

Foregrounded Linguistic Features in *Ulysses*
—— A Stylistic Way of Reading

《尤利西斯》的前景化语言特征
——文体学解读

吴显友 著

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序

文洁若

记得2002年的一个秋天,傅光明(萧乾的关门弟子,现任中国现代文学馆研究员)给我介绍了他在河南大学读博士的好友吴显友,并带来了小吴的一封信。在信中,他介绍了他与乔伊斯的“缘分”,他的研究计划和所思考的一些问题。我给他回了信,并托傅光明捎去了1995年北京乔伊斯研讨会的全部资料。2004年6月在上海鲁迅纪念馆举办了“乔伊斯和他的世界”国际学术研讨会,小吴的交流论文“《尤利西斯》的语音修辞研究”引起了与会者的浓厚兴趣。开会期间,他总会找机会同国内外学者讨论问题,交流思想。吴显友给我的印象是勤奋上进,谦虚好学,勇于创新。常言道:“文如其人”,我先前的一些顾虑也消失了,我相信凭着这股韧劲,他一定会在乔学研究方面做出自己的贡献。不出所料,他的英语博士论文受到了评审专家和答辩委员会的肯定和好评,被认为是“国内第一部以文体学方法专门研究《尤利西斯》的博士论文”。这部专著就是在他的博士论文的基础上完成的。

《尤利西斯》是乔伊斯意识流小说创作的最高成就,同时也是一部集英语各类语体于一书的文体学史,章章都有独特的语言风格和文体特征。《尤利西斯》讲述的是1904年6月16日发生在爱尔兰都柏林市的故事,这一天便成为“布卢姆日”,是世界上唯一一个以纪念一部艺术作品为目的的国家节日。80多年来,《尤利西斯》的艺术魅力一直倍受文学界、评论界和语言学界的普遍关注。评论家围绕作者—文本—读者—语境等方面,就其主题思想、结构布局、艺术形式、文学技巧、语言风格、读者反应和社会、历史、文化语境,进行了多层次、多角度、全方位的探讨与研究,取得了突破性的进展和丰硕的成果。拉康和德里达分别在1975年和1984年的两次国际学术交流会上作了主题发言,随后,福科、克利斯蒂娃、巴尔特和德鲁兹等著名现代主义和后现代主义学者也相继撰文研究《尤利西斯》的艺术价值。20世纪80年代以来在

文艺理论界出现的一些新理论、新视角,如文化研究、新历史主义、女性主义、性与性学、后现代主义,甚至是巴赫金理论、后殖民理论、量子力学等也都被及时地应用到乔伊斯的作品研究之中,取得了一系列重大突破,乔学研究呈现出更加专业化和国际化的倾向。

尽管早在1922年茅盾就在《小说月报》第13期11号上撰短文介绍乔伊斯的新作《尤利西斯》,但在《尤利西斯》发表后的半个世纪里,乔伊斯研究在我国“几乎是一片空白”。70年代末以来,乔伊斯研究在中国大致经历了从初步介绍、宏观描述、微观剖析到全面深化的研究过程,但总的来看,无论是在数量上还是质量上,国内乔学研究都不容乐观,正如王友贵(2000)所指出的那样,“到90年代在翻译上真正有大面积的收获,但研究缺少有分量有独创性的成果”。诚然,阅读《尤利西斯》并非一件易事,要研究它就更加困难。我和萧乾花了4个年头才译完这部鸿篇巨著。我感到阅读《尤利西斯》主要有以下四个方面的困难:(1)隐喻式的神话结构和多层次的主题思想;(2)语言难度大,个别章节艰深难懂(如第14和15章),要吃透原文需下狠功夫。就语言而言,全书除了夹杂有法、德、意、西、瑞典语、波兰语、拉丁语,甚至还有阿拉伯语、印度语、希伯来语、梵语、依地语、土耳其语、日语等;第14章“太阳神的牛”被认为是有关英语文体发展史。该章分为9个部分,代表胚胎发育的9个月,涉及从十四、五世纪到十九世纪末各阶段的英语文体,从盎格鲁—撒克逊的头韵文字直到美国福音派教会的布道文字,其间包括斯威夫特,哥尔史密斯,狄更斯等32位作家的文体风格,还有《圣经》、哥特式小说直到十九世纪医学文献等各种语体;最后一章共8句长达62页,没有标点符号,第一句则由2500个单词组成,用以描述女主人公摩莉那半梦半醒、漂浮不定的意识流;(3)百科全书式的文化语境,涉及天文、地理、历史、宗教、神话、哲学、文学、音乐、诗歌、法律、医学、性等,比如我们对小说第15章的译文注释就多达984条;(4)互文性。《尤利西斯》不仅在章节之间、段落之间充满了多声交叉、渗透与对话的互文性,而且在文本之外与作者的其他作品之间也产生了一个多元的互文本、互文化空间,其中囊括了视觉、语言、运动、听觉等异质符号材料,并使它们在几个不同层面上相互关联,决定相互的意义。难怪不少读者,包括英语读者“谈《尤利西斯》色变”。我

