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Abstracts of the Chinese papers in English

Gao Shunquan

Grammaticalization and acquisition order of adverb-conjunction-concurrent functional words

In Chinese language, there are many functional words spanning more than one category. For example, *buguo* can not only be an adverb but also a conjunction. They are usually in the same grammaticalization chain and share a common acquisition order for language learners. The author argues that for functional words in Chinese language, including adverb-conjunction-concurrent functional words, a close relationship exists between the acquisition order and the grammaticalization order, and therefore grammaticalization provides an excellent perspective for us to investigate and speculate the acquisition order of these adverb-conjunction-concurrent functional words.

The article consists of four parts. Part one introduces the motivation and the purpose of the research.

In part two, the author explains the notion of grammaticalization order as well as four criteria to judge grammaticalization degrees. Then, the author elaborates the notion of acquisition order, the criteria and methods to determine an acquisition order with reference to current theories and results of research on the relationship between grammaticalization order and acquisition order in a global perspective, and introduces the interlanguage database on which our research is based.

Part three takes *zhishi* and *buguo* as instances to probe two orders and their relationship. First, we categorize the meanings and usages of these two words functioning both as an adverb and a conjunction. Secondly, we investigate the grammaticalization order of these two words from the perspective of semantic relation, diachronic evolution, generalization and subjectivity degrees, and then give a putative acquisition order of them. Thirdly, the acquisition of these two words is discussed in detail based on the analysis interlanguage database, and an acquisition order is summarized with the criteria of output, accuracy and emergence.

Part four contains the conclusion. Upon the above research, we find that the acquisition order of *zhishi* is consistent with its grammaticalization order, while the acquisition order of *buguo* disagrees with its diachronic evolution but consists with the order of its subjectivity degrees. Such a result indicates that *zhishi* and *buguo* may possibly represent two different modes of the relationship

between grammaticalization order and acquisition order of adverb-conjunction-concurrent functional words: For an adverb-conjunction-concurrent functional word, the acquisition of its conjunction function will be later than that of its adverb function if the two functions hold the same subjectivity degree. On the other hand, if, unlike the adverb function, the conjunction function indicates no subjectivity but highly abstract logic relationship, it will be acquired earlier than the adverb function. Adult learners can easily understand and acquire the conjunction function in the latter situation since the logic relationship of a conjunction is universal and can be found in all languages around the world; while the subjectivity of a word and its subjectification process vary from language to language, thus in the former situation the conjunction function is usually more difficult to acquire.

Keywords: adverb-conjunction-concurrent functional words, zhishi, buguo, grammaticalization order, acquisition order

Chen Gang

Adjective and parts-of-speech system of Mandarin Chinese

According to the cross-linguistic investigation of parts-of-speech systems in languages, adjectives are much more intangible and complicated than other major word categories. Previous studies on the identification of adjectives in Mandarin Chinese still remain problematic by far. Typologically nouns and verbs act as the heads in phrases, and adjectives and adverbs as modifiers (Hengveld 1992a,b). This paper holds that the parts-of-speech system in any language is an organic mechanism in which all word categories interact with each other both syntactically and functionally. Therefore, the relation between nouns and verbs can determine the syntactical function of adjectives and adverbs. In many Indo-European languages there is morphologically a clear-cut borderline between nouns and verbs and their syntactic functions can be easily recognized, while in Chinese the difference between nouns and verbs can be told only at the syntactic level. More importantly, all verbs in Chinese can be directly used as the head of noun phrase, which indicates that verbs are also a type of noun. This fact consequently complicates the identification of adjectives in Chinese. Since all adjectives can, without any morphological change, function freely as subject, predicate, and the modifier of nouns and verbs. We argue that adjective in Chinese is a word class of great flexibility and that the flexibility hierarchy of parts-of-speech system in Chinese is adjective > verb > noun. We also find that there exist two major inclusion models in the parts-of-speech system of Chinese, i.e., inter-category inclusion and func-

