

Paraphrase 的等义值概念及训练方法

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摘要 释义(Paraphrase)是语言学习中常用的训练和检测手段。本文提出了释义的等义值的概念,并对释义的训练方法进行了探讨。

关键词 翻译;教学;释义;等义值;表层义;深层义;方法

中图分类号 H314

释义(paraphrase)作为语言学习常用的训练和检测手段,不失为语言教学中一种行之有效的科学方法。通过释义,学习者在句子理解、逻辑思维和语言运用等能力方面均能获得提高;而教授者则能较准确地掌握学习者在以上三个方面的进展、提高情况。

释义可以运用到英语各门课程的教学中去。由于综合英语课是融听、说、读、写等技能为一体的综合训练课程,因此,通过 paraphrase 使学生加深对句义、背景、修辞、文风等的了解,更好地理解通篇文章,欣赏文章的风格神韵,从而提高“四会”能力,显得更为可行和必要。

在指导学生进行释义练习时,口语表达训练与文字表达训练应结合起来。由于口语表达随意性强,释义出来的句子可以不要求结构完整、语篇完美;而文字表达则应要求文字结构严谨、思想内容表达全面,遣词行文地道、流畅。

然而,何谓 paraphrase? Webster's New Twentieth Dictionary of English Language 中是如此下定义的:“a rewording of the thought or meaning expressed in something that has been said or written before.”其他词典,如《牛津英汉双解词典 ALD》则定义为“restatement of the meaning of (a piece of writing) in other words.”不论是 reword, 或是 restate, 都涉及到一个如何把原句的内容及色彩按“等义值”原则再现出来的问题。

英国李奇教授(Gi Leech)在谈到翻译理论时,曾提出“交际值”(communicative value)的概念,并提出语义、句法和音位都各有自己表层和深层,各表层和深层之间都要受

收稿日期:1996-12-26

到转换规则的制约。这个观点,也适用于 paraphrase。其区别主要在于,进行释义时,除了使用的是同一种语言(而不是第二种语言),更要求从深层意义上来完整地再现原文的“交际值,”即本文提出的“等义值”(Equisense Value)。

释义对“等义值”的要求,主要表现在能完整再现原句以深层的思想内容及感情色彩为特征的转换过程。而原句的思想内容和感情色彩则主要体现在李奇指出的七个方面的意义:

1. 概念意义 (conceptual meaning)
2. 内涵意义 (connotative meaning)
3. 社会意义 (social meaning)
4. 感情意义 (affective meaning)
5. 附带意义 (reflected meaning)
6. 词的搭配意义 (collocative meaning)
7. 主题意义 (thematic meaning)

试以下例说明:

原句: It is a good machine that can work without power. 有些学生在对此句释义时,只满足于表层释义,其间没有经过一个分析、提义和重新组织的过程;因此,释义出来的句子往往没有新意,甚至完全背离原意。换句话说,没有再现其“等义值”。结果,表层释义为:

The machine that can run without power is a good one. 显然,与本意大相径庭。出现这种情况,是因为释义者没有摆脱原句的线性配列的束缚,进入深层结构,挖掘其义,进而用其它表现方式再现其思想内容。该句的基调是“impossibility,”故正确的释义应为: Whichever (of good machines) Can work only with power.

实际上,不是每个句子都含有程度相仿的深层意义,同时,学生运用语言能力水平也存在差异,因此,进行释义训练时可在多个层面进行。根据原句结构、含义的深浅,对不同层次水平的学生采取不同的训练的方法。一般的做法是由浅入深,由表及里、由点到面地循序渐进式地进行。可采取的训练方法有:

一、单词、词组替换法

严格地说,这不属 paraphrase 范畴,只可看作为释义练习的基础训练方法。通过用所学过的单词、词组来改写句子,不仅可以巩固学习者对所学单词、词组的识记,还可加强对词组的理解,积累语言素材,为今后在更高层面上释义打下坚实基础。

如: I'll give him your note first thing monday morning.

——I'll give him your note as soon as I see him on monday morning.

