Chinese Causal Sequencing and Yinwei in Conversation and Press Reportage

Author(s): Yung-O Biq

Proceedings of the Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society: Special Session on Discourse in Southeast Asian Languages (1995), pp. 47-60

Chinese Causal Sequencing and Yinwei in Conversation and Press Reportage*

Yung-O Biq
San Francisco State University
National Taiwan University

1. INTRODUCTION

Aspects of the relationship between Chinese discourse and grammar have been the focus of numerous recent studies (see Biq, Tai, & Thompson (to appear) for references). While conversation as the primary source for detecting the behavior and evolution of grammar (including grammatical words and grammatical patterns) is established in most of these studies, variations across text types with regard to grammatical patternings have not been given due attention. This lag in research may now be amended by the various corpora of written Chinese that have recently become accessible.

This paper examines the sequencing of clauses expressing the causal relation as it is displayed in conversation and journalistic writing. Our corpus-based investigation suggests that forward linking (Li & Thompson 1981), which is widely accepted as canonical, is not necessarily the preferred order for expressing the causal relation. Through this study, we hope to show that grammar in use is more flexible and complex than most rule-based systems have tried to account for. Interactional factors arising from the functional nature of text types may both motivate and constrain variations of grammatical patternings.

2. THE BACKGROUND, PROBLEM, SCOPE OF STUDY, AND DATABASE

I was attracted to the topic of Chinese causal sequencing after reading Kirkpatrick (1993) and Young (1982; 1994). Both authors discuss a discourse pattern Chinese speakers tend to use to present their points in verbal exposition. Young focuses on the order by which Chinese speakers present their main point and supporting materials when they speak in English. Kirkpatrick focuses directly on how Chinese speakers do this in Mandarin. Both authors point out that, in speech settings such as answering a question at the question-answer session after a talk or offering one's own opinion at a budget meeting, Chinese speakers tend to present supporting materials for the main point *before* they explicitly deliver that point. In other words, Chinese speakers tend to start off their exposition by compiling a series of causes, reasons, evidences, motivations, or justifications, but wait to the end to reveal what all these are arguing for. The main point, in short, is often not presented early enough to let the hearer grasp the idea. The phenomenon is illustrated in the following two examples. In example 1., a Chinese businessman voices his opinion at a budget meeting conducted in English. In example 2., a

Chinese answers a question from the audience after his talk regarding the 1989 Beijing student movement. He was asked if foreign involvement was welcome by the students, and he tried to explain that he didn't know much about it. In both examples, the main point was not revealed until reasons were given.

1. (from Young 1994:32)
(One thing I would like to ask.) BECAUSE MOST OF OUR RAW MATERIALS ARE COMING FROM JAPAN AND ( ) THIS YEAR IS GOING UP AND UP AND, UH, IT's NOT REALLY, I THINK, AN INCREASE IN PRICE, BUT UH, WE LOSE A LOT IN EXCHANGE RATE. AND, SECONDLY, I UNDERSTAND WE'VE SPENT A LOT OF MONEY IN TV ADS LAST YEAR. So, in that case, I would like to suggest here: chop half of the budget in TV ads and spend a little money on Mad magazine.

2. (adapted from Kirkpatrick 1993:432-433)
1 dan *yinwei* wo meiyou yudao zhege wenti/
but because I NEG:have meet this:M question
2 suiran wode airen shi Aodaliya ren/ danshi ta dangshi
although my wife be Australia person but she then
3 zai Zhongguo you/ Beijing hukou/ suoyi ta keneng ne
in China have Beijing permit therefore she can PRT
4 bifangshuo shenzi gen youxing duiwu zou yi zou{?}/
for:example even with parade troop walk one walk
5 *yinwei* ta juyou Beijing shimin shenfen
because she have Beijing citizen status
6 zhege women meiyou jin yi bu tantao
this:M we NEG:have enter one step discuss
7 wo mei banfa zai shenru huida duibuqi le.
I NEG way again deep reply sorry PRT

'but because I haven't come across this question, (because) although my wife is Australian she had in China at the time a Beijing residence permit therefore she might for example even walk with the parading marchers because she has Beijing citizen status (so) we haven't further discussed this (so) I have no way in replying in any more depth, sorry.'

