

The Semantics and Pragmatics of the Quasi-logical Use of *yòu* in Mandarin Chinese

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the quasi-logical use of *yòu* (又) ‘again’ in naturally occurring conversation. It is argued that such a usage of *yòu* not only keeps its generalised conjunctive meaning, whose left conjunct can be either explicitly present or omitted, but also contributes to inducing pragmatic inferences. Since the logically encoded meaning of *yòu* and the presuppositional meaning it engenders fail to provide a coherent interpretation of *yòu* in a negation context, there is a need to backtrack and accommodate an implicit proposition as the premise for inferring the implicature of that utterance, i.e. a conditional. We also argue that what really invites the said abductive inference is the specific construction of [*yòu* + neg + right conjunct], rather than the adverb *yòu* per se.

Keywords: Mandarin grammar, construction, pragmatic inference, Mandarin adverb *yòu*

1. Introduction

Mandarin adverbs relating to extent or range in meaning often display chameleonic nature (Hole 2004). Sometimes, they are used as Boolean operators, i.e., *and*, *or*, *not* (also known respectively as conjunction, disjunction, and negation), and can be readily translated as such in logical form. Some other times, they have highly colloquial usages that are hard to explain in purely logico-semantic terms. We call them quasi-logical words here, namely they are essentially logical terms but also carry extended uses that are derived from their intrinsic properties. *Yòu* (又) ‘again’ is a case in point. In fact, it has been observed in the literature that *yòu* in daily communication is intuitively associated with presupposition-negation or counter-expectation at a pragmatic level.

This paper is organized as follows: **2** gives a brief review of previous studies on the meaning of *yòu*. **3** introduces two types of use of *yòu*: the logical use and the quasi-logical use. **4** analyses the meaning of both quasi-logical *yòu* and a special construction formed by *yòu* plus a negated proposition. **5** further discusses the function of *yòu* in this specific construction, and conclusions are given in **6**.

2. Literature review

Yòu is treated as a presupposition-negator by Peng (1999), Wu (1999), Tang (2007), Yang (2008), Zhang (2013), etc. They claim that *yòu* + *neg.* does not aim to negate a statement, but through the denial of a presupposition¹, the speaker’s negative attitude towards the

¹ To be more exact, it is an assumption not a presupposition, as argued above.

presupposition and/or current event/state of affairs is emphasized. An example from Xia (2017: 14) is shown in (1). The given presupposition is assumed to be true by the speaker, and she refutes the view that she should drink sweet wine (a view held by the hearer) by negating the proposition that ‘she is being treated as a child’.

- (1) 吃 甜酒? 又 不是 小孩,
chī tiánjiǔ? yòu bùshì xiǎohái,
 eat sweet-wine YOU² NEG child
- 还 问 人 吃 甜酒!
hái wèn rén chī tiánjiǔ!
 still ask people eat sweet-wine
 ‘I am not a child, so I cannot ask for sweet wine.’

Presupposition: Only children drink sweet wine.

Yet another treatment of *yòu* uses the notion of counter-expectation. Shi (2005) and Li (2014) propose that *yòu* functions as a counter-expectation marker, indicating that the negated proposition introduced by *yòu* is contrary to the addressee’s expectation. However, the real meaning of *yòu* is more complicated than what has been proposed in previous studies. Both *expectation* and *counter-expectation* are informal terms loosely used in pragmatics without clear definition, and their related terms such as *presupposition* and *assumption* have not been sharpened or accurately used with distinctions by many Chinese linguists in their studies.

3. Two uses of *yòu*

3.1 *Yòu* as a Boolean conjunctor

Yòu is an additive particle whose logical meaning is usually interpreted as ‘in addition’, where the new proposition introduced by *yòu* is a supplement to the information previously given, as shown in (2) and (3).

