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A Telos-oriented Model
of Genre Analysis
—A Case Study
of Corporate Website Genres

基于目的论的语类分析模式 ——以公司网站语类为例

赖良涛 著

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序

听到赖良涛博士即将出版《基于目的论的语类分析模式——以公司网站语类为例》一书,本人感到由衷的高兴,也向赖良涛博士表示祝贺。赖良涛 2007 年考入厦门大学攻读博士学位。在我的印象中,他学习刻苦用功,大量阅读语言学的有关书刊,不断提高自己的科研能力和科研水平,是一位非常勤奋的学生。2008 年,他申请国家公派研究生的博士生联合培养项目,到澳大利亚悉尼大学语言学系进行为期一年半的学习,在 James Martin 教授的指导下展开研究。

语类是系统功能语言学经常涉及的一种重要概念,因此有许多学者对其加以研究和探讨,赖良涛的著作能把系统功能语言学和社会学的理论与目的论结合起来,阐释语类的本质,提出分析语类的模型,并把它运用于公司网站语类的研究来加以验证,从而说明语类是以目的为导向的社会活动类型。该书采用级阶的概念,把语类目的分解为三个单位,并说明目的单位能决定语类的三个结构单位,目的单位和语类结构单位可构成复合体。该书并且用体现、实例化和个体化三个维度来说明语类分析的可操作性,使大家对语类能有更深刻的认识。

赖博士在回顾学者对语类研究的基础上,能够进行归纳,并指出以前研究的不足之处。与此同时,赖博士提出了自己的语类分析模型。为了说明这一模型如何应用于不同语类的分析,他选取描述性报告和公司主页语类进行了详细的对比分析,说明在不同目的的影响下不同语类的实例化过程,得出了有意义的结论。因此该书不仅提供了研究语类的另一种思路,而且丰富了语类研究

的内容。

赖博士已在自己的学术生涯中迈开了可喜的一步。我期待能够看到他在功能语言学的研究上取得更多的科研成果。

杨信彰

2012 年 7 月 6 日于厦门

Preface

For over three decades now scholars from China have pursued coursework and research in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Sydney. This has proved an invaluable exchange of scholarship, as annual international and national systemic functional linguistics (hereafter SFL) conferences bear witness. One scholar who typifies this negotiation of ideas is Lai Liangtao, who spent 18 months of his PhD program at Xiamen University working alongside us in Sydney. This book consolidates the work on genre with which he was engaged for this research.

This book, *A Telos-oriented Model of Genre Analysis*, is an important contribution to genre theory in several respects. For one thing it provides an up-to-date and very scholarly survey of relevant work on genre, including the three “grand” traditions of ESP, New Rhetoric and SFL. In addition Lai interrogates and develops the notion of purpose deployed across these traditions, inspired in part by Russian activity theory. Lai argues that a deeper engagement with telos provides a firmer grounding for work on genre staging (including phases and smaller units of meaning), and for dealing with the challenges of genres and macro-genres, synoptic and dynamic perspectives, multi-functional analysis (ideational, interpersonal and textual) and typological and topological approaches to genre agnation. In keeping with the privileging of system over structure in SFL, Lai proposes a paradigmatic telos-oriented perspective, the rewards of which he illustrates with respect to several genres which play key roles in the constitution of corporate websites.

Informing all of this discussion is Lai’s careful scholarly reading of extant work and recent developments in SFL theory, including an important elucidation of the complementarity of realisation, instantiation

and individuation in relation to genre theory and description. Accordingly, I would strongly recommend this book not just for scholars interested in cutting edge work on genre, but for anyone exploring the foundations of SFL theory. Lai's current research focus is on the potential applications of genre studies to language teaching in China, inspired in part by Sydney School genre-based literacy programs. It is indeed exciting to imagine what these prospective exercises in applicable linguistics have in store as our Sino-Australian conversations about language and society unfold for decades to come.

