

「琉璃」詞彙競爭探究

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摘要

本文以漢語外來詞「琉璃」為研究對象，結合語言生態學與詞彙競爭理論，探討其在漢語中由多重譯名並存走向單一詞形定型的歷時演變機制。研究採用「雙典平行分析法」(Dual-Canon Parallel Analysis)，以漢文佛典與中土傳世文獻為兩套功能有別而相互滲透的語料系統，透過文本計量分析，系統檢索並統計歷代「琉璃」相關異形詞的用例數與典籍數，建構詞形密度與使用強度等指標，量化比較其在不同語體與歷史時段中的分布與競爭態勢。

研究結果，「琉璃」詞彙演變呈現清晰的歷時分工：佛典語體在魏晉隋唐時期扮演詞形創新的主要場域，衍生出大量多音節新音譯詞，形成高度多樣且競爭激烈的詞彙生態；中土文獻則自較早階段即展現詞形收斂趨勢，長期以「琉璃」與「瑠璃」為核心，並最終確立「琉璃」為主流形式。密度與強度指標顯示，佛典之高峰出現較早，而中土文獻於宋元以降在使用集中度與優勢程度上反超佛典，標誌該詞由宗教專門語轉化為世俗通用詞彙，完成語體擴散與詞彙標準化。

進一步分析，「琉璃」之所以在競爭中勝出，關鍵不在音譯精確度，而在其高度的形—音—義整合：雙音節結構符合漢語韻律，「玉」部構形清楚標示珍寶語義，兼具語義透明度與文化象徵性，因而在漢字系統的過濾機制中取得優勢。本文證實，「琉璃」的定型歷程具體展現外來詞在漢語中「多重補位—競爭—篩選—定型」的演化模式，並顯示語體分工與書寫系統在詞彙演變中的關鍵作用，為漢語外來詞研究提供可複製的量化分析範式。

關鍵詞：琉璃、詞彙競爭、雙典平行分析、外來詞、漢字過濾機制

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A Study of Lexical Competition in the Forms of “Liúlí”

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Abstract

This study investigates the historical evolution and standardization of the Chinese loanword *liuli* (琉璃), drawing on theories of language ecology and lexical competition to examine how multiple competing transliterated forms gradually converged into a single dominant lexical form. Adopting a **Dual-Canon Parallel Analysis** approach, the research treats **Chinese Buddhist scriptures** and **secular Chinese transmitted texts** as two functionally distinct yet interacting corpora. Through large-scale textual quantitative analysis, the study systematically identifies and counts all historically attested word forms referring to *liuli*, and constructs quantitative indices—specifically **lexical density** and **usage intensity**—to compare their distribution and competitive dynamics across genres and historical periods.

The results reveal a clear diachronic division of labor between the two canons. During the Wei–Jin and Sui–Tang periods, Buddhist scriptures functioned as the primary site of lexical innovation, generating a wide range of multi-syllabic phonetic transliterations and forming a highly diversified and competitive lexical ecology. In contrast, secular texts exhibited an early tendency toward convergence, consistently favoring a small set of core forms—primarily *liuli* (琉璃) and *luli* (瑠璃)—and ultimately establishing *liuli* as the dominant standard. Quantitative evidence shows that while Buddhist texts reached their peaks of density and intensity earlier, secular literature surpassed them from the Song–Yuan period onward, marking the transformation of *liuli* from a specialized religious term into a broadly used secular lexeme and completing its genre diffusion and lexical standardization.

Further analysis demonstrates that the success of *liuli* cannot be attributed to phonetic accuracy alone. Rather, its competitive advantage lies in its high degree of **form–sound–meaning integration**: its disyllabic structure conforms to common Chinese prosodic patterns, and its characters—both bearing the jade radical—clearly signal the semantic category of precious materials, thereby enhancing semantic transparency and cultural resonance. Operating through what may be termed a **Chinese-character filtering mechanism**, the writing system favored forms that aligned with entrenched cultural expectations and graphic conventions, gradually marginalizing competing variants such as *liuli* (流離) or more complex phonetic transliterations.

By documenting the full trajectory of *liuli* from multiplicity to standardization, this study provides empirical support for a dynamic model of loanword evolution in Chinese characterized by **multiple filling, competition, filtering, and stabilization**. Methodologically, it demonstrates the explanatory power of Dual-Canon Parallel Analysis for capturing genre-based differentiation and interaction in lexical change, offering a replicable quantitative framework for future research on Chinese loanwords.

Keywords: Liúlì (琉璃) ; lexical competition;; Dual-Canon Parallel Analysis; loanwords ; Chinese-character filtering mechanism

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