

A Review of Grammatical Metaphor Research in China Based on the Content Analysis Method

Chu Yan*, Chen Xiangling

English Department, Foreign Language School, North China Electric Power University, Baoding, Hebei, China

DOI: [10.36348/sijll.2020.v03i05.003](https://doi.org/10.36348/sijll.2020.v03i05.003)

| Received: 08.05.2020 | Accepted: 15.05.2020 | Published: 21.05.2020

*Corresponding author: Chu Yan

Abstract

The grammatical metaphor theory is an important part of Halliday's functional grammar. With the introduction of it, it has attracted more and more researchers' attention, and its research has continued to deepen. This article uses the content analysis method, taking the journal articles published in CSSCI with grammatical metaphor as the key words as the research object, to analyse the number of publications, keywords, research purposes, disciplinary distribution of these articles quantitatively and qualitatively. The purpose of this paper is to summarize the research hotspots and development trends of grammatical metaphor in order to provide reference for the application and development of grammatical metaphor research.

Keywords: content analysis method; grammatical metaphor; literature review.

Copyright @ 2020: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution license which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use (NonCommercial, or CC-BY-NC) provided the original author and source are credited.

INTRODUCTION

Grammatical metaphor is a very common linguistic phenomenon. Halliday formally proposed the idea of grammatical metaphor in 1985 in his book 《Introduction to Functional Grammar》 [1]. Halliday believes that grammatical metaphor includes conceptual metaphor and interpersonal metaphor. Conceptual metaphor mainly embodies empirical meanings through non-conformity and physical structure, such as the use of nouns or nominalized components to materialize the processes and nature; While Interpersonal metaphor mainly embodies interpersonal meaning through inconsistent mood structure and modal elements, such as using interrogative sentences to reflect commands, requests; and using "I think", "It is likely" and other sentence patterns to reflect modal meaning. Early researchers in this field include Halliday, Mathiessen, and Martin etc.

Since the grammatical metaphor was introduced to China in the 1990s, it has attracted more and more scholars' attentions and researches. In recent years, a considerable number of scientific research achievements on grammatical metaphor have appeared in the core journals at home, these researches analyse grammatical metaphor from the perspective of introduction, analysis, revision, and expansion, even from an interdisciplinary point of view. Such as Hu

Zhuanglin introduced and analyzed the generation patterns and types of grammatical metaphor[2]; Fan Wenfang proved the function of the discourse cohesion of the grammatical metaphor from the perspective of nominalization[3]; Yan Shiqing traced the new development of grammatical metaphor theory and pointed out its theoretical significance[4]; Jin Nana, Chen Zili[5], Lang Tianwan, Jiang Yong[6], Liu Chengyu explored the cognitive effects, semantic expansion and cognitive motivation of grammatical metaphor from the perspective of cognition[7]. Wang Yifang and Yang Chenghu explored the relationship between grammatical metaphor and grammaticalization[8, 9]. Zhu Yongsheng expanded the scope of grammatical metaphor from the perspective of verbization[10].

As a research method of objective, systematic and quantitative description of the obvious content of the text, the content analysis method has been widely used in the analysis of the research literature. This method aims to clearly sort out and understand the essential facts and development trends of the research subjects, so as to reveal and excavate the deep content, predict and grasp the development tendency. The implementation steps of content analysis include Firstly, raise questions; then, identify the data sources and screen out the research samples; after that, Encode

、count and process the samples; Finally, Analyse and obtain the research results[11].

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research questions

This study is intended to answer the following questions: 1) How about the basic situation of the gramatical metaphor research?2) What are the hotspots in gramatical metaphor research? 3) What are the new developments in the study of gramatical metaphor?

RESEARCH METHOD

Data Sources

The Chinese Social Science Citation Index (CSSCI) database was developed by Nanjing University and covers a wide range of research fields. It uses the qualitative and quantitative method to select the academic periodical with editorial normalization and strong academic as the sources, which is the most important and commonly used source database for social science research, and it is also an important choice for social science researchers to search for

literature. Therefore, the data source of this paper is CSSCI in order to ensure the quality of the research samples.

