

Functions of Anaphora in Text

语篇中回指的功能

梁鲁晋 著



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作者简介

梁鲁晋，1970年10月出生，1993年毕业于聊城师范学院英语系，获英语文学学士学位。1996年-1999年就读四川外语学院，主攻翻译学，获英语文学硕士学位。2001年就读厦门大学，主攻语言学，2007年获英语博士学位。现任厦门大学英语系讲师。主要学术兴趣为：功能语言学、话语分析、语言哲学。迄今，已在国内学术刊物上发表多篇论文，并出版3部译著和编著。

序

回指是语言学领域研究较为广泛的一个复杂语言现象,研究角度具有多样化的特点。梁鲁晋老师的这部论著从功能和认知两大角度对语篇中的回指进行了理论探讨和应用分析,揭示了回指在语篇意义关系网络中的地位、特点及这些特点间的关系,可谓是对功能与认知这两角度在回指研究中的互补性、兼容性和可行性进行了有益探索。

一部论著的可信度及创新度部分取决于对前人研究的广度和深度的理解。这部论著首先系统回顾了古典、近代及当代回指研究的理论流派和研究方法。这些方法涉及了句法、语用、功能和认知各个方面。对于每种研究方法,作者都能不囿于理论既成框架的束缚,而是在理论的整体范围内给予评价,阐述个人见解。

论著的深度可体现在论证本身是否能深入语言现象所指涉的语言经验实体,并对语言经验实体的本质作出解释性说明。该论著不仅在回指功能的理论框架下对回指在语篇中的特点或制约要素、回指的生成和确认这三方面进行了描述性的实例分析,并说明回指的语篇、人际和认知三功能分别指向语言、社会和心理三个经验域,从而增加了论证的解释力,有助于从本体方面理解回指。

该部论著对回指研究在英语教学实践中的应用也进行了可贵探索。通过对回指和先行词在语篇中的数量、分布、回指间距、回指类型的统计分析和应用研究,作者在语篇难易度的判断、语篇选用的适切性以及语篇理解的实效性这些方面都得出了有价值的结论。

本书是梁鲁晋老师在博士论文的基础上完成的。作为她的导师,我对她的论文得以出版感到高兴。希望她在语言学领域取得更大的成绩。

杨信彰
2008年5月

前言

在语言研究中,语言符号与其所指之间的关系,即指称,一直是人们所关注的问题。从广义来说,指称是词或短语与外部世界中的实体(即该词所代表的事物、行为、事件及特性)之间的关系;从狭义来说,指称是指词或短语与具体事物,如具体的树或具体的动物之间的关系。在自然语言中,指称所代表的这种“语符与实体间的关系”进一步抽象为两个语言要素间的关系,对其中一个语素(回指)的解释在某种程度上依赖于对另一语素(先行词)的解释。

由于回指是自然语言的内在特性,在自然语言理解中起到不可忽视的作用,人们不仅在语言学,而且在包括哲学、心理学、认知科学及人工智能等各个领域对回指现象进行了研究。在语言学领域,回指被视为在句子内部以及句子之间运作的语言形式。这样就使回指兼备了句法和语篇特征,而在句法和语篇层面上对回指所进行的研究则有助于明晰自然语言的形成和推理的方式及过程。近年来,回指因其在语篇中所起的作用而日益得到语篇分析学家的关注。

本书第二章系统回顾了古典、近代及当代回指研究的理论流派和研究方法。在此基础上,本书提出从功能—认知角度对语篇中的回指进行研究的方法。功能—认知这一方法同时基于功能语言学和认知语言学的理论框架,融合功能和认知两种角度,使这两种角度在回指研究中得到了互补和兼容。通过功能—认知研究方法,本书在第三章提出回指研究的理论框架。该理论框架由回指的三种主要功能组成:语篇功能,人际功能和认知功能。

本书第四章对回指的语篇功能从词汇、语法、语义和语篇四个层次进行了探讨。在词汇层上,回指表现为限定性和词汇相似性两个特点。限定性有助于构建回指辨认的基础,而词汇相似性则有助于回指确认。限定性和词汇相似性在程度上的差异影响了回指信息的密度,从而进一步影响了回指确认。研究揭示了词汇相似性在回指

