A CMB Framework to Semantic Features of Opposite-Localizer-Superposition-Idioms

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ABSTRACT. *OLSI (opposite-localizer-superposition-idioms), consists of one pair of antonymous localizers and other two components in one idiom, possesses distinctive word formation characteristics and semantic structure types. This paper attempts to explain the OLSI of Chinese idioms'reduplicated words through CMB theory.*

KEYWORDS: *CMB; Semantic Features; Opposite-Localizer-Superposition-Idioms*

The CMB framework is AabstracTed from the cognitive reference point, metonymy view and conceptual integration theory in cognitive linguistics in order to discuss the cognitive mechanism of OLSI constructions. Concerning CMB theory, related articles have been discussed in detail. Under the guidance of CMB, the author constructs the related closed corpus and the idioms analyzed in the thesis are selected from it. This thesis compiles an exhaustive list of OLSI and gets 320 items from the electronic format of popular version of Chinese Dictionary to discuss the semantic of OLSI constructions. Therefore, this section will focus on the related data statistics and induction analyses on OLSI constructions from semantic.

1. Data Description and Distribution

According to the general structure of OLSI, which consists of one pair antonymous localizer and other components in one idiom, we collect OLSI one by one from the electronic format of popular version of Chinese Dictionary with the total number of 47200. After screening, 320 idioms are available and suitable for the discussion and they are selected to be further analyzed.

Table 1 Superposition types of OLSI

Superposition types	Number	Rate(Num/320)	Examples
Dong-Xi(东-西)	136	42%	东拼西凑
Qian-Hou(前-后)	45	14%	前朝后代
Nei-Wai(内-外)	41	13%	内紧外松
Shang-Xia(上-下)	40	12%	上蹿下跳

Nan-Bei(南-北)	25	8%	南征北战
Zuo-You(左-右)	24	7%	左邻右舍
Li-Wai(里-外)	9	3%	里应外合

The idioms analyzed in the thesis are selected from the electronic format of popular version of Chinese Dictionary, and all the example sentences used for the discussion are from Center for Chinese Linguistics PKU (CCL).

2. Data Analysis of "L1 A L2 B" With CMB

"L1 A L2 B" format is a parallel arrangement of "L1A" and "L2". The most common formation of "L1A" and "L2B" is modification structure, therefore, the part of speech of the whole format determined by A and B. A, B are mainly verbs, sometimes nouns or adjectives, so the whole format is mainly used as the predicate, but also as adverbial, complement, attributive, subject, object, and even can act as clauses or as separate sentences. However, the syntactic function of the format is not completely consistent with the syntactic functions of its components, which will be subject to more conditions.

"L1 A L2 B" has a fixed constructional meaning, which has a certain correspondence with the type of structure. The embedding components and localizer words semantically affect each other. When A and B show different characteristics, the direction and extent of blurring will be different, too. So each type of OLSI usually shows different semantic features.

Through the collection of corpus, we find that "L1 A L2 B" constructions are rich in vocabulary and appear relatively early, but they have not been obliterated in the flood of history, but show a strong vitality, Not only the scope of use has expanded, the frequency of use has increased, but also a lot of new words derived. This fully shows that the "L1 A L2 B" format has unique pragmatic value.

In the following parts, based on the model CMB, the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features of all kinds of OLSI constructions will be analyzed respectively.

3. Semantic Features of OLSI

Due to the fixed structure meaning of "L1 A L2 B", its semantics and structure type have some corresponding relations. The types and features of components embedded in OLSI are also fully described in the above sections, so the semantic discussion will be analyzed from the collocation types. Dong-Xi type, Qian-Hou type and Zuo-You type account for a large proportion in OLSI and have prominent features, so this section will focus on these three types of OLSI.

3.1 Dong-Xi type

(1) Express repetition

Li Yuming (2002) discussed the repetition expressed in grammar. Therefore, from this perspective, Dong-Xi type OLSI make use of "Dong" and "Xi" socket and the stack up A and B, indicating the variability in direction and multi-orientation. Therefore, this format emphasizes "repeated", not "continuous." For example:

1) 姜伟立即投放了紧张的研究工作,每天[东奔西走],参观学习,访师问友,查询资料…(当代报刊'年报刊精选')

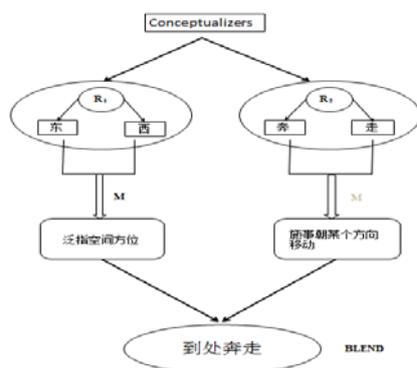Combined with the CMB framework, this idiom can be further illustrated as:

Figure. 1

As shown in the figure, the basic meaning of "奔" and "走" is that "human foot moves forward and toward the destination interactively". "奔"and "走" are related to the affair in the context. When the action takes place, affair moves in one direction accordingly. "东" and "西" are the directions of motion. However, the direction here refers to the spatial orientation after metonymy, not certainly to the east and west. Therefore, "东" and "西" are generalized here.

In addition, when components A and B do not have definite orientations, they are directional after being combined with "Dong" and "Xi", thus indicating the change of direction.

(2)Express continuity

When A and B are non-directional verbs, 东 A 西 B is reflected in the human brain as the process or scene of action , which is ABSTRACT. For example:

2) 当我正在[东猜西疑]的时候,拖拉机忽然停在我的身旁,柳永慧把我叫上去了.(沙汀'柳永慧')

Combined with the CMB framework, this idiom can be further illustrated as:
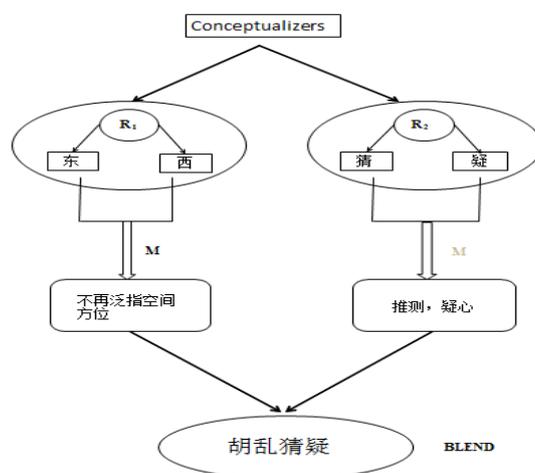
Figure.2

The basic meaning of "猜" and "疑" is "to start thinking with the brain, to find the correct answer based on obvious clues or suspicions"; None of these verbs refer to the semantic feature of directionality and thus have no meaning of space directivity. It reflects the process or scene of action, so "东" and "西" naturally cannot express the concept of spatial orientation. "东猜西疑" means that " guessing and thinking, casually suspicion.

It can be seen that A and B are non-directional verbs in the Dong-Xi type OLSI, so it is impossible to have relation with space. "东" and "西" do not indicate orientation but "time quantity". "东" and "西"use the range of space reached by the action to record the "amount of time", which is projected from the category of space to the category of quantity. Therefore, Dong-Xi type expresses the long duration of the action that is, the time range of the action takes place, so the degrees of virtualization are stronger.

