



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

“All the aids which a beginner needs”: James Summers’ (1828-1891) research on Chinese grammar

Chen, W.

Citation

Chen, W. (2023, June 15). *“All the aids which a beginner needs”: James Summers’ (1828-1891) research on Chinese grammar*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3620407>

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3620407>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

“All the aids which a beginner needs”:
James Summers’ (1828-1891) research on Chinese grammar

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van
de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van rector magnificus prof.dr.ir. H. Bijl,
volgens besluit van het college voor promoties
te verdedigen op donderdag 15 juni 2023
klokke 11:15 uur

door

Wei Chen

geboren te Neimongol, China
in 1990

Promotores: Prof. dr. Rint Sybesma
Prof. dr. Henning Klöter (Humboldt Universität zu Berlin)

Promotiecommissie: Prof. dr. Gijsbert Rutten
Prof. dr. Nicola McLelland (University of Nottingham)
Prof. dr. Ingrid Tiekens-Boon van Ostade
Prof. dr. Otto Zwartjes (Université de Paris)

This dissertation was partially funded by a PhD scholarship from University of Malta.

Table of contents

List of figures and tables	4
Major conventions	5
Part I: Introduction	6
1. Research in the context of the historiography of linguistics	6
2. The aims of the present study	13
3. Framework and methodology	15
Part II: Summers' works and their historical background	19
Chapter 1. Summers' life and times	19
1.1 A brief introduction to Summers' life and the historical background of his works	19
1.2 Summers' professional life	24
Chapter 2. A glimpse of the history of linguistics in the East and the West	33
2.1 The Greco-Latin model	33
2.2 Nineteenth-century linguistics	34
2.3 The Chinese linguistic tradition	41
2.4 A case study: Chinese characters	42
Chapter 3. An introduction to Summers' works concerning China and its language	46
3.1 <i>Lecture on the Chinese Language and Literature</i>	47
3.2 <i>The Gospel of Saint John in the Chinese Language</i>	48
3.3 <i>The Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed</i>	48
3.4 <i>A Handbook of the Chinese Language</i>	49
3.5 <i>The Rudiments of the Chinese Language</i>	53
3.6 <i>Chinese and Japanese Repository</i>	54
3.7 <i>Flying Dragon Reporter</i>	57
3.8 <i>Notes on Writing Chinese with Roman Letters</i>	64
3.9 <i>The Phoenix, a Monthly Magazine for China, Japan & Eastern Asia</i>	65
3.10 <i>Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese, Japanese and Manchu Books in the Library of the India Office</i>	66
3.11 <i>On Chinese Lexicography, with Proposals for a New Arrangement of the Characters of That Language</i>	68
Part III: Summers and Chinese grammar	71
Chapter 4. Summers and the claim that Chinese is a "monosyllabic language"	71

4.1 A general introduction to Chinese as “monosyllabic” at the level of the word ..	71
4.2 Summers’ view on the question of whether Chinese is “monosyllabic”	73
4.3 Summers’ precursors and the claim that “Chinese is a monosyllabic language”	77
4.4 Summers’ successors on the view that Chinese being a monosyllabic language	81
4.5 Summary	82
Chapter 5. Morphology.....	84
5.1 General introduction to Chinese morphology.....	84
5.2 James Summers and Chinese morphology.....	86
5.3 Summers’ precursors and Chinese morphology.....	102
5.4 Summers’ successors and Chinese morphology	111
5.5 Summary	112
Chapter 6. Parts of speech	114
6.1 A general introduction to the problems of classifying Chinese words.....	114
6.2 Summers and parts of speech	115
6.3 Summers’ precursors and parts of speech	121
6.4 Summers’ successors and parts of speech	129
6.5 Summary	130
Chapter 7. Classifiers.....	132
7.1 A general introduction to “classifiers”	132
7.2 Summers’ research on the Chinese classifiers	134
7.3 Summers’ precursors and Chinese classifiers.....	138
7.4 Summers’ successors and Chinese classifiers	143
7.5 Summary	144
Chapter 8. Particles.....	146
8.1 Summers and particles	146
8.2 Summers’ precursors and Chinese particles.....	153
8.3 Summers’ successors and their discussion of particles	158
8.4 Summary	159
Chapter 9. Syntax.....	161
9.1 A general introduction to the topic of “syntax”	161
9.2 Summers and Chinese syntax	162
9.3 Syntactic research in Summers’ reference works	174
9.4 Scholars after Summers and Chinese syntax	183

9.5 Summary	183
Chapter 10. A brief note on Summers' ideas of Chinese phonology and orthography	185
10.1 Summers and the Romanization of the Chinese language.....	185
10.2 Summers and Chinese phonology	192
10.3 Concluding remarks	204
Part IV. Conclusion	206
1. Summers' terminology.....	206
2. The characteristics of Summers' research on Chinese	206
2.1 Hybridism.....	206
2.2 Eclecticism.....	207
2.3 Pedagogical orientation	208
3. The contribution of Summers' research to the historiography of linguistics	210
Appendix 1. A brief introduction to the works referred to by Summers	213
1. The works mentioned in the Preface of the <i>Handbook</i>	213
2. Other works which Summers referred to	224
Appendix 2. A list of the works by Summers' successors	229
1. Works by Summers' students	229
2. Scholars who commented on Summers' works	229
3. Summers' contemporaries.....	231
Appendix 3. An inventory of Summers' terminology.....	232
References.....	235
Unpublished sources.....	235
Newspapers.....	236
Websites.....	236
Publications	237
Summary.....	286
Samenvatting in het Nederlands.....	287
Acknowledgements	288
Curriculum vitae.....	289

List of figures and tables

Figure 1: ‘On English’ in *Flying Dragon*

Figure 2: Title page of *Lecture*

Figure 3: Title page of *Handbook*

Figure 4: Title page of *Rudiments*

Figure 5: Title pages of two issues of *Repository*

Figure 6: Title page of the first issue of *Flying Dragon*

Figure 7: Javanese Pégon or Gundil in *Flying Dragon*

Figure 8: Title page of *Phoenix*

Figure 9: Specimen page of Summers’ dictionary

Figure 10: “Meaning” of the word as a criterion to classify words in *Flying Dragon*

Figure 11: [ʒ] and [dʒ]

Figure 12: Parts of speech in Summers’ works

Figure 13: The vowel triangle by Summers

Table 1: Parts of speech of Summers’ precursors

Table 2: Consonants in Summers’ works

Table 3: The combination of consonants and <w>

Table 4: The differences of the two texts in Summers’ *Handbook* and Thom’s *Chinese Speaker*

Major conventions

In principle, when quoting passages from James Summers and his contemporaries, their own transcription and glosses are adopted, unless the translation they provide contains obvious mistakes. If glosses or transcriptions are not provided by the authors, they are added in square brackets. In other cases, for instance, when analysing Summers' work and his examples (that is, outside of a quotation), the *Hànyǔ Pīnyīn* transcription is employed without square brackets. When citing modern sources, *Hànyǔ Pīnyīn* is used, and translations are provided where necessary. Finally, all quotations are cited literally from the original works, without any corrections, even if there are obvious mistakes, unless otherwise indicated.

The first couple of words in the book titles are used as abbreviations to refer to the book, unless otherwise indicated (cf. Appendices 1–2).

When referring to the sections of this dissertation, it always means the section in the same chapter, unless otherwise indicated.