

RECOGNIZED IN "Y"
CATEGORY BY



Research Consortium Archive

P(ISSN) : 3007-0031

E(ISSN) : 3007-004X

<https://rc-archive.com/index.php/Journal/about>



EXPLORING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE LANGUAGES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Shafaq Hanif

International School of Chinese Studies, Shaanxi Normal University, Xi'an, China.

Waseem Ullah

International School of Chinese Studies, Shaanxi Normal University, Xi'an, China.

Publisher : EDUCATION GENIUS SOLUTIONS

Review Type: Double Blind Peer Review

ABSTRACT

Learning English and Chinese language at the university level is crucial and effective for successfully attaining the objectives of lessons and English language learning with the aspect of ESL learning. The differential and similarities factors in both languages discussed in the study, A L2 learner tries to arrange all the necessary elements which could achieve the goals of a successful learning process of English and Chinese by understanding the concept of similarity and differential factors of both languages. A quantitative and survey-based study is conducted to evaluate the results of similarities and differential aspects of English and Chinese languages at the University of Sargodha. The results and outcomes discussed and analyzed with the responses of quantitative study with students' problems from the perspective of similarities and differences at the university learning process of target languages in Sargodha.

Keywords: *Similarities, Differences, English Language, Chinese Languages, Comparison*

Introduction

Comparative Analysis of English and Chinese Languages

The precise number of languages spoken now is unknown. According to one estimate, the number of spoken languages ranges between 3,000 and 4,000. Each language style has its protocol, writing manners, sound, syntax, and sentence structure differences. Several elements affect oral and written communication between English and Chinese, the two most widely spoken languages in the world, and between these two languages. Some writing style variances, particularly in business writing, catch our attention.

Although there are many semantic and syntactic parallels between the English and Chinese comparison expressions, it can be argued that there are more distinctions between them. The next chapter will attempt to investigate how Chinese and English comparison phrases differ from one another and the causes of the discrepancies based on the theories discussed above.

Differences between English and Chinese Thinking Modes

The way we think is one of the most crucial cultural cues. It reflects the traits of cultural psychology and is intimately tied to cultures. "The ways of thinking are highly varied; in fact, each region's residents have their way of thinking. It connects to many things, like geography, history, and country. The main factor causing cultural differences is thought processes. It contains information, ideas, techniques, language, and customs. Deng Yanchang (2007). In addition, the patterns of thinking and language are interconnected. Language embodies various kinds of thoughts. As a result, each way of thinking has unique traits. There are many ways to examine and think about how the thinking styles of the Chinese and English people differ. Here are just a few examples.

Visual and Rational Thinking Modes

According to Zheng Yanhong (Zheng Yanhong, 2003), the pictured thinking mode or empirical synthesized thinking pattern establishes the critical distinction between the Chinese and the English countryside, which prefers the logical, analytic thinking modes. Although the English and other Western countries may have evolved their logical and analytical thinking styles, the Chinese are discerning in their reasoning.

The Chinese philosophy's "yin and yang as one" tenet emphasizes the aspect of unification while acknowledging the conflict. However, the English and Westerners' thought of God and humanity's separation emphasizes the oppositional side without explicitly denying the connection. Such a divergence is indicative of the two distinct forms of thinking. The Chinese place more emphasis on overall and abstract concepts, whereas Westerners place more emphasis on individual parts and details. The Chinese also prefer synthesis over analysis. For instance, the Chinese generally begin with available units and move on to smaller units when discussing time, whereas the English do the exact reverse. It is also true of how they communicate locations. The English would proclaim the specific name first (individually), then list a succession of duties from the lower to the higher. In contrast, the Chinese would first mention the titles (total) (from the higher to the lower) before referring to the unique names.