(3) Express thoroughness

When A and B are nouns, the 东-西 opposition will be dispelled under the influence of nouns, thus affecting the semantics of the entire format. For example:

3) "要是没有了,"周大贵的声音在噪子眼抖动着说道，"就先找[东邻西舍]的婶子大娘借一点,等我出去了再…"(李晓明'平原枪声')

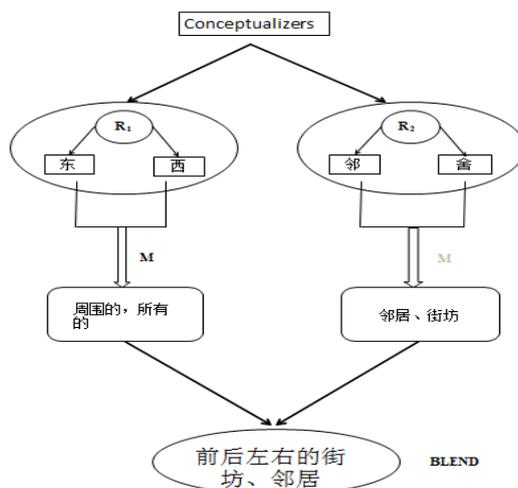Combined with the CMB framework, this idiom can be further illustrated as:

Figure. 3

The main function of localizer words is attached to the other words to form the directional phrases. However, in Dong-Xi structure, the localizer words are placed before the nouns, the fixed term "东" and "西" and the variable items A and B belong to the attributive structure in the syntactic level, such as "东邻西舍". Through the corpus investigation, we find that all the nouns in Dong-Xi structure have the characteristics of collection. After entering the format, "东" and "西" are influenced by the latter nouns, that is, the characteristics of "邻" and "舍" bring an incremental effect to the amount of the Dong-Xi structure, making them metonymic, less directional and "more universal and more generalized".

3.2 Qian-Hou type

1. The sequence of time

前 A 后 B structure can indicate the sequential order of the occurrence of action or things, for example:

4. 他满腹经纶,通晓"[前朝后代]之典故和正史野史之趣闻".

(文件名   \当代\报刊\读书\vol-073.txt)

Combined with the CMB framework, this idiom can be further illustrated as:
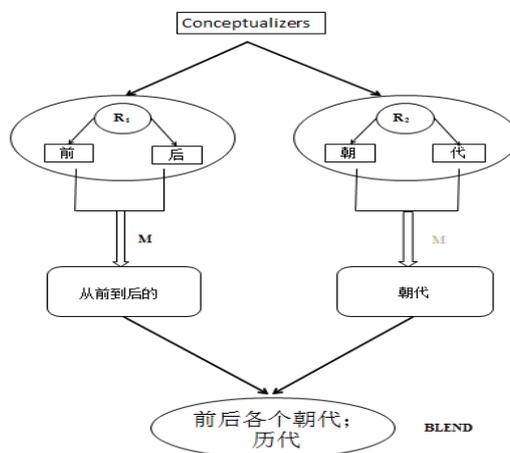
Figure. 4

In this idiom, "前" and "后" represent actions that happened before and after the given time; "朝" and "代"have similar meaning. It should be noted that after combing with the format, the indefinite components no longer refer to a particular thing, but a series of actions that occur in the time or countless incidents that exist, time category has been expanded.

2. The thoroughness of orientation

Because "前" and "后" are localizer words, so they can indicate certain directions; After combing with indefinite components, opposition between "前" and "后"has been reduced and the whole format refer to "surrounding, all"

5.中国人因为爱土地爱得太厉害,大家都决定老住一个地方,住到后来[前街后巷]全是亲戚.

(文件名　　\当代\报刊\读者\读者(合订本).txt)

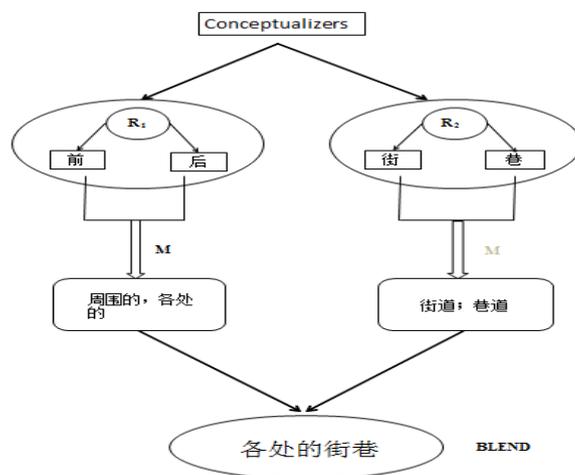Combined with the CMB framework, this idiom can be further illustrated as:

Figure. 5

As shown in the figure, the words "前" and "后" are combined with "街" and "巷". Under the influence of the nouns and the format, the directionality of localizers are weakened, the meaning of "surrounding and everywhere" has been produced. The integrity of "街" and "巷" adds semantic incremental effects to the format. This phenomenon is similar to the one discussed in the previous section.

