A Case Study on the Grammaticalization of *GUO* in Mandarin Chinese－Polysemy of the Motion Verb with Respect to Semantic Changes[*]

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This paper investigates the grammaticalization paths of the motion verb *GUO* in Mandarin Chinese based on synchronic corpus data. The Mandarin morpheme *GUO* is shown to have undergone numerous semantic shifts: the spatial *GUO* through the operation of The Moving Ego Metaphor and The Moving Time Metaphor is initially mapped onto the target domain of temporality. With metaphoric or metonymic extension and pragmatic enrichment, *GUO*, which originally means 'physical passing through space,' arrives at its new senses of 'to go beyond a certain norm,' 'excessively,' and 'a mistake.' Further separate developments have led to the use of *GUO* such as that found in the concessive adverb *Bu-GUO*, and to its use as an experiential aspect marker. In these evolutional processes, *GUO* has changed from a basic motion verb to a highly polysemous word, and provides the language with an enriched set of concepts that signify various abstract functions related to path, direction, time flow, norm, and temporal experience.

Key words: grammaticalization, motion verb, polysemy, semantic changes

1. Introduction

Since Meillet (1912), the phenomenon of grammaticalization has been noticed by linguists and recognized as fundamental to diachronic language change. However, it has only been in the last decade or so that research into grammaticalization has become a truly disciplinary concern. In concert with research on the nature of grammaticalization is the equally widespread preöccupation with typological and cross-linguistic investigations of paths of grammaticalization (Hegège 1993, Hopper and Traugott 1993, McMahon 1994, Pagliuca 1994, Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca 1994, Harris and Campbell 1995, Heine 1997, Gildea 2000, et al.). Among the issues addressed in these research efforts is

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the status of the central claim of grammaticalizaton, namely the unidirectionality of grammaticalization. (See Ramat and Hopper 1998 and Campbell 2001 for details). Regardless of the controversy within grammaticalization theories, the present study on the grammaticalization of *GUO* in Mandarin falls under the range of what Hopper and Traugott (1993:126) have called "prototypical grammaticalization." We begin by making explicit the definition of grammaticalization we adopt in this analysis. Grammaticalization is:

> "the process whereby lexical items and constructions come in certain linguistic contexts to serve grammatical functions, and, once grammaticalized, continue to develop new grammatical functions." (Hopper and Traugott 1993:xv)

In this view, the notion of "unidirectionality", that is, the tendency to advance from a less grammatical to a more grammatical status is implicitly assumed. What recent research on grammaticalization has shown is that certain functional elements always originate from lexical categories. For example, case markers typically develop from terms of body parts or verbs of motion; tense and aspect markers typically have their origins in spatial configurations; modals come from terms for possession, or desire; middle voice markers usually derive from reflexives, etc. (Traugott and Heine 1991). Our investigation of *GUO* also reveals this very process of semantic change: *lexical > grammatical*. In this study, we demonstrate that the semantic changes of this Mandarin motion verb lend further support to this claim of grammaticalization; most importantly, we also hope to illustrate how this universal process contributes to language change and lexical polysemy.

At the same time, we subscribe to the belief that "grammaticalization has to be conceived of as a panchronic process that presents both a diachronical perspective … and a synchronic perspective…" (Heine, Claudi and Hünnemeyer 1991:261). The reason for holding this belief is that we do observe in this research that traces of grammaticalization are accessible both to a diachronic analysis of early conventionalized forms and to a synchronic analysis of language-use patterns. Although grammaticalization is originally used to characterize gradual diachronic development of content morphemes, situated discourse dynamics and pragmatic forces both take part in these overall developmental processes. The synchronic structure of a linguistic unit can only be understood in terms of its historical development and is deeply rooted in its paths of grammaticalization over historical time. In the present case study, a large number of synchronic instances of *GUO* will be examined from a cognitive point of view, but whenever relevant, historical sources are also cited to support the present analysis.

Besides the issues of directionality, numerous researchers on grammaticalization

also speak of the possible motivations behind this feature of linguistic change. Haspelmath (l998) argues that the underlying psychological and cognitive motivations for "expressivity" are responsible for grammaticalization. We concur with this line of thinking. We consider this need for expressivity in certain situated contexts (Huang 2000b) to be what causes the initial semantic-pragmatic change of a lexical category in a certain grammatical construction followed by morphosyntactic adjustments or phonetic adaptations.

Taking the above assumptions for granted, we begin our investigation of the grammaticalization process of the Mandarin morpheme *GUO*. Expressions or sentences containing the morpheme *GUO* from the Sinica Corpus form the main database of the present study, supplemented by corpus materials from the Taida Spoken Corpus and from dictionary sources.

The organization of this paper is as follows. The remainder of Section 1 reviews previous work on the mechanisms of grammaticalization and the notion of "layering" proposed in Hopper (1991). Section 2 focuses on the temporal mapping of *GUO* from the spatial domain. Section 3 investigates the semantic extensions of *GUO* through metaphoric or metonymic mappings and identifies the rise of causative, normative, and resultative *GUO*s. Section 4 is concerned with further evolution of *GUO* toward abstractness, including a detailed analysis of *GUO* as a bound morpheme in the concessive adverb *Bu-GUO*[1] and *GUO* as an experiential aspect marker. Section 5 then turns to other meaning shifts of *GUO* at the lexical level and in constructional schema due to pragmatic inferencing (Verspoor, Lee, and Sweetser 1995). Section 6 tests the claim of "unidirectionality." The last section summarizes the present findings and suggests possible implications of this case study.

1.1 Mechanisms behind grammaticalization

The semantic shift of linguistic expressions into a more abstract and more grammatical meaning has been described in terms of several well accepted mechanisms: metaphorical and/or metonymic transfer, pragmatic implicature, and context-induced reïnterpretation (Heine 1997:76). In Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca (1994), five kinds of mechanism for semantic change are identified: metaphorical extension, inference, generalization, harmony, and absorption of contextual meaning. We do not see the need for this five-fold distinction, since it seems that several of them (except for harmony) are a combination or consequence of those espoused by Heine. Secondly, the mechanism of harmony is not operative in non-inflectional languages such as Mandarin. Thus, we

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[1] In personal communication, Professor Shuanfan Huang views such use of *Bu-GUO* as conjunctive, and points out that *Bu-GUO* in some contexts actually behaves like a negative focusing adverb (see later discussion).

shall only discuss the grammaticalization paths of *GUO* in light of the four mechanisms mentioned.

