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中国境内语言的空间表达

Space in Languages of China

Cross-linguistic, Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives

[法] Dan Xu 主编

世界图书出版公司



中国境内语言的空间表达

Space in Languages of China

From language, space and human perception

2011, 2012, 2013

中国境内语言空间表达

西方语言学与应用语言学视野

西方语言学视野

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Cross-linguistic, Synchronic and
Diachronic Perspectives

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——跨语言、共时和历时视角

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总 序

世界图书出版公司是国内最早通过版权贸易出版影印海外科技图书和期刊的出版机构，为我国的教学和科研做出了重要的贡献。作为读者，我自己也是得益于这项工作的人之一。现在世界图书出版公司北京公司打算引进出版一套“西方语言学视野”系列丛书，一定也会受到广大研究语言、教学语言的人士的欢迎。

世界图书出版公司的宗旨是：把中国介绍给世界，把世界介绍给中国。我认为，从总体上讲，在今后相当长一段时间内，把世界介绍给中国这项任务还是主要的。西方的语言学在过去几十年里的发展和变化是很快的，新理论、新方法、新成果很多，特别是在语言学和其他学科的交叉方面。跟我们的近邻日本相比，据我所知，我们翻译、引进西方语言学著作无论在速度还是数量上都是有差距的。不错，从《马氏文通》开始，我们就在不断地引进和学习西方的语言学理论和方法，有人会问，这样的引进和学习还要继续到哪一天？其实，世界范围内各种学术传统的碰撞、交流和交融是永恒的，我们既要有奋起直追的勇气、独立创新的精神，也要有宽广平和的心态。要使我们的语言研究领先于世界，除了要继承我们传统中的优秀部分，还必须将别人先进的东西学到手，至少学到一个合格的程度，然后再加上我们自己的创新。

这套丛书叫“西方语言学视野”，顾名思义，就是要开拓我们的视野。理论和方法姑且不谈，单就关注的语言而言，我们的视野还不够开阔，对世界上各种各样其他

民族的语言是个什么状况，有什么特点，关心不够，了解得更少，这肯定不利于我们探究人类语言的普遍规律。我们需要多引进一些语言类型学方面的书，看来出版社已经有这方面的考虑和计划。我发现这套丛书中有一本是《历史句法学的跨语言视角》，另一本是《语法化的世界词库》，都是从各种语言的比较来看语言演变的普遍规律，还有一本是《语言与认知的空间——认知多样性探索》，大概是从语言的多样性来看认知方式的多样性。这都是值得我们参考学习的。

请专家给每本引进的书写一个导读，这是一个帮助一般读者阅读原著的好办法。种种原因不能通读原著的人，至少也可以从导读中了解到全书的概貌和要点。最后希望世界图书出版公司能不断给这套丛书增添新的成员，以满足读者的需求。

沈家煊

2007年2月

《中国境内语言的空间表达》

中英双语版序言

放眼世界，世界似乎越来越小了。以前难以跨越的距离（地理、语言、文化及交流方面的障碍），现在几乎都不在话下了。中国人走出国门，外国人来到中国，经济发展加速了学术交流，学术研究又带动了经济发展。谁能想到，曾几何时一本影印的内部交流的外语著作都是稀罕物，而今天中国不少出版公司和欧洲一些出版公司共同携手出版学术著作，共同开拓市场。这一有远见、有意义的举动必定受到广大读者和研究者的欢迎。

本书*Space in Languages of China*（《中国境内语言的空间表达》）于2008年由荷兰著名出版社Springer出版。作者来自中国、法国、美国、日本、澳大利亚等国家。最初的起因是编者于2003年得到了法国政府资助的ACI 03326关于“空间研究”的项目。从那时起，我们就开始了这种“定题做作文”式的探索。多亏各国学者的积极投入和参与，我们的初步探索获得成功，本书也顺利出版。2006年法国政府研究部资助的关于“量和复数的研究”的项目，现在也已经顺利结项，2010年年底，中国商务印书馆出版发行了作者用中文撰写的《量与复数的研究》一书。同时，受益于法兰西大学研究院的资助，作者用英文撰写的文章将在德国柏林的De Gruyter出版社出版。

