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英汉肤觉形容词的认知语义研究

SKIN-SENSE ADJECTIVES IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE: A COGNITIVE SEMANTIC PERSPECTIVE

彭懿 著

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总序

《论语》开篇云："学而时习之，不亦乐乎？"《朱子语类》写道："读书，放宽著心，道理自会出来。若忧愁迫切，道理终无缘得出来。"以这两位先哲的名言作对照，我校国家重点学科英语语言文学的全体团队人员在岳麓山的美丽风景下，"放宽著心"，满腔热情地将自己教学与科研的体会变成学术成果，这无疑是件令人愉悦的事。

学者在希腊语中的意思即"忙碌的闲人"，他们在闲暇中忙碌自己的思想与智慧。《清静经》曰："人能常清静，天地悉皆归"，雷震诗云："草满池塘水满坡，山衔落日浸寒漪。牧童归去横牛背，短笛无腔信口吹。"黄昏向晚，牧童横身牛背，信口吹笛，好一幅诗意盎然的乡村图景！若学人能像牧童那般信自悠闲，定能写出像样的作品。可惜，随着工业化的脚步，世人包括学者越来越忙碌，闲暇的思考与阅读于他们弥足珍贵。亚里士多德曾说："我们工作是为了休闲"，此话对今天"能量崇拜以及行动狂热"（美国批评家白璧德语）的大学似乎成了日行渐远的理想。故美国哲人爱默生在美国现代化的进程中感叹说："迄今为止，我们的周年庆典仅仅是一种友善的象征而已，它表明我们这个民族虽然过分忙碌，无暇欣赏文艺，却仍然保留着对文艺的爱好。尽管如此，这个节日也是值得我们珍惜的，因为它说明文艺爱好是一种无法消除的本能。"这些话对当今的中国学术界以及体制化的大学具有一定的反省作用。本套丛书的出版得到了国家重点学科和"211 工程"重点学科的资助，让处于浮躁时代与重压状态的学人免于奔波与忙碌之苦，他们得以专心自己的创作与研究。他们虽不能像牧童那般悠闲吹笛，但至少在整个写作与出版过程中能放宽心境，写出他们自己满意的作品。

曾国藩论读书之道时说："涵泳二字，最不易识，余尝以意测之，曰：涵者，如春雨之润花，如清渠之溉稻。雨之润花，过小则难透，过大则离披，适中则涵濡而滋液；清渠之溉稻，过小则枯槁，过多则伤涝，适中则涵养而兴。泳者，如鱼之游水，如人之濯足。程子谓鱼跃于渊，活泼泼地；庄子言濠梁观鱼，安知非乐？此鱼水之快也。左太冲有'濯

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足万里流’之句，苏子瞻有夜卧濯足诗，有浴罢诗，亦人性乐水者之一快也。善读书者，须视书如水，而视此心如花如稻如鱼如濯足，则涵泳二字，庶可得之于意言之表。”学者能达到涵泳境界需要长期积累，还需要道德学问的气象，此方面我校开拓者钱基博、钱钟书堪为楷模。1938年日军大举入侵我中华内陆腹地，为培养师资与抗战军政干部，国民政府遂于湖南蓝田创立国立师范学院，是为我校前身。当时一批大学者云集我校，其中钱基博、钱钟书父子最引人注目。钱基博为我校中文系首任系主任，他有感于湖湘先贤“独立自由之思想，有坚强不磨之志节”，在国师写出《近百年湖南学风》一书，以百年变化寄托历史兴亡，唤起国人抗敌斗志。钱钟书为我校外文系首任系主任，他在湘西穷乡僻壤，孤独艰辛，诚如所言“如危幕之燕巢，同枯槐之蚁聚。”但他处乱不惊，沉潜学问，构思小说《围城》，并写出大半《谈艺录》。钱氏父子在我校开创之初的垂范影响着一代又一代湖南师大人。这套丛书秉承这种涵泳精神的灵光。两位钱先生的境界，我们虽难以企及，但值得我们学习与效法，如《史记》所云：“虽不能至，然心向往之。”

