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THE CHINESE LANGUAGE UNIT 上 *SHÀNG* AND ITS CORRELATES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The term *globalization* has been coined in the 1980s and is increasingly becoming a new prominent and worldwide phenomenon illustrating basic features of modern times. Globalization is primarily an economic process of interaction and integration that's associated with social and cultural aspects [1]. Over nearly 40 years' development, globalization and its impacts are not only visible in the world economy, but they have also penetrated every area, including cultural aspects of life. Since language is a subdivision of culture, it plays a very significant role in the world globalization. To some extent, language facilitated and accelerated the process of interaction and integration.

Under the influences of the globalization, there are quite a lot of people interested in learning Chinese that is spreading faster than other popular European languages becoming an obvious unique sign in the world culture. Along with English, the Chinese language occupies an important position in the world in terms of the number of speakers.

Every European language has its unique grammar system and its own way to put ideas into words, so does the Chinese language. Many Chinese words have several meanings and usages in different contexts. It means they are polysemous. In the Chinese language there are some notional words, such as 上*shàng* 'up', 下*xià* 'down', 前 *qián* 'front', 后*hòu* 'behind' used for indicating spatial orientations and called "words of orientation and location" [2]. Although in the Chinese language there are no parts of speech like in the European languages, Chinese linguists also divide the Chinese words into notional words and function words. Apart from various lexical meanings of these words of orientation and location, they often have peculiar grammatical features related to spatial orientation.

Spatial issues in linguistics are increasingly becoming a popular research topic (see for ref. the works of L. Tamly, R. S. Jackendoff, R. W. Langacker and so forth). This paper deals with the peculiarities of the Chinese word 上 *shàng* 'up, on, over, above and so forth' and its correlates in the English language. From the perspective of its lexical meanings and grammatical characteristics, the language unit 上 *shàng* is one of the most actively and frequently used words as a noun, adjective and verb with spatial features in the Chinese language. Moreover, besides the above mentioned 3 parts of speech, this lexical unit may correlate in the English language with an adverb, preposition, numeral, and a pronoun. The above said makes the language unit 上 *shàng* an interesting object of research which will help to shed light on the mechanics of spatial cognition in typologically different languages.

The research materials related with the language unit 上 *shàng* are collected on the basis of dictionaries and two corpora (Chinese CNCORPUS and BCC corpus (Chinese-English parallel corpus)). The data obtained suggest the following conclusions.

The language unit 上 shàng is one of the 20 frequently used words in the Chinese language: it shows 38,084 context examples in the 现代汉语语料库 (Chinese CNCORPUS) [3]; 360,038 related context examples in the 语料库汉英双语 (bilingual BCC corpus) [4]. Moreover, in the 新世界汉英大词典第二版 (New Century Chinese-English Dictionary, the 2nd edition) there are 27 main kinds of Chinese definitions and explanations with the equivalent English translations of the language unit 上 shàng. On the basis of these 27 lexical meanings, there are 19 semantic explanations which include spatial characteristics, and 240 related phrases and phrase structures with the language unit 上 shàng and their equivalent English translations [5, p.1468–1475]. On the other hand, there are 135 of these 240 phrases and phrase structures with the language unit 上 shàng which contain spatial meanings. These data can be displayed in the following table.

Table

The quantity of the definitions, phrases and context examples
of the language unit 上 shàng in the corpora and dictionaries

No.	Criteria for analysis	Data
1.	Context examples in the Chinese CNCORPUS	38,084 findings
2.	Context examples in the bilingual (Chinese and English) corpus of BCC	360,038 findings
3.	Chinese definitions and explanations with the equivalent English translations	27 definitions
4.	Definitions with semantic spatial characteristics	19 definitions
5.	The related phrases and phrase structures	240 phrases
6.	Phrases and phrase structures with spatial relations	135 phrases

The findings from the above mentioned corpora offer the platform for the contextual analysis of the language unit 上 shàng in two languages. As stated above, 上 shàng may correlate to different parts of speech in Chinese and English. At the same time, the spatial components of the language unit 上 shàng accompany these grammatical features. The following examples from BCC corpus show the language unit 上 shàng with spatial orientations and relations used as different word categories in English.

(1) 意大利维格纳拉镇镇长说：“你可以*在山上*安一面镜子，将那阳光线反射*到大广场上*”。该镇长已把这个方案呈报给意大利皮埃蒙特地区，等待批准。 /(1a) *You put a mirror on the mountain to reflect the sun's rays into your main square, says the mayor of Viganella, who has just presented the project to Italy's Piedmont region for approval.*

In example 1, 上 shàng can be used separately, but most time it is used with other Chinese words composing a phrase or structure to reflect the context meanings: with the preposition 在 zài 'indicates the time, place, situation, scope, etc. of the matter' [6] and the verb 到 dào 'go to, arrive' to equal with the English prepositions *on* and *into*, and both of them indicate spatial relations. The language unit

上 *shàng* with the Chinese preposition 在 *zài* compose a structure which is equivalent with the English preposition *on* to express the static status of something. Here, from the context, the mirror can be put up on the mountain or laid down the surface of the mountain, thus, the language unit 上 *shàng* and the preposition *on* indicate the three dimensional or two dimensional spatial relations. On the other hand, 上 *shàng* with the Chinese verb 到 *dào* 'go to, arrive' make up a structure akin to the English preposition *into* to express spatial directions. On the basis of the Chinese context, the sun rays will be projected on the surface of the square, and 上 *shàng* in example 1 emphasizes that the result and location of the sun ray is on the square reflecting the dimensional spatial relation. However, in example 1a, *into* indicates that the moving routes and directions of the sun ray is from the mountain reflected into the square, so it seems that the sun ray penetrates the surface and enters the inner side of the square, while the English translation reveals that the spatial direction of the sun ray is from a high point to a low point.

