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# Speech organs and linguistic activity/function in Chinese\*

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This chapter investigates the Chinese cultural understanding of speech and language based on the metonymic chain from speech organ to language as proposed by Radden (2004): speech organ → speaking → speech → language. The focus is on three metonymies, SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING, SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEECH, and SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE. It is found that the first two are abundant in conventionalized expressions, but SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE, widely attested across languages (Radden 2004), is not realized lexically in Chinese. While SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE is not manifested in the Chinese lexicon, it is nevertheless realized in its logographic writing system as components of the characters. Chinese characters representing ‘language’ and ‘speech’ contain within them the ‘mouth’ radical as a semantic component. This finding provides an interesting and telling example of how the general cognitive principle of embodiment can be realized in and embraced by a culture-specific environment.

**Keywords:** culture-specific environment, logographic writing system, metonymy

## 1. Introduction

Cognitive Linguistics holds the position that the human mind is embodied (Lakoff & Johnson 1999), and the embodiment premise states that people’s subjective, felt experiences of their bodies in action provide part of the fundamental grounding for language and thought (Gibbs 2006). For example, Radden (2004) in a study of linguistic data from dozens of languages, investigates a “naïve view” or “folk model” of language based on the metonymic chain from speech organ to language:

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speech organ → speaking → speech → language. This metonymic chain, which is motivated by cognitive principles governing the selection of preferred metonymic vehicles (Radden & Kövecses 1999) and which operates within the conceptual frame LANGUAGE, is expressed in conceptual formulae as SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING, SPEAKING FOR SPEECH, and SPEECH FOR LANGUAGE. These conceptual metonymies are respectively specific instantiations of more general conceptual metonymies INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION, ACTION FOR RESULT, and SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC. They are often elaborated by metaphor in intricate ways resulting in what is called “metaphonymy” (Goossens 2002).<sup>1</sup> As a process of conceptual and semantic extension, the metonymic chain illustrates how the conception of a crucial human cognitive function is rooted in the human body and bodily experience.

The shifts along the metonymic chain, however, can skip one or more intermediate links. As a rule, therefore, the word for ‘language’ is synchronically related to, or historically derived from, a more basic sense belonging to one of the three domains: (i) articulation and speech organs, (ii) linguistic action, and (iii) basic linguistic units (Radden 2004: 543). In certain languages, for instance, the term for ‘word’, which denotes a linguistic unit, can mean ‘language’, or be part of a derived word or compound that means ‘language’, i.e. LINGUISTIC UNIT FOR LANGUAGE. In many other languages, the word for ‘language’ derives from a word meaning ‘speak’, ‘say’, or ‘tell’, i.e. SPEAKING FOR LANGUAGE. Skipping the intermediate links along the metonymic chain also results in a metonymy widely attested across world languages, i.e. SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE. For example, the term for ‘tongue’ is also used for ‘language’ in virtually all Indo-European languages, and this is true for many non-Indo-European languages as well (Radden 2004: 554–555).

The folk understanding of language and linguistic behavior, which is rooted in embodied experience and has a physiological basis, focuses especially on the salient articulators: the tongue, the teeth, the lips, and the mouth. Radden (2004) expresses the need for systematic studies across languages in order to assess the

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1. Over the past two decades, Cognitive Linguistics has published an enormous number of studies on the crucial role of metaphor and metonymy in human language and thought. See, e.g., Barcelona (2000a), Dirven & Pörings (2002), Forceville (1996), Forceville & Urios-Aparisi (2009), Gibbs (1994), Gibbs & Steen (1999), Goatly (2007), Johnson (1987); Kövecses (2000, 2002, 2005, 2006), Lakoff (1987), Lakoff & Johnson (1999), Lakoff & Núñez (2000), Panther & Radden (1999a), Panther & Thornburg (2003), Panther, Thornburg, & Barcelona (2009), Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Otal Campo (2002), Steen (2007), Yu (1998). Readers are referred particularly to Gibbs (2008) for a recent state-of-the-art collection of multidisciplinary studies on metaphor and thought. In the past decade, Cognitive Linguistics has especially emphasized the interaction between metonymy and metaphor, which, it has been argued, form a continuum (Barcelona 2000b). It has been claimed that metonymy is a more fundamental cognitive phenomenon than metaphor (Panther & Radden 1999b) and, very often, metaphor is motivated by metonymy (e.g., Barcelona 2000c; Niemeier 2000; Panther 2006; Radden 2000).

possibly universal status of this folk model of language and to map out cross-linguistic differences that are likely to occur with respect to conventionalized implicatures invited by the metonymies.

Following Radden (2004), this chapter studies the Chinese folk understanding of speech and language as is manifested in the Chinese language. It attempts a systematic analysis of Chinese terms for such speech organs as tongue (*she*), teeth (*chi*), lips (*chun*), and mouth (*zui* and *kou*) as are used metonymically and metaphorically in conventionalized linguistic expressions, including compounds and idioms that refer to more abstract linguistic action and function. The study intends to document how speech organ terms extend their meanings along the metonymic chain as proposed by Radden (2004), and how metonymic extension interacts with metaphoric projection along such semantic transfers in Chinese. It attempts to demonstrate the extent to which Chinese conforms to the metonymic chain and displays its cultural characteristics. It is shown that while the metonymy SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE is not realized lexically in Chinese, it is realized in its logographic writing system in the form of Chinese characters. Thus, the study presents a striking case of the general cognitive principle of embodiment embraced in a culture-specific context, or what cognitive linguists call “socioculturally situated embodiment” (Ziemke, Zlatev, & Frank 2007; Frank et al. 2008; Sharifian et al. 2008; see also Maalej 2004, 2007, 2008).

## 2. Speech organ terms in Chinese

In Chinese, the characters that represent the speech organs of a human being are as follows:

- |     |    |   |             |                    |
|-----|----|---|-------------|--------------------|
| (1) | a. | 口 | <i>kou</i>  | ‘mouth’            |
|     | b. | 嘴 | <i>zui</i>  | ‘mouth’            |
|     | c. | 唇 | <i>chun</i> | ‘lip (or lips)’    |
|     | d. | 牙 | <i>ya</i>   | ‘tooth (or teeth)’ |
|     | e. | 齿 | <i>chi</i>  | ‘tooth (or teeth)’ |
|     | f. | 舌 | <i>she</i>  | ‘tongue’           |
|     | g. | 喉 | <i>hou</i>  | ‘throat’           |

The words and the characters that represent them in (1a) and (1b) both mean ‘mouth’. They are of equally common use in present-day Chinese although they are sometimes found in different collocations or contexts. In terms of characters in the writing system, however, 口 *kou* (1a) is more basic than 嘴 *zui* (1b) because it is also one of the basic radicals, i.e. components of characters, found in many of the Chinese characters semantically related to the mouth as their semantic component,

e.g. in 嘴 *zui* 'mouth' (1b), 舌 *she* 'tongue' (1f), and 喉 *hou* 'throat' (1g) above, and many others, such as 吃 *chi* 'eat', 喝 *he* 'drink', 唱 *chang* 'sing', and 叫 *jiao* 'shout'.

The speech organ terms in (1) are not equally productive in their metonymic and metaphoric extensions along the metonymic chain under discussion. In fact, among them *ya* 'tooth' (1d) and *hou* 'throat' (1g) are found, it seems, in very few conventionalized expressions, such as the following two compounds that are results of metonymic and metaphoric extensions.

- (2) a. 磨牙 *mo-ya* (grind-teeth) 'dial. indulge in idle talk; argue pointlessly'  
 b. 喉舌 *hou-she* (throat-tongue) 'mouthpiece'

Here, (2a) refers originally to people grinding their teeth in sleep, but metaphorically to their 'indulging in idle talk' or 'arguing pointlessly'.<sup>2</sup> The metaphor, however, is based on a metonymy SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING. In both literal and metaphorical senses, the speech organ (i.e. the teeth) is making undesirable meaningless noise. Example (2b) is a compound word consisting of *hou* 'throat' and *she* 'tongue', i.e. the combination of two speech organ terms. While the word can refer to the speech organ in general, it is usually used figuratively to refer to the 'tool or person that speaks representing others'. Thus, for instance, the spokesperson of the White House can be called 白宫'喉舌', which literally means 'the White House's throat and tongue'. Also, in China, newspapers are often called 人民的喉舌, i.e. 'people's throat and tongue', which means they represent people's voices or views.

Because their metonymic and metaphoric use in terms of the metonymic chain is very limited, *ya* 'tooth' and *hou* 'throat' are excluded from my discussion unless they occur together with the remaining speech organ terms.

### 3. Analysis of data instantiating the metonymic chain

In present-day Chinese, compound words, which mostly consist of two constituents (represented by two characters), make up the vast majority of its lexical items. In this study, one of the two elements is a speech organ term, which can take the first or the second position. When the speech organ term takes the first position, it very often combines with a verbal or adjectival constituent, and the compound takes up the subject-predicate construction (S-P). When the speech organ term occupies the second position, it can be preceded by a verbal or adjectival element, the internal relationship between the two constituents being, respectively, verb-object (V-O) or adjective-noun (A-N). Occasionally, however, two speech organ

2. See, e.g., NACED (2004: 1090). Linguistic data presented in this chapter were collected from dictionaries and actual discourse.

terms can combine to form a noun-noun (N–N) construction too (e.g. (2b) above). Chinese idiomatic phrases, or *chengyu* (成语) ‘set phrases’, are usually composed of four constituents (i.e. four characters in writing). Quite often, they are two compounds in juxtaposition. In this case, they sometimes involve two body-part terms or, more specifically, speech organ terms.

