

A Classification Research of "Adverb+Noun" in Chinese and English from Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives under CRP Theory

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Abstract: *There are many adverbs in English and Chinese, and the grammar community usually thinks that adverbs can be used to modify verbs and adjectives, but in actual language use, it is found that there are many unconventional uses of "Adverb +Noun" in both English and Chinese, and this structure appears more and more frequently in Chinese, especially in colloquial language and online media. Many English grammar books deal with the phenomenon of "Adverb+Noun", but none of them give an adequate explanation. In Chinese, since the emergence of the "Adverb+Noun" in the 80s of the last century, the previous studies on this phenomenon have achieved great results from the initial denial of the structure to the current multi-angle interpretation and research, but there are also problems such as single research object, few cross-linguistic comparative studies, and confusion of classification. Therefore, from the perspective of cognitive comparative linguistics, this project intends to scientifically classify and compare the "Adverb+Noun" in Chinese and English languages from the syntactic level and the lexical level. Secondly, at the synchronic level, the cognitive reference point theory (CRP) and the combination of "constructive coercion" and "lexical coercion" jointly explain the cognitive mechanism of the "Adverb of degree+ Noun" type that needs to be studied after classification. Thirdly, at the diachronic level, this paper explores the development process of "Adverb of degree +Noun" in English and Chinese from grammatical construction to rhetorical construction and back to grammatical construction.*

Keywords: "Adverb+Noun"; Cognitive Mechanisms; Development Process

1. Introduction

In recent decades, there has been a controversy in Chinese grammar about whether adverbs can modify nouns, and with the increasing number of expressions of "Adverb+Noun" in Chinese. Research on this phenomenon has emerged one after another, which is mainly divided into three categories: the first type is that adverbs cannot modify nouns; the second type is that adverbs can modify nouns, and the third type believes that "Adverb+Noun" is a special phenomenon, admitting that adverbs can modify nouns, but are subject to other conditions, focusing on analysis and explanation. Most of the previous studies have focused on synchronicity, and have not made a detailed classification of "Adverb+Noun", and there is a mixed and confusing problem at the syntactic and lexical level [1]. Therefore, we can classify this structure of English and Chinese in detail from the syntactic level and the lexical level at the synchronic level. For the types that need to be studied, the cognitive reference point theory under cognitive linguistics is used to analyze the generation mechanism of cognitive linguistics combined with constructional coercion and lexical coercion. At the diachronic level, this paper analyzes the development process and law of the "Degree of adverb+Noun" from the initial grammatical construction to the rhetorical construction and then to the grammatical construction.

2. Classification of "Adverb+Noun" in English and Chinese

Based on the corpus accumulated by predecessors, the "Adverb+Noun" in Chinese is relatively complex, and only a few adverbs in English can enter this structure. It should be noted that the "Adverb+Noun" worthy of real research is not the linear arrangement of adverbs and nouns, but the existence of a certain modification or limiting relationship between the two (that is, the semantics of the adverb point to the noun) [4], which does not depend on the existence of the sentence structure and can be expressed independently. Yang Yiming and Xu Yizhong (2003) pointed out that the

interpretation of "Adverb+Noun" should pay attention to distinguishing different structural levels and examining various complex linguistic phenomena from a dynamic perspective. Therefore, at the synchronic level, we intend to analyze the classification of this structure at different levels.

2.1 At the Syntactic level

Once an adverb enters a structure, it no longer relates to other components as a single structure, but produces grammatical relations with the components. At the syntactic level, the structure of type A to type H belongs to those we should exclude. Because adverbs can only modify nouns in specific syntactic and pragmatic situations, that is, some syntactic or pragmatic "Adverb+Noun" are not inherent properties of the adverb itself, but are mainly determined by syntactic position. For example:

Type A: Words that denote places+"only"+ Nouns

Type B: already/only +time

e.g. (1) It is already/only autumn. ("already autumn" cannot express the complete semantics independently)

Type C: Adverb + noun (as predicate)

Type D: Adverb + Quantitative Noun/Structure

e.g. (1) Only five minutes (Adverbs modify numerals)

Type E: Adverb + noun phrase (as subject)

e.g. (1) Even one child can do it. (It is unable to express the full semantics independently)

Type F: Noun+ adverb

e.g. The way ahead (which is ahead)(It can be seen as a definite clause that omits relative pronouns and predicates)

Type G: Adverb+Noun/ Noun+adverb

e.g. the noise backstage/the backstage noise (It can be seen as a definite clause that omits relative pronouns and predicates.)