Generalizing and Analytical Thinking Modes

Intuition thinking, in which people investigate objects as a whole and stress totality, is the fundamental aspect of the Chinese people's method of mind since they are more concerned with their bodies while expressing feelings. Naturalism is a systematic philosophy in China. (2002) Mao Ronggui Individualism is strongly valued in the English thought pattern. The English prefer analytical reasoning because they relate their feelings to planetary influences and the elements.

To be examined, target things are broken down into smaller pieces, which naturally can cause people to prioritize the parts above the whole when seeking knowledge. Because of this, sense has always predominated in Chinese, whereas expression forms have received little attention. However, Westerners, mainly the British, have traditionally emphasized analysis and reasoned thought. Their dualistic ideology results from their belief that individualism is the main issue and is always dependent.

Tortuous Thinking VS Straight Thinking

Pursuing alternate contrast in reasoning has long been a tradition in Western philosophy, establishing a clear-thinking style. On the other hand, the Chinese are more prone to take both sides of a matter, creating a complicated thinking pattern since they are more accustomed to the harmony and unity of the world. The English tend to stay to the point at the outset of their speeches, providing a straightforward and honest topic before giving pertinent facts and

antecedent circumstances. The syntactic characteristics of a compact head and a long, hefty finish with the emphasis at the front half of the sentences could very well be explained by this. Moreover, due to the speakers' thought processes, the Chinese sentences will offer the relevant material in great detail before getting to the theme.

In short, the different points could be discussed as under points;

- a) Contextual Features
- b) Grammatical Features
- c) Semantic Features
- d) Syntactic Features
- e) Lexical Differences

Research Objective

To investigate and explore similarities and differences points in English and Chinese languages.

Research Question

How do similarities and different points in English and Chinese languages vary in the learning process for L2 learners?

Statement of the Problem

The researcher intends to investigate the similarities and differences between the English and Chinese languages for their academic, social, and professional needs for future research. How the difference and similarities points could be varied in both languages, according to their learning and teaching point of view of students and teachers ends. The study will focus on the effectiveness points of the differences and similarities between English and Chinese languages by controlling their challenges and barriers to learning.

Significance of the Study

The study will be beneficial for the teachers and students in identifying similarities and differences points of English and Chinese. This research may purposefully investigate theoretical issues like professional and educational learning concept expertise and training courses for English and Chinese learners at the university level for successful learning outcomes from both languages.

- a) To know about the different points like behavioural and linguistic variations in English and Chinese.
- b) Knowing the similarities between sentences and vocabulary structure of the English and Chinese languages could be very influential in the successful learning process.
- c) Beneficial for both teachers and students about the meaning structure at the school and university level to know about the variations in differences and similarities points of both languages.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study highlights Investigating and exploring similarities and differences in English and Chinese languages: a comparative study.

The perceptions and expectations of the English and Chinese learners in Pakistani institutions where both languages have the status of L2. ELT and Chinese teachers in learning Chinese and English subjects according to the students' ground realities and thinking approach in the learning process by learners would be analyzed and explored by systematic quantitative research protocols.

Researchers agree that language learning aspects like English and Chinese are the most significant that make the student successful in learning with the help of practical language-developing syntactic features used by E.L.T and Chinese teachers. For this, an investigation was intended to collect the perceptions of university learners for extracting effective language practice with the language skills and syntactic features of similarity and difference used in their language learning skills at the university level to develop futuristic perspectives and decision-making.

Students' participation in developing English and Chinese learning is related to the positive effects of the learning environment according to the availability of resources and materials like books, articles, and practices about its similarities and differences. So it has many advantages for enhancement of language learning skills. It will be explored to encourage and facilitate the best educational practices for university-level learners. Research is equally important for teachers' and students' perceptions about practicing learning expertise and attaining SLOs (Students' Learning Outcomes) for students.

Research Method

The study was quantitative, and data from the University of Sargodha students was gathered using a quantitative tool. A survey questionnaire was created and utilized in quantitative research for this reason. The questionnaire, developed for the University of Sargodha students studying English and Chinese, used a five-point Likert scale. Fifteen closed-ended questions on a five-point scale, from strongly disagree to agree strongly, made up the survey questionnaire.

