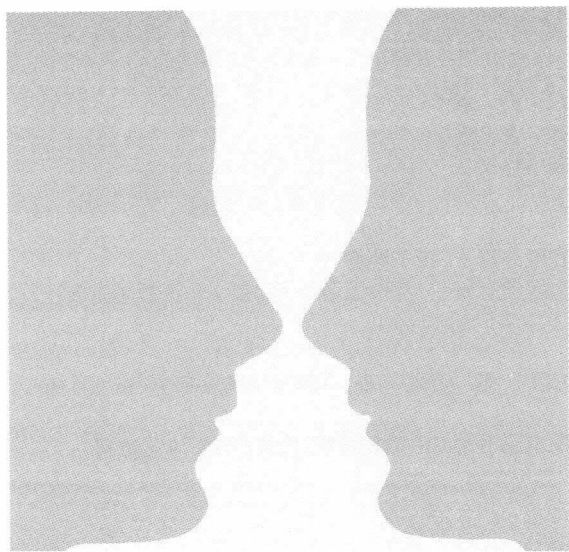


The
Dynamics
of
Communicative
Misunderstandings

话语误解动态研究

张少云 著



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前 言

误解现象由来已久，它普遍存在于各种语言文化背景之下的言语交际活动中。误解的情况有所不同：有的误解无伤大雅，交际者没有明显觉察；或者发现后及时补救、修正，使交际得以顺利进行。有的误解则不然，具有较大的破坏性。这类误解的存在往往会导致交际双方不曾预料、也不曾希望的消极效果的产生，直接威胁交际者面子，影响交际行为的正常进行，甚至引起人际关系的矛盾冲突。因此对言语交际中的误解现象进行研究有其重要的理论意义和应用价值。它有助于深化人们对言语交际规律与特点的认识，指导人们建构具体、有效的误解应对策略，在提高人们的交际能力与言语修养的同时，促进整个社会的和谐与稳定。

本书试图对误解现象进行较为全面、系统、深刻的理论与应用研究。在对误解研究的各流派成果进行扫描式回顾及恰当评述的基础上，提出本书的研究对象、研究方法、研究思路和框架。我们以言语交际活动中真实、自然的误解现象为研究主体，所有例证均源于现实语境。本书采用描写与解释相结合、动态与静态相结合以及对比分析的研究方法。我们始终贯彻这样一种研究思路：言语交际是交际双方共同参与的话语建构与话语理解的互动过程，交际者需要依赖客观语境与主观社会心理等因素对话语意义进行磋商、协调与适应，形成正确的理解。而体现这种思路的

研究特点就是动态、互动、多角度。本书的框架涵盖以下五个方面。

一、关于误解的实质。言语交际是话语建构与话语理解的互动过程，说写者建构话语要考虑自己的言语目的与意图通过话语信息有效地传递给听读者；听读者理解话语是从理解词句意义过渡到捕捉话语整体信息及信息核心。可见，言语交际的实质是形成理解。作为一种言语理解现象，误解的识别与处理有赖于交际双方互动过程中的合作与协商，误解的消除或弥合是在对话过程中取得的一种和谐。通过对误解的归属问题、误解的区别性特征、被误解的内容以及误解的发现与识别四个要素的归纳分析，我们提出本文对误解的界定：误解是言语交际过程中听读者无意中错误理解说写者的话语信息或话语意图的言语理解现象。然后通过对误解与不解、歧解、曲解、误导、交际失误与语用失误等其他相关言语现象的比较进一步明确误解概念的外延，即误解范围的划界问题。

二、关于误解的分类。本书在对前人的分类研究进行简要的总结与评价的基础上，提出了误解分类的标准，它们是语用意义标准、理解结果标准、识别程度与处置方式标准。语用意义标准是以所误解的话语信息为对象加以分类，首先归纳出话语意义与话语含意两大类，话语意义包括词句的命题意义、指称意义及表情意义。话语含意包括言语行为意义、暗含、修辞含意等。这个标准较易揭示误解的本质，价值最大。理解结果标准是从交际双方信息量的角度区分误解的方法，表现形式有增解、减解、转解三类。它关注的是误解的静态结果，不能细致说明误解形成的实际状况。识别程度及处置方式标准是从交际者出发对误解及其后续活动所作的划分，有立即识别与处置、逐步识别与处置、事后

