



# **The Application and Research of Cognitive Linguistics Theory in College Japanese Teaching**

**Yi Liu**

Eastern Liaoning University, Dandong 118001, Liaoning, China.

**Abstract:** The traditional scattered teaching mode based on generative grammar in college Japanese teaching can help students find the relationship between scattered knowledge, but the inefficient Japanese learning caused by the lack of context influence. The theory of cognitive linguistics provides a new way for Japanese teaching, emphasizing the cultivation of students' cognitive thinking. Its application in Japanese vocabulary, grammar, communication and other teaching helps students to remember and understand the complex Japanese vocabulary and grammar knowledge more deeply, so as to lay a solid foundation for the skilled use of Japanese in the future. This paper mainly introduces the theory of cognitive linguistics, points out the shortcomings in the research of cognitive linguistics theory, and discusses and studies the practical application of cognitive linguistics theory in college Japanese teaching from many aspects, so as to improve the level of college Japanese teaching.

**Keywords:** Cognitive Linguistics Theory; Japanese Teaching in Colleges and Universities; Application and Research

Cognitive linguistics is the integration of cognitive theory and language, which belongs to a new interdisciplinary theory. In recent years, it has been widely used in foreign language teaching, especially in Japanese teaching in colleges and universities.

## **1. Cognitive linguistic theory**

As a new interdisciplinary theory, cognitive linguistics realizes the integration of cognitive theory and linguistic knowledge. It holds that human language communication ability is not simply independent, but closely related to people's social experience. The most important content is semantics. Cognitive linguistics is not only a kind of theoretical knowledge, but also an interpretation of the relationship between language and general cognitive ability from a new perspective.

Cognitive linguistics connects the form of language expression with the concept of meaning, and pays attention to the internal connection of thinking language. Therefore, in the teaching of Japanese in colleges and universities, the theory of cognitive linguistics is skillfully applied to combine language with people's sensory experience, which makes the traditional boring language research more interesting and helps students to have a deeper geography from three aspects of cognitive semantics, cognitive pragmatics and cognitive psychology to understand the difficulties of Japanese knowledge. In view of some extremely special language phenomena in Japanese teaching, the new teaching methods can be explored from the standpoint of cognitive linguistics, and deeply think and understand the Japanese teaching content.

## **2. The deficiency of cognitive linguistics theory in research**

Based on experiential philosophy, cognitive linguistics has significant guiding value for Japanese teaching. However, there are some deficiencies in the practical research of cognitive linguistics.

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First, the prototype category of cognitive linguistics. The prototype category theory is based on family resemblance, which holds that there is a prototype as the central member in the prototype category, and the other non central members are formed by extending from the center to the outside. However, in the practice of Japanese teaching, it is found that the central meaning of a word overlaps with the basic meaning and the original meaning, which can not effectively distinguish the prototype members;

Second, the semantic chain of cognitive linguistics, although theoretically speaking, can be linked by the principles of similarity and relevance, it is not necessarily applicable to all of them. At the same time, this rigid concept can not explain the coexistence of polysemy, homonymy and homonymy;

Thirdly, the experiential nature of cognitive linguistics is influenced by complex and changeable linguistic phenomena. When we expand the research object from semantics to sentence meaning and then to discourse, human experience has certain limitations on language learning and mastering;

Fourth, relevance theory of cognitive linguistics, which mainly interprets translation from the perspective of cognition, has some limitations. There are differences in cognitive context between the translator and the author of the original text. They can only achieve convergence as far as possible, but it is impossible to achieve a high degree of relevance between the translation and the original text.

In the linguistics teaching, cognitive linguistics is different from other linguistic theories, which is not enough to explain all the linguistic phenomena. We need to constantly practice and revise it in the course of teaching.

### **3. The application of cognitive linguistics theory in college Japanese teaching**

#### **3.1 Application of cognitive language theory in Japanese auxiliary verb teaching**

For Japanese teaching in colleges and universities, we can make full use of cognitive language theory knowledge in the difficult study of auxiliary verb meaning discrimination. In teaching, the teacher will explain the usage of a case auxiliary word one by one. Although students know and recognize the knowledge points of learning at that moment, when the auxiliary verbs appear in various forms and rich meanings, it is difficult for students to classify and summarize auxiliary verbs, which is not conducive to students' memory, and can not better use cognitive linguistics theory in practice .

