

**An applicative approach to “oblique object” constructions and DOCs
in Chinese**

by
Jianxun Liu

B.A., Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade, 1996
M.A., Shandong University, 2004

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in the Department of Linguistics

© Jianxun Liu, 2012
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without permission of the author.

Supervisory Committee

An applicative approach to “oblique object” constructions and DOCs
in Chinese

by
Jianxun Liu

B.A., Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade, 1996

M.A., Shandong University, 2004

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Martha McGinnis-Archibald (Department of Linguistics)
Supervisor

Dr. Leslie Saxon (Department of Linguistics)
Departmental Member

Abstract

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Martha McGinnis-Archibald (Department of Linguistics)

Supervisor

Dr. Leslie Saxon (Department of Linguistics)

Departmental Member

This thesis explores an applicative approach to two constructions in Chinese: the “oblique object” construction and the double object construction (DOC). The DP following the verb in an “oblique object” construction has generally been viewed as an object of the verb; however, its properties, especially object-associated properties, have not been tested systematically. This study tests the properties of the oblique object, and finds that the oblique object in the “oblique object” construction differs from a typical theme object in a range of syntactic properties.

Pylkkänen (2002) hypothesizes that applicatives fall into two categories, high applicatives and low applicatives. Syntactically, the high applicative head is merged above the VP, with the VP as complement and the applied argument as specifier; semantically, high applicatives denote a relation between the applied argument and the event described by the VP. Low applicatives are base-generated within the VP, merging with the direct object as complement and the applied argument as specifier; semantically, a low applied argument bears a transfer-of-possession relation to the direct object.

According to Huang (2007), Chinese has two types of DOCs, *giving* DOCs and *stealing* DOCs. *Giving* DOCs indicate situations in which the indirect object is given something or some advantage; *stealing* DOCs express situations in which the indirect object suffers some loss, or is adversely affected. In analyzing Chinese DOCs from an applicative approach on the basis of Pykkänen's high/low applicative hypothesis, Cheng and Wen (2008) suggest that Chinese DOCs are high applicatives, while Sun and Li (2010) suggest that they are low applicatives. This thesis suggests a finer classification of Chinese DOCs, and shows that Chinese DOCs include both high and low applicatives. Specifically, *giving* DOCs can be analyzed as low recipient applicatives. *Stealing* DOCs in which the indirect object bears a possessive relation to the theme can be analyzed as low source applicatives, and *stealing* DOCs in which the indirect object bears no direct semantic relation to the theme correspond to high malefactive applicatives.

Table of Contents

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Supervisory Committee | ii |
| Abstract | iii |
| Table of Contents | v |
| List of Tables | vii |
| List of Figures | viii |
| Acknowledgements | ix |
| Abbreviations | xi |
| | |
| Chapter 1 Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 Overview: main points and organization of the thesis | 1 |
| 1.2 Theoretical background of this thesis | 2 |
| 1.3 Applicatives | 4 |
| 1.4 Typological variation of applicatives | 5 |
| 1.4.1 Semantic roles | 6 |
| 1.4.2 Interaction with the predicate valency | 7 |
| 1.4.3 Morphosyntactic alternations | 9 |
| 1.4.4 Distribution of object properties between applied and basic objects | 10 |
| 1.5 Pylkkänen’s high/low applicative hypothesis | 14 |
| 1.5.1 Major aspects of the high/low applicative hypothesis..... | 15 |
| 1.5.2 Diagnostics of high/low applicatives | 18 |
| 1.6 Summary | 20 |
| | |
| Chapter 2 “Oblique object” constructions and DOCs in Chinese | 22 |
| 2.1 Introduction..... | 22 |
| 2.2 The definition of “object”..... | 22 |
| 2.3 The two constructions that contain unselected objects in Chinese | 24 |
| 2.4 “Oblique object” constructions in Chinese: types and previous approaches..... | 27 |
| 2.4.1 Types of “oblique object” constructions | 28 |
| 2.4.2 Light verb approach: Lin (2001)..... | 29 |
| 2.4.3 Applicative approach: Sun (2009) | 33 |
| 2.5 DOCs in Chinese..... | 38 |
| 2.5.1 The two types of DOCs in Chinese..... | 38 |
| 2.5.2 Double VP hypothesis: Zhang (1998)..... | 39 |
| 2.5.3 Applicative approach: Sun and Li (2010), Cheng and Wen (2008)..... | 43 |
| 2.6 Summary..... | 49 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Chapter 3 An applicative approach to “oblique object” constructions..... | 50 |
| 3.1 Introduction..... | 50 |
| 3.2 Six properties of the four types of objects | 51 |
| 3.2.1 The ability to move to subject position in passives..... | 53 |
| 3.2.2. The ability to be shifted in <i>BA</i> constructions..... | 56 |
| 3.2.3 The ability to convert to “theme-subject” clauses..... | 59 |
| 3.2.4 The relativization pattern..... | 60 |
| 3.2.5 The ability to be modified by adjectives..... | 62 |
| 3.2.6 The ability to become <i>wh</i> -phrases..... | 64 |
| 3.3 The implications of the similarities and differences of these objects..... | 67 |
| 3.4 Summary..... | 68 |
| | |
| Chapter 4 An applicative approach to DOCs in Chinese..... | 70 |
| 4.1 Introduction..... | 70 |
| 4.2 An applicative approach to <i>giving</i> DOCs..... | 71 |
| 4.2.1 <i>Giving</i> DOCs as low recipient applicatives and the two subtypes..... | 71 |
| 4.2.2 Different properties of the two subtypes of low recipient applicatives in Chinese..... | 75 |
| 4.3 An applicative approach to <i>stealing</i> DOCs..... | 82 |
| 4.3.1 The two subtypes of <i>stealing</i> DOCs in Chinese | 83 |
| 4.3.2 Different properties of the two subtypes of <i>stealing</i> DOCs | 84 |
| 4.4 Summary..... | 91 |
| | |
| Chapter 5 Conclusion..... | 93 |
| 5.1 Summary of the study..... | 93 |
| 5.2 Significance, limitations, and future research..... | 94 |
| | |
| References..... | 96 |

List of Tables

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Table 3-1: Six properties of four types of objects..... | 52 |
| Table 4-1: Different types of applicatives in Chinese DOCs..... | 70 |
| Table 4-2: Different properties of the two subtypes of LRAs..... | 76 |
| Table 4-3: Different properties of the two subtypes of <i>stealing</i> DOCs in Chinese..... | 84 |

List of Figures

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Figure 1-1: Multiple Spell-Out in the phase-based recursive derivation..... | 3 |
| Figure 1-2: Syntactic structure of high applicatives..... | 15 |
| Figure 1-3: Syntactic structure of low applicatives..... | 16 |
| Figure 2-1: PP modification..... | 31 |
| Figure 2-2: Serial verb construction..... | 31 |
| Figure 2-3: Serial verb construction | 32 |
| Figure 2-4: Oblique object construction..... | 32 |
| Figure 2-5: Derivation of “oblique object” constructions..... | 34 |
| Figure 2-6: Double VP structure for DOCs..... | 40 |
| Figure 4-1: Double VP structure for Chinese DOCs..... | 72 |

Acknowledgements

Finally, I completed this thesis. I am happy that now I can look back at the writing process and express my thanks to the people who have helped me. In the whole past year, my brain has been occupied by organizing words and phrases into meaning; at this moment, however, I feel words and phrases fail me.

First and foremost, I wish to express my thanks and gratitude to Dr. Martha McGinnis-Archibald, my supervisor. Even now I am still wondering how much patience and expertise Dr. McGinnis-Archibald must have had to turn a first draft which was nothing more than a vague description of my native language into an MA thesis. From Dr. McGinnis-Archibald I have learnt much about writing this thesis, and even more about academic research in general. For me, it is from the writing of this thesis, and under the guidance and influence of Dr. McGinnis-Archibald, that my academic pursuit truly begins. I am lucky.

I also wish to express my thanks and gratitude to Dr. Leslie Saxon. Leslie was my professor of LING 503 and a member of my supervisory committee. In my heart, however, she is more a mentor and a good friend. I enjoyed talking and meeting with her, and also her ideas and thoughts that made things right and better. In the final stage of my writing, it is Leslie's thorough review and detailed suggestions that helped me draw a full stop for this year-long writing project.

Special thanks go to Dr. Catherine Léger, my external examiner. Catherine made meticulous comments and remarks, and provided many insightful suggestions for this thesis, all of which have become a natural part of this thesis.

I also want to thank other professors at the Department of Linguistics at UVic who have taught and guided me in my MA study. They are Dr. Hua Lin, Dr. Ewa Czaykowska-Higgins, Dr. Hossein Nassaji, and Dr. Sonya Bird. Thanks also go to my fellow graduate students for their friendships.

Finally, I wish to thank my parents, my wife Xuan Geng, and my daughter Yuming, for their sacrifice, love, and support during all the years. Especially, I want to say to my beloved wife: “Xuan, this is for you.”

Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | first person |
| 2 | second person |
| 3 | third person |
| A | agent |
| ABL | ablative |
| ACC | accusative |
| APPL | applied affix or applicative |
| ASP (asp) | aspect |
| Ba (ba) | particle indicating <i>BA</i> construction in Chinese |
| BEI (bei) | particle indicating passive in Chinese |
| CL | classifier |
| COM | comitative |
| CONT | continuous |
| DAT | dative |
| DEP | depictive head |
| DIM | diminutive |
| ERG (E) | ergative |
| FOC | focus |
| FV | final vowel |
| INST | instrumental |
| LOC | locative |
| LRA | low recipient applicative |
| MAL | malefactive |
| NEG | negative |
| NOM | nominative |
| OBJ (O) | object |
| PAST (PAS, PST) | past |
| PLAIN | plain (level of formality in Korean) |
| POSS | possessive |
| PP | prepositional phrase |
| PRES (PR) | present |
| PRON | pronominal |
| s | singular |
| S | subject |
| SP | subject prefix |
| SVC | serial verb construction |
| TOP | topic |

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Overview: main points and organization of this thesis

This thesis explores an applicative approach to two Chinese constructions: the “oblique object” constructions and the double object constructions (DOCs). The DP following the verb in “oblique object” constructions in Chinese has been regarded as an object¹ of the verb in the literature; however, its “objecthood” has not been tested in a systematic manner. In this thesis, I analyze the “oblique object” constructions as high applicatives in Pykkänen’s (2002) high/low applicative typology and test the properties of the oblique (applied) object. My study indicates that the oblique objects in Chinese “oblique object” constructions have quite different properties from theme objects.

For the double object constructions (DOCs), some previous studies suggest that they are high applicatives (e.g. Cheng and Wen 2008), and some other studies suggest that they are low applicatives (e.g. Sun and Li 2010). In this thesis, I suggest and demonstrate a new

¹ In this thesis, how to refer to the DPs following the verb is an issue. In the literature, the DP following the verb in the “oblique object” constructions is termed “oblique object”, and in this thesis, I will follow this terminology. For DOCs, previous studies generally term the DP immediately following the verb “indirect object”, and the DP following the “indirect object”, “direct object”. In Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 of this thesis, which mainly introduce previous studies, I continue to use the terms used in the literature to avoid confusion. In my analyses in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, I will use the semantic term “theme” to refer to the “direct object”. Logically, I need to use a semantic term to refer to the “indirect object” too; however, since I argue in this thesis that the “indirect object” bears different semantic roles depending on the construction in which it appears, for the sake of convenience, I will continue to use the term “indirect object” as a cover term, rather than referring to the semantic role it plays in specific environment.

proposal: of the two types of DOCs in Chinese, *giving* DOCs can be analyzed as low recipient applicatives; *stealing* DOCs in which the indirect object bears a possessive relation to the direct object are low source applicatives, and *stealing* DOCs in which the indirect object bears no direct semantic relation to the direct object can be analyzed as high malefactive applicatives.

This thesis is organized as follows: I begin by introducing the theoretical background of this thesis and reviewing relevant works on applicatives, especially Pykkänen's high/low applicative hypothesis, in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, I introduce "oblique object" constructions and DOCs in Chinese, and previous studies about them. Then Chapter 3 is an analysis of "oblique object" constructions, in which I test the properties of the oblique object; and Chapter 4 is the analysis of Chinese DOCs from an applicative approach. Finally, Chapter 5 is the conclusion.

1.2 Theoretical background of this thesis

This study is carried out within the framework of the Minimalist Program. Very briefly speaking, the Minimalist Program approach includes the following major hypotheses (Chomsky 1995, 2001; Hornstein et al. 2010):

- The human language faculty interfaces with the Articulatory-Perceptual (A-P) system and the Conceptual-Intentional (C-I) system through two levels of representation, Phonetic Form (PF) and Logical Form (LF) respectively.

- The language faculty comprises a lexicon and a computational system. The lexicon specifies the items that enter into the computational system, and lexical items are possibly just bundles of syntactic/semantic features. The computational system arranges these items to form a pair containing a PF object and an LF object. This pair is subject to Full Interpretation, which is guaranteed through feature-checking.
- The derivations proceed phase by phase. The syntactic objects that qualify for phases include DP, v P, and CP. Within a clause, the subject, when it is the external argument of the v P, is generated as the specifier of v .
- The derivation is performed by two operations: Merge and Move. Merge puts previously unconnected syntactic objects together under a node; Move then recombines or rearranges the merged elements. Move is subject to various principles and constraints.
- When a phase is completed in the course of the derivation, it is transferred to the interfaces (Spell-Out). Since the phase-based derivation is recursive, this entails “multiple Spell-Out”, as illustrated by Figure 1-1.

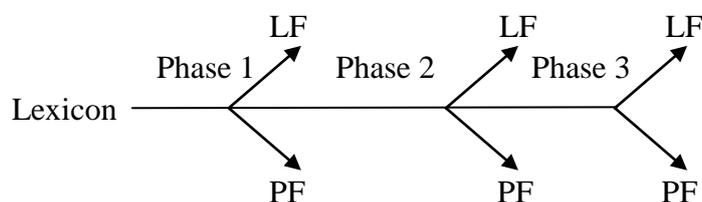


Figure 1-1: Multiple Spell-Out in the phase-based recursive derivation

The hypothesis of Merge and Move is directly relevant to my analysis. In this thesis, I apply Pytkänen's high/low applicative hypothesis to analyze and distinguish different subtypes of DOCs in Chinese and to analyze "oblique object" constructions. The crucial difference between high and low applicatives, according to Pytkänen (2002), is that the low applicative is merged within the VP, merging with the direct object as complement and the applied argument as specifier; the high applicative, however, is merged outside the VP, merging with the VP as complement and the applied argument as specifier.

1.3 Applicatives

An applicative is traditionally understood as a linguistic construction in which a verb bears a specific morpheme which licenses a non-core argument that would not otherwise be considered a part of the verb's argument structure (Jeong 2006). Contemporary studies on applicatives originated from the study of Bantu languages, which are characterized by an abundance of applicatives. In (1), from Chichewa (a Bantu language), (1a) is a simple clause, and (1b) is an applicative construction. In (1b), the verb bears an additional affix *-ir* which introduces *mfumu* 'chief' as an object, whose semantic role is the beneficiary of the event described by the VP.

(1) Chichewa

a. Simple clause

Mavuto a- na- umb -a mtsuko.

Mavuto SP PAST mold ASP waterpot

Mavuto molded the waterpot.

(Baker 1988: 353)

b. Applicative construction

Mavuto a- na- umb -ir -a mfumu mtsuko.
 Mavuto SP PAST mold APPL ASP chief waterpot
 Mavuto molded the waterpot for the chief. (Baker 1988: 353)

Example (2) is from Kinyarwanda, another Bantu language. (2a) is a prepositional phrase construction in which the oblique argument *ishuûri* ‘school’ is introduced into the clause by the preposition *kw* ‘to’; while in (2b), the verb is applicativized with the morpheme *-ho*, and the oblique argument *ishuûri* ‘school’ is realized as an object.

(2) Kinyarwanda

a. Oblique introduced by a preposition

Úmwálimu y -oohere-je igitabo kw'i ishuûri.
 teacher he-send -asp book to school
 The teacher sent the book to school. (Kimenyi 1980: 94)

b. Oblique realized as an applied object

Úmwálimu y -oohere-je -ho ishuûri igitabo.
 teacher he-send -asp-APPL school book
 The teacher sent the book to school. (Kimenyi 1980: 94)

The contrast between the pair of clauses in (1) and (2) indicates that, in these two languages, certain obliques can be realized either as prepositional phrases, or as objects in applicative constructions.

1.4 Typological variation of applicatives

A salient feature of applicatives is that they demonstrate great variations, both language-internally and cross-linguistically. These variations constitute the typology of applicatives. Here I consider the following parameters which are relevant to my analysis of Chinese.

1.4.1 Semantic roles

In applicative constructions, the applied object can bear various semantic roles. A common method in the literature in the classification of applicatives, especially within a given language, is according to the semantic role that the applied object plays. The following thematic categories of applicatives are common cross-linguistically: benefactive, malefactive, instrumental, locative, and source, as illustrated in (3) to (7).

(3) Kichaga benefactive (or malefactive) applicative

N -a'' -í' -lyì -í -à m'-kà k-élyà.
 FOC-1s- PR-eat-AP-Fv 1-wife 7-food
 He is eating food for/on his wife. (Bresnan and Moshi 1990: 150)

(4) Hakha Lai malefactive applicative

rul = niʔ ka -ʔin =ʔaʔ ʔa-ka -luʔ -hnoʔ.
 snake= ERG 1s POSS-house=LOC 3sS-1sO -enter₂ -MAL
 A snake came into my house on me. (Peterson 2007: 19)

(5) Chichewa instrumental applicative

Mavuto a -na -umb -ir -a mpeni mtsuko.
 Mavuto SP PAST mold APPL ASP knife waterpot
 Mavuto molded the waterpot with a knife. (Baker 1988: 354)

(6) Kinyarwanda locative applicative

umuhuungu a -r -iig -ir -a -ho ishuûri imibare.
 boy he-PRES-study-APPL-ASP-LOC school math
 The boy is studying mathematics at school. (McGinnis 2008: 1225)

(7) Chisona source applicative

bvut -ir -a mw-ana banga.
 PR-snatch-APPL-FV 1-child 5-knife
 Snatch the knife from the child. (Mabugu 2000, cited by Jeong 2006: 9)

1.4.2 Interaction with the predicate valency

1.4.2.1 Applicatives that increase the valency of the predicate

One defining characteristic of a standard applicative is that it increases the valency of the predicate by adding an extra argument. For example, (8a) below, from Luganda, is an applicative constructed on an unergative verb *tambu* ‘walk’, which has no internal argument. The applicative affix *-le* adds an internal argument *Katonga* to the predicate.

