Modern Chinese Analytic Syntax

Vol. I

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Introduction

The aim of this Little Primer is not to create any new theory of Chinese grammar. It is to enable the student to appreciate Chinese language structure, or to *pīnjiă* 品句, to taste sentences, to develop a discriminating taste for phrases. The aim is to systematically develop the student’s analytical sensibilities towards the intricate structural patterns Chinese sentences make. The method of this work crucially involves visualisation. The student is encouraged to visualise his/her structural perceptions through diagrams. The student is encouraged to learn the graphic conventions of these diagrams as an analytical language.

Leonhard Euler’s *Lettres à une princesse d’Allemagne* (written in 1761 and published in St Petersburg in 1768) popularised Leibniz’s devices for illustrating logical relations by geometrical analogies. Euler’s circles became important tools for the visualisation of logical structure, particularly the syllogism. Li Jinxi 黎锦熙 (1890 -1978) has made a crucial contribution to the study of Chinese grammar by presenting a comprehensive set of grammatical analyses in graphic form. In this Little Primer I hope to present a graded strategy for the visualisation of some problems in the description of Chinese language structure for beginning Western students of the Chinese language.

The graphic conventions outlined in this Little Primer aim to provide a basis for classroom discussion. On the one hand, this has severely restricted the range of problems I have wanted to bring up for detailed discussion and analysis. On the other hand this has caused me to keep closer to traditional school grammar - and to Chinese grammatical conventions - than I might have wished to under different circumstances. It is hoped that the additional material provided in the form of supplementary exercises and additional remarks may serve as a basis for wider discussions. This is a discussion book and not an instruction book to learn Chinese from.

The paragraphs marked with asterisks (*) contain exercises one might or might not want to use. Paragraphs with several asterisks (**, ***)) contain graded material to be discussed with advanced or especially interested students and conveniently skipped by beginning students.

My debt to Chinese (and some Western) works will be obvious to specialists. I have not hesitated to take over example sentences from the Chinese works although I have always felt free to analyse them my own way. I am profoundly indebted to Lu Jianming 陸燁明 and to Ma Zhen 马真 from Peking University for their generous and enthusiastic help, and for their

Note, incidentally, that Latin *sapientia* "wisdom" comes from *sapere* "to have a taste for" hence: "to be wise".
spirited opposition at many points.\textsuperscript{2} 

The present preliminary version of the Little Primer consists of fifteen chapters of set readings. By the end of the course, the students are summarily introduced to the grammar of chéngyǔ 成語 in order to lead them on to the study of classical Chinese.

I emphasise: The grammatical analyses proposed as examples in this Little Primer are intended as topics for classroom discussion and for comparison with rival analyses to be supplied by students and teachers. They are not proposed as definitive analyses in any sense. The structural descriptions are inevitably tentative at many points.

This Little Primer has a number of special features:

1. emphasis on syntactic ambiguities
   I pay consistent attention to the structural and semantic ambiguities of Chinese phrases as diagnostic environments for the determination of structural features of the language. It has proved natural and important to place a great deal of emphasis on minimally contrastive pairs. The ambiguities indicate the range of readings between which intonation, stress, pauses, pragmatic context etc. often (but not always) enable us to choose. A sequence of written morphemes will often be ambiguous in isolation and in principle, while in context and with a given intonation that same sequence is not ambiguous at all.

2. word stress and distinctive constituent stress
   It was found especially important to discuss the question how intonation will disambiguate between the different possible readings of a sequence of morphemes. An experimental attempt is also made here to mark natural stress patterns for Chinese words and some expressions where stress seems grammatically important.

3. degrees of lexicalisation (cshuó 詞化)
   The second volume of this Little Primer pays consistent attention to the question to what degree a string of morphemes on a given reading has achieved wordhood and is lexicalised.

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4. degrees of grammaticalisation (xūhūa 虚化)
The second volume of this Little Primer pays consistent attention to the question to what extent a given usage on a given reading involves grammaticalised uses of words or phrases.

5. stylistic registers (fēnggé 風格)
The second volume of this Little Primer pays progressive attention to the distinctive stylistic features of words, phrases and constructions under a given interpretation.

6. historical dimensions of morphology and syntax
The historical registers of Chinese are an integral part of the study of the linguistic pattern a sentence makes, especially at a slightly more advanced level. I therefore introduce graphic devices that integrate a historical perspective into the grammatical analysis, in addition to the - separate- stylistic analysis.

By way of a concluding appendix I have introduced grammatical analyses of classical Chinese sayings (chéngyǔ 成語) based on classical Chinese literature through the ages, and of various forms of traditional colloquial sayings (yànyǔ 諺語 etc.) mainly based on the colloquial literature of the Yuan (1260-1368 A.D.), Ming 明 (1368-1644 A.D.) and Qing 清 (1644-1911 AD) dynasties. The emphasis on chéngyǔ 成語 may seem excessive but it has turned out to be a useful introduction to the study of classical Chinese grammar.

There are profound and pervasive links between modern morphology and classical syntax. There are intimate connections between many modern idioms and classical as well as pre-modern colloquial syntax. Disregarding these historical links in the investigation of modern Chinese grammar amounts to disregarding a crucial distinctive feature of Modern Standard Chinese language structure: the extraordinarily varying depth of historical resonance in Chinese syntax and vocabulary.

It is the ambition of this Little Primer to sensitise the student to the modulations of such historical, stylistic, and structural resonances on all levels of linguistic analysis so that he/she may become a Hányǔ dài zhìyín 漢語的知音 “a connoisseur of the Chinese language” - though not necessarily an aspiring theoretical linguist.

Terminological preliminary: what is Chinese?
It is customary to refer to the variety of the dialect of Peking which is promulgated as a standard language for school instruction throughout China as Modern Standard Chinese or simply as “modern Chinese”. Since there are standards also for other dialects of Chinese (or: languages of the Sinitic group), it might be less ambiguous to refer to Modern Standard Chinese as
Mandarin, but this term translates the obsolete Chinese term guānhuà 官話 “language of the officials” and is therefore highly problematic. Ivanov and Polivanov 1930:28 could still maintain that “a commonly Chinese colloquial language not linked to a certain dialect of a class [все определенного классового диалекта обще-китайский язык], (i.e. a koiné [common language C.H.] of mass social significance) does not exist.”

Arguably, the situation has changed in China today. But the terminological confusion in Modern Chinese certainly is no less than in English even today. (Cf. Li Chi 1957 on the notion pǔtōnghuà 普通话) Jerry Norman 1988:136 discusses the following common terms:

1. Guānhuà 官話 “Mandarin”
2. báihuà 白話 “vernacular”
3. guóyǔ 国语 “national language”
4. pǔtōnghuà 普通话 “the common language”
5. Hányǔ 汉语 “language of the Hán”
6. Zhōngguóyǔ 中國語 “language of China”
8. Huáyǔ 华语 “Chinese talk” [used mainly in Singapore, Hong Kong etc.]

One might add:
9. báihuà-wén 白話文 “vernacular writing”.

In Taiwan the correct standard is called biāozhün 標准 “norm” while in Peking it is called guīfàn 規范 “standard”. But as it happens the two standards/norms are grammatically near-identical, being based very largely, in both cases, on the literature of the nineteenthies and -forties.

All these terms are clearly open to objection, and so is any English term one settles for.

In English I choose the term Modern Standard Chinese (MSC) without any particular enthusiasm, hoping that the term will perhaps cause the least offence, although I am aware that it misleadingly implies the absence of such things as Modern Standard Cantonese.
Chapter 1
Word Stress

The importance of stress comes out in pairs like the English permit/permit, where we use a dot under the stressed syllable in order to indicate stress. In English such stress contrasts tend to be distinct and clear. In Chinese, word stress - which manifests itself most prominently not only in the loudness but even more in the length of a syllable - is much more a matter of degree, and indeed of controversy. There is a great deal of individual variation of Peking speakers when it comes to word stress (as there is among English speakers regarding such pairs as research/research). Even when the lexical stress in the citation form is clear, there is a significant tendency towards neutralisation of many stress features in natural speech. Moreover, it is important to recognise that there are many words like rénmín 人民 in Chinese where there is an even stress pattern with two equal peaks. The use of two dots to indicate even stress is, of course, problematic because the dot does not in this context indicate primary stress. The notation is practically necessary only to differentiate in the manuscript between cases where I have not been able to make up my mind on stress patterns, and where I have decided that there is an even stress pattern.

In English you do have to choose between research and reseach and no speakers will normally say anything like research. You cannot have an even stress on both syllables in any bisyllabic word in English. Here we have an important contrast with stress in Chinese. On the other hand, even those speakers of English who always say research are well aware that those who use research will use this form only for the noun, not for the verb. In this way there are important similarities between stress distinctions in Chinese and in English.

Stress assigned in this Little Primer always relates to an expression under the interpretation as indicated in the translation. The stress markings try to keep as close as possible to an indication of what is perceived as the most representative and typical stress pattern in a normal citation form of the word or expression under that interpretation. Contrastive stress within a larger pragmatic context as well as any contextually conditioned deviation from the normal citation form of the stress pattern are disregarded.

Moreover, what I indicate in this Little Primer is just one stress pattern that has emerged as common and natural in Peking Standard Chinese speech. Listing up variants, where applicable, would have led too far. Disregarding stress, on the other hand, is a profound mistake. The contrastive pairs below are designed to illustrate the systematic importance of word stress in Modern Standard Chinese. By way of an introduction we concentrate on binomes.
The distribution of the completely unstressed zero tone is relatively clear much of the time:

*dìxià* 地下 EARTH UNDER “underground”
*dìxià* 地下 EARTH UNDER “on the ground”

Learning Chinese is, among other things, learning to distinguish between pairs like these. A primer of Chinese which disregarded such contrasts would be pitifully inadequate.

Here are some more examples:

*xiàluò* 下落 DOWN FALL “fall”
*xiàluò* 下落 DOWN FALL “whereabouts”

*xiàchāng* 下場 GO-DOWN FIELD “make an appearance”
*xiàchāng* 下場 DOWN FIELD “ending”

It seems natural to regard the form with the toneless final syllable as the derived marked form.

In principle, phonetic contrasts of this sort can also occur among words made up of different morphemes:

*xiàzuò* 下座 GET-DOWN SEAT “leave seat”
*xiàzuò* 下作 LOW DO “vulgar”

* Consider the following pair and decide why it is not a case of stress as a distinctive feature:

*shuōshuò* 說說 TALK TALK “say a little, talk a little”
*shuōshuò* 說說 CONVINCE TALK “go round proselytising for a belief”

The recognition of the distinctive zero tone is necessary for the explanation of this sort of very common minimal contrast. This is why good dictionaries of Standard Modern Chinese will indicate zero stress in one way or another in order to distinguish these different words. Excellent dictionaries might even indicate when a form systematically permits both zero stress and reduced stress. Thus one might want to claim that there is a slight but not entirely negligible difference between the following pairs:

*shuō-fǎ* 說法 SPEAK DHARMA “preach Buddhism”
*shuō-fǎ* 說法 SPEAK METHOD “way of speaking”

and

*kàn-fǎ* 看法 SEE LAW “pay due attention to the law” (cf. *kàn fǎ bù kàn rén* 看法不看人 “pay attention to the law and not to the persons involved”.)
*kànfǎ* 看法 SEE METHOD “view”
We note that in shuō-fū “preach Buddhism” lexicalisation is much less tight, and one might think of this construction as not morphological but syntactic. This is reflected in the presence of a slight pause between the two syllables which is indicated by the symbol “-”. The hyphen thus indicates a slight pause or stop between two syllables, which in some instances can be optional, in others is strictly customary, and in still others may be completely obligatory.

Distinction between morphology and syntax in cases of this sort is notoriously uncertain. The problem will be taken up in the section on lexicalisation.

Perhaps we are here being more detailed in our description than the evidence permits us to be. However, one needs to investigate whether or not there are degrees of atonality. It is convenient to use the dot after the first syllable to indicate the typical cases where the second syllable may be pronounced either with a very reduced tone or with a zero tone.

Both the last pairs are in any case clearly different from the following, where there is no pause in either example:

xiǎngfū 想法 THINK METHOD “think of a method” (cf. xiǎngfūzǐ 想法子 “think of a method”)
xiāngfū 想法 THINK METHOD “way of thinking”

In general, the object fū 法 receives stress while the semi-suffix -fū 法 never receives stress and is very often atonal.

In a pair like:

yào-shì 要事 IMPORTANT MATTER “important matter”
yàoshì 要是 WANT BE “if”
the observation that the second syllable may not have a zero tone but a reduced tone would be written thus: yàoshì.

The reduced tones in kàn-fū or yàoshì might theoretically be regarded as an allophone of the zero tone. This would account for current cases like:
cúnzài 存在 EXIST BE-IN “exist”
cúnzài 存在 DEPOSIT BE-IN “deposit in [e.g. money in a bank]”

But we shall see that such a method would not work when the distinctive reduced tone is on the first syllable as long as the zero tone is construed as restricted to the final position.

Consider a series of minimal pairs where non-zero secondary initial stress is important:

bùduì 部隊 PART COLUMN “army”
bùduì 不對 NOT CORRECT “incorrect”
bùjiàn 部件 PART ITEM “components”
bùjiàn 不見 NOT APPEAR “disappear”

bùliào 不料 NOT FORESEE “unexpectedly”
bùliào 布料 CLOTH MATERIAL “cloth”

In all these three cases unstressed fourth tone in bù 不 cannot be construed as an allophone of the zero tone, except if one assumes that the zero tone is realised as a reduced tone in word-initial position.

The reduced fourth tone in the last three pairs is realised as a second tone, so that there is not the slightest doubt that the distinction in this case is explicit. Perhaps all the examples laid out thus far may still be explained without reference to stress among tonal syllables.

But even when we do not have this effect of tone sandhi in words like bù when they precede fourth-tone syllables, contrasting minimal pairs are easy to find. One neat set involves the lexically unstressed but not atonal initial negation bù 不:

bùxíng 步行 STEP WALK “walk by foot”
bùxíng 不行 NOT BE-OK “it is not OK”

bùzú 部族 PART TRIBE “tribe”
bùzú 不足 NOT SUFFICIENT “insufficient”

bùlí 步犁 STEP PLOUGH “walking plough”
bùlí 不離 NOT LEAVE “not leave”

bùfá 步伐 STEP ATTACK “pace”
bùfá 不乏 NOT LACK “have no shortage of”

bùfá 步法 STEP METHOD “footwork, dancing mode”
bùfá 不法 NOT LAW “lawless”

There seems to be a general rule that the negative prefix bù 不 does not receive the main stress, except in the case of “contrastive stress” or “logical stress”.

Two empirical questions may be asked about these pairs:

1. Does the stress on the first syllable and the retention of the falling tone cause native Peking speakers to understand the phrase as predicted?
2. Conversely: if asked (preferably in writing) to make explicit the meaning “accompanying guest” through pronunciation, will native Peking speakers spontaneously indicate the predicted stress pattern or not?

If a significant majority of native speakers interpret the different forms as predicted, and if the separate group submitted to the second test spontaneously produce distinctive stress on the first syllable we must conclude that the distinction is a part of their language.

One might go on to a third purely written test which is of more limited effectiveness because it tests subjective attitude rather than performance:

3. When presented with the two meanings of the Pinyin sequence in question and asked to underline the characters which they think are phonetically more prominent on each of the readings will native Peking speakers underline the characters our account predicts?

This third test ascertains not whether Peking speakers make the distinction but whether they are aware that they do make it or whether they feel that they ought to make it. If a clear majority of informants feel that they ought to make the predicted stress contrasts one will still maintain that they probably are part of the systemic distinctions between lexical citation forms. If on the other hand they do not bring out the contrasts this may still only be because they are not aware of a stress distinction which in fact they do make.

The quasi-suffix -shōu 手 tends to retain its tone, although it loses the primary stress on the last syllable which is so very common in Modern Standard Chinese:

zhù-shōu 住手 STOP HAND “desist, stop”
zhùshōu 助手 HELP HAND “helper”
xià-shōu 下手 PUT-DOWN HAND “start”
xiàshōu 下手 UNDER HAND “helper, aide; next player in card games”

shàng-shōu 上手 UP HAND “to start with”
shāngshōu 上手 UP HAND “leading practitioner”

Cases of this sort are not rare, and some more will be introduced below. We may have a distinctive slight pause between these two syllables, so that one might want to argue that this pause and not the stress contrast is what makes the difference.

There is, apparently, no pause in the following case:
liánshōu 連手 CONNECT HAND “take concerted action, gang up to cheat”
liánshōu 連手 CONNECT HAND “interested party”
There is also no pause in the following, where the directional suffix -dào 到 receives secondary stress whereas the noun head dào 道 has to receive the main stress except when contrastive stress interferes with the lexical stress pattern:

pàodào 跑到 RUN REACH “run to”
pàodào 跑到 RUN WAY “runway for aircraft; running-track”

*** We note in passing that the lexical stress pàodào 跑到 changes regularly in sentence final position, as in tā pàodào lè 他跑了 “He has got there.”

Verb/noun contrasts are often marked through stress contrasts:

bāwò 把握 GRASP GRIP “have a grip on”
bāwò 把握 GRASP GRIP “assurance, confidence”

Standard dictionaries regard the verb and the noun as homophones. I claim that the words are not homophones: the noun is marked by first-syllable stress as derived from the verb with the final stress.

One might surmise that the form which receives first syllable stress is the derived form, so that in yánjiū 研究 the basic form would turn out to be the noun with equal stress on both syllables, and the derived form would be the verb which has clear stress on the first syllable:

yánjiū 研究 GRIND SEARCH “noun: study”
yánjiū 研究 GRIND SEARCH “verb: study”

Compare:

bāzhù 扛住 TAKE STOP “catch hold of”
bāzhù 扛住 TAKE STOP “retention”

xīnlíng 心靈 MIND SPIRIT “quick-witted”
xīnlíng 心靈 MIND SPIRIT “spirit”

guài-rén (or guàirén) 怪人 BLAME MAN “blame others”
guàirén 怪人 STRANGE MAN “strange person”

láiìn 來信 CAUSE-TO-COME LETTER “send a letter”
láiìn 來信 COME LETTER “a letter that has arrived”

pèi-kè 隨客 ACCOMPANY GUEST “accompany a guest”
pèikè 隨客 ACCOMPANY GUEST “accompanying guest”

xià-jīào 下腳 PUT-DOWN FOOT “get a foothold”
xiàjīào 下腳 FALL-DOWN FOOT “left-overs”
shàng-zuò 上座 GO-UP SEAT “take a seat”
shàngzuò 上座 TOP SEAT “seat of honour; your honour”

chá-fáng 茶房 INVESTIGATE ROOM “investigate a [hotel] room [for example, to see if there are prostitutes inside]”
chájiāng 茶房 TEA ROOM “hotel boy”

dōngshì 懂事 UNDERSTAND MATTER “be knowledgeable”
dōngshì 董事 SUPERVISE MATTER “member [of board of directors]”

jiàn-rén 見人 SEE PERSON “meet other people”
jiànshú 見俗 VULGAR PERSON “slut”

kànguān 看官 LOOK OFFICIAL “old-fashioned: reader”
kàn guān 看官 LOOK OFFICE “take a person’s official position as important”
(Cf. kàn guān bù kàn rén 看官不看人 “take account of the office but not of the person holding it”)

The suffix guān 官 receives reduced stress whereas the nominal head guān 官 has the ordinary final stress:
kèguān 客官 GUEST OFFICIAL “guest”
kèguān 客觀 GUEST LOOK “objective” (Note the contrast with zhǔguān 主觀 “subjective”).

In the case of verbal constructions ending in the semi-suffix -lái 来 there is already regularly reduced stress on the second syllable so that the grammaticalised form may contrastively receive stress on the second syllable: kàn[-lái] 看來 LOOK COME “come to see” Cf. 他看來了 “He has come to see [it]”
kàn-lái 看來 LOOK COME “apparently”

Sometimes stress distinguishes adnominal verbs (noun-modifying verbs) from other verbs:
shuōmíng 說明 TALK CLEAR “explain”
shuōmíng 說明 TALK CLEAR “explanatory”
(Cf. shuōmíng kěxué 說明科學 “explain science”
shuōmíng kěxué 說明科學 “explanatory science”)

yīngyòng 適應 RESPONS USE “apply”
yīngyòng 適應 RESPONS USE “applied”
(Cf. yīngyòng kěxué 適應科學 “apply science in practice” versus yīngyòng kěxué 適應科學 “applied science”)


Sometimes the contrast marked is that between an ungrammaticalised form and a more grammaticalised form (see our chapter on grammaticalisation):

kàn nào 看到 LOOK REACH “catch sight of”
kàn nào 看到 LOOK REACH “turning one’s attention to, going over to”

liàn nào 临近 APPROACH REACH “approach, go near”
liàn nào 临近 APPROACH REACH “when”

Sometimes the grammaticalised form receives the characteristic word stress on the last tonal syllable:

guò fēn 過分 EXCEED PORTION “exceed the proper limits”

guò fēn 過分 EXCEED PORTION “exceedingly”

The three main possibilities are nicely illustrated by the following:

tóu shù 投水 CAST WATER “cast oneself into the water”
tóu shù 頭水 HEAD WATER/PROFIT “commission money”
tóu shù 頭水 HEAD WATER “best quality”

In verb-object constructions the stress tends to be on the object, but in special idioms this pattern may be broken:

biǎn fă 变法 CHANGE LAW “change the legal system”

biǎn fă (r) 变法(兒) CHANGE LAW “find new method”

In a very considerable number of pairs the difference is semantic rather than grammatical. The most idiomatic meaning of a given combination of morphemes tends to receive the marked stress on the first syllable:

míng jiă 名家 NAME FAMILY “famous family” cf. míng jiă chū shēn 名家出身 “hail from a famous family”

míng jiă 名家 NAME FAMILY “distinguished specialist”

míng jiă 名家 NAME FAMILY “school of logicians”

The noun jiă 家 “home” receives full stress whereas the quasi-suffix -jiă 家 has reduced stress:

dàojiă 到家 REACH HOME “reach a very high level”
dàojiă 道家 WAY SCHOOL “Taoism”
(cf. also dào jiă 到家 REACH HOME “reach home”)

zuò jiă 做家 MAKE HOUSE “[old-fashioned:] set up one’s own household, lead independent life”

zuò jiă 作家 MAKE HOUSE “writer”
lǎoshi or lāoshi 老式 OLD SHAPE “old-fashioned”
lǎoshi or lāoshi 老事 OLD MATTER “well-known fact”
lǎoshi 老是 OLD BE “always”

The following pair would seem to imply that there is a prominent set of
different terms ending in the semi-suffix -yuán 员 “employees” as well as a
prominent set of things to do with diàn 電 “electrical power”:
diànyuán 店員 SHOP EMPLOYEE “shop assistant”
diànyuán 電源 ELECTRICITY SOURCE “source of electricity”

hán yì 含義 HOLD-IN-MOUTH MEANING “meaning”
hán yì 寒意 COLD THOUGHT “slight feeling of cold” (Cf. 感到一絲寒意 “feel a
little cold”.)

dàzhī (or dà-zhī) 大旨 BIG MEANING “main meaning”
dàzhī 大指 BIG FINGER “[literary:] large finger [e.g. of a Buddha statue]”
dàzhī 大指 BIG FINGER “middle finger”

We can predict the stress pattern in the following because of the idiomaticity
of the second member of the pair:
shèng-rén 生人 LIVE PERSON “living person”
shènggrén 生人 STRANGE PERSON “stranger”

xià-wèi 下位 BELOW SEAT “the less honourable seat at table”
xiàwèi 下位 BELOW SEAT “following, lower, inferior”
Strict coordination is often marked with a level stress pattern.
shàng-bàn 上半 TOP HALF “half third tone (without the rising intonation at the
end)”
shàngbàn 上半 TOP HALF “first half”
The stress on shàng - 上 seems motivated by the contrast with xiàbàn 下半.

* Do you expect there to be such a thing as a xiàbàn 下半 “lower half tone”?

There seems to be no doubt about the following neat contrast:
xīn-kǒu 心口 HEART MOUTH “heart and mouth” (Cf. xīn-kǒu liǎngyàng 心口
兩樣 “His speech is different from his thought.”)
xīnkǒu 心口 HEART MOUTH “pit of the stomach”

In xīnkǒu 心口 one might feel that -kǒu 口 is a semi-suffix and therefore
receives reduced stress.
In a good number of cases it is still hard to think of clear reasons for stress contrasts at this stage:

$fājùe$ 發覺 EMIT FEEL “become aware”
$fājùe$ 發掘 EMIT DIG-OUT “unearth”

$zhāolái$ 招來 CALL-COME “attract [as customers]”
$zhāolái$ 招來 CALL-COME “invite [as guests]” (Cf. zhāolái hénghuò 招來橫禍 “lead to unexpected disaster”)

$xíngshì$ 行事 ACT MATTER “carry out a task”
$xíngshì$ (or: $xíngshì$) 形勢 FORM SITUATION “appearance or condition of things”

Just as in English we have a neat lexical distinction between a blackbird and a black bird (which need not be a blackbird), so in Chinese we have

$yù-mín$ 愚民 STUPID PEOPLE “treat the people as stupid, make the people stupid”
$yùmín$ 愚民 STUPID PEOPLE “the stupid common people”
and in addition there is a phonetic distinction with

$yúmín$ 愚民 FISHER PEOPLE “fisherman”

$cánshā$ 殘殺 CRUEL MURDER “murder cruelly”
$cánshā$ 騷沙 SILKWORM SAND “silkworm excrement”

$yóushuǐ$ 游水 WANDER WATER “swim”
$yóushuǐ$ 油水 OIL WATER “profit”

We need to know whether Peking speakers can hear the difference between

$huáng-niú$ 黃牛 BROWN BUFFALO “speculator”
and

$huángniú$ 黃牛 BROWN BUFFALO “domestic buffalo”.
Furthermore we need to know why $niú$ 牛 “buffalo” receives the main stress in spite of the fact that there appear to be many constraining kinds of $niú$ 牛 “buffalo”.