Professor J R Martin
Department of Linguistics
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前言

语类在语言学界一直受到广泛关注,因为语类是人类语言活动的一个核心概念,语类的研究具有重大的理论意义和实践意义。从理论上来说,语类就是人类语言文化活动的模式,语类研究对于研究语篇结构生成、语篇动态性、文化系统、文化模式等具有重大意义。在实践上,语类研究对于课程教学、文化传承等应用领域具有重大的指导意义。近二十多年来,语类研究主要关注具体语类的语言特征,而语类基础理论和分析模式的研究进展不大。

基础理论研究很容易失之肤浅、空泛,成为好高骛远之作,语类理论研究也不例外。为了使本研究具有一定理论深度,作者从语类的核心概念“目的”出发,以哲学目的论为基本理论依据,整合社会学、社会心理学、社会符号学、系统功能语言学等相关理论,通过分析人类社会活动的目的结构来研究语类的本质、系统、结构、体现、实例化、个体化、语类关系、分析工具、分析方法等基本问题。研究的基本目的是发展悉尼学派的语类理论,提出一个相对完整可行的语类分析模式。理论深度似乎有了,但其效果是深入深出、深入浅出、还是深入不出,有待各位专家学者鉴别。

为了使新理论模式免于空泛,作者选取了IT业领军企业的网站语类为语料,按照体现、实例化、个体化三个维度,通过小型语料库来验证模式的可行性和应用价值。毋庸讳言,一个小型语料库对于验证新理论的实际需求来说只是杯水车薪。更大的问题在于受技术条件限制,语篇分析、特别是网站等多模态语篇分析目前基本只能靠手工,无法实现大规模计算机处理,因而分析过程中不可避免带有一些主观个人因素,分析得出的结论也必然有偏颇之处。这些问题都是今后努力的方向。

本专著是国家留学基金委资助、厦门大学外文学院和悉尼大学语言学系联合培养博士项目的结晶。首先我要感谢我的导师厦门大学

学杨信彰教授。数年来他一直引领着我的学术研究。博士论文的开题、框架确定、数度修改,无不凝结着他的汗水。杨教授渊博的学识、敏锐的洞察力、严谨的治学态度、宽容的学术胸怀是我一生学习的榜样。杨老师和师母无微不至的人文关怀,让我永生难忘。

其次我要感谢我在悉尼大学的导师 James R. Martin 教授。是他让我开拓了学术视野、把握了功能语言学的最前沿动态。正是他的学术宽容和批判精神让我有勇气班门弄斧,在他指导下对他一手创立的悉尼学派语类理论进行批判、整合、发展。本书中许多观点、创新,都是和他深入讨论的结果,并得到了他的首肯和鼓励。Martin 教授还数次通读论文全文并提出深入、细致的指导意见。本书将要出版之际,Martin 教授欣然作序、推介。他的帮助、指导,将让我受用终生。

还要感谢的是厦门大学连淑能教授、吴建平教授、纪玉华教授、南京师范大学辛斌教授、东北师范大学杨忠教授、浙江大学马博森教授、悉尼科技大学 Susan Hood 教授和 Theo van Leeuwen 教授以及荷兰 Tilburg 大学的 Jan Renkema 教授,他们都对本书的内容提出过中肯、独到的批评和建议。此外,我在厦门大学和悉尼大学求学期间的同学、同事、朋友等也都在论文撰写过程中提供了不少帮助、关怀。

最后还要感谢我的妻子王任华博士对书稿的校对,感谢我的家人在我多年求学期间给予的理解、支持、鼓励,感谢厦门大学出版社王扬帆女士在本书出版期间的大力协助。没有他们的支持,本书出版绝无可能。

本书是一个理论创新的尝试,其中定有许多不足甚至谬误,恳请广大读者批评指正。

Abstract

Genre has long been treated as a subject in academic study in linguistics, literature, anthropology, ethnography and other sciences. In most genre theories, purpose has been treated as an important element. However, in most cases, it is only treated as a common sense term and taken for granted. This book presents a teleological study of genre, with purpose studied academically and treated as a pivot for the working of genres. A telos-oriented model of genre analysis is developed through an integration of the theories of teleology, sociology and SFL, and is tested through its application to a case study of corporate website genres in a small corpus consisting of 16 websites. The book thus paves a new way for the development of genre theory and genre analysis.