- (2)
- a. 我 这两天 也 在 补钙 补铁,
wǒ zhèliǎngtiān yě zài bǔgàì bǔtiě,
 1.SG these-days also PROG supply-calcium supply-iron
- 之前 吃的 不 频繁。
zhīqián chīde bù pínfán.
 before take not frequent
 ‘I am also taking calcium and iron supplements these days, which I did not take frequently before.’

² Abbreviations used in this paper are listed as follows: 1 (first person), 2 (second person), 3 (third person) ATTR (attributive), AUX (auxiliary), CL (classifier), DM (discourse marker), EXP (experiential aspect), NEG (negation), PFV (perfective), PROG (progressive), SFP (sentence final particle), SG (singular), YOU (*yòu*).

- b. 你 又 吃 钙片, 又 喝 牛奶,
nǐ yòu chī gàipiàn, yòu hē niúniǎi
 2.SG YOU take calcium-tablets YOU drink milk

会不会 便秘 啊?
huìbúhuì biànmì a?

yes-no-yes constipated SFP

‘Will you be constipating if you take calcium tablets and drink milk at the same time?’

(3)

- a. 晚上 少 吃点, 可以 分 两顿 吃。
wǎnshàng shǎo chīdiǎn, kěyǐ fēn liǎngdùn chī.
 at-night less eat can divide two-servings eat
 ‘Eat less at night. Maybe you can divide into two servings.’

- b. 我 婆婆 家里 的 还 没 吃完, 又
wǒ pópó jiālǐ de hái méi chīwán yòu
 my mother-in-law in-home AUX still NEG finished YOU

买 了 一个 回来, 西瓜 供应 不断。
mǎi le yīgè huílái, xīguā gōngyìng bùduàn
 buy PFV a back watermelon supply never-in-short

‘My mother-in-law’s family has not finished the watermelon yet, and they bought another one. Watermelons are never in short supply.’

In both (2) and (3), the left conjunct appears first, followed by *yòu* introducing the right conjunct.

Yòu can also be interpreted as ‘repetition’, as a proper subset of the ‘addition’ meaning, which means that an action, event, or situation that happened in the past occurs again, as shown in (4) and (5), where the left conjunct does not have to be explicitly given.

(4)

- a. 你 在 干嘛 呢?
nǐ zài gànma ne?
 2.SG be doing SFP
 ‘What are you doing?’

- b. 我 又 在 去 浙大 的 路上。
wǒ yòu zài qù zhèdà de lùshàng.
 1.SG YOU be go Zhejiang-university AUX on-the-way
 ‘I am on my way to Zhejiang University (ZJU) again.’

(5)

a. 李四 呢?

līsì ne?

Lisi SFP

‘Where is Lisi?’

b. 他 又 没 来 开会。

tā yòu méi lái kāihuì.

3.SG YOU NEG come attend-meeting

‘He did not come to the meeting again.’

In (4), *yòu* expresses the fact that the action of (4b) going to ZJU has already happened at some point in the past before the conversation takes place, and now it happens again. Similarly, in (5), *yòu* expresses the replication of the situation. Not only did Lisi fail to attend the meeting this time, but he also did not attend a previous meeting.

As *yòu* can be interpreted as either denoting the more specific ‘repetition’ or the more general ‘addition’, it is understandable that it can sometimes be ambiguous between the two, as shown in (6):

(6)

a. 怎么 好久 没 看到 小张 了?

zěnmě hǎojiǔ méi kàndào xiǎozhāng le?

why a-long-time NEG seen Xiaozhang SFP

‘Why haven’t I seen Xiaozhang for a long time?’

b. 他 最近 又 找 了 一份 兼职。

tā zuìjìn yòu zhǎo le yīfèn jiānzhí.

3.SG recently YOU find PFV a.CL part-time-job

‘He has recently taken up a part-time job in addition to what he is doing.’ Or ‘He has recently taken up another part-time job.’