认为,对读者而言,最大的困难还是乔伊斯标新立异的语言文体风格,他的这种不知疲倦的语言文体创新精神一直贯穿于他所有的作品里,从《都柏林人》经《尤利西斯》到《为芬尼根守灵》。吴显友的这本书就是研究这些前景化(偏离常规)的语言现象,其研究目的也很清楚:力求为读者扫清阅读障碍,让更多的读者能够享受到阅读和鉴赏这部“旷世奇书”的乐趣。

吴显友的专著从文体学视角切入,并结合叙述学、政治文体学和互文性理论,从语音修辞、词汇创新、爱尔兰英语语体和文体模仿与拼贴等四个方面对《尤利西斯》的前景化语言特征进行了详细的分析和阐释,提出了自己的见解和结论,这无疑对逐步培养读者对乔伊斯作品的学习和研究兴趣,正确认识和把握意识语体的本质特征都有积极意义。最后提一点希望,若能写一本汉语的姊妹篇,定会拥有更多的读者。

2006年元月20日于北京

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This book originates from my PhD thesis, and along the way many have helped me, and their faith and generosity deserve special recognition.

I owe my greatest thanks to my doctoral supervisor Professor Xu Youzhi for his insightful guidance, scholastic discipline and constructive criticism without which I never would have been able to summon up enough courage to write and complete a thesis about, what I think, one of the most challenging topics. During my three years at Henan University, he consistently refined my sense of style, stylistics and other subjects, guided me through Joycean studies, and offered unflagging encouragement and sound advice every step of my way. Whenever I encountered any difficulty, he was always there to help me out; whenever I had made any progress, even if small, he was even happier than I was. I want to express my deepest respect and appreciation to him for his enormous contributions in time, energy, and eclectic expertise through the entire process.

I am specifically indebted to Senior Editor Wen Jieruo, a co-translator of *Ulysses*, for kindly mailing me the materials at 1995 Beijing James Joyce Symposium and for offering me invaluable suggestions concerning *Ulysses'* studies at 2004 Shanghai International Symposium. My sincere thanks go to Professor Shirley Wood who took pains reading my manuscript, and was pleased at any time to talk about James Joyce with me, which proved so insightful and helpful to me. I make a grateful acknowledgement to Professor Xu Shenghua, Professor Gao Jihai, Professor Zhang Delu, Professor Liu Shisheng and Professor Li Weiping for their advice, support and encouragement in this project.

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Abstract

By way of description, interpretation and evaluation, my study aims at a preliminary study of the stylistic values of the foregrounded linguistic features in *Ulysses* so as to get a better understanding and appreciation of Joyce's linguistic inventiveness in fiction. In so doing, I hope to foster readers' interest in reading and studying *Ulysses*, and thus to do my bit to the acceptance and popularity of *Ulysses* in China. This is quite an adventure because, to my knowledge, such an attempt has not yet been made.

