

清华语言论丛

语言导论新编

*An Introduction to Language:
A New Course Book*

彭宣维 编著



清华大学出版社

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北 京

内 容 简 介

本书是一部语言学的入门教材,整体框架有别于其他任何一部国内外同种教材。编著者将语言形象地看作一个立体模式,由级阶、层次和相度三个维度构成,对英语的词、词组、句子以及语篇进行了系统的、深入浅出的介绍,对语言中的主要基本现象逐一用图式加以说明,叙述生动活泼,语言表达浅显易懂。

主要读者对象:高校英语教师、英语专业高年级学生、语言学专业研究生及语言学爱好者。

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

语言导论新编 = An Introduction to Language: A New Course Book/彭宣维编著. —北京:清华大学出版社,2003

(清华语言论丛)

ISBN 7-302-06190-4

I. 语… II. 彭… III. 英语—语言学—教材 IV. H31

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2003)第 107220 号

出 版 者: 清华大学出版社(北京清华大学学研大厦,邮编 100084)

<http://www.tup.tsinghua.edu.cn>

责任编辑: 吴 锦

版式设计: 刘 路

印 刷 者: 北京牛山世兴印刷厂

发 行 者: 新华书店总店北京发行所

开 本: 787×960 1/16 印张: 20.25 插页: 1 字数: 356 千字

版 次: 2003 年 3 月第 1 版 2003 年 3 月第 1 次印刷

书 号: ISBN 7-302-06190-4/H·443

印 数: 0001~4000

定 价: 38.00 元

序

本书作者彭宣维君是一位笔耕甚勤的多产作者，一位在校时期就表现出在学术上不甘寂寞的研究者，一位能敢于进行创造性思维的勇敢的探索者。我为他的一些著作写过审定材料，也写过序。《语言导论新编》该是我第三次为他写序了。

本书书名中的“语言导论”四个字表明作者写本书的目的是向学习者提供有关语言的基本知识。据了解，本书原来是为网上课程准备的语言学教材，学生对象应当是把英语作为副修专业学习的非英语专业学生，语言学将是可供他们选修的一门课程，因此不能谈太深奥的语言学理论和流派。正是这个原因，宣维在他的前言中开宗明义地指出他的这本教材对初学者不会太难。

我也注意到宣维在书名的“语言导论”之后有“新编”二字。作者自己最清楚，他在前言中主要谈了三点：（一）从“新的视角”写本书，具体说，他采用了三个维度的方法。第一个是情景——语言——媒介的横截度，第二个是从词——词组/短语——小句——复句——段——节——章——部——语篇的垂直度，第三个是由概念功能、人际功能和信息功能及其对应的语法和语音范畴组成的横向度。三者构成有机的整体。（二）描写过程分两个方向，从左至右，前一个层面由下一个层面体现；从下到上，从语言选择到语言结构到语篇组织。（三）该书不可能穷尽一切有关语言的问题并给以解答，但提出若干让学习者思考的问题。

我同意作者上述的归纳，但受读者反映论的影响，我对本书的“新”也作了一些解读，补充以下几点体会。（一）也许受到网上课程的启示，作者在编排上采用了屏幕表述法，如把每章的要点放在屏幕内，便于学习者抓住主要的模块；对例句加框，并使用较多的插图。这些都有利于教学。（二）作者能经常打铁趁热，在每个模块最后，向读者提出一些讨论题，作者在上面的第三点中谈到了这

一点,惟深度不够。我认为作者可爱之处是没有把自己看作先知,以独语垄断一切,而是与学习者共同讨论问题,探索语言的奥秘。这种对话式、启发式的文风值得提倡。(三)本书不是各种理论的综合或大杂烩。作者基本上采用了系统功能语言学的三大元功能的理论和术语写作本书。这种以一个理论为指导贯穿整本教材脉络的做法在目前国内英语语言学教科书编写中是一个新的创举。它要求作者至少吃透消化这个理论。第四,也是最为重要的,虽然作者采用了系统功能语言学的理论,但没有照搬理论,而能根据自己的认识进行修正,提出新的理论或观点。例如,他的第三元功能强调的是信息,而经典理论是谋篇。

如何看待最后一点人们会有不同认识。我国传统的治学精神讲究严谨继承,任何一个细微之处都要认真考证,不要轻易否定前人,不要编一些经不起推敲的新理论吓人。这个传统的不足之处就是只能“克隆”一些复制品,无法解决理论建设的落后,在国际上很难端出自己品牌的语言学理论。一位来华三次的俄罗斯学者曾问我:为什么中国学者都是外国理论的介绍者,或是对他人理论或文章的评论者,却很少有自己的理论体系?我认为他言之有理,只能告诉他我们已注意到这个问题,有些学者正在往这方面努力。我想把宣维放在这一族群中不算为过。

