



The Exploration of Research-Oriented English Learning of Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics Based on Corpus Study

—Taking the Instruction of “the use of EXPECT” as an Example

WU Guoliang*

Zhejiang Yuexiu University of Foreign Languages

*Corresponding Authors: WU Guoliang, Zhejiang Yuexiu University of Foreign Languages

Abstract: This paper describes the exploration of research-oriented deep learning of syntax, semantics and pragmatics in the English language based on corpus study. As we know, the traditional English usage teaching usually concentrates on the classification and analysis of the practical examples concerned, focusing on the traditional grammar, without an in-depth semantic and pragmatic explanation. This is, however, by far not enough for the university students now. It is well known that as the development of the study of linguistics and pragmatics, language scholars have found that there are many new solutions available to some problems of the language that could hardly be explained in the past. This paper points out that the innovation of the teaching contents organization, based on the corpus study, is one of the key steps in cultivating the students' ability of critical thinking and research-oriented learning. The target students involved in this paper are those who are majors of English Language and Literature, in their undergraduate program, and whose English is a foreign language. This paper holds that the main purpose of the innovation of the teaching materials is to make the students understand the syntactic form, the potential meaning, the structural function, the discourse background, and their relationships. The teachers involved in this paper, taking the instruction of “The Use of EXPECT” as an example, have strengthened the comprehensive instruction as a trinity of syntax, semantics and pragmatics, and encourage the students to make a deep study of the content concerned, before and after class, apart from the classroom learning, based on corpus studies under the guidance of the instructors, as a result of which, students' ability of critical thinking and research-oriented learning has been greatly raised. In terms of linguistic study, this paper provides a discussion on the topics which are challenges to the traditional instruction, among which the topic “Equivalent or Not Equivalent?”, in particular, has got an active and positive feedback information from the students and instructors.

Keywords: syntax; semantics; pragmatics; critical thinking; research-oriented; deep learning; corpus study

1. INTRODUCTION

As we know, the word *expect* is a commonly used word in English. Its usage and potential characteristics, however, are not as simple as some people imagine. For a long time there are quite different opinions about the use of *expect* among linguists. When doing translations concerned, either from English into Chinese or from Chinese into English, we have to make sure that the best structure is selected. Even some native speakers sometimes would fail to use the word perfectly. This paper is to make an in-depth analysis of the use of *expect* and some related words, and make the selection of the patterns based on the semantic reasons, from the view point of linguistics, so as to do the translation better in terms of pragmatics.

Linguistic study shows that some teaching methods for traditional English usage are no longer applicable to the English instruction in the world today. The famous educator Penny cook (2017, 4-5) points out: “Thus, while it might be important to critique work in second language acquisition, for example, because it has tended to locate the process of learning solely in the psychological domain without taking into account the social, economic, cultural, political or physical domains in which

language learning takes place, it is also important that these contexts of learning are dealt with critically.”

Here he mentioned the importance of critically dealing with many elements in the second language acquisition process, and the study environment. Following is the exploration and language practice of the usage instruction of *expect* in terms of syntax, semantics and pragmatics as a trinity for learning and research, based on corpus study from a critical point of view.

2. THE FUNDAMENTAL MEANINGS

As for the study of the English usage, the important point is still to arouse the motivation of the students. Schumann (2015, p.xiii) points out: These studies gave information about motivation at a particular moment in time. Nevertheless, they were often interpreted as providing information about what kind of motivation had brought the learner to this point and what kind of motivation would carry him/her forward.

From the above message, we can see the importance of motivation for each stage of the study. As far as the English usage instruction is concerned, the vocabulary teaching usually starts with fundamental meanings in universities and colleges abroad.

The paraphrase of the word *expect* given by Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (Sinclair, 2001) is very clear : 1. If you expect something to happen, you believe that it will happen, because of what you know about the situation. V+O/ to-INF/REPORT -CL, OR V +O+to-INF=anticipate.

As we know, *expect* can be translated into different meanings such as *anticipate*, *look forward to*, *think* or *believe* (that something will happen). It depends on the context and background. Theoretically speaking, *expect* can have either ‘epistemic sense’, or ‘deontic sense’. Huddleston & Pullum (2002, 842) have a description that is worth mentioning: Note also the difference between the epistemic and deontic senses of *expect*. In the epistemic sense (roughly,” think likely”) the Implication generally goes through, but in the deontic sense (“ think X should”) its application is more restricted . Consider, for example, *we don't expect them to pay more than \$100*. In the epistemic sense this implicates “we expect that they won't pay more than \$100”. But in the deontic sense (roughly “we don't regard them as having an obligation to pay more than \$100”). Dixon (2016, 188-189) classifies *expect* and *dread* as the fifth type of the verbs of WANTING. The reason for this is that they are of the same characteristics. He says : ”*Expect* and *dread* may take a surface object NP in two further ways. Firstly, if the main and complement clauses have different subjects then a verb with the meaning ‘come/arrive’ can be omitted from the complement clause. e.g. *I expect John (to come) tomorrow. Mary always dreads the cyclone season (arriving).*” From this we can see, whether the content in the bracket is omitted or not, the meaning keeps the same. However, as far as the omission is concerned, attention should be paid to the following comparison:

We can say : I expect him to be president.

