The Development of Constructions

结构式的演化：

第一人称认识性插入语的语法化

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序

　　共时层面的语言现象是语言历时演化的产物。作为一种研究方法，语法化为历时比较和语言间的比较提供了新的思路与视角。作者指出，英、汉第一人称认识性插入语的演化呈现一定程度的规律性：它们经过转喻化、隐喻化、主观化、交互主观化及引发性推理等过程，由原来的内容义发展为内容义和程序义并存直至最后的程序义。重新分析、类推和语言接触是结构式句法变化的主要机制。重新分析使其内部结构关系发生变化，最终导致规则的改变。类推改变的是表层形式，与规则的扩散有关。语言接触使得一种语言结构受另一语言的影响而导致语用规则发生嬗变。

　　语法研究的最终目标是对语言现象做出解释和预测。语言现象是有理据的，这一理据受倾向性原则的支配。找到规约背后的理据并对规约做出解释，也是完成了预测。作者发现，英汉第一人称认识性插入语的演化路径同样存在于其他语法范畴的演化进程中，如情态动词、话语标记等的语法化。作者指出，形式语言学所探求的语言共性可以在历时演化中找到解释。很多语言现象都有一个历时的维度，而非形成于一朝一夕。探索共时层面下历时变化的普遍机制不仅可以解释共时层面的语言现象，还可以预测将来的语言面貌。

　　语言比较研究绝大多数集中在语言内部或语言间的共时比较层面，而语言间的历时比较在国内研究较少。作者对第一人称认识性插入语的历时研究发现，语言在共时层面上显现的共性或个性往往是历时作用的结果，语言间的历时比较既可以探索语言间的共性和共同的变化机制以及规律性原则，又可以为共时层面的差异寻找合理的解释。另外，这些插入语的历时研究结果表明语法化的研究可

以突破词汇层面向结构式方面扩展。同时,这些结构式在语法化过程中显现的句法灵活性和语义辖域的扩大,进一步证实了语法化研究早期总结的各项参数呈减缩状态的规则具有片面性。

　　本书的初稿是程丽霞向厦门大学提交的博士论文。由于论文选题新颖,逻辑清晰,具有较强的学科前沿性和较高的理论价值,已顺利通过答辩。与已有的相关文献相比,本书加强了相关领域研究的薄弱环节,对语言对比研究和语法化理论将产生较大的推动和促进作用。作为程丽霞的导师,我祝贺她的博士论文得以出版,并期待她继续发扬刻苦钻研、求真务实的严谨治学精神,在语言的历时研究方面做出更多贡献。

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连淑能

2010 年 3 月 28 日

厦门大学外文学院

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前　言

近年来,插入语成分引起语言学界的广泛关注。第一人称认识性插入语由"第一人称＋动词原形"构成,经常在日常会话中出现。语义上它已不同于原始结构式的字面义,而是用来表示说话者的认识情态,即对命题的主观判断和个人态度。句法结构上它具有独立性和可分离性且位置灵活,是典型的附接成分。结构式中的动词已失去动词的基本属性,如不存在时态、语态及体态的变化,不受副词修饰,不能被否定等。这些插入语缘何而来,为何在英、汉语中呈现出诸多句法和语义的共性,为何在语法形式上又表现出一定程度的差异,为何共时层面的功能和认知解释在这类问题上具有局限性而无法全面深入地解释这些语言现象,探索和解决这些问题又会对语言学研究和英汉比较研究产生何种意义？对以上问题的疑惑与思考便是本研究的缘起。

共时层面的语言现象是历时发展的产物,本书尝试以语法化和比较为主要方法对英汉第一人称认识性插入语进行历时的回溯与比较。这些插入语来源于三大结构式:第一人称＋思维动词、第一人称＋言语行为动词、第一人称＋感官动词。这些原始结构式的演化呈现出一定程度的规律性。它们经过转喻化、隐喻化、主观化、交互主观化及引发性推理等过程,由原来的内容义发展为内容义和程序义并存直至最后的程序义。主观性也在演化过程中逐渐增强直到交互主观义的产生。语用功能也由原来的实义结构式发展为传信结构式以至后来的认识性插入语。语义辖域也由原来的命题内辖域发展为命题外辖域直到统辖整个语篇。除了语义和语用功能上的变化,大部分原始结构式还经历了由主句结构式向外接式插入语的演化。原始的主

谓结构式单独构成独立的句子,后来在传信结构式中与复指词或介词共现,最后复指词、介词消失,原始结构式成为依附主句出现的附接性成分。重新分析、类推和语言接触是结构式句法变化的主要机制。

