

GRAMMATICALIZATION OF *VERBA DICENDI* IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN LANGUAGES: A (RECURSIVE)
CASE OF CLAUSE INTEGRATION

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(1) Colloquial Beijing dialect (Fang 2006)

我 总是 觉得 说, 生活里 缺了 点儿 什么。
wǒ zǒngshì juéde shuō, shēnghuó-lǐ quē-le diǎnr shénme
1SG always feel SAY_{THAT} life-in lack-PFV little something
'I've always felt that there is something a little lacking in my life.' (corpus of spoken transcriptions)

1.1. Introduction

- The grammaticalization of SAY verbs, or *verba dicendi*, into complementizers, subordinating conjunctions and other grammatical functions has been documented in detail for many languages in the African, South and Southeast Asian regions and also, interestingly, for creoles (see Güldemann 2001, Hock 1982, Lord 1993, Plag 1992, Saxena 1988 *inter alia*). However, this category is not at all well-attested in the study of the Sinitic or Chinese languages.
- In fact, for two of the more extensively analysed ones, Standard Mandarin (*pǔtōnghuà*) and Cantonese, it has generally been held that there are no subordinating conjunctions similar to *that* in English, or *que* in French, which serve to introduce indirect speech or an embedded clause.
- There has been little research to date specifically targetting the grammatical category of the complementizer in the field of Chinese linguistics, with the consequence that descriptions are difficult to come by, if at all. It is only recently that this phenomenon has been observed and described for Beijing Mandarin (Fang 2006), though earlier in the case of Southern Min by Cheng (1991).
- As a newly emerging category, it is not found in standard grammars, if based solely on elicitation. Hence, sufficient quantities of spoken discourse materials are needed to discover phenomena such as the complementizer.
- Complementation involves clause subordination and is a case of productive recursion – an important cognitive process of human languages which possibly distinguishes it from other kinds of communication (Heine and Kuteva 2007, chapter 6).

1.2. Sources for complementizers

- (i) nouns such as 'thing', 'fact' or 'place', e.g. Korean *kEs* 'thing'; Japanese *koto* 'thing'
- (ii) demonstrative, interrogative and relative pronouns, e.g. Faroese *tadh*; German *daß*, Georgian *raytamca*
- (iii) dative, allative and locative case markers or prepositions, e.g. Maori *ki* LOC/DAT; English 'to'
- (iv) SAY verbs, e.g.; Chantyal *b í*, Nepali *bhan*, Yoruba *kpé*, Vietnamese *rǎng*
- (v) simulative verbs meaning 'resemble' or 'be like'; simulative manner adverbials and deictics, e.g. Idoma *bE* 'resemble'; *íti* 'thus' in Sanskrit; *ti* in Shona 'be/do thus'

1.3. Areas of concentration for SAY verbs:

SOUTHEAST AND EAST ASIA: Tibeto-Burman; Tai-Kadai; Hmong-Mien; Austroasiatic;
 Austronesian
 NORTH ASIA: Mongolian
 SOUTH ASIA: Indo-Iranian; Dravidian
 AFRICA: Amharic (Semitic, Afroasiatic); Chadic (Afroasiatic); Kwa (Niger-Congo)

N.B. The source is often also a manner adverbial ‘thus’ or even a verb ‘to be like, resemble’ in the Asian region

- Sinitic is thus encircled by many SAY_{COMP} languages.
- high functional load of grammaticalized SAY verbs:¹
 1. Quotative marker or complementizer; marker of embedded questions
 2. Conditional conjunction
 3. Reason or purpose conjunction
 4. Causal conjunction
 5. Hearsay marker of evidentiality
 6. Topic marker
 7. Clause-final discourse particle expressing self-evident assertions, warnings and echo questions (different construction types)
 8. Clause-initial discourse marker for exclamations
 9. Marker used with onomatopoeic words
 10. Comparative marker
 11. Mirative marker
 12. Listing constructions

Figure 1: *Pathway for the grammaticalization of SAY verbs into complementizers in Sinitic languages*

- SAY > quotative function as main verb of principal clause introducing direct or indirect speech
 > quotative function as V₂ in a serial verb construction where V₁ = speech act verb
 > complementizer upon extension of V₁ to other verb classes including cognition, perception, emotion and modal

Figure 2: *Implicational hierarchy of verb classes co-occurring with quotative complementizers*

- (1) factive verbs in general ⊃ (2) modal verbs ⊃ (3) stative and emotion verbs ⊃
 (4) cognition and perception verbs ⊃ (5) speech act verbs

- Sinitic languages: Head-initial complementizers

NP VP_{CP}[C_{IP}[Complement clause]]

Figure 3: *Constituent-internal reanalysis* (Heine et al 1991: 215-216)

(A, B)	C	>	A	(B, C)
<i>I say that:</i>	<i>he comes.</i>	>	<i>I say</i>	<i>that he comes.</i>

¹ This list is synthesized from the discussions of grammaticalization pathways in Lord (1976: 179), Hock (1982), Saxena (1988), Heine and Kuteva (2005, 2007) and my own research on Sinitic languages.

