‘Again’ and ‘Again’:
A Grammatical Analysis of You and Zai in Mandarin Chinese


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Abstract

This paper analyzes the two elements in Mandarin Chinese that denote repetition, you ‘again’ and zai ‘again’. It has been assumed that you occurs in realis contexts, whereas zai occurs in irrealis contexts. We observe that in fact you may occur in irrealis contexts and zai in realis context; furthermore, we argue that these two elements should be distinguished in terms of the structural positions they adjoin to and the event structures they modify, rather than the realis and irrealis contexts. We adopt Shen’s (2004) framework of phrase structure and event structure for Chinese sentences, and show that you adjoins to a dynamic AspP, and for zai to a static vP. Our analysis accounts for a number of phenomena pertaining to you and zai, including their relative structural heights, and their ability to change the event structure of the predicate. We also show that the scope of repetition of you and zai is sensitive to the event structure of the predicate; this is in agreement with the discoveries from recent researches on the repetitive and restitutive readings of again.

Keywords: you and zai, repetition, aspect, light verb, event structure
1. **Introduction**

When a Chinese speaker intends to express repetition of an event or action, s/he uses one of the two morphemes, *you* ‘again’ or *zai* ‘again’. These two elements occur in different contexts; the consensus has been that *you* occurs in realis contexts, and *zai* in irrealis contexts; see Lü (1980) and Tang (1988). Look at the following examples for demonstration.¹

(1) **Xiaoming zuotian you lai le.** (realis context)
Xiaoming yesterday again come PERF
‘Xiaoming came again yesterday.’

(2) *Xiaoming zuotian zai lai le.** (realis context)
Xiaoming yesterday again come PERF
‘Xiaoming came again yesterday.’

(3) **Xiaoming mingtian hui zai lai.** (irrealis context)
Xiaoming tomorrow will again come
‘Xiaoming will come again tomorrow.’

(4) *Xiaoming mingtian hui you lai.** (irrealis context)
Xiaoming tomorrow will again come
‘Xiaoming will come again tomorrow.’

(1) is an event-reporting sentence in realis mood, and *you* occurs in it. But if *zai* replaces *you*, as in (2), the sentence becomes unacceptable. On the other hand, (3) is a modal sentence in irrealis mood, and *zai* occurs in it. Again, if *you* replaces *zai*, as in (4), the sentence is unacceptable.

However, this generalization is not really correct, because as a matter of fact *you* is not excluded from irrealis contexts, and *zai* may occur in realis contexts. The following sentences are examples.

(5) **Xiaoming mingtian you yao lai le.**
Xiaoming tomorrow again be-going-to come PERF
‘Xiaoming is coming again tomorrow.’

(6) **Xiaoming qiantian gei Xiaohua yi bai kuai, zuotian zai gei ta liang bai.**
Xiaoming the-day-before-yesterday give Xiaohua one hundred dollar yesterday again give him two hundred
‘Xiaoming gave Xiaohua one hundred dollars the day before yesterday, and [he] gave him two hundred (more) again yesterday.’

(5) is a modal sentence (with the aspectual modal verb *yao* ‘being going to’ as the head of the predicate), yet *you* occurs in it without any unacceptability. (6) is an event-reporting sentence, though *zai* occurs in it. These sentences indicate that the realis/irrealis contrast is actually not a criterion to distinguish the elements *you* and *zai*. Deeper generalizations must be sought for the licensing of these two elements.

This work aims at clarifying the licensing conditions for the elements *you* and *zai*. We make the following proposals. (i) *You* adjoins to AspP, and *zai* adjoins to vP. (ii) *You* adjoins to a predicate that is [+dynamic]; if it adjoins to a static predicate, it induces the merger of the dynamic light verb *dlv* (Shen 2004) to the structure and thereby turning the predicate into dynamic. (iii) *Zai* is licensed when the predicate it adjoins to denotes an event that is cognitively a continuation of, or result from, an earlier event of the same nature. Such semantics of *zai* induces the merger of the static light verb *slv* (Shen 2004) to the structure.

This work is structured as follows. Section 2 examines the properties of *you* in Chinese sentences, and section 3 proposes an analysis for *you*. Section 4 discusses and analyzes sentences containing *zai*. Section 5 looks at some more phenomena pertaining *you* and *zai*. Section 6 is the conclusion.

2. *On you*

2.1. *You* in irrealis contexts

The word *again* in English may occur in a number of different positions in a sentence structure, as the examples in (7) show. *You*, on the other hand, is very restricted in the position that it may occur. See the examples in (8).

(7) a. John came yesterday again.
    b. John came again yesterday.
    c. John again came yesterday.
    d. Again John came yesterday.

(8) a. Xiaoming zuotian *you* lai le.
    Xiaoming yesterday again come PERF
    ‘Xiaoming came again yesterday.’
b. *Xiaoming zuotian lai le you.
   Xiaoming yesterday come PERF again

c. *Xiaoming you zuotian lai le
   Xiaoming again yesterday come PERF

d. *You Xiaoming zuotain lai le
   again Xiaoming yesterday come PERF

The examples in (8) indicate that you can only adjoin to a verbal element, as in (8a).

But you doesn't always adjoin to the main verb of the sentence. In particular, you may
adjoin to a modal. What is more, when the sentence contains a modal, you cannot adjoin to
the main verb; it must adjoin to the modal. See the following examples.

(9) a. Xiaoming mingtian you yao / hui / yinggai lai le.
   Xiaoming tomorrow again be-going-to will should come PERF
   ‘Xiaoming is going to / will / should come again tomorrow.’

   b. *Xiaoming mingtian yao / hui / yinggai you lai le
   Xiaoming tomorrow be-going-to will should again come PERF

Note that (9a) is a case where you occurs in an irrealis context. We pointed out above that
you in fact is not excluded from irrealis contexts. It appears that you can occur in an irrealis
context because you can adjoin to a modal, which sets the sentence in irrealis mood.

2.2. You and modals

A Mandarin Chinese sentence may contain more than one modal. In such sentences the
ordering of the modals is constrained; for example, the epistemic modal must precede the
deontic modal (see Lin and Tang 1995 and Lin and Hsieh 2003, among others). Look at the
following examples.

(10) a. Xiaoming keneng yuanyi lai wo jia.
    Xiaoming possibly willing come my home
    ‘Xiaoming may be willing to come to my home.’

   b. *Xiaoming yuanyi keneng lai wo jia.
   Xiaoming willing possibly come my home
Thus the position of the epistemic modal is higher than that of the deontic modal in the sentence structure.

