

CHAPTER 5

TEN EXAMPLES OF NEGATION WITH *BÚ*

1. In this chapter I will argue that in present-day spoken Mandarin in the Peking area, the form *bú* appears not only as a morphophonemic alternant of *bù* 'not' before *qù* tone syllables, but also as an independent form meaning 'not to be'. Synchronically, *bú* 'not to be' contrasts in a minimal way with *bù* 'not'. Diachronically, *bú* 'not to be' may have developed as *bú shì* > *bú shì* > *búr* > *bú*, leaving the *yángpíng* tone as the only reflex of the copula *shì/shì* 'be'. An interesting parallel may be proposed for Mandarin *yī*, which is not just a morphophonemic alternant of *yī* 'one' before *qù* tone syllables, but also appears as an independent form meaning 'a specimen of'.

Some of the arguments and examples submitted here have been presented in Wiedenhof (1994a: 96-102 and 1994b). Here, I present nine spoken instances¹³ and one written example of *bú* 'not to be', at once illustrating its use and suggesting reasons why it has tended to escape linguistic attention. Among the spoken examples, six instances of *bú* represent three different Pekinese speakers. Two spoken examples were recorded from a speaker from Tiānjīn who had lived in Peking for the last ten years. In addition, one non-native spoken instance of *bú* will be considered.

2. The common Mandarin word for 'not' is *bù*. The form is peculiar in that it has its own tone sandhi rules. These are usually listed as follows: the negation occurs as *bú* 'not' before *qù* tone syllables and as *bù* 'not' before all other tones. Examples: *Bú zài*. 'He isn't in'; *Bù duō*. 'It isn't much.'; *Bù máng*. 'I'm not busy.', *Bù hǎo*. 'No good.' and *Bù a*. 'Well, no.'

This neat representation in terms of allomorphic alternation is upset by at least two disturbing factors. Firstly, the negation carries an obligatory neutral tone in collocation with compound verbs of the so-called resultative type. A neutral-tone *bu* can be infix in these compounds to express potentiality. Even careful enunciation of this infix *bu* will not restore (so to speak) a full-tone *bú* or *bù*: *Shuō bu dào*., literally 'speak not arrive', hence 'In talking, I didn't get that far.'; *Dǎ bu tōng*. literally 'hit not pervade', i.e. 'Can't get through.' (on the telephone). Secondly, from the perspective of actual speech data, a neutral-tone *bu* is by far the most

common form attested for 'not' in Mandarin. In other words, at normal conversational speed, *bu* 'not' commonly occurs in positions where careful enunciation would restore *bú* 'not' or *bù* 'not'. Conversely, the occurrence of *bú* 'not' and *bù* 'not' in a regular speech tempo usually denotes special emphasis, so that *Shuō bú dào*. denotes 'In talking, I did not get that far.' and *Dǎ bú tōng*. means 'I cannot get through.'

The circumstance that *bu* 'not' usually appears in the neutral tone is, I think, one of the reasons why the expression *bú* 'not to be' is not easily perceived. The problem is that like *bù* 'not', *bú* 'not to be' can optionally be realized with a neutral tone, as in the first example below. In this example, speaker A was explaining how to make *bāozi* or 'Chinese steamed buns' using Dutch ingredients. Speaker B replies that he must prepare some for a certain *Qián lǎoshī*, literally 'teacher Qián', who has been complaining about having to eat rice every day.

- (5.1) A: Nǐ fàng-- zhǐjiē fàng fāxiào fěn jiu kéyī.
2.SG release direct release rise powder just may
'You put-- put in baking powder just like that, and that's it.' (4760)
- B: Nà wǒ x[ia cì]--
that 1.SG [below occasion]
'So [next time] I'll--' (4761)
- A: Wó (zai zhèr) zuò guo liǎng cì.
1.SG in here make EXP pair occasion
'I made them a couple of times (here).' (4762)
- B: Nà wǒ xià cì, <zuò bāozi> na gěi Qián lǎoshī
that 1.SG below occasion make *bāozi* that give PN*Qián* teacher
zuò bei.
make EVD
'So next time, <you'll make *bāozi*> so I'll just have to make some for Qián.' (4763)
- A: Duì, zuò bā[ozì]--
right make [*bāozi*]
'Right, make some *bā*--' (4764)
- B: Tā bu xiǎng chī miànshí ma?
3 not.be think eat wheaten.food Q
'Didn't he want to eat pasta?' (4765)
- A: Shì ma?
be Q
'Is that right?' (4766)

13. The spoken examples, (5.1)-(5.2) and (5.4)-(5.10) below, have been collected on a cassette tape which is available from the author.

