

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 is divided into two parts. The first part outlines the objectives, research questions, hypotheses, methods, scope and limitations, and overview of the thesis. The second part presents a general introduction to aspects of the Mandarin Chinese language as needed for this study, including a brief phonology and grammar sketch.

1.2 Objectives and Research Questions

This thesis analyzes three different features of discourse prominence in selected Mandarin children's stories: 1) the surface and notional structure, 2) Storyline and supportive material and 3) the macrostructure. The thesis identifies how this information is encoded within four selected Mandarin children's narratives. To do this, each of the texts is first analyzed into logical segments using topic continuity markers (Barnwell 1980, Givón 1984, Dooley and Levinsohn 2001). This analysis results in a rough outline of the surface and notional structure stages. Next, each thematic unit is analyzed for what type(s) of salience information it contains. Specifically, the discussion focuses on how material with differing degrees of salience to the Storyline is encoded within the surface structure. The surface grammatical coding will then be compared to the semantic (notional) structure of the text by looking at what characteristics mark the various stages of the story. Finally, a macrostructure based on the Storyline and non-Storyline clauses of two texts will be generated, creating a summary of each text (van Dijk 1977a).

Specifically, the research questions of this thesis are:

1. What stages occur in the surface and notional structures of the selected texts and what are the characteristics of each? How do they correspond to each other?
2. Which salience bands occur in the selected stories and what are their characteristics?
3. Can a reasonable macrostructure of each discourse be constructed using both Storyline and non-Storyline clauses?

1.3 Hypotheses

Following the research questions stated above, the hypotheses proposed in this thesis are as follows:

1. The surface structure stages of the selected narratives can be configured to include Title, Aperture, Stage, Pre-Peak Episodes, Peak, Post-Peak Episodes, Closure and Finis. Correlations to Aperture and Finis will not be included in the notional structure. The stages of the notional structure include Exposition, Inciting Moment, Developing Conflict, Denouement and Conclusion. Final Suspense may or may not occur in some of the narratives. Because these narratives are written simply and for children, it seems likely that the structural stages will generally have a direct, one-to-one correspondence between surface and notional structures.
2. Seven salience bands will be found in the selected stories: Storyline, Background, Flashback, Setting, Irrealis, Evaluation /Author Intrusion and Cohesion. The Storyline will be marked by action verbs, motion verbs and perfective aspect markers. Background events will either be marked with durative aspect markers or no aspectual markers at all. They may also be marked by cognitive event verbs. Setting will be marked by existential or stative verbs. Flashback, if it occurs, will be signaled through the use of temporal adverbs. Irrealis will be marked by negatives and modals. Evaluative material will be marked with stative or cognitive event verbs and/or particles that invite the reader's response. Cohesion will be marked through the use of overlapping phrases, conjunctions and lexical cohesion.
3. A reasonable macrostructure can be created for each of the four selected texts by using both Storyline and non-Storyline happenings and applying macrorules.

1.4 Text Selection Criteria

Narrative texts were chosen firstly because they represent a relatively simple genre to begin working with when looking at discourse features (Dooley and Levinsohn 2001: 44) and secondly because they provide clear separations between different kinds of information (Grimes 1975: 33). Four texts were collected from an online children's story website <http://www.zhly.cn> (February 19, 2011)¹. All of the stories are written in Mandarin Chinese and are written at about a 4th grade reading level. Once the texts were collected, I glossed and wrote a preliminary free translation.

¹ Since this site was first accessed, the pages referenced have been taken down. The stories have been found again in their exact format at the following sites:

Text 1: 华家池 *hua² jia¹ chi²* 'Hua Pond': <http://www.tonghua5.com/minjiangushi/minjian/1024.html> (December 22, 2011).

Text 2: 钱王射潮 *qian² wang² she⁴ chao²*, 'King Qian Shoots the Tide': <http://hangzhou.baike.com/article-72067.html> (December 22, 2011).

Text 3: 六和填江 *liu⁴ he² tian² jiang¹* 'Liu He Fills in the River' <http://www.aohz.com/mingsheng/legend18.htm> (December 22, 2011).

Text 4: 隐身草 *yin³ shen¹ cao³* 'Invisible Grass' <http://www.gushi365.com/info/930.html> (December 22, 2011).

Each text was then proofread by two native Mandarin speakers. In the four instances where typographical errors occurred in the original texts, I double-checked the accuracy with a native Mandarin speaker and made the correct changes. The first typographical error was in “Hua Pond” (clause 69). One of the mother tongue translators who checked my work thought that 脚 *jiao*³ ‘foot’ was a typo and so we changed it to 子 *zi*³ ‘noun suffix’ in the word 日子 *ri*⁴ *zi* ‘days’. The second error was one character which was written incorrectly in two different places. In “King Qian Shoots the Tide” (96 and 101), the original character that appeared in both places was 隻 *sou*³ ‘gentleman, old man’, but was changed to 嗖 *sou*¹ ‘whooshing sound’ as it was more appropriate for the context. The third error was found in “Liu He Fills in the River” (20). The particle *la* was changed to the perfective aspect marker *-le*. The fourth typographical error was in “Liu He Fills in the River” clause (24) where the second 一面 *yi*¹ *mian*¹ ‘on one hand’ was changed to 一边 *yi*¹ *bian*¹ ‘at the same time’.

In the original text, there was no spacing between characters, so I inserted them where word breaks naturally occurred. Four-character idioms and phrases were treated as one unit. Using the punctuation found in the text, I divided the text into sentences and clauses where they seemed to naturally occur. Where there was a full stop (。), a question mark or an exclamation point I marked as the end of the sentence. Where a comma (,), semi-colon, colon, dash (——) or ellipsis (……) appeared, I marked that as the end of the clause. There are two points to note about the comma. First, it was primarily used to indicate the end of a complete thought or independent clause (though it was also used at the end of dependent clauses). Strings of these independent clauses were put together to form a larger group of states or events and completed with a period. In this regard, commas functioned more like an English period than a comma. A second type of comma (、) appeared in the text which denoted items in a list. Finally, quotation marks were marked as (“”). They denoted speech in the text as well the name of something. Please note that several Chinese characters should not be confused with a few English non-alphabet characters, i.e. *yi*¹ (一) ‘one’ with a dash, *er*² (二) ‘two’ with an equal sign, *shi*² (十) ‘ten’ with a plus sign and *kou*³ (口) ‘mouth’ with an empty character box.

Please also note that numbers in parentheses () refer to clause numbers, not sentence or page numbers. These will always be accompanied by the title of the text.

To get a better analysis of the text, some measurements were taken, specifically the number of clauses and sentences per text, the clause-to-sentence ratio of each text, the longest and shortest sentences in each text (by the number of words) and

average number of words in a random section of the texts. One word could be made up of one to four characters. (Determining what a word is is a very subjective process; a different analysis may result in slightly different numbers than what is shown here.) To find the average number of words per sentence, 25% of the sentences in each text were counted. In Text 1 “Hua Pond”, 15 sentences were counted (clauses 1-39); in Text 2 “King Qian Shoots the Tide”, 14 sentences were counted (clauses 32-63); in Text 3 “Liu He Fills in the River”, eight sentences were counted (clauses 36-51) and in Text 4 “Invisible Grass”, 10 sentences were counted (clauses 69-97). Table 1 below shows some of the texts’ statistics.

