文学语篇的语用文体学研究
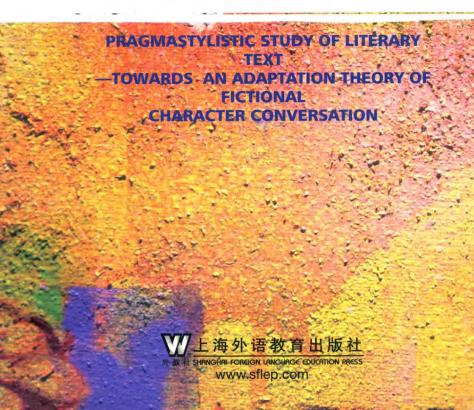
——基于顺应理论的小说人物会话分析 汪承平 著

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—TOWARDS AN ADAPTATION THEORY OF
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前 言

"语言—文学"之争由来已久。语言和文学各走各的路，长期处于分裂状态。事实上，语言研究和文学研究互相依存，密不可分。文学作品本质和功能的研究离不开语言。文学是语言的艺术，语言是文学的第一要素，文学和语言之间有着不解之缘。"语言学转向"使语言成为人类的家园和文学存在的方式。《文学语篇的语用文体学研究——基于顺应理论的小说人物会话分析》的侧重点是运用耶夫·维绪尔伦的语用学观点，即选择、顺应理论，解读小说中的人物会话。

会话是一个复杂而有序、受规则支配的活动。小说会话通常用来实现多重任务，因而更加复杂。尽管如此，它是有序的、有章法的，并且可以用语言学分析方法对其进行系统描述的。本书在语言学和文体学相关研究的基础上，构建了基于语言选择与顺应的小说人物会话分析框架。该框架综合了顺应论和语用学其他相关理论的最新研究成果，并试图解答如何让顺应论更有效地促进文学话语分析这一问题。具体而言，本书就是研究作者在小说人物会话中如何选择语言成分来顺应各种语用因素以达到交际意图和艺术效果的。

本书首先对小说会话涉及的相关因素进行分析，探讨日常会话和小说会话的各自特点及其相互关系，并详细论述运用语用学理论分析文学语篇的可能性和可行性。小说中的人物都有他们自己的词汇、句法和表达方式，能够精确而又形象地反映其性格特征。因此，小说人物会话是人物性格的载体，是一个嵌入在小说中推动情节发展、展现人物冲突的动态过程。一直以来，人们在进行文学批评时，通常仅就个别作家和作品的人物会话作些附带评论。然而，小说人物会话的特点、其作为小说构成要素的作用以及和其他构成要素之间的关系等基本问题一直未得到应有的关注。

文体学家对非传统意义上文学话语分析类型（语言体裁）做了很多研究。有些理论，如合作原则、言语行为理论、礼貌原则等已经用于小

说会话分析。然而，此类研究未能充分考虑文化、社会、认知等因素对小说会话整个过程的影响，因而难以做到全面而又充分地理解文学作品。耶夫·维绪尔伦的理论继承和发展了语用学的基本理论和原则并和它们互为补充，从而形成了一个综合统一体，恰好满足了这方面的要求。

维绪尔伦从达尔文生物进化论和皮亚杰的心理学适应理论中得到启发，认为语言使用是受认知、社会和文化等因素制约的行为，强调认知、社会和文化等复杂因素在语言使用和语言理解中的作用。语言的使用和理解是一个为了适应语境而不断进行语言选择的过程。根据顺应理论，意义是在语言使用者及其心理世界、社交世界、物理世界的相互联系中产生的。语言使用者在语言的各个层面进行顺应选择以达到各种社会需要和各种交际目的。文学语言的使用在语言选择过程中涉及作者意识的程度更高。根据本研究提出的语用文体学顺应理论框架，小说人物或小说作者的任何一个语言选择（包括语言策略的选择）必有自己的意图，并能产生特殊的语用文体效果。在小说会话中，作者（人物）为了顺应其心理世界、社交世界和物理世界，在语言、语码、语体、语言构成要素（如语音、词汇、句法、语义）以及交际策略各个层面进行语言选择，以达到刻画人物、展开情节、服务主体的目的。

