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Yě, yě, yě: On the syntax and semantics of Mandarin yě
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Chapter 6 Conclusion

This dissertation provides a study of the Mandarin particle *yě* and aims to answer the questions raised in Chapter 1: “Is there one *yě* or are there several *yě*s in Mandarin?” This question is explored via an analysis of three different usages of *yě*, namely, the additive use, the parametric/scalar use and the modal use. By surveying the syntactic positions (in Chapter 3) and examining the semantics/pragmatics (in Chapters 2, 4 and 5) of each use type, this dissertation has shown that there are at least two different *yě*s, namely, the additive/lower *yě* in the IP and the scalar/higher *yě* in the CP. Although the exact position of the modal use of *yě* is not explicitly determined in this study, we did find that it has a close connection to scalar *yě*. In light of the fact that both scalar *yě* and modal *yě* involves an evaluation or judgement of the speaker, they might occupy the same high position in the CP.

Although the dissertation has provided evidence to differentiate *yě*s in different contexts, I have found the following commonality: all three use types of *yě* invariably evoke alternatives in their respective occurrence contexts. However, both the mechanism activating these alternatives and the relation between the alternative proposition(s) and the proposition expressed by the host sentence are different. The difference should be attributed to the very nature of each *yě*. For instance, like a discourse anaphore, additive *yě* always requires a verifiable antecedent. Therefore, the alternative that additive *yě* triggers is either often explicitly mentioned in the preceding discourse or can easily be retraced within the active context, i.e., it is a real alternative. In contrast, scalar *yě* in the *no-matter* or *even* contexts evokes alternatives in the background and does not require the alternatives to be verifiable or explicitly mentioned. In other words, the alternatives evoked in the scalar contexts are not necessarily real alternatives, but possible alternatives. This observation also applies to the modal use of *yě*. The alternatives evoked by modal *yě* do not need to be explicitly mentioned either.

In addition, how the alternatives activated by the different *yě*s are ordered also varies. Regarding the additive use, I have argued in Chapter 2 that the host sentence and the antecedent must share something, namely, the identical argumentative orientation. Furthermore, the two (or more) propositions connected by the additive *yě* are not arranged on any scale, i.e., they are equal alternatives that share the same augmentative goal and orientation. This argument is supported by the existence of the *yě...yě...yě* pattern in Mandarin.

The alternatives denoted by the scalar *yě* is ordered in a different way. As discussed in Chapter 4, the possible alternatives are ordered on a scale provided by the context on which the degree is measured, e.g., the degree of

likelihood. The proposition expressed by the host sentence of *yě* points to the extreme of the scale.

Regarding the modal use of *yě*, I have argued that a concessive relation exists in all its occurrence contexts between the proposition conveyed by the host sentence and the contextual proposition, i.e., the possible alternative indicated by the context or common knowledge. Therefore, similar to the alternatives in the context of scalar *yě*, the alternatives in the context of modal *yě* are not equal either. These overall conclusions can help us to round off this research in some way. However, while discussing each use type of *yě* many more findings appeared. In what follows, I will present the readers with an overview of what I have done by summarizing the findings of each chapter.

6.1 Conclusions per chapter

In **Chapter 2**, I discussed the additive use of *yě*. Based on the basic notions of alternative semantics laid out by Rooth, I focus on the property typical for an additive particle, namely that it always presupposes the existence of alternatives in the discourse. I argued that an additive particle as a focus particle is a discourse-anaphoric element. For instance, it resists presupposition accommodation due to its lack of lexical meaning. Its interpretation always requires the preceding discourse and it always refers backwards. I further discussed the requirements of the antecedents of additive *yě*. Due to its anaphoric nature, a viable host sentence for additive *yě* always requires an antecedent which can be verifiable in the preceding context. The antecedent does not have to be explicitly mentioned but must be active in the preceding discourse. By the same token, I argued that the role played by the discourse in licensing the use of additive *yě* is crucial. In line with Winterstein (2009), I presented evidence to show that discourse similarity, more particularly, the same argumentative orientation between the antecedent and the host sentence, is the key to license the use of additive *yě*. This has provided a new account for using *yě* in sentences with two or more contrasting elements between the host sentence and the antecedent, in which the “one-distinction” rule is broken. Our account for the licensing condition of additive *yě* is simple and consistent: additive *yě* can only be used if the antecedent of additive *yě* can be retrieved from the context, i.e., it must be explicitly asserted or somehow mentioned in the active context, and it shares the same argumentative orientation towards the argumentative goal with the host sentence.