当然做学问该谦虚处还得谦虚。我说的不是虚假的谦虚,而是对别人的意见虚心以待,认真反省。这就是说,完美的东西也难免瑕疵。我是有根据的。譬如说,作者在前言中一面说,本书对头脑空白的学生不会太难,倒是那些“专家”会觉得难了,因为他们摆脱不了原有知识或理论的限制,不容易接受新的观点。后一点是对的,如果我也称得上“专家”的话,确实产生了难的感觉,这给作者说对了;但作者在前言的末尾又说,本书是特别为英语专业高年级学生写的,这不是明白说对非英语专业学生难了,这便有违编写本书的初衷。至于有关语言学的具体问题,需要读者(专家,准专家,英语专业学生,非英语专业学生)一起参加讨论。这里,我把一句话分成两截,我鼓励宣维敢想敢说,敢于创新,我又告诫宣维,经常与“他者”对话,营造活泼的健康的学术气氛。愿与宣维共勉。

胡壮麟

2002年8月

北京大学蓝旗营

Preface

This course book may not be difficult for beginners, but not so easy for experts. The reason lies in that the writers attempt to introduce language from a new perspective. That is, this perspective treats language as a dynamic process, the final appearance of which turns out to be stereoscopic:

(i) from Situation to Language (Meaning to Wording to Sounding) to Medium is the Transverse dimension, (ii) from Word to Word Group/Phrase, Clause, Clause Complex, Paragraph, Section, Chapter, Book, and ultimately to Text is the Vertical dimension, and (iii) along these two dimensions is the third one, i. e. the Longitudinal extent, which is mostly composed of three strands, i. e. Ideational, Interpersonal and Informational meaning, wording and sounding respectively.

The three dimensions are an organic whole, but the process of realization starts from two directions and ends up with one. The first proceeds from left to right, one level to be realized by the next, and so on. The second direction is bottom-up, namely, from linguistic options to linguistic structures (the clausal/sentential) and organizations (the textual). The two directions have potentials to be represented (for the transverse dimension) and constructed and organized (the vertical dimension). Beginners have nothing in their minds beforehand, so they may start to learn what language is according to the guidance being set from the very beginning. But experts usually start to match the descriptions here with what has already been stored in their minds; so it is not easy for an expert to skim it through. Fortunately, this book is compiled for beginners, so the worry may be put aside for the moment.

The way of compiling this course book is somewhat different from the current ones that have a similar purpose. That is, it is not possible to introduce everything, so only some important aspects are presented; and questions are put forward wherever necessary. Readers are expected to think about them creatively, because no available answers are supplied. In fact, we are facing so many problems in our reality, and no ready solutions await us; we are supposed to cope with them ourselves. So, if you could work out some of them, whether partially or completely, you are beginning to be a scholar yourself, even though a green hand. Then you should continue the thinking till you find all the answers presented here and those not. In one word, you could have by then learnt to face a new world and a new life, even if you will not touch upon linguistics any more the rest of your life. Meanwhile, important terms are given Chinese versions in the subsequent parentheses; most of them are so signalled for at least twice so as to lead readers to gradually remember them.

This book is prepared for senior English majors; or it may also be used as a type of reference book for the course of general linguistics of the MA students. The teaching or self-learning of this book may follow the following steps. First, for self-learners, you may only read the figures and tables since the information presented in this way have covered the chief points the writers want to say. Next, if you want to know some of the traces or reasons of the points, you may then turn to the words, with occasional sidelong glimpses at the corresponding diagrams. But always remind yourself that whenever you find yourself lost, just browse the figures, and neglect the words.

On the other hand, if you are a teacher, you may also refer to some materials in *Linguistics: A Course Book* by Hu Zhuanglin (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2001) if you think the content here is not enough. Or you may recommend such a marvelous introductory copy as *Language and Linguistics: A Work Book* by Gu Yueguo (Beijing: Beijing Foreign Studies University Press) if you find that your students need something to back up. Or you may even download something from the Internet, but you are suggested to stick to the main line this book provides in order to land at a point that we regard as the shortcut to other targets within the field. By the way, this book may also to a large extent benefit graduate students in one way or another. Believe it or not!

Special gratitude finds way to Professor Hu Zhuanglin (胡壮麟), without whose prompt it is absolutely impossible that this book would come into being. He proposed that a lively narration and unique format be wanted for beginners. He also read carefully through the draft and helped me with various problems and questions. He offered the Foreword that adds great glamour to this small book. Abundant thanks should also go to Dr. Edward McDonald (马爱德) who exerted great effort to making constructive suggestions and critical comments as well as proof-readings on the form and the content of the draft of this book. His sharp eyes and the reference books he supplied are to me very much inspiring. Furthermore, Professor Wang Qiang (王蔷), Professor Tian Guisen (田贵森), Professor Luo Yiming (罗益民), Dr. Gao Yanmei (高彦梅) and Professor Liu Lihui (刘立辉) have provided me with much-needed materials and other related generous help before and during the compiling of the book.

