SOME NOTES ON THE SYNTAX OF CHINESE PARTITIVES AND INDEFINITES *  
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It is claimed in this paper that Chinese you ‘have’ in partitives and indefinites is verbal. Given that de is a nominalizer, it undergoes incorporation into you in partitives on the surface, forming a nominal youde. In indefinites, you and xie may be reanalyzed as an attributive on the surface, functioning as an indefinite modifier.

1. Existential you ‘have’: Tsai’s observations and analysis

- There are three variants of existential you ‘have’ in Chinese: presentational, partitive, and indefinite (specific plural).

(1) 有人走了。 (presentational)  
You ren zou-le.  
have person leave-Perf  
‘There were (some) people leaving.’

(2) 有的人走了。 (partitive)  
You de ren zou-le.  
have DE person leave-Perf  
‘Some of the people left.’

(3) 有些人走了。 (indefinite)  
You xie ren zou-le.  
have some person leave-Perf  
‘Some people left.’

- These three types of you have different syntactic distributions (Tsai 2003).¹
In general, you ‘have’ tends to be in a preverbal position (Tsai 2003).

The occurrence of the variants of existential you ‘have’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Presentational you</th>
<th>Partitive you de</th>
<th>Indefinite you xie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preverbal</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>OK</td>
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<td>Object</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*/?</td>
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</table>

Presentational you is a verbal element (modal or auxiliary), functioning as a sentential operator (collective wisdom, not controversial).
Both partitive you and indefinite you are determiners (Tsai 2003).

- ‘∅’ denotes the ‘part-of’ relation, cf. ‘some (part) of the people’.
- De is a determiner, à la Andrew Simpson.

(11) [DP you [NP ∅ [DP de [NP ren ]]]] (partitive)
(12) [DP you [NumP yi [ClP xie [NP ren ]]]] (indefinite)

Tsai (2003) assumes that the variation in table (10) is created by the ‘gradual change’ of the categorial status of you, i.e. existential predicate → pronoun → determiner.

Indefinite you has undergone grammaticalization, becoming a ‘genuine determiner’.

Partitive you is a still pronoun, only halfway grammaticalized. Its ambiguous structural status is correlated with its ‘on-the-fly’ character from a historical point of view.

QUESTION: How does the ‘on-the-fly’ character preclude partitive you from being in the postverbal position?

2. You ‘have’ as a verbal element underlyingly

Tsai’s (2003) intuition is insightful: assuming that existential you is in a sentence initial position, the closer the argument is, the more likely you and the argument form a ‘constituent’.

(13) you [ NP1 [ bei [ NP2 [ V NP3 ]]]]
(14) you NP1 > you NP2 > you NP3

To account for these facts (e.g. hierarchy (14)), I have the following claims:

(15) Grammatical status of the variants of existential you ‘have’
- a. presentational you: verbal throughout the derivation;
- b. partitive you: verbal (underlyingly) and nominal (on the surface);
- c. indefinite you: adverbial (underlyingly) and attributive (on the surface);

2 There could be a ‘downward incorporation’ of you historically. However, as pointed by Tsai (2003), there is no evidence for such movement in the historical development of Chinese.
Partitive you

- Partitive *you* is a verb that selects a nominal DP whose head is *de* (=16a).
- Morphologically, *de* is a suffix and should undergo suffixation/incorporation into *you* ‘have’ on the surface, à la D/P-to-I raising in Kayne’s (1993) story (=16b).
- In terms of its function, *de* is a nominalizer and will change the category of *you* to a nominal. As a result, *you-de* will be reanalyzed as an attributive.

(16) a. \[ VP you [DP de NP] \ldots \]
    - suffixation
b. \[ VP you-de [DP e NP] \ldots \]
c. \[ DP youde NP \ldots \]
    - nominalization

- As ‘you + de NP’ is underlingly a VP/clause, it can be in the clause initial position and follow the light verbs like *bei* (under the complementation approach to Chinese passives). This VP/clause never follows transitive verbs like *pian* ‘cheat’ in (5).
- If ‘you + de NP’ follows *bei* (and other light verbs), reanalysis must take place in order to satisfy Case assignment (and other requirements) of the light verbs (Tang 2001). That’s why the judgment is marginal (see table (10)).

Indefinite you

- Indefinite *you* is an adverbial underlingly, which is used to modify the indefinite noun phrase ‘xie + NP’ and the main predicate.
- In some situations, *you* and *xie* may be reanalyzed as an attributive, on a par with the formation of *nobody* from the conflation of *not + anybody* under adjacency in English (Klima 1964).

(17) a. \[ VP you [VP [NP xie NP] \ldots \]
b. \[ VP [NP you xie NP] \ldots \]
    - reanalysis

- As adverbials never occur in any postverbal positions in Chinese, the ungrammaticality of indefinite *you* in the object position is predictable (to many speakers, unmarked).
- If such reanalysis took place historically, ‘you + xie’ is already a constituent in the lexicon in modern Chinese and may appear in virtually any argument, including the object (to some speakers, marked).
3. Arguments for my claims

So-called ‘pronominal’ usage of you ‘have’

- To support his nominal analysis of you ‘have’ in modern Chinese, Tsai (2003) assumes that you ‘have’ had been used as a pronoun in archaic Chinese (pre-Qin period) (cited from Yang and He 2001:159).

(18) 日有食之。  
Ri you  shi zhi.  
‘The sun, someone ate it.’

- You ‘have’ in examples like (18) could be analyzed as a verb that takes a VP complement, similar to the causative construction in archaic Chinese (Li 2004).

(19) 鄭夫人使棄諸夢中。  
Yun furen  shi   qi    zhu meng zhong.  
‘Madam Yun caused something to be discarded in the dream.’

- In the literature, it is not impossible to analyze the so-called ‘pronominal’ you in classical Chinese as a verb (Fang 2002).

‘You + de’ as a word in Chinese

- ‘You + de’ can be a word used independently meaning ‘some’ in modern Chinese, supporting the analysis of suffixation and nominalization of de (see (16)).

(20) 十個指頭, 有的長, 有的短。  
Shi-ge zhitou, youde  chang, youde  duan.  
‘Of the ten fingers, some are long and some are short.’

You as an adverbial

- You in some usage in archaic Chinese seemed to be an adverbial, occurring in a preverbal position.
(21) 女子有行，遠父母兄弟。 (Shijing《詩經·衛風·竹竿》)
Nüzi you xing, yuan fumu xiongdi
girl have marry far parents brothers
‘When a young lady goes away [and is married], she leaves her brothers and parents.’

- You in meiyou ‘not’ in modern Chinese can be treated as an adverbial.

(22) 他沒有來。
Ta mei you lai.
he not have come
‘He did not come.’

‘You xie NP’ and ‘you xie AP’ in pre-modern Mandarin
- The plural classifier xie in modern Mandarin was derived from shao 少 (literally meaning ‘few’) that was used as an attributive in the Wei, Jin, and Southern-Northern Dynasties (Lü 1985).

(23) 樓下有少酒，與卿為別。 (《後漢書》, from Lü 1985: 366)
Lou xia you shao jiu, yu qing wei bie.
house down have few wine with you WEI leave

- Xie ‘some’ is an attributive/adjective, meaning ‘few’, ‘some’.

(24) 這是些逃荒的百姓。 (《儒林外史》, Lü 1985: 372)
Zhe shi xie tao huang de baixing.
this be few flee famine DE people
‘These are the common people who fled from their famine-stricken homeland.’

(25) 無些氣力。
Wu xie qili.
not some strength
‘without strength’

- You ‘have’ is still an adverbial when it is used to modify xie ‘some’ after reanalysis. The grammatical relation/category of you ‘have’ doesn’t change. That’s why the judgment of reanalysis of you + xie is much better, contra nominalization of you in youde (see table (10))
4. Dialectal variation: Mandarin vs. Cantonese

Assume that Cantonese ge3 (嘅) and di1 (啲) are counterparts of Mandarin de (的) and xie (些).

(26) 我嘅書
ngo ge  syu
I GE book
'my book(s) / 我的書'

(27) 呢啲書
ni  di syu
this DI book
'these books / 這些書'

The partitive pattern is missing in Cantonese (cf. (2) and (3) in Mandarin). Why?

(28) *有嘅人走咗。
   *Jau  ge  jan  zau-zo.
   have GE person leave-Perf
   'Some of the people left.'

