林 伟 杨玉晨 / 编著

Yingyu Yupian Fenxi

英语语篇分析

英语语篇分析

林　伟　杨玉晨　编著

前　　言

　　语篇分析(或称话语分析),作为概念的提出已是半个世纪之前的事了,但对语篇的深入研究却始于上个世纪 70 年代。自80 年代以来,语篇分析作为语言研究中一个年轻的分支,其发展速度、深度和广度令人瞩目。国内外有关语篇分析的著作和论述层出不穷,从不同层面和侧面反映出学者们对语篇的认识水平和研究方法。但这些著作大都有各自的侧重点、研究角度,或针对特定的读者对象,如语言教师。因此,在内容选择上有所偏重。有些 80 年代的著作,已经不能反映近期的研究成果和趋势。

　　本书的写作目的是尽可能比较全面、系统地概述语篇分析的基本理论,介绍这一学科的历史渊源、发展过程、研究范畴和研究方法。该书可用于语篇分析入门者,更适合英语专业的研究生。

　　本书共十章。第一章介绍语篇分析的形成和发展,语篇的本质及语篇分析的基本方法。第二章着重论述书面语和口语的关系问题。书面语和口语有各自明显的带有区别性的语言特征,但在语言使用中由于语境等因素,口语亦可能带有书面语的某些特征,书面语也可能具有口语的特征。这些特征在词、小句和整体语篇中都有不同的体现。第三章从语言使用意图和理解两方面讨论语言的使用,内容主要涉及语言功能、言语行为以及使语言使用意图得以实现的各种因素和条件。第四章介绍语篇中各种成分之间的微观结构,主要介绍语篇组织体系中词汇和语法层面上语篇的衔接,从而形成有意义的语篇。第五章讨论口语语篇,主要包括三方面内容:语用学理论对语篇分析的贡献,话语分析和交际理论中的限制问题。第六章讨论书面语篇,

内容主要包括语篇标记的特征、功能及分类,小句的意义、分类、方式以及语义关系和修辞关系,书面语篇基本模式。第七章讨论主位、述位的意义、类型、功能、结构,以及与之相关的信息结构。第八章从三个方面介绍体裁分析:专门用途语篇,如学术语篇的体裁分析;系统功能语言学家对语篇体裁的分析;新修辞学者对语篇体裁的分析;各领域研究的框架模式及其对语言教学的启示。第九章讨论互文性,内容包括互文性的概念,语篇间对话的本质特征,不同层面的互文性,互文性在语言形式上的体现以及实际运用。第十章讨论语篇的批评性分析,介绍批评语篇分析的基本概念和重要特征、研究目的、批评语篇分析的形成和研究方法。

　　本书在写作过程中,侧重对语篇分析的基本理论和基本概念的阐述,所以很少涉及具体分析和实践。语篇分析发展至今,似乎有些纷繁庞杂,我们的写作初衷是希望为语篇分析入门者,特别是语言研究生提供帮助。就像做所有其他事情一样,在写作中我们要做出选择,因此难免挂一漏万。疏漏或不当之处,敬请学界和读者匡正。

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Analyzing Language Form and Language in Use

It has been a long tradition for linguists to focus their attention on the study of the formal aspects of language. While the great linguist Saussure proposed the distinction between langue and parole, Bloomfield felt it a major concern for linguists to explain and describe the phonological, lexical, and syntactic features of language. They did, in effect, achieve fruitful results in their study. And then Chomsky redirected linguists' attention to the study of syntax with an aim to understand and describe the ideal native speaker's linguistic competence — the underlying knowledge of his/her native language, with part of their job being to separate the grammatical sequences of words from those that are considered ungrammatical. As a result, the syntactic structure of grammatical sentences has been delved in a remarkable depth and enormous insights have been obtained in this respect. It has also been recognized, however, that there is not a uniform native speaker competence, that grammaticality is a matter of degree and that seemingly ungrammatical sentences are actually acceptable or may be acceptable in certain context. Not all grammatically correct sentences are relevant, suitable or meaningful. Sentences are not always used in their complete forms and neither can they be put one after another

at random and still mean something. The following pieces of language taken from Cook (1989:4) can help illustrate the point.

1. *This box contains, on average, 100 large plain paper clips. "Applied Linguistics" is therefore not the same as "linguistics". The tea's as hot as it could be. This is Willie Worm. Just send 12 Guinness "cool token" bottle tops.*
2. *Playback. Raymond Chandler. Penguin Books in association with Hamish Hamilton. To Jean and Helga, without whom this book could never have been written. One. The voice on the telephone seemed to be sharp and peremptory, but I didn't hear too well what it said — partly because I was only half awake and partly because I was holding the receiver upside down.*

In the first example, all the sentences are grammatically correct, with sentence 3 and sentence 4 spoken to someone. The five sentences, however, do not form a meaningful or a unified and coherent whole, and therefore, the reader simply cannot make any sense of them. In comparison, the sentences in the second example, with some of them being incomplete in form, convey some fairly clear meaning to the reader. Information such as the original layout and typography, the author, the title, the genre, the publisher, the dedication could be identified by the reader and it is also possible to tell that this is only the beginning part of a much longer piece of writing. A more careful examination of the two examples may invite us to further consideration, but now a distinction can be seen clearly: example 1, in which the sentences are randomly sequenced, is not language for real communication, and example 2 is a piece of language used to perform a certain function. Broadly speaking, the language in use, whether spoken or written, is discourse, and the study of the ways in which language

is organized and used for communication is discourse analysis.

