

Embedded Imperatives and Finiteness in Mandarin Chinese

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Introduction – This research project studies the so-called negative imperative marker *bie* in Mandarin Chinese (MC) and its theoretical implications with respect to finiteness and control. In comparison to the other two negative markers, *mei* and *bu* in MC, the negative marker *bie* is understudied in the current literature, in part because it was generally assumed to be a negation specifically designed for imperative sentences, such as (1a) vs. (1b). However, we observe that *bie* is complementary to the other negations in embedded environments, such as (1c) vs. (1d):

- (1) a. *Bie* chou-yan. b. Ta *mei/bu* chou-yan
 NEG smoke-cigarette he NEG smoke-cigarette
 ‘Don’t smoke.’ ‘He did/does not smoke.’
- c. Zhangsan *xiwang/quan/jiao* Lisi **mei/*bu*^{ok}*bie* chou-yan.
 ZS expect/persuade/ask Lisi NEG smoke-cigarette
 ‘ZS expected/persuaded/asked Lisi not to smoke.’
- d. *Zhangsan *xiangxin/shuo/zhidao/jide* Lisi *mei/bu/*bie* chou-yan.
 ZS believe/say/know/remember Lisi NEG smoke-cigarette
 (intended) ‘ZS believed/said/knew/remembered that Lisi did/does not smoke.’

The contrast between (1c) and (1d) immediately raises questions of what kind of predicate is able to license the negative imperative marker in the embedded environment, and how we should analyze such a selection in syntax and semantics.

Analysis – Syntactically, we analyze the embedded clauses that allow for *bie* as control (infinitive) clauses (while the others as finite clauses). That is, under the (1c) type of predicate, the second argument (*Lisi*) is the object of the matrix clause, which is the controller of the PRO in the embedded clause (see 2a). Supporting evidence comes from binding and partial control. First, in (2a) the pronoun cannot refer to the matrix subject, suggesting that the pronoun is in the same binding domain, subject to Condition B. However, co-reference is possible in the finite complement in (2b). Second, the former admits partial control (3a), but not the latter (3b):

- (2) a. ZS_i *xiwang/quan/jiao* ta_{j/*i} [CP *bie* PRO_{j/*i} chou-yan]
 ZS expect/persuade/ask he NEG smoke
 ‘ZS expected/persuaded/asked him not to smoke.’
- b. ZS_i *xiangxin/shuo/zhidao/jide* [CP ta_{i/j} *bu/mei* chou-yan]
 ZS believe/say/know/remember he NEG smoke
 ‘ZS believed/said/knew/remembered that he does/did not smoke.’
- (3) a. ZS_i *xiwang/quan/jiao* Lisi_j [CP PRO_{j+} chang jianmian]
 ZS expect/persuade/ask Lisi often meet
 ‘ZS expected/persuaded/asked Lisi to meet (with him or others) more often.’
- b. *ZS *xiangxin/shuo/zhidao/jide* [CP Lisi chang jianmian.]
 ZS believe/say/know/remember Lisi often meet

Semantically, we observe that the contrast between (1c) and (1d) is related to the propositional attitude of the matrix predicate, and only those with the bouletic attitude (involving the speaker’s intention, wish, or desire) are able to license the negative marker *bie* in the embedded clause.

Implications – Based on the syntax-semantics correlation, we argue that finiteness in Mandarin Chinese is sensitive to the propositional attitude of the matrix predicate (contrary to the claim