3. Referring to different situations / attitudes

Although "前" and "后" are prepositions of the position or time, when combined with the adjectives of opposite meaning, the directionality of the overlapping forms is no longer emphasized, the whole structures refer to the before and after opposite attitudes or situations:

6. 他[前倨后恭],忽然变得如此热情,李寻欢反而怔住了.

(文件名　　\当代\文学\台湾作家\古龙　小李飞刀.txt)

Combined with the CMB framework, this idiom can be further illustrated as:
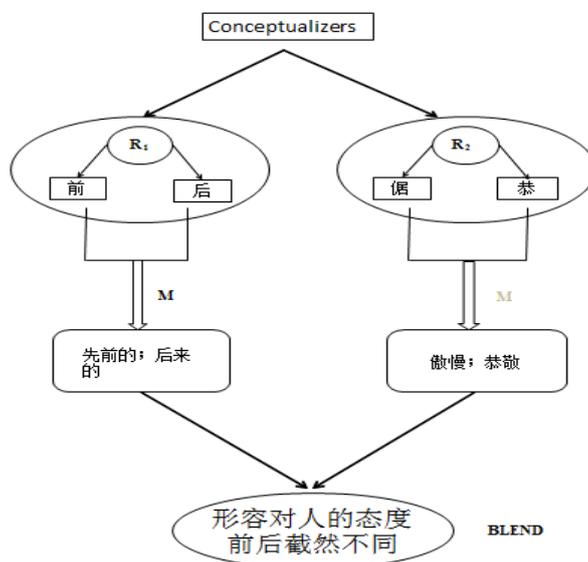
Figure. 6

As shown in the figure, the sense of direction of "前" and "后" has been blurred, after combining with the adjectives of opposite meaning, this idiom indicates two opposite attitudes. From the above analysis, we can find that "前" and "后" can represent a chronological order, so when it comes to the meaning of "opposite attitudes", it usually comes with the feature of "time precedent".

3.3 Zuo-You type

1. Distinguishing two different situations

Zuo-You mode structure has the meaning of "distinguishing two different situations". In this case, the fixed items "左" and "右" may refer to the left hand and the right hand, and may also refer to the left side and the right side. Variables A and B are usually opposite in meaning, for example:

7. 消费者被[左推右挡],投诉无门

(1993 年人民日报\3 月份)

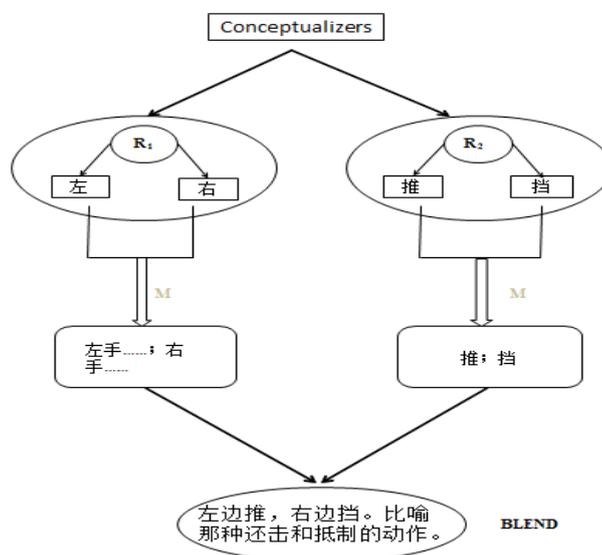Combined with the CMB framework, this idiom can be further illustrated as:

Figure. 7

When Zuo-You format is used to distinguish two different situations, the terms "左" and "右" refer to the left and right hand, or the left and right side. The relationship between variables A and B is antonymic. The meaning of the format can be specifically expressed as "left hand..., right hand...", "left ..., right...", and grammatical attributes are neutral.