Young points out that American English speakers tend to find such Chinese speakers "inscrutable" because this Chinese discourse pattern "seem[s] to be the inverse of English discourse conventions in that definitive summary statements of main arguments are delayed until the end" (Young 1994:29).

While she uses socio-culturally constructed (thus particular) politeness conventions to account for the preference of this discourse pattern by Chinese, Young further argues that the fact that Chinese tend to place causes and reasons before the concluding main point at the discourse level is related to another fact,

i.e., in Chinese sentence structure the BECAUSE clause is placed before the SO clause. Kirkpatrick makes the same claim: the "reason preceding main point" tendency at the discourse level is a result of the recursive instantiation of the cause-preceding-consequence ordering at the sentence level.

I am in complete agreement with Young's argument that socio-culturally constructed politeness conventions can control, to a great extent, the decisions a speaker in a community makes with respect to each move she takes in communicative interaction (Biq (to appear)). I have nothing new to say with regard to this aspect of the issue in this paper. What I would rather want to take issue with is the particular linguistic pattern that both Young and Kirkpatrick appeal to in support of their argument, i.e., the "BECAUSE - SO" clause sequencing in Chinese. I respect the effort both authors have made in trying to relate motivations for discourse strategies with features in the linguistic structure. However, my research shows that the "reason before main point" (RN - MP henceforth) discourse tendency and the "BECAUSE - SO" clause sequencing are related to each other in ways more complicated than the straightforward analogical parallel that both authors have claimed.

About the sequencing order, Young (1994) does acknowledge the other possibility, i.e., the "main point before reason" (MP - RN henceforth) pattern, but she nonetheless claims that the RN - MP sequence is canonical in Chinese. Most linguists working on Chinese would probably agree with her: Almost all descriptions of Chinese clause combining acknowledge that the "MP - RN" pattern is possible. However, when the topic is touched upon, the forward linking RN - MP pattern is always the first that gets mentioned, while the backward linking MP - RN pattern is only mentioned "on the side" (e.g., Chao 1968; Li & Thompson 1981). These facts indirectly suggest that the "RN - MP" pattern is commonly accepted as the canonical form.

Is this conception about Chinese causal sequencing borne out by the facts? Do Chinese speakers really place reasons before the main point more than they do the reverse in actual use? While I have observed the RN - MP discourse strategy in Chinese speech described by Kirkpatrick (and, for that matter, in the English spoken by Chinese as described by Young), I also seemed to encounter many uses of the MP - RN sequence, especially in speech. Thus, an investigation of the Chinese causal sequencing order in actual use was in order.

The scope of the investigation, however, had to be narrowed down. Causal relations are hard to define from a purely semantic perspective. I decided to approach the notion in a humble but tangible way. There are many ways to express causal relations in Chinese. In addition to the two sequencing patterns concerning the order of the RN part and the MP part, one has the choices of using or not using linking elements: (a) having zero linking elements in both parts, (b) having one linking element (either the causal marker or the result marker) attached to one part, or (c) having two linking elements (both the causal marker and the result marker) attached to both parts. Moreover, there are several causal markers and result

markers available, especially in writing.[1] There also exist various ways in which each reason/result marker can be combined with result/reason markers. Since the English 'because' and its Chinese equivalent, *yinwei* 'because', both being the causal marker used most widely in speech and writing in their respective language, are apparently taken in Young's and Kirkpatrick's works as the only index for causal relations in their data, I have set the scope of this study on causal sequences that involve *yinwei* in order to obtain comparable data. While the reason part can vary in size (from as simple as an NP to as complicated as a group of clauses/sentences), *yinwei* is always located at its beginning. Thus, this study basically considers two sequencing patterns: "*yinwei* RN - MP" and "MP - *yinwei* RN."[2]

Next to be considered was the type of data to be examined. Since traditional treatments lack corpus-based investigation of actual use, descriptions of Chinese sentence and discourse structures tend to be based on the individual linguist's impressions and generalizations, which in turn tend to be biased by the written language. Could there be distributional variations among text types such as conversation and newspaper language? Could it be that "MP - *yinwei* RN" is used more often in speech and less often in writing while "*yinwei* RN - MP" is used more often in writing and less often in speech? What is the reason for that, if that is the case? Moreover, if that is the case, could it be the reason why the "*yinwei* RN - MP" is accepted as the canonical form? In order to answer these questions, I conducted an investigation into both conversation and (written) press reportage. Daily conversation is worth investigating because it is the most common context in which a language is situated. On the other hand, (written) press reportage is a good contrast to daily conversation for my purpose: The two genres occupy almost the two ends of a continuum of text types in terms of their gradation of "editedness" or "plannedness" (Biber 1988).

