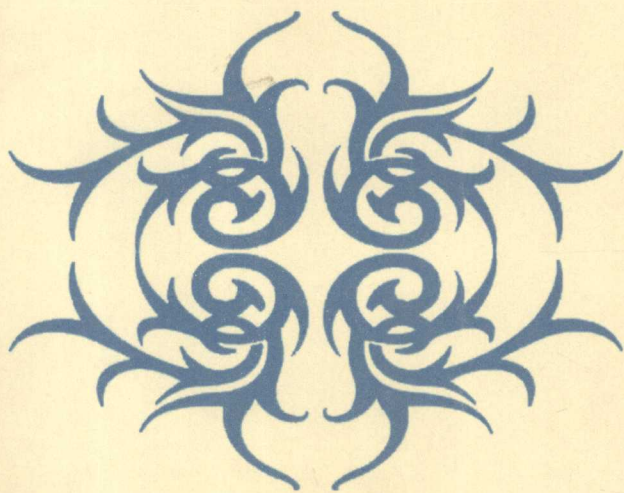


*Argumentative Writings by English
and Chinese Natives:*

A Study in Contrastive Rhetoric

论证语篇的 对比修辞研究

王燕萍 编著



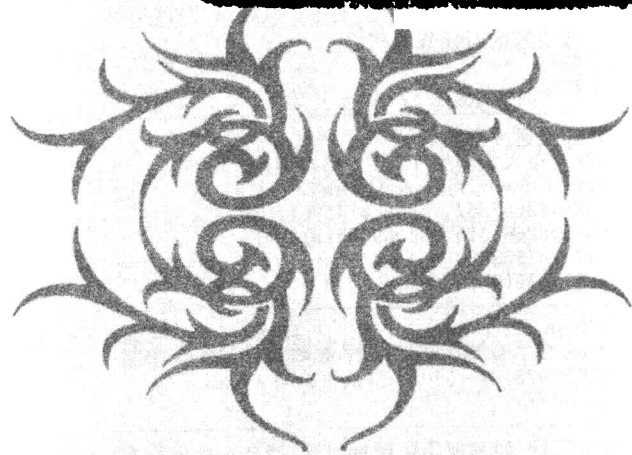
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内 容 提 要

本研究以国内外正式发表的英文论证语篇为语料进行英汉对比修辞的研究,旨在揭示英汉修辞模式的差异,及外语写作中母语思维模式负迁移现象的存在,从而有助于改进国内英语教学,特别是英语写作教学,帮助英语学习者在英文写作中自觉地、有意识地运用符合英语修辞习惯的语篇模式。本研究中的一些研究成果也可推广至汉英翻译。

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随着语言哲学、社会语言学与心理语言学等学科的发展,“修辞”作为思维方式这一新概念已被广泛接受。始于二十世纪六十年代的对比修辞这一研究领域,通过对不同语言、不同文化的修辞模式的对比研究来启示第二语言的写作实践。

英汉对比修辞的研究在国内起步较晚,尚未得到充分发展,因而中国作者在英文写作中常因语篇结构即修辞结构使用不当而影响写作质量。本研究以国内外正式发表的英文论证语篇为语料进行英汉对比修辞的研究,旨在揭示英汉修辞模式的差异,及外语写作中母语思维模式负迁移现象的存在,从而有助于改进国内英语教学,特别是英语写作教学,帮助英语学习者在英文写作中自觉地、有意识地运用符合英语修辞习惯的语篇模式。本研究中的一些研究成果也可推广至汉英翻译。

本研究所选样文为中西方英文报纸中的社论或其它评论性文章,语料的选取角度在英汉对比修辞领域尚属首次尝试。中西两组样文各十六篇,中方组语篇选自“中国日报”(英文版),西方组语篇选自“纽约时报”及“今日美国”(英文原版)。作者对每篇样文结构从微观和宏观两个层面进行分析。微观结构采用言外行为及交互分析模式,宏观结构采用小语篇及宏观交际模式分析法。对两组样文微观及宏观语篇结构进行对比分析,既显示出相同语体的语言共性,又揭示出写作或修辞规范的文化特定性。

编者

2008年5月

In research on second language writing, CR (Contrastive Rhetoric) has received a great deal of attention. CR maintains that language and writing are cultural phenomena and that each language has rhetorical conventions unique to it. The present study explores the English-Chinese CR research, which is relatively new and rare domestically, by contrasting the rhetorical structures in English argumentative writings of English and Chinese natives. It is hoped that the present study helps to promote our understanding of the rhetorical differences between English and Chinese within the socio-cultural contexts, and thus helps to improve the Chinese speakers' ESL (English as a Second Language) writing skills. Meanwhile, it is believed that the Chinese-English translating practice will also benefit from such English-Chinese CR knowledge.

