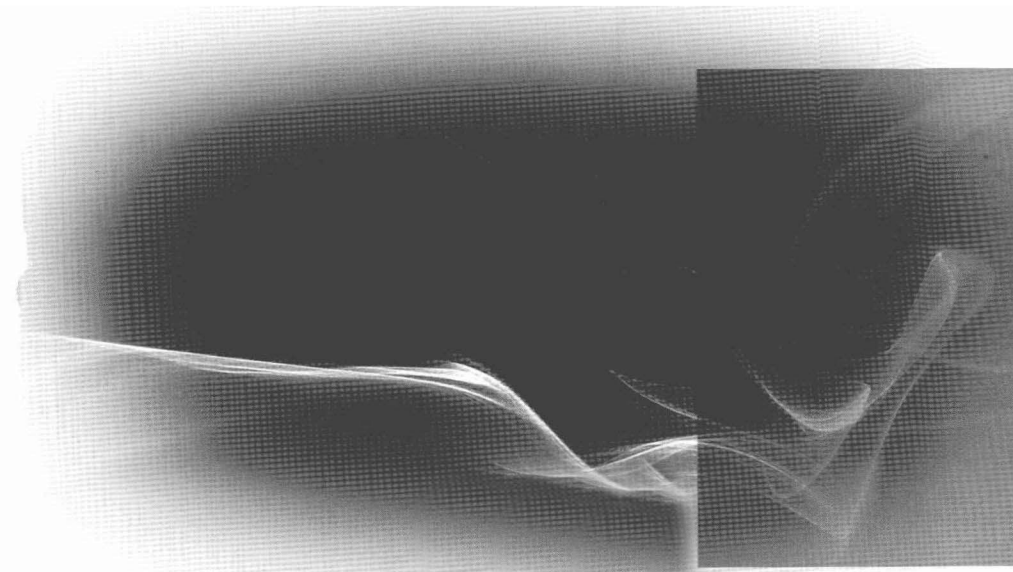
A Cognitive Approach to Serial Verb Constructions in Mandarin Chinese

以认知理论进行汉语连动式结构的研究

印 辉／著

厦门大学出版社 XIAMEN UNIVERSITY PRESS
国家一级出版社
全国百佳图书出版单位



以认知理论进行汉语连动式结构的研究

A Cognitive Approach to
Serial Verb Constructions in Mandarin Chinese

印辉 著

安徽大学图书馆
藏书
www.lib.ahu.edu.cn

厦门大学出版社
XIAMEN UNIVERSITY PRESS
国家一级出版社
全国百佳图书出版单位

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

以认知理论进行汉语连动式结构的研究/印辉著. —厦门:厦门大学出版社,2012.12
ISBN 978-7-5615-4527-0

Ⅰ.①以… Ⅱ.①印… Ⅲ.①汉语-复杂谓语-语法结构-研究
Ⅳ.①H146.3

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2012)第 316104 号

厦门大学出版社出版发行
(地址:厦门市软件园二期望海路 39 号 邮编:361008)
http://www.xmupress.com
xmup @ xmupress.com
厦门市明亮彩印有限公司印刷
2012 年 12 月第 1 版 2012 年 12 月第 1 次印刷
开本:889×1194 1/32 印张:6 插页:2
字数:200 千字 印数:1～1 000 册
定价:26.00 元
本书如有印装质量问题请直接寄承印厂调换

[基金项目]

本书为厦门理工学院社会科学研究项目(YSK11005R)研究成果,并获该项目经费资助

Abstract

This study aims at solving a long-standing problem in Mandarin linguistics, namely how to categorize and understand the plethora of constructions that have been called SVCs (Serial Verb Constructions) at one time or another. This study examines features which differentiate them from typical cases of coordination, subordination. It demonstrates that the main differences between SVCs and non-SVCs lie in their different profiles. My classification for an SVC is based on the three iconically based semantic principles: **temporal sequence** and **scope**, **shared participants**, and **situational dependence**. Grounded on these three principles, seven morphosyntactic and prosodic tests have been proposed to apply to five constructions which consist of more than one verb. The seven operational iconic/semantic tests allow us to capture common features of SVCs in Mandarin Chinese. Mandarin SVCs reflect cognitive packaging, that is, an SVC denotes a unitary complex event and reflects event conflation of two or more sub-events. The five constructions reflect degrees of serialization or a continuum of event conflation in Mandarin. In this study, two experiments were designed to explore the phenomenon of event autonomy or event conflation of the five [V (N) V ...] types and the effects of construal on the interpretation of different constructions. The findings in the experiments suggest that Mandarin speakers are sensitive to sentences exhibiting different degrees of event conflation. The results in the experiments indicate that event conflation really turned out to be a graded rather than a discrete phenomenon. The phenomena of Mandarin SVCs provide evidence for a kind of iconicity operating in the coding of multi-verb structures.