But we cannot say : * I expect him president. (Wierzbicka, 1988, 53)

This is due to the fact that both *want* and *expect* are future-oriented, and the infinitive phrase can indicate the function of intent. We will discuss them later in this paper. In practical use of *expect*, it is easy for non-native speakers to be confused with *anticipate*.

Bertram (1997 , 153) regards these two words as synonyms : **expect**. (verb) to think something will happen. **anticipate**: to *expect* or *look forward to* something.

We hold that the above definitions are lacking in degree of distinction in terms of meaning.

Words and phrases which are similar to *expect* in meanings and which are commonly seen are as follows: *hope* , *anticipate* , *look forward to* et al. Their semantic meanings at deep levels, however, are worth mentioning. Just as Dixon (2016, 194) points out : Whereas *hope* refers to something acceptable that the Principal thinks may happen in the future, *expect* refers to something the Principal thinks will probably happen, and it needn't be acceptable to them. If the Principal thinks that this future happening is something he would greatly dislike then the appropriate verb to use is *dread*, which involves the intersection of ‘expect ‘ and ‘hate’(and is a cross—member of the LIKING type).

The above description given by Dixon is very useful for the distinction of these words. Note that there are some differences between *dread* and *expect* in syntax. There are also semantic reasons for their syntactic difference. As we know *expect* is very often followed by an infinitive just because *expect* is future-oriented; However, *dread* behaves quite differently in this respect. *Dread* refers to the future, and yet ING is possible (and in fact virtually obligatory). However, as many dictionaries of English point out [...] *dread* is an 'intense' emotion, which involves a vivid 'picture' of the dreaded event. This suggests that *dreading* involves an act of imagination; and the terrifying event happening in our imagination is of course simultaneous with the feeling itself. In other words, *dread* behaves syntactically like *imagine* [...] because 'dreading' implies imagining. (Wierzbicka 1988: 70)

However, in practical uses one point is worth mentioning: Sometimes *expect* is still a verb that can be used to indicate something the Principal doesn't like, and also it has been used in this way for a long time. Please see a citation from the famous book <Tomorrow> written by Conrad (2003): *At home? Yes! The world's my home, but I expect I'll die in a hospital some day. What of that? Any place is good enough as long as I have lived...*

Linguistic investigation shows that *anticipate*, *look forward to* and *expect* are most confusing, though English native speakers can distinguish them quite clearly. As the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (Sixth edition) (Wehmeier, 2000) describes: You use *hope*, not *expect*, to say that you want something to happen. *I hope you will have a good party*. You use *look forward to* when you are feeling happy and excited about something that you expect to happen.

The last sentence has indicated the difference between *look forward to* and *expect*. Just because of this, the dictionary points out clearly: "At the end of a letter, use *look forward to*, not *expect*." Therefore, if *expect* is used at the end of a letter as some Chinese students occasionally do, it is a kind of pragmatic failure. Meanwhile, In terms of syntax, which tense the phrase *look forward to* is in, needs to be paid attention to. There are two tenses, present simple and present continuous, which are commonly used in the English language, depending on the pragmatic situation:

I'm looking forward to... is often used to talk about something that you expect to enjoy. *I/we look forward to...* is often used as a polite formulae at the end of formal or business' communication: *I look forward to hearing from you* (=please reply). *We look forward to working with you in the future*. Do not use *expect* at the end of a letter. (Lea, 2008, 265)

As to the difference between *expect* and *anticipate*, the situation is much more complicated. It is not only something to do with the historical evolution, but also has a problem of requirement of a precise semantic explanation. Now let's see the fundamental meanings of the two words: The definition of *expect* in Concise English Thesaurus (Knight2000) is that: to think that something is likely to come or happen: *I expect the storm will break in thenexthalfhour*. To *anticipate* can mean to *expect* something will come pass: *We anticipate the release of the prisoner tomorrow*. We think that though the author has used the words *can mean*, it is defined too simply, which is lacking in explanation of distinction. From the view points of semantics and pragmatics, *anticipate* has not only the meaning of *expect*, but also has the meaning *to take action to prevent*. However, from the example above, people can still feel the implied meaning: *We anticipatethereleaseof the prisoner tomorrow*. It is not difficult to understand that it usually takes the people concerned to get preparation before the release of the prisoner.

Fowler (1998, 56) gives a very clear description for *anticipate*: The *OED* recorded nine senses of this verb, the chief two of which are rendered in the Oxford Miniguide to English Usage (1983) as (1) To be aware of (something) in advance and take suitable action, to deal with (athing) orperform (anaction) before someone else has had time to act so as to gain an advantage, to take action appropriate to (anevent) before the due time, e.g. *His power to...anticipate every change of volume and tempo*(C. Day Lewis); *I shall anticipate any such opposition by tenderingmy resignation now*(Angus Wilson); *She had anticipated execution by suicide* (R. Graves); ...Fowler disliked and rejected the use of *anticipate* for the meaning of *expect* and *foresee*. However, his co-author of later generations recognizes that: "Educated people of his generation and mine opposed this encroachment on the core meaning of these two verbs, but the tide kept moving in the opposite direction, and this third sense now seems to have become widely adopted." Kahn (1985, 68) also made a comment on the use of *anticipate* in the book *The Right Word at the Right Time: The verb to anticipate still attracts criticism from purists when used as (rather pompous) synonym of to expect: ?Everyone is*

anticipating a change of government before July.

