A Corpus-based Analysis of Near-Synonymous Sentence-final Particles in Mandarin Chinese: "*bale*" and "*eryi*"

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Abstract

This paper explores the differences between two near-synonymous disyllabic sentence-final particles in Mandarin Chinese *bale* and *eryi* based on a corpus-based approach. We argue that there is a close interaction between adverbs and sentence-final particles. Firstly, the usage of adverbs in the local proposition of two different SFPs has a strong tendency. 仅 jin 'only' is only used in the local proposition of *eryi*, and 仅仅 jin-jin 'only' tends to use in the local propositions of *eryi*. 最多 zui-duo/顶多 ding-duo/至多 zhi-duo 'at most' are only used in the local propositions of *bale*, while 决不是 jue-bu-shi/绝非 jue-fei/决非 jue-fei/绝不 jue-bu 'definitely not' are only used in the local propositions of *eryi*. *Eryi* expresses minimal value and *bale* expresses maximal value. Moreover, the position of the adverbs also presents a tendency: the adverbs in the local proposition of *bale* are always in the initial position, while *eryi* in the middle position. In addition, the polarity of the local propositions of two SFPs are also different: the local proposition of *bale* tends to express negativity, while the local proposition of *eryi* obtains a tone of neutrality. We believe that this study will significantly enhance the research on sentence-final particles and second language teaching.

1 Introduction

罢了 *bale* and 而已 *eryi* are two Chinese disyllabic sentence-final particles (SFPs) which are believed to be almost equivalent in terms of meaning and usage (Lü 1980, Wang 1984, Hou 1998, Zhang 2001), and can be used interchangeably in most cases (Fang 2006). For instance:

（1） 有些人认为，所谓野人，不过是一些猿猴<u>罢了/而已</u>。
you3xie1 ren2 ren4wei2, suo3wei4
some people think so-called
ye3ren2, bu2guo4 shi4 yi4xie1 yuan2hou2
savages merely is some monkey
ba4le/er2yi3.
BALE/ERYI
'Some people think that the so-called savages are merely some monkeys.'

（2） 从另一个角度说，生活又是极其简单的，它只不过是过去的简单重复<u>而已/罢了</u>。
cong2 ling4yi2ge4 jiao3du4 shuo1,
from another point of view say
sheng1huo2 you4 shi4 ji2qi2 jian3dan1
life also is extremely simple
de, ta1 zhi3bu2guo4 shi4 guo4qu4
DE it just is past
de jian3dan1 chong2fu4 er2yi3/ba4le.
DE simple repetition ERYI/BALE
'On another point of view, life is extremely simple, and it is just a simple repetition of the past.'

There is no difference when the two SFPs interchange in (1) and (2). Yet, there remain some cases where the two SFPs *bale* and *eryi* cannot be used interchangeably. For example:

（3） 卢梭一生清贫，但他的清贫和我们当时的清贫之间有着一个本质的区别：我们是物质匮乏，迫不得已；而卢梭则是自

愿贫困。无衣可穿时打补丁称不上朴素，不过是不折不扣地穷罢了。

Lu2suo1   yi4 sheng1 qing1pin2, dan4 ta1
Rousseau one life   poor   but he
de qing1pin2 he wo3men de qing1pin2
DE   poor   with we   DE   poor
zhi1jian1 you3zhe yi2 ge4 ben3zhi4 de
between   have   one CL essential DE
qu1bie2, wo3men shi4 wu4zhi4 kui4fa2,
difference we   is   material short
po4bu4de2yi3; er2 Lu2suo1 ze2shi4
be forced   while Rousseau is
zi4yuan4   pin2kun4. wu2 yi1
of one's own accord poor   no clothes
ke3   chuan1 shi2 da3bu3ding1 cheng1
have   wear   when put a patch   called
bu2shang4 pu3su4,   bu2guo4 shi4
not   simplicity merely   is
bu4zhe2bu2kou4 de   qiong2 ba4le.
completely   DE   poor   BALE
'Rousseau's life is poor, but there is an essential difference between his poverty and our poverty at that time: we lack material things and it is forced, while Rousseau is poor of his own accord. It cannot be called simplicity when there are not clothes to be worn and put a patch, but just completely poor.'