tional inclusion. The inter-category inclusion model reveals the syntactic relation between nouns, verbs and adjectives. Specifically, adjectives are a sub-class of verbs and verbs a sub-class of nouns. In other words, adjectives in Chinese are both verbs and nouns, which proves the fact that Chinese nouns, like Iranian, are a category of super-noun (Larson 2009). We can also explain the reason why Chinese adjectives can be used to modify verbs. It is not because adjectives have changed into adverbs (Wu and Wang 2010) but because verbs are nouns. Functional inclusion model describes the functional relation between adjectives and adverbs in Chinese. Adjectives can freely fulfill the modifying function of adverbs instead of vice versa, but syntactically both adjective and adverb are independent word class respectively. As a result, we propose that there are no specialized adjectives and verbs in Chinese and that Chinese has a rather flexible parts-of-speech system, which presents a challenge to the conclusion of Hengveld (1992a, b) and Hengveld and van Lier (2010). In addition, reduplication is one of the most important morphological means in Chinese. The abundant reduplicative forms of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs all points to the fact that the primary distinction in parts of speech system is between super-noun and depictive, both of which can be semantically referential head, therefore, the differentiation between referential and predicative category raised by Zhu (1982) might be of little importance in the parts-of-speech system of Mandarin Chinese.

Keywords: parts-of-speech system, adjective, flexible, syntactic function

Herbert Mushangwe

Shona pitch and Chinese tone errors of native speakers of Shona

This paper examines the pronunciation errors in acquiring Chinese tones by native speakers of Shona. Comparative and experimental research methods are used to explore the similarities and differences of the nature of pitch in Shona and Chinese language. The main aim of this research is to provide reference material for both teachers of Chinese language and native speakers of Shona learning Chinese language. In order to find out the possible tone errors that speakers of Shona language make when acquiring Chinese tones, it was necessary to find out the nature of pitch in Shona language since researchers in the Shona linguistics seem not to give more information about Shona tone values and tone contours. Various Shona syllables with tones which differentiate meaning are used for a pitch experiment. 5 native speakers of Shona participated in this experiment and the pitch experiment demonstrates that Shona and Chinese language do have similar types of tones, the observed tones can be grouped into three types as

follows: level tone, rising tone and falling tone. However, the tone values for all different types of tones observed are completely different from those in Chinese. For instance, the Shona level tone can be further sub-divided into high level tone, middle level tone and low level tone, but the Chinese level tone do not have such variations, rather it has only a high level tone. The Shona rising tone also differs from the Chinese rising tone in the sense that the Chinese rising tone rises from the mid level to the highest point which can be measured as from level 3 to level 5 if we use a 5 level contour system, but the Shona rising tone rises from the low level to mid-level, which can be measured as from level 1 to about level 3 on a 5 level contour system. Just like the other tones, the falling tone also differs in these two languages; while the Chinese falling tone falls from the highest point to the lowest point, the Shona falling tone falls from the mid-level to the lowest level. The major difference between Chinese and Shona tones is that Chinese language has a curving tone known as the third tone; the results of the Shona pitch experiment did not show any evidence of this curving tone in Shona language. The above observed differences suggest that native speakers of Shona language learning Chinese language are likely to have mother language negative transfer. A pronunciation experiment is therefore done in order to establish how native speakers of Shona pronounce Chinese mono and disyllabic words, and as predicted, the results of the experiment showed that all of the 4 participants of our experiment exhibit pronunciation errors that can be traced back to their native language, Shona. All the subject can not distinguish the rising and the curving Chinese tone; this could be due to the fact that the Chinese curving tone does not exist in Shona language. As for the level and falling tone, experiment results showed that the majority of native speakers of Shona could not produce the tones as they are produced by native speakers of Chinese language. This paper therefore suggests possible solutions to such pronunciation errors. We recommended that teaching of the Chinese sound system needs continuous practice as well as the help of an experienced teacher who speaks standard Chinese language, who can clearly explain the places of articulation as well as articulation methods for various tones. It is suggested that Chinese language teachers can utilize certain Shona words that are produced with tones similar to those in Chinese language to help students grasp Chinese tones. Apart from that, considering the fact that use of praat software helped us to see the similarities and differences between the pitch contours and pitch values between these two languages in graph form, it is also suggested that praat software can be a useful tool in teaching Chinese tones to native speakers of Shona since students will be able to see the tone structures on the tone graphs.

Keywords: Chinese, Shona, pitch, tone, tone error, teaching of Chinese tone

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