

On the Features of Register and Their Functions in Constructing Chinese Textual Metaphor

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Manuscript received September 17, 2024; revised November 5, 2024; accepted December 21, 2024; published March 27, 2025.

Abstract—Based on Chinese rhetorical tradition and in combination with Systemic-Functional Linguistics, this discussion focuses on the features of register and their functions in constructing Chinese textual metaphor. Registers exert varied effects on metaphoric text by means of some of their most representative features including registrational co-occurrence restrictions, violation, and tautology. In Chinese, there are cases in which one metaphor can work across contexts or some related metaphors can map reciprocally when one register occurs in multicontexts, except for one-to-one relationship between a register and its context; on the contrary, the same register in one context can hold double function that might lead to the more probable production of one literal or metaphorical representation and the other metaphorical connotation.

Keywords—register, textual metaphor, Chinese text

I. INTRODUCTION

Register is sometimes also referred to as ‘stylistic variation’, ‘functional variety’ or ‘diatypic variety’. The notion, which was first introduced by Thomas Bertram Reid in 1956 when he was engaged in ‘bilingualism’, is very useful and powerful in practical functional analysis of text. It refers to the case that the language we speak or write changes according to the type of situational context. It is an embodiment of language-in-action. What registrational theory tries to do is to disclose the general regularities governing this variation so as to reveal what situational factors govern what linguistic features. As a basic attribute of all human languages, keeping constant variation according to use is their eternal theme. It is the choice of subject matter that composes the variety to which a text belongs. As for the concept “textual metaphor”, after Halliday (1985) advanced “ideational metaphor” and “interpersonal metaphor”, J. R. Martin (1992) was the first to formally use the term “textual metaphor”, and treated it as the fact that “discourse systems can be used to construe text as ‘material’ social reality”. Later on, Sampson (1996) also verified the thematic bi-transitivity of textual metaphor. Likewise, Halliday and Matthiessen (1999) talked about “textual metaphor”, emphasizing (1999) that grammatical metaphor is textually significant, but ideational metafunction and interpersonal metafunction work on the basis of text. Halliday (1985) claimed that any text of more than minimal length is almost certain to present us with instances where some metaphorical element needs to be taken into account. In this discussion, our concentrations are focused on some special features of register and their functions constructing textual metaphor on the basis of the belief that metaphor, register and context are closely connected with one another, once the context changes, it requires the correspondent change of its

related metaphor or register both as a tenor and as a vehicle, especially as the latter.

II. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN REGISTER AS TENOR AND REGISTER AS VEHICLE OF A METAPHOR

Generally, for the formation of a complete metaphor, whether it is in a single sentence or in a text, there exist three sorts of logical and categorical relationships between its register as the tenor (referred to as A) and its register as the vehicle (referred to as B): ① A and B are of the same register; ② A and B are of related registers; ③ A and B are of different registers. Each type has its specific characteristics and functions for the construction of a metaphor and a text.

A. A and B Are of the Same Register

While dealing with the relational pattern “A and B are of the same register”, we can further classify it into four subtypes: ① A and B are of the same feature; ② A and B are of similar features; ③ A and B are of related features; ④ A and B are of different features. First, when the tenor and the vehicle are of the same feature in one register, the two elements to be compared have got the same point of view and hold much more similarities or confluent qualities. The only difference in this case is that the feature of the vehicle is more obvious, familiar, well-known or easily understood compared with the feature of the tenor which is more or less obscure, abstract, strange, unknown and to be stated. For instance:

[1] 鹭，鹰科部分鸟的统称。像鹰而较大。
(Li, 2004)

(Vulture, a general name for eagle family. It is like an eagle but a bit bigger.)

Because vulture and eagle belong to the same family, it is similar to eagle in every aspect. Thus it is appropriate to liken vulture to an eagle.

Second, when the tenor and the vehicle are of similar features of the same register, the two elements to be compared have got the same point of view and hold at least one similarity or one common feature. In this case, the vehicle is just the same as all the vehicles in other metaphors, namely, their function is to construe the tenor by means of their conventional, familiar or quotidian features. Among them, the pattern “a to b is like/as c to d”^① is much more commonplace. For example:

[2] 正如水对鱼一样，空气对人是至关重要的。

^① As is known, nowadays, that people tend to ascribe the construal for simile introduced by “like/as” to the domain of metaphor because of their similar generative mechanisms.

