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# 英语冠词的特殊运用及影响

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摘 要 研讨了英语冠词在特殊场合所产生的特殊意义和特殊运用, 着重指出了冠词的运用会造成对句子的意义、指代关系、词性等方面的巨大影响.

关键词 英语 冠词 特殊运用 影响中图法分类号 H341.3

# 引言

英语冠词是一种虚词,本身不能独立使用,只能和名词连用,放在名词前面,帮助说明名词的意义,或赋予名词某种意义.英语冠词有两个:不定冠词 (a/an)和定冠词 (the).据专家统计,冠词在一篇文章中的出现的平均概率是在 6% ~ 15% 之间<sup>[1]</sup>.可见冠词在英语中的重要地位.英语冠词的用法看似简单,但要完全正确使用却又很困难,这有 3 方面原因:

- 1 英语冠词在汉语中没有相对应的词类,我们常把英语中的冠词与汉语中的量词简单地对等起来,然而实际情况并非完全如此,例如:
  - (1) A horse is a useful animal.
  - (2) The horse is a useful animal.

两句都是"马是有用的动物". 能说成"一匹马是有用的动物"或"那匹马是有用的动物"吗? 显然不行.

- 2 英语冠词在教学中也常常是容易被忽视的一个语法内容,因为太"简单"了. 其实, 为了掌握冠词的用法所下的功夫和所花的时间并不比掌握其他语法项目少.
- 3 英语冠词的使用虽然有其固定的章法和一定的规律可寻,但在很大程度上对英语冠词的使用是一种语言习惯,必须在广泛的语言实践中逐步地加以理解和掌握. 几乎所有的英语语法书籍都会全面地叙述冠词的基本用法,但英语冠词在特殊场合所产生的特殊意义和特殊运用或是语焉不详,或是散见诸章.

笔者结合实例集中归纳,研讨冠词的特殊用法,并着重分析有无冠词以及用什么样的冠词会对句子意义、指代关系、词性等方面产生影响.

# 1 不定冠词的特殊运用

#### 1.1 不定冠词与物质名词的关系

物质名词是不可数名词,一般不与不定冠词连用,但在直接表示物质名词的量、类型、品种等时,可以和不定冠词连用<sup>[2]</sup>. 例如:

- (1) I would like to have a coffee (我想要杯咖啡);
- (2) This is a good wine (这是一种好酒);
- (3) What a heavy rain we had last night (昨晚雨下的真大呀)!

#### 1.2 不定冠词与抽象名词的关系

抽象名词是不可数名词,一般不与不定冠词连用,但在抽象名词表示某种具体事物或状态时,可以和不定冠词连用,特别是由动词转变来的抽象名词与不定冠词连用时着重表达行为的短暂性.例如:

- (1) This is really a work of art (这是一件艺术品);
- (2) We are working with a great enthusiasm (我们以巨大的热情在工作);
- (3) Let's have a rest (让我们休息一会儿);
- (4) I'm going to have a talk with the boss about it (我要和老板谈谈这件事).

### 1.3 不定冠词与复数名词的关系

复数形式的名词一般不与不定冠词连用,但在表示时间、款项等短语前面或者形式上是复数而实际上是单数的名词可以和不定冠词连用.例如:

- (1) I'll finish it in a more two hours (再有两小时我就可以把它完成了);
- (2) I told her that I wanted an additional five dollars per hour (我告诉她我要每小时 增收5美元);
  - (3) This is an important means to an end (这是达到终极目的的重要手段).

# 1.4 不定冠词和专用名词的关系

专用名词在与不定冠词连用时,表示同名(或同姓)者中的一个或表示某人的作品. 例如:

- (1) A Mary is waiting for you in the office (一个名叫玛丽的人正在办公室等你);
- (2) She played a Chopin last night (她昨晚弹了一首肖邦的曲子);
- (3) I put a Venus on the desk in my study (我在书房的桌子上摆了一尊维纳斯的雕像)

# 1.5 不定冠词在某些习语中的运用

先看一个句子: Xiao Li is a boy of a girl 此句不是"小李是一个女孩的男孩", 而是"小李是一个男孩般的女孩". 因为"不定冠词+名词(1)+不定冠词+名词(2) (a···of a···)

是个固定结构,译成汉语时应该把名词(1)当作名词(2)的定语,其涵义为"像···一般···"。例如:

- (1) a mountain of a wave (像高山般的巨浪);
- (2) an elephant of a woman (像头大象般的女人);
- (3) She is a flower of a girl (她是一个美貌如花的姑娘);
- (4) He lives in a palace of a house, but he is leading a hell of a life (他住在宫殿般的房子里,却过着地狱般的生活).

