

Cognitive Thinking Differences in E-C Translation Driven by Temporal/Spatial Preferences: A Case Study of the Translation of “The Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East”

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ABSTRACT

This study, grounded in the interdisciplinary integration of cognitive science and translation studies known as translation cognition, examines how differing temporal-spatial cognitive orientations in English and Chinese influence translation processes. English exhibits a temporality preference, explicitly linking semantic logic through grammatical and lexical devices, while Chinese demonstrates a spatiality preference with nonlinear, chunked, and discrete language encoding. During translation, translators must cognitively reconstruct the source language to align with the target language's cognitive and expressive conventions. Analyzing English-Chinese translation cases from "*The Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal For the Far East*," the research reveals cognitive strategies in semantic processing and sentence restructuring. It emphasizes the importance of understanding and applying temporal-spatial cognitive differences in cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication.

KEYWORDS

Temporality Preferences; Spatiality Preferences; Cognitive Thinking Differences; English-Chinese Translation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Empirical translation processes are complex and dynamic, and linguistic contrastive studies have always been a focal point in academia. Since the beginning of this century, the rapid development of cognitive science has intersected and integrated with various fields, inspiring new research perspectives, and translation cognitive science is one of these inspirations. On the basis of cognitive studies, the translation community has begun to turn to explore the cognitive thinking and processing involved in translation. Translation is an interaction between the source and target languages, a communication between different cultures, and a collision of different national thoughts. This paper will focus on the translation process of "*The Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal For the Far East*" under the theoretical framework of temporal-spatial thinking differences between English and Chinese within the scope of cognitive linguistics, exploring the cognitive drive and processing paradigms of translators.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Hypotaxis and Parataxis

There is a long history and rich achievement in the comparative study of English and Chinese in academia. In the last century, linguists both at home and abroad agreed that the distinction between hypotaxis and parataxis is an important characteristic of the English and Chinese languages (Wang, 1940; Nida, 1982). There has been in-depth exploration on this point, with fruitful results. However, these studies only stayed at the level of observation and description of the ontology of language, rarely delved into the cognitive thinking level.

Multiple researchers have underlined the need for carefully choosing between hypotaxis and parataxis in translations from Chinese to English. Translators tend to transform Chinese paratactic relations into English hypotactic ones, inserting dependent clauses (Li & Yu, 2021). The discrete nature of Chinese spatiality meshes with the freedom inherent in formulaic expressions, yet the absence of connectivity hampers the evolution towards temporality (Liu & Wang, 2022).

Traditional comparative studies also appears in political discourse translations. It has primarily explored the bipartite cultural differences, notably the well-recognized contrast between "hypotaxis" and "parataxis". There has been a scarcity of investigations into deep-seated philosophical or cognitive aspects, resulting in an incomplete picture of political discourse. Building on Wang Wenbin's (2019) discourse on spatial-temporal variances between English and Chinese, scholars have embarked on empirical studies examining the distinct chunk discourse informed by this theoretical framework (Cao Huan et al., 2024; Cao Huan et al., 2023; Liu Shaolong et al., 2021).

In light of this context, the present study endeavors to delve into the uniqueness of form and meaning in chunk structures found in Chinese political speech. By comparing the original Chinese text with English translations, the aim is to unearth cognitive mechanisms, hermeneutics, and fundamental ideational contrasts that inform our understanding. These comparative analyses promise to offer valuable perspectives and frameworks for cognitive linguistic thinking, the practice of translation, and further academic inquiry.

2.2. Temporality Preferences and Spatiality preferences

In 2013, Wang revisited the unique differences between English and Chinese through a lens of differing national psyches, attributing Chinese to spatiality and English to temporality (Wang, 2013). Chinese is marked by fragmented, implicit communication, largely made up of these formulaic expressions, whereas English communication is more explicit and coherent. Studies have also examined the paratactic and hypotactic differences between the two languages, highlighting English's focus on form and subject-predicate construction, whereas Chinese prioritizes meaning, resulting in a more flexible structure overall.

