

The application of cognitive linguistics to TCFL: 白 and 把 as a case study

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Introduction

- Aim: CL as a new approach towards teaching lexical and grammar categories in Chinese taking 白 and 把 as case study.
- Motivation:
 - Chinese and Spanish present remarkable differences at both the linguistic and the cultural levels
 - Current teaching methods tend to adopt a traditional approach to the teaching of lexical and grammar categories
 1. Classical approach to categorisation
 2. Lexical items are monosemic (only prototypes are taught)
 3. One-to-one equivalent
 4. Neglect of metaphorical competence and uses

Cognitive linguistics

- Polysemy is the norm
- Prototype model of category structure
 - prototypes
 - natural extension members
 - metaphorical extension members
 - fuzzy boundaries between categories (continuum)
- Principle of family resemblance
- Importance of figurative thought (metaphor and methonymy)
- Categories are complex structures of interconnected knowledge, i.e. they are motivated
- Categorisation varies across cultures

Cognitive linguistics and FLT

- Big number of contributions (focusing in TEFL):
 - Achard & Niemeier (2004), Kristiansen, Achard, Dirven & Rui de Mendoza (2006), Ellis & Robinson (2008), Holme (2009), Littlemore & Juchem-Grundmann (2010), De Knop, Boers & De Rycker (2010), etc.
- Theoretical model of particular benefit to L2 learners:
 - Makes them focus their attention on given lexicalization or grammaticalization patterns.
 - Facilitates retention of unfamiliar figurative extensions.
 - Helps them to face certain challenges mapping the differences between their L1 and the L2.

Cognitive linguistics and Chinese

(see handout for full references)

- Adverbs (Liu 2007)
- Anaphora (Gao 2003)
- Aspectual particle 过 (Wang 2002; Yu 2007)
- Discourse markers and topic-comment constructions (Li 2012; Chu 1993)
- Double object constructions (Xu 2004)
- Effect of spatial dimension on the comprehension of event-state (An 2007)
- Fictive motions in spatial stationary location expressions (Yao 2007)
- Idioms (Zhang 2003)
- Measure words (Tai 1994; Shi 1996; Rovira-Esteva 2003; Zong 2012)
- Metaphorical orientation of time (Yu 2012)
- Negative constructions (Zhu 2007; Zhang & Yan 2011)
- Nominal phrases (Zhang 1998)
- Prepositions: 从、由 (Chen, 2007), 把 (Chen 2007), 由、归 (Wang 2007)
- Space metaphors and expressions (Lan 1999, Wu 2004)
- Verbs (Wang 2002, Yin 2012, Wang 2007, Yao 2007, Sun 2007; Wei 2007)
- Universal quantification feature of co-ordinate structure (Zhu & Jiang 2007)

