

THE NATURE OF CHINESE ADPOSITIONS AND THEIR CONSTITUENT ORDER¹

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This paper investigates Chinese adpositions with respect to the typological adposition parameter. It is claimed that Chinese co-verbs are prepositions, and Chinese short form locative words are postpositions. This claim is actually confirming a predicative role for Chinese Type 1 co-verbs. With the presence of both prepositions and postpositions in Chinese, a third type of adposition, i.e. circumposition, is also said to exist. It is proposed that the last type be typologized on the adposition parameter as prepositional, where the preposition and the NP + postposition are immediate constituents of the adpositional phrase.

1. Introduction

Within the framework of word order typology, the adposition parameter distinguishes between languages according to the position of the adposition within its adpositional phrase: head-final vs. head initial. Chinese has a much more complicated system of adpositions than most languages. It cannot be neatly put on either end of the binary parameter. Whereas some (e.g. Ernst, 1988) have argued that Chinese is a postpositional language, others (e.g. Li & Thompson, 1974) have argued that Chinese is a prepositional language, and still others (e.g. Ross, 1984) have proposed a two-way classification for Chinese major grammatical categories (i.e. distinction between N and V) and claimed that Chinese does not have adpositions at all. The issues seem to concern (1) whether Chinese does or does not have adpositions; and (2) how to identify or categorize this type of word in Chinese. In addition, if existence of both forms of adpositions (preposed and postposed) can be claimed for the Chinese language, a kind of 'bipositioned' adpositions are observed which take position on both sides of the objective noun in the phrase.² If this is the case, further observation and analysis will be needed in order to acknowledge the status of this type of adposition in the language, as well as locate it on the parameter.

The controversial issues surrounding Chinese adpositions mainly involve two groups of words: (1) co-verbs, a subcategory of verb, a few of which can be both syntactically and semantically considered verbs as well as prepositions (and thus there has evolved the problem of distinguishing them); and (2) locative words, a subcategory of noun in traditional grammar which may yet be actually two different types of words--noun and postposition. To include Chinese in the study of adpositions within the typological framework, a preliminary step is to adequately identify Chinese adpositions, if any.

The purpose of this paper is two-fold. First, I will look at the Chinese co-verbs and locative words with respect to existing literature. In doing this I suggest a preliminary claim that Chinese has both prepositions and postpositions. Second, I will make preliminary assumptions about the appropriate position for Chinese circumpositions on the adposition parameter. I will suggest that this type of adposition be put in the prepositional type, based on analyses both semantic and syntactic, as well as on the analogous analysis with English prepositional phrase structure 'from behind the tree' in which Prep₁ and Prep₂+NP are immediate constituents of PP.

2. Chinese: Prepositions and Postpositions

Chinese has a very complicated system of adpositions compared with most languages. Whether Chinese adpositions are preposed or postposed has been a controversial question argued

Whether Chinese adpositions are preposed or postposed has been a controversial question argued by many scholars. Major issues include: (1) whether co-verbs are prepositions or verbs, and (2) whether locative words are postpositions or nouns. As for the prepositional argument, Li and Thompson (1974) have provided some 'clear-cut' criteria to distinguish between co-verbs and verbs. They have proposed that Chinese co-verbs are actually prepositions, and that there is no need to use the language-particular classification 'co-verbs'. Compared with the debates about co-verbs, the conclusions about locative words are still far more controversial. The answer is not so clear-cut. Instead, people consider the judgement a matter of taste (Ernst, 1988). In this part of the paper, I will argue in support of Li and Thompson's claim that Chinese co-verbs are prepositions. In so claiming, I will point out, we are actually claiming that Type 1 co-verbs³ have a predicative function similar to that of Chinese adjectives. I will also argue that Chinese monosyllabic locative words are postpositions.

