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A Cultural Comparison of Spatial Metaphors in Chinese and English

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1. Introduction

What is metaphor? Chinese scholar Qian Zhōngsu says that “the essence of metaphor lies in making the dissimilar similar” (1979:74). American linguists Lakoff and Johnson suggest that metaphor is a cognitive tool that aids people in understanding abstract concepts in terms of superficially dissimilar concepts that are easier to comprehend (more commonplace versus more abstract) (Lakoff & Johnson 1980:3). Indeed, it seems that metaphor is a “unique cognitive mechanism underlying social thought and attitudes,” as much a reflection of culture as any other form of language (Landau 2010:2).

While there is a clear correlation between language and culture, whether language affects culture or culture affects language is still debated. However, metaphors are one special case where it seems that there is a causal effect from culture onto language. Metaphors are figurative language that, though born out of the literal, have adapted to carry certain connotations that have been shaped by the culture of the language’s speakers. One may argue that perhaps these figurative extensions are simply arbitrary (much like how words themselves in the lexicon are arbitrary), but this thesis seeks to argue otherwise, supporting the view that cross-linguistic differences in metaphoric connotations are due to differences in culture. We will examine the differences in connotations between metaphors with the same words in a traditionally individualist society, American, and a traditionally collectivist society, China, and see how the two juxtaposing society types might vary in metaphorical expressions.

In English and Chinese, people use spatial metaphors to express literal meanings. In particular, the up-down scale of directionality colors metaphors including gradient adjectives with biases based on where the adjective falls on the scale. These include (but are not limited to) *high/middle/low*, *up/down*, and *top/middle/bottom* in English, and *gāo/zhōng/dī* ‘high/middle/low’, *shàng/xià* ‘up/down’, and *dǐng/zhōng/dǐ* ‘top/middle/bottom’ in Chinese.

The use of spatial metaphor extends beyond mere directionality: any gradable antonyms that can be placed on an up-down scale are privy to metaphorical expressions based on directionality. For instance, time is an example of a scale that can be subjected to a spatial plane (Boroditsky 2010), as well as progression toward completion and temperature. This thesis will focus on the figurative extensions of temperature, because it is both figuratively and metaphorically on a linear scale (temperature can be measured on a numbered linear scale of degrees).

It is common to use terms relating to heat and cold in figurative expressions that extend beyond just the literal meaning of physical temperature. These include the two polar extremes of *hot* and *cold* as well as the gradients in between them. In English, we have adjectives such as *hot*, *warm*, *cool* or *chilly*, and *cold*, while Chinese employs the adjectives *tàng* ‘hot’, *rè* ‘warm,’ *wēn* ‘lukewarm,’ *liáng* ‘cool, chilly,’ *lěng* ‘cold,’ and *hán* ‘very cold’ to express degrees of hotness and coldness.

While it is to be expected that American English and Mandarin Chinese share similar expressions of spatial directions like high and low, as well as gradable antonyms like hot and cold, due to the universal human experiences of directionality, there are a striking number of dissimilar expressions. It will be the contention of this thesis that these

dissimilarities may be born out of cultural differences in the areas where each respective language is spoken (American English in the United States, Mandarin Chinese in Mainland China).¹ After all, it is commonly accepted that "language is a part of culture," and "the two are inseparable" (Jiang 2000:328). In fact, metaphors are actually based on the culture of the society, and it is this culture that gives rise to different associations and images for certain words (Jiang 2000). This goes against the notion of linguistic determinism, or that language shapes and limits culture. If linguistic determinism were true, then metaphors would not arise as they do to reflect the ideals of the culture. Ultimately, whether culture influences language, or language influences culture, the link between the two is inherently spelled out in the connotations and distributions of the metaphors below.

2. Hot *and* Cold

In the first part of this thesis, we will describe these temperature terms and their connotations with regards to personality (i.e. non-physical attributes attached to a person); in the second part, we will explore the phrases and idioms containing these adjectives; and in the final part, we will take a look at the distribution of figurative expressions of temperature in English and in Chinese and what these findings may imply.

¹ From here on out, American English will be referred to as "English," and Mandarin Chinese will be referred to as "Chinese."

2.1. *Figurative Extensions with Personality*

English and Chinese both extend the attribution of *warm* and *cold* to personality. Both languages have similar connotations for these adjectives, with *warm* being primarily positive and invoking a caring and considerate personality, while *cold* carries a negative connotation of lack of emotion or caring.

2.2.1. Warm

In English, a person or personality can be described as *warm*. In contrast, a person or a personality cannot directly be referred to as *warm* or *cold* in Chinese; this sort of direct referral indicates physical temperature only. Instead, it is necessary to adopt a figurative phrase containing one of these adjectives.

In Chinese, the phrase that roughly translates *warm-hearted* is *rè qín* ‘warm family member = warm-hearted’, or *rè qín sī huǒ* ‘warm family member like fire = very warm-hearted’ if describing someone who is *very* warm-hearted—*sī huǒ* means ‘like fire,’ intensifying the warmth of one’s personality by attributing it to the burning heat of fire. There are numerous more specific metaphors that are used to express a warm personality in Chinese, each phrase subtly differing from the others. By contrast, English has a dearth of such phrases; other than the general expression of *warm-hearted*, there do not seem to be any other phrases in which *warm* is used to describe one’s personality in English. Perhaps the reason Chinese metaphors focus on subtle differences versus intensifiers and modifiers such as in English has to do with Chinese philosophy’s focus on *hán xū*, or ‘subtle reserve.’ *Hán xū* is a notion advanced by philosopher and poet Sikong Tu (837-908), focusing on specific subtleties using as few words as possible.

Therefore, we find metaphors in Chinese, such as ones connoting *warm-heartedness*, that use two through four characters to describe a very particular nuance of warm-heartedness. This may stem from the Chinese philosophical desire to use a single verbal representation to evoke “unlimited semiosis,” or unlimited impressions in one’s imagination that is specific to the image generated by that particular phrase (Gu 2003:495).

In Chinese, the expression *rè chéng* ‘warm honest’ essentially carries the same meaning as *rè qin*, but also connotes honesty and possessing a genuinely good-hearted nature, indicating that the person being described is genuine in his or her warm disposition. By contrast, *rè qin* merely refers to *acting* warmly, regardless of whether this attitude is true to one’s individual nature. The phrase *rè qié* ‘warm keen’ carries the same meaning of *warm-hearted* that *rè qin* expresses, but it also connotes being eager to help, meaning that one who is *rè qié* is so kind and caring that they are keen to help out anyone in need. Going one degree further than *rè qié* is to describe one as *rè xīn cháng* ‘warm heart (and) intestines’, which literally means that one’s heart is so full of warmth that its heat warms the intestines beneath it. *Rè xīn cháng* refers to one who is so warm-hearted and eager to help that they in fact *do* help, implying that one is an accomplished philanthropist versus one who merely has the *intent* to help.

This focus on lending a helping hand may be a result of the Chinese culture’s emphasis on community. One person who has discussed the types of societies of the world, Geert Hofstede, labels China as a horizontal collectivist society, meaning that there is a focus on the culture’s overall society as opposed to one’s individual interests. Indeed, Triandis (1989) called U.S. culture the prototype of individualism and Chinese

culture the prototype of collectivism; he defined individualists as those who “give priority to personal goals over the goals of collectives” and collectivists as those who “either make no distinctions between personal and collective goals, or if they do make such distinctions, they subordinate their personal goals to the collective goals” (Triandis 1989:509).

The Hofstede scale scores China as 20 on the Individualism Scale, where 0 is no individualism at all and 100 is extremely individualistic. In collectivist societies, people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families, which continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty, assuming that “the group's well-being is the best guarantee for the individual” (Hofstede 1980:151, 158). Because of this loyalty to one’s in-group, (versus the lack of such cohesion in an individualist culture), it makes sense that we find so many positive figurative expressions referring to eagerness to help others. In American culture, while generosity is still a respectable and reputable trait to possess, it is often compromised, overwhelmed by individual aspirations; the United States is the prototypical vertical individualist society, meaning that there is more emphasis on one’s own situation over the good of the community as a whole. For example, the western (American) concept of “personality” does not exist in Chinese culture, for it indicates an individual's separation as a distinct entity from the rest of society, such as in America (Hofstede 1980:150). When power is placed in the hands of an individual, the power holder tends to act with their self-interests at heart over those of others' interests and needs (Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee 2003). Hofstede’s scale gives America a 91 on the Individualism Scale, meaning that American culture is highly individualistic, or “a loosely-knit society in

which the expectation is that people look after themselves and their immediate families” versus tending to help others (Hofstede 1980:157). This may be why there is only one term for *warm-hearted* in English, and why the figurative expression *warm-hearted*, while connoting a giving sort of personality, does not imply that one actually *gives* help to another. Chinese phrases with *warm* are not the only ones that possess specific distinctions that the generic *warm-hearted* in English does not. We will see this come up again in phrases with *cold*.

2.2.2. *Lukewarm*

In English, there are no metaphorical expressions involving the lesser-used adjective *lukewarm*. Despite *lukewarm* being the middle of the temperature range, or even on the warmer (and thus more positive for personality) side, it is viewed as an insult, much as calling someone *average* ‘middle of a range’ is perceived in a negative manner. In American culture where individualism teaches the notion that one should strive to become the best, it is offensive to refer to someone as average rather than above average. While striving to be the best is also present in Chinese culture, the notion of modesty is valued, whereas boasting is looked down upon. There is a general cultural context of not complimenting others in the way that people do in American culture; no news is good news, and one only speaks up when someone is below average.

In contrast to the English *lukewarm*, the Chinese term *wēn* ‘lukewarm’ is viewed in a much more positive light. Here, *lukewarm* draws upon aspects of a *warm* personality in that it contains positive connotations of kindness. Yet *wēn* possesses a distinctive quality of its own as well. A *lukewarm* personality is easy-going and humble; *wēn* refers

to one who is modest and considerate of others, careful not to offend someone else or make him or her feel inferior. *Wēn* connotes the calm aura similar to the one connoted by the adjective *cool* in English (more on *cool* in part three).

The Chinese phrase *wēn hé* refers to a personality that is *warm*, but also has aspects of humbleness and leniency, indicating that this person is well composed, their warmth coming from their calm and understanding disposition. *Wēn shùn* ‘lukewarm passive’ is very similar in meaning to *wēn hé*, differing in that *wēn shùn* emphasizes that one is devoid of all stubbornness, this lenient passivity making them easy to get along with. *Wēn róu* ‘lukewarm soft’ is essentially identical in meaning to *wēn hé*, but with one exception: *wēn róu* may only refer to the softness of women (you would get laughed at if you used it to describe a male!), whereas *wēn hé* is a neutral term that may refer to anyone. *Wēn hòu* ‘lukewarm sincere’ is very similar to *wēn hé* as well as to *wēn shùn*, except that it carries aspects of a forgiving personality, indicating that this person is so humble and not wanting to offend that he or she does not even hold grudges. *Sòng wēn nuǎn* ‘to give lukewarmth = to uplift someone’s mood’ carries strong connotations of being *warm-hearted*, but also nudges toward the direction of lending a helping hand. It means that an individual is so selfless and caring that they will sacrifice their own happiness to make someone else feel better; their modesty allows them to view other people’s happiness as more important than their own, and thus they make this sacrifice without self-regard or hesitation.

This positive emphasis on humbleness may be intertwined with the influence of Chinese philosophy throughout the ages. The ancient Chinese philosophy of Taoism preaches selflessness and humility due to the suppression of all desire; this sense of

unwavering inner unity causes one to help others, because one has no desires of one's own to risk destroying. Thus, it makes sense that Chinese has many expressions for describing a giving, selfless personality. By contrast, in American culture, there is great emphasis placed on ambition and improving one's situation in society, quite different from the modest attitude of Taoism. Due to the individualistic focus in American society, many individuals end up becoming far more powerful than others, and acting in the manner of an individualist society, they would promote their own self goals over those of others. Thus, it follows that in English, there are scarcely any figurative expressions for temperature that directly express selflessness or modesty. While in English there do exist terms such as *in my humble opinion*, often or not these terms, if said, are taken ironically, as using this phrase makes the speaker seem less humble, as someone who is modest would not compliment themselves on their humbleness in the first place.

2.3. *Cold*

In English, the unfeeling, callous qualities of a *cold* personality may be represented in various manners. There is the traditional *cold-hearted*, polar opposite of *warm-hearted*. There is also the *cold-blooded* (one who is *cold-blooded* acts *in cold blood* 'in a cruel manner without remorse').

The Chinese language has a plethora of phrases that refer to a *cold* personality, each with its own slight distinction based on the degree of *cold-heartedness* that one possesses. In Chinese, the basic term for a *cold* personality is *lěng dàn* 'light cold,' which connotes the same indifference and uncaring as *cold-hearted* in English. *Lěng dàn* is the opposite of *rè qín* 'warm-hearted,' much as *cold-hearted* and *warm-hearted* are opposites in English. A more severe term is to call someone *lěng mǒu* 'cold indifference,' which

carries the same connotations as *lěng dàn*, but with an even more intense cold-heartedness. Thus, instead of having to use an intensifier to denote ‘very cold-hearted’ (*hěn lěng dàn*, where *hěn* means *very*), one can simply use *lěng mǒu* to express this deep-seated cold-heartedness. One degree colder than *lěng mǒu* is *lěng kù* ‘ice cold = one that is so cold-hearted and void of emotion that their very presence emotionally pains others.’ This phrase is used after someone witnesses another’s act, expressing that the act is so heartless or callous that it causes emotional strife for the viewer.

