Analysis of the Grammar-pragmatics Interaction of Generative Mechanism of "A+Yixia" in Chinese

Hongyan Sang*, Mingyong Mao

Chongqing Jiaotong University, Chongqing, China

Corresponding author: sanghongyan@126.com

Abstract: Adjectives are one of the most important parts of speech in most natural languages. Chinese adjectives are a very complex and common linguistic phenomenon in practical use, so they have always been the focus of attention and research by many scholars. On the basis of previous studies, this paper aims to study the complex phenomena of "A+Yixia" from the perspective of grammar-pragmatics interaction, especially to explain its generating mechanism.

Key words: Chinese adjectives; grammar-pragmatic interaction; adjective collocations

1. Introduction

As one of the most important parts of speech in Chinese, the study of adjectives has always been the focus of domestic scholars and foreign sinologists. Chinese adjectives usually assume attributive, predicate, complement, adverbial and other components in the sentence, mainly expressing the shape, nature and state of things. However, the emerging linguistic phenomenon appear gradually, such as the "adjective+ Yixia (一下)" (hereinafter "A+Yixia") as a new structural type, which is different from grammatical forms, expression meaning, expression of the original Chinese adjectives commonly used in a casual, relaxed, or slightly irrelevant ways to express the imperative and subjective desire. In natural language, this expression can be used flexibly, and most adjectives with [+variability] characteristics, such as property adjectives, can be listened in daily conversation. On the basis of previous studies, from the perspective of the interactive relationship between grammar and pragmatics, this paper takes the collocation of "A+ Yixia" as an example to conduct an in-depth discussion on the complex phenomenon of the adjectives' generation mechanism in its use.

2. Research Status of Chinese Adjectives

With the development of the study of Chinese part of speech, the number of articles on the study of adjectives in the early 21st century not only increased a lot, but also the research field became more and more extensive. The research direction of overlapping Chinese adjectives, adjectives as predicates and adjectives as adverbials has changed to the adjectives of Chinese as a foreign language, and the comparative research between various languages and Chinese adjectives. Zhou Guanglei (2013) compared the similarities and differences between English adjectives and Chinese adjectives when they were used as modifiers, and made a unified analysis and research on the mechanism of noun

modification by English finite adjectives and Chinese basic formal adjectives. At the same time, many scholars have also conducted in-depth studies on specific descriptive words and adjective collocation constructions, such as "Cu (Thick)", "Toutong (headache)", "N Duo (many)", "X+ Hua (-lization)", "adjective +Yidian (a little bit)", "NT-ly /-" and so on.

In recent years, with the increasing attention of scholars to adjectives, the research field is also expanding. For example, Liang Yan and Zhang Yancheng (2018) analyzed the complex projection and selection relationship between the lexical semantic structure, syntactic semantic structure and syntactic form symbols of the two types of adjectives, and proved that "body feature" is a syntactically sensitive lexical semantic feature for adjectives. Zhao Qingqing and Huang Juren (2018) systematically investigated the phenomenon of synesthesia metaphor in modern Chinese based on the quantitative and qualitative methods. Chen Yuanyuan (2018) analyzed that "Zai (again) X Ye (also) Y" is a common form of modern Chinese composed of "Zai (again) X Ye (also) Y" and "you", and then studied and discussed the relationship between the part of speech of X in the construction and its expression quantity.

It can be seen that the domestic linguistic circle has paid attention to the study of adjectives both from the macroscopic theoretical achievements and the microscopic application analysis. However, researches on "Yixia" mainly focus on verbs and their combinations, while researches on other parts of speech such as adjectives and the combination of "Yixia" are relatively few, and all of them are briefly classified and discussed, which provides us with a lot of research space.

3. Grammar-pragmatics Interaction Research Perspective

The relationship between grammar and pragmatics has attracted the attention of philosophers and linguists. In post-Grice pragmatics, it is argued that grammar and pragmatics are completely different and have different divisions of labor. However, many linguists, such as Mira Ariel, Georgia M. Green, etc., tend to study grammar and pragmatic interfaces to explain how language functions in communication.

