

Self-Corrected Comprehension of Near-Synonymous Verbs via Comparative Visualizations

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Abstract

Building from previous studies, this paper explores the nature of English conceptual structure of state differentiation for the holding/carrying near-synonyms in random and paired sessions. To test for such conceptual differences, Imai & Saji's (2013) instrument was adopted where 56 monolingual English speakers were asked to name the holding/carrying near-synonyms in random and paired sessions. In each session, the order of stimuli presentation was manipulated. In random session, the stimuli was randomized in a way that a holding action may or may not be successively followed by a carrying action; whereas, in the paired session, the stimuli was paired in a way that a holding action must be successively followed by a carrying action. The qualitative data were coded to indicate multiple cognitive categories as to how state and manner distinctions were perceived for further quantitative analysis. Overall, the results demonstrated that native English speakers have a differentiated conceptual structure for the state of holding and carrying near-synonyms and that structure is sensitive to the order of stimuli presentation. Implications for such results were discussed in terms of near-synonymous difficulty and pedagogical recommendations for L2 English learners.

Keywords: conceptual structure, conceptual distinctions/differentiations, cosslinguisticcross linguistic differences, near-synonyms.