网络新闻英语功能文体研究

Functional Stylistic Study of Online English News

◎ 秦乐娱 著

中国矿业大学出版社

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秦乐娱　湖南商学院外国语学院教授。主要研究方向为国外语言学、文体学、语篇分析、英语教育和教学法。先后在省部级和国外刊物上发表论文20余篇，出版专著2本，主编英语专业教材4本，主持参与省部级科研课题9项。2005年获国家留学基金委资助，赴加拿大滑铁卢大学(Waterloo University)英语系访学一年。2011年应约翰·诺斯（John North）教授的邀请再赴加拿大滑铁卢大学参与其科研项目研究。

前　言

在21世纪，高速发展的网络繁荣让信息爆炸，人们能通过点击获取信息。在这样的环境中，国际语言是进行有效沟通的必要媒介。毫无疑问，英语在交流信息中扮演了重要角色。新闻是了解外界的重要窗口。

新闻英语是一种涵盖范围很广的文体，主要是指以最快的速度向公众传播信息的一种类型。随着社会的发展，计算机和互联网被广泛使用，越来越多的人通过这种媒介获取信息和新闻。在这种情况下，网络新闻英语似乎逐渐形成了一种全新的英语新闻，即“第四新闻媒体”。

网络新闻英语不仅具有英语新闻的共同特点，而且具有独特的网络优势，没有时间、空间、地点、国籍等因素的限制。网络英语新闻拥有无穷无尽的信息，反映了世界各地的政治、经济、文化和技术。到目前为止，文体学家们在报纸新闻英语的研究中做了大量的工作，但不幸的是，全面、系统的网络新闻英语的功能文体特征的研究很少涉及。因此，如何通过互联网快速、高效、准确地掌握全球信息和动态已成为一个我们需要考虑的问题，必须更加重视网络新闻英语的功能文体研究，以更深入地理解这种新的英语风格，更有效地获得全球信息。

本研究以语言学家韩礼德的功能文体学理论为基础，对网络新闻英语进行功能文体分析。正如利奇（2001）所说，“基于语料库的分析”是一个“新的研究方式”。该研究是实证的，研究自然和典型的网络新闻英语语言功能文体模式。基于自然的新闻文本“语料库”采用定量和定性的分析方法。

本书中的网络新闻英语选自一些热门媒体的网站，如China Daily、VOA、CNN、BBC、ABC和其他一些网络报刊网站。笔者采用归纳、分类和对比的方法，

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探讨网络新闻英语各种具有不同特点的文体，包括新闻报道、新闻特写和新闻评论，并对网络新闻英语的标题、导语和正文的词汇、语法、语篇和修辞等方面做详细分析。该研究由 11 个章节组成：

第 1 章　综合介绍新闻英语的定义、特点和结构。

第 2 章　分析网络新闻英语的布局、分类和结构层次，并对报刊新闻英语和网络新闻英语进行对比，以揭示网络新闻英语的区别性特征。

第 3 章　阐述本研究的理论背景，回顾语言学家韩礼德的系统功能文体学理论，包括前景化理论、语境理论、衔接理论和功能理论，为网络新闻英语的功能文体分析提供了理论视角。

第 4 章　从前景化理论的角度探讨网络新闻英语标题的独特性。从网站上随机选取网络新闻英语标题，主要分析其文字、词汇、句法三个层面的前景化表现形式。

第 5 章　分析网络新闻英语导语的功能、特征和分类，指出导语的用途是使网络新闻读者更有效地去了解新闻的主要内容。

第 6 章　分析网络新闻英语特写的功能和常见分类，并区分新闻报道与新闻特写的差异，以更好地理解其功能文体特征。

第 7 章　对网络新闻英语评论的特征、结构和功能进行分析，旨在了解新闻评论的功能文体特征。

第 8 章　依据语域理论分析网络新闻英语词汇。研究表明，掌握网络新闻英语的语域特征是必不可少的。

第 9 章　运用韩礼德和哈桑的衔接理论对网络新闻英语的语法衔接手段进行综合的分析，其目的是更深入地了解英语新闻中语法衔接的应用。

第 10 章　从元功能理论的角度分析网络新闻英语语篇的概念功能、人际功能和语篇功能。采用定量和定性的分析方法，从网站上随机选取几篇新闻语篇作为语料分析对象，试图揭示网络新闻英语语篇语言系统和形式是由它们的使用或承担的功能决定的。

第 11 章　基于语境理论和前景化理论，对网络新闻英语修辞进行分析。作

为一种特殊的风格，其主要修辞手法的运用能帮助读者更好地理解网络英语新闻的语境意义和文化内涵，提高读者的语用能力。

总而言之，网络新闻英语拥有广泛和快速更新的内容。在传统的阅读习惯发生了变化的当下，阅读网络新闻英语是学习和掌握现代英语实用、简单和有效的方法。网络新闻英语可以帮助扩大词汇量，增强语言意识，提高阅读能力。本书只是探索性的研究，笔者希望能够引起更多学者对这一课题的兴趣，并期待以此来促进对网络新闻英语的进一步研究。同时，本书可为网络新闻英语功能文体的研究者和英语学习者提供借鉴和参考。

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CHAPTER 1

English News

It is commonly recognized that English newspapers and internet news are the best original materials to learn modern English. Many readers take national and international news as an important window to the outside world. They read English news reporting in order to study English and improve their reading comprehension. Based on normal English, English news has its own unique language features. Therefore, it is indispensable and definitely conductive for journalists and English learners to have an overall comprehension of English news.

