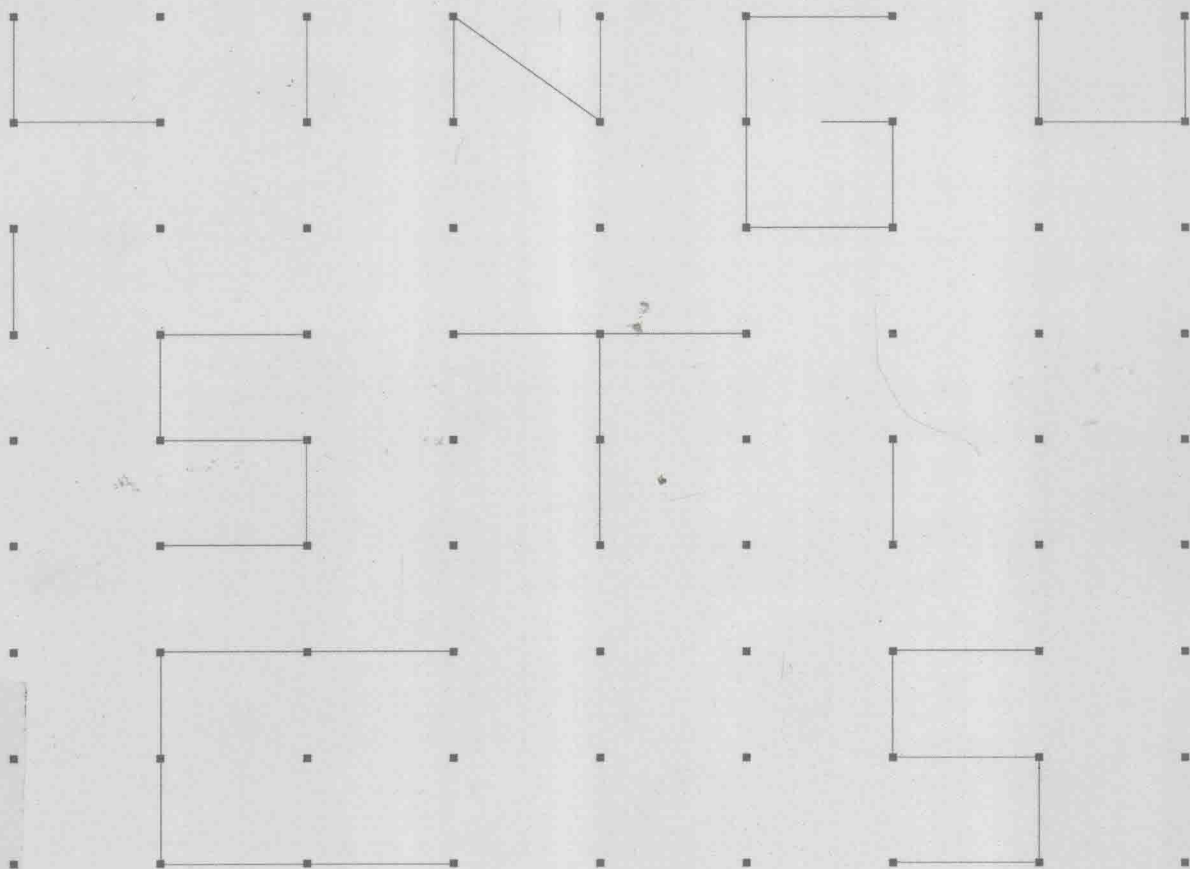


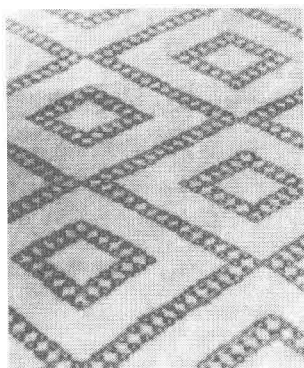


GUIDE TO ENGLISH LINGUISTICS

英语语言学导读

主 编：高 阳

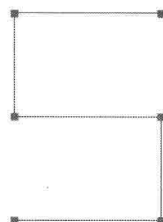
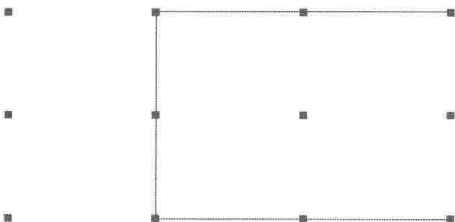
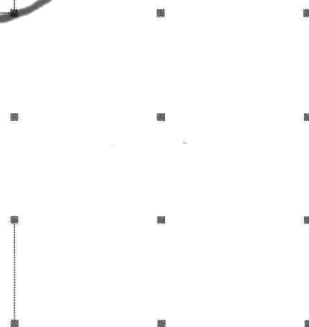
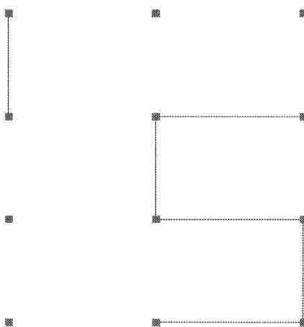
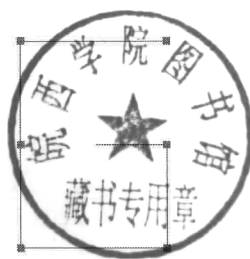




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主 编：高 阳
副主编：李 郁
 张志峰



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前言

目前,《高等学校英语专业教学大纲》明确地把英语语言学列入高等院校英语专业必须开设的专业知识课程之一。这门课程对于提高学生的英文修养及专业水平至关重要,而且属于英语类自学考试及硕士研究生资格考试的必考科目。近年来,国内很多著名学者编写和出版了几种普通语言学教材,其中大部分书籍全部采用英文编写,内容多,知识点分散,学生接触、掌握、吸收起来比较困难。针对本科的教学实践,有的过于偏重理论,有的过于艰涩,有很多不适宜的地方。

为了满足学生渴望了解语言学基础知识、扩大自己知识面及认识深度的需求,我们专门编写了这本《英语语言学导读》,希望能帮助他们系统地掌握语言学知识。编者本着理论联系实际、重点突出的原则介绍了英语语言学的基本理论和概念,着力培养学生的感性认识和理性认识。

本书汲取了英语语言学重要的研究成果,以国内高等院校的英语专业本科生为教授对象,遵循条理清晰、层次分明的原则,以易于学生理解、掌握和查询为目的编写。具体特点如下:

易理解:本书编写形式新颖,每节英文内容后,都有相应内容的汉语解析,解析简洁、重点突出;同时,在比较晦涩难懂处,添加了生动活泼的图片示例,方便学生理解。

易掌握:本书在每章介绍基本内容之后,均特意设置了“要点分析”、“名词解释”,同时,为了满足学生更深层次的要求,收集整理了相关内容的经典文献,方便学生掌握重点,了解全局。

易查询:本书附录中不仅包括传统的术语英汉对照列表,还有重要语言学术语定义,均为中英文对照,方便学生系统查询。

本书内容针对性很强,将重点知识点提炼出来,使学习程序简化,具有很强的操作性。全书共分十三章,既包括传统的内容,如语音学、音位学、形态学、语义学、语用学,吸收了新兴的学科,如语言与社会、语言习得。

参加编写工作的是哈尔滨商业大学英语专业教师,其中高阳主要编写第一、二、三、四、五、七、八、九、十一、十二章;李郁主要编写第六、十、十三章以及英汉与汉英语言学术语对照表;张志峰收集整理语言学文献选读部分。

本书得以出版应感谢哈尔滨商业大学外语学院的鼓励和外语教学与研究出版社的大力支持。由于编者水平有限,书中难免有不妥之处,恳请读者不吝赐教,便于以后修订提高。

编者

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Chapter 1 Introduction

