

A Contrastive Study of Structural Patterns of Resultative Adjectives as Verb Modifier Between Chinese and English

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Abstract

Resultative adjective (RA) has been a great concern in the linguistic circle for its various types of semantic orientations and flexible verbal placements. With CCL Parallel Corpus of Chinese-English, the present study makes a comprehensive categorization and contrast of RA's structural patterns in resultative construction between Chinese and English. Data of 59 RAs are processed to get the targeted data according to their verbal placements. The difference in structural patterns of RA as verb modifier between Chinese and English is analyzed from a cognitive perspective. The study further investigates features of RA and the relationship between language, culture and cognition. The findings are also significant for Chinese and English language learning and teaching as well as Chinese and English translation.

Key words: RA; Verbal placement; Structural pattern; Cognitive factor

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INTRODUCTION

Chinese resultative construction, which consists of predicate verb and the verb's complement, has been regarded as one of the most complex constructions in Chinese syntax. Resultative, as one type of verbal complement, has drawn linguists' attention for its

flexibility in placement relative to predicate verb and its semantic relationship with other syntactic elements. In Chinese, there are a number of adjectives which can be used as resultative. Such kind of adjective is called resultative adjective (RA).

Studies of RA showed that RA demonstrates distinctive features, such as its verbal placement and semantic orientation (LIU, 1990; MA & LU, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c; ZHANG, 1999; SHI, 2000a, 2000b; YANG, 2005; ZHANG, 2006). Investigations on these issues reached different conclusions with different approaches applied. Some studies of RA also covered the differences in RA between Chinese and English in terms of RA's modifying function (TAI, 1985; Hsieh, 1989; SHEN, 2004). These studies posed questions to be further investigated.

The present study applies a contrastive methodology, aiming to generalize the different structural patterns of RA as verb modifier between the two languages and to investigate factors accounting for the differences.

1. STUDIES OF RESULTATIVE ADJECTIVE (RA) IN CHINESE RESULTATIVE CONSTRUCTION (RC)

The definition and categorization of *buyu* “补语” (*complement*) have been discussed by many researchers (WANG, 1952; ZHU, 1982; WANG, 1998). Most researchers defined *complement* as the complementary constituent of predicate verb or adjective, providing information about action, such as when, where, how it takes place and the result it leads to. Generally, most complements are verbs and adjectives. WANG (1952) classified complement into four categories: the explanatory complement, the resultative complement, the degree complement and the numeral complement. He considered resultative complement as the category which is basically composed of adjectives and verbs, appearing after the predicate verb to describe a result.

1.1 Synchronic Studies of RA

MA and LU carried out comprehensive studies on RA in RC (1997a, 1997b, 1997c). Many studies of RC were conducted based on their findings. The following are elaborations on MA and LU's discussion about RAs.

MA and LU (1997a) examined 1,078 words collected in *The Adjective Dictionary*. They found that 958 out of the 1078 words can be modified by “很 (VERY)” without objects. Such words are defined as adjectives. In their studies, MA and LU (1997a; 1997b; 1997c) addressed the following questions: 1) adjectives used as resultative complement (RA); 2) the semantic orientation of RA with other syntactic constituents; 3) the grammatical meaning of RCs with RA; and 4) the conditions for RCs with RA and O, i.e., the condition for the construction “V+A+O”. In the present study, the first two questions are the concerns and are addressed from a cognitive perspective.

Regarding the first question, findings showed that 216 out of the 958 adjectives can be used as RA, with 76 being commendatory, 58 being derogative and 82 being neutral in meaning. Among these RAs, there are two distinctive features. One is that some of the adjectives are more productive in making up RC construction than others; the other is that these adjectives can be affixed with “了” (Chinese perfect aspect marker) on some occasions; and sometimes “了” can be omitted.

As for the question of the semantic orientation of RA with other constituents in RC, MA and LU (1997a) held that RA does not just semantically modify the predicate verb that it follows. Instead, RA can semantically modify 10 types of syntactic constituents, including the predicate verb, the doer, the human organs or body parts, the agent, the instrument, the product, the location, the distance, the cognate constituent of predicate verb and the patient. (1) to (10) illustrates the ten types of the semantic orientation of RA.

(1) 这个问题我想仔细了。

I have carefully considered it.

RA “仔细(CAREFULLY)” semantically modifies the predicate verb “想(THINK)”.

(2) 我干活干累了。

I am tired from the work.

RA “累(TIRED)” semantically modifies the doer “我(I)”.

(3) 我的脚站麻了。

My feet became numb from long standing.

RA “麻(NUMB)” semantically modifies the body part “脚(FEET)”.

(4) 枫叶变红了。

Leaves of maple trees turned red.

RA “红(RED)” semantically modifies the agent “叶(LEAVES)”.

(5) 一连砍钝了两把刀。

Two choppers became blunt with overuse.

RA “钝(BLUNT)” semantically modifies the instrument “刀(CHOPPER)”.

