

A Cognitive Contrast of Adjective-verb Temporary Conversion between English and Chinese

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Temporary conversion refers to the phenomenon that a word functions as member of another word class instead of the traditional word class it belongs to. By adopting Construction Grammar approach, this paper researches into adjective-verb temporary conversion in English and Chinese. The majority of data is from COCA, COHA and CCL(Chinese Corpus of Peking University), and the additional examples are from the internet.

English adjective-verb temporary conversion involves cause-result transitive construction and inchoative intransitive construction, which are shown in example (1) and (2). Chinese adjective-verb temporary conversion involves four constructions. The first is similar to English cause-result transitive construction. The second is property-describing transitive construction, as is shown in example (3). Example (4) is an instance of anti-cause-result transitive construction. The last is attitude-describing construction, as is shown in example (5). After contrast, our findings are as follows: first, adjectives concerning adjective-verb temporary conversion in the two languages can participate in the same construction as well as different constructions, and the syntactical and semantic similarities and differences result from their participation in different and similar constructions; second, a single adjective can participate in different constructions in the two languages. Participation in similar constructions results from the effect of transitive construction while participation in different constructions is a result of language typology as well as diachronic development.

- (1) Sunrise still pinked the sky between the telephone wires on East Central.
 (2) His face purpled.
 (3) gongjin hong le lian .
 person name red asp face
 'Gongjin's face became red.'
 (4) Tamen buman bosì de tongzhi, fadong le wuzhuang qiyi.
 They not content Persia's rule, launch asp armed uprising
 'They are not content with the rule of Persia and launched an armed uprising.'
 (5) Shaowen tongzhi zhongcheng dang de shiye.
 Person name Comrade loyal Party's career
 'Comrade Shaowen is loyal to the Party's career.'

Key words: adjective; construction grammar; temporary conversion; verb; typology

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