We need to investigate whether Peking speakers make a difference as predicted between $yùmín$ and $yú-mín$, or indeed between:

$zuò-fǎ$ 作法 MAKE MODEL “make a religious show of oneself”
$zuòfǎ$ 坐法 SIT LAW “be punished”
(Contrast: $zuò-fǎ$ 作法 MAKE MODEL “method of making something”)
Further examples are easy enough to find:
zhèng-fā 政法 POLITICAL LEGAL “politics and the law”
zhèng-fǎ 正法 CORRECT LAW “carry out capital punishment”

shèn-shǒu 伸手 STRETCH-OUT HAND “stretch out hand”
shēnshǒu 身手 BODY HAND “ability”

zuò-wén 作文 MAKE TEXT “write a text”
zuòwén 作文 MAKE TEXT “work, text”

These last four pairs, and the many similar ones, are problematic and deserve close empirical study: when asked to make explicit the difference in meaning between the two different meanings, do speakers of Peking Modern Standard Chinese bring this out through a pause (which in ordinary contexts is usually neutralised) or do they not?

The distinctions perhaps get a little clearer when there is a difference in stress:
jiè-kuǎn 借款 BORROW AMOUNT “make debts”
jièkuǎn 借款 BORROW AMOUNT “debt incurred”

cún-kuǎn 存款 DEPOSIT MONEY “deposit money”
cúnkuǎn 存款 DEPOSIT MONEY “financial deposit”

But do Peking speakers clearly recognize this distinction? Clearly, in many contexts these distinctions are neutralised. But does this mean they do not exist at all? This needs close empirical investigation.

Here is a colloquial example where we do seem to have a neat contrast between a stressed and an unstressed tonal syllable preceding an atonal syllable:
lǎolè 老了 OLD-PERFECTIVE “has grown old”
lǎolè 老了 OLD-PERFECTIVE “be very much so” (Cf. 人多不多? 老了! “Were there a lot of people? You bet there were!”)
If the observation is confirmed, this would cause us to introduce a new type of tonal pattern into our list.

Let me end with an example that is perhaps not good enough:
jiè-shǒu 解手 UNRAVEL HAND “[obsolete:] take leave” [Cf. the current fēnshǒu 分手 “take leave”]
jièshǒu 解手 UNRAVEL HAND “go to the toilet”
Examples of this sort are very common indeed. Essentially they are cases where a combination with one pre-modern idiomatic reading has got a new idiomatic meaning in current speech. When the old meaning is no longer current today, the case remains abstract in so far as it concerns the pronunciations of words in meanings that are not current in speech.

Y.R. Chao 趙元任 1968:38 writes:

"Some writers (for example, Hockett Peip Phon, 256) set up a medium degree of stress between the normal and the weak. For instance, in "This is not bitter-melon (Momordica charantia), nor sweetmelon (Cucumis melo), it's just a kind of sweet melon,' where apparently the second tyan has normal stress and the second gua, though less stressed, is not completely neutral and weak ... My treatment of such cases is to regard 'tyan, gua as having contrastive stress 'tyan, gua. Since stress is relative, putting a contrastive stress is often physically equivalent to putting an average normal stress on the syllable to be contrasting-stressed and reducing the degree of other normal stresses."

Y.R. Chao continues:

"...another reason for not recognizing a phonemic medium stress is the difficulty of obtaining agreement among native speakers of Peiping in a significant proportion of cases tested, as against the occurrence of the neutral tone, on which there is a good degree of agreement."

Y.R. Chao’s skepticism is based on passionately careful observation. Stress in Modern Standard Chinese is highly context-sensitive. Contrastive stress will affect word stress throughout. But this is true of all languages I know of and it does not affect the question of stress in the citation form of words. After all, we know that the realisation of tones varies hugely according to context, but we still take it to be important to learn the tones of the citation forms because it is on the basis of these that all deviations occur.

There is only a relatively limited number of cases in which there is sustained disagreement among speakers of Chinese on the tones in Chinese words (except that there is considerable divergence on the zero tone), there is - within definite limits - a remarkable variation in the stress patterns accepted as normal and standard by the speakers of the language. It is this variation that has caused Y.R. Chao to disregard the stress phoneme. Another factor that may have played a significant part is the fact that word stress in Chinese is highly context sensitive, very significantly more so than for example in English.

It does make sense to learn the citation form stress of a word in modern Chinese. But by far the majority of Chinese and Western dictionaries follow Y.R. Chao’s practice. The Dictionary of Spoken Chinese (War Department) 1945, Oshanin 1951, Isaenko 1957, Kuraishi Takeshiro, Iwanami Chugoku
jiten, Tokyo: Iwanami 1963, *Dictionary of Spoken Chinese* (Yale) 1966, and Oshanin 1983 are the only dictionaries I know of which systematically indicate stress patterns, and it is very interesting indeed to see how often they differ on the question where exactly the stress is in a given word. Even between the two versions of the *Dictionary of Spoken Chinese* there are many interesting differences.¹ This does tend to support Y.R. Chao’s skepticism. At the very least we must conclude that there is no rigid and pervasive grammatical regime on stress in Chinese. Y.R. Chao 1968:360 does generalise: “From the rules of stress it follows that a compound has the main stress on the last non-neutral syllable.”

But surely the case of Chinese is very different indeed from that of Polish with its rigid stress on the penultimate syllable, or of French with its relative stress on the last syllable.

Note that there tends to be a kind of regular lexical contrastive stress on the syllables that are distinctive within a series of parallel words: fāyǔ 法語 FRENCH SPEECH “French”, yīngyǔ 英語 ENGLISH SPEECH “English”, déyǔ 德語 GERMAN SPEECH “German” etc., yǔfǎ 語法 SPEECH METHOD “grammar”, bùfǎ 步法 STEP METHOD “footwork”, wénfǎ 文法 TEXT METHOD “grammar” etc. A very large set of similar series may easily be constructed. Some speakers may, in fact, accept stress on the second syllable in these words, but the form with stress on the first syllable is fully comprehensible for all speakers of the language, whereas such stress makes many other words incomprehensible. (Compare words like lǎomǔ 老母 “mother” which has no comprehensible variant ??? lǎomǔ 老母 ???)

We might predict that a construction like jīròu 雞肉 CHICKEN MEAT “chicken meat” is likely to receive stress on the first syllable because there is a natural contrast with all sorts of meat like niúròu 牛肉 “beef” etc.. An integrated standard combination like the following, on the other hand, will often tend to receive the standard stress on the last tonal syllable: jīròu 肌肉 MUSCLE MEAT “muscles”

In so far as there are many kinds of piàn 片 “cards” while there is no such obvious set of kinds of piàn 片 “films” the following pair is predictable: míng-piàn 名片 NAME FLAT-PIECE “famous film” míngpiàn 名片 NAME FLAT-PIECE “visiting card”

¹ For our purposes the War Department version of 1945 is clearly superior because it distinguishes marks out words without a distinction in stress between the syllables from those which have standard second syllable stress.
*** Discuss the possible reasons behind the following contrasts:
1. yǒuyì 有益 HAVE ADVANTAGE “be good for one”
yǒuyì (or yǒuyì) 友谊 FRIEND FRIENDLY “friendship”
2. zāogāo 糟糕 DREG CAKE “damn”
zāogāo 糟糕 DREG CAKE “a kind of small cake”

In so far as pìào 票 “tickets” are a more obvious reference set than that of
pìào 票 “written documents” the stress patterns in the following pair are
predictable:
chuánpiào 船票 BOAT TICKET “boat ticket”
chuǎnpiào 傳票 PASS-ON TICKET “summons”

One gets the impression that except in cases of contrastive sets, stress on the
first syllable tends to be restricted to common words.

If a reasonable number of the contrastive pairs listed up above turn out to be a
real part of Peking Standard Chinese speech then the following three features
will turn out to have distinctive phonemic status in Modern Standard Chinese:

1. The distinction between tonal syllables and atonal syllables marked by “·”.
The existence of the distinction is uncontroversial though there are many
borderline cases. Optional neutralisation of the last syllable is marked by a dot
under the syllable which is marked as atonal (e.g. kànshū 看書).

2. The relative stress among tonal syllables in binomes marked by a dot “’”
under the main vowel. This is undoubtedly wide-spread, but there are many
variants among speakers of Peking Standard Chinese, and the scope of the
distinction is less in other varieties of the Standard language.

3. The slight glottal closure or articulatory pause between the syllables as used
when pronouncing literary Chinese words to indicate that they are to be taken
in their old sense, marked by a hyphen or dash “-”. This is common to all
varieties of Chinese but often hard to identify in practice, although the
characteristic pause between each syllable undoubtedly is a clear conventional
signal in modern Chinese that the linguistic form one is using is literary and
not part of the current daily language.

Chinese word stress is always a matter of degrees and varies significantly not
only from dialect to dialect, but even from idiolect to idiolect (from one
speaker to another) within one dialect group. In what follows I shall only
indicate word stress where in Peking Modern Standard Chinese there seems to
be no doubt on where a natural stress may fall.
A survey of Daniel Jones, *Everyman’s English Pronouncing Dictionary*, 13th edition edited by A.C. Gimson, London 1967 shows variant pronunciations for a large majority of English words. There is also significant variation on stress in English (indočile/indocile) in many words. This sort of ambiguity does not prevent us from teaching one of the standard forms to students of English.

The case is significantly different in Chinese. Speakers of southern varieties of Modern Standard Chinese have the even stress pattern as in rénmín 人民 for a considerable number of words in which northern speakers of the language clearly stress one syllable or the other. Moreover, in all varieties of Chinese, including Peking Standard Chinese, the question of stress is one of degree rather than a question of the clear presence or absence of an absolutely distinct suprasegmental stress morpheme.

In addition there are serious and pervasive problems of contextual variation: Zhídào 知道 may change according to context so that we may have bù zhídào 不知道 “does not know”.

Compare tā shòudào lè yīfēng xìn 他收到了一封信 versus yīfēng xìn méi shòudào 一封信没收到. This does not prevent us from taking it to be an important feature of zhídào 知道 that it has the stress on the first syllable. Along with the lexical ânquán 安全 we might hear bù ânquán 不安全. If any part of rénmín 人民 can be more prominent than the other, it tends to be rén 人 as in the possible Zhōngguó rénmín 中國人民. But then there is a prominent general tendency for four-syllable words to have stress on the first and on the third syllable. We can see that the problems of word stress are much more context-sensitive than in the common European languages. We do not, after all, significantly change the stress pattern of the word *population* according to the context in which the word occurs.

In spite of all these complications it seems to me well worth recalling Bernhard Karlgren 1918:36:

“For a phonetic transcription of Chinese, which abounds in bewildering homonyms, we must be careful to render adequately the distribution of stress over the different syllables, for this is of the utmost importance if the transcription is to be perfectly understood. In my opinion it is by no means sufficient to mark only the strong-stressed syllables and group all the rest under the heading of unstressed syllables... Instrumental research would of course enable us to distinguish a lot of degrees, but for all practical purposes three degrees will be quite sufficient: 0) Unstressed syllables;
1) Weak-stressed syllables;
2) Strong-stressed syllables.”

I concur in Bernhard Karlgren’s judgment. I believe that any account of Chinese language structure which disregards word stress or sentence stress is seriously deficient.
Hoa 1983:193 distinguishes three stress types in Chinese bisyllabic words:
1. Secondary stress + primary stress (e.g. huījiā “return home”)
2. Primary stress + atonic (e.g. zhīdào “know”)
3. Primary stress + secondary stress (e.g. cānkāo “consult”)
I feel we definitely need to add a fourth:
4. Ordinary stress + ordinary stress (e.g. rénmin)

The first type, i.e. secondary stress + primary stress, is most common, and it naturally invites further subclassification according to the stability of the reduction of the stress on the first syllable. This analysis has been carried out in a project of O. Svarny entitled “Dictionary of the most frequent monosyllabic sememes of Chinese”.

All stress types (occasionally even the second) may occasionally take the standard form of the first type with the main stress on the second syllable. Conversely, one might insist that the lexical first stress type never has the second and third types as alternative forms. Thus the test whether something belongs to the second or third types is whether outside conditions of contrastive stress the word can be given these intonations in citation form.

We need to investigate stress contrasts as between làoshī 老師 “teacher” and làoyīng 老鷹 “eagle”. One might point out that a few speakers do seem to prefer làoshī 老鼠 “mouse”, but even these speakers agree that a common form in Peking speech is làoshū 老鼠 . On the other hand no one is in any doubt that làoyīng 老鷹 has a clear stress on the second syllable. Làoyīng 老鷹 would not be understood as “eagle”.

Similarly for làoshī 老師 “teacher” versus làomǔ 老母 “mother”: làoshī, though probably not the dominant form, is certainly comprehensible, while làomǔ, as noted above, is not recognised as a form having the meaning “mother”.

The preface of 普通話輕聲詞匯編 1963 claims that about 70% of the Standard Modern Chinese vocabulary conforms to the pattern 1, about 23% conforms to pattern 2, and 7% conform to pattern 3.

Pattern 4, in a way represents the claim that clear stress in Chinese - as opposed to English - is not an invariable feature of words, and that in many words stress is not only variable but actually absent. Stress, I claim, is in fact not a pervasive feature of Chinese words. None the less, it is a significant feature of Chinese words.
There is no way in which the very important results reported in these publications can be incorporated into the present primer. The stress markings in this Little Primer have been reviewed by Yu Xiaoxing 于晓星 who grew up in Peking and first left Peking four years after graduating from Peking University, and whose speech is as close to Peking Standard Chinese as I have been able to find here in Oslo. In many cases it has been difficult to reach a decision because there are various optional variants. I have found it impracticable to mark these wherever they occur. If the indications of stress patterns in this Little Primer serve to bring about lively discussion about the relative acceptability of alternative readings they will have fulfilled their function.
Chapter 2
Immediate constituent structure

The analysis into constituent parts or immediate constituents (ICs) indicated by “constituent boxes” is used to define a basically binary system of internal parsing of an expression, under a given interpretation, at every level.