With this background, we now examine the position of *you* relative to the different kinds of modals. First, *you* may precede or succeed an epistemic modal:  

(11) a. Mingtian *you* keneng yao xia yu le.  
"It is possible again that it will be raining tomorrow."

b. Mingtian keneng *you* yao xia yu le.  
"It is possible that it will be raining again tomorrow."

(12) a. Xiaoming *you* keneng pao hui jia qu le.  
"Xiaoming is permitted / able / willing to go home again."

b. Xiaoming keneng *you* pao hui jia qu le.  
"Xiaoming will / is going to go home again."

However, *you* must precede all other types of modals, including the deontic modals, the future modal *hui* ‘will’, and the aspectual modal *yao* ‘be going to’ (the obligation modal *bishū* ‘must’ is exceptional in this regard; we will return to *bishū* ‘must’ later). See the following examples.

(13) a. Xiaoming *you* keyi / nenggou / yuanyi lai le  
"Xiaoming is permitted / able / willing to come again."

b. Xiaoming *you* hui / yao lai le  
"Xiaoming will / is going to come again."

(14) a. *Xiaoming keyi / nenggou / yuanyi *you* lai le  
"Xiaoming is permitted / able / willing to come again."

b. *Xiaoming hui / yao *you* lai le  
"Xiaoming will / is going to come again."

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In a sentence where an epistemic modal and a deontic modal occur, you can precede the epistemic modal, or succeed the epistemic modal but precede the deontic modal. Other positions are not allowed. (The result is the same if the deontic modal is replaced by the future modal hui ‘will’ or the aspectual modal yao ‘be going to’.)

(15) a. Xiaoming you keneng keyi hui jia le.  
Xiaoming again possibly be-permitted return home PERF
'It is possible again that Xiaoming is permitted to go home.'

b. Xiaoming keneng you keyi hui jia le.  
Xiaoming possibly again be-permitted return home PERF
'It is possible that Xiaoming is permitted to go home again.'

c. *Xiaoming keneng keyi you hui jia le.  
Xiaoming possibly be-permitted again return home PERF

2.3. You and aspectuality

In all the grammatical examples of you that we presented so far, the sentence-final perfect particle le is present. But the occurrence of you doesn't seem to hinge on the presence of le. In the following examples you occurs without the presence of le in the sentence.

(16) a. Xiaoming zuotian you qu Taipei.  
Xiaoming yesterday again go Taipei
'Xiaoming went to Taipei again yesterday.'

b. Xiaoming you mai-le san-ben shu.  
Xiaoming again buy-PERFCTV three-CL book
'Xiaoming, again, bought three books.'

However, in some cases, the presence of the perfect particle le appears to be obligatory. This is particularly true when you adjoins to a modal (see footnote 4):

(17) a. Xiaoming you nenggou qu Taipei *(le) 
Xiaoming again be-able go Taipei PERF
'Xiaoming, again, has become able to go to Taipei.'
b. Xiaoming you keyi mai shu *(le)
   Xiaoming again be-permitted buy book PERF
   'Xiaoming, again, has come to be permitted to buy books.'

A special property of you is that the predicate that you adjoins to must denotes a dynamic event. In (16a) and (16b), the verbs qu 'go' and mai 'buy' are both dynamic. Though modals are generally regarded as static, the modals in (17a-b), nenggou 'be able to' and keyi 'be permitted to', in fact falls within the scope of the perfect particle le and hence assume a change-of-state reading (i.e. 'become able to' and 'come to be permitted to'). Thus the modals in (17a-b) are dynamic too. As a matter of fact, when you adjoins to a static predicate, it turns the predicate dynamic. See the following examples.

(18)a. Zhe-duo hua hen hong.
   this-CL flower very red
   'This flower is red'
   
   b. Zhe-duo hua you hen hong le.
   this-CL flower again very red PERF
   'This flower, again, has [become] red'

(19)a. Xiaoming xihuan Xiaohua.
   Xiaoming like Xiaohua
   'Xiaoming likes Xiaohua.'
   
   b. Xiaoming you xihuan Xiaohua le.
   Xiaoming again like Xiaohua PERF
   'Xiaoming [comes to] like Xiaohua again.'

The predicates in (18a) and (19a) hen hong 'very red' and xihuan 'like' are static. However, when you adjoins to them, they assume a change-of-state meaning.

The epistemic modals exhibit the same effect when you adjoins to them. The epistemic modal is static, and, when the perfect particle le appears in a sentence with an epistemic modal, le must fall within the scope of the epistemic modal, not the reverse. See the following example:

(20)a. Xiaoming keneng [ qu Taipei le ].
   Xiaoming possibly go Taipei PERF
‘It is possible that Xiaoming has gone to Taipei.’

b. *Xiaoming [ [ keneng qu Taipei ] le ].
   Xiaoming possibly go Taipei PERF
   ‘(Intended) It has become the case that Xiaoming possibly went to Taipei.’

But when you adjoins to an epistemic modal, the epistemic modal can fall within the scope of le, as in the following example:

(21) Xiaoming you [ [ keneng qu Taipei ] le ].
   Xiaoming again possibly go Taipei PERF
   ‘It has once again become possible that Xiaoming went to Taipei.’

Thus in terms of aspectuality, you shows the following properties. First, you adjoins to a dynamic verbal element; second, when you adjoins to a static predicate, you turns it dynamic.

3. Analysis of you

The above observations provide important clues for the structural analysis of you and its licensing. We base our analysis on Shen’s (2004) theory on AspP in Mandarin Chinese. Shen proposes that the Chinese phrase structure has a functional projection AspP, which hosts the sentence-final aspectual particles. One such particle is the perfect particle le. The head of AspP, Asp, takes VP/vP as complement. Asp can take one of the two possible features, [+dynamic] and [-dynamic], and, furthermore, the predicate of the sentence, i.e. the VP/vP complement of Asp, must agree with Asp in the [+dynamic] feature. For example, the Asp in a sentence with a static predicate has the feature [-dynamic], as in (22); on the other hand, if Asp is [+dynamic], as in a sentence where the perfect particle le is present, the predicate must be turned dynamic, as in (24). Notice that in (23) a light verb dlv (dynamic light verb) is merged with the predicate, triggered by the aspectual agreement between Asp and the predicate.
(22)  Xiaoming  [AspP[VP xihuan[-dyn]  Xiaohua ][-dyn]  [Asp ∅][-dyn] ]
Xiaoming           like           Xiaohua

Agreement in [-dynamic]

‘Xiaoming likes Xiaohua’

(23)  Xiaoming  [AspP[+P dlv[+dyn]  [VP xihuan[-dyn]  Xiaohua ][+dyn]  [Asp le][+dyn] ]
Xiaoming           like           Xiaohua

Agreement in [+dynamic]

‘Xiaoming has come to like Xiaohua.’