Figure 4: Fusion of the matrix construction with its linked proposition

- NP V_[quotative] (*intonational pause*) : s[“Direct Speech”]
- > NP (V_[speech act]) V_{2 [quotative]} s[Indirect speech] (+changes in prosody and pronominal deixis)
- > NP V_[cognitive] — [COMP Complement clause].

Figure 5: Juxtaposition of the matrix construction with its linked proposition for Sinitic languages

- NP V_[quotative] (*intonational pause*) : s[“Direct Speech”]
- > NP (V_[speech act]) V_{2 [quotative]} s[Indirect speech] (+changes in prosody and pronominal deixis)
- > NP V_[cognitive] - COMP (*intonational pause*) — [Complement clause_[finite]]

(2) Southern Min example

- | | | | | |
|----|---------------------|--------|-----------|---------------------|
| | 彼 | 講 | 啊 , - | |
| | he | kóng | a | |
| | that _{3SG} | say | PRT | |
| <Q | 這 | 事 | 感覺 | 講, |
| <Q | che | sū | kám-kak | óng /kóng/ |
| | this | matter | feel | SAY _{THAT} |
| | 這 | 足 | 危險 | Q > |
| | che | chiok | gūi-hiàm | Q > |
| | this | very | dangerous | |

‘He (Toyotomi) said, “I **feel that** the situation is very dangerous”.’ (*Japanese tales* 1081-1083).

2. Sinitic taxon: three main SAY verbs > complementizer are JIANG 講, SHUO 說 and HUA 話

Table 1: SAY verbs in 8 branches of Sinitic

LANGUAGE	VARIETY / DIALECT	SAY VERB	GRAMMATICALIZED FUNCTION
1. Southern Min 闽南话	Taiwanese	kóng 講	Stage V complementizer
2. Cantonese Yue 粵	Hong Kong	wa ⁶ 話	Stage II-III semi-complementizer
3. Mandarin 官话	Standard (pǔtōnghuà)	shuō 說	—
	Beijing	shuō 說	Stage IV Complementizer
	Taiwanese	shuō 說	Stage IV-V Complementizer
4. Hakka (Kejia) 客家	Sixian, Taoyuan, Taiwan	koŋ ³¹ 講	Stage II semi-complementizer
5. Xiang 湘	Changsha	kan ⁴¹ 講	—
6. Gan 贛	Nanchang	wa ⁶ 話	—
7. Wu 吳	Shanghai	kā ³⁴ 講	—
8. Jin 晉	Huojia	ʈu ³³ 說	—

Legend: ‘—’ = no evidence in the sample of discourse data or in the relevant publications.

Table 3: V₁ in the verb complex formed with the complementizer *kóng* across three Southern Min texts

1. <i>kóng kóng</i> 講講 ‘to say that’	10
2. <i>m#ng kóng</i> 問講 ‘to ask that’	4
3. <i>chhiò kóng</i> 笑講 ‘to mock that’	3
4. <i>liām kóng</i> 唸講 ‘to nag that’	3
5. <i>iok-sok kóng</i> 約束講 ‘to agree that’	1
<i>kì-chài kóng</i> 記載講 ‘to record that’	1
7. <i>siūⁿ kóng</i> 想講 ‘to think that’	17
8. <i>siau siūⁿ kóng</i> 數想講 ‘to intend that’	1
9. <i>m#chai (iáⁿ) kóng</i> 佢知(影)講 ‘to not know that’	2
10. <i>hoat-hiān kóng</i> 發現講 ‘to find that’	1
11. <i>kámkak kóng</i> 感覺講 ‘to feel that’	1
12. <i>khodⁿ kóng</i> 看講 ‘to be of the view that’	1
13. <i>thiaⁿ kóng</i> 聽講 ‘to hear that’	1
14. <i>chin gao kóng</i> 真賢講 ‘very clever that’	1
16. <i>beh kóng</i> 慾講 ‘to want that’	1
17. <i>m#bién kóng</i> 佢免講 ‘to not need to’	1
18. <i>e-sài kóng</i> 会使講 ‘it is possible that’	3
TOTAL	52

(4) 恁 厝叔仔 共 我 講 講 ,
lín ban-chek-à kah goá kóng kóng
 2SG:PL youngest: uncle COM 1SG say SAY_{THAT}

我 還也 有 做 善事 啦 .
goá oân-á ū chò siān-sū là
 1SG also have_{PFT} do good-deed PRT
 ‘Your youngest uncle told me that I had also done some good deeds.’ (Fate 77-78)

3.2. Hong Kong Cantonese *wa⁶* 話

- Cantonese is at an earlier stage of the grammaticalization process than Southern Min.