In its various older senses, to *anticipate* would convey the idea not just of expecting or foreseeing, but also of preventive—or premature—action:

We anticipate that the enemy would attack at dawn, and made preparation to rebuff them.

He says that.” To the dismay of the purists, this rich variety of established uses has been overshadowed by the newer and weaker sense of simple forecast or expectation. Most dictionaries now accept this modern sense as fully standard, with only a few purists fighting a rearguard action. “(Kahn, 1985, 68)

Comparatively speaking, Hughes’ ideas (1993, 37) about the use of *anticipate* are quite reasonable: *Anticipate* traditionally means to look ahead and prepare for something or forestall it: *The townspeople anticipated the cyclone by boarding up windows.* He holds : Some authorities disapprove of using the word as a synonym for *expect*, arguing that to expect something is not necessarily to do anything about it. However, many dictionaries now allow this usage.

Gove, P.B. (1984, 310) has the same ideas : *Expect* usually implies a high degree of certainty, but it also involves the idea of anticipation(as by making preparations or by envisioning what will happen, what one will find, or what emotions one will feel) .*He told his mother not to expect him for dinner. She had reason to expect that the trip would be exciting.*

We anticipate that the plane will be late because of the turbulent weather.

We hold that as the non-native speakers, on the basis of understanding the above usage characteristics, we should pay special attention to the language context in practical uses. Of course, to use *anticipate* in the meaning of “to foresee and provide for beforehand” is still the most reliable choice.

While we are distinguishing between *anticipate* and *expect* in meaning, we cannot neglect the usage difference. In terms of syntax, *expect somebody to do something* is a typical use of *expect*, however, the typical use of *anticipate* is *anticipate somebody doing something* ,though occasionally the pattern *anticipate somebody to do something* can also be seen in the English speaking countries.

Egan (2008 244) points out : ”Both ‘anticipate S2 *to infinitive*’ and ‘anticipate S2 *-ing*’ are Forward-looking constructions in the sense that they imply that the complement situation is profiled by the matrix verb subject as a likely candidate for realisation in the projected future.” In fact, the frequency of “anticipate somebody to do something” is extremely low. Please see the statistics given by Egan (2008, 245): “Compared to the ‘anticipate S2 *-ing*’ construction, ‘anticipate S2 *to infinitive* is very much a minority option in present-day English. This is reflected in the fact that there were only two such tokens among the 1000 downloaded utterances containing *anticipate*.”

Langaker (1008) explains the phenomenon from the view point of cognitive linguistics :“The prototypical values of *to* and *-ing* hint at possible ways of dealing with less typical uses. An initially puzzling case is the use of *-ing* with *anticipate*, as in *anticipate being nervous*. Because it pertains to the future, it ought to take *to* instead, like its synonym *expect*: *I expect to be nervous*. But synonymy is never exact. One can argue that these verbs reflect two different ways of apprehending a future occurrence. *Expect* incorporates the more straightforward strategy of simply looking into the future from the present vantage point. It governs *to* because, from this perspective, the occurrence lies at the end of a temporal path and can thus be viewed in its entirety. *Anticipate* incorporates the more elaborate strategy of adopting a nonfactual vantage point and imagining how things appear from there. It governs *-ing* by virtue of shifting the vantage point to the time of the future occurrence, thus fictively affording an internal perspective on it.”(440)

We hold that as non- English native speakers we should not imitate the pattern of “anticipate S2 to infinitive”.

The high degree of certainty implied by *expect* can also be seen from the Achard’s (2007, 788) description :

For... *to*—complements conflict with *to*-complements in two important respects. The first is the level of confidence with which the accomplishment of the process in the complement is envisaged. This is

illustrated in (1) and (2) (from Wierzbicka 1988:167):

(1) a. She expected him to come.

b. *She expected for him to come.

(2) a. * She waited him to come.

b. She waited for him to come.

The verb *expect* in (1) indicates more confidence in the realization of the coming process than *wait* in (2). Consequently, *expect* is possible with *to-*, but infelicitous with *for...to-* complements. *Wait* conversely with *for...to* but not with *to*

3. HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

“The verb *anticipate* is often used with the meaning ‘foresee (something) and take action to prevent it, counter it, meet its requirements, etc.’...Some people consider this to be the only correct meaning of *anticipate*, but for most speakers of English this verb has another meaning, equivalent simply to ‘foresee’ or ‘expect’...” (Gilman, 1994,99)

In the book *Usage and Abusage*, Partridge, E. C. (1999, 28-29) describes the words: *anticipate* and *expect*. The former is now commonly used both for the latter and for *await*, but its proper sense is ‘to forestall’ an action or a person, or ‘to foresee’ an event and take appropriate action. *OED* registers, as blameless English, the senses, ‘to take into consideration before the appropriate or due time’ (e.g. ‘to anticipate consequences and provide for the future’)-to realize beforehand (a certain future event)’, as in ‘some real lives... actually anticipate the happiness of heaven’ (C. Bronte)—‘to look forward to, look for (an uncertain event) ascertain’, as in ‘Those, not in the secret, anticipated an acquittal.’