The necessity of a teleological perspective is entailed by the teleological nature of genres. A genre is a typification of telos-driven social actions. It is telos-driven because as realization of human activities, human actions are driven by a motive/object and directed toward a conscious purpose, and are in turn realized by specific operations subordinate to specific conditions. Purpose is the basic criterion for distinguishing one action from another. An action type will be established in a community through the recognition of similarities in terms of objectives/motives, agents, tools, and methods between individual actions, and will be routinized when it can be successfully used in new situations.

Based on the teleological ordering of human action, three teleological units are suggested: purpose, goal, and end, which are considered as underlying the three structural units of genre analysis:

genre, stage, and message. Each of the teleological/generic units can form complexes, and a higher-level unit can be embedded into a lower one. Each teleological unit is considered as consisting of representational, interactional and organizational aspects, which respectively condition the field, tenor and mode at the register stratum and the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions at the discourse semantic stratum.

Based on the teleological structure of social actions, a telos-oriented genre system is developed, which includes two subsystems: simplex and complex. The simplex subsystem describes the configuration of specific goals and the complexing of the goals into the purpose of a specific simple genre. The complex subsystem describes the resources employed to organize two or more genres into a genre complex (macro-genre) based on the teleological ordering of purpose subsumption. This tentative genre system is believed as capable of capturing the underlying principle for the derivation of generic structure.

Based on the telos-oriented genre system, genre staging is considered as the result of the realization of the simplex subsystem, and may be explained teleologically by the concretization of a general and abstract purpose into several specific goals. As for genre agnation, typology is based on the difference in the values of the same system feature realized in different genres, while topology is the result of the sharing of feature values in the genre system among several genres. The theories of genre system, structure, staging and agnation are applied in the analysis of website genres.

A general and abstract genre is teleologically operationalized along three dimensions of semantic variation simultaneously: realization, instantiation, and individuation. The telos-oriented genre system is realized by a teleological structure, which is then realized by a generic structure. The three teleological aspects of a purpose are respectively realized by the corresponding register variables, which are in turned realized by the three metafunctions at the discourse semantic stratum.

Genre realization is illustrated by the exploration of the realization process of operating procedures, descriptive reports, compositional reports, and news stories.

Genre instantiation deals with the teleologically-conditioned relation between system and text. Each level along the realization dimension instantiates. Different ways of coupling and commitment instantiate the same genre into different texts. The specific instantiation process is illustrated by the analysis of the different instantiations of the descriptive report genre and the homepage genre employed on corporate websites.

Genre individuation is concerned with the achievement of the specific purpose of a genre by a user through the employment of user-specific semiotic resources. Every stratum along the realization hierarchy individuates. During the individuation process, individual users on the one hand show their respective unique identity through their unique ways of coding, and on the other negotiate their identities with each other and affiliate themselves into personality types, master identities, and finally into the system. Genre individuation is illustrated by the individuation/affiliation processes in three company profile texts of the descriptive report genre.

The specific telos-conditioned genre operationalization process preconditions semiotic resources at the register and discourse semantic strata, which are adopted as tools for the analysis of specific genres. A register is a configuration of field, tenor and mode variables, which are respectively contextual projections of ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions. At the discourse semantic stratum, the appraisal, involvement and negotiation systems deal with interpersonal meanings, the ideation system and the external part of the conjunction systems deal with ideational meanings, while the internal part of the conjunction system, the identification system and the periodicity system deal with textual meanings.

The specific telos-oriented genre analysis process can proceed

either in a top-down or bottom-up order based on the principle of metaredundancy. The basic method is to work out the semiotic configurations at one stratum based on those of the adjacent stratum, with the pursuit of the general purpose of the specific genre as the key factor conditioning the semiotic configuration. The analysis of macro-genres should work out the logico-semantic relations among the elementary genres and show how such an organization serves the pursuit of the most general purpose of the macro-genre.

Key Words: genre; teleology; model of analysis; application

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