2.1. Chinese Co-verbs As Prepositions

In Chinese traditional grammar, the category of 'co-verbs' "refers to a closed class of morphemes which can be well translated into English by means of prepositions" (Li and Thompson, 1974, 257).⁴ Since co-verbs are in certain circumstances very similar to verbs, and also due to the respectively different rate of the evolution of such elements from verbs to prepositions,⁵ there has been a controversial issue regarding the word category of this class of words, i.e., whether its members are verbs or prepositions. Liang (1971) studied six of the most commonly used co-verbs and claimed that five of them, i.e., zai⁶ 'at', yong 'use', gen 'with', gei 'for', and dao 'to', are verbs (cited from Li & Thompson, 1974). However, some people (Chao, 1968; DeFrancis, 1963) pointed out that some co-verbs are never verbs, though they did not seem to venture to assert that they are definitely prepositions. Compared with the earlier studies on Chinese co-verbs with respect to their classification, Li and Thompson (1974) have provided a more detailed analysis. They concluded that Chinese co-verbs are actually prepositions, and that the term 'co-verb' should be done away with. According to their analysis, there are a variety of co-verb types. The first type (Type 1) includes those co-verbs which have their homophonous verbs as in (1):⁷

- (1) a. Ta chao nan xiabai.
He to south worship.
He worships facing south.
- b. Tade wuzi chao hai.
His room face sea.
His room faces the sea.

The second type of co-verbs (Type 2) share their verb counterparts' same pronunciation yet differ in meaning as in (2):

- (2) a. Women an tade yisi ban.
We according to his idea do.
Let's do it according to his ideas.
- b. Youren an menling.
Someone press doorbell.
Someone is ringing the doorbell.

The last type of co-verbs (Type 3) do not have verbal counterparts at all, and an example given by Li and Thompson under this category is the word cong. The example is rather problematic since cong is a Type 2 co-verb, having its verbal counterpart as in (3):

- (3) Ruguo ni bu cong wo, wo jiu sha le ni.
If you not obey me, I then kill Asp. you.
If you do not obey me, I'll kill you.

Despite this, some co-verbs (e.g. *ba* 'mostly an object marker', *bei* 'passive marker', *chen4* 'taking advantage of an opportunity', etc.), do belong to this type.

Many Chinese co-verbs may behave as either a verb or a preposition, i.e., they cannot be formally divided into two word classes. This can be explained by the fact that co-verbs actually evolved from early transitive verbs [Cihai (literally, Sea of Words), the 1979 edition], and they are still at different stages of evolution. Whereas some of the co-verbs (Type 1 and Type 2) still have verb counterparts with the prepositional version losing the notion of action, some of the co-verbs (Type 3) have become a clear-cut prepositional class from the verb category.

In working out criteria to distinguish co-verb plus main verb constructions from serial verb constructions, the homophonous items in Type 1 become the center of difficulty and thus the focus of interest. Li and Thompson (1974) have proposed some supposedly clear-cut criteria. Their approach is both a semantic and a syntactic one.

According to their analysis (1973, 1974), the strongest evidence to show that co-verbs are not verbs but prepositions is that a typical serial verb sentence can usually have four possible interpretations as follows:⁸

- (4) Ta gui xia lai qiu wo.
He kneel down come beg me.
i. He knelt down in order to beg me. (purpose)
ii. He knelt down and then begged me. (consecutive actions)
iii. He knelt down begging me. (simultaneous actions)
iv. He knelt down and he begged me. (alternating actions)

A co-verb sentence, however, does not have this semantic characteristic, the reason being that the co-verb and the main verb do not express separate actions, as in (5):

- (5) Ta zai chufang li zuo jiaozi.
He at kitchen in make dumplings.
He is making dumplings in the kitchen.

A second test suggested by Li and Thompson to distinguish between a co-verb plus main verb construction and a serial verb construction is that the former cannot "freely take the verbal aspect suffix *-le*"⁹ (267) as in (6):

- (6) *Ta na le shou ca han.
He with Asp. hand wipe sweat.
He wiped away the sweat with his hand.

However, *na* with *le* is correct in (7) as a verb:

- (7) Ta na le yi ben shu.
He hold Asp. one Clas. book.
He is holding a book.

They have also argued that the object of the first verb in a serial verb construction cannot be relativized, while the object of a co-verb in a co-verb sentence can as is exemplified respectively in (8) and (9):

- (8) Wo tuo le xie jin qu.
I take off Asp. shoes go in.
I take off my shoes to/and go in.

Rel. *Wo tuo le (ta) jin qu de xie ...
 I take off Asp. (them) go in Partc. shoes ...
 The shoes that I take off to/and go in ...

(9) Wo gen neige ren xue zhongwen.
 I with that person study Chinese.
 I study Chinese with that person.

Rel. Wo gen ta xue zhongwen de neige ren ...
 I with her study Chinese Partc. that person ...
 The person that I study Chinese with ...