When Zuo-You format is used to distinguish two different situations, variables A and B should be opposite in meaning. According to the different objects that"左" and "右"refer to, the formats are slightly different in meaning. When "左" and "右"refer to the left and right hands, "左 and 右" indicate the different actions and abilities of two hands.

2. Expressing "actions occur alternately"

When Zuo-You format expresses the meaning of "actions occur alternately", the fixed items "左" and "右" may refer to left and right hand, or the left and the right side, and may also refer to two different directions after the metonymic process.

8. 她[左躲右闪],想逃避检.

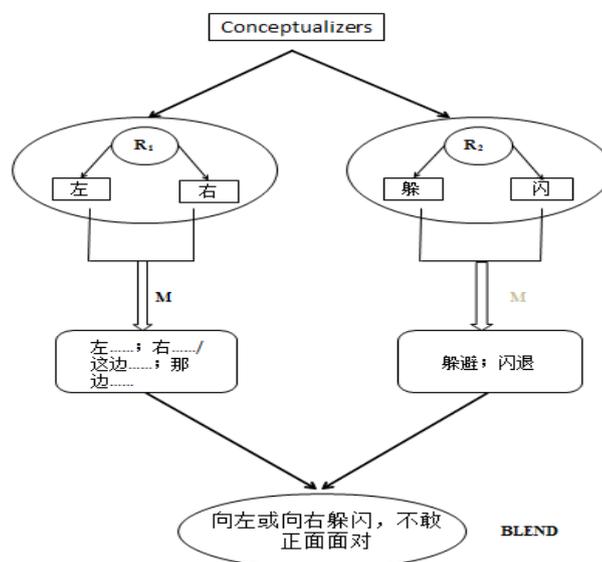Combined with the CMB framework, this idiom can be further illustrated as:

Figure. 8

There are three kinds of sense relations of A and B: synonymy, near-synonymy and antonym. Most of them are in synonymous relationship, so "左" and "右" of this semantic type are mainly used to describe the same or similar behavior. In addition, if "左" and "右" refer to different orientations, the format indicates that behaviors alternately occur in different directions or at different locations.

3. Expressing "surrounding" and "all"

When Zuo-You format expresses the meaning of "surrounding" and "all","左" and"右"is used for empty reference and refer to different objects, events or ways, which semantically equals to "this", "that"; "左" and"右"can also refer to different directions, which semantically equals to "here", "there". And "左" and"右"obtain semantic proliferation in the format, from referring to two objects to three or more objects, even all objects. (This semantic extension has been mentioned in the above sections, so the diagram of this part refers to the above discussions)

4. Expressing repetition or continuity

When the Zuo-You format expresses the meaning of "repetitive or long-lasting action behaviors", "左" and "右" do not carry an explicit meaning and do not refer to any object. Their role is to fictitiously point opposite situations or different situations and to express the amount of actions or long duration, Zuo-You format thus produce the meaning of "repetitive or long-lasting action behaviors". when "左" and "右" express this meaning, A, B are verbs, such as "左说右说", "左顾右

盼", "左思右想" (This semantic extension has been mentioned in the above sections, so the diagram of this part refers to the above discussions)

4. Summary

With the help of CMB, we can not only find the relationship within an OLSI but also the general construction and features when OLSI is used as a whole. By inheriting all properties of minimal constructions, the idioms have larger meaning of the blending of these constructions. According to the discussions above, we can conclude that CMB framework is a useful explanation facility by which we can recognize the production mechanism of OLSI and understand the schema of Chinese minds.

References

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