Southern Min liah
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THE POLYSEMOUS LIĀH 力 IN EARLY MODERN SOUTHERN MIN AND ITS CONTEMPORARY FATE

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ABSTRACT
Based on Early Modern Southern Min texts from Ming and Qing dynasties, this paper studies the different functions of 力 liāh in Southern Min and the grammaticalisation pathways that led to the polysemantism. 力 liāh could appear as a content verb ‘to catch’ or a polyfunctional case marker in Early Modern Southern Min; while in Contemporary Southern Min, its verb use has become overwhelming, and its grammatical uses are mostly fossilised. The history of this word is worthy of the attention of typological studies.

SUBJECT KEYWORDS
Early Modern Southern Min Li Jing Ji Object marking Grammaticalisation Affectedness Hierarchy

1. INTRODUCTION
The character 力 liāh was used in Early Modern Southern Min for multiple purposes. It not only retained its original meaning as a lexical verb, ‘to catch, to take, to seize’ (Lien 2002), but also developed alternative verb uses, and furthermore underwent grammaticalisation into a polysemous case
marker. Productive as it was in the Ming dynasty, 力 liāh might however well have suffered twists and turns with the vicissitude of Chinese dynasties, and is only used as a verb contemporarily, with only a few fossilised traces of grammatical morpheme. This paper aims to account for the main functions of 力 liāh in Ming and Qing dynasties with typological analyses. In the first place, in Section 2, I will talk about the orthographic variants of this morpheme, 力 and 掙 in different versions of script plays; in Section 3, I will briefly discuss the etymology of 力 liāh; Section 4 describes the verb uses of 力 liāh. From Section 5 to Section 7, 力 liāh as a grammatical morpheme will be taken care of, before Section 8 comes up with some ambiguous constructions concerning this character. In Section 9, competing markers such as 共 kăng and 甲 kap will be mentioned. Section 10 focuses on the contemporary uses of 力 liāh and the paper comes to a conclusion in Section 11 with a discussion.

2. ORTHOGRAPHIC VARIANTS
The morpheme liāh has three orthographies in Ming and Qing dynasties, 力, 掙 and 掙.

力 is the only character used in the Jiājing version of Li Jing Ji (1522-1566) and The Classical theatre and art song of South Fukien (van der Loon 1992) (dating from 1604, within the reign of 萬曆 Wànli (1572-1620) in the Ming dynasty), which indicates the Chôan-Chiu (泉州) origin of their authors. In contemporary Chôan-Chiu, 力 is pronounced liāk (Lin 1993), not sounding too far from liāh; we however have enough evidence to show that this contemporary pronunciation is irregular: in the historical Chôan-Chiu dictionary of Hûiyīn miàowù (Hong 1996), dating back to 1800, the colloquial pronunciation of 力 (represented as 掙) was under the rhyme class 京 -iȃː, indicating liāh or liārh, without the velar coda.
tion is found in *Arte de la lengua Chio Chiu* (Klöter 2009) (Chioⁿ-Chiu 漳州 dialect), with two glosses: ‘to catch, to hold’ as a verb and classifier of textiles. We are not sure if 扳 as a classifier is of the same origin of liāⁿ in this paper, therefore it will not be discussed here.

With *Huíyīn miàowù*, we know that the character 扳 was accepted by Chôan-Chiu people in 1800. However, the script play case must be studied separately. 扳 is the only character used in script plays of two periods: the reign of *Wànli*, with 明萬暦刊荔枝記 *Míng Wànli Kān Lìzhījì* (Wu 2001b), 蘇六娘 *Sūliùniáng* (Wu 2002a) and 金花女 *Jīnhuānǔ* (Wu 2002b); and the reign of *Qiánlóng* of the Qing dynasty, with 同窓琴書記 *Tóngchuāng Qīnshūjì* (Wu 2003). In other script plays including 清順治刊荔枝記 *Qīng Shùnzhì Kān Lìzhījì* (Wu 2001d), 清道光刊荔枝記 *Qīng Dàoguāng Kān Lìzhījì* (Zheng 2010) and 清光緒刊荔枝記 *Qīng Guāngxù Kān Lìzhījì* (Wu 2001c), 力 is overwhelmingly used, whereas 扳 is also occasionally found, with 2 instances each in Shûnzhì, Dàoguāng and Guāngxù.

The choice of 扳 to represent liāⁿ shows that its users spoke a dialect in which 力 did (and probably still does) not sound similar to liāⁿ. Such dialects are generally spoken in the Southern part of Southern Min speaking regions. It is presumably the Tiê-Chiu dialect, as Wu (2001b) suggests in the preface. In Tiê-chiu, 力 is pronounced *lak*² and 扳 *lia²* (Lin & Chen 1996: 283, 293). Furthermore, apart from 看 *kʰoa¹* ‘to look’, we notice the coexistence of 体 *thòi⁵* in these resources, which is the common word for ‘to look’ in modern Tiê-Chiu dialects³.

Therefore, the versions with 扳 as liāⁿ should be treated with caution that it might reveal dialectal variance in Early Modern Southern Min.
The figures below show the photocopies of 力 and 撫 in their original appearance.

(a) 撫 in Wànli
(b) 力 in Jiājing

Figure 1: Examples of 力 and 撫 in script plays

Figure 2: 撫 in Arte de la lengua Chio Chiu

3. ETYMOLOGY OF 力 LIĀH
As Lien (2002, 2010) suggests, the etymology of 力 liāh should be 撫, nuò in Mandarin. I would like to take this opportunity to add more comments on this etymology.

The original meaning of the character 撫, as in 說文 Shuōwén (100-121 AD), was ‘to press’⁴. The 广韵 广韻 (1008 AD) has two entries for 撫, both with the meaning ‘to catch’ or ‘to hold’⁵. 鄧玉裁 (段玉裁), in
his Commentaries on Shuōwén, underlines that the meaning ‘to catch, to hold’ is recent⁶. Combined with the Guāngyùn evidence, it is clear that the meaning of 擾 had already shifted to ‘to catch, to hold’ before the Ming Dynasty. Therefore, semantics-wise, the 擾 hypothesis is plausible.