British linguist Geoffrey Leech (1983) once pointed out that grammar is "rule-governed" while pragmatics is "principle-governed". A sentence that accurately conveys the speaker's intention obeys both grammatical and pragmatic rules, and is otherwise considered either ungrammatical or inappropriately used. At the same time, he argued that grammar itself is adapted to pragmatic constraints. Verschueren (1999) believed that language use is a process of continuous language selection, and proposed linguistic adaptability theory to explain the adaptability process of formal system to contextual factors in language use. Mohanty and McKenna (1989) intentionality refers to this representational feature of the mind or consciousness. Zhang Shaojie (2010) believes that in the process of language use, grammar and pragmatics work together and are related to each other. Grammatical rules restrict the internal organization of language, while pragmatic principles limit the external expression of language. It can be seen that in the specific use of language, grammar is the resource system of language use, and the choice of grammar by language users is restricted by pragmatic factors. Zhang Shaojie (2010) thinks the interactive relationship between grammar and pragmatics is reflected in "the limitation and regularity of collective intention".

4. The Generative Mechanism and Grammar-pragmatics Interaction of "A+Yixia"

Gao Pin (2008) holds that "Yixia" can be defined as "Yi Xia" (once) and "Yixia" (some times) in terms of semantics. Among them, "Yi Xia" is used as a definite number ; and "Yixia" means an approximate number, and has more complex usage, such as definite number, approximate number time quantity, momentum. Meanwhile, Gao Pin (2008) believes that "Yixia" should be a phrase in terms of grammatical units, while the meanings of "Yi" and "Xia" in "Yixia" have been blurred and should be regarded as words. According to scholars' definition of the semantic meaning of "Yixia", we believe that "Yixia" in "A+ Yixia" should be a phrase in grammatical unit, not a word. In terms of semantics, the probability of

short time quantity and small momentum is greater.

Here are some examples to explain why "A+ Yixia" comes into being:

e.g. (1) a. Bao chi yixia Shuchang de qingxue hui zengjia koushui fenmi.

(A little cheerfulness will increase saliva secretion)

b. Baochi yixia kaixin de qingxu hui zengjia koushui fenmi.

(Keeping a happy mood increases drool production)

x. Kaixin baochi yixia zengjia koushui fenmi.

(Keep it happy to increase saliva secretion)

y. x + b $\longrightarrow$ Kaixin yixia hui zengjia koushui fenmi......(Source from *AiMei*, 2013)

(Having fun increases saliva secretion......)

The sentences of a & b are all used to express people's mood. Yixia of Baochi Yixia is used as a noun and its basic function is to modify the preposition as a complement. There is no expression like "Kaixin yixia hui zengjia koushui fenmi", which is the product of x and b mix extracted the structure frame of "A +" of item b and the word Kaixin of x, on the basis of x and the relationship between a and b, Kaixin yixia hui zengjia koushui fenmi can be analogized, thus to form the relationship between a and b correspond to the pattern of the relationship between x and y. Kaixin yixia is a combination of "V+ Yixia +A+N" and "A+V+ Yixia". The mash-up produces a new expression. When a speaker wants to express a subjective meaning that does not already exist, he often uses a combination of two existing expressions. It can be seen that this new adjective expression reflects the normative nature of language.

e.g. (2) Ou'er liu banchangbuduan de pijian, fumei yixia, suanshi qingchun suiyue li de yisi dianzhui.

 Occasionally leave half a long shawl, charming, is a piece of youth ornament. (Source from *Hair for You*)

(3) Dianle manman yizhuo nongjia jingpincai, rang quanjia jiankang yixia.

Order a table full of rural boutique dishes to make the whole family healthy. (Source from*The Evening News*)

(4) Turan youyitian youyigeren ta shaowei di zisi le yixia.

Suddenly one day there was a man who was a little selfish. (Source from *Philosophical Analysis of Game Problems* edited by Zhao Tingyang)

(5) Yifangmian jingzhong ta, yifangmian you xiang tiaopi yixia.

On the one hand, I respect him, but on the other hand, I want to be naughty. (Source from nameless highland becomes famous edited by Laoshe)

"Yixia" is used after adjectives, both of which are complementary elements. Fumei yixia in (2), Jiankang yixia in (3) and zisi yixia in (4) are located in the position of the predicate in the sentence while Tiaopi yixia in (5) is in the object of the sentence. And "Yixia" represents a small amount, when matched with an adjective, its meaning is similar to the original adjective meaning, so it can be used as the above components. In addition, Zisi le yixia in (5) is the adjective Zisi + the experiencial le + yixia, thus forming the construction of A le yixia, indicating the completion of an action or state. Therefore, we believe that the grammatical nature of "A+Yixia" in discourse representation includes the grammatical form as a component in sentence and the tense with the other word "le".

"A+ Yixia" also reflects the intentionality of mind. Searl (1983) holds that "the intentional state represents the object and the state of affairs, and the speech act represents the object and the state of affairs in the same 'representational' sense (although the speech act has a derived form of intentionality and therefore is different from the way the intentional state is represented, the intentional state has the internal form of intentionality)". A+Yixia reflects people's desire to express their own feelings and understanding so that their personal voice can be recognized and accepted, and it also satisfies people's

pragmatic psychology and innovative and unique pursuit of expression.

e.g. (6) Ba sixiang "huopo" yixia.

Liven up your mind. (Source from *PLA Daily*)

(7) Fang Si anjing yixia, duta yunian.

Fang Si settled down and spent the rest of his life. (Source from *Three Heroes of the Qing Dynasty*)

(8) Yilishabai bian dao wuwai qu liuda, hao rang ziji jingshen shuchang yixia.

Elizabeth walked out to refresh herself...... (Source from *Translated from Pride and Prejudice*)

Huopo yixia in example (6) reflects the speech act in which the speaker is in a high position and gives instructions to the recipient to do something. However, Anjing in example (7) and Shuchang in example (8) is the collocation of adjectives in the union structure with yixia, do not express the time meaning of "Yihui'er" in the sentence, which can only be judged after combining the context and semantics.

It can be seen that "A+Yixia" contains rich semantic content and can succinctly and accurately express the speaker's intention, which is in line with the economic principle of language expression. According to Shen (2006) proposed by integrating "analogy" as a new expression can produce surface meaning, language economy principle, efficiency principle and subjective expression, driven by demand based on the conceptual metaphors and form the psychological reality of integrating "analogy" is to promote the integration of structure type, shaping a new expression of the most important means of easy, "analogy" is a kind of with regularity, syntactic innovation means and mechanism of typological significance. "A+Yixia" embodies the syntactic generation mechanism of "analogy blending".

From the perspective of the interaction between grammar and pragmatics, which is the regularity of language and the intentionality of mind, the grammatical form of "A+Yixia" reflects the realization relationship between grammar and pragmatics. Grammar provides resources and means for the expression of utterance meaning and pragmatics is realized through grammatical forms to achieve a certain communicative purpose. In other words, grammar and pragmatics are indispensable in the use of natural language, and they belong to the relationship of realization.

5. Conclusions

With the advent of the information age, language life is becoming more and more colorful, and can usually convey different amounts of information human communication. At the same time, the development of the internet has provided a platform for people to express their personal feelings and makes it easier for people to express. To some extent, this has contributed to the emergence and rapid popularity of language forms with more subjective connotations. Modern Chinese adjectives have always been the focus of grammar research. From the perspective of the interaction between grammar and pragmatics, this paper analyzes that the new collocation of adjectives can be accepted by the hearer in the use of language, and there is no obstacle for the hearer to misunderstand the meaning of the utterance, which conforms to the grammatical norms of language norms. In addition, when a speaker implements a speech act, the intention to convey can also be accurately and economically reflected in this collocation, which reflects the dynamic interactive relationship between grammar and pragmatics, and further discusses the generation mechanism of "A+ Yixia".

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

[1] Leech G. (1983). Principles of Pragmatics. Longman, London.

[2] Mohanty J. N. and McKenna W. R. (1989). Husserl's Phenomenology: A Textbook. University Press of America, Lanham.

[3] Searle J. (1983). Intentionality: an Essay in the Philosophy of Mind. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

[4] Verschueren J. (1999). Understanding Pragmatics. Arnold, London.

