

A Study of the Part of Speech and Functional Shift of the Chinese Word “Gaoji”

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Abstract

The word “Gaoji” (高级) should be a distinguishing word as well as adjective. It became a word in late Qing Dynasty and the beginning of Republic Period. “Gaoji” was used as an adjective, and then its meaning has been extended and its sememe has been expanded. Besides, the timeliness of “Gaoji” has been strengthened, and it gains the grammatical function of intransitive verbs. The functional shift of hierarchical distinguishing words, such as “Gaoji”, is influenced by their meaning extension. Moreover, hierarchical distinguishing words have two functional shift ways because of the difference in the meaning of word-forming morphemes. A bi-directional constraint relationship exists on the meaning of word and their parts of speech. Finally, from the perspective of function and cognition, the part of speech has a functional shift in sentences. It is closely relevant to the meaning extension.

Keywords

Gaoji, part of speech, distinguishing word, adjective, functional shift

1. Introduction

"Modern Chinese Dictionary" (seventh and sixth editions, hereinafter referred to as "Xian Han") indicates that the part of speech of "Gaoji" is "adjective" and one Sense is "① attributive word. (Stage, level, Etc.) to a high degree: ~ nerve center | ~ cadres | ~ people's court". And another sense is "② (quality, level, etc.) is more than ordinary: ~ commodities | this kind of wool is very ~". "Gaoji" is currently widely considered as an adjective. In fact, the rationality of the part-of-speech tagging principle in "Xian Han" has been under discussion. Yang Xu (2019) believes that when we deal with the problem of "concurrency of parts of speech", we should "focus on linguistic facts" and the principle of "as few part of speeches as possible". Hou Ruifen (2017) also suggested that the attributive words (distinctive words) in "Xian Han" should be uniformly noted for the combination of

attributive words (distinctive words) and adverbs, and should not be simply marked as attribute words. We believe that if we simply tag "Gaoji" as an adjective, the accuracy of the facts of the linguistic use is sacrificed to a certain extent, and this thought is debatable.

Previous studies on distinguishing words also tended to associate "Gaoji" with adjectives. Lv Shuxiang and Rao Changrong (1981) pointed out that "non-predicate adjectives can easily be transformed into general adjectives", and take "嘿!你这太高级了(Hei! Ni Zhe Tai Gaoji le)(Hey! So advanced) !" or "这个真高级!(Zhege Zhen Gaoji!) (This is really advanced!)" As examples to show that "Gaoji" is equivalent to adjective in spoken Chinese. Guo Rui (2002) also agreed with Lv and Rao's point of view, and further summarized the viewpoint that "distinguishing words also have a predicative (adjective) tendency." Among the 344 common non-predicated adjectives listed by Lv and Rao, 27 words including "高级 (Gaoji) (High-level), 低级 (Diji) (Low-level), 积极 (Jiji) (positive), 消极 (Xiaoji) (negative), 直接 (Zhijie) (direct), 间接 (Jianjie) (indirect), 绝对 (Juedui) (absolute)" have been adjectives. Lv, Rao, and Guo Rui considered the "advanced" adjectives to be a dynamic, ongoing process. However, Zhu Dexi (1982) directly pointed out that as two adjectives, "高 (Gao) (high) and 低 (Di) (low)" can be modified by "非常 (Feichang) (very)".

We do not suppose that "Gaoji" is classified as an adjective, although many examples of modern Chinese, such as "真高级 (Zhen Gaoji) (really advanced), 非常高级 (Feichang Gaoji) (very advanced), 太高级 (Tai Gaoji) (too advanced)" have been widely accepted. In the perspective of meaning, both non-predicate adjectives (attributive words) and adjectives represent a standard of classification. However, this only shows that "Gaoji" can accept adverbial modifiers such as "very", and it does not mean that it has all the grammatical functions of adjectives. We can only learn from the above example that the part-of-speech function of "Gaoji" has indeed undergone "shift to adjective". But some questions remain to be further discussed: to which word class does "advanced" belong? What is the path that the part-of-speech features of "Gaoji" shift on? What are the causes of the shift?