In 2019, Wang Wenbin's book "On the Temporal-Spatial Differences of English and Chinese" explained the intrinsic differences between English and Chinese in linguistic genes and cognitive thinking. From the bottom up, the deconstruction of the hierarchical structure of language can be as small as phonemes, morphemes, or as large as sentences and texts; from the top down, thinking determines the speaker's cognition of the world and shapes their language processing paradigm. Whether from the perspective of etymology, morphological structure, or phrases, sentences, and texts, what is evident is the different cognitive thinking of the two cultures and nations.

The main temporal-spatial difference between English and Chinese is that English has a strong temporal aspect, while Chinese has a strong spatial aspect. The affiliation of the two languages in linguistic typology can also be glimpsed. English is a language transitioning from synthetic to analytical, emphasizing the integrity of language form and structure, using various forms such as vocabulary, morphology, and grammar to make explicit connections, to show meaning through form,

displaying a one-dimensional linear progression of thinking, highlighting the temporal cognition and thinking preferences of its nation. As an analytic language, Chinese is characterized by its block-like discreteness, with its language encoding showing spatial aggregation, emphasizing the relationships between words and sentences, and forming a pattern of scattered yet organized writing, showcasing a multi-dimensional spiral thinking method characteristic of the strong spatial thinking cognition of the Chinese people.

2.3. Formulaic Expressions

The term "formulaic expressions" was introduced by Becker in the mid-1970s, suggesting that such expressions are embedded in the human mind (Wu, 2010). These expressions are prevalent in everyday language, constituting over 80% of all natural language (Wang, 2020; Cao & Liu, 2021). These fixed or frozen sequences are often seen as rigid due to their frequent use and recognition as complete units of meaning. Moreover, Nattinger & DeCarrico describe lexical phrases as varying lengths of language fragments that straddle the traditional definitions of lexicon and syntax, being more predictable and idiomatic than language constructed afresh each time.

Academia has yet to set a definitive word count for these chunks. An expression is considered "formulaic" if it shows a pattern of fixedness, ranging from small linguistic units like morphemes to larger constructs like idioms, proverbs, and even entire sentences or texts (Wary, 2000; Alwhan, 2019). Regarding implicit Chinese political language and explicit English translations, such formulaic expressions are common in Chinese political texts, including idioms and set phrases used in diplomatic speech (Liu et al, 2021; Du & Chen, 2022; Yang, 2023). Yang introduced the idea of "diplomatic formulaic expressions," noting their tendency to conceal certain information, like the agents involved. Statistical analysis shows a mere 9% of Chinese sentences adhere to the subject-predicate structure, often leaving the actor's identity undefined (Zhang & Yang, 2023).

The burgeoning field of political discourse analysis is seeing scholars take a wide-lens approach, exploring the global spread of China's political messages, developing Chinese political discourse systems, and establishing norms for translating political terms (Yang Ping, 2017; Hu Kaibao, 2019; Hu Anjiang, 2020).

The challenge of spreading Chinese political ideas effectively has captured scholarly focus, with an emphasis on the principles and tactics of translation becoming a major area of interest (Wang Kefei, 2010; Huang Youyi, 2015; Lin Rong & Lin Dajin, 2016; Yang Wangping, 2018). Researchers have concentrated on specific 'keywords' or 'distinctive terms', (Yang Mingxing, 2008; Zhu Chunshen & Zhang Junfeng, 2011; Yang Mingxing, 2016), yet a comprehensive systematization of political discourse has been lacking. In response, researchers have identified "chunk constructions" as a characteristic of Chinese political language and have begun examining their use and how they are translated (Liu Shaolong & Wang Liuqi, 2021; Cao Huan & Liu Shaolong, 2021; Liu Shaolong et al., 2021).

3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

3.1. The Temporality Preference in English

Examples (1) and (2) are both from The Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal For the Far East on December 10, 1946. They will be used as examples for explanation. The cognitive thinking pattern behind the English language is linear, focusing on getting straight to the point and coherence. American scholar Kaplan conducted a systematic analysis of the writing styles of foreign students with different native languages, and found that the thought patterns of different ethnicities have a profound impact on the patterns of written discourse (Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education; 1996).