Sampling Technique

The random sampling technique was used to collect data with the students of the University of Sargodha through close-ended questions.

Population of the Study

The study population was about 100 English and Chinese language learners of the University of Sargodha for learning English and Chinese through similarities and differences features of both languages so that a successful objective could be established.

Sample Size of the Study

The study's sample size was 61 L2 learners of English and Chinese at the University of Sargodha.

Research Instrument

The close-ended Likert scale questions asked English and Chinese learners at the University of Sargodha language. Conventional meetings and online survey forms were generated for this framework.

Reliability and Validity of Tool

The reliability and validity of the questionnaire ensured providing a copy of the closed-ended questions to the course instructor and supervisor to review. The questionnaire was initially checked and then reconsidered to achieve authentic results and completed by the University students. Then a modified and approved questionnaire was applied to the survey. The results will be interpreted in detail in the result section of this study.

The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were ensured by providing a copy of the closed-ended questions to the course instructor and supervisor to review. Then a modified and approved questionnaire was applied to the survey.

Table No. 1 Shows Reliability Test Analysis

Cronbach Alpha	Number of statements
.839	15

Time Frame

Ten to fifteen days were allotted for the data-gathering period

Results And Discussions

Table No. 2 Exploring similarities and differences in English and Chinese languages: A comparative study

Items	Stat	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total	M	SD
Students faced many differential aspects in English and Chinese while learning L2 at the university level.	freq	0	4	3	43	11	61		
	%age	0.	6.6	4.9	70.	18.0	100		
	e	0			5			4.0	.71
Many students do not take much interest in learning English and Chinese due to the complicated sentence structures of both languages.	freq	0	10	6	39	6	61		
	%age	0.	16.	9.8	63.	9.8	100		
	e	0	4		9			3.6	.87
								7	

Many learning variations in English and Chinese speaking and writing skills exist.	freq	1	1	1	41	17	61		
	%age	1.6	1.6	1.6	67.2	27.9	100	4.18	.70
Speaking errors and communication barriers are the main differential aspects of the English and Chinese languages.	freq	1	3	5	39	13	61		
	%age	1.6	4.9	8.2	63.9	21.3	100	3.98	.81
vocabulary and sentence structure of English and Chinese language vary.	freq	0	3	3	41	14	61		
	%age	0.0	4.9	4.9	67.2	23.0	100	4.08	.69
All language skills like speaking, writing, reading, and listening manners of the language are very different for both languages at the university level.	freq	0	2	0	43	16	61		
	%age	0.0	3.3	0.0	70.5	26.2	100	.69	.60
The learning and teaching resources or material are also different due to the different contexts of the English and Chinese languages.	freq	1	6	12	26	16	61		
	%age	1.6	9.8	19.7	42.6	26.2	100	3.82	.99

Both languages have similar errors in speaking and pronunciation while communicating.	freq	1	12	3	33	12	61		
	%age	1.6	19.7	4.9	54.1	19.7	100		
								3.71	1.05
Dis-fluency is also a standard or similar error in English and Chinese languages by L2 learners.	freq	0	4	6	36	15	61		
	%age	0.0	6.6	9.8	59.0	24.6	100		
								4.02	.79
Chinese and English language have less competency than L1 students at the university level in Pakistan.	freq	0	8	2	39	12	61		
	%age	0.0	13.1	3.3	63.9	19.7	100		
								3.90	.87
Lack of teaching resources and activities while learning English and Chinese languages is also a central problem for L2 students.	freq	1	6	5	32	17	61		
	%age	1.6	9.8	8.2	52.5	27.9	100		
								3.95	.96
English and Chinese language learning process demand highly qualified teaching staff to educate the students.	freq	1	4	3	30	23	61		
	%age	1.6	6.6	4.9	49.2	37.7	100		
								4.15	.91