The highest degree of cold-heartedness can be expressed by the phrase *lěng ruò bīng shuāng* ‘cold like ice (and) frost.’ This phrase connotes the same meaning as *lěng kù*, but with one addendum: unlike *lěng kù*, where one’s actions (or lack thereof) are a result of indifference and lack of caring, the actions of one who is *lěng ruò bīng shuāng* are intended to be malicious or spiteful, mirroring the cruel connotations found in the English expression *in cold blood*. The previous phrase is somewhat related to the expression *lěng jìn* ‘cold quiet’, which refers to one who is calculating and devious on top of merely lacking emotion. One who is *lěng jìn* commits acts that may be shrewd or conniving, unmoved by feelings of others and unconcerned with their reactions.

The specificity of the preceding expressions may be connected with aspects of Chinese culture, which supports the notion that “saying less is more” as expressed earlier through the analysis of Chinese metaphors with *rè* (Gu 2003:491). Chinese culture insists that using fewer words expresses your thoughts with more powerful emphasis, as brevity of speech is often associated with wisdom. This is explained best by philosopher and poet Weng Fanggang (1733-1818), who said “saying nothing [is] therefore saying everything,” reflecting the Chinese Daoist philosophy of “silence as eternity” and *yǎn*

wài zhī yì ‘meaning beyond the expressed words’ (Gu 2003:495). Daoism focuses on “Dao,” or “the way of life,” for the Chinese people. The ability to express your thoughts in fewer words is made easier by the existence of two- to four-word phrases which, differing in slight degrees, can concisely capture subtle nuances and aspects of one’s personality that in English would require additional modifiers and possibly circumlocution. Thus, with the existence of these phrases of degree or slight distinction in Chinese, people may express exactly what they intend with a minimum of verbiage.

3.1. *Metaphors and Idioms*

Both English and Chinese are rich with metaphors and idioms containing temperature terms. Many of these expressions share similar connotations between the two languages, presumably due to the similar properties of *heat* and *cold* upon which they are based. Yet we find metaphors and idioms that express different meanings in one language though using the same term in the other language, a phenomenon we shall now delve into.

3.2. *Hot and Warm*

The adjective *hot* is inevitably associated with fire. Therefore, it follows that we find many qualities of fire—volatility, movement (the flickering of flames), and danger—in the metaphorical expressions and idioms containing *hot*.

In English, we find expressions such as *hotheaded* or possessing a *hot temper*, both referring to one who is touchy and easy to anger. Like the instability of a spreading flame, people who are *hotheaded* or with a *hot temper* cannot maintain their composure

or control themselves. Another expression, *hot and bothered*, describes one who is worked up in a sweat of frenzy. Not only does this idiom reflect the excitable, turbulent nature of fire, but the physical insinuation—that one is actually so worked up that one's body temperature rises, causing one to sweat—is related to the extreme heat expressed by *hot* itself. The phrase *like a cat on a hot tin roof* 'restless or jumpy' adequately mirrors the quality of movement in fire: the intense heat of the fire would make one jump about instead of remaining comfortably in one spot. The idioms *in hot pursuit*, *hot on someone's tail*, *hot on someone's heels*, and *hot on the trail*, all meaning 'to follow close behind one's target in pursuit,' connote the movement of chase. Note that it is not in 'fiery' pursuit, but it is in 'hot' pursuit. Here, the metaphorical movement of fire is translated into the fast movement of chase.

The phrases *in the hot seat* and *in hot water* both mean 'to be in a difficult position, often because one did something to anger someone else.' This is linked to the quality of extreme heat connoted by *hot*; when something such as a seat or water is scalding hot, it is uncomfortable to be in, just as it is uncomfortable to be in a difficult situation where the blame is placed upon one's head.

As an unstable and powerful element, fire is unpredictable and therefore dangerous, expressing an aspect of excitement in its risk—after all, the threat of danger makes playing with fire more tempting. This trait is expressed in *hot to trot*, which refers to one who is sexually excited or ready to partake in thrilling sexual encounters. This thrill is derived from the risk of letting down one's guard during such an exhilarating, perhaps unwholesome act, resembling the risk of danger that is involved with fire. The idiom *hot stuff* 'one who is attractive or sexually exciting' is related to the previous term.

Much as the light and warmth of a flickering flame has an alluring appeal that draws one in (think of a bug zapper), both *hot to trot* and *hot stuff* share the aspect of enticement, drawing others in with the risky thrill of sexual excitement. This quality is also found in *red hot* ‘exciting or popular.’ If someone or something is *red hot*, people are drawn to it because it’s exciting or desirable; this goes back to the allure of fire that draws one in with its bright, visually stimulating flicker of flames.

Surprisingly, there are few if any metaphorical expressions or idioms in the Chinese language with the adjective *hot*. In Chinese, *tàng* ‘hot’ can only refer to physical temperature; similarly as we saw above with *rè*, *tàng* cannot be extended to describe people or personality. This does not mean, however, that none of the meanings expressed in idioms with *hot* in English do not exist in some metaphorical or idiomatic form in Chinese. In Chinese, the word *warm* seems to take over certain metaphors that are expressed with the word *hot* in English. The lack of metaphors with *hot* is another instance of how Chinese is more understated and moderate, whereas English is more geared toward the extreme. Time and time again, Chinese uses metaphors with *warm* to express metaphors of extreme heat in English.

The English phrase *hot spot* translates into *rè diǎn* ‘warm dot = warm spot’ in Chinese, but despite the dissimilar diction of *hot* and *warm*, the meanings of these phrases are identical, connoting the aspect of excitement associated with *hot*. In Chinese, the phenomenon of *warm* covering the metaphorical territory of *hot* is even observed in the case of the English food item *hot dog*, which translates into *rè gǒu* ‘warm dog’ in Chinese! The English idiom, *dying of heat*, translates into *rè sǐ le*, which literally and figuratively means ‘died of warmth,’ a silly notion in English, where the pleasant, limited

heat generated by the term *warmth* is by no means as intense or blistering as that of *hot*; but in a language where the term for *hot* cannot extend metaphorically to idioms, *warm* jumps in to take its place, expressing the same notion of ‘dying of heat’ despite the temperature limitation capped on *warm*.

Just because *warm* in Chinese may cover some phrases that employ *hot* and connotations of extreme heat in English, there are also idioms involving *warm* that carry connotations related to warmth. For instance, the phrase *rè nào* ‘warm fuss’ refers to an atmosphere that is lively, festive, and jovial. In this case, *rè nào* draws upon the uplifting, alluring aspect connoted by warm, similar to how one can describe something—often a location—as ‘warm and inviting’. While this phrase carries the aspect of excitement incited by *hot*, this excitement derives not from danger but instead from the inviting, jubilant aura of the atmosphere.

The aspect of extensive heat that appears in English phrases with *hot* but is absent in Chinese idioms is that of danger or risk. This may be because Chinese solely employs *warm* to cover phrases that draw upon connotations of both *hot* and *warm*. *Warm* refers to a pleasant amount of heat, less extreme or striking than the high amount of heat attributed to *hot*. Therefore, since *warm* lacks this aspect of danger associated with fire and temperatures higher than preferred, in Chinese expressions involving *warm* do not carry these connotations of risk and threat.

3.3. Cool

In English, the adjective *cool* connotes being calm and patient (as evident by its inclusion between the two adjacent adjectives in the phrase *calm, cool, and collected*). Someone who is *cool* or has a *cool head* has the ability to stay calm and think clearly,

even in trying times. This well-composed, levelheaded quality is further alluded to in the idioms *cool as a cucumber* ‘one who is extremely calm and composed,’ *play it cool* ‘pretend to be calm,’ and *keep cool* ‘stay calm in a difficult situation.’ Similar connotations can be found in the exclamation *Cool it!*, which is said to make someone calm down, or *to cool one’s heels*, referring to someone who is anxiously stopping and waiting until they regain a calm disposition. In the latter expression, this may be derived from the physical heat on one’s heels from moving about at a fast pace (giving a nod to movements of chase connoted by metaphors such as *hot on someone’s heels* or *hot on the trail*); *to cool one’s heels* is to reduce this heat (associated with motion and movement), thus to slow them down and make them wait until they are calmer and more composed.

In Chinese, because the adjective *hot* is not used in metaphorical extensions or idioms (thus not having any temperature phrases that express anger or instability), it makes sense that this language also lacks the connotations of *cooling down the heat* that we find in English. Interestingly, the connotation of calmness associated with the English adjective *cool* is expressed in metaphors involving *lukewarm* in Chinese (seen back in part 2.2.2.), though lukewarm in Chinese has the culturally significant nuance of lending a helping hand which *cool* in English does not.

The difference in connotation may be due to a Confucian ideal found in Chinese culture. Confucius instilled an ideal of rigidity and order within one’s self as well as outwardly in the society of a culture. Metaphors in Chinese accordingly do not focus on emotional extreme. The absence of these *hot* expressions of anger therefore makes it unnecessary to have the juxtaposing *cool* expressions of regaining control of one’s temper, evidenced in the lack of either in the Confucian culture of the Chinese language.

While the Chinese language does not contain any metaphors or idioms for *liáng* ‘cool’ that connote the same calmness and stability that it does in English, it nonetheless has a few expressions; for instance, *xīn liáng* ‘cool heart’ refers to one who is experiencing such great disappointment that they give up all hope. This same aspect of hopelessness is mirrored in the expression *liáng le bàn jié* ‘to feel cold in the middle of someone’s utterance.’ This refers to someone saying something and halfway through their sentence, before they even completely vocalize the thought, the idea being conveyed is so horrifying or devastating that it makes one instantly feel *cool* (similar to the “freezing up” effect of *cold* in English, covered in part 3.4). *Liáng le bàn jié* connotes feelings of hopelessness and bleakness derived from what was just said, strengthening the connotation of disappointment or hopelessness connoted by *cool* in Chinese.

3.4 Cold

In English as well as in Chinese, the adjective *cold* has an overall connotation of lack of motion, feeling, or comfort. This may be due to the properties of frozenness: when something is frozen, it is unmoving, unfeeling, and unyielding, with effectively no exceptions. This is expressed in the metaphorical expression *freeze up* ‘become so frightened or anxious that one loses the ability to function.’ English plays upon this chilly quality of unmoving, such as in the phrases *getting cold feet* ‘becoming too scared to go and perform a planned action’ and *to make one’s blood run cold*, referring to when one is so frightened that one’s blood is chilled by the fear.

The connotations of *cold* that were explored in relation to personality rear their negative head again in the following idioms, referring to lack of emotion or empathy. The

notions of freezing may be prevalent here as well, as evidenced by the phrases *freeze out*, *leave someone out in the cold*, and *give someone the cold shoulder*; all these terms refer to ignoring or ostracizing someone, disregarding how this person might feel and denying them the friendly feeling of companionship. This type of indifferent, callous action is exemplified in the idiom *to throw cold water on someone*, which means to ruin their enthusiasm by destroying their dreams or ideas. This idiom draws further upon the connotations of *cold* found in describing one's personality, for it shares the same quality of lack of concern and perhaps even a tinge of the same cruelty as found in the previously mentioned expression *coldblooded*.

The hardness and inflexibility of frozenness is present in certain expressions containing *cold* in English. For example, *to quit cold turkey* means 'to quit something in one go, without any coddling or comforting.' This harsh, unwavering nature may be derived from the rigid solidity of ice, the extreme cold on the temperature scale. Two more idioms that invoke this quality are *in the cold light of day* 'expressing something without any sugarcoating' and *the cold facts* 'the facts as they are, regardless of how harsh they might be, without any euphemisms'. These phrases imply that the speaker lacks empathy, for they fail to soften the blow of potentially harmful or offensive news, and they also mirror the sharp rigidity of solid ice, refusing to twist the truth just to spare someone's feelings and instead leaving the truth intact, unmoved and untouched.

Although Chinese has fewer idioms involving *lěng* 'cold,' it still conveys this frozen, unmoving aspect of extreme cold in certain idioms. The expression *lěng bù dīng* 'don't run into the cold' refers to 'suddenly doing something to scare someone so much that they cannot move at all from their current spot. The phrase *xīn hán lěng* 'a heart

turned icy cold’ describes the opposite role from the expression above; *xīn hán lěng* means that something has instilled so much fear in someone that they feel “frozen” in fear. This inability to move coincides with the frozen, rigid qualities of ice and extremely low temperatures.

The lack of movement connoted by extreme cold is expressed in the Chinese idiom *lěng lěng qīn qīn* ‘cold and clear,’ which is the opposite of *rè nào* ‘lively, jubilant, festive’. The lack of festivity is due to the lack of passion and excitement in the atmosphere, for the passion and zeal (that is associated with heat) has been cooled down to such a cold degree that the jubilation in the air is “frozen” in place, leaving the place unlively and dismal.

