The Left Periphery of Nominal Expressions: Perspective Phrase in Mandarin Chinese*

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Mandarin Chinese utilizes the morpheme qian ‘front’ in the \([qian + \text{Num} + \text{Cl} + \text{N}]\) sequence (henceforth the qian phrase) to express the counterpart of the English phrase the first three prime ministers. The qian phrase is a deictic expression which may assume two different readings expressing ‘absolute’ and ‘relative’ points of view. I therefore argue that qian possesses a [Perspective] feature which introduces a Point-of-View variable (henceforth POV), which may be bound by the speaker or by an internal protagonist. If the POV variable is bound by the speaker, it results in a relative reading; if it is bound by an internal protagonist, it returns an absolute reading. This analysis suggests that nominal phrases are parallel to clauses in having a syntactic projection with pragmatically relevant features (i.e. the Perspective Phrase).

Key words: DP periphery, deictic, left periphery, perspective phrase

1. Introduction

The syntax and semantics of nominal expressions in Mandarin Chinese have been widely studied (cf. Cheng & Sybesma (1998, 1999, 2005), Chierchia (1998), Li (1998, 1999, 2009), Tang (1990) among many others). Most of the discussions focus on bare noun phrases in (1) or number expressions in the form \([\text{Num} + \text{Cl} + \text{N}]\) (shown in (2)). The expression with the morpheme qian in the \([qian + \text{Num} + \text{Cl} + \text{N}]\) sequence (henceforth the qian phrase) in (3) which expresses the counterpart of the English phrase the first three prime ministers is less discussed.\(^1\)

(1) shu book
(2) liu-ben shu six-CL book ‘six books’

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\(^1\) Abbreviations used in this paper include: ASP: aspect marker, CL: classifier, DE: marker for modifying genitive phrases, and DEM: demonstrative.
It is worthwhile to note that the qian phrase is more complex than its English counterpart, since it may assume two different readings expressing the ‘absolute’ and ‘relative’ points of view under Kuno & Kaburaki’s (1977) empathy theory.² Put more clearly, the qian phrase is a deictic expression which is sensitive to variations in the context in which it is uttered. For example, if the speaker stands in the “shoes” of the U.K., the qian phrase denotes the first three prime ministers: Robert Walpole, Spencer Compton and Henry Pelham, as indicated in (3a). This interpretation will not change when the qian phrase is used by different speakers; we thus call it an absolute reading. Alternatively, if the speaker stands in his/her own “shoes”, the qian phrase refers to the previous three prime ministers relative to the one at the speech time. For instance, the incumbent the U.K. prime minister in 2013 is David Cameron, and the qian phrase refers to the previous three prime ministers: John Major, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, as shown in (3b). In this case, the denotation of the qian phrase is contingent on the speech time, and thus may refer to different prime ministers when used by different speakers; we therefore call it a relative reading.

The ambiguity of the qian phrase raises the following questions: (A) what are the syntactic and semantic properties of the morpheme qian; (B) how does the configuration of nominal expressions in Mandarin Chinese accommodate the characteristics of the morpheme qian? Any theory about nominal expressions should provide an answer to the above questions.

This paper concerns the fine structure of nominal expressions, especially in the

² Under the Empathy Perspective, discussed in Kuno (1972, 1987) and Kuno & Kaburaki (1977), when a speaker describes an event, he or she can choose various “camera angles.” To phrase it differently, a speaker can represent his/her attitude towards the participants involved in a number of different ways. For instance, let us assume the following situation: a man named John hits his brother Bill. The speaker can describe this situation in the following ways:

(i) a. Then John hit Bill. [Kuno (1987)]
b. Then John hit his brother.
c. Then Bill’s brother hit him.

The above sentences share the same logical content, but they differ from each other with respect to where the speaker has placed himself/herself. Like a film director shooting a scene, speakers can choose various “camera angles” with respect to the events and states that their sentences are intended to describe. The film director can set the camera equidistant from John and Bill, and the scene will be represented objectively, with the director taking a detached view, as illustrated in (ia). Alternatively, the director can, for example, place the camera closer to John than to Bill, and the scene will be shown from the point of view of John, as in (ib). Finally, the director can place the camera closer to Bill than to John, and the scene will be represented from the standpoint of Bill, as shown in (ic).
phrase \([qian + \text{Num} + \text{Cl} + \text{N}]\). The interpretation of this construction is sensitive to discourse factors such as perspective and reference point. I will therefore argue that \(qian\) possesses a [Perspective] feature and projects a Perspective Phrase located right under DP in Mandarin Chinese nominal phrases (cf. Speas (2004), Nishigauchi (1999), Liu (2007), Fillmore (1982)).

The organization of this paper is as follows. Section 2 is devoted to the syntax and semantics of the \(qian\) phrase in Mandarin Chinese; this discussion will help to crystallize the questions this paper addresses. In Section 3, some previous literature on nominals will be reviewed, and Section 4 will introduce some background on logophors as a preliminary to the main analysis. Section 5 presents my proposal. Section 6 brings forth inter and intra-linguistic evidence for syntactic projections with pragmatically relevant features. Finally, concluding remarks are presented in Section 7.