Consider the following simple structure:

```
xiao  Li  shang  ye  ban
LITTLE  LI  GO-UP  NIGHT  SHIFT

"Little Li is on night shift."
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Boxes 2 and 3 represent the immediate constituents of 1.
Boxes 4 and 5 represent the immediate constituents of 2.
Boxes 6 and 7 represent the immediate constituents of 3.
Boxes 8 and 9 represent the immediate constituents of 7.

At levels two to four one may usefully ask oneself which constituent receives relative stress and which is the relatively unstressed constituent. In this way one may try to construct a stress contour of the expression under the given reading for the expressions under discussion. This stress contour will be related to the constituent structure and in a sense it will be predicated on it.

Broadly speaking, what is regarded as an immediate constituent is a prosodic group. Constituent boundaries at the highest levels tend to mark places of possible pauses. For example, it is most unlikely that one should make a pause after xiao 小 “little” and then read Li shang 李上 or Li shang ye 李上夜 as a tight group etc..
Thus immediate constituent (IC) analysis should show up where the main breaks normally are in a sentence. None the less, even under one given interpretation associated with a given IC analysis, an expression may be pronounced with widely differing pauses, stresses and so on, depending on the pragmatic context.

*** The IC-analyses can be expressed as bracketing:
[[LITTLE LI] [ASCEND [NIGHT SHIFT]]]
Our boxes, so far, are no more than notational variants of brackets. Even when we introduce labels, these are still no more than notational variants of labelled brackets.

**constituent stress**
I take it that there is a continuum of relative constituent stress in syntax, and I choose to divide this continuum into four levels of stress because at certain stages in our discussion all these five will become relevant. Assignment of stress in this Little Primer, like the assignment of syntactic structure is not meant to provide definitive solutions but a basis for discussion and empirical investigation among native speakers of Modern Standard Chinese.

atonic realisation / less prominent

semi-tonic realisation / slightly more prominent

tonic realisation / clearly more prominent

prominent tonic realisation / heavily dominant

Relative constituent stress may be assigned on all levels of immediate constituent analysis. The linear assignment of stress as presented in both versions of the Dictionary of Spoken Chinese fails to recognise the essential link between constituent structures and stress contour.

In general, the rules of **contrastive** constituent stress in Chinese are not very different from the rules of constituent stress in English and do not need very detailed treatment here. One example will suffice:
我給你很多錢
wǒ gěi nǐ hěn duō qián
I GIVE YOU VERY MUCH MONEY
“I [as opposed to others] am giving you a lot of money.”

我給你很多錢
wǒ gěi nǐ hěn duō qián
I GIVE YOU VERY MUCH MONEY
“I am giving you [not your brother] a lot of money.”
我 給 你 很 多 錢
wǒ gěi nǐ hěn duō qián
I GIVE YOU VERY MUCH MONEY

“I am giving you a lot of money [and rent out to you some land].”

我 給 你 很 多 錢
wǒ gěi nǐ hěn duō qián
I GIVE YOU VERY MUCH MONEY

“[I protest:] I am giving you a lot of money [although you think it is not enough].”
The convergence is quite deep. In English we distinguish between “I like her very much” and “I like her very much”. “I like her very much” means that I like her very much indeed whereas “I like her very much” only means that I am not entirely indifferent. Compare now the situation in Modern Standard Chinese:

我 很 愛 她
wǒ hěn ài tā
I VERY LOVE SHE

“[I protest:] I do love her [and do not hate her in any way].”

我 很 愛 她
wǒ hěn ài tā
I VERY LOVE SHE

“I love her very much indeed.”
Stress may affect the semantics of many verbs:

她很漂亮
tā hěn piàoliàng
SHE VERY BEAUTIFUL

"[I admit] she is pretty [but she has no talent]."

If one omits the hěn 很 the sentence acquires a comparative meaning and often a different stress pattern:

她漂亮
tā piàoliàng
SHE BEAUTIFUL

"She is the prettier one"
Stress on the second word would change the meaning:

她 漂亮
tā piàoliàng
SHE BEAUTIFUL

“She is the prettier one [not the more talented of the two].”

*** Consider different stress patterns for the following sentence and their different interpretations. Where would you put the stress if you wanted to be ironical and wish to suggest that someone is really rather late?

今天來得很早啊

Quite often, there is a grammatical contrast marked by stress:

説明書
shuō míng shū
SPEAK CLEAR BOOK
A. “manual”

説明書
shuō míng shū
SPEAK CLEAR BOOK
B. “explain books”
*** What intonation features other than stress distinguishes the above two meanings? Consider pauses and virtual pauses.

Stress often has a basic disambiguating function:

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zui hao sheng yi ge
MOST GOOD BRING-FORTH ONE PIECE
“having one child is best.”
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zui hao sheng yi ge
MOST GOOD BRING-FORTH ONE PIECE
“It is best to have a child.”
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As a written slogan for birth control this will not do at all, but as an oral slogan to be used in public meetings it has no problems.
A. “Even the exercises he has done.”

B. “All the exercises have been done.”

C. “The exercises have already been done.”
In this case intonation serves to disambiguate the highly complex word dōu 都 within the context of this sentence. As a written sentence, the sentence is highly ambiguous, but as soon as it comes with its natural intonation it loses some of its basic ambiguities.

Y.R. Chao 1968:38 maintains that there is the following ambiguity:

**A. “cakes with large sesame seeds”**

**B. “cakes as large as sesame seeds”**

Note that dē 的 is not analysed as a constituent here. It is regarded as a grammatical marker defining the relation between constituents. (See the section on grammatical markers below.)

If, following Y.R. Chao, we take shāobīng 烙饼 to be correctly analysed as having a reduced third tone and not a zero tone on the second syllable, then on Chao’s interpretation we have here another nice pair: *shāobīng 烙饼 COOK CAKE “sesame seed cake” versus shāo bīng 烙饼 BURN CAKE “burn cakes”.*

* Is there a 3rd reading of 芝麻大的烙饼 with the main stress on zhīmā 芝麻?
This pair illustrates the need for at least two degrees of relative stress in syntactic analysis.
Contrastive constituent stress must often be distinguished from standard constituent stress. Here is a teaser of an example involving the outdated or at least obsolescent word jīshì 技士 “technologist” from the nineteenth-thirties:

既 是 技 士 記 事， [我們就可以放心了]。
jì shì jì shì jì shì

SINCE TECHNOLOGIST TAKE-NOTES

“Since the technologist is taking notes [we can relax].”

We note that the conjunction jīshì 既是 remains standardly unstressed in relation to the sentence which typically is its scope. Jīshì 記事 is ambiguous between 1. “to record facts”, 2. “recorder of facts > secretary”. Jīshì 技士 TECHNOLOGY GENTLEMAN receives stress on the first syllable because the second is a quasi suffix.

The example of unmarked nominal modification

In simple cases involving two characters, or, more precisely, two morphemes, there can be no doubt about the parsing of a construction:

yǔfá 語法 LANGUAGE LAW “grammar”
Fǎyǔ 法語 FRENCH TALK “French”
Fàwén 法文 FRENCH WRITING “French”

*** Is fǎ 法 LAW the same morpheme as Fǎ 法 FRENCH?

Even in more complex noun phrases there often is no doubt that the main division must be between the second and the third morpheme:

gǔdài fàwén 古代法文 ANCIENT AGE FRENCH WRITING “ancient French”
gǔdài yǔfá 古代語法 ANCIENT AGE LANGUAGE METHOD “ancient grammar[s]”
cānkǎo zǐliào 參考資料 REFERENCE MATERIAL “reference material”.
We note that a collocation  컴퓨터 참조 is idiomatic and is never separated in our readings, so that even in the following cases there is no problem of structural ambiguity, the main division being still between the second and the third morpheme:

*yīfā cānkāo zīliào 語法參考資料 LANGUAGE METHOD REFERENCE MATERIAL “reference material on grammar”
*fāwēn cānkāo zīliào 法文參考資料 FRENCH REFERENCE MATERIAL “reference material in French”
*gǔdài cānkāo zīliào 古代參考資料 ANCIENT AGE REFERENCE MATERIAL “ancient reference material”

**Which of the following readings are acceptable?

**法文語法**

*fāwēn yǔfǎ FRENCH WRITING LANGUAGE METHOD

A. “grammars of the French language”;
B. “grammars (of any language) written in French” [not acceptable, but would be acceptable with shū 書 at the end.]
C. “the grammatical structure of French”.

Do these different readings affect the immediate constituent structure of the phrase?

* Consider a famous book title. Why is one reading much more plausible than the other?

**現代漢語詞典**

*xiàndài Hàn yǔ cídiǎn PRESENT CHINESE DICTIONARY

A. ?“present-day dictionary of Chinese”?
B. “dictionary of modern Chinese”

* Find out whether the following is an ambiguous book title:

**當代文學詞典**

* Zhōngguó wénxué

A. The study of Chinese characters
B. Chinese studies on writing
Compare now the following phrases in which, for reasons which we shall explain below in the section on grammatical markers, the (optional) particle dé 的 is disregarded for the time being because it is not here considered as a constituent. We leave out uncontroversial parts of the analysis:

古 代 法 文 ( 的 ) 語 法
gǔ dài fǎ wén yǔ fǎ
OLD TIME FRENCH TEXT SPEECH PATTERN
ANCIENT FRENCH GRAMMAR
A. “grammar book on Old French”
A’ “the grammatical structure of Old French”

Note that at this level of analysis the readings A and A’ are structurally the same.

古 代 ( 的 ) 法 文 語 法
gǔ dài fǎ wén yǔ fǎ
OLD TIME FRENCH TEXT SPEECH PATTERN
ANCIENT FRENCH GRAMMAR
B. “ancient grammars of French”

* How do we distinguish in intonation between the readings A. and B.?

Consider now which of the following translations and analyses are acceptable in Standard Modern Chinese:

古 代 法 文 語 法 參 考 資 料
gǔ dài fǎ wén yǔ fǎ cān kǎo zī liào
OLD AGE FRENCH TEXT SPEECH PATTERN CHECK THINK RESOURCE STUFF
ANCIENT FRENCH GRAMMAR REFERENCE MATERIAL
A. “ancient research material on French grammar”


B. Old French research material on (not necessarily French) grammar.

C. research material on the grammar of Old French.

D. ancient research material in French on grammar (of any language)“

E. research material on ancient grammars of French.

* Are there any more possible readings of this phrase?
Discuss in detail the patterns of intonation, stress, and pause that allow us to distinguish between the above readings. Can intonation make the phrase entirely unambiguous?

關 於 魯 迅 的 書
guānyú Lu Xun de shū
REGARDING LU XUN 'S BOOK
A. [ ] [ ] "concerning Lu Xun's books"
B. [ ] [ ] "books concerning Lu Xun"

What, if any, are the prosodic features which distinguish between these two readings? [Intonation can distinguish between these two readings.]

Of course, the expression "Lu Xun's books" in English as well as in Chinese is itself ambiguous: it can refer either to the books which belong to Lu Xun or to the books that were written by Lu Xun. But this is a result of the very general nature of the semantic relation marked by the marker de 的.

We note that de 的 is not treated as a constituent. de 的 marks the relation between constituents without being a constituent itself. Therefore markers like de 的 do not get a box of their own to represent them. We shall return to the formal treatment of some of these "markers" below.

Ask yourself whether the following is ambiguous, and then look at the abbreviated analyses:

在 路 西 的 郵 局
zài lù xī de yóujú
IN WAY WEST 'S POST OFFICE
A. [ ] [ ] "in the post-office on the west side of the street"
B. [ ] [ ] "the post-office on the western side of the street"

In general, I only pursue graphic analyses to highlight certain grammatical problems, and I only pursue them as far as they turn out useful for didactic purposes for students within a given context. In many cases abbreviated analyses will be enough.
The internal structure of 路西的郵局, or of 在路西 is conveniently left out when the ambiguity outlined above is under discussion.

In practice, immediate constituent (IC) analysis will often only be applied to such parts of a structure as are under grammatical discussion. Particularly, morphology will often be disregarded in the context of syntactic analysis.

*** Each of the immediate constituent analyses presented above may obviously be contested. One may propose different immediate constituent structures. Can you provide and explain alternative IC-analyses to the ones so far presented?

**Criteria for the determination of IC structure**

The division of a string of morphemes into its immediate constituents is determined by a wide range of factors and possible syntactic tests. Among the fundamental conditions to be taken note of are the following:

◊ The grammatical relation between the two constituents must one of a limited set recognised by the grammatical system and listed up in the next chapter.

◊ A relatively long pause is normally the most likely at the dividing point one decides on;

◊ The last syllable before the dividing point may relatively naturally be prolonged and/or followed by a pause;

◊ In the case of a topic/comment construction it often is relatively easy to insert expletive "modal" particles like 亞 啊, 麼 麼, 呢, 呀 呀, or the semi-grammaticalised shìbāshì 是不是 between the topic and the comment;

◊ The possibility of the addition of grammatical particles and various other tests of expansion may determine the decision where to divide up a given string of morphemes under a given interpretation.

Take for example the following which has the gaps 1 to 5 between the constituent morphemes:

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccc}
A & B & C & D & E & F \\
他 & 1 & [呀] & 2 & 正 & 3 & 在 & 4 & 吃 & 5 & 飯 \\
tā & [yā] & zhèng & zài & chī & fàn
\end{array}
\]

In B a number of particles like 呀 呀 may occur. One might say that 呀 呀 is enclitic on tā 他.
Moreover, supposing from now on that there is 你的, this 你 may be lengthened and then followed by a pause in gap 2 in spite of the fact that it is toneless.

*** Yä 呀, wà 哇, nà 哪, and ă 啊 represent the same morpheme. They are contextually determined forms called ”allomorphs“ in technical linguistic usage.
1. After a,i,ü,üe,ie the morpheme takes the form yä 呀 (e.g. tā yä 她呀)
2. After u,ou,ao the morpheme takes the form wà 哇 (e.g. hǎo wà 好哇)
3. After n the morpheme takes the form nà 哪 (e.g. rénmín nà 人民哪)
4. After all other sounds it takes the form ă 啊 (e.g. lěng ă 冷啊).
Note that in non-literary prose most writers prefer to disregard the allomorphs and always write ă 啊. In artistic prose all variants are common, but some writers also prefer the unified ă 啊.

*** Can you find other cases of allomorphs in modern Chinese?

In gap 1, on the other hand, no further ”modal“ particles may be inserted, and no pause of any kind is possible under any circumstances. Gap 1 must therefore come at the lowest level in this part of the structure.

Gap 3 is usually extremely short and the two adjacent characters form a tight word-unit into which no other material may be inserted without destroying the basic structure. Gap 3 must therefore come at the lowest level in this part of the structure.

Gap 4 allows for longer pauses than gap 3, gap 5, and gap 1. Zài 在 may be lengthened phonetically and followed by a shortish pause. Moreover, additional material may be inserted in 4 salva constructione, i.e. without the basic construction being affected. Cf. tā zhèngzài guāiguāirdè chīfàn 他正在乖乖地吃饭 “He is just obediently eating his rice”.

AB, CD, and EF have lexically fixed stress contours and are word-like structures. BC does not have such a lexically fixed contour and there is no question of them forming a word.

At gap 5 chi 吃 may not normally be lengthened except in cases of interrupting oneself.
The binary principle in IC-analysis
Until now all analysis into immediate constituents that we have considered has been binary in the sense that any division has been into two immediate constituents. It is a remarkable fact about the Chinese language that in a vast number of cases the binary principle may be maintained. There are cases in which the binary principle breaks down, as in the following traditional colloquial saying which has one main constituent, the topic, divided into no less than seven immediate constituents the relation between which is unmarked:

之 乎 者 也 異 焉 啊 用 得 來 的 好 秀 才
zhī hū zhě yě yī yān zāi yòng děi lái dě hǎo xiū cái

As for [the classical Chinese particles] zhī hū zhě yě yī yān and zāi he who can use them is a good scholar.”

We note in passing that the first part of this sentence does not have any distinctions in stress, while the second does seem to have distinctive stress at various levels.

On our analysis of this kind of dě see the section on operators.
Limitations of plain IC analysis
Many widely different grammatical structures may share the same basic IC-structure. Take, for example, our two grammatically very different phrases with identical IC structures. I have tried to indicate contrasts in intonation through lines of varying thickness at the bottom of the boxes:

小李上夜班
xiao Li shang ye ban
LITTLE LI GO-UP NIGHT SHIFT
"Little Li is on night shift."

一朵大红花
yi duo da hong hua
ONE PIECE LARGE RED FLOWER
"one large safflower"
* There is a variety of grammatically very different phrases with exactly the same constituent structure beyond the above pair noted by Lü Shuxiang 呂叔湘 which we have just analysed. Ask yourself how you would describe the grammatical differences between the following phrases:

1. 兩個不太貴
   liǎnggè bù tài guì
   TWO PIECE NOT TOO EXPENSIVE
   “Two are not too expensive”

2. 畫中有行人
   huàzhōng yǒu xíngrén
   PICTURE MIDDLE EXIST WALK PERSON
   “There are people walking in a picture.”

3. 白酒他不喝
   báijiǔ tā bù hē
   WHITE WINE HE NOT DRINK
   “He does not drink white liquor.”

4. 戴上個綠帽
   dài shàng gè lǜ mào
   WEAR ON PIECE GREEN HAT
   “put on a green hat”

5. 冷水不好喝
   lèngshuǐ bù hǎohē
   COLD WATER NOT GOOD DRINK
   “Cold water is not good to drink.”

6. 酒酸就不行
   jiǔ suān jiù bù xíng
   WINE SOUR THEN NOT O.K.
   “If the wine is sour that won’t do.”
7. 怕人不怕鬼
pà rén bù pà guǐ
FEAR MAN NOT FEAR GHOST
“be afraid of people and not be afraid of ghosts”

8. 愛人不怕鬼
ài rén bù pà guǐ
LOVE WOMAN NOT FEAR GHOST
SPouse
“The spouse is not afraid of ghosts.”

9. 被他打回去
bèi tā dǎ huí qù
SUFFER HE BEAT DUST PIECES
“be beaten back by him”

10. 比他更好看
bǐ tā gèng hǎokàn
COMPARE HE MORE GOOD LOOK
BEAUTIFUL
“be still more handsome than he”

11. 救他更不錯
jiù tā gèng bù cuò
SAVE HE MORE NOT MISTAKEN
BE-A-GOOD-IDEA
“Saving him will be a still better idea.”

12. 否則我不去
fǒuzé wǒ bù qù
NOT-SO THEN I NOT GO
OTHERWISE
“otherwise I won’t go”
** Does 咖啡不好喝 also have the same constituent structure? If so, how do you explain the grammatical relation between 咖 and 啡. Discuss the difference between the notions of a “character”, a “morpheme” and a “syllable”.

The grammatical variety of these structures is in no case related to the immediate constituent (IC) structure itself. It is connected, for example, with
A. the grammatical relations between the constituents and
B. the grammatical properties of the constituents.

We shall turn to these two dimensions of grammatical analysis in that order. It will be tempting to simply ascribe to the Chinese sentences the grammatical relations between constituents and the grammatical properties of the constituents that we are used to ascribe to our English translation sentences. This, however, is a very dangerous procedure because it simply describes Chinese in terms of English language structure. Throughout our analyses we must ask ourselves what the Chinese linguistic evidence is for the categories and relations we ascribe to that language.
Chapter 3
Relations Between Constituents

* The formula "A > B" signifies that the constituent B is the main constituent and that A is the non-main constituent in this construction. (">" functions as an arrow pointing towards the centre of the construction.) The general grammatical characteristic of AB and of B will normally be the same: if AB is verbal, B will be verbal, if AB is nominal, B will be nominal, etc.. Exceptions to this require a special explanation. I call constructions of this kind hypotactic structures.

* The formula "A < B" signifies that the constituent A is the main constituent and that B is the non-main constituent in this construction. Under these circumstances the general grammatical category of AB and A will normally be the same. Exceptions are rare.

* The formula "A & B" signifies that there are two main coordinate constituents in this construction (cf. A and B), i.e. that the construction is paratactic. Under these circumstances the general grammatical category of A, B, and AB must be the same.

* Among the paratactic constructions we may distinguish between ordinary coordination "John and Mary are British" symbolised by "&" and conjoined coordination "John and Mary are married to each other" symbolised by "&&", apposition, as in "Mary, my wife" symbolised by "=" and reduplication symbolised by "++".

* The formula "A v B" signifies that there are two main disjunctive constituents in this construction (cf. A or B). The general grammatical category of A, B, and AB must be the same.

* Among the hypotactic relations ">" we may distinguish subject-predicate relation "->", from the topic-comment relation ">:", although there will obviously be many cases of a subject-predicate relation which is also a topic-comment relation so that we have ">:>". (For brevity the final element "->" is usually omitted in these ordinary constructions.)

* A postposed subject we may mark as "<". (Here "<" may never be omitted.

* Among the hypotactic relations "<" the relation between a copula and the predicative noun phrase which follows it we mark as "<c", that between verb and object as "<o", and that between verb and its nominal or verbal complement as "<c". (For brevity the initial element "<" is usually omitted in these constructions. The distinctions among the relations "<" remain problematic.)
Illustration of basic constituent relators
We begin with examples from morphology, i.e. the internal structure of words:

慢 走
màn zǒu
SLOW WALK
“walk slowly”

行 走
xíng zǒu
GO WALK
“walk about”

赶 走
gān zǒu
CHASE WALK
“chase away”

This still leaves many widely different structures with identical descriptions:

法 語
fǎ yǔ
FRENCH SPEECH
“French”

慢 走
màn zǒu
SLOW WALK
“walk slowly”
Note that being the main constituent is not the same as being further specified or “modified” by the non-main constituent. Being ̀bù xìng 不行 “not OK” is not at all a specified or modified way of being xìng 行 “OK”. Chàdiàn 平差點兒跌倒 “almost stumble” is not a specified or modified way of diédào 跌倒 “stumbling”, a jià yángguīzi 假洋鬼子 is no more a special kind of yángguīzi 洋鬼子 than a fake Rembrandt is a special kind of Rembrandt.

*** One might feel that ̀bù 不 was the main constituent in ̀bù xìng 不行 since one can say ̀bù 不 and mean ̀bù xìng 不行. But note that other adverbs that are not negatives, like mǎshān 马上 can be used as independent utterances without thereby becoming the main constituent. One is tempted to take them as adverbs used in elliptic sentences rather than as verbs.

*** The kòutóu gémíngpài 口頭革命派 “fake revolutionary” is perhaps a borderline case.

None the less, expressions like kòutóu 口頭, jià 假, and chàdiànn 平差點兒 are regarded as grammatically subordinate to what they precede.

For example, one might try to read nàgē rén 那個人 “that man” as 匣 “the man who happens to be that one”, or as 匣 <= 匣 “that one of the man-kind” or indeed as a coordinate structure of apposition 匣 = 匣 “that one who is also the man”. We shall settle on the third solution without dismissing the first as entirely impossible.

Note that we say both nàgē 那個 “that one” and rén 人 “the man” to refer to nàgē rén 那個人 “that man”. One needs to argue for one of these solutions. We settle for apposition, but we note that this solution is not without its problems, since nàgē rén 那個人 seems to answer the question shénme rén 什麼人 “what man?”

The possibility that there may be sustained structural ambiguity between these structural analyses must also be kept in mind.

Liànggè rén 兩個人 “two people” might be construed as “the pair who happen to be people”, or as “people, who happen to be two”, or coordinatively “the pair who are also people”. Again, liànggè 兩個 “[the] two” as well as rén 人 “people” may be used to refer to the liànggè rén 兩個人 “two people”. We interpret the relation between liànggè 兩個 “two” and rén 人 “man” as one of apposition.

Zhèixiè rén 這些人 “these people” raises similar problems.
* Cf. also zhèzhǒng dòngwù 這種動物 “this kind of animal/these kinds of animals”. Zhèzhǒng dē dòngwù 這種的動物, if it was ever current, is in any case not acceptable in modern Peking speech. And zhèzhǒng 這種 “this kind” can mean the same thing as zhèzhǒng dòngwù 這種動物.

** Zhèzhǒng dē máo hǎokàn 這種的毛好看 would have to mean “hair of this kind [of animal] is beautiful” and could never mean “this kind of hair is beautiful”. Analyse this latter expression.

I am not suggesting that these problems of description are insoluble, but that they are far from trivial, and that from the very start, grammatical analysis raises subtle questions that invite abstract reflection on language structure.

At times, even the distinction between disjunction and conjunction is not trivial. But let us begin with a clear example:

```
是 不 是
shì bù shì
RIGHT NOT RIGHT
"Is that right or not?"
```

In Peking speech we read shìbùshì 是不是 where we seem to have very clear phonetic reduction of bùshì 不是.

* Compare and analyse:
1. 這是不是鋼筆
2. 意見是不是正確
3. 他是不是在外面跑

Shìbùshì 是不是 is disjunctive in all cases, but in one instance we have the grammatical copula shì 是 whereas the two others we have the related but not identical verb shì 是 “be right”. Decide where shì 是 is used as a copula.

Note that shìbùshì 是不是 may be omitted or postponed in cases 2 and 3, but not in case one. Why?
Subjects and predicates, topics and comments
Among the topics of a Chinese sentence we may distinguish between those involving a subject-predicate relation marked by "-:" and those which do not involve such relation may be marked by ":" . Clearly, there will be many topics that are not logical subjects. Whether there are many subjects which in no sense are topics is perhaps more controversial, but when we want to express this analytical point of view we shall mark the relation simply by "-:" . The relators "-:", "-:" and "-:" are subspecifications of the relator "-:".

```
老三 不 在
Làosān bù zài
Laosan NOT BE-IN
"Laosan is not in."
```

```
今天 老三 不 在
jīntiān Làosān bù zài
TODAY OLD THREE NOT BE-IN
"Today Laosan is not in."
```

```
老三 今天 不 在
Làosān jīntiān bù zài
LAOSAN TODAY NOT BE-IN
"Laosan is not in today."
```

Only subjects and objects may be referred to by certain constructions in dě 的. For example, bù zài dě 不在的 NOT SEE dě, in the context of our sentence, has
to refer to the subject Lǎosān 老三 and cannot refer to the topic jīntiān 今天 “today”. Kàn dè 看的 SEE dè is either the subject (the reader) or the object (the thing read), but never a topic which is not also the subject (e.g. the time or place where something is read). In tā kàn dè shì jīntiān 他看的是 today the word jīntiān 今天 has to refer to a piece of writing, for example the journal Today.

* Why should we not take jīntiān 今天 as a temporal adverb? Can adverbs normally be used as nouns?

A whole range of sentence connectives and sentence adverbials as well as modal particles may be inserted after the topic of a sentence.

张三今天要是不在…
Zhāngsān jīntiān yào shì bù zài
ZHANGSAN TODAY IF NOT BE-IN
“If Zhangsan is not in today…”
今天张三如果不在
jīntiān Zhāngsān rú guò bù zài
TODAY ZHANGSAN IF NOT BE-IN

*** One can insert sentence connectives after shéi 誰:
誰要是說到他
shéi yào shuō tā
ANYONE IF TALK-ABOUT HE
“If anybody talks about him…”
This would seem to indicate that shéi 誰 here is a topic although one feels intuitively certain that on current informal notions of a topic, shéi 誰 certainly would not qualify.

** A useful test whether something is or is not a topic is to ask whether you can insert shìbùshì 是不是:
今天李老是不是上班
今天李不是老李上班
On the other hand we also have:
是不是李老今天也上班
Considering that
一個人也不能去
cannot be expanded to
???? 一個人是不是也沒去 ????
and that
誰也不知道
cannot be expanded to
???? 誰是不是也不知道 ????
we have to conclude that yīgè rén 一個人 and shéi 誰 are subjects but not topics in these sentences.
* Compare:
他來了客人
tā láilè kèrèn
COME-lè GUEST
“A guest has arrived for him.”
and
他來了，客人
tā láilè，kèrèn
COME-lè GUEST
“The guest has arrived.”
In láilè kèrèn 來了客人 there has to be relative stress on kèrèn 客人 and the
kèrèn 客人 cannot have been mentioned in the context before. On the other
hand in láilè kèrèn 來了，客人 the word kèrèn 客人 as a whole may be entirely
unstressed, and the kèrèn 客人 will have been mentioned in the context.

*** Strictly speaking the notions of subject and topic are not necessarily on the
same theoretical level. “Subject” is often taken as a syntactic term on a
different level from the pragmatic notion of “topic” which has to do with the
pragmatic organisation of discourse. Both these notions are again to be
distinguished from the semantic concepts of an “agent”, “patient”, “time
indicator” etc.. Many Chinese linguists will call all of our subjects and topics
zhǔyù 主语 indiscriminately, and they will then, on a pragmatic level speak of
huàtī 話題, and then again on the separate level of semantics of the function of
shīshì 施事 “agent”, shòushi 受事 “patient” etc..

*** Chinese linguists have formulated a principle to the effect that
yǔxù gǔdìng 語序固定 “The order of the constituents related by the constituent
relators is constant.” According to this theorem subjects always precede
predicates, verbs always precede their objects, complements always succeed
the verbs they are subordinate to, modifiers always precede what they
modify, adverbs always precede the verbs they modify etc. For example, in

çaìdiàn mǎi
dictionary buy
“The dictionary [we’ll] buy.”

çaìdiàn 詞典 is regarded as the shòushi zhǔyù 受事主語 “patient subject”
whereas in

mǎi çaìdiàn
buy dictionary
it is regarded as an object.
Conversely, Chinese linguists speak of *shīshì bīnyú* 施事賓語 “agential object”, as in the case of

來了客人

*láilè kērèn*

COME-leş GUEST

“a guest has arrived”

Many Chinese linguists would say that in *láilè kērèn* 來了客人 the parallelism with *chīlè fàn* 吃了飯 is significant, and that this parallelism licences us to call *kērèn* 客人 the object (bīnyú 賓語) of *láilè* 來了.

*** Consider, in this context, the structure of:

1. 鬧賊了
   *nào zéi lè*
   CREATE THIEF ṭè
   “There is a thief about.”

2. 鬧鬼
   *nào guǐ*
   CREATE-DISTURBANCE GHOST

A. = 有鬼 “There is a ghost, be haunted [of a place]”
B. = (背地裡) 作壞事 “play tricks behind someone’s back [of a person]”

3. 孩子又鬧了
   *háizǐ yǒu nào*
   CHILD AGAIN CREATE-DISTURBANCE ṭè
   “The children are again being naughty.”

*** Analyse the following sentence from Qu Qiubai 齊秋白 as quoted in Gunn 1991:246:

這樣生活着，我們二十六個人。

*** Is the following ambiguous?

東方出了個毛澤東

The concept of “a subject which is also a topic” versus “a subject which is not a topic” is controversial among grammarians, but the basic idea, for what it is worth, may be made plausible through the following pair:

真有意思這個人

*zhēn yǒuyìshī zhègē rén*

REALLY INTERESTING THIS PERSON

“Very interesting, this person.”

and

這個人真有意思

*zhègē rén zhēn yǒuyìshī*

THIS PERSON REALLY INTERESTING

“This person is very interesting.”
One might be excused for thinking that the grammatical relations between the subject and the predicate are the same but the thematic and topicalising organisation is different: a post-posed subject is not regarded as a topic and may not normally receive contrastive focal stress, whereas the topic/subject at the beginning may receive such stress. Consider an analysis:

```
這個人真奇怪
zhēigê rèn zhēn qìguài
```

“This man is very strange.”

```
真奇怪這個
zhēn qìguài zhēigê rèn
```

“Really strange, this man.”

There is only a difference in topicalisation here. It is hard to think of zhēigê rèn 這個 as a topic when it is placed at the end of the sentence. At the same time zhēigê rèn 這個 does remain the subject even when for some reason which is to do with the organisation of the discourse it is placed at the end of the sentence. Thus it appears that we need both a concept of a subject and a concept of a topic, although both functions very often overlap.

The grammatical structure of

```
真喜愛這個
zhēn xǐhuān zhēigê rèn
```

“really like this person”

is totally different and involves a verb-object relation which we mark by “o”.

---

HARBSMEIER: 3 SUBJECT/PREDICATE VERSUS TOPIC/COMMENT

53
*** Analyse the following report on the arrival of Shevrov (緩應略夫) taken from Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936):
房門一開，走進了緩應略夫。
“As soon as the door opened, in walked Shevrov.”

*** It might look as if our distinction is neatly illustrated through a surprising ambiguity brought up by Lu Zhiwei 陸志韋 1948:113, but the first impression is spurious because the ambiguity lies in the ambiguity of 扶著 rather than in the possibility of a post-verbal subject:

![Diagram](attachment:image.png)

A. “The lady supported the maid.” Cf. 扶着病人 “support a sick person”
B. “The lady used the maid as her support” Cf. 扶着杖 “support oneself with a stick”

* Contrast the subject-predicate structure in the following:

來了客人
*lái lè kénr
COME-lè GUEST
“A guest has arrived.”

請了客人
*qǐnglè kénr
ASK-lè GUEST
“He has invited guests.”

Find a definition of the term “ergative verb” and see how this applies to Modern Standard Chinese.

* Analyse and translate:
太可愛，那個小孩子。
* Discuss the ambiguities and the analytical problems involved in the following analyses:

禁 止 核 武 器
jinzhǐ hé wǔqì
FORBID KERNEL WEAPON

“If we] forbid nuclear weapons ... ...”

A. “Carrying of arms forbidden”

If one refuses to accept this analysis of reading A, then what analytical alternatives are there? How is one to construe the expression?

禁 止 荷 槍
jinzhǐ hé qiāng
FORBID CARRY-ON-SHOULDER GUN

B. “[If we] forbid the carrying of arms ... ...”

* Compare:
1. 禁止入內
“No entrance.”
2. 禁止砍伐樹木
A. “No felling of trees”
B. “[If we] forbid the felling of trees ... ...”
3. 禁止抽煙
A. “Smoking forbidden”
B. “[If we] forbid smoking”
4. 禁止抽印
A. “[If we] forbid offprints ... ...”
B. ????
* Investigate the ambiguity of the following:
1. 禁止通行
2. 禁止停車
3. 禁止鴉片
4. 禁止白酒
5. 禁止原子彈

Predictably, we have the following ambiguity:

A. "He has received [or: come into] money.
Lit: As for him, money has come to him."

B. "He has sent money."
* Analyse the following phrases:

1. 來信
   lái xìn
   COME LETTER
   A. “incoming letter”

2. 來信
   lái xìn
   COME LETTER
   B. “send a letter here”

3. 他今天沒來信
   tā jīntiān méi láixìn
   HE TODAY NOT COME LETTER
   A. “He has no letters today.”

4. 他今天沒來信
   tā jīntiān méi láixìn
   HE TODAY NOT COME LETTER
   B. “He has not sent a letter here today.”

5. 他來信了
   tā láixìn lè
   COME LETTER lè
   A. “He has received a letter.”
   B. “He has sent a letter here.”

***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>北京</th>
<th>來了</th>
<th>客人</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Běijīng</td>
<td>láilè</td>
<td>kèrén</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEKING</td>
<td>COME-lè</td>
<td>GUEST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. “A guest has arrived from Peking.”
B. “A guest has arrived in Peking.”

** kēré n lái lè Bēijing 客人來了北京 and Bēijing lái lè kēré n 北京來了客人 differ in thematic structure and in the interpretation of kēré n 客人. Explain the difference.

*** In Moi, je suis sinologue, moi is the topic, je is the subject. Ask yourself why je is not naturally taken as a topic in this sentence.

*Analyse and try to determine the stress pattern under the following two readings:

老朋友都不認識
lǎopéngyǒu dōu bù rènshì
OLD FRIEND ALL NOT RECOGNISE
A. “Even old friends all don’t recognise [him].”
B. “[You/he/they/I] don’t even recognise an old friend.”

Note that if there is clear stress on dōu 都 then the word has to mean “all” and on lǎopéngyǒu 老朋友 if dōu 都 is to be glossed as “even”.

文学 批評 應該 發展
wénxué pīpíng yīnggāi fāzhǎn
LITERATURE CRITICISM SHOULD DEVELOP
A. “One should develop literary criticism”
B. "Literary criticism should develop."

*Note incidentally that one feels hesitant and uncomfortable when calling fāzhǎn 发展 the object of yīnggāi 應該. Why?

A. "In India coffee is very cheap"

On the following reading B the sentence is about Indian coffee, and not just any coffee sold in India, and the intonation is quite different:

B. "Indian coffee is very cheap."

印度 咖啡 很 便宜
Yīndù kāfèi hěn piányì
INDIA COFFEE VERY CHEAP

B. "Indian coffee is very cheap."
* Describe the intonation features that allow one to distinguish between readings A and B above.

*** Describe the special character of the following case of topicalisation:

這件事讓我作主
zhèjiàn shì ràng wǒ zuòzhǔ
THIS MATTER LET I BE MASTER

"As for this matter, let me take charge of it."

Is there any un-topicalised position for zhèjiàn shì 這件事?

* Even within the context of some sentences the ambiguity remains. Present two analyses of the following:

我們需要進口設備
Topics, like subjects, can be quantified by 都 “all”:

東屋 北屋 都 燈
dōng wū běi wū dōu diǎn zhē dēng

EASTERN CHAMBER NORTHERN CHAMBER ALL BE-LIT SUFF LAMP

“In the eastern chamber as well as the northern chamber the light was on.”

* If one reads 都 with very slight stress indeed, then this sentence can also mean “In the eastern chamber as well as in the northern chamber the light was already on.” If 都 is to mean “both, all”, then it has to receive relatively heavy stress.

* Could one take 燈 “lamp” to be the object in this construction? Is 燈 in any sense a topic here?

* Translate
1. 東屋北屋都點了燈
2. 東屋北屋都點著燈了

NB that in Cantonese these two kinds of lè 了 are different words pronounced in an entirely different way. The problems of the grammatical particle lè 了 will be taken up below.

* Analyse the following sentence from Zhao Shuli 趙樹理:
廟裡掛著一口鐘
“In the temple there was hanging a bell.”

* Identify the subjects in the following:
飯吃完了人也逛了
“By the time he had eaten his meal (flour-based pancakes lào bǐng 烙餅) he had found all the people.” Lǐjīa zhù zhāng Děi Biānqiǎn 李家莊的變遷, beginning.

Note that in the first reading of the following sentence 他 他 is not the subject of 出色 whereas in the second reading it could be taken to be the subject if one construes the topic as a special sub-type of a subject or indeed, in the style of Chinese linguists, refuses to recognise any distinction between subject and topic.
他講課很出色
"His teaching is very outstanding."

他講課很出色
"He teaches outstandingly well."

*Cf. 他講課講得很出色
他字寫得很好
He teaches outstandingly well.
Characters he writes very well.”

* Provide contrasting analyses of:
1. 他字寫得很好
他媽媽寫得好
A. “His mother writes better.”
B. “He has written мама well.”
3.
他那个人写得好
*tā nà gè rén xiě dè hǎo*
HE THAT CL REN WRITE dè GOOD
“That man writes better.”

Note the very expressive flexibility in word order in the following four variants brought up by Timothy Light 1979:154, in which the basic semantic relations are the same throughout whereas the grammatical organisation of the sentence differs considerably:

```
yīběn shū duōshāo qián
ONE VOL BOOK HOW-MUCH MONEY
“How much is one book?”
```

```
daōshāo qián yīběn shū
HOW-MUCH MONEY ONE-VOL BOOK
“How much is one book?”
```

```
shū duōshāo qián yīběn
BOOK HOW-MUCH MONEY ONE-VOL.
“How much is one book?”
```

書 一本 多少 錢
shū yīběn duōshǎo qián
BOOK ONE-VOL. HOW-MUCH MONEY
“How much is one book?”

Compare the following:

我 不 喜歡 吃 米飯
wǒ bù xǐhuān chī mǐfàn
I NOT LIKE EAT RICE
“I do not like to eat rice.”

米飯 我 不 喜歡 吃
mǐfàn wǒ bù xǐhuān chī
RICE I NOT LIKE EAT
“Rice I do not like to eat.”
Lǎo Lì sǐlè 老李死了 “Old Li died” is a straightforward subject predicate sentence where the subject is at the same time the topic, but consider a more complex and particularly well-rehearsed example:

Lǎo Lì sǐlè 父親 FATHER
OLD Li DIED-FATHER
“As for Old Li there died his father.”
“Old Li lost his father.”
Contrast: “Dem Alten Li starb sein Vater.”

This sentence is event-centered and contrasts with the noun based Lǎo Lì dè fùqín sǐlè 老李的父親死了. Our analysis captures this because it makes the sentence 死了父親 a comment.
Lü Shuxiang 吕叔湘 1979:72 notes the following slightly more complex sentence:

老李四岁时上了死了父亲
Lào Lǐ sì suī shàng sì lè fù qīn
OLD Lǐ FOUR YEAR ON-TOP DIE-lè FATHER

“At the age of four Old Li lost his father.”
Cf. “Dem Alten Li, im alter von vier Jahren, starb sein Vater”

On this reading 上 is a grammaticalised form which transforms a noun phrase expressing a time 四岁 四年 “four years” into the time NP 四岁 上 “at the age of four”. We shall investigate such grammatical operators and the grammatical categories under the boxes at a later stage.

*** Si 死 in sentences of this sort can even take the suffix -guò 過:

他死过一匹马
tā sǐ guò yī pí mǎ
HE DIE -EXP ONE-CL HORSE

“He had a horse die on him.”
*** Translate:
1. 他 levels 一匹馬都沒死過
2. 〔連〕一匹馬他都沒死過
and note that we cannot say
????他一匹馬死過????

* Translate:
1. 他死過三個弟弟
2. 他死過兩個兒子
3. 他家死過一口豬

One might suspect that -guò 过 is limited to transitive verbs so that the present examples would show sǐ 死 to function as a transitive verb in these contexts. This, however, is not the case.

* Translate:
1. 休息過〔三天〕
2. 游行過〔三次〕
3. 他自殺過〔三次〕
4. 游泳過〔三次〕
5. 這個地方地震過
6. 我跟他來往過多次
7. 相傳是往昔曾在院子裡的槐樹上縊死過一個女人的（魯迅：吶喊，自序）

*** Translate and analyse the following. Which of the sentences answers the question “how long?” (duration) and which answers the question “when?” (time):
1. 他住在北京三年了。
2. 三年來他住在北京。
3. 這三年他住在北京。

** However, the addition of the experiential -guò 过 after the verb sǐ 死 “to die” might be taken to suggest that sǐ 死 must be taken in this context as “have die for oneself”, something that one can experience or live through.
他爛過五十斤香蕉
tā lànɡuò wǔshí jīn xiānɡjiānɡ
HE ROT-EXP FIFTY CATTY BANANA
“He had fifty catty of bananas get rotten.”

This sort of construction might suggest that just as sǐ 死 may be treated as an experiential verb “have die for oneself, suffer the death of”, and lăn 遭 may be taken as “suffer the rotting of, have rot away for oneself”. On these kinds of interpretation of the verbs there is no problem of grammatical description. The problem has been shunted into the area of lexicography.
Consider a wonderfully confusing case involving the coverb *bèi* 被:

母鸡 被 狼 吃了 一只 小鸡

MOTHER HEN SUFFER WOLF EAT -lè ONE-CL LITTLE HEN

"As for the hen by a/the wolf there was eaten one chick."

"The hen had one chick eaten by a/the wolf."

What is subject and object is not simply a matter not of actual role in the physical processes etc. of the world, but of semantic perspective. At the same time, the special lexical properties of verbs like *qì* 騎 seem to be important in bringing about the grammaticality of the following pair of which the first is entirely unproblematic from the grammatical point of view while the second is well worth investigating:

這個人都沒有騎過馬。

"This person has not ridden a horse."
We turn now to the analysis of the problematic case:

这张马没有骑过人
zhè pí mǎ méiyǒu qíguò rén
THIS-CL HORSE NOT RIDE-EXP MAN

"This horse has not been ridden by anybody."

The current analysis of this sentence by Chinese linguists would involve a different analysis of the last phrase:

没有骑过人
méiyǒu qíguò rén
NOT RIDE-EXP MAN

"No one has ridden it."
Here are some further tricky examples for comparison:

1. 窗户糊了纸
   chuāng hú hú lè zhǐ
   WINDOW PASTE-PROG PAPER
   A. “The window is already pasted up with paper.”

**Try to analyse the following tricky similar sentence:**

纸已经糊了窗户。
zhǐ yǐjīng hú lè chuāng hú
PAPER ALREADY PASTE-PROG WINDOW
“They have already pasted up the window with paper.”

**The following present perhaps fewer problems:**

西昌已经通车了。
xīchāng yǐjīng tōng tiē lè
XICHANG ALREADY LINK RAILWAY PERF
“Xichang is already linked to the railway system.”

铁路已经通西昌了。
tiē lè yǐjīng tōng xīchāng lè
RAILWAY ALREADY LINK XICHANG
“The railway system already reaches Xichang.”
Often, the distinction between subject-predicate and topic-comment constructions is problematic, which is why many grammarians in China refuse to recognize the distinction altogether. (From now on I add labels to the immediate constituents. These labels will be explained in the following section and may be disregarded until then, if found confusing.)

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{蘋果} & \text{一} & \text{斤} & \text{四} & \text{角} \\
píngguǒ & yī & jīn & sì & jiǎo \\
\text{APPLE} & \text{ONE CATTY} & \text{FOUR DIME} \\
\text{"Apples are forty cents a catty."} \\
\end{array}
\]

The point is that “cost four dimes a catty” is predicated of “apples”, just as “costs four dimes” is predicated of “one catty”. Thus the relations at these two levels ought to be identical. And yet, according to our traditional methods we might be inclined to call píngguǒ 青果 the topic, and not the subject of what follows, whereas we are inclined to call yījīn 一斤 the subject of the nominal predicate sìjìāo 四角.

We need some carefully defined standards or criteria which allow us to distinguish between topics and subjects.

** Bring out the following near-synonymous readings through an IC-analysis:

他走路快極了
\(tā \ zǒulù \ kuài \ jílè\) 
HE WALK FAST IN-THE-EXTREME-lè
A. “He runs extremely fast.”
B. “His running is extremely fast.”
A. "I did not go because I did not have the money."

B. "I did not go because there wasn’t the money."
Objects and unmarked nominal complements

The verb-object relation is marked "o" and distinguished from the equally problematic relation verb-complement marked by "c". The temptation to distinguish between different post-verbal grammatical roles becomes evident when one considers the following pair:

吃 餃子
chī jiāozǐ
EAT DUMPLING
"eat dumplings"

For verbal complements see the subsection on 得 in the chapter on markers.
The question 他吃些甚麼  may be answered by saying 吃餃子, but it may not normally be answered by:

吃 餃子
chi guanzi
EAT RESTAURANT
A. “eat out”

The question whether 吃館子 should be regarded as one verb(v) or as a verb phrase VP need not interest us at this stage. It will be taken up below when we get to the register of lexicalisation. Supposing that there is, for example, a marzipan 餃子, a restaurant made of marzipan, we have a natural ambiguity because we can also construe:

吃 餃子
chi guanzi
EAT RESTAURANT
B. “eat the restaurant”

In order to understand this particular ambiguity speakers of Chinese must realize that the grammatical relations involved in these two readings are different, although the grammatical categories of the words involved are exactly the same. The grammatical relation between eating and a restaurant in which you eat is not the same as the relation between the eating and a marzipan restaurant which you eat.
On the other hand, nouns indicating places can obviously be objects. For example, in

```
下
xià
GO-DOWN

馆子
guǎnzi
RESTAURANT
“go to a restaurant”
```

```
VP
```

```
vt
```

```
n
```

Places often have to be asked for by *shénme dìfāng* 甚麼地方 rather than simply by *shénme* 甚麼.

* Discuss the following:

```
吃酒席
chī jiǔxí
EAT BANQUET
“attend a banquet”
```

What is the relation between *chī* 吃 and *jiǔxí* 酒席?

Object and subject are not always easily distinguished. Consider the verb *yǒu* 有 “to have”:

```
有三塊錢
yǒu sān kuài qián
HAVE THREE PIECE MONEY
```

```
A. “have three dollars”
```

```
VP
```

```
vt
```

```
= np
num
n
```
有 三 塊 錢
yǒu sān kuài qián
HAVE THREE PIECE MONEY
B. “there are three dollars”

S

vt <- NP
num n

** For historical reasons it is tempting to think of sān kuài qián 三塊錢 in reading B as an object, since we have the object pronoun zhī 之 after yǒu 有 in the standard classical phrase yǒu zhī 有之 “there is such a thing”. This is one plausible reason to analyze existential yǒu 有 as having an object even in modern Chinese.

* Try to analyse the following without turning to the next example:

剩下了三個人
shèngxiàlē sāngē rén
REMAIN·lè THREE MAN
“Three people were left over.”

房子 里 剩下了三個人
fángzì lǐ shèngxià lè sāngē rén
HOUSE INSIDE REMAIN PERF THREE MAN
“In the house three persons remained.”
* Compare the following and ask yourself whether what comes after the main verb is the object or the subject of the verb:
1. 他有三個房子
2. 房子裡有三個人
3. 上海有個城隍廟
4. 今天發生了一件重要的事
5. 今天發現了一件重要的事
6. 老李發現了一件重要的事

```
昨天 大 風
zuòtiān guā dà fēng
YESTERDAY BLOW GREAT WIND
"Yesterday there was a storm."
```

* Compare the superficially similar “n + v + vadj + n”
老李用大筆
“Old Li uses a large brush.”

*** Consider
響鈴了
xiǎng línɡ lè
RING BELL 了
“The bell is ringing.”
Linguists in the People’s Republic of China tend to regard línɡ 鈴 as an object in this construction. The basic structural similarity is said to be with
吃飯了
chī fàn lè
EAT RICE 了
“[I] have eaten rice/food.”
The difference between these constructions, however, comes out when one tries transposition:

飯吃了
fàn chǐ lè
RICE EAT lè
A. “[He] has eaten the rice/food.”
B. “The rice has been consumed.”

Similar transposition in the case of our verb, however, yields different results:
鈴響了
líng xiǎng lè
BELL RING lè
A. “The bell is ringing.”
*B “[He] has rung the bell.”

響雷了
xiǎng léi lè
SOUND THUNDER lè
“It is thundering.”

雷響了
léi xiǎng lè
THUNDER SOUND lè
A. “It is thundering.”
*B “[He] is sounding the thunder.”

It appears that xiǎng 響 in these constructions is not a transitive verb, and constructions like dāléi 打雷 “It is thundering” would seem to be precisely structurally parallel. Guāfēnglè 刮風了 “It is windy” allows for inversion fēng guālè 風刮了 which again does not allow for a transitive reading of guā 刮.

The class of expressions that work like guāfēng 刮風 seems closed [fēngbì dè 封閉的], whereas there seems to be an infinite number of constructions like chīfàn 吃飯. Note, however, that we can also say zhèshí chuānglè yǐzhèn wēifēng 這時吹起了一陣微風 “At that time a mild wind started to blow.” or cóng fāngzì lǐ sòngchūlānlè yīgè qīngcuìdè shēngyín 從房裡送出來一個清脆的聲音 “From the room there emerged a clear voice.” (Both sentences are by Ba Jin. Cf. Solincev 1957:124.)
Such postposed subjects seem very different objects such as those in:

跑了 三個 地方
páolè sāngè difāng
RUN/WALK-lē THREE+CL PLACE

“He went to three places.”

I take this to be structurally similar to qùguó sāngè difāng 去過三個地方 “went to three places”. The construction is totally different from lái lē sāngè rén 來了三個人 “Three people arrived” which involves a postposed non-thematic subject.

Time complements seem different from such objects for various reasons. The verb-complement relation may be marked by “c”. One may be tempted to treat times differently from places as follows:

跑了 三個 鐘頭
páolè sāngè zhōngtóu
RUN/WALK-lē THREE+CL HOUR

“He walked for three hours.”

*** You can ask tā páolè shénme difāng 他跑了甚麽地方 “where did he go?” but also tā páolè jīgè zhōngtóu 他跑了幾個鐘頭 “for how many hours did he run around?”.

* One feels inclined to say that there is a marked grammatical difference between kàn yī bēn 看一本 “read one volume” and kàn yī biàn 看一遍 “read one time” which a structural analysis might try to bring out. Contrast and translate:
1. 張三寫的書，我買了一本
2. 張三寫的書，我看了一遍
3. 你看了哪一本
???? 你看了哪一遍 ????
** Note that that the verb-object construction pà rén 怕人 “1. be afraid of others; 2. make others afraid” has the same grammatical structure, but different semantics of the transitive verb pà 怕.

** Analyse tā sāngē zhōngtóu pàolē sāngē dìfāng 他這三個鐘頭跑了三個地方 “Within these three hours he went to three places.”

Places can be topics in sentences with pāo 跑 “run”:
他這三個地方跑了四個廟
tā zhèi sāngē dìfāng pāolē sigē miào
HE THREE PLACE RUN/WALK-lé FOUR TEMPLE
“In three places he ‘did’ (i.e. visited) four temples.”

But here zhèi sāngē dìfāng 這三個地方 “three places” is not the object of pāo 跑 “run, walk” but a topic which indicates where he was going to these four temples. In fact this sort of place topic is entirely parallel to the time topics. (We disregard the problem whether in fact he visited twelve temples in all....)

* Translate and analyse:
他三個大學學了四種語言
An expression like yìdiǎn 一點 can function nominally, as in gěi tā yìdiǎn 給他一點 “give him a little”, but also as an adverbial modifier, as in kuài-yìdiǎn 快一點 “a little faster”. Compare the following analysis in which we begin to use the formal category labels which will be introduced in the next chapter:

```
| 說 坦白 一點 |
|---------|--------|
| shuō   | tánbái |
| SPEAK  | FRANK |
| “speak a little more frankly” |
```

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
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```

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

** One might find tánbái yìdiǎn 坦白一點 as a whole adverbial. What arguments are there for such an analysis?
說 錯 一 點
* The difference between the symbols “<” and “c” in cases like these is notoriously unclear. One wonders whether the notion of a complement should not simply always be marked by the ordinary “<”.

我 去 圖書館 還 一本 書
I GO LIBRARY RETURN ONE COPY BOOK
“I’m going to the library (in order) to return a book.”
Contrast the following case of coordination:

我去了图书馆，还了一本书。

I went to the library and returned a book.

Objects can be of very different kinds, for example in the case of a verb like 喜欢 “want, want to”:

我們 喜歡 學習 文件

We want to study documents

A. “We want to study documents”
* Explain the structural contrast between the following:
1. 你要甚麼 ？
2. 你要作甚麼 ？
What kinds of answers does nǐ yào shénmè 你要甚麼 allow? Try to describe the difference between a complement and an object.

** Compare chū hàn 出汗 “issue forth sweat > to sweat” with chūbān 出版 “come off the press > be published > publish”. Are these verb/object constructions? What is the difference between these two constructions? Cf. chūlè lēnghàn 出了冷汗 “sweated cold sweat”. Are there comparable expansions of chūbān 出版? Is chūhàn 出汗 a word?
The formal status of *duì chī mǎntòu* is interesting here. We could simply construe it as an ordinary coverbal phrase, but on the other hand one feels there is a process of topicalisation at work here where the topicalisation happens to be marked with a coVP.

* Consider the following two analyses: which do you prefer, and why? Can you think of a third analysis?

**Cf. the following tests for topic-hood of *kànshū* 看書. Are these sentences acceptable?**
1. 他呀看書呢看了三個鐘頭
2. 他看書是不是三個鐘頭?
Predicate nominals and apposition
The relation between the copula and the predicate nominal to which it relates (which we designate by the letter “e”) might for various reasons perhaps be usefully distinguished from the notion of an object and that of a complement:

Mao Zedong was this man

Apposition is marked by “=”:

this man Mao Zedong
A. "Him Little Wang understands well."

B. "He understands little Wang."

C. "He, Little Wang, understands [this] well."

*** How about the reading "Him, Little Wang, [he] understands very well." Discuss this with a native speaker of the language.
Compare a semantically similar sentence which brings out the underlying semantic function of 小王 in this sentence.

他 對 小 王 很 了 解
tā dìu xiǎo wáng hěn liǎojiě
HE AGAINST LITTLE WANG VERY UNDERSTAND
“He understands little Wang very well”

We note that the possible grammatical and semantic relations in tā hěn liǎojiě 他很了解 “he understands well” are not the same as in Xiǎo Wáng hěn liǎojiě 小王很了解 “Little Wang [he] understands well”. The first has to be a subject/predicate relation, because tā 他 is not easily moved from the object position or topicalised, the second can also be taken as a topicalised-object/verb relation, because Xiǎo Wáng 小王 is naturally topicalised.

* Analyse:
小李練習本丢了
xiǎo Lǐ liànxiúcèn diūle
LITTLE LI EXERCISE-BOOK LOSE-lè
A. “Little Li’s exercise book has got lost.”
B. “As for Little Li, his exercise book has got lost.”
C. “As for Little Li he lost his exercise book.”?

* The contrast between subjects and topics remains highly controversial, and the terms are certainly hard to define. For our purposes two things are important to remember:
1. A topic has to precede its comment, whereas a subject does not have to precede its predicate.
2. The rôle of the subject typically is that of the agent or the thing characterised by the sentence of which it is the subject, whereas the topic is not typically restricted to these rôles.
Chapter 4
Formal Categories Of Constituents

As we have seen in the latter half of the last chapter, the subscripts of the constituent boxes are used to indicate the grammatical category to which an expression is said to belong under a given interpretation of the whole expression. The application of subscripts is often debatable, especially at the level of morphology, but also at the level of individual words and on the syntactic level. The question of the definition of word classes particularly is extremely complex in the case of Chinese, something which is conveniently illustrated by the following plain example:

慢 步
màn zǒu
SLOW WALK
“walk slowly”
“1. don’t leave yet; 2. take care”

adv. > VP

va vi

Words are marked by small letters like “n”, “v”, “vi”, “vt”, “va”, “adv”, “cop” on the bottom right according to their grammatical properties in modern Chinese. Phrases are marked by capitals “NP”, “VP” etc. These labels are explained in alphabetical order below.

A number of very obvious descriptive problems present themselves:
1. We treat mànzǒu 慢走 as a verb phrase, but could/should one not treat it as a straightforward verb with an adverbial morphological element? Mànzhōu 慢走 is, in any case, an entry in A Chinese English Dictionary, Peking 1978. But what is the reason behind this inclusion? Màn màn zǒu 慢慢走 is more like a verb phrase. Màn màn zài (地) zǒu 慢慢叫 (地) 走 is clearly a VP. In any case there is no entry for it in this dictionary. In the section on lexicalisation below we shall enter into this problem more systematically.

2. The question may be asked whether a word like màn 慢 here should be labeled as a verb meaning “be slow” (cf. tā hěn màn 他很慢 “He is very slow”), or as an adjective meaning “slow” (cf. mǎncē 慢車 “slow train”) or even as an adverb meaning “slowly”. One might say that it is an adjectival verb which here functions adverbially.
The question whether one speaks of adjectives as a separate class or of adjectival verbs seems of little theoretical significance as long as one recognizes the contrasts between adjectival and other intransitive verbs.

* Is chēzhan 車站 a constituent in huǒchēzhan 火車站 “railway station”? Write an analysis. Compare dìtiězhan 地鐵站 “underground station”: how do you understand dìtiě 地鐵?

* Is zhàn 站 “stand” not the same word, according to our account, as the noun zhàn 站 “station”? Discuss the the reasons for your answer.

On the lower left corner, the grammatical category of an expression in classical or early colloquial Chinese may occasionally be indicated when this is different from the current modern Chinese lexical category:

```
是
shì
“is/was”
[pron] cop
```

Cf. shì kě rén shú bù kě rén 是可忍孰不可忍 “If this is bearable what is not bearable?” where the old meaning is clearly present. In Modern Standard Chinese the pronominal origin of shì 是 is rarely relevant.

Most of the time the bracketed categorisation is not grammatically relevant, but at times it is a useful reminder, and in the context of historical syntax such bracketed categorisation can be very useful, as we shall see below.

Phrases like nǐ dè wánxiào 你的玩笑 in kāi nǐ dè wánxiào 開你的玩笑 receive bracketed labels on the bottom right [NP] to indicate that they are pseudo-NPs [zhūn míngcì zǔ 造名詞組].
Word classes play a very important role in Chinese grammar. Consider the grammatical difference between nán 難 “(be) difficult”, kǔnnán 困難 “(be) difficult; difficulty” and kǔnjíng 困境 “difficulty”. This sequence illustrates the usefulness of the classification of modern Chinese words into word classes. Without such a classification we should not be able to distinguish clearly between these closely related words.

Our classification predicts the possibility of ambiguities. An apparently innocent phrase like jīngjí kǔnnán 經濟困難 admits of two competing grammatical readings which differ not in the division into immediate constituents but in the ascription of grammatical features to these constituents as well as in the nature of the relation between constituents:

A. “difficulties of the economy”

```
| n | n |
```

We can say bù shì jīngjí kǔnnán 不是經濟困難 “are not difficulties of the economy”, but we cannot say bù jīngjí dē kǔnnán 不經濟的困難 “uneconomic difficulties”. The fact that, in another meaning, we can say bù jīngjí 不經濟 “be uneconomic, be wasteful of money” is not relevant to our present subject.

B. “the economy is in difficulties”

```
| n | va |
```

Cf. jīngjí bù kǔnnán 經濟不困難 “The economy is not in difficulties.” The ambiguity arises because kǔnnán 困難 is both an adjectival verb and a noun.

* Contrast the following words with respect to the grammatical form classes to which they belong:
1. niǎnqìng 年青
2. qīngnián 青年

* Analyse the following ambiguity:
我暫時不需要花
wó zhànsǐ bù xuēyào huā
I FOR-THE-TIME-BEING NOT NEED FLOWER/TO-SPEND
A. “For the time being I do not need flowers.”
B. “For the time being I do not need to spend money.”

We distinguish, among others, the following categories, most of which may be subdivided into subcategories of various types:

**adj = adjective.**
see va = adjectival verb

**adn = adnominal**
◊ Can only function as noun modifiers.
◊ Cannot be modified by hěn 很 or by bù 不.
◊ Cannot function as subject or as predicate.
◊ Cannot have a complement or function as a complement.
◊ Cannot be followed by lè 了.

雌, 雄, 副, 單
袖珍, 野生, 法定, 國產, 國立, 西式, 中式, 民用, 軍用,
國營, 私營, 彩色, 黑白, 急性, 慢性, 首要, 次要, 大型, 微型, 良性, 惡
性, 初等, 公共

The term “adnoun” is unusual, but it is necessary to distinguish an important class of Chinese words which might almost be likened to unbound nominal prefixes.

**adv = adverb**
◊ Modify only verbs, verb phrases or sentences
◊ May be marked (like jiànniàn’dè 漸漸地 “gradually” which has the adverbial suffix dè 地) or they may be unmarked like hěn 很 “very”
◊ Adverbs are a notoriously heterogeneous word-class

忽然, 決然, 猛然, 漸漸地, 馬上
哪兒, 怎麼
很, 太, 最, 更, 非常, 格外, 稍微
都, 締締, 一共, 只, 僅僅
正, 剛, 剛剛, 就, 才, 立刻, 常常, 往往, 一向, 偶爾, 已經, 曾經
逐漸, 終於
卻, 偏, 偏偏, 難道, 簡直, 究竟, 居然, 反正
悄悄, 暗暗, 親自, 一齊, 相互, 死死
A. "There is somebody on the horse."

We read *shàng* 上 as a place noun here. The point is controversial. On the more normal second reading we have an adverb:

B. "Somebody will be here soon."

The presence of NPp on the left under *mǎshàng* 馬上 indicates the syntactic source of the adverb.

On reading B *mǎshàng* 馬上 is a word, a fully lexicalised item, and at the same time it is also a grammaticalised item, because though etymologically a noun phrase, it is specialised on its adverbial function. For the formal representation of this grammaticalisation see our sections on grammaticalisation and on lexicalisation below.
* Many Chinese linguists would call lái lè yīgě rén 来了一个人 not a sentence but a verb phrase (VP). See S=sentence.

* Analyse the following paying special attention to the grammatical functions of lè 了:
  忽然電話鈴響了
  hūrán diànhuà líng xiāng lè
  SUDDENLY TELEPHONE BELL SOUND lè
  “Suddenly the telephone rang.”

* Compare, translate, and analyse:
  忽然響電話鈴了

  很 聰明 的 人
  hěn cōngmíng de rén
  VERY INTELLIGENT de PERSON
  “a very intelligent person”

  Dē 的 is obligatory after what Chinese linguists call zhùàngtài 形状詞 “descriptive adjectival verbs” in noun-modifying position. (See v d) The phrase hěn cōngmíng 很聰明 taken as a whole functions like a descriptive adjective.
* Analyse:
1. 很高興
   hěn gāoxìng
   VERY HAPPY
   “be very happy”
2. 很喜歡音樂
   hěn xǐhuān yǐnyuè
   VERY LIKE MUSIC
   “like music very much”

Adverbs are usually unmarked, but VPs functioning adverbially are often marked by dě 地

馬上 寫 信 給 他
mǎshàng xiě xìn gěi tā
IMMEDIATELY WRITE LETTER FOR HIM
“write a letter to him immediately”

很 緩 慢 地 減 少
hěn huǎn màn dě jiǎn shǎo
VERY GRADUAL SLOW dě REDUCE LITTLE
“be very gradually reduced”
In this case it might appear that *hên* 很 does modify an adverb, but our analysis shows that this superficial impression is wrong: *hên* 很 modifies an adjectival verb (va).

* Some adverbs are often used as complete sentences: *Dângrán 當然 “obviously, certainly, naturally”. (Cf. Lu Jianming and Ma Zhen (1985) p. 152-199 where 65 adverbs which can be used as independent sentences are discussed.)*

** Some adverbs produce complex ambiguities. Note the distinct disambiguating function of the relative stress of constituents in:
練習 都 作 完 了
liànxi̍ hù dōu zuò wán lè
EXERCISE ALL DO FINISH lè
B. “All the exercises have been done.”

練習 都 作 完 了
liànxi̍ hù dōu zuò wán lè
EXERCISE ALL DO FINISH lè
C. “The exercises have already been done.”
With the main stress on liànxi 练习 we have to take dōu 都 to mean “even”. With the stress on dōu 都 the word has to mean “all”. With the main stress on zuòwánlè 作完了 we have to take dōu 都 to mean “already”. The lack of homogeneity of the word class of adverbs is brought out usefully by the fact that these three very different meanings are all subsumed under the general conceptual umbrella of the term “adverb”.

*** We have omitted the readings on which liànxi 练习 is the object of zuòwánlè 作完了. Supply the relevant analyses.

The precise scope of adverbs does not come out at the present stage of our analysis:

他 最 愛 唐 詩
tā zuì ài Táng shī
HE MOST LOVE TANG POETRY

A. “He loves Tang poetry most.”
B. “He is the one who most loves Tang poetry.”

