

A Semantic Map Approach to Crosslinguistic Comparisons of Polysemy: Implications for Perspectivization Theories* **

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ABSTRACT

In crosslinguistic communications, direct translation has often been used as an effective way to understand a novel linguistic form in a foreign language. By utilizing the notion of “semantic map,” we would like to show the possible mismatches of direct translations. Speakers in one language often take a socially shared perspective to map the conceptual structure to the semantic structure, rendering different verbalizations. Saisiyat *nahan* is, for example, used to denote repetition, continuation, addition, and succession. However, the conceptual space NAHAN is categorized into three different groups denoted by *hai* 還, *zai* 再, and *you* 又 in Mandarin. The semantic extensions of Saisiyat *nahan* and Mandarin *hai* 還, *zai* 再, and *you* 又 follow different routes, and there are collectively agreed verbalizations that can only be mastered through the real uses. In view of this, in addition to subjectification, intersubjectification and objectification, we suggest that a fourth perspective—collectivization—is crucial to the development of language. Because language is to a large extent a social product that is beyond speaker-internal cognition, studies of language have to take into consideration the power of contextualization and its impact on society.

Key Words: comparative semantics, semantic map, perspectivization,
meta-language glossing

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** In the text, forms referred to in specific languages are in italic type. Glosses are presented in single quotes, and quotations or emphasis of proper notions are in double quotes.

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1. Introduction

Crosslinguistic semantics has been widely investigated because of its practical value in pedagogy, translation, and lexicography. And one intuitive way to understand a foreign linguistic item is to understand it through an “equivalent” or “counterpart” in one’s own language, in other words, to ask for its “direct translations” in a meta-language. The present study, nevertheless, aims to show the limitation of such translation approach: A linguistic form in one language is usually different from its crosslinguistic “counterpart” to some extent, because the concepts denoted by a linguistic item in one language is likely to be categorized differently in other languages, rendering language-specific ways of verbalizations. The semantic mismatches become even more conspicuous when crosslinguistic counterparts are typically integrated with different linguistic, situational, and cultural contexts.

This study is initiated by a problem that has been raised in many studies—The so-called crosslinguistic “equivalents” are often at variance with each other. For instance, the famous “spiel” example in German (Wittgenstein 1963) is usually translated as “game” example in English. However, German *spiel* is not entirely identical to English *game*—A boy playing sand alone in the park can be denoted by German *spiel*, but not by English *game* (Wierzbicka 1996). Similarly, Korean *nehta* is not equivalent to English *put in*. To put a video cassette in a case can be denoted by English *put in* but not by Korean *nehta* (Bowerman and Choi 2003).

Such mismatch is not limited to word-level comparisons: Schematic constructions also exhibit language-specific ways of perspectivization that are even more mischievous. As an example, the Chindali motion expressions are found to have nine parameters at work that have partitioned motion events into complex constructional paradigms (Botne 2005). Though denoting meanings approximately as “approaching” and “leaving,” those motion constructions cannot be simply equated with English *come* and *go*. Abundant works have been devoted to similar crosslinguistic comparisons of constructions, such as space (Bowerman 1996; Talmy 1983), middle voice (Kemmer 1993), indefinite pronouns (Haspelmath 1997), modality (van der Auwera and Plungian 1998), motion events (Talmy 2000), classifiers (Aikhenvald 2000), among others. Their general finding is that a construction in a specific language is usually multi-functional, but the functions of this construction often differ from those of its counterpart-constructions in other languages, though similarities are also expected.

The problem of crosslinguistic semantic mismatches appears to be a trivial one, but it becomes eminent when it is necessary to use one language to code the other. The situation we have encountered is “corpus documentation.” As correctly observed by Matthewson (2004) and Lehrer (1992), the use of a natural language for semantic glossing is inevitable. Though we agree that Chindali has nine parameters in constructing their verbs of motion which cannot simply be glossed as ‘come’ and ‘go’, we nevertheless find the texts hardly conceivable if those verbs are glossed by schematic symbols that are not natural to speakers of any language. We hold that corpus is designed to be readable to its users, and the problem is how we can adequately represent the specific semantic categorization of an object language with meta-language glossing.

But the use of natural languages for corpus documentation necessarily invites some problems. When we try to document our Saisiyat texts, a lexical item *nahan* has become a thorny case. In different contexts, the informants give different interpretations of this lexical item, using Mandarin as the meta-language. In Su and Huang (2006), the authors adopt Principled Polysemy framework (Tyler and Evans 2001) to reconstruct a semantic network of *nahan*, showing that its various interpretations are interrelated as a “family” (in view of Wittgenstein 1963). In the present work, we find it helpful to turn to Semantic Map (Haspelmath 2003; Kemmer 1993; Croft 2001) approach to illustrate the functional mismatches between Saisiyat *nahan* and its Mandarin counterparts *hai* 還, *zai* 再, and *you* 又.¹ Saisiyat *nahan* is highly polysemous, and so are Mandarin *hai* 還, *zai* 再, and *you*. Each of them occupies a region in a conceptual space whose boundaries do not match perfectly. Different partitioning of the conceptual space thus leads to multiple glossings of the same lexical item in the target language.

The result shows that a conceptual space is potential to be conceptualized in many alternative ways, and a language often highlights some aspects of it, rendering different semantic mappings, which in turn are expressed by different syntactic devices (Croft 2001). We will thus argue for a modest view of linguistic relativity. That is, there is likely universal conceptual ability of all human beings, but the grammatical manifestation of a specific notion is language-specific. The preferred ways of conceptualization in each language may constraint the personal preference of perspectivization: Using a specific language,

1. Romanticized Mandarin words are coded with tones represented by diacritics: first tone (level tone) *ye*, second tone (rising tone) *yé*, third tone (dipping tone) *yě*, fourth tone (falling tone) *yè*, and fifth tone (neutral tone) *yê*.

the speaker should follow a socially-agreed way of perspectivization adopted by that speech community. A full account of language structure will have to rely on a social view of language, by which we would like to propose a fourth way of perspectivization, collectivization, in addition to objectification, subjectification, and intersubjectification.

2. Methodological Framework

This study adopts Semantic Map approach to present the comparison of Saisiyat *nahan* and its Mandarin counterparts. This section begins with a brief sketch of Semantic Map in 2.1. The data and methodologies are stated in 2.2.

2.1. Semantic Maps and Radical Construction Grammar

From a cognitive perspective, the mismatch of crosslinguistic counterparts is essentially a categorization problem. Bowerman and Choi (2003) have gracefully illustrated that the English phrases *put on* and *put in* constitute a cluster of spatial configurations that denotes the placement of one thing on top of the other, but this space is partitioned differently in Korean into five categories denoted by *nohta*, *ssuta*, *pwuchita*, *kkita*, and *nehta* (Bowerman and Choi 2003). To gloss these Korean lexical items either as ‘put on’ or ‘put in’ cannot satisfactorily reflect the spatial configurations structured by those lexical items.

