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论文

以概念为核心、以意义为基础的语法分析----爱德华·萨丕尔《语言论》第五章解析

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摘要:

爱德华·萨丕尔在《语言论》第五章“语言里的形式：语法概念”中展现了其独特的语法分析方法。他以概念为核心、以意义为基础,并始终强调语言模式的社会及心理基础。这种对语言本质的深刻认识不仅体现在人们熟知的“萨丕尔—沃尔夫假说”中,也体现在萨丕尔对语法系统的研究中。萨丕尔的语法分析方法有其产生的哲学基础,他的心理学研究倾向不仅源于美国人类学家博厄斯和意大利唯心主义哲学家克罗齐的相关研究,还受到了德国哲学家及语言学家洪堡特语言世界观的影响。萨丕尔的语法研究对美国结构主义语言学和20世纪后期认知语言学及心理语言学的发展具有深远影响,当代理论语言学研究也能够从萨丕尔的语法研究中得到启示。

关键词: 爱德华·萨丕尔 《语言论》 语法分析 语法概念 语言模式

On Edward Sapir's Concept centered and Meaning based Grammatical Analysis

Liu Mingming

Abstract:

Edward Sapir published Language in 1921. This book includes both the language external research, the research on the language related culture, and the language internal research, the research on language concept system. In the grammatical analysis, Edward Sapir places persistent emphasis on language's social and psychological essence. This perspective is not only reflected in the popular "Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis" but also in Sapir's grammatical research. The fifth chapter Form in Language: Grammatical Concepts presents Sapir's unique grammatical analysis which is concept centered and meaning based. It is unique in that Sapir categorizes different language elements according to the various concepts conveyed by them, the way of which highlights the psychological and social characteristics of language. According to Sapir's grammatical theory, there are two types of concepts and of linguistic elements: radical elements expressing radical concepts and derivational elements expressing descriptive or derivational concepts. At the sentence level, there are relational elements used to express relational concepts which define the relationship among radical elements and construct the forms of proposition. Meanwhile, derivational elements define the meanings of radical elements, but they do not influence the meaning of a proposition. In the further analysis, Sapir revises his first classification by attributing radical elements and derivational elements to material content, with each corresponding to basic concepts and derivational concepts. Besides, he subdivides relational elements into concrete relational concepts modifying radical elements and pure relational concepts defining the sentence forms. Based on his analysis, Sapir categorizes various speeches in the world. He points out the basic concepts and pure relational concepts are essential to all languages, while derivational concepts and concrete relational concepts are common but not essential.

Sapir's psychological tendency in his grammatical research is affected by his teacher, Franz Boas, who claims that anthropology and psychology are indivisible. It is also influenced by Italian famous idealist philosopher Benedetto Croce. Besides, the linguistic

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worldview of the Germany philosopher and linguist William von Humboldt wields influence on Sapir's grammatical research as well. In spite of the fact that there is a lack of meticulous elaboration, a clear definition of the division standard for different grammar concepts, a thorough terminology, and a strong basis for some of his arguments, his wisdom manifested in his work can not be denied. And his contribution to the development of American structural linguistics, cognitive linguistics and psycholinguistics in the late 20th century cannot be neglected. However, Sapir's grammatical theory has received far less attention; therefore, through this discussion, the author hopes to reevaluate Sapir's contribution to theoretical linguistics, especially to the grammatical theory.

Keywords: Edward Sapir; Language; grammatical analysis; grammatical concepts; language model

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