In Chinese, one trait of idioms containing *cold* that is not present in those idioms in English is deception or betrayal. The origin of the phrase *dǎ lěng jiàn* may give insight to why this connotation exists. *Dǎ lěng jiàn* literally translates ‘to throw a cold sword,’ meaning ‘to stab someone in the back’. It mirrors the same despicable cowardly deception connoted by a warrior who is not upright enough to fight fairly in combat, instead choosing to resort to backhanded guerrilla tactics to obtain the upper hand. This characteristic of betrayal and dishonesty is exemplified in the expression *lěng cháo rè fěnn* ‘cold laugh, warm criticism = to talk behind someone’s back.’ *Rè fěnn*, *rè* meaning *warm*, expresses that one is kind and friendly to someone else's face, but the *lěng cháo* ‘cold laugh’ reveals that this kind disposition is merely a deceptive façade, for that person is speaking ill of you to others. I am not quite sure as to the reason this particular connotation has been associated with *cold*, other than that coldness in general, as evident

by expressions describing a *cold* personality, is associated with negative and, at times, spiteful notions.

4.1. Observations of Data

Attached are four figures depicting the above data in two different manners. For our purposes, *lukewarm* has been included in *warm* in the data. Figure 1 shows an almost uncanny inverse relation in frequency of distribution between English and Chinese in almost every category. In our data, English has nineteen terms for hot, the highest frequency of any category for any language, while Chinese has none. For *warm*, English has two phrases, the lowest frequency for a distribution in any category, while Chinese has fourteen phrases, the highest number for any category in the language. English has fourteen phrases, the highest number for any category in the language. English has eleven phrases for *cool*, a relatively high number, while Chinese only has two phrases. The category of *cold*, however, breaks this inverse pattern, with both languages having a high number, English with fifteen and Chinese with a lower but still impressive ten.

Figure 2 shows the different distributions by comparing categories of the same language to each other. We can note from Figure 2 that interestingly, the highest distribution frequency for one language correlates to the lowest distribution frequency of the other language.

Figure 1: The distribution of metaphors with *hot/cold* in Chinese and English.

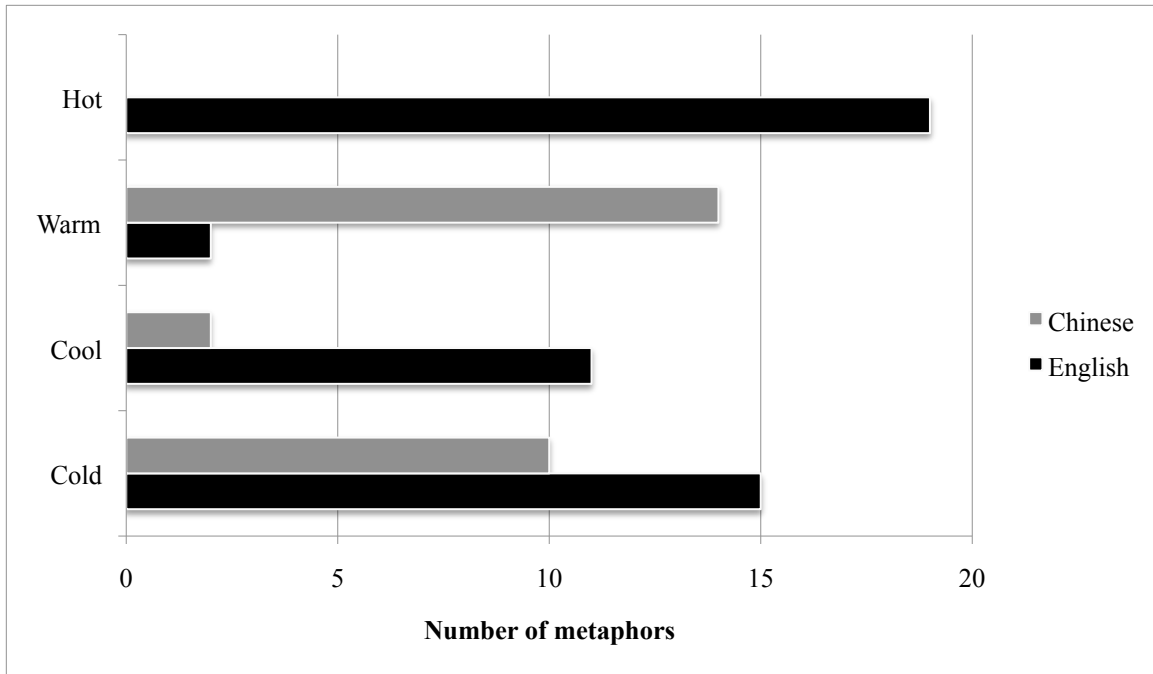


Figure 2: The distribution of metaphors with *hot/cold* in Chinese and in English, respectively.

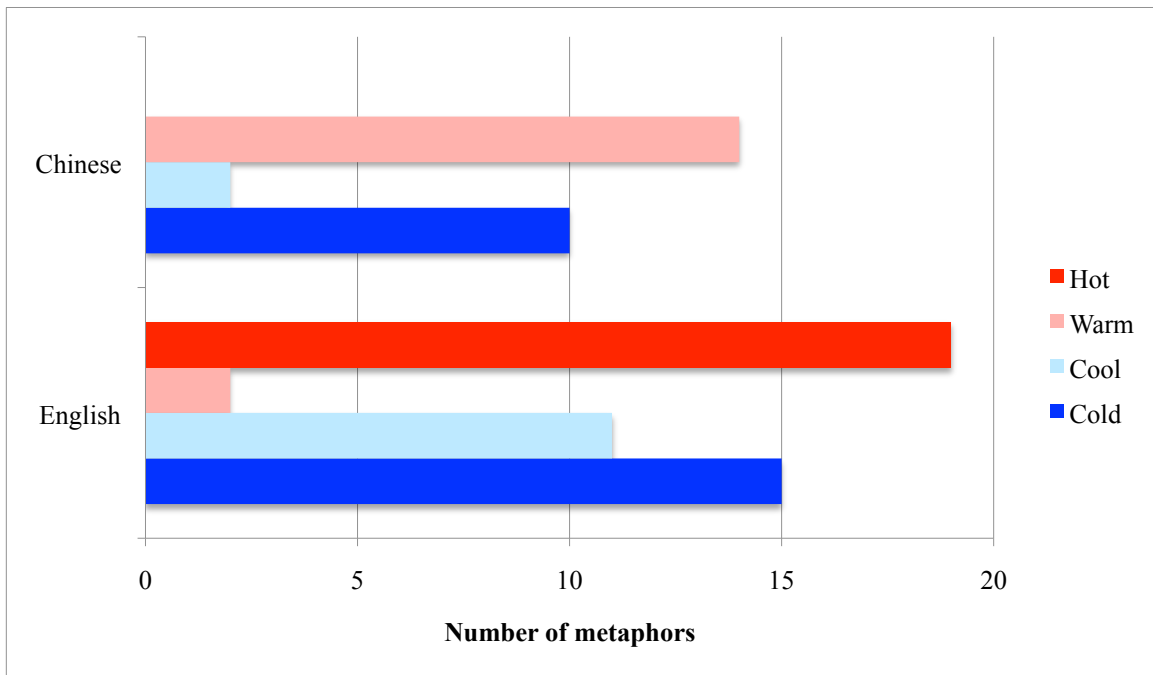


Figure 3 and 4 represent the distribution of metaphors in English and again in Chinese. Figure 3 shows that the expressions involving cooler temperatures take up a bit

more than half the pie, with the warmer temperature expressions composing the smaller half of the pie. Interestingly enough, there seems to be another inverse correlation between English and Chinese in Figure 3 and Figure 4. In Figure 4, we see that it is colder temperature expressions that compose the smaller half of the pie, with warmer temperature expressions representing a bit more than half the pie.

Figure 3: Distribution frequency of *hot/cold* metaphors in English.

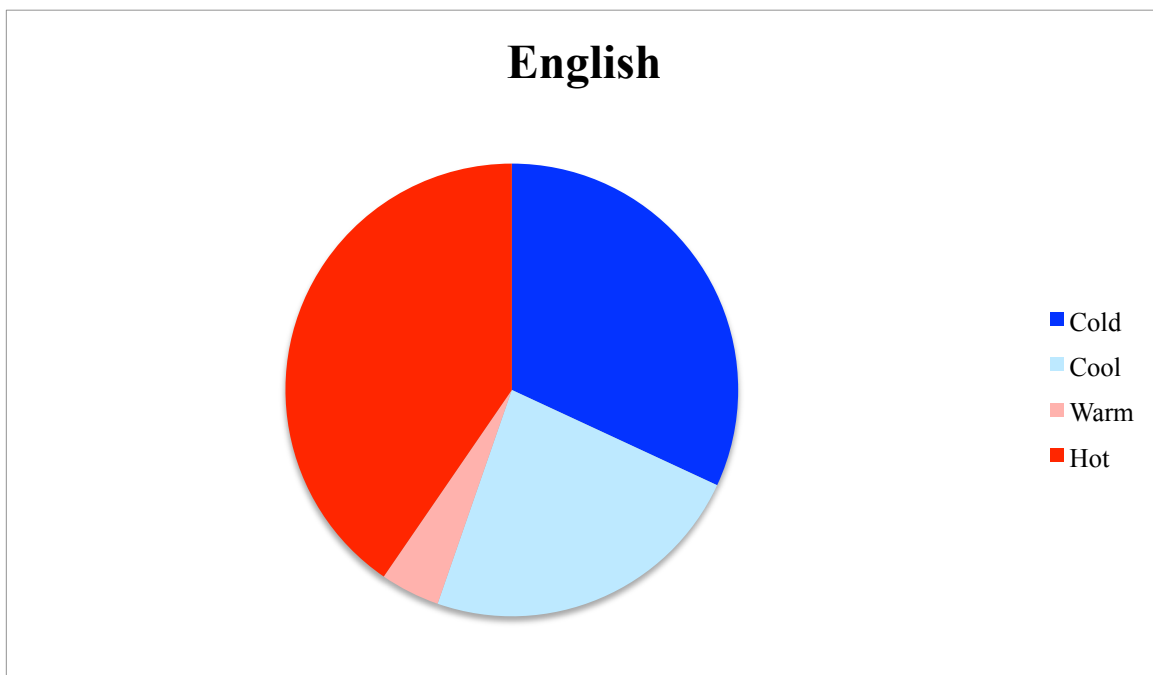
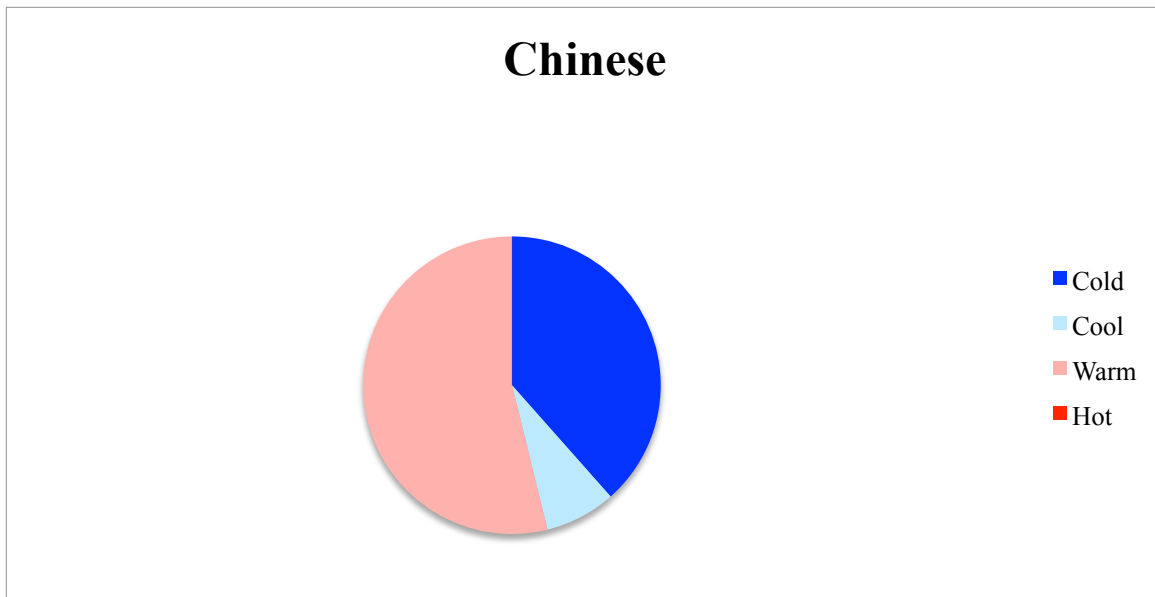


Figure 4: Distribution frequency of *hot/cold* metaphors in Chinese.



