PREDICTING NP FORMS IN
VERNACULAR WRITTEN CANTONESE[1]
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ABSTRACT

Cantonese contains a range of NP forms which are ambiguous with respect to referentiality and definiteness (e.g., 個人 *go yahn* 'a/the man'). Accessibility theory (Ariel 2001) predicts that entities which are salient in the discourse will be introduced using forms with more linguistic material, and referred back to using forms with less linguistic material. Previous studies of Standard Written Chinese have found that more topical entities are introduced using fuller NP forms (Sun 1988; Li 2000). A study of online love-advice narratives reveals that, in the case of new items, fuller NP forms in Vernacular Written Cantonese are more frequently used for more topical, referential, and plural entities. For given items, however, contrary to the predictions of accessibility theory, topical entities and those with a previous reference using a longer NP form are associated with fuller, rather than more abbreviated, NP forms. These findings suggest that the desire to highlight topical entities may override the principle of accessibility in choice of NP form for given items in certain genres.

预测广东话书面语名词组形式

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提要

广东话中名词组可有指称与定指的歧异，例如，『个人』可指『一人与 『那人』。根据可及性理论对名词组形式使用的规范（Ariel 2001），显着性高的名词在首次提及时使用较复杂的形式，而在回指时使用较简单的形式。在（Sun 1988, Li 2000)以往的研究中提及，主题性越显着的名词 越有可能使用完整的名词组形式。本研究分析网上广东话书面语脚本『爱情烦恼』发现，新名词为主题、指称、复数时多用详细的名词组形式。与可及性理论相反的，显着性高的已知名词仍使用详细名词组形式，并无使用比较简单的名词组形式。此研究结果显示，在广东话书面语中，显着性高的已知名词不需遵守可及性理论中回指时使用简单形式的规范。

主题词
广东话书面语 话语 可及性 名词组 零形回指

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