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Comparing construals across languages and genres:

A perspective of Cognitive Linguistics

Course: General and diachronic linguistics

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Table of contents

COMMENTARY TO HABILITATION THESIS[1]

The present thesis, entitled "Comparing construals across languages and genres: A perspective of Cognitive Linguistics", is composed pursuant of MU Directive No. 7/2017, Section 6 (1b), in the form of a collection of 9 previously published scholarly works with a commentary. The commentary, which follows immediately below, comprises a characterization of the investigated matter (Section 1), objectives of the work (Section 2), research questions and employed methodology (Section 3), obtained results (Section 4), a self-assessment of the work reported in this thesis (Section 5), works cited in the commentary and the applicant's share of contribution in each of the publications included in the habilitation thesis.

1. Investigated matter: variation of construals

One of the basic principles of Cognitive Linguistics is that semantics is equated with conceptualization (Croft & Cruse, 2004; Langacker, 2008). The principle is different from the assumption of the truth-conditional (logical) semantics, where the meaning of language is evaluated in terms of the truth or the falsity of a proposition relative to the world and where highly abstract semantic generalizations are sought. As a result of such reductionist thinking of logical semantics, many semantic-pragmatic subtleties are pushed to the periphery of the human language faculty. In reaction to the context-independent approach to language, Cognitive Linguistics came along in the 1980s and appealed to a radically usage-based approach to language, claiming that the meaning of human language emerges from actual language use by placing emphasis on conventionalized semantic-pragmatic subtleties.

Following this *usage-based* (Barlow & Kemmer, 2000) commitment of Cognitive Linguistics, the current thesis explores the variation of *construals* mediated through the linguistic encoding of comparable real-life situations (or *usage events* in Cognitive Linguistic terms). The comparison of construals is made across languages (when the same semantic content is expressed) and across genres (within the same language when the same pragmatic act is performed), which aims to show the range of construal operations allowed for by different sets of conventionalized linguistic tools (across languages) and by the socio-culturally-agreed conventions related to the pragmatic act (across genres).

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[1] The in-text citations and the references in the thesis follow the APA format.

1.1 Comparing the construals of narrative viewpoint across languages

The first section of the thesis (Publications 1-4) is a cross-linguistic approach to the construal of *viewpoint* (Dancygier, 2012; Dancygier & Sweetser, 2012) in narratives, drawing on linguistic samples from English and Chinese. In particular, I compare the linguistic manifestations of narrative viewpoint and the resultant construals that are invoked by the viewpoint expressions in the two languages.

Narrative viewpoint is a research issue that has attracted increasing scholarly interest in cognitive linguistics, poetics and stylistics, which can be witnessed in the various collections of works in different publication venues (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2012; Dancygier & Vandellanotte, 2017; Vandelanotte & Dancygier, 2017). In most of the above works, language is understood as the bed of rock that facilitates the emergence of meaning in literary works as linguistic artefacts, with the mixing, or the switching between narrative viewpoints being a crucial part of the poetics. Under such rubric, Mental Spaces Theory (Fauconnier, 1997) and Conceptual Blending Theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) have been extensively applied to the study of text-wide meaning construction (Dancygier, 2012; Fonseca, Pascual & Oakley, 2020; van Krieken, Sanders & Hoeken, 2016). But lower at the sentential level, analyses of viewpointing devices from a *constructionist* perspective (Goldberg, 1995) also abound. Along this line of investigation, in the reading process of a literary work, the linguistic form that participates in the composition of the text may help construct a mental space, and the reader's attention is guided between the mental spaces in the story as s/he encounters different linguistic cues that are typically associated with one of the many spaces. Typical constructions that have been identified with a viewpointing function discussed thus far in literature include: personal pronouns (Dancygier, 2012; Rubba, 1996), deixis (Dancygier, 2012; Wu, 2004); at the more grammatical end along the lexicon-grammar continuum, we can see tense marking (Sanders & van Krieken, 2019), discourse particles (Engberg-Pedersen & Boeg Thomsen, 2016), and negation (Dacnygier & Vandelanotte, 2016; Foolen & Yamaguchi, 2016). In addition, there are also constructions or templates that do not involve a specific linguistic form, such as the inversion of word order (Dorgeloh, 1997; Chen, 2003). As we go beyond what has been traditionally considered the core of verbal communication, color and character size in picture books (Fukada, 2016), non-verbal cues, including eye gaze (Sweetser & Stec, 2016), body leaning, head position and facial expression

(Josep Jarque & Pascual, 2016), and body partitioning (Jansen, 2019) are also meaningful in communicating narrative viewpoint.