(8) Luganda

a. Applicative constructed on an unergative verb

Mukasa ya -tambu -le -dde Katonga.

Mukasa PAST-walk-APPL-PAST Katonga

Mukasa walked for Katonga. (Pylkkänen 2002: 25)

b. Applicative constructed on a transitive verb

Mukasa ya -som -e -dde Katonga ekitabo.

Mukasa 3G.PAST-read-APPL-past Katonga book

Mukasa read Katonga a book. (Pylkkänen 2002: 24)

(8b) is an applicative based on a transitive verb, in which the applicative affix *-e* adds an applied argument to the clause besides the verb’s canonical object, thereby creates a ditransitive construction. In both (8a) and (8b), the applicative increases the valency of the predicate.

1.4.2.2 Applicatives that rearrange the argument structure

In some languages, such as Chinese and Yagua, there are cases in which an applicative, particularly one based on a transitive verb, does not result in increased valency for the predicate. Two cases have been reported in the literature. In one case, the applicativization just rearranges the argument structure of the predicate, rather than adding

an extra argument to it, as illustrated in (9) from Chinese.

(9) Chinese: the applicative rearranges the argument structure of the predicate

Ta zuijin chi shitang.

he recently eat restaurant

He eats at the restaurant recently. (Sun 2009: 72)

In (9), the applicative is based on a transitive verb *chi* ‘eat’, and the locative *shitang* ‘restaurant’ is realized as an object (Sun 2009). However, since the theme object of the verb *chi* ‘eat’ is obligatorily absent, this applicativization does not increase the valency of the predicate; instead, it just reorganizes its argument structure.

The other case is when the addition of the applicative does not introduce an applied object to the verb, but instead, alters the verb’s meaning in some respect. Payne (cited by Valenzuela 2010: 105) reports that, in Yagua, the applicative affix *-amypy* sometimes does not result in a valency increase; rather, it adds a sense of greater “intensity” to the meaning of the verb. The contrast between (10a) and (10b) shows this.

(10) Yagua

a. Non-applicative expression

θ *-kow -een -aan chesha-tyoll.*

3sg-look-CONT-OBJ.follows child-DIM

S/he is looking at the small child.

b. Applicative expressing a sense of greater “intensity”

θ *-kow-amypy-een -aan chesha-tyoll.*

3sg-look-APPL-CONT-OBJ.follows child-DIM

S/he is caring for the small child.

(Payne 2000, cited by Valenzuela 2010: 105)

It seems that the applicatives that increase the valency of the predicate are more common among languages which have applicative constructions.

1.4.3 Morphosyntactic alternations

Applicatives also vary as to whether the applicative construction alternates with a semantically close paraphrase in which oblique arguments are licensed by means of a case marker and/or an adposition. For example, Peterson (2007) reports that certain applicatives in Hakha Lai, including comitative (11) and instrumental (12) applicatives, have alternative oblique expressions.

(11) Hakha Lai

a. Comitative applicative

Ka -law ꜱan -ka -thloꜱ -pii.
 1S POSS -field 3pS -1sO -weed -com
 They weeded my field (together) with me. (Peterson 2007: 45)

b. Alternative oblique expression

kay -maꜱ = hee ka -law ꜱan -thlaw.
 1s -PRON= COM 1s POSS -field 3Ps -weed
 They weeded my field together with me. (Peterson 2007: 45)

(12) Hakha Lai

a. Instrumental applicative

tiiloog khaa tivaa kan -tan -naak.
 boat TOP river 1sS -cross -INST
 We used the boat to cross the river. (Peterson 2007: 46)

b. Alternative oblique expression

tiiloog = ꜱin tivaa (khaa) kan -tan.
 boat = INST river TOP 1pS -cross
 We used the boat to cross the river. (Peterson 2007: 46)

Other applicative constructions in this language, on the other hand, do not have equivalent non-applicative expressions.²

² Peterson (2007) doesn't provide examples to illustrate this case.

In Tzotzil, it is not possible to express the recipient thematic role without using the applicative construction (Peterson 2007: 46). For example, (13a), the applicative construction, is acceptable; in contrast, (13b), a conceived non-applicative construction in which *voʔone* ‘I’ is introduced by the preposition *ta* ‘to’, and the verb is not applicativized, is unacceptable.

(13) Tzotzil

a. Applicative construction

mi mu s -a -con -b -on l -a -citom
 ? NEG ASP -E2 -sell -APP A1 the -YOUR -pig

Won't you sell me your pigs? (Aissen 1983, cited by Peterson 2007: 46)

b. Conceived non-applicative variant

* mi mu s -a -con -θ ʔa -citom ta voʔone
 ? NEG ASP -E2 -sell -A3 YOUR -pig to I

The intended meaning: Won't you sell me your pigs?

(Aissen 1983, cited by Peterson 2007: 46)

1.4.4 Distribution of object properties between applied and basic objects

When a semantically peripheral argument is realized as an object in an applicative, it acquires some object properties. For example, “Kimenyi (1980) shows that the applied locative argument in Kinyarwanda is an object by a variety of tests, including passivization, pronoun incorporation, and relativization” (Gerds & Whaley 1991: 138). While the applied object acquires some object properties, the basic object retains some object properties, and may lose others. For example, in the Kinyarwanda locative applicatives, the basic object can no longer become the subject in passives. Applicative constructions vary, language-internally and cross-linguistically, with respect to which

object properties are demonstrated by which object. So another parameter along which applicatives vary is the distribution of object properties between the applied object and the basic object.

Many object-associated properties with respect to which the applied and the basic objects may differ have been studied in the literature, including: the ability of triggering agreement, case marking, movement to the subject in passives, relativization, pronoun incorporation, and reflexivization. (Baker 1988, Bresnan and Moshi 1990, Gerds and Whaley 1991, McGinnis 2008, Peterson 2007, Valenzuela 2010, among others). As some of these tests are not applicable to the analysis of Chinese, due to the characteristics of Chinese³, in this subsection, I only consider the distribution of two object properties: the ability to move to the subject position in passives and the ability to be extracted in relative clauses.

1.4.4.1 The ability to move to subject position in passives

In some applicatives, either the applied object or the basic object can move to the subject position in passives. For example, in a passive Kichaga benefactive/malefactive applicative, either the applied object, or the basic object, can move to the subject position (Bresnan and Moshi 1990: 150), as shown in (14).

(14) Kichaga

a. Benefactive applicative

N -a' -í' -lyì -í -à m'-kà k-élyà.

FOC-1s- PR-eat-AP-Fv 1-wife 7-food

He is eating food for/on his wife.

³ Chinese does not have agreement, case marking, pronoun incorporation, or reflexivization.

- b. Passive in which the applied object moves to the subject position

M'-kà n -a" -í' -lyì-í -ò k-èlyà.

1-wife FOC-1s-PR-eat-AP-PAs 7-food

The wife is being benefited/adversely affected by someone eating the food.

- c. Passive in which the basic object moves to the subject position

K-èlyá k -í' -lyì-í -ò m'-kà.

7-food 7s-PR-eat -AP-PAs 1-wife

The food is being eaten for/on the wife.

(Bresnan and Moshi 1990: 150)

Some applicatives, on the other hand, allow only one of the objects to move to the subject position in passives. For example, Chichewa allows only the applied object, but not the basic object, to move to the subject position, as in (15).

(15) Chichewa applicative

- a. The applied object moves to the subject position in a passive

atsíkāna a -na -gúl -ír-idw -á mphâtso (ndí chítsíru).

2-girls 2S-PST-buy-R-PAS-FV 9-gift by 7-fool

The girls were bought a gift.

- b. The basic object cannot move to the subject position in a passive

* mphâtso I -na -gúl -ír-idw -áatsíkāna (ndí chítsíru).

9-gift 9s-PST-buy-R-PAS-FV 2-girls by 7-fool

The intended meaning: A gift was bought for the girls. (McGinnis 2008: 1232)

In contrast, in Fula instrumental applicatives, only the basic object is allowed to move to the subject position in passives (Woolford 1993: 695), as illustrated in (16).

(16) a. Fula instrumental applicative

Aali tay'-r -ii lekki jammberere.

Aali cut-Inst-Tns tree axe

Aali cut a tree with an axe.

- b. The basic object moves to the subject position in a passive

Lekki tay'-r -aama jammberere.

tree cut-Inst-Tns/Passive axe

A tree was cut by using an axe.

c. The applied object cannot move to subject position in a passive

* Jammbera tay'-r -aama lekki.
axe cut-Inst-Tns/Passive tree

The intended meaning: An axe was used to cut the tree. (Woolford 1993: 695)

1.4.4.2 The ability to be extracted to form relative clauses

In many languages, one syntactic property of the object of a transitive clause is the ability to be relativized, or in other words, to be extracted to form a relative clause. For applicatives which contain both an applied object and a basic object, there is the question of which object has this property. Applicatives vary with regard to which object can be extracted for relativization. In some applicatives, for example, the instrumental applicative of Chichewa, either the applied object or the basic object may be relativized, as illustrated in (17).

