

# 英语无灵主语句的隐含逻辑语义关系分析

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**摘 要:** 英语无灵主语句常以小句的形式出现, 具有结构严谨、词汇密度大以及逻辑语义关系隐蔽等特点。叶斯柏森的语结理论与奈达的语义范畴对英语无灵主语句中隐含逻辑语义关系的形成机制和体现方式有指导意义。

**关键词:** 英语无灵主语句; 隐含逻辑语义关系; 语结; 语义范畴

英语无灵主语句是一种独具特色的典型英语句子, 一般都以小句(简单句)形式出现, 具有句型多样、结构严谨、词汇密度大以及表达客观生动等特点, 加上句中常常缺乏标示逻辑关系的连接词语, 其逻辑语义关系十分隐晦, 给英语学习者带来理解和使用困难。为了揭示英语无灵主语句的隐含逻辑语义关系, 本文拟在叶斯柏森的语结(Nexus)理论和奈达的语义范畴(Semantic category)思想指导下, 以七种逻辑语义关系和六种英语常用句型为线索, 通过大量实例分析, 探索英语无灵主语句中隐含逻辑语义关系的形成机制和体现方式。

## 一 语结(Nexus)理论与语义范畴(Semantic category)思想概述

叶斯柏森<sup>[1]</sup>的语结(Nexus)这个术语, 也有人译为“连接式”, 与另一术语“组合式”(Junction)相对应。所谓语结就是指一个词或一个词组具有一个句子的意义。例如 a furiously barking dog 含有 A dog barks furiously 之意; the doctors' arrival 含有 The doctor arrived 的逻辑语义。语结有两个特征: 一是语结里并不要求出现限定动词; 二是语结可以表达完整句子的意思。例如当修饰语和被修饰语共同指称一个事物, 构成一个本来就可以用一个独立单词表达的事物名称时, 这样的词组就不是语结: a new-born dog 就是 a puppy, a silly person 就是 a fool, a female horse 就是 a mare, 它们都无法表达一个意义完整的句子的意思。总之, 语结必须包含两个各自独立和分离的概念, 第二个用语必须为已经提及的名称增加新的内容。语结比较柔韧, 隐含生命, 而且结构严紧。除名词性语结之外, 叶斯柏森还列举了如下不同形式的语结: 不定式语结(infinitival nexus)、语结宾语(nexus object)、无动词语结(nexus without a verb)、语结次添加语(nexus subjunct)和贬抑语结(nexus of deprecation)等等。更为重要的是, 叶氏还区分

了两类语结名词: 动词性语结名词(如 arrival)和表语性语结名词(如 cleverness)。这与 Halliday<sup>[2]</sup>的语法隐喻(grammatical metaphor)或名词化(nominalization)概念具有异曲同工之妙, 对我们分析英语无灵主语句的隐含逻辑语义关系具有很大的指导意义。

奈达<sup>[3-4]</sup>在其交际理论中创造性地提出了英语的四个语义范畴(semantic category)概念, 认为词语可依据其上下文逻辑语义关系, 分别归属于不同的语义范畴: 一是物体词(objects); 二是活动词(events); 三是抽象词(abstracts); 四是关系词(relations)。这是一种以语义分析为目的的词类划分, 四个语义范畴所反映的是词与词、词组与词组之间的逻辑语义。<sup>[5]</sup>具体说来, 物体词不仅仅是“名词”的概念, 它们还常常透露出动作所涉及的方方面面信息, 如动作的主体(主语)或动作的受事(宾语)等等; 活动词是逻辑上的动词, 但所表达的不仅仅是动词概念, 通过动词可以透视出一个逻辑上的句子来, 因为其逻辑上的主体(主语)和受事(宾语)等有助于补充和完整其自身的逻辑语义; 关系词也不仅仅是“介词”和“系词”的概念, 因为它们能反映出其前后词项的逻辑关系, 从而折射出一个或多个逻辑语句来; 抽象词相当于传统语法中的形容词和副词, 一般处在定语和状语的位置, 但又不能直接与形容词和副词划等号, 因为它们反映的是逻辑句式中的某些成分。由此可见, 从理论上说, 英语的短语或词组, 甚至一个内涵丰富的单词, 都可以在理解时看作一个逻辑语义完整的句子。这一思想对我们分析英语无灵主语句的逻辑语义关系具有直接的指导意义。