2. Characteristics of the \(qian\) phrase
2.1. Syntactic properties of the \(qian\) phrase

In comparing \(qian\) phrases with number expressions, some significant contrasts between the two types of phrases can be highlighted. First, \(qian\) phrases can occur freely in subject positions or topic positions, as indicated in (4); however, this is not possible for number expressions, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (5) (cf. Li (1998)).

\[(4)\]
\[
\text{a. } Qian \ liu-ge \ xuesheng \ qu-guo \ Taipei.
\]
\[
\text{qian} \ six-\text{CL} \ \text{student} \ \text{go-ASP} \ \text{Taipei}
\]
\[\text{‘The first six students have the experience of going to Taipei.’} \]
\[\text{‘The previous six students have the experience of going to Taipei.’} \]
\[
\text{b. } Qian \ liu-ge \ xuesheng, \ wo \ zhidao \ qu-guo \ Taipei.
\]
\[
\text{qian} \ six-\text{CL} \ \text{student} \ \text{I} \ \text{know} \ \text{go-ASP} \ \text{Taipei}
\]
\[\text{‘The first six students, I know they have the experience of going to Taipei.’} \]
\[\text{‘The previous six students, I know they have the experience of going to Taipei.’} \]

\[(5)\]
\[
\text{a. } *Liu-ge \ xuesheng \ qu-guo \ Taipei.
\]
\[
\text{six-\text{CL} \ \text{student} \ \text{go-ASP} \ \text{Taipei}}
\]
\[\text{‘Six students have the experience of going to Taipei.’} \]
\[
\text{b. } *Liu-ge \ xuesheng, \ wo \ zhidao \ qu-guo \ Taipei.
\]
\[
\text{six-\text{CL} \ \text{student} \ \text{I} \ \text{know} \ \text{go-ASP} \ \text{Taipei}}
\]
\[\text{‘There are six students; I know they have the experience of going to Taipei.’} \]
It is well-known that subject or topic positions only allow specific nominal expressions (cf. Chao (1968), Tsai (2001), among many others). The grammatical contrast between (4) and (5) indicates that the qian phrase cannot be a nonspecific expression.

Second, qian phrases cannot occur in you ‘have’ existential sentences, lai ‘come’ sentences, or sentences with secondary predicates, as indicated by the ungrammaticalities in (6a)-(8a); number expressions, however, are grammatical in all of these environments, as shown in (6b)-(8b) (cf. Huang (1987), Zhang (2006)).

   village-inside have qian three-CL doctor
   ‘In the village there are the first three doctors.’

b. Cunzi-li you san-ge yisheng.
   village-inside have three-CL doctor
   ‘In the village there are three doctors.’

   village-inside come-ASP qian three-CL doctor
   ‘There come the first three doctors in the village.’

b. Cunzi-li lai-le san-ge yisheng.
   village-inside come-ASP three-CL doctor
   ‘There come three doctors in the village.’

(8) a. *Zhangsan jiao-guo qian san-ge xuesheng
   Zhangsan teach-ASP qian three-CL student
   hen congming.
   very clever
   ‘Zhangsan has the experience of teaching the first three students who are very clever.’

b. Zhangsan jiao-guo san-ge xuesheng hen congming.
   Zhangsan teach-ASP three-CL student very clever
   ‘Zhangsan has the experience of teaching three students who are very clever.’

According to Huang (1987), the nominal expression has only an indefinite and nonspecific reading, if it is after you ‘have’ existential sentences or lai ‘come’ sentences ((6b)-(7b), respectively). That the qian phrase cannot occur in the above two sentences can be expected because it does not denote a nonspecific reading. In terms of the secondary predicate construction in (8b), this requires the noun phrase behind the verb to be indefinite but specific. Since the qian phrase cannot appear in
sentences with secondary predicates, it further indicates that the *qian* phrase denotes a
definite reading.

Further evidence showing the dissimilarity between *qian* phrases and number
expressions can be demonstrated by two tests: co-reference and binding.

(9) a. **Qian san-ge ren** tai-bu-dong zhe-jia gangqin.
qian three-CL person lift-not-move this-CL piano
Tamen de liliang tai xiao.
they DE strength too small
‘The first three persons cannot lift up this piano. Their strength is too weak.’
‘The previous three persons cannot lift up this piano. Their strength is too weak.’

three-CL person lift-not-move this-CL piano
Tamen de liliang tai xiao.
they DE strength too small
‘Three people cannot lift up this piano. Their strength is too weak.’

(10) a. **Zhangsan zhidao qian san-ge ren** yiding
Zhangsan know qian three-CL person certainly
ban-de-dong zijij de gangqin.
move-able-move self’s DE piano
‘Zhangsan knows that the first three persons certainly can move self’s/selves’ piano(s).’
‘Zhangsan knows that the previous three persons certainly can move self’s/selves’ piano(s).’

b. **Zhangsan zhidao san-ge ren** yiding
Zhangsan know three-CL person certainly
ban-de-dong zijj de gangqin.
move-able-move self’s DE piano
‘Zhangsan knows that three people certainly can move self’s piano.’

Simply put, a *qian* phrase in a subject position denotes definite individuals, and
thus is able to co-refer with or bind a pronoun ((9a) and (10a), respectively). In
contrast, number expressions in this position cannot co-refer with or bind pronouns, as
shown by (9b) and (10b), because they do not refer to entities or individuals in the
discourse (cf. Li (1998)).

In terms of semantics, the observation made in Section 1 that the *qian* phrase may
assume two alternate readings denoting separate viewpoints has not been accounted
for. I shall explore the interpretation of the *qian* phrase in the following section.

2.2. Semantic properties of the *qian* phrase

On syntactic grounds, the *qian* phrase denotes a definite reading. What interests us most is that the denotations of the *qian* phrase have many possibilities. Some *qian* phrases may be ambiguous between an absolute reading and a relative reading, while other *qian* phrases may have only one available interpretation. As shown in Section 1 (cf. (3)), the *qian* phrase in (11) could be ambiguous between an absolute and a relative reading:

(11) Qian san-wei shouxiang dou shi nanxing.
    *qian* three-CL prime.minister all be male
    a. ‘The first three prime ministers are all male.’ [absolute]
    b. ‘The previous three prime ministers are all male.’ [relative]

Consider the *qian* phrase in (12), only an absolute reading is possible if an internal protagonist denoted by the external argument of the nominal constituent is provided.