Data Collection and Processing

Firstly, take the grammatical metaphor as the title keyword, 76 related papers were retrieved, the search date was June 15th, 2019; After the data source was determined, the titles, abstracts, keywords and publications of 76 related papers were queried and downloaded and all the information were saved on Note Express; then, according to the search results, the quantitative visualization analysis is carried out, and the information such as the trend diagram of the volume of documents, the distribution of keywords, the distribution of subjects and other information are obtained; Finally, carry out the corresponding statistics and analysis .

Encoding

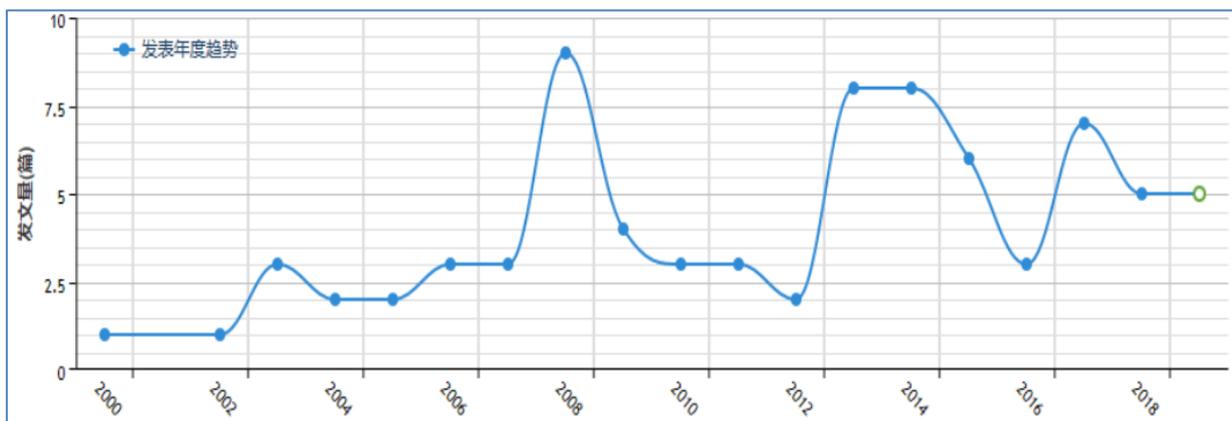
76 articles were encoded according to the four aspects in Table 1.

Table-1: Variables and Classification

Classification	Variables
1. Theoretical research	The number of publications
2. Applied research	
	Keywords
	Research purposes
1. Language	Disciplinary distribution
2. Psychology	
3. Education	
4. Politics	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The trend of publications



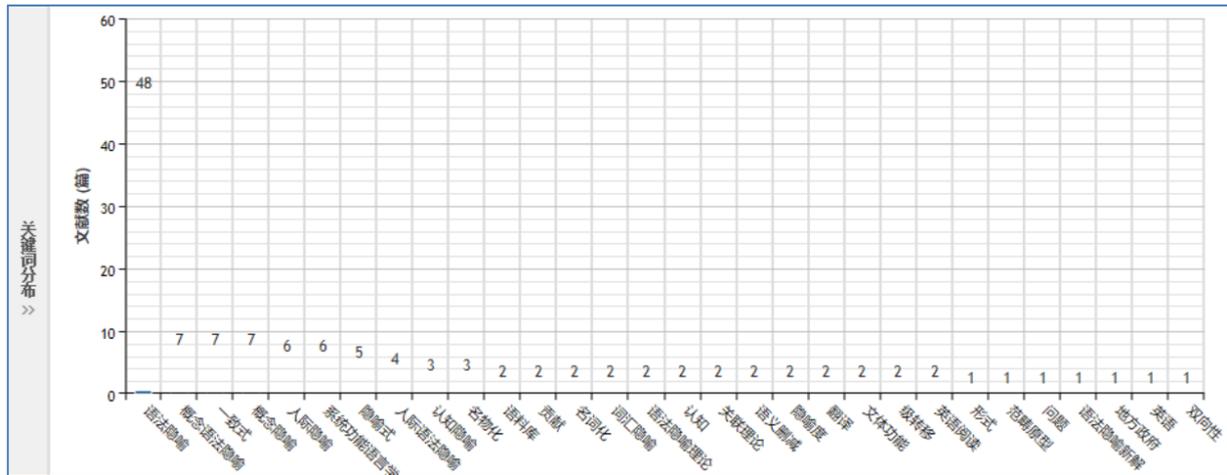
(Picture comes from CNKI)

Fig-1: Publications Tendency Chart of Grammatical Metaphor Research

As shown in Figure 1, Over the years, the study of grammatical metaphor has generally shown a fluctuating and unstable trend. There were only 9 articles at the peak of publications in 2008. In the past 20 years, 76 papers related to grammatical metaphor have been published on CSSCI, with an average of 4 papers per year. It can be seen that the study of grammatical metaphor may have not attracted enough attention in China.

