

*A Chinese-English Contrastive Study
Based on Universal Grammar*

基于乔姆斯基普遍语法的 汉英对比研究

陈丽萍 司联合 著



北京师范大学出版集团
BEIJING NORMAL UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING GROUP

安徽大学出版社

“安徽省2010年教育厅人文社会科学研究项目”最终成果（2010sk525）

*A Chinese-English Contrastive Study
Based on Universal Grammar*

基于乔姆斯基普遍语法的 汉英对比研究

陈丽萍 司联合 著



北京师范大学出版集团
BEIJING NORMAL UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING GROUP
安徽大学出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

基于乔姆斯基普遍语法的汉英对比研究/陈丽萍,司联合著.
—合肥:安徽大学出版社,2014.4

ISBN 978-7-5664-0725-2

I. ①基… II. ①陈… ②司… III. ①比较语法学—汉语、英语
IV. ①H1 ②H31

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2014)第 041790 号

基于乔姆斯基普遍语法的汉英对比研究

陈丽萍 司联合 著

出版发行:北京师范大学出版集团
安徽大学出版社
(合肥市肥西路3号 邮编 230039)
www.bnupg.com.cn
www.ahupress.com.cn

印 刷:中国科学技术大学印刷厂
经 销:全国新华书店
开 本:170mm×230mm
印 张:15.5
字 数:260千字
版 次:2014年4月第1版
印 次:2014年4月第1次印刷
定 价:32.00元
ISBN 978-7-5664-0725-2

策划编辑:钱来娥
责任编辑:钱来娥
责任校对:程中业

装帧设计:李 军
美术编辑:李 军
责任印制:赵明炎

版权所有 侵权必究

反盗版、侵权举报电话:0551-65106311

外埠邮购电话:0551-65107716

本书如有印装质量问题,请与印制管理部联系调换。

印制管理部电话:0551-65106311



Preface

To many researchers, the study of contrastive linguistics and the study of Universal Grammar (UG) by Chomsky are two separated areas with little relation for a long period. However, based on the real nature of UG which can explain the similarities among all human languages fully at the abstract level and differences on the surface, it can also be applied to the contrastive researches between any two human languages or more, revealing both similarities and differences. My way is a trying academic one of providing a detailed initiation into the contrastive study between Chinese and English in the framework of UG. The purpose, therefore, is not to supplant but to support the more academically oriented introductions to contrastive study between Chinese and English. It is based on the belief that UG is a new perspective for contrastive study.

This study is intended to be helpful to those teachers, students and researchers who are interested in the areas of UG, Chinese Grammar, English Grammar, language teaching (including Chinese and English), translation, lexicography and so on.

This study has four parts:

Chapter 1 is a brief review of contrastive study, especially the one between Chinese and English.

Chapter 2 is a general introduction to UG with its general ideas and concepts and based on that the author points out the feasibilities and significances of this study.

Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 provide detailed descriptions on the contrastive study between Chinese and English at lexical and syntactic levels respectively in the framework of UG, especially the principles and parameters theory and its modules. During the process of descriptions, the author tries to discover the real similarities and differences between Chinese and English with strong evidence.

Table of Contents



Chapter 1 A Brief Review on the Contrastive Study between Chinese and English 1

- 1.1 Contrastive Linguistics: Concept and Definition 1
- 1.2 Significance 3
- 1.3 History and Development 7
 - 1.3.1 The Appearance of Contrastive Linguistics 7
 - 1.3.2 Development and Maturity 8
 - 1.3.3 Contrastive Researches between Chinese and Foreign Languages in China 11
- 1.4 Classification 20
 - 1.4.1 Theoretical and Applied Contrastive Linguistics 20
 - 1.4.2 Microscopic and Macroscopic Contrastive Linguistics 22
 - 1.4.3 A Special Classification by Xu Yulong 23

1.5	Methods and Goals	25
1.5.1	Framework of Contrastive Researches	25
1.5.2	The Directions of Contrastive Researches	27
1.5.3	Differences or Similarities	28



