

Conceptualizations of GUO in Mandarin^{*}

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This paper discusses the polysemy of Mandarin GUO from the perspective of cognitive grammar, which equates meaning to conceptualization in the broad sense. The related senses of GUO are closely examined within a single category and across categories, and are subject to a variety of substructure designations from the relevant bases. In the characterization of spatial schemas, metaphor provides a convenient avenue to enrich the polysemy by mapping one cognitive domain to another. A comparison between GUO and *cross/across* in English indicates that conceptualizations of linguistic forms are to some extent language-specific.

Key words: cognitive grammar, polysemy, metaphor, conceptualization, schema, profile, semantic structure, Mandarin

1. Introduction

The flourishing theories of linguistic categorization have aroused an increasing interest in research on semantic structures of lexicon and grammar. This paper offers a conceptual approach to the lexical form GUO in Mandarin under the framework of cognitive grammar (Langacker 1982, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1999), and addresses the polysemous nature of GUO both intra-categorially and cross-categorially. The idea of metaphor (Aristotle 1933, Black 1962, Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Fillmore 1982, Lakoff 1987) is then employed to account for polysemous values that are related to cognitive domains other than space.

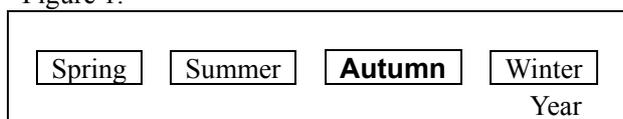
1.1 Scope of predication

A fundamental claim of cognitive grammar is that semantic structures are conceptualizations reified in terms of linguistic convention. Accordingly, a given semantic

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structure is called a **predication**. The predication is depicted in regard to the cognitive domain, which can be any conceptual structure or perceptual experience, such as space, time, or, more abstractly, morality, and so on. The domain or domains presupposed by a linguistic predication constitute the scope of predication, referred to as the **base**.¹ A designated substructure of the base is referred to as the **profile**.

Figure 1.



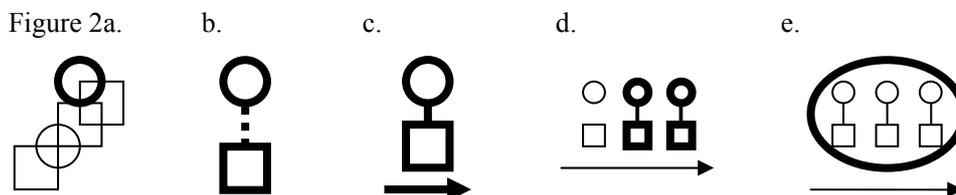
As shown in Figure 1, the domain of [YEAR] constitutes the base which provides the context necessary for the description of [AUTUMN], the profile. In other words, the profile is maximally preponderant and can be comprehended as a focal point (in boldface).

1.2 Types of profile

Langacker distinguishes three types of profile: thing, relation and process. A **thing** does not refer literally to a physical object, but it is defined in a more abstract manner and refers to cognitive events. A predication of noun that designates a region is a thing. A **region** is portrayed abstractly as a set of related entities, as represented by the boldfaced circle in Figure 2a. A **relation** is an atemporal profile of the interconnections between participating entities, the most salient of which are termed **trajector** and **landmark**. The trajector is the active entity that is evaluated or assessed, while the landmark provides one or more reference points for locating the trajector.² Relations are conceptually dependent, and thus one cannot profile the interconnections without also profiling the related participants. As in Figure 2b, the circle (trajector), the square (landmark), and the perpendicular broken line (interconnection) are all in boldface. Atemporal relations refer to predications of adverb, adjective, preposition, aspect-marker, and the like. A **process** is a temporal profile which designates a sequence of states through the domain of conceived time; each of the state contains a relation between the trajector and the landmark in the physical domain. A process refers to the predication of verb, and is usually simplified as the schema in Figure 2c, where the arrow represents the conceived time.

¹ The scope of predication is comparable to Fillmore's (1982) semantic frame and Lakoff's (1987) idealized cognitive model in the sense of providing the relevant context.

² The trajector/landmark relationship is similar to Talmy's (2000a, b) figure/ground connection.



Based on the simple schemas in Figures 2a-c, Figure 2d illustrates a complex atemporal relation, like the predication of a perfect-aspect marker, and profiles only partial stages of a schematic process; it is not a temporal process, as the time arrow is not boldfaced. Figure 2e marks a region out of a process, as only the ellipse is boldfaced, and it suggests a case of nominalization. Figures 3a-b display two types of processes: perfective and imperfective.

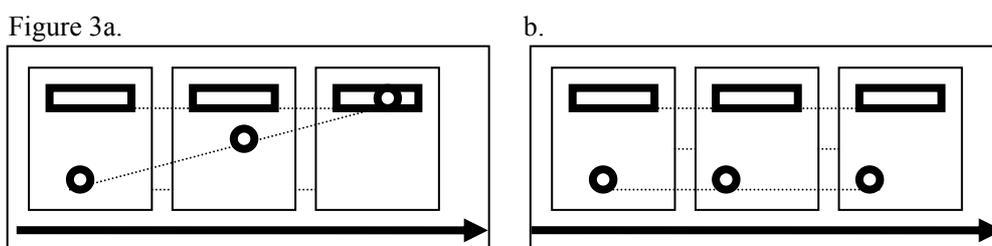


Figure 3a shows a **perfective** process, which includes a series of distinct states through time; in other words, the states entail a change. The vertical rectangles denote the sequential states consisting of the space domain, and the dotted lines denote the **correspondence** between landmarks, between trajectors, and between states.³ Perfective processes refer to, but are not limited to, predications of motion verbs like *approach*, *enter*, *reach*, etc. In Figure 3b, the process is **imperfective**, and the profile contains a sequence of identical states; that is, the trajector-landmark relationship is invariant through time. Imperfective processes refer to, but are not limited to, predications of epistemic verbs like *know*, *believe*, *feel*, and so forth.

