A Variationist Analysis of Locative Markers in Chengdu Dialect

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Outline

1   **Chengdu & its language**

2   **Research question**

3   **Solution**

4   **Conclusion**

1 **Chengdu & its language**

1.0 Chengdu
Economic, cultural and education center of China

Population: 13, 989, 300 (by 2016)

1.1 Inner Chengdu

11 districts
4 county-level cities
5 counties

Inner Chengdu as the speech community

1.2 Chengdu dialect

THE SINITIC LANGUAGES

Mandarin	836 million (worldwide)
Jin	45 million(usu. grouped with Mandarin)
Wu	77 million
Hui	3.2 million(usu. grouped with Wu)
Gan	31 million
Xiang	36 million
Min	60 million(incl. Taiwanese)
Hakka	34 million (worldwide)
Yue	71 million (worldwide)
Ping	2 million(usu. grouped with Yue)

Research question

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2.0 Everyday truth

The national promotion of Putonghua has 'standardized' the vernacular Chengdu dialect

The variation between locative markers *-tou* (头'head') and *-mian*(面'face')

2.1 Expressing locality in Chinese

Preposition + place nouns + postposition

(1) (在)学校里-(面/头)
(zai)-xuexiao-li-(mian/tou)
at-school-inside-(MIAN/TOU)
'at school'

2.2 -*tou* (头'head') v.s. -*mian*(面'face')

2.2.1 -*tou* functions as a nominalizer:

a. noun-*tou*: 石头 *shi-tou* (stone-TOU) 'stone'

b. verb-*tou*: 看头 *kan-tou* (look-TOU) 'things worth looking'

c. adj.-*tou*: 甜头 *tian-tou* (sweet-TOU) 'sweet things'

Chao (2011)

2.2 *-tou* (头'head') v.s. *–mian*(面'face')

2.2.2 *-tou* as locative marker after localizers:

上头 *shang-tou* (up-TOU) 'on top of'
下头 *xia-tou* (down-TOU) 'under...'
前头 *qian-tou* (front-TOU) 'in front of'
后头 *hou-tou* (behind-TOU) 'behind…'
里头 *li-tou* (inside-TOU) 'inside…'
外头 *wai-tou* (outside-TOU) 'outside…'

Lü (1981:473-474)

2.2 -*tou* (头'head') v.s. –*mian*(面'face')

2.2.3 -*mian* as locative marker:

上面 *shang-mian* (up-MIAN) 'on top of'
下面 *xia-mian* (down-MIAN) 'under...'
前面 *qian-mian* (front-MIAN) 'in front of'
后面 *hou-mian* (behind-MIAN) 'behind…'
里面*li-mian* (inside-MIAN) 'inside…'
外面 *wai-mian* (outside-MIAN) 'outside…'

Lü (1981:473-474)

Gao (2006): suffixation of *-tou*
Wei (2007): grammaticalization of *-tou*
Feng (2008): suffixation of *-mian*
Yin (2008): psychological constraints of *-tou* & *-mian*
Chen (2016) : diachronic change of the productivity of *-tou*

None of the previous works on *-tou* and *-mian* is related to sociolinguistics.

(2) Cases where only *-tou can be used*:
 a. 屋头 *wu-tou* (house-TOU) 'inside the house'
 b. 学校头 *xuexiao-tou* (school-TOU) 'inside the school'

(3) Cases where *-tou* alternates with *-mian*:
 a. 屋里面/头 *wu-li-mian/tou*
   (house-inside-MIAN/TOU)
    'inside the house'
 b. 学校里面/头 *xuexiao-li-mian/tou*
   (school-inside-MIAN/TOU)
   'inside the school'

（**1964** *Dialectal Words in Chinese*）

2.4.1 *-tou* (头'head') v.s. *-mian*(面'face')

Table 1. Summary of cases where *-tou* alternates with *-mian*

Meaning	Chengdu dialect	standard Chinese
'on/above'	$shang^{213}$/kau^{45}**tou**^{21}(up/tall-TOU)	$shang^4$**mian**^{0} (up-MIAN)
'below'	xia^{213} **tou**^{21} (down-TOU)	xia^4**mian**^{0} (down-MIAN)
'front'	$qian^{213}$ **tou**^{21} (front-TOU)	$qian^2$**mian**^{0} (front-MIAN)
'back'	hou^{213} **tou**^{21} (behind-TOU)	hou^4**mian**^{0}(behind-MIAN)
'inside'	li^{42}/hou^{13}_{53} **tou**^{21} (inside-TOU)	li^3**mian**^{0} (inside-MIAN)
'outside'	wai^{213}**tou**^{21} (outside-TOU)	wai^4**mian**^{0}(outside-MIAN)

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2.4.2 Research questions

- **Social distribution of *-tou* and *-mian*.**

- **Possible linguistic and social constraints on the distribution of *-tou* and *-mian*.**

- **Why do such constraints exist?**

3 **Solution**

3.1 Data collection

Table 2. Forty participants (born and raised in inner Chengdu)

	Female			Male		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
15-20	0	6	0	0	5	0
20-30	0	1	6	1	1	2
>35	5	2	1	7	3	0
Total		21			19	

3.1 Data collection

3.1.1 Narrative telling

- **Participants could only use Chengdu dialect;**

- **Each interview lasted at least 45 minutes;**

- **Participant-guided topics + prepared questions:**

   E.g.: Have you had any nightmares?
   Have you been caught in any dangers?

