

Grammatical Words and Discourse Markers in Chinese:
A Corpus-based Investigation of Grammaticalization*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between discourse and grammar has been enthusiastically discussed in recent years. Many linguists have become convinced that the only way to understand linguistic structure is to consider it as an adaptive response to recurrent habits in the way people talk to each other (e.g. Du Bois 1987; Givon 1979; Hopper 1987; Hopper & Thompson 1993; Hopper & Traugott 1993). This approach has also been taken up in a number of corpus-based studies of Chinese in the 1990's (e.g. Biq 1994, 1995; Liu 1993; Huang 1995).

In this paper, we would like to take up the corpus-based approach again to investigate the interaction between discourse and grammar, and offer support from Chinese to the hypothesis that grammaticalization is a result of the daily, routinized use of language. We will examine and compare how three related Chinese expressions, jiushi, jiushishuo, and jiushuo are used in both speech and writing.

What we would report in this paper is the variety of uses of the three abovementioned expressions in daily conversation as these uses are compared with those seen in press reportage, the relatively "conservative" written language text type. We argue that the three expressions are currently undergoing a grammaticalization process whereby the original copula meaning of jiushi is first reduced to a connective function marking textual coherence. This semantic "reduction" is developed through the metonymic association that jiushi has with the verb of saying. This connective use is then further reduced to a use in which jiushi serves as a floor holder

in interactive speech. The behavior of the three Chinese expressions under study not only evidences that repeated daily language use is where early stages of grammaticalization take place, but also supports the hypothesis that linguistic contiguity is one of the important sources leading to the inception of grammaticalization.

2. DATABASE

Before we proceed to discuss the three expressions, we need to talk about the database we use for this study. There are two types of corpora. The first one is casual speech from a mostly dyadic Mandarin conversation about 80 minutes long. (Please refer to Appendix 1. for transcription notations.) The second one is written Chinese in press reportage from the People's Daily published in Mainland China, dating between January 1993 to December 1993. Daily conversation is worth investigating because it is the most common context in which a language is situated. On the other hand, (written) press reportage is a good contrast to daily conversation: the two genres occupy almost the two ends of a continuum of text types in terms of their gradation of "editedness" and "plannedness" (Biber 1988). For ease of reference, we shall call, in the remainder of this paper, the conversational data **CS** (for conversational speech) and the People's Daily data **PR** (for press reportage).

We will also use abbreviated forms for two of the three expressions in the remainder of this paper. From here on, jiushi will be **JS**, and jiushishuo will be **JSS**. However, jiushuo remains spelled out in full form.

3. THE THREE EXPRESSIONS IN PR

In this section, we discuss the meanings of the three expressions and the ways they are used (if at all) in PR. Since, as said above, PR is considered the most "conservative" (written) text type, meanings and uses

appear in PR are considered the "canonical" ones. These canonical meanings and uses will be our basis when we proceed to discuss how the three expressions are used in CS in Section 4.

3.1. Jiushi

The expression JS consists of the adverb jiu and the copula shi, 'to be'. Jiu is a versatile adverb able to carry out a number of functions in different contexts (Biq 1984, 1988; Liu 1993; Wang 1956). Most important, and most relevant to our purpose here, jiu is a "backward-linking" connective positioned before the predicate in the main clause signaling the temporal and/or causal relationship between the situation denoted in the antecedent clause and the situation denoted in the main clause. Consider the following (constructed) examples:

- (1) Ta da le dianhua jiu zou le.
3s call PF telephone JIU walk PRT

'(lit.) (After) s/he made the phone call (then) s/he left. --> S/He left after s/he made the phone call.'

- (2) Ni bu da dianhua lai, wo jiu bu qu jie ni.
you NEG call telephone come I JIU NEG go pick=up you

'(lit.) (If) you don't phone me (then) I don't pick you up. --> I won't pick you up unless you phone me.
--> I'll pick you up as long/soon as you phone me.'

In other words, what jiu denotes in these contexts is an equivalent of the then in 'once after/as soon as ... , then ...' or in 'if ... , then ...'.