To illustrate how a typical viewpointing construction works in communicating narrative responsibility, consider the following excerpt, cited from the discussion of Dancygier (2012, p. 69), which is taken in turn from the narration of a narrating subject (about someone else's life) in a novel by Henry Fielding.

> *He now lived, for the most part, retired in the country, with one sister, for whom he had a very tender affection… This lady was now somewhat past the age of thirty.* (Tom Jones, p. 17)

In the excerpt, the past tense marker is a viewpoint construction typically seen in literary narratives, where the narrator starts out from the story viewpoint space, which is an independent mental space that contains a narrating subject and a reader (or a listener), with the time of narration being present. In a typical literary narrative, the story viewpoint space usually has access to all the other mental spaces that develop as the narrative goes along. The use of the past tense in this example is to set the distance between the narrating subject (in the story viewpoint space) and the main narrative space, making a clear distinction between the time of story-telling (which is present) and the time of the reported event (which is earlier than the time of the story-telling). In this example, the pronoun *he* is used to refer to a character situated in the reported event in the main narrative space (which is contains the reported event and is distant from the story viewpoint space). However, note that the temporal adverb *now* is used in the passage, not to refer to the time of the reported event in the main narrative space being present but to highlight the communicative roles of the narrator and the listener (Dancygier, 2012, p. 69; see also Nikiforidou, 2012) in the story viewpoint space.

As shown earlier, previous literature has identified various viewpointing means in narratives (as a means of human communication); however, so far, the cross-linguistic dimension of viewpoint phenomena and construals invoked by different viewpoint expressions in different languages has remained under-investigated. This is a research gap in Cognitive Linguistics, which the current thesis aims to fill.

1.2 Comparing the construals of an event of death across genres
Founded on the usage-based commitment, Cognitive Linguistics has come to pay close attention to the actual socio-cultural context of language use (Kövecses, 2015; Kristiansen &

Dirven, 2008; Sharifian, 2011). Among the various notions advanced, *cultural conceptualization*, which stands for culture-specific ways of expressing and construing concepts (Sharifian 2011), has been at the forefront of scholarly attention. Previous literature has identified various conceptual strategies for constructing the construal of an event in a cultural setting, such as cultural schemas, cultural categories, cultural metaphor, and cultural metonymy. The second section of the current thesis (Publications 5-9) deals with the variation of cultural conceptualization in Taiwanese Mandarin and investigates the various cultural symbols that are used in the pragmatic act of offering solace, using the eulogistic idioms that are displayed at public funerals as illustration.

This research views eulogy as a *genre* (Swales, 1990) and the different sets of Mandarin eulogistic idioms displayed at funerals as sub-genres of eulogy, which means that I consider the idioms to form sets of semiotic codes used for the purpose of a communicative convention. It is the role played by the socio-cultural context of the usage of the eulogistic idioms (輓語 *wǎn yǔ*) and the resultant construals that I study in the current thesis.

In addition, from a cultural-anthropological or a cultural-sociological point of view, it is also important to note that the setup of the official eulogy request system allows for an immediately transparent display of the extra-linguistic factors that are considered crucial in an event of commemoration by that particular culture. In the act of commemoration, the variables (such as the profession[2] or the religion of the deceased, among others) must be sufficiently relevant to such an extent that the government decides to create a category that allows the mourner to choose from whatever that is considered relevant to the object of mourning. Therefore, this research considers these general categories (occupation, religion), and the sub-categories that are subsumed under those general categories (i.e., "teacher", "legal expert", "politician", etc.; "Buddhist", "Christian", "Catholic", etc.) *cultural categories* (Lakoff, 1987; Rosch, 1978; Sharifian, 2011), not just because they are interculturally different but because they reflect properties that emerge from the constant interaction among the members of a cultural group (Sharifian, 2011, p. 27-28). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that each of the cultural categories may conceptually invoke relevant socio-cultural beliefs and socio-cultural expectations, which can be manifested by the language used in the expression of the mourning. Accordingly, the research investigates the choice of eulogistic

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[2] Note that I make a distinction between *occupation* and *profession* in my writing—when I emphasize the type of work that the deceased did when alive, the term *occupation* is used, while when the socio-cultural expectation is meant, I tend to use the term *profession*; otherwise, the terms are interchangeable in my writing when no emphasis is laid on either the person or the culture.

idioms and the variation of construals invoked by the idioms based on the different socio-cultural expectations related to the professional and religious categories.