Besides its relation with the antecedent, in the **second part of Chapter 2**, the relation between additive *yě* and the constituents within the host sentence, i.e., the AC and ID, was also discussed. Along with Reis and Rosengren’s (1997) generalization on German AC/ID distribution patterns,

similar AC/ID patterns of Mandarin unstressed *yě* and stressed *yě* were demonstrated based on the results of my survey. The pattern is repeated here:

- (1) **AC/ID patterns of stressed *YE* and unstressed *yě***
 ([AC]_{CT}) (AC) (ID) *YE* ID (ID)
 (ID) *yě* [AC]_F (ID) (ID)

In addition to the complementary distribution of AC/ID pattern concerning sentences with unstressed *yě* and stressed *yě*, the relation between the AC and the additive particle was also discussed. In particular, I supported the “contrastive topic” treatment of the preceding AC before the stressed particle proposed by Krifka (1999). In spite of the differences observed between unstressed *yě* and stressed *yě*, a uniform analysis was adopted as to the meaning/function of the two variants. In other words, the “contrastive topic” associated with the stressed *yě* is also regarded as a focus constituent and establishes its relation with the stressed additive particle in the same way as that of the unstressed *yě*. This chapter also singled out the use of an unstressed *yě* with a preceding stressed AC and argued that this use type of *yě* is different from the normal additive use and should be treated as a parametric/scalar use type.

After establishing the semantics of additive *yě*, **Chapter 3** aims to determine the syntactic position of *yě*. Firstly, I presented evidence to prove that additive *yě* is an IP adverb: it occurs in a position lower than the outer subject, i.e., [Spec, IP], but higher than the inner subject, i.e., [Spec, vP]. In order to determine the exact position of additive *yě* in the IP, I introduced two diagnostics. The first is the modal hierarchy proposed by Butler (2003) and the second is the adverb hierarchy proposed by Cinque (1999). I proposed a new classification of Mandarin modals based on Butler (2003) and Lin (2012) and confirmed the rigid order between the modals with the results of my survey, as is repeated here:

- (2) Epistemic necessity < Negation < Epistemic possibility < (Strong) subject
 < Root necessity < Negation < Root possibility < vP

My first diagnostic tool is a survey of the relative position of additive *yě* in this modal hierarchy. I concluded that the position of additive *yě* is higher than the root necessity modals but lower than the subject, as is represented below:

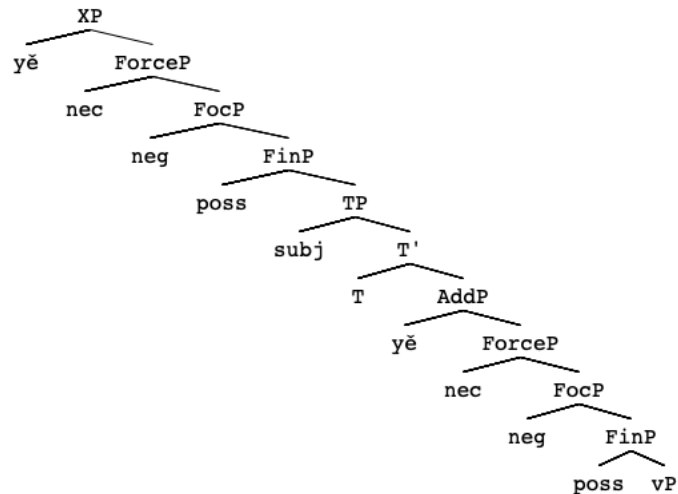
- (3) Epistemic necessity < Negation < Epistemic possibility < (Strong) subject
 < Additive *yě* < Root necessity < Negation < Root possibility < vP

My second diagnostic tool, the survey of the positioning of additive *yě* in Cinque's adverb hierarchy, leads to a similar conclusion. The resulting placement of additive *yě* is comparable to that in Butler's hierarchy of modals. In the IP zone it is higher than the adverbs or modals expressing necessity, as shown below:

- (4) [*lǎoshi-shuō* Mood_{speech-act} [*búxìng* Mood_{evaluative} [*xiǎnrán* Mood_{evidential} [*hǎoxiàng*. Mod_{epistemic} [*xiànzài* T [*yěxu* Mod_{irrealis} [*yě* Add [*bìrán* Mod_{necessity} [*yídìng* Mod_{possibility} [*míngzhì-de* Mod_{root} [*yìbān* Asp_{habitual} [*yòu* Asp_{repetitive} [*chángcháng* Asp_{frequentative} [*yíjīng* T (Anterior) [*bú-zài* Asp_{terminative} [*zǒngshì* Asp_{perfect} [*yìzhí/gānggāng* Asp_{retrospective} [*wánquán* Asp_{completive} [*hǎo* Voice (< V)

By using the same diagnostics, my investigations into the positioning of parametric *yě* lead to the conclusion that it is much higher than the additive *yě*, and presumably higher than the epistemic necessity modals and corresponding adverbs. In the end, I placed the two *yě*s in Butler's syntactic structure, as repeated below:

- (5)



According to Ernst (2007: 1011), the two adverbs licensed by distinct heads must have two distinct interpretations. After establishing two syntactic positions for *yě*, it is also important to demonstrate that they have different interpretations, that is to say, if the higher *yě* is not additive, then what interpretation does it get? This was the aim of Chapter 4.

In **Chapter 4**, I argued that parametric *yě* has a scalar nature. To this end, I demonstrated that *yě* can not be used in a pure FC context, such as a *no matter* context with a pure FC reading. It can only be licensed whenever scalarity is marked in the sentence. For instance, when an inherent scalar phrase such as *even* or a minimizer occurs, the use of *yě* is licensed. In addition, negation and modality may also contribute in providing scalarity and warranting the use of *yě*. Meanwhile, another licensing condition of parametric *yě* is the existence of the extreme of the provided scale in the sentence. Following this, I proposed that the function of *lián* is to introduce the extremity to which parametric *yě* can point. In the last part of Chapter 4, following with Hole's proposal, I argued that parametric *yě* is the head of a scalarity phrase and a null \emptyset_{even} exists in *no matter* sentences with *yě*. The relation between additive *yě* and scalar *yě* was also briefly discussed. In combination with the syntactic survey in Chapter 3, I argued that the ScalP headed by scalar *yě* is above the ForceP headed by an epistemic necessity modal in the CP. The position of scalar *yě* is so high that it may function as an “evaluative particle” according to Greenberg (2019). Interestingly, cross-linguistically, the particle expressing ‘also’ has been found with a modal use that is closely relevant to the speaker’s judgement or evaluation. Chapter 5 further discusses this modal use of *yě*.

Three different contexts in which modal *yě* can be used, i.e., the “criticism” context, the “acceptance” contexts and the “denial” context, were examined in **Chapter 5** in order to determine whether there are similarities regarding the use of *yě* in these contexts. By separating the contextual elements from the role of the modal particle itself, a common mechanism behind the various pragmatic roles has been established, that is, modal *yě* in all three contexts invariably denotes a concessive relation between a contextual proposition and the proposition expressed by its host sentence. Due to the nature of a concessivity marker, using *yě* in a sentence always presupposes the existence of a concessive proposition as an alternative and pragmatically results in a polite, indirect, tactful or less absolute reading of the host sentence. By the same token, I argued that *yě* in the sentences with an overt concessive conjunction should also be regarded as a modal particle. When comparing the modal use and the scalar use of *yě*, it became clear that there exists a close relationship between the two.

6.2 Remaining questions

Due to the fact that our focus in this dissertation is on the uses of *yě*, more specifically, the different use types of *yě* in modern Chinese, there are two questions that remain unanswered. The first one concerns the use of *dōu*, which is often regarded as an alternative to *yě* in some contexts. The second one concerns a diachronic study of *yě*. This last section of the dissertation is left for a brief discussion of these two questions.