(17) Chichewa instrumental applicative

a. The applied object can be relativized

uwu ndi mpeni umene ndi -ku -ganiz -a kuti Mavuto
this is knife which IsS PRES think ASP that Mavuto

a -na -umb -ir -a mitsuko.

SP PAST mold APPL ASP water pots

This is the knife which I think Mavuto molded the waterpots with.

b. The basic object can be relativized

lyi ndi mistuko imene ndi -ku -ganiz -a kuti
these are waterpots which IsS PRES think ASP that

Mavuto a -na -umb -ir -a mpeni.

Mavuto SP PAST mold APPL ASP knife

These are the waterpots which I think Mavuto molded with a knife.

(Baker 1988: 355)

In some other applicatives, only one object can be relativized. For example, in Chichewa benefactives, only the basic object can be relativized, as shown in (18).

(18) Chichewa benefactive applicative

- a. The basic object can be relativized

uwu ndiwo mtsuko umene ndi- ku -ganiz -a kuti
this is water pot which 1sS PRES think ASP that

Mavuto a -na -umb -ir -a mfumu.

Mavuto SP PAST mold APPL ASP chief

This is the waterpot which I think Mavuto molded for the chief.

- b. The applied object cannot be relativized

* lyi ndiyo mfumu imene ndi- ku -ganiz -a kuti
this is chief whom 1sS PRES think ASP that

Mavuto a -na -umb -ir -a mtsuko.

Mavuto SP PAST mold APPL ASP waterpot

The intended meaning: This is the chief whom I think Mavuto molded the waterpot for. (Baker 1988: 355-356)

So far I have introduced the definition of applicatives and their parametric variations.

Especially, I have considered the distribution of two object properties in applicatives: the ability to move to the subject position in passives, and the ability to be extracted to form relative clauses. In Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, the distribution of these two properties will be examined in “oblique object” constructions and DOCs in Chinese.

1.5 Pykkänen’s (2002) high/low applicative hypothesis

In recent research on applicatives, one influential hypothesis is Pykkänen’s (2002) high/low applicative hypothesis. This hypothesis captures certain empirical generalizations across a variety of languages, including English, Japanese, Hebrew,

Korean, Finnish and others, and has been one of the primary points of departure in recent research on applicatives. The main points of this hypothesis are reviewed below.

1.5.1 Major aspects of the high/low applicative hypothesis

1.5.1.1 Division of all applicative constructions into high and low applicatives

Pylkkänen hypothesizes that all applicatives fall into two categories that she terms “high applicatives” and “low applicatives”. The universal inventory of functional elements includes high and low applicative heads, which are responsible for introducing additional arguments into a clause (Pylkkänen 2002: 19). High and low applicatives have distinct syntactic and semantic properties.

1.5.1.2 Syntactic and semantic properties of high applicatives

Syntactically, a high applicative is merged above the VP, with the high applicative head merging with the VP as complement, and the applied argument as specifier, thus yielding the syntactic structure illustrated in Figure 1-2.

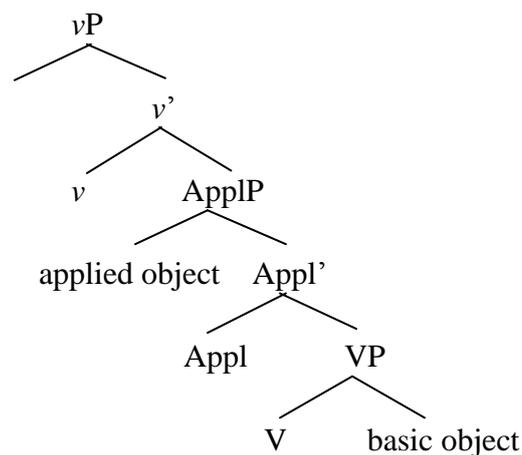


Figure 1-2: Syntactic structure of high applicatives
(Adapted from Pylkkänen 2002: 19)

Semantically, high applicatives denote a relation between the applied argument and the event described by the VP. The applied argument bears no direct relation to the basic object within the VP (Pylkkänen 2002: 18). In terms of the semantic content of the applicative head, Pylkkänen suggests that there is a universal inventory that includes instrumental, benefactive, malefactive, and so forth (Pylkkänen 2002: 21).

1.5.1.3 Syntactic and semantic properties of low applicatives

Unlike the high applicative head which is merged outside the VP, Pylkkänen hypothesizes that the low applicative head is generated within the VP, merging with the direct object as complement and the applied argument as specifier. The main verb then merges with the applicative phrase as complement (Pylkkänen 2002: 19). Low applicatives have the syntactic structure illustrated by Figure 1-3.

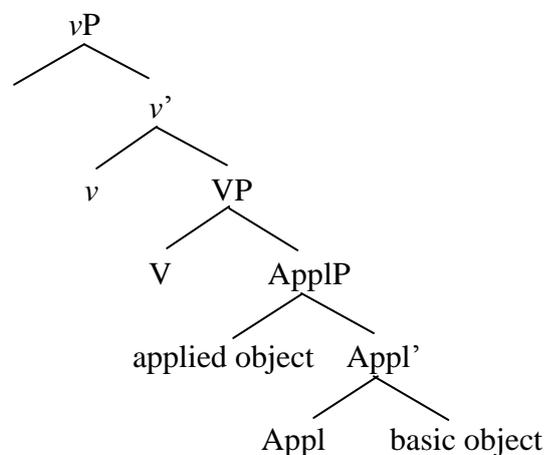


Figure 1-3: Syntactic structure of low applicatives
(Adapted from Pylkkänen 2002: 19)

Pylkkänen hypothesizes that, semantically, low applied argument bears a transfer-of-possession relation to the direct object and bears no direct semantic relation to

the verb (Pylkkänen 2002: 20).

Pylkkänen claims that there are two types of low applicatives according to the direction of the transfer: the applied object being the *source* of the transfer, or being the intended *recipient* of the transfer. Pylkkänen terms these two types of low applicatives “source applicatives” and “recipient applicatives” respectively (Pylkkänen 2002: 20-21).

Illustrations of these two types are provided in (19).

(19) a. Source applicative (Korean)

Totuk-i Mary- hanthey panci-lul humchi-ess -ta.
 thief-NOM Mary -DAT ring-ACC steal -PAST-PLAIN
 The thief stole a ring from Mary. (Pylkkänen 2002: 21)

b. Recipient applicative (English)

I wrote John a letter.
 I baked my friend a cake. (Pylkkänen 2002: 19)

It is worth noting that Cuervo (2003) shows that, besides the *recipient* and *source* low applicatives suggested by Pylkkänen, there is a third type of low applicative in Spanish and some other languages, the *stative* applicative (*at*-applicative). Semantically, the applied argument in a stative applicative does not get or lose anything as a result of an event; it is just a participant in the event as the possessor of the theme DP. As in (20), the applied argument ‘*Valeria*’ is the possessor of the direct object ‘*forehead*’. Cuervo claims that “the action expressed by the verb falls on the ‘forehead’, and ‘*Valeria*’, in virtue of the possessive relation, gets involved in this action” (Cuervo 2003: 63).

(20) Pablo le besó la frente a Valeria.
 Pablo CL.DAT kissed the forehead.ACC Valeria.DAT
 Pablo kissed Valeria on the forehead. (Cuervo 2003: 63)

1.5.2 Diagnostics of high/low applicative

Pylkkänen (2002) provides three diagnostics to distinguish high and low applicatives: transitivity restrictions, verb semantics, and depictive secondary predication.

1.5.2.1 Transitivity restrictions (Pylkkänen 2002: 23)

Since low applicatives denote a relation between the applied object and the basic object, they can only be constructed on verbs that have an internal argument. That is to say, low applicatives can only be constructed on transitive or unaccusative verbs, but not unergative verbs.

On the other hand, as high applicatives denote a relation between the applied argument and the event described by the VP, and the applied argument bears no direct semantic relation to the basic object inside the VP, these applicatives can be constructed on verbs that either do or do not have internal arguments. That is to say, besides transitive and unaccusative verbs, high applicatives can also be constructed on unergatives.

1.5.2.2 Verb semantics (Pylkkänen 2002: 23)

According to the high/low applicative hypothesis, low applicatives imply a transfer of possession of the basic object, which entails that low applicatives cannot be constructed on verbs that are completely static⁴, as in (21a). High applicatives, on the other hand, have no problem combining with static verbs, since they indicate a relation between the applied object and an event (21b).

⁴ By “static verbs”, Pylkkänen (2002) refers to the verbs that do not plausibly result in the transfer of possession (Pylkkänen 2002: 23).

(21) a. Low applicatives cannot be based on a static verb (English)

* I held him the bag. (Pylkkänen 2002: 24)

b. High applicatives can be based on a static verb (Luganda)

Katonga ya -kwaant-I -dde Mukasa ensawo.

Katonga PAST-hold -APPL- PAST Mukasa bag

Katonga held the bag for Mukasa. (Pylkkänen 2002: 25)

It should be mentioned that, according to Cuervo's low applicatives hypothesis, low applicatives can be based on static verbs as long as possession is involved (22).