In (6), *yòu* can indicate the combination of two eventualities. One is a certain given event understood in the context where Xiaozhang is doing and such a context is shared by both the speaker and hearer; (6b) being a different one. But another scenario could be that *yòu* triggers the iterative presupposition that Xiaozhang was already working part-time and now he has found another part-time job. So, the second event is a repetition of the first event. In neither interpretation, the left conjunct is explicitly given. We can generalize from the examples so far examined that while *yòu* needs to co-occur with the right conjunct, the left conjunct can either appear or be understood.

Rooth (1992) observes that the additive particle is much like an *anaphoric element* which is taken to be a linguistic entity that ‘recalls to the consciousness of a hearer entities or concepts that have already been introduced into a discourse’ (Botley & McEnery 2000: 2). König (1991: 62) also points out that ‘all sentences with simple additive particles

entail the corresponding sentences without the particles and presuppose furthermore that at least one of the alternative values under consideration in a context satisfies the complex predicate.’ Following Rooth (1992), the interpretation of the additive *yòu* is sensitive to the information in the preceding discourse or background information, from which a viable antecedent is required to identify *yòu*’s presupposition. In line with König (1991), the additive *yòu* in Mandarin can be seen as a ‘presupposition trigger’, presupposing the existence of at least one alternative that fits the complex predicate. Hence the left conjunct of *yòu*, even if invisible, can be recovered.

The interpretation schema for (5b) is given as (7):

- (7) Logical meaning encoded by *yòu*: conjunction
 IP.Q (P & Q)
 Proposition introduced by *yòu* [the right conjunct]
 Q: Lisi has not come to the meeting this time.
 Presupposition triggered by *yòu*: iterative presupposition
 P: Lisi did not come to the meeting last time [the left conjunct]

Inferred conclusion: P & Q, given as (8):

- (8) \dot{U} -Introduction
 Lisi did not come to the meeting last time, and he has not come to the meeting this time.

It is generally assumed that the meaning of *yòu* is in common with the Boolean operator \dot{U} , an utterance like (8) is true if and only if both conjunct propositions are true.

3.2 The quasi-logical use of *yòu*

However, it has also been recognized that utterances with *yòu* have types of meaning beyond the conjunctive sense. In a different paradigm of cases, *yòu* can carry a contrastive connotation, which is not part of *yòu*’s truth conditional meaning, as shown in (9) - (11) and is often lacking in utterances without *yòu*.

(9) discusses the university’s increasingly complicated requirements for lecturers:

- (9)
 a. 我 以为 是 要 简化 流程。
wǒ yǐwéi shì yào jiǎnhuà liúchéng.
 1.SG think be will simplify process
 ‘I thought they wanted to make things simpler.’
 b. 本来 我 也 这么 觉得,
běnlái wǒ yě zhème juéde,
 basically 1.SG also so think
 但是 现在 上完课后 又 要 签字。
dànshì xiànzài shàngwánkèhòu yòu yào qiānzì.
 but now after-class YOU have-to sign

‘I thought so too, but now I have to sign, as an extra requirement, after the class.’

If a presupposition is triggered by *yòu*, it can only be that a signature was required in the past, but no such meaning can be perceived; on the contrary, the implied contextual information is that no signature was required before. This demonstrates that *yòu* only triggers a vague existential presupposition: something else had to be done before, for example, giving lectures as routine work. The proposition introduced by *yòu* expresses the fact that there is now another thing to be done in addition to what had to be done before. Therefore, to sign is a new state appended to a given conjunct. This is a case of addition of events with no ‘repetition’ meaning expressed. On top of it is a contrastive meaning of what is introduced as new, compared to what was not in existence.

Similarly, in (10), there is no presupposition triggered as the repetitive *yòu* does, while *yòu* illustrates a contrast between two different situations in line with the semantics of ‘but’. Blakemore (1989: 15) proposes that *but* has part of its meaning in common with *and* so that an utterance is true if and only if both conjuncts are true, “however, utterances with *but* have contrastive connotations often lacking in utterances with *and*”.