James Joyce is said to be a man of "no style" or "all styles". His work is not big in quantitative output, but any one of his four novels would suffice to make him the reputation of a great writer. *Ulysses* is one of Joyce's most remarkable achievements in the world stream – of – consciousness literature, but there is a funny phenomenon: more bought than read, more literary criticisms than linguistic/stylistic studies. For both readers and critics, one of the biggest obstacles lies in Joyce's fresh and new linguistic innovations which he carries so pervasively, so persistently through all his works from *Dubliners* via *Ulysses* to *Finnegans Wake*. In view of this situation, my research is to explore the linguistic obstacle: foregrounded linguistic features. The highlights are as follows:

Chapter 1 gives a brief introduction to the background of the study, which consists of three major problems: *Ulysses*—the book, *Ulysses*' criticism and the theoretical preliminaries. The first problem includes my "encounter" with James Joyce, *Ulysses*' synopsis, Homeric parallels, its "sun's path" and its stylistic innovations. The second covers literary criticism and linguistic/stylistic criticism, the former of which is discussed according to three periods: the first period (1920s – 1950s), the second period (1960s – 1980s) and the third period (since the 1990s). Compared with the former, linguistic/stylistic criticism is relatively inadequate and its findings

are declared more in articles than book – length studies. *Ulysses*' criticism in China is just a first step out and there is a long way to go to catch up with world Joycean studies. The third problem takes into account such matters as defining "style" and "stream – of – consciousness style" and the theory of foregrounding. A linguistic foregrounding or deviation means a certain linguistic feature which breaks the accepted linguistic rule or enforces the rule by repetition or parallelism at various linguistic levels.

Chapter 2 "Sound Effects" illustrates the special functions of some symbolic sounds, phonological figures and musical genres. *Ulysses* brings us into a world of sounds. The chimings of the church bells suggest a gloomy horrible overtone of death while the jingling sounds of both Bloom's old brass bed and the hackney imply one major theme of the novel—sexuality. Plett's model, though not yet perfect, provides a useful reference frame for a brief survey of the phonological figures in *Ulysses*. In the 15 phonological figures, assonance, alliteration, rhyme and others are directly responsible for its poetical tendency. Music for Joyce carries special implications; music is not only a natural revelation of one's true feelings, but also an effective way to enrich the novel genre. The four songs at the Ormond bar have aroused Bloom's emotional communion and "The Croppy Boy" in particular reveals the betrayal theme. We come to know Bloom and the other characters particularly by their individual tastes in music.

Chapter 3 is devoted to a detailed analysis of *Ulysses*' lexical deviations such as conversion, compound and word – play. For Joyce, words are the basic testing ground to try out his linguistic innovations. Verb and nonverb conversions, known as "dynamic" transfers, are short in form, but compact in meaning. Compounds such as "babemary" and "Besteglinton" are invested with rich cultural connotations, while neologisms like "throwaway" and "theirhisnothis", are good for foregrounding the themes or leitmotifs. "Theirhisnothis" implies the theme of pursuit of father. The "throwaway" motif may carry three implications: (1) As an anecdote, it plays a cohesive function in the novel; (2) it has a Homeric parallel; (3)

it is helpful in describing one aspect of Bloom's personality: kindness. Bloom's major characteristics are also discussed in this section. A few jumbled compounds show that Joyce's lexical inventiveness goes too far and we should take it critically. Word – plays which are witty, comic and playful, are much to Dubliners' liking, suggesting the comic and humorous aspect of Irish people in a way. For Joyce's lexical inventiveness, there is not only irregularity in regularity but also regularity in irregularity.

Chapter 4 discusses Hiberno – English syntax, a typical variety in *Ulysses*. Four major salient structures are examined: (1) inversion; (2) omission of the subject – relative or connector; (3) special TMA markers (tense, mood and aspect) and (4) other salient features. Hiberno – English is relatively simple, practical and expressive, so it is exceedingly popular with ordinary Dubliners. Hiberno – English in Joyce's writing is not merely a matter of writing medium, but that of political importance in that colonial period. The constant occurrence of Hiberno – English adds much to the popularity of Irish literature and culture, showing well the colloquial feature of the “highbrow” *Ulysses*; meanwhile, it is essential to establish the linguistic identity of Hiberno – English and spread Irish culture in that special context.

Chapter 5 is devoted to investigating the functions of stylistic parody and pastiche; for mockery or reverence or metaphorical purpose. The opening words of *Ulysses* are a typical parody on the Latin Mass which enraged the religious circle 80 years ago; similarly, the “Citizen” in Episode 12 is ruthlessly derided as the superfluity of details coupled with various kinds of modifications portrays a lifelike figure of violence, ignorance and pomposity. The two statistical tables show that Joyce is greatly indebted to his predecessors and that the novel is characterized by intertextuality.

