

Chapter 6

Implications and applications

[Myers, J. \(May 2019\). *The grammar of Chinese characters: Productive knowledge of formal patterns in an orthographic system*. London: Routledge.](#)

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Abstract

This final chapter starts by asking where character grammar might come from: the uniquely Chinese linguistic and social context, general physiological and cognitive constraints, a species-specific capacity for grammar, and/or universal laws of organization. It then turns to possible ways in which the study of character grammar might actually have practical use. Teachers of young readers and writers who are first-language speakers of Chinese may benefit from seeing children as natural language learners, even for orthographic systems, suggesting a role for more creative self-exploration. Teachers of second-language learners of Chinese may take advantage of the greater metalinguistic skills of adults by having students try to discover some of this book's character grammar generalizations on their own. Clinical linguists may be able to use the notion of character grammar to bring greater specificity to their diagnoses and interventions, perhaps exploring the possibility that developmental dyslexia may result from delays in character grammar, while adult-acquired dyslexia may result from other parts of the system. Computational linguists may be able to ground the inevitable hard-wired aspects of their systems on a firmer empirical basis by studying constraints on how actual people learn and represent character knowledge.