

A Study on Metadiscourse Markers in English Research Articles:
A Metapragmatic Perspective

元语用视域下的英语科研论文中 功能性言语标记研究

◎姜 晖 成晓光 著

教育部人文社会科学规划项目(2007)JA740015

A Study on Metadiscourse Markers in English Research Articles: A Metapragmatic Perspective

元语用视域下的英语科研论文中 功能性言语标记研究

姜 晖 成晓光 著

姜 晖 著
成晓光 著
姜 晖 著
成晓光 著
姜 晖 著
成晓光 著

姜 晖 著
成晓光 著
姜 晖 著
成晓光 著
姜 晖 著
成晓光 著

吉林大学出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

元语用视域下的英语科研论文中功能性言语标记研究 / 姜晖 成晓光著

— 长春: 吉林大学出版社, 2011. 6

ISBN 978-7-5601-7441-9

I. ①元… II. ①姜… ②成… III. ①科学技术—英语—论文—功能(语言学)—研究 IV. ①H31

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2011)第121049号

元语用视域下的英语科研论文中功能性言语标记研究
姜晖 成晓光 著

责任编辑、责任校对: 邵宇彤 周婷

吉林大学出版社出版、发行

开本: 787×1092 毫米 1/16

印张: 13.875 字数: 350千字

ISBN 978-7-5601-7441-9

封面设计: 匡秋爽

吉林省金山印务有限公司 印刷

2011年6月 第1版

2011年6月 第1次印刷

定价: 30.00元

版权所有 翻印必究

社址: 长春市明德路421号 邮编: 130021

发行部电话: 0431-88499826

网址: <http://www.jlup.com.cn>

E-mail: jlup@mail.jlu.edu.cn

前言

任何语篇都包含两个层面:命题内容层面和功能性言语层面。基本言语层面包括那些指称外部世界和客观现实的语言表达形式,而功能性言语层面涉及到语言使用者如何运用语言来描述和指称言语行为本身,以便更好地呈现和表达客观现实。从这个意义上说,功能性言语包括那些在语篇中标识话语组织结构、表明作者对命题和读者的态度、标识作者、读者以及互文信息的再现等语言表达形式,是作者对自身言语行为的一种自反体现,以此来反映话语的对话性和主体间性。具有自反特征的功能性言语是人类所有语言共有的特性,是一种有意识的和有标记性的言语行为。功能性言语这个概念自1959年由Harris提出以来,吸引了如话语分析、二语习得、语用、写作等各个领域的研究者从不同的角度对其进行研究。因此,对于功能性言语概念的定义、分类和研究角度就有所不同。但是对于其在语篇生成和理解中的语篇组织功能、评价功能、人际互动功能等方面,国内外的研究者们都达成了共识。

就目前的研究来看,虽然功能性言语的研究成果显著,但仍存在很多不足和问题,有待于我们进一步探索和研究。总的来说,过去的研究问题主要体现在以下几个方面:1)从理论上来看,大部分研究者把功能性言语定义为在语篇中处于次要地位的,和命题表达无关的言语表达。根据韩礼德的系统功能语法理论,功能性言语主要行使语篇功能和人际功能。但对于功能性言语的使用机制和动机却没有系统的论述。2)在实践上,功

能性言语标记大多出现在论说语篇中,但以往的研究多集中在对于功能性言语标记的对比分析和定量分析,重点强调描写,而忽视了阐述的过程。尤其对于科研论文来说,没有系统全面地论述作者如何利用功能性言语标记来实现互动和劝说的目的。3)作为一种人类特有的自反言语行为,以往的研究很少从自反的角度去研究功能性言语。4)功能性言语作为语篇中的一个自主层面,由不同的言语表达形式来表征,对于其分类,以往的研究也存在很多不足。

根据 Verschueren 的语用综观论,任何一种语言的使用都是一个不断进行选择的动态适应过程,选择不仅仅局限在语言结构和形式的选择,同时还是语言策略的选择和对于语境的选择。语言使用的过程实际上是一个有意识的心理过程,受各自的认知机制所调控,在这个过程中语言使用者为了达到一定的交际目的,就会有意识地使用语言的自反功能来完成目的实现。这种意识就是我们所说的元语用意识,也是人类普遍的一种自反意识。元语用意识的体现是通过一些语言标记的使用来完成的。这些语言标记就是我们所说的功能性言语标记,也就是 Verschueren 所说的元语用意识指示语 (metapragmatic indicator)。对语言选择过程中出现的自反意识标记的系统研究就构成了元语用理论。

