Yě, yě, yě

On the syntax and semantics of Mandarin *yě*

This dissertation presents a description and analysis of the Mandarin particle *yě* 'also'. It provides a comprehensive syntactic and semantic treatment of three different manifestations of *yě*, namely, Additive *yě*, which is similar to English *also*, Parametric/Scalar *yě*, which we find in 'no matter' and *even/even if* contexts, and, finally, Modal *yě*, basically a concessivity marker.

Additive, Parametric/Scalar and Modal *yě* are different in interpretation and require different licensing conditions. Additive *yě* can only be licensed if an antecedent can be retrieved from the context: the antecedent must be explicitly asserted or otherwise present in the active context and it must have the same argumentative orientation as the host sentence. Parametric/scalar *yě* can only be licensed if scalarity is marked in the sentence. Finally, as a concessivity marker, Modal *yě* presupposes the existence of a concessive proposition as an alternative. Pragmatically, the use of Modal *yě* results in a polite, indirect, tactful or less absolute reading of the host sentence. The syntactic properties of the different manifestations of *yě* are explored vis à vis Butler's modal hierarchy and Cinque's adverb hierarchy. We conclude that there are two positions of *yě* in the syntactic structure, one in CP and the other in IP.

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