Another distinct feature of the serial construction suggested by Li and Thompson, is that it can be divided into two short sentences each containing only one of the two verbs and still keep the original meaning. This is not a feature of a co-verb sentence.

Ross (1984), however, has proposed a two-way (i.e. distinction between N and V) instead of a four-way (i.e. distinction among N, V, A, and P) distinction for the classification of Chinese major grammatical categories, claiming that Chinese co-verbs are verbs. While admitting that Chinese co-verbs are semantically the same as English prepositions, she holds that the two are syntactically different. Though she agrees that co-verb sentences and serial verb sentences differ from each other in some significant ways, she argues against the above distinction tests. For her, whether a sentence has more or less possible interpretations is not determined by the difference of whether a verb or a co-verb is applied, but by the relationship between two verbs in a serial verb sentence. However, both Li & Thompson and Ross apply a very marginal coverb, i.e. Type 1 co-verb *yong*, which may be interpreted as 'use' or 'with' (for instruments) in different contexts, to support their conflicting positions. Examples of this type of coverb are not prototypic of all co-verbs and, thus, cannot account for co-verbs as a whole. As mentioned previously, Chinese co-verbs are at different stages in the course of evolution from V to P, and there evolved, thus, three types of co-verbs. The interpretation test might not meet tough marginal cases with Type 1 co-verbs because: (1) this type of co-verb can be either a verb or a preposition; and (2) with a verb in the sentence, the interpretation of the co-verb could be arbitrary depending on the context or the reader. However, the interpretation test is appropriate for Type 2 co-verbs. Type 3 co-verbs do not even need to be tested for they are ruled out of possessing any independent, complete verbal notion at all.

Ross also argues against using relativizability as a test, questioning that, if such difference does not exist between prepositional and verbal objects in English, why should it serve as a criterion in Chinese. According to her explanation, the difference between verbal objects and co-verbal objects in relativizability lies in the fact that the former occurs in a coordination structure (serial verb construction) which obeys the phrase structure rule, namely Coordinate Structure Constraint (CSC)¹⁰ (Ross, 1967 cited in Ross, 1984), whereas the later occurs in a subordinate structure (co-verb sentence) which violates the rule. This, however, does not rule out the possibility of co-verbs being prepositions. Instead, CSC actually supports the observation of the differences between co-verbs and verbs in Chinese, that is, the co-verb and the main verb in a sentence never show separate actions.

In case of the aspect *-le* test, Ross has argued that not all verbs can co-occur with aspect markers. However, all the analyses provided concerning aspect is irrelevant to co-verbs as prepositions. According to her, "verbs that describe non-duration states do not occur with the durative marker *-zhe*" (15). No co-verbs, except those in Type 1, however, belong to this semantic class. She still argues that "The insertion of *-zhe* is only possible if the first verb of a two-verb sequence is an action or event that can occur independently of the other verb" (16). Prepositions do not show independent actions, so if co-verbs are prepositions, they should not be a category in question. Ross also says "*guo* can only follow an isolated verb, and never occurs after a verb in a two verb string" (16). However, *guo* does occur after a verb in a co-verb + verb sentence as exemplified in (10):¹¹

- (10) Wo yong kuaizi zhuo guo cangying.
 I with/use chopsticks catch Asp. fly.
 I have tried to catch flies with chopsticks.

Yong, then, cannot be a verb, and thus may be a preposition, according to this diagnostic test with guo.

Even though Li and Thompson's distinction tests are not really shattered so far, Ross's challenge does reveal the inadequacy of these tests in dealing with the behavior of Type 1 co-verbs. These tests may be applied to distinguish between the co-verb plus main verb construction and serial verb construction so as to determine the prepositional status of co-verbs. They do not apply, however, to non-serial verb sentences such as (11) and (12):

- (11) a. Wo jia jin aizhe ta jia.
 I home close next to he home.
 My home is right next to his home.
 b. Wo aizhe ni zuo.
 I next to you sit.
 I'll sit next to you.
- (12) a. Ta zai Shanghai.
 He in Shanghai.
 He is in Shanghai.
 b. Ta zai Shanghai gongzuo.
 He in Shanghai work.
 He works in Shanghai.