2. Processual profiles

Predications of GUO profile temporal processes when this lexical form occurs as a verb or pertains to the first morpheme in a verb compound. The processes designated by

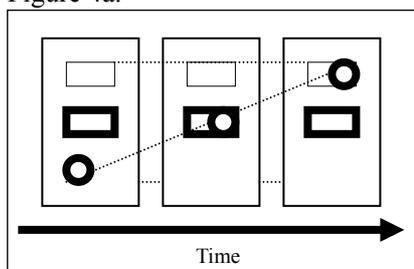
³ To avoid distraction, we shall not show all the details of correspondence in the following sections, but will indicate only the correspondence relevant to our discussions.

the verbal GUO can be perfective or imperfective.

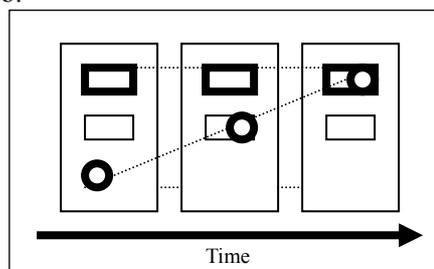
2.1 Verb

The verbal GUO predicates a prototypical activity such that a participant passes a particular **intermediate point** and reaches an **endpoint**. The scope of predication (the base) is established by the motion of the trajector through time, and the temporal profile contains a sequence of states which can be locative, durative, or something more abstract. There are two typical spatial conceptualizations of the verbal GUO. First, it profiles the motional transition through an intermediate point, as in Figure 4a. Second, it profiles the post-transitional movement to an endpoint, as in Figure 4b.

Figure 4a.



b.

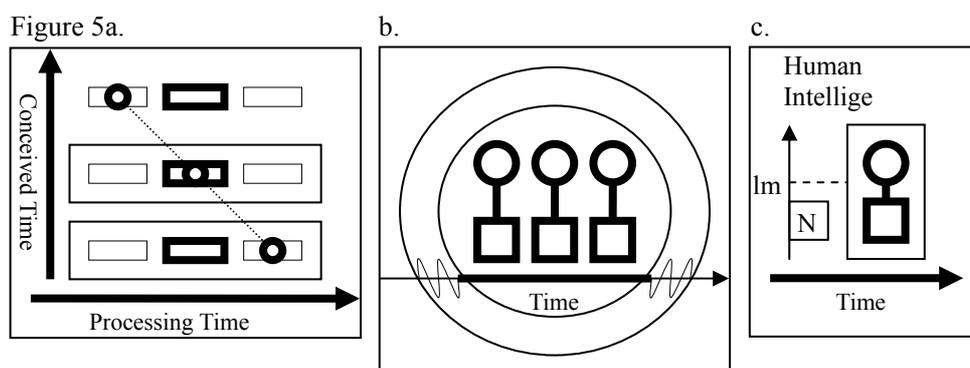


In Figures 4a-b, the rightward arrow at the bottom embodies the domain of conceived time, while the domain of physical space is represented by the larger vertical rectangles; the smaller horizontal rectangles stand for the states of the landmark, and the little circles occurring at different distances from the landmark illustrate the sequential states of the trajector. The first spatial sense of GUO is shown in (1a, b), where the landmark-profiles include the intermediate points, *malu* ‘the road’ and *hai* ‘the sea’, of the [CROSSING] movement. (2a, b) show the second spatial sense of GUO, which profiles the [ARRIVING] at the endpoints, *Taiwan* and *fu* ‘your home’.

- (1) a. GUO malu (過馬路)
 GUO road ‘cross the road’
 b. ba xian GUO hai (八仙過海)
 eight immortal GUO sea ‘the eight immortals cross the sea’
- (2) a. Tangshan GUO Taiwan (唐山過台灣)
 Tangshan GUO Taiwan ‘Tangshan crossed (the Straits) to Taiwan’
 b. GUO fu yi xu (過府一敘)
 GUO your-home one chat ‘go over to your home to have a chat’

In addition to the basic spatial senses, there are at least three metaphoric senses that can be conceptualized along lines of the verbal GUO's profiles. First, a temporal motion is profiled through space, as in (3). Second, a repeated activity out of a perfective process is profiled, as in (4). Third, a constant relationship through time with reference to a norm is profiled, as in (5).