此为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertongbook.com

This study explores the Lancaster Corpus of Mandarin Chinese for multi-verb constructions (MVCs) containing two or more verbs in a sequence. The corpus results indicate that there is a delicate interaction between lexical items and the construction types they enter into. Certain verbs are easily attracted to a particular construction or even a particular verb position. The results also suggest that there are degrees of freedom and fixedness in the collocating verbs associated with different multi-verb constructions.

By providing a fine-grained analysis of a central feature of Mandarin grammar this research not only provides insight into Chinese linguistics, but also advances the discussion of the graded phenomenon in language. The experimental components show the relevance of perspective or construal on the interpretation of language and the effects of conceptualization on grammatical structures. Thus, this study supports central claims in cognitive linguistics and provides an empirically valid account for the connection between language and cognition.

List of Abbreviations

PERF: perfective
PROG: progressive
EXP: experiential
LOC: locative
PRES: present
CL: classifier
1SG: first person singular
1PL: first person plural
2SG: second person singular
3SG: third person singular
3SGF: third person singular female
3SGM: third person singular male
PL: plural
PRT: particle
NEG: negation
INJ: interjection
POSS: possessive
BA: object marker in the *ba*-construction
BEI: passive marker in the *bei*-construction
OBJ: object marker
RC: relative clause marker
ASP: aspectual marker

Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction ····· 1
Chapter 2 Past Treatments of Serial Verb Constructions ····· 4
2.1 Past Approaches to SVCs ····· 4
2.1.1 Christaller (1875) ····· 4
2.1.2 Westermann (1930) ····· 6
2.1.3 Stewart (1963) ····· 7
2.1.4 Bamgbose (1974) ····· 9
2.1.5 Baker (1989) ····· 11
2.1.6 Agbedor (1994) ····· 13
2.1.7 Aikhenvald (2006) ····· 17
2.2 Past Approaches to Chinese SVCs ····· 21
2.2.1 Chao (1968) ····· 21
2.2.2 Li and Thompson (1981) ····· 23
2.2.3 Dai (1990) ····· 24
2.2.4 Paul (2004) ····· 27
2.3 Discussion ····· 31

Chapter 3 Basic Tenets of Cognitive Grammar ····· 32
3.1 Assumptions of Cognitive Grammar ····· 32
3.2 Symbolization ····· 34
3.3 Construction and Composition ····· 36
3.4 Base vs. Profile ····· 38
3.5 Construal ····· 39
3.6 Perspective ····· 40
3.7 Action Chain ····· 42

3.8 Lexicon and Syntax ····· 42
3.9 Schematic Representation of a Transitive Event ····· 44
Chapter 4 The Present Analysis ····· 45
4.1 Three Iconically Based Semantic Principles ····· 45
4.1.1 Principle of Temporal Sequence and Scope ····· 46
4.1.2 Principle of Shared Participants ····· 48
4.1.3 Principle of Situational Dependence ····· 48
4.2 Conceptual Event ····· 49
4.3 Laying Out the Event Conflation Continuum ····· 53
4.4 Event Structure of Coordination, Subordination, and SVCs ·····
····· 54
4.5 Morphosyntactic and Prosodic Tests of Event Conflation ····· 57

Chapter 5 The Five Constructions and the Seven Tests ····· 62
5.1 Coordinate Constructions ····· 62
5.1.1 Schematic Representation ····· 62
5.1.2 Application of Tests ····· 63
5.1.3 Discussion ····· 64
5.2 Complement Constructions ····· 65
5.2.1 Schematic Representation ····· 65
5.2.2 Application of Tests ····· 68
5.2.3 Discussion ····· 70
5.3 Purposive Constructions ····· 70
5.3.1 Purposive Complements or Separate Clauses ····· 70
5.3.2 The Three Principles Reflected in Purposive SVCs ····· 72
5.3.3 Schematic Representation ····· 75
5.3.4 Application of the Tests ····· 75
5.3.5 Discussion ····· 77
5.4 Double-headed or Shared Object Constructions ····· 78
5.4.1 The Three Principles Reflected in Double-headed Constructions ··· 79
5.4.2 Schematic Representation ····· 80

5.4.3 Application of Tests ····· 82
5.4.4 Discussion ····· 83
5.5 The So-called VV Compounds—A Continuum Between Lexicon and syntax ····· 84
5.5.1 Parallel VV Compounds ····· 84
5.5.2 Phase VV Compounds ····· 85
5.5.3 Resultative VV Compounds ····· 87
5.5.4 Directional VV Compounds ····· 89
5.6 VV Compounds as SVCs ····· 93
5.6.1 SVCs with Complements of Result ····· 94
5.6.2 SVCs with Complements of Direction ····· 99
5.6.3 Schematic Representation ····· 104
5.6.4 Application of Tests ····· 104
5.7 Discussion ····· 106

