



英汉对比研究丛书

A Comparative Study of the Functions of
Discourse Markers in English and
Chinese Fictional Discourse

英汉小说语篇中话语标记 功能的对比研究

徐欣 张媛 著

外语教学与研究出版社
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前言

英汉两种语言在词汇、句法等层面存在许多异同。这种异同在话语标记层面同样得到清晰的阐述。话语标记指的是一些话语中起语用作用的词语或结构，从局部或整体对话语的建构与理解产生重要影响，引导和制约人类的语言交际活动。话语标记，不论是词、短语还是分句，其作用不仅仅是表达它们所属的语言范畴，还可以表明两个或者更多的句子之间的逻辑关系和语篇中各个组成部分之间语义上的联系。它们通常缺少概念意义，多表示主观性情态和语气。

本书关注英汉小说中话语标记功能的对比分析，旨在分析话语标记功能在英汉小说语篇中的异同，并评价其在解读小说语篇中的贡献。本书选取了三类话语标记——对比、补充、推导类话语标记，进行基于语料库的英汉对比分析。每类话语标记按照在英汉语料库中出现频率的高低选出较常用和使用较灵活的一组词语进行个案分析。这三组话语标记分别为：*but* 和但是；*you know, I mean* 和你知道；*so* 和所以。在言语行为理论和关联理论基础之上，本书对上述三类话语标记进行系统、细致分析。通过对单一语类——小说语篇中的话语标记英汉对比分析，找出话语标记功能在英汉语中的不同点和相似点，探究不同类型话语标记的使用规律及其在句中分布特点。

本书研究表明话语标记在语篇组织功能上主要体现其语用意义，在这个含义下，它们主要在语篇结构层面发挥作用。话语标记的命题含义主要体现在语篇微观层面。其次，话语标记对语篇另一贡献体现在语篇语义和信息结构层面。再次，话语标记的分布体现出一定规律。另外，较之汉语小说语篇，话语标记在英语小说语篇中分布更为广泛，这符合英语形合，汉语意合的特征。再者，话语标记限制听者对话篇的解读。

在关联理论框架下，听者在寻求关联时是被操纵的。听者在处理新信息时如果话语可以产生足够的语境效果，听话人只需付出最小努力，即可获得最佳关联。

相对于同类研究，本书在理论上和方法论上都具有创新。理论上，通过在英汉小说语篇中对话语标记进行对比分析，进一步把握话语标记的本质。话语标记多在连贯理论框架下进行分析。而本书不仅对英汉小说语篇中的汉语标记进行对比，而且进行了基于语料库的分析，并构建了基于英汉小说语篇话语标记对比的分析框架。方法论上，采用语料库检索、定量与定性相结合的分析方法。本书针对小说语篇中的话语标记功能进行对比分析，有利于对这个语类进行更深入地研究。

本书对于语言教学和学习具有较大的实践意义，尤其在阅读理解、听力练习方面表现更为突出。原因在于话语标记的多功能性。但是以往研究多关注话语标记在语篇中的逻辑关系或语法限制，忽略了其所具有的多种话语功能。

List of Abbreviations

CCL	Center for Chinese Linguistics
CCSARP	Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns
CDM	contrastive discourse marker
COCA	The Corpus of Contemporary American English
DM	discourse marker
DR	discourse relationship
DSAT	Dynamic Speech Act Theory
EDM	elaborative discourse marker
IDM	implicative discourse marker
IFIDS	illocutionary force indicating devices
KWIC	key words in context
PM	per million
S1	segment 1
S2	segment 2
SS	source segment
TS	target sequence

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Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Background of the Book

In recent years, the study of discourse markers has turned into a growth industry in linguistics, with tremendous articles, both theoretical and descriptive, appearing yearly. It is widely agreed that discourse markers play a variety of important roles in utterance interpretation. And there is disagreement in regard to such fundamental issues as how to classify discourse markers, whether the items in question comprise a unified grammatical category, what type of meaning they express, and the sense in which such expressions may be said to relate elements of discourse (Schoroup, 1999: 227).

In texts, discourse markers signal a kind of coherence relation holding between adjacent text spans. For any but simple applications of text generation, marker selection is an important aspect of producing cohesive text.

Discourse markers should be described by a dedicated lexicon that provides a classification of their syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features and characterizes the relationships between similar markers. This will be a lexicon whose main grouping criterion is function rather than grammatical category; not surprisingly, this is motivated by the production perspective, where the parameters governing the generation decisions play the central role.

1.2 Rationale for the Book

Discourse markers in English and Chinese fictional discourse are chosen as the object of the book for the following reasons.