（4） 詹姆斯对此事的参与也仅止于此。老布什更只是写了封推荐信而已。

Zhan1mu3si1 dui4 ci3 shi4   de
James   for this matter DE
can1yu4   ye3 jin3 zhi3 yu2 ci3.
participation also only stop PERP here
lao3bu4shi2   geng4   zhi3shi4 xie3
Bush the Elder even more   just   write
le feng1   tui1jian4xin4   er2yi4.
LE CL   recommendation letter ERYI
'James's participation in this matter just only ended here. Bush the Elder even just wrote a letter of recommendation.

In (3) and (4), the alternation of two SFPs will have influence on the meaning and the acceptability of the sentences.

The current study aims to examine the semantic and pragmatic differences between the two near-synonymous SFPs *bale* and *eryi* based on a corpus-based approach.

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 discusses the related work on two SFPs: *bale* and *eryi*. Section 3 describes the data collection and agreement test. Section 4 presents the data analysis and results. Section 5 concludes the paper and highlights the contributions of this work.

2　Related Work

The study of the sentence final particles (SFP) is one of the most popular studies in recent years. One of the reasons is that the SFPs is a special element in Chinese compared with other European languages. We find that the study of SFPs focused more on the typical monosyllabic ones, such as 吧 ba, 吗 ma, 呢 ne, 啊 a etc., but not the disyllabic SFPs, such as 罢了 ba-le, 而已 er-yi, 得了 de-le, 着呢 zhe-ne, etc.

It is believed that *bale* always uses in the sentence final position of the declarative sentences which indicating 'that is it' and there is the tone of unimportance. It always collocates with 不过 bu-guo 'merely', 无非 wu-fei 'nothing but', 只是 zhi-shi 'just', etc. (Lü 1980, Zhang 2001, Qi 2011). Tang and Zhou (1989), Hou (1998) argue that *bale* can dilute the sentence meaning and often use with 不过 bu-guo 'merely', 只 zhi 'just', 无非 wu-fei 'nothing but', 只有 zhi-you 'only', 只好 zhi-hao 'have no choice but', etc. It is the same as *eryi*, but *bale* is often used in the spoken language. Liu and Shao (2012) argue that *bale* has three grammatical meanings. Liu (2013) states that there are three functional meanings of *bale*: (1) *bale* emphasizes a part of information (2) *bale* expresses dissatisfied, negative, despised and sarcastic emotion (3) *bale* obtains the attitudes of tolerance, euphemism and modesty.

There are also some discussions on *eryi*. Some scholars argue that *eryi* is often used in the final position of declarative sentences which contains a kind of tone of smallness. It always collocates with 不过 bu-guo 'merely', 无非 wu-fei 'nothing but', 只 zhi 'just', 仅仅 jin-jin 'only'. *Eryi* often used in the written language (Lü 1980, Zhang 2001), which dilutes the mood of sentence meaning at the end of the sentence (Wang 1984, Hou 1998, Qi 2001). Chu (1986) and Liu (2000) believe that *eryi* expresses the mood of limitation.

Compared with these two SFPs, some scholars believe that *bale* and *eryi* are almost equivalent in terms of meaning and usage, and the only difference is that *bale* often use in spoken language while *eryi* in written language. Fang (2006) also made a comparative study of two SFPs. He claims that the usage of the two SFPs have a kind of tendency. The numeral phrases often correlate with *eryi*, but not in *bale*. There are also differences on the mood of the two SFPs.

3   Corpus Data

The data was retrieved from Center for Chinese Linguistics PKU (CLC), from which 4652 sentences containing *bale* and 8579 sentences containing *eryi* are extracted. Firstly, all the data are retrieved from the corpus. Secondly, a manually analysis is processed to find the sentences that the two SFPs *bale* and *eryi* cannot be used interchangeably. We find that 6.5% (304 sentences) of the sentences which contain *bale* and 5.2% (452 sentences) of the sentences which contain *eryi* cannot be used interchangeably. Therefore, our dataset has 756 sentences which the two SFPs cannot be used interchangeably.

In order to verify the manually analysis results, a questionnaire is designed. Eight sentences which contain *bale* and eight sentences which contain *eryi* are extracted from the dataset randomly (see Appendix A). 15 participants with linguistic academic background and 15 participants without linguistic academic background fill out our questionnaire. The 30 participants are all native speakers of Mandarin Chinese.