(6) 这件毛衣织大了。

The sweater knitted too large.

RA “大(LARGE)” semantically modifies the product “毛衣(SWEATER)”.

(7) 房间里坐满了人。

The room is full of people.

RA “满(FULL)” semantically modifies the location “房间(ROOM)”.

(8) 你把花种密了。

You have planted the flowers too close.

RA “密(CLOSE)” semantically modifies the distance between flowers.

(9) 走平了路。

The road became even with walking.

RA “平(FLAT)” semantically modifies the cognate constituent “路(ROAD)” of predicate verb “走(WALK)”.

(10) 打破了一个杯子。

The cup was broken.

RA “破(BROKEN)” semantically modifies the patient “杯子(CUP)”.

Furthermore, some RAs can be semantically related only to some certain constituents. The key factor for this limitation is the nature of RA. However, the semantic orientation of RA can be hardly defined in most cases, which leads to the ambiguity of some expressions. MA and LU (1997a) believed that to solve this dilemma, the semantic meaning of both RA and predicate verb as well as the noun coexisting with them should be taken into consideration.

MA and LU (1997b) classified the grammatical meaning of RCs with RA into 4 kinds: expected result; unexpected result; natural result and deviation from the expected result. They held that the critical factors accounting for the different grammatical meanings of RC include the features of RA; the feature of predicate verb; the restrictive effect of the predicate verb on RA and the context.

The last question, the condition for RCs with RA to take object to form the construction V+A+O, MA and LU (1997c) considered the semantic orientation of RA with other constituents and the grammatical meaning of RCs with RA as two determinant factors. They held that when the constituents to which RA is semantically related are different, objects might or might not appear in RCs.

Many other studies also focused on the semantic orientation of RA in RC (LIU, 1990; ZHANG, 1999; SHI, 2000). Their claim about RA's semantic orientation is consistent with that of MA and LU's.

1.2 Cognitive Studies of RA

Adopting a cognitive approach, ZHANG (2006) discussed the cause-result relation in Chinese constructions such as verb copying construction and descriptive verb copying construction. By collecting and sorting out 491 such constructions from conversations, literature and relative research papers, ZHANG proposed the concept “distant

cause-result relationship” to address the cognitive basis for these constructions. According to him, except for those adjectives that denote quantity, most adjectives as resultative complement in the constructions can be classified into the category “social evaluation”, such as “early, late, right and wrong”. “Social evaluation” is defined as the subjective evaluation according to certain social standards. The semantic meaning of such social evaluation is represented through the deviation from expected results. However, such deviation is too abstract to show a direct cause-result relationship. For example:

(11) a. 小张寄信寄错了地址。

Junior Zhang sent the letter wrong.

b. 小张寄错了地址。

Junior Zhang sent the letter wrong.

“错(WRONG)” in (11)a indicates a much more abstract deviation of the result from the expected result than in (11)b.

ZHANG (2006) claimed that in Chinese grammar, RC is the primary construction to express cause-result relationship and the distance between the cause and the result varies according to the relationship between the complement and the verb.

YANG (2002) also carried out a study on RA within a cognitive framework. In his study, PTS is introduced to explain the pre-verbal and post-verbal placement of an adjective. YANG proposed two types of temporal sequence of the state described by adjective and the action expressed by verb: natural temporal sequence and subjective temporal sequence. According to him, natural temporal sequence observes the logic of event. The state and action that are viewed in the natural temporal sequence are subdivided into two categories. One is co-existing state, which co-occurs with action. The other is post-verbal state, which exists after action. YANG asserted that in the case of post-verbal state, adjectives take a post-verbal position. In terms of subjective temporal sequence, it is the sequence construed by observer of events. With such a sequence, the state expressed by adjective is categorized as either intended state or result. The state is intended when it is the supposition for an action; while it is the result when it is noticed after the action has taken place. Adjectives take corresponding pre-verbal or post-verbal placement with such temporal sequence.

1.3 Studies of the Prototype Position of RA in RC

YANG asserted that in the case of post-verbal state, adjectives take a post-verbal position. In terms of subjective temporal sequence, it is the sequence construed by observer of events. With such a sequence, the state expressed by adjective is categorized as either intended state or result. The state is intended when it is the supposition for an action; while it is the result when it is noticed after the action has taken place. Adjectives take corresponding pre-verbal or post-verbal placement with such temporal sequence.

TAI (1989) used Hsieh’s (1978) example (12) to prove

his non-objectival approach toward Chinese grammar. He believed that the different placement of RA “错(WRONG)” in Chinese and English can be traced back to different perspectives of values that Chinese speaker and English speaker adopt.

(12) 她嫁错了人。

She has married the wrong guy.

Hsieh (1989) examined the different modifying function of RA “错(WRONG)” between Chinese and English illustrated in (13). He claimed that in Chinese and English translation, the subtle difference in RA between Chinese structure V+A, such as “走错(WALK+WRONG)” and English structure A+O, such as “THE WRONG ROOM(错+房间)” cannot be conveyed though the concept “WRONG” is kept.

