

從生命度和代詞脫落的角度看現代漢語的“它” 和英語的“it”

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摘要 本文旨在通過對比漢語和英語第三人稱單數代詞的使用情況，揭示名詞對代詞的擁有度和其生命度高低之間有着密不可分的關係。筆者進一步指出，英語的虛位主語“it”和第三人稱非人類代詞“it”，其實最終可以合二為一，兩者都是虛位代詞。從類型學上看，很少有語言有專門指代低生命度名詞的代詞，這也能夠解釋為什麼漢語往往用空位代詞指示低生命度的名詞。從這個角度來看，漢語的“它”和英語的“it”並不能完全對應，即前者可以省略，而後者必須出現。我同時證明，如果我們細察漢語“把一字句”中的虛位賓語，會發現漢語並不是像語言學家一直認為的那樣，是一個可以無條件脫落代詞的語言。

關鍵詞 代名詞 生命度 虛位代詞 空位代詞 把一字句 代詞脫落



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THE MODERN CHINESE “TA 它” AND THE ENGLISH “IT”, STUDIED FROM THE ANGLES OF ANIMACY AND PRO-DROP

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ABSTRACT This article aims to reveal that there is a close connection between the degree of animacy of a noun and its pronoun-worthiness by comparing how Chinese and English use third-person singular pronouns. I further contend that the dummy subject *it* in English and the non-human third-person singular pronoun *ta* are the same word, both serving as expletive pronouns. Judging from linguistic typology, very few languages have an exclusive pronoun whose sole function is to refer to nouns with low animacy, which explains why Chinese uses null pronouns and demonstratives for non-human and inanimate nouns. From this perspective, the Chinese “*ta* 它” and the English “*it*” are not exactly the same; the former is omissible but the latter’s presence is obligatory. I also argue that if we study closely the expletive object in the Chinese *ba*-structure, we can conclude that Chinese is not an unconditionally consistent pro-drop language as has been assumed by linguists.

KEYWORDS Pronoun, animacy, expletive pronoun, null pronoun, the *ba*-structure, pro-drop



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