认知语言学研究・第四辑

顾问:沈家煊 徐盛桓 Ronald Langacker George Lakoff John Taylo

主编:王 寅

现代汉语否定构式的 认知研究

——一项语料库驱动的研究

张立飞 严辰松 著



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Xiandai Hanyu Fouding Goushi de Renzhi Yanjiu — Yi Xiang Yuliaoku Qudong de Yanjiu

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总序(一)

Preface to the Monograph Series "Cognitive Linguistics Research" in China

Ronald W. Langacker San Diego, December 2004

I am most happy to acknowledge and welcome Cognitive Linguistics Research, edited by Professor Wang Yin in China. The time has certainly come for such a series, which will undoubtedly both stimulate and facilitate the continued development of Cognitive Linguistics in that great nation — China.

I vividly recall the moment — one day in the spring of 1976 — when I first decided to attempt the formulation of a new and radically different linguistic theory. The need was readily apparent to scholars with enough grounding in language to apprehend it independently, not solely through the lens of a particular linguistic theory. The major theories of the day were clearly inadequate to accommodate its richness and subtle complexities, especially in regard to meaning. Indeed, the raging controversies of the day (the "Linguistics Wars") seemed increasingly pointless and sterile. The problems with current theory could not, I thought, be rectified through minor adjustments. Only a complete conceptual reformulation could overcome them. An entirely new theoretical framework, erected on totally different foundations, would be necessary.

The personal implications were evident. To the extent that I succeeded in developing something completely different, based on a radically different way of viewing language and linguistic investigation, what I produced would almost certainly fail to be understood or appreciated by other linguistic theorists. The consequence would be professional isolation and marginalization, both in my department and in the discipline. Yet there was never any question about undertaking the project — the prospects were too exciting to do otherwise, and the thought of continuing along familiar lines was far too dreary. So I started. Within a few years, various ideas came together to form the basic outline of the framework (originally called Space Grammar) that has come to be known as Cognitive Grammar. While I had hoped for better, the professional consequences were as expected. Linguists

committed to other theoretical approaches have in general proved quite incapable of grasping the basic ideas of Cognitive Grammar, let alone its descriptive potential and insight.

The first accessible article on Cognitive Grammar — Space grammar, analyzability, and the English passive - appeared in 1982, and the first book -Foundations of Cognitive Grammar, vol. 1, Theoretical Prerequisites in 1987. Of course, numerous other linguists were equally dissatisfied with currently dominant theories and engaged in finding alternatives. Quite a few works that have proved foundational in Cognitive and Functional Linguistics appeared during the same general era. One of the earliest was Chafe's pioneering Meaning and the Structure of Language (1970). Basic ideas of Functional Linguistics began emerging in publications like Givón 1979, Hopper and Thompson 1980, and many others. With respect to Cognitive Linguistics, early and significant efforts include a number of papers by Talmy (e.g. 1978, 1983, 1985), Fauconnier's book Mental Spaces (1985), Lakoff and Johnson's Metaphors We Live By (1980), and Lakoff's Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things (1987). So by 1987 the foundations were in place for Cognitive and Functional Linguistics as we know them today. And while the initial efforts of these and other scholars were largely independent, they soon started to coalesce into a reasonably cohesive and self-conscious intellectual movement.

The institutionalization of Cognitive Linguistics dates from 1989, which saw the meeting of the first International Cognitive Linguistics Conference, the founding of the International Cognitive Linguistics Association, and the launching of both the journal Cognitive Linguistics and the monograph series Cognitive Linguistics Research. What has happened since is too diverse and too extensive for me to attempt even a cursory summary. Suffice it to say that the growth of Cognitive Linguistics has been steady and cumulatively phenomenal. It has steadily gained in breadth of coverage and depth of analysis. It has been applied to an ever broader range of languages and linguistic phenomena. It has vastly expanded our awareness of the many dimensions of linguistic meaning, as well as their ramifications for linguistic structure as well as for the nature of cognition itself. And of course, it has spread to an increasingly wide range of scholars around the world, in linguistics and in other disciplines. There are now generations of linguists who received their primary training in cognitive approaches.