Table 1 Statistics of the four selected texts

	Text 1 Hua Pond	Text 2 King Qian	Text 3 Liu He	Text 4 Invisible Grass
Number of clauses	122	111	69	97
Number of sentences	58	54	32	41
Ratio of clauses to sentences	2	2	2	2
Longest sentence in words (clauses)	48 words (48-52)	54 words (92-94)	50 words (15-20)	62 words (1-7)
Shortest sentence in words (clauses)	1 (28)	2 (37)	8 (58)	4 (32, 39)
Average sentence length (words)	23	21	19	21

It is interesting to note from Table 1 that Text 1 is almost twice as long as Text 3, and Texts 2 and 4 are closer in length to Text 1. Another interesting thing is that the ratio of clauses to sentences came out the same for all four texts. Average sentence length among the texts was similar, as well. The sentences with the most number of clauses occurred in the Stage (“Invisible Grass”), Pre-Peak segments (“Hua Pond”, “Liu He Fills in the River”) and across the Pre-Peak Episode and the Peak (“King Qian”). The sentences with the fewest number of clauses primarily occurred in the Pre-Peak Episodes, except “Liu He Fills in the River” where they occurred in the Post-Peak Episode. While the longest and shortest sentences of the stories do not appear to fall into an observable pattern in the texts, upon closer analysis of more

texts there may be a correlation between sentence/clause length and section of text. Sentence and clause length may be used as a rhetorical device to increase or decrease vividness within a specific segment of text.

Criteria for choosing the four stories not only included Levinsohn's (2007: 12) guidelines of third person narration with two or three participants, but also that the participants were of the same type (human or animal). The number of clauses per text varied from 69-122.

The texts were then classified with Longacre's (1996: 8-10) typology and determined to be proper narrative texts with the necessary binary characteristics of (+) contingent succession, (+) agent orientation, (+) tension and (-) projection. (See Section 2.3.1 for further discussion of the meaning of these terms.)

Once the four stories were chosen and classified, each text was then divided into thematic units utilizing boundary markers and indicators of internal (thematic) unity. These identified the major sections in the text and facilitated the analysis of the surface and notional structures of each text.

Once the four texts were prepared, the first step was to analyze the thematic units to find out how each stage of the story was marked in the surface structure and what the characteristics of each stage were. The second step was to see how the surface structure and notional structure corresponded to each other. The stages of each structure were compared, looking to see where they matched up and where skewing between the stages occurred (Longacre 1996). The third step was to break down the texts to the clausal level. Each clause was ranked by the salient information it contained and it was noted how that information was communicated in the grammatical and semantic structures. Specifically, the types of verbs, particles and other lexical items that signaled what type of information (Longacre 1996 and Levinsohn 2007) were identified. Finally, using both Storyline and non-Storyline salience bands, a macrostructure of each story was created by iteratively applying van Dijk's (1977a) macrorules. This created an effective abstract of each story.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

The scope of this thesis covers the salience scheme, surface and notional structure and macrostructure of four selected Mandarin children's stories. These particular four were selected because they tell the stories of famous mythical people and events in Chinese history. Because these are children's stories, the limitations of this

study include the fact that lexical choices and grammatical constructions are simpler than they would be for an older audience. Further study would reveal if there is any change in these selected aspects of discourse prominence with an older audience.

1.6 Overview of the Thesis

To give an overview, this thesis is made up of six chapters. Chapter 1 is divided into two parts. In the first part, the objectives, research questions, hypotheses and scope and limitations of the thesis are stated and the methods are outlined. In the second part, a general introduction to the Mandarin language is presented which includes a brief phonology and grammar sketch of the language. The grammatical sketch focuses on elements which are most relevant to the texts: namely clause structure, the noun phrase, the prepositional phrase, the verb phrase, aspect markers and clause-final particles. Chapter 2 is divided into three sections. Section 2.2 contains a brief discussion of the foundational issues on which this study is based. Specifically, the definitions of *text* and *discourse*, what discourse analysis is and views of discourse classifications will be discussed. Section 2.3 gives a brief overview of the tools used for analyzing the selected texts. Section 2.4 contains reviews of discourse studies done in languages which have similar structures to Mandarin as well as other discourse works which inform this study.

Chapter 3 looks at the makeup and correlation between the surface and notional structures of the four selected texts. Chapter 4 analyzes and discusses the salience bands found in each of the four texts and proposes an emic salience scheme for Mandarin. In Chapter 5 a reasonable macrostructure of “Liu He Fills in the River” is created. Chapter 6 summarizes the findings gained from in-depth analysis of each of the four texts. Suggestions for further research are also put forth. Appendices A-D contain the interlinearized version of each of the four texts, the Storyline clauses for “Liu He Fills in the River” are found in Appendix E and Appendix F contains a macrostructure of “Invisible Grass”.

1.7 The Mandarin Language

In this second part of Chapter 1, a brief overview of Mandarin Chinese is given. First, in this section basic information about the language and its speakers is presented, then a brief phonology (Section 1.7) and grammar sketch (Section 1.8) are outlined. The grammar sketch focuses on the primary grammatical structures

that are pertinent to the texts. These latter two sections are based on the work of Li and Thompson (1981) and do not represent any original research for this thesis.

Mandarin is one of the languages of the Chinese branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family. Some of the major language groups are summarized in Figure 1.

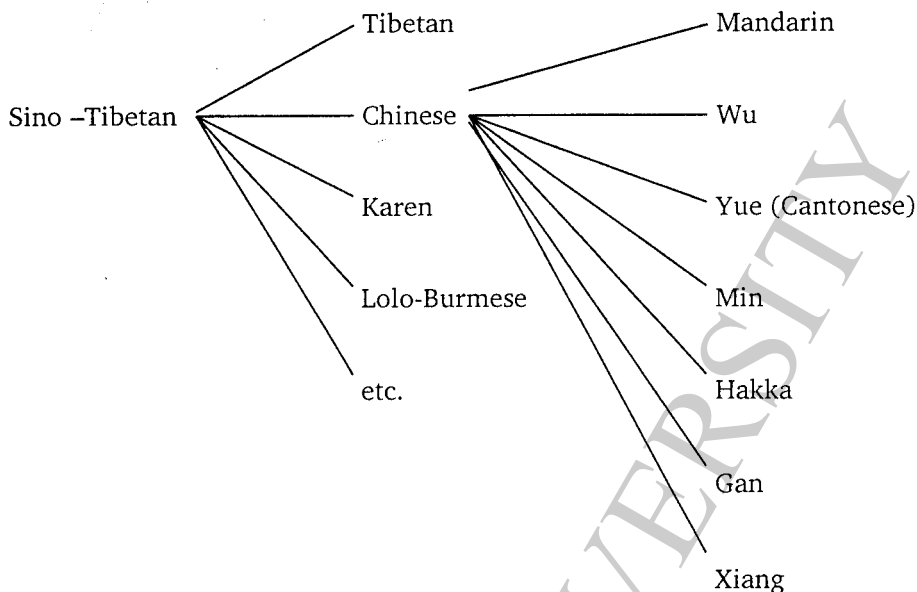


Figure 1 Mandarin classification (adapted from Li and Thompson 1981: 3)