1.2 The "layering" principle

Hopper (1991) has proposed five major principles—layering, divergence, specialization, persistence, and de-categorialization—to account for the internal process of grammaticalization. Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca (1994) also incorporate the "layering" principle into their eight diagnostic hypotheses for the phenomenon of grammaticalization. We consider this layering principle to be the primary factor for the polysemy of the morpheme *GUO*:

> Layering: When new layers emerge within a functional domain, older layers are not necessarily discarded, but may remain to coëxist with and interact with the new layers. (Hopper 1991:22)

> Layering: This rise of new markers is not contingent on the loss or dysfunction of its predecessor. (Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca 1994:21)

This coëxistence and interaction between old and new layers can clearly be seen in the case of *GUO*, as will be demonstrated in the following discussion.

2. Space and time in Mandarin

As Johnson (1987) has pointed out, in early stage of language formation, humans structured their experiences, especially those through body contacts with the physical world, into "embodied" meanings of language and hence made them the basis for interpreting more abstract concepts such as time, emotions, ideas, or events. The way we perceive concrete objects, persons, or locations is applied to abstract categories by metaphorical extensions (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Cross-linguistic evidence has shown that the most pervasive metaphorical mapping is from the spatial domain to the temporal domain, and this always occurs rather early in the history of a language. This is also the case with Mandarin. As research on Mandarin motion verbs such as *Lai* and *Qu* (Huang 1982), or the interesting case of *Jiu* (Liu 1997:263-264) has shown, spatial concepts indeed appear to be a common source domain for our understanding of the target temporal domain. To illustrate this mapping, in the following we shall first examine the semantics of *GUO* as a motion verb, and then we shall proceed to clarify what might underlie this mapping.

2.1 *GUO* as a spatial motion verb

Starting with a cognitive basis, we tend to understand the image schema of *GUO* in terms of "Figure", "Ground", and its trajectory.[2] According to Talmy (2000a:184), "Figure is a moving or conceptually movable entity whose site, path, or orientation is conceived as a variable the particular value of which is the relevant issue," and "Ground is a reference entity, one that has a stationary setting relative to a reference frame, with respect to which the Figure's site, path, or orientation is characterized." The trajectory of *GUO* involves **some Figure moves past some Ground**. In general, when the Figure moves across a certain concrete landmark, the path is one of 'going through', or 'going over/across', depending on the nature of the landmark. This is because Mandarin speakers do not always distinguish three-dimensional passing from two-dimension passing. In Mandarin, unlike in English where different prepositional elements are needed, in cases of going through an enclosed space (e.g., a tunnel or a bush) or in those of going over/across a surface (e.g., water surface, bridge, or street), the motion of traversing is expressed by a single motion verb *GUO*. The role of the contours and properties of landmarks (Svorou 1994) seems not that crucial in Mandarin, at least at the level of linguistic expression. Hence, all motions denoting 'going past' can be expressed by the verb *GUO*.

2.1.1 *GUO* as a main motion verb

The possible paths of the image schema mentioned can be exemplified in the following examples:[3]

(1) 百花叢裡過 (to go through), 片葉不沾身
(2) 過 (to go past) 關
(3) 輕舟已過 (to go past) 萬重山
(4) 過 (to go past) 了幾個沙丘
(5) 過 (to go over/across) 河

Notice that (1) and (3) seem to be older uses of *GUO*, since they can be found in ancient

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[2] A notion on locative relationship like OVER, UNDER, UP, DOWN … to its trajector (Figure) and landmark (Ground) in physically based cognitive patterns or image schemas. For its further application to language structures, see Ungerer and Schmid (1996:156-204).
[3] Examples quoted in this research are primarily extracted from the Sinica Corpus unless otherwise indicated.

Chinese literary works,[4] which attests in the early history of the Chinese language to *GUO* serving as a lexical verb. Of course, *GUO* still retains its prototypical content meaning in Contemporary Mandarin, as in (2), (4), and (5), even though this morpheme has undergone several semantic changes. This retention of an earlier meaning, as noted above, is a common feature observed in all processes of grammaticalization.

The landmark may appear to the right of *GUO* when it acts as the syntactic object, as in examples (2)-(5), or to its left, as in (1) and (6), or may be not overtly indicated, as in (8):

(6) …一位同仁，被疾駛而過的車子…
(7) …每次回家總是匆匆而過
(8) 照片裡的背景是一輛剛咆哮而過的砂石車

In these instances, the landmark seems to be either "anaphoric" as in (6) and (7) (同仁 and 家, respectively), or has to be inferred as in (8) (the landmark should be an unspecified observer). This phenomenon of a "gapped" landmark/or path (Talmy 1996, 2000a, Dewell 1996, Ungerer and Schmid 1996) is not uncommon. In providing a cognitive account on the separability of German *über* 'over', Dewell (1996:112) has observed that the use of separable *über* usually is associated with a pragmatically recoverable landmark. The English case study by Lakoff (1987:419) on *over* also illustrates a similar instance with an unspecified landmark as in "The plane flew over." How Mandarin *GUO* differs from German *über* or English *over* on this point is that *GUO* acts as a lexical verb rather a preposition or particle.

Spatial *GUO* as a motion verb may also be followed by the deictic *Lai* or *Qu* to signify the directionality of the Figure, which is either moving away from the speaker or towards the speaker:

(9) ..我過去跟你拿自修好了.\
(10) ..你才過來阻擋他,_

(9) and (10) are taken from the Taida spoken corpus (henceforth SC). In this kind of usage, by virtue of the deictic features inherent to Mandarin motion verbs *Lai* and *Qu*, the orientation of the figure relies on its relation to the speaker. However, in (9) and (10) the 'passing' meaning of *GUO* seems to be secondary to the deictic meaning of *Lai*, nor can any clear landmarks be identified. There is only the meaning of 'moving some distance', the motion entailed by 'passing'. In other words, in collocation with *Lai* and

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[4] No attempt to cite the sources of the ancient literary expressions is made here, since it is not germane to the discussion at hand.