- (3) wo zai Taipei GUO ye (我在台北過夜)
 I in Taipei GUO night 'I spent the night in Taipei'
- (4) kai-xin GUO rizi (開心過日子)
 happily GUO day 'happily pass my/his days'
- (5) caizhi GUO ren (才智過人)
 intelligence GUO people 'surpass others in the intelligence'



In Figure 5a, the larger horizontal rectangles represent the domain of conceived time, which is now the trajector, and the landmark is the speaker. The horizontal arrow below represents the domain of **processing time**. The temporal trajector has been variously elaborated as a metaphoric characterization (Lakoff 1993, Hsiao 1997, Yu 1998, Wu 2000, among others), whereas the processing time is a mental device that provides a passage to construe cognitive events sequentially (Langacker 1987:166-167). In the case of (3), one might literally think of *wo* 'I' passing through *ye* 'the night', but at a higher cognitive level, it is in fact *ye* that passes through *wo*, i.e., what is profiled is the motion of [NIGHT] through the speaker. In (4), there is a **maximal scope** that consists of a perfective process [PASSING A DAY], and an **immediate scope** in which the repeated activity of [PASSING THROUGH EACH DAY] is profiled. This repeated activity gives constant quality to each component state in a process, such that GUO acquires its metaphoric meaning [LIVE]. The maximal scope contains "offstage" entities such as reference points and background knowledge, while the immediate scope

is the “onstage” region which encompasses the designated elements (Langacker 1999: 49-53). As shown in Figure 5b, GUO takes the defined perfective process in the maximal scope (the outer circle) as the base, out of which an imperfective process is profiled in the immediate scope (the inner circle containing the boldfaced elements), where the boldfaced level line indicates the constant quality of repetition through time. In Figure 5c, the base is metaphorically related to a more abstract domain, human intelligence, and an abstract norm (N) of average intelligence serves as a **reference point**; the trajector is a complex component (a conceptual motion) which is interconnected with some point (Im) above the norm on the human intelligence scale (vertical arrow). It is unlikely that one’s intelligence would move from a point below this norm to a point above it, but rather, such a higher intelligence is already there. Therefore, in the case of (5), GUO profiles a sequence of states that are identical through time, and obtains the metaphoric meaning of [SURPASS], revealing a typical imperfective process.

2.2 Verb compound

The verbal GUO very often occurs as the first morpheme in a verb compound, which has either a VO structure or a coördinate structure. In a VO compound, GUO is followed by an object morpheme serving as the intermediate point which the trajector passes through. In (6a), the second morpheme *-men* ‘the door’ is a spatial intermediate point, while in (6b), there is a temporal intermediate point *-shi* ‘time’. As to (6c), *-mu* ‘eye’ can be construed as a landmark which an object passes by or through.

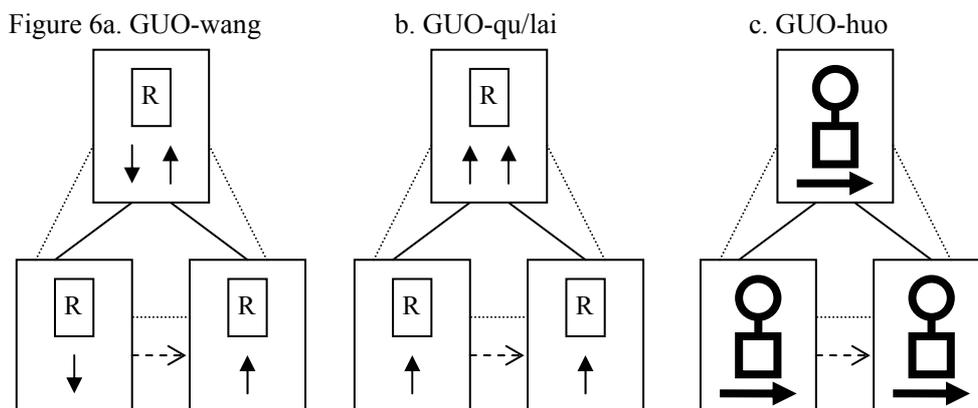
- (6) a. xifu GUO-men (媳婦過門)
 bride GUO-door ‘The bride enters the door (of the bridegroom’s house)’
 b. yifu GUO-shi (衣服過時)
 dress GUO-time ‘The dress is out of date’
 c. qing GUO-mu (請過目)
 please GUO-eye ‘Please look over’

In a coördinate verb compound, the GUO morpheme can be synonymous or antonymous to the second morpheme. At this point, it is not my intention to define the exact quality or opposition between the morphemes by using the terms synonym and antonym. Rather, they simply serve to characterize the relationships between processes predicated by these component morphemes.

- (7) GUO-wang shen mi (過往甚密)
 GUO-go very closely ‘visit each other very often’

- (8) GUO-qu (/lai) jichang (過去(/來)機場)
 GUO-go/come airport 'go/come to the airport'
 (9) mai cai GUO-huo (賣菜過活)
 sell vegetable GUO-live 'sell vegetables to make a living'

The compound GUO-*wang* in (7) consists of two sub-processes in which the paths defer in direction, and obtains the meaning of [MUTUALLY VISIT]. As in Figure 6a, the component structures of GUO and *wang* are superimposed in the composite structure, and the vertical arrows, which point to opposite directions with respect to a reference point (R), represent this conceptually integrated meaning. In (8), GUO and *-qu* 'go', or GUO and *-lai* 'come', profile the same type of motion, as signaled by the perpendicular arrows in Figure 6b, which point to a uniform direction. (9) also designates two identical sub-processes in the compound, but unlike the compound of (8), in which the profile is a perfective motion, GUO-*huo* profiles an imperfective process, as in Figure 6c. In all three cases, the process designated by GUO is elaborated by the second morpheme, as indicated by the horizontal broken-line arrows.⁴



