

Ninety Years Since Saussure

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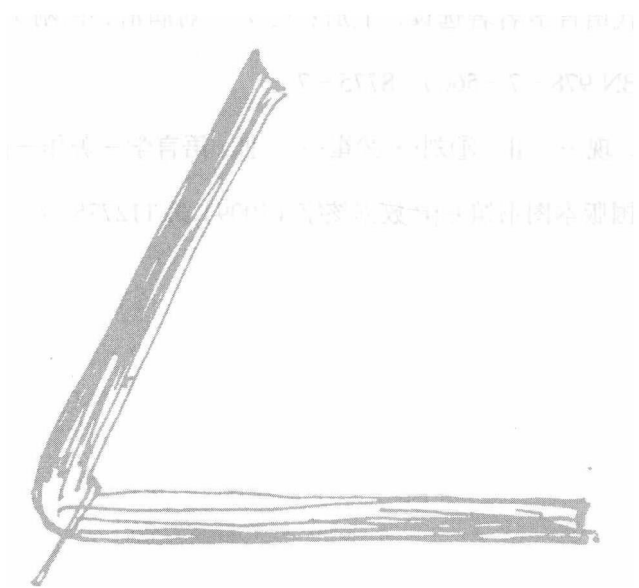
现代语言学名著选读

(上册)

刘润清 崔刚 编

外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS



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修订版说明

《现代语言学名著选读》一书作为中央电大继续教育教材于1988年由测绘出版社出版。在过去的20年间,该书受到了广大语言学研究、教师、研究生,以及英文系和中文系本科生的普遍欢迎,被许多学校选为研究生的教材或者研究生入学考试的指定参考书。就在前些日子,还有学生打电话来询问购买此书。他们说,尽管近年来外研社和外教社引进了五六百册语言学原著,但他们还买不起那么多书,先有一本《选读》则可一览大家风采。与此同时,不少读者也为本书提出了许多很好的建议。为了适应语言学研究的新发展、更好地满足教学的需要,我们对该书进行了修订。

本次修订仍然遵循原来的选编原则:(1)既照顾到语言学的系统性,又要反映不同学派的观点;(2)既照顾到当前的最新发展,又要反映思想的沿革;(3)所选著作都是现代的(20世纪以来的),皆出自名家之手,既有独到之处,又代表某学派的主要观点;(4)在评介中,力求客观、全面,多写事实,少抱偏见,不褒扬一派,驳斥其他。

修订的主要工作包括以下三个方面:(1)增删了原有章节的内容。为了体现语言学研究的最新进展,使得本书选编的内容更具代表性,我们增加了部分著作,例如,在转换生成语言学部分增加了“最简方案探究框架”,在心理语言学部分增加了“《语言本能》节选”和“联结主义心理语言学纵览”等作品。同时,为了节省篇幅,本次修订也删除了部分原有的著作,例如,美国结构主义语言学一章中布龙菲尔德的“语言科学的公设”、斯瓦德士的“音位原理”以及豪克特的“《现代语言学教程》节选”等。(2)增加了部分章节。在过去的20年中,语言学研究的各个领域都得到了迅速发展,取得了累累硕果,尤其是语言学与相关学科的相互结合产生了许多新的研究领域。有鉴于此,我们增加了认知语言学、语用学、话语分析、神经语言学和计算语言学等章节。(3)进一步充实了编者述评。编者述评是本书的一大特色,总字数超过15万字,也是很受读者欢迎的部分,因为它更像一篇篇的简明导读。此次修订,我们又对相关的内容作了进一步的充实与规范,每篇述评仍采用英汉两种语言,内容均包括作者生平、主要学术成果和思想介绍,语言力求通俗简洁、易于理解。

