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PREVIEW



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the verbal complex is formed in the lexicon or in the syntactic derivation along the lines of Baker's (1988) theory of incorporation. The fact that an object or the particle *le* may occur between the verb and its directional complement points to the possibility of deriving the verbal complex in syntax. Recent developments in Distributed Morphology (Matushansky and Marantz 2013) not only strengthen this syntactic manipulation but also make it unavoidable since word formation is distributed in the process of syntactic derivation. If directional complements could be regarded in principle as resultative complements, questions remain as to whether it is possible to derive them in a similar way to what Li (2005) did to resultative constructions in Chinese. Exactly how to derive directional complements awaits further research.

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Xiaoguang Li

Discourse Markers

1. INTRODUCTION

Discourse markers (DMs henceforth) have been a popular topic in discourse and pragmatics research over the last couple of decades (Schiffrin 1987; Miracle 1991; Fraser 1999; Rån 2000; Feng 2008; Yin 2012, to name but a few publications on the topic). A recent query in the *Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts* (LLBA; October 5, 2015) database shows that DMs have been studied in Spanish, English,

Table 1. Linguistic properties of DMs in Chinese

Prosody	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DMs are unstressed compared with other adjacent words and/or structures; 2. There are perceptible pauses before and/or after DMs; 3. Very often DMs form prosodic units by themselves; and 4. The majority of Chinese DMs are monosyllabic or disyllabic. Tri-syllables and four-syllabic ones are also possible but much less frequent.
Semantics	DMs lack propositional meaning.
Constituency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DMs cannot be readily pigeonholed into any given grammatical category; 2. DMs are syntactically optional, except that they are used as independent conversational turns; 3. DMs have flexible positions. DMs can take initial, middle and final positions in a discourse segment, the initial position being the most frequent; and 4. Many Chinese DMs can take sentence-final particles (e.g., <i>ā</i> 啊, <i>ba</i> 吧, <i>ne</i> 呢, <i>ya</i> 呀, etc.; → Utterance Final Particles).
Discourse-pragmatic functions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DMs can suggest the start, continuation, shift and termination of a turn or prosodic unit; 2. DMs express and implicate attitude of the speakers; 3. DMs enable interaction between the interlocutors; and 4. DMs highlight topic and give clue to the information focus in discourse.

French, Chinese, Japanese (in the descending order of the number of publications), and many other languages. The majority of DM research has been on spoken discourse, as spoken interaction is commonly understood as a dynamic process of speaker and listener constructing an intersubjective world of discourse. Along the flow of discourse, DMs function as “traffic lights” or “landmarks”, as it were, and they are generally assumed to create discourse coherence and to achieve situated interpretations of utterances.

2. CHINESE DMs AND THEIR STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL PROPERTIES

Investigating DMs is both easy and difficult. It is easy in the sense that they are very frequent in real-life discourse but difficult when we attempt to technically define them. As a matter of fact, there is no definition of DMs that is commonly accepted in the field. This article does not intend to propose an all-satisfying definition either. Here DMs are described as lexical items, be they words or short phrases, which help connect prior and following discourse segments. Most likely, DMs do not have a prominent

grammatical status or semantic content in their local linguistic contexts. For instance, in the following discourse segment:

1. 好，我們言歸正傳。
Hǎo, wǒmén yán guī zhèngzhuàn.
good 1PL words back real.stuff
'OK, let's get back to our business.'

In its normal reading, an apparently audible pause follows *hǎo* 好 'OK'. The pause isolates *hǎo* as a grammatically independent element in its linguistic context. Semantically, the *hǎo* in the example does not carry any meaning of 'goodness' or any other specific lexical meaning. In other words, it does not add or deduct much semantic content to or from the discourse segment. As such, this *hǎo* makes itself a good candidate of a DM in Chinese discourse given the following criteria.

In light of the properties discussed above, about twenty frequent Chinese DMs were identified out of a mini-corpus of real-life spoken Chinese discourse of approximately 140,000 characters (see Xǔ 2009).

