Meaning and syntax in spoken Mandarin

Jeroen Wiedenhof
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- The Dutch text accompanying the Ph.D. dissertation as an insert booklet:
  - Summary in Dutch
  - Curriculum vitae
  - Fifteen numbered Propositions as required by Leiden University dissertation protocol

### Addenda et corrigenda

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MEANING AND SYNTAX IN SPOKEN MANDARIN

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in memoriam

Han Yun Hung
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TECHNICAL CONVENTIONS

Symbols and abbreviations

* an asterisk precedes forms which do not belong to the language under discussion

. a period separates written words in English glosses, e.g. nánfāng ‘southern.region’; zài ‘be.in’

↓ a quadruple diamond precedes quotations translated by the author, the original texts being given in the appendix

> a closing angle bracket indicates the direction of development: A > B ‘A develops into B’

∅ an empty set symbol represents a formal or semantic void

/ a forward slash

(a) means ‘or’

(b) separates an example number from a line number within that example (e.g. “(2.2)/2358” in chapter 2, p. 22)

(c) indicates a paragraph break in quoted text (e.g. in example (3.1), p. 35)

-- a double hyphen signals interruption or hesitation

... three dots indicate a pause in an utterance

[...] three dots enclosed in square brackets indicate a place in a quotation where text has been skipped

1, 2, 3 1st, 2nd, 3rd person

Tā has been glossed as ‘3’, not as ‘3.SG’ in examples representing informal speech styles, where tā is unmarked for number. In more formal usages, tā usually denotes the singular

ACC accusative case

CNF request for or declaration of confirmation as expressed by the final particle a and its morphophonemic variants, e.g. ya

EVD final particle bei, indicating that a statement should be evident

EXP experiential aspect expressed by the particle guo

ff. and following

hahaha laughter

hahaha- laughing onset
IT ‘judged by the speaker to be identifiable by the hearer’ (defined in chapter 2, p. 28)
ms. manuscript
MSC masculine gender
n. note
no. number
NOM nominative case
NON1 person other than first person
n.p. no place of publication indicated
NPF aspect not marked as perfective
n.y. no year of publication indicated
ORD ordinal numeral prefix di
p. page
p.c. personal communication
PF perfective aspect
PL plural number
PNAmsterdam proper name “Amsterdam”
PRC People’s Republic of China
PRS present tense
Q question
RLV final particle ne, indicating strong relevance of an expression in the context
SG singular number
SUB subordination, expressed by the particle de
SUG suggestion as denoted by the final particle ba

Fonts and transcriptions

TEXT text in small capitals transcribes
(a) a technical term at the place in the text where it is explained
(b) glosses (defined in chapter 1, p. 8)
(c) a general expression type (e.g. in “gēi wǒ VERB de” in chapter 4, p. 52)

_text_ text in italics
(a) transcribes signs (defined in chapter 1, p. 4)
(b) in a broad transcription, also transcribes forms (defined in chapter 1, p. 4)

“text” text enclosed in double quotation marks
(a) quotes a source
(b) marks an expression as a set phrase or conventional wording
text enclosed in single quotation marks transcribes
(a) meanings (defined in chapter 1, p. 5)
(b) glosses (defined in chapter 1, p. 8)
(c) translations
(d) paraphrases
(e) a quotation within a quotation

/text/
text between forward slashes represents a phonological transcription

/text/
text enclosed in square brackets indicates
(a) a phonetic transcription in the International Phonetic Alphabet following the recommendations in IPA (1993) and Maddieson (1990)
(b) a remark added to quoted text
(c) words possibly intended by the speaker

(text)
in example sentences, text between parentheses indicates a transcription which is uncertain due to noise or interruption

<text>
text enclosed in angle brackets indicates an interjection by the interlocutor

| text |
text enclosed in straight vertical lines transcribes features (see p. 6)

Other conventions

The romanized transcription of Peking Mandarin follows the Hányǔ Pīnyīn 漢語拼音 system. In China, the use of this transcription was officially sanctioned by the National People’s Congress on 11 February 1956. Since the late 1970s the system has gained international acceptance, and in 1982 the transcription was approved by the International Standards Bureau ISO. An English description of the system is available as ISO norm 7098-1982 (E). A detailed overview of Peking Mandarin phonology is given by Norman (1988: 138-147). In the present work, the example sentences recorded on tape are transcribed as narrowly as possible within the confines of the Hányǔ Pīnyīn system. In the text, a broader transcription may be used for citation forms. A small set of interjections has been transcribed on an ad hoc basis, e.g. m ‘mm’ and oh ‘oh’. For the interjection é ‘uh-huh’, indicating mild interest or agreement, the transcription follows the usage of many mainland dictionaries (e.g. Cídiăn: 285; see (2.8) for an example). Interjections have been transcribed without tone symbols.

Chinese characters have been printed in Sòng tí 宋體 ‘Sòng type’. In quotations, the degree of abbreviation follows the source: complex characters, pre-simplified characters (February 1955 – May 1964 PRC usage) and simplified characters. Characters original to the present work are in their traditional complex forms. Quotations in Chinese characters precede their transcription in Mandarin (e.g. “兼語 jiānyǔ ‘pivot’ ” in chapter 7, p. 86), while characters added by me follow the
transcription (e.g. "dòngci 動詞 ‘verb’ " in chapter 3, p. 39, n. 9). When applicable, the same course has been followed for the names of authors writing in Chinese and those writing in other languages, respectively. Classical Chinese expressions are conventionally cited according to the character readings of a contemporary dialect. In this book, they have been transcribed in Peking Mandarin.

Examples and quotations from Y.R. Chao’s work are cited (a) with Gwoyeu Romatzyh transcriptions converted to Hányǔ Pínyīn and (b) without the Chinese characters of the original. When Chao’s example sentences appear as numbered examples in the present text, glosses have been added. The hyphens and spaces of Chao’s transcriptions have been preserved in the quotation of examples, but not always in the discussion.

Phonetic transcriptions of speech sound are based on the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA 1993). The tentative phonological transcriptions given in this book are also based on the IPA norm. Due to printing restrictions, the shape of phonetic letters has in some cases been slightly modified. The following special symbols have been used:

- schwa, i.e. unrounded open-mid central vowel
- unrounded close back vowel
- unrounded open back vowel
- unrounded open-mid front vowel
- unrounded front vowel, between open-mid and open
- voiced labiodental approximant
- voiceless alveopalatal fricative consonant
- voiced velar nasal consonant
- voiceless retroflex fricative consonant
- voiced velar fricative consonant

The IPA (1993) provides eight different systems for the transcription of tones. Several of these systems are based on Chao’s (1930) “tone-letters”. Tone-letters consist of a vertical reference line to which a time-pitch curve is attached. Maddieson (1990: 32) recommends (a) that the reference line of tone-letters be placed to the right hand side of the tonal curve, and the tone-letter itself “after the segmental material concerned”; and (b) that if necessary, phonemic and phonetic transcriptions be distinguished by placing tone-letters between slashes / / or square brackets []. I have followed both proposals.

The vertical axis of Chao’s tone letters represents five pitch-levels designated as low, half-low, medium, half-high and high, assuming equal intervals (Chao 1930: 25, 1968: 25-26). The canonical tones of Peking Mandarin are shown in the table on page xiii. Peking Mandarin is traditionally described as having four tones, each neutral tone deriving from one of the four “full” tones. Minimal pairs do however
exist between each of these four tones and the neutral tone. For details see e.g. Cheng (1973: 54ff.).

**Peking Mandarin tones**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>name</th>
<th>pitch description</th>
<th>transcription</th>
<th>phonemic</th>
<th>Hanyu Pinyin</th>
<th>examples</th>
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</thead>
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<td>yīnpīng tone</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>/˥/</td>
<td>macron:</td>
<td>/ba ˥/</td>
<td>bā ‘rake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yángpīng tone</td>
<td>rising, medium to high</td>
<td>/˦/</td>
<td>acute accent:</td>
<td>/ba ˦/</td>
<td>bā ‘pull up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shǎng tone</td>
<td>falling and rising, half-low to low to half-high</td>
<td>/ə/</td>
<td>haček:</td>
<td>/ba ə/</td>
<td>bā ‘grasp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qù tone</td>
<td>falling, high to low</td>
<td>/˩/</td>
<td>grave accent:</td>
<td>/ba ˩/</td>
<td>bā ‘dad’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qīng or neutral tone</td>
<td>short, unaccented; pitch</td>
<td>/˧/</td>
<td>no tone symbol</td>
<td>/ba ˧/</td>
<td>ba ‘SUG’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TONE SANDHI** is the term used for the mutual effects of tones occurring in collocation. Peking Mandarin has two main types of tone sandhi. Firstly, a given tone may have different kinds of allotones occurring in different environments. Allotones are alternative realizations which the language user identifies as representing one and the same tone. Allotones are not indicated in phonological or Hanyu Pinyin transcriptions. This may be illustrated with the shǎng tone /ə/, for which realization as [ə] regularly occurs only before a pause. When preceding yīnpīng, yángpīng and qù tones, the shǎng tone is systematically realized as a low falling tone such as [˩]. Compare e.g. /bu ˧/ yan ə/ Bu yuan. ‘Not far.’, which may typically be pronounced as [bu ˧ yē ə], with /hen ə/ gaw ˥/ Hěn gāo. ‘Very tall.’, for which a realization such as as [xō ˧ kou ˥] is characteristic.

The second type of tone sandhi is that of neutralization, i.e. the loss of a tonal distinction. Three main cases are listed below. The first two, (a) and (b), are restricted to specific tonal environments, while the kind of neutralization listed in (c) is typically lexicalized or grammaticalized:

(a) Before a shǎng tone, the contrast between a yángpīng tone and a shǎng tone is neutralized. Both are realized as a yángpīng tone and transcribed as such. This type of neutralization occurs regularly unless the two forms involved belong to different syntactic constructions. Compare: wǒ ‘I’; lān ‘lazy’; Wó lān ‘I’m lazy.’; Wǒ? Lān. ‘Me? I’m lazy.’

(b) Following a yīnpīng or yángpīng tone, and preceding a non-neutral tone, the contrast between yīnpīng and yángpīng tones is neutralized. Both are realized as yīnpīng tones and transcribed accordingly. The presence of this type of neutralization
depends largely on speech style and tempo. Compare: shěi ‘who’; nèng ‘can’; gàn ‘do’; Shěi nèng gàn? ‘Who can do it?’ but also Shěi nèng gàn? ‘Who can do it?’ Combination with the kind of neutralization listed in (a) leads to instances such as shuō ‘say’; wǒ ‘I’; lân ‘lazy’; Shuō wǒ lân. ‘They say I’m lazy.’.

(c) A non-neutral tone realized as a neutral tone correlates with various semantic effects. A lexicalized example is /ba – ŋ j/ baba ‘doo-doos’; cf. bā ‘hold out a small child, supporting its knees with one’s forearms, to let it urinate or defecate’. For a grammaticalized example, compare: chōu ‘smoke’; chōu chōu ‘smoking on and on’; chōu chou ‘have a smoke’.
Preface

Speech, as one of the most powerful of human endowments, maintains a pervasive presence in human interaction. This situation presents linguists with a vocational dilemma. They may count on a fair degree of social acceptance for their personal fascination with speech, and derive a corresponding sense of professional legitimacy. However, the very lack of pressure to account for its undertakings makes the profession a remarkable free-for-all in terms of methods and goals. Academic fields no doubt have a way of presenting a much less uniform picture to specialists than to laymen, but the lack of internal cohesion in linguistics is not merely a consequence of adopting a professional point of view. While the notion of speech as an instrument of human communication may serve as a convenient external justification, the professional implementation of that notion is often far from obvious. As a consequence, the field is open to any endeavor somehow related to speech. In my view, academic approaches to human speech should acknowledge its communicative function as a relevant factor.

I first came to linguistics as a student of sinology. The sinologist faces a dilemma very similar to that of the linguist. As China plays a major role in the affairs of this world, sinologists rarely need to justify their trade to outsiders. Vocationally, however, the old mountaineering motto—"because it is there"—provides little or no basis for a general statement of purpose and design. The sinologist may be worse off than the linguist as long as China remains undefined in functional terms.

The basis of this work is a collection of dialogues which I have recorded from speakers of Mandarin over the past several years. Large portions of the material were initially put to use in the classroom. My intention was to enable my students to listen to real-life conversations of Mandarin speakers talking among themselves, with the added advantage of the repeat button. When the recordings were made, my absence from the recording studio and a thermos flask of Chinese tea were usually sufficient to ensure casualness and spontaneity. The recording times ranged from 30 minutes to two hours of conversation.

For each spoken example presented in this work, a four-digit number indicates its place in the corpus. At this moment, the transcribed part of the material consists of 5,000 sentences reflecting five dialogues between a total of five female and five male adult speakers. The great majority of the examples presented in this work reflect the speech of native Peking and Tiānjīn speakers. Other native speakers of Mandarin
came from Chéngdū, Taipei and Qíqīhăär. In addition, two non-native speakers of
Mandarin from Shanghai and Hong Kong were recorded. The purpose of these
recordings was to confront my students with representative non-native accents in
Mandarin. A very small portion of this material was used in the present work after
verifying the data with native speakers.

The problems I encountered in transcribing the tapes soon awakened my interest
in descriptive problems in linguistics. In the present study, the approach to the
material is first and foremost to let the data speak for themselves. This means the
reader may have to take some open-ended discussions for granted. The absence of
theoretical aims, however, does not remove the need for theoretical discussion.
Indeed, some of the treatment will be of a highly technical nature. As explained in
the first chapter, the main difference between data-oriented and theory-oriented
approaches is a matter of direction.

Despite the technical nature of some of the discussions, the book is intended for
a general academic audience. No more than an everyday familiarity with linguistic
vocabulary is assumed, and no technical terms or linguistic tricks are introduced
without offering definitions and examples.

The first chapter of this work introduces the method and terms used in the
analyses to follow. I explain how I propose to deal in an ordered manner with the
chaotic ways in which linguistic data tend to present themselves. This type of
confusion is demonstrated in chapters 2 to 4, which discuss various aspects of the
Mandarin particle de. In view of the extremely high frequency of this particle, it is
hardly surprising that it is connected with a wide variety of phenomena. The
treatment of the phenomena presented in chapters 2 to 4 tries to convey that the use
of the same form is not coincidental.

Chapter 5 reports on a Mandarin word which, as far as I am aware, has not
previously been described by others. The expression bù ‘not to be’ is largely
restricted to spoken Pekingese, though some written evidence exists.

In chapters 6 and 7, further aspects of verbal meaning are discussed. Chapter 6
prepares the ground with a theoretical discussion of the way in which entities in the
world are referred to by means of verbal expressions. In chapter 7, this theoretical
account is applied to an old problem of Mandarin syntax, that of the semantic
description of verbs appearing in series.

The writing of this study has allowed me to document a number of spoken utterances
with some degree of precision. By a curious contrast, local academic tradition
prescribes the strictly oral delivery of personal acknowledgments. To all of those who
have helped, I report my heightened awareness of the fact that a person is ultimately
dependent on others for his development.
CHAPTER 1

THE STUDY OF FORM AND MEANING

1. SPEECH\textsuperscript{1} is the phenomenon of talking found in human communities all over the world. It may be contrasted with the notion of language, for which any serious linguistic endeavor needs to formulate a technical definition. In associating the everyday phenomenon of speech with language as a target of scientific inquiry, a decision has to be made as to their relative primacy. Depending on the outcome of this decision, investigations may proceed in one of two opposite directions.

One may start from ordinary speech and try to account for it both in terms of its physical characteristics and of the worldly use to which it is put. Viewed in this way, the linguist's notion of language is a theoretical construct developed from the analysis of accessible data. Subsequent steps of linguistic investigation involve the collection of speech data, the assessment of their quality, the evaluation of the data by native speakers and an analysis of the data by the observer. Each of these steps presents numerous problems for which various solutions may be proposed without abandoning the general direction of the procedure. I shall call such linguistic approaches DESCRIPTIVE.

The alternative approach is to start from a theory of language and to validate or modify it by determining its compatibility with facts observed in speech. Here again, language is viewed as a theoretical construct, but this time it derives from postulated principles. This line of attack focuses on problems presented by rules which are formulated as a corollary of the theory. The ultimate goal is to make the theory maximally predictive as to the properties of human language, which in turn determine the organization of elements of speech. I shall refer to approaches of this type as GENERATIVE.

While both approaches treat language as a theoretical construct, the procedural status of the two constructs is very different.

Comparisons of linguistic approaches inevitably lead back to one of the very few elements which play a part in all of them, viz. human speech. Indeed, example sentences which more or less directly represent speech appear to play an important role in linguistic treatments regardless of paradigmatic affiliation. Another factor common to academic approaches to language is the fact that, just as in science at

\textsuperscript{1} A technical term is printed in small capitals at the place in the text where that term is explained.
large, there usually remains a considerable gap between aims and results. Descriptive approaches ideally set out to produce full accounts of the speech habits of a language community. Yet culling a handful of speech data from one or two speakers of a specific language and accounting for these data in some detail may count as a substantial contribution to the field. In a generative approach, painstaking theoretical contemplations tend to show little promise of accounting for those language properties which are observable in speech. To a fair degree, therefore, the question is not whether one theoretical position deserves more support than another, but rather which type of inevitable drawbacks is more acceptable.

In my view, linguistics had better stay as close as possible to phenomena which belong to the common experiences of humankind, i.e. to those of speech. Still, I am ready to admit that there usually is a considerable element of personal taste in the choice of one’s scientific approach. I can only report that my taste is for thrills like the one I experienced when coming across the word *bù* ‘not to be’ in Mandarin (see chapter 5). The chances of discovering *bù* would have been slim had I started out from the theoretical end instead of listening to recorded speech data.

In the following pages, I have undertaken to account for a necessarily very small set of data in order to give speech the priority it deserves.

2. The spirit of a descriptive approach to language may be characterized as the inclination to ask “What does it mean?” every time a difference in form is observed, and “How is it said?” whenever a difference in meaning is to be accounted for. It follows that example sentences must be properly glossed and translated. It also follows that there can be no question of *a priori* semantic distinctions. Neither of these two principles are widely accepted. Section 4 will treat the presentation of example sentences. The question of semantic distinctions will be raised in sections 5 to 7.

I treat form and meaning as twin phenomena, discrete yet inseparable like *yīn* 陰 and *yáng* 陽. Together they make up the Saussurian sign (de Saussure 1985: 97ff.). Both parts of the sign reside in the speaker’s mind. The following considerations lead me to accept the psychological reality of both phenomena.

Sections of speech sound, or *utterances*, may differ in many respects yet be perceived as identical by the hearer. That is to say, when several Mandarin speakers differing in sex, age, education, mood or any combination of these factors utter the botanical term for trees and shrubs, *qìdōu* ‘arboretum’, each realization may sound different. Nonetheless, the linguist will record as a single form the mental image corresponding to each of these realizations. Note that the mental image at issue here is not the meaning associated with the utterance, but a conception of speech sounds which the mind of the hearer abstracts from acoustic details. Conversely, utterances are a speaker’s realizations of the forms he has in his mind.
When the sounds recorded from several speakers saying qiáomù are converted into graphic images by means of a spectograph or computer, the acoustic differences between these utterances show up indisputably. The ear of native speakers and hearers is generally less well equipped to detect such variations between utterances precisely because linguistic capacities obliterate them. To ordinary native speakers and hearers, therefore, the same expression is used each time. Phonetic data specify details of an utterance. The mental abstractions of linguistic form to which phonetic data correspond are PHONOLOGICAL phenomena.

Phonetic data can be presented in some detail by means of a phonetic transcription, conventionally enclosed in square brackets. The phonetic alphabet used here follows a recent version of the International Phonetic Alphabet (see IPA 1993). Some details on phonetic transcriptions are given in the list of technical conventions (see p. xii). For the expression qiáomù ‘arbors’, different realizations by Mandarin speakers may be described as [tɕœu ʅ mɯ ɻ], [tɕœu ʅ mu ɻ], and [tɕœu ʅ mɯ ɻ].

Forms may be presented in two ways. A narrow transcription distinguishes between forms and signs. Forms are transcribed as phonemes between slashes, as in /kjaw ɿ mu ɿ/. Signs are italicized and written in traditional alphabetic spelling or in romanization, e.g. qiáomù. A broad transcription represents forms as if they were signs. I will use a broad transcription, and accordingly speak of “the form qiáomù”, except where the need to distinguish forms from signs arises.

I adopt Carl Ebeling’s (1978: 22-23) term CORRELATION for the relationship between a form and its meaning: the form qiáomù correlates with the meaning ‘arbors’. The MEANING of a form is the mental image, for those in control of the language, of the entities in the world which can be appropriately referred to by means of realizations of that form. The entity referred to by a meaning, i.e. the thing meant, is a REFERENT of that meaning. Whether a given tree is an APPROPRIATE REFERENT of the meaning ‘arbors’ correlating with qiáomù is decided by native speakers. The linguist describes appropriateness of reference on the basis of the speakers’ directions, thus furnishing the semantic analysis with an empirical foundation.

Meanings are transcribed between single quotation marks: ‘arbors’. Depending on the level of analysis, the same meaning is described to differing degrees of accuracy. Thus in chapter 3, the meaning corresponding with English length is transcribed sometimes as ‘length’ and sometimes as ‘the feature | long | seen as an entity’.

Willows, cedars and poplars may equally serve as appropriate referents of the meaning ‘arbors’ which correlates with the form qiáomù. Conversely, a willow tree may be referred to as nèi ge dōngxī ‘that thing’ or as hǎo pénghyou ‘dear friend’, which goes to show that one and the same referent can be referred to by different meanings.
The distinction between meaning and referent parallels the one between form and utterance in the following way. A form such as /kjaw ˩ mu ˥/ and a meaning such as ‘arbor’ both reside in the mind. An utterance [tʂau ˩ mu ˥] of this form and a specific cedar serving as a referent of the meaning both belong to the external world. But while the correlation between form and meaning is a direct link, the relationship between utterances and referents is indirect, running by way of the correlating parts of the sign. That is to say, for the utterance [tʂau ˩ mu ˥] and the cedar adorning the entrance to Hotel De Ceder in Leiden, a relationship can be established in terms of the correlation which exists between their respective projections in the mind of a speaker of Mandarin.

The projection of a referent is its image in the mind of the language user formed by means of perception. The notion of perception unleashes a vast array of philosophical problems. Bertrand Russell (1980) provides a transparent introduction to the questions involved, but few of these will concern us here. Whereas philosophy explores ways in which naive judgments and intuitions can be replaced by analytic truths, linguistics seeks to account for the speaker’s ordinary judgments and intuitions regardless of logical or philosophical inconstencies. Nonetheless, a few aspects of perception will be discussed in chapter 3. For the moment, I will assume that entities talked about are represented in the mind as the projection of one or more features, i.e., properties judged by speakers to pertain to entities. For the cedar tree in Leiden acting as the referent of qiáomù ‘arbor’, a feature |green| may be established as being projected in the meaning. I make use of Ebeling’s convention of transcribing features between straight vertical lines (1978: 102). Features are REDUNDANT when they are underspecified with respect to other features. In the semantic description of qiáomù ‘arbor’, a feature |visible| will be redundant because the presence of this feature is presupposed by |green|. Meanings which are projections of redundant features may be said to be included in meanings which project the dominating features: the meaning ‘visible’ is included in the meaning ‘green’, which is itself included in the meaning ‘arbor’.

The ability to conceive of projected features as meanings is a fundamental linguistic capacity. In this connection, Edward Sapir’s (1985: 14) conjecture is inspiring: “while speech as a finished organization is a distinctly human achievement, its roots probably lie in the power of the higher apes to solve specific problems by abstracting general forms or schemata from the details of given situations”. In the process of abstraction, the mind presumably selects a number of representative features, discarding other features as trivial. The mind also seems powerful enough to create such details of its own accord, and to fool itself into accepting them as representatives of given situations. For linguistic purposes, it is irrelevant whether the source of the feature is physiological or psychological: the description of meanings created on either basis remains securely within the domain of description.
3. In this study the use of written data has been kept to a minimum. From the linguist's viewpoint, written texts are a derived medium reflecting to a very limited extent the primary data of speech. This is not to deny the possibility that written texts constitute an effective medium of communication or that they form a worthy tradition in their own right. The point is that written texts are of interest to linguistics proper only to the extent that they reflect speech, so that it is usually of little interest to the linguist whether a language has written traditions or not. Nevertheless, in a number of cases the linguist has to devote attention to the writing system. In the study of dead languages, written texts allow exclusive access to speech data. Other examples of linguistic interest in writing include instances where written conventions become the source of spoken expressions. Hence in a description of the English expression /gæt/ 'General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade', the written abbreviation GATT enters into the linguistic picture.

For Mandarin, the relationship between speech and script involves some particularities worth mentioning. First and foremost, the social significance of the Chinese writing system is enormous. The Chinese themselves are unreservedly and justly proud of their characters, and the elegant intricacy of the script seldom fails to impress foreigners. Among the visual arts, the prestige of calligraphy in China has traditionally rivalled that of painting. Societies with literary traditions tend to hold written texts in greater esteem than the spoken word. In China, too, there is a strong tendency to regard the spoken word as a vulgar, less accurate derivative of a written norm.

Conversely, orthographic idiosyncrasies are often identified as linguistic problems by modern Chinese linguists. This tendency has been reinforced by successive campaigns to reform the writing system between 1955 and 1964 and again briefly in 1977-1978. During these two periods, Chinese linguistic media duly gave massive attention to problems of the writing system, and in the intervening years, scholarly activities in mainland China practically came to a standstill.

The Chinese script reforms changed the looks but not the workings of the writing system. They did not affect the relationship between visual data and the sounds of speech, which is much less direct in Chinese characters than in alphabetic scripts. This is not to say that alphabetic writing mirrors the speech chain at all adequately. For an impression of the distance which a writing system creates between visual information and the corresponding sounds, consider the circumstance that in written English, prosodic details are rendered by scanty means, such as exclamation marks, question marks and the occasional stress mark. Yet in English, as in any other language, prosodic information plays a crucial role. The part played by intonation in the success of spoken communication is far from generally recognized by speakers and often disregarded by linguists. This lack of attention may be attributed at least in part to the visual absence of prosodic details in the writing systems of the world.
Finally, it should be noted that the community of native writers and readers of Mandarin is far larger than that of native speakers. This is mainly the result of an effective promulgation of Mandarin as a standard language since the 1950s. Apart from Classical Chinese, Mandarin is virtually the only Chinese language written today. Written counterparts which do exist for other Chinese languages, e.g. Yuè (Cantonese) and Mǐn (Hokkian) dialects, have limited application and are heavily influenced by Mandarin writing traditions.

4. The question of how to present example sentences may seem a technicality better suited to classroom textbooks than to a linguistic essay. Yet for the reader of a linguistic essay, example sentences are the principal form of access to the data under discussion. Since a large amount of variation and corresponding confusion exists in this area, it seems appropriate to justify some of the principles adhered to in this study.

In most cases, my example sentences consists of three lines: (1) a line quoting linguistic forms; (2) a line of glosses; and (3) a translation. An extra line of Chinese characters is added above the first line only when an example is quoted from a written Chinese source.

The first line of an example sentence is written in the Roman alphabet. For languages normally written in this alphabet, forms are quoted according to their conventional spellings. Otherwise, a commonly accepted or scientific transcription is used. The system of transcription used for Mandarin is Hányǔ Pīnyīn 漢語拼音. More information about this system is given in the list of technical conventions (see p. xi). Prosodic details such as pitch, duration, volume and intonational contours are not indicated in the first line, except for the informal use of commas and other common punctuation marks.

In the second line of an example sentence, a GLOSS is a semantic label or a combination of such labels corresponding to one word or morpheme in the first line. Glosses come in two kinds. Most of them represent a brief translation in lower-case type. For grammatical function words, abbreviations printed in small capitals represent longer descriptions, some of which are discussed in the text. An index of abbreviations is given in the list of technical conventions (see p. ix). The following Mandarin example contains glosses of both kinds:

(1.1) tā mā de
      3 mother SUB
      ‘dammit’

Tā is the third person pronoun, abbreviated as ‘3’. Most of my spoken examples represent informal speech styles where tā is not specified for number. In formal speech styles, the meaning of tā comprises singular number and is accordingly
1. THE STUDY OF FORM AND MEANING

glossed as '3.SG'. A period links semantic labels in compound glosses which correspond to a single word in the first line of transcription. In this connection, note that in the Chinese character script, a distinction between male, female, and neuter pronouns is regularly made despite the fact that pronouns are unmarked for gender in Mandarin. In example (1.1), må means 'mother', and the gloss 'SUB' indicates that de is a subordinative particle. The expression as a whole literally means 'that person's mother's'. As a matter of principle, a gloss supplies a meaning which is applicable to the same form in as many different contexts as possible. This may be illustrated in the following examples:

(1.2) Shū hào.  (1.3) Hào shū.  (1.4) Hào duō shū.
book good  good book  good many book
'The book is nice.'  'Good books.'  'Very many books.'

In the first two examples, the change of position of hào 'good' relative to shū 'book' corresponds to a semantic difference. Some syntactic details of this difference will be discussed in chapter 3. For the time being, a description in terms of Western 'school grammar', however ill-suited to Mandarin syntax, may suffice here to indicate that there is a semantic difference. It might run as follows: in (1.2), hào is a verb corresponding closely to English be good and serving as a predicate to a subject shū 'book', and in (1.3) it is an adjective modifying a noun shū 'book'. The point is that these considerations do not lead to a gloss 'be.good' in (1.2) because this would detract from the maximal applicability of the gloss. In (1.2), the circumstance that 'good' is a predicate to go with 'book' is the semantic correlate of the formal circumstance that /xaw A/ follows /su/ and that they share a single intonation unit. To be sure, there is a possibility that the same semantic information is presented by /xaw A/ itself, i.e. independently of its positional and prosodic context. However, a comparison with (1.3) shows that there is nothing in the form /xaw A/ which characterizes it as a predicate. Hence hào is to be glossed as 'good' in both (1.2) and (1.3).

At least two different objections are commonly raised against the above considerations. First, it may be argued that hào is basically a verb, and that 'good' does not exhibit this semantic aspect. According to this view, a consistent glossing of (1.2) and (1.3) would be 'be.good' in both cases. Hence (1.3) would be understood literally as 'a being-good book' or 'a book which is good'. There seems to be little evidence to support this view. In my experience, native speakers subscribing to such an analysis rely on their educational training or knowledge of foreign languages instead of on speaker intuitions. In addition, an example such as (1.4) would have to be described in terms of, roughly, 'being being good numerous books'. An analysis in terms of 'books which are being good and being numerous' is excluded here, so that the 'being good' quality will somehow have to be described as carried by 'being
numerous’. Speakers assuming a ‘be.good’ reading for hǎo in (1.2) and (1.3) are reluctant to accept it in sentences such as (1.4). I conclude that the meaning of hǎo should not be analyzed as ‘be.good’ in any of these three sentences.

Another objection which may be raised against the transcription of hǎo as ‘good’ in (1.2) is that this example is really a sentence in which a copula shì ‘be’ has been deleted. Again, it could be argued that hǎo should be glossed as ‘be.good’ instead. This stance is problematic on two scores. Firstly, there is no language-internal evidence for assuming a deletion here. Such assumptions about Mandarin grammar often rest on expectations raised by grammatical properties of other languages, such as English. Secondly, a deletion constitutes a formal void. Even if such a zero form were to be assumed here, it would be this form instead of the “neighboring” form hǎo which correlated with the meaning ‘be’ in ‘be.good’. In terms of presentation, when the need to assume zero forms does arise, they can either be glossed in the second line of an example underneath an empty set symbol ø in the first line, or simply be explained in the main text. I prefer the second option.