Before I move on to analyze the data manifesting the metonymic chain, I first point out that a kind of example that is not directly related to the chain is however relevant to our discussion too. Look at the following group:

- (3) a. 大嘴 *da-zui* (big-mouth) ‘one given to loud offensive talk; one who has a loose tongue; one who shoots off one’s mouth’  
 b. 快嘴 *kuai-zui* (fast/quick-mouth) ‘one who readily voices his thoughts; one who is quick to articulate his ideas; a straight person; one who has a loose tongue’  
 c. 利口 *li-kou* (sharp-mouth) ‘a glib tongue’  
 d. 恶口 *e-kou* (evil-mouth) ‘an abusive tongue; a foul tongue; a wicked tongue’  
 e. 长舌 *chang-she* (long-tongue) ‘a long tongue – a gossipy person; gossip-monger’  
 f. 舌头 *she-tou* (tongue-SUF) ‘tongue; an enemy soldier captured for the purpose of extracting information’

All of these compounds instantiate the conceptual metonymy SPEECH ORGAN FOR PERSON OR, more generally, PART FOR WHOLE, which are traditionally known as cases of synecdoche. Obviously, when a speech organ term is used in the metonymy BODY PART FOR PERSON, it differs from some of the other body part terms that serve the same purpose. In Chinese, for instance, the following body part terms are often found as standing metonymically for the whole person, but they have different emphases or highlight different abstract qualities of the person in serving this function:

Different emphases of the BODY PART FOR PERSON metonymy

- (4) a. 心 *xin* ‘heart’ → ‘person, with emphasis on cognition and inner self’ (see e.g. Yu 2009)  
 b. 脸 *lian* ‘face’  
 面 *mian* ‘face’ → ‘person, with emphasis on social identity and outer self’ (see e.g. Yu 2001)  
 c. 手 *shou* ‘hand’ → ‘person, with emphasis on skill and capability of doing things’ (see e.g. Yu 2003)

Thus, for instance, the statement ‘Every Chinese is a heart’ is based on the metonymic conceptualization that the heart, which is perceived as the central faculty

of cognition and locus of the inner self in Chinese culture, can stand for the whole person (see Yu 2009: 300–301). The statement ‘A couple of Asian faces were appointed to the cabinet’ places the emphasis on the racial background of the appointees. Similarly, the statement ‘Our factory hired some new hands’ stresses the working skills (or the lack of them) on the part of the new employees. Now, when it comes to such speech organ terms as *zui* or *kou* ‘mouth’ and *she* ‘tongue’ used metonymically to stand for the whole person, they emphasize the person’s characteristics of speaking or talking, as illustrated by the compounds in (3), or the person’s function as a speaker, as found in the example where the spokesperson of the White House is referred to as the ‘first mouth of the White House’ (白宫第一嘴), and well-known talk show hosts are referred to as ‘famous/name mouths’ (名嘴).

Having discussed some cases of the SPEECH ORGAN FOR PERSON metonymy and how it differs from other cases of BODY PART FOR PERSON, I turn now to the data that contribute to the metonymic chain under investigation. Subsection 3.1 focuses on the mouth, which in Chinese is represented by two words or characters, *kou* and *zui* ‘mouth’; 3.2 deals with *chun* ‘lip/lips’, *chi* ‘tooth/teeth’, and *she* ‘tongue’.

### 3.1 The mouth in conventionalized expressions

The Chinese language is very rich with compounds and set phrases that contain either *kou* ‘mouth’ or *zui* ‘mouth’ for the purpose of morphological construction and semantic extension. Some of them are related to the semantic category of eating (e.g. 口味 *kouwei* ‘mouth-flavor, i.e. one’s taste or liking’; 忌口 *jikou* ‘avoid-mouth, i.e. avoid certain food or be on a diet’; 贪嘴 *tanzui* ‘covet-mouth, i.e. be greedy for food’; 偷嘴 *touzui* ‘steal-mouth, i.e. take food on the sly’), but the vast majority are found in the semantic category of speaking along the metonymic chain under discussion.

I first discuss the compounds that instantiate the SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING metonymy.

- (5) a. 动口 *dong-kou* (move-mouth) ‘talk; speak’
- b. 开口 *kai-kou* (open-mouth) ‘open one’s mouth; start to talk’
- c. 张口 *zhang-kou* (open-mouth) ‘open one’s mouth to say sth.; ask for a favor’
- d. 启口 *qi-kou* (open-mouth) ‘open one’s mouth; start to talk about sth.’
- e. 出口 *chu-kou* (exit-mouth) ‘speak; utter’
- f. 闭口 *bi-kou* (shut-mouth) ‘keep one’s mouth shut; refuse to express one’s opinions’
- g. 住口 *zhu-kou* (stop-mouth) ‘shut up; stop talking’
- h. 动嘴 *dong-zui* (move-mouth) ‘talk; speak’

- i. 张嘴 *zhang-zui* (open-mouth) ‘open one’s mouth to say sth.; ask for a favor’
- j. 住嘴 *zhu-zui* (stop-mouth) ‘stop talking’

In this group of examples, as we can see, the term *kou* or *zui* ‘mouth’ is preceded by a verb that means ‘move’, ‘open’, ‘close’, ‘exit’, or ‘stop’, whereas all of the compounds so formed mean ‘talk or not talk’ or ‘start or stop talking’ in some fashion. Apparently, in some compounds *kou* and *zui* are interchangeable (i.e. in (5a, c, g) vs. (5h, i, j) respectively), but this is not always the case. In some cases, a particular constituent can only combine with one but not the other (e.g. in (5b, d, e) only *kou* but not *zui* is possible). Occasionally, a particular constituent can combine with both but the results do not have exactly the same meaning.

- (6) a. 缄口 *jian-kou* (seal-mouth) ‘keep one’s mouth shut; hold one’s tongue; say nothing’
- b. 绝口 *jue-kou* (sever-mouth) ‘stop talking; keep one’s mouth shut’
- c. 钳口 *qian-kou* (clamp-mouth) ‘force sb. into silence; prevent sb. from talking; shut up; keep silent’
- d. 灭口 *mie-kou* (extinguish-mouth) ‘do away with a witness or accomplice’
- e. 堵嘴 *du-zui* (block up-mouth) ‘gag sb.; silence sb.’
- f. 松口 *song-kou* (loosen-mouth) ‘relax one’s bite and release what is held; be less unyielding; soften; relent’
- g. 松嘴 *song-zui* (loosen-mouth) *inf.* ‘relax one’s bite and release what is held; be less unyielding; soften; relent’

The compounds in (6) have to do with ‘keeping silent oneself’ or ‘silencing others’. The compound in (6c), which means literally ‘grip or clamp one’s mouth with pliers or pincers’, means ‘force oneself or others into silence’. The one in (6d) usually means ‘silence a witness by killing him’ or ‘kill someone to prevent him from disclosing a secret’. Both (6f) and (6g) have the same meaning, with the latter less formal than the former, and evoke the same image where one’s mouth has relaxed from being tightly shut into a release (of a promise or permission).

- (7) a. 斗口 *dou-kou* (fight-mouth) ‘quarrel; bicker; squabble’
- b. 斗嘴 *dou-zui* (fight-mouth) ‘quarrel; bicker; squabble; banter’
- c. 争嘴 *zheng-zui* (contend/vie-mouth) ‘quarrel; bicker; vie for more food’
- d. 吵嘴 *chao-zui* (quarrel-mouth) ‘quarrel; bicker’
- e. 闹嘴 *nao-zui* (make noises/stir up trouble-mouth) ‘quarrel; bicker’
- f. 拌嘴 *ban-zui* (mix-mouth) ‘bicker; squabble; quarrel’
- g. 嚷嘴 *rang-zui* (yell-mouth) *dial.* ‘quarrel; bicker’



The examples in (7) belong to the semantic domain of quarreling. As we can see, arguing is ‘fighting’, ‘contending’, ‘quarreling’, ‘making noises’, ‘mixing’, and ‘yelling’, all with one’s mouth. That is, arguing or quarreling is ‘fighting a mouth battle’ (打嘴仗). Given in the following are some more relevant examples:

- (8) a. 破口 *po-kou* (break-mouth) ‘shout (abuse); let loose (a torrent of abuse)’  
 b. 还口 *huan-kou* (return-mouth) ‘answer back; retort’  
 c. 回口 *hui-kou* (return/go back-mouth) *dial.* ‘answer back; retort’  
 d. 还嘴 *huan-zui* (return-mouth) *inf.* ‘answer or talk back; retort’  
 e. 回嘴 *hui-zui* (return/go back-mouth) ‘answer or talk back; retort’  
 f. 顶嘴 *ding-zui* (push up/retort-mouth) *inf.* ‘reply defiantly (usu. to one’s elder or superior; answer back; talk back’  
 g. 犟嘴 *jiang-zui* (obstinate/stubborn-mouth) ‘reply defiantly; answer or talk back’  
 h. 强嘴 *jiang-zui* (stubborn/unyielding-mouth) ‘reply defiantly; answer or talk back’

The image evoked by (8a) is that a person’s mouth ‘cracks’ to let out ‘a torrent of abuse or curses’. The compounds in (8b–e) all mean ‘to hit back’ in ‘a verbal battle’. Instead of hitting back with their fists, people ‘hit back with their mouths’ in such a battle. The compound in (8f) evokes the image of one pushing up with one’s head when being ‘pressed down’. Conceptualized in spatial terms, younger or junior people have a lower status than that of their elders or superiors. Thus, when they ‘talk back’ in a verbal battle against their seniors and superiors, they not only ‘stand up’ to them, but also ‘push their heads up against’ them.

