

should not have been found out, and (22) suggests that 'our conversation' should not have been heard:

- (20) Zhāngsān bèi rén kànjian le
Zhangsan BEI person see CRS

Zhangsan was seen by people.

- (21) nèi — jian shì bèi tā fāxiàn le
that — CL matter BEI 3sg discover CRS

That matter was discovered by him/her.

- (22) wǒmen — de huà bèi tīng — dào le
we — GEN speech BEI hear — arrive CRS

Our conversation was overheard.

Second, it has been observed by practically all Chinese grammarians that the number of *bèi* constructions that do not express adversity is increasing, particularly in the written language of modern China. This increase in the nonadversity usage of the *bèi* constructions in modern Chinese is clearly due to the influence of the Indo-European languages, especially English. In fact, Chao calls such nonadversity *bèi* sentences "translate." He states that "recently, from translating foreign passive verbs, 'by', or some equivalent in the Western language, is mechanically equated to *bèi* and applied to verbs of favorable meanings" (Chao [1968:703]). Elsewhere he explains that

a Chinese translator . . . uses a preposition *bèi* 'by' whenever he sees a passive voice in the original verb, forgetting that Chinese verbs have no voice. . . . Once this sort of thing is done often enough, it gets to be written in originals, even where no translation is involved. . . . Such "translate" is still unpalatable to most people and no one talks in that way yet, but it is already common in scientific writing, in newspapers, and in schools. [Chao (1970:155)]

According to another observer (Kiernan [1969:74–75]),²

a markedly increased use of the passive has perhaps been one of the striking syntactic trends in the development of Modern Chinese. . . . There has been a great deal of translation from foreign languages into Chinese during the past half century, including a perfect flood of Marxist material, which the Soviets translated and sold far below cost and which had a profound and continuing impact upon Chinese intelligentsia. The great majority of the translators were hacks, equipped with neither any real linguistic

sophistication nor even a very secure grasp of the languages involved and their stylistic niceties. They had learned another language in the most straightforward and mindless fashion: Here is a Russian verb *ispol'zovan* [which means 'is used, utilized']. What's the Chinese for that? *Bèi li-yòng* [where *li-yòng* means 'to take advantage of someone or something for one's own benefit'] and ever thereafter, when the Russian *ispol'zovan* crops up, it is doggedly translated *bèi li-yòng*, with never a thought that there might be some possibility of recasting the sentence to put it into idiomatic Chinese, avoiding the passive. Such patterns become enshrined in ritually-admired literature and thence they are imitated in other literature and are read aloud; and in no time people are speaking that way, with no idea that they are participating in radical linguistic change.

Although in spoken Mandarin the *bèi* sentence, as Chao points out, is confined primarily to the expression of adverse messages, from the written language and "translate" the nonadversity usage of the *bèi* passive has been extended into people's speech. This extension most naturally occurs with verbs representing usages borrowed or introduced into the language during the modern age, such as *xuǎn* 'elect', *jiěfàng* 'liberate', *fān(yi)* 'translate':

- (23) Zhāngsān bèi rénmin xuǎn zuò dàibiǎo le
Zhangsan BEI people elect serve:as representative CRS

Zhangsan has been elected by the people to be (their) representative.

- (24) shěng — chéng bèi jiěfàng le
province — capital BEI liberate CRS

The provincial capital has been liberated.

- (25) Losù — de shū yǐjīng bèi tā fān
Russell — GEN book already BEI 3sg translate

— chéng Zhōngwén le
— become Chinese CRS

Russell's book has already been translated into Chinese by him.

The mutual influence between the written and the spoken language is, of course, to be expected. In the case of the nonadversity usage of the *bèi* construction, the written language actually serves as a vehicle for the borrowing of a pattern from Indo-European languages into Mandarin.