(22) Low applicative based on a static verb (Spanish)

Pablo le envidia la hija a Valeria.

Pablo CL.DAT envies the daughter.ACC Valeria DAT

Pablo envies Valeria her daughter. (Cuervo 2003: 75)

Cuervo claims that, as demonstrated in (22), considering the existence of static low applicatives in some languages, the diagnostics of verb semantics suggested by Pylkkänen need to be refined.

1.5.2.3 Depictive secondary predication (Pylkkänen 2002: 30-31)

Pylkkänen claims that depictives can be predicated of high applied arguments (23), but not of low applied arguments (24), and she provides this as another diagnostic to distinguish high and low applicatives⁵. However, I will leave investigation of this diagnostic in Chinese for future research.

⁵ In illustrating the relation between depictives and applicatives, Pylkkänen adopts a decomposing approach to depictives and hypothesizes the existence of a depictive head which temporally links the state denoted by the adjective to an event. Pylkkänen then hypothesizes that the depictive phrases are of the type <e<st>>, which means that they are able to combine via Predicate Modification with constituents that are of type <e<st>>. Pylkkänen argues that since the head of high applicative has the feature of <e<st>>, a depictive phrase can combine with it and modify the high applicative; and since a low applicative is of type <e<<e,st>>>, which is too complex for a depictive phrase to combine with, low applied arguments are predicted to be unavailable for depictives.

(23) Depictive can modify a high applied argument (Luganda)

Mukasa ya -ko -le -dde Katonga nga akooye.

Mukasa past.3sg- work-APPL-past Katonga DEP tired

Mukasa worked for *Katonga tired*. (Katonga is tired)

(Pylkkänen 2002: 34)

(24) Low applicative is unavailable for depictive (Japanese)

* Taroo-ga hadaka-de Hanako-ni hon-o yonda.

Taro-NOM naked Hanako-DAT book-ACC read

The intended meaning: Taro read Hanako, who was naked, a book.

(Pylkkänen 2002: 32)

Pylkkänen (2002) tests these three diagnostics in distinguishing high and low applicatives in various languages, including English, Japanese, Korean, Luganda, Venda and Albanian. Generally speaking, data from these languages verify the predictions made according to these three diagnostics.

1.6 Summary

In this chapter, I first introduced the theoretical framework of this thesis, the Minimalist Program. Then I reviewed relevant works on applicatives. I provided the definition of applicatives and their typological variations. I presented Pylkkänen's high/low applicative hypothesis in particular.

In Chapter 2, I will introduce “oblique object” constructions and DOCs in Chinese and previous studies about them. In Chapters 3 and 4, I will analyze “oblique object” constructions and DOCs in Chinese on the basis of the high/low applicative hypothesis. In Chapter 3, I will demonstrate that the oblique objects in “oblique object” constructions actually behave differently from typical theme objects in a range of syntactic properties. In

Chapter 4, I will propose and demonstrate the three types of applicatives in Chinese DOCs— namely, low recipient applicatives, low source applicatives, and high malefactive applicatives.

Chapter 2 “Oblique object” constructions and DOCs in Chinese

2.1 Introduction

There are two constructions in Chinese in which a verb is followed by an unselected DP as object: one is the so-called “oblique object” construction (Zhang 1999, Sun 2009), and the other is the traditional double object construction (DOC). In this chapter, I introduce these two constructions, with the purpose of making preparation for an applicative approach to them in Chapters 3 and 4.

This chapter is laid out as follows: in 2.2, I discuss the definition of the term “object”. In 2.3, I give a brief introduction to “oblique object” constructions and DOCs in Chinese. I then introduce these two constructions, and previous studies about them, in more detail in 2.4 and 2.5 respectively. Finally, 2.6 is a summary.

2.2 The definition of “object”

Before I introduce the “oblique object” construction and DOC in Chinese, it is advisable to discuss the definition of the term “object”. In the literature, the object in Chinese is generally defined within the framework of Functional Grammar. Most researchers agree that the recognition of Chinese objects should be based on both the meaning and the location in a clause (Fan 2006: 4). Semantically, an object refers to the person(s) or thing (s) which is (are) dominated by, or involved in, an act (the verb) (Fan

2006: 7); in terms of location, a defining character of object is that it appears after a verb.

Within the framework of transformational syntax, there are really two different conceptions of objects: (a) “thematic” objects, i.e. internal nominal (not PP) arguments, which are merged below the position of the external argument of their clause (below spec-*vP*); and (b) “syntactic” objects, which are identified by their syntactic resemblance to thematic objects in simple transitive clauses, such as bearing accusative case in a NOM-ACC system, triggering “object” agreement on the verb, or being subject to syntactic alternations that typically apply to objects (e.g. movement to the subject position of a passive).

In this thesis, I use the term “object” in both senses. In Chapter 3, I will discuss six properties of four grammatical relations. On one hand, among these six properties are “movement of the object” to the subject position in a passive and in a “theme-subject” clause and “movement of the object” to a position immediately after *BA* in a *BA* construction. These three properties are associated with typical theme objects in Chinese, and from this perspective, I am using the term “object” in the sense of “thematic” object in these three cases. On the other hand, when I analyze and compare the six properties of the four types of “objects”, namely, the theme object, the oblique object, the object of a preposition, and the DOC indirect object, I am seeking to identify the properties of objects in Chinese. From this perspective, I am using the term “object” to refer to the “syntactic object”.

2.3 The two constructions that contain unselected objects in Chinese

Chinese is basically an SV(O) language, as shown in (1).

(1) a. ta shuijiao.

he sleep

He sleeps.

b. ta chi fan.

he eat meal

He eats his meal.

If the event described by the VP involves an oblique semantic role, it is usually expressed by a prepositional phrase which precedes the verb and modifies the VP. For example, in (2a), an oblique argument *xiao chuang* ‘small bed’ is involved in the event of “sleeping” to indicate the location of the event. This oblique argument is introduced by the preposition *zai* ‘at, on’, and the prepositional phrase locates before the verb. Likewise, in (2b), a comitative semantic role *pengyou* ‘friend’ involved in the event of “eat meal” is introduced by the preposition *he* ‘with’.

(2) a. ta zai xiao chuang shuijiao.

he at small bed sleep

He sleeps on the small bed.

b. ta zhengzai he pengyou chi fan.

he ASP with friend eat meal

He is eating his meal with his friend.

However, in Chinese, constructions containing unselected objects are also found abundantly. Chinese has two constructions which contain unselected objects: one is the “oblique object” construction, in which a verb is followed by an unselected object; and the other is the double object construction (DOC), in which a verb is followed by an

unselected object, and then a theme object.

I first introduce the “oblique object” constructions. In the three clauses in (3), the verbs are followed by DPs that are not inherently selected by them.

(3) a. *wode che bu neng kai gaosu.*
 my car no can drive freeway
 My car cannot be driven on the freeway. (Lin 2001: 209)

b. *ta zai ku qushide fuqin.*
 he ASP cry dead father
 He is crying for his father who is dead. (Sun 2009: 74)

c. *jintian wanshang women chi shitang.*
 today evening we eat restaurant
 For today’s supper, we will eat at the restaurant. (Sun 2009: 70)

The DPs following the verbs in (3) are not adjuncts, since adjuncts in Chinese are canonically introduced in prepositional phrases that appear before the verb (Sun and Li 2010), as illustrated by (4).

(4) a. *wode che bu neng zai gaoshu kai.* [Contrast with (3a)]
 my car no can on freeway drive
 My car cannot be driven on the freeway.

b. *ta zai wei qushide fuqin ku.* [Contrast with (3b)]
 he ASP for dead father cry
 He is crying for his father who is dead.

c. *jintian wanshang women zai shitang chi (fan).* [Contrast with (3c)]
 today evening we at restaurant eat (meal)
 For today’s supper, we will eat at the restaurant.

The mainstream analyses in the literature (Gao and Fang 2001, Meng et al. 1984, Tan 1995, Xie and Gu 2009) treat DPs like those in (3) as objects. For example, Meng et al.’s (1984) “Dictionary of the Usage of Verbs” classifies 14 types of objects in terms of

semantic roles, such as “instrumental objects”, “locative object”, “reason objects”, “manner objects”, and so forth. Lin (2001) terms this phenomenon of a verb followed by an unselected DP “non-selectiveness of objects”. Sun and Li (2010) term this “thematic liberty of objects”. While these studies assume these unselected DPs are objects, they have not tested their properties, especially the supposed object-associated properties, in a systematic way. In this thesis, I will test the properties of these unselected DPs in the “oblique object” constructions (Chapter 3).

Another Chinese construction in which a verb is followed by an unselected DP as an object is the double object construction (DOC). In the literature, the term DOC generally refers to a construction containing two internal arguments (objects) that are both nominal (not prepositional). For example, in (5) below, (5a) is a DOC, as the verb ‘give’ has two internal arguments, ‘him’ and ‘several books’, and both of these internal arguments are nominal; (5b), in contrast, is a dative, not a DOC, since one internal argument of the verb, ‘to him’, is not nominal, but prepositional.

- (5) a. The teacher gave him several books.
 b. The teacher gave several books to him.