识别三类情况。上述三种分类标准从不同角度观察并揭示误解现象的本质特征。

三、关于误解的成因。话语理解是交际者依赖语境的复杂的心理认知过程。本书通过对产生误解的整个语篇进行连贯、动态的综合因素的分析,挖掘出隐含在语言因素背后的导致误解的深层动因。我们分别从话语因素、语境因素、心理因素三个角度对误解形成的根源与机制问题进行了较为广泛而深刻的探讨。研究发现,歧义、模糊、省约等是引发误解的主要话语因素,它们为误解的产生提供了物质条件,为听读者做出非说写者期待的理解留下了空间。但在多数情况下误解是由语言手段、言语动机、话语角色、语境信息、社会心理等多方面的因素综合作用而成。听读者所依据的心理和语境因素失当便会导致其对说写者话语意义或话语意图的误解,产生语用障碍或信息差。这种基于言语交际使话语建构与话语理解双向互动的研究思路与方法可以对误解的根源问题进行更加合理、充分的阐释与说明。

四、关于误解的调控。在把握误解根源的基础上,我们借鉴信息修辞学与控制修辞学的研究成果对言语交际中产生的信息差及其调控策略进行探讨,目的是争取在最大程度上减少话语误解的可能性,以保证交际活动的顺利进行。书中论述了话语信息的控效和类型,根据信息反馈的顺序与功能区分出前反馈与后反馈、正反馈与负反馈,指出话语控制的机制实质在于负反馈。并从语音特征、词语选择、句法结构、语用修辞等不同层面重点探讨避免或消除误解的具体策略。我们认为,语音、词汇、句法层次的调控最终均可归结为语用修辞角度的调控。为了克服理解障碍,消除信息差,交际双方需要在话语建构与话语理解的互动过程中,根据开放的、动态的语境通过反馈机制调节自身话语,直到双方

适应，达到相互理解。

五、关于误解的应用。除了对误解的理论进行分析阐述以外，本书还尝试结合对外汉语教学在误解理论的应用方面做些探索。我们发现，留学生容易对某些词语的转义、隐喻用法、国俗语义或熟语等内部隐含意思产生不解或误解，而这些都极有可能成为影响他们快速阅读、形成汉语语感、捕捉话语信息核心能力的障碍，误解研究理论对这方面有一定的指导与帮助。另外，由于各民族形成概念化的心理机制不尽相同，语言手段也存在着差异，因此，在翻译中存在“望文生译”现象，造成误译，影响翻译的实质。在跨文化交际中存在着理解困难与沟通障碍等问题，误解研究理论也为我们提供了一些思路 and 方向。

对误解的研究既要考虑语境和社会等因素对说写者建构话语的制约与影响，也要兼顾听读者在诠释话语时的认知心理机制，单独从一个角度进行阐述是难以概括误解的本质特征的。本研究综合语用学、现代修辞学、话语语言学、社会语言学、心理语言学、认知语言学等相关学科的研究成果，对所收集的语料实例进行了细致的描写和说明。通过对误解的实质与类型、误解产生的综合性根源、误解应对的调控策略以及误解理论的应用价值等多方面问题的探讨研究，使我们对误解现象形成了比较全面、系统的认识。

张少云

2011年3月20日

Preface

Misunderstanding is a long-standing phenomenon in speech community. It exists in various forms of communication in different languages and cultural backgrounds. Misunderstandings differ: some don't cause serious consequences and others do. Serious misunderstandings often cause negative effects which are unexpected, such as, embarrassing the communicator, creating a negative impact on ongoing communication activities, or even causing conflicts in interpersonal relations. This study on misunderstanding is thus as important theoretically as it is valuable practically.

This dissertation documents the attempt to carry out an overall and systematic research on the theory and application of misunderstanding. Based on the previous achievements in the study of misunderstanding, the author puts forth the research target, research methods, main concepts and theoretical framework of this study. The study focuses on misunderstanding cases in real life situations. The author combines description and explanation as the research methods, using dynamic research, static research and contrastive analysis. The main idea of this dissertation is that verbal communication is an interactive speech construction process between communicative participants. In any given

situation, communicators need to negotiate and adapt their meanings based on the discourse context and socio-psychological factors so as to reach correct understandings of verbal communication. Dynamic concepts and interactive and multi-faceted perspectives feature prominently in this study, the framework of which focuses on five main aspects.

1. The nature of misunderstanding. Speech communication is an interactive process consisting of verbal construction and verbal understanding, with understanding being its core concept. Misunderstanding, as a phenomenon, can be identified and remedied by the cooperation and negotiation during the interactive communication process. Therefore, we can deduce that the elimination of misunderstanding can be achieved by ensuring balance in the dialogue. The definition of misunderstanding consists of four elements: ascription, differentiating characteristics, the content or objective of misunderstanding and the finding or identification of misunderstanding. The concept of misunderstanding in this study is defined thus: misunderstanding refers to the situation when a reader or listener unintentionally obtains a mistaken or partial understanding of a speaker's verbal information or writer's intended communication. After a careful comparison between misunderstanding, non-understanding, divergent-understanding, deliberate-misinterpretation, misleading communication, communication failures, and pragmatic failures, the denotation of misunderstanding has been further clarified.