To show a conceptual space constituted by groupings of spatial configurations, Bowerman and Choi (2003) unconsciously employ the “Semantic Map” approach of comparative semantics. In recent crosslinguistic researches, “Semantic Map” has been a developing framework specialized for typological problems (Haspelmath 2003; Kemmer 1993; Croft 2001). In this framework, a group of related concepts can be conceptualized metaphorically as a “space,” and each language has a specific way of partitioning this space, constituting a “map” of language-specific grammars. A map to show semantic relations and partitions can help us visualize abstract conceptualization by spatial representations, which greatly facilitates comparative works.

To construct a map, we have to imagine a space in which functions of a linguistic form are distributed with relation to each other, sketched as Figure 1.²

2. In the present study, we will use “function” interchangeably with “meaning.” Functions or meanings that are cognitively distinct will be called “sense.”



Figure 1. A conceptual space for semantic study

The interconnecting lines represent the relation between the functions, but the length of the line does not necessarily indicate the semantic approximation of two functions. The orientation of the map, i.e., left-right and top-down, bears no significance. The labels of functions as well as the lines connecting them are verified only when crosslinguistic studies are considered. In such an imagined space of conceptualization, different languages are likely to have different ways of conceptual categorization, reflected by the use of different/same linguistic forms. In the present study, we employ enclosed spaces to represent the functions that are marked by the same linguistic form as suggested by Haspelmath (2003). For example, in Figure 2, the two squares each enclose a function-set that is expressed with two linguistic forms. One advantage of such approach is that it can be used for intra- as well as inter-language comparison: the two enclosures can be linguistic items in a language or counterparts in two different languages. With proper methodological adjustment, a semantic map is also potential to be used for diachronic changes of a linguistic form over time.

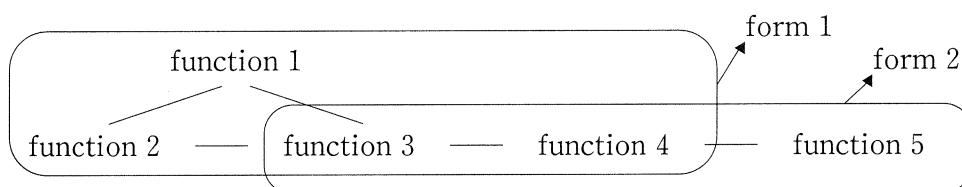


Figure 2. Partitioning of a conceptual space by linguistic forms

In Croft's (2001) Radical Construction Grammar (RCG), the notion of "semantic map" is exploited not only to show the functional distribution of particular contrastive linguistic forms, but also to search for common tendencies of functional extension and its underlying cognitive mechanisms, i.e., how one function extends to another.

RCG also makes another important modification on Semantic Map: the distinction of three levels of language structure: conceptual, semantic, and syntactic. In a given conceptual space, functions are assumed to be connected, but it allows alternative semantic conceptualizations and syntactic representations. Under competitions of different motivations, the choice of a specific expression is to some extent "arbitrary" and subject to change. In different languages,

speakers may highlight different elements of this conceptual space, rendering crosslinguistic typological variations. The mapping between semantic structure (meaning) and syntactic structure (form) follows the spirit of “constructions grammars” (Fillmore, Kay and O’Conner 2003; Lakoff 1987; Langacker 1987; Goldberg 1995).³

By looking at the diverged syntactic devices, linguists are likely to see the semantic subdivisions of a conceptual space, in an attempt to construct a universal semantic map on which human thinkings are based. Still, syntactic structures conventionalized in language can affect the semantic structure which in turn links to the conceptual structure. This explains the conventionalized ways of conceptualization in a speech community, and the interactions among levels of structures are thus deemed bi-directional. The above-mentioned assumptions can be illustrated as Figure 3. The arrows show bi-directional influences between levels of structure.

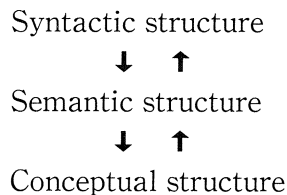


Figure 3. The relation between semantics, syntax and conceptualization

One important assumption shared by semantic map approaches is that the functions represented in a conceptual space for comparison are assumed to be “similar,” i.e., inter-related in some aspects. It is evident by Croft’s (2001: 96) Semantic Map Connectivity Hypothesis: “Any relevant language-specific and construction-specific category should map onto a CONNECTED REGION in conceptual space.” Those functions sharing the same form can be monosemous (uses of one single sense) or polysemous (related senses of a linguistic form), subject to linguists’ interpretation.⁴ The “relatedness” of functions in a semantic

3. The present study distinguishes capitalized “Construction Grammar” from “construction grammars.” The former refers exclusively to the framework established by Goldberg (1995) in which thematic roles are in correspondence with grammatical roles in a schematic structure. The later is a broad notion of form-meaning mapping and verbalization in the sense of Croft (2001) and Langacker (1987, 1991). In talking about “construction” in the present study, we are more inclined to adopt Croftian and Langackerian conceptions.
4. “Homonymy” is theoretically excluded from semantic map approach. However, the subtle differences between polysemy and homonymy and the difficulties in finding an “idealized” homonymy are issues beyond the scope of the present study.

map approach is determined by crosslinguistic comparisons: **When a group of concepts is denoted by the same linguistic form in a dozen of languages, its members are said to be conceptually related.**

However, in corpus documentation where only at most three to four languages are in question, the labels and relations we give to the functions can be very arbitrary. This problem may be solved with the help of Principled Polysemy (Tyler and Evans 2001). Principled Polysemy shares many similar beliefs with Semantic Map, e.g., studies of multifunctionality/polysemy, spatial representation of meanings, and the emphasis on the interconnection of meanings. In addition, Principled Polysemy provides us with a set of criteria to identify discrete senses of a polysemous linguistic item, and suggests ways to construct the relation between those senses. It helps us to discern the “relatedness” of a linguistic form’s multiple functions before we can decide whether to make a semantic map for further comparisons with its counterparts in the other languages. We thus consider the possibilities of combining Semantic Map with Principled Polysemy. When a lexical item in the target language is testified by Principled Polysemy to be a multi-functional/polysemous “family,” this family can serve as a “conceptual space” to be compared with its counterparts in the meta-language.

2.2. Data and methodology

The NTU [National Taiwan University] Corpus of Formosan Languages (henceforth referred to as NTU-Formosan) has collected 122 minutes and 44 seconds of Saisiyat natural spoken data, including narratives and conversations.⁵ With a default search engine of the corpus, a total of 48 tokens of *nahan* are identified. Su and Huang (2006) employed Principled Polysemy to show that Saisiyat *nahan* has four discrete meanings: repetition, continuation, addition and succession. A painstaking investigation was dedicated to the reconstruction of the semantic network, and it successfully demonstrated that the various senses of *nahan* were interrelated as a semantic family.⁶

In the present study, this semantic family NAHAN is served as the “target

5. Compiled by the Graduate Institute of Linguistics, National Taiwan University, NTU-Formosan is available on-line with limited access (<http://corpus.linguistics.ntu.edu.tw/>).