3.1 Data collection

To avoid Observer's orthodox (Labov 1972)

- **Independent interview with friends**

- **Group interaction for those who were friends**

- **Friends as my interviewers**

More than 40 hours' oral data of interview collected

3.1 Data collection

3.1.2 Picture description

3.1 Data collection

3.1.3 Question-answering pairs
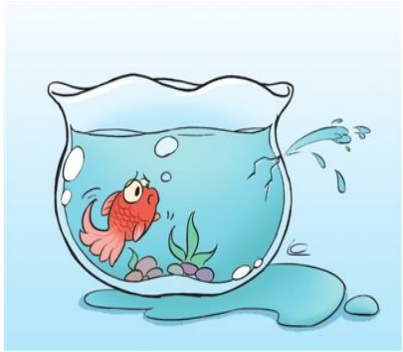
3.1 Data collection

3.1.4 Language attitude survey

30 multiple choice questions arranged at the end of the interview to test their preference for Chengdu dialect and their willingness to involve into the local community.

E.g.:
Which do you prefer: Chengdu dialect or Putonghua?
Would you like to live in Chengdu in the future?

3.2 Data analysis

3.2.1 Two exceptions excluded

- **Tokens repeated for the purpose of clarification:**

  (4) 你是说在屋头嘛？

    ni shi shuo zai wutou ma

    you-are-talk-at-house-PARTICLE

    'are you talking about 'at home'.

- **Sentences where neither *-tou* nor *-mian* was used:**

  (5) 她在屋里。

    ta zai wuli

    she-at-house-inside

    'she is at home'.

3.2 Data analysis

3.2.2 Coding

Linguistic predictor:

Grammatical function (Types of adverbial)

Extra-linguistic predictors:

Contextual styles
Language attitude
Gender
Age
Education

3.2 Data analysis

(6) 她就在屋里头给我做饭那些嘛。

*Ta jiu shi zai wu-li-**tou** gei wo zhufan naxie ma.*

She just is at home-inside-TOU for me cook those PARTICLE.

'She just does some cooking for me at home'.

(01/ F/Z/037)
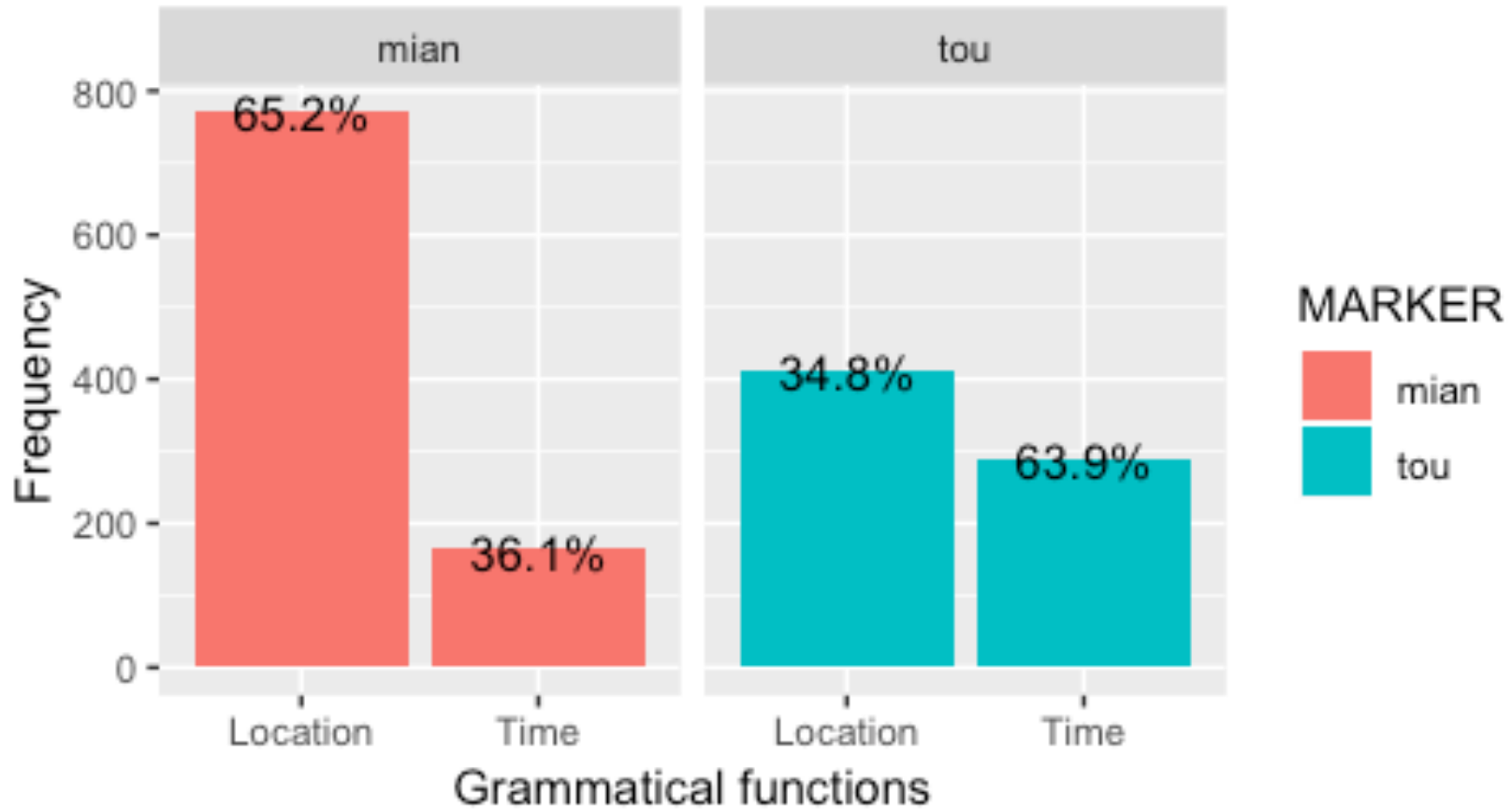
**Figure 1. Variation between *-tou* & *-mian*
in terms of time and location**

