

Put Focus on Presupposition: on the Chinese “just” *jiushi*

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Abstract: The chunk *jiushi* in Chinese is of different categorial identities and assumes a variety of meanings. This paper zooms in on its compositional and adverbial usages under a semantic-pragmatic approach. Similar to *just*, *jiushi* carries exclusive meaning “only”, emphatic meaning “exactly” and can serve as an independent confirmative response in discourse. Different meanings of *jiushi* correspond to different intonational elements in the sentence. The interaction between *jiushi* and the focalized constituent indicates its identity as a focus sensitive operator. Semantically, *jiushi* binds an identificational focus and identifies it as the exhaustive subset of a contextually relevant set. The apparent different meanings of *jiushi* can be attributed to the floating of identificational focus, which can be a property, an entity or a truth value. Pragmatically, *jiushi* implies an affirmation of the speaker’s own presupposition and it can trigger the presupposition in the hearer’s mind. The speaker’s intention to accommodate the common background knowledge drives her to put focus on her presupposition is the pragmatic condition to use *jiushi*. Standing on the boundary between semantics and pragmatics, *jiushi*, is used when a presupposition is also the focus, as the construction “X *jiushi* X” literally indicates.

Key words: *jiushi*; Chinese; identificational focus, focus operator; presupposition; emphasis

1. Introduction

In Mandarin Chinese there is a construction: “X *jiushi* X”, in which X can be of various categories and *jiushi* is a chunk formed by adverbial *jiu* and the copula *shi*. At first sight, the repetition of X causes a violation of the Cooperative Principle (Grice, 1975), as there is no old-new information flow in the construction. This conflicts with the Maxim of Quantity in CP. However, the addition of an adverb *jiu* exempts such a violation and contributes to the so-called “constructional meaning”: a sense of emphasis on X (Lu, 2010; Tan, 2011). For example:

1. Jizhang jiu shi jizhang.
Captain just be captain
Capitan is captain.
2. Luxun jiu shi Luxun.
Luxun just be Luxun
Luxun is Luxun.
3. Yibai kuai jiu shi yibai kuai.
One hundred RMB just be one hundred RMB
RMB 100 is RMB 100.
4. Bu tongyi jiu shi bu tongyi.
Not agree just be not agree.
I will never agree (on that).

In (1), *jiushi* connects 2 common nouns, namely “*jizhang*” (captain) in Chinese and the construction emphasizes the typical properties of being a captain, such as calmness, being good at flying a plane or dealing with emergency. Similarly, in (2), the variable X is saturated by a proper name “Luxun”, the great Chinese writer in 1900s. The sentence expresses the admiration on Luxun, like “This is exactly Luxun and he is worthy of the name!”. In (3), the X is a numerical-classifier phrase: RMB100 and the sentence emphasizes the amount of money is exactly 100, neither less nor more. The logic is the same in (4), in which *jiushi* connects 2 identical negative phrases, *bu tongyi* (not agree) and it implies “I will never agree with that no matter what you say.”, showing the strong determination of the

disagreement.

Through the 4 examples, we can see in the “X *jiushi* X” construction, the redundant repetition of X is just an illusion and the construction indeed contributes some new information by the adding of *jiu*. The new information is the emphasis of the characteristics held by X, whether it nominative or predicative. Furthermore, the emphasis can only be recognized in certain contexts or situations such as after an emergency on the plane (like the situation of (1)), or when I am reading an excellent essay of Luxun (like the situation of (2)), namely the situations in which the typical characteristic of X is shown. Therefore, here comes the first puzzle: How come the emphatic meaning in the construction? Is it meaning encoded in the semantic layer or is it pragmatically derived through implicature?

Syntactically, the above construction consists the adverbial *jiu* and the copulative verb *shi*. The copulative status of *shi* is evident since it links the repetitive two parts and indicates the predication relation (Wang, 1947; Zhu, 1982). Noting that all the above sentences are infelicitous without *jiu*. Therefore, *jiu* must play a crucial role in licensing the construction and contributing to its emphatic meaning. To unveil the mystery of the construction, it is crucial to figure out the pivot of the structure, *jiu*.

Jiu, being an adverbial, is adjuncted to *shi* to modify the predicate, with its semantic meaning unclear by now. Although the boundary between *jiu* and *shi* is relatively clear in this construction, *jiushi* has been grammaticalized into a single adverb (Lv, 1980; Zhang, 2002; Dong, 2004). The adverb *jiushi* is commonly seen in between subject and predicate (X *jiushi* Y) and it carries several different meanings, similar to *just* in English. For example:

5. Nana *jiushi* xihuan change, meiyou biede aihao.
Nana just like sing, no other hobbies
Nana just likes singing, with no other hobbies.
6. Xiaoming *jiushi* bu xiangxin Nana.
Xiaoming just not believe Nana
Xiaoming just won't believe Nana.
7. ---Xiaoming zhunbei de henchongfen, yiding neng de diyi ming!
Xiaoming prepare DE very adequate, certain can get first prize
Xiaoming had very adequate preparation, it is certain that he can get the first prize!
---*Jiushi*!
Just
Exactly!

(5) is the exclusive use of the adverbial *jiushi*. It restricts the scope of the predicate: The only hobby Nana has is singing. *Jiushi* excludes all the other possible hobbies. In (6), the use of *jiushi* emphasizes the strong distrust of Xiaoming to Nana: No matter what Nana said or did, Xiaoming won't trust her. Without *jiushi*, the emphatic meaning cannot be expressed. This is the emphatic use of *jiushi*. Lastly in (7), *jiushi* is used independently as an affirmative response, like *exactly*. Different from (1)-(4) in which the deletion of *jiushi* will lead to the crash of the sentence, in 5-7, *jiushi* as adjuncts can be deleted without influencing grammaticality (although the exclusive/emphatic/affirmative meaning is subtracted from the sentence), indicating its adverbial status. We call *jiushi* in (1)-(4) compositional *jiu-shi*¹ and (5)-(7) adverbial *jiushi*. Comparing adverb *jiushi* with compositional *jiu-shi*, we can trace some similarities between them, namely the emphatic sense in some cases. We bring up the second question here: what is the nature of *jiushi*? What's the relationship between the compositional *jiu-shi* and adverb *jiushi*?

This research attempts to propose a unified account for compositional and adverbial *jiushi* in the aforementioned

¹ Here *jiu* and *shi* doesn't actually form a phrase syntactically. The copula *shi* forms a constituent with the phrase that follows it and this predicate “*shi* YP” is modified by the adverb *jiu*. That is to say, “*jiu-shi*” is merely a linear combination and they do not form a constituent. “Compositional” is just a label here.

cases. And we believe figuring out the nature of *jiushi* will shed some light on the answer to the first question, namely the emphatic meaning in the construction.

