Matrix *shuo* in Mandarin*

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This paper investigates matrix occurrences of *shuo* in Mandarin. We show that, even though it has been known that *shuo* can function as a speech verb and as an unmarked/pure complementizer, matrix *shuo* in question is not an instance of either of them. Rather, we demonstrate that it shows similarities with evidential markers in other languages and argue that matrix *shuo* is in fact an evidential marker, which heads an Evidentiality Phrase, unlike the pure complementizer *shuo*, which heads ForceP. We also briefly discuss distributional differences between *shuo* and Spanish *que*, which provides support for Demonte and Fernández-Soriano's (2014) analysis of matrix *que* in Spanish.

1. Introduction

Evidentials are often described as functional morphemes which encode speaker's information source regarding the statement she is making. A reportative evidential indicates that the speaker's source of information is a person other than the speaker or the addressee. As Aikhenvald (2004) notes, all natural languages have their own "evidentiality strategies", i.e., the evidentiality can be expressed by other lexical items (usually by verbs equivalent to 'see', 'hear', and/or 'say') even in languages which do not have dedicated evidential morphemes. For instance, in Mandarin, the verb *shuo* 'say' can explicitly indicate the speaker's source of information (= John), as shown in (1).

(1) Yuehan **shuo** [mingtian ting shui.]
John say tomorrow stop water
'John said that there will be water suspension tomorrow.'

Despite its lexical meaning as the verb 'say', Mandarin *shuo* can also be used as a complementizer when following a certain type of verbs such as *jiang* 'speak' and *juede* 'feel', as shown in (2).

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(2) Wo zongshi juede **shuo** [shenghuo li que le dian shenme.]
I always feel SHUO life in lack PERF little what
'I always feel that there is something a little lacking in my life.'
(From the Peking University corpus of spoken transcriptions, Fang 2006)

The non-verbal use of *shuo* in (2) has been standardly assumed to be a counterpart of English *that* (i.e. a regular complementizer) (Li and Thompson 1989, Huang 1982, Hwang 1998); this kind of grammaticalization of saying verbs is in fact not rare cross-linguistically (e.g. Taiwanese *kong* and Cantonese *wa* among Chinese dialects, see Simpson and Wu 2002 for discussion). What is of particular interest here is that the distribution of *shuo* is not limited to embedded clauses: non-verbal *shuo* can also occur in matrix clauses, as shown in (4).[1]

(4) **Shuo** Kongyiji yijing si le.
SHUO Kongyiji already die PERF
'(Someone said/I heard) Kongyiji has died.'

Shuo in (4) contributes an additional meaning that the sentence is a report of a declarative. In this way, the matrix *shuo* seems to have a different meaning from the pure complementizer *shuo* in embedded clauses, as the latter does not have this evidential use. We will argue that *shuo* in (4) is an evidential marker, not a verb or an unmarked/pure complementizer (like English *that*).

2. *Shuo* as an evidential marker

In this section, we will show that: (i) matrix *shuo* is not an unmarked/pure complementizer, and (ii) matrix *shuo* is not a speech verb. Rather, matrix *shuo* shows similarities to evidential markers found in other languages.

For the first point, our argument comes from the interpretational difference between matrix *shuo* and the pure complementizer *shuo*: as observed in (4) above, matrix *shuo*, like verbal *shuo*, encodes information of a speech event while the pure complementizer *shuo* does not. The latter is semantically bleached so that it no longer encodes such information (see (2) and (3) above, see also Li and Thompson 1989).

However, matrix *shuo* is not a speech verb either. While matrix *shuo* semantically encodes information of a speech event, it is not verbal: verbal *shuo* can be modified by adverbs while matrix *shuo* resists adverbial modification, as shown in (5).

(5) a. Yuehan dasheng-de **shuo** mingtian yao xiayu

[1] *Shuo* can also appear in the sentence-final position, but we will focus on sentence-initial *shuo* (4). See Simpson and Wu (2002) for the sentence-final usage of grammaticalized speech verbs in Taiwanese.

John loudly SHUO tomorrow will rain
'John loudly said it will rain tomorrow.'

b. * Dasheng-de **shuo** mingtian yao xiayu
loudly SHUO tomorrow will rain
Intended: '(Someone loudly said) it will rain tomorrow.'