2. The classification of misunderstanding. The defining criteria of misunderstanding used here have been based on the summarization

and evaluation of existing research in the field. Pragmatic meaning criterion, comprehension result criterion, the degree of identification and disposition criterion have all been taken into account in classifying misunderstanding. Pragmatic meaning criterion refers to identification based on a misunderstood meaning, including discourse meaning and discourse implication, with subclasses of proposition meaning, referential meaning, rhetoric meaning, illocutionary force, implicature and so on. And the criterion is easily applied to disclosing the nature of misunderstanding. Comprehension result criterion refers to the classification of misunderstanding by examining the volume of information. It includes additional interpretation, losing information and paraphrase. This criterion focuses on the static result and cannot help us to understand the actual condition of misunderstanding. The degree of identification and disposition criterion refers to the classification based on the follow-up activities of the communicator, including instant identification and disposition, gradual identification and disposition and final identification but no disposition. Put together, these criteria disclose the nature of misunderstanding from different angles.

3. The causes of misunderstanding. Through this study, the root causes of misunderstanding have been explored by examining the elements of discourse and analyzing the discourse in a coherent and dynamic manner. We find that misunderstanding is not caused by a particular unitary element, but by comprehensive ones, although ambiguity, vagueness and omissions are the main verbal elements which cause misunderstanding. The comprehensive elements include verbal means, motivation, speech roles, social elements, contextual

information and psychological information. By using this interactive and dynamic view of misunderstanding that is based on construction and interpretation, we can further thoroughly explain and illuminate misunderstanding.

4. The adjustment strategy for misunderstanding. Based on the achievement provided by information rhetoric and controlling rhetoric research, we discuss the information gap and adjustment in trying to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding and to guarantee the efficacy of speech communication. We first discuss the controlling effect of utterance and the classification of utterance. In this study, front feedback and back feedback, positive feedback and negative feedback are differentiated based on the order and function of feedback. We find that the fundamental mechanism of utterance control lies in negative feedback, after which we discuss the specific strategies of avoiding and eliminating misunderstanding at different levels of pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence patterns, pragmatics and rhetoric. It is concluded that all controlling and adjusting of pronunciation, vocabulary and sentence patterns ultimately comes down to pragmatics and rhetoric. That is to say, in order to eliminate misunderstanding and the information gap, both parties in a communication need to adjust their language through constant feedback in the construction and interpretation of conversation to accommodate each other and to reach a mutual understanding.

5. The applications of misunderstanding research. Besides conducting a theoretical analysis of misunderstanding, this study also tries to explore its applications to teaching Chinese to speakers

of other languages. We have found that international students often misunderstand transferred meanings, metaphorical meanings, special cultural meanings and fables. These misunderstandings affect their reading speed, formation of Chinese language sense, and grasp of the core meaning of information. My research aims to provide guidance and help in both this area and the area of translation. Because of the different psychological mechanisms in conceptualization and the different means of language, misinterpretation occurs and the nature of a piece of translation can be affected. This research also aims to lessen the difficulties associated with cross-cultural understanding and communication.

Any study on misunderstanding has not only to take into account the restrictions that situational and social elements place on the speaker when constructing a discourse, but also to give consideration to the cognitive psychology mechanism of the listener when interpreting said discourse. Such considerations therefore make it difficult to include all the distinctive features of misunderstanding and describe them from a single aspect. To counter such difficulties, this study takes an overall look and systematic exploration and interpretation of misunderstanding based on the theories of pragmatics, modern rhetoric, discourse linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics and other related fields.

Zhang Shaoyun

March 2011

第1章 绪 论

1.1 研究意义

话语是“说写者”在某个特定语境中运用语言手段表情达意的口语或书面语形式，它是言语活动的产物。根据美国学者 de Beaugrande 与奥地利学者 Dressler 的广义的观点，话语具有语形衔接性、语义连贯性、目的性、可接受性、信息度、情景性、话语间关联性七种特征（王德春，2004：130），它们把话语的语法、语义、语用三个层面连通起来。

误解是指言语交际中“听读者”错误、片面地理解“说写者”的话语信息或交际意图而造成的话语信息差的言语现象。误解现象由来已久，而且亘古不断。中国史书关于误解的最早记载可追溯到战国末年《吕氏春秋》中的“乐正夔一足矣”这句话。我们在日常交际中不难发现：无论是稍纵即逝的口语交际，还是固定成形的书面交际；无论是同语言、同文化背景的交际，还是跨语言、跨文化背景的交际，都无法摆脱误解现象。可见，误解普遍存在于人类言语交际中。

误解的情况有所不同。有的误解无伤大雅，交际者并没有觉