

A contrastive study of the semantic prosody of Time adverbs "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn"

Yunqian Hu

Tianjin University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Tianjin, China

camil2022@163.com

Abstract. This study taking "màn màn" and "jiàn jiàn" as an example, on the basis of syntactic description, using the theory of semantic prosody, combined with the research methods of employing data and analysis, being qualitative and quantifying, under the support of professional knowledge and technique, analyses contrastively the colligation and semantic prosody of the overlapping time adverbs "màn màn" and "jiàn jiàn". It is found that "jiàn jiàn" is more commonly used when describing the state, while "màn màn" is more commonly used when modifying the action. What's more, the proportion of the neutral collocation of "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" is basically same. In the comparison between positive collocation and negative collocation, the negative collocation of "jiàn jiàn" is more, and the positive collocation of "màn màn" is more. P.

Keywords: semantic prosody, time adverbs, corpus linguistics, màn màn, jiàn jiàn.

1. Preface

1.1 The theory of semantic prosody

Based on the Firth (1957)'s concept of "prosody", Sinclair (1991) established the brand-new term -- semantic prosody. He believed that the corpus-related researches prove that if a certain collocation is formed between words, it will lead to specific semantic tendencies, in other words, specific words naturally have the ability to form collocation. They always aggregate words with the same or similar semantic characteristics.

Keywords and words with the same or similar semantic features tend to appear together in the collocation. With the increasing application frequency of two kinds of words collocation, the keyword items will be affected by the long-term collocation of words and their related semantic characteristics, which will eventually cause that the whole context of applying the key word items has a specific semantic atmosphere which is also the semantic prosody.

1.2 The reason for selecting the topic

As for "jiàn jiàn", the Modern Chinese Dictionary (the seventh edition) explains that "it represents the degree or number gradually increases or decreases slowly." The Modern Chinese False Words Dictionary explains that "it means 'slowly' and the degree or quantity varies continuously and slowly." In our research, we can find that the overlapping possibility of "màn màn" and "jiàn jiàn" is very large. And "jiàn jiàn" often needs to borrow the word "màn màn" or use other similar words such as "huǎn màn" and "huǎn huǎn" to explain the meaning of "jiàn jiàn".

As for "màn màn", the definition of it is relatively clear currently, but there is some controversy in the attribution of word categories. This study recognizes the view of Zhang Yaming (2013) which says the "màn màn" indicates that the action takes a long time and can only act as adverbial to mean time as a time adverb in syntax.

Zhang Yaming, Shi Jiwei (2013) hold the opinion that "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" belong to the synonym adverbs, their adverbial syntactic function is basically the same, semantics meanings in different states such as autonomous or not, subjective and objective have individual differences. Liu Jun (2006) studied 16 kinds of representative dictionaries of the explanation situations of the word "jiàn jiàn" and found that most dictionaries think "jiàn jiàn" contains the meaning of "slowness", more than this, some grammar works also recognize the statement, for example, Ma Zhen (2004) thinks that

"jiàn jiàn" represents behavior or condition happen or appear slowly and continuously. In addition, Zhang Jing (2011), Liu Yan (2016), Cao Yulin (2016) and others have further analyzed "màn màn" and "jiàn jiàn" from the perspectives of semantic analysis、 diachronic evolution and pragmatic characteristics.

These research results are relatively close to the study of semantic prosody, so they have certain reference value for this research. However, because they are still in the traditional stage of example analysis and description, and lack the support of corpus data and more reasonable interpretation, we still need to further observe the existing relevant research conclusions.

Table 1. Existing studies of "jiàn jiàn " and "màn màn"

entry	pronunciation	existing research views	examples
gradually	jiàn jiàn	The degree or quantity will gradually increase or decrease slowly.("Modern Chinese Dictionary")	She is~ getting old. We are~ familiar with the pharmacist. Rain ~ stopped.
slowly	màn màn	Syntactic: only act as adverbial and semantic function is time adverb indicating time(Zhang Yaming, Shi Jiwei, 2013)	Please ~ enjoy. She ~ holds out her right hand. I'm ~used to it.