We collected the questionnaire via Wechat and then do the statistical work. We calculate the accuracy which means the answer what the participants choose is same as the original text in the corpus. The SFPs which the original text is used are in gray shade on frequency and percentage in Table 1. The majority of the answers of each question are in accordance with the original text. As Table 1 shows, the agreement is 88.25%. It proves that our preliminary observation is efficient and can be used to do the following analysis and comparison.

The meaning and usage of the two sentence-final particles are too close to be distinguished, but the native speakers have the intuition to judge the accurate situations to use two SFPs respectively. A

No.	*Bale*		*Eryi*		*Bale / Eryi*	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	27	90%	0	0	3	10%
2	0	0	29	97%	1	3%
3	25	83%	3	10%	2	7%
4	30	100%	0	0	0	0
5	3	10%	24	80%	3	10%
6	1	3%	28	93%	1	3%
7	2	7%	23	77%	5	17%
8	28	93%	1	3%	1	3%
9	2	7%	25	83%	3	10%
10	28	93%	0	0	2	7%
11	30	100%	0	0	0	0
12	2	7%	26	87%	2	7%
13	2	7%	22	73%	6	20%
14	0	0	27	90%	3	10%
15	25	83%	1	3%	4	13%
16	27	90%	0	0	3	10%
Agreement	88.25%					

Table 1. The result of the questionnaire

word always has different word senses based on the context of the word's usage in a sentence. As for near-synonymous words, they have some common word senses, but differ in others. So the two SFPs that can be used interchangeably in these sentences share the same word sense, while those cannot be used interchangeably contain different word senses. In this study, we analyze 13231 sentences and find that 756 sentences (5.7%) cannot be used interchangeably. It is an exhaustive data analysis of CLC on two SFPs. In other words, native speakers can demonstrate the usage of two SFPs in different situations precisely, which proves that the two SFPs have obvious differences on word sense. Otherwise, the two SFPs can be used interchangeably in all situations. Therefore, even though the dataset is relatively small, it is efficient to compare the two SFPs and analyze their different word senses more precisely. Based on the analysis of the context to narrow down the possible senses to the probable ones, we can find the accurate meaning of each word and the differences between the two SFPs.

4   Data Analysis

Of the 756 sentences analyzed, we find some different features between *bale* and *eryi*. Most of the sentences of *bale* and *eryi* collocate adverbs in their local propositions, e.g. 只 zhi 'only', 不过 bu-guo 'merely', 最多 zui-duo 'at most', 仅仅 jin-jin 'only'. The local proposition means that the clause contains the SFPs. But there is a tendency for using different adverbs in the local propositions between *bale* and *eryi*. There is a list for the top 10 collocating adverbs (see Table 2).

Adverb in *bale*	Token	Percentage	Adverb in *eryi*	Token	Percentage
不过 *bu-guo*	60	28.57%	仅 *jin*	102	29.57%
只是 *zhi-shi*	37	17.62%	只是 *zhi-shi*	94	27.25%
只不过 *zhi-bu-guo*	20	9.52%	仅仅 *jin-jin*	32	9.28%
也 *ye*	16	7.62%	不过 *bu-guo*	22	6.38%
无非 *wu-fei*	15	7.14%	只 *zhi*	20	5.80%
只好 *zhi-hao*	8	3.81%	只不过 *zhi-bu-guo*	20	5.80%
最多/顶多/至多 *zui-duo/ding-duo/zhi-duo*	7	3.33%	只有 *zhi-you*	17	4.93%
只 *zhi*	6	2.86%	无非 *wu-fei*	12	3.48%
只能 *zhi-neng*	6	2.86%	决不是/绝非/决非/绝不 *jue-bu-shi/jue-fei/jue-fei/jue-bu*	7	2.03%
只有 *zhi-you*	4	1.90%	只能 *zhi-neng*	6	1.74%

Table 2. Distribution of co-occurrence between adverbs and SFPs (Top 10 adverbs)

Of the 756 sentences analyzed, there are 188 sentences that use adverbs in their local propositions of *bale* and 298 sentences in *eryi*. Moreover, some sentences use more than one adverb in one sentence. For example:

（5）   至于苏伦和弗兰克·肯尼迪的失利，她根本就不放在心上，**最多只**暗中冷冷地笑笑<u>罢了</u>。
zhi4yu2   su1lun2   he2   Fu2lan2ke4
as for   Sullen   and   Frank

Ken3ni2di2   de shi1li4, ta1 gen1ben3 jiu4
Kennedy   DE   loss she totally thus
bu2   fang4 zai4   xin1 shang4, zui4duo1
NEG   put PREP heart on   at most
zhi3   an4zhong1   leng3leng3   de
just   secretly   coldly   DE
xiao4xiao   ba4le.
sneer   BALE
'As for the loss of Sullen and Frank Kennedy, she totally put it behind her. She at most sneered secretly.'

（6） 而且她父亲常来北京，她母亲也有可能再到北京学习、进修。我们这一次分别，**仅仅不过**是为下一次会面创造条件<u>而已</u>。
er2qie3 ta1 fu4qin chang2 lai2
and she father often come
Bei3jing1, ta1 mu3qin ye3 you3
Beijing she mother also have
ke3neng2 zai4 dao4 Bei3jing1 xue2xi2,
possibility again come Beijing study
jin4xiu1. wo3men zhe4 yi2 ci4
advanced study we this one CL
fen1bie2, jin3jin3 bu2guo4 shi4 wei4
separate only merely is for
xia4yi2ci4 hui4mian4 chuang4zao4
next meet make
tiao2jian4 er2yi3.
condition ERYI
'And her father often comes to Beijing. Her mother may also come to Beijing to study. This parting is just for making a condition to union.'

In (5) and (6), two adverbs are used in one sentences: 最多 zui-duo 'at most' and 只 zhi 'just' in (5); 仅仅 jin-jin 'only' and 不过 bu-guo 'merely' in (6)

4.1 Adverbs and SFPs

Based on the analysis above, adverb is a very important part in the local proposition of SFPs *bale* and *eryi*. Of the 756 sentences analyzed, 486 sentences (64%) collocate one or more adverbs in their local propositions. Different adverbs are used collocating with different sentence-final particles.

As shown in Table 2, there are some features can be identified:

- 仅 jin 'only' is only used in the local proposition of *eryi*, and 仅仅 jin-jin 'only' tends to use in the local proposition of *eryi* (9.28% in *eryi*, while 1.43% in *bale*). 最多 zui-duo/ 顶多 ding-duo/ 至多 zhi-duo 'at most' are only used in the local proposition of *bale*.

仅 jin 'only' is an adverb in Mandarin Chinese, which means only, solely, merely and just. 仅 jin 'only' expresses limitation in (7). And the SFP *eryi* is used in the final position indicating a minimal

value---only one. So we argue that *eryi* indicates minimal value.

（7） 十字路口没有路灯，亦很少有警察，有的重要路口亦**仅**有一块"停"的牌子<u>而已</u>。
shi2zi4lu4kou3 mei2you3 lu4deng1, yi4
crossroad NEG streetlight also
hen3 shao3 you3 jing3cha2, you3de
very less have police officer some
zhong4yao4 lu4kou3 yi4 jin3 you3 yi2
important junction also only have one
kuai4 ting2 de pai2zi er2yi3.
CL STOP DE sign ERYI
'There are no streetlights at the crossroads, and there are very few police officers. Some important junctions have only one "stop" sign.'

最多 zui-duo/ 顶多 ding-duo/ 至多 zhi-duo means at most. So *bale*, collocating with 最多 zui-duo/ 顶多 ding-duo/ 至多 zhi-duo 'at most', expresses maximal value. It can be seen that maximum value performs a kind of expectation of the speaker. As in (8) and (9), *treating it as a guided principle* and *watching the sunrise* express maximal value of the speaker. As in (8), the intention of the speaker is the neglect of his response and he also told the listener treating it as a guided principle only. So *treating it as a guided principle* is the maximal value / maximal expectation.