2. Shift to Predicate of Distinguishing Words

Particularity of words such as "男 (Nan) (male), 女 (Nv) (female), (金) (Jin) (gold), 银 (Yin) (silver)" was not attracted widespread attention in the field of linguistics until the article by Lv Shuxiang and Rao Changrong (1981) The formation of these words is similar to that of nouns. They can be used as attributives, but not predicates, and they cannot be modified by "很 (Hen) (very)、不 (Bu) (not)". Due to the same and exclusive functional characteristics as adjectives, so such words are named "non-predicate adjectives". "Non-

predicate adjectives" are regarded as special adjectives "settled in an existing system". Xing Fuyi (1991) also held the same view. For the first time, Zhu Dexi (1982) separated non-predicate adjectives from adjectives and they became an independent part-of-speech, distinguishing word, juxtaposed with nouns, verbs, adjectives, and so on. Qi Huyang (1990) disagreed with the above two classifications. He thought that the distinguishing word should be the third word juxtaposed with the nominal and predicate—addition. Guo Rui (2002) classified the distinguishing words into modifier. Although there is no fully convincing distinguishing word classification system, today's academia has basically reached a consensus that they should be divided into independent part of speech that do not depend on others parts, and they have independent distribution functions.

Some Usages like "很高级 (Hen Gaoji) (very advanced), 太高效 (Tai Gaoxiao) (too efficient), and 很高端 (Hen Gaoduan) (very high-end)" seem to contradict the distinguishing lexical functions identified by the academic community. The cause of "contradiction" is related to the semantics of these special distinguishing words. Li Yuming (1996) believes that when "(高级) (Gaoji) (advanced), 新型 (Xinxing) (new style), 女 (Nv) (feminine)" and so on are in a certain context, when the "very" and other degrees adverbs are in front of them, their weak degree meaning can be activated, and their function is the same as that of adjectives. They can also be predicate heads in sentences. Qi Huyang and Zhang Suling (2008) argued that "from the perspective of part-of-speech status, the spatial, degree, and temporal changes of the three major parts of speeches, name, verb, and adjective, cause the functional shift of distinguishing words to these three main parts of speeches". What is certain is that the multiplication of grammatical function shift of distinguishing words to adjectives and even verbs is shift to predicate.

3. Part of Speech of "Gaoji"

An Hualin (2005) summarizes the four necessary methods for determining whether a word is holding two classes: "language intuition of the general public, take transference of semantic type as standard, refer to authoritative Chinese dictionaries, or employ the methods of investigation and statistical analysis." Yuan Mingjun (2013) believed that distinguishing words can be combined with 5 parts of speeches, and "Gaoji" is distinguishing words and also adjectives. Its use of distinguishing words has been preserved, and the use of adjectives has also been generally accepted, which is related to its meaning. Therefore, "Gaoji" should be a distinguishing word and adjective. There was the use of distinguishing words before the use of adjectives.

"Gaoji" first appeared in the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China. By examining the data from the late Qing Dynasty to the beginning of the Republic of China in

corpora, we can grasp the changes of senses of "Gaoji". A full-text search of the term "advanced" in the "Chinese Basic Ancient Books Library" showed a total of 79 records. Among the available documents, the earliest corpus data comes from the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, and the latest corpus comes from the Republic of China. Before the Qing Dynasty, "Gaoji" referred to "高级阶梯 (Gaoji Jieti) (high-rise stairs)", such as:

(1)相衔径直立梯高级仄不容屣(Qing Baoting's "Ozhai Poetry of Grass", the second volume of the set of Tian Tianji, Youyou Ji, Xishanji, Wangyangji, the sporadic set of the envoys, the set of Yueji, Jiyi, and the banknote set)

Xiang Xian Jing Zhili Ti Gao Ji Ze Bu Rong Xie

High-ranking ladders that are so upright not allowed people step in.

According to the corpus source, the meaning of "high-level ladder" was basically used in the anthology and poetry collection. "High-level ladder" is a Modifier-core Structure, which is beyond the scope of this article, so it is excluded.