- (9) a. 夸口 *kua-kou* (exaggerate/boast-mouth) ‘boast; brag; talk big’  
 b. 夸嘴 *kua-zui* (exaggerate/boast-mouth) *inf.* ‘boast; brag; talk big’  
 c. 说嘴 *shuo-zui* (talk-mouth) ‘brag; boast’; *dial.* ‘argue; quarrel’  
 d. 失口 *shi-kou* (lose-mouth) ‘make a slip of the tongue’  
 e. 走口 *zou-kou* (go-mouth) *dial.* ‘make a slip of the tongue; let slip an inadvertent remark’  
 f. 走嘴 *zou-zui* (go-mouth) ‘make a slip of the tongue; let slip an inadvertent remark’  
 g. 漏嘴 *lou-zui* (leak-mouth) ‘let slip a remark; make a slip of the tongue’  
 h. 改口 *gai-kou* (change-mouth) ‘withdraw or modify one’s previous remark; correct oneself’  
 i. 改嘴 *gai-zui* (change-mouth) ‘withdraw or modify one’s previous remark’

Found in (9) are some compounds that fall into three categories: bragging (9a–c), making a slip of the tongue (9d–g), and correcting oneself (9h, i). As can be seen, people who ‘make a slip of the tongue’ would ‘lose their mouths’ (9d), ‘let go their mouths’ (9e, f), or have ‘a leaking mouth’ (9g), and those who ‘withdraw or modify their previous remark’ would actually ‘change their mouths’ (9h, i).

The compounds given below indicate various manners of talking or reading aloud.

- (10) a. 插口 *cha-kou* (insert-mouth) ‘interrupt; chip in’  
 b. 插嘴 *cha-zui* (insert-mouth) ‘interrupt; chip in’  
 c. 抢嘴 *qiang-zui* (rush/rob-mouth) ‘try to get the first word in; try to be heard above the rest’  
 d. 随口 *sui-kou* (follow-mouth) ‘speak thoughtlessly or casually; blurt out whatever comes into one’s head’  
 e. 信口 *xin-kou* (trust/at random-mouth) ‘speak thoughtlessly or casually’  
 f. 拗口 *ao-kou* (disobey/defy-mouth) ‘be hard to pronounce; be awkward reading’  
 g. 绕嘴 *rao-zui* (wind-mouth) ‘not be smooth; be difficult to articulate’  
 h. 咬嘴 *yao-zui* (bite-mouth) ‘be difficult to articulate; be awkward-sounding’  
 i. 上口 *shang-kou* (go up to-mouth) ‘be able to read aloud fluently; be suitable for reading aloud’  
 j. 顺口 *shun-kou* (obey/go with-mouth) ‘read smoothly; say offhandedly’  
 k. 顺嘴 *shun-zui* (obey/go with-mouth) ‘read smoothly; say offhandedly’

The compounds in both (10a, b) mean ‘interrupt’, and to do so one ‘inserts one’s mouth’ into the flow of discourse. When people try to be heard above the rest, they ‘rush their mouths’ (10c). People speaking thoughtlessly or casually ‘follow or trust their mouths’ (10d, e). The compounds in (10f–k) show that things hard to pronounce, articulate, or read aloud ‘disobey’, ‘defy’, ‘wind’, or ‘bite’ the mouth whereas in the opposite case they ‘obey’ or ‘go with’ the mouth. Also, when people speak offhandedly, they ‘go with their mouths’ rather than their heart/mind (10j, k).

- (11) a. 卖嘴 *mai-zui* (sell-mouth) ‘show off verbal skill; indulge in clever talk’  
 b. 磨嘴 *mo-zui* (grind/rub-mouth) *dial.* ‘jabber; do a lot of talking; indulge in idle talk; argue pointlessly’  
 c. 碍口 *ai-kou* (hinder-mouth) ‘be too embarrassing to mention’  
 d. 借口 *jie-kou* (borrow-mouth) ‘use as an excuse or pretext; excuse or pretext’

- e. 矢口 *shi-kou* (vow-mouth) ‘state categorically; insist emphatically; assert positively’
- f. 交口 *jiao-kou* (exchange/cross-mouth) ‘with one voice; converse; talk’
- g. 吐口 *tu-kou* (throw up-mouth) ‘tell truth; put forward a claim; make a demand’

In (11), people showing off their verbal skill by indulging in clever talk are trying to ‘sell their mouths’ (11a). Indulging in idle talk or arguing pointlessly is to ‘grind the mouth’ ((11b); cf. (2a)). Things too embarrassing to mention actually ‘hinder the mouth’ (11c). To use something as an excuse is to ‘borrow a mouth’ and an excuse is a ‘borrowed mouth’ (11d).

In all the compounds discussed above, the first constituent is a verbal element whereas the ones in (12) have an adjectival element as their first constituent, i.e., they constitute an adjective-noun construction.

- (12) a. 多嘴 *duo-zui* (many-mouth) ‘speak out of turn; shoot off one’s mouth’
- b. 油嘴 *you-zui* (oily/greasy-mouth) ‘glib; a glib talker’
- c. 贫嘴 *pin-zui* (nagging-mouth) ‘garrulous; loquacious’
- d. 满口 *man-kou* (full-mouth) ‘(speak) unreservedly or profusely; be full of’
- e. 苦口 *ku-kou* (bitter-mouth) ‘(admonish) in earnest’
- f. 羞口 *xiu-kou* (shy-mouth) ‘find it difficult to bring the matter up’
- g. 极口 *ji-kou* (extreme-mouth) ‘(praise) in highest terms’
- h. 亲口 *qin-kou* (personal-mouth) ‘(say sth.) personally’

Thus, for instance, a person who speaks out of turn has ‘too many mouths’ whereas a glib talker has a ‘greasy mouth’.

While all the compounds discussed so far have the speech organ term *kou* or *zui* ‘mouth’ as their second constituent, preceded by a verbal or adjectival element, the ones given in (13) have the speech organ term as their first element.

- (13) a. 口称 *kou-cheng* (mouth-call/claim) ‘claim to be; profess’
- b. 口吃 *kou-chi* (mouth-eat) ‘stutter; stammer’
- c. 口角 *kou-jue* (mouth-contend/wrestle) ‘quarrel; bicker; wrangle’
- d. 口才 *kou-cai* (mouth-talent) ‘eloquence’
- e. 口气 *kou-qi* (mouth-air/breath) ‘manner of speaking; what is actually meant’
- f. 口风 *kou-feng* (mouth-wind) ‘one’s intention or view as revealed in what one says’
- g. 口实 *kou-shi* (mouth-seed/fruit) ‘a cause for gossip’
- h. 口过 *kou-guo* (mouth-mistake) ‘make a slip of the tongue’

- i. 口误 *kou-wu* (mouth-error) 'make a slip of the tongue; a slip of the tongue; an oral slip'
- j. 口语 *kou-yu* (mouth-language) 'spoken language'

The examples in (13) instantiate either a noun-verb or a noun-noun construction. For instance, if one claims something, one's 'mouth claims' it (13a), and the spoken language is the 'mouth language' (13j).

In the many compounds in (14), the speech organ term for 'mouth', while taking the first position, combines with an adjective that follows it.

- (14) a. 口快 *kou-kuai* (mouth-fast) 'outspoken; plainspoken; thoughtless in speech; quick with one's tongue'
- b. 口紧 *kou-jin* (mouth-tight) 'closemouthed; tight-lipped'
- c. 嘴快 *zui-kuai* (mouth-fast) 'have a loose tongue'
- d. 嘴稳 *zui-wen* (mouth-stable) 'able to keep a secret; discreet in speech'
- e. 嘴直 *zui-zhi* (mouth-straight) 'outspoken; plainspoken'
- f. 嘴尖 *zui-jian* (mouth-pointed) 'sharp-tongued; cutting in speech; be choosy about what one eats'
- g. 嘴冷 *zui-leng* (mouth-cold) *dial.* 'blunt'
- h. 嘴贫 *zui-pin* (mouth-nagging) 'loquacious; garrulous'
- i. 嘴碎 *zui-sui* (mouth-fragmented) 'loquacious; garrulous'

As these examples show, an outspoken and plainspoken person has a 'fast' (14a) or 'straight' (14e) mouth; a loose-tongued person also has a 'fast' mouth (14c) while a sharp-tongued person has a 'pointed' mouth (14f); a loquacious or garrulous person has a 'nagging' (14h) or 'fragmented' (14i) mouth; those who are discreet in speech or tight-lipped have a mouth that is 'stable' (14d) or 'tight' (14b) whereas those who speak bluntly have a mouth that is 'cold' (14g). In the Appendix, more examples of this kind are presented in (1).

- (15) a. 嘴勤 *zui-qin* (mouth-diligent) 'fond of talking; chatty'
- b. 嘴懒 *zui-lan* (mouth-lazy) 'not inclined to talk much'
- c. 嘴松 *zui-song* (mouth-loose) 'have a loose tongue'
- d. 嘴紧 *zui-jin* (mouth-tight) 'tight-lipped; closemouthed'
- e. 嘴敞 *zui-chang* (mouth-open wide) *dial.* 'have a loose tongue'
- f. 嘴严 *zui-yan* (mouth-shut tight) 'tight-lipped; closemouthed'
- g. 嘴软 *zui-ruan* (mouth-soft) 'afraid to speak out'
- h. 嘴硬 *zui-ying* (*mouth-hard*) 'stubborn and reluctant to admit mistakes or defeats'

As shown in (15), there are pairs of compounds where the two adjectives following the speech organ terms are antonyms. However, the two compounds with antonymous adjectives are not necessarily antonyms, e.g. (15g, h).