By now Cognitive Linguistics has a substantial following in China and a history of more than a decade. Of course, a decade is a very short time in the history of Chinese scholarship, as is the entire time-span of Cognitive Linguistics to date. Decades from now it may well appear that Cognitive Linguistics in China dates from virtually the beginning of the movement. Certainly I expect it to have had a major impact. This will be guaranteed by the efforts of large numbers of Chinese linguists, the unique perspective afforded by Chinese linguistic tradition, and the analytical challenges posed by the Chinese languages themselves. This new monograph series edited by Professor Wang Yin has every promise of being an important contributing factor to the cognitive linguistics enterprise in China and throughout the world.

Let me offer my congratulations, my encouragement, and my best wishes for its success.

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总 序(二)

王 寅

汉语中的"认知"一词译自英语的Cognition(cognition意为: the action or faculty of knowing, perceiving, conceiving, as opposed to emotion and volition,也可译为"认识"),据《辞海》(1989,1999)解释:认知就是认识,指人类认识客观事物,获得知识的活动,包括知觉、记忆、学习、言语、思维和问题解决等过程。在1979年版的《辞海》中还只有"认识",而没有"认知"这个词条。译作"认知"是随着20世纪60—70年代后在西方兴起的"认知心理学""认知科学""认知语言学"而逐步被我国学者所使用的,到1989年版才收入"认知""认知科学""认知心理学",到1999年版又增加了"认知人类学"。此时,"认知"这一术语才在我国学术界逐步流行开来。

中国社会科学院语言研究所于1978年出版了《现代汉语词典》第1版,其中未收录"认知"这一词条,到2002年的第4版(增补本)还没收入,直到2005年的第5版才收入"认知"这一词条(竟然比《辞海》晚了13年),并将其定义为:"通过思维活动认识、了解。"

至于"认知语言学"这一术语,国外最早是Sidney Lamb (1998: 381) ^① 于1971年提出的,用以指对大脑中的语言的研究及对语言与心智、神经之间关系的研究。但当前国内外学者所说的认知语言学与Lamb的研究方法和内容并不相同,主要指20世纪70年代末源于美国西部地区,80到90年代得到迅猛发展,目前已盛行于欧洲、北美、中国及其他国家,并已渐成主流的一个新兴的语言学流派。

德国学者René Dirven于1989年春天在德国的Duisburg主持召开了第十四届国际LAUD 研讨会(Linguistic Agency University of Duisburg),这次会议也是第一届国际认知语言学大会(The First International Cognitive Linguistics Conference),会议期间成立了国际认知语言学协会(ICLA: International Cognitive Linguistics Association),创办了Cognitive Linguistics期刊(每年4期)。德国的Mouton de Gruyter出版社出版了由Dirven,Langacker,Taylor等主编的《认知语言学研究》(Cognitive Linguistics Research,简称CLR)系列丛书。2004年出版了CLR第28卷,由Radden Günter和Panther Klaus Uwe编纂,书名为Studies in Linguistic Motivation(《语言理据研究》。2005年出版了第29卷,由

① Lamb, Sydney. 1998. Pathways of the Brain: The Neurocognitive Basis of Language. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Beate Hampe编纂,书名为 From Perception to Meaning: Image Schema in Cognitive Linguistics(《从知觉到意义——认知语言学中的意象图式》)。2007年出版了CLR第39卷,书名为Cognitive Sociolinguistics(《认知社会学》)。1993年荷兰John Benjamins出版公司开始发行《语用学与认知》(Pragmatics and Cognition)期刊。ICLA到目前为止分别在德国、美国、比利时、荷兰、瑞典、西班牙、韩国等国召开了9届国际研讨会。

所有这些活动和出版物奠定了认知语言学的坚实基础,使其得到迅猛的发展,为我们研究语言提供了一个崭新的视角和全新的方法,越来越得到普遍承认,形成了结构主义学派和转换生成学派渐渐让位于认知语言学派的趋势,后者已逐步成为主流学派。近二十几年来一大批学者奋斗在这一领域,各类著作和论文如雨后春笋,数量猛增。

Lakoff和Johnson于1980年合作出版了《我们赖以生存的隐喻》(Metaphors We Live By), 1999年出版了《基于身体的哲学——体验性心智以及对西方思想的挑战》(Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought,下文简称《体验哲学》), Lakoff于1987年出版了《女人、火与危险事物——范畴对于心智揭示了什么》(Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind)。