概述

[本章概述]

- 1.1 What Is Language? 什么是语言?
- 1.2 Design Features of Language 语言的本质特征
 - 1.2.1 Arbitrariness 任意性
 - 1.2.2 Duality 双重性
 - 1.2.3 Creativity (Productivity) 创造性 (能产性)
 - 1.2.4 Displacement 移位性
 - 1.2.5 Cultural Transmission 文化传递性
- 1.3 Functions of Language 语言的功能
- 1.4 What Is Linguistics? 什么是语言学?
- 1.5 Scope of Linguistics 语言学的领域
- 1.6 Some Important Distinctions in Linguistics 语言学中的一些重要区分
 - 1.6.1 Descriptive vs. Prescriptive 描写性和规约性
 - 1.6.2 Synchronic vs. Diachronic 共时性和历时性
 - 1.6.3 Langue vs. Parole 语言和言语
 - 1.6.4 Competence vs. Performance 语言能力和语言应用

1.1 What Is Language? 什么是语言?

Linguists have not reached an agreement on how to define language. Consider the following two definitions:

“Language is a purely human and non-distinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols.” (Sapir 1921)

“Language is human vocal noise or the graphic representation of this noise in written used systematically and conventionally by a community for purposes of communication.” (David Crystal 1989)

Both definitions refer to the element of system and both allude to the fact that the association between the words used and the things that they denote is not inherent, Sapir by using the word symbols and Crystal by referring to the fact that the association is the result of convention. Crystal, in referring to the vocal noise, is more specific about the principal way in which the message is physically transmitted.

