Readings on Linguistics

语言学名著选读

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【内容简介】《语言学名著选读》精选了著名语言学家的33篇选文，涵盖语言学的诸多方面，每篇选文附选文要点、作者简介、注释、讨论题等。本书系英语专业研究生语言学阅读教材，也可供对英语语言学感兴趣的读者及英语自学者使用。

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前　言

《语言学名著选读》是为英语专业硕士研究生选编的阅读教材。本书选自世界著名语言学家的原著，其33篇选文涵盖语言与语言学、语音学与音位学、形态学与句法、语义学与语用学、心理语言学与语言发展等内容。选文前面有一个对材料来源、论述要点的简短介绍及对作者的简要评论。为便于读者阅读，我们在选文的后面附有注释及供复习讨论的思考题，同时对部分原文的章节顺序和全部选文中提及的参考文献的排列格式做了一些调整。

本书第一部分的选文为语言与语言学方面的一般研究。语言方面的5篇选文涉及语言的各种基本特征，起源与进化，印-欧语系语言之间的关系以及英语简史。另外5篇选文为语言与言语的区分，语言学的定义、研究目标、基本概念及1篇比较/历史语言学方面的选文。

语音学与音位学方面的2篇选文论述音位学的不同定义，研究方面的发展，以及语音的区分性特征与发音过程。

形态学与句法部分由8篇选文组成。4篇选文涵盖词汇理论探究，英语构词中的词素及其功能，新单词的形成等。句法方面的选文以对传统语法和语言结构的各种描述方法的评论开始。随后是解释生成语法对句子的分析以及介绍生成语法中采用比较的方法进行语言研究的选文。这一部分的最后一篇选文是功能语法对语言三大功能的概述。

我们把语义学、语用学、语篇分析、社会语言学方面的选文放在了同一部分。这一部分的首篇选文探讨语义理论的基本概念与语义分析的原则。随后是意义分类方面的选文。语用学侧重上下文中所反映的情景语义研究，或者更具体地说是包括或不包括语言学意义的交际意义研究，说话人在言语交际过程中的语义推断等。这些在有关言语行为研究、会话含义以及关联理论的选文中都涉及到了。语境在解释交际意义方面作用很大。第5篇选文通过所指、前提、隐含、推断等语用构想对语境在话语分析中的作用展开了具体分析。对于语篇中各种衔接现象的研究是语篇分析的另一个重要方面。有关衔接的选文主要探究了文学体裁语篇中的各种衔接手段以及衔接在解释文章结构与连贯方面的作用。这一

部分的最后一篇选文主要探讨研究言语社团与语言变体的因素、任务以及方法。

本书的最后一个部分收入了心理语言学与语言发展方面的6篇选文。3篇选文讨论心理语言学的目标及其基本研究方法,言语产生与理解的认知过程,第二语言习得中的输入假设,输出假设等。还有1篇选文对输入假设的某些方面提出质疑,认为侧重于意义的教学指导活动或许能够诱发交际策略的应用。这一部分以1篇介绍认知理论基本概念的选文结束。此文认为第二语言学习是一个技巧习得的认知过程。这一过程包含语言学习前期各个阶段的习惯化了的次技巧的积累以及后期各个阶段内化表征的重构,另外各种不同的学习与表达策略在第二语言学习过程中也会用到。

有7位编者参与了本书的编辑,各部分分工如下:

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余宝珠教授负责策划,杨达复和谭志明审订了全书。

尽管编者力图提供一本能够反映语言学全貌,时代特征鲜明的介绍性读物,但由于我们对该学科发展及对有较大贡献的学者在了解方面有一定的局限性,另外在编辑过程中选材也有一定困难,本书仍有不尽人意之处。我们真诚地希望读者提出改进的批评建议。

本书的编辑出版得到了西安外国语学院的支持,对此我们表示衷心的感谢。我们同时感谢西北工业大学出版社为本书的出版所提供的一切帮助。

编 者

2002年8月

Preface

Readings on Linguistics is a comprehensive volume of reading texts for MA students in linguistics and applied linguistics. The thirty-three selections in this volume (cf. sources of selections) cover the studies in language and linguistics, phonetics and phonology, morphology and syntax, semantics and pragmatics, and psycholinguistics and language development. Each selection starts with a short introduction to its source, focus of study and a brief comment on its author when necessary, and ends with some questions for discussion and review. We see to it that notes and relevant references are provided but have made some slight changes in section order of the original selection and the format of references for the sake of readability of this volume.