本研究有以下几点发现和启示：

第一，作为语言综观论，维绪尔伦的顺应理论涉及话语构建成分以及社会、文化、认知等方面，可用以解读具体小说话语交际。

第二，利用以语言顺应综观论为基础的文学语篇语用文体分析框架来分析小说会话的语篇构成模式及其艺术效果，消除了以往小说会话在研究视野和考察范围等方面的局限。该方法不仅从小说会话语篇生成（发话者）的角度，还从话语接受者（读者）的角度研究小说人物会话产生的结构模式。基于分析语言选择的变异性、协商性和顺应性的研究模式有利于读者理解小说作者是如何通过语言选择的艺术技巧将人物形象生动地呈现的。

第三，通过顺应分析，书中所选的小说会话交际的复杂性和艺术效果得以充分展示，小说人物交际过程能够得到恰当的解释。

语用顺应文体学分析方法继承了话语分析、会话分析和文学文体学之精髓，统一、协调了诸多领域的相关研究成果，是在此基础上形成的

综合方法。其目的是为文学研究提供非主观映象式的研究方法，更加有效地解读文学语篇中的话语交际。

本书稿是在我的博士学位论文基础上修改而成的，也是 2011 年安徽省高校人文社科重点专项课题——"语用学视域下的文学语篇研究"(2100SK3592d) 的部分研究成果。今日得以面世，首先要感谢我的导师——上海外国语大学梅德明教授。梅老师是国内外语界德高望重的专家。在上海外国语大学攻读博士学位期间，我有幸成为梅老师的学生。我聆听梅老师的语言哲学课程，发现梅老师学贯中西、旁通古今，更让我敬意倍增。在撰写博士论文的过程中，梅老师以平易近人的态度和宽广的胸襟引领我、启发我，在论文选题、研究方法、论文结构等方面给予耐心细致的指导。在得知学生这本拙作即将出版时，梅老师欣然接受为本书作序的请求。回顾整个论文写作过程，我的心中充满了对梅老师的感激之情。感谢皖西学院澳大利亚籍教师托马斯·斯蒂芬先生对本书语言部分的校阅。同时感谢上海外语教育出版社将本书纳入出版计划，感谢责任编辑李倩女士在本书出版过程中的辛勤付出。此外，徐君先生在资料收集等诸多方面给予我极大的帮助与支持。在此，我一并向他们表示最真诚的感谢。最后，由于学术水平有限，书中肤浅乃至不妥之处在所难免，我真诚地期待读者的批评和指教。

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2015 年 9 月 10 日

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Contents

Chapter *1*

Introduction

1.1 | Introduction

Modern linguistics has contributed a lot to the development of modern stylistics. For a long time, modern stylistics has aroused much debate, and one of the disputes is that stylistics is the study of literature based on linguistic description and analysis, whereas linguistics is regarded as having nothing to do with literary studies. Concerning the disputes of stylistics by literary critics and linguists, it is necessary, first of all to discuss the relationships between language and literature, and between linguistics and literary criticism.

The major dispute is on the convergence versus divergence of language and literature. Literature is created out of language and it is the art of language while language provides material for literary creation and is the major medium for literary communication. Literary works form part of the data for which linguistic theory must account. Language studies and literary studies are inseparable and mutually dependent. It is reasonable to say that the study on the essence and functions of literature cannot avoid examining the literary language. However, as Feng (2002) writes, although there is a keen awareness of language in literary studies from Aristotle onwards, and although linguistics has been attentively responsive to literature, the bridge between the two kinds of studies has never been stable. The general situation between linguistic and literary studies can be characterized as disharmony. For a time, in British universities, it is not unusual for the department of linguistics to be separate from the department of literature (or English) (Guerin et al., 1999:232). As the new discipline has transcended traditional philological studies, a number of new questions have arisen: is literature merely a part of language? Is the object of literary criticism totally different from the object of linguistic analysis? Is the

language of literature susceptible to the same kind of study that can be brought to bear on, for example, language in its spoken form?

Consequently, there is also a debate about linguistics as an approach to literature. One can find articles, for example, that say that attempts to apply modern linguistics to the study of literature are "out-and-out failure".