1.1 Definitions of News

In today's society, no one is unfamiliar with news. With the help of mass media, news seems accessible to everybody. But to give "news" a definition or to explain what news is, it will undoubtedly not be an easy thing. One of the sayings goes like that the word "news" consists of the initial letter of "North", "East", "West" and "South", so it refers to a variety of information collected from all directions. Many scholars have already given many definitions to "news". The following ones (George A. Hough, 1980) are some classical and typical definitions:

(1) News is the reporting of anything timely that has importance, use, or interest to a considerable number of people in a publication audience.

(2) News is any event, idea or opinion that is timely, that interests or affects a large number of people in a community and that is capable of being understood by them.

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(3) If a dog bites a man, it is not news; if a man bites a dog, it is big news.

(4) News is both a product and a state of mind. As a product, news is gathered, processed, packaged and sold by newspapers and other news media. As a state of mind, it excites, interests and holds the attention of millions of people every day.

(5) News is more unpredictable than the minds. Sometimes it is the repetition with new characters of tales as old as the pyramids, and again it may be almost outside the common experience.

Joseph Pulitzer, the most skillful newspaper publisher of the 19th century, had his own view of news. He instructed his staff to look for stories that were "original, distinctive, dramatic, romantic, thrilling, unique, curious, quaint, humorous, odd and apt-to-be-talked-about". (Brians Brooks, 1985)

Besides, Charles A. Dana said "news is anything that will make people talk." *Turner Catledge* said "news is anything you can find out today that you did not know before". (Brians Brooks, 1985)

Some other definitions in Zhang Jian's book (2001): "News is a fresh report of events, facts, or opinions that people did not know before they read your story." "News is anything timely that interests a number of persons, and the best news is that which has the greatest interest of the greatest number. "

According to definitions above, news is published in newspapers and broadcast on radio, television and online. The news value is ceaselessly changing with different times and different places. One thing is clear that something may be a big event in one country, but in another place it may not be news at all. But news is usually timely, interesting, informative, surprising and conflicting.

It is time to talk about English news. It seems that English news has no exact definitions for it. It concerns various areas of social activities, which is the integration of diverse stylistic features of news reporting. Bell and Alan (1991) gave the definition of English news that it refers to English used in newspapers and magazines in a broad sense, which should be brief, clear and accurate.

1.2 Features of English News

According to the above definitions, news is quite complicated and elusive. No specific one is widely accepted in the world until now. It is obvious that events and situations regarded as newsworthy have certain characteristics in common. As English news is different from other English articles, it has some general characteristics.

1.2.1 To Be Familiar

English newspapers and internet use a wide range of words in technology, business, education, culture, society, entertainment, sports, military, gambling, and etc. such as *artificial breeding* used in medicine, *kickback* used in economy, and *scud missile* used in military, *honey trap* and so on. It aims to reflect an integration of modern journalistic language and contemporary realities of modern life, trying to meet a variety of reading interest and arousing the readers' familiarity.

1.2.2 To Be Simple and Vivid

Some visualized vocabulary and colloquial words are recently used in the news, which not only make the news lively but also simple. For instance, there is an article in *Daily Star* entitled *World Eyes Mid-East Peace Talks*, in which the report used *eyes* to mean concern and did not use the word *observes* or *watches*, which makes the headline a precise and vivid image.

Compare the following three news reports on the same accident:

EX.1-1

(a) *Police W. Carmichael announced today two children were killed outside Prospect Park at Jackson Ave. And 16th St., NW, when a "recklessly driven" automobile jumped the curb near where they are playing at 2 p.m. and ran them down.* *(www.voanews.cn, 2017-08-09)*

(b) *Two children were killed and 12 others injured today when an automobile hit them outside Prospect Park.*

(c) *Two children at play were killed and 12 others injured today when a speeding sports car jumped the curb outside Prospect Park and ran them down.*

It is self-evident that the report(c) reads much more like a simple and vivid text than the other two.

1.2.3 To Be Humane

One of the criteria in news reporting is humane. For example, in order to affect readers, the journalist gives a number of details which have no direct contact with the event, such as the driver's age, family situation, so as to arouse a parental love. It even quotes the conversation in which the medical correspondent James Wilkinson talks about the survival of "Siamese twins". These are very humane, completely arousing the reader's interest. Here is a piece of news about the original Siamese twins.

EX.1-2

The original Siamese twins fathered 21 children by their sister wives

A new biography about the lives of Chang and Eng Bunker, the original Siamese twins, has some rather amazing revelations.

Born in Thailand, which was then called Siam (which happens to be my name... long story) in 1811, the twins travelled to America aged 17, where they toured carnivals and theatres as a curiosity act.

