part of speech normally does not have mistakes but the context will reveal whether the part of speech is applied correctly. Through summarizing the data from sub-corpus of ST3, 1081 cases of misapplied parts of speech were analyzed and divided into two categories:

## 2.1. Misuse of Different Parts of Speech

The statistical results revealed that the misuse of the adjectives ranked first with 381 cases, then followed by 241 cases of verbs, 194 cases of nouns and 50 cases of adverbs. Next, we will analyze the four situations mentioned above.

### 2.1.1. Misuse of Adjectives and Verbs

The most frequent misuse of parts of speech is the misuse of verbs and adjectives. And we will analyze it through the following examples in students' compositions.

(1) If you don't work hard, you will never be success.

(2) We will never *success* if we don't work hard.

The misuse of the above two sentences indicates that students are not able to distinguish the adjectives and verbs in English very well. The stem in the first sentence is «success», which is a noun. But the adjective 'successful' derived from it should be used instead. In the second sentence, the verb «succeed» should be used. It can be seen that the above misapplication is due to the mother tongue negative transfer. When «success» in Chinese is expressed in English writing, the students do not pay attention to the difference in the part of speech in English and use it casually, which results in the mistakes.

### 2.1.2. Misuse of Nouns and Adverbs

Such misuse also occurs frequently and the misuse of nouns accounted for 17.9%. For example,

(3) Sometimes giving up is a wise choose.

In the third sentence, the verb «choose» shall be replaced by the noun «choice». Due to the similar written forms between these two words, students are easily confused.

## 2.2. Misuse of the Same Part of Speech

The misuse of the same part of speech accounts for a small proportion, but it also reflects the influence of the mother tongue negative transfer. For example:

(4) If they give up when you fail, they would never get they goal.

The word «they» shall be replaced by the possessive pronoun «their». Many students rarely notice the difference between Chinese and English pronouns. There are only three categories in Chinese pronouns: personal pronoun, demonstrative pronoun and interrogative pronoun. However, there are eight pronouns in English. Besides the three pronouns in Chinese mentioned above, another five categories include possessive pronouns, reflexive pronouns and etc [4]. The complexity of English pronouns makes it difficult for students to master their usage.

## 3. A Probe into the Reason of the Misuse of Part of Speech in English Writings by Chinese Learners

Through the analysis of the various misuses of parts of speech in students' compositions, we can find certain regularity that the misuse of several major parts of speech is related to the mother tongue negative transfer. That is the interference of the thinking patterns and rules in the process of mother tongue conversion to the target language learning. So what are the exactly specific reasons for the mother tongue negative transfer? It will be analyzed from the following two aspects:

### 3.1. Linguistic Differences between Chinese and English

Chinese is an isolated language but English is an inflectional language. «Isolated language» refers to the language whose grammatical functions are mainly expressed through the word order and functional words, meanwhile the «inflectional language» refers to the one whose meaning or grammatical functions will be different for the morphological changes [5]. The difference between the two languages is obvious. Chinese has no inflectional morphemes, no amount and tense differences. The relationship between words and other related grammatical structures in a sentence is mainly reflected by the functional words, the sentence order and relevant pragmatic knowledge in the sentence. The reason why students are likely to make mistakes in the part of

speech is that they do not realize that the different rules in the application of words in English and Chinese.

### 3.2. Vocabulary Collocation Differences between English and Chinese

In this paper, collocation is defined as the repeated co-occurrence of two institutionalized words in a structural relation. The collocation of words can form meaningful phrases. Isolated words without context and collocation will have no meanings at all [6]. The appearance of one word always indicates or determines the appearance of other words. Collocation errors occur at the textual level and have both semantic and grammatical errors [7]. Some expressions that do not conform to the rules of English will be in students' writing because of the choice of vocabulary or the misuse of part of speech.

### 4. Implications for English Teaching

In view of the above reasons leading to the misuse of parts of speech, teachers should pay attention to the following points in teaching in order to help students avoid the mistakes. First, let students understand the linguistic differences between English and Chinese during teaching. Teachers should explain the different parts of speech of English words and their basic grammatical functions to the student. At the same time, it would be better to explain the knowledge of «one word with multi-functional (grammatical function)» in Chinese rules [8]. In addition, it is also reasonable to compare the similarities and differences between English and Chinese in word classification conversion, especially for students to pay attention to the differences. In the second place, abandon the traditional teaching method that depends on the vocabulary recitation. Students can not only master the pronunciation and the meaning of each word but more importantly is to learn how to apply them correctly in sentences when they learn the vocabulary. When a new word is in a certain context, the teacher should explain its meaning based on the context and meanwhile introduce its synonyms, antonyms, cognate words and etc. by providing examples or phrases to compare with the new word. In this way, we can clearly show the similarities and differences in the usage of each word and remind students to pay more attention to the grammatical structure and the context of the sentences or phrases. In writing, we should not only pay attention to the

meaning of individual words, but also consider the grammatical function of words in the sentence from the overall situation of the sentence, so as to avoid the misapplication of part of speech.

From the above, it can be summarized that the misapplication of part of speech is caused by the mother tongue negative transfer, which has affected the level of English writing in college. Both teachers and students should pay enough attention to this kind of mistake, strengthen the contrast between English and Chinese and apply correct and effective methods to teach and learn the English vocabulary. Therefore it will reduce the occurrence of the misuse of part of speech.

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