(13) 喝醉的那个人走错了房间。

The one who was drunk walked into the wrong room.

SHEN (2004) agreed with TAI (1989) and Hsieh’s (1989) claim that different cultures result in different conceptual structures, which in turn are represented with different grammatical structures. To SHEN, the Chinese expression “嫁错(MARRY+WRONG)” indicates that Chinese speaker focuses on the wrong action that the agent “她(SHE)” commits while the English expression “THE WRONG GUY(错+人)” indicates that English speakers focus on the difference between the man whom she married and the man whom she had wished to marry.

TAI (1989), Hsieh (1989) and SHEN (2004) all believed that this discrepancy in the modifying function of RA reflects different cultures and conceptual structures. However, they made no further elaboration on the cognitive factors leading to the different conceptual structures.

The previous studies had addressed issues concerning the different placements of RA as complement in RC and the cause-result relationship between RA and V. However, there are several limitations in these studies. Firstly, no in-depth contrastive study of the structural patterns of RA has been made between Chinese and English. Secondly, cognitive studies of RA have pointed out some different structural patterns between Chinese and English, such as the difference between Chinese structure (V+A)+O and English structure V+(A+O); however, the differences were elicited from a limited number of sentences instead of data from corpus. Moreover, explanations for the differences were rather general without detailed discussion. Lastly, the relationship between RA as complement and V in RC was interpreted differently. A comprehensive and consistent interpretation for the relationship is to be made.

2. CONCEPTUAL STRUCTURING SYSTEM MODEL

One of the differences found in the present study between Chinese and English in terms of RA is that for the same

resultative event, Chinese speakers tend to combine the concepts encoded by V and RA while English speakers tend to combine concepts encoded by RA and N (the noun denotes the patient of V). For examples:

(14) 那狗在我腿上[[狼]]咬了一口。

The dog gave me a nasty nip on the leg.

(15) 恐怕你拨[[错]]号码了。

I'm afraid you've dialed the wrong number.

In the present study, such differences in linguistic variations across languages are interpreted with Talmy's (2000) Conceptual Structuring System Model (CSSM). This model consists of the "Configuration of SPACE and TIME", "Schematic Systems", the "Configurational Structure System", "Conceptual Alternativity" and the "Attentional System". The following are models applied in the present study.

2.1 Conceptual Alternativity

Conversions from verb to noun and vice versa in structures of RA are found between Chinese and English. For example, when someone reads tirelessly, the verbal phrase "勤读(TIRELESSLY READ)" is used to describe him/her in Chinese while in English the noun phrase "A TIRELESS READER" is used. In this example, Chinese V "读(READ)" is converted to English N "READER(读者)". Such phenomenon is explained in the present study in terms of conversions between the domains of SPACE and TIME.

Talmy (2000) believed that concepts with the domains of SPACE and TIME sometimes convert to each other, such as the conversion from action into matter and vice versa. The ability to conceptualize a member of one domain in terms of another is termed as **conceptual alternativity** by Talmy, who believes that the two domains share certain structural principles.

2.2 The "Attentional System"

As mentioned above, states encoded by RA are sometimes conceptualized in the domain of TIME in Chinese while they are conceptualized in the domain of SPACE in English, such as the RA "错(WRONG)" in the Chinese expression "拨错号码(WRONGLY DIALED THE NUMBER)" and in the English expression "DIALED THE WRONG NUMBER". Besides the conversion of domain, focus of attention is also believed as one factor to lead to such difference.

In cognitive model, attention plays a part in making language as it is, to use Evans and Green's (2006) words, "...attention underpins language" (p. 535). Langacker's (1987) definition of attention is:

Attention is intrinsically associated with the intensity or energy level of cognitive processes, which translates experientially into greater prominence or salience. Out of

the many ongoing cognitive processes that constitute the rich diversity of mental experience at a given time, some are of augmented intensity and stand out from the rest as the focus of attention (Langacker, 1987, p. 115).

According to the definition, attention affects language users' cognitive processes and accordingly partly determines the way in which language is organized.

Talmy (2000) claimed that the figure-ground asymmetry is an attentional phenomenon. The asymmetry is fundamental to the nature of human perception. He claimed that attention over matter and action (scenes and their participants) is governed by the "Attentional System" through three factors: strength, pattern and mapping.

2.3 Action Chain Model

Since the present study focuses on different structures of RA when it is used to encode the result of events, analysis of these structures mainly involves the process of action. Langacker's (2002) "Action Chain model" is adopted mainly for the illustrations of the different processes that Chinese and English speakers undergo when representing the same events.

The distinctive feature of action is its involving "the transfer of energy from AGENT to PATIENT resulting in a change of the state of the PATIENT", which is illustrated by Figure 1 (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 545). This is termed as the Action Chain Model.