用上下两册一千多页的文字反映100年的语言学思想史,绝对不是一件容易的事情,其难度主要来自著作的取舍。对于“名著”的定义,学术界历来就有不同的看法;一般的看法是这些著作都深刻地影响了后来的发展,经得起时间的考验,在语言学史上留下了不可磨灭的痕迹。按照这一标准,对于一些传统的语言学研究领域在选择上还可做得好一些,而对于一些新兴的学科,要选择得很好就非常困难了。在新加的几个章节中,取舍入选著作时,除了考虑该作品的影响之外,我们更多地考虑了它的内容在这一领域的代表性,而对于其能否算得上名著,则只能靠时间的检验了。篇幅的局限也制约着作品的取舍。我们原计划多收入一些著作,但由于篇幅所限,只好忍痛割爱,所删去的上一版中的许多文章也大多是出于篇幅的考虑;更为遗憾的是,作为语言学重要分支的应用语言学,由于其所包含的内容太多,而未能包含在内。选文中常

常出现注解页码,那都是指原书的页码。另外,为了节省篇幅,我们也没有提供某些选文的原参考文献,感兴趣的读者可以查阅原书。

修订过程中,我们深感原来参加编写的另外几位编者的巨大贡献,在此再次向他们表示感谢。在修订版选材过程中,我们曾利用英国剑桥大学、诺丁汉大学和华威大学的图书馆,曾咨询过上述三所大学的许多专家。他们的建议让我们少走了一些弯路,避免了某些偏激。我们在此一并感谢。

读者同仁发现什么错误或有何建议,请及时告诉我们,以便于下次修订时采纳。

刘润清

北京外国语大学中国外语教育研究中心

崔 刚

清华大学外语系

2009 年元旦

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1 Early Modern Linguistics

现代语言学的开端

FERDINAND DE SAUSSURE

Extracts from *Course in General Linguistics* (1916). C. Bally and A. Sechehaye (eds.). Revised English Edition. Collins (1974). Parts 1 & 2.

It is often maintained that modern linguistics began at the turn of the 20th century with the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure for he redefined the systematic study of language in such a way as to set the context for many of the achievements of twentieth-century linguistics.

De Saussure (1857-1913) was born in Geneva, Switzerland to a family with a long history of contributions to the sciences. His grandfather was a professor of geology and mineralogy and his father was a geologist and a naturalist. A bright and eager student, de Saussure showed an early promise in the area of language and learned Sanskrit, Greek, German, Latin, French and English. His father had a close friend, the eminent linguist Adolph Pictet, who encouraged the young man in his growing passion for languages. Saussure followed his ancestor's footsteps to attend the University of Geneva in 1875 to study chemistry and physics. However, by 1876 he had turned to the study of linguistics. De Saussure studied at the University of Berlin from 1878 to 1879 and then enrolled at the University of Leipzig to study comparative grammar and Indo-European languages. He published his first full-length book, *Mémoire sur le système primitif des voyelles dans les langues indo-européennes* (*Thesis on the Original System of Vowels in Indo-European Languages*) in 1878. The book launched de Saussure's reputation as a new expert, contributing as it did to the field of comparative linguistics. He completed his doctoral dissertation on the use of the absolute genitive in Sanskrit, and got his doctor's degree at the University of Leipzig in 1880.

In 1881, de Saussure went to Paris and worked as a teacher at the École Pratique des Hautes Études. He taught numerous languages there, including Lithuanian and Persian. Meanwhile, he became an active member of the Linguistic Society of Paris and served as its secretary in 1882. He remained at the École Pratique for 10 years, and finally left in 1891 to accept a new position as professor of Indo-European languages and comparative grammar at the University of Geneva.

Historical records indicate that de Saussure had a great fear of publishing any of his studies until they were proven absolutely accurate. Thus, many of his works were not released during his lifetime, many of his theories were explained in books by other authors, and many of his works were released posthumously. Between 1906 and 1911, de Saussure taught general linguistics at the University of Geneva three times. After his death, two of his students (Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye) collected and compiled their lecture notes and had them published in 1916 as the now famous *Cours de Linguistique Generale*. It is through the influence of this book that de Saussure is widely held to be the founder of twentieth-century linguistics.