In the search results of the "Chinese Basic Ancient Books Library", there are 38 corpus data with the meaning of "Gaoji" as "a higher level of stage and level". The 18 Chinese corpora with "Gaoji" retrieved from ancient Chinese in the Peking University Corpus (CCL) are almost from the late Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China.

(2)孙殿英马福田皆高级军官竟敢为盗贼所不为(Republic of China, Wang Guowei's Collection of Quiet Poems and Basic Chinese Ancient Books)

Sun Dianying Ma Futian Jie Gaoji Junguan Jinggan Wei Daozei Suo Bu Wei

Sun Dianying and Ma Futian were senior military officers But they dare do something thieves do not do

(3)但高级官吏，吾终不信其有信教者

Dan Gaoji Guanli, Wu Zhong Bu Xin Qi You Xin Jiao Zhe

... But As for senior officials, I do not believe that they have a belief. (Qing, Yu Deling's "Two Years of the Qing Dynasty Ban", CCL)

The head words with modified by "Gaoji" modified in the above corpus are schools and military ranks. At the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, China was influenced by the trend of "Western learning to the east" and followed the Western education system and military rank system. In this period, the meaning of the "advanced ladder" was no longer used. "Gaoji" became a word and its meaning became abstract. It only

represented a attribute. The classification criteria were "stage, level, etc. "Gaoji" is only distributed in the modifier position before the head noun. The corpus data of modern literary works in CCL also proves that "Gaoji" is a distinguishing word in this period, such as:

- (4) 有一位高级将领, 好奇地瞧着他(Lao She's "Drum Book Artist", CCL)
 You Yiwei Gaoji Jiangling, Haoqi Di Qiaozhe Ta
 A senior general looked at him curiously.

In the modern Chinese corpus in CCL, there are more examples of "Gaoji" as attributive after the founding of the People's Republic. When we selected the corpus data, we excluded Internet-language languages, TV program interviews and other high-spoken language styles to ensure that the comparison was performed in the written style.

- (5) 县里的高级小学正式恢复(Zhao Shuli, Sanliwan, CCL)

Xianli De Gaoji Xiaoxue Zhengshi Huifu

The high school in the county was officially restored.

(6) 例如有人购买高级化妆品, 其主要动机是为了引人注目, 但是对别人说是为了保护皮肤。(Tang Zhengru "Market Management" Modern Chinese Corpus of National Language Committee)

Liru Youren Goumai Gaoji Huazhuangpin, Qi Zhuyao Dongji Shi Weile Yinrenzhumu, Danshi Dui Bieren Shuo Shi Weile Baohu Pifu

For example, when someone buys advanced cosmetics, their main motivation is to attract attention, but they tell others it is to protect the skin.

In the above two examples, "Gaoji" is used as the attributive before the head. Let's test them with "very" and see if both can accept modification of degree adverb "very".

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 高级小学 | * 很高级的小学 |
| Gaoji Xiaoxue | Hen Gaoji De Xiaoxue |
| High school in the county | * Very high school in the county |

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 买高端化妆品 | 买很高端的化妆品 |
| Mai Gaoduan Huazhuangpin | Mai Hen Gaoduan De Huazhuangpin |
| Buy high-end cosmetics | buy very high-end cosmetics |

From the above we can see, in Example (7), "very or other degree adverbs +Gaoji" is not accepted by our language institution, and it is not acceptable in terms of people's language institution. The "very or other degree adverbs +Gaoji" in Example (8) is still valid, and can

still be accepted people's language institution. The sense of the "Gaoji" in Example (7) corresponds to "a higher degree of stage, level, etc.", the word is a distinguishing word, and the The sense of the "Gaoji" in Example (8) corresponds to "quality, level, etc. exceeding ordinary things", the word is an adjective.