Chapter 6 Coverb Constructions ····· 111
6.1 Traditional Criteria ····· 112
6.2 Problematic Criteria ····· 112
6.3 Verbhood Tests ····· 115
6.4 Present Analysis ····· 116
6.4.1 Coverbs—A Continuum ····· 116
6.4.2 Entities Undergoing Process ····· 118
6.5 Metaphorical and Functional Extensions ····· 118
6.5.1 Na 'take' — Instrumental and Topic Marker ····· 119
6.5.2 Ba — Object Marker ····· 120
6.5.3 Gei (give) — Recipient Marker and Benefactive Use ····· 120
6.6 Differences between SVCs and CoVCs ····· 121

Chapter 7 Psycholinguistic Experiments ····· 124
7.1 Experiment One ····· 124
7.2 Experiment Two ····· 126

Chapter 8 The Association of Multi-Verb Constructions with Verbs …… 128
8.1 Coordinate Construction …… 129
8.2 Complement Construction …… 132
8.3 Purposive Construction …… 139
8.4 Shared Object Construction …… 145
8.5 Compound Construction …… 147
8.5.1 Contiguous Compounds Containing *Lai* 'Come' and *Qu* 'Go' … 150
8.5.2 Contiguous Compounds Containing Motion Verbs other than *Lai* and *Qu* …… 157
Chapter 9 Conclusions …… 161

Bibliography …… 164

此为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertongbook.com

Chapter One

Introduction

Mandarin Chinese is classified as an isolating and non-inflecting language. What English achieves by changing verb forms is expressed in Mandarin Chinese by means of additional adverbs, other independent morphemes, etc. For example, in Mandarin *lai* 'come' remains the same morphologically no matter when the action happened or happens or will happen since Mandarin does not inflect its verbs for tenses (Lin 2001). In syntax, Mandarin has very few overt morphosyntactic expressions of tense or aspect and has no subject-verb agreement, in contrast to inflectional languages. The lack of affixational morphology and syntactic markers in Chinese often makes a string of words highly ambiguous syntactically and, thus, a Mandarin expression with two or more verbs in a sequence could be associated with more than one construction type. For example, a multi-verb sequence in Mandarin could be analyzed as coordination (not unlike the English expression *eat* [and] *drink*), subordination (as in the English *I want* [to] *go*), or causation (such as *I made him leave*). A "multi-verb expression" is understood as a sequence of verbs (with a shared or omitted participant) in an expression without any syntactic marking to indicate what the relation is between the verbs.

Serial verb constructions (SVCs) are prevalent in Mandarin Chinese and deserve more investigation than they have thus far received. In the past, different linguists have given different classifications to multi-verb expressions with shared subjects. The string [NP V (NP) V ...] is at

least 5-way ambiguous in Mandarin (with the optional inter-verbal NP functioning either as matrix DO or embedded SUBJ), as shown in the following labeled examples:

(1) COORDINATED CLAUSE CONSTRUCTION

Ta *meitian* ***duanlain*** (*ta*) (*meitian*) ***xuexi*** *yingyu.*
3SG everyday **exercise** (3SG) (everyday) **study** English
'S/he exercises and studies English everyday.'

(2) CLAUSAL COMPLEMENT CONSTRUCTION

Ta ***chengren*** (*ta*) ***zuo*** *cuo* *le.*
3SG **confess** (3SG) **do** wrong ASP
'S/he confessed that s/he had done something wrong.'

(3) PURPOSIVE COMPLEMENT CONSTRUCTION

Ta ***mai*** *piao* ***kan*** *dianying.*
3SG **buy** ticket **see** film
'S/he bought a ticket to see a film.'

(4) DOUBLE-HEADED/SHARED OBJECT CONSTRUCTION

Ta ***zhong*** *cai* ***mai.***
3SG **plant** vegetable **sell**
'S/he planted vegetables to sell.'

(5) VV COMPOUND CONSTRUCTION

Ta ***tui*** ***dao*** *le* *wo.*
3SG **push** **fall** ASP I
'S/he pushed me down.'