Chapter 2 Universal Grammar (UG) 34

2.1	Universal Grammar	34
2.1.1	A Brief Introduction	34
2.1.2	General Ideas of Language by UG	39
2.2	Concepts of Principles and Parameters Theory (P&P Theory)	52
2.2.1	A Historical Review	52
2.2.2	The Framework	56
2.2.3	Movement	56
2.2.4	Modules of P&P Theory	58
2.3	The Chinese-English Contrastive Study Based on UG	75
2.3.1	The Feasibility of This Study	75
2.3.2	The Significance of This Study	75



Chapter 3 The Contrastive Study between Chinese and English Lexicons Based on UG

	77
3.1	Lexicon	77
3.1.1	Introduction	77
3.1.2	Subcategorization	78
3.1.3	S-selection and C-selection	79

3.1.4	Projection Principle	83
3.2	The Description of English Lexicon	86
3.2.1	Phrase Structure Rules	86
3.2.2	Verb Phrase	87
3.2.3	Noun Phrase	96
3.2.4	Adjective Phrase	101
3.2.5	Proposition Phrase	102
3.3	The Description of Chinese Lexicon	104
3.3.1	Verb Phrase	105
3.3.2	Noun Phrase	114
3.3.3	Adjective Phrase	126
3.3.4	Preposition Phrase	130
3.4	The Contrastive Study between Chinese and English Lexicons	135
3.4.1	CIP, QP and PartP	136
3.4.2	The Differences between Double-object Structures in Chinese and English	140
3.4.3	Multi-category Words in Chinese	142
3.4.4	Comparison on Phrase Structures of NPs between Chinese and English	144
3.4.5	Comparison on Phrase Structures of PPs between Chinese and English	145
3.4.6	Summary	146



Chapter 4 The Contrastive Study between Chinese and English Syntaxes Based on UG

	147
4.1	X-bar Theory	147
4.1.1	X-bar Theory	147

4.1.2	The Structure of Lexical Phrase	148
4.1.3	The Structure of Functional Phrase	155
4.1.4	Levels of Structural Representation and Movement	161
4.2	Government Theory	164
4.2.1	C-command	164
4.2.2	Government	166
4.3	θ -Theory	169
4.3.1	θ -Criterion and Full Interpretation	169
4.3.2	θ -Theory	171
4.3.3	Grammatical Functions	173
4.3.4	Further Types of Functional Phrase	182
4.4	Case Theory	185
4.4.1	Case Theory	185
4.4.2	The Case Filter	188
4.4.3	Visibility Hypothesis	191
4.5	Move α	192
4.5.1	NP-movement	193
4.5.2	Wh-movement	197
4.6	Binding Theory	199
4.6.1	Binding Theory	199
4.6.2	Binding Theory and Empty Categories	202
4.7	Bounding Theory	206
4.7.1	Bounding	207
4.7.2	Proper Government	209
4.7.3	Barriers	210
4.8	Control Theory	214
4.8.1	Control Structures	214
4.8.2	PRO and Control Theory	216

4.9	Contrastive Studies between Chinese and English	218
4.9.1	The Head Parameter	219
4.9.2	Movement	221
4.9.3	Parameters of Case Theory	226
4.9.4	The Pro-drop (Null Subject) Parameter	226
4.9.5	Functional Categories	228
4.9.6	AGR ₀ Parameters	230
4.9.7	Summary	231



References	233
-------------------	-----

Chapter



A Brief Review on the Contrastive Study between Chinese and English

1.1 Contrastive Linguistics: Concept and Definition

As a branch of linguistics, contrastive linguistics can also be called contrastive analysis, contrastive study, contrastive grammar, comparative descriptive linguistics, or linguistic confrontation, and the concept of it was firstly proposed by American anthropological linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf. He claimed that contrastive linguistics aims at the study on the significant differences of grammar, logics and the common analysis of experience among different languages. (Whorf, 1941a:240) As a matter of fact, the first work on contrastive linguistics titled “The Relationship between Comparative Linguistic Research and Different Stages of Language Development”(1820) was written by the German scholar Humboldt, in which Humboldt had a description on a series of basic theoretic issues on contrastive research and gave the world first definition for contrastive linguistics. Absolutely, Humboldt is the founder of contrastive linguistics. (Pan Wenguo, 2006) From the very beginning of contrastive linguistics, many scholars and linguists, home and abroad, have given different definitions to it and many of them are of great significance to some degree.