6.2.1 Two hypotheses on *dōu*

The first unsolved question concerns the difference between *yě* and *dōu* in *no-matter* and *even* contexts. In Chapter 4, I have shown the reason that *yě* cannot be used in some *no-matter* contexts, i.e., due to the lack of scalarity. However, I did not address the question why *dōu*, which is regarded as a distributor (Lee 1986; Liu 1990; Lin 1998; Cheng 1991 and Cheng 1995) or a maximality operator (Giannakidou and Cheng 2006; Cheng 2009; Cheng and Giannakidou 2013), can be used in most scalar contexts, such as *lián* ‘even’ contexts. This short section has no intention to describe or define the nature of *dōu*. However, I will provide two tentative accounts for the possible use of *dōu* in scalar contexts.

One possible account is that *dōu* indeed has two different interpretations, i.e., as a scalar particle in scalar contexts expressing scalarity (e.g., in *even* contexts) and as a maximality/exhaustivity particle expressing exhaustivity in non-scalar contexts (e.g., in *no matter* contexts with a pure free-choice reading). Interestingly, the phenomenon that a particle can express exhaustivity in some contexts and scalarity in other contexts has been documented in recent literature. For instance, New and Erlewine (2018) discuss how the Burmese particle *hma* changes its interpretation from a non-scalar exhaustive particle to a scalar marker with the aid of other operators, e.g. in the scope of negation and a mood marker *dar* for propositional clefts like Mandarin *shì...de*.

Another possible account is that there is invariably one *dōu* in all contexts, which is a maximality operator in all *even* or *no matter* contexts. As a maximality marker, it requires a preceding element expressing exhaustiveness, for instance, motivated by spec-head agreement. Since there is always an overt or covert *wúlùn* ‘no matter’ which can enforce the exhaustiveness reading in all *no matter* contexts with a free-choice reading (as discussed by Lin (1996), Cheng and Giannakidou (2006)), the exhaustivity is syntactically marked by *wúlùn* ‘no matter’ and the use of *dōu* in these contexts can be relatively easily accounted for. The only problem is that *dōu* can also be used in a typical scalar context. One possible account is that exhaustiveness

is inherently denoted in all *lián* ‘even’ contexts. I have argued that the function of *lián* is to mark the extreme or maximal point of the scale. The exhaustive reading can be derived easily by relying on some pragmatic reasoning. It is in fact argued by Horn (1981:132-133) that exhaustivity, instead of being structurally encoded in some focusing or exhaustive listing constructions, like *it*-clefts, is pragmatically derived as a “generalized conversational implicature”. This pragmatic implicature-based account of exhaustivity can also be substantiated by Mandarin data. A generalized conversational implicature differs from an entailment in its defeasibility and reinforceability (Grice 1989; Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 2000: 26-27). The exhaustive reading can in fact be defeated in either *no-matter* contexts or *even* contexts in Mandarin. Consider (6) and (7):

(6) *Shéi dōu néng shuō wǒ, jiù nǐ bù xíng.*
 who DOU can criticize I only you not allow
 ‘I can be criticized by anyone, but only not by you.’

(7) *Lián guówáng dōu/yě lái-le,*
 even king DOU/YE come-PEFR
kěshì nǐ què méi lái.
 but you yet not come
 ‘Even the king came, but you did not come.’

Meanwhile, the first part in (6) and (7) can also be reinforced without any flavor of the redundancy, as shown in (8) and (9).

(8) *Shéi dōu néng shuō wǒ,*
 who DOU can criticize I
nǐ dāngrán yě néng.
 you surely also can
 ‘I can be criticized by anyone, surely including you.’

(9) *Lián guówáng dōu/yě lái-le,*
 even king DOU/YE come-PEFR
gèng-bù-yòng-shuō tā.
 not.to.speak.of he
 ‘Even the king came, not to speak of him.’