A prominent characteristic of the Chinese language is that it contains a great number of set phrases or idiomatic collocations. Very often, these idioms consist of four characters. Listed below are the ones that contain *kou* or *zui* ‘mouth’. Because there are so many of them, I simply list some while leaving the rest to the Appendix (see (2) there).

- (16) a. 难以开口 *nan-yi kai-kou* (difficult-to open-mouth) ‘find it difficult to bring the matter up’  
 b. 闭口无言 *bi-kou wu-yan* (shut-mouth no-speech) ‘remain silent; be tongue-tied’  
 c. 三缄其口 *san-jian qi-kou* (three-seal one’s-mouth) ‘with one’s lips sealed’  
 d. 祸从口出 *huo con kou chu* (disaster from mouth come out) ‘trouble comes out of the mouth (i.e. from a loose tongue)’  
 e. 恶口伤人 *e-kou shang-ren* (evil-mouth hurt-people) ‘hurt people with one’s abusive tongue’  
 f. 金口玉言 *jin-kou yu-yan* (gold-mouth jade-words) ‘precious words; utterances that carry great weight’  
 g. 信口开河 *xin-kou kai-he* (at will-mouth open-river) ‘talk irresponsibly; wag one’s tongue too freely; talk at random’  
 h. 口若悬河 *kou-rou xuan-he* (mouth-like hanging-river) ‘let loose a flood of eloquence; be eloquent; speak volubly’  
 i. 嘴不关风 *zui bu guan feng* (mouth not enclose wind) ‘shoot one’s mouth off; have a loose tongue’

In (17) are idiomatic expressions consisting of three characters:

- (17) a. 碎嘴子 *sui-zui-zi* (fragmented-mouth-SUF) ‘chatter; jabber; prate; a garrulous person; chatterbox’  
 b. 支嘴儿 *zhi-zui-er* (pay-mouth-SUF) *dial.* ‘give advice; suggest ideas; make suggestions’  
 c. 嘴把式 *zui-bashi* (mouth-master) *dial.* ‘a person given to idle talk’  
 d. 耍贫嘴 *shua pin-zui* (play nagging-mouth) ‘be garrulous’  
 e. 打嘴仗 *da zui-zhang* (wage mouth-battle) *inf.* ‘argue; quarrel’  
 f. 婆婆嘴 *popo-zui* (old woman’s mouth) ‘a nagging tongue; a garrulous person’

Many of the idioms in (17) actually contain the compounds discussed above. In this sense, we can see these idioms as constructed from expansion and elaboration of those compounds.

As show in (18), such idiomatic expressions or collocations may contain another body part term, suggesting the relationship of this body part with the mouth under certain circumstances.

- (18) a. 杜口裹足 *du-kou guo-zu* (shut out-mouth bind-feet) 'speechless and motionless with fear'  
 b. 口蜜腹剑 *kou-mi fu-jian* (mouth-honey belly-sword) 'honey-mouthed and dagger-hearted; honey on one's lips and murder in one's heart; hypocritical and malignant'  
 c. 目瞪口呆 *mu-deng kou-dai* (eyes-stare mouth-dumb) 'gaping; dumbstruck'  
 d. 嘴闭眼明 *zui-bi yan-ming* (mouth-shut eye-bright) 'keep the mouth shut and the eyes open'  
 e. 利嘴花牙 *li-zui hua-ya* (sharp-mouth flowery-teeth) 'have a ready tongue; saponaceous'  
 f. 拙嘴笨腮 *zhuo-zui ben-sai* (clumsy-mouth stupid-cheek) 'clumsy-tongued; inarticulate'  
 g. 嘴硬骨软 *zui-ying gu-ruan* (mouth-hard bone-soft) 'talk tough but act soft'  
 h. 嘴软骨硬 *zui-ruan gu-ying* (mouth-soft bone-hard) 'talk soft but act tough'

Other than the mouth, the body parts included in the idioms in (18) are feet, belly, eyes, teeth, cheeks, and bones. However, such partnership is most commonly found between the mouth and the heart, as the examples in (19) show (see also (3) in the Appendix).

- (19) a. 锦心绣口 *jin-xin xiu-kou* (splendid-heart beautiful-mouth) 'elegant thought and flowery speech'  
 b. 苦口婆心 *ku-kou po-xin* (bitter-mouth old woman-heart) '(admonish) earnestly and maternally'  
 c. 心直口快 *xin-zhi kou-kuai* (heart-straight mouth-fast) 'frank and outspoken; straightforward and plainspoken'  
 d. 有口无心 *you-kou wu-xin* (have-mouth not have-heart) 'be sharp-tongued but not malicious'  
 e. 心服口服 *xin-fu kou-fu* (mouth-convinced heart-convinced) 'to be genuinely convinced'  
 f. 口心如一 *kou-xin ru-yi* (mouth-heart like-one) 'what one's says is indeed what one thinks; one means what one says'  
 g. 口是心非 *kou-shi xin-fei* (mouth-yes heart-no) 'say yes and mean no; say one thing and mean another'

- h. 嘴甜心辣 *zui-tian xin-la* (mouth-sweet heart-peppery) ‘a cruel heart under the cover of sugar-coated words; sweet words and a bitter heart’
- i. 佛口蛇心 *fu-kou she-xin* (Buddha-mouth snake-heart) ‘honeyed words but evil intent’

In Chinese, *xin* ‘heart’ is culturally conceptualized as the central faculty of cognition, which is the agent of thinking, as well as feeling, and as the seat of both mental and emotional lives, where feelings and thoughts are stored (Yu 2007a, 2007b, 2008, 2009). The idiomatic phrases highlight either the unity or the difference between people’s words and thoughts.

### 3.2 The lips, teeth, and tongue in conventionalized expressions

For Chinese, there is no doubt that the vast majority of the conventionalized expressions manifesting the metonymic chain under discussion contain the speech organ term for ‘mouth’. The mouth, however, has its own parts, notably the lips, the teeth, and the tongue, which also participate in the metonymic chain, as exemplified by the compounds in (20), as well as those in (4) in the Appendix.

- (20) a. 启唇 *qi-chun* (open-lips) ‘open one’s mouth; start to talk about sth.’  
 b. 启齿 *qi-chi* (open-teeth) ‘open one’s mouth; start to talk about sth.’  
 c. 挂齿 *gua-chi* (hang on-teeth) ‘mention’  
 d. 齿及 *chi-ji* (teeth-reach) ‘mention; touch upon’  
 e. 饶舌 *rao-she* (rich-tongue) ‘too talkative; garrulous; say more than is proper; shoot off one’s mouth’  
 f. 卖舌 *mai-she* (sell-tongue) ‘make sensational statements for the sake of publicity’  
 g. 结舌 *jie-she* (tie/knot-tongue) ‘be tongue-tied; be at a loss for words’  
 h. 嚼舌 *jiao-she* (chew-tongue) ‘wag one’s tongue; chatter; gossip; argue meaninglessly; squabble’  
 i. 舌耕 *she-geng* (tongue-plow) *form.* ‘make a living by teaching’

As we can see, starting to talk is ‘opening the lips or teeth’ (20a, b). To mention something is to ‘hang it on the teeth’ (20c). In (20d), to mention or touch upon something is one’s ‘teeth reach’ it. In (20e), a talkative or garrulous person has a ‘rich tongue’. Making sensational statements for the sake of publicity is ‘selling one’s tongue’ ((20f); cf. (11a)). In (20h), to gossip or argue meaninglessly is to ‘chew one’s tongue’. Interestingly, a formal way of saying that someone makes a living by teaching is to say that this person has his ‘tongue plow’ (20i). Notably, a writer does ‘pen-plowing’ (i.e. 笔耕 *bi-geng* [pen-plow] ‘live by one’s pen; make a living by

writing'). The figurative use of the verb *geng* 'plow' reflects the values of a traditionally agrarian culture, where a peasant makes a living by plowing the land.

- (21) a. 反唇相讥 *fan-chun xiang-ji* (reverse-lips PRT-ridicule) 'answer back sarcastically'  
 b. 嘴唇油滑 *zuichun you-hua* (lips greasy-slippery) 'eloquent in speech; with one's tongue in one's cheek'  
 c. 难以启齿 *nan-yi qi-chi* (difficult-to open-teeth) '(find it) difficult to talk about sth.'  
 d. 不便启齿 *bu-bian qi-chi* (not-convenient open teeth) '(find it) inconvenient to talk about sth.'  
 e. 何足挂齿 *he-zu gua-chi* (why-sufficient hang on-teeth) 'not worth mentioning'  
 f. 不足挂齿 *bu-zu gua-chi* (not-sufficient hang on-teeth) 'not worth mentioning'  
 g. 不足齿数 *bu-zu chi-shu* (not-sufficient teeth-count) 'not worth mentioning'  
 h. 伶牙俐齿 *ling-ya li-chi* (clever-teeth smart-teeth) 'have the gift of the gab; have a glib tongue; have a ready tongue'

The above are some idiomatic phrases or collocations that contain *chun* 'lip' and *chi* 'tooth'. Note that *chun* 'lip' is also called *zuichun*, as in (21b), which literally means "mouth lip." *Zuichun* 'lip' has an informal variant, given in (22a).