1.3 Research methods

When constructing the corpus, this study downloaded 10,000 examples containing "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" in the Beijing Language and Culture University Corpus Center(BCC corpus). Then, the examples that fit the study conditions were manually selected, and the examples that did not meet the conditions of this study were deleted, for instance: "jiàn jiàn" as examples for onomatopoeia, adjectives, and nouns, and "màn màn" as examples for adjectives and nouns.After merging and deleting similar items,the corpus of the translated works and the ancient Chinese works still have a total of 9879 corpus of "jiàn jiàn"and 9726 corpus of "màn màn". And then about 20 corpus as a group were randomly selected to meet the requirements.Finally separately 500 corpus of "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" become the basic corpus and index corpus.

This paper will use Excel software, MyTxtSegTag participle and the tools of part-of-speech tagging to analyze the sample corpus, and organize the relevant data and charts to show the subtle differences between the time adverbs "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn".

2. The class connection of time adverbs "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn"

"jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" are both time adverbs with the meaning of "slowness " (Liu Jun, 2006). We use the index corpus to summarize and compare the class connection modes of "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" , then further explore the differences between these two semantic prosody and select the appropriate span.

2.1 The class connection of the time adverb "jiàn jiàn"

There are five basic categories of the class connection of time adverb "jiàn jiàn", as follows:

The first category is "jiàn jiàn + VP", and behind "jiàn jiàn" to modify verb phrases, accounting for the largest proportion of all examples. Verbs component contains verbs mainly including psychological verbs such as "believe", "like", "feel", action behavior verbs such as "go up", "go down", modal verbs such as " can ", "could", expressive development verbs such as "grow" , "fruit". And there

are more conditions using words "dào" "le" "chéng" behind "jiàn jiàn + V P" to show changes and results. Generally it can not be correct to add tendency verbs such as "huíqù" "jìnlái" etc.:

Baja gradually believed that the "liquid energy" of flowers into the spring water, heated by the sun, and mixed with some brandy, can treat the most fundamental human disease: emotional diseases. (Wen Hui Bao)

Paper windows gradually became white and could distinguish the window lattice! (Xiao Hong / Life and Death Field)

The train gradually went up to the mountain and both sides are the green cliffs closing to the windows, such as barriers like green velvet, rotating and overlapping. (Bing Xin / Bing Xin Collection)

The second category is "jiàn jiàn + Adv + VP". The adverbs behind "jiàn jiàn" that modify verb phrases can be the definite adverb "zhǐ", the negative adverb "bù" and "bú zài", and the adverb "yòu" indicating repeated actions:

This is another year, in the east area of Beijing city, the snow in the courtyard has been a long time, gradually only a little bit under the north window left. (Yu Pingbo / The hymn of early spring)

The child gradually stopped crying, and it just reminded her of that it is not a good omen. It's the most efficacious for children. (Eileen Chang / Eileen Chang)

The voice of Cheng Gang becoming hazy, the brain gradually appeared hallucination again. (Luo Guangbin / Red rock)

The third category is "jiàn jiàn + AdjP", "jiàn jiàn" can only be used to modify state adjectives to show the dynamic process of state change. The state adjectives behind tend to describe the form after changing. Negative adverbs often appear in front of adjectives, auxiliary words "qǐ lái" and "le" adjectives often match with adjectives:

When I opened my eyes again, the red did not disappear, but gradually became rich, like a rust of rusty water, silently diving into the green sea. (Bi Shumin / Moon halo and Wind)

The blood-red twilight gradually faded, and the bridge became even more empty and silent (People's Daily)

After a few meals, Madam Dan's mood gradually deteriorated. (Chen Shixu / General Town)

The fourth category is "jiàn jiàn + subject-predicate phrase", which is similar to using "jiàn jiàn de" as an adverbial at the beginning of one sentence to use a comma as separation like "jiàn jiàn de...", for example:

Gradually he grew thinner, and his elegant suit and shirt grew bigger and bigger, like an empty shell. (Yi Shu / If Suxi falls down)

Gradually their conversation led out to the debate. (Mao Dun / Eclipse)

Gradually he ached the deltoid on his arms. (Zhang Chengzhi / The North River)

The fifth category is "jiàn jiàn + PP", among which there are a large number of the cases of "jiàn jiàn + PP + VP", such as (14) (15):

It was accidental for her to push the wall, gradually back, it was a gem door. (Xu Dishan / Ming ming bird)

Its performance style gradually shifted from its original theme of "Carnival" to its new styles of Orleans, Caribbean, and Venetian. (City Express)

With so many honors, the brand awareness of "Xuhui" is gradually promoted in the real estate industry in Shanghai and even the whole country. (Wen Hui Bao)

Table 2. The class connection types and quantity contrasts of the "jiàn jiàn"

Basic class connection	quantity	colligation	quantity
jiàn jiàn + VP	358	jiàn jiàn + VP	295
		jiàn jiàn + VP + auxiliary words	63
jiàn jiàn + Adv + VP	45	jiàn jiàn + Adv + V P	30

		jiàn jiàn+ Adv + V P + auxiliary words	15
jiàn jiàn+AdjP	52	jiàn jiàn+Adj	14
		jiàn jiàn+ Adj + auxiliary words	28
		jiàn jiàn+ A dv + Adj	9
		jiàn jiàn+ Adv + Adj + aids	1
jiàn jiàn+ master-verb structure	11	jiàn jiàn + master-verb structure	11
jiàn jiàn+PP	34	jiàn jiàn+PP	9
		jiàn jiàn+PP+VP	14
		jiàn jiàn+ PP + V P + auxiliary words	11

2.2 The class connection of the time adverb "màn màn"

There are five basic categories of the class connection of the time adverb "màn màn", which are as follows:

The first category is "màn màn+ VP", namely behind the time adverb "màn màn"to modify verb phrases, such category accounts for the largest proportion of all cases. These verbs mainly including action verbs such as "go", "write", psychological verbs such as "believe" "admire", part of modal verbs such as "can" "could", directional verbs such as "jìnlái", "guòlái", expressive development verbs such as "grow", "fruit" etc.:

I want to write a lot, but I am not stable, then I will slowly write them down. (Guo Moruo / Rafting Trilogy)

"Thus, I will not accompany, any more! Hey, hey, hey, " Mr. Ma slowly went down two stairs (Lao She / Erma)

However, in the north, in the so-called dead city, a group of powerful and energetic writers slowly showed up. (Shen Congwen / Learn from reality)

The second category is "màn màn + Adv + VP". The adverbs that modify verb phrases behind "màn màn" can be negative adverbs, definite adverbs, and those adverbs representing repeated actions etc:

Reporters pretended to be diners, and they seemed to not mind any more slowly. (City Express)

Shao Ping slowly figured out what had happened to himself. (Lu Yao / The Ordinary World)

Near the foot of the mountain is the green grass, the color of green far away gradually fade, slowly become a grey and yellow land which is vast and boundless. (Nie Yunlan / Yu Jiaolong)

The third category is "màn màn + AdjP", which is consistent with "jiàn jiàn". But "màn màn" can only be used to modify state adjectives, showing the dynamic process of state change. The adjectives can be modified with negative adverbs. The state adjectives behind "màn màn" often describe the form after changing, and there are also many examples of using directional verbs such as "qǐ lái" and "xiàlái" as ending, such as (23) (24):

The most fatal thing is that the brain is slowly out of control. (People's Daily)

Jinggang town slowly develops up, his business is getting better and better day by day (Lao She / The Democratic World)

We still can not communicate well, but this sentence has been slowly accepted. (San Mao / Qingcheng)

The fourth category is "màn màn+ IP", which is similar to using "màn màn de" as an adverbial at the beginning of one sentence to use a comma as separation like "màn màn de...", for example:

Slowly he added, "Old age sometimes adds fun as well." (Nameless / Bridge)

Slowly, I also accumulated experiences(Wen Hui Bao)

Slowly you will understand: how the ancients used the word.(Lao She / When the root is firm,the branches flourish)

The fifth category is "màn màn+ PP", among which there are a large number of "màn màn + PP + VP" cases, such as (8) (9):

The children are still children, so they naturally can not reach highly and far, just start slowly from the near and small. (Zhu Ziqing / Zhu Ziqing)

Its performance style gradually shifted from its original theme of "Carnival" to its new styles of Orleans, Caribbean, and Venetian .(City Express)

Chun Hua thought for a while ,slowly took three hundred dollars out from the pocket , helplessly handed over.(Zhang Yu, / Weak)

Table 3. The class connection types and quantity contrasts of the “màn màn”

Basic class connection	quantity	colligation	quantity
màn màn +VP	399	jiàn jiàn+VP	342
		jiàn jiàn+ VP + auxiliary words	57
màn màn + Adv + VP	39	jiàn jiàn+ Adv + V P	27
		jiàn jiàn+ Adv + V P + auxiliary words	12
màn màn +AdjP	17	jiàn jiàn+Adj	2
		jiàn jiàn+ Adj + auxiliary words	14
		jiàn jiàn+ Adv + Adj P + aids	2
màn màn + master-verb structure	13	màn màn+ master-verb structure	13
màn màn +PP	32	jiàn jiàn+PP	4
		jiàn jiàn+PP+VP	11
		jiàn jiàn+ PP + V P + auxiliary words	17

2.3 The contrast of the class connections of the time adverbs " jiàn jiàn " and "màn màn "

Contrasting the class connection of the time adverbs " jiàn jiàn " and "màn màn" ,it is found that they can be directly matched with the verb components, adjective components, prepositional phrases and subject-verb structures and can be adverbials. The differences are :

"jiàn jiàn" should not match verb phrases with directional verbs such as "jìnlái" and "jìnqù", while "màn màn" can, such as "màn màn jìnlái" and "màn màn jìnqù".

"jiàn jiàn" cannot modify monosyllabic predicates, but "màn màn" can modify not only polysyllabic and multisyllable predicates, but also monosyllabic predicates, such as " màn màn xiàlái," and " màn màn zuò".

The proportion of the adjective components directly connection with "jiàn jiàn " is greater than that with "màn màn". However, there are more examples that "màn màn" directly modifies the verb components.The number is larger than that of the cases of using " jiàn jiàn "to modify verb components directly. It can be seen that the "jiàn jiàn" tends to describe and modify the states, while "màn màn" tends to describe and modify the movements.

3. The semantic prosody of the time adverbs "jiàn jiàn " and "màn màn "

To study the semantic prosody of the time adverbs "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn "and to describe and compare them, it is necessary to understand some concepts involved in the semantic prosody , such as"colligation","node word"and"span". "Colligation" refers to the form of combination of abstract expression words , but we should also pay attention to that its collocation is not a specific form,but can be considered the collocations between grammar structure formulas (Wei Naixing, 2002),for example,the structure of "màn màn + V" is a colligation , namely one colligation formed by the time adverb " màn màn" and verb collocations,such as "màn màn zǒu", " màn màn xīnshǒng", etc."Node word" is also known as key words, which is the object of semantic prosody research, such as the time adverbs "màn màn" and "jiàn jiàn ". " Span" refers to the distance between collocation words and node words, calculated in words. Semantic prosody can be divided into four types: Positive prosody,Negative prosody, Neutral prosody, and Mixed prosody. Specifically, they all refer to the collocation tendency of node words.(Stubbs,1996)

After the analysis of the basic colligation of the words "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn", we can find that the collocation of "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" is mainly the right collocation.So in this study, we chose the span of [0.2R]. Because this study cannot calculate MI values, only reference values T can be counted ,and specific values should be adjusted according to the actual situation.