The speaker of (10b)’s cousin scored 564 points in this year’s college entrance examination and his performance was not very satisfactory.

(10)

a. 感觉 已经 很高 了。
gǎnjué *yǐjīng* *hěngāo* *le*.
 feel already very-high SFP
 ‘I feel the score is high enough.’

b. 好像 能 上 重本, 但 又 好像
hǎoxiàng *néng* *shàng* *zhòngběn,* *dàn* *yòu* *hǎoxiàng*
 like can admitted key-university but YOU like

不大行, 至少 专业 没得 选。
bùdàxíng, *zhìshǎo* *zhuānyè* *méide xuǎn*.
 not-qualified at-least major NEG choose

‘It seems like he can be admitted to a key university, but it doesn’t seem to be a too certain result because there is limited choice for a major.’

P: He can be admitted to a key university.

Q: He can’t be admitted to a key university for sure.

P Û Q

Here, *yòu* introduces a negated proposition as the right conjunct, and the previous utterance provides a left conjunct. P Û Q is true only if P and Q are true.

(11) discusses postnatal rehabilitation:

(11)

a. 你 试 过 正骨 吗?
nǐ shì guò zhènggǔ ma?
 2.SG try EXP orthopedics SFP
 ‘Have you ever tried orthopedics?’

b. 我 感觉 我 两条 腿 不一样 长,
wǒ gǎnjué wǒ liǎngtiáo tuǐ bù yí yàng cháng
 1.SG feel my two-CL leg not-same long

很 想 去, 又 怕 疼。
hěn xiǎng qù, yòu pà téng.
 very want go YOU afraid pain

‘I feel like my legs are not of the same length. I want to go, but I am afraid of the pain.’

P: I want to try orthopedics.

Q: I am afraid of the pain.

P Û Q

In the same vein, *yòu* in (11) cannot trigger the iterative presupposition ‘I was afraid of the pain before/in the past’. However, the two propositions connected by *yòu* can be interpreted as the schema shown above, with the latter implicating the negation of the former. If the conjunction *kěshì* ‘but’ is inserted before the *yòu*-clause, the legitimacy of the sentence and the original meaning will not be affected. The addition of this new state to the *yòu* proposition is a complement to the previous knowledge.

(9) - (11) are all cases with *yòu* interpreted only as ‘in addition’, not as ‘repetition’, hence carrying no iterative presupposition. A conjunction carrying ‘but’ meaning can co-occur with *yòu* in such cases, and a contrast between the left and right conjuncts of *yòu* can be detected.

By contrast, if a ‘but’ is inserted before the *yòu*-clause in (11b), the sentence would not make sense semantically, because the *yòu*-clause and the previous utterance cannot constitute an adversative relation or a contrast. Moreover, given that no ‘repetition’ meaning is available here, it is not immediately clear how the more general sense of ‘addition’ is obtained.

(12) Context: (12b) wants to give an expensive razor to his cousin as a gift, but (12b)’s husband does not allow her to do so. So, (12b) complains to her friend (12a).

(12)

a. 如果 不 送人 的话,
rúguǒ bù sòng rén dehuà,
 if not send-people DM

真 没 必要 买 太 贵的。
zhēn méi bìyào mǎi tài guìde.
 indeed NEG need buy too expensive

‘There is no need to buy anything too expensive if you are not giving it away as a gift.’

b. 就是 送人 啊,
jiùshì sòng rén a,
 exactly send-people SFP

他 又 不是 没 工作。
tā yòu bùshì méi gōngzuò.
 3.SG YOU NEG NEG job

‘It is exactly for a gift. It is not the case that he [(12b)’s husband] does not have a job.’

