

余富斌 主编

英语修辞概览

AN OUTLINE OF ENGLISH RHETORIC

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江西高校出版社

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PREFACE

This is a book dealing with the figure of speech in a systematic way. The study of various kinds of figurative speech has a long tradition. Of late, however, publications in this field seem rather scarce. The reason might be that the subject seems too close the meaning to be presented in formal analysis, and yet too heterogeneous to be discussed consistently. To the advanced learners, in fact, a comprehensive knowledge about the recognized forms of rhetoric expression is of great help in reading and translation. A general guide or handy reference on this subject is almost unavoidable at present. This book will fill this gap and meet the learner's need suitably.

What is more, an inquiry into the uses of figures of speech in their context may be of interest to the study of text linguistics. This book, with its illuminating definitions and many interesting examples may prove to be a stepstone to further study.

I know Mr. Yu more than thirty years. He was diligent when he was a student. After graduation he works conscientiously. He has been teaching college English over two decades. The present volume is compiled from his lecture-notes. It lives up to his assiduous work

Z. F. Sun

J. N. U. Nanchang

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Chapter One INTRODUCTION

第 1 章 引言

1. What is Rhetoric

Retarik 修辞学

Rhetoric, as a course, has, from the very beginning, been regarded as the art of expressing oneself well. As early as in the fourth century B. C., Aristotle defined it as the art of persuasion.

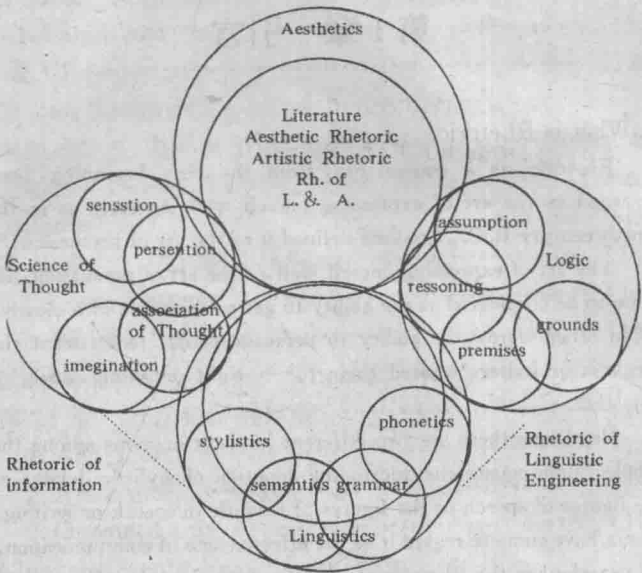
The art of expressing oneself well, or the art of persuasion, has come to be considered as the ability to get across one's idea clearly, or, in other words, the ability to persuade people to do what the speakers or writers wanted them to—right or wrong, justly or unjustly.

Nowadays there are two different kinds of opinions among the people. Some equate rhetoric to the adoption of stylistic devices or the figures of speech or the figures of rhetoric in speech or writing; others have come to regard it as the effectiveness of communication. To us, whether the adoption of stylistic devices or the effectiveness of communication are all rhetoric. The differences lie only in that the former lay emphasis on the study of various means used in speeches or writings while the latter put stress on the social effectiveness.

2. The interposition of rhetoric and other principles

Rhetoric has a close connection with many other principles, such as, aesthetics, literature, linguistics, logic, thought, psychology, acoustics and various kinds of engineering. So we may think of rhetoric as a principle interposed among all these principles, especially between linguistics and literature.

Rhetoric is a principle among Linguistics,
Literature and other principles of science



The interposition of English Rhetoric

2-1 Rhetoric and Association of Thought

When we are discussing the relationship between Rhetoric and Association of Thought we have to put Rhetoric and Association of Thought under the premises of Thought and linguistics. Rhetoric and Association of Thought is one aspect of relations which vividly depicts in rhetoric the relations of the two major principles.

For example:

"It's a case of January and May."

It is quite wrong if we take it literally for "一月和五月的一种情况"。本句有其深层次的寓意, "January"代表"winter", "winter"的典型特征为"snow"——white, "white"引申到"white-haired man"; "May"代表"flowers", 而"flowers"的典型特征为"beautiful", "beautiful"则是"young lady"的外貌。所以此句的真正含义是"一位白发老头娶了一位美丽的少女为妻"。人们则谚称为"老少配"。如果不是通过联想发挥作用, 其修辞效果则很难为人们所认识。

That is the so-called polysemy of words, or in other words, the connotation or denotation of words

As to metaphorical thought (a neglected topic of major importance. We have to think of A as B to get a better grasp of it.

