****LT3326 Comparative Study of Chinese and English

**Reasons and Features of Antonym:**

**A Comparative Study of Asymmetric Antonyms from Chinese to English**

Group 22

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We agree that our work can be submitted to the University as DEC evidence should it be evaluated as up to the quality of such submission.

**Abstract**

Asymmetric usage of antonyms has been observed by past researches in Chinese and English respectively, yet a comparative view between these two languages has not been adopted wildly for a more comprehensive understanding of Chinese asymmetric antonym in comparison with that in English. The present research will be grounded on Chinese, using empirical methods, to compare Chinese with English asymmetric antonyms. The results found that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Introduction**

Antonymy, as one kind of semantic fields, is used to refer to the pairwise relation of lexical items in context that are understood to be semantically opposite. Such antonymy pairs bear a one-to-one relationship with minimal difference (Hale 1971, Cruse 1980, Murphy 2003) and logical incompatibility (Jones, S., 2012).

Asymmetry, means essentially the non-one-to-one relationship within a pair. Asymmetric antonyms refer to all the pairs which do not stick to one-to-one correspondence in terms of either grammar, pragmatic or semantics.

Existing researches focused on intra-language’s asymmetric antonyms. In English, which is a phonographic language, such oppositeness can be inferred from rhyme and morphology (Jones, S., & Murphy, M. L., 2005), like “increase” and “decrease”. In Chinese, which is a morphographic language, autonomy is not highly transparent phonetically, yet, we can find a few clues in orthography. One of the typical examples is “上” and “下”. This Chinese antonym pair will be examined in detail in this study.

It is essential to look into antonym since it can provide insights into words’ semantic features and structures. Mental organization of concepts and contrast perceptions can be overtly shown through it (Murphy, M. L., 2003). More importantly, as 吕叔湘 (1977) claimed, 一种语言的特点必须通过跟其他语言的比较才能看出来，要认识汉语的特点，就要跟非汉语比较, in this research, the comparison is not restricted to pairs of antonyms in a single language. Rather, comparisons between Chinese and English from the perspective of asymmetric antonym are conducted.

This study begins by introducing four distinctive features of antonym pairs. These features will be the basis of the upcoming discussions and comparisons. Next, an analysis is given to explore the reasons of Chinese asymmetric antonyms with the support of examples. We then proceed to propose an empirical method to examine 5 frequently used antonym pairs in Chinese and English respectively to demonstrate the features we present. The results show that\_\_\_

**Literature Review**

The asymmetric antonym phenomenon has been observed by scholars for long. Exhaustion methods are often used in Chinese literatures to examine one or more pairs of antonyms (周统权, 2003; 周蓉,2009). In English, prior researches show the general pattern of asymmetric antonyms (Jones, S., 2012; Jones, S., & Murphy, M. L., 2005; Murphy, M. L., 2003; Cruse, D. A., 1980). Meanwhile, several established scholars have raised theories regarding the asymmetric phenomenon (李秀香, 2013; 吕叔湘, 1977; 沈家煊, 1999). However, past researches are limited to the diverse performances in English and Chinese separately. Research questions from a comparative view will be introduced and investigated based on empirical method.

**Feature Classification**

The asymmetry of antonyms can be further divided into 4 types according to their different performances regarding the following features: sense item, morphology, lexical meaning and pragmatic usage. The four types are (1) sense item asymmetry (2) symmetric morphology with lexical meaning asymmetry (3) morphology asymmetry and (4) divergent pragmatic usage. A brief explanation of this classification will be given below.

1. Sense Item Asymmetry 義項的不對稱性

Throughout time, sense items in every language has gone through continuous enrichment. One entry in the dictionary extents its original meaning to a more abstract meaning during the process. Such enrichment in the antonym section unavoidably results in sense item asymmetry due to the contrastive meaning embedded in antonyms’ source meanings. For example, the antonyms “full” and “empty”, originally, bears contrastive meanings. “Full” means having no empty space. “Empty” means containing nothing. However, the concrete meaning of “empty” spreads to describe abstract feature, using the sense item “having no value or purpose”. In contrast, “full” cannot entail the content “has as much value as possible”.