[Adapted from Larson 1988: 339]

In this thesis, following Zhang (1998) and Huang (2007), I define a DOC in Chinese as a structure of DP + V + DP₁ (indirect object) + DP₂ (theme). In this structure, DP, the clause subject, is the causer of the event; DP₁ (indirect object), is either a recipient, or a source, of DP₂ (the theme). The notion of recipient can either be a recipient of a tangible

entity, or a recipient of something which is abstract (e.g. a benefit), given by the subject. The source can be either a source of a tangible entity, or someone/something that is adversely affected.

In Chinese DOCs, the indirect object, which is not inherently selected by the verb⁶, appears after the verb as an object, as illustrated in (6).

(6) a. ta daduan le zhuozi yi tiao tui.
 he break ASP table one CL leg
 He broke one of the legs of the table. (Xu 1999: 26)

b. wo he le ta san ping jiu.
 I drink ASP him three bottle wine
 I drank three bottles of his wine on him. (Li and Liu 2005: 54)

The verbs *daduan* ‘break’ in (6a) and *he* ‘drink’ in (6b) are monotransitive verbs. However in a DOC, unselected DPs, *zhuozi* ‘table’ in (6a) and *ta* ‘he’ in (6b), enter the predicate of the clause, as arguments that are affected.

In what follows, I will give a more detailed introduction to these two constructions and previous studies about them.

2.4 “Oblique object” constructions in Chinese: types and previous approaches

In this subsection, I introduce three issues about “oblique object” constructions in Chinese:

i . Types of “oblique object” constructions

⁶ Whether the indirect object in DOCs is unselected by a verb such as English “give” (which normally requires two arguments) is still arguable. In this thesis, I follow the tradition in the literature which analyzes the indirect object in DOCs as unselected by the verb (e.g. Marantz 1993, Pyllkänen 2002) and assume that the indirect object in Chinese DOCs is not inherently selected by the verb.

- ii. The light verb approach to “oblique object” constructions
- iii. An applicative approach to “oblique object” constructions

2.4.1 Types of “oblique object” constructions

In the existing literature, “oblique object” constructions are usually classified with respect to the thematic role of the oblique object. The following types, namely, instrument, location, time, manner, and reason, are the most commonly identified in the literature. Examples of these “oblique object” constructions are provided in (7)-(11).

(7) Instrument

a. na zhi bi huai le, ni xie zhe-zhi bi.
 that CL pen break ASP, you write this-CL pen
 That pen doesn't work, you write with this pen. (Lin 2001: 203)

b. qie na -ba dao
 cut that-CL knife
 to cut with that knife (Feng 2005: 5)

(8) Location

a. tade erzi du beida.
 his son read Beijing University
 His son is studying at Beijing University. (Feng 2005: 5)

b. jintian wanshang women chi shitang.
 today evening we eat restaurant
 For today's supper, we will eat at the restaurant. (Sun 2009: 70)

(9) Time

a. zhe liang chuzuche⁷ wo kai baitian, wo zhangfu kai wanshang.
 this CL taxi I drive daytime I husband drive night
 This taxi I drive it during the daytime and my husband drives it at nighttime.
 (Gao and Fang 2001: 62)

⁷ Leslie Saxon questions the role of ‘this taxi’ in this clause. I assume that, in (8a), ‘this taxi’ is a topicalized theme object, and this theme has to be topicalized for clauses like (8a) to be grammatical.

- b. women xiu libailiu.
 we rest Saturday
 We rest on Saturdays. (Gao and Fang 2001: 62)

(10) Manner

- a. hezuide ren bu neng zou zhixian.
 drunken person no can walk straight line
 A drunken person cannot walk along a straight line. (Huang 2009: 85)

- b. mifeng hui fei bazi.
 bee can fly “8”
 Bees can fly along the figure “8”. (Huang 2009: 85)

(11) Reason

- a. ta zai ku qushide fuqin.
 he ASP cry dead father
 He is crying for his father who is dead. (Sun 2009: 74)

- b. ta mangzhe pao shengyi.
 he busy go here and there business
 He is busy going here and there in a hurry for his business. (Huang 2009: 85)

2.4.2 Light verb approach: Lin (2001)

Lin (2001) puts forward a light verb approach to analyze the derivation of “oblique object” constructions. In this subsection, I first introduce the main points of Lin’s hypothesis, and then discuss its limitations.

2.4.2.1 Main points of Lin’s hypothesis

Lin’s light verb hypothesis is based on the following two assumptions:

- i. All “oblique object” constructions in Chinese have equivalent prepositional phrase (PP) constructions.

- ii. It is ambiguous between the corresponding PPs and serial verb constructions (SVCs), therefore the corresponding PPs can also be analyzed as SVCs.

First, Lin assumes that all “oblique object” constructions in Chinese have equivalent PPs, as in (12a) and (12b).

(12) a. “Oblique object” construction

xie zhe-zhi bi

write this-CL pen

use this pen to write (or to write with this pen) (Lin 2001: 203)

b. PP construction corresponding to the “oblique object” construction

yong bi xie xin

with pen write letter

to write a letter with a pen (Lin 2001: 202)

c. Serial verb construction corresponding to PP construction

yong bi xie xin

use pen write letter

use a pen to write letter (Lin 2001: 203)

Then, Lin capitalizes on the special properties of Chinese prepositions. In Chinese, some prepositions can also be used as verbs. For example, the preposition *yong* ‘with’ can also be used as a verb meaning ‘to use’. Given this property of *yong*, Lin critically claims that constructions like *yong bi xie xin*, which translates literally to ‘with/to use pen write letter’, are “structurally ambiguous— on one hand, they can be a VP structure with a pre-verbal PP modifier [(12b)]; on the other hand, they can be serial verb constructions [(12c)], with a VP taking another VP as complement” (Lin 2001: 225). This is illustrated by Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2.

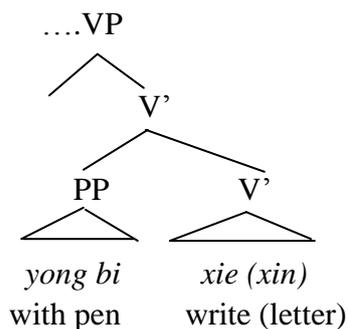


Figure 2-1: PP modification
(Lin 2001: 225)

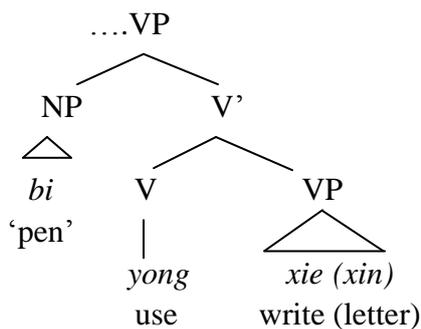


Figure 2-2: Serial verb construction
(Lin 2001: 225)

Based on these two assumptions, Lin hypothesizes that “oblique object” constructions are derived from serial verb constructions (SVC). In the derivation, the first verb (V_1) in the SVC (Figure 2-3) becomes a light verb (v) without phonetic form⁸ in the “oblique object” construction (Figure 2-4). This light verb takes the oblique object, which is the DP specifier of VP_1 in the SVC, as its specifier, and takes the VP, or in other words, the VP_2 in the SVC, as its complement. This light verb triggers the main verb (V_2) to incorporate into it, and then rises and incorporates into the higher subject-selecting light verb v , thus yielding the structure of the “oblique object” construction.

⁸ Lin (2001) does not explain why and how V_1 in the SVC becomes a light verb without phonetic form in “oblique object” constructions.

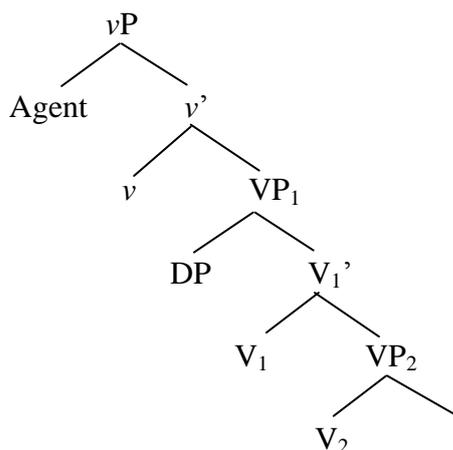


Figure 2-3: Serial verb construction
(Adapted from Figure 2-2)

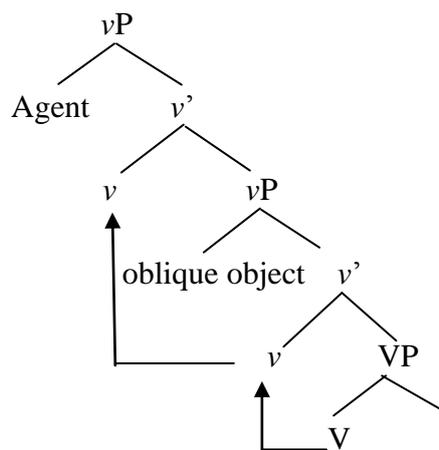


Figure 2-4: Oblique object construction
(Adapted from Lin 2001: 226)

2.4.2.2 Comments on Lin's light verb hypothesis

While Lin's light verb hypothesis captures the properties of some "oblique object" constructions in Chinese, it faces empirical challenges too. This hypothesis predicts that, for every "oblique object" construction, there exists a corresponding PP construction, and that the preposition in these PP constructions can be used as a verb as well, so that these PP constructions can also be analyzed as SVCs. However, while these predictions hold for some "oblique object" constructions, they by no means hold for all "oblique object" constructions in Chinese.