语法研究的最终目标是对语法现象做出解释和预测。语言现象是有理据的,这一理据受倾向性原则的支配。找到规约背后的理据并对规约做出解释,也是完成了预测。英汉第一人称认识性插入语的演化趋势也同样体现在其他语法范畴如情态动词、话语标记等的演化进程中。探索共时层面下历时变化的普遍机制不仅可以解释共时层面的语言现象,还可以预测将来的语言面貌。同时,不同语言在共时层面呈现不同的形态句法特征,有些差异仅靠共时层面的认知、功能等因素无法做出完全的解释。很多差异来源于语言的历时状态,因而需要从历时的角度做出解释。迄今为止的语言比较研究,绝大多数集中在语言内部或语言间的共时比较层面,而语言间的历时比较在国内却少有尝试。本书指出,语言在共时层面上显现的共性或个性往往是历时作用的结果。语言间的历时比较研究既可以探索语言间的共性和共同的变化机制以及规律性原则,又能为共时层面的差异寻找合理的解释。

以往的语法化研究集中在词汇层面,本书尝试对结构式的演化进行语法化的推测与假设。第一人称认识性插入语历时研究结果表明语法化的研究可以突破词汇层面向结构式方面扩展。同时,第一人称认识性插入语在语法化过程中显现的句法灵活性和语义辖域的扩大,进一步证实了语法化早期阶段总结的各项参数呈减缩状态的规则具有片面性。修改后的语法化原则更符合绝大多数语项的实际演化状态。本书还尝试将认知语言学和语用学所关注的传信义和认识义区分开来。尽管关于这一区分会存在一定的争议,但从历时的角度看,信息来源或获知方式影响说话者对实际情况的概念构成及其断言的可信度,获知方式暗示了命题的可信性,即存在一种由传信到认识的演化过程,而不是相反。

　　本书得以出版,首先要感谢我的导师连淑能教授。他学识渊博、语言学功底深厚、学有专精而又博采众长,这使我在厦门大学学习期间获益匪浅。他治学严谨、为人宽厚、对学生言传身教、循循善诱,正是他的鼓励和关怀一直激励着我不断努力学习。我也要感谢教授我博士生课程的杨信彰教授,正是从他的课堂上我知道了语法化并对此产生了浓厚的兴趣。还要特别感谢论文答辩委员会主席、上海外国语大学的许余龙教授和清华大学的罗选民教授,感谢他们对论文提出的宝贵建议。还有厦门大学吴建平教授、纪玉华教授、胡兆云教授、傅似逸教授,感谢他们对论文修改提出的诚恳意见以及平时对我的关心和鼓励。本书的部分语料取自北京大学汉语语言学研究中心的 CCL 语料库和厦门大学卢伟教授的 OEC 语料库。大连理工大学外国语学院对我的教学工作给予了很多关心与帮助,院长杜凤刚教授一直鼓励我在学术上不断进步、勇于创新。在此一并表示感谢。

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程丽霞

2010 年 3 月 30 日

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Introduction

Parenthetical disjuncts have been a major focus of linguistic study in recent decades. This study will deal with one special kind of them—first-person epistemic parenthetical, which consists of a first-person singular pronoun and a present tense verb. The focus is on their development — the change of the semantic and pragmatic properties, and of the grammatical status as well.

0. 1　The term FPEP

FPEP, the abbreviation of "first-person epistemic parenthetical", can be interpreted as follows. "Parenthetical", the head of the noun phrase, is defined as an expression that is inserted into the flow of thought and speech. It may be in a sentence or between sentences. Some parentheticals are set off by commas and others also by parentheses or dashes. A parenthetical can be a word, a phrase, or a sentence, which interrupts an utterance and bears no syntactic relation to the sentence at the point of interruption (Trask 1993:199).

The parentheticals in this study can express the speaker/writer's (hereafter SP/W) stance towards what he or she is talking about. A vast literature is devoted to the fact that language can express the SP/W's subjective viewpoint (see Thompson & Hunston 2000) and the notion of stance has been given various terms in the previous literature, such as "evaluation", "affect", "attitude", etc. It generally refers to the expression of the SP/W's attitude towards, viewpoint on, or feelings

about the things that he or she is talking about. To cover this pragmatic property of the constructions, the word "epistemic" is adopted here, which applies to the modal system indicating the degree of commitment by the SP/W to what he or she says (Palmer 1986:51). That's the reason why there is the word "epistemic" in the title as a modifier to the head "parentheticals".

Everything is changing in the world. Language is no exception and nor is its constituent — constructions, for example. The "first-person singular pronoun + present tense verb" construction has developed from a main clause to a parenthetical which gets more freedom in syntactic position and more procedural meaning at the same time, such as I think, I promise, I guess, etc. In all these constructions there is always a first person singular pronoun, for example I in English and wo 我 in Chinese. So the phrase "first-person" functions as another modifier to the head "parentheticals" in the title.

