

# A Contrastive Study on Translating Degree Modification: Functional-Syntactic Analysis of English Pre-modifying Temperers and the Chinese Deriver ‘de’

Ziting Niu, Na Zhao\*

Kunming University, Kunming, Yunnan, China

\*Corresponding Author

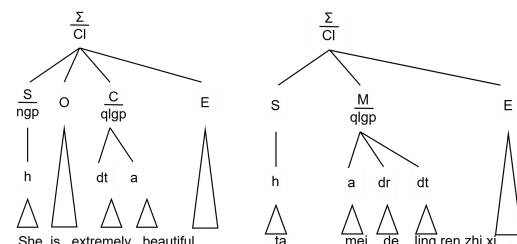
**Abstract:** Degree modification, essential for nuanced expression across languages, presents persistent translation challenges due to structural asymmetries between English and Chinese. This study conducts a systematic contrastive analysis of English pre-modifying temperers and the Chinese ‘de’ structure within the Cardiff Grammar’s Quality Group model. The corpus includes bilingual parallel texts (CCL, COCA) and literary translations. Analysis spans four dimensions: syntactic structure, semantic refinement, pragmatic rhetoric, and cognitive basis. Results reveal that English pre-modifying Temperers realizes through pre-modification, abstractness, objectivity, and figure-first logic, whereas Chinese ‘de’ structure employs post-introduction, concreteness, subjectivity, and background-first logic, reflecting typological differences in hypotaxis vs. parataxis and divergent cognitive styles. Based on findings, three translation strategies are proposed: structural correspondence and transformation (for English-to-Chinese), semantic integration and compensation (for Chinese-to-English), and rank shift of constituents. This research extends the Cardiff Grammar’s cross-linguistic application, provides a unified framework for multi-dimensional contrast, and offers theoretically grounded practical tools for translators, bridging linguistic theory and translation practice.

**Keywords:** Degree Modification; Cardiff Grammar; Quality Group; Contrastive Linguistics; Translation Strategies

## 1. Introduction

Degree modification is a basic language tool. It polishes meanings and improves expression in all kinds of texts, from daily talks to stories and academic articles. It shows how strong a quality

or condition is. It makes communication exact and lively. English and Chinese have different structures. This makes degree modification hard to translate. English usually puts simple adverbs such as very and extremely before words to show the degree. Chinese often uses the word ‘de’. It adds parts after verbs to show degree with real situations or results. English uses “extremely beautiful”. People can say “ji qi mei li” in Chinese. This phrase follows grammar rules. But it is not as lively as the common saying “mei de ling ren zhi xi”. Chinese has the phrase “ku de si xin lie fei”.



**Figure 1. A Schematic Overview Contrasting the Two Structures**

These examples show that it badly needs organized contrastive research. This research can find out basic functional and syntactic rules, and give clear rules for translation. This study uses the Quality Group model from Cardiff Grammar of Systemic Functional Linguistics as its theory. Fawcett said this unit type has clause (CI), nominal group (ngp), quality group (qlgp), quantity group (qtgp), and prepositional group (pgp). A clause has Subject (S), Operator (O), Main Verb (M), Main Verb Extension (MEx), and Complement (C) [1,2]. The Quality Group model is a common analysis tool. People can use it to compare degree modification structures of different languages. It marks out functional parts like emphasizing temperer (et), degree temperer (dt), adjunctival temperer (at), and apex (a). In this model, English temperers before the main part follow the simple pattern “et/dt/at + a”. The Chinese Quality Group includes apex (a),

emphasizing temperer (et), degree temperer (dt), adjunctival temperer (at) and deriver (dr). The ‘de’ structure follows the pattern “a + dr + dt” (See Figure 1).

This study follows three research questions. First, what basic differences are there between English pre-modifying temperers and the Chinese ‘de’ structure in syntax, meaning, language use, and thinking rules? Second, how do these differences show the language types (hypotaxis and parataxis, synthesis and analysis) and thinking ways of English and Chinese? Third, what practical translation strategies can translators get from full contrastive analysis to make degree modification translation more correct and natural? A functional and syntactic contrastive research method was used. This method comes from Systemic Functional Linguistics. It can be collected language materials from reliable bilingual parallel databases like CCL and COCA, as well as translated literary books. These materials cover different language styles. The analysis has four steps. First, it can be found out what the target language structures are. Second, it can mark sentences with Cardiff Grammar. Third, it can be compared from different angles. Fourth, it can be summed up as relevant strategies.

