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# 隐喻论

严世清 著

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Metaphor, Metaphorization and Demetaphorization

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My cordial and sincere thanks go to Professor Lu Guoqiang, whose interesting and informative lectures on text semantics lead me to a challenging yet fascinating domain of academic research. The profit that I gained from his profound knowledge, remarkable expertise and intellectual ingenuity will be of everlasting significance to my future research not only in text semantics but also in other related areas.

## 序

苏州大学外国语学院最近做了一件很有意义的事,拨专款为获得博士学位的教师出版学术专著。其中 *Metaphor, Metaphorization and Demetaphorization* (《隐喻论》) 和 *Discourse Functions of Pragmatic Presupposition* (《语用预设的语篇功能》) 这两部是分别由严世清和苗兴伟撰写的。听到这个消息,我感到出自内心的高兴。

严、苗两位在复旦大学读书期间给我留下了非常深刻的印象。他们俩一个来自江苏,一个来自山东,但一起进校,同时毕业,寒窗三年结下了深厚的友谊。他们研究的课题不同,但时常一起讨论,相互切磋,学术观点上可谓你中有我,我中有你。他们的经历不完全一样,但在语言理论上都有相当深厚的基础,对学术研究有着同样执着的追求,都是坐得起冷板凳的真正意义上的读书人。最使我难忘的是他们那种勤于思考、敢于创新的精神。成书过程中,他们查阅了大量的资料,在前人研究的基础上,勇敢地提出了自己的观点。

严世清对隐喻现象的性质、产生过程、运作机制以及发挥的种种功能,对各个流派隐喻理论的形成、发展以及存在的不足作了全面的阐述。读了他的著作,不仅会对两千多年来隐喻理论的发展轨迹有一个大致的了解,而且可以从中看出作者本人在博采众家之长的基础上在哪些方面修正或补充了前人的观点。隐喻研究是一个难度很大的题目,涉及的面很广,需要论证的地方很多,但严世清迎难而上,依靠自身的勤奋和悟性把它做出来了,而且做得令人相当满意。我希望他的专著出版后能引起国内同行的注意和讨论,对其中的不足进行批评指正,以使该课题的研究不断深入。我

也希望作者泰而不骄,锲而不舍,在学术研究的道路上迈出更大的步伐,取得更大的成绩。

写这篇短序,内心颇有感触。国内有人喜欢将我们这些做教师的比作蜡烛,毁灭了自己,照亮了别人。这个比喻的产生,想必是出于业外人士对教师职业的敬重,其中可能也夹杂着些许惋惜。然而,我本人对这个比喻的内涵始终不敢完全认同。因为我看到,当我们在照亮别人(姑且认为我们真的做到了这一点)的时候,别人可能反过来也照亮了我们自己。我不敢说所有的教师都会如此幸运,但我本人感受到严、苗两位身上发出的光亮却是千真万确的。每当在权威刊物上看到他们新出的论文时,每当在学术会议上听到他们的发言时,每当得知他们又完成了某一个研究项目时,包括这一次获悉他们的研究成果能够公开出版时,我都像上小学第一次捧回“三好生”的奖状一般兴奋、喜悦和自豪!

但愿我能经常有如此兴奋、喜悦和自豪的机会。在结束这篇序言之时,我已翘首盼望作者下一部著作的问世。同时,我也祝愿苏州大学的外国语言文学研究不断产生新的成果,在全国外语界取得应有的学术地位。

朱永生

1999年12月于复旦大学

## 前 言

本书在追溯隐喻理论发展史的基础上重新审视隐喻的性质、机制和功能,并对主流学派的词汇隐喻理论和系统功能语言学派的语法隐喻理论之间的异同及互补性展开讨论和探索。笔者力图辩证地看待所有新兴的或传统的隐喻理论,博采众家之长,贬抑其短,进而提出自己对有关问题的见解或假设,故本书重在思辩,而不依附任何理论派别。