Li and Thompson (1981) provide a helpful introduction to characteristics of Mandarin or *putonghua*. Out of the seven² major dialect groups of what is broadly known as “Chinese”, Mandarin is the largest dialect family, and it is spoken throughout northern China. What is known in the West as Mandarin, and within China as *pu³ tong¹ hua⁴* ‘common language’, is the standardized version of this northern dialect. It was named as such in 1955 by the government of the People’s Republic of China in order to provide a national language and to unify the country. It is based on the grammar of northern Mandarin, utilizing the pronunciation of the Beijing dialect of Mandarin and the vocabulary of modern vernacular literature, so that most workers and farmers would be able to understand it. Since becoming the

² Other authors posit more or fewer major dialect groups, but the consensus is generally seven. Lewis (2009) cites 13 varieties under “Chinese”. Li and Thompson reduce their original count from their 1981 publication to five dialects in their 1990 work. Norman (1988) bases his count on research done by Li Fang Kuei in 1937 and Yuan Jia Hua in 1961, agreeing with Li and Thompson (1981) in counting seven main dialects. Chappell (2001: 6) also recognizes seven main dialects, though she identifies three more which could be included in the Chinese language family.

national language, *putonghua* is used for official business, education and media. As a result, 70% of the population within China is reported to be able to speak and understand it (Li and Thompson 1981: 3, San 2007: 1), as well as a large percentage of those who have emigrated to other parts of the world.

For the purposes of this paper, the term 'Mandarin' will be used to refer to *putonghua* (as defined above) as it is a more commonly known term for English readers. All of the texts used in this study were written using *putonghua*.

The Chinese orthography (called *han²zi*) is written using a set of eight basic strokes. These strokes combine to form sets of strokes which in turn combine to form characters. Among the many sets of strokes, about 214 of them (called radicals) are used as a classification system for finding characters in a dictionary. Traditionally, the number of strokes per character was quite high, creating an intricate and complicated writing system. After the Communist Revolution in the 1950s, the writing system was simplified by reducing the number of strokes per character to make it easier for the average person to become literate. Within mainland China, this simplified script is used; outside of the mainland, in Hong Kong, Taiwan and among Chinese communities around the world, traditional characters are still used.

In an effort to make the Chinese language more accessible to the Western world, several versions of a romanized script of Mandarin were developed. The one that is most widely used today is *pin¹ yin¹* (lit. 'sound spell'). This is the system which will be used for interlinearizing the texts used in this thesis.

1.8 Phonology Sketch

Mandarin has 22 consonants and two semi-vowels³, as seen in Table 2 below. All of them except /ŋ/ occur syllable-initially, while /n/ and /ŋ/ are the only consonants that occur syllable-finally. When a syllable begins with the vowels /i, y, u/, this is written in *pinyin* orthography with *y* or *w*. Thus, /i/ 'one' is written in *pinyin* as *yi¹*, /y/ 'fish' is written as *yu²* (rounding implied) and /u/ 'five' is written as *wu³* (Yip 2007: 25). There are no consonant clusters in Mandarin (Li and Thompson 1981: 3).

³ Yip (2007: 24-25) presents an interesting discussion on the distribution of consonants and vowels.

Table 2 Chart of Mandarin phonemes with *pinyin* counterparts (adapted from Li and Thompson 1981: 5)

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Retroflex palatal	Palatal	Velar
Stops	/p/ [b] ⁴ /p ^h / [p]		/t/ [d] /t ^h / [t]			/k/ [g] /k ^h / [k]
Nasals	/m/ [m]		/n/ [n]			/ŋ/ [ng]
Fricatives		/f/ [f]	/s/ [s]	/ʃ/ [sh] /z/ [r]	/ç/ [x]	/x/ [h]
Affricates			/ts/ [z] /ts ^h / [c]	/tʃ/ [zh] /tʃ ^h / [ch]	/tç/ [j] /tç ^h / [q]	
Approximants	/w/ [w]		/l/ [l]		/j/ [y]	

According to most scholars, there are five standard Mandarin vowels /i, y, u, ʌ, a/. (Sometimes /o/ is included as well because it occurs in the *pinyin* inventory⁵.) But Goddard (2002: 156) notes that the situation is more complex than that. These five basic vowels are affected by their environment and so have a wide range of allophonic variants. For the purposes of this thesis, both the vowels and their allophones will be presented. Table 3 below shows 13 phonetic monophthongs found in Mandarin.

Table 3 Mandarin vowels (adapted from Yip 2007: 23)

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i ⁶ y		u
Near-close	e		ʌ o
Mid		ə ⁷	

⁴ Letters in square brackets indicate the *pinyin* letter.

⁵ See Yip (2007: 22).

⁶ This is a complex sound which scholars have described in various ways (see Norman (1988: 141-142), Yip (2007: 22) and San (2007: 34-35)). Each acknowledges that the *pinyin* letter -i is pronounced differently in three different environments. The first environment is after the fricatives /ts, ts^h, s/, the second environment is after the affricate retroflexives /tʃ, tʃ^h, ç, z/ and the third is after all other consonants or word initially (as in /i/ yí¹ 'one'). To maintain consistency with the other phonetic descriptions, Yip's (2007: 22) description will be employed, namely that the phoneme in the first environment is the unrounded alveolar apical vowel /ɿ/; in the second environment it is the unrounded retroflex apical vowel /ɻ/ and in all other environments it is the unrounded high-front vowel /i/.

Near-open	ɛ ⁸		ʌ	ɔ
Open	a	ɐ	ɑ	

Mandarin has 12 phonetic diphthongs and 4 phonetic triphthongs, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Mandarin diphthongs and triphthongs (adapted from Yip 2007: 23-24)

IPA	Pinyin	Example	IPA	Pinyin	Example	IPA	Pinyin	Example
ai	ai	<i>gai</i>	ou	ou	<i>gou</i>	iau	iao	<i>jiao</i>
au	ao	<i>gao</i>	ue	ua	<i>gua, luan</i>	iou	iu	<i>jiu</i>
ei	ei	<i>gei</i>	uo	uo	<i>guo</i>	uai	uai	<i>guai</i>
iɐ	ia	<i>jia</i>	ye	üe	<i>xue</i>	uei	ui	<i>gui</i>
iɛ	ie	<i>jie</i>	uə	u	<i>dun</i>			
io	io	<i>qiong</i>	ya	üa	<i>quan</i>			

Mandarin has four tones: high, rising, dipping and falling as shown Table 5 below.