(12) Yingguo qian san-wei shouxiang dou shi nanxing. [absolute]
    U.K. *qian* three-CL prime.minister all be male
    ‘The first three prime ministers of the U.K. are all male.’

Conversely, the *qian* phrase can denote only a relative reading if the identity of the internal protagonist of the nominal phrase is unclear or such an entity does not exist.

(13) Qian san-tian hen leng. [relative]
    *qian* three-day very cold
    ‘The previous three days were very cold.’

If the speaker is spatio-temporally dissociated from the internal protagonist within the nominal phrase, the *qian* phrase yields an absolute reading. For example, in the context of viewing a photo, (14) describes a situation in which *Zhangsan* likes the first three players in the picture.

(14) Zhangsan xihuan zhaopian zhong qian san-ge xuanshou.
    *Zhangsan* like picture inside *qian* three-CL player
    ‘Zhangsan likes the first three players in the picture.’
If the relationship between the arguments of the nominal expression is “continuous” in the sense that it is not subject to voluntary terminations – as is the case with the relationship between parents and children in (15), we get only an absolute reading. This can be illustrated by the following contrast:

(15) Zhangsan qian san-ge nuer dou zhu zai Taipei. [absolute]
Zhangsan qian three-CL daughter all live in Taipei
‘The first three daughters of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’

(16) Zhangsan qian san-ge nupengyou dou zhu zai Taipei. [ambiguous]
Zhangsan qian three-CL girlfriend all live in Taipei
a. ‘The first three girlfriends of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’
b. ‘The previous three girlfriends of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’

Finally, if the number in the sequence [qian + Num + Cl + N] is yi ‘one’, the qian phrase denotes only a relative meaning.

(17) Zhangsan qian yi-ge nupengyou zhu zai Taipei. [relative]
Zhangsan qian one-CL girlfriend live in Taipei
‘The previous girlfriend of Zhangsan lives in Taipei.’

In light of the above observations, we can characterize the interpretation of the qian phrase in Mandarin Chinese as follows. On the one hand, the qian phrase takes an absolute reading in the following cases: (a) an internal protagonist is provided; (b) the speaker is dissociated from an internal protagonist spatio-temporally; (c) the relationship between the arguments of the nominal expression is perpetual. On the other hand, the qian phrase gives rise to a relative reading if no internal protagonist is available within the nominal phrase, or if the number in the [qian + Num + Cl + N] sequence is yi ‘one’.

2.3. Insufficiency of pure lexical ambiguity analysis

One may not attribute the ambiguity of the qian phrase to the distinction of point-of-view holders, i.e. the speaker or an internal protagonist. Instead, it may be argued that the two possible readings of the qian phrase are derived from the lexical ambiguity of the morpheme qian, as evidenced by the case that the relative qian and the absolute qian can be phonological reductions of different phrases, zui-qian (the earliest) and zhi-qian (the earlier).3 If we take the pure lexical approach to account for

3 Thanks to one anonymous reviewer for raising this question.
the characteristics of the *qian* phrase, we may not be able to explain the contrast between (18)-(19) and (20)-(21), respectively.

(18) Zhangsan *qian* san-ge nupengyou dou zhu zai Taipei. [ambiguous]
   Zhangsan *qian* three-CL girlfriend all live in Taipei
   a. ‘The first three girlfriends of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’
   b. ‘The previous three girlfriends of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’

(19) Zhangsan zeng zeng zeng zufu *qian* san-ge
    Zhangsan grand grand grand grandfather *qian* three-CL
    nupengyou dou zhu zai Taipei. [absolute]
    girlfriend all live in Taipei
    ‘The first three girlfriends of Zhangsan’s great-great-great-grandfather all lived in Taipei.’

(20) Qian san-tian hen leng. [relative]
    *qian* three-day very cold
    ‘The previous three days were very cold.’

(21) Zhe ge yue *qian* san-tian hen leng. [absolute]
    this CL month *qian* three-day very cold
    ‘The first three days of this month were very cold.’

Simply put, (18)-(19) differ only with respect to the noun phrase *Zhangsan* and *Zhangsan’s great-great-great-grandfather*; it is unclear why (18) is ambiguous, but only an absolute reading is possible in (19). As for the contrast between (20)-(21), it is also unclear why the addition of the noun phrase *zhe ge yue* “this month” in (21) changes the reading of (20).

In addition, if the pure lexical approach is adopted, the question about the syntactic position of the morpheme *qian* is yet to be answered. As will be shown in Section 3, projections like DP, S pecificity)P cannot accommodate the properties of the *qian* phrase. In what follows, I shall discuss how the semantics of the *qian* phrase can be mapped to its syntactic structure. Before the discussion of my proposal, it would be instructive to review current analyses of the structures of nominals in Chinese.

3. Literature review

In the literature, much work has been done to derive the architecture of nominal expressions in Chinese, and this section reviews two previous analyses related to the current discussion. The first one is by Li (1999, 2009), who provides a structure for
complicated nominal expressions. The second one is by Sybesma & Sio (2008), who focus on the referential properties of nominal phrases.

3.1. Li (1999, 2009)

Li (1999) proposes that both classifiers and numbers head an independent projection. Classifiers stay in a Cl head position while numbers stay in [Spec, NumP]. She also argues for the projection of DP, and that the morpheme *men* should be analyzed as a plural morpheme realized as an element in D. This proposal is exemplified by (22), which has (23) as its syntactic structure.

(22) tamen san-ge xuesheng
they three-CL student
‘them three students’

(23) [DP[D[1 tamen[N_num san [Num[N_num CI P[Cl[ge[NP[N[N xuesheng ]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]
adjointed to D, and the name is in Spec of DP.