If *yòu* here induces a conjunction relationship, then the left conjunct of *yòu* will be unclear. We cannot say the presupposition is that there is already an instance of ‘it is not the case that he does not work’, since it would be tautological with the right conjunct of *yòu*. Thus, presuppositional meaning no longer applies in such a negation context, nor does it help to reach a coherent interpretation. In such a case, *yòu*’s role needs reconsideration.

Similarly, if we cling to the ‘repetition’ sense of *yòu*, (13) would be interpreted as ‘(13a) had not spent her (13a) mother-in-law’s money before, and still does not’, thus presupposing that (13a) never spent her mother-in-law’s money. But *yòu* and its right conjunct express the negation of an implicit hypothetical assumption that ‘(13a) had spent her mother-in-law’s money before’. The presupposition, if obtainable, would contradict the implicit assumption, so the speaker’s real intention or the communicative information she wants to convey to the hearer is obviously not as simple as such a presupposition, whose existence is doubtful in this case.

(13) Context: (13a) complains to (13b) that her mother-in-law is stingy with her granddaughter.

(13)

a. 孩子 的 东西 都 是 我 买 的，
háizi de dōngxī dōu shì wǒ mǎi de,
 children AUX thing all be 1.SG buy AUX
 ‘I bought the kid’s stuff myself.’

- b. 又 没有 花 她的 钱，
yòu méiyǒu huā tāde qián
 YOU NEG spend her-ATTR money

就 不 知道 咋 那么 抠！
jiù bù zhīdào zǎ nàme kōu.
 only not know why so stingy

‘I did not use her money, so I simply do not know why she is so stingy.’

- c. 可能 觉得 你 花了 她 儿子的 钱，
kěnéng juéde nǐ huāle tā érzide qián
 probably think 2.SG spend her son-ATTR money

所以 心疼？
suǒyǐ xīnténg?
 so feel-bad

‘Probably she feels bad because you spent her son’s money.’

In addition, the utterance meaning of the same proposition expressed in different contexts can be very different. In the conversational contexts of examples (5b) and (14b), *yòu* and its following proposition should be interpreted differently.

(14)

- a. 李四 知道 后天 的
Lǐsì zhīdào hòutiān de
 Lisi know the-day-after-tomorrow AUX

活动 安排 吗？
huódòng ānpái ma?
 activity plan SFP

‘Does Lisi know the plan for the day after tomorrow?’

- b. 他 又 没 来 开会。
tā yòu méi lái kāihuì.
 3.SG YOU NEG come attend-meeting
 ‘He did not come to the meeting though.’

Although the information provided by (14b) is a negative answer identical to (5b), (5b) states that Lisi is not in the meeting room and that it is not the first time that he has not attended the meeting. But what (14b) says is that Lisi does not know about the plan for the good reason that he did not come to the meeting (excluding other means through which he may learn about the plan). The former is about a repetition of the same event, while the latter is to supply the causal relation between two events, i.e., Lisi’s failure to come to the meeting is the reason why he is unaware of the plan, which explains the current situation. Moreover, from (14b), we only know that Lisi did not come to the

meeting this time, which does not mean that he had missed yet another meeting before. That is, the iterative presupposition in (5b) is not present in (14b).

4. The interpretation of quasi-logical use of *yòu*

4.1 Implicit conditional

As an attempt to explain the special use of *yòu* with a negated right conjunct, Shao & Rao (1985) take the basic grammatical meaning of *yòu* to be a conjunctive relationship between similar activities, states, or properties. When used in a sentence with negation, they think *yòu* triggers association with an implicit premise, which is a hypothetical (Shao & Rao 1985: 12). Some implicit inference is recoverable, lending the *yòu* + negated sentence an argumentative force in the inferential process, and hence the emphatic tone. Still, they take the basic meaning of *yòu* to be conjunctive. The argumentative force, according to them, is a pragmatic effect. Although the exact reasoning pattern is not spelt out in Shao & Rao (1985), we can explicate their point with example (13). (13a) says she does not know why her mother-in-law has been so stingy, as she has been using her own money. We give the tentative reasoning pattern in (15):

- (15)
- a. *yòu* (I don't use her money) [$\dot{U} \sim P$]
 - b. I don't know why she is so stingy [$? Q$]
 - c. She is stingy [Q] (presupposition triggered by (15b))
 - d. If I don't use her money, she is not stingy. [$\sim P \textcircled{R} \sim Q$]
 - e. (She is stingy) only if (I use her money) [$Q \textcircled{R} P$]
- [$P = I$ use her money; $Q = She$ is stingy.]

