话语标记语 why 的语用功能分析

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摘　要:　言语交际中,why 有时不直接构成话语的命题内容,所起的作用是对会话等互动性言语进行调节和管理。本文借助有关语料,重点探讨它在会话互动中的语用功能。我们认为在不同的语境条件下它至少有以下五种语用功能:(1)话语起始标记;(2)话语轮换标记;(3)信息短缺标记;(4)话语缓和标记;(5)话语明示标记。对它的研究有助于我们进一步揭示话语交际的奥秘。

关键词:　话语标记语;语用功能;why

1. 引　言

话语标记语包括部分连词(如 and, therefore, because 等)、副词(如 actually, incidentally 等)、感叹词(如 well, oh 等)以及某些短语或小句(如 as a consequence of…, you know, I mean, if I'm not wrong 等),它们传递的不是命题意义或语义意义,也就是说它们不构成话语的语义内容,而是为话语理解提供信息标记,从而对话语理解起引导作用的程序性意义(procedural meaning)(冉永平:2000)。在 20 世纪 70 年代末期,随着语用学这门新兴学科的确立与发展,人们开始了对话语标记语的研究,尤其是 20 世纪 80、90 年代,不少西方语言学界的学者们对话语标记语的研究产生了兴趣。但是还未发现有人对话语标记语 why 作过系统性的研究,原因在于它在现代语言中的使用不如其它话语标记语频繁。但不管怎样,在英语中 why 作为话语标记语的用法还是存在的。本文就话语标记语 why 的语用功能展开讨论。

2. 语用功能分析

Hölker 指出话语标记语的功能主要体现为四个方面:(a)不对话语的真值条件产生任何影响;(b)不会增加话语的命题内容;(c)与说话时的情景有关;(d)具有一定的情感功能或表达功能(冉永平: 2003)。在"What is one plus one?" "Why, it's two."中,why 并不传递语义意义,即不对话语的真值条件产生影响;它传递的也不是命题意义,句中 why 的有或无,传递的都是同一个命题。但是 why 与此时此地的语境有关,这里的语境是指发话人提了一个众人皆知的简单问题。受语境的影响,答话人用 why 表明了他对发话人所提问题的态度,即,"你干吗问我如此简单的问题?"。也就是表达了他对此类问题不耐烦的态度。本文

主要分析话语标记语 why 的(c)与(d)两方面的功能。

首先我们来分析一下 why 的词性和用途:

(1)疑问副词

a)—I had to say no.

—*Why?*

b)*Why* did you do that?

(2)关系副词

That is *why* he came here late last night.

There is no reason *why* he did not go there.

I realize *why* he did it.

The reason *why* he opposed the nomination is not clear.

(3)why 与 not 连用表示提建议

Why don't you come to have dinner with us?

(4)why not 表示应答

—Can I sit here?

—*Why* not?

(5)名词

The man was embarrassed at the child's unending hows and *whys* .

(6)叹词

a) *Why* , don't be silly.

b) *Why* , what did she say?

从以上例子可以看出 why 在(1)至(5)中会影响所在话语的真值条件,并增加该话语的命题内容。而在(6)中它是一个话语标记语。它不对话语的真值条件产生任何影响,也不会增加会话的命题内容,它所起的作用就是话语标记语。在不同的语境条件下,话语标记语 why 具有多种语用功能。

2.1 话语起始标记

在言语交际中,人们往往用一些话语起始成分(initiators)来表示自己有话要说,充当此功能的话语标记语除了 well, oh, ah, oh well, oh then 等之外,why 也可以用来引起话题。

(7)Willy: No! Boys! Boys! (*Young Biff and Happy appear.*) Listen to this. This is your Uncle Ben, a great man! Tell my boys, Ben!

Ben: *Why* , boys, when I was seventeen I walked into the jungle, and when I was twenty – one I walked out. (*He laughs.*) And by God I was rich.