特别需要指出的是,应多引导学习者使用常见词组来替换单词,以适应现代英语中词组被广泛运用的现状。

二、关键词连句法

这种训练方法亦只是基础阶段的训练辅助手段。教师给出几个关键词,由学生按其内在联系组成句子。在此过程中,学生必须运用联想和逻辑推理,才能把原句的思想内容再

现出来, 因此对培养学生的逻辑思维能力大有裨益。

如: Then the snags would crop up. 列出关键词 unexpected difficulties, apttar, 组成句子, Then the unexpected difficulties would appear.

又如: I studiously ironed out the west Indian lilt from my voice. 列出 take pains, get rid of, accent 等关键词, 继而组成 I took pains to get rid of the west Indian accent from my voice.

三、句子扩充法

教师给出句子的前半部或后半部, 由学生按逻辑关系补充。如 A rational explanation of man's mental faculties is still lacking. 给出前半句: So far the functions of the brain——由学生练习补全为 So far the functions of the brain still remain unexpected.

又如: He is going to cause a stir in the world. 给出句子的后半句——on the musical world. 由学生补足为 He will become famous and exert a great influence on the musical world.

四、句型引导法

教师给出句型结构, 要求学生按内容需要用该句型表达思想内容。如:

We would hardly believe that he had finished the essay within thirty minutes. 给出句型 It was incredible for him……由学生完成为

It was incredible for him to have finished the essay within thirty minutes.

又如: The cab driver's door popped open at the very sight of a traveler.

给出句型 No sooner …than… 由学生完成为 No sooner did the cab driver see a traveler than he opened the car door promptly.

五、角度转换法

要求学生从不同角度、语态、语序对原句进行释义。通过此种方法训练, 可使学生获得触类旁通, 将所学过的语言知识融会贯通的效果。

如 The house detective clucked his tongue reprovingly. 可分别要求学生从 He 和 His tongue 的角度进行释义。释义分别为:

He made noise with his tongue to show his disapproval. /His tongue made some disapproving noises.

又如: Bitterness fed on the man who had made the world laugh. 可要求学生分别用主动、被动语态释义。结果释义为:

——The man who had made the world laugh was consumed by bitterness.

——The humorist now became a scathing satirist, because bitterness had eaten him up.

六、背景掺和法

这一方法适用于必须参照上下文或参考了成语、典故方可进行完整释义的句子。

如: Jorkens joined in, all for oletermination. 要正确释义此句话; 不参照上下文, 难以做到准确无误。背景如下: Our talk at the club one day was about opportunity and determination. Some said opportunity was necessary for success, and millions never had it, Others

believed that only determination was needed. Jorkens joined us, all for determination.

联系上下文, 此句释义为:

Jorkens joined in the discussion and supported the idea that determination was more important than opportunity.

又如: In his place rose a childlike phoenix with the strength of an ox and an evil temper to match it. 要正确地释义此句, 首先必须弄清楚 phoenix 的来龙云脉。phoenix 原指埃及神话中的不死鸟, 每活五百年至六百年即自我焚烧。烧成灰烬后获得新生, 又能活五六百年。因此, 正确释义时应掺和交代典故背景:

Instead of being killed, Gage changed into a completely different person, as if he were re-born like the mythical bird a Egyptian mythology, a person as strong as an ox, and his temper was very much like that of an ox.

七、隐义提成法

对含有明显感情色彩或含有隐蔽意义的句子, 释义时应把这些感情色彩或隐蔽意义提成, 再现出来。

如: most of my fellow west Indians are trapped in their little calypso belts in dingy boroughs. 原句中, 作者形象地运用“trap”一词, 表达了他对西部印第安人穷困生活的深切同情。可释义为: They have to live in old, ruined - down district of the city where only Indians live and most of them are never able to get out and live anywhere else.

又如: “Today it is the teachers,” he continued, “and tomorrow the magazines, the books, the newspapers.” 这段文字表达了律师 Darrow 先生对无知与偏执的担心。可释义为:

Darrow said these words with worry: “Today teachers are put on trial just because they taught science, if this ignorance problem can not be solved, then tomorrow, the magazines, the books and newspapers will not be allowed to spread new idea, the editors and writers will also be sent to court.

以上七种释义训练法并不是一成不变的, 各种方法可交叉使用。在培养学生掌握这些方法进行释义的同时, 对学生在释义过程中出现的问题, 如词性的误用、词组搭配错误、语法不当、逻辑混乱甚至书写不规范等应适当加以纠正。既严格要求, 又适当宽容, 以鼓励学生大胆实践。

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