鉴于目前研究的不足,在语用和元语用理论的支撑下,本书认为功能性言语标记体现出语言使用者较强的自反意识,是为了实现交际意图、达到互动交流而不断反思自己言语行为的策略选择手段。为了达到互动交流的目的,作者通常会对语篇组织结构、主体间互动、以及互文资源进行有意识的标记,功能性言语标记在这三个层面上都有不同的表现形式。本书试图把功能性言语标记分为以下三种:语篇功能性言语、人际功能性言语和互文功能性言语。并从实践上分析英语科研论文作者是如何通过三种功能性言语标记的使用来实现对语篇组织、主体间互动和语篇互文的自反互动,最终达到劝说的目的。本书主要包括七个章节:



第一章是绪论,主要包括对于功能性言语的简要回顾,本研究的目的和意义、研究问题和假设、本研究的研究方法以及本书的整体结构介绍。

第二章介绍功能性言语理论,首先从语篇、话语和功能性言语的关系出发,确定了功能性言语在语篇中的不可或缺性以及对于它的概念界定。其次,回顾了不同视角下的功能性言语研究。区分了两种不同的功能性言语研究方法,也就是对功能性言语的界定范围区别,并明确了本研究的界定标准。最后,在以往研究评价的基础上提出本书的研究方向。

第三章主要讨论功能性言语使用的机制、动机和分类。功能性言语在本质上是人类自反意识的体现,是语言使用者策略选择的结果,是元语用意识的语言表征。本书把作者的立场和互文性包括在功能性言语范畴内。根据作者对于语篇中三个不同层面的自反体现,我们把功能性言语分为三类:语篇、人际和互文功能性言语。

第四章主要分析和讨论英语科研论文中的语篇功能性言语。语篇功能性言语标记体现出作者对话语命题的控制和组织,表现出作者很强的读者意识和语篇意识。作者从读者的角度出发,通过使用恰当的语篇功能性言语标记来使语篇连贯、衔接、并且从读者的认知、心理因素考虑来组织语篇,引导读者,并邀请读者参与到语篇的构建过程中去。作者对语篇本身结构的自反意识也是在召唤读者参与其中的构建和阐释。

第五章主要分析和讨论英语科研论文中的人际功能性言语。人际功能性言语标记标识作者和读者之间的互动关系。作者在语篇创造的过程中,通过人际功能性言语的使用不仅凸现自己在语篇中的位置和角色,表达自己的态度,信念,评价,还完成和读者之间的对话交流。最终达到劝说的目的。

第六章主要分析和讨论英语科研论文中的互文性功能言语。它是指作者对他人研究成果和信息来源的自反体现,体现了语篇中的多重声音,反映了作者、其他作者和读者之间的互动交流。任何语篇的形成都是建立在其他语篇的基础之上的。语

篇的对话交流不仅仅局限在作者和读者之间,作者在表达自己观点的时候,还会邀请他人的话语参与,利用权威者的观点来佐证自己的观点,同时,通过对他人观点的批判和评价,来突出自己观点的可行性。

第七章结语,对本书的主要观点和研究内容进行了归纳和总结,并指出本研究的不足之处和今后的研究前景。

本书的意义和贡献主要体现在以下三个方面:首先,本研究在元语用视域下从自反的层面述了功能性言语的使用机制和动机。功能性言语标记在本质上是自反的,是语言使用者策略选择的结果,由语言使用者的元语用意识所调控,目的是实现交际目的。其次,本研究对功能性言语标记进行了重新分类。最后,对于英语科研论文中的功能性言语标记的使用进行了全面系统的分析,对于英语学习、专门用途英语的教学、教师培训以及科研论文的写作和批判阅读都提供了新的角度和思路。

本书是教育部人文社会科学研究规划项目“汉英亚言语的修辞语用对比研究”(07JA740015)的最终成果。本书的出版除了我们自身的努力外,还得到了同事和朋友的许多帮助和支持。姜晖在比利时访学期间得到了国际语用学研究中心 Jef Verschueren 教授的热情接待,并提供了便利的科研条件。娄琦博士、林正军博士、王泽霞博士和刘风光博士为我们提供和收集资料。这些都让我们永远心存感激。我们还要真诚感谢吉林大学出版社的责任编辑邵宇彤老师和东北师范大学学报张树武老师,正是有了他们的帮助和支持,本书才能得以顺利出版。

