

## QUEST FOR THE ESSENCE OF CHINESE GRAMMAR

James H-Y. Tai

*National Chung Cheng University, Chiayi*

### ABSTRACT

Some key issues in the analysis of Chinese grammars in the past five decades are identified and discussed from typological perspectives. They include 1) the wordhood in 「字」 and 「詞」, and word formation; 2) parts of speech; 3) syntactic pivots (topic, subject, and object); 4) active vs. passive voice; 5) cognitive principles of word order; 6) SOV vs. SVO. Typological characterizations of Chinese are also summarized, pointing to the importance of understanding Chinese from perspectives of creole and sign language. Mental lexicon of 「字」, 「詞」 and four-character idioms should be constructed with syntactic structures for the processing of reading Chinese.

---

**Acknowledgements** The author highly appreciates the comments and suggestions from the reviewers, and have done minor revisions of the original manuscript submitted to the volume. One reviewer suggested that ‘some controversial issues in the Chinese grammar’ may be used for this article. The suggestion has not been taken for the following reason. Controversy arises from specific theoretical frameworks of analysis with rigorous argumentation, and each issue would require space beyond the limit. Thus, the summary of issues in this article is intended to be as theoretically neutral as possible, though with a general orientation of cognitive linguistics. The reviewers have also provided the information that Wechat groups of Chinese Linguists have identified the following 10 key issues in the study of Chinese grammar as following: “1) 「名動包含說」和「名動分立說的實質」2)漢語動詞、形容詞的名物化和指代性問題 3) 「臺上坐著主席團」句式與主賓語問題 4) 「王冕死了父親」句式與動詞的論元結構 5) 「他的老師當得好」句式與近代漢語的兩大發展 6)漢語的話題和主語之辨與句法和片語的一致性問題 7)漢語是意合語言、缺乏形態標記與句法靈活性 8)漢語形容詞作定語的限制與「的」的使用規律 9)漢語的處置式、SOV 語序和被動式之關係 10)漢語疑問代詞的引申用法與本質屬性問題。” This article touches upon 6, 7 and 9 of the above issues only in essence. To identify the essence of all the ten issues would require, at least, a book-length manuscript. When the author has a chance in the near future to work out such a manuscript, he would certainly keep the 10 issues in mind.

**James H-Y. Tai** (戴浩一) [lngtai@ccu.edu.tw]; Institute of Linguistics, National Chung Cheng University, Chiayi, Taiwan.

## 漢語語法本質的探索

戴浩一

臺灣中正大學

### 摘要

本文綜觀過去 50 年來漢語語法研究的重要議題，並點出爭議所在。這些議題包含 1) 「字」與「詞」的糾結；2) 詞類的區分；3) 「主題」、「主語」與「賓語」的角色；4) 主動句與被動句；5) 認知原則與詞序；6) 基本詞序的爭議：「主語-賓語-動詞」，還是「主語-動詞-賓語」。本文也從語言類型學的角度來檢視這些爭議，同時建議更進一步從克里奧語與手語的特徵詮釋漢語語法，並使用以漢字為基礎的心理詞典探討中文閱讀，俾對閱讀理論有重大的啟示。

### 關鍵詞

漢語 漢字 詞類 句法軸心 認知原則 語言類型學

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, Copyrighted Material