The eighteen DMs in Table 2 can be functionally categorized into four groups, to be characterized as:

Table 2. Frequent DMs in Chinese (sorted by frequency)

DMs	Freq. (in descending order)
<i>en</i> 嗯	1,390
<i>a</i> 啊	598
<i>o</i> 哦	538
<i>nà(ge)</i> 那 (個)	531
<i>duì</i> 對	228
<i>ránhòu</i> 然後	223
<i>hǎo</i> 好	201
<i>jiù</i> 就	169
<i>shì</i> 是	129
<i>ai</i> 哎	105
<i>zhè</i> 這	48
<i>ao</i> 噢	44
<i>e</i> 呃	38
<i>xíng</i> 行	29
<i>OK</i>	17
<i>nàme</i> 那麼	9
<i>zěnmeyàng</i> 怎麼樣	7
<i>wǒshìshuō</i> 我是說	7

(a) backchanneling and acknowledgment token (e.g., *en* 嗯)

2. 小峰: 你說你要把這些詩背熟, 你要多長時間?

Xiǎofēng: Nǐ shuō nǐ yào bǎ

Xiǎofēng: 2SG say 2SG want OBJM
zhèxiē shī bèi shú, nǐ
these poems recite well 2SG
yào duōcháng shíjiān?
need how.much time

Xiǎofēng: 'How long do you think it takes to learn the poems by heart?'

小軍: 不知道。

Xiǎojūn: Bù zhīdào.

Xiǎojūn: not know

Xiǎojūn: 'I don't know.'

小峰: 三天? 五天? 十天半個月?

Xiǎofēng: Sān tiān? Wǔ tiān? Shí

Xiǎofēng: three day five day ten
tiān bàn ge yuè?
day half CLF month

Xiǎofēng: 'Three days? Five days? Ten days or half a month?'

→ 小軍: 嗯, 不知道。

Xiǎojūn: En, bù zhīdào.

Xiǎojūn: Well not know

Xiǎojūn: 'Well, I don't know.'

(b) agreeing response (e.g., *hǎo* 好)

3. 小峰: 碳酸氫鈉的化學方程式怎麼寫啊?

Xiǎofēng: Tànsuān qīngnà de

Xiǎofēng: sodium bicarbonate SUB

huàxué fāngchéngshì zěnmé

chemical formula how

xiě a?

write PART

Xiǎofēng: 'Do you know how to write the chemical formula of sodium bicarbonate?'

小軍: 拜托, 不知道。寫, 自己寫。

Xiǎojūn: Bàituō, bù zhīdào. Xiě,

Xiǎojūn: come.on not know write

zìjǐ xiě.

yourself write

Xiǎojūn: 'Come on. I don't know. Write it by yourself.'

→ 小峰: 好好好, 自己寫吧, 不好意思啊。

Xiǎofēng: Hǎo hǎo hǎo, zìjǐ xiě

Xiǎofēng: good good good myself write

ba, bùhǎo-yìsi a.

PART pardon.me PART

Xiǎofēng: 'OK, OK, OK, I will write it by myself. Sorry about that.'

(c) initiating a new topic or "buying" time for thinking (e.g., *nà(ge)* 那個)

4. 父親: 你們哪一門課學得最慢?

Fùqīn: Nímén nǎ yī mén

Father: 2PL which one CLF

kè xué de zuì màn?

course learn GET most slowly?

Father: 'Which course is going with least progress?'

小輝: 語文

Xiǎohuī: Yǔwén

Xiǎohuī: Chinese

Xiǎohuī: 'Chinese.'