Table 1. English Texts in E.g. (1) & (2)

<p>E.g. (1)</p>	<p>There can be no denying the fact, your Honor, that after all we are all human and have our likes and prejudices, and we feel that if the prosecution here should be permitted to introduce this evidence without at least showing a prima facie case against those whom they intend to hold responsible for these acts, that some of the other accused would possibly suffer as a result of the introduction of this evidence and perhaps the failure on the part of the prosecution when they are finished to show any connecting link between these acts and any of these accused.</p> <p>(Mr. Logan; <i>The Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal For the Far East</i>; Dec. 10, 1946)</p>
<p>E.g. (2)</p>	<p>If the Tribunal please, before starting to present our evidence we beg to call attention to the fact that technically our phase covers Class C offenses in general and Classes D and C offenses in the Philippines involving the 2nd, 3rd and 4th clauses of the last paragraph of page 1 of the Indictment; Counts 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48. 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54 and 55 of the Indictment, including Appendix B thereof.</p> <p>(Mr. Lopez; <i>The Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal For the Far East</i>; Dec. 10, 1946)</p>

In example (1), Mr. Logan used grammatical conjunctions such as "that," "and," "if," "whom," "as," "when," etc., to link ideas; the use of "if," "as," and "when" explicitly elaborates the semantic relationship between English sentences. In example (2), Mr. Lopez used several grammatical conjunctions like "if," "before," "that," "and," "of," etc., which organically connect the internal components of the sentence and between sentences. Hence, it's clear that the "strong temporal aspect" of English is specifically manifested by its connective and continuative construction, with continuity hinging on connectivity, and its linear order achieved through grammatical device and lexical means.

3.2. The Spatiality Preference in Chinese

The spatiality preference of Chinese language is specifically manifested in the discrete, reversible chunky constructions. Discreteness is conditioned by chunky-like structure, and discreteness leads to reversibility, their combined non-linear or chunky order is achieved through semantic processing or non-grammatical/lexical means. The cognitive thinking pattern behind the Chinese language is a circular thought pattern (Kaplan, 1966), where the narrative can put aside the current topic to transfer to other content, and then come back to the previous topic; or in narrative, it is not necessary to always describe content that is directly related to the theme, but rather adopt an approach that deals with certain content in a loosely connected manner.

E.g. (3) shì jiè cháo liú^①(World trends), hào hào dàng dàng^②(mighty and majestic), shùn zhī zé chāng^③(those who follow will flourish), nì zhī zé wáng^④(those who resist will perish).

E.g. (4) cháng qī gòng cún^①(long-term coexistence), hù xiāng jiān dū^②(mutual supervision), gān dǎn xiāng zhào^③(sincere treatment with each other), róng rǔ yǔ gòng^④(sharing of weal or woe).

Examples (3) and (4) in Chinese source language both show a four "four-character chunky structure" (4+4+4+4, 4×4) constituting a combined sequence "shì jiè cháo liú /hào hào dàng dàng/shùn zhī zé chāng/nì zhī zé wáng" (example 3) as well as "cháng qī gòng cún /hù xiāng jiān dū/gān dǎn xiāng zhào/róng rǔ yǔ gòng" (example 4) with all the internal components of these two sequences formed by a four-syllable rhythm. Both cognitive grammar and construction grammar emphasize semantic and pragmatic factors (Langacker, 2004; Fillmore et al, 1988), and they emphasize the subtle aspects of understanding events and states of affairs (Goldberg, 1995 & 2003). On closer observation, we can

see that the source language reveals different groups of meanings, with block structures showing different semantic logical relationships.