The second argument comes from the test of challenging the information source of a proposition. As Lim (2010) describes it, one of the most important characteristics of evidentials is that "the meaning introduced by the narrow evidential marker is not truth conditional and the evidential marker does not contribute to the truth-conditional meaning" (see also Speas 2008 and references therein). Murray (2010) defines this characteristic of evidentials as "not-at-issueness", i.e., evidentials contribute a not-at-issue proposition, which gives the source of evidence that the speaker has for the at-issue proposition. Given this, if matrix *shuo* is an evidential, then the addressee can only negate the at-issue proposition (the truth of the propositional content), but cannot negate the not-at-issue proposition (where the information comes from). On the other hand, if matrix *shuo* is not an evidential, i.e., it is part of the assertion, then the addressee should be able to challenge how the speaker got the information. The contrast found in (6) indicates that matrix *shuo* is in fact an evidential; the proposition the matrix *shuo* takes is deniable, as in (6B1), but challenging about the speech event expressed by matrix *shuo* yields in felicity, as in (6B2).

(6) A: **Shuo** shuoxiang si le.
SHUO prime.minister die PERF
'The prime minister has died (someone said/I heard).'

B1: Bu dui. Shouxiang mei si.
NEG right prime.minister NEG die
'That is not true. The prime minister has not died.'

B2: #Bu dui. Shouxiang si le, dan yinggai meiren gaosu guo ni.
NEG right prime minister die PERF but should nobody tell EXP you
'That is not true. The prime minister has died, but nobody should have told you this.'

In contrast, with verbal *shuo*, unlike matrix *shuo*, the speech event expressed by *shuo* is the at-issue content of the utterance, and thus it can be challenged, as shown in (7).

(7) A: Yuehan **shuo** mingtian ting shui.
John say tomorrow stop water
'John said that there will be water suspension tomorrow.'

B: Bu dui mingtian hui ting shui, dan Yuehan mei shuo guo.
NEG right tomorrow will stop water but John NEG say EXP

'No, that's not true. There will be water suspension tomorrow, but John didn't/doesn't say that.'

There is a further similarity between matrix *shuo* and reportative/hearsay evidential markers in other languages. Matrix *shuo* cannot report the speaker's or the addressee's saying. For example, in (4) above, repeated in (8) below, it can only mean 'Kongyiji has died according to someone different from the speaker and the addressee'. This is another common property of (hearsay) evidentials in other languages (see e.g. Demonte and Fernández-Soriano 2014 and references therein).

(8) **Shuo** Kongyiji yijing si le. = (4)
SHUO Kongyiji already die PERF
'(Someone said/I heard) Kongyiji has died.'
* 'Kongyiji has died according to me/you.'

In sum, in this section we have shown that Matrix *shuo* is not a verb or an unmarked/pure complementizer. Rather, it has a number of similarities to evidential markers. In the next section, we will argue that matrix *shuo* under investigation is in fact an evidential marker, which is located in a syntactically different position from verbal *shuo* and the pure complementizer *shuo*.

3. Matrix *shuo* as an Evid head

In the previous section, we have observed that matrix *shuo* is not a mere counterpart of English *that* or a speech verb. Rather, it shows many similarities to reportative/hearsay evidential markers in other languages. In this section, we will argue that matrix *shuo* under investigation is an evidential marker, not a pure complementizer, which means that matrix *shuo* is located in a different syntactic position from the pure complementizer *shuo*.

On the basis of the observations from the previous section, we argue that matrix *shuo* under investigation is in fact a reportative/hearsay evidential marker. We suggest that it is located in a different syntactic position from the pure complementizer *shuo*, which is a counterpart of English complementizer *that* (see (2)). To be more specific, assuming a fine-grained split CP-domain (Cinque 1999, Speas and Tenny 2003 a.o.), we suggest that matrix *shuo* heads an Evidentiality Phrase (EvidP), as shown in (9) (see Demonte and Fernández-Soriano 2014 for Spanish and Saito 2019 for Japanese).

(9) [$_{\text{EvidP}}$ *shuo* […]]

In contrast, the pure complementizer *shuo* is, just like English *that*, the head of ForceP, which is selected by matrix predicates (e.g. 'say', 'think').

(10) … V [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *shuo* […]]

Note here that it is cross-linguistically common that elements of the same phonological form can function as an evidential marker as well as an unmarked complementizer. Thus, *tte* in Japanese (see (11)), and *kong* in Taiwanese can function as a (pure) complementizer and as an evidential marker (see Simpson and Wu 2002, Hsieh and Rint 2011, Saito 2019 and references therein). As discussed in more detail in the next section, *que* in Spanish has the same kind of multifunctionality.

(11) Japanese
a. John-ga [asita kuru tte] itta.
John-Nom tomorrow come TTE(C) said
'John said that he would come tomorrow.'
b. Gakubutyoo-ga yameta tte.
dean-Nom resigned TTE(evidential)
'The dead has resigned (someone said/I heard).'

In this section, we have argued that matrix *shuo* under investigation is an evidential marker, heading an Evidentiality Phrase, which contrasts with the unmarked complementizer *shuo*, which we suggest is the head of ForceP.