The expression JS, literally '... then be/is ...', is mostly used as a copula with an emphasis on the preciseness of the equation. It is equivalent to the 'is precisely' in the English 'A is precisely B'. Consider the following example from PR:

- (3) Shanghai jinnian yao ban de shier jian shi shi,
Shanghai this=year want do DE twelve M concrete thing

diyi jian jiushi youguan chengshi jiaotong
first M JIUSHI concern city transportation

sheshi de.
facility DE

'The first of the twelve important things to be
accomplished this year in Shanghai is (precisely)
about the city transportation facilities.'

However, through the same pragmatic inferences that
polysemize the meanings of English scalar words such as
just (Traugott 1986), the Chinese JS can also denote an
equational with either an uptoner (i.e., 'is as much as')
or with a downtoner (i.e. 'is as little as -- is
just/only'. Consider the following examples from PR:

- (4) Tamen chengbao de gongcheng danwu yitian sunshi
they contract DE construction delay one=day loss

jiushi sanqian yuan.
JIUSHI three=thousand dollar

'For the construction project they contracted, the
businessloss for any delay is (as much as) 3,000
dollars per day.'

- (5) Ta shuo, jiaoyu gaige guigenjiedi
3s say education reform return=root=summary=bottom

jiushi yiju hua, yao shizhong an jiaoyu
JIUSHI one=M sentence want always follow education

jiaoxue guilu ban shi.
teaching principle do business

'S/He says that the bottom line for educational
reform is just/simply to follow the principles

for teaching and education throughout.'

JS is further used to denote specific meanings in some specific constructions, e.g., as the expression prefacing the second element in the choice construction bushi A, jiushi B 'if not A, it (then) be B -- either A or B', or as the expression prefacing concession in the concessive construction jiushi (concession), ... ye (consequence) 'even (concession), ... still (consequence)' (Lu et al. 1980). Consider the following examples from PR:

- (6) Meidang haizi tan wan shi, bushi xunchi, jiushi
 whenever kid greed play time BUSHI scold JIUSHI

dashang ji bazhang.
 hit=up several slap

'Whenever the kids were being mischievous, they
either got scolded or got slapped.'

- (7) Rujin yushang zheli you huo, ta shuo jiushi
 now encounter this=place have goods 3s say JIUSHI

deng dao wanshang guan men ye yao deng.
 wait until evening close door also want wait

'Now that this place has it, she says that she'll
 wait (in line to buy it) even if it means she has to
 wait till the evening closing hour.'

3.2. Jiushishuo

Our second expression, JSS, consists of the first expression JS and the verb of saying, shuo, 'say'. It literally translates as '(that) is to say (that)', with the verb of saying serving as a complimentizer. In written Chinese it is typically used as an expression equivalent of the English 'namely' or 'in other words'. Consider the following example from PR:

- (8) Bing bu shi mei yiben shu dou you zhishi, dou

yet NEG be every one=M book all have knowledge all

you yichu, ye jiushishuo bing bu shi mei
have advantage also JIUSHISHUO yet NEG be every

yiben shu dou shi nide pengyou, nide yizhongren.
one=M book all be your friend your sweet=heart

'Not every book contains knowledge and does good to you. That is to say, not all books are "friends" or "sweethearts" of yours.'

3.3. Jiushuo

The third expression, jiushuo, consists of the adverb jiu and the verb of saying, shuo. It is rarely seen in written Chinese used as an expression. We could not find any jiushuo token in PR. It is believed to be the reduced form of JSS in casual speech.

4. THE THREE EXPRESSIONS IN CS

Since conversation and press reportage respectively represent the unplanned and planned types of discourse, disparities in the distribution of the functions of these grammatical words across the two text types are expected. Indeed, the three expressions are used in quite different ways in CS as compared to in PR. First of all, they all appear in CS with a relative high frequency. Most strikingly, however, is the fact that many of these tokens are used as pause fillers in these conversational contexts with hardly any meaning attributable to them. In the following, we will discuss the various meanings these three expressions each can convey.

4.1. Jiushi

The canonical meanings and uses of JS are well alive in CS. Consider the following CS examples, in each of which JS is used to convey a canonical meaning mentioned in 3.1.

(9) JS/B451 (copula + 'precisely')

B: ... (1.2) Suoyi ta,
so it

B: .. chenggong a,
succeed PRT

--> B: .. jiushi zhege yuanyin.
JIUSHI this=M reason

A: .. Um.
um

B: ... (1.2) So its,

B: .. success,

--> B: .. is (precisely) because of this reason.