Table 5 Chart of Mandarin tones (adapted from Li and Thompson 1981: 8)

Tone 1	high level	55
Tone 2	high rising	35
Tone 3	dipping	214
Tone 4	high falling	51

In this paper, for ease of reading, Tone 1 (55) will be marked with a superscripted '1', Tone 2 (35) will be marked by a superscripted '2', Tone 3 (214) will be marked by a superscripted '3' and Tone 4 (51) will be marked by a superscripted '4'.

Mandarin also employs a neutral tone which is a mid-level tone. This tone can occur on some monosyllabic words (such as particles) or on the last syllable of a di- or tri-syllabic word. For these syllables, the superscripted tone is omitted.

⁷ Li and Thompson (1981: 7) also describe a rhoticized schwa, as in *er²-zi* 'son'.

⁸ San (2007: 37) includes /ɛ/ in his vowel inventory which he describes as being in between /ɛ/ and /e/, as in the words *ye⁴ /jɛ/* 'leaf' and *lie⁴ /l¹ɛ/* 'crack'.

1.9 Grammar Sketch

The grammar sketch below outlines the grammatical features of Mandarin which are pertinent to understanding the features found in the chosen texts. Specifically, clauses (and how clauses are joined to form sentences), the noun phrase, the prepositional phrase, the verb phrase, aspect markers and clause-final particles are examined. This brief analysis is primarily taken from the work of Li and Thompson (1981), using examples from the texts selected for this study.

1.9.1 Clause Structure

In this section, different types of clauses are discussed. These include intransitive, transitive, ditransitive and stative clauses along with dependent and independent clauses. Clause connectors and alternative word orders will be briefly discussed as well.

Within any given clause, the verb controls which nominal phrase will occur in the clause. Each verb has an intrinsic number of slots that must be filled by nominal elements, namely a subject, an object and an indirect object. The type of verb which occurs in the clause determines which and how many of these nouns will appear. The normative word order in Mandarin intransitive clauses, that is those clauses where the verb has a valence of one nominal argument (subject), is SV (subject + verb), as in the example below.

(1) Hua Pond (62)

62 杨柳 枝儿 摇
yang² liu³ zhi¹ er yao²
willow tree branch shake, wave
n n v

the willow tree branches waved,

A transitive clause, in which the verb has a valence of two, orders the nominal elements as SVO (subject + verb + object); this is the standard word order for Mandarin. An example is shown below.

(2) Liu He Fills in the River (9)

9 娘 儿 俩 用 两 支 竹 竿
niang² er² lia³ yong⁴ liang³ zhi¹ zhu² yu²
mother son two, both use two clf bamboo
n n num v num clf n

Mother and son both used two pieces of bamboo,

The word order of a ditransitive clause, where three nominal arguments are required, follows the pattern of SVO + IO (subject + verb + object + indirect object) where the indirect object occurs after the object, as shown in the following example.

(3) Invisible Grass (7)

7 当地 老百姓 给 他 起 了 个 外 号 : “ 老 财 迷 ”
dang¹ di⁴ lao³ bai³ xing⁴ gei³ ta¹ qi³ le ge wai⁴ hao⁴ lao³ cai² mi²
local common people give 3sg-m start PFV clf nickname Old Miser
adj n v pro Vcomp ASP clf n n

the local people began to give him the nickname "Old Miser".

The types of verbs described in the clauses above can all be categorized as describing an action or event. Other clauses, called stative clauses, do not use action verbs; rather they use verbs that describe states of being, existence, characteristics or qualities. There are several types of stative clauses in Mandarin, each having a different function. Three types are discussed here: descriptive clauses which do not use a copula, descriptive clauses which do use a copula, and presentational clauses.

In descriptive clauses, adjectival verbs are often used to describe the subject. To distinguish, adjectives describe nouns and generally precede the noun head. Adjectival verbs are often clause predicates describing the state or characteristics of the subject. According to Li and Thompson, an adjectival verb is one "that is at the nucleus of a verb phrase" and that adjectival verbs make up most of the inventory of Mandarin adjectives (1981: 142). When describing the subject with an adjectival verb, no copula is used, as illustrated in the example below.

(4) King Qian Shoots the Tide (55)

56 这 个 地 方 山 路 狭 窄
zhe⁴ ge di⁴ fang shan¹ lu⁴ xia² zhai³
this, here clf place mountain road narrow
dem clf n n n adj

this mountain road was narrow,

When identifying or characterizing someone or something, a copula is used, as in the example below.

(5) King Qian Shoots the Tide (26)

26 他 是 个 潮 神
ta¹ shi⁴ ge chao² shen²
3sg-m is clf tide god
pro v clf n

he is a tide god

When describing the existence of something, the presentational or existential verb *you³* 'have, there is' is used, as shown in the example below.

(6) Invisible Grass (13)

13 老 财 迷 院 子 里 有 棵 老
lao³ cai² mi² yuan⁴ zi li³ you³ ke¹ lao³
Old Miser courtyard in exstmrkr clf indicates affection or familiarity
n n loc v clf adj

槐 树
huai² shu⁴
locust tree
n

Inside the Old Miser's courtyard there was a locust tree,

In Mandarin, chains of two or more clauses are often juxtaposed to form sentences. Two types of clauses make up these sentences: dependent clauses and independent

clauses. An independent clause can stand alone as a sentence. Often independent clauses are coordinated with conjunctions such as *he²* 'and', *ke³ shi* 'but', *jiu⁴* 'then' or *hai² shi⁴* 'or, still, nevertheless' to form a compound sentence. An example of a chain of two independent clauses is shown in the example below. The *jiu⁴* 'then' in bold links the two clauses.

(7) Invisible Grass (55-56)

55 接着 又 商量 了 半天 , 趁 着
 jie¹ zhe you⁴ shang¹ liang le ban⁴ tian¹ chen⁴ zhe
 continue, proceed again talk over CRS quite a while take advantage of DUR
 v adv v prt temp adv v ASP

天 还 不 大 亮
 tian¹ hai² bu⁴ da⁴ liang⁴
 day still NEG big light, bright
 n adv adv adj adj

They continued to talk it over for quite a while, taking advantage of the day while it was still not very light,

56 就 开始 行动 了 。
 jiu⁴ kai¹ shi³ xing² dong⁴ le
 then begin act, move PFV
 conn v v ASP

then they began to act.

The second type of clause is a dependent clause. This kind of clause cannot stand alone as a sentence; it must be attached to an independent clause and is called a complex clause. In Mandarin, a dependent clause occurs before the independent (or main) clause. A dependent clause is linked to an independent clause with a conjunction like *sui¹ ran²* 'even though' or a temporal adverb like *de shi² hou⁴* 'when'. The conjunction or temporal adverb can occur at the beginning or the end of the dependent clause. An example of a dependent clause is shown below; the dependent clause is bolded while the temporal adverb is italicized.