Here is the prelude to our proposal. We argue that the adverbial *jiushi* contributes to 2 layers of meanings: Semantically, *jiushi* serves as the identificational focus operator and it identifies the focus as the exhaustive subset of a relevant set within a given context. Pragmatically, the use of *jiushi* is an affirmation of the presupposition and it accommodates the presupposition of the hearer. From a diachronic perspective, it is the adverb *jiu* that initially carries these 2 layers of meanings and after its combination with the copula *shi*, *jiu-shi* has undergone grammaticalization and is reanalyzed as an adverb, inheriting the properties of *jiu*. In the following, I will show that the exclusive/emphatic/affirmative use of the chunk *jiushi* can be umbrellaed to the above account. Moreover, it also explains the source of the emphatic meaning of the “X *jiushi* X” construction.

The organization of the paper is as follows: Section 2 lays out the usages of the chunk *jiushi*, including the semantic meanings and the appropriate contexts to use it. Section 3 provides the theoretical foundation to analyze *jiushi*, then gives the unified account of different meanings of *jiushi*. Section 4 further investigated the property of *jiushi* in the pragmatic facet, especially its relationship with presupposition as well as the information structure. Section 5 comes back to the construction “X *jiushi* X” to anchor the source of its emphatic meaning. Section 6 discusses the relationship between compositional *jiu-shi* and adverbial *jiushi*, explaining their differences. Section 7 concludes the paper.

2. Observations on *jiu-shi* and *jiushi*

From the introduction, it seems that *jiu-shi* is compositional in the construction “X *jiu-shi* X”, while it is an adverb in other contexts, namely in the construction “X *jiushi* Y”. In effect, the one-to-one correspondence is an illusion. Compositional *jiu-shi* can also occur in “X *jiushi* Y” as long as *shi* is a copula to link the subject with a nominal phrase. The point for distinction is whether there is another predicative phrase besides *jiushi*: adverbial *jiushi* is to modify the main predicate while for compositional *jiu-shi*, the copulative *shi* is the predicate, with *jiu* adjuncted to it.

8. Dahua (*jiushi*) ai kanshu.
Dahua (just) love read
Dahua (just) loves reading.
9. Dahua*(*jiu-shi*) Beijing Daxue de xuesheng.
Dahua *(just be) Peking University DE student
Dahua is exactly a student of Peking University.
10. Dahua *jiu-shi* zuotian lai de.
Dahua just-be yesterday come DE
It is just yesterday that Dahua came.

In (8), the deletion of *jiushi* does not affect grammaticality, indicating the adjunct status of *jiushi*. While in (9), the sentence is largely ungrammatical² without *jiu-shi*, showing *shi*’s main predicate status thus *jiu-shi* is “compositional” in (9). (10) involves a *shi...de* cleft construction which is used to express focus. The constituent in the slot is get focused thus *shi* in the construction is also called a focus marker (Dong, 2004; Paul & Whitman, 2008; Wang, 2018). It is a consensus that focus marker *shi* is originated from its copulative use (Shi & Xu, 2001; Dong, 2004; Shi, 2005). Therefore, for focus marker *shi*, it is still possible to retain the copulative analysis: taking *shi* as a copula, linking the subject and a nominalization phrase, De Phrase (Zhu, 1960, 1978; Li & Thompson, 1981). To sum up, in (9) and (10), *shi* is the same element, namely the copula.

² Copulative sentence without *shi* is marginally grammatical in some context. For example
Wo Beijingren. Jintian xingqisan.

The matching between the category of *jiushi* and the construction it occurs is seen as follows:

11.

<i>X jiushi Y</i>	<i>X jiushi X</i>
Compositional	Compositional
Adverbial	

Up to now, we make a clear distinction between compositional *jiu-shi* and adverbial *jiushi*. Although both of them occur in “*X jiushi Y*” construction, their syntactic behaviors are quite different. The intriguing construction “*X jiushi X*” constitutes a subset of “*X jiushi Y*” when *jiushi* is compositional. Next, we will firstly concentrate on *jiushi* in “*X jiushi Y*”, to give a detailed description of compositional *jiu-shi* and adverbial *jiushi*. Then we come back to the construction “*X jiushi X*” in a later section.

2.1 *Jiu* and *shi*, separately

Compositional *jiu-shi* consists of 2 parts: adverb *jiu* and copula *shi*. *Jiu* in Chinese is a multifunctional word that can occur in different syntactic environments with different categorial identities, such as verb, preposition, adverb and conjunctive (Lv, 1980). Among its different usages, the adverbial one is the most diversified and controversial. For instance, *jiu* can be used to restrict the scope of the object/predicate, and it can trigger the scalar implicature, just like *only* in English (Lu, 1984; Zhou, 1991).

12. Wo *jiu* you sanbai kuai.

I only have three hundred RMB.

I only have RMB300.

13. Lili *jiu* mai le binggan.

Lili only buy Asp cookies.

Lili only bought cookies.

In (13), the use of *jiu* triggers the scalar implicature that the quantity of money is no more than RMB 300. And in (14), the thing Lili bought (did) is limited to cookies (buying cookies). There is nothing else she bought/did. The meaning is different depending on where the focus is.

Jiu is also a modal adverb with emphatic meaning to show the determines of the speaker. (Lv, 1980; Xu, 2003)

14. wo *jiu* yao mai babiwawa.

I JIU want buy Bobby.

I want to buy a Bobby (very determined)!

(14) could be used in a toy store when a little girl is very determined to buy a Bobby. Without *jiu*, the determined tone cannot be expressed. The sketchy description of *jiu* shows it is a polysemous adverb to modify the main verb³. When the main verb is copula *shi*, we have compositional *jiu-shi*.

As is known, in Chinese, *shi* is a copula which can be used in nominative predicate sentences or in a cleft focus construction *shi...de* (Wang, 1947; Zhu, 1978; Shi, 2005; Paul & Whitman, 2008; Wang, 2018). Similar to English *be*, copula *shi* states the identification/classification relation between a subject and a nominal phrase, expressing predication. When *jiu*, the adverb modifying it, different semantic “flavors” of *jiu* are added to the sentence:

15. Wo *jiu-shi* ge **wumingxiao**zu.

I just be Cl nobody

I am only nobody.

16. Xiaoming *jiu-shi* ge **xiao haizi**.

³ The adverb *jiu* has more usages than we listed here, but only these two occur when it combines with copula *shi* and “inherit” to the adverbial *jiushi* we will discuss later. Due to the limitation of space, I skipped the other irrelevant use of *jiu* here.

Xiaoming just be CL little kid

Xiaoming is just a kid.

In (15), the “only/just” meaning of *jiu* is instantiated and it restricts the scope of the predicate by confirming the nominal phrase after *jiu-shi* as the only suitable description for the subject, excluding any other possibilities. Again, it can trigger a scalar reading if the nominal phrase is on an ordered scale. (15) means that I am only a nobody rather than some big shot (so don’t count on me). In (16), *xiao haizi* (kid) can be put on the scale {kid, teenager, adult...}. the use of *jiushi* carries the scalar meaning: namely, Xiaoming is just a kid, not a teenager or an adult, which further gives rise to implied meanings like “don’t put too much pressure on him” or “why bother arguing with him”, depending on the context. For the exclusive *jiu-shi*, the intonational stress always falls on the last constituent, namely, the final focus.