The data selected in this study are a type of English argumentative texts by professional writers, namely, editorials or other argumentative essays taken from the English-language newspapers. Thirty-two sample texts are collected and contained in two groups: sixteen in the English or native speakers group, taken from 'The New York Times' and 'USA Today'; sixteen in the Chinese or non-native speakers group, taken from 'China Daily'. The sample texts are analyzed and contrasted in terms of local view—illocutionary & interactional analysis, and global view—minitext structures and overall interactive patterns. The local and global views of text structure together reveal both the

linguistic universals and the cultural particulars between the sample texts of the two groups. After the discussion of analytical results come the implications for China's ELT (English Language Teaching) and suggestions for further research, which serve as the conclusion of the study.

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第一章 引言

本章导读

对比修辞学是始于 20 世纪 60 年代的语言学新兴研究领域,通过对不同语言、不同文化的语篇规约和修辞模式的对比研究来启示第二语言的写作实践。对比修辞理论指出,语言与写作都是文化现象,每种文化都有其独特的思维模式;从根本上说,“修辞”指的是一种思维模式,一个民族或一种文化特有的思维模式和思维序列,会直接体现在语篇的组织结构上。

写作是一种交织着浓厚的社会、文化观念的语言思维活动,而决不是简单的词汇、语法和句子的运用问题。但我国传统的英语写作教学主要强调词汇和句法,即强调用词的准确和句法的正确,而很少关注文化和思维习惯对写作教学的影响,因而语篇修辞结构的因素往往被忽视。中国的英语学习者在 ESL 写作中难免会受到母语修辞规范负迁移的作用。事实上,很多中国英语学习者的英语文章被英语本族读者认为主题不明,结构混乱。譬如,许多中国大学生的英语作文被来自英美的教师认为“重点不突出”(out of focus);一些中国学者用英文书写的学术论文,因组织结构不符合英语的写作规范而被美国评委认为质量不高;甚至像 *China Daily* 这样公开发行的英文报纸中的一些文章也被西方读者批评

为“欠连贯性”(lack of coherence)。以上问题产生的根本原因在于:中国英语学习者在书写英文文章时,使用了不同于英语本族语使用者所预期的修辞模式。

进行英汉对比修辞的研究,对于启示国内英语教学,尤其是英语写作教学具有现实的指导意义。

对比修辞学指出:语篇组织结构与思维模式紧密相关,即思维方式和思维序列直接体现在语篇的组织模式上。对于学习外语的人来说,如果仅仅掌握了目的语的语法规则,而缺乏对目的语的语篇思维模式的认识和敏感性,就很容易把本族语的语篇组织规则即修辞规则迁移到目的语中去,导致交际失误。在英汉对比修辞学的范畴内对英汉语言的修辞结构进行对比研究并探讨其深层根源,有利于启示中国的 ESL 学习者树立英汉语篇模式差异和思维差异的认识,把握英语语言的本质特征,在 ESL 写作中自觉地、有意识地运用符合英语修辞习惯的语篇组织模式,从而写出地道得体的英文文章,保证跨文化交际的顺利实施。

本研究是在对比修辞学的范畴内,以国内外正式发表的英文论证语篇为语料进行英汉对比修辞的实证研究。本研究所选样文为中西方英文报纸中的社论或其他评论性文章,语料的选取角度在英汉对比修辞领域尚属首次尝试。

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Underlying Rationales for the Study

According to Connor (1996), writing was neglected as an area of study for decades because of the emphasis on teaching spoken language during the dominance of audiolingual methodology. In the past two decades, however, the study of writing has become part of the mainstream in applied linguistics. Reasons for this change are many: the increased understanding of language learners' needs to read and write in the target language; the enhanced interdisciplinary approach to studying second language acquisition through educational, rhetorical and anthropological methods; and new trends in linguistics with emphasis on discourse analyses (Connor, 1996).