（8） 我所草拟的答复，你不必交去，**最多**把它看作是一个指导原则<u>罢了</u>。
wo3 suo3 cao3ni3 de da2fu4, ni3 bu2
I PREP draft DE response you NEG
bi4 jiao1 qu4, zui4duo1 ba3 ta1
need hand in PREP at most BA it
kan4zuo4 shi4 yi2 ge4 zhi3dao3
treat is one CL guided
yuan2ze2 ba4le.
principle BALE
'You don't have to hand in the response that I draft. You can treat it as a guided principle at most.'

（9） 卡拉蒙漫不经心的乱瞄，心想着没啥大不了的，**顶多**就是看个日出<u>罢了</u>。
Ka3la1man4 man4bujing1xin1 de
Karaman insouciance DE

luan4   miao1, xin1 xiang3 zhe mei2
carelessly aim   heart think ZHE NEG
sha2   da4bu4liao3 de,   ding3duo1
what   a big deal   DE   at most
jiu4 shi4 kan4 ge   ri4chu1 ba4le.
thus   is   see CL   sunrise BALE
'Karaman aimed carelessly. He thought it is not a big deal. At most, it is to see the sunrise.'

Based on the analysis above, we argue that *bale* expresses maximal value while *eryi* expresses the minimal value collocating with adverbs.

- 决不是 jue-bu-shi/绝非 jue-fei/决非 jue-fei/绝不 jue-bu 'definitely not' are only used in the local proposition of *eryi*.

决不是 jue-bu-shi/绝非 jue-fei/决非 jue-fei/绝不 jue-bu means definitely not. Eryi, collocating with 决不是 jue-bu-shi/绝非 jue-fei/决非 jue-fei/绝不 jue-bu 'definitely not', contains a strong tone of subjectivity. The sentence-final particles are always used to express mood or tone. As shown in (10) and (11), *alive and still breath* and *a simple repetition of previous works* contain a strong tone of speaker's subjectivity collocating with the adverb 绝非 jue-fei 'definitely not'. The speakers want to express their own mood and tone, which may different from other people.

（10） 这块闲章，**绝非只是** "活着还有一口气" 而已。
    zhe4 kuai4 xian2 zhang1,   jue2fei1
    this   CL   free   seal definitely not
    zhi3shi4   huo2   zhe   hai2   you3
    only   alive   ZHE   still   have
    yi4   kou3   qi4   er2yi3.
    one   CL   breath   ERYI
    'This piece of free seal is not only "alive and still breath".'

（11） 江枫的译文，有他个人的特色，**绝非**是 前人劳动成果的简单重复而已。
    Jiang1feng1 de   yi4wen2,   you3 ta1
    Jiang Feng   DE   translation work have he
    ge4ren2 de   te4se4,   jue2fei1   shi4
    personal DE   style   definitely not   is
    qian2   ren2   lao2dong4 cheng2guo3
    previous people   work   achievement

de   jian3dan1   chong2fu4   er2yi3.
DE   simple   repetition   ERYI
'Jiang Feng's translation work has his own personal style. It is not a simple repetition of previous works.'

- 不过 bu-guo 'merely' may inclined to use in the local proposition of *bale* (28.57%).

As shown in Table 2, the most commonly used adverbs in our dataset is 不过 bu-guo 'merely' (28.57%) in the local proposition of *bale* and 仅 jin 'only' (29.57) in the local proposition of *eryi*. 只是 zhi-shi 'just' is the second most commonly adverbs used in both *bale* and *eryi*. 也 ye 'also' may also inclined to use in the local proposition of *bale* in our dataset (7.62%).

It can be seen that the usage of the adverbs has strong tendency. It can also be concluded that adverb is a very important part of the sentences which collocate with SFPs in the final position. And there is a close interaction between adverbs and sentence-final particles.

4.2 Position of adverbs

The position of adverbs in the local proposition of *bale* and *eryi* is also different from each other. As shown in Table 3, the adverbs in the proposition of *bale* incline to use in the initial position (see 12), while *eryi*'s tend to use in the middle of the sentence (see 13).