(8) Liu He Fills in the River (15)

15 有 一 天 ， 娘 儿 俩 正 在
 you³ yi¹ tian¹ niang² er² lia³ zheng⁴ zai⁴
 exstmrkr one day mother son two, both in the process of, while
 v num n n n num adv

捞 鱼 的 时 候 ， 不 料 这 次
 lao¹ yu² de shi² hou⁴ bu⁴ liao⁴ zhe⁴ ci⁴
 fish up, dredge up fish when unexpectedly, to one's surprise this, here time
 v n temp adv coordconn dem n

潮 水 来 得 特 别 快
 chao² shui³ lai² de te⁴ bie² kuai⁴
 tidewaters come to the extent that especially, particularly quickly
 n dir prt adj adv

特 别 凶
 te⁴ bie² xiong¹
 especially, particularly terrible, fierce, vicious
 adj adv

One day, while mother and son were both fishing, the tide came in especially quickly and especially viciously,

When clauses are linked together in long chains, they often share a common subject or topic and so many of the clauses will consist of only a verb phrase and an object. The sentence below is an example of one of these long clause chains, where *ta¹* 'he' (the Old Miser) is the common subject and is highlighted in bold.

(9) Invisible Grass (25-27)

25 他 忙 不 迭 地 躲 到 假 山 后
 ta¹ mang² bu⁴ die² de duo³ dao⁴ jia³ shan¹ hou⁴
 3sg-m hurriedly adverbializer hide arrive at, to false hill after
 pro adv prt v coverb adj n temp adv

He hurriedly hid behind a little mound,

26 竖 起 耳 朵
 shu⁴ qi³ er³ duo
 erect, vertical start ears
 v Vcomp n

[he] perked his ears up,

27 想 听 个 究竟 。

xiang³ ting¹ ge jiu¹ jing⁴

want hear clf result

v v clf n

wanting to hear (what on earth was being said).

In terms of word order, Li and Thompson note that meaning drives Mandarin word order more than grammar rules (Li and Thompson 1981: 20) and therefore word order may be rearranged to give prominence to a certain clause constituent. In most Mandarin sentences, the word order follows the standard SVO pattern, but alternative word orders are commonly used as well. Two of the most prevalent alternative word orders are described here⁹. SOV word order, through the use of the *ba* (把) construction (S-*ba*-O-V), shows how the direct object is “affected” or “disposed of” (Huang, Li and Li 2009: 153). *Ba* is the grammaticalized form of the verb *ba*³ (把) ‘to take hold of, to grasp’. Verbs co-occurring with grammaticalized *ba* have high transitivity and so will have greater prominence.

(10) King Qian Shoots the Tide (85)

马上 把 诗 丢 进 江 水 里 去 ...

ma² shang⁴ ba³ shi¹ diu¹ jin⁴ jiang¹ shui³ li³ qu⁴

immediately poem, ode throw enter river water in go

adv prt n v dir n n loc v

Immediately, he threw the poem into the river water...

OSV word order, through the use of the *bei*⁴ (被) construction (O-*bei*⁴-S-V), highlights the object and what happens to it, taking precedence over the agent, similar to the English passive construction (Liu 2003). But in contrast to English, *bei*⁴ is primarily an adverse passive, used when something bad has happened. *Bei*⁴ differs from *ba* in that *bei*⁴ just shows that the object was affected; *ba* shows how it was affected (Huang, Li and Li 2009: 158-159). An example of the *bei*⁴ construction is found below. In this clause, the subject (the tide god) is omitted as the power behind the devastating tides as he has already been introduced in the preceding clauses. Therefore the structure in the following example is O-*bei*⁴-V.

⁹ Alternative word orders not employing *ba* or *bei*⁴ were also found in the texts (e.g. Liu He Fills the River (69)). One explanation may be one of definiteness, where pre-verbal nominal elements are considered definite whereas post-verbal nominal elements are indefinite (Li and Thompson 1981: 20-21). If the author wants to highlight that a certain nominal element was definite or indefinite (contrary to expectation), he would change the standard word order.

(11) Liu He Fills in the River (4)

4 沿 江 两 岸 的 田地 常常 被 淹没
yan² jiang¹ liang³ an⁴ de tian² di⁴ chang² chang² bei⁴ yan¹ mo⁴
along river two bank NOM farmland often, frequently **passive** flood
coverb n num n prt n adv prt v

the fields on both sides of the river **were** frequently flooded,

Word order may also be rearranged without any markers such as in the following example. Here, the word order is VS, making the subject prominent.

(12) Liu He Fills in the River (42)

42 潮头 上 站 着 个 横行霸道 的 蟹 将军
chao² tou shang⁴ zhan⁴ zhe ge heng² xing² ba⁴ dao⁴ de xie⁴ jiang¹ jun¹
tide on stand DUR clf tyrannical NOM crab (military) general
n loc v ASP clf adj prt n n

Standing on the tide was **a tyrannical crab general**

One important point to note is that some scholars, such as Li and Thompson (1976, 1981), argue that Mandarin is better described as being primarily a topic-comment language more than being a subject-predicate language. Mandarin can be analyzed in terms of both structures, but they have different functions within discourse. Topic-comment sentences provide a description or opinion; subject-predicate sentences primarily describe an action or narrate an event. Therefore, subject-predicate sentences are more often found in narrative discourse whereas topic-comment sentences are more commonly found in expository discourse (Yip and Rimmington 2006: 146, 149).

The constituents of the sentence, i.e. the noun phrase, the prepositional phrase, the verb phrase, aspect markers and clause-final particles, are discussed below, beginning with the noun phrase.

1.9.2 The Noun Phrase

The Mandarin noun phrase in its most basic form is composed of a pronoun or noun (single or compound) functioning as a head with optional dependents. Li and Thompson (1981: 103ff) describe more complex noun phrases as including dependents such as classifier phrases, associative phrases and modifying phrases.

These elements all occur pre-nominally; thus the Mandarin noun phrase is head final.

Noun phrases which contain a classifier phrase exhibit the following general pattern:

NP = (demonstrative) + (number) + (quantifier) + (adjective) + classifier + (adjective) + (的 *de* 'nominalizer, possessive') + N

There are several dozen classifiers in Mandarin (Li and Thompson 1981: 105). Many nouns share a classifier because they share common features. *Ge* is the general classifier and is sometimes used to replace specialized classifiers. An example of a classifier noun phrase is shown below.

(13) Hua Pond (4)

4	这	一	大	片	荒地	就	算	是	华
	zhe ⁴	yi ¹	da ⁴	pian ⁴	huang ¹ di ⁴	jiu ⁴	suan ⁴	shi ⁴	hua ²
	this, here	one	big	clf	uncultivated land	just, in fact,	calculate, figure	is	Hua
	dem	num	adj	clf	n	conn	v	v	n

家 的 了 。

jia ¹	de	le
family	NOM	CRS
n	prt	prt

This large piece of uncultivated land was figured to be the Hua family's.

Noun phrases which contain associative phrases are described as:

NP = NP₁ *de*¹⁰ NP₂

In noun phrases which use an associative phrase, NP₁ and *de* comprise the associate phrase while NP₂ is the head noun. This structure indicates that the two noun phrases are linked in some way, either through possession or general association. The difference between the two is that possession describes something that is closely linked with the noun, such as a family member or a body part. Association is similarly linked, but not as closely. *De* serves both a possessive and associative marker. The clause below shows an example of possession.

