INTRODUCTION

It has been determined that, in English, primings (as defined in LPT) observed for a given node “depend on a more complex pattern or cluster of primings integrating two or more levels of description” (Cantos & Almela, 2017:231). The focus of this study is attempting to find evidence of this dependency relation in Chinese and then contrast the two given nodes based on a combinatory profile, which has not been done in the literature of contrastive linguistics.

METHODS

• Two kinds of corpora were used in the study. The first kind of corpora was general corpora, the British National Corpus (BNC) and the zhTenTen11 corpus, which were adopted to examine the general collocational and colligational behaviour of the pair. The second kind was comparable corpora—the Freiburg-LOB corpus of British English (henceforth FLOB) and the Lancaster Corpus of Mandarin Chinese (henceforth LCMC)—which were used to examine the pairs’ general colligational behaviour and the relations exhibited among the three concepts.
• The data was analyzed by Antconc (4.1.0).
• Concordances retrieved from the two kinds of corpora were pasted in MS Excel and annotated manually by the researcher.

RESULTS / FINDINGS

• Collocates results. The comparison of collocates at different positions to the node pair indicated that a similar semantic meaning might be presented with different collocates in the two languages. The collocates could differentiate in terms of their positions (i.e., left or right) relative to the nodes and distance (i.e., number of tokens) from the nodes. Semantically, the equivalence between English and Chinese resides in a unit that could not be simply categorised as word or phrase. It has been shown, by Wei & Li (2014), that cross-linguistic equivalence resides in corresponding patterns of units, not corresponding single words. Our examination echoes this view and further shows that the equivalence between English and Chinese is not restricted to the number of tokens.

• Colligation Results. i. There was a clear negative colligation between world and the grammatical function of Adjunct. ii. Regarding collocation, while the tendency of world to occur in this function was not as strong as that exhibited by consequence, it still occurred much more frequently than did other non-literate words, with the exception of question. iii. There was a clear positive colligation between 世界 shi4jie4 and the grammatical function of Object. iv. There was also a positive colligation between 世界 shi4jie4 and the grammatical function of Adjunct. Though the percentage was not strikingly higher than for several of the other nouns (excluding 首届 fan4wei2 (range)), 世界 shi4jie4 displayed a relatively stronger tendency to be associated with this function. iii. There was a negative colligation between 世界 shi4jie4 and the grammatical function of Complement, especially when compared with 语言 yu3yan2 (language). A negative colligation was also found between 世界 shi4jie4 and the grammatical function of Subject; only 14% of instances containing 世界 shi4jie4 occurred within this function, compared to from 17% to 55% of other nouns.

DISCUSSION

• The data obtained in the research show an interaction of the node pair occurring within a lower rank of grammatical position (intra-colligation) and occurring at a higher rank of grammatical function (inter-colligation), indicating that colligation operates for world and 世界 shi4jie4 both inter- and intra-colligationally. By combining the examination of collocation and semantic association, the present study found indications that particular colligations exerted on collocates were related to those collocates’ semantic associative properties. The conclusion drawn from examining the colligations of both world and 世界 shi4jie4 adds further, fine-grained parameters for describing the coligational behaviours of a language; specifically, that colligation is primed in an interaction with collocation and semantic association, and that the parameters interchange with and are dependent on each other. The interaction between collocation, coligation and semantic association operating on world and 世界 shi4jie4 implies that the relationship between grammar and lexis in Chinese may need to be reconsidered as well. LPT argues that the grammatical category assigned to a word is “simply a convenient label we give to the combination (some of) the word’s most characteristic and genre-independent primings” (Hoey, 2005: 154). That is, it is the outcome of a combination of factors, not the starting point for linguistic description.

• SELECTED REFERENCES