Time v.s. Location
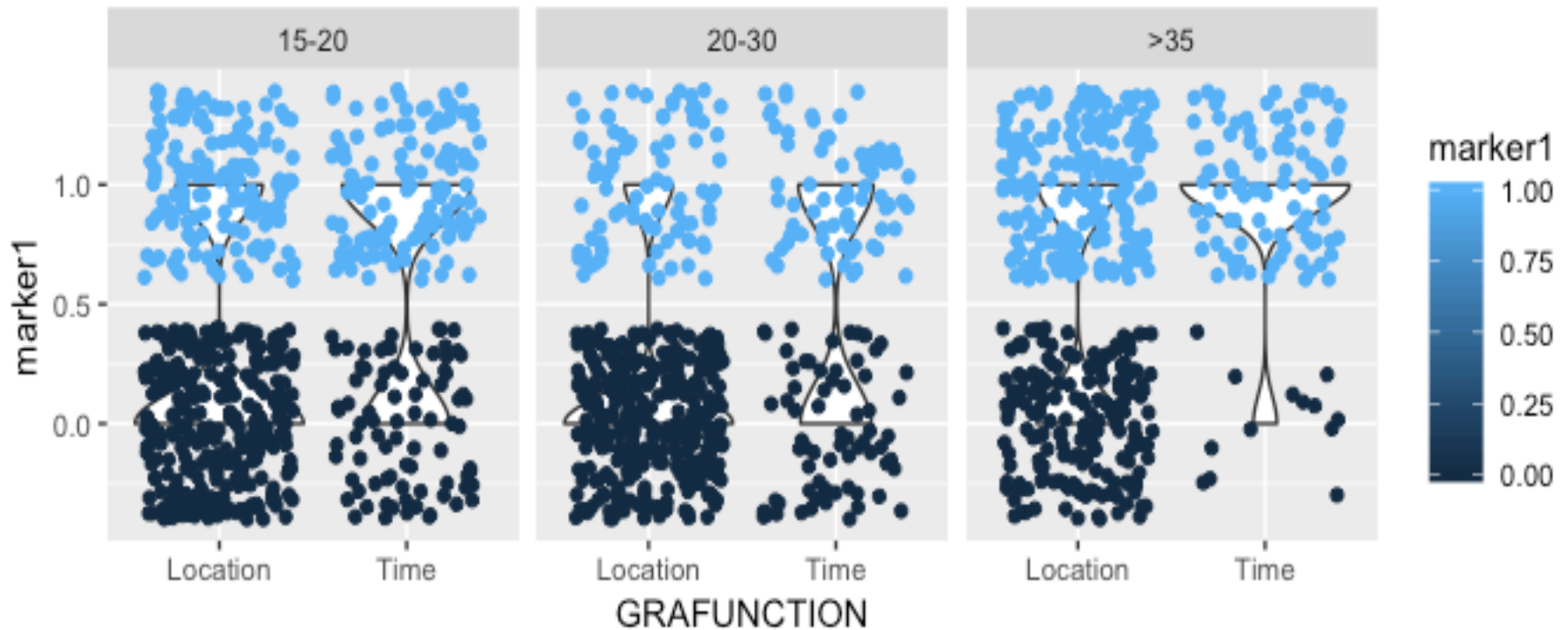
**Figure 2. Variation between *-tou* & *-mian*
in terms of time and location by age**