3. Relational profiles

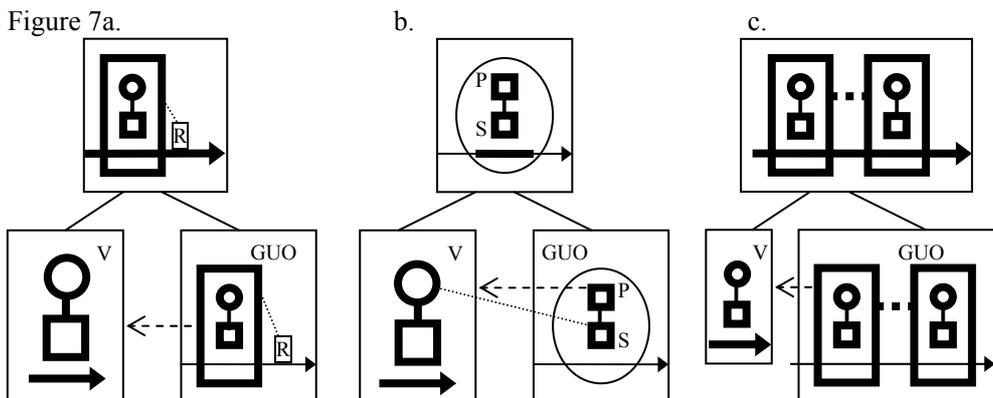
Atemporal relations are profiled when GUO functions as an aspect marker, an adverb, or a preposition. The aspect marker designates a complex relation, while the other two mostly designate single relations.

⁴ The composite structure is also elaborated by the component structures; but to avoid distraction, we shall indicate only the elaborations relevant to our discussions.

3.1 Aspect marker

The aspect-marking functions of GUO follow from the grammaticalization of the verb, and it may emerge as a bound morpheme suffixed to a preceding verb. Using Li and Thompson's (1981) term, I will call it an experiential marker. The experiential GUO has three related senses. First, it profiles a schematic process that has happened previously. Second, it profiles the continuity of the interconnection between a completed process and the speaker. Third, it profiles the relationship between a presently recurring process and a previous occurrence of an identical process.

- (10) wo tongzhi-GUO ta (我通知過他)
 I inform-GUO him 'I informed him before'
- (11) wo chi-GUO fan le (我吃過飯了)
 I eat-GUO meal PRF 'I have eaten the meal'
- (12) wo lai-GUO zheli (我來過這裡)
 I come-GUO here 'I have come here before'



In (10), GUO profiles a schematic process which is elaborated (or instantiated) by the verb stem *tongzhi* 'inform', as the elaboration is denoted by the leftward broken-line arrow in Figure 7a. Conceived time forms the primary domain, where a reference point (R), anchored in the present, is presupposed in the GUO component and serves as the landmark; the trajector is a process occurring before the reference time. The dotted line shows the correspondence between the referent point and the earlier process. It should be noted that what GUO profiles is an atemporal relation between the participants, but not a temporal process; therefore, the time arrow is not boldfaced in the GUO component, but in the composite structure. The profile in (11) includes the accomplished process of *chi*

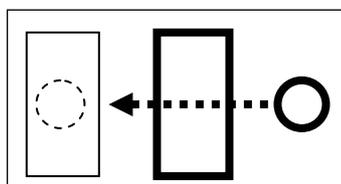
‘eating’, the speaker, and the established relationship that continues to hold through time, possibly connoted, for example, the feeling of [FULL], etc. In this case, the aspect of accomplishment is conceptually overlapped with the profile of the perfect marker *le* (Hsiao 1990, 1991). As in Figure 7b, the process (P) in the GUO component is the trajector, and speaker (S) becomes the landmark. Again, the broken-line arrow shows that this trajector (the process profiled by GUO) is elaborated by the verb stem, and the dotted line shows that the landmark (the speaker) of the GUO component corresponds to the trajector in the V component. In the composite structure, the boldfaced portion of the time arrow (within the circled scope) points to the fact that the V-GUO construction profiles an imperfective process. In (12), the speaker may come to a particular place and say, “I have come here before.” That is, there are two identical processes; as in Figure 7c, a process happening in the past is the landmark, and a recurring process at the present stands out as the trajector. In the GUO component, the atemporal relation between these two identical processes is profiled.

3.2 Preposition

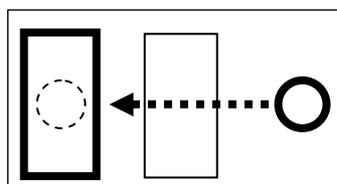
The prepositional GUO profiles an atemporal relation out of the same base of its verbal variant of the prototype, which is comprised of at least three sub-relations: that is, with respect to the intermediate point, the trajector progresses from a [BEFORE] relation via an [ON] relation to an [AFTER] relation (or an [AT] relation with respect to the endpoint). There are two related senses of the prepositional GUO: (13) demonstrates the first sense which includes the intermediate point, *qiao* ‘bridge’ in the profile, as in Figure 8a; The second sense is found in (14), which instead includes the endpoint, *na-bian* ‘there’ in the profile, as in Figure 8b.

- (13) zou GUO malu (走過馬路)
 walk GUO road ‘walk across the road’
 (14) qiu diu GUO na-bian (球丟過那邊)
 ball throw GUO that-side ‘throw the ball toward that side’

Figure 8a.



b.



