

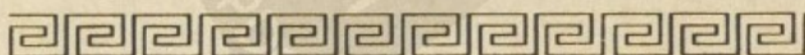
SELECTED WORKS OF MODERN CHINESE LEARNING

A GRAMMAR OF SPOKEN CHINESE

Yuen Ren Chao



商務印書館
The Commercial Press





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Yuen Ren Chao

(1892–1982)



Editorial Note

One hundred years ago, Zhang Zhidong tried to advocate Chinese learning by saying: "The course of a nation, be it bright or gloomy, the pool of talents, be it large or small, are about governance on the surface, and about learning at the root." At that time, the imperialist powers cast menacing eyes on our country, and the domestic situation was deteriorating. The quick infiltration of Western learning made the long-standing Chinese tradition come under heavy challenge. In those days, Chinese learning and Western learning stood side by side. Literature, history and philosophy split up, while many new branches of learning such as economics, politics and sociology were flourishing, which made many Chinese dazed. However, there appeared a vital and vigorous learning climate out of the confusing situation. It was at this critical moment that modern Chinese scholarship made the transition—by exchanging views, basing on profound contemplation and even with confrontation of idea and clash of views, the scholarship made continuous progress, bringing up a large number of persons of academic distinction and creating numerous innovative works. Changes in scholarship and in general modes of thinking made transition in all aspects of the society possible, thus laying a solid foundation for revitalizing China.

It's over a century since the journey of modern Chinese learning started, during which various schools of thought stood in great numbers, causing heated discussions. The journey sees schools of thought as well as relevant arguments rising and

falling, waxing and waning instantly, leaving complicated puzzles to followers. By studying and reviewing the selected works, one may gain new insights into that journey; and it is the editor's sincere hope that readers would ponder over the future by recalling the past. That's why we have compiled "Selected Works of Modern Chinese Learning". The effort includes masterpieces of celebrated scholars from diverse fields of study and different schools of thought. By tracing back to the source and searching for the basis of modern Chinese learning, we wish to present the dynamics between thought and time.

The series of "Selected Works of Modern Chinese Learning" includes works (both in Chinese and in foreign languages) of scholars from China—mainland, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan—and from overseas. These works are mostly on humanities and cover all fields of subjects, such as literary theory, linguistics, history, philosophy, politics, economics, jurisprudence, sociology, to name a few.

It has been a long-cherished wish of the Commercial Press to compile a series of "Selected Works of Modern Chinese Learning". Since its foundation in 1897, the Commercial Press has been privileged to have published numerous pioneering works and masterpieces of modern Chinese learning under the motto of "promoting education and enlightening people". The press has participated in and witnessed the establishment and development of modern Chinese learning. The series of "Selected Works of Modern Chinese Learning" is fruit of an effort to relay the editorial legacy and the cultural propositions of our senior generations. This series, sponsored by National Publication Foundation, would not be possible if there were no careful planning of the press itself. Neither would it be possible without extensive collaboration among talents of the academic circle. It is our deeply cherished hope that titles of this series

will keep their place on the bookshelves even after a long time. Moreover, we wish that this series and “Chinese Translations of World Classics” will become double jade in Chinese publishing history as well as in the history of the Commercial Press itself. With such great aspirations in mind, fearing that it is beyond our ability to realize them, we cordially invite both scholars and readers to extend your assistance.

Editorial Department of the Commercial Press

December 2010



或者
一不冷静就说出些
中邪的话的
例子

所以
我这部书

给读者

新学知

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CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	7
PREFACE	9
USAGES OF THIS BOOK	13
1. Characters Used	13
2. Glossing	15
3. List of Symbols	17
4. Abbreviated Characters	21
5. Abbreviated References to Frequently Cited Works	24
6. Abbreviations for Frequently Occurring Morphemes and Grammatical Terms	27
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION	29
1. 1. Grammar	29
1. 2. Spoken Chinese	40
1. 3. Phonology	47
Chapter 2 THE SENTENCE	80
2. 1. General Observations	80
2. 2. Minor Sentences	83
2. 3. Structure of the Full Sentence	90
2. 4. The Grammatical Meaning of Subject and Predicate	92
2. 5. The Logical Predicate	101
2. 6. Subject and Predicate as Question and Answer	104
2. 7. The Full Sentence as Made Up of Minor Sentences	105
2. 8. Types of Subjects	106