Langacker分别于1987年和1991年出版了《认知语法基础》第1卷和第2卷(Foundations of Cognitive Grammar: Theoretical Prerequisites (Vol. I); Foundations of Cognitive Grammar: Descriptive Application (Vol. II)), 2000年出版了《语法和概念化》(Grammar and Conceptualization)等著作。

Taylor于1989年出版了《语言范畴化——语言学理论中的原型》(Linguistic Categorization: Prototypes in Linguistic Theory)(1995年出第2版,2003年再次修订),1996年出版了《英语中的所有格构式——一项从认知语法角度的研究》(Possessives in English: An Exploration in Cognitive Grammar),2002年出版了《认知语法》(Cognitive Grammar)等。

Johnson于1987年出版了《心智中的身体——意义、想象和推理的身体基础》(The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination & Reason)。Sweetser于1990年出版了《从词源学到语用学——语义结构的隐喻观和文化观》(From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural Aspects of Semantic Structure)。Dirven和Verspoor于1998年出版了《语言与语言学的认知探索》(Cognitive Exploration of Language and Linguistics)。

Ungerer和Schmid于1996年合作出版了《认知语言学导论》(An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics)。Croft和Cruse于2004年合作出版了《认知语言学》(Cognitive Linguistics)。Evans和Green于2006年合作出版《认知语言学入门》(Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction)。这3本书已被国内外很多院校用作研究生的认知语言学课程的教材或主要参考书目。

2004年到2008年期间,荷兰的John Benjamins出版社又出版了由Fried 和Östman主编的《语言的构式语法研究丛书》(Constructional Approaches to Language),到目前为止已出版了5辑:

第1辑为Kuno 和Takami 2004年主编的《语法中的功能限制:论非作格与非宾格的区别特征》(Functional Constraints in Grammar. On the Unergative-Unaccusative Distinction)。

第2辑为Fried和Östman 2004年主编的《从跨语言视角论构式语法》 (Construction Grammar in a Cross-Language Perspective)。

第3辑为Östman和Fried 2005年主编的《构式语法:认知基础和理论扩展》(Construction Grammars: Cognitive Grounding and Theoretical Extensions),大大推动了在认知语言学理论框架中对构式语法的研究。

第4辑2005年出版,由Mirjam Fried和Hans Boas主编,书名为《语法构造: 追根求源》(Grammatical Constructions: Back to the Roots)。

第5辑2008年出版,由Jaakko Leino主编,书名为《构造的重现》(Constructional Reorganization)。

认知语言学的基本观点和研究方法也得到了我国学者的广泛响应,他们从20世纪90年代初开始零散介绍国外这方面的理论和研究成果,90年代中后期至今该领域的研究已初具规模,各大语言研究刊物在这方面发表的文章稳步增多,不少刊物设立了认知语言学专栏,国内还出版了二十多部有关认知语言学研究的专著,如:

- 1. 张 敏(1998)《认知语言学与汉语名词短语》
- 2. 袁毓林(1998)《语言的认知研究和计算分析》
- 3. 熊学亮(1999)《认知语用学概论》
- 4. 王 寅(1999)《论语言符号象似性》
- 5. 石毓智(2000)《语法的认知语义基础》
- 6. 東定芳(2000)《隐喻学研究》
- 7. 赵艳芳(2001)《认知语言学概论》
- 8. 高 原(2003)《照应词的认知分析》
- 9. 蓝 纯(2003)《从认知角度看汉语和英语的空间隐喻》
- 10. 赵彦春(2003)《认知词典学探索》
- 11. 张 辉(2003)《熟语及其理解的认知语义学研究》
- 12. 胡壮麟 (2004) 《认知隐喻学》
- 13. 吴一安(2004)《英汉空间指示语研究》(荷兰John Benjamins 出版社出版)
- 14. 李福印(2004)《应用认知语言学》和《隐喻与认知》

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- 15. 徐德宽(2004)《现代汉语双宾构式研究》
- 16. 王 寅(2005)《认知语言学探索》
- 17. 陈 忠(2005)《认知语言学研究》
- 18. 石毓智(2006)《语法的概念基础》
- 19. 卢 植(2006)《认知与语言》
- 20. 王 寅(2006)《认知语法概论》
- 21. 沈家煊(2006)《认知与汉语语法研究》
- 22. 王义娜(2006)《指称的概念参照视点——认知语篇学的探索》
- 23. 王 寅(2007)《认知语言学》
- 24. 王 寅(2007)《中西语义理论对比研究初探——基于体验哲学 和认知语言学的思考》等
- 25. 刘国辉(2007)《语言语用及认知研究》
- 26. 刘正光(2007)《隐喻的认知研究》
- 27. 牛保义(2007)《认知语言学理论与实践》