The rationale behind the principle that glosses should be maximally applicable is that the line of glosses, in combination with the first line, should provide the reader with an insight into how the signs are arranged along the linear dimension which time imposes on the speech chain. In other words, the glosses ideally show how expressions are strung together in a foreign tongue, with minimal analytic interference. Glosses can be especially helpful to readers with a linguistic interest who do not happen to know the language under discussion.

In this connection, compare the glosses for Mandarin jiù in the following excerpt from Charles N. Li and Sandra A. Thompson (1981: 331-332):

(1.5) A very common use of jiù is as a sentence-linking element meaning ‘then, thereupon’ [...]. In this usage, it normally has a neutral tone, as in (36):

(36)  wǒ lái — le yǐhòu, tā jiù bu gāoxìng
       I come — PFV after  3sg then not happy

After I came, s/he became unhappy.

Jiù can also be used in a simple sentence to mean ‘immediately’ or ‘soon with respect to the time of utterance’. [...]

(37) a.  wǒ jiǔ qù
      I   soon   go

I’ll soon go.

[...] When jiù is used as an emphatic particle, it receives special stress and optionally takes the destressed copula verb shì ‘be’ with a neutral tone:

(38) tā jiǔ  (shì) zuò zài nàr
       3sg  emphatic  (be) sit at there

S/He simply sat there.
1. THE STUDY OF FORM AND MEANING

"Jiù may also mean ‘only’:"

(39)  tā  jiù  xīhuān  Zhāngsān

3sg  only  like  Zhangsan

S/He likes only Zhangsan.

Again, the precise meaning of jiù in a sentence must be determined on the basis of contextual factors.

Li and Thompson’s grammar is “explicitly designed for students and teachers of Mandarin” (p. xiii), and the use of different glosses for jiù to reflect a different “feel” of jiù in each case is a convenient teaching tool. Still, it is entirely possible that the meaning of jiù as perceived by Mandarin speakers is the same in each case. In my approach, the properties of English do not affect the representation of Mandarin semantics to the same degree. The complexity of many semantic issues requires a rigorous application of the principle that glosses be maximally applicable. An expression is glossed uniformly unless there are clear indications that homonymous meanings are involved. In the case of jiù, my gloss is ‘just’ throughout. The question of homonymy versus polysemy will be presented in section 7.

Finally, the third line of each example sentence gives an English translation. The semantic properties of English and Mandarin are so different that generally only a large set of translations would begin to do justice to the Mandarin original of the first line. In the case of (1.2), ‘The book is nice.’ and ‘The books were nice.’ represent two of many English meanings corresponding to interpretations of the same Mandarin meaning. As a matter of principle, only one translation is given in each example sentence. The distinction between meaning and interpretation will be explained in section 5.

My definition of the context of an expression covers both neighboring linguistic expressions and relevant aspects of the non-linguistic situation in which the expression is used, e.g. the time of day, objects present in the situation of utterance, and the referents associated with preceding utterances. The reason for giving the term context a broad definition is that Mandarin, like many other languages, generally does not distinguish between the two types of context. Single quotation marks are used in the main text to transcribe meanings as well as interpretations, glosses, translations and paraphrases. A specification of the status of these transcriptions will be added whenever the need arises.

Translations given in example sentences do not serve as semantic analyses. They represent one close English equivalent of the meaning of an example sentence. The examples themselves, including their meanings, are analyzed in the main text. For example, a discussion of (1.1) may reveal the fact that some speakers explain tā mā de ‘that person’s mother’s’ as a euphemism deriving by ellipsis from a coarser expression cào tā mā de bt ‘fuck his mother’s cunt’. This claim may then be
contrasted by the observation that the latter expression is little used, and that in the
more explicit expression, speakers prefer the pronoun ni ‘you’ to tā ‘he’ (cf. Li Róng

To the extent possible, the translations fit the stylistic peculiarities of the
Mandarin sentences. In other words, the translations are as colloquial, formal, vulgar
or pedantic as their originals. Whenever the context of an example was known,
I have attempted to translate the example accordingly.

For someone working on Mandarin it is all very well to formulate glossing
principles at will, for the isolating characteristics of this language make it readily
presentable in glosses. Languages with an agglutinative character similarly allow a
clear separation of morphemes, but yield a proliferation of descriptive glosses. Gerjan
van Schaaik gives the following example from Turkish:

(1.6) Ev-de-ki-ler-in-miş.
    house-Loc-Rel-Plur-Gen-Rep
    ‘It seems to be of those who are in the house.’ (1994: 35)

Languages with copious flexion lend themselves less comfortably to glossing.
Compare the following examples from Russian and Mandarin:

(1.7) On čitaet knigu.
    3.MSC.SG.NOM read.NPF.PRS.3.SG book.SG.ACC
    ‘He reads a book.’

(1.8) Tā kàn shū.
    3 look book
    ‘He reads a book.’

Despite the need to find ad hoc solutions for individual languages, I maintain as
before (Wiedenhof 1990: 114) that a clear division of labor between glosses and
translations in example sentences can and should be implemented. Glosses give a first
impression of the sequential arrangement of signs realized in the speech chain, and
translations propose a situational equivalent in another language. To illustrate this
division of labor, and to wind up the discussion of example sentences, let me contrast
two Mandarin examples cited by others with my own presentation of the same data.
The original examples are taken from Li and Thompson (1981) and from S. Robert
Ramsey’s (1987) compendious treatment of languages spoken in China:

(1.9) wǒ xǐhuān tā
    I like 3sg
    I like him/her. (Li and Thompson 1981: 23)

(1.10) Tā de Yīngwén, shuō de hěn hǎo.
    she SP English speak SP very good
    ‘Her English, speak’s (manner) is very good.’ (Ramsey 1981: 72)
In Li and Thompson's example, "3sg" means "third person singular pronoun" (p. xix); Ramsey's gloss "SP" means "subordinative particle" (p. 69). The principles outlined above would lead me to transcribe, gloss and translate as follows:

(1.11) Wó xīhuān tā.  
1.SG like 3  
'I like him.'

(1.12) Tā de Yīngwén, shuō de hén hǎo.  
3 SUB English.language say SUB very good  
'She speaks her English very well.'

In (1.9), the absence of a gender distinction being indicated in the gloss, I see no reason to repeat this information in the translation. The choice of "him" or "her" in the English sentence can be dictated by the context of the Mandarin original. In (1.10), the rendition "Her English, speak's (manner) is very good" adds little to the information provided by the glosses, and it cannot be judged an acceptable English sentence either. In my examples, any information on the "literal" arrangement of the original sentence will be relegated to the line of glosses.

5. In section 2, the duality of the linguistic sign led me to state that forms and meanings reside in the mind whereas utterances and referents belong to "the external world". But the external worlds of utterances and referents overlap only partially. Utterances are part of a CONCRETE WORLD of physical phenomena deemed material and measurable. Some referents, such as cedars, also belong to a concrete world. Other referents, such as freedom, are in an IMAGINARY WORLD created by the human mind. Many aspects of the reality of this distinction belong to philosophy. Linguistically, there is no reason to assume that there is more than one relevant way in which speakers relate meanings with appropriate referents belonging to these two worlds. A Mandarin speaker may mentally link up a cedar, coming to him in the form of sensory data from the concrete world of a busy street in Leiden, with the meaning of qīdōnǔ 'arbor'. In an identical way, he may associate an abstract, imaginary referent such as the notion of the freedom of speech with the meaning of zìyǒu 'freedom', again by means of features judged to belong to the referent. In this sense, language treats referents from the concrete world and from the imaginary world in the same way, namely, in terms of representative features projected in the mind. In assuming this, I do not mean to disallow the possibility that referents belonging to these two different worlds may be associated with forms displaying systematic differences.

For the speaker to speak, the referents he wants to talk about must be cast into meanings available in his language. He pronounces the forms correlating with these
meanings as utterances. On the receiving end, the task of the hearer is first to abstract forms from these utterances and subsequently to identify the meanings with which the forms correlate. Finally, the hearer composes INTERPRETATIONS of these meanings by combining the invoked meanings with information from the context of the utterance, such as stored knowledge of the world, sensory perceptions, and the meanings invoked by preceding utterances.

Note that the entities transmitted between speaker and hearer are not meanings but utterances devoid of meaning. Utterances are prompted by meanings in the mind of the speaker, and invoke meanings in the mind of the hearer. There is no guarantee that the meanings are identical on both sides. The notion of SPEAKING THE SAME LANGUAGE can accordingly be defined as the degree of success of a speaker in invoking by means of utterances those meanings in the mind of a hearer which for the speaker’s intents and purposes are identical to the meanings in his own mind. Ultimately, individual speakers each speak their own language, the homogeneity of a language community being a matter of degree. LANGUAGE, accordingly, is the power of humans to invoke in the minds of other humans more or less truthful copies of meanings in their own minds by means of sounds emitted by the vocal apparatus, as well as the complementary phenomenon that such copies of meanings are invoked in human minds by way of these sounds as they are received by the ear. A LANGUAGE COMMUNITY is defined not by the degree to which a concrete world (e.g. a habitat) or an imaginary world (e.g. a culture) are shared, but by the degree to which its speakers link up entities in their concrete and imaginary worlds with the same meanings correlating with the same forms.

Even though the distinction between meaning and interpretation is not generally accepted as valuable or even necessary, I consider it an essential and powerful tool in descriptive semantics. Meaning is invoked in the hearer by means of an utterance. An interpretation arises from the association of this linguistic information with information from other sources, which may or may not be linguistic. The fact that utterances are always realized within a context does not render the distinction between meaning and interpretation less substantial. In other words, meaning and interpretation, like meaning and form, are discrete yet inseparable. Let me illustrate this with, once again, the cedar next to Hotel De Ceder. If nēi ge dōngxī ‘that thing’ is said while pointing at the cedar, the meaning ‘that thing’ will be interpreted as referring to the cedar. It does not follow, however, that nēi ge dōngxī means ‘cedar’. In other words, there is no element of form in /nēi ∂ ge ∂ dōnxī/ corre-lating with the meaning ‘cedar’. Given the presence in the hearer’s mind of the concept of a cedar in connection with an utterance of nēi ge dōnxī, and assuming, as I will, that this concept cannot be traced back to the linguistic means of that sentence, it must be analyzed as the contribution of external sources: in this case, of
the act of pointing at a cedar visible to the hearer. The concept of the cedar accordingly is an interpretation.

The distinction between meaning and interpretation can also be illustrated as follows. As argued above, uttering a form cannot guarantee that the meaning intended by the speaker will be identical to the meaning invoked in the hearer. The difference between them will usually be a subtle one. In contrast, there is a wide range of possible interpretations which can be composed by the hearer on the basis of the same meaning. By definition, interpretations cannot be linguistically enforced by the speaker. However, the speaker, having selected a meaning and realizing that there is a chance of being misinterpreted by a hearer, has the choice of either (a) selecting another meaning, so that the intended interpretation is explicitly specified by the meaning to be invoked in the hearer; or (b) adding contextual clues in order to decrease the chances of being misinterpreted. Thus, when speaker A, pointing at the same cedar yet again, says nèi ge dōngxi, speaker B, extrapolating the line of pointing all the way up to the chimney of the hotel, may assume that ‘that thing’ is to be interpreted as ‘that chimney’. Linguistically, the communication has been entirely successful, for the meaning ‘that thing’ has been invoked as intended by the speaker. This meaning may be defined roughly as ‘an object away from the speaker which is the most likely one to have been intended by him’, where ‘most likely to have been intended’ describes the notion of definiteness in the meaning of nèi ‘that’. From A’s point of view, the chimney is the wrong object, but from B’s point of view, the chimney is the object most likely to have been intended by A. Speaker A has a choice of either further specifying the intended interpretation in a meaning, e.g. by saying nèi kē bāishù ‘that cedar’ or nèi kē shù ‘that tree’, or, alternatively, of standing closer to the tree while pointing at it.

6. Given the notion of meaning as a mental image which cannot be directly transmitted between minds, the linguist is likely to witness semantic variations between individual language users. Still, the common observation that language users by and large understand each other indicates that there is usually a high degree of conformity between the meanings conceptualized by speakers and hearers. For this reason, an inventory of meanings elicited from just one language user may yield a representative semantic description. A comparison with data from other language users will enable the linguist to distinguish between individual idiosyncrasies and elements relevant to the semantic description of the language as a whole.

As the semanticist seeks systematic access to mental notions, he is compelled to study them indirectly by way of their physical arguments. In the case of meaning, the closest physical arguments are those referents which belong to a concrete world. A second physical entity relevant to the study of meaning is the utterance, i.e. the realization of the form correlating with a given meaning. For the phonologist, on the
other hand, utterances constitute the primary material. These circumstances lend a
certain matter-of-factness to phonology, while semantic issues are often judged to be
much more inscrutable due to the fact that referents may belong to imaginary worlds.
Still, as argued in section 5, language treats imaginary referents and material referents
in exactly the same way. As a consequence, linguistic informants are able to talk
about these referents as if they were things.

In this connection, compare once again Hao shū. ‘Good books.’ with Hao duō
shū. ‘Very many books.’ in (1.3) and (1.4). For Hao shū., if speakers agree that the
things which are Hao ‘good’ are the very same things which are shū ‘book’, the
linguist may record a shared referent, viz. the books in question, for the two
meanings ‘good’ and ‘book’. The idea is simply to ask ‘What entity is good?’ and
‘What entity is a book?’. If the answer is the same entity in both cases, the two
meanings ‘good’ and ‘book’ share the same referent. Similarly for Hao duō shū.
‘Very many books.’, speakers are able to formulate, each in their own way, the
notion that not the books, but their numerosness is Hao ‘good’. For the expression
as a whole, there are accordingly two referents, viz. the books in a concrete world
and their numerosness in an imaginary world. The books are shared as a referent by
(a) the meaning ‘book’ correlating with shū; and (b) the meaning ‘a good many’
correlating with Hao duō. The latter meaning can in turn be analyzed as two
meanings, ‘good’ and ‘numerous’, correlating with Hao and duō, respectively, and
sharing the imaginary notion of numerosness as a referent.

As just illustrated, different meanings may be construed as sharing the same
referent. I will make a terminological distinction between CONVERGENT meanings,
which are syntactically construed so as to share a referent, and COREFERENTIAL
meanings, which share a referent as a matter of interpretation. Both terms are
Ebeling’s.2 In the following example, the meanings ‘book’ and ‘good’ are
convergent.

(1.13) Zhè shū hǎo. Wǒ mǎi zhè běn.
     this book good i.sg buy this volume
     ‘This book is nice. I’ll buy this one.’

If the speaker wants to imply that he is going to buy the very book which he says is
nice, the meanings ‘book’ and ‘this volume’ are coreferential. A non-coreferential
interpretation of ‘book’ and ‘this volume’ might occur in the following situation. A

2. Ebeling (p.c. 23 July 1993) proposes convergent to replace his earlier (1978: 29) term parallel. I have
adopted convergent because the image of meanings ‘coming together’ in the same referent is more
transparent than the ‘never touching’ image suggested by parallel. At the same time, the contrast with the
opposite case of divergent meanings (ibid.) is made clear. See also Ebeling (1978: 226-231) on
coreference.
speaker, talking to a friend while looking at books in a book shop, is holding a dictionary he has chosen to buy while looking at some more books. He points out to his friend a novel he likes while saying Zhè shū hǎo. 'This book is nice.' and adds Wǒ mǎi zhè běn. 'I'll buy this one.' while pointing at a dictionary he intends to buy.

7. The same form often seems to correlate with a number of different meanings. The meanings to be distinguished may be so vastly different that the use of the same form is felt to be accidental, as in English *date* 'day on which something happens' and *date* 'sweet fruit from a palm tree'. In other cases, various meanings of identical forms may seem to be related in one way or another, e.g. for English *date* 'specific time' and *date* 'social acquaintance met at a prearranged time, prospective partner in love'. The correlation of unrelated meanings with the same form is usually called homonymy. When one form denotes related meanings, the term polysemy is used. As John Lyons (1986: 552) observes, "relatedness of meaning appears to be a matter of degree", so that "the linguist might well decide that it is preferable to leave the theoretical status of the distinction between homonymy and polysemy unresolved". In this connection, note that the decision about the degree of relatedness rests with the speaker. Meanings may in some cases be homonymous for some speakers and polysemous for others. This appears to be the case for Dutch *ruit* 'rhombus, diamond' and *ruit* 'window pane'.

As regards relatedness as "a matter of degree", one factor complicating the semantic description is that polysemous meanings may be cognate in more than one way. Consider the English form *mouse* 'small furry rodent with a long tail'. Since the advent of personal computing, *mouse* is also widely used to designate a cursor-controlling interface. The use of the form *mouse* in a computing context was suggested by a number of aspects of its 'rodent' meaning:

(1.14) *mouse* [...] 
A computer peripheral consisting of a small plastic box with a number of buttons and a lead, which may be moved about on a desk or tablet to control the position of the cursor on a monitor, and used to enter commands.

A metaphorical use of the animal name, arising from the appearance of the computer device, with its compact body and its trailing flex resembling a tail, as well as its effect of making the cursor 'scamper' across the screen. This is the latest in a long line of technical uses of *mouse* based on physical resemblance to the furry animal; these include a nautical term for a type of knot and a plumber's lead weight on a line. (Oxford: 202)

In addition to the physical aspects enumerated here, the use of the expression *mouse* may have been suggested by the initially standard gray color of computers and computer peripherals. Among later technical developments, the use of infra-red light for the transmission of signals has made the 'tail' an optional feature. An infra-red
mouse is still a mouse by virtue of its mobile, cursor-positioning, small and gray qualities, but the tail feature has been lost.

If one were to define ‘mouse’ in terms of the common denominator between the features of these three types of mouse, this would lead to the description ‘something mobile, small and gray’. Such a semantic description falls short on two accounts. Firstly, it overlooks the fact that what speakers of English think of when they hear mouse is more than the notion thus delimited. Some may think of something that is additionally a rodent, and others may think of a small computer interface of one kind or other. Secondly, the fact that the cursor-positioning quality is shared between the two kinds of computer mouse is not represented in a description of the meaning of mouse as ‘something mobile, small and gray’.

Hence polysemy does not necessarily lead to a reduction of meanings to a single invariant meaning. The relationships between meanings denoted by the same form may prove to be more meaningful than a common semantic denominator. In the case of mouse, consider two more meanings which render the notion of a denominator common to all meanings useless. First, mouse may be used to refer to a shy person. In addition, on a limited scale, passport and tax exiles have been observed to style themselves “mice” (Monitor 1993: passim), presumably because of the secretive qualities attributed to mice. Some characteristics of each ‘mouse’ are summarized below.

(1.15) mouse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'animal'</th>
<th>'cabled interface'</th>
<th>'infra-red interface'</th>
<th>'shy person'</th>
<th>'passport/tax exile'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>small</td>
<td>small</td>
<td>small</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with long tail</td>
<td>with long tail</td>
<td>mobile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobile</td>
<td>mobile</td>
<td>gray</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gray</td>
<td></td>
<td>shy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shy</td>
<td></td>
<td>secretive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secretive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rodent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>controls cursor</td>
<td>controls cursor</td>
<td>human</td>
<td>human</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The absence of a common semantic denominator does not necessitate a description in terms of homonymy as long as the various uses of a form can be plotted along a continuum in which adjacent uses share semantic properties. In other words, the meanings ‘passport/tax exile’ and ‘infra-red interface’ correlating with mouse have more in common than just being mobile, even though the lines of their semantic relationship are indirect. The fact that people using these meanings know
these things is relevant. Any meaningful connection between the different uses of a single form helps to complete the linguistic description.
CHAPTER 2

JUNCTION WITH DE

1. The Mandarin particle de is used in a number of different syntactic constructions. Its functions have been described as "nominalizing", "modifying", "situational", "specifying" etc. The semantic variation between different uses of de appears to allow for a treatment in terms of polysemy. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 will explore the possibility of such a treatment.

Perhaps the most eye-catching feature of the particle de is its extreme frequency. In my spoken corpus of 5,040 sentences, de occurs 3,030 times. As regards its form, de has a neutral tone, which means that it is unstressed and that its relative pitch is determined by the tone of the preceding syllable. De cannot appear as the first word in a sentence. Even the use of de in HYPOSTASIS, i.e. when the referent of the meaning of de is the form de itself, is exceptional. The usual form employed in such cases is not de, but dè, with a qù tone. Hence one would say:

(2.1) Dè zì shì qīng shēng.
    de character be light tone
    'De has a neutral tone.'

An utterance of the form dè, meaning 'de', may bear stress. For the particle de, the neutral tone, the position following another form and the fact that hypostasis requires a qù tone are all formal characteristics shared with many other grammatical particles in Mandarin.

Semantically, de invariably links up with the meanings of preceding forms, matching the formal circumstance that it must follow other expressions. As a matter of principle, the semantic analyses offered in this work are based on a firm semantic footing. I define SYNTAX as the study of the relationships which hold between meanings correlating with linguistic forms. Syntactic relationships are relationships between meanings, and the syntactic relationships themselves are also aspects of meaning. In an analogous way, the positional and prosodic arrangements of forms are themselves aspects of linguistic form. Meanings construed as bearing a syntactic relationship together form a SYNTAGM or SYNTACTIC CONSTRUCTION. Syntactic relationships never hold between forms. They may but need not hold between the meanings of given forms. If a syntactic relationship holds between the meanings of given forms, it may correlate with the positional or with the prosodic arrangement of these forms. In order to define a syntactic relationship, it is necessary to start from
the meanings entering into the relationship. The semantic inventory rests on an identification of features carried by appropriate referents.

For an illustration, consider the following excerpt. The speaker is talking about the Taiwanese phenomenon of péi kào ‘escorting someone to an examination’. In Taiwan, family and friends often accompany candidates to school and stay there until the exams are over. The fragment starts with a pun alluding to the fact that final exams take place in the height of summer. The witticism is based on the homonymy of kào ‘have exams’ and kão ‘bake’. De will be glossed throughout as ‘SUB’, for ‘subordination’.

(2.2) B: Yóu-- hěn duō rén kāi wánxiào xié “kào jì, kāo exist very many man open joke write have.exams season bake jì” <m>.
season mm
‘There are-- many people make a joke of it, writing “examination time – baking time”’ <mm>.’

(2357)

B: Yì ge shì... kāoshí de kāo, yì ge shì k-- kāo huò one piece be examination SUB kāo one piece be HES bake fire de kāo <è, duì>.
SUB kāo uh-huh right
‘One is... kāo as in kāoshí “examination” and the other is the k-- kāo of kāo huò “warm oneself by a fire” <uh-huh, right>.’

(2358)

[...]
B: Suǒyì hěn duō rén dōu zuò zài zōuláng, zuò zài yì therefore very many man all sit be.in corridor sit be.in one ge tèbié <m> de dìfāng.
piece special mm SUB place
‘So many people sit in the corridors, or sit in in a special <mm> area.’

(2376)

B: Huòzhè shènzhì zuò (zài) tàiyáng dīxià (jiù) dǎ <m> yí ge perhaps even sit (be.in) sun below (just) hit mm one piece sān <m>.
umbrella mm
‘Or they even sit in the sun, and put up <mm> a parasol <mm>’.

(2377)

B: Nà kāoshí de rén zài lǐmian kāo, <m> wàimian that examination SUB man be.in inside have.exams mm outside
de rén shì bēi tài yáng kāo <hahaha, bèi g-- tài yáng kāo, hahaha>.

'So the people doing exams are kāo-ing indoors and the people outside are kāo-ing because of the sun <hahaha, kāo-ing because of-- the sun, hahaha>.'

(2378)

The two instances of de in (2.2)/2358 give a good first impression of the meaning of de, because in both cases de is preceded as well as followed by expressions used in hypostasis: kāoshì de kāo ‘the kāo of kāoshì’ and kāo huǒ de kāo ‘the kāo of kāo huǒ’. For the tone sandhi involved in the second case, see p. xiii.

Now consider the expression wài mían de rén ‘person outside’ in (2.2)/2378. According to the method just outlined, a syntactic analysis of wài mían de rén ‘person outside’ takes stock of the meanings contributed by wài mían ‘outside’ and rén ‘person’. For an inventory of the referents to which each of the three meanings of these three forms apply, the procedure introduced in chapter 1 (p. 16) may be used. The idea is to ask “What entity is a person outside?”, “What entity is the outside?” and “What entity is a person?”. Starting with the second question, the context suggests that the outside talked about is the area outside the school. In other words, the area outside the school serves as the referent of the meaning ‘outside’ correlating with wài mían. For both ‘person’ correlating with rén and for ‘person outside’ correlating with the form wài mían de rén as a whole, the same referent can be assumed, namely, the person or persons escorting examination candidates. This identity of referents leads to the establishment of convergence for ‘person outside’ and ‘person’.

For the description of the relationship between the three meanings ‘outside’, ‘person’ and ‘person outside’, the convergence of the latter two is a crucial factor. In my view, it is this factor which indicates that for wài mían de rén, the relationship between ‘outside’ and ‘person’ is such that the persons serving as the referent of ‘person’ are presented as somehow carrying the feature projected in the meaning of ‘outside’. In other words, the meaning ‘outside’ is a projection of a feature carried by the area outside the school, but the meaning ‘person outside’ presents this feature as being indirectly carried by the persons talked about. These persons ‘are pictured primarily as ‘person’, but additionally as characterized by a feature | outside | . I will use Jespersen’s (1924: 97) term JUNCTION for this type of syntactic construction.

Jespersen’s analysis does not always clearly distinguish between forms and their meanings. I will apply his terms in a strictly semantic sense and regard junction as a syntactic construction type representing a compound meaning. Junction is constructed from two different meanings, a head and an adjunct. The HEAD is a projection of a feature directly carried by a referent which simultaneously serves as the referent of the compound meaning. Jespersen’s ADJUNCT (1924: 97) can be
redefined as the projection of a feature which is also carried by the referent of the head, but in a less prominent way. The description “in a less prominent way” is deliberately vague at this point and will be specified presently. The meaning of wāimian de rén ‘person outside’ can now be described as a case of junction formed by a head ‘person’ and an adjunct ‘outside’.

Jespersen’s examples of junction include cases where the adjunct and the head are convergent as well as cases where these semantic constituents are divergent. I will accordingly speak of CONVERGENT and DIVERGENT JUNCTION. Wāimian de rén ‘person outside’ in (2.2) is an instance of divergent junction because two different referents are involved. The following example illustrates several cases of convergent junction. The speaker was talking about waves of popular culture and fashion.

(2.3) Cónɡ dà chénɡshì, cónɡ dà de guójìā, dà de chénɡshì <m> dào from big city, from big SUB country big SUB city mm arrive
xiǎo de guójìā, xiǎo de chénɡshì, <m> dōu shì yì zhǒnɡ small SUB country small SUB city mm all be one sort
chuánrán <m>.
infection mm

‘It’s like an infection spreading <mm> from big cities, from big countries and big cities <mm> to small countries and small towns <mm>.’

(1947)

Junction without de, as exemplified in dà chénɡshì ‘big city’, will be treated presently. First, consider the four cases of convergent junction with de: dà de guójìā ‘big country’, dà de chénɡshì ‘big city’, xiǎo de guójìā ‘small country’ and xiǎo de chénɡshì ‘small town’. The semantic issues involved are the same in each case; I will take the expression dà de chénɡshì as representative. Here the feature | big | and the feature | city | are carried by the same referent, namely, the cities talked about. The two features are not carried by this referent in the same way. As regards the ways in which the two features are carried, Ebeling’s (1978) analysis in my view offers a clear presentation of the issues at hand:

(2.4) In set theory the notation \( V \cap W \) [denoting the intersection of two sets \( V \) and \( W \), i.e. the set of elements belonging to both \( V \) and \( W \)] is unordered, i.e., \( V \cap W \) is identical with \( W \cap V \), but language goes beyond that by distinguishing a set \( V \cap W \) seen as a subset of \( V \) from a set \( V \cap W \) seen as a subset of \( W \).

(pp. 29-30)

If the set of wooden tables is a subset of the set of objects that possess the (set of) feature(s) | table | , it is equally true that it is a subset of the set whose elements are marked as | wooden | . However, a more careful inspection shows that linguistic ordering can make a distinction to the effect that, for example, a high table, seen as the appropriate referent of a meaning containing a projection of | high | and | table | , is rather a member of a subset of the set of tables than of a subset of the set of high objects.

(pp. 341-342)
Applied to the case of dà de chéngshì ‘big city’ in (2.3), the objects referred to are seen rather as a member of a subset of the set of cities than as a member of a subset of the set of big objects. In other words, the meaning ‘big city’ represents the feature [big] as a less intrinsic characteristic of the big city referred to than the feature [city]. To sum up, the “less prominent way” in which the referent of an adjunct carries its feature comes in two kinds. For (2.2) wàimian de rén ‘person outside’, the feature [outside] figures less prominently because it is carried indirectly, being carried directly by another referent. For (2.3) dà de chéngshì ‘big city’, the feature [big] is carried in a less prominent way than the feature [city] because the cities talked about are presented rather as a member of the subset of the set of cities than as a member of the subset of the set of big objects.

The reasoning presented in (2.4) can be seen as a formalization of Jespersen’s description of junction:

(2.5) red in a red rose restricts the applicability of the word rose to one particular sub-class of the whole class of roses, it specializes and defines the rose of which I am speaking by excluding white and yellow roses (1924: 108)

In view of this neat referential evidence, I take exception to Samuel R. Levin’s statement (in his Foreword to Jespersen 1969, p. vii) that “[t]he outstanding deficiency of Jespersen’s analysis, from the point of view of transformational grammar, is his failure to see any underlying structure in Junctions of this sort”. Apparently, the criticism is based on a failure to see underlying structures unless they are rooted in transformational grammar. For a red rose, the syntactic structure joining ‘red’ and ‘rose’ can effectively be described in terms of the different ways in which the features [red] and [rose] are carried by “the rose of which I am speaking”. This means that in addition to identifying referents and their features, the linguistic analysis defines the way features are carried by referents.

An analysis of the morphemes making up the expression wàimian ‘outside’ will reveal a comparable case of convergent junction. That is to say, the area outside the school, as the referent of both mian ‘side’ and of wàimian ‘outside’, is represented as carrying a less intrinsic feature [exterior] when it is referred to by the latter meaning. However, unlike the example wàimian de rén ‘person outside’ in (2.2)/2378, the junction members ‘exterior’ and ‘side’ here correlate with BOUND FORMS. That is to say, neither wài ‘exterior’ nor mian ‘side’ can make up a sentence. The expression wài de mian therefore cannot be used to mean ‘the side of the exterior’.

3. The only exception is hypostasis, e.g. Nǐ shuō shéme? – Wài. ‘What did you say? – Wài’, where wài does not mean ‘exterior’ but ‘an utterance of the form wài’.
2. Compared to *wàimian de rén* ‘person outside’ in (2.2), the case of *nánfāng rén* ‘Southerner’ in the next example presents a slightly different case of divergent junction:

(2.6) A: *Nǐ bù shì nánfāng rén?*  
2.SG not be southern.region person  
‘You’re not a Southerner?’

B: *Wǒ Tiānjīn*  
1.SG PNTiānjīn SUB oh  
‘I’m from Tiānjīn.’

The referent of *nánfāng rén* ‘Southerner’ in (2.6) is primarily pictured as a person, and additionally as being from a southern region. The relationship between ‘person’ and ‘southern region’ is much like that between ‘person’ and ‘outside’ in (2.2) *wàimian de rén* ‘people outside’. The meaning of *wàimian de rén* ‘person outside’ presents the persons talked about as carrying the feature | exterior | in a less intrinsic way than the feature | person |. In (2.6) *nánfāng rén* ‘Southerner’, a feature | southern region | is similarly presented as a less intrinsic aspect when compared with the feature | person |. Nevertheless, the meaning of *nánfāng rén* ‘Southerner’ presents | southern region | as a feature which is firmly ingrained in its carrier. To sum up, in (2.2) *wàimian de rén* ‘person outside’, the fact that the person is someone outside is pictured as a circumstantial event, but (2.6) *nánfāng rén* ‘Southerner’ presents | southern region | as a permanent feature of the person talked about.

For a minimal pair, (2.6) *nánfāng rén* ‘Southerner’ may be compared to the Mandarin expression *nánfāng de rén* ‘person from the south’. Here the semantic difference does not involve a different set of features, but merely a difference in the way these features are carried. When *de* is inserted, the feature | outside | is represented as a circumstantial event instead of a more intrinsic feature of the persons referred to.

For (2.2) *wàimian de rén* ‘person outside’, the converse operation of leaving out *de* does not lead to comparable results. Theoretically, it may seem reasonable to expect that the omission of *de* leads to a meaning which presents the feature | outside | as an intrinsic aspect of the persons talked about. In other words, these persons are then referred to as ‘outsiders’. In Mandarin, this meaning is lexicalized without *de*, but also without *mian* ‘side’: *wài rén* ‘outsider’.

Also note the way in which a formal difference such as that between *nánfāng de rén* and *nánfāng rén* mirrors a semantic difference. Just as *nánfāng* and *rénn* are

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4. *Tiānjīn* ‘Tiānjīn’ is the form used consistently by an informant from Tiānjīn. The name of the city is usually transcribed as “Tiānjīn” in PRC sources and likewise spelled without a g in the West. For my Pekinese informants, the forms Tiānjīn and Tiānjīn coexist.
separated by an intervening de in nánfāng de rén but directly juxtaposed in (2.6) nánfāng rén, their respective meanings are also more loosely connected in the former case than in the latter.

The challenge formulated by 范继淹 Fān Jìyān can now be taken up:⑤

(2.7)  FormControl
Cōngmíng rén ‘intelligent person’ is usually said without de, while yōnggān de rén  ‘brave person’ must be said with de. This phenomenon would be very hard to explain except in terms of “idiomatic expression” and “non-idiomatic expression”.

(Fān 1982: 501)

In my view, there is a good semantic reason for the phenomenon observed by Fān: the absence and presence of de in these examples reflect the common-sense notion that intelligence is a more intrinsic, innate quality than bravery. This explanation does not exclude the possibility that common-sense notions are culturally determined.

For convergent junction, the difference between expressions with and without de is the same as for divergent junction. Hence in the meaning of (2.3) dà de chéngshì ‘big city’, the feature | big | is represented as a circumstantial characteristic. For dà chéngshì ‘big city’ in (2.3), the feature | big | is pictured as an intrinsic characteristic. The semantic difference between dà de chéngshì ‘big city’ and dà chéngshì ‘big city’ is comparable to that of English big city and metropolis, but English here lacks the kind of formal resemblance which it exhibits in cases such as red skin ‘skin which happens to be red’ vs. redskin ‘skin which is intrinsically red > American Indian rudely referred to by other races’. A comparison of German große Stadt ‘big city’ and Großstadt ‘metropolis’ reveals semantic as well as formal parallels to the Mandarin case.

3. In sections 1 and 2, two types of divergent junction have been described. The first type is represented by wàimian de rén ‘person outside’ and the second type is exemplified by nánfāng rén ‘Southerner’. In both cases, the semantic description specifies the manner in which two features are assigned to two different referents. The instances of convergent junction discussed so far are exemplified by dà de chéngshì ‘big city’ and dà chéngshì ‘big city’. The semantics involved in each case describes the way in which two features are allocated to a single referent.

Next, consider the case of Tiānjīng de ‘from Tiānjīn’ in (2.6). Unlike the previous examples, a description of the meaning of this expression records only one feature, namely | Tiānjīn |. Nevertheless, the semantic description of Tiānjīng de ‘from Tiānjīn’ requires two referents, one of which is the city of Tianjīn. The second referent is the speaker himself, but the meaning of Tiānjīng de presents precious little

⑤ Quotations preceded by the symbol  FormControl are my translations. The original texts are given in the appendix, pp. 103-108.
information about this referent. The only thing reported about this referent by means of Tiānjīng de is that it is something known exclusively by means of the feature projected for the city of Tiānjīn. Otherwise, the syntactic construction is identical to the instance of divergent junction described for wāimian de rén ‘person outside’ in (2.2). In other words, the referent is represented in the meaning of Tiānjīng de as a divergent junction head. No feature of this referent is projected in that meaning other than an indirectly carried | Tiānjīn |, which is carried directly by the city of Tiānjīn.

The fact that no additional feature is projected for the referent of the junction head leads to a descriptive paradox. Given the intention to start the semantic analysis by identifying referents, the description of an extra semantic aspect may be expected to be based on the projection of an additional feature carried by a referent. Still, as was shown above for nánfāng de rén ‘person from the south’ versus nánfāng rén ‘Southerner’, a difference in the way features are projected may constitute a semantic difference even if the set of projected features is the same. The “way features are projected” can also be viewed as the way in which features are carried by a referent. Alternatively, since language ultimately creates these features rather than reporting their existence, the “way features are projected” is actually the way in which features are presented by the speaker as being carried by a referent. For Tiānjīng de ‘from Tiānjīng’, Tiānjīng correlates with the projection of a feature | Tiānjīn | and de correlates with the projection of that feature as an adjunct.

To sum up, the rationale for assuming an extra semantic aspect for Tiānjīng de ‘from Tiānjīn’ in comparison with Tiānjīng ‘Tiānjīn’ is threefold:
(a) formal evidence, i.e. the presence of de;
(b) referential evidence, namely, the fact that the meaning of Tiānjīng de is not only felt to say something about Tiānjīn, but also about an entity which is not the city of Tiānjīn; and
(c) the consideration that there are two different ways in which the feature | Tiānjīn | is carried: directly by the city and indirectly by the other entity. I will presently argue a comparable case which lacks the referential evidence adduced here.

The “dummy” junction head described here is reminiscent of, but different from, the notion which I defined in chapter 1 (p. 15) as “most likely to have been intended by [the speaker]”. That meaning can more exactly be defined as the projection of a feature | assumed by the speaker to be identifiable by the hearer |. In other words, for the speaker, the referent of this meaning is something which he presents as known to both the hearer and himself; for the hearer, the use of this meaning amounts to a call to find the most likely referent. Henceforth, this meaning
will be transcribed as ‘IT’. Unlike the junction head described for Tiānjīng de ‘from Tiānjin’ above, ‘IT’ constitutes the projection of an extra feature.

The meaning of Tiānjīng de ‘from Tiānjin’ may now be compared with the three expressions with de in the next example. The speaker is explaining the difference between the meanings of the expressions fànguăn ‘restaurant’ and cānțīng ‘dining room’ in Taiwan Mandarin.

(2.8) B: Fànguăn shì yī ge hén xiăo de fànguăn.  
restaurant be one piece very small SUB restaurant  
‘A restaurant is just a small restaurant.’  

B: Cānțīng shì yī ge <ē> fēichăng háohuá de dà  
dining.room be one piece <uh-huh> extraordinary luxury SUB big  
de jiao cānțīng.  
SUB call dining.room  
‘A dining room is a <uh-huh> very posh one, a big one, that’s what is called a dining room.’

Xiăo de fànguăn ‘small restaurant’ is a case of convergent junction exactly like that of dà de chéngshì ‘big city’ in (2.3). For fēichăng háohuá de ‘which is extremely posh’ and dà de ‘which is big’, the context makes it clear that the speaker was still talking about restaurants. The dummy junction head correlating with de can accordingly be interpreted for both instances as referring to these restaurants. These restaurants similarly serve as the referents of the adjuncts ‘extremely posh’ and ‘big’.

To sum up, for xiăo de fànguăn ‘small restaurants’ as well as for fēichăng háohuá de ‘which is extremely posh’ and dà de ‘which is big’, the heads are convergent with their respective adjuncts. The semantic relationship between fēichăng ‘extraordinarily’ and háohuá ‘posh’ will not be discussed here, but it parallels that between hào ‘good’ and duō ‘many’ in example (1.4) of the previous chapter.

This leaves the question as to whether “convergent” is still the term to use here. In section 6 of chapter 1, convergent meanings were defined as “[d]ifferent meanings [...] which are syntactically construed so as to share a referent”. But do the head and the adjunct in cases like dà de ‘which is big’ constitute different meanings? Meanings were defined as “the mental image, for those in control of the language, of the entities in the world which can be appropriately referred to by means of realizations of [a form]” (chapter 1, section 2). The definition of meaning can now be reformulated so as to cover both the projection of features and the way in which features are projected. The MEANING of a form is, for those in control of the language, the projection in the mind of one or more features carried by one or more

6. My semantic label ‘IT’ is inspired by and roughly corresponds to Ebeling’s (1978: 165-166) term ‘THE’. 
entities in the world to which the realization of that form can appropriately refer, including the way in which each feature is carried by each referent. This reformulation will allow the “semantic aspects” discussed in this section, which constitute a way of projecting a feature rather than the projected feature itself, to be called simply meanings. Hence I will use the term convergent junction for cases like dà de ‘which is big’ in (2.8) to indicate that the restaurants carry the feature | big | in an indirect way.

The questions discussed so far show that the semantic analysis proposed here sets out to account for the following aspects: (a) for each form, its meaning; (b) for each meaning, the identity of its referents; (c) for each referent, the identity of its projected features; (d) for each projected feature, the way in which it is carried by each referent. The set of referents needed for the description of any given meaning consists of those entities in the world which, whether indirectly or directly, are presented as carrying features projected in the meaning.

4. As a practical spin-off from the distinction between convergent and divergent junction, a definition of Mandarin nouns and verbs can be given as follows. A noun is a sign which, when followed by the particle de, inevitably leads to the establishment of divergent junction. The need to assume a second referent for Tiānjīng de ‘from Tiānjīn’ in (2.6) establishes Tiānjīn ‘Tiānjīn’ as a noun. A verb is a sign which, when followed by de, allows for the possibility of convergent junction. Hence fēicháng hǎo húá de ‘which is extremely posh’ and dà de ‘which is big’ in (2.8) define hǎo húá ‘luxury’ and dà ‘big’ as verbs.

Verbs followed by de also allow for divergent readings. The structure of these meanings will be the subject of chapter 3. In the remaining part of the present chapter, I will discuss collocations of de with different kinds of verbs.

5. In the description of meanings as projections of features, it often happens that features carried by different referents come together in one meaning. Consider the Mandarin expression mài ‘sell’. An attempt to describe its meaning may start from an inquiry into the things in the world to which this meaning can refer, i.e. those entities which can be projected in the mind as possessing a selling feature of sorts. It will then be observed that shops and salespeople may possess selling qualities of one kind, and that bread, bananas and books can possess selling qualities of a different kind. A single selling event usually involves both types of entities simultaneously, and, more importantly, may be referred to by a single occurrence of mài. More technically, an analysis of the meaning of mài into two valences, e.g. ‘selling’ and ‘being sold’, may be prompted by the observation that what mài denotes potentially combines projections of different features carried by two distinct referents.
Superficially, the above description may seem to be a reformulation of the traditional concept of a transitive verb in terms of a referent-based approach to semantics. I nevertheless consider the specification useful, because terms such as *transitive verb* often go undefined, or underdefined, in linguistic descriptions. In my view, although a semantic description will have to rely heavily on speaker intuitions, it cannot depend on intuitive perceptions of grammar. Some theoretical aspects of valences will be taken up in chapter 6.

The meaning of *dà* ‘big’ discussed in section 2 was monovalent, i.e. there was a single referent carrying the feature |big|. For cases of junction of polyvalent meanings with *de*, the question arises as to which feature is projected as the adjunct. In other words, must *mài de* be interpreted as ‘what is sold’ or as ‘who sells’? This question has been treated in great detail by Li and Thompson (1981: 575ff.) in their description of Mandarin nominalization. They conclude that “a nominalization functioning as a noun phrase consists of a portion of a sentence including the verb, followed by the particle *de*, where one of the participants normally associated with that verb is missing. The interpretation of the nominalization is governed by principles (i)–(iii), specifying to which of the missing participants the nominalization is understood to refer” (p. 579). Here, “participant” roughly corresponds to the notion of valence described above. The principles in question are as follows (the term “referent” being used in a sense different from my own):

(2.9) (i) To be used alone as a noun phrase, a nominalization must contain a verb with at least one of its participants unspecified.
(ii) If there is only one participant unspecified, then the referent of the nominalization is the same as that of the missing participant. [...] (iii) If both the subject and direct object participants are unspecified in a nominalization, then that nominalization will generally be understood to have the same referent as the unspecified direct object participant of that verb. (p. 577)

My spoken corpus generally confirms this description. Examples (2.10) to (2.13) illustrate the way I believe Li and Thompson’s principles are intended. For *xué* ‘learn’, the subject and object participants denote the learner and the thing learned, and are here represented by *tā* ‘he’ and *líshì* ‘history’, respectively:

(2.10) Tā xué shìjì lǐshì.
3 learn world history
‘He studies world history.’ (2908)

In the following case of nominalization with *de*, the subject participant is missing:

(2.11) Yīnwèi zhè lǐ yī yuǎn de ne, zài Zhōngguó because this piece learn this sort language SUB RLV be.in China
bú shì hěn duō.
not be very much

‘Because, eh... in China there are not many who, eh, learn these languages.’ (0111)

As predicted by Li and Thompson’s principle (ii) in (2.9), xué zhěi zhōng yǔyán de means ‘who learn these languages’. In the following example the object participant is missing. The speaker was reacting to his interlocutor’s use of the Taiwan Mandarin term píng 平 ‘square measure of two Japanese tatami mats, equalling 3.31 m²’. Not knowing the term, he contrasted it with what he himself had learned in school.

(2.12) Wǒmen-- wǒmen xué de jiù shì eh, yī mǐ-- yī mǐ de
1.PL learn SUB just is eh one meter one meter SUB
pingfāng mǐ, <dùi> jiù shì zhè shì yàng <dùi>.
square meter right just is this kind right

‘What we-- we used to learn was a, eh, a sq-- a square meter of one meter, <right>, like this <right>’.

(1999)

Here, the “missing participant” of (2.9) is the thing learned, and wǒmen xué de means ‘what we learn’ as predicted by principle (ii).

Principle (iii) is illustrated by the instance of chī de meaning ‘what is eaten’ rather than ‘who eats’ in the next example:

(2.13) B: Báitiān tā shì yī ge shíchǎng, shí mài yú, mài cài, mài
by.day 3 be one piece market be sell fish sell vegetables sell
ròu <m>, mài shēng de dōngxi <m>.
meat mm sell live SUB thing mm

‘By day it’s a marketplace, they sell fish, vegetables and meat <mm>, they sell raw things <mm>.’

(1611)

B: Wǎnshàng biàn chéng... mài shòu de, mài chí de <m>.
evening change become sell done SUB sell eat SUB mm

‘At night they change over to... selling cooked things, things to
eat <mm>.’

(1612)

In instances where “subject and direct object participants are unspecified in a nominalization”, I have found no clear case of de denoting the subject participant, which confirms Li and Thompson’s findings. Still, such cases have been reported and commented on, e.g. by 朱德熙 Zhū Déxī:

(2.14) 反对 的 是 少数 人
Fǎnduì de shì shǎoshù rén.
oppose SUB be minority person (1985: 170, my transcription and glosses)
Zhū distinguishes two readings, ‘Those opposing it are in a minority.’ and ‘Those opposed to are in a minority.’ and explains that the choice between them is determined by the context. For another example,

(2.15) 扮演 的 是 一 个 有名 的 演员
Bànyàn de shì yí ge yǒumíng de yānyuán.
act SUB be one piece famous SUB actor

( Ibid., my transcription and glosses) he estimates an 80% preference for ‘The one playing the part is a famous actor.’ over ‘The part played is a famous actor.’. And for

(2.16) 相信 的 是 俊瓜
Xiāngxìn de shì jùnguā.
believe SUB be fool

( Ibid., my transcription and glosses) his odds are less than 50% for ‘The one trusted was the fool.’ as opposed to ‘The one believing it was the fool.’. Note, however, that these probabilities (a) rely heavily on the linguistic context offered within each sentence, and (b) apply to the appropriate referents, and only in that sense to meaning.

Zhū’s remarks confirm my own observation that native speakers are able to point out the difference between these meanings while being aware of a common element. I will speak of SYNTACTIC POLYSEMY when distinct yet related meanings are presented by a syntagm rather than by the lexical elements making up the syntagm. For fándui de in (2.14), syntactic polysemy can be established because the meanings discussed derive from the syntactic association of fándui ‘oppose’ with de ‘SUB’. By contrast, the kind of polysemy presented e.g. by shuō de ‘what is said; who gets told off’ would lead to LEXICAL POLYSEMY, for these possibilities are already given in the lexical element shuō ‘say; tell off’.

Still, matters are not as clear-cut as this brief inventory may suggest, and the most interesting instances of de are typically those which are hard to classify in terms of the principles given in (2.9). Consider the following example, in which two participants are missing for xué ‘learn’:

(2.17) Xué de hǎo tā jiù (yao) fēn de gōngzuò yě hǎo, xué de
learn SUB good 3 just (will) share SUB work also good learn SUB
chà ne, fēn de gōngzuò yě chà
lack KLV share SUB work also lack
‘If they’re good students they’ll be assigned a good job, but if they do a poor job studying they’ll be assigned a poor job too.’

(0146)

Both occurrences of xué de in (2.17) may be interpreted as ‘what is learned’ in accordance with principle (iii). In this reading, the sentence can be rendered more
literally as 'If what is learned is good, for them it just will be that the allocated work is also good, and if what is learned is poor, the allocated work is also poor.' However, this is rarely the way sentences like (2.17) are explained by linguists. Instead, *de* is usually described in such cases as a particle linking a verb and an adverbial extension, "allow[ing] either a manner or an extent inference" (Li and Thompson 1981: 627). This means that it is the way or the extent of learning rather than the thing learned which is stated to be good in (2.17). Alternatively, expressions such as *xué de hǎo* are sometimes analyzed as primarily asserting an action, *xué* 'learn', the performance of which is described as being *hǎo* 'good'. In terms of traditional school grammar, the question is whether the main predicate is *xué* 'learn' or *hǎo* 'good'. This question will be discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3

NEXUS WITH DE

1. The term nexus (from Latin *nexus* ‘bond’) was originally devised by Jespersen (1924: 97, 114ff.). In his oeuvre, nexus and junction are frequently contrasted. Two Mandarin examples given in chapter 1 illustrate nexus and junction, respectively:

(1.2) Shū hāo.
    book good

(1.3) Hāo shū.
    good book

    ‘The book is nice.’
    ‘Good books.’

In order to appreciate the difference between the two examples, I will consider their similarities and discrepancies first from a formal and then from a semantic point of view.

In terms of form, both examples combine an instance of the form /xaw A/ with an instance of the form /su ˥/ At first sight, the only formal difference between the two examples is what is often called word order, i.e. the relative position in time of /su ˥/ and /xaw A/ when they are uttered. In this arrangement of forms along a time dimension, not only does each of the arranged forms correlate with a meaning, but the arrangement itself is also an aspect of form with its own semantic correlate. It is easy to overlook the fact that the time needed to produce an utterance is not the only dimension along which utterances of forms can be arranged. Prosodic details are an equally important formal means to arrange signs. This role of stress and intonation tends to be somewhat underrated, possibly as a byproduct of literacy: overcoming a visual approach to language remains an arduous challenge for the linguist. The present work forms no exception to the neglect of prosodic details which characterizes many syntactic and semantic treatments. Indeed, I will go no further here than stating that examples (1.2) and (1.3) each represent one intonationally neutral sentence. In this respect, (1.3) may be contrasted with the sentence Hāo, shū. ‘They’re okay, the books.’, where shū is added as an afterthought, or with Hāo, shū. ‘Okay, books.’ said by a customs inspector.

As regards the semantic similarities between the two examples, the two meanings ‘book’ and ‘good’ correlating with /su ˥/ and /xaw A/ are convergent in both examples. For Shū hāo. ‘The book is nice.’ in (1.2), this means that the entity carrying a feature | book | is at the same time the carrier of a feature | good |. The

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7. For a serious attempt to do justice to prosodic information in syntax, see e.g. Keijser (1994).
same holds for Hāo shū. ‘Good books.’ in (1.3), which presents a case of convergent junction just like the one discussed for dà chéngshì ‘big city’ in chapter 2.

In order to assess the semantic differences between (1.2) and (1.3), first recall that for each instance of convergent junction, the head, the adjunct and the meaning as a whole are all convergent. Thus Hāo shū. ‘Good books,’ as a whole refers to the books in question, and these books also serve as a referent of the constituent meanings ‘good’ and ‘book’. For me, one of the most stimulating insights in descriptions of nexus is Ebeling’s (1978: 234) view that unlike junction, the nexus construction as a whole is not convergent with its two semantic constituents. In other words, the meaning of Shū hǎo. ‘The book is nice.’ as a whole does not have the book talked about as a referent. This point is perhaps best-appreciated by repeating once again the impressionistic test introduced in section 6 of chapter 1 by asking “Which entity is the book is nice?” Formulated in this way, the question seems impossible to answer. Nevertheless, it may be surmised that the answer is not the book in question. What, then, is the referent of the meaning ‘The book is nice.’ as a whole? For Ebeling, the referent of the whole meaning is the situation for which it is claimed that an entity simultaneously carries the features projected in the two meanings ‘book’ and ‘good’. I will briefly present his (1978: 231-248, 323-329) arguments below and then add a few comments in sections 2 and 3.

Firstly, comparing English (a) the high trees and (b) the trees are high, Ebeling argues:

(3.1) Both require the existence of high trees in the appropriate referents, which implies the presence of a situation of which these trees are a part. This situation is characterized by a feature which consists in the fact that the referent of trees is identical with the referent of high. / Now, the difference between (a) and (b) is that this feature of the situation is explicitly transmitted by (b) but not by (a). (1978: 231)

Secondly, Ebeling explains that in his use of the term “situation”, it is essential that “this portion of the world has a temporal dimension” (p. 235). Thirdly, for the two meanings constructed in a nexus, apart from their convergence, there is also an aspect of semantic ordering. Hence there is a need to distinguish between FIRST and SECOND NEXUS MEMBERS (pp. 323-325) to mark the fact that swapping the position of these meanings in a nexus construction corresponds to a meaning difference for the construction as a whole. Nexus members are meanings, and nexus is the syntactic construction between these meanings. For Shū hǎo. ‘The book is nice.’ in (1.2), the first nexus member is ‘book’ and the second nexus member is ‘nice’. Restated in Ebeling’s (p. 325) terms, this means that the referent of ‘book’ and ‘good’ is an
entity with the feature | book | which is pictured at the time when it has the feature | good | .

2. Let us take a closer look at Ebeling's statement that in addition to the single referent to be assumed for both nexus members, a second referent is needed for the meaning as a whole. To generalize his description in (3.1), this referent is a situation of which the nexus members' shared referent is a part. Now it may be asked to which "portion of the world" this situation belongs. In section 5 of chapter 1, I made a distinction between a concrete world of phenomena which are physically present and a virtual world of human imagination. I also indicated that in my view, language seems to treat these two worlds in much the same way. The problem which remains is whether there is a need to distinguish these worlds at all in linguistics. If the distinction between the two worlds is real, and language nevertheless treats these worlds in similar ways, then the mechanism of this uniform treatment may have to be sought in the way features are projected from either world as meanings, these meanings themselves residing exclusively in the mind.

In other words, the assumption that a situation of which the books talked about are a part is the referent of the meaning of example (1.2) leads to the question as to whether this situation is (a) a part of the real world, (b) an imaginary referent created by the speaking mind, or (c) neither or both, because the distinction between the two worlds does not obtain. Note that option (b) need not be at odds with the assumption that referents are projected as meanings in terms of their features. If the mind is powerful enough to actually create referents, it will have little trouble experiencing a self-made referent in terms of features attributed to it. Indeed, the perceptive reality of an imaginary referent has everything to gain by being represented in the same way as referents from the concrete world.

An intriguing angle for viewing these matters is proposed by Richard Dawkins in his popular treatment of evolution, The Selfish Gene. In Dawkins' book, humans and other forms of life are pictured as complicated "survival machines" controlled by their genes. Even though the genes' direct control is limited to the level of protein synthesis, given time, this level is at the basis of a long but effective chain of control by which the genes ultimately manipulate the creatures carrying them. It is through these living creatures that genes strive with other genes for the sole purpose of self-propagation. Viewed in this way, a creature's behavior is to be explained as being

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8. In the passage paraphrased here, Ebeling generalizes for a first nexus member "p" and a second nexus member "q". I assume a printing error in his phrase "an entity with the feature(s) | q |, which is pictured (or observed) at the time when it has the feature(s) | p | ", and read " | p | " for " | q | " and vice versa.
dictated by its genes. Given the unpredictability of their environment, genes resort to
the strategy of simulation to increase the effectiveness of their survival machines:

(3.2) [...] when you yourself have a difficult decision to make involving unknown quantities
in the future, you do go in for a form of simulation. You imagine what would happen
if you did each of the alternatives open to you. You set up a model in your head, not
of everything in the world, but of the restricted set of entities which you think may be
relevant. You may see them vividly in your mind's eye, or you may see and
manipulate stylized abstractions of them. In either case it is unlikely that somewhere
laid out in your brain is an actual spatial model of the events you are imagining. But
[...] the details of how your brain represents its model of the world are less important
than the fact that it is able to use it to predict possible events. Survival machines that
can simulate the future are one jump ahead of survival machines who can only learn
on the basis of overt trial and error. The trouble with overt trial is that it takes time
and energy. The trouble with overt error is that it is often fatal. Simulation is both
safer and faster.

(1989: 59)

The relevance of Dawkins' arguments to semantics is that they independently suggest
a biological reason for the mind to treat its own artefacts (the imaginary world) in
much the same way as external physical facts (the concrete world).

At the same time, Dawkins' treatment offers an interesting perspective on the
difference between junction and nexus. Junction can be likened to the type of
incoming information which even "trial and error" survival machines can process and
react to: a bright sky, an approaching foe or a parched throat. The development of
simulation makes it possible to process information of a radically different kind. In
the absence of a bright sky, there can be no question of a 'bright sky' stimulus. What
simulation offers is a copy of the stimulus even in the factual absence of that
stimulus. In that case, it is crucial that the copy of the 'bright sky' stimulus is
produced by a survival machine which is fully aware that in the concrete world the
stimulus is absent, and that it may be present there at another time.

It seems to me that nexus in language is made possible by the same type of
awareness. In nexus, a feature is projected in such a way that the possibility of its
absence at another time is duly recognized. For the case of Shù hào. 'The book is
nice.' in (1.2), this means that the book talked about is projected in the mind in the
following way. It is viewed as simultaneously carrying a feature |book| and a
feature |good|, the latter feature being projected as something that could be absent
at another time at which the feature |book| is present. The factor common to both
the linguistic and biological examples is the notion of time. The advantage of the
time concept is that it allows the observer to combine the presence and the absence
of the same feature in one view. This effect may be likened to the transition from
two-dimensional to three-dimensional perception which allows the observer to
perceive two different surfaces as belonging to the same body.
At first glance, Dawkins’ simulation and the linguistic instance of nexus appear to be each other’s direct opposites. In the former instance, a feature is treated as something that is absent, but could have been present at another time; in the case of nexus, a feature is represented as something that is present but may be absent at another time. A further look reveals that the relationship between the biological and linguistic examples is not so straightforward, and that it exposes at least one further aspect distinguishing Dawkins’ simulator from the speaking mind. First, to go back to the level of perception of a simple “trial and error” survival machine, the perceived features are just as present and real as the machine monitoring them is; both firmly belong to the concrete world. A survival machine capable of simulation distinguishes between two types of presence of features, namely, their presence in the same concrete world in which the observer exists, and their presence in the imaginary world which resides in the observer. Hence simulation can be described as follows:
(a) in the concrete world, the feature is absent;
(b) in the imaginary world, the absence and presence of the same feature are combined, i.e., the feature is absent in the sense that its absence in the concrete world is duly taken into account, and present in the form of a mental copy.
In view of the real-world absence of the feature at the moment of observation, its presence in the imaginary world must be a copy produced from memory. In other words, simulation presupposes the capability to store a real-world event and represent it as a copy in the imaginary world.

The time depth created by this mechanism is a prerequisite for the following step, which replaces the primacy of the concrete world by that of the imaginary world. As Dawkins indicates, his simulator’s imaginary world serves the biological goal of generating safer solutions for problems in the concrete world. For the speaking mind, the reverse is often true. Human behavior is characterized by a drive to make the concrete world provide solutions for problems encountered in the imaginary world. While simulation requires the ability to store real-world events in memory, the imaginative creativity of the human mind presupposes a capacity for the combination, permutation and selection of such stored elements.

Hence, if a development of linguistic meaning from such a biological foundation is a viable suggestion, it may be envisaged along the following lines. For Dawkins’ simulator, a mental image always constitutes a projection of a feature from the concrete world, whether the feature is witnessed on the spot or stored and reproduced from memory. Reformulated in linguistic terms, this means that while these primitive meanings constitute an imaginary world, the referents of such meanings are restricted to the concrete world. With the advent of linguistic meaning proper, referents can also be selected from the imaginary world. In other words, humans are capable of talking not only about concrete things which are temporarily absent, but also about the mental constructions which dominate their lives.
The "situation" described in (3.1) is an example of a referent belonging to the imaginary world. Applied to example (1.2) Shǔ hǎo. 'The book is nice.', this means that the situation in which the books are identified as something nice serves as the referent of the nexus meaning as a whole.

The above discussion confirms Ebeling's contention that the description of nexus requires two different referents. So far the following arguments relevant to the description of the nexus meaning of (1.2) Shǔ hǎo. 'The book is nice.' have been considered:

(3.3)  
(a) the book talked about serves as a referent both of 'book' and of 'good';  
(b) the situation in which the book is identified as something nice serves as the referent of the nexus meaning as a whole;  
(c) "the book is identified as something nice" is a shorthand notation for a syntactic construction between the meanings 'book' and 'good' which amounts to the following: an entity carrying a feature | book | simultaneously carries a feature | good |, the latter feature being carried as something that could be absent at another time when the feature | book | is carried by the entity.

With regard to the type of identification described in (c), it may be interesting to recall one of the many similes and metaphors offered by Jespersen to explain the contrast between junction and nexus:

(3.4) [Junction] is unfinished and makes one expect a continuation (a red rose, — well, what about that rose?) and [nexus] is rounded off so as to form a connected whole (the rose is red). The former is a lifeless, stiff combination, the latter has life in it. This is generally ascribed to the presence of a finite verb (the rose is red; the dog barks), and there is certainly much truth in the name given to a verb by Chinese grammarians, "the living word" as opposed to a noun which is lifeless. Still, it is not the words themselves so much as their combinations that impart life or are deprived of life and [...] we have combinations without any finite verb which are in every respect to be ranged with combinations like the rose is red, or the dog barks. (1924: 115)

The liveliness experienced by Jespersen is, I think, situated in the tension created by the perception of a time when the referent is a rose which is red against the background of another time when the referent is just a rose. This kind of backgrounding in time does not occur in junction. The notion of being a non-red rose at another time does not enter into the meaning of a red rose, and a consideration of the time when the books are not nice is irrelevant to the semantic description of Hǎo shū. 'Good books.'.

9. In modern Mandarin, 'verb' is dònget 動詞, literally 'move word'. As Koos Kuiper points out (p.c. 4 January 1994; cf. 1993: 130 n. 32), Jespersen here refers to the older name 活字 huó zì, literally 'live character'. Jespersen's Chinese translators (1988: 146) do not recognize the original term: "汉语语法学家把与无活力的名词相对的动词叫作 "有活力的词", 这是很有道理的".
A remaining problem in the description of nexus is the notion, to my mind counter-intuitive, that the situation which serves as a referent is a feature projected as an entity. This will be the subject of the next section.