Let’s see whether Li’s (1999, 2009) proposal can account for the characteristics of the *qian* phrase under consideration, illustrated again in (26).

(26) qian san-wei shouxiang
    qian three-CL prime.minister
a. ‘the first three prime ministers’ [absolute]
b. ‘the previous three prime ministers’ [relative]

As shown in the previous section, the *qian* phrase denotes a definite reading, so one may submit that the morpheme *qian* stays in the D head. From this view, we should be able to identify the reference of the *qian* phrase. However, *contra* our prediction, the true denotation of the *qian* phrase depends on the identity of the point-of-view holders. In addition, the ambiguity of the *qian* phrase in (26) cannot be properly represented by the structure in (25) proposed by Li (2009). Next, I shall review the proposal made by Sybesma & Sio (2008).

### 3.2. Sybesma & Sio (2008)

Sybesma & Sio (2008) argue against the existence of DP projection in Mandarin Chinese along the lines of Cheng & Sybesma (1999). Instead, they suggest that Chinese has two D-type elements related to the referential properties of the nominal domain: SP and DetP, adopting the views presented in Szabolcsi (1994) and Hoekstra & Hyams (1996).

(27) [SP[′s [NumP[Num′[CL′[CL[DetP[Det′[Det[NP[N′[N ]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]

Here, the element in the head of the topmost SP is the subordinator, which licenses the noun phrase to be an argument; the lower D-type layer, DetP, has certain deictic properties. Sybesma & Sio (2008) indicate that the demonstrative is base-generated in [Spec, DetP] and then moves to [Spec, SP], which is a Specificity layer located immediately above NumP (cf. Sio (2006)). Sybesma & Sio (2008) further assume that numeral stays in a head Num position. This proposal can be employed to account for (28), as illustrated by (29).

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5 The data considered in this paper are mainly drawn from Mandarin Chinese. Sybesma & Sio (2008) include a wider range of data; “Chinese” in their paper refers to the group of languages belonging to the Sinitic language.
Let us then turn to the [qian + Num + Cl + N] phrase in Mandarin Chinese. It seems that the morpheme qian, like the demonstrative, can turn a noun phrase (i.e. the number expression san-ge xuesheng) into an argument, as shown below.\(^6\)

\[(30)\]  
\[\text{San-ge xuesheng qu-guo Meiguo.}\]  
\begin{align*}  
\text{three-CL student go-ASP America}  \\
\text{‘Three students have the experience of going to America.’}  
\end{align*}

b. Zhe san-ge xuesheng qu-guo Meiguo.  
\begin{align*}  
\text{DEM three-CL student go-ASP America}  \\
\text{‘These three students have the experience of going to America.’}  
\end{align*}

c. Qian san-ge xuesheng qu-guo Meiguo.  
\begin{align*}  
\text{qian three-CL student go-ASP America}  \\
\text{a. ‘The first three students have the experience of going to America.’}  \\
\text{b. ‘The previous three students have the experience of going to America.’}  
\end{align*}

Given this similarity between demonstratives and qian, one may assume along the
lines of Szabolcsi (1994), Hoekstra & Hyams (1996), and Sybesma & Sio (2008), that
the morpheme qian is base-generated in [Spec, DetP] and moves to [Spec, SP].
However, this analysis immediately encounters the following problems.

First, the ambiguity of the qian phrase cannot be explained, as shown below:

(31) Qian san-wei shouxiang dou shi nanxing.
qian three-CL prime.minister all be male
a. ‘The first three prime ministers are all male.’ [absolute]
b. ‘The previous three prime ministers are all male.’ [relative]

Neither a SP or a DetP can reflect the fact that the denotation of the qian phrase is
affected by the point-of-view holder.

In addition to this problem, there is another closely related fact that is also
impossible to explain under the current analysis: when an internal protagonist Yingguo
‘the U.K.’ is available, only the absolute reading of the qian phrase is possible, as
exemplified by (32).

(32) Yingguo qian san-wei shouxiang dou shi nanxing. [absolute]
U.K. qian three-CL prime.minister all be male
‘The first three prime ministers of the U.K. are all male.’

In brief, the syntactic projection of SP, provided by Sybesma & Sio (2008), is not
able to reflect or account for the properties of the qian phrase.

Although Li’s (1999, 2009) and Sybesma & Sio’s (2008) analyses are both
insightful, the above discussion has shown that neither analysis can accommodate
either the intrinsic characteristics of the qian phrase, such as the functions of the
morpheme qian, or the ambiguity of the qian phrase. In what follows, therefore, I will
attempt to provide my own analysis.

4. Preliminaries

As shown in the discussion in Section 3, the denotation of the qian phrase is
contingent on the point-of-view holder or reference point. This phenomenon can also
be found in discussions of logophors (cf. Cantrall (1974), Kuno (1972), Kuno &
Kaburaki (1977), Zribi-Hertz (1989)). Before proceeding to my proposal, I shall first
briefly introduce Huang & Liu’s (2000) analysis of the bare reflexive ziji in Mandarin
Chinese, which suggests that certain behaviors of ziji are best explained in terms of
additional functional structures that mediate between grammar and discourse.
Huang & Liu (2000) suggest that the characteristics of the bare reflexive *ziji* in Mandarin Chinese are best accounted for if a distinction is made between local *ziji* and long-distance *ziji*. The local *ziji* is an anaphor whose reference is governed by Condition A of the Binding Theory. What interests us most is long-distance *ziji*, and its antecedents, following the taxonomy of Sells (1987) in (33), can be further distinguished into the following three subtypes: Source, Self, and Pivot.\(^7\)

(33) a. Source: the one who is the intentional agent of the communication.
   b. Self: the one whose mental state or attitude the proposition describes.
   c. Pivot: the one with respect to whose (time-space) location the content of the proposition is evaluated.