## 二 英语无灵主语句中七种逻辑语义关系的形成机制和体现方式

如上文所述, 语结是一种浓缩的语言形式, 表面上, 它只是一个单词或词组, 但就语义而言, 它能表达一个句子所表

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达的概念。换句话说,一个语结表达一个命题,语结与语结之间的逻辑语义关系实际上就是命题与命题之间的逻辑语义关系,只不过没有用显性的逻辑连接词语体现出来而已。逻辑语义关系种类繁多,限于篇幅,本文仅举例分析常见的因果、条件、方式、让步、时空、程度和对比等七种逻辑语义关系的形成机制和体现方式。

### 1. 因果关系

认知语义观认为,语义是语法结构的中心,语义分析离不开语义结构分析。因果语义结构是一个意义整体,在这个整体中,必须存在两个或两个以上独立的概念单位,它们之间的逻辑关系是原因和结果的关系。在英语无灵主语句中,这种因果语义关系由谓语动词连接起来。因果语义结构是英语无灵主语句中最常见的语义结构,也就是说,因果关系是此类句子中最常见的逻辑语义关系。例如:

(1) Short hair made you look younger 句中的无灵主语 short hair 是一个名词语结,可逆转换为 you wore short hair 宾语 you 和宾补 look younger 组成一个不定式语结,可逆转换为 you looked younger, 这两个语结代表了两个独立的概念单位,它们之间存在着因果逻辑关系: Because you wore short hair, you looked younger 句中的谓语动词 made 起连接作用,体现这两个独立概念之间的因果关系。再如:

(2) His honesty brought him many friends 句中两个语结所表达的概念意义分别是: He was honest, He had many friends 它们之间一因一果,形成因果语义结构,相当于: Because he was honest, he had many friends

例(1)和例(2)都是先因后果,即无灵主语表因,宾语和(或)补语表果,连接此类因果语义结构的动词常有: lead to, result in, give rise to, cause, allow, permit, enable, bring, make, give, keep 等等。当然也有不少先果后因的语义结构,即无灵主语表果,宾语和(或)补语表因,连接此类因果语义结构的动词常用: represent, justify, show, indicate, imply, result from, betray 等等。例如:

(3) This glorious achievement represents the principle of self-reliance (They have made this glorious achievement because they adhere to the principle of self-reliance)

(4) Her trembling hands betrayed her nervousness (As she was very nervous, her hands trembled)

### 2. 条件关系

一般说来,条件与结果的关系和原因与结果的关系不易区分,因而有人将前者纳入后者的范畴,并称之为准因果关系。<sup>[6]</sup>然而,从准确理解语义关系的角度出发,还是有必要将其区分开来,尽管差别非常细微。例如:

(5) The application of computers will make a tremendous rise in labour productivity (If we use computers, there will be a tremendous rise in labour productivity)

(6) A little flattery would draw him out (If you flattered him a little, he would pour himself out)

以上两例表明:在条件语义结构中,也要存在两个独立

的概念单位,它们一个为条件,一个为结果,仍由谓语动词将其连接起来。虽然此类句子中的动词与含因果逻辑语义关系句子中的动词在语义上难以区分,但在时态上却有个明显的倾向,那就是多用将来时态。值得注意的是,在条件语义结构中,条件与结果概念的融合性更大,逻辑语义关系更加隐蔽。在这种情况下,动词用一般现在时,表示客观事实。例如:

(7) The wheel of the car obeys the slightest touch (Even if you touch the wheel very slightly, the car will react immediately)

(8) The hill commands a fine prospect (If you stand on top of the hill, you can get a fine prospect)

### 3. 方式关系

英语无灵主语句中的方式语义结构有显性和隐性两种。显性的方式逻辑语义一般由充当状语的介词词组来体现。例如:

(9) a Darkness fell like a grey blanket over the sea

b The happy news came to the satisfaction of all

c Life is measured by thought and action, not by time

隐性的方式逻辑语义常常体现在无灵主语中。例如:

(10) a Her frown gave him a speechless message (She gave him a frown and the frown acted as a speechless message → She gave him a speechless message by showing him a frown)

b Her glamour throws other ladies into shade (She is glamorous and this throws other ladies into shade → Other ladies are thrown into shade by her being glamorous)

c A few steps across the lawn brought me to a large splendid hotel (I took a few steps across the lawn and I reached a large splendid hotel → I reached a large splendid hotel by taking a few steps across the lawn)