Let's consider the relatively simple case of thinking of the geometrical figure sometimes called the "Star of David" in the following different ways:

- a) as an equilateral triangle set upon another of the same size; (figure 1)
- b) as a regular hexagon, bearing an equilateral triangle upon each of its edge; (figure 2)
- c) as three superimposed congruent parallelisms. (figure 3)

咱们举一个相当简单的几何图形“正六角星”为例。我们可以把它看成是:

- a) 两个同一大小的等边三角形, 其中一个倒置在另一个之上(见图 1);
- b) 一个正六边形, 其每条边上各有一个以其为边长的等边三角形(见图 2);

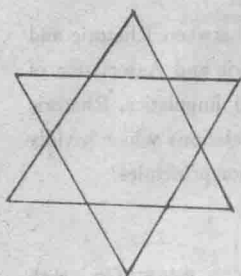


fig 1

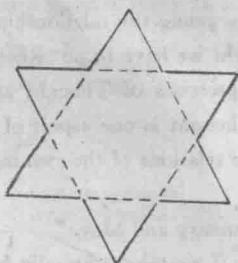


fig 2

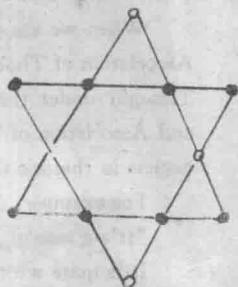


fig 3

c) 三个互相有一部重叠的平行四边形(见图 3)。

d) as the trace left by a point moving continuously around the perimeter of the Star and then around the interior hexagon;

e) as in d), but with the point tracing out the hexagon before moving into outside.

d) 一个沿正六角星各顶点和凹点运行的轨迹,及一个沿内正六边形运行的轨迹(见图 2);

e) 或反之,一个先沿内正六边形运行的轨迹,及一个后沿正六角形各顶点和凹点运行的轨迹(见图 2)。

至此,所出现的情况,就与我们理解明白的 A 相似于 B 的修辞情况,相似无二了。把六角星看成是重叠的平行四边形,犹如修辞学家把生活看成是一个连续的信息流一样;两者均是通过概念得出这一发现的;两者又都是借助某一适当的表达来介绍其各自的观察力的。

在我国,修辞与联想的不解之缘之例子也比比皆是:

在《红楼梦》电影或电视连续剧中,薛宝钗和林黛玉对弈的场景中,导演在处理谁执黑、谁执白时,很快就确定了,黛者黑也,薛(雪)者白也。但是,在处理宝玉观棋的位置时,却颇费了一番苦心踌躇。后来是从两句诗“面对着嵩山高士晶莹雪(薛),终不忘世外仙姝寂寞林”得到启发,确定了宝玉观棋的位置应该是“站在黛玉的立场,面对着宝钗的挑战”。导演的这种处理,大家都认为入情入理,也是通过修辞与联想的关系产生效果。

再请看下面一则小故事。

从前,有位先生,很喜欢看《三国演义》,整天捧着一本书,这倒无妨。精

糕的是，他逢人便吹嘘，凡是三国演义中的人物，他没有不知晓的。

有一次，他正吹得天花乱坠时，一位长者实在看不惯，便走上前去，说：“请问，先生，你既然这么熟悉三国演义中的人物，周瑜的母亲姓什么？诸葛亮的母亲又姓什么？”先生被这突如其来的问题问蒙了。“我读了《三国演义》这么些年，也不知道。书上肯定未交待过。”长者说：“白纸黑字，书上明明写着。”先生当即下拜，向长者求教。长者说：“你知道三气周瑜吗？”“知道”。“周瑜气绝身亡前，说什么来着。”“他悲叹，‘既生瑜，何生亮？’”“这不明明白白地——告诉你了么？周瑜的母亲‘既(季)’氏，诸葛亮的母亲姓‘何’嘛？”先生满脸羞红，自愧不如长者，以后再也不敢吹嘘了。