A caveat is in order about the sentence-final perfect particle le. In Shen’s (2004) theory, when Asp is [+dynamic], it takes a particle with an overt phonetic form, such as the perfect particle le or the progressive particle ne. But this doesn’t seem to be always the case. For instance, the predicates of the sentences in (24a-b) are dynamic, but the perfect particle le doesn’t have to be present (cf. (16a-b) above). Shen (2004) also takes note of examples like (ii), namely sentences with a numeral object.

(24)  a.  Xiaoming  zuotian  qu  Taipei.
   Xiaoming  yesterday  go  Taipei
   'Xiaoming went to Taipei yesterday.'
 b.  Xiaoming  mai-le  san-ben  shu.
   Xiaoming  buy-PERFCTV  three-CL  book
   'Xiaoming, again, bought three books.'

What is more likely is that only when the dynamic light verb dlv is merged to the predicate (as in (23)) is the presence of le obligatory, triggered by aspectual agreement. In fact this is what happens in (17a-b), the (b) examples in (18-19), and (23). This hypothesis, in particular, explains why the presence of le in (17a-b) is obligatory.
We can account for the properties of *you* if we assume that *you* adjoins to an AspP with the feature [+dynamic], as in (25).

(25)

One of our observations above was that *you* may precede or succeed the epistemic modal, but must precede other types of modals and verbs. Lin and Hsieh (2003) and Lin (2005) observe that verbs and non-epistemic modals in Mandarin Chinese typically fall within the scope of AspP (namely the scope of *le*). That is, non-epistemic modals typically cannot take an AspP with *le* as complement. Instead, an AspP with *le* takes the non-epistemic modals as complement. Below is an illustration with the modal *nenggou* 'be able to':

(26) a. Xiaoming [[ nenggou qi jiao-ta-che ] le ]
   Xiaoming be-able ride bicycle PERF
   'Xiaoming has become able to ride a bicycle.'

   b. *Xiaoming [ nenggou [ qi jiao-ta-che le ] ]
      Xiaoming be-able ride bicycle PERF
      '(Intended) Xiaoming is able to have ridden a bicycle.'

Since *you* adjoins to AspP, *you* necessarily precedes the non-epistemic modals and verbs. On the other hand, the epistemic modals can take AspP as complement (see (20a-b)). As *you* adjoins to AspP, *you* may succeed the epistemic modal.

What about the case when *you* precedes the epistemic modal? This has to do with the aspectual agreement introduced above. *You* denotes repetition of an event, so, by its nature, it entails a change of state. This is why it adjoins to an AspP with the feature [+dynamic].
And since the predicate of a Chinese sentence must agree with Asp in the feature \([\pm\text{dynamic}]\), \textit{you} necessarily occurs with a predicate with the feature \([+\text{dynamic}]\). We saw above that when Asp is \([+\text{dynamic}]\) yet the predicate is static, a dynamic light verb \(dlv\) is merged to the predicate for aspectual agreement, turning the static predicate into a dynamic one. This is what happens when \textit{you} precedes an epistemic modal. The epistemic modal is static, but with the adjunction of \textit{you} to the AspP that takes the epistemic modal phrase as complement, the Asp must be \([+\text{dynamic}]\). This then triggers the merger of \(dlv\) to the structure, as follows.  

\[(27)\]  
\[
\text{Mingtian } [\text{AspP you } [vP \ [dlv_{[+\text{dyn}] } [\text{ModP keneng}_{[+\text{dyn}] } [vP \ xia \ yu ]]] \ le_{[+\text{dyn}] } ] \]
\[
\text{tomorrow } \text{again } \text{possibly } \text{fall rain } \text{PERF}
\]

‘It is once again possible that it will be raining tomorrow.’

A confirmation of our analysis comes from the obligation modal \(bishu\) ‘must’. The modal \(bishu\) ‘must’ is special in that it can occur outside or inside the scope of AspP. See the examples in (28a-b). In (28a-b) the adverb \(yijing\) ‘already’ is used to disambiguate the two different scope relations, as \(yijing\) ‘already’ is an AspP-level adverb. When \(yijing\) ‘already’ precedes \(bishu\) ‘must’, that means \(bishu\) ‘must’ is within the scope of AspP; when \(yijing\) ‘already’ succeeds \(bishu\) ‘must’, that indicates \(bishu\) ‘must’ is outside the scope of AspP.

\[(28)\]  
\[a.\]  
Xiaoming \(bishu\) \(yijing\) \(qu\) Taipei \(le.\) \(\quad (bishu > \text{AspP})\)
\[
\text{Xiaoming must already go Taipei PERF}
\]

‘It has to be the case that Xiaoming has already gone to Taipei.’

\[b.\]  
Xiaoming \(yijing\) \(bishu\) \(qu\) Taipei \(le.\) \(\quad (\text{AspP} > \text{bishu})\)
\[
\text{Xiaoming already must go Taipei PERF}
\]

‘It has become the case that Xiaoming must go to Taipei.’

Now the prediction is that \textit{you} must occur at the same level as \textit{yijing} ‘already’, since \textit{you}, like \textit{yijing}, is an AspP-level adverb. This prediction is borne out.

\[(29)\]  
\[a.\]  
Xiaoming \(bishu\) \(yijing\) \(you\) \(qu\) Taipei \(le.\)
\[
\text{Xiaoming must already again go Taipei PERF}
\]

‘It has to be the case that Xiaoming has already gone to Taipei again.’
b. *Xiaoming you bishū yijing qu Taipei le.
   Xiaoming again must already go Taipei PERF

(30) a. Xiaoming yijing you bishū qu Taipei le.
   Xiaoming already again must go Taipei PERF
   ‘It has already become the case again that Xiaoming must go to Taipei.’

b. *Xiaoming yijing bishū you qu Taipei le.
   Xiaoming already must again go Taipei PERF

In (29a-b), yijing ‘already’ occurs inside the scope of bishū ‘must’; thus you must occur inside the scope of bishū ‘must’ too. In (30a-b) yijing ‘already’ occurs outside the scope of bishū ‘must’; so does you. Different allocations of you, as in (29b) and (30b), lead to ungrammaticality.