Qu, *GUO*, though still behaving like a spatial motion verb, has lost some part of its original status as a free lexical unit. While in the following two examples, where the landmarks are explicitly specified, the 'passing' meaning of *GUO* coöccurring with *Lai* and *Qu* seems to be maintained:

(11)　守住河岸教晉兵過不來界是最好的政策
(12)　所以老年應該去過關, 過不去, 就被卡住了

When *GUO-Lai* and *GUO-Qu* with an infix like *Bu* or *De* are not used with any landmarks, they rarely mean spatial 'passing'. Note that 過不去 in (13) remains a motion predication, but it designates the meaning of 'being hard to pass one's mental standards' as a result of metaphor, mapping from physical passing to mental passing:

(13)　你別老是鑽牛角尖, 和自己過不去　(Constructed example)[5]

This reading is more easily interpretable if we resort to the blending theory of Fauconnier and Turner (1996). Blending theory, an elaborated perspective developing from "mental spaces" (Fauconnier 1985), makes use of general and stable knowledge structures associated with two particular domains, and focuses on the on-line conceptualizations by the blend of these structures in a projector's mental scenario. In (13), there seems to be such a mental scenario envisioned by Mandarin users in which a person fails to move past imagined, self-imposed mental obstacles or standards to impede the passing of the person. The integration of the two input conceptual structures, namely "physical space" and "mental space" here, is responsible for the nuanced meaning of the phrase. Similar integration can be seen in example (14):

(14)　A: 你覺得這家餐廳的食物怎樣?
　　　　B: 還過得去啦!　(Constructed example)

In view of their highly frequent occurrences in newspapers and natural discourse, we find the abstract 'passing' by 過得/不去 from prototypical motion predication might have conventionalized through repetition, and become one of the lexical meanings of *GUO* (though this particular usage is not attested in the limited 2000 tokens of *GUO* from the Sinica Corpus).

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[5]　It is obvious that 過不去 in such "mental passing" has become an intransitive verb. Its landmark 自己 can be identified, but appears only in a preposition phrase 跟自己 (or sometimes 和自己).

To summarize briefly, we have identified the spatial meaning of *GUO* with respect to how its trajectors and landmarks are realized in Mandarin expressions through examples (1) to (12). We have also introduced the development of the frequent collocations of *GUO-Lai* and *GUO-Qu* from their spatial to less spatial senses through the process of abstractness.

2.1.2 *GUO* as a verbal suffix in spatial motion

GUO as a directional suffix or directional complement of a motion verb has been discussed extensively in the literature (e.g., Chao 1968, Li and Thompson 1981, Tang 1992, and Chu 2000). As the second verb after a manner or cause verb in motion expressions, *GUO* appears more like a path satellite (see Talmy's 1985 study on the lexicalization pattern of Mandarin), specifying explicit information about the spatial event. In the two following examples, because landmark or medium required by the motion verb *GUO* is kept, *GUO* in this serial verbalization still preserves much of its content meaning, 'passing':

(15) 我揹過河之後就把女子放下
(16) 火車開過一站又一站

But once landmarks are left implicit or gapped, the 'passing' meaning of *GUO* is weakened, and the first verb, which describes the manner of a motion event, gains more prominent meaning of the entire serial verbalization, as in (17) and (18):

(17) 我們小孩子遊戲的地方，平常很少有人走過
(18) 微風輕輕地吹過

In both examples, following *GUO*, deictic verbs *Lai* or *Qu* can also be attached to the motion expression. Many researchers classify this suffixation of deictic verbs to *GUO* after motion verbs conflating manner as another independent subcategory of directional suffix or complement. With deictic verbs, the end point of the motion event relative to the speaker is what falls within the focal conceptualization. Thus, the directional suffix *GUO* in such expression as 坐過來 becomes semantically bleached and serves a more grammatical function.

2.1.3 Cognitive considerations on different syntactic behaviors of spatial *GUO*

The discussion of *GUO* as part of compound spatial expression reminds us of the

research by Bellavia (1996) and Dewell (1996) on the German verb prefix *über*, which in some aspects is similar to the meaning of Mandarin *GUO*. They both argue that different cognitive salience is responsible for different degrees of transitivity between separable and inseparable uses of *über*. Inseparable *über* compounds are chosen by speakers to convey more interaction between the trajector and the landmark, and hence more transitive. This emphasis on transitivity seems not as effective in solving the Mandarin puzzle on *GUO* as a main verb or as a complement in a [VV]V spatial compound. Both kinds of spatial *GUO* can be equally transitive with an overt landmark (e.g., as in (5) and (15)) or intransitive with a recoverable landmark (e.g., as in (7) and (17)). Therefore, this consideration of transitivity might not be crucial for spatial *GUO*s in different syntactic positions.

Another useful line of thinking here might be the distinction made between "summary scanning" and "sequential scanning" by Langacker (1991). He thinks that how the content of a motion event is processed leads to different functions and cognitive perceptions of the verb *cross* and the preposition *across*. "Summary scanning" might better describe the final state of the event, whereas "sequential scanning" is suitable for characterizing an instant of a proceeding event. The former fits the use of a preposition, and the latter a verb. We find this distinction important to an understanding of the difference between *GUO* as a main verb and *GUO* as a directional suffix. The *GUO*, which is in the second position of the serial verbalization, is shown to be more like the English preposition *across*, and can be understood to summarize the motion event. This "summarizing" effect characterizes what a path satellite like *across* in English or Mandarin *GUO* does to a spatial macro-event. However, we should notice that Mandarin *GUO* following a co-event verb is not a preposition-like element as *across* is. Rather, it is some unit that is more or less verbal.

2.2 Temporal mapping of *GUO*

Temporal moving in Mandarin, like spatial moving, can also be understood through the previously introduced image schema of *GUO*. In this section, we shall argue that the metaphorical extension of spatial *GUO* to temporal *GUO* in fact involves two kinds of metaphor, TIME PASSING IS MOTION OVER A LANDSCAPE and TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT, and sometimes their combination. In certain contexts, this mixed metaphor is operative to make temporal *GUO* sometimes ambiguous between the two kinds of metaphor.