     (2) Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry 詞形對稱，詞義不對稱

From the view of word construction, symmetric constructions for a pair of antonyms are often possible. However, the meaning of the words after construction might be asymmetric. For such pairs of antonyms, even they have symmetric morphology in the larger word units, the lexical meanings of these units are not asymmetric. “嘴硬” and “嘴軟” are strictly symmetric in terms of their subject-predicate structure. While, in the sentence (1) and (2), their lexical meanings are asymmetric.

1. 拿别人的手短,吃别人的嘴软。
2. 我看你能嘴硬到什么时候。(adapted from Xiong, 2017)

    (3) Morphology Asymmetric 詞形不對稱

Apart from lexical meaning asymmetry, the abilities of word construction for a pair of antonyms are not identical all the time. In such situation, by replacing one constituent of the word to its antonym, there will be a morphology gap caused by such replacement. For instance, in the word “細軟”, which can be decomposed into two adjectives, cannot fulfill morphology symmetry for any of the two morphemes. Neither “粗軟”, “細硬” nor “粗硬” are in the Chinese glossary.

     (4) Divergent Pragmatic Usage 實際語用不同

According to the Synonym and Antonym Rule (Ding, X., Liu, B., & Yu, P. S., 2008), if a word is found to be positive in a context for a feature, its antonyms are considered negative from the perspective of pragmatic usage. However, such symmetric usage does not hold true in many cases in both Chinese and English, which will be further elaborate in the following discussions.

# Qualitative Methodology-- Analysis of Reasons and Examples

The reasons of Chinese antonym asymmetry are varied but they can be generally divided into two classes, internal cause and external cause. Internal causes come from two aspects, which are cognition and psychology. External causes come from two aspects, which are pragmatics and cultural experience.

### **Internal causes**

#### **Cognition - “Prototype”**

The formation of cognition has its objective material basis. Mankind use experience to understand the world. According to Zhou, the term “Prototype” can be used to describe this phenomenon(周统权, 2003). In other words, an individual uses his body as a reference point to understand and categorize the world. Some words will be more significant because of physiological characteristics. For example, “上” is more significant because eyes are high up on head. “下” is always ignored.

#### **Cognition - Markedness Theory**

Cognition also influences the understanding of antonym pairs.  A significant theory called Markedness Theory must be introduced. It was about phonology at first and later extended to other aspects such as morphology. R.Jakobson proposed binary opposition: marked term approves a feature while unmarked term does not approve or deny this feature. Experiment shows that individual “总是从典型成员出发认识和推导出非典型成员”（沈家煊,1999）In antonym pairs, more popular and productive ones such as “上”, “深”, “长”, “大” are typical and unmarked terms, which are easier to learn. For example, only unmarked “深” is used to ask the depth as “有多深” but not “有多浅”. The questions such as “How old are you?” and “How long will you stay?” indicate that human cognition has generality cross languages.

#### **Cognition - Metaphor and metonymy**

Cognitive model of metaphor and metonymy is one of the most important reasons that meaning continuously extends. Metaphor means that a word is used to refer to another thing in order to show their similarity. In language use, some metaphor gradually become the meaning of word. For example, “低谷” originally means “low valley” and its metaphor “发展中的低点， 不顺利的时期” also became a meaning term after long-time using. As for metonymy, it means replacing the name of a thing with the name of something else closely associated. For example, “铁窗” refers to “监狱”. Similarly as metaphor, some metonymy also become the meaning of original words. After developing over time, both sides of antonym will inevitably have some asymmetrical meaning terms extended.

#### **Psychology - Pollyanna hypothesis**

Image Schema matches every meaning of a word to an image, which can finally form a image system. In most situation, one of the antonym pair matches positive image and the other one matches negative image. According to the Pollyanna hypothesis of Boucher & Osgood, people tend to pursue good aspect and abandon bad aspect（周统权, 2003）. However, nothing is static. The negative ones in “褒-贬”, “善-恶”, “难-易” and “吉-凶”, are more productive and popular（沈家煊, 1999）. The reason maybe that these difficulties are so upset that people are deeply impressed, then normal smooth process is ignored.