In (11a) and (12a), the status of ai and zai will be verbal, different from that in (11b) and (12b), if Chinese does not allow certain prepositional phrases to have the similar functional attributes with Chinese adjectives in that they may function as predicates by themselves. The type of words that may occur likewise should include Type 1 co-verbs, i.e., those that have homophonous verbs. In claiming that "all co-verbs are not verbs but prepositions" (270) "even though homophonous verbs do exist" (271), Li and Thompson are actually claiming a predicate role for Chinese prepositional phrases headed by Type 1 co-verbs. This fits in well with the evolution of Chinese co-verbs which may be put on a continuum from the more verbal type (i.e. Type 1) to the absolutely prepositional type (Type 3).

In the above analysis and examples, we have demonstrated only the status of Chinese co-verbs as prepositions. To view the group of words concerned (see Appendix for a list of co-verbs), we will see that the notion of location is almost exclusively absent. Besides zai (in/at), which suggests a very general notion of location, and a few words such as cong (from), xiang (to/toward), yan (along), and so on, which suggest the notion of the starting point of action, the directional goal of the action or the path/course of the action, respectively, no word in the list gives any specific notion of relative location such as 'over', 'under', 'along', etc. In other words, Chinese prepositions barely cover the semantic scope of the English prepositions with respect to location. This role in Chinese is taken over by a group of words categorized in traditional grammar as locative words. There are two types of locative words: monosyllabic and bisyllabic. The former have become the foci of controversies, namely, whether they are nouns or postpositions.

2.2. Chinese Monosyllabic Locative Words As Postpositions

In traditional grammar (see Lu, 1942), words such as shang, or li in zhuozi shang 'on the table' or wuzi li 'in the room', as well as shang mian in zhuozi shang mian 'on the table', and li mian in wuzi li mian 'in the room' are categorized as locative words, a subcategory of noun. This categorization caused great controversy when Greenberg's (1963) concept of typology was introduced into the study of world languages. Languages are grouped according to word order, one parameter of which concerns the position of adposition (preposed or postposed) with respect

to the noun in the phrase. Based on the traditional categorization, Chinese has only prepositions. However, there seems to be some discrepancy in adposition categorization among different languages. For example, English does not have such a nominal subcategory called locative words. Quite a number of the locative words in Chinese such as shang and li, which always accompany nouns such as zhuozi and wuzi in sentences take the form of prepositional phrases in English (e.g., 'on the table' and 'in the room'). To typologize Chinese in terms of adposition, this discrepancy of categorization needs to be solved: either Chinese locative words are nouns (the N-approach), or some of the locative words are postpositions (the P-approach).¹²

People in favor of either of the solutions have noticed that there are two types of locative words: the monosyllabic ones that occur right after the NP, and bisyllabic ones which are made up of the monosyllabic form plus the suffixes -mian, -tou, or -bian. We will borrow from Ernst (1988) two terms to refer to the two types of locative words respectively, i.e., the 'short form' and the 'long form'. However, proponents of the two approaches hold different views about the status of the two kinds of locative words. Though both groups agree that the long forms are nouns, the N-approach group (e.g. Li 1985) argues that arguments for the nominal status of long forms automatically carry over to the short forms, while the P-approach group (e.g. Greenberg, 1963; Tai, 1973; Ernst, 1988, etc.) argue that the short forms are different from the long forms in that they do not have certain features shared by nouns. The argument in question then focuses on the status of the short forms.

Ernst (1988) has compared analytic arguments from both perspectives. According to his summary of the P-approach, the short forms lack a number of attributes required of nouns in Chinese. They lack the ability to take the particle de to be a noun modifier¹³ and they lack the ability to stand alone in argument position. (It is argued that phrases headed by short forms occurring in argument positions are an exceptional case.) Short forms must take a preceding NP, usually take neutral tone in many dialects, while head categories with modifiers rarely do. By contrast, long forms possess all the above features.

To Ernst, both approaches have some unshared mechanisms to account for. The N-approach claims short forms are bound forms which must attach to a noun and that nouns may be marked as obligatorily relational/adverbial. The P-approach, on the other hand, requires that certain P's subcategorize for PP's as well as NP's, and that exceptions are allowed to the Case-directionality parameter.