In fact, prepositions are the most polysemous words cross-linguistically in virtue of their diverse paths (Hawkins 1984, Sweester 1986, Lakoff 1987, Brugman 1988, Tayler 1995). The prepositional GUO also displays a set of path-oriented senses, such as [OVER] in (15), [THROUGH] in (16), [ACROSS] in (17) and [VIA] or [PASSING BY] in (18), not to mention the additional related senses that each of the paths may generate when the constructions are modified.⁵

(15)	fei	GUO	shantou	(飛過山頭)
	fly	GUO	hill	‘fly over the hill’
(16)	chuan	GUO	suidao	(穿過隧道)
	pass	GUO	tunnel	‘pass through the tunnel’
(17)	chuan	GUO	cao-chang	(穿過操場)
	pass	GUO	sports-field	‘go across the sports field’
(18)	jing	GUO	youju	(經過郵局)
	pass	GUO	post-office	‘/passing by/via the post office’

3.3 Adverb

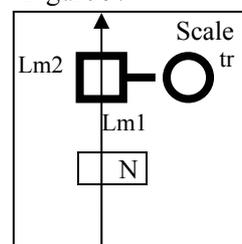
The adverbial GUO profiles an atemporal relation between a process and a certain scale of comparison, functioning as a degree adverb which means ‘too’ or ‘excessively’. In Figure 9, the scale of comparison constitutes the scope of predication, where the norm (N) of average quantity/quality is specified. The first landmark (lm1) represents the range higher than the norm (N) on the scale; and any point located in this range is recognized as being [MANY] in (19a) or [BIG] in (19b). The range of [TOO MANY] or [TOO BIG] is marked then by the second landmark (lm2) above lm1. The trajector for the adverbial predication is a process, i.e., [THE INSECTS ARE MANY] in (19a) or [THE NOSE IS BIG] in (19b).⁶ The processual trajector is interconnected with lm2 along the comparison scale, such that the atemporal relation contributes to the meaning [EXCESSIVELY]. The presentation of the trajector, lm2, and the connection between them in boldface illustrate this adverbial designation of atemporal relation.

⁵ In addition, the various landmarks, such as *shantou* ‘hill’, *suidao* ‘tunnel’, *caochang* ‘sports field’ and *youju* ‘post office’ also contribute to different senses of GUO, from the perspective of construction grammar (Fillmore et al. 1988, Goldberg 1995, Jackendoff 1997).

⁶ An adjective like *big*, *red*, etc. profiles a relation between two things (regions), cf. Langacker (1987:218-221) for discussions of the distinction between adjective and adverb.

- (19) a. chong GUO duo (蟲過多)
 Insect GUO many ‘too many insects’
 b. bizi GUO da (鼻子過大)
 nose GUO big ‘The nose is too big’
- (20) GUO-jiang (過獎)
 GUO-praise ‘flatter’

Figure 9.



The degree adverb GUO also appears as some sort of prefix followed by a verb stem, as in (20). The profile schema is similar to that in Figure 9, except that the base would be a scale of manner, and the trajector would be the process indicated by the verb stem. The composed verb then profiles a temporal process. In other words, the polysemous senses of the adverbial GUO reply upon the mapping between different scales, i.e., cognitive domains.

4. Regional profiles

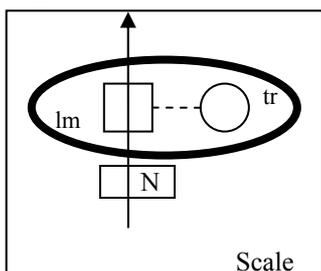
A region is profiled in the nominal predication of GUO. It can be an individual noun or part of a noun compound. Like the verb compounds, the noun compounds aligned with GUO also display both VO and coördinate constructions.

4.1 Noun

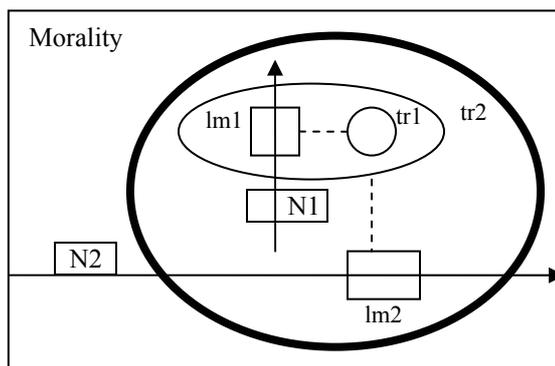
The nominal GUO profiles a region out of the base, and Langacker refers to such a regional profile as a thing. There is a Chinese saying, “Excessiveness is as bad as inadequacy,” as in (21), in which GUO undergoes a case of nominalization. Figure 10a is conceptually similar to Figure 9, except that the profile here is a region (the horizontal ellipse in boldface) which contains the relation between the trajector and the landmark, whereby the sense of [EXCESSIVENESS] is construed. The reasoning of (21) may provide a clue to another metaphoric sense of the nominal GUO, i.e., [FAULT], as in (22). Figure 10b can be used to describe this sense, as the base is extended to the scale of morality (the rightward arrow), on which a social moral norm (N2) is specified. Any entity located at a point beyond this norm along the scale is considered [WRONG]. Therefore, the sense of [FAULT] is conceptualized through the profile of the region that consists of an atemporal relation between tr2 and lm2.

- (21) GUO you bu ji (過猶不及)
 GUO as not enough 'Excessiveness is as bad as inadequacy'
- (22) shei zhi GUO (誰之過)
 who of GUO 'whose fault'

Figure 10a.



b.