In *Say What You Mean !*, Trask (2005, 26), when explaining the word *anticipate*, points out: This word divides the authorities. It is long established in the sense of “foreseeing and taking suitable action to deal with”: *He anticipated his opponent's every move; We were anticipating the price drop when we sold our shares*. It is also established in the sense of “mentioning (something) before its proper time,” as in *He anticipated my punchline*, and in the now uncommon sense of “making use of (something) before you have it,” as in *He anticipated his salary when he bought the car*. No problem so far.

Generally speaking, he is quite tolerant of using *anticipate* with the meaning of *expect*: He says: “...for about two centuries the word has also been used in the sense of ‘expect’: *We anticipate a fall in share prices; We anticipated that our investment will start to pay off this year*. This sense is now so well established that it can hardly be regarded as wrong, yet a number of conservative speakers still object to it, and some usage handbooks condemn it, while others are resigned to it. My advance is to avoid *anticipate* in this sense and to write *expect* instead. (Trask, 2005, 26)

We think his comment sounds reasonable and his advice is feasible, especially for those whose English is not their first language.

Manser's attitude is similar to that of Trask. In the book *Bloomsbury Good Word Guide*, he points out: The verb *anticipate* is widely used as a synonym for ‘expect’: *We do not anticipate that there will be any problems. Oil prices showed their expected leap yesterday...But the rally was not as strong as some traders anticipated.* (*Daily Telegraph*). This usage is disliked by many people, who restrict the verb to its accepted more formal senses of “forestalling”, “acting in advance of”, etc. *Preventative medicine anticipates disease. They anticipated the attack by boarding up their doors and windows. You must learn to anticipate his needs.* (Manser, 2000, 15)

Phythian (1982, 12) has a different opinion and insists on the so-called correct sense, though he recognizes the tendency of the usage development. He says: *Anticipate* does not mean *expect*, despite general opinion. It means *forestall* (a person or thing); *consider, discuss or realize before hand; look forward to*... It is possible that usage will ultimately decree that *anticipate* means *expect*, but for the moment the correct meaning is worth insisting on.

As for the historic evolution of *expect*, it seems to us that the Canadian English changes faster in both

the semantic and pragmatic fields, especially in the enlargement of the pragmatic occasions.

Fee & McAlpine, (2001, 41) give the following description of the use of *anticipate* : In Canadian English, the most common meaning of *anticipate* is *expect* or *look forward to*: ‘We’re anticipating a bumper crop this year’. This meaning has been disparaged in usage guides for over a century. According to Fowler’s idea (1965), for example, it is a ‘slipshod extension’ of the true meaning of the word. Earlier meanings of *anticipate* involved not just contemplation of the future but action in relation to it. In other words, if you anticipated a raise, you spent it in advance; if you anticipated a problem, you forestalled it; and if you anticipated what someone else had to say, you said it first. The older senses of *anticipate* have not been superseded by the new, but today they are found mostly in formal and literary writing. The ‘new’ meaning of *anticipate*—now over two hundred years old—is established at all levels of Canadian writing. There seems to be no good reason to avoid it.

They also provide the following example:

(3) Roy (writing in the 1950s) thus anticipated the concerns of the younger writers of the 1960s and 1970s, and their preoccupation with language as a crystallization of the anxiety over cultural survival.

Ben-Z. Shek *French-Canadian Quebecois Novels* 1991:37

Let’s also see the examples from the corpus given by Egan (2008, 244) :

(4) Because of the ideal lively location and facilities, we *anticipate the Magamar apartments to be* Very popular this year with Club Clients. (AM0 716)

(5) Project Video is provisionally scheduled for publication in September 1989 and we *anticipate sales* over the first three years *to be* in the region of 2000 cassettes. (AP1 402)

Obviously, the *anticipate* in either of the two sentences is *expect*.

However, on some occasions, instead of using *anticipate*, some commentators would use more special words. See the following examples from Fee, M& McAlpine, J (2001, 41):

(6) It was anticipated that family participation scores would differ somewhat between the periods.

The Canadian Geographer Spring 1989: 40

(Some commentators would replace *anticipated* with *expected*.)

(7) He had eagerly anticipated his involvement as a volunteer doctor for the swimming events, but now he could barely see the pylons he was stepping into at poolside.

Daniel Gawthrop *Affirmation: The Aids Odyssey of Dr. Peter* 1994: 48

(Some commentators would replace *anticipated* with *looked forward to*.)

Though the relationship between *expect* and *anticipate* has experienced for several centuries, each of them still has something in particular. Kahn (1985, 68) reminds people to note further that in some constructions, *to expect* cannot be replaced by *to anticipate* at all :

She expects me to pay for the damage; He expects to see us soon; The peace talks are expected to take place in Oman, and so on.

In the historical evolution, the most controversial topic is the use of *expect* with the meaning of *suppose*, *guess*, etc. As Gilman (1994, 422) describes: “We have collected over 40 comments and admonitions about *expect* from the past century or so, and all of them discuss the same issue: using *expect* to mean “suppose” or “think” in sentences such as “ I expect you were sorry to hear that.” Criticism of this usage has more often than not been based on such reasoning as that used by Richard Grant White in 1870: “*Expect* refers only to that which is to come, and which, therefore, is looked for.... We cannot expect backward.” Many commentators echoed Whites’s opinion during the late 19th and in particular, early 20th centuries.