The *Course in General Linguistics* is composed of five sections apart from an introduction.

《普通语言学教程》节选

F. de 索绪尔

编者评述:

人们通常认为,现代语言学始于20世纪初,语言学的新纪元是由瑞士语言学家费尔迪南·德·索绪尔开创的。当时,是索绪尔指出了系统研究语言的新方向,才使得20世纪语言学取得了巨大的成就。

索绪尔(1857—1913)出生于瑞士日内瓦的一个学者世家。其祖父是一位地质学和矿物学教授,父亲是一位地质学家和博物学家。索绪尔在年轻时就是一位聪明而且勤奋好学的学生,显示出了很强的语言天赋,学习了多种语言,包括梵语、希腊语、德语、拉丁语、法语和英语。他父亲的一位挚友阿道夫·皮科特是一位语言学家,他的鼓励使得年轻的索绪尔对于语言的兴趣越来越浓。受家庭的影响,索绪尔于1875年进入日内瓦大学学习物理与化学,但是,他很快就在1876年转学语言学。索绪尔曾经就读于柏林大学(1878—1879),后来又来到莱比锡大学学习比较语法和印欧语言。在1878年,他出版了《论印欧系语元音的原始系统》一书,这本书在比较语言学中具有重要的地位,也奠定了索绪尔在当时语言学界的地位。在1880年,索绪尔完成了他关于梵语中绝对属格用法的博士论文,并在莱比锡大学获得博士学位。

1881年,索绪尔来到巴黎,在高等应用学院从事教学工作。他教授的语言门类众多,其中包括立陶宛语和波斯语。与此同时,他还积极参加巴黎语言学学会的活动,曾于1882年担任该协会的秘书。1891年,索绪尔离开高等应用学院,去日内瓦大学担任印欧语言和比较语法的教授。

据一些历史回忆记载,索绪尔非常害怕在十分有把握之前发表自己的研究成果。因此,他在世时许多成果未能发表,他的许多理论只能在他人著作的解释中发现,他的许多著作也只能在他去世后才得以问世。在1906到1911年间,索绪尔在日内瓦大学三次讲授普通语言学。他逝世之后,他的两个学生(查尔斯·巴利和阿尔帕特·薛施蔼)整理了上课的笔迹,编辑成书,于1916年出版,成了现在举世闻名的《普通语言学教程》。此书在语言学界产生了深远的影响,因此人们普遍认为索绪尔是20世纪语言学的开山鼻祖。

《普通语言学教程》由一个导论和五大部分组成。导论简单叙述了

The introduction gives de Saussure's definition of language, outlines the scope of linguistics and presents certain principles for the study of phonology and writing systems.

Part 1: General Principles discusses the symbolic nature of language, the mutability and immutability of the linguistic sign and various principles in static and evolutionary linguistics.

Part 2: Synchronic Linguistics examines the concrete entities of language, their identities, realities and values and considers syntagmatic and associative relations.

Part 3: Diachronic Linguistics examines phonetic changes, the grammatical consequences of phonetic evolution, the relation between analogy and evolution and between analogy and agglutination.

Part 4: Geographical Linguistics is concerned with the geographical diversity of languages, its causes and implications.

Part 5: Retrospective Linguistics concerns reconstructions of languages and the contribution of language study to anthropological and prehistorical research.

Central to de Saussure's views is the arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign. He viewed language as a system of signs where the sign is a union of the signifier (the sound image) and the signified (the idea). There is no natural or inevitable connection between the signifier and the signified. English uses the sound sequence /dog/ to refer to an animal of a particular species while Chinese uses /gou/ to denote the same animal. The important implication of this observation is that a language does not simply assign arbitrary names to a set of independently existing concepts but rather sets up an arbitrary relation between signifiers and signifieds of its own construction. In other words each language has an arbitrary way of organising the world into concepts and categories.