```
S
n > VP
adv > VP
o VT
n > n
```
advP = adverbial phrase
◎ phrase which modifies a verb or verb phrase.

```
| jin | kěněng | kuài | huídá |
```

"answer fast, as far as this is at all possible"

```
VP
```
```
VP
```
```
vp nom adv > VP
```

Cf. 1. 這件事情你說可能不可能。
2. 我盡最大可能滿足你的要求。
3. 他很可能來。

Compare the following sentence in which we have phrases functioning as adverbials without being advP:

```
| jin | kěněng | kuài | dé | huídá |
```

"answer as fast as possible"

```
adverbial > VP
```
```
adverbial > VP
```
```
vp o va > vt
```

For the analysis of dé 地 see chapter 5 below on grammatical markers.

* Analyse the following:
我盡可能清清楚楚地回答。
cl = classifier (more explicitly: cln = nominal classifier)
◊ Usually follows a demonstrative pronoun or a number from which it may not be separated
◊ Mostly precedes a noun from which it may be separated
◊ May not be followed by other classifiers than itself (..)
◊ To be distinguished from verbal classifiers clv (quod vide)
◊ To be distinguished from measure clm (quod vide)
◊ To be distinguished from nouny classifiers cl/n
◊ To be distinguished from classifier nouns ncl

個，本，枝，條，場（一場球賽），次（一次教訓）

Note that the nominal classifier phrase is itself an NP:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{兩 面 鏡子} \\
\text{liăng miàn jìngzi} \\
\text{TWO FACE MIRROR} \\
\text{A. “two mirrors”} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
= \\
\text{NP} \\
\text{nu} & \text{n} \\
\text{nu} & \text{n} & \text{cl} \\
\end{array}
\]

The analysis of classifiers remains highly problematic, but in any case there is a very clear structural contrast with the following reading:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{兩 面 鏡子} \\
\text{liăng miàn jìngzi} \\
\text{TWO FACE MIRROR} \\
\text{B. “double mirror”} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
> \\
\text{NP} \\
\text{NP} \\
\text{nu} & \text{n} \\
= \\
\end{array}
\]
Cf. 二鏡子 which is more explicit for “double mirror”. A more current way of referring to such mirrors is 雙面鏡子.

Nominal classifier phrases may be clefted:
他看的是一部電影
tā kàn de shì yībù diànyǐng
HE SEE de 1 CL FILM
“What he is watching is a film.”

They may also be modified by a further demonstrative pronoun:
他看了這三部電影
tā kàn le zhè sānbù diànyǐng
HE SEE le 1 THIS CL THREE FILM
“He watched these three films.”

Note the semantic significance of classifiers in the following contrasting pair:
這本書
zhè běn shū
THIS CL BOOK
“this (individual copy of a) book”
這個書
zhège shū
THIS CL BOOK
“this [abstract] book (of which there are many individual copies)”

The semantic function of classifiers or measures is neutralised in certain suffix-like classifiers:

```
-  只 鴨子
  yī  zhī  yāzǐ
  ONE  CL  DUCK

“one duck”
```

= 

```
  n
```

<

```
  nu    cl
```

* Check whether zhī 只 has uses as an independent noun in Modern Standard Chinese.
One cannot say ??? yāzǐ yīzhōng 鴨子一種 ??? After zhōng 種 yāzǐ 鴨子 “duck” is used as a generic term, and it is not really quantified in the same sense as before.

Yāzǐ 鴨子 may also function as a mass term after quantitative measures or containers:

一箇鴨子
yī jiān yāzǐ
ONE CATTY DUCK
“one catty of duck [-meat]”

一筐鴨子
yī kuāng yāzǐ
ONE BASKET DUCK
“One basket-full of ducks”

These will be treated below under the heading of clm.

In the following, zhāng 張 looks like a grammaticalised classifier, although it is doubtful whether one should treat the classifier as atonal:

一 張 紙
yī zhāng zhi
ONE CL PAPER
“one piece of paper”

nu < n
nu cl
** The quasi-nominal quality of some ordinary classifiers like zhāng 張 comes out very nicely in constructions like this one:

```
一大张纸
yī dà zhāng zhǐ
ONE LARGE CL PAPER
“one large piece of paper”
```

```
NP

NP

nu > cl/NP

va cl/n
```

** Contrast yīduī zhǐ 一堆纸 “one pile of paper” where duī is surely not just a suffix classifier to yī “one” but a semi-grammaticalised measure noun cl/n.

*** Consider now an intractable construction like the following which defies our principles of analysis, but which one might try to represent as follows:

```
一小时
yī gè bàn xiǎoshí
ONE CL HALF HOUR
“an hour and a half”
```

```
NP

nuP n

nu + nu

nu cl
```

Define what is so intractable in this construction. Note that you cannot say yīgè bàn 一個半 and mean “one and a half hours”. That is why we do not have apposition here. On the other hand, since we do say yīgè bàn píngguǒ 蘋果 by our criteria we do indeed have apposition in that construction. This result does seem puzzling. We have here a case of bizarrerie de la science.
Translate and consider the following:
1. 一個半蘋果
2. 人一個
3. 蘋果三個
4. 蘋果一整個
But you cannot say:
?? 月一整個 ??
?? 月三個 ??
?? 小時三個 ??
?? 地方三個 ??

Note incidentally the following distinction and provide analyses:
一本兒
yī bènr
ONE VOLUME-SUFF
“one volume [printed book]”
一個本兒
yīgè bènr
ONE CL. VOLUME-SUFF
“one notebook”

clm = measure classifiers
◊ Classifier cl used directly after a number, and mostly before a word which is being used as a mass noun (bù kē shū míngcí 不可數名詞).

Here yāzi 鴨子 is used as a mass term for a kind of meat and we have a case of mass quantification. In the following, on the other hand, we have yāzi 鴨子 used as a count noun:
一斤的鸭子
yī jīn dè yāzǐ
ONE CATTY dè DUCK
“a duck that weighs one catty”

*Analyse in this connection:
一只一斤的鸭子
yī zhī yī jīn dè yāzǐ
ONE CL ONE CATTY dè DUCK
“one duck that weighs one catty”.

* In yījīn píngguǒ 一斤蘋果 “one catty of apples” the count noun píngguǒ 蘋果 is used with a measure classifier. One might suspect that píngguǒ 蘋果 is being used as a mass noun in this context. Note that one might buy yī jīn xīguā 一斤西瓜 “one catty of water-melon” without buying a single item. And water-melons are eminently countable. One is buying a kind of stuff: one jīn 斤 of water-melon-stuff.

Certain kinds of measures one is inclined not to regard as suffix-like at all:

一筐鸭子
yī kuàng yāzǐ
ONE BASKET DUCK
“one basketfull of ducks”

*
Note that the clm *kuāng* 筐 “basket” has a variant *kuār* 筐兒 even when used in the classifier position, as in *yīkuār jīdàn* 一筐雞蛋 “a basket-full of eggs”. This applies even to the common *běn* 本 as in *yīběr shū* 一本兒書 “one book”. The test to decide whether *kuāng* 筐 “basket” is clm or rather ncl is to ask whether or not *yīkuāng* 一筐 can mean “one (possibly empty) basket” or whether it has to mean “one basket-full” (of something). Since it has to mean the latter, the word is a classifier clm.

* Analyse and discuss whether *yāzǐ* 鴨子 is or is not a mass term in the following:

1. 一對鴨子
   *yī duì yāzǐ*
   ONE PAIR DUCK
   “one pair of ducks”
   Cf. *chéngduì* 成對 “make a pair”.

2. 一群鴨子
   *yī qún yāzǐ*
   ONE FLOCK DUCK
   “a flock of ducks”

\[
\text{cln = nominal classifier: see “cl”}
\]

\[
\text{clv = verbal classifier}
\]

◊ Usually follows a demonstrative pronoun or a number from which it may not be separated
◊ Mostly precedes a noun from which it may be separated
◊ Can precede a VP
◊ May not be followed by other classifiers or reduplicated (.:)

次，趟，回，場
他看了四次
tā kànle sì cì
HE SEE-LE FOUR TIME
“He has seen it four times.”

Exercise ****[24]

我就進了這一次城
wǒ jiù jìnle zhè yī cì chéng
I ONLY ENTER-LE THIS ONCE CITY
“I only entered the city this one time.”

conn = sentence connectives
◊ May be construed as sentence modifiers or as VP modifiers
◊ May either precede sentence or be inserted between topic and comment,
some, like dānshì 但是 being always sentence initial, others, like yǐnwéi 因為
may occur in both positions. None are restricted to post-topic position
**** One might bring up a grammatical teaser at this point:

He once film also not watch

"He did not watch a film even once."

One might also consider yī cì diànyǐng 一次電影 as a standard noun phrase in the lián 连 ... yě 也 pattern, with the lián 连 -as often- omitted. The example remains troublesome for grammatical analysis.
conn = sentence connectives
- May be construed as sentence modifiers or as VP modifiers
- May either precede sentence or be inserted between topic and comment, some, like dànshì 但是 being always sentence initial, others, like yínwèi 因為 may occur in both positions. None are restricted to post-topic position
- Often come in pairs, like bùdàn … érqiě 不但 … 而且
- Often hard to distinguish from markers (e.g. huòzhě 或者 “or”)
- causative: 因为, 所以, 由于, 因此
- conditional: 假如, 假设, 如果,
- concessive: 雖然, 即使, 哪怕, 就是, 尽管, 不论, 不管
- adversative: 但是, 可是, 然而, 不过
- coordinating: 而且, 并且
Basing yourself on the sentences below, discuss the question whether 了 is a verb, a coverb, or a connective:

1. 我們的專門家不但為了幹部，主要地還是為了群衆 (毛澤東)
   “Our specialists are not only for the cadres, but mainly for the masses.”

2. 他為了國家犧牲自己。
   “He, working for the state, sacrificed his own life.”

3. 為了國家他犧牲自己。
   “Working for the state he sacrificed his own life.”
cov = coverb (=cv)
◊ Cannot be used on its own as main verb in the same meaning, cannot function as subject or predicate
◊ Cannot normally take the suffixes -lè 了, -guò 過, -qǐlái 起來, or zhè 着, [cf. however wéi le 為了 “for” and cháo zhè 朝着 “towards”]
◊ Cannot have tentative reduplication as in kànyīkàn 看一看 “have a look”
◊ Mostly followed by a nominal object
◊ Some coverbs are more coverbal than others in the sense that they admit fewer of the verbal modifications mentioned above than other coverbs.
◊ Often difficult to distinguish from markers of coordination: géi 跟, hé 和 or from main verbs like dào 到 “to get to, reach”, yòng 用 “to use” zài 在 “to be in”.

給他寫信
gèi tā xiě xìn
GIVE HE WRITE LETTER
A. “write a letter to him”

B. “write a letter for him”
Many Chinese linguists regard *gěi* 给 in reading A. as a verb:

\[ gěi \quad tā \quad xiě \quad xīn \]
GIVE HE WRITE LETTER

A. "write a letter to him"

\[ VP \quad > \quad VP \]

** As a background to this, compare**

給不給他寫信

\[ gěibùgěi \quad tā \quad xiě \quad xīn \]
FOR NOT FOR HE WRITE LETTER

"Are you going to write him a letter?"

写信給他

\[ xiě \quad xīn \quad gěi \quad tā \]
WRITE LETTER TO HE

"write a letter to him"

給他洗衣服

\[ gěi \quad tā \quad xǐ \quad yīfú \]
FOR HE WASH CLOTHES

"wash clothes for him"

According to many Chinese linguists involves the coverb *gěi* 给 since we do not have:

??? 給不給他洗衣服 ???

??? 洗衣服給他 ???
Contrast:

我 們 把 門 鎖 好
wǒ mèn bā mén suǒ hǎo
I PLUR TAKE GATE LOCK GOOD
“We lock the gate.”

我 們 把 門
wǒ mèn bā mén
I PLUR HOLD GATE
“We guard the gate.”
Coverbs like  把 “to take, object marker” form a distinct lexical class which typically enters into the sentence as follows:

"I have forgotten what he said."
This example shows, incidentally, an interesting limitation of immediate constituent analyses which has been pointed out by Zhu 朱 1980:183. The grammatical relation between *shuō 說* and *huà 話* which is the elementary one between a transitive verb and its object is not made explicit in the analysis. It could be indicated by a labelled arrow. The subject-predicate relation between *wǒ 我* and *wànglè 忘了* is not immediately visible either, but it is unambiguously deducible from the structural description of the sentence as it stands. The case of *shuō 說* and *huà 話* is of a completely different order because it is altogether obliterated by the structural analysis.

```
我 給 他 新 衣服
wǒ gěi tā xīn yījū
```

"I give him new clothes."

In general, the analyses presented here only indicate relations between adjacent constituents. Grammatical relations between non-adjacent constituents have to be indicated by arrows, as will be shown below.

Note the dual function of the particle *lè 了* as a modal particle (mp) and as a verbal suffix. This is common, and conveniently captured by our symbolism.

The main verb phrase after coverbs is very often complex, and the coverbal phrase relates to the whole complex main VP. In the following one needs a complement after *xǐ 洗*:

```
他馬上把衣服洗乾淨
tā mǎshàng bā yījū xǐ gānjìng
```

"He will immediately wash the clothes clean."

Here the coverbal phrase in *bā 把* modifies not only *xǐ 洗* but the whole of *xǐ gānjìng 洗乾淨*. 
* Analyse: bā duò 把舵 “hold the rudder” versus bā duò nòng huài lè 把舵弄坏了 “ruin the rudder”. Check whether duò 舵 may be used as an independent word.

*** Cf. Nǐ bā tā zěnmè yàng 你把他怎麼樣 “What are you going to do with him?” Here bā 把 seems to function almost like early bāihuà 白話 ná 拿.

* Note that coverbs and markers sometimes look very similar. Identify the markers versus the coverbs in the following sentences:

我跟他借錢
wǒ gēn tā jiè qián
I WITH HE BORROW MONEY

A. “I borrow money from him.”

我跟他學英語
wǒ gēn tā xué yīngyǔ
I WITH HE STUDY ENGLISH

B. “I study English with him.”

* Can one read this as B. “He and I are studying English”? Consider what difference this makes grammatically. Is the English translation ambiguous?

我跟他(都 )會英語
wǒ gēn tā (dōu) huì yīngyǔ
I WITH HE (ALL) CAN ENGLISH

“He and I (both) know English.”

For the analysis of gēn 跟 as a marker of the conjunction of two constituents see the section on grammatical markers.

Note that we can add adverbs before the coverb gēn 跟 in the first case but not in the second before the marker gēn 跟.

我時常跟他借錢
wǒ shícháng gēn tā jiè qián
I FREQUENTLY WITH HE BORROW MONEY

“I frequently borrow money from him.”

你又跟他借錢
nǐ yòu gēn tā jiè qián
YOU AGAIN WITH HE BORROW MONEY

“You again borrow money from him.”

but not:

???????? 我又跟他是男孩子????????
wǒ yòu gēn tā shì nán hái zǐ
I AGAIN WITH HE BE BOY
我跟他結婚了
wǒ gēn tā jiēhūn lè
I WITH HE MARRY lè
A. “I married him.”
B. “He and I both got married.”?
Reading B seems unusual, but given a suitable context it is perfectly possible.

* Translate:
我跟他結婚了
wǒ gēn tā dōu jiēhūn lè.
Can the sentence be read and interpreted in different ways?

The case of the coverb dào 到 is particularly instructive. Consider the following sequence of sentences. One might be tempted to regard the following as a case of the coverb or preposition dào 到 but in fact we must analyse:

```
到 了 春 天 我 來 看 你
daolè chūntiān wǒ lái kàn nǐ
ARRIVE-lè SPRING I COME SEE YOU
```

"When spring comes I shall come to see you."

```
vi nt S
```

The reason for this comes out in the following largely synonymous sentence:

```
春 天 到 了 我 來 看 你。
chūntiān daolè wǒ lái kàn nǐ
SPRING ARRIVE-lè I COME SEE YOU
```

"When spring comes I shall come to see you."

```
tn vi S
```
*** 春天還沒有來呢，他就來了。
"Before spring had come, he arrived."
This sentence supports our analysis. But discuss now the implications of the sentence 到了現在他纔來看我。"He did not come to visit me before now."
Can we say 現在到了纔來看我 meaning roughly the same thing?

We might even have to contemplate an adverbial sentence inserted between the subject and the predicate of a sentence of a type we have already described:

我 到了 春天 來 看 你
wǒ dào lē chūn tiān lái kàn nǐ
I ARRIVE-lē SPRING COME SEE YOU
“When spring comes I shall come to see you.”

[For these examples see W. Paul, “Etude de dào 繼 introduisant les expressions temporelles”, in 中央大學人文學報 no. 6 (1988) pp.179-198, p. 185.]

*Analyse the following sentences:
1. 到了天亮他還不走。
2. 他到了天亮還不走。
3. 天亮了他還不走。
The following two sentences illustrate three uses of *dào* to:

**spk reach cao cao cao cao then arrive**

"When you speak of the devil, there he comes!"

---

**he arrive peking go lè**

"He has gone to Peking."

---
"The colour of the face was like [that of] paper."

A. "This pencil and that one are of the same kind."

A. "This pencil is the same as that one."
* Compare
這枝鉛筆跟那枝都一樣
-versus
這枝鉛筆呢我同意跟那枝完全一樣

* Analyse the following:

1. 這篇文章你給我看看看
   zhè piān wénzhāng nǐ gěi wǒ kàn kàn
   THIS PIECE ESSAY YOU GIVE I SEE
   A. “You read this article for me.”
   B. “Give me this book to read.”
   On which of these readings is gěi 給 a coverb?

2. 張三給老虎吃了
   Zhāngsān gěi lǎohǔ chī le
   ZHANGSAN GIVE/BY TIGER EAT le
   A. “Zhangsan was eaten by the tiger.”
   B. “Zhangsan gave the tiger [something] to eat.”
   Analyse and discuss the following colloquial reading:
   C. “Zhangsan ate the tiger.”

Even among the coverbal meanings of gěi 給 there is ambiguity:
我給他偷了三匹馬
wǒ gěi tā tōulè sān pí mǎ
I GIVE/BY HE STEAL-le THREE PIECE HORSE
A. “I stole three horses for him.”
B. “I had three horses stolen by him.”
We claim that these two readings are structurally very similar except for the
active versus passive meaning of tōu 偷 triggered by the different uses of the
coverb gěi 給.

covP = coverbial phrase
◊ verb phrase with a coverbal head
   把它（拿走）

ex = exlamatory particle
◊ Best regarded as single-word sentences
   哎呀，哎喲
[marker]

◊ Markers are morphemes or phrases that are not construed as constituents within a given sentence under a given interpretation.
◊ Many markers also have constituent functions in other contexts.
◊ Many markers like ㄉㄜ 的 and ㄉㄜ 得 are clitic to what precedes them and are therefore often regarded as suffix-like particles belonging to the preceding elements which constitute their scope.
◊ Note that ㄉㄜ 的 is also current as an operator, as in māishūdē 賣書的 “book-seller”. See [operator] below.

(我)的 (父親), (跑)得 (快), (慢慢)地 (學習) disjunctive: 或者, 或, 還是
inter-nominal: 和, 跟, 與, 同, 以及
inter-verbal: 又, 而, 並

我 跟 你
wǒ  gèn  nǐ
I  FOLLOW  YOU
A. “you and I”

B. “I’ll join you.”
Contrast:

我 還 是 我
wǒ hái shì wǒ
I STILL BE I
“I am, after all, myself.”

*** Note that hái shì 還是 “still am” is pronounced almost exactly like háishì 還是 “or”. What is the exact difference in pronunciation?

我 還 是 你
wǒ háishì nǐ
I OR YOU
“you or I”

mp = modal particle
◊ Sentence clitic, which, however, in some southern varieties of Mandarin can receive considerable length stress, and which may also often occur as pause markers in discourse;
◊ May be construed either with the whole main sentence after which they occur, or with the comment of that sentence only, or even only with an embedded sentence;
了，呢，吧，罷了，嗎，麼，啦
* Translate and consider whether the following is ambiguous:

你說對嗎?

There often is a problem about the scope of the sentence-final particle 了.

Consider a sentence like the following:

他吃了飯了。

tā chīlè fàn lè

HE EAT-蓊 MEAL lè
If we give contrastive stress to the word 他 so that the meaning becomes something like “It is he who has already eaten”, then the scope of 了 definitely has to include 他. If, on the other hand, there is no such contrastive stress, we might as well say that 了 is a clitic subordinate to the verb phrase 吃了饭了 only.

In some cases it is in any case very clear that the final particle only goes with an embedded clause:
你覺得誰去合適呢
nǐ juédì shéi qu héshì nè
YOU FEEL WHO GO APPROPRIATE nè
"Who do you feel it would be proper if went? (!!!)"

Sentential 了 can actually go with an embedded clause only:
我知道天下雨了
wǒ zhīdào xiàyǔ lè
I KNOW RAIN lè
"I know it has started to rain."

*Analyse the following:
下雨了吧
xiàyǔ lè bā
RAIN lè MP
“It has probably started to rain.”
Is lè bā了吧 a constituent? Give a reasoned answer to this question.

*** Some modal particles can occur after the topic or after adverbials functioning, apparently, as pause markers:
忽然呢他來了
wò kàn qiē bù hǎo
Analysis of living discourse as opposed to printed texts shows that many particles may be inserted wherever there is a pause in the discourse.

Note that the continuative aspect may be marked by many elements in addition to 了 within a single sentence:
他正在吃著飯呢
tā zhèngzài chīzhī fàn nè
HE JUST EAT-CONT RICE nè
“He is just having a meal.”
n = noun

◊ Cannot be modified by hěn 很 or negated by bù 不
◊ May function as subject, topic, nominal modifier, object of verbs or coverbs
◊ May be modified by va, n, or S
◊ All phrases that can be conjoined with gēn 跟 “and” are nominal.

老师 很 累
lǎoshī hěn lèi
TEACHER VERY TIRED
“The teacher is very tired.”

S
n
n := n
n > VP
n > VP
adv va

昨天 很 累
zuōtiān hěn lèi
YESTERDAY VERY TIRED
“Yesterday [he/she...] was very tired.”

VP
VP
n
n := n
n > VP
n > VP
adv va
Yesterday's teacher was very tired.

ask the/a teacher

write a letter to the/a teacher
ncl = classifier noun

◊ Noun that is counted without classifiers c1

年，歳，小時

一 年
yi nian
ONE YEAR
“one year [NOT: ’s work]”

nu > ncl

Contrast:

一 碗
yi wan
ONE CUP
“one cup [of tea, coffee etc.]”

nu > clm

* Analyse and translate:
1. 一個碗
2. 碗一個

We have both
一 小時
yi xiao shi
ONE HOUR
“one hour”
and
一個小時
yi ge xiao shi
ONE-CL HOUR
“one hour”

*Translate:
1. 三個月
2. 三個月
ne(g) = negation

◊ adverbs with negative meaning
不，非，没，没有，别，甭，無

沒有鎖
méi yǒu suǒ
NOT HAVE LOCK

A. “haven’t locked”

B. “have no lock, there is no lock”

* Contrast the following:
沒有錢
méiyǒu qián
NOT-HAVE MONEY
“does not have money”
沒有去 “did not go / has not gone”

* Analyse the following:
沒有作不好的事情
méi yǒu zuò bù hǎo de shì qíng
NOT-HAVE DO NOT GOOD de AFFAIR
A. “There was nothing he was unable to do well.”
B. “He did not do bad things.”
Compare:

他不得不说
$tā$ $bù$ $dé$ $bù$ $shuō$
HE NOT GET NOT SPEAK
“He cannot fail to say it.”

A. “He has to say it.”

他非说不行
$tā$ $fēi$ $shuō$ $bù$ $xíng$
HE NOT-BE SAY NOT O.K.

**$Fēi$ 非 can also mean something like “inevitably, be bound to”, so that we also get the following somewhat surprising highly colloquial reading:
他非说不行
$tā$ $fēi$ $shuō$ $bù$ $xíng$
HE CERTAINLY SAY NOT O.K.
B. “He will inevitably say no.”**
Bu 不 as in bu chi fan 不吃飯 NOT EAT RICE “not eat rice” poses a special problem of scope:

不 吃 飯
bù  chī fàn
NOT     EAT     RICE

“not eat”

If you don’t eat…

不 吃 飯
bù  chī fàn
NOT     EAT     RICE

“If you don’t eat…”

* Translate, explain, and analyse the following ambiguous phrases:
1. 他們沒有磨
2. 他們沒有鋸
3. 他們沒有編輯
4. 他們沒有導演

*** Consider the semantic function of the negation in the following:
1. 好容易
好不容易
“with great difficulty”
2. 別是生病了
別不是生病了
“Maybe he has fallen ill.”
3. 難免犯錯誤
難免不犯錯誤
“inevitably commit mistakes”
4. 差點兒掉下去了
差點兒沒掉下去
“nearly fall off”
5. 上大學以前
沒上大學以前
“before [they] entered the university”
6. 走了幾步就摔倒了
沒走幾步就摔倒了
“after a few steps he fell down”

np = place noun
北京・東京

NP = noun phrase
◊ Phrase with a nominal head
北京人口
* Does the phrase 北京人 occur in 北京人口?

NPp = place noun phrase
◊ Phrase with a place noun (np) head

桌子 (的) 上面
zhuōzi shàngmiàn
TABLE UPPER-SIDE
A. “the top surface of the table”

* n > np
** There is something unnatural about taking the unstressed morpheme \textit{shàng} 上 as the main constituent in this construction, although historically and logically this is what one ought to do, and indeed this is what the distinguished linguist Zhu Dexi 朱德熙 does. (Cf. incidentally \textit{lāoshǔ} 老鼠 “rat” where the semantically empty \textit{lǎo} 老 has the main stress.) On the other hand, Lü Shuxiang 呂叔湘 regards \textit{shàng} 上 as a highly grammaticalised operator converting the name of an object into the place name referring to the upper side of that object.

\textbf{NPt = time noun phrase}

◊ Functions as topic or adverbial phrase
◊ Datings have to be on the left of the main VP, indications of duration are often (but not always) on the right:

\begin{verbatim}
昨天他没事
zuòtiān tā méi shì
YESTERDAY HE LACK AFFAIR
“Yesterday nothing happened to him.”
他等了半天
tā děnglè bāntiān
HE WAIT-lé HALF-DAY
“He waited for a long time.”
\end{verbatim}

\textbf{nu(m) = numeral}

◊ Is usually, in modern colloquial Chinese, followed by cl, clv or clm or ncl (see cl=classifier, clv=verbal classifier, clm=measure, and ncl classifier nouns)
◊ May be preceded by \textit{dì} 第
◊ Note that since classifiers may be viewed as suffixes it is tempting to regard the numeral followed by a classifier as \textit{nu}, although one might also mark it as \textit{nup}=number phrase

一 (個) \quad \text{一} (m) \quad \text{一} (tè) \quad \text{一} (liè) \quad \text{两} (m) \quad \text{两} (tè) \quad \text{两} (liè)
他幹了一天的活
tā gàn le yī tiān de huó
HE DO-LE ONE DAY de WORK
A. "He did one day's work." (cf. 他這星期幹了一天的活)
B. "He worked the whole day." (cf. 他今天幹了一天的活)

In a traditional mode as well as in very colloquial contexts the classifiers may be omitted:

```
   一 孔之見
  yī kǒng zhī jiàn
ONE HOLE de VIEW
   "narrow view"
```

In the following the noun after yī — might look like a classifier, but in fact we have yī — “the whole of” followed by a noun:

```
   一屋子的人
  yī wūzi de rén
ONE ROOM de MAN
   "a roomfull of people"
```

Wūzi 屋子 does not become a classifier just because it follows directly on yī — in a non-traditional and non-colloquial context. Yī — is not a number in these contexts but may perhaps be read as a special adnoun since in this meaning it is restricted to pre-nominal position.
operators are elements that are neither constituents nor markers of constituent relations but grammatical particles which change the basic grammatical features of their scope.

(賣書的) 所 (得) “income”

所 長
suō zhāng
OFFICE IN-CHARGE
“head of the department”

n

> n

n [vi] n

所 長
suō cháng
THAT-WHICH EXCEL
“that which one is best at”

NP

vt

買 菜 的 篮子
mǎi cài dè lánzì
BUY VEG dè BASKET
A. “a basket for buying vegetables”

NP

> n

VP

v n
"a basket belonging to someone who buys vegetables"

* Analyse the following two readings:

紅的扣子
hóng dē kòuzì
RED dē BUTTON
A. “red button”
B. “button of the red one”

-P = -phrase
cf. VP, NP, clP, advP, covP etc.

pref = prefix
◇ Often clitic grammaticalised non-main first element in a word
阿 (三) > 老 (虎) > 老 (師) > 老 (馬) > 老 (鼠)

* Note that Li and Thompson regard lǎo 老 as an integral part of the one-morpheme word lǎohǔ 老虎. Mention some arguments for such a view, and against it.

Compare:

老鼠
lǎoshǔ
“rat”

老鷹
lǎoyīng
“eagle”

老虎
lǎohǔ
“tiger”
HARBSMEIER: 4 FORMAL CATEGORIES pref

老馬
lǎo Mǎ
“Old Mǎ”
老馬
lǎomǎ
“old horse”
老駱駝
lǎo lüētuō
“old camel”

pron = deictic pronoun
◊ Deictic pronouns (pron) are “defective” nouns. From a semantic point of view they are all characterised by the fact that they may substitute for certain nouns or noun phrases in a sentence.
◊ They are never used as predicates. (Tā 他 cannot function as a predicate. One has to say shì tā 是他.)
◊ They are rarely modified (but cf. kēliàn dē wǒ 可憐的我) although they may modify nouns.
◊ See also re(f)

我, 你, 您, 他[她], 它, 牠[牠], 咱, 我們, 你們, 他們, 咱們, 大家, 自己, 別人, 人家, 本人, 其他, 大伙兒, 誰, 甚麼
這, 那, 哪
這兒, 那兒, 這裡, 那裡
哪兒, 哪裡
這會兒, 那會兒, 多會兒
(Qītā dē 其它的 is a syntactic construction involving the marker dē 的.)

* Translate and analyse:
作為大學生的我

prov = pro-verb
Pro-verbs (prov) are “defective” intransitive verbs. From a semantic point of view they are characterised by the fact that they may substitute for certain verbs and verb phrases.

The verbal functions that they cannot perform are the following:
◊ They may not function as complements without dē 得 or as noun modifiers without dē 的.
◊ They cannot take complements.
◊ They are very common as adverbial phrases (zhùāngyǔ 狀語)
◊ May be modified by bù 不 but cannot be modified by hěn 很.
◊ They cannot enter the construction VERB bù 不 VERB.

這麼, 那麼, 這樣, 那樣, 這麼樣, 那麼樣, 怎麼, 怎樣, 怎麼樣
你怎麼樣
nǐ zěnméyàng
YOU HOW
“How are you?”

** In exceptional cases proverbs may be used in a transitive way:
把他怎麼樣
bā tā zěnméyàng
TAKE HE HOW
“do something to him”

re(f) = reflexive pronoun
◊ Pronoun which refers to the subject of a sentence or to the speaker/author of a sentence, sometimes used adverbially.

The analysis of preverbal reflexive zǐjǐ 自己 often allows for two alternatives:

A. He himself goes. (Cf. 他本人去)

B. “He personally goes.” (Cf. 他親自去)
* Analyse:
他想自己作

他認為大家一定會批評自己

tā rènwéi dàjiā yīdìng huì pīpíng zìjǐ
HE CONSIDER EVERYONE CERTAINLY WILL CRITICIZE SELF

A. "He thought that everyone would criticize themselves."
He considered everyone would criticise himself.

B. "He thought that everyone would criticise him."

---

*** Do these alternative analyses constitute a real ambiguity in the Chinese or are they imported into the Chinese through the analysis? How does one argue for the presence of the ambiguity in the Chinese?

S = sentence
   ◇ May normally be followed by modal final particles
   ◇ Must normally have a complete intonation contour when used independently
   ◇ Must normally be capable of being bounded by a significant pause on each side
   ◇ Need not consist of subject and predicate
   ◇ Generally recognised sentence types include:
      Chēnshūjù 陳述句 “declarative sentence”
      Yíwènjù 疑問句 “interrogative sentence”
      Qǐshǐjù 祈使句 “imperative sentence”
      Gàntànjù 感嘆句 “exclamatory sentence”
   ◇ Embedded subject predicate structures are regarded as sentences.
"There is no need to put an example here."

* Cf. 不必, "It is not necessary." We take 不必 as verbal here. We assume that 不必 is the main constituent in this construction. One might also treat 不必 as an adverb, i.e. as one of those adverbs that can function as main predicates which we mentioned above.

On our view, a sentence may be embedded in a noun phrase, and it can function as a modifier of a main noun, but under these circumstances it loses many of the above-mentioned characteristics of a sentence such as that of being bounded by significant pauses, being normally able to take modal particles, having a complete sentence contour. For these reasons, Chinese linguists will speak here not of 句 "sentence" but of a 主謂結構 which has the character of a VP.

"when he is glad"
**** If we call this kind of embedded sentence in Chinese a VPs (sentential VP), then we shall reserve the notion or category S only for the highest level of analysis. One might even go so far as to treat the notion of a sentence at the highest level as a function which VPs can have rather than a structural concept. One must go on to consider whether this will be a more adequate way of regarding Chinese syntax, although we shall not follow this path in the present little primer.

"When he was small his father died."

*Compare and analyse:
小的時候
xiǎo děi shíhou
SMALL děi TIME
短的時間
duǎn dě shíjiān
SHORT dě TIME
Given that a VP may be conveniently defined as a construction with a verbal head it is both tempting and natural to construe subject-predicate and topic-comment constructions as VPs throughout, and to regard the notion of a sentence as a pragmatic notion which has to do with the question whether or not a given string of morphemes is being used as a complete utterance. [The fact that what is or is not to count as a complete utterance is in itself problematic does not in itself invalidate this approach: any notion of a complete sentence will run into this sort of problem of definition.]

*** Major sentences (i.e. sentences with a subject) are called zhúwèijù 主謂句, minor sentences (i.e. sentences without a subject or without a predicate) are called fēi zhúwèijù 非主謂句. For example, shéi 誰 “who?” is a minor interrogative sentence in which one cannot determine out of context whether the subject or the object is is referred to.

**** One might try to say that the notion of a sentence in Chinese is not at all a grammatical or syntactic concept, but that it is a pragmatic concept concerned with the use we make of grammatical forms. If we follow this line of thought, then what we used to describe as sentences are simply VPs in which certain grammatical roles are explicit.
suff (or sf) = suffix
◊ word clitics
◊ may or may not have a distinct separate meaning
(果)子，(孩子)們，(坐)着，(夠)了，(看)過，(饅)頭，(說)的(上海話)

* Distinguish the following readings through analysis:
我昨天吃的麵包
wǒ zuótiān chī dè miàn bāo
I YESTERDAY EAT dè BREAD
A. “the bread I ate yesterday”
B. “Yesterday I ate bread.” (verbal suffix -dě 的）
C. “What I ate yesterday was bread” (omitted copula shì 是）

v = verb
◊ May be negated with bù 不 and converted to a question “V bù 不 V?”
◊ All phrases that may be conjoined with bìng 并 “and” are verbal.
◊ May be followed by suffixes -lě 了, -guo 过, -zhē 着.
◊ May be modified by adv or followed by complements.

Cf. 出了一大口氣 etc.
Kǎidiăo 開刀 “operate on” is regarded not as a verb 但 as a verb phrase VP, because while we can say chūbān yīběn shū 出版一本 “publish a book”, we cannot say kǎidào yīgè rén 開刀一個人 ???
This shows that dāo 刀 is already treated as a direct object and cannot therefore be followed by another direct object.

Some special verbs

xiě jiǎn tí zì bǐ fán tí zì róngyì
WRITE SIMPLE BODY CHAR. COMPARE COMPLEX BODY CHAR. EASY
“It is easier to write simplified characters than to write complex characters”

From a logical point of view we should require bǐ xiě fǎnti zì 比寫繁體字.
The xiě 写 “write”, one is tempted to say, is “deleted”. Within the framework of very powerful descriptive systems like transformational grammar this deletion is easy enough to represent. Within our system there is no formal way of indicating that a logically required element is missing. All our grammatical description does is record a strictly illogical form which does happen to exist in Chinese here. [Cf. “All that glitters is not gold” which does not have the same grammatical form as the logically correct but unidiomatic “Not everything that glitters is gold”]

Comparison between incomparables of this type is very common in Modern Standard Chinese.
One might wish to maintain that zhēigézi 这个字 is the object of xiě cuò 写错 and that this verb-object construction is in turn the subject of the verb phrase hěnróngyǐ很容易 “is very easy”. This would be impossible to represent through our immediate constituent boxes. Compare our section on Comparison with other analyses below.

* Analyse:

這個問題很難解決

* Pseudo-objects (zhǔnbīnyǔ 准賓語) as pseudo-nominals:

我們在一起

wǒmèn zài yīqǐ

WE BE-IN TOGETHER

“We are together.”

The case of the verb sǐ 死

Sǐ 死 “1. die; 2. dead” cannot count as an adjective or adjectival verb, since we cannot say hěn sǐ 很死. On the other hand we can say hěn sībān 很死板 “very rigid, very stiff”. Sībān 死板 is an adjective, or, as we prefer to say, an adjectival verb (va).

We often find “adjectival” uses of sǐ 死 “die”, as in sīrén 死人 “dead person”, or sīguǐ 死鬼 “devil” as in nǐ zhēigé sīguǐ 你這個死鬼 “you devil”.

However, in sīguǐ 死鬼 one might suspect that sǐ 死 may actually be nominal and mean something like sīrén 死人 so that sīguǐ 死鬼 should be construed grammatically as sīrén dè guǐ 死人的鬼 “ghost of a dead person”.
But note now:

The question is whether *死* here is verbal “to die” or nominal “death”. One might think that it is obviously verbal, but note:

－不怕苦，不怕死。
yi bù pà kǔ èr bù pà sǐ
ONE NOT FEAR HARDSHIP, TWO NOT FEAR DIE
“fear neither hardship nor death”

The verbal form of *苦* “hardship” would be *吃苦* “suffer hardship”. *怕吃苦* would have a verbal object, *怕 kǔ* does not have a verbal object, although *kǔ* “bitter, hard” does qualify as an adjectival verb or an adjective, as witnessed by such forms as *很 kǔ* “very bitter, hard”, *那麼 kǔ* that “so hard”. Could one not take *怕 sǐ* “fear death” as an exact syntactic parallel? In any case we have such idioms as

*sǐ lí táo shēng*
DEATH INSIDE ESCAPE LIFE
“escape by the skin of one’s teeth”

---
I am uncertain whether *pà sì rén* “be scared to death” has reduced stress on the second syllable, but in any case *tēng sì* “be hopelessly in love” does have reduced stress according to V. M. Oshanin (1959).

* The construction *sì dì* “mortal enemy” is not the same as *sī lè dì rén* “dead enemy”. What is the difference in terms of grammatical structure? Cf. *sì dì tō* “mortal enemy”.

* Try to explain the term *zhūn xiūshì guānxì* 准修飾關係.

*Sì* “death” is also used as a transitive verb:

死心
*sì xīn*

DIE HEART

“drop an idea, have no more illusions”
as in:
You still die-le this-class heart perf
“you had better give up this idea altogether.”

Here is another example:
死心眼儿
sǐ xīnyǎnr
DIE HEART
“obstinate, stubborn”

Sí 死 is also current as an adverb (cf. in English “dead slow”):
死读书
sǐ dú shū
DIE READ BOOK
“study in a stultifying way; be a bookworm”

Within morphology, we have an adverbial sǐ 死:
死守
sǐ shǒu
DIE DEFEND
“defend to the death; obstinately cling to”

饿死了
è sǐ lè
BE-HUNGRY DIE lè
A. “be famished”
V.M. Oshanin (1959) and (1983) have no tone on sǐ 死 in èsǐ 饥死.

The rounding of the corners of the box for sǐ 死 indicates the degree of grammaticalisation of meaning in the word. In gāoxíng sīlè 高興死了 “be beside oneself with joy” there is no thought of death, only of a very high degree of joy. We have a grammaticalised use of sǐ 死. (Compare incidentally the English dead slow. See the section on the registers of grammaticalisation.)

We also have the nominal sǐ 死 “death” in shēngsǐ 生死 “life and death.”
* Even when the meaning of 大死 打死 is metaphorical the internal grammatical structure of the idiom is not affected:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{一棍子打死} \\
yī gùnzì dà sǐ \\
\text{ONE STICK BEAT DIE} \\
\text{“finish off at one stroke”}
\end{array}
\]

The stylistic feature of yī gùnzì 一棍子 “one stick” (versus the more standard yīgēn gùnzǐ 一根棍子) as pre-modern colloquial will be analysed in the section on stylistic registers below.

The label “adverbial” will be explained in the section on functional/semantic features below.

* Yèsīr 一死兒 “stubbornly”, as in 不让他去, 他一死兒要去 “even if you don’t let him go he will stubbornly insist on going” raises interesting questions of grammatical analysis. What is the scope of the suffix ér 兒?

***** 死回来
sǐ huílái
DIE RETURN
“bloody well come back”

***** 死丫头
sǐ yāchū
DIE MAID
“bloody witch”

Cf. 死也不
sǐ yě bù
DIE ALSO NOT
“would not under any circumstances”.
va = adjectival verb
* Can function as predicate and as complement
* Cannot take a nominal object
* Can be modified by hēn 很 "very" and by nàme 那么 "so"
* May be viewed as a a sub-class of verbs
小，大，好，坏，慢，慢，矮，瘦，肥，甜，
乾净，认真，正确，仔细，舒服，整齐，

Monosyllabic adjectival verbs (va) may be reduplicated with the addition of the sub-syllabic retroflex suffix written as ěr 耳 to form adverbial phrases:

```
慢 慢 兒 走
màn màn -r zǒu
SLOW SLOW SUFF WALK
“walk slowly”
```

Bisyllabic adjectival verbs are reduplicated differently from bisyllabic verbs:

```
乾 乾 淨 淨
gàn găn jìng jìng
CLEAN CLEAN NEAT NEAT
“very clean”
```

versus the verbal pattern of reduplication as in the transitive verb yánjiū 研究:
Note that we treat the reduplicated adjectival verb as a complex word here, and not as a syntactic phrase. In the case of the reduplication of verbs one might, on the other hand, be tempted to think of reduplication as a syntactic phenomenon.

** One might be excused for thinking that gāoxìng 高興 is a va, but we do seem to have this word used with objects, as in

我很高興見到你
wǒ hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ
I very glad see-suff you
“I am very pleased to see you.”

Huài 壞 “bad, be bad” is standardly lined up as a paradigmatic adjective, and adjectives are supposed not to function as transitive verbs, but we do have

壞大事
huài dàshì
BAD BIG MATTER
“to spoil an important affair”

Cf. 成事不足，壞事有餘
“not enough to get the thing done, but more than enough to ruin the matter”.

We also have

壞肚子
huái dùzi
BAD STOMACH
“spoil one’s stomach”
This does not mean “a bad stomach”, and the meaning of huái 壞 is shī biànhuài 使變壞, according to Xiàndài Hányǔ cídiǎn 現代漢語詞典 (Peking: Commercial Press, 1976).

Again, hǎo 好 “good” which is another of the paradigmatic “adjective”, is currently used as an adverb as in hǎojiù bù jiàn 好久不見 “long time no see”, hǎo lèng 好冷 “(be) pretty cold”.
Thus in many cases we have homonyms in Modern Standard Chinese which we have to say belong to different word classes.

\[ \text{vc} = \text{copula} \]

Verbs that are negatable by \( bù \) 不 but not modifiable by aspectual suffixes etc. may be regarded as “defective” pseudo-transitive verbs.

是，叫，姓，當做，當成，作為，稱為，成為，變為，變為，變成，變成，當

\[ wō jiào Zhāngsān \]

I CALL ZHANGSAN

A. “I am called Zhangsan.”

\[ S \]

\[ VP \]

\[ n \]

\[ e \]

\[ \text{vc} \]

\[ n \]

\[ S \]

\[ VP \]

\[ n \]

\[ o \]

\[ vt \]

B. “I shall call Zhangsan.”

\[ * \] Consider the reasons why \( xīng \) 姓 might be considered as a verb in expressions like the following, and consider whether \( xīng \) 姓 should be considered as a transitive verb:

他姓馬

\[ tā xīng má \]

HE SURNAME MA

“His surname is Mā.”
**vd = descriptive verbs**

- May function as predicates, as complements and as noun modifiers
- May not be modified by *hěn* 很 or *bù* 不
- May not function as subject
- May not have complements
- May not be followed by *lè* 了.

紅通通(的) *緋紅(的)*, 香噴噴 (的), 乾乾淨淨,
好好兒的, 慢慢兒的, 高高兒的,
胡裡糊塗, 小裡小氣, 馬裡馬虎,

**vi = intransitive verb**

**VP = verb phrase**

- Phrase with a head that is either VP or v

```
一個 人 去
yīgè rén qù
ONE PERSON GO

A. “go alone”
```

```
adverbial > VP

NP  vt
```

```
一個 人 去
yīgè rén qù
ONE PERSON GO

B. “One person will go, [the other will stay at home ... ...]”
```

```
S
```

```
NP  vt
```
CONCLUDING REMARKS
The problems raised by any classifications of constituents are, of course, strictly unending. Subclassification is potentially infinite. As our analyses proceed, we must be prepared to change the categories and to add further subclassifications as this turns out desirable or necessary.

The conceptual relations between our concepts are varied and complex. For example, proper names and pronouns are clearly nouns, so that these may well be marked generally as nouns, whereas their status as pronouns or proper names respectively will only be specified as and when the analysis for some reason makes this desirable.

A hierarchy of criteria for the determination of some major word classes
There is a hierarchy of criteria in a definite sequence which one might use to determine a set of basic word classes in Chinese including nouns, transitive verbs, intransitive verbs, adjectival verbs, descriptive verbs, adnominals, and adverbs.

1.1 If a word X may be modified by hén 很 or by bù 不, or if it may be followed by an object, or if it may be followed by a complement, then it is either verbal v or adjectival va.
1.2 If X may not enter any of the above constructions then X is n or adv, or adn or vd.

2.1 The criteria for the distinction between v and va are as follows:
If X combines with hén 很 but does not take an object, then X is adj.
If X combines with hén 很 and does take an object as well, then it may either be vtr (xǐhuān 喜歡) or it may be a va/vtr (fāngbiàn 方便 cf. fāngbiàn qùnzhòng 方便群衆 “be convenient for the masses”). The difference between va/vtr and vtr in these cases is often hard to determine because it involves subjective judgments. Va/vtr are always historically and basically intransitive, and their use as vtr is a development in Modern Standard Chinese which is felt to be derivative and always comparatively rare. (This is a matter of fairly objective grammatical observation.) Moreover, vtr are felt to have a psychological object even when that object is not present. (This is a matter of much more problematic subjective judgment.
If X does not combine with hén 很 then if it does not take an object, it is vi and if it does take an object it is vtr.
2.2 The criteria for the distinction between n or adv, or adn or vd are as follows:
If X may function as a complement, then it is vd.
If X may not function as a complement, then it is either n or adv, or adn.
3.1 The criteria of the distinction between n or adv, or adn are as follows:
If X may be modified then it is n.
If X may not be modified then it may be adv or adn.

4.1 The criteria for the distinction between adv and adn are as follows:
If X must be followed by n then it is adn, and if it must be followed by a
verbal expression then it is adv.
If X may be followed by either n or a verbal expression then it is adn/adv.
(Examples include zhēn 真, gòngtóng 共同, chángqīi 長期.)
Chapter 5
Grammatical markers

The circles indicate morphemes that are not construed in the context in which they occur as constituents but as markers of grammatical relations between constituents.

For example, one might be tempted to take 陟的 to be a marker of a grammatical relation which often goes unmarked, as in the case of 陟陟 陟 jane 陟 my father:

我 父親
wǒ  fùqín
I  FATHER
“my father”

The marked and the unmarked expression are synonymous. However, the addition of 陟的 can sometimes make a difference, as 陟 陟 yan 狗 “running dog” which is a highly idiomatic term of abuse, versus 陟 陟 陟 the dog “a dog running around” would be an entirely unidiomatic syntactic combination with no special lexical status. We shall study this sort of difference under the heading of registers of lexicalisation.

*Is there any grammatical difference between the following two sentences?
他買的蘋果不好
他買的蘋果不好
* We note already at this point that wǒdē 我的 can be used to refer to “my father” so that wǒdē 我的 and fùqín 父親 can be construed to be in apposition.

Disjunction is often unmarked:

```
喝 咖啡 喝 茶
hē kāfēi hē chá
DRINK COFFEE DRINK TEA
“[Do you want] to drink coffee or tea?”
```

One might just as well have added hái shì 還是 “or” in this sentence:

```
hē kāfēi hái shì hē chá
DRINK COFFEE OR DRINK TEA
“Do you want to drink coffee or tea?”
```

Disjunction may be between nouns:

張三還是李四
Zhāngsān hái shì Lǐsì
“Zhangsan or Lisi”

```
你 或者 他
nǐ huòzhé tā
YOU OR HE
“you or he”
```

```
```
Compare the case of conjunction and analyse the following:

張三 和 李四
Zhāngsān hé Lǐsī
ZHANGSAN AND LISHI
"Zhansan and Lisi"

Note the role of relative stress in the disambiguation of the following:

我 哥哥 和 張三
wǒ gégē hé Zhāngsān
I ELDER-BRO AND ZHANGSAN
A. "my elder brother and Zhangsan"

我 哥哥 和 張三
wǒ gégē hé Zhāngsān
I ELDER-BRO AND ZHANGSAN
B. "I, [my] elder brother and Zhangsan"

* Provide contrasting analyses for the following. Ask yourself how many people are involved:
1. 你哥哥・老三・和我 and
2. 你，哥哥・老三・和我。
3. 你哥哥老三和我。
Compare the following pair of sentences. The first has unmarked coordination of the subjects, whereas the coordination is marked in the second case:

張三 張四 張五 都在場。
Zhāngsān Zhāngsì Zhāngwǔ dōu zài chǎng
ZHANGSAN ZHANGSI ZHANGWU ALL BE-PRESENT
"Zhangsan, Zhangsi, and Zhangwu were all present."

張三 張四 和 張五 都在場。
Zhāngsān Zhāngsì hé Zhāngwǔ dōu zài chǎng
ZHANGSAN ZHANGSI AND ZHANGWU ALL BE-PRESENT
"Zhangsan, Zhangsi, and Zhangwu were all present."

美麗 的 鳥鶯 和 雲雀 那 兩只 鳥
měili de yīngwǔ hé yúnquè nà liǎngzhī niǎo
BEAUTIFUL de PARROT AND SKYLARK THESE TWO-CL BIRD
A. “these two birds, the beautiful parrot and the skylark”

NP = NP
NP & = NP
NP n & = NP
va > n
n > dem num
B. “these two beautiful birds, the parrot and the skylark”

C. “the beautiful parrot, and these two skylarks”:

* Analyse:
1. 分析研究
   fēnxī yánjiù
   “analyse and study”
2. 分析並研究
   fēnxī bīng yánjiù
   “analyse and study”
3. 機智勇敢
   jīzhì yǒnggǎn
   “quick-witted and courageous”
There are also discontinuous markers of conjunction which present special problems of graphic representation though not of grammatical interpretation. A verb phrase like

跳舞 唱歌
tiāowǔ chǎnggē
DANCE SING
"sing and dance"

may also be expressed in a more explicit and emphatic way through a kind of adverbial modifier that looks suspiciously like a marker of coordination:

又 跳舞 又 唱歌
yòu tiāowǔ yòu chǎnggē
ALSO DANCE ALSO SING
“both dance and sing”

For the use of the arrows see the section below on syntactic frames and arrows.

Coordination among the modifiers can be marked by hé 和:

我 和 弟弟 的
wǒ hé dìdi de
I AND Y-BROTHER’S
“my younger brother’s and mine”

* The final de 的 converts wǒ hé dìdi 我和弟弟 “I and my younger brother” into a logically exocentric construction and is therefore taken as an operator, a notion to which we shall turn in the next section.
Varieties of  

Compare:

For an alternative reading of this one might be tempted to introduce the notion of an object of a noun:

Comparing this to the Latin

A. God’s love.
B. Love towards God.

Westerners might be tempted to say that on reading A the  的 forms a “genitus subjectus” versus the “genitus objectus” in reading B. We shall discuss ways of incorporating such observations into our analyses in the section on functional and semantic labels.

In Rénmín Wénxué 人民文学 no.9.198, there is a short story about the mother of a certain person called Gèdà, a word which in his local dialect also means “stupid”. His mother has a nickname, which, as Lù Shuxiang 吕叔湘 1984:43 points out, has an entertaining intended ambiguity:
In reading A the relation marked by dè 的 is one of modification. In reading B, on the other hand, there relation is one of appurtenance, of belonging to marked by the particle dè 的. The two readings are distinct grammatically because gēdā 痤瘤 in one case is an adjective, in the other case a proper name and a noun. (Cf. miáoxiē guānxi 描寫關係 versus lǐngshū guānxi 領屬關係.)

The concrete semantic relations marked by dè 的 are infinite, just as the variety of semantic relations marked by the genitive in Latin or of "-'s" in English is huge. Our grammatical analysis does not specify such semantic relations. It focusses on the underlying grammatical relation, in these cases the subordination of the first constituent under the second.

Li Jinxi 李錦熙 1924:64 introduces different diagrams for the two kinds of grammatical relations where the modifier in both cases is a noun. Within our system we might try to write:
A. "the life lived by concrete ordinary people (which, in some cases, may be the aristocratic life style of ordinary people suddenly turned extremely rich)."

B. "humble, ordinary life (which, in some cases, may be the life of aristocrats fallen on hard times)"

* Consider which sort of interpretation applies in the following two examples:

他過的是平民的生活，不是貴族的生活。
年輕平民的生活是很苦的。

A. "His understanding is very deep."
B. “He understands very profoundly, ...”

C. “As for him, his understanding is very profound, ...”

*** Does a speaker of Chinese have to choose between the readings made explicit by the markers dè 的 or dè 得 or can his usage be vague between these two readings? One difference certainly is this: on reading B. there has to be another closely related contrasting sentence like

“... but his article is not written very well.”
Compare:

画的 好看
huà dê hǎokàn
PAINT dê BEAUTIFUL
"The painted ones are [more] beautiful."

For the interpretation of dê 的 in this context see ch. 6 on operators.

画得好
huà dê hǎokàn
PAINT dê BEAUTIFUL
"They are beautifully painted."

It is important to keep in mind that whereas dê 地 and dê 的 are just modern variant written forms, dê 得 in its grammaticalised usages was read differently in earlier forms of bái huà 白话.

* Can this mean “[He] is able to paint it beatifully.”?

他写的是字
tā xiě dê zì
HE WRITE dê CHARACTER
A. “the characters he writes/wrote”
Try to analyse:
他写的字

*iā xiě dè zi*

HE WRITE dè CHARACTER

B. "He is writing characters."

The solution to this problem will be in our section on the verbal suffix dè below.

Dè 的 is often used to make what we translate as relative clauses:

```
這個 小姐 買的 書
zhègè xiǎojiě mǎi dè shū
THIS GIRL BUY dè BOOK
```

**A. "the book(s) this girl bought"**

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
```

```
NP
```

```
NP vt
```

dem n

```
這個 小姐 買的 書
zhègè xiǎojiě mǎi dè shū
THIS GIRL BUY dè BOOK
```

**B. "the book(s) this girl bought"**

```
S
```

```
NP VP
```

dem n o

```
vt sf
```

這個 買 書 的 小姐
zhègie mǎi shū de xiǎojiě
THIS BUY BOOK de GIRL
“the girl who bought the book(s)”

dem = NP

VP

VT n

對 你 的 意見
duì nǐ de yìjiàn
TURN-TO YOU de OPINION
“opinion concerning you”

NP

cov

vt pron

Note that the coverbal phrase duì nǐ 對你 here modifies a noun.

對 你 的 意見
duì nǐ de yìjiàn
TURN-TO YOU de OPINION
“concerning your opinion”

cov

pron

NP
** Find two IC-analyses for the following near-synonymous readings:

我們吃飯的桌子
wǒmén chīfàn dè zhuōzǐ
A. “our eating table”
B. “the table we eat on”
Cf. 我們的吃飯的桌子

Many markers raise problems of scope. Grammatical structure is assigned to expressions under a certain interpretation of that scope. The case of dè 的 is typical:

```
zhào gù zì jǐ dè hái zǐ
SHINE LOOK SELF SELF dè CHILD SUFF
LOOK-AFTER
A. “look after one’s own children”
```

** The fact that zhàogù 照顧 is one word is disregarded at this stage. The distinction between morphology and syntax which is so problematic in Chinese will be taken up systematically in our section on lexicalisation below.

```
zhào gù zì jǐ dè hái zǐ
SHINE LOOK SELF SELF dè CHILD SUFF
LOOK-AFTER OWN dè CHILD
B. “children who look after themselves”
```
Note that the reading “children who are looking after oneself”, if possible, cannot be symbolised as distinct except if we introduce something along the lines of a label “reflexive” for verbs where the subject and the object are identical.

The question whether, in fact, children can look after themselves is not a grammatical one.

Compare the following very similar case:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{一個} \quad \text{商店} \quad \text{的} \quad \text{服務員} \\
yīgè \quad shāngdiàn \quad děi \quad fúwùyuán \\
\text{ONE-CLASS} \quad \text{SHOP} \quad \text{děi} \quad \text{ATTENDANT} \\
A. \text{“one shop attendant”}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
= \quad \text{NP} \\
\text{num} \quad \text{NP} \\
\text{n} \quad \text{n}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{一個} \quad \text{商店} \quad \text{的} \quad \text{服務員} \\
yīgè \quad shāngdiàn \quad děi \quad fúwùyuán \\
\text{ONE+CL} \quad \text{SHOP} \quad \text{děi} \quad \text{ATTENDANT} \\
B. \text{“attendant[s] of one shop”}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
= \quad \text{NP} \\
\text{num} \quad \text{n}
\end{array}
\]

* Analyse:
幾個團的負責同志
Contrast again the following superficially similar sentences:

訪問一所職業學校的學生
fāngwèn yī sǒu zhíyè xuéxiào de xuéshēng
VISIT ONE PLACE PROFESSION SCHOOL dè STUDENT
“visit students of a professional school”

訪問一位職業學校的學生
fāngwèn yī wèi zhíyè xuéxiào de xuéshēng
VISIT ONE CL PROFESSION SCHOOL dè STUDENT
“visit a student of a professional school”
咬死了父親的狗
yǎo sǐ lè fùqīn dè gǒu
BITE DIE PERF FATHER dè DOG
A. "bit [his/my] father's dog to death"

咬死了父親的狗
yǎo sǐ lè fùqīn dè gǒu
B. "the dog that bit father to death"
Consider also the problematic reading “bite the dog that had lost its father”:

* Consider the analysis of the following ambiguities:

告別山區的青年
say-farewell mountain-range dê youth
A. “say farewell to the youth from the mountain area”
B. “the youth who said farewell to the mountain area”

部分被侵占的國家
part pass invade dê state
A. “a state that has been partly invaded”
B. “some states that have been invaded”.
A. "Japan had long prepared itself against Korea’s attack."

B. "Japan’s attack against Korea had long been prepared."
* Consider the following sentence and decide whether it is ambiguous between A. and B:
看乒乓球的小孩
A. watch children who play ping pong.
B. children who watch ping pong playing.

* Find two interpretations for the following:
發現敵人的哨兵回答了。
A. discover that the enemy's sentries had returned to camp.
B. The sentries who discovered the enemy returned to camp.

**Pseudo-modifiers**

准領屬關係 "pseudo-modification" may be marked with a circle broken by a question mark.

* Discuss:
生他的氣
開他的玩笑
How would you characterise the object relation involved in these expressions? Do we have pseudo-modification in such cases? How does one argue on these questions?
The verbal suffix 了的
The verbal suffix 了的 is a suffix and not a marker. But since it is often hard to distinguish from the marker, we may introduce it here through the following ambiguity:

我 购 的 票
wǒ mǎi le piào
I BUY 了 TICKET
A. "the ticket I bought"

The use of 了的 as a verbal suffix comes out in this alternative reading:

我 购 的 票
wǒ mǎi le piào
I BUY 了 TICKET
B. "[who bought the ticket?] I bought the ticket."

Here again we have a case of that verbal suffix written as 了的 which is sometimes neglected in grammars of Modern Standard Chinese. It turns out that this use of 了的 is quite common in colloquial Chinese.

*** Could one relate the following characteristic use of 了的 to this use of 了的 as a verbal suffix?
我是在北京的汉语。
Zhu Dexi 1980:89 mentions a third reading:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{我 買 的 [是] 票} \\
\text{wǒ mǎi dè piào} \\
\text{I BUY dè TICKET}
\end{array}
\]

C. [What did you buy?] “What I bought was a ticket”

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{NP n} \\
\text{S}
\end{array}
\]

This involves the notion of an operator \( dè \) which converts a sentence into a noun phrase (marked by a circle in the constituent box). This will be treated in the next section.

Here is another ambiguity involving the verbal suffix \( dè \) 的:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{他 說 的 上海 話} \\
\text{tā shuō dè Shànghǎi huà} \\
\text{HE SPEAK dè SHANGHAI SPEECH}
\end{array}
\]

A. “He speaks Shanghainese.”

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{S} \\
\text{n} \\
\text{VP} \\
\text{o} \\
\text{vt} \\
\text{vt} \text{ sf} \text{ np} \text{ n}
\end{array}
\]

For the verbal suffix \( dè \) 的 in this reading one might well have found a separate graph along the lines of 地, 得, 底, 的, since the suffix is entirely different in function from all of these in their ordinary functions.
In some cases modifiers can be coordinated with repeated dē的:

真 的 善 的 美 的 東西
zhēn dē shàn dē měi dē dōngxī
TRUE dē GOOD dē BEAUTIFUL dē THING
A. “things which are [both] true, good and beautiful”
Logically, there is only one subordinating relation on reading A, and this subordinating relation is marked by several markers dē 的. There is only one kind of thing in question, the kind of things which are at the same time both true, good, and beautiful.

In cases like B. one is tempted to assume that dòngxi 東西 is understood after the first two dē 的. Zhēn dē dòngxi, shān dē dòngxi, měi dē dòngxi 真的東西，善的東西，美的東西. In terms of transformational grammar one might postulate a transformation “equi-NP deletion”. Compare incidentally a pair of English noun phrases: “people who read, write, and annotate books” seems short for “people who read books, write books and annotate books”. At this stage our grammatical analysis does not distinguish the two readings.

* Translate the current:
偉大的, 光榮的, 正確的中國共產黨
Remember that there is only one Chinese Communist Party.

Compare another sentence from the works of Mao Zedong (選集 p. 332)

一切忠誠、坦白、積極、正直的共產黨員
yīqiè zhōngchéng tānbái jījí zhèngzhí dē gòngchǎndǎngyuán
ALL LOYAL FRANK POSITIVE STRAIGHT CPC-MEMBER
“all loyal, frank, positive and straight members of the Chinese Communist Party”

This refers to all party members who are at the same time both loyal, frank and straightforward.
One may insert the marker of conjunction hé 和 into a similar kind of construction, but when this is done, the main noun has to refer to different kinds of objects:

If our generalisation is true, this should not mean “a black, brown and white stone”, and indeed, the context from which this sentence is taken conforms to this prediction: 黑的, 黃的和白的石頭在水中閃動。
“Black, brown and white stones were glittering in the water.”

* Supply the analysis for:
美麗的蘇州的女孩子
měili de Sūzhōu de nǚháizi
BEAUTIFUL de SUZHOU de GIRL
A. “beautiful Suzhou girls”

B. “girls in beautiful Suzhou”
The repetition of *dé* alone is rare, but note Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936) is not afraid of this extraordinary construction:

*因為從那裡面，看到了被壓迫者的善良的靈魂、的辛酸、的掙扎⋯⋯*  
（中俄文字之交）

The relation between the modifiers may be one of disjunction rather than of conjunction. The disjunction may be marked by *huò* or "or", and then the resulting logical relation is more complicated:

White *dé* [TROUSERS] OR Black *dé* TROUSERS

Here we have two kinds of trousers, the white ones and the black ones. And no trousers are both black and white. Thus *bái dé huò hēi dé kùzī* 白的或黑的裤子 involves two separate noun phrases: *bái dé kùzī* 白的裤子 “white trousers” and *hēi dé kùzī* 黑的裤子 “black trousers” where *kùzī* 裤子 in these two noun phrases does not refer to the same physical objects. *Bái dé huò hēi dé kùzī* 白的或黑的裤子 is synonymous with *bái dé kùzī huò hēi dé kùzī* 白的裤子或黑的裤子 on one reading, but not on another.

Not so in *zhēn dé shàn dé hé měi dé dōngxī* 真的善的和美的東西 which is not a combination of the true things, the good things and the beautiful things. On the contrary, it is the one set of things which has all these qualities, so that *dōngxī* 東西 “things” refers to the same objects of thought throughout when we fill in the “deletions” so that the phrase reads *zhēn dé dōngxī shàn dé dōngxī hé měi dé dōngxī* 真的東西善的東西和美的東西. Thus *zhēn dé shàn dé hé měi dé dōngxī* 真的善的和美的東西 is not synonymous with *zhēn dé dōngxī shàn dé dōngxī hé měi dé dōngxī* 真的東西善的東西和美的東西.
The marker *de* 地

This way of analysing the phrase brings out the connection with the other particles pronounced “de”. However, *mànmàrdè* 慢慢兒地 should probably be regarded as one word. We might want to regard *de* 地 as an adverbial suffix. But our analysis brings out the syntactic origin of this suffix, if indeed it is a suffix.

An alternative visual representation which for reasons of prosody (*mànmàrdè* seems to be read as one tightly-knit phrase) one might prefer runs like this:

Consider the following pair of sentences:
積極 的 勞動
ji jí dè láo dòn g
POSITIVE dè EFFORT
A. “positive efforts”

Keep in mind that the distinction between dè的, dè地, and dè底 is a Westernising imposition on Chinese writing. In Chinese they represent one morpheme.

Considering the different morpheme dè得 there are two superficially similar constructions into which it enters. These may be distinguished as in the analysis below.

Consider the following two readings. The question is whether, according to these readings, the subject did or did not irrigate and fertilise, adequately or inadequately.

他不適當地灌水施肥
tā bù shìdàng dé guàn shuǐ shǐ féi
HE NOT ADEQUATE-LY IRRIGATE WATER DEPLOY FAT
A. “He irrigated and fertilised inadequately.”
B. “He failed to adequately irrigate and fertilise.”

On reading A he must have irrigated and fertilised, and he must have done this inadequately. On reading B his failure may well have consisted in not irrigating or fertilising at all, but it may also be a failure to do so adequately. Let us try to represent this ambiguity with our present analytical conventions.
他不適當地灌溉施肥

A. “He irrigated and fertilised inadequately.”
From the point of view of our grammatical analysis the crucial difference is in the scope of the negation. When this scope is so large that it includes the whole of the remaining VP the result is a sentence meaning in which it is possible that the subject did not in fact irrigate or fertilise at all.

不適當地管教孩子
bù shūdàng dè guǎnjiào háizǐ
NOT ADEQUATE -LY EDUCATE CHILD
A. “educate one’s children inadequately”

* Provide an analysis for the following:
不適當地管教孩子
bù shūdàng dè guǎnjiào háizǐ
NOT ADEQUATE -LY EDUCATE CHILD
B. “not educate one’s children adequately”

* Compare, translate, and analyse:
聽衆熱烈地鼓掌
fāchū rèliè de gǔzhǎng

* Provide an analysis for the following:
這是大家的辛勤的 / 地勞動的果實
zhè shì dàjiā de xīnqín de làodòng de guǒshí
THIS BE EVERYONE CONSCIENTIOUS WORK DÉ FRUIT
A. “This is a result of everybody’s hard work.”
B. “This is a result of everybody working hard.”

* Discuss the problems of the standardisation of the script raised by the alternative forms of dē 的 / 地. Are these different particles, or are they one particle written - under Western influence - in different ways?

Note finally that an adverbial modifier may include a marked construction involving a complement:
The marker 得

Complements in 得 will normally be analysed thus:

得 很 慢
dé hěn mān
WRITE 得 VERY SLOW
“write (very) slowly”

你 買 得 好
nǐ mǎi dé hǎo
YOU BUY PART GOOD
A. “You did well to buy it.”

得 使
dé shǐ
MAKE

得 看
dé kàn
LOOK

得 聽
dé tīng
LISTEN

得 說
dé shuō
SAY

得 說
dé shuō
SAY
B. “The one that you bought was good.”

VPs “sentential verb phrase” is used here - experimentally - to bring out the fact that the head of a Chinese sentence is a verb, and that the subject is subordinate to that verb, like the pre-verbal object or the pre-verbal adverb.

Here is an ambiguous phrase:

The negations of this

“didn’t wash it clean”

presents no special new problems of analysis.
Consider now the potential idiom where we might be tempted to analyse *dé* not as a marker but as a grammaticalised verb with an (intended) object:

B. “be able to wash clean”

On the right is an analysis according to the system outlined in Lü Shuxiang 呂叔湘 1979 which will be discussed in the section on Comparisons below.

*** The negation of this sentence needs a consistent analysis which causes severe trouble. In analogy with the preceding one would need to interpret *bù* not as a potential pro-verb “be unable to”, but such a way of construing *bù* does against one’s linguistic instincts:

I take *bù* here to mean *bù dé* “be unable to get”. We understand the idiom, but we do not seem to have a straightforward way of construing it logically and grammatically.
*** Analyse discuss:
跑得很累
pǎo děi hěn lèi
RUN děi VERY TIRED
“ran until he was tired”
May one give this a potential interpretation? Who or what is getting tired here? Was his running tired?

* Consider the word *shuōhǎo* 說好 “reach an agreement” and analyse the following:
說得好
shuō dě hǎo
SPEAK dě GOOD
A. “can agree”
B. “speak well; well said”

*** Can potential complements be sentential? Is *xǐdī yǐdiǎnr huàchén dōu méiyǒu* 洗得一點灰塵都沒有 ambiguous? Does it have a potential reading? Translate and analyse.

看 得 多
kàn dě duō
SEE PART MUCH
“read more”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>VP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vt</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>va</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

看 得 見
kàn dě jiàn
LOOK PART SEE
“be able to see”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>VP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vt</td>
<td>c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o</td>
<td>VP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*** In desperation we may have to analyse dé 得 in what follows as a grammaticalised verb:

```
看 得
kàn dé
LOOK BE-ABLE-TO-OBTAIN
“be able to see”
```

* Compare qùde 去得 “can go”, qùbùdé 去不得 “cannot go”; chīdé 吃得 “edible”, negated by chībùdé 吃不得; dònghdé 動得 “can touch”, negated by dòngbùdé 動不得.

```
他 打 篮球 打得好
tā dǎ lán qiú dǎ dé hǎo
HE PLAY BASKET BALL PLAY PART GOOD
“He plays basketball well.”
```

* Compare qùde 去得 “can go”, qùbùdé 去不得 “cannot go”; chīdé 吃得 “edible”, negated by chībùdé 吃不得; dònghdé 動得 “can touch”, negated by dòngbùdé 動不得.
The following raises no special problems of its own:

他 篮球 打 得 好
tā lánqiú dǎ dè hǎo
HE BASKETBALL PLAY PART GOOD
“He plays basketball well.”

他的篮球打得好
tā dè lánqiú dǎ dè hǎo
HE dè BASKETBALL PLAY PART GOOD
“He plays basketball well.”

他 的 老师 爱 得 好
tā dè lǎoshī ài dè hǎo
HE dè TEACHER FULFILL PART GOOD
“As for his role as a teacher, he plays it well.”
“He plays the part of the teacher well.”
In all of these cases except the last we have pseudo-NPs zhǔn míngcìzhǔ 准名詞組 marked with dē 的. This observation even applies to a noun phrase like tā dē xiǎoshuō 他的小說, as the following example shows.

Consider the following beautifully ambiguous sentence discovered by Lü Shuxiang 呂叔湘 1984:44, where the reading C causes considerable trouble when one tries to think of a close paraphrase which makes clear how the sentence is supposed to work:

他的小說看不完

A. “The novels he owns one cannot read completely.”
B. “The novels he has written one cannot read completely.”
C. “He never finishes reading novels [i.e. a novel freak].”

We note that the readings A and B are not grammatically distinguished with the categories of syntactic analysis we use.

* Find two grammatically different analyses of

写得好

WRITE dē GOOD

A. be able to write properly
B. write nicely.

* Compare the meanings of

写得好不好

and of the questions

寫得好寫不好?

寫得好不好?
* Analyse:
气得肺都炸了
qì děi fèi dōu zhà lè
GET-ANGRY PART LUNG ALL EXPLODE PERF
“he got so angry that his lungs burst”

Note that the complement can be a coordinate construction, whereas in potential complements no such coordination is possible:
理解得正确全面
liǎn jiè děi zhèngquè quánmiàn
UNDERSTAND dě CORRECT EXACT
“understand correctly and completely”

* Analyse the following ambiguity:
这孩子追得我直喘气
zhè háizi zhuī dě wǒ zhí chuǎngqì
THIS CHILD PURSUE I SIMPLY GASP
A. I pursued the child so that I simply got breathless.
B. The child went after me so that I simply got breathless.
C. The child pursued me and got simply breathless.

* Translate the following:
1. 走得勤
2. 走不勤
3. 搬得勤
4. 搬不勤

喘不过气来
chuǎn bù guò qì lái
BREATHE NOT PASS BREATHE COME
“cannot breathe properly”
* Contrast
看得完
kàn dē wán
READ dē FINISH
"can finish reading it"
and
看得快
kàn dē kuài
READ dē FAST
"reads it faster".

* Analyse the following:
1.
我走不进去。
wǒ zǒu bù jǐnqu
I GO NOT ENTER
"I can’t walk in."

2.
我走，不进去！
wǒ zǒu, bù jǐnqu
I GO, NOT ENTER
"I’m leaving, I’m not going to go in."

3.
我走不好意思。
wǒ zǒu bù hào yìsī
I GO NOT BE-GOOD-FORM
"If I leave that is improper."