《学记》写道：“是故学然后知不足，教然后知困。知不足，然后能自反也。知困，然后能自强也。故曰教学相长也。《兑命》曰：‘学学半’其此之谓乎!”，该丛书涵盖英美文学、比较文学、文化研究、翻译理论与实践、语言学、英语教学等诸多领域，它们大多是教与学过程中诞生的成果，有的是各方向学科带头人多年积累的成果，有的是教师在教学实践中新的体会，有的是青年教师的博士论文扩充的论著。尽管各自研究的题目不同，但都跟教与学相关，且教与学相长，并永无涯也，该丛书既是科研成果的汇总，又是相互的永远激励。故该丛书命名为“学学半”。

是为序。

蒋洪新

于长沙岳麓山，二〇〇九年六月

Preface

Adjectives both in English and Chinese are a major lexical class. However, there are still some linguists (Zhao 1968, Lü 1979, Li & Thompson 1981) who, from biased perspectives, do not agree to treat adjectives in Chinese as an independent lexical class. We maintain that, adjectives in English and Chinese, as a principal type of words, are supposed to be taken as a research focus in linguistics and that skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese should naturally be given much attention as well.

With a survey of earlier studies, including research of adjectives in English and Chinese, linguistic studies more or less in relation to skin sensations and other human experiences, as well as non-linguistic analyses of skin sensations, we find those studies are manifestly inadequate in the following respects: 1. Research of adjectives, especially semantics of adjectives in English and Chinese, is less carried out in linguistics than that of prepositions and verbs. 2. At present, chiefly four semantic studies are to some extent related to skin-sense adjectives, including Balmas's investigation of tactile metaphors in English (2000), Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Rakhilina's semantic study of temperature adjectives in Russian and Swedish (2006), Shindo's study focused on semantic extensions of sensory adjectives (2009), and Rakova's research of polysemy regarding adjectives, in particular, synaesthetic adjectives (2003). Notwithstanding, cognitive semantics of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese from a cross-linguistic perspective has never been studied. 3. Previous cognitive semantic research in respect of human experiences is mainly directed towards areas of space (Brugman 1981, 1983; Talmy 1983), emotions (King 1989, Kövecses 1990), motions (Matsumoto 1996), smell (Ibarretxe-Antuñano 1999), and dimension (Vogel 2004). Moreover, most of those studies are concerned with lexical classes such as prepositions and verbs instead of adjectives.

The skin-sense adjective construed in this study is one type of the adjective, describing skin sensations and reflecting relevant skin-sense experiences. Skin sensations are those sensations stemming from the skin provoked by mechanical, chemical or other types of stimuli, primarily including the sense of temperature, touch, and pain. Accordingly, the skin-sense experience is the experience arising from human skin sensations.

We apply the prototype theory of categorization and the theory of idealized cognitive models in cognitive linguistics to synchronic semantic analyses and investigation of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese, and, meanwhile, to semantic comparative research of such adjectives from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives, attempting to reveal pertinent semantic and grammatical regularities of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese.

The prototype theory of categorization mainly entails the following four main points: 1. Category is not defined by a set of sufficient and necessary conditions or features. 2. Category members are not discrete and independent from each other. Instead, the members form a continuum and are interrelated by family resemblances. 3. The boundaries of a category tend to be fuzzy rather than clear. 4. Members of a category do not have equal status, acting as either prototypical or non-prototypical members of the category. The theory of idealized cognitive models is a further improvement on the prototype theory in cognitive linguistics. Such a theory, as stated by Lakoff (1987: 68), is derived from Fillmore's frame semantics, Lakoff & Johnson's theory of metaphor and metonymy, Langacker's cognitive grammar, and Fauconnier's theory of mental spaces. In terms of Lakoff's arguments (1987: 113-114, 154), we treat idealized cognitive models in this study as four kinds of cognitive structures acting as parts of the conceptual system, principally including image schematic models, propositional models, metaphoric models, and metonymic models.