The first section of the volume focuses on the general study of language and linguistics. The five selections on language cover the studies in the features of language, its origin, the Indo-European language family and a brief history of English. This is followed by another five selections on linguistics, specifically its definition, object of study, basic concepts and a selection on comparative and historical linguistics.

There are two selections on phonetics and phonology, which focus on the various definitions of phonology, the development of phonological research and the sounds of English in terms of distinctive features and phonological processes.

The section on morphology and syntax consists of eight selections. The first four selections cover the study in the theory of lexicon, the description of morphemes as the building blocks of words in English and their function, and the formation of new words. Selections on syntax start with comments on traditional grammar and the descriptive approaches to the study of the structure of language. It is followed by explanations of sentential analysis and an introduction to the comparative method of language study in generative grammar. This section ends with an outline of the three metafunctions of language studied by functional grammar.

We put the selections on semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis and sociolinguistics in one section. The section starts with a discussion on the fundamental

concepts of semantic theory and principles of semantic analysis. This is followed by a selection on the categorization of meaning. Pragmatics focuses on the study of contextual meaning of language, or specifically what is communicated in addition to or other than the linguistic meaning, or hypothesized by the participants of verbal communication. These are reflected by the selections on the study of speech acts, conversational implicature and relevance. Context of situation plays an important role in the interpretation of communicative meaning. A following selection discusses the roles of context in the analysis of utterances, specifying it by such pragmatic conceptions as reference, presupposition, implicature and inference. The study of cohesion is also an important area of discourse analysis. Another selection here explores various cohesive ties reflected in one of the discourse types — literature — and the role of cohesion in the explanation of text construction and coherence. This section ends with a selection on the discussion of the factors, tasks and methodology relating to the study of speech community and language variations.

The last section of this volume gathers six selections on psycholinguistics and language development. The first three selections cover the discussion about the goal of psycholinguistics and its basic approaches, the cognitive process of speech and its comprehension, the input hypothesis in second language acquisition and an output hypothesis. There is also a selection which argues against certain aspects of the input hypothesis, suggesting that instructional activities with an emphasis on meaning may induce the application of strategies for communication. The last section ends with an introduction to the basic concepts of cognitive theory. Second language learning is considered here as a cognitive process of skill acquisition involving the accumulation of automatized subskills at the early stages, restructuring of internalized representations at later stages, and the application of both learning and production strategies of various kinds.

Seven editors have made contributions to the publication of this book. The selection from publications is a group effort. Of the thirty-three selections, the first five on language were edited by Zhang Ying and the five selections on linguistics by Tan Zhiming. Yang Ping edited the two selections on phonetics and phonology and the following four on morphology, and Yang Dafu the four selections on syntax and the following two on semantics. Hei Yuqin wrote the introductions and questions for the five selections on pragmatics and discourse analysis while Jiang Lan was responsible for the six selections on psycholinguistics and language development. Yang Dafu and Tan Zhiming finally revised and proofread the whole book. Professor Yu Baozhu was responsible for the planning and participated in the final revision of the book. Though we aimed to present a comprehensive volume of introductory readings on lin-

guistics, what we faced in the process of editing were the limits of our knowledge of the development, the lack of sources for choice and seminal contributions to the areas of study covered by this book. We hope to hear suggestions and criticism from the readers of this book for its improvement.