# 2 定冠词的特殊运用

### 2.1 定冠词用在某些介词短语中

定冠词用在某些介词短语中,代替句中与宾语有关的形容词性物主代词[3] 例如:

- (1) The cruel boss hit the employee in the face (那个凶残的老板打了雇员的脸); 句子中的 "the face"显然是指 "the employee's face",但是我们不能说 The cruel boss hit the employee's face 或 The cruel boss hit the employee in his face.
  - (2) The policeman grasped the thief by the colla (警察抓住了那个贼的衣服).

句子中的 "the collar" 显然是指 "the collar of the theif's coat",但是我们不能说 The policeman grasped the thief by his collar 或 The policeman grasped the thief by the thief's collar.

### 2.2 定冠词用在与动词同形的名词前的某些介词短语中

定冠词用在与动词同形的名词前的某些介词短语中,表示处在这种行为的状态中. 例如:

- (1) This type of hair-do is all on the go in Shanghai (这种发型正风靡上海);
- (2) Electric heater will bring cold water into the boil quickly (电热器能使冷水迅速 沸腾).

### 2.3 定冠词用在某些习语中

在某些习语中须用定冠词,才能构成其完整的意义. 例如:

- (1) He said that she was begging the question. (他说她在回避问题).
- (2) Everyone opposed it, but she went on all the same. (尽管人人反对,她仍然坚持下去).
- (3) The police lowered the boom on the open gambling. (警方严惩公开赌博).
- (4) She thought she kmew the ropes about 'eaching. (她认为自己对教学很在行).

# 3 冠词的影响

#### 3.1 冠词对习语的影响

在一些英语习语中,冠词的存在与否造成了习语意义的巨大差异,先看下面两句英语:

- (1) His success is out of question.
- (2) His success is out of the question 这两个句子的差异只在句(2)比句(1)多了定冠词 the,然而意义却大相径庭.
- (1) 他的成功是毫无疑问的.
- (2) 他的成功是根本不可能的, 又如:
- (1) Bells are no longer in fashion.
- (2) He can speak English in a fashion.

句(2)只比句(1)多了个不定冠词 a, 意义却迥然不同:

- (1) 喇叭裤不再流行.
- (2) 他勉强能讲点英语.

从上述的两个例子中我们可以清楚地看到冠词在习语中的地位是多么重要,在平日的 学习过程中,我们一定要仔细,否则会造成对整个句子意思的理解错误,类似常用的习语有:

- (1) few (没几个, 意义否定, 修饰可数名词), a few (有些, 意义肯定, 修饰可数名词);
- (2) little (没多少,意义否定,修饰不可数名词), a little (有点,意义肯定,修饰不可数名词);
  - (3) at table (就餐), at the table (坐在桌旁);
  - (4) go to school (上学), go to the school (去学校);
  - (5) in case of (如果,假如,以防···), in the case of (就···而言;至于···);
  - (6) in front of (在…(物体外面)的前面), in the front of (在…(物体内部)的前面);
  - (7) in office (执政), in the office (在办公室);
  - (8) in possession of (占有), in the possession of (被占有;为某人所占有);
  - (9) in secret (秘密地), in the secret (知道内情;参与机密);
  - (10) in word (口头上), in a word (总之);
  - (11) in charge of (主管;看管), in the charge of (在…的主管下);
  - (12) in general (大体上;一般说来), in the general (概括地说);
  - (13) in line (排成一行), in the line (内行);
  - (14) in word (口头上), in the word (说了这话之后);
  - (15) by day (在白天), by the day (按日计算).

# 3.2 冠词对指代关系的影响

有无冠词会造成指代关系的差别. 如果两个名词代表两个人或物,通常在各个名词前都要加定冠词;如果指同一人或物,一般只用一个定冠词<sup>[4]</sup>. 例如:

- (1) Have you seen the red and the white roses in our garden? (指两种不同颜色的玫瑰花)
- (2) Have you seen **the red and white roses** in our garden? (指一种红白相间的玫瑰花)
- (3) The singer and the dancer performed wonderfully last night. (指两个人,一位是歌唱演员,另一位是舞蹈演员)
- (4) The singer and dancer performed wonderfully last night. (指一个人,即指一位歌舞演员)

#### 3.3 冠词对形容词的影响

有无定冠词是形容词是否名词化的重要标志. 有些形容词在表示一类人或东西时,一定要和定冠词连用,才能使形容词名词化. 这时,定冠词是断乎不可缺的.