My speech database consists of five segments of naturally occurring Mandarin conversations of various lengths. The total length is about 120 minutes. (See appendix for transcription conventions.) My written database consists of the PH (*Pinyin Hanzi*) on-line corpus. It is a collection of news from China's official *Xinhua* (New China) News Agency during the period from January 1990 to March 1991 and is over four million Chinese characters in size. For ease of reference, I will henceforth refer to the conversation data as SP, and the press reportage data as PH.

In the remainder of this paper, I offer answers to the following research questions: First, are both "*yinwei* RN - MP" and "MP - *yinwei* RN" frequently used to express the causal relation in Chinese? What are their respective distributions in conversation and press reportage? Are there disparities in the distribution figures between the two orders across text types? What do they tell us about the relationship between text type variation and the two orders? Next, if, distributionally, the "*yinwei* RN - MP" order is not the canonical pattern, then how is the discourse strategy described in Kirkpatrick (and in Young) accounted for?

Finally, again, if distributionally the "*yinwei* RN - MP" order is not the canonical pattern, why has it been regarded as such?

3. RESULTS

We will first look at results from the conversation data, and then those from the press reportage.

3.1. *Yinwei* in Conversation

There are all together 99 valid *yinwei* tokens found in SP.[3] The stretch of talk prefaced by *yinwei* is overwhelmingly related in one way or another to the stretch of talk that is positioned before *yinwei*. However, the distribution is a little misleading if we don't look into the relationship between the two stretches of talk in each case.

TABLE 1. FUNCTIONS OF YINWEI IN SP

(total valid tokens: 99)		
(1) CAUSE (ideationally causal relation)	67	68%
(2) ELABORATION	32	32%
(3) DISCOURSE REFLEXIVE USE	5	5%
(4) JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST/QUESTION	3	3%
(5) TOPIC RESUMPTION	7	7%
(a) linking ideationally causal elements (= (1))		68%
(b) linking interactionally related elements (= (2) to (5))		47%

Functionally, *yinwei* is not always used to preface a stretch of talk that is ideationally (propositionally) related to the prior talk as the reason, cause, motivation, or justification for whatever is said in that prior talk. In other words, the linking that *yinwei* establishes between two stretches of talk may not be directly concerned with the content of talk. Rather, the linking may be concerned with the discourse in which the talking is situated (cf. the "internal vs. external" distinction made in Halliday & Hasan 1976). As can be seen in Table 1., only type (1) is an ideationally motivated linking regarding a causal relation expressed in two stretches of talk connected by *yinwei*. Types (2) to (5) are rather interactionally motivated cases.[4] Due to space limititations, I can only give two examples here. Example 3. illustrates the ideational use; example 4., a case of elaboration, illustrates the interactional use.

3. CAUSE (IDEATIONAL USE)
((b explains why his English is no good:))

1b: fanzheng shi= yuanlai ne,
anyway be originally PRT
'Anyways in the beginning',
2 meiyou haohao xue,
NEG:have seriously study
'(I) didn't study (English) seriously',
3 *yinwei* huahua bijiao mang a,
because painting relatively busy PRT
''cause painting took a lot of time',
4 ... dangran ye shi jingchang xiang toulan.
of:course also be often think save:trouble
'Of course I was also lazy all the time.'

This is an example of an ideationally determined causal relation. The reason provided in line 3, that painting took a lot of time, and the consequence provided earlier in line 2, that the speaker didn't study English seriously, held a causal relation that was established on the basis of the propositional content.