### **External causes**

#### **Pragmatics**

In Chinese, when people meet unprecedented situation, they usually change existing characters to create new character or just use existing ones instead of creating new characters. Similarly, a word will grow up with many other meanings gradually because people strive to use simplest form to convey richest meaning, which is called the Economy Principle（李秀香, 2013）. Compared with creating new words, use existing words can lighten burden of memory and also better understand the situation with the semantic relation between two meanings. Therefore, antonym asymmetry is likely to happen when their meanings extend at same time.

#### **Cultural experience**

Antonym asymmetry also comes from culture experience（张敏, 1998）. In Chinese language environment , we belittle ourselves and praise others, which leads to higher frequency of positive parts in antonym pairs（周蓉, 2009）. There also some specific reasons for certain pairs. Take “上下” as example. Capital was in Northern region most time in ancient China. Emperor said “皇上”“七下江南”，common people said “在下”“北上赶考”，the rich said “下馆子” and the poor said “上馆子”, which reflects social rank（周统权, 2003）.

**Quantitative Methodology-- Analysis of 10 Antonym Pairs**

This study reports the results of an comparative analysis of 10 typical antonym pairs which are used frequently in daily life. By using the features summarized above, antonym pairs were analyzed according to 4 indexes. The raw materials, such as explanation and usage statistics, are from online XinHua dictionary, online Cambridge dictionary and an online English dictionary dict.cn.

For 10 typical antonym pairs:

Five of them are from different categories in Chinese, which are “上-下”(noun of locality), “天-地”(noun), “快-慢”(adjectives), “善-惡”(adjectives) and “來-去”(verb).

The other five are English antonyms, two of which belong to the category of “contrariety”, namely, clean and dirty, good and bad. Another three pairs, that is, up and down, on and off, win and lose, fall upon the category of “contradiction”.

“Contrariety” means that within one field of concept, from one side to the other one, the meanings of a pair of antonym are gradual and continuous differences of degree .The difference is only a relative one within the conceptual domain. “Contradiction” means that within one conceptual domain, there are only two extremes without the middle items. The field of concept is not a continuum. (沈家煊,1999）

# **Results Analysis**

### **上-下**

1. Sense Item Asymmetry

位置在高处的 - 位置在低处的（對稱）

次序或时间在前的 - 次序或时间在后的（對稱）

等级和质量高的 - 等级低的（對稱）

由低处到高处 - 由高处往低处，降落（對稱）

按规定时间进行或参加某种活动-到规定时间结束日常工作或学习（對稱）

达到一定的程度或数量-少于（對稱）

special sense items of 上:

去，到；向前进；增加；安装，连缀；涂；拧紧发条；登载，记；

用在名词后边，表示时间、处所、范围， 如晚上。桌上。组织上。

用在动词后边，表示开始、继续、趋向、完成，如爬上来。锁上。选上代表。

special sense items of 下:

方面，方位；使降落；进入；投送；谦辞；颁布；攻克；卸掉；用，投入精力；退让；做出判断；量词，指动作次数；動物生產；

用在名词后边（ａ．表示在里面；ｂ．表示当某个时节）

用在动词后边（ａ．表示关系；ｂ．表示完成或结果；ｃ．与“来”、“去”连用表示趋向或继续）

2. Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry

橋上（橋的上表面）-橋下（橋的下部空間，非下表面）

上床（上到床這個終點，有延伸意義：發生性關係）- 下床（從床這個起始點下去）

上流（顯貴的）- 下流（齷齪的）

上手（開始做某件事）- 下手（動手，作案甚至殺害）

上課（開始課程）- 下課（終止課程，延伸義：開除，取消資格）

上書（臣子用奏章進言） - 下書（送婚約，遞狀紙）

上藥（塗藥，多外用） - 下藥（醫生用藥，也可指投毒）

上交（將所得交給地位更高的人）- 下交（尊貴之人與寒微者交往）

上火（發怒，也可指中医中的大便干燥或鼻腔粘膜、口腔粘膜等发炎症狀） - 下火（僧徒火葬儀式；挑撥是非）

上街（去逛街） - 下街（去街上叫賣）

3. Morphology Asymmetric

次序或时间在前/后的 - 上古 / \*下古

等级和质量高/低的 - 上將 / \*下將

由低处到高处 / 由高处往低处，降落 - 上天 /\*下天

达到一定的程度或数量/少于 - 上年紀 / \*下年紀

1. Divergent Pragmatic Usage

人們在廣場上跳舞（上 can be deleted）

人們在大樹下跳舞（下 can not be deleted）

### **天-地**

1. Sense Item Asymmetry

在地面以上的高空-地球表面的土壤（對稱）

指神仙或他们所住的地方-人类生长活动的所在（对稱）

special sense items of 天:

在上面；气候；季节，时节；日，一昼夜，或专指昼间；自然界；自然的、生成的；古代用来记日或年的字

special sense items of 地:

地球或地球的某部分； 地球表面除去海洋、江河、湖泊的部分； 地球上的一个区域； 建筑材料铺成的平面； 所在空间或区域的部位； 人在社会关系中所处的位置； 表示思想或行动的某种活动领域； 底子

1. Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry

天下（四海之內，全世界）- 地下（地面以下，地層內部）

天府（天然的府庫，比喻物產豐饒）- 地府（人死之後靈魂的歸宿地）

天理（自然法則，天道）- 地理（山川土地的環境形勢，研究地球表面現象行政區劃的科學）

1. Morphology Asymmetric

在地面以上的高空-地球表面的土壤（對稱）

天空-\*地空 天體-\*地體

指神仙或他们所住的地方-人类生长活动的所在（对稱）

天庭-\*地庭 天仙-\*地仙

1. Divergent Pragmatic Usage

Unpredictable weather deeply influenced people in ancient China, which leads to worship of “天”. People think that “天” is supernatural and they always mention it in daily life such as “老天爷” and “没天理”.

People used burial for the dead in ancient China. Chinese people believe there is another world after death such as “地下有知” and “阴曹地府”.

### **快-慢**

1. Sense Item Asymmetry

速度大，与“慢”相对 - 迟缓，速度小，与“快”相对（對稱）

special sense items of 快

赶紧，从速；将，就要；接近；灵敏；锐利，锋利，与“钝”相对； 爽利，直截了当； 高兴舒服

special sense items of 慢

态度冷淡，不殷勤，不礼貌

1. Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry

Such example cannot be found

1. Morphology Asymmetric

快艇 - \*慢艇 快递 - \*慢递

1. Divergent Pragmatic Usage

People like “快” but not “慢”. Many things in daily life use “快” as advertising such as “快递”,”快件”, “快门”, “快餐”. These things only have form as “快 + sth.” but not “慢 + sth.”

### **善-惡**

1. Sense Item Asymmetry

好的行为、品质 - 不好 + 犯罪的事，极坏的行为（對稱）

友好，和好 - 凶狠（對稱）

special sense items of 善

心地仁爱，品质淳厚；高明的，良好的；熟悉：面善；办好，弄好；擅长；赞许；好好地；容易，易于

1. Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry

善棍（借助慈善事业牟利的人） - 恶棍（胡作非为作恶多端的人）

1. Morphology Asymmetric

好的行为、品质 - 不好 + 犯罪的事，极坏的行为（對稱）

\*善梦 - 恶梦

善良 - \*恶良

1. Divergent Pragmatic Usage

Though “恶” is marked term and less general, its productivity is much higher than “善”. For example, bad people can be “恶人”, “恶徒”, “恶霸”, “恶少”, “恶棍”, but good people can only be “善人” and “善徒”.

### **來-去**

1. Sense Item Asymmetry

由另一方面到这一方面 - 由自己一方到另一方（對稱）

现在以后，未到的时间 - 已过的（對稱）

special sense items of 來：

从过去到现在；表示约略估计；做某个动作；用在动词前，表示要做某事；用在动词后，表示做过；用在动词后，表示动作的趋向；表示发生；在数词一、二、三后面，表示列举理由；用做诗、歌词中的衬字；表示语气

special sense items of 去：

距离，差别；除掉，减掉；扮演戏曲中的角色；用在动词后，表示趋向；用在动词后，表示持续；汉语四声之一

1. Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry

来意（到这里来的意图）- 去意（离开的意向）

来人（送东西来的人）- 去人（人到某地去帮着做某事）

1. Morphology Asymmetric

来电 - \*去电   来客 - \*去客

\*来掉 - 去掉

1. Divergent Pragmatic Usage

The productivity of “来” is much higher than 去.

