

《语言的战争》

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内容概要

编辑推荐：罗宾·洛克夫切中肯綮地触及到了当今美国社会一个引人注目又非常迫切的问题——“谁”是权力的拥有者，权力拥有者“怎样”运用、维持、丧失权力。本书对关于“政治正确”的讨论，安妮塔·希尔-克劳伦斯听证会，作为第一夫人的希拉里·克林顿、O.J.辛普森谋杀案，关于黑人英语的争论以及克林顿的性丑闻等新闻事件进行了深入，然而又是趣味横生的探讨。作者通过考察得出结论，20世纪末的权力与地位之争是对话语权力

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精彩短评

1、言语具有现实影响力。统治阶层垄断释义权力。当新的情境新的词汇产生时，激进一方对现状的批评，从而形成“语言的战争”。...有很多有启发性的观点，无奈翻译非常差。结构方面，前三章内容比较多，后面的案例分析略啰嗦。

1、 What is reality? Reality is what has actually happened, or just what you see, what you hear and what you think? In Robin Lakoff ' s book Language War, reality is not what it is, but what is defined by us and created by language. Feminists often blame the markedness of gender in English for gender inequality, as if the language had created the reality and it could be eliminated by language itself. Males, who have been dominating the world for thousands of years, have assumed the control over defining language. They tend to think they themselves are “ plain, undistorted, normal, natural ” , so traditionally “ masculine ” has been unmarked, while “ feminine ” marked – “ gender is a grammatical category subject to marking ” . As a result, Men can represent not only males but also human beings, while women cannot. It rarely occurred to people that there was anything wrong with policeman, businessman, spokesman etc., until feminism arose in the late 19th century. On the contrary, policewoman, businesswoman, spokeswoman, till these days, still seem quite odd to the conservatives. Females are regarded as “ not-fully-human ” , and even the feminine suffixes sometime bring about derogatory meaning. Feminine words like authoress, poetess and sculptress, which may convey contempt, should be used discreetly. -ette is connected not only to the female, but also to small things or an imitation or substitute, like kitchenette and flannelette. Such discrimination appears not only in English, but also in many other languages, including Chinese. Such linguistic phenomena are so widespread that some feminists even want to forsake this language and create a mean one. But even if they successfully coin a new language which is free from markedness of gender, does it mean that it can help create an impartial world? Certainly not! Reality, in most cases, is just common sense shared by the majority of people in a society. Reality must be normal or at least seem normal so that it is easy to digest and accept. Most of the reality, however, is just based on mere speculation of certain phenomena rather than careful scientific reasoning. Before Newton ' s law, the idea that “ force is a means to keep objects moving ” was regarded as common sense, since we can observe that moving objects without continuous force stop finally. This theory is amiable and familiar because it is obviously everyday phenomenon. But with effort of over hundreds of years, Newton ' s law became part of people ' s common sense, and those who still stick to the outdated theory would be mocked as ignorant and void of common sense. Such historical experience, however, doesn ' t teach people to be open-minded to new ideas. The innovation, to the conservatives, is scaring. They resist in desperate, citing the existing and familiar references to fight back. It ' s comparatively easy to hold the conventional battle field, because “ rhetorically at least, theirs is the easier task: their arguments are intellectually easier to grasp and emotionally more evocative of sympathy. Theirs is the side of ‘ common sense ’ . ” Common sense, nevertheless, may be the very strangler of the rudiments of new ideas. Planck, a traditional physicist, though established the quantum theory, was quite skeptical about this “ rebellious ” discovery. The reality of Newton ' s theory reminded him every second that his behavior was dangerous. Planck ' s thought was blocked by the reality, and seldom did other scientists dare to give up the convention and research in a new field. It was really a grave risk to betray the reality! Einstein, on the other hand, was the one who really lived up to pure reasoning. He abandoned the old reality and determined to create his own one. The conservatives certainly would not let the things ride. They would resist and fight back. In the movie Einstein and Eddington, when Eddington showed his support for Einstein ' s new theory, a member of the board of directors asked, “ What are his references? ” “ None, but – ” “ Acknowledgement? ” “ None... ” Eddington answered with a sigh. Finally the board of directors drew a conclusion, “ So this Einstein, in other words, has nothing to say about the real world? ” “ That ' s right, no. It ' s not real. ” Eddington replied helplessly. Eddington and Einstein, because of their innovative theory of gravity and their love for true science that transcended the national boundaries, had in a sense become they to the whole science community, which claimed to be we. Lakoff points out that “ we are the world ” , we are “ normal, rational and good ” , and we are reality. An interesting example is that the government and politicians, in order to accomplish reality, tend to employ we to include the audience. Be careful! I warn myself: Do not be assimilated by their standard; hold your own!

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