A: .. Um.

(10) JS/C544 (copula + 'just/only')

B: .. Wanshang ne,
evening PRT

B: .. wo gei tamen,
I for they

B: .. bao jiaozi,
wrap dumpling

B: ... gei tamen zuo jige cai.
for they make several=M dish

B: ... (0.8) bu shi sheme da cai.
NEG be some big dish

--> B: .. jiushi zuo dian xiao liang cai.
JIUSHI make bit small cold dish

B: .. In the evening,

B: .. I'll make,

B: .. dumplings for them,

B: ... and make a few dishes for them.

B: ... (0.8) Nothing special.

--> B: .. just a few cold dishes.

(11) JS/D236 (either A, or B)

A: .. Ni you caoping ni bu weichi bu xing,
you have lawn you NEG maintain NEG OK

A: .. ni yao weichi,
you want maintain

A: .. bushi ziji,
NEG=be self

--> A: ...(0.7) jiushi yao qing ren lai gao.
JIUSHI want hire person come do

A: .. If you have a lawn, it simply won't do
not to maintain it.

A: .. If you want to maintain it,

A: .. either you do it yourself,

--> A: ...(0.7) or (it's that) you hire someone else
to do it.

(12) JS/C62 ('even') (In America, money is all important.)

--> B: .. Jiu jiushi jiao pengyou ma=
JIU JIUSHI make friend PRT
ye dei kan kan ni zhege xiaozi
also have=to see see you this=M guy
tamade you qianr mei qianr.
fuck have money NEG money

--> B: .. Even when making friends they'd see if
you've got money or not.

However, many of the JS tokens in CS do not convey any one of the canonical meanings. Some are used just like JSS, i.e., to serve as an expression connecting two units of talk with the second being a further clarification or elaboration on something that was already been commented on in the first unit. Consider the following CS example:

(13) JS/D388 ('That is', 'In other words', 'Namely')

B: .. Neige nuhaizi jia ne,
that=M girl home PRT

B: .. shi Beijing de,
be Beijing POSS

B: .. pinminqu.
ghetto

--> B: ... (1.4) Jiushi,
JIUSHI

B: ... eh= shenghuo huanjing hen cha la.
eh life environment INT bad PRT

B: .. That girl's place,

B: .. was in Beijing's,

B: .. poor area.

--> B: ... (1.4) Which means that,

B: ... eh= the living environment was pretty bad.

Yet some other JS tokens occur in CS with hardly any meaning attributable to them. Consider the following example, in which JS is used with "empty meaning":

(14) JS/A744 (floor holder)

B: .. Danshi,
but

B: .. Zhongguo ne, *
China PRT

--> B: .. fan guolai ne jiushi,
reverse over PRT JIUSHI

B: .. hen zhongshi zhege wenrenhua.
INT emphasize this=M literati=painting

B: .. But,

B: .. China,

--> B: .. on the other hand jiushi,

B: .. regards literati paintings as important.

In this example, JS is semantically reduced, from its "original" copula meaning in canonical uses, to a mere

pause filler, or a "dummy" floor holder, in conversational interaction, which hardly contributes any meaning to the proposition of what is said in that unit.

It is usually hard to determine what a polysemous word is intended to mean in a particular context, and very often more than one meaning may be implied (however "meaning" is defined). Nevertheless, we did a rough meaning categorization of all of the JS tokens in CS by assigning one and only one most appropriate meaning to each token as it is situated in the context. Table 1. shows the result of this categorization. There were all together 124 JS tokens in CS. First, 10 tokens (8%) were indeterminable cases for various reasons, such as being discarded by the speaker for a restart or being cut off by the interlocutor's speech. About one third (n = 42, 34%) of the tokens display one of the canonical (copula) meanings also seen in PR. There were another 27 tokens (22%) which were identified to be carrying the connective meaning for further elaboration or clarification on something that was just commented on. Finally, 45 tokens (36%) were identified as a floor holder for the speaker's turn without much substantial meaning attributable to them.

	number	%
indeterminable cases	10	8%
"canonical" meanings	42	34%
followed by further elaboration	27	22%
floor holder	45	36%
TOTAL	124	100%

Table 1. The various uses of jiushi (JS) in CS

It is apparent, then, that while the canonical meanings of JS are quite prevalent (roughly, one out of every three tokens) in CS, many JS tokens in CS have "moved on" to be used with a "lesser" meaning attached to them. Some of these tokens are used just like JSS as a connective. Some are even more semantically bleached and

become a device in the turn-taking system of spontaneous verbal interaction (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson 1974).