就历史渊源而言,西方的隐喻研究起源于亚里士多德的《修辞学》和《诗学》两部著作,而中国则始于先秦时期的修辞思想。由于中国修辞理论体系本身界限不清并缺乏系统性,加之本书所讨论的隐喻与修辞学中的相应概念并不完全相同,本文作者仅介绍了西方自古至今的一些重要理论。需要指出的是,本书对西方隐喻理论的介绍也并非简单的罗列,而是在对比和评述的基础上将 20 世纪以前的隐喻理论分为亚里士多德学派和柏拉图学派,20 世纪的隐喻理论则被归入非构建主义和构建主义两大范畴予以介绍和评论。韩礼德所提出的语法隐喻理论被纳入构建主义范畴,不仅因为他有关隐喻性质的观点与构建主义极其相似,而且因为语法隐喻理论和词汇隐喻理论之间有着多方面的互补性。

构建主义和非构建主义隐喻理论的根本区别在于它们对隐喻性质的不同看法。构建主义者强调隐喻的普遍存在性,认为隐喻是语言乃至人类区别于其他动物的不可或缺的特征;而非构建主义者则强调字面语言和非字面语言(或文学语言)之间的区别,认为隐喻是附属于语言之上的一种修饰性成分。本书批判了这两大学派各自的理论缺陷,指出隐喻应该被看作一种动态的现象。为

了表明隐喻的动态性,本书作者借鉴韩礼德的有关论述,提出应以隐喻化、隐喻和非隐喻化这一组术语来说明隐喻的性质。作者认为,隐喻不仅是语言发展的推动者,而且可能是语言形成的原始阶段的主要机制,只不过隐喻化机制在语言形成阶段的作用方式是零碎的、万花筒式的,而在促进语言发展的过程中则呈现出系统性和规则性(如对词义发展的推动作用)。同时需要指出的是,隐喻化和非隐喻化并不是完全对立的,而是不断地相互作用,推动语言和人类对世界的认识的发展。统而言之,隐喻化和非隐喻化是思维、现实和语言三者之间相互作用,把握纷繁无序的宇宙世界之意义的一种机制,而人们通常所说的隐喻只不过是这种相互作用的副产品。正是在当代隐喻学意义上,我们才能说隐喻是人类语言和认知的固有属性,人类是隐喻性的动物。

隐喻的机制是本书第四章讨论的核心问题。该章首先区分了隐喻这一术语在构建主义和非构建主义理论中的不同含义,进而指出在隐喻的机制这一问题上两者之间并不完全相背。譬如,亚里士多德提出的类比、相似性和转义(transference)等概念一般被认为是非构建主义的理论基础,但实际上可以被沿用来说明隐喻的机制,前提是将这些概念理解为动态的过程,而不是事物之间固有的关系。例如,莎士比亚说“人生世界是一个舞台”时并不是因为人生和舞台有着先天的共性之处,而是因为莎翁将人生理解为一个舞台,或者更准确地说,莎翁试图通过这个隐喻引导观众将人生理解为一个舞台。显然,这里所说的相似性、类比等概念的动态特征是与上文有关隐喻性质的阐述一脉相承的,也正因为隐喻所揭示的相似性具备的这种动态性推动了人类认识的发展;换言之,我们之所以说隐喻代表了人类认知机制的性质,是因为认知即意味着于混沌之中把握相似性并进而构建与此相应的结构性。由于人类的这种认知过程从本质上讲又是一种社会化过程,我们对于隐喻机制的探求应该超越语言而将它放置在更广泛的人类经验