The teaching application of cognitive linguistics theory is to explain the meaning of auxiliary verbs as notional words, and then introduce the transformation mechanism and grammatical functions of notional words to students after they can clearly distinguish the meanings. In this case, the meaning and usage of notional words will not change. According to the meaning and characteristics of notional words, students can divide auxiliary verbs into different categories to facilitate students' memory. It is a more efficient method for teaching and learning.

#### **3.2 The application of cognitive language theory in the teaching of transitive verbs**

For Japanese students who study Japanese from scratch, the grammar of transitive verbs in Japanese is the most difficult to understand. Usually, it will use their own fixed case auxiliary words, but there are some cases that do not follow the rule. In classroom teaching, in order to facilitate students to master and remember, teachers often simplify the knowledge points, but in practice, there will be a variety of special situations.

Therefore, the introduction of cognitive language theory in the teaching of transitive verbs can provide a shortcut to solve this problem. Teachers can interpret the grammatical phenomenon from the prototype meaning, make a gradual explanation of the semantic meaning, and solve the specific problems.

#### **3.3 The application of cognitive linguistics in Japanese vocabulary teaching**

Cognitive linguistics is divided into metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche. The first is metaphor. In Japanese vocabulary teaching, students use the concept of one thing to express another. In Japanese vocabulary teaching, students understand and learn Japanese vocabulary with the concepts in their mother tongue, and memorize and understand the vocabulary again; the second is metonymy. In Japanese vocabulary teaching, when learning basic vocabulary, it is not only easy to remember, but also to expand students' vocabulary; the third way is to use metaphor. In the teaching of Japanese vocabulary, the general meaning of words is used to express their deep meaning and usage, and the deep

understanding of Japanese vocabulary can achieve twice the result with half the effort.

In addition, in Japanese vocabulary teaching, students can understand and master the vocabulary of basic level category, which is divided into upper category and lower category, so that they can construct a clear learning system in their mind and learn to be good at summarizing and classifying vocabulary.

### **3.4 The application of cognitive linguistics in the teaching of Japanese conversational communication**

The languages of China and Japan belong to different linguistic and cultural communities. The differences in the way of thinking between the two countries lead to various problems in our conversational communication using Japanese. Because Japanese is mainly reflected in the Japanese way of thinking, it is easy for us to encounter some difficult phenomena in the process of learning and understanding, which also brings difficulties to the practical application of Japanese. Therefore, the best way to solve the problems in Japanese teaching is to deeply understand the deep cognitive characteristics of Japanese language and apply cognitive linguistics theory to teaching.

Generally speaking, Japanese language is in a small “high context” environment, which is characterized by simplicity and conciseness. For example, in the teaching of basic Japanese, there are often no new words or grammar in a short sentence, which makes it difficult for students to master its meaning. Generally, the simpler the sentence, the more diverse the meaning. Starting from the cognitive language theory, it is necessary for the students to understand the cognitive characteristics and expression characteristics of Japanese, break the existing thinking stereotype, and apply basic Japanese expression in Japanese thinking mode and habits, which will significantly improve students’ Japanese conversation and communication ability.

## **4. Conclusion**

The theory of cognitive linguistics has brought a new way of thinking for the innovation of teaching methods. The introduction of cognitive linguistics in college Japanese teaching can solve the problems students encounter in learning Japanese from the perspective of cognition and thinking. This paper discusses the cognitive linguistic theory, points out its shortcomings in the research, and finally puts forward some countermeasures on how to apply the cognitive linguistics theory in Japanese teaching practice from the aspects of grammar, vocabulary and communication conversation, so as to promote the application of cognitive linguistics theory in Japanese teaching practice, stimulate students’ enthusiasm and initiative in learning Japanese, and significantly improve the quality of Japanese teaching.

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