

INSIGHT

A SENTENCE-MEDIAL CLAUSE-TYPING INTONEME IN MANDARIN A-NOT-A QUESTIONS

Chi Wang

Hunan University of Arts and Science, Changde

ABSTRACT

A sentence-medial intoneme is argued to be responsible for typing Mandarin A-NOT-A questions. In narrow syntax, it is merged higher than deontic modals and lower than Tense; after spell-out, it is realized phonetically as a high-low intonation starting from the left edge of the A-NOT-A predicate. This proposal is supported by a sentence-medial segmental particle in Chinese dialects, which further corroborates the Intonation-Particle Hypothesis by showing that typing particles in non-sentence-final positions are also variants of intonations. Besides, the Mandarin nuclear stress rule derives two prosodic features of A-NOT-A questions: No intonational breaks within the A-NOT-A predicate and de-stressing of the negation word. The two features follow from the

Acknowledgments An early version of this article was presented at the fourth Prosodic Grammar Salon (Beijing Language and Culture University, June 2021). I am grateful to the audience there, especially Lijuan Wang, Jing Su and Liyuan Liu, for their comments. Special thanks go to Prof. Shengli Feng and the two anonymous reviewers for their insightful advice. All errors remain mine. The article is funded by Humanities and Social Sciences Project of the Ministry of Education in China “A Comparative Study of the Syntax of Non-wh Questions in English and Chinese: A Perspective from Prosodic Parameters” (21YJC740051), Key Research Project of Department of Education in Hunan Province “A Study on Distribution and Transformation of Disjunctive Questions in Chinese Dialects: A Perspective from Formal Typology” (21A0425), and Project of Evaluation Committee of Social Sciences Research Output in Hunan Province “A Comparative Study of English and Chinese Polar Questions: A Perspective from Syntax-Phonology Interface”(XSP2023WXC046).

Chi Wang (王迟) [wchfranklin@126.com]; School of Foreign Languages, Hunan University of Arts and Science, No. 3150 Dongting Dadao, Changde, Hunan, China.

● <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2831-0460>

requirement that only one intonation is allowed in the nuclear stress domain and instantiate interaction among different stresses.

KEYWORDS

A-NOT-A questions Clause-typing Intoneme Intonation-Particle Hypothesis

1. INTRODUCTION

Clause-typing strategy of interrogatives is an important topic in generative syntax. As for Mandarin A-NOT-A questions, the standard assumption is that they are typed through covert movement: something (the A-NOT-A constituent or an interrogative feature) moves at LF (mostly to the CP area) to acquire a question reading. Since Huang's (1988) classic analysis, this approach has been widely adopted among the generative works.

However, Gasde (2004) argues against the standard "movement to C" approach by proposing that A-NOT-A questions have a sentence-medial clause-typer Force 2 (different from Force 1 or C in the left periphery), a position closer than C in Huang's analysis.¹

The idea of sentence-medial typers is also put forward in Xu (2005). He identifies three clause-typing positions for interrogatives, which are linearly placed at the initial, medial and final positions of sentences. Structurally, the medial position is akin to Gasde's Force 2.

Another important study on clause-typing is the proposal of intonation morpheme (intoneme) in Cheng and Rooryck (2000). They argue that French in-situ wh-questions are typed through merging an intoneme at C⁰, which is realized phonetically as a rising intonation.

In this squib, inspired by the sentence-medial typing position (Gasde 2004; Xu 2005) and the intoneme analysis (Cheng and Rooryck 2000), I will make a new proposal about the typing strategy of Mandarin A-NOT-A questions.

2. A NEW PROPOSAL

Specifically, my proposal is stated as (1).

- YANG, Yang 杨洋, and Lisa Lai-Shen Cheng 郑礼珊. 2019. Hanyu yunlü de biaoju zuoyong jiqi shiyan yanjiu 汉语韵律的标句作用及其实验研究 (The role of prosody in Chinese clausal typing: An experimental study). *Yunlü yufa yanjiu* 韵律语法研究 1: 65–82.
- ZHU, Dexi 朱德熙. 1985. Hanyu fangyan li de liangzhong fanfu wenju 汉语方言里的两种反复问句 (Two types of A-not-A questions in Chinese dialects). *Zhongguo yuwen* 中国语文 1: 10–20.

[Received 29 March 2023; accepted 4 October 2023]

普通话正反问的句中调素

王迟

湖南文理学院

摘要

普通话正反问的句中位置存在一个标句调素，在狭义句法阶段合并于一个低于时态中心语、高于义务模态词的位置，拼出之后则在语音上以正反问谓语的左边界为起点，实现为前高后低的句调模式。这一假设得到了汉语方言事实的支持，表明除了句末语气词，句中调素也是句调素的另一种变体，从而进一步支持了“语调-语气词变体假说”。此外，正反问的韵律模式还有两个关键特征：肯定、否定部分之间不能停顿；否定词不能重读。上述两个特征都是普通话的“核重-语调定律”所致，即核心重音范围内不容两个语调。这说明不同类型的重音之间存在互动效应。

关键词

正反问 标句调素 语调-语气词变体假说