That is, a logophor can be used to indicate the person whose (a) speech or thought, (b) attitude, or (c) point of view is reported. This person can be the speaker (the external Source, Self or Pivot) or an internal protagonist denoted by an argument of the sentence (e.g. the matrix subject). The above roles are demonstrated by the following examples, where *Lisi* is the internal protagonist:

(34) Lisi shuo [Zhangsan chang piping ziji].
   Lisi say Zhangsan often criticize self
   ‘Lisi says that Zhangsan often criticizes him.’

(35) [Ziji-de xiaohai mei de jiang]-de xiaoxi shi Lisi hen shangxin.
   self’s child not get prize DE news make Lisi very sad
   ‘The news that his child didn’t win the prize made Lisi very sad.’

(36) [Zhangsan lai kan ziji]-de shihou, Lisi zheng zai kan shu.
   Zhangsan come see self DE moment Lisi now at read book
   ‘Lisi was reading when Zhangsan came to visit him.’

Simply put, *Lisi* in (34) may be understood as the Source antecedent of *ziji*, since he is the internal agent of the communication, while *Lisi* in (35) is the internal Self whose mental state is being reported. As for *Lisi* in (36), he serves as the role of Pivot, since the content of the proposition is evaluated from his point of view.

These three roles, according to Huang & Liu (2000), express a progressive degree of liberation in the linguistic expression of logophoricity: Source is the ‘core’ use, Self is the ‘extended’ use, and Pivot applies in even further extended uses. This analysis helps to account for the observation that some languages permit a logophoric

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\(^7\) According to Sells (1987), these roles are postulated as primitives within the framework of Discourse Representation Theory (DRT).
antecedent to the Source only, others allow either Source or Self, and still others allow all of the three roles.

Huang & Liu (2000) argue that these various cases of logophoricity can be integrated to syntax by introducing an independent Self Phrase, Pivot Phrase, and Source Phrase, which work together to capture the syntax, semantics and pragmatics of logophoricity following Rizzi’s (1997) system. For instance, the structures of (37) and (38) can be represented as (39) and (40), respectively.  

(37) Zhangsan, shuo Lisi you zai piping ziji, le. 
    Zhangsan say Lisi again at criticize self SFP 
    ‘Zhangsan, said that Lisi was again criticizing him.’

(38) ??(Dang) Lisi piping ziji de shihou, Zhangsan zheng 
   (at) Lisi criticize self DE moment Zhangsan right 
   zai kan shu. 
   at read book 
   ‘At the moment Lisi was criticizing him, Zhangsan was reading.’

(39)

8 Sentences (34)-(38) and their grammatical judgments are adopted from Huang & Liu (2000). It is unclear why there is a contrast in judgment between (36) and (38). Thanks to Miao-Ling Hsieh for raising this question.
As indicated in the above structures, Huang & Liu (2000) claim that [Spec, PivotP] is bound by an NP denoting the Point-of-View holder of the relevant discourse. If no internal protagonist involved is identified as a Point-of-View holder, the speaker will be the default antecedent in [Spec, PivotP].

5. Proposal

Huang & Liu’s (2000) analysis of the long distance ziji provides a reasonable starting point for treating the internal structure of DPs containing a qian phrase. Recall that the interpretation of the qian phrase depends on the “camera angle” chosen by the speaker; I shall therefore postulate a pragmatically-related projection within the nominal constituent in Mandarin Chinese (cf. Kuno & Kaburaki (1977), Kuno (1972, 1987)). In what follows, for ease of explanation, I first briefly introduce basic assumptions about the status of classifiers and numerals, and then expand on the details of my proposal.

I follow scholarly tradition in assuming that a classifier heads an independent projection; this proposal was first put forward in Tang (1990) (cf. Cheng & Sybesma (1998, 1999), Li (1998) among others). Saito, Lin & Murasugi (2008) provide an argument of N’-ellipsis in support of this view. In addition, according to the previous analyses, I propose that number expressions are syntactically represented by the functional projection NumP, and that number expressions stay in [Spec, Num P] (cf. Ritter (1991), Borer (2005), Zabbal (2006), Hsieh (2008)).

In light of the above assumptions and the claim that the morpheme qian cannot stay in the D head (i.e. Section 3.1), I argue that the morpheme qian possesses a
[Perspective] feature, which projects a Perspective Phrase right below DP within the nominal expression in Mandarin Chinese, as illustrated by (41).\textsuperscript{10}

\begin{equation}
(41) \ [\text{DP} [\text{PerspectiveP} \ qian [\text{Perspective} [\text{NumP} \ san [\text{Num} [\text{CIP} \ [\text{wei} [\text{NP} \ shouxiang]]]]]]]]
\end{equation}

Moreover, the morpheme \textit{qian} introduces a Point-of-View (henceforth POV) variable which may be bound either by the speaker or by an internal protagonist denoted by an argument of the nominal expression (e.g. the possessor or the external argument) (cf. Nishigauchi (1999), Huang & Liu (2000)).\textsuperscript{11} If the POV variable is bound by the speaker, it results in a relative reading; if it is bound by an internal protagonist, it gives rise to an absolute reading.\textsuperscript{12,13}

There is a prerequisite basic front/back dimension for the morpheme \textit{qian} ‘front’ and \textit{hou} ‘back’. When several entities are lined up according to a time axis, a speaker/observer faces the origin of the time axis and is in line with one of the entities, and the ones “in front” are the ones that are closer to the speaker/observer (cf. (42)). It is also noticeable that an entity contains an intrinsic frame of reference, such as, the “front” of a car is the facet which canonically lies in the direction of motion (cf. (43)).\textsuperscript{14}

\begin{equation}
(42)
\end{equation}

\textsuperscript{10} An anonymous reviewer points out that the postulation of syntactic phrase for the [Perspective] feature will pose a problem for the Inclusiveness Condition. In fact, if \textit{qian} is endowed with the [Perspective] feature in the numeration, my analysis of the \textit{qian} phrase on the basis of the cartographic approach can comply with the Inclusiveness Condition (Chomsky (1995); Aboh (2010)).