Chapter 6 makes a conclusion. Joyce's linguistic inventiveness is extensively and effectively carried out in *Ulysses*, covering those features at every aspect of language. Those foregrounded linguistic features are novel, vivid, economical and expressive. Usually invested with rich cultural im-

plications, they are conducive to portraying characters or foregrounding themes. It is by these abundant linguistic materials that Joyce is able to provide a more faithful representation of Dublin's persons, things and objects as well as a person's mental activity; it is in these marked features that Joyce is seeking to reveal the inseparable relationship between style/form and meaning/content, and thus to increase the expressive power of literary language, and it is in grappling with linguistic deviation, creativity and polysemy that much of the pleasure of reading *Ulysses* lies. Linguistic inventiveness is part of Joyce's artistic ingenuity in fiction and calls for further studies.

Key Words: *Ulysses*; foregrounded linguistic features; stylistic way of reading

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 *Ulysses*: the Book

June 16, 2004 was the centenary of Bloomsday, the day that Leopold Bloom, the central character of *Ulysses* (1922), set out on his odyssey through the streets of Dublin on the 16th June, 1904, and also the day that James Joyce met his wife, Nora Barnacle whom he married legally in 1931. The 2004 Bloomsday was being marked in over 60 countries, with enthusiastic Joyceans feasting on readings in Tokyo, acting out Molly Bloom's soliloquy in Buenos Aires and eating stock feed in Sydney, giving a truly international taste to the celebration of a book about Dublin that was written in rooms in Trieste, Paris and Zurich. In Dublin, the celebration of the day lasted five months, and "50,000 tourists, many or most of them with little connection to academia, are expected to flood Dublin on June 16. Bloomsday has become the world's de facto literary holiday, when devotees in Edwardian costume re-enact the book's salacious scenes, sing Irish music hall melodies, and tramp out for 18-hour pub crawls with a zeal more reminiscent of a Star Trek convention or a Renaissance Fair than a salon of academic snobs."^① No other date in literature is so widely celebrated.

As a Joycean lover, I was fortunate enough to be invited to attend the 2004 Shanghai Symposium (June 16—18) and had a precious opportunity to rub shoulders with Joycean critics and scholars at home and abroad. Presentations and discussions at the symposium covered a variety of topics and issues, such as Joyce's biological studies, his narrative skills, his ar-

① Canvanagh, T. *Ulysses Unbound: Why Does a Book So Bad It "Defecates on Your Bed" Still Have So Many Admirers?* Reason, July, 2004. http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1568/is_3_36/ai_n6181300.

tistic achievements, Joyce's effects, his political and cultural contexts, and so on. But after the three-day brainwashing, I felt neither relaxed nor delighted. At that time, the very scene of my "encounter" with James Joyce about four years ago kept turning up in my mind.

1.11 My "Encounter" with Joyce

That was a June morning (2000), and I was strolling home after delivering two periods of Advanced English reading course for my college students. Under a big shady tree near the college swimming-pool, stood a mobile discount bookstore which frequented our campus once a week. As usual, I browsed some magazines, journals and books. Among piles of books, one new book instantly caught my eye: *James Joyce: Modern Ulysses* by Yuan Decheng (1999), one of the series of Western Humanist Thinkers. The original price was 18 yuan and the discount price was only three yuan. I immediately bought the book for two reasons: its unreasonably cheap price and my long-cherished reverence for James Joyce, a man famous for *Ulysses*, "a book from heaven". At the same smiling price, I bought two more books of the same series: one by Wu Houkai (1999) and another by Xiao Minghan (1999). With the total price of less than that of a steak, I got three precious books which brought me an engaging summer vocation. It is through these three books that I have fostered my real interest in James Joyce and western literature, particularly stream-of-consciousness literature, and what's more, my "encounter" with James Joyce has turned out to be the turning point in my academic pursuit. But after the reading, when I calmed down, that big sale appeared repeatedly before my eyes. I felt somewhat sympathetic and even obsessed about the displeasing prospects of *Ulysses* here in China and in the world. Concerning the matter, questions may easily arise: Why are Joyce and *Ulysses* given the cold shoulder here in Chongqing and other places in China? How about *Ulysses* and its style? How to read *Ulysses* properly? No doubt, these are intimidating questions, and any single one would easily consume a man's life as I came