**Rhetorical Figure Cognitive Network Model**

——New Achievements in the Study of Rhetorical Cognition

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From the perspective of research, rhetorical research can be divided into two categories: traditional rhetorical research and cognitive rhetorical research. Traditional rhetorical research believes that rhetorical figures are common in literary works, and their role is only to modify words to achieve aesthetic effects. They are additional components of daily language and are unconventional language phenomena. Cognitive rhetorical research believes that rhetorical figures are a universal phenomenon, denying the essential differences between literary language and daily language, and their role is not limited to modifying words, but an important reflection of human thinking. The author expounds on the cognitive research of rhetorical figures, aiming to explain the dependency relationship and organizational pattern of a series of rhetorical figures, and believes that this is a major progress in the cognitive research of rhetorical figures, reflecting strong theoretical tension and original thinking.

　　As an important scholar in this field, Professor R. de Mendoza, a famous Spanish cognitive linguist and editor-in-chief of Review of Cognitive Linguistics, proposed a cognitive network model of rhetoric. As a new achievement in the cognitive research of rhetoric, it makes up for the imbalance in the previous research on rhetoric, realizes the integration of cognitive linguistics and rhetoric, and opens up broad prospects for the cognitive research of various rhetoric.

**Integrating cognitive linguistics and rhetoric**

　　The cognitive study of rhetoric began with Metaphors We Live by, co-authored by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson. They believed that rhetoric is an important linguistic phenomenon that reflects the human cognitive system. Since then, the study of conceptual metaphor, conceptual metonymy and the interaction between the two has received unprecedented attention. However, up to now, the cognitive study of other rhetorical figures in language is still in a vacuum or gray area. To solve this problem, Mendoza proposed a rhetorical cognitive network model, arguing that all rhetorical figures in language can be reasonably explained from the perspective of cognitive operation, and that rhetorical figures are not isolated, but have various associations and differences in semantic effects.

　　The cognitive operation of rhetoric involves two basic relationships: first, domain-internal relations, namely A FOR B, which has two types: cognitive domain expansion and cognitive domain reduction, and can explain metonymy; second, cross-domain relations, namely A IS B. There are two types of cross-domain relations or cross-domain reasoning: similarities between two domains and differences between two domains. The former can explain simile, metaphor, overstatement and understatement, while the latter can explain irony, paradox and oxymoron. Of course, domain-internal relations and cross-domain relations can also interact.

　　Figures of speech exist in an interconnected and hierarchical network, divided into basic and non-basic figures of speech. The conceptual structure and semantic effects of the former do not depend on other figures of speech and are self-standing, including all the figures listed above. The latter are derived from the former and include hypocatastasis, synesthesia, analogy, allegory, synecoche, merism, anthimeria, antonomasia, proverbs, hypallage, auxesis, meiosis, litotes, sarcasm, antiphrasis, satire, and prolepsis.

　　The network of rhetorical figures is connected in three ways: first, the type-token relationship, such as the metonymy type has the tokens synecdoche, substitution, conversion, substitution and transfer. Second, the overlap relationship, such as metaphor, analogy and various forms of simile, which overlap in some features, but there is no question of who is a variant of whom. Third, the convertibility relationship, such as the expected description can be transformed into another rhetorical figure under certain contexts and discourse conditions through shared features. In addition, there are two types of semantic effects of rhetorical figures: denotational semantic effects and attitudinal semantic effects. Metaphor, analogy, simile, metonymy, paradox and antithesis highlight the denotational semantics, and their focus is mainly on interpreting one type of entity, situation or event through another type of entity, situation or event. Irony and hyperbole are specifically used to express the speaker's attitude.

　　The cognitive network model of rhetoric embodies the integration of cognitive linguistics and rhetoric. Professor Mendoza believes that each type of non-basic rhetoric has a strong correlation with the cognitive operation of a basic rhetoric, which is also the basis of the semantic effect of rhetoric.

　　Take the basic rhetorical figure irony as an example. Professor Mendoza believes that this rhetorical figure is the result of a sharp contrast between conceptual situations or conceptual events in two cognitive domains, which leads to a conflict. The target domain is the observable reality, which the speaker assumes is obvious to the listener; the source domain is the wrong assumption or belief that the speaker pretends to agree with. The conceptual conflict between the two domains ultimately leads to the cancellation of the conceptual structure of the source domain in the cross-domain mapping, which is what Professor Mendoza calls "frame structure override". Of course, this is based on the listener having enough discourse clues, intonation clues, gesture clues, etc. "Frame structure override" is the key for the listener to understand the meaning of the ironic attitude through conventional reasoning mechanisms.

　　Let’s take the non-basic rhetorical figure of extreme hyperbole as an example. As the name implies, it is the maximum extreme value of hyperbole in terms of measurement, and its semantic effect also comes from cross-domain mapping. Among them, the source domain is a disproportionate up-scaling of a scalar concept, which is virtual; the target domain is the real representation of this scalar concept, such as an entity, situation or event. The listener’s emotional response to the exaggerated target domain leads to the generation of the attitude meaning of this rhetorical figure.

**It has important theoretical and application value**

　　The theoretical value of the rhetorical figure cognitive network model is that it emphasizes the theoretical feasibility of rhetorical figure cognitive research. As a new achievement in rhetorical figure cognitive research, the rhetorical figure cognitive network model realizes the integration of cognitive domain operations and rhetorical figure research, and embodies the interdisciplinary characteristics because it integrates important ideas from disciplines such as cognitive linguistics, rhetoric, and semantics. Its core viewpoints, such as the universality of cognitive operations, the relevance of rhetorical figures, and the regularity of semantic effects, are well reflected in this network model.

　　The cognitive network model of rhetorical figures makes up for the imbalance in the cognitive research on rhetorical figures. Cognitive linguistics and rhetoric are closely linked, and the two complement each other. However, when dealing with rhetorical language, cognitive linguists focus mainly on the so-called major rhetorical figures, especially metaphor and metonymy, and occasionally exaggeration and irony. Other rhetorical figures have not received enough attention, and their theoretical significance is generally underestimated. In addition, the association and semantic effects between rhetorical figures have rarely received attention from the academic community. The cognitive network model of rhetorical figures presents the following characteristics: paying attention to the cognitive interpretation of major and non-major rhetorical figures at the same time; seeking the typological internal connection between rhetorical figures; exploring the semantic effects of rhetorical figures, etc. All of these have made up for the imbalance in the cognitive research on rhetorical figures to a certain extent.

　　The cognitive network model of rhetoric has a strong application value. Under the cognitive network model of rhetoric, all rhetorical phenomena in language expression are explained in a unified way, including basic and non-basic rhetoric, common and rare rhetoric, etc. The cognitive network model of rhetoric provides a comprehensive, systematic and interconnected research path for language research, requiring us not to focus only on metaphor and metonymy, but to place them in the entire cognitive network of rhetoric, seek a unified cognitive explanation of various rhetoric, and build the mutual connection between them. To thoroughly explain the cognitive motivation and semantic effect of a certain rhetoric, it can only be done by comparing and contrasting it with other rhetoric in the network system. Although the basis of the cognitive network model of rhetoric is English, it has great advantages and application prospects in the study of Chinese and other languages, especially in the systematic explanation of the cognitive operation behind a certain language based on a certain rhetoric, which needs to be verified and improved in future research.

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