6. The identification and semantic reconstruction is based on Principled Polysemy. Three criteria are suggested for sense distinction: meaning criterion, concept elaboration criterion, and grammatical criterion. Please see Tyler and Evans (2001, 2003) for detailed discussion, and see Su and Huang (2006) for specific steps.

conceptual space.” With the semantic map approach, we can compare the functions of Saisiyat *nahan* with its three candidate counterparts in Mandarin: *haí* 還, *zài* 再, and *yòu* 又. Examples of Mandarin are provided to supplement the functions of *haí* 還, *zài* 再, and *yòu* 又, extracted from Spoken Mandarin Corpus of NTU Cognitive-Pragmatic Lab (henceforth referred to as NTU-CoPra).⁷ NTU-CoPra is chosen because this corpus compiles Taiwanese Mandarin data, which is the meta-language of NTU-Formosan. Also, it is of spoken genre, which is the same as NTU-Formosan. The comparison of Saisiyat and Mandarin semantic counterparts extracted from these two corpora can help us investigate the different partitioning of a conceptual space in the target language as compared with a meta-language.

3. The functions of Saisiyat *nahan* and its related constructions

In this section, we will illustrate the four functions of Saisiyat *nahan* with examples extracted from NTU-Formosan. Driven by cognitive shifts of vantage point and textual/situational forces, the structure “VERB *nahan*” is potential to be interpreted differently in different contexts. For the detailed mechanisms of semantic interconnections, please see Su and Huang (2006).

3.1. Construction for repetition

Saisiyat *nahan* is typically used in the construction for “action repetition.” Whenever a “VERB *nahan*” structure is encountered, it most likely denotes repetition of an activity. In other words, repetition is the most prominent sense of *nahan*, and most contextually independent. Repetitive *nahan* denotes an event composed of an action (A) and its reduplicate (A’) in sequential order, and there is an implicit or explicit temporal gap between A and A’.

Example (1a) is a case of repetitive *nahan*, taken from a Saisiyat legend. Saisiyat people believe their ancestors, when very old, would molt and become young again. The word *nahan* in IU 13 receives the interpretation ‘again’ because there is a felt discontinuous phase between the men’s twice of being youth—one before and one after molting.

7. NTU-CoPra is compiled by Professor Lily I-wen Su’s research laboratory, but it is not open for public use currently.

(1a) molaw⁸

10. k<om>oSa: 'am masay ila
 AF-*shou* Fut AF-*sǎ* Pfv
 AF-say Fut AF.die Pfv

11. m-o=law ila **nahan**
 AF-*tuēpí* Pfv *yoũ*
 AF-molt Pfv again

12. m-olaw ila
 AF-*tuĩpí* Pfv
 AF-molt Pfv

13. so: m-olaw kita'-en ma' 'al'alak ila **nahan**
rúguǒ AF-*tuĩpí* *kǎn*-PF *yě* *niǎnqīng* Pfv *yoũ*
 if AF-molt see-PF also young Pfv again

'It (the story) says that when they were dying, they molted and looked young again.'

Example (1b) is a variety of event repetition, which is also called "res- titutive" function (Han 2004) that reverts an entity to its previous state. Because IU 9-14 describe how the bamboo shoots are dehydrated for preservation, *nahan* in IU 16 denotes that the state "moist" is recovered before a man eats the dried shoots.

(1b) anhi'

9. na= mari'-in kopyak-en ila
 FIL *nā*-PF *ya*-PF Pfv
 FIL take-PF press-PF Pfv

10. k<in>opiyak-en sizaeh
 <Pfv>*ya*-PF *wǎn*
 <Pfv>press-PF finish

11. in-timo'-en
 Pfv-*yan*-PF
 Pfv-preserve-PF

12. isa=
 DM
 DM

8. Saisiyat has three case markers: nominative (Nom), accusative (Acc), locatives (Loc), and four focus markers: agentive (AF), patientive (PF), instrumental/benefactive (I/BF), and locative (LF). Please see Yeh (2000) for details.

13. mari'-in
nǎ-PF
 take-PF
14. tabe-en ila ray= 'a taboway
fāng-PF Pfv Loc FIL *wēng*
 place-PF Pfv Loc FIL urn
15. So: 'a-s<m>i'ael ila
rúguǒ Fut-<AF>*chi* Pfv
 if Fut-<AF>eat Pfv
16. senge-en **nahan** ray ralom
pāo-PF *yoũ* Loc *shuǐ*
 soak-PF again Loc water
17. a= talek-en ma' nak isaa ma kin kayzaeh si'ael-en
 FIL *jiarē*-PF *yě xiāng nā* DM *hěn* haǒ *chi*-PF
 FIL heat-PF also like that DM very good eat-PF

'Press (the bamboo shoots). After that, preserve them (with salt), then place them in urns. If (one) feels like eating (it), soak them again in water and it would taste better if heated.'

It is also typical for *nahan* to denote repetitive meaning when A' is not a strict iteration of A. Example (1c) illustrates such a case. In this example, the speaker mentions a man carrying a goat passing through a tree, and soon after that, another boy riding a bicycle also passes the same tree.

(1c) Pear 4

27. o: rima' ila hiza
 DM AF.*qū* Pfv *nǎlǐ*
 DM AF.go Pfv there
28. kita'-en m-wa:i' ila **nahan**
kān-PF AF-*lái* Pfv *yoũ*
 see-PF AF-come Pfv again
29. 'aehae' ka=
yí Nom
 one Nom
30. kamo'alay
niánqīngrén
 young.man

31. kamamanra:an
nānrén
 male
32. 'ima papama' ray=
 Prog AF.qi Loc
 Prog AF.ride Loc
33. kapapama'an=
jiàotāche
 bicycle

'(The man and the goat) went off. (Then) another boy was seen coming; he was riding a bike.'

The action "passing by" is repeated, and ordered in a temporal sequence. However, A and A' are carried out by different actors. There is "specific-to-generic" attenuation that shows symptoms of grammaticalization (Langacker 1987) by which a strictly-defined repetition is now loosely realized in a topological manner.

3.2. Construction for continuity

In Saisiyat, continuity of an activity is also expressed by *nahan*. Similar to repetitive *nahan*, continuous *nahan* also denotes an event structure that contains one action A and its reduplicate A' in temporal sequence. However, there is no perceived gap between A and A', rendering a continuous sense that the same activity persists for a period of time.

Example (2) is a case of continuous *nahan*, extracted from a piece of pear story. The following excerpt indicates that the old man remains on top of a tree when a boy stole his fruits away.

(2) Pear 3

44. isaza tatini' rima' r<om>okrok **nahan** babaw ka boway
nā laòrén AF.qù <AF>cǎi hái shāngmiǎn Acc shuǐguǒ
 that old.man AF.go <AF>pick still above Acc fruit

'The old man was still up in the tree to pick fruits.'

It has been suggested that continuity is cognitively approximate to repetition, and they differ mainly in terms of the viewpoint: When a wider event-internal view is taken, the interpretation is directed to continuity, and when a narrower event-external view is taken, the repetition sense overrides (Dowty 1979; Yeh 1998; Han 2004). As an action iterates itself in a period of time, our

cognitive ability prompts us to neglect the gaps between iterations, rendering continuous reading. With this in mind, it is not surprising to find Saisiyat *nahan* can denote continuity and repetition of an activity, and sometimes it is the contexts that help us to grasp the speaker's intended meaning.