This research has three meanings. First, it uses Cardiff Grammar in more cross-language studies. It shows that this grammar can explain different language structures. It also shows how languages use different ways to express degree modification. Second, this study puts syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and cognition into one system. It does not just describe language parts alone, but explains language as a whole. Third, it gives useful strategies to translators and language learners. These strategies include matching and changing structures, combining and adjusting meanings, and adjusting language unit levels. This study does a strict comparison analysis and gives easy-to-use translation tools. It connects linguistic theory and translation practice. It talks about how to deal with degree modification in English-Chinese and Chinese-English translation.

## **2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

### **2.1 The Theoretical Model of “Quality Group” in the Cardiff Grammar**

Cardiff Grammar is a key part of Systemic

Functional Linguistics. Robin Fawcett mainly created it. It has a special functional way to analyze phrase structures. Its “Quality Group” model is an exact tool [3]. People use it to compare degree modification structures of different languages. Traditional grammar mostly looks at word forms. Cardiff Grammar pays attention to links between language structure and use.

A Quality Group is a grammatical unit. Its main use is to show the features and conditions of things. This model has three main parts. First, the apex (a) is the main meaning part of a Quality Group. People usually use adjectives or adverbs to form it. Some common words are “beautiful”, “quickly”, “moved” and “fast”. This part carries the main meaning of the quality. Next, the degree temperer (dt) comes before the apex. It changes how strong the meaning of the apex is. In English, most degree temperers are adverbs, like “very”, “extremely” and “more”. Then, the deriver (dr) only exists in Chinese. It is the function word ‘de’. This part leads to extra explaining parts later. It links the apex with the degree or result.

This model is much better than the old grammar explanations of the ‘de’ structure. It shows how degree words work in sentence structure from a practical view. It lets researchers study different languages. These languages use different structures to convey the same meaning about degree. The Quality Group model works well for studies comparing different languages. It finds parts based on use. These parts can look different in various languages. The Cardiff Grammar uses systemic functional ideas. This way can help study English and Chinese sentence structures.

### **2.2 Review of Relevant Literature**

Prior research on degree modification in English as well as Chinese can be systematically categorized into two principal research strands, each possessing distinct contributions as well as limitations. Research about English degree adverbs is a major research area in linguistics. Many scholars study how degree adverbs modify extreme words. They look at this from three common angles: word meanings, sentence positions, and language use. Huang Guowen, He Wei, and Liao Chuyan explain clearly how English temperers work under Cardiff Grammar. They study where these words appear and what they mean [4]. Bai Ye does cognitive research

on the order of pre-modifiers in English [5]. Research on the Chinese word ‘de’ follows different theories. Old Chinese grammar mostly sees ‘de’ as a structural word. This word is used to lead different complements. People study these complements, such as state complements, result complements, and degree complements [6]. These studies sort out the meanings of complements in the ‘de’ structure. They also show that this structure has many uses and can express rich meanings. He Wei and Duan Yaohua study the meanings and text uses of sentences with ‘de’. They explain how this structure helps connect content and arrange information [7].

This line of research has two clear weaknesses. First, not many studies on the ‘de’ structure look at its use in translation work. They cannot solve actual translation problems well. Second, most past works do not compare the ‘de’ structure with similar English structures. Researchers have not studied differences between the two languages much. Translation research concerning degree modification between English and Chinese constitutes a growing yet still underdeveloped domain. Although degree modification has been increasingly examined through descriptive as well as cognitive frameworks, the application of these frameworks to degree modification remains limited.

### **2.3 Research Contribution of This Study**

The synthesis of the literature reveals a clear research contribution: fewer studies have conducted an integrated functional-syntactic comparison of English pre-modifying temperers and the Chinese ‘de’ structure from the perspective of the “Quality Group” in the Cardiff Grammar. It impedes a full understanding of the essential differences between the two structures and the internal logic of translation transformation.

This study does useful work. It gives a full comparison of four parts: sentence structure, word meaning, language use, and thinking rules. All parts follow one set of theory. This study also sums up three translation strategies from the comparison results. It connects language theory and real translation work.

### **3. Research Methods**

This study uses functional and syntactic

contrastive research. It is based on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). It focuses on the links between language structure and language function. Corpus-based translation studies have changed a lot in recent years. They have moved from descriptive methods to theoretical and practical methods. The functional and syntactic way works well to show the sentence features, meaning functions, and usage differences of degree modification structures in English and Chinese.