In addition, the research is theoretically relevant, as from a pragmatic and usage-based point of view, the mourner's (electronic) deliverance of a eulogistic idiom at the funeral is *situation-bound* (Kecskes, 2010) and can be considered a *pragmeme* (Mey, 2001) for offering solace to the family of the deceased. Hence, in this wider sense, the eulogized is not merely the deceased but also the living. Accordingly, the eulogistic idiom displayed at the funeral can be considered a way of referring to the deceased as an object of conceptualization, and it is in this sense that the various culturally relevant figures of speech including metaphor, metonymy, and allusion, come into the picture as a mourner's way of creating a construal of the object of commemoration in the mind of the living. The act of commemoration is done, and the conceptualization is realized, in a particular socio-cultural setting, so it is natural that the verbal practice should be analyzed and should be understood against the backdrop of socio-cultural significance of the commemoration.

Accordingly, the second section of the thesis is a comparison of the construals invoked by the different sets of eulogistic idioms that are used for the different cultural categories, with the analytic focus being the use of metaphor, metonymy and allusion in the same pragmeme of offering solace.

2. Objectives of the work

The thesis addresses the variation of construal mediated through language, which is a manifestation of the cognitive flexibility of the human mind in the process of meaning creation meaning through the use of language. To achieve the purpose, the thesis comprises two research threads.

The first objective is to study how the construal of a usage event created by language varies with the linguistic toolkit involved in the encoding of a situation across languages. To this end, I investigate parallel linguistic representations of the same literary scene rendered in different languages (in my case, English and Chinese). The results are reported in Publication 1 to 4 of the thesis.

The second objective is to study how the construal of a usage event created by language vary with the socio-cultural factor surrounding the event. In order to do this, I focus on the cognitive semantic mechanisms involved in the four-character eulogistic idioms in

Chinese that are used for the deceased of different professions and religions at public funerals in Taiwan. The results are reported in Publication 5 to 9 of the thesis.

3. Research questions and employed methodology

This section lays out the research questions and the research methods employed in the thesis.

3.1 Variation of construal across languages

In the first section of the thesis (Publication 1 to 4), the research questions addressed is one of comparative stylistic nature: "When a stylistic phenomenon with a cognitive effect is created in Language A that allows for a usage event to be construed in a particular way, how do users of Language B render the style and the construal of the event (with the set of linguistic tools available in Language B)? Can we observe a tendency among the users of Language B that makes it impossible (or difficult) for them to reproduce the style and the construal from Language A?"

Methodologically, this part of the research is based on the scrutiny of a selection of parallel texts of world masterpieces. The choice of parallel texts (or translation) as the study material is to reasonably control for the semantic content expressed in the comparison of languages. To compare my target languages (which are English and Chinese), I use world masterpieces written in English and their multiple published translations in Chinese.[3] The translations selected are commercial publications, which ensures the quality of the language sample studied; the inclusion of multiple renditions of the same work ensures the reliability of the generalization made over the renditions.

Below, I expound the advantages of employing multiple parallel texts as the study material.

Humans are designed as pattern-seeking animals: Since infancy, babies take statistics of all sorts of sound patterns, turning all acoustic input experienced into stable phonological categories in mind. Lexical and grammatical patterns emerge later in life, as a result of innumerable generalizations made from the various meaning-bearing structural inputs. Adult scientists do the same; in the field of corpus linguistics, databases are built for seeking regularities in language (and languages). In contrastive construction grammar, studies have made use of large bodies of data to scrutinize how constructions are similar and how they are

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[3] Throughout Publications1-4, (my co-authors and) I use an English original and multiple Chinese renditions, with an exception made in the second half of Publication 1, where one Chinese original and its (only) published English translation are used.

different across languages. However, the majority of contrastive constructional research is methodologically based on comparison of two constructions suspected to be similar from two independent mono-lingual corpora. Such practice certainly has its value— using large quantities of linguistic data ensures a high extent of precision in the generalizations made, at least in each of the languages involved. However, such practice may run into an issue of commensurability— when Construction X (in Language A) and Construction Y (in Language B) are semantically similar, and can be considered translation equivalents, how much sense would it make for us to compare the two constructional tools, in the two completely different human communication systems? In other words, how commensurable are the function of Construction X and that of Construction Y, in the two sets of radically conventional constructional tools? Recent studies comparing analogous viewpoint constructions in different languages have suggested a negative answer. An example is proximal and distal demonstratives, which may seem to serve similar communicative functions across languages, and, as a logical result of that, can be surmised to exhibit similar distributional profiles cross-linguistically. However, it was found that in English-Chinese parallel texts, when the users of the two languages express highly similar (or almost identical) messages, the usage patterns of the proximal and the distal demonstratives vary considerably between the two languages (Wu, 2004). Similar observations have also been made regarding prepositions and motion verbs (Knotková & Lu, 2020), articles and epistemic modals (Tabakowska, 2014), when different published translations (which ensure the quality of the language samples analyzed) were used to obtain a confident intra-language generalization.