关于“空间问题的研究”也好，关于“量和复数的研究”也好，主线是一条，都是关于中国境内的语言研究。“中国境内语言”的含义是不言而喻的，即不仅包括汉语（普通话和汉语各大方言），而且包括各种在中国境内使用的或即将消失的、有文字的或

从来无文字记载的各种各样的“非汉语言”。中国的语言是一个宝藏，她为人类语言的研究提供了丰富多彩的样本。由于许多语言没有文字记录，众多语言还未来得及研究、整理，所以比起印欧的历史语言比较研究，我们的差距还相当大。且不说这些研究不够或还未研究的各种语言，即便是汉语，许多问题仍处于探讨阶段，并无定论。如本书收入的十篇文章，大家对某些词的不同术语如“方位词”、“后置词”、“名词附加成分”等，就反映出研究者不同的观点，表明学者们的意见不一致。这正反映了本书希望达到的“百家争鸣”的目的。

为什么本书最初要用英文出版呢（这使母语为中文的学者们颇费了一番工夫）？不少西方普通语言学学家，由于不懂中文，只能读英文文章，所以他们并不了解中国学者的研究到了何种地步，也无法充分利用中国境内语言材料补充、完善有关普通语言学的某些通则。一些西方普通语言学学家的某些观点很可能是读了某些文章产生了误解，许多情况下是因为对中文缺乏感性认识。所以我们中西学者共同探讨同一个题目，研究同一个对象，共同切磋然后发表自己的心得，就显得顺理成章，非常有必要了。当普通语言学家抱怨，中文总是他们研究普遍规则的“死角”时，我们可以从两个角度考虑问题，是否我们的研究过于重视个案研究而缺乏普通语言学的视角？我们也可以这样思考，可能当普通语言学的重点从印欧语言转移到汉藏语言时，许多普遍规律可能会遇到未曾料及的挑战。

徐丹

法国国立东方语言文化学院教授

(Institut National de Langues et Civilisations Orientales)

法兰西大学研究院院士

(Senior Member of the University Institute of France)

2012年2月

Preface

This collective work began in 2004 thanks to Grant Number 03326 awarded by the Research Department of the French Government to the project entitled *L'Espace et ses représentations en Asie orientale à travers divers langages*. The participants are from universities and institutions in several countries, working in various domains. They all have the same strong interest: investigating 'Space' in languages of China. Over the past decade, this topic has been the subject of debate in many disciplines including linguistics and psychology, but there have so far been few studies of Chinese and related languages.

My gratitude goes to the authors, who have supported this project and given their contributions to this book. Our collaboration over the years has been enjoyable and fruitful. We have shared our experiences and exchanged our points of view, which are not always the same. Without their indispensable help and constructive observations, this book would never have been completed.

Many thanks to Craig Baker for his efficient help with editing work in English. I take responsibility for any remaining mistakes.

Dan Xu
Paris

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INTRODUCTION: HOW CHINESE STRUCTURES SPACE

Dan Xu

INALCO/CRLAO, France

Space has long been a popular topic in linguistic research. Numerous books on the subject have been published over the past decade. However, none of these books were based on linguistic data from Chinese. The Chinese language is an “atypical” SVO language¹ and deserves more attention and study. In this volume, contributors working in different specialties present and analyze the expression of space in languages of China. Not only Mandarin Chinese (the standard language) is investigated; several other dialects, as well as a minority language of China and Chinese Sign Language are studied. Cross-linguistic, synchronic and diachronic approaches are used to investigate phenomena related to space. This work does not claim to challenge or revise ongoing theoretical proposals, since the contributors are aware that problems explaining the expressions of space in Chinese have been largely neglected in past research. Even the available data is not very well described. In this book, we try to provide general linguists and those who are interested in the Chinese language with a reliable presentation and description of spatial expressions in Chinese. The papers collected here are empirical, descriptive and sometimes tentative. Our aim throughout has been to stimulate discussion rather than to offer solutions.

In this book, some contributors focus on spatial structures, while others concentrate on spatial terms. In section 1 of the Introduction, the language situation in China is presented. Then, we introduce some important recent debates about the Chinese language. Finally, we give a summary of the articles which study the expression of space using different approaches. As the contributing scholars argue, Chinese shares many common features with other languages, but also presents some particular properties.

1. Language Situation in China

What does “Chinese” mean? It is not easy to give a short answer. The language situation in China is very complex, not only for those who do not know this language, but also for linguists who have been working on it for many years.