3.3 Results

Table 3. Result from fixed-effects modelling (linguistic predictor)

		%	N
Total N: 1636			
Input: .390			
Adverbial			
Place adverbial	.420	34.8	411
Time adverbial	.698	63.9	290
Range:	*28*		
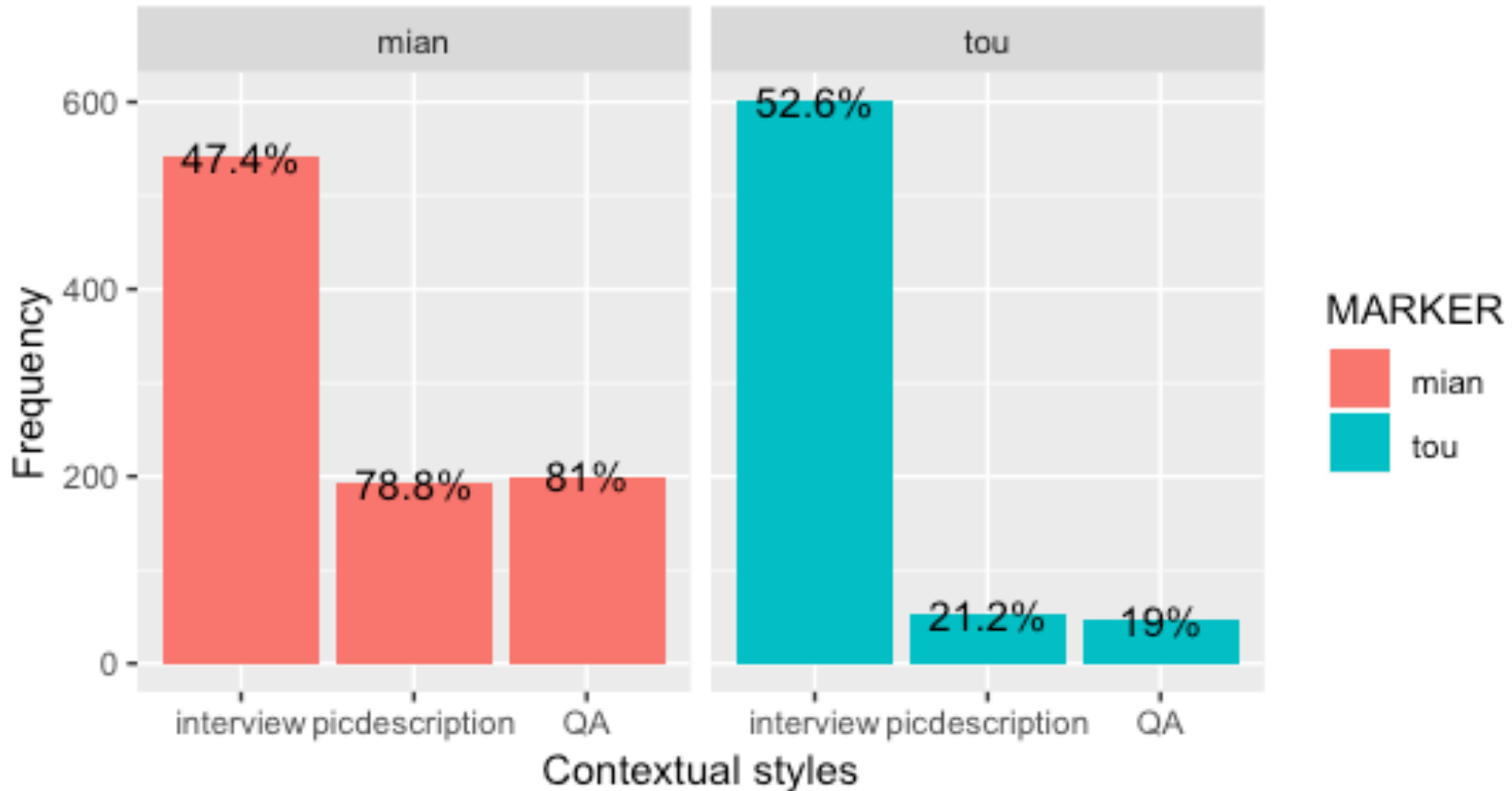
Figure 3. Variation between *-tou* & *-mian* in terms of contextual styles

