

Interclausal Anaphora in Chinese Written Corpus : The Case of Conditionals

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First observed by Chao (1968), the fronting of the subject before the subordinate conjunction in Chinese appears to be a language-specific phenomenon such as : Wo suiran xiang fa cai, keshi bu gan mao xian. « I although want to get rich, yet don't dare to take risks. » In this talk, I first presents a semantic analysis with intention to evaluate different theoretical approaches and then a corpus approach with qualified sentences containing 25 conditional subordinated, randomly generated from the literature genre and the newspaper genre of the Center for Chinese Linguistics corpus (CCL). The statistical findings suggest that other things being equal, zero anaphora would be the norm of anaphoric reference in the Coreference StructureB pattern (Structure B is with NP-Conj. form in subordinate clause and not more so in the Coreference) StructureA pattern (Structure A is with Conj.- NP form in subordinate clause) ; most zero anaphora refer to a pronoun instead of a name in the CA pattern, while stylistic factors can be identified in some exceptional cases. The reason why structure comes first is related to the nature of topic and discourse.