即文化范畴之中。所以,在第四章的最后部分,作者简单对比了英汉两种文化有关人生和爱情的一些隐喻,发现这些隐喻反映了两种文化氛围下的人们不同的理念和人生态度。

当代隐喻研究的主要成就是揭示了隐喻或隐喻性的思维方式在众多领域中的重要作用。限于篇幅,作者仅简要讨论了“隐喻与真理”、“隐喻与科学”、“隐喻与诗歌”和“隐喻与第二语言习得”等问题。在隐喻与真理的关系问题上,我们侧重介绍了里格尔(Ricoeur, 1977/1986)提出的“指称二重性”(the duality of reference)理论,即除了传统语言哲学所认定的逻辑专名或限定摹状词的指称作用外,命题的述谓部分同样也具有指称功能。该理论的意义在于揭示了指称的动态性,从而为隐喻的指称功能奠定了理论基础。从这个意义上讲,除了传统的真值条件语义学理论所认为的那种真理外,世界上还应该有一种古德曼(Goodman, 1979)称之为“隐喻真实性”(metaphorical truth)的东西。隐喻与科学的关系是西方当代自然哲学界讨论的热点问题之一。包括爱因斯坦、库恩和波依德在内的自然科学家或哲学家批判了统治西方文明三个多世纪的逻辑实证主义思想,认为科学研究本身也是科学家作为一个社会的人的行为,所以根本不存在超越人的意识形态的“纯粹的真理”(dry truth),取而代之的是“相对真理”的思想。当代自然哲学家一般认为,虽然世界上不存在纯粹的真理,但人类可以借助其认知机制的隐喻性质逐步走近真理,隐喻促进人类知识和科学发展的契机亦在于此。隐喻与诗歌的关系似乎是一个十分陈腐的课题,但当代隐喻研究对此也提供了一些新的见解。例如,隐喻不再被看作是附属于诗歌的、标志着诗歌语汇的修辞格,而被看作是构成诗歌的核心要素(简言之,诗歌都是隐喻性的,而单个的隐喻则是一首微型诗篇);又例如,隐喻研究还促进了诗学思想的发展,诗歌的创作不再被看作是诗人的个人行为,而被看作是诗人与读者的阐释之间互动的结果;再例如,当代隐喻研究还揭示了诗歌的指

称和认知功能等。在讨论隐喻与第二语言教学的关系时,本书介绍了隐喻能力(metaphorical competence)的概念,提出第二语言教学应以培养学生以目标语的(隐喻性的)思维方式为宗旨,同时也指出了该领域有待进一步研究和探讨的问题。

本书第六章的重点在于澄清韩礼德的语法隐喻理论中的转义(transference)和一致性(congruence)两个概念,并在此基础上探讨语法隐喻理论与词汇隐喻理论之间的互补性。讨论表明,第一,韩礼德所说的转义与转换生成语法中所说的转换(transformation)在含义上有着一定程度上的统一性,因此语法隐喻现象实际上早已被语言学家们所认识和研究,韩礼德的贡献在于赋予该现象以新颖的命名,并试图阐述其产生的机制,进而揭示语言起源的奥秘。第二,“一致性”这一概念是韩礼德语法隐喻理论的关键所在,但他却并未明确地界定或阐明其含义;本书讨论的结论是,在人类认识世界的初始阶段多以人体为参照点(如左右、前后、上下等方位概念;又如汉语文化中的阴阳思想),这些概念在语言和人类认识发展史上成为决定或限制人们思维方式的基本隐喻(root metaphors),而韩礼德所谓的“一致性”实际上就是指与这些基本隐喻相一致的语言表达结构或形式。第三,作者认为语法隐喻理论和词汇隐喻理论之间有着多方面的互补性。语法隐喻理论对于词汇隐喻理论的意义在于:(1) 语法隐喻是隐喻这一整体大厦的重要组成部分,任何不关注语法隐喻现象的研究或理论都必然是不全面、不充分因而也是有缺陷的;(2) 语法隐喻理论为揭示隐喻的性质提供了新视角;(3) 语法隐喻理论有助于揭示隐喻的工作机制;(4) 语法隐喻理论进一步展现了隐喻的认知价值。词汇隐喻理论对语法隐喻理论同样有着重要的理论意义:(1) 语法隐喻理论显然未能对当代隐喻学所研究的词汇隐喻现象予以足够的重视;(2) 塞尔的语用隐喻概念表明隐喻性不仅仅取决于语言形式,还需要参照语境因素;(3) 莱考夫等人的认知隐喻理论研究能够验证语法隐喻