In conclusion, you is an AspP-level adverb. It precedes the verbs and non-epistemic modals because these elements are subordinate to AspP. And since you adjoins to an AspP with the feature [+dynamic], the predicate of the sentence must be dynamic, due to the aspectual agreement between Asp and the predicate.

4. On zai

In this section we turn to zai. Like you, the syntactic position of zai is quite rigid. See the following examples:

(31) a. Xiaoming mingtian hui zai lai.
   Xiaoming tomorrow will again come
   ‘Xiaoming will come again tomorrow.’

b. *Xiaoming mingtian hui lai zai.
   Xiaoming tomorrow will come again

c. *Xiaoming mingtian zai hui lai.
   Xiaoming tomorrow again will come

d. *Zai Xiaoming mingtian hui lai.
   again Xiaoming tomorrow will come

Zai differs from you in a number of respects; in particular, zai is lower than you in structural position, and zai requires that the predicate it adjoins to denote an event that is cognitively a
continuation of, or result from, a previous event of the same nature. You doesn’t need such licensing.

4.1. The structural position and aspectual properties of zai

Zai, like you, has to precede the main verb of the sentence; see (31a). But unlike you, zai cannot precede any modal. Look at the following examples.

(32) a. Xiaoming keneng / bishü / hui / keyi zai qu Taipei.
   Xiaoming possible must will be-permitted again go Taipei
   'Xiaoming may / must / will / is permitted to go to Taipei again.'

b. *Xiaoming zai keneng / bishü / hui / keyi qu Taipei.
   Xiaoming again possible must will be-permitted go Taipei

This indicates that the structural position of zai must be quite low, at least lower than you, since you may precede the modal. This is indeed true. In fact, you and zai may occur in one and the same sentence, and when they do, you must precedes zai:

(33) a. Xiaoming you zai qu xuexiao.
   Xiaoming again again go school
   'Once more, Xiaoming went to the school again.'

b. *Xiaoming zai you qu xuexiao.
   Xiaoming again again go school

Zai may occur with dynamic verbs or static verbs. The examples of zai that we have seen so far belong to the category of dynamic verbs. Some more examples are given in (34) where zai occurs with a dynamic verb.

(34) a. Qiyou hui zai zhang jia.
   gasoline will again raise price
   'The price of gasoline will raise again.'

b. Na-zuo jiao (zao-wan) hui zai kua.
   that-CL bridge sooner-or-later will again collapse
   'That bridge (sooner or later) will collapse again'
c. Mingtian hui zai xia yu.
   tomorrow will again fall rain
   'It will rain again tomorrow.'

_Zai_ may occur with static verbs too, but in such cases the static verb has to assume a change-of-state meaning. Below are some examples:

(35) a. (Chuntian-de shihou,) hua hui zai hong.
   spring-MOD time flower will again red
   '(In spring,) flowers will [become] red.'
   b. Xiaoming-de tou hui zai tong
   Xiaoming's head head will again ache
   'Xiaoming will [resume] headache again.'
   c. Tianqi hui zai re.
   whether will again hot
   'The whether will [turn] hot again.'

In this regard _zai_ is similar to _you_, which has the ability to turn a static predicate into a dynamic one. But unlike _you_, the static-to-dynamic conversion of _zai_ applies to the core VP only, not to the whole predicate. This is so because the intensifier _hen_ 'very' cannot occur with _zai_, which is nonetheless possible with _you_. Compare (36a) with (36b) (and also compare (36b) with (35a)).

(36) a. Zhe-duo hua you hen hong le. (= (18b))
   this-CL flower again very red PERF
   'This flower, again, has become red'
   b. *Hua hui zai hen hong.
   flower will again very red
   '[(Intended) Flowers will [become] red.]

These properties of _zai_ seem to indicate that _zai_ adjoins to _vP/VP_ with the head _v/V_ dynamic. This analysis accounts for the low syntactic position of _zai_ (relative to that of _you_), and also the static-to-dynamic conversion of the predicate that _zai_ triggers (cf. (35a-c)). (This analysis may also account for the ungrammaticality of (36b), assuming that the intensifier
hen ‘very’ is outside of vP/VP and agrees with vP/VP in the feature [±dynamic], since hen ‘very’ can only occur with a static predicate.)

This analysis, however, suffers a major problem. If zai adjoins to a vP/VP with the head v/V dynamic, then zai must be compatible with the sentence-final perfect particle le, since the aspectual agreement between Asp and vP/VP would render Asp [±dynamic], which would then license the occurrence of le. But the problem is that zai is not very compatible with the perfect particle le. Consider the following examples.

(37) a. *Xiaoming zai qu xuexiao le.
Xiaoming again go school PERF
‘(Intended) Xiaoming went to school again.’

b. Xiaoming (you) nenggou zai qu xuexiao le.
Xiaoming again be-able again go school PERF
‘(Once more) Xiaoming can go to school again.’

The unacceptability of (37a) shows that zai alone cannot occur with the perfect particle le. The presence of le must be triggered by some other element, such as you and nenggou ‘be able to’ in (37b). If zai adjoins to a dynamic vP/VP, the ungrammaticality of (37a) cannot be explained.

The solution to this problem bears on the semantics of zai. In the next subsection we propose that zai in fact adjoins to a vP headed by the static light verb slv. This solves the problem posed by le, and is also more compatible with the semantics of zai.

4.2. The semantics of zai

The traditional conception about zai is that it occurs in irrealis contexts only, and one may infer that zai is not very compatible with the perfect particle le precisely because zai occurs in irrealis contexts only, since irrealis contexts, e.g. modal sentences, typically don’t permit sentence-final perfect particle le. But we pointed out at the outset of this paper that zai in fact can occur in realis contexts. We repeat the example below ((6) in section 1).

(38) Xiaoming qiantian gei Xiaohua yi bai kuai, Xiaoming the-day-before-yesterday give Xiaohua one hundred dollar
zuotian zai gei ta liang bai.
yesterday again give him two hundred
‘Xiaoming gave Xiaohua one hundred dollars the day before yesterday, and [he] gave him two hundred (more) again yesterday.’

Why do researchers tend to think that zai can only occur in irrealeis contexts only? This has to do with the incompatibility of zai with the perfect particle le. For example, we gave (2) as an illustration for the traditional conception that zai doesn’t occur in realis contexts; the example is repeated in (39). But if zai actually may occur in realis contexts, then the incompatibility of zai with le must have resulted from some other reason.

(39) *Xiaoming zuotian zai lai le. (= (2))

Xiaoming yesterday again come PERF

‘Xiaoming came again yesterday.’

