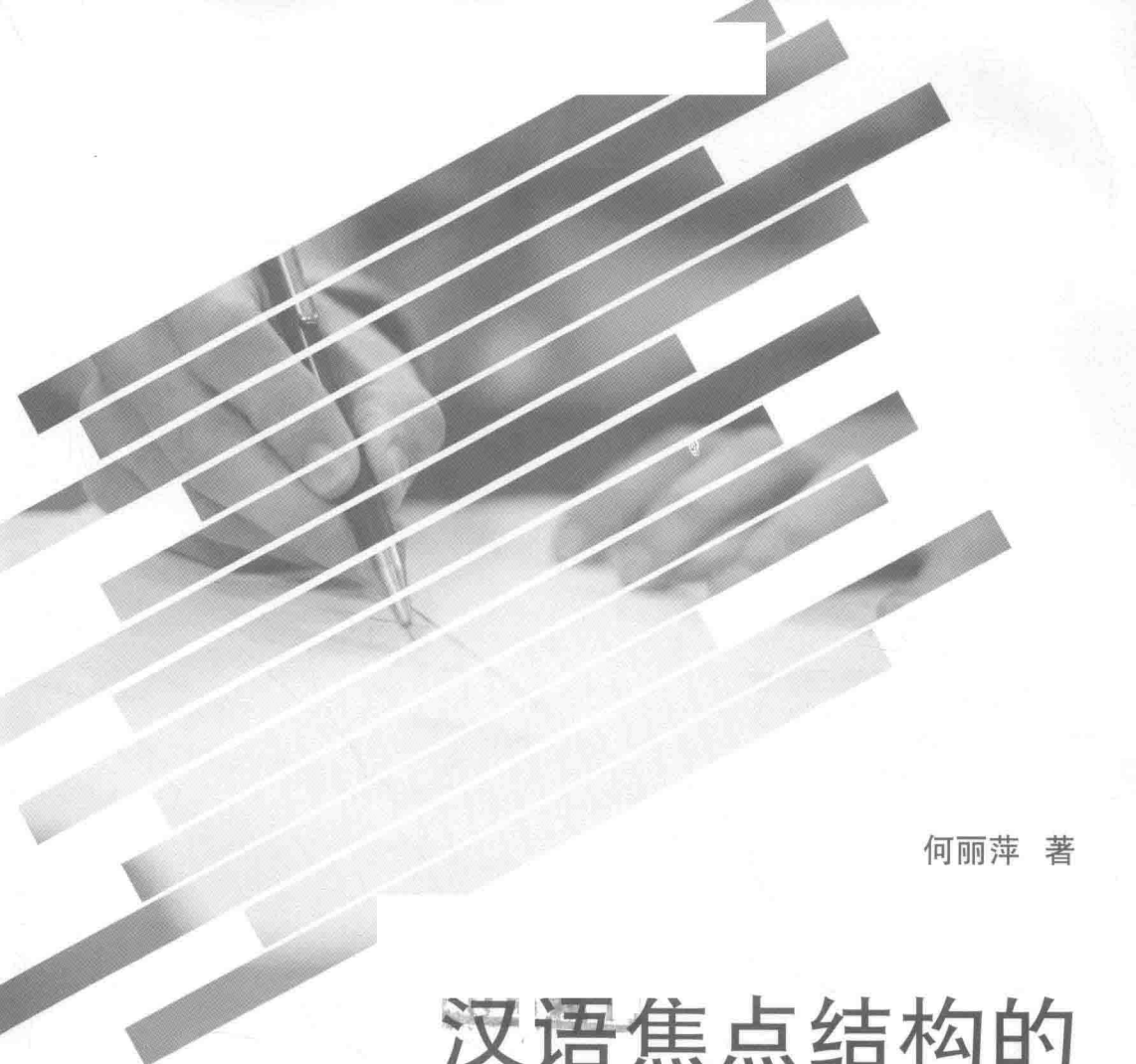


何丽萍 著

汉语焦点结构的 句法研究

A SYNTACTIC
STUDY ON
CHINESE
FOCUS
CONSTRUCTIONS

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List of Abbreviations

*	ungrammatical
?	reduced grammaticality
ACC	accusative case
Adj	Adjective
Adv	Adverb
Agr	Agreement
C	complementizer
Cl	classifier
COP	copula
DAT	dative case
DP	determiner phrase
I/INFL	inflection
lit:	literal meaning
N	Noun
NOM	nominative case
Neg	negation
P	Preposition
Perf	Perfective
Pl	plural
Poss	Possessive

Prt	sentence final particle
Spec	specifier
T	tense
V	Verb
Wh-/wh	wh-word
X ^{max}	the maximal projection of category X
∈	include

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Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter is intended to provide an introduction to the topics to be addressed in the following chapters as well as a preview to the research goals of this book.