- (22) a. 嘴皮子 *zui-pizi* (mouth-skins) *inf. derog.* 'lips (of a glib talker); ability to talk'  
 b. 磨嘴皮子 *mo zui-pizi* (grind mouth-skins) *dial.* 'jabber; do a lot of talking; indulge in idle talk; argue pointlessly'  
 c. 费嘴皮子 *fei zui-pizi* (cost mouth-skins) 'talk nonsense; waste one's breath'  
 d. 耍嘴皮子 *shua zuipizi* (play with-lips) 'talk glibly; be a slick talker; mere empty talk; lip service'

As shown in (22a), the lips are also called the 'mouth skins', which, however, is informal and, quite often, derogatory usage, referring to a glib talker's lips, for instance. The idiomatic collocations in (22b–d) illustrate this point.

- (23) a. 烂舌头 *lan she-tou* (rotten tongue-SUF) *inf.* 'be fond of gossip; gossip; scandalmonger'  
 b. 烂舌根 *lan she-gen* (rotten tongue-root) 'same as above'  
 c. 嚼舌头 *jue she-tou* (chew-tongue-SUF/head) 'wag one's tongue; chatter; gossip; argue meaninglessly; squabble'



- d. 嚼舌根 *jue she-gen* (chew-tongue-root) ‘wag one’s tongue; chatter; gossip; argue meaninglessly; squabble’
- e. 磨舌头 *mo she-tou* (grind tongue-SUF) *dial.* ‘indulge in idle talk; argue pointlessly’

The idiomatic expressions in (23) contain the speech organ term for ‘tongue’. In (23a, c, e), the term for the tongue means literally ‘tongue head’, but *tou* ‘head’ here is grammaticalized into a suffix, so *she-tou* (tongue-head) simply means ‘tongue’. In (23b) and (23d), *gen* ‘root’ is not grammaticalized, so *she-gen* means ‘the root of the tongue’.

The three examples in (24) show that speech organ terms can combine to form compounds encoding the concepts related to speaking and speech, as illustrated by the conventionalized expressions in (25):

- (24) a. 口舌 *kou-she* (mouth-tongue) ‘dispute or misunderstanding caused by gossip; talking round’
- b. 口齿 *kou-chi* (mouth-teeth) ‘enunciation; ability to speak’
- c. 唇舌 *chun-she* (lip-tongue) ‘words; argument’
- (25) a. 口舌意气 *kou-she yiqi* (mouth-tongue personal feelings) ‘get involved in a verbal dispute to let out one’s personal feelings’
- b. 口舌是非 *kou-she shi-fei* (mouth-tongue right-wrong) ‘disputes and quarrels’
- c. 口齿清楚 *kou-chi qingchu* (mouth-teeth clear) ‘have clear enunciation’
- d. 口齿伶俐 *kou-chi lingli* (mouth-teeth clever) ‘be fluent and eloquent’
- e. 斗口齿 *dou kou-chi* (fight with mouth-teeth) ‘squabble; bicker; banter’
- f. 费唇舌 *fei chun-she* (cost lip-tongue) ‘take a lot of talking or explaining’
- g. 白费唇舌 *bai-fei chun-she* (in vain-cost lip-tongue) ‘waste one’s breath’

Apart from forming compounds, as in the examples above, pairs of speech organ terms are also found in idiomatic phrases, as in the examples below.

- (26) a. 摇唇鼓舌 *yao-chun gu-she* (shake-lips beat-tongue) ‘flap one’s lips and beat one’s tongue – wag one’s tongue; engage in loose talk (to stir up trouble)’
- b. 唇枪舌剑 *chun-qiang she-jian* (lip-spear tongue-sword) ‘cross verbal swords; engage in a battle of words’

- c. 唇焦舌敝 *chun-jiao she-bi* (lips-scorched tongue-worn out) 'talk till one's tongue and lips are parched; wear oneself out in pleading, expostulating, etc.'

In the set phrases in (26) the two speech organ terms juxtaposed are *chun* 'lip' and *she* 'tongue'. However, it is *kou* or *zui* 'mouth' and *she* 'tongue' that are most frequently found in such set phrases.

- (27) a. 张口结舌 *zhang-kou jie-she* (open-mouth tie-tongue) 'be agape and tongue-tied; be at a loss for words'  
 b. 轻口薄舌 *qing-kou bo-she* (light-mouth thin-tongue) 'have a caustic and sharp tongue'  
 c. 笨口拙舌 *ben-kou zhuo-she* (stupid-mouth clumsy-tongue) 'awkward in speech; slow of speech; inarticulate'  
 d. 七嘴八舌 *qi-zui ba-she* (seven-mouth eight-tongue) 'with everybody trying to get a word in; all talking at once'  
 e. 甜嘴蜜舌 *tian-zui mi-she* (sweet-mouth honey-tongue) 'speaking honeyed words; honey-mouthed'  
 f. 油嘴滑舌 *you-zui hua-she* (greasy-mouth slippery-tongue) 'glib-tongued'  
 g. 利嘴毒舌 *li-zui du-she* (sharp-mouth poisonous-tongue) 'have a shrewd tongue; a sharp tongue'  
 h. 嘴尖舌快 *zui-jian she-kuai* (mouth-pointed tongue-fast) 'be fluent in speech'  
 i. 嘴尖舌酸 *zui-jian she-suan* (mouth-pointed tongue-sour) 'cutting in speech; sharp-tongued'  
 j. 嘴巧舌能 *zui-qiao she-neng* (mouth-skilful tongue-capable) 'clever and plausible in speech; gifted with a quick and sharp tongue; shine in conversation'

Many of these set phrases, as well as those in (5) in the Appendix, are constructed by using one or two existing compounds. Therefore, it can be said that set phrases are constructed from expansion and elaboration of more basic compounds.

#### 4. Discussion

According to the "naïve view" or "folk model" of language proposed by Radden (2004), languages generally observe the metonymic principle by which they make metonymic extension along the metonymic chain from speech organ to language: speech organ → speaking → speech → language. However, the metonymic shifts

along the metonymic chain can skip one or more intermediate links, thus resulting in a metonymy widely attested across languages, SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE.<sup>3</sup>

In this chapter, my study has focused only on the speech organ terms *kou* or *zui* ‘mouth’, *chun* ‘lip’, *chi* ‘tooth’, and *she* ‘tongue’ in Chinese with regard to their roles in contributing to the formation of the metonymic chain in Chinese. Specifically, I investigated the manifestation of these three conceptual metonymies: (i) SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING, (ii) SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEECH, and (iii) SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE. My first finding is that the first two metonymies SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING and SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEECH are richly manifested in Chinese.

Among the large number of conventionalized expressions discussed, the majority instantiate SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING, which is, unsurprisingly, the first link of the metonymic chain. For instance, ‘open the mouth (开口、张口、张嘴)’ means ‘start talking’, ‘move the mouth (动口、动嘴)’ means ‘talk’, ‘shut the mouth (闭口)’ means ‘keep silent’ or ‘not talk about something’, and ‘stop the mouth (住口、住嘴)’ means ‘stop talking’ or ‘shut up’. Some of the conventionalized expressions, however, realize SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEECH, which is a metonymic transfer that skips over the intermediate link SPEAKING. For instance, ‘change the mouth (改口、改嘴)’ means ‘withdraw or modify the previous remark’, ‘insert the mouth (插嘴)’ means ‘interrupt or chip in’, i.e. ‘insert remarks into other people’s remarks’, and ‘the mouth sweet or tough (嘴甜、嘴硬)’ means ‘what one says sounds sweet or tough’. That is, one’s speech organ, the mouth in these cases, stands

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3. One anonymous reviewer suggested that a simple alternative to the concept of metonymic chain is that the extensions each radiate directly from ‘speech organ’, and so there is no skipping involved. Furthermore, it was suggested that only diachronic evidence can justify such a chain. This is indeed an interesting and serious suggestion that calls for further empirical research. Nonetheless, I think that the metonymic chain under discussion is meant to catch some important generalizations. For instance, this chain distinguishes groups of concepts that are relatively closer to, or further away from, one another. Thus, the chain ‘mouth (as speech organ) → speaking → speech → language’ could be distinguished from another hypothetical chain ‘mouth (as eating organ) → eating → flavor (of food) → taste (as personal liking)’, but both of them would also be distinguished from, as well as related to, still another path of metonymic extension ‘mouth (as both speech and eating organ) → person’ (in terms of this person’s characteristic way of speaking and liking of food), and so on, as touched upon earlier in this chapter. Moreover, the metonymic chain, though based on synchronic description of cross-linguistic evidence (Radden 2004), can better catch the generalization in directionality of semantic extension, which extends, in general, from the more concrete to the more abstract (i.e. speech organ → speaking, speaking → speech, speech → language), rather than the other way around (i.e. speaking → speech organ, speech → speaking, language → speech). If these generalizations can be supported by further systematic empirical studies across languages and cultures, then the metonymic chain model could turn out to be more like a radial network (à la Lakoff) rather than a “direct radiation” model (as proposed by the reviewer).

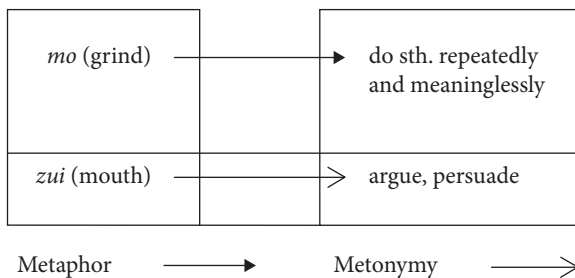
metonymically for what one says: words, sentences, utterances, or remarks, all of which fall into the category of speech.

