

ZHONGGUO YUWEN

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Abstracts of Major Papers in This Issue

ZHANG Ansheng, Nominal cases in He-Huang dialects in Gansu and Qianghai provinces

The study of this paper based on the data collected from the author's survey covering 26 cities and counties in the Linxia (临夏) Hui Autonomous Prefecture (reigned under 'Hezhou (河州)' jurisdiction in ancient times) and in the Huangshui (湟水) river basin in Eastern Qinghai province, so called the area of 'He-Huang dialects' (HHDs henceforth). The main findings include: 1) A majority of HHDs mark the following grammatical cases: nominative, accusative (marked invariably by *ha* (哈) among different vernaculars), dative, locative, ablative, comitative, and instrumental. 2) Both postposition and preposition are observed in HHDs. 3) While the OV order predominates in HHDs as a whole, the OV-VO distribution varies in parallel to the distinction of post-versus prepositions respectively. The Hezhou-type HHDs with OV as the predominant order are found in the area where minorities of Hui, Tibetan and Altaic are rather densely populated.

Key words: Hehuang dialects, nominal case, case marking, word order correlations

WANG Linhui, Suffix *tou* (头): The origin of 'Z' rhyme in Jin and Yu Dialects

The so-called 'Z' rhyme, distributed intensively in the north of Henan province and the southeast and southwest of Shanxi province, is evolved from the suffix *tou* (头), instead of from the suffix *zi* (子), through the process of initial dropping, synaeresis and tonal modification. From the characteristics of their geographical distribution and the historical record of immigration, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the sound change of 'Z' rhyme in Henan dialects is a consequence of the emigration around that area in the Ming Dynasty.

Key words: Shanxi dialects, Henan dialects, the sound change of 'Z' rhyme, evolution

WANG Chunhui, The temporal and conditional overlapping in Chinese adverbial clauses

Although temporal clauses are generously interpreted separately from conditional clauses, with certain circumstances they overlap synchronically and diachronically. Besides, regular correspondence in subcategories occurs in such overlapping, i.e., habitual clauses and future time clauses overlap with habitual and hypothetical conditionals respectively. The overlapping is explained by the similarity of aspect and modality.

Key words: temporal clause, conditional clause, overlapping

DONG Zhengdcun, The reduction of arbitrary conditional constructions and its syntactic-pragmatic consequence

An arbitrary conditional construction (ACC henceforth) was composed of three parts in its origin: 1) a sentence-initial ACC subordinator, e.g. *wu* (无) in Pre-Qin period, *buwen* (不问) in Wei, Jin, and South and North Dynasties, and *wulun* (无论) in Sui and Tang Dynasties; 2) a juxtaposition of two contradictory elements, e.g. *da-xiao* (大小), or an expression of universal quantification; 3) the consequence clause containing the adverb of *ye/dou* (也/都). The ACC is realized with the reduction of one subordinator, or the ellipsis of the adverb of *you/dou*. The reduced construction exhibits subjectivity and differences from its origin in syntax and pragmatics.

Key words: arbitrary conditional construction, ellipsis, syntactic-pragmatic perspective

LIANG Yuan, CHEN Baihua, The variation of /b-/ initial in the Lei dialect

The recent years have seen four variants spawn from the /b-/ onset in the Lei dialect. When followed by a round vowel, /b-/ appears to undergo lenition to become the approximant [w], or to become a bilabial trill [B]. With non-rounded vowels, /b-/ has the option to surface as [b] or labiodental nasal [m]. Distribution and frequency of the variants correlate with age of speakers, which suggests the gradual disappearance of /b-/ in favor of [w] and [m].

Key word: /b-/ initial, variation, Lei dialect

LIU Yi, SHI Feng, LIN Yuanyuan, A crossing age analysis on the basic vowels in Hong Kong Cantonese

Based on the investigation of data from 120 participants with different ages from 4 groups, this paper discusses the features and differences of 7 basic vowels in Hong Kong Cantonese in different age groups. With phonetic and statistical analysis, the distributional features of the basic vowels in Hong Kong Cantonese are analyzed with the method of skewness.

Key words: Hong Kong Cantonese, vowel, age, statistical analysis

WANG Weihui, HU Bo, Some issues on the data analysis in historical Chinese studies: A case study of the maturation time of the copula *shi* (是)

This paper suggests that proper use of the historical data is a precondition for the studies of the history of the Chinese language. It proposes two principles for data analysis: typical cases take priority over atypical cases, and earlier cases are more significant than later cases. The paper also provides a case study to elaborate on the afore-mentioned principles, i.e., the maturation time of the copula *shi* (是). It finds that the negated copula *bushi* (不是) has replaced the earlier form *fei* (非) in some typical oral examples of the Tang Dynasty, and concludes that the copula *shi* has developed into maturity at least during mid-Tang period instead of late Yuan and early Ming period.

Key words: historical data, historical Chinese studies, copular *shi* (是), principles for data analysis