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董 艳◎著

A CONTRASTIVE ACADEMIC DISCOURSE STUDY
OF CRITICAL STANCE AND EVALUATION

批判性立场和评鉴 学术话语对比研究

(英文版)



上海交通大学出版社
SHANGHAI JIAO TONG UNIVERSITY PRESS



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内 容 提 要

本书采用密歇根高级学生论文语料库,检验了研究者提出的批判性立场和评鉴具有学科和文化特异性的假设;然后利用密歇根大学机构合作委员会十大联盟硕博论文语料库自建的 DISCORPS 语料库以及 Hyland 学科专家语料库,对比分析了中国博士生和英美博士生以及成熟的学科专家之间在显性和非显性评鉴策略使用方面的差异。结构合理,分析细致,结论可信。在对大量的文献进行归纳、分析和研究的基础上,确定自己的研究重点和分析框架,并以自己收集的第一手数据资料来进行实证分析研究。研究结论可以为 ESL/EFL/EAP/EIL 写作教学提供启示。

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前 言

本研究首先采用密歇根高级学生论文语料库,检验了研究者提出的批判性立场和评鉴具有学科和文化特异性的假设;然后利用密歇根大学机构合作委员会十大联盟硕博论文语料库自建的 DISCORPS 语料库以及 Hyland 学科专家语料库,对比分析了中国博士生和英美博士生以及成熟的学科专家之间在显性和非显性评鉴策略使用方面的差异。结构合理,分析细致,结论可信。在对大量的文献进行归纳、分析和研究的基础上,确定自己的研究重点和分析框架,并以自己收集的第一手数据资料来进行实证分析研究。研究结论可以为 ESL/EFL/EAP/EIL 写作教学提供启示。

本书是在我的博士论文基础上进一步完善而成的。自收集资料、海外研修、撰写文稿、成稿答辩到修改出版,历经数载。回想起来,往事历历在目,令人感慨万千。首先,特别感谢导师许余龙教授。许老师渊博的学识和大师风范让我获益匪浅。在选题、撰写、修改和定稿过程中,许老师不仅对总体框架提出建设性意见,而且对于局部的细微问题也反复推敲,使之更加严谨细致。许老师虚怀若谷的人生态度和严谨的治学态度将鼓励我坚守学术,在学术道路上不断登攀。其次,感谢上海外国语大学的老师们,通过选修对比语言学、语用学、英语测试、文学理论、口译研究等课程,我聆听到诸多名家之言,感受到众多学术思想在摩擦碰撞中的流光溢彩。

感谢项目合作导师密歇根大学资深语言学教授约翰·马尔科姆·斯韦尔斯(John Malcolm Swales),使我有机会和国际语言学大师面对面地交流。2012 年夏季学期和秋季学期,本人有幸得到太原科技大学骨干青年教师出国留学项目基金的资助,在密歇根大学英语语言研究所研修。其间,项目合作导师斯韦尔斯教授天生的学术洞察力、语言天赋、学术忠诚以及学术激情给我留下了深刻的印象。感谢亲爱的家人和朋友,你们给予我的欣赏和支持,就是本书最大的创作

动力。

感谢教育部人文社会科学研究青年基金项目(No.13YJC740016)、山西省高校哲学社会科学研究项目(No.2012241)、山西省研究生教育改革研究课题(No.2014-49)、太原科技大学博士科研启动项目(20142002)基金资助和上海交通大学出版社的大力相助使本书得以顺利出版。这些激励让我辈青年学者勇于邀游学海,探索未知,开创未来。

虽然本书是在整合各方资源后认真思考和深入研究的结晶,但是,由于本人学术水平、时间精力等因素,尚且存在一些疏漏。书中的疏忽和错误均由本人负责,在此恳请各位专家和读者同行批评指正,广泛交流。