4.2. Jiushishuo

The cononical use of JSS, as a connective relating two sets of sentences in PR with the second set being a further elaboration or clarification of what is being said in the first set, is well alive in the JSS tokens found in CS. Consider the following CS example, in which JSS means 'namely', 'that is to say', or 'in other words':

(15) JSS/D219 ('namely', 'that is to say', 'in other words')

B: .. Min yi shi wei tian.
people take eat be heaven

A: .. Uhm.
uhm

--> B: .. jiushishuo xian dei chi bao fan,
JIUSHISHUO first must eat full meal

B: .. bie de zai zuo.
other POSS then do

B: .. "People need food to live".

A: .. Uhm.

--> B: .. It means that you have to have enough to eat,

B: .. before you do anything else.

However, many JSS tokens have gone on with a semantic simplification process similar to the one we have seen for JS above. They are used simply as a floor holder, or a pause filler, in CS without carrying substantial meaning. Consider the following example from CS:

(16) JSS/B856 (floor holder)

- B: .. Ta yuanlai shi,
3s originally be
- B: .. women= xuexiao de laoshi.
our school POSS teacher
- B: .. Yuanlai,
originally
- B: .. [zui zao shi wo de laoshi.]
most early be I POSS teacher
- A: .. [Ni-,
you
- A: .. ni de xuexiao shi,
you POSS school be
- A: .. neibian de xuexiao?]
which=side POSS school
- B: .. Dalu.
Mainland
- A: .. X
(indiscernable speech)
- B: .. Yunnan.
Yunnan
- A: .. Oh Yunnan.
oh Yunnan
- B: .. Yunnan Yishu Xueyuan.
Yunnan art college
- A: .. Oh.
oh

- > B: .. Jiushishuo ta shi women xuexiao de laoshi.
JIUSHISHUO 3s be our school POSS teacher
- B: .. Nage shihou women hai zuo xuesheng ma.
 that=M time we still do student PRT
- B: .. He used to be,
 B: .. a teacher in our school.
 B: .. Originally,
 B: .. [(he) was my teacher long time ago.]
 A: .. [You-,
 A: .. your school is,
 A: .. where was your school?]
 B: .. In the Mainland.
 A: .. X
 B: .. Yunnan.
 A: .. Oh Yunnan.
 B: .. The Yunnan Art Institute.
 A: .. Oh.
- > B: .. Jiushishuo He was a teacher in our school.
 B: .. Back then we're still students.

Just as for JS, we also did a rough meaning categorization for all of the JSS tokens found in CS, assigning one and only one most appropriate meaning to each token. As Table 2. shows, among the 56 JSS tokens found in CS, 5 (9%) were indeterminable cases due to

various reasons. There are 22 tokens (39%) which display the canonical, textual connective meaning as seen in PR. Finally, 29 tokens (52%) are identified as a floor holder without contributing much meaning to the proposition of what is said in the context.

	number	%
indeterminable cases	5	9%
followed by further elaboration	22	39%
floor holder	29	52%
TOTAL	56	100%

Table 2. The various uses of jiushishuo (JSS) in CS

While its canonical use is still quite visible in CS, JSS has, just like what has happened to JS, developed into a semantically bleached device required for spoken discourse, i.e., as a floor holder in the turn-taking system of spontaneous conversation.

4.3. Jiushuo

We have also found 4 tokens of jiushuo in CS. Literally, jiushuo means '... then say ...'. But the 4 tokens are all used idiomatically either as JSS to mean 'that is to say' or as a place holder or pause filler without conveying much substantial semantic meaning. Consider the following CS example:

(17) JIUSHUO/A739 ('that is to say' or floor holder)

A: .. Uhm.

uhm

--> B: ... (2.2) Name jiushuo zhege shi Zhongguo,
so JIUSHUO this=M be China

B: .. yishu zhongjian yige feichang zhongyao de
art middle one=M INT important DE
chuantong.
tradition

A: .. Uhm.

uhm

A: .. Uhm.