1. 2 Discourse Analysis — A Brief Historical Review

Although the study of language in use could date as long ago as the times of scholars of Greece and Rome in the western tradition, who separated grammar from rhetoric, with the former being the study of language rules in isolation and the latter the ways to achieve more successful effect in using a language, it is generally accepted that discourse analysis grew out of the work in different disciplines beginning from the 1950s.

In the early 1950s when most linguists were concentrating on the language rules of single sentences, Zellig Harris (1952) wrote an article entitled "Discourse Analysis", in which he suggested the idea that in grammar it was possible to analyze the distribution of linguistic elements in connected speech and writing and set up distributional equivalence. This analysis, he maintained, could be applied to the study of a whole text so that the structuring above sentence could be discovered. The idea can be illustrated below with the four sentences taken from Harris (1952):

1. *The trees turn here about the middle of autumn.*
2. *The trees turn here about the end of October.*
3. *The first frost comes after the middle of autumn.*
4. *We start heating after the end of October.*

Harris aims to isolate elements of texts that are equivalents in distributions. In the first two sentences, for example, the equivalence of *the middle of autumn* and *the end of October* can be established due to the same linguistic environments of *The trees turn*

here. The kind of equivalence can then be carried over from *The trees turn here* to *The frost comes* and *We start heating* in sentences 3 and 4. In this way, two classes in the sentences can be identified, and according to Harris, if the linguist continues with the analysis using this method, a chain of equivalences can be created throughout the whole text and the linguistic elements can be assigned to the identified classes. It is true that Harris was the linguist who first used the term **discourse analysis** but, in essence, he still works within the Bloomfieldian tradition, for his analysis is still a purely formal analysis and he is still a sentence linguist.

Different from Harris, Mitchell (1957), working in the Firthian tradition, presents a semantically motivated analysis of discourse. In his analysis of the buying and selling process, transaction is categorized largely into market auctions, other market transactions and shop transactions; relevant participants and situations are specified and the buying-selling process is divided into stages, though the sequence of the stages may vary and nonverbal language may occur in certain stages. The following are the stages in the process followed by an example.

1) salutation
2) enquiry as to the object of sale
3) investigation of the object of sale
4) bargaining
5) conclusion

5. Example of a shop transaction:

Personality	Transaction	Stage
Buyer:	Have you a bed to sell?	2
Seller:	I've got one but it's rather expensive.	2
Buyer:	Let me have a look at it then.	2

Seller:	Certainly. If you want it for yourself,	
	I will make you a reduction.	4
Buyer:	How much is it?	4
Seller:	£4.	4
Buyer:	What's your last price?	4
Seller:	Believe me if it were anyone but you	
	I'd ask him five.	4
Buyer:	I'll make you a firm offer of £3.50.	4
Seller:	Impossible. Let it stay where it is.	4
Buyer:	Listen. I'll come this afternoon,	
	pay you £3.70 and take it.	4
	(Buyer crosses the threshold of the shop	
	on his way out.)	
Seller:	It still wants some repairs.	5

With the structure of the transaction captured, Mitchell also provided the kind of language used — phrases and clauses, which are often ritually set, for instance, *How much*. There has been some criticism of Mitchell's analysis. For example, it has been noted that the stages are recognized and defined more by activity than by linguistic features and that there are no linguistic markers to characterize any internal structure for the stages he proposed.

The period from the 1960s to the 1970s witnessed a rapid growth in discourse analysis, since the 1980s, discourse analysis has been attracting wider attention and has been flourishing, resulting not only from linguistic research but also from research in other disciplines.

The speech act theory originally by the linguistic philosopher Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1969, 1983) have been influential. In the speech act theory, pieces of language actu-

ally used are seen as functional units to convey two kinds of meanings: the locutionary meaning (propositional meaning) and the illocutionary meaning, the former being the basic literal meaning of a piece of language and the latter the effect of an utterance / sentence on the listener or reader. Lying at the heart of the speech act theory is the concept that language is used to perform certain functions or people use language to do things. The theory provides us with a means of probing beneath the surface of discourse and examining the surface relations of forms as well as underlying relations of functions and acts.

Also influential are Grice (1975), Levinson (1979) and Leech (1983) who view language as social action and explore how speakers observe and violate conversation maxims, how they require hearers to derive their meanings from the words uttered and how social constraints of politeness and face-saving act in conversations, a phenomenon also studied in pragmatics.