3.3 Results
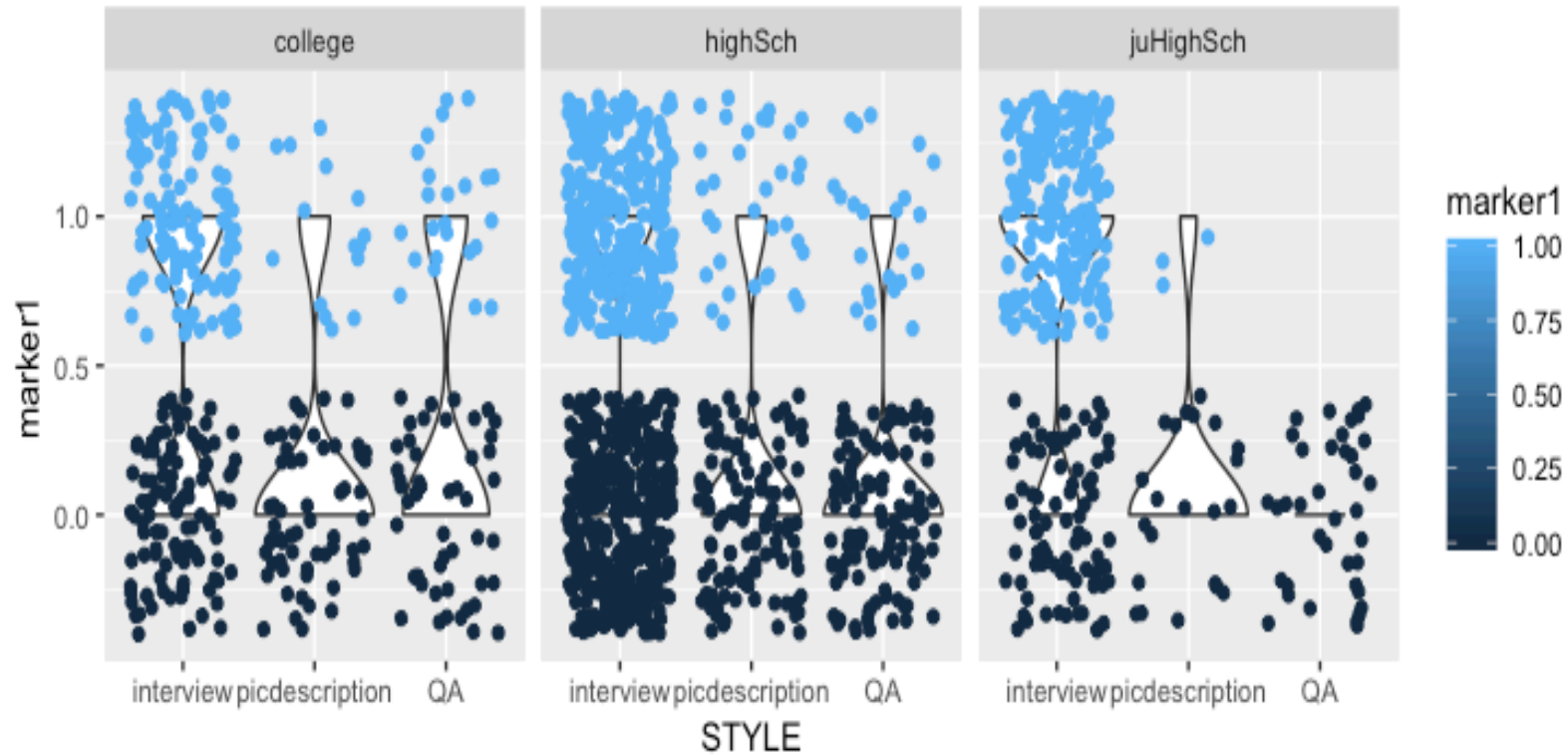
Figure 4. Variation between *-tou* (marker1) & *-mian* in terms of contextual styles by education
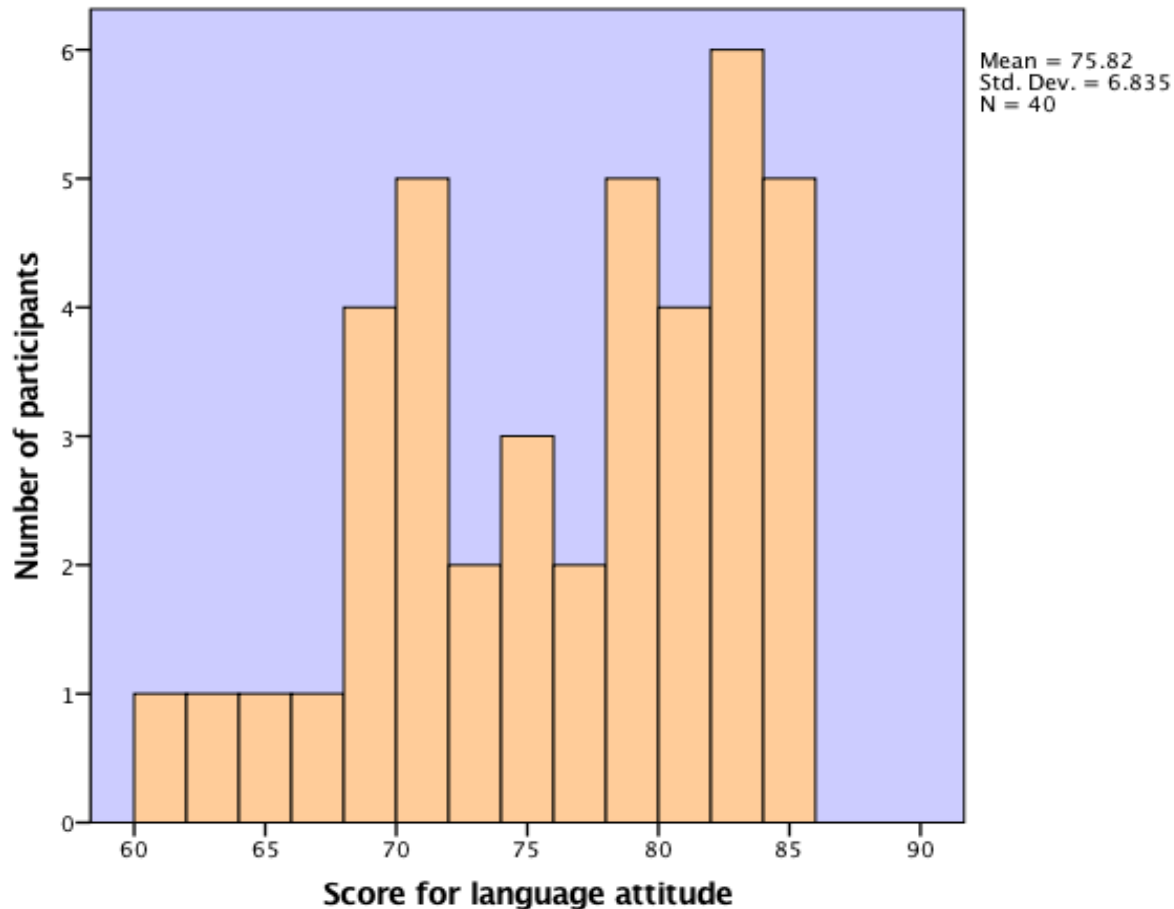
Figure 5. Questionnaire for language attitude

