Sense, Reference, and Collocation
of the Chinese Nominal Continuum:
The Use, or Non-use, of 的

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Abstract

Previous studies of the Chinese nominal marker *de* 的 (Zhu 1999, Li and Thompson 1981, Chappell and Thompson 1992, and Zhang 1998) explained its optional uses in various ways but had all fallen short in providing a full account. In this paper, a Modern Chinese nominal continuum is proposed to systematically account for the form/meaning co-variations between nouns (no 的) and noun phrases (have 的). Chinese proper nouns (unique) and common nouns (concepts) do not allow the modifier marker 的 to occur inside them, regardless of the number of syllables. Therefore, a phrasal 中國的銀行 *zhongguo de yinhang* China's bank 'Chinese bank(s)' is different from a lexical proper noun 中國銀行 *zhongguo yinhang* China-bank 'Bank of China'. Depending on the degrees of lexicalization of various compounds, there are formally three kinds of common nouns: word (including monosyllabic word), word-like, and phrase-like compounds. Although the use, or non-use, of 的 in many of the set expressions can be arbitrary (or collocation), many of the grammatical uses with, or without, 的 can still be pragmatically inferred from the referential properties of the Chinese nominal continuum.

Keywords

Nominal marker, Chinese noun phrase, collocation, referentiality, pragmatic inference

1. Introduction

The Chinese character 的，representing the Chinese nominal marker *de*, constitutes the single most frequently used Chinese character in modern Chinese texts (approximately 4% occurrence rates, 北京語言學院 1984). Previous studies (Zhu 1999, Li and Thompson 1981, Zhang 1998, Huang 2008) treat it variously as a nominal genitive, associative (1b), or a nominalization (1a), marker. In this paper, *de* 的 in (1) is uniformly treated as a marker of nominal modification.

(1)   a. 我的
          wo de
          1st nominalizer
          'mine'
       b. 好的書
          hao de shu
          good ASSO. book
          'good book'
       c. 我的書
          1st GEN. book
          'my book'

Chappell and Thompson (1992: 225-226) found the optional uses of *de* in front of a determinatum making up 55% of the NPs in their corpus and observed that

> "[t]he question of what the factors are which influence speakers to use or omit the associative marker *de* has perplexed and fascinated linguists of Chinese for years. We hope to have shown that it is possible to begin to answer this question, and the answers are complex."

The iconic and economic principles by Chappell and Thompson (1992) are given in terms of conceptual closeness between two nominal in a construct:

(i)   The closer the relationship between NP1 and NP2, the less likely *de* is to be used.

(ii) the closer the relationship between NP1 and the speaker, the less likely *de* is to be used.

In similar vein, Zhang (1988) describes the absence, or presence, of *de* 的 in terms of physical distance: proper noun, mutual possession, distance, etc. For example, in *wo baba* 2nd dad 'my dad' 我爸爸 'my dad' and *women xuexiao* 2nd school 'our school(s)' 我們學校 all correspond to a proper noun, mutual possession, and close physical distance. However, it remains unclear why 的 is needed in *wo de baba* 2nd dad 'my dad' 我的爸爸 'my dad' and *women* 的 *xuexiao* 2nd school 'our school(s)' 我們的學校 .

In this paper, a Modern Chinese nominal continuum is proposed to systematically explain the form/meaning co-variations between nouns and noun phrases. Chinese proper nouns (semantically unique) and common nouns (lexicalized concepts) do not allow 的 to occur inside them. It then follows that the presence of 的 marks a noun phrase with a modifier, cf. a phrasal 中國的銀行 *zhongguo de yinhang* China's bank 'Chinese banks' and the 的 -less 中國銀行 *zhongguo yinhang* China-bank 'Bank of China' is lexicalized compound. Depending on the degrees of lexicalization of various compounds, three kinds of common nouns are recognized: word, word-like, and phrase-like compounds. Although the use, or non-use, of 的 in many set- expressions can be arbitrary (or collocation), many of the uses with, or without, 的 can still be pragmatically inferred from the referential properties of this Chinese nominal continuum.