The emphatic meaning of *jiu* can also be added to *jiu-shi*, as in (17)-(19). This *jiu* is more like is “exactly/just” rather than “only”. For instance, (17) emphasizes “I” am exactly the person you are looking for. Furthermore, the use of *jiu* is usually to cater for the presupposition of the addressee: in (17) the addressee must have somebody to look for and “I” am the one, out of her expectation. In (18), the pragmatic sense is more evident. (18) expresses the speaker’s certainty about the fact that today is Wednesday and it is used as a refutation toward the hearer’s opposite belief “today is not Wednesday”. Notice that in (17) and (18), the (default) intonational stress is different. In (17), the focalized element is the subject, i.e., initial focus. While in (18) it is *jiu-shi*, specifically, *jiu* that gets focused. Actually, both of the 2 focalized patterns are accessible for them, although with different meanings. Again we take the cleft construction (19) as an example. Without *jiu*, the focalized element is *Meiguo* (America). When *jiu* is added, the focalized element changes to *jiu*, indicating the speaker’s certainty about the fact that Zhang Sirui is from America, like (18). Furthermore, the subject of (19) can also get focused, for example, when the hearer is looking for someone from America and the speaker says that it is exactly Zhang Sirui. To sum up, for the emphatic meaning of *jiushi*, the emphasized element can be the subject or the whole sentence, marked by different stress patterns.

17. **Wo** *jiu-shi* ni yao zhao de ren.

I just be you want find De person

I am exactly the person you are looking for.

18. Jintian **jiu-shi** xingqisan!

Today just be Wednesday

Today is exactly Wednesday!

19. Zhang Sirui **jiu-shi** cong Meiguo lai de.

Zhang Sirui just be from America come De.

Zhang Sirui is exactly from America.

Zhang Sirui comes from America, exactly (I am very sure about that).

Sometimes *jiu-shi* can be ambiguous between the exclusive meaning and the emphatic meaning. The different distributions of stress can help to disambiguate, see (20):

20. **Dahua** *jiu-shi* (ge) **mendian jingli**.

Dahua just be (CL) store manager.

Dahua is only a store manager.

Dahua is exactly a store manager.

Dahua is the store manager, exactly (I am sure about that).

The sentence is ambiguous between “only” and “exactly” reading. The only reading can be construed when mendian jingli (storemanager). For example, Lili, a employee in a big company, is bullied by her managers. Angry and embarrassed, she reported it to her direct superior Dahua but the complaint received no recourse. Her friend, Nana knew this issue and encouraged Lili to skip the area manager and report the issue to the CEO. In this situation,

Nana would say (20) with the stress falling on (ge) *diqujingli* (a region manager), indicating the Dahua is only a store manager and this position is too low to deal with this issue. It is not helpful to ask for his help at all.

The stress can also fall on Dahua and the sentence conveys the meaning that Dahua is exactly a region manager. Imagine a context like this: On the company meeting, the CEO would like a store manager to explain some detailed issues. It suddenly comes to her/him that Dahua, who is just also attending this meeting is exactly a store manager. In this context, the CEO would say (20), stressing Dahua. The sentence implies that there is no need to look for some other store manager, we just have one here. Of course, *jiu-shi* can also get focused in (20), expressing certainty on the fact that Dahua is the store manager.

To summarize, as the stress fell on different elements of the sentence, the meaning of *jiu* as well as the truth condition of the sentence is different. It is “exactly” when the stress is on the subject or on *jiu* and “only” when the stress is carried by (part of) the predicate. *Jiu-shi*, is focus sensitive in this regard.

The boundary between *jiu* and *shi* is blurred when *jiushi* becomes an adverb. The adverbial use of *jiushi* is largely found in non-copulative sentences, with a matrix predicate apart from *jiushi*. In descriptive grammar books, it is believed there are 3 usages of adverbial *jiushi* (lv, 1980): exclusive use, emphatic use and affirmative use. These usages are largely parallel to compositional *jiu-shi*.

2.2 The exclusive use of *jiushi*

The first use of the adverb *jiushi* inherits the “only/just” meaning of *jiu*. It occurs in between the subject and the predicate. *jiushi* restricts the scope of the predicate and makes it the only thing that the subject can do. For example:

21. Tuixiu hou, laozhang meijian *jiushi* **he he cha**, **Kan kan bao**.

Retire after, Laozhang every just drink-drink tea read read newspaper

After retirement, everyday Laozhang just drink tea and read newspaper (doing nothing else).

22. wo *jiushi* **Kankan**, bu hui nonghuai de.

I just see see not will break De.

I just want to have a look; I won't break it.

In (21), *jiushi* means the only thing that laozhang does after retirement is reading newspapers or drinking tea, nothing else. Without *jiushi*, the exclusive meaning cannot be expressed. It is the same for (22). A felicitous scenario for (22) is as follows: Xiaoming is a stamp collector. He collects a lot of precious stamps. One day his cousin came to his house and wanted to have a look at his stamps. But he was afraid that Xiaoming would reject him since he cherished the stamps so much. In order to persuade Xiaoming to allow him to look at the stamps, his cousin would say (22), which means that “the only thing I am going to do is to have a look and nothing else”. This implied Xiaoming's stamps are safe with him.

The “only/just” meaning of *jiushi* is indicated by its free substitution of *jiushi* with *zhi(shi)*, the other exclusive adverb in Chinese. Same as compositional *jiu-shi*, the exclusive *jiushi* “only” sentence also has a final focus, namely the elements after *jiushi*, indicated by the intonational stress.

2.3 The emphatic use of *jiushi*

This *jiushi* is used for emphasis. It appears in between the subject and the predicate. Speaker uses *jiushi* to emphasize what has been addressed is absolutely true and often she has sufficient evidence to say that. Let me elaborate on that with some examples:

23. Context: In our class we all know that Nana is fond of reading all kinds of books. Today in the crowded and noisy dining hall, I found Nana reading and I say the following sentence:

“Nana **jiushi** ai kan shu!”

“Nana just love read book”

“Nana loves read books, exactly!”

(23) asserts Nana loves reading books and the addition of *jiushi* is not to exclude other hobbies Nana has, but to emphasize that Nana really enjoys reading. The sentence is particularly felicitous when I see Nana is reading in some situations especially uncomfortable for reading, which constitutes solid evidence to justify Nana’s passion for reading, the fact that is in line with the speaker’s belief in mind. The logic is similar for an adjective predicate in emphatic *jiushi* sentence:

24. Context: Nana is a beautiful girl and this is acknowledged by everyone who knows her. Today I saw a picture of Nana on which she was making a face. For a normal face, such an expression will be ugly or scary. Whereas Nana is still very pretty with such a grimace. Seeing this picture, I will say:

“Nana **jiushi** piaoliang!”

“Nana just beautiful”

“Nana is exactly beautiful!”

Similarly, *jiushi* is used in the sentence to emphasize the beauty of Nana. Although that she is a beauty is recognized by people, there are very few people who can be good-looking with a grimace face. Seeing she is pretty with a grimacing face, again, becomes solid evidence to confirm my old thinking and I use *jiushi* to emphasize that Nana is super beautiful.

The emphatic meaning is also prominent when *jiushi* is combined with a negative verb phrase as we have mentioned in (6), repeated as (25).