Table 4: Frequency and uses of *wa⁶* in two Cantonese narratives

NARRATIVE	<i>Tale of the Reborn Lady at the Red Flowering Plum</i> 再世紅梅記	<i>Balcony Rendezvous</i> 樓台會	TOTALS
Length in Minutes	7:24	13:42	22:06
N° Intonation units	416	754	1,170
1. Lexical: Quotative verb (NP) <i>wa⁶</i> : “....”	18	17	35
2. Semi-complementizer: (NP) VERB _{COMM} X <i>wa⁶</i> : “....”	6	8	14
3. Complementizer: VERB _{gone2} - <i>wa⁶</i> : “....”	1	1	2
4. Irrealis: ‘supposedly’	0	2	2
Indeterminate or false starts	1	1	2
TOTAL	26	29	55

(5) Semi-complementizer usage of *wa⁶* in Cantonese:

(NP_{SUBJ}) VERB_{SPEECHACT} X wa⁶ – QUOTATION:

你 就 = ,
lei⁵ jau⁶ = ,
 2SG then

欺騙 我 話 你 係 一 個 = ,
hei¹pin³ ngoh⁵ wa⁶ lei⁵ hai⁶ yat¹ goh³ = ,
 deceive 1SG say 2SG be one CL

eh 已經 ,
 eh *yi⁵ging¹* ,
 already

出 - 出嫁 嘅 =
chut¹ - chut¹ga³ ge³ =
 out marry:a:man GE_{ASST}

婦人。
foo⁵yan⁴ .
 woman
 ‘You deceived me by saying that you were already a marry- married woman.’
 (Tale of the reborn lady at the red flowering plum 72-76)

Table 5: Speech act verbs followed by the semi-complementizer wa⁶ 話 in the structure (NP_{SUBJ}) VERB_{SPEECHACT} X wa⁶ in two Cantonese texts

<i>wa⁶ ... wa⁶ 話 ... 話</i> ‘to say ... saying/that’	4
<i>gong² ... wa⁶ 講 ... 話</i> ‘to tell ... saying/that’	4
<i>man⁶ ... wa⁶ 問 ... 話</i> ‘to ask ... saying/that’	1
<i>hei¹pin³ ... wa⁶ 欺騙 ... 話</i> ‘to deceive ... saying/that’	1
<i>bo³ ... wa⁶ 報 ... 話</i> ‘to report ... saying/that’	1
<i>jaan³ ... wa⁶ 讚話</i> ‘to praise ... saying/that’	1
<i>aat³ wa⁶ 嗌 ... 話</i> ‘to protest ... saying/that’	1
<i>ying¹sing⁴ wa⁶ 應承 ... 話</i> ‘to acquiesce ... saying/that’	1
TOTAL	14

4. Complementizers in other Sinitic languages

4.1. Standard Mandarin or *pǔtōnghuà*

(6) Standard Mandarin translation of a Southern Min discourse example

我 認為 (*說) 我 從來 沒 做過 善事
*Wǒ rènwei (*shuō), wǒ cónglái méi zuò-guo shàn-shì.*
 1SG think (*SAY_{THAT}) 1SG never NEG do-EVD good-matter
 ‘I thought I’d never done any good deeds.’ (Elicited example)

4.2. Beijing Mandarin

(7) Complementizer usage in Beijing Mandarin:

我 总是 觉得 说, 生活里 缺了 点儿 什么。
wǒ zǒngshì juéde shuō, shēnghuó-lǐ quē-le diǎnr shénme
 1SG always feel SAY_{THAT} life-in lack-PFV little something
 ‘I’ve always felt that there is something a little lacking in my life.’ (Fang 2006: 109°)

From an historical point of view: in late 19th century literature, the quotative use of *shuō* 說 with speech act and perception verbs can already be observed, reflecting the vernacular language of the capital, Beijing, at the end of the Qing dynasty.

4.3. *Taiwanese Mandarin*

(8) Taiwanese Mandarin:

260.	.. 他們	不	知道	說、		
	<i>tāmen</i>	<i>bù</i>	<i>zhīdao</i>	<i>shuō</i>		
	3PL	NEG	know	SAY _{THAT}		
261.	.. 係裏面 最近	有	什麼樣	的	事情。	
	<i>xì-lǐmianzujìn</i>	<i>yǒu</i>	<i>shémeyàng</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>shiqing.</i>	
	department-inside	lately	have	what:kind LIG	matter	

‘They didn’t know what was happening in the department.’