2.2.1 The moving ego metaphor

In this metaphor, the image schema in application is "the Figure is an ego in motion, whereas the Ground is a fixed reference point in time with respect to the traveling ego." Therefore, we have the following expressions:

(19)　過午不食
(20)　明末的腐敗政局, 使他有志難抒, 過了而立之年後, 依然無所建樹
(21)　我打算過兩天, 再到別的鞋店去看看
(22)　我們過一段時候, 可能是「平劇」的文化國了

This type of *GUO* has further grammaticalization paths. In exploiting the moving ego metaphor, 'going through' or 'passing by' a certain temporal point or area is reïnterpreted by users as 'to live' or 'to spend' due to contextual pressure:

(23)　不久, 我自醫院返家, 過 (to live) 著正常的生活
(24)　今天是民國八十二年的十一月十五日, 過 (to spend) 了一個國父誕辰紀念日連續假期…

This interpretation has become so deeply entrenched that tokens of this type account for the majority of temporal *GUO*s in the Sinica Corpus. Another related use of this temporal *GUO* 好過 and 難過 is seen in examples (25)-(28):

(25)　勃列日涅夫的日子不會太好過
(26)　我想發生那樣的事, 他也不好過 (Constructed example)
(27)　…今年年關難過
(28)　…前面兩天會很難過吧.\ (SC)

The compound expression 難過 has developed a further reading of 'emotionally difficult to bear', obviously an inference from temporal passing to the emotional domain.

2.2.2 The moving-time metaphor

In this metaphor, we conceive of the Figure in *GUO* image schema as time, and the fixed landmark as the ego. Examining the actual uses of this *GUO*, we think there is not much significance in differentiating the deictic time of the ego and the speaker, for in most contexts the speaker and the ego seem to stand at the same "spatial-temporal" point/area relative to the moving time-flow. Temporal flow is omnipresent as long as the

temporal GUO figures in a sentence. And when that happens, the presence of the ego must be assumed. In other words, the ego is not necessarily situated at the present time, as Ahrens and Huang (2000) have argued. Consider the following examples:

(29) 等到暑假過了, 卻一本也沒看
(30) 去訪時, 冬至剛過
(31) 一年剛過, 小白貓已經長成漂亮的大白貓了

2.2.3 Mixed metaphorical mapping

If both the ego and time are in motion, could the motion 'passing' still be induced in the image schema of *GUO* by metaphorical mapping? We think the answer is yes, based on the following examples:

(32) 「老彭, 明年怎麼過呀?」
(33) …壞事接受處罰, 會覺得好漢做事好漢當, 過了以後他可以重新做人
(34) 沒過多久, 老三提出了新的意見
(35) 民國過了一大半
(36) 事情過了二十年
(37) 哈日的熱潮過了之後[6]

At first sight, it is hard to decide which metaphor gets activated in these examples. Perhaps in (32), most people may agree the moving ego metaphor seems to override the metaphor of TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY and then interpret the latter part of this sentence as "how will you strive to pass next year?" Except for this, most of them appear to be ambiguous between the two kinds of metaphor. Our suggestion to resolve this ambiguity is to take these expressions as making use of two metaphors at the same time. That is, both the ego and time are moving. This phenomenon of "duality" (Lakoff 1993, Yu 1998), which we have now found in temporal *GUO*, conforms to the discovery of Yu (1998:125) in his Case 3 of the TIME AS SPACE metaphor in Mandarin: Time and ego are moving in the same direction along an axis from the past, through present, into future. Therefore, we consider that, once the encountering of the two moving entities occurs, it is likely that they will 'pass' each other as long as they are going at different paces. In this dual metaphor, the canonical orientations of their moving are both towards the future, only in retrospect the ego may sometimes "turn back" to examine the time moving, thus facing the past. However, the ego may still keep on going without

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[6] This instance is taken from a radio conversation between the host and the guest.

changing the original direction, towards the future, even while the other moving entity—time—is passing by her/him. Actually the 'passing' will take place independent of the orientation of the ego or time. Therefore, the lexeme *GUO* can always express temporal passing in Mandarin, even if the distinction on the orientations of both travelers is not made.

Something else worthy of note is that in (35), (36), and (37) the ego seems to attach to the institution, event, or current, and goes together with them, passing by the other on-going entity—time. It seems that the time motion here cannot be interpreted without getting ego involved in the organization or activities. The fact that time is in perpetual motion (whereby people age) might give us some explanation as to why the ego always moves with time, and why there are such dual metaphors in linguistic expression.

3. Metaphor and metonymy in *GUO*

After looking at the operation of metaphors of *GUO* from space to time, now we shall examine how another semantic shift mechanism, metonymy, can also contribute to the understanding of the grammaticalization of *GUO*. Metonymy as well as metaphor has been acknowledged by many linguists as being a powerful conceptual tool for understanding language. Basically, metonymic mappings require a contiguity relation (e.g., part-whole contiguity) between meanings, and metaphorical mappings are based on comparisons between two distinct domains. Besides, metaphorical semantic shift is described as "only possible in the very early stages" (Bybe, Perkins, and Pagliuca 1994: 290-297), an observation also borne out by the present corpus data, whereas metonymic mappings seem to occur later then metaphors in the process of semantic shift. The rest of this section will be concerned with investigating further metaphoric or metonymic meaning changes of *GUO*.

3.1 Causative *GUO*

The prototypical meaning of *GUO* is to depict a motion event of 'passing' or 'crossing'. When only one particular part or property of the entire range of the motion event is picked out to express the resulting state by this motion, new senses of *GUO* may come into being through a metonymic operation. For example, if "location change" of the 'passing' event in (38) is considered to be representative of this motion event, *GUO* here derives the meaning 'to transfer from one person to another' rather than 'to go past' some landmark:

(38) 你再想想有沒有把什麼其它亂七八糟的病過給我[7]

Furthermore in (38), due to contextual reïnterpretation, *GUO*, signifying the displacement of a disease, can be interpreted as 'to be contagious' as well. Of course, many may find that this example also involves a metaphorical conception: The disease is mapped onto a moving entity.

A more obvious metonymic operation is illustrated in (39):

(39) 他的房子還沒過戶給我 (Constructed example)

In this compound, via several earlier metonymic mappings from 'window of the house', and then 'a house', 戶 seems to have obtained the meaning of 'ownership of a house'. *GUO* here also stresses the transferring of the ownership to a destination, not the passing of the ownership with respect to any overt landmark. The Figures for *GUO* in examples (38) and (39) are likewise noteworthy, disease and ownership, respectively: These are not typical trajectors always having volition or intention to perform the action of passing. In this situation, the caused passing may be instantiated by another volitional agent. The same development of such a causative *GUO* can be seen in other VO compounds like 過目, 過秤/過磅, or 過房. In 過目, *GUO* denotes 'to let some Figure be passed by eyes' and thus ' to take a look'. In 過秤/過磅, GUO is the passing of some Figure across a steelyard or weighing scale caused by a volitional—always human—agent, and then means 'to weigh'. In 過房, a child (usually a boy), though a volition agent, is made to go to another room (metonymically signals another family of a kindred branch) and will be brought up as son of the branch. Once again, in this compound, only the end point of the passing schema (i.e., the resultant new location) is treated as important in using *GUO*. This is the reason why *GUO* can be used to indicate location change and designates not only 'to transfer', but 'to get to a new place/state' as well.