（12） 照王守仁的说法，"致知"就是"致良知"。 自我的修养，**不过**是遵从自己的良知而 行<u>罢了</u>。
    zhao4   Wang2shou3ren2 de shuo1fa3,
    according to Wang Shouren DE argument
    "zhi4zhi1"   jiu4 shi4 " zhi4liang2zhi1".
    know   thus   is   conscience
    zi4wo3 de   xiu1yang3, bu2guo4 shi4
    self   DE   cultivation   merely is
    zun1cong2 zi4ji3   de   liang2zhi1
    comply with   own   DE   conscience
    er2   xing2   ba4le.
    with   do   BALE
    'According to Wang Shouren's argument, "to know" is "to conscience." Self-cultivation merely complies with their own conscience to do things.'

（13） 我还没打算退休，也许这本书出版后我会被迫退休。我又在讲笑话了，我希望**仅仅**是笑话<u>而已</u>。

wo3 hai2 mei2 da3suan4 tui4xiu1, ye3xu3
I   still NEG intend   retire   maybe
zhe4 ben3 shu1 chu1ban3 hou4 wo3
this CL book publish after I
hui4 bei4po4 tui4 xiu1, wo3 you4
will be forced retire   I   also
zai4 jiang3 xiao4hua4 le, wo3
PREP talk   joke   LE I
xi1wang4 jin3jin3 shi4 xiao4hua4 er2yi3.
hope   only   is   joke   ERYI
'I have not intended to retire, and maybe I will be forced to retire after this book published. I'm talking about jokes again, and I hope it's only a joke.'

		Initial Position	Middle Position
bale	Token	141	69
	Percentage	67.14	32.86
eryi	Token	100	245
	Percentage	28.99	71.01

Table 3. The position of adverb

We find that the adverbs in the local proposition of *bale* are often used in the initial position, while there are subjects, pronouns or other kinds of constituents in the initial position of the local proposition of *eryi*.

We can conclude that the structures of the local proposition of two SFPs are:

- Adverb + clause + *bale*
- Subject / other constituent + adverb + clause + *eryi*

4.3 Polarity and SFPs

Sentence-final particles are always used to express speaker's mood and tone. Benveniste (1971) argues that language is the instrument of communication and taken over by the man who is speaking and within the condition of intersubjectivity. Therefore, people can use a lot of methods to express their mood and tone. Sentence-final particle is a very important element in Chinese to express different mood and tone. Polarity is often used to classify and detect sentiment and it can be classified to positive, negative, both and neutral (Wilson et al. 2005). In order to compare the polarity of the local proposition between *bale* and *eryi*, a polarity analysis is conducted. Firstly, we extract all the local propositions in the corpus. Then, analyze them based on the sentiment of the local proposition and context to classify them into positivity, negativity and neutrality. The analysis result shows in Table 4.

		Positive	Neutral	Negative
bale	Token	14	119	171
	Percentage	4.61	39.14	56.25
eryi	Token	2	420	30
	Percentage	0.44	92.92	6.64

Table 4. Polarity of the local proposition

It can be seen that *bale* always expresses a tone of negativity, while *eryi* always obtains a tone of neutrality. It can be seen that when people express their mood or tone, they have a strong tendency to choose different sentence-final particles. It is also a way to describe the SFPs more precisely in pragmatics. For example:

（14） 倘若硬要认定何处是"家"，不过是回到牢笼<u>罢了</u>。

tang3ruo4 ying4yao4 ren4ding4 he2chu4
if   insist   affirm   where
shi4 "jia1" bu2guo4 shi4 hui2dao4
is   home   merely is   back to
lao2long2 ba4le
cage   BALE
'If you insist that it is "home", we will just go back to the cage.'

（15） 说到这个组委会，它不是什么体育组织，仅仅是赤柱居民联谊会<u>而已</u>。

shuo1dao4 zhe4 ge4 zu3wei3hui4,
speaking of this CL committee
ta1 bu2 shi4 shen2me ti3yu4
it NEG is   what   sports
zu3zhi1, jin3jin3 shi4 Chi4zhu4
organization only is Stanley
ju1min2 lian2yi2hui4 er2yi3.
resident association ERYI
'Speaking of this committee, it is not a sports organization, but only the Stanley Resident Association.'

In (14), the local proposition has a strong tone of negativity. *We will just back to the cage* express the speaker's sentiment is negative. The key word is 牢笼 lao-long 'cage'. While (15) just expresses that it is a kind of tone of neutrality. *But just the Stanley Resident Association* doesn't contain any sentiment in the context. Based on the analysis above, we argue that polarity can also become a feature to define the usage of *bale* and *eryi*.