3.3 Result

Extra-linguistic predictors: 3/5

Figure 6. Variation between *-tou & -mian*
in terms of different language attitudes
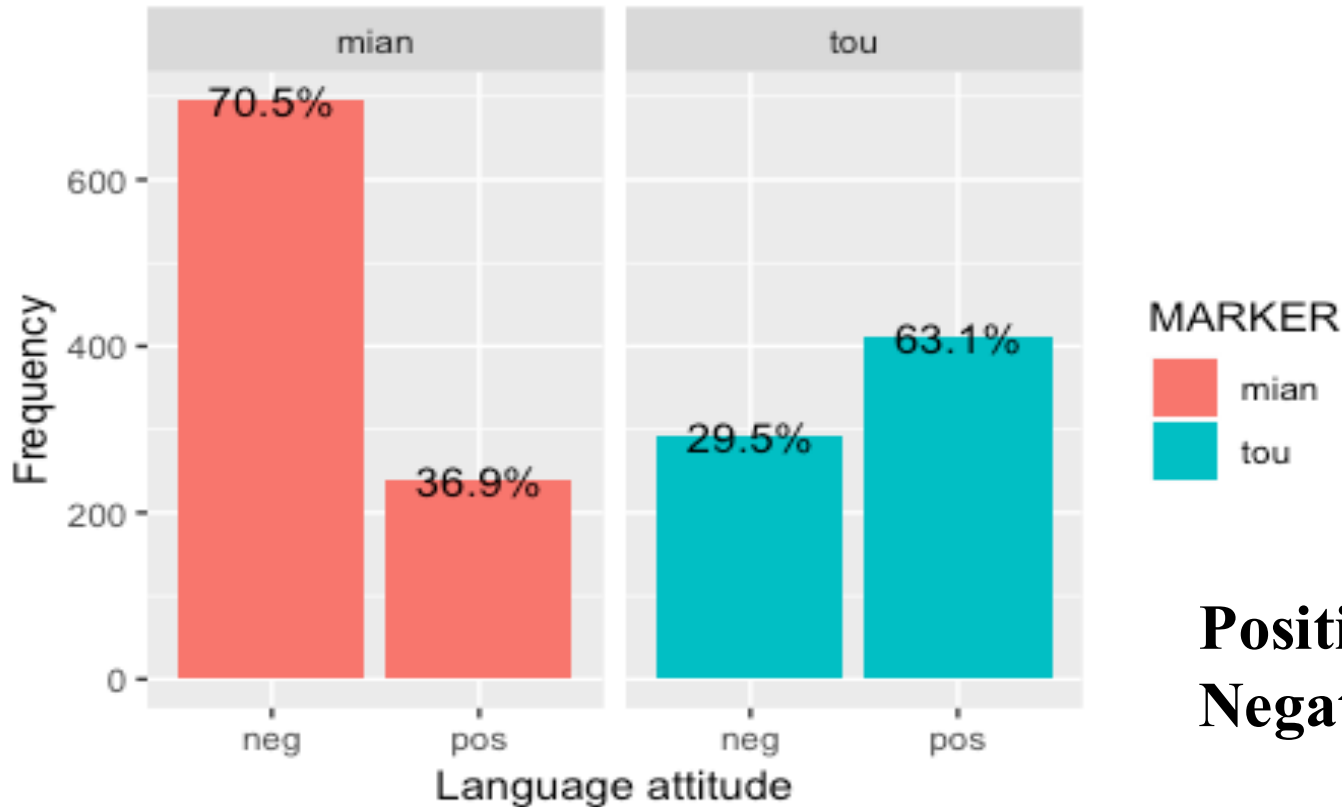
Positive : high score
**Negative: low score**