The above diagnostics of defeasibility and reinforceability suggest that the exhaustivity in *no matter* contexts and *even* contexts can be pragmatically derived as an implicature. The licensing of *dōu* in these contexts is thus not a surprise due to its satisfaction of the exhaustivity requirement. Furthermore,

it also means that an exhaustivity determiner like *wúlùn* ‘no matter’, as a syntactic marker, is not always required, particularly in a scalar context. Provided that exhaustivity is inherently there and pragmatically activated in a scalar context such as the *lián* context, it is possible to assume that both *yě* and *dōu* can occur in a *lián* sentence; one agrees with scalarity and the other with exhaustivity. In fact, all native speakers that were consulted for this study accept the *lián*-sentences with a *yě* preceding *dōu*, as demonstrated in (10) and (11):

- (10) *Tā lián yí-jù-Héland-huà*
 (s)he even one-CL-Dutch-language
yě dōu bú huì.
 YE DOU not can
 ‘He doesn’t even know one Dutch sentence.’
- (11) *Lián guówáng yě dōu lái-le,*
 even king YE DOU come-PEFR
 ‘Even the king came.’

Following this account, we can assume that, in all scalar cases, there is always a *yě* even though it can be left out when a *dōu* is also there. Based on the linear order shown in (10) and (11), it seems that *yě* denoting scalarity is syntactically higher than *dōu* denoting maximality.

Both accounts discussed above are certainly in need of more support and more research. I will not take a stance here.

6.2.2 *Yě* in *Lao Ch’i-ta* and Classical Chinese: A diachronic study

This study has not gone into the historical development of the use of *yě*. However, an interesting observation made by Hole illuminates the importance of a comprehensive diachronic study. Hole (2014) observes the similarity between Manchu and Mandarin in how ‘even’ is expressed, as illustrated by (12) and (13) (Hole 2014: 292):

- (12) **Manchu:**
Ter-ei toumen de EMGERI be inou
 this-GEN 10,000 DAT once ACC also
same mouterakô kai
 knowing not.can SFP
 ‘Among this vast number, one does not even know one [thing].’
 (originally from von der Gabelentz 1832: 58)

(13) **Mandarin:**

Tāmen dāngzhōng, wǒ lián yí-ge rén yě bú rènshi.
 they among I even one-CL person YE not know
 ‘I don’t even know a single person among them.’

As shown by (12) and (13), the Manchu sentence and the Mandarin sentence share the same sequence: “focus constituent + *inou/yě* + negation + predicate”. Considering the fact that Manchu, in contrast to Mandarin, is a heavily left-branching Altaic language which has its focus particle on the right of the focus, the current “unusual” Mandarin pattern shown in (13) may have been the result of language contact and was “modelled according to the Manchu type”, as speculated by Hole (2004: 292). This observation made by Hole has clearly shown the similarity between two genetically different languages. Language contact might be a possible account for Mandarin preposed foci in *no matter* and *even* contexts. A similar hypothesis that the fronted object pattern in northern Chinese may result from the influence of Altaic languages has been proposed by Norman (1988: 20).

However, my data does not support any influence from Manchu in this regard; if there is any Altaic influence at all, it must predate the advent of the Manchus. For instance, all the three different use types mentioned in this dissertation can be found in the *Lao Ch’i-ta* (老乞大) which was a widely used and one of the most authoritative textbooks of colloquial Chinese for Koreans in the Yi Dynasty (1393-1910 A.D.). Though the exact time of publication of the book is unknown, it is often believed that the book was at latest written in the early Ming dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.) or even as early as in Yuan dynasty (1271-1368 A.D.) (Dyer 1983: 3-5). The language recorded in the book does not correspond with that used during the Qing dynasty (1644-1911 A.D.), a period when the Manchu language arguably had its biggest influence on Mandarin. Almost all the different use types of *yě* in modern Chinese discussed in this dissertation can be found in *Lao Ch’i-ta*, as demonstrated below. The following examples and translations are taken from Svetlana Rimsky-Korsakoff Dyer’s (1983) “Grammatical Analysis of the *Lao Ch’i-ta*”.