3.2 *GUO* and the abstract standard

When one maps a spatial landmark in a dynamic motion onto an abstract reference point in a stative description, one gets sentences like (40) and (41):

(40) 不論國民黨立院席次過不過半…
(41) 言過其辭

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[7] This sentence is taken from the dialog of a movie, which is a contemporary comedy and is acted out in Chinese ancient costume.

In (40), the reference point is 50% of the parliamentary seats. In (41), the reference point is the fact that is described by one's words. When the reference point is some kind of 'standard,' then *GUO* is likely to evolve the interpretation of 'going beyond' or 'exceeding' the standard. Oftentimes, the 'standard' is left implicit, either because it is reconstructible from the prior context as in (42)-(44), or because the standard derives from some abstract social norm, as in (45) and (46):

(42)　而今天發現自己也不過如此而已
(43)　勇氣太過, 會變成毫無規矩
(44)　有過之而無不及[8]
(45)　過分
(46)　過度

In (42), the implicit standard can be understood through the anaphoric pro-form 如此 to its antecedent. The collocation of the negative *Bu* and the verb *GUO* in this example has undergone several stages of semantic and syntactic change, and we shall detail this development later. In (43) and (44), the standard may be one that is thought appropriate in that context, or one that is agreed upon according to the general value in a particular culture. In fact, this "excess" reading is also evidenced in Dewell's (1996:121-122) study on German *über* by imagining a linear path "extending over a normative bound on some presumed abstract scale." From this use, an evaluative sense of *GUO* relative to some abstract scale begins to develop. For compounds like 過分 and 過度, when followed by another state, the abstract landmark might get gapped, giving rise to an adverbial *GUO* meaning 'excessively'. That is, we postulate there might be a derivation of normative verb *GUO* to a degree adverb in 過多, 過長, 過快, etc. We demonstrate the syntactic shifts by the following representations:

[[過(to exceed)]V + [分(a proper standard)]N]Adv. + [多]Adj.
[[過(to exceed)]V + [度(a proper standard)]N]Adv. + [多]Adj.

⟶ [[過(to exceed)]V + (implied standard)]Adv. + [多]Adj.

⟶ [過]Adv. + [多]Adj.

8　Some may argue that the 之 in this phrase can be a pronoun and serve as the landmark of *GUO*, but based on our research, in the earliest use of this phrase, 之 appears to be just a functional marker after a verb. Thus, we claim that the landmark of this phrase will be found preceding *GUO*.

From *GUO* 'to exceed a normative standard', it is but a short step to derive the meaning of 'to behave improperly' or 'to err' (in the moral domain) as in example (47):

(47)　顏回不貳過[9]

Here, *GUO* describes the new state (i.e., to have made a mistake) after passing the proper standard. In addition, we believe this semantic transfer must have occurred early in Mandarin, for this saying can be dated to at least 2,200 years ago. Notice that in this stage *GUO* still functions as a verb. Later on, there seems to occur one prominent disjunctive development from this verbal *GUO* denoting 'to go beyond a certain proper standard', to *GUO* as a noun ('a mistake'). It is perhaps due to this change that the disyllabic compound noun　過錯　entered the Chinese lexicon.

3.3 Resultative *GUO*

GUO in the sense of 'to exceed' can also occur in the second position in a resultative construction as the directional *GUO*:

(48)　只要油價不漲過每桶元
(49)　高過人頭的甘蔗

In these examples, *GUO* still has clear content meaning. In other examples, in the same syntactic position, *GUO* seems to gradually evolve into the sense of 'to surpass' because of a 'competitive' landmark, such as time in (50), the government in (51), a person in (52), and a slander enforced by some national institution in (53):

(50)　富不過三代
(51)　憤怒的農民鬥不過政府
(52)　…沒有一個人跑得過他
(53)　…對丈夫至親的信賴如何抵擋得過國家強制的詆毀

Some may question that the *GUO* in (50) should belong to the same *GUO* as that in example (48) or (49). But if we compare the negative *Bu* in (48) with that in (50), we may find the scopes of the negative *Bu* are different and have different functions in each example. In (48) the entire predicate is negated by *Bu*, whereas in (50) *Bu* does not negate the entire VP 'to be rich for three generations', and only indicates the resultant

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[9]　The saying is from the Analects of Confucius.

state of not being able to be rich for that long. This *Bu* in (50) is one of a potential infix pair. Thus *GUO* in this example expresses the sense 'to surpass' rather than 'to exceed.' This meaning shift of *GUO* always accompanies the insertion of potential infixes *Bu* and *De* preceding *GUO*, emphasizing that the success of the competition is achievable or unachievable (Li and Thompson 1981). Certain RVCs (resultative verb compounds) of Mandarin may be derived from this development:

(54) 逃過(一劫); 活過(十個月); 瞞過(我的眼睛)

A similar rise of the meaning 'competitive surpassing' is found in German *über* through the conceptualizer's use of an accusative landmark (Dewell 1996) and implies a higher degree of interaction between the trajector and the landmark. Moreover, analysts of the English morpheme *over* also talk about the "UP" metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and the "overcoming" of the trajector on the landmark. It appears quite natural for a locative morpheme that expresses the path of 'passing' to also develop the meaning of 'surpassing.'

Apart from *over*, the English verbal prefix *out-* can also express the meaning of 'surpassing,' and is identified as an action-correlating satellite by Tamly (2000b:253-256). We believe that this function as a framing satellite of *out-* corresponds to *GUO* as a resultative complement here. This also leads us to reconsider *GUO* in compound constructions: *GUO* as a directional suffix, *GUO* as a "success" complement, *GUO* in 好過 or 難過, and those in the causative VO compounds. The first two seem to have the function of anchoring the final state of the event, and the latter two seem to have a very specialized meaning from the spatial image schema of *GUO*. What these more dependent *GUO*s have in common is that they are less transparent in their semantics and go farther afield from the ontological spatial *GUO* as a motion verb.