董 艳

2014 年 2 月

于太原科大世纪花园

Abbreviations

CE: Civil Engineering

EAP: English for Academic Purposes

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

EIL: English as an International Language

EL: English Language

ELF: English as a Lingua Franca

ELL: English Language and Literature

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

NNS: Non-native Speakers

NS: Native Speakers

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Academic discourse analysis has been a well-documented field of discourse analysis and numerous studies have been conducted to investigate into the features and attribution of, and approaches to discourse (Stubbs 1996; Swales 1986, 2004; Blommaert 2005; Johnstone 2007; van Dijk 2008; Bloome and Carter 2008; Wodak and Krzyzanowski 2008; Hyland 2009, 2012) and its relation to culture study (Barker and Galasinski 2001) and to critical consciousness (Bizzell 1992). Various comparative studies have also been conducted to compare and contrast academic writings of native English with non-native English writers, such as those by Hinds (1984), Givon (1983), Eggington (1987), Taylor and Chen (1991), and Stapleton (1996). However, the contrastive studies between Chinese Ph. D. students writing in English and, their Anglo-American counterparts have rarely been conducted to my knowledge and we still haven't possessed a clear understanding of the following issues: To what extent and in which way are Chinese Ph.D. students writing in English similar to and different from their Anglo-American counterparts? And what are the underlying factors contributing to such similarities and differences? What can such knowledge of the academic discourse bring to ESL/EAP/EFL/EIL teachers and learners, in enlightening the pedagogy and facilitating learning? These are the questions we need to shed more light on.

During the initial few years of the twenty-first century, scholarship in linguistics and related disciplines has witnessed a notable upsurge of interest in stance and evaluation. Several

published monographs explicitly reference stance in their titles, such as Gardner's (2001) *When Listeners Talk Response Tokens and Listener Stance*, Hunston and Thompson's (2000) *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse*, Mushin's (2001) *Evidentiality and Epistemological Stance*, Wu's (2003) *Stance in Talk: A Conversation Analysis of Mandarin Final Particles*, and Karkkainen's (2003) *Epistemic Stance in English Conversation*. Special issues of journals, panels and symposia have been devoted to various perspectives on stance and evaluation. And numerous journal articles have dealt with this topic either directly or indirectly. This broad array of research represents a convergence; an intersection of subdisciplines within linguistics (e. g. corpus linguistics, cognitive linguistics, sociocultural linguistics, and interactional linguistics), and it highlights a set of overlapping interests with closely-allied fields such as anthropology, social psychology, education, and sociology. As this heterogeneous range of research implies, stance is by no means a monolithic concept. Definitions and conceptions of stance are as broad and varied as the individual backgrounds and interests of the researchers themselves. But what is noteworthy about the focus on stance and evaluation from all of these different perspective, is that it marks an orientation towards conceiving of language in terms of the functions for which it is used, based on the contexts within which it occurs. Research on stance and evaluation, however the term is defined, represents an ongoing trend towards understanding the full social and pragmatic nature of language, as it is used by actual speakers or writers to act and interact in the real world. The study joins this burgeoning field, offering new insights into the sociocultural, interactional, and performative nature of language by addressing stancetaking from a range of perspectives in context in which it is projected.

The lack of a consistent definition of stance and evaluation poses a conundrum for anyone wishing to summarize the state of the field in an introduction. Such a writer is faced with essentially two possibilities. One approach would be to present a clearly operationalized definition, and consequently to exclude from the purview of stance and evaluation research anything which does not meet this definition. Such an approach would border on academic imperialism, and would likely end up excluding much of what has been published under the rubric of stance and evaluation research. Prescribing a narrow definition would needlessly fragment and limit this interdisciplinary field of research at a time when it has only just begun to emerge and take shape. A second, more inclusive approach would be to adopt a broader, ethnographically-informed conception of stance and evaluation; to seek to understand how researchers conceive of stance and evaluation in their own work, and to begin to develop a model which recognizes the heterogeneous and multifaceted nature of stancetaking. This inclusive approach has the advantage of promoting dialogues among stance and evaluation researchers and encouraging interplay among ideas, and this is the approach I have chosen to adopt in the study though it is difficult to follow the disparate threads of ideas as they coalesce throughout the various approaches. However, this is the most realistic and fruitful way to approach the current, burgeoning state of stance and evaluation research. The understanding of stance and evaluation is indeed heterogeneous and variegated, but always intimately bound up with the pragmatic and social aspects of human conduct, highlighting the situated, pragmatic, and interactional character of stancetaking.

Current approaches to academic communication view writing as a social activity and knowledge as the product of the social

validation of claims. Discourse is seen as playing a crucial role in the process of knowledge construction. Consequently, scholars have focused their interest on the interpersonal and intersubjective nature of academic communication, describing how academics use language to argue in favor of their views and seek consensus through stancetaking.

1.1 Importance of and Reasons for Studying Critical Stance and Evaluation

The importance of the research topic is undeniable. Academic discourse is one of the most significant concepts of contemporary thinking in the humanities and social sciences. It concerns the ways language mediates and shapes our interactions with each other and with the social, political and cultural formations of our society.