This research method was chosen for three reasons. First, contrastive linguistics says that comparing languages in a regular way can help find out language structures. These structures show whether it is easy or hard for people to use language rules across different languages. Second, SFL sees language as a social sign system. It believes language forms exist for practical use. This theory fits the research goal “figuring out why English and Chinese use different structures to show the same meaning of degree change”. Third, the functional-syntactic method lets researchers study language from several sides. It covers syntax, meaning, language use, and human thinking.

### **3.1 Corpus Sources**

Corpus sources have two main parts. They can make the data comprehensive and representative. Official bilingual parallel corpora were used. They include texts from the CCL Corpus of the Institute of Linguistics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). These corpora have different text types. They include news reports, literary works, and academic papers. They cover many kinds of texts with degree modification. The translated classic literary work was added. Some examples are *A Dream of Red Mansions*, translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, and *Pride and Prejudice*, translated by Wang Keyi.

These corpus sources were chosen for two main reasons. Bilingual parallel corpora let us directly compare language structures that work in the same way. Literary translations help us see how professional translators deal with degree modification in real translation work.

### **3.2 Research and Analysis Procedures**

The study employs a systematic four-step analytical procedure, specifically designed to ensure analytical rigor as well as replicability (See

Figure 2).

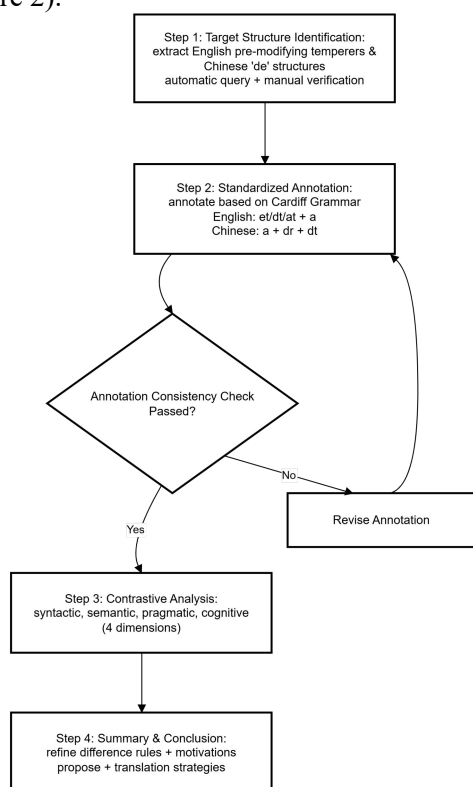


Figure 2. Four-Step Procedure

Step one: The target sentence structures were first found. Sentences with English pre-modifying temperers and Chinese ‘de’ structures were picked from the corpus. The corpus was searched by machine. The sentences were checked by hand. This work makes sure it collects all target sentence structures correctly. Step two: Standardized annotation. Components in the target structures are labeled according to Cardiff Grammar terminology. As specified in the theoretical framework, English structures are annotated as “et/dt/at + a”, while Chinese structures are annotated as “a + dr + dt”. This is a standardized annotation scheme. Step three: Contrastive analysis. English and Chinese target structures were compared one by one. The comparison has four parts. They are syntactic structure, semantic refinement, pragmatic rhetoric, and cognitive basis. This way looks at many sides. It does not just state the differences. It also explains what the differences work for. Step four: Summary as well as conclusion. Based on the comparison results, the difference rules as well as the underlying motivations governing English and Chinese degree modification structures are refined. These findings subsequently inform the proposal of translation strategies.

### 3.3 Research Design Features

This study uses a research plan with several parts to make the results more reliable. First, it uses numerical data from language collections and a detailed analysis of language use. This follows common good ways in translation research based on language collections. These research ways focus on combining numerical study and detailed study [8]. The study uses methods of language use and sentence structure. It not only look at sentence forms, but it also works better for real communication. This study compares two languages. It can find language rules that people cannot see when studying only one language. It should be noted that the present study focuses on English pre-modifying temperers as well as the Chinese ‘de’ structure as the primary objects of analysis. Other degree modification devices, including comparative constructions, intensifying prefixes, and rhetorical repetition, fall outside the current scope, though they merit further investigation.