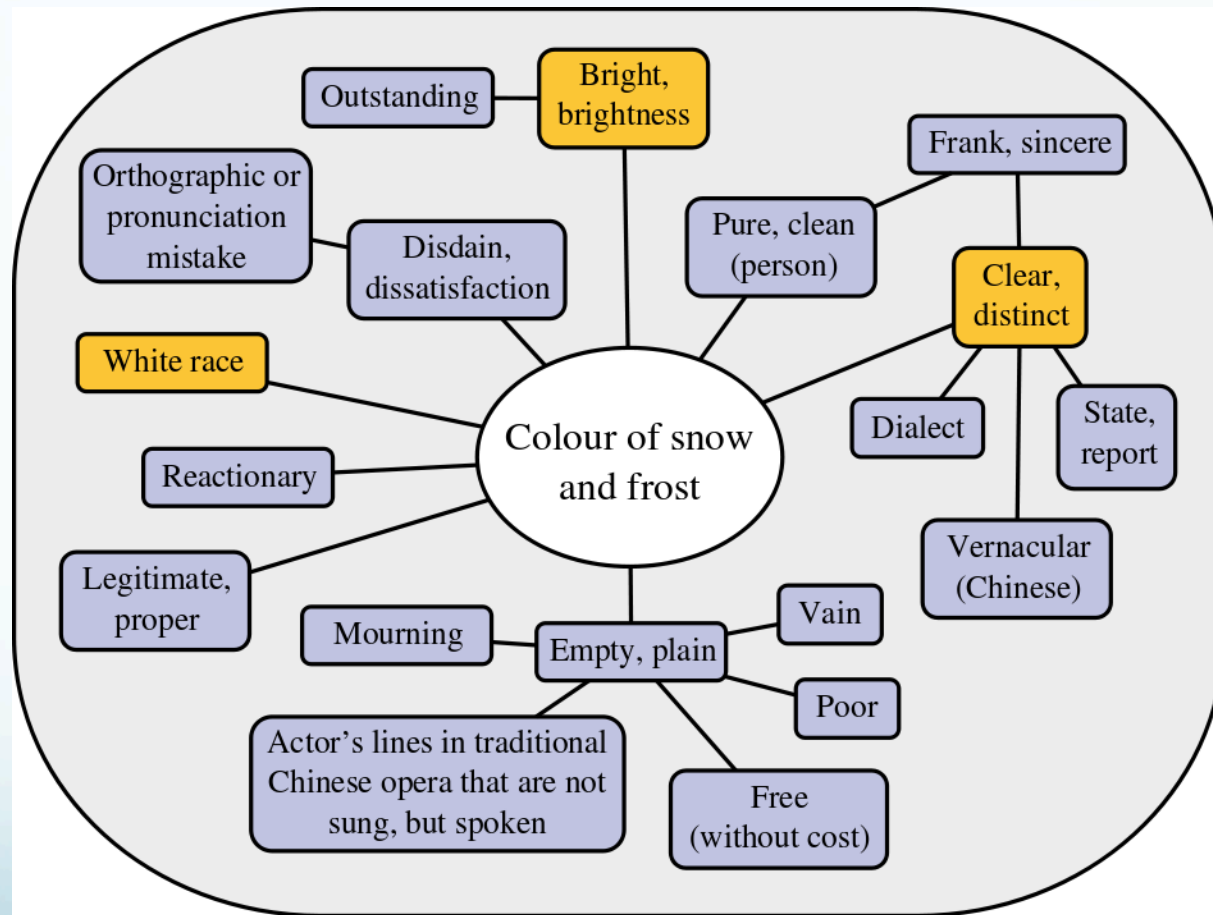
Cognitive linguistics and Chinese pedagogy

- Findings from research into TCFL?
 - Bridging Language and Culture: A Cognitive Approach to the Study of Chinese Compounds (Liu 1992)
 - Classifying Units of Meaning: Using Prototype Theory to Understand Polysyllabic Morphemes (Myers 1995)
 - Converb Construction (Chief 2011)
 - Lexicalisation of directional verbs (Dong 2012)
 - Measure words (Shi 1996; Rovira 2004, 2007)
 - Saliency Mapping of Figure and Ground of Motion (Chu 2011)