25. Xiaoming **jiushi** bu xiangxin Nana.

Xiaoming just not trust Nana

Xiaoming just won’t trust Nana.

Here the use of *jiushi* emphasizes the strong distrust of Xiaoming to Nana. (25) is perfectly felicitous in a context like Nana tried every effort to win Xiaoming’s trust but no matter what she says or does, Xiaoming just won’t trust him. The sentence is equal to say that under no condition will Xiaoming trust Nana, excluding any condition that will make the proposition true.

From the above analysis we can see the relation between emphatic *jiushi* and exclusive *jiushi*: the emphatic effect comes from an exclusion of any extra condition for the proposition to hold up. The exclusion of any condition is to state that the proposition is true or false unconditionally, thus the sense of emphasis will follow. The logic is the same in (23) and (24): remember that the emphasis of Nana’s love of reading or her beauty becomes very felicitous under some extreme conditions like reading in very noisy environment or being beautiful when making a face. We take these extreme conditions as the highest one on a “condition scale” to ensure the truth of the proposition. The “trigger” to speak out the *jiushi* sentence is when the speaker sees the extreme conditions hold, which can scalarly implicate the proposition is true under any condition, namely unconditionally. Coming back to the examples, seeing Nana reading in a very noisy environment or she is still pretty when making a face, the speaker can generate the implicature that Nana’s love of reading or her beauty also holds in all the other situations (which are weaker conditions on the scale), i.e., “Nana loves reading” or “Nana is beautiful” is true and this requires no condition. Therefore, we can unify the emphatic use and the exclusive use of *jiushi* since the emphatic effect comes from an exclusion of any extra condition for the proposition *jiushi* involves to hold up.

However, different from the exclusive use of *jiushi* which has a sentence final focus, the stress of the emphatic *jiushi* sentence always fall on *jiushi*, which means that *jiushi* is the focus of the sentence. The different distribution of focus, can again assist in disambiguating *jiushi* sentences, as in (26).

26. Xiaoming **jiushi** bu hui zuo **na-dao-ti**.

Xiaoming just not can figure out that-CL-question

Xiaoming just cannot figure out that question (only this question and no one else).

Xiaoming just cannot figure out that question (no matter how hard he tried).

The sentence is ambiguous due to the different meanings of *jiushi*. But the ambiguity can be easily resolved when the sentence is uttered with different stress: if the stress is carried by *nadaoti* (that question), it is exclusive *jiushi* and the sentence means that “Xiaoming only cannot figure out the answer of that question and for all the other question, there is no problem”. Whereas the stress is on *jiushi*, the sentence is to emphasize Xiaoming’s incapability in figuring out that question, unconditionally. Or “no matter how hard he tries, he just cannot answer it”. Different stress patterns again, suggest that *jiushi* is focus sensitive.

2.4 The confirmative use of *jiushi*

The last usage of *jiushi* is somewhat different from the above two in the syntactic environment in it occurs. Instead of being inserted in between the subject and predicate, *jiushi* can be used independently as an affirmative response to a previous utterance. The independent *jiushi* expresses the speaker’s strong approval of what has been said. As the gloss indicates, it can be literally translated to “exactly” in English.

27. ---Xiaoming zhunbei de henchongfen, yiding neng de diyi ming!

Xiaoming prepare DE very adequate, certain can get first prize

Xiaoming had very adequate preparation, it is certain that he can get the first prize!

---**Jiushi!**

Just

Exactly!

Jiushi here, express a strong sense of certainty about what has been said, which is usually very obvious and natural. This can be recognized if we compare *shi* and *jiushi*. *Shi*, the copula in Chinese can stand alone as an approval answer or response like “yes” in English, see 28.

28. ---Xiaoming zhunbei de henchongfen, yiding neng de diyiming!

Xiaoming prepare DE very adequate, certain can get first prize

Xiaoming had very adequate preparation, it is certain that he can get the first prize!

---*Shi*.

Yes

Yes.

It is easy for native speakers to construe the difference in the mood between 27 and 28. *Shi* merely provides an affirmative response without any special tone. When *jiushi* is used, not only the affirmation is expressed, but also the speaker’s confidence in Xiaoming’s winning the first prize and shows that the speaker has already known that, namely what she confirms is already presupposed in her mind. She thought that Xiaoming will win the first prize is pretty obvious and natural. Semantically, this *jiushi* is exactly the emphatic adverbial one we have talked about, albeit occurs in different contexts, just like when “exactly” is served as an answer in English.

The comparison of 27 and 28 also casts doubt on the adverbial status of *jiushi*. Since the copula *shi* can serve the affirmative response by itself. *Jiushi* here can be the compositional *jiu-shi*, formed by adverbial *jiu* adjuncted to copula *shi*. Therefore, the affirmative use of *jiushi* is actually ambiguous between compositional and adverbial.

All the properties of compositional *jiu-shi* and adverbial *jiushi* are summarized as (29) below. The table exhibits a clear parallel between them, calling for a unified analysis of the chunk *jiushi*. Moreover, there is implicit semantic relation among the apparently different meanings of *jiushi*. It is pretty clear the confirmative use of *jiushi* is exactly the emphatic one: to emphasize the truth of what has been said and show strong approval. The emphatic use can further be identified to the exclusive *jiushi*, as the emphatic meaning arises from the exclusion of any extra condition: saying a proposition is true unconditionally reflects the strong certainty of the truth condition, namely an emphasis.

Therefore, we can safely arrive at the conclusion that “exclusiveness” is the semantic core of *jiu(shi)*⁴. *Jiushi* encodes the uniqueness of something, basically the focalized element, and excludes all the other possible alternative options.

29.

Syntactic category Meaning/usage	Compositional <i>Jiu-shi</i> (adverb <i>jiu</i> ; copula <i>shi</i>) X <i>jiushi</i> NP(DP/DeP)	Adverbial <i>Jiushi</i> (<i>jiushi</i> +predicate) X <i>jiushi</i> VP (AP)
exclusive use(only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrict scope: NP is the only suitable description for X Can trigger scalar reading Final focus (indicated by stress) 娜娜就是个小孩子⁵。 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrict scope: VP is the only thing X did. Final focus 我就是看看。
emphatic use (exactly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize the subject is exactly the object that satisfy the description of NP. Or emphasize the truth of the proposition. (Usually) out of the expectation of the addressee or serves as a refutation. Initial focus or <i>jiu</i> focus 娜娜就是我要找的人。 娜娜就是昨天来的。 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize the truth of the proposition The speaker usually has solid evidence to make the judgment. The emphatic sense comes from the exclusion of any extra condition <i>Jiushi</i> focus 娜娜就是爱看书/漂亮。
confirmative use(exactly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize what has been said previously is true and also very obvious and natural. Show the speaker’s certainty. Being used independently as an affirmative response; ambiguous between compositional and adverbial. <i>Jiushi</i> focus -娜娜一定能得第一名。 -就是! 	