5 Conclusion

This paper explores the differences between two disyllabic sentence-final particles in Mandarin Chinese *bale* and *eryi* based on a corpus-based approach. We argue that there is a close interaction between adverbs and sentence-final particles. Firstly, the usage of adverbs in the local proposition of two different SFPs has a strong tendency. 不过 *buguo* 'merely' may incline to use in the local proposition of *bale* (28.57%). 只是 zhi-shi 'just' is the second most commonly adverbs in the local proposition of both *bale* and *eryi*. 仅 jin 'only' is only used in the local proposition of *eryi*, and 仅仅 jin-jin 'only' tends to use in the local propositions of *eryi*. 最多 zui-duo/顶多 ding-duo/至多 zhi-duo 'at most' are only used in the local propositions of *bale*, while 决不是 jue-bu-shi/绝非 jue-fei/决非 jue-fei/绝不 jue-bu are only used in the local propositions of *eryi*. *Bale* expresses maximal value while *eryi* expresses the minimal value collocating with different adverbs. Moreover, the position of the adverbs also presents a tendency: the adverbs in the local proposition of *bale* are always used in the initial position, while *eryi* in the middle position. In addition, the polarity of the local propositions of two SFPs are also different: the local proposition of *bale* tends to express negativity, while the local proposition of *eryi* obtains a tone of neutrality. We believe that this study will significantly enhance the research on sentence-final particles and second language teaching.

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Appendix A. The questionnaire of the agreement test

序号	句子	罢了	而已	罢了/而已
1	卢梭一生清贫，但他的清贫和我们当时的清贫之间有着一个本质的区别：我们是物质匮乏，迫不得已；而卢梭则是自愿贫困。无衣可穿时打补丁称不上朴素，不过是不折不扣地穷____。			
2	世上的毒大致可分两种,一种是草木之毒,一种是蛇虫之毒,能自草木中提炼毒药的人较多,能提取蛇虫之毒的人较少,能以蛇虫杀人于无形的, 普天之下,也只不过仅有一两人_____。			
3	这(活动宫殿)在当时可算是一种发明，可惜只是供隋炀帝一个人享乐_____。			
4	现在我不能不实说，我确实没听魏元忠说过反对陛下的话，只是张昌宗逼我做伪证_____。			
5	(女足门票)说是卖出去了 10 万张票，但除了瑞典队比赛外，其余各场观众寥寥，仅数百人_____。			
6	真是出乎人意料，小王可是大型企业的 CEO，原来年薪也只不过 10 万____。			
7	的确有人把范文搬到考场上得了高分，但那毕竟是少数幸运儿____。			
8	七巧就在兰仙的椅子上坐下了，一手托着腮，抬高了眉毛，斜睒着季泽道："她跟我生了气么？"季泽笑道："她干嘛生你的气？"七巧道："我正要问呀！我难道说错了话不成？留你在家倒不好？她倒愿意你上外头逛去？"季泽笑道："这一家子从大哥大嫂起，齐了心管教我，无非是怕我花了公帐上的钱_____。"			
9	说话间，200 余名旅客已通过了海关，时间不过 30 分钟。被开箱检查的仅一两人____。			
10	"不。不能算是家。不如说来做客_____。老人家照顾不了我。"			
11	但几千年婚姻专制的中国，两性的结合，几乎完全由于"父母之命"、"媒妁 之言"，买卖包办或强迫_____。			
12	在上万种新药中，经临床筛选能脱颖而出的仅一两种_____。			
13	在不少科研单位，工学博士的研究课题一般在本人毕业后 3--4 年也未能变成产品，有的甚至永远只是一篇文章_____。			
14	《大公报》的一篇专栏文章指出,为了提高选民登记率，港英当局花费了大量纳税人的金钱，而登记率仅在 10%至 30%_____。			
15	光绪进了宫，什么也不懂，一切全听凭慈禧和慈安的摆布。慈安又作不了多大的主，她只是听从慈禧的旨意_____。			
16	遗憾的是，日本人的说话能力几乎为零。话题空洞、毫无事前准备、缺乏服务精神以及广泛的社交性，顶多只能和自己的亲朋好友谈谈家务_____。			