These definitions, though different, are based on the same assumption that only human beings have language. To give the barest of definition, language is a means of verbal communication. It is instrumental in that communicating by speaking or writing is a purposeful act. It is social and conventional in that language is a social semiotic and communication can only take place effectively if all the users share a broad understanding of human interaction.

Many linguists hold that human language is specific (unique). A question that has been pursued is: What properties make human language unique?

And there are more understanding on the definitions of language, which are given in different respects.

Language can mean

- 1) what a person says, e.g. bad language, expressions;
- 2) the way of speaking or writing, e.g. Shakespeare's language, Luxun's language;
- 3) a particular variety or level of speech or writing, e.g. language for special purpose, colloquial language;
- 4) the abstract system underlying the totality of the speech/writing behavior of a community, e.g. Chinese language, first language;
- 5) the common features of all human languages, e.g. He studies language;
- 6) a tool for human communication. It explains language's social function.
- 7) a set of rules.

【解析】第一节：什么是语言？此节主要讨论了语言的定义，而至今语言学家们仍在语言的定义上无法达成一致。尽管不同，大多数的定义都基于只有人类有语言的假设。

1.2 Design Features of Language 语言的本质特征

Design features refer to the defining properties of human language that distinguish it from any animal system of communication. By comparing language with animal communication systems, we

can have a better understanding of the nature of language. A framework was proposed by the American linguist Charles Hockett. He specified 12 design features, five of which will be discussed here.

【解析】 第二节：语言的本质特征（识别特征）。语言的本质特征是指人类语言区别于任何动物交流系统的定义性特征。只有通过与动物交流系统的比较，我们才能更深层次地理解语言的本质。此本质特征由美国语言学家 Charles Hockett 提出，其列举了语言的五个基本本质特征，包括：任意性、双重性、创造性（能产性）、移位性、文化传递性。

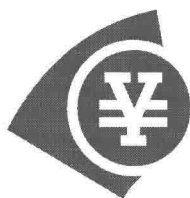
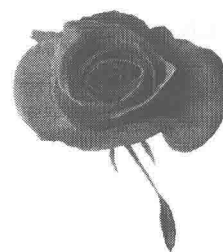
1.2.1 Arbitrariness 任意性

The widely accepted meaning of this feature which was discussed by Saussure, first refers to the fact that the forms of linguistic signs bear no natural relationship to their meaning. A good example is the fact that different sounds are used to refer to the same object in different languages.

This also explains the symbolic nature of language words are just symbols; they are associated with objects, actions, ideas, etc., by convention. This conventional nature of language is well illustrated by a famous quotation from Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*: "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." However, we should also aware that language is not entirely arbitrary, certain words are motivated. The best examples are the onomatopoeic words, such as *rumble*, *crash*, *cackle*, and *bang* in English. Besides, some compound words are also not entirely arbitrary, e.g. "photo" and "copy" are both arbitrary, but the compound word "photocopy" is not entirely arbitrary.

Why do you call me "Rose"?

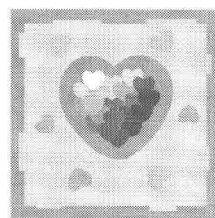
When we read the following pictures, it is very easy for us to identify these pictures stand for what. Picture 1 stands for Renminbi (RMB), Picture 2 stands for that it is designed for the disabled persons, Picture 3 stands for "love" and obviously Picture 4 is the symbol of Olympics.



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Arbitrariness of language makes it potentially creative, and conventionality of language makes learning language laborious. For learners of a foreign language, it is the conventionality of a language that is more worth noticing than its arbitrariness.

【解析】任意性：声音和意义之间的关系是约定俗成而确定的。用语言学的术语说，这种关系就是“任意性”。简而言之，任意性意味着声音和意义之间的联系没有特别的理由，或者说声音和它所表示的意义之间没有自然和不可避免的联系。

1.2.2 Duality 双重性

“By duality is meant the property of having two levels of structures, such that units of the primary level are composed of elements of the secondary level and each of the two levels has its own principles of organization.” (Lyons 1982: 20)

At the low (secondary) level there is a structure of sounds which are meaningless. But the sounds of language can be grouped and regrouped into a large number of units of meaning such as morphemes and words, which are found at the high level of the system. In the lines of Keats, “The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves”, for example, there is a repetition of sounds which are associated with the letter “s”. One of these sounds is voiced in the words *flies* and *eves*, and the other unvoiced as in *summer*. The same distinction corresponds to spelling differences in the case of “v” (voiced as in *eves*) and “f” (unvoiced as in *flies*). These distinctions are part of the sound system of English. But the sounds don’t themselves have meaning. What they do is to combine in all manners of ways to form words which are meaningful. So although we can attribute no meaning to the sounds /s/ and /z/ or /f/ and /v/ as such, they serve to make up words which are different in meaning, as for example:

face/feɪs/ & *phase*/feɪz/; *safe* /seɪf/ & *save* /seɪv/.