- 父親：語文學得最慢啊？你們語文老師不是很有經驗麼？
- Fùqīn: Yǔwén xué de zuì
Father: Chinese learn GET most
màn a? Nǐmén yǔwén
slowly PART 2PL Chinese
lǎoshī búshì hěn yǒu-jīngyān
teacher not very experienced
me?
PART
- Father: 'How come that your Chinese course is going with least progress? Isn't your Chinese teacher very experienced?'
- 小輝：那，我們改教材，再有經驗也不能把教材給那個
- Xiǎohuī: Nà, wǒmén gǎi jiàocái,
Xiǎohuī: well 1PL change textbook,
zài yǒu jīngyān yě
even.more have experience even
bùnéng bǎ jiàocái
cannot OBJM textbook
gěi nèige
give that
- Xiǎohuī: 'Well, we've used a new textbook, so a teacher cannot go that smoothly even if he or she is extremely experienced.'

(d) connecting two lexico-grammatical constituents (e.g., *ránhòu* 然後)

5. 小莉：第5個我爸說了一個很複雜的一個詞，然後我說我沒學過，然後我就沒記了。
- Xiǎoli: Dì-wǔ ge wǒ bà shuō le
Xiǎoli: fifth CLF 1SG dad say ASP
yíge hěn fùzá de
one.CLF very complex SUB
yíge cí, ránhòu wǒ shuō
one.CLF word then 1SG say
wǒ méi xué guò, ránhòu
1SG not learn ASP then
wǒ jiù méi jì le.
1SG just not take.down ASP
- Xiǎoli: 'My dad mentioned a word for question number five, which is a quite complex one, and then I said that the word was new

to me, and so I didn't take it down.'

- 小強：沒，沒記了？
- Xiǎoqiáng: Méi, méi jì le?
Xiǎoqiáng: not not take.down ASP?
Xiǎoqiáng: 'What, you didn't take it down?'
- 小莉：然後，第9個也沒記，因為太複雜了，我就寫了個
- Xiǎoli: Ránhòu, dì-jiǔ ge yě
Xiǎoli: then ninth CLF also
méi jì, yīnwèi tài
not note.down because too
fùzá le, wǒ jiù
complex ASP 1SG thus
xiě le ge 'come up'.
write ASP CLF 'come up'
- Xiǎoli: 'And then, I didn't write the ninth down either, because that one is too complex, and I wrote COME UP instead.'
- 小強：啊？
- Xiǎoqiáng: Á?
Xiǎoqiáng: what
Xiǎoqiáng: 'What?'

The four categories are by no means exhaustive; more would be found if more Chinese texts were collected and analyzed. More often than not, a lexical item can take different roles given different contexts. In other words, there is no strict one to one correspondence between discourse functions and DMs. Other DMs discussed in the literature include *jiùshì* (*shuō*) 就是(說), *wǒ xiǎng* 我想, *wǒ shuō* 我說, *wǒ rènwéi* 我認為, *wánle* (*yǐhòu/zhīhòu*) 完了(以後/之後), *zhèbu* 這不, *nǐ kàn nǐ* 你看你, *duì bú duì* 對不對, *shàngqiě* 尚且, *hékuàng* 何況, and so forth. The four groups of DMs form a continuum from the most colloquial and interactive to the most substantive lexical items of the DM family. Typical DMs are monosyllabic or disyllabic. They are versatile in pragmatic functions, highly flexible in terms of position and frequent in actual language use. Some of the controversies in the research of DMs is related to the fact that some DMs are in the process of grammaticalization, which means that they are definable as DMs by their context of use only.