(13a-c) provides a more complete set of utterances for discussion, because it even contains (13c), i.e., (15b), which is a description of the given, current situation often not explicitly uttered in many other examples involving the [*yòu* + neg + right conjunct] construction. The right conjunct of *yòu* with negation in (13b) is given here as (15a). Only (15a) and (15b) are uttered. (15b) yields presupposition (15c). As (15a) and (15c) are presented as forming a puzzle, one way to resolve it is to accommodate the conditional in (15d). But (15d) is too weak, as negating the antecedent does not necessarily lead to negating the consequent. So, it should be strengthened into (15e), which is a necessary conditional³.

Note that the accommodated (15e) here is not the left conjunct of *yòu*. Although the left conjunct is explicitly present in this case, i.e. I bought the kid's stuff myself; it is missing in most examples. Moreover, as a [*yòu* + neg + right conjunct] construction is not usually followed by a sentence like (13c), we need to explain how can the construction alone, like (15a), lead to the accommodation of a necessary conditional like (15e)? That is, given (15a), while (15b) is not uttered and is only contextually manifest, how (15e) can still be inferred? This is crucial to the characterization of the quasi-logical use of *yòu*.

4.2 Relevance-driven accommodation

It falls on an ostensive-inferential pragmatic theory to give an adequate account of meaning-accommodation and meaning-derivation in utterance comprehension related to

³ Cf. also Chen (1987).

the puzzling construction presented above. In terms of relevance-theoretic pragmatics (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995, Wilson & Sperber 2012, Carston 2012, among others), given an utterance containing the [*yòu* + neg + right conjunct] construction, it is necessary to search for its optimal relevance in the context. According to the communicative principle of relevance (Wilson & Sperber 2004), the speaker produces an utterance with the given construction believing it will enable the hearer to obtain enough cognitive effects without incurring an undue amount of processing effort in terms of mental computational labour and the time spent on the processing. Following the presumption of optimal relevance (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995) that a communicated utterance does not only convey its intended meaning but also the understanding that the speaker intends the utterance to be optimally relevant to the hearer, the hearer, when comprehending the utterance, also believes the speaker will aim at letting him obtain an interpretation with maximal relevance, matching her verbal ability and preferences. Otherwise, he does not need to bother himself with the processing of her utterance. The exact details of the pragmatic inference activated depend on the available assumptions in the cognitive context in the online processing of the utterance, e.g., assumptions made manifest by the encoded content of the utterance and the overall discourse, associated assumptions retrieved from the memory: personal experiences, information acquired from others through communication, and encyclopaedic knowledge (Carston 2012).

The extent of the exactness of the encoded form of the utterance will lead to the accommodation of specific assumptions, resulting in specific inferences being made. In the case of the construction being scrutinised here, the encoded information is *yòu* with a negated right conjunct. This is a very specific syntactic form, a construction that is used as a fixed form for native speakers to accommodate a premise in the form of a necessary conditional. Although the inferential process is sophisticated, native language users as hearers find it easy, and in fact, automatic, to reach the interpretation originally intended by the speaker. The negation form in the ‘*yòu* + negator + right conjunct’ construction can be said to make it easier for the necessary conditional to be accommodated, because a negation, when presented without the accompanying reasoning, will often prompt the hearer to contrast it with its positive counterpart and explore the consequences of both the forms. This will serve as a clue for the accommodation of implicated premises. But it can also go along another route. From (15a) and (15b), the hearer can accommodate (16), which, in everyday language use, is often strengthened into (17), as an instance of conditional strengthening.

