Chapter 6
Conclusion

This study examined the areas of contrast which arose from four stories from the Gospel of Mark in Mandarin Chinese beginning with a written source, used to produce a radio script (aural version) and an oral-performance. In the analysis the total number of syllables, words, and clauses were counted and contrasted between the three versions to isolate and determine areas of overlap and contrast. Then these areas of overlap and contrast were examined through the study of the distribution and function of substantive lexical items and functional lexemes, specifically: participant references, particles, time references, and conjunctions. The clausal distribution was analyzed with a salience scheme. The following section summarizes the findings of this study. Then the significance of these findings is discussed and suggestions for possible areas for further study are proposed.

6.1 Summary of findings

This study began by asking the following questions: 1) Will the translations of a text change as it is revised from a written source, and made into a radio script and then to live performance? 2) Will the changes be uniform or represent any discernable patterns? 3) Which mode will be longest in length when measured by syllabic units? 4) How will participant reference differ between the modes? and 5) Will the live performance have any unique feature in contrast to the other two modes?

Based on these five questions five hypotheses were proposed.

The first hypothesis stated:

1. The overall length of each of the three versions (written, aural and oral), as measured by syllables will vary in length; the written version will have the shortest length, the oral-performance version will have the longest length, the aural version's length will be somewhere in between the written and oral-performance versions. The oral-performance version will be the longest, in part because of the presence of more explicit participant reference, particle usage, time reference, conjunctions, and audience interaction through Teller Intrusion.

This hypothesis was confirmed in three out of the four texts. The oral version of Mark 5:1-20 was only one syllable longer than the written version, and the written version was longer than the aural version. So that text presented some surprising data. However, upon further study, it appears that the written version was the longest due to a larger than normal omission of content in the aural and oral versions. It is speculative at the moment, but it seems that the omissions were the result of reordering of the story that occurred in the aural and oral versions. However, further research is needed to explore if the reordering was the cause of the omission or if there was another factor. However, when the entire corpus is in view, this hypothesis is confirmed. The corpus of the oral-performance used a total of 2,375 syllables (compared to written's = 1,865 and aural's = 2035). The oral-performance was therefore 27.35% longer than the written version. As seen in the following hypotheses, the increased length of the oral version was in part due to increased usage of particles, time references, and conjunctions.

The second hypothesis stated:

2. The aural and oral-performance versions will have a higher frequency of explicit participant reference than the written version. The aural and oral-performance versions will use pro-forms and noun phrases more than the written version. The written version will use more zero anaphora than the aural and oral-performance versions.

This hypothesis was also confirmed. The oral-performance had a corpus total of 41.43% more occurrences of explicit reference to participants in S1-S4 environments than the written version. The aural version had a corpus total of 31.43% more occurrences of explicit reference to participants than the written version. The contrast between the aural and oral-performance did not seem significant as the aural version's use of explicit reference was more similar to the oral-performance than it was to the written version. The only possible exception was Mark 5:1-20, in which the written version only had one less explicit reference than the aural and oral versions. This one explicit reference difference accounts for only a 6% increase between the written and the aural/oral versions. This is well under the average for the corpus as whole. A possible reason for this was that the structure of the Mark 5:1-20 text has inherent discontinuity in its structure, and that because of this, it required more coding of its participants, leaving less room for contrast between the aural and oral versions. More research is needed in this area.

A possible reason for the increase in coding used by the audible versions may be caused by the inherent streaming feature of audible content, as it is meant to be

received by the ears in real-time. Unlike the static written media, which can be processed at the speed of the reader, audible media is usually controlled by the technology that transmits it or the person who speaks it, thus making the audience process the content at the speed of the transmitter or speaker. This along with some of the other contrastive features between written and audible communication may cause the audible media to have more discontinuity and difficulty in processing its content to a certain extant, and thus more coding was needed. More study is needed to see if this trend truly is represented in Mandarin Chinese, or if the data represented in this study was merely an anomaly of the crafter/teller. It would also be worth further study to see how other languages deal with explicitness of participant reference across different media.