And as for the drawbacks and defects the book still contains, I am alone responsible for them all, and always ready for critical suggestions and comments to the following address: xuanweipeng@263.net. Thank you ever so much!

The author

March, 2002

Revised in November, 2002

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Part One

A Setup for Language

Chapter I

Language as a Set of Facts

Do you have any idea of the following points? And can you find out some instances or explanations for each of them before you go on reading?

- a) Language as a set of facts: social, historical, neurological as well as cognitive;
- b) Language as a fact of its own: the design features;
- c) Language as entity vs. speaking/writing as substance.

By the time you pick up this course, you have most probably had read or heard of *The Life and strange and surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe (1660—1731). Do you still remember that there was a character named Robinson Crusoe? He was, after the shipwreckage on the sea, pushed by waves to a lonely island, where he lived isolated afterwards for 27 years before he was finally picked up by a passing-by British ship. You may still remember one of the events that Crusoe saved a primitive who was then given the name Friday and taught to speak English. That is to say, Robinson could still speak English after a long time of separation from his people.

But this sounds somewhat impossible if the following report is true. A Chinese worker was captured to Japan during the Anti-Japanese War, and detained there for hard working before he could manage to escape into a forest. One day after over 13

years' cavity life in the mountain he saw a ship on the sea. He attempted to shout "Help!", but failed to utter it out. From here we can see that a man who is detached too long from his SPEECH COMMUNITY (言语共同体) would lose his ability to speak. But the report further says that the above-mentioned Chinese worker later recovered his native tongue. It is therefore noticeable there was a period of time during which he could not say anything meaningful. Then why could he recover his native tongue? Does it suggest that the Chinese language should still have been in his mind all the time? And does his later problem chiefly lie in his mouth organs and some other related physiological mechanism that could no longer be brought into play to carry out his intention to speak?

1.1 Language as a Set of Facts

In regard to the report, there are a couple of points concerning language. On the one hand, language is associated with its due society as well as the process it evolves; and on the other hand it is involved in neurological and cognitive co-working mechanism.

1.1.1 Language as a socio-historical fact

Has it ever occurred to you that we use language everywhere most of the day in our daily life, especially for our urban people? In fact, we were taught to say MUM and/or DAD just after birth. And we were brought to kindergartens and schools to learn to speak and write. Awards are always given to those who speak better or write better. And the best develop their gift of this kind and become scholastic in dealing with words; that is, these are professional speakers and/or writers such as teachers, statesmen, administrators and managers, who have long been enjoying their achievements and popularity. So in school, classes proceed and are usually filled with the teachers' and/or students' voices; gatherings in most cases are typical with statesmen's enthusiastic eloquence. Meanwhile, noises are heard in school playgrounds, on university campuses, in offices or shops, in the streets, at the park corners, during meetings/conferences, in workshops, on trains, in cars, buses or airplanes. We make a lot of phone calls everyday to someone else who is near or far away. What would you think if you come across a colleague or

friend who does not say “hello” to you? In each of these occasions, among many others, the physical air movement as rhythmic waves serves as one important type of MEDIUM (媒介), i. e. the means or tool being employed for delivering message or for doing something, as displayed in (1).

1

Billionaire: ... I got money, I got security, I have businesses, but... you have something I actually don't have.

Husband: There're limits to what money can buy.

Wife: Some things are not for sale.

Billionaire: Such as...

Wife: You can't buy people.

Billionaire: That's naive, Diana. I buy people every day.

Wife: Oh, in business maybe, but they are so much involved.

Billionaire: So you say I can't buy love. That's a bit of cliché...

Wife: That's absolutely true.

Billionaire: Is it? What do you think?

Husband: I agree with Diana.

Billionaire: You do? Well, let's test the cliché... Suppose... I would offer you one million dollars... for one night of your wife...

Husband: I'd say you're kidding.

Billionaire: Let's pretend I'm not. What would you say?

Wife: He tells you to go to hell!

Billionaire: I didn't hear him.

Husband: I tell you to go to hell!

Here the speakers are doing something with words. That is, the couple is trying to make something straight at first, but all the while the billionaire to make a deal. If the offer is accepted by the husband and wife, each of them is going to fulfill some task according to the agreement.

Moreover, the majority of message manipulation also requires pen-to-paper WRITINGS (书写), including school homework, financial or commercial reports, agent message, or administrative documents. We make notice and direction notes in public places. We also come across piles of newspapers and magazines in the street