4. Consequences: Two matrix *que*'s vs. One matrix *shuo*

In the previous section, we have observed multifunctionality of *shuo*; it functions as an unmarked/pure complementizer (like English *that*) and as an evidential marker. As briefly mentioned above, this kind of multifunctionality is observed cross-linguistically. In this section, we will briefly compare the distribution of matrix *shuo* and *que* in Spanish. We will observe that despite their similarities, there are differences regarding *shuo* and *que* regarding the availability of a specific type of their matrix occurrences, which can be seen as support for Demonte and Fernández-Soriano's 2014 analysis of matrix *que*.

We have seen that *shuo* can function as an evidential marker and as a pure complementizer. This distribution of *shuo* is strikingly similar to *que* in Spanish. Just like *shuo*, *que* is usually assumed to be a counterpart of *that* in English, since it functions as a pure complementizer, as in (12). However, it can also occur in matrix clauses, as in (13) (e.g. Spitzer 1942, Etxepare 2007, Etxepare 2010, Demonte and Fernández-Soriano 2014).

(12) John dijo que ha dimitido el decano.
John said QUE(C) has resigned the dean
'John said that the dean has resigned.'
(13) Que ha dimitido el decano.
QUE has resigned the dean

'The dean has resigned (someone said/I heard).'
((13) is taken from Demonte and Fernández-Soriano 2014: 229)

Based on a number of similarities between *que* in (13) and evidential markers in other languages, Demonte and Fernández-Soriano (2014) (D&F, henceforth) argue that *que* in question is in fact an evidential marker, referring to this use as ***evidential que***. Assuming a fine-grained split-CP domain, they suggest that evidential *que* heads an EvidP, as in (14), just like our matrix *shuo*.

(14) Evidential *que*: [$_{\text{EvidP}}$ *que* $_{\text{Evid}}$ […]]

D&F further observe that this use of *que* is not the only instance of matrix occurrences of *que*. They show that matrix *que* has another usage: *echoic que*.

(15) Echoic *que*

A:	No	me	he	acordado	de	sacar	las	entradas.
	not	Refl	have	remembered	of	get	the	tickets
	'I did not remember to get the tickets.'							
B:	¿Que	no	te	has	acordado?			
	QUE	not	Refl	have	remembered			
	'Are you saying you did not remember?' (Porroche Ballesteros 2000: 104)							

The core characteristic of echoic *que* is that "the source of the *que*-clause is inside the linguistic context, i.e. there is a particular portion of speech that is (partly) reproduced" (D&F: 238). Thus, in (15), the speaker reproduces a part of the addressee's utterance ('did not remember').

D&F show that evidential *que* and echoic *que* behave differently in a number of syntactic and semantic respects, despite their apparent similarities. Based on such differences, they suggest that echoic *que* is located in a different syntactic position than evidential *que*. Specifically, they argue that echoic *que* is in fact the regular complementizer *que*, located in Force^0. This Force(P) is selected by a silent verb of communication, e.g. 'say', as illustrated in (16).

(16) Echoic *que*: … V$_{\text{(null)}}$ [$_{\text{ForceP}}$ *que* […]]

What is important for us here is that, while there is a similarity between Mandarin *shuo* and Spanish *que* in that both can function as a complementizer and as an evidential marker, *shuo* lacks the echoic use, as shown in (17).

(17) A: Wo wang le mai piao.

I forget Perf buy ticket
'I forgot to buy tickets.'

B:* Shuo ni wang le mai piao?
SHUO you forget Perf buy ticket
Intended: 'Are you saying that you forgot to buy tickets?'

As shown above, *shuo* has an evidential use but lacks an echoic use. In other words, *shuo* has only one of the two usages of "matrix complementizers" identified by D&F. There then need to be (at least) two distinct types of "matrix complementizers" (i.e. evidential and echoic) to capture the difference between Mandarin *shuo* and Spanish *que*. Hence, the distribution of matrix *shuo* provides support for D&F's dual treatment of matrix *que*. It shuold also be noted that, if D&F's and our analyses of *que*/*shuo* are on the right track, the fact that Mandarin lacks the echoic use of *shuo* implies that Mandarin, unlike Spanish, does not have a phonologically null communication verb.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we have investigated matrix *shuo* in Mandarin. We have shown that matrix *shuo* is not a speech verb or an unmarked/pure complementizer. We have argued that it is an evidential marker, heading an EvidP, unlike the pure complementizer *shuo*, which heads ForceP. We have also discussed the distributional differences between *shuo* and Spanish *que*, demonstrating that matrix *shuo* lacks one of the two usages of matrix *que* identified by Demonte and Fernández-Soriano (2014), which we have suggested can be seen as support for Demonte and Fernández-Soriano's (2014) analysis of matrix *que*.

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