While all of the conventionalized expressions contribute to the manifestation of the underlying metonymic chain under discussion, it must be emphasized that metaphor also plays an important role in the construction of many of them. For instance, metaphor is involved in these expressions: ‘sell the mouth (卖嘴)’ meaning ‘show off one’s verbal skill or indulge in clever talk’, ‘block the mouth (堵嘴)’ meaning ‘keep somebody from talking or silence somebody’, ‘grind the mouth (磨嘴)’ meaning ‘indulge in idle talk or argue pointlessly’, and ‘wind the mouth (绕嘴)’ meaning ‘be difficult to articulate’. Obviously, the use of the verbs in these cases is metaphorical. In a similar vein, in the expressions such as ‘the greasy mouth (油嘴)’ meaning ‘glib’, ‘the bitter mouth (苦口)’ meaning ‘(admonish) in earnest’, ‘the mouth pointed (嘴尖)’ meaning ‘cutting in speech’, ‘the mouth straight (嘴直)’ meaning ‘outspoken’, and ‘the mouth fragmented (嘴碎)’ meaning ‘loquacious or garrulous’, the use of the adjectives is also metaphorical. For the purpose of illustration, I provide Figure 1 to show how metonymy and metaphor interact with each other to result in the compound word 磨嘴.

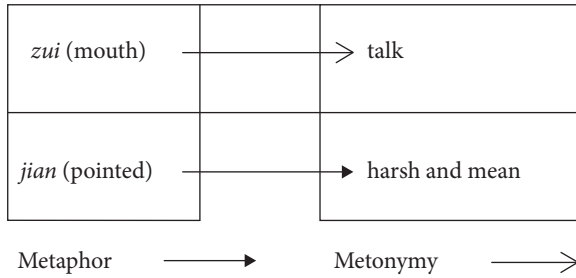
As shown in Figure 1, the compound involves two mappings: one is metonymic (i.e. a mapping within the same conceptual frame or matrix domain), represented by an open-headed arrow, and the other is metaphoric (i.e. a mapping across two conceptual frames or domains), represented by a solid-headed arrow.

Figure 2 illustrates the case of 嘴尖.

Again, this compound involves two different mappings, metonymic and metaphoric. Since in both of the cases above, the mappings, metonymic or metaphoric, take place within the conceptual frame of speaking, we can refer to them as cases of “metaphor within metonymy” (Goossens 2002; readers are also referred to Barcelona 2000a, Dirven & Pörings 2002 for the cognitive linguistic views on the interaction between metaphor and metonymy).



**Figure 1.** Interaction between metonymy and metaphor in *mo-zui* (grind-mouth) ‘indulge in idle talk or argue pointlessly’



**Figure 2.** Interaction between metonymy and metaphor in *zui-jian* (mouth-pointed) ‘cutting in speech’

What is especially interesting is my finding regarding the third conceptual metonymy *SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE*, the metonymic transfer that has skipped the two intermediate links, *SPEAKING* and *SPEECH*. As Radden (2004) shows, this metonymy has been widely attested across languages. It is, however, not manifested lexically in Chinese. None of the speech organ terms in Chinese, from ‘mouth’ to ‘tongue’, can really mean ‘language’ in any context. For instance, mother tongue in English can only be translated into 母语 *muyu*, i.e. ‘mother language, but not 母舌 *mushe* (i.e. ‘mother tongue’); and 人口 *renkou* (human-mouth) in Chinese does not mean ‘language’, but means ‘population’ (because population counts the number of ‘human mouths’ that need feeding!). This finding seems to suggest that Chinese has fallen short of the metonymic chain widely attested across languages (Radden 2004). What is particularly intriguing, however, is the discovery that in Chinese, while *SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE* is not manifested lexically, it is nevertheless realized in its logographic writing system as semantic components of the characters. Look at (28).

- (28) a. 口      *kou* ‘mouth’  
 b. 舌      *she* ‘tongue’  
 c. 言      *yan* ‘speech’  
 d. 话      *hua* ‘speech; oral language’ (Traditional character: 話)  
 e. 语      *yu* ‘speech; language’ (Traditional character: 語)  
 f. 言语    *yanyu* ‘speech’ (Traditional characters: 言語)  
 g. 语言    *yuyan* ‘language’ (Traditional characters: 語言)

In (28a, b) are the Chinese words for ‘mouth’ and ‘tongue’, respectively. They both also serve as radicals, i.e. components of other characters. Thus, the Chinese characters for the words ‘speech’ and ‘language’, 言 *yan* (28c) and 语 *yu* (28e) respectively, both contain the ‘mouth’ radical 口 *kou*. In contemporary Chinese, in fact, these two words combine to form a compound 言语 *yanyu* (28f), meaning ‘speech’,

and when its two constituents are reversed in order, the result is the compound word for ‘language’ 语言 *yuyan* (28g). It is worth mentioning that in the traditional writing system, the semantic component, known as the ‘speech’ radical, on the left side of the character for ‘language’ 语 *yu* (28e) is 言 *yan*, which itself contains a ‘mouth’ radical 口 *kou* (28a), as in (28c). Besides, another word that is represented by the character 话 *hua* (28d) also means ‘speech’, and is composed of two constituents: on the left is the ‘speech’ radical, which contains the ‘mouth’ 口 *kou* in its traditional variant (言 *yan* as in (28c)), and on the right is the radical 舌 *she* that means ‘tongue’, which is also a character with the same meaning when used alone (28b). As we can see, the character for ‘tongue’, i.e. 舌 *she*, also contains a ‘mouth’ radical 口 *kou* in it. Therefore, it is clear that the Chinese characters meaning ‘speech’ and ‘language’ all contain the radical for ‘mouth’ 口 *kou* and one of them meaning ‘speech’ or ‘oral/spoken language’ contains the radical for ‘tongue’ 舌 *she*.<sup>4</sup> Based on these facts, it can be concluded that in Chinese the metonymy SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE is manifested in the logographic writing system although it is not manifested lexically as in many other languages. This finding provides an interesting and telling example of how the general cognitive principle of embodiment can be realized in and embraced by a culture-specific environment.

The Chinese logographic writing system is an important area where the manifestation of conceptual metonymies and metaphors can be studied in the Chinese language. For instance, in Yu (2007b, 2009), I argue that the heart is traditionally conceptualized as the central faculty of cognition in Chinese culture. Therefore, in the Chinese language, the word 心 *xin* that primarily denotes the heart organ may also refer to it as the ‘organ for thinking’ and the ‘seat of thought and emotions’. This fact is displayed clearly in the unique logographic writing system of Chinese. Thus, many Chinese characters for words related to

4. As one of the anonymous reviewers suggested, there may be many characters with the ‘mouth’ radical in Chinese today that do not have anything to do with ‘mouth’. This is because, throughout the long history of evolution of the Chinese writing system, from the earliest pictographic drawings to the traditional characters that are used in Taiwan, Hong Kong, etc., and to the simplified characters that are used in Mainland China and some other countries, Chinese characters have undergone some major stages of change toward formalization, abstraction, and simplification. As a result, the characters in the Chinese writing system as a whole are no longer as pictographic or even ideographic today as they were thousands of years ago. Therefore, the motivation for certain characters to contain certain radicals have become opaque, especially to ordinary people who use characters merely for the purpose of daily communication and do not care about their etymology. Nonetheless, such motivation with most characters is still there, and helpful to those who learn the Chinese language. As an old saying goes, “A scholar can guess (the meaning or the pronunciation of) a new character from a half (i.e. a radical indicating the meaning or the pronunciation) of it (秀才认字认半边)”. I return to this point later in the section.

thought and feelings contain the ‘heart’ radical as their semantic component. Here are a few examples pertaining to thinking or thought: 思 *si* ‘think; consider; deliberate; think of; long for; thought; thinking’, 想 *xiang* ‘think; ponder; think back; try to remember; recall; recollect; consider; miss’, 虑 *lü* ‘consider; ponder; think over; concern; worry’, and 念 *nian* ‘think of; miss; thought; idea’. The following are two common characters representing words for feeling: 感 *gan* ‘feel; sense; feeling’ and 情 *qing* ‘feeling; affection; sentiment; passion’. Note that the ‘heart’ radical has two variants in the Chinese writing system. The canonical one, which looks the same as the word 心 *xin* ‘heart’, often occurs at the bottom of a character, as in 思 *si*, 想 *xiang*, 虑 *lü*, 念 *nian*, and 感 *gan*. The other one, usually called the ‘vertical heart radical’, stands on the left side of a character, as in 情 *qing*. Also, single-character words often combine with others to form so-called compound words in present-day Chinese. For instance, the preceding single-character words can form the following compounds: 思想 *sixiang* ‘thought; thinking; idea; ideology’, 思虑 *silü* ‘consider; contemplate; deliberate’, 思念 *sinian* ‘think of; long for; miss’, 感情 *ganqing* ‘emotion; feeling; sentiment; affection’, and 情感 *qinggan* ‘emotion; feeling’. As suggested by the characters and meanings of the words they code, or the connection between form and meaning, the heart represents a person’s intellectual and affective center and locus of mental and emotional life, and it is therefore traditionally regarded as the central faculty of cognition in Chinese culture (Yu 2007a, 2007b, 2008, 2009). From a linguistic point of view, these characters manifest a conceptual metonymy HEART FOR THOUGHT AND FEELINGS, or at the generic level CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED, since according to the Chinese cultural conceptualization, the heart is the seat (or container) of both thought and feelings.

Here is another example that I have discussed elsewhere (Yu 2009): the Chinese compound word 忖度 *cunduo* ‘speculate; conjecture; surmise’, which is represented by two characters that have a spatial connotation. The first character is composed of the ‘heart’ radical on its left and the character for ‘inch’ on the right; the second character *duo* originally means ‘to measure’ (see HYDCD 2000: 983), and with a change in pronunciation (*du*) and tone (from the second to the fourth) it means ‘linear measure’. Thus, the mental activities of speculating, conjecturing, and surmising something is to ‘measure it for its spatial dimensions’. That is, SPECULATING, CONJECTURING, OR SURMISING IS MEASURING.