1) Additive use type

- (14) *Lǐtōu yě yǒu wán-de me?*
 inside YE have mischievous-ATTR SFP
 ‘Are there also any mischievous ones among them?’
 (Dyer 1983: 216)

In addition, the correlative ‘*yě...yě*’ construction can also be found, as is shown in (15):

- (15) *Jiāo nǐ yí rì xīnkǔ.*
 make you one day work.hard
Wǒmen jiǔ yě zuì-le, chá fàn yě bǎo-le.
 we wine YE drunk-PERF tea meal YE full-PEFR
 ‘We have made you work all day. We have had enough wine and enough tea and food. too.’
 (Dyer 1983: 248)

2) Scalar *yě*

Examples show that a scalar *yě* is used in the *even* context with a preceding minimizer like in (16) and in a concessive conditional context like in (17):

- (16) *Zánmen měinián měiyuè měirì kuàihuo.*
 we every.year every.month every.day happy
Chūnxiàqiūdōng yí-rì
 spring.summer.autumn.winter one-day
yě bú yào pī le.
 YE not will cast.away SFP
 ‘We should be happy every year, every month and every day. We mustn’t cast away even one day in the spring, summer autumn or winter (i.e., be unhappy).’
 (Dyer 1983: 41)

- (17) *Xiū shuō nǐ liǎngsān-ge rén,*
 don’t say you two.three-CL people
biàn shì shí-shù-ge kèren,
 even.if is ten.or.more guest
yě dōu yǔ chá fàn chī.
 YE DOU to tea meal eat
 ‘I could have given tea and a meal, not only to you two or three people, but even to ten or more people.’
 (Dyer 1983: 37)

3) Modal *yě*

Modal *yě* which marks concession can also find its examples in *Lao Ch’i-ta*, as is shown in (18) expressing a criticism and (19) expressing a reluctant acceptance:

- (18) *Zhè mài-jiǔ-de, yě kuài chán.*
 This sell-wine-ATTR YE too bothering
 ‘You are a nuisance (lit. this wine-seller is good at bothering, i.e., dragging the discussion on and on.)
 (Dyer 1983: 239)
- (19) *Ruò jiāodào tā, bú lìshēn chéng-bu-dé rén,*
 if teach he not establish.self succeed-not-able man
yě shì tā-de mìng yě.
 YE is his fate SFP
 ‘If, after educating him, he does not establish himself and cannot
 succeed in life, that is his fate.’
 (Dyer 1983: 196)

Another interesting observation made by Dyer (1983: 190) is that when *yě* is used at the end of a sentence in *Lao Ch’i-ta*, it often indicates a completion of action or a change of situation which can interchange with *le* or *le yě*. Apparently, this use type of *yě* has disappeared in modern Chinese. See the following examples:

- (20) *Zhè gōng hé xián, dōu mǎi le.ye.*
 this bow and string all buy SFP
 ‘Now I have bought both the bow and the string.’
 (Dyer 1983: 191)
- (21) *Zhè záowǎn, rìtōu luò yě.*
 this time sun set SFP
 ‘It is so late now and the sun has set.’
 (Dyer 1983: 191)
- (22) *Míngxīng gāo le. Tiāndào dài míng yě.*
 morning.star high SFP sky.way wait bright SFP
 ‘The star is high, soon it will be dawn.’
 (Dyer 1983: 190)

Note that although *yě* is often used as a sentence final particle in Classical Chinese, the use type shown in (20) – (22) is in fact not a typical function of

Classical Chinese *yě*.⁷³ In Classical Chinese, the equivalent particle to sentence final *le*, instead of *yě*, is *yǐ* (矣) which can be used at the end of a sentence to denote that the event has happened or will happen soon or that a change of situation will occur or has occurred. *Yě* in Classical Chinese is often used as a mood particle at the end of sentences expressing factuality, explanation, affirmation or judgement, or it can be used after the topic functioning as a pause or a topic marker. It has nothing to do with tense or aspect (Wang Li 1980: 443-445; He Yongqing 2016: 187-190; Mei Guang 2018: 454-460). The three examples from *Lúnyǔ* ‘The Analects’ below demonstrate the function of *yě* in Classical Chinese. All the translations are taken from James Legge’s famous translation of the *Lúnyǔ*.