The editing and publication of this book is sponsored by Xi'an International Studies University, for which we express our sincere gratitude. Our thanks also go to Northwestern Polytechnical University Press for its assistance in the publication of this book.

Editors

August 2002

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Part One

Language and Linguistics

1 Language Defined

Edward Sapir

This is an excerpt from *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech* by Edward Sapir (1884-1939), an American linguist and anthropologist. With his student Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941) Sapir developed the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, arguing that the limits of Language restrict the scope of possible thought and that every language recognizes peculiar sets of distinctions—e. g. Eskimo and its rich vocabulary for different kinds of snow. In this excerpt, he, having distinguished speech from other functions of man (such as walking) and from mere imitation of things, tries to give a serviceable definition of language. He also discusses the nature of speech, and the relation between language and thought.

Speech is so familiar a feature of daily life that we rarely pause to define it. It seems as natural to man as walking, and only less so than breathing. Yet it needs but a moment's reflection to convince us that this naturalness of speech is but an illusory feeling. The process of acquiring speech is, in sober fact, an utterly different sort of thing from the process of learning to walk. In the case of the latter function, culture, in other words, the traditional body of social usage, is not seriously brought into play. The child is individually equipped, by the complex set of factors that we term biological heredity, to make all the needed muscular and nervous adjustments that result in walking. Indeed, the very conformation of these muscles and of the appropriate parts of the nervous system may be said to be primarily adapted to the movements made in walking and in similar activities. In a very real sense the normal human being is predestined to walk, not because his elders will assist him to learn the art, but because his organism is prepared from birth, or even from the moment of conception, to take on all those expenditures of nervous energy and all those muscular adaptations that result in walking. To put it concisely, walking is an inherent, biological function of man.

Not so language. It is of course true that in a certain sense the individual is predestined to talk, but that is due entirely to the circumstance that he is born not

merely in nature, but in the lap of a society that is certain, reasonably certain, to lead him to its traditions. Eliminate society and there is every reason to believe that he will learn to walk, if, indeed, he survives at all. But it is just as certain that he will never learn to talk, that is, to communicate ideas according to the traditional system of a particular society. Or, again, remove the new-born individual from the social environment into which he has come and transplant him to an utterly alien one. He will develop the art of walking in his new environment very much as he would have developed it in the old. But his speech will be completely at variance with the speech of his native environment. Walking, then, is a general human activity that varies only within circumscribed limits as we pass from individual to individual. Its variability is involuntary and purposeless. Speech is a human activity that varies without assignable limit as we pass from social group to social group, because it is a purely historical heritage of the group, the product of long-continued social usage. It varies as all creative effort varies—not as consciously, perhaps, but none the less as truly as do the religions, the beliefs, the customs, and the arts of different peoples. Walking is an organic, an instinctive, function (not, of course, itself an instinct); speech is a non-instinctive, acquired, "cultural" function.

There is one fact that has frequently tended to prevent the recognition of language as a merely conventional system of sound symbols, that has seduced the popular mind into attributing to it an instinctive basis that it does not really possess. This is the well-known observation that under the stress of emotion, say of a sudden twinge of pain or of unbridled joy, we do involuntarily give utterance to sounds that the hearer interprets as indicative of the emotion itself. But there is all the difference in the world between such involuntary expression of feeling and the normal type of communication of ideas that is speech. The former kind of utterance is indeed instinctive, but it is nonsymbolic; in other words, the sound of pain or the sound of joy does not, as such, indicate the emotion, it does not stand aloof, as it were, and announce that such and such an emotion is being felt. What it does is to serve as a more or less automatic overflow of the emotional energy; in a sense, it is part and parcel of the emotion itself. Moreover, such instinctive cries hardly constitute communication in any strict sense. They are not addressed to any one, they are merely overheard, if heard at all, as the bark of a dog, the sound of approaching footsteps, or the rustling of the wind is heard. If they convey certain ideas to the hearer, it is only in the very general sense in which any and every sound or even any phenomenon in our environment may be said to convey an idea to the perceiving mind. If the involuntary cry of pain which is conventionally represented by "Oh!" be looked upon as a true speech symbol equivalent to some such idea as "I am in great pain," it is just as allowable to interpret the appearance of clouds as an equivalent symbol that carries the definite message "It is likely to rain." A definition of language

however, that is so extended as to cover every type of inference becomes utterly meaningless.