理论的心理真实性。

第七章总结全书,既作出了一些尝试性的结论,同时也指出了本书未能解决的一些问题,主要有以下几方面:(1) 本书对隐喻性质的阐述尚缺乏足够的考古学或类型学理论依据;(2) 隐喻的认知功能有待心理学实验的验证或探讨;(3) 科技语篇中的隐喻现象尚缺乏足够的统计数据,另外似乎也尚未有此方面的语料库及相关研究;(4) 隐喻与第二语言教学之间的密切关系和培养隐喻能力的重要性表明,我们应重新设计教学大纲和教材,并探讨新的教学和测试方法;(5) 本书尚未对韩礼德的人际语法隐喻作充分的探讨,另外马丁(1992)所提出的语篇隐喻概念也值得作进一步的探讨。

## Foreword

With a brief introduction that associates the reduction of metaphor to a mere figure of speech parasitic upon language with the word semantics tradition in the European culture, this book aims at bringing back to life the ancient issue by looking into its nature, mechanism and function, with the historical account of metaphor being the point of departure for discussion (Chapter 2) and the discussions of the complementarity between lexical and grammatical metaphor theories as a further indication of the complexity and perplexity of the issue (Chapter 6). The approach adopted in this book is genuinely polemical as well as integrative in that nearly all the previous views on metaphor mentioned in the book have been examined or resorted to critically, though my own views on the important aspects of metaphor (that is, its nature, mechanism and function) indicate my favor of and indebtedness to the constructivists.

The historical account of metaphor in Chapter 2 falls into two parts. The first part examines the Aristotelian and Platonic schools of thought on metaphor in a basically chronological order, aiming at exploring the theoretical matrix of the metaphor theories prevailing in the classical period. In the second part, I have followed Ortony's (1979) distinction between nonconstructivism and constructivism to sort and review the 20th century metaphor theories, though such a categorization itself seems far from being adequate. Under the heading of nonconstructivism are subsumed the rhetorical views, the comparison/substitution views and above all the TG views. Comparatively speaking, the introduction and assessment of the constructivist views are more elaborate, mostly because constructivism as

a trend of thought is gaining more and more recognition not only in the linguistic literature but in the humanistic domain in its entirety. It is indicated in my discussions that constructivism experiences a history of development from Richards' tension theory through Black's interaction theory up to the cognitive metaphor theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson et al, with the essential status that metaphor holds in language and perhaps human culture as a whole being identified and emphasized. In addition, Halliday's grammatical metaphor theory is also placed under the heading of constructivism not only because Halliday's view on the nature of metaphor has much in common with that of the mainstream theorists who show exclusive concern for lexical metaphors, but also because grammatical metaphors may prove an indispensable aspect of the metaphor issue in general.

It is pointed out in Chapter 3 that metaphor should be taken as a dynamic phenomenon and studied from what Ricoeur (1977/1986) terms a panchronistic approach, so that the terms metaphorization and demetaphorization are employed from systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1985; 1995; 1996) to capture the dynamic feature of metaphor. The nature of metaphor may be briefly summarized as: (i) Metaphor is not only the impetus that gives rise to language development but also one possible mechanism of language formation; (ii) It should be noted that while the metaphorization process in the making of language might be fragmentary as well as kaleidoscopic in nature, the metaphorization process that happens in our application of language is often marked by systematicity though we might be unaware of it ourselves; (iii) Human experience is the ultimate impetus to the metaphorizing process, which indicates the culturalness and relativity of metaphor; (iv) Metaphorization and demetaphorization are not to be taken as two clear-cut processes. Instead, they do interact

in observable ways so that it is possible for us to tell whether an expression is metaphorical or not, though intuitively in most cases; (v) Metaphorization and demetaphorization are the mechanisms by which culture, language and human cognition interact to make sense of the chaotic world human beings live in or to structure social reality and create it, with metaphors being the observable products scattered in the linguistic system, although the metaphoricalness of certain expressions may or may not be construed by man.