The study of the grammatical metaphor in China can be divided into three stages: the introduction and interpretation period in the 1990s, the innovation and development stage in the early 21st century, and the interdisciplinary integration development period in the last decade or so.

Keywords



(Picture comes from CNKI)

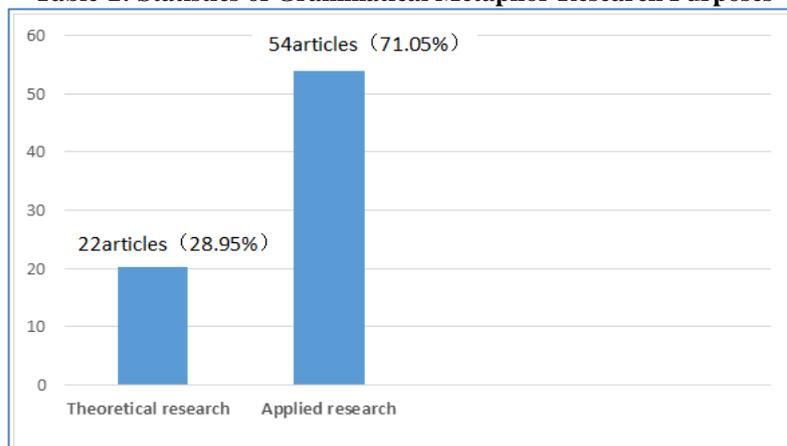
Fig-2: Keyword distribution of grammatical metaphor research

As shown in Figure 2, Among the keywords appeared in the literature, “grammatical metaphor” is the most, with 48 times, which is closely related to the literary theoretical background of the study of grammatical metaphor; secondly, “conceptual grammatical metaphor”, “congruence”, and “Conceptual metaphors” all have appeared 7 times. By analyzing the reasons, at the beginning of conceptual grammatical metaphor, its rationality has been questioned by some scholars, related disputes and problems have been constantly discussed. In addition, the most controversial thing about grammatical

metaphor is its criterion-congruence. In introducing the concept of grammatical metaphor, Halliday did not highlight its standards, but introduced them into his theoretical framework in a random way. As the main introducer of grammatical metaphor, Hu Zhuanglin summarized six standards for judging consistency and non-conformity, and pointed out the operational difficulties of these standards. Liu Yuhong[12]、Zhu Yongsheng[13] *et al.* explored the criteria for consistency judgment from the perspective of cognitive linguistics.

Research purposes

Table-2: Statistics of Grammatical Metaphor Research Purposes

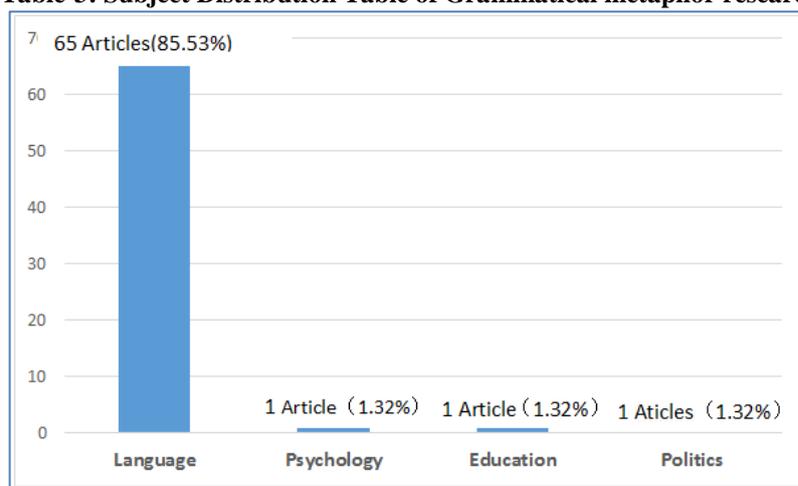


It can be seen from Table 2 that the applied research of grammatical metaphor accounts for 28.95%, theoretical research accounts for 71.05%, the proportion of theoretical research papers is significantly higher than that of applied research papers. This shows that the theoretical study of grammatical metaphors is not fully used in language applied research. Analyze the reasons , on the one hand, because of the late start of the study of grammatical metaphor in China, most scholars focus on the introduction and interpretation [13, 2, 10],