Obviously this duality provides language with productive power: A relative small number of elements at one level can enter into thousands of different combinations to form units of meaning at the other level.

Many animals communicate with special calls, which have corresponding meanings. That is, the primary units have meanings but cannot be further divided into elements. So we say animal communication systems do not have this design feature of human language—the property of duality. Consequently, the communicative power of animal language is highly limited.

【解析】双重性：语言是一个系统，它是由两套结构或两个层面构成的。在较低的或者基础的层面上，存在着一个语音结构，自身没有意义；在较高的层面存在大量有意义的单

位。粗略地说，语言的组成成分是那些自身不传达意义的语音，其唯一功能是各自组合成例如词之类的有意义的单位。动物的特定声音是用来交流的，这种声音有相应的意义，但无法再分解成更小的元素。

1.2.3 Creativity (Productivity) 创造性（能产性）

Language is creative in the sense that users can understand and produce sentences they have never heard before. If I say “A three-eyed white monkey is sleeping soundly on bed of the king of France.” None of those who have heard it would have any difficulty understanding it, though it is remotely possible that anyone could have heard it before.

Creativity is unique to human language. Most animal communication systems appear to be highly restricted with respect to the number of different signals that their users can send and receive.

The creativity of language partly originates from its duality which we just discussed in the above section, namely, because of duality the speaker is able to combine the basic linguistic units to form an infinite set of sentences, most of which are never before produced or heard.

Language is creative in another sense, that is, its potential to create endless sentences. The recursive nature of language provides a theoretical basis for this possibility. For instance, we can write a sentence like the following and go on endlessly:

This is the farmer sowing the corn that kept the cock that crowed in the morn that waked the priest all shaven and shorn that married the man all tattered and torn that kissed the maiden all for torn that milked the cow with the crumpled horn that tossed the dog that worried the cat that killed the rat that ate the malt that...

The following example also shows a sentence can be expanded in a way of recurring.

He came into a room (that had a big shelf (which was full of books (which were covered by thick layers of magazines (which were put there by the lady (who used to...

In conclusion, productivity is peculiar to human languages, and the users of language can understand and produce sentences they have never heard before. We can speak an endless number of sentences with a limited vocabulary and one sentence can expand into endless theoretically possible sentences in the way of recurring.

【解析】 创造性（能产性）：我们能应用有限的词汇去创造无限的句子，并且一个句子理论上可以产生无穷无尽的句子。很多时候我们所说的、所听到的都是第一次说和听到的句子。

1.2.4 Displacement 移位性



“Can you talk with me?”

Displacement means that language can be used to refer to things which are present or not present, real or imagined in the past, present or future or in far-away places (time place). Thus, I can refer to Confucius, or the North Pole, even though the first has been died for over 2,550 years and the second is situated far away from us.

In contrast, no animal communication system possesses this feature. Animal calls are mainly uttered in response to immediate changes of situation, i.e. in contact of food, in presence of danger, or in pain. Once the danger or pain is gone, call stops.

【解析】 移位性：移位指人类语言可以让使用者来表示在说话时（时间和处所）并不存在的物体、事件和观点。移位性赋予人们概括和抽象的能力，这是动物无法达到和拥有的能力。

1.2.5 Cultural Transmission 文化传递性

While human capacity for language has a genetic basis, i.e., we were all born with the ability to acquire language, the details of any language system are not genetically transmitted, but instead have to be taught and learned. An English speaker and a Chinese speaker are both able to use a language, but they are not mutually intelligible. This shows that language is culturally transmitted. It is passed on from one generation to the next through teaching and learning, rather than by instinct. In contrast, animal call systems are genetically transmitted, i.e., animals are born with the capacity to produce the set of calls peculiar to their species.

That means language can transmit culture which the language contains.

Human children grow up speaking the language they hear in their immediate surroundings. Human language is transmitted by the culture we live in, not by parents. If the Chinese infant is adopted by an Italian couple living in Italy, he or she will grow up speaking perfect Italian.

【解析】 文化传递性：语言属于文化的一部分，文化的传递是以语言为载体的；同时语言是通过传授学习的，并不是通过本能，在传授语言的过程中文化必定被传承。