近年来,一批从事语言学研究的博士生(包括外语界和汉语界)也对 认知语言学情有独钟,撰写了很多篇高质量的博士论文。

所有这些研究,使得认知语言学逐步成为我国语言学界研究的一大热 点,并形成了初具规模的研究队伍。

特别是进入21世纪后,我国的认知语言学研究更是呈现出一派欣欣向荣的大好景象,队伍大有发展,论述逐步深入,成果更为丰硕,呈现出系统化、多元化的研究格局:从介绍综述走向专题研究,从理性探索走向语言教学和人工智能的应用,从单语分析走向汉外对比,从理论基础阐述走向对认知方式或认知策略 [Cognitive Strategy,又叫认知工具(Cognitive Tool),主要包括:体验(Embodiment)、原型(Prototype)、范畴化(Categorization)、概念化(Conceptualization)、认知模式(包括框架等)(Cognitive Model)、意象图式(Image Schema)、隐喻(Metaphor)、识解(Construal)、语法化(Grammaticalization)、激活(Activation,Trigger)、关联(Relevance)、概念融合(Conceptual Blending)等]的透视等。

与此同时,为促进我国认知语言学研究的进一步发展,以认知语言学为主题的全国性学术活动也相继进行。苏州大学于2000年4月7日至12日举办了全国第一期认知语言学讲习班,学员近百名,世界著名认知语言学家 John Taylor教授以及苏州大学王寅等教授共作了8场报告。2001年10月上海外国语大学举办了全国第一届认知语言学研讨会。2002年10月19日至24日,苏州大学举办了全国第二期认知语言学讲习班,学员有来自全国高校的教师和研究生150多名,世界著名认知语言学家美国加州大学圣地亚哥

分校Fauconnier教授,中国社会科学院语言研究所所长沈家煊研究员,河南大学徐盛桓教授、上海外国语大学束定芳博士以及苏州大学王寅、汪榕培等教授共为学员作了8场报告。讲习班后,接着于25日至27日苏州大学召开了全国第二届认知语言学研讨会,与会代表160余名,讲习班上的报告人在大会上又作了主题发言,世界著名认知语言学家、美国加州大学圣地亚哥分校Langacker教授还专为大会发来贺信。2004年4月17日至25日西南师范大学举办了全国第三期认知语言学讲习班及全国第三届认知语言学研讨会。这次讲习班先后邀请了Langacker、徐盛桓、熊学亮、束定芳、石毓智、沈家煊、程琪龙、王寅等教授讲学,来自国内40余所高校近120位学者参加了这次讲习班。此后,认知语言学研讨会每两年举办一次,各类讲习班更是连续不断。

虽说认知语言学在西方于20世纪80年代才算正式建立起来,但人们运用"认知和心智"的方法来研究语言由来已久,尤其值得称道的是在我国汉语界从"认知和功能"角度研究语言已经取得了很多成果,这是因为汉语自身的特点更适合从这个角度来进行研究。不仅"他山之石,可以攻玉",而且"我山之石,亦可攻玉",当今,我们既要借鉴西方学者的理论,也要学习我国汉语界的语言研究成果,只有将中西语言理论结合起来,洋为中用,中西结合,才能对复杂的语言现象作出更为合理的解释,提出更具解释力的理论框架,尽早走出语言的迷宫。

正是这些国内外学者的共同努力,使得世界范围内的认知语言学不断 走向新高潮,在我国出现了汉语学界与外语学界齐头并进的喜人局面。确 实呈现出一派研究认知语言学的欣欣向荣的景象。

为了适应当前国内外语言学研究迅猛发展的趋势,进一步推动我国认知语言学的深入发展,展示我国和外国学者在这一领域的最新研究成果,并考虑到国内尚无专门出版物反映这方面的信息,高等教育出版社和四川外语学院商定将定期编纂出版《认知语言学研究》。本系列出版物将借鉴德国Mouton de Gruyter出版社出版 Cognitive Linguistic Research 的经验,既包括个人专著,也包括专题论文汇编。十分感谢高等教育出版社、四川外语学院以及国内认知语言学界的专家学者对本书所给予的大力支持和鼓励。

语言的认知研究前景广阔,我们为此感到兴奋和自豪。但此项研究仍有漫长的道路要走,我们更感任重道远。要能从认知角度揭示出语言中深远的奥秘,撩开其透明度不高的面纱,走出语言的迷宫,学者尚须努力。 "路曼曼其修远兮,吾将上下而求索。"我们当以此共勉。

继往开来,让我们沿着前辈的足迹不断发展语言理论,有所建树; 承前启后,让后来者能踏着我们的肩膀奋力向上攀登,超越我们!