--> B: ... (2.2) So jiushuo (= in other words) this/it is,
B: .. a very important tradition in Chinese art.

A: .. Uhm.

4.4. Interim Summary

From 4.1 to 4.3 we have seen the various ways the three expressions are used in CS. JS has displayed not only its canonical uses as a copula at the intra-sentential level, but also as a connective for textual coherence at the inter-sentential level, and as a floor holder for interactive purposes at the communicative level. In like fashion, JSS has not only displayed its canonical uses as a connective for textual coherence at the inter-sentential level, but also as a floor holder for interactive purposes at the communicative level. Finally, jiushuo, as an expression, is used idiomatically also as a floor holder in interactive discourse with no bearing on the literal meaning of the two constituting morphemes. The reason that jiushuo can be used idiomatically, just as JSS (and JS), as a floor holder in interactive discourse is probably because it is a simplified and abbreviated form of JSS in casual, rapid speech.

In the following, we will examine the syntagmatic aspect of the three expressions in CS, i.e., the various

features that typically co-occur with the three expressions, and the way these features assist the three expressions in acquiring their non-canonical meanings in CS.

5. LINGUISTIC CONTIGUITY OF THE THREE EXPRESSIONS IN CS

That the three expressions are on their way to become further grammaticalized into markers with emptier meanings is to a large extent evidenced by the sorts of linguistic features that cluster around them. In the following, let us consider the metonymic relationships (1) between these expressions and the neighboring prosodic features, and (2) between these expressions and some other Chinese discourse markers that are their frequent company.

5.1. Intonation Unit, Boundary, and Completion

First, let us consider the relationship between the three expressions and the intonation unit in which they appear. An intonation unit (**IU** hereafter) is roughly "a stretch of speech uttered under a single coherent intonation contour" (Du Bois et al. 1993: 47). IUs are also typically (although not always) separated from one another by pauses. The intonation contour and the pause break are reflexive and indicative of the operation of the human mind, because, as a result of the way the human mind handles information flow, speakers typically deliver no more than one new idea in each IU (Chafe 1994). On the other hand, the more pauses and/or short IUs filled with hedges and "empty" words there are in a speaker's speech, the more likely it is that the speaker is trying hard to come up with accurate or appropriate information at that particular point of speaking (Huang 1993).

IUs can be further distinguished into two major types in terms of the speaker's projection of the completion of his/her turn: final intonation for turn completion and continuing intonation for turn incompleteness (Ford & Thompson, to appear). In English,

intonational contours are generally isomorphic of the projection of turn completion: Falling contours imply a completion, whereas (non-question) rising contours imply non-finality. As pointed out in Tao (1993), in a tone language such as Mandarin, intonational contour of a single IU is not enough an indicator of whether the completion of a speaker's turn is projected. Rather, it is the shape and scope of a declination unit that indicate the completion of a turn (Schuetze-Coburn et al. 1991). Intonation units coinciding with the end of a declination unit are generally perceived as a **final IU**, designated by a period in the transcription, and they signal the projection of the completion of a speaker turn. Conversely, intonation units not coinciding with the end of a declination unit are generally perceived as a **continuing IU**, designated by a comma in the transcription, and they signal the incompleteness and continuation of the current speaker turn.

5.2. The Three Expressions and Intonation Boundary

Now, let us examine the relationship between the expressions and the IUs in which they occur. We will disregard *jiushuo* because the sample size is too small. We focus on JS and JSS here. As Table 3. shows, among the 124 JS tokens, 18 (15%) constitute an IU by themselves, i.e., without other accompanying linguistic elements in the same IU, 34 (27%) occur at the beginning of an IU, and 31 (25%) appear at the end of an IU. Only 41 tokens (33%) occur in the middle of an IU. This also means that, all together, 83 tokens (67%) occur next to an IU boundary (and, most likely, next to a pause).

JSS displays the same tendency even more distinctively. Among the 56 tokens, 17 (30%) constitute an IU by themselves, 19 (34%) occur at the beginning of an IU, and 14 (25%) occur at the end of an IU. Only 6 (11%) occur in the middle of an IU. All together, 50 tokens (89%) occur next to an IU boundary (and, most likely, next to a pause).

