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Abstract

In this article, the merits and demerits of *Jiudian Yingyu Shouce* (The Wordbook of Hotel English), a newly published corpus-based wordbook on hotel English, is reviewed. It has three distinctive features, including relying on a specially constructed corpus, HotelCOPE, to select headwords and provide some unique lexicographical information, offering some useful appendixes to enhance its usefulness, and seamlessly integrating itself with modern technology for better learning efficiency in the age of mobile learning. Meanwhile, it has also left room for further improvement in the future, including the translation of some headwords. Overall, it makes a valuable addition to the repertoire of references to those learning hotel English in China.

Keywords: *Jiudian Yingyu Shouce*, HotelCOPE, corpus-based, appendix, mobile learning

Jiudian Yingyu Cihui Shouce (The Wordbook of Hotel English) (henceforth abbreviated as *Jiudian*) is a corpus-based wordbook of hotel English. HotelCOPE, the corpus for making the wordbook, needs to be introduced first. It is one of the eighteen subcorpora of the Corpus of Occupational Purpose English (COPE), coordinated by Dr. Jiajin Xu of Beijing Foreign Studies University. HotelCOPE has approximately 150,000 words, with texts crawled from major international five-star hotel websites as well as hotel guests' comments from TripAdvisor. In addition, it also incorporates some Hotel English textbooks published by renowned Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. The 365 hotel-specific high-frequency words in the wordbook are extracted through keyword analysis, based on the statistical comparison between the HotelCOPE and a two-million general-purpose American-and-British English corpus. Useful phrases for the words are selected from

statistically significant collocates using AntConc. All collocational patterns/phrases and typical illustrative sentences are directly based on the data from HotelCOPE.

Among *Jiudian*'s merits, there are three outstanding ones to be noted in this review, which can provide direct inspirations for compiling similar wordbooks for other specialized fields. Firstly, the corpus-based method offers a fresh perspective for compiling wordbooks of a similar kind. The various pieces of useful lexical information concerning a particular word contributes to its overall picture from a different perspective. The entry of "reservation" (see Figure 1 below) can serve as a case in point.

Figure 1. The entry of "reservation"

It can be observed that the number of stars below a word provides users with clues as to how often a particular word is used in seven settings in the hotel industry, such as generic scenario, room service, and catering service. Only words with three stars and above from HotelCOPE are included therein, which cover 100 five- and four-star ones and 165 three-star ones. They are arranged following the decreasing order of frequency, with 5-star ones at the front. This could enable users to focus on most frequently used words in the hotel industry. The phonetic symbols help the user to pronounce words correctly, while labeling the part of speech of each word assists the reader to understand its syntactic functions. The Chinese translation equivalents of a word enables users to know what its Chinese counterpart is. The statistically significant phrases of a word and corpus-based sentence examples can familiarize users with its actual usages. Some words also feature a situational dialogue which illustrates vividly how the word is actually used in context. In addition, some words are even supplemented with other innovative information to make it more user-friendly. Such information includes language or culture notes, word-building information, mind map, illustration, real image, and mnemonic rhymes. The one-word-a-day arrangement aims to help users space out their vocabulary learning. The various features above combine to help users acquire a highly frequent word in the hotel industry through statistically significant collocational patterns/phrases and typical examples, something a similar non-corpus-based work may be incapable of achieving.

The second merit of the workbook relates to the four appendixes which greatly enhance its

usefulness. The appendixes include the table of phonetic symbols, the complete wordlist with the page numbers, the words for common hotel amenities and foods served in hotels. The table of phonetic symbols, with exemplary words and their primary and/or second stress, can help users pronounce a word correctly. The alphabetically arranged full wordlist can assist them in locating a particular word they search for in the wordbook with ease. In the meantime, the terms for common hotel amenities can prove very handy if a user is searching for a way to express it, even if they may not qualify as one of the corpus-based top 365 words or their statistically significant patterns/phrases. The corpus-based list of various foods on the menu in the hotel are also handy since they are used so often in hotel industry, thus making the wordbook more useful to hotel English learners.