The importance of and reasons for studying critical stance and evaluation can be revealed from the three assumptions about successful academic communication:

- 1) Writers should take a guarded stance, especially when presenting argumentation and results;
- 2) Texts should display a vision of reality shared by members of the particular discourse community to which the text is addressed; and
- 3) Academic texts should display a set of social and authority relations; they should show the writer's understanding of the roles they play within the text or context. (Johns 1997: 60-62)

The current interest in academic discourse is largely the result of three major developments over the past twenty years: changes

in higher education which have led to greater interest in the importance of writing, the growth of English as the international language of research and scholarship, and the emergence of theoretical perspectives which recognize the centrality of academic discourses in the construction of knowledge.

First, a huge expansion of education in Europe, Asia and Australia and increases in self-sponsored international students have created a student body far more culturally, socially and linguistically heterogeneous than ever before. The academicization of practice-based disciplines and the growth of modular and interdisciplinary degrees add to this expansion, too.

A second reason for this growing interest in critical stance and evaluation has been the power it wields in the careers of individual academics. Publishing is the main means by which academics establish their claims for competence and climb the professional ladder, so does the demand that this should be done in English, which has become the international lingua franca (ELF) of research and scholarship, being less a language than a basic academic skill. There were over 1.1 million peer-reviewed research articles published globally in English in 2005 and this number has been increasing by 4 per cent annually (Hyland 2011: 173). The number of non-native English speaking academics publishing in English language journals now exceeds the papers authored by native English speakers (Swales 2004). To survive and flourish in the academic communities, the non-native academics must adapt themselves to the Anglicized and Americanized stancetaking convention as quickly as possible.

A third incentive for studying stance and evaluation comes from a very different direction: the questioning of a positivist, empirical view of scientific knowledge. In recent years the view of academic discourse as an objective, independent demonstration of

absolute truth has been challenged by the sociology of scientific knowledge. Essentially, this perspective argues that scientific proof does not lie in the application of impartial methodologies but in academic arguments (Hyland 2011: 173). Observations are as fallible as the theories they presuppose, and texts cannot be seen as accurate representations of “what the world is really like” because this representation is always filtered through acts of selection and foregrounding. In other words, there is always more than one possible interpretation of data and these competing explanations shift attention from the laboratory or clipboard to the ways that academics argue their claims. At the heart of academic persuasion, are writers’ attempts to anticipate and head off possible negative reactions to their claims and to do this they have to project an appropriate stance and evaluate points of view and messages conveyed.

Academic discourse analysis seeks to discover how people use discourse to get their ideas accepted and at the same time how this works to construct knowledge and sustain and change disciplinary communities. Research into differences in academic practices is relatively new, partly because the notion of discipline and its underlying reliance on the idea of community has been difficult to pin down, on the other hand because of the fixation with genre in recent years. Genres are ways in which people “get things done” through their use of language in particular contexts. A dissertation is an example of a genre, a socially approved way in which students show what they know, what they can do, and what they have learned in a course of study. In drafting their dissertations, student writers use language in particular ways according to the aim and purpose of the genre and the relationship between the writer and the audience. The way student writers use language in such a genre as dissertation depends on the expectations of the

context in which the dissertation is being produced. Student writers also draw on their previous experiences with the genre to produce a new text. While genre has provided a significant way of understanding situated language use, its power of harnessing generalizations has led us to over-emphasize resemblances between texts at the expense of variation. But, as Swales made clear in 1990, we need to see community and genre together to offer a framework of how meanings are socially constructed by forces outside the individual.

Research on language variation across the disciplines and across cultures is rapidly becoming one of the dominant paradigms in EFL/ESL/ESP/EAP (e.g. Hyland 2004, 2011; Flottum et al. 2006; Hyland & Bondi 2006). Considering the goals of academic discourse helps to explain why the study of stance and evaluation is centrally important. A crucial aspect of liberal education is the ability to assess the status of information, being able to discriminate among a host of epistemic distinctions, from “speculation” to “fact”. These distinctions reflect the reliability of a statement, as well as the possibility that statements are offered from a particular perspective. To help student learners interpret the statements and determine whether they should be adopted as fact, criticized, or understood from a particular perspective, it is important for both the instructors and researchers to study stance and evaluation.

Therefore, a contrastive analysis of critical stance and evaluation between Chinese L2 English and Anglo-American dissertations may reveal something of how the Ph.D. writers align and position themselves within the academic community they belong to, and how they construct the relationship with their readers.