A: (Kěshi)--
but
(But)-- (4767)

B: Tā lǎo chī mǐfàn, tā juéde fán le.
3 old eat rice 3 feel vexed PF
'He always eats rice and he is fed up with it.' (4768)

A: Oh, wǒ-- wó yě shì a, wǒ jiù--
oh 1.SG 1.SG also be CNF 1.SG just
'Oh, I-- me too, I just--' (4769)

B: Tā xiǎng chī miànshi (de).
3 think eat wheaten.food SUB
'He wants to eat pasta.' (4770)

The clue to the interpretation of *bu* in line 4765 is given in the last line of this example: *Tā xiǎng chī miànshi (de)*. 'He feels like having pasta.'. (For want of a better translation for *miànshi* 'wheat products', 'pasta' is here meant to include Chinese steamed buns.) In view of Qián's eagerness to eat pasta, a reading of *bu* in line 4765 as 'not' is implausible. With *bu* 'not', *Tā bu xiǎng chī miànshi ma?* would express disbelief: 'He doesn't want to eat pasta?' I would argue instead that this *bu* is an instance of *bú* 'not to be' appearing in neutral-tone disguise. In other words, *Tā bu xiǎng chī miànshi ma?* means 'Isn't it the case that he wanted to eat pasta?, Didn't he want to eat pasta?'

In the second example, the *yángpíng* tone of *bú* can be heard quite clearly. The example occurs in a mock discussion about *chá dào* 'the art of tea'. Speaker B hints that speaker A is not quite cultured enough to engage in the contemplative inspection of leaves dancing in one's teacup. Surely, suggests speaker B, the only thing speaker A can think about in connection with tea is drinking it?

(5.2) B: Nà zhèi ge chádào shì duō zhǒng duō yàng de suóyī
that this piece art.of.tea be many sort many kind SUB therefore
nǐ dàgài shì-hahaha guāng huì hē, nà n--
2.SG general be-hahaha bare can drink that [2.SG]
'Well, the art of tea has many ways, so probably you-hahaha can only drink, so y--' (4931)

A: Bú shì wǒ guāng huì hē, nà nǐ-- wó ye bú guāng
not be 1.SG bare can drink that 2.SG 1.SG also not.be bare
huì hē.
can drink
'It's not as if I can only drink, so you-- it's not as if I can only drink though.' (4932)

This example illustrates the close affinity between *bú shì* 'not to be' and *bú* 'not to be', both of which occur in the last line. After *Bú shì wǒ guāng huì hē, nà nǐ--* 'It's not as if I can only drink, so you--', the speaker checks herself and restates her original comment as *...wó ye bú guāng huì hē* '...it's not as if I can only drink though'. If this phrase were to be written in Chinese characters, it would presumably be rephrased as 我也不是光會喝, which may in turn be read aloud as *wó yě bú shì guāng huì hē* 'it is not as if I can only drink, though'. This is in line with a general tendency in written Chinese to insert the existential verb *shì* 'be' where no such verb is needed in the nominal predicates of spoken Mandarin (cf. p. 59). Thus colloquial *Wó Běijīng rén*. 'I'm from Peking.' corresponds to written 我是北京人。 *Wǒ shì Běijīng rén*. 'I am from Peking.'. Similarly, 我是天津的 <哦>。 *Wǒ shì Tiānjīng de <oh>*. 'I am from Tiānjīn <oh>.' may serve as an acceptable written equivalent of *Wǒ Tiānjīng de <oh>*. 'I'm from Tiānjīn <oh>.' in example (2.6). When *shì* 'be' is enunciated with deliberate care, or when it expresses emphasis, it is realized as *shì* 'be', with a *qù* tone. For *bú* in *...wó ye bú guāng huì hē* '...it's not as if I can only drink though', therefore, the *yángpíng* tone can be regarded as the only reflex of *shì* 'be'. In other words, the *yángpíng* tone reflects the fact that *bù* 'not' is realized as its allomorph *bú* 'not' when followed by a *qù* tone in *shì* 'be'. In the absence of *shì* 'be', the retention of the *yángpíng* tone in *bú* 'not to be' makes this tone the only formal correlate of the meaning 'be'. As the negator of a nominal predicate, *bú* is in many ways similar to Classical Chinese 非 *fēi* 'not to be'.