1.1 Preliminaries

This chapter is intended to introduce the topic to be addressed in the following chapters as well as the claims to be argued and theoretical assumptions to be made throughout this book.

This present study proposes Generative Grammar based Focus-criterion and criterion for identifying focus markers/ heads in Mandarin Chinese (Mandarin). The syntactic properties of three kinds of focus construction in Mandarin, namely *shi* constructions, *lian ... dou/ye* constructions and *zhi you ... cai* constructions, are investigated. The central goal of this book is to explore the similar inner syntax of the focus construction in Mandarin.

Focus has been hotly discussed at home and abroad. It has received attention in the field of Generative Grammar since 1970s, and Chomsky (1975) pioneers this work. From then on, *focus* is studied at length extensively from various perspectives, such as syntax, semantics and pragmatics, which contributes a lot to language researchers' understanding of this topic and thus

undoubtedly benefits children's first language acquisition. Among those studies, most are concerned with focus in English language in aspects such as pitch accent, information structure and semantic interpretation. It is worth mentioning that the magnificent works tremendously cited in the study of focus are given in Jackendoff (1972) which addresses focus correlating with presupposition and É. Kiss (1998) which conducts a research on focus in terms of configuration with various languages. Besides, we would like to mention Brody (1990) for his attempt to put forward Focus-criterion following Rizzi's (1990) *Wh*-criterion. As for the works on English focus in the framework of Generative Grammar, the influential developments come from Rochemont (1978) and Rochemont & Culicover (1990). Rochemont (1978) attempts to discuss the phonological, syntactic and semantic features of focus under a unified framework and he explores the essence of the concept of focus and its relevant linguistic peculiarities. This work is well-acknowledged to be the first doctorate dissertation on focus from the perspective of Generative Grammar (徐烈炯 & 潘海华, 2005: ii), later on it was published in 1986 with moderate revision. An excellent representation on focus study interacting with Generative Semantics is given in 徐烈炯 & 潘海华 (2005). These two works contribute a lot to our desire to conduct this work in my references consultation.

At home, *focus* has been introduced into Chinese linguistic study field since 1980s. Afterwards much study has been conducted, and numerous articles have been published concerning with different aspects of focus in Mandarin, such as different types of focus constructions, accent placement, identification of focus markers, and designation of those bearing the function to mark focus. A large proportion of these studies examine the language evidence on an observation level (see the earlier work by Cheng (1983), 方梅 (1995), 张伯江 & 方梅 (1996), and among others). Yet those researches are conducted from perspectives of pragmatics (see 钟华, 2007; 仇栖锋, 2006; 张亚军,

2008; etc.), and semantics (see Paris, 1985). Some explore the focus construction in Mandarin or the relevant issues on the grounds of pragmatics, semantics or syntax (see Biq, 1984; Hole, 2004). Zhang (1997) discusses object shift phenomenon in the *lian...dou/ye* construction. It deserves noticing that Shyu (2005), to which we will turn in detail, discusses the categorical status of *lian* and *dou/ye* in *lian...dou/ye* constructions at great length and the interpretation of Chinese *lian ... dou/ye* sentences. This work makes great contribution to the subsequent relevant studies, and also offers much insight into the research questions in the present dissertation. To the best of my knowledge, until now no work has been conducted on probing into the inner syntax of focus constructions in Mandarin Chinese on the grounds of Generative Grammar, so the present study is of great significance not only for Generative Grammar, but also for modern Chinese linguistics study.