One factor behind the choice of viewpoint is collocation effect: the repetitive sense applies to “accomplishments,” “achievements” and “activities,” whereas the continuous sense is prone to be activated by “states” and some “activities.”⁹ This is the case mostly because “accomplishments” and “achievement” hint at event termination whereas “states” and “activities” do not. However, collocation effect does not always predict repetition/continuity distinction. Note that (1a) depicts a state, yet it receives the reading ‘again’ because the text mentions a phase of aging that has gapped the continuation. In general, situational and contextual effects almost always override collocational effects.

3.3. Construction for addition

In Saisiyat, *nahan* is also used for listing. Example (3) is extracted from an episode in which the speaker talks about the breeds of deer he keeps. After reciting a list of breeds, he recalls another kind of similar deer but he forgets its breed name. In IU24, there is a numeral verb ‘*aehae*’ ‘one’ precedes, which coerces the additive reading of *nahan* and the informants intuitively translate it as *lingwai* 另外 ‘another.’ To repeat the act of numerating is in a sense to add a new member to this category.

(3) Life

22. M: koSa'-en .. kasakiray bangol ka= wa'ae'
 shuo-PF yèwai senlín Nom lù
 say-PF field forests Nom deer

23. B: e
 BC
 BC

24. M: 'aehae' nahan
 yì lǐngwài
 one another

9. There are some accomplishment/achievement verbs that cannot be repeated or restituted by natural inference, e.g., ‘die.’ They are preferred not to collocate with *nahan* unless the contexts demand so.

25. M: sinkano'on

shémè

what

'M: (There is one kind) called field deer.'

'B: e.'

'M: There is one more wachamaccalit.'

Following Tyler and Evan's Principled Polysemy, our study assumes one important consequence: the semantic change of a lexical item is closely related to its collocational pattern with its contexts, be it linguistic or situational. Conceptually, the additive *nahan* can be regarded as a "use" contextually derived from a more basic "repetitive function." Nevertheless, it has a high frequency of use with a specific constructional structure "NUMERAL.PREDICATE *nahan*." In addition to textual effect, listing activity that is common in conversation might have motivated the pragmatic inferencing of additional meaning attributed to this construction. As suggested by Ford, Fox and Thompson (2003), activities involved in conversation are found to accelerate constructionalization of certain linguistic patterns.

3.4. Construction for succession

In Saisiyat, activities in succession can also be linked by *nahan*. Example (4) illustrates an instance of *nahan* used for construction of action succession. It is extracted from a piece of frog story in which a boy and his dog keep looking for a frog. The sequential activities, "to go aside", "to rest on a wood" and "to catch the frog" are linked by *nahan* to show that they are temporally relevant to the episode "to search for a specific object." The Mandarin gloss *xian* 先 'first' was provided by the informants in IU 259, 262, and 267, probably because they unconsciously equated it with Mandarin *xian... zai...* construction 'first... then...' (先...再...).

(4) Frog 5

258. m-wa:i'

AF.*laí*

AF.come

259. ...	kabih	<u>nahan</u>	langi=
	<i>pāngbian</i>	<i>xian</i>	<i>ānbian</i>
	<i>aside</i>	first	shore

260. 'akoy' atomalan ila kita-en ka a takem
duo hēn Pfv *kān*-PF Nom Lnk *qingwa*
 many very Pfv see-PF Nom Lnk frog
261. lasia isaa
 3Pl.Nom *nāh*
 3Pl.Nom there
262. masa:eng ri'saon **nahan** ray
 AF.zuō *nāh* *xian* Loc
 AF.sit *there* first Loc
263. 'atabai: babaw
mùtóu shāngmiān
 wood above
264. isahini ka=
xiānzai Nom
 now Nom
265. a korkoring
 Lnk *xiǎohái*
 Lnk child
266. ma=
 DM
 DM
267. a r<om>akep tasihoeroe ila **nahan**
 Lnk <AF>*zhuo* *zhǎo* Pfv *xian*
 Lnk <AF>catch find Pfv first
268. kayzaeh ka= a takem
hǎo Acc Lnk *qingwa*
 good Acc Lnk frog

'They came first to the side, and saw many frogs. They were sitting on top of a piece of wood. Now the child caught . . . , found his frog.'

When the activity chain grows, *nahan* is used to connect A, A', A'', and so forth, constituting a "VERB *nahan* VERB *nahan*" structure, which has become a schematic construction. The lexical item *nahan* in this construction prepares the hearer to expect a series of event temporally ordered and related.

The successive function of Saisiyat *nahan* is closely related to the continuous sense. Like continuous *nahan*, the structure depicts a scene which contains a series of activities as an "episode" and the speaker sets his perspective on the entire event sequence. However, A' is no longer an identical or even similar

activity as A, and the two activities are connected mainly by sequential relationship. The “specific-to-general” attenuation introduced in 3.1 becomes even more salient in this construction.

4. A contrastive study: How Saisiyat NAHAN is partitioned in Mandarin

We have shown that Saisiyat *nahan* is realized as different readings in different contexts, and different Mandarin glosses are provided by the informants. This section will show how the four constructions of *nahan* are covered by three linguistic labels—*haí* 還, *zài* 再, and *yòu* 又—in Mandarin.¹⁰

4.1. Continuity in Mandarin: *haí* 還

In Mandarin, continuity of an activity is primarily labeled by *haí* 還 ‘still.’ A typical example is (5). In this example, the activity “to be here” is true at the reference time, and the use of *haí* 還 presupposes that this activity extends from the time prior to the reference time.

(5) dorm

34. *hánjià* *nāshíhòu* *wǒ* *zǒu* *lè*
winter.vacation that.time 1Sg go LE

35. *nǐ* *hǎoxiàng* ***haí*** *zài* *zhèbian*
2Sg seem still Loc here

‘When I went back home in winter vacation, you seemed to be still here (in the dorm).’

The use of continuous *nahan* seems to correspond that of continuous *haí* 還 in this example. However, there may not be “perfect equivalents” in a crosslinguistic perspective especially when “constructions” are taken into consideration. According to Michaelis (1993), scalar-related lexemes sometimes trigger subjective expectation of an event. Mandarin *haí* 還 can activate such a mental expectation. By using *haí* 還, it is implied that the speaker/hearer has an imagined world in which an activity A is expected to end under a specific condition, but in reality, A continues contrary to the expectation. Such expectation can be subjective, i.e., speaker-oriented, as (6a). It can also be intersubjective, i.e., the speaker

10. We will only demonstrate the functions that are related to Saisiyat *nahan*. However, many functions of the three lexemes are beyond the denotation of *nahan*, yet they are interrelated to each other as three meaningful “families.”

estimating the hearer's expectation, which renders the suggestive interpretation, as in (6b).