The divergence between "linguistics and literature" has existed for a long time. Before the 1960s, linguistics and literature were two separate disciplines. Literary circle took a skeptical attitude towards the function of linguistics in the study of literary works. Literary critics held that linguistics was a scientific subject and linguistic theory would destroy the artistic beauty of literary text, while linguistic circle overlooked the study of literary language or were wandering around the edge of speech and writing, or of langue and parole, not touching on literary text. In their opinion, literary criticism was somewhat irrational and impressionistic. In *The Languages of Literature*, Fowler (1971a:1–2) describes the relationship of the two subjects as "… a lamentable spectacle of two close neighbors jealously fencing in their pastures and defending them at any cost, including irrational argument". Sell in his *Literary Pragmatics* also points out this problem. He comments that although language and literature are "close neighbors working on the same branch", there is almost no communication between them (1991:xii–xiv). "Linguistics and literary history were simply two peas in the philology pod." (Greenfield, 1986:vii)

It is undeniable that linguistics has become a valid and applicable tool in the study of language. Especially since Halliday's first work "Descriptive Linguistics in Literary Studies" (1966), much attention has been paid to literary aspects of language. Scholars have tried to prove that linguistics can further the studies of literature. Stanley B. Greenfield has shown how linguistics is helpful in restoring a balance to the New Criticism. He comments that the "new linguistics" is instrumental because it "gives rise to both linguistic and critical interest in elements of language other than diction, symbolism, and imagery, those staples of New Criticism" (1986). In *Essays on the Language of Literature* by Chatman et al. (1967), one can read that "reconciliation" between linguistics and literary critics is necessary. Consequently, the convergence of linguistics and literature was brought about in the 1960s with the rise of sociolinguistics, and the introduction of Speech Act Theory and text linguistics.

A number of linguists and literary critics have moved from the two extremes to a merging of the two disciplines, with the linguists taking literary language as corpus in their language investigation, and the critics adopting a linguistic approach in their interpreting literary works. Works of such scholars as Jakobson (1960), Fowler (1971a), Halliday (1973), Carter (1982), etc. have demonstrated close relations between linguistics and literary studies from interdisciplinary perspectives.

It is generally supposed that literature cannot be studied in depth without taking language into consideration, whereas language cannot be studied apart from literature. This assumption is not difficult to justify, for it is evident that a literary work cannot be adequately understood without sufficient knowledge of its language. But there is a deeper reliance of literary studies on linguistic studies than the other way round. Most critical discussions of literature, at some stage, appeal to linguistic evidence in literary texts. Practical literary criticism relies more heavily on linguistic evidence than others. In addition, lots of the basic vocabulary of literary criticism such as "metaphor", "irony", "antithesis", "figurative", etc., cannot be explained without resorting to linguistic notions.

Against this background, modern stylistics which adopts linguistic methods in literary studies has been established in the early 20th century. Stylistics is often compared to a "bridge" between linguistic analysis and literary critics (Short, 1989:183). The difference between linguistic, critic and stylistic studies of literature is clarified by Liu (2003) in that linguistics focuses on form studies with description as its essential task, whereas literary criticism focuses on content studies of which the greatest attraction is interpretation. Stylistics is a kind of interdisciplinary study of the two, emphasizing both linguistic description and literary interpretation.

Michael Short (1982) summarizes the stylistic analysis into three correlated steps. Their relation is as the following:

Description ⟶ Interpretation ⟶ Evaluation
(mainly linguistic)

Since any literary text is a fictional world constructed by language, then, through the description and analysis of the constituents of language the author chooses and its stylistic effect, the meaning of the text can be better understood

and at the same time, its artistic value can be adequately explained.