Section 2 discusses the degrees of lexicalization of various words with respect to 的 . Section 3 proposes a form/meaning continuum in light of their co-variations in referentiality. Section 4 takes a closer look at pragmatic motivations of various uses in the light of the referential properties of Chinese noun phrases. Section 5 is the conclusion.

2. Words with different degrees of lexicalization

In contrast to Chappell and Thompson's 1992 iconic principles in terms of the rather vague conceptual closeness, a falsifiable lexicalization hypothesis is proposed in (2):

(2)   Lexicalization of a Chinese nominal compound:
   a. A lexicalized nominal (either semantically unique or symbolically a concept that can be treated as a set/kind) does not allow an internal 的 *de*.
   b. An NP with 的 *de* indicates that the determinatum is a member/subset of a set restricted by its modifier.

Such a hypothesis on the use of a nominal phrasal marker is Chinese specific. For instance, it is perfectly good to use a similar nominal marker *of* in a proper noun *the United States of America* in (3a). Furthermore, the presence of the English *of* would necessarily mean *Californian universities* in (3b), whereas the one without *de* is necessarily a proper noun with a unique reference in Chinese, *University of California*.

(3)   a. 美利堅合眾國   * 美利堅的合眾國
         meilijian hezhongguo   meilijian de hezhongguo
         America united-state   America DE united-state
         'the United States of America'

      b. 加州大學   加州的大學
         jiazhou daxue   jiazhou de daxue
         California university   California DE university
         'University of California'   'Californian universities'

In addition, the data in (4) show that a conceptualized Chinese lexical item is not allowed to co-occur with an internal *de* either.

(4)   電影院   圖書館   思想
      dianyingyuan   *tushuguan*   *sixiang*
      electric-shadow house   picture-book house   think think
      movies theater   library   thought
      * 電影的院   * 圖書的館   * 思的想
      *dianying **de** yuan*   *tushu **de** guan*   *si **de** xiang*

A common noun can, nevertheless, take a modifier with a marker of modification *de* 的 . For instance in (5), although *bai* 白 'white' and *zhi* 紙 'paper' are two free morphemes (i.e., two words), they can form a compound word *baizhi* 白紙 meaning either "blank paper" or "white paper," although the form marked by *de* is unambiguously "white paper". This demonstrates that the compound meaning "white paper" is a less lexicalized word than the compound meaning "empty paper".

(5)   白紙   白的紙   很白的紙
      baizhi   *bai de zhi*   *hen bai de zhi*

| white paper | white DE paper | very white DE paper |
| white paper or blank paper | white paper | very white paper |

The "white paper" reading is simply composed of the meanings of the two free morphemes *bai* and *zhi*. In other words, the meaning of the more lexicalized compound "blank paper" is more unpredictable from its formants. Brinton and Traugott observe (2005: 96-97):

> Lexicalization is the change whereby in certain linguistic contexts speakers use a syntactic construction or word formation as a new contentful form with formal and semantic properties that are not completely derivable or predictable from the constituents of the construction or the word formation pattern. Over time there may be further loss of internal constituency and the item may become more lexical.

In this light, three categories of words with different degrees of lexicalization are proposed: simple words, word-like words and phrase-like words.

The distributional properties of the compounds in (6)-(7) further support the categorization in terms of degrees of lexicalization. 好 'good' and 兆頭 'omen' are both Modern Chinese words. The impossibility to have the degree modifier 很 'very' in the non-phrasal* 很好兆頭 shows that 好兆頭 is lexicalized into word, as the formants of the compound, 好 and 兆頭, behave just like 白 and 紙 in (5) with a phrasal alternative marked by 的.

(6) 好兆頭　　　　好的兆頭　　　　很好的兆頭　　　　* 很好兆頭

　　hao zhaotou　　*hao de zhaotou*　　*henhao de zhaotou*　　*hen hao zhaotou*

　　good omen　　　good DE omen　　　very good DE omen　very good omen

　　'good omen(s)'　'good omen(s)'　　'very good omen(s)'

Moreover, the adjective 好, only in the phrasal form, can be modified by a degree modifier 很 'very' in (6). The same, however, is not true for the same 好 in a different compound 好朋友 'good friend,' a more lexicalized word-like compound.

