Formation of a Modern Chinese clause-taking conjecturing huaiyi predicate:
A parenthetical perspective and a conjoining account

Abstract: Modern Chinese clause-taking conjecturing huaiyi is a predicate that is mostly used in third person contexts (e.g. Renmen huaiyi zheming taoyi de jingchahen keneng canyu le zheqi anjian. ‘People conjecture that the escaped policeman had probably been involved in the case.’) is actually a parenthetical structure. Diachronically, it does not develop from an NP-taking huaiyi predicate (e.g. Wo hen huaiyi zhe ge shuofa. ‘I doubt the statement a lot.’) or a clause-taking doubting huaiyi predicate (e.g. Du Yifu changchang huaiyi ta yuerzi you nazhong ge’ermen yiqi de shiguang. ‘Du Yifu often doubted that he had had times of buddy loyalty with his son.’), but develops from a prosodically-separated conjecturing huaiyi predicate (e.g. Renmen huaiyi, zheming taoyi de jingcha hen keneng canyu le zheqi anjian. ‘People conjecture, the escaped policeman had probably been involved in the case.’). The goals of this talk is to show that its formation has not followed a commonly-accepted Matrix Clause Pathway, which argues that a parenthetical clause-taking predicate develops from a corresponding matrix clause structure. Instead it has followed a hypothesized Conjoining Pathway that essentially involves the loss of phonetic gap between a prosodically-separated huaiyi predicate and the clause that it takes, and that the hypothesized pathway has cross-linguistic significance.