Battling Negative Transfer of American English in Learning and Teaching Chinese

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Battling Negative Transfer of American English in Learning and Teaching Chinese

- Negative Transfer
- Negative Transfer of American English
- Overcoming Negative Transfer (beginners)
Overcoming Negative Transfer

- Discerning patterns of negative transfer
- Finding similar elements in both languages
- Distinguishing differences
- Producing non-existing sounds
Negative Transfer

• Transfer
• Negative Transfer (for beginners)
  – Pronunciation (tones; \textit{pinyin})
  – Conversation—sentence structure
Negative Transfer of American English

• Pronunciation (tones)
Negative Transfer of American English

- Pronunciation (tones)
  - Most challenging: the third tone (sandhi)
Overcoming Negative Transfer

• Pronunciation (tones)
  – There are at least two tones in English:
    • rising (/) & falling (\) tones
      e.g. Huh? (/)
      Hmm... (\)
      What? (/)
      Why? (\)
    – Most challenging tone: V
      Yes? (V)
Overcoming Negative Transfer

• Pronunciation (tones)
  – Neutral tone vs. unstressed syllable (English):

  e.g. 爸爸  bàba
       认识  rènshi
       学生  xuésheng
Negative Transfer of American English

• Pronunciation (*pinyin*)

Providing sound references
(Blackboard posting)

Overcoming Negative Transfer

- Pronunciation (*pinyin*)
  Taking advantage of similarities
  - Z
    • = ds (beads)
  - C
    • = tz (treats)

- zh ch sh r (ran vs. run in English)
  • = vision [ʒ]
Overcoming Negative Transfer

• Pronunciation (*pinyin*)

  Taking advantage of similarities:
  
  – g k h       j q x
  
  q = *cheese*
  
  x = *sheep*
Overcoming Negative Transfer

• Pronunciation (*pinyin*)

Differentiating differences:

– g k h

– j q x

– eng ong (vs. [ɔŋ])

  e.g. gong [gɔŋ]  
  long [lɔŋ]  

  hong [hɔŋ]  
  lónɡ
Overcoming Negative Transfer

- Pronunciation (*pinyin*)

  Producing sounds that don’t exist in English
  
  - ü  üe  ün
Negative Transfer

- Negative Transfer
  - Conversation—sentence structure

  e. g. 他说得汉语比我说流利。

  他是高比他的弟弟。

  她比她朋友喜欢极了中国音乐。

  我们系少七十五个学生比他们系
Overcoming Negative Transfer

• Negative Transfer
  – Conversation—sentence structure

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Overcoming Negative Transfer

• Negative Transfer
  – Conversation—sentence structure

  e.g. 他们都喝咖啡也。
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Conclusions
For beginning Chinese learners to overcome negative transfer in oral communication:

• Finding similar elements in both languages
• Distinguishing differences
Thank you!

• Questions?

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