(7)   好朋友   * 好的朋友 [1]   很好的朋友   * 很好朋友
      hao-pengyou   *hao de pengyou*   *hen hao DE pengyou*   *hen hao pengyou*
      good friend   good DE friend   very good friend   very good friend
      'good friend(s)'   'very good friend(s)'

In sum, pertaining to the morphological status of a Chinese word, there are three kinds
in (8), word, word-like, and phrase-like depending on their abilities to have a phrasal
alternative and to co-occur with the degree modifier 很 .

(8)   word   word-like   phrase-like   phrase
      紙   白紙   白紙   白的紙
      zhi   *baizhi*   *bai-zhi*   *bai de zhi*
      paper   blank paper   white paper   white DE paper
      朋友   好朋友
      pengyou   *haopengyou*
      friend   good friend

The data in (9), for the N-N pattern is different from the Adj-N pattern in (8). But the
three-tier model for the Chinese nouns remains valid. The category for word includes
free morphemes and compounds that have a bound morpheme (can be more than one),
as, under the column of word, there are 雞 ji 'chicken' and 蛋 dan 'egg,' even though
the combination of the two words can form a phrase-like compound 雞蛋 'chicken
egg.' Furthermore, both 鴿子 gezi 'pigeon' and 黃蜂 huangfeng 'wasp' are composed
of two bound morphemes, thus inseparable simple words, cf., * 鴿的子 or * 黃的蜂 .
However, 大黃蜂 da-huangfeng 'hornet' is a word-like compound composed of two
words 大 da 'big' and 黃蜂 huangfeng 'wasp.' It is word-like because it does not have
a corresponding phrasal expression. Finally, 大黃蜂戰鬥機 dahuangfeng-zhandouji
'hornet jet-fighter' is still another word-like compound without a corresponding phrasal
expression. Pertaining to Chinese word formation, this may be a very productive
strategy without any length limit on a compound, as 同步穩相回旋加速器 *tongbu
wenxiang huixuan jiasuqi* synchronize-steady-cycle-accelerator 'a synchronized-
steady- cyclotron' is an equally good Chinese word.

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[1]   A phrasal 好的朋友 is possible only if it means something else such as "a friend of good influence".

(9)

word	word-like	phrase-like	phrase
蛋、雞	--	雞蛋	雞的蛋
dan ji		ji-dan	ji de dan
egg, chicken		chick-egg	chicken DE egg
		'chicken egg'	'chicken's egg'
鴿子	--	鴿子蛋	鴿子的蛋
gezi		gezi-dan	gezi de dan
pigeon		pigeon-egg	pigeon DE egg
		'pigeon egg'	'pigeon's egg'
黃蜂	--	大黃蜂	大的黃蜂
huangfeng		da huangfeng	da DE huangfeng
wasp		big wasp	big de wasp
		'*big wasp'	'big wasp'
--	大黃蜂	--	--
	da-huangfeng		
	big wasp		
	'hornet'		
戰鬥機	大黃蜂戰鬥機	--	* 大黃蜂的戰鬥機
zhandou-ji	dahuanfeng-zhandouji		dahuangfeng de zhandouj
fight-machine	hornet-jet fighter		hornet DE jet-figher
'jet fighter'	'hornet (jet figher)'		

The same system can take care of the Chinese set-expressions. In (10) the word-like set-expressions do not allow a phrasal form with 的，whereas the phrase-like ones allow it.

(10) word-like: 錦繡河山   * 錦繡的河山
                  jin-xiu-he-shan   jin-xiu DE he-shan
                  brocade-silk-river-hill
                  'beautiful country with hills and rivers'
                  滿懷豪情   * 滿懷的豪情
                  man-huai-hao-qing   man-huai de hao-qing
                  fill-bossom-unrestrained-spirit
                  'to be filled with noble sentiments'

Phrase-like: 大好河山   大好的河山
               da-hao-he-shan   da-hao de he-shan
               big-good-river-hill   big-good DE river-hill
               'a beautiful country with hills and rivers'
               滿心喜歡   滿心的喜歡
               man-xin xi-huan   man-xin de xi-huan
               fill-heart-happy-delight   fill-heart DE happy-delight
               'totally pleased'   'totally pleased'

The data given in (10) also reveal that the use of 的 is arbitrarily determined depending on the degree of lexicalization of each expression as collocation is unpredictable by the conceptual closeness hypothesis (Chappell and Thompson 1992) or prosody (Feng 2001, Lu and Duanmu 2002). The unpredictable nature of the uses of 的 in (11) further illustrates this point.

