

Typology of English and Mandarin: Taking spatial stationary events as examples

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Keywords: Spatial stationary events; Satellite-Framed Languages; Verb-Framed Languages; Hybrid-Framed Languages; complementary typology

Abstract: Talmy (2000b) has stated that typologically both English and Chinese belong to Satellite-Framed Languages (S-Languages). The author uses elicitation experiments to obtain the corpora, and explores the typological characteristics of the representation of spatial stationary events in the two languages. This study contributes to the analyses of the typological features related to the representation of stationary events in the two languages. In this thesis, the Talmyan statement of the S-Language typology of the two languages is revised. This study collects the linguistic data by elicitation experiments using the following two stimuli: Bow-Ped Series and PosB Series. By using these two series, 6 English native speakers and 26 Chinese native speakers are interviewed. And both quantitative and qualitative analyses are conducted to those elicited data. In the analysis, a new type of satellites is put forward, which are the constructional satellites, such as the locative construction of SbePreNP in the sentence *The cloth is in the basket*. By those satellites, some complex components of the stationary events, particularly Site or Path, can be integrated into a complete concept and represented as a single syntactic unit. Consequently, the typology of the representation of stationary events brings about a change to the overall typological picture of the two languages. It is found that: 1) There are two patterns of Path components represented in both languages. One pattern is to represent the complete path information in the locative constructional satellites, while the co-events such as manner or cause are simply represented by the main verbs, as in the English sentence *The cloth is lying across the top of the basket* and its Chinese equivalent *Buliao heng zai lanzi shang* (The cloth is lying on the basket). The other pattern is to represent part of the path information or the vector component in the English main verb *be* or in its Chinese equivalent *zai*, and the general path is expressed in the locative constructional satellites, as in the English sentence *The cloth is in the basket* or the Chinese sentence *Butiao zai lanzi li* (The cloth is in the basket); 2) When the main verbs in the English and the Chinese data of stationary events represent co-events, such patterns manifest the characteristics of S-languages, and when the main verbs in the English elicited sentences are the English copula *be* or in the Chinese elicited data are the Chinese copula *zai*, the patterns in both languages exhibit the features of a Hybrid-Framed typology of both V-Languages and S-Languages; 3) And similar to the Chinese main verb *zai*, the English main verb *be* also represents part of the spatial information of Path. Based on the investigation of the empirical data, the author arrives at the conclusion that either English or Mandarin Chinese demonstrates a complement typology of being both S-Framed and Hybrid-Framed, but not a plain S-Language typology as Talmy has stated. In the meantime, the integrating function of the constructional satellites in the typology of stationary events cannot be overlooked.

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