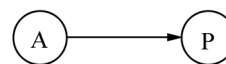


Figure 1
The Prototypical Action Chain Model (Langacker, 2002, p. 211)

To include the role of language users for the analysis of the present study, the action chain model is revised based on Langacker's model of subjectification and objectification. The model of subjectification and objectification is illustrated by Figure 2.

The circle marked C represents the conceptualiser who is mentally scanning the interaction between trajectory (TR) and landmark (LM). The arrows represent the scanning process between C, TR and LM. The horizontal arrow marked T represents that the scanning takes place across processing time, i.e., along the temporal sequence in which action takes place. The presence and absence of the arrow in the first and third diagrams represents the objective salience of the relationship between TR and LM.

In the present study, C corresponds to language user; TR corresponds to AGENT; and LM corresponds to PATIENT. The revised action chain model applied in the present study is illustrated by Figure 3.

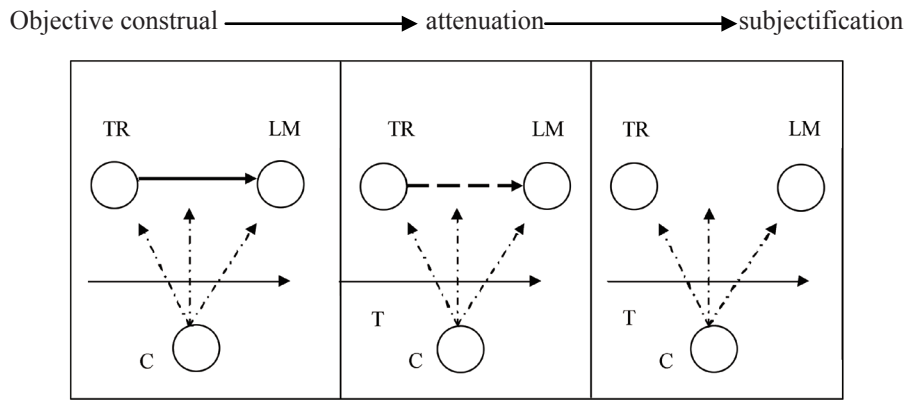


Figure 2
Subjectification, or the Attenuation of Objectivity (Langacker, 1999, p. 6)

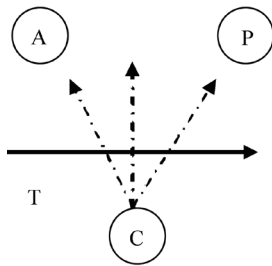


Figure 3
Revised Actional Model Applied in the Present Study

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, sentences with RA are collected in CCL Parallel Corpus of Chinese-English with concordancer ParaConc, a bilingual or multilingual concordancer. CCL Parallel Corpus of Chinese-English, which is constructed by Institute of Computational Linguistics, Peking University. The total number of the files in the corpus is 2,374, with 747 being English translations from Chinese and 1627 Chinese translations from English. As for the sentence level, 259,425 Chinese sentences and 287,924 English sentences are included, with 6,176,546 Chinese characters and 3,934,609 English words, respectively. Practical writing, literature and news are included, covering fields such as politics, science and techniques, sports, cultures, industry and business, art and film. Data collected in this corpus are considered representative for both spoken and written languages.

In the present study, Chinese text and English text are first loaded with the software to get the original data. The max search hits are assigned as 1,000 to ensure that all the desirable data are included.

The target data of sentences with RA are selected according to RAs' modifying function. The procedures to collect and classify data are as follows:

(i) To get the original data

Altogether 59 mono-syllabic resultative adjectives defined by MA and LU (1997b), including 15 commendatory RAs and 44 derogative RAs (MA & LU,

the number of mono-syllabic derogative RAs is 46 for two words are counted twice, see Appendix 1), are run in CCL Parallel Corpus with ParaConc to get the original data. In the data, RAs are within the mark [[]] and underlined. Their corresponding English expressions are also underlined.

(ii) Processing of the original data

Step 1: To delete non-target data

The following samples represent non-target data, in which RA is not verb modifier.

(16) 从这点上讲, 她是 [[对]] 的。

With this considered, she is right there.

In matchings like (16), the RA is the traditionally-called predicative to describe the subject instead of the predicate verb.

(17) 冬天没有人替这一 [[对]] 老夫妇生火。

There was no one to fire for the old couple in winter.

In matchings like (17), the RA is used as a numeral without adjectival meaning.

(18) [[破]] 钟敲不响。

A cracked bell can never sound well.

In matchings like (18), RA is the traditionally-called attribute to modify a noun.

(19) 我不过是不想难为你们去 [[破]] 开一张大票子罢了。

I simply did not wish to put you to the trouble of changing a large note.

In matchings like (19), the RA is converted to a verb instead of being an adjective.

Step 2: To delete non-target data in which RAs do not bear resultative meaning of action though they are adjacent to verb. For examples:

(20) a. [[光]] 说, 当然不行。

Only talk and no action, naturally that won't do.

b. 是谁把饼干全都吃 [[光]] 了?