Games, puzzles, and smart devices are very helpful in improving students' interest in the English and Chinese language learning process.	freq	0	0	2	41	18	61		
	%age	0.	0.0	3.3	67.	29.5	100		
	e	0			2			4.2	.51
								6	
Background knowledge about social and cultural variations of students could interrupt the learning process of Chinese and English as L2.	freq	1	5	5	36	14	61		
	%age	1.	8.2	8.2	59.	23.0	100		
	e	6			0			3.9	.89
								3	
The written and sound structure of alphabetical items differs in English and Chinese.	freq	1	2	4	36	18	61		
	%age	1.	3.3	6.6	59.	29.5	100		
	e	6			0			4.1	.80
								2	
Total	freq					100		4.0	.88
	%age					61		0	
	e								

The table presents responses from students about the challenges and similarities in learning English and Chinese as second languages (L2) at the university level. The data reflects various aspects of language learning, such as vocabulary, sentence structure, speaking, writing, resources, and errors, in both languages. The total mean score is 4.00 with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.88, which suggests that, on average, students strongly agree with the statements related to language differences and challenges. This indicates a consensus among the respondents that significant differences exist between English and Chinese in terms of language learning at the university level. Several statements have mean values above 4.0, including: Differences in speaking, writing, vocabulary, and sentence structures (e.g., speaking errors, sentence structure variations, and language competency differences). The need for qualified teaching staff and the use of

games and puzzles to engage students. Learning challenges due to differences in disfluency and pronunciation errors. These responses suggest that students strongly feel the impact of these differences on their learning experience. Medium to High Scores 3.5-4.0 as some responses fall in this range, such as, Interest in learning (complicated sentence structures) and differences in teaching resources. Cultural knowledge interruptions and language competency issues. This suggests that while these aspects are acknowledged, they are not seen as uniformly problematic for all students. Many students seem to agree that English and Chinese language learning requires, Specialized teaching, Adapted resources, and Attention to disfluency errors. Based on the overall data, it can be concluded that, Significant Differences Exist, as Students report notable challenges in learning English and Chinese, particularly in terms of grammar, vocabulary, speaking errors, and communication barriers. There is a clear consensus that highly qualified teachers and tailored learning resources are essential to address these challenges effectively. Using interactive learning methods like games and puzzles is viewed positively, which could be an area for further development in language education. Overall, the data suggests that while students acknowledge some commonalities, the differences in structure, competency, and resources between English and Chinese create considerable learning barriers. The recommendation is to focus on enhanced teacher training, innovative learning materials, and interactive tools to better address these challenges and improve student engagement in both languages.

Discussions

From all the above analysis and results through pie charts and tabular calculation of students' responses, it could discuss that the relationship of Chinese learning in the context of English varies according to the needs, trends, curriculum, and level of students or study. It could find that different learning scenarios and situation demand variation in the teaching process of English vocabulary, teaching skills, and availability of resources with the differences and similarity points of both languages. However, overall, responses from learners considered that the Chinese and English cooperation and promotions aspects bring favourable results against all learning outcomes and interests of learners.

There are many differences and similarities points of the Chinese and English languages. The similarities describe the learning outcomes common in both languages in the Chinese and English learning process. The vocabulary learning process through English and Chinese concepts has its importance and value in the field of education; it cannot be ignored as a part of regular learning practices of English. For successful learning objectives like translating both languages, we need to adopt a favourable learning environment according to students' interest level for the smooth conduction of English and Chinese relation of their concept of

learning outcomes about differences and similarities factors. Classes at the university level of Sargodha.