3.1 The Statistics of the semantic tendency of the time adverb " jiàn jiàn"

For the time adverb "jiàn jiàn",because there are too many words to be counted, and the lower T value has little impact on the results, so we choose the collocations of T value greater than 3 as the statistical objects, specifically as follows:

Table 4. Typical collocation statistics of "jiàn jiàn" (local)

lexical item	word frequency	lexical item	word frequency
became	25	lose	4
cold	19	weaken	4
grow	19	lighten	4
find	15	go up	4
towards	11	and	4
appear	10	produce	3
sink	9	cultivate	3
from	9	like	3
stop	8	melt into	3
reduce	8	condense	3
shine	7	come out	3
rise	7	increase	3
be accustomed to	7	quicken	3
cool	6	deepen	3
understand	5	find	3
lack	4	change	3

The rules of semantic tendency of this study are as follows:

Positive collocation: after synthesizing the specific context and related words of the selected example sentences, if they contain positive meanings such as beautiful, upward trend and other emotional feelings, it can be determined as positive collocations, such as shine, rise, produce, like, increase, quicken, deepen, understand, etc

Negative collocation: after synthesizing the specific context and related words of the selected example sentences, if they contain derogatory and negative meanings, downward trend disappointment and other emotional feelings, it can be judged as negative collocations, such as cold, decline, stop, decrease, cold, lack, lose, weaken, reduce, melt into, and find, etc.

Unable to reflect a specific emotional tendency, only to express the objective facts of the collocation of words are regarded as neutral collocations, such as become, discover, find, towards, appear, from, be accustomed to, and, form, condense, come out, etc.

According to the above criteria, I list the semantic tendency statistics of the word "jiàn jiàn", specifically as follows:

Table 5. Statistical table of the semantic tendency of the node words of "jiàn jiàn"

	Positive collocation	Negative collocation	Neutral collocation	total
lexical item	Shine(7), rise (7), rise (4), produce (3), like (3), increase (3), accelerate(3), deepen(3), understand(5)	Cold (19), sink (9), stop (8), reduce (8), cool (6), lack (4), lose (4), weaken (4), decrease (4), melt into (3), discover(3), change (3)	Become (25), become (19), discover (15), towards (11), appear (10), from (9), be accustomed to(7), and (4), develop (3), condense (3), come out (3)	
The number of words	9	12	11	32
Word quantity	38	75	109	222
The proportion of words	17%	34%	49%	100%

According to the statistical data of semantic tendency, it can be found that there are 32 typical collocations of the time adverb "jiàn jiàn" and 222 word frequencies. Among them, there are 9 positive collocations, 38 word frequency, accounting for 17% of the total quantity, 12 negative collocations, 75 word frequency, accounting for 34% of the total quantity, 11 neutral collocations, 109 word frequency, accounting for 49% of the total quantity.

3.2 The statistics of the semantic tendency of the time adverb "màn màn"

For the time adverb "màn màn", the collocations of T value greater than 3 are also selected as the statistical objects:

Table 6. Typical collocation statistics of "màn màn" (local)

lexical item	word frequency	lexical item	word frequency
from	27	will be used to	5
find	17	lift	4

be accustomed to	15	enjoyment	4
experience	11	reduce	4
make	11	come out	4
up	10	appear	4
develop	8	ascend	4
stop	8	You just	3
grow	8	heat	3
understand	7	know	3
become	7	low	3
produce	6	fall	3
rise	6	add	3
also	5	enjoy	3
reach	5	separate	3

The rules of determining the semantic tendency of the word "màn màn" shall remain unchanged, as follows:

Table 7. Statistical table of the semantic tendency of "màn màn "

	Positive collocation	Negative collocation	Neutral collocation	Always remember
lexical item	Experience (11), make (11), up (10), develop(8), understand (7), rise (6), will get used to (5), enjoyment(4), ascend(4), heat(3), enjoy (3)	Stop (8), also (6), reduce (4), low (3), fall down (3)	From (27), discover (17), be accustomed to (15), Become (8), grow(7), produce(6), reach(5), lift (4), Come Out(4), appear (4), You just (3), Discover(3), Separate (3)	
The number of words	11	5	13	29
Word quantity	72	24	106	202
The proportion of words	36%	12%	52%	100%