Death of a Salesman Act One P. 48

在(7)中威利要求本告诉他的两个孩子发家致富的经过,本用 why 作起始语,叙述起自己过去的经历。Why 在此不但起到了引起听话人注意的作用,而且使听话者消除了唐突之感。*A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Languages* 把此类用法的词称为话语起始成分(initiators)(Quirk 1985:444)。又如,《威尼斯商人》第二幕第七场的开头(萨拉里诺和萨莱尼奥刚登场):

(8)Salarino: *Why* , man, I saw Bassanio under sail:

With him is Gratiano gone along;

And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

The Merchant of Venice Act Two Scene Seven P. 50

在此对话中,萨拉里诺一登场,就开始与萨来尼奥谈起罗兰佐的下落问题。Why 起到了话语起始标记的作用。

2.2 话语轮换标记

会话的一个特点是说话人的轮换(turn – taking),即会话参与者在整个会话过程中轮流说话。这一普通的社会行为中却蕴藏着惊人的现象:会话过程中很少会出现重叠(overlap)。究其原因,说话人之间这种有条不紊地更迭(说话人的轮换)是由于双方有意无意地遵从话语轮换管理系统(local management system)。话语轮换管理系统实际上是一系列取得话轮(getting turns)、占据话轮(keeping turns)、放弃话轮(giving turns away)的规约(Yule 2000:72)。在研究中我们发现 why 同时具备这三种功能。

2.2.1 取得话轮

在说话轮次不断更迭的过程中,人们通常用一些标记语来取得话轮,以便让话轮占据者迅速退出。但取得话轮一般不是打断对方说话而是在过渡相关位置(Transition Relevance Place)进行的(Yule 2000:72)。在会话中 why 可以用来取得说话轮次。请看下面的例子:

(9)Solanio: I never heard a passion so confused, So strange, outrageous, and so variable, As the dog Jew did utter in the streets: 'My daughter! —O my ducts! —O my daughter! Fled with a Chris-

tian! —O my Christian Ducts! —Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter! A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducts, Of double ducats, stol'n from me by my daughter! And jewels, – two stones, two rich and precious stones, Stol'n by my daughter! – Justice! find the girl! She has the stones upon her, and the ducats!'

Salarino: *Why*, all the boys in Venice follow him, Crying, – his stones, his daughter, and his ducats. *The Merchant of Venice Act Two Scene Seven PP. 50 – 51*

萨莱尼奥用夏洛克本身的话语描绘了一番夏洛克的形象后,萨拉里诺因为也亲眼目睹了夏洛克那疯疯癫癫的样子,他觉得对方描绘得还不够充分,所以他想取得话轮继续描绘一番。他用 why 作标记语来取得话轮,以便让对方退出话轮。

2.2.2 占据话轮

在言语交流过程中,说话者有时因种种原因会在句与句之间停顿,但是句末的停顿会被听话者认为是会话的"可能结束之处",而面临着被下一个自选的说话人把说话轮次接过去的可能。如果说话人想越过一个"可能结束之处"而继续往下讲,其中的一个技巧就是使用"搪塞语"(hesitation filler)。(何兆熊 2000:311)

(10) Amanda: I've had to put up a solitary battle all these years. But you're my right – hand bower! Don't fall down, don't fall!

Tom [*gently*]: I try, Mother.

Amanda [*With great enthusiasm*]: Try and you will SUCCEED!

[*The notion makes her breathless.*] *Why*, you—you're just full of natural endowments! ……

The Glass Menagerie Scene Four PP. 48 – 49

例(10)中阿曼达因过于激动,透不过气来,而她又没有详尽地表达自己的思想,不愿放弃说话轮次,因而利用 why 来向对方表明自己将继续该话题。

2.2.3 放弃话轮

在话轮交互过程中,当说话人感到自己要说的话已经说完,想主动放弃说话轮次,把说话轮次交给对方,又让对方能及时地接过话轮而不致出现"冷场"(silences)。有时他会用话语结束标记

来表明自己将放弃话轮。

(11) Solanio: I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapt ginger, or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, – without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain highway of talk, – that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio, – O, that I had a title good enough to keep his name company! –

Salarino: Come, the full stop.

Solanio: Ha, – what sayest thou? – *Why*, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salarino: I would it might prove the end of his losses.

The Merchant of Venice Act Three Scene One P59

从语境可以判断,在这个会话中,萨莱尼奥用 why 作为总结话语的标记来表示自己放弃话轮。

又如:

Launcelot: For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir it shall be cover'd; for your coming in to dinner, sir, *why*, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [*Exit.*]

The Merchant of Venice Act Three Scene Five P84

罗兰佐吩咐佣人朗斯落特把桌子铺好,端上饭菜,准备就餐。朗斯落特在退场前用一番幽默的言辞来应答对方,同时用 why 表明自己将放弃话轮。

2.3 信息短缺标记

人们在言语交流过程中有时会发生难以提供对方所期待的信息的现象,如,他不想把真实情况向对方进行陈述,但出于应对,他又不得不接过话题,这时也会出现"搪塞语"(hesitation filler)。尽管 why 作此用法不常见,但不能否认它具有此功能。试看下面的例子:

(12) Jim: No, Ma'am. All these fuses look o-kay to me.