The above description implies that a formal distinction between *bú/bu* 'not to be' and *bù/bù/bu* 'not' can be realized only before non-*qù* tones. As shown in example (5.1), the formal contrast before non-*qù* tones is not obligatory. The *yīnpíng* tone of *guāng* 'bare, only' in (5.2)/4932 identifies *bú* as 'not to be' instead of 'not'. If *tài* 'too, excessive' were substituted for *guāng* 'bare', *bú* could be read as either (a) 'not to be': *...wó ye bú tài huì hē* '...it's not as if I can drink too well though'; or (b) as the allomorph of *bù* 'not' before *qù* tones: *...wó ye bú tài huì hē* '...I can't drink too well though'.

A diachronic development *bú shì* > *bú shì* > *búr* > *bú* > *bu* 'not be' may be surmised. All of these forms co-occur synchronically, along with intermediate realizations, e.g. with nasalized schwa: *bú* [ũ].¹⁴ In this connection, an interesting parallel may be noted with the Peking Mandarin expression *yí* 'a specimen of, one piece of'. This expression has been described by 杜永道 Dù Yǒngdào (1993: 142). The parallel with *bú* 'not to be' is especially striking in view of the fact that *yí*

14. Here and on p. 66, expressions have been transcribed partly in Hànyǔ Pīnyīn and partly in the phonetic alphabet. In other words, the transcriptions enclosed in square brackets are not intended as a phonetic restatement of the preceding italicized expressions.

'one, a' has special tone sandhi rules closely resembling those for *bù* 'not': *yí* when preceding a *qù* tone; *yì* before all other tones, and *yī* in final position, including isolated utterances. In other words, apart from the *yīnpíng* tone in final *yī* 'one', the tonal modifications are identical to those of *bù* 'not'. Another similarity with *bù* 'not' is that *yī* 'one', in my experience, usually appears in the neutral tone in regular conversational tempos: *yī* 'one, a'.

The phenomenon noted by Dù Yǒngdào is that *yí*, in the *yángpíng* tone, appears directly before a nominal expression without an intervening measure word, as in the following example:

- (5.3) 前 院儿来 了 一 工人，一 解放军，一
 qián yuàn lái le yí gōngren yí jiěfàng jūn yí
 before yard come PF one.piece worker one.piece liberate army one.piece
 学生，还 有 一 老外。
 xuéshēng hái yǒu yí lǎowài
 student still exist one.piece foreigner

'In the front yard, a worker, a soldier, a student and also a foreigner had arrived.'
 (Dù 1993: 142; my transcription, glosses and translation)

As Dù reports, the expression *yí* 'a specimen of' occurs in colloquial Pekinese. In this connection, it may be interesting to note that unlike *yí* 'a specimen of', the colloquial expressions *liǎ* 'two specimens of' and *sān* 'three specimens of' have long been documented and can even be written in Chinese characters, as 倆 and 仨, respectively. Like *yí* 'a specimen of', these two expressions can be immediately followed by a noun.¹⁵

Dù's description of *yí* 'a specimen of' suggests a very similar diachronic development to the one proposed above for *bú* 'not to be'. In the case of *bú* 'not to be', the *yángpíng* tone was due to the *qù* tone of *shì* 'to be'. In a similar fashion, the general measure word *gè* 'specimen, piece' may be assumed to have led to the *yángpíng* tone in *yí* 'a specimen of'. The loss of *gè* may be envisaged as follows (cf. note 14): *yí gè* > *yí ge* > *yí* [ɣ] > *yí* [ǝ] > *yí* [ə] > *yí* > *yī* 'a specimen of'. Again, these and intermediate forms co-occur synchronically, and a formal contrast between *yī* 'one' and *yí* 'a specimen of' occurs only before non-*qù* tones.

In the next example, *shì bú* 'isn't it' in line 3517 takes the place of the expression which is normally cited as *shì bu shì* or *shì bu shì* 'isn't it, is it not the case that'. The speakers were discussing the impression Chinese speech sounds make

15. The two characters combine a "man radical" 亻 with 兩 *liǎng* 'pair' and 三 *sān* 'three'. By analogy, a combination of the man radical with 一 *yī* 'one' can be used to coin a character 𠂇 for *yí* 'a specimen of'. Similarly, the character 甬 *béng* 'not need to', which combines 不 *bù* 'not' and 用 *yòng* 'need', may serve as a model for a new character made up of 不 *bù* 'not' and 是 *shì* 'be': 𠂇 *bú* 'not to be'.

on speakers of Dutch, and the impression of Dutch sounds on Chinese ears. A small section of this exchange was presented in example (4.3).