故事是真是假，周瑜的母亲是否姓季，孔明的母亲是否姓何，姑且勿论。因为这毕竟是“故事”，是相声艺术家表演时用的材料。但是，老者通过三国中的语言，别开生面的联想，则可以给人以启迪，把周瑜气绝身亡时的悲叹，联想成自白了两位智士的母亲姓氏。这种效果，恐怕连原著作者罗贯中也未始料及。

2-2 Climax and Anticlimax in relation to Logic 层进及递降与逻辑的关系

我们很多同志都学习过 Jacques Danvoir 所写的报导 Hiroshima——the “Liveliest” City in Japan 这一课文(见张汉熙主编的 Advanced English 第七课)，其中有这样的一段描述：

“Gentlemen” said the mayor, “I am happy to welcome you to Hiroshima.”

Everyone bowed, including the westerners. After three days in Japan, the spinal column becomes extraordinarily flexible.

“Gentlemen, it is a very great honour to have you here in Hiroshima.”

There are fresh bows and the faces grew more and more serious each time the name Hiroshima was repeated.

“Hiroshima, as you know, is a city familiar to everyone,” continued the mayor.

“Yes, yes, of course,” murmured the company, more and more agitated.

“Seldom has a city gained such world renown, and I am proud

and happy to welcome you to Hiroshima, a town known throughout the world for its——oysters.”

I was just about to make my little bow of assent, when the meaning of these last words sank in jolting me out of my sad reverie.

“Hiroshima——oysters? What about the bomb and the misery and humanity's most heinous crime?”

所谓突降法，或曰反高潮法，是指说话或写作从重大意义的内容，突然转入平淡或荒诞的内容。广岛作为原子弹爆炸的现场之一，仅在爆炸中丧生的就达七万一千之众，此外，还有因射线灼伤，在极端的痛苦中缓慢死去的，还有因基因损伤，影响下一代乃至几代人生下来就残疾的，不计其数。这些都是人所共知的事实。一提起广岛，人们便自然而然地把这些事实联系在一起。

市长闭口不提原子弹，而独提起牡蛎，讳避重大意义的内容，其真实意图是，不使在场的外国人难堪，尽量淡化人们的悲伤。当然，牡蛎也是广岛的一大名产，但比起原子弹爆炸的知名度却相距径庭。这是从重大政治内容转入日常生活小事的一个实例。细想之，这是有其逻辑道理的。

其实 climax 和 anticlimax 是相反相成的。Anticlimax 要以 climax 作基础，否则难以体现其突降（反高潮）的效果。汉语中也不乏其例。

有这样一则笑话。当年的民兵希望在军训时，每人有一支枪，军训才象实战一样。县里派员到基层进行视察，来员作了一个讲话。他说：

我是县长（民兵们以为县长大驾光临，掌声雷动）——派来的。（掌声过后，众皆愕然。）

关于枪的问题，解决了。（尽管见到的人不是县长，能解决实际问题，大家还是掌声热烈。）一人一支——（大家又劲头十足地鼓掌）是不可能的。两人一支（半数鼓掌）——也是办不到的。三人一支（剩三分之一的人鼓掌）——是木头的（众皆哗然）。

这就是典型的递降法的实例，也是符合逻辑的必然发展。

Climax 和 anticlimax 互相穿插，从一个侧面看是层进，从另一个侧面看是递降。请看下面英文实例。

An old lady of good fortune was sitting in the sunshine in a park. A poor young lad was wandering by. On seeing the old wealthy lady, he came forward and greeted her.

"Oh, you are very beautiful, I like you."

"Sorry, I am very hard of earing. Will you speak louder? I can't hear you."

The young man said in a lower voice:

"You are very pretty, I like you very much."

"Sorry, I am hard of earing. Will you speak a bit louder? I can hardly hear you."

The young man murmured.

"You are really lovely. I would like to court you."

"Sorry I am a bit hard of earing. Will you speak still louder? I can almost hear you."

The young man wispered.

"You are sweet-hearted. I would like to marry you."

"Now, now. I can hear you."

The old widow offered her hand and the young man took it and they both walked home hand in hand.

从音响的角度,先是"greet", "in normal voice"接下来"in lower voice",再接下去是"murmuring"最后是"whispering"是采用递降手法,但是从意义的角度,"can't hear", "can hardly hear""can almost hear"到"can hear",却是层进,直到最后"walked home hand in hand"圆满结束。

It is in line with logic; The rich old widow was badly in need of care and consolation, while the poor young man was in want of wealth and fortune. So both of them are satisfactory for the time being. Besides, there are also points of repetition.