### 4. 让步关系

与方式逻辑语义结构一样,英语无灵主语句中的让步语义结构也有显性和隐性之分。显性的让步逻辑语义一般存在于句子的插入成分和形容词或副词的最高级形式之中。例如:

(11) a The sight of the light even in the distance brings warmth from the window all the way to the heart

b Sound reasoning and logic, present in all good writings are essential to a causal analysis

(12) a Her words wring tears from the hardest heart

b The wheel of the car obeys the slightest touch

隐性的让步逻辑语义常常存在于无灵主语及其夸张表达方式中。例如:

(13) a Love will go through stone walls (So long as love exists, no stone wall can stop it)

b Words failed to convey my gratitude to you (No matter what I might say, I could not convey my gratitude to you)

## 5. 时间与空间关系

英语无灵主语句中的隐含时间逻辑语义关系有两种体现方式:一是由表达时间意义的无灵主语与拟人化转义谓语动词体现;二是由起连接作用的时间语义动词体现。例如:

(14) a Dusk found the child crying in the street ( When dusk came, the child was crying in the street )

b Every day sees our motherland flourishing ( As the day goes by, our motherland flourishes )

(15) a The execution of the prisoner preceded the president's arrival ( The prisoner was executed before the president arrived )

b The death of his mother was followed two months later by the loss of his three-year-old daughter ( After his mother died, he lost his three-year-old daughter two months later )

本文所指的空间概念是指处所、方向与方位等意义范畴。英语无灵主语句中隐含的空间语义关系一般由表达处所、方向及方位等空间概念的无灵主语及其拟人化转义谓语动词体现,或者由此类无灵主语本身的隐喻意义体现出来。例如:

(16) a Beijing first saw the start of the movement

b The work site bustled with activity

(17) a The path to glory is always rugged

b Thailand is a smugglers' delight

## 6. 程度关系

程度包括极限程度和渐变程度。在英语无灵主语句中,极限程度逻辑语义一般体现在否定的谓语部分里;而渐变程度逻辑语义则常常由谓语与状语共同体现。例如:

(18) a His presence of mind never deserted him.

b This medicine knows no bounds of effectiveness

(19) a The visibility of his impatience increased second by second

b The reefs loomed in front of them with startling clarity

## 7. 对比关系

当英语无灵主语句通过陈述成对概念来阐释“哲理”或“常识”时,对比或比较的逻辑语义关系就常常隐含在其中。例如:

(20) a Fire is the test of gold and adversity of strong men

b Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire

c A bad compromise is better than a fair lawsuit

这种含有对比逻辑语义关系的英语无灵主语句在英语谚语、成语或俗语中尤为常见。例如:

(21) a Excess of sorrow laughs and excess of joy weeps

b Two is company, three is a crowd

c Genius is one percent of inspiration and ninety-nine percent of perspiration

## 三 六种句型英语无灵主语句中的逻辑语义关系分析

如上文所述,英语无灵主语句所隐含的逻辑语义关系就是语结与语结之间的逻辑关系。在语结与语结之间作为连接纽带的谓语动词扮演着非常重要的角色。因为谓语动词在英语句子结构中作用巨大,所以体现句子逻辑语义关系的连接图式也与充当连接纽带的谓语动词密不可分。<sup>[7]</sup>因此,分析谓语动词在句子结构中的意义与作用,也可以揭示句子中隐含逻辑语义关系的体现方式。

## 1. SVA 句型中的逻辑语义关系

在英语的实际运用中,以SV句型出现的无灵主语句很少见。一般情况下,要与表达地点、时间、方式等概念的状态(以介词短语最常见)相结合,形成SVA句型,才容易广泛使用。在SVA句型中,谓语动词主要起连接语结的纽带作用,其次也与其它成分相结合产生附加意义,语结(S或SV)与语结(VA或A)之间可以存在因果、条件和方式等逻辑语义关系。例如:

(22) a The case snowballed into one of the most famous trials in U. S. history

b His diligence resulted in his success

(23) a The heart would break without hope

b His eloquent description can arise only out of his deep love for his motherland

(24) a Her voice tailed off into silence

b The happy news came to the satisfaction of all

## 2. SVC 句型中的逻辑语义关系

在SVC句型中,S与C一般都是独立语结,在语义上相当于一个意思完整的句子,谓语动词只起连接纽带作用,不产生附加意义。上文提到,这种结构常常用来阐述“哲理”或“常识”,可隐含因果、条件和对比等逻辑语义关系。例如:

(25) a Arrogance and complacency turned out to be his ruin ( Because he was arrogant and complacent, he ruined himself )

b This novel was the beginning of his fame ( As he wrote this novel, he began to be famous )

(26) a Good company on the road is the shortest cut ( If you have a good company on the road, you will find yourself on the shortest cut )

b Unpleasant advice is good medicine ( If the advice is unpleasant, it may act as good medicine )

(27) a The weight lost by the anode is exactly equal to the gain in the weight by the cathode

b Prosperity is not without many fears and disasters, and adversity is not without comforts and hopes

## 3. SVO 句型中的逻辑语义关系

英语无灵主语句最常用的是SVO句型,其中的主语(S)与宾语(O)都是独立语结,在逻辑上相当于意思完整的句子,因而谓语动词有时没有具体意义,只起语法和逻辑纽带作用;有时虽具有一定意义,但总要受其所连接的前后两部分语义的影响与制约。SVO句型隐含的逻辑语义关系以因

果关系最常见, 有时也隐含方式等逻辑语义关系。例如:

(28) a The appearance of a distant sail kindled his hope of rescue

b The knowledge of cellular structure and organization has permitted a better understanding of cell division

c Her trained ear detected the weaknesses and exaggeration of the story

(29) a Only a very light and scattering ripple of half-hearted handclapping greeted her

b A thick coat of gloom enveloped the valley

c A faint smile lights up the woman's face

#### 4. SVOA 句型中的逻辑语义关系

在 SVOA 句型中, A 表面上是地点或方位状语, 但从深层语义去分析, OA 或 VOA 常常形成一个独立语结, 表示结果。以 SVOA 句型出现的英语无灵主语句都是隐喻句。句中的谓语动词大都是使役动词 (causational verbs), 具有“传递”作用。这种英语无灵主语句常常隐含因果逻辑语义关系, 有时也暗存方式和让步等逻辑语义关系。例如:

(30) a Business took him to the town

b Fear rooted her to the ground

c Their charity accepted me in the orphanage

(31) a The downpour plastered his shirt to his body

b Her glamour throws other ladies into the shade

(32) a Her words wring tears from the hardest heart

b Words can't convey my gratitude to you

#### 5. SVOO 句型中的逻辑语义关系

在以 SVOO 句型出现的英语无灵主语句中, 无灵主语 (S) 总是隐含原因, 具有传递意义的谓语动词一般都失去其本来的词汇意义, 只起因果连接作用, 双宾语 (OO) 隐含结果逻辑语义。在这一结构中, 既有“传递”又有“接受”的概念, 这里的因果关系就是通过“传递”和“接受”来实现的。值得注意的是, 在这个隐含因果关系的隐喻性结构中, 直接宾语一定是由抽象或泛指名词来充当的。例如:

(33) a The use of dialect lent the work great charm.

b The news gave me quite a start

c His slip of the tongue almost cost him a good friend

#### 6. SVOC 句型中的逻辑语义关系

以 SVOC 句型出现的英语无灵主语句, 总是隐含一种因果和条件逻辑语义关系。无灵主语 (S) 总是隐含“原因”或“条件”, 宾语和补语 (OC) 共同形成“结果”逻辑语义, 谓语动词 (V) 多为使役动词, 以 make 为其典型代表。值得注意的是, 隐喻性 SVOC 结构呈现十分复杂的多义现象, 如因果

行为、因果状态或属性、因果运动等等。也就是说, 随着补语 (C) 的词义和语法形式的变化, 句子可隐含各种各样的因果逻辑语义关系。例如:

(34) a Einstein's theory of relativity and his other discoveries make him world famous

b Absence makes the heart grow fonder

c The noise outside made it impossible for me to go on with my work

d My shyness prevented me from speaking first

(35) a Short hair will make you look younger

b Benefits often make a man a slave

c A little flattery would draw him out

分析表明: 英语无灵主语句中隐含的逻辑语义关系种类繁多, 包括因果、条件、方式、让步、时间、空间、程度以及对比等等, 其中以因果关系最为常见, 最为复杂。不同句型英语无灵主语句所隐含的逻辑语义关系主要由谓语动词的意义与功能来体现, 谓语动词的使役意义和转递意义 (包括显性和隐性两种) 以及谓语动词的连接功能是英语无灵主语句隐含逻辑语义关系的发源地, 不同的谓语动词和不同的句子结构体现不同的逻辑语义关系。

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