- (16) If I use her money, she will be stingy. [P ® Q]
 (17) If I don’t use her money, she won’t be stingy. [~ P ® ~ Q]

Either inference routes are possible and they lead to the same conclusion: complaining about the non-generosity of the person concerned.

4.3 More examples

In addition to example (13) whose inference pattern we have spelt out, we now give analysis to one more example presented in 3. Analysis of example (12) is presented in (18) below:

(18)

- a. The razor is a gift. [P, being the left conjunct of *yòu*], given assumption
- b. *yòu* (He is not unemployed = he has a job) [$\dot{U} \sim Q$], given assumption
- c. [Not buying an expensive razor] only if {[the razor is not a gift] and [he is unemployed]} ($\sim R$ only if $(\sim P \dot{U} Q)$), accommodated assumption
- d. $P \dot{U} \sim Q$ \dot{U} -introduction (18a), (18b)
- e. $\sim(\sim P \dot{U} Q)$ De Morgan's Law (18d)
- f. R [implicated conclusion] Modus Tollens (18c), (18e)

5. The function of *yòu*

If what is accommodated when processing the [*yòu* + neg. + Proposition] is a conditional which is not the left conjunct of *yòu*, where is the left conjunct? We have established in 3.2 that the right conjunct, when negated, does not replicate a previously occurring eventuality. Hence, the meaning for *yòu* conjunction would be the more general ‘in addition’ meaning. That is, *yòu* introduces a right conjunct which is presented in addition to a left conjunct, be it present or implicit. The left conjunct could be an identified eventuality of immediate relevance under discussion, e.g. (13a). So *yòu* can continue to be treated as having the meaning of conjunction. What really invites the accommodation of the conditional is the whole construction of [*yòu* + neg. + Proposition]. Our inferential pragmatic account thus subsumes some alternative treatments of *yòu* using the notion of counter-expectation, such as Shi (2005) and Li (2014), because our treatment takes expectation as one kind of recovered assumptions. Moreover, since *yòu* is not a negator, it cannot be used to deny an expectation. Some other treatments⁴ take the construction of [*yòu* + neg. + Proposition] to have a presupposition-negation, negating a presupposition like the antecedent of (16). We find this kind of claim puzzling, as it is not clear how the alleged presupposition is triggered. Since it is not possible to identify a trigger, some works, such as Xia (2017), claim that the said presupposition is a pragmatic one, and hence does not need a trigger. To us, that is just like saying that there is some worldly knowledge, encyclopedic or cultural, that is accommodated as some background assumptions which join in the pragmatic inference. Our account makes no use of pragmatic presupposition.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed the purely logical use of *yòu*, namely it is a conjunctive. In the structure ‘P, *yòu* + Q’, Q can be another situation or particularly a repetitive state of affairs in addition to the one previously given by P which does not have to be explicitly uttered but must be active in the background. In contrast, P in the construction ‘P, *yòu* + neg. + Q’ is always missing and does not have to be active in the preceding discourse but can be derived from the context and is sometimes a presupposition. We provide a unified treatment retaining the conjunctive role of *yòu* within this construction while attributing a special function to the construction, which is to accommodate a conditional assumption (strengthened into necessary conditional in some cases) to help with the comprehension of the negated Q. In this sense, *yòu* represents a quasi-logical use, which has presented some problems for grammatical analysis and natural language processing. It is hoped that our findings can contribute to computational processing of utterances that involve quasi-

⁴ Such as Peng (1999), Tang (2007), Yang (2008), Ma (2009), Zhang (2013) and Zhang & Yan (2015).

logical words by providing a relatively fixed inferential schema induced by that fixed construction.

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