

## The puzzle of Mandarin adverbs *bing* and *you* with negation

Adverbs *bing*, and *you* in Mandarin can serve as negative polarity items. They may co-occur with negations so as to express their additional properties (e.g. Lee, C. 2016). Be that as it may, it is rather difficult to derive discourse meanings from their adverbial elements while in negative contexts. On the report of previous studies (e.g. Lin 2014), adverbs *bing* and *you* function as presupposition negators. For *bing*, while in negative contexts, it is utilised to negate the presupposition that derived from i) objective logic, and ii) hearers' words and deeds, as in (1) and (2) from Lin's excerpt:

- (1) Shìyàn duō cì, zhèngmíng xīn nóngyào **bing** wú fùzuòyòng.  
examine NUM CL prove new pesticide combine NEG side-effect  
'Having examined the new pesticide a number of times, [we] have proven that it has no side effects.'
- (2) **Bing** bù shì wǒ yǒuyì lái wǎn, shì chē huài le.  
combine NEG FOC 1SG intend come late FOC car break PFV  
'I did not intend to come late. It was because the car broke down.'

As for *you*, not only does it possess the first property mentioned above for *bing* (to negate the presupposition that derived from objective logic), but frequently appears in rhetorical questions as an emphasiser to introduce a cause-effect logic, as in (3) from Lin's excerpt:

- (3) Tā yòu bù huì chī rén, nǐ pà shénme?  
3S.M accumulate NEG MOD eat human 2SG fear what  
Fig. 'He will not bite you. What did you fear for?'

The extended properties point out that *bing* and *you* boast little remaining overtones, which is hence reduced, to some extent, to be less referential. Based on the core properties of adverbs *bing* and *you*, combination and accumulation respectively, interlocutors will choose either *bing* or *you* to facilitate their expressions. As might be expected, they do not choose any of them at random, but with an explicit purpose. The use of both *bing* and *you* are to negate others' presupposition, but in a different way. They are not merely to emphasise negation. The central aim of this study is then to delineate the use of *bing* and *you* as a result of pragmaticalisation.

### Selected References

- Lee, C. 2016. Introduction. In P. Larrivé & C. Lee (eds), *Negation and polarity: Experimental perspectives*. Springer International Publishing.
- Lin, C. 2014. *Pingjia fuci bing, you, cai de lishi yanjiu* [The diachronic studies of evaluative adverbs *bing*, *you*, and *cai*]. Master's thesis. National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei.