

A Brief Discussion on the Origin and Diachronic Evolution of the Chinese Sentence "As Long as p, q"*

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Abstract—The Chinese sentence pattern "as long as p, q" is originated from the sentence pattern "once p, q" in the Han Dynasty. After long-term development and change, there have been "so long as p, then q", "should p, then q", "only p, then q", "as long as p, then q", "as long as p, q" and other formats. "As long as p, q" sentence appeared for the first time in the "a manual for military training", initially formed in the Ming Dynasty, further developed in the Qing Dynasty, and matured in the Republic of China.

Keywords—conditional complex sentence; "as long as p, q"; origin; evolution

I. INTRODUCTION

A conditional complex sentence refers that the modifier clauses proposes a condition and the main clause describes the result produced by the satisfaction of the condition.¹ It can be divided into three types: one is sufficient conditional complex sentence, with the representative format "as long as p, q"; the second is the necessary conditional complex sentence, with the representative format "only p, q"; the third is unconditional complex sentence, with the representative format "Regardless of p, q". This paper mainly discusses the representative format of the sufficient conditional complex sentence "as long as p, q". The semantic relationship between the clauses p and q can be sufficient and necessary condition, or necessary condition. That is to say, if there is p, then there will be q; if there is no p, then there is not necessarily no q.

II. THE ORIGIN OF SENTENCE "AS LONG AS P, Q"

In ancient Chinese, conjunctions with the meaning of "as long as" also include "once, only, and should", etc., adverbs with the meaning "then" include "will, can, and then" and so on. The author believes that the conditional complex sentence "as long as p, q" originated from the "once p, then q" format of the Han Dynasty. P is a sufficient condition for q, while q is the result of p.

*Fund: phased results of Weng Hongwu Research Funds General Project of Peking University "Research on the Use of Conjunction Words in Modern Chinese Complex Sentences" (WHW201809).

¹ Zhang Bin. Modern Chinese Descriptive Grammar [M]. Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2015: 669.

A. *In the Han Dynasty, the Sentence Pattern "Once p, then q" and "Once p, will q" Appeared*

In the sentence "once p, then q", and "once p, will q", "once" means "as long as" meaning, and "then", and "will" means "then". For example:

(1) The big movement on land disturbs the earth god. The god can forgive people for not being malicious. As long as they want to live in peace, the god will not be angry. ("Lun Heng" volume 24)

(2) Now you continuously asking questions. If you want to reach a higher level, as long as the source is right, it will echo with the nature, and complement with the holy words, and then transfer to correspond to geography. For the third transfer, it echoes to humanity, and fourth to all things. Then everything will give birth to vanity, which will lead to failure and disorder. (Scripture of the Great Peace, volume 51)

(3) Like this person, as long as he hears the bird's tweet, and the sound that the autumn wind blows the trees, he will be sad. (New Theory: Qin Dao)

(4) It is necessary to be cautious if you just learn knowledge but not be proficient. The god will carry out actions according to people's omen, and set up a decree for the emperor, so we can govern by etiquette to avoid risk. (Scripture of the Great Peace, volume 44)

(5) If you don't know what the important documents are, then you can use them as long as they are the writs in the world. (Scripture of the Great Peace, volume 50)

B. *During the Tang Dynasty and Wudai Period, the Sentence Pattern "Just p, then q" Appeared*

(6) I just often watch a water bull, and take it out when I fall into the grass one day. (ZuTangJi, volume 17)

C. *In the Southern Song Dynasty, There Were "Shall p, then q", "Once p, then q", "As long as p, then q", "As Long as p, will q" Sentence*

These four sentence patterns appeared together in "Zhuzi's language category", such as:

(7) One must be conscientious and responsible for studying in order to do well. ("Zhuzi's language category" Volume 11)

(8) Therefore, as long as scholars are not blinded by material enjoyment, they will have an open and generous heart. ("Zhuzi's language category" Volume 20)

(9) As long as he followed for a while, he can kill him. ("Zhuzi's language category" Volume 25)