(6a) club

134. *suiráng wǒ yāo chīdào*
 although 1Sg Mod late
 135. *kěshì wǒ hái-shì juéding*
 but 1Sg still-Cop decide
 136. *jiù gěi tā chīdào hào le.*
 Con give 3Sg late good LE

'Although I will be late, I still decide to be late.'

→ Expectation: The speaker will avoid being late (according to common sense).

→ Reality: The speaker will be late (based on his own will).

(6b) Thesis

149. A: *yǒu rén chūxiàn zài liúwèi tān qián*
 Ext people appear Loc stewed.food vendor front
 150. B: *èi nǐ wúliáo*
 Int 2Sg bored
 151. *děngyíxià hái-shì qù mǎi mǎi yídiǎn [hào le]*
 later still-Cop go buy buy a.little good LE

'A: There are people at the front of the stewed-food vendor.'

'B: If you feel bored, you should buy some of it later (though it gets you fat).'

→ Expectation: Speaker A will not eat the stewed-food (for fear of gaining weight).

→ Reality: Speaker B suggests A don't stop eating.

The use of *hái* 還 to connote the continuation of an activity contradictory to the expected situation is also termed as "concessive" function (Yeh 1998; Wang and Lu 2006; Liu 2001). It is typically lexicalized with copula *shì* 是 to signal an affirmative attitude. Such expectation is to a large extent the effect of its contexts: concessive *hái* 還 occurs as a subordinate clause of a counter-expectation connective such as *suirán* 雖然 'although,' *jìnguǎn* 儘管 'in spite of,' *jiùsuàn* 就算 'even if,' etc.

However, such expectation does not work with Saisiyat continuous *nahan*. Being an "equivalent," Saisiyat *nahan* does not develop similar constructions of concession, and concessive readings are occasionally derived mainly through conversational implicatures. For example, (7) is a conversation between two Saisiyats about their tomb-sweeping rituals.

(7) Holiday

- 110 Chu: hini 'aehae' so: kik haba:an ka ma'iaeh
zhē yi rúguǒ Neg AF.duo Nom rén
 this one if Neg AF.many Nom man
 m-wa:i' isaa p<in>a'apol-on hini 'am ino'an-nanaw
 AF-lái FIL <Pfv>fen-PF *zhèlǐ* Fut *taì-duo*
 AF-come FIL <Pfv>distribute-PF here Fut too-many
 poa'aw 'am amet
rúhé Fut AF.chiwán
 how.come Fut AF.finish
- 111 isaa ma' isaa' alibih-in ray taew'an
ránhòu DM *nā* *dài*-PF Loc *jiā*
 then DM that take-PF Loc home
- 112 Kao: ay 'a'apol-on nahan ay so: m-wa:i' inaray kinololan
 Int fen-PF *haí* Int *rúguǒ* AF-lái *cúng* *mùdì*
 Int distribute-PF still Int if AF-come from tomb

'Chu: How could you consume so many things if there were not many people coming? You have to distribute them and take them home.'

'Kao: From the graveyard, is the food taken home still going to be distributed?'

Because sacrifices are typically distributed at the tombs after finishing sweeping, (7) has a concessive reading that distributing the sacrifices after going back home from graveyards is unusual and counter-expected. Nevertheless, in Saisiyat, such reading is not a discrete one because the concessive reading is ephemerally derived through our understanding of Saisiyat ritual in this specific text.

4.2. Addition in Mandarin: *haí* 還

In Mandarin, the meaning of addition is labeled also by *haí* 還. Like Saisiyat *nahan*, Mandarin *haí* 還 renders additive sense only in the listing or elaborative contexts. There is a strong tendency of lexicalization of additive *haí* 還 with existential *yoǔ* 有. *Haí-yoǔ* 還有 'still-exist' in a sense represent that something exists in addition to the others. For example, in (8), the speaker talks about the foods served in a restaurant. After finishing a list of foods, the speaker uses *haí* 還 in IU 388 and IU 391 to suggest that the restaurant also serves pasta and ice cream in addition.

(8) Card

388. A: *ta* ***hai***-*yoũ*
 3Sg still-Ext
389. *yìdālimiǎn* *dě* <E bar E>
 pasta Nominalizer bar
390. *nǐ* *kěyǐ* *tiao* *miǎn* *qù* *zhǔ*
 2Sg Mod pick noodle go cook
391. *ránhòu* *ta* ***hai***-*yoũ*
 then 3Sg still-Ext
392. *bīngqǐlín*
 ice.cream

‘A: There is also a bar for pasta where you can choose pastas to cook. And it also has ice creams.’

Note that we do not exclude the compounded or collocated patterns of *hai* 還 as members of HAÍ semantic family. For instance, *hai-shì* 還是 ‘still’ (still-Copula), *hai-yoũ* 還有 ‘in addition to’ (still-Exist), *hai-hǎo* 還好 ‘fortunately’ (still-good), or other collocation patterns are included in HAÍ family—though the compounds carry additional meanings with specific collocational forms, they are cognitive or pragmatic extensions based on the protoscene (in the sense of Tyler and Evans 2001) or the idealized cognitive model (or ICM in the sense of Lakoff 1987) of HAÍ.¹¹

4.3. Repetition in Mandarin: *yoũ* and *zài*

In Mandarin, repetition of an activity is partitioned into two categories, respectively labeled as *zài* 再 and *yoũ* 又, and they differ in terms of vantage points. See Figure 4. *Zài* 再 and *yoũ* 又 both represent A and A’ ordered in sequence with a gap in between, and they both focus on A’ as the repetition of A. However, *zài* 再 refers to the speaker’s position at time t-1, but *yoũ* 又 signals the speaker’s position at time t, which results into realis repetition (past/present) and irrealis repetition (future) respectively.

11. Mandarin *zài* 再 ‘again’ also has additive function, but it is not used for listing. Instead, its function is primarily used for request, e.g., *zài yí-gè* 再一個 ‘One more, please.’ We do not see Saisyat *nahan* used in this kind of function, so it is excluded from the present study but remains an issue for further investigation.

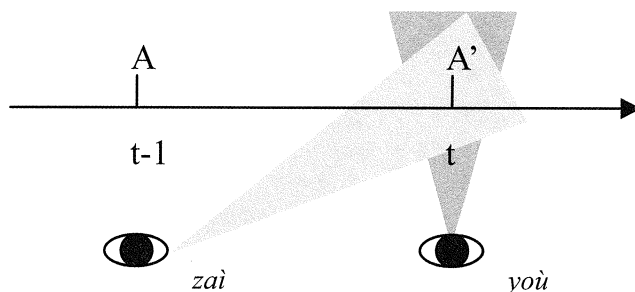


Figure 4. The semantic structure of *zài* 再 and *yòu* 又

This difference has been indicated in Li and Thompson (1981). *Zài* 再 and *yòu* 又 are in complementary distribution in terms of the contexts they occur in. In (9), observe how *zài* 再 is not compatible in realis contexts, and *yòu* 又 is anomalous in irrealis contexts.

(9a) *nǐ yòu/*zài lái le*
 2Sg again/again come LE
 ‘Here you go again.’