3. In Ebeling’s analysis, the situation serving as a referent of the nexus meaning as a whole does not carry (any of) the feature(s) projected in that nexus meaning. This is due to a distinction between two ways in which features are projected for the referent of a nexus construction, depending on whether this referent is a situation or an entity in the (concrete or imaginary) world. In this connection, Ebeling contrasts English a longlegs, another name for the crane fly (Tipula oleracea), with his legs are long:

\[(3.5) \text{each appropriate referent of the meaning of } [a \text{ longlegs}] \text{ is an entity carrying a feature which is a realization of the parallelism [i.e. convergence, cf. my note 2 on p. 16] of the two nexus members, whereas each appropriate referent of the meaning of } his \text{ legs are long} \text{ is itself such a feature.}
\]

(1978: 234)

In short, one referent carries a feature and the other referent is a feature viewed as an entity. The notion of a feature acting as referent may seem a curious paradox, but for Ebeling this mechanism is a fundamental one: it constitutes his definition of abstraction in linguistic semantics (1978: 34).

Abstractions are exemplified in the meanings of expressions such as English beauty, redness and height (Ebeling 1978: 125, 188, 203). The descriptive problem may be illustrated by means of a comparison of the meanings of English length ‘length’ and long ‘long’. When a snake acts as an appropriate referent of the meaning ‘long’, this meaning is the feature |long| projected, i.e. the snake is represented in the mind by means of a feature |long|. The meaning ‘length’ is also a projection of a feature |long|, but the way in which this feature is projected creates its own referent. That is to say, the mind classifies as an entity the property for which a feature stands, so that a feature is projected as its own referent. At first sight, there can be no feature without a referent carrying it. The trick played by the speaking mind is to create this referent. This creative act rules out other referents, so that a snake cannot be an appropriate referent of length ‘length’, i.e. of ‘the feature |long| seen as an entity’. The capacity of conceiving abstraction does, however, presuppose a familiarity with long things like a snake. At least, it seems reasonable to assume that the ability to conceive of an entity which actually constitutes a feature derives at least in part from a familiarity with entities carrying that feature.

If I understand Ebeling’s analysis correctly, the nexus meaning of his legs are long is an abstraction, viz. ‘the feature |the referent of his legs is identified with the referent of long| seen as an entity’, and the situation of which someone’s long legs are a part serves as this feature and as this entity. I do not subscribe to such an
analysis. In my view, nothing prevents a description of the meanings of both long and his legs are long as projections of features (i.e. \( \text{long} \) and \( \text{the referent of his legs is identified with the referent of long} \), respectively) directly carried by the respective referents.

4. Mandarin is one of many languages in which the semantic representation of a first nexus member is optional:

\[(3.6) \quad \text{Cháng.} \]
\[\text{long} \]
\[\text{‘It’s long.’} \]

The meaning of (3.6) maps the feature \( \text{long} \) as pertaining to an entity at one time and viewed against the background of the possible absence of that feature at another time. No other feature is projected for the carrier of \( \text{long} \), but the nexus meaning of Cháng. ‘It’s long,’ still conveys the identity of the entity at both times.

The presence of nexus in a single Mandarin sign was noted and aptly described in the 1940s by 王力 Wáng Lì. In his Theory of Chinese Grammar, he explains:

\[(3.7) \quad \text{�[...] even though it is possible not to use a subject, a sentence will not lose its nexus characteristics on that score. For all sentences in which no subject is used, we can say the subject is \text{VIRTUAL}. The characteristics of xià ‘below’ in xià yǔ ‘it’s raining’ and of xià ‘below’ in jī xià dàn ‘the chicken lays an egg’ are identical. Still, when we do not need a subject in the sentence xià yǔ ‘it’s raining’, we will just refrain from using it. Expressions such as tiān xià yǔ ‘the sky is raining’ are not entirely impossible either. In an analogous way, when yǒu ‘exist’ does not have a subject, it can be understood as ‘there exists in the universe’ or ‘there exists in the world’. When shì ‘be’ does not have a subject, it can be understood as ‘this is’ or ‘that is’. In proverbial sayings without a subject, rén ‘man’ can be taken as the virtual subject. Since a verb expresses an action, even if the agent of the action is not mentioned in the sentence, an initiator of the action is tacitly assumed in the mind of the speaker. Since a copula connects a subject with a predicate, even shì ‘be’ lacks a subject, in the mind of the speaker it is still as if shì has something to connect. In short, whenever the subject can be suppressed in Chinese, it will be suppressed, but sentences can nevertheless be said to be constructed as either an \text{ACTUAL NEXUS} or a \text{VIRTUAL NEXUS}.} \]

(Wáng 1955: 66; 1984: 54-55)

I concur with Wáng’s analysis in describing a nexus for xià ‘below’ in xià yǔ ‘it’s raining’ without expecting a separate form to represent the notion of subject. For Wáng, there are two kinds of ��“sentences in which no subject is used”. The type illustrated in xià yǔ ‘it’s raining’ is called ��“subjectless sentence” (1955: 64): ��“in subjectless sentences, it is not just that the subject cannot clearly be known, but quite on the contrary, that it cannot be known at all” (ibid.). If I understand this argument
correctly, the way in which the "initiator of the action is [...] assumed in the mind of the speaker" may indeed be so tacit as to escape semantic representation.

The second type of sentence without a subject is called "sentence with a suppressed subject" (ibid.). It is explained as follows:

(3.8) [...] a subject is by no means required in Chinese grammar. Hence, whenever the subject can plainly be known, it is normally not used. As to what "can plainly be known", roughly three situations occur: (1) the subject of the sentence is identical with the subject of the previous sentence, and need not be repeated; (2) the subject is wǒ 'I' or nǐ 'you': when the linguistic context very strongly implies this, it doesn't have to be mentioned (a circumstance most frequently occurring in letters by the Ancients); (3) the subject is some circumstance, and this circumstance can be inferred both by the speaker and by his interlocutor, so it need not be mentioned (as in bù yào jǐn 'it doesn't matter').

(Wáng 1955: 63; 1984: 52)

This description makes it clear that Wáng envisages the type of meaning which I have described as 'IT' (cf. p. 28). I have previously proposed (Wiedenhof 1993: 188) analyzing sentences such as bù yào jǐn 'it doesn't matter' in a similar fashion. At this moment, I feel less confident in making the claim, which may be based on a false analogy. That is to say, the possibility of sentences such as zhèi ge wènti bù yào jǐn 'this problem doesn't matter' does not guarantee that the thought of an initiator of the action is transmitted by bù yào jǐn 'it doesn't matter' in the absence of zhèi ge wènti 'this problem'. Semantic aspects must be based on referential evidence. This evidence in turn can only be obtained from speakers. On the basis of the evidence which I have so far elicited, I am not sure whether a meaning 'IT' is transmitted in cases such as bù yào jǐn 'it doesn't matter'. For each of the three cases mentioned by Wáng, the alternative solution is to describe the notion that an entity is 'assumed by the speaker to be identifiable by the hearer' (cf. p. 27) as an interpretation. This leaves the meaning 'IT' strictly outside the meaning to be described for "sentences with suppressed subjects". Note that in a number of other cases to be described in chapter 6, I will claim the, representation of the meaning 'IT' in the absence of separate forms. Thus (6.20) Támen bu mài. 'They don't sell them.' transmits the thought of an entity which is being sold. For this entity, a feature | assumed by the speaker to be identifiable by the hearer | is projected as the meaning 'IT'. For the present purpose, the point is that there is a need for a distinction between those entities which are semantically represented and those which are not. In addition, I concur with Wáng, albeit for different reasons, in describing these sentences as well as those dubbed "subjectless sentences" in terms of nexus.

One of the reasons for this extensive presentation of Wáng's nexus theory is that it appears to have been repeatedly and regretfully misunderstood. I will mention just one instance here. Wáng (1955: 187-197; 1984: 133-140) describes a type of serial verb construction in terms of one nexus connecting to the next, dubbing the
pattern 迭織式 dìxi shì ‘successive nexus pattern’. This construction will be treated in chapter 7. In several of Wáng’s examples, there is no subject corresponding to the first nexus member. These subjectless examples are rejected as “successive nexus patterns” by 陈建明 Chén Jiànmíng precisely because *“having no first nexus to speak of, there is no successive nexus to speak of either” (1960: 101-102).

5. Sentences such as (3.9) have engendered much interest among linguists past and present.

(3.9) Shuō de hǎo.
    say SUB good
    ‘What he says is okay.’

The following possible ways of translating this Mandarin sentence into English give some impression of its semantic scope: (a) ‘What he says is okay.’; (b) ‘What he says is it’s okay.’; (c) ‘The speaker is okay.’; (d) ‘That he says it is well.’; (e) ‘Orally is okay.’; (f) ‘He says it well.’.

According to Li and Thompson’s (2.9) principles for the interpretation of missing participants (see p. 30), the expression shuō de in (3.9) can be interpreted as  who speaks  or, less frequently, as  what is said . I have described this alternation in chapter 2 in terms of syntactic polysemy. The problems with these principles is that they do not cover all the semantic possibilities. The hackneyed issue raised by sentences like (3.9) is the status of the meaning listed above as (f) ‘He says it well.’ and its relationship with the other meanings listed here. Naïve native intuitions on this issue are hard to come by, and native linguists have expressed widely divergent opinions.

For Yuen Ren Chao, both meanings for shuō de ‘who speaks; what is said’ would count as instances where de is a nominalizer (1968: 294-298). In his Mandarin Primer the formulation of the issue is straightforward:10

(3.10) A special, frequent type of substantive subject is one ending in de followed by an adjective as predicate, as Tà xiě de hǎo ‘He writes well’; Zhēige hǎo de duō ‘This is much better.’ Apparently the combinations de hǎo and de duō are adverbs ‘well’ and ‘much.’ They cannot be, since modifiers in Chinese must precede the modified [...]. The correct analysis of the sentences is Tà xiě de (dōngxi, yàngzi, etc.) hǎo ‘(The stuff, the manner, etc.) he writes is good’; Zhēige hǎo de (dīfāngr, chéngdu, etc.) duō ‘(The respect in which, extent to which, etc.) this is good is much.’ (1972: 36)

10. In quotations from Chao’s work, Gwoyeu Romatzyh transcriptions have been converted to Hányǔ Pīnyīn. See the list of technical conventions (p. xii) for details.
The statement that de hào and de duō cannot be modifiers "since modifiers in Chinese must precede the modified" is the kind of truism which is of course didactically correct, for it reflects an important and ubiquitous phenomenon in Mandarin and in other Chinese languages, including Classical Chinese. As Chao was no doubt well aware, it does not constitute a linguistic argument. In Mandarin, the case of jíle ‘extremely’ disturbs the picture. It can perhaps best be described as modifying the expressions preceding it, combining e.g. with hào ‘good’ and mèn ‘stuffy’ to form hào jíle ‘extremely well’ and mèn jíle ‘most stuffy’. More substantially, the postposition of reduplicated expressions such as mèngmèng ‘murky’ in huì mèngmèng ‘murky grey’ and làlà ‘burning’ in rè làlà ‘burning hot’ can similarly be described as an exception to the general rule. However this may be, I agree with Chao that cases like Tá xíe de hào. ‘He writes well.’ should not be interpreted in terms of a modifier following the modified.

For me, the most interesting point in Chao’s (3.10) account is that in paraphrasing the example Tá xíe de hào. ‘He writes well.’ as “Tá xíe de (dōngxi, yàngzi etc.) hào ‘(The stuff, the manner, etc.) he writes is good’”, he combines two syntactically distinct phrases:

(3.11) (a) tā xíe de dōngxi hào (b) tā xíe de yàngzi hào

3 write SUB thing good 3 write SUB appearance good
‘the stuff he writes is good’ ‘the manner he writes is good’

In (a), ‘the stuff he writes’ is ‘the stuff written down by him’. In (b), however, ‘the manner he writes’ is not ‘the manner written down by him’, but ‘the manner in which he writes’. At least, these interpretations are suggested by Chao’s text. A similar argument applies to the way in which Chao paraphrases Zhēige hào de duō. ‘This is much better.’ in (3.10): hào de difāngr means ‘good points’ but hào de chéngdu means ‘the extent of being good’ rather than ‘a good extent’.

Restated in terms of referents, the meaning of xíe ‘write’ in (a) is bivalent, i.e. its description requires two different referents which are typically and appropriately a writer and something written (cf. p. 29; the status of the ‘writer’ valence will be reconsidered in section 6 of chapter 6). These two valences of xíe ‘write’ are convergent with tā ‘he’ and with dōngxi ‘stuff’, respectively. In (b), xíe ‘write’ is similarly convergent with both tā ‘he’ and yàngzi ‘manner’, but in a different way. Tá ‘he’ is convergent with a ‘writer’ valence in exactly the same way as in (a), but the convergence of yàngzi ‘manner’ with xíe ‘write’ is established through the extra referent (namely, the situation in question) resulting from the interpretation of xíe ‘write’ as an instance of nexus. The status of this extra referent in nexus was discussed in section 3 above. To sum up, both xíe de dōngxi ‘the stuff he writes’ and xíe de yàngzi ‘the manner he writes’ require two referents for their semantic descriptions, but there is just one shared type of referent between them.
Even though the above analysis focuses on Chao’s paraphrases rather than on his discussion of the construction Tā xiě de hǎo. ‘He writes well.’, the syntactic difference recorded here is highly pertinent to the main issue. The mechanism involved in the association of the two meanings of (3.11) in Chao’s (3.10) description is the same as that which enables him to use both of them to paraphrase Tā xiě de hǎo. ‘He writes well.’. The point is that when de follows a verb, the referent of de corresponding with a “missing participant” in Li and Thompson’s (2.9) sense can alternatively be identified with the extra referent supplied by a nexus interpretation of that verb. The converse solution, i.e. that of describing the extra nexus referent as a “missing participant”, seems to me less appropriate. This is because both the number and the identity of participants (valences, arguments) define the exclusive semantic properties of each individual verb. By contrast, a nexus style projection leading to the establishment of an extra referent is available in the same way for almost any verb. The existential verb shì ‘be’ is, as often, the notable exception.

The above description of de is not original. Chao’s description below reflects more or less the same argument:

(3.12) Sometimes the de refers to the whole situation with the meaning of ‘such is the case’, ‘this is the kind of situation’ and no particular noun is understood or can be supplied rather than some other noun. For example: Tā shì gèn nǐ kāi wànxiǎo de. ‘He was just joking with you that was what he was doing.’ If rén [‘person’] were supplied after de, it would mean ‘He (and not someone else) is the man who... [was joking with you]’ (1968: 296)

Still, when applied to cases such as Tā xiě de hǎo. ‘He writes well.’, this analysis of de is highly controversial in the light of analyses which argue that xiě ‘write’ is somehow modified by hǎo ‘good’. C.-T. James Huang’s (1988) account is a case in point. In section 6, I will discuss an account given by Zhū Déxī, who is likewise opposed to linking up observations such as (3.12) to the semantics of Tā xiě de hǎo. ‘He writes well.’. Looking back on his own terminological vicissitudes in naming the expression following de, Chao settles on the term “predicative complement”. He reports that the name was suggested by F.K. Li and motivated by the circumstance that “most writers in China call such predicate[s] búyǔ (complements)” (1968: 355-356, n. 55). The term incorporates both sides of the semantic controversy. In this respect, it matches Jos. Mullie’s term bijwoordelijk gezegde ‘adverbial predicate’ (1930-1933: I, 266; cf. 1932-1937: I, 302).

Despite his terminological concession, Chao’s (1968: 355-358) analysis remains unchanged. The semantic continuum which he perceives between the two paraphrases spelled out in (3.11) and the meaning of tā xiě de hǎo ‘he writes well’ is nicely reflected in the way he fines up the three corresponding translations: “Tā xiě de hǎo can mean ‘What he writes is good, the way he writes is good, — he writes
well” (1972: 153-154). The first two translations introduce the possibility of nexus, showing that the Mandarin phrase allows the referent of something written to be replaced by the way in which writing is done. The second and the third English translations do not reflect a difference of interpretation for Tā xiě de hǎo. What this means for the corresponding Mandarin phrases in (3.10) is that between Tā xiě de yàngzǐ hǎo ‘The manner he writes is good’ and Tā xiě de hǎo ‘He writes well’, the removal of yàngzǐ ‘manner’ broadens the scope of possible interpretations to just a tiny extent. The only gain that is achieved involves those manners which are not properly expressed by yàngzǐ ‘mien, appearance, demeanor’. I think one candidate for this category of gained interpretations is tā xiě de hǎo in the sense of ‘it’s good that he wrote’ or ‘good thing he wrote’. This specific manner of writing, i.e. ‘getting down to doing the writing’, cannot be appropriately expressed by means of yàngzǐ.

What is not gained by the removal of yàngzǐ ‘manner’ in Chao’s paraphrase is a broadening of scope so as to include the abstract notion ‘the fact of him writing’ (cf. p. 40). To express that this ‘fact of him writing’ is good, Mandarin has Tā xiě hǎo. ‘That he writes is good.’

The meanings and interpretations considered here for each Mandarin phrase represent just a fraction of the possibilities. My purpose here is to present a descriptive basis from which further progress can be made. To give an idea of the semantic scope involved, I will just translate a few other meanings and interpretations for two of the Mandarin expressions discussed above. For tā xiě de yàngzǐ hǎo some further possibilities are: ‘the manner that he writes down is nice’; ‘he writes so that it looks nice (i.e. so that the manner is good).’; ‘in his case, the way they wrote was nice’; ‘with him writing, it will look nice’ and ‘that it looks good when he writes it’. And for tā xiě de hǎo: ‘he can write it well’; ‘what is good about him writing it’; ‘for him they’ll write well’ and ‘what is good about what is written by him’.

6. Zhū Déxi’s (1985) account includes some reactions to the arguments advanced by Yuen Ren Chao. His examples are as follows:

(3.13) A. 煮 [taʊ] 烂, 蒸 [taʊ] 不烂。
    Zhū de làn, zhēng de bù làn.
    boil SUB mushy steam SUB not mushy
    ‘Boiled ones are mushy, steamed ones aren’t.’

B. 煮 [taʊ] 烂，才 好 吃。
    Zhū de làn, cái hǎo chī.
    boil SUB mushy only good eat
    ‘They’re only tasty when boiled mushy.’

(1985: 68; my transcription, glosses and translation. The superscript * in Zhū’s phonetic transcription indicates a neutral tone.)
The fact that Zhū uses the phonetic transcription [təŋ] is noteworthy, for in doing so he avoids having to choose from among the various Chinese characters corresponding to the particle de. Modern Mandarin dictionaries usually have separate entries for the de, 得 de, 地 de and 底 de, specifying rules for the use of each character. As can be expected in view of the degree of polysemy between the various uses of de, there is considerable overlap between the uses of these characters.

According to Zhū's assessment of (3.13), "These two patterns differ both structurally and semantically. Suppose the de involved were one and the same morpheme, viz. the de of chī de ‘which is eaten’ and hóng de ‘which is red’. In that case, both zhū de làn in A and zhū de làn in B would constitute a subject-predicate construction, zhū de would be a substantive structure in both cases, and it would be impossible to explain the contrast between these two patterns" (p. 68).

Zhū’s main concern here is to categorize expressions in terms of the distributionalist theory formulated by Zellig S. Harris. Zhū accordingly defines Mandarin parts of speech as distribution types. In the initial stage of this procedure, meaning does not play a role, or at least, the role of meaning remains undefined. One of the principles of Zhū’s approach (p. 69) is that given two expressions \( x_1 \) de and \( x_2 \) de, a distributional difference (or similarity) between these two expressions must be due to a different (or identical) morpheme de: it cannot be derived from a difference between \( x_1 \) and \( x_2 \). Paradoxically, the rationale for this principle is that no fixed meaning of de could otherwise be established: "Its grammatical meaning would be different in different contexts. Following an adverb, it would be a suffixed element in an adverbial unit of grammar; after a reduplicated adjective, it would be a suffixed element in an adjectival unit; and following an adjective, a verb, or a noun, it would be a suffixed element in a nominal unit of grammar" (p. 103). If I understand this correctly, the fact that two different morphemes de are distinguished in (3.13) signals that Zhū, in spite of himself, perceives a semantic difference. The semantic disparity between patterns A and B in (3.13) is judged to be unquestionable: "The meanings of these two are entirely different. [...] The dividing line between these two patterns is obvious and leaves no room for confusion." (pp. 32-33).

Zhū’s appreciation of Chao’s argument in (3.10) accordingly goes only halfway:

(3.14) Conceptually, the xiě de in xiě de hǎo can indeed be interpreted as xiě de dōngxi ‘the stuff written’ or xiě de yàngzi ‘the manner of writing’. But in the case of xiě de in zhēi ge zì de yàngzi xiě de hǎo ‘the manner in which this character is written is nice’ it is very hard to tell to what it refers. (1985: 32)

What are we to make of these opposing arguments and of the controversial status of expressions like Tā xiě de hǎo. ‘He writes well.’? It seems to me that the semantic assessments given by Chao and Zhū are as important as their analytic judgments.
After all, the fact that both recognize the meanings discussed here is critical information. In other words, both writers, as linguist-informants, are keenly aware of the distinctions between 塗 xiě de hào. ‘What he writes is good.’, ‘The way he writes is good.’ and ‘He writes well.’. For Chao, these meanings are three of a kind, whereas Zhū judges the first two as incompatible with the last one. The advantage of a description in terms of syntactic polysemy is that it shows such semantic differences while allowing for the possibility that speakers lump some or all of them together. The idea that speakers are able to view the same meanings in different ways is supported by the universal phenomenon of diachronic semantic change.

What the discussion also shows is the perhaps somewhat vulnerable position of semantic description. As stated above, it has proved difficult to consult ordinary native speakers on the issues discussed here. In part this has been due to limitations of this study, which was completed on the basis of data collected from informants outside China. Still, my experience in discussing the Dutch language with speakers of Dutch gives me every reason to believe that running into semantically sensitive, moderately talkative, clever and curious informants is largely a matter of chance. For part of the present work, therefore, I have had to rely on the judgment of native-speaking linguists.

7. In conclusion, nexus has been defined in this chapter as an ordered convergent relationship between two meanings designated as nexus members. Apart from the shared referent of the two nexus members, a second, imaginary referent is required for the semantic construction as a whole. This referent is called a situation. It is in this situation that the speaker envisages the first nexus member as being identified as the second nexus member. More technically, this means that nexus represents the referent of the two nexus members as simultaneously carrying the two features projected in the first and second nexus members, the second feature being projected in such a way as to contrast it with its absence at another time when the first feature is present.

In Mandarin constructions with de, the referent which is identified as a “missing participant” in Li and Thompson’s (2.9) principles (xiě de ‘what is written’; ‘who writes’) can alternatively be construed as the situation serving as the referent of a nexus meaning (xiě de ‘he writes’).

Nexus in Mandarin is by no means confined to the presence of de. Some aspects distinguishing nexus with de from nexus without de will be discussed in chapter 4.
CHAPTER 4

ASPECT WITH DE

1. In the previous chapter, the type of meaning available for xīe de in Tā xīe de hǎo. ‘He writes well.’ was described in terms of nexus. The aims of that discussion were neither terminological nor theoretical. The main object was to establish a semantic connection between the nominalizing functions of de described in chapter 2 and another, situational type of meaning of de. This chapter will explore a number of aspectual details of the latter meaning. It will be shown that these details have plausible semantic connections with the other meanings of de.

The term aspect will be used in a broad sense to refer to a variety of meanings including completion, stativity, continuation, repetition and punctuality. Bernard Comrie’s (1981: 3) apt and all but classical definition “aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation” covers all of these meanings and many more. Still, the notion of “viewing” (or “representing”, Comrie 1981: 52) a referent seems to me hardly specific to the category of aspect: it characterizes the use of language generally. If we use the term aspect as the name of a linguistic expression type, the definition can be reduced to read “aspects are different internal temporal constituencies of a situation”. Cross-linguistically, the category of aspect is formally and semantically bound up with many other categories, especially those of tense and modality. In this respect, Mandarin is no exception. Studies of aspect in Mandarin traditionally focus on the use of the perfective particle le, the experiential particle guo/guò, the stative particle zhe, the difference between bu ‘not’ and méi ‘have not’ and selected issues in verb reduplication, but generally pay scant attention to the meanings of de.

2. To return to the meaning of xīe de in Tā xīe de hǎo. ‘He writes well.’. The availability of nexus does not depend on the presence of de, for a nexus meaning is also possible without de. As indicated in section 4 of the previous chapter, Mandarin verbs such as xīe ‘write’ can appear by themselves in a minimal sentence: Xiè. ‘He writes it.’. As regards the semantic difference between xīe de ‘he writes’ and xīe ‘he writes it.’, it was established in chapter 3 (section 5) that the former expression offers a wider array of meanings: xīe de ‘what is written; who writes; he writes’. No junction meanings are available for xīe without de. But the semantic difference between xīe de ‘he writes’ and xīe ‘he writes it’ is not just a matter of range. Chao’s (3.12) description of de as referring “to the whole situation” points to
anaspectual difference, viz. that *xiě de* ‘he writes’ presents the verbal event as a state or circumstance. This is a rather broad qualification, and in this chapter a number of refinements will be attempted.

As an introduction to the type of meaning involved, consider the following excerpt. The speakers are trying to identify a common acquaintance. Speaker B has mentioned just previously that the person he has in mind is a student majoring in *zhèngcè yǔ guǎnlí* ‘policies and management’ and studying at the same institute where speaker A is doing her degree:

(4.1) B: Hahaha, wàng le jiào shènne.
    hahaha forget PF call what
    ‘Hahaha, I forget his name.’
  (4182)

A: Tā shì xué zhèngcè ne?
  3 be learn policy RLV
  ‘You say he’s studying policies?’
  (4183)

B: Hm.
    hm
    ‘Hmm.’
  (4184)

A: Tā xué rénkǒu de, xǐng Zhāng.
  3 learn population SUB surname PNZhāng
  ‘He’s studying demography, his name is Zhāng.’
  (4185)

B: Bù shì <bù shì>.
    not be not be
    ‘No <oh>.”
  (4186)

B: Shì... jiù shì xué zhèngcè, xínghuá-- hm, xínghuá
    be just be learn policy administrative hm administrative
    guǎnlǐ shènmé... nèi xiē, shènmé--
    management what that few what
    ‘He... he’s studying policies, administrative-- hmm, administrative management or
    something... like that, like--
  (4187)

A: Shí lǎo shèng ba.,
    be old fellow SUG
    ‘He must be an old student.’
  (4188)

B: Shānxī lái de.
    PNShānxī come SUB
    ‘He’s from Shānxī.’
  (4189)

A: A, xíng Huáng, <xíng Huáng a> m.
    ah surname PNHuáng surname PNHuáng CNF mm
    Ah, his name is Huáng, <is it?> mm.
  (4190)
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A: Tā shì lǎo de <oh>.
   3 be old SUB oh
   'He's old <oh>.' (4191)

A: Shàng yì jiè de.
   above one batch SUB
   'He's from last year's class.' (4192)

B: Hahaha, shàng yì jiè <è> de jiù shì
   hahaha above one batch uh-huh SUB just be
   lǎo de le, hahaha <hahaha>.
   old SUB PF hahaha hahaha
   'Hahaha, being from last year's class means he's old, hahaha <hahaha>.' (4193)

Xué rènkòu de 'studying demography', Shānxī lái de 'coming from Shānxī', shàng
yì jiè de 'from last year's class' and lǎo de 'being old' are all descriptive phrases
used to characterize the intended person. Note that when the right person is found in
line 4190, de is not used. Xìng Huáng de 'being called Huáng' would have presented
yet more circumstantial details about this person, whereas xìng Huáng 'his name is
Huáng' serves to make the identification.

The collocation of de with nǐr 'where' in the following example again matches
the notion of a circumstance serving to characterize the person talked about. The
sentence occurred at the beginning of a conversation between two speakers who did
not know each other. Note that nǐr de 'from where' is to be interpreted as a nexus
meaning.

(4.2) B: Eh, nǐ nǐr de?
   eh 2.SG where SUB
   Eh, where are you from? (2830)

A: Wǒ cóng Běijīng lái de, <Běijīng lái de> è.
   1.SG from PNBěijīng come SUB PNBěijīng come SUB uh-huh
   'I'm from Peking, <from Peking> uh-huh.' (2831)

The first speaker's nǐ nǐr de? 'where are you from?' asks for details of the other
person's circumstances rather than inquiring where he is situated; cf. nǐ nǐr 'where
are you?'

In the semantic description of de, the aspectual details are perhaps the most
intricate and puzzling ones. This is not just because of the problem of eliciting
judgments (cf. p. 48). As far as I have been able to establish, native Mandarin
speakers from various regional backgrounds differ more significantly in their
aspectual use of de than when they use de in its other meanings. This is not
surprising in view of the frequency of the particle and the liability of aspectual
meanings to change.
In the following two examples, the expressions げい wǒ xiào de ‘it makes me laugh’ and げい wǒ chuàn de ‘it makes me revolve’ illustrate a pattern with de by means of which the speaker provides details about his own circumstances. げい wǒ verb de is a colloquial expression type indicating that the speaker (wǒ ‘I’) is in a situation (verb de) as a result of being affected by something (げい ‘give’): げい wǒ verb de ‘puts me into such-and-such circumstances’. In the first example, the speaker reports that she had asked Dutch people what they thought Chinese sounded like. Dā jià, literally ‘hit frame’, means ‘quarrel’.

(4.3) A: Hái shì tāmen shuō de tèbie nán hahaha-ting, xiàng dà 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: げい wǒ xiào de! <hahaha>
give 1.SG laugh SUB hahaha

‘It had me in stitches! <hahaha>’

(3514)

(4.4) B: Nèi ge lóu yě eh, eh, hái kēyǐ, <aiyo, g---> láoshù that piece building also eh eh still may gee old-fashioned de lóu.
SUB building

‘That building is also, eh, eh, quite nice, <gee> it’s an old-fashioned building.’

(4205)

A: M, yuánlái shì ge hotel, <oh> oh.
mm original be piece hotel oh oh

‘Mm, originally it was a hotel, <oh> oh.’

(4206)

B: Litou n-- jiū shì xiàng migōng yiyàng, rào lái rào qu dì inside HES just be like maze same coil come coil go SUB <hahaha> hahaha, nèi tiān gěi wǒ zhuàn de.
hahaha hahaha that day give 1.SG turn SUB

‘And inside-- it’s just like a maze, coiling in every direction <hahaha> hahaha, that day it kept me in a swirl.’

(4207)

3. The type of nexus with de illustrated above is very common in spoken Mandarin. In written usage, an extra shì ‘be’ is usually required when it is not present in the spoken expression. For the two sentences in (4.2), this would yield: 你是哪兒的? Nǐ shì nár de? ‘Where are you from?’ and 我是從北京來的. Wǒ shì cóng Běijīng
lái de. ‘I am from Peking.’. The linguistic parallel to this stylistic operation is an analysis of such sentences as expressions in which shì ‘be’ has been deleted.

In my view, an analysis in terms of deletion is deceptive. Note that there is no reason to assume a deletion, for sentences like Eh, nǐ nár de? ‘Eh, where are you from?’; Wǒ cóng Běijīng lái de, è. ‘I’m from Peking, uh-huh.’ and (2.6) Wǒ Tiānjīng de <oh>. ‘I’m from Tiānjin <oh>.’ are all perfectly good spoken Mandarin. The scanty representation in written traditions does not affect the linguistic status of these expressions. In linguistics, as opposed to many other disciplines dealing with language, speech takes prominence over writing. Also note in this connection that the Chinese academic tradition places xiūcìxué 修 辭 學 ‘composition’

within linguistics proper, putting a potential strain on the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive approaches to language.