(11)[2] two syllables: 別處   * 別的處
                         bie-chu   bie DE chu
                         other place

                         別人   別的人
                         bie ren   bie DE ren
                         other people   other people

                         * 別話   別的話
                         bie hua   bie DE hua
                         other word   other word
                                            'other words'

three syllables: * 別國家   別的國家
                 bie guojia   bie DE guojia
                 other country   other country
                                            'other country(ies)'

                 其他人   其他的人
                 qita ren   qita DE ren
                 other people   other people

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2   The examples in (17)-(19) are taken from Peng and Jin (2004: 40-42).

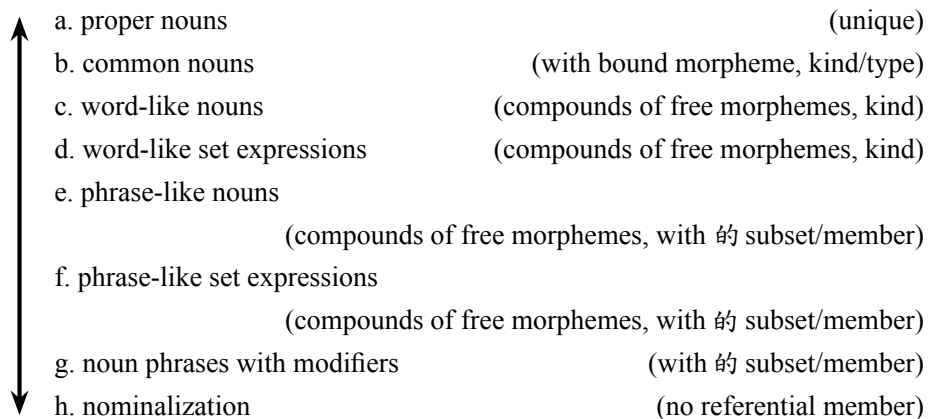| four syllables:	* 另外計劃	另外的計劃
	lingwai jihua	lingwai DE jihua
		other plan
	另外打算	另外的打算
	lingwai dasuan	lingwai DE dasuan
	other plan	other plan

According to Bybee (2011) collocation refers to compounds that are generally low in frequency and with morphemes strongly retaining their original meanings. This is exactly the case for the interface differences between phrases with 的 and lexical compounds in Chinese.

3. A continuum of form and meaning pairs of the Chinese noun phrases

Section 2 portrays the use, or non-use, of the Modern Chinese 的 in the light of their degrees of lexicalization with a three-tier model. This section focuses on the form/meaning pairings (Goldberg 2006) of this nominal system with a lexical-grammatical continuum in (12) similar to the one proposed by Brinton and Traugott (2005).

(12) The form-meaning pairs of different kinds of Chinese noun phrases
Lexicalization (no 的)

    a. proper nouns   (unique)

    b. common nouns   (with bound morpheme, kind/type)

    c. word-like nouns   (compounds of free morphemes, kind)

    d. word-like set expressions   (compounds of free morphemes, kind)

    e. phrase-like nouns

                  (compounds of free morphemes, with 的 subset/member)

    f. phrase-like set expressions

                  (compounds of free morphemes, with 的 subset/member)

    g. noun phrases with modifiers   (with 的 subset/member)

    h. nominalization   (no referential member)

Noun phrases (must have 的)

The Chinese 的 is treated as a grammatical marker of an NP in which the determinatum and its modifier are not a lexical item. On the other hand, the non-use of *de* marks

a word associated with a concept that is either unique or a type/kind/set of idea. Uniqueness is normally understood as the one and only one individual which fits the definite's descriptive content (Russell 1906) in a certain presupposition (Strawson 1950). In Modern Chinese no nominal marker *de* is allowed in any proper noun for its unique reference. Similar to the examples in (3), those in (13) show that even though the English nominal markers like *of*, or *'s* can be used grammatically in English, the corresponding Chinese 的 is not allowed in a proper noun (13d), and it implies a subset, or a member, of a set of banks in Chinese (13b).