De Saussure made three distinctions which remain interesting and important to linguistics today. The first is that between "langue" (broadly speaking, language) and "parole" (broadly speaking, speech). "Langue" is the system of a language, the language as a system of signs, whereas "parole" is actual speech, the speech acts which are made possible by the language. "Langue" is what the individual assimilates and internalizes when he learns a language; it is social and abstract and enables the members of a speech community to communicate linguistically. "Parole", on the other hand, is individual and concrete; it is the realisation of the language system. "Langue" is stable; "Parole" is subject to context and such personal factors as mood. In separating langue from parole, we are separating what is social from what is individual and what is essential from what is accidental. The task of the linguist is to study langue, language as a system.

The second distinction is that between synchronic and diachronic linguistics. Language exists in time and changes through time. If our study is concerned with language at one point in time, that is the linguistic system in that particular state, then it is synchronic linguistics. If it is concerned with the development or evolution of language, that is comparison of two or more language states, then it is diachronic linguistics. Synchronic study is given priority because unless each state of the language is described and analysed, there cannot logically be any comparisons or diachronic studies. However, it is no straightforward task to separate

语言的定义、语言学研究的范围以及语言与文字和语音的关系。第一部分是一般原理，主要讲语言符号的性质，符号的不可变性和可变性，以及静态语言学和进化语言学中的各种理论。第二部分是共时语言学，主要讲语言的具体实体，实体的统一性、现实性和价值，以及组合关系和联想关系。第三部分是历时语言学，主要讨论语音的演变，语音演变给语法带来的后果，类比与演变的关系，类比与粘合的作用等。第四部分是地理语言学，主要叙述语言的地理差异，产生地理差异的原因，以及这种差异产生的影响。第五部分是回顾语言学，主要论述语言的重建问题，和语言研究对人类学和史前学的贡献。

索绪尔的根本观点是，语言符号是任意的。他认为，语言是一个符号系统，符号是施指（声音形象）和受指（概念）的联合。施指与受指之间没有天然的联系。英语中用/dog/这串音来表示的一种动物，汉语则用/gou/来表示。这种任意性的重要意义在于，一种语言不是给独立存在的概念赋予任意的名称，而是在施指和受指之间创建自己的一套任意关系。换句话说，每种语言都任意地把世界划分成若干实体，再选择自己的概念表达出来。

索绪尔为语言学所作的三种区分，直到今天仍有重大意义。第一种区分是语言和言语的区分。语言是指语言的系统，是一套符号系统；言语是指实际运用的话语，即以语言系统为基础的言语行为。语言是一个学习语言时消化后所吸收的东西，是抽象的，是属于全社会的，是它使得一个言语社团的成员能够相互交流。言语是具体的，属于个人的，是语言系统的具体实现。语言是稳定的，而言语则会受到环境、情绪等个人因素的影响。区分语言和言语，也就是区分什么是社会的、什么是个人的、什么是根本的、什么是偶然的。语言学家的任务就是研究语言，即语言的系统。

第二，索绪尔区分了共时语言学和历时语言学。语言存在于时间，并随着时间的推移而变化。如果我们研究存在于某段时间内的语言，即某时的语言状态所呈现的系统，那就是共时语言学。如果研究语言的发展和演变，即比较两个或两个以上时期的语言状态，就是历时语言学。二者相比，共时研究应居首位，因为要先把每个语言状态进行描写和分析，才有可能进行比较。不过，区分共时语言学和历时语言学并不容易，因为在不同地区语言变化的速度不同，方式不同，使共时现象和历时现象交错在一起。

第三，索绪尔区分了组合关系和联想关系。组合关系是指在文字或口语的线性结构中一个语言成分与其他语言成分之间的关系。组合关系

the synchronic from the diachronic as language changes at different rates in different ways in different communities, resulting in the intertwining of the two.

The third distinction is that between syntagmatic and associative relations. Syntagmatic relations refer to the relations a linguistic element enters into with other elements in a serial or linear structure in writing or in the temporal stream of speech. They are relations of cooccurrence, relations that link the whole structure to its parts and vice versa. Associative relations refer to the relations that obtain between elements, not because they belong to the same structural stream or message but because they belong to the same language, with which they are associated through similarity or difference. Such relationships are now more often called paradigmatic.