Interestingly, in a related compound 忖量 *cunliang* ‘think over; turn over in one’s mind; conjecture; guess’, the second character can mean ‘measure’ when used as a verb (and ‘capacity’, ‘volume’, etc., when used as a noun); when its tone is changed (from the fourth to the second), it becomes a verb that again means ‘measure’. In another related word 忖摸 *cunmo* ‘reckon; estimate; conjecture’, the second character means to ‘feel’, ‘stroke’, or ‘touch’ with one’s hand. The metaphorical

mapping from bodily onto mental experience is very obvious. It is again interesting to note that, while the first character 忖 *cun* ‘think over; ponder; speculate’ contains the ‘heart’ radical on its left, the second character of the compound 摸 *mo* ‘feel; stroke; touch’ contains the ‘hand’ radical on its left side. Applying the metaphorical formula A IS B, we can say that the first character represents the target concept whereas the second represents the source concept. The metaphor so derived is THINKING OVER, PONDERING, OR SPECULATING (IN ONE’S HEART) IS FEELING, STROKING, OR TOUCHING (WITH ONE’S HANDS). That is, at the generic level, it is MENTAL FUNCTION IS MANUAL ACTION, OR MIND IS BODY, a conceptual metaphor that summarizes the embodied nature of human cognition.

The Chinese logographic writing system, evolved from the earliest drawing through formalization, abstraction, and simplification differs from the alphabetic phonetic writing system in that the linguistic signs in the latter are largely symbolic in nature whereas those in the former, e.g. Chinese characters, are to some extent related to the concepts they represent iconically and/or indexically, as well as symbolically.<sup>5</sup> According to *Shuowen Jiezi* (Explaining Simple and Analyzing Compound Characters) by Xu Shen (ca. 58–147) of the Han Dynasty, Chinese characters are divided into six categories according to their structures and relationships to the referents they represent. In the following, the four major kinds are illustrated. The pictograms, which are relatively small in number, bear an imaginatively iconic relationship with the referents they represent. The character 山 *shan* ‘mountain’ is such an example, still having the shape of a mountain with three peaks. The simple ideograms are usually characterized by a diagrammatically iconic relation with the referents they represent, and often such a relationship also contains an indexical relation based on a pictographic character. For example, the character 木 *mu* ‘tree; wood’ is originally pictographic. Based on this character, 本 *ben*, which originally refers to the root of a tree, and 末 *mo*, which originally refers to the tip or top of a tree, both add one stroke to indexically ‘point to’ the part of the tree they each refer to, root or tip. The compound ideograms can be illustrated

5. That is, following the Peircean theory of semiotics, signs are classified into icons, indexes, and symbols according to the relationships they bear to their referents: the iconic relation is based on similarity, the indexical relation on contiguity (spatial or causal), and the symbolic relation on conventionality. Readers are referred to Hiraga (2005: ch. 7) for a detailed discussion of iconicity (imagic and diagrammatic) and the logographic writing system. There it is argued that in the mixed writing system of Japanese *kanji* (i.e. Chinese characters) function as “graphic icons” in contrast with phonographic *hiragana*, and thus serve as a poetic medium in poetic texts (199). As Hiraga (2005) points out, however, the degree of iconicity varies greatly among Chinese characters depending on the principles on which they are formed. Readers are also referred to McDonald (2009) for a recent argument in the debates on the nature of the Chinese writing system in the field of Chinese studies.



by the character 信 *xin* 'faith; trust', which is composed of the radical for 'person' on the left and that for 'speaking' or 'speech' on the right, and is therefore interpreted as 'a man standing by his word'. Here, indexically, the 'person' radical indicates the fact that the word refers to a human quality, and the 'speech' radical indicates that it has to do with what one says; hence, together they can mean '(a person) keeping one's word or promise'. As indicated earlier, the 'speech' radical itself contains a 'mouth' radical, which indexically points to the meanings of 'speaking' and 'speech'. The phono-semantic compounds, which by far make up the largest category, consist of a phonetic component (suggesting the pronunciation) and a semantic component (indicating the meaning). The characters discussed earlier, such as 想 *xiang* 'think; ponder', 情 *qing* 'feeling; affection', 摸 *mo* 'touch; stroke', and 唱 *chang* 'sing', all belong to this category. Their semantic elements, referring to a part of the body, heart, hand, and mouth, are indexical of their meanings respectively.<sup>6</sup>

As discussed above, pictographic characters are imagic icons, based on the similarity between the shapes of the character and its referent. In other words, these characters can be said to be metaphorically related to the concepts they represent. On the other hand, the characters that contain an indexical element based on the relationship of contiguity (between, e.g. the heart and thinking or feeling, the hand and touching or stroking, or the mouth and singing) are metonymically related to the concepts they represent. As logographic scripts, Chinese characters, therefore, are contrastive with alphabetic phonetic scripts, which are generally related to the concepts they represent symbolically, thus involving little metaphor or metonymy on the plane of the writing system. In light of the difference between logographic vs. alphabetic writing, we can see why it is possible and natural for the SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE metonymy to be manifested at the level of characters in Chinese.

In this chapter, I have not studied the metonymic shifts along the metonymic chain SPEAKING FOR SPEECH and SPEECH FOR LANGUAGE since my focus is on the initial link, SPEECH ORGAN. But how do SPEAKING FOR SPEECH and SPEECH FOR LANGUAGE fare in Chinese? And does SPEAKING FOR LANGUAGE hold in Chinese if we assume the metonymic shift can skip a link (i.e. SPEECH) along the metonymic chain, as we see is the case cross-linguistically with SPEECH ORGAN, which can actually skip two links (i.e. SPEAKING AND SPEECH)? These are the questions for further research. At this point, I can propose only some hypotheses based on some preliminary evidence. Let us look at the following list (collected from HYCD 1995; NACED 2004):

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6. In addition to these four, the remaining two, called 'transformed cognates' and 'rebus writing', are relatively minor categories, where the characters do not have the same iconic or indexical motivations as those in the other four categories.

- (29) a. 说 *shuo* (i) speak; talk; explain (ii) theory; teachings; views; doctrine (e.g. 自圆其说 *ziyuan qi shuo* ‘justify oneself [i.e. one’s theory, views, etc.]’)
- b. 讲 *jiang* (i) speak; say; tell; explain; interpret; discuss; negotiate (ii) lecture (e.g. 第一讲 *diyī jiang* ‘the first lecture’)
- c. 谈 *tan* (i) talk; chat; discuss (ii) what is said or talked about (e.g. 无稽之谈 *wuji zhi tan* ‘unfounded rumor; sheer nonsense’)
- d. 话 *hua* (i) word; talk; oral language (e.g. 中国话 *Zhongguo hua* ‘Chinese [spoken] language’) (ii) talk about; speak about (e.g. 共话往事 *gonghua wangshi* ‘talk together about past events’)
- e. 言 *yan* (i) speech; word; character (ii) say; talk; speak (e.g. 不言而喻 *buyan eryu* ‘it goes without saying’)
- f. 语 *yu* (i) language; words; set phrase; proverb; saying (ii) speak; say (e.g. 默默不语 *momo buyu* ‘speak nothing’)

In (29a–c) are three verbs of speaking, as in (i), but they all have nominal meanings that fall into the category of speech, as in (ii). In other words, we can hypothesize that the nominal meanings of these verbs reflect the underlying metonymy SPEAKING FOR SPEECH. Of course diachronic studies are required to confirm the historical development of the senses of these words (i.e. to find out if they are instances of SPEAKING FOR SPEECH), but the synchronic link between their verbal and nominal senses is obvious.

The three words in (29d–f) are regarded as primarily nominal in present-day Chinese, as in (i). All three of them have verbal meanings as well, as in (ii), and their verbal senses can be traced back to ancient times when they might have been even more common verbs of linguistic action than they are today. Again, the link between their verbal and nominal senses is there, but diachronic studies are necessary to determine whether they represent cases of SPEAKING FOR SPEECH (i.e. ACTION FOR RESULT). The word in (29f) is the only one in the list that can mean ‘language’ in a complete sense (whereas (29d) is usually restricted to ‘oral language’), but it also possesses the meanings that fall into the categories of speech and speaking. We can hypothesize that the links are related to each other in a way that conforms to the metonymic chain: speaking → speech → language, but again only diachronic studies can confirm this hypothesis. In *Shuowen Jiezi*, the etymology dictionary from the Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 AD), for instance, 语 in (29f) is defined with 论 *lun*, which nowadays have some primary verbal senses ‘comment; discuss; talk about’, but also some secondary nominal senses such as ‘view; opinion; theory; doctrine’ (see e.g. NACED 2004: 1021). That is, if we confirmed that in ancient times (29f) was primarily a verb of linguistic action, then we could conclude that the metonymy SPEAKING FOR LANGUAGE is realized lexically in the

Chinese language whereas, returning to the focus of this chapter, the metonymy *speech organ for language* is realized ideographically in its writing system (see the discussions centered on Example (28) above).