2-3 Rhetoric in relation to Aesthetics 修辞与美学的关系

When we are dealing with the relations of rhetoric and aesthetics we are discussing the problem from four different angles: acoustics, coloration scenery, shape and form, and imagery.

J2-3.1 Rhetoric and acoustics 修辞与声美

a) This kind of perfume is cool, calm and comfort.

这种香水清心、凉爽、宜人。

此句采用的是(alliteration)押头韵的方法,连用三个[K]音,似乎在连说三声“OK,OK,OK”。

b) I see the dull, drilled, docile brutish masses of Hun soldiery plodding on like a swarm of crawling locusts, ...

我看见大批笨头笨脑、机械训练、服服贴贴任人指挥的匈军象蝗虫一样在爬行。

tull”、“drilled”和“docile”是押头韵

c) The rain drops drip-drop, plip-plop, splatter-splash.

雨在滴滴嗒嗒、啵啵剥剥、淅淅沥沥地下。

drop-drip, plip-plop, splater-splash, 既押头韵, 又拟声。

d) The door opened with a creak and was shut with a bang.

门吱的一声开了, 碰的一声关了。

“creak”和“bang”是象声词。

e) The difference for example, between the much-touted Second International(1934) and much-clouted Third International(1961) is not like the difference between the yearly model but like the difference between the horse and buggy and automobile.

例如, 备受吹捧的韦氏国际词典第二版(1934)和备受抨击的韦氏国际词典第三版(1961)之间的差别, 并不象一种汽车不同年代型号之间的区别那么小, 而象轻便马车与汽车之间的区别那么大。

much-touted 和 much-clouted 是准押韵。

2-3.2 Rhetoric and coloration

a) The one in the brown suit gaped at her. Blue suit grinned, might even winked. But big nose in the grey suit still stared——and had small angry eyes and did not even smile.

穿棕色衣服的人目瞪口呆地盯着她, 兰衣服笑着, 甚至使了一个眼神。但是, 穿灰衣服的大鼻子依然凝视着, 他生着一双红肿的小眼睛, 没有笑。

“棕”“兰”“灰”“红”色彩多姿。

b) We sat on the flat clay terrace under an apple tree with a view of distant hills through the afternoon hours till sunset.

我们坐在苹果树下的土坪上, 望着远山, 整整一个下午, 直到太阳

西沉。

有“黄色”的土，“绿”色的苹果树，“灰”蒙的远山，“红”日西沉。色彩绚丽。

2-3.3 Rhetoric and shape and form 修辞与形美

a) We sat on the flat clay terrace under an apple tree with a view of distant hills through the afternoon hours till sunset.
土坪、苹果树，远山、红日形成多维空间；黄的土、绿的树、朦胧的山岗、红日晚霞、绚丽的色彩；下午到黄昏，时间跨度。这多重组合成形美。

b) Sow seed——but let no tyrant reap;
Find wealth——let no imposter heap;
Weave robe——let no idler wear;
Forge arms——in your defence to bear.

播下种子吧，别让暴君收；

寻找财富吧，别让骗子留；

织造锦袍吧，别让懒汉穿；

铸造武器吧，拿起来为保卫自己战斗。

播种者与暴君，创造财富者与骗子，织造者与懒汉，一句话，真善美与假恶丑，形成了鲜明的形象对照，色色脸谱，跃就纸上。

2.3-4 Rhetoric and Imagery 修辞与意美

a) Our class is limited.

我们班是有限员定额的。

这是在厦门大学短期英语高校教师进修班上一位外教，针对常有不明身分人员来听课时说的一句委婉的“逐客令”，她不说“不欢迎外人听课”的粗话，而改用婉言。

b) In private I should merely call him a liar. In the press you should use the word “reckless disregard for the truth” and in Parliament——that you should regret he “should have been so misinformed.”

在私下里，我就会干脆把他叫做撒谎者，在报刊上，你却要使用这样的字眼“粗心大意地忽略了事实”，而在议会里——你则要表示遗憾，因为他“竟然得到了如此错误的情报”。

这就是说在不同的场合下，要使用不同的措词，这就是婉言法。