Despite the disagreement of the two approaches, Ernst has concluded with a matter-of-taste basis. To him, both approaches are plausible in some respects. The N-approach is more syntactically based, "keeping the parameters more constrained and free of exception" (p. 231), since prepositional parametric direction correlates well with the fact that Chinese is a SVO language. The P-approach, on the other hand, is "more concerned with matters of morphology and the semantic basis for syntactic categories" (p. 231). He concluded, however, that the latter is preferable, because in a classic case of an isolating language like Chinese, a group of head nouns as obligatorily bound would be extremely marked, and thus should be ruled out from universal grammar. In favor of the P-approach, 'dual directionality' within one language is evidenced in many languages, and that "the possibility of P subcategorizing (i.e., P + PP as in 'from behind the tree' in English) for a prepositional phrase is attested in at least English, Polish, and Tamil" (233).¹⁴

I will argue, in support of the P-approach from a semantic perspective, that monosyllabic locative words are postpositions. As mentioned previously in this paper, Chinese prepositions barely denote notions of relative locations, and are thus a more limited category than English prepositions. Many of the locative notions are expressed by the postposed Chinese short forms. In (13), the notion 'on' is carried by both zai and shang but not by zai alone. Similarly, shang in (14) alone expresses the locative notion on:

- (13) Ta zai zhuo shang fang le yi ben shu
 He table on(with 'zai') put Asp. one Clas. book
 He put the book on the table.

- (14) Zhuo shang you yi ben shu.
 Table on have one Clas. book
 There is a book on the table.

With the claim of the existence of both preposed and postposed adpositions in Chinese, we are assuming the existence of a third type, i.e. "circumposition" as in (13), which is so named in Saville-Troike's (1992) recent paper, addressing the phenomenon that, in Chinese, such adpositions are positioned on both sides of the noun in the adpositional phrase. Researches in second language acquisition of both child and adult learners have revealed supporting evidence for the claim of Chinese circumpositions, which, in turn, supports the claim of Chinese postpositions.

3. Chinese Circumpositions on the Adposition Parameter

As mentioned previously, if we claim that Chinese has both prepositions and postpositions, a third type of adposition, namely, circumposition, exists in Chinese as well. A Chinese circumpositional phrase consists of a prepositional part, a postpositional part, and a noun in between. When such a construction is used, both adpositional parts work together to denote the notion of a location and/or direction, etc. The prepositional part usually gives the notion of a general location, a starting point of action or direction (e.g. zai 'locating somewhere', cong 'from', chao 'toward', etc.), whereas the postposition gives the specific location (e.g. shang 'on', hou 'behind', xia 'under', etc.).

3.1. Chinese Circumpositions

According to semantic notions, Chinese circumpositions can be classified into three groups as follows:

- (A) zai + NP + shang (xia, li, etc.)
 (B) you (cong, da, etc.) + NP + shang (xia, li, etc.)
 (C) wang (chong, chao, xiang, etc.) + NP + (shang, xia, li, etc.)

In Group (A), the circumpositions may be divided into two types, the scene-setting and the resultative, depending on their semantic function in the sentence. According to Hou (1977), the former "denotes the location where the action actually takes place" whereas the second "denotes the location where the action of the verb takes place and the location that the recipient of the action reaches as a result of the action" (143-144). The difference may be easily observed in (15) and (16):

- (15) Zhangsan he Lisi zai wu li da le yi jia.
 Zhangsan and Lisi room in(with'zai') fight Asp. one Clas.
 Zhangsan and Lisi had a fight in the room.
 (16) Ta zai zhuozi shang fang le yi ben shu.
 He table on(with'zai') put Asp. one Clas. book
 He put a book on the table.

Group (B) circumpositions denote the starting point of actions as in (17):

- (17) Yi ge ren cong shan shang xialai le.
 One Clas. person from mountain on come down Asp.
 Someone has come down from the mountain.

Group (C) circumpositions denote the directional notion of action as in (18):

- (18) Ta wang wu li kan.
 He toward room in look.
 He looked into the room.

Component parts in Chinese circumpositional phrases are freely replaceable. From the phrase 'cong shan shang' (from top of the mountain), for example, we may have the following substitution of each part:

- (19) a. cong shan xia (from the foot of the mountain)
 b. chao shan shang (toward the top of the mountain)
 c. cong wu li (from inside the room)
 d. chao wu wai (toward outside the room) etc.