生成过程中的作用。在语法层上,对回指语篇功能从语法关系和临近原则两方面进行了研究。与小句过程类型和作为参与者的回指类型相关的语法关系可说明回指在主语和宾语位置之间进行的转换。在语法层上对回指构成限制的临近原则可解释回指确认中的特殊情形。分析表明,语法关系为语法层上的回指提供了从小句角度进行理论阐释的策略。在语义层上,回指同时表现为回指信息的连接和增加两种特点。回指信息的连接保证了回指语义信息在语篇推进中的稳定性。回指信息的增加则通过因不同回指形式而造成的语义微小差异而增进和强化了语篇信息流。在语篇层上,针对回指的作用从回指在语篇中所实现的关系——主题关系和衔接关系——这一角度进行了探讨。回指的主题性是回指实现主题关系的关键,而回指连续性则影响了主题连续性。回指对衔接关系的实现可从回指形成衔接链的方式得以反映。分析表明,通过编织语篇关系,回指在创建语篇织体方面起到不可或缺的作用。

第五章针对回指的人际功能,从作者—社会和作者—读者关系进行了探讨。通过回指手段,如重复性的第一人称代词,主语宾语化,指称点的转换和先行词的嵌入,作者构建了与社会的关系并传达出隐含的态度和观点。作者—读者关系表现为作者通过运用回指寻求与读者的共同基础。在这一过程中,作者所使用的回指手段具有排除说话方和包括受话方的特点。通过不同的回指手段,作者寻求到与读者共通的信仰、态度、一致性以及思想的赞同和支持。

在第六章,对回指的认知功能从读者—文本关系进行了探讨。在回指确认中,读者使用了三种认知策略:基于框架的回指信息整合,受语境限制的回指信息推理,与记忆相关的回指信息确认。对回指认知功能的探讨表明,为达到最大化的交际效果,读者的回指确认过程应与作者的回指生成过程最大程度上相一致。

为验证和三种回指功能相关的理论阐释,第七章对回指在三篇样文中的分布进行了对比分析。通过对统计结果的对比,回指三种功能所涉及的部分特征得到了验证。通过理论探讨和应用研究,本书得出结论:语篇中的回指是由语篇功能、人际功能和认知功能构成的系统。这三种功能使回指成为关系的网络,回指既是将经验实现为语篇性的手段,也是经验和语篇性的构建得以显现的目的。本研

究具有理论和应用两方面价值。研究成果可用于回指理论探讨、回指研究方法、语篇分析和教育语言学领域。

本书系由笔者的博士论文修改而成。在此,我要特别感谢我的导师、厦门大学的杨信彰教授。在我攻读博士论文期间,杨教授不仅给予悉心指导,更以他严谨虚心的治学态度、简洁缜密的思维方式、科学的探究方法,使我在语言学领域的学习受益非浅,也将激励我在语言学探索之路上继续走下去。对杨教授所给予我的一切支持和鼓励,我谨向他表达我由衷的谢意。

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我还要感谢厦门大学外文学院的同事多年来的关心和支持。对于远在伦敦的 Alan 先生和 Tanis 女士所给予我的精神上的支持,我深怀感激。同样要感谢 Mark Hilton 先生在语言学研究的有关方面的深刻洞见和启发性建议。

最后,我要感谢厦门大学“创新团队计划”的资助以及厦门大学出版社为本书的出版所提供的大力支持。

梁鲁晋

2008 年 1 月于厦门大学

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The term “anaphora” is used to refer to the relation between two linguistic elements. The interpretation of one linguistic element, which is called an anaphor, is in someway determined by the interpretation of the other, which is called an antecedent.

In recent years, anaphora has drawn consistent attention from textual analysts due to its role in textual organization. Although the methodology and perspectives in approaching anaphora are various, the research has one feature in common. That is, anaphora is taken as an auxiliary element in sentence connection and textual organization. Therefore, description of it is not systematic. This book, which studies anaphora in text from a functional-cognitive perspective, serves to be complementary to the previous research of anaphora in both theory and application.

1.1 The aim of this book

This book is an attempt to set up a tentative framework to study anaphora in text by considering both the linguistic features of anaphora and the two processes of producing and tracking anaphora. The aim is not to give an exhaustive list of the features of anaphora in sentence connection and textual organization, but to give a systemic description of the functions of anaphora in text.

This book points out that anaphora is a complex linguistic phenomenon, as its production involves factors in many aspects. Based



on this viewpoint, it is argued that the fundamental feature of anaphora in text is its textuality, so research methods and processes should start from and be based on this fundamental feature. In accordance with this basic understanding of anaphora, a functional-cognitive approach to anaphora is proposed. With this approach, it is argued that anaphora constitutes a system of three functions—textual function, interpersonal function and cognitive function, and these three functions render anaphora as a network of relations. Through the argument, this book aims to reveal, at an ontological level, the domains of experience that anaphora points toward ultimately and the interaction between these domains. Also, it aims to conclude that anaphora is both the means of realizing experience into textuality and the end in which the construction of experience and textuality can be revealed.