¹⁰ *de* can be omitted in certain contexts, for example when the possessive relationship is between two human relatives and when the noun in the associative phrase is a pronoun (Li and Thompson 1981: 115-116).

(14) Liu He Fills in the River (17)

17 牵 住 娘 的 手 拔 脚 飞 跑 ,
 qian¹ zhu⁴ niang² de shou³ ba² jiao³ fei¹ pao³
 hold hands live mother POSS hand pull out feet fly run
 v v n prt n v n v v

he grabbed his mother's hand and ran away,

The next clause example is an example of general association:

(15) Liu He Fills in the River (4)

4 沿 江 两 岸 的 田 地 常常 被 淹 没 ,
 yan² jiang¹ liang³ an⁴ de tian² di⁴ chang² chang² bei⁴ yan¹ mo⁴
 along river two bank POSS field, farmland often, frequently passive flood
 coverb n num n prt n adv prt v

the fields on both sides of the river frequently flooded,

Modifying phrases serve to specify something about the noun. This is done by using a relative clause, as in the example below.

(16) Liu He Fills in the River (68)

68 为了 感谢 六和 治 伏 了 龙 王 ,
 wei² le gan³ xie⁴ Liu⁴ He² zhi⁴ fu² le Long² Wang²
 in order to (express) thanks Liu He control into submission PFV Dragon King
 conn v n v ASP n

后 人 就 在 他 搬 石 块 的 小 山 上 ,
 hou⁴ ren² jiu⁴ zai⁴ ta¹ ban¹ shi² kuai⁴ de xiao³ shan¹ shang⁴
 descendants then at 3sg-m move rock POSS small hill on
 n conn coverb pro v n prt adj n loc

修 筑 起 一 座 宝 塔 ,
 xiu¹ zhu⁴ qi³ yi¹ zuo⁴ bao³ ta³
 build, construct start one clf treasure pagoda, tower
 v Vcomp num clf n n

In order to thank to Liu He for controlling the Dragon King into submission, his descendants began to build a pagoda on **the hill of rocks that he moved**,

1.9.3 The Prepositional Phrase

Li and Thompson (1981) outline three different types of phrases which describe the position of one thing in relation to something else. These three phrases are the prepositional phrase, the locative phrase and the directional phrase. These phrases are constructed using coverbs. *Coverb* is a general term for a class of words which exhibit both verb-like and prepositional-like qualities and so to avoid confusion, Li and Thompson (1981: 360) have labeled them coverbs. In the prepositional phrase, the coverb functions as the preposition and must occur with a verb phrase. The order of constituents is:

Prepositional phrase = coverb + noun phrase

A variety of coverbs can be used in the prepositional phrase, such as *gen*¹ 'with' and *cong*² 'from'. The locative construction is written as:

Locative phrase = (*zai*⁴ 'at') + noun phrase + (locative particle)

The following example contains both a prepositional phrase (in italics) and a locative phrase (in bold); the locative phrase comes first.

(17) King Qian Shoots the Tide (27)

28	在	海	水	里面	,	跟	海	龙王
	<i>zai</i> ⁴	<i>hai</i> ³	<i>shui</i> ³	<i>li</i> ³ <i>mian</i> ⁴		<i>gen</i> ¹	<i>hai</i> ³	<i>Long</i> ² <i>Wang</i> ²
	at	sea, ocean	water	inside		<i>with, as compared to</i>	<i>sea, ocean</i>	<i>Dragon King</i>
	coverb	n	n	loc		<i>coverb</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
	住	在	一起	的	哩	!		
	<i>zhu</i> ⁴	<i>zai</i> ⁴	<i>yi</i> ¹ <i>qi</i> ³	<i>de</i>	<i>li</i>			
	live	at	together	NOM				
	v	coverb	adv	prt	interj			

he lives **in the ocean** *with the Sea Dragon King!*

There are many locative particles which can fill the locative particle slot. These include *shang*⁴ 'above', *xia*⁴ 'under, below', *li*³ 'inside' and *qian*² 'in front of' (e.g. example (18)). The locative particle may be omitted when the locative phrase appears before the verb, but it is never omitted when it occurs after the verb.

The directional phrase is identical in construction and distribution to the locative phrase except for which coverbs it takes:

Directional phrase = coverb + noun phrase + (locative particle)

The coverb in the directional phrase is often *dao*⁴ 'to' but can also be similar words meaning 'to, towards' such as *xiang*⁴ or *wang*⁴. In the selected texts, *lai*² 'come' and *qu*⁴ 'go' are common directional verbs which are found in the locative phrase, indicating movement toward or away from the speaker. An example of a directional phrase is found below.

(18) Invisible Grass (82)

82	一	个	时	辰	的	工	夫	,	就	来	到	县
	yi ¹	ge	shi ²	chen ²	de	gong ¹	fu		jiu ⁴	lai ²	dao ⁴	xian ⁴
	one	clf	time	7-9am	NOM	time			then	come	arrive at, to	county
	num	clf	n	n	prt	n			conn	v	coverb	n
	衙	门				前						
	ya ²	men				qian ²						
	gov't	office	in	feudal	China	in	front	of,	before,	ahead		
	n					loc						

Two hours later, he arrived **in front of the government office**.

1.9.4 The Verb Phrase

The verb phrase is composed of an obligatory main verb as head and optional pre-verbal and post-verbal elements. The pre-verbal elements in the verb phrase are negators, auxiliary verbs, intensifiers and adverbs. Temporal adverbs also precede the main verb, usually occurring at the beginning of the clause to give the action a point of reference. Negators precede auxiliary verbs and main verbs as shown in the example below.

(19) King Qian Shoots the Tide (16)

16	总	不	会	修	好	的	。
	zong ³	bu ⁴	hui ⁴	xiu ¹	hao ³	de	
	always	NEG	will	repair, build	good, well	NOM	
	adv	adv	aux	v	Vcomp	prt	

it **will never be built** well.

Intensifiers precede adverbs and the main verb as shown in the example below.

(20) Hua Pond (59)

59 荒地	很	快	变	了	样	:
huang ¹ di ⁴	hen ³	kuai ⁴	bian ⁴	le	yang ⁴	
uncultivated land	very	quickly	change, transform	CRS	appearance	
n	intsf	adv	v	prt	n	

the uncultivated land was quickly changed:

Verb phrases are constructed in seven different ways with varying degrees of closeness to the main verb. Verbs with the closest relationships are single verbs (*sha*¹ 'kill'), verb-verb (*kan*⁴ *jian*⁴ 'look see') and reduplicated verbs (*kan*⁴ *kan*⁴ 'look look') (Reduplicated verbs can have the word *yi*¹ 'one' inserted between them to convey the idea of doing something for a little bit e.g. *kan*⁴ *yi*¹ *kan*⁴ 'have a look') More open verbs have postverbal elements attached to the main verb to further modify it. These include verb-result (*e*⁴ *si*³ 'to be hungry + die' or colloquially 'starving to death, really hungry'), verb-complement (*shou*⁴ *bu*⁴ *liao*³ 'unable to bear') and verb-directional (*shuo*¹ *chu*¹ *lai*² 'speak out come, say it'). The verb-result pattern (called resultative verb complements) is widely used and indicates the result of an action. This will be further discussed in Section 4.2.1.6 as it is important for sequentiality of the Storyline. The most open type verb is the verb-object type of verb of which there are many in Mandarin. These include *chi*¹ *fan*⁴ 'eat (food)' or more abstractly *chi*¹ *kui*¹ 'to suffer losses' (lit. 'eat loss'). These are very open because other elements, such as aspect markers, can come between the verb and the object.