Recommendations

- a) The student should show similarity and implement a constructive teaching approach in the classroom learning environment for both language learning objectives like English and Chinese.
- b) Learners-centered classrooms should be maintained to achieve the learning objectives, which are similar points of view of the learning process of both languages.
- c) I believe the fundamental sentence form is where they are most comparable. Almost without exception, the fundamental Chinese statement follows a Subject-Verb-Object format, just like English.
- d) The biggest similarity, in my opinion, is that both languages are analytical. In other words, rather than inflection, they rely more on word order and connecting words like prepositions. In this regard, English and Mandarin are more similar than many of the languages it is linked to.
- e) The students should manage all necessary group and individual activities in the learning process at university level classrooms also show a similar point in English and Chinese.
- f) Traditional teaching should be controlled to implement the constructivist approach because new teaching trends would attract the learners for the successful learning outcomes of subject matter and content of English and Chinese language learning objectives
- g) The written activities, alphabetical concepts, and the English and Chinese differential points.
- h) Speaking errors and dis-fluency are common factors in both languages. In other words, we can conclude and recommend that all barriers and errors in learning activities and language skills are the common factors and similar characteristics of both languages.

Limitations

- a) The current study is limited to only university students of the university of Sargodha.
- b) A random sampling technique was used to collect data for this survey from the English and Chinese learners district of Sargodha.

Conclusion

The present study revealed that similarities between English and Chinese complete both languages' structural and learning processes. The differential points opposite changes, like variation in written and speaking context of both languages at the University of Sargodha. Students' trends in the learning process of the English Chinese language discussed the complex sentences and understanding level of both languages are same for the students. However, the written context and speaking, accent, and written

context are very different and opposite. Through this, students take more interest and motivation in the learning goals of the tasks if they take it through challenging tasks the learning objectives. Students could be inspired and take advantage of such resources for learning objectivities of their learning content in writing and speaking activities which are different from each other, so that the students could face problems in their learning process of English and Chinese language. Many subject learning activities about English subjects' vocabulary items and all learning skills of English could be practised efficiently to learn the subject successfully, which are similar activities as much needed in the learning process of Chinese language.

References

- Alsalem, N.K., 2015. Compliment responses: A comparison of Saudi English learners and native speakers of American English in an academic environment. Illinois: Department of Linguistics in the Graduate School, Southern Illinois University Carbondale.
- Cheng, D., 2011. New insights on compliment responses: A comparison between native English speakers and Chinese L2 speakers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(8): 2204-2214. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.02.003>.
- Deng Yanchang & Liu Running. (1989). *Language and Culture*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Goffman, E., 1967. *Interaction ritual: Essays on face-to-face behaviour*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Goodenough, W.H., 1957. Cultural anthropology and linguistics. In *Report of the Seventh Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistics and Language Study*. Edited by Paul L. Garvin. Monograph Series on Languages and Linguistics. Washington: Georgetown University Press. Pp: 167-173.
- Guo Chunjie & Liu Fang. (1997). A Dynamic Research into L1 Influence on L2 Writing. *Modern Foreign Language*, 4, 30-38.
- Hans Robert Jauss. *Reception Aesthetics and Reception Theory [M]*. Shenyang: Liaoning People's Press, 1987.
- Herbert, R.K., 1990. Sex-based differences in compliment behaviour. *Language in Society*, 19(2): 201-224. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0047404500014378>.
- Holmes, J., 1988. Paying compliments: A sex-preferential politeness strategy. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 12(4): 445-465. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166\(88\)90005-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(88)90005-7).
- Hu Shuzhong. *A comparative study of English and Chinese rhetoric [M]*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1993.
- Hu Wenzhong. (1999). *Aspects and International Communication*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Researching Press.
- Joseph A. Devito. (2001). *The Interpersonal Communication Book*. London: Langman.
- Kaplan, R. (1966). Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education. *Language Learning*, 2, 15-27