The deep integration of the wordbook with current technology marks its third major merit. Since mobile learning has become one of the defining features of the current digital age, being corpus-based alone cannot make the wordbook stand out among other similar ones. Such learning "takes place in learning environments and spaces that take account of the mobility of technology, the mobility of learners and the mobility of learning" (El-Hussein & Cronje 2010: 20). The deep integration of the wordbook with the technology helps it achieve the goal of such learning. This is symbolized by its supporting "U *Ci*" app, which incorporates the contents of the wordbook and the ones beyond it, like several audio-visual units of practical oral English, accessible from various mobile devices. The 365 words for the seven settings are subdivided into 36 groups, with each group featuring about 10 words with the same usage frequency in the same setting. Various tasks have been neatly integrated to enable users to acquire one lexical expression actively rather than passively. Such tasks cover picking out the correct Chinese meaning of an English word, listening to an English sentence used in the hotel setting and repeating it, listening to an English word and choosing its correct Chinese meaning, and selecting the correct English word according to its Chinese meaning. Also integrated into the app are functions: to fill a blank with the words learned; to spell a word according to its pronunciation; to read a response to an expression in a communicative context; and to complete a phrase. When all the tasks concerning the words in a particular subgroup are accomplished, users will be awarded a shining virtual trophy, to encourage them to move on to the next group. Also, the app is further supplemented with 5 units of audio-visual practical oral English and 6 units of useful expressions in the hotel settings. With all the functions of the app neatly incorporated in this way, users are encouraged to actively utilize a word or phrase rather than just acquire a passive knowledge of it.

Despite its merits, this corpus-based innovative wordbook has also left some room for improvement. Firstly, some words, which could have been part of the high-frequency wordlist, are missing. The possible reason can be that HotelCOPE, crawled from the websites of the five-star hotels, has failed to cover some highly useful words or expressions used in the interactions between customers and hotel attendants or clerks, etc. Nevertheless, such words can be very useful in the hotel settings, thus very helpful to hotel English learners. Therefore, the transcripts of in-hotel interactions between customers and clerks or hotel attendants can make valuable corpus data. In such data, words or expressions like "bell desk", "bell captain", "luggage/bell/baggage cart", "luggage rack", "vending machine", might surface. Also some

expressions may only appear in the the pamphlets or notices for customers in hotel rooms, such as "first-run movies", "pay-and-view channel", "safety lock/bolt" and "complimentary coffee". The lack of such data will lead to the absence of some high-frequency words or expressions, which could otherwise be highly conducive to the expansion of hotel English learners' working vocabulary. Therefore, if the wordbook is to be revised in the near future, the data featuring in-room settings and in-hotel interactions from which the lexical expressions will surface can be incorporated to expand the HotelCOPE.

Secondly, to render appendixes 3 and 4 even more useful, they can be further expanded, based on the expertise and/or linguistic intuitions of other researchers. Since the compilers of the wordbook aim to benefit hotel English learners, there seems no need to overemphasize that the appendixes should also be purely corpus-based. The reason is that some words may not appear so often in the HotelCOPE but may supplement certain lexical items extracted from it. Then it is highly recommended that such items are integrated into the appendixes as well. For example, expressions like "front desk" can make valuable supplements to the current "information counter" neatly. Similarly, "buffet lunch / supper / service can serve as useful complement to "buffet breakfast", while "vanity cabinet" to "vanity top". Doing so can further expand hotel English learners' repertoire of useful vocabulary, since it can be enlarged through incidental or intentional learning (e.g.: Nation, 2001: 52). By exposing more relevant words or expressions to those learners, it is hoped that in terms of acquiring hotel English vocabulary, the effect of 'i+1' can be achieved automatically (Krashen, 1987: 21), either incidentally or intentionally. In this way, the hotel English learners can be better equipped with tools to enable them to grasp more "opportunities for rich and varied communication" (Webb & Nation, 2017) and practice them in actual hotel interactions.

Finally, the translation of some words or example sentences in the wordbook are open to question. The translation of "bedding" as "床品 *chuangpin*" is questionable, as there is no such word in Chinese. Instead, it might as well be rendered into "卧具 *woju*" or "寝具 *qinju*", which are the equivalents of "bedding" in many English-Chinese dictionaries and are more commonly used. The translation of "The door is marked 'Private'" can be reworded as "门上挂着'请勿打扰'的标志。*men shang gua zhe 'qing wu darao' de biaozhi*" rather than "门上写着'私人专用'*men shang xie zhe 'siren zhuanyong*'", which can be more reasonable. In addition, to my knowledge, very few rooms in hotels are actually labeled with "private". Correcting such translations can further enhance the quality of the wordbook.

Overall, even if the wordbook still leaves some room for further improvement, it makes a valuable addition to the repertoire of references to those learning hotel English. Relying on a specially built corpus for making such a workbook and integrating it seamlessly with modern technology for better learning efficiency can be especially inspiring to the compilation of similar bilingual works involving other language pairs, to be conducive to learners of occupational English.

Acknowledgments

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