The OED shows that the “suppose “sense of *expect* is actually quite old, dating back to the 16th century. But the OED editors, writing in 1894, were evidently no more fond of this sense than was

Richard Grant White; they described it in the following terms:

Now *rare* in literary use. The misuse of the word as a synonym of *suppose*, without any notion of ‘anticipating’ or ‘looking for’, is often cited as an Americanism, but is very common in dialectal, vulgar or carelessly colloquial speech in England. (422)

Thus, the use of *expect* with the meaning of *suppose* gives people a kind of impression, lack of standardization. Here it involves the semantics and pragmatics. However, the problem only exists in comparison with others. It has always been influenced by the language practice of the English speaking countries.

Herbst (2004, 287) points out in A Valency Dictionary of English: *I expect* is often used to mean ‘I assume’. *We have spoken on the phone a couple of times, and I expect your husband’s mentioned me. I expect there’s lots more to come.*

I exaggerated, I expect. Two hours they’ll have been up. Washing up, I expect.

As to the use of *expect* with the meaning of *suppose* there have been arguments among linguists for a long time..

Kahn et al (1985) describe the situation as the following: *To expect* used to attract criticism when used to mean ‘to suppose’, and still does from many purists: *?Sam’s gone home already, I expect; ?Of course she failed—what do you expect?:*

(8) *”A most extraordinary man, Mr Nuttel’, said Mrs Sappleton; ‘ could only talk about his illnesses, and dashed off without a word of good-bye or apology when you arrived. One would think he had seen a ghost.’*

‘I expect it was the spaniel,’ said the niece calmly; ‘ he told me he had a horror of dogs. He was once hunted into a cemetery on the banks of the Ganges by a pack of a parish dogs...’

_____ Saki, ‘ The Open Window ‘

Kahn et al (1985, 230) state that : *”To expect* can apply only to future event, it is argued. However, the extended use of *expect* (a very old use, though it withered for some time under the blaze of criticism) is now so widespread that its acceptance into standard English, even in formal contexts, is just a matter of time.”

It is recognized that their judgment is reasonable, and has been proved to be true by the language practice. The extended use of *expect* has been widely recognized and accepted by quite a few major dictionaries, including some leading dictionaries such as Oxford Advanced Learner’s English Dictionary (Wehmeier, 2000) . It is understandable that there are some pragmatic notes attached.

Kahn et al (1985,230) have a good idea to give an explanation for the extended use of *expect* : If *expect* is understood as a shortened form of *expect to learn, expect to hear, expect that it will be*, or the like, then it does still refer to a future event technically, even though that future event is the discovery of a past event: *Sam’s gone home already, I expect (you will tell me); Of course she failed—what do you expect to hear)?*

We think that the above explanation sounds reasonable, however it seems a little bit farfetched. If we recognize the extended uses directly, this problem will be solved much easier than if it is not. Of course, there are some problems that have something to do with pragmatic background and the potential meaning. Linguistic investigation shows that the phenomenon of *expect* followed by a complement clause whose content is something in the past can be found everywhere :

(9) *I expect the crew had tiptoed down very gently from the bunk above while he slept.*

BNC A4S 18

(10) *How he knew from which coach to retrieve her is a puzzle; I expect he was telling a tale, but even this made him a very disagreeable character.*

BNC AMC 612

In fact, this kind of use has been established for a long time, and many sentences were written even by masters (We found a lot of cases of this kind of uses based on the corpus).

(11) This place was entirely for officers, and I expect it was a show place where American visitors were taken.

John Buchanan, *Green mantle*, 1916

(12) "This is curious," said he, Yes, Sir, we saw the chip on the ledge. I expect it's been done by some passer-by."

Sir Arthur Conan Doy, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, 1892

However this extended use is, after all, not recommended for people who are not English native speakers.. Just as Kahn et al (1985, 231) point out : That said, there is still no reason to prefer *expect* to *suppose*, *assume*, *believe*, *consider likely*, *should not be surprised to discover*, and so on. And if there are old-fashioned purists about who would object to the use of *expect* in this sense, it is best to draw on one of the many synonyms instead.

We hold that when *expect* is used to mean *suppose* and so on its style is usually with special characteristics. Fee & McAlpine, 2001, 199) provide the following comments: The use of *expect* to mean *suppose* or *guess*, as in 'I expect I will', is labeled informal in most dictionaries. Yet it's common in fairly formal Canadian writing. Perhaps it could be more accurately described as having a conversational tone.

(13) When they cut Mary Webster down the next day, she was, to everyone's surprise, not dead.... I expect that if everyone thought she had occult powers before the hanging, they were even more convinced of it afterwards.

Margaret Atwood *Second Words* 1982:331

(14) 'I expect you'd like some breakfast too.' She didn't wait for an answer.