Along with the rapid development of modern linguistics, there have been important developments in the linguistic study of literary works. Thus stylistics has been brought into existence. Influenced by formalism and New Criticism, stylistics tends to view meaning as residing in texts. As a result, stylistics has been doing more description than interpretation of a literary text, and considers language in literary text as static or abstract. Moreover, stylistics takes poetry as the object of study and seldom touches the other literary genres. With the development of pragmatics, there comes a new perspective on language in literature—pragmatic perspective. Pragmatic theories and principles have been applied to literary text analysis and thus pragmastylistics or literary pragmatics, which views literature as dynamic or communicative discourse, appears. Great attention has been paid to this new area; scholars and experts that have been acknowledged for their contributions to the interpretative power in this field are, Fowler (1971b), Burton (1980), Leech & Short (1981), Cummings (1983), Short (1982a), Sell (1991), Yu (1993, 1996, 1999), Feng (1997, 2002), Tu (2004), Wang (2006), Gao & Shen (2007), Toolan (2008), etc. As pragmatics looks at language in use in certain context, likewise, pragmastylistics deals with literary discourses in their use as contextualized. Pragmastylistics as an interdiscipline, together with the developments of pragmatic theories and literary theories, can serve as a powerful tool for more explicit linguistic descriptions and analyses with less impressionistic and therefore more convincing literary interpretations. The present study will proceed, on a pragmatic level, analyzing literary communication or specifically fictional character conversations.

Most critics and common readers find the dialogues in a fiction especially interesting and memorable. One who loves reading novels is likely to remember Oliver Twist asking for more, or Catherine declaring her passion for Heathcliff, or Jane confessing her affection to Rochester. It is the speech of the characters that is most often remembered. "Speech is such a revealing indicator of character that it is a common resort of novelists to imaginary speech, as a way of conveying the hidden purport of a person's behavior" (Leech & Short, 1981:171). Furthermore, theme construction has been achieved through the conversations and other components of the fictional texts. There have been

some incidental comments on characters of some books and authors; however, the fundamental questions of the nature of fictional speech, its role as one of the components of a novel, and its relationship to other components of the novel and to everyday speech have often been paid less attention to than they demand and deserve.

Many pragmatic theories and principles, such as Cooperative Principle, Speech Act Theory, Politeness Principle etc. which are originally based on oral communication, have already been adopted into the analysis of the novel conversation. Toolan provides an overview of several common analyzing models for discourse stylistics (1990), including Speech Act Theory, Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP), Levison's Politeness Principle (PP) and Conversation Analysis (CA) etc. More recently much work has been carried out by stylisticians on the way fictional speech presented in discourse genres beyond those conventionally classed as literary. While carrying out studies on fictional speech, researchers must take into consideration the cultural, social and cognitive factors so as to interpret literary works in a more comprehensive way. Verschueren's Adaptation Theory which inherits and extends the rudimental theories of Cooperative Principle, Politeness Principle, and Relevance Principle, has just met this demand. As the chief concern of this study is to develop Adaptation Theory as a tool to analyze fictional conversation, references will be made principally to the introductory treatments of the subject in Verschueren's *Understanding Pragmatics* (1999).

Adaptation Theory (AT) considers the use of language as a process of continuously making linguistic choices, both in producing and interpreting an utterance. Language users can make proper choices only because language has three properties—variability, negotiability and adaptability. The process of language use can be described and interpreted from four aspects: contextual correlates of adaptability, structural objects of adaptability, dynamics of adaptability and salience of adaptation processes. It also demonstrates that meaning is generated in the correlations of mental, social and physical worlds and the users may make adaptive choices at any linguistic level to satisfy different social needs or achieve various communicative ends.

Since it was put forward in 1987, AT has evoked extensive and broad

attention. In China, the studies of the theory focus on its applications. In the first place, it is mainly employed in translation studies; in the second place, it is used in the analyses and studies of the adaptability of communicative strategies. AT provides a new perspective for pragmatic study and it investigates language production and language interpretation from a different perspective, which is thus considered to be of great theoretical significance and demonstrates a strong interpretative power. However, AT has seldom been adopted in the study and interpretation of literary texts.

In order to meet satisfactory communication needs, the writer has to choose not only the language forms, including codes, language, style, words, sentence structure, text type, but also pragmatic strategies. Therefore, literary creation is also the result of making choices. This study will elaborate Verschueren's AT in ways which will enable it to cope more fully with literary discourse, and to develop its potential not only for an in-depth understanding, interpretation and appreciation of literary works, but also for going deep into the aesthetic value of literary works.

