中动结构的认知阐释

Middle Constructions
in Chinese and West-Germanic Languages:
Toward a Unified Cognitive Account

◎何文忠　著

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序

"中动"最初是指古希腊语中动词的一种形式,用来表示介乎"主动"和"被动"之间的一种语态,表达广义的反身意义,即动词所示的行为作用与主语本身,或出于主语自身的利益。后来,这一术语用来指其他语言中的反身动词形式。而且还用于指不及物构式中具有反身意义的动词,如I shaved 中的shaved,以及与主语具有类似被动关系的不及物动词,如This stone cuts easily 中的cuts。(Matthews 1997: 226)

从上述 Matthews 对中动的简单描述来看,中动既可以指动词的一种形态变化类别,即中动形式;又可以指动词的一个语义类别,即中动动词,此类动词用于不及物构式中,表达反身或被动意义。而将两者联系在一起的是语义,即中动语义,也就是说两者都用于表达广义的反身意义。

在本书中,何文忠博士正是紧紧抓住中动语义,将其作为对比描述的出发点和参照点,对汉语和西日耳曼(特别是英语)中的中动构式进行了较为详尽的对比研究,并采用认知语法理论,对中动构式的句法特征和制约条件作出了统一的阐释。作为一项对比研究,这是一种明智的选择,因为在汉语中没有严格意义上的形态变化,我们很难进行系统的基于形态基础上的中动构式对比研究。

我觉得,本书的贡献主要体现在如下三大方面。

首先,本书对中动构式下了一个具体的工作定义,明确了研究的对象。

在过去的二、三十年中,虽然有不少研究者对中动构式进行过研究,但几乎从未对中动构式下过严格的定义。其结果是,研究所得出的结论,要么是由于例证仅局限于某一类型的中动构式而欠周全,要么是由于研究对象不完全相同而无法进行比较和验证。

　　本书对中动构式所下的定义是：中动构式是指这样一种具有[NP
V (RPW) Adv]构型的构式，其中的谓词以简单形态（英语中的一般
现在时，汉语中谓词后不能出现"了"、"过"等体助词）的主动式出
现，其主语表示一个被动参与者，通常含有一个副词或副词性短语作
为动词补足语，在某些语言（如德语）中，可以出现一个弱化的反身
代词（RPW）。

　　本书对中动语义的定义为：中动构式用于表达一个被动参与者由
于其某种内在或赋予的特性，在促使动词表达的事件以副词或副词性
短语表达的方式发生的过程中所起的积极作用。中动是一种恒时性述
谓，描述的并不是实际事件的发生，而是虚拟事件的特征。

　　根据上述定义，上述Matthews的例句 I shaved 并不是一句中动
句，因为该句既不符合中动构式，又不表达中动语义。

　　其次，本书在国内首次尝试采用认知语法理论框架，对中动构式
和中动语义特征作出了统一的阐释。这也是本书所做的主要工作。

　　作者认为，主动、被动和中动表达不同的认知意图，描述同一事
件的不同侧面。选用中动构式的认知动因是凸显被动参与者对事件发
生所起的积极作用，因而在中动构式中，该被动参与者被选择为小句
的射体（即主语），而谓语采用主动态。由于中动语义描述的是事件可
能会发生的一般特征，而非某一具体事件，因而中动构式中的动词选
用一般现在时。

　　据此，作者提出了合法的中动句的两个制约条件：一是体式条件，
二是责任条件。体式条件规定，在 Vendler (1967)提出的四类具有不
同体貌特点的动词中，只有活动（activity）和达成（accomplishment）
类动词才能出现在中动构式中，实现（achievement）和状态（state）
类动词不能出现在中动构式中。所以，This stone cuts easily 和 The
book reads easily 是合法的中动句，但 *This stone notices easily 和
*The book owns easily 不是合法的中动句。这是因为，实现和状态类
动词属于 Langacker 所说的完成体动词，在表述具体事件发生时不能
用一般现在时（如 *He cuts this stone right now），但中动构式中的

一般现在时将该类动词非完成体化，使此类动词从表达在某一时段内发生的事件转变为表达恒时性的事件特征。而实现和状态类动词本身已经是非完成体动词，不能再非完成体化。

责任条件规定，中动构式中的主语必须具有某种内在或赋予的特性，是动词表达的事件以副词或副词性短语所描述的特定方式发生成为可能。因此，This kind of book sells easily 是一句很容易接受的中动句，而 This kind of book buys easily 却不太容易接受。这是因为，我们很容易想象某一类书具有某种迎合读者的特性或卖点，因而卖起来很容易；而较难想象这种卖点会使读者买起来容易。当然，如果这类书是电子版书，那么这种特性确实可以使读者买起来比较容易，不出门就可以从网上下载。因而在这样的语境中，此句可以成为一个合法的中动句。