2. 9. Types of Predicates	110
2. 10. Full Sentence (S-P) Predicates	118
2. 11. Compound Sentences	127
2. 12. Complex Sentences	131
2. 13. Pivotal Constructions	147
2. 14. Planned and Unplanned Sentences	152
 Chapter 3 WORD AND MORPHEME	159
3. 1. General	159
3. 2. Free and Bound Forms	166
3. 3. Prosodic Aspects	169
3. 4. Substitution and Separation	178
3. 5. Words in Functional Frames	183
3. 6. The Word as a Unit of Meaning	189
3. 7. Word Identity and Morpheme Identity	192
3. 8. Definitions and Tests for the Syntactic Word	205
3. 9. Synoptic Tables of Word-Like Units	210
 Chapter 4 MORPHOLOGICAL TYPES	214
4. 1. General	214
4. 2. Reduplication	218
4. 3. Prefixes	230
4. 4. Suffixes	239
4. 5. Infixes	276
 Chapter 5 SYNTACTICAL TYPES	277
5. 1. Expressions and Constructions	277
5. 2. Coordination	281
5. 3. Subordination	292
5. 4. Verb-Object (V-O) Constructions	319

5. 5. Verbal Expressions in Series	342
5. 6. Verb-Complement Constructions	366
Chapter 6 COMPOUNDS	375
6. 1. Nature and Classification of Compounds	375
6. 2. Subject-Predicate (S-P) Compounds	384
6. 3. Coordinate Compounds	388
6. 4. Subordinative Compounds	397
6. 5. Verb-Object (V-O) Compounds	430
6. 6. Verb-Complement (V-R) Compounds	449
6. 7. Complex Compounds	494
Chapter 7 PARTS OF SPEECH SUBSTANTIVES	509
7. 1. General Observations on Parts of Speech	509
7. 2. Nouns	518
7. 3. Proper Names	526
7. 4. Place Words	532
7. 5. Time Words	545
7. 6. D-M Compounds	563
7. 7. N-L Compounds	574
7. 8. Determinatives	575
7. 9. Measures	595
7. 10. Localizers	631
7. 11. Pronouns	638
7. 12. Other Substitutes	668
Chapter 8 VERBS AND OTHER PARTS OF SPEECH	673
8. 1. Verbs (Including Adjectives)	673
8. 2. Prepositions (K)	755
8. 3. Adverbs (H)	772

8.4. Conjunctions	793
8.5. Particles	798
8.6. Interjections	817
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	822
INDEX	829
SYNOPSIS OF TONAL SPELLING	856



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Initials	50
Table 2. Finals	52
Table 3. Finals in All Tones	58
Table 4. Syllabic Types	59
Table 5. Retroflex Finals	72—73
Table 6. Morphemes	212
Table 7. Morpheme Complexes	213
Table 8. Correlation Between Compounding and Lexicality	380
Table 9. German Separable Prefixes and Chinese Directional Complements, Types 1, 2, and 3	472
Table 10. Parts of Speech	517
Table 11. Monosyllabic Determinatives After Prepositions	539
Table 12. Dissyllabic Position Words	541
Table 13. Relative Time Words	558
Table 14. <i>Shanq-</i> and <i>Shiah-</i> as Applied to <i>Shyuechi</i>	559
Table 15. Complex D-M Compounds	568—569
Table 16. Quantitative Determinatives and Measures	596—597
Table 17. Types of Measures	631
Table 18. Classification of Verbs	675
Table 19. Schematic Table of Prepositions	773
Table 20. Skewed Functions of <i>hao</i> and <i>nan</i>	783
Table 21. Demonstrative and Interrogative Adverbs	793

PREFACE

When I translated my *Cantonese Primer* into Mandarin—for that was what *Mandarin Primer* essentially was—I was going to use the same eight pages on grammar, except for some minor points in which Cantonese and Mandarin differ grammatically. But Fang-Kuei Li insisted that I write a fuller grammatical chapter, and so it was subsequently expanded to thirty-seven pages. No sooner, however, was *Mandarin Primer* published, in 1948, than Lien-Sheng Yang began to furnish me with additional materials and urged me to write a full-length book on the subject. For some time I had been jotting down notes and had written some articles on special topics in the grammar of spoken Chinese, but it was not until 1954, when I went to Europe on a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, that I decided to make a book project of it. Everybody laughed at my going to Europe for Chinese grammar. But when it was possible to exchange ideas with European students of modern Chinese, with men like Harry Simon, who were not only able to take part in but even conduct discussion groups in Chinese, with the whole paraphernalia of new terms, I found that going to Europe for Chinese grammar was, to change the figure a little, not entirely a matter of 东辕西辙.

Preoccupation with other, though related, matters delayed my progress on the book, but during my sojourn in the Orient in 1959 I was able to make profitable contacts, both in the way of theoretical discussion and in the collecting of raw material in the form of tape recording of live conversation.

Most of the actual writing of the book was, however, not begun until the fall of 1960, when the grammar project was given additional impetus by a grant under the National Defense Education Act of the Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, under the terms of which I was able to obtain