1.2 | Objectives of the Study

The main part of this study is devoted to the development of an approach which allows us to describe literary utterances in the same terms used to describe other types of utterances. This study is intended to answer several questions: (1) why pragmatics, which is normally employed in real-conversation, can be adapted to the investigation of conversation in literary text? (2) should the pragmastylistic approach go one step further to avail more achievements in the domain of literary criticism? (3) how will the adaptation theory facilitate a more rigorous discourse analysis for literary works? Specifically, how will the writer choose linguistic elements in fictional conversation and adapt them to various pragmatic factors in order to arrive at communicative purpose and achieve the artistic effects? This study attempts to build up a framework, hoping to get a more efficient, more adequate and more scientific interpretation of fictional conversation by applying it to the analysis of fictional character conversation. Thus a practical purpose of this study is to

provide a new perspective for readers in their interpreting and understanding of fictional conversation.

1.3 | Research Scope and Methodology

A novel is not composed of a single discourse, but the occurrence of discourse within discourse—a complex array of many discourses. Novels can contain at least three levels of discourse, one embedded inside another, operating at the level of author and reader, narrator and interlocutor, and character and character. This study will single out the conversations between the characters which are ultimately a part of the message from author to reader.

Since the actual choice-making involves all aspects of language use from the structure of the language itself to paralinguistic elements, and since the choices in one area are often adaptable with those in another, the selected samples will test the validity of Adaptation Theory, by abstracting one prominent aspect at a time and disregarding the other aspects. e.g. "word choice" can represent code, style etc. simultaneously, and can adapt to the social world as well as to the style. The discussion will focus on just one aspect of them.

Given the enormous range of fictional dialogue types, it goes without saying that examples used in this study will have to be restricted to a limited choice of samples, which the author hopes will be sufficiently representative to introduce the basic framework of AT and its being as methodological tool.

Methodologically speaking, this study is a combination of theoretical discussion and empirical research. Theoretical discussion is used more often in the construction of the theory of literary pragmatics of fictional texts, and in the description and interpretation of Adaptation Theory, some being inductive, and others deductive. Empirical research, which is qualitative and descriptive is mainly used to test the applicability of Adaptation Theory, e.g., the discussion of some examples. It will try to demonstrate how Verschueren's AT can be used to describe what writers and readers are doing with the language when they are engaged in works of literature.

1.4 | Data Collection

This study makes analysis on novel conversation based on Verschueren's AT. The texts selected to exemplify this effect are from the generally accepted literary canon. Most data for this study is taken from three novels, two English and one Chinese, namely: *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, *Sons and Lovers* by D. H. Lawrence, *Fortress Besieged* by Chian Chung-shu, in which dialogue has an exceptionally prominent place. Due to the limited space here, it is impossible to cover all the dialogues, but only the typical ones that can illustrate the explanation power of Adaptation Theory.

In order to cite more typical and illustrating examples to make the arguments more convincing, examples outside the above mentioned three novels are occasionally referred to.

1.5 | Layout of the Study

This study consists of seven chapters. The aim of chapter one is to make initial attempts for the study, i.e. formulating objectives, providing the rationale for the present study.

Chapter Two offers a review of some major points concerning fictional conversation and elaborates the feasibility and possibility of applying pragmatics to literary discourse. Firstly it is to explore the nature of ordinary conversation and fictional conversation and to investigate the relationship between them. Secondly, it is to survey stylistic study of literature and to investigate the problems with stylistics, bringing in the next part—literary pragmatics. And thirdly it is to review the studies related to literary pragmatics home and abroad, which act as the background of introducing the next section—the interpretation of fictional conversation.

Chapter Three discusses some of the related pragmatic theories. Its purpose is to examine some of the main tenets of pragmatics, to access their

potential roles in the analysis of literature, and to discuss some of the topics of general concerns so as to prepare the ground for the analysis of its various aspects and manifestations in later chapters.

Chapter Four first elaborates upon the theoretical foundations of the study and propose the multi-level adaptational framework for fictional character conversation analysis. And then, it explains how the framework operates.

Chapter Five and Chapter Six are intended to explain, with reference to the proposed framework, how the described AT is handled in practice, by drawing on excerpts of fictional character conversations as evidences in order to test the descriptive and interpretative adequacy of Adaptation Theory and its procedure, so as to prove the feasibility of the cross-disciplinary pragmatic discourse analysis.

Chapter Seven basically presents a gist of the present study. It also summarizes the main findings and conceives a guide for further study.