0. 2   Problems and aims

One linguistic difficulty concerning FPEPs is that they are notoriously difficult to describe in grammatical and semantic terms, perhaps partially because they depend on the context to be interpreted appropriately. Their position in the utterance, for example, is too flexible to behave like a matrix clause. And the verb in a FPEP has no tense, aspect or mood change in no matter what kind of local context the parenthetical occurs. It cannot be negated, either. When there is a tag question attached, the questioning is not based on the FPEP but the clause co-occurring with the construction. Why does a FPEP have these special morphosyntactic properties? And how can it behave as a main clause in some contexts but as a parenthetical in others?

As for the semantic properties, some linguists have found most FPEPs have no contributions to the content of the utterance. When a FPEP is deleted in the sentence, the proposition will not be changed. Despite the semantic emptiness, most FPEPs enjoy a high frequency in

daily language use. What is the function of these FPEPs? How does the function work? Compared with the FPEPs in English, Chinese FPEPs also present particular morphosyntactic and semantic properties. There are a lot of similarities and a number of differences as well. What motivates these similarities and differences? What will these FPEPs shed on the current linguistic studies? All the questions above are what this study attempts to explore.

There is not much previous effort to the study of FPEPs, though their special pragmatic-semantic and syntactic properties have drawn some attention. For example, Thompson & Mulac (1991) analyze the phrase I think in a great detail. Brinton (1996) highlights the Middle English phrase I gesse, which she calls a "KNOW-type parenthetical" in her book. Palander-Collin (1997) discusses me thinks at great length. All the previous studies mentioned above are concerned with a single parenthetical case, such as I think. None of them touches more than one case of FPEPs. Hence there is no effort paid to generalize the semantic and syntactic properties of this linguistic category or analyze the relation-ship among different FPEPs and those between different languages.

Among several hypotheses about the semantic and pragmatic properties and syntactic status of these parentheticals, this book proposes that the development of FPEPs in semantics, pragmatics and syntax involves a process of grammaticalization. Most FPEPs in modern languages have developed out of "first-person + present tense verb" constructions, which originally carry content meaning only but later on also derive procedural meaning and serve as mitigators or afterthought. And in the same process they have lost the matrix clause status to behave as adjuncts that are independent of the other elements of the sentence.

The term "construction" is traditionally defined as recurrent syntactic patterns (e.g.,Quirk et al.,1985). But linguists in Construction Grammar, acknowledging the interdependence between semantics and

syntax, focus on the form-meaning correspondences in constructions (e.g., Fillmore et al. 1988; Goldberg 1995). This study will adopt a usage-based approach to the study of constructions. When examined in actual use, constructions have the following characteristics: first, they are lexically skewed; second, the lexically constrained constructions are cognitively processed, stored and accessed as a unit; third, these constructions serve interactional functions (Tao & McCarty 2001; Thompson 2001, 2002).

It needs some courage to describe and demonstrate the grammaticalization of constructions, since most grammaticalization studies, up to now, have been concentrated on the lexemes, such as modal auxiliaries and adverbials. Traugott (2003) and Croft (2000) suggest that more attention should be drawn to the grammaticalization of constructions, though grammaticalization is often described as a process by which individual items evolve grammatical functions (e.g. Heine et al. 1991 2). As mentioned above, constructions are also in the process of changing, but there is little effort on the study of their development. This book is also an attempt to make a step forward in this direction.

Following Traugott's understanding of grammaticalization and her suggestion that the development of discourse markers should be included in a theory of grammaticalization (Traugott 1995a), this study holds that the development of FPEPs can also be described as a process of gram-maticalization. But what is crucial is that the conception of grammati-calization itself ought to be somehow revised, to encompass a new view of grammar, i. e., a view according to which grammar structures com-municative and cognitive aspects of language. It concerns with phonology, morphosyntax and semantics, and also involves inferences that arise out of linguistic form.