Type H: Negative adverb + noun

2.2 At the lexical level

The "Adverb+Noun" from Type I to Type K are structures we should analyze. Only those established at the lexical level can be considered as a true "Adverb+Noun" structure, because in this level, one component modifies another component at the static level, that is, it is not affected by syntactic structure or position. The structure is stable and can exist independently, and the adverb semantics point to the noun, e.g.

Type I: Adverb + noun signifying directions

Type J: Adverb signifying directions+ Noun: an away match; the then chairman

Type K: Adverb of degree + noun: Quite a man/gentleman

Among the above three types, the latest and most worthy of study is the Type-K, that is, the English and Chinese structures of "Degree adverb + Noun", which is a construction that has existed for a long time in Chinese, and there are usually three kinds of nouns that enter the construction type: abstract nouns, proper nouns and concrete nouns. In this collocation, the referential meaning of the noun changes from the extended meaning to the connotative meaning. The following part will focus on the analysis of the Chinese and English "degree adverb + noun" structure from the synchronic and diachronic levels. As is shown in Figure 1.

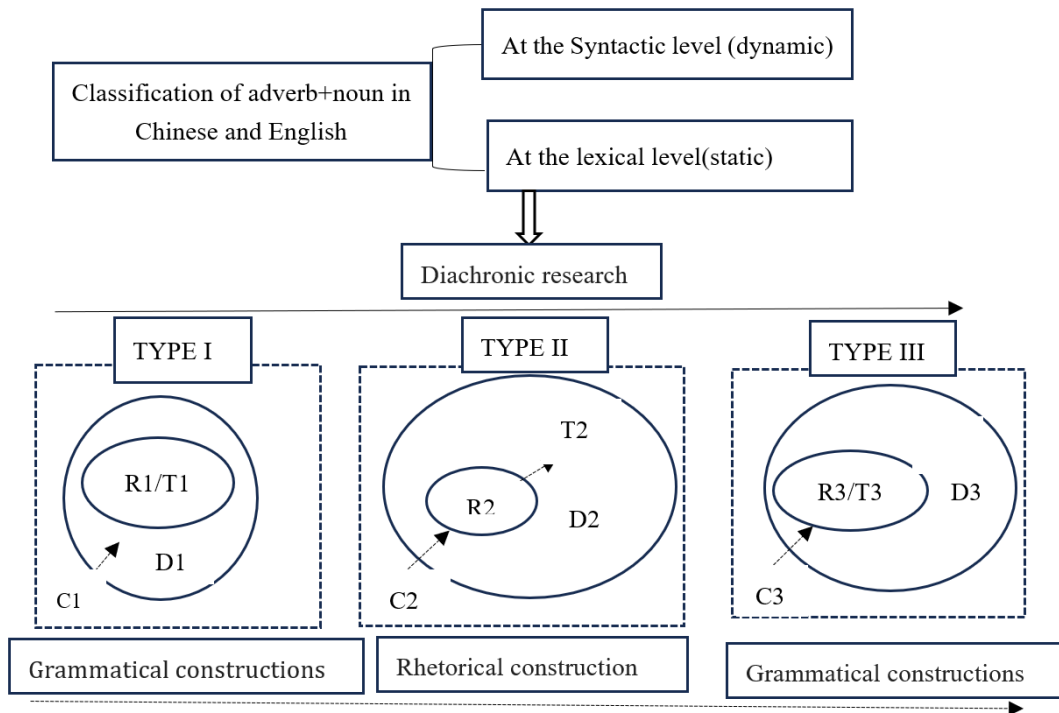


Figure 1: Synchronic and diachronic studies of "Adverb of degree + Noun"

3. The synchronic research—Cognitive Reference Point theory combines constructive coercion and lexical coercion

Langacker believes that the Cognitive Reference Point theory is pervasive in people's daily life, and he defines the theory as: establishing psychological contact with another entity by activating the concept of a certain entity. Its cognitive reference process refers that the cognitive subject (C) often uses another more recognizable entity (R) as a medium to recognize the target when recognizing a target entity (T). The dotted arrow indicates the mental path experienced by the cognitive subject in the cognitive goal, and D represents the cognitive domain. That is, a series of scope concepts that are achieved through a particular reference point.