** Here are two competing analyses of the word dē, which is usually written dē 得. Which do you prefer, and why?

![Diagram of sentence structure]

- [ ] run
- [ ] fast
- [ ] particle
- [ ] verb phrase
How does the Modern Standard Chinese writing system affect your decision on the above question?
Chapter 6
Grammatical Operators

The operator ֳ¢ֳ™ ֳ‘ֳ£ ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ‘
We have seen that ֳ¢ֳ™ ֳ‘ֳ£ ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ‘ is a marker of subordination. It can also function as a nominaliser:

```
朋友 ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ¥ֳ­ֳ‘ ֳ‘ֳ£ ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ‘ ֳ£ ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ‘
FRIEND OLD ֳ¢ֳ™ GOOD
"Of friends the old ones are better."
```

Dֳ¢ֳ™ ֳ‘ֳ£ ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ‘ operates on the va ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ¥ֳ­ֳ‘ ֳ‘ֳ£ and converts it into an NP. Indeed, the construction xֳ‘ֳ¥ֳ­ֳ£ ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ¥ֳ­ֳ‘ 新的朋侶 could be explained on the basis of this kind of nominalisation:

```
 neuen の ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ¥ֳ­ֳ‘
NEW ֳ¢ֳ™ FRIEND
"new friend"
```

On this analysis ֳ¢ֳ™ ֳ‘ֳ£ ֳ‘ֳ£ֳ‘ is not a marker of a relation between constituents, it is in fact an operator which operates on constituents to create other constituents of a different grammatical type. In this case we might say it is a special operator called “nominaliser” because it converts a verb or an adjectival verb into a noun phrase.
Interpreting dé 的 as an operator converting something verbal into something nominal is perfectly possible, but it is not always adequate. This comes out in various ways. For example, it works perfectly for kāiqiāng dé rèn 開槍的人 “the person who opened fire” but not for the apparently quite similar kāiqiāng dé shēngyīn 開槍的聲音 “the sound of gunfire”. The noun phrase kāiqiāng dé 開槍的 has to mean “those who shoot” or “he/she who shoots” and can never come to mean “shooting”, so that kāiqiāng dé shēngyīn 開槍的聲音 cannot be construed as containing the nominalised kāiqiāng dé 開槍的.

Let us look at another example:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{他 畫 的} \\
\text{tā huà dé} \\
\text{HE PAINT dé} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{[東西]} \\
dōngxī \\
\text{THING} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{NP} \\
\text{NP} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
> \\
\text{n} \\
\end{array}
\]

or even:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{他 畫 的} \\
\text{tā huà dé} \\
\text{HE PAINT dé} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{[東西]} \\
dōngxī \\
\text{THING} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{NP} \\
\text{NP} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
= \\
\text{n} \\
\end{array}
\]

There is no problem about saying that tā huà dé 他畫的 “what he paints” is an immediate constituent in tā huà dé dōngxī 他畫的東西 “the things characterized by being what he paints” or as apposition “the things, which are also what he paints”.
But consider the following impossible analysis:

The point is that huàhuà dē 畫畫的 has to mean “he/she who paints pictures”, so that the current huàhuà dē 畫畫的 “painter” does not in fact occur in huàhuà dē fāngfǎ 畫畫的方法. The above analysis is clearly impossible. Neither does such an analysis work in huàhuà dē gōngjù 畫畫的工具 “painting implements”.

The case of huàhuà dē rén 畫畫的人 “the person who paints” is different because one can construe the phrase to contain the constituent huàhuà dē 畫畫的 “she/he who paints”, but if we want the different cases of dē 的 in huàhuà dē gōngjù 畫畫的工具 and in huàhuà dē rén 畫畫的人 to receive a parallel structural explanation, we would need to say that huà huà dē 畫畫的 is not a constituent in huà huà dē rén 畫畫的人.

* Sometimes there is no overt syntactic slot in what precedes the dē 的 into which the main noun phrase after dē 的 fits.

wǒ qié ròu dē nà bā dāo
I CUT MEAT dē THAT HANDLE KNIFE
“the knife with which I cut the meat”

* The modifier before dē 的 may be very complex. Analyse the following from Zhu Dexi 朱德熙 (1981) p. 23:

你得藏在一个你看不见他，可是他看不见你的地方
“You should hide in a place where you can see him but he cannot see you.”

Can difāng 地方 be left out and understood in this kind of construction?
None the less there are sentences like the following where dē 的 very clearly is an operator creating a noun phrase:

A. “the person opposed was he”

B. “the opposing person was he”

* Make a polite translation and a grammatical analysis of the following: 丫頭養的

Ask a native speaker about the meaning of yāng 丫挺 which is a current contracted or abbreviated form of yàotóu yāng dē 丫頭養的. 

Cf. English bloody = by Our Lady.
* Analyse this sentence according to the reading

B. "As for the skins, the green ones are not sweet."

* Reading B is very considerably less plausible or likely than A. Are the reasons for this grammatical or lexical? (Note incidentally the ambiguity of this latter English question. Investigate the question whether they are neither grammatical nor lexical. Consider the pragmatic dimension.)
Contrast now:

香蕉 青 的 不 甜
xiāngjiāo qīng de bù tián
BANANA GREEN de NOT SWEET

"As for bananas, the green ones are not sweet."

** Is there an alternative reading to this last example?

* Consider the following set of ambiguities and decide which of them involve the operator de 的:

1. 没有 购票 的
méi yǒu mǎi piào de
NOT HAVE BUY TICKET PART

A. “those who have not bought a ticket”

** Is there an alternative reading to this last example?
2. 没有买票的
méi yǒu mǎi piào dé
NOT HAVE BUY TICKET PART
B. “No one has bought a ticket”

* See now what happens when we introduce certain complications which increase the range of ambiguities:

1. 没有一个买票的
méi yǒu yīgè mǎi piào dé
NOT HAVE ONE BUY TICKET PART
A. “There was no ticket buyer.”
2. 没有 一个 购 票 的
méi yǒu yīgè mǎi piào dé
NOT HAVE ONE BUY TICKET PART
B. "Not a single person bought a ticket"

---

3. 没有 一个 购 票 的
méi yǒu yīgè mǎi piào dé
NOT HAVE ONE BUY TICKET PART
C. "[He] did not buy tickets alone."

---

*** One might add another tricky reading which admits of several explanations:
没有一个 购 票 的
méi yǒu yīgè mǎi piào dé
NOT HAVE ONE BUY TICKET PART
D. "not a single ticket-buyer"
One appreciates why one might need this latter reading when one compares this sentence:

![Image: Chinese text]

“Not a single ticket-buyer brought an umbrella.”

One might take this as a pivotal construction in which yīgē mǎi piào dē一一個買票的 is both the object of méiyǒu 沒有 and the subject of dài lè sān 帶了傘. But that would mean that someone who is first said not to exist is then claimed to bring an umbrella, which is not a logically very attractive way to construe the meaning of the sentence. Logically, we must paraphrase that of the ticket-buyers none brought an umbrella. Grammatically, “méiyǒu yīgē 沒有一個 X” seems to work nominally almost like “not a single X”.

**The operator zhě 者**

As we have seen in the section on markers, mài shū 賣書 “sell books” is verbal, whereas mǎishūdē 賣書的 “the subject that sells books > book-seller” is nominalised by the particle dē 的 which we call an operator that nominalises, a nominaliser. Compare the classical particle zhě 者 which in Modern Standard Chinese functions in a similar way to the dē 的 which nominalises:

```
学者
xué zhě
STUDY HE-WHO
“scholar”
```

n
vt
Lü Shuxiang 呂叔湘 provides an entertaining complex example:

世界 战争 不 可 避免 者
shìjiè zhànzhēng bù kě bìmiǎn lùn zhé
WORLD WAR NOT CAN AVOID THEORY HE-WHO
“advocate of the theory that a world war is unavoidable”

The operator suǒ 所
Zài 在 “be in” is verbal, and it is nominated by suǒ 所 in suǒzài 所在 “the object/place which something is in, location”. We call suǒ 所 an object modifier in a sentence like zhè shì wǒmen de lìliàng suǒzài 這是我們的力量所在 “this is where our strength lies.” An analysis of suǒ 所 would have to run like this:

But the problem is that lìliàng 力量 is the subject of the verb zài 在.
* The literary quality of suō 所 is evident in many chéngyu 成語. Translate the following:
1. 所答非所問
2. 不出所料
3. 綜上所述
4. 人心所向
5. 各盡所能，各取所需
6. 所剩無幾
7. 大失所望

無所謂
wū suō wèi
LACK WHAT REFER-TO
“be of no consequence”

Can we say yǒu suō wèi 有所謂 “it is significant”?

* Translate the following taken from 現代漢語虛詞例釋 p. 408 and determine whether the phrase wūsuōwèi 無所謂 does or does not occur in that sentence: 對於敵人，無所謂仁慈的問題；於他們只有給以致命的打擊。

*Gorelov 1982: 181-184 quotes
我已經明白了你所說的話。
What is the difference between 你說的話 and 你所說的話?
The addition of nàgè rén 那個人 does not seem to make a difference:
你所說的那個人已經死了。

*Translate and comment on the following:
我知道他說的那件事
wǒ zhīdào tā shuō de nàjiàn shì
I KNOW HE SPEAK de THAT MATTER
A. “I know the matter he is talking about.”
Cf. 我知道他所說的事兒.
B. “I know what he is talking about is that matter.”
Cf. 我知道他說的是那件事.
他做人家所要他做的事
He does what others want him to do.

* Analyse and translate:
這是我所要補充說明的第一點。
蘇聯在這個問題上所一貫堅持的觀點是正確的。

* Consider which of the following involve the operator suǒ 所:
1. 所長
   suǒzhǎng
   “head of department”
2. 
所得
suòdě
“income”

3. 
所謂
suǒwèi
“so-called”

4. 
所見所聞
suǒjiàn suǒwēn
“experience”

衆人議論不一，所說不一。
zhòngrén yìlùn bù yī, suǒshuō bù yī
MASS-PERSON VIEWPOINT NOT ONE, WHAT SAY NOT ONE
“The points of view of the various people were at variance, what they said was not the same.”

Suò 所 may be construed as a grammatical operator. Suò 所 always precedes its scope, and that scope is always verbal.

* Compare yǒu 有 “have; there is” with suǒyǒudě 所有的 “every” and provide an analysis of the latter.
Chapter 7
Functional/Semantic Features of Constituents

The inside labels of the constituent boxes are used to indicate special functional characteristics of an expression under a given interpretation. These are concerned not with the form class that a word belongs to but with the grammatical or semantic role it plays.

Compare:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{買的紙} & \quad \text{māi dē zhī} \\
& \quad \text{BUY 'S PAPER} \\
& \quad \text{"the paper that has been bought."} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{NP} & \quad \text{pass} > \text{pat.} \\
\text{vt} & \quad \text{n} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{買的人} & \quad \text{māi dē rén} \\
& \quad \text{BUY 'S MAN} \\
& \quad \text{"the person who has bought > the buyer"} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{NP} & \quad \text{act.} > \text{ag.} \\
\text{vt} & \quad \text{n} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Without functional labels these two structures would look identical. In order to record their difference we introduce functional labels.

* Discuss the ambiguity of māidè rén 買的人 and its social context.

* Analyse the reading of māidè zhī 買的紙 as “is buying paper”.

*** One is tempted to claim that māi 買 means the same thing in both sentences, but is taken to be “active” in one case and “passive” in the other. The attribution of the notion of the passive to Chinese is controversial, but
what alternative ways of describing this sentence are there which do not involve notions like “passive”. One might make the distinction by calling rén 人 an “agent” in the second sentence while shū 书 is the “patient” in the first. However, neither shū 书 “book” nor rén 人 “man” are grammatical subjects or topics in the phrases under discussion.

When a verb functions verbally there is no reason to mark this with a label. On the other hand when a verb phrase functions nominally as a topic, then this fact is conveniently registered by a functional label indicating that what is formally a verb phrase functions as a noun phrase or - to use more formal language - is nominalised.

Functional or semantic labels that may be inscribed into the boxes are not taken from any limited set. The range of such labels needs to be widened as the analysis proceeds. Here are some examples of what we may need:

adv. = adverbia
act. = active
ag. = agent
com. = comment
cmp. = complement
instr. = instrumental
med. = medium
nom. = nominal,
obj. = object
pass. = passive
pat. = patient, sufferer
piv. = pivot
pred.nom. = predicate nominal
sent. (or s.)= sentential
subj. = subject
top. = topic
verb. = verbal
......

For a wide range of uses of functional labels see the sections below on the functional flexibility of chéngyǔ 成語, and on the pattern “XY bù 不 Z” in chéngyǔ 成語.
衣服 洗了
yi̯fû xîlê
CLOTHES WASH-INTEGER
A. “The clothes are washed.”

S

S

衣服 洗了
yi̯fû xîlê
CLOTHES WASH-INTEGER
B. “The clothes [he/she/they] have washed.”

At times one is tempted to introduce the label med. “medium” from Latin grammar:
B. "They are preparing a banquet in the house."
(Cf. 屋裡正在擺酒席)

A. "He just underwent an operation."
他剛作了手術
tā gāng zuò lè shǒushù
HE JUST DO -lè OPERATION
B. “He just carried out an operation.”

* Analyse:
1. 他剛給誰作了手術
tā gāng gěi shéi zuòlè shǒushù
HE JUST FOR WHO DO -lè OPERATION
“He has just performed an operation on someone.”

2. 他剛給誰打了針
tā gā’ng gěi dǎlè zhēn
HE JUST FOR HIT -lè NEEDLE
A. “He just had acupuncture performed on him.”
B. “He just performed acupuncture [on someone].”
*** Compare the meanings of the following examples brought up in Lu Jianming 陸健明 and Ma Zhen 馬真 1985:243:

我所吃的都是小的
“I eat/have eaten all small.”

Here the noun phrase wǒ suǒ chī dē 我所吃的 is definite, the phrase has to refer to a definite and finite set of things.

我吃的都是小的
A. “Such ones I eat are all small (i.e. in principle I only eat small ones).”
B. “The ones I am eating/have eaten are all small.”

Here the wǒ chī dē 我吃的 may be both definite and indefinite. If this kind of observation is right, then one would have to enter it as a label into our description.
The following well-known ambiguity might be analysed in terms of functional labels as follows:

A. "studies by Lu Xun"

B. "studies of Lu Xun"

We have here an example which suggests that even nouns can have subjects and objects. The matter deserves detailed attention. One might use the Latin grammatical terms "[genitivus] subjectivus" and "[genitivus] objectivus" to describe similar cases as follows:
The relations that may be marked by 皴 的 are as varied as the relations between two nouns in English. Consider the following 25 collocations: "Table cloth; pine tree; oak forest; monkey paw; paper bag; tool; steel; meat ball; brick ice; water pipe; finger bowl; honey bee; foot print; horse thief; chicken feed; wine bottle; box lunch; prairie dog; dog kennel; gold mine; goat milk; Christmas cake; fruit season; sword fish; clothes tree."

In each case the first noun is related to the second in a different sense. The list is by no means exhaustive. And it is most remarkable that for every English expression one can find a Chinese one corresponding to it in reference or at least parallel in form.” (Lu Zhiwei 陸志韋 1948:112)

Compile a list of semantically different 皴的 constructions in Chinese providing English equivalents. Do you find many collocations that cannot in principle be rendered through simple collocation in English?

Dā 皴子 “come down with the big stick on someone” raises special grammatical questions with respect to the literal - non-metaphorical - structural relations. What is beaten is certainly not the stick. The stick is an instrument of beating. Dā 皴子 “wield the stick” and 大人 打人 “beat up other people” are very different. One might either claim that 大 打 functions as a transitive verb meaning something like “to wield”, or that we have an unmarked instrument in the object position. If we choose the latter, we would have to write something like this:
* Object relations can hide widely different semantic relations. Compare, translate and analyse:
1. 洗凉水
2. 洗盤子
In some cases similar phenomena are common in English. Compare *drink a large cup, eat a large bowl* with the following:
3. 吃大碗
4. 吃大米

* Explain the contrast between the semantic relations involved in the following:
 抽煙斗
chōu yāndōu
PULL PIPE
“smoke pipe”
 抽香煙
chōu xiāngyān
SMOKE CIGARETTE
“smoke cigarette”

Thinking along these lines of analysis one might recall the case of láilè kèrén
來了客人, in which we have insisted that kèrén 客人 is a postposed subject, we might now consider an alternative reading which is indeed the preferred analysis within the People’s Republic of China:
Very interestingly, the main constituent 去 has to be given clearly reduced stress, at least in Peking speech. Not so in the following example:
Contrast:

有 飯 吃
yǒu fàn chī
HAVE FOOD EAT
“There is something to eat.”

* Analyse: 他有飯吃 “He has something to eat.”

For a noun to be modified by a verb that follows it is grammatically extraordinary and the phenomenon is idiomatically linked to the presence of the verb 有. In some idiomatic contexts after 有 it seems that a noun may modified by the verb that comes after it. (Cf. 房 zhù 可住 “may be lived in”, 可穿 “may be worn” where the main constituent is 可 and this verb is modified by a (passivised) further verb.)

* Translate and analyse the following:
  1. 走着去
  2. 買菜去
  3. 去騎馬

*** Here is a tricky case:

我去買菜去
Wǒ qù mài cài qù
I GO BUY VEG. GO
“I’ll go and buy vegetables.”

*
Here one might try to say that the first *qù 去* is a straightforward verb of movement while the second is a suffix for verbs of outward action. (Grammaticalisation is indicated through rounding of the corners. For details see the section on Grammaticalisation.)

We distinguish between a verb which functions nominally in a sentence under a given interpretation and a verb which has a nominal homonym: the verb *lái wǎng 来往* “go back and forth” may be used nominally, but is then still different from *lái wǎng 來往* “intercourse, have social connections with”, as in *měi yǒu rén hé lái wǎng 没有任何來往* “have no contact”.

![Diagram](image)

The verbal nature of such deverbal subjects comes out explicitly in sentences like this under the relevant reading B:

**坐著比站着舒服**

*zuòzhē bǐ zhànzhē shòufū*

STAND-CONT COMPARED-TO STAND-CONT BE-COMFORTABLE

A. “He is more comfortable when he is sitting than when he is standing.”


When the topic/object immediately precedes the verb of which it is the object, one might indicate the function (redundantly) in two ways. But, of course, we have objects that do not in that way immediately precede the verb in that way, as in *yīfù wǒ xīlè 衣服我洗了* “The clothes I have washed.” Here we definitely
need the object label, and if necessary, we can indicate the verb-object relation by an arrow, although this makes a messy picture. Here is a slightly more complex case which illustrates a range of distinctions that we have made so far:

```
Mao Zedong Zhou Enlai these man I see have seen
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“As for these people Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai I have seen them.”

The arrow indicating the relation between non-adjacent constituents will be explained below.

* Consider the following sentences. Are they ambiguous as indicated? Can you give reasons?
1. 魚吃完了
   yú chī wán lè
   FISH EAT-UP -lè
   A. “The fish has eaten [it] up.”
   B. “[He/she/they] have eaten up all the fish.”
   C. “The fish has been eaten up”
2. 老太太洗好了
   lǎo tàidiă xǐ hǎolè
   OLD LADY WASH -lè
   A. “The old lady has washed [them] clean.”
   B. “The old lady [he/she/they] have washed clean.”
   C. “The old lady is washed clean.”

* Discuss the meanings of lǎo tàidiă chī wán lè 老太太吃完了.
The label “topic” in the following analysis only repeats the content of the symbol “:” just as the label “subject” only repeats what is indicated by the symbol “<-”:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>間</th>
<th>房子</th>
<th>住過</th>
<th>四個</th>
<th>人</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zhèijiān</td>
<td>fángzì</td>
<td>zhùguō</td>
<td>sìgē</td>
<td>rén</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THIS-CL</td>
<td>ROOM</td>
<td>LIVE-SUFF</td>
<td>FOUR-CL</td>
<td>PERSON</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

“Four persons have lived in this room.”

One may be excused for thinking that zhèijiān fángzì 間房子 “this room” is not the logical subject of zhùguō sìgē rén 住過四個人 “four persons have lived”. Rather, it is is the logical object of the verb zhùguō 住過 “have lived”. But consider “This room sleeps four people.” If we wish to attribute to the speaker of the sentence zhèijiān fángzì zhùguō sìgē rén 這間房子住過四個人 a meaning along the lines of “This room has once accommodated four people” then, of course, we must call zhèijiān fángzì 這間房子 the subject in our analysis, and we must claim that the verb zhù 住 “to live in” also has a meaning “to accommodate”. The grammatical structure would then be exactly the same as:

這個人住過四間房子
zhègè rén zhùguō sìjiān fángzì
THIS MAN LIVED FOUR ROOM
“This man has lived in four rooms.”

* How would one decide the question whether the topic-reading as in our analysis and the subject-reading are possible in Chinese? Is the argument that the standard dictionaries do not have the meaning “accommodate” for zhù 住 decisive?

Inside labels are useful in morphological analysis which is often extremely complex and controversial.
Cf. 白得象雪
“white as snow”.

Not every noun in front of a verb is a subject or a topic:

一 口 吞 下
yi kou tun xia
ONE MOUTH GULP DOWN
“swallow down in one gulp”

* Contrast. translate and analyse the pair:
1. 他一個人吞下
2. 他一塊肉吞下 [一塊肉送給我]

我們 兩個 人 (都) 去
womén liangge ren qu
WE TWO PERSON GO
A. “Let both of us go.”

= NP
n
= NP
t num n
On the second reading dōu 都 cannot be inserted without this profoundly affecting the grammatical structure of the sentence:

我們 兩個 人 去
wōmén liànggè rén qù
WE TWO PERSON GO
B. “Let both of us go together.”

The grammatical point comes out even more crisply when one changes the predicate in this construction:

我們 兩個 人 分 一個 西瓜
wōmén liànggè rén fèn yīgè xīguā
WE TWO PEOPLE SHARE ONE MELON
A. “As for us, let two people share one water melon.”
On the second reading only two subjects are involved, and the intonation is markedly different:

我們  Two  people  share  one  melon.

B. “Let us two people (the two of us) share one water melon.”

* Analyze:
我們大家  “We are all of one mind.”
一棍子打死  “beat to death at one blow”.

The notion of the subject is in itself complex. For example, one is tempted to distinguish between agents (ag.) and sufferers (suff.) as subjects:
Note that 了 in this kind of construction serves both as a verbal subject and as a modal particle.

文章 写 完 了
wénzhāng xiě wán 了
ARTICLE WRITE FINISH 了

"The article is finished."

* Compare and analyse:
我修好了
wǒ xiūhǎolè
I REPAIR GOOD 了
"I have repaired it."

自行车修好了
zìxíngchē xiūhǎolè
BICYCLE REPAIR GOOD 了
"The bicycle is repaired."
Compare the following pair in terms of grammatical structure:

他把這個人打死了
tā bā zhègè rén dǎ sǐ lè
HE TAKE THIS MAN BEAT DIE lè
"He killed this man."

他被這個人打死
he bēi zhègè rén dǎ sǐ lè
HE SUFFER THIS MAN BEAT DIE lè
"He was killed by this man."
Pivots
Sometimes an NP seems to work both as the object of the main verb and as the subject of an embedded clause. Some grammarians have called these pivots:

他 請 我 去
tā qǐng wǒ qù
HE ASK I GO
“He asked me to go.”

“”

他 以為 我 去
tā yǐwéi wǒ qù
HE THINK I GO
“He imagined I would go.”

** In yǒu rén shuō “someone said” and 我有一個弟弟到台灣去了“I have a younger brother who went to Taiwan”?
嫌 他 髒
xián tā zāng
DISLIKE HE DIRTY
“dislike that he is dirty”
can be analysed both as a pivotal construction and as a verb with a sentential object, since we can say xián tā 嫌他 “dislike him” and xián bù gānjìng 嫌不乾淨 “dislike the fact that he is not clean”.

A. “suspect him of having many younger brothers”

B. “dislike that his younger brothers are many”
One may also claim that 嫌 嫌 can take a sentential object, as in the following analysis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>嫌</th>
<th>他</th>
<th>弟弟</th>
<th>多</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xián</td>
<td>tā</td>
<td>dìdì</td>
<td>duō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISLIKE</td>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Y-BROTHER</td>
<td>MANY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C “dislike that he has a lot of younger brothers”

* Why not explain all pivot-sentences in terms of this kind of structure and thus do away with the messy dual function of the pivot?

派 他 學習 的 問題

派tā xuéxí de wèntí
SEND HE STUDY ’S PROBLEM

A. the problem of sending him out for study

派他學習 is nominalised on this reading while there is no such nominalisation on the reading B. that follows.
The size of the pivot can vary widely on different readings, as the following example brings out:

 ADMIRE  CAPTAIN  OLD CHINESE  BASIS  DEEP
 A. “admire the captain for his profound basic knowledge of classical Chinese”
B. “admire the captain’s classical Chinese for having a deep basis”

C. “admire the captain’s basis in classical Chinese for being deep”

But why not assume a sentential object? One could then let the ambiguity of the embedded sentence-object take care of the various readings along the following lines:

D. “admire that the captain’s basis in classical Chinese is deep [??]”
* Contrast:
  我佩服他那么聪明 implies 我佩服他
  我相信他那么聪明 does not imply 我相信他

* What are the arguments for introducing the notion of a pivot?

** Consider the following clause from Li Chi 1962: 68
  ［周滅殷以後，］奴隸了殷的貴族
  “After the Zhou had toppled the Yin, they enslaved the aristocracy of the Yin.”
  One might be tempted to introduce an inside label “causative verbal” to describe this rather special use of the noun *núlì* 奴隸, but on the other hand one could also, on the basis of this kind of sentence, introduce a new lexical item *núlì* 奴隸 “enslave”.

** The word *míngfàng* 喊放 “make frank criticism”, which is an abbreviation for *bāi jiā zhēng míng, bāi huā qí fàng* 百家爭鳴, 百花齊放, may occasionally even be used as a transitive verb:
  我早準備好了要 “喊放” 那些調皮搗蛋的家伙。
  “I have long prepared to openly speak out against these rascals and mischief makers.”
  In an abbreviation like this one feels that there is a clear case of co-ordination. Perhaps this transitive use of the word *míngfàng* 喊放 should not properly be described in terms of a functional inside label “transitive” because it should be regarded as what in ancient Chinese grammatical theory would be called a *huóyòng* 活用 “lively special usage” of a word in a category to which it does not lexically belong.
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