The mistake must not be made of identifying our conventional interjections (our oh! and ah! and sh!) with the instinctive cries themselves. These interjections are merely conventional fixations of the natural sounds. They therefore differ widely in various languages in accordance with the specific phonetic genius of each of these. As such they may be considered an integral portion of speech, in the properly cultural sense of the term, being no more identical with the instinctive cries themselves than such words as "cuckoo" and "killdeer" are identical with the cries of the birds they denote or than Rossini's treatment of a storm in the overture to "William Tell" is in fact a storm. In other words, the interjections and sound-imitative words of normal speech are related to their natural prototypes as is art, a purely social or cultural thing, to nature. It may be objected that, though the interjections differ somewhat as we pass from language to language, they do nevertheless offer striking family resemblances and may therefore be looked upon as having grown up out of a common instinctive base. But their case is nowise different from that, say, of the varying national modes of pictorial representation. A Japanese picture of a hill both differs from and resembles a typical modern European painting of the same kind of hill. Both are suggested by and both "imitate" the same natural feature. Neither the one nor the other is the same thing as, or, in any intelligible sense, a direct outgrowth of, this natural feature. The two modes of representation are not identical because they proceed from differing historical traditions, are executed with differing pictorial techniques. The interjections of Japanese and English are, just so, suggested by a common natural prototype, the instinctive cries, and are thus unavoidably suggestive of each other. They differ, now greatly, now but little, because they are builded out of historically diverse materials or techniques, the respective linguistic traditions, phonetic systems, speech habits of the two peoples. Yet the instinctive cries as such are practically identical for all humanity, just as the human skeleton or nervous system is to all intents and purposes a "fixed," that is, an only slightly and "accidentally" variable, feature of man's organism.

Interjections are among the least important of speech elements. Their discussion is valuable mainly because it can be shown that even they, avowedly the nearest of all language sounds to instinctive utterance, are only superficially of an instinctive nature. Were it therefore possible to demonstrate that the whole of language is traceable, in its ultimate historical and psychological foundation, to the interjections, it would still not follow that language is an instinctive activity. But, as a matter of fact, all attempts so to explain the origin of speech have been fruitless. There is no tangible evidence, historical or otherwise, tending to show that the mass of speech elements and speech processed has evolved out of the interjections. These are a very small and functionally

insignificant proportion of the vocabulary of language; at no time and in no linguistic province that we have record of do we see a noticeable tendency towards their elaboration into the primary warp and woof of language. They are never more, at best, than a decorative edging to the ample, complex fabric.

What applies to the interjections applies with even greater force to the sound-imitative words. Such words as "whippoorwill," "to mew," "to caw" are in no sense natural sounds that man has instinctively or automatically reproduced. They are just as truly creations of the human mind, flights of the human fancy, as anything else in language. They do not directly grow out of nature, they are suggested by it and play with it. Hence the onomatopoetic theory of the origin of gradual evolution from sounds of an imitative character, really brings us no nearer to the instinctive level than is language as we know it to-day. As to the theory itself, it is scarcely more credible than its interjectional counterpart. It is true that a number of words which we do not now feel to have a sound-imitative value can be shown to have once had a phonetic form that strongly suggests their origin as imitations of natural sounds. Such is the English word "to laugh." For all that, it is quite impossible to show, nor does it seem intrinsically reasonable to suppose, that more than a negligible proportion of the elements of speech or anything at all of its formal apparatus is derivable from an onomatopoetic source. However much we may be disposed on general principles to assign a fundamental importance in the languages of primitive peoples to the imitation of natural sounds, the actual fact of the matter is that these languages show no particular preference for imitative words. Among the most primitive peoples of aboriginal America, the Athabaskan tribes of the Mackenzie River speak languages in which such words seem to be nearly or entirely absent, while they are used freely enough in languages as sophisticated as English and German. Such an instance shows how little the essential nature of speech is concerned with the mere imitation of things.