(13) a. 中國銀行 *zhongguo yinhang*   China bank 'Bank of China'   (unique)
     b. 中國的銀行 *zhongguo **de** yinhang*   China DE bank 'Chinese banks'
        (type/kind/set)
     c. 鬼坡 *guipo*   devil slope 'Devil's Slide'   (unique as a place name)
     d. * 鬼的坡

Similarly word in a language can represent a culturally recognized (Carlson (ms) 2008) concept. In Chinese, examples in (4) represents concepts in Chinese and, therefore, 電影院 dianying-yuan movie-house 'cinema' does not allow an internal 的 (* 電影的院). The Chinese data in (5)-(11) strongly demonstrated that a three-tier system: nouns, word-like nouns, phrase-like nouns depending on a compound's degree of lexicalization. That is, a word is culturally perceived as a recognizable concept. Thus, a word-like noun is almost conceptualized, but it still allows a limited possibility in expressing it in a phrasal format. Moreover, the flexibility in representing a sequence of words either as a phrase-like word or as a phrase marked by 的 mirrors speakers' intuition about its being already conceptualized as a word in spite of the fact that they still can be represented by a phrase with multiple concepts. So these Chinese noun phrases take up the middle positions on the continuum. In other words, the less lexicalized compounds are more likely to have a phrasal format with the modification marker 的 . Finally, at the bottom of the continuum (12) are cases of 的 functioning as nominalization markers signaling NPs that are non-referential, exactly the opposite of the unique proper nouns. For example, the three expressions in (14) simply identify restricted sets without a referent.

(14) 紅的   我的   沒去過的
     hong-de   wo-de   mei qu-guo-de

red-nominalizer	1st-nominalizer	DEM go ASP-nominalized
'things that are red'	'things that are mine'	'people who have not been (there)'

The hypothesis in (15) is a restatement (2) characterizing the relationship between the form and meaning pairings of the Chinese NPs with, or without, 的 .

(15) Lexicalization of a Chinese nominal compound:
   a. A lexicalized nominal (either semantically unique or symbolically a concept that can be treated as a set/kind) does not allow an internal 的 *de*.
   b. An NP with 的 *de* indicates that the determinatum is a member/subset of a set restricted by its modifier.

4. The pragmatics of 的

In spite of the arbitrariness of the uses of 的 in some expressions like those in (10) and (11), many uses of 的 need to be explained in terms of pragmatic inferencing on the basis of the referential nature of the unique ←→ non-referential continuum (12).

4.1 我爸爸 vs. 我的爸爸

In Chinese, *dad/father* can be expressed with, or without, 的 : *wo (de) baba*, 1st (de) dad, 我（的）爸爸 'my dad' and *wo (de) fuqin*, 我（的）父親 , 1st (de) father, 'my father'. Although the latter may be more formal than the former, the difference in register is negligible as 的 appears optional in both. Table 1 presents the occurrence counts of the four in a Modern Chinese corpus at the Center for Chinese Linguistics at Peking University.

Table 1 Frequencies of *wo (de) baba* 我（的）爸爸 'my dad' and *wo (de) fuqin*
我（的）父親 'my father'

我父親		我的父親		Total	
1935	69%	864	31%	2799	100%
2		1		ratio	
我爸爸		我的爸爸			
646	88%	107	12%	753	100%
6		1		ratio	

The *de*-less version greatly outnumbers that of *de* form by nearly four times. In addition, the two *de*-less versions are much more common with a ratio of approximately 2 to 1 and 6 to 1 respectively. Nevertheless, they are not always interchangeable. The speaker in (16) was born and raised in the United States and can speak Chinese with grammatical errors.