Judgement and criticism [14, 8, 9], repair and improvement [10, 12, 15] of the theory. However, most of the scholars in China who study the application of grammatical metaphor are foreign language teachers. One of their original intentions of the theory is to do a good job in teaching. Therefore, most of the grammatical metaphor theory is only applied in the study of English teaching, translation and discourse analysis.

Disciplinary distribution

Table-3: Subject Distribution Table of Grammatical metaphor research



It can be seen from Table 3 that the distribution of grammatical metaphor research subjects are mainly concentrated in the language subject, a total of 65 papers, accounting for 85.53%. Reflecting on the reasons, grammatical metaphor itself belongs to the category of linguistics, and naturally, its application cannot be separated from the analysis of specific language texts. In the papers and works of grammatical metaphor, it covers advertising, scientific discourse, business English, hotel English, contract English, news, newspapers, editorials, academics, speeches, debates, government reports, campaigns, novels and so on. Besides, grammatical metaphor research has emerged an interdisciplinary trend in the fields of psychology, education, and politics.

CONCLUSION

In China, although some achievements have been achieved in the study of grammatical metaphor, and its own research features have been formed, there are still some shortcomings. To sum up, they are 1) Lack of discipline guidance: The study of grammatical metaphor in China has been developed on the basis of foreign studies, and it is only after the formation of a more mature theory that we began to introduce, interpret, criticize and study the grammatical metaphor; 2) Researches are not independent enough: The researches of Chinese scholars are generally to study a newly developed theoretical argument in foreign

countries; 3) the lack of applied research: although the grammatical metaphor theory is proposed by Halliday on the basis of English language research, as a General linguistic theory, grammatical metaphor should be used more widely in other disciplines. All in all, there is still a long way to go in grammatical metaphor research.

REFERENCES

- Halliday, M.A.K. (2000). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* [M.Beijing : Foreign Language Teaching and Research P ress.
- Hu, Zhuanglin. (2000). *Comments on Halliday's model of metaphor* [J] .Foreign Language Teaching and Research, (3).
- Fan, W. (1991). *The cohesive function of nominalized metaphor in English discourse* [J].Foreign Language Research, (1)
- Yan Shiqing. *The development of grammatical metaphor theory and its theoretical significance* [J] .Foreign Language, 2003, (3) .
- Nana, J., & Zili, C. (2004). Cognitive effects of grammatical metaphor. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 36(1), 25-30.
- Lang, T. (1997). Jiang Yong. *To expanding analysis of Halliday's conceptual metaphor of English grammar from a cognitive perspective* [J. Journal of Sichuan University of Foreign Language,(4).

7. Liu, C. (2002). *Semiotics and cognitive motivation of grammatical metaphor* [J] .Foreign language and foreign language teaching,(5).
8. Wang, F.(2001). *Grammaticalization theory and Halliday's grammatical metaphor model* [J] . Shandong Foreign Language Teaching Journal,(2).
9. Yang, C. (2002). *An analysis of the differences between grammaticalization theory and grammatical metaphor* [J] Foreign Languages in Fujian. F(1).
10. Zhu, Y. (2006). *Nominalization, verbalization and grammatical metaphor* [J. Foreign Language Teaching and Research, (2).
11. Qiu Junping, Z. Fei. (2004). *Research on content analysis*, Journal of China Library, 14-19.
12. Liu, Yuhong. (2001). *Congruence* [J] .Foreign Language, (6).
13. Zhu, Y. (2004). *Introduction to functional linguistics*,[M]. Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
14. Jianbo, H. (2008). *Grammatical Metaphor: A Novel Interpretation and Reconsideration* [J]. *Foreign Language Education*, 5.
15. Zhang, D. L., & ZHAO, J. (2008). *On the formal similarity principle in ideational grammatical metaphor between congruent and metaphorical forms*. *Journal of Foreign Languages*, 6, 25-32.