(Water is vital to fish, so as air to human kind.)

here in this comparison, the vehicle “水”(water) and “鱼”(fish) are respectively of the same registers as “空气”(air) and “人”(human kind). In addition, even in for the two different registers, the inanimate substance field including “水” and “空气” is closely related to the animate field including “鱼” and “人”.

Third, when the tenor and the vehicle are of related features of the same register, the two elements to be compared have got different points of view but their features in use are somehow related. In this case, the feature used to construe the tenor is more or less related to the main feature of the vehicle. For example:

- [3] 子曰：“回也视予犹父也，予不得视犹子也。非我也，夫二三子也。”

(Confucius said: “Oh! Yan Hui, you treats me like your father, but I can’t treat you like my son. This is not what I mean but is my students’ intention”)

This comparison likens the relations of “student to teacher” and “teacher to student” to the relations of “son to father” and “father to son”.

Last, when the tenor and the vehicle are of different features of the same register, the two elements to be compared have got different points of view but still the different features in use are in co-hyponymy of the same superordinate category. For this phenomenon, because of the juxtaposition of the tenor and the vehicle, their different features produce very strong tension with resort to their heterogeneity. For example:

- [4] 狗的视力不如它的嗅觉发达。

(A dog’s sight is not as well developed as its olfaction.)

This statement makes a comparison between two sense organs exerting different perceptive capabilities.

B. A and B Are of Related Registers

The pattern “A and B are of related registers” implies that the tenor and the vehicle in a metaphor belong to different registers but still they retain a certain relationship because, as co-hyponyms, they have their common superordinate category. Alternatively, this semantic relation can be further testified by the fact that the result of this kind of comparison is the discovery of their common features or of their own differences. For instance:

- [5] 就像柠檬一样，猕猴桃也含有丰富的维生素C。

(Just like lemons, Chinese gooseberries also contain very rich vitamin C.)

The above sentence, through a successful comparison with two related hyponyms of fruit, reveals their common feature (both contain rich vitamin C).

- [6] 但猕猴桃看起来却不如柠檬那么让人赏心悦目。

(However, Chinese gooseberries are not so

good-looking and pleasing as lemons in appearance.)

In this sentence, although the difference was found out through comparison with the two related hyponyms, this difference is the difference of degree in similarity, namely, the difference of their common features, not the difference of their unique features.

C. A and B Are of Different Registers

As far as the rate of a certain metaphorical usage is concerned, the pattern “A and B are of different registers” seems much more popular and frequent. It is very evident that because the tenor and the vehicle involved in comparison are of two different registers, then, there must be something common between them linking them together, otherwise, this metaphor cannot exist. This linking item is just their common feature used for comparison, or put it another way, the feature from the vehicle (“the source domain” in Lakoff’s terms) is mapped onto the feature of the tenor (“the target domain” in Lakoff’s terms) to be stated. For example:

- [7] 怒是猛虎，欲是深渊。(Jin, 2003:24)
(Anger is a tiger, desire is an abyss.)

In this process of mapping from vehicle to tenor, the role of tenor is not passive, but active. According to Dingfang Su (2000: 81), the feature of tenor determines which features of vehicle can be transferred, it acts as a “filtering” role, stressing some features while restraining some others. Furthermore, in the writer’s opinion, this kind of “mapping” is only a type of “borrowing”. That is to say, the feature from the source is borrowed to state about the feature of the target. It is by no means the so-called “merging” or “blending”. Because, if two different things are “merged” or “blended” into one, its consequence can only leads to the production of a mixed or compound thing (viz. a new thing), this theory is only suitable for construing the generation of new concept, but unsuitable for metaphor, which aims to construe A (the tenor) by means of B (the vehicle), not to create C (a new compound thing).

So far as the textual construction of metaphor is concerned, whether the tenor and vehicle are of the same/related registers or not, if they have adequate common features to be discussed or even if they only have some few features or merely one feature in common, still, there exist some epiphenomena accompanying the feature(s) to be elaborated, then, we can have a lot to say so as to lengthen the text by extending a series of metaphorical processes (viz. by constructing a series of semantically-related megametaphors). In this case, there are a lot more “submetaphors” to be utilized, and the text is correspondingly easy constructing as well as understanding because they open a broader information-transmitting channel with resort to verbal interactions. On the contrary, if the tenor and vehicle have little in common, then, the only most probable feature has to be extracted from the vehicle to interpret the tenor, this would make the comparison very awkward and grudging, and finally leave the whole metaphor in tension. Pragmatically and rhetorically

speaking, this kind of tension can make a metaphor fresh and strange, but textually speaking, it is very difficult to form a metaphorical text because the selected feature supplies too small informational space to construct a complete text. In some special cases, even if this kind of text was created, it is impossible to get rid of the unnatural, awkward, pretending and obscure traces both for its formation and for its semantic comprehension. Take 《望庐山五老峰》(The Five Greybeard—like Peaks of Mount Lu Viewed from Afar) by Li Bai (Yi, 2009:69) for instance:

[8] 庐山东南五老峰，青天削出金芙蓉。

九江秀色可揽结，吾将此地巢云松。

(The Five Greybeard-like Peaks at the southeast of Mount Lu,

Golden lotuses were cut out against the blue sky.

The pretty scenery of Jiujiang can be gathered together,

Here in seclusion I will live among clouds and pine trees)

In the poem, the five peaks are likened to golden lotuses cut out high to the blue sky. The “削出” (cut out) is used as a fresh or even strange metaphor, which reminds readers of the towering aloft and steep of the peaks. However, it's difficult for us to extend this behavioral feature to the ensuing descriptive part of the text.

III. FEATURES OF REGISTER PROPER AND THEIR FUNCTIONS ON TEXTUAL METAPHOR

This part explores the following registral features including registral co-occurrence restrictions, violation, variation, simplification and tautology, meanwhile, analyzes their functions constructing textual metaphor.

A. Co-occurrence Restrictions as Vehicle and Their Textual Functions

The complete expression of a register necessitates some co-occurrence restrictions, which are the pre-conditions of a vehicle expanding a text. About co-occurrence restrictions, John Gumperz (1971) once said that one's choice of linguistic alternants “reflects the positions actors (parties in an interaction) wish to assume relative to each other”. Linguistic alternants in sociolinguistics means sets of words and phrases that share meaning but differ in that one or more members of the set carries a social connotation. This connotation gives information about the speaker's social status and about how he or she wishes to be treated. It also

often gives information about what is being talked about. Gumperz gives the example of “dine” versus “eat”. Both denote consumption of food, but “dine” connotes more formal surroundings calling for formal manners. Choice of the verb “dine” carries implications about those who are doing it. “Dine” belongs to upper class speech, and pretty much, to older people. The refined and aristocratic dine. Everyone else eats. One way to verify our intuitions about “dine” is to note its co-occurrence restrictions. There are restrictions on what words can go together. Generally speaking, words in the same field often co-occur to form a special diatypic variety. For instance, in English both people and animals can be “killed”, but only people can be “murdered” or “assassinated”. The latter two verbs imply the victim was a human being. Similar restrictions determine which style goes with certain words. Words that differ in the degree of formality do not usually co-occur, nor do words that give conflicting information about social status.

Similarly, in Chinese, the equivqlent word of “dine” is “用餐” or “进餐”, for “eat”, it is “吃”, but if an emperor or empress would “have the meal” or “dine”, the most formal type of “dine” was used, which is “用膳”. “食” (verb) and “啖” are two archaic expressions. Nowadays, they are only used in some fixed expressions such as “食之无味” (tasteless while eaten), “啖以私利” (seduce/feed by personal interests). As for “干” (do), “整” (get) and “惹” (take), they are often used colloquially. Besides, in some dialects, we can find some vulgar wordings to mean “eat”. They imply a certain pejorative metaphorical usage. For example, the slang word “造” (make/devour) is used colloquially in northeastern China to symbolize a person's “swallowing food” just like an animal. The same type of implication can also be found in central China's dialectal word “倒” (digest or transfer food from outside into tummy like an animal). Thus, in terms of formality of style, these wordings form a continuum like “superformal (用膳)→formal(用餐, 进餐)→common core(吃, 食, 啖)→informal(干, 整, 惹)→superinformal(造, 倒)”. In this continuum, metaphorization happens between the opposite polarity from the left literal meaning to the right incremental metaphorical implication. That's to say, in the field of mode expressing “eat”, the more informal the wording is, the stronger its metaphoricality would be. According to Martin Joos's classification of style, this continuum goes like the following:

		Literal/weak
[9] a. 皇上，该用膳了。	-----Frozen	metaphorization ↓
(His majesty, it's time to dine.)		
b. 贵宾在楼上用餐。	-----Formal	
(The distinguished guests have dinner upstairs.)		
c. 鱼上来了，咱们吃吧。	-----Consultative	
(The fish is served, let's eat it.)		metaphoric/stronger
d. 鱼上来了，整!	-----Casual	
(The fish is served, get!)		
e. 造你的饭吧，少插嘴!	-----Intimate	
(Devour your food, no butting in!)		