In research on second language writing, contrastive rhetoric has received a great deal of attention. Contrastive rhetoric (CR, hereafter) is an area of research in second language acquisition that identifies problems in composition encountered by second language writers, and attempts to explain the problems by referring to the rhetorical strategies of the first language. CR maintains that language and writing are cultural phenomena and, as a direct consequence, each language has rhetorical conventions unique to it. Such terms as

'rhetorical strategies', 'rhetorical conventions', 'rhetorical patterns' or 'rhetorical styles' in the CR field almost mean the same. They all refer to the typical discourse patterns of a language, and sometimes they can also be replaced by other terms like 'writing conventions' or 'writing styles'.

CR was initiated almost thirty years ago by the American applied linguist Robert Kaplan, who rendered a new notion to 'rhetoric'—mode of finding all available means for the achievement of a designated end. This new definition suggested that rhetoric was essentially a mode of thinking. Accordingly, rhetorical patterns of a language, though linguistically embodied by discourse patterns, were fundamentally determined by the culture-specific thought patterns. Kaplan's pioneering study (1966) concluded that rhetorical patterns of the first language interfered with writing in the second language and that 'contrastive rhetoric must be taught in the same sense that contrastive grammar is presently taught'. CR developed within the context of ESL writing, and it has had an important impact on studies of writing across cultures and on the teaching of English to speakers of other languages (Leki, 1991).

Contrastive rhetorical studies have expanded a great deal over the past three decades with the focus shifting from L2 texts to L1 texts with different cultural backgrounds; from student writing to accomplished writing; and from expository writing to other genres of writing. However, the contrastive rhetorical studies between English and Chinese have not been

fully developed, though this field of research is of great significance to our Chinese learners of English.

Traditionally, the Chinese way of teaching and learning English has focused on acquiring the sentence-level knowledge such as syntactic correction and lexical accuracy. Little attention has been paid to the ways in which sentences and paragraphs are combined to form stretches of connected discourse. In other words, the overall arrangement of ideas or the schematic organization of discourse is basically ignored. As a result, many Chinese speakers' English writing seems structurally bizarre or uncomfortable to native speakers of English. For example, many Chinese college students' compositions in English are considered to be out of focus by their English-speaking teachers; also, because of the unfamiliarity of some Chinese scholars with the writing conventions of English, their academic papers in English are evaluated unfavourably by American judges (Purves, 1988); and even some published articles in the English language newspaper *China Daily* are complained about by foreign readers for lack of coherence (Matalene, 1985). In all these cases, the English speakers are mis-signalled or under-signalled by the Chinese rhetorical patterns that are not familiar to them. To avoid this, Chinese learners and users of English should acquaint themselves with the English rhetorical conventions that are not native to them.

CR research between English and Chinese aims to reveal the

rhetorical differences between the two languages, to help Chinese speakers to overcome writing problems in English, and ultimately to enable them to improve their writing skills in English. Therefore, it deserves immediate attention in ESL teaching practice in China.

1.2 Framework of the Study

The present study represents an effort to shed new light on CR research between English and Chinese. In this study, the English-Chinese CR research will be explored from a new angle. Specifically, a contrastive study of text structure in English argumentative writings by native speakers of English and Chinese will be made. It is hoped that such a study could sensitize Chinese learners of English to the socio-cultural factors involved in ESL writing, and thus could help them become more proficient in ESL writing.

The literature survey on the development of CR in general and that of English-Chinese CR studies is followed by the methodology of the study. Then an empirical examination of sample texts is made in two groups (native speakers or NS group and non-native speakers or NNS group). Data analysis reveals both linguistic universals and cultural particulars of the samples in the two groups. In particular, the rhetorical differences between English and Chinese are interpreted within the socio-cultural contexts. Finally, implications for China's ELT and suggestions for further research are presented as the conclusion of the study.

