

RISE AND LOSS OF THE INCLUSIVE/EXCLUSIVE OPPOSITION IN NORTHERN CHINA

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ABSTRACT

In Northern Sinitic languages, the inclusive/exclusive distinction seems rare in the Gansu-Qinghai area whereas this use is omnipresent in the Central Plain region. The Northern Sinitic languages in the Central Plain region adopted the inclusive/exclusive distinction from the non-Sinitic languages (Zhang 1982; Mei 1988; Janhunen 2003; Xu 2023) since the Song Dynasty and consistently kept it. Paradoxically, the Mongolic languages are losing this opposition with a different rhythm north of the Central Plain, and this tendency even begins inside the Gansu-Qinghai area. Our research shows that Northern China should be divided into two distinct zones. The Central Plain region and the Gansu-Qinghai area. The Central Plain zone covers Hebei including Beijing, together with its neighboring areas, constituting the core of the area corresponding to the ancient *Yanyun shiliu zhou* (Sixteen Prefectures). Shandong and Henan's contiguous provinces make up this area's extension. The Gansu-Qinghai area mainly indicates the Northwestern variety of Mandarin Chinese. The use of the inclusive/exclusive distinction constitutes one of the syntactic features splitting the two zones. The inclusive/exclusive spreading stops at the

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Ningxia province separating these two distinct zones. The influence of this syntactic device does not extend to the northwestern provinces of China, such as Ningxia, Gansu, and Qinghai. The several ancestral populations in Tangwang and Wutun might come from Sinitic-language-speaking zones nearby to be incorporated with local populations and other different components. During the shaping of the new population, the core groups are unlikely to possess or retain this use. This partly explains why a mixed language such as Wutun, spoken in Qinghai, and a mixing language such as Tangwang, used in Gansu, do not have the inclusive/exclusive distinction. This article tries to understand what has happened in language contact between Sinitic and non-Sinitic languages and then analyzes the rise and loss of this distinction in Northern China.

KEYWORDS

Inclusive Exclusive Northern China Mongolic languages

1. INTRODUCTION

The inclusive/exclusive opposition is attested in numerous languages of the world, while it is not attested in European languages at all. This distinction can be found in 63 languages among 200 (see WALSL¹). The Mandarin language, more precisely Northern Mandarin, is recognized to have this usage among other Asian and Austronesian languages.

In Northern Mandarin, the inclusive pronoun is *zanmen*, meaning “we” and including the addressee, while the exclusive pronoun is *women*, also referring to “we” but excluding the addressee.

In the Gansu-Qinghai linguistic area (Slater 2003a, 2003b; Janhunen 2007; Zhong 2007; Xu 2017; Xu and Peyraube 2018, among others), situated at the borders of these two provinces of China, one phenomenon seems striking (Xu 2017: 135): A mixed language such as Wutun, spoken in Qinghai, and a mixing language such as Tangwang, used in Gansu, do not have the inclusive/exclusive distinction, although these languages have been and still are circled and influenced by Mongolic, Tibetic and Sinitic languages which do possess this opposition.

The question is raised then of why and how the Wutun and Tangwang languages could have avoided acquiring this use when they have been deeply affected at the syntactic level by neighboring languages. This

中国北方包括式/排除式对立的兴起与消失

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摘要

在北方汉语中，包括式和排除式在甘青地区似乎很少见，而这种用法在中原地区却无处不在。中原地区的北方汉语自宋代以来就吸收了非汉语言的包括式/排除式(张清常 1982; 梅祖麟 1988; Janhunen 2003; 徐丹 2023)，并一直保留了下来。奇怪的是，在中原以北，蒙古语言正在以不同的速度失去这种对立，这种趋势甚至在甘青地区内部也开始出现。我们的研究表明，中国北方应该分为两个不同的区域。中原地区和甘青地区。中原地区包括北京在内的河北及其周边地区，对应于古代燕云十六州的核心区域。山东省和河南省毗邻的省份构成了这一区域的延伸地带。甘青地区主要指西北各方言。包括式和排除式的使用与否是划分甘青和中原两个地区的句法特征之一。包括式/排除式的传播在分隔这两个不同地区的宁夏省停止了。这一句法手段并未延伸到中国西北其他省份如宁夏、甘肃、青海。唐汪和五屯的部分祖先群体可能来自附近的汉语区域，他们与当地群体和其他不同的人群融合在了一起。在唐汪人和五屯人群体形成过程中，核心群体可能没有这一用法或没有保留这一用法。这在一定程度上解释了为什青海的混合语五屯话和甘肃正在混合的唐汪话不具有包括式和排除式的区别。本文试图厘清汉语和非汉语接触后发生的这一语言现象，分析包括式和排除式在中国北方兴起和消失的原因。

关键词

包括式 排除式 中国北方 蒙古诸语