- (5.4) A: Wǒ wèn tāmen tèbié dòu.
 1.SG ask 3.PL special provoke
 'When I asked them it was really funny.'
 (3511)
- A: Wǒ wèn tāmen wǒ shuō de nèi ge, nǐmen nèi jiào shéme
 1.SG ask 3.PL 1.SG say SUB that piece 2.PL that call what
 ya, nèi ge, nèi ge... tí-- yí kāishǐ tīng Zhōngwén
 CNF that piece that piece HES one start listen Chinese.language
 shéme wèr de, shéme gǎnjué? <m>
 what taste SUB what perceive mm
 'I asked them, I said, eh, you, eh, what was it again, eh, eh, when you li-- first listen to Chinese for the first time what is its flavor, what's the feel of it?
 <mm>'
 (3512)
- A: Hái shì tāmen shuō de tèbie nán hahaha-tīng, xiàng dǎ
 still be 3.PL say SUB special difficult hahaha.listen like hit
 hahaha-jià yiyàng-hahaha <hahaha>.
 hahaha-frame same-hahaha hahaha
 'Well, they said it was awful to listen to-hahaha, that it sounded like hahaha-people quarreling-hahaha <hahaha>.'
 (3513)
- A: Géi wǒ xiào de! <hahaha>
 give 1.SG laugh SUB hahaha
 'It had me in stitches! <hahaha>'
 (3514)
- A: Tāmen shuō tèbie nán tīng.
 3.PL say special difficult listen
 'They said it was awful to listen to.'
 (3515)
- A: Búguo nèi shéme yě shì, Hélān wén yě shì, gāng
 but that what also be PNHolland language also be barely
 tīng a <ê>.
 listen CNF uh-huh
 'But what's-it is like that too, Dutch is like that too, when you first listen to it
 <uh-huh>.'
 (3516)
- A: Juéde shì bú kǒuyīn tèbié-- wǒ tīng le yǐhòu jiù juéde hh
 feel be not.be accent special 1.SG listen PF later just feel "kh"
 zhèi zhǒng de tèbié duō.
 this sort SUB special much
 'I felt isn't the sound terribly-- after I had heard it, I felt there were a lot of "kh"-like sounds.'
 (3517)

Example (5.5) shows a non-native instance of *bú* 'not to be' observed in a speaker from Shanghai who had lived in Peking for ten years. None of the native Mandarin speakers I confronted with this example mentioned peculiarities that concern the arguments presented here. In my view, therefore, speaker B's *bú* 'not to be' in line 3354 reflects common Pekinese usage.

- (5.5) A: Érqie tāmen nèi shì bu shì Zhōngwén dōu shuō de
 moreover 3.PL that be not be Chinese.language all say SUB
 tèbié hǎo, ha?
 special good ha
 'Also, don't you think all of them speak Chinese extremely well?' (3351)
- B: Tāmen, zhìshǎo tāmen de lǎoshī, j-- wó hěn chī jīng de
 3.PL at.least 3.PL SUB teacher HES 1.SG very eat fright SUB
 shì tāmen de lǎoshī shuō de dōu fēicháng de hǎo.
 be 3.PL SUB teacher say SUB all extraordinary SUB good
 'They, at least their teachers-- I was really amazed their teachers all speak it extremely well.' (3352)
- A: Oh, tāmen de lǎoshī dōu-- wǒ dōu méi yǒu-- méi yǒu
 oh 3.PL SUB teacher all 1.SG all not.exist exist not.exist exist
 tīng a.
 listen CNF
 'Oh, their teachers-- I haven't-- haven't heard any of them.' (3353)
- B: Wǒ bú shuō shì Zhōngguó rén de lǎo[shī]-- eh, jiù shì <jiù
 1.SG not.be say be PNC_{China} man SUB [teacher] eh just be just
 shì> shuō Zhōngguó xuétǒng de <shì-- bú shì didào de j-->.
 be say PNC_{China} parentage SUB be not be genuine SUB
 'I don't mean to say they are Chinese teach-- eh, or <or> of Chinese parentage <they're-- not the real-->.' (3354)
- B: Jiù shì shuō didào de Hélan rén, jiu xiàng zhèi ge
 just be say genuine SUB PNHolland man just like this piece
 Wèi xiānsheng.
 PND_e.Weert mister
 'I mean real Dutch persons like, eh, Mr. De Weert.' (3355)

With *bù* 'not' instead of *bú* 'not to be', *Wǒ bù shuō shì Zhōngguó rén de lǎo[shī]--* would mean 'I won't say they are Chinese teach--'.