4.4. *Sixian Hakka*

(9)	就	同	掌牛	阿哥	參詳	講 :			
	<i>ts'iu⁵⁵</i>	<i>t'uN¹¹</i>	<i>tʂoN^{β1}-ku¹¹</i>	<i>a²⁴-ko²⁴</i>	<i>ts'am²⁴-sioN¹¹</i>	<i>koN^{β1} :</i>			
	then	COM	cowherd	brother	discuss	say			
	“細	阿哥	唉!	你	攪	個	該	尾	蛇
	<i>se⁵⁵</i>	<i>a²⁴-ko²⁴</i>	<i>↔⁰</i>	<i>ɿ¹¹</i>	<i>kau³¹</i>	<i>kai⁰</i>	<i>kai⁵⁵</i>	<i>mu²⁴</i>	<i>•a¹¹</i>
	little	brother	PRT	2SG	play	LIG	that	CL	snake
	來	賣	分	我	好	麼?”			
	<i>loi¹¹</i>	<i>mai⁵⁵</i>	<i>pun²⁴</i>	<i>Nai^{β1}</i>	<i>ho³¹</i>	<i>mo¹¹</i>			
	come	sell	give _{DAT}	1SG	good	Q			

‘(The fisherman seeing the snake in tears) then negotiated with the cowherd, (saying): “Hey Little Brother! How about selling me that snake you’re playing around with?” (Yang 1957 : 161, my glossing and translation - HC)

- 15 written narratives of *koN^{β1}* as a quotative marker or a semi-complementizer (14/158) with speech act verbs such as *tap²-in⁵⁵ koN^{β1}* 答應講 ‘answer-say’ ; *ham⁵⁵-koN^{β1}* 喊講 ‘call-say’ ; *mun⁵⁵-koN^{β1}* 問講 ‘ask-say’ and *t'aN²⁴-to⁰ koN^{β1}* 聽倒講 ‘hear-say’.

4.4. *Sinitic languages without complementizers*

Xiang, Wu, Gan and Jin – no evidence of SAY > complementizer

Other uses found: topic marker, conditional marker, consequence marker, rhetorical marker of surprise, negative comparative ‘not like’

5. *Continental Southeast Asian languages*

- several different language families are claimed to form a linguistic area with Southern Sinitic languages
- Austroasiatic (Mon-Khmer but not Munda), Tai-Kadai, Hmong-Mien

Table 6: Complementizers and their compatibility with verb classes in some continental Southeast Asian languages

Language	Marker		Verb classes for V ₁				
			Speech	Cognition	Perception	Emotion	Modal
Vietnamese	<i>là</i> 'be'	V-V _q	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>răng</i> < 'say'	obs.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Khmer	<i>tha:</i> < 'say'	V-V _q	✓	✓	✓	—	—
	<i>ci:ə</i> < 'be'	VxV _q	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
Lao	<i>vaa'</i> < 'say'	VxV _q	✓	✓	✓	✓	—
Thai	<i>wâa</i> < 'say'	VxV _q	✓	✓	✓	—	—
Hmong-Mien	<i>tias</i> < ?	—	✓	✓	✓	✓	—
	<i>hais tias</i> < 'say-say'	V-V _q	—	✓	✓	—	—

Sources: Bisang 1992, Enfield in press, 2008, Truong 1970

Conclusion

- Once more large-scale discourse studies are undertaken, it would be expected that complementizers based on verbs of saying, not to mention other grammaticalized uses of SAY verbs, are going to be found in many other Chinese languages and dialects, perhaps even complementizers based on different verbs.
- Finally, the primary importance of using spoken discourse materials as the main source of data can only be emphasized: the use of a complementizer is more likely to be detected in colloquial discourse materials than in elicited data or in reference grammars for standard varieties of languages. This has far-reaching consequences for methodology in current typological studies and also for diachronic studies.
- A comprehensive picture of modern languages and dialects in East and Southeast Asia is crucial for any complete reconstruction of grammar in a given taxon, for example, wrt complementation, given that non-standard varieties often furnish highly archaic forms, already obsolete in the standard form of a language. The diversity of forms obtained has the potential to fill in the missing pieces of the puzzle.
- Grammaticalization producing a new complementation strategy, recursive in nature, consequently enables the formation of more complex constructions: originally juxtaposed constituents become hierarchical structures involving subordination through this embedding process (see Heine and Kuteva 2007, chapter 6).

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