According to the statistical data of semantic tendency, we can find that there are 29 typical collocations of the time adverb "màn màn" and 202 word frequency. Among them, there are 11 positive collocations, 72 word frequency, accounting for 36% of the total quantity, there are 5 negative collocations, 24 word frequency, accounting for 12% of the total quantity, there are 13 neutral collocations, 106 neutral word frequency, accounting for 52% of the total quantity.

3.3 The semantic prosody description result of the time adverbs "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn"

The basic collocations of the words "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" are mainly combined with verb components, accounting for 358 (71.6%) and 399 (79.8%) of the 500 items. Meanwhile, the items combined with verb components have a slight advantage. In addition, the proportion of the items combined directly with adjective components of "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" are 52 (10.4%) and 17 (3.4%) respectively, indicating that the proportion of the items combined directly with adjective components of "jiàn jiàn" is greater than that of "màn màn". This indicates that "jiàn jiàn" is more commonly used in describing and modifying states, while "màn màn" is more commonly used in describing and modifying movements.

Among the selected typical collocation words of "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn", the proportion of the neutral collocations is close to 50%, the difference is not obvious. But there is a significant difference between the positive collocations and negative collocations. For the time adverb "jiàn jiàn", the proportion of belonging to the typical negative collocation words relatively is larger than that of belonging to the typical positive collocation words. On the contrary, for the time adverb "màn màn", the proportion of belonging to the typical positive collocation words relatively is larger than that of belonging to the typical negative collocation words.

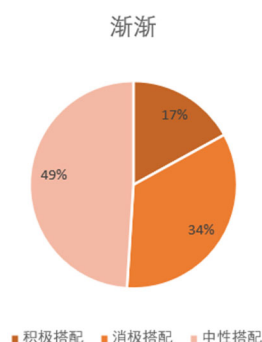


Figure 1. The pie chart of statistical semantic tendency of “jiàn jiàn”

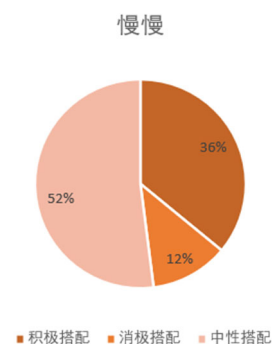


Figure 2. The pie chart of statistical semantic tendency of “màn màn”

To sum up, according to the statistical map of semantic tendency of the time adverbs "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn", the proportion of neutral collocations of them is basically the same, while in the comparison between positive collocations and negative collocations, the proportion of the negative collocations of "jiàn jiàn" is greater, and the proportion of the positive collocations of "màn màn" is greater.

4. Conclusion

In this study, we choose the synonym time adverbs "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" for contrast study, according to the research of collocations, semantic prosody, high-frequency collocation words, showing the subtle differences between "jiàn jiàn" and "màn màn" which are mainly reflected in the aspects of the basic collocations, the class connection collocations, the semantic prosody tendency, the high-frequency collocation words, etc.:

Table 8. The Contrast table of the differences between the time adverbs

Time adverbs time	Jiàn jiàn	Màn màn
Basic collocation	Jiàn jiàn+VP Jiàn jiàn+ Adv + VP Jiàn jiàn+AdjP Jiàn jiàn+PP Jiàn jiàn+ subject-predicate structure	Màn màn+VP Màn màn+ Adv + VP Màn màn+AdjP Màn màn+PP Màn màn+ subject-predicate structure
Class connection collocation	Biases to describe and modify states	Biases to describe and modify the actions
Semantic prosody tendency	Negative collocations> Positive collocations	Positive collocations> Negative collocations
High- frequency collocation words	Become, cold, grow, discover, from ……	From, discover, be accustomed to, experience, make……

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