Table 2. Chinese Chunky Construction and its Translation Reconstruction in E.g. (3)

ST (3)	shì jiè cháo liú ①	hào hào dàng dàng②	shùn zhī zé chāng③	nì zhī zé wáng④
Meaning	The tide of history①	mighty②	follow it will prosper③	resist it will perish④
TT (3)	The tide of history <u>is</u> mighty.		<i>Those</i> who follow it will prosper, <i>while those</i> who resist it will perish.	

Table 3. Chinese Chunky Construction and its Translation Reconstruction in E.g. (4)

ST (4)	cháng qī gòng cún ①	hù xiāng jiān dū②	gān dǎn xiāng zhào③	róng rǔ yǔ gòng ④
Meaning	long-term coexistence	mutual supervision	sincere treatment with each other	sharing of weal or woe
TT (4)	<i>The Chinese Communist Party</i> upholds the principle of long-term coexistence, mutual supervision, sincere treatment with each other <i>and</i> the sharing of weal or woe in its relations with China's other democratic parties.			

In the translation of example (3), that is target test (3), the semantic logic is divided into two groups of meanings, “shì jiè cháo liú /hào hào dàng dàng//shùn zhī zé chāng/nì zhī zé wáng”. In the first group of meaning "shì jiè cháo liú /hào hào dàng dàng", a subject-predicate-object structure is formed, with "mighty and majestic" serving as the predicate of "world trends". In the second group of meaning "shùn zhī zé chāng/nì zhī zé wáng", the two chunky structures form a contrasting relationship, highlighted in the translation with "while." Within each block structure, a conditional and result semantic relationship is formed, and the translation is reconstructed as follows: Those who follow it will prosper, while those who resist it will perish.

Example (4) shows a very typical representation of the non-linear spatial preference of Chinese cognition, with implicit forms and connective means, aiming to achieve the expressive effect of "semantic leading with a dispersed yet united spirit" in the translation. For example, the entire Chinese sentence omits the implied subject, which, combined with the context, is known to be “the Chinese Communist Party”. Furthermore, due to the constraint of the four-character rhythm, "cháng qī gòng cún /hù xiāng jiān dū" omits the attribute that they both express principles, as well as the parallel logical relationship between them. The two chunky structures "gān dǎn xiāng zhào/róng rǔ yǔ gòng" also omit the object (with China's other democratic parties) and the parallel logical relationship between them. Therefore, the translation is reconstructed as follows: The Chinese Communist Party upholds the principles of long-term coexistence, mutual supervision, sincere treatment with each other, and sharing of weal or woe in its relations with China's other democratic parties.

4. COGNITIVE THINKING PATTERN IN E-C TRANSLATION PROCESS

As a rising global force, China has garnered increased international attention, prompting a shift in academic research from broadly "translating the world" to the more specific task of "translating China" (Huang Youyi, 2021). The year 2022 marks the 77th anniversary of the victory in the War of

Resistance Against Japan. Looking back on history, it is a calamity for the people and a shame for the country. "Remember the past, and you shall not be doomed to repeat it", the publication of the complete translation of the Chinese Translation of "*The Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal For the Far East*" is undoubtedly a warning medicine for peaceful times, which is of great significance for mankind to correctly understand the significance of the Tokyo Trials. Under the current international situation, it also has far-reaching academic significance for the study of human war history, world anti-fascist history, and understanding the dangers of war.

The English corpus of this study comes from the "*The Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal For the Far East*" (April 16, 1947 - April 30, 1947), and the Chinese corpus is selected from the second volume of the "yuǎn dōng guó jì jūn shì fǎ tíng tíng shēn jì lù-quán yì běn (The Chinese Translation of The Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal For the Far East)" Volume 17. The study of the cognitive drive in its translation process can subtly clarify the mysteries and promote the development of translation practices of such texts in the future. The specific cases will be analyzed one by one.