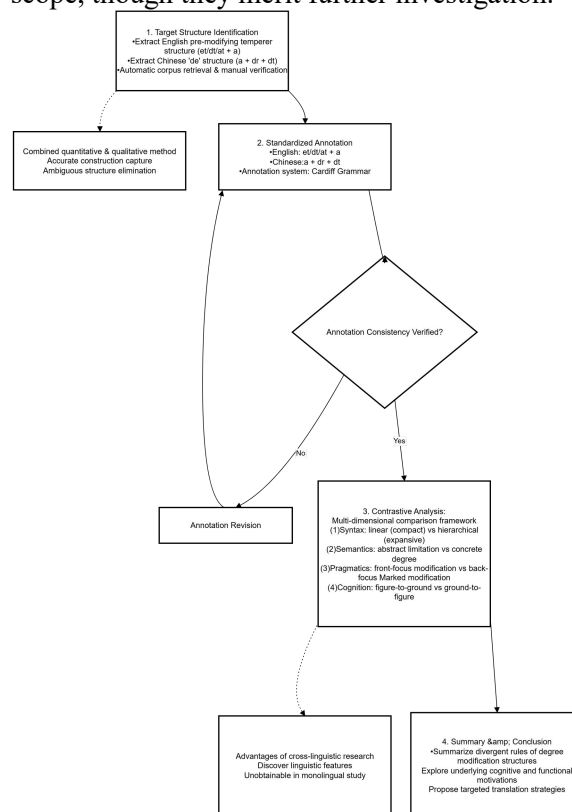


Figure 3. Flowchart of the Analytical Procedure

The study uses this strict research method (See Figure 3). It makes sure the results have solid theory and real evidence.

### 4. Functional-Syntactic Comparison of English and Chinese Degree Modification

## Structures

This section presents a systematic contrastive analysis of English pre-modifying temperers as well as the Chinese ‘de’ structure across four dimensions: syntactic structure, semantic refinement, pragmatic rhetoric, and cognitive basis. Drawing on the Quality Group model of Cardiff Grammar as well as supported by corpus evidence, the analysis identifies the essential differences between the two structures as well as interprets their underlying motivations.

### 4.1 Syntactic Structure: Pre-modification vs. Post-introduction

The biggest difference between English pre-modifying temperers and the Chinese ‘de’ structure is their sentence arrangement. English uses pre-modification. The temperer comes before the subject. It makes a short line of “et/dt/at + a”. This is in phrases like “very happy”, “extremely quickly” and “incredibly difficult”. English pre-modifying temperers have a set place in sentences. They usually sit right before the adjective or adverb they modify. By contrast, Chinese adopts a post-introduction mode in which the deriver ‘de’ is placed after the subject, followed by a complement elaborating on the degree or result. This yields an extended structure of “a + dr + dt”. Take “mei de ling ren zhi xi” (beautiful to the point of taking one’s breath away) as well as “xiao de he bu long zui” (laugh until one’s mouth is wide open) as instances, the complement following ‘de’ provides specific, often vivid, elaboration of the expressed degree.

This syntactic difference shows big language-type gaps between English and Chinese. Linguistic research says English uses hypotaxis. It depends on clear grammar signs and formal links to connect parts of a sentence. Chinese uses parataxis. For example, in English, in the sentence “she is very happy”, “is” expresses the characteristic of an inflected word. In Chinese, in the sentence “ta xiao de he bu long zui”, “he bu long zui” expresses the characteristic of weight-semantic function.

Furthermore, the structural difference can be understood in terms of “front-weighted” versus “back-loaded” syntactic patterns. Generally speaking, English syntax is characterized as “front-compressed, back-open”, with the head word typically positioned in the middle. This allows only limited modifiers before it, but permits extensive modification after it. Chinese

syntax, by contrast, follows an “open-beginning, closed-ending” pattern, with the head word usually placed at the end. This permits successive modification before the head word but closes the structure once the head word appears. But in the context of degree modification, the English temperer functions as a compressed front-modifier, while the complement of the Chinese ‘de’ structure constitutes an extended tail following the head (See Figure 4).