Who scoffed all the biscuits?

Compared with (20)b, in which RA [[光]] denotes the resultative state BE USED UP caused by the action "吃(EAT)", RA [[光]] in (20)a means ONLY without resultative meaning.

- (21) a. 那对 [[好]] 管闲事的夫妇闯入我们的交谈。
The nosy couple broke in on our conversation.
b. 他这人 [[好]] 说话。
He is easily persuaded.
c. 他们争吵后, 她收拾 [[好]] 提包就走了。
After their quarrel, she packed her bags and left.

In both (21)a and (21)b, RA [[好]] (WELL) is adjacent to verb. However, it does not encode the result of an action as it does in (21)c. In (21)a, [[好]] means “TEND TO DO SOMETHING” while in (21)b it means “EASILY”.

- (22) a. [[烦]] 请接受我小额订购, 具体品目如下。

I now trouble you with a small order as particularised at foot.

- b. 观众都看 [[烦]] 了。

The audience was bored.

In (22)a, RA [[烦]] (BORED) functions as a Chinese way to convey politeness in making a request instead of describing the resultative state BORED as in (22)b.

(23) 不可否认, 所有的艺术都具有使人有超尘脱俗的 [[浮]] 想的力量。

That all great art has this power of suggesting a world beyond is undeniable.

In (23), RA [[浮]] (SUPERFICIAL) is fused with V into one unit, encoding action of thinking in a special manner. RAs in such case are not considered as verb modifier in the study.

4. COGNITIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENT STRUCTURAL PATTERNS OF RA BETWEEN CHINESE AND ENGLISH

4.1 Analysis of RA's Prototype Structure V+A in Chinese and English

Result shows that the structure V+A is the most frequently adopted structure for RA's verbal placement in both Chinese and English. Additionally, single V is also extensively applied in English under this occasion. Since the single V fuses both concepts of an action and a resultative state, it can be viewed as a deviated structure of V+A structure. In the present study, the biggest percentage of the structure R+A as one type of the verbal structure of RA is accounted from the aspect of language speakers' conceptual system.

A prototype is a mental representation that illustrates the key features of a given category (Evans & Green, 2006). The prototypical structure V+A in Chinese and English indicates that RA is primarily conceptualized in the domain of TIME (See Figure 4: V and RA encode action and resultative state; and they are conceptualized along the progress of time T represented by the arrow line. The conceptualizer (C) conceptualizes V and RA within the domain of TIME, which is represented with the square.

Regarding that the domain of TIME is a conceptual term, the square is drawn with broken lines).

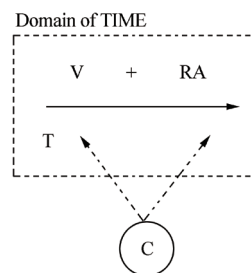


Figure 4
RA's Prototype Structure V+A

Evans (2004) suggested that events derive from temporal processing. In the case of resultative event, action denoted by V precedes resultative state denoted by RA, i.e. the result exists after an action has taken place. When conceptualizing events and representing them with language, language users follow the temporal sequence in which the events progress, which gives rise to the prototypical structure V+A.

For examples:

- (24) 折信前, 你先把信上的墨迹吸 [[干]]。

Blot your letter before folding it.

- (25) 我组织这次旅游, 可是我把事情搞 [[糟]] 了。

I was asked to organize the trip, but I messed it up.

In (24) and (25), verbs “BLOT” and “MESS UP” in English are equivalent to the Chinese verbal phrases “吸[[干]] (ABSORB+DRY)” and “搞 [[糟]] (MAKE+MESSY)”, which indicates that the states encoded by RAs “干(DRY)” and “糟(MESSY)” exist at the endpoint of the actions “吸(ABSORB)” and “搞(MAKE)”. Since such temporal sequence is objective, language users' conceptualization of these events must reflect such sequence, which explains for RA's post-verbal structure V+A as the prototypical structure in both Chinese and English.

4.2 Cognitive Analysis of Different Structural Patterns of RA as Verb Modifier Between Chinese and English

This section focuses on the conceptual differences between two Chinese and English structures:

- (i) Chinese structure (V+A)+O and its corresponding English structure V+(A+O); (ii) Chinese structure A+V and its corresponding English structure A+N.

To illustrate the different conceptual processes of these structures in Chinese and English, Talmy's discussions about domains of TIME and SPACE and conceptual conversion operations are applied.

4.2.1 (V+A)+O in Chinese and V+(A+O) in English

Generally, in the Chinese construction V+A+O, A encodes the result of action V and is semantically related to V instead of O. This construction is rewritten as (V+A)+O in the present study. For example, in “穿错了鞋(WEAR

THE WRONG SHOES)” and “执行错了政策 (FOLLOW THE WRONG POLICY)”, what is “WRONG” are the actions “WEAR” and “FOLLOW”. Utterances like “错鞋 (WRONG SHOES)” and “错政策 (WRONG POLICY)” sound odd to Chinese speakers (ZHANG, 1999, p. 91).