We for the most part make use of the qualitative method in the present study. From a large number of reference materials, we obtain abundant linguistic data for the research and adopt the qualitative method to reveal relevant semantic and grammatical regularities of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese. We, for example, select skin-sense adjectives in English

and Chinese, collect and generalize basic lexical concepts, and disclose relevant cognitive models according to English and Chinese dictionaries such as *Oxford English Dictionary* and *Newly Adapted Dictionary of Chinese Adjectives*; examine semantics of the selected skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese from a synchronic perspective; integrate both synchronic and diachronic perspectives to make semantic comparisons of pertinent skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese. Meanwhile, on the basis of the Corpus of Contemporary American English, Zhu's Corpus of Chinese, and the Online Chinese Corpus, we search out relevant practical combinations of skin-sense adjectives and nouns in English and Chinese, and bring forward corresponding cognitive models.

Our study is comprised of three major parts: synchronic semantic analyses of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese, synchronic semantic comparisons of skin-sense adjectives between English and Chinese, and diachronic semantic comparisons of skin-sense adjectives between English and Chinese.

The synchronic semantic survey is chiefly directed towards eight prototypical skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese – four temperature adjectives, *hot*, *cold*, *rè* 热 'hot', *lěng* 冷 'cold', and four touch adjectives, *hard*, *soft*, *yìng* 硬 'hard', and *ruǎn* 软 'soft'. In the analysis of semantics regarding each of these skin-sense adjectives, three major aspects are involved – lexical concepts of the skin-sense adjectives predominantly according to dictionaries, combinations of attributive skin-sense adjectives and nouns based on corpora, and primary cognitive models tied to skin-sense adjectives built on both dictionaries and corpora. With the examination of the three aspects, lexical concepts of the eight skin-sense adjectives are generalized and 1,173 groups of actual combinations of attributive skin-sense adjectives and nouns, together with pertinent image schemas, propositions, 68 groups of metaphors and metonymies, are extracted and sorted out.

Synchronic semantic comparisons are grounded in the abovementioned synchronic semantics. The eight prototypical English and Chinese skin-sense adjectives are still compared from the three respects – lexical concepts,

combinations of attributive skin-sense adjectives and nouns, and relevant cognitive models. Corresponding construal similarities and differences between English and Chinese in regard to skin sensations and other relevant experiences, along with associated causes, are additionally exposed by such synchronic semantic comparisons.

Diachronic semantic comparisons of skin-sense adjectives between English and Chinese, on the whole acting as a perspective supplementing the synchronic semantic examination, are centered on the comparison between two types of skin-sense adjectives. Such two classes of skin-sense adjectives respectively represent two primary and somewhat inconsistent semantic changing paths. In view of representativity and the reliability of historical resources, we particularly focus on comparing the semantic development of *keen* and *ruì* 锐 'keen'. In addition, some biased explanations about the inconsistent semantic development are discussed and comparatively realistic accounts of the divergence are proposed.

At last, we draw the following four principal findings by means of the cognitive semantic investigation of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese.

1. Embodiment and prototypicality are two essential characteristics of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese.

Embodiment of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese is largely exhibited by the subsequent three points: (1) The emergence of skin-sense adjectives and concepts of these adjectives per se, rather than merely objective reflections of the world and having little to do with purely scientific parameters, are directly rooted in skin-sense experiences stemmed from mutual interactions between the human body and the world. (2) Adjectives extended from skin-sense adjectives and concepts linked with these extended adjectives are indirectly grounded in skin-sense experiences. The survey of semantic extensions of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives demonstrate that the semantic development path of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese chiefly shifts from concrete to abstract. (3) The synchronic semantic extension and

diachronic semantic change of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese occur under pertinent social and cultural backgrounds. Different social and cultural experiences lead to essentially divergent construal scope, content, means, disparately conceptual structures, and grammatical discrepancies.

Prototypicality of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese is manifested by both semantic and grammatical respects. (1) Semantic categories of skin-sense adjectives by and large make up prototype categories. Compared with other conceptual content in reference to vision, audition and other senses, human emotions, and personality, etc, and relevant experiences, the semantic content of skin-sense adjectives concerning skin-sense experiences, as a rule, is more prototypical, since skin-sense experiences function more basically and spread more widely than other experiences. Undoubtedly, with the development of time and society, magnitude and frequency of occurrences with respect to other experiences may vary, which to a large degree gives rise to the dynamic prototypicality. Notwithstanding, as corroborated by our study and Shindo's research (2009), semantic content regarding skin-sense experiences tends to remain prototypical, which is in essence attributed to the fundamental roles and prevalence of skin-sense experiences. (2) Largely controlled by semantic prototypicality, grammatical aspects related to skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese are for the most part indications of prototypicality as well. Skin-sense adjectives in English are non-prototypical members of English adjectives, situated in the margin of the adjective category and approximating to the verb class in English. Skin-sense adjectives in Chinese are prototypical adjectives in Chinese, placed in the center of the Chinese adjective category and close to the category of Chinese verbs.