Firstly, the study of discourse markers is that of the interface between

syntax and pragmatics, syntax and semantics, which has long been neglected. Although discourse markers are parenthetically employed with multi-functions, their appearances can be contextually analyzed in the fictional discourse. The present study of discourse markers contributes to the relationship between syntax and pragmatics, and the relationship between syntax and semantics. Secondly, discourse markers are pervasive in fictional discourse, but researches on them have never been more complete. And in many cases, their employment is pragmatically oriented but syntactically optional. How they are adopted in fictional discourse to facilitate the linguistic communication and ultimately serve to reach the intended purposes, is still an issue which is worth making an attempt to have a thorough understanding.

Thirdly, while progress is being made in English discourse markers research in China, a few studies have examined comparative study of discourse markers by adopting a corpus-based approach. In addition, not much theoretical progress has been achieved in the classification of Chinese discourse markers.

On the basis of the major reasons mentioned above and in terms of various pioneering efforts made on the study of discourse markers as surveyed in the literature review in the following chapter, this research is intended to be an in-depth comparative study of discourse markers in English and Chinese fictional discourse.

1.3 Objectives of the Book

This book focuses on discourse markers in fictional discourse, but the discussion is set against the background of comparative studies between English and Chinese. There are lots of differences and similarities in syntax, morphology and lexical meaning. Nevertheless, in the perspectives of discourse markers, the differences and similarities between the two languages can expect a better elaboration.

The goals of this book are listed below:

- 1) To figure out the role that discourse markers play in the composition of English and Chinese fictional discourse;
- 2) To evaluate the contribution of discourse markers to the interpretation of the development of fictional discourse;
- 3) To study the similarities and differences of the discourse markers in fictional discourse of English and Chinese;
- 4) To determine what characteristics found in discourse markers in English are consistent with the characteristics of discourse markers in Chinese.

1.4 Research Questions

The research objectives outlined above are formulated as a set of research questions as follows. The proposed study investigates the discourse markers in fictional discourse by adopting a corpus-based analysis. It aims at answering the following research questions.

- 1) What discourse functions do discourse markers perform in English and Chinese fictional discourse?
- 2) What are the similarities and differences in the distribution of English and Chinese discourse markers? How do discourse markers contribute to the construction of fictional discourse from the pragmatic perspective?
- 3) What patterns do discourse markers exhibit in fictional discourse?

1.5 Significance of the Book

The book is of great significance for theoretical and methodological reasons. Theoretically, this study gains insight into the nature of discourse

markers. Traditionally, discourse markers have been analyzed within the framework of coherence theory. In view of the absence of comparison of discourse markers in English and Chinese fictional discourse, this study is an attempt to fill the gap by conducting corpus-based analysis. Valuable data is added to the literature of discourse markers, and an analytical framework of comparative analysis of discourse markers characteristic in English and Chinese fictional discourse is generated by the present study.

Methodologically, this book contributes to discourse markers research by adopting more empirical methods. A corpus-based quantitative study is conducted in order to find out the factors that contribute to the differences and similarities of discourse markers in different languages. Various kinds of corpus help to get enough data for analysis.

Practically, the book provides guidelines on how to deal with discourse markers in language teaching and learning, especially in reading comprehension and listening practice since discourse markers are multi-functional, but much attention has long been paid to their logic relations or grammatical constraints.

1.6 Organization of the Book

This book falls into eight chapters. Chapter One is a general introduction to the whole research, including the background of the study, rationale, objectives, significance, and research questions of the study. Chapter Two outlines the related previous work on the study of both English and Chinese discourse markers under the guidance of paradigms in both pragmatic and relevance-theoretic approaches with the aim to trace the development of studies of discourse markers and simultaneously locate the present research. Chapter Three firstly presents an overview of various definitions of discourse markers, and then proposes a theoretical framework based on speech act

theory and relevance theory as well as on a critical evaluation of other work in research of discourse markers. Besides, it also introduces some key notions that will run through this book.

Chapter Four presents the methodology and procedures in data collection and various aspects of the corpus-based study in detail, including the advantage of corpora, the objectives of the study, criterion of data collection, procedure and tools and so on. Chapter Five is a detailed investigation on the contrastive discourse markers. Crucial to the discussion are examples that emerge from the data analysis. The analysis is based on the proposed theoretical framework. The study adopts a combined socio-pragmatic approach to explain, analyze, and interpret data. Discourse markers *but* in English and *danshi* in Chinese are chosen for case study. Chapter Six addresses the elaborative discourse markers in English and Chinese and discourse markers *you know* and *I mean* in English and *wo zhidao* in Chinese are chosen for case study. Chapter Seven begins with a discussion on the distribution of inferential discourse markers in the fictional corpus of COCA and CCL Corpus and then investigates the functions of discourse markers *so* in English and *suoyi* in Chinese. Chapter Eight summarizes the major findings of the book. In this concluding chapter, it presents the major findings of the investigation in the book and implications for the relevant fields, especially the field of language teaching. Issues for further investigation are brought forward and limitations of the book are also pointed out.