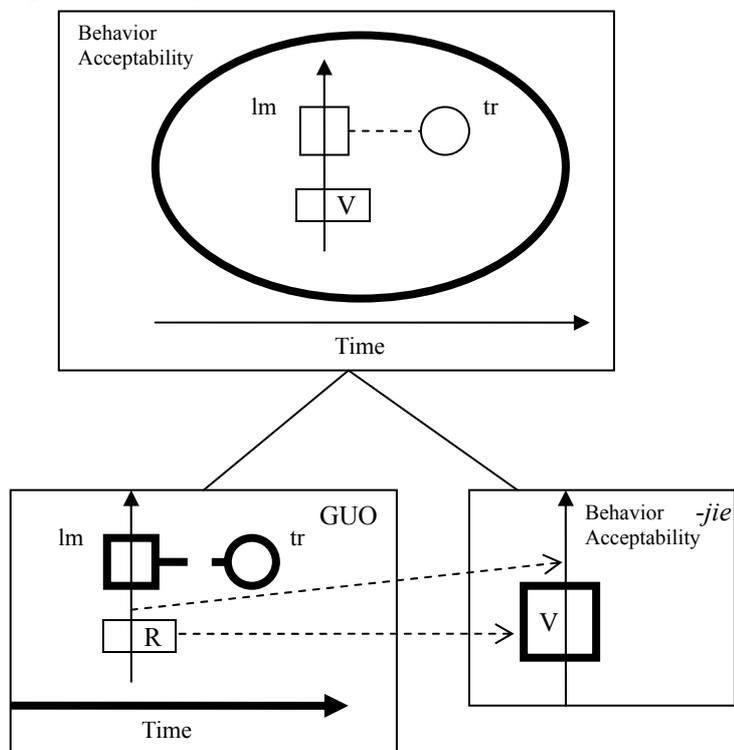


4.2 Noun compound

There are two genres of noun compounds that appear with GUO, and I will refer to them as the VO compound and the coordinate compound. The VO compound in (23) is schematically described in Figure 11, in which the base of the *-jie* component takes a metaphoric domain formed primarily by a scale of behavior acceptability. Along this scale a verge point (V) indicating the limit of acceptable behavior is profiled, and any entity beyond this limit is considered [UNACCEPTABLE]. On the other hand, the GUO component of this compound profiles a temporal process in which the trajector is interconnected with a landmark above a reference point (R) on an unspecified scale (the vertical arrows). Note that this unspecified scale is elaborated by the scale of behavior acceptability in the *-jie* component, and the reference point by the verge point; the elaborations are indicated by the rightward broken-line arrows. As a result, the composite structure profiles a region containing the trajector, the landmark, and the interconnections between them, all of them above the verge point, such that the sense of [GRUDGE] is conceptualized.

- (23) ta-liang you GUO-jie (他倆有過節)
 they-two have GUO-manner 'They have a grudge against each other'

Figure 11. GUO-jie



Like the verb compounds, the GUO morpheme in a noun compound can be antonymous to the other morpheme, as in (24), or synonymous to it, as in (25). However, the noun compound differs from the verb compound in two ways. Schematically, the GUO morpheme of the synonymous noun compound is not elaborated by the other morpheme, but it has an independent meaning.⁷ Structurally, it does not have to be the first morpheme of the antonymous noun compound.⁸

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| (24) gong-GUO | (功過) |
| merit-GUO | 'merit and fault' |
| (25) GUO-cuo | (過錯) |
| GUO-mistake | 'mistake' |

⁷ In the synonymous verb compound, the GUO morpheme is always elaborated by the second morpheme. See (8-9) and Figures 6b-c.

⁸ In the antonymous verb compound, GUO is always the first morpheme. See (7) and Figure 6a.

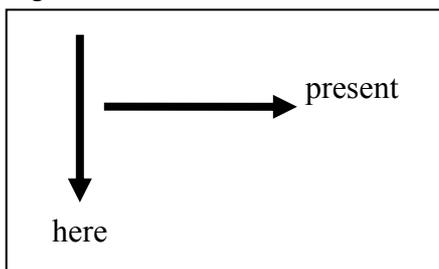
5. On the paths of GUO: Two comparisons

The diverse paths of GUO have been observed in its verbal and prepositional predications (sections 2 and 3.2). The following discussions will examine closely some peculiar properties of its spatial and temporal paths through two comparisons: a system-internal comparison between *GUO-lai* and *GUO-qu*, and a cross-linguistic contrast between GUO and *cross/across* in English.

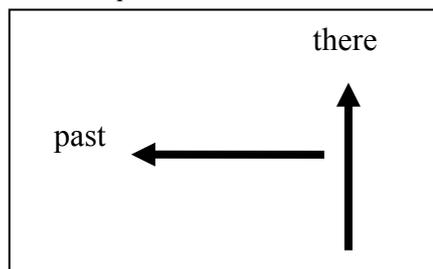
5.1 *GUO-lai* and *GUO-qu*

In section 2.2, *GUO-lai* and *GUO-qu* have been characterized as the same type of verb compound, in the sense that GUO is elaborated by *-lai* or *-qu*. However, it should be noted that predications of *-lai* or *-qu* point in opposite directions, both spatially and temporally. *GUO-lai* and *GUO-qu* inherit this contrast, since GUO in such compounds profiles an unspecified process which must be elaborated by the second morpheme.

Figure 12a. *GUO-lai*



b. *GUO-qu*



GUO-lai points to [HERE] in the domain of space and to [PRESENT] in the domain of time, as in Figure 12a, whereas *GUO-qu* points to the converse in both domains, as in Figure 12b. *GUO-lai* and *GUO-qu* also occur as adverbs, adjectives, and nouns; in all the categories, this directional distinction continues to be the case.