By contrast, in the corresponding English expressions, RAs are semantically related to O instead of V, being semantically grouped with O. Utterances like “WRONG SHOES” and “WRONG POLICY”, which sounds odd to Chinese speakers, is completely acceptable to English speakers. The corresponding English structure is accordingly rewritten as V+(A+O).

The study assumes that partly for syntactic rules of each language, cognitive factors also play a role for the difference between the two languages. Examples (26) to (28) are used to further illustrate this difference.

(26) 恐怕你拨 [[错]] 号码了。

I am afraid you've dialled the wrong number.

(27) 警方逮 [[错]] 了人。

The police arrested the wrong man.

(28) 喝醉了酒扳 [[错]] 道岔, 就会造成火车相撞的重大事。

If someone gets drunk and pulls the wrong switch, he can cause a collision.

The difference between Chinese structure (V+A)+O and English structure V+(A+O) applied to represent the same event can be interpreted in terms of the domain in which RA is conceptualized. The Chinese structure (V+A)+O indicates that Chinese users tend to conceptualize RA along the progression of time, within which action takes place. Accordingly, RA is in the domain of TIME together with V. On the contrary, English users tend to conceptualize RA in the domain of SPACE, focusing on the endpoint resultative state of an action. Such a conceptual process gives rise to the semantical closeness of RA and O in English. Figure 5 illustrates the different domains that RA is conceptualized by Chinese and English users. In Figure 5 (a), the broken arrow line on the top represents that the state encoded by RA exists along the progression of the action encoded by V and is in the domain of TIME together with V; the broken circle with RA which is embedded with the circle with P in 5 (b) represents that the state encoded by RA is conceptualized within the domain of SPACE together with P.

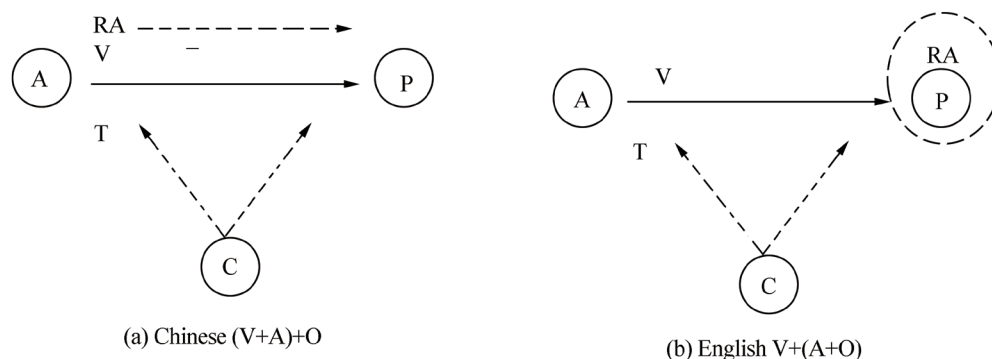


Figure 5
Conceptual Processes of Chinese Structure (V+A)+O and English Structure V+(A+O)

In addition to the conceptual system, language users' notion of value may also play a role in the adoption of different linguistic structures for the same event. Hseih (1989) and TAI (1989) agreed that different conceptual structures originate from different cultures (SHEN, 2004). The different verbal structures of RA “错(WRONG)” in Chinese and English reflect different perspectives of value that language users adopt when conceptualizing objective events. For example, when Chinese speakers say “她嫁错了人 (She has married the wrong guy)”, the focus is on the wrong action instead of the difference between the man

whom she married and she had wanted to marry; while the focus of English speakers is on the opposite. The researchers acknowledged that they do not mean to follow Sapir-Whorf's language determination or relativity; their claim is that different grammatical structures in Chinese and English embody different conventionalized images. In the case “She has married the wrong guy”, images of the action and the patient in Chinese and English are different. Figure 6 illustrates the different images in Chinese utterance “她嫁错了人” and its corresponding English expression “She has married the wrong guy”.

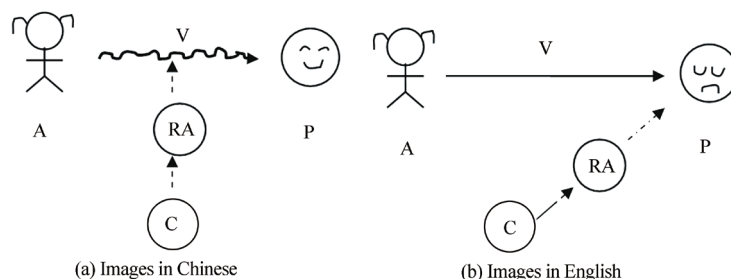
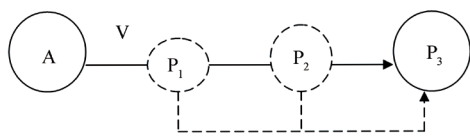


Figure 6
Different Images of Action and Patient of the Same Event: “她嫁错了人(She Has Married the Wrong Guy)” in Chinese and English

However, in Chinese it is sometimes also acceptable for VA “错(WRONG)” to modify O in the construction V+A+O, which seems to contradict with what has been claimed. For examples:

- (29) 她一紧张, 写了 [[错]] 字。
 Nervous, she wrote a wrong word.
 (30) 这个小孩子做了 [[错]] 事, 不敢回家。
 The kid did something wrong and dare not go home.
 *(31) 警方逮了 [[错]] 人。
 The police arrested the wrong man.