The third hypothesis stated:

3. There will be particles in the orally-performed version, which will be contrastive with both the aural and written versions, with the most contrast being with the written version. Particles will be present in all three media, but the written version will have them only in direct speech, while the aural and oral versions, especially the oral version, will have them outside of direct speech. The particles outside of direct speech in the orally-performed version will serve in some of the following functions; mainline story line marker, mark sections of the story such as shift in time, background information, and teller intrusion with the purpose of audience engagement.

This hypothesis was confirmed. First, particles were present in all three versions. Second, in terms of number and relative frequency throughout the corpus as a whole, the oral version had the most particles. However, at times the aural version's particle frequency was close to the oral-performances frequency of use. Thirdly, the written version only had particles in the quotations, while the aural and oral versions had particles throughout the mainline and supporting bands. There were eight particles which were unique to the oral-performance (*oke:j* 'ok', 哦 *o* 'o', 阿 *a1* *'a'*, 嗯 *en* 'en', 啦 *la* 'la', 吗 *ma* 'ma', 呀 *ya* 'ya', 哎 *ai* 'ai'). At least one of particles, 那 *na* 'na', outside of direct speech in the orally-performed version did serve in of the following functions: a) mainline story line marker, b) mark sections of the story such as shift in time, background information, and Teller Intrusion with the purpose of audience engagement. The particle 那 *na* seems to be an oral discourse marker which occurs in Band 1- Band 3 with temporal words, and was used to denote time and sequentially. When it does occur in this environment, it occurs in the following pattern:

<na>/_Temperal phrase_/ [<ne>].

It also seems to occur as a possible Band 1 Storyline marker. When it occurs in Band 1 without temporal markers, it occurs in the following pattern:

<na>/_ Band 1

It also seems to also mark possible oral boundary markers, which are represented in the written version by paragraph breaks. In this usage it is presented in the following pattern:

<na>/_major boundary in text/

In Band 5 那 *na* 'na' marks Teller Intrusion and occurs in the follow way:

<na>/_Teller Intrusion_/[<particle of audience interaction>].

Although only 那 *na* 'na' seems to serve a specific discourse function, it should be noted that all the particles outside quoted speech which occurred in the aural and oral versions do seem to serve as particles unique to oral discourse. Further research is needed, but it is worth noting the higher number of particles in the aural and oral version, especially those unique to the oral-performance. It is possible that audible media contains more particles on average than written media, because most of the particles are oral particles, and belong in the oral register. Thus many natural and oral particles may be omitted by the written version in order to conform to the written media's register of acceptable norms. The omitting of particles is made possible by the static nature of written texts, which 'reduce' speaking to writing, and subsequently is able to make modifications to a static text.

The fourth hypothesis stated:

4. The orally-performed version's use of time reference and conjunctions will be contrastive with the written and aural versions. This will be due to the live and audio characteristic of the orally-performed version, which will mark time, progression, sequentiality, and conjunction more explicitly than the written version.

This hypothesis was confirmed in three of the four texts. Mark 2:1-12 had more frequent use of conjunctions in the aural version than the oral-performance version. In the corpus as a whole, the oral-performance version had the highest and most frequent use of both time references and conjunctions. This is an interesting finding as both of the audio-based communication modes had more time references and conjunctions than the written version. Other than the sequential marker 就 *jiu* 'then', the written version had few temporal markers, while the aural and oral versions had many more. The exact reason for this is unclear and warrants further

study. However, it is possible to speculate that the more usages and frequency of time references and conjunctions in the aural version and especially the oral version, has something to do with the nature of audio-based communication. It is possible to see explicit time-references and conjunctions as tools that audible media use as mental cues to help the listener track with the story and understand more clearly, and in real-time, what the connection of one clause or sentence with the one goes before or after it. Another possible reason for the increased usage of time reference phrases and conjunctions in the aural and oral versions could be to slow down the rate of information so that it is easier for the listener to process.

The fifth and final hypothesis stated:

5. There will be context-dependent interaction with the audience in the oral-performance, which will be unique to the oral-performance and in contrast to both the written and aural versions. The presence of the immediate audience in the oral-performance will cause the teller to interact with the audience in order to draw from or help build a mutual cognitive environment.