(9b) *nǐ zài/*yòu lái yíci, wǒ jiù dǎ nǐ*
 2Sg again/again come once 1Sg Con beat 2Sg
 ‘If you go like this again, I will beat you.’

On the other hand, Saisiyat is not sensitive to such difference. In fact, the relais/irrealis contrast in Mandarin has been extended to successive constructions, as we will demonstrate in 5.4.

4.4. Succession in Mandarin: *yòu* 又 and *zài* 再

Succession in Mandarin is also denoted by *zài* 再 and *yòu* 又. It seems that succession and repetition are conceptually more approximate in Mandarin, if the sharing of linguistic form is taken as a piece of evidence.

Again, there is a vantage difference made in Mandarin, i.e., *zài* 再 denotes future irrealis event succession (10a) whereas *yòu* 又 denotes past/present realis succession (10b).

(10a) Sue

40. *nǐ xiān fāng zài pángbian hǎo le*
 2S first put Loc aside good LE

41. *děngyíxià zài fāng jìnqù*
 later again put enter

‘You may put it aside, and insert it later.’

(10b) Sue

199. *nàshíhòu yǐjīng zǒu shàngqù le o*
that.time already walk upward LE Par

200. *san gè rén zǒu shàngqù yǒu zǒu xiàlái*
three Class person walk upward again walk downward

‘(We) have walked up (the hill) at that time. We three walked up and then walked down.’

Note that in irrealis successive construction, *zài* 再 is often preceded by *xian* 先 ‘first,’ constituting a structure “*xian... zài...*” and it explains why Saisiyat informants tend to equate successive *nahan* with the gloss *xian* 先, as we have shown in example (4).

5. Perspectivization in crosslinguistic studies

In this section, in addition to a short summary of our finding with a semantic map, some implications of our study will be addressed. Particularly, different ways of semantic partitioning of a given conceptual space triggers the problem of linguistic relativism as compared to universal view of language. The finding also prompts us to reconsider the social essence of language, and the widely accepted view of perspectivization should take this essence into consideration.

5.1. Language-specific semantics

Starting from a Saisiyat “VERB *nahan*” construction, we found that this form maps to the concept of replication realized in temporal and narrative contexts. This construction, as we have demonstrated in section 4, corresponds to three Mandarin counterparts, each intertwined with their own structural patterns. Adopting Croft’s RCG framework and especially the notion of “semantic map,” the focus is placed on the relation between conceptualization and verbalization in specific languages.¹²

It is evident that the process of verbalization is to a large extent the product of contextualization. We do not exclude the compounded or collocated pattern of *haí*, *zài*, and *yǒu* as a member of HAÍ, ZÀI, and Yǒu families. For instance, *haí-shì* ‘still’ (still-Copula), *haí-yǒu* ‘in addition to’ (still-Exist), *haí-hǎo* ‘fortunate-

12. This is different from traditional Construction Grammar (especially Goldberg 1995) which centers on how a linguistic structure with its structural meaning determines the interpretation of an utterance.

ly' (still-good), or other collocation patterns are included in our discussion. Though they carry additional meanings with specific collocational forms, they are cognitive or pragmatic extensions based on a protoscene (in the sense of Tyler and Evans 2001) or an idealized cognitive model (or ICM in the sense of Lakoff 1987). By including constructional patterns in a linguistic family for contrastive studies, we also wish to show how the development of a linguistic family is strongly associated with the contexts it occurs in. Language has the tendency of collocation, and contexts are the resources of collocational patterns: Implicatures embedded in particular linguistic/situational contexts often "emerge" as stored meanings, and the co-occurrence patterns become frozen expressions to which the meanings are attached, a process that we will call "pragmatic strengthening" (Traugott and Dasher 2002; Levinson 2000; Hopper 1998).

The findings in section 3 and 4 can be summarized as the followings.

- (A) In Saisiyat, REPETITION, CONTINUATION, SUCCESSION, and ADDITION are conceptualized as in the same linguistic category, labeled by *nahan*, but they are grouped into more than one category in Mandarin with different linguistic codings.
- (B) REPETITION and SUCCESSION are further partitioned in Mandarin into realis and irrealis, but in Saisiyat, such distinction is not made.
- (C) Partitioning of a conceptual space is closely related to language-specific contextualization and constructions.

Based on (A)-(C), a semantic map can be constructed as in Figure 5. Such categorical mismatches hint at the danger of lexis-to-lexis translation: A field-worker may easily transplant the semantic categorization from one language to another when the condition is in fact not so straightforward. Our interpretation of a lexical item is influenced by the knowledge of the meta-language, and direct translations reflect little of the categorization in the target language.

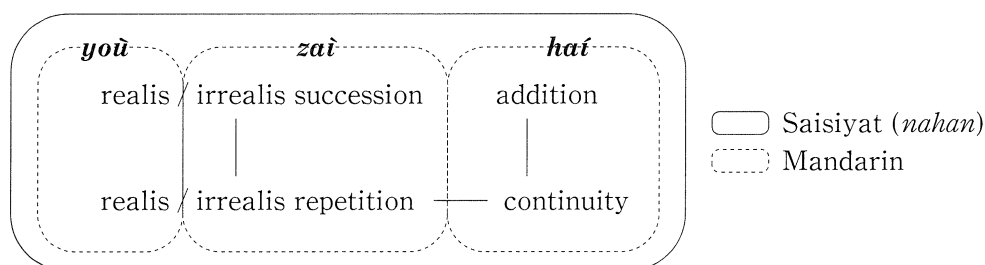


Figure 5. Semantic maps in Saisiyat and Mandarin compared

The conceptual space of Saisiyat NAHAN has been partitioned into three subtle subdivisions in Mandarin. Whether concepts are prone to be grouped into “larger” families in Saisiyat is an issue that needs to be followed up in further studies. In languages with fewer vocabularies, there are supposedly richer ways of “conceptualizations” in order to verbalize newly-encountered situations. Lexical borrowing is one way to cope with vocabulary deficiency. In our investigation, we found that Saisiyat has borrowed a large amount of lexical items from Japanese, Hakka, Mandarin Chinese, and Taiwanese. Besides borrowing, various types of “construals” (in the sense of Croft and Cruse 2004) are employed. For example, Saisiyat *samiyan* primarily refers to “god,” but it also means “gasoline,” because they both have power beyond their scientific knowledge. As another example, Saisiyat does not have full-fledged causal connectors such as English *although*, *unless*, *because*, etc. Speakers are expected to rely greatly upon pragmatic inference, conceptual association, or interactive cues to reason for causal concepts. The rich ways of conceptualization in Saisiyat reflect not only the amazing imagination of human beings, but also the link between language and its cultural background. How Saisiyat speakers infer the intended meaning in verbal interaction with limited linguistic devices will be an issue for our further investigation.

5.2. A modest relativist view towards verbalization

The semantic Map approach generally has an ultimate assumption to rebuild the blueprint of universal human conceptualization (Haspelmath 2003), but this approach is, presumably, showing that semantic categorization and syntactic manifestations of the “same” concept tend to vary in different languages (Croft 2001). As predicted by RCG, meaning is language-specific as well as construction-specific. A notion (a conceptual space) can substantiate various alternative ways of conceptualization, yet different languages manifest different aspects of it with different semantic categorization and grammatical constructions. We agree with Haspelmath (2003: 220) in saying that there are language-particular and construction-specific subdivisions of the universal semantic structure, which requires special attention and specific terminology to deal with each language.

