Decomposing Genericity
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Two approaches have competed in the issue of genericity. One is Carlson (1977), who tried to account for generic sentences by the $\text{Gn}$-operator operating on the subject-predicate structure. The other is Heim (1982), Kratzer (1995) and Diesing (1992), who tried to explain generic sentences by means of unselective binding. In this paper, I propose that the effects of both approaches can be seen in Mandarin Chinese, but on different levels. Extending this discovery, I propose that there should be two levels of genericity in natural languages.

In Mandarin Chinese, there are two types of generic sentences. One is the aspectual generic sentence; see (1). The other is the modalistic generic sentence, characterized by the presence of the modal $\text{hui}$ ‘will’; see (2). These two types of generic sentences differ in a number of respects. First, they occur with different groups of frequency adverbs; see (3) and (4). Second, the aspectual generic sentence denotes a property or habit of the subject with a strong sense of lawlikeness. On the other hand, the modalistic generic sentence only expresses some generalization and doesn’t show such a strong sense of lawlikeness. Third, in the aspectual generics, there is a subject-object asymmetry on the interpretation of bare NPs. That is, the object of an aspectual generic sentence can never be a generic term, unlike the subject; it can only assume a narrow-scoped existential reading. On the other hand, the modalistic generics do not exhibit such asymmetry. Bare subject and object NPs can assume the generic interpretation. Fourth, frequency adverbs in the aspectual generics do not affect the interpretations of NPs; in other words, unselective-binding effect is absent in the aspectual generics. For the modalistic generics, on the contrary, the interpretation of bare object NPs may vary along with different frequency adverbs.

Thus genericity splits into two different levels in Mandarin Chinese. The aspectual generics fit the Carlsonian approach and behave intensionally on the time index. The $\text{Gn}$-operator lifts a stage-level predicate to an individual-level predicate and strings up the relevant stages. The frequency adverbs occurring in aspectual generics quantify over probabilities (cf. Cohen (1999)), for they do not only quantify over the events that happen, but also predict the probability of the happening of the event on every time index in the future. In the modalistic generics, the modal $\text{hui}$ ‘will’ serves as the modal base and raises intensionality on possible worlds. The frequency adverbs occurring within the modalistic generics quantify over possible worlds. The unselective-binding effect on the object is the result of quantification over pairs of the index of possible world and the object NP. What is even more interesting is that these two levels of genericity can co-occur in a single sentence; see (5). Following the spirit of Chierchia (1995) that the Q-adverb Gen agrees with the head Hab in the feature $[+Q]$, we come up with the structure in (6) for (5). This structure also provides evidence for the adverbial hierarchy and licensing proposed by Cinque (1999).

English sentences also exhibits such split genericity; see (7) and (8). It is the termination
of stages of dinosaurs that affects the grammaticality of (7b). The _often-usually_ contrast indicates that _often_ only quantifies over probabilities whereas _usually_ quantifies over both probabilities and possible worlds. Comparing Chinese with English, it appears that the case of Chinese, namely the two levels of genericity realized on different levels of phrase structure, arises from the special property of Chinese that its phrase structure is more event-transparent (Lin 2001). In English the two levels of genericity are compacted into the aspectual head, and, as a consequence, only by examining the different Q-adverb can we detect the two levels of genericity. Such a distinction can be accounted for by the Lexicalization Parameter proposed by Lin (2001), according to which languages may vary on the phrase structural height which lexicalization reaches.

(1) Laohu chi ren
   Tigers eat human beings
   ‘Tigers eat human beings’
(2) Laohu hui chi ren
   Tigers will eat human-beings
   ‘Tigers eat human beings.’
(3) a. _often_-group: _zongshi_ (all the time), _changchang_ (often), _henshao_ (rarely)
   b. _usually_-group: _yixiang_ (always), _tungchang_ (usually), _oer_ (sometimes), _nande_ (seldom)
(4) a. Laohu changchang/*tungchang chi ren
   Tigers often *usually eat human-beings
   ‘Tigers often eat human beings.’
   b. Laohu *changchnag/tungchang hui chi ren
   Tigers *often/usually will eat human-beings
   ‘Tigers usually eat human beings.’
(5) Laowang oer hui changchang qu Taipei
   Laowang sometimes will often go-to Taipei
   ‘It is sometimes the case that Laowang often goes to Taipei.’
(6) ModP
       oer Mod’
       [+Q] AspP
           Mod Asp
           hui changchang Asp
           [+Q] Ga
(7) a. Dinosaurs often ate ferns.
   b. ?? Dinosaurs often eat ferns.
(8) a. Dinosaurs usually ate ferns
   b. Dinosaurs usually eat ferns.