The chapters selected here from the *Course in General Linguistics* are intended to expand and explain further the ideas that have been outlined above.

就是共现关系,也就是整体与部分和部分与整体的关系。联想关系是语言成分之间的关系;这种关系的产生不是由于几个成分同时出现于一个结构,而是由于它们同属一种语言,而且由于它们在意义上的相似或区别而发生联系。现在,这种关系通常被称为聚合关系。

这里从《普通语言学教程》中选录的几章,详细地阐述了以上几种观点。

PART ONE

General Principles

Chapter I Nature of the Linguistic Sign

1. Sign, Signified, Signifier

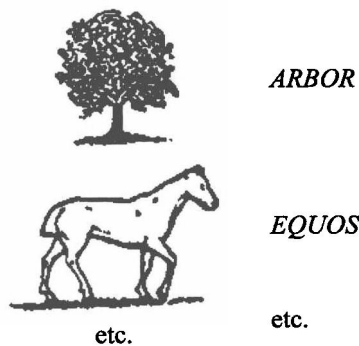
Some people regard language, when reduced to its elements, as a naming-process only—a list of words, each corresponding to the thing that it names. For example:

This conception is open to criticism at several points. It assumes that ready-made ideas exist before words (on this point, see below, p. III)*; it does not tell us whether a name is vocal or psychological in nature (*arbor*, for instance, can be considered from either viewpoint); finally, it lets us assume that the linking of a name and a thing is a very simple operation—an assumption that is anything but true. But this rather naive approach can bring us near the truth by showing us that the linguistic unit is a double entity, one formed by the associating of two terms.

We have seen in considering the speaking-circuit (p. 11) that both terms involved in the linguistic sign are psychological and are united in the brain by an associative bond. This point must be emphasized.

The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image.¹ The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses. The sound-image is sensory, and if I happen to call it “material”, it is only in that sense, and by way of opposing it to the other term of the association, the concept, which is generally more abstract.

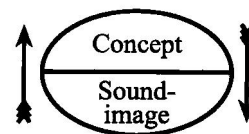
The psychological character of our sound-images becomes apparent when we observe our own speech. Without moving our lips or tongue, we can talk to ourselves or recite mentally a selection of verse. Because we regard the words of our language as sound-images, we must avoid speaking of the “phonemes” that make up the words. This term, which suggests vocal activity,



* Page numbers in brackets refer to pages in the original.

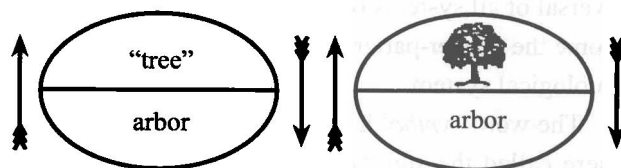
is applicable to the spoken word only, to the realization of the inner image in discourse. We can avoid that misunderstanding by speaking of the *sounds* and *syllables* of a word provided we remember that the names refer to the sound-image.

The linguistic sign is then a two-sided psychological entity that can be represented by the drawing:



The two elements are intimately united, and each recalls the other. Whether we try to find the meaning of the Latin word *arbor* or the word that Latin uses to designate the concept “tree”, it is clear that only the associations sanctioned by that language appear to us to conform to reality, and we disregard whatever others might be imagined.

Our definition of the linguistic sign poses an important question of terminology. I call the combination of a concept and a sound-image a sign, but in current usage the term generally designates only a sound-image, a word, for example *arbor*, etc. One tends to forget that *arbor* is called a sign only because it carries the concept “tree”, with the result that the idea of the sensory part implies the idea of the whole.



