

## NOUNS AND VERBS: EVOLUTION OF GRAMMATICAL FORMS

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### ABSTRACT

While noun and verb are two separate syntactic classes in opposition to each other in Indo-European languages, in Chinese they are a pair of pragmatic classes (reference and predication), and not in opposition to each other. Chinese nouns constitute a super-noun category with verbs as its sub-category. In other words, all verbs in Chinese are actually verbal nouns. This characteristic feature of Chinese can be explicated from the perspectives of cognition, language typology, grammaticalization, philosophical background, and experimental studies of word classes.

### KEYWORDS

Super-noun    Verbal nouns    Predication    Grammaticalization

### 1. FULL WORDS AND EMPTY WORDS

In 1898, the first Chinese grammar book, *Mashi Wentong* 馬氏文通 (Ma's grammar), was published by a Chinese scholar, Ma Jianzhong ([1898]1925). Four years before the publication, China was defeated by Japan in a war and the Northern Fleet of the Qing dynasty was almost wiped out. Ma thought that one of the causes for China's defeat was its lacking a grammar which should, like the grammars of Western languages,

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## 论汉语的名词和动词：语法形式的演化

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### 提要

名词和动词在印欧语中已经分化为两个对立语法范畴，然而汉语的名词和动词间不存在类似的关系，二者分别对应指称语和陈述语，因而更切合语用范畴。此外，汉语的名词构成一个大类，包含动词。换句话说，汉语是一种名动包含的格局，动词实质上是兼有动词性的名词，即“动名词”。本文从认识方式、语言类型、语法化、哲学背景、词类的实验研究等诸方面论证汉语的这一特点。

### 关键词

大名词 动名词 述谓语 语法化