Moreover, an analysis in terms of the deletion of shì ‘be’ leaves the door open for emendations such as the following, which are in my view equally unfounded. Eh, nǐ nár de? ‘Eh, where are you from?’ may be analyzed as Eh, nǐ nár de rén? ‘Eh, you are someone from where?’ with rén ‘person’ deleted; or, combining the two options, as Eh, nǐ shì nár de rén? ‘Eh, you are someone from where?’ with deletions of both shì ‘be’ and rén ‘person’. This is not to deny that nexus with de in collocation with shì ‘be’ is common in spoken usage. Tā shì láo de. ‘He’s old.’ in (4.1)/4191 is among the many spoken examples illustrating this collocation.

Interestingly, the situational meaning of de has often been classified as just another type of nominalization. Chao’s (3.12) statement that “no particular noun is understood” seems to justify just such an analysis, but in my view, this stretches the idea of nominalization with de (subject and object participants) to an unacceptable extent. In fact, Chao’s (1972: 153-154) meaningful line-up of English translations for Tā xiě de hǎo. as “‘What he writes is good, the way he writes is good, — he writes well’” (see chapter 3, section 5) may have had the unintended effect of removing the incentive for seeking a semantic rationale. Zhū’s theoretical opposition to Chao’s analysis has already been discussed. More importantly, Zhū’s semantic opposition in (3.14) reveals that at one end of Chao’s semantic spectrum (‘What he writes is good, the way he writes is good), the meanings may be viewed in terms of nominalization, whereas at the other end (‘he writes well’), nominalization is not at issue because, in

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11. Chinese-English dictionaries usually translate xiūcìxué as ‘rhetoric’, i.e. “the art of using language for persuasion, in speaking or writing; especially in oratory” (Cuddon 1982: 570, emphasis added). The term “rhetoric”, while reflecting the history of the Mandarin expression, conceals the fact that the latter has been associated mainly with writing: *“Xiūcìxué [...] Was of great importance in European education in the Middle Ages. Taught in China in the curricula of Chinese and English in senior high school and higher level education, it has generally been restricted to techniques for the refinement of written compositions.”* (Cì hǎi, p. 110).
Zhū's words, "it is very hard to tell to what [the meaning of xiē de] refers".

To return to the description of the situational meaning of de in terms of nominalization, I will just quote one easily accessible and respectable source; the reader will have no trouble finding many other examples. In their grammar of Mandarin, Li and Thompson (1981) treat the "shi ... de construction" as "a special sentence type in which a nominalization is used" (p. 587). Their example is:

(4.5) tā shì zuòtiān lái de
     3sg be yesterday come NOM

The situation is that s/he came yesterday. (p. 587)

The gloss "NOM" defines de as a "nominalizer" (p. xix). The "strange translation" in (4.5), to quote Li and Thompson's own words (p. 593 n. 6), aims at bringing out the difference between this sentence and tā zuòtiān lái le "S/He came yesterday.": the latter expression "describes an action, whereas [4.5] explains a situation" (p. 590). Interestingly, the kind of nominalization involved in (4.5) is claimed to be that of a missing subject participant: "in a shi ... de construction, the subject of the sentence must be the same as the missing subject participant in the nominalization" (p. 588), so that the sentence literally means: 'He is the one who came yesterday.' I agree with Li and Thompson that this is a possible interpretation of (4.5), and I concur with the semantic description in terms of a situation being expressed. What seems to be missing is a plausible semantic connection between these two statements. My point is that an interpretation of (4.5) as 'He is the one who came yesterday,' is polysemous rather than identical with the notion of a situation being described. Instead of a "missing subject participant", the kind of so-called nominalization involved here has a nexus-type referent (see p. 45). I do not agree with Li and Thompson that the construction of (4.5) should be "set [...] apart from other sentences that superficially have the [same] form" (p. 588), e.g.:

(4.6) bālā shí shì - de .
     guava be eat - NOM

Guavas are to be eaten.
{ for eating.} (p. 588)

In my view, (4.5) and (4.6) illustrate similar types of polysemy with de. In (4.5), the polysemy is between a subject participant and a situation: 'He is the one who came yesterday.' The situation is that he came yesterday.' The polysemy of (4.6) is between an object participant and a situation: 'Guavas are what will be eaten.; The situation is that guavas are eaten.' In both cases, the meanings are distinct but directly associable, hence polysemous. The possibility of the readings 'The guavas are those eating it.' and 'The situation is that the guavas are eating.' for (4.6) complete the semantic picture. The strangeness of these readings is not a semantic
limitation but a restriction imposed by our knowledge of the world. In other words, what is relevant here is not that guavas are generally known to be entities that are eaten rather than entities that eat. Linguistically, the point is rather that even in spite of this knowledge, the expression in (4.6) is capable of evoking the thought of (a) guavas eating something identifiable from the context, or (b) a situation in which guavas are eating.

Li and Thompson’s analysis of (4.5) in terms of a missing subject participant is interesting in view of their treatment of the following examples:

(4.7) wǒ tǐ – chū – lái de yǐjiàn
 I raise – exit – come NOM opinion
 the opinion that I put forth (p. 587)

(4.8) fān É de yǐjiàn
 oppose Russia NOM opinion
 the opinion that (we/someone) should oppose Russia (ibid.)

In (4.7), “yǐjiàn ‘opinion’ refers to the unspecified direct object participant of tǐ-chū-lái ‘put forth’, in the preceding nominalization, namely, ‘what I put forth’” (p. 587). But in (4.8), “the head noun refers to nothing in the preceding nominalization. Instead, that nominalization names the content of the opinion, namely, that we/someone should oppose Russia” (ibid.).

A comparison of these sentences as “two apparently similar constructions” (Li and Thompson p. 586) is perhaps somewhat forced because wǒ tǐ chū lái and fān É differ in several respects. In particular, (a) É ‘Russia’ serves as an object to go with fān ‘oppose’, whereas no comparable structure is presented in the meaning of tǐ chū lái ‘put forth, bring up (in a conversation)’; and (b) wǒ tǐ chū lái represents regular spoken Mandarin, but fān ‘oppose’ and É ‘Russia’ are bound expressions largely restricted to written usage. They correspond to the spoken equivalents fānduì ‘oppose’ (cf. example (4.15)) and Ēguó ‘Russia’. The collocation fān É ‘oppose Russia’ has the ring of a slogan or set phrase.

These considerations do not stand in the way of the kind of comparison intended by Li and Thompson, for the sentence in (4.7) can itself be interpreted in both of the proposed ways. If a “direct object participant” is understood in the way described above, the sentence has the meaning given by Li and Thompson. An interpretation in the way proposed for (4.8) is also feasible for (4.7), which can then be translated as ‘The opinion that I should bring it up.’ Note, incidentally, that this interpretation involves not only a nexus-type referent but also an object ‘it’ (cf. p. 28). In this reading of (4.7), to paraphrase Li and Thompson’s (p. 587) description, “the head noun refers to nothing in the preceding nominalization. Instead, that nominalization
names the content of the opinion, namely, that I should bring up something identifiable from the context”. This type of “nominalization” seems to suit sentences like (4.5) tā shì zuǒtiān lái de ‘The situation is that s/he came yesterday.’ much better than the explanation of that sentence in terms of a subject participant. In (4.7), the notion that “the head noun refers to nothing in the preceding nominalization” is, in my analysis, an instance of a nexus-type referent replacing the object participant: wǒ tī chú lái de ‘which I bring up; my bringing it up’. Similarly in (4.5), a nexus-type referent takes the place of a subject participant in tā shì zuǒtiān lái de ‘he is the one who came yesterday; the situation is that he came yesterday’. The analysis in terms of polysemy brings out semantic differences while allowing for the common semantic ground suggested by the agreement in form.

4. The aspectual overtones of de are of some cross-linguistic interest. A link between nominalizing functions (e.g. that of de in xiě de ‘who writes; what is written’) and imperfective aspectual notions (e.g. de in xiě de ‘he writes’) has been reported from a variety of languages. Thus George van Driem (1993: 485), writing about Limbu, a Kiranti language of Nepal, notes that “the presentation of a situation as such by means of the Imperfective has to do with the fact that in Limbu, the Imperfective ending is not merely homophonous with the nominalizing marker -pa, but derives from the same root”. He goes on to observe that in two other Kiranti languages, Dumi and Lohorung, imperfective endings and nominalizing markers are cognate forms. Interestingly, despite the genetic relationship between these three languages, the roots in question do not represent a common Kiranti etymon. Van Driem (p. 489 n. 3) also points out a cross-linguistic parallel: “since in the Non-Preterit, the Limbu Imperfective denotes a progressive, the affinity between imperfective meaning and nominalization likewise brings to mind the English ending -ing”. In Classical Chinese, the particle 者 zhē, though unrelated to Mandarin de, similarly serves to nominalize verbal meanings (言 者 yán zhē ‘who talks; what is said’) and to present verbal meanings as a circumstance (yán zhē ‘the case of one’s speaking’). Indeed, the issues discussed in the present chapter are strikingly reminiscent of the semantic problems involved in the description of Classical Chinese 者 zhē. A stimulating account of some of these aspects of Classical Chinese is given by Christoph Harbsmeier (1981: 210-228). The tempting option of linking Classical Chinese 者 zhē with the Mandarin stative particle zhe 着 is not mentioned in the historical grammars I have consulted, and may turn out to be no more than speculation. A common root is generally held to be implausible. However, given the similarity of the reconstructed and modern forms, the possibility that the development of a stative particle zhe was semantically reinforced by Classical Chinese zhē deserves further investigation.
5. It has often been noted that the particle *de* may be positioned between a verb and its object. It is less clear, however, what the semantic implications are. The last line of the following example illustrates this construction: *dài de yóuyòng yī* does not mean 'a swimming suit that is brought along' but 'the situation is such that I bring a swimming suit along'. The speakers are discussing their plans for touring Europe together.

(4.9) A: Búguò nǐ Dānmài hōur lěng de a.
but 2.SG PNDenmark pretty cold SUB CNF
'But, eh, it'll be pretty cold in Denmark, won't it?'

B: Bújiānde Dānmài bǐ zhèr lěng, <shì ma> chà bu duō, not.necessarily PNDenmark compare here cold be Q lack not much
kēnéngh <bu zhídào>.
possible not know
'Denmark won't necessarily be colder than here, <really?> it'll be about the same, possibly <I didn't know>.'

B: Wǒdū chà bu duō <bu zhídào>.
latitude lack not much not know
'It's about the same latitude <I didn't know>.'

A: Nà xíng, fānzheng, <a> fānzheng wǒ dàì yóuyòng
that go anyway ah anyway 1.SG bring swim
yī, wǒ zhēn shì qù nár dōu dàì de yóuyòng yī.
clothes 1.SG real be go where all bring SUB swim clothes
'Well all right, anyway, <ah> anyway, I'll bring my swimsuit, I just bring my swimsuit wherever I go.'

Chao (1968: 297) describes this construction as a "specially Northern usage" which is in some cases more common than the corresponding construction with *de* following the object. For Li and Thompson, a comparison between

(4.10) tāmen (shì) bā – diānzhōng kāi mén de
they be eight – o’clock open door NOM

The situation is that they opened at eight o’clock.

(p. 589)

and

(4.11) tāmen (shì) bā – diānzhōng kāi de mén
they be eight – o’clock open NOM door

The situation is that they opened at eight o’clock.

(ibid.)

leads to the conclusion that they are "essentially equivalent, and it makes little difference which one is used" (p. 589). Both are treated as denoting a situation. Lú Shūxiāng’s (1980: 435) treatment seems to indicate the same kind of aspectual
meaning: ॐ "s + shi + v + de + o affirms a situation which has been realized". Note, however, that the description ॐ "has been realized" seems to refer to a relative past tense, i.e. to situations which are the result of some past action relative to the time talked about. For Mullie, a verb followed by de is a Past Participle: ॐ "the Past Participle can sometimes be used to express a past tense: 我來的是為你 wo lài-di cheu wei ni (.wo -le-di še wei .ni): ‘I came for you’” (1930-1933: II, 11; cf. 1932-1937: II, 11). John DeFrancis’s (1976) textbook of Mandarin, while warning the student that the construction with shi ‘be’ and the particle de “is not a general past tense”, maintains that “a past occurrence” is at issue. DeFrancis provides detailed instructions for the placement of de:

(4.12) When a sentence emphasizes the time, place, purpose or some other aspect of a past occurrence, rather than the occurrence itself, the following pattern is used:

S (shi) A V de. ‘S did V under A time or place conditions.’ or ‘It was under A time or place conditions that S did V.’ […]

If the verb of [this] construction […] has a pronoun object, this must come directly after the verb:

Wō-shi-jintian-kànjian-ta-de. ‘It was today that I saw him.’

With the verbs mài ‘buy,’ mài ‘sell,’ and chī ‘eat,’ the preferred position for the object is at the end:

Wō-shi-jintian-mài-de-shū. ‘I bought the book today.’

In other cases, the object is either placed right after the verb or is separated from the verb by the particle de:

Wō-shi-yǐyue-dào-Mēiguó-de. or Wō-shi-yǐyue-dào-de-Mēiguó. ‘I arrived in America in January.’

(1976: 152)

Lǔ, Li and Thompson, and DeFrancis all indicate that shi ‘be’ may be deleted. I take this as evidence that their descriptions are relevant to the semantics of de rather than that of shi.

Indeed, in examples such as (4.10) and (4.11), the versions without "shi" more strikingly reveal the syntactic possibilities of de. As a first endeavor, they may be contrasted as follows. In (4.10) tāmen bā-diǎnzhōng kāi mén de ‘The situation is that they opened at eight o’clock,’ a nexus-type referent replaces a subject participant for kāi mén de ‘that the door is opened’ < ‘which opens the door’, and the first nexus member is the meaning of tāmen ‘they’. In (4.11) tāmen bā-diǎnzhōng kāi de mén ‘The situation is that they opened at eight o’clock’, the first nexus member is likewise the meaning of tāmen ‘they’, but here the nexus-type referent does not replace a participant of the verb kāi ‘open’. The second nexus member is the meaning of kāi de mén ‘door which is opened’. In this nexus sense, the persons referred to by means of tāmen ‘they’ are equated with the door which is opened. This
construction may be compared to the nexus arrangements of wǒ Tiānjīng de ‘I'm from Tiānjin’ in (2.6) and nǐ nàr de? ‘where are you from?’ discussed earlier (see section 3). More generally, the second nexus member can be a nominal expression with or without de, yielding a type of nexus which may be called a nominal predicate. I shall briefly return to this point in chapter 5 (see p. 65).

A number of factors complicate a clear assessment of the difference between de following an object and de following the verb but preceding the object. First of all, the amount of clear cases is rather small. Consider the following instance of bǐ de yè ‘being a graduate’:

(4.13) B: Jiù shì... biān gōngzuò, biān xuéxí, <dùi, zài zhí yánjiū
   just be side work side learn correct again employ graduate
   shēng> nèi yàng de.
   student that kind SUB
   ‘I just... worked and studied at the same time, <right, then you became a graduate student>, that kind of thing.’
   (0047)

   B: Ránhòu ne, zhèi ge... bā sān nián bǐ de yè.
   afterwards RLV this piece eight three year finish SUB task
   ‘So, eh... I graduated in ’83.’
   (0048)

It could be argued that the de in bǐ de yè denotes a situation of having graduated: bā sān nián bǐ de yè ‘being a graduate of ’83’. Note that ránhòu, literally ‘afterwards, subsequently’ does not stand in the way of such an analysis. In spoken Mandarin, but not in written Chinese, ránhòu is frequently used to indicate that the speaker has something more to say: ‘subsequently [let me tell you that...]’. In this usage, ránhòu can be translated in English as ‘so’, ‘well’, or ‘now’. Therefore it is not necessary that the phrase following ránhòu indicates an action. The possibility that bā sān nián bǐ de yè is interpreted as ‘being a graduate of ’83’ accordingly remains. But we cannot be sure. An analysis of bā sān nián bǐ de yè as a junction construction ‘the task accomplished in ’83; the degree attained in ’83’ is equally possible. The nominal character of this expression does not prevent its use as a nexus. When the expression is replaced by a nominal expression without de, e.g. Bēijīng rén ‘inhabitant of Peking’, the possibility of nexus remains: Ránhòu ne, zhèi ge Bēijīng rén. ‘So, eh, I’m from Peking.’ (cf. p. 65). In the case of bǐ de yè, the fact that bǐ ‘finish’ and yè ‘task’ are bound forms which must appear together does not, I think, detract from the argument. Conversely, the fact that de actually can be inserted into the compound bīyè ‘graduate’ seems to point to the relevance of a semantic distinction between bǐ yè de and bǐ de yè.
The following example is slightly more complicated.

(4.14) Wei, nǐ zhè yì nián lái nǐ-- nǐ-- nǐ shì-- nǐ shì
hey 2.SG this one year come 2.SG 2.SG 2.SG be 2.SG be
děngyuì zìfèi chū lái hái shì nǐ ná de jiāngxuéjīn?
equal privately.funded exit come still be 2.SG take SUB scholarship

‘Hey, this one year you are here is it like you-- you left-- you left on private funds or are you on a scholarship?’

(3966)

The question is whether ná de jiāngxuéjīn must be taken in the aspectual sense of ‘being in the situation of having taken a scholarship’, or whether it should be interpreted as a convergent junction construction: ‘obtained scholarship’. In the latter case, the nexus-style identification of nǐ ‘you’ with the obtained scholarship follows the pattern explained for (4.11) tāmen bā-diānzhōng kǎi de mén ‘The situation is that they opened at eight o’clock.’ (see p. 58). What renders (4.14) more complicated than (4.13) is that de may be regarded as the neutral-tone realization of dào ‘arrive, attain’. Peking Mandarin low vowels and back vowels, including diphthongs starting with these vowels, are often neutralized to schwa [ə], especially when they carry a neutral tone. To distinguish between these vowels, a full-tone reading pronunciation may be imposed, while many speakers can also keep -da, -dao, -de, -dou, -du, -dui and -duo distinct as true neutral-tone syllables. In short, the distinction between ná de and ná dào is possible but optional. In example (4.14), ná de may be understood as ná dào ‘take and arrive at, get and accordingly attain, obtain’.

Given the availability of more than one analysis for VERB de OBJECT in most cases, speakers characteristically vary in their responses to requests for judgments. To illustrate, I will mention the judgments elicited in relation to the following exchange. The speakers are talking about graffiti:

(4.15) B: Tāmen jiù wàng nèi Zhōngshān Líng shàng <uh-huh>
3.PL just toward that PNSun.Yat-sen tomb above uh-huh
pēn qì <uh-huh, uh-huh>
spray paint uh-huh uh-huh

‘They just went to spray graffiti <uh-huh> on Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum <uh-huh, uh-huh>.’

(3921)

B: Eh, shì Zhōngshān Tánghái shì Zhōngshān Líng? <mhm>
eh be PNSun.Yat-sen hall still be PNSun.Yat-sen tomb mhm
‘Eh, was it Sun Yat-sen Hall or Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum?’

(3922)

B: Yě shì hàn bái yù de, hén bái de <m> qiáng <mhm>.
also be PNSHàn white jade SUB very white SUB mm wall mhm
‘This was classical marble too, a very white <mm> wall <mhm>.’

(3923)
4. ASPECT WITH \textit{DE}

B: Aiya, shì pèn de zì. shéme de, <mhm> hahaha, fândui gee be spray SUB character what SUB mhm hahaha oppose
Hào Bócūn dāng... kuígē, shéme de <mhm, a>...
\textit{PNHào PNBócūn} function (prime.minister)\textsuperscript{12} what SUB mhm ah
gěkūi.
(prime.minister)

'Gee, they sprayed characters and things, <mhm> hahaha, opposing Hào Bócūn becoming... primer and so on <mhm, ah>... permier.'

(3924)

In line 3924, \textit{pèn de zì} 'characters were being sprayed' may seem a more appropriate reading in this context than 'sprayed characters'. Still, speakers of Mandarin provide both types of explanation effortlessly. This seems to me evidence of the close resemblance of these meanings, and hence of polysemy.

\textsuperscript{12} At the time of recording, the (mainland) speaker had only recently been introduced to the terminology of Taiwanese politics. The term intended here is \textit{gěkūi} 'prime minister'. The speaker first says \textit{kuígē}, then corrects himself but mispronounces \textit{gěkūi} as \textit{gěkūi}. 
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 > bù shì > bùr > bù, 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 yì ‘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 instances 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 Tiānjin 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 māng. ‘I’m not busy.’; Bù hào. ‘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 infixed in these compounds to express potentiality. Even careful enunciation of this infixed bu will not restore (so to speak) a full-tone bù or bù: Shuō bu dào., literally ‘speak not arrive’, hence ‘In talking, I didn’t get that far.’; Dā 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

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.
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 bû ‘not’ or bû ‘not’. Conversely, the occurrence of bû ‘not’ and bû ‘not’ in a regular speech tempo usually denotes special emphasis, so that Shuô bû dào. denotes ‘In talking, I did not get that far.’ and Dâ bû tîng. 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 bû ‘not to be’ is not easily perceived. The problem is that like bû ‘not’, bû ‘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 bâozi or ‘Chinese steamed buns’ using Dutch ingredients. Speaker B replies that he must prepare some for a certain Qián lâoshi, literally ‘teacher Qián’, who has been complaining about having to eat rice every day.

(5.1) A: Ni fâng-- zhîjî fâng fâxiào fên jiu kîyi.
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 wô x[ià cî]--
that 1.SG [below occasion]
‘So [next time] I’ll--’ (4761)

A: Wô (zài zhêr) zuô guò liâng cî.
1.SG in here make EXP pair occasion
‘I made them a couple of times (here).’ (4762)

B: Nà wô xià cî, <zuô bâozi> na gêi Qián lâoshi
that 1.SG below occasion make bâozi that give PN Qián teacher
zuô bei,
make EVD
‘So next time, <you’ll make bâozi> so I’ll just have to make some for Qián.’ (4763)

A: Dûl, zuô bâ[ozî]--
right make [bâozi]
‘Right, make some bâ--’ (4764)

B: Tâ bu xiâng chî miânsî ma?
3 not.be think eat wheaten.food Q
‘Didn’t he want to eat pasta?’ (4765)

A: Shî ma?
be Q
‘Is that right?’ (4766)
A: (Kēshī)--
    but
    (But)--

B: Tā lǎo chǐ mǐfàn, tā juéde fán le.
   3 old eat rice 3 feel vexed PF
   ‘He always eats rice and he is fed up with it.’

A: Oh, wǒ-- wǒ yě shì a, wǒ jiù--
    oh 1.SG 1.SG also be CNF 1.SG just
    ‘Oh, I-- me too, I just--’

B: Tā xiǎng chī miànshī (de).
   3 think eat wheaten.food SUB
   ‘He wants to eat pasta.’

The clue to the interpretation of bu in line 4765 is given in the last line of this example: Tā xiǎng chī miànshī (de). ‘He feels like having pasta.’. (For want of a better translation for miànshī ‘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 miànshī ma? would express disbelief: ‘He doesn’t want to eat pasta?’ I would argue instead that this bu is an instance of bu ‘not to be’ appearing in neutral-tone disguise. In other words, Tā bu xiǎng chī miànshī 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 yāngpíng tone of bù 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 zhōng duō yàng de suōyì
    that this piece art.of.tea be many sort many kind SUB therefore
    nǐ dàgāi shì-hahahaha guāng hui hē, nà n--
    2.SG general be-hahahaha bare can drink that [2.SG]
    ‘Well, the art of tea has many ways, so probably you-hahahaha can only drink, so y--’

A: Bù shì wǒ guāng huì hē, nà nǐ-- wǒ ye bù 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.’

(4931)
This example illustrates the close affinity between *bú shí* ‘not to be’ and *bú* ‘not to be’, both of which occur in the last line. After *Bú shí wǒ guāng hui hē, nà ni— ‘It’s not as if I can only drink, so you—*, the speaker checks herself and restates her original comment as ...*wǒ ye bú guāng hui 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 *wǒ yē bú shí guāng hui 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 *shí* ‘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。*Wó shí Běijīng rén. ‘I am from Peking.’*. Similarly, 我是天津的 < 哦 >。*Wó shí Tiānjīn < oh >. ‘I am from Tiānjīn < oh >.’* may serve as an acceptable written equivalent of *Wó Tiānjīng de < oh >. ‘I’m from Tiānjīn < oh >.’* in example (2.6).

When *shí ‘be’* is enunciated with deliberate care, or when it expresses emphasis, it is realized as *shì ‘be’*, with a *qù* tone. For *bú* in ...*wǒ ye bú guāng hui hē ‘...it’s not as if I can only drink though’, therefore, the *yǎngpīng* tone can be regarded as the only reflex of *shí ‘be’*. In other words, the *yǎngpīng* tone reflects the fact that *bú ‘not’* is realized as its allomorph *bǔ ‘not’* when followed by a *qù* tone in *shí ‘be’*. In the absence of *shí ‘be’*, the retention of the *yǎngpīng* tone in *bǔ ‘not to be’* makes this tone the only formal correlate of the meaning ‘be’. As the negator of a nominal predicate, *bǔ* is in many ways similar to Classical Chinese 非 *fēi ‘not to be’*.

The above description implies that a formal distinction between *bǔ hu ‘not to be’* and *bǔ/bǔ hu ‘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 *yǐnpīng* tone of *guāng ‘bare, only’* in (5.2)/4932 identifies *bǔ* as ‘not to be’ instead of ‘not’. If *tài ‘too, excessive’* were substituted for *guāng ‘bare’*, *bǔ* could be read as either (a) ‘not to be’: ...*wǒ ye bú tài hui hē ‘...it’s not as if I can drink too well though’; or (b) as the allomorph of *bǔ ‘not’* before *qù* tones: ...*wǒ ye bú tài hui hē ‘...I can’t drink too well though’.

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

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14. Here and on p. 66, expressions have been transcribed partly in Hányǔ 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 不 ‘not’: 你 when preceding a 语 tone; 你 before all other tones, and 你 in final position, including isolated utterances. In other words, apart from the 与 óng tone in final 你 ‘one’, the tonal modifications are identical to those of 不 ‘not’. Another similarity with 不 ‘not’ is that 你 ‘one’, in my experience, usually appears in the neutral tone in regular conversational tempos: 你 ‘one, a’.

The phenomenon noted by Dù Yongdào is that 你, in the 与 óng 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  
前院儿 来了 一 工人, 一 解放军, 一
前院儿 来了一 个工人, 一个 解放军, 一个

学生, 还 有 一 老外。
学生 还有 一个 外国人

‘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 你 ‘a specimen of’ occurs in colloquial Pekinese. In this connection, it may be interesting to note that unlike 你 ‘a specimen of’, the colloquial expressions 俩 ‘two specimens of’ and 三 ‘three specimens of’ have long been documented and can even be written in Chinese characters, as 俩 and 三, respectively. Like 你 ‘a specimen of’, these two expressions can be immediately followed by a noun.15

Dù’s description of 你 ‘a specimen of’ suggests a very similar diachronic development to the one proposed above for 不 ‘not to be’. In the case of 不 ‘not to be’, the 与 óng tone was due to the 语 tone of 要 ‘to be’. In a similar fashion, the general measure word 个 ‘specimen, piece’ may be assumed to have led to the 与 óng tone in 你 ‘a specimen of’. The loss of 个 may be envisaged as follows (cf. note 14): 你 个 > 你 个 > 你 个 > 你 个 > 你 个 > 你 个 ‘a specimen of’. Again, these and intermediate forms co-occur synchronically, and a formal contrast between 你 ‘one’ and 你 ‘a specimen of’ occurs only before non-语 tones.

In the next example, 要 不 ‘isn’t it’ in line 3517 takes the place of the expression which is normally cited as 要 不 或 要 不 ‘isn’t it, is it not the case that’. The speakers were discussing the impression Chinese speech sounds make

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15. The two characters combine a “man radical” ♂ with 俩 与 óng ‘pair’ and 三 三 ‘three’. By analogy, a combination of the man radical with 一 你 ‘one’ can be used to coin a character 一 for 你 ‘a specimen of’. Similarly, the character 俩 俩 与 óng ‘not need to’, which combines 不 你 ‘not’ and 用 你 ‘need’, may serve as a model for a new character made up of 不 不 and 是 你 ‘be: 要 不 ‘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
   yà, nèi ge, nèi ge... tiǐ yi kāishǐ tīng Zhōngwén
   CNF that piece that piece HES one start listen Chinese.language
   shéme wèr de, shéme gānjué? <m>
   what taste SUB what perceive mm
   ‘I asked them, I said, eh, you, eh, what was it again, eh, eh, when you liǐ-- 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 tèbié nán hahahaha-tǐng, xiàng dà
   still be 3.PL say SUB special difficult hahahaha.listen like hit
   hahahaha-jīà yìyàng-hahahaha <hahahaha>.
   hahahaha-frame same-hahahaha hahahaha
   ‘Well, they said it was awful to listen to-hahahaha, that it sounded like
   hahahaha-people quarreling-hahahaha <hahahaha>.’

   3513

A: Gèi wǒ xiào de! <hahahaha>
   give 1.SG laugh SUB hahahaha
   ‘It had me in stitches! <hahahaha>’

   3514

A: Tāmen shuō tèbié nán tīng.
   3.PL say special difficult listen
   ‘They said it was awful to listen to.’

   3515

A: Búguo nei shéme yě shi, Hélān wèn yě shi, 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: Juède shì bù kōuyīn tèbié-- wǒ tīng le yīhòu jìù juède hh
   feel be not.be accent special 1.SG listen PF later just feel “kh”
   zhè 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 不能 ‘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 不能 ‘not to be’ in line 3354 reflects common Pekinese usage.

(5.5) A: errick tämen 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, zhīshāo tämen de làoshī, jī-- wò hén chǐ jīng de 3.PL at.least 3.PL SUB teacher HES 1.SG very eat fright SUB
shì tämen de làoshī 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 làoshī dōu-- wǒ dōu méi yǒu-- méi yǒu oh 3.PL SUB teacher all 1.SG all not.exist exist not.exist exist
fēng a. listen CNF
‘Oh, their teachers-- I haven’t-- haven’t heard any of them.’ (3353)

B: Wǒ bù shuō shì Zhōngguó rén de lào[shi]-- eh, jiù shì <jiù 1.SG not.be say be PNCNina man SUB [teacher] eh just be just
shì> shuō Zhōngguó xuētōng de <shi-- básì shì dídào de jī.--. be say PNCNina 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 dídào de Hélán rén, jiu xiāng zhèi ge just be say ‘genuine SUB PNHolland man just like this piece
Wěi xiānshēng. PNdE,Weert mister
‘I mean real Dutch persons like, eh, Mr. De Weert.’ (3355)

With 不能 ‘not’ instead of 不能 ‘not to be’, Wǒ bù shuō shì Zhōngguo rén de lào[shi]-- would mean ‘I won’t say they are Chinese teach--’.

Example (5.6), like (5.1) above, illustrates a neutral-tone 且. In this case, the choice between ‘not’ and ‘not to be’ may seem more puzzling. The speakers are discussing academic library facilities.
5. TEN EXAMPLES OF NEGATION WITH BÚ

(5.6) B: Suǒyǐ dào zhèi biār, kěyí liàng yì xiàr zhèr de therefore arrive this side may make.use one below here SUB zǐliào-- material

'So now that I'm here, I can make use of the materials here--' (4036)

A: Nǐ juédé zhèr de zǐliào 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 guònèi n-- <hǎo also not(be?)> extraordinary complete yet be compare interior good dé le> a, yǒu xiē dōngxi nǐ... guònèi kàn bu dào de, obtain PF ah exist few thing 2.SG interior look not arrive SUB nǐ zhèr kěyí 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, bù '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 bù '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 talenlab 'language lab'.

