What is a word in Chinese?

Word is a cornerstone notion in linguistics that is taken for granted by most speakers and learners and even by many linguists. But what a word is in Chinese remains a notorious unsolved problem in word recognition practice, by both human and machine, disregard the availability of well-formed word definition and related linguistic principles (such as lexical integrity hypothesis) as theoretical basis and several word segmentation standards (including national and international) for engineering purposes. There are a large number of controversial cases, e.g., “separable” words. This talk intends to give an overview of the problem with examples and offer some thinking towards possible solutions.

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