However, although there have been numerous efforts looking into how large quantities of parallelly aligned and annotated texts (which are the so-called *parallel corpora*) may be put to use in contrastive linguistic and translation research,[4] such application of parallelly aligned texts in studying viewpoint constructions across languages is still rare.

Given the above reasons, the studies presented in Section 1 of the thesis are methodologically progressive due to the high level of commensurability between the samples across languages and the level of the confidence in the generalization made across the different samples within the same target language.

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[4] An example is Doval and Teresa Sánchez Nieto (2019).

3.2 Variation of construal across socio-cultural settings

The methodology employed in the second section of the thesis (Publications 5-9) is founded on the usage-based commitment of Cognitive Linguistics, aiming to facilitate comparison of the construal of an event of death across different socio-cultural settings.

In this thread of research, the questions addressed is one of anthropological linguistic nature: "As a universal type of events, how is death communicated and construed by humans through the linguistic toolkit available to them? What role does the socio-cultural aspect of language use play in shaping the construal?"

To address the questions, I base the research on an investigation of an online mortuary service provided by the Taiwanese government. The state-run nature of the online service ensures the authoritativeness and thus representativeness of the data analyzed. The service system allows the mourners to request a pre-defined eulogy (in the form of four-character idioms), in order for the eulogy to display on an electronic banner in the funeral hall where a funeral is scheduled to take place. The system asks the user (the mourner) to choose the religion and the occupation of the deceased when alive. As a result of the mourner's choice, the system turns up eulogistic idioms that fit the descriptions. Specifically, when a mourner chooses "Christian" (based on the religion of the deceased when alive), the system turns up a group of idioms that are suitable to the description; by the same token, each occupational category returns its own idioms that the mourner may choose from.

Methodologically, the setup of the mortuary service system as such ensures rigor and clarity, as the pre-defined categorization gives us a transparent correlation between the socio-cultural characterization of the object of commemoration and the idiomatic expression used by the mourner in the pragmeme of helping the family accommodate a death (Parvaresh and Capone, 2017).

In this thread of research, I study the cultural conceptualization invoked by the eulogistic idioms that are linked to each of the religious and occupational categories from a Cognitive Linguistics perspective. In particular, I analyze the cognitive mechanisms (such as metaphor, metonymy, and subject-object distinction) and the various cultural symbols and allusions involved in the encoding of the pragmeme of accommodation.

Another methodological dimension that is worth noting of this thread of research is the fact that the Chinese language is characterized by a highly productive lexical template of four-character idioms, the fixed length of which ensures the comparability of the results obtained.

Another fact that the idioms constitute an integral part of the Chinese death ritual makes the cognitive semantic study of the idioms notably valuable from an anthropological point of view.

4. Obtained results

In the first part of the research, I (along with my collaborators) identify a wide variety of mismatches between the two languages in terms of viewpoint management, which result in irreducibly differences in the construal of the same narrated content across the languages. With the mismatches, I am further able to pinpoint a few language-specific devices that facilitate the formation of mixed narrative viewpoint and that help achieve the cognitive effect in the respective languages.

In Publication 1, based on a scrutiny of the opening chapter of *Alice in Wonderland* and its 4 Chinese renditions, my collaborator and I observe that the English text systematically utilizes a specific combination of conventional constructional tools (including punctuation, letter case and connectives) for the purpose of constructing a gradual shift from a narrator-responsible viewpoint to a character-responsible one. These elements are, however, partially missing in the majority of the Chinese texts, which results in the translators' difficulty in adopting the entire constructional complex from the source language and forces the translators to use a variety of constructions available to them, sometimes losing the construal of the mixed viewpoint in the English original. In addition, a comparison of a Chinese world masterpiece (酒國, *The Republic of Wine*) with its English translation reveals a similar result; the productivity of the deictic verb (來/去 *lái/qù* "come/go") in the Chinese resultative construction allows the Chinese text to easily operate on the narrative viewpoint by using a deictic verb in the resultative construction in the report of a motion event, whereas the English language is not equipped with a similar set of conventionalized linguistic tools to viewpoint a motion event. As a result, the above difference creates an irreducible difference in the viewpoint construal of a motion event between Chinese and English.