Despite the lack of expressions involving the adjective *hot* in Chinese, the abundant number of expressions involving *warm* still makes up more than half the pie, meaning that there are more expressions involving *warm* in Chinese than expressions involving *cool* and expressions involving *cold* combined. On the other hand, even with the numerous expressions involving *hot* in English, the fact that only two expressions involving *warm* were found means that there are more expressions involving terms with colder temperatures than with warmer temperatures. However, because the distribution between warmer and colder expressions is so close to being equal, it is difficult to draw a firm conclusion about the reflection of warmer or cooler temperatures on the cultures.

However, another observation we see in Figure 3 and Figure 4 involves the frequency of expressions involving extreme temperatures (*hot* and *cold*) versus intermediate temperatures (*warm* and *cool*). Approximately two-thirds of the English pie is composed of expressions involving *extreme* temperatures, whereas approximately two thirds of the Chinese pie is composed of the *intermediate* temperature expressions! From

this data, we might postulate that English speakers, being so inclined to expressions using such extreme temperatures, may be more volatile in their temperament, with passionate, angry *hots* and the regaining of calm expressed by *cools* (but not *colds*). By contrast, Chinese, with its abundance of intermediate temperatures, focuses more on maintaining the steady calm expressed by the traditional philosophies of Taoism and Confucianism. Thus, while both languages share many similar connotations in expressions involving temperature, the differences in culture may cause the dissimilarities as well as the tilted skew of distribution in frequency of expressions on a spectrum of temperature.

5. *Spatial Metaphors with High, Middle, Low.*

In the following sections, this thesis will first present metaphors in English with *high*, *middle*, and *low*, and then these English metaphors will be compared to metaphors in Chinese with *the same concepts*.

5.1.1. *High in English.*

In English, many metaphors with *high* often carry connotations of goodness or superiority. For instance, many metaphors refer to possessing an honorable or respected reputation. These include the following: *to take the high road* ‘to be the more mature, level-headed person in a situation’; *to hold the high ground* ‘to be the one who is the best, most successful person’; *to be held in high regard* ‘to be looked upon with reverence’; *in high esteem* and *in high favor* ‘to be looked upon with respect’; and *to speak/think highly of someone/something*, ‘to speak or think respectful, flattering things about someone/something’.

Metaphors with *high* carry connotations of superior class membership or reputation as well. These include: *high-class* ‘sophisticated and of superior quality’; *high society* ‘of a privileged upper class, especially in fashion’; *highbrow* ‘being highly cultured or intellectual’; and *your Highness* ‘term of an address to a king or a queen’. These are related to two phrases with *high* that involve pride in one’s reputation, *to hold one’s head (up) high* ‘to show that one is proud of something;’ and *to be high maintenance* ‘to take much pride and care in one’s appearance’ or ‘to need money and attention to be happy.’

This connotation of good and better is further exemplified in metaphors revolving around intellect. These include the following: *high-intellect* ‘very intelligent’; *higher education* ‘education beyond the secondary level’; *higher animals* ‘animals of more advanced intellectual capacity’; and *high school* ‘an institution of more advanced education than middle school’.

It is easy to see the connection between high intellect and success, as reflected in the following metaphors for success: *high achiever* ‘one that goes above and beyond the required effort for a task’; and *aim high* and *high goals*, referring to the actions and goals of one who is ambitious.

These metaphors of success easily translate into metaphors of wealth involving *high*, such as the following: *in high cotton* ‘possessing a large amount of income’ (derived from the notion of having high cotton crops for harvest and thus a high profit); *living high off/on the hog* and *riding high* ‘living a lavishly rich lifestyle’; and *high flier* ‘one who spends much money’. Note that most if not all of the preceding metaphors with

high that refer to a respected reputation also connote wealth, such as *high society* or *high class*.

With success and wealth comes power. Power metaphors with *high* include the following: *high roller* ‘one who lives an exciting and extravagant lifestyle’; *having friends in high places* ‘having powerful contacts in the world;’ *high and mighty* ‘arrogant or overbearing due to having power and clout’; *high on the totem pole* ‘being in a position of power’; *on one’s high horse* ‘being arrogant or overbearing due to having power’. Note that *your Highness* corresponds to power as well, for it refers to having a royal position of power.

Perhaps there are so many (29) English metaphors containing *high* that relate to superiority because superiority is an important and positive concept in American culture; *high* corresponds to more, and more is perceived to be better. For instance, Americans seem obsessed with powerful celebrities (think Donald Trump) who have made it to the top "mainly due to craven self-interest and who use their power to self-aggrandize" (Hofstede 1980:71). In American culture, there is a sense of never settling, that nothing is ever enough, so to achieve more (*to climb higher*) is a good thing. The higher one is on this metaphorical ladder, whether it is corporate or academic or one of social class, the more worth one possesses; thus, higher signifies better.

English metaphors with *high* are also associated with intensity and extremity. This is exemplified with metaphors involving excitement and/or anger, such as *to have high hopes* ‘to be extremely optimistic’; *to be high as a kite* ‘to be so happy that one becomes giddy’; *to have high spirits* ‘to have imperturbable optimism’; *to be high-strung*, meaning ‘to be tightly wound and easily upset’; *to have emotions running high* ‘to be in a state of

extreme excitement or anger’; and *to be in high dudgeon* ‘to be extremely angered by something or to exhibit resentment’.

The association of *high* with intensity is further seen in four metaphors that signify general intensity of a situation: *high octane/high charge/high tension* ‘of a high level of intensity for a situation’ and *to get high* ‘to bring oneself to an intense state of being, as with drugs.’

This connotation of intensity quickly leads to notions of movement due to the excitement and kinetic energy of such intensity. Metaphors with *high* associated with excitement and movement include the following: *high jinks* ‘exciting, dangerous situations’; *to swing into high gear* ‘to increase the general excitement and intensity of a situation’; *to blow it sky high* ‘to detonate something in a fantastic and frenzy-induced movement’; and *it’s high time that we do something* ‘the intensity and excitement has built up so much that movement and action must now be taken’.

The excitement and intensity associated with *high* easily translates into metaphors involving the initiation of movement due to excitement, such as in the following: *the high sign* ‘a prearranged signal for going ahead with something’; *to hightail it (out of here)* ‘to quickly and hastily leave’; and *to high pressure someone into something* ‘to forcefully urge someone into going and starting to do something’.

The association of *high* with intensity and extremity may be derived from the concept of high temperatures being more extreme and volatile. For instance, the metaphors involving cars, such as *high octane* and *high gear*, mirror the heated state of a car being in *high drive*, or extremely revved up. When the stakes are high or more intense, then emotions can *run high*, or be more extreme because more is on the line. For

meanings of excitement or movement, *high* could connote ‘more’ once again, such as more intensity and more excitement, which in turn signifies more kinetic movement. The hotter the temperature, the more intense the feelings: for example, hot weather causes people to be more irritated and on edge; hot body temperature causes people to be more bothered and uncomfortable; hot internal temperature of any liquid causes that liquid to be more volatile and have more kinetic movement. Because one basic physiological effect of anger is increased body heat, this heat could trigger more intense emotions, or more intense excitement or anger (Chen 2010:73). Thus, the notion of *high* as ‘more’ is seen in these metaphors as well.

5.1.2. *Middle in English*

In English, *middle* is used in two kinds of metaphors, those involving compromise and those involving lack of extremeness. The first kind of metaphor is based on the notion that compromise falls onto a linear scale, with two extremes at either end. Thus compromise is viewed as placing oneself in the middle of the linear stream between the two extremes. These include: *middle ground* ‘position of compromise’; *piggy in the middle* ‘being in a position of compromise but not agreeing with either side.’ Metaphors where compromise involves dividing the linear scale equally between the two extremes include: *split down the middle* ‘compromise by equal division’; *to play both ends against the middle* ‘pitting two sides against the compromised position’ (with the image of having divided the linear scale into two sides); and *to be caught in the middle* ‘to be in a difficult situation because the two extreme sides are arguing and have divided the linear stream, asking you to pick one side or the other’.

The association of *middle* with lack of extremeness is found in the following metaphors: *middle of the road* ‘not exceptional’ (not inhabiting either extreme end of the linear scale); *to be middle of the road* ‘to not be extreme politically, i.e. not falling to the extreme left or right of the linear political scale’; *middle of nowhere*, referring to ‘a very dull and isolated place’; and *middle-aged* ‘the time of life between young age and old age’ (on a chronological scale, this would be not at either extreme of youth or old age).

The first notion, of middle being about compromise, may be derived from the idea that being in the middle, therefore less extreme, means less zeal, thus a more willing mindset to compromise or to share by division. This idea of equal division in compromise may come from the idea of splitting something down the middle, leaving two equal and thus fair parts. The other notion, of middle being not extreme, may have developed from the idea mentioned above from lack of zeal. By placing oneself in the middle of a spectrum rather than on an extremity or end, one lacks the passion of falling to one side of the spectrum; therefore, one lacks the devotion to one extreme focus.

5.1.3 Low in English

Much as *low* is the gradable antonym of *high*, metaphors with *low* connote the opposite meanings from metaphors with *high*. While certain metaphors with *high* signify superiority, metaphors with *low* accordingly denote inferiority. The following metaphors with *low* refer to an inferior or poor reputation: *to be held in low regard* ‘to be thought of in a negative light’ (note that this is the opposite of *to be held in high regard*); *low man on the totem pole* ‘one who has an inferior ranking in a system of people’ (the opposite of *high man on the totem pole*); *lower class* ‘the poorest social class’ (the opposite of *upper*

class); *low class* ‘lacking social etiquette, culture, or respectability’ (the opposite of *high class*). Another group of metaphors with *low* have to do more specifically with lack of honor in one’s reputation, such as: *low life* ‘one who behaves immorally or criminally, usually of a lower social class’; *the lowest of the low* ‘the most despicable, immoral person’; *to lower oneself to some level* ‘to disregard one’s ethics in order to get ahead’; *low blow* ‘underhanded, unethical tactic’; and *That’s low*, a phrase uttered in reference to something immoral, unfair, or despicable.

While metaphors with *high* signify success due to ambition, metaphors with *low* express lack of success due to lack of ambition. These include *to lower one’s sights* ‘to set one’s goals lower than what is expected’ and *a low-end product* ‘a product that is cheap or of poor quality’. The polar opposite relationship between *high* and *low* is seen through metaphors involving levels of intellect. While metaphors with *high* signify intelligence, metaphors with *low* signify lack of intelligence. These include *low intelligence* ‘not smart or unwitting’ and *low hanging fruit* ‘the easiest person to convince or fool’ or ‘the most readily achievable goal’.

This dichotomy between *high* and *low* is further exemplified through metaphors involving excitement and movement, or lack thereof, including: *to lie low (and sing small)* and *to keep a low profile* ‘to make oneself unnoticed and not call attention to one’s self’; *low-key* ‘relaxed, muted, temperate’; *to lower one’s guard* ‘to let oneself relax due to a perceived lack of danger’ (from the literal meaning of lowering one’s shield and sword due to a perceived lack of danger); *at a low ebb* ‘below the usual condition or standard’; and *to lower one’s voice* ‘to speak more quietly’.

Following the predictable oppositeness of *high* and *low* on a gradient scale, because metaphors with *high* express happiness, metaphors with *low* connote sadness. These include *in low cotton* ‘depressed’ (note that the opposite, *in high cotton*, signifies not emotion but wealth; one could make the argument that in English-speaking America, wealth leads to happiness, though this is not explicit in the linguistic data); and *to be at one’s lowest point* ‘to have hit rock bottom’.

The fact that so many (9) metaphors with *low* involve being less extreme is due to the same reasons that *high* is thought to be more extreme. On a temperature spectrum, *low* signifies less hot, which in turn means less kinetic movement and volatility. Thus, we see that there are six metaphors involving *low* that deal with lack of excitement or movement. We see this lack of excitement in emotional metaphors where *low* signifies less excitable emotions. The metaphors involving *low* in emotion signify depression and dejection; note that there are metaphors in emotion with *high* that also signify an upset mood, but these are more extreme and volatile notions of being upset versus just being lackluster like the metaphors involving *low*.

Intriguingly, the two metaphors with *low* related to temperature are also the two metaphors with *low* that deal with anger. These are *to have a low boiling point* ‘to be easily angered’; and *to burn with a low blue flame* ‘to be quietly and intensely angry without any outward indication of anger’. This is interesting because there are many metaphors with *high* that denote anger, whereas there are no other metaphors with *low* that denote anger. This notion of low temperature is exemplified in the metaphor *burn with a low blue flame* in which the “low blue flame” signifies a high temperature since

blue flame is the hottest of flame, but the low makes it so that the metaphor connotes having a subtle, controlled anger, thus not being volatile even in anger.

5.2.1. High in Chinese

Metaphors with *high*, or *gāo* in Chinese are similar to metaphors with *high* in English in that they also denote superiority or goodness. Metaphors with *gāo* in Chinese that denote superior intellect include: *gāo cái shēng* ‘high student = outstanding student’; *gāo zu* ‘high foot = teacher’s pet’; and *gāo zhǎo* ‘high search = good idea in a tough time’. It is interesting to note that two out of the three metaphors with *gāo* that denote superior intelligence are within the realm of academia, whereas in English, the corresponding metaphors with *high* that denote intellect do not involve succeeding in academia, but merely refer to it generally. This focus on knowledge may be due to Confucian influence since it became the orthodox doctrine of Chinese society back 300 BC. Confucius emphasizes in the *Analects* that knowledge and learning are basic values necessary to the order of a society (Lau 1979).