Example (5.6), like (5.1) above, illustrates a neutral-tone *bu*. In this case, the choice between 'not' and 'not to be' may seem more puzzling. The speakers are discussing academic library facilities.

- (5.6) B: Suóyǐ dào zhèi biān, kéyǐ liyòng yì xià zhèr de
 therefore arrive this side may make.use one below here SUB
 zīliào--
 material
 'So now that I'm here, I can make use of the materials here--' (4036)
- A: Nǐ juéde zhèr de zīliào fēicháng quán, shì ba?
 2.SG feel here SUB material extraordinary complete be SUG
 'You think they have an enormous collection of materials here, right?' (4037)
- B: Yě bu fēicháng quán, dàn shì bǐ guónèi n-- <hǎo
 also not(.be?) extraordinary complete yet be compare interior good
 dé le> a, yǒu xiē dōngxi nǐ... guónèi kàn bu dào de,
 obtain PF ah exist few thing 2.SG interior look not arrive SUB
 nǐ zhèr kéyǐ kàn dào yì xiē-- <duì>.
 2.SG here may look arrive one few right
 'I wouldn't say enormous, but compared to China-- <easier to come by> ah, some of the things you... don't get to read in China, you can get to read some of those here-- <right>.' (4038)

It is possible that *Yě bu fēicháng quán*, ... in the last line means 'It's not extremely complete either, ...'. But given the repetition of *fēicháng quán* 'extremely complete', it is more plausible that speaker B, rather than denying just the attribute *fēicháng* 'extremely', negates the proposition *fēicháng quán* 'it's extremely complete' as a whole: *Yě bu fēicháng quán*, ... 'It's not as if it's extremely complete, ...; I wouldn't say extremely complete, ...'.

In the next instance, *bú* 'not to be' appears before *yǒu* 'exist'. In the exceptional case of *yǒu* 'exist', a simple negation cannot be marked by *bù* 'not', but must be formed with *méi* 'have not' instead. The expression *bú* 'not to be', however, is fully compatible with *yǒu* 'exist'. Here, speaker B is inquiring about the possibilities of learning Dutch. In her answer, speaker A uses the Dutch word *talentlab* 'language lab'.

- (5.7) B: Bǐrú shuō duō duō shǎo shǎo shì dǎ ge jīchū ba, nǐ
 for.instance say much much little little be hit piece basis SUG 2.SG
 jíran lái le yì ge hǎo tiáojiàn.
 since come PF one piece good condition
 'Say like more or less doing some fundamentals, since I have the opportunity to do this now.' (3490)
- A: Nà zh-- eh, heh, nà kéyǐ a, nǐ-- tāmen zhèr bú yǒu nèi
 that eh heh that may ah 2.SG 3.PL here not.be exist that

talenlab ma nǐ jiù zài zhèr xué bu jiù xíng ma?
language.lab Q 2.SG just in here learn not just go Q

'Well-- eh, heh, well that's possible, you-- don't they have this language lab over here, couldn't you just learn it there?' (3491)

B: Zìjǐ xué a?
self learn CNF
'Learning it by myself?' (3492)

A: Nǐ zìjǐ jiè cídài yě kényǐ xué.
2.SG self lend magnetic.tape also may learn
'You can learn it by yourself by just borrowing the tapes.' (3493)

The following two examples illustrate the expressions *kě bú ma* and *kě bú*, both meaning 'indeed, very much so' and both deriving from *kě bú shì ma*. Taken literally, *kě bú shì ma* is a rhetorical question meaning 'could it not be?, how could it not be?', but instead it denotes the implied answer: 'indeed, very much so'. The loss of the interrogative meaning matches the circumstance that leaving out the interrogative particle *ma* affects the meaning only slightly. Hence *kě bú shì* also means 'indeed, very much so', but is perhaps slightly more informal. A similar difference applies to *nà kě bú ma* 'well indeed, no kidding' in (5.8) and *nà kě bú* 'well indeed, you bet' in (5.9):