Table 4. English Source Text and its Chinese Translation in E.g. (5)

ST (5)	As Chang Fsueh-liang and his followers' anti-Japanese policy consists of ' resistance to Japan through compromise with communism and union with Soviet Russia ', the attention(Exhibit No. 2514)
TT (5)	yóu yú zhāng xué liáng jí qí zhuī suí zhě de kàng rì zhèng cè jiàn lì zài " lián é róng gòng kàng rì "guān xì jī chǔ shàngwéi shì rén zhǔ mù. (tíng shēn dì 2514hào zhèng jù)

Language is a continuum; this example starts from the phrase level, explaining the different thinking paradigms of English and Chinese in recognizing the world. In ST 5 and TT 5, the bold parts show the source language material and its translation, and the difference is significant to the naked eye. So, how did the translator complete the cognitive processing of translation? Analyzing the syntactic structure of ST 5, the bold part is a structurally complex nominal component, resistance is the head, followed by two prepositional phrases of different complexity ("to Japan", "through compromise with communism and union with Soviet Russia") as its complements. The italicized "to", "through", "with", "and" and "with" are all explicit linking lexical forms, the expressions of temporal cognitive thinking. Given the strong spatial preference inherent in Chinese, it cannot be translated as "tōng guò yǔ gòng chǎn guó jì hé zuò hé tōng guò yǔ sū lián lián hé duì rì běn jìn xíng dǐ kàng" during the translation process, which would be against the expressive habits of the Chinese language.

Therefore, when translating into the target language Chinese, one should refer to the non-linear spatial preference of Chinese for cognition, hiding explicit linking forms, to achieve the expressive effect of "lead by semantics, coherent in spirit". Therefore, consider breaking it down into "kàng rì", "róng gòng", "lián é". At the same time, the spatial cognitive characteristics of Chinese are also reflected in the block-like, discrete, and reversible nature of language representation. Combining the syntactic analysis of the source language, "kàng rì" is the purpose, "róng gòng", "lián é" are the means. Therefore, based on the strong spatial characteristics of the target language, the semantic reorganization of the translation into "lián é róng gòng kàng rì (resistance to Japan through compromise with communism and union with Soviet Russia) " is as shown in TT 5.

From this example, one can perceive that the cognitive thinking preferences of the source and target languages drive the translator's language processing during the translation process. Apart from phrases, are sentence translations also subject to such cognitive thinking drives? Let's look at the following example.

Table 5. English Source Text and its Chinese Translation in E.g. (6)

ST (6)	①Able men <i>shall be</i> collected at large <i>and</i> men of talent <i>shall be</i> appointed. ②The education <i>shall be</i> spread <i>and</i> proper courtesy <i>shall be</i> observed. ③Police and soldiers <i>shall be</i> trained <i>and</i> the calamity of bandit <i>shall be</i> regulated. (①②③: Exhibit No. 445)
TT (6)	①guǎng jù rén cái, qǐ yòng jùn xián. ②pǔ jí jiào yù, zūn chóng lǐ jiào. ③xùn liàn jǐng chá yǔ jūn duì, sù qīng fěi huàn. (①②③: tíng shēn dì 445hào zhèng jù)

The form of sentences in ST 6 ①②③ is very similar and relatively simple; the italicized words are all linguistic "links and continuations" under the driving of English temporal preference, among which "shall" and "be" are morpho-syntactic means, and "and" is a lexical linking means. They all show English's emphasis on formal structural integrity and the pursuit of "showing meaning through form". These sentences as a whole are clear in structure, all joined by "and", with two clauses in parallel before and after. When translating into Chinese, since Chinese is driven by spatial thinking preference, it is advisable to make these formal means implicit, and therefore, it is unnecessary to translate as "yīng gāi (shall)", "bèi (be)", "hé (and)", in pursuit of the expressive effect of "simple in form, rich in meaning".

From the TT 6①②③ examples, one can see that translators, when translating into the target language, have well recognized the temporal genetic representation in English and effectively adapted to the spatial genetic representation in Chinese. Both ① and ② translate the two clauses into the chunky constructions "guǎng jù rén cái", "qǐ yòng jùn xián" and "pǔ jí jiào yù", "zūn chóng lǐ jiào", respectively, each "four-character chunk" representing a "2+2" rhythmic structure, each with a verb-object structure within the four-character chunk, restoring the parallel structure in the source language and meeting the cognitive thinking drive and language expression norms of the target language. ③ is also translated into two parts, restoring the source language's structure and complying with the linguistic characteristics of the target language. However, considering the chunky discreteness of the form under the spatial characteristics of Chinese and the aesthetic content of its rhythmic beauty, there is still some regret in ③. If translated as "xùn jǐng liàn jūn, sù qīng fěi huàn", it might be better.