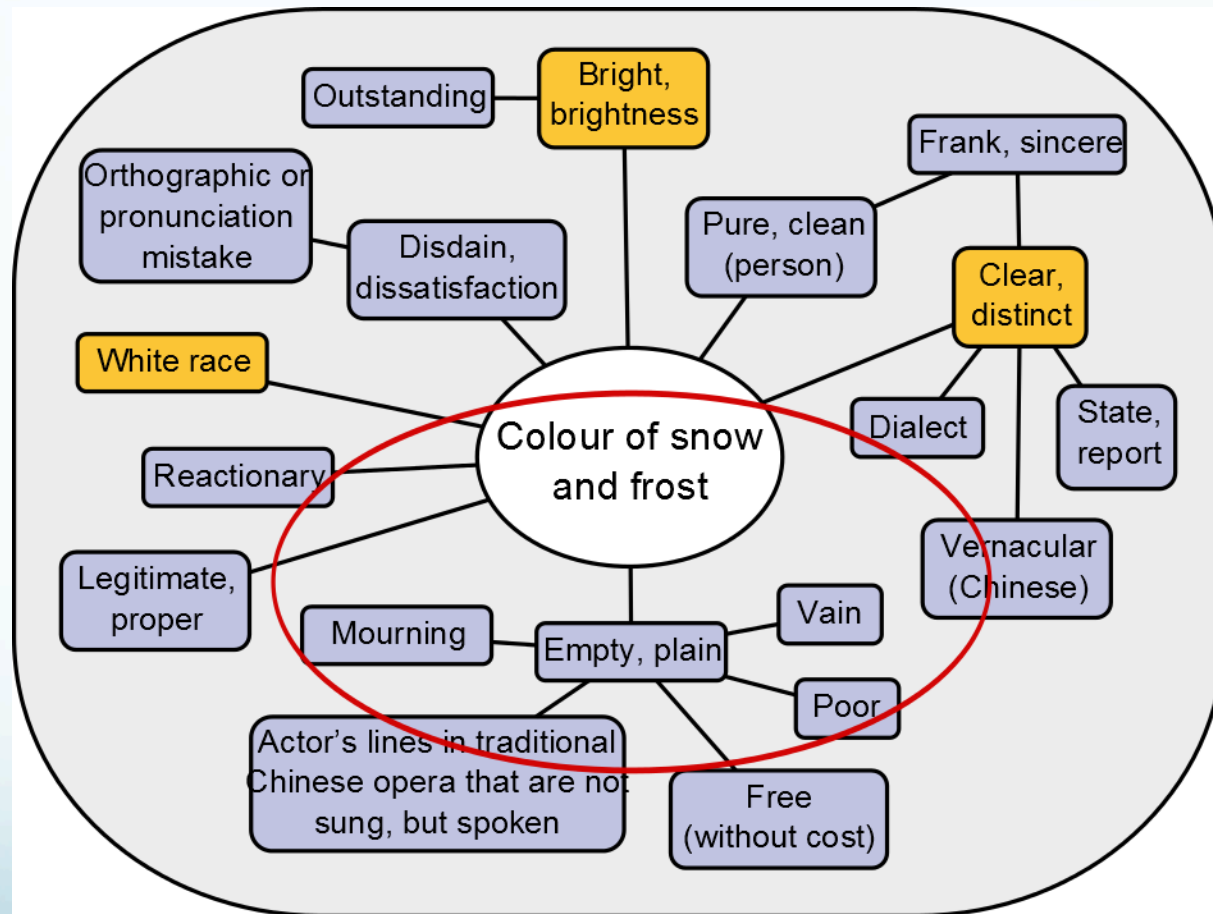
白 and 把 as case studies

- 白
 - High frequency word
 - Very productive in word formation
 - Complex category with outstanding differences across languages as far as extensions is concerned
 - Assumes different grammar functions
- 把
 - Its use as a measure word is a result of a grammaticalisation process
 - Complex category (highly polysemic)
 - Can be used both as a noun measure and a verbal measure
 - Can collocate with concrete and abstract nouns