这两个制约条件决定了中动构式和中动语义的一些主要和次要特征，使这些特征得到了统一的解释。因此，作者的研究显示，虽然 Langacker 在阐述认知语法基础的两卷本著作（1987，1991）中并未直接提到中动构式，但是认知语法的基本原理可以对中动构式作出合理的解释。

最后，本书通过对比研究，对一些语言现象提出了一些新的见解。

例如，对于英语中动构式中的动词为何只能以一般现在时的形式出现这个问题，以前没有人认真研究和讨论过。作者认为，在英语中动构式中，动词采用一般现在时的动因是将原本通常用于表达在某一时段内所发生事件的动词，转变为表达某种恒时性的事件特征，使整个中动构式表述某种类属性。

又如，以前的一些研究者认为，汉语动词后的"起来"可以表示：1）向上的方向（如"站起来"），2）起始（如"他伤心得哭起来了"），3）完成（如"群众发动起来了"）。作者通过对汉语中动构式的研究认为，中动构式中的"起来"（如"这篇文章翻译起来很容易"）并不表达上述三种意义中的任何一种，而是一个"泛时性标记词"，其作用有些类似于英语中的一般现在时，用于降低动词表达的事件性，赋予动词某种泛时性的特征。

　　本书对中动构式的研究和阐释是在认知语法的总体理论框架中做出的。袁毓林（1998: 368）在评价功能主义研究取向时指出："功能主义对语法结构的解释往往是比较透彻、并且是比较直观的。问题是要做一番提存、求精和概括的工作，不能就事论事、随文释义。努力找出几个最重要的、可以控制的因素，看看它们对语言结构有些什么样的影响。"我觉得，袁先生的这一评价同样也适用于认知语法。本书在"提存、求精和概括"方面做了一些工作，也努力找出了影响中动结构的一些要素。当然，基于这些要素对中动构式的解释是否符合语言事实，是否周全和具有概括力，还需作进一步的研究和验证。

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中 文 摘 要

本论文对于西日耳曼语和汉语中的中动结构进行了全面的描述，并从认知的角度对中动结构的形成、构句制约及其语义、句法特征进行了统一的阐释。

本论文主要做了以下四个方面的工作。

首先，本文确立了汉语非施事主语"起来"结构的中动地位，并对其语义、句法特征进行了描述和分析。

在过去的 25 年中，中动结构一直是国外语言学界研究的一个热点问题，其中尤以对欧洲语言的研究最为深入，现有的研究主要是在生成语法框架内进行的。研究表明中动语义具有跨语言普遍性。相比之下，汉语中动研究却相对滞后。通过用广为接受的中动语义、句法标准来检验汉语非施事主语起来句[NP V 起来 Adj]，我们发现这一结构体现了所有的中动语义，具有跟西日耳曼语中动结构[NP V Adv]相同的语义特征和相似的句法表征。据此我们确立了其中动地位，这一结构跟西日耳曼语中动结构同属阿克马和舒莱默所归纳的类型一中动结构。相对于西日耳曼语的中动结构，汉语中动结构能产性更高，事件的各种被动参与者甚至场景等都可以成为汉语中动结构的主语。

其次本文证明了目前流行的对中动结构的分析，如句法说和词汇说，都存在较大问题，因而是不可行的。

通过对于典型及非典型中动结构的分析，我们发现目前流行的对于中动结构的解释大都是建构于对中动结构的不全面把握之上，没有深入分析中动结构的认知动因以及中动语义对于中动结构的决定作用，因而无法解释中动结构所体现出来的种种语义及句法特征，更无法解释这些特征的根源及其相互关系。尤其对于生成语法下的移位说而言，它很难解释为什么有的动词可以，而另一些动词却不可以构成中动结构，也不能很好解释中动构句中的各种制约。许多合法的中动结构无法以此种移位方式生成，大量语料无法得到合理解释。该理论还面临许多其他无法摆脱的困境。对于中动结构的动因及本质的不准确把握