Publication 2 is similarly based on a study of *Alice in Wonderland* and its four Chinese renditions, which explores the issue of correspondence between the demonstratives in English (*this/that*) and Chinese (這/那 *zhè/nà* "this/that") and how that influences the viewpoint construal of a narrated scene. My collaborators and I find that despite a similar two-way distinction (of proximal-distal), the two languages viewpoint the same reported content in different ways; the two languages also vary in the frequency of demonstratives as viewpoint

constructions (with Chinese being more heavily demonstrative-viewpointed in general). In addition, it is found that lack of viewpoint correspondence is actually the norm between the languages. Furthermore, a close look reveals several factors that influence how a narrative is construed via the use of demonstratives across the languages, which include: the use of shell nouns as an anaphoric strategy of referent tracking in the narrator's language (such as 玩意兒 *wányì-ér* "thing-diminutive" in Chinese), the grammatical profile of the viewpointing construction (that is, whether the demonstrative is involved as a pronoun or joined by an adverbializing construction such as 麼 *me* in Chinese), and the tendency (of the English language) to pronominalize an event and make reference to it as part of the cleft construction using *it*, which is rendered in Chinese as a proximal demonstrative that invokes a character-dominant viewpoint. In many other cases, the demonstrative viewpoints the narrative in one language, but the stylistic effect is achieved in the other language with a completely different viewpoint construction.

Publication 3 is a study of how the stylistic effect of tense shifting, as a main strategy for creating a mixed viewpoint in English, is typically rendered in Chinese and the resultant construal of the rendition. The study is based on selected passages from the original English works of *Great Expectations*, *David Copperfield* (both by Charles Dickens) and "A&P" (by John Updike) and their published Chinese versions. In this paper, I find that in English, tense marking (which is a device relevant to the encoding of TIME) works with at least two language-specific stylistic means, which are clause interpolation and the inversion of word order, to create a mixed narrative viewpoint. However, the three stylistic elements cannot be found in the Chinese versions systematically. What is also remarkable is that unlike the frequent involvement of TIME of the English language, the Chinese texts do not use the perfective aspect or temporal adverbials (which are constructions that invoke TIME) systematically, which shows the Chinese system's overall indifference to TIME in managing viewpoint in discourse. Furthermore, the Chinese renditions, in addition to an overall indifference to TIME, feature consistent and frequent use of reduplication as the system's distinctive stylistic strategy, allowing the text producer to create a vivid, intensified, and as a result, character-dominant construal of the narrated content.

Publication 4 is a natural continuation of Publication 3, which investigates how the viewpoint effect created by the English inversion is rendered in the Chinese versions and the resultant viewpoint construal. The study sampled passages from *Great Expectations* and its Chinese renditions. In the study, I observe that in addition to inversion, the English linguistic

toolkit allows for the language sample to exhibit a zoom-in effect through use of punctuation, the participial clause, and an ad hoc constructional schema of [*some*] – [X] with the middle three instantiations sharing an identical phonological schema, as in *some stricken with terror, some sobbing and weeping, and some covering their faces*. In this example, the identical phonological schema and the shared character-responsible narrative viewpoint makes the three instantiations of the schema iconic. In comparison, the Chinese renditions employ the presentative construction and a focus particle to approximate the character-based viewpoint, but the zoom-in effect is not present in any of the Chinese versions due to a lack of a similar composition of the stylistic strategies. In addition to the difference in construal, another important difference between the language samples is the generally longer iconic part in the Chinese versions, due to the productivity of four-character templates at the phonological pole in Mandarin Chinese. In other words, the character-dominant viewpoint is similar across the languages, but the part of the text that is iconic tends to be longer in Chinese.

In the second part of the research, I identify various cultural symbols and figurative devices that contribute to the variation of the construal of death in the genre of eulogy in Chinese; the religion- and occupation-specific construals of death are multiply motivated by various socio-cultural and historical factors.

Publication 5 serves to contextualize the second thread of research. The article introduces the eulogistic idioms as situation-bound utterances by considering the pragmatic act against modern funeral practice of the Taiwanese society in the digital form. The eulogistic idioms are fixed in length (of four characters) and are presented in the written mode in the funeral hall (on a white cloth banner in the past and on an electronic screen nowadays), so the idioms have a very high level of formulaicity. In addition, I identify four extra-linguistic factors that are important in the analysis of how humans communicate death in a cultural setting (at a Taiwanese funeral), including the affiliation and the job title of the mourner, the occupation of the deceased when alive, the religion of the deceased when alive, and the Taiwanese cultural practice of adopting an English nickname for the purpose of impression management. The study also finds a warning on the website that misusing another person's name to request a eulogy constitutes a crime (which presupposes that such transgression is not uncommon).