In order to be an independent discipline with its own goals and objectives, comparative linguistic research has to be used to discuss

language, the development of nations and the progress by human beings deeply and continuously. (Humboldt, 1820:1)

Contrastive linguistics aims at the study on the significant differences of grammar, logics and the common analysis of experience among different languages. (Whorf, 1941a:240)

Contrastive analysis is a kind of linguistic method, which discovers both synchronic and diachronic values of language categories by contrastive, not comparative studies between two languages based on the admission of the comparability. (James, 1980:3)

Contrastive linguistics is a branch of linguistics, of which the task is to carry out a synchronic contrastive research between two or more languages, describing similarities and differences between them, especially differences and applying research findings to other relative fields. (Xu Yulong, 2010:3)

Chinese-English contrastive study is a branch of linguistics, which has characteristics of both theoretic and applied linguistics, of which the task is to carry out a contrastive research between Chinese and English both synchronically and diachronically, describing and explaining similarities and differences between them and applying research findings to other related fields. (Yang Zijian, 2004:6-7)

Contrastive linguistics is a branch of linguistics which studies two or more languages synchronically, with the aim of discovering their differences and similarities (especially the former) and applying these findings to related areas of study. (Ke Ping, 2008: 9)

Pan Wenguo gathered more than sixty definitions for contrastive linguistics from different researches and concluded a more comprehensive and detailed one:

Contrastive linguistics is a linguistic discipline oriented by philosophical linguistic with two levels of both theoretic and applied researches,

which aims to the contrastive studies between two or more languages or dialects, describing similarities and differences, especially differences and explaining them from the aspect of human languages and the relationship between them and mental processing. The goal of contrastive linguistics is the attribution to communication and understanding among different cultures and civilizations and to the harmonious coexistence of human beings. (Pan Wenguo, 2006: 252-253)

From the definitions of contrastive linguistics mentioned above, we can reach the following points.

① For some researchers (such as Humboldt, Whorf and Pan), contrastive linguistics is in nature a science of language of its own and is closely related to the nature of human beings and national spirits. Different languages reflect different human natures.

② For other researchers (such as James, Xu, Yang and Ke), contrastive linguistics is rather a method, discovering the similarities and differences between two or more languages and the findings of which can also be applied to related fields.

③ Contrastive linguistics is a branch of linguistics and is of great significance. The most significant function of it is to find the differences between two languages or more.

1.2 Significance

Generally speaking, the significance of contrastive linguistics can be considered from two aspects, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, contrastive linguistics is a branch of linguistics and is a necessary part of general linguistics in the whole world. Taking the contrastive researches between Chinese and English as an example, the research findings between Chinese and English can facilitate the researches on both Chinese and English. Practically, the results of contrastive linguistics, especially

between Chinese and English, can be applied to related fields, such as English teaching, teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, cultural communication between China and foreign countries, translation and lexicography.

Pan Wenguo (2006: 67-77) concluded the theoretical significance of contrastive linguistics in three points.

① The significance of contrastive researches between Chinese and foreign languages is firstly the irreplaceable typological meaning. When proposing the term of contrastive linguistics, Whorf (1941a: 240) also emphasized that the objects of contrastive researches are events far-off with the aim to the discovery of relationship between “language and thinking” and “the significant differences of grammar, logics and the common analysis of experience among different languages”. Theoretically, the more distant the objects are, the more significant the contrastive researches could be. Thus, the contrastive researches between European languages and Chinese, which are far away from each other, can meet the goals of Whorf most easily and then test his theory “Linguistic Relativity”.

② Secondly, the contrastive researches between Chinese and foreign languages are on their own tests of theories of general linguistics. Chinese is a language with complete and mature writing and is of special significance among different human languages. There existed a “Chinese research tradition” which stood up to the “European linguistic research tradition” in the past more than 2000 years due to the fact that the research method of Chinese was always different from that of European languages until the late 1990s. What Chinese can provide for general linguistics is not only a most special and most long-standing language sample with most abundant cultures, which is most distant from European languages, but also the only different linguistic research tradition from that of European languages in the world.