还导致必须提出很多条件来规范中动结构的三个可见成分甚至另一个不可见成分，而这些条件又往往顾此失彼、相互重叠。同时忽略语义和语用因素也使得一些学者把在某一语境下构成不合法中动结构的动词完全排除在中动构句之外。再者，各种不同的句式往往被赋予不同的生成机制，其间的内在联系得不到很好的解释，并使得语法机制非常的复杂。

第三，本文将认知语法理论运用于中动研究，对中动结构的方方面面进行了统一的解释。

在认知语法框架内，中动结构的各个方面都可以得到有机统一的解释。我们认为中动结构的认知动因是弱化事件主动参与者（即施事）的作用，而凸显被动参与者对于事件的发生所发挥的积极作用。因此该被动参与者处于认知突显地位，该事件基体的中动侧面因而选择此被动参与者为子句射体，即主语，并且选择主动态谓语形式，而事件的主动参与者不被编码进此侧面而仅存于基体中，因此，它虽没有句法地位我们却能感觉到中动结构蕴含一个施事。这样，中动结构不允许像被动结构中"被……"这样的短语出现，以及中动结构中的副词或者形容词不能具有自主性这两个问题都可以得到合理解释。因为这样一来，又会突显施事的作用，这跟中动结构的意图是不相符的。从另一方面来看，一个被动参与者要在一个事件中凸显出来，并被选择为一个主动态句子的射体，它就必须是能对事件的发生发挥至关重要的甚至是决定性的作用，所以中动构句必须满足责任条件，即该被动参与者在说话人看来由于某种内在特征而使得事件可以以某种方式发生或使得事件具有某种特性。

另一方面，中动语义决定了中动结构表述的是一种恒时性特征，不以时间为转移。因此中动结构虽然建构于事件动词之上，却不描述具体事件，而是概括虚拟事件所体现出来的特征。而虚拟事件跟具体时间无关，故而中动结构选择（一般）现在时。由于兰盖克所说的认知局限及事件持续性两方面的问题，现在时不能表述现在正在发生的动作，而是用来表述类属性，普遍真理，习惯等。这样，中动结构具有非事件性以及具有类属性特征也就不足为奇，这二者是紧密相关的。同时，主动参与者没有进入侧面，主语由不具有控制力的被动参与者

充当，以及结构中的副词这三方面的因素都大大弱化了谓语的事件性，动词的及物性降低，事件被转化成关系或状态。可以说中动构句是一种把事件转化为关系或状态的过程，中动结构对于动词的选择限制也就顺理成章。

本论文认为要制约中动构句的合法性，只需要两个条件，一个是体式条件，它提供中动构句的可能性，另一个是责任条件，它提供中动构句的必要性，它们共同作用。以往文献中提出的各种条件基本上都可以置于这两个条件的解释之下。理论上事件过程的所有被动参与者甚至场景只要满足这两个条件就可以构成合法的中动句，然而中动句的可接受性还要受到语义和语用因素的约束，这样构成的句子可能因为语义荒诞或语用怪异而不被接受，但并非是它们结构上不合法。在某一语境中不被接受的句子一旦置于合适的语境之中，其可接受性便不成问题。本文中的一些语料充分说明了这一点。英语中动构句能产性较低，在德语、荷兰语和汉语中完全可以接受的中动结构其对应的英语中动结构不一定能被接受。

本文的分析表明中动的句法结构和它所要表达的语义是相符的，其形成是为满足中动语义表达意图而对句法结构和语法标记进行选择的结果。中动的结构本身具有很深刻的认知动因，并因此而约定俗成和语法化，而不是任意的。在约定俗成之后，这一结构本身就具有了一种结构语义。

在本认知解释中，各种不同的句法结构（如主动、被动、中动、作格、致使结构等）能被给予一揽子的解释，而不需要复杂的句法操作和特别的假设。中动和主动各自表达不同的认知意图，同属于同一基准事件的不同侧面，说话人根据对所感知事件的判断决定勾勒哪些参与者及选择哪个参与者为子句射体，而绝非中动结构是由主动结构通过移位这样的句法操作派生而来的。本文的分析也表明许多中动结构并没有对应的主动形式。同一事件基体可以有许多不同的认知侧面，同一事件侧面也可以选择不同的射体，射体的选择取决于事件参与者的认知显要性。

第四，本文确立了汉语难易结构跟英语难易结构的对等地位。

本论文通过用英语难易结构来检验汉语难易结构，证明汉语难易

结构和英语难易结构表达相同的语义并具有相似的语法结构。在此基础上，本文对英汉中动结构和难易结构之间的关系进行了探讨。

微观而言，本研究能为中动的普遍性提供进一步的证据，帮助我们了解中动的共性，也有利于了解各语言中动的个性；宏观而言，也有助于我们了解语义与句法结构之间的关系，进一步证明句法规则是现实关系在句法中的投影，任何句法结构都不是任意的而是有理据的。

关键词：中动结构　认知　虚拟现实　汉语　西日耳曼语

Abstract

This dissertation makes a relatively comprehensive description of the middle constructions in three West-Germanic languages and Chinese, and on the basis of that provides a unified cognitive account of the middle formation, the restrictions middle formation is subject to, and the syntactic and semantic features middles display.