Phonology-wise, Guāngyùn gives two pronunciations of 擾: 女角切 (ŋæwk) and 女白切 (ŋæk). The two pronunciations in Middle Chinese have several different reflexes in Modern Southern Min. As for 女角切, we would expect *lōh in Modern Southern Min, which does not seem to be the right paraphrase; on the other hand, in the case of 女白切, we would well expect liāh as a regular correspondence, as unrounded rhymes in the 梗 gěng rhyme class, regardless of the rhyme grade, appear as -iah in Modern Southern Min (Lo 1930).

The Eastern Min cognate of liāh is nie? (Fúzhōu dialect, Chen & Li 1991: 116). The correspondence Eastern -ie? :: Southern -iah traces back to Proto-Min *iak, which matches perfectly the Middle Chinese unrounded 梗 gěng rhymes (Norman 1981: 70). The n- onset of Eastern Min also indicates that the etymology cannot be 掃, the other candidate, whose onset comes from Proto-Min *l-.

Summing up all the evidence above, 擾 ‘to press, to hold, to catch’ seems to be the best candidate for the etymology of 力 liāh.

4. VERB USES
The original meaning of liāh, ‘to catch, to hold’, is attested in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, examples are shown below:

(1) a. 你是乜人卜力阮
   lì sī mǐh lâng bēh liāh góan
   2SG be what man want catch 1PL
Want to arrest me? Who are you?⁷ (嘉靖 43.013)
b. 亞娘使-小七天邊去力鳥都著去
mistress caus-sio.chhit edge.of.sky go catch bird
as.well must go
Mistress, I will do it even if you want me (Sió-chhit) to go beyond the horizon to catch a bird. (光緒 39.022)

The structure of example 1c is similar to the transitive constructions that we are going to talk about in Section 5, in which liāh will be analysed as an object marker. However, in this example, the conjunction 便 piān, marking the succession of two events, indicates that liāh should be the predicate of the first event.

Other verb uses are illustrated in 2.

(2) a. 掠我不-值半文銭
liāh góa m-tāt pòaⁿ.bûn.chî
consider 1SG neg-worthy half.a.penny
She thought that I was not worth half a penny. (金花女 追姑掌羊)

b. 任伊有千-軍共万-馬,我力一-片-忠心
jîn i ū chîan-kun kâng
no.matter 3SG have thousand-army and
tên.thousand-horse 1SG have one-cl-loyalty
I do not care how powerful an army he has, I have all my loyalty. (絃管 滿天春 下)

c. 力阮情迷
liāh góan chêng-bê
caus 1SG be.passionate
That makes me passionate. (絃管 滿天春 下)
In 2a (written as 書), liāh takes the meaning of a perception verb, ‘to consider as’; 2b is an antithetical pair of clauses, with 有 tū ‘to have’ in the first clause corresponding to our 力 liāh in the second. These two verbs should have similar meanings given the situation, therefore, liāh in this case has less of an action verb meaning, and more of a stative one: ‘to possess, to have’; In 2c, liāh appears as a causative verb, ‘to cause to do’.

5. TRANSITIVE OBJECT
In Southern Min of the Ming Dynasty, liāh has already developed into a grammatical word, with the first function of liāh to be noticed being the object marker of transitive constructions. liāh occurs formally in the following syntactic constructions as an object marker (see also Lien 2010: 46):

(3) Monotransitive constructions
   (a) liāh + NP + V
      力-媒姨 打
      liāh-bōe.i p'ah
      LIAH-match.maker hit hit the match maker

   (b) liāh + NP + V + resultative/phase compound
      力-只-門 捲-上
      liāh-chit-mīāng ám-síōng
      LIAH-door shut-up
      shut the door up

Ditransitive constructions
   liāh + NP₁ + V + (resultative/phase compound) + NP₁
   力-荔枝手帕 獻-我
   liāh-nāi.chi.ch'ū.p'eh hiän k'it-gōa
   LIAH-handkerchief.with.lychee give DAT-1SG
   give me the handkerchief with lychee inside
As an object marker, *liāh* is deeply grammaticalised with no room for an alternative verbal analysis. First, contrary to a real verb, *liāh* is never attested with a TAM marker (I use the asterisk symbol “*” to indicate that we do not find this sequence of constituents):

(4) a. 力-玉盞 打-破-除 
*liāh-giosk.čóan  pʰah-pʰoa-tů*  
LIAH-jade.cup  hit-break-PFV  
He broke the jade cup. (嘉靖 18.020)

b. *力-除 玉盞 打-破  
*liāh-tů giosk.čóan  pʰah-pʰoa*  
LIAH-jade.cup  hit-break

Second, unlike a verb, *liāh* can never be formally negated. The negation of a *liāh* construction has always the negator on the main verb:

(5) a. 力-阮不-做-人 
*liāh-goa  m-chó-läng*  
LIAH-1SG  NEG-do-man  
They don’t take me as a human being. (絃管 滿天春 下)

b. *不-力-阮 做-人  
*m-liāh-goa  chó-läng*  
NEG- LIAH-1SG  do-man

Thirdly, unlike many Sinitic languages (Chappell 2006), resumptive pronouns never occur with *liāh*. The prohibition of resumptive pronoun indicates that the marker itself is capable of taking on objects.

(6) a. 子期 死-後 力-琴-不-弾  
*chí.kî  sî-aǔ  liāh-kîm-m-tôa*  
Chi.Ki  die-after LIAH-chinese.zither-NEG-play  
After the death of Chi Ki, he never played the zither. (道光 27.016)

b. *子期 死-後 力-琴-不-弾-伊
In the following subsections, I will first examine the referentiality of liāh-marked objects in 5.1, and the affectedness of the verbs available for liāh constructions from 5.2 to 5.3.

5.1 Referentiality and definiteness
Referentiality, as defined by Li and Thompson (1989), is the fact that a noun phrase is used to refer to an entity. This entity may be physical or conceptual, real or hypothetical, singular or plural. A referential noun phrase can be definite or indefinite.

Southern Min is overwhelmingly an SVO language. However, when the object marker is used, the object itself must be preposed. Such construction is often referred to as the ‘disposal construction’ in the Sinitic tradition, and a great deal of accounts have been put forward for Standard Mandarin and other Chinese dialects.

In Standard Mandarin, for instance, the disposal construction in 把 bā is used with strict semantic constraints. In her chapter on differential object marking in Sinitic languages, Chappell (2016) observes that preverbal objects in Standard Mandarin must be referential and affected by a highly transitive predicate (which causes a change of state or a change of location).