(5.8) B: Nǐ yǐjīng chū lái shíjiān bǐjiao jiǔ le ba?
2.SG already exit come time relative long.time PF SUG
'You must have left quite some time ago, right?' (3825)

A: Heh, wǒ xiǎng xiǎng a, <xuéxiào> bā sì nián, <bā sì nián> bā sì nián <oh>.
heh 1.SG think think SUG school eight four year eight four
year eight four year oh
'Heh, let me think, <the school> eighty-four, <eighty-four> eighty-four <oh>.' (3826)

B: Nà kě bú ma, liù nián le.
that may not.be Q six year PF
'No kidding, it's been six year now.' (3827)

(5.9) B: Huá bīng yě méi xué huì, ránhòu yóuyǒng ne, shì--
slide ice also not.exist learn can afterwards swim RLV be
'So I couldn't learn to skate, and as concerns swimming--' (4658)

A: A, yóuyǒng nà nǐ hái-- nǐ hái xiā zhàhu shéme?
ah swim that 2.SG still 2.SG still blind bluff what
'Ah, swimming! Still-- still going on about that?' (4659)

B: Wǒ zuì hòu cèy-- cèyàn de shíhou zǒng shì hégé le.
1.SG most after HES test SUB time general be qualify PF
'Eventually in the te-- tests I did pass.' (4660)

A: Nà wó-- hǎo, wǒ dào shíhou hái qù jiù nǐ, tiān, nǐ
that 1.SG good 1.SG arrive time still go save 2.SG heaven 2.SG
yào zài, eh--
will in eh
'Then I-- well, I'll end up having to save your life, my God, when you're in, eh--' (4661)

B: Nà kě bú, nǐ jiù děi jiù.
that may not.be 2.SG just must save
'You bet, you're going to have to save me.' (4662)

A: Ha, tiān a.
huh heaven CNF
'Huh, my God.' (4663)

The example below illustrates the position before a *qù* tone which neutralizes the contrast between *bú* 'not to be' and *bù* 'not'. *Bú gào su* in line 4520 could mean either 'it's not that I tell' or 'I won't tell'. In this instance, however, the semantic clues are quite clear.

(5.10) B: Nǐ kényǐ géi wǒ zhèr dǎ diànhuà, èr sān liù jiǔ.
2.SG may give 1.SG here hit telephone two three six nine
'You can call me here, two-three-six-nine.' (4518)

A: Shì ma, èr sān--?
be Q two three--
'Really? Two-three--' (4519)

B: Wǒ bú gào su nǐ le ma?
1.SG not.be tell 2.SG PF Q
'Didn't I tell you?' (4520)

A: Nǐ méi gào song wǒ guo!
2.SG not.exist tell 1.SG EXP
'You didn't tell me.' (4521)

Taking *bú* as the allomorph of *bù* 'not' would lead to a reading of *Wǒ bú gào su nǐ le ma?* as 'Am I no longer telling you?' Only *bú* 'not to be' leads to the correct reading of *Wǒ bú gào su nǐ le ma?* in this context: 'Isn't it the case that I have told you?, Didn't I tell you?'

One of the reasons why *bú* 'not to be' is hard to detect is because it doesn't have its own Chinese character. It is my contention that in the following example the character 不, which is normally used to write *bù/bú/bu* 'not', has been borrowed to represent *bú* 'not to be'. The fragment is taken from one of Wáng Shuò's 王朔

dialogues, which are well known for their colloquial flavor. The original text is given below, together with the transcription of a recording of a native Mandarin speaker reading the passage aloud.¹⁶

(5.11) [...] 我 只 知 道 凡 事 都 有 个 理 儿 , 打 个
wó zhǐ zhīdao fán shì dōu yǒu ge lǐr dǎ ge
1.SG only know every affair all exist piece principle hit piece

喷 嚏 不 也 有 人 写 几 十 万 字 的
pēnti bú yě yǒu rén xié jǐ shí wàn zì de
sneeze not.be also exist person write how.many ten 10,000 character SUB
论 文 , 得 了 博 士 。
lùnwen dé le bóshì
thesis obtain PF doctor