摘 要

现代汉语句子否定的功能主要由3个否定词来实现,即"不""没""别"。它们在汉语中的分布以及各自的语法意义一直是汉语研究的热点问题。学界分别从主观与客观、静态与动态、过程与非过程、离散与连续、"不"的黏合说、"不"的焦点说等对有关问题做了多方面的探讨,并解释了很多相关的语言现象。但已有研究尚不能令人满意,主要表现为:对3个否定词的探讨不均衡,对否定词分布的描述不全面,对有些现象的解释缺乏说服力。

本书从认知语言学的角度探讨现代汉语否定句的形式和意义。对否定句形式的研究以认知语言学基于用法的思想为理论框架,用语料库的方法,描述3个否定词在现代汉语中的分布,并从构式的角度进行描写和解释;对否定句意义的研究则以人们对现实性的认识为出发点,从现实与非现实的角度探讨3个否定词的语法意义,认为"没"否定现实范畴,"不"和"别"分别否定非现实范畴的认识模式和意愿模式,并从语言类型学的角度进行验证。

本书在以下4个方面体现了创新:

第一,对汉语3个否定词的分布做了全面细致的描述。3个否定词中, "不"和"没"的分布较为广泛,能出现在多种语境中,实现不同的功能。相比之下,"别"的功能则较为单一。具体来讲,"不"主要用来表示:1)对事物性状的否定;2)对惯常行为的否定;3)对将来行为的否定;4)对人或物所处位置的否定;5)对心理状态的否定;6)对正在进行的动作的否定;7)对抽象关系的否定;8)表示情理或道义上的不允许;9)对能力的否定;10)对可能性的否定。"没"主要用来表示:1)对存在的否定;2)对领有关系的否定;3)否定动作的实现;4)对体貌、身势、存在等状态的否定;5)否定心理状态的实现;6)否定动作的历时性;7)对比较关系的否定;8)对人或物所处位置的否定;9)否定动作的进行;10)对预设的强烈反驳。"别"则主要用来表示说话人的否定性意愿。此外,还对"不"和"没"不同功能在书面语及口语中的使用频率做了统计分析。

第二,从认识观,即人们对现实世界认知的角度对3个否定词的语法意义做了阐述。共用同一个否定词的不同句子必然存在功能上的一致性,即具有统一的语法意义。本书的观点是:汉语中3个否定词的分工从形式上体现了现实与非现实在语义上的对立。具体来说,"没"否定的句子都属于现实语义范畴,而"不"和"别"否定的句子则分别属于非现实语义范畴的认识模式和意愿模式。这一论断不仅建立在语义分析的基础上,还从

汉语内部找到了形式上的佐证,并从类型学角度提供了跨语言的证据。

第三,运用基于用法的模式来描述和解释汉语中否定词的分布。基于用法的模式体现了认知语言学的思想,它有4个基本的方面:实际语料对语法的构建作用、语法的构式观、使用事件的范畴化以及频率对语言结构的影响。上述4个方面在本书中都得到了充分的体现。如书中对一些特殊的否定构式进行了分析,例如"没+敢+VP","没+来得及/顾得上+VP"等。这些构式最大的特点就是语义上的非合成性,即整体意义不等于部分意义之和,对其意义的考察必须着眼于整个结构。再如,一些与否定词分布有关的语言现象体现了使用频率对语言结构的影响。例如,汉语的"没"不能与现实性体标记"了"共现,以往所说的语义上不兼容的解释并不令人满意。通过对"没"的历时考察,本书认为,现代汉语中"没"与"了"的不兼容实际上是构式"没+VP+了"在频率的作用下发生了形式上的弱化,从而导致"了"的脱落。