In Early Modern Southern Min, disposal constructions exhibit a similar pattern concerning referentiality of the object. In many a case, the object is also marked by the definite marker 只 chit, as shown by the examples below:

(7) a. 力-只-寒衣 脫-幾重
liāh-chit-gōu-i tâng-kūi-tiông
LIAH-DEF-cold.clothes take.off-several-time
I took off several layers of my winter clothes.
b. 力-只-春 來-留滯
dlā-h-chit-ch’un  lāi-lâu.tè
LIAH-DEF-spring come-let.stay
To let this spring stay.

Ten out of 62 examples of liāh as an object marker are attested with the definite marker 只 chit. In other examples, we find pronouns, person names and body parts, etc., which are most likely to be specific and referential.

Even those objects without any formal indication of referentiality can be proven to imply definite referentiality:

(8) 故意 力-鏡 打-破
kò.i  liāh-kìâⁿ  p’ah-p’ôa
deliberately  LIAH-mirror  hit-break
You deliberately broke the mirror. (嘉靖 19.216)

In the episode from which example 8 is drawn, Tân-Saⁿ (陳三), who disguised himself as a mirror polisher, deliberately broke the mirror of Ngô-Niû (五娘), whom he had a crush on. In order to be able to see Ngô-Niû, he tried to frame the maidservant, Ek-Chhun (益春) with the breaking of the mirror. Driven mad, Ek-Chhun shouted at Tân-Saⁿ, “It’s you that were trifling with the expensive mirror and it’s you that deliberately broke the mirror!”

Given the situation, it is obvious that 鏡 kìâⁿ, even though unmarked, is actually referential to the expensive mirror owned by Ngô-Niû, and broken by Tân-Saⁿ. It represents old or given information.

Examples involving a noun phrase marked by liāh marked by the character 一 chit ‘one’ are rare, only 7 examples are found in all the five versions of Li Jing Ji:
To account for this irregularity, we have two hypotheses. First, these examples are all from the versions of the Qing dynasty, more than a hundred years later than the first version. It could be due to the evolution of the marker, for which the semantic constraints have become looser. Second, we suspect that the character 一 is a mistaken form for the homophonous definite marker 只. We cannot determine which of the hypotheses to choose, but the rarity of 一 does not have a big enough impact on the general referential reading of the noun phrase marked with 了, even if 一 is really an exception.

5.2 Affectedness Hierarchy

Before looking into the semantic roles of the objects and the verbs suitable for 了 constructions, it is worthwhile to introduce Tsunoda (1985)’s AFFECTEDNESS HIERARCHY which deals with transitive verb types. In this paper, we adapt a simplified version of the Hierarchy, presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect on object</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Pursuit</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Feeling</td>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Resultative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>Non-resultative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>打破 ̀ phah.pʰǎa</td>
<td>打破 ̀ phah.pʰǎa</td>
<td>看 ̀ kʰi</td>
<td>等 ̀ kʰi</td>
<td>記得 kʰi</td>
<td>有</td>
<td>有 好</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the Mandarin case, we can easily find that only the resultative verb (Type 1a), implying a change of state on the patient, is suitable for the disposal bā construction. In the following subsections, I will discuss the case of Early Modern Southern Min.

5.3 Patient
5.3.1 Proto-typical patient
Type 1a verbs (resultative verbs) in Earlier Southern Min often involve a second resultative element such as 破 phòa ‘break’ or 上 siōng ‘up’, etc; others might not have any additional element, and can only be identified through their semantic context.

We have already seen examples of the prototypical patient marked with lāh in 8 and 9 with the resultative transitive verb 打破 phah phòa. More examples are provided in 10.

(10) a. 且 力-只-門掩-上
   chʰâ liāh-chit-míng am-siōng
   CONJ-PATIENT-door shut-up
   So I shut the door. (嘉靖 28.021)

   b. 阮來 三哥 力-火 點-光光 只-處 睡
   göan.lâi saⁿ-ko liāh-hèe tiâm-kng.kng chit-chʰù
   turn.out Saⁿ-Ko PATIENT-fire kindle-bright DEM-place
   kʰùn
   sleep
   It turns out that San-Ko lit the candle and slept there. (嘉靖 29.023)

   c. 益春 力-鋪陳 收-起
   ek-chʰun liāh-pʰo.tîn siu-kʰí
   Ek-Chhun PATIENT-bed.clothes pack-up
   Ek-Chhun, pack up the bed clothes. (道光 31.064)

5.3.2 Non-resultative patient
Type 1b verbs (non-resultative verbs) do not necessarily cause a change of state in the patient. Examples include:

(11)  

a. 你 力-媒姨 打 是 乜 道理  
   liāh-bōei pʰah sī mih  
   2SG N.R.PATIENT-match.maker hit be what  
   tō.li reason  
   Why did you hit the match maker? (嘉靖 14.254-55)

b. 煩 你 力-書收  
   hôan liāh-chu siu  
   please 2SG N.R.PATIENT-letter receive  
   Please take this letter. (嘉靖 25.225)

c. 力-君 來-攬  
   liāh-kun lâi-lâm  
   N.R.PATIENT-2SG come.embrace  
   Let me embrace you. (嘉靖 48.088)

Such constructions are ungrammatical in Standard Mandarin (at least for the author), while well attested in Earlier Southern Min.

5.3.3 Ditransitive constructions

Ditransitive constructions can also be marked by liāh, illustrated by the sentences below:

(12)  

a. 你 力-荔枝手帕 獻 乞-我做-乜  
   liāh-nāi.chî.chîú.pʰê hiân kʰi̍t-góa  
   2SG PATIENT-handkerchief.with.lychee give DAT-1SG  
   do-what  
   Why did you give me the handkerchief with the lychee inside? (道光 22.202)

b. 力-拙-恩愛 全頭 共-伊細說  
   liāh-chōat-un.ài chōan.tʰâu kāng-i
5.3.4 Perception
The next category in the Hierarchy, Type 2, perception verbs, are available for liâh constructions. Examples are shown in 13. 13a and 13b illustrate the perception use with simple transitive verbs, and 13c is somewhat structurally ambiguous, in which 力 liâh can be understood as the predicate, or alternatively, a grammatical word marking the observed object, 有心 iù.sim ‘care’, while 做 chòe ‘make’ being the predicate. Following the latter analysis, the construction can be termed a double-object perception construction.

