词义探幽与 where 补充

李祐吉

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关键词:词法探幽、熟词辟义、where 材料补充

1 前情提要

本学期五篇文章,专业性逐渐递增。仅就文法角度而言,我觉得第9单元最有味,当时读了就觉得一股"经济学人"味,一查果然摘自其中。后面几篇虽然也来自 economic,但专业性强,不容易懂。因此我花费较多精力,赏析此篇。

2 词义精析

本次切入点是【词法——熟词辟义】, 主要探讨 spin, yield。

2.1 spin 的思考

之前看您发的 quiz 上, be spun in 的解释是卷入,我后来问了同学您上课是怎么讲的,都记不太清。但无妨,备课要考虑很多事情,若有疏忽,再正常不过;没有疏忽,对文章的挖掘也是永恒的底色。回到 spin,这里我认为是叙述、解释,思考如下。

文章第7段: In this light, the credit crunch seems like old news. Even bank write-downs can be spun in a good light. Much of the panic in August was caused by fear of what banks had on their books; now the bad news is out, investors can relax.

Light 这里是熟词辟义:角度。In this light 也是总结前面讲述市场对 credit crunch 乐观的理由,作者随后使用 spin。本义是旋转,延伸义是叙述,朗文字典解释如下: to describe a situation or information in a way that is intended to influence the way people think about it - used especially about what politicians or business people do 有倾向地陈述〔尤用于指政客和商人所做的事〕故第一次阅至此处眼前一亮,想到了"政客有倾向性地陈述"。故翻译可以为:甚至 write down 也可以往好的方面解释。为什么可以从"好的角度"(good light)解读(be spun)呢,一方面是上文市场对 credit crunch 危机似乎过去的现象解读,另一方面是下文"much of the panic…"说坏消息公布出来带来的影响,可以是银行资产状况清晰,不确定消除等。

2.2 yield

同样眼前一亮的,是 yield: the borrowing of low-yielding currencies to buy higher-yielders,这是作者对 carry trade 的同位语表述(p160 末-161 初),复习课看到 ppt 上 carry trade 解释,遂联想至此。思考: The borrowing...yielders。其中"yielding"和"yielder"精巧,因为 yield 一个意思是: to produce as return from an expenditure or investment: furnish as profit or interest, yielder:

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something that yields produce or products。(都来自韦氏) 再和 ppt 对比: borrows money at a low interest rate to buy an investment that is likely to produce a much higher amount of profit. 其中 borrow money at...rate 对应 the borrowing of low-yielding currencies。作者用了动词名词化,先是 borrow 变成 the borrowing of. 其次,at a low interest rate 变为 low-yielding...,"an investment that is …"变为 high-yielders。因此 yield 的使用就好像精华弹丸,浓缩原本冗长的表达。

2.3 where 材料补充

上次探讨了 where 从句应用,在后续阅读教材和其他资料时,又收集了一些。先来看教材上的例句定从: 12 单元两个句子:

- 1. ...encourage some banks dominant "deal factories" through which more and more of.. 这里 through which 可以改成 where, deal factory 相当于抽象地点名词。我觉得作者用 through which 是基于文体/正式书面语,毕竟本文有很强的专业性,(科技英语也常如此,将关系副词变为介词+关系代词)。上次查牛津给的 credit crunch 释义也如出一辙: an economic situation in which it suddenly becomes…
- 2. Thereby eliminating the risk that only one party to the transaction 从语法功能讲,这里 that 从句我觉得理解为同位语,或定语从句(that 作关系副词)都可以,因为语义内容都是说 risk 的内容。因此我觉得改成 where 也未尝不可,risk 作抽象地点先行词。

Where 状从 13 单元第 20 段: where an assignment is prohibited, consent from the without an actual assignment. 该句一看就很好判段,要是把 where 从句放在名词后面,要花一番工夫判断从句类型,分析语义。这句话 where 打头,基本上是状从,充当【语义角色——不同的逻辑关系】,转折、假设、让步等。这句话应该是假设: 如果禁止转让,那么会有……的效果。(大概是这个意思,文章太专业了,我看不太懂)

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之前和朋友一起研究 where 从句,她后来给我分享了很多语料,我觉得很有价值,值得分享。

3.1

2016 考研阅读 Text 2. 这篇文章是讲当时英国两大政党,都赞同要以占地建楼的方式,解决住房危机。比如在农村占地,在城市占地。作者就讲了这个现象,进行评析:建房的问题在哪、怎样规划。其中作者使用了很多 where 从句,我节选了多段:

The Conservatives' planning reform explicitly gives rural development priority over conservation, even authorising "off-plan" building where local people might object. The concept of sustainable development has been defined as profitable. Labour likewise wants to discontinue local planning where councils oppose development.

有了上面的背景铺垫,即使这是段节选的话,也很好理解。其中两个 where 从句,由于放在名词后面,具有迷惑性。…" off-plan" building where local people might object。可能容易把 building 当作 object 宾语,这样就不通顺了。此处 object 是不及物,即"在当地居民反对的地方"建楼,where 从句并没有转义成别的逻辑关系,典型的状从,保留"地点"味道——在……地方下一句的 where 就开始转义了: Labour likewise wants to discontinue local planning where councils oppose development.不过这比较简单:尽管/即使地方议会反对开发,工党同样计划终止地方计划。

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The idea that "housing crisis" equals "concreted meadows" is pure lobby talk. The issue is not the need for more houses but as always, where to put them. Under lobby pressure, George Osborne favours rural new-build against urban renovation and renewal. He favours out-of-town shopping sites against high streets. This is not a free market but a biased one. Rural towns and villages have grown and will always grow. They do so best where building sticks to their edges and respects their character. We do not ruin urban conservation areas. Why ruin rural ones?