本书的出版只是标志着我们几年的课题研究工作告一段落,但对于功能性言语的理论和实践研究还有许多问题值得我们去思考和研究。我们真诚的希望对此感兴趣的学者和同学们能对我们的研究提出批评意见,并和我们一起对功能性言语开展更多的研究。

Abstract

Any discourse consists of two levels; one level is called propositional discourse dealing with what one knows about the world and reality, and the other one is metadiscourse concerned with how you use language to refer to or describe language itself for presenting the reality. In this sense, metadiscourse includes those linguistic expressions that refer to the current text, the participants in the text, writer-reader relationships and the writer's evaluation of the content, etc. The use of metadiscourse markers indicates the writer's reflection on his/her own linguistic behaviour in discourse to express his/her interaction and intersubjectivity. Metadiscourse by nature is reflexive. As a kind of reflexivity, metadiscourse is a universal feature of all languages and is unique to all human communicative systems. Since its coinage, it has attracted many researchers' interests to explore it from a wide range of perspectives and has become a highly dynamic topic in discourse analysis, pragmatic studies, compositions and many other research fields. As a result, divergent definitions, various taxonomies and perspectives exist. But an agreement upon the functions of metadiscourse has been made by scholars from both abroad and in China.

Although great achievements have been made in metadiscourse studies, there are still some gaps for us to explore it in both theory and practice. Generally, the previous studies have the following limitations: 1) In theory, most previous studies defined metadiscourse as non-propositional and secondary in discourse. The functions

performed by metadiscourse are textual and interpersonal under the framework of Halliday's systematic functional grammar. They have tried to answer the question of "what does metadiscourse do in discourse?" without investigating the mechanism and motivation for the use of metadiscourse markers. 2) In practice, most of previous studies are focused on the contrastive analysis of the use of metadiscourse markers in academic discourse rather than touch upon the systematic functional analysis of the use of metadiscourse markers for achieving interaction and the writer's persuasive intention. They put more emphasis on "description" rather than on "interpretation". Description is only the first step for discourse analysis. The most significant part lies in interpretative work. 3) Few studies touch upon the reflexive nature of metadiscourse. 4) As for the taxonomy of metadiscourse, problems still exist.

The present study aims to study metadiscourse from a metapragmatic perspective which answers the question of "why metadiscourse markers are used in discourse?" According to Verschueren (1999: 55 — 56), the use of language is a continuous linguistic choice-making, consciously or unconsciously, for language-internal or language-external reasons, from a variable range of possibilities governed by language users' reflexive awareness for realizing their communicative goals. Metapragmatics is the systematic study of indicators of the language user's reflexive awareness. Considering the limitations of the previous studies, based on the pragmatic and metapragmatic theories, this study holds that metadiscourse, forming an integrated level of discourse, is a collective of reflexive linguistic expressions as a result of language users' conscious choice-making indicating the writer's conscious awareness of reflection on the use of language in the aspect of discourse organization, writer-reader relationships and intertextual relations for achieving the final communicative purposes in both written and spoken forms of communication. According to the three aspects of reflection and borrowing the terms from previous researches, we divide metadiscourse into three types, that is,

metatext, interpersonal metadiscourse and intertextual metadiscourse. In practice, we provide a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the use of metadiscourse markers in RAs in order to show how writers realize interaction and persuasive intentions by reflecting on discourse organization, writer-reader relationships and intertextuality.

This book includes seven chapters:

Chapter One offers a brief introduction to the whole study including a brief overview of metadiscourse, significance and objectives, research questions and hypotheses, methodology and the outline of the present study.

Chapter Two presents a global review of metadiscourse including the concept of metadiscourse itself, current theoretical perspectives on metadiscourse, two approaches to metadiscourse and evaluations of previous researches.

Chapter Three discusses the mechanisms and motivations of using metadiscourse markers in verbal communication intending to provide an explanatory framework for this study. Metadiscourse, in nature, is reflexive and interactive, and is regarded as the results of linguistic choice making indicating language user's metapragmatic awareness. A modified taxonomy of metadiscourse will also be presented in this chapter. The present study will follow the broad approach and reflexive nature of metadiscourse, holding that markers for stance and intertextuality also belong to the metalevel of language use for reflecting on the writer's evaluation towards both the content and other resources. According to the writer's reflection on three levels in the text and generic feature of RAs, we divide metadiscourse into three types: metatext, interpersonal metadiscourse and intertextual metadiscourse. The linguistic realization of each type will also be given here.

