

回声问句的语言形式

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提要

回声问句以疑问句完全复述或者部分复述前一个说话人的非疑问陈述语句,以达到表示惊奇、要求证实或间接否定等语义语用效果。在语言形式上,回声问句有两大广泛存在于多种自然语言的突出特征:一是它虽为公认的疑问句式,却不能使用疑问句式的基本句法形式;二是一定要使用疑问句式典型的上升语调,而有其他很多类型的疑问句式并非一定要使用上升语调。本文认为在这两项特征中,其句法特征外加一个“虽非为回声问句所特设但却对其所适用的一条普遍原则”一起导致了其语音特征;而句法特征则是因为回声问句在本质上是附加问句的紧缩形式,且被紧缩掉的正好是体现疑问句法形式的那部分。紧缩的原因则是回声问句的使用者因意外惊奇而语气急促。

关键词

回声问句 语调 句法 特点

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LINGUISTIC FORMS OF ECHO QUESTIONS

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ABSTRACT

An echo question is a special type of interrogative which fully or partially reiterates a non-interrogative declarative uttered by a preceding conversation partner. It has the pragmatic effect of expressing surprise, requesting confirmation, or making an indirect negation. With respect to linguistic form, echo questions exhibit two cross-linguistic characteristics: First, as a type of putative interrogative, they do not use the typical syntactic devices of question formation. Second, they must take the sentence final rising intonation typical of interrogative sentences. It is argued in this article that the phonological characteristic can be derived from the joint effect of its syntactic characteristics and a cross-structural and cross-linguistic principle, while its syntactic characteristic itself can be analyzed as the shortened form of a tag question, where what is deleted in the shortened form are exactly those syntactic devices for question formation. The reason for the shortening is that the speaker utters the question too quickly due to the unexpectedness of the preceding declarative.

KEYWORDS

Echo question Intonation Syntax Characteristics