It is acceptable for RA “错(WRONG)” to modify Os “字(WORD)” and “事(THING)” in (29) and (30) while it is odd for RA “错(WRONG)” to modify O “人(MAN)” in (31). Explanation for this difference can be made in terms of “the degree of extension” of V and the temporal existence of O (Talmy, 2000, p. 523). In (29) and (30), Vs “写(WRITE)” and “做(DO)” encode **durative events**, (the action encoded by V extends over time); and Os “话(WORD)” and “事(THING)” come into being at the endpoint of the actions. By contrast, the action “逮(ARREST)” in (31) encodes a **punctual event** (the action encoded by V is over almost as soon as it has begun); and the patient “人(MAN)” exists before the action “逮(ARREST)” starts, i.e., the patient in this event remains the same along the progression of the action. This difference of O in durative event and punctual event is illustrated in Figure 7. In Figure 7 (a), P₁ and P₂ in broken circles represent the preliminary stages of the final stage of P, which is marked as P₃. In Figure 7 (b), the P in the broken circle indicates that the patient of an action pre-exists before the action takes place.



(a) Object formed along the progression of action in durative event



(b) Object existing before action in punctual event

Figure 7
Objects in Durative Event and Punctual Event

In Chinese, verb-modifier RA can modify O when the O comes into being along with the progression of action in a durative event, such as “写了错字(WROTE A WRONG WORD)””; while it is less frequent for such RA to modify O when the O exists before the action takes place in a punctual event, such as “逮了错人(ARRESTED THE WRONG MAN)”.

4.2.2 Conversions in Verbal Structures of RA Between Chinese and English

Two major conversions in verbal structures of RA between Chinese and English are shown in the study. The two conversions are explained from the perspective of different conceptual processes that Chinese and English speakers undergo when they are representing the same event with language.

(i) Conversion from the V in Chinese structure A+V to the N in English structure A+N.

Examples (32) and (33) illustrate the conversion from the V in Chinese structure A+V to the N in English structure A+N in the representation of the same event.

- (32) 伯承同志 [[勤]] 读不厌。
 Comrade Bocheng is a tireless reader.
 (33) 那狗在我腿上 [[狠]] 咬了一口。
 The dog gave me a nasty nip on the leg.

The Vs “读(READ)” in (32) and “咬(NIP)” in (33) are converted into English Ns “READER” and “NIP”, respectively. Such linguistic conversion embodies **reification** termed by Talmy, the conversion operation that converts our conceptualization of TIME (or action) into SPACE (or matter). In (32) and (33), the temporal concepts (verbal phrases “勤读(TIRELESSLY READ)” and “狠咬(FEROCIOUSLY BITE)”) in Chinese are reified to be expressed by nominal expressions “A TIRELESS READER” and “A NASTY NIP” in English.

This reification between the Chinese and English languages indicates that Chinese speakers tend to present objective event according to its temporal sequence; while English speakers tend to represent the same objective event in the domain of SPACE. This conceptual difference is illustrated by Figure 8.

Figure 8 (a) represents the conceptual process that Chinese speakers undergo. In this process, the conceptualizer pays more attention to the semantic relationship between A and RA in the broken circle. This conceptual distance is reflected by a shorter distance between the two elements in the linguistic form A+V. Figure 8 (b) represents conceptual process that English speakers undergo. The RA, A' and the broken arrow between the two represent that RA is considered as a

special type A (which is marked with A' in the figure) through a certain action. This change from RA to A' from Chinese to English is fulfilled by the increasing amount of conceptualizer's attention to the semantic relationship between RA (in the broken circle) and A'. Thus the English structure A+N comes into being. The conceptual processes and the different linguistic structures between Chinese and English embody the observation of iconicity principles and the function of conceptualizer's levels of attention in language

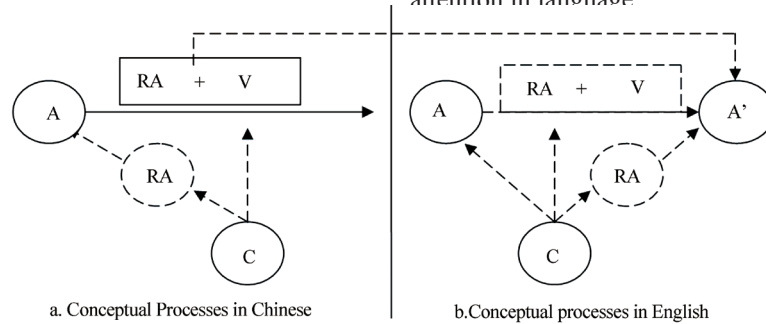


Figure 8
Conceptual Processes of the Conversion from the V in Chinese Structure A+V to the N in English Structure A+N