Verbs can be modified pre-verbally, such as *kuai*⁴ *lai*² 'come quickly' or post-verbally as in *ta*¹ *pao*¹ *de* *hen*³ *kuai*⁴ 'he runs very fast'. Adverbs appear before the verb unless they are part of an adverbial phrase in which the main verb precedes the adverbial phrase. Adverbs are often derived from adjectives, reduplicated (when the adjective is two syllables) and given the adverbializer *de* (地) to make into an adverb.

An important verb pattern that occurs in the text is the *shi...de* (是...的) construction. According to Li and Thompson (1981: 587ff), this pattern describes the situation of something rather than an event. They provide a contrastive example in the example below. In the first example an event occurs; the second example affirms that the event happened.

(21) Li and Thompson (1981: 589)

24a 他 昨天 来 了
 ta¹ zuo² tian¹ lai² le
 3sg-m yesterday come PFV
 pro temp adv dir ASP

S/He came yesterday.

24b 他 是 昨天 来 了 的
 ta¹ shi⁴ zuo² tian¹ lai² le de
 3sg-m shi...(de) yesterday come PFV (shi)...de
 pro constr. temp adv dir ASP constr.

The situation is that s/he came yesterday.

This difference is important to understand because the construction does not so much report an event but rather affirms or denies a supposition. Therefore, when analyzing *shi...de* constructions they will not be on the Storyline but rather fill out the non-Storyline material.

Aspect markers allow the reader to anchor the verb phrase relative to a certain time; they are discussed in the next section.

1.9.5 Aspect Markers

In Mandarin, events are viewed from the perspective of their internal make up (aspect) rather than the perspective at the time of speech (tense). Aspect is marked by particles which precede or follow the verb. Li and Thompson (1981: 184-237)

describe the aspects found in Mandarin as being perfective (*-le*)¹¹ and perfectivizing expressions, durative (*zai*⁴ and *-zhe*), experiential (*-guo*), and delimitative (reduplication of verb). When no aspect marker is present, the verb “usually expresses habitual action or intention” (Yip and Rimmington 2006: 43). The following discussion is a brief summary of each of these aspect markers.

1.9.5.1 Perfective Aspect

In Mandarin, the perfective aspect “indicates that an event is being viewed in its entirety or as a whole”, that is, as Li and Thompson (1981: 185-186) describe, an event which is bounded by being a) a quantified event, b) a definite or specific event, c) inherently bounded because of the meaning of the verb or d) the first event in a sequence. It is a completed event, whether completed in the past, present or future. Perfective *-le* is used to signify all of these cases. An example of perfective *-le* is found in the example below.

(22) Liu He Fills in the River (7)

7	他	爸	在	江	上	打	鱼	翻	了	船	,	淹	死	了	。
	ta ¹	ba ⁴	zai ⁴	jiang ¹	shang ⁴	da ³	yu ²	fan ¹	le	chuan ²		yan ¹	si ³	le	
	3sg-m	father	at	river	on	fish		overturn	PFV	boat		drown	PFV		
	pro	n	coverb	n	loc	v	v	ASP	n	n		v	ASP		

...his father was fishing on the river, **overturned** the boat and **drowned**.

1.9.5.2 Durative Aspect

Two aspect markers, *zai*⁴¹² and the suffix *-zhe*, mark the ongoing or durative nature of a verb. Only activity verbs, which include action verbs as well as verbs in which the animate subject is an active participant in the action, can take *zai*⁴. In the selected texts, *zai*⁴ only appears once.

The more common durative aspect marker *-zhe* has three uses. First it is used with verbs of posture (which usually include a location). Secondly, *-zhe* occurs with action verbs which are describing a state which is associated with their active meaning (Li and Thompson 1981: 221). Thirdly, in complex sentences, *-zhe* occurs

¹¹ This perfective *-le* should not be confused with clause-final particle *le*. Following Li and Thompson’s (1981) notation, a hyphen precedes perfective *-le*.

¹² The character 在 *zai*⁴ has two senses. One is the coverb used in locative phrases; the other is a durative marker.

in the first clause to provide a durative background activity for the event which occurs in the second clause. These are shown in the following three examples.

(23) Liu He Fills in the River (42)

42 潮头 上 站 着 个 横行霸道 的 蟹 将军
 chao² tou shang⁴ zhan⁴ zhe ge heng² xing² ba⁴ dao⁴ de xie⁴ jiang¹ jun¹
 tide on stand **DUR** clf tyrannical NOM crab (military) general
 n loc v **ASP** clf adj prt n n

Standing on the tide was a tyrannical crab general

(24) Invisible Grass (3)

3 梁头 上 雕 着 元宝 图案
 liang² tou² shang⁴ diao¹ zhe yuan² bao³ tu² an⁴
 beam, rafter on carve, engrave **DUR** 'yuan bao' pattern
 n loc v **ASP** n n

on the beam was engraved a 'yuan bao' [ancient currency] pattern,

(25) Liu He Fills in the River (69)

69 娘 儿 俩 苦 挨 着 过 日子。
 niang² er² lia³ ku³ ai² zhe guo⁴ ri⁴ zi
 mother son two, both hardship, suffering **endure** **DUR** to go over, pass days
 n n num n v **ASP** v n

mother and son both spent their days **enduring** hardship.

Durativity is also marked by the use of temporal adverbs. These show the duration for which an action was done. In the example below, the verb is italicized and the duration for which it is done is in bold.

(26) Liu He Fills the River (38)

38 一 天 , 两 天 整整 丢 了 七 七 四 十
 yi¹ tian¹ liang³ tian¹ zheng³ zheng³ diu¹ le qi¹ qi¹ si⁴ shi²
 one day two day whole, full throw PFV seven seven four ten
 num n num n adv v ASP num num n num

九 天 。

jiu³ tian¹
 nine day
 num n

one day, two days...he *throw* rocks for 7,749 days.

1.9.5.3 Experiential Aspect

The experiential aspect marker *-guo* signals if an event has been experienced before. When no specified time period is indicated in the sentence, *-guo* occurring with a verb indicates that the event has been experienced at least once in the unspecified past. If *-guo* does occur with a time phrase, then it signals that the event has occurred at least once within that time period.

Li and Thompson (1981: 227) point out that there is a significant difference between experiential *-guo* and perfective *-le*. The difference is that *-le* indicates that the action is a bounded event whereas *-guo* indicates that the action has been experienced in the past. In addition, *-guo* indicates not only that the action has been experienced, but also that it has been completed by the time of speech.