Amanda: Tom!

Tom: Yes, Mother?

Amanda: That light bill I gave you several days ago. The one I told you we got the notices about?

[LEGEND: 'HA!']

Tom: Oh. — Yeah.

Amanda: You didn't neglect to pay it by any

chance?

Tom: *Why*, I —

Amanda: Didn't! I might have known it!

The Glass Menagerie Scene Seven PP. 86 – 87

在这里,汤姆因瞒着母亲,用他的薪水支付了商船船员工会费,而没有付电费,结果造成在关键客人到来时他家的电源被切断的尴尬局面。当母亲责问他是否付电费时,他因一时想不出如何应对,组织话语时出现了信息短缺现象,why 成了"搪塞语"。

2.4 话语缓和标记

Brown 和 Levinson(1978:63)把典型人所具有的"面子"分为消极面子(negative face)和积极面子(positive face)两类。积极面子是指希望得到别人的赞同、喜爱。威胁听话人积极面子需求的言语行为是指说话人表明他不关心听话人的感情、需求等,其中包括对听话人的积极面子的某一方面作出负面评价的言语行为,如表示不赞同,批评、蔑视、取笑、抱怨、指责、非难、侮辱、挑战、反驳等。在言语交际中说话人和听话人往往为维护和谐的人际关系作出种种努力,通过采取一定的语言手段尽量给对方或自己留有面子,做到言辞有礼。

(13)Poppy: We've been saying, Sammy, that whatever the outcome of all this, darling, we're going to stand by you. We're a family.

Samantha: You all coming to prison with me, are you?

Poppy: You're not going to prison. Is she, Jack? Sammy's not going to prison?

Jack: Course you're not.

Poppy: Your Dad did what he could to persuade the man but –

Samantha: Yes, I heard him.

Jack: *Why,* Sammy? That's what I don't understand. For less than two quids' worth of goods.

A Small Family Business P. 29

在这个会话中,杰克认为萨姆不值得因一桩小小的货物把事情闹大,对他的做法持异议态度。如果省略 why 而直截了当地表达自己的反对意见,会对 Samantha 造成面子威胁。Why 在此起到了调节人际关系的作用,它是缓和标记语(mitiga-

tor)。再看下面的例子:

(14)Jim: Oh, don't go out, Mrs. Wingfield. The fact of the matter is I've got to be going.

Amanda: Going, now? You're joking! *Why*, it's only the shank of the evening. Mr. O'Connor!

The Glass Menagerie Scene Seven P. 110

当阿曼达热切盼来并且一厢情愿地想让他作自己的女婿的吉姆,在时间还早提出要走的情况下,阿曼达心里有些失望。但为了对第一次上门的客人表示礼貌,她不能直截了当地说明时间还早。用缓和标记 why 是为了恪守礼貌原则。

(15)Laura: [*in a tone of frightened apology*]: I'm crippled!

Amanda: Nonsense! Laura, I've told you never, never to use that word. *Why*, you're not crippled, you just have a little defect—hardly noticeable, even!

The Glass Menagerie Act Seven P35

当阿曼达的女儿劳拉谈及自己跛腿时,阿曼达开始用严词谴责,但接着改用缓和语气进行安慰。句中的 why 为她表达不同意见起了调和作用。

(16)Bassanio: ……

Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice,—

Parts that become thee happily enough,

And in such eyes as ours appear not fauts;

But where thou art not known, *why*, there they show

Sometimes too liberal. ……

The Merchant of Venice Act Two Scene Two P36

巴萨尼奥在此指出他的朋友葛莱西安诺性格上的缺点,但为了缓和谴责,照顾对方的面子,他不但使用了"sometimes"一词,而且使用了 why。

2.5 话语明示标记

Sperber 和 Wilson 的明示推理交际(Ostensive – Inferential Communication)模式认为"明示"和"推理"是交际过程的两个方面。明示是对说话人而言,说话人通过某种使听话人"显映的"(manifest)方式进行编码、表达意图;"推理"是对听话人而言的,听话人凭说话人所提供的显映的方式进行解码,并将解码所得到的证据作为前提

的一部分,再结合听话人本身的认知语境(旧信息)对话语信息(新信息)按一定的方向进行推理,最终达到对话语信息的正确理解(Sperber & Wilson,2001:50 - 54)。明示可以是语言的,也可以是非语言的。我们认为话语标记语 why 有时在言语交际中起到了话语明示的作用。

(17)Jim: Let me give you a hand.