(5.7) B: Búrú shuō duō duō shǎo shǎo shì dà ge jīchù ba, nǐ for.instance say much much little little be hit piece basis SUG 2.SG jīràn lái le yì ge hǎo tiáojìàn. 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 kěyǐ a, nǐ-- tāmen zhèr bù yǒu nèi that eh heh that may ah 2.SG 3.PL here not.be exist that
talentlab 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: Zǐjī xué a?
self learn CNF
‘Learning it by myself?’ (3492)

A: Nǐ zǐjī jiè cídài yě kěyǐ 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 bù ma and kě bù, both meaning ‘indeed, very much so’ and both deriving from kě bù shì ma. Taken literally, kě bù 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 bù shì also means ‘indeed, very much so’, but is perhaps slightly more informal. A similar difference applies to nà kě bù ma ‘well indeed, no kidding’ in (5.8) and nà kě bù ‘well indeed, you bet’ in (5.9):

(5.8) B: Nǐ yǐjīng chū lái shìjiān bǐjiào 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 xiàng a, <xuéxiào> bā sì nián, <bā sì
heh 1.SG think think SUG school eight four year eight four
nián> bā sì nián <oh>. year eight four year oh
‘Heh, let me think, <the school> eighty-four, <eighty-four> eighty-four
<oh>.

B: Nà kě bù 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 bǐng yě méi xué hùi, ránhòu yóuyǒng ne, shi-
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 zhāhū shéme?
ah swim that 2.SG still 2.SG still blind bluff what
‘Ah, swimming! Still-- still going on about that?’ (4659)
5. TEN EXAMPLES OF NEGATION WITH BÚ

B: Wò zuì hòu cèy-- cèyàn de shìhou zòng 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, wó dào shìhou hái qù jiù nǐ, tiān, nǐ
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.
heaven CNF
‘Huh, my God.’ (4663)

The example below illustrates the position before a qù tone which neutralizes the
contrast between bù ‘not to be’ and bù ‘not’. Bú gāosu 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 kěyí gěi wǒ zhèr dá diànhuà, ěr 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, ěr sān--?
be Q two three--
‘Really? Two-three--’ (4519)

B: Wò bù gāosu nǐ le ma?
1.SG not be tell 2.SG PF Q
‘Didn’t I tell you?’ (4520)

A: Nǐ méi gāosong wǒ guò!
2.SG not exist tell 1.SG EXP
‘You didn’t tell me.’ (4521)

Taking bù as the allomorph of bù ‘not’ would lead to a reading of Wǒ bù gāosu nǐ
le ma? as ‘Am I no longer telling you?’ Only bù ‘not to be’ leads to the correct
reading of Wǒ bù gāosu 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 bù ‘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 bù ‘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

\[ \text{wò zhī zhīdào fàn shì dōu yǒu ge fīr dā ge} \]

1 SG only know every affair all exist piece principle hit piece

\[ \text{pènì bù yě yǒu rén xiē jī shí wàn zi de sneeze not be also exist person write how many ten 10,000 character SUB} \]

\[ \text{lùnwén dé le bōshì} \]

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, bù ‘not to be’ precedes (a) verbal or (b) adverbial expressions:

(a) verbal expressions: shuō ‘say’ in wò bù shuō shì Zhōngguó rèn de lāo[shī]-- ‘I don’t mean to say they are Chinese teach-- (5.5); yǒu ‘exist’ in tāmen zhèr bù yǒu nèi tānlab ma? ‘don’t they have this language lab over here?’ (5.7); gào su ‘tell’ in wò bù gào su nǐ le ma? ‘didn’t I tell you?’ (5.10); and the verb xiāng ‘think, want’ appearing as an auxiliary, i.e. before another verb, chī ‘eat’, in tā bu xiāng chī miànshi ma? ‘didn’t he want to eat pasta?’ (5.1);

(b) adverbial expressions: guāng ‘bare, only’ in wò yé bù guāng huǐ hē ‘it’s not as if I can only drink though’ (5.2); fēicháng ‘extraordinary’ in yě huì fēicháng quán ‘it’s not as if it’s extremely complete, ...’ (5.6); and yě ‘also’ in 不也有人写 bù yě yǒu rén xiě ‘didn’t someone write’ (5.11).

Bù ‘not to be’ appears-in sentence-final position in nà kē bù ‘very much so’ in example (5.9) and is followed by the interrogative particle ma in (5.8): nà kē bù ma ‘so indeed’. This is interesting when bù ‘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). Synchronously, 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?

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16. The format of this recording does not allow its reproduction on the tape mentioned in note 13.
5. TEN EXAMPLES OF NEGATION WITH BÚ

- 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 bù 'not to be' would argue against this theory, since the loss of shì 'be' does not lead to the impossibility of bù 'not to be' occurring in final position.

In only one of the instances presented here does bù 'not to be' appear before a noun, kǒuyīn 'uttered sound' in (5.4)/3517: shì bù kǒuyīn tēbié-- '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 bù kǒuyīn tēbié nán tīng? 'isn't the sound awful to listen to?' In other words, bù negates the following sentence as a whole. If bù 'not to be' negated the nominal expression following it, shì bù kǒuyīn tēbié [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 bù 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 Bèijīng rén. 'I'm from Peking.' (see p. 65), can appear as Wó bù Bèijīng rén. 'I'm not from Peking.' These and other questions with regard to bù '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 bù 'not to be' with a yàngpíng tone which may be reduced to a neutral tone. Like yí 'a specimen of', it deserves a separate entry in Mandarin dictionaries.
CHAPTER 6

VERBAL VALENCE

1. In chapter 7, an analysis of verbal concatenation in Mandarin will be presented. In view of that presentation, the notion of valence, which was briefly introduced in section 5 of chapter 2, requires further discussion. The notion of valence is reintroduced in section 2 below. The remaining sections deal with the definition of a discovery procedure for valences.

2. VALENCE (or VALENCE, or ARGUMENTS) are subdivisions in the meanings of various lexemes such as verbs, prepositions, coverbs, conjunctions and particles. The question of how to determine the number and the identity of valences has troubled many linguists.17 I will treat the need for valences in the analysis as a corollary of the notion that "even the most subtle semantic aspect can be described as a feature of something" (Ebeling 1978: 109).

In the case of Mandarin mài ‘sell’, an analysis of the meaning of mài ‘sell’ in terms of two valences ‘selling’ and ‘being sold’ implies that this meaning combines projections of distinct features | selling | and | being sold |, carried by two different referents, viz. the seller of the thing sold and the thing sold by the seller. In other words, even though the two features projected as valences are carried by different entities, they do not randomly belong to different acts of selling, but to one and the same selling event.

Valences are strictly internal to the meaning of the expression under consideration. Thus in a sentence such as

(6.1) Tāmén bu mài lǐngjìān.

3.PL not sell spare.part

‘They don’t sell spare parts.’

the meanings ‘they’ and ‘spare part’ are not valences belonging to mài ‘sell’. The meanings ‘they’ and ‘spare part’ correlate with the forms tāmen and lǐngjìān, respectively, and share referents with the meaning of mài ‘sell’. Between the three

17. E.g., in a descriptive framework, the exchange of views between Honselaar (1980) and Ebeling (1978, 1980), a brief assessment of which is given by Van Helden (1993: 1015); and in generative linguistics, the discussion between Huang Chu-Ren (Academia Sinica, Taiwan) and C.-T. James Huang following the latter’s presentation of his (1993) paper.
meanings ‘sell’, ‘they’ and ‘spare part’, only two referents are shared. The meaning ‘spare part’ is convergent with the ‘being sold’ valence of mài ‘sell’, sharing the intended spare parts as a common referent. The meaning ‘they’ shares its referent, i.e. the persons most likely to have been intended in the speech situation, with the ‘selling’ valence of mài ‘sell’. I follow Honselaar (1980: 11) in reserving the term complement for expressions such as tāmen ‘they’ and língjiàn ‘spare part’ in (6.1) whose meanings are constructed so as to be convergent with a given valence. The nature of this convergent syntactic relationship will be considered in the following sections. A complement will be said to represent (Honselaar’s term, pp. 3, 11) a valence.

3. A given day on which a selling event takes place may be thought of as somehow being characterized by the selling event, viz. as possessing a | selling time | feature. The question is now whether that feature can be projected as a ‘selling time’ valence of mài. In example (6.2), such a valence would be convergent with the meaning of the complement jīntiān ‘today’:

(6.2) Jīntiān mài fángzì.
    today sell house
    ‘Today the house will be sold.’

This line of reasoning will soon increase the number of valences, as even a preliminary inventory may show. For mài ‘sell’, the valences ‘selling price’, ‘place of selling’, ‘manner of selling’ and ‘result of selling’ appear to be represented in the following sentences by the complements bā mǎo ‘eighty cents’, Hāiyá ‘The Hague’, xiānrán ‘obviously’ and guǎng le ‘become bare’:

(6.3) Liăng zhī mài bā máo.
    two single sell eight dime
    ‘Two pieces sell for eighty cents.’

(6.4) Hāiyá mài Zhōngwén shū.
      PNThe.Hague sell Chinese.language book
      ‘In The Hague they sell Chinese books.’

(6.5) Xiānrán mài guǎng le.
      obviously sell bare PF
      ‘It’s obviously sold out.’

Note that this provisional list of valences does not include a projection of a feature | selling to | carried by the entity to which something is being sold. The reason is that in Mandarin this meaning is usually expressed by means of gěi ‘give’, as in
(6.6) Mài gěi ta le.
sell give 3 PF
"We sold it to her."

Here I describe ta 'her' as a complement of gěi 'give'. It is possible to find complements of mài 'sell' correlating with a meaning which refers to the entity to which things are sold, but they are stylistically and regionally marked. They will not be considered here, but may be analyzed in exactly the same way as the valences to be discussed.

In the present treatment of valences, I will have little to say about the position of complements relative to the verb (preposition, etc.) except that the same complement representing the same valence may often occur either before or after the verb. The corresponding difference in meaning does not affect the analysis which follows.

It is not always easy to establish whether features such as | selling time | and | selling price | are distinctive, i.e. whether they are projected in the mind as partaking of the meaning 'sell' correlating with mài in sentences (6.2), (6.3), (6.4) and (6.5). In order to establish the valences of verbs, prepositions, and conjunctions, Wim Honselaar (1980: 10-11) has proposed a detailed discovery procedure. I will discuss some of his arguments and Dutch examples below, not only because the analysis offers interesting approaches, but also because is available only in Dutch. In addition, since one of my aims is to demonstrate the subtlety of the semantic distinctions involved in this type of description, I am on surer ground in a language over which I have native command.

Given a word for which valences are to be determined, Honselaar's discovery procedure takes the form of successive instructions:

(6.7) 1. Intuitively establish, on the basis of as many sentences in which forms of the word occur as possible, which discrete semantic aspects appear to be required for an adequate description of the set of appropriate referents;
2. Determine if these aspects are being manifested, and if so, in which phrases;
3. For the phrases selected in 2, establish whether their occurrence is obligatory;
4. For the remaining phrases selected in 2, establish whether their meaning can be described on the basis of their own form;
5. Designate both phrases occurring obligatorily and phrases whose meaning cannot be described on the basis of their own form as REPRESENTATIVES of valences;
6. Considering as VALENCEs only those semantic aspects which have representatives to match, establish the word's inventory of valences;
7. For phrases which cannot be considered representatives of valences according to criterion 1, describe the conditions prompting any obligatory occurrences.

(Honselaar 1980: 10-11)
6. VERBAL VALENCE

The discussion below will be restricted to instructions 1 to 6. Note that Honselaar's •“representative” is apparently used interchangeably with his •“complement” (1980: 11, 46).

Application of instructions 1 to 3 to examples in (6.1) to (6.5) yields the following results:

(6.8) 1. The semantic features in question are projections of the features | selling | , | being sold | , | selling price | , | selling time | , | place of selling | , | manner of selling | and | selling result | , as argued above;


3. None of the phrases identified in 2 occur obligatorily: Bu mài lìngjiàn. ‘They don’t sell spare parts.’, Tòmen bu mài. ‘They don’t sell them.’, Mài fāngzi. ‘The house will be sold.’, Liáng zhì mài. ‘Two pieces I’ll sell.’, Mài Zhōngwén shù. ‘Chinese books are sold.’, Mài guāng le. ‘They’re sold out.’ and Xiānrán mài. ‘Obviously they sell it.’ are all grammatical.

In spite of the absence of obligatory elements in the examples given for mài, instruction 3 of the procedure is by no means trivial in the description of Mandarin. E.g. for the verb dâ ‘from’, the three instructions will (1) record a tentative semantic aspect ‘place or time from which’, (2) detect that this meaning correlates with forms following dâ ‘from’, and (3) establish that such forms occur obligatorily.

For mài ‘sell’, in the absence of obligatory elements, all of the phrases identified in 2 pass on to instruction 4. The question whether their meanings can be •“described on the basis of their own form[s]” is a crucial one. If so, instructions 5 and 6 will define these meanings as valences of mài.

In Honselaar’s assessment of meanings •“on the basis of their own form[s]”, a meaning provisionally constructed as a valence of a verb (preposition, etc.) is confirmed as a valence if this meaning can be shown not to belong to the meaning of the provisional complement. The following are some of his examples:18

(6.9) • In de voorstelling duurt drie uur ‘the show lasts three hours’, drie uur cannot be left out. Hence I consider it a representative of a valence of DUREN ‘last’, viz. ‘duration’ (the other valence being ‘that which lasts’). Now drie uur ‘three hours’ also occurs as a phrase outside the context of duurt, denoting a time span just as it does within the context of duurt: hij sliep drie uur ‘he slept three hours’. Still, drie uur ‘three hours’ can also denote a point in time: hij is drie uur vertrokken ‘he left at three’. Also

18. Honselaar’s italics transcribe utterances (1980: 2), i.e. realizations of forms. For the present purpose, the distinction between utterances and forms is irrelevant. Honselaar’s capitals indicate lexemes.
compare *dat duurt een zondag* ‘that will take up one Sunday’ with *hij is een zondag gevalien* ‘he fell one Sunday’.

In *de voorstelling duurt drie uur* ‘the show lasts three hours’, *drie uur* ‘three hours’ cannot denote anything but a time span. It derives this specific meaning from the fact that it represents the ‘duration’ valence of DUREN ‘last’.

N.B. The fact that few representatives combining with DUREN ‘last’ behave like *drie uur* ‘three hours’ and *een zondag* ‘a Sunday’ does not weaken the argumentation.

An additional argument is that a sentence like *dat duurt een sigaret* ‘that will last a cigarette’ cannot be taken in any other way than ‘that will last as long as a cigarette lasts’ (i.e. for the duration of smoking a cigarette).

(Honselaar 1980: 22)

For the last example,

(6.10)  
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{dat } \\
\text{duurt } \\
\text{een } \\
\text{sigaret}
\end{array}
\]
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{that } \\
\text{last.NON1.SG.PRS a } \\
\text{cigarette}
\end{array}
\]

‘that will last a cigarette’

the argument runs roughly as follows:

(6.11)  
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{given that}
\end{array}
\]
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{(a) the example presents a cigarette as a time span and}
\end{array}
\]
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{(b) *sigaret* ‘cigarette’ occurs without this temporal meaning in other collocations,}
\end{array}
\]
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{hence}
\end{array}
\]
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{(c) the example refers to the cigarette as ‘cigarette’ by means of *sigaret*, and}
\end{array}
\]
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{simultaneously as a ‘duration’ by means of *duurt*.}
\end{array}
\]

In short, the analysis prevents an uncomfortable construction of temporality in the meaning of *sigaret* ‘cigarette’. Note, incidentally, that the paraphrase *“for the duration of smoking a cigarette”* in (6.9) is an interpretation with respect to “smoking”: the meaning ‘duration’ allows it but does not impose it. When a service technician calibrating electronic devices in a cigarette production line says *dat duurt een sigaret* ‘that will last a cigarette’, this may be interpreted as ‘that will last for the time needed to produce a cigarette’.

It seems unavoidable that the meaning mentioned in arguments like that of (b) in (6.11) is less specific than the provisional valence. After all, a search for a meaning ‘duration’, i.e. ‘time span in which something lasts’ would be futile outside of the context of *duurt* ‘lasts’. When this search fails, as it will, and a valence ‘duration’ is assigned on this basis, analogous tests for other valences would render the meaning of *duurt* infinitely polyvalent.

Accordingly we must search for a meaning ‘time span’, not ‘duration, time span in which something lasts’, in other collocations. More generally, the domain of the search is the provisional complement in any collocation but the one under investigation. The object of the search is the projection of a feature, this feature being
necessarily redundant with respect to the features projected in the valence to be established.

4. Argument (b) of (6.11) presents the occurrence of a meaning in different collocations of a provisional complement. A provisional valence is confirmed if this meaning can be shown not to belong to the meaning of the provisional complement. Conversely, if the meaning of the provisional valence can be shown to belong to the meaning of the provisional complement, nothing is proven, for the possibility remains that the meaning represented by the provisional valence belongs to both this valence and the verbal meaning simultaneously. This situation suggests a practical amendment to the discovery procedure introduced in (6.7).

Consider once again the meaning ‘selling price’ which was provisionally recorded as a valence represented by bā mǎo ‘eighty cents’ in (6.3). A comparison of collocations with bā mǎo will soon show that the ‘price’ meaning is present in every instance. Also note that bā mǎo does not mean ‘eight ten-cent coins’. That meaning is described periphrastically in Mandarin, e.g. as bā ge yī mǎo de ‘eight ten-cent ones’, or, more formally, bā ge yī mǎo de yīngbi ‘eight coins of ten cents’. Compare:

(6.12) Ná nei ge yī mǎo de qu kāi.
    take that piece one dime SUB go open
    ‘Take that dime to open it.’

In short, the meaning ‘eight dimes’ correlating with bā mǎo is a projection of feature(s) comprising or presupposing the feature | price |. The test fails to confirm the presence of a ‘selling price’ valence in the meaning of mǎi because the detection of a projected | price | feature may in each case be due to its being contributed by bā mǎo ‘eighty cents’. It also fails to disprove the presence of the valence because the feature may in each case have been projected simultaneously by the complement and the valence.

The question is now whether there are other expressions lacking a ‘price’ meaning which can be constructed so as to allow the occurrence of that meaning in collocation with mǎi. Consider the expression yī shǒu shī ‘one poem’. The following sentence shows that it lacks a ‘price’ meaning:

(6.13) Méi yì yè yǒu yī shǒu shī.
    each one page exist one poem poetry
    ‘There is one poem on each page.’

Now if I were to enter monastic life, I might sell all my books for the symbolic price of one poem. In this context, someone who has heard that the books are on offer may ask:
(6.14) Mài duór qián a?
    sell how.much money CNF
    'For how much do they sell?'

The answer may be:

(6.15) Mài yì shǒu shī.
    sell one poem poetry
    'They sell for one poem.'

I conclude that a 'selling price' valence should be described for the meaning of mài.

The above considerations suggest the following amendment to the discovery procedure in (6.7):

(6.16) [...]  
    2. Designate each semantic aspect recorded in 1 as a PROVISIONAL VALENCE. For each provisional valence, select those phrases in whose presence it is manifested, and designate them as the set of PROVISIONAL COMPLEMENTS.

[...]  
    4. For each set of provisional complements corresponding to the same provisional valence, create a subset in the following way:
       a. Select those expressions in the set of provisional complements which can occur both in collocations where the semantic aspect at issue is present and in collocations where it is not;
       b. If the subset thus far obtained is empty, look for an expression which - itself lacks the semantic aspect at issue, yet - when substituted for a provisional complement in collocations with the verb (preposition, etc.) necessarily leads to the recording of the semantic aspect at issue.
       Add this expression to the subset.

The subset contains the "phrases whose meaning cannot be described on the basis of their own form" referred to in instruction 5.

[...]

Now consider an examination of the 'selling time' valence according to the amended procedure. When instruction 1 registers a 'selling time', instruction 2 designates this meaning as a provisional valence and may find it to be represented by the provisional complement jìnitiān 'today' in example (6.2). As before, instruction 3 establishes that the occurrence of this provisional complement is not obligatory. In instruction 4a, the question is whether the 'time' meaning can be absent in the presence of jìnitiān. It will soon become evident that it cannot. The exception of the name of the magazine Jìnitiān 'Today' does not affect the argument, because the description needs to deal separately with the special relationship between form and meaning in proper names. In short, the meaning 'today' includes the meaning 'time'.
The 'time' meaning intended here localizes the event on the time axis, i.e. it is, in Honselaar’s (6.9) terms, a point in time, not a time span.

In executing instruction 4b, *di yí kè ‘first lesson’* may be taken as an expression lacking the meaning ‘time’. The expression can e.g. refer to the relevant part of a text book: *Di yí kè xǐ de hǎo. ‘Lesson One is written well.’*. Now consider the substitution of *jīntiān ‘today’* by *di yí kè ‘first lesson’*:

(6.17)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Di yí kè mài fángzi.} \\
\text{ORD one lesson sell house} \\
\text{‘They were selling houses in the first lesson.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Given a situation in which houses are being sold in an economy class, e.g. in a simulation or as an educational game, and given an occurrence of sentence (6.17) referring to that situation, the question is whether the sentence presents the selling event as occurring at the time identified by the class. The Mandarin sentence does not impose this meaning: the selling event is presented against the background of the economy class in a much less specific way, which may in turn be interpreted e.g. as a local backdrop (‘at the location of the first lesson’), a logical condition (‘in case of a first lesson’), a manner (‘by means of lesson one’), an identification (‘as a first lesson’) or indeed a temporal background (‘at the time of the first lesson’). Grammars of Mandarin usually describe this relationship between the meanings of *di yí kè ‘first lesson’* and *mài fángzi ‘sell houses’* in terms of TOPIC and COMMENT (e.g. Chao 1968: 69-72). In the present analysis, the fact that the temporal reading is not imposed makes it a matter of interpretation, invalidating the provisional ‘selling time’ valence.

5. The meaning of a complement is generally convergent with only one valence at a time. Exceptions are of the reflexive type and are easily identified: for *zìwǒ jièshào ‘to introduce oneself’*, the meaning ‘oneself’ correlating with *zìwǒ* can be analyzed as convergent with an ‘introducing’ as well as with a ‘being introduced’ valence in the meaning of *jièshào ‘introduce’*. In other cases, the convergence of a complement with one valence excludes its convergence with another valence of the same expression. Honselaar (1980: 26-27) reaches a similar conclusion in connection with his example *hij shoot hazen ‘he shot hares’*:

(6.18)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{hij shoot hazen} \\
\text{3.MSC.SG shoot.PAST.SG hare.PL} \\
\text{’He shot hares.’} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(1980: 26)

He argues that

(6.19)  
\[
\text{The hares referred to are here meant as the hunting catch. The sentence means: ‘he shot at hares so as to obtain them as catch’.}
\]
In *hij scoot* 'he shot', there is no implicit indication that an intended catch is at issue. On the other hand, the phrase *hazen* 'hares' is not used in a regular meaning of prepositionless phrases: it acquires the meaning 'catch' only in the context of SCHIETEN 'shoot'. One solution would be to consider *hazen* 'hares' a representative of a semantically optional valence. When the valence is not represented, as in *hij scoot* 'he shot', it is not covered either.

The valence 'being shot [as a projectile]', as represented by *een zware kogel* 'a heavy bullet' in *hij scoot een zware kogel in de richting van de stad* 'he shot a heavy bullet in the direction of the town', is semantically obligatory, but syntactically optional. It is covered in *hij scoot* 'he shot' and in *hij scoot hazen* 'he shot hares'. When the optional valence 'shooting catch' is represented, the valence 'being shot [as a projectile]' can no longer be represented:

*hij scoot een zware kogel* 'he shot a heavy bullet'

* *hij scoot een zware kogel hazen*  
(Honselaar 1980: 26-27)

The analysis rightly leaves open the possibility that the hares referred to in example (6.18) are presented as projectiles. This reading may be strange, but its strangeness derives from the knowledge that hares are not generally used as ammunition. No strangeness is imposed by the language, for there is nothing in the form *hij scoot hazen* 'he shot hares' which decides whether *hazen* 'hares' represents the valence 'catch being shot' or the valence 'being shot as a projectile'. The expression *hij scoot hazen* may be said to be homonymous in this sense, but I will return to this point in section 6. For the present purpose, the point is that the meaning of *hazen* 'hares' can be convergent with either valence, but not with both valences simultaneously. A similar argument applies to *Mài yì shǒu shī*. 'They sell for one poem.' in (6.15) and *Mài yì shǒu shī*. 'They sell one poem.'.

In Honselaar's reading of example (6.18), which presents the hares as catch, I see no formal or semantic reason to assume a 'being shot as a projectile' valence. This is not to say that acts of shooting can do without projectiles being shot. I simply do not think that the thought of projectiles is transmitted by sentences such as (6.18). As argued in chapter 3 (p. 42), it seems advisable that the allocation of unrepresented valences be based on semantic clues. In this respect, my approach may tally with Honselaar's arguments, but it also allows for individual semantic judgments by different speakers. In the case of (6.18), Honselaar and I may agree as linguists but do not seem to agree as native speakers of Dutch. Likewise in (6.19) "*hij scoot een zware kogel hazen*", Honselaar's asterisk in my view indicates only that *een zware kogel* 'a heavy bullet' cannot represent the valence 'being shot as a projectile'. The expression cannot be disqualified either formally or semantically, and in one reading the 'being shot as a projectile' valence can be seen to be represented. The sentence *hij scoot een zware kogel hazen* means 'he shot a heavy bullet of hares'. As in the case of hares being shot as projectiles, the strangeness of this example derives from world knowledge, not from restrictions in the language. If the need were to arise to
count hares in terms of heavy bullets, then Dutch *een zware kogel hazen* ‘a heavy bullet of hares’ would be an appropriate way of doing so. This means that the sentence *hij schoot een zware kogel hazen* ‘he shot a heavy bullet of hares’ can denote that the man in question shot a heavy bullet of hares as his catch. But if *hij schoot een zware kogel hazen* ‘he shot a heavy bullet of hares’ is used to refer to a heavy bullet of hares being shot as a projectile, the complement *een zware kogel hazen* ‘a heavy bullet of hares’ will represent the ‘being shot as a projectile’ valence.

The following example from Mandarin, mentioned briefly in (6.8) above, does seem to illustrate an unrepresented valence:

(6.20) Tämén bu mài.

3.PL not sell

‘They don’t sell them.’

My analysis records for *mài* ‘sell’ a ‘selling’ valence represented by *tämén* ‘they’ and a ‘being sold’ valence which is not represented, but which is nevertheless needed because sentence (6.20) cannot be interpreted as ‘They do not sell whatever things can be sold.’ or ‘They do not engage in selling.’ In other words, the sentence does not refer to the things being sold as things in general, but specifically as things which the speaker assumes the hearer can identify from the (linguistic or non-linguistic) context. I have transcribed this meaning as ‘it’ (cf. chapter 2, section 3). In example (6.20), the meaning ‘it’ is convergent with a ‘being sold’ valence. Note that “is convergent with” is a rather exaggerated way of describing the relationship between ‘it’ and the ‘being sold’ valence. These two meanings not only project features pertaining to the same referent, viz. what is sold, but correlate with one and the same form /màj \|/. For want of a better term, and in analogy with instances in which valences are represented by complements, I will continue to describe this relationship as convergence.

If other meanings besides ‘it’ are found to be convergent with unrepresented valences, they will likewise be reflected in the description of these valences. In Mandarin, convergence of unrepresented valences with ‘it’ happens to be very common, and the phenomenon is attested in other languages as well. Ebeling quotes the following example from Russian:

(6.21) ja vižu

1.SG.NOM see.PRES.NPF.1.SG

‘I see’

(1980: 364, my glosses)

For the stem of the verb *vižu* ‘I see’, he records the following “semantic alternants” (ibid.) or complementarily distributed allosemes of one meaning, separated by vertical strokes. The valences belonging to the same meaning are enclosed in square brackets and aligned vertically.
(6.22) "[seeing] | seeing the | having the power of sight"

The lack of square brackets in the second and third alternants indicates monovalent meanings. The first alternant, if I understand Ebeling correctly, is realized only when the "[seen]" valence is represented by a complement. The second alternant is monovalent in Ebeling's analysis. My analysis would record an extra valence for the second alternant because of the presence of 'the'='THE', corresponding to my 'IT'. This difference corresponds to the one noted above with respect to the use of the term "convergence". In other words, Ebeling does not distinguish a separate valence in the absence of a separate formal correlate.

For the third semantic alternant, I concur with the monovalent analysis. In Honselaar's (6.19) terms, this means that "[seen]" is established as a "semantically optional valence". In my view, only valences which cannot occur unless they are convergent with another meaning are "semantically obligatory". The number of valences in my analysis equals the number of referents.

As suggested above, the meaning 'IT' is well represented cross-linguistically as a meaning convergent with unrepresented valences. Note, however, that dialects and speech styles can vary considerably with respect to the presence of unrepresented valences. To quote one example, Pecok\textsuperscript{19} appears to possess many more semantically obligatory valences than standard Dutch. Thus the meaning of Pecok Hij ziet al. 'He already sees it.' includes a valence 'being seen' convergent with 'IT', and Ik weet. 'I know.' matches English I know. in that it includes a valence 'being known', again convergent with 'IT'. In standard Dutch, Hij ziet al. means 'He already has the power of sight.' and Ik weet. means 'I am knowledgeable.'. On the other hand, informal standard Dutch Weet ik. 'I know.' does present a semantically obligatory valence convergent with 'IT'.

6. The arguments presented in sections 4 and 5 show different ways of dealing with provisional valences. This leads us back to the distinction between homonymy and polysemy which, as argued in chapter 1 (see p. 17), rests ultimately with the speaker.

The application of Honselaar's (6.19) arguments to instances such as (6.15) Māi yī shōu shī. 'They sell for one poem.' and (6.20) Tāmen bù māi 'They don't sell it.' reveals the need to distinguish between them.

\footnotesize

\textsuperscript{19} Pecok (also spelled Petjok, Petjoeh, Petjo, etc.) is the name of the informal Dutch-Malay mixed language "belonging to the street and circles of friends" (Jan W. De Vries 1994: 1) in colonial Dutch Batavia (now Jakarta, Indonesia). In the examples, my spelling follows that of Robinson (1975).
(a) semantically optional valences, i.e. those which are present only in the presence of a complement, e.g. ‘selling price’ in (6.15) Mài yì shōu shī. ‘They sell for one poem.’;

(b) semantically obligatory valences, i.e. those which are present even in the absence of a complement, e.g. ‘being sold’ in the case of mài ‘sell’. Unlike Honselaar, I recognize these valences only when they are convergent with other meanings. Unlike Ebeling, I recognize these valences even in the absence of a separate complement. In Mandarin the usual meaning associated with an unrepresented valence is ‘it’. Note that this meaning has been translated as “they” in (6.15) Mài yì shōu shī. ‘They sell for one poem.’.

The need for syntactically obligatory valences, which is rather marginal in Mandarin, has been mentioned in connection with dā ‘from’ in section 3.

In (6.15) Mài yì shōu shī. ‘They sell for one poem.’, the presence of both the unrepresented valence ‘being sold’ and the represented valence ‘selling price’ indicates that each of these valences has an independent status. Hence the reading of Mài yì shōu shī. as ‘They sell one poem.’ can be treated as a case of homonymy. The same argument would apply to Honselaar’s (6.18) hij schoot hazen ‘he shot hares’ if one were to accept his (6.19) claim that both this example and hij schoot ‘he shot’ cover a ‘being shot as a projectile’ valence. My disagreement with him on this point opens the possibility of a polysemous analysis of the two readings of hij schoot hazen, viz. ‘he shot hares as a hunting catch’ and ‘he shot hares as ammunition’.