(27) Liu He Fills in the River (65)

65 那 是 因为 龙王 吃 过 六和 的 亏 ...
 na⁴ shi⁴ yin¹ wei⁴ Long² Wang² chi¹ guo Liu⁴ He² de kui¹
 that is because Dragon King eat EXP Liu He NOM loss
 dem v coordconn n v ASP n prt n

that is because the Dragon King **had suffered losses** because of Liu He...

1.9.5.4 Delimitative Aspect

The delimitative aspect is described as doing something “a little bit” or for a very short time. It is written using the formula: verb + (yi¹) + reduplicated verb. Verbs which occur in this construction must be activity verbs as well as volitional. The delimitative aspect can also be applied to verbs with a natural end point (telic

verbs), such as *shi*⁴ ‘guess’ as in *shi*⁴ *yi*¹ *shi*⁴ ‘have a guess’. In this case the reduplicated verb would have the delimitative meaning ‘trying to (verb)’.

(28) King Qian Shoots the Tide (38)

39	钱王	想	了	一		想
	Qian ² Wang ²	xiang ³	le	yi ¹		xiang ³
	King Qian	think	PFV	ind. that action lasts for a short time		think
	n	v	ASP	Delim ASP		v

King Qian thought for a bit

1.9.6 Clause-Final Particles

Mandarin has a number of clause-final particles which add subtlety to the speaker’s meaning or solicit a response from the addressee. Li and Thompson (Chapter 7) discuss six of these particles. Three of these, shown in Table 6 below, are found in the selected texts.

Table 6 Clause-final particles found in the selected texts (adapted from Li and Thompson 1981: 238)

<i>le</i>	currently relevant state
<i>ba</i>	solicits agreement
<i>ma</i>	question

Clause-final *le* is a prolific and notoriously complex particle. Li and Thompson (1981: 238-300) present cogent arguments for what this particle does and how it differs from perfective aspect suffix *-le*. These usages are summarized in this section; other clause-final particles which appear in the selected texts are briefly discussed at the end of this section.

1.9.6.1 Clause-Final *le*

Li and Thompson (1981: 240) gloss *le* as ‘Currently Relevant State’ (CRS) meaning that “*le* claims that a state of affairs has special current relevance with respect to some particular situation”. ‘Current’ indicates that when *le* occurs at the end of a sentence, the state being described is current to a particular situation. When no specific situation or time frame is mentioned, then it is assumed that the state is current with the time of speech. ‘Relevant’ highlights the fact that the state of affairs

being described is relevant to the speaker and addressee. It is assumed then from the context that they will understand in which ways it is relevant. Finally, 'State' describes the fact that *le* is showing an event as a state of affairs. While the sentence may include an event such as (e.g. go out for a walk), the addition of *le* indicates that the speaker is talking about the state of this event happening (i.e. the state of being gone) and that this state is currently relevant to the situation at the time of speech (i.e. he can't come to the phone right now).

All instances of clause-final *le* reflect a currently relevant state but it is not always clear how this is so. Li and Thompson (1981: 244-300) outline the five environments in which clause-final *le* is used:

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Table 7 States in which clause-final *le* expresses CRS (adapted from Li and Thompson 1981: 244)

1. To describe a changed state
2. To correct a wrong assumption or describes a state that contradicts normal expectations
3. To report progress so far
4. To determine what will happen next
5. The speaker's total contribution to the conversation at that point

Out of these five states, only #1 and #4 are relevant to the selected texts. This is because the selected texts are for children and thus are not as complex as texts for an older audience. Secondly, these five states include the spoken use of clause-final *le* and so some uses are not pertinent to the selected texts. Therefore only the first and fourth states are discussed.

The first situation in which clause-final *le* is used is to describe a change of state; a state which has not been true before, but is true now (or vice versa). This 'change of state' does not have to be an actual change of state. *Le* can also be used when the speaker has just realized information that he did not know previously. While the objective situation may not have changed, his perception of it has. An example of this aspect of CRS *le* is shown in the example below. What is significant about this "current" aspect of *le* is that it can occur with past, present, future or hypothetical time periods; it does not strictly indicate the past tense. When translated into English, it can cover a wide variety of tenses and aspects.

(29) Hua Pond (120)

120 这	片	地方	慢慢	地	变得	越
zhe ⁴	pian ⁴	di ⁴ fang	man ⁴ man ⁴	di ⁴	bian ⁴ de	yue ⁴
this, here	clf	place	slowly	adverbializer	become, change into	more
dem	clf	n	adv	adv	v	adv

美丽 了
 mei³ li⁴ le
 beautiful CRS
 adj prt

this place slowly became more beautiful.

The second situation (#4) found in the texts in which clause-final *le* indicates a relevant state is when it determines what happens next. It is used to indicate that one thing has finished and that another thing can happen now. In the example below, it has become too late to do something, so something else must be done instead.

(30) Liu He Fills in the River (18)

18 可是	已经	来不及	了	,
ke ³ shi ⁴	yi ³ jing ¹	lai ² bu ⁴ ji ²	le	
but	already	too late, not enough time	CRS	
coordconn	adv	adj	ASP	

but already it was too late,

1.9.6.2 Other Clause-Final Particles

Other particles besides *le* occur at the end of a clause. The ones which appear in the selected texts are 啊 *a*, 吧 *ba*, 啦 *la*, 吗 *ma*, 嘛 *ma*, and 呀 *ya*. These particles are used to make an exclamation, to emphasize a point or to connect with the reader or listener. (In the texts these particles are used both in dialogue between characters and author to reader.) The particles *a*, *la*, *ya* are interjections, expressing the intense feeling of the characters. The particle *ma* (嘛), used only once in the text, serves as emphasis, indicating that something is obvious. The other, more common particle *ma* (吗) is a question particle. *Ba* is used to solicit agreement with the reader or listener. It is used to suggest that someone doing something. (Note that in the example below, an interjection particle is used at the beginning of the clause. This can be translated like a sigh or 'oh, if only'.)

(31) Hua Pond (12)

12 唉	,	天下	哪	有	这么	好	心肠
ai ⁴		tian ¹ xia ⁴	na ³	you ³	zhe ⁴	me	hao ³ xin ¹ chang ²
interj. of regret		the whole world	which, how	have	so (much)	good	heart, intentions
interj		n	QW	v	pro-form	adj	n
的	财主	呀	!				
de	cai ² zhu ³	ya					
NOM	rich man, moneybags	excl.					
prt	n	interj					

oh, if only the whole world had such good-intentioned rich men!

1.10 Summary

The first part of this chapter, Sections 1.2-1.6 presented the objectives, research questions, hypotheses, methods used, scope and limitations and overview of this study. The second part of this chapter, Sections 1.7-1.9 presented the background information about Mandarin needed for analysis of the texts. This included a brief description of the Mandarin language, its phonology and grammar. The salient grammatical points were clause structure, the noun phrase, the prepositional phrase, the verb phrase, aspect markers and clause-final particles.

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