3.4 Interim summary

Although meaning transfers of *GUO* from concrete domains into more abstract domains discussed thus far are by no means transitions with a clear-cut shift, major changes along this grammaticalization continuum can still be recognized on the basis of its internal mechanisms. Before we go on to investigate other important meaning shifts of *GUO*, we propose its possible development chains as depicted in Figure 1:
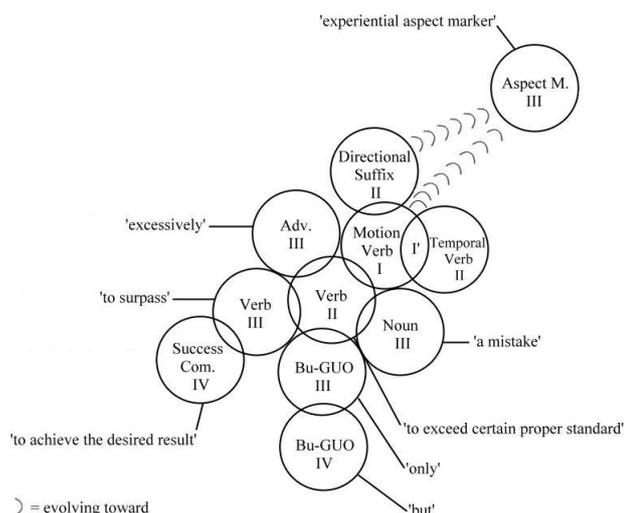
Figure 1: The grammaticalization paths of *GUO*

The above summarizes most of the paths of evolved meanings mentioned in the paper thus far. Other grammaticalization paths to be discussed are those of *GUO* as a concessive adverb (*Bu-GUO*), and *GUO* as an experiential aspect marker. These two lines of development are, in fact, processes of greater abstraction. We shall examine these two important semantic shifts below.

4. Other paths towards abstractness

The use of *GUO* as an experiential aspect marker or in the backward-linking adverb *Bu-GUO* signifies that *GUO* has experienced a great degree of semantic attrition and abstraction. In this section, we are going to analyze their development and scrutinize the new status of these two *GUO*s in Mandarin grammar.

4.1 The development of *Bu-GUO*

Bu-GUO, a negative focusing adverb, is very frequently used to emphasize that something is small or unimportant, especially when compared with something else. We assume this use of *GUO* derives ultimately from its use as a verb meaning 'to exceed', followed by an NP as its subject, as in (55)-(57):

(55)　大約世數 [不+過] V 如此[10]

(56)　語言學的發展是 1970 年以後的事, 迄今 [不+過] V 二十年

(57)　爲期最多 [不+過] V 半個月

This use of *GUO* preceded by *Bu* 'not to exceed' appeared as early as the Sung Dynasty, and seems to have gradually evolved the meaning 'no more than', especially when it modifies a quantified NP, like twenty years in (56) or half a month in (57).

These *Bu-GUO*s function more like a 'focusing' verb, and inherently involve an act of negative "evaluation" on the speaker's part. Interestingly, we discover there seems to exist parallel developments between *Bu-GUO* in Mandarin and the English morpheme *but*. Of course, their evolutional paths are not completely identical.[11] As Nevalainen (1987:342) writes, "when *but* focuses on an item that represented the extreme value on a scale, the adverb is interpreted as an intensifier rather than as an ordinary exclusive," so we find *Bu-GUO* as a 'focusing' element also beginning to have freer syntactic position and even turning into an intensifying adverb. Although *but* and *Bu-GUO* display different syntactic behaviors in this use (*but* preceding the extreme value, in Mandarin, *Bu-GUO* following the extreme value), they indeed have identical pragmatic function. Look at the following examples with *Bu-GUO*:

(58)　這樣再好不過

(59)　是最適合不過的

(60)　答案再清楚不過

Mandarin speakers tend to use this kind of *Bu-GUO* in such frozen construction:

[再/最　+ stative verb] + 不過

The non-gradable sense of the extreme item in the brackets is typically expressed by the adverb 再 or 最.

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[10]　The sentence is taken from the example of the entry 不過如此 in "漢語大詞典".

[11]　Nevalainen (1987) points out that before *but* was exploited as a scalar focus, it was a preposition *butan* "outside" in Old English, whereas the Mandarin *Bu-GUO* derives from a verbal source. In addition, *but* does not include another negative morpheme in utilization. Then we may wonder what leads to similar semantic changes later between the two morphemes. In effect, there was one stage when *but* still had to coöccur with a negative word. Afterwards, *but* could be used alone without the negative and entailed a negative sense because of the high frequency of their coöccurrence. Then *but* expressed the meaning "to exclude the higher value on a scale." Later, *but* develops into an exclusive adverb meaning "only."

When *Bu-GUO* begins to coöccur frequently with a VP, its status as a negative focusing verb meaning 'no more than, only' is clinched:

(61)　我 [不過] Adv. [想去看看] VP (Chu 2000:68)
(62)　生活 [不過] Adv. [是一個個的場景] VP
(63)　這 [不過] Adv. [是盡心盡力做好份內工作] VP

This adverbial use of *Bu-GUO* is reïnforced by its frequent coöccurrence with the adverb 只.[12]

A further development of *Bu-GUO* as a concessive conjunction meaning 'the only thing is, but' is exemplified in (64)-(65):

(64)　對習於服從, 無意見的人而言, 不過是因爲她們不甘放棄既有的權力
(65)　我講的挺認真的, 純粹是爲了逗你笑, 不過你笑都沒有笑就是

The subjective sense of *Bu-GUO* in such uses increases, for its scope ranges over an entire sentence, not just a VP. This new function arises from the fact that the speaker does not think the previous sentence or a certain fact is satisfying, according to his/her own judgment, and a certain opposition lies on the speaker's side towards the anaphoric sentence or situation. Here a backward-linking feature makes *Bu-GUO* a "sequentially sensitive" conjunction (Huang 2000a). After *Bu-GUO* has evolved into a complete adversative connective, it usually includes a separate intonation contour, preceded or followed by a pause (i.e., the pause marker ".." at the beginning of IUs 198 and 199), and stands as an independent element in spoken discourse:

(66)　197: (0)我提供一點資料給你.\ (SC)
　　　198: ..不過,\
　　　199: ..我要先提醒你喔,\

When we look elsewhere for more evidence for the present analysis, we observe that in Taiwanese, *Bu-GUO* seems to have become much more grammaticalized: *GUO* as a verb in Taiwanese is pronounced as /kòe/, and when it coöccurs with *Bu* (*Put* in Taiwanese) as an exclusive adverb, it is pronounced as /kò/ or even /ko/ as in /m̄ ko/ only with a high-level (neutral) tone when it is an adversative connective in colloquial

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[12] Traugott's 1995 discussion of the grammaticalization of *while* as a concessive connective shows that the coöccurrence of semantically (and sometimes syntactically) isomorphic words can reïnforce the shaping of morphemic meaning. For example, the concessive inference of *while* is reïnforced by *yet*.