(13) a. 力-我 不-揪采
liâh-góá m-ch’iu-ch’ái
PERCEPT-1SG NEG-take.notice
She ignores me. (順治 15.346)

b. 且 力-只-水 影 來照看
ch’ái liâh-chit-chúi.iù lái chíò.k’oan
CONJ PERCEPT-DEM-reflection to look.at
Let me look at my own reflection in the water. (絃管 百花賽錦)

c. 力-伊有心做無心
liâh-i iù.sim chòe bò.sim
PERCEPT-3SG care make heartlessness
To (mistakenly) regard his care as heartlessness. (嘉靖 18.010)

5.3.5 VO Constructions
liâh constructions, with an OV word order, can go back to their VO versions without changing the semantics (but not vice versa).

In Episode 24 of Lì Jìng jì, in a moonlit night, Tân-Saⁿ went to Ngô-Niû’s garden, but hesitated about going in. He started making noises, in the
hope that Ngō-Niû would hear him. Ngō-Niû did hear the noises, and asked Ek-Chhun, her maidservant if someone was outside. Ek-Chhun thought it was just a cuckoo, and this caused Ngō-Niû to fall into melancholy: springtime was too short, and even a cuckoo sang sad songs about it. Ek-Chhun asked Ngō-Niû if she was able to let springtime stay, and Ngō-Niû felt powerless to help. The question, uttered by Ek-Chhun, is in 14a, with a līāh construction. What Ngō-Niû answered about it is in 14b, with the same meaning, but using the VO construction.

(14) a. 唔娘今有乜計力-春來-留滯
"niû ta' ū mih kē līāh-chit-ch'ūn
místress now have what solution PATEINT-DEF-spring
lāi-lâu.tè
come-let.stay
Mistress, have you got any idea how to let springtime stay? (嘉靖 24.088)

b. 愛卜共伊人留春想都無計
"ài.beh kāng-i.lāng lāu ch'ūn sū' to
want BEN-3SG let.stay spring think even
bō kē
not.existent solution
I want to let springtime stay, but I know it is impossible. (嘉靖 24.089)

Other VO constructions with Type 1 and 2 verbs are listed below.

(15) a. 你偶年卜打破-阮-鏡
"li chai.nî bēh p'ah.p'ōa-gōan-kiā
2SG how.come want hit.break-1PL-mirror
Why did you break my mirror? (嘉靖 19.282)

b. 不-惜-福句卜打-人
"m-sioh-hok koh bēh p'ah-lāng
NEG-cherish-happiness still want hit-person
You not only don’t cherish your good luck, but also want to hit people. (順治 19.133)
c. 看 許-樓上 娘仔 扔-乜-落-來
kʰoaʰ  hit-lâu.siông niû.á  taʰ-mi-h-lôh-laî
look DEM-building-up girl throw-what-downwards-come
See what the girl from upstairs threw down. (嘉靖 17.106)

d. 請 入-內食-些兒-茶飯
chʰiáⁿ jîp-lâi  chiâh-kôa.jî-tê.pîng
please enter-inside eat-some-tea.food
Please come in and have a meal. (嘉靖 14.203)

e. 看 日落 在-天邊
kʰoaʰ jît.lôh  châi-tê.piⁿ
look sunset LOC-edge.of.sky
Watching the sun setting down on the horizon. (嘉靖 4.206)

We can see that the referentiality constraint is not applicable for VO constructions, as 15b, 15c and 15d show.

liâh is never found with verb types lower than Type 2 in the Hierarchy, only VO constructions are permitted in these cases:

(16)  

a. Pursuit

须等-鳳凰來宿
su tán-hông.hông laî siok
must await-phoenix come dwell
Must wait for a phoenix to come and live here. (嘉靖 26.061)

b. Knowledge

那 我 去 吓-記得-小妹
nâ âû.kî bê-kî.tit-siô.môe
that be.afraid after NEG-remember-little.girl
I’m afraid that you won’t remember me. (嘉靖 23.044)

c. Feeling

又 我-伊-爹媽
iû âû-i-tiâ.ma
then be.afraid-3SG-parents
But she is afraid of her parents. (嘉靖 28.065)
d. Possession
伊-娘 有-一个-照身寶鏡
i-niū ū-chit.ē-chiò.sin.pó.kià
1SG-mistress have-one-expensive.mirror
Her mistress has an expensive mirror. (嘉靖 18.096)

e. Ability
人客 即是 看-說話
lângk.heh chiáhsí gāu-seh.ōè
guest really be.good.at-talking
You are really eloquent. (順治 9.094)

5.3.6 Interim summary
As an object marker, I have shown liāh is compatible with transitive verbs having a direct effect on object and perception verbs, which occupy the first and second slots of the Affectedness Hierarchy. See Table 2 for a better view of its distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Direct effect on object</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Pursuit</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Feeling</td>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Ability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resultative</td>
<td>Non-resultative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>打破 p̥ah.p̥oa</td>
<td>'break'</td>
<td>看 k̥i̥t</td>
<td>'wait'</td>
<td>記得 k̥it</td>
<td>'remember'</td>
<td>怕 ū</td>
<td>'be afraid'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. INSTRUMENTAL
Early Modern Southern Min also uses liāh to mark the instrument. This construction resembles a serial verb construction, and may be interpreted alternatively as a serial verb construction, as Lien (2002) suggests. See 17 for an example.

(17) 不免 力-扇連-面-遮-除
m. biùn liāh-sí lián-bīn-chia-tū
inevitably INSTR-fan whole-face-cover-PFV
She inevitably cover her face with a fan. (絃管 滿天春 上)

\( liāh \) not only marks real instruments, but is also a marker of instrumental noun phrases denoting means or manner, which are generally abstract nouns and cannot be held by the hand. This is illustrated in 18.

