

行政院國家科學委員會專題研究計劃成果報告

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* 國語得字句之結構及其含蘊意義 *
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1. 中文摘要

國語得字句為漢語句法學一重要研究課題。依其意義之不同，又可區分為狀語得字句與結果得字句。一般皆認為（如 Huang (1988)）這兩種得字句具有相似的詞組結構，因此討論其句法表現之相似與相異處的研究並不多。本研究延續 Li and Ting (1997) 的研究，對此假設提出質疑，進而對此兩種得字句之詞組結構及衍生方式提出合理分析。本研究指出表結果之 V-得 為一複合詞，在詞匯 (lexicon) 中衍生，而表狀語之 V-得 則在句法部門衍生。本計劃成果有助於漢語語言學之研究，也提供吾人對一般語言學理論機制有更進一步的了解：解釋語言現象時，表面且直接的解釋應優於抽象且深層的解釋。

關鍵詞：國語得字句，詞組結構，複合詞

Abstract

One of the topics that have been substantially studied in Mandarin Chinese syntax is the phrase structure of sentences involving a *V-de* sequence. Depending on the construal of the sequence introduced by *de*, two types of constructions are distinguished: manner *V-de* and resultative *V-de* sentences. It has been assumed (for example, Huang (1988), among others) that these two types of *V-de* constructions are derived in a similar fashion and not much work has been devoted to comparing their syntactic behavior. In this project we pursue an analysis that best accounts for the syntactic behavior of these two *V-de* constructions. We argue that resultative

V-de is a compound formed in the lexicon but that manner *V-de* is a morphological complex formed in the syntax. The results of this study not only benefit the research of Chinese linguistics, but also have non-trivial implications for the linguistic theory in general: it is not automatically justified that a linguistic fact is the result of some well-hidden underlying principles; some rather complex phenomena can have very “superficial” explanations.

Keywords: the *V-de* construction, Chinese phrase structure, compound

2. Introduction

In generative grammar, much effort has been devoted to discovering the underlying mechanisms that determine the behaviors of languages. The success of this approach has created the general tendency to seek “deep” explanations for any given data. Reanalyzing a phenomenon we investigated before in Li and Ting (1997), this project argues for the opposite: that it is not automatically justified that a linguistic fact is the result of some well-hidden underlying principles; some rather complex phenomena can have very “superficial” explanations. This conclusion comes from our investigation of the manner *V-de* and resultative *V-de* constructions. The explanation of their structural properties will be argued to be based on the types of compounds permitted in Chinese, a factor straightforward and “superficial”.

3. Basic facts of the two types of *V-de*

constructions

Sentences involving a manner *V-de* and a resultative *V-de* are those like (1) and (2), respectively.

(1) 我走得很快

(2) 我走得氣喘吁吁

Each of these sentences has two predicates, referred to as V1 and V2. In (1), V1 is the action verb *zou* 'walk' and V2 is the adjective or stative verb *knai* 'fast'. In (2),

V1 is *zou* 'walk' and V2 is *qichuan* 'pant'.

Furthermore, the particle *de* is phonologically attached to the preceding verb. It has been argued convincingly by Huang (1988), among others (see Mei 1972, 1978, Paris 1979, Zhu 1982, Huang 1982, Ross 1984, and A. Li 1985) that V1 is the main predicate and V2 is the secondary predicate in these *V-de* sentences. Depending on the construal of the sequence introduced by *de*, two types of *V-de* constructions are distinguished. Sentences like (1) are traditionally referred to as descriptive complement constructions, and those like (2) as resultative complement constructions. Adopting Huang's proposal that V1, but not V2, in the *V-de* sentences is the main predicate, the sequence introduced by *de* then has an adverbial construal. This type of *V-de* construction will thus be referred to as manner *V-de* sentences henceforth.

There are similarities between manner *V-de* and resultative *V-de* constructions, as pointed out by Tom Ernst (p.c.).

First, both *V-de* constructions refuse to co-occur with a CP complement, as illustrated in (3) and (4). This contrast shows that while the manner *V-de* does not occur with the object NP of the matrix verb, the resultative *V-de* does. But when the complement is not a NP, but a CP, even the resultative *V-de* does not occur with it.

(3) 我說得【他不能來了】很快

(4) *我說得【他不會喝酒】家喻戶曉

Second, the constituent "introduced" by *de* (referred to as the post-*de* XP) functions like a complement in both

constructions. This is shown by the fact that movement out of this post-*de* XP in the relative clause context creates no detectable deterioration, as illustrated in (5) and (6).

(5) ?我跑得【快到超過了那個冠軍】

(6) ?我跑得【快到超過了 t】的冠軍

(7) 我氣得【一拳打碎了那扇窗戶】

(8) 我氣得【一拳打碎了 t】的窗戶

Relativization involves A'-movement, which is known to be able to take place out of complement clauses, but not islands, such as adjunct clauses. This is illustrated by the contrast between (9a) and (9b). The well-formedness of relativization out of the post-verbal XP in both manner *V-de* and resultative *V-de* thus suggests that it is a complement in both types of *V-de* constructions.

(9) a. 李四認為[張三批評 t₁]的那個人₁

b. *李四[在張三批評 t₁]的時候很生氣的那個人₁

These two similarities between manner *V-de* and resultative *V-de* constructions observed by Ernst can be further supported by the fact that the two *V-de* constructions exclude each other. This is evidenced by the impossibility to merge (1) and (2), as shown by the ill-formedness of (10a) and (10b).

(10) a. *我走得很快氣喘吁吁

b. *我走得氣喘吁吁很快

There is one significant difference between the two types of *V-de* constructions, though: only the resultative *V-de* permits the object NP of the matrix verb to occur postverbally, as shown by the contrast between (11) and (12).

(11) *我打得籃球很好

(12) 我氣得他吐血

3. Analysis

We now discuss the structures of these two types of *V-de* constructions. We will start with the resultative *V-de* construction. Huang (1992) proposes that resultative *V-de* sentences such as 張三哭得李四很傷心 involve complex

predicates. On this analysis, V selects and **theta-marks** the result clause (as Result or Goal), and the **V'-compositionally** selects and theta-marks the NP *Lisi* (as Patient or Theme), and the VP, in turn, **compositionally** theta-marks the subject NP *Zhangsan* (as Agent). Thus, the NP *Lisi* is not the subject of the result clause, but the object of a complex predicate containing the matrix verb and the predicate of the result clause. The empty subject in the result clause is construed by the generalized control rule as represented in (13).

(13) The Generalized Control Rule (GCR):

An empty pronominal (PRO or pro) is **coindexed** with the closest potential antecedent. (Otherwise, an empty pronominal is assigned the index **arb** for arbitrary reference.)

The closest potential antecedent for the pro subject in the result clause in (12) is the NP *Lisi* and thus by the GCR, *Lisi* is construed as the agent of crying. This analysis of **Huang** treats all **resultative** sentences in the same fashion, irrespective of the predicate type of the main clause. In contrast, **the two types of resultatives must be distinguished**, depending on the transitivity of the matrix predicate. Under this view, an intransitive V takes a clausal complement, whereas a transitive V takes two complements: one is a NP and the other is a clause. Arguments for this distinction are based on the following contrasts: First, question words may be fronted after an intransitive *V-de*, but not a transitive *V-de*.

(14) a. *悠悠誇得什麼事桃桃都不想做

b. 悠悠哭得什麼事桃桃都不想做

Second, depending on the transitivity of the first verb in a *V-de* sentence, *ya*-insertion right after the *V-de* cluster produces different degrees of acceptability:

(15) a. 悠悠哭得呀，桃桃都不想做事了

b. *悠悠誇得呀，桃桃都不想做事

了

Again, the contrast is expected if *Taotao* is the subject of the second verb in (15a) but the object of the first verb in (15b). In (15a), *ya* separates the first verb and a clause whereas in (15b) it separates the verb from its object NP.

Third, a transitive *V-de* sentence allows two overt NPs to occur before the second verb, but an intransitive *V-de* sentence does not, as illustrated in (16).

(16) a. 他打得張三[連李四都出面干預了]

b. *他哭得[張三連李四都出面干預了]

All these contrasts are expected if the NP following a transitive *V-de* is its object, but the NP following an intransitive *V-de* is the subject of the second verb. In the former case, we assume, following **Huang** (1988), that there is a pro as the subject of the second verb which is **coindexed** with the object of the first verb. Consider the structures in (17a/b/c), for instance. The empty subject pro is bound by the closest **c-commanding** antecedent under **Huang's** Generalized Control.

(17)a. 張三哭得[pro 很傷心]

b. 張三哭得[李四很傷心]

c. 張三誇得李四[pro 不好意思]

With respect to the phrasal status of the manner *V-de* complement, A. Li (1990) suggests it to be an AP. Huang (1988), on the other hand, is not clear about whether this complement contains a pro. But if the formation of A-not-A questions depends on I (see Huang (1988)), then the possibility of having A-not-A questions in the manner *V-de* complement suggests that it is a clause requiring an empty subject. Then, sentences like (1) should have a structure in (18).

(18) 我走得[pro 很快]

With the forgoing discussion in mind, let's now turn to the explanation of their structural similarities and asymmetry between the manner *V-de* and resultative *V-de* constructions. We would like to

propose that resultative *V-de* is a compound verb formed in the lexicon, while manner *V-de* is a complex verb formed in the lexicon. *De* in both instances introduce a complement clause, resultative or adverbial. The similarities shared by the two *V-de* constructions thus follow from the complement status of the clause introduced by *de*. Their asymmetry, on the other hand, follows from where they are derived. Chinese allows resultative compounds (see Y. Li (1990 and subsequent works)). Resultative *V-de* is simply such a compound with *de* as the second morpheme. A resultative compound allows its object to occur postverbally, as in (19).

(19) 張三打哭了李四

In a similar fashion, the resultative *V-de* also allows its object to occur as in (12). As pointed out by Huang (1988, p. 275), the particle *de* "...has been historically derived from the verb *de* 'obtain'." Phonologically, *de* is attached to the preceding verb, either as a suffix or a clitic, depending on one's theory." Due to the fact that resultative *V-de* allows postverbal object, on a par with regular VV compounds, we suggest *de* compounds with another verb in the lexicon. T.-C. Tang (1999) also suggests *V-de* is a complex verb in Mandarin, noting many cases in which verbs in Mandarin combine with *de* to form a complex verb and subcategorize for NP (e.g. 認得, 記得, 懂得), AP (e.g. 顯得, 變得, 覺得), VP (e.g. 懶得, 捨不得), S' (e.g. 曉得, 省得, 免得, 值得, 覺得), or NP + S' (e.g. 使得). Our analysis differs from his in that manner *V-de* is also a lexical verb for him (ibid, p. 64), but we argue that it is a complex verb formed in the syntax, rather than in the lexicon. Chinese does not allow V-V compounds with the second V interpreted as adverbial. Thus, there is 靜坐, but not *坐靜. So *V-de* is not possible if *de* corresponds to an adverbial. But *de* is a

bound morpheme looking for V as host. For example, Jane Tang (1990) claims that *de* is a clitic in Mandarin. The only solution is for *de* to be linearly next to V to form a constituent and the NP is an "outsider". Hence the ungrammatical (11). An immediate advantage of this analysis is that if *de* has different functions, it may correspond to different morphemes. T.-C. Tang, in his comparison between *V-de* constructions in Mandarin and their Southern Min counterparts, also suggests (ibid. p. 98) that 甲 is used to introduce resultative constructions only. This analysis also accounts for why (20) is not allowed in Mandarin.

(20) *我哭累得很傷心

On our analysis, the ill-formed (20) contains a three-morpheme compound, thus not allowed. As for why a regular VV compound may occur with the aspect marker *-le*, but the resultative *V-de* cannot, we adopt T.-C. Tang's (ibid. p. 105) suggestion that the combination of a verb with *de* changes the verb into an achievement verb.

There is one problem concerning likening *V-de* in (12) to a resultative compound in (21).

(21) 我氣忘了他該按時吃飯

is interpretable only when 他 is the subject of 吃飯 and not the object of 氣, indicating that resultative compounds generally reject two postverbal arguments. Then why is *V-de* in (12) followed by the object of V and the clause 吐血? We suggest the following account. If 他 were the object of 氣 in (21), there would be two V-object thematic links in (21). 氣 to 他 and 忘 to CP. Linearly the two thematic links interfere with each other, with 忘 between 氣 and 他, and 他 between 忘 and CP (cf. Pesetsky's Chain Containment). (12) differs from (21) because 得, unlike 忘, is not a lexical verb and is incapable of assigning theta-roles. So the link between 氣 and 他 is still thematic, but the one between

得 and the clause is not. And it is well known that different types of relations don't interfere with each other.

5. Conclusion and self-evaluation

In this project, we have collected the basic facts of the V-*de* constructions in Mandarin Chinese and have provided a proper analysis of them. This analysis has explained the similarities and contrasts exhibited in the different V-*de* constructions, shedding light on understanding the mechanism of principles in Universal Grammar. Given these reasons, we consider the primary goals expected in this project have been achieved.

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