	JIUSHI (total:124)		JIUSHISHUO (total:56)	
	number	%	number	%
entire IU	18	15%	17	30%
front of IU	34	27%	19	34%
end of IU	31	25%	14	25%
middle of IU	41	33%	6	11%
preceded by IU boundary	18+34=52	42%	17+19=36	64%
followed by IU boundary	18+31=49	40%	17+14=31	55%

Table 3. Position of the expression with respect to the intonation unit boundaries

To summarize, for at least JS and JSS, more likely than not they are uttered next to an IU boundary. JSS is even more so than JS.

5.3. The Three Expressions and Speaker Continuation

As shown in Table 3., 42% of the JS tokens ($n = 52$) and 64% of the JSS tokens ($n = 36$) are immediately preceded by an IU boundary. We examined the types of turn projection involved in these cases. As shown in Table 4., the two expressions can be used at the beginning of a new turn, i.e., spoken by a speaker different from the one who just spoke the last IU. However, this is by no means the dominant case. Rather, the two expressions are mainly used by the same speaker in between his/her own units of speech. Furthermore, these units of talk (of the same speaker) are typically separated by a continuing intonational break (comma), rather than a final intonational break (period). For JS, 28 tokens (54%) of those occurring immediately after an IU boundary are preceded by an IU (spoken by the same speaker) with a continuing intonation. For JSS, 19 tokens (52%). By contrast, only 10 tokens (19%) of those JS tokens that immediately follow an IU boundary are preceded by an IU (spoken by the same speaker) with a final intonation. For JSS, only 9 tokens (25%). Thus,

the two expressions are not only predominantly used between units of talk of the same speaker, but they are typically preceded by a continuing IU, which signals that the speaker's turn is yet to be completed. The routinized contiguous relationship of the two expressions with the same speaker's continuing IU break has probably motivated the grammaticalization of their role as a floor holder in spontaneous, interactional speech.

	JIUSHI (total:52)		JIUSHISHUO (total:36)	
	number	%	number	%
self-continuation	28	54%	19	52%
self-final-extension	10	19%	9	25%
after speaker change	14	27%	8	22%

Table 4. Types of speaker continuation found in cases immediately preceded by an IU boundary

5.4. The Three Expressions with Other Discourse Markers

It is also typical to find the three expressions used next to a variety of grammatical words which all serve to reinforce textual coherence in one way or another. The most distinct among these words is the particle ne. Ne can indicate a variety of meanings, depending on the context (Biq 1993; Chao 1968; King 1986; Lu et al. 1980; Li & Thompson 1981). Most relevant to our purpose here, ne marks the topic in declarative sentences: it serves "as a device for highlighting or evaluating certain portions of background information in the discourse and bringing them to the attention of the hearer in the speaker/hearer world" (King 1986: 27). The three expressions we study here frequently appear around this type of ne. In CS, we found 22 cases in which ne is immediately followed by one of the three expressions within the same IU, and 4 cases in which ne is followed by an IU boundary and then one of the three expressions. The example (14) (JS/A744) provided above illustrates the contiguous relationship between ne and JS.

The three expressions also frequently co-occur with other textual connectives such as na/name 'then/so ...' and suoyi 'so/therefore', or other "parenthetical" expressions occurring in spontaneous speech as pause fillers or floor holders, such as zhege 'this', zheyang '(in) this way', bifang shuo 'for instance, like', zeme shuo 'how (should I) say (it)'. These expressions may be combined in various ways with one of the three expressions, with one another, or with particles like ne. Consider the following example, in which JSS appears right after name 'so, therefore':

(18) JSS/C839 (with name)

A: ... Wo wo benren bu tiaoti de jieguo
 I I this=person NEG picky POSS result
 wo ye bu tai hui zuo dongxi.
 I also NEG too know=how do thing

B: .. Oh=
 oh

--> B: .. name jiushishuo= yao sihou ni hai= bu
 so JIUSHISHUO want serve you still NEG
 kunnan.
 difficult

A: ... The result of not being picky is that I can't really cook.

B: .. Oh=,

--> B: .. So jiushishuo serving something up for you isn't too difficult.