这段话就是作者的评析了:所谓的解决住房危机之道,在于占地建房,只是游说说辞罢了。他认为无论在城市还是乡镇,建房没问题,但是要遵守一定的原则在城市,就是 where to put,简单的表语从句,前文有一句表述,我觉得刚好呼应:

The sensible place to build new houses, factories and offices is where people are, in cities and towns where infrastructure is in place. 在居民存在的的地方,即基础设施完备的城市。而在乡镇,要想建房,作者有如下的看法: Rural towns and villages have grown and will always grow. They do so best where building sticks to their edges and respects their character. We do not ruin urban conservation areas. 乡镇从过去到未来,都会一直发展。只有 building(建房规划)恪守边界,保留特色,才是长久之道。

They do so best··· 这句话翻译很有意思,我俩思考许久。有几个点值得探讨:

- 1. Building 要把动作意味翻出来。
- 2. Edges 的理解,朋友当时说,有人翻译的是"优势",我们认为不妥,没有依据。作者评析的关键,在于 where to put。乡村建房规划,要规定边界,才吻合作者的意思。另外 edges 复数, character 单数也挺有意思,不同乡镇,划定范围有差别;农村大体的基调特色,是个总称概念。
 - 3. Where 状句。这里就是充当"假设/条件"的语义角色了,不再赘述。 总之这篇文章易懂,有兴趣可以去看看。

3.2

The tragic paradox of massive suffering amid global plenty traces in part to widespread poverty, which denies access to food even where it piles high in village market.

这句话(我们认为)翻好难度挺大。就 where 从句来说,是简单的"地点"味道,没有转义成别的逻辑关系。我们的翻译如下:一边是世界物质的极大丰富,一边却是许多人饱受饥饿之苦。造成这种不幸的困境,一部分原因是普遍贫穷。因为人们没有钱财,即使在像农村市场食物堆积的地方,也买不起粮食。

3.3

The sobering aspect of Allen's book is that we have no one else to blame for our present condition except ourselves. The upside is the possibilities contained in knowing that everything is up to us; where before we were experts in the array and fearsomeness of limitations, now we become connoisseurs of what is possible.

这段话前面意思是说,Allen 这本书一个发人深省的点,在于明白我们当下的处境,都是自己造成的。知道一切成败皆取决于自己,这个好处在于,它能给我们带来各种机会。作者的逻辑清晰: 先点出 upside,然后用对比的手法阐释,过去怎样,现在怎样。Where 从句翻译翻译: 从前我们只知道自己深陷诸多困境,现如今我们却能够敏锐地把握成功的机会。Where 逻辑关系是对比,相当于while, whereas 这种逻辑关系和句式很常见。比如想说事物的不同点在于,从前如何,现在如何,可以造句: the difference is that where…, now…。

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3.4

A sanctuary of repose, however contrived it may be, is a distinctly human need, as opposed to shelter, which is a distinctly animal need, so much so that where the latter is lacking, as it is for these unlikely gardeners, the former becomes all the more urgent.

本句源自一篇散文,主题比较深刻,大致来说,是一位教授对流浪汉在城市里建造花园现象的解读。不过,这个"花园"比较细微,需要仔细研读文章才会深刻领悟,这里就不详述了。主要聚焦于 where 的逻辑构造。前半部分大意是,人类与动物对居所的需求迥异,人类需要的身心安宁的憩息之所,动物所需的只是供遮风挡雨的栖息之处。后面作者评价道,二者的差别相当大(so much so that),对人类来说,如果/就算栖息的功能消失,人类最需要的还是前者(身心安宁)。As it is for these unlikely gardeners 就是一个例证,流浪汉在城市里建造的"花园"没有栖息的功能,但是可以让人身心安宁。Where the latter is lacking 状从,表达的就是条件/假设,如果……

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Where 功能强大、精妙。阅读中,要从位置特征、逻辑语义分析迅速判断是定从/状从。为什么where 状从可以扮演不同的【逻辑关系语义角色】,我认为源于其基本的"空间含义",逐渐延伸转义。因此,当你要表达各种逻辑关系,起承转合,都可以使用。

随意举例,我先说一个短语:人聚财聚。逻辑梳理:"人聚"是前提条件,然后"财聚",即"财"资本往有人的地方聚集。翻译: Capital goes where human resources go.

再说一句话: 我认为专利曾经是一个有利的保护,如今却是创新和进步的阻碍。分析: 专利在曾经起作用的"地方"成了阻碍,逻辑转义就是对比关系: Where they were a useful protection, now I see them only an inhibitor to innovation and progress.

最后说一段话:听说读写是英语训练的基本步骤,其中写可以帮助你内化知识。如果没有写这个阶段,那么英语学习知识不会牢固。思路:立好框架,这里是观点+阐释,随后从"如果"这层逻辑关系出发,迅速想到 where。"如果没有…"可以写成:where this stage is missing… 选词可以替换。再回顾上面分享的材料,基本循着这种思路。比如"allen 那本书"这句话,先说观点:有什么好处。接着阐释:从前…现在…随后用 where 句式,描述这层对比关系。因此,小至短语、单句,大到段落,都可以巧妙使用 where 状从,即使用最基本的"地点"含义,扩展至各种逻辑关系。无论是今天分享的,还是平常看到的,都可以用这种模式训练,相信会助你内化 where。

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