Publication 6 reports the construals of death in the sub-genres of idioms for Buddhists (which contains 59 idioms) and for Christians (8 idioms) in Chinese. Specifically, six main metaphorical conceptualizations are reflected in the Buddhist sub-genre, including DEATH IS

REBIRTH, DEATH IS A JOURNEY TOWARDS REBIRTH, DEATH IS A JOURNEY TOWARDS REBIRTH, REBIRTH IS WEST, LIFE IS A CIRCLE, A PERSON IS A LOTUS, and HEAVEN IS (A POND/SEA) FULL OF LOTUSES. On the other hand, there are three conceptualizations identified in the Christian sub-genre, including DEATH IS REST, HEAVEN IS AN ETERNAL HOME and DEATH IS A RETURN JOURNEY. An analysis of the metaphor involved in the eulogistic idioms reveals vast differences in how death is construed by the two religious communities in Taiwan. In addition to the differences, the chapter also identifies a similarity in metaphor use, which is DEATH IS REST. However, a type-frequency count of the REST metaphor shows different weight of the conceptual metaphor in the two communities (3/8 in the Christian category and 1/59 in the Buddhist one).

Publication 7 presents an analysis of the sub-genre of eulogistic idioms for politicians, which is based on an analysis of all the 16 idioms of that category in the online service system. The study firstly shows that for the idioms used in the commemoration of politicians frequently involve the notion of COUNTRY or PEOPLE in the conceptual profile or the conceptual base. Secondly, allusion is found to be a significant strategy in Taiwanese political eulogies, which affords access to a highly specialized cultural knowledge structure as the conceptual basis for understanding and evaluating the deceased, with typical examples including 甘棠 *gāntáng* 'birchleaf pear (Pyrus betulifolia)', 麒麟閣 *Qílín Gé* 'Qilin Building', and 峴首 *Xiànshǒu* 'Mountain Xianshou'. In addition to that, culture- and profession-specific metaphors and metonymies also abound in this sub-genre. An example is the TEXTILE metaphor, which can be conceptually characterized as LINES ARE (POLITICAL) BUSINESS; ATTENDING (POLITICAL) BUSINESS IS ORGANIZING FIBERS; ORGANIZATION IS WISDOM IN DEALING WITH (POLITICAL) BUSINESS. At the social level, I find that through the cultural conceptualizations invoked by the eulogistic idioms, politicians in the Taiwanese society are always remembered exclusively in the political domain (where COUNTRY or PEOPLE is of conceptual significance), which is different from the American conceptualization, where personal traits are often remembered with a note of affection.

Publication 8 investigates the eulogistic idioms for teachers (12 idioms), media workers (10 idioms) and legal experts (8 idioms) as three more sub-genres of eulogy. Across the professions, I firstly observe an overall abundance of cultural elements and assumptions that underlie the use of eulogistic idioms, such as PLANT metaphors in the domain of EDUCATION, SOUND metaphors in MEDIA, and CLEANLINESS metaphors in LAW. Second, allusions to historical figures (such as 楊時 Yáng Shí, 游酢 Yóu Zuò, 程頤 Chéng Yí, and 馬

融 Mǎ Róng) are also present in the idioms for teachers but not in the other categories. In addition to the cultural metaphors and allusions, my analysis shows that whether the mourner places himself onstage as an object of conceptualization is a factor that correlates with a student viewpoint in the sub-genre of eulogies for teachers. Such objective construal of the mourner and an accordingly less objective construal of the deceased is not found in the other sub-genres of eulogy.

Publication 9 deepens our understanding of religion-specific construals addressed in Publication 6 from a constructionist perspective. In particular, the analysis presented in the chapter elaborates on the role played by lexical instantiations in metaphor research; the REST metaphor exists in both the Buddhist and the Christian sub-genre but the exact lexical constructions that evoke the metaphor are different in the two sub-genres. Specifically, REST is prompted by 歇 *xiē* 'break' in the Buddhist eulogy but by 息 *xí* 'stop' in the Christian sub-genre. The nuanced semantic shades of the lexical constructions used in the sub-genres reflect the different worldviews of the two religions. In addition, although both religions share the metaphorical conceptualization of LIFE IS A JOURNEY; DEATH IS A JOURNEY FROM THIS WORLD TO THE HEAVENS, the exact motion verb that instantiates the JOURNEY is different in the two religions, with JOURNEY prompted by 往 *wǎng* 'towards' in the Buddhist idioms and by 歸 *guī* 'return' in the Christian idioms. Although the metaphorical conceptualization is shared across the religious communities, the nuanced semantic difference in the lexical instantiations gives away the worldview that underlie.