The way is now cleared for a serviceable definition of language. Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. These symbols are, in the first instance, auditory and they are produced by the so-called "organs of speech." There is no discernible instinctive basis in human speech as such, however much instinctive expressions and the natural environment may serve as a stimulus for the development of certain elements of speech, however much instinctive tendencies, motor and other, may give a predetermined range or mold to linguistic expression. Such human or animal communication, if "communication" it may be called, as is brought about by involuntary, instinctive cries is not, in our sense, language at all.

I have just referred to the "organs of speech," and it would seem at first blush that this is tantamount to an admission that speech itself is an instinctive, biologically

predetermined activity. We must not be misled by the mere term. There are, properly speaking, no organs of speech; there are only organs that are incidentally useful in the production of speech sounds. The lungs, the larynx, the palate, the nose, the tongue, the teeth, and the lips, are all so utilized, but they are no more to be thought of as primary organs of speech than are the fingers to be considered as essentially organs of piano-playing or the knees as organs of prayer. Speech is not a simple activity that is carried on by one or more organs biologically adapted to the purpose. It is an extremely complex and ever-shifting network of adjustments—in the brain, in the nervous system, and in the articulating and auditory organs—tending towards the desired end of communication. The lungs developed, roughly speaking, in connection with the necessary biological function known as breathing; the nose, as an organ of smell; the teeth, as organs useful in breaking up food before it was ready for digestion. If, then, these and other organs are being constantly utilized in speech, it is only because any organ, once existent and in so far as it is subject to voluntary control, can be utilized by man for secondary purposes. Physiologically, speech is an overlaid function, or, to be more precise, a group of overlaid functions. It gets what service it can out of organs and functions, nervous and muscular, that have come into being and are maintained for very different ends than its own.

It is true that physiological psychologists speak of the localization of speech in the brain. This can only mean that the sounds of speech are localized in the auditory tract of the brain, or in some circumscribed portion of it, precisely as other classes of sounds are localized, and that the motor processes involved in speech (such as the movements of the glottal cords in the larynx, the movements of the tongue required to pronounce the vowels, lip movements required to articulate certain consonants, and numerous others) are localized in the motor tract precisely as are all other impulses to special motor activities. In the same way control is lodged in the visual tract of the brain over all those processes of visual recognition involved in reading. Naturally the particular points or clusters of points of localization in the several tracts that refer to any element of language are connected in the brain by paths of association, so that the outward, or psycho-physical, aspect of language is of a vast network of associated localizations in the brain and lower nervous tracts, the auditory localizations being without doubt the most fundamental of all for speech. However, a speech-sound localized in the brain, even when associated with the particular movements of the "speech organs" that are required to produce it, is very far from being an element of language. It must be further associated with some element or group of elements of experience, say a visual image or a class of visual images or a feeling of relation, before it has even rudimentary linguistic significance. This "element" of experience is the content or "meaning" of the linguistic unit; the associated auditory, motor, and other cerebral processes that lie immediately

back of the act of speaking and the act of bearing speech are merely a complicated symbol of or signal for these "meanings," of which more anon. We see therefore at once that language as such is not and cannot be definitely localized, for it consists of a peculiar symbolic relation—physiologically an arbitrary one—between all possible elements of consciousness on the one hand and certain selected elements localized in the auditory, motor, and other cerebral and nervous tracts on the other. If language can be said to be definitely "localized" in the brain, it is only in that general and rather useless sense in which all aspects of consciousness, all human interest and activity, may be said to be "in the brain." Hence, we have no recourse but to accept language as a fully formed functional system within man's psychic or "spiritual" constitution. We cannot define it as an entity in psycho-physical terms alone, however much the psycho-physical basis is essential to its functioning in the individual.