(10) It says: "If you want to be remembered by a person, you have a selfish desire. Sage often tells people that people should remove their selfish desires. It is not clear what other things that Mencius opposes to. Only this one can be regarded as a law." ("Zhuzi's language category" Volume 32)

(11) As long as you review old knowledge, you can comprehend new knowledge from it. ("Zhuzi's language category" Volume 41)

(12) The later chapters of "Doctrine of the Mean" maybe express that as long as people restrain themselves, then the work will be very fine. ("Zhuzi's language category" Volume 64)

(13) The so-called rites and music, as long as it conforms to Dao of heaven and nature, there is nothing that is not feasible. ("Zhuzi's language category" Volume 87)

In the case of (7), the conjunction "shall" means "as long as" and the adverb "will" means "then". "One must be conscientious and responsible for studying" is a sufficient condition for "do well" while "do well" is the result of "One must be conscientious and responsible for studying". In the examples (8) and (9), the subject can be placed after the conjunction "as long as" or after "then". In the examples (10) and (11), the conjunction "once" means "as long as", and expresses conditional relationship semantically. In examples (12) and (13), "then" all have the meaning of "will".

D. In the Ming Dynasty, the Sentence Pattern "Only if p, then q", "Only if p, will q" Appeared

(14) Gan Ning said: "Only a hundred soldiers can beat the enemy. Why do you use three thousand?" (Chapter 68 of the Romance of the Three Kingdoms)

(15) Gao Gongxin said: "Only if Hui Yuan come back, will this matter be settled." ("Wonders of China", Volume 79)

(16) Wu Shan said: "Only after three to five days, I will come to see you." ("Clear Words to Illustrate the World", Volume 3)

(17) Hu Dahai replied: "Please don't be worried, master. You can lead the generals to control the situation. I am willing to take the lead. We can break the surrounding only by this axe." (Chapter 13 of "The Charge of the Light Brigade")

(18) Ju Liusun said: "He came only for the Ruyiqiankun bag. I won't go to meet him. You can capture him only by doing this." (Chapter 75 of "Creation of the gods")

It can be seen from the above that the conditional complex sentence "as long as p, q" may be originated from the format "once p, then q" in the Han Dynasty. After a long period of development, the "just p, then q" sentence appeared in the Tang and Wudai Dynasties. In the Southern Song Dynasty, there were "should p, then q", "once p, then q", "as long as p, then q", "as long as p, will q" sentence. In the Ming Dynasty, the sentence pattern "only if p, then q", "only if p, will q" appeared.

III. THE EVOLUTION OF THE SENTENCE "AS LONG AS P, Q"

The conditional complex sentence "as long as p, q" sentence has experienced a long period of evolution, which mainly can be divided into: formation period, development period and maturity period.

A. Formation Period: Ming Dynasty

The Ming Dynasty is the formation period of the conditional complex sentence "as long as p, then q", when the conditional complex sentence "as long as p, q" appeared first. The conditional complex sentence "as long as p, then q" sentence is first seen in the "a manual for military training" (volume five) of the Ming Dynasty: "The soldiers only need to go on fighting, without cutting the first level. As long as they beat him, the infantry will be sure to win." The previous clause connected by the conjunction "as long as" and the latter clause connected by the adverb "then" form the semantic relationship signifying conditions, "they beat him" is a sufficient condition for "the infantry will be sure to win".

