Mixed viewpoints and FID in a parallel corpus:
A (radical) constructional perspective

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The present study investigates the (re-)presentation of perspectives, i.e. loci of responsibility for the content being conveyed, as a central component in human communication (e.g. Dancygier and Sweetser 2012; Verhagen 2005).

Previous studies on Speech and Thought Representation (STR) are usually based on in-depth investigations of phenomena in texts in a single language. However, given the radically conventional nature of linguistic structure (Croft 2001), it is to be expected that languages will vary in their strategies and tools for STR, and that stylistic categories like Direct Discourse, Indirect Discourse and Free Indirect Discourse (FID), are not universal and language independent notions. Following that, we need methodologies that allow cross-linguistic comparison and contrast (cf. Boas 2010), to deepen our insights into the possibilities of achieving mixed modes of STR in similar texts in different languages, and thus in the relation between general and language-specific aspects of mixing points of view.

We contend that precise and comprehensive analyses of a parallel corpus of (translated) literary texts of two (or more) languages can provide the basis for such work. We will illustrate this with analyses of STR, especially some 'FID-like' fragments, in a parallel corpus of English and Mandarin narratives (originals and translations in both languages).

In particular, in this paper we will focus on an English text in some detail and identify passages of FID, then find the corresponding Mandarin passages to see whether these also contain a mixture of perspectives, and what linguistic means are employed for that purpose. To that end, we will especially need translations that are recognized as doing justice to the English original; Y.R. Chao's classic translation of *Alice in Wonderland* has been a well-known and highly praised masterpiece, thus constituting a good contrastive pair with the original.

By contrasting Y.R. Chao's translation with its English original, we are able to discover two interesting facts. We first of all find use of vertical particles (*up* and *down* in English and *shang* 'up' and *xia* 'down' in Mandarin) to be a viewpoint management strategy, which has not been identified as such in previous studies. We furthermore find that constructions that seem cross-linguistically equivalent, such as vertical particles and deictics such as COME and GO, are essentially distributionally distinct in our corpus in terms of constructional profile and frequency.

Our study shows that the stylistic effect of mixed perspectives in Mandarin and English is indeed achieved with partly non-overlapping sets of linguistic strategies. We demonstrate in addition that the use of a parallel corpus provides powerful converging evidence for the radically language-specific nature of grammar: While functional equivalence may hold (in the sense that texts in different languages invite readers to construct mixing of perspectives), the cognitive and linguistic tools may differ in irreducible ways.