3. *Jiushi* as focus sensitive operator

The previous sections seem to arrive at an interim conclusion that the semantic core of *jiushi* is exclusiveness. Similar to *only*, it asserts the uniqueness of the focalized element and excludes all the other possible options. *Jiushi* shows focus sensitivity since its interpretation varies with the location of focus; e.g., the stressed syllable (Beaver & Clark, 2002). The semantic behaviors of *jiushi* suggest its close relation with focus. In this section, we will dive into the literature about focus and figure out the nature of *jiushi*.

3.1 Theoretical background

⁴ Actually, for compositional *jiu-shi*, the exclusiveness is contributed by *jiu*, with the copula *shi* has its own function: encoding the predication relation. The property of copula is not of our interest in the study. For convenience, we attribute the “exclusiveness” to the chunk *jiushi*, without differentiating its compositional or adverbial status.

⁵ The focalized element is indicated by the bold font.

Focus is generally defined as the element which conveys nonpresupposed information in a sentence. (Halliday 1967, Rochemont 1986). It stands on the boundary between semantics and pragmatics/discourse (Zimmermann, 2008). In a vast of literature concerning focus, there is a significant distinction between information focus and contrastive focus (Dryer 1994, Kiss 1998, Drubig & Wolfram 2001, Zimmermann, 2008). Information focus merely conveys new information without expressing contrastive or exhaustive meaning, while the contrastive focus will evoke a set of contextually salient alternatives (Rooth, 1985, 1992) to “form a contrast”. In Kiss (1998), he forms a three-way distinction: information focus, identificational focus and contrastive focus. Identificational focus and contrastive focus are similar in that they both express a quantificational operation, take scopes in LF and trigger the exhaustive meaning “X and no one/nothing else”. According to Kiss, the function of identificational focus is as follows:

“An identificational focus presents a subset of the set of a contextually or situationally given elements for which the predicate phrase can potentially hold, it is identified as the exhaustive subset of this set for which the predicate phrase actually holds.” (Kiss 1998, P245)

The above quotation illustrated the semantic nature of identificational focus, whose spirit is very much in line with the *Alternative Semantics* of focus interpretation in Rooth (1985, 1992). According to him, the focus semantic value will trigger a set of alternatives potential contrast with the ordinary semantic value. Exhaustivity comes from the contrast of the focus (the subset) with its potential alternatives (the complement). Whereas for Kiss(1998), the contrastive focus is subordinate to identificational focus. The distinction lies in the open/closeness of the contextual or situational given set. An identification focus is contrastive only when it operates on a close set with all of its members being given information to the hearer. For a contrastive focus, not only the subset is identificational, but its complementary set is also identificational.

How does a focalized element influence the meaning of the sentence? In Szabolcsi(1994), she generalized 2 different approaches, one assumes that focus makes a semantic contribution by itself. The other argues that focus solely provides the informational or syntactical structure for a focus sensitive operator to act on. However, she further added that the 2 approaches are not in contradictory with each other. Both of them are supposed to be available in one language. In Hungarian, identificational focus encoded via structural position (periphery) follows the first approach while identificational focus associated with *cask*, the “only” in Hungarian chooses the second. Szabolcsi (1994) believes that both of them expressed exhaustivity, but by different means. In her proposal, *only* is a modifier of NP phrases to get interpreted exhaustively. It also affects the presupposition, compared to a sentence with free focus.

An element is focus sensitive when “its semantics involves essential reference to the information structure of the sentence containing it”. Commonly, it shows dependency on the placement of the intonational focus (Aloni et al, 2002). There are a considerable body of literature on *only* and its cross linguistic counterparts (Chomsky, 1971; Jackendoff, 1972; Rooth, 1985, 1992; Kfirka, 1993; Bonomi-Casalegno, 1994; Dyer 1994; Kiss,1998; Aloni et al, 2002, Beaver & Clark, 2002, 2003). Following Rooth (1992) and Aloni et al (2002), there are three approaches to account for the nature of focus sensitive operators. The first one is the semantic approach. The link between the focus sensitive operator and the intonational focus is structure. For example, *only*, as a “focus adverb” and it forms “association with focus” by grammatical rules, which are responsible for linking different meanings with different locations of focal accent (c.f. Chomsky, 1971; Rooth, 1985; Kfirka, 1993). Similarly, Kiss (1998) also argued that *only* phrase was analyzed as a special type of identificational focus. *Cask*, the quantifier-like item is adjoined to a constituent and makes it identificational focus. This is evidenced by the element *cask* is adjoined to will undergo focus movement, leaving *cask* stranded in the VP domain, like a floating quantifier. Bonomi-Casalegno(1994) proposed an event semantic analysis of *only*, which applies different focused categorial elements. According to them, *only* is like a universal quantifier whose restrictor is the focus frame, namely, the restrictor of the universal quantifier

over events is defined by replacing the Focus phrase with a variable. The second one is the pragmatic approach: it is pragmatic factors that link the interpretation of focus sensitive operator to the focus, rather than semantics. Dryer (1994) argued that the so called “standard view” of *only* by the above scholars are mistaken. Focal element and the constituent associated with *only* are not related by grammatical or semantic rules. Actually, they just fall on the same element by accident. He further provided new data to show the focal element and the associate *only* can be distinct. The element associated with *only* is contextually dependent and the same for a free focus. Lastly, there is a “hybrid” approach. Beaver & Clark (2003) gave up the unitary analysis of focus sensitivity and proposed two mechanisms to explain the properties of focus sensitive operators, one is semantic and the other pragmatic. *Only* and *always* are representatives in semantic and pragmatic theories respectively. Although both operators show universal characters, *only* and *always* exhibit distinct properties in terms of lexicalized dependency on focal marking, absolute exhaustivity, taking all non focal material in its scope as the restrictor of universal and impossibility to interact with the learner in its scope or extract the focus in its scope. All of the above difference indicates that *only* falls in a semantic account, the alternatives quantified over by *only* are constrained compositionally. Above all, focus and its related issues are standing on the boundary of semantic and pragmatic. It is of no benefit to just adopt one of them and ignore the other. Next, we will follow a semantic-pragmatic approach on Chinese *jiushi*.

Up to now, it is obvious that all *jiushi*'s behaviors manifest that it is, like *only*, a focus sensitive operator. Remember that the different meanings of *jiushi* can be boiled down to “exclusiveness”, namely exhaustivity, and it is directly sensitive to intonational prominence in its syntactic scope. We will follow Rooth(1992) and Kiss(1998) and argue that *jiushi* is the focus sensitive operator(or focusing adverb, in Rooth's term) and it binds an identificational focus in the sentence. Chinese does not obtain focus movement like Hungarian. The identificational focus can be indicated by a stressed syllable or the cleft construction *shi...de*(Yuan, 2003; Xu & Pan, 2005; Paul&Whitman, 2008; Wang, 2018; Liu &Li, 2019). Here we merely concentrate on the identificational focus manifested by stress and leaves *shi...de* cleft construction in the later section. *Jiushi*, the focus sensitive operator can bind an element in the sentence and makes it the identificational focus. This identificational focus will trigger a contextually relevant set, represented by replacing the focus with a variable. The meaning of *jiushi* is to identify the focus as the unique value for the variable, henceforth exhaustivity. The identificational focus operator *jiushi* identifies the focus as the exhaustive subset of the set with contextually or situationally given elements and excludes the complement subset. (Kiss 1998). In this regard, the function of *jiushi* is more like a universal quantifier whose restrictor is defined by replacing the focus phrase with a variable. This universal quantifier, however will finally quantify over a singleton, the element denoted by the focus, thus deriving the “only” meaning, namely, exhaustivity. The semantic equality between only and universal quantification is seen in Horn (1996).