David Williams *Eye of the Father* 1985 : 43

As far as the style is concerned, there are some different opinions among linguists. Wilson (1993, 183) points out : *Expect* is now standard in the meaning "suppose" as in *I expect you'll be wanting something to eat*; in that sense it is probably still best limited to semiformal and conversational uses. In the meaning "anticipate, look forward to," as in *We have long expected his appointment*, it is standard at all levels.

From the above examples, we can see the phrase *I expect* appears in every sentence. We can make a deep study of the function of the phrase *I expect* . In certain conditions, the phrase *I expect* is not the simple combination of the meanings of the two words. No doubt they are related to each other. But sometimes the phrase *I expect* as a whole has a function of pragmatics. Randolph Quirk et al (1985) regard *I expect* and *I believe*, *I guess*, *I think*, *I feel*, *I hear*, *I presume*, *I assume*, *I understand*, *I suppose* as the same class and also give them the following description:

(a) They hedge, ie they express the speaker's tentativeness over the truth value of the matrix clause. Commonly, the subject is *I* and the verb is in the simple present, but the subject may be an indefinite *one* or *they* or (usually with a passive verb) *it* and the verb may (for example) have a modal auxiliary or *be* in the present perfective.

We think that the above description has expressed the pragmatic function of the phrase *I expect*.

Apart from that, *I expect* also has another special discourse function of confirming.

Therefore *I expect* can also be regarded as a discourse marker.

How many children have you? Yes beat me, I expect, on that count.

As is common in modern English, the speaker is using here the phrase *I expect* to say something about the addressee and is clearly expecting confirmation from the addressee, the speaker expects to hear something that will confirm what she or he now thinks but doesn't know. Wierzbicka. , 2006, p229

4. EQUIVALENT OR NOT EQUIVALENT ?

Quite a few books have some descriptions of the two complement clauses after *expect*. For example:

Expect may be followed by an infinitive, as in *England expects every man to do his duty*, or by a clause, as in *I expect he will come*. (Evans, 1957:168) . The New Sunrise English-Chinese Dictionary (SONG & CHEN, 2001, 681) regards the two sentences as equal:

(15) I expect him to come on Friday.=

(16) I expect that he will come on Friday.

Is sentence (15) really equal to sentence (16)? Before class we prepared a questionnaire for the students to fill in and respond to. As a result, we found most students failed to answer perfectly. It reminded us of the importance of critical thinking and research-oriented learning. In the *Learners' Progressive English-Japanese Dictionary*, Xiao Xiyou Qi et al (1989, 538) also regard the following two sentences as equivalent to each other :

(17) *She expects her husband to return.*

(18) *She expects that her husband will return.* (the former uses the infinitive, the meaning is close to 'hope her husband to return'.)

Nevertheless, from the added explanation 'the former uses the infinitive, the meaning is close to 'hope her husband to return' in the brackets, we think that there still exists some subtle difference between the two sentences. Sentence (17) indicates that she *wants* her husband to return. However in sentence (18) there is no such meaning implied. Now we can also look at the essence through the phenomenon, in terms of relationship between what is expressed by the matrix verb and what is expressed by the complement. In sentence (17), there is a causally relevant relationship between the intentional act expressed by the verb *expect*, which implies the meaning *hope*, and the state of affairs expressed by the complement *her husband to return*. However there is no such kind of causally relevant relationship between *expect* and the *complement clause* in sentence (18). Here the clause only provides the information concerned. See also Verspoor (1990, 27).

Radford (1997, 402) who is a generative linguist also has a comparison between the following two sentences:

(19) He expected me to take syntax.

(20) He expected that I would take syntax.

Radford et al explained that : *He expected me to take syntax* is paraphraseable as ' *He expected that I would take syntax*'. This is, however, not an exact explanation for their relationship between sentence (19) and sentence (20), as far as their meanings are concerned.

Verspoor's (1990, 40) says "Syntactic form is indicative of its semantic function". We maintain that from the view points of syntax, semantics and pragmatics, to take the two sentences as equal is obviously not correct. The two sentences are different in syntactic form, semantic meaning and pragmatic background. We would make a deep analysis of them in this paper step by step. Now, let's see some linguists' descriptions.

Dixon (2016, 243) has a description of the two patterns: " Many verbs that take a Modal (For) TO complement also accept a THAT complement clause. The meaning of the (FOR) TO construction is often similar to the meaning of the THAT construction when a Modal is included." Compare: ...

(21) I expect that Mary will be appointed.

(22) I expect Mary to be appointed.

Dixon (2016, 243) propose that the two sentences are similar in meaning, and he provides the explanation in terms of linguistics : It seems here as if the complementiser *to* carries the same sort of semantic load as a Modal does in a THAT clause; This is why we refer to this variety of complements as ' Modal' (FOR) TO.

However, we still feel that there should be some difference between the two structures. In terms of complementizers, they are different. As Riddle (1975 467) says: Sentences with infinitival

complementizers tend to express activities, while those with *that* complementizers refer to a mental or physical state. Therefore the two sentences differ not only in form, but also in function, as a result of which, they differ in the discourse background as well.