To approach this question, we must look at the semantics of zai in a closer way. Typically, when zai adjoins to a predicate that denotes the event P, it is presupposed that there has been an event P’ prior to P which is of the same nature as P, and that P is a continuation of P’, or P is a result from P’. (40)-(43) are some examples.

(40) (Xiaoming went to Taipei the day before yesterday for some work. But the work wasn’t finished. So—)

Xiaoming zuotian zai qu Taipei, ba gongzuo zuo-wan.

Xiaoming yesterday again go Taipei DISP work do-finish

‘Xiaoming went to Taipei again yesterday, to finish up the work.’

(41) (Xiaoming bought a book the day before yesterday—)

Xiaoming zuotian zai mai liang-ben shu.

Xiaoming yesterday again buy two-CL book

‘Xiaoming bought two books again yesterday.’

The sentence in (40) presupposes that Xiaoming had been to Taipei, and that event had a direct bearing on Xiaoming’s going to Taipei yesterday. Likewise, the sentence in (41) presupposes an event of book-purchase by Xiaoming before yesterday, and the book-purchase yesterday was a continuation of that prior event. In this kind of contexts, zai is licensed. Without such presupposition, zai is not quite acceptable. An example is (42).
Xiaoming the-day-before-yesterday cry PERF yesterday again cry
‘(Intended) Xiaoming cried the day before yesterday; yesterday he cried again.’

Since it is not easy to understand an event of crying (an outburst in response to certain emotion) as a continuation of or result from a previous event of crying, (42) sound awkward. In such cases zai is not well licensed, and this is why (42) is degraded. You, on the other hand, is neutral in this regard, so (42) will turn acceptable is zai is replaced by you.

Sometimes the sense of continuation or result that underlies a zai sentence is fairly abstract. However, in such sentences, it is always possible to sort out a common thread that links the prior event and the asserted event together. See the following sentence for example.

Xiaoming the-day-nefore-yesterday mop floor yesterday again clean kitchen this-way finally DISP house clean clean PERF
‘Xiaoming mopped the floor the day before yesterday, and again cleaned the kitchen yesterday; this way [he] finally get the house clean.’

In (43) the event modified by zai, namely kitchen cleaning, is not really a repetition of the prior event floor mopping. But these two events share the objective of house cleaning. Thus the two events can be regarded as constituting a continuum that lead to the consummation of house cleaning. A common thread, namely house cleaning, runs through the two events. Zai is licensed in such contexts, regardless of whether the sentence is in realis or irrealis mood. If a zai-sentence is not supported by such a “common thread”, then the occurrence of zai will result in marginality or event unacceptability. (44) is an example.

Xiaoming da-po yi-ge huaping.
‘Xiaoming hit-break one-CL vase’

zai da-po yi-ge.
‘again hit-break one-CL’
‘Xiaoming broke a vase the day before yesterday, and yesterday [he] carelessly broke a vase again.’

Vase breaking, in normal circumstances, is hard to be conceived as something that one would conduct in a continual fashion. Furthermore, the adverbial *bu-xiaoxin* ‘carelessly’ brings in the sense that the second event of vase breaking wasn’t meant to be a continuation of the first event of vase breaking. In this context, therefore, the use of *zai* is awkward. *You*, on the other hand, is neutral in this regard, so it is acceptable in this context.

### 4.3. The structural analysis of *zai*

How does the semantics of *zai* contribute to its structural analysis? Here we once again resort to Shen’s (2004) theory on the predicates of Chinese sentences. We have seen the dynamic light verb *dlv* in section 3; here we will introduce another light verb in Shen’s (2004) theory, the static light verb *slv*. Shen (2004) proposes that *slv* can be merged to a dynamic predicate and turn it static. Below are two examples:

(45) Xiaoming he hong jiu.
Xiaoming drink red wine
‘Xiaoming drinks red wine [as a hobby].’

(46) Shizhang mingtian da gaoerfu
major tomorrow play golf
‘The major [will] play golf tomorrow [in his schedule].’

In (45) and (46), the predicates ‘drink red wine’ and ‘play golf’ are dynamic, but these two sentences are actually static—(45) is a habitualizing sentence, and (46) has a “schedule” reading. The static reading, in Shen’s (2004) theory, is attributed to the static light verb *slv*. (45) and (46) this are analyzed as in (47) and (48).

(47) Xiaoming [AspP [vP *slv*-dynamic] [VP he hong jiu ]] Ø(-dynamic)]
    Xiaoming drink red wine
(48) Shizhang mingtian [AspP [vP *slv*-dynamic] [VP da gaoerfu ]] Ø(-dynamic)]
    major tomorrow play golf
The static light verb *slv*, in Shen’s (2004) theory, attributes the sense of obligation, intention, genericity, or habibuality to the predicate. This is exactly what we seen in (45) and (46). Notice that when *slv* is merged to a dynamic predicate, the predicate turns static, and due to the aspectual agreement between Asp and the predicate, the sentence must assume static aspect, represented by the phonetically null element $\emptyset$ in (47) and (48). In particular the perfect particle *le* cannot occur here, since *le* is [+dynamic] and cannot agree with the static predicate headed by *slv*.

We believe that the semantics of *zai* is a function of *slv*. We saw above that *zai* adjoins to a dynamic predicate, yet the predicate doesn’t really denote a dynamic event, but a continuation of or result from the event. We may, therefore, conceive of the predicate that *zai* adjoins to as denoting the state that follows from the dynamic event. If this thinking is correct, then *zai* adjoins to a vP headed by *slv*, as follows.

(49)

This structure does not only account for the semantics of *zai*, but also solve the problem of the perfect particle *le*. We noted above that though *zai* adjoins to a dynamic predicate, *zai* is not very compatible with *le*. Now the reason is clear. *Zai* doesn’t really adjoin to the dynamic predicate directly, but to a vP headed by *slv*, which in turn takes a dynamic vP/VP as complement. Since *slv* is static, the Asp of the sentence must be static as well, namely $\emptyset$. This is why *le* generally is not compatible with *zai*. We also noted above that other elements in the sentence may trigger the presence of *le*, such as *you* and *nenggou* ‘be able to’ in (37b). (50) is an example where *you* and *zai* occur in one sentence, and the structural analysis is given in (51). In (51), Asp agrees with the light verb *dlv*, hence *le* is present. This *dlv* takes the vP that *zai* adjoins to as complement, which is headed by *slv*.
In (51) both slv and dlv occur in one and the same predicate. Shen (2004) argues that such multiple occurrences of light verbs is required to derive the possible predicates in Mandarin Chinese sentences. We also see this in sentences where zai adjoins to a static predicate. We noted above that when zai adjoins to a static predicate, it turns the predicate dynamic, as follows:

(52) (Chuntian-de shihou,) hua hui zai hong. (= (35a))
    spring-MOD time flower will again red
    '(In spring,) flowers will [beomce] red.'