5. Self-assessment of the research work reported
The research reported in the thesis is expected to create impact in the fields of Cognitive Linguistics (especially viewpoint research and metaphor research), pragmatics and anthropological linguistics. A self-assessment is stipulated as follows.

First of all, the research shows that the construal of a scene constructed through the linguistic mode is restricted by the linguistic toolkit available to the users of a particular linguistic community and is, as a result, bound to be highly conventional and language-specific, as is evidenced by the findings throughout Publications 1-4. In general, what the findings reveal is a general lack of cross-linguistic correspondences; in the same usage event, different text producers in different languages have completely different ways of utilizing the same cognitive capacity in their parallel encoding of similar events, which is reflected in their actual use of language. This has an important implication: although the general human

cognitive infrastructure may be universal, the cognitive and construal operations in different languages simply have to follow the linguistic conventions in the respective languages. Viewpoint taking in language in general, and in literary narratives more specifically, is a natural epiphenomenon of the radically conventional nature of grammar (Croft 2001; Verhagen 2012).

Moreover, the research helps answer part of a long-standing puzzle of why Chinese has been considered a vague and context-dependent language. When it comes to the management of narrative viewpoint, the typological nature of Chinese (which is its lack of an obligatory tense marking system) does not *require* its users to encode the narrative viewpoint *by sentence*; instead, the viewpointing strategies of the Chinese language (such as reduplication) are non-obligatory, which naturally leaves the narrative viewpoint of some sentences unspecified and contingent on the existence of another viewpointing strategy in context. This part of the research is theoretically valuable, as it helps demystify the generally acknowledged vagueness of the Chinese language through the lens of linguistic relativity.

Secondly, the research shows the role played by socio-cultural factors in shaping the construal of an event of death. The study pinpoints the Chinese concept of 面子 *miànzi* 'face' as a culture-specific force that facilitated the establishment and shaped the setup of the eulogy request system. In addition, the religion and the profession of the deceased when alive are found to play an important role in shaping the construal in the communication around an event of death, as different religions and professions invoke different worldviews and socio-cultural values that are manifested by different cultural symbols, metaphor, metonymy, allusions and different degrees of subjectivity that create variation in the construal of a death event in eulogy. The conceptualization of the event of death reported is highly culture-specific.

Furthermore, the research shows the relevance of subject/object distinction (i.e. the notion of "viewing arrangement" in Cognitive Grammar) to analyzing the language of death. Specifically, in the sub-genre of eulogies for teachers, some idioms place the mourner and their relationship with the object of the mourning onstage as an object of conceptualization along with the mourned, which is different from what is typical of the other professions (where the mourner stays entirely offstage as a mere subject of conceptualization). The different subject-object distinction at the conceptual level is motivated by the cultural characterization of the profession involved, which constitutes an innovative finding in the study of the language of death.

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6. The applicant's contribution in the publications included

My share of contributions in each of the published articles is stipulated in the tables below. All the numbers had been discussed with the collaborators for the co-authored publications (1, 2, and 9) before the submission of the commentary. In such cases, a substantiation follows to report the division of labor.

[1][5] Lu, Wei-lun and Arie Verhagen. 2016. Shifting viewpoints: How does that actually work across languages? An exercise in parallel text analysis. *Viewpoint and the fabric of meaning: Form and use of viewpoint tools across languages and modalities*, **ed. by Barbara Dancygier, Wei-lun Lu and Arie Verhagen, 169-190. Berlin: De Gruyter.**

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
60	60	60	60

Substantiation: I (first author) was responsible for the collection of the data, data analysis, the writing of the main body of the analysis and part of the method, introduction and conclusion. The second author was responsible for the writing of part of the introduction and conclusion, and the proofreading of the entire text.

[2] Lu, Wei-lun, Arie Verhagen and I-wen Su. 2018. A Multiple-Parallel-Text approach for viewpoint research across languages: The case of demonstratives in English and Chinese. *Expressive minds and artistic creations*, **ed. by Szilvia Csábi, 131-157. Oxford: Oxford University Press.**

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
85	85	85	85

Substantiation: I (first author) was responsible for the collection of the data, data analysis, the writing of the main body of the analysis and most parts of the method, introduction and conclusion. The second author was responsible for the writing of small parts of the

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[5] Bibliographic record of a published scientific result, which is part of the habilitation thesis.

introduction and conclusion, and the proofreading of the entire text. The third author was responsible for writing a small part of the conclusion and for proofreading parts of the text.

