A Review of the Research on Color Words in China and Vietnam in the Past Five Years (2018 to 2022)

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Abstract: Words with cultural connotations are always the focus of many Chinese and Vietnamese language scholars, especially color words. Because this word group not only has the meaning which refers to colors, but also, is related to the perception of each ethnic group to the outside world. Therefore, the research to find a suitable method of teaching Chinese color vocabulary is always a topic that makes researchers interested. Although the two countries, China and Vietnam, have many similarities in the way of expressing colors through language, there are cultural differences in the perception of colors, which leads to confusion in the CSL (Chinese as Second Language) teaching and learning process. These differences are still deep under the skin of language, and waiting to be discovered. This article reviews the research on color words in Chinese and Vietnamese from three aspects: the current research situation of color words in China and Vietnam, the existing research direction of color words, and the development trend of color words research in Chinese teaching, so as to use them as the basis for future research.

Key words: Chinese and Vietnamese comparison, color words, CSL teaching, future research trend

1. Introduction

Vocabulary is the building block in the process of building language. Vocabulary is like a mirror, which can best present each nation's unique way of cognition and thinking about the external world. Through the long-term encounter and exchange process, the result of the collision and fusion of the two cultures of the Chinese and Vietnamese people has become the premise and basis for the formation and development of Vietnamese vocabulary, including the color words in the vocabulary. Color words are an important part of vocabulary. Color words not only help to enrich the lexical system of the language, but also enable people to fully recognize and express the natural world through vision. Although the color words in Chinese and Vietnamese have similar meanings, there are still differences in the cognition and values of the natural world between the Chinese and Vietnamese people. The linguists of both countries have noticed this point and conducted research and obtained certain research results.

This paper will review the research history of color words from four perspectives: the current research situation of color words in China and Vietnam, the existing research direction of color words, and the

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development trend of color words research in Chinese teaching. After that, it will serve as the application basis for teaching Chinese to Vietnam and the premise of follow-up research.

2. The Research Situation of Color Words

This paper will review the current research situation of color words in Chinese and Vietnamese.

2.1 The Current Situation of Research on Color Words in China

We searched for the keyword "color word" in the past 5 years (2018 to 2022) on CNKI system[1], and found a total of 657 articles related to this topic. The data is shown that in the past five years mainly focus on basic color words (40 articles), comparative studies (16 articles), CSL teaching (29 articles), metaphor cognition (10 articles), and cultural connotations and differences (45 articles).

In the book "Beautiful Color: Chinese Color Aesthetics", Zeng Qixiong (2019) after 30 years of research on ancient oriental colors, has integrated the knowledge that has influenced several generations of Chinese color aesthetics, connected history and legends, technology and materials, and inherited the experience of classics and exchanges between the East and the West, in the form of pictures and texts, tells the rich and colorful culture of China. Through many color-related histories, many legends and stories passed down by word of mouth, one can experience the calm feeling of traditional Chinese colors, as well as the factors that influence the aesthetics of Chinese colors, such as history, culture, nation, society, region, and beliefs.

Zhao Xiaochi (2020) further clarified the historical development of Chinese color words in the Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties based on "Research on Color Words in Ancient and Medieval Chinese". First comprehensively collect ten monosyllable and multisyllable color words in modern Chinese: red (红), black (黑), white (白), green (绿), blue (蓝), yellow (黄), purple (紫), gray (灰), brown (褐), brown (棕), and then form according to different parts of speech, from the inheritance of old words and the new words From the perspective of generation, it explains how the modern Chinese color words evolved from the ancient color words, and how they continued to evolve into the modern Chinese color words. Taking it as a cornerstone, he further discusses the historical evolution of Chinese color words, the basic color words in each period of time in Chinese, the interpretation of modern Chinese color words, the significance of compiling Chinese color words, and the comparison between various dialects.

Lu Xiang and Tan Jingyi (2021) believe that color is an important channel for us to understand all things in nature. The traditional Chinese color system represents the way Chinese people look at the world, scattered in the vast sea of classics and poems, how to "salvage" them, analyze their subtle meanings, reproduce their subtle meanings, improve the aesthetic ability of Chinese people, and thus enhance their understanding of culture This is

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[1] The concept of National Knowledge Infrastructure (NKI) was proposed by the World Bank in the 1998 World Development Report. In March 1999, with the overall goal of fully opening up the information channels of knowledge production, dissemination, diffusion and utilization, and building an exchange and cooperation platform that supports knowledge innovation, learning and application in various industries across the country, CNKI launched the China Knowledge Infrastructure Project (China National Knowledge Infrastructure, CNKI), has received strong support and close cooperation from the academic, educational, publishing, and library and information circles across the country.

The construction of CNKI and its industrialized operation mechanism provide abundant knowledge information resources, effective knowledge dissemination and digital learning platform for the efficient sharing of knowledge resources in the whole society; create a market environment and business mechanism for Internet publishing and distribution for knowledge resource production and publishing departments , providing a promising information network space for the promotion of education, science and technology, culture, publishing and other undertakings and the development of cultural and creative industries, available online at: https://www.cnki.net/index/.

an important new topic.

Song Junyi (2021) sorted out the evolution of the color name "blue" (蓝), analyzed from the evolution of the color name "green" (青) to the semantic transformation of "blue", and formed the concept of color and its color range, influencing factors and establishment time. Then, through the analysis of culture, technology, economy, politics and other angles in turn, explore the development context and background causes of "blue", draw the corresponding conclusions, and then find the law of its color development from the usage of ancient and modern clothing. Finally, the research results are applied to traditional color innovation design. Through the multi-angle analysis of traditional ancient books, discover its causes and changes, and make new discoveries for the inheritance and development of traditional colors.

Aldac Pollati (2019) studied the origin and development trend of different colors, most of which are derived from records, mainly in the expansion of the meaning of words and then explained in detail "red", "yellow", "green", "black", "white", "blue", "Purple", "Grey". The composition, meaning and cultural connotation of these color words are used to understand the deep cultural connotation expressed by color words in the context of Chinese culture, and to better understand the historical development of Chinese culture.

2.2 The Current Situation of Research on Color Words in Vietnam

At present, Vietnam does not have a complete scientific research article retrieval system like CNKI, so most of the scientific research articles in Vietnam are scattered on the Internet, and it is difficult for us to count the number of scientific research articles in Vietnam. At the same time, due to limited time, the results of research articles related to color words collected in Vietnam are not very optimistic.

In the past five years, there are only a few research articles related to Vietnamese color words. Typical research on color word ontology includes Vo Dinh Trung (2018) in "The Etymology of the Vietnamese Names of Colors" which pointed out that these color words, such as "red" (màu đỏ), "blue" (màu xanh), "yellow" (màu vàng), "white" (màu trắng) and "black" (màu đen). After studying 100 basic color words in Vietnamese, it was found that Vietnamese color names have more common features with other Austronesian languages. From this, it can be seen that the words "black" (màu đen) and "white" (màu trắng) are obviously of Austronesian origin, while the words "yellow" (màu vàng) and "blue" (màu xanh) are of Chinese origin. However, the word "red" (màu đỏ) has connections between the Viet-Muong, Eastern Thai and Austronesian languages. In the context of such complex and intersecting kinship, the most systematic correspondences are probably the result of ancestral relations, others are the result of borrowing through linguistic eminence. It is most convincing to attribute the origin of "red" (màu đỏ) to the Viet-Muong language family. In addition, Tran Thi Thuy Huong (2018) investigated the additional meanings of red and blue in Vietnamese based on semantic theory, and established the semantic categories and semantic features of the additional meanings of color words in Vietnamese. Thus pointing out some outstanding problems in the study of the category of Vietnamese color words and their additional meanings, especially the problems related to the determination of the number of color words with additional meanings. The article also excavates the original meaning, derived meaning and symbolic meaning of this group of words, and analyzes people's perception of color and the perception and reflection of the surrounding world. In addition, Le Phuong Thao (2018) conducts research at the level of semantic features, representational and cognitive features. Tran Thi Phuong Ly (2019) applies the basis of Berlin and Kay's work on color terminology to study color categories in Vietnamese, then elaborates on the perception of color and its representation in Vietnamese vocabulary, and demonstrates that colors' important role in Vietnamese cognition of other objects. In

terms of lexicography, there is the latest research by Nguyen Thi Thuy Quynh (2020). Her article points out that studying the structure of derived color words in bilingual explanatory dictionaries will not only help researchers understand the structural problems of the two languages, but also help compiling dictionary.

3. Current Research Direction of Color Words

Through investigation, the research directions of color words mainly include three directions: comparative research, cognitive linguistics research and foreign Chinese teaching research.

3.1 Comparative Research Direction

There are many research articles on the comparison of color words in China and Vietnam, most of which are compared with English, and a few are compared with Vietnamese, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Russian and other languages. There are Li Leilei (2018), Liu Bei (2019), Tan Wen (2022), Jiang Wen (2022) and others in the comparative study of English and Chinese. Based on previous research results, they also pointed out that color words are an important part of vocabulary in CSL teaching, and complex metaphors make color words one of the difficult points in the learning process. However, the current research on teaching Chinese as a foreign language in this area still has deficiencies. Based on this, they compared the metaphorical meanings of basic color words in English and Chinese, combined with the current situation of color word teaching, and designed an excellent teaching plan targeting English and Chinese color words.

In the past five years of research comparing Chinese and Thai color words, Zhou Muxi (2018), Liu Juanjuan and Wang Wenbang (2020), Liu Ke (2021), Ya Yaping and Yang Xue (2022) and others have all researched the comparative study of color words in Chinese and Thai, also brings up new ideas and lays a solid foundation for future research.

In the past five years of research comparing Chinese and Japanese color words, Kong Miaomiao (2019), He Ping (2019), Huang Kaiyan (2020), Kuang Yanlin (2021) and others also "follow the trend", and most of them use the cognitive linguistics is the main theory, and some color words in Chinese and Japanese are sorted out.

Compared with Chinese and Vietnamese, Lu Yiru (2018) clarified the relationship between color itself and color words from two aspects of language and cultural connotation, and analyzed and summarized the definitions of the scope of basic color words in Chinese and Vietnamese by scholars. The article takes the basic color words of "red" (红), "yellow" (黄), "green" (绿), "white" (白) and "black" (黑) shared by Chinese and Vietnamese as the research object. Through the research on the cultural connotation of the five basic color words, we can jointly understand the social cultural and psychological contexts of China and Vietnam, and compare and analyze the differences in the cultural connotations of the five colors, so as to further analyze the reasons for the similarity of the basic color words in Chinese and Vietnamese and the corresponding characteristics, in order to provide some inspiration and suggestions for the teaching Chinese to Vietnamese students. Nguyen Thi Minh Nguyet (2019) selected "green" (青), "blue" (蓝), "green" (绿) in Chinese and "green" (xanh) in Vietnamese, and put them together for description and comparative analysis from the perspectives of semantics, word formation and grammar . This article mainly emphasizes that although the similarities between Chinese and Vietnamese color words are very conspicuous, the differences are worth exploring. In addition, Nguyen Minh Huong (2020) not only studied color words, but also expanded and thoroughly analyzed the meaning of color words in Vietnamese idioms. The basic purpose of the research is to discover the difference in the meaning of color in Chinese and Vietnamese idioms, so as to find out the influence of Chinese idioms containing color words on Chinese. Through

the analysis of Chinese color idioms, find out the changing rules of Vietnamese idioms containing color words.

3.2 Cognitive Linguistics-based Research Direction

In the past five years, research articles from the perspective of cognitive linguistics have exploded, and many linguists regard it as a new research direction, including research on color words, such as Ma Teng (2018) in cross-language and cross-cultural communication, some metaphors of the same concept are directly equivalent, some are approximately equivalent, some are parallel equivalent (but the mapping images are different), and some have no metaphorical equivalent at all. Exploring the interpretation of conceptual metaphors in multiple languages will be the cornerstone of broadening and enriching theoretical and applied research on metaphor. Peng Jie (2019), Li Qinqin (2019), Wan Xiaoyang (2022) and others have made more and more systematic researches on the analysis of Chinese color categories and color visual characteristics with the help of conceptual metaphor theory of cognitive linguistics. The meaning of color words has different metaphorical meanings in different contexts, and metaphorical awareness should be observed from different angles. By sorting out the color words, they uniformly indicated that the metaphor construction of color words is affected by external factors and must abide by certain cognitive rules. In addition, the research of Ni Tao (2022) shows that although Chinese color change events show a variety of lexical structures and syntactic forms, they still follow a relatively transparent mapping law in form and meaning. In terms of literature, Guo Yanting (2021) analyzed the color word "green" (青) in "Dream of the Red Chamber" (红楼梦) from a cognitive perspective, and found that the meaning of "green" (青) is mainly based on the color itself. The creation and development of metaphor and metonymy, including chain structure and mapping structure, are influenced by generations and people's cognition.

The study of Vietnamese color words based on cognitive linguistics theory has the research of Le Phuong Thao (2018). She researched, compared and analyzed the cognition of British and Vietnamese on the level of semantic features, representation and cognitive features. The way of the colorful objective world. Tran Thi Phương Ly (2019), who studies the ontology of Vietnamese color words, applied Berlin and Kay's research results on color terminology to study the color category in Vietnamese, and clarified the cognition of color and its role in Vietnamese vocabulary, and the important role of color in Vietnamese perception of other objects. In addition, Nguyen Thi Lien (2022) used conceptual metaphor theory to identify three cognitive categories of Vietnamese (including: people, social life, and natural phenomena) to analyze and explain the metaphorical phenomenon of Vietnamese color words. It can be seen that the study of Vietnamese color words has begun to change the perspective of the problem, not just focusing on the semantics of words as before.

3.3 CSL Teaching Research Direction

In addition to the two research directions mentioned above, the author also found many research articles on CSL teaching. There are many research papers in the past five years, studying color words from different perspectives, such as Zhou Muxi (2018), Zhang Ruonan (2018), Li Xueyin (2018), Wei Wanwan (2019), Xiang Xijun (2020), Wang Xuege (2020), Liu Xia (2021), Lin Donghong (2021) and others. They all realized that for CSL learners, vocabulary teaching, especially color vocabulary teaching, is a very difficult and challenging thing. Because each nation has completely different understandings of various colors in different contexts, which is affected by the negative transfer of each nation's mother tongue and its own culture, so local teachers should learn the culture of this nation, which has a great impact on Chinese language teaching.

A paper by Zhang Hailing (2019) mainly takes Chinese idioms with color words as the research object, and analyzes the semantic and cultural connotations of the color morphemes in these idioms, thus, combined with the

characteristics of CSL teaching, a handbook of idioms with colored words suitable for learners is compiled for teaching work.

In addition, Chen Xin (2021), Jiang Wen (2022) and others analyzed the metaphorical meaning of color words in different countries from the perspective of conceptual metaphor in cognitive linguistics, so as to help learners of different ethnic groups with different cultural backgrounds understand color word, not affected by one's own mother tongue, avoiding the phenomenon of negative transfer of mother tongue.

In Vietnam, there is also a research article by Le Thi Nhu Thuy (2020). This article mainly classifies and then compares the color words in Vietnamese and Chinese from the semantic structure of the words. method. Drawing on previous research results, Nguyen Thi Ly (2020) showed that the word "color" in Chinese and Vietnamese has both similarities and differences, and also reflects the similarities and differences between Chinese and Vietnamese cultures. She sequentially used the five Chinese color words "red" (红), "yellow" (黄), "white" (白), "black" (黑) and "green" (绿) and the corresponding Vietnamese words "red" (đỏ), "yellow" (vàng), "white" (trắng), "black" (đen) and "green" (xanh) carry out a careful comparison of the research objects, and analyze the types of errors through a large number of investigations on Vietnamese learners. Based on this, some good teaching suggestions are also put forward. Phạm Thị Thu Hiền (2019) showed in the study of basic color words in Chinese and Vietnamese idioms that Chinese and Vietnamese color idioms have quite different origin characteristics, and there are similarities and differences in linguistic features, pragmatic features and cultural connotations. The profound influence of Chinese culture on Vietnamese culture exists in both Chinese and Vietnamese. Therefore, the basic color words in Vietnamese idioms have many similarities, but many differences in social and cultural backgrounds, natural environments and ways of thinking lead to differences. The comparative study of the basic color words in Chinese and Vietnamese idioms not only reveals the cultural characteristics of the two nations, but also provides a certain reference for the study and use of idioms.

In short, through the investigation of relevant research articles on the comparison of color words in different languages and Chinese, we can know that in the past five years, most of the comparative studies have analyzed color words based on the theory of cognitive linguistics. At the same time, it also shows that the research space of cognitive linguistics is still very broad.

4. The Development Trend of the Study of Color Words on Chinese Teaching

4.1 International CSL Teaching and Learning

In recent years, research articles on vocabulary and its application in teaching Chinese as a foreign language have emerged in an endless stream. Most studies look at and analyze vocabulary from different angles, so as to provide learners with appropriate teaching methods and strategies. Studies related to color words are still concerned by linguistic scholars, but the number of articles is not much. With the continuous rise of global Chinese enthusiasm, more attention should be paid to the comparison of Chinese color words with languages other than English, such as Japanese, Korean, Thai, and Vietnamese. Although these languages belong to Asian countries and have been greatly influenced by ancient Chinese, the cultural connotations of the color words of each nation are different. Therefore, when these people are learning Chinese, they will more or less affect their misunderstanding and misuse of Chinese. Therefore, research on contrasting color words and teaching to provide solutions remains a priority.

4.2 Vietnamese CSL Teaching and Learning

By searching on CNKI for research related to the teaching of color words in Vietnamese and Chinese, it is not difficult to see that scholars and Vietnamese students are still interested in and doing research on this topic, but the number of articles is still very small and the research content is not comprehensive enough. Most of the existing research only looks at this issue from different traditional perspectives (semantics, word formation, grammar), and there are very few studies focusing on cognitive linguistics. Therefore, it can be said that the research space of color words is still very large. The starting point of modern language research is no longer just from the language itself, but has gradually emerged in combination with other sciences, such as: artificial intelligence science, psychology, etc., and with the help of the theoretical framework of cognitive linguistics. The reason why learners make errors in the process of using language can be explained from different angles. Thus, more optimized and modern solutions can be provided for teaching Chinese to Vietnam. In short, the future development trend prospect is very broad.

5. Summarizing

Combining the analysis of Chinese and Vietnamese scholars' research on modern Chinese color words, we can know that the research on modern Chinese color words has been integrated and accumulated to a certain extent, and scholars have studied color words from many different angles. Under the guidance of more and more cognitive theories, the research core of color words has also changed: from the study of traditional color words, the study of the metaphorical meaning given to colors by cultural factors, to the study of cognitive conceptual metaphors. Therefore, the application in teaching Chinese as a foreign language and teaching Chinese to Vietnam has also changed: from using traditional methods to guiding learners to deeply understand the cultural similarities and differences between Chinese and their mother tongue. In order to further understand Chinese correctly, avoid errors caused by the negative transfer of mother tongue, and help teachers and learners to teach and learn better.

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