- (1) The wise avoided such temptation (有头脑的人).
- (2) She was always good with the unfortunate (不幸的人).
- (3) He was fond of writing about the unusual (古怪的题材).
- (4) She expects me to do the impossible (不可能的事).

### 3.4 冠词对物质名词和抽象名词的影响

有无冠词是物质名词和抽象名词是否变成个体名词的标志. 有些物质名词和抽象名词本身具有词义,但是当他们转换成个体名词时(在这些名词前置有冠词),词义就会发生很大变化. 例如:

- (1) paper (纸), a paper (论文);
- (2) glass 玻璃), a glass (玻璃杯);
- (3) iron (铁), an iron (熨斗);
- (4) copper (铜), a copper (铜币);
- (5) youth (青春), a youth (青年人);
- (6) authority (权威), an authority (权威人士).

### 3.5 冠词对动名词的影响

有无冠词是动名词是否进一步名词化的标志: 动名词兼有名词和动词的特征,故可以用定语、状语或宾语修饰,但在一个动名词前是不会有冠词的. 可是,如果一个动名词进一步名词化,虽然它失去了状语和宾语,但具有更多名词的特征,它可以有自己的冠词. 换言之,我们在判断一个动名词是否进一步名词化,除了看是否有定语修饰或复数形式外,还可以看是否有冠词置于动名词前. 例如:

- (1) we should give our room a good cleaning.
- (2) The reading of the will took place in the lawyer's office.
- (3) Who did the typing?

(4) These are needed for the making of paper.

#### 3.6 定冠词与不定冠词对句子意思的影响

使用什么样的冠词,也就是使用不定冠词还是使用定冠词会影响全句的意思[3]例如:

- (1) A number of students attended the lecture yesterday (许多的).
- (2) The number of students attended the lecture yesterday is over 500 (…的数目).
- (3) In a way I agree With you (在某种程度上).
- (4) If you are not going to help, at least don't get in the way (妨碍人的). 类似常用的词组还有:
- (1) take a chair (就座), take the chair (主持会议);
- (2) at a crossroads (在十字路口), at the crossroads (抉择的重要关头);
- (3) a book of a day (只有短暂价值的书), a man of the day (当代名人);
- (4) for a moment (片刻), for the moment (目前).

# 4 结束语

英语冠词是使用率最高、意义色彩最复杂的词类,形式虽少,却常常使人不知所从,因而造成病句、错句、曲解或误译等.令人高兴的是国内外对英语语法研究的最新成果使有关冠词的论述比以前大大科学化、系统化了.例如,把冠词的规律用法与习惯用法区别开来,又将规律用法中的基本用法与扩展用法(即本文中的特殊运用)区别开来,这就给英语学习者掌握冠词的用法带来极大的方便.但是,这并不意味着对英语冠词的掌握就能一蹴而就,恰恰相反,冠词的用法相当复杂,要真正掌握它并不容易. 试看 3 个习语:(1) "at the first meeting"(一见如故);(2) "at a glance"(一眼看出);(3) "at first sight"(一见钟情).所以,我们必须以老老实实的态度、认真钻研的精神来学习并掌握英语冠词的运用.只有这样,才能有助于我们的英语水准得到进一步提高.

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# Special Usage of English Articles and Its Effect

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#### **Abstract**

Articles, frequently used in English, are two most colorful and complicated words which often puzzle English learners. This paper discusses the relation between articles and material nouns, abstract nouns, plural nouns, prepositions and idioms. It also points out that articles have much effect on idioms, nouns and gerund. Above all, the paper lays emphasis upon the presence of articles, which can affect the meaning of a sentence completely. As a matter of fact the usage of articles, to a great degree, depends on conventional language practice apart from the general rules. As for the special functions of articles on some special occasions, we should pay much attention to it. Only by a lot of language practising and correctly mastering the special uasge of articles, can we further improve our English.

Key Words English article; special usage; effect