A similar possibility of polysemy is available for the provisional valences recorded for example (6.17) Dì yì kē mài fāngzi. ‘They were selling houses in the first lesson.’: ‘location of a lesson’, ‘condition of a lesson’, ‘method of a lesson’, ‘time of a lesson’, etc. Instead of an all-out rejection of these provisional valences, a less specific, semantically optional valence may be established. The definition of this valence concurs with traditional analyses in terms of topic, i.e. the valence delineates a rather general ‘situation of selling’.
CHAPTER 7

THE PIVOTAL CONSTRUCTION

1. In chapter 6, a number of theoretical issues relating to valences were discussed. The present chapter applies these issues to the description of the so-called pivotal and other types of serial verb constructions. It will be argued that a treatment of syntactically similar constructions as mutually exclusive possibilities cannot be maintained in the light of language processing strategies.

2. The Chinese terms 兼語 jiānyǔ ‘pivot’ and 兼語式 jiānyǔ shì ‘pivotal construction’ were apparently first proposed in the April 1952 installment of 語法講話 Yúfǎ jiānghuà ‘Lectures on grammar’ of the then new journal 中國語言 Zhōngguó yǔwén ‘Chinese language’. Jiān-yǔ is literally a ‘doubling-expression’ and shì means ‘pattern’. The terminology reflects the notion of a pivot doubling as object and subject:

(7.1) • A pivotal construction consists of two subject-predicate structures linked together, as in wǒ jiào tā lài ‘I make him come over’. In wǒ jiào tā ‘I call him’, tā ‘he’ is the object of jiào ‘call’. In tā lài ‘he comes’, tā ‘he’ is the subject of lài ‘come’. Wǒ jiào tā ‘I call him’ and tā lài ‘he comes’ are both subject-predicate constructions. In wǒ jiào tā lài ‘I make him come over’, tā doubles as object of jiào ‘call’ and subject of lài ‘come’, hence the name jiānyǔ shì ‘doubling construction’. (Jiānghuà 4: 23)

The authors of the ‘Lectures on grammar’ were by no means the first ones to have noticed this syntactic phenomenon. Among earlier descriptions, Wáng Li’s (1955: 187ff.; 1984: 133ff.) insightful account of the 適繫式 dǐxì shì ‘successive nexus pattern’ was briefly mentioned in chapter 3 (p. 43). As regards the history of the Chinese terminology, it is noteworthy that Wáng (1955: 225 n. 43; 1984: 137 n. 2) traces his own use of the term 兼格 jiāngé ‘doubling case’ in describing pivot-like elements back to 劉復 Liú Fù (1891-1934). I have not been able to track down this reference in Liú’s work, but it is probably one of the earliest sources for the now very popular term jiānyǔ shì ‘pivotal construction’. A brief overview of Chinese terms is given by 張靜 Zhāng Jìng (1987: 522-527).

The English term PIVOTAL CONSTRUCTION was coined by Yuen Ren Chao, who formulated the following definition:

(7.2) • A pivotal construction consists of a succession of a verbal expression $V_1$, a nominal expression, and another verbal expression $V_2$, with the nominal expression serving at once as object of $V_1$ and subject of $V_2$ [...]. (1968: 124-125)
Chao’s terms *pivot construction* and (1968: 125) *pivot* are not only suggestive of a semantic double role. They also allude to the linear order of forms in which two verbal expressions are hinged on either side of a nominal expression. The latter implication is not shared by the term *jiānyǔ shī*.

3. The main difference between the definitions in (7.1) and (7.2) is that the authors of the ‘Lectures on grammar’ series seem to account for a subject preceding the first verb, i.e. *wǒ* ‘I’ in (7.1). A later installment, however, includes several examples without a subject as well as an explicit reference (Jiānghùa 10: 22) to the possibility that no subject precedes the first verb. Nexus in the absence of a formal subject was discussed in chapter 3 (p. 41).

The following sentence is one of Chao’s many examples of pivotal constructions:

(7.3)  
\[ \text{Wǒ yǒu péngyou bāng-máng.} \]
\[ \text{1 exist friend help} \]
\[ \text{‘I have friends to help.’} \]  
(1968: 729)

In terms of valences, the verb *yǒu* ‘exist’ can be described as having a ‘situation of existing’ valence and an ‘existing’ valence. The ‘situation of existing’ valence parallels the ‘situation of selling’ valence proposed for *mài* ‘sell’ in chapter 6 (p. 85). As will be recalled, this ‘situation of selling’ valence replaces provisional valences such as ‘selling’, ‘selling time’, ‘place of selling’ and ‘manner of selling’ which were established on the basis of examples (6.1)-(6.2) and (6.4)-(6.5). Similar examples may be applied to the description of *yǒu* ‘exist’: *Wǒ yǒu péngyou bāngmáng*. ‘I have friends to help.’; *Jīntiān yǒu péngyou bāngmáng*. ‘Today there are friends to help.’; *Hàiyǔ yǒu péngyou bāngmáng*. ‘In The Hague there are friends to help.’ and *Xīànrán yǒu péngyou bāngmáng*. ‘Obviously there are friends to help.’. The procedure proposed in chapter 6 will replace provisional valences such as ‘possessing’, ‘time of existence’, ‘place of existence’ and ‘manner of existing’ by one ‘situation of existing’ valence.

Also note that Mandarin *yǒu* ‘exist’ regularly corresponds both to ‘have’ and to ‘be there’ in English: *Wǒ yǒu péngyou bāngmáng*. ‘I have friends to help.’; *Yǒu péngyou bāngmáng*. ‘There are friends to help.’. The relevance of these two translations for the description is, at best, as an indication of the semantic range of Mandarin *yǒu* ‘exist’. The meaning of *yǒu* ‘exist’ is not in itself conducive to a distinction between ‘have’ and ‘be there’, and the difference is a matter of interpretation, not meaning. Of the two valences, neither is syntactically obligatory: *Yǒu péngyou*. ‘There are friends.’; *Wǒ yǒu*. ‘I have them.’; *Yǒu*. ‘There is.’.

The latter two sentences also illustrate that the ‘existing’ valence is semantically obligatory and, in the absence of a complement, convergent with ‘TT’
(cf. chapter 6, section 5). As far as I can establish, the ‘situation of existing’ valence of yǒu ‘exist’ is not semantically obligatory. For bāngmáng ‘help’, a monovalent description in terms of a ‘situation of helping’ valence will suffice for the present purpose. The possibility of an additional valence to be represented by máng remains. In that case, the verb under description would be bāng ‘help’, not bāngmáng ‘help’. The semantic description of the additional valence depends on the description to be given for máng, which may or may not be identified with the morpheme máng ‘busy’. The possibility of its being semantically composite seems to be supported by the formal separability of bāng and máng, e.g. in:

(7.4) Wǒ bāng tā de máng.
1 help 3 SUB (?busy)
‘I’ll help him.’

However, since the present treatment focuses on the ‘situation of helping’ valence, the status of máng will not be discussed further. When the need to distinguish between bāng and máng arises, the analysis of the ‘situation of helping’ valence presented below for bāngmáng ‘help’ can just as well be applied to bāng ‘help’.

Chao’s English translation in (7.3) “I have friends to help.” allows for at least two different readings: ‘I have friends who help,’ and ‘I have friends who I help.’. Both interpretations are likewise available for the Mandarin original, for which a number of additional readings can be found. For each of these readings, the representation of valences and the coreference of complements can be specified. The table in (7.5) below lists eight readings with English translations. The coreference of two meanings within one reading is indicated with a superscript “a” . When a meaning appears twice in the same line, it is marked with a superscript “A” . Note that the meaning of English conjunctions such as and, if, and when are very often a matter of interpretation in the corresponding Mandarin expressions. A reading such as (e), translated as ‘When I have friends, they help’ might just as well be rendered in English as ‘I have friends and they will help’. The information in the columns to the left of the translations makes it possible to avoid notations such as ‘[When] I have friend[s, they] help’.

According to the definitions in (7.1) and (7.2), only reading (h) is a pivotal construction. In terms of valences, this means that the ‘existing’ valence of yǒu is represented by the same complement pèngyou ‘friend’ which represents the ‘situation of helping’ valence of bāngmáng ‘help’. If the variety of other possibilities adduced in (7.5) at first appears somewhat far-fetched, it may be recalled that there are no linguistic standards to distinguish between implausible and plausible referents. Hence an inventory of appropriate referents must not impose a priori restrictions. At the same time, such a semantic inventory is a necessary prerequisite for a syntactic analysis. I will return to these methodological points in section 4.
Eight readings of in (7.3) Wǒ yǒu péngyou bāngmáng.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yǒu</th>
<th>bāngmáng</th>
<th>translation of one interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'situation of existing'</td>
<td>'situation of helping'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| (a) | ø | '1.SG' | 'friend' | 'Me, I'm around, and friends will help.' |
| (b) | '1.SG' | aǐ 'friend' | 'If I have them, friends will help.' |
| (c) | '1.SG' | 'IT' | 'friend' | 'When I have it, friends will help.' |
| (d) | aǐ '1.SG' | 'friend' | ø | 'If I have friends, I will help.' |
| (e) | '1.SG' | aǐ 'friend' | ø | 'When I have friends, they help.' |
| (f) | '1.SG' | 'friend' | ø | 'If I have friends, he will help.' |
| (g) | '1.SG' | nexus formed by 'friend' and 'help' | Aǐ 'friend' | 'I have friends helping.' |
| (h) | '1.SG' | Aǐ 'friend' | Aǐ 'friend' | 'I have friends who help.' |

4. One of the main concerns in descriptions of the pivotal construction has been to distinguish this pattern from other instances of verbs appearing in series. It is revealing that the opening line of the section on pivotal constructions in the 'Lectures on grammar' notes that "sentences with a pivotal construction are formally very similar to sentences with a subject-predicate construction serving as object" (Jiānghuá 10: 21). In this section and the next, I will discuss several analyses by linguists writing about the same or very similar sentences. Apart from the so-called 主賓 zhǔ wèi bīn or 'subject-predicate type object' pattern, there is another pattern from which pivotal sentences are regularly distinguished, the so-called 双賓語 shuāng bīn yǔ 'paired objects' construction formed by a sequence of one verb and two objects.20 Consider the following example:

(7.6) 我 叫 他 辦 這 事
wǒ jiào tā bàn zhè jiàn shì
1.SG call 3 manage this item affair
'I asked him to take care of this matter'

(Jiānghù 10: 21; with modifications in Dīng 1979: 118; my transcription, glosses and translation)

Among writers who recognize a pivotal construction of one kind or another, causative sentences generally form the centerpiece of the description. Causative sentences are formed with verbs such as ràng 'allow', cuī 'urge', pài 'send' and jiào 'call', which, in a pivotal analysis, precede the pivot. However, the treatment of other uses of the

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20. The term shuāng-bīn-yǔ, literally 'pair-object-expression', can be understood in two ways: (a) 'paired objects'; (b) 'paired object pattern'. The difference depends on the degree of abbreviation assumed in the term: either bīn yǔ or just bīn may correlate with the meaning 'object'.
same verbs tends to vary greatly. Compare (7.6) with another way of using the verb jiào ‘call’:

(7.7) 叫 他 環 隊 長
jiào tā Xiāo duì zhǎng
‘call him Team Leader Xiāo’

( Jiānghuà 10: 22; similarly in Dīng 1979: 124; my transcription, glosses and translation)

Both the ‘Lectures on grammar’ and its sequel (Dīng 1979) treat this sentence as a case of ‘paired objects’, ranking it with constructions such as

(7.8) 送 我 一 本 書
sòng wǒ yī běn shū
‘present me with a book’

( Jiānghuà 10: 22; omitted in Dīng 1979; my transcription, glosses and translation)

This classification takes care of a superficial similarity between the sentences (7.7) and (7.8), viz. that in each instance, two complements (tā ‘he’, Xiāo duì zhǎng ‘Team Leader Xiāo’; wǒ ‘I’, yī běn shū ‘a book’) follow the verb (jiào ‘call’; sòng ‘deliver, give as a present’). However, the referential arrangement in the two examples is different. In (7.7), tā ‘he’ and Xiāo duì zhǎng ‘Team Leader Xiāo’ share the same referent, viz. the person called Team Leader Xiāo. In other words, if the analysis of jiào ‘call’ leads to the establishment of the valences ‘being given a name’ and ‘being given as a name’, these two valences are convergent. In contrast, wǒ ‘I’ and yī běn shū ‘a book’ in (7.8) do not, or do not necessarily, share referents. In an analysis of sòng ‘deliver’ in terms of two valences ‘being presented to’ and ‘being transported’, these valences will not be convergent. Hence I cannot agree with Zhāng Jīng’s judgment on these two examples:

(7.9) whether in terms of grammatical meaning or in terms of grammatical form, this type of structure [in (7.7)] is identical to the paired object construction [of (7.8)].

(Zhāng 1987: 530)

Zhāng quotes the two examples as 叫他肖 [sic] 政委 jiào tā Xiāo zhèngwèi ‘call him Political Commissar Xiāo’ and 送你一本书 sòng nǐ yī běn shū ‘present you with a book’. The modifications in the first sentence seem to originate from Chén Jiànmíng’s (1960: 102) quotation from the ‘Lectures on grammar’ (see below); none of the adjustments affect Zhāng’s arguments.21

21. I transcribe Zhāng’s and Chén’s “肖”, which does not seem to be in official use as a surname, as Xiāo. Its regular reading is xiào ‘resemble’, but it has an obscure reading xiāo ‘feeble’. The character appears to be in handwritten use as an abbreviation of the complex surname character 肖 Xiāo, now
The claim of semantic identity in spite of a different referential arrangement appears to be a conscious methodological preference:

(7.10) In our view, even though structural analysis and semantic analysis are intimately connected, they are after all not one and the same thing. Semantics deals with the complete meaning of a structure, while structural analysis has its levels and steps. It would be unrealistic to go for the semantic whole while in the process of analysis, instead of waiting until the analysis has been achieved. (Zhāng 1987: 532)

Here, as elsewhere, Zhāng takes great care to explain his judgments step by step. While his discussion of the pivotal construction raises many important issues, his position is the exact opposite of the approach taken in this study. In my view, if semantics “deals with the complete meaning of a structure”, it can only do so by establishing the relationship between this complete meaning and the meaningful units correlating with the formal constituents of that structure. I take it that Zhāng’s term 结构 jiégòu ‘structure, structural’ in (7.9) and (7.10) is used in the common generative sense of ‘pertaining to the relationship between linguistic forms’. In my view, given a string of forms, a syntactic structure cannot be established without invoking meaning. Rather than “waiting until the analysis has been achieved”, semantic groundwork precedes the syntactic inquiry by exploring the meanings of individual forms in a string. On the basis of these forms and their meanings, syntax explores the meaning of the string. A syntactic structure defines “the semantic whole”, i.e. the meaning of the string of forms, by establishing the relationships between the meanings of these forms.

In Chén Jiānmíng’s review of (7.7) jiào tā Xiāo duì zhāng ‘call him Team Leader Xiāo’ the ‘paired objects’ analysis is rejected in favor of the pivotal construction (1960: 102, with zhèngwěi ‘Political Commissar’ for duì zhāng ‘Team Leader’ as explained). This is because in his view, tā Xiāo duìzhāng ‘he’s Team Leader Xiāo’ here serves as a subject-predicate construction. Chén also points out that the identification of a subject-predicate construction following a verb does not by itself lead to a pivotal analysis. He adduces the following counter-example:

(7.11) wǒmen gāo hū Máo zhǔxí wàn suì
1.PL high exhale 1PNMáo chairman 10,000 year
‘we loudly cry out “long live Chairman Máo”’

(Chén 1960: 102)

Here, Chén claims, we are dealing with a subject-predicate construction, Máo zhǔxí wàn suì ‘long live Chairman Máo’, serving as an object of the verb gāo hū ‘cry out’. The question, once again, is how to distinguish between two construction types. In
the absence of semantic arguments, Chén (1960: 102) adduces the following formal consideration:22

(7.12) The dividing line between the two sentence types can be drawn quite clearly on the basis of a difference in phonetic shape. When speaking in a normal tone, the position in which a pivotal sentence allows pausing or dragging must follow the "V-N" sequence: it cannot come after "V". It is possible to say nǐ qǐng wǒ | chī fàn 'you invite me to a meal', but nǐ qǐng | wǒ chī fàn is impossible. But in a sentence with a subject-predicate sequence serving as object, the position in which pausing or dragging is allowed must follow "V", and cannot come after "V-N". We can only say wǒmen gāo hù | Máo zhǔ xī wàn suì 'we loudly cry out "long live Chairman Máo" ', but not wǒmen gāo hù Máo zhǔ xī | wàn suì.

* The possibility of saying nǐ qǐng, (the comma may be replaced by a semicolon or a full stop) wǒ chī fàn 'if it’s on you, I’ll eat’ falls outside the scope of discussion for the issue at hand.

(Chén 1960: 103)

In treatments of the pivotal construction, the argument of a fixed position for optional pauses is usually combined with the notion that additional expressions can be inserted in that same position. Chén's arguments are no exception, as his insertion rules parallel those for optional pauses. In his view (1960: 103), the position following the first verb determines the distinction between a pivotal construction, which allows no pauses or insertions there, and a subject-predicate type object which does allow pauses and insertions in that position. Chén's claim matches the conclusion in the 'Lectures on grammar' that the pivot and the verb preceding it are closely bound together (Jiānghùà 10: 21).

I will have little to say here about pauses and inserted expressions. This is not because I deny the relevance of these criteria as diagnostic tools for a speaker's intuition. Indeed, as 胡明揚 Hú Míngyáng (1957: 18) judiciously remarks with regard to pauses defining pivotal constructions in the 通園 Tongyuán dialect, "these pauses in the sounds of speech are not easily detected auditorily, but the speaker himself will sense these pauses". Still, these criteria seem to me to have generally received too much weight. For a remarkable example, I refer to 吳仁甫 Wú Rénfū's (1988: 181) implementation of the pause criterion to define pivotal constructions in Classical Chinese, a written medium par excellence. In my view, the descriptive problem which lies at the heart of the pivotal construction occurs most characteristically in the absence of pauses and insertions.

22. In section 6 (p. 98), I will account for the transcription nǐ qǐng preceding a pause.
5. Generally speaking, when a linguistic analysis explains a phenomenon while excluding formally or semantically very similar phenomena, that explanation creates a new problem. In connection with causative verbs, it has already been briefly mentioned that other uses of these verbs tend to receive very different treatments. It was shown that the ‘Lectures on grammar’ propose different analyses for (7.6) วó จิ้ะ ตํา บัน ชี จิ่น ชิ่ ‘I ask him to take care of this matter’ and (7.7) จิ้ะ ตํา ชิ่า ดํา จิ่ง ‘call him Team Leader Xiăo’, namely as a pivotal construction and as ‘paired objects’ respectively. For (7.7), I have argued that ตํา ‘he’ and ชิ่า ดํา จิ่ง ‘Team Leader Xiăo’ are convergent. A similar referential arrangement applies to example (7.6), even though the convergent valences of จิ้ะ ‘call’ need to be given different descriptions from those in (7.7). In วó จิ้ะ ตํา บัน ชี จิ่น ชิ่ ‘I asked him to take care of this matter’, จิ้ะ ‘call’ can be defined in terms of a valence ‘being summoned’, represented by the complement ตํา ‘he’, and a valence ‘being required’ represented by บัน ชี จิ่น ชิ่ ‘take care of this matter’. The convergence of the two valences can be demonstrated by the fact that the person referred to by ตํา ‘he’ must also be the referent of บัน ชี จิ่น ชิ่ ‘take care of this matter’. In addition, the valence represented by บัน ชี จิ่น ชิ่ ‘take care of this matter’ in (7.6) and the valence represented by ชิ่า ดํา จิ่ง ‘Team Leader Xiăo’ in (7.7) share the sense of being effectuated as a result of the calling event.

Summarizing, we have
(a) the appearance of the same form จิ้ะ in both (7.6) and (7.7);
(b) even at first glance, a semantic resemblance between these occurrences of จิ้ะ.
It can hardly be coincidental that in a genetically unrelated language such as English, call may be used to translate both จิ้ะ ‘call someone by name’ in (7.6) and จิ้ะ ‘call upon someone to do something’ in (7.7);
(c) an identical referential arrangement of provisional valences for จิ้ะ ‘call by name’ and จิ้ะ ‘call to do’;
(d) the shared presence of a valence which constitutes a result.

I conclude that the resemblance noted in (b) may be accounted for by defining the meaning of both instances of จิ้ะ as ‘addressing entity’, with a view of identifying it with a newly established entity2, where entity2 can be either a name or the performer of an action.

In so doing, I do not exclude the possibility that the same form with the same meaning may occur in radically different syntactic constructions. Rather, it is to make sure that such a syntactic difference is accounted for on a firm semantic basis. In the case of จิ้ะ ‘call by name; call to do’, this basis seems to be absent.

Wáng Li is among the few linguists who have pointed out interesting semantic similarities between different uses of จิ้ะ ‘call’. His comparison provides a diachronic parallel to the synchronic behavior of จิ้ะ ‘call’. Wáng’s two examples are as follows:
The second example appears in a conversation about the choice of appropriate pen names for the members of a newly established Poetry Club. Wáng Li’s arguments are as follows:

In a sentence such as [7.14], zuò... is easily misunderstood to be a kind of complement. In fact, this construction hardly differs from that in example A [illustrating a causative use of ming ‘order to’]. Wōmen jiào tā zuò yi zhāng zhūōzi ‘we had him make a table’ and wōmen jiào tā zuò Xiāoxiāng fēizi ‘we call her the Xiāoxiāng Concubine’ are formally the same. The only difference is that zuò ‘do’ in the former instance denotes a concrete action, while zuò in the latter instance denotes an imaginary action. In this kind of distinction, only the two extremes are far apart, but in between, there is no clear-cut dividing line.

Mandarin zuò not only means ‘do’ and ‘make’, but also ‘be in the sense of ‘act as; serve as’. A modern Peking Mandarin equivalent of example (7.14) would omit zuò ‘do’: Yínhòu dōu jiào tā Xiāoxiāng fēizi jiù wán le. ‘From now on we’ll all call her the Xiāoxiāng Concubine and that’s that.’. While it is possible to preserve the collocation of jiào ‘call’ with zuò ‘do’ in current Pekinese usage, this would normally require the addition of the object marker guān: Yínhòu dōu guān tā jiào zuò Xiāoxiāng fēizi jiù wán le. ‘From now on we’ll all call her the Xiāoxiāng Concubine and that’s that.’. This use of guān, literally ‘control, be in charge’, resembles that of the general preverbal object marker bā, but it appears to be restricted to collocations with the verb jiào ‘call’.

Wáng’s statement may be contrasted with the following account by Zhāng Jīng, who also compares two uses of the verb jiào ‘call’:

In structures such as jiào tā Xiāo zhēngwěi ‘call him Commissar Xiāo’, omitting tā ‘he’ yields jiào Xiāo zhēngwěi ‘called Commissar Xiāo’ of which the meaning is not only complete, but also basically identical to the original meaning. But omitting Xiāo zhēngwěi ‘Commissar Xiāo’ yields jiào tā ‘call him’, of which the meaning is no
longer complete. Although the meaning is complete under different circumstances, it will then greatly differ from the original meaning (jiào in that case meaning 'shout' or 'hail', which is different from the original 'address'). (Zhāng 1987: 530-531)

My translation 'called Commissar Xiāo' for jiào Xiāo zhèngwéi deliberately leaves the choice between 'hailed Commissar Xiāo' and 'known by the name of Commissar Xiāo' as both options apply to the Mandarin expression. For Zhāng, only the latter reading is relevant here. Significantly, Zhāng strictly separates two meanings of jiào ('address' vs. 'shout, hail') which are a great deal closer than the two meanings of jiào ('address' and 'bid') which Wáng seeks to bring together. At least, both of the meanings discussed by Zhāng include the notion of vocal activity directed towards an entity, viz. entity₂ in the semantic description of jiào given above (p. 93). This notion is not necessarily represented in Wáng's meaning 'bid'. In my view, Zhāng Jing's "greatly different" case of jiào tā 'call him' merely suggests that the second valence mentioned in (d) is semantically optional: jiào tā means neither 'call him the name most likely to have been intended' nor 'call him to perform the action most likely to have been intended'. In other words, without the complement Xiāo zhèngwéi 'Commissar Xiāo', the expression jiào tā does not refer to entity₂ of the definition proposed on p. 93. This leaves the meaning 'addressing entity₁' for jiào, i.e. precisely the meaning which Zhāng proposes to exclude.

The above discussion suggests an alternative way of describing the pivotal construction. To recapitulate: First, let me recapitulate the relevant issues:

(a) Wáng's perception of the formal and semantic similarities between (7.13) Wǒmen jiào tā zuò yì zhāng zhūōzi 'we had him make a table' and (7.14) Yīhòu dōu jiào tā zuò Xiǎoxiāng fēizi jiù wán le 'From now on we'll all call her the Xiǎoxiāng Concubine and that's that.';
(b) the modern Peking Mandarin translation of (7.14) which lacks zuò 'do': Yīhòu dōu jiào tā Xiǎoxiāng fēizi jiù wán le. 'From now on we'll all call her the Xiǎoxiāng Concubine and that's that.'; and
(c) the controversy over the status of sentences such as (7.7) jiào tā Xiāo zhèng wéi 'call him Team Leader Xiāo' as either a pivotal construction or an instance of 'paired objects'.

6. Most analyses start from the assumption that strict dividing lines should be drawn between pivotal constructions, double objects, and subject-predicate type objects. In my view, the real problem is in the attempt to deal with these and other construction types as mutually exclusive constructions. Zhāng Jing's statement about jiào tā Xiāo zhèng wéi 'call him Commissar Xiāo' is representative of this approach:

(7.17) Starting from the feature of Chinese that nouns cannot directly serve as predicates, tā 'he' and Xiāo zhèngwéi 'Commissar Xiāo' can by no means enter into a subject-
Nominal predicates regularly appear in spoken Mandarin, as illustrated with the example *Wǒ Běijīng rēn* ‘I’m from Peking’ on p. 65. Zhāng’s insistence on mutually exclusive patterns has two unsatisfactory effects:

(a) It may lead to an artificial separation of formally and semantically very similar data. This was shown above in Zhāng Jing’s (7.16) proposal for distinct treatments of *jiào* ‘address’ and *jiào* ‘shout, hail’. Similarly, Zhāng argues for *ràng* ‘allow’ in the passive use of

(7.18) 碗 让 他 打 破 了
    wān ràng tā dǎ pò le
    bowl allow 3 hit broken PF
    ‘the bowl was hit to pieces by him’

(1987: 533)

that ‘*this ràng is a different word from the ràng which expresses the meaning ‘consent’, and should be treated separately’’ (1987: 533).

(b) It may also lead to the conclusion that a number of sentences cannot be assigned to any of the proposed patterns because they must be simultaneously assigned to more than one. Thus Chén Jiānmíng, in his comparison between pivotal sentences and subject-predicate type objects, examines ‘over 1,000 example sentences containing verb-noun-predicate sequences’ (1960: 104) and assigns them to three categories: (i) examples which are definitely pivotal; (ii) examples definitely containing a subject-predicate type object; and (iii) examples ‘doubling as ‘subject-predicate type object’ and pivotal construction’ (*ibid*). Chén’s examples are culled from written sources, and he suggests that some of the examples may be read differently depending on the way pauses are inserted. Somewhat ominously, he notes that ‘this [possibility of variation] is a very common phenomenon’, and that ‘the great majority of verbs allow for both possibilities’ (*ibid*). Since the pauses concerned are only potentially realized, this leaves a substantial number of instances unaccounted for. In a similar vein, Dīng (1979: 121) inserts an interesting addendum to the original ‘Lectures on grammar’ stating that ‘For a number of sentence structures, it is not so easy to distinguish the joined verbs construction [defining subordinative relations between two verbs] from the pivotal construction’.

In my view, the categories suggested by the various construction types should have a purely diagnostic function. Given an individual sentence with more than one verbal expression, it is not necessary to argue for an exclusive analysis in terms of a single construction type, whether pivotal construction, double objects, a subject-predicate type object or joined verbs. My main objection to the treatment of these constructions as mutually exclusive is that there seems to be no psychological basis
for doing so. On the contrary, the way in which a hearer processes the speech chain suggests a very different description. This point leads back to the very nature of linguistic syntax.

When an utterance is received by the ear, a hearer who shares the language of the speaker is presented with a string of meaningful forms. Similarly and simultaneously, prosodic details are received by the ear and processed in time. Both of these channels of formal input can be visualized as single dimensions. Given the presence of meaningful formal elements in a single dimension, positional order (Greek σύνταξις syntaxis) is the only meaningful relationship between these formal elements. Linguistic syntax goes beyond these positional possibilities by establishing relationships between meanings. The meanings entering into syntactic relationships correlate with individual formal units, or with linear or prosodic arrangements of these formal units, as such arrangements also constitute linguistic forms in themselves.

For an utterance like (7.3) Wǒ yǒu pénghou bāngmáng, an inventory of syntactic possibilities such as the one suggested by the translations in (7.5) is a necessary analytic step. In a subsequent step, the description must take into account the hearer's confrontation with these options. In aural comprehension, processing the speech chain is initiated as soon as the chain gets under way, and the hearer constantly allows for more to come. If the speaker were to stop after wǒ yǒu, the hearer would choose between such meanings as 'Me, I'm around.' and 'I have them.' An additional ...pénghou offers possibilities such as 'I have friends.' and 'I have them, friend.' When ...bāngmáng is added to the chain, possibilities such as those listed in (7.5) result. In Mandarin complements, the typical lack of formal means to distinguish between different functions ensures a vast number of possibilities. Further clues from the linguistic and non-linguistic context will help the hearer decide from among these options.

Still, while several options are available to the hearer in the process of comprehension, selecting a contextually optimal variant will not prevent the simultaneous availability of semantically close alternatives. In this respect, descriptions of the pivotal construction such as the ones given in (7.1) and (7.2) are psychologically exact. Syntactic polysemy can be conceived of as the degree to which the alternatives are admitted by the hearer. In the case of (7.3) Wǒ yǒu pénghou bāngmáng and the options in (7.5), my analysis allows for an affinity between (e) 'When I have friends, they help' and (g) 'I have friends helping'. This affinity cannot be accounted for in an analysis which imposes a priori distinctions, especially if such distinctions are treated as mutually exclusive options.

The proposed analysis also suggests an explanation for a phenomenon which was noted in chapter 6 (p. 84). In Mandarin, English and Pecok, when semantically obligatory valences are represented by complements, these complements normally
follow the verb:  

Wǒ zhidao. ‘I know.’ – Wǒ zhidao tā. ‘I know him.’; I know. – I know him.; Ik weet. ‘I know.’ – Ik weet ’t. ‘I know it.’. I believe the existence of a semantically obligatory valence in such cases derives from the hearer’s anticipation that the following element may be a complement representing that valence. This valence remains psychologically active and linguistically functional even when no such complement follows.

Consider once again the quotation in (7.12). The note in the original text provides one more instance where meanings relevant to the pivotal discussion are strictly separated from very similar meanings. Rather than falling “outside the scope of discussion for the issue at hand”, the case of nǐ qìng, wǒ chī fàn ‘if it’s on you, I’ll eat’ is indeed relevant because it presents new questions, e.g. whether the meaning of qìng ‘invite’ has a semantically obligatory ‘being invited’ valence, or whether it has a semantically obligatory ‘being suggested’ valence. In the first of these two options, nǐ qìng means ‘you invite the entity most likely to have been intended’. A subsequent ...wǒ ‘I’ may represent this valence as a complement: nǐ qìng wǒ ‘you invite me’. Whether this happens depends partly on the elements which in turn follow wǒ ‘I’. In the second option, nǐ qìng means ‘you solicit the performance of the action most likely to have been intended’. This valence may in turn be represented by a subsequent ...wǒ chī fàn ‘I eat’.