In the following segment, the main speaker (B) is struggling to come up with words to express his thoughts and opinions. Notice the clusterings of JS and JSS (1) with disfluency signs such as long pauses, lengthened syllables, and paralinguistic interjections expressing attitudes (e.g., tse) and disfluencies (e.g., zhzhzhzh), (2) with ne, and (3) with textual connectives serving as floor holders such as zeme shuo 'how should I put (it)', bifang shuo 'for example, like', and zhege 'this', whose

- B: ... (1.5) The [kind--,
 A: [Chinese defy laws.
 B: .. /zhzhzhzh/ the kind of social --,
 B: ... um,
 B: .. /tse/,
 B: .. how how should I say jiushishuo,
 B: .. like the=,
 B: .. it,
 B: .. it is very difficult to get a Chinese,
 B: .. to take money out of his pocket,
 B: .. to beautify his life's surroundings.

5.5. Interim Summary

In Sections 5.2 to 5.4 we have respectively shown that the three expressions are frequently clustered with intonational boundaries, continuing intonation, and with other Chinese discourse markers. That the occurrence of the three expressions are often immediately accompanied with (an) intonational boundary(ies) indicates that these expressions are likely to be used at a time of the speaker's disfluencies. That the majority of these disfluency cases are marked with a continuing intonation, however, suggest that the speaker intends to keep on going with his turn and the three expressions are employed as pause fillers to hold his/her turn. That the three expressions often co-occur with other Chinese expressions marking textual transitions or other varieties of discourse continuation brings in another evidence that these expressions are on their way to become linguistic elements more and more significant at the textual/discourse level but less and less significant at the clausal/propositional level.

6. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have examined the diverse ways JS, JSS, and jiushuo are used in CS as these diverse uses are compared with the restricted but "canonical" uses they display in PR. Despite distributional and diversity differences among one another, all three expressions

demonstrate themselves to be used as a pause filler in conversation, i.e., a floor holder for the speaker who intends to continue with his/her turn, given the turn-taking system of the spontaneous, interactional discourse type. We have also shown that the development from the "original" copula meaning (of JS) to the semantically bleached floor holder function (of all three expressions) can be accounted for by the metonymic associations that these three expressions have with intonational boundaries, continuing intonation, and other discourse connective expressions in spontaneous, interactional discourse types such as casual conversation. Through this corpus-based study, we hope to have not only documented a case of grammaticalization that is currently on-going in Mandarin speech, but have also shown, through this case, the impact of linguistic contiguity and clustering to the inception and evolution of grammaticalization.

NOTES

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APPENDIX 1. TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS FOR THE CONVERSATIONAL DATA (adapted from Du Bois et al. 1993 with modifications)

speaker identity and intonation unit	:
word	{space}
truncated intonation unit	--
truncated word	-
beginning of speech overlap	[

ending of speech overlap]
final intonation	.
continuing intonation	,
appeal intonation	?
lengthening	=
long pause	... (N)
medium pause	...
short pause	..
latching	(0)
laughter	@
researcher's English paraphrase	()
key intonation unit	-->
phonetic sounds	/ /

LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

S.L. Chhange.

The paper seeks to justify the role of language and its complexities. The importance of language is felt by everyone, no communication is possible without language. It is the most powerful, convenient and permanent means and form of communication. Language is the best means of self expression. It is through language that humans express their thoughts, desires, emotions and feelings. It is through language humans store knowledge, transmit message, transfer knowledge and experience from one person to another, from one generation to another. We can say that language is the foundation of all learning that yokes present, past and future together. There are several languages in the world which are mostly different in forms, styles, structures, sounds and meaning etc. As language is a fascinating aspect of human behaviour people are tempted to learn and delight in prodding it from various points of view like what is the origin of language ? Why do men speak differently ? How do words change their meanings ? Could it be feasible to think of one's existence without language ? Are the various languages spoken on the global surface basically the same ?. Such questions always baffle one's mind.

First of all, I would like to point out the peculiarities and nature of **Mizo Language** or what we called *Duhlian Language* as I am coming from Mizoram which is situated in the remote corner of North East India. In Mizoram, fortunately, we have a homogenous unilingual society. Though we have a small number of dialects like Pawi, Hmar, Lakher, Duhlian (Mizo Language) etc. But as they possess common cultural, social and linguistic affinities they pose no problem. Those who speaks the different dialects like Pawi, Hmar, Lakher also understands **Mizo Language** which is the common as well as official language throughout Mizoram.