In North America, discourse analysis has been conducted largely in the ethnomethodological tradition, in which emphasis of study is on close observations of groups of people — how they communicate with each other and how they use their language in everyday activities. In his *Towards Ethnographies of Communication*, Hymes (1964) presents studies of speech in its natural social setting from a sociological perspective, and in *Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Life*, Hymes and Gumperz (1972) make an attempt to build structural models of speaking. They maintained that the ethnographer of speaking is not simply concerned with language structure, but with language use and the rules of speaking — the ways in which speakers associate particular models of speaking, topics or message forms with particular settings and activities. In describing models of speaking, one will

need to provide data along four interrelated dimensions:

1) the linguistic resources available to a speaker — how
    many different styles he can choose from;
2) supra-sentential structuring — how many differently struc-
    tured linguistic events, like trials, religious ceremonies,
    debates, songs, are recognized;
3) the rules of interpretations by which a given set of linguis-
    tic items comes to have a given communicative value;
4) the norms which govern different types of interaction.

It has been pointed out that such a kind of description would re-
quire an enormous or even impossible undertaking. And for this
reason, perhaps, the detailed structural descriptions given by those
ethnographers of speaking are usually well-defined ritualized
speech events, such as greetings (Irvine 1974) and ritual encoun-
ters (Salmond 1974). Others observed and examined speech par-
ticipants (Goffman 1979, Labov 1972, Albert 1972, Irvine
1974), settings of speech events (Foster 1974, Salman 1974),
factors affecting speakers' choice of variety or styles (Ervin-Tripp
1972), speech events (Hymes 1982), components of speech
events, purposes of speech events (Frake 1972) and norms of in-
teraction (Tannen 1982, Goffman 1976, 1979, Sacks, Schegloff
and Jeferson 1974) and investigation into other aspects of spoken
interaction, which are often referred to as conversation analysis.

British discourse analysis developed in the work of Firth (1957)
and was greatly influenced by Halliday (1976, 1978, 1985,
1989), who takes a functional approach to language study and
whose systemic functional grammar sets a framework for discourse
analysis. Among the scholars working in this tradition are Sinclair
and Coulthard (1975) who observed classroom interactions be-

tween teachers and pupils and developed models of exchange structures of teacher-pupil talk. Similar work has been done to deal with other types of spoken interactions such as interactions between doctor and patient, service encounters, interviews, debates, and business negotiations. Also important in this tradition is the functional analysis of intonation in discourse (Brazil 1985, Brazil, Coulthard and Johns 1980).

The Prague School of linguists, Van Dijk (1972, 1980, 1985), for example, have also made significant contribution in this area, with their special interest in the structuring of information in discourse and in their work the links between grammar and discourse have been shown.

Different as these approaches are, linguists share the common view: Language should be seen as a dynamic social interactive phenomenon between speaker/writer and listener/reader. Meaning is not conveyed by single or isolated sentences. In language study, we should not confine ourselves to sentences and rules of sentences, that is, we must look beyond the formal rules operating within sentences in order to understand what gives stretches of language unity and meaning, and take into consideration not only the people who use the language but also the world in which language is used. The language we use shapes the world and is in turn shaped by the world.

1. 3   Discourse and Discourse Analysis

The term **discourse**, as is mentioned above, is generally used to refer to language in use, but linguists do have slightly different interpretations of the word. Some linguists prefer to include the study of all spoken language, particularly if it is longer than one

sentence, under DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, and **text** is the term used to refer to written language and so the analysis of written language is called TEXT ANALYSIS (Coulthard, Sinclair 1975, Coulthard, 1992; 1994). Others use the word **discourse** to refer to the process of language use, which means discourse is dynamic language behavior, and **text** to refer to the representation or result of the language process or behavior, hence the terms **written text** and **spoken text** (Gillian Brown and George Yule, 1983), or the actual instances of communication in the medium of language in the way we talk about other things such as music (Johnstone, 2002: 2). Still others take discourse as language in use to enact identities and activities which is melded integrally with non-language aspect (Gee, 1999). We can also find the term **discourse** used in a more general way to refer to all kinds of language in use, that is, language which has been produced as the result of an act of communication, whether written or spoken, hence the terms **spoken discourse** and **written discourse**. TEXT LINGUISTICS is another term often used in this regard which studies both spoken and written texts, for example, a descriptive passage, a scene of a play or a conversation, but some researchers use the term to refer to the study of written discourse (Richards et al. , 1992: 138-139; 447). Here in this book, we use the term **discourse** generally to refer to both the spoken and written product of communication, but where necessary or convenient, we also use **text**, for instance, when quoting other researchers' views.

While the correct grammar rules are central to the sentence-grammarians, whose main object of study are **system-sentences** which are probably constructed and "never occur as the products of ordinary language-behavior" (Lyons, 1977), discourse analysts take a different view of the rule-governed aspects of languages. They are more interested in observing naturally occurring languages with