'... all I know is everything has something to it. Didn't someone write a thesis several hundreds of thousands of characters long about a sneeze, getting him a Ph.D.?' (Wáng 1990: 9; my transcription, glosses and translation)

3. In most of the ten examples presented above, *bú* 'not to be' precedes (a) verbal or (b) adverbial expressions:

(a) verbal expressions: *shuō* 'say' in *wǒ bú shuō shì Zhōngguó rén de lǎo[shì]--* 'I don't mean to say they are Chinese teach-- (5.5); *yǒu* 'exist' in *tāmen zhèr bú yǒu nèi talenlab ma?* 'don't they have this language lab over here?' (5.7); *gàosu* 'tell' in *wǒ bú gàosu nǐ le ma?* 'didn't I tell you?' (5.10); and the verb *xiǎng* 'think, want' appearing as an auxiliary, i.e. before another verb, *chī* 'eat', in *tā bu xiǎng chī miànshī ma?* 'didn't he want to eat pasta?' (5.1);

(b) adverbial expressions: *guāng* 'bare, only' in *wó ye bú guāng huì hē* 'it's not as if I can only drink though' (5.2); *fěicháng* 'extraordinary' in *yě bu fěicháng quán* 'it's not as if it's extremely complete, ...' (5.6); and *yě* 'also' in *不也有人写 bú yě yǒu rén xiě* 'didn't someone write' (5.11).

Bú 'not to be' appears in sentence-final position in *nà kě bú* 'very much so' in example (5.9) and is followed by the interrogative particle *ma* in (5.8): *nà kě bú ma* 'so indeed'. This is interesting when *bú* 'not to be' is compared with *méi* 'have not'. The offglide *-i* in *méi* 'have not' is possibly a reflex of the verb *yǒu* 'exist' (see Norman 1988: 126). Synchronically, *méi* 'have not' and *méi yǒu* 'have not' co-occur, but *méi* cannot appear in clause-final position. Thus we have *Tāmen méi lái*. 'They haven't come.' and *Tāmen méi yǒu lái*. 'They haven't come.', but there is no **Dào le méi you? – Hái méi.* to match *Dào le méi you? – Hái méi you.* 'Have they arrived?

16. The format of this recording does not allow its reproduction on the tape mentioned in note 13.

– Not yet.'. Note that the presence of *yǒu* 'exist' is not what is at issue here. The only requirement is that *méi* 'have not' does not appear in final position. The use of the particle *ne*, expressing increased relevance, following *méi* 'have not' leads to an acceptable expression: *Dào le méi you? – Hái méi ne.* 'Have they arrived? – Not yet.'. It is tempting to conjecture that the reluctance of *méi* 'have not' to appear in final position is somehow connected with its status as a fused form. The argument might run as follows: given the formal loss in the position following *méi*, the remaining form still requires the position following it to be filled, indicating that something was there. The parallel case of *bú* 'not to be' would argue against this theory, since the loss of *shì* 'be' does not lead to the impossibility of *bú* 'not to be' occurring in final position.

In only one of the instances presented here does *bú* 'not to be' appear before a noun, *kǒuyīn* 'uttered sound' in (5.4)/3517: *shì bú kǒuyīn tèbié--* 'isn't the sound terribly--'. In this case, *kǒuyīn* is the first expression in a self-interrupted sentence which might have run, e.g. *shì bú kǒuyīn tèbié nán tīng?* 'isn't the sound awful to listen to?' In other words, *bú* negates the following sentence as a whole. If *bú* 'not to be' negated the nominal expression following it, *shì bú kǒuyīn tèbié [nán tīng]?* would mean 'isn't it an accent? – it's terribly [arduous to listen to]'. In the speech data collected so far, I have not yet discovered examples of *bú* NOUN 'not to be NOUN', but in my experience, this type of construction does occur in present-day Mandarin. This means that in colloquial Peking Mandarin, the negative counterpart of the sentence adduced earlier, *Wó Běijīng rén.* 'I'm from Peking,' (see p. 65), can appear as *Wǒ bú Běijīng rén.* 'I'm not from Peking.' These and other questions with regard to *bú* 'not to be' remain to be further investigated.

4. In conclusion, there is clear spoken evidence and sporadic written evidence of the existence in Peking Mandarin of an expression *bú* 'not to be' with a *yángpíng* tone which may be reduced to a neutral tone. Like *yí* 'a specimen of', it deserves a separate entry in Mandarin dictionaries.