Cognitive map of the category 白



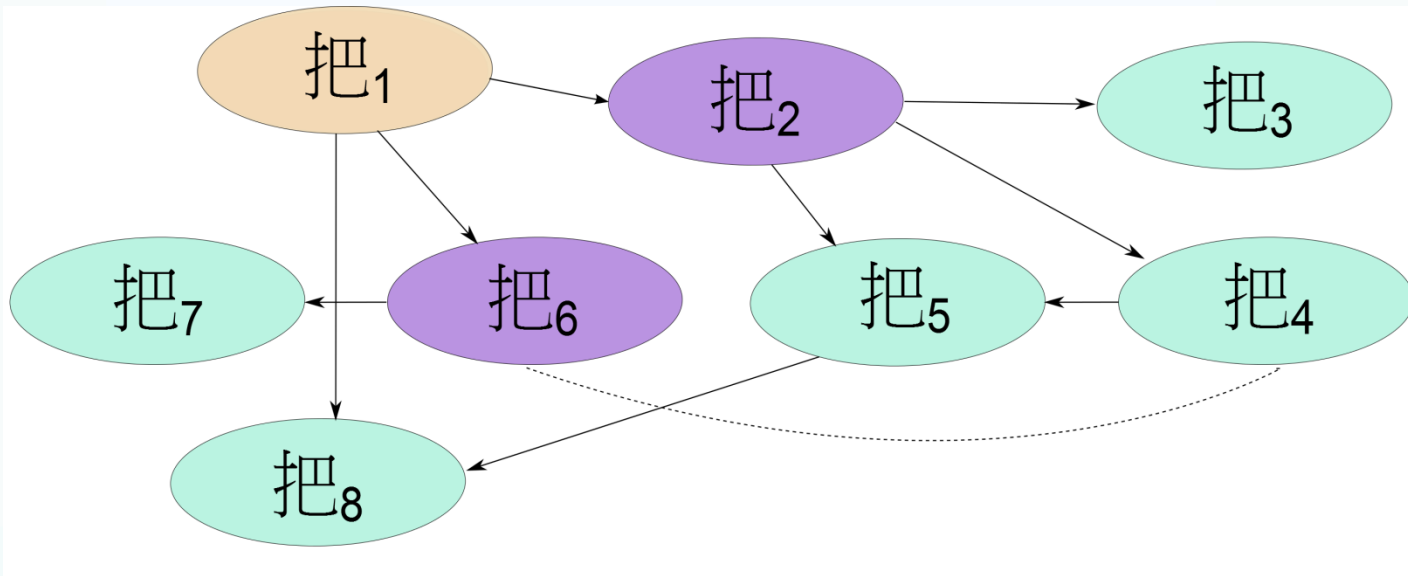
Cognitive map of the category 白



The category 白 and its extensions

MEANING ACCORDING 现代汉语词典	TYPE OF EXTENSION
Colour (of snow, frost, milk, etc.) (白色)	Central member
Bright, brightness (明亮)	Natural extension
White race (白种人)	
Disdain, dissatisfaction (轻视, 不满)	
Empty, plain (空白, 没有加上什么东西)	
Reactionary (反动)	Metaphorical extension
Pure, clean (person) (清洁)	
Frank, sincere (坦白)	
Vain (徒然)	
Free (without cost) (无代价)	
Outstanding (显著)	
Vernacular language (白话)	
Dialect (方言)	
Orthographic or pronunciation mistake (白字)	
Clear, obvious (明白, 清楚)	
Legitimate, proper (合法的, 正当的)	
Poor (卑贱, 贫寒)	
Actor's lines in traditional Chinese opera that are not sung, but spoken (戏曲中只说不唱的台词, 戏剧角色所说的话)	
To state, to report (陈述, 表明)	
Mourning (丧事)	

Cognitive map of the category 把



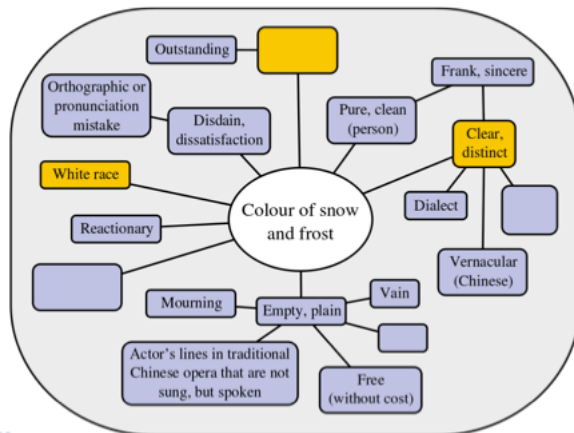
Prototype	Natural extension	Metaphorical extension			Natural extension	Metaphorical extension	
把 ₁	把 ₂	把 ₃	把 ₄	把 ₅	把 ₆	把 ₇	把 ₈
一把壶 一把椅子 一把刀 一把钥匙	一把花儿 一把米 一把泥土	一把野火 一把怒火	一把眼泪 一把冷汗 一把鼻涕	一把年级 一把骨头 一把力气 一把哀叹	洗一把脸 拉一把 扶一把 推一把	帮一把	一把好手 一把巧手 一把能手

Pilot study

- We designed some learning activities to use in different stages of the learning process.
- Student-based retrospective micro-evaluation.

颜色	西班牙文	中文
白色 báisè	Pureza, virginidad	boda, en vano, menosprecio, luto, cornudo, ilegalidad, seriedad, mezquino, vacío, alegría, pornografía, brillante, revolucionario, reaccionario, mar, peligro, salud, éxito, entre legalidad e ilegalidad, permiso, fortuna, etnia han, emperador, juventud, cielo, poder, envidia
黑色 hēisè	Illegal, sucio, humor negro	
红色 hóngsè	Pasión, violencia, peligro	
黄色 huángsè	Mala suerte	
绿色 lǜsè	Ecología, esperanza	
蓝色 lánsè	Cielo, mar, sangre azul	
紫色 zǐsè	Feminismo	
灰色 huīsè	Triste, apagado, policía	

► Conceptual map: fill in the gaps



Expressions with 白	meaning
祝福你们俩白头到老早生贵子。	空白
这家公司是他白手起家建成的。	丧事
我去他家参加一堂白事。	看不起
小谢生气地白了我一眼。	白色

Concluding remarks

- One of the main contributions that cognitive linguistics makes to second language learning and teaching is to suggest ways in which the relationships between grammatical expressions and their original lexical meanings can be made apparent in the language classroom to enhance learning and memorization.
- This process encourages learners to explore the deeper meanings of grammatical items, and to think about *why* the target language expresses things the way it does.

Thank you for your attention!
谢谢！

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