This was also confirmed. Band 5 Teller Intrusion represented 7.2% of the total oral-performance corpus. Band 5 Teller Intrusion only occurred in the oral-performance version given in front of a live audience. Band 5 Teller Intrusion seemed to be a tool that the teller of the story used to insure that the audience was actively listening to the story, and were engaged with the story. Band 5 also seemed to interact with the mutual cognitive environments of the audience at times affirming shared knowledge, and at other times introducing Band 2 Background information which may have been needed to correct and/or built a correct mutual cognitive environment with the modern audience, allowing them to understand content which would have been implicit to the original audience of the source text. It is not yet determined if Mandarin Chinese utilized Teller Intrusion in native written texts. In this limited study it seems to be a feature only assigned to oral-performance in front of a live audience.

In addition to the findings of Band 5's unique occurrence in the oral version, there were some other trends, which occurred in the salience scheme worth noting. There was content in the written version, which was sometimes omitted from the aural and oral versions. The exact reason for the omission is unknown as this time, but could be from, 1) teller error, or 2) intentional summarizing and omission of redundant, burdensome, and/or implicit information for the sake of optimal relevancy. Also in the salience scheme there were times were the aural and oral version would add a clause which did not occur explicitly in the written version. However, when the

aural and oral version make such additions, they seems to be making explicit information left implicit in the written text. It was also discovered that the aural and oral version at times re-ordered certain Bands to present the story with a different flow of information, which could be interpreted as changing the story structure to a more linear way which would be easier to process via audible content.

6.2 Evaluation of methodology

As can be seen from the above findings, there were discernable patterns of contrast throughout in the areas of participant references, particle usages and distribution, time references, and use of conjunctions. As seen above, the application of a subset of Givón's scale of iconicity indeed showed an increase in explicitness in the aural and oral-performance reference of participants. However, more research is needed to explore whether this trend continues and investigate other possible explanations for this increase in explicitness.

As stated in chapter one, this study does not claim to be definitive in its analysis but merely suggestive. This study was based on a small corpus of data, much of which was specifically produced for the purpose of this study.

The use of colors to code the syllables for areas of contrast throughout the three texts was indeed helpful, especially at the beginning of the research. It was the color-coding of the data that allowed the researcher to identify hard statistical data which showed real areas of contrast between the three versions. This color-coding also made the data clear enough to show the possible patterns across the three versions, and subsequently lead to the formation of the hypotheses of this study. However, the color-coding was unable to be represented black and white text, which make it impossible to show the color in the examples found in the body of this thesis. This is not a major set back, as the color-coding assisted this researcher in the study of the texts. The color-coding step was admittedly time consuming and future researchers may find it overly burdensome and unneeded. The use of a computer program which could color-code overlap and contrast the difference between two or three texts would save a lot of time in applying this procedure in the future, especially in a larger corpus, and make this step more practical for future research. It should also be noted that this method of overlapping a story based on syllabic overlap was helpful for Chinese which have a character based orthography in which each character represented by monosyllabic unit, which can be wither an individual work or part of a disyllabic word. Applying the syllabic contrastive color-coding

would probably not be helpful for a language which uses an alphabet. In such cases the color coding may best be applied on a word level instead of a syllable level. However, in a language with morphology, it may be beneficial to color-code the data bases on lexeme and morphological affixed.

This researcher also discovered that given the breadth of topics dealt with in this thesis, one method of formatting and presenting the data does not seem to be sufficient. For the study of initial contrast and overlap between the three versions a color coded horizontal interlinear of all three texts aligned according to corresponding clauses allowed for the clearest initial analysis, especially in isolating contrastive use and distribution of particles, time references, and conjunctions. It was also helpful for initial inquiry into whether the versions had any contrast in how they referred to participants. A weakness of this method of data formatting was that it made it more difficult to read each story on its own. Thus during the course of the analysis each story was reformatted to represent each individual on its own. However, even this is not enough. When it came to analyzing participant reference and salience scheme, the researcher found that a vertical 3-column interlinear with corresponding clauses marked, allowed for easier contrastive analysis. It is for this reasons that the appendix of this thesis contains all three methods of data representation. However, each of the methods of formatting and presenting the data were helpful for different parts of the study. The method of special usefulness was the 3-column interlinear used to display and analyze participant reference and salience scheme.