Supporting evidence for the claim of Chinese circumpositions comes from studies in second language acquisition of both child and adult learners. Chinese children, for example, after being in the United States for some time, tend to lose the postpositional part in the circumpositional phrase under the influence of English (Saville-Troike, 1992). Adult learners of Chinese whose first language is English tend to drop the postpositional part of circumpositions at early stages, a phenomenon of the first language influence on the second language (Dong, Zhonghui, 1986). In both cases, the Chinese postpositional part in the phrase is lost in second language acquisition and delayed in second language learning as part of the adpositional construction but not as part of the NP. This may provide implications to the acknowledgement of a semantic as well as syntactic corresponding relationship between English prepositions and Chinese circumpositions. Which, in turn, supports the claim of Chinese postpositions.

3.2. Circumpositions and the Adposition Parameter

Chinese circumpositions are circumposed and thus raise the question as where they should be typologized: are they prepositional or postpositional? Semantically speaking as well as syntactically speaking, this subcategory of Chinese adpositions should be considered prepositional.

Semantically speaking, the postpositional part in a circumpositional phrase denotes the specific location and so is closer to the noun than the prepositional part, which denotes a more general notion of location.

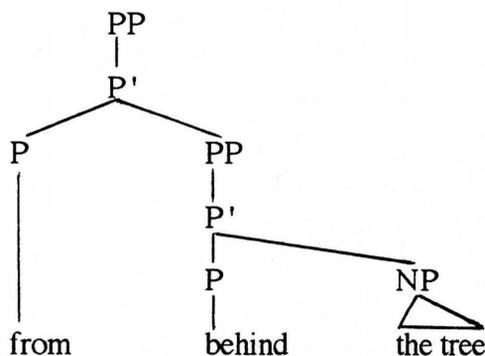
Syntactically speaking, nominal modifiers or specifiers, if any, in the circumpositional phrase should be put between the prepositional part and the objective noun, but never separating the objective noun and the postpositional part. This is exemplified in (20):

- (20) Ta cong nei ke da shu hou zou chulai.
 He from that Clas. big tree behind walk out.
 He walked out from behind that big tree.

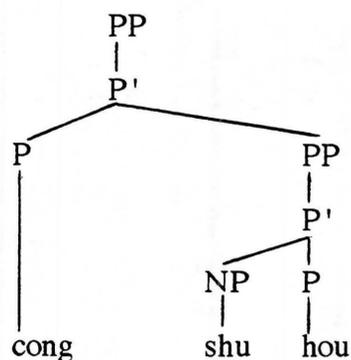
This analysis may be supported by an analogous adpositional phrase in English exemplified 'from behind the tree'. This type of English adpositional phrase is similar with Chinese circumpositional phrases with regard to the formation of the adpositional phrase which consists of two adpositions and the noun. Though English adpositional phrases of this type have both adpositional parts in the pre-objective position, that is, they are preposed, whereas the Chinese circumpositions have them in the circumposition, the semantic functions of English Prep₁ and Prep₂ are identical to the Chinese Prep and Post respectively. Compare:

- (21) English: from behind the tree
 Chinese: cong shu hou
 from tree behind
 from behind the tree

The structure in both languages here may be presented in the following tree diagrams respectively:



(English)



(Chinese)

With the above analysis, we may propose that Chinese circumpositions be typologized on the adpositional parameter as prepositional.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed Chinese adpositions with respect to the typological adposition parameter. As we have claimed, Chinese co-verbs are prepositions, and Chinese short form locative words are postpositions. This claim is actually confirming a predicative role for Chinese Type 1 co-verbs. With the presence of both types of adpositions in Chinese, a third type, i.e. circumposition, also exists. It has been proposed that the last type be typologized on the adposition parameter as prepositional where the preposition and the NP+postposition are immediate constituents of the adpositional phrase.

The circumposition notion has important implications for the study of both typology and applied linguistics. First, in the typology framework, circumposition has never been taken into serious considerations for the adposition constituent order parameter. This might be due to the consistent status of prepositions in languages such as English and of postpositions in languages such as Japanese. As for languages such as Chinese, where circumpositions do occur frequently, the status of adpositions is still a controversial problem within itself. Actually, in Hawkins (1983, see Language Index), Chinese is already listed as both a prepositional and postpositional language. However, circumposition as an adpositional phenomenon is worth exploring; its typological position on the parameter, its distribution, etc. need studying. It provides an interesting test for the binary nature both of the structure of phrases and of parameter setting.