So, the two sentences provided by SONG&CHENG (2001) are not really equivalent. For the sake of convenience, let's see some practical examples given by Colin's COBUILD English Usage (Sinclair, 2009). It has a description which is comparatively concise and comprehensive: "You can sometimes use a 'to'-infinitive after *expect* instead of a 'that'-clause. For example, instead of saying 'I expect Johnson will come to the meeting', You can say 'I expect Johnson to come to the meeting'. However, the meaning is not quite the same. If you say 'I expect Johnson will come to the meeting' you are expressing a simple belief. If you say 'I expect Johnson to come to the meeting', you are indicating that you want Johnson to come to the meeting and that you will be annoyed or disappointed if he does not come." We hold that '*the meaning is not quite the same*' is exact to the point. However the above description does not provide an in-depth theoretical explanation, which is badly needed by many English majors whose native language is not English. If we can learn something from the analyses given above, we feel that when we use the pattern *expect somebody to do something*, the subject of the verb gets involved at a certain degree. Wierzbicka (1988, 164-165) claims that: Whereas to-complements are associated with a personal, subjective, first-person mode: 'I want', 'I think', or 'I know', "*that*-complements introduce an 'objective', 'impersonal', 'one can know' perspective". While what Wierzbicka says is not a hard and fast rule, however, she does provide a general tendency. Maybe we can find the potential reason by introducing a message given by Achard (2007, 784) in a similar situation: "By comparison, in *She wants me to come back*, the form of the complement *me to come back* indicates that the event it codes has a lesser degree of independence with respect to the main verb *want*." When we use *expect somebody that*, there is no such kind of involvement. Comparatively speaking, *that* clause has something to do with information. The semantic function of *that* clause is quite different. Just as Bolinger (1984, 45) says: "THAT clauses (...) presuppose INFORMATION. The information may be affirmed, doubted, denied, or emotionally reacted to, but there is always a representation of knowledge." *That* clause is self-contained and has its special features. Dixon (2016) says "A *that* complement essentially refers to some activity or state as a single unit, without any reference to its inherent constitution or time duration." Comparatively speaking, therefore, the infinitival complement has a closer relationship with respect to the main verb. Again this phenomenon verifies Bolinger's (1968 127) statement: "A difference in syntactic form always spells a difference in meaning".

Therefore we need a deep analysis of the two structures in terms of potential meanings and related contexts.

And we can take a further step to understand the potential difference between the two structures in terms of cognitive linguistics. Let's see Riddle's description (1975): "Each instance has to do with the closeness of the relationship between the subject or speaker and the predication of the complement. In infinitival complements there is a greater participation on the part of the subject or speaker in terms of control, subjective opinion, and attitude, as well as a sense of a decreased authority and distance. All the *that* complements describe situations which are more objectively true and where there is a greater psychological distance between the subject or speaker and the object." In short, in the use of the infinitival complement, the subject or speaker has got more involved (in the respect of control, subjective opinion, and attitude). Based on this idea, it is much easier for us to understand the difference between the sentences *I expect Johnson will come to the meeting* and *I expect Johnson to come to the meeting* mentioned by Sinclair (2009). Comparatively speaking, if we use a *that* clause it sounds a little bit objective and there is a bigger psychological distance between the subject or speaker and the object. If we use the infinitive complement, we want to get the result that we expect, and the psychological distance between the subject or speaker and the object is obviously shorter.

Based on the potential relation between the structure and function, we can understand the reason for the semantic difference of the two structures. Note that the above message can only explain some types of comparisons. For there are many parameters and variables that can affect the meaning. It has something to do with the types of verb that go with, the background of the language (WU, 2017). For

example, if the main verb is *believe*, the difference in meaning between the two patterns is mainly based on the directness and indirectness. See the comparisons given by Verspoor (1990: 43). She claims that the distinction between *to* and *that* complements lies in the notion of ‘directness versus indirectness’, as in the sentence *I believe him to be honest*. *To* is used when there is some direct evidence for the belief, and therefore, expresses a stronger degree of commitment to the truth of the proposition expressed in the complement than *I believe that he is honest*.

Therefore it is extremely important for the students of English to understand the potential relationship between the structure, meaning and the functions. As we know there are many types of parameters that can influence the choice of constructions. However, one parameter is usually not the same as the other in terms of influencing strength. Perhaps the following message might be worth mentioning:” Most analyses of grammatical variation in particular those involving word order alterations, fall into two categories. The first type is mainly based on syntactic parameters such as length and complexity, while the second one is based on discourse functional or information-structural parameters such as given-ness and/or importance of referents. As is frequently acknowledged the explanations and predictions based on the two kinds of parameters coincide in many cases. However, many linguists have argued that a particular instance of grammatical variation illustrates that one of the two approaches is somehow superior to the other.”(Stefan, Th. Gries, 2003, 155)

If we analyze the differences between the two structures from the view point of cognitive linguistics, there is a slight difference in meaning in terms of information status and information structuring. Let’s see Langacker’s (1995, 33-35) description:“ In essence, the contrast between sentences like *I expect that Don will leave* and *I expect Don to leave* is that the former sentence gives focal prominence to an entire process (Don’s leaving), whereas the later focuses on a participant in that process. This description also brings to light the difference between sentence (17) and sentence (18).”

Meanwhile, when dealing with the relationship between the syntactic form and semantic meaning, we should remember the Principle of Clause Integration given by Rohdenburg, (1995, 367) :” The degree to which the dependent clause is integrated into its superordinate clause correlates (inversely) with the degree of its semantic independence”.