To sum up, the function of *jiushi* is to identify a focus and the function of the identificational focus is to trigger alternative options and then exclude them. Next, we will prove that the so-called different meanings of *jiushi* actually result from the floating of identificational focus.

3.2 when *jiushi* binds a property

The exclusive use of compositional *jiu-shi* and adverbial *jiushi* shares the same stress pattern, namely the focalized element is in sentence final position. See example (15) and (21), repeated below:

30. Wo jiu-shi ge wumingxiao zu.

I just be Cl nobody

I am only nobody.

31. Tuixiu hou, laozhang meijian jiushi he he cha, Kan kan bao.

Retire after, Laozhang every just drink-drink tea read read newspaper

After retirement, everyday Laozhang just drink tea and read newspaper(doing nothing else).

According to our analysis of *jiushi*, the identificational focus operator will select an element and identify it as the focus, marked by stress. In 30, the focus is *wumingxiao zu* “nobody”. Replacing the focus phrase with the variable and we have the relevant set in given context:

$$\lambda P. P(wo).$$

The set is made up of all the properties that can be used to describe “me” in the given context. *Jiushi*’s function is to bind the focus *wumingxiao zu*(nobody) and identify it as the exhaustive subset of the above set and excludes other complement subsets such as *da ren wu*(big shot) and others. To put it another way, the above set is a singleton: there is only one property satisfying the set, *wumingxiao zu*(nobody), thus the exhaustive meaning is derived. Therefore, the sentence encodes the meaning that “I am a nobody and that is the only property that suits me in the context”. If the property under identificational focus is ordered along a scale like {nobody, normal people, big shot...}, following Horn (1984, 2009), the scalar implicature “I am not a big shot, so don’t count on me” can be derived.

The logic is similar for (31), in which the focus is *hehecha kankan bao* “read newspaper and drink tea”. Again, replacing the focus phrase with the variable and we have the relevant set:

$$\lambda P. Tuixiuhou, ta meitian (zuo) P.$$

In this context, the set is constituted by the things that he did every day after retirement. *Jiushi*, identifies reading newspapers and drinking tea as the exhaustive subset in the above set, excluding all the other alternative options. We have “after retirement, his daily routine is reading newspapers and drinking tea, nothing else.”, showing how leisure he is.

3.3 When *jiushi* binds an entity

The “exactly” meaning of phrase *jiu-shi* obtains sentence initial focus, i.e., the subject is focused. As in (17), repeated as (32):

32. Wo jiu-shi ni yao zhao de ren.

I just be you want find De person

I am exactly the person you are looking for.

The meaning “I am exactly the person you are looking for” is naturally recognized when *wo*(I) is focalized in the sentence, namely it is the identificational focus, replacing it with the variable *x* we have the relevant set:

$$\lambda x. ni yao zhao de ren = x.$$

This set is made up of all the individuals that you would like to find and it serves as *jiu-shi*’s domain of restrictor. *Jiu-shi* will bind the focus *wo*(I) and identify it as the exhaustive subset. Here it is equal to say that there is only one element in the set, “I”. Therefore, “the only one” is “exactly the one”. The meaning “exactly” can be derived from the exhaustive meaning encoded by *jiu-shi*.

That *jiushi* binds an entity can also happens with final focus. Let’s recall the ambiguous case in (33).

33. Nana jiushi bu hui zuo na-dao-ti.

Nana just not can figure out that-CL-question

Nana just cannot figure out that question (only this question and no one else).

When the focalized element is *nadaoti*(that question), adverbial *jiushi* has exclusive meaning, means that “Nana only cannot figure out that question, that one and only”. *Nadaoti* is being bound by *jiushi* and becomes identificational focus. The domain of restrictor is all the questions that Nana cannot figure out.

$$\lambda x. Nana buhui zuo x.$$

When *jiushi* will bind “*nadaoti*”, it means that “that question” is the exhaustive subset in the above set. This is equal to say what Nana cannot figure out is only one question, nothing else.

3.4 Focused *jiushi*: when *jiushi* binds the truth value

So far, the emphatic and confirmative use of *jiushi* has not been explained. This is the most intriguing one since in these cases, *jiushi* itself carries the stressed, indicating it as the focus of the sentence. This happens with compositional *jiu-shi* as well as adverbial *jiushi*.

33. Jintian jiu-shi xingqisan!

Today just be Wednesday

Today is exactly Wednesday!

34. Nana jiushi ai kan shu!

Nana just love read book

Nana loves read books, exactly!

35. Xiaoming jiushi bu xiangxin Nana.

Xiaoming just not trust Nana

Xiaoming just won't trust Nana.

Above examples all involve an emphasis meaning. The emphatic use of *jiushi*, according to our analysis in section 2, can be viewed as an exclusion of any condition for the proposition to hold up. That is, in 35, Xiaoming will not trust Nana under any condition. In 34, Nana loves reading in all situations, including the one that is extremely uncomfortable for reading. 33 is the same. The sentence is mostly used as a refutation to “today is not Wednesday” by arguing that “today is Wednesday under whatever condition you can think of”.

We argue that what *jiushi* binds here is the truth value. Every proposition has a truth value under a given situation, namely, true or false (0 or 1). When *jiushi* is focalized, the truth value of the sentence is selected to express the exhaustive identification. Replacing the truth value with a variable, we create the relevant set for *jiushi* to operate on. The set is a closed one with 2 members: 0 and 1.

$$\lambda t. \llbracket \text{Jintian shi xingqisan} \rrbracket^c = t$$

$$\lambda t. \llbracket \text{Xiaohong ai kanshu} \rrbracket^c = t$$

$$\lambda t. \llbracket \text{Xiaoming xiangxin Nana} \rrbracket^c = t$$

For (33), the truth value of the proposition “Today is Wednesday” is 1 since it is a positive polarity sentence. The identificational focus $\{t=1\}$ is bound by *jiu-shi* and it is identified as the exhaustive subset of the above set. That is, when *jiushi* binds the truth value, it asserts the above truth value set is a singleton, $\{1\}$. That is to say, the all and only possible truth value for the proposition is 1. Under intensional semantics, the truth value of a proposition is with respect to situations, or possible worlds (Heim & Kratzer 1998, von Stechow & Heim 2010). A proposition represents a set of situations/possible worlds in which the proposition can be true or false⁶. To argue that the truth value set contains only “1” is equal to say that the proposition is true in all situations/possible worlds: the “under any condition” intuition is depicted.