- (26) a. ta pao GUO-lai zhebian (他跑過來這邊)
 he ran GUO-come here 'He ran over here'
 b. ta pao GUO-qu nabian (他跑過去那邊)
 he ran GUO-go there 'He ran over there'
- (27) a. wo shi GUO-lai ren (我是過來人)
 I am GUO-come person 'I am the person who has had the experience'
 b. *wo shi GUO-qu ren (*我是過去人)
 I am GUO-go person 'I am the person who has had the experience'

- (28) a. *bie danxin ni-de GUO-lai (*別擔心你的過來)
 not worry your GUO-come 'Don't worry about your past'
 b. bie danxin ni-de GUO-qu. (別擔心你的過去)
 not worry your GUO-go 'Don't worry about your past'

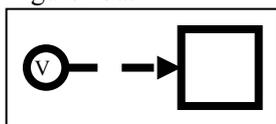
Examples (26a, b) show the designated different directions in space, where the compounds in question function as some sort of directional adverbs. Both (27) and (28) have the temporal domain as the base: the concept of [EXPERIENCE] is recognized as an entity cumulated from the past to the present, such that only GUO-lai can satisfy this condition in (27), where it is an adjective modifying *ren* 'person'; in (28), GUO-qu is a noun, which refers to the addressee's [PAST] viewed from a **vantage point** anchored at present, and thus the possibility of GUO-lai is excluded.

The directional difference between GUO-lai and GUO-qu can be neutralized under, but not limited to, two circumstances. First, there is a vantage movement. Second, there is map-pointing. Compare first (26b) with (29):

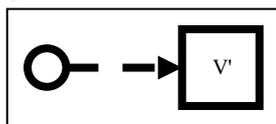
- (29) ta pao GUO-lai nabian (他跑過來那邊)
 he ran GUO-come there 'He ran over there'

In (26b), the vantage point (V) is in its canonical position (coinciding with the trajector) at some distance from the landmark, as illustrated by Figure 13a. In (29), however, the speaker mentally transports his/her vantage point (V') to a position within the range of the landmark, and from the perspective of V', GUO-lai is interpretable, as schematically represented in Figure 13b.

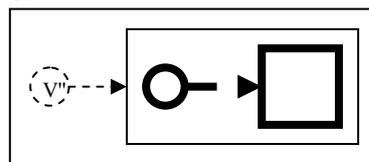
Figure 13a.



b.



c.



Consider now (30) in conjunction with (26a). The sentence in (30) would not make sense unless the speaker is pointing at some kind of map. In this case, the vantage point (V'') is "offstage", as schematized in Figure 13c.

- (30) ta pao GUO-qu zhebian (他跑過去這邊)
 he ran GUO-go here 'He ran over there'

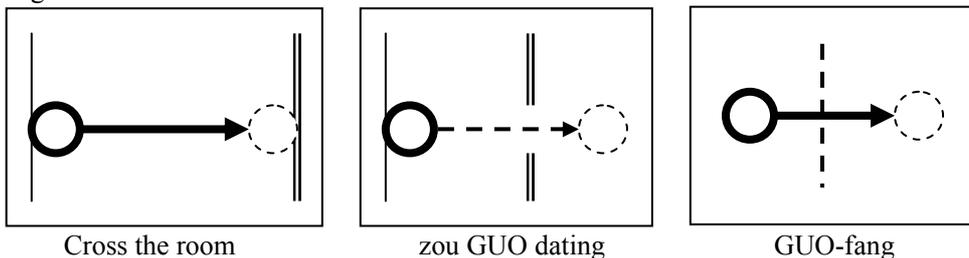
5.2 GUO and *cross/across*

We have discussed earlier that GUO presupposes or profiles an intermediate point along the path, as if it were equated with the predications of *cross* and *across* in English. For example, in (1) GUO *malu* is paraphrased as *Cross the road*, and in (13) *zou* GUO *malu* is comprehended as *Walk across the road*. However, the distinction between GUO and *cross/across* becomes clear when the image of [WALL] is included in the base:

- (31) a. *GUO fangjian (*過房間)
 GUO room ‘cross the room’
 b. Cross the room
- (32) a. zou GUO da-ting (走過大廳)
 walk GUO lobby ‘pass the lobby’
 b. Walk across the lobby
- (33) GUO-fang (過房)
 GUO-family ‘adopted by another family (of a relation)’

In (31a), the verbal GUO takes *fangjian* ‘the room’ as the intermediate point and designates a process for an entity to pass this intermediate point. However, this path is blocked by the existence of [WALL] (represented by the vertical doubled line in Figure 14a), and thus the sentence sounds awkward to the native speaker. The predication of *cross* in (31b) has no such problem; it allows an entity to move from one side of the room to another side against the [WALL]. In (32a), the process is designated by the verb *zou* ‘walk’, while GUO is a preposition profiling only a relation. The sentence sounds all right, but it connotes that an entity [PASSES] the lobby through some door to another room (or outside), as shown by the schema in Figure 14b. The path of *across* in (32b), like *cross*, allows the possibility of the entity being another side of the lobby.⁹

Figure 14a.



⁹ I would like to thank Leonard Talmy for useful discussions of *across* and *cross* in English. Of course, I am solely responsible for any error in the analysis.

In contrast to (31a), (33) is metaphorically acceptable. GUO-*fang* is a VO compound, where *fang* is not literally taken as [ROOM], but semantically extended to the construal of [FAMILY]. In that event, GUO designates a metaphoric transfer of an entity across the family boundary (the vertical broken line in Figure 14c), that is, to have a child adopted by another relative.