From the physiologist's or psychologist's point of view we may seem to be making an unwarrantable abstraction in desiring to handle the subject of speech without constant and explicit reference to that basis. However, such an abstraction is justifiable. We can profitably discuss the intention, the form, and the history of speech, precisely as we discuss the nature of any other phase of human culture—say art or religion—as an institutional or cultural entity, leaving the organic and psychological mechanisms back of it as something to be taken for granted. Accordingly, it must be clearly understood that this introduction to the study of speech is not concerned with those aspects of physiology and of physiological psychology that underlie speech. Our study of language is not to be one of the genesis and operation of a concrete mechanism; it is, rather, to be an inquiry into the function and form of the arbitrary systems of symbolism that we term languages.

I have already pointed out that the essence of language consists in the assigning of conventional, voluntarily articulated, sounds, or of their equivalents, to the diverse elements of experience. The word "house" is not a linguistic fact if by it is meant merely the acoustic effect produced on the ear by its constituent consonants and vowels, pronounced in a certain order; nor the motor processes and tactile feelings which make up the articulation of the word; nor the visual perception on the part of the hearer of this articulation; nor the visual perception of the word "house" on the written or printed page; nor the motor processes and tactile feelings which enter into the writing of the word; nor the memory of any or all of these experiences. It is only when these, and possibly still other, associated experiences are automatically associated with the image of a house that they begin to take on the nature of a symbol, a word, an element of language. But the mere fact of such an association is not enough. One might have heard a particular word spoken in an individual house under such impressive circumstances that neither the word nor the image of the house ever recur in consciousness without the

other becoming present at the same time. This type of association does not constitute speech. The association must be a purely symbolic one; in other words, the word must denote, tag off, the image, must have no other significance than to serve as a counter to refer to it whenever it is necessary or convenient to do so. Such an association, voluntary and, in a sense, arbitrary as it is, demands a considerable exercise of self-conscious attention. At least to begin with, for habit soon makes the association nearly as automatic as any and more rapid than most.

But we have traveled a little too fast. Were the symbol "house" —whether an auditory, motor, or visual experience or image—attached but to the single image of a particular house once seen, it might perhaps by an indulgent criticism, be termed an element of speech, yet it is obvious at the outset that speech so constituted would have little or no value for purposes of communication. The world of our experiences must be enormously simplified and generalized before it is possible to make a symbolic inventory of all our experiences of things and relations and this inventory is imperative before we can convey ideas. The elements of language, the symbols that ticket off experience, must therefore be associated with whole groups, delimited classes, of experience rather than with the single experiences themselves. Only so is communication possible, for the single experience lodges in an individual consciousness and is, strictly speaking, incommunicable. To be communicated it needs to be referred to a class which is tacitly accepted by the community as an identity. Thus, the single impression which I have had of a particular house must be identified with all my other impressions of it. Further, my generalized memory or my "notion" of this house must be merged with the notions that all other individuals who have seen the house have formed of it. The particular experience that we started with has now been widened so as to embrace all possible impressions or images that sentient beings have formed or may form of the house in question. This first simplification of experience is at the bottom of a large number of elements of speech, the so-called proper nouns or names of single individuals or objects. It is, essentially, the type of simplification which underlies, or forms the crude subject of, history and art. But we cannot be content with this measure of reduction of the infinity of experience. We must cut to the bone of things, we must more or less arbitrarily throw whole masses of experience together as similar enough to warrant their being looked upon—mistakenly, but conveniently—as identical. This house and that house and thousands of other phenomena of like character are thought of as having enough in common, in spite of great and obvious differences of detail, to be classed under the same heading. In other words, the speech element "house" is the symbol, first and foremost, not of a single perception, nor even of the notion of a particular object, but of a "concept," in other words, of a convenient capsule of thought that embraces thousands of distinct experiences and that is ready to take in thousands more.