# The Research on English Verb Phrase Learning Study Skills about College Students

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**ABSTRACT.** *A verb phrase is a kind of conformation expression, which is composed of verbs and sketch words (including prepositions and adverbs). They appear in large numbers in modern English, serving as an essential part which college students are expected to master. At the same time, the grammatical structure of verb phrases is complex and has become intricate for college students to grasp. Therefore, how to help college students effectively master verb phrases has become the focus of this study. With the development of the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics, the phenomenon of verbs phrase has gradually received the attention of cognitive linguists. From the perspective of cognitive Linguistics ecology, this paper draws the following conclusions by comparing the teaching methods based on the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics and the influence of traditional pedagogy on the learning of verb phrase . First, compared with the traditional pedagogy, the teaching method based on the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics can promote the learning of the verb phrase. Second, based on the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics, college students have better long-term memory effects on verb phrase that have been studied than short-term memory; third, based on the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics, college students are able to apply the cognitive rationale behind phrase verbs that have been studied to new metaphorical verbs.*

**KEYWORDS:** *verbs and sketch words;grammatical structure of verb phrases;Study Skills*

## 1. Backgrounds

For nearly a century, modern linguistics has evolved along different paths, one of which was the generative linguistics proposed by American linguist Chomsky in the

1950s [1], and the other was the cognitive linguistics proposed in the 1980s by Lakoff [2], one Chomsky followers.

In a speech in 1970, Haugen of Stanford University formally proposed language ecology and tried to construct the marginal disciplines of "ecology" and "linguistics", which drew the attention of many scholars and proclaimed the official appearance of this new branch of linguistics. The famous systematic functional linguist Halliday advocated the study of the applied research of linguistics from an ecological point of view [3-4], he believed that ecological problems were not only the concern of botanists, physicists and postmodern philosophers, but also that of linguists.

In the same year, Danish scholars Del and Bane created a special research group on "Ecology, language and ideology". The 1993 International Society for Applied Linguistics organized the first "ecological linguistics" Branch, and since then monographs, papers and websites around the subject have sprung up. Austrian linguist A. Fill published "Ecological Linguistics" in 1993 [5], which is defined as: placing the linguistic phenomenon in the ecological cultural background as an open whole ecosystem, exploring its development nature, ecological law. The relationship between linguistic diversity and biodiversity and the role of language in ecological and environmental development and resolution.

*The Eco-Linguistics Reader* was edited by Fill & Mühlhäusler in 2001 [6], which published the English version of the Academy of Ecological Linguistics in 2003. Since 2001, the German Conference on Applied Linguistics has opened an eco-linguistics workshop. Since then, through various conferences and periodicals, North American and European scholars preached this new branch of linguistics, and gradually extended it to the world, making it popular, and gradually leading in-depth, with more and more scholars' care attracted.

In 1987, Chinese scholar Li Guozheng published a paper entitled "Theory of Ecological Language system" in *The Chinese Guide* [7], which has advocated the theoretical framework of Saussure and Chomsky, criticizing the traditional view of language as a static closed system, combining the basic principles of ecology with linguistics. The ecological language system is recognized from the inner and outer ecological environment of language. In 2002, Qian Guanlian, a famous linguist in China, published the *Theory of Language Holography* [8], the core view of which is that language is related to cosmic holography, language expression can find corresponding sources in the world, and language rules are derivatives of cosmic rules.

## 2. Literature Exploration

"Ecological Linguistics", the publication of the collection of essays of Haugen in 1972, marks the official birth of ecological linguistics as a branch of linguistics [9]. In 1975, cognitive linguistics was born. In 2007, Professor George Lakoff, one of the founders of cognitive linguistics, pointed out that cognitive linguistics is the creation of a new linguistic theory, a subject that blends with cognitive science and neuroscience. At present, the study of this subject is in the ascendant."

According to the study of Stibbe [10], ecological linguistics is a subject-oriented to real life. If the initial avocation of ecological linguistics is mainly aimed at pointing out the lack or disregard of ecological consciousness in language construction, then currently, it has developed into a kind of "critical research", with the purpose promoting the change and reconstruction of discourse. Piketty [11], a professor at the Paris School of Economics, said: "The main challenges faced by the present era are increased inequality and global warming". How to cope with the challenge of climate change and construct a sustainable ecological economic model is a global hot topic. The successful construction of eco-economic model requires the combined role of education, dialogue, negotiation, protest, compromise, and action. The study of ecological linguistics is essentially a theoretical response to these challenges at the level of dialogue and negotiation.

The understanding of the concept of "ecology" is divided into broad and narrow senses. The broad sense of "ecology" refers to "the interaction of certain things and other things", while the narrow sense of "ecology" refers to "related to environmental doctrine". Stibbe defines "ecology" in the narrow sense as "the interaction of organisms with each other and with their physical environment". The early study of ecological linguistics is mostly a narrow perspective of "ecology". The "ecological" perspective in the narrow sense has inherent theoretical limitations.

Different understandings of "ecology" lead to a different understanding of the environment, another important term for ecological linguistics. Starting from the narrow concept of "ecology", the understanding of "environment" is bound to be narrow. It is precisely because of the theoretical limitations of the "ecological" perspective in the narrow sense that the study of ecological linguistics is not entirely confined to the study of the various interactions between organisms and the biological or physical environment in which they are located, but extends the study to the interaction between the organism and its "social and cultural ecological environment" and "cognitive ecological environment". The study of the social and cultural ecological environment "generally holds that language exists in the social and cultural ecological environment, and explores how language is linked to the social and cultural forces that shape the situation of the speaker and the Speech Society" [13]. The study of cognitive ecological environment, on the other hand, "agrees that language exists in the cognitive ecological environment, and explores how language is dynamically activated by biological organisms and the environment and focuses on the cognitive ability that causes organisms to adapt flexibly to behavior."