The work I did in this thesis is made up of four parts.

First, the status of Chinese non-agent subject *qilai* construction as middle construction in Chinese is established.

The middle construction has been a hot topic abroad during the past quarter of a century and is studied extensively in a number of European languages. It is claimed that middle semantics is universal. In contrast, the study has just begun in Chinese. The checking of the data of the Chinese *qilai* constructions with a non-agent subject plus verb in simple active morphology and an adjective against the unanimously agreed criteria for middles in West Germanic languages, English in particular, shows that Chinese *qilai* constructions realize all facets of middle semantics and exhibit the same semantic properties and similar syntactic representations of the middles in West Germanic languages. The middle status of such *qilai* constructions is established, which belong to Type 1 middle construction like those in West Germanic languages. Compared with the middles in West Germanic languages, the middle construction is far more productive in Chinese. Various passive participants of event and even settings can be middle subject.

Second, the implausibility of the prevailing accounts of middles in the generative framework is illustrated.

Through a detailed analysis of both typical and atypical middles,

it is found that the now prevailing accounts of middles were mostly constructed on the inadequate understanding of middles, therefore are untenable. They did not probe into the cognitive motivation behind middles and did not realize the decisive role of middle semantics on the syntactic structure, but merely focused on the superficial phenomena such as syntactic representations. Consequently, they could not reasonably explain why middles display such unique syntactic and semantic features, let alone the origins of such features and their correlations. The movement approach in the generative syntax framework in particular, could not explain why some verbs are whereas others are not eligible for middle formation. Neither could it account for the restrictions on middle formation. A lot of actually acceptable middles could not be formed in this manner and a lot of data were left unaccounted for. This approach is also in face of lots of other dilemmas. The inadequate understanding of the nature and motivation of middles also led linguists to put various conditions on middle formation to regulate the three visible elements and even the invisible one in middles, which actually overlap to a great extent and often cover only a part of the data. Also the neglecting of semantic and pragmatic factors led them to completely exclude verbs which form unacceptable middles in a certain context. Besides, the obviously closely related constructions were thought to be formed in different manners. Their correlations could not be well explained and the syntactic mechanism became even more complicated.

Third, and most important of all, middles were analyzed from cognitive approach and all facets of middles were given a unified account.

We argue the motivation of middle construction is to deemphasize the role of the active participant and highlight the active role a passive participant can play in the outcome of virtual

events. Therefore, this passive participant is perceptually prominent. It is then selected as the clausal trajector in the middle profile of the event base and at the same time a predicate in active morphology is selected because an active angle can only be construed in active structure. The active participant is not profiled and left unspecified; however, it exists in the base. That is why middles imply an agent though it is syntactically inert. Thus, the prohibition of the presence of a *by*-phrase and the selectional restriction on adverb or adjective in middles can be well accounted for. The presence of an agent and the volitional adverb or adjective would bring the deemphasized agent back into focus, which obviously runs counter to the cognitive motivation of middles. On the other hand, for a passive participant to stand out to be salient, and be selected as trajector of an active predicate, it must be able to play an important and even decisive role. Therefore the responsibility condition must be satisfied, namely in the speaker's point of view, this passive participant is largely responsible for the outcome of the event in a specific manner or the resultant quality of event process.

The middle semantics determines the nature of middle construction as individual level predicates, which are time-irrelevant. Therefore, though middles are formed out of event verbs, they do not portray actual occurrences of events, which are necessarily time-bound, but quantify over properties of virtual events. Virtual events are not time-bound; therefore middles select present tense (simple present tense in English). Due to the epistemic and durational problems as Langacker argues, present tense can not portray real present time events, but is used to express generics, habituals and timeless truth. The non-eventiveness and genericity of middles can then be naturally and reasonably accounted for. These two features are closely interwoven. And the unprofiled agent, the passive participant subject which lacks [control] feature, and the adverb work together to