> (16) …
>   (Speaking in Chinese to his grandmother in China by telephone)
>   * 我告訴**我的爸爸**…
>   wo gaosu wo de baba
>   1ˢᵗ tell   1ˢᵗ DE dad
>   'I will tell my dad.'
>   (The correct statement should be a *de*-less expression like 我告訴我
>   爸／老爸／我爸爸／我父親……)
>   (Father was present, father=the author of this paper)

Therefore, synonymous as the two versions may be in most contexts, the semantic overlap of the two versions is not total. Two important observations here:

> (17) a. the *de*-less version must be used in a context when the father figure is unique;
>   b. the *de* version is used nearly all the time in book/chapter/film titles of the corpus.

First of all, the uniqueness associating with a *de*-less noun is at work here. The 的 version presents the father of the speaker as a member of a father set in the family. But in this specific context, such an implication is grossly wrong and, therefore, its usage is unacceptable. It would have been acceptable only if the children living in the family are born of different fathers.

In contrast, the data in (18) show a context, book/article/film titles, in which the *de* version is favored.

> (18) *wo de fuqin he muqin*   'My Father and Mother'   我的父親和母親
>   *wo de fuqin Zhu De*   'My Father Zhu De'   我的父親朱德

wo de fuqin Deng Xiaoping   'My Father Deng Xiaoping'   我的父親鄧小平
wo de fuqin Dong Biwu   'My Father Dong Biwu'   我的父親董必武
wo de baba hui buxie   'My Father Can Repair Shoes'

我的爸爸會補鞋

huiyi wo de fuqin   'In Memory of My Father'   回憶我的父親
Zhou zongli ji wo de fuqin Zhou Rongxin   周總理及我的父親周榮鑫
'Premier Zhou and My Father Zhou Rongxin'

Such a unanimous choice bears on the discourse intent for the a-member-of-the-father set reading, describing the authors' fathers as non-unique reading, one of the fathers in the world, thus coding them with the phrasal *de*. This contrasts very well with the discourse context in which a son must use the *de*-less form to refer to the one and only one father within the family. By using a *de*-less form, 我爸鄧小平 'my dad Deng Xiaoping,' the author would have made a reader think that the author is very proud of the father, and the story may be full of bragging about the father. Therefore, the pragmatic effects in the use, and non-use, of *de* 的 actually follow from the referential properties of the Chinese nominal system. Thus, the two synonymous phrases *wo baba* 我爸爸 and *wo de baba* 我的爸爸 'my dad' overlap only partially and may carry different meanings. And in many cases, they are not freely interchangeable.
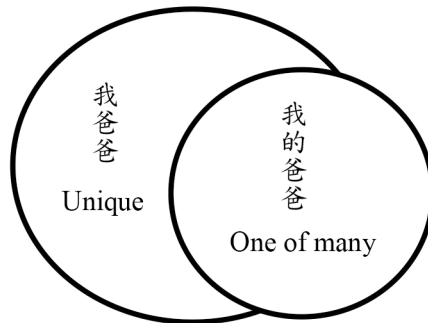
In addition, Givón notes (1984) that cross-linguistically, at first mention, the thematically important nouns in a given discourse tend to be coded in referential/ existing morphology identifiable by generic/type properties. It is then not surprising that the *de* version that has exactly the generic/type properties is unanimously chosen for the authors of the titles in (18), as they are all the main figures in these books, chapters, or films. This hypothesis is also consistent with Chen's (2003, 2009) observation that

Chinese greatly favors the bare NP encoding for referents of low thematic referentiality, as the *de*-less version is closer to a bare NP than the NPs with a phrasal maker *de*.

4.2 Chinese exasperation expressions

In Chinese, the expressions signaling exasperation frequently involve metaphorical uses of 的 . For examples, the two expressions in (19) are frequently used by women. Note that 天 tian sky is generally not considered as unique, thus 中國的天 zhongguo de tian 'the sky of China' vs. * 中國天 zhongguo tian, China-sky.

(19) 我的天啊！   我的媽呀！
     wo de tian a   wo de ma ya
     1st DE sky Part.   1st DE mother Part.
     'my god!'   'my god!'

Swear words used by men can show most clearly how the use of 的 is correlated to nominal referentiality. The expression in (20) involves a unique target to which the swearing is directed. The *de*-version in (20a) implying a one-of-many implication (one/several of the mother set), is predictably ungrammatical. However, it is pragmatically quite plausible for 的 to be used as a nominalizer in (20b), as the non-referential NP here identifies a restricted set of body parts without explicitly referring to the sexual organ.

(20) a. C. 你媽   *C. 你的媽
        cao ni ma   cao ni de ma
        fxxx 2nd mother   fxxx 2nd DE mother
        'Fxxx you!'
     b. C. 你媽的
        cao ni ma de
        fxxx 2nd mother DE
        'Fxxx you!'

4.3 Pragmatic referentiality

The pragmatic inferences in relation to the referential properties in the nominal continuum (12) can also be seen from the ways 的 is used with respect to the modifying

pronouns. For instance, if the referents of the pronoun 我們 women 'we' are from the same school, the *de*-less version (21a) is more likely to be used; on the other hand, (21b) is ambiguous and more likely to be used when the referents of the same pronoun are from different schools. This is consistent with the uniqueness/one concept hypothesis of the lexicalized Chinese nouns.

(21) a. 我們學校   b. 我們的學校
     women xuexiao   women de xuexiao
     2nd-PL school   2nd-PL DE xuexiao
     'our school'   'our school(s)'

The example in (22a) shows that a place name regularly selects a plural pronoun with, or without DE, like the Chinese terms for father above. However, in normal situation it is not possible to use a singular pronoun in (22b) as Beijing is a city of many people. The singular pronoun is grammatical only in the case that a poet wants to emphasize his own individual experience of city. Thus, it is conceptualized as one experience of many different experiences of the city.

(22) a. 我們（的）北京   b. *我的北京   c. 啊！我的北京
     women (de) beijing   wo de beijing   a! wo de Beijing
     2nd-PL (DE) name   1st DE name   ah 1st DE name
     'our Beijing'   'Ah! My Beijing!'

5. Conclusion

This paper set out to investigate the functions of the nominal marker *de*, with a special attention to the different properties of its use, or non-use. This paper demonstrates *de*'s regular function as a noun phrase marker in the nominal system. It is found that Chinese lexicalized proper nouns and common nouns simply do not allow the presence of *de* in front of its determinatum, or head noun. Such expressions either imply a unique reference, or a concept associated with a lexical noun in the language. Furthermore, *de* as a noun phrase marker, restricts the meaning of the determinatum of the phrase to be a member, or a subset, of a set/type/kind. Therefore, the use, or non-use, of *de* follow from these two restrictions and can be fully accounted for by a

continuum between these two restrictions. This paper also recognizes word-like and phrase-like nouns restricted to use, or non-use, of *de* correlating to different degrees of lexicalization. Given the systematic form and meaning pairings of the Chinese nouns and noun phrases on this continuum, many pragmatic meanings can be naturally explained without having to resort to any ad hoc solution. Fox and Thompson (2007) note that the regularities in the use of relativizers, such as *who*, or *that*, in English can be seen as systematic, i.e., the more the Main Clause and the Relative Clause are integrated with each other into a MONOCLAUSAL status, the more likely a relativizer is not used. In Chinese the use, or non-use, of *de* is also systematic, although it is so at the level of word formation, i.e., compounding between a word and a syntactic phrase.

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漢語名詞連續統中的詞義、指稱性，和搭配：
"的"字在應用中的隱現

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提要

現有關於"的"字隱現的研究（Zhu 1999, Li and Thompson 1981, Chappell and Thompson 1992, and Zhang 1998）一般都只討論該助詞隱現的種種現象，但是沒有一個系統的解釋。本文通過對名詞（無"的"）和名詞短語（有"的"）形式和語義的對應變化，嘗試提出一個系統的解釋。漢語不論音節多少的專用名詞（具唯一性）和普通名詞（概念）內部都不可以有"的"，所以有"的"的"中國的銀行"和無"的"的"中國銀行"語義所指完全不一樣。漢語有因詞彙化程度不同而形式相異的複合名詞：名詞（含單音節詞）、似詞詞和似語詞三種。雖然成語（習語）中"的"字的隱現多為任意性的搭配現象，很多符合語法有"的"和無"的"的用法，都可以從漢語名詞連續統中的指稱特點進行語用推理，得出合理的解釋。

關鍵詞

的，漢語的名詞短語，搭配，指稱性，語用推理