But it's the details of their private lives which are perhaps most shocking.

In 1843 the brothers married sisters Adelaide and Sarah Yates.

The biography goes on the explain that the four of them slept in a super-sized reinforced bed, and that the twins went on to father an impressive 21 children.

Their biographer Joseph Orser explains that their marriage and subsequent children caused quite a stir at the time: "The prospect of the twins engaging in sexual relations with women disturbed sensibilities."

(www.metro.co.uk, 2014-11-08)

1.2.4 To Be Objective

Authenticity is the most important part of news; fake news will inevitably lose the

trust of the readers. An extensive use of direct quotations and indirect quotations to increase its authenticity and vitality, also shows the objective position of authors. For example,

EX.1-3

The dangers of not looking ahead

Risk management has undoubtedly moved up the corporate agenda in recent years with fears of war and terrorism being added to the usual list of business worries.

Shivan Subramaniam, the Chairman and Chief Executive of FM Global, a commercial and industrial property insurer, says: "Corporations are operating in a turbulent world where businesses are seeking growth through globalisation, out-sourcing, consolidation, just-in-time delivery and cross-border supply, further increasing their potential exposure to risk."

"Add regulatory, legal and labour considerations, and you begin to understand the complex nature of business risk in the 21st century. While acts of terrorism receive the most coverage, it's the more traditional events such as fires, floods, explosions, power failures or natural disasters that have the biggest impact."

FM Global believes the majority of all loss can be prevented or minimised and this should be the first part of any disaster recovery plan. It also argues that prevention is better than cure and says there is a lot of companies can do to stop such events from becoming a disaster in the first place.

However, research shows that more than one-third of the world's leading companies are not sufficiently prepared to protect their main revenue sources and have room for improvement.

Ken Davey, a managing director with FM Global, says: "To best protect cashflow, competitive position and profit, companies need to assess the potential hazards that can impact top revenue sources and make sure there is business continuity planning."

Lord Levene, chairman of the Lloyd's insurance market, said recently that

companies must be prepared for business interruptions, which accounted for 25 percent of the $40bn lost as a result of the September 11 terrorist attacks. It was estimated that 90 percent of medium to large companies that could not resume near-normal operations within five days of an emergency would go out of business.

"Looking ahead 10 years I firmly believe that the most successful, least crisis-prone businesses will be those whose boards have shown firm resolve and taken decisive action," Lord Levene said. "Effective, integrated strategies for dealing with tomorrow's risks require a change in culture at board level now."

A new research report from Marsh, the world's biggest insurance broker, found that half of European companies did not know how to manage the most significant risks to their business.

Most of Europe's senior executives surveyed admitted that they did not have procedures in place to manage properly operational and strategic risks, which were responsible for most company failures in the twenty-first century.

The survey found that the three most significant risks, and those that businesses felt least able to manage, were:

- *Increased competition*
- *Adverse changes in customer demand*
- *Reduced productivity because of staff absenteeism and turnover*

"While business leaders are aware that these risks are the most threatening to their future survival and growth they are scratching their heads when it comes to protecting their businesses against them," says Neil Irwin, European development director of Marsh's corporate client practice. "Management processes could easily help companies identify and address these risks. Instead, too many companies take a low-level approach to risk management preferring to focus on easy-to-solve risks, such as asset protection and health and safety."

Mr. Irwin says: "Risk is dynamic, it changes with the environment. Unless

businesses accept this and review risk regularly, they could eventually find themselves in a state of crisis, struggling to survive rather than focused on growth. Business leaders have an obligation to their employees, shareholders and other stakeholders to properly protect themselves against risk. Businesses that do attempt to manage these risks will boost their bottom lines."

(www.ft.com, 2014-05-17)

The above news reporting is about the dangers to companies of not having effective risk management strategies and procedures in place. It has only 13 paragraphs, however the words synonymous with "say" in direct quotations or indirect quotations are used in 11 paragraphs respectively. It can be seen that ultimately any news reporting cannot lack the use of quotations.

These features are not entirely satisfactory, though each touches on some aspects of news. Nearly all pieces of news imply that news is familiar, objective, humane, simple and vivid. They also imply that news is something which interests people. Except for the agreed characteristics, some English news has distinctive qualities. Not all news will have all of these qualities, but all news will have some of them. The following are the frequently discussed ones:

(1) English news is unusual. News involves what is not the usual state of affairs, such as disasters, accidents, epidemics, etc. When something happens unexpectedly, it is usually news. The distinctive features of English news bring learners motive and passion for reading.

(2) English news is new. If someone does something that he has not done before, that is news. Whatever something important changes, the change is likely to be newsworthy. It is said that the word news comes from the word "new". News is not the common information; instead it is about the things in its newest state. In other words, only those new things, new problems, new people, new ideas, and new experiences can become news.

(3) English news is impactive. A new law, a drought, a recession in the economy — all has impact on people's lives. Anything that has a significant effect on people is news.

(4) English news is interesting. Sometimes an event does not have much effect

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