

ZHONGGUO YUWEN

STUDIES OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE

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Abstracts of Major Papers in This Issue

WANG Guiyuan, Some issues on the development of Chinese characters

The development of Chinese characters could be divided into four main stages in terms of the features of the characters' shape: pictographic from Shang Dynasty to Western Zhou Dynasty, sub-pictographic from the Spring and Autumn Period to the middle of the Warring States Period, clerical script from the late of the Warring States Period to Eastern Han Dynasty, and regular script from the Three Kingdoms Period up to now. In pictographic and sub-pictographic stages, the characters' conformation was based on the physical images, and then turned to the meaning-sound patterns. There were two interacted mechanisms in the course of the establishment of the new system after the clerical script change: innovation which dominated the early period, and structure balance which replaced innovation in the later period. Co-existence of multiple shapes of the same character is common, while total replacement is fairly rare.

Key words: development of Chinese characters, clerical script change, pictographic.

MA Beijia, WANG Qian, Evolution from beneficial prepositions to disposal prepositions in Chinese

This paper finds that the evolutionary path from beneficial prepositions to disposal prepositions started from Song Dynasty. The disposal prepositions, such as *yu* (与)、*gei* (给)、*bang* (帮)、*da* (搭)、*dai* (代)、*gong* (共)、*tong* (同) and *gen* (跟), all directly originated from the prepositions which introduce the beneficiary. Two factors are argued to be related to the evolution: one is the misunderstanding of the anaphor when the beneficiary is a pronominal; the other is the "undesired" meaning implied by the verb in the "beneficial preposition + *ta* (他) + verb" construction. The paper also finds that the evolutionary path between beneficial prepositions and accompanying prepositions is bidirectional, and this is the reason why some prepositions can have beneficial, disposal and accompanying usages in modern Chinese.

Key words: beneficial, disposal, *yu*, *gei*

LONG Guofu, The grammaticalization of the "yuelaiyue (越来越)..." construction in Chinese: A case of construction emergence

This paper tries to discuss the question "where do constructions come from" through a case study on the grammaticalization of the "yuelaiyue..." construction meaning "more and more" in Chinese. It illustrates the evolutionary path of the "yuelaiyue..." construction as follows: *yue* (越) + place noun > *yue* + common noun > clause, *yue* ... > *yue* ... *yue* ... > *yuelaiyue* The mechanism of the

grammaticalization of the “*yuelaiyue*...” construction is reanalysis and analogy, and the main motivation of the change is pragmatic inference. Based on the above observations, it finally concludes that construction meanings are emergent instead of being preexisted.

Key words: “*yuelaiyue*” construction, grammaticalization, construction grammar, emergence

JIANG Jingzhong, PAN Haihua, How many DOUs do we really need?

This paper reconsiders the two mapping rules, i. e. the topic rule (P1) and the focus rule (P2) proposed in Pan (2006), and makes some minor adjustments concerning their contents and application domains. It also proposes to reclassify the different uses of *dou* (都) into two major subtypes, labeled as *dou*₁ and *dou*₂. Although the various uses of *dou* have long been generalized as conducting universal quantification on the associated item A, the quantification domain of *dou*₁ is still not structured, or does not contain a scale, whereas the quantification domain of *dou*₂ is structured and ranked according to the unlikelihood with the lowest on the top and the highest at the bottom. Both *dous* are further classified according to the mapping rules above. *Dou*_{1a} and *dou*_{2a} apply P1, not inducing an exclusiveness reading on A, while *dou*_{1b} and *dou*_{2b} employ P2, inducing an exclusiveness reading on A. Under the new proposal and analysis, all the different uses of *dou* including its unexpectedness, uncommon and unusual senses, subjectivity, etc., as have been discussed in literature, can thus be accounted for.

Key words: *Dou*, universal quantification, topic-comment mapping, scale, background-focus mapping

WAN Quan, *De* (的) in state-of-affairs sentences

De attached to the end of an event sentence cannot serve as a formal criterion of a state-of-affairs sentence. Event sentences can express state-of-affairs connotation even without *de*. Event sentences describe actions, and state-of-affairs sentences refer to actions. A state-of-affairs sentence is a kind of sentences with a predicate nominal used for expressing the situation or state-of-affairs property of an event, and is essentially identical to sentences with a predicate nominal expressing the state of things. *De* is added to the end of a state-of-affairs sentence to draw hearer's attention to the concerned situation, for it intensifies the demonstrativeness of the word or phrase to which it attached.

Key words: state-of-affairs sentences, *de*, containing model of word classes, demonstrativeness, attention

XIA Liping, On the multifunction of “*a*⁴⁵” in the Yiyang dialect, Hu'nan Province.

As a multifunctional nominal determiner conveying definiteness, genericity or non-referentiality, *a*⁴⁵ (阿) in the Yiyang dialect, Hu'nan Province, has a high frequency of occurrence both in the combination with demonstratives or classifiers, i. e. in the construction of “Demonstrative- *a*⁴⁵-NP” or “*a*⁴⁵ - *tsa*⁴⁵ (只, Cl.) -NP” respectively, and in the direct union with NP, namely “*a*⁴⁵ NP”. In the combination of “*a*⁴⁵ NP” *a*⁴⁵ functions as a quasi-definite article, from which it develops multiple functions of a topic marker, a genitive marker, and a copular, etc. With the evidence of grammaticalization and phonetic features, it is assumed that *a*⁴⁵ probably evolves from the general classifier “*tsa*⁴⁵”.

Key word: the Yiyang dialect, “*a*⁴⁵”, definiteness, genericity, prominent categories