Ambiguity would disappear if the three notions involved here were designated by three names, each suggesting and opposing the others. I propose to retain the word *sign* [*signe*] to designate the whole and to replace concept and sound-image respectively by *signified* [*signifié*] and *signifier* [*signifiant*]; the last two terms have the advantage of indicating the opposition that separates them from each other and from the whole of which they are parts. As regards *sign*, if I am satisfied with it, this is simply because I do not know of any word to replace it, the ordinary language suggesting no other.

The linguistic sign, as defined, has two primordial characteristics. In enunciating them I am also positing the basic principles of any study of this type.

2. Principle I: The Arbitrary Nature of the Sign

The bond between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. Since I mean by sign the whole that results from the associating of the signifier with the signified, I can simply say: *the linguistic sign is arbitrary*.

The idea of “sister” is not linked by any inner relationship to the succession of sounds *s-ö-r* which serves as its signifier in French; that it could be represented equally by just any other sequence is proved by differences among languages and by the very existence of different languages: the signified “ox” has as its signifier *b-ö-f* on one side of the border and *o-k-s* (*Ochs*) on the other.

No one disputes the principle of the arbitrary nature of the sign, but it is often easier to discover a truth than to assign to it its proper place. Principle I dominates all the linguistics of

language; its consequences are numberless. It is true that not all of them are equally obvious at first glance; only after many detours does one discover them, and with them the primordial importance of the principle.

One remark in passing: when semiology becomes organized as a science, the question will arise whether or not it properly includes modes of expression based on completely natural signs, such as pantomime. Supposing that the new science welcomes them, its main concern will still be the whole group of systems grounded on the arbitrariness of the sign. In fact, every means of expression used in society is based, in principle, on collective behavior or—what amounts to the same thing—on convention. Polite formulas, for instance, though often imbued with a certain natural expressiveness (as in the case of a Chinese who greets his emperor by bowing down to the ground nine times), are nonetheless fixed by rule; it is this rule and not the intrinsic value of the gestures that obliges one to use them. Signs that are wholly arbitrary realize better than the others the ideal of the semiological process; that is why language, the most complex and universal of all systems of expression, is also the most characteristic; in this sense linguistics can become the master-pattern for all branches of semiology although language is only one particular semiological system.

The word *symbol* has been used to designate the linguistic sign, or more specifically, what is here called the signifier. Principle I in particular weighs against the use of this term. One characteristic of the symbol is that it is never wholly arbitrary; it is not empty, for there is the rudiment of a natural bond between the signifier and the signified. The symbol of justice, a pair of scales, could not be replaced by just any other symbol, such as a chariot.

The word *arbitrary* also calls for comment. The term should not imply that the choice of the signifier is left entirely to the speaker (we shall see below that the individual does not have the power to change a sign in any way once it has become established in the linguistic community); I mean that it is unmotivated, i.e. arbitrary in that it actually has no natural connection with the signified.

In concluding let us consider two objections that might be raised to the establishment of Principle I:

1) *Onomatopoeia* might be used to prove that the choice of the signifier is not always arbitrary. But onomatopoeic formations are never organic elements of a linguistic system. Besides, their number is much smaller than is generally supposed. Words like French *fouet* “whip” or *glas* “knell” may strike certain ears with suggestive sonority, but to see that they have not always had this property we need only examine their Latin forms (*fouet* is derived from *fāgus* “beech-tree”, *glas* from *classicum* “sound of a rumpet”). The quality of their present sounds, or rather the quality that is attributed to them, is a fortuitous result of phonetic evolution.

As for authentic onomatopoeic words (e.g. *glug-glug*, *tick-tock*, etc.), not only are they limited in number, but also they are chosen somewhat arbitrarily, for they are only approximate and more or less conventional imitations of certain sounds (cf. English *bowowo* and French *ouaoua*). In addition, once these words have been introduced into the language, they are to a certain extent subjected to the same evolution—phonetic, morphological, etc.—that other words undergo (cf. *pigeon*, ultimately from Vulgar Latin *pīpiō*, derived in turn from an onomatopoeic formation): obvious proof that they lose something of their original character in order to assume