- (23) *Fūzǐ* *zhī* *wénzhāng*,
Confucius ATTR principles and ordinary descriptions
kě dé ér *wén* *yě*.
can get and hear SFP
‘The Master’s personal displays of his principles and ordinary descriptions of them may be heard.’
(From *Lúnyǔ: Gōngyě Cháng*: 13)
- (24) *Zǐ* *yuē*: “*Xiǔ* *mù* *bù* *kě* *diāo* *yě*,
Confucius said: rotten wood not can carve SFP
fèn tǔ *zhī* *qiáng* *bù* *kě* *wū* *yě*,
dung earth ATTR wall not can t rowel SFP
yú *Yú* *yǔ* *hé* *zhū*”.
to Yu PRT what blame
‘The Master said, “Rotten wood cannot be carved; a wall of dirty earth will not receive the trowel. This Yu! - what is the use of my reproving him?”’
(From *Lúnyǔ: Gōngyě Cháng*: 9)

⁷³ Classical Chinese or *wényán wén* refers to the written form of Chinese from the end of the Spring and Autumn period (approximately 771 to 476 BC) to the end of the Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 AD). According to Jerry Norman (1988: 83), Classical Chinese must have been based on the vernacular language of that period when it was created, although it became a purely written language later on. The sources that I cite in this chapter, i.e., The Analects or *Lúnyǔ* and *Mozi*, are two of the masterpieces written in Classical Chinese.

- (25) *Huò* *yuē* : “*Yōng* *yě*,
 someone said Yong TOP
rén ér bú nìng.”
 virtuous bu not ready.with.the.tongue
 ‘Someone said, “Yong is truly virtuous, but he is not ready with his
 tongue.”’
 (From *Lúnyǔ: Gōngyě Cháng*: 5)

As shown above, *yě* in (23) and (24) is used sentence-finally to confirm or emphasize the statement or judgement. And it is inserted in between the NP topic and the comment as a topic marker in (25).

According to Dyer (1983: 195), instances of *yě* with the typical functions in Classical Chinese are in fact difficult to find in *Lao Ch'i-ta*. Only a few instances of sentence-final *yě* expressing “emphasizing the exclamation” can be found. It is consistent with Wang Li’s speculations that after the *zhōnggǔ* ‘middle ancient’ period (about 400 – 1200 A.D.), the Classical Chinese use of *yě* became less frequent due to the copular *shì* ‘to be’ becoming more widely used.⁷⁴ The ways that *yě* was used in *Lao Ch'i-ta* provide us with a snapshot of this development. Another speculation is that the use of *yě* and *yǐ* has been merged into one *yě* which could interchange and co-occur with the sentence final particle *le* during/before the period of *Lao Ch'i-ta*’s publication.⁷⁵ The sentence final particle *le* won in the competition with *yě*. As a result, as a sentence final particle, *yě* finally disappeared from colloquial Chinese. This speculation surely calls for more evidence and investigation.

Furthermore, the additive particle in Classical Chinese was *yì* (亦) rather than *yě*, as shown in (26):

- (26) *Nì* *yuàn* *ér* *yǒu* *qí* *rén*,
 conceal resentment and make.friends that man
Zuǒ Qiūmíng chǐ zhī, Qiū yì chǐ zhī.
 Zuo Qiuming be.ashamed.of this Qiu also be.ashamed.of this
 ‘To conceal resentment against a person, and appear friendly with him,
 Zuo Qiuming was ashamed of such conduct. I also am ashamed of it.’
 (From *Lúnyǔ: Gōngyě Cháng*: 25)

⁷⁴ According to Wang Li’s hypothesis on the history of the Chinese language (1980: 35), the period around the 12th century and 13th century is the transitory phase from the *zhōnggǔ* ‘mid-ancient’ period to the *jìndài* ‘modern’ period.

⁷⁵ I did not find any instance of *yǐ* in *Lao Ch'i-ta*

Although no instance of *yì* being used in an *even* context with a preceding object is found, *yì* is found in *even if* sentences, as demonstrated in (27):

- (27) *Suī gǔ zhī Yáo Shùn Yǔ Tāng Wén Wǔ*
 even.if ancient ATTR Yao Shun Yu Tang Wen Wu
zhī wéi zhèng, yì wú yǐ yì cǐ yǐ
 TOP do governing YI not.have use differ this SFP
 ‘Quite the same as they would be even in the government of Yao, Shun,
 Yu, Tang, Wen, and Wu.’
 (From *Mòzǐ 7-tiānzhi III: 7*)

In light of the use of *yì* in Classical Chinese, it is not clear when and how the preverbal *yě* used in (14) – (19) emerged and replaced *yì* (at least in colloquial Chinese). I shall use this historical mystery to end my dissertation.