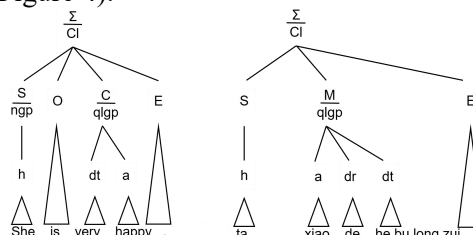


Figure 4. Comparison of Syntactic Structures between English Pre-Modifying Temperers and Chinese ‘de’ Structure

### 4.2 Semantic Refinement: Abstract vs. Concrete

The fundamental principles of functional grammatical analysis indicate that semantic analysis serves as the foundation of syntactic analysis, and both are equally important in grammatical analysis [9,10]. The second dimension of contrast concerns semantic refinement—the degree of specificity and detail with which degree meaning is conveyed. English pre-modifying temperers operate primarily through abstract degree limitation. They indicate intensity on a generalized scale without depicting specific scenes, states, or results. For example, “more interesting” merely indicates “geng you qu” but does not specify what makes the subject interesting or how the interest manifests; “incredibly difficult” emphasizes “ji qi kun nan” but does not elaborate on the specific dimensions of difficulty.

The Chinese ‘de’ structure, however, achieves a concrete degree of depiction through the diversity and vividness of its complement. Complements following ‘de’ can be words, phrases, or clauses, and they serve to elaborate the degree through specific states, results, or comparisons. Based on semantic function, three types of complements can be identified. First, state complements show the specific state brought by the subject. For example, “xiao de he bu long zui” means someone laughs so much that they cannot close their mouth. It tells how

strong the laughter is with the clear state of an open mouth. The complement “he bu long zui” creates a picture people can feel. It lets people easily know how intense the laughter is.

Second, the results complement show what happens to the subject afterwards. For example, “mang de wang le chi fan” (so busy as to forget to eat). It tells people how busy someone is by saying they forget to eat. Third, comparative complements make writing lively by comparing things with metaphors. A common phrase, “bai de xiang xue” (as white as snow) uses snow for comparison. People can easily understand how white something is because snow is a common and real thing. Another phrase, “lei de xiang tiao gou” (as tired as a dog), uses a familiar image to show great tiredness.

Generally speaking, English is concrete. Chinese is abstract. Their semantic difference shows how the two languages record degree information in different ways. But in the context of degree modification, English uses abstract scales to show specific quantities. Chinese uses real-life scenes to describe features. This difference matches studies on scalar equatives. These studies say English and Chinese understand “degree” in separate ways. One way sees degrees as abstract numbers on a scale. The other way sees degrees as fixed features of things.

### **4.3 Pragmatic Rhetoric: Objective vs. Subjective**

The third contrast part is about language use. It mainly looks at how much a speaker gets involved and shows feelings. English front-placed degree words usually give objective ideas. They judge features and situations in a plain way, with no strong feelings. Take “very good” for example. It gives a simple positive thought. It does not show the speaker’s personal feelings. Take “extremely important” for another example. It says something is highly important. It just states a fact.

Chinese ‘de’ structures are more for subjective description. They show the speaker’s feelings with lively words. The words after ‘de’ often carry comments or emotions. They tell what the speaker thinks. Take “mei de rang ren xin zui” (so beautiful that it intoxicates the heart) as an example. It shows a high level of beauty. It also shows how the speaker feels. Look at “qi de hun shen fa dou” (so angry that one’s whole body trembles). It tells how strong the anger is. It also

shows the body’s reaction to this feeling.

This pragmatic contrast reflects broader differences in how English and Chinese handle subjectivity as well as intersubjectivity in communication. A corpus-based comparison of subjective combination patterns of English as well as Chinese degree adverbs reveals that Chinese degree adverbs exhibit greater subjective flexibility, permitting combinations that are not possible in English. This finding suggests that Chinese degree modification is more deeply integrated with subjective expression than its English counterpart. In other words, Chinese tends to embed subjective stance within degree expressions to a far greater extent than English does.

Also, the use of degree words is different because of the audience. English words for degree usually state a fact directly. They need little reaction from the audience. Chinese phrases with ‘de’ use lively descriptions and feelings. They make readers or listeners think and understand more.

### **4.4 Cognitive Basis: Figure-First vs. Background-First**

The fourth dimension of contrast concerns the underlying cognitive logic that shapes the two structures. English follows a “figure-first” logic. The core property is foregrounded. This reflects a direct, linear cognitive style that prioritizes focusing on the core content first and then establishing the modifying relationship.

Chinese, conversely, follow a “background-first” logic. The background is established first, and then the core properties gradually appear. This reflects a cognitive habit of proceeding step by step and paying attention to details—the elaboration first, and then the core is established. “Very happy” usually shows a person’s mood. It is the main part of a sentence. Take “She is very happy today” as an example. The words “very happy” tell us the main feeling of the person “she”. It directly shows how she feels. This way of speaking puts the person first. It talks mainly about what the person feels inside. Listeners need to understand these inner feelings.