Employing this approach, it seems inevitable for us to face the year-long debate of universalism vs. relativism. One important point needs to be clarified is that by showing crosslinguistic semantic mismatches, we do not presume their impacts on human thinking process. In other words, a modest view of relativism is held in this study—by the acknowledgement of both “conceptual universality”

and “grammatical relativity.”

Before we proceed with our claim, it is necessary to address a little history. For a very long time, linguists have been ambitious to claim the relation between “speech” and “thought.” It is argued that by studying the forms in languages of the world, we may uncover the thinking process of speakers in different speech communities. This postulation has invited considerable debates between relativists and universalists, and it remains an untied-knot ever since. Linguistic relativism claims that “meaning” lies in the form of a language. When forms diverge from one language to another, meanings are supposed to be culturally relative (Malinowski 1938; Boas 1940). Radical followers of Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis thus suggest “linguistic determinism,” i.e., the form of a language affects the thinking capacity of its speakers (Whorf, cited from Carroll 1956). The rise of Chomsky’s “cognitive approach” in 1960’s is in a sense a challenge to relativism. Chomskian approaches hypothesize the innateness, autonym and universality of all human languages. By looking at the regularities of various grammatical patterns, we may find universal modularity in languages all over the world, e.g., the study of word order in Greenberg (1966). This view has inspired mushrooming syntactic studies in search of the shared cognition in every speech community. In the semantic field, there are efforts to counteract the relativist view. For example, the Natural Semantic Meta-language (NSM) suggests lexicon or grammar is constrained by the linguistic repertoire conventionalized or formalized in a language, and the search of “meaning” cannot be fully embedded in it (Wierzbicka 1996; Goddard 2001). With rigorous methodologies, NSM breaks “meaning” into fundamental building blocks, the so-called “primes,” which are claimed to be universal. If interpreted in a radical way, it implies that human beings in all over the world can theoretically think in the same manner.

Linguistic determinism and absolute universalism represent two radical poles in terms of the relation between “speech” and “thought.” Recently, theories in anthropology, psychology, and linguistics hold an intermediate view between extreme relativism and extreme universalism. While acknowledging the universal basis of language as a discourse-interactional pattern, the importance of social-environmental contexts in each culture has also been emphasized (Gumperz and Levinson 1996). Goddard and Wierzbicka (2004) and Goddard (2002) in their recent works of NSM put much more premium on the significance of social-cultural factors: The semantic primes are still suggested to be universal semantic cores, but the exponents of those primes and cultural scripts may vary in different languages.

In our study, we found that the Mandarin glosses given by the informants

are too often inconsistent because there are language-specific considerations which are hardly translatable. Recall example (7). The counter-expectation “continuous” reading overrides the repetition reading mostly because Saisiyat people typically distribute the sacrifice at the tombs. Also, the *samiyan* ‘god’ example cited in 5.1 also shows the particular cultural considerations that contribute to language-specific extensions/categorizations. Su and Huang (2006) thus suggest including cultural-specific informations under the so-called ethnolinguistic notes in corpus documentation system. This will not only facilitate the understanding of corpus users, but also help to preserve precious information that is of particular value to the study of endangered languages, such as Formosan languages.

Nevertheless, the language-specific extension/categorization of a conceptual space should NOT be taken as a piece of evidence in support of the claim that formal differences should have any effect on the speaker’s ways of thinking. We suggest that linguists should be more cautious to argue the relation between linguistic form and thinking process when the connection between language and thought still remains a “hypothesis.” An insightful observation in Slobin (1996) suggests that the relation between “speech” and “thought” can be more correctly interpreted if rephrased as “speaking” and “thinking.” That is, the conventional ways of conceptualization in a speech community will definitely constrain the way of expression, and a speaker is required to “become sensitive” to the grammatical codings demanded in that language. In view of this, the relation between “speaking” and “thinking” is rather a dynamic process, and linguistic structure may affect the thinking of its speakers at the final stage of verbalization. Similarly, if there is a hint of evidence to show that Saisiyat speakers relate CONTINUATION to REPETITION better than Mandarin speakers can do, it might be that the language form triggers Saisiyat speakers’ semantic networking, but it does not necessarily illustrate how Mandarin Chinese retards the thinking capacity of Mandarin speakers.

5.3. Perspectivization revisited

The “conventional ways of conceptualization” in each language invite us to reconsider the relation between conceptual structure and semantic/syntactic structure in the framework given by Croft in Figure 3. We are also prompted to rethink the notion known as perspectivization in cognitive linguistics.

“Perspectivization” is the grounds taken by the speaker to view a particular scene during verbalization of a concept. The speaker could perceive an object/event from different angles, and different aspects of the same scene will come into view (Graumann and Kallmeyer 2002). Between the conceptual space and

the semantic and syntactic structures, there is a perspective taken by language users for verbalization.¹³

Theoretically, three alternative perspectives can be chosen: subjective, objective, and intersubjective (Traugott and Dasher 2002), as illustrated in the followings:

- (A) Objective: object-oriented; explicit
- (B) Subjective: speaker-oriented; evaluative/attitudinal, deictic
- (C) Intersubjective: hearer-oriented; polite

The three perspectives clearly illustrate Bühler's (1933) view of speech communication which contains three elements: "object," "speaker," and "hearer," in a triangular structure (cited from Graumann 1992: 240), as illustrated in Figure 6. Using language as a "sign" (as suggested by de Saussure), the speaker employs a symbol to represent the object (the topic of communication), and the language also serves as an index to express the speakers attitude/belief. In addition, it signals the speaker's attempt to appeal to the hearer. The speaker's perspective can align with the object, the hearer, or the speaker himself, respectively rendering objective, intersubjective, and subjective perspectivities.

Among them, subjectification and intersubjectification are two common tendencies of human perspectivization, and they are closely related to the direction of semantic change or grammaticalization (Langacker 1990; Traugott 1999). Objectification is an idealized explicit way of verbalization, with which the speaker is truthful to the state of affairs. In everyday language use, however, speakers seldom take a perspective purely from the object (Traugott and Dasher 2002).

With the three ways of perspectivization, language structures are supposed to be rich and idiosyncratic. The present study also shows that in a speech community, there is usually a preferred way of expression, which we will call the "collective" tendency of perspectivization. This is not a new claim, but can rather be traced back early in Saussure who regarded language as a social product—an agreed way of symbolization in a speech community for the purpose of

13. The term "perspectivization" has been used in many different senses. It is used elsewhere to mean the "vantage point" one takes to view a temporal or spatial configuration, e.g., "event-internal view" vs. "event-external view" as well as "realis vantage point" vs. "irrealis vantage point." This kind of perspectivization is referred to as "vantage point" or "viewpoint" in the present study. The term "perspectivization" in this study is used strictly to refer to the linguistic empathy/alignment with a specific conversational element in a communicative setting.