The notion of *gāo* as good is further seen in metaphors related to reputation, or more specifically honor. These include: *gāo tái guī shǒu* ‘high lift kind hand = forgiving someone for doing something wrong’ and *gāo diào* ‘high pitch = humble, unboastful’. Note that humbleness as an aspect of metaphors of high connoting honor is seen only in Chinese and not in English. This aspect of humbleness may derive from the Daoist influence on Chinese culture. Chinese culture believes that “Dao makes everything run smoothly but it does not boast about its own achievement. Daoism emphasizes humbleness and tenderness” (Parsiala 2011:65). In terms of forgiving others for their

mistakes, Daoism emphasizes “cultivating one’s moral character and perfecting one’s moral integrity” in order to obtain the desired goal of Dao (Parsiala 2011:65). The focus on moral integrity is further seen in the Confucian philosophy which teaches one to strive to be *chūn zū* ‘gentleman = the man with a cultivated moral character’ (Lau 1979:15). In *The Analects*, Confucius states that “Morality is the only object a man ought to pursue, including honesty and forgiveness” (Lau 1979:29). Thus, this focus on humbleness and forgiving versus boastfulness seen in Chinese metaphors with *high* but not with English ones may stem from this idea of Daoism.

The positive connotations of metaphors with *gāo* are additionally seen in those that involve skill, including: *gāo cháo* ‘high fill = extraordinary’; *gāo shǒu* ‘high hand = good at something’; (*bù fēn*) *gāo xià* ‘(not discriminating) high low = evenly matched in skills, but connoting a high skill level nonetheless’; and *gāo tóu dà mǎ* ‘high head big horse = strong, big and able in stature’. While metaphors with *high* in English are predicated on the image of success as moving up in life, Chinese seems to focus on the core components necessary in order to move up in life. English focuses on the ideal end goal in sight, whereas Chinese focuses more on practical matters of what one needs to obtain that goal. Note that there is one metaphor with *high* in Chinese that refers to ambition, *gāo yuán* ‘high fence = set lofty goals’, but there are many more cases of metaphors in English with *high* that express this idea.

This different approach to learning expressed in the metaphors above may be influenced by the difference in mental representations of the categorical systems of learning. Roschian’s mental model of human mental representations of categorical systems may be analyzed in two dimensions: vertical (consisting of superordinate, basic,

and subordinate) and horizontal (Li 2003:259). Jin Li discovered that due to cultural differences, Americans and Chinese attach different content to the categories of conceptions of learning despite the same overarching mental structures in the vertical dimension. The superordinate category in English is “the learning process,” whereas the superordinate category in Chinese is “the desirable approach.” This fundamental difference is further exemplified through the basic and subordinate categories, with the basic category in English being “learner characteristics” and in Chinese being “seeking knowledge and achievement,” and with the subordinate category in English including “communicating, school subjects, methods/tools for learning,” and the subordinate category in Chinese including “lifeline pursuit of knowledge, humility, desire, contribution to society, learning as an end in itself, extraordinary ability;” the above content reflects the connotations found in the metaphors above, with English metaphors focusing more on using knowledge as a means to an end (for success), while Chinese metaphors focus more on knowledge as an end in itself (or what Chinese philosophy calls the *hǎo xué xīn*, or ‘heart and mind wanting to learn’) and ability of skill (Li 2003:260). Li noticed, “Most striking of all was the near absence of references to hard work, effort, and persistence on the U.S. list, while such concepts were abundant on the Chinese list (30% vs. 2%);” the importance of these concepts in Chinese culture but not in American culture is expressed in the presence of such connotations in Chinese metaphors above and the complete lack of connotation in English metaphors above (Li 2003:261). Interestingly, the basic category in Chinese touches upon the notion of humbleness and contribution to society found in a traditionally collectivist society like China, and lacking in a prototypical individualist society like the United States.

This focus on the importance of one's skills may be derived from the Confucian influence on Chinese culture. Confucianism emphasizes "self-cultivation (Hsiu-shen, Hsiu-chi) leading to personal self-realization and the attainment of the highest virtues of *chéng* 'doing one's best'," which is reflected in the figurative speech of metaphors focused on skill (Lau 1979:16). Confucianism as a philosophy asserted the importance of making the full use of one's ability, thus the inclusion of abilities in metaphors with *high* in Chinese, but not in English metaphors with *high* since English culture lacks this Confucian influence (Lau 1979:16). Therefore, I argue that English-speaking cultures are more focused on obtaining an abstract "American Dream" or a lofty idea of success, whereas Chinese-speaking cultures are more focused on how one must be or act in order to actually obtain such goals through skills and bettering oneself.

Notice that while there are numerous metaphors with *high* in English that connote power and wealth, there are none in Chinese. Perhaps this reflects the Daoist belief that one's goal in life is not to gain worldly success, but it is to "cultivate a mystical relationship to the Dao" (Halsall 1995:1). Thus, Chinese culture emphasizes preventing one's energy from being spent on the pursuit of wealth or power, and instead focusing on life itself as a spiritual entity, explaining why there are no *high* metaphors in Chinese involving success through power and wealth.

5.3.2 Middle in Chinese.

In Chinese, while *zhōng* literally means *middle*, it corresponds most closely to *central* in English in terms of metaphorical usage. The distinction between *middle* and *central* adds a wealth of difference to metaphors in Chinese with *zhōng* versus ones with

middle in English. Metaphors with *zhōng* that denote appropriateness include: *zhōng guó* ‘central country = China’; *shí zhōng* ‘appropriately’; *zhōng yòng* ‘middle use = fitting, a fitting use’; and *zhōng kàn/tīng* ‘looks/sounds very good’ (equivalent of the English phrase *Sounds good!*).

Metaphors with *middle* in Chinese are also related to mundaneness, but with a positive spin: in Chinese-speaking cultures, being mundane is not seen in a negative light as it is in English-speaking cultures (where being average or mundane is viewed negatively); on the contrary, being average or mundane is actually a positive quality in Chinese. These metaphors include: *zhōng bù liú* and *zhōng dāng* ‘average quality, rank, etc’; *zhōng lí* ‘middle near = indifferent attitude, civil (in civil relations between two countries)’; *zhōng yòng* ‘middle use = not taking sides/being in the middle’ (this is related to a Chinese philosophy known as *tài dú* that values impartiality and keeping one’s opinions in a neutral, basic state). Note that this last metaphor is akin to English metaphors with *middle* that concern being in the middle, only this Chinese metaphor focuses on the principle of staying impartial no matter what the issue, as opposed to being stuck in the middle due to indecisiveness or otherwise.

5.3.3. *Low in Chinese*

Metaphors with *low*, or *dī* in Chinese, are just as common as metaphors with *gāo*. In general, metaphors with *dī* fit in with the “down as bad” metaphor that Lakoff suggests for English metaphors with *down* (Anderson 2003:19). Metaphors with *dī* that connote bad quality include *dī luè* ‘low bad = bad quality’. Metaphors with *dī* that connote bad intellect or education include: *dī sù* ‘low follower = crass, vulgar, lower education’ (this

is a very insulting, negative label for someone). Metaphors with *dī* that denote poor reputation include *dī jiàn* ‘low meet = lower class’ (a negative, insulting label) and *dī rén yī děng* ‘low person one wait = lower social/economic class’ (a neutral term). More specifically, the certain metaphors with *dī* that are related to reputation connote low respect for oneself. These include: *dī shēng xià qì* ‘low sound down air = careful with words, afraid to speak up due to a lack of confidence’ and *dī sān xià sì* ‘low three down four = unconfident with one’s boss, but very mean to those below’ (a negative, snide label).

The subtle, subdued nature of *low* is seen in Chinese metaphors with *dī* as well. These include: *yǔ diào dī huán* ‘low, smooth pitch = smooth talker, mellow talker’; *dī huī* ‘low grey = mellow rhythm in music’ (not rock and roll).

Lakoff’s “down as sad” metaphor for *low* in English is also found in metaphors with *dī* in Chinese (Anderson 2003:84). Metaphors with *dī* that denote sadness include: *dī chéng* ‘low sinking = emotional drop’ and *qīn xū dī luò* ‘low landing = feeling down’.

5.4. Analysis of high/middle/low metaphors in Chinese versus English

Both Chinese and English metaphors with vertical directionality place power at the high end of the scale; perhaps this similarity is due to a shared abstract/amodal model of mental representation. This model asserts that a certain quality is represented in the nodes and their connections on a linear scale (in this case, vertical) (Schubert 2005:1). Fiske (2004) asserts that this vertical scale is pre-equipped for the creation of a power hierarchy, and humans may even be evolutionarily prepared to pick up such associations

of power and spatial positions. He concludes that virtually all cultures use vertical markers for authority ranks in their language, accounting for the similar vertical model of power in both Chinese and English spatial metaphors (Fiske 2004). However, why does *up* signify power and *down* signify powerlessness?

Schubert (2005) argues that the abstract social concept of power is also influenced by the physical spatial information of a vertical linear scale; he asserts that when we think of power differences, we actually think of spatial differences as well. Verticality “embodies power almost everywhere in the domains of posture, housing, furniture,” and more, using height and size interchangeably to correlate more power with greater height or size (Schubert 2005:3). This explains the previously mentioned metaphor *your Highness*, for the most important person is physically seated at an elevated seat during meals (Schubert 2005:3). Thus, greater size or height indicates greater power and dominance, giving the connotation of power to the high end of the scale and conversely giving the connotation of powerlessness to the low end of the scale.

To recap the previously mentioned differences between *high/middle/low* metaphors in English versus Chinese, we looked to the connotation of humbleness, the manner in which learning/knowledge is perceived, and the notion of *middle* as division versus centrality. The connotation of humbleness in China may derive from the Daoist philosophy of humility and avoidance of boasting, whereas the individualist culture of America prods people to strive to be better than those around them and to value ambition over modesty. Thus, we see mention of humbleness in the Chinese metaphors above, but a lack of humbleness in the English metaphors.

The aforementioned passion for knowledge in Chinese culture versus lack of such passion in English culture is explained by Roschian's model of human mental representations. Chinese culture focuses on knowledge and skill as an end in itself, as mirrored in its metaphors with *high* connoting desire for knowledge and skill valued over achievement; English culture focuses on knowledge as a means to an end (whether for communication, power, or as a tool otherwise), which is reflected in its lack of connotation for the desire of knowledge but its abundance of metaphors with *high* focusing on using learning in school as a means to an end for success.

6.1. Up in English

Metaphors with *up* include what Lakoff calls the “good as up” metaphor, where there is a connotation of goodness (Anderson 2003:43). These include: *up to par* ‘good enough’; *up to scratch* or *up to snuff* ‘as good as is required’; *up to the minute*, *up to code* and *up to date* ‘good enough to meet the current standards’; *all caught up* ‘previously not good enough to meet the required standards, but now good enough’; *to size someone up* ‘to decide if someone is good enough’; and *to look someone up and down* ‘to judge someone as good enough or not’.

Metaphors with *up* involving goodness are also seen in relation to reputation. This is what Lakoff calls the “virtue as up” metaphor (Anderson 2003:106). These include: *to build someone up* ‘to make someone’s reputation look good’, or ‘to instill confidence in someone’; *to work one’s way up (the corporate ladder)* ‘to obtain a better position through hard work (such as in a company setting)’ *to hold up one’s own* ‘to support one’s

own weight in terms of responsibility, or to stand one's ground'; and *to look up to someone* 'to respect someone enough to want to emulate him/her'.

Metaphors with *up* also signify superiority; this is similar to metaphors with *high* in regards to reputation. The following are metaphors with *up* that connote superiority and the conceit that comes with it: *the upper crust (of society)* 'the elite members of society'; *uppity* or *acting up* 'ornery due to conceit'; *all dolled/gussied/dressed up* 'dressed to impress'; *stuck up* 'snooty'; *uptight* 'unrelaxed, nit-picky and demanding' (*high-strung, high-maintenance*); and *to get the upper hand on someone* 'to move to a position superior to someone'.

Metaphors with *up* revolve around a general concept of 'increase,' whether on a scale of inferiority to superiority or otherwise. This concept includes connotations of 'more,' or what Lakoff calls the "more as up" metaphor (Anderson 2003:72). These include *surf's up* 'an increase in ocean waves that makes the sport of surfing more extreme'; *on the upswing* 'increasing in success'; *on the up and up* 'increasing in popularity or success'; *up and coming* 'increasing in popularity or success for someone or something that is just beginning'; *to be up for something* 'to be ready to take on something' (note that interestingly the phrase *to be down for something* has the same meaning); and *to pile up* or *to heap up* 'to add more'.