Therefore the choice of the structures will depend on the pragmatic background.

Apart from this, the structure *expect somebody to do something* also has other functions and characteristics, which many non- English native speakers would fail to understand.

Sinclair(2001), in Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary, has a message about the use of *expect*: If you expect someone to do something, you require them to do it as a duty or obligation, for example as part of their work. EG *He is expected to put his work before his family...*

Thomson & Martinet (1986,217) have also pointed out that: ... Very often expect + object+ infinitive conveys the idea of duty:

(23) He expects his wife to bring him breakfast in bed at weekends. (He thinks it is her duty to do this.

Just because of this, the pattern *expect somebody to do something* is frequently used in passive voice: *Visitors to the hospital are expected not to smoke*. Swan (2005)has an example of the " duty " function: *We expect you to work onthe first Saturday of every month*.

Our linguistic investigation from BNC also found many cases in which *expect* is used in this pattern indicating the meaning of ‘duty’.

(24) Make sure staff know what is expected of them— a responsible attitude towards drinking, standards of work performance and so on.

—BNC AOS 153

(25) The Supreme Court is expected to weaken further the nationwide constitutional protection for abortion early next year.

—BNC A4H 63

Meanwhile, *expect* can also be used to express a meaning which is not familiar to most non-English

native speakers: directive meaning. See Tanaka's description(2007): "Indeed *expect*, which is a member of *want*-verb, has a directive meaning, but Bresnan (1979 163) syntactically distinguishes this use of *expect*, which is illustrated in (26), from its uses as a *want*-verb and a *believe*-verb, so it would be more plausible to put verbs of commanding and permitting into a different verb class from *want*-verbs."

(26) As long as I'm boss, I will expect you to have a share in the office work. (Bresnan, 1979, p163)

According to the meaning of the whole sentence (26), here it is acceptable to regard this sentence as a command.

Because the pattern *expect somebody to do something* is rich in meaning, it can be ambiguous without a certain context.

Linguistic studies show that, the comparison of syntax and semantics between patterns should be multi dimensional and in all directions.; Comparison of any single dimension will fail to get a true result. For the comparison between the two patterns, we can also explore it from a view point of discourse function, information status and information structures. Langacker (1995 ,33-35) says: In essence, the contrast between sentences like *I expect that Don will leave* and *I expect Don to leave* is that the former sentence gives focus prominence to an entire process (Don's leaving), whereas the latter focuses on a participant in that process. Borkin (1984 :60-61) puts a suggestion from another point of view in terms of syntactic structure difference: The choice between a *that* clause and an accusative and infinitive may have something to do with information structure : infinitival complements " rely on previous discourse to complete their function", whereas *that* clauses do not.

In the process of research-oriented learning we should pay attention to the fact that sometimes there are quite a lot of parameters or variables that could influence the choice of the constructions, they do coincide in some cases. However in a certain context, one of them might be stronger than the other in terms of influential strength, according to our empirical results, and also it has something to do with the verb types and feature strength based on semantics. These are the interesting topics for us to deal with based on the corpus studies in the future. Again the Linguistic investigation is badly needed. As Achard (2007, 786) tells us: Typological research therefore needs to be complemented by in-depth language-specific investigations that bring to light the different kinds of semantic contrasts various complement constructions code". Therefore , multifactorial statistical analyses based on corpus study are very important for our deep learning for the years to come.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper has made a comparison, in terms of linguistics, between words such as *expect*, *anticipate* and *suppose* in the respects of syntax, semantics and pragmatic background, and explored them in detail. Meanwhile the paper has made an in-depth analysis of, and comparison between, the two patterns, *expect somebody to do something* and *expect that clause* in a multi dimensional respects based on the corpus studies, aiming at understanding the differences in structures, meanings, as well as discourse functions and their potential relationship, so as to provide students with linguistic and pragmatic skills with which to use the right word at the right time in the writing and translation concerned. This paper prefers multifactorial statistical analyses of grammatical variation in dealing with English learning . In the respect of teaching, taking the instruction of the use of *expect* as an example, we have explored the research-oriented deep learning of syntax, semantics and pragmatics as a trinity based on corpus studies, focusing on the teaching materials development and experiment with innovation in mind. The key idea of the education is to cultivate the students' ability of critical thinking and deep learning. We may conclude that **Instruction promotes research and research feeds back its achievement to the instruction.**

Note: The asterisk (*) is the sign to indicate an ungrammatical structure.

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AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY



Dr. WU Guoliang, Professor, Chief Expert of the Institute of Foreign Language and Culture, Zhejiang Yuexiu University of Foreign Languages. Ph.D Supervisor of Zhejiang University, China. Distinguished Visiting Professor of Arkansas State University ,USA, Ph.D (HONORIS CAUSA), Colorado Technical University,USA.In the early years,he stayed in Universities at West countries as a visiting professor and research fellow in English linguistics and was Associate Editor- in -Chief of the International Forum of Teaching and Studies(USA) for years. He has got more than140 articles published in the journals, mainly in CSSCI,including SSCI,and other international Journals. He also has more than 40 books published.His main interest is English linguistics, semantics, pragmatics and translation concerned.

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