(18) a. 再 力-金蓮步 行進
  \( chái liāh-kim.lián.pō hêng.chìn \)
  then INSTR-female.trotting.manner walk
  And then, she walks in a female manner. (絃管 郭華買胭脂)

b. 又 力-言語 來-氣 阮
  \( iū liāh-giân.gi lâi-kʰi-góan \)
  CONJ INSTR -speech to-irritate-1SG
  And he irritated me with bad words. (絃管 深林邊、招商店)

c. 力-只-醜事 相-翕瞥
  \( liāh-chít-chʰiú.sū sio-lûn.pʰi \)
  INSTR-DEM-scandal DETRAN-compare
  To compare that with this scandal (絃管 蒙正冒雪歸窯)

As Givón (1995: 27) notices, noun phrases marked with instrumental \( liāh \) are characteristically indefinite, non-referential and non-topical, which is totally the reverse case of the patient marker \( liāh \). Examples like 18c with the definite marker are not many.

In 19 below, we have an antithetical pair of sentences with the general instrumental marker 用 \( ēng \) corresponding to \( liāh \) in the second. This example confirms the instrumental use of \( liāh \).

(19) 莫-閑-苦痛 徒 奔波, 莫-力-青春 空 煩惱
  \( bō-kʰi-ō.pʰâ.pʰ \) ōng pʰun.pʰo
  PROH-INSTR-pain vainly toil
  \( bō-liāh-chʰîng.chʰun kʰâng hōan.ló \)
  PROH-INSTR-youth vainly worry
Stop toiling with pain in vain, don’t waste away your bloom of youth with sadness. (同窓琴書記 仙伯遊春)

7. SUMMARY OF THE FUNCTIONS
A summary of the functions of liāh is provided in Table 3\(^\text{10}\) below.

| Table 3: Functions of liāh and their proportions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verb (to catch)</td>
<td>Verb (passive)</td>
<td>Verb (static)</td>
<td>Verb (imperative)</td>
<td>Object (patient)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1 (0%)</td>
<td>0/0 (0%)</td>
<td>2/2 (100%)</td>
<td>0/0 (0%)</td>
<td>1/1 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/3 (100%)</td>
<td>1/1 (100%)</td>
<td>1/1 (100%)</td>
<td>0/0 (0%)</td>
<td>1/1 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1 (100%)</td>
<td>0/0 (0%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>0/0 (0%)</td>
<td>0/0 (0%)</td>
<td>0/0 (0%)</td>
<td>0/0 (0%)</td>
<td>0/0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first five rows show the data of different versions of Li Jing Ji in their chronological order. The last three lines are those of the other resources, also chronologically ordered. The grey-coloured rows are texts using 掃 as liāh.

The data listed in the table above are not directly usable without the following precisions:

1) The sample size of liāh is relatively small for a detailed and significant statistic analysis. Resources with total liāh counts lower than 70 are to be treated with caution.

2) We are not including the data of van der Loon (1992), as in many cases, the characters are hardly recognisable or simply missing. However, examples will be cited when necessary.

3) Script plays with 掃 may show diacritical variance, which will be discussed later on. They are to be treated separately.

7.1 Summary of verb uses
Looking through the five versions of Li Jing Ji, we can see that the meaning ‘to catch, to hold’ is relatively stable, of around 30% to 40% (the
**Dàoguāng** version, with lower than 20%, has however only 67 occurrences of *liāh*, which is hardly significant).

Most of the causative verbs are in ambiguous constructions (c.f. Section 8), we have only one instance of pure causative use, in van der Loon (1992) (see example 2c).

The stative meaning of *liāh* is extremely uncommon, only found in van der Loon (1992) (example 2b).

The distribution of *liāh* meaning ‘to consider as’ (including the fossilised expression *liāh* chò ‘to consider as’), interestingly, is found to be limited to the script plays using 撻. This could indicate the early innovation of South-Western Southern Min, probably the Tiē-chiu dialect.

7.2 Summary of marker uses
From Jiājing to Guāngxù, the patient marker use of *liāh* undergoes a slight decrease in frequency. The percentage of perception object use is low but stable, while the one in Wànli (another dialect) is higher than the other versions. Instrument use is not common, either, of around 5% in each version. Whether or not the phenomena observed here are related to the evolution of Southern Min will be discussed in Section 11.

8. AMBIGUOUS CONSTRUCTIONS
Ambiguity may rise due to syntactic, semantic or pragmatic properties. Whereas all types of ambiguity are included in the statistics in Table 3, in this section, I will focus on the syntactic and semantic types. Four main classes of ambiguity will be accounted for, object marker vs causative verb, object marker vs instrumental marker, object marker vs verb ‘to catch’ and verb ‘to catch’ vs instrumental marker.

8.1 Object marker vs Causative verb
The ambiguity between an object marker and a causative verb rises when the transitivity of the main verb can be interpreted in two ways. For instance, 闪 siām in 20a can be either transitive ‘to wrench’ or intransitive ‘to be wrenched’, which leads to two possible translations. 嫁 kè in 20b can be either ditransitive ‘to marry sb. to sb.’, or intransitive ‘be married to sb.’, the two readings both match the context semantically.

(20)  
a. 力 我-腰闪-一下
    liāh  góa-io  siām-chit.ê
   LIAH  1SG-waist  wrench/be.wrenched-one.time
(a) He wrenched my waist.  
(b) He caused my waist to be wrenched.  (道光 10.015)

b. 卜力仔嫁乞-林大
    bēh  liāh  kiáⁿ  kè  kît-lîm.tôa
   want  LIAH daughter marry - DAT-Lîm.Tôa
(a) They want to marry their daughter to Lîm Tôa.  
(b) They want to make their daughter marry Lîm Tôa.  (嘉靖 14.422)

8.2 Object marker vs Instrumental marker
As in a disposal construction, the object is preposed, it gives room to add another noun phrase as direct object behind the transitive verb, which creates a new OV construction. The original object, already fronted by the marker liāh, can be therefore considered demoted into an oblique function. As a result, the addition of the noun phrases 哀怨 ai.òan ‘melancholy’ in 21a and 就裹 chiū.li ‘reason’ in 21b cause alternative readings in the examples below.

(21)  
a. 力 只-琵琶弹-出-哀怨
    liāh  chît-pî.pê  tôaⁿ-chîut.ai.òan
   LIAH  DEM-pîpa  play-out-melancholy
(a) play the pîpa to convey melancholy
(b) convey melancholy with the pîpa (絃管 滿天春 上)
b. 力 只-恩愛 從頭 共-伊說-出 擦-就裹
liāh chīt-un.ai chēng.t'āu kā-i
LIAH DEM-love from.the.beginning DAT-3SG
seh-ch'ut choat-chiū.li
say-out DEM-reason
(a) Tell her all about my love from the beginning.
(b) Tell her the reason right from the beginning through my love.