This sense of increasing is also seen in metaphors with *up* that connote the unknown becoming known, or an increase of knowledge. This is Lakoff's "unknown as up" metaphor (Anderson 2003:103). The following are a list of metaphors with *up* connoting the unknown and frustration caused by the unknown, followed by a list of metaphors connoting the act of something becoming known: *up a tree* 'confused, without

an answer to a question'; *all balled up* 'stuck and confused'; *up in the air* 'without a certain, known outcome'; *up a blind alley* 'at a dead end, on a route that leads to nowhere concrete or known'; *to throw one's hands up in despair* 'to give up trying to figure something out'; *to be up against the wall* or *to be up the wall* 'to be in serious difficulties with no known solution in sight'; *an uphill battle* 'a hard struggle' (battling an opponent who is on higher ground is more difficult); *to be up to one's ears/eyeballs* 'to be frustrated from being overwhelmed'; *to have had it up to here with something* 'to be frustrated or at one's wit's end with something'; *to be fed up with something* 'to have had enough of something, to be tired and angry about it'; *to be worked up over something* 'to be bothered or frustrated by something'; and *to be up to no good* 'to be planning or scheming something unknown to everyone else'.

The following is a list of metaphors connoting the act of something becoming known: *to clear something up* 'to clarify the truth about something'; *to chalk something up to something* 'to ascribe something to something'; *to write up (a report, etc.)* 'to compose'; *to read up on something* 'to increase one's knowledge about something by reading about it'; *up to speed* 'having the most recent information' (note this metaphor also falls under the concept of goodness mentioned above); *to catch up with someone* 'to become more acquainted with the goings-on in someone's life' (this phrase could also mean 'to physically reach someone ahead of you'); *to follow up on something* 'to further inquire into a matter'; *to open up* 'to divulge'; *What have you been up to?* or *What's up?* 'Tell me about what is going on recently in your life'; *to ring someone up* 'to call someone to chat'; *to call someone up* 'to summon someone so that they become visible' (also 'to call someone to chat'); *to pull something up (on a screen)* 'to make something

visible’; and *to show everything up front* or *to tell everything up front* ‘to present all known facets of a situation with nothing hidden’.

Metaphors with *up* also denote consciousness, or what Lakoff calls the “consciousness as up” metaphor (Anderson 2003:35). These include: *up and running* ‘functioning’; *up and about/around* ‘awake and alert’; *to wake up* ‘to gain consciousness’; and *to get up* ‘to become alert and mobile’.

Metaphors with *up* include what Lakoff calls the “good as up” metaphor, which include good emotion, or raising one’s mood (*lifting up one’s mood*) (Anderson 2003:43). These include: *buck up*, *chin up*, and *cheer up* ‘feel better’; *to charge someone up*, *to jack someone up*, and *to gin up* ‘to give someone a reason to get excited’; *things are looking up* ‘the future looks bright’; *to gear oneself up for something* ‘to get excited and ready for something’; *to get up and go* ‘to become enthused’; *all fired up* and *pumped up* ‘excited’; *to ratchet something up* ‘to increase the intensity of one’s emotions’ (note this also falls under Lakoff’s previously mentioned “more as up” metaphor); *to shape up (or ship out)* ‘to improve one’s attitude about something (or else)’; *to feel/be up to something* ‘to feel prepared and energized’; and *to suck it up* ‘to improve one’s mood or attitude’.

Metaphors with “up” signifying better mood may be related to the general idea of *up* as ‘more’ or ‘increase’. The idea of ‘increasing one’s mood’ may correlate to improving one’s mood, which would mean raising one’s mood and thus a “good as up” or “happiness” motif.

6.1.2. Down in English

Metaphors in English with *down* carry many of the same connotations of inferiority that other English metaphors with adjectives on the lower end of the spatial scale carry. Metaphors with *down* that denote inferiority include: *a downward spiral* ‘a general descent into inferiority’; *down and dirty* ‘crude and carelessly done; mean spirited’; *a put-down* ‘an insult’ or *to put someone down* ‘to insult someone’; *to look down on someone/something* ‘to judge something as inferior’; *to turn down* ‘to reject’; *to be down by some amount* ‘to be losing by some amount’; *Down with something!* ‘to do away with something undesirable’; *to fall down on the job* ‘to do poorly or mess up at one’s job’; *to break down* or *to have a nervous breakdown* ‘to lose one’s mental ability’. Metaphors with *down* that specifically refer to bad luck include: *downhill from here on out* ‘unlucky or in a bad situation’; *when the chips are down* ‘when things are not going well; when one is losing’; and *down on one’s luck* ‘unlucky’.

Metaphors in English with *down* that denote sadness include: *down in the dumps* ‘depressed’; *down in the mouth* ‘sad and unsmiling’ (literally the corners of one’s mouth are turned downward); *down trodden* ‘sad and hopeless’; *downcast* ‘sad and pessimistic’; *things getting you down* ‘things upsetting you’; *to be/feel down* ‘to be/feel sad’; and *Debbie Downer* ‘one who brings others down with their pessimism’. Note that these same denotations of sadness are found in other metaphors in English on the lower end of the spatial scale as well, such as in metaphors with *low* and, as we will see in the pages to come, metaphors with *bottom*.

Many metaphors with *down* seem to revolve around Lakoff’s concept of the “subject to control as down” metaphor, including: *to put one’s foot down* ‘to not tolerate another’s actions’; *to clamp down on someone/something* ‘to not allow someone to do

something/something to happen’; *to lay down the law* ‘to be strict and bossy’; *to force something down someone’s throat* ‘to make someone do something against his/her will’; *to stare/face someone down* ‘to intimidate someone into doing something’ (literally to put someone in a down position by staring); *to breathe down someone’s neck* ‘to pressure someone into doing something’; and *to bring something crashing down around someone* ‘to thwart or ruin someone’s plans’ (Anderson 2003:20). Very similar to these metaphors where control translates into fixation are the following metaphors that connote fixing someone/something to one place: *to nail something/someone down* and *to pin something/someone down* ‘to get a hold of something/someone or to plan for something/someone at a specific time in the future’; *to keep someone/something down* ‘to not let someone/something move up the ladder of success’; *to bog someone/something down* ‘to keep someone from succeeding or moving forward’; and *to hold down a job/the fort* ‘to keep a steady job/to maintain a steady situation’. Note that these metaphors connote the same lack of motion that we see in other metaphors containing adjectives on the lower end of the spatial spectrum, such as metaphors containing *low* or *cold*.

One group of metaphors with *down* is the follow group denoting the act of swallowing in relation to eating, most likely because of the physical downward passage of food involved. These include: *to scarf down*, *to gobble down*, *to wash down*, *down the hatch*, and *down the little red lane*. These metaphors can most likely be attributed to the downward direction of food traveling from the mouth, through the esophagus, and into the stomach. However, it is strange that we do not see this connotation in metaphors with other lower-grade adjectives such as *low* or *bottom* or *cold*.

6.2.1. Up in Chinese

Similar to metaphors with *up* in English, metaphors with *shàng* ‘up’ in Chinese also connote a sense of goodness. These include *kǎo shàng* ‘take up = academic scores good enough to be accepted’; *shàng děng* ‘up wait = high quality’; *ài shàng le* ‘loved up = to start to fall in love with a place’; and *shàng shǒu* ‘up hand = to be naturally skilled at something’. Note that these metaphors with *shàng* touch upon the connotations of superior skill, quality, and intellect that are found in metaphors with *high* in both English and Chinese.

Metaphors with *shàng* and metaphors with *up* share a connotation of superior reputation. These include *shàng bīn kè* ‘up guest = guest of honor’ and *shàng zuò* ‘up sit = the head of the table’. Interestingly, two connotations with reputation which Chinese *up* metaphors have that English *up* metaphors lack are those of wisdom increasing with age, and royal or godly reputation. Metaphors where reputation improves with age include *shàng bèi* ‘up life = honorable ancestors’; *shàng nián jí* ‘up year count = euphemism for getting old and wiser’; and *shàng bèi zǐ* ‘up generation = last life that teaches you about your new life’.

Another quality of reputation connoted by *shàng* metaphors and not English *up* metaphors is the quality of being a role model. These include *shàng liáng bù zhāng, xià liáng wài* ‘measuring up isn’t enough, you must start at the bottom (this is based on the figure of a house, where you can’t have a roof without a foundational structure first) = to set a good example’; *shàng xíng xià xiào* ‘up actions down copy = set the standard for everyone else’; and *shàng xīn* ‘up heart = earnest; put your heart into it’. Perhaps the

reason why the connotation of being a role model exists in Chinese metaphors with up but not in English ones is due to the difference between a collectivist and individualist society; collectivist societies like China work together toward a communal good, so to emulate those around you would help you to work more smoothly as a team. On the other hand, individualist societies like America focus on individual ambition, making the individual more self-focused than conscious of others and how they might act.

Despite the above connotations within superiority that exist in *up* metaphors in Chinese but not English, the connotation of success in the workplace is present in *up* metaphors in both languages. As we saw in English metaphors with *up*, there is a focus on superiority in the workplace. In Chinese, these include *shàng ban* ‘up shift = work’; *shàng ji* ‘up level = boss or position above you’; *shàng bào* ‘up newspaper = report to one’s superiors’; *zòu mǎ shàng rén* ‘duty to walk the horse up = first day one starts their new position after a promotion’; and *dǐng tóu shàng sǐ* ‘one’s head hits the up commander = your immediate superior’.

Metaphors with *shàng* also carry the same connotation of *more* or *increase* held by metaphors with up. These include *fēi shàng* ‘flying up = extremely’ and *shàng huǒ* ‘up fire = to develop an increase in inflammation, a cold sore’. These fall into Lakoff’s “more as up” category for metaphors.

Chinese metaphors with *shàng* also share with English *up* metaphors the connotation of lack of movement. These metaphors include *dòng shàng* ‘move up = freeze up’; *shàng dòng* ‘up move = temperature at freezing in the winter’; and *(yú) shàng gōu* ‘(fish) up hook = catch [a fish] on a hook while ice-fishing’. Interestingly, the first

two metaphors in this list have to do with falling temperatures, but they use *up* instead of *down* to express it.

Metaphors with *shàng* that connote royalty or godliness include *shàng dì* ‘up king = God’; *shàng gōng* ‘up provide = give a sacrifice to the gods/Buddha; usually food offerings’; *shàng cháo* ‘up dynasty = ritual where King listens to morning reports’; and *shàng cáng* ‘up sky = Heaven’. Connotations of royalty that exist with metaphors with *shàng* but not with English *up* metaphors may be due to the different governments of China and America. While in the past China was ruled by periods of dynasties, America quickly established itself as a democracy independent from its motherland, England. Thus, it makes sense that such connotations of royalty exist in Chinese metaphors but not in English metaphors.

Metaphors with *shàng* carry a surprising connotation of dishonesty. These include *shàng dàng* ‘(*dang* doesn’t mean anything on its own) = fooled or deceived, lied to’ and *shàng cuān xià tiào* ‘up jump down jump = a bad person that misleads others’. These seem to be anomalies that cannot be compared to any other connotations of spatial representation in Chinese or English.

6.2.2. Down in Chinese

Metaphors with *xià* ‘down’ in Chinese are more plentiful than metaphors with *shàng* ‘up’. Metaphors with *xià* fall into the same connotations of superiority and inferiority that up/down metaphors in both Chinese and English fall into. Metaphors with *xià* that connote general inferiority include *xià děng* ‘down wait = low level quality’ and *xià chéng zhī zhōu* ‘down becomes work = subpar art.’ These connotations of inferiority

reflect inferiority in the work place as well, much as how metaphors with *down* do. These include *xià shǒu* ‘down hand = assistant below you’; *xià fāng* ‘down release = power trickling down from top to bottom, power by association with those above you’; *xià dǎ míng lìng* ‘down hit reason = orders from the top down’; *xià gǎng* ‘down position = to be laid off’; and *bú chī xià wèn* ‘not only down ask = person in higher position of power asks person of lower position a question without losing face, just for the pursuit of knowledge’ (connotes tones of humbleness). The anomaly is *xià mǎ wèi* ‘down horse fed = grand display of power when someone first gets promoted’, which connotes an increase of power that is associated more with metaphors with *shàng* than *xià*. Continuing with the “down as inferior” category, metaphors with *xià* that connote inferiority include *xià děng* ‘down wait = low quality’ and *xià chéng zhī zhòu* ‘down becomes only made = subpar art’.

The downward direction of *xià* translates into physically falling in certain metaphors. These include *xià tiào* ‘down adjust = the interest rate or price goes down’; *xià xiàn* ‘down line = your threshold for something sinks toward the ground (lowers)’; *xià zhui* ‘down pinpoint = fall from the sky like a snowflake or plane’; and *xià jiàng* ‘down lower = the temperature decreases from higher to lower, such as on a thermometer’. Note that this last metaphor refers back to the temperature metaphors mentioned in the first part of this thesis, putting temperature on a vertical linear scale.