Amanda: Indeed you will not!

Jim: I ought to be good for something.

Amanda: Good for something? [*Her tone is rhapsodic.*] You? ***Why*** , Mr. O'Connor, nobody, nobody's given me this much entertainment in years—as you have!

The Glass Menagerie Scene Seven P. 87

阿曼达用惊喜的口吻表达了她对吉姆上门做客的高兴心情。她通过赋予 why 以高兴的语气,创造出一种语境效果,把这种语境效果显映给听话人吉姆,向他明示她的心情。听话人吉姆按照说话人阿曼达在 why 上提供的显映方式,推断出她的心情,然后他把这一推断与 why 后的新信息相结合,帮助他正确理解阿曼达的话语意图。我们再来分析一下,如果不用 why,阿曼达同样可以表达高兴心情,吉姆也同样能理解。Why 岂不是多余? 根据 Sperber 和 Wilson 的关联理论,说话人的语境选择主要受两个目的影响:(a) 最大限度地减少听话人理解话语时所付出的努力;(b) 最大程度地增加话语的语境效果。这就是最佳关联原则(2001: 157 - 158)。因此,why 在此的作用是"帮助"或者说"制约"听话人理解话语,使听话人按照说话人的意图去理解 why 后面的新信息。

在研究中我们发现说话人通过赋予 why 以不同语气来向听话人明示自己不同的言语行为意图。

(18)Tom: Laura!

Amanda: Laura!

[*There is a clap of thunder.* LEGEND: 'AH!']

[*Despairingly*] ***Why*** , Laura, you are sick, darling! Tom, help your sister into the living - room, dear!

The Glass Menagerie Scene Six P. 83

阿曼达的女儿劳拉因贵客登门而极度恐慌,身体出现不适。阿曼达对劳拉感到非常失望,她通过 why 制造出她对劳拉的表现感到绝望神情的语境,使听话人明白她对劳拉的病情不是关心、担忧而是绝望。因为她担心劳拉的表现会毁掉吉姆将成为他们家女婿的希望。因此 why 对后面话语的推理过程很明显起制约作用。通过它的明示,说话人的话语意图被听话人所理解。

(19)Grandpa: You are full of surprises, Pete.

Pete: We are going to spend the entire weekend having a good time together here on the farm. We are going to celebrate all weekend.

Peggy: When is the wedding?

Pete: That's another surprise. Lillian and I were married two weeks ago in Detroit. She's come here to stay.

Grandpa: Wait till I tell my family about this!

Peggy: [*to Lillian*] ***Why*** , that's wonderful!

Family Album, U. S. A. Book 2 *P.* 67

"that's wonderful!"可以表达多种含义,但是受语境的影响,通过话语明示标记 why 及其语气的引导作用,听话人明白说话人是在表达惊喜。

(20)Sue: Well Ken, if you ask me, there's too much violence on television. ***Why*** , killing seems normal now.

Ken: Uh Sue, I'm not sure if I agree with you. I've never read any proof that supports your claim.

Functions of American English P. 43

"killing seems normal now"可以表达说话人对电视播放内容不同的态度,从语境可以判断,苏在回答对方的问题时通过赋予 why 以不满的口吻,限制对方对她的话语的理解。

3. 结束语

以上我们探讨了在互动言语交际中 why 在不同语境条件下不同的语用功能,它具有管理和调节会话的功能,可以表达说话人不同的态度,可以引导或制约听话人对话语的理解。但它不构成话语的基本语义或命题内容。像 why 这样的小品词在动态的会话过程中可以帮助听话人识别各种

语用关系,帮助说话人更好地传递话语意图。对话语标记语 why 的研究有助于我们探索话语交际的内在规律,进一步认识此类小品词在互动言语交际中扮演的角色。

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On the Pragmatic Functions of the Discourse Marker *WHY*

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Abstract: In verbal communication, sometimes *why* is found not to contribute to the propositional content of the utterances to which it is attached, instead it is an adaptive device helping to manage and maintain the on – going interaction. With the help of the collected data in English, we lay stress upon its pragmatic functions in verbal interaction. We think *why* can at least act respectively as speech initiator, turn – taking marker, insufficiency marker, mitigator of face – threatening acts as well as ostensive marker. The study on *why* might help to reveal the mystery of verbal interaction.

Key words: discourse marker, pragmatic function, why

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