### **clean&dirty**

1.Sense Item Asymmetry

clean: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least one among the three items)

清洁 (v.)（42%)；打扫 (v.)（32%）；干净的 (adj.)（17%）

dirty: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least popular one among the three items)

脏的 (adj.)（37%）；肮脏的  (adj.)（27%）；弄脏 (v.)（15%）

2.Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry ：none

3.asymmetric morphology

clean sweep 大胜

clean up on 胜过，击败

come clean 坦白承认

keep one’s nose clean 安分守己

clean off 除去

give sb a dirty look 厌恶地看着某人

play a dirty trick on sb以卑鄙的手段对付某人

4.Divergent Pragmatic Usage

“Clean” can be used as an adverbial meaning “totally”. For instance, “I clean forgot about his birthday.” “Dirty” has a noun form which means the messy stuff. For instance, “Please wipe the dirty off the table.” Although “dirty” is more noticeable compared with “clean” according to the Pollyanna principle (Boucher&Osgood, 1969), “clean” is still the unmarked item because people tend to use words with positive indications more frequently.

### **good&bad**

1.Sense Item Asymmetry

good: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least one among the three items)

好的 (adj.)（78%）；好处 (n.)（11%）；优秀的 (adj.)（7%）

bad: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least popular one among the three items)

坏的 (adj.)（27%）；坏事 (n.)（16%）；不好的(adj.)  严重的(adj.) 坏人(n.)（10%）

2.Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry:

good taste 品味好,味道好；bad taste 后悔和不安的强烈感觉,低级趣味,粗俗

as good as 和…几乎一样,实际上; as bad as 和…一样糟糕

3.Asymmetric Morphology

a good few 相当多的

for good 永远，永久

bad egg 卑鄙小人

go bad 食物变质

4.Divergent Pragmatic Usage

“Good” often appears with adjectives in American oral English to strengthen the tone, possessing the same meaning as “very”. When “bad” is used as a noun, it means “things with unpleasant qualities” and could be extended as “misfortune” which is an uncountable noun. In contrast, “good” is a countable noun when it expresses the meaning of “benefits”. When it illustrates the concept of “moral things” or “kindness”, it is a mass noun. “Good” is the unmarked item since it is widely acknowledged that “good” is usually connected with pleasant things and conforms with people’s general expectations.

up&down

1.Sense Item Asymmetry

up: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least one among the three items)

起来 (adv.)（41%）；增加 (v.)（19%）；向上 (adv./prep./adj.)（16%）

down: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least popular one among the three items)

向下 (adv.)（55%）；向下的 (adj.) 绒毛(n.)（10%）；击倒 (v.)（7%）

2.Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry:

up sb’s street 正合某人的意；down the street 沿街道（basically symmetric morphology）

set up 成立；set down 写下,制定

3.Asymmetric Morphology

be up and about (病愈后）下床活动，到外边走走

be up for 打算；在选举中被提名

stay up 熬夜

finish up解决

What’s up 怎么了？

be up to sb 由某人决定

down the drain 浪费,消失

down the line 完全

4.Divergent Practical Usage

Like the Chinese antonyms “上” and “下”, “up” here is the unmarked item and has a stronger vocabulary extension ability. The collocations with “up” usually indicate the tendency towards a higher degree or lager volume, such as “turn up”, “on the up”, which accords with the principle of simplicity and efficiency. The principle illustrates that since people are innately self-centered and physically asymmetrical (Johnson, 1987), it is easier for them to notice larger or higher stuff. Meanings of “down” usually associates with the movement or direction of lowering the position, which could be extended to the unsatisfied emotional status. According to the frequently used phrases collected, it is clear to see that “up” is used more often.

off&on

1.Sense Item Asymmetry

on: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least one among the three items)

关于 (prep.)（38%）；表示持续 (adv.) 穿着 (adv.) （13%）；表示已连接、处于工作状态或使用中（adj.)；发生（adj.)；值班 (adj.); 在 ... 之上 (prep.)；由 ... 支撑着(prep.)；在（某一天）(prep.)；关于(prep.)；基于(prep.) (6%）

off: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least popular one among the three items)