When the sentence is of negative polarity like (35), the proposition under discussion is “Xiaoming xiangxin Nana” whose truth value is 0. Again, the truth value $\{0\}$ is bound by *jiushi* and becomes the identificational focus. The exhaustive identification means that of a set of truth values present for the proposition, it is only $\{0\}$ and nothing else. This is equal to say the proposition that “Xiaoming xiangxi Nana” is always false, under all situations. This is totally in line with our intuition that *jiushi* sentence express “an exclusion of any condition”. The emphatic meaning comes from the location of identificational focus.

We have proved that the emphatic use of *jiushi* is identical to its exclusive use. The difference is ascribed to the element bound by emphatic *jiushi*, i.e., the truth value. This is exactly the same for the confirmative use of *jiushi*, that is, when *jiushi* is used independently. In this case, *jiushi* binds the truth value of the proposition instantiated by

⁶ For every proposition, there is another variable s is bound by the context through the identification function. This is indicated by the superscript “ c ”.

a previous utterance, rather than the sentence in which it is embodied. Everything but this is the same for emphatic and confirmative *jiushi*.

Last but not least, the relevant set formed when *jiushi* binds the truth value is different from that when *jiushi* binds a property or an entity. That is, the set is always closed: with 2 possible members. Under the framework of Kiss (1998), the identificational focus here is also contrastive, contrasted with the other truth value. This explains why sentence with stressed *jiushi* like 33 tends to carry a sense of refutation. The contrastive focus triggers the opposite truth value and *jiushi* is to indicate the other truth value is never a possible option. The two truth values 0 and 1, are like two sides of a coin, identifying one equals to refusing the other.

So far, we have gone through all different usages of *jiushi* and see the explanatory power of the identificational focus approach. To recap, *jiushi* functions as an identificational focus operator. It will bind an element and make it the identificational focus of the sentence. The identificational focus not only marks the nonpresupposed information but also the exhaustive subset of a contextually or situationally relevant set triggered by the focus. The superficial different meanings of *jiushi* are attributed to the floating of identification focus, which can be a property, an entity or a truth value. So far, an unsolved issue is why *jiushi* is the stressed element with emphatic meaning, namely, when the truth value will be bound by *jiushi*. We will figure this out in the next section, which will give a comprehensive analysis of *jiushi* under the pragmatic approach.

4. Focus on presupposition with *jiushi*

The function of focus sensitive operator *jiushi* on semantics is illustrated in the last section. There is a truth conditional effect when *jiushi* binds different elements and identifies it as focus. Particularly, the emphatic meaning of *jiushi* arises when the truth value becomes the identificational focus. *Jiushi* identifies the truth value as the only option for the proposition under discussion and this gives rise to the emphatic sense. One more question just follows: why *jiushi* is the focalized element when the truth value is under focus and why and for what will the speaker focus on the truth value of a proposition?

To answer the questions, it is of necessity to take a pragmatic approach to focus and focus sensitive elements (Glanzberg, 2011; Zimmermann, 2008). Let's come back to the most basic definition of focus (Halliday 1967; Chomsky, 1971. Jackendoff, 1972): focus represents the nonpresupposed, new information in the discourse. In a sentence with *jiushi* focalized, only *jiushi* is the nonpresupposed, new information. This means that the sentence with *jiushi* subtracted, which is also a complete proposition, is the presupposition. As *jiushi* does not provide any concrete information, the proposition and the presupposition related to *jiushi*, have the same truth condition. In this respect, what is given is also new. The seemingly redundant expression is discourse-acceptable as an affirmation of one's presupposition.

The corollary is in line with the previous description of the felicitous condition of *jiushi*. Recall the typical contexts or situations for *jiushi*, they all involve an affirmation of the speaker's presupposition with some newly coming, solid evidence. For example, when we all know that Nana is a book lover or she is very beautiful, this piece of information is the presupposition of the speaker. Then there comes another very solid evidence like Nana was seen reading in a noisy environment or the picture that she is still pretty when making a grimace, confirming this presupposition. Under these conditions, we use *jiushi*. In brief, when *jiushi* is used, it implicates an affirmation of the presupposition. The intention to affirm the speaker's presupposition drives her to take the truth value of the proposition (also the preposition) as the identificational focus thus using *jiushi*. To make it clearer, in “*Nana jiushi piaoliang*” (Nana *jiushi* beautiful). It presupposes that “Nana is beautiful” and when some solid evidence occurs, the speaker will affirm this presupposition with *jiushi*, asserting “that Nana is beautiful is only and always true (under any situation)”.

The affirmation of presupposition can be vividly shown in a description of someone's mental activity. Imagine

a scenario like this: you are a spy and today you received a message and were asked to exchange information with a guy in the lobby of a hotel. You never knew him before. In the message, he was described to be a tall man and always wears a black cashmere overcoat. Most importantly, a chess piece in the left hand was the secret token for identification. You came to the lobby, standing in a corner and began to search the target. After a while, you saw a tall man wearing a cashmere overcoat and you guessed he was the guy. But you made no move, continuing the observation. Suddenly you saw him take out a chess piece from his pocket and hold it in his left hand. Then you will blurt out (maybe in your mind) “Ta jiushi wo yao zhao de ren!” (He is exactly the guy I am looking for!). The scenario is perfect to use *jiushi*. From the hero’s mental activity, it is not difficult to grasp the pragmatic meaning of *jiushi*: the affirmation of presupposition. The presupposition in the scenario is the hero’s surmise of the guy’s identity from his figure or wearing. It was not until the secret token was taken out that the hero confirmed his presupposition. And then he uses *jiushi* to express this affirmation.

So far, we only stand on the speaker’s side and see how the conversation moves on with the manipulation of his/her own presupposition, without considering the hearer’s stance. In effect, this is not in accordance with the definition of “presupposition”. The wide consensus is that presupposition is the common ground for both sides of the conversation (Dryer, 1996). It is something the speaker believes and assumes the hearer also believes to be true. In Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet (1990: 281), presupposition is defined as “being backgrounded and being taken for granted”. Levinson (1983: 205) explicitly noted presupposition should be “mutually known by participants”. Different definitions of presupposition all emphasize its “shared” nature, i.e., the shared knowledge of hearer and speaker (Horn 1986; Krifka, 1993). Therefore, what is affirmed by the speaker is not presupposition but a quasi-presupposition which only hold on the speaker’s side and she will make it a genuine presupposition held by both sides, with *jiushi*. From the hearer’s side, *jiushi* will trigger a presupposition in his mind.

Under this perspective, *jiushi* is a presupposition trigger, used to update the hearer’s background information, canceling the hearer’s old presupposition and replacing it with the one that is the same as the speaker. By this means, the quasi presupposition (presupposition only held to the speaker) becomes the genuine presupposition (shared knowledge for both speaker and hearer). sometimes the sense of being out of expectation will arise when the hearer’s old, opposite presupposition is opposite with the newly coming one. In this case, *jiushi* has a refutational sense. to sum up, the presupposition, felicity condition and assertion related to *jiushi* are as follows:

36. Nana jiushi piaoliang!

Nana just beautiful

Nana is exactly beautiful!

- Presupposition: Nana is beautiful.
- situation: I saw Nana is beautiful when making a face
- assertion: That Nana is beautiful is only and always true (under any situation)
- *Jiushi*: confirm presupposition

From the above analysis, we can see that in pragmatic facet, *jiushi* not only affirms the speaker’s own presupposition; it also aims to accommodate the back ground information of the conversation by triggering a new presupposition in hearer’s mind.