The concept of focus is understood as a hypothetical construct that has a phonological correlate, a semantic-pragmatic correlate and a syntactic correlate. It is introduced into Generative Grammar by Chomsky to refer to the prosodic salient in a sentence (Chomsky, 1955). Later on, it has been widely studied in Functional Linguistics to be regarded as new information (Halliday, 1967), and it is also discussed along with information structure, cf. Lamdrecht (1994). 刘丹青 & 徐烈炯 (1998) agree with Halliday's new-information-based account, while they depart from Halliday's proposal to address focus from pragmatics viewpoint, and they claim that focus can be any constituent in a sentence, and so it is not a syntactic element although the focused element may function as subject or object, etc. in that particular sentence. 徐杰 (2001) elaborates on 刘丹青 & 徐烈炯's (1998) account, and he further postulates that focus is on the one hand a pragmatic notion, on the other hand syntactically marked as a set of features, which he borrowed from Jackendoff (1972), to enter into the human language computational system to be assigned to the proper

constituent, the similar computational process with features such as TENSE, AGREEMENT, GENDER, NUMBER, etc. Therefore, the notion of focus is elsewhere considered to be a syntactic notion. Besides, researchers tend to discuss the notion of focus in close relationship with utterance context. This is the case with Cheng (1983), who defines focus as a status of an element (noun or some other types of expression) in the sentence, or its referent, rather, that the speaker assesses to prevail in the addressee's mind at the speech time, more specifically, the focus is treated to be an element on which the addressee, according to speaker's judgment, will focus his attention for its significance of message. For example, when a speaker utters *It is Lily who will deliver an important speech in tomorrow's conference*, the addressee naturally puts the message focus onto *Lily*, because the addressee, as a native English speaker, knows that the set sentence pattern *it is...who...* is an emphatic sentence with the function of stressing the element succeeding *it is*, thus the focus is *Lily*. So here the notion of *focus* turns out to be closely related to syntax. In this thesis, focus is defined as something reflected in a sentence with structural devices in order that it is easier for the addressee to identify the stressed information to make the communication go on more smoothly. Therefore, in a conversation, the speaker usually adopts some devices to highlight the focus.

Brunetti (2003) points out that there are mainly two approaches to focus, one is to focus by prosodic rules and the other is to focus by syntactic strategies. In the early 1970s, the research on focus in terms of phonology has attracted a great deal of attention and achieved influential developments. Chomsky & Hale (1968) put forward Nuclear Stress Rule (NSR) to uniquely identify the focus of an English sentence — assign nuclear stress to the rightmost lexical category in a sentence, which plays a crucial role in the identification of focus in the 1970s. This rule has been arguably revised constantly for its inadequacy of accounting for the English evidence (see Jackendoff, 1972; Rochemont, 1986;

Cinque, 1993; Zubizarreta, 1998). Still they receive opposition (see Brunetti, 2003; Shyu, 2005). Concomitantly, it is commonly acknowledged that in SVO languages the canonical sentence accent is located in the rightmost lexical item, such as English and Mandarin. In recent study, the placement of the canonical sentence accent in Mandarin is controversial. 冯胜利 (2001) argues that it is not always the case that the canonical sentence accent is located in the rightmost lexical item in Mandarin. 满在江 & 宋红梅 (2004) assume the canonical sentence stress to be placed pre-verbally in Mandarin. In this study of focus constructions in Mandarin, we will concentrate on those typical constructions in which focus can be identified without extra sentence information, so sentence stress and phonological devices will be left out from the present discussion. Nevertheless, all of the above tell that prosodic strategy is not reliable to identify focus for at least the speaker can place phonological stress on any position according to different contextual situations if there is no specific device to mark focus. We then turn to the syntactic means to focus.

It is commonly agreed that the most notable way to identify focus in Mandarin is to employ focus marker (cf. 徐杰, 2001). Focus marker, as the terminology implies, is to mark focus, i.e. the stressed constituent. With regard to the designation of those items to highlight focus, it is still disputable in modern Chinese linguistic study, some refer to *biao ji ci* (cf. 方梅, 1995; 范晓 & 张豫锋, 2003); some name *biao zhi ci* (cf. 吴登堂, 2004); some nominate *jiao dian biao ji* (cf. 徐杰 & 李英哲, 1993). Whatever terminology the researchers choose, in this thesis, we use the term of *focus marker* or *focus head*^①, classified according to their syntactic properties and status, to nominate those constituents bearing the function of focus marking.