(ii) Conversion from the N in Chinese structure V+A+N to the V in English verbal structure

Examples (34) to (36) demonstrate conversion from the N in Chinese structure V+A+N to the V in English verbal structure. The nouns “皮(SKIN)”, “队(LINE)” and “爪(CLAW)”, which encode the patient, end result and instrument of events in the domain of SPACE in Chinese, are verbalized in English and thus are conceptualized in the domain of ACTION/TIME. This conversion is facilitated by **actionisation**, the conceptual conversion operation that converts matter to action. The rationale for English using verbalized nouns to encode action is that in the domain of ACTION, different parts, such as INSTRUMENTS, an AGENT, a PATIENT, and end RESULT, can be metonymically related and provide

access to another part (Kövecses & Radden, 1998). The claim provides ground for such conversion.

(34) 我的肘部撞在墙上擦 [[破]] 了皮。

I skinned my elbow against the wall.

(35) 篮球队员们很快排 [[好]] 了队。

The cagers quickly lined up.

(36) 他们家宠爱的猫在我的袜子上抓 [[破]] 了个洞。

Their favorite cat clawed a hole in my stocking.

This type of conversion is illustrated by Figure 9. In Figure 9, the upper broken curved arrow line represents the conversion from Chinese N (denoted by P) to English V (denoted by V+RA). This conversion is facilitated by the conceptualizer's primary attention to P. The focus of attention on P is illustrated by P in the broken circle.

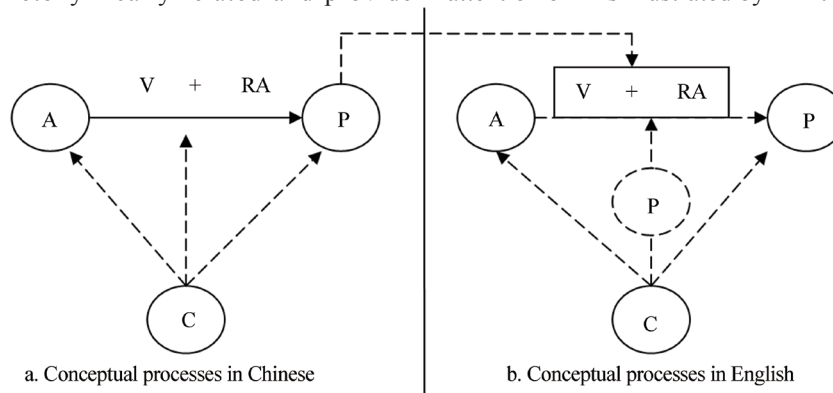


Figure 9
Conceptual Processes of the Conversion from the N in Chinese Structure V+A+N to the V in English Verbal Structure

SUMMARY

In the present study, the features of RA as verb modifier, its prototypical verbal structure and its structural differences between Chinese and English are discussed. The analysis shows that in construing the objective world, different language users undergo different conceptual processes under different perspectives of value. The result is consistent with the claim that “language reflects our unique human construal of the world” (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 48).

The originalities of the research lie in its application of parallel corpus of Chinese-English to elicit data, the systematic classification of structural patterns of RA and the consistent cognitive interpretations for the varied linguistic forms between Chinese and English. The study makes contribution to the study of Chinese RA in the following respects. Firstly, it uses corpus to collect data of RA in verbal placement to generalize the typical structural patterns of RA in Chinese and English. In this respect, features of RA are investigated on a new footing. Secondly, the contrast of the structural differences further proves that different values are embodied in different linguistic forms. Thirdly, the cognitive analysis of RA’s prototypical structure, the conversion from Chinese structures (R+A)+O and A+V into English structures R+(A+O) and A+N illustrate the underlying factors leading to the differences and conversions. Furthermore, both Chinese and English structures of RA are interpreted with consistent cognitive models, which strengthens the claim that linguistic forms correspond to language users’ conceptual processes. Lastly, since the various grammatical forms of RA in verbal placement and its different structural patterns between Chinese and English have always been a concern in Chinese and English language teaching and learning, this study can be enlightening for RA’s teaching and learning as well as Chinese-to-English translation.

The limitations of the study lie in the amount of data and the extent to which the structural patterns of RA are cognitively interpreted. The selected data are monosyllabic RAs instead of all RAs. Moreover, the parallel corpus used may not be completely representative for RA in this case. Additionally, the cognitive analysis is tentative instead of comprehensive due to the depth of the research. Further research is to be carried out to provide a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of features of RA and discrepancies in linguistic forms between Chinese and English.

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