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usage. In this subjective use, *Bu-GUO* has lost its phonological substance, as is the case with *De* in Mandarin from /dei/ to /də/ in deontic or epistemic usage as indicated by Sun (1996). We may not be able to provide a sufficient enough explanation as to why only in Taiwanese but not in Mandarin[13] the phonetic erosion of *GUO* is triggered. What is sure is that this loss of both semantic and phonological integrity has demonstrated that *GUO* has become more grammatical and abstract in Taiwanese.

In this development, *GUO*, originally used as a verb 'to exceed', has become a bound morpheme in the negative focusing adverb, and no longer expresses a content meaning by itself. Thus we include it as an important process of the semantic abstractness of the motion verb *GUO*.

4.2 *GUO* as an experiential aspect marker

Now, in order to trace the meaning change of *GUO* from a spatial verb to an experiential aspect marker, we should like to refer once again to example (17), in which *GUO* is a directional suffix in a motion event:

(17)　我們小孩子遊戲的地方, 平常很少有人走過

In this use, a metaphorical transfer from 'some Ground being physically crossed' to 'some event being physically or even mentally experienced' can create the reading of the directional suffix here as an experiential aspect. On the other hand, temporal passing is supposed to be more closely associated with human experience, as can be seen in the following examples:

(67)　我吃過了飯就走 (Chao 1968:450)
(68)　算算自己活過的日子也不少

Here *GUO* obviously involves a certain degree of temporal movement and indirectly signifies that the action has occurred through time and has been experienced. Nevertheless, since the basic metaphoric mapping of *GUO* from space to time should have occurred extremely early, the *GUO*s in these two domains might get considerably merged and overlapped (area I' in Figure 1). There is, in fact, some ambiguity as to which of the two domains is responsible for the development of *GUO* as an experience marker.

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[13] This phonological attrition of *GUO* in Taiwanese requires more investigation. The validity of our observation would be better supported if Taiwanese linguists could trace the diachronic change.

5. Further individual grammaticalization

There are still two intriguing semantic changes of abstract *GUO* in the data from the Sinica Corpus. One type might be related to the mechanism of generation. It is by conventionalizing context-based inference that *GUO* as 重新來過 or 本來是布, 就把它裁過縫過, 做成衣服 coërces the meaning 'to have some event or state re-experienced' or 'to undergo a new kind of experience'. The other type appears in such expressions as 回過頭, 反過手來, 轉過身, 別過頭, 回過身, etc. Here *GUO* seems to function as some kind of directional marker, following typically "turning" motions. We conceive of *GUO* in this construction [V+*GUO*+N] VP as an instance of distributed cognition and displays the emerging feature of grammaticalization, since such a use has restricted occurrence with specific type of objects (i.e., body parts) in the VO compound. Furthermore, 回過頭 in (69) is not and cannot be physical motion, but means 'turning back in time', an instantiation of fictive motion:

(69)　當你回過頭再想一想, 你就會覺得很有道理　(Constructed example)

Apart from these meaning layerings related to *GUO* as an aspect marker, we observe that the directional suffixes *GUO-Lai* and *GUO-Qu*, when coöccurring with non-spatial verbs, are used to indicate change into a new state, and function as a result complement:

(70)　…到最後才清醒過來._ (SC)
(71)　[如果]直接用國語翻過去,\ (SC)

As noted in Heine and Reh (1984:15), grammaticalization is an evolution and "an attempt at segmenting it into discrete units must remain arbitrary to some extent." Therefore, apart from these constructional usages concerning *GUO*, we have found several other *GUO*s at the lexical level without clear traces as to the source of their semantic shifts. *GUO* in the compound 過癮 'to enjoy/satisfy' has probably evolved from temporal *GUO* meaning 'to spend' (see section 2.2.1), because 'to spend time doing something' can at the same time imply 'to experience something', and 'to spend time experiencing a person's addiction' is surely a very enjoyable thing. Then, through pragmatic inferencing in this local context, this meaning may gradually become conventionalized and spread out. Another nominal compound 過節[14] meaning 'grudge',

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[14] This compound, as a noun denoting 'the proper social manners when getting along with people', began to be commonly used in the Ching Dynasty, as for example in "兒女英雄傳". The rise of the meaning "grudges" for this compound noun is not found until very recently in the works of modern Mandarin writers.

seems to be of more opaque origin. This *GUO* might have the meaning associated with 'exceed' and 節 'proper social manners and behavior'. When proper manners are breached, conflict ensues between two parties, and thus the reading of 過節 as 'grudges' results. Finally, 過世/過身 meaning 'to die'. When a person 'walks by' the world he lives in, or by the body he has long resided in, he has left this world and is dead. As in English *pass away*, this usage of *GUO* may be a euphemism for 'to die'. A similar euphemism in Mandarin for 'die' is also by means of *GUO* in a context like 她昨晚過去了.