[3] Lu, Wei-lun. 2019. Time, tense and viewpoint shift across languages: A Multiple-Parallel-Text approach to "tense shifting" in a tenseless language. *Cognitive Linguistics* **30(2), 377-397.**

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
100	100	100	100

[4] Lu, Wei-lun. 2020. Viewpoint and subjective construal across languages: English inversion, associated strategies and their Chinese renditions in multiple parallel texts. *Cognitive Linguistic Studies* **7(2), 333-355.**

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
100	100	100	100

[5] Lu, Wei-lun. 2017. Socio-cultural factors in analyzing the pragmeme of accommodation: A case study of the official online eulogy request system in Taiwan. *The pragmeme of accommodation and intercultural pragmatics: The case of interaction around the event of death***, ed. by Vahid Parvaresh and Alessandro Capone, 111-127. Zurich: Springer.**

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
100	100	100	100

[6] Lu, Wei-lun. 2017. Religion and worldview in metaphor use: Cultural conceptualisations of death in Taiwanese Buddhist and Christian eulogistic idioms. *Advances in Cultural Linguistics***, ed. by Farzad Sharifian, 49-64. Singapore: Springer.**

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
100	100	100	100

[7] Lu, Wei-lun. 2020. Cultural "signs of life" in politics: A case study of eulogistic idioms for Taiwanese politicians. *Signs of life: Changes and continuity in language, thought and identity***, ed. by Vera da Silva Sinha, Ana Moreno-Núñez and Zhen Tian, 139-154. Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins.**

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
100	100	100	100

[8] Lu, Wei-lun. 2020. Viewpoint and metaphor in culture: A Cognitive Linguistic analysis on a selection of Chinese eulogistic idioms used in Taiwan. *Cognitive Linguistic Studies* **7(1), 260-279.**

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
100	100	100	100

[9] Lu, Wei-lun and Svitlana Shurma. 2021. Rituals. *Analysing Religious Discourse***, ed. by Stephen Pihlaja, 217-234. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
55	55	55	55

Substantiation: I (first author) was responsible for the collection of the data, data analysis, the writing of the main body of the analysis, the method and the conclusion. The second

author was responsible for the writing of the introduction and part of the conclusion and for proofreading and editing the entire text.

Date: 19 August, 2022   Signature:

Publication 1

[1] Lu, Wei-lun and Arie Verhagen. 2016. Shifting viewpoints: How does that actually work across languages? An exercise in parallel text analysis. *Viewpoint and the fabric of meaning: Form and use of viewpoint tools across languages and modalities*, ed. by Barbara Dancygier, Wei-lun Lu and Arie Verhagen, 169-190. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Experimental work (%)	Supervision (%)	Manuscript (%)	Research direction (%)
60	60	60	60

Substantiation: I (first author) was responsible for the collection of the data, data analysis, the writing of the main body of the analysis and part of the method, introduction and conclusion. The second author was responsible for the writing of part of the introduction and conclusion, and the proofreading of the entire text.

CIRCLE in Christian eulogistic idioms shows that cyclicity is not part of the conceptual substrate associated with the Christian understanding of LIFE. We also find that in the Christian idioms, there is no occurrence of motion verbs such as 來 *lái* 'come', as in example (1) or 往 *wǎng* 'go toward', as in example (2). The only verb that comes close is 歸 *guī* 'return', which is given in example (4).

4.	息	勞	歸	主
	xí	*láo*	*guī*	*zhǔ*
	rest	toil	return	Lord
	"(This person has) put down (their) hard work (and has) returned to the Lord."			

However, the use of 歸 *guī* comes with an important semantic entailment – when one returns to a place, that place is not only the destination of that person's motion but also their origin. There are eight Christian idioms in the eulogy request system in total, two of which contain 歸 *guī*. This fact shows not only that 歸 *guī* is the only verb that instantiates the JOURNEY metaphor but also that RETURN constitutes an important element of the journey, given the high type frequency of 歸 *guī* in the Christian category (two of eight idioms). Based on this reasoning, we may formulate the JOURNEY metaphor as follows: LIFE IS A JOURNEY; DEATH IS A RETURN JOURNEY. No linguistic prompt that may invoke the repetition of journey is found in the collection of Christian idioms.

13.3.2 Death as a Break before the Journey Resumes or as an Eternal Rest

In the Buddhist category, there is one lexical item that invokes REST, which is 歇 *xiē* 'rest' in (5).

5.	歇	即	菩提
	xiē	*Jí*	*pútí*
	rest	LK	bodhi/wisdom
	"(As the deceased is,) rest is the ultimate wisdom."		