5. Combing back to X *jiushi* X

This section will come back to the properties of the construction “X *jiushi* X” and find the association of *jiushi* in this construction and *jiushi* in general. Up to now, we figure out the nature of *jiushi*, namely the identificational focus operator as well as the presupposition trigger. The emphatic meaning of *jiushi* is a combinational effect of semantics and pragmatics. *Jiushi* as the identificational focus operator binds an element and express exhaustivity. When the truth value is bound by *jiushi*, the proposition, as a matter of fact, provides no brand new information but

an affirmation of the speaker's presupposition which is thought to be unexpected by the hearer or under common world knowledge.

In the construction “X *jiushi* X”, it is *jiushi* that carries the stress, suggesting us the identificational focus is also the truth value. As we have summarized, this construction is used to emphasize that the typical, stable, prominent characteristics and it is especially felicitous in a context or situation in which X is fully embodied, namely when the speaker has solid evidence to say that. This, again reminds us of the felicitous condition of the emphatic *jiushi*. Actually, we found “X *jiushi* X” is perfect in the contexts we have depicted in (23) and (24). In (23), since we all know Nana loves reading, which is a typical feature of her. In the situation that I saw she is reading in an extremely noisy environment or she is still very beautiful when making a face, I can definitely say:

37. Nana jiu-shi Nana!

Nana just be Nana

Nana is Nana.

(37) is equally felicitous with (23) or (24). They all emphasize the typical feature of Nana: her love of reading or her beauty, with (23/24) explicitly speaking it out while (37) implicitly means that. The intonational stress all fall on *jiushi*, indicating the focalized truth value is identified as the exhaustive choice for the proposition under discussion. It also affirms the presupposition of the speaker which is believed to be less expected to the hearer/common world knowledge. The use of *jiushi* shows the speaker's certainty on the fact.

The parallel is again revealed when X in this construction is not NP(DP) but VP. Remember in (25) is a context in which Xiaoming just will not trust Nana no matter what she did or said. If Nana is very furious and asked Xiaoming why he didn't trust her and Xiaoming found there is actually no reason (the distrust is held unconditionally), Xiaoming can say “wo *jiushi* bu xiangxin”(I will never trust you) or he can say:

38. “bu xiang xin *jiushi* bu xiangxin.”

“Not trust just be not trust”

“I will never trust you”

(38) can be a reply to Nana as felicitous as (25). *Jiushi*, as an identificational focus operator binds the truth value of the proposition (also, the presupposition), indicating that Xiaoming trusts Nana is all and only false, under all situations. Here the refutational sense is strong, due to the presupposition of the hearer, Nana. When she asked Xiaoming why he does not believe in her. She held the presupposition that there must be some reason for that, or at least there will be some situations in which Xiaoming will trust her. While Xiaoming's answer with *jiushi* rules out this possibility and forces Nana to take the same presupposition with Xiaoming's i.e., “He does not trust Nana.” Again, we see the pragmatic function of *jiushi* in accommodating presupposition.

From the above illustration, it is clear that in “X *jiushi* X” construction, *jiushi* is exactly the same identificational focus operator and presupposition accommodator. In this construction, what *jiushi* binds is also the truth value of the proposition. It also gives rise to an affirmation of the speaker's presupposition and cancels the hearer's opposite one. “X *jiushi* X” is nothing different from “X *jiushi* Y”. Not only that, the construction “X *jiushi* X” also shed some light on the relation between presupposition and focus in terms of information structure: in a normal copulative sentence, *shi*, the copula is the informational boundary: elements preceding it is old information and those follows it as new information. In the “X *jiushi* X” construction, the old information X is just the new information X, namely the piece of information X serves as presupposition in the first slot and as focus in the second, suggesting “the presupposition is all and only information I can provide”. The construction thus provides a perfect template to focusing on the presupposition with the two occurrence of X. “Focusing on the presupposition” is exactly within the ability of *jiushi*, when the identificational focus operator targeting the truth value of the presupposition/proposition.

6. *Jiu-shi* and *jiushi*: grammaticalization

In the beginning of the paper, we made a distinction between compositional *jiu-shi* and adverbial *jiushi*, on the ground whether *shi* serves as a copula to connect the subject and a nominative predicate. Throughout the whole paper, we argue that the chunk *jiushi*, no matter compositional or adverbial, is the identificational focus operator and presupposition accommodator. As a matter of fact, for compositional *jiu-shi*, it is *jiu*, the adverb itself that has the above two functions. *Shi*, being a copula, exists independently for the structure building.⁷

Compositional <i>jiu-shi</i>	<i>Jiu</i> : identificational focus operator and presupposition trigger <i>Shi</i> : copula or focus marker
Adverbial <i>jiushi</i>	<i>Jiushi</i> : identificational focus operator and presupposition trigger

From a diachronic perspective, the adverbial *jiushi* is grammaticalized from adverbial *jiu* combined with the copula *shi* (as a verb or as a focus marker, see Zhang, 2002; Dong, 2004). Not only adverbial *jiushi*, but there is also a group of adverbials and connectives in the form “*Xshi*”, all of which are the consequence of grammaticalization (Dong, 2004). When the adverb *jiu*, with its double-layered meaning, modifies the copulative verb *shi*, the linear adjacency provides a syntactic environment for reanalysis. *Jiu-shi*, originally as 2 constituents, is reanalyzed as a single adverb, inheriting the semantic and pragmatic features of *jiu*. Therefore, the compositional use of *jiu-shi* is the remaining fossil of the grammaticalization since it retains the separate use of *jiu* and *shi*. The co-existence of pre and post-grammaticalized items (Here the compositional *jiu-shi* and adverbial *jiushi*) is a common phenomenon in Chinese (Tsai, 2010), indicating the analyticity feature of this language (Huang, 2015).

7. Conclusion

The paper begins with a special construction in Chinese, “*X jiushi X*”, the seemingly redundant expression and its emphatic meaning is believed to be originated from *jiushi*, the compositional as well as adverbial element in Chinese. Similar to “just” in English, *jiushi* carries “only” or “exactly” meaning and it can serve as an independent confirmative response in discourse. Hinted by the distributions of the intonational stress of the sentence, it is detected that *jiushi* is an identificational focus operator can bind an element and express exhaustive identification. The apparent different meanings of *jiushi* result from the floating of identificational focus, which can be a property, an entity or even a truth value. In the last case, *jiushi* focus on the truth value of the proposition, which is exactly the speaker’s presupposition. The “focusing on presupposition” function of *jiushi* is perfectly embodied in the construction “*X jiushi X*”, in which the presupposed *X* is exactly the focused *X*. The repetition is by no means a redundancy but an emphasis. By doing so, *jiushi* affirms the speaker’s presupposition. In a nutshell, *jiushi* marks the identificational focus with the label “this one and only one” and it also conveys the implied words to the hearer “Hey, I am quite sure about that.”

⁷ When *jiu* is used without copula *shi*, it also exhibits the above two functions, see 12-14.

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