The overall procedure used in this study was very conducive to statistical analysis. This was helpful in exploring the hypotheses of this thesis, as the initial step in exploring the hypotheses required an examination of contrastive statistical data on a syllabic level. However, the procedure of this study would probably need to be adapted for further in-depth study of participant reference and salience scheme. The methodology was sufficient for the specific area of participant reference and salience scheme needed to explore the hypotheses. However, if a future researcher were to do further study using this procedure, yet conducting more in-depth discourse analysis, there may be areas that would need to be adapted. However, the overall framework laid out by the procedure in this study for exploring contrast between three media would most likely be useful, as the three-way contrast presented in this study can reveal unique features of discourse which other methods may not.

Concerning the study of salience scheme, the analytic tool used in this study would need further exploration. A difficulty in this study was discerning the reason for contrast in the salience scheme. The analytic tool was sufficient for finding areas of contrast, but there would need to be other mechanisms and further steps to help understand the reason for these contrasts. For example, in the case of addition and omission of information, it would be helpful to set up a test with other crafter/tellers to find out if the additions and omissions were teller error or personal style linked to a specific teller, or if the pattern also occurred with other crafter/tellers.

6.3 Significance of findings and further research

This study produced an aural and oral-performance version of a written source text. The aural version and oral performances produced were contrastive with the written source. The oral-performance corpus was 22.8% unique. When the material that was shared by both the aural and oral-performance, as well as the unique oral-performance were combined, it revealed that the oral-performance version was 65.5% unique and contrastive to the written version throughout the entire corpus. This contrast consisted of, but was not limited to, the areas of participant references, particles, time references and conjunctions. This study has contributed to understanding how a message which is transferred from written source, to aural version, to oral-performance, and what kinds of contrast occurs in addition to where those areas of contrast occur. Also, this study has discovered some interesting findings in the area of discourse analysis in relation to contrastive features of a single story told in contrastive medium. Further study is needed, but the contrast in participant reference and salience scheme revealed in this study, has the potential to further the study of discourse analysis, adding a new way to process and understand features of a text.

Further study of the contrast between the oral-performance and the written version would be useful. Further study of the characteristics and patterns found in this study in a larger corpus would be profitable and serve to either affirm or refute the findings of this thesis. A possible next area of further analysis for this corpus would be to look at how each version marked boundaries and encoded peak, although they are hard to identify in shorter stories. Also, more in-depth study of participant reference through more common means of participant reference analysis would most likely continue to reveal interesting contrast.

Additional further study that could supplement this study would be examining the oral-performance as it is retold by the same teller on different occasions to different audiences. As well as look at how different tellers tell the same story orally. These areas of further study would help to clarify if the data represented in this data was the anomaly of the crafter/teller used, or if it does represent wider patterns and trends in Mandarin Chinese.

In addition to exploring the patterns discovered and analyzed during this study, it would be also interesting to explore other areas, such as grammar and other areas of discourse. With questions such as: Are there a difference in word order among the versions? What is the default word order and grammatical structure of each version? Are there some grammatical constructions unique to any of the versions?

The testing of these hypotheses in other languages would be a worthwhile study. It would be interesting to test related languages to see if the patterns and trends in this study were also represented. It would also be interesting to apply this methodology to languages which are not related to Mandarin Chinese to see if the methodology could continue to be used to discover contrast between written, aural, and oral communication. If this methodology applied throughout related and unrelated languages, among multiple crafters/tellers, the results would possibly provide a better understanding of general trends and characteristics of written, aural and oral discourse features across language.

Lastly, a study which started from the opposite starting point would be interesting. This study essentially looked at the en-'live'-ning, of a written source text ultimately into a 'live' oral-performance. Thus this study looked at area of contrast that occurred as features were added and modified form written source, to radio script to live performance. This is essentially the analyzed 'oralization' of a written source text. It would be a very worthwhile study to start with native (un-translated) oral-performances, and then seek through various means to 'reduce' that oral-performance to a radio script/recording, and then finally reduce it further into a written text. This would essentially be the 'textualization' of a live performance. It would be interesting to see how the findings of such a study would compare to the findings of this thesis. It would also be profitable to do intelligibility testing between 'textualized' and 'oralized' stories among different audiences.

The areas of further study mentioned above would add to the world's linguistic knowledge of the interaction between medium and message as well as documenting area of discourse contrast between written and oral forms of language and discourse.