\textsuperscript{11} Following Chomsky (1995), I suggest that the covert Perspective head dominates a bundle of features.

\textsuperscript{12} The analysis of point-of-view can be substantiated by Koopman & Sportiche (1989), Speas & Tenny (2003), and Speas (2004), who assume that a logophoric pronoun is a variable which must be bound by a pragmatic point of view operator.

\textsuperscript{13} Whether the variable introduced by the morpheme \textit{qian} is syntactically projected or not is left for further research. Please refer to Partee (1989), Bhatt & Pancheva (2005), and Condoravdi & Gawron (1996).

\textsuperscript{14} The considerations for fixing the orientation of deictic expressions involve a high degree of logical complexity. Please refer to Mitchell (1987), Partee (1989) and Levinson (2003).
Now, let us take the following examples as illustrations: First, consider a sentence containing the \textit{qian} phrase but no overt internal protagonist, as in (44).

\begin{equation}
\text{(44) Qian san-wei shouxiang dou shi nanxing.}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation*}
\begin{array}{l}
\text{qian three-CL prime.minister all be male} \\
\text{a. ‘The first three prime ministers are all male.’ [absolute]} \\
\text{b. ‘The previous three prime ministers are all male.’ [relative]}
\end{array}
\end{equation*}

The morpheme \textit{qian} with its [Perspective] feature projects a Perspective Phrase, and the POV variable introduced by the morpheme \textit{qian} can either be bound by a speaker or by a covert internal protagonist. The \textit{qian} phrase in (44) has (45) as its syntactic structure.\footnote{The \textit{qian} phrase can occur in the non-lexically governed subject or topic position, so the D head is not completely null but contains a [Definite] feature. When the point-of-view holder is determined, the reference of the \textit{qian} phrase can be identified and in turn agrees with the D head.}

\begin{equation}
\begin{array}{c}
\text{\textbf{(45) [DP}_{\text{PerspectiveP}} \textit{qian} [\text{Perspective} [\text{NumP} \textit{san} [\text{Num} [\text{CIP} \textit{wei} [\text{NP shouxiang}}]]]]]]]}
\end{array}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation*}
\begin{array}{c}
\text{qian three CL prime.minister}
\end{array}
\end{equation*}

Here, if the speaker speaks from his/her own viewpoint and reviews the history of the U.K., the denotation of the \textit{qian} phrase is closely tied to the temporal dimension of the speaker. For instance, the incumbent the U.K. prime minister is David Cameron in 2013. Then the \textit{qian} phrase will refer to the “previous three prime ministers” with regard to the speech time in 2013: John Major, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. In this case, the \textit{qian} phrase results in a relative reading. Alternatively, if the “camera angle” is positioned on the covert internal protagonist, namely, the speaker empathizes with the U.K., which intrinsic frame of reference for the “front” is the beginning of the U.K. The \textit{qian} phrase therefore refers to the “first” three prime ministers of the U.K.: Robert Walpole, Spencer Compton and Henry Pelham. The denotation of the \textit{qian} phrase will not differ from speaker to speaker, and will yield an absolute reading.

Significantly, when an internal protagonist is realized by an overt nominal expression, such as \textit{yingguo} ‘the U.K.’ in [Spec, DP] in (46), the position where the “camera angle” is placed by the speaker is simultaneously determined. The POV variable can, therefore, be directly bound by that internal protagonist, and the \textit{qian} phrase can occur in the non-lexically governed subject or topic position, so the D head is not completely null but contains a [Definite] feature. When the point-of-view holder is determined, the reference of the \textit{qian} phrase can be identified and in turn agrees with the D head.
phrase results in an absolute reading, with the structure shown in (47).

(46) Yingguo qian san-wei shouxiang dou shi nanxing. [absolute]
    U.K. qian three-CL prime.minister all be male
    ‘The first three prime ministers of the U.K. are all male.’

(47) [DP Yingguo [PerspectiveP qian [Perspective [NumP san [Num [ClP [Cl wei
    U.K. qian three CL
    [NP shouxiang]][]]]]]]
    prime.minister

Second, let us turn to the case of a qian phrase with no internal protagonist, as illustrated in (48).

(48) Qian san-tian hen leng. [relative]
    qian three-day very cold
    ‘The previous three days were very cold.’

In (48), the context of the sentence does not provide any internal protagonist or a reference point for the ‘camera angle’ to be placed on. The only option left for the binder of the POV variable is the speaker; otherwise, the prohibition against vacuous quantification will be violated (cf. Kratzer (1989)).

In contrast, if an internal protagonist zhe ge yue ‘this month’ is provided within the nominal expression, as shown in (49), the POV variable can and must be bound by it. An absolute reading is thus expected.

(49) Zhe ge yue qian san-tian hen leng. [absolute]
    this CL month qian three-day very cold
    ‘The first three days of this month were very cold.’

Recall that, in the context of viewing the photo, (50) can only describe a situation where Zhangsan likes the first three players in the picture:

(50) Zhangsan xihuan zhaopian zhong qian san-ge xuanshou.
    Zhangsan like picture inside qian three-CL player
    ‘Zhangsan likes the first three players in the picture.’

In (50), the temporal and spatial dimensions of the players within the picture have been frozen at the moment when the picture was taken. That is, the speaker is
spatio-temporally dissociated from any internal protagonist within the nominal phrase, and it is therefore implausible for the speaker to describe the event or state from his/her standpoint. In these circumstances, the POV variable can only be bound by the internal protagonist. In consequence, (50) can only assume an absolute reading.