As we can see from the above figure, in the "Adverb+Noun" structure, the traditional type I construction, i.e., "adverb + nouns for location" or "nouns for location + adverb", the semantics of the adverb directly point to nouns for location, and the cognitive subject C1 does not need to go through the mediation R1 in the process of recognizing the target T1 (nouns for location), so R1 and T1 share the same category. With the continuous expansion of the semantic and pragmatic functions of the constructional term, the use of the type II construction has emerged, e.g. "quite an expert". In the process of understanding the structure, the cognitive subject (C2) uses the noun term "expert" as the medium (R2) under the joint influence of constructional coercion and lexical coercion, highlighting the adjective attribute meaning of "expert", that is "professional, meticulous and rigorous" in the term (T2). And suppressing the referential meaning of the word. With the popularity and widespread use of the "Adverb+Noun", more and more nouns have entered the structure, forming a new conventional type III construction, which is gradually generalized and has prolific properties. The cognitive subject (C3) does not have to repeat the previous complex steps in the process of recognizing the structure. The extended meaning and connotative meaning (i.e., R3 and T3) are recognized at the same time, and people widely recognize and accept this expression, which gradually solidifies and evolves into a new grammatical construction.

Cognitive Construction Grammar believes that the syntax and semantics of a word must rely on its overall construction to make accurate analysis, that is, the overall syntactic environment can force words (especially verbs) to change their syntactic and semantic features, which is the main meaning of "Construction Coercion" [5]. In the construction of "Adverb+Noun", the construction suppresses the noun that enters the construction. Restricted by the principle of saving effort and the principle of cognitive prominence, the term will be inconsistent with the construction many times after entering the

construction, so the construction must suppress the word term and highlight the meaning consistent with the construction in the term. In this construction, the construction suppresses the noun and highlights attribute characteristics of the noun. Similarly, the suppressive effect is sometimes caused by a word in the construction, for example, in the "Adverb+Noun" structure, the main source of the suppressive effect is the adverb, while the semantics of the adverb itself does not change. When it is combined with the noun, it will force the noun to change in syntactic semantics and pragmatics. Take "quite an expert" for example. The meaning of "quite" does not change, but under the effect of its lexical coercion, the attribute meaning of "expert" is forced to be highlighted, and the referential meaning of its noun enters the background.

This is also the pervasive metonymy in language. Cognitive linguistics holds that people recognize the whole object or event by using the prominent aspect of an object, concept or event, or conversely use the whole object or event as a part of the gestalt cognition. In the structure of "Adverb of degree + Noun", the meaning of proper noun is not referential, but the attribute part.

4. The diachronic research of "Adverb of degree + Noun"

According to Liu Dawei's definition of grammatical construction and rhetorical construction, grammatical construction refers to any kind of construction that can be deduced from the constituent components, as well as a construction that has been completely grammaticalized although there is a non-derivable construction meaning[2]. Rhetorical constructions refer to all constructions that have non-derivability, as long as this non-derivability has not been fully grammaticalized in the construction. According to the above definition, both types I and III are grammatical constructions, while type II is a rhetorical construction as shown in the diagram above.

Grammatical construction and rhetorical construction are two ends of a continuum. Grammatical construction only focuses on construction with derivability (such as type I construction), and construction whose non-derivable meaning is fixed through grammaticalization (such as type III construction), while rhetorical construction focuses on non-derivable construction meaning, and pays attention to the language forms that do not exist stably in the language, but present novel and temporary language form (such as type II construction). rhetorical Here "rhetoric" does not mean the use of a certain rhetorical device for a certain rhetorical purpose in the traditional sense, but refers to the "large number of atypical, abnormal tense, and sentences limited by a certain situation" caused by various factors in the language [3], the type I construction is grammaticalized and highly productive, the type III construction can be activated by the solidification and memory of the non-derivable construction, and the understanding of the non-derivable meaning of the type II rhetorical construction requires on-the-spot mental operation. That is, through the Cognitive Reference Point, the organic combination of construction coercion and lexical coercion highlight the attribute characteristics of nouns. This process is more time-consuming than type I and type III constructions, because it requires the understander to spend more time to deduce. However, even if the type II construction is less effective, and the acceptability and legitimacy are lower at the beginning, it has aroused the interest of users. People need to express themselves by more innovative language forms, so in the process of continuous use, the type II construction continues to become highly productive. The meaning of the construction is solidified, thus forming a process from type I grammatical construction to type II rhetorical construction and then to type III grammatical construction. The new grammatical construction gradually presents grammatical characteristics, and the change of grammatical construction originates from rhetorical construction. All the rhetorical constructions that are frequently used will eventually evolve into grammatical constructions.

5. Conclusion

Based on previous research, this paper first classifies the "Adverb+Noun" in English and Chinese languages from the syntactic level and the lexical level. Then, at the synchronic level, the Cognitive Reference Point theory (CRP) is used to combine with the "Constructive Coercion" and "Lexical Coercion" to explain the cognitive mechanism of the "Degree adverb +Noun" that needs to be studied after classification. At the diachronic level, this paper explores the development process of "Adverb of degree +Noun" in English and Chinese from grammatical construction to rhetorical construction and back to grammatical construction.

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