In this connection, I should also mention that (for once) I disagree with Chao’s statement that “[i]n: Wǒ qìng nǐ jiù zǒu. ‘I ask you to go right away.’, it is obviously not Wǒ qìng nǐ. ‘I invite you.’” (1968: 125). I would argue instead that both sentences have the same ‘being suggested’ valence, which is dealt with differently in each case. Depending on further inquiries, the second example may show this valence to be either absent (i.e. semantically optional) or convergent with ‘I’. In Chao’s first example, it is represented by the complement jiù zǒu ‘go right away’. In my analysis, I am indeed inviting you when I say Wǒ qìng nǐ jiù zǒu. ‘I ask you to go right away.’.

Note, incidentally, that I have tentatively transcribed nǐ qìng in (7.12) with a yāngqìng tone for qìng ‘invite’ even where it precedes a pause. The position before a pause would normally require the realization of the canonical shǎng tone for qìng ‘invite’. In everyday conversations, however, it has often struck me that before a pause, or sentence finally, this expression is realized with a yāng-qìng tone instead: Nǐ qìng! ‘Please go ahead!’. I am not sure whether this phenomenon should be described in terms of an intonational pattern imposed on the shǎng tone, or alternatively as a reflex of an original complement in the shǎng tone.

The case of qìng is also interesting in that for this example, Nǐ qìng! ‘you go ahead!’, nǐ ‘you’ precedes qìng ‘invite’ but refers to the person invited. The complement of the ‘being invited’ valence usually follows qìng ‘invite’ rather than preceding it.
7. THE PIVOTAL CONSTRUCTION

In short, qīng ‘invite’ offers formal and semantic peculiarities not shared by other verbs. One reason for this may be Professor Ch.N. Li’s suggestion (p.c. 24 June 1993) that the causative use of qīng ‘invite’ is a recent innovation mainly restricted to urban areas. He reports that the countryside Mandarin equivalent of Pekinese Qīng nǐ chī! ‘Please eat!’ is Chī, chī, chī!, literally ‘Eat, eat, eat!’. Once again, this implies that the case of qīng ‘invite’ deserves a more detailed inquiry.

All of the aspects mentioned above contribute to the description of qīng ‘invite’ and its syntactic behavior. Excluding any of these aspects may prevent an adequate description of the other aspects.

7. In conclusion, a strict classification of verbal concatenation types is not substantiated by formal and semantic details of Mandarin data. This does not render such a classification unserviceable. On the contrary, only a thorough inventory of meanings, combined with a full review of the syntactic possibilities, will expose the semantic potential offered to the listener. The selection of one interpretation by the listener does not preclude the psychological availability of other readings.
POSTSCRIPT

Looking back on this study, many questions remain. Problematic aspects of some analyses have been pointed out in the text and several suggestions for further research can be made.

The main purpose of the exposé has been to demonstrate the viability of a data-oriented approach to syntax and semantics. In this approach, what people talk about is relevant for the description of the way they talk about it. In other words, if "language is in its analyzed form a symbolic system of reference" (Sapir 1985: 12), then an analysis of the symbols cannot disregard the referents.

The linguistic approach taken here is just one among many possible approaches that assign an important role to aspects of communication. Several distinguished traditions of data-oriented semantics have been established. Here, I will mention just two. Firstly, the "semantic metalanguage" developed in Anna Wierzbicka's stimulating oeuvre (e.g. 1988, 1992) would seem to constitute a natural ally to the system of semantic transcription developed by Ebeling (1978). Wierzbicka's metalanguage aims at the presentation of (predominantly) lexical items in terms of maximally simple semantic primitives. Ebeling's notations represent the ways in which such lexical meanings and other semantic units combine to form larger semantic wholes. Secondly, the semantics of spoken communication can be approached from the perspective of information processing over longer stretches of discourse. A short introduction to this line of attack is given by Wallace Chafe (1987).

On the formal side, many aspects of the presentation of the data have been passed over in silence. In the interest of accessibility, I have generally preferred the limitations of the Hanyu Pinyin system to the advantages of a narrower transcription. Similarly, the introduction of commas, periods and other punctuation marks in the example sentences has largely been a matter of ad hoc interpretation. As noted in chapter 3, the prosodic aspects of the material have largely been ignored. For a methodical approach to the representation of natural conversation, I refer to the system of transcription developed by John Du Bois and applied to Mandarin data by Hongyin Tao (1993).

One of the most intriguing formal aspects left to be accounted for in the spoken material collected so far is the question of tonal behavior. Traditionally, Mandarin tones are described as being anchored in the syllable. The tone sandhi patterns
recorded in the corpus suggest that a larger tone-bearing unit for the traditionally recognized tones may be more appropriate for the description of connected speech. Another formal question only briefly raised is the phonological status of the neutral tone. Even though the existence of minimal pairs such as yào mā 'we want mother', yào mā ‘what do you want?’, yào mā ‘I want a horse’, yào mā ‘he’s going to scold’ and yào ma ‘do you want it?’ would seem to be clear enough evidence, the phonemic status of the neutral tone is not generally accepted. An inquiry into this matter could start by investigating how marginal this phenomenon is. The analysis would have to deal with problems of vowel neutralization such as those touched upon in chapter 4.

Progress in the study of linguistic form, meaning and syntax depends on the readiness of researchers to record and account for the ways in which the world is shaped in language. The willingness and ability of ordinary speakers to talk about these matters renders the linguist’s task enjoyable.
APPENDIX

ORIGINAL TEXTS OF TRANSLATED QUOTATIONS

Chapter 2: Junction with de
p. 26 – Fan (1982: 501)

“聪明人”通常不带“的”字，“勇敢的人”却非带“的”字不可，
这种现象除了用“熟语”和“非熟语”来说明以外，很难找到别的解
释。

Chapter 3: Nexus with de
p. 41 – Wáng (1955: 66)

[...] 主语虽可不用，而句子并不因此失了連繫的性質。在一切不用主
语的句子裏，咱們都可說主語是潛在的(virtual)。「下雨」的「下」，
和「雞下蛋」的「下」，其性質完全相同。不過，在「下雨」這一個
句子裏，咱們沒有用主語的必要，就不用罷了。像「天下雨」一類
的說法，並不是絕對不通的。由此類推，當「有」字没有主語時，可
以解釋作「天下有」或「世上有」；當「是」字没有主語時，可以解
釋作「這是」或「那是」；當真理句没有主語時，可以認「人」為潛
在的主語。動詞既是表示動作的，即使在句子裏沒有把主事者說出，
在說話人的心理裏，總覺得默默中有個動作的主持者。繫飾既是連繫
主語和謂語兩項的，即使「是」字的主語缺去，在說話人的心理裏，
總覺得「是」字是有所繫的。總之，在中國語裏，凡主語可以隱去的
時候，就讓他隱去；但是句子仍可以說是由現實的連繫(actual nexus)
或潜在的連繫(virtual nexus)構成的。

p. 41 – Wáng (1955: 64)

無主句

p. 41 – (ibid.)

在無主句裏，主語非但不是顯然可知的，而且恰恰相反，它是不可知
的。

p. 42 – (ibid.)

主語隱去的句子
Wáng (1955: 63)

[...] 主語並非中國語法所需求，故凡主語顯然可知的時候，以不用為常。所謂顯然可知，大約有三種情形：（一）此句的主語和上句的主語相同，不必重說；（二）主語是「我」或「你」，在語言環境最能暗示的時候，不必說出（古人書札中，此種情形最多）；（三）主語是一件事，而這事是說話人及對話人雙方所能意會者，不必說出（如「不要緊」。）

Chén 1960: (101-102)

无所谓第一次連系，也无所谓递系了

Zhū (1985: 68)


Zhū (1985: 103)

它的语法意义随环境而异：放在 E 之后，是副词性语法单位的后附成分，放在 R 之后，是形容词性单位 [sic] 的后附成分，放在 A、D、M 之后，是名词性语法单位的后附成分。

Zhū (1985: 32-33)

[...] 二者的意义完全不同。[...] 这两类格式界限分明，不容混淆。

Zhū (1985: 32)

从意念上说，“写得 (的) 好”里的“写得 (的) ”固然可以解释为“写的东西”或“写的样子”，但是“这个字的样子写得 (的) 好”里头的“写得 (的) ”就很难说它指的是什么。

Chapter 4: Aspect with de

Cǐ hǎi (p. 110)

【修辞学】[...] 在欧洲中世纪教育课程中占重要位置。我国高中以上之国语科及英語科，亦有修辞学课，惟往往限於作文中字句修飾之技术。
APPENDIX: ORIGINAL TEXT OF TRANSLATED QUOTATIONS

p. 56 – Van Driem (1993: 485)
Die imperfectivische Darstellung einer Situation an sich hängt damit zusammen, daß im Limbu die Imperfektivwendung nicht nur gleich lautet wie das Nominalisierungszeichen -pa, sondern auch derselben Wurzel entspringt.

p. 56 – Van Driem (1993: 489 n. 3)
Da im Nichtpräteritum der Imperfektiv des Limbu progressive Bedeutung hat, erinnert die Verwandtschaft von Imperfektivbedeutung und Nominalisierung auch an die englische Endung -ing.

主 + 是 + 动 + 的 + 宾。肯定某种已实现的情况。

p. 58 – Mullie (1930-1933: II, 11)
Het verleden deelwoord kan soms gebruikt worden om den verleden tijd uit te drukken:
我來的是為你 wo lâi-di cheu wei ni (wo -le-di sê wei ni): ik kwam voor u.

Chapter 6: Verbal valences
p. 76 – Honselaar (1980: 10-11)
1. bepaal intuitief – op grond van een zo groot mogelijk aantal zinnen waarin vormen van het woord voorkomen – wat de discrete betekenisaspecten zijn die noodzakelijk lijken voor het adequaat omschrijven van de verzameling passende referenten;
2. stel vast of, en zo ja, in welke zinsdelen, deze aspecten worden gemanifesteerd;
3. bepaal van de onder 2 geselecteerde zinsdelen of zij verplicht voorkomen;
4. bepaal van de overige onder 2 geselecteerde zinsdelen of hun betekenis niet beschreven kan worden op grond van hun eigen vorm;
5. benoem verplicht voorkomende zinsdelen en zinsdelen waarvan de betekenis niet op grond van hun eigen vorm kan worden beschreven als REPRESENTANTEN van valenties;
6. bepaal het valentiebestand van het woord door alleen die betekenisaspecten als VALENTIES te beschouwen die representanten kennen;
7. beschrijf de omstandigheden waaronder zinsdelen, welke op grond van criterium 1 niet als representanten van valenties zijn te beschouwen, noodzakelijk voorkomen.

p. 77 – Honselaar (1980: 22)
In de voorstelling duurt drie uur is drie uur niet weg te laten en daarmee beschouw ik het als een representant van een valentie van DUREN, te weten 'de lengte van het duren' (de andere valentie is 'wat duurt'). Nu komt drie uur als zinsdeel ook buiten de context van duurt voor, waarbij het, net als binnen de context van duurt, een tijdsduur aanduidt: hij sliep drie uur. Echter, drie uur kan ook een tijdsstip aanduiden: hij is drie uur vertrokken. Vergelijk ook dat duurt een zondag en hij is een zondag gevallen.
In de voorstelling duurt drie uur kan drie uur niets anders dan een tijdsduur aanduiden. Deze specifieke betekenis ontleent het aan het feit dat het de valentie 'de lengte van het duren' van DUREN representeert.
NB. het feit dat er niet veel representanten bij DUREN zijn die zich net als drie uur en een zondag gedragen doet aan de argumentatie niets af.

Een extra argument is dat een zin als dat duurt een sigaret niet anders opgevat kan worden dan als 'dat duurt zo lang als een sigaret duurt' (d.w.z. ter lengte van het roken van een sigaret).


De aangeduide hazen zijn hier bedoeld als de jachthuis. De zin betekent: 'hij schoot op hazen om deze als buit te verwerven'.

In *hij schoot* is niet impliciet gegeven dat er sprake is van een beoogde buit. Anderzijds is het zinsdeel *hazen* niet in een normale betekenis van een prepositieeloo zinsdeel gebruikt, het krijgt de betekenis 'buit' alleen in de context van SCHIETEN. Een oplossing is om *hazen* als representant van een semantisch facultatieve valentie op te vatten; als de valentie niet geregpresenteerd wordt, zoals in *hij schoot*, dan is zij ook niet meebegrenzen.

De valentie 'wat geschoten wordt', zoals geregpresenteerd door *een zware kogel in hij schoot een zware kogel in de richting van de stad, is semantisch verplicht, maar syntactisch facultatief; zij is meebegrenzen in: *hij schoot en hij schoot hazen*. Indien de facultatieve valentie 'buit van het schieten' wordt geregpresenteerd, dan is de valentie 'wat geschoten wordt' niet meer te representeren:

*hij schoot een zware kogel

* hij schoot een zware kogel hazen

Chapter 7: The pivotal construction

p. 86 - Jiānghuà 4 (p. 23)

兼語式是兩個主謂結構套在一起，如“我叫他來”。“我叫他”。“他”是“叫”的賓語。“他來”，“他”是“來”的主語。“我叫他”。“他來”都是主謂結構。“我叫他來”，“他”是“叫”的賓語兼“來”的主語，所以叫做兼語。

p. 89 – Jiānghuà 10 (p. 21)

兼語式的句子和主謂結構做賓語的句子形式上很相像。

p. 90 – Zhāng (1987: 530)

[...]这种结构无论是语法意义还是语法形式都跟双宾语结构相同。
APPENDIX: ORIGINAL TEXT OF TRANSLATED QUOTATIONS

p. 91 – Zhāng (1987: 532)

我们认为结构分析和语义分析虽然有密切联系，但毕竟不是一回事，语义是指结构的整体意义，结构分析是有层次、有步骤的，在分析的过程中，而不是等到分析完毕就苛求语义的完整性，是不切实际的。

p. 92 – Chén (1960: 103)

两种句子在语言形式上的不同，是可以把它们的界限划分得相当清楚的。用一般的口气说话时，兼语式句子里可以停顿和拉长的地方，只能是在“动·名”后边，不能在“动”的后边。能说“你请我吃饭”，不能说“你请我吃饭”；①然而，“主谓宾”的句子里可以停顿和拉长的地方，一定是在“动”的后边，不能在“动·名”后边。只能说“我们高呼毛主席万岁”，不能说“我们高呼毛主席万岁”。

① 可以说成“你请，（这里逗号可以用分号，也可以用句号。）我吃饭”。那不在本题讨论范围之内。

p. 92 – Hú (1957: 18)

这种语义上的停顿是不容易在听觉上察觉出来的，但是说话的人自己会感觉到这种停顿。

p. 94 – Wáng (1955: 191)

像(B)例一类的句子，很容易令人误解「做……」为一种补语(Complement)。其实这种结构和(A)例是差不多的。「我们叫他做一张桌子」和「我们叫他做潇湘妃子」，形式上是一样的，不过前者的「做」字表示一种具微的行为，后者的「做」字表示一种假想的行为罢了。这种分别，只有两个极端是迥殊的，中间并没有截然的界限。

p. 94 – Zhāng (1987: 530-531)

[...“叫他肖政委”这种结构，去掉“他”，说成“叫肖政委”，不仅意思完整，而且跟原意基本相同；可是去掉“肖政委”，说成“叫他”，意思就不完整，即使在别的情况下意思完整，那也跟原意大不相同（“叫”变成“喊”或“招呼”的意思，跟原来的“称呼”的意思不同）。
p. 95 – Zhāng (1987: 530)

[...] 如果从汉语名词不能直接作谓语这个特点出发，“他”和“肖政委”肯定不能发生主谓关系，即使“他”和“肖政委”可以发生主谓关系，但在这里它们也没有主谓关系，而是分别跟“叫”发生动宾关系。

p. 96 – Zhāng (1987: 533)

这个“让”跟表示“应允”意义的“让”不是同一个词，应该区别对待

p. 96 – Chén (1960: 104)

一千多条包含动·名·谓次序的例句

p. 96 – *ibid.*

兼作“主谓宾”和兼语式

p. 96 – *ibid.*

这是很常見的現象

p. 96 – *ibid.*

大多数的动詞都是两可的

p. 96 – Ding (1979: 121)

有些句法是連动式还是兼語式不很容易分辨

p. 109 – Chén (1960: 105)

陆志韦先生改写的
REFERENCES

In the main text, authors' full names are cited, including characters if applicable, in the first reference made to their work, e.g., "Yuen Ren Chao 趙元任". Most subsequent references in the main text are to surname alone, e.g., "Chao". Page references in the main text are given by means of labels such as "Chao (1968: 125)", consisting of a name, a year of publication, and a page number. The year in the label is that of the actual edition used, additional details of publication being listed below. For some editions which are out of print, page references to newer editions are given.

In the following list, the use of capital letters in the names of books and articles has been restricted to first words and proper names.

Chafe (1987)

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官話口語的句法和語義

本論文對當代官話口語的一些句法現象加以分析。其語料基礎為五場自由對話，每場由一男一女進行，經錄音及以漢語拼音拼寫為約五千句的口語資料庫。本文所取口語例句主要選自北京、天津人的對話，均代表作為官話標準的北方方言。

本語言學論文的撰寫兼顧對一般學術性問題感興趣而不是語言學專家的讀者，因而對術語詳加詮釋並舉例說明。

第一章介紹本論文的基本術語和概念。其中心概念為索緒爾氏的語言符號 (signe)。語言符號是由形式與意義這兩個性質獨特卻不能分隔的成分組成的。因為這兩個對應成分存於語言使用者的腦子裏，所以只有通過其顯現才能作為研究的對象。這意味着，形式的研究以形式的表達為出發點，而意義的研究則由意義所指事物着手。語言符號的不可分隔性也反映在分析本身上，因而，在描寫某些形式時，必需解答這些形式的意義，同時，在描寫意義時也得兼顧與此意義相關的形式。

第二章至第四章闡述由的、得、地、底等漢字所代表的虛詞「de」的一些句法特徵。這三章將「de」的不同功能視為多義現象，即此，「de」代表着多種同源卻截然不同的意義。

在第二章探討以「de」構成的組合 (junction) 結構，如「外面 de 人」、「大 de 城市」、「天津 de」、「大 de」等。在方法上，第二章闡明以所指事物定向的語義學如何能成為句法分析的基礎。本章分析的實際結果是給官話的名詞跟動詞提供了實用的定義。

第三章描寫以「de」構成的連繫 (nexus) 結構，如「他寫 de 好」。首先討論連繫的整體意義所指的抽象事物的理論地位。又以生物進化類推，提議組合與連繫可能是前後發展的。組合給兩個事物在腦中的影像建立特定的句法關係。連繫則一方面給兩個影像建立在時間上定位的句法關係，一方面產生所指的第三個抽象事物。章末討論含「de」的組合結構及含「de」的連繫結構之間的語義關係。
第四章論及「de」的時態意義，如「給我笑de」、「拿de獎學金」等例句，又將其時態意義與前述各「de」的功能相比。在語系不同的語言裏也存在類似的多義現象，這進一步證實了本語義分析的可信性。

在第五章探討語言學界尚未注意到的口語否定詞「bù」。文中舉口語九例，如「我也bù光會喝」，並引書面一例。這個「bù」與在去聲前說成陽平聲「bù」的否定詞「不」不同，大約代表「不+是」通過溶合而形成的新詞語。其陽平聲即原形中「是」留下來的惟一痕跡。就意義而論，新起的「bù」表示「不是」的意思並加上鬆快語氣。語言學文獻中已見的陽平聲「yí」很可能是通過類似的溶合由「一+個」發展出來的。「bù」、「yí」兩個詞語均值得記錄在當代官話的詞典中。如須為此創漢字，可依「甫」、「勩」、「倆」、「佮」等字類推，將「bù」寫作「胚」字，將「yí」寫作「 Decompiled」字。

第六章是對動詞配價做理論性的探討，以實例對動詞配價的鑑別程序提出一些修改建議。本章分析官話動詞「賣」的配價，並談到作者的母語——荷蘭語裏的一些動詞配價，從而展示以母語程度掌握一個語言如何及在何程度上能對分析較微妙的語義差別有助益。

第七章在動詞配價理論的基礎上探索中國語言學上由來已久的一個問題，即怎樣處理「我有朋友幫忙」一類句子中的所謂兼語式。既有的句法分析經常對兼語式、雙賓語、主謂賓等結構劃出嚴格的界限。然而在語義上没有理由以互相排斥的結構看待這些句法。反之，就聽話人對言語的處理方式來看，雖由不同的句法中選出某一結構，而並立的句法結構總維持心理存在。

本論文的語言學立場既重視表達的言語也尊重話中所指的事物，從而一方面發掘新的語言資料，同時也使語言分析儘可能地與語言使用者的指向相結合。
The basis of this work is a collection of Mandarin Chinese dialogues recorded on tape and transcribed so as to constitute a spoken corpus of 5,000 sentences. Using examples from this corpus, the author discusses several issues in the analysis of spoken Mandarin. The main purpose of the work is to demonstrate the viability of a data-oriented approach to syntax and semantics. In this approach, both the way people talk and what they talk about are relevant for the linguistic description. The procedures and terms used in the analyses are introduced step by step without assuming more than an everyday familiarity with linguistic terminology.
samenvatting, curriculum vitae en stellingen

behorend bij het proefschrift

MEANING AND SYNTAX IN SPOKEN MANDARIN

van

Jeroen Wiedenhof

Leiden, 9 mei 1995
Nederlandse samenvatting

Betekenis en syntaxis in het gesproken Mandarijn


Het betoog is gericht op de academisch geïnteresseerde maar niet noodzakelijk taalkundig getrainde lezer. Technische termen zijn zo veel mogelijk verklaard en met voorbeelden geïllustreerd.

Hoofdstuk 1 geeft een overzicht van het gebruikte begrippenapparaat. Centraal hierin staat het Sanssuriaseen taalteken (signe), dat vorm en betekenis verbindt als onderscheiden maar onseheidbare tegenhangers. Deze beide kanten van het taalteken bevinden zich in het brein van de taalgebruiker en zijn voor de taalkundige slechts toegankelijk via hun realisaties. Dit betekent dat de studie van vormen begint bij de uitingen van die vormen, en dat de bestudering van betekenis uitgaat van een beschouwing van referenten van die betekenis, dat wil zeggen van zaken in de wereld die met betekenis worden aangeduid. De notie van de onseheidbaarheid van de beide kanten van het taalteken is ook in de analyse weerspiegeld. De analyse poogt namelijk in de beschrijving van vormen systematisch de betekenis van die vormen te verantwoorden, en in de beschrijving van betekenss steeds de ertee correlerende vormen te betrekken.

In de hoofdstukken 2 tot en met 4 komen diverse aspecten van het partikkel de aan de orde. De beschrijving duidt de verschillende functies van het partikkel als polyseme varianten, dat wil zeggen, als verwante maar duidelijk verschillende betekenss.

In hoofdstuk 2 worden gevallen behandeld van koppeling (junction) met de, zoals in wāimian de rén ‘persoon buiten’, dà de chéngshì ‘grote stad’, Tiānjīng de ‘uit Tiānjīn afkomstige’ en dà de ‘die groot is’. In methodologisch opzicht laat dit hoofdstuk zien hoe een referentieel georiënteerde semantiek als basis kan dienen voor de syntactische analyse. Als praktisch uitvoelis van de analyse wordt een definitie van naamwoorden en werkwoorden in het Mandarin voorgesteld.
Hoofdstuk 3 beschrijft de vorming van nexus met de in zinnen zoals Tā xiě de hǎo. ‘Hij schrijft goed.’ Een theoretische inleiding handelt de status van de abstracte referent waaraan een nexusbetekenis als geheel verwijst. Daarbij wordt met een biologische parallel de mogelijkheid geopperd dat nexus zich ontwikkeld heeft uit koppeling. Koppeling brengt een syntactisch verband aan tussen de afbeeldingen van twee referenten. Bij nexus gaat een verankering in de tijd samen met de vorming van een derde referent. Het hoofdstuk besluit met een bespreking van het betekenisverband tussen nexus met de en koppeling met de.

Hoofdstuk 4 behandelt aspectuele betekenis met de in gevallen als gěi wǒ xiǎo de ‘ik moest er zo om lachen’ en nà de jiāngxuéjīn ‘kreeg een beurs’. Ook hier wordt het betekenisverband met eerder behandelde functies van hetzelfde partikel beschreven. Dat dergelijke verbanden ook zijn aangetroffen in andere, genetisch niet verwante talen vormt een extra argument voor de plausibiliteit van de semantische analyse.

Het onderwerp van hoofdstuk 5 is de nog niet door andere onderzoekers beschreven uitdrukking bǔ ‘niet zijn’ in uitdrukkingen zoals wǒ yě bǔ guāng huì hē ‘het is heus niet zo dat ik alleen kan drinken’. Van de tien besproken voorbeelden zijn er negen afkomstig uit de verzamelde dialogen en één uit een geschreven bron. Bǔ ‘niet zijn’ is waarschijnlijk een ontwikkeling uit bǔ shì ‘niet zijn’, waarbij als reflex van shì ‘zijn’ de yǎngpíng-toon is overgebleven. Voor de wel al eerder beschreven vorm yí ‘één stuks’ kan een vergelijkbare ontwikkeling uit yí gě ‘één stuks’ worden aangenomen. Zowel yí ‘één stuks’ als bǔ ‘niet zijn’ verdienen een apart lemma in Mandarijnse woordenboeken.

In hoofdstuk 6 volgt een theoretische beschouwing over valenties (actanten, argumenten) van het werkwoord. Aan de hand van voorbeelden worden aanpassingen van een ontdekkingsprocedure voor valenties voorgesteld. De bespreking behandelt mogelijke valenties van het Mandarijnse werkwoord mài ‘verkopen’. Ter vergelijking worden enkele Nederlandse werkwoorden onder de loep genomen. Daarbij komt ook naar voren hoe en in hoeverre beheersing van een taal op moedertaalniveau een voordeel kan zijn bij de analyse van subtiele semantische verschillen.

Ten slotte behandelt hoofdstuk 7 op basis van het aldus ontwikkelde valentiebegrip een oud probleem uit de Chinese taalkunde: de beschrijving van zogenaamde spil-constructies (兼語式 jiānyǔ shì) in zinnen zoals Wǒ yǒu pèngyou bāngmáng. ‘Ik heb vrienden om te helpen.’ Eerdere analyses brengen stricte scheidslijnen aan tussen een spil-constructie en andere syntactische verbindingen, met name die van een werkwoord gevolgd door twee voorwerpen (雙賓語 shuāng bīnyǔ) en van een
werkwoord waarbij een onderwerp met bijbehorend gezegde als lijdend voorwerp dient (主謂賓 zhǔ wèi bīn). Semantisch is er geen reden om de besproken constructies te beschrijven als elkaar uitsluitende mogelijkheden. De manier waarop taalgebruikers uitingen aanzien suggereert juist dat bij een keuze uit verschillende syntactische mogelijkheden de afgewezen opties psychologisch geenszins afwezig zijn.

De in dit werk gekozen taalkundige benadering laat zowel taaluitingen als de zaken waarvoor die uitingen verwijzen tot hun recht komen. Deze benadering brengt niet alleen nieuwe taalfeiten aan het licht, maar stelt de onderzoeker ook in staat de analyse nauw te laten aansluiten bij aanwijzingen van de taalgebruikers.
**curriculum vitae**


In 1984-85 verbleef hij opnieuw een jaar in Peking in het kader van een taalkundig project van de universiteiten van Leiden en Peking en het Nijmeege Max-Planck-Institut für Psycholinguistik. Hij trad op als tolk in de collegecyclus die medewerkers van het laatstgenoemde instituut verzorgden voor staf en studenten van de Universiteit van Peking. Daarnaast verrichtte hij taalkundig veldwerk onder Chinese kleuters.

In augustus 1985 studeerde hij af op een geannoteerde vertaling van een verhandeling over het Chinese schrift in het woordenboek *Shuò Wén Jiě Zì* (100 n. Chr.). Sinds september 1985 is hij verbonden aan het Sinologisch Instituut van de Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden. Na twee tijdelijke onderwijscontracten volgde in 1986 een aanstelling voor het geven van onderwijs in Mandarijn, klassiek Chinees en taalkunde en voor het verrichten van taalkundig onderzoek.
stellingen

1. In het hedendaagsse Mandarijn van Peking is de vorm *bù* niet alleen een variant van *bù* 'niet' voorafgaand aan een *qù*-toon. Naast *bù/bù/bù* 'niet' is er ook een uitdrukking *bù/bù* 'niet zijn', die ongeacht de erop volgende toon wordt gerealiseerd met een *yàngpìng*-toon of, geneutraliseerd, met een *qìng*-toon.
   (dit proefschrift, hoofdstuk 5)

2. In het Mandarijn kunnen naamwoorden en werkwoorden worden gedefinieerd op grond van de aard van de syntactische constructie met het partikel *de*. Een naamwoord leidt met een erop volgend *de* tot divergente koppeling (*junction*). Een werkwoord gevolgd door *de* biedt de mogelijkheid van convergente koppeling.
   (dit proefschrift, hoofdstuk 2)


4. Het aanduiden van het dialect van Peking als “modern Chinees” of “standaard-Chinees” is even ongelukkig als het omdopen van het Engels van de BBC tot “modern Europees” of “standaard-Europees” zou zijn. Voor de huidige Chinese standaardtaal verdient de naam “standaard-Mandarijn” de voorkeur.

5. Bij het transcriberen van toontalen in een alfabetisch schrift is het niet transcriberen van de tonen af te raden.

6. De gangbare uitdrukking voor ‘bloed’ in het Mandarijn van Peking is *xuè*.

7. De Chinese lexicografie kent geen taboe op het gebruik van een trefwoord in de betekenisomschrijving van dat trefwoord.
8. Als de één-kind-politiek in de Volksrepubliek China slaagt, zullen taalkundige voorbeeldzinnen met Zhāng Sān en Lǐ Sī nog ongewoner klinken.

9. Chinees taalkundig werk dat taal voorstelt als iets kēguān cūnzài de ‘dat objectief bestaat’ kent aan de semantiek geen rol van betekenis toe.

10. Een nadeel van het beschrijven van een taal in dezelfde taal is dat bij het citeren van voorbeelden het toevoegen van betekennis niet voor de hand ligt.

11. Nederlandse kinderen van twee jaar scheiden voor labiale continuanten zoals /m/ en /w/ soms de labialiteit van de continuiteit, wat leidt tot realisaties als [pɔlɔˈzik'] voor muziek en [pulɔˈsej] voor w.c.. Daarom kan voor de etymologie van het informele plee ‘w.c.’, ook in het licht van het eufemistische w. ‘w.c.’, gedacht worden aan ontlening uit of versterking vanuit de kindertaal.

12. De marginale status van het onderzoek naar gebarentalen van doven is niet te rijmen met de onder horende taalkundigen wijd verspreide gewoonte het vak te bedrijven met de oren dicht.

13. Dat de Rijksuniversiteit Leiden personeelsadvertenties opent met ‘s Lands oudste universiteit voert een beleid dat overeenstemt met de opvattingen en eisen van de jaren '90 versterkt het vermoeden dat beleidsmakers ter plaatse te weinig oog hebben voor een fundamentele taak van de wetenschap: het zoeken naar waarheden die de opvattingen en eisen van de tijd ontstijgen.

14. De regelmatig tijdens promotieplechtigheden te beluisteren verzekering van opponenten dat zij het proefschrift gelezen hebben klinkt niet minder omneus dan kardinaal Simonis' omschrijving van aankomend bisschop Frans Wiertz als “een gelovig iemand, een man van de kerk”. (interview, Radio 1, 10 juli 1993)

15. De maatvoering van schroefdraden in de sluitringen voor rubberen spenen op zuigflessen voor baby's dient gestandaardiseerd te worden.
De illustratie op de voorzijde is een fragment uit 王力 Wang Li's *Theorie der Chinese grammatica* waarin Otto Jespersens theorie over koppeling en nexus wordt besproken (中國語法理論 Zhōngguó yǔfǎ lìlùn, 上海 Shanghai: 中華書局 Zhōnghuá shūjú, 1955: 50).