③ Thirdly, the contrastive researches between China and foreign

languages are windows for talking between Chinese and European linguistics. In this part, Pan put researchers into nine groups according to their different attitudes to contrastive researches between Chinese and foreign languages, among which Pan claimed that the views of four groups should be noticed and paid attention to. The first group has researchers such as Humboldt and Sapir who have enough knowledge of Chinese with deep researches on it and have a tendency to study Chinese as a special sample. The second group has researchers called “western sinologists” like Karlgren and Maspero who are very knowledgeable on Chinese and even have a better study on Chinese than some Chinese researchers. The third group has scholars who have a deep understanding of both Chinese and linguistic researches worldwide and many of them have become famous linguists in China since the first half of the 20th century such as Zhao Yuanren, Wang Li and Lü Shuxiang. The only aim of their researches is to get the perfect combination of the western linguistic theories and Chinese linguistic practice. The last group has developed into the new academic circles in the last decade or so on the contrastive researches between Chinese and foreign languages. They can continuously absorb the new theories from western countries while bettering their own understanding of Chinese without stopping. In order to develop and enrich the content of general linguistics and make it the real wealth of human beings, they make great efforts to conclude the principles of Chinese by the contrastive researches between Chinese and western languages, especially English.

Among the four groups, the last one is a new group and special attention should be paid on it. It is the most proper window for talking between Chinese and foreign linguists and this new power is also closely related to the development of contrastive linguistics in China.

König (cited by Xu Yulong, 2010: 327) proposed that there are three important functions of contrastive linguistics.

① The contrastive researches between different languages can help

to discover the linguistic factors which can not be found by researches on single language and then can help to improve the traditional research models on L1 grammar.

② Researchers can be enlightened by contrastive researches and then analyze a single language from a different aspect.

③ The contrastive studies between different languages have at least some important implications and applied significance for foreign language teaching and translation.

In Xu Gaoyu's review (2006: 24), the significance of contrastive linguistics is more detailed and more specific. Xu listed three important views respectively by Zhao Shikai, Luo Qihua and Fang Mengzhi, of whom the views have typical meanings.

① Proposed by Zhao Shikai (1979), the theoretical significance of contrastive linguistics lies in the better understanding of language structures and further understanding of language natures by contrastive studies between the structures of two languages. Also, contrastive linguistics would provide a new method for the analysis of language structures and the results of it can be applied in the fields of foreign language teaching, translation (including machine translation), the research of typology, the research of society, history, culture and so on.

② Luo Qihua (1988) claimed that contrastive analysis would "not only contribute to the teaching and translation of non-native languages, but also to the deep studies of native and non-native languages. It can provide rich information for the comprehensive researches on human languages and make a difference to the general development of linguistic science".

③ Fang Mengzhi (1983) concluded three points of the significance of contrastive researches between Chinese and foreign languages: it will be beneficial to further study on Chinese; it will be beneficial to the adoption of lively expressions and fresh words from foreign languages; it will be beneficial to the purity of our mother tongue, avoiding confusion.

In a word, contrastive linguistics is of great significance both theoretically and practically, especially the contrastive researches between Chinese and foreign languages, on which we should put more emphasis and make greater efforts.

1.3 History and Development

1.3.1 The Appearance of Contrastive Linguistics

Contrastive linguistics originated from comparative linguistics but is different from it, which was mentioned by Whorf in his article “Language and Logics”.

“Comparative linguistics” refers to the results of the researches dividing human languages into individual language families coming from single ancestor and describing every state of their development and these researches have already made great achievements. What’s more important is that these researches would produce new methods, which can be titled “contrastive linguistics” with the aim of the studies on significant differences of grammar, logics and the common analysis of experience among different languages. (Whorf, 1941a: 240)

From the definitions of comparative linguistics and contrastive linguistics, we can see that contrastive linguistics originated from comparative linguistics, but there still exist some differences between them. Pan Wenguo (2010: 7-9) pointed out that there are three main differences between comparative linguistics and contrastive linguistics. Firstly, they differ in their researching goals. In comparative linguistics, as a basic way, “comparison” serves to discover the originations of languages. The main purpose of comparative linguistics is to find the similarities of different languages, to reconstruct original languages and to set up language