First, not every "oblique object" construction in Chinese has a corresponding PP construction. For the sentence in (13), it is hard to conceive of an acceptable equivalent PP construction (Sun 2009).

(13) ta jingchang chuang hong deng.
he often rush red light

He often goes ahead against the red traffic light. (Sun 2009: 73)

Second, not all prepositions in Chinese can be used as verbs. For example, (14b), in which the preposition is *yanzhe* ‘along’, is the corresponding PP construction of (14a).

(14) a. “Oblique object” construction [Repeated from (10b) above]

mifeng hui fei bazi.
 bee can fly “8”
 Bees can fly along the figure “8”.

b. Corresponding PP construction

mifeng neng yanzhe bazi fei.
 bee can along “8” fly
 Bees can fly along the figure “8”.

In Chinese, the preposition *yanzhe* ‘along’ cannot be used as a verb in any case; therefore, Lin’s prediction that all “oblique object” constructions have corresponding SVCs is not borne out.

2.4.3 Applicative approach: Sun (2009)

Sun (2009) makes a preliminary exploration on approaching the “oblique object” constructions from the perspective of applicative. In this subsection, I first introduce the main points of Sun’s argument, and then comment on it.

2.4.3.1 The derivation of “oblique object” constructions

Sun suggests that Chinese “oblique object” constructions can be analyzed as high applicatives in Pykkänen’s (2002) typology, as these constructions semantically indicate a relation between the oblique object and the event described by the VP. Sun hypothesizes that the oblique object is introduced by a high applicative head, which takes the oblique object as specifier and the VP as complement. The main verb of the VP first rises and incorporates into this applicative head, and then further rises to the subject-selecting v ,

thus yielding the surface order of the “oblique object” construction. I demonstrate the derivation process with the example (15).

(15) “Oblique object” construction

Ta zuo shafa.

he sit sofa

He sits on the sofa.

According to Sun’s hypothesis, the applied object *shafa* ‘sofa’ is introduced by a high applicative head. This applicative head has *shafa* ‘sofa’ as specifier and the VP *zuo* ‘sit’ as complement. The verb *zuo* ‘sit’ in the VP first rises and incorporates into the applied head, and then rises and incorporates into the higher subject-selecting light verb *v*, thus yielding the surface order of the clause, as illustrated by Figure 2-5.

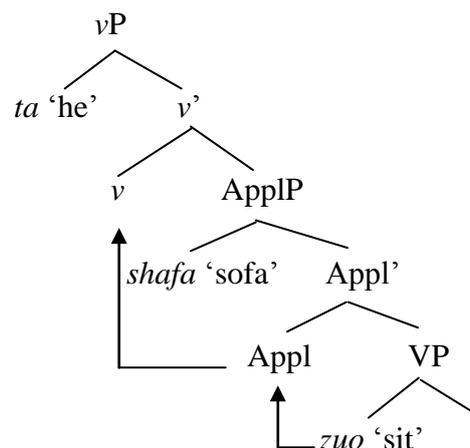


Figure 2-5: Derivation of “oblique object” constructions

2.4.3.2 The syntactic properties of “oblique object” constructions

Sun (2009) examines the syntactic properties of “oblique object” constructions and observes that there exist asymmetries between the oblique and the theme object. Sun discusses asymmetries in three respects:

As shown in (18b), when an “oblique object” construction is converted to a *BA* construction, it is still grammatical; however, its meaning is absurd and different from the corresponding non-*BA* construction.

2.4.3.2.3 The ability to be modified by adjectives

Theme objects can be modified by adjectives; oblique objects, however, are usually bare NPs, and cannot be modified by descriptive adjectives, as illustrated by the contrast between (19a) and (19b).

(19) a. “Oblique object” construction

chi shitang
eat restaurant
to eat at a restaurant

b. The oblique object cannot be modified by adjective(s)

chi (*sange / *ganjingde) shitang
eat (three / clean) restaurant
to eat at three / a clean restaurant (Sun 2009: 73)

Sun (2009) describes these three asymmetries between oblique objects and theme objects, but provides no explanation for them.

2.4.3.3 Comments on Sun’s high applicative analysis

Sun’s (2009) study is one of the first explorations analyzing Chinese “oblique object” constructions from an applicative approach. This applicative approach has shed new light on our understanding of Chinese “oblique object” constructions. In my view, Sun’s work provides a good point of departure for further research on this issue.

In this thesis, I adopt Sun’s proposal that “oblique object” constructions in Chinese can be analyzed as high applicatives. Sun has examined some of the syntactic properties of

“oblique object” constructions. On the basis of Sun’s study, I will test the properties of the oblique object in Chapter 3 in a more systematic way. In Chapter 3, I will compare the properties of the theme object, the indirect object in DOCs, the oblique object, and the object of adjunct PPs in six respects, to examine how the oblique object behaves like the theme object on one hand, and how it behaves differently from the theme object and the object of adjunct PPs on the other hand.

2.5 DOCs in Chinese

This section includes three subsections. In 2.5.1, I introduce the two types of DOCs in Chinese; in 2.5.2, I introduce Zhang’s (1998) double VP hypothesis about Chinese DOCs; and then in 2.5.3, I introduce two applicative approaches to Chinese DOCs: Sun and Li (2010), and Cheng and Wen (2008).

2.5.1 The two types of DOCs in Chinese

Huang (2007) classifies DOCs in Chinese into two categories based on the meaning of the verb. One type is represented by verbs that have the “giving” meaning, such as *gei* ‘give’, *song* ‘send’, *jiangli* ‘award’, *fā* ‘distribute’, and a few others (20).

- (20) a. Zhangsan *gei* le Lisi yi ben shu.
 Zhangsan give ASP Lisi one copy book
 Zhangsan gave Lisi a book. (Huang 2007: 6)
- b. ta *song* le wo yi qian kuai.
 he send ASP me one thousand dollar
 He sent me a thousand dollars. (Huang 2007: 7)

The other type is represented by verbs that have the “depriving” sense, like *tou* ‘steal’, *qiang* ‘rob’, *fa* ‘fine’ (21).

(21) a. ta tou le Lisi liang tai diannaoh.
 he steal ASP Lisi two CL computer
 He stole two computers from Lisi. (Huang 2007: 16)

b. jingcha fa le wo wu bai kuai.
 police fine ASP me five hundred dollar
 The policeman fined me five hundred dollars. (Huang 2007: 16)

Huang (2007) terms the two types of DOCs the “*giving*” DOCs and the “*robbing and stealing*” DOC (hereafter referred to as “*stealing*” DOCs). Essentially, *giving* DOCs indicate situations in which the indirect object is given something or some advantage, and *stealing* DOCs express situations in which the indirect object suffers some loss or is adversely affected.

In this thesis, I adopt Huang’s two-type classification of Chinese DOCs; however, in Chapter 4, I will suggest classifying each of these two types into finer subgroups.

2.5.2 Double VP hypothesis: Zhang (1998)

Zhang (1998) investigates DOCs in English and Chinese, and proposes a double VP hypothesis to account for the properties of DOCs in these two languages. In this section, I first introduce the main points of Zhang’s hypothesis, and then demonstrate its predictive potential and limitations.

2.5.2.1 Main points of Zhang’s hypothesis

Zhang’s hypothesis consists of the following main points:

i. Zhang claims that, semantically, DOCs in English and Chinese indicate that the subject causes the transfer of the direct object (DO) *to* or *from* the indirect object (IO), whereby the IO is “getting” or “losing” something¹⁰.

ii. Based on Larson’s (1988) double VP structure, Zhang hypothesizes a double VP structure for DOCs (Figure 2-6). This double VP structure contains a low VP projection (VP_{Low}) and a high VP projection (VP_{High})¹¹. The verb of a DOC occupies the head of the high VP. Within the low VP, the DO occupies the complement position, and the IO occupies the specifier position.

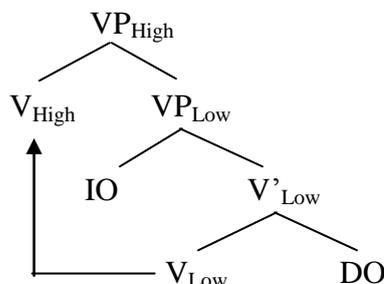


Figure 2-6: Double VP structure for DOCs (Zhang 1998: 184)

iii. The head of the low VP contains a verbal element which indicates the direction of the transfer, or in other words, decides which thematic role the indirect object bears (the recipient, or the source). This element can be null or a morpheme. In English, it is null,

¹⁰ Zhang (1998) does not discuss other possibilities for Chinese DOCs. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, other relations are possible in Chinese DOCs besides the transfer of the direct object.

¹¹ Zhang (1998) uses “high” and “low” just to refer to the two VP projections, hence Zhang’s “high” and “low” have different meanings from Pylkkänen’s “high” and “low” which refer to two different types of applicatives.

and in Chinese, it is either null or a morpheme. When it is null, the direction of the transfer is determined by parameters, which for English is “recipient”, and for Chinese is “source”.