In other documents of the Ming Dynasty, the use case of the conditional complex sentence "as long as p, q" also appeared. For example:

(19) We can send someone to invite Jiang Sheng to come here. Then sweep the study room so that he can settle down. Once we pick a good day, we will marry our girl to him. ("Amazing Tales, second series" Volume 29)

(20) There are many people loving my beauty, and want to marry me with expensive gifts, but he don't want expensive gifts. As long as you persuade him to make a deal, he will marry you. ("Amazing Tales, first series" volume 16)

(21) With this medallion, he won't be afraid of everthing. Ypu needn't to wait long. As soon as you stretch your legs, he will rest his wings. He will perform all the events that he used to blame others. (Chapter 36 of "The Marriage Stories to Awaken Men")

In order to fully explain the use of the sentence "as long as p, then q" in the Ming Dynasty, we take the fifteen ancient books around this period as examples:

TABLE I. THE USE OF CONDITIONAL COMPLEX SENTENCE "AS LONG AS P, Q" IN MING DYNASTY

The title of books	once p, will q	only p, then q	as long as p, then q	only if p, will q	as long as p, q	as long as p, q
<i>Wan Li Compilation</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>A Manual for Military Training</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0
<i>Secret History of the Zhou dynasty</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Wonders of China</i>	0	0	0	0	4	0
<i>Cases of Judge Bao</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Water Margins</i>	3	8	0	0	6	0
<i>Journey to the West</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Creation of the Gods</i>	1	0	0	1	0	0
<i>Lasting Words to Awaken the World</i>	0	0	0	0	3	0
<i>Ordinary Words to Warn the World</i>	2	1	0	0	0	0
<i>Clear Words to Illustrate the World</i>	0	1	0	0	1	0
<i>Romance of the Three Kingdoms</i>	2	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Amazing Tales, Second Series</i>	1	1	0	0	5	5
<i>Amazing Tales, First Series</i>	0	0	0	0	9	1
<i>The Marriage Stories to Awaken Men</i>	0	0	0	0	0	3
<i>Subtotal</i>	10	12	0	1	28	9

It can be seen from "Table I" that in this period, the sentence pattern "as long as p, q" is used less frequently, only 9 cases appear in 15 ancient books, which means that "as long as p, q" is still the process of formation in this period. "As long as p, then q", "only p, then q", and "once p, will q" sentence patterns continue to develop, "as long as p, then q" sentence pattern is rarely seen.

B. Development Period: Qing Dynasty

The Qing Dynasty is the development period of the conditional complex sentence "As long as p, q". In this period, the use cases of the conditional complex sentence "as long as p, q" are more common. For example:

(22) If the water monster comes, don't run around. You just need to shout aloud, sit in the nest and don't move. (Chapter 84 of "The Seven Heroes and Five Gallants")

(23) As the saying goes: No matter how big the lawsuit is, as long as there is enough silver, it will be fine. (Chapter 2 of "The Seven Heroes and Five Meanings")

(24) If you are afraid that he may die, his parents and brothers will come to argue with me and complain to the office, I only need to spend a lot of money to buy his life. (Chapter 25 of "The Nine-Tailed Turtle")

(25) He followed: "How can this make sense! As long as he has great power, he can do it. However, he offered the price, prepared the memorial and solicited customers everywhere, which is too improper! (Chapter 5 of "Bizarre Happenings Witnessed over Two Decades")

(26) As long as one is an intellectual, he should stop. (Chapter 18 of Daughters and Sons)

In order to fully explain the use of the sentence "as long as p, then q" in the Qing Dynasty, we take the fifteen ancient books around this period as examples:

TABLE II. THE USE OF CONDITIONAL COMPLEX SENTENCE "AS LONG AS P, Q" IN QING DYNASTY

The title of books	once p, will q	only p, then q	as long as p, then q	only if p, will q	as long as p, q	as long as p, q
<i>Judge Dee</i>	0	1	0	0	6	5
<i>Cases of Judge Peng</i>	0	1	0	0	5	19
<i>Revealing Original State of Officialdom</i>	0	2	0	0	9	32
<i>A torn lily</i>	0	0	0	0	2	4
<i>The Scholars</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>The Marriage of Flowers in the Mirror</i>	0	0	0	0	0	10
<i>A Dream in Red Mansions</i>	0	5	0	0	5	7
<i>The Wizard of Oz</i>	0	4	1	0	4	3
<i>Strange Stories from a Scholar's Studio</i>	1	0	0	0	1	1
<i>The Travels of Lao Ts'an</i>	0	0	0	0	0	5
<i>Three Heroes and Five Gallants</i>	0	0	0	0	3	7
<i>The Seven Heroes and Five Meanings</i>	2	0	1	0	18	16
<i>Bizarre Happenings Witnessed Over Two Decades</i>	0	0	0	0	24	18
<i>Daughters and Sons</i>	0	1	0	0	5	9
<i>The Nine-tailed Turtle</i>	1	2	0	0	12	46
<i>Subtotal</i>	4	16	2	0	94	183

