

TITLE:

Chinese demonstrative *gāi* (该): a Linguistic investigation and its Pedagogical implications

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AUTHOR:

Juan Zhong

AFFILIATION:

Columbia University

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures

Columbia University

116th Street and Broadway

New York, NY 10027

EMAIL:

jz3019@columbia.edu

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Given the fact that referentiality is a crucial grammatical category and among the major determiners of Chinese demonstratives function virtually as the same as definite article (Chen, 2004), it is concerning that the mastery of the widely and frequently used demonstrative *gāi* 该 of Chinese language learners couldn't be completed with the pedagogical explanations offered by existing textbooks and dictionaries. Generally, the demonstrative *gāi* 该 is categorized as pronoun, however, it never stands by its own yet strictly prefaces a referent. Besides, it is commonly listed with English equivalences, *this, that, the, the above-mentioned*, etc. which process distinct functional characteristics respectively. As for scholarly studies on demonstrative *gāi* 该, it is surprising that relevant rigorous research is scarce and the one and only directly-related analysis by Li (2008) fails to offer an adequate description for its pragmatic functions and constraints as it claims that the demonstrative *gāi* 该 now can be used unconditionally before most nouns, which counters the following linguistic facts:

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| a1. 该书 | a2. *该公/司 |
| b1. *该(书)籍 | b2. 该公司 |
| c1. *该本书 | c2. 该系列图书 |
| d1. *该个人 | d2. 该名男子 |

To address this rising issue, this study conducts a both quantitative and qualitative investigation of the demonstrative *gāi* 该 by utilizing register-diversified linguistic corpora within the theoretical framework of discourse grammar and proposes an adequate description of the demonstrative *gāi* 该 in terms of its syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic attributes and constraints, with a tentative explanation supported by cross-linguistic evidence and grammaticalization findings. Desired results of this study encompass the syntactic and semantic restrictions of the head noun demonstrative *gāi* 该 attached to (i.e. the numbers of syllable, spatiotemporality, and evidentiality), the use of classifiers/measure word between it and the head noun, the syntactic positions of the demonstrative *gāi*+referent construction, and the co-occurrent main verb with such construction. Furthermore, the study illustrates the features of the type of discourse where demonstrative *gāi* occurs concerning register, genre, and style. Last, this study reveals the uniqueness of demonstrative *gāi* by comparing it with *zhè* 这, *cǐ* 此, and *běn* 本. In the end, this study generates some pedagogical implications based on the proposed sounding linguistic analysis.