The development of FPEPs shows certain semantic and syntactic properties that go against some principles of grammaticalization. These principles were suggested in the earlier period of the grammaticalization studies and mainly based on the development of lexemes. So this study

on constructions will also attempt to revise some former principles of grammaticalization and to present a new and more complete understanding of the theory. Certainly this revision effort is not teleological, that is, to justify the development of FPEPs in the process of grammaticalization. Other relevant studies have also suggested that some earlier principles are not consistent with the properties of some grammaticalizing items.
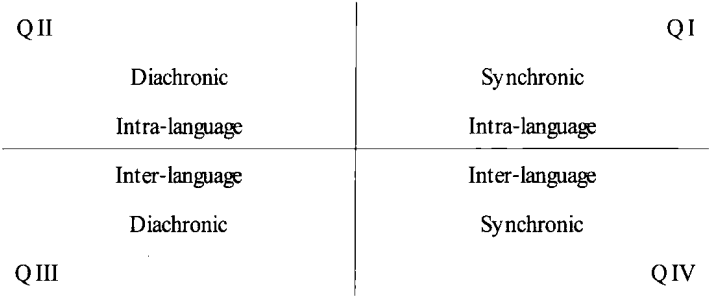
Q II		Q I
Diachronic		Synchronic
Intra-language		Intra-language
Inter-language		Inter-language
Diachronic		Synchronic
Q III		Q IV

Figure 0. 1   The quadrants of contrastive & comparative studies of language

A new perspective is adopted in this study — the perspective of diachronic comparison between English and Chinese. Xu (1992/2002:2) draws a diagram to show the four quadrants of contrastive and comparative studies between languages (see Figure 0. 1, originally in Chinese). Comparative studies between languages in the past mostly belong to the Quadrant I, II, IV, with the third quadrant almost empty (cf. Pan 2002). Studies in Quadrant I are synchronic and within one single language, such as the comparative study of even if and even though, Quadrant II concentrates most historical linguistic studies which deal with the history of some items within one language, such as the development of canonical modal auxiliaries like can and the new modal expressions like have to, want to. Quadrant IV involves synchronic comparative studies between languages. Most comparative studies between English and Chinese in recent decades belong to this quadrant, for example, Lian (1993), Luo (2001), etc.

The emptiness of Quadrant III is partly due to the difficulty in handling the comparative study between languages over such a long time as hundreds or thousands years. It needs a theoretical framework to cover the stages of development. The grammaticalization theory seems to fit well in this field of study, but it has not been widely used in the diachronic comparison between languages. So this book tends to add something to Quadrant III by conducting a diachronic comparative study of FPEPs between English and Chinese, to find the universal mechanisms of change and explore the reasons for the similarities and differences presenting on the synchronic level.

On the basis of the similarities and differences between the two languages in a historical perspective, a diachronic typology between English and Chinese will also be proposed here. This is an attempt to explore the deep mechanisms for the synchronic similarities and differences between the two languages. There are two main reasons for proposing such a study of diachronic typology. First is the diachrony itself. Language change is a universal and essential feature of human language, and by studying the general laws of language change, scholars can explore much more about human language. Secondly, diachronic typology helps to understand synchronic language states better. All languages are constantly in a process of change, in a kind of flux, and many features that do not fit neatly into a synchronic system begin to make sense once a diachronic point of view is taken. This applies both to recent innovations and to remnants of earlier regularities that are no longer synchronically motivated. Language can carry such synchronic irregularities for many generations, and if the goal of linguistic study is the explanation of linguistic structures, then the diachronic considerations must be taken into account.

There are many differences between Present-day English (PDE) and Modern Mandarin (MdMand), many of which are hard to explain on a synchronic level. This diachronic typology will not only describe the development of some items of the two languages but also offer an

explanation to the synchronic similarities and differences between the two languages.

0.3   Assumptions and methods

This study is based on the following assumptions. First, one of the main functions of language is to communicate successfully. To this end, one salient human strategy consists in using linguistic forms with meanings that are concrete, easily accessible, and clearly delineated to express less concrete, less easily accessible, and less clearly delineated meaning contents. Then, lexical or less grammaticalized linguistic expressions are pressed into service for the expression of more grammaticalized functions. Accordingly, grammaticalization is a process whereby expressions for concrete meanings are used in specific contexts to encode grammatical meanings. This process has a number of implications for the structure of the expressions concerned, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 1.

The second assumption is that grammar is a linguistic system and the link between grammar and use is the SP/W-AD/R (addressee/reader) dyad, who negotiate meaning in the interactive ways, both responding to context and creating context. The dyad is of course a simplification. In many situations it is expanded to include multiple addressees, and other participants, e.g. bystanders and eavesdroppers. Although this dyad may appear symmetric and indeed has been memorized as such by models like Saussure's "talking heads" (1993:11), in fact it is not: SP/Ws have mental states and produce meanings that may or may not be understood by AD/Rs in the way intended.

Although both members of the dyad are the grounds in the sense of participants assumed in the context of a particular speech or reading event, the SP/W, when exercising his or her turn, has the central role in the context. The SP/W's central role calls for a production-oriented view of language change, and accounts for why the major type of semantic change is subjectification. Here it must suffice to say that the