Second, it is of interest to the area of applied linguistics with respect to the differential permeability of first language structures in the context of second language acquisition. As mentioned previously, research in Chinese child second language acquisition (L2 = English) and English adult second language learning (L2 = Chinese) have revealed evidence of circumpositional postposition attrition and slow development in circumpositional postposition respectively. It is also predicted (Saville-Troike, 1992) that in the Japanese language environment, the children may lose the prepositional part. Both the discovery and the prediction lend implications to the linguistic acknowledgement and exploration of Chinese circumpositions, which in turn may benefit greatly the area of applied linguistics with respect to second language acquisition.

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NOTES

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²In the discussion of this type of adposition in Chinese, I will apply Saville-Troike's (1992) coined term 'circumposition'.

³See 2.1.

⁴For an embracing list of Chinese co-verbs, see Appendix in Li & Thompson (1974). The same list is provided in Appendix in this paper.

⁵For the evolution of Chinese co-verbs from verbs, see Li (1980).

⁶Chinese characters will be presented in the Chinese phonetic symbols--Pin Yin.

⁷The examples in (1) and (2) are from Li & Thompson (1974).

⁸Examples (4) to (9) are from Li & Thompson (1974).

⁹Chinese "le" may denote either the past tense or the perfective aspect.

¹⁰This rule holds "In a coordinate structure, no conjunct may be moved, nor may any element contained in a conjunct be moved out of that conjunct" (Ross, 1984, 10).

¹¹This example sentence is from both Li & Thompson (1974) and Ross (1984)

¹²The terms 'N-approach' and 'P-approach' are borrowed from Ernst (1988).

¹³In Chinese, *de* may occur after noun modifiers.

¹⁴For detailed discussion of P' -- P - (NP) - (PP), see Jackendoff (1981).

¹⁵This list is essentially from Li & Thompson (1974). I use, however, numbers 1 to 4 to indicate tones.

¹⁶If different from present-day homophone.

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APPENDIX¹⁵
(Chinese Co-verbs)

co-verb	rough gloss	gloss of present verbal homophone	gloss of older verb ancestor ¹⁶
ai1	next to	be next to	
an4	according to	press	
ba3	(object marker)	-----	take, hold
bei4	(agent marker)	-----	receive
ben4	toward (Peking)	go to	
bi3	'than'	compare	
bu4 ji2	'not so much as'	ji2 = reach	
bu4 ru2	'not so much as'	ru2 = follow	
chao2	facing	face	have audience with the emperor
chen4	take advantage of	-----	ride
cheng2	'by' (e.g. the dozen)	form, become	
cheng2	take advantage of	ride on	
chong4	facing	face	
cong2	from	follow	follow
da3	from (Peking)	hit	
dai4 ti4	in place of	take the place of	
dang1	in front of	serve as	
dao4	to (place)	arrive	
dui4	to	face	
gei3	for	give	
gen1	with	follow	
gen1	at (Peking)	be at	
guan3	(as ba3 with jiao4)	control, manage	
gui1	(agent marker)	put away	
he2	with	mix	mix
jiang1	[=be (Lit.)]	checkmate	

co-verb	rough gloss	gloss of present verbal homophone	gloss of older verbal ancestor
jiao4	(agent marker)	call	
jie3	from (Peking)	untie, relieve	
jin3	take first, limit	let go first	
jiu4	oneself to take advantage of	-----	go
jiu4	with (food or drink)	go with (food or drink)	
kao4	dependent on, against	lean against	
li2	apart from	-----	keep distance
lun4	by(some unit measure)	evaluate	
na2	with	take	
ni4	against	be opposed to	meet, welcome
ping2	according to, dependent on	depend on	
qi3	from (a time, place)	go up (Peking)	
shi3	with(instru- ment)	cause	
shou4	(agent marker)	receive, suffer from	
shun4	along	follow	
ti4	in place of	substitute for	
tong2	with	be the same (with tong2)	
wang4	facing	face	
wang3	toward	-----	go
wei4	for	be for the sake of	
xiang4	like	be like	
xiang4	facing	face	
yan2	along	follow along	
yi1	according to	agree with	
(yi1)zhao4	according to	zhao4 = reflect	
you2	from (Lit.)	-----	follow
yu2	to, for	-----	be at
zai4	at, in	be at	