第四,为现实与非现实在概念上的对立在汉语中找到了形式上的体现。汉语句子否定词体现了两个范畴的融合:其一是否定,表现形式是显性的否定词;其二是现实性,表现形式是否定词的分布。现实与非现实这对概念范畴在世界许多语言中都有形式上直接的体现。在汉语中,它们在句子否定这个范畴上得到了间接的体现。这进一步证明了现实和非现实这对概念范畴作为普遍语言范畴的存在。

关键词:不;没;别;句子否定;否定构式;情态;现实;非现实;认识模式;意愿模式

Abstract

In contemporary Chinese Language, there are three major sentence negators, namely bu, mei and bie. Their functional distribution in the language and the grammatical meaning of each of these negators have been the focus of Chinese linguistic studies for many years. Previous studies have addressed the issues in various accounts, such as subjectivity vs. objectivity, static vs. dynamic, process vs. non-process, discreteness vs. continuality, etc. But the results are not quite satisfactory, in that the discussion of the three negators is unbalanced, the description of the distribution of the three negators is not exhaustive and the explanation of some linguistic facts is not convincing.

This book investigates the form and meaning of the Chinese negative constructions from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. Based on the framework of the usage-based model, and driven by both written and oral corpora, the present study gives an exhaustive description of the three negators in the form of negative constructions. On this basis, the grammatical meanings of the three negators are analyzed in terms of human cognition of reality. Specifically, *mei* is used to negate sentences of realis modality, while *bu* and *bie* are used respectively to negate epistemic mode and volition mode of irrealis modality. Typological evidences are also provided to support this analysis.

In sum, the originality of the present work is manifested in the following four aspects:

Firstly, we give an exhaustive and detailed account of the distribution of the three negators in Chinese. In this regard, both bu and mei are widely distributed and can occur in many linguistic contexts and perform various functions, while bie can be used only in limited contexts and its function is relatively restricted. To be more specific, bu can be used to negate: 1) characteristics and states; 2) habitual behaviors; 3) future actions; 4) locations; 5) mental states; 6) progressive actions; 7) abstract relations; 8) permission; 9) abilities; 10) possibilities. Mei is mainly used to negate: 1) existence; 2) possession; 3) realized actions; 4) appearance and posture; 5) changing of mental states; 6) experienced actions; 7) comparison; 8) locations; 9) actions in progress; 10) presupposition. In contrast, bie is mainly used to express the speaker's negative volition. We have also made a statistic analysis of the use

of bu and mei in both written and oral corpora in terms of their different functions.

Secondly, we have worked out the grammatical meanings of the three negators in terms of epistemology. "One form, one meaning" is a tenet of functional linguistics. Thus it follows that all sentences negated by the same negator must have commonalities in function, i.e., they share one grammatical meaning. We propose that the functional distribution of the three negators represent formally the semantic dichotomy of realis and irrealis modality. Our view is not only based on solid semantic analysis and supported by formal evidence in Chinese, but is also backed up by typological evidence from other languages.

Thirdly, our analysis creatively utilizes the usage-based model to investigate and interprete the distribution of Chinese negators. Generally speaking, usage-based model is in accordance with cognitive linguistics and features the following four stances: shaping of grammar by actual language use, constructional view of grammar, categorization of usage events and frequency effects on language structures. All these are incorporated in the present study and make it a feasible and worthwhile effort. For instance, we have discovered some special constructions, such as mei+gan+VP, mei+laideji/ gudeshang+VP, etc. These constructions are characterized by semantic noncompositionality, i.e., the meaning of the whole structure doesn't amount to the totality of the meanings of its components. Its meaning must be analyzed with regard to the whole construction. Also, we have found that some language facts concerning the distribution of negators can be explained in terms of frequency effects on language structure. For example, as is well known in Chinese, mei cannot co-occur with the aspect marker le. The previous explanation that draws on semantic incompatibility is not quite satisfactory. Based on a diachronic analysis of mei, we conclude that the incompatibility of mei and le is in fact a manifestation of reduction effect that frequency has on language structure.

Lastly, our study has also discovered the formal realization of semantic dichotomy between realis and irrealis in Chinese. In a way, the Chinese negators incorporate two semantic categories. One is negation, which is realized formally by negators themselves, and the other is reality status, which is realized formally by the distribution of negators. In some languages, the conceptual dichotomy of realis and irrealis is realized directly through grammatical morphemes, while in Chinese, it is reflected indirectly with