Generally speaking, for the five levels of style, so far as the register expressing “eat”, even though it is not impossible for metaphor to appear above consultative level, still, it is more often used below consultative level, because in the informal utterances, especially in dialect and slang, people tend to use metaphors embodying the features of animals or natural phenomena, where a protruded feature of an animal or object as vehicle is mapped onto the tenor so as to make the comparison vivid, deep, impressive and cool. In the above Chinese characters, “造” originally refers to a hog’s devouring the food (造食) in northeastern China’s dialect and “倒” means a cow’s chewing and ruminating the food (倒食) in central China’s dialect. This can be further testified by the Chinese sayings “狼吞虎咽” and “狼餐虎噬” (devour like wolves and tigers). What’s more, in Chinese, “他咕咚了一碗凉白开”(He thudded in a bowl of cold boiled water), “小伙子匆忙吐噜了一碗热干面”(The young guy gorged a bowl of hot dry noodles), “老人吸溜一口小酒”(The old man sucked a little wine) and “二傻正在嘎吱一根大排骨”(Er Sha is creaking a block of ribs) are all

onomatopoeic metaphors to describe the tenors’ vivid actions with resort to the vehicles’ phonetic features. All these metaphoric usages can more often appear at the levels below consultative level.

While considering the facts in combination with the textual construction of metaphor, we believe that the same is true of the register in the position of a vehicle wherein four points should be focused on: ① the central theme or topic of vehicle (viz. root metaphor) must be able to be extended, elaborated, compared and contrasted so that extended megametaphors or parallel megametaphors can be formed (see Jidong Wei, 2009); ② the lexical items in the vehicle must be of the same semantic field; ③ each lexical item used in the vehicle must obey the collocational rules of co-occurrence with other items concerned; ④ different levels of style in the vehicle should change along with different participants in the corresponding communication. For the sake of clarity, let’s see “To the Tune of ‘Picking Mulberries’” (Cai Sangzi) by Lü Bengzhong in Song Dynasty (Tang, 1965):

- [10] 恨君不是江楼月， 南北东西。南北东西，只有相随无别离。
恨君却是江楼月， 暂满还亏。暂满还亏，待得团圆是几时。

(I regret Thou art not the river-tower in the moonlight
Going with the Moon, east or west,
Along or across, never apart or left;

I regret Thou art the moon lighting the river-tower
Waxing but waning round never,
When is the reunion but going around ever?)

This poem, centered on the departure of the lovers, describes the opposite departure against the union of moonlight illuminating the river-tower and the lover in the first half while it depicts the obverse departure in comparison with the waxing but waning moon over the head of the river-tower, with each half keeps the coherence among sentences by the continuity of meaning so as to form two independent extended metaphors. Overall, setting out by depicting the moonlight of the riversides, the poem extends the moon as vehicle and its features through the whole textural process. Thus, a bigger extended metaphor is formed when the moon’s waxing and waning comes to the end. In this coherent metaphorizing process, the moon’s waxing and waning features are mapped onto the conception of people’s reunion and separation. Moreover, the style embodied from the poem are appropriate for the communication between lovers and all the lexical items in the vehicle such as the moon’s waxing and waning and its feature of moving and accompanying any object belong to the same field of the moon. Just by means of such metaphorized co-occurrence and distribution of the lexical items, can this poem form a typical megametaphorized text.

B. *Registral Violation and Its Influence on Text*

Contrary to co-occurrence restrictions, registral violation can sometimes produce special effects, often in literature, particularly in metaphoric text. Registral violation can also be called ‘category violation’ or simply, ‘trope’, refers to the sort of sense deviation, particularly on the levels of syntax

and semantics of registers. We can see this from Li Yu’s “虞美人” (The Beautiful Lady Yu):

- [11] 春花秋月何时了，
往事知多少？
小楼昨夜又东风，
故国不堪回首月明中。

雕栏玉砌应犹在，
只是朱颜改。
问君能有几多愁？
恰似一江春水向东流。

(When will there be no more moon and spring flowers,
For me who had so many memorable hours?
The east wind visited the attic again last night,
Unbearable to retrospect my lost country in the moonlight.