(29) 有啲人走咗。
    Jau  di  jan  zau-zo.
    have some person leave-Perf
    'Some people left.'

Historical development of Cantonese ge3 and di1 may shed light on this issue.

Ge3 (嘅)

Ge3 (嘅) was derived from the measure word/classifier gè (個/箇/个)(Cao 1995)

In pre-modern Mandarin (since late Tang Dynasty and Five Dynasties), no examples of the ‘verb + gè (個) + noun’ pattern existed and ge (個) was not attached to any verbs.

In pre-modern Mandarin, di (底) was used as an attributive marker, e.g. 245 examples of di (底) vs. 24 examples of ge (個) in Zutangji (《祖堂集》). Perhaps di (底) was a vocabulary in the standard language while ge (個) was used in some southern dialects (Cao 1995).

Compared with Mandarin de (的), perhaps ge3 (嘅) entered Cantonese quite recently (Yue 2000) and has not yet been fully grammaticalized in modern
Cantonese, e.g. 的: 2445 examples; 嘅: 321 examples in 《麥仕治廣州俗語〈書經〉解義》 (cited from Yue 2000).

Di1 (啲)
- In the 19th century Cantonese, di1 (written as 的) was used as a plural marker and an attributive marker (in 《麥仕治廣州俗語〈書經〉解義》, cited from Yue 2000).

(30) 個堯帝個人的事績
   go Jiu dai go jan di dik sizik
   Cl Yao king Cl person DI achievement
   ‘the achievements of the person of King Yao’

(31) 百姓下頭就有一個未曾娶老婆的人
   Baaksing haatou zau jau jat-go mei cang ceoi loupo di dik jan.
   people below then have one-cl not yet marry wife DI person
   ‘There is a person who has not yet taken a wife among the common people.’

- Examples of the partitive di1 can also be found in Cantonese the 19th century (in 《麥仕治廣州俗語〈書經〉解義》, cited from Yue 2000).

(32) 世上有的，…。
   Saisoeng jau di dik jau, ...
   on earth have some person
   ‘There are some people in the world.’

(33) 有的就不過至多做十年。
   Jau dik zau batgwo zido zou sap nin.
   have some then merely at most do ten year
   ‘Some only worked ten years at most.’

- The attributive usage of di1 (啲) could be derived from dik1 (的).
- The plural marker was written as ‘的’ in 呢 ‘these’ and rendered [tik] in E. C. Bridgman (1841) Chinese Chrestomathy in the Canton Dialect (Macao: S. Well Williams) (cited from Yue 2004: 250).

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3 Examples (30) to (33) are transcribed in the modern Cantonese pronunciations of the Chinese characters.
(34) Historical development of Cantonese *di1 (啲) and *ge3 (嘅)  
\[ de/dik1 (的) \rightarrow di1 (啲) \rightarrow jau5 di1 (有啲) \]
\[ ge/go3 (個) \rightarrow ge3 (嘅) \rightarrow *jau5 ge3 (有嘅) \]

- In terms of the diachronic development of Cantonese *di1 (啲), it could preserve more grammatical properties of *de (的), such as the partitive usage, functioning as the head of DP.
- Given that *ge3 (嘅) was from *ge/go3 (個) and entered Cantonese quite recently, it is not yet fully grammaticalized.
- Though *ge3 (嘅) is now used as a nominalizer in modern Cantonese, only *di1 (啲) preserves the partitive usage (or pronounced as *dit1).\(^4\)

(35) 給啲蘋果我呀。
Bei *di pinggwo ngo aa.
give some apple I SFP  
‘Give me a little piece of an apple.’

(36) *給嘅蘋果我呀。
*Bei *ge pinggwo ngo aa.
give GE apple I SFP

(37) 啾（咁）多蘋果
\[ dit (gam) doe pinggwo \]
some so few apple  
‘a very little piece of an apple’

(38) *嘅（咁）多蘋果
*ge (gam) doe pinggwo  
GE so few apple

- The heterogeneous nature of so-called (nominal) modifier markers in Cantonese may open up a new way to study the grammatical properties of this type of words and their syntactic status.

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\(^4\) Example (35) and its judgment are due to Cathy Wong (personal communication).


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