We have seen that *shàng* ‘up’ in metaphors connotes heaven; interestingly, the opposite of *shàng*, or *xià*, connotes not hell (the opposite of heaven), but instead death and the afterlife in general. Metaphors with *xià* that connote this include *xià bèi zì* ‘down life = one’s next life’; *xià fán* ‘down to world = a fairy or angel descending onto earth’; *xià shǐ*

‘down world = someone is dead’; *xià zàng* ‘down bury = funeral for lost loved one’; *xià cháng* ‘down result = no good afterlife due to bad karma’; and *xià yì shí* ‘down sixth sense = something instantly happens or is instinctually done due to otherworldly influences’. These metaphors with *xià* are intriguing in their affair with the otherworldly; much as metaphors with *shàng* focus on heaven as the afterlife, these metaphors with *xià* focus more on how the afterlife or death affects those on earth. It is interesting to note that no connotations of heaven or the afterlife are found in English metaphors with *up* or *down*.

Perhaps this focus on the afterlife is related to the connotation of the future and planning connoted by certain metaphors with *xià*. These include *xià běn er* ‘down payment = to invest in something’; *xià bǐ* ‘down pencil = start writing something after brain storming and planning’; *xià bù wèi lǐ* ‘down not example = not allowed to use this excuse in the future’; and *xià cè* ‘down strategy = bad idea because it was planned last minute’.

6.3. *Analysis of up/down metaphors in Chinese versus English*

The similar associations in both languages of *up* as ‘good’ and *down* as ‘bad’ refer back to the notion of power. Presumably, more power is good, and less is bad, just as more height and size is good, while less is bad. Accordingly, metaphors with *up* in both languages connote superiority, whereas metaphors with *down* in both languages connote inferiority. Based on the associations with more and with less, it makes sense that in both languages, metaphors with *up* connote increase while metaphors with *down* connote decrease.

In terms of differences, metaphors with *up* in English connote a sense of completion or closure not found in Chinese metaphors with *up*. Perhaps this stems from America's individualist society in which individuals strive to achieve, and with each completion of an achievement one figuratively moves *up* in society.

Another distinction is the connotation of *role model* found in Chinese metaphors with *up* but missing in English metaphors with *up*. Once again, this difference may stem from the difference between China's collectivist culture and America's individualist culture. Collectivist societies and individualist societies have different perceptions of the "ought-is fallacy," which is based on the systematic analysis of individual differences, or how the actions of an individual (what *is*) differs from the norms of a society or institution (what *ought* to be) (Stanovich, 1999). Their studies found that "individuals who perceive that traditional views are culturally consensual (e.g. Chinese participants who believe that most of their fellows hold collectivistic values) will themselves behave and think in culturally typical ways," explaining the emphasis on role models in Chinese metaphors with *up* (Zou et al. 2009:579). On the other hand, American individualist society employs a dual-process/dual-system processing, or understanding what society stresses but choosing to act in one's own way anyway, in which what people do is not always what they think society says they *ought* do (Stanovich, 1999). This dual-system processing is due to how Americans perceive others' perceptions of society; Zou et al. (2009) stress how "people's perceptions of consensual views [are] an important explanatory variable in carrying cultural patterns people's perceptions of consensus tend to be systematically biased;" because in an individualist society everyone acts in their own best interest, there is less of a desire to emulate someone else, for their interest

would not be the same personal interest as someone else (Zou et al. 2009:581). Thus, it follows that there are no connotations of being a role model in English metaphors with *up*.

7.1.1. Top in English

Numerous *top* metaphors connote a maximum. These include *at the top of one's game* 'performing at one's maximum capacity'; *at the top of one's lungs* and *at the top of one's voice* 'as loud as possible'; *over the top* 'extreme'; *to pay top dollar* 'to pay the highest amount possible'; *to top out* 'to reach a peak or maximum'; and *to top it off* 'to add more onto what is already at maximum capacity'. This connotation of maximum may be explained by the abstract/amodal model of representation previously mentioned in the *high/low* section. In this case, the *top* of such a scale must be the maximum, for no node can be higher than the highest endpoint.

As previously discussed, *up* signifies 'good' while *down* signifies 'bad'. This can be applied to the scale so that the highest point, or the *top*, is the best, a connotation that we find in certain metaphors with *top*. Metaphors with *top* in English fall into the same connotation of superiority that metaphors with *high* and *up* possess. Metaphors with *top* that connote the best include *top of the food chain*, *big man on top*, *top dog*, and *the top of the heap* 'one in control'; *to be on top of the world* 'to feel the best one has felt'; *come out on top* 'be in a beneficial place after a situation'; *in top form* 'in the best physical shape'; *top notch* and *top of the line* 'the best'; *on top* 'in a dominating or successful or controlling position'; *top brass* 'leadership position (originally the leader of the

military)'; *top banana* 'top performer in show business, or most important person in any group'; and *top flight* 'highest level in a job or sport'.

Metaphors with *top* also connote control. These include *to be on top of something* 'to be in control of something or on task' and *to keep on top of something* 'to stay well-informed about the status of something'. The opposite seems to hold as well: when one *blows his top* 'becomes very angry', one is losing control due to the loss of the cap or top.

An interesting connotation of *top* previously unseen in other metaphors in this thesis is that of the start or beginning. These include *(to take it) from the top* '(to redo something) from the beginning' and *off the top of one's head* 'off the cuff'. If *top* is to be viewed as the start, then the opposite, *bottom*, must be seen as the end. This idea is further exemplified in the upcoming analysis of metaphors with *bottom*.

The abstract/amodal model of representation can be applied to metaphors with top/bottom that refer to power. These include at the bottom/top of the heap/barrel, at the bottom/top of the ladder, at the bottom/top of the totem pole, and at the bottom/top of the food chain, which all refer to how much power one holds. Going along with the thought that up connotes power while down connotes lack of power, we find that the above metaphors with top signify power whereas the metaphors with bottom signify powerlessness.

7.1.2. Bottom in English

As *bottom* is the antonym of *top*, English metaphors with *bottom* carry many opposite connotations than those held by metaphors with *top*. While *top* metaphors

connote superiority, *bottom* metaphors connote inferiority. These include *bottom feeder* ‘one who lacks morals or status’ and *to be bumping along the bottom* ‘to be working very slowly’. While as previously mentioned *top* metaphors connote the best, *bottom* metaphors connote the worst. These include *to hit rock bottom* ‘to be at one’s worst’ and *to bottom out* ‘to reach the lowest point so that the only way to go is up (improvement)’. Following the abstract/amodal model, the bottom node is the lowest point in a linear scale, thus nothing can be below, or ‘worse’, than the bottom.

While metaphors with *top* connote the beginning, metaphors with *bottom* connote its antonym: the end. These include *the bottom line* ‘the final result or outcome’; *to bet one’s bottom dollar* ‘to bet one’s last dollar about something one is sure of with no chance of going back’; *bottoms up* ‘to finish something (usually a drink)’; and *to get to the bottom of something* ‘to figure something out once and for all’.

7.2.1. Top in Chinese

Metaphors with *dǐng* ‘top’ in Chinese possess similarities as well as differences with metaphors with top in English. *Dǐng* metaphors connote the same idea of best that *top* metaphors connote, due to the universality of the top node in the abstract/amodal scale previously mentioned. These include *dǐng guā guā* ‘top [sound of a frog croaking] = the best’; *dǐng jiān* ‘top sharp (refers to the top point of a tower/building) = best in the field’; *dǐng liáng zhū* ‘top pillar holding something up = critical position in a team’; and *dǐng shì* and *dǐng yòng* ‘top thing = useful team member that can solve the problem at hand’.

Metaphors with *dǐng* in Chinese connote hostility/argumentation, something not found in metaphors with *top* in English. These include *dǐng gang* ‘top bar (the wood that holds a door together) = one that always argues with people, one with bad composition’; *dǐng niú* ‘top cow (refers to a bull fight) = ones who always compete or butt heads, but they are equally matched’; *dǐng zhuàng* ‘top break open = fight back or mouth off, stand one’s ground against boss’; and *dǐng zuǐ* ‘top mouth = talk back to adult by child’. Perhaps the reason this negative hostile connotation exists is due to the collectivist notion of Chinese society. To be at the top of a power scheme indicates favoring one’s self over the social group as a whole, something that is looked down upon in Chinese society (Hofstede 1980:153). Thus, we see that metaphors with *dǐng* signify an inability to work with others, instead indicating that one selfishly puts oneself ahead of the group as a whole.

Another connotation of *dǐng* metaphors unfound in *top* metaphors is replacement/equalization. These include *dǐng tí* ‘top suggest = replace/substitute’; *dǐng shù* ‘top number (refers to when there is not enough good fish to sell, so you mix bad fish into the bunch to compensate) = supplement’; *dǐng zhāng* ‘top accounting book = replace for value of money’; *dǐng zuì* ‘top crime = take the fall for someone’; and *dǐng mìng* ‘top life = a life for a life; someone sentenced to death for a murder’. Perhaps there is a cultural reason behind why connotations of replacement/equalization are so prevalent in *dǐng* metaphors while completely absent in *top* metaphors, but it is currently not found.

7.2.2. Bottom in Chinese

Just like metaphors with *top* and with *bottom* hold opposite connotations in English, the same phenomenon is seen in metaphors with *dǐng* ‘top’ and *dǐ* ‘bottom’ in Chinese. While *dǐng* metaphors connote superiority and the best, *dǐ* metaphors conversely connote inferiority and the worst. These include *dǐ xià de rén* ‘below person = position beneath a boss’ and *dǐ qì bù zú* ‘bottom air is not accomplished (cannot sing the high note) = unable to measure up.

Metaphors with *dǐ* also share the connotation of the end/finality found in metaphors with *bottom*. These include *nián dǐ* ‘year bottom = the end of a physical or fiscal period’; *dǐ pái* ‘bottom card = last trick up one’s sleeve’; *jiā dǐ er* ‘bottom floor of a home = how much money one has when it comes down to it’; and *dǐ xiàn* ‘bottom line = how things actually turn out in the end’.

Interestingly, *dǐ* metaphors in Chinese connote a sense of neutrality/positivity not present in *bottom* metaphors in English. These include *dǐ xíng* ‘bottom amount = minimum wage (said in a proud way, as in one will work hard despite low pay)’ and *dǐ zi* ‘bottom [no literal meaning on its own] = foundation and support for those above’. This connotation of neutrality/positivity may stem from the Chinese focus on humbleness previously discussed. There is no need to have to be the most powerful member in a collectivist society if everyone is looking out for the group as a whole, and everyone must play their part for the wheel to inevitably turn. Thus, there is no negative connotation for being at the ‘bottom’ of a power scale versus the top.

Another connotation held by *dǐ* metaphors but not present in *bottom* metaphors is the unknown. These include *dǐ qíng* ‘bottom truth = reality of things unknown by someone’; *dǐ shù* ‘bottom count = unknown intent or original plan behind something’;

and *dǐ xì* ‘bottom detail = unknown facts about something’. This same connotation is shared by metaphors with *up* in English, or what Lakoff labels as the “unknown as up” metaphor (Anderosn 2003:103). It is intriguing that this connotation is shared between *dǐ* metaphors in Chinese and *up* metaphors in English, as they are on opposite ends of the linear scale.

8.1. *Observations of Data*

Attached are four figures describing the above data (English and Chinese metaphors with high/middle/low/up/down/top/bottom) in two manners. Figure 5 shows that in each category, there are more English metaphors than Chinese metaphors. In terms of ratio, there is a 5.09:1 ratio of English metaphors to Chinese metaphors with *high*, 3.17:1 ratio for *up*, 2.21:1 ratio for *top*, 1.72:1 ratio for *middle*, 2.5:1 ratio for *low*, 3.27:1 ratio for *down*, and 1.54:1 ratio for *bottom*. The high ratio of 5.09:1 for metaphors with *high* may be explained by the many *high* metaphors in English that deal with closure or completion. What is curious is the low ratio from English to Chinese for *middle* and *bottom*, which can be further elucidated by Figure 6.

Figure 5: Distribution of metaphors based on spatial values as compared between Chinese and English.