The structural analysis of (52) is (53):

(53) … hua hui [TP … [AspP [vP zai [vP slv [vP dlv [VP hong ]]]]]]
    flower will again red

Slv takes a dynamic predicate as complement. But the main verb/adjective hong ‘red’ is static. Thus the dynamic light verb dlv is merged into the structure to mediate between slv and hong ‘red’, and bring in the sense of change of state along its merger.

4.3. Summary

The above discussion shows that zai adjoins to a vP headed by the static light verb slv. This provides a satisfactory account for the properties of zai: its low structural position (relative to you), its semantics, and its general incompatibility with the perfect particle le.

We have seen examples where you and zai occur in one and the same sentence, e.g. (50)/(51). Here we provide one more example. This example shows that the light verbs dlv and slv are crucial to the licensing of you and zai.
Xiaoming you nenggou zai qu xuexiao le.
Xiaoming again be-able again go school PERF
'Once more, Xiaoming becomes able to go to school again.'

5. Some further issues concerning you and zai

In this section we discuss some further questions pertaining to you and zai. We will show that you and zai may interact with other elements in the sentence yielding very interesting effects.
5.1. Event and action repetition

We assign the meaning of repetition to you because a repetition of the event is entailed. Look at the following sentence:

(56) Xiaoming zuotian you lai le.
Xiaoming yesterday again come PERF
‘Xiaoming came again yesterday.’

For (56) to be true, it is necessary that Xiaoming had come at least once before yesterday. Thus we have a repetition of the event of Xiaoming’s coming. This is why you is taken to denote repetition of an event.

However, you sometimes doesn’t denote repetition of the entire event. Compare the following two sentences.

(57) Xiaoming you chi wu-ge pinguo le
Xiaoming again eat five-CL apple PERF
‘Xiaoming ate another five apples again.’

(58) Xiaoming you chi-le wu-ge pinguo.
Xiaoming again eat-PERFTV five-CL apples
‘Xiaoming ate five apples again.’

While (57) denote repetition of the whole event—five-apple-eating followed by another five-apple-eating—(58) seems to denote repetition of the action of eating only, not the whole event of five-apple-eating. The antecedent event to (58) can be one in which Xiaoming ate only two apples, or even two burgers. Thus (58) can be felicitously uttered if the antecedent event is not a five-apple-eating event; some sort of eating action will suffice. So the contrast between (57) and (58) is one of the scope of repetition—the whole event in (57) but just the action in (58).

Clearly the perfect particle le and the perfective suffix –le are responsible for the different readings of (57) and (58). How do they result in the event repetition reading and the action repetition reading with you?

It has long been observed that the perfective suffix –le doesn’t entail completion of the action/event denoted by the verb/predicate (see Tai 1984, Smith 1994, Sybesma 1997, Klein et al. 2000, J. Lin 2000, among many others). For example, (59) does not express a logical
contradiction, since the suffixation of –le to the verb xie ‘write’ doesn’t entail the culmination of the event of letter-writing. J. Lin (2000) also points out that sentences like (60) don’t have any sense of completion or culmination.

(59) Xiaoming xie-le yi-fen xin, keshi hai mei xie-wan.
Xiaoming write-PERFTV one-CL letter but yet have-not write-finish
‘Xiaoming wrote a letter, but he hasn’t finished it yet.’

(60) Xiaoming yang-le yi-tiao yu.
Xiaoming pet-PERFTV one-CL fish
‘Xiaoming pets a fish.’

Thus it is clear that when a verb is suffixed with the perfective marker –le, the resulting predicate denotes an action.

On the other hand, the sentence-final perfect particle le is often said to have an “inchoative” function and denotes a change of state (see Li and Thompson (1981), for instance). This means that the perfect particle le imposes a telic bound to the event denoted by the predicate (see Liao 2004). Look at the following examples for instance. (61) means that the action of letter-writing has reached a point where three letters have been produced (thus a logical contradiction will arise if the second clause of (59) is appended to (61)), and (62) means that the situation where Xiaoming pets a fish has been achieved.

(61) Xiaoming xie san-fen xin le.
Xiaoming write three-CL letter PERF
‘Xiaoming has written thee letters.’

(62) Xiaoming yang yi-tiao yu le.
Xiaoming pet one-CL fish PERF
‘Xiaoming has pet a fish.’

Thus a predicate with the perfect particle le denotes a bounded event.

The contrast between (57) and (58), therefore, has a direct bearing on the event types represented by the perfect particle le and the perfective suffix –le. The repetition that you denotes does not simply target the predicate at its literal meaning, but also the event type that underlies the predicate. In (57), the whole event repeats because the predicate of the sentence denotes a bounded event due to the function of the perfect particle le. This is why
the entity that repeats is the event of five-apple-eating, the telic bound being defined on the numeral *wu-ge pingguo* ‘five apple’ (cf. Verkuyl 1993, Liao 2004). In (58), only the action of eating repeats; this is because the predicate in (58) denotes an unbounded event due to the function of the perfective suffix –le, and thus you only denotes repetition of this unbounded event, namely the action of eating (of certain things).

The perfect particle *le* and the perfective suffix –le may occur in the same sentence, as in (63):

(63)  
Xiaoming you chi-le wu-ge pinguo le  
Xiaoming again eat-PERFTV five-CL apple PERF  
‘Xiaoming ate another five apples again.’

(63) actually is no different from (57) in meaning; that is, what repeats is the whole event of five-apple-eating. This is the case because the presence of *le* is sufficient to make the predicate bounded. The perfective suffix –le simply serves as a realization marker without any substantial impact on the event type of the predicate (Liu 1988, Klein *et al.* 2000).

One thing that should be mentioned is that, though the default reading of (58) is such that the action that repeats is eating (of certain things), it is possible that the action that is meant to “repeat” is not eating, but some other action related to eating in some way. See (64) for example.

(64)  
Xiaoming he-le liang-bei niunai,  
Xiaoming drink-PERFTV two-glass milk  
you chi-le wu-ge pinguo,  
again eat-PERFTV five-CL apples  
cai juede bao.  
only feel full  
‘[Only after] Xiaoming drank two glasses of milk, and again [continued to] eat five apples, did he feel full.’