As can be seen from "Table II", the sentence pattern "as long as p, q" is quite common in the Qing Dynasty. At the same time, the phrase "as long as p, then q" also showed a

strong development trend. "As long as p, will q", "only p, can q", "just p, then q", and "once p, will q" developed relatively slowly during this period.

C. Maturity Period: Republic of China

The Republic of China is the maturity period of the conditional complex sentence "as long as p, q". In this period, the use cases of the conditional complex sentence "as long as p, q" are common in vernacular novels. For example:

(27) Previously, as long as Chen Xiaoli can't see Fan Huahua for a few days, she can't eat well or sleep well. ("Ancient and Modern Love", volume 11)

(28) Now that we are talking about the location, I'm not sure the meaning of location mentioned by the ministry councilor. Have you determined the place and just need me to look at it, so that you can bury the person. Or you haven't determined the place, so I need to find it? ("The Three Heroes in the Qing Dynasty")

(29) He always brags to his friends that as long as the prime minister goes away, he has hope for reinstatement. (Chapter 34 of the Romantic Stories in Court in the Han Dynasty)

(30) There is only one strange place. I like to be close to Wang Gao since I was a child. Whenever I cry and no one can stop me, as long as Wang Gao hug me, I would stop cry in a moment. (Chapter 2 of the Secret History of the Qing Dynasty)

(31) The idea of the owner is that, as long as the whereabouts are known, he will say nothing, and go out. Chapter 6 of private records of studying in japan

In order to fully explain the use of the sentence "as long as p, then q" in the Republic of China, we take the fifteen ancient books around this period as examples:

TABLE III. THE USE OF CONDITIONAL COMPLEX SENTENCE "AS LONG AS P, Q" IN THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The title of books	once p, will q	only p, then q	as long as p, then q	only if p, will q	as long as p, q	as long as p, q
<i>Midnight</i>	0	0	0	0	0	10
<i>Cold Nights</i>	0	0	0	0	0	7
<i>the Sun Shines over the Sanggan River</i>	0	0	0	0	1	20
<i>Tales of Hulan River</i>	0	0	0	0	0	4
<i>The Philosophy of Old Zhang</i>	0	0	0	0	0	3
<i>Scream</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>The Gold Rush</i>	0	0	0	0	1	11
<i>The Mortal Wind</i>	0	0	0	0	0	4
<i>The Informal History of Shunmei</i>	0	3	0	0	1	62
<i>Fortress Besieged</i>	0	0	0	0	0	7
<i>Rickshaw Boy</i>	0	2	0	0	4	11
<i>the Torrent Trilogy</i>	0	1	0	0	2	15
<i>Family Heirloom</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>Collected Works of Ai Wu</i>	0	0	0	0	2	23
<i>Ancient and Modern Love</i>	0	1	1	0	5	30
<i>Subtotal</i>	0	7	1	0	16	209

It can be seen from "Table III" that the sentence pattern "as long as p, q" matured during the Republic of China, and there are many use cases. "Once p, q", "only p, can q" sentence did not have obvious development during this period, sentence patterns "only p, then q", "as long as p, then q", "as long as p, will q" developed slowly.

IV. CONCLUSION

To sum up, "As long as p, q" sentence is originated from the sentence pattern "once p, q" in the Han Dynasty and appeared for the first time in the "a manual for military training". It formed in the Ming Dynasty, further developed in the Qing Dynasty, and matured in the Republic of China.

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