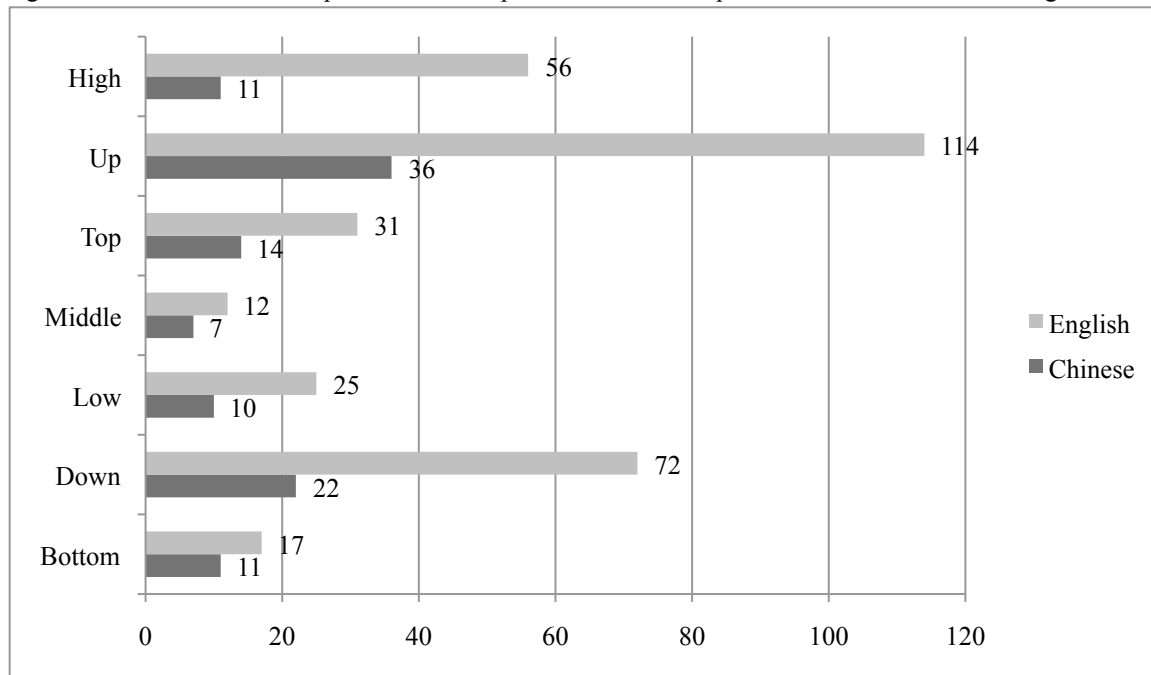
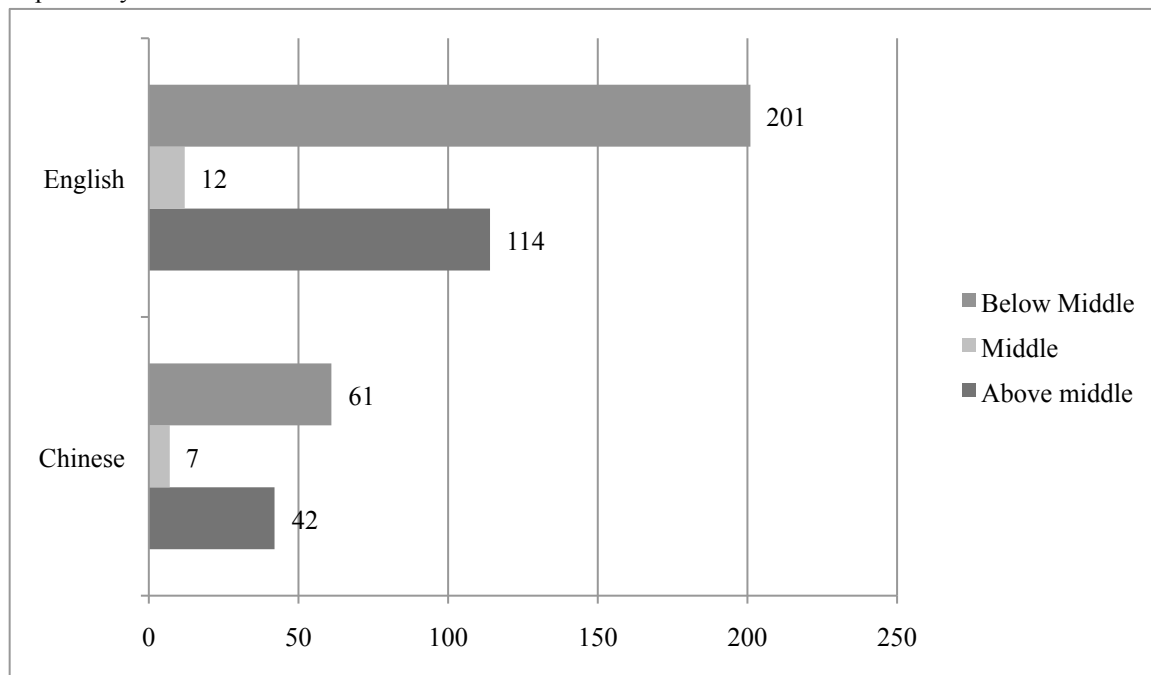


Figure 6 shows that English in comparison with Chinese, has many more metaphors on the higher end of the scale (above middle) than on the lower end of the scale. While both languages have relatively few metaphors with *middle*, the ratio of above middle metaphors to below middle metaphors for English is 1.76:1, whereas it is only 1.45:1 for Chinese. This same data is represented in a different manner through Figures 7 and 8, where red colors indicate above middle and blue colors indicate below middle.

Figure 6: Distribution of metaphors based on vertical spatial values within Chinese and within English, respectively.



Both English and Chinese have a higher distribution of metaphors above middle than below middle. Schubert (2005) found that the judgments of groups as powerless were less clearly influenced by vertical position than judgments of groups as powerful. Perhaps this is because the power (*up*) symbol is stronger than the power (*down*) symbol (Schubert 2005:17). Two hypotheses that might explain this unbalanced distribution could be: 1) powerful groups are more important than powerless groups and therefore receive more attention and are represented by clearer symbolic representations, or 2) power dimension is asymmetric, with a marked end point (powerful) and an unmarked and negated end point (powerless) (Schubert 2005:17). Whatever the reasoning behind the phenomenon, there are cross-linguistically more above-middle metaphors than below-middle metaphors, and the higher up one goes on the vertical linear scale, the more positive the connotation.

By comparing Figures 7 and 8 it becomes clear that metaphors with *middle* are far less numerous in English than Chinese. Perhaps this goes back to the notion that being average is more acceptable in Chinese culture than in English culture. In terms of societal prototypes, it makes sense that a collectivist society like China would tend to have a more even distribution of metaphors across the vertical linear scale than an individualist society like America, where individuals look out for their own self interest (resulting in the red) with less regard to others' self interest (resulting in the blue).

What is interesting is the difference in ratio for above middle metaphors to below middle metaphors in Chinese and English. The ratio for English is 1.76:1, 14.5% higher than the Chinese ratio of 1.45:1. Why is it that spatial metaphors in English are distributed so far toward the top of the vertical scale, whereas Chinese spatial metaphors are relatively more spaced out throughout the scale? Perhaps this stems back to the perception of culture by members of the culture itself. Since Americans perceive that other members in their individualist society are less likely to work together as a society, then they tend to focus on one's individual success and ascent up the ladder of success and power, resulting in high frequency of metaphors above middle. In fact, manipulating the salient culture affected whether bicultural subjects' judgments were implicitly guided by their assumptions about American consensual beliefs or their assumptions about Chinese, with Chinese beliefs causing people to act in accordance to a collectivist culture that works together as a whole (Zou et al. 2009).

Figure 7: Distributional frequency of spatial metaphors in English.

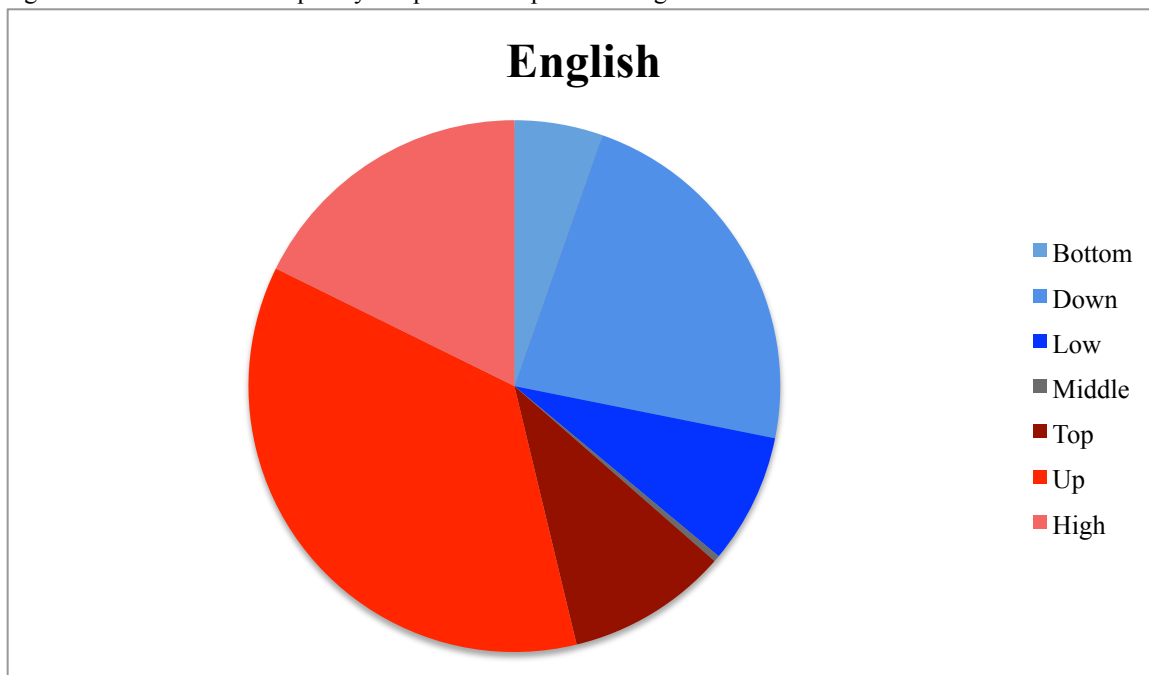
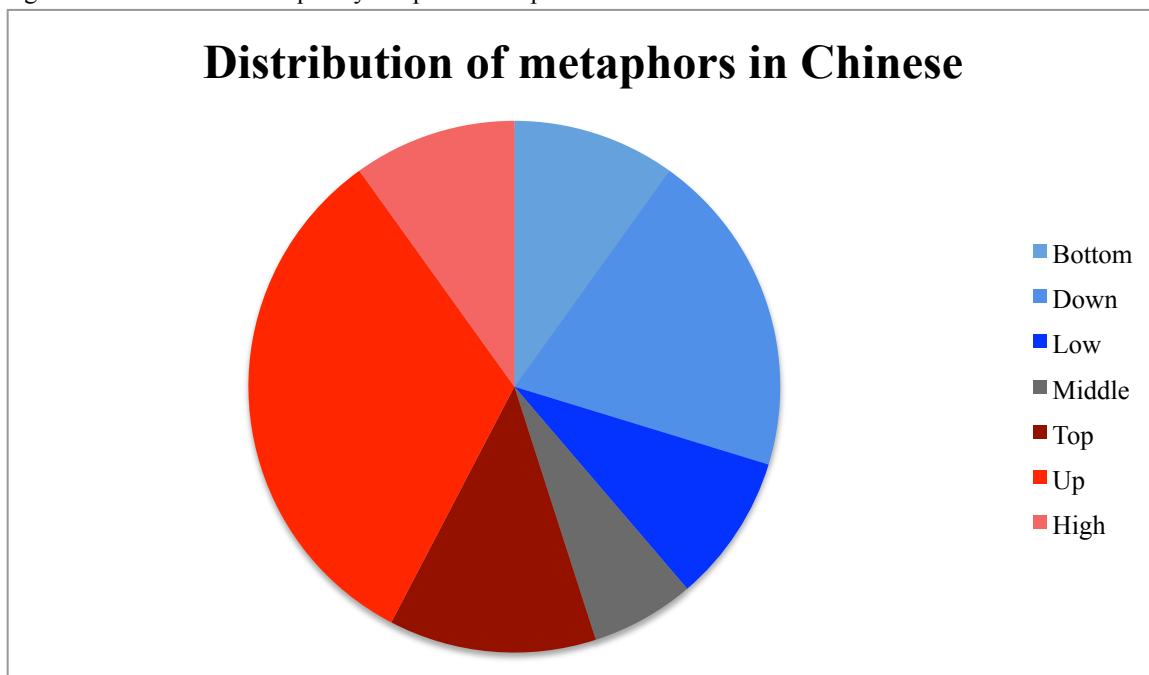


Figure 8: Distributional frequency of spatial metaphors in Chinese.



8.2. Discussion of Results

While metaphors of directionality in Chinese and English do share many similarities, the disparaging metaphorical connotations between the two languages are often explainable by differences in culture. The similar connotations may be explained by universal qualities of human living, such as the physical height and size of higher versus lower, and the concept of more power as good. What is most interesting is how the two languages differ in metaphorical connotations, especially in the relative frequency of metaphors.

Further studies may focus on how distributional frequencies of metaphors on a vertical linear scale may suggest collectivist versus individualist tendencies for the language's culture. What this thesis has not taken into account, but would be interesting for future study, is how the ever-changing nature of a society and its culture affects metaphors within the language.

I conjecture that the culture of China, despite looming Western influence, will continue to hold relatively true to its past traditions, whereas the culture America will face constant flux and change. This is due to the perception of culture in collectivist versus individualist societies; a collective culture like China will continue to perceive others as following the cultural norms of society, allowing everyone to mesh together in the same way with the same mindset. This will most likely result in cultural stability and therefore stability of metaphors in Chinese. On the other hand, an individualist culture like America has individuals who perceive others as not following cultural norms, resulting in disparaging actions and manners of thought within a less unified society. I believe that this will most likely result in shifting paradigms in culture and inevitably language, making metaphors into fossils of idioms that were once derived from

something more culturally relevant. However, while all languages are constantly changing, only time will tell in which direction the change will flow.

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