① Our idea of using *focus head* comes from the analysis of the syntactic status of *lian* and *dou/ye* in the *lian...dou/ye* construction. We hold that *focus head* is more implicit to reflect the syntactic status of *dou/ye*, which will be touched upon in Chapter 4.

Admittedly, *shi* receives most attention compared with others bearing the function of focus marking. Teng (1979) is the first to name Chinese *shi* as a focus marker. Huang (1989), after a thorough examination of Chinese language data, holds that Chinese *shi* is not just a focus marker, but also carries along with it some other functions. The *lian...dou/ye* structure as a way to mark focus also attracts much attention, while researchers disagree as for the identification of the focus head. Besides, there exist a group of elements which the association with other elements influences the truth condition of the sentence, such as the well-acknowledged *only* and *even* in English language. They are commonly termed as focus-sensitive operator in the literature. In line with English language, *dou*, *jiu*, *cai*, *ye* and *zhi* in Mandarin are concomitantly nominated as focus-sensitive operators by some researchers for their semantic content and syntactic function are akin to English *only* or *even* (cf. 董秀芳, 2001; 赵永清 & 孙刚, 2005). Some tend to regard them as focus adverbs due to the reason that they are grammatically categorized as adverbs in Chinese language study. Some researchers therefore conclude that Chinese adverbs mark focus. 范开泰 & 张亚军 (2002) treat those items like *you qi (shi)* “especially (BE)”, *te bie (shi)* “particularly (BE)”, the stressed *jiu* and the modality adverb *nan dao* “doesn’t it mean that...” to be prepositional focus markers. In addition, 刘丹青 & 唐正大 (2001) argue that *ke* (KE) in Mandarin counts as a topic focus operator. Fu (1992) considers the *bei* construction to be a focus device in Mandarin. 仇栖锋 (2006) holds that the *bei* construction is closely related to focus marking. 宗守云 (2008) elaborates on the pragmatic function of *shu* (SHU) in Mandarin and treats it as a focus marker.

The research we are conducting deals with the focus construction in Mandarin which is not yet defined in the literature. Therefore, in the presence of the bulk of syntactic items mentioned in the preceding paragraph, for the sake of clarification, it deserves defining the scope of this study. Our work will focus

on the constructions with the presence of the focus marker *shi* or focus head *dou/ye* and *cai*, namely, *shi* constructions, *lian...dou/ye* constructions and *zhi you...cai* constructions. Without any controversy, *shi* constructions and *lian...dou/ye* constructions serve to mark the focused constituent, and our freshness in dealing with these two constructions lies in providing a Generative-based solution to some unresolved issues concerning these two constructions. With regard to the *zhi you ... cai* construction, there are few studies on it in the literature. Nevertheless, investigating it in detail, we will show that the focus specifying function is no less apparent and effective. Thus we are venturing to present fresh research into this construction and attempting to explore their inner syntax of these three constructions with a unified account under the framework of Generative Grammar. In the following, “Mandarin” and “Chinese” will be used interchangeably, referring to Mandarin Chinese or *Putonghua*, the official language of the People’s Republic of China.

1.2 Research Goals

In light of the research vacancies presented in the preliminaries, in this study, we will conduct a thorough investigation into the syntactic distributions and properties of three focus constructions in Mandarin, namely the *shi* construction, the *lian...dou/ye* construction and the *zhi you...cai* construction, as exemplified respectively in (1). The grammatical categories and syntactic categories that can be focused by these configurations will be examined. It is demonstrated in (1), (2) and (3) that subject and object can be focused in the three configurations, predicate verbs are constrained to be focalized in the *zhi you ... cai* construction, but they are allowed to do so in the other two constructions. Unexpectedly, the three constructions simultaneously exhibit ex-situ object focus. In *lian ... dou/ye* constructions and *zhi you ... cai*

constructions, the object focus is shifted (with the indefinite object in *zhi you...cai* constructions remaining in-situ), while in *shi* constructions the object focus is otherwise reflected in another pattern, namely, *...de shi...* construction, as exemplified in (2a).

(1) a. *shi Zhangsan* *huo* *le* *jiang*.