Generally speaking, “Chinese” refers to Mandarin², or rather the “standard language” based on Beijing dialect, which is spoken on TV. In almost every province, educated people are bilingual; they speak a dialect and the standard language. Most people can at least understand Mandarin. The Chinese dialects are classified into ten groups³:

- (1) Mandarin: mainly spoken in north of the Yangtze River, and in southern provinces including Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, etc. More than 662 million⁴ people speak Mandarin.

- (2) Jin: spoken in Shanxi province and zones contiguous with this province, for instance some regions of Hebei, Inner Mongolia, Henan and Shaanxi. (45 million)
- (3) Wu: spoken in Shanghai, Zhejiang, etc. (69 million)
- (4) Min: distributed in Fujian, Taiwan, etc. (55 million)
- (5) Hui: attested in Huizhou, Anhui province. (3 million)
- (6) Gan: spoken in Jiangxi. (31 million)
- (7) Hakka: located in zones between Fujian, Guangdong and Jiangxi. (35 million)
- (8) Yue: used in Guangdong, Guangxi, Hongkong, Macao. (40 million)
- (9) Xiang: spoken in Hunan. (30 million)
- (10) Pinghua: found in Guangxi. (2 million).

While people in the North understand each other when they travel across provinces, people in the South cannot communicate easily when they visit a neighboring village. Cantonese is almost as much a “foreign language” for people from Beijing as the Breton language (spoken in Bretagne of France) is for people from Paris. In other words, the mutual intelligibility among Chinese dialects is low. In the South, ancient Chinese pronunciation is better preserved. The evolution source has been in the North, since most capitals in history were located in the North. However, a common cultural and historical background, as well as the same written form, have united the different ethnic groups and dialects for millennia. Recent excavated texts from different provinces show us that as early as the Warring States period (475–221 BC), a large majority of the written forms were similar and had the same origin; only some particles had variant forms. Unfortunately, we do not know their pronunciation since Chinese characters do not directly reflect sounds. Nevertheless, researchers have attempted to reconstruct them using the *Qìèyùn*, the first rime dictionary from 601 BC, the *Shījīng* (Odes) dated from around the eleventh to sixth centuries BC, and phonetic series of characters (see Karlgren, 1957, Fanggui Li, 1980, Pulleyblank, 1991, Baxter, 1992, Sagart, 1999 among others). Works based on these three data sources, especially the eminent research of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) scholars, clearly describe the pronunciation around the time of the *Qìèyùn*. The reconstruction of Old Chinese (11th century BC to first century AD) began in the last century. As expected, there are still many problems and divergent points of view.

The complexity of the Chinese languages is evidently due not only to the vast geographic region where they are spoken; the long time period for which data is available means that assigning different time periods to the history of Chinese is also often a subject of debate. The earliest texts, divinatory texts inscribed on bones and shells (usually called “inscriptions on bones”), can be traced back to the 14th century BC. The style of characters changed over time, but the continuity of the writing system is evident. Scholars working on phonology and syntax, including the contributors to this book, often have different points of view on the division of the history of Chinese into time periods⁵.

Scholars generally agree that Chinese belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language family. However, comparative studies “are still at a relatively primitive level” (Norman, 1988, 13); many problems remain unclear and data is unavailable for many languages. Comparative methods used for Indo-European languages some-times cannot be used because descriptions of languages are incomplete or non-existent. Moreover, investigation of the Sino-Tibetan family is much more complex than Indo-European, because a large portion of the languages have been never investigated and have never had written forms. These non-Han language speakers have permanent contact with Han people (Chinese people) in the South and Southwest. This situation also causes complication in the dialects. Geneticists⁶ propose a continuous southward movement of Han people. Southward migrations “occurred during almost all periods in the past two millennia” (Bo Wen *et al.* 2004, 304). “Studies on classical genetic markers and microsatellites show that the Han people, like East Asians, are divided into two genetically differentiated groups, northern Han and southern Han, separated approximately by the Yangtze river.” (302). Their genetic observation suggests that the Chinese dialects in the North may be less heterogeneous than those in the south. The vast regions of the North have had language contact with the Altaic languages: Mongolian within China, and Manchu spoken in some villages in Heilongjiang province⁷, while in the south contact has been with the Tibeto-Burman family in the West and Southwest, and the Miao-Yao and Tai languages in the South. This presents an intricate situation. The geneticists conclude that “the massive movement of the northern immigrants led to a change in genetic makeup in southern China, and resulted in the demographic expansion of Han people as well as their culture” (304).