离开 (adv.)（52%）；空闲的 (adj.) （15%）；脱下 (v.)（13%）

2.Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry:

come on 加油；come off 脱离,从…上掉下来,从…中去除,放弃

live on 靠……生存；live off 以……为食

knock on敲击；knock off 撞倒，停止

3.Asymmetric Morphology:

and so on 等等

[background on](http://dict.cn/background%20on) 关于…的必要信息

[ban on](http://dict.cn/ban%20on) 对…的禁令

charge on 对…的费用

[judgement on](http://dict.cn/judgement%20on) 对…的判断

[raid on](http://dict.cn/raid%20on) 对…的袭击

[reflection on](http://dict.cn/reflection%20on) 对…的评论

no skin off my nose 不关我的事

be off for 有需要的某物

an off season 淡季

4.Divergent Practical Usage:

“On” and “off” indicate opposite routes. “On” can further imply “connection”, “duration”, “progressing”,etc, while “off” is mainly used to express “separation” and “halt”.

win&lose

1.Sense Item Asymmetry

win: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least one among the three items)

赢 (v.)（46%）；赢得 (v.) （23%）；胜利 (n.) (16%）

lose: three most frequently used separation of meanings (ranked from the most popular one to the least popular one among the three items)

失败 (v.)（29%）；丢失 (v.) （25%）；迷失 (v.)（14%）

2.Symmetric Morphology with Lexical Meaning Asymmetry:

win to说服，参加，接受；lose to失去，败给

3.Asymmetric Morphology:

win through 战胜……取得胜利

win of从……赢来

win over战胜

win round 争取过来

lose in thought 沉思

4. Divergent Practical Usage

“Win” can be used as a noun meaning “victory” and it can also be used in

the sentence structure “Subject+win+ n./pron. +to- v”, functioning as “persuade”. According to the Pollyanna principle（Boucher&Osgood, 1969), people psychologically prefer “win” to “lose”. Therefore, the former is more competent in word-building capacity and used more often.

# Discussion and Conclusion

For sense item asymmetry in Chinese, the number of sense items of unmarked items is much larger than those of marked items. In most cases, only one or two sense items are totally symmetric. The asymmetry between English pairs is more distinct in part of speech and usage frequency.

For symmetric morphology with lexical meaning asymmetry in Chinese, the sense items of two sides used usually have different extending capabilities.  For example, 上藥（上：涂）-下藥（下：用/投送）. Another situation is opposite. The parts which are not antonym pairs are not symmetric. For example, 上交（交：遞給另一方）- 下交（交：結交）.  One more situation is that original meaning of both sides of antonym pairs have shifted so that it can not be symmetric even the words have symmetric morphology. As for English, the lexical meaning of phrases made up of marked items usually have similar implications with the marked words while phrases consisting of unmarked items are more flexible and diverse in meanings.

For asymmetric morphology, the most common situation is that the meaning of a character in the word is related to one side of antonym so that it cannot be collocated with other side any more. There is also a situation where cultural experience make people choose one side to express respectation. For example, 上將 - \*下將.  In English, it is obvious that words with higher degree or larger volumes or positive indications have stronger vocabulary extension capabilities.

For divergent pragmatic usage, what was mentioned most is productivity. In most common situation, unmarked items have more sense items and higher productivity. However, some abnormal situation can also be caused by human cognition such as 善-惡.

In a summary, the reasons and features of asymmetric antonym are relative similar in Chinese and English. However, when it comes to features in detail, ous study indicates that asymmetric antonyms in Chinese and English still have many differences in practical phenomenon.

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**Collaboration**

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**DEC-reflection**

Through the whole project, we have discovered that antonym asymmetry is a not only a pure linguistic phenomenon, but also involves the culture behind language, psychology and physiology of people as well as pragmatic concerns of communication. Comparison between Chinese and English provides an effective way to analyze the issue and explore further the two languages we have been studying. The most important discovery is that we have realized the significance of conducting a research systematically and logically. The procedure and methodology weigh more than the result since it is through out the academic process that we gradually understand the necessity of collecting data, deliberate on the connection between the phenomenon and the essence, and finally get a rather comprehensive view of the whole project, which benefit us most.