(道光 22.067)

8.3 Object marker vs Verb ‘to catch’
This class of ambiguity depends on the semantic interpretation of the text,
and is found in ditransitive constructions.

(22) 力 我-三哥 送 到官司
liāh gōa-san.ko sāng kào-kō².si
LIAH 1SG-third.brother send to-government.office
(a) send my third brother to the government of ice
(b) arrest my third brother and send him to the government of ice.

(光緒 36.034)

The context of 22 allows the interpretation of ‘to catch’, we therefore
cannot determine whether it is a real object marker or an action verb.

8.4 Verb ‘to catch’ vs Instrumental marker
The hesitation to choose between verb ‘to catch’ and instrumental marker is
also caused by semantic properties, as 23 shows.

(23) 力 只-小扇 撲流螢
liāh chīt-siō.sin p'ok liū.êng
LIAH DEM-small.fan flick firefly
(a) take a small fan to lick the fire flies
(b) lick the fire flies with a small fan (絃管 滿天春 上)

Here, liāh can be interpreted either as a verb or an instrumental marker.
This example is different from 17 in that the noun phrase following liāh is
marked with definite article 只 chit, which makes it less likely to be a canonical instrumental argument (c.f. Givón 1995).

9. COMPETING MARKERS

9.1 將 chiong

The marker 將 chiong can appear as an object marker as well as an instrumental marker in Early Modern Southern Min. Identical constructions of 將 chiong and 力 liāh are put together in 24, 25 (object marker) and 26 (instrumental marker), some of which come from the same texts.

According to (Lien 2002:192), the noun phrase marked by 將 chiong is more often than not inanimate, unlike the case of 力 liāh. We will see that the noun phrases marked by 將 chiong enjoy a larger range than those marked by 力 liāh, as far as semantic roles are concerned.

(24) a. 不免將-這-鏡來-打-破

 mé.bián chiong-chiá-kiâⁿ lâi-pʰah-pʰòa
inevitably PATIENT-DEM-mirror to-hit.break
Inevitably broke this mirror. (嘉靖 19.173)

b. 不免力-只-鏡來-打-破

 mé.bián lâh-chit-kiâⁿ lâi-pʰah-pʰòa
inevitably PATIENT-DEM-mirror to-hit.break
Inevitably broke this mirror. (嘉靖 19.188)

(25) a. 將-只-禮聘 送轉 還-伊

 chiong-chit-lé.pʰèng sàng.tâng hêng-i
PATIENT-DEM-betrothal.gift send.back return-3SG
Send this betrothal gift back to him. (嘉靖 14.177)

b. 你 力-只-禮聘 送轉去 還-伊人

 lî lâh-chit-lé.pʰèng sàng.tâng.kʰî
2SG PATIENT-DEM-betrothal.gift send.back
hêng-i.lâng
return-3SG
Send this betrothal gift back to them (嘉靖 14.109)

(26) a. 娘仔 將-手帕 包 荔枝
   niú.à chiong-ch⁴ü,pʰè pau nǎi.chí
   girl INSTR-handkerchief wrap lychee
   The girl wrapped the lychee with a handkerchief. (順治 26.053)

   b. 伊 力-手帕 包 荔枝 掮-落-來
   i liā-h-ch⁴ü,pʰè pau nǎi.chí
   3SG PATIENT-handkerchief wrap lychee
taⁿ-lōh-lai
   throw-downwards-come
   She wrapped the lychee with a handkerchief and threw it down. (嘉靖 18.055)

   將 chiong has also extended functions, such as marking the path in 27.

(27) 將-門踏入去
   chiong-mīng tāh jīp kʰì
   PATH-door step in go
   Step inside the door. (光緒 34.037)

   It is an analogy of the disposal construction, with 踏入門去 tāh jīp mīng kʰì (step-in-door go) as the original construction. This example shows that 將 chiong enjoyed looser usage constraints than 力 liāh.

9.2 甲 kap and 共 kāng

甲 kap and 共 kāng are worth mentioning as they are often found in disposal constructions in Modern Southern Min (Lien 2002: 194-195), although not quite so in the Ming dynasty.


   In Southern Min of Ming and Qing dynasties, 甲 kap and 共 kāng generally marked animate objects, especially human objects.
共 kāng appears often with dative and ablative functions that mark goal (28a) and source (28b).

(28) a. 待我共阮阿娘呾
   trāi göa kāng-góan-a.niū tʰā
   wait 1SG DAT-1SG-mistress say
   Let me tell my mistress about it. (萬曆 06.024)

b. 值人卜共你討恩
   ti.läng bēh kāng-li-tʰó.un
   who want DAT-2SG-ask.favour
   Who wants to ask a favour from you? (嘉靖 22.280)

(29) a. 甲啞媽討一對金花
   kah-a.ma tʰó chit-tūi-kim.hoe
   SOURCE-mother require one-pair-gold.flower
   Ask the mother for a pair of lowers. (嘉靖 13.114)

b. 甲你鏡打破除
   kah-li-kid⁵ pʰah-pʰoa-tú
   PATIENT-2SG-mirror hit-break-PFV
   He broke your mirror. (嘉靖 19.346)

c. 甲我來賣乞人飼
   kah-góa läi-bōe-kʰit-lâng-chʰī
   PATIENT-1SG to-sell-DAT-person-feed
   They sold me to others. (嘉靖 13.050)

10. CONTEMPORARY USE

Our contemporary data are mainly based on the database of National Tsing-hua University, 台語文數位典藏 Tái Yǔwén Shǔwèi Diàncáng, and online dictionaries. The examples include contemporary folklores and narratives and date from 1880 up until now.

The verbal meaning ‘to catch, to hold’ of liâh is by far the dominant use in Contemporary Southern Min, which represents over 90% of the occurrences by my estimate.
The meaning ‘to consider as’ is retained, being fossilised with 做 chò and other similar verbs: 掃做 liāh.chò ‘to consider as’, 掃凖 liāh.chún ‘to believe firmly’, etc.