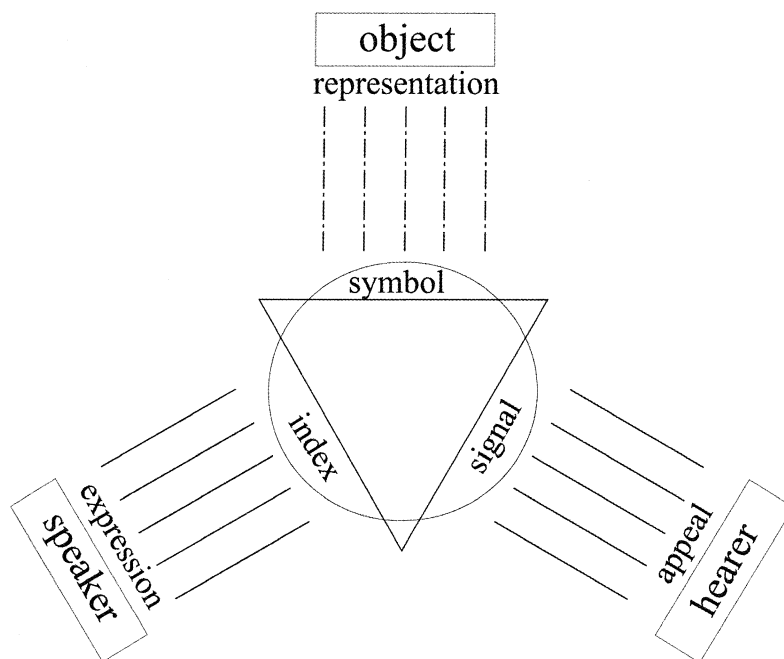


Figure 6. Bühler's Organon Model of communication

communication. Such a perspective can be added to the above list:

(D) Collective: culturally-oriented; ritualized; default

For example, REPETITION and CONTINUATION is potential to be conceptualized as the same lexical group as we have shown by Saisyat; however, speakers cannot freely determine the way of verbalization entirely from a subjective aspect. In Mandarin, for instance, there is a convention to express them as two separate lexical categories. In view of this, speakers' free choice is largely constrained when there has been a "collectively-oriented" way of expression in the speech community (Gyori 2002). Unless it is necessary to employ a "marked" way of expression, the conventional perspectivity is chosen as the priority for felicity of conversation. In a broad definition, constructions and fixed collocations are products of such collective perspectivization. They are agreed linguistic patterns that have to be "learned" or "memorized" for mastery of the language. As suggested by Graumann (1990), communicative competence of perspectivity is not only the simulation of others' perspective, but also the ability to grasp a social group's perspective.

Traugott (1999) claims that intersubjectification is a subtype of subjectification, and here we would like to suggest that "collectivization" can be regarded as

intersubjectification in essence. Rather than taking a speaker-internal view, the speaker in real conversation cannot be without audience and speech contexts. Like intersubjectification, collectivization appeals to the speaker-external factors of language, but with a wider scope that covers the backgrounding information of communication. In summary, in the three-level structure of language suggested in RCG (Croft 2001), mapping between levels are geared to collective perspectivization or a broad view of intersubjectification, which suggests the incorporation of semantic-pragmatics and syntactic-pragmatics in studies of language.

6. Conclusion

In the present study, the case of Saisiyat *nahan* shows that a pair of commonly-presumed semantic counterparts may diverge in some aspects, and the way of divergence is greatly influenced by language-specific evolution that involves complex contextualization and constructional patterning. And such language-specific partitioning has an impact on meta-language glossing. The result is in line with RCG: A conceptual space is potential to be construed in many alternative ways, but when it comes to verbalization, the linguistic “form” is expected to be language-specific and construction-specific.

The finding has motivated us to reconsider the general tendency of linguistic perspectivization. When a speaker encounters a scene, the perspective he takes for the purpose of verbalization is not entirely subjective. Instead, he has to follow the ritualized way of speech in the community. In addition to objectification, subjectification and intersubjectification, speakers are prone to take a “collective” perspective that is aligned with the speech community. This “collective perspective” is essentially a kind of “intersubjective perspective,” because they both reflect on speaker-external situations, with an even larger scope to include cultural-specific constraints.

In the past century, we have witnessed the view of language shifting from sociology to cognition and then back again. Saussure first draws our attention on linguistic study by emphasizing the social value of semiotics. As a social product, the nature of language should be consistent with that of other social activities. There was a time when such view was highly esteemed, until Chomskian approaches upheld the value of human cognition. Then, much effort has been placed on the functioning of human cognition independent from the outside world, and language is prone to be understood as a totally innate property universal to all human beings. In recent years, there is a revival of social awareness

that acknowledges the function of human cognition yet emphasizes the power of shared social value—which we would like to call “the sociology return.” This trend is represented by abundant works of “cognitive grammars” which blur the boundaries between semantics and pragmatics (Taylor 2002). By the present study, we hope to have shown that language as a social product has to take into consideration the power of contextualization, which include linguistic contexts as well as a general notion of social contexts.

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Appendix (coding conventions)

@	laughter	Fut	future tense marker
[xxx]	overlapping	Int	interjection
<E xxx E>	code switching (to English)	Lnk	ligature
=	lengthening	Mod	modality marker
BC	backchannel	Neg	negative marker
Class	classifier	Par	particle
Con	conjunction	Pfv	perfective aspect marker
Cop	copula	Prog	progressive aspect marker
DM	discourse marker	Red	reduplication
Ext	existential marker	<i>italicized</i>	a specific lexical item
FIL	filler	CAPITALIZED	a conceptual category

以語意圖譜呈現跨語言的多義詞比較： 兼談語言的觀點化理論

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摘 要

在跨語言溝通中，我們經常使用「直接翻譯」作為了解一個陌生語言的新詞語最迅捷的方式。本文藉由「語意圖譜」的理論，探討直接翻譯可能帶來的誤解：若將概念想像成一個圖譜，不同的語言在表達同一個概念時，切分概念空間的方式有其約定俗成的社會力量，圖譜劃分的邊界無法完美地符合，跨語言的同義詞也因此出現語意落差。以賽夏語的 *nahan* 一詞為例，它可以表示事件重複、事件延續、成員增述、以及事件相序。這些功能之間彼此相關，構成一個概念域，但是這個概念域在中文中卻被切分成三個類別，分別以「還」、「再」、「又」來表示。雖然中文的「還」、「再」、「又」常被視為 *nahan* 的跨語言同義詞，但這四個詞發展的路徑卻大不相同，各自和其語境緊密結合，其結構和意義必須仰賴學習而非單純的將之對等。這種概念表達的不自由性促使我們相信除了客觀化、主觀化、及互動主觀化之外，語言的使用應該加入「群體化」此一觀點。我們認為語言的型態與其社會功能息息相關，不能單純地用說話者的「個體認知能力」來解釋，而語境和社會性的影響正是未來語言學研究必須考慮的關鍵因素。

關鍵詞：比較語意學，語意圖譜，觀點化，語料標記

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