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
   wo de shu
   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’ 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
   *美利堅的合衆國
   meilijian hezhongguo
   America united-state
   ‘the United States of America’

   b. 加州大學
   jiazhou daxue
   California university
   ‘University of California’

  加州大學
   jiazhou de daxue
   California DE university
   ‘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
   dianyingyuan
   movie theater

   圖書館
   tushuguan
   library

   思想
   sixiang
   thought

   *電影的院
   *tushu de guan
   *思的想

   dianying de yuan
   ‘electronic-shadow house’
   tushu de zhi
   ‘library’
   si de xiang
   ‘thought’

A common noun can, nevertheless, take a modifier with a marker of modification *de. 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
   baizhi
   ‘blank paper’

   白的紙
   bai de zhi
   ‘white paper’

   很白的紙
   hen bai de zhi
   ‘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
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.
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

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>紙</td>
<td>白紙</td>
<td>白的紙</td>
<td>白紙</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paper</td>
<td>blank paper</td>
<td>white paper</td>
<td>white DE paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>朋友</td>
<td>好朋友</td>
<td>好朋友</td>
<td>好朋友</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friend</td>
<td>good friend</td>
<td>good friend</td>
<td>good friend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 dahuangfeng ‘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.

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

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

(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)’
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Word-like</th>
<th>Phrase-like</th>
<th>Phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>蛋，雞</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>雞蛋</td>
<td>雞蛋的蛋</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dan ji</td>
<td>ji-dan</td>
<td>ji de dan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>egg, chicken</td>
<td>chick-egg</td>
<td>chicken DE egg</td>
<td>‘chicken’s egg’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>鴿子</td>
<td>gezi-dan</td>
<td>gezi de dan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pigeon</td>
<td>pigeon-egg</td>
<td>pigeon DE egg</td>
<td>‘pigeon’s egg’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>黃蜂</td>
<td>da huangfeng</td>
<td>da DE huangfeng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wasp</td>
<td>big wasp</td>
<td>big de wasp</td>
<td>‘big wasp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*big wasp</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘big wasp’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(10) word-like: 錦繡河山 *錦繡的河山  
brocade-silk-river-hill  
‘beautiful country with hills and rivers’

滿懷豪情 *滿懷的豪情  
fill-bossom-unrestrained-spirit  
‘to be filled with noble sentiments’
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:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* other place</td>
<td>別處</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other people</td>
<td>別的人</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other word</td>
<td>別的話</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

three syllables:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* other country</td>
<td>別的國家</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other people</td>
<td>其他的人</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 The examples in (17)-(19) are taken from Peng and Jin (2004: 40-42).
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 hong-de
     我的 wo-de
     沒去過的 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’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>我的父親</th>
<th>我的父親</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>2799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>646</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ratio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>我爸爸</td>
<td>646</td>
<td></td>
<td>753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ratio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>我父親</td>
<td></td>
<td>864</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ratio</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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
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, ‘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* 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.
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 中国的天 zhongguo de tian ‘the sky of China’ vs. *中国的天 zhongguo tian, China-sky.

\[(19) \text{我的天啊！} \quad \text{我的妈呀！} \]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wo de tian a} & \quad \text{wo de ma ya} \\
1^{st} \text{ DE sky Part.} & \quad 1^{st} \text{ DE mother Part.}
\end{align*}
\]
\‘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.

\[(20) \begin{align*}
a. \text{C. you ma} & \quad \text{*C. you de ma} \\
\text{cao ni ma} & \quad \text{cao ni de ma} \\
fxxx 2^{nd} \text{ mother} & \quad fxxx 2^{nd} \text{ DE mother}
\end{align*} \]
\‘Fxxx you!’

b. \text{C. you de ma} \\
\text{cao ni ma 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  
   women xuexiao  
   2nd-PL school  
   ‘our school’  

   b. 我們的學校  
   women de xuexiao  
   2nd-PL DE xuexiao  
   ‘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  
   women (de) beijing  
   2nd-PL (DE) name  
   ‘our Beijing’  

   b. * 我的北京  
   wo de beijing  
   1st DE name  

   c. 啊！我的北京  
   a! wo de Beijing  
   ah 1st DE name  
   ‘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.

References


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Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Stanford University, Stanford, California, USA
提要


關鍵詞

的，漢語的名詞短語，搭配，指稱性，語用推理