3. APPROACHES TO CHINESE DISCOURSE MARKER STUDIES

The study of Chinese DMs is generally understood as a recent phenomenon, but the interest in discourse-pragmatic features of some so-called function words (*xūzì* 虛字 or *xūcí* 虛詞) has a history as long as the Chinese language has been studied. For example, Chao (1968) has special sections on particles, interjections, as well as the non-canonical usage of demonstratives, some adverbs and conjunctions in spoken Chinese. Lǚ (1980, 1985), Zhāng and Fāng (1996) succinctly observed that there are frequent non-deictic uses of demonstratives in Chinese. As it turns out, discourse-pragmatic interpretations of lexical items in Chinese are quite frequent, but these items are generally not called DMs. More systematic attention is paid to Chinese DMs in discourse related studies and neighboring fields such as interactional sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and functional linguistics. Studies on Chinese DMs can be seen to have developed from two different directions. First, there is the work done by discourse analysis specialists working in foreign language departments in Chinese universities as well as Chinese scholars overseas, such as: Rán Yǒngpíng 冉永平, Féng Guāngwǔ 馮光武, Chén Yìyà 陳軼亞 and Hé Agnes Wěiyún 何緯芸. Secondly, there is the work done by functional linguists at Chinese departments in Chinese universities, such as: Fāng Méi 方梅 and Gāo Zēngxiá 高增霞. The first group of scholars investigate the Chinese DM usage from the perspective of analytical frameworks found in publications in English, for example, Interactional Sociolinguistics, Relevance Theory, Adaptation Theory. Deborah Schiffrin, Bruce Fraser and Diane Blakemore are among the scholars they often refer to. The second group, the scholars in Chinese departments, sees DMs as the product of pragmaticization and/or grammaticalization. Semantic bleaching and inter-subjectivity are popular topics among these scholars. Working on the discourse-pragmatic and the functional-grammatical properties of DMs respectively, the two ‘camps’ are working toward each other from two ends of a tunnel, which appropriately reflects the continuum nature of DMs—from interactive tokens to sentence connectives.

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Jiajin Xu

Discourse Processing

1. INTRODUCTION

The decoding of characters and words, the analysis of sentences and the processing of discourse are all indispensable components in discourse comprehension. As the most complicated level of comprehension, discourse is a linguistic unit consisting of a series of sentences, such as a paragraph, passage, or narrative section of text. Discourse comprehension integrates incoming information with previous information and maintains the local and global coherence. Local coherence refers to the integration between

- WANG, Hongzhi, University of Washington, Seattle, United States.
- WANG, Hsiao Lan Sharon, National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei, Taiwan.
- WANG, Tingting, Peking University, Beijing, People's Republic of China.
- WANG, Xiaomei, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- WANG, Yu Xia, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China.
- WANG, Yue, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Canada.
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- WEE, Lian-Hee, Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
- WEI, Hang, Peking University, Beijing, People's Republic of China.
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- WU, Jei-Tun, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan.
- WU, Yi'an, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, People's Republic of China.
- XIANG, Ming, The University of Chicago, Chicago, United States.
- XIAO, Richard, Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom.
- XIAO, Yun, Bryant University, Rhode Island, Smithfield, United States.
- XING, Janet Zhiquan, Western Washington University, Bellingham, United States.
- XU, Jiajin, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, People's Republic of China.
- XU, Jie, University of Macau, Macau.
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- XU, Wenkan, National Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies, Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China.
- XU, Yi, UCL, University of London, London, United Kingdom.
- XU, Yulong, Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China.
- XU, Zheng, National University of Singapore, Singapore.
- XUE, Nianwen, Brandeis University, Waltham, United States.
- YAKUP, Abdurishid, The Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Berlin, Germany.
- YANG, Barry, National United University, Miaoli, Taiwan.
- YANG, Bei, College of Letters & Science, University of Wisconsin, Madison, United States.
- YANG, Chin-Lung, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, Hong Kong.
- YANG, Guowen, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, People's Republic of China.
- YANG, Hsiu-fang, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan.
- YANG, Jing, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, People's Republic of China.
- YANG, Suying, Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
- YANG, Xiaolu, Tsinghua University, Beijing, People's Republic of China.
- YANG-DROCOURT, Zhitang, Research Center for East Asian Linguistics (INALCO), Paris, France.
- YIN, Li, Tsinghua University, Beijing, People's Republic of China.
- YIP, Virginia, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, Hong Kong.
- YOSHIDA, Yutaka, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan.
- YOU, Rujie, Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China.
- YU, Alan, The University of Chicago, Chicago, United States.