SHI Zhangsan win-Perf prize

'It is ZHANGSAN who has won the prize.'

b. *lian Zhangsan* *dou* *huo* *le* *jiang*.

LIAN Zhangsan DOU win-Perf prize

'Even ZHANGSAN won the prize.'

c. *Zhi you Zhangsan* *cai* *neng* *huo* *zhe* *ge* *jiang*.

ZHI YOU Zhangsan CAI can win this prize

'Only ZHANGSAN will win this prize.'

(2) a. Zhangsan *hede* *shi* *cha*.

Zhangsan drink DE SHI tea

'It is tea that Zhangsan drank.'

b. *lian* *cha* Zhangsan *dou* *he*

LIAN tea Zhangsan DOU drink

'Zhangsan drank even TEA.'

c. *zhi you* *cha* Zhangsan *cai* *he*.

ZHIYOU tea Zhangsan CAI drink

'Zhangsan drinks only TEA.'

(3) a. Zhangsan *shi* *he* *cha* *de*.

Zhangsan SHI drink tea DE

'Zhangsan DRINKS tea.'

b. *cha*, Zhangsan *lian* *he* *dou* *bu* *gan* *he* *yi* *kou*.

Tea, Zhangsan LIAN drink DOU not dare drink one-CL

'Zhangsan doesn't even dare to have a DRINK of the tea.'

c. *Zhangsanzhi you he cai cha/ Zhangsan cha zhi you he cai.

Zhangsan ZHI YOU drink CAI tea/ Zhangsan tea ZHIYOU
drink CAI

'Zhangsan only DRINKS tea.'

The above sentences show that the three constructions display analogous syntactic features. In view of this, we wonder whether they share some more in depth out of their syntactic behavior. This inspires us to consider the second goal of our present study – we are exploring the similarity of the inner syntactic structure and computational mechanism of these available focus constructions. It is our belief that they are derived from a similar syntactic structure, because they exhibit surprisingly similar syntactic properties with regard to marking focused elements, and it is just this belief that inspires us to make great effort to conduct this work.

shi constructions, in which *shi* is not stressed phonologically, are well-acknowledged typical focus constructions. While according to most researchers' study, *shi* of focus marking is derived from *shi* of confirmation, and the function of confirmation as a verb still works in the *shi* focus construction. When *shi* is to stress a constituent in the sentence, its syntactic distributions are constrained, it can be placed in front of the subject or subject modifier to focus mark subject or subject modifier, and it can also be located in front of the predicator or predicator modifier to focus-mark predicator or predicator modifier, nevertheless, it cannot be placed directly in front of the object, predicate object or prepositional object, and when the object is to be focused, another construction can be employed, and that is the ...*de shi*... construction, the so-called pseudo-cleft construction (Tang, 1981). We strongly disagree with 徐杰 (2001) claiming that *shi* can be placed in front of

any element of a sentence to focus-mark that constituent. He draws his conclusion on the basis of the following examples:

- (4) a. *Shi Wo men*^[+F] *ming tian zai lu yin peng yong xin she bei gei na pian zi lu zhu ti ge.*

SHI I-Pl tomorrow in recording studio use new appliance for that film record theme song

'It is WE that will use the new appliance to record the theme song for that new film tomorrow in the recording studio.'

- b. *Wo men shi ming tian*^[+F] *zai lu yin peng yong xin she bei gei na pian zi lu zhu ti ge.*

I-Pl SHI tomorrow in the recording studio use new appliance for that film record theme song

'It is TOMORROW that we will use the new appliance to record the theme song for that new film in the recording studio.'

- c. *Wo men ming tian shi zai lu yin peng*^[+F] *yong xin she bei gei na pian zi lu zhu ti ge.*

I-Pl tomorrow SHI in the recording studio use new appliance for that film record theme song

'It is IN THE RECORDING STUDIO that we will use the new appliance to record the theme song for that new film tomorrow.'

- d. *Wo men ming tian zai lu yin peng shi yong xin she bei*^[+F] *gei na pian zi lu zhu ti ge.*

I-Pl tomorrow in the recording studio SHI use new appliance for that film record theme song

'It is USING THE NEW APPLIACNE that we will to record the theme song for that new film in the studio tomorrow.'