In sum, my study as a whole is a case of ‘embodiment via body parts’. It demonstrates that human meaning and understanding are indeed embodied. We can mean what we do and understand what we do because we have the kind of the body we have. If we had a different kind of body, with a different kind of structure, the way we understand the world and the way we use language would be different accordingly. It is because human beings all have similar bodies with similar functions that the metonymic chain under discussion may have the potential of being a universal. Nonetheless, the body always exists in its cultural context, and the mind that is embodied is never free from the dynamic forces of culture. In my study, for instance, the rich manifestation of the metonymies *SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING* and *SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEECH* at the lexical level reveals the important role of cultural influences. Similarly, the metonymy *SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE*, absent in the lexicon, but present in the writing system, displays a unique characteristic of Chinese language and culture.

## 5. Conclusion

In this chapter I have undertaken an analysis of Chinese speech organ terms and their role in the Chinese folk understanding of language. The findings of this study can be summarized as follows:

1. The metonymies *SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING* and *SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEECH* are pervasive in conventionalized Chinese expressions. I take the existence of these conceptual metonymies as an indication of their significance in Chinese culture.
2. In contrast, however, the metonymy *SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE* is not realized at the level of the lexicon, as in many other languages, but it plays an important role in the Chinese writing system. This finding presents a striking example of how the general cognitive principle of embodiment can be realized in and embraced by a culture-specific environment – in this study, the ideographic writing system characteristic of Chinese culture and language.
3. Metaphor plays an important role in the construction of many of the conventionalized expressions that are primarily metonymic in character. This finding reinforces the argument of Cognitive Linguistics that metaphor is often motivated by metonymy and therefore often has a metonymic basis (e.g. Barcelona 2000c; Niemeier 2000; Radden 2000; see also Dirven & Pörings 2002).

4. The findings of my study are synchronically compatible with Radden's (2004) metonymic chain hypothesis. However, only thorough diachronic studies can provide a definitive answer to the question whether the metonymic chain model is correct.
5. The findings of my study, in general, support the claim for the embodied nature of human cognition (Gibbs 2006; Johnson 1987, 2007; Lakoff 1987; Lakoff & Johnson 1999), and embodiment situated in cultural contexts (Gibbs 1999; Ziemke, Zlatev, & Frank 2007; Frank et al. 2008; Sharifian et al. 2008; Yu 2009).

In this chapter, I have focused on the initial link of Radden's metonymic chain, speech organ, in keeping with the theme of this volume "embodiment via body parts". I have investigated how this initial link gives rise to semantic shifts along the chain, that is, the metonymies *SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEAKING*, *SPEECH ORGAN FOR SPEECH*, and *SPEECH ORGAN FOR LANGUAGE*, including semantic leaps in the case of the latter two metonymies. The directionality of the metonymic chain exploited by the three metonymies moves from concrete to increasingly abstract concepts, namely from the body part (*SPEECH ORGAN*) via the linguistic action (*speaking*) and the linguistic product (*SPEECH*) to the linguistic system (*LANGUAGE*). The study of explicit use of body-part terms for metonymic and metaphoric extensions is, however, only the first step toward the discovery of the full mechanisms of the embodiment principle in human language and cognition, just as *SPEECH ORGAN* is only the initial link of the chain that leads to the metonymic conceptualization of language. The other possible metonymies, *SPEAKING FOR SPEECH*, *SPEECH FOR LANGUAGE*, and *SPEAKING FOR LANGUAGE*, are not realized by means of speech organ terms, but they are very likely grounded in embodied experiences and presuppose the notion speech organ as the initial link.

Embodiment has to do with the body. The body is at the center of the "radial network" of human language and cognition. This body is however surrounded by the dynamic forces of culture. In each cultural context, therefore, the body "radiates" with a different pattern of "routes" and "nodes".

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## Appendix

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|--------|------|--|
| (1) a. | 口惠   | <i>kou-hui</i> (mouth-favorable) ‘lip service; empty promise’  |
| b.     | 嘴损   | <i>zui-sun</i> (mouth-damaging/cutting) <i>dial.</i> ‘sharp-tongued; sarcastic’                        |
| c.     | 嘴笨   | <i>zui-ben</i> (mouth-stupid) ‘inarticulate; clumsy of speech’   |
| d.     | 嘴刁   | <i>zui-diao</i> (mouth-tricky) <i>dial.</i> ‘talk cunningly and craftily; be choosy with food’         |
| e.     | 嘴乖   | <i>zui-guai</i> (mouth-well-behaved) ‘(of children) clever and pleasant when speaking to elders’       |
| f.     | 嘴甜   | <i>zui-tian</i> (mouth-sweet) ‘ingratiating in speech; smooth-tongued; honey-mouthed’                  |
| (2) a. | 开口闭口 | <i>kai-kou bi-kou</i> (open-mouth close-mouth) ‘every time one opens one’s mouth; whenever one speaks’ |
| b.     | 闭口不谈 | <i>bi-kou bu-tan</i> (shut-mouth not-talk) ‘refuse to say anything about’                              |
| c.     | 破口大骂 | <i>po-kou da-ma</i> (break-mouth big-curse) ‘shout abuse; let loose a torrent of abuse’                |
| d.     | 顺口搭音 | <i>shun-kou da-yin</i> (go with-mouth throw in-sound) ‘echo what others say; chime in with others’     |

- e. 交口称赞 *jiao-kou chengzan* (cross-mouth praise) ‘unanimously praise’
- f. 出口成章 *chu-kou cheng-zhang* (exit-mouth become-essay) ‘words flow from the mouth as from the pen of a master’
- g. 出口伤人 *chu-kou shang-ren* (exit-mouth hurt-people) ‘say things that will hurt others’ feelings; speak bitingly’
- h. 杀人灭口 *sha-ren mie-kou* (kill-people extinguish-mouth) ‘silence a witness by killing him; kill sb. to prevent him from disclosing a secret’
- i. 空口无凭 *kong-kou wu-ping* (empty-mouth no-guarantee) ‘a mere verbal statement is no guarantee’
- j. 血口喷人 *xue-kou pen-ren* (bloody-mouth spurt-people) ‘make unfounded and malicious attacks upon sb.; venomously slander’
- k. 口口声声 *kou-kou sheng-sheng* (mouth-mouth voice-voice) ‘say again and again; keep on saying’
- l. 口角春风 *kou-jiao sheng-feng* (mouth-corner spring-wind) ‘make favorable remarks about sb.; put in a good word for sb.’
- m. 口角生风 *kou-jiao sheng-feng* (mouth-corner produce-wind) ‘speak fluently’
- n. 口诛笔伐 *kou-zhu bi-fa* (mouth-punish pen-attack) ‘condemn both in speech and writing’
- o. 如出一口 *ru chu yi kou* (like coming out of one mouth) ‘as if from one mouth; unanimously’
- p. 嘴不干净 *zui bu ganjing* (mouth not clean) ‘use dirty language’
- q. 嘴不饶人 *zui bu rao ren* (mouth not forgive people) ‘fond of making sarcastic remarks’
- (3) a. 嘴快心直 *zui-kuai xin-zhi* (mouth-fast heart-straight) ‘be outspoken and frank; straightforward and sincere’
- b. 有嘴无心 *you-zui wu-xin* (have-mouth not have-heart) ‘be sharp-tongued but not malicious’
- c. 口凶心软 *kou-xiong xin-ruan* (mouth-fierce heart-soft) ‘one’s bark is worse than one’s bit’
- d. 嘴硬心软 *zui-ying xin-ruan* (mouth-hard heart-soft) ‘firm in speech but soft in heart’
- e. 口甜心辣 *kou-tian xin-la* (mouth-sweet heart-peppery) ‘honey on the lips and viciousness in the heart’
- (4) a. 不齿 *bu-chi* (not-teeth/mention) ‘not worth mentioning; despise’
- b. 齿冷 *chi-leng* (teeth-cold) *form.* ‘laugh sb. to scorn’



- c. 鼓舌 *gu-she* (beat-tongue) ‘wag the tongue (esp. in honeyed talk)’
- d. 学舌 *xue-she* (learn-tongue) ‘mechanically repeat other people’s words; *inf.* ‘wag one’s tongue spreading hearsay’
- e. 舌战 *she-zhan* (tongue-battle/war) ‘have a verbal battle with; argue heatedly with; a hot dispute; a verbal battle’
- (5) a. 钳口结舌 *qian-kou jie-she* (clamp-mouth tie-tongue) ‘keep one’s mouth shut; hold one’s tongue’
- b. 赤口毒舌 *chi-kou du-she* (red-mouth poisonous-tongue) ‘venomous tongue; vile language’
- c. 尖嘴薄舌 *jian-zui bo-she* (pointed-mouth thin-tongue) ‘have a caustic and flippant tongue’
- d. 轻嘴薄舌 *qing-zui bo-she* (light-mouth thin-tongue) ‘have a caustic and sharp tongue’
- e. 多嘴多舌 *duo-zui duo-she* (many-mouth many-tongue) ‘gossipy and meddlesome; long-tongued’
- f. 贫嘴薄舌 *pin-zui bo-she* (poor-mouth thin-tongue) ‘be garrulous and sharp-tongued’
- g. 拙嘴笨舌 *zhuo-zui ben-she* (clumsy-mouth stupid-tongue) ‘clumsy-tongued; inarticulate’
- h. 利嘴巧舌 *li-zui qiao-she* (sharp-mouth skilful tongue) ‘have the gift of the gab’
- i. 调嘴学舌 *tiao-zui xue-she* (adjust-mouth learn-tongue) ‘tittle-tattle; gossip’
- j. 嘴乖舌巧 *zui-guai she-qiao* (mouth-good tongue-skilful) ‘be full of gibes and ready with one’s tongue’
- k. 嘴尖舌巧 *zui-jian she-qiao* (mouth-pointed tongue-skilful) ‘gifted with a quick and sharp tongue’