4. ELABORATION (INTERACTIONAL USE)

1a: na ni shi shuyu shenme?
so you be belong what
'so which (ethnicity) do you belong to?'
2b: wo shi= Hanzu,
I be Han
'I am Han',
3 yin[wei women shi hou-
because we be later
'(t[hat's) because we la-'
4a: [ni shi @ ni shi Hanzu.
you be you be Han
'[You're @ a Han'.
5b: houlai shuyu zhege zhiminzhuyi qude@.
later belong this:M colonialism go:DE
'later colonized the area (and I ended up being there)@.'
6a: oh zheyangzi.
oh this:way
'Oh I see'.

Prior to this exchange, Speaker b was talking about the minority peoples in Yunnan. Speaker a was therefore a little surprised (line 4) when Speaker b said that he was a Han (the ethnic majority in China) after all. Speaker b sensed her reaction and explained why he, an ethnic majority, ended up being in Yunnan, a place known for minority peoples (lines 3 and 5). This elaboration was triggered by

Speaker a's reaction and *yinwei* in line 3 is an interactionally motivated use. Speaker b's Han ethnicity was in no way caused by his being in Yunnan due to colonialism! Therefore this is not an ideationally based causal use.

In some cases the speech prefaced by *yinwei* is related to the prior talk in more than one functional way. These cases were counted multiple times, thus the total percentage from type (1) to type (5) is larger than 100. As summarized in Table 1., almost half of all tokens (47%) are used to link two stretches of talk that are interactionally related. However, over two thirds of all tokens (68%) are still used to link two stretches of talk that ideationally hold a causal relation to each other.

Compared to results obtained in studies of how because is used in English conversation, our findings about *yinwei* in Mandarin conversation are anything but a surprise. Schleppegrell (1991) and Ford (1993; 1994) all suggest that because in American English conversation not only manifests functional diversity in different contexts but may sometimes connect upcoming talk to prior talk in multiple functional dimensions at once.

Next, let us look at the sequential relation. The surprising result is that sequentially, *yinwei* is overwhelmingly used in the MP - RN order. However, there are cases where the stretch of talk prefaced by *yinwei* can be seen as the RN part to both the prior talk and the following talk, thus creating sequentially indeterminate relationships. In our data, only three cases definitely manifest an RN - MP order, while nine cases can be interpreted in either the RN - MP order or the MP - RN order. Even if we assume that the nine indeterminate cases all belong to the RN - MP order and lump them with the former type, we still have only 12% of the entire conversational *yinwei* tokens that are used in the RN - MP order. A further examination of these 12 cases shows that all of them belong to type (1) in the functional classification, i.e., the ideationally determined causal relation. Thus, Table 2. shows that in the 67 type (1) tokens, 18% (n = 12) manifest the RN - MP sequencing while 82% (n = 55) manifest the MP - RN sequencing.

TABLE 2. CAUSAL YINWEI IN SP

yinwei RN - MP	12	18%
MP - *yinwei* RN	55	82%
total causal *yinwei* tokens:	67	100%

3.2. *Yinwei* in (Written) Press Reportage

There are 328 valid *yinwei* tokens found in PH.5 Among them, 31% (n = 102) display the RN - MP order while 69% (n = 226) display the MP - RN order. These figures, however, could be misleading. It was apparent that many news pieces in the PH Corpus were translations of the news provided by foreign news services. The Chinese used in these translated pieces could be influenced by the

original language. The causal sequencing could be a direct, literal rendition of the order used in the original language. In order to avoid potential interferences from the source language (of which I have no information), I separated the international news (or rather, news that is likely to be translated pieces) from the domestic news (or rather, news that is likely to have been written in Chinese in the first place). Table 3. shows the distribution of the two sequencing orders in international news, in domestic news, and in PH as a whole.

TABLE 3. *YINWEI* IN PH

	International		Domestic		Total	
yinwei RN - MP	19	13%	83	45%	102	31%
MP - *yinwei* RN	125	87%	101	55%	226	69%
Column Total	144	100%	184	100%	328	100%

The international pieces (n = 144 , 44% of the 328 total) do seem to go to extremes in terms of causal sequencing. Only 13% (n = 19) manifest an RN - MP order, while the rest 87% (n = 125) manifest a MP - RN order. By contrast, the domestic pieces (n = 184, 56% of the 328 total) show a much more balanced distribution between the two sequencings: 45% (n = 83) manifest an RN - MP order, while the rest 55% (n = 101) manifest an MP - RN order.

3.3. A Comparison of SP and PH

Now let us compare the figures of the two sequencing orders in SP and in PH. In order to avoid possible source language interference, I disregard the international news and use the domestic news as our PH data. I should also note that in this study it is assumed that no *yinwei* in PH is used for marking two interactionally connected (and ideationally NOT causally related) parts. Since all *yinwei* tokens in PH are assumed ideationally motivated causal markers, we will contrast the domestic news figures with those of the causal type in SP only. Table 4. shows that the sequencing distribution is quite balanced in PH but uneven in SP. The MP - RN order is significantly preferred to the RN - MP order in SP; it is slightly more often used than the RN - MP order in PH.

TABLE 4. *YINWEI* IN SP AND PH

	PH (Domestic News Only)	SP (Causal Type Only)
yinwei RN - MP	45%	18%
MP - *yinwei* RN	55%	82%

Total	100%	100%

We can answer our first research question now: Not only are both the RN - MP pattern and the MP - RN pattern used to express the causal relation with *yinwei*, but the MP - RN order is the preferred sequencing in SP and is at least as popular as the RN - MP order, if not more, in PH. Thus, the "*yinwei* RN - MP" sequence as the canonical order to express the causal relation is not confirmed by what Chinese speakers and writers do in actual use.

4. DISCUSSION

In section 2, we asked whether the disparities in the distribution can tell us anything about the relationship between the text type differences and the preference of the two orders. Our examination of the PH data did not find any significant functional distinctions between the two sequencing orders. They co-exist as free forms. As said above, the backward linking "MP - *yinwei* RN" sequence has a higher frequency (especially in international news) because it happens to be the preferred order in the source language.

The uneven distribution of the two orders in SP is a result of the constraint set by conversation as an extremely interactive text type. Conversation is characteristically spontaneous: both the turn structure and the content of the exchanges are locally managed. In order to use her turn most effectively, a speaker is forced to "get to the point" as much as she can. Therefore, the MP is most likely asserted prior to the RN, if the latter is intended to be offered at all, thus the prevalence of the backward linking "MP - *yinwei* RN" pattern. The forward linking "*yinwei* RN - MP" is dispreferred in SP because the MP is delayed in this sequence. This bears a conflict with the speaker's interest in using her turn most effectively.

Our next question is how Young's and Kirkpatrick's data are explained given our results. The answer to this question lies in the kinds of setting where verbal interactions occur. The settings where both authors collected their data include the following types: (1) answering a question at a Q-A session (after a talk, at a press conference, etc.), (2) interviewee speaking in an interview, (3) (simulated) business meetings where employees are asked to voice their opinions (through making requests for monetary funds, etc.), and (4) (simulated) presentations such as making a plea by a student to school officials. These are typical situations in which the speaker is given the floor and the interactional turn-taking system is temporarily suspended (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson 1974). Under such circumstances, the speaker is expected to "give a speech": she is both allowed the luxury—or, expected to meet the challenge—of giving an elaborate exposition. This kind of setting is similar to the prototypical written language such as expository writing in the sense that the speaker/author is entitled to a sizable

time/space to work her points into an organized piece. While the socio-culturally oriented motivations (that Young appeals to in her studies, as pointed out earlier) favor the "*yinwei* RN - MP" order for Chinese speakers, the pre-allocated floor and the suspension of the turn-taking system in these settings further facilitate, rather than resist, this sequencing. Put in a markedness perspective, the distributions of the two orders are indicative of the two speech types in which they respectively dominate: the marked "*yinwei* RN - MP" order for the marked, turn-taking-suspended settings, and the unmarked "MP - *yinwei* RN" order for the unmarked conversation.

Now let us turn to the last question: Why has the forward linking "*yinwei* RN - MP" sequence been accepted as the canonical pattern when our data show the contrary? This question is complicated. First, other semantic relations that involve a subordinate element and a main element, such as the conditional relation and the concessive relation, are predominantly expressed by forward linking in both spoken and written Chinese. Backward linking is definitely the marked form. A priori, the causal relation, which also involves a semantically subordinate element and a semantically main element, is assumed to behave in the same way.

Next, most forms that express the causal relation do display a forward linking preference. For example, result markers, such as suoyi 'so, therefore', generally display a forward linking preference in both spoken and written Chinese (e.g., "RN - suoyi MP"). Other causal markers, such as youyu 'because, due to', which is frequently seen in writing and is renowned for its literary connotation, also display a forward linking preference. Finally, our data also confirm that the "*yinwei* RN - MP" order is not a minority in PH. All these facts support a forward linking generalization that causal relations are canonically expressed with the cause preceding the consequence, including when the marker is *yinwei*.

Compared with other forms marking "subordinate - main" relations, the behavior of *yinwei* could be a case of functional conformity overriding structural conformity. As suggested earlier, the backward linking preference in conversation should be accounted for by the interactional factor inherent in conversation. Furthermore, the near balanced distribution of the two orders (instead of a dominance of the forward linking over the backward linking) manifested in (the domestic news in) PH, could be the outcome of an on-going process of structural adaptation that was functionally motivated, originated from conversation, but has now reached the rather "conservative" text type of press reportage. For functional conformity overriding structural conformity, Ford (1993) documents a similar case in American English: As opposed to other adverbial clause types such as the conditional and the temporal that predominantly show a "subordinate - main" pattern, the cause clauses are most likely to follow the main clause. Conversational interaction is also suggested to explain the phenomenon. The Chinese case is, however, more complicated than the English case, since both of the two *yinwei* sequences are robust in the written language. Certainly more corpus-based

research, both diachronic and synchronic, in Chinese clause combining is required before any conclusion can be reached.

5. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

In this paper, we have shown that in Mandarin conversations the "*yinwei* RN - MP" order, as opposed to the alternative "MP - *yinwei* RN" order, is highly unpopular, and by no means the preferred sequence, for expressing causal relations. Given that conversation is the most typical spoken form, we suggest that it is erroneous to assume that the "*yinwei* RN - MP" order is the canonical causal sequence and to take it as the linguistic basis to account for the phenomenon described in Kirkpatrick (1993) and Young (1982; 1994). Rather, the robustness of the "*yinwei* RN - MP" sequence in the turn-taking-suspended settings[6] should be accounted for in terms of the functional nature of the text type (as well as the socio-culturally constructed politeness conventions that Young (1982; 1994) appeals to).

The distributional discrepancies in the two orders between conversation and press reportage are similarly accounted for in terms of the functional differences between text types, which either facilitate or resist the occurrence of these patterns.

We have also shown that forward linking is generally preferred in Chinese for semantic relations that involve a subordinate element and a main element. While a formal-structural approach would render the prevalence of the postposed *yinwei* (especially in conversation) an odd exception to this general tendency, a functional perspective would take the prevalence of the postposed *yinwei* as a natural outcome of the impact of discourse interaction on grammar.

A major implication of this study is that causes for variations in grammar across text types can be traced to interactional factors that are inherent in those text types and crucial in shaping the functions of those text types. Corpus-based approaches to text types help us to better understand grammar as it adapts itself to the kind of discourse in which it is used. The same approaches also help us to better understand functional factors that motivate and constrain grammatical variation.

* Research reported in this paper was supported in part by a grant from the National Science Council of the Republic of China on Taiwan (NSC 84-2411-H002-019). I would like to acknowledge the hospitality I have received from the Graduate Institute of Linguistics at National Taiwan University during my residence there as a visiting research fellow in 1994-95. I thank Flora Wang for sharing some of her conversational data with me, Dr. Guo Jin for giving me access to the PH Corpus, Minjeng Chen, Jacob Chu, and Joyce Liou for their assistance in various ways during the writing of this paper. I am grateful for the comments from the audiences at BLS, and at Academia Sinica and National Chengchi University, where earlier versions of this paper were presented. Thanks also go to the following people with whom I had the privilege to discuss the ideas in this paper: Claire Hsun-huei Chang, Kawai Chui, Guo Jiansheng, Chu-Ren Huang,

Shuanfan Huang, Lily I-wen Su, Sandy Thompson, and Wen-chen Wei. Needless to say, all remaining errors and inadequacies in the paper are my own.