Tone systems are characteristic of Chinese and many other Asian languages. However “there is now considerable evidence to suggest that the various tone systems within Sino-Tibetan may not be directly cognate, i.e. that tone systems have developed independently in various branches of the family.” (DeLancey, 1987, 805). The rise of the tone system in Chinese was partially caused by the loss of voiced stops. This process was repeated in other Asian languages such as Thai and Vietnamese (Haudricourt, 1954). Tones evidently compensated for the loss of the distinctive feature of voiced stops. Old Chinese may have possessed clusters. “If the morphology in OC [Old Chinese] was wiped out, the reason seems to be that the one character—one syllable development, urged perhaps by the rise of tones, was not favorable to recording a morpheme containing more than one syllable or clusters.” (Dan Xu, 2006, 2).

Today researchers know that structural resemblances do not imply genetic relationship, and vice versa. Typologically speaking, Chinese has the word order SVO while “all TB [Tibetan-Burman] languages are OV, except for Bai and the Karen languages, which are VO (and more specifically SVO).” (Dryer, 2003, 43; see also Jingqi Fu and Lin Xu in this volume). Dryer has identified “a number of characteristics that are highly atypical of VO languages” in Mandarin. In fact, there seems to be a strong correlation for VO languages to have prepositions and OV languages to have postpositions. In Mandarin, however, both prepositions and postpositions are common (see Dan Xu, 2006, Danqing Liu in this volume).

With this schema in mind, readers will understand why in this book, the topic “Space in languages of China” comprises many approaches and perspectives.

2. Different Approaches to Space in Languages of China

The intent of this volume is for authors working on different domains to focus their investigation on one topic: the expression of space in various languages in China, both oral language and sign language, Mandarin and other Sinitic languages, as well as other languages of China.

In this book, many dialects are examined, including Wu and Yue dialects (Liu Danqing), Waxiang of an unidentified dialect spoken in Hunan (very little research on this dialect has been done, see Yunji Wu), and Jizhou of Hebei province, which is a Mandarin-speaking region (Lamarre). The Bai language, spoken in some regions of Yunnan province, is also investigated (Jingqi Fu and Lin Xu). The linguistic affiliation of Bai has been a topic of debate. Sign language is not ignored in this study (Shun-chiu Yau), whereas previous investigations of space mainly focused on oral language. Almost the entire history of China is covered, from Old Chinese to Middle Chinese, Modern Chinese, and contemporary Mandarin (Chappell and Peyraube, Fuxiang Wu, Chaofen Sun, Qingzhi Zhu and Wenjie Chen, Lamarre, Dan Xu, etc.).

If we can take the vast geographic area of China as a projection of time, we will see that the dialect varieties represent different depths in time. In other words, the different dialects form continuums corresponding to historic periods. The Wu and Xiang dialects still preserve the voiced stops, while in most other Chinese dialects these sounds have disappeared or become distinctive tones. The “entering tones,” which are in fact syllables ending in the stops -p, -t, -k, are well preserved in Yue, Min and Hakka, while in most regions they have been lost (except in some Jin dialects, which are isolated by mountains and seem more conservative for northern dialects). Current dialects present fine-grained patterns to diachronic analyses.

In this book, the following topics are discussed. They are also subjects of current investigations in general linguistics:

- grammaticalization
- typology of motion events (satellite-framed vs. verb-framed languages)
- adpositions (prepositions and postpositions)
- phonological change and its impact on syntax.

2.1. Grammaticalization

Almost all authors in this book have dealt directly or indirectly with the process of grammaticalization. It consists of a lexical item becoming a grammatical item, or a less grammatical element becoming a more grammatical one. The Chinese language offers rich examples of this process, and studies on this subject have flourished for two decades. The Chinese language has always been a serial verb construction language. Almost all prepositions originated from verbs. Some conjunctions also came from verbs. For example, the preposition *zài* grammaticalized from an existence verb (see Danqing Liu, Chaofen Sun in this volume). Evidently, the localizers (particles following an NP and indicating location in space) in Chinese