Based on these two meanings, we input 600 corpus data from the "Gaoji" in the National Language Commission Modern Chinese Corpus and CCL Corpus to classify the head nouns modified by "Gaoji". Modifier of "High level of stage, level, etc." is agreed as "Gaoji 1", "Quality, level, etc. are more than ordinary" is about "Gaoji 2":

Gaoji1: Generals, managers, agricultural cooperatives, officials, species, commanders, mammals, etc ;

Gaoji2: cars, silk, cosmetics, rooms, cigarettes, toothpaste, products, consumer goods, etc.

The head words modified by "Gaoji 1" are for more than that modified by "Gaoji2". The earliest corpus data of "Gaoji 2" appeared in 1937. The "Gaoji 2" appeared sporadically in the early days after the founding of the People's Republic of China. To be sure, the meaning of adjective usage of "Gaoji2" appeared after the founding of the People's Republic of China, and was later than "Gaoji 1".

From the grammatical point of view, "Gaoji 1" represents attributes, "Gaoji 2" with obvious descriptive. Grammatical function of "Gaoji 1" to make a fixed language is very limited, far more than that of "Gaoji 2" to make a modifier.

From the conceptual point of view, the noun modified by "Gaoji 1" has the semantic feature [+rank]. The nouns that can accept the "Gaoji2" decoration do not have this semantic feature, marked as [-rank], although they also have a certain "level" concept meaning ("quality, level" also has a certain "level" meaning), But not as significant as the previous category. The meaning of "Gaoji1" reflects the essential properties of things. As for the way to add the sememe, Jia Yande (2001) thinks that it can be "based on the original meaning and derive the new meaning, so that the words can derive from a single word to polysemy words, and the new and old meanings also exist at the same time. "Gaoji 2" comes from "Gaoji 1".

From the above we know that "Gaoji" shifts to adjective, and the use of the distinguishing word is also preserved. We do not agree that "advanced" is an adjective, and its part of speech should be divided within the meaning of the word.

4. "Gaoji" Part of Speech Feature Shift

The meaning of words is closely related to the grammatical function of words. The abstraction of "advanced" is gradually increasing, and its function goes through the process of "nouns >distinguishing words >adjectives". The grammatical function of distinguishing

words is very unstable, Li Yuming (1996) believes that non-predicate (distinguishing words) are in the middle of three major part of speeches -noun, verb, and adjective. The function of distinguishing words is also easy to transfer to the three major part of speeches. Zhang Bojiang and Fang Mei (2013) also pointed out that " in both semantic characteristics and grammatical functions, the two major part of speeches, noun, verb, are distinct. Adjectives and distinguishing words (non-predation adjectives) are in the transition between the two major part of speeches of the transition segment". They also put forward a synchronic continuous to describe the shifts of part of speeches "Nouns>non-predicate adjectives >adjectives>transitive verbs> intransitive verbs". Zhang and Fang said in the book:"When the meaning of a word reflects its typical meaning, the word is in its original use, but when the word loses the typical meaning of one part of itself and takes the meaning of other dimensions, it is part of speech shift ." The essence of shift to predicate is the process of timeliness increasing. In this continuous system, if any link shifts to the right, the timeliness will be enhanced, the space is reduced. We can conclude the shift to predicate of "Gaoji":

- 1) Can be accepted by "very" and other degree adverbs;
- 2) Can be predicate;
- 3) Can be marked by time-based auxiliary word (typical markers of time);

Here are some examples in CCL:

“degree adverbs+Gaoji” to be predicator:

(7) 然后儿童的记忆、言语、思维、意志等更高级的心理机能才得以发展。

(Contemporary Application "Child Psychology" CCL)

Ranhou Ertong De Jiye Yanyu Siwei Yizhi Deng Geng Gaiji De Xinli Jineng Caineng

Deyi Fazhan

Then children's memory, speech, thinking, will and other higher psychological functions can be developed.

"Gaoji+ time auxiliary word“to be predicate

(8) “那地方太高级了，不宜于我去住”。 (Contemporary Literature Zhu Zhongli, Writer's Digest Wang Jiaxiang Moves Out of Zhongnanhai CCL)

"That place is too advanced for me to live."