The Chinese phrase “mei de ling ren zhi xi” often describes the beauty of things like scenery or works of art. It mainly helps build a feeling and gives background details. Here is an example: “zhe li de feng jing mei de ling ren zhi xi” (The scenery here is so beautiful that it is breathtaking). This Chinese phrase talks about

the scene and makes a general mood. It follows the way of presenting the background first. It uses the feeling of being out of breath to show strong beauty. This phrase is not the main part of the sentence. It just helps people understand the main idea (See Figure 5).

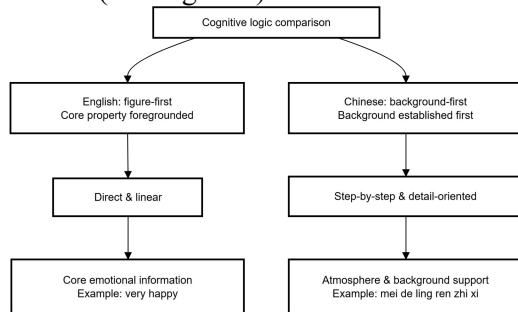


Figure 5. Cognitive Logic Comparison

#### 4.5 Summary of Contrastive Findings

The systematic comparison across four dimensions reveals a coherent pattern of differences between English pre-modifying temperers as well as Chinese ‘de’ structures. In the context of degree modification, English favors abstract, objective, and linear expression, whereas Chinese favors concrete, subjective, and elaborative expression. These differences are not arbitrary but reflect deeper typological features as well as cognitive styles inherent to the two languages.

The Quality Group model is an exact theoretical tool. It shows the differences in a single system. This model explains the same functional type, which is degree modification. It uses different structures to reach the same function.

Next, it will be discussed how these different results help people make translation strategies. These strategies keep the original degree meanings and also follow the rules of the target language.

#### 5. Discussion and Application of Translation Strategies

Based on the systematic comparison in Part Four, this part talks about three translation strategies. These strategies deal with differences in structure and use between English pre-modifying temperers and the Chinese ‘de’ structure.

The strategies follow the theories of Cardiff Grammar. They also take four comparison aspects into account: sentence structure, word meaning, language use, and thinking logic.

This part explains each strategy by talking about common translation problems. It also uses real examples from language collections to show

how the strategies work.

#### 5.1 Theoretical Foundations of Translation Strategy Selection

First translation choices for degree modification were discussed. Translation methods fall into two main kinds: literal translation and free translation. These two methods are chosen based on several things. They include text types, target readers, and structural similarities between the original language and the translated language.

In the context of degree modification, the decision-making process is further complicated by the fundamental structural asymmetry between English pre-modification and Chinese post-introduction. As the contrastive analysis has demonstrated, English temperers realize abstract degree limitation through a compact “et/dt/at + a” structure, while Chinese ‘de’ structures achieve concrete degree depiction through an extended “a + dr + dt” pattern. This asymmetry means that direct structural correspondence is often impossible, requiring translators to adopt more creative methods.

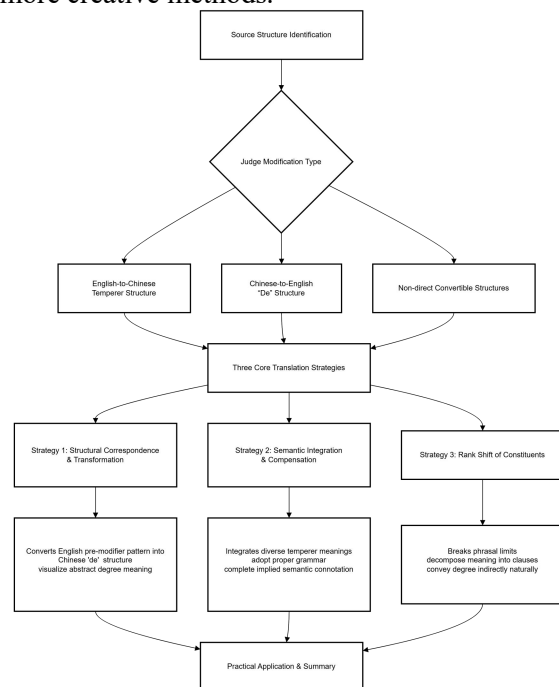


Figure 6. Decision Tree for Translation Strategy Selection

The idea of words that cannot be fully translated matters a lot here. Indo-European languages and Sino-Tibetan languages are different in sounds, ways of speaking, and writing skills. These differences make translation lose some original meanings. Degree-related word groups show this problem clearly. English words that show degree are abstract. Chinese words that follow main

words to add meaning are concrete. When a translator cannot turn one kind directly into the other, they need to use proper translation strategies to fix the differences in structure and use (See Figure 6).