In addition to expanding the theoretical scope of the "language environment" to make up for the theoretical limitations of the ecological perspective, ecological linguistics also draws on the cognitive perspective to enrich its research, such as, applying the "conceptual metaphor theory" and "cognitive Framework Theory" of cognitive linguistics to the analysis and interpretation of ecological texts and the interpretation of ecological discourse construction. Alexander's book *Framework Environmental Discourse: Critical Discourse Research Law* also applies "framework", a cognitive linguistics theory tool, to the study of ecological linguistics. Nowadays, the study of cognitive ecological linguistics is beginning to emerge. Zhu Changhe [14] pointed out: cognitive ecological linguistics takes

experiential philosophy as the philosophical basis, and the interaction between language and the ecological environment as the premise, aiming at studying the role of language in the emergence of ecological environment problems and the possible ways to solve these problems with the aid of language. In addition, various thoeries , ranging form critical discourse analysis, evaluation theory to identity theory , are also applied in the study of ecological linguistics.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to make a useful attempt to provide a new perspective for the study of college students' verb phrases from the perspective of cognitive linguistics in the field of applied linguistics.

## 3. Research Methods

As stated, most of the previous studies of verb vocabulary are static descriptions of vocabulary, lack of explanatory and research from cognitive rationale, which is particularly prominent in the study of verb phrases. Because of historical routines, the traditional verb phrase research mostly describes the verb phrases from linguistic factors such as structuralism and transformation generative grammar and neglects the explanatory function of psycholinguistics. After the rise of cognitive linguistics, contemporary cognitive linguistics commenced to explore and process mechanism of the verb phrase from the cognitive perspective, verb phrase research has gone through the shift from description to interpretation. In recent years, along with the rapid development of the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics, many scholars have tried to reinterpret the linguistic phenomena neglected or unexplained by traditional linguistics theory by using the basic theory of the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics. In this way, the study of college students' verb phrases can explain the linguistic phenomena from the aspects of ecological linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and cognitive linguistics.

In this study, a variety of research methods, such as investigation and research, literature, comparative and empirical doctrine, were used. First, in this paper, on the basis of investigation and research, some research questions were put forward; and then, on the basis of comparing and combing Chinese and foreign lexical studies, including verb phrase research, especially the literature of verb phrase research, the shortcomings of the previous research, as well as research hypothesis have been put forward; and finally the hypothesis was confirmed through an experimental study. The empirical research of this study adopts hybrid research design, that is, both quantitative and qualitative in data collection and analysis. The research problem adopts a quantitative research design, which is carried out before qualitative research.

## 4. Analysis Results

Quantitative data analysis is applied, mainly in the process and single factor variance test. In SPSS 25.0, Means' confidence interval is 95% in data analysis, which means that if the significant level indicates that the statistical results are significant, there is a linear relationship between the two variables.

The experimental results showed that the average value of the control group and the experimental group in the pre-learning test is close. The significant P value was 0.12, bigger than 0.05 and there was no significant difference in statistics. This showed that the students of the two groups had the same level of mastery of English verb phrases before they study. After training in the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics, the average score of the previous problem was significantly higher than that of the control group using the traditional rote method to learn English verb phrases, and the significant P value was 0.001, indicating that there were significant differences between the control group and the experimental group in the statistics of the post-Test after one week. The results showed that college students based on the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics migrated when they acquired new verb phrases in the experimental group, indicating consciousness of ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics played an active role in study.

**Conclusions**

College students' English verb phrase learning based on the ecological perspective of cognitive linguistics plays a role in promoting learning. Because, as mentioned, the image schema metaphor, as a kind of conceptual metaphor, also has cultural characteristics and cultural imagery. Spatial metaphor based on image schema metaphor is the basis of people's abstract thinking. There are differences in the ways, angles and habits of different nationalities to think abstractly, so the expected goal of the experiment is to prove that the metaphorical consciousness of image schema can promote the acquisition of English verb phrases by Chinese English learners. The experimental results basically support the hypothesis and reach the desired goal.

**Suggestions**

It was noted that there might be several reasons why the image schema based on cognitive ecolinguistics perspective can promote the acquisition of English verb phrases of college students. First, image schema is based on people's experience, and spatial metaphor based on intention provides a more specific connection between people's understanding of English phrase verbs containing first-class space words and their metaphorical meanings. Second, the use of cognitive means such as image schema can help learners identify the source domain, and establish associations between the source domain and the target domain, which is conducive to learners to carry out deep cognitive processing, and then promote the memory storage of vocabulary.Third, the pedagogy of cognitive ecolinguistics perspective is effective in vacabualry leanring, with the potential and value to extend to more areas.

**Author Biography**



Yurong Zhang has received a master's degree from Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, New York University and a master's degree from SC Johnson College of Business, Cornell University.

Yurong Zhang is one of the best school and career counselors and educators. She has been worked as school and career counselor for 7 years and helped thousands of students worldwide to achieve their education and career goals. In 2019, she won top honor of the best educator and America Chinese 30 under 30 from "AACYF". She also has been invited to give talks to K12 schools, Universities both in China and the US about her unique knowledge on education planning and career planning.

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