(30) 日本人有掠做像一款
jīt.pūn.jīn ü liāh.chò chʰiū chʰ.kʰǒan
Japanese have consider.as be.like same
Japanese people consider them as the same (pronunciation). (日本話 ê 根底 (1896))

Surprisingly, liā as an object marker is extremely rare in the contemporary language. Type 1a verbs of the Affectedness Hierarchy are never found with liā, and I only found one example of Type 1b verbs:

(31) 固執-我-罵 nē 做 伊 倒去
kò.chip liāh-góa-mā nē chòe
Obstinate N.R.PATIENT-1SG-scold CONJ make
i tō.kʰi
3SG return
Obstinate scolded me and returned. (天路歷程2 (1897))

The original version, by John Bunyan, is “(but when they saw that they could not prevail), Obstinate went railing back (Bunyan 1684: Part I, Section I, 2.4)”, which shows that liā in this case does mark the object. This example is probably amongst the last productive uses of liā as an object marker.

A limited number of Type 2 verbs are in fossilised construction with liā, as shown in 32.

(32) a. 你 厭 一直 掃-我金金看 啦
lī mài it.tìt liāh-góa kim.kim.kʰəaʰ
2SG PROH always PERCEPT-1SG stare
PART
Stop staring at me!

b. 彼-陣仔 毋 就 疣-臭頭仔 做-皇帝 曬啦呼
hit- chūn. a  m  chiū  liāh- e’hāu. t’au. ā
DEN- period  NEG  CONJ  PERCEPT- ringworm. headed. child
make-emperor  PART
At that time, they took that ringworm headed guy as the emperor (彰化縣民間文學集十七)

Table 4 shows the contemporary usage of liāh in the Affectedness Hierarchy. We can clearly see that liāh as a marker moves rightwards to the very end of its old range of use. In the Ming dynasty, it could match verbs of both Type 1 and 2. Later on, it marked the objects of Type 1b and 2 verbs and now it is restricted to Type 2 unproductively.

The gaps that it left in Contemporary Southern Min are filled with the generalisation of 甲 kap. Although 甲 kap usually marked human objects in the Ming dynasty, but as Chappell et al. (2011: 39) pointed out, there is no longer any semantic constraints for this marker.

11. DISCUSSION
11.1 The status of liāh in Southern Min
We have shown that liāh in Early Modern Southern Min was a polysemous case marker as well as a polysemous lexical verb, and that one function could be ambiguous with another. The coexistence of various functions and
different types of ambiguity suggest that liāh was undergoing more than one grammaticalisation pathway at that time.

The polysemy and polyfunctionality of the morpheme in question, however, reflects several principles of grammaticalisation put forward by Hopper (1991). First, it is related to the LAYERING principle (Hopper 1991: 22), which states that the emergence of new grammaticalisation layers do not imply the loss of the older ones, which instead might occur in interaction with the new layers. In Early Modern Southern Min, liāh was undergoing different layers of grammaticalisation at the same time; second, the PERSISTENCE principle, referring to the fact that the grammaticalised morpheme might retain traces of its original lexical meaning. Persistence explains why we have ambiguous forms wavering between the original lexical verb and a case marker. Lord (1982: 287) observes the same phenomenon with ke ‘to take/ACC’ in Gā (Benue-Kwa, West Africa), which can be interpreted as a lexical verb ‘to take’ or an object marker.

The contemporary use of liāh is virtually restricted to its original verb meaning. Hopper (1991) talks about DIVERGENCE, which points out that while grammaticalisation, the original form may remain as an autonomous lexical element. In Southern Min, liāh never lost its original meaning, which moreover seems to be the most persistent one.

11.2 Foissilisation of liāh
The traces of the case marker use of liāh are all fossilised constructions with meanings similar to ‘to consider as’. Historical resources tell us that liāh with this meaning is restricted to the script plays that used 捜 to represent this morpheme, that is to say, dialects in which 力 did not sound like liāh. As I mentioned above, I suspect the dialect using 捜 in early script plays was Tiê-chiu, or at least a South-Western variant of Southern Min. Provisionally, we can call it the 捜 lüè-dialects, opposed to the 力 li-dialects.
The fossilisation of liāh clearly started with the lüè-dialects, more precisely, with the perception use of liāh. Of all 7 instances of perception use found in the lüè-dialects, 6 imply the meaning of 'to consider as' together with the main verb. All 13 instances of lexical use meaning 'to consider as' are from the lüè-dialects, with two of them combined with 做 chò ‘to do’.

Today, liāh alone cannot have the meaning 'to consider as', only掠...做 liāh...chò and 掠做 liāh.chò (and synonyms) are grammatical.

The fossilisation of liāh must have moved northwards during the following four centuries. It expanded to the entire Southern Min speaking region.

11.3 Guāngxù and Contemporary Southern Min
Although with a decreasing tendency, the Guāngxù (1875-1908) version of Jiājing is the earliest text known in Southern Min, we have no clue of how exactly liāh transformed from a verb to a grammatical word. It is however not impossible to put forward hypothetical grammaticalisation pathways based on the data we possess, especially the ambiguous constructions.

11.4 Possible evolutionary pathways
Since Jiājing is the earliest text known in Southern Min, we have no clue of how exactly liāh transformed from a verb to a grammatical word. It is however not impossible to put forward hypothetical grammaticalisation pathways based on the data we possess, especially the ambiguous constructions.

We have listed four major types of ambiguous constructions in Section 8:
The following figure shows clearer relations between these ambiguous functions:

**Figure 3: Relations between ambiguous constructions**

As shown in Section 8, most of the ambiguities arise in ditransitive or double-object constructions, which suggests the grammaticalisation from an actual verb to a case marker come from older serial verb constructions, in which the first verb (liāh in our case) is finally reanalysed as a case marker:

(34) \[ S + V_1 + NP + V_2 \rightarrow S + \text{MARKER} + NP + V \]

In consequence, the reanalysis is responsible for two new constructions: a **disposal construction** parallel to OV constructions, and an **instrumental construction**.

(35) \[ S + V_1 + NP + V_2 \rightarrow S + \text{OBJECT MARKER} + NP + V \]
(36) \[ S + V_1 + NP + V_2 + (NP_2) \rightarrow S + \text{INSTRUMENTAL MARKER} + NP_1 + V + (NP_2) \]

It would not be surprising that synchronic confusions between the object marker use and the instrumental marker use occasionally occur, as their surface structures are similar.