Table 6. English Source Text and its Chinese Translation in E.g. (7)

ST (7)	The government of the Chinese Republic①, <i>by</i> adopting wrong measures in regard to the recent incident in the Eastern Provinces②, <i>has opened</i> hostilities against a friendly country ③, <i>victimizing</i> many people④, <i>on whom</i> we take great pity⑤. (Exhibit No. 278-A)
TT (7)	cǐ cì dōng shěng shì biàn(②-2), mǐn guó zhèng fǔ①chù cuò shī dāng(②-1), kāi xìn yǒu bāng③, tú tàn shēng líng④, yǔ shèn mǐn zhī⑤.(tíng shēn dì 278-A hào zhèng jù)

Here is an analysis of another complex sentence translation process. In ST 7, bold italic "by", "has opened", "victimizing", and "on whom" are all explicit linking forms indicating the continuation under the driving of English temporal properties. The mood marks in "has opened" and "victimizing" further highlight the importance of time in English thinking. Relying on these formal means, the

sentence can be divided into five different parts ①②③④⑤, each performing different syntactic-pragmatic functions. It is known from the analysis that ① is argument 1 "The government of the Chinese Republic", ② can be broken down into manner "by adopting wrong measures (②-1)" plus object adjunct "in regard to the recent incident in the Eastern Provinces (②-2)", ③ is the predicate "open" and argument 2 "hostilities" and its complement components "against a friendly country", ④ indicates the result with a non-finite verb, and ⑤ is a relative clause modifying "people".

With the strong spatial cognitive thinking preferences, Chinese emphasizes chunky spatial aggregation of tangible things and rarely uses linking means, focusing on implicit connections, logical reasoning, and comprehensive form. As previously discussed, when translating into Chinese, one must not simply copy the source language, but consider the target language's thinking preference and use it as a cognitive reference point.

First, look at how the five parts are translated internally after preliminary decomposition. In addition to the formal linking means indicated in the source language, there are also articles, prepositions, and other lexical linking means inside (such as the, of, etc.; for a better understanding of the overall structure, they are not shown in example 3). Based on the previous discussion, when translating into Chinese, explicit linkages in English often need to be turned into implicit ones, so under the spatial cognitive drive of the Chinese people, the translator has commendably processed them into "mín guó /zhèng fǔ", "chù cuò /shī dāng", "cǐ cì dōng shěng/shì biàn", "kāi xīn /yǒu bāng", "tú tàn /shēng líng", "yǔ /shèn mǐn zhī". At the same time, as indicated by the underline, most of the translation is in the "four-character rhythm" structure (with "yǔ /shèn mǐn zhī" as a 1+3 pattern), which not only presents the representation of block language under the spatial thinking preferences of Chinese but also shows the cognitive control mechanism of the "four-character block", which is spatial aesthetic in painting. From an overall perspective, the translation finally shows a source language corresponding sequence of ②-2/①/②-1/③/④/⑤, highlighting the block-like linguistic distribution of discreteness and reversibility, exactly fitting the strong spatial thinking trait of Chinese, demonstrating the cognitive thinking driver of its translation processing.

5. SUMMARY

It can be seen that the translation process is the process of converting source language into target language. As Humboldt said: Language and national cognitive thinking intertwine, different cognitions result in different linguistic representations; the inherent national thinking differences in English and Chinese languages also determine the different linguistic genetic coding of both. Therefore, the theory of temporal-spatial differences in English and Chinese thinking provides a cognitive drive path for English-Chinese/Chinese-English translation practice, and also offers a theoretical perspective for empirical translation research.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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