Carved balustrades and marble steps must still be there,
But rosy faces cannot be as fair.
If you ask me how much my sorrow has increased,
Just as the overbrimming river flowing east.)

This is a sorrowful song of life experience where, through the sharp contradictory comparison between the eternal nature and the fugacious life, the poet Li Yu (李煜), as a

subjugated emperor of South Tang Dynasty, expressed his sadness of empty life by sobbing his utterance so as to make the poem pitifully readable. Overall, the poem depicts the grievance for the lost country by the remote prospect, sincere emotion, fresh language and intricate structure. Its text is not so long but has endless flavor full of charm.

In the poem, the expressions of meaning foregrounded are in general relationships of similarity or of contrast. We know that, ontologically speaking, the original attributes of the words used in the poem should fall into the following natural registers:

- A-time: 春, 秋, 何时, 往, 昨夜, 故
- B-nature: 花, 月, 风, 水
- C-building: 小楼, 雕栏, 玉砌
- D-actions: 了, 不堪回首, 在, 改, 问, 有, 流
- E-thought: 知, 愁
- F-matter: 事, 国
- G-orientation: 东, 中, 向东
- H-quantity: 多少, 几多, 一江
- I-attribute: 明, 朱
- J-person: 朱颜, 君
- K-modality: 应, 能, 恰
- L-similarity: 又, 犹, 似
- M-contrast: 只是

From the list above, we can see that from A to M, there appear 13 fields of lexical items belonging to different registers. Because these lexical items can exert ideational, interpersonal and textual functions, here, we roughly equate them to 13 registers. In the practical operation of text, one register is switched to the other by various rhetorical means. Here, in this poem, through a series of association, the poet skillfully connects the violation and concord among registers by similarity, contrast and other rhetorical means. Among them, spring flowers, autumn moon and other objects always serve as the vehicles of metaphor.

However, we have to, by our own experience, work out the connections of similarity and contrast between the expressions in the groups A to M, which thereby become representative of something more abstract, which could not be expressed by simply adding together the literal senses of the words. Paraphrases can only capture part of what these significances represent: A--- the contrast of time between present and past; B---the vehicles of metaphor; C---the comparison between existent and lost; D---processes of metaphorical events; E---mental representation of association; F---objects of anxiety; G---orientational metaphor; H---woe as accumulation of quantity; I---modifier of vehicles; J---agents of events; K---appraisal function; L---alike by on-the-spot comparison; M---reverse difference between present and past.

As we can see, in this poem, registral violations are produced in the first three sentences with each including two clauses while registral adaptation/concord happens in the last two clauses. This can be construed from the lexical level and the sentential level respectively. On the one hand, at the lexical level, the word “又” denotes the sequential variation of “spring flowers and autumn moon”, implying the repeated occurrence of this type of mood and scene which

evokes the poet’s unbearable spiritual woes. The next “只是” expresses a sense of unlimited melancholy resentment by a sympathetic sigh. In addition, “又东风” and “故国不堪回首” in the third and fourth clauses, “应犹在” and “改” in the fifth and sixth clauses form a pair of comparison respectively while “又东风” and “应犹在” make an echo to “何时了”; “不堪回首” and “朱颜改” echo to “往事”. Such contrast and chiasmus vividly demonstrate the poet’s mental heavings and subsidings and difficult calmness of sorrow. In the last two lines, by a thought-evoking rhetorical question, the poet points out the abstract tenor “anxiety”, and then answer it by the torrent river as vivid vehicle to metaphorize the endless and restless sorrowful melancholy in his heart, thus uplifting his mournful emotion into climax.

On the other hand, at the sentential level, for the eight lines altogether, we can find oppositional contrast for example, between lines 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6 in the first six clauses. They are also oppositions between present and past, concrete and abstract. But present metaphorical similarity exists between the last two lines by a comparison between abstract and concrete. For the kinds of horizontal cohesions, these are collocational ties which in many cases defy literal interpretation, and have to be understood rhetorically such as the metonymic use of “朱颜” (rosy faces) referring to the pretty maids in the imperial palace, and the metaphorical use of the last two lines. Despite of the last two lines, this direct juxtaposition of incompatibles further suggests the big gap and difference between present and past, which directly leads to the metaphorical consequence of sorrowful melancholy (just as the overbrimming river flowing east) in the last two lines.