Na Difang Tai Gaoji le, Bu Yi Wo Qu Juzhu

"Gaoji“ to be predicate

- (9) 格调高级了许多 (Zhang Xiaoxian, "The Girl Who Exchanged The Night" CCL)
 GeDiao Gaoji Le Xuduo
 the style is much higher

part of speech function of "Advanced 2" moves to predicate. Zhang Bojiang and Fang Mei (2013) assumed that in the above continuous, those who are on the left side used as their right items will conform to the tendency law of noun functional shift. "Gaoji 2" deviates from the basic usage and can be considered predicate in verbs that live on the right side of the continuous assembly.

The above-mentioned predicate can be made into two categories, one is "very and other adverbs+Gaoji", which is still equivalent to the function of adjectives used as predicates, and the other is "Gaoji+ time-marking (time or frequency adverbs) "as predicate. When "Gaoji" can be added various time markers, it is considered to be given the meaning of timeliness and functionally equivalent to an intransitive verb. In the study of practical data, we have not found the direct use of "Gaoji+ object". So we think that the function of "Gaoji" shifts to predicate but it is not yet equivalent to that of transitive verb.

5. Functional Shift of "Gao X" ("High X") Hierarchical Distinguishing Word

The function of the distinguishing word is not limited to the syntax structure, we should integrate the internal and external factors of the language, adopted the dynamic, duration and development vision to research the reduction of the characteristics of distinguishing words and the shift to predicate process. The dynamic process of senses of "Gaoji" word affects the movement of its part of speech function.

In the late Qing Dynasty, "Gaoji" became a word. It was first used as a distinguishing word, and then after the word meaning extended and the sememe expanded, it has adjective usages, the distinguishing word sememe is also retained. In the adjective sememe, time property of "Gaoji" has been continuously enhanced, making "Gaoji" equivalent to an intransitive verb. According to semantic features, the "Gao X" hierarchical distinguishing word is the "edge member" in the distinguishing word, which is commonly used as an adjective and then becomes a word holding two classes, and shift towards the verb. However, only when "X" is a verb sememe, "high X" can have the timeliness characteristics and verbized. It can be said that the process of shift to predicate is restricted by the meaning of words.

The imbalance of "X-ji(degree)" shift is related to the human brain's perception of significant things. "High X" can convey active meaning and emotions. Shen Jiakuan introduced the concept of "significance" with the help of psychology in "A meronymic model

of transferred designation of de constructions in Mandarin Chinese"(1999), and said that "people's attention is easily attracted by significant things and the human brain's recognition. Processing and memory of things is more focused on the high-level things". It is not difficult to understand that the senior teachers in schools will have more praise, low-profile teachers get less attention ... In a set of "high/medium/low X" differential words, people will give "high X" names more attention which give opportunity to its meaning expansion.

The language economy principle of also promotes the functional shift of "Gao X". Tao Hong-yin "The Grammatical Meaning of the Classification of Language Sinology" (1999) pointed out that "spoken language has its own special vocabulary". Oral language is temporary, often with playful and humorous colors, and we can see some extraordinary match breaking the grammar rules. In recent years, we can find some extraordinary matches similar to the "low-level, high-grade, high-energy" in the micro-blogs. This makes "Gao X" in a particular language accompanied with time markers, and bring time-based auxiliary words.

According to Wen Lian and Hu Fu (2002), the division of part of speeches, we "should not only see syntactic relations, but also focus on semantics and pragmatics". If we look at the process of the shift of word senses through the perspective of time, and look for the intersection of the two surfaces of part of speech and semantics, we can find that the function of part of speech is also more or less restricted by the meaning of words. We should not ignore the function, cognitive factors in the Chinese part of speech. But what role the word extension plays in the function shift of words, and how much the function of the part of speech is restricted by the meaning of the word, is worthy of further discussion.

It can be inferred that when X is a noun morpheme, the function of the "high X" type of hierarchical distinguishing words shifts to adjective, and when X is verb morpheme, the "high X" type of hierarchical word class function shifts to verb. The difference between the functions of the two part of speeches is related to the "X" pheromone meaning.

6. Conclusion

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