6. Theoretical implication and conclusion

A polysemy is a linguistic form that has two or more related senses (Harrington 1992, Alm-Arvius 1993, Yap 1999, Lien 2000, among others). Cognitive linguists characterize the mediating of these related senses as a mental process, that is, conceptualization. (Hawkins 1984, Sweester 1986, Lakoff 1987, Brugman 1988, Tayler 1995, Langacker 1999). In this paper, the polysemous senses of GUO have been carefully explored at both intra-categorial and cross-categorial levels. This discussion has not been intended to be exhaustive, but its purpose is to illustrate the following inferences. First, the intra-categorial related senses are determined by the choice of substructure (e.g., intermediate point or endpoint) included in a single type of profile. Second, the cross-categorial polysemous senses are attributed to different types of profile (process, relation, or region). Thirds, at both levels, metaphor is incorporated into the construal to achieve or enrich the polysemy (i.e., the mapping of cognitive domains).

6.1 Intra-categorial polysemy

The related senses within each category of GUO follow from the choice of certain substructures designated within a single profile type. The verbal GUO has two basic spatial senses: one profiles the motional transition through the intermediate point; the other profiles the ultimate movement to the endpoint. Viewing metaphor as mapping one cognitive domain to another, I discuss three metaphoric senses of the verbal GUO: two of them are related to temporal domains and one to an abstract domain of human intelligence. The experiential marker GUO has three related senses: it may profile a schematic process that has happened previously, a continuing relationship between a completed process and the speaker, or a relationship between two identical processes in chronological order. The prepositional GUO exhibits two basic related senses: it profiles a relation with respect either to the intermediate point or to the endpoint. The diverse paths of this prepositional predication also make possible various path-oriented senses. Both the adverbial GUO and the nominal GUO acquire their polysemous senses by mapping between metaphoric domains.

6.2 Cross-categorial polysemy

The polysemous senses are also observed among the five categories of GUO. The verbal GUO profiles a temporal process, that is, a sequence of states through time. The experiential marker GUO profiles a complex atemporal relation between the landmark and a schematic process. The prepositional GUO profiles a single relation between things, while the adverbial GUO profiles a single relation between a process and a thing. The nominal GUO profiles a thing (a region) that contains either a single relation or a process. The cross-categorial polysemy arises from the fact that language is organized by conceptual structure related to cognitive domains. The related senses among the categories stem from two essential notions: conceptual overlap and metaphor.

The term “conceptual overlap”, which Langacker uses to explain correspondence between component structures and their composite structure, also provides an avenue to relate the GUO categories. It is not intended to say that all five categories of GUO have a central sense in terms of classical centrality (Wittgenstein 1953) or prototypicality (Rosch 1973, 1977a, 1977b, 1978). Rather, it suggests that some of the members may include the same conceptual structure in the base, but simply profile different substructures out of it. For example, both the adverbial GUO and the nominal GUO include in the base a comparison scale, a reference point along the scale, a landmark above the reference point, and a trajector interconnected with the landmark; the adverbial then profiles the relation between the landmark and the trajector, while the nominal profiles a region out of the relation.

Metaphor, in Lakoff’s (1987) term, is the mapping from a source cognitive domain to a target cognitive domain. The most basic sense usually correlates to the source domain, which is spatial. The target domain, which is emotional, is related to a metaphoric sense. In the case of GUO, the experiential marker, the adverb and the noun can be viewed as metaphoric, since they are always related to domains such as time, morality scale, etc. The verb and the preposition are more central in virtue of their spatial senses.¹⁰ At this point, the adjectival compound GUO-*lai* and the nominal compound GUO-*qu*, adopting the temporal domain, can be viewed as metaphoric variants of their spatial senses related to the verb compounds as well.¹¹

¹⁰ The verb and the preposition may, of course, have metaphoric senses as discussed in sections 2 and 3.

¹¹ The separate form of GUO does not have an adjectival sense, but the compound GUO-*lai* can function as an adjective modifying a noun. See (27).

6.3 Interlanguage variation

Langacker (1987:47) indicated that “Lexicon and grammar are storehouses of conventional imagery, which differ substantially from language to language,” and claimed further that there is no “full universality” of semantic structure. Talmy (2000a, b) reasoned that the universally available inventory of spatial schemas are “pre-packaged” in a language-particular way. In this paper, we have observed a language-specific distinction between GUO and English *cross/across* in relation to the image of [WALL]. The predication of *cross* or *across* designates a motion from one side of the room to another side, whereas the conceptualization of GUO requires an entity to pass through the room through a certain door or to penetrate through the [WALL]. The conceptualizations of linguistic forms can be subsumed under Lakoff’s (1987) “idealized cognitive model”. They are created by human knowledge and vary from culture to culture.

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漢語「過」的概念化

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本文從認知語法的角度討論漢語「過」的多義性。認知語法認為義涵即是廣義的概念化，「過」的詞類內部與詞類之間的多項涵義，乃是來自相關基底中不同次結構的指定。而在空間輪廓的刻畫中，隱喻則透過認知範疇的轉換，使這個多義詞的語意更加豐富。此外，藉由漢語「過」與英語 cross/across 的比較顯示，語言形式的概念化在某種程度上是有語言個別差異性的。

關鍵詞：認知語法，多義性，隱喻，觀念化，輪廓，語意結構，漢語