Based on the above discussion of registral violation, we conclude the ensuing points: ① registral violation dissolves and challenges the commonsense bonds of meaning, thus, making lexical senses ambiguous or ambivalent; ② the unusual collocation of words is the direct cause leading to registral violation; ③ pragmatically, efforts made to process the text containing registral violations are much more greater; ④ registral violation is one of the main methods to generate figurative, especially metaphorical text; ⑤ sociolinguistically, the deliberate use of registral violation can successfully obtain certain communicative strategies such as euphemism, allusion and elusion from a problem, etc.

C. Registral Tautology and Its Influence on Text

On the opposite of simplification of register exists the phenomenon of registral tautology or pleonasm. There are two facets for the co-ordinated and prolix use of some near-synonyms. On the one hand, the unnecessary and inappropriate connection of this kind can mean nothing but redundancy and unsophistication in such sentences as “这个孤儿没爹妈了” (This orphan has no parents with him) and “天上的雨都是往下下的” (All the rain from the sky falls down).

On the other hand, if the deliberate use of some registral tautology in utterance may be for a certain purpose or for the pursuit of a certain effect. For example, in Chinese, when we sometimes can hear the type of seemingly prolix

expressions such as “男爷儿们” (male manfolk) or “女娘儿们” (female womanfolk), we can immediately feel its tautology, but for an instant, we can realize its implication of stress with the first Chinese character emphasizing the next part.

In some cases, some reasonable tautology and prolixity

[12]

寻寻觅觅，
冷冷清清，
凄凄惨惨戚戚。
乍暖还寒时节，
最难将息。
(Longing, longing,
Missing, missing;
Lone, lone,
Bleak, bleak;
Sad, sad; sorrowful, sorrowful; forlorn, forlorn.
At this season, now warm now cold,
It is most difficult to keep well.)
(Trans, by He, 2004: 90)

Here, “寻寻”and “觅觅”, “冷冷”and“清清”, “凄凄”and“惨惨”and“戚戚”are all synonyms or near-synonyms respectively. Just by means of tautology, the poetess’s senses of solitude, loss, sadness, helplessness as well as the manner of pursuit for extrication were fully demonstrated.

Similarly, in legal language, a legal document is prolix because its author always endeavors to secure complete coverage of a certain range of meaning, and the style turns involved as a result of the author’s attempt to give a precise definition of this range. Thus the law-makers’ main concern is to avoid ambiguity. For example, one of the obvious legal features is the co-ordination of some near-synonyms, which is necessary if precision is to be obtained. The following example is taken from Article 27 of “中华人民共和国刑法” (The Criminal Law of the People’s Republic of China, 2016):

[13] 在共同犯罪中起次要或者辅助作用的，是从犯。对于从犯，应当从从轻、减轻处罚或者免除处罚。

(In joint crime, the one who acts as secondary or ancillary role is accessory. For an accessory offender, the punishment executed should be lighter, mitigated or exonerative.)

In this legal article, “次要”is synonymous with “辅助”, so is “从轻”with “减轻”. Even “免除” is a bit further on from “减轻”. The use of this type of tautology is nothing but for the effect of precision. Otherwise, the criminal differences can not be made clearly for treatment.

Additionally, when tautology is applied in a register as vehicle, there also exist the two facets discussed above. First, if a given variable of vehicle can express a clear range of meaning by itself, then, adding a synonym to it is redundant and unnecessary, this is what writers should avoid. Second, if adding a synonym can make the range of meaning of the given variable much more precise and complete, then, this kind of tautology and prolixity is necessary, reasonable and acceptable, which should be advocated in textual metaphor.

are necessary, understandable and acceptable, especially in literature or legal documents. Let’s enjoy the first half in the first stanza of the poetess Li Qingzhao’s “声声慢” (“Autumn Mood”: *To the tune of Shengsheng-man*):

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper tentatively discusses the characteristics of register and its functions for constructing textual metaphor. The research shows that between registers as tenor and registers as vehicle of a metaphor there exist very close relationships. Hence, we list and explore three kinds of relational patterns. As for the proper features of register, in text, registers are dynamic and constantly changing. This is especially true of metaphorical registers as vehicles in text. In view of this case, we choose to explore some of the most representative registral features including registral co-occurrence restrictions, violation, variation, simplification and tautology, meanwhile, analyze their functions constructing textual metaphor. In fact, no language exists in vacuum. Only in combination with their related contexts, can registers function successfully.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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