However, the language facts are in reality more complex than those we have discussed so far. Consider the following two sentences, both of which contain an internal protagonist; note that (51) is limited to an absolute reading, whereas (52) is ambiguous.

(51) Yingguo qian san-wei shouxiang dou shi nanxing. [absolute]  
U.K. qian three-CL prime.minister all be male  
‘The first three prime ministers of the U.K. are all male.’

(52) Zhangsan qian san-ge nupengyou dou zhu zai Taipei. [ambiguous]  
Zhangsan qian three-CL girlfriend all live in Taipei  
a. ‘The first three girlfriends of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’  
b. ‘The previous three girlfriends of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’

Given my analysis, the ambiguity of (52) is unexpected. We need to account for the fact that the POV variable in (52) can optionally be bound by the speaker. The reasoning is as follows. Since the speaker can potentially have a spatial or temporal association with an internal protagonist Zhangsan, the “camera angle” can be easily shifted from Zhangsan to the standpoint of the speaker. The POV variable can then be bound by the speaker in turn, and the qian phrase is thus able to denote a relative as well as an absolute reading. However, this kind of perspective shifting is impossible with an internal protagonist like the U.K. in (51). The U.K. is a country and hence an abstract notion which is detached from the speaker temporally or spatially; the speaker almost certainly had not even come into existence when the U.K. was established. Obviously, it is unreasonable for the speaker to ‘go proxy’ for the internal protagonist the U.K. The qian phrase in (51) can therefore only assume an absolute reading.

Following the same line of reasoning, it is easy for us to interpret the qian phrase in (53). It is quite clear that the speaker can not have any spatio-temporal connection with the internal protagonist Zhangsan’s great-great-great-grandfather, since he must already have passed away. It is therefore implausible for a shift to occur that puts the speaker in the viewpoint of the internal protagonist Zhangsan’s great-great-great-grandfather. Consequently, the POV variable in (53) can only be bound by the internal protagonist and only an absolute reading of the sentence is available.
The above discussion describes a situation in which a POV variable can be simultaneously bound by an internal protagonist and by the speaker, under the condition that it is possible to link the speaker and the internal protagonist along the temporal or spatial axis.

Significantly, an additional contrast relevant to our discussion is demonstrated by the following pair.

(53) Zhangsan zeng zeng zeng zufu qian san-ge
    Zhangsan grand grand grand grandfather qian three-CL
    nupengyou dou zhu zai Taipei. [absolute]
    girlfriend all live in Taipei
    ‘The first three girlfriends of Zhangsan’s great-great-great-grand father all lived in Taipei.’

(54) Zhangsan qian san-ge nupengyou dou zhu zai Taipei. [ambiguous]
    Zhangsan qian three-CL girlfriend all live in Taipei
    a. ‘The first three girlfriends of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’
    b. ‘The previous three girlfriends of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’

(55) Zhangsan qian san-ge nuer dou zhu zai Taipei. [absolute]
    Zhangsan qian three-CL daughter all live in Taipei
    ‘The first three daughters of Zhangsan all live in Taipei.’

The above two sentences differ from each other only with respect to the noun phrase in the subject positions nupengyou ‘girlfriend’ and nuer ‘daughter’. This difference is reducible to the distinction between the two relationships, namely, boyfriend/girlfriend relation and father/daughter relation in (54) and (55), respectively. However, unlike the ambiguity of (54), (55) allows only an absolute reading. In effect, this is because the relation between father and daughter, unlike that of boyfriend and girlfriend, is genetic and thus is considered to continue indefinitely without intermission under normal circumstances. It is therefore questionable for the speaker to refer to the “previous” three daughters of Zhangsan relative to the one at the speech time of the speaker. That is, if the relationship between the nominal constituent cannot be terminated, a “camera angle” can never be positioned at the viewpoint of the speaker. Since the POV variable involved can never be bound by the speaker, it must be bound by the internal protagonist to avoid the violation of vacuous quantification. An absolute reading therefore results.

This analysis also explains a contrast that can be observed between pairs of sentences like the following:
The previous girlfriend of Zhangsan lived in Taipei.

The previous daughter of Zhangsan lived in Taipei.

As already illustrated, the relationship of father and daughter is perpetual, and it is thus absurd for the *qian* phrase in question to refer to any “previous” daughter relative to the one at the speech time of the speaker.\(^{16}\)

The final idiosyncrasy of the *qian* phrase is its limitation to a relative interpretation if the number in the *[qian + Num + Cl + N]* sequence is yi ‘one’ (cf. (56)). If the speaker stands from the viewpoint of an internal protagonist, an intrinsic frame of reference for the “front” of Zhangsan’s girlfriends will be “the first one”. In effect, “the first N” only refers to an intrinsic frame of reference without any “front” sense. In this context, an absolute reading of *[qian + yi + Cl + N]* is therefore ruled out.

Alternatively, if the speaker stands from his/her own viewpoint, “the N” which is “in front” with regard to the speech time of the speaker is picked out. A relative reading is therefore obtained.

So far in this section, I have argued that a POV variable is introduced by the morpheme *qian*; this variable may be bound either by the speaker or by an internal protagonist denoted by an argument of the nominal expression (e.g. the possessor or the external argument) (cf. Speas (2004), Nishigauchi (1999), Huang & Liu (2000)). If the POV variable is bound by the speaker, it results in a relative reading; if the POV variable is bound by an internal protagonist, it gives rise to an absolute reading. A POV variable can additionally be bound by the speaker even if an internal protagonist is available under the condition that the speaker can be temporally or spatially associated with the internal protagonist and therefore ‘go proxy’ for the internal protagonist. In addition to this, the relationship between entities within the nominal expression also plays a crucial role in determining the interpretation of the *qian* phrase in question. If the relationship involved is continued and perpetual, a POV variable can only be bound by an internal protagonist, but if the relationship is alienable, an ambiguity results. Finally, if the number in the *qian* phrase is yi ‘one’, there can only be a relative reading due to the fact that the *qian* phrase can never refer to the ‘first one’ of anything.