Each of the constructions in (1) to (5) has been labeled an SVC at one time or another. As is apparent, there are no agreed-upon criteria for either what is or is not an SVC or for sub-classifications within the SVC category as a whole. Previous analyses have fallen short mainly because they either are based on syntactic criteria which are overtly exclusive or fail to explain why verb serialization is so robust in Mandarin. The aim of this study is to integrate past examples and provide an operative and unified account for what is and what is not an SVC in Mandarin. It will

be demonstrated that this aim can be achieved through the present analysis which takes a cognitive/functional perspective. Based on such an approach, SVCs will be characterized as follows. SVCs refer to two or more events which exhibit some degree of semantic interdependence — a purposive or causal relationship. They involve the integration of two or more events into one macro event or they are understood to be related as parts (or phases) of one overall event. These events are denoted by two or more verbal phrases without any syntactic marker between them. The more interdependence or integrated the two events, the better an SVC. As expected, the classification in this study is based on a set of iconically based semantic principles, which can characterize all true SVCs in Mandarin Chinese.

Chapter Two

Past Treatments of Serial Verb Constructions

In this chapter, I will first survey past treatments of verb serialization in general, and then I will discuss past approaches to Chinese SVCs in particular. After the literature of serial verb constructions has been reviewed, it will become apparent that there is little consensus about what is or is not an SVC.

2.1 *Past Approaches to SVCs*

The phenomenon of serialized verbs was first described more than a hundred years ago by Christaller (1875). However, extensive and intensive formal syntactic research began to be conducted only after the publication of Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures* in the late 1950s (Stewart 2001). Since then, various approaches to SVCs have been adopted to account for the phenomenon. Nevertheless, Stewart (2001: 3) claims that after "over one century of grammatical analysis the SVC is still an ill-defined and often misinterpreted phenomenon". The following are representative studies that have dealt with the phenomenon of SVCs.

2.1.1 *Christaller* (1875)

Christaller (1875) was the first known scholar to have studied SVCs from a grammatical perspective. In his book, *A Grammar of the Asante and Fante Language called Tshi*, he states that it is possible for two or more verbs, which are not connected by conjunctions, to have the same

subject in a Twi (Tshi) sentence. He distinguishes two basic types of verb combinations: essential combinations and accidental combinations.

By essential combinations, he refers to a construction in which one verb is principal and the other verb is an auxiliary verb which supplies an adverb of time or manner, or forms a complement or adjunct. The second verb is generally a supplemental verb which forms a part of a larger verbal phrase (Christaller 1875). The actions expressed by the two verbs are simultaneous and the two are in an internal or inseparable relation or connection. In these cases, the auxiliary or supplemental verb is coordinate only in form, but subordinate in sense, as in the following examples:

(6) a. *Oguare* *baa* *mpoano.*
he. swim. PAST come. PAST shore
'He swam to the shore.' (Christaller 1875: 144)

b. *Oyɛ* adwuma man ne nan.
he. do. PRES *work* *give. PRES* *his* *mother*
'He works for his mother.' (*Christaller* 1875: 144)

As for accidental combinations, Christaller (1875: 143-4) *indicates that two or more predicates* (*verbs with or without complements or adjuncts*) *which express different successive actions or denote a state simultaneous with another state or action happen to have the same subject and are merely joined together without conjunction. In accidental combinations, two or more sentences are contracted into one and the two verbs are coordinate in sense as well as in form, as exemplified in* (7) (*cf. Sebba* 1987):

(7) *a.* Osoree guaree srae.
he. arise. PAST *wash. PAST* *anoint. PAST*
'He arose, washed (and) anointed himself.'
(*Christaller* 1875: 144)

b. Yesoree ntem koo ofie.
we. arise. PAST *quick* *go. PAST* *home*

'We arose quickly (and) went home.'

(*Christaller* 1875: 144)

Obviously, Christaller's analysis of SVCs is consonant with the traditional classification of verb combinations, which claims that the relationship of verb combinations is either one of coordination or subordination. His accidental combinations of verbs are commonly referred to by other linguists as "coordinate SVCs" while essential combinations of verbs as "subordinate SVCs". Interestingly, Christaller implies that two or more sentences underlie a coordinate SVC. Chen (1993) *claims that this view still holds in the modern linguistic literature.*

2.1.2 *Westermann* (1930)

Another linguist who provides detailed descriptions of SVCs in West African languages is Westermann (1930). *In his study of the Ewe language, he does not classify SVCs into either coordinate constructions or subordinate constructions as Christaller does. He states that a row of verbs often occur one after another. The main features of such verb sequences are that all the verbs stand next to each other without being connected, that all have the same tense or mood, and that in the event of their having a common subject and object, these surface near the first verb while the others remain bare. In case a conjunction should stand between the two verbs, the subject and object must be repeated. It seems to Westermann that the sentence in* (8*a*) *is a case of an SVC, but that the one in* (8*b*) *is not, since* (8*b*) *features a conjunction between the two verbs.*

(8) *a.* etsɔa îu.
he. took. it ate
'He took it (and) ate it. (*Chen* 1993: 4)

b. etsɔa eye wo îui.
he. took. it and he. ate. it

此为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertongbook.com