The instrumental construction further gives rise, possibly combining forces with the monotransitive perception object use, to the double-object perception formation, e.g. 力...做 (liāh + NP_1 + chò + NP_2, see example 13c).

These pathways are by no means strange as far as sinitic languages are concerned. Peyraube (1989,1996) discusses the same processes in Medieval Chinese, in which the two serial verb constructions, ‘V_1+NP+V_2’ and ‘V_1+NP_1+V_2+NP_2’, developed into disposal and instrumental constructions respectively.

The causative verb is found ambiguous with the object marker only. Chappell (1992) states that the Mandarin disposal marker, 把 bā, can be conceptually analysed as denoting a causal relationship between an event and an ensuing state of affairs. It is not unclear that many an example of disposal liāh can opt for a causative reading, especially with a resultative verb, such as 打破 p'ah.p'ōa ‘to break’ (see example 15a). Therefore, the causative verb use of liāh may well have developed from its transitive object use.

The stative use of liāh is only found in one example in the entire database (2b). It should have developed from the original verb meaning of the word, while failed to join the common usages.

The dialectal verb use of liāh (liē-dialects) is fossilised from double-object perception constructions by combining liāh with the main verb,
as discussed in the previous subsection. Summing up, we can represent the hypothetical evolution of *liāh* with the figure below:

![Figure 4: Hypothetical evolution of *liāh*](image)

11.5 What next?
Thanks to script plays from the Ming and Qing dynasties, we have been able to find productive uses of *†liāh* as a grammatical marker, which is completely extinct today. Nevertheless, the original verb use of *†liāh* is preserved in the contemporary language. It might be intuitive that newly emerged functions outlast older ones, the story of *†liāh* gives us a counter-example, its marker uses lost in the competition with other markers, and its oldest function persists until today.

Several tasks are to be completed for further studies.

Most of the elaborated works today on Southern Min concern the variants within Taiwan (which is a sad fact) and efforts on exploring and documenting Southern Min dialects in Fujian have not gone enough. Fieldwork in even the smallest villages in the territory of the homeland of Southern Min should definitely be done. We may find more information about *liāh* and even more insightful facts about the language there.

Comparative studies between *lūè*-dialects and *li*-dialects must be put forward. The syntactic and lexical differences may amount to a considerable number concerning the dialectology of Early Modern Southern Min.
We should also look into other Sinitic languages, as well as languages around the world, in order to see how Early Southern Min studies can contribute to linguistic typology.

### ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>first person singular</th>
<th>INSTR</th>
<th>instrumental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>first person plural</td>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>locative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>second person singular</td>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>third person singular</td>
<td>N.R.PATIENT</td>
<td>patient of non-resultative verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>third person plural</td>
<td>OBJ</td>
<td>object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEN</td>
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<td>PATH</td>
<td>path</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAUS</td>
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<td>PATIENT</td>
<td>patient</td>
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<td>CL</td>
<td>classifier</td>
<td>PERCEPT</td>
<td>perception</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONJ</td>
<td>conjunction</td>
<td>PFV</td>
<td>perfective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>dative</td>
<td>PROH</td>
<td>prohibitive</td>
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<tr>
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<td>definite</td>
<td>PART</td>
<td>particle</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
<td>SOURCE</td>
<td>source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DETRAN</td>
<td>detransitive</td>
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NOTES

1 The research leading to this paper has received funding from the French Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR) for the project entitled «Typologization of synchronic and diachronic processes in Southern Min, a Sinitic language», (TYSOMIN) n° 11-ISH2-001-01, a bilateral cooperative project with the National Science Council of Taiwan (NSC), Principal investigator, Hilary Chappell and Co-investigator, Alain Peyraube. I would like to thank both of the investigators, Hilary Chappell and Alain Peyraube, for their useful comments regarding this paper. My sincere gratitude is also dedicated to Professor Lien Chin-fa and my colleague, Song Na, for their insightful discussions over the subject. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewer for her/his detailed suggestions and corrections. All faults are mine.

2 c.f. The Southern Min spoken in the Ming Dynasty. The main resource we refer to is the 嘉靖 Jiā Jìng version of 荔鏡記 Lì Jìng Jì, which dates to the th century (Wú 2001a).

3 In Jiājìng 5.025, we also attest an example of 体 thóuⁿ, which is said by Lim-Tōa, a character of Tiê-chiu origin.

4 按也, 從手弱聲 àn yě, cóng shǒu ruò shēng ‘To press, its meaning follows the ‘hand’ part (手) and its pronunciation follows the ‘weak’ part (弱).’

5 持也 chíyě ‘to hold’; 捕撈又正也 zhuō nuò yòu zhèng yě’ to catch, or to straighten’

6 捕猶捉也。此今義，非古義也。nuò yòu zhuō yě. cí jīn yì, fēi gǔ yì yě. ‘捕 means to catch. This is a recent meaning, not an archaic one.’

7 In this case, 阮 gòan ‘1PL’ is in its singular use.
We will see in Section 8 that this example can also be interpreted as a causative construction, while it would better be understood as a disposal one, according to the context (c.f. Example 14a).

I accept Wú (2003: 19)’s reading that the character 順 'spare time' is mistaken and that 用 'to use,' should be the right word.

The numerator indicates non-ambiguous counts of each function, and the denominator the total counts. The corresponding percentages are indicated within parentheses. Resource abbreviations: JJ: Jiājing version of Lì Jing Ji; WL: Wānlì version of Lì Jing Ji; SZ: Shùnzhì version of Lì Jing Ji; DG: Dàoguāng version of Lì Jing Ji; GX: Guāngxù version of Lì Jing Ji; JS: Jīnhuān and Sālijīa; TC: Tōngchuāng Qīnshū Ji. Total counts of liān are parenthesised behind the names of the resources.

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早期閩南語中“力 liāh”字之多重功能及其現代命運

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提要
本文立足于明清閩南語文獻研究近代閩南語「力」liāh 的多重功能以及引致其多義性之語法化路徑。在早期閩南語中，力 liāh 既是表“捉、拿”的動詞，亦是一個多功能的格標記。然而在當代閩南語中，力 liāh 的動詞功能尤為顯著，其格標記用法則幾乎喪失能產性。研究力 liāh 的歷史可為語言類型學提供有用的材料。

關鍵詞
早期閩南語 荔鏡記 實語標記 語法化 受動性等第