### **5.2 Strategy 1: Structural Correspondence and Transformation**

The first strategy, structural correspondence as well as transformation, is applicable when translating English pre-modifying temperer structures into Chinese. Its core logic lies in retaining the degree semantics of the original structure while converting the English pre-modification pattern of “et/dt/at + a” into the Chinese post-introduction pattern of “a + dr + dt”. This transformation compensates for the abstractness of English degree modification through the concrete expression of the Chinese complement, thereby rendering the target text more idiomatic as well as expressive.

Example 1: The English sentence “(dt) Deeply (a) moved by the story” can be literally translated as “bei zhe ge gu shi shen shen di gan dong le”. This translation is correct in meaning, but it is not lively enough for Chinese. It can be changed to the sentence structure and translated into “bei zhe ge gu shi (a) gan dong (dr) ‘de’ (dt) re lei ying kuang”. The English word “deeply” shows a strong degree of feeling. The Chinese phrase “re lei ying kuang” was used to show this meaning directly.

Example 2: The English sentence “(dt) Extremely (a) hungry after the long journey” can be translated as “chang tu ba she hou (a) e (dr) ‘de’ (dt) qian xiong tie hou bei” (so hungry that one’s chest sticks to one’s back). The Chinese idiom “qian xiong tie hou bei” uses a real feeling of the body to show how hungry someone is.

This strategy follows the domestication in translation. This strategy wants the target text to fit the culture and language rules of the target language. The translator changes English pre-modification into the Chinese ‘de’ structure. The translator puts naturalness and readability of the target text first.

### **5.3 Strategy 2: Semantic Integration and Compensation**

The second strategy, semantic integration and compensation, is primarily used when translating Chinese ‘de’ structures into English. Because of the vividness and diversity of Chinese temperers, it is difficult to replicate directly through English

pre-modifying temperers; the translator must integrate the semantics of the temperer into English expressions and compensate through alternative grammatical forms.

Example 3: The Chinese sentence “(a) chao (dr) ‘de’ (dt) ren shui bu zhao jiao” (so noisy that people cannot sleep) cannot be literally rendered as “Noisy makes people can’t sleep,” which failed to express the degree. Adopting semantic integration and compensation, it can be translated as “ear-splitting noise,” where the compound adjective “ear-splitting” integrates the core semantics of “chao” (noisy) with the degree characteristic of “ren shui bu zhao jiao” (people cannot sleep). Alternatively, it can be rendered as “The noise was so loud that it kept people awake,” using the English “so...that...” clause structure to express the result semantics of the ‘de’ complement.

Example 4: The Chinese sentence “(a) mei (dr) ‘de’ (dt) rang ren yi bu kai yan” (so beautiful that one cannot look away) can be translated as “a breathtaking beauty.” The compound adjective “breathtaking” integrates both the core meaning of “mei” (beauty) and the degree characteristic of “rang ren yi bu kai yan” (so captivating that one cannot look away), achieving semantic condensation while maintaining expressive force.

This strategy changes the content from the original language. It makes the content work well in another language. English readers notice key points first. Chinese readers notice context first. This is the thinking behind the strategy. People translate Chinese phrases with the word ‘de’ into English. They need to put the degree details first. They also make short English expressions.

### **5.4 Strategy 3: Rank Shift of Constituents**

The third strategy is constituent rank shift. People use it when it is hard to translate English and Chinese degree modification structures directly. Its main thought is to get rid of the limits of the original phrase structure. It moves the meaning of degree from phrases to clauses. It uses clause parts like mood, modality, and process types to show the meaning of degree.

Example 5: The English sentence “(dt) Somewhat (a) disappointed with the result” is hard to translate into the Chinese ‘de’ structure. If the translator translated it word for word as “dui jie guo (a) shi wang (dr) ‘de’ (dt) you xie”, it does not follow how Chinese uses the word

'de'. This translation also has the wrong word order. Translators can use rank shift. They can turn this sentence into a clause: "The result was not as satisfying as expected." The comparative structure "not as...as..." shows the meaning of "somewhat disappointed".