[5] Chen Y.Y. (2018). Preliminary Study on the Table Quantity of "Again X Also Y" (Zai X Ye Y) Format. *Sinogram Culture*, (18): 6+8.

[6] Shen J.X. (2006). The Generative Mechanism of Sentences Like "Wangmian Died Father"(Wangmian si le fuqin): Sentence Generation by Blending in Chinese. *Chinese Language*, (4): 291-300+383.

[7] Shan B.S. and Xiao L. (2009). "Yixia" and Politeness Principle. *Journal of Eastern Liaoning University (Social Sciences)*, (2): 52-55+72.

[8] Gao P. (2008). Study on the Grammaticalization of "Yixia (once)". *Gansu Social Sciences*, (4): 58-61.

[9] Li X. (2015). The Origin of "Headache" Used as Adjective in Chinese. *Journal of Qiongzhou University*, (3): 68-72.

[10] Liang Y. and Zhang Y.C. (2018). A Study on the Relationship between the Model of Adjctive Syntax Marker and the "Aspect Characteristics" of Adjective Lexical Semantics. *Language and Translation*, (1): 36-42.

[11] Liao G.R. (2019). A Study of Super Normal World-class Shifting Chinese and the Typicality. *Journal of Hunan University (Social Sciences)*, (1): 105-112.

[12] Liu D.Q. (2005). The Research Framework of Adjectives and Adjective Phrases. *Minority Languages of China*, (5): 28-37.

[13] Long J. (2018). The Grammatical Meaning of the "A+ Yixia(一下)" Format. *Sinogram Culture*, (19): 9-11.

[14] Luo J.J. (2017). The Semantic Generative Mechanism of the" X+hua (-lization)" Derivatives in Modern Chinese. *Journal of Hunan University of Science & Technology (Social Science Edition)*, (3): 121-126.

[15] Luo S.M. and Wang W.B. (2015). The Structuralization of "N T-ly/-Deconstruction" and Its Syntactic Features in English and Chinese. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, (4): 509-521+639-640.

[16] Shao J.M. and Ma J. (2009). The Generalization Trend and Rhetorical Value of the Emerging Combination "X Yixia". *Contemporary Rhetoric*, (2): 81-87.

[17] Shen J.X. (2006). Blending and haplology. *Chinese Teaching in the World*, (4): 5-12+146.

[18] Sun P.F. (2018). The Main Discourse Functions and Semantic Tendency of the Constructions Related to Adjective-predicate-sentence. *Language and Translation*, (2): 5-11.

[19] Wu L. (2016). A Study on the Part of Speech of Chinese Adjectives from the Perspective of Sentence Jurisprudence. *Journal of Zhengzhou University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 49(3): 89-92.

[20] Wu Y. (2013). Study on Semantic System of Dimensional Adjective Cu (Thick) in Mandarin Chinese. *Journal of Hunan University of Science & Technology (Social Science Edition)*, (4): 169-172.

[21] Xiang Y.M. (1984). The Quantitative Complement "Yixia". *Chinese Language Learning*, (4): 20-31.

[22] Xue B. and Zhang S.J. (2016). An Interaction of Tense and Time from the Grammar-pragmatics Perspective with Special Reference to English Future Tense. *Foreign Language Research*, (5): 59-63.

[23] Zhang S.J. (2010). An Account of Grammar and Pragmatics from the Interactive Perspective of Language Use. *Foreign Language Research*, (5): 74-79.

[24] Zhao Q.Q. and Huang J.R. (2018). Mapping Models and Underlying Mechanisms of Synaesthetic Metaphors in Mandarin. *Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies*, (1): 44-55.

[25] Zhou G.L. (2013). A Comparative Study of Adjectival Modification Strategy in English and Chinese. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages*, (4): 29-34+56+127-128.

[26] Zou B.Y. (2017). The Flexible Use of Parts of Speech and Its Rhetorical Effect in Modern Chinese. *Western China Quality Education*, (1): 273.

[27] Zou X.L. (2016). Analysis of Semantic Direction of Adjective + "Yidian" in Modern Chinese. *Journal of Yibin University*, (7): 47-49+2.