In this case what is meant to repeat is the action of ingesting, of which drinking and eating are instances. Such sentences are permitted as long as the action of the antecedent event can be subsumed under certain general category that also encompasses the depicted action of the sentence. This is similar to the case of *zai* that we discussed in section 4.2. There we
showed that *zai* can be used as long as a common thread runs through the prior event and the depicted event, and the depicted event can be rightfully regarded as a continuation of, or result from, the prior event. The depicted event doesn’t have to be identical to the prior event. See the following example for demonstration.

(65) Xiaoming he-le liang-bei niunai,
    Xiaoming drink-PERFTV two-glass milk
    (ranhou) zai chi wu-ge pinguo,
    and-then again eat-PERFTV five-CL apples
    zonggong hua-le wu-bai kuai.
    altogether spend-PERFTV five-hundred dollar
    ‘Xiaoming drank two glasses of milk, and again [continued to] eat five apples; [he] totally spent five hundred dollars.’

Therefore, we may reasonably assume that *zai*, like *you*, denotes repetition on the basis of the event type, not simply the literal description of the predicate.

In conclusion, the scope of repetition in the semantics of *you* and *zai* is not simply determined by the literal description of the predicate, but more crucially by the event type of the predicate. This is actually in line with the discoveries that some researchers made regarding the adverb *again* in English (and other languages) (see von Stechow (1996), Beck and Johnson (2004), and Beck (2005)). According to these discoveries, *again* may “look into” the event composition of a predicate yielding what are known as the ‘repetitive reading” and the “restitutive reading.” See the following example ((1), Beck 2005:3).

(66) Bilbo opened the door again

    Reading 1: Bilbo opened the door, and that had happened before. (Repetitive)
    Reading 2: Bilbo opened the door, and the door had been open before. (Restitutive)

According to von Stechow (1996), Beck and Johnson (20044), and Beck (2005), The two readings of (66) arise from the modification of *again* on the whole causative event of opening (the repetitive reading) or on the state of being open only (the restitutive reading). Our finding is in line with the discoveries of these researchers; that is, the “repetition power” of *you* and *zai* is sensitive to the event type of the predicate.⁷
5.2. Resumption vs. repetition

We saw above that you and zai do not always denote repetition of the entire event; sometimes they just denote repetition of the action. In fact zai has an even more intriguing property: it may denote “repetition” of an event/action that doesn’t actually exist. Compare the following two sentences:

(67) Xiaoming (jintian bu neng lai,) mingtian zai lai.
    Xiaoming today not can come tomorrow again come
    ‘Xiaoming (cannot come today as expected;) [he will] come tomorrow.’

(68) Xiaoming mingtian keneng / hui / nenggou zai lai.
    Xiaoming tomorrow possibly will be-able again come
    ‘Xiaoming may / will / is able to come again tomorrow.’

In (67), the meaning of zai is more like resumption of an event/action that is expected to happen but in fact doesn’t, rather than repetition of an existing event/action. (68) differ from (67) minimally in that it contains a modal. However, (68) doesn’t have the “non-existing event/action” reading—in fact the most natural reading of (68) is that the event/action meant to repeat has indeed happened. Below is one more pair of examples:

(69) Xiaoming mingtian zai hui xue xiao.
    Xiaoming tomorrow again return school
    ‘Xiaoming [will] go back to school tomorrow, [not the expected time, e.g. today.]’

(70) Xiaoming mingtian keneng / hui / neng zai hui xue xiao.
    Xiaoming tomorrow possibly will be-able again return school
    ‘Xiaoming may / will / is able to go back to school again tomorrow.’

Why can zai denote “repetition” of a non-existing event/action? Why does the presence or absence of a modal matter so much?

To answer these questions, let's remove zai from (67) and (68). We obtain the following sentences.

(71) Xiaoming mingtian lai.
    Xiaoming tomorrow come
    ‘Xiaoming [will] come tomorrow.’
(72) Xiaoming mingtian keneng / hui / nenggou lai.
Xiaoming tomorrow possibly will be-able come
‘Xiaoming may / will / is able to come tomorrow.’

(71) has a strong implication that Xiaoming will not be coming until tomorrow. But (72) doesn't have such an implication; it is neutral. (73) and (74) show the same contrast with zai removed:

(73) Xiaoming mingtian hui xuexiao.
Xiaoming tomorrow return school
‘Xiaoming [will] go back to school tomorrow.’

(74) Xiaoming mingtian keneng / hui / nenghui xuexiao.
Xiaoming tomorrow possibly will be-able return school
‘Xiaoming may / will / is able to go back to school tomorrow.’

(73) has an implication that Xiaoming will not go back to the school before tomorrow, yet (74) doesn’t have such an implication.

It is now clear that the contrasts in (67)-(68) and (69)-(70) are simply preserved from (71)-(72) and (73)-(74). Zai is not responsible for these contrasts; it denotes repetition throughout. However, in (67)-(68) and (69)-(70), there is in fact no event/action to repeat, due to the implication carried over from (71)-(72) and (73)-(74). To accommodate the "missing event/action," the grammar simply creates a “phantom event/action” as the antecedent event/action, and construes it in such a way that it was expected to happen but in fact does not. So zai in (67) and (69) doesn't really denote resumption of an event/action; it still denotes repetition, though the event/action that is meant to repeat in fact doesn't exist, a “phantom.” (68) and (70), on the other hand, are different, because (72) and (74) are neutral in the first place. This neutrality is preserved after the adjunction of zai. The grammar then construes (68) and (70) in the familiar way, yielding the normal repetition reading.

5.3. Intensification vs. repetition

In the following examples zai doesn’t seem to denote repetition but intensification:
(75) a. Zhe-jian gongzuo, ni zai zenme zuo,
    this-cl work you again how do
    ye bu keneng wancheng.
too not possible complete
‘[No matter] how [hard] you do [it], this work cannot be completed.’
b. Zhe-liang che zai (zenme) gui,
    this-cl car again how expensive
    ye mei Falali gui.
too not Ferrari expensive
‘[No matter] how expensive this car is, it cannot be as expensive as a Ferrari.’

In these two sentences, zai doesn’t seem to have the meaning of repetition; it seems to denote intensification of the degree of a state/action. Is the zai in these examples simply a homonym of the “repetition” zai, or is it derived from the “repetition” zai in some way?

We believe the latter is correct. If we remove zai from (75a), we obtain (76):

(76) Zhe-jian gongzuo, ni zai zenme zuo, ye bu keneng wancheng.
    this-cl work you again how do too not possible complete
‘[No matter] how [hard] you do [it], this work cannot be completed.’