Example 6: The Chinese sentence "(a) nan (dr) 'de' (dt) wu fa yong yu yan xing rong" (so difficult that it cannot be described in words) can be translated as "extremely difficult". Though it can be translated using the "dt+a" pattern, "beyond words" can't be translated in English. The translator can change the sentence structure to "It is impossible to describe how difficult it is". This new version uses the structure "it is impossible to..." to show the degree of difficulty. It also completes the semantics.

This strategy works well to deal with parts about degree modification that cannot be translated. If direct structure matching and meaning adjustment do not work well, rank shift can keep the communication purpose of degree modification. It changes the original form completely.

### **5.5 Summary and Practical Recommendations**

The three ways talked about above include matching and changing sentence structures, combining and adjusting meanings, and changing the order of sentence parts. These strategies help people deal with degree modification when translating between English and Chinese. People can use them together in different translation situations, for they do not rule out one another.

First, if you turn English degree phrases into Chinese, follow the original structure and make changes. Use the Chinese word 'de' to express meanings well. This way keeps the original degree meaning. It also makes the translated words lively and natural.

Secondly, when translating Chinese 'de' structures into English, employ semantic integration and compensation to condense the concrete, elaborated semantics of Chinese temperer into compact English expressions. Compound adjectives, "so...that..." clauses, and other English grammatical resources should be utilized to compensate for the characteristic of hypotaxis in English.

Third, if you cannot do a direct conversion or get awkward results, use a rank shift of parts. Move the meaning of degree from phrases to clauses.

This way, the use of degree modification for communication still works when you cannot keep the original structure.

These strategies, grounded in systematic contrastive analysis and supported by corpus evidence, provide translators with theoretically informed and practically applicable tools for addressing the persistent challenges of degree modification in cross-linguistic communication.

### **6. Conclusion**

This study has conducted a systematic functional-syntactic contrastive analysis of English pre-modifying temperers as well as the Chinese 'de' structure within the framework of the Quality Group model of Cardiff Grammar, addressing the three research questions posed in the introduction. Through multi-dimensional comparison across syntactic structure, semantic refinement, pragmatic rhetoric, as well as cognitive basis, the study reveals that the characteristics of English pre-modifying temperers, including pre-modification abstractness, objectivity, as well as figure-first logic, whereas the characteristics of Chinese 'de' structure, including post-introduction, concreteness, subjectivity, as well as background-first logic. These differences are not arbitrary but reflect the deeper typological features of hypotaxis versus parataxis as well as synthesis versus analysis, along with divergent cognitive styles between the two languages.

The analysis uses language data from CCL, COCA, and literary translations. It shows that the Quality Group model is a clear theoretical tool. This tool can find structural differences between different languages in one functional system. The model also shows that degree modification has the same use. It works via different structures but serves the same purpose.

Based on the contrastive findings, three translation strategies were proposed: structural correspondence as well as transformation (for English-to-Chinese translation), semantic integration as well as compensation (for Chinese-to-English translation), and rank shift of constituents (for cases where direct conversion fails). Grounded in empirical data, these strategies provide translators with practically applicable tools for handling degree modification.

But it must be admitted that this study has some shortcomings. First, most of the language materials come from daily texts and literary

works. It does not include many professional writings, such as science, law, and technology articles. The limited data may make the research results less useful in more cases. Second, this study only looks at pre-modifying temperers and the ‘de’ structure. It does not discuss other ways to show degree, such as comparison structures, emphatic prefixes, and repeated expressions. Third, the collected bilingual texts are typical, but more samples can be added to make the results fit more situations.

Future research can do more analysis in different ways. One good way is to add more texts from professional fields. It helps check if the structural and functional differences exist in different language uses. Another way is to study more ways to show a degree. These ways include English “so...that...” sentences, Chinese repeated words, and word parts that strengthen meaning. This work can help people know better how the two languages express degrees. It can also do experiments to see how native speakers understand these structures. The experiment results can support the analysis of grammar and language use in this paper.

In conclusion, this study connects linguistic theory and translation practice. It gives careful comparison analysis and usable translation strategies. The results show that regular language comparison helps people know different sentence structures and makes translation better. The study also points out its weak points and future research ideas. It can support more studies on degree modification between English and Chinese in linguistics and translation.

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