Chapter Four to Chapter Six will discuss when, how and why research article writers use metatextual markers, interpersonal metadiscourse markers and intertextual metadiscourse markers to interact with their expected audiences to achieve their persuasive

purposes. Chapter Seven summarizes the main arguments, ideas and findings presented in the previous chapters. Limitations and suggestions for future researches will be pointed out.

This study has made the following three contributions: First, this study investigates metadiscourse from metapragmatic perspective and regards metadiscourse as the result of language users' choice-making which includes either the linguistic forms or rhetorical strategies. The present study aligns with the principles that metadiscourse categories are reflexive by nature and ultimately aim to realize the communicative and persuasive purposes governed by language users' metapragmatic awareness. Second, based on its reflexivity and the features of RA genres, the study provides a modified taxonomy of metadiscourse from which RA is analysed in detail. Third, the study provides a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the use of metadiscourse markers in RAs for purposive realization. The findings of this study will benefit EFL and ESP teaching and learning, teacher training and moreover, they also provide some insights for the writing and critical reading of research articles written in English for Chinese researchers.

Key words: metadiscourse; metadiscourse markers; metapragmatics; reflexive awareness; research article

Chapter Four to Chapter Six will discuss when, how and why research article writers use metatextual markers, interpersonal metadiscourse markers and intertextual metadiscourse markers to interact with their expected audiences to achieve their persuasive

CONTENTS

Chapter One Introduction / 1

- 1.1 Motivation of the Study / 1
- 1.2 Objectives and Research Questions of the Study / 7
- 1.3 Methodology and Data Collection / 10
- 1.4 Organization of the Book / 13

Chapter Two Theories of Metadiscourse / 15

- 2.1 Introduction / 15
- 2.2 The Concept of Metadiscourse / 15
 - 2.2.1 Text, Discourse and Metadiscourse / 16
 - 2.2.2 Definitions of Metadiscourse / 21
- 2.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Metadiscourse / 26
 - 2.3.1 The Communicative Perspective / 26
 - 2.3.2 The Functional Perspective / 27
 - 2.3.3 The Rhetoric Perspective / 29
 - 2.3.4 The Psycholinguistic Perspective / 31
 - 2.3.5 The Pragmatic Perspective / 32

- 2.3.6 The Cognitive Perspective / 37
- 2.4 Two Approaches to Metadiscourse / 39
 - 2.4.1 The Broad Approach / 40
 - 2.4.2 The Narrow Approach / 49
- 2.5 Evaluations of the Previous Research / 54
- 2.6 Summary / 62

Chapter Three Reinvestigating Metadiscourse: A Metapragmatic Perspective / 63

- 3.1 Introduction / 63
- 3.2 Understanding Metadiscourse from a Metalinguistic Domain / 64
 - 3.2.1 Metalanguage and Metalinguistic Functions / 64
 - 3.2.2 Metalanguage and Metadiscourse / 67
- 3.3 A Metapragmatic Perspective on Metadiscourse / 69
 - 3.3.1 Pragmatics / 69
 - 3.3.2 Metapragmatics and Reflexive Awareness / 73
 - 3.3.3 Pragmatic and Metapragmatic Interpretation of Metadiscourse / 76
- 3.4 A Modified Taxonomy of Reflexive Metadiscourse / 85
 - 3.4.1 A Working Definition of Metadiscourse in the Current Study / 86
 - 3.4.2 Writers' Reflection on Three Levels / 86
 - 3.4.3 Types and Linguistic Realization of Reflexive Metadiscourse / 90
- 3.5 Summary / 100

Chapter Four Metatext in Research Articles / 101

- 4.1 Introduction / 101
- 4.2 Motivations for Using Metatextual Markers in RAs / 101
 - 4.2.1 Logical Discourse Organization and Persuasion / 102
 - 4.2.2 Metatextual Markers and Reader Expectation / 103