- Kaplan, R. (1972). Argument Translation Networks as Psychological Models of Sentence Comprehension. *Artificial Intelligence*, 3, 77-100.
- Kelly, G. (1963). *The Theory of Personality: Psychology of Personal Constructs*. New York: W. W. Norton Company.
- Kobayashi, H. & Rinner, C. (1992). Effects of First Language on Second Language Writing: Translation versus Direct Composition. *Language Learning*, 42, 256-273.
- Larry A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter, and Lisa A. Stefani. (2000). *Communication between Cultures*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Researching Press.
- Lian Shuneng. (1993). *Contrastive Studies of English and Chinese*. Beijing: Higher Education Press.
- Liu Miqing. *Contemporary Studies of Translation*. [M]. Bei Jing: China Translation & Publishing Corporation, 2005,11.
- Luo Xuanmin. *A comparative study of discourse analysis between English and Chinese* [M]. Changsha: Hunan People's Publishing House, 2001.
- Ma Guanghui & Wen Qiufang. (1999). Research on the Influence Factors of College Students' English Writing Ability. *Foreign Language Teaching and Researching*, 4, 34-39.
- Ma Jianzhong. *Ma Shi Wen Tong--Chinese Grammar Series*[M]. Beijing: The Commercial Press, 1983.
- Manes, J. and N. Wolfson, 1981. The compliment formula. In f. Coulmas (ed.), *everyday routine: Explorations in standardized communication situations and pre-patterned speech*. New York: Mouton Publishers. Pp: 116-132.
- Othman, N., 2011. Pragmatic and cultural considerations of compliment responses among Malaysian-Malay speakers. *Asiatic: IIUM Journal of English Language and Literature*, 5(1): 86-103.
- Pan Wenguo, Tan Huimin *comparative linguistics: historical and philosophical reflections* [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Education Press, 2006.
- Pan Wenguo, Tan Huimin. Wilhelm von Humboldt and Benjamin Lee Whorf contributed to the Founding of Contrastive Linguistics. [J]. *Journal of East China Normal University (Philosophy and Social Science Edition)*,2005(06):75-80.
- Pan Wenguo. A hundred years of comparative studies between Chinese and English [J]. *World Chinese Teaching*, 2002(1).
- Qu Yan. Linguistic and cultural dimensions of English to Chinese translation [J]. *Journal of Foreign Languages*, 2006(5).
- Scollon, R. & Wong Scollon, S. (1991). Topic Confusion in English-Asian Discourse. *World Englishes*, 10(2), 113-126.
- Si Xianzhu. Comparative study of Chinese and western views on translation [J]. *Foreign Language and Foreign Language Teaching*, 2005 (3).
- Wang Lixin. A diachronic comparative study of Chinese and Western translation methodologies [J]. *Journal of Harbin*

- University of Technology (Social Science Edition), 2002 (02): 103-106.
- Wang Wenbin. Contrastive Linguistics: the Essentials of Language Research [J]. Foreign Language and Foreign Language Teaching, 2017 (05)
- Wolfson, N., 1983. An empirically based analysis of complimenting in American English. Sociolinguistics and language acquisition. London: Newbury House. pp: 82-95.
- Xian, L.X. and L. Lei, 2014. Research on responses to compliment actions in spontaneous Chinese conversation. Journal of Sichuan Normal University (Social Sciences Edition), 41(06): 96-108.
- Ying Wang was born in Tangshan, China, in 1978. She received her M. D in linguistics from Dongbei University of Finance and Economics, China, in 2009. She is currently an instructor at Hebei United University, Tangshan, China. Her research interests include business English and linguistics.
- Jing Chen was born in Tangshan, China, in 1978. She is an instructor at Tangshan Vocational and Technical College, Tangshan, China. Her research interests include business English and linguistics.
- Zhu Liyuan. Introduction to reception aesthetics [M]. Hefei: Anhui Education Press, 2004.
- Zhu, M.C., 2016. A comparative analysis of Chinese and American compliments from the perspective of intercultural communication. National teacher research funds research achievements (3): National Teacher Research Fund Management Office. Pp: 333-334.