(76) retains the essentials of (75a), including the modal force (‘no matter…’) and the quantification over degree (represented by the non-interrogative wh-element zenme ‘how’). Comparing (75a) and (76), we find that the sense of intensification (‘no matter how much you do it…’) actually arises from the degree quantification represented by zenme ‘how’, no from zai. The function of zai in (75a) is that it brings in an implication that the addressee of (75a) has already spent some effort on the work. In other words, zai in (75a) still denotes repetition. This point becomes clear if we look at (76), which is neutral with respect to whether the addressee has already had spent effort on the work.

(75b) involves some complications. If we remove zai from (75b), we don’t actually get a grammatical sentence, as in (77):

(77) *Zhe-liang che (zenme) gui, ye mei Falali gui.
    this-cl car how expensive too not Ferrari expensive
‘[No matter] how expensive this car is, it cannot be as expensive as a Ferrari.’
To obtain a grammatical sentence, the operator bulun ‘no matter’ must occur, and the degree adverb zenme ‘how’ cannot be omitted, as in (78):

(78)  Zhe-liang che bulun zenme gui,
      this-cl car no matter how expensive
      ye mei Falali gui.
      too not Ferrari expensive

      ‘No matter how expensive this car is, it cannot be as expensive as a Ferrari.’

Thus the constructions of the kind (75a-b) appear to exhibit a dynamic/static contrast. This issue itself deserves in-depth study, which we will not go into in this paper.  

For the present purpose, let’s simply assume that (78) is equivalent to (75b) with zai removed. The by-now familiar contrast in implication emerges again. (75b) has the implication that the car referred to has already been considered expensive (by the addressee or a third party), yet (78) doesn’t have such an implication. This, again, is a manifestation of the repetition meaning of zai. Zai doesn’t denote intensification; the sense of intensification arises from the quantification of the degree adverb zenme ‘how’. Zai denotes repetition through out.

6. Summary
In this work we examined the elements you 'again' and zai 'again'. We show that you adjoins to an AspP with the feature [+dynamic], and zai adjoins to a vP headed by the static light verb slv. We also examined some phenomena involving to you and zai. It was shown that the repetition that these two elements denote are determined by the event type of the predicate. Some special uses of zai were also discussed, and we showed that in all these uses zai retain the meaning of repetition.
References


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Notes

1 The abbreviations used in this paper are: CL: classifier; DISP: the disposal marker (an object-shift marker); MOD: modification marker; PERF: perfect aspect; PERF TV: perfective aspect;
2 Some native speakers of Mandarin Chinese that we consulted don’t accept sentences in which you precede an epistemic modal. Please see note 6 for a possible explanation. The grammatical judgments reported here are of the authors’.
3 We follows Shen (2004) and define “dynamic” in such a way that a predicate is dynamic if the eventuality it denotes continues or changes in time. For details, see Shen (2004).
4 The modals hui 'will' and yao 'be going to' pattern with the deontic modals in this regard, though hui 'will' generally is not quite compatible with the perfect particle le. For detailed discussion of the relevant questions, see Lin (2005), who attributes the relevant differences to the finiteness properties of the clausal complements of different modals.
5 Some Mandarin Chinese speakers that we consulted reported that they find examples such as (12a), (13a), and (26) not very good; that it, they don’t accept you preceding an epistemic modals. Perhaps to them the epistemic modals have to remain static all the time and thus resist “dynamicization” brought about by the adjunction of you. This difference doesn’t seem to affect our analysis in any substantial way, though.
6 Mandarin Chinese has an adverb that denotes repetition and involves zai as a component: zai-yi-ci ‘again-one-time = once again’, sometimes abbreviated as zai-ci ‘again-time’. Zai-yi-ci is different from zai and cannot be regarded as simply composed of zai plus a frequency measure phrase, because zai-yi-ci exhibits properties distinct from those of zai. First, zai-yi-ci ‘once again’ is a full-fledged adverbial, as it can take the adverbial ending –di (equivalent to English -ly) and yield zai-yi-ci-di ‘once again’. Zai, on the other hand, looks more like an X°-adverb, as it cannot take the adverbial ending -di. Second, zai is restricted in the syntactic position that it may occur (see (31a-d)), but zai-yi-ci ‘once again’ enjoys much more freedom in occurrence, in that it may occur in the sentence-initial position, as in (i.b) and (i.c).

(i) a. Xiaoming nenggou zai-yi-ci qi jiaotache le. 
Xiaoming be-able once-again ride bicycle PERF
‘Xiaoming has become able to ride a bicycle once again.’
b. Xiaoming zai-yi-ci nenggou qi jiaotache le.  
Xiaoming once-again be-able ride bicycle PERF
‘Xiaoming, once again, has become able to ride a bicycle.’

c. Zai-yi-ci, Xiaoming nenggou qi jiaotache le.  
once-again Xiaoming be-able ride bicycle PERF
‘Xiaoming, once again, has become able to ride a bicycle.’

Third, zai is not compatible with the sentence-final perfect particle le (see the discussion in the text), but zai-yi-ci is compatible with le, as in (i.a-c). All these differences indicate that zai and zai-yi-ci ‘once again’ are different elements. Limited by scope, we will not go into the analysis of zai-yi-ci ‘once again’.

7 You and zai also permit the restitutive reading. (i) is an example.

(i) Wo benlai zhi you yi-zhang piao,  
I originally only have one-CL ticket  
Xiaoming you / zai gei wo yi-zhang piao,  
Xiaoming again again give me one-CL ticket  
suyo wo xianzai you liang-zhang piao.  
so I now have two-CL ticket
‘Originally I had only one ticket; [later] Xiaoming gave me one ticket again. So now I have two tickets.’

There have been debates on how the repetitive/restitutive distinction should be handled; Dowty (1979) and Fabricius-Hansen (2001) propose that this distiction is of semantic nature, whereas Stechow (1996), Beck and Johnson (2004), and Beck (2005) argue that it should be syntactic. At present we are not sure which approach is better for the analysis of the restitutive reading of you and zai. We will leave the question to future studies.

8 There are in fact more complications with (75a-b). For example, the degree adverb zenme ‘how’ in (75a) can be replaced by a regular kind of adverb, e.g. nuli ‘[work] hard’, in which case the degree being quantified over is that of hard working. Such replacement is not possible with (75b). There are still other questions that deserve exploration. We will not go into them in this paper.
Notice that in (75b) the predicate that zai adjoins to doesn’t denote a change of state, but a change of the (possible) degree of a state. This is still compatible with the semantics of zai that we characterized in section 4.2.