(2) 一位中文导游在凡尔赛宫大门外接待我们，并带我们**上楼**。/ (2a) *A Chinese-speaking guide met us at the palace gate and led us* **upstairs.**

Except for prepositional correlates of 上 *shàng*, there are findings where it is used as an adverb either. In example 2, 上 *shàng* with the Chinese noun 楼 *lóu* 'stair' make up a phrase used as an adverb which reveals spatial directions. In the Chinese context the guide takes the visitors to go to the upper floors. Therefore, 上 *shàng* is translated as an adverb *upstairs* showing spatial direction from the bottom to the top.

(3) *2100年以后，海平面还将继续上升，预计在未来几个世纪可能上升好几米。* / (3a) *Ocean levels would keep on* **rising** *after 2100 and "several meters of sea level* **rise** *must be expected over the next few centuries".*

上 *shàng* can also correlate with verbs and nouns in English. In example 3, 上 *shàng* is used with the verb 升 *shēng* 'ascend' formed and only used as a verb phrase and equaled with the English translation *rise* which can be used as a noun and a verb. Here, in example 3a, the first *rise* is used as a verb, and the second – as a noun, both expressing the same spatial directions. Therefore, no matter if 上 *shàng* is used as a verb or a noun in the English translation, it reflects the same spatial orientation: that the sea level ascends from a low place to a high place.

(4) *在街道上，走在上风口比走在下风口要减少50％的污染。* / (4a) *Walk on the* **windward** *side of the street where exposure to pollutants can be 50 percent less than on the downside.*

上 *shàng* can also be used as an adjective, often accompanied by other words, as in example 4, where it is combined with the noun phrase 风口 *fēngkǒu* 'the side that the wind blows' forming a new noun phrase which equals with the English adjective *windward*. The English adjective *windward*, just like 上 *shàng* in the noun phrase, indicates spatial direction: the wind blows from the upper side to the downside.

(5) *《哈利波特与死亡圣器》(上)预计在2010年底首映，下集则将在2011年与观众见面。* / (5a) *Part* **one** *of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" is due out in late 2010 and part two is planned for release in 2011.*

In the Chinese language, when 上 *shàng* is used as a noun, it can also be applied for pointing out the parts, fragments and volumes of the books, scripts, TV series, films and so forth. In this case 上 *shàng* is always with its antonym 下 *xià* 'below, down,

next, underneath and so on' to stress that the works have two parts, the first one called 上 *shàng* and the second one presented by 下 *xià*. In example 6a, the book is divided into two parts, the numeral *one* from the *part one* can be replaced by 上 *shàng*. If the works are divided into three parts, the language unit 中 *zhōng*, 'centre, middle, medium' is used, then 上 *shàng* and 下 *xià* will represent the first and the last part, and the second or the middle part will be replaced by 中 *zhōng*. To equal with 上 *shàng*, the language units 中 *zhōng* and 下 *xià* also acquire spatial characteristics, but in this example they are used as numerals in the English language without reflecting any spatial relations.

(6) *当然Bay不属于以上任何一种，但是法院需要将法律应用在这个新事物上，关于商标侵权的法律是建立在这些已经过时的分类上的。 /(6a) Of course eBay is none of **these** things. But courts must apply the law they have, and the case law for trademark infringement is based on these kinds of outdated classifications.*

Unlike in the Chinese language, 上 *shàng* can be used as a pronoun in English, but not frequently. In example 6, 上 *shàng* is used with the word 以 *yǐ* 'used as word formation, always used with nouns to express time, space, direction, location and so on' [7] making up a noun phrase. The examples show that the demonstrative pronoun *these* is equivalent with the Chinese noun phrase 以上 *yǐshàng* to replace the previous or above mentioned things. Thus, being reflected as a pronoun in English (examples 6 and 6a) 上 *shàng* at the same time doesn't indicate spatial relations.

To sum up, the language unit 上 *shàng* with semantic spatial characteristics functions in 3 parts of speech: as a noun, adjective and verb in Chinese. At the same time, it can be reflected in English as 7 parts of speech. However, a number of examples from the BCC corpus indicates that the correlates of 上 *shàng* in English are mainly verbs and prepositions with spatial orientations and relations: *on, in, at, to, by, from, off, onto, into, over, up, above, with* and so forth.

These findings suggest the need to a further more detailed research of the peculiarities of spatial cognition displayed in Chinese and English.

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