2. It is noteworthy for researchers to take into account the construal focus. Moreover, different construal focuses ought to be basically discriminated.

In process of the present research, we suggest basically differentiating between distinct construal focuses – human-centered construal and nonhuman-centered construal. If embodiment and prototypicality have provided chief solutions to the problem "how to construe the focus", then the basic discrimination between human-centered and nonhuman-centered construal

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mostly answers the question "what is the construal focus". Human-centered construal refers to the human construal that is largely focused on human beings, including human emotions, evaluations, and actions, etc. Nonhuman-centered construal is the human construal centered on nonhuman things, such as states and qualities of objects or events. In terms of the basic differentiation, we generally divide cognitive models of propositions, metaphors, and metonymies into two primary kinds – human-centered and nonhuman-centered cognitive models. Furthermore, while basically distinguished from each other, the two kinds of construal are in the meantime conceived of as interconnected with each other instead of being absolutely separated, since humankind and nonhuman things in effect inevitably affect each other.

Such a distinction definitely corroborates the interactional characteristic of embodiment. On the one hand, the differentiation helps researchers to more clearly reveal the internal relationship between cognitive structures tied to the same construal focus. On the other, with the basic distinction, the close relationship between different construal focuses is manifestly exhibited. More importantly, at the same time a further construal principle is accordingly disclosed – anthropocentricity.

3. The tenet of establishing the construal focus is anthropocentricity. Meanwhile, chiefly based on this principle, we discover that skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese tend to be subjectified.

It is to a great extent with the help of the basic distinction between human-centered and nonhuman-centered construal that we find out another significant construal tenet – anthropocentricity or the human-centered rule – which states that human construal is in essence centered on human beings.

While unveiling the idealized cognitive models, we discover that no human-centered metaphor is tied to nonhuman-centered metaphor. By contrast, nonhuman-centered metaphor is normally connected with pertinent human-centered metaphor, indicating that nonhuman things are merely meaningful when they are in association with human beings.

According to the diachronic semantic examination and the tenet of anthropocentricity, the semantic content of skin-sense adjectives in English and

Chinese has a tendency to be subjectified. At present, prototypical skin-sense adjectives in English have been more extensively applied to delineation of abstract experiences connected with humankind than those in Chinese. It is expected that prototypical skin-sense adjectives in Chinese are most probably to be tied to more abstract lexical concepts centered on human beings as the society develops.

4. Skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese are liable to be verbalized.

The general verbalization trend of skin-sense adjectives in English and Chinese can be predicted. Five specific aspects in regard to the verbalization trend are pointed out: (1) Most skin-sense adjectives in English have the tendency of verbalization but will not be completely verbalized; (2) Only the most prototypical skin-sense adjectives in English will be actually verbalized; (3) Only the most non-prototypical skin-sense adjectives in English will not have the tendency of verbalization; (4) The majority of prototypical skin-sense adjectives in Chinese will be absolutely verbalized; (5) The majority of non-prototypical skin-sense adjectives in Chinese will not be totally verbalized.

This work is in a large part built upon Peng Yi's PhD dissertation finished in 2010.

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List of Abbreviations

AN	Adjective and Noun
CCCL	Corpus of Center for Chinese Linguistics
CD	*Chinese Dictionary*（《汉典》）
COCA	Corpus of Contemporary American English
GCD	*Grand Chinese Dictionary*（《汉语大字典》）
NADCA	*Newly Adapted Dictionary of Chinese Adjectives*（《新编汉语形容词词典》）
OCC	Online Chinese Corpus
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
ZC	Zhu's Corpus

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