6. Evidence of the "unidirectionality" of *GUO* from corpora

We have mentioned that metaphorical changes are relatively more abrupt or radical (across two different cognitive domains) than metonymies or context-based inferences. But when measured on a language development scale, metaphorical extensions and their semantic specializations require long spans of time. After undergoing these internal mechanisms, *GUO* acquires versatile functions, and they all coëxist in Modern Mandarin, some of which have more "frozen" senses and some just "emerging" usages. Moreover, we find there are some instances of *GUO* remaining in the intermediate stage (i.e., the overlapping area in Figure 1) towards further grammaticalization. In trying to figure out the "primary" types of grammaticalization paths of *GUO*, we found that we had to divide, sometimes somewhat arbitrarily, these overlapping phases of grammaticalization into distinct types. We calculate the instances of each type in both the Sinica Corpus, which contains written data, and the Taida Spoken Corpus of more than thirteen hours' spoken data. As for intermediate *GUO*s, as in the suffixal use (in 接過紙袋, 如流水般橫過生活, 星魁拉過她,手擱在她腰上) or in lexicalized compounds with the meaning 'transmission' (as in 通過, 渡過, 過程, 過境), we count them as occurrences of the more prototypical meaning when choosing between two stages. The justification for this choice is merely more consistency and convenience in calculation. The results are shown in the following two tables:

Table 1: The distribution of *GUO* in the Sinica Corpus

Type	Semantics of *GUO*	No. of tokens	%
Verb	To go across physically	98	4.9
	To go across temporally	450	22.5
	To surpass[15]	60	3
Verb + Adv.	To exceed; excessively	99	4.95
Noun	A mistake	11	0.55
Suffix	To indicate a path	21	1.05
Neg. focusing Adv.	*Bu-*	0	0
	(Low evaluative attitude)		
Marker	Experiential aspect	1261	**63.05**
Total		2000	100

Table 2: The distribution of *GUO* in the Taida Spoken Corpus

Type	Semantics of *GUO*	No. of tokens	%
Verb	To go across physically	9	3.75
	To go across temporally	40	16.67
	To surpass	6	2.5
Verb + Adv.	To exceed; excessively	8	3.33
Noun	A mistake	0	0
Suffix	To indicate a path	13	5.42
Neg. focusing Adv.	*Bu-*	57	**23.75**
	(Low evaluative attitude)		
Marker	Experiential aspect	107	**44.58**
Total		240	100

To what degree the statistics shown in the two tables can aid us in understanding the exact grammaticalization development of *GUO* remains uncertain. The only affirmative conclusion from them is that *GUO* indeed has shifted into a more abstract grammatical morpheme, as evidenced by its predominate occurrence as an experiential aspect marker (e.g., 做過, 想過, 聽過, 買過, etc.) in either corpus (63.05% and 44.58%), and as a bound morpheme of the negative focusing adverb in the Taida Spoken Corpus (23.75%).

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[15] In order to underscore the major meaning transfer, we do not separate the "success" complement from this type.

Though *Bu-GUO* does not occur in the 2,000 tokens of *GUO* in the Sinica Corpus, it does not mean that *Bu-GUO* has a lower frequency in written discourse. This is simply because a computer search yields a maximum of only 2,000 occurrences for any key word entry searched. When we search the Sinica Corpus with the keyword *Bu-GUO*, it yields another 2,000 tokens, which attests to its high frequency and stable status as a negative focusing adverb. Also, this in turn solidifies the abstract use of *GUO* as a bound morpheme. On the other hand, we may not be able to calculate the exact proportions of this subjective adverb in either written or spoken corpora. However, we do find that in both kinds of synchronic corpus the most frequent use of *GUO* is as an abstract aspect marker, rather than as a spatial verb (in either corpus this type is less than 5%). The second most frequent type of *GUO* in the Sinica Corpus is temporal *GUO* (22.5%), and in the Spoken Corpus, temporal *GUO* (16.67%) is second only to *GUO* in frequency as a negative focusing adverb, confirming that the metaphorical mapping is overwhelmingly from space to time in Mandarin.

To sum up, based on our analyses of the grammaticalization paths of *GUO* and the statistics of frequency count, the present study of *GUO* demonstrates a clear-cut tendency of unidirectionality in its grammaticalization, from being contentful and lexical to more abstract and grammatical, as is the case with bound *GUO* in the high- frequency adverb and in other compounds or constructional usages, ending up as an aspect marker. Moreover, an increase in subjectivity, a pragmatic-semantic process whereby meanings become increasingly based on the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude toward a proposition (Traugott 1995), is also demonstrated in the path of evaluative *GUO*. From the meaning 'go across physically' to 'exceed', more subjective belief on the speaker's part gets involved (also refer to section 3.2), and then the dependent use of *GUO* with the negative element *Bu* in the concessive adverb comprises the major use in Mandarin Chinese to signify the speaker's low opinion of the anaphoric situation.

7. Conclusion

GUO as a motion verb has developed into a number of different, yet coëxisting meanings in a large number of situated contexts through a complex series of semantic shifts motivated by metaphoric, metonymic, or pragmatic inferencing. This coëxistence of the older layers of the meaning of *GUO* with its newer layers of meaning results from the MGMF principle (i.e., the "more general, more frequent" principle; Hagège 1993:212). Heine, Claudi, and Hünnemeyer (1991:33) and Peyraube (1999:194) have made the related observation that "categories of the subordinate level are unlikely to serve as source concepts" for grammaticalization, and that "verbs which grammaticalize tend to be superordinate terms ('hyperonyms') in lexical fields." Since *GUO* is a basic

motion verb, it is used in wider contexts with a higher frequency, and has over the course of time triggered more semantic change, and thus complex chaining of meaning.

In attempting to make every step of the grammaticalization of *GUO* as explicit as possible, we have tried to identify and hypothesize the intricate paths that *GUO* has gone through in acquiring a number of the more abstract functions that it now possesses, such as expressing direction, time flow, social norm, and temporal aspectuality. What the present exercise in the analysis of the grammaticalization of *GUO* has demonstrated, then, is that the currently understood mechanisms of semantic change both underlie and constrain the grammaticalization paths of *GUO* and that the near-universal assumption of the unidirectionality of grammaticalization is also broadly supported.

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「過」之語法化研究——
運動動詞的多義性與語意改變

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　　本文根據當代語料探究中文裡運動動詞「過」的語法化演變路徑。並顯示「過」這個中文詞素已歷經多種語意上的轉變：與空間表達相關的「過」最先透過<u>自我移動隱喻</u>和<u>時間移動隱喻</u>的運作映照至時間性的目標領域。而後隨著隱喻或轉喻所得到的語意延伸及語用上的語意擴充，原本意指「空間穿越」的「過」字於是取得以下的新意涵，「超越某種規範」、「過度地」、及「過錯」。進一步的語法化也導致「過」發展出諸如在讓步副詞「不過」和表經驗動貌標記的用法。在這些演化過程中，「過」已從一個基本的運動動詞變成爲一個語意極度豐富的多義詞，並且給予中文此語言一套更豐富的概念用以表達多樣與路徑、方向、時間流動、規範和時間經驗有關的抽象功用。

關鍵詞：語法化，運動動詞，多義性，語意改變