4.3 Metapragmatic Functions of Metatextual Markers / 104

4.3.1 Logical Connectives for Showing Argument

Development / 104

4.3.2 Topicalizers for Topic Arrangement / 109

4.3.3 Code Glosses for Elaboration and Clarification / 111

4.3.4 Explicit Reflexivity of the Current Text and

Discourse Acts / 119

4.4 Summary / 123

Chapter Five Interpersonal Metadiscourse in Research Articles / 124

5.1 Introduction / 124

5.2 Interpersonal Metadiscourse and Writer-Reader Interaction / 124

5.2.1 Construction of a Credible Self-Image and Credibility / 125

5.2.2 Readers' Emotion and Active Engagement / 126

5.3 Metapragmatic Functions of Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers / 128

5.3.1 Hedges and Detachment from the Proposition / 129

5.3.2 Boosters and Total Commitment to the Proposition / 135

5.3.3 Attitude Markers and Evaluation / 139

5.3.5 Engagement Markers and Reader Involvement / 149

5.4 Summary / 156

Chapter Six Intertextual Metadiscourse in Research Articles / 157

6.1 Introduction / 157

6.2 Intertextual Metadiscourse and Intertextuality in RAs / 157

6.2.1 Intertextual Metadiscourse and Cited Propositions / 158

6.2.2 Intertextuality and Persuasion / 160

6.3 Metapragmatic Functions of Intertextual Metadiscourse Markers / 164

6.3.1 Positioning both Writers and Authors / 165

6.3.2 Indicating Writer's Activities and Evaluation / 169



**6.3.3 Showing Writer's Respect, Credibility and
Responsibility / 174**

6.4 Summary / 177

Chapter Seven Conclusion / 178

7.1 Main Findings and Implications / 179

7.2 Limitations of the Current Study / 182

7.3 Suggestions for Future Study / 183

Bibliography / 186

Appendix I / 199

Appendix II / 202



Chapter One Introduction

This book is concerned with reflexive functions of metadiscourse markers from a metapragmatic perspective and with what reflexive functions are performed by RA writers to realize their persuasive purposes. This introductory chapter will introduce motivation of the study, objectives and research questions, methodology and data collection, and the organization of the book.

1.1 Motivation of the Study

Language as the distinctive feature for human beings has long been studied and explored by scholars from various aspects to expose its nature and patterns of use. Linguists have always been trying to specify what is special for language, trying to explore more functions and features of language. Language users can use language to comment on language itself, the communicative situation, the speech acts, their attitudes or their roles. Human languages are reflexive systems (Mauranen 2010). Reflexivity in language (see e. g. Hockett, 1977; Lyons, 1977) or metalinguistic function posed by Jakobson (1966) is the unique capacity of human language, which functions to refer to language itself. Before the late 1980s, reflexivity has mainly been discussed in the field of linguistics to talk about the 'object' language. In 1959, reflexivity has been broadened to the scope of discourse in terms of metadiscourse by Harris. In Harris' system, metadiscourse contains information that is distinct from the main material of the text; it does not express what the article is really about, however, metadiscourse talks about

the main kernels in a text. In other words, language is not only used to convey message about the reality, but also used to talk about talk. Language users, either in spoken or written form, can comment not just on the propositional content, but also make some comments on the organization of the text, the presence of participants and interactions among participants in the current text. Since the late 1980s, metadiscourse has become a widespread interest in applied linguistics and many scholars have pioneered to do a relatively large body of researches on metadiscourse in written texts, especially in academic writing (Crismore, 1989; Vande Kopple, 1985; Mauranen, 1993a; Hyland, 1998a, 2004c, 2005b). The interest in the study of metadiscourse reflects a growing awareness in reflexive and interactive use of language.

Obviously, in order to understand and talk about 'metadiscourse', first of all, we should be clear about the status of metadiscourse in discourse and need to distinguish it from discourse which is not 'meta'. Many linguists, philosophers and rhetoricians have argued and agreed that there are two levels of meaning in communication: one is about the referential meaning and the other is about the understanding and comments on the referential meaning. As stated by Crismore (1989), in any form of language communication, there are two levels of discourse: the primary discourse level, which consists of propositions and referential meanings, and the metadiscourse level, which consists of propositional attitudes, textual meanings, and interpersonal meanings. If we say the former is "what is said", then the latter is about "how to say about it or what the status is for what is said". The following passage (taken from Cummings, 2005, 39) will be used to explain the two levels of discourse model.

In the sections to follow, I examine theories of meaning according to a tripartite classification that is adopted by Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet (1990). Although this classification of theories of meaning is borrowed from these theorists, the multidisciplinary examination that I will pursue below each of its three categories is completely my own formulation. [...].

In this short passage we can find that the propositional or ideational content