2.5.2.2 The predictive potential and limitations of Zhang’s hypothesis

Zhang’s hypothesis captures the major semantic and syntactic properties of some, but not all, DOCs in Chinese. I will demonstrate this by analyzing relevant examples.

2.5.2.2.1 The predictive potential of Zhang’s hypothesis

i. Zhang hypothesizes that Chinese DOCs semantically indicate that the subject causes the transfer of the DO *to* or *from* the IO. This hypothesis captures the semantic characteristics of many DOCs in Chinese. For example, (22a) below indicates that the subject *ta* ‘he’ caused the transfer of the DO *yi zhang heka* ‘a card’ *to* the IO *wo* ‘me’, and therefore implies that the IO got something. (22b) means the subject *wo* ‘I’ caused the transfer of the DO *san ge pingguo* ‘three apples’ *from* the IO *Xiaowang* by eating them up, thus implying that the IO suffered a loss of three apples.

(22) a. *ta song le wo yi zhang heka.*
 he send ASP me one CL card
 He sent me a card.

b. *wo chi le Xiaowang san ge pingguo.*
 I eat ASP Xiaowang three CL apple
 I ate three of Xiaowang’s apples on him (Xiaowang).

ii. Zhang’s hypothesis that the low VP head functions to indicate the transfer direction of the DO can account for the syntactic properties of many Chinese DOCs.

First, Zhang’s hypothesis that the low VP head indicating the direction of the transfer can be null or a morpheme is borne out. The case in which the low VP head is null can be

illustrated by (22) above, and the morpheme case can be illustrated by (23) below. In (23a), *gei* ‘give’ indicates *to* direction, and in (23b), the verb *zou* ‘go’ indicates *from* direction.

- (23) a. ta ban **-gei** -le wo yi ba yizi.
 he move-give-ASP me one CL chair
 He brought a chair to me.
- b. ta ban **-zou**-le wo yi ba yizi.
 he move-go-ASP me one CL chair
 He took a chair from me.

(Zhang 1998: 181)

Second, Zhang hypothesizes that, when the low VP head is null and the meaning of the verb can potentially indicate both *to* and *from* direction, the direction is determined by parameters, which for Chinese is *from* direction. Data in Chinese support this hypothesis, as illustrated in (24).

- (24) a. Lao Li **tou** -le wo yi ben shu.
 Lao Li steal-ASP me one CL book
 Lao Li stole a book from me.
 This clause does not have the reading: “Lao Li stole a book for me.”
- b. ta **ban** -le wo yi ba yizi.
 he move -ASP me one CL chair
 He took a chair from me.
 This clause does not have the reading: “He brought a chair for me.”

(Zhang 1998: 182)

2.5.2.2.2 The limitations of Zhang’s hypothesis

While Zhang’s double VP hypothesis captures the properties of a large part of DOCs in Chinese, it fails to account for others. Zhang hypothesizes that Chinese DOCs semantically indicate that the subject causes the transfer of the DO *to* or *from* the IO; however, some DOCs in Chinese do not indicate a transfer, as the case in (25). That is to

say, Zhang's hypothesis cannot account for all Chinese DOCs.

(25) a. wo an le qianmiande siji yi laba.

I press ASP front driver one horn

I honked at the driver in front of me (thus he was negatively affected).

(Sun and Li 2010: 27)

b. women dui da le tamen dui yi ge qianleida.

we team hit ASP they team one CL homerun

Our team hit a homerun on their team. (Adapted from Tsai and Yang 2008: 4)

Zhang's double VP hypothesis shares essence with Pykkänen's low applicative hypothesis in that they both hypothesize the existence of a head that indicates the direction of the transference of the direct object. In other words, Zhang demonstrates that some DOCs in Chinese are actually low applicatives in Pykkänen's typology.

In this thesis, I adopt this aspect of Zhang's hypothesis. I will further argue in Chapter 4 that Chinese DOCs that can be accounted for by Zhang's hypothesis are low applicatives, and DOCs that cannot be accounted for by Zhang's hypothesis are high applicatives.

2.5.3 Applicative approach: Sun and Li (2010), Cheng and Wen (2008)

Sun and Li (2010) and Cheng and Wen (2008) both suggest an applicative approach to Chinese DOCs based on Pykkänen's high/low applicative hypothesis. However, they disagree on which type of applicatives Chinese DOCs belong to. Sun and Li (2010) argue that DOCs in Chinese can be analyzed as low applicatives, while Cheng and Wen (2008) suggest that Chinese DOCs are high applicatives. I introduce these two analyses below.

2.5.3.1 Sun and Li (2010)

In this subsection, I first introduce the main points of Sun and Li's proposal, and then I comment on it.

2.5.3.1.1 Main points of Sun and Li's proposal

Sun and Li put forward two main arguments:

- i . DOCs in Chinese conform to the defining characters of applicatives.
- ii . DOCs in Chinese are low applicatives.

i . DOCs in Chinese conform to the defining characteristics of applicatives.

Sun and Li argue that Chinese DOCs conform to the defining characters of applicatives in two important respects, and therefore they can be analyzed as applicatives.

First, Sun and Li argue that the nature of the indirect object in Chinese DOCs is that an unselected argument bearing the theta-role of “affectee” is realized as an object. In this respect, Chinese DOCs conform to the defining character of applied objects. Sun and Li argue that, in (26), the verb *shao* ‘burn’ is a monotransitive verb; however, in the DOC, a non-core argument *ta* ‘him’ is added to its argument structure.

- (26) wo shao le ta san jian fang.
 I burn ASP him three CL house
 I burnt three rooms of his house on him. (Sun and Li 2010: 28)

Second, Sun and Li claim that another character of applicatives is that a distribution of object properties between the applied and the basic object takes place, with the applied object acquiring, and the basic object losing, some object properties. Sun and Li argue that this is the case in Chinese DOCs. For example, in some DOCs, the indirect object acquires

the ability to move to the subject position in passives, while the direct object loses this ability, as illustrated in (27).

(27) a. DOC

wo chi le ta yi ge pingguo.

I eat ASP him one CL apple

I eat an apple of him (therefore caused a loss of an apple on him).

b. Indirect object moves to the subject position in a passive

ta bei wo chi le yi ge pingguo.

he bei I eat ASP one CL apple

One of his apples was eaten on him by me.

c. Direct object cannot move to the subject position in a passive

* yi ge pingguo bei wo chi le ta.

one CL apple bei me eat ASP him

The intended meaning: One of his apples was eaten on him by me.

(Sun and Li 2010: 28)

ii. DOCs in Chinese are low applicatives

Sun and Li argue that, in Chinese DOCs, the indirect object bears no direct semantic relation to the verb, but bears a transfer relation to the direct object, as illustrated in (26) and (27a) above, so they are low applicatives in Pylkkänen's (2002) typology.

Sun and Li further claim that a major character of Chinese with regard to DOCs is that Chinese prefers *source* applicatives. They argue that, for most Chinese DOCs, the indirect object tends to be interpreted as a *source* or *malefactive*, and it is hard for a benefactive to enter DOCs, as illustrated in (28) and (29).

(28) a. ta hui le wo yi dong fangzi.

he destroy ASP me one CL house

He destroyed one of my houses on me. (Sun and Li 2010: 29)

- b. * ta zao le wo yi dong fangzi.
 he build ASP me one CL house
 The intended meaning: He built a house for me.

(Sun and Li 2010: 29)

- (29) a. ta xielu le zuzhi henduo mimi.
 he betray ASP organization many secret
 He betrayed many of the organization's secrets on the organization.

- b. * ta baoshou le zuzhi henduo mimi.
 he keep ASP organization many secret
 The intended meaning: He kept many of the organization's secrets for the organization.

(Sun and Li 2010: 29)

2.5.3.1.2 Comments on Sun and Li's analysis

Sun and Li's (2010) analysis captures the properties of some DOCs in Chinese. In particular, their observation that, in some DOCs, the indirect object bears no direct semantic relation to the verb, but bears a transfer relation to the direct object, and their conclusion that Chinese prefers *source* type of applicatives, are in accordance with Chinese data and can be demonstrated by ample examples.

Like Zhang's double VP hypothesis, Sun and Li's analysis only holds for DOCs in which a transfer of the theme is involved. As illustrated in (25) above, Chinese also has DOCs in which no transfer of the theme is involved, which Sun and Li's "low applicative" analysis cannot account for.

In this thesis, I partly adopt Sun and Li's analysis. I will argue in Chapter 4 that Sun and Li's analysis only applies to one subgroup of Chinese DOCs: *stealing* DOCs with a possessive relation between the indirect object and the theme.

2.5.3.2 Cheng and Wen (2008)

In this section, I introduce Cheng and Wen's proposal, and discuss its limitations.

2.5.3.2.1 Analysis of Cheng and Wen (2008)

Cheng and Wen argue that DOCs in Chinese should be analyzed as high applicatives, since the majority of Chinese DOCs do not indicate the transfer of the direct object *from* or *to* the indirect object¹². They claim that Chinese DOCs indicate a relation between the indirect object and the event described by the VP, and they give the example (30).

(30) Laoli xiu le Wang jia san shan men.
 Laoli repair ASP Wang family three CL door
 Laoli repaired three doors of Wang