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\(^{16}\) The expression “the speaker” refers to an external speaker other than Zhangsan.
6. Implications and more evidence

According to Cinque & Rizzi (2008), the cartography approach endeavors “to
draw maps as precise and detailed as possible of syntactic configurations,” and one of
its useful principles is the maxim “one (morphosyntactic) property – one feature – one
head.” My analysis follows this approach by assuming that a [Perspective] feature of
the morpheme qian corresponds to an independent syntactic projection (cf. Rizzi
(1997, 2004), Cinque (1999), Tsai (2008)).

More specifically, my proposed Perspective Phrase in the nominal structure of
Mandarin Chinese is similar in function to the Evaluative Phrase of Cinque (1999).
The whole of Cinque’s (1999) hierarchy can in turn be included under the Modifier
Phrase in Rizzi’s system.

In Mandarin Chinese this kind of analysis is not unique to the qian phrase, and has
been proposed by Liu (2007), who argues that the V-qilai evaluative construction
contains syntactic projections with pragmatically relevant features (i.e. the Evaluative
Phrase and the Evidential Phrase), as we can see from (58) below. Its structure is
represented by (59).

17 In line with Speas (2004), evidential agreement distinguishes among sets of worlds relevant to the
context; Liu (2007) thus postulates a world argument w occurs in [Spec, EviP]. Given space limit, I
only review the proposal of the Evaluative Phrase here, and for arguments of the Evidential Phrase,
please refer to Liu (2007).

(58) Zhe-ke zuanjie kan-qilai hen zhiqian.
this-CL diamond.ring look-qilai very precious
a. ‘Based on my personal experience of looking at this diamond ring, I would say
this diamond ring is precious.’
b. ‘The external speaker infers from his/her knowledge of this diamond ring that
this diamond ring is precious.’

(59) [TopP Zhe-ke zuanjie [EvaP QIP Pro kan-qilai] [Eva’ [Eva Eva] [EviP w [Evi [Evi Evi]
this-CL diamond.ring look-qilai
[Pro hen zhiqian))))]]].
very precious

In (59), the V-qilai evaluative construction, following the analysis of Liu (2007),
consists of two clauses and this construction projects as QIP occurring in the Spec
position of the Evaluative Phrase. When the subject NP of the V-qilai clause (i.e. QIP)
occurs as an empty pronominal (i.e. Pro), the Pro subject NP can either be
semantically controlled by the external speaker implied by the V-qilai evaluative
construction or be interpreted as an arbitrary Pro, as shown by the ambiguity in (58).
Put more clearly, if the Pro subject of the V-qilai clause is interpreted as an external speaker, the evaluator (i.e. the external speaker) has his/her ‘internal’ or personal experience as evidence for the judgment of the evaluated event in question. Alternatively, if the subject of the V-qilai clause is interpreted as an arbitrary Pro, the evaluator (i.e. the external speaker) has his/her judgment of the evaluated event to be true simply relying on indirect evidence or inference.

Similar proposals, that pragmatic notions such as evaluative or point of view can be syntactically encoded, can also be seen in Romance nominal expressions. For prenominal adjectives in Romance, Laenzlinger (2005) argues that they are analyzed in terms of movement to the left-periphery of the DP. For example, the prenominal adjectives in (60) in French are moved to the left periphery, with the structure shown in (61).

(60) la probable récente destruction de la ville
the probable recent destruction of the city
‘the probable recent destruction of the city’

(61)

Specifically, the order in (61) can be derived from the cyclic movement of the two adjectives. The temporal adjective récente ‘recent’ first moves and merges in the left-periphery and then the epistemic adjective probable ‘probable’ raises and merges in a higher position in the left-periphery. It is noticeable that the exact labels of FP1 and FP2 are akin to the Modifier phrase in Rizzi (2004).

As the discussion here shows, the posited Perspective Phrase built on the
cartographic approach in this paper can be substantiated by inter or intra-linguistic evidence.

7. Concluding remarks

In this paper, I first used empirical data to show that it is improper to analyze the morpheme qian as remaining in D throughout the derivation. I then demonstrated that the otherwise puzzling properties of the qian phrase are explained once a Perspective Phrase is provided. I argued that the qian phrase contains a Perspective Projection, and the morpheme qian further introduces a POV variable. The two possible interpretations of the qian phrase can be attributed to the two Points-of-View involved. Specifically, if a POV variable is bound by the speaker, it results in a relative reading; if the variable is bound by an internal protagonist, it gives rise to an absolute reading. This analysis draws a parallel between nominal expressions and clauses by assuming that pragmatically related features can be encoded in syntax (cf. Rizzi (1997, 2004), Cinque (1999)).

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名詞組左緣結構：漢語觀點詞組

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漢語使用詞素「前」，以「前+數量詞+量詞+名詞」，也就是「前三位英國首相」的形式表達英語 ‘the first three prime ministers’ 的語意。此結構為直示表達語(deictic expression)，可表達「絕對觀點」與「相對觀點」兩種語意。我假設「前」帶有「觀點特徵」([Perspective] feature)，引介「觀點變數」(Point-of-View variable)，此變數受說話者或內在主角(internal protagonist) 所約束，分別產生「相對語意」與「絕對語意」。此分析證明名詞組與句子結構平行，皆可投射與篇章相關的句法結構，即「觀點詞組」(Perspective Phrase)。

關鍵詞：名詞組左緣、直示性表達語、左緣結構、觀點詞組