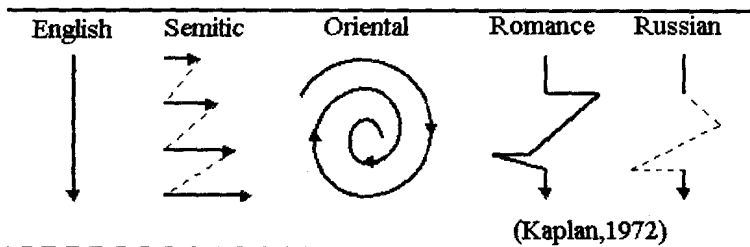
第二章 文献综述及本研究的侧重点

本章导读

2.1 文献综述

2.1.1 对比修辞的起源

1966 年, R. Kaplan 发表了《跨文化教育文化思维模式》这一奠基性文章, 率先对母语的语篇结构和修辞方式在第二语言中的表现进行研究。他对 600 份 ESL 作文进行分析后发现, 来自不同文化背景的 ESL 学生写作中语篇的段落组织方式明显不同。下图为 Kaplan 归纳出的五种不同的段落组织模式。其中, 虚线表示不直接相关的陈述:



如图所示, 英语段落的组织和发展呈直线型; 而闪语篇章在段落组织中常出现一系列复杂的平行结构; 罗曼语的段落组织呈曲

折型;俄语的篇章常允许一些在英美人看来是离题的插曲;而东方语言(包括汉语和日语)中篇章的主题往往通过迂回的方式来阐述发展,其段落组织呈螺旋型。

Kaplan 的研究成果指出:每一种语言和文化都具有独特的修辞传统;从根本上说,“修辞”指的是一种思维模式,一个民族或一种文化特有的思维模式和思维序列,会直接体现在语篇的组织结构上;母语的语言与修辞传统会对 ESL 写作产生干扰。

Kaplan 的观点在应用语言学界产生了巨大的反响。但随后有些学者对其研究方法提出质疑,认为他的研究以学生的 ESL 作文为语料,忽视了语言能力及写作能力等许多变量,因而在一定程度上缺乏科学性和说服力。

2.1.2 对比修辞的发展:与语篇分析一同发展

从方法论上讲,对比修辞的研究是一种对照语篇分析(contrastive text analysis),因而对比修辞研究的发展,与语篇分析的研究密切相关。20 世纪 70 年代,篇章语言学或语篇分析的发展使对比修辞的研究具有更为科学性的基础。但当时的语篇分析侧重于口头语篇或书面语篇中诸如照应、名词化及衔接手段等表面特征,不能解释语篇的宏观特征,因而对比修辞的研究在 70 年代没有重大突破。到 20 世纪 80 年代,篇章语言学和语篇分析的发展给对比修辞的研究注入了新的动力。该阶段的语篇研究者开始关注诸如主位-述位结构(theme-rheme structure)及宏观结构(macrostructure)等语篇特征,从而大大促进了对比修辞研究的发展。90 年代之后,可用于验证对比修辞假设的篇章分析手段更为完善。

2.1.3 对比修辞的研究方向

继 Kaplan 之后,其他一些对比修辞的研究人员依然以 L2 学生的作文为研究语料,对比研究不以英语为母语的学生作文与英语本族语学生的作文之间的语篇差异。但这类研究往往遭到一定的质疑,因为 ESL 学生作文中展现出的不符合英语修辞模式的特征也可能是学生作者语言能力及写作能力有限等因素造成的。

第二类研究方向是在确定语篇评判标准的基础上,对比研究学生用母语完成的优秀作文与劣质作文,总结发现优秀作文的共性,尤其是在跨文化读者预期方面的共性。

第三类主要的研究方向是以来自不同语言背景的职业作家公开发表的 L1 语篇为语料,对比研究不同语言的修辞模式。

就语篇体裁而言,以往的对比修辞研究主要以说明文为语料,而以其它体裁,如记叙文或论证文为语料的对比修辞研究相对较少。

2.1.4 英汉对比修辞研究回顾

以往英汉对比修辞的研究主要侧重于两个方面:其一,对比研究公开发表的英语与汉语两种语言写成的语篇;其二,对比研究中国学生用英语写成的作文与英语本族语学生的作文。

2.2 本研究的侧重点

本研究以国内外正式发表的英文论证语篇为语料进行英汉对比修辞的实证研究。本研究的特色:以论证语篇为语料;以正式发表的优秀文章为语料;侧重语篇宏观结构的对比分析。

Kaplan 的研究中所分析的语料为说明性文章,但本研究作者认为,论证语篇以劝说他人信服为目的,依赖于严密的逻辑推理,能够更典型地体现作者的思维模式和思维序列。