3.3 Result

Extra-linguistic predictors: 4/5
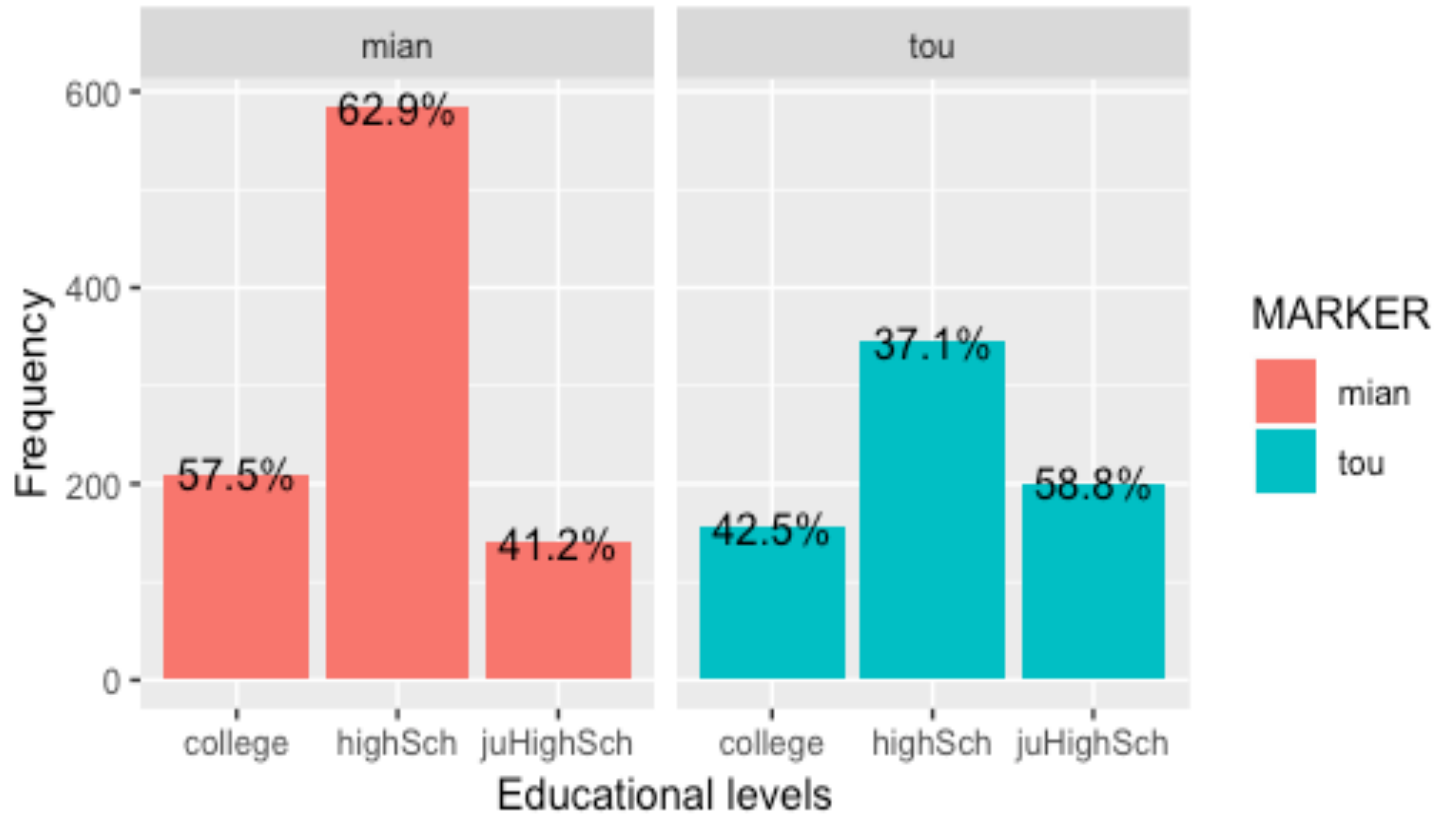
**Figure 7. Variation between *-tou* & *-mian* in terms of different educational levels**
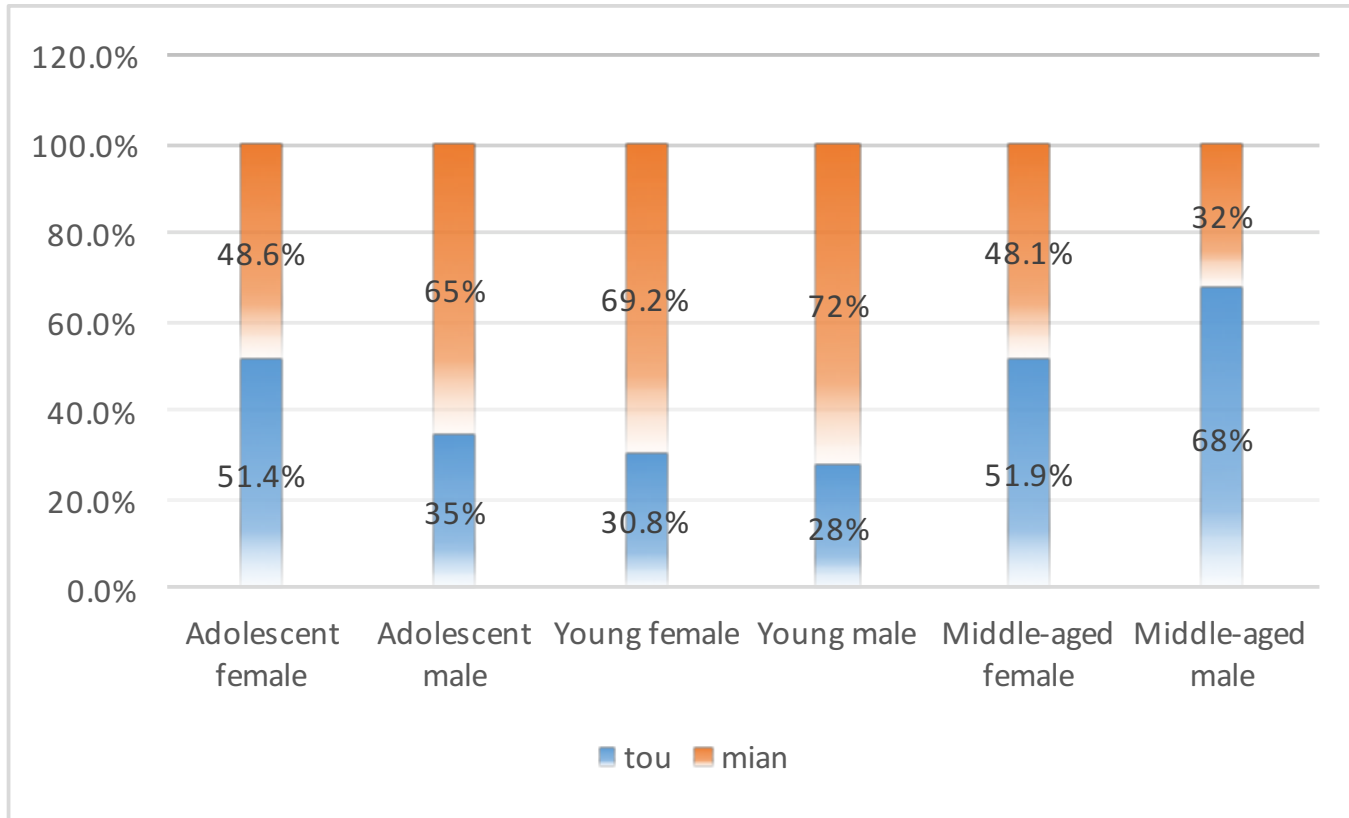
A possible "v"-shaped age grading

Figure 8. Variation between *-tou* & *-mian* in terms of gender and age

3.3 Results

Ranking of constraints: (from fixed-effects modelling)

    Age & Gender (*Range* =63)

    Language attitude (*Range*=47)

    Contextual style (*Range*=37)

    Education level (*Range*=33)

    Grammatical function (*Range*=28)

4 **Conclusion**

4 Conclusion

- **The most favorable environment for *-tou* to occur:**

  An adolescent female with positive language attitude towards Chengdu dialect is most likely to use *-tou* as the locative marker in her daily speech.

- **Grammaticalization:** *-tou* favors time adverbial

- **Effect from language attitude**: positive attitude favors local variant *-tou*

4 Conclusion

- **Age grading : < 20 and >35 favor *-tou***
  The 20s favor *-mian*

- **Principle of "Avoid Synonymy" (Kiparsky 1982): two synonymous morphemes avoid the same social context.**

- **Convergence and divergence:**
  Cases where *-tou* is used only coexist with cases where *-tou* alternates with *-mian*

Thanks !