The investigations into the mechanism of metaphor ( Chapter 4) are initiated with the efforts to clarify the concept of metaphor. My discussions indicate that Aristotle's observation of analogy and resemblance in metaphor is not so much incompatible with the interaction theory, but instead can be accepted with reservation. Nonetheless, since similarity, analogy, transference and the relationship therein are the central topics of traditional rhetoric, tropology and parable researches, they can not fully account for the dynamic nature of metaphor. To make up for such a defect, I have devoted one section to discussing Ricoeur's predication theory of metaphor. Meanwhile, by taking the sociocultural perspective of systemic functional linguistics into account and pointing out that human cognition is only the intermediary stage that perceives, processes and possibly imports the influence of culture into our linguistic performance, I emphasize that metaphor has to be grounded in the human experience, while the quest for it should be, accordingly, culturally rooted as well. Therefore, the last section of Chapter 4 attempts to explore the cultural aspect of metaphor's mechanism with a comparative study.

The function of metaphor is an area that attracts attention from almost all the scholars who have shown some concern for metaphor. In consideration of the multi-facetedness of metaphor's function, I have adopted a se-

lective approach by focusing on the following topics: "metaphor and truth", "metaphor and science", "metaphor and poetry" as well as "metaphor and second language teaching". The discussions of the relationship between metaphor and truth not only ascertain the referential function of metaphor, but also point to the existence of what Goodman (1979) terms metaphorical truth. The relationship between metaphor and science has never been attended to in the traditional nonconstructivist studies of metaphor. However, owing to the influence of logical relativism, the contemporary philosophers of science come to recognize the futility of logical empiricism for the development of modern science. Such considerations lead to the dismissal of "dry truth" and the approval of relativity in knowledge, whereas the function of metaphor in the progress of human cognition is at the same time recognized. However, the denial of absolute truth or the access to the real world does not necessarily mean that the contemporary philosophers of science are pessimistic about man's quest for knowledge and truth. The attention to the function of metaphor in the processes of learning about the universe shows their concern for a more sophisticated representation of man's epistemological processes. So what has been rejected might not be the quest for knowledge itself but the blind optimism of the modern man. Furthermore, even if the dry truth or real world is inaccessible, the unique metaphorical mentality can surely lead us closer and closer to truth. The relationship between metaphor and poetry used to be investigated by stylisticians and literary critics, with their focus on the function that metaphor performs in the bringing about of poetic diction. Our discussions show that the constructivist thinking has stimulated a revolution in almost every facet of the metaphor-poetry issue, although the limited space of the book only allows for a mere mentioning of some important aspects. The traditional view of metaphor as a frill or ornament to

language places metaphor in a marginal position in applied linguistics and only occasional attention is paid to the importance of the so-called contrastive rhetoric in second language teaching. The constructivist metaphor research, however, shows special concern for the cognitive aspect of the metaphorizing and demetaphorizing processes not only in language use but also in language acquisition. I have introduced the term "metaphorical competence" invented by Gardner and Winner (1979 IN Sacks, 1979) and have pointed out that the mechanisms of metaphorizing and demetaphorizing processes should be considered the important aspects of second language teaching.

The revisit to the grammatical metaphor theory in Chapter 6 chiefly aims at posing cases for grammatical metaphor, elucidating the evasive aspect of Halliday's theorization and most important of all, demonstrating the aspects of complementarity between the lexical and grammatical metaphor theories. By establishing the isomorphism between the Hallidayan notion "transference" and the Chomskyan term "transformation" I attempt to show that the phenomenon of grammatical metaphor has already been attended to by the mainstream linguists though they may be reluctant to accept Halliday's terminology. The second part of the chapter (6.2) chiefly discusses the implicitness and the possible ways of elucidating the term "congruence" and the conclusion drawn from the discussion is that in the early stages of human cognizance man tends to take his own body as the reference point, to which the Hallidayan notion "congruence" may be ultimately attributed. The final part of Chapter 6 indicates that the lexical metaphor theory and the grammatical metaphor theory are mutually complementary and illuminative in various aspects.

Chapter 7 offers a brief summary of the whole book, some tentative conclusions and some suggested topics or issues for future researches.



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