

## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

In this chapter, we will first focus on how past studies view the roles of complementizers in English. Secondly, we will discuss on how complementizers are grammaticalized from verbs of saying in different languages. Then, we will proceed to review how the verb of saying *shuo* in Chinese grammaticalizes into a complementizer.

#### 2.1 Complementizers in English

Previous researchers have attempted to account for how complementizers in English are used from both the structural and functional perspectives.

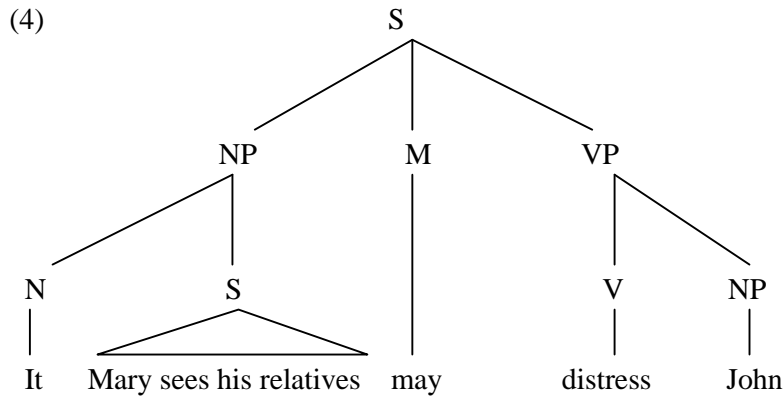
##### 2.1.1 The Structural Approach

Generative grammarians attempt to explain how complementizers in English are manifested in a sentence structure. While the earlier structural linguists argued for the transformational approach in analyzing the status of complementizers, the later linguists argued for the base-generated approach.

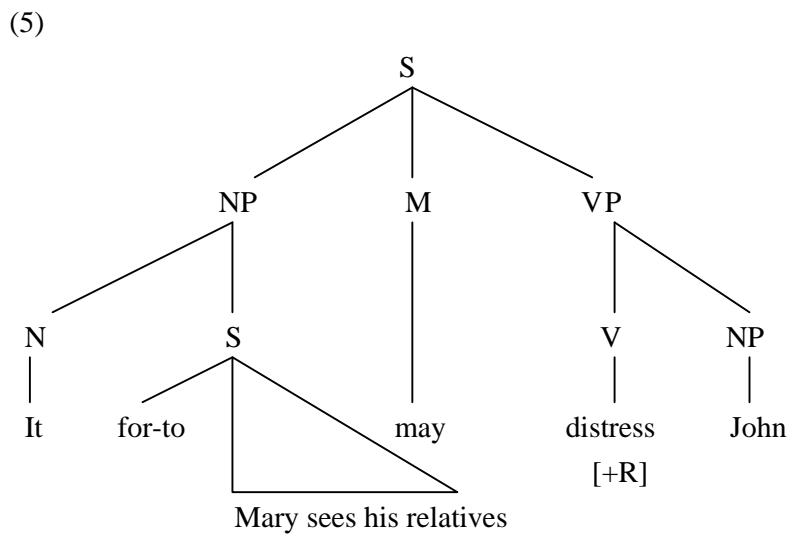
###### 2.1.1.1 The Traditional Transformational Account

The earlier generative grammarians (Lakoff 1965, Kajita 1967) maintain that complementizers are neither syntactically significant nor semantically substantial. In terms of the syntactic role, the presence of a complementizer results from a transformational rule of insertion. That is, complementizers are not distinguishable in the underlying structure; instead, it is inserted into the underlying structure through transformation. For example, the following three sentences all derive from the same underlying structure (4) (see Bresnan 1970:297).

- (1) It may distress John for Mary to see his relatives.
- (2) It may distress John that Mary sees his relatives.
- (3) Mary's seeing his relatives may distress John.



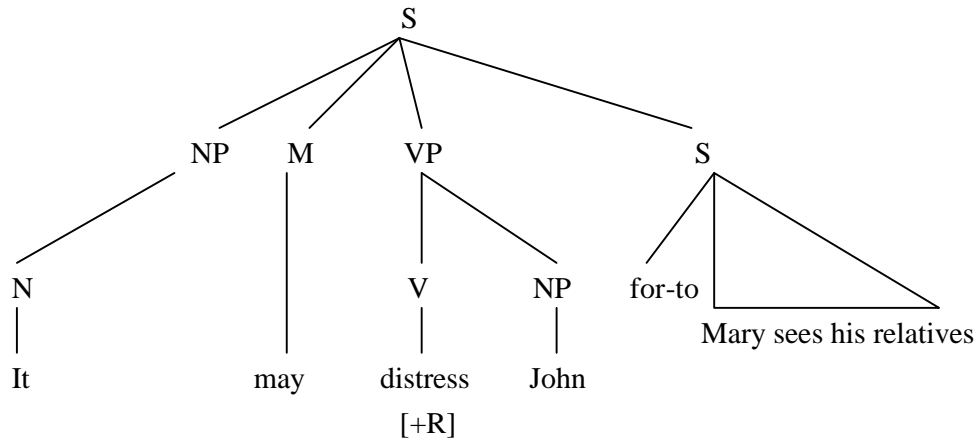
In the underlying structure (4), complementizers are not specified. Then, through the transformation of insertion, a specific complementizer should be selected to insert into the underlying structure as shown in (5). The selection of a specific complementizer is determined by the higher predicate, which is termed as a “rule feature”  $[\pm R]$  (Lakoff 1965).<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> If the transformation introducing *for-to* is ruled as  $[\pm R]$ , then another transformation introducing *that* should be viewed as  $[-R]$ .

After the procedure of “rule feature” is completed, movement can then be performed as we can see in (6) and a sentence containing a complement and a complementizer is thus formed.

(6)



However, the above claim would be confronted with two counter-arguments First of all, the proposal that complementizers are inserted into the underlying structure counters Chomsky’s (1965:146) claim that no transformational insertion of morphological materials can be performed within an embedded sentence. Moreover, this perspective maintains that complementizers serve only grammatical/functional purposes, are determined by the predicate verbs and have no semantic value themselves. Nonetheless, if this is indeed the case, this approach then fails to account for the differences among grammatical sentences (1), (2) and (3) which all have the same predicate verb “distress” (supposedly the same rule feature) but contain different complementizers.

### 2.1.1.2 Complementizers as Based-Generated

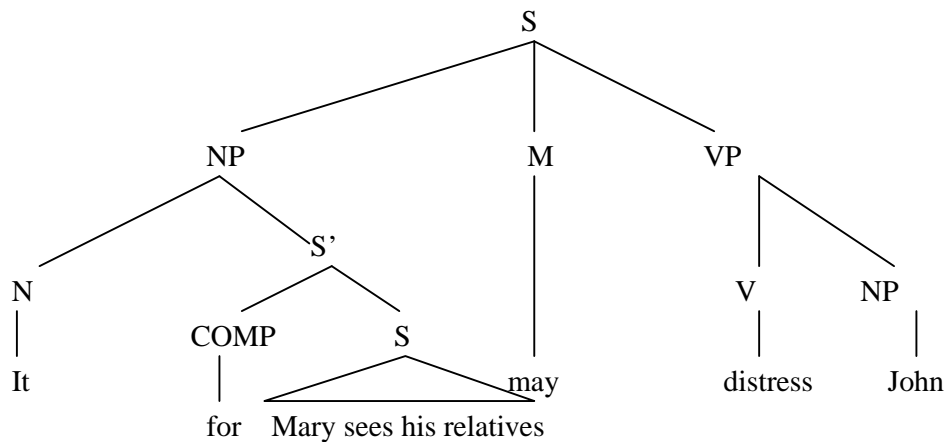
In order to improve the traditional transformational account on complementizers, Bresnan (1970) proposes that the presence of complementizers is not a result of

transformation but that of “the phrase-structure hypothesis” and that complementizers actually have semantic value. By the phrase-structure hypothesis, Bresnan maintains that there should be a node COMP which distinguishes complementizers in the underlying structure. This phrase-structure rule looks as:

(7)  $S' \rightarrow COMP S$

With this phrase-structure rule, the transformations of insertion and movement are no longer needed and thus Chomsky’s claim that universally any insertion into the embedded clause is not permitted can be observed. As the illustration of this phrase-structure rule, the underlying structure of (1) would be revised into (8).

(8)



On the other hand, Bresnan proposes that transformational rules and rule features are not able to account for the differences among the complementizers in the following sentences while verb subcategorization can (1970:304).

(9) **That** he eats cabbage means nothing.

(10) This means **that** he is of low birth.

(11) \* This means **for** him to eat cabbage.

- (12) **That** he eats cabbage means **that** he is of low birth.  
(13) **For** him to eat cabbage means nothing.  
= It means nothing **for** him to eat cabbage.  
(14) \* **For** him to eat cabbage means **that** he is of low birth.

Examples (9)-(12) show that the *that*-complement can occur both as a subject and as an object whereas the *for-to* complement cannot function as an object, and examples (12)-(14) show that that *that*-complement can occur as an object while *for-to* can never occur in the subject position. Therefore, Bresnan contends that the traditional transformational rules or rule features cannot explain why some sentences with a particular complementizer are well-formed while some are not. Also, she proposes that if COMP is a node in the underlying structure, these complementizers would be selected via subcategorization of verbs.

Bresnan furthermore points out that complementizers are not semantically empty as argued by traditional transformationalists. The strongest evidence is that WH words are also complementizers as illustrated by the following comparison between (15) and (16) (1970:302).

- (15) He doesn't care that she is a doctor.  
(16) He doesn't care whether/if she is a doctor.

If complementizers are indeed semantically empty as suggested by the traditional transformational grammarians, there should be no difference between (15) and (16) in terms of their sentence meanings. Yet, these two sentences carry very different meanings, and the meaning difference obviously results from the difference choice of complementizers *that* or *if/whether*.

Bresnan has featured her study by proposing that complementizers are base-generated and are thus semantically significant. Unlike the traditional transformational grammarians, Bresnan attended to the semantic aspects of

complementizers and she also foreshadowed the significance of semantic studies of complementizer functions.

### 2.1.2 Semantic Features of Complementizers

While early generative studies concentrate more on the role of complementizers in the syntactic structure, linguists later attempt to take semantics into account when trying to explain why one rather than another complementizer is employed in the complementation structure.

Bresnan (1972), for example, elaborates the distinction between *that*-complement and *for-to* complement by claiming that the semantics of *that*-complement is associated with definiteness while *for-to* complement is related to subjectivity, intention and motivation. She claims that *that*-complement serves the function of “definitizing” the complement. This function can be clearly manifested in the comparison of the following examples (1972:70):

- (17) a. It has already been decided whether you can go – but I can’t tell you the outcome.  
b. It has already been decided that you can go – \*but I can’t tell you the outcome.

The difference between (17a) and (17b) lies in the definiteness of *that*-complement in (17b), which entails that the proposition contained in *that*-complement has already been established and cannot be rejected. However, the *WH*-complement in (17a) yields an interpretation of probability of the complement proposition. Therefore, it is still possible to negate the *WH*-complement. Moreover, the definiteness or specificity carried in *that*-complement can also be shown in the comparison between *that*-complement and *for-to* complement as illustrated below (1970:76-77):

- (18) a. ?John made one proposal after another that funds be raised.  
b. John made one proposal after another for funds to be raised.
- (19) a. ?We ignored his repeated plea that we help him.  
b. We ignored his repeated plea for us to help him.

Bresnan maintains that the unacceptability of (18a) and (19a) results from the incompatibility between the specificity carried in *that*-complement and the indefinite apposition “one proposal after another.” However, *for-to* complement does not provide a specific description, which allows indefinite co-reference.

Furthermore, the distinction between *that*-complement and *for-to* complement can also be shown in terms of factivity. The definiteness carried in *that*-complement renders it a presupposition that the complement has been realized; on the other hand, *for-to* complement does not preserve such a presupposition as shown in (20) (1970:85):

- (20) a. I would be surprised that she said that (if I hadn't heard it already).  
b. I would be surprised for her to have said that.

In summary, *that*-complement is used to signal definiteness and factivity whereas *for-to* complement does not function in the same way.

In discussing the semantics of *for-to* complement, Bresnan draws attention to the inherent meaning of the word *for*. The inherent meaning of *for* is to express “subjective reason or cause” (1972:81) as we can see below (1972:80):

- (21) a. He considers her a fool for her generosity.  
b. He considers her a fool for being so generous to him  
c. He considers it foolish for her to help him.

Examples (21a) and (21b) both show the reasons why “she” is considered a fool and the reason is presented with the word *for*. Furthermore, the reason presented with *for*

also carries the speaker's subjective judgment and motivation/intention to assert this claim. Thus, *for-to* complement is more likely to be compatible with predicates which signal subjective judgments or emotive reactions as exemplified in (22) and it is usually incompatible with predicates which mark objective knowledge as exemplified in (23) (1972:84).

(22) It is right for God to punish sinners.

It is wrong for there to be such inequalities.

It is illegal for these houses to be occupied.

I consider it unfair for them to win all the time.

(23) \* It is true for God to exist.

\* It is false for there to be only finitely many primes.

\* It is clear for these houses to be occupied.

To summarize, Bresnan (1972) has pointed out that semantic factors including definiteness, factivity, cause/reason, motivation and subjectivity should be taken into account in differentiating *that*-complement from *for-to* complement<sup>2</sup>.

Along a similar line, Noonan (1985) attributes the difference to two factors: the dependence/independence of time reference of the complement and the state/action distinction of the complement. First of all, he proposes that infinitival complementizer (*for-*)*to* is usually associated with the so-called dependent time reference (DTR) contexts while indicative complementizer *that* with independent time reference (ITR). That is, the time reference of *that*-complement does not have to agree with that of the matrix clause whereas the time reference of infinitival (*for-*)*to* complements is bound to that of the matrix clause as we can see below:

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<sup>2</sup> Bresnan (1972) also discusses the difference of WH-complements from *that*-complements and *for-to* complement.



- (24) I don't believe that Floyd skipped town.  
       I don't believe that Floyd is skipping town.  
       I don't believe that Floyd will skip town. (1985:97)
- (25) I believe Zeke to be an idiot. (1985:101)

The time reference of *that*-complement clauses as shown in (24) is not controlled by the matrix clause. However, in (25), there is only one interpretation of the time reference of the (*for-*)*to* complement. Namely, the time reference of “Zeke to be an idiot” must be identical with that of the predicate verb “believe.”

The other semantic difference between complementizers *that* and (*for-*)*to* lies in the interpretation of state or activity. Noonan maintains that given the same predicate, *that*-complement carries the interpretation of state while (*for-*)*to* complement yield the interpretation of activity as shown in (26)-a & (27)-a and (26)-b & (27)-b respectively.

- (26) a. Floyd remembered that he was a nice boy. (state)  
       b. Floyd remembered to be a nice boy. (activity)
- (27) a. Max convinced Floyd that he was a nice boy. (state)  
       b. Max convinced Floyd to be a nice boy. (activity)

In summary, Noonan (1985) also focuses on the semantic differences between complementizer *that* and complementizer *for-to* by attributing to the semantic factors of time reference and the interpretation of state/activity.

### **2.1.3 Functional Domains of Complementizers: *De dicto* vs. *De re***

In the same attempt to further probe into the semantic differences among different complementizers, Frajzyngier proposes the notions of *de dicto* and *de re* (Frajzyngier 1991, 1995, Frajzyngier and Jaspersen 1991).

First, Frajzyngier explains how the notions *de dicto* and *de re* are defined. The concept of *de dicto* refers to the semantic domain in which the reference of the proposition is made to the speech world, while that of *de re* refers to the domain of

reality.

A clause is in the domain *de dicto* only when it is presented to the hearer as such, i.e., not as a direct description of an event but rather as a fragment of speech, or a fragment of linguistic representation which may contain a description of an event. Thus a proposition is in the domain *de dicto* when it has a metalinguistic function, viz., when it is presented as an object of discourse (1991:136).

With the distinction made between *de dicto* and *de re*, Frajzyngier and Jasperson go on to argue that complementizer *that* marks the domain of *de dicto* while complementizers *-ing* and *(for)-to* belong to the domain of *de re*. They propose two arguments to support that complementizer *that* marks the *de dicto* domain. Firstly, a language that has a complementizer deriving from a demonstrative usually marks the non-deontic (epistemic) complements of verbs of saying and thinking as shown in the following example (Frajzyngier and Jasperson 1991:137, Frajzyngier 1991:225)<sup>3</sup>.

(28) Harold claimed *that* the apartment wasn't clean.  
(Frajzyngier and Jasperson 1991:137)

In (28), it can be observed that the complement “the apartment wasn't clean” should not be referred to any fact in the real world where the apartment was truly not clean, but to an epistemic judgment deriving from the verb of saying “claim.” This verb of saying *claim* creates the speech world. Therefore, when *that*-complement follows verbs of saying and thinking which yield the world of speech, the referent of *that*-complement belongs to the domain of *de dicto*.

Secondly, when *that* is used alone as a demonstrative pronoun without any following complement, it marks the reference to belong to the domain of speech as

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<sup>3</sup> Supporting Frajzyngier's proposal, Suzuki (2000) points out that Japanese complementizers deriving from demonstratives such as *to* tend to function as *de dicto* complementizers since this type of complementizers are used to mark the complements of verbs of saying and thinking whereas other complementizers like *koto* or *no* mark the domain of *de re*.

shown in the comparison between (29) and (30) (1991:137).

(29) I don't believe that.

(30) I don't believe this.

Demonstrative pronoun *that* in (29) refers to a proposition expressed in the previous utterance while *this* in (30) refers to something here and now. Things occurring here and now are usually visible and real. For example, a person may say (29) when referring to a statement he or she has heard previously, while a person may use (30) to refer to something he or she just sees. In sum, it can be concluded that complementizer *that* indeed functions to mark a domain of speech.

Furthermore, Frajzyngier (1991) points out one more characteristic of *de dicto* complementizers. *De dicto* complementizers tend to indicate indirect evidence. Since *de dicto* complementizers usually co-occur with verbs of saying, they would also carry the intrinsic epistemic value of verbs of saying; that is, the information obtained from speech is not as reliable as that obtained from the direct perception. Therefore, the *de dicto* complementizers usually function to signal less reliable information value<sup>4</sup>.

Complementizer *that* differs from gerund complementizer *-ing* and infinitival complementizer *(for-)to* in that the latter two signal that the complement belongs to the domain of reality. Frajzyngier and Jasperson maintain that gerund complementizer *-ing* marks the complement to carry an interpretation of actuality while infinitival *(for-)to*, that of potentiality. The following two examples illustrate the difference between *that*-complement and *-ing* complement.

(31) *His eating broccoli* was reported by the campus press.

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<sup>4</sup> In some languages, as Frajzyngier (1991) has proven, a sentence without such a complementizer denotes direct evidence whereas a sentence with a complementizer signals indirect evidence.

(32) *That he eats broccoli* was reported by the campus press. (1991:142)

When the verb *report* takes different complements, different interpretations would be yielded. The *-ing* complement in (31) creates a factive meaning and refers to the event itself. On the other hand, if the event is marked by *that*-complement, what is being reported is the news about the event instead of the specific event itself. Therefore, what distinguishes *-ing* complement from *that*-complement is that the former signals an actual event while the latter marks a reported event.

Frajzyngier contends that the difference between *that*-complement and (*for-*)*to* complement can be attributed to potentiality. The potentiality marked by infinitival *to*-complement means that the complement belong to the world of reality though the fact is not yet present but forthcoming, whereas the expressed proposition marked by *that*-complement shows that the complement is in the domain of speech, as illustrated in (33) and (34):

(33) He believes *Bacon to be the real author*.

(34) He believes *that Bacon is the real author*. (1991:143)

The infinitival *to* in example (33) indicates the futurity of the complement event; that is, it expresses the subject's belief that a certain potential affair is going to happen. On the other hand, *that*-complement in example (34) expresses the subject's belief about a certain proposition.

A conclusion can thus be drawn from the previous examples. That is, the semantic differences among different complementizers do not result from the predicate verbs such as *report* or *believe*, but from the use of different complementizers, which mark the complements to belong to either the *de dicto* domain or the *de re* domain.

### 2.1.4 Complementizer *that* in Discourse

Thompson adopts the approach of discourse analysis to conduct a series of studies to examine the omission of complementizer *that* (Thompson and Mulac 1991-a, 1991-b). She also argues that the matrix clauses of *that*-clause complement should be deemed as an epistemic formulaic expression (Thompson 2002).

Thompson and Mulac (1991-a, 1991-b) investigate how discourse factors condition the omission of English complementizer *that*. Although previous works maintained that the presence or the absence of complementizer *that* does not render any grammatical difference<sup>5</sup>, Thompson and Mulac propose that the presence and the absence of complementizer *that* are actually conditioned by discourse factors and should be deemed different. First, the use of personal pronoun plays a significant role in determining the omission of complementizer *that*. Their studies prove that complementizer *that* is likely to be omitted when the subject is the first person *I* (90%) or the second person *you* (91%), as illustrated in the following example.

(35) So what do you think you're going to major in now that you're down here?  
(Thompson and Mulac 1991-a:244)

The use of the first person and the second person subjects gives rise to the speaker's commitment and subjective evaluation. That is to say, the main clause behaves like an epistemic phrase. As exemplified in (35), the main clause "what do you think" in nature functions to express the speaker's invitational attitude instead of uttering any substantial proposition. It is the invitational attitude that makes the main clause an epistemic phrase.

Furthermore, the subject of the complement clause also plays a role in

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<sup>5</sup> Noonan (1985) claims that the following two sentences should be deemed exactly identical:

- (i) Perry knows *that Hugh is vulnerable*.
- (ii) Perry knows *Hugh is vulnerable*. (Noonan 1985:45)

determining the omission of complementizer *that*. When the subject of the complement clause is a pronoun, the complement clause holds more discourse topicality, so the omission of complementizer *that* is more likely. In contrast, when the subject of the complement clause is a full NP, the complement clause would be less topical. So, it is more likely that the main clause is treated as a unitary epistemic phrase and *that* is thus retained.

Secondly, Thompson and Mulac claim that complementizer *that* tends to be omitted when the main verbs are cognition verbs expressing epistemicity such as *think* or *guess*. When these two verbs are employed, the matrix clauses are meant to illustrate strong epistemicity because the semantics of these two verbs involve more subjective evaluation. Thus, if the matrix clause contains either one of these two verbs, the matrix clause mostly functions like an epistemic phrase and therefore complementizer *that* tends to be omitted as exemplified below.

(36) I think it's going to rain, isn't it? (Thompson and Mulac 1991-a:239)

As the matrix clause "I think" mainly aims to convey the speaker's subjective evaluation, the main clause serves as an epistemic unit to lead in the following complement clause in which complementizer *that* is omitted.

Moreover, the occurrence of auxiliaries, indirect objects and adverbs in main clauses also has a lot to do with the occurrence of complementizer *that*. These variables can add more information value to the matrix clause and thus render the matrix clause less like an epistemic phrase. Therefore, complementizer *that* tends to be present in order to serve as a boundary between the information-loaded matrix clause and the complement clause. In the following examples, complementizer *that* is used to set a border between the non-epistemic-unit matrix clause and the complement clause.

(37) ...people who should know you know *that* you don't just walk down the street and shake hands with them.

(38) I wanted to show her *that* I ... she got the points.

(39) I just figured out *that* I'd walk to class at that time, just stay in the library...

(Thompson and Mulac 1991-a:246-247)

Thompson (2002) further examines more spoken data and attributes the strong tendency of complementizer-*that* omission to the semantics of the predicate verbs. She reports that most of the matrix clauses in spoken data function as epistemic formulaic units in that their matrix predicates carry epistemic interpretation. Most of these matrix predicates fall into three categories: epistemic complement-taking predicates such as *believe, feel* or *think*, evidential complement-taking predicates like *find, tell* or *can tell* and evaluative complement-taking predicates like *be (be) glad, like it* or *(doesn't) matter*. Thompson argues that in a conversation what really matters is the proposition uttered in the complement clause instead of the epistemic matrix clause. In other words, the real function of the matrix clause is to express the subjective attitude toward the proposition manifested in the complement clause. Thompson's claim can be further supported by the finding that most of the subjects in the matrix clauses are either the first person *I* or the second person *you*, who are the primary interlocutors in the conversation. As the matrix subjects correspond with the interlocutors, the matrix clauses are more likely to function to convey the subjective attitude, evaluation or judgment. As there is no strong need to mark the information boundary when the matrix clause serves as an epistemic unit, complementizer *that* is thus omitted.

What features Thompson and Mulac's research and Thompson's study is their concern about discursual factors: the epistemicity and the topicality of the main clause

which function as the determining factors in the omission of English complementizer *that*.

## 2.2 Saying Verbs as Complementizers

It has been documented that complementizers in a number of languages derive from verbs of saying (Lord 1976, Jacobsen 1986, Ransom 1988, Saxena 1988, Klammer 2000)<sup>6</sup>. Lord (1976) investigates how a verb of saying evolves into a complementizer or subordinator in Kwa. She reports that when a verb of saying undergoes grammaticalization, the content meaning of the verb would be bleached before it becomes a grammatical morpheme to mark the relationship between clauses. Jacobsen (1986) points out that Basque, a language spoken in west Europe, has an evidential marker *omen* deriving from a hearsay verb. In addition to functioning as a complementizer, *omen* can also be used as an impersonal quotative or be used to signal general inferred meanings from indirect evidence such as “reportedly,” “as they say” or “it seems,” as illustrated in the following example (1986:7)<sup>7</sup>:

(40) *etorri omen da*

“He is said to have come” or “He seems to have come”

Saxena (1988) also examines different grammaticalized functions of verbs of saying. In the investigation on a number of South Asian languages and Tibeto-Burman languages, she concludes with three historical stages of the development of the grammaticalized functions of verbs of saying. At the first stage, the verbs of saying

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<sup>6</sup> Ransom (1988) investigates the issue that to what extent the current meanings of complementizers in different languages are correlated with their lexical sources and their particular stage of development. The lexical sources can be divided into three types: full lexical content words such as nouns or verbs (*be* “say” in Ewe), lexical function words such as determiners or pronouns (*that* in English) and bound forms with abstract functions such as mood-like clitics (*-ela* in Basque).

<sup>7</sup> Aksu-Koc and Slobin (1986) observes that in Turkish, *-mIs*, which derives from a verb of saying contains basic functions to convey both inference and hearsay. That is, *-mIs* can be used to indicate that the asserted event is outside of the speaker’s direct observation; rather, the information is obtained through inferencing through indirect evidence.



(such as *bhanera* in the following example) function as a quotative linker to associate the complement with the matrix clause, as exemplified in the following sentence of one South Asian languages -- Newari (1988:376).

- (41) *ram-le saroj calak cha bhanera bhay-o*  
 Ram-ERG Saroj intelligent is say-PART say-PD  
 “Ram said that Saroj is intelligent.”

At the second stage, the verbs of saying can be employed not only as a complementizer but also as a linker between the adverbial clause and the matrix clause. To be more specific, these verbs of saying can perform the functions as purpose conjunctions, causal conjunctions or conditional conjunctions, as shown in (42), (43) and (44) respectively. (1988:379-382)

(42) **Purpose conjunction**

- ji kamala yato napal-e dha-k-a-a woy-a*  
 I Kamala DAT meet-NAP say-CAUSE-PART-NF come-PD  
 “I came to meet Kamala.”

(43) **Causal conjunction**

- chi-pi- cho-mho murkho kho chae-dha-e-sa tho dhorohora mo-khu*  
 you-PI one-CL fools are why-say-INF-if this tower NEG-is  
 “One of you is a fool because this is not a tower.”

(44) **Conditional conjunction**

- cho ji-to kapi byu-sa dha-k-a-a ji ch-to kalam by-i*  
 you I-DAT copy give-COND say-CAUSE-PART-NF I you-DAT-pen give-PD  
 “If you will give me a copy then I will give you a pen.”

When the verbs of saying have evolved into Stage III, they can then serve as comparative markers between two noun phrases.

To conclude her examination on the South Asian languages and Tibeto-Burman languages, Saxena (1988) maintains that most of the verbs of saying can grammaticalize into a complementizer which also serves as a quotative linker, a

causal conjunction, a purpose conjunction, a conditional conjunction or a comparative marker. Her proposal of the historical sequence for the grammaticalization path of the verbs of saying paves the way for further examination of the evolution of verbs of saying in other languages.

## 2.3 Previous Works on *Shuo* in Chinese

### 2.3.1 *Shuo* as a Main Verb of Saying

In most of the Chinese dictionaries, *shuo* is deemed as a typical verb of saying because its content meaning is to signal an act of speech. In what follows, we will examine four studies which focus on the content meaning of *shuo*: Lu (1980), Meng (1982), Liu (1983) and Lin (1998, 2004).

#### 2.3.1.1 Lu's (1980) Account

Lu (1980) argues that *shuo*, when used as a verb of saying, has two meanings. The first one is to orally express meanings with words. When this meaning is adopted, *shuo* can be followed by nouns, verbs, adjective and clauses as shown in the following examples (1980:509-510).

(45) *shuo* + noun

*shuo shihua*

SHUO truth

“Say the truth.”

(46) *shuo* + verb

*wo shuo qu*

I SHUO go

“I say let's/I'll go.”

(47) *shuo* + adjective

*ta shuo tai tian le*

he SHUO too sweet ASP

“He said it is too sweet.”

(48) *shuo* + clause

Lao Li *shuo* Xiao Huang yijing kao shang daxue le  
old Li SHUO little Huang already test on university ASP  
“Mr. Li said Mr. Huang has been admitted to a university.”

The second verbal meaning of *shuo* is to criticize or to blame. When used with this meaning, *shuo* can only take noun objects as shown in the examples below (1980:510).

(49) *wo* yijing *shuo* guo ta le  
I already SHUO PER he ASP  
“I have blamed him.”

Lu has attempted to explain the polysemous uses of *shuo* as a verb of saying, claiming that *shuo* at least has two content meanings. One is to express an act of uttering words and the other is to indicate that the uttered words are meant to criticize. However, Lu focuses merely on the content meaning of *shuo* and does not take into interaction into account.

### 2.3.1.2 Meng's (1982) Account

Meng (1982) classifies the functions of *shuo* into seven categories: *shuo* taking objects, *shuo* taking no objects, *shuo* as connectors, *shuo* as an adverb, *shuo* used in a prepositional phrase, *shuo* used to indicate interjection and others.

When *shuo* is used as a verb, it can take either objects or no objects.<sup>8</sup> Meng contends that when *shuo* takes objects, it is used as a reported speech frame which can be followed by a direct quote or an indirect quote, as shown in the following (1982:337-338).

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<sup>8</sup> Only the verbal meanings will be presented in this section. Other functions of *shuo* will be discussed in the following sections.

(50) Direct Quote

*suhua shuo e you e bao shan you shan bao*  
saying SHUO evil have evil revenge kindness have kindness revenge  
“It is said that the bad have bad things in return while the good have good things  
in return”

(51) Indirect Quote

*wo shuo wo neng you guoqu ta bu xin*  
I SHUO I can swim over he not believe  
“I said I could swim there; he did not believe me.”

When there is no object following *shuo*, the main function of *shuo* is either to get the listeners’ attention or to express the speaker’s thought. As *shuo* serves as an attention getter, the subject co-occurring with *shuo* is very likely the first person pronoun *wo* “I”. Moreover, since the phrase *wo shuo* “I say” functions as an attention getter, there is usually a pause or an interjection like *hei* which is positioned between the phrase *wo shuo* and the proposition as exemplified in (8) (1980:339).

(52) Getting Attention

*wo shuo [pause] wode nakozi zai jia ne*  
I SHUO [pause] my wife/husband stay home PAT  
“I say, is my husband/wife at home?”

When *shuo* takes no object, it is actually meant to explicitly express the speaker’s thought and is usually preceded by the second person subject *nin* or *ni*. Although the subject is the second person *nin* or *ni*, the subject phrase does not aim to elicit the listener’s act of responding an opinion as the form of the sentence superficially manifests. What’s more is that the proposition following *shuo* is not really what is being said. Instead, *shuo* serves as a means to strongly assert the speaker’s opinion, as shown below in (9) (1980:339) and *ninshuo* “you say” actually means “(don’t) you think”.

(53) Asserting the Speaker's Thought

*nin shuo dajia zheyangde bangmang wo,*

you SHUO everybody like this help I

*bu shi wei le gaizheng wode cuowu ma*

no BE for ASP correct my mistake QUE

“You say, isn’t the reason why everybody helps me like this is to correct my mistakes?”

In summary, Meng reports that *shuo* may have two main verbal meanings. When followed by an object, *shuo* usually functions as a reported speech frame. When it is used in conversation and is not followed by an object, it tends to perform more interactional discourse functions such as getting attention with “*wo shuo*” and expressing the speaker’s thought with “*ni shuo*.” Meng’s analysis has shown that *shuo*, when used as a verb, conveys not only the meaning of saying with words but also the meaning of thinking. The meaning extension from a verb of saying to a verb of thinking takes place only in a conversational context. Therefore, the meaning and function extension of *shuo* in speech interaction deserves more discussion.

**2.3.1.3 Liu’s (1983) Account**

While Meng (1982) has found that the verb of saying *shuo* can perform conversational functions, Liu (1983) attempts to probe more into the conversational functions performed by *wo shuo* “I say” and *ni shuo* “you say”. Liu proposes that in conversation, *wo shuo* “I say” performs not only the function of getting attention but also that of making a suggestion and that of asserting the speaker’s opinion which is different from the other interlocutors, as shown in (54) and (55) respectively (1983:168).

(54) Making a Suggestion

*wo shuo zamen dou bie qu le*  
I SHUO we all not go ASP  
“I suggest let’s not go there.”

(55) Asserting a Different Opinion

*wo shuo zheyang zuo ke bu dui,*  
I SHUO like this do very not correct  
*ni bie wang le ni shi laoshi*  
you not forget ASP you BE teacher  
“I say/mean doing something like this is not correct. Don’t forget you are a teacher.”

The conversational functions of *ni shuo* “you say,” are classified into two types: inviting listeners’ positive feedback to support the speaker’s thought and asserting the speaker’s thought by sparing no floor for the listener to speak. Firstly, when *ni shuo* is used to invite listener’s feedback, the speaker’s actual intention is to seek the listener’s agreement. In other words, when *shuo* is used in this manner, the complement clause following *ni shuo* is often a question and the desired and typical response is supposed to be “Yes!” as shown in (12).

(56) Inviting Listeners’ Positive Feedback

*ni shuo zhe shen yifu wo chuan zhe bu cuo ba*  
you SHUO this body clothes I wear PER not bad PAT  
“You say, it is not bad to wear this piece of clothes, right?”

Another conversational function performed by *ni shuo* is to assert the speaker’s thought instead of inviting the listener to offer any response (cf. Meng 1982). When the speaker uses *ni shuo* in this manner, his/her actual intention is to continue his/her own turn and, therefore, no floor is indeed given to the listener for any feedback. That is to say, this type of conversational function of *ni shuo* aims to convey the interpretation of *wo shuo* “I say”. The word choice of *ni shuo* instead of *wo shuo* reflects the concern of politeness in face-to-face conversation (Brown and Levinson

1987). Take example (57) for example. Although the speaker says *ni shuo* “you say” explicitly, what he is trying to express is actually *wo shuo* “I say/think.” In other words, the listener of (57) would naturally interpret this sentence into “(The speaker) I want to say/I think how nice a person he is!” *Ni* is chosen instead of *wo* because of the speaker’s intention to seek the listener’s agreement with his/her judgment. The speaker does not want to sound self-centered or judgmental in this conversation and therefore chooses to involve the listener as a way to show politeness.

(57) Asserting the Speaker’s Thought

*ni shuo ta zhege ren you duo hao,*  
you SHUO he this person have very good  
*bierende shi ta zhong ji zai xin shang*  
others’ thing he always remember in mind on  
“You say, how nice a person he is! He always remembers others’ business.”

Similar to Meng (1982), Liu’s study on the verbal use of *shuo* also investigates the conversational functions of *wo shuo* “I say” and *ni shuo* “you say.” She points out that in conversations, *wo shuo* can function either to make a suggestion or to assert the speaker’s different opinion, while *ni shuo* is employed either to invite the listener’s positive feedback or to assert the speaker’s thought without actually offering the listener a chance to respond. Both Meng and Liu take conversational contexts into account in analyzing the verbal meaning of *shuo*, and they have found that *shuo* has not only its literal meaning as orally expressing oneself with words but also different discourse meanings, especially in conversations where interlocutors have to take politeness in interaction into consideration.

**2.3.1.4 Lin’s (1998, 2004) Account**

Also focusing on the conversational functions of *wo shuo* and *ni shuo*, Lin (1998, 2004) examines how interaction between interlocutors trigger these two speech

frames to undergo grammaticalization. First of all, *wo shuo* and *ni shuo* can be used as prototypical reported speech frames. *Wo shuo*, as a reported speech frame, functions to report a speech event occurring in a different context some time ago or to report a prior speech event in the same context as the following example shows (2004:159).

- (58) H: ..*oh benlai shi shuo yao taida de*, -  
 PAT originally BE SHUO want Taida POSS  
 <XX>*shuo chinghua de ye keyi.*\  
 SHUO Chinghua POSS also do  
 (H)(0.6)*ranhou wo jiu shuo*, -  
 then I jiu SHUO  
 → ...(0.8)*wo shuo*, -  
 I SHUO  
 <Q..*haohaohao.*\  
 okay-okay-okay  
 ..*ni zheme luosuo.*\  
 you so long-winded  
 ..*wo gei ni yi ge gen ni yiyang xonghang de ren.*\<Q> (Matchmaking)  
 I give you one GE with you same tough POSS person  
 H: ‘Originally, he wanted someone who had graduated from Taiwan University. But then he said graduates from Tsinghua University will also do. Then I said, **I said**, “Okay okay, since you set up so many stringent requirements, I’ll introduce someone as tough as you are for you.”’

Instead of uttering a here-and-now statement, the utterance following *wo shuo* is actually meant to refer to a there-and-then statement.

As *ni shuo* serves as a reported speech frame, the speaker’s actual attempt is to reinforce the credibility of the information and also to seek the listener’s confirmation. This type of conversational function has also been documented by the previous researchers (Meng 1982, Liu 1986).

Furthermore, Lin proposes that due to the mechanism of simultaneous interaction, the canonical reported speech frames *wo shuo* and *ni shuo* can also be employed as



reported thought frames. Due to the publicization effect of the act of saying, an act of saying can actually indicate an expression of making the speaker's thought "publicized" (2004:163). For example, when the speaker senses that the listener might misunderstand him/her and a clarification is thus needed, the use of *wo shuo* "I say" would mean "I mean" as shown in (59) (2004:160). In this example, the first *wo shuo* functions as a reported speech frame indicating a previous speech event while the second occurrence of *wo shuo* helps L clarify his meaning so as not to cause J's misunderstanding. Therefore, the second *wo shuo* in fact serves as a reported thought frame.

(59) J: ...*wo shuo*

I SHUO

.. *Kaixi Wulong cha* <@ *ruguo keyi fang ai dehua*  
 Kaixi Wulong tea if able to prevent cancer dehua (if)

.. *women jia zhende he henduo.* \@>  
 our family really drink a lot

L: .. <*P deyi fang ai.* \P>  
 able to prevent cancer

J: ...*zhende a*  
 really PAT

L: .. <*F meyou la F*>  
 no PAT

.. *wo shi shuo*  
 I BE SHUO  
 ... *ruguo* <*MRC keyi MRC*> *dehua*  
 if able dehua (if)

J: **I say**, if Kaixi Wulong tea is able to prevent cancer, we really drink a lot of it.

L: It prevents cancer.

J: Really?

L: No, **I mean (I said)** if it does.

While *wo shuo* is intended to provide a clarification of the speaker's intention, *ni shuo*, when used as a reported thought frame, aims to seek a confirmation of the

interlocutor's intention (2004:171). In the following conversation, T's use of *ni shuo* actually means "you mean" instead of "you say" because what T really wants to convey is the meaning of the proposition which needs confirmation rather than the act of speech.

(60) B: ..*yaoshi tai dali jiu hui ba ta da xialai*  
if too strength just will ba it hit down

T: .. <@*zheyangzi a*@>  
this way PAT

.. *o*

oh

.. *ni shuo nimen hui wangxing*  
you SHUO you will get carried away

.. *hui yiwei ta shi zhende lankuang*  
will think it BE real basketball backboard

B: If we hit it too hard, it would drop.

T: I see. Oh, **you said (you mean)** you would get so carried away that you would regard it (the class plate) as a real basketball backboard?

In addition to serving as the reported speech frame and the reported thought frame, *wo shuo* and *ni shuo* also derive pragmatic meanings due to the interaction between the speaker and the hearer in conversation. *Wo shuo* has grammaticalized to be a pragmatic marker of attention getting and a pragmatic marker of self-assertion to hold the speaker's floor in order to secure the addressee's attention. Both types of pragmatic functions of *shuo* have also been documented by Meng (1982) and Liu (1986).

As for *ni shuo*, when used in conversation, it can function as a concessive conditional marker<sup>9</sup>, a contrastive marker or a discourse marker of getting attention through metonymy and pragmatic inferencing. The conditional interpretation derives

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<sup>9</sup> It is believed that the verbs of saying are closely related to conditionals, which according to Lyons (1995) can be used to express a subjective epistemic modality.

from the speaker's seeming command *nishuo* "you speak" to the listener to give a comment without giving the addressee a chance to say it (cf. Meng 1982, Liu 1986). That is to say, both the speaker and the addressee know that the command is not a real command but a hypothetical context in which the listener is not held responsible to be engaged to provide any response. In the following example, the use of *(ni) shuo* "set a metalinguistic conditional situation for the following statements (2004:173)"

(61) *(ni) shuo ta lan, ta dushu you man younggong de,*  
 you SHUO he lazy he study yet kind of hardworking POSS  
*(ni) shuo ta qinlao, ta you changchang toulan.*  
 you SHUO he diligent he yet often get lazy  
 "(You) say he is lazy, yet he studies quite hard; (you) say he is diligent, yet he fools around a lot"

Along the path of grammaticalization, a concessive conditional marker of *ni shuo* can evolve to be a pragmatic marker of contrast. It is argued that in the interaction of conversation, the concessive reading is well understood and thus gradually deleted. Instead of being a conditional marker, *ni shuo*, while containing a commanding and challenging reading, serves to get the listener's attention and also to hedge the speaker's claim. This use is particularly conspicuous when *ni shuo* co-occurs with contrastive markers such as *keshi* "but" and *qushi* "in fact" as shown in (62) (2004:175).

(62) *wo zhi chi le shala mianbao*  
 I only eat ASP salad bread  
*ni shuo qishi tang limian ye mei sheme dongxi*  
 you SHUO actually soup inside also not have what thing  
 "(For lunch), I only had salad, bread and you say, in fact, there was not much in the soup."

Also due to the interactional context, *ni shuo* has been conventionalized into a

discourse marker of getting attention. It is used to hold the floor and in the meanwhile to get the listener's attention. It functions just like another typical attention getter *ni kan* "you see" as we can see in the example (62) (2004:176):

(63) B: ..*zhende ne*  
 really PAT  
 .. *ni shuo*  
 you SHUO  
 .. *ni kan ta lingxian si fen*  
 you see he lead four scores  
 .. *youmeiyou*  
 have-not-have  
 "Really! You see, you see, he has been ahead by four scores, hasn't he?"

Like Meng (1982) and Liu (1986), Lin (1998, 2004) also concentrates on the conversational functions of *wo shuo* and *ni shuo*. The synchronic data collected in her studies has shown a grammaticalization path which *wo shuo* and *ni shuo* have undergone. Along the grammaticalization path, both *wo shuo* and *ni shuo* function originally as reported speech frames, then as reported thought frames and later as pragmatic markers. Lin has put a lot of efforts in qualitative analysis of the grammaticalization path of reported speech frames *wo shuo* and *ni shuo*. Along this line, the future studies should pay more attention to both the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the discourse functions of *shuo*.

### 2.3.2 *Shuo* as the Second Verb of a Serial Verb Construction

In addition to the verbal uses, *shuo* is also used in the serial verb construction and the complementation structure<sup>10</sup> in Mandarin Chinese.

<sup>10</sup> Chao (1968) has attempted to differentiate complement clauses from adverbial clauses in Mandarin Chinese. He proposed that, unlike adverbial clauses, there is usually no pause or interjection between the matrix clause and the complement clause unless the complement clause is very long as shown in the following example:

(i) *women dou yiwei a ta you shi yige ren na le ben xiaoshuo*

Li and Thompson (1981) examine the function of *shuo* as part of the serial verb construction. It is observed that the whole construction serves as an indirect discourse frame because the verbal meaning of *shuo* indicates that the following verb phrase or clause actually represents something being spoken or reported, as shown in (64), (65) and (66) (1981:602).

- (64) *ta gaosu wo (shuo) ni tou teng*  
 he tell I SHUO you head ache  
 “S/He told me that you had a headache.”
- (65) *women wen ta (shuo) Jiefang Lu zai nar*  
 we ask he SHUO Liberation Road at where  
 “We asked him/her where Liberation Road was.”
- (66) *meimei lai xin (shuo) xia ge yue lai*  
 younger sister arrive letter SHUO next GE month come  
 “(My) younger sister wrote (me) that she’d be here next month.”

The matrix verbs *gaosu* “tell,” *wen* “ask” and *laixin* “write to” are speech-act verbs. Since *shuo* is also a verb of saying, its co-occurrence with *gaosu*, *wen* or *laixin* thus form a reported speech frame. In other words, *shuo* tends to co-occur with speech-act verbs, forming serial verb constructions to signal the following phrase or clause as a reported speech.

Other studies (Chao 1968, Liu 1983) point out that in addition to co-occurring with speech act verbs, *shuo* also tends to co-occur with verbs of perception and cognition such as *juede* “think” or *ting* “hear”. In brief, the verb of saying *shuo* is likely to form a serial verb construction together with speech act verbs, perception verbs and cognition verbs. How they are different deserves more investigation.

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We all think PAT he also BE one person take ASP book novel  
*duo de na kan qu le.*  
 hide de there read go ASP

On the other hand, both Chao (1968) and Liu (1983) argue that complement clauses in Chinese usually follow matrix verbs of perception or of cognition such as *shuo* “say,” *xiang* “think,” *ting* “listen,” *kan* “look,” *juede* “think,” *yiwai* “thought” and so on.

### 2.3.3 *Shuo* as a Complementizer

*Shuo* as a verb of saying in Mandarin Chinese has grammaticalized into a complementizer, which has been documented by Huang (1982, 2003), Hwang (1998), Wang et al. (2000, 2003) and Su (2002, 2004).

#### 2.3.3.1 Huang's (1982) Account

Huang proposes that there is a close relation between mental verbs and verbs of saying. It is argued that since people think in words, people's thought can also be put into words and be presented in speech act. Therefore, due to the homogeneity of saying verbs and mental verbs, the verb of saying *shuo* can co-occur with mental verbs such as *xiang* 'think', *zhidao* 'know', *liaojie* 'understand', *huaiyi* 'doubt', *xiwang* 'hope' so as to perform the function of presenting the proposition of thoughts, as we can see in (67)-(70) (1982:173):

(67) *Wo xiang [shuo] ta bu hui lai.*

I think SHUO he not will come  
"I don't think he will come."

(68) *Wo zhidao [shuo] ta bu hui lai.*

I know SHUO he not will come  
"I know he will not come."

(69) *Wo liaojie [shuo] ta bu hui lai.*

I understand SHUO he not will come  
"I understand that he will not come."

(70) *Wo huaiyi [shuo] ta bu hui lai.*

I doubt SHUO he not will come  
"I doubt he will come."

The co-occurrence of mental verbs and *shuo* makes it behave like a complementizer. When *shuo* immediately follows mental verbs, what matters more to the speaker is the proposition expressed by the mental verbs instead of the act of saying. Therefore, *shuo* loses its verbal meaning and should be regarded as only a

conjunction or a punctuation (1982:176). In other words, as its content meaning is bleached, *shuo* fulfills the function of introducing the proposition expressed in the complement clause. Therefore, *shuo* can be viewed as a complementizer.

Huang concludes that the semantics of *shuo* has gone through from stages A to C in a diachronic order (1982:178):

- A. [*shuo*] as an autonomous and general verb of saying
- B. [*shuo*] forming a compound with other verbs of saying
- C. [*shuo*] attached to any mental verbs by analogy, because of deep similarity between the two classes of verbs.

The semantic change from Stage A to Stage C manifests the change of functions of *shuo*: Originally, it serves as a verb of saying to express meanings with words. Then, *shuo* can co-occur with other verbs of saying such as *gaosu* “tell” or *wen* “ask” to form serial verb constructions as discussed by Li and Thompson (1981). Next, when *shuo* co-occurs with mental verbs, it has lost the verbal reading of saying and thus functions more like a complementizer.

Although Huang has documented the occurrence of *shuo* as a complementizer, he also proposes two conditions in which *shuo* tends not to occur: when the subject is the third person and when the complement clause is preposed or otherwise deleted by a rule. Huang argues that *shuo* is usually not employed when the matrix subject is the third person in that the thought of other minds is less accessible compared with the first person’s. Since the speaker can never speak or think on behalf of the third person, he/she tends not to use *shuo* so as to sound more impersonal.

Furthermore, sentences in which complement clauses are preposed or deleted, as shown in (71) and (72), will result in ungrammatical sentences (1982:178).

(71) Preposing the complement clause

\*“*Shihuo le*” *ta zheme han shuo*  
on fire ASP he like this shout SHUO  
“ ‘It’s on fire’ shouted him.”

(72) Deleting the complement clause

\**wo xiangxin [shuo] ta buhui lai, ni ye ruci xiangxin shuo*  
I believe say he not come you also like this believe SHUO  
“I believe he will not come and you also believe so.”

In summary, Huang’s (1982) study argues that in the cases where *shuo* co-occurs with mental or cognitive verbs, *shuo* has lost its verbal content meaning and performs the function of linking the complement clause to the main clause, resembling a typical complementizer. Huang also attempts to account for the cases where *shuo* is not used as a complementizer. Most of the data presented in his study is constituted from constructed sentences. Therefore, for further study, more authentic language data is desired for the analysis on how *shuo* functions as a complementizer and the optionality of *shuo*.

### 2.3.3.2 Hwang’s (1998) Account

Hwang (1998) categorizes the complementizer uses of *shuo* into two types: a complementizer following informative or saying verbs and a complementizer following subordinators. Like Huang (1982), Hwang maintains that as a typical complementizer *shuo* can follow verbs of saying such as *jiang* “talk” or cognition verbs such as *renwei* “think”. Besides, Hwang proposes that *shuo* can also co-occur with subordinators such as *ruguo* “if,” *yaoshi* “if” or *jiaru* “assuming” to form adverbial conjunctions, as shown in the following examples (1998:579).

(73) *Suiran (shuo) xuesheng dao gongsi*  
though (SHUO) student arrive company  
“Although after students were employed...”



(74) *Biru* (shuo) *Rueishi*...  
for-instance (SHUO) Switzerland...  
“For example, Switzerland...”

Hwang is probably the first to carefully examine the adverbial use of *shuo* which co-occur with adverbial sentence connectives such as *ruguo* “if,” *yaoshi* “if,” *jiaru* “assuming” *suiran* “although” or adverbial discourse connective such as *biru* “for instance.” However, she has not provided an explanation on the function of *shuo* when co-occurring with adverbial connectives, or on how this function of *shuo* is related to the other functions of *shuo* including being as a verb of saying and being as a complementizer. Furthermore, it can be observed in Hwang’s examples that *shuo* can be optional when serving as an adverbial connective. The optionality of *shuo* either as a complementizer or as an adverbial connective deserves more investigation.

### 2.3.3.3 Wang et al.’s (2000, 2003) Account

Wang et al. (2000, 2003) conduct quantitative studies on the use of *shuo* in the BBS and conversation data. They observe that *shuo* is more likely to be employed as a complementizer in conversation (90.35%) than in BBS (11.04%). They argue that this contrast results from the fact that face-to-face conversations involve interlocutors in a turn-by-turn interaction in which negotiation and face (Brown and Levinson 1987) are engaged, whereas in BBS communication negotiation and face are not the main concern. This suggests that the occurrence of *shuo* as a complementizer is strongly associated with the concerns of negotiation and face engaged in conversations.

Wang et al. also find that as a complementizer, *shuo* can follow mental/cognitive verbs and speech-act/reportative verbs.

- (75) *wo xiang shuo CHANEL keneng hui bang ren xiuli ...*  
 I think SHUO CHANEL probably would help people fix  
 “I think that CHANEL can fix their products...”
- (76) *shanghui tade jinjiren bu shi chulai zhegshi shuo*  
 last time her agent not BE go out verify SHUO  
*ta yijin huaiyun le ma...*  
 she already pregnant ASP QUE  
 “Didn’t her agent verify that she was already pregnant the last time?”

Wang et al.’s studies differ from the previous ones in that they find that complementizer *shuo* can also co-occur with other types of verbs aside from mental/cognitive verbs and speech-act/reportative verbs as shown in (77).

- (77) *ta jiu faxian shuo aiya...*  
 he just find SHUO PAT  
 “She found that...”

In this sentence, *faxian* “find” is neither a speech act verb nor a mental verb. Therefore, it can be observed that the complementizer use of *shuo* has been extended to verbs other than speech act verbs and mental verbs.

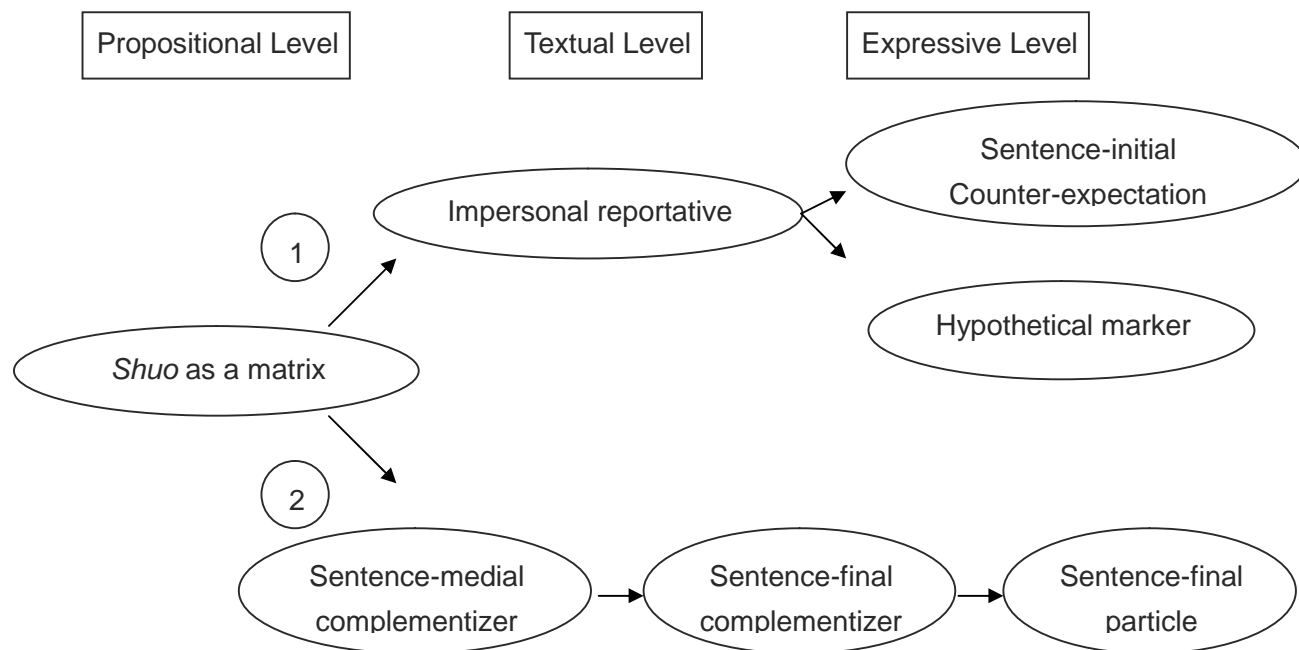
In addition, the co-occurrence of *shuo* with these types of verbs reveals different distributions in BBS and conversation data. Most of the tokens of *shuo* in conversation data follow mental verbs (64.08%) while most of the occurrences of *shuo* in BBS data follow speech-act verbs (73.68%).

Wang et al. maintain that when complementizer *shuo* is used, a sense of reported speech is derived. Their data shows that most matrix subjects co-occurring with *shuo* are in the third person, such as *ta(men) jiang shuo* “he (they) speak(s) say”. By reporting the proposition as stated by the third person, the speaker tries to avoid the responsibility of verifying the information in the proposition. In other words, *shuo* functions to indicate lower degree of certainty on the part of the speaker.

To summarize, Wang et al.'s studies have shown a tendency that as a complementizer, *shuo* not only goes with speech-act/reportative verbs and mental/cognitive verbs but also other types of verbs. Their quantitative analysis has proved the different use of *shuo* in different genres such as face-to-face conversations and BBS communication.

### 2.3.3.4 Su's (2002, 2004) Account

Many linguists have attempted to examine the grammaticalization path of the verbs of saying in Mandarin Chinese and in its dialects. Chui (1994) probes into the grammaticalization of the verb of saying *wa* in Cantonese. Cheng (1997) and Chang (1998) investigate the grammaticalization path of the verb of saying *kong* in Taiwanese. Su (2002, 2004) focuses on the grammaticalization of *shuo* and has provided two models of grammaticalization path at three levels:



Along the first path, *shuo*, as a verb, originally functions to tell something or talk about something with utterances. In the second step of Path I, the hearsay function of

*shuo* is developed and it behaves like an impersonal reportative marker as termed by Chang (1998). The following example manifests this function of *shuo* (2002:79).

(78) *wo ting renjia shuo guo de, shuo ni you ge nuer*  
 I hear people SHUO ASP POSS SHUO you have GE daughter  
 “I heard people say it is said that you have a daughter.”

There are two choices for Step 3 along the first grammaticalization path. The first type of Step 3 signals the counter-expectation meaning of sentence-initial *shuo*. When the speaker lacks direct evidence and commitment to the information in the utterance, he/she tends to drop the subject identity, leaving *shuo* positioned sentence-initially. Therefore, this type of *shuo* is reanalyzed as a sentence-initial particle indicating counter-expectation as illustrated in (79).

(79) *ba geren chouli chulai*  
 hold individual draw out  
*gei ta renquan gei ta baozhang*  
 give he human right give he insurance  
*shuo shi renmin zuo zhu*  
 SHUO BE people make master  
 “They isolate individuals, give them human right and insurance. It is said to make people the master of the country.”

(Su 2002:79)

The second type of Step 3 serves as a hypothetical *shuo*. Because the information obtained through speech is not reliable, the reading of hypotheticality is thus yielded. In this case, *shuo* can co-occur with hypothetical markers such as *ruguo* “if” as shown below (2002:80):

(80) *ruguo (shuo), wo lai le jiu daibiao wode jingyi...*  
 if SHUO I come ASP just represent my respect  
 “If my coming represents my respect...”

The other grammaticalization path of *shuo* explains how verb of saying *shuo* develops into a sentence-medial complementizer, a sentence-final complementizer and then a sentence-final particle. At the first step, *shuo* functions as a saying verb. Then it evolves from a saying verb to a sentence-medial complementizer following saying verbs and mental verbs, as exemplified below:

(81) *ni hen keneng bu hui zai jianchi shuo*  
 you very possible not will again insist SHUO  
*zhexie dongxi pingdanwuqi le*  
 these things boring ASP  
 “You may not again insist that these things are boring.”

(Su 2002:80)

Then, resembling the use of *kong* in Taiwanese, *shuo* has grammaticalized into a sentence-final complementizer which incorporates more subjectivity into its meaning as shown in (82) (2002:80):

(82) B: *Dui a!*  
 yes PAT  
*Wo juede Xushuyuan hao kelian shuo...*  
 I feel Xushuyuan good pathetic SHUO  
 “Yes! I feel that Xushuyuan is very pathetic.”

The last step of Path II indicates that a sentence-final complementizer is likely to develop into a sentence-final particle to express epistemicity.

Su (2002, 2004) has conducted a fairly thorough investigation on the grammaticalization paths of *shuo* at propositional level, textual level and expressive level. Unlike the past studies, she has elaborated the functions of *shuo* at the textual level and the expressive level and reports that *shuo* in different positions of a sentence performs different epistemic functions. Furthermore, she also points out the

correlation between conditional conjunction *ruguo* and *shuo*. However, she does not attempt to examine the data where *shuo* is used together with other adverbial conjunctions such as *suiran* “though,” *biru* “for example,” *souyi* “so,” *jiushi* “that is.” She merely speculates that these adverbial conjunctions belong to lexicalized usages (2002:81) without further examples or data to support her claim. Hence, how *shuo* is related to these adverbial connectives should be further studied.

### 2.3.3.5 Huang’s (2003) Account

Huang (2003) conducts a corpus study to investigate the complementation structure in Mandarin Chinese and also to examine the use of *shuo* as a complementizer. He observes that there are in total 38 matrix verb types which take complement clauses with or without complementizer *shuo*. Huang particularly focuses on the top ten matrix verbs as shown in the following table (2003:432):

**Table 1: Matrix verbs and their occurrences**

| Rank order                                      | Occurrence  | Verb type                |
|---|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>juede</i> ‘fee, think’                    | 223 (38.6%) | epistemic                |
| 2. <i>zhidao</i> ‘know’                         | 92 (15.9%)  | epistemic                |
| 3. <i>kan</i> ‘see (that); think’               | 83 (14.3%)  | epistemic;<br>evidential |
| 4. <i>xiang</i> ‘think; think about; intend to’ | 77 (13.3%)  | epistemic;<br>deontic    |
| 5. <i>xiaode</i> ‘understand’                   | 25 (4.3%)   | epistemic                |
| 6. <i>xiwang</i> ‘hope’                         | 22 (3.8%)   | deontic                  |
| 7. <i>wen</i> ‘ask’                             | 20 (3.4%)   | speech act               |
| 8. <i>yiwwei</i> ‘thought’                      | 17 (2.9%)   | epistemic                |
| 9. <i>faxian</i> ‘find out’                     | 11 (1.9%)   | epistemic                |
| 10. <i>jide</i> ‘remember’                      | 6 (1%)      | epistemic                |

Although there are frequent entries of matrix verbs which are followed by complement clauses, the proportion of matrix verbs co-occurring with *shuo* seems to

be very low as shown in Table 2 (2003:438).

**Table 2: Percentages of matrix verbs occurring with the linker *shuo***

| Verb                 | Percentage    |
|----------------------|---------------|
| <i>xiang + shuo</i>  | 51.9% (40/77) |
| <i>faxian + shuo</i> | 9.1% (1/11)   |
| <i>xiwang + shuo</i> | 9.1% (2/22)   |
| <i>yiwei + shuo</i>  | 5.8% (1/17)   |
| <i>juede + shuo</i>  | 4.4% (10/223) |
| <i>xiaode + shuo</i> | 3.7% (1/27)   |
| <i>zhidao + shuo</i> | 3.4% (3/92)   |
| <i>kan + shuo</i>    | 0%            |

Table 2 shows that complementizer *shuo* does not frequently co-occur with matrix verbs (lower than 9.1%) except for the mental verb *xiang* (51.9%). Huang argues that *xiang* is very frequently followed by complementizer *shuo* when *xiang* is interpreted as a deontic indicator rather than an epistemic indicator. Huang further argues that the high frequency of co-occurrence between *xiang* and *shuo* is due to the fact that *xiang* is the most canonical mental verb among the top ten matrix predicates. Since there exists high homogeneity between saying verbs and mental verbs, the most typical mental verb *xiang* therefore is most likely to co-occur with *shuo*, and therefore “*xiang* is the only verb in strong collocation with *shuo*” (2003:438). The co-occurrence rate between *shuo* and *xiwang* is merely 9.1% in contrast to that between *shuo* and *xiang* (51.9%).

In addition, based on Frajzyngier’s (1991) classification of *de dicto* and *de re* complementizers, Huang also proposes that Chinese complementizer *shuo* should be better understood as a *de dicto* marker. The reference of the complement clause following *shuo* “is made to the elements of speech rather than to the elements of reality” (2003:438). That is to say, the presence of *shuo* indicates the following

complement as belonging to the domain of *de dicto* whereas the absence of *shuo* means that the complement belongs to the domain of *de re*.

Huang (2002) uses corpus data to investigate Chinese complementation structure and also to account for the optionality of complementizer *shuo*. However, there is still room for more discussion on his findings. First of all, it seems questionable to attribute the high frequency of co-occurrence between *shuo* and *xiang* to the deontic interpretation of *xiang* and to the claim that *xiang* is the most canonical mental verb because another deontic mental verb *xiwang* “hope” in his data does not co-occur with *shuo* very frequently. In fact, Huang’s proposal that complementizer *shuo* often occurs with deontic *xiang* counters Frajzyngier and Jasperson’s (1991) claim that *de dicto* complementizers in numerous languages are usually used to mark non-deontic complement of saying verbs as illustrated in (83), in which the English *de dicto* complementizer *that* co-occurs with non-deontic (epistemic) verb of saying *claim*.

(83) Harold claimed *that* the apartment wasn’t clean.

Since Chinese complementizer *shuo* is deemed as a *de dicto* complementizer by Huang (2003), it is contradictory to claim that *shuo* very frequently follows deontic *xiang*. Moreover, as the current study will later prove, Chinese complementizer *shuo* is more likely to co-occur with non-deontic (epistemic) *xiang*, as shown in the following example, in which *xiang* has an epistemic interpretation.

(84) *ta jiu shuo Xiao Hou      nicheng    hen    haoxiao*  
 he just SHUO small monkey    nickname very interesting  
*wo jiu shuo o*  
 I just SHUO PAT  
*wo **xiang shuo** bu zhidao ni    youmeiyou      huan      a*  
 I think SHUO not know you have-not-have change PAT  
*haishi zenyang*



or how

“He just said that the nickname ‘Small Monkey’ is very funny. Then I said ‘Well’. Then I thought I didn’t know whether you have changed it or what.”

Furthermore, what should also be discussed regards Huang’s claim that the high co-occurrence between *shuo* and *xiang* results from the fact that *xiang* is the most canonical mental verb. If *shuo* is more likely to follow mental matrix verbs, it should also often go with other mental verbs such as *juede* “think; feel” or *zhidao* “know”. It seems questionable to claim that *xiang* is “the most canonical” mental verb while others are not.

What’s also noteworthy is that unlike some previous studies on *shuo*, Huang does not take the factor of interaction in conversations into account although his study is primarily based on the corpus of conversational data. Most of his explanation on Chinese complementation structure and matrix predicates centers around the semantics of matrix predicates. It would be much more reasonable to take the conversational or discoursal factors into consideration in discussing the function of *shuo* as a complementizer since all of the data examined in his study is adopted from conversations.

### 2.3.4 *Shuo* as an Expressive Marker

Previous studies (Cheng 1997, Hwang 1998, Wang et al. 2000, 2003, Su 2002, 2004) have attempted to examine how *shuo* has grammaticalized into an expressive marker including a sentence particle or a discourse marker based on the general tendencies of semantic change in grammaticalization proposed by Traugott (1982, 1989).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Traugott (1982, 1989) proposes three general tendencies of semantic change as illustrated below:  
Tendency I: Meanings based in the external described situation > meanings based in the internal (evaluative/perceptual/cognitive) described situation.  
Tendency II: Meanings based in the external or internal described situation > meanings based in the

Hwang (1998), Wang et al. (2000, 2003) and Su (2002, 2004) base their studies on the above Traugott's proposal to discuss the grammaticalization path of *shuo*. On the basis of Tendency I, *shuo* derives from a verb of utterance which indicates an external action of uttering to a verb of cognition which describes the internal state of thought. This semantic change is also confirmed by the account of metaphorical extension that SPEECH IS THOUGHT (Lord 1993)<sup>12</sup>. Based on Tendency II, *shuo* develops from a cognitive verb to a complementizer to serve the textual function to introduce complements. Furthermore, based on Tendency III, the meaning of *shuo* becomes more dependent on the speaker's attitude or belief and thus *shuo* changes from a complementizer into a sentence particle which signals subjectivity and epistemicity.

Previous studies have shown that *shuo* can be positioned sentence-initially and sentence-finally to mark different epistemic functions. Sentence-initial *shuo* is used to report the information the speaker hear from an unreliable source, which is usually omitted and leaves *shuo* positioned sentence-initially. By doing so, the speaker is less willing to be committed to the asserted information. Therefore, sentence-initial *shuo* carries a hear-say meaning and behaves like a discourse marker, as illustrated below (Wang et al. 2004:469):

(85) *zuotian kan wan Guanlangashou hou,*  
 yesterday watch finish Slam dunk after  
*shuo cong 9/9 ri qi yao bo jia you jian gou...*  
 SHUO from 9/9 day since want show family have bad dog  
 "After watching 'Slam dunk' yesterday, it is said that 'The Bad Dog in Our Family' will take its place and will be shown on Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>."

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textual and metalinguistic situation.

Tendency III: Meanings tend to become increasingly based in the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition.

<sup>12</sup> Lord (1993) maintains that the distance between saying and thinking is very small and that the words expressed in saying can be correspondent to the words in thought.

Sentence-final *shuo* can either serve as a marker of counter-expectation or an intensifier marker to convey the speaker's emotion. The reading of counter-expectation is derived from the pragmatic inferencing from the hearsay function of *shuo*. When the speaker lacks evidence to verify the information carried in the hearsay speech act, the information may not actually exist in the speaker's expectation, as we can see in (86) (Wang et al. 2003:472).

- (86) *dui a! ta guanggao de yiangzi yidian dou bu haokan!*  
 Right PAT she advertisement DE manner a little all not good-looking  
*yidian dou bu xiang ta shuo*  
 A little all not like she SHUO  
 "Right! She doesn't look as good as she does in that new advertisement! She is not like herself at all *shuo*."

The other expressive function of sentence-final *shuo* as documented by Wang et al. (2000, 2003) is to intensify the speaker's assertion. This phenomenon is particularly manifested in BBS interaction in that this function serves as a compensation for facial expressions which can be employed in face-to-face conversation. Since it is difficult to express emotion in BBS communication, *shuo* is thus used as an emotional marker to reinforce the speaker's assertion, as shown below:

- (87) *Ha Xiaowen...zhende momingqimiao shuo...he...*  
 Ha Xiaowen...really ridiculous SHUO oh  
*gao bu qingchu la...gaoxiao... gaoguai... gaopi*  
 make not clear PAT make fun of be mischievous fart  
 "Ha Xiaowen is very ridiculous *shuo*. He always makes fun of others and is always mischievous."

In summary, the findings presented in prior studies (Cheng 1997, Hwang 1998, Wang et al. 2000, 2003, Su 2002, 2004) have proved that *shuo* has grammaticalized to serve expressive functions.

## 2.4 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the previous studies on the investigation of complementation structure and complementizers in different languages including *that* in English and *shuo* in Chinese. Many linguists maintain that complementizer *that* differs from the other complementizers in English in that as different complementizers are used, different interpretations of the complement are thus yielded. In addition to the studies on English complementizers, a number of studies are conducted to examine complementizers which evolve from verbs of saying in other languages. It is observed that the grammaticalization path of verbs of saying can be separated into several stages in which these verbs perform different functions. Moreover, the past studies on Chinese have examined how the saying verb *shuo* has grammaticalized from a verb of saying, to a part of a serial verb construction, to a complementizer and to an expressive marker.

The finding obtained from the prior studies all point to the direction that the choice of different complementizers does signal different semantic information. Along this line, whether the use of complementizer *shuo* in Mandarin Chinese can also perform different functions deserves further investigation. It has been claimed that the occurrence and the non-occurrence Chinese complementizer *shuo* do not make any difference. However, little study has attempted to focus on the functions performed by Chinese complementizer *shuo*. Therefore, this study aims to look into what discourse functions complementizer *shuo* performs.