NOTES

1 There are also a number of lexical items that are nouns, and not connectives, but whose prime function is to make explicit the causal/result relations that may exist between two clauses, sentences, or groups of sentences (Hoey 1993), e.g., *yuanyin* 'reason', *liyou* 'reason', and *jieguo* 'result'.

2 Details about variations within each of these two patterns due to the presence or absence of a result marker (such as *suoyi*) attached to the MP are complicated and will not be discussed in this paper.

3 SP *yinwei* tokens occurring in the following situations were considered invalid and disregarded in this study: (1) where indiscernible speech prevented me from determining the function of *yinwei*, and (2) where talk was interrupted or discontinued.

4 The distinction among types (2) to (5) is not so much a categorization as a preliminary characterization of the examples. Further refinement and reclassification is possible. However, for our purpose, types (2) to (5) have the commonality that they are cases in which the use of *yinwei* is not motivated by ideationally determined causal relation between the two connected stretches of talk.

5 A very small number of the *yinwei* tokens in PH was disregarded for this study. They all belonged to cases in which the direction of the causal sequence could not be determined within the context I specified when I did the on-line search by using the KWIC (Key Word In Context) concordance. The context was set as "80 characters to the left of the key expression and 80 characters to its right." This size was adequate to analyze most tokens.

6 There is in fact no statistics available to prove that the forward linking "*yinwei* RN - MP" sequencing is preferred to the backward linking alternative in the turn-taking-suspended settings. The most we can say at this point is only the following: According to our informal observation, the frequency of the forward linking pattern in those settings is noticeably higher than in conversations.

REFERENCES

Biber, Douglas. 1988. Variation across Speech and Writing. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Biq, Yung-O. To appear. Review of Crosstalk and Culture in Sino-American Communication, by Linda W.L. Young. China Review International.

Biq, Yung-O, James H-Y. Tai, & Sandra A. Thompson. To appear. Recent development in functional approaches to Chinese. New Horizons in Chinese Linguistics, J. Huang & A. Li (eds.).

Chao, Y.R. 1968. A Grammar of Spoken Chinese. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Du Bois, John. W., et al. 1993. Outline of discourse transcription. In Jane A. Edwards & Martin D. Lampert (eds.), *Talking data.* Hillsdale, N.J.: L. Erlbaum. 45-89.

Ford, Cecilia. 1994. Dialogic aspects of talk and writing: *Because* on the interactive-edited continuum. *Text* 14.4.

_____. 1993. *Grammar in interaction: Adverbial clauses in American English conversation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Halliday, M. A. K. & Ruqaiya Hasan. 1976. *Cohesion in English.* London: Longman.

Hoey, Michael. 1993. A common signal in discourse: How the word *reason* is used in texts. In , J. M. Sinclair, M. Hoey, & G. Fox (eds.),*Techniques of description: Spoken and written discourse, A Festschrift for Malcolm Coulthard.* London: Routledge. 67-82.

Kirkpatrick, Andy. 1993. Information sequencing in Modern Standard Chinese in a genre of extended spoken discourse. *Text* 13.3: 423-453.

Li, Charles N. & Sandra A. Thompson. 1981. *Mandarin Chinese: A functional reference grammar.* Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Sacks, Harvey, Emanuel A. Schegloff, & Gail Jefferson. 1974. A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking in conversation. *Language* 50.4: 696-735.

Schleppegrell, Mary J. 1991. Paratactic *because*. *Journal of Pragmatics* 16: 323-337.

Young, Linda Wailing. 1994. *Crosstalk and culture in Sino-American communication.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

_____. 1982. Inscrutability revisited. In John Gumperz (ed.), *Language and social identity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 72-84.

APPENDIX. Transcription Conventions for the Conversational Data

The conversations were transcribed with the transcription system proposed in Du Bois et al. 1993. In order to reduce reading interferences, transcription notations with no direct bearing on the treatment of *yinwei* are not provided.

speaker identity/turn start	:
intonation unit	{carriage return}
truncated word	-
final intonation	.
continuing intonation	,
appeal intonation	?
beginning of speech overlap	[
lengthening	=
medium pause	...
laughter	@
researcher's comments	(( ))
researcher's English paraphrase	()
key words	underline