

## **A diachronic study of social evaluation towards women in Chinese co-referential appositive construction**

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The Chinese co-referential appositive construction, with the structure of “pronoun + one-CL + NP”, has been paid much attention with respect to its syntactic and pragmatic features (Liu & Zhang 2014, Li 2016). However, few studies focus on the sociolinguistic function (Barron & Schneider 2009) of this construction.

- (1) “Ni Yige Nvren, zou yelu duo weixian”.  
You one-CL woman, walk at night very dangerous  
*“It’s very dangerous for you, a woman, to walk alone at night.”*

Since NP in this construction usually refers to a group of people, and it is often followed by a comment, we can study the social evaluation of a certain social group by analyzing this construction. Based on the CCL (Center for Chinese Linguistics) diachronic corpus, this study investigates how the social evaluation of women changes over 2000 years and how it is influenced by social factors such as marriage (married or unmarried), degree of education (low or high), occupation (whether they have jobs), age (young or old), economic status (low or high), social status (low or high) and residence (urban or rural). The social evaluation, as the dependent variable, is reduced to binary data (negative and non-negative). According to a binary logistic regression, our findings indicate that: 1) Although women tend to receive negative comments in general, their social evaluation becomes more neutral and positive over centuries, especially after 1700s and 1900s; 2) By using a generalized additive model, it has been found that women’s social evaluation is less sensitive to social factors during the 9<sup>th</sup> century BC-0 (the first period). During the 0-17AD (the second period), their social evaluation is significantly correlated with age ( $p < 0.001$ ). 3) After the 18<sup>th</sup> century (the third period), there is a fluctuation of social factors that correlated with social evaluation towards women. During this period, the social factors that significantly contribute to the change of women’s social evaluation are age ( $p < 0.001$ ), occupation ( $p < 0.001$ ), social status ( $p < 0.001$ ) and education ( $p < 0.001$ ). Based on Chinese co-referential appositive construction, the findings show the overall change of social evaluation towards women in different historic stages. This study shows a way of analyzing constructions from a sociolinguistic perspective.

**Key words:** Chinese co-referential appositive construction, social evaluation of women, diachronic change, corpus-based, a binary logistic regression

## References

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