1.2 The nature of anaphora

The nature of anaphora in text touches on four features: (1) the antecedent-anaphor relationship; (2) co-reference; (3) textuality; and (4) contextuality.

The feature of antecedent-anaphor relationship is referred to most frequently in anaphora study and is thus taken as the core feature of anaphora. Traditionally and at the most surface level, anaphora is defined from the perspective of “antecedent-anaphor” relationship. Anaphora is therefore defined as a kind of linguistic element with subsequent reference to an already introduced entity. But on many occasions, cataphora, which is forward reference or a linguistic element that will occur later (such as “Listen to *this*, ...” or “Have you heard *it* yet... etc. ”), is also included as anaphora.

Co-reference is the second feature that is frequently included into the definition of anaphora, as shown in Bussmann’s (1996: 23) definition, “if the anaphoric element has the same reference as the antecedent, it is termed co-referent.” The feature of co-reference is also frequently implicated in linguistic literature. In his *language*, Bloomfield

(1935) stresses the “substitutinal” characteristic of anaphora. Bloomfield’s view is based more literally on the term “pro-noun”. For him, a pronoun refers to its referent via a form for which it is a substitute. It can be inferred that in proposing the term “substitute”, Bloomfield in fact affirms the common nature that the anaphor shares with its antecedent, which is based on the “co-reference” concept.

Textuality, which is the third feature of anaphora, is the most fundamental feature of anaphora in text. This feature is mainly represented by anaphora’s contribution to cohesion and coherence.

In modern linguistics, anaphora is rather viewed as one of the elements participating in text or discourse¹ construction, and it is taken as acquiring some “textual characteristics”. Thus, when placed within the context of text, the term “anaphora” is in fact equated with “anaphora in text” in meaning. Anaphora is held to contribute to a large extent to textual cohesion and coherence (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Giora, 1985; Cook & Newson, 1988; Parsons, 1990; Hoey, 1991; Zhang, 2003). Halliday and Hasan (1976) describe anaphora as “cohesion which points back to some previous item”. The “pointing back” word or phrase is called an anaphor and the entity to which it refers or for which it stands is its antecedent (Mitkov, 2002). In such a case, anaphora is held to be a special case of cohesion. The meaning (sense and/or reference) of one item in a cohesive relationship (the anaphor) is, in isolation, somehow vague or incomplete, and can only be properly interpreted by considering the meanings of the other item(s) in the relationship (the antecedent(s)). As cohesion is closely related to another important textual property of “coherence”, in much linguistic literature, anaphora is viewed as producing or being used to maintain textual coherence.

The fourth feature of anaphora is “contextuality”. This feature covers both the linguistic context by means of which anaphora can be distinguished from another easily confusing term “deixis”, and the social and cognitive contexts used to describe anaphora in an extended sense.

The “contextual” view of anaphora mainly originates from the distinctions between two confusing terms “deixis” and “anaphora”. On this point, specific evidence can be found in the respective literature of the Greek grammarian Apollonius and of the German psychologist Bühler. The classic Greek grammarian Apollonius’ s view on anaphora is explicated by Windisch (1869; cited from Bosch, 1983: 5 – 6) in the following way:

Real deixis, however, is distinguished from anaphora by referring immediately to the real objects in the external world which so far has been unknown or at least not been introduced into discourse. We are concerned with anaphora, however, when an object, previously mentioned in discourse, is taken up again by a pronoun.

This explication shows that the major difference between deixis and anaphora is held to focus on whether the linguistic information is “given” or “new”. Extensively speaking, if the information is new, the referring word must have a high degree of dependency upon situational or physical context, which is “the external world” mentioned above, and deixis will be used in such a case; if the information is given, the referring word will have a high degree of dependency upon the linguistic context, which is “discourse” mentioned in the explication, and anaphora will be used. This “contextual” view, although not formed clearly in Apollonius’ grammatical literature, takes an initial shape in the distinction that the German psychologist Bühler drew between *objectural* and *syntactic* pointing, which is further developed into what Bühler identifies later as *deixis* and *anaphora* respectively. Bosch (1983: 11) has the following citation of and comment on Bühler’ s view:

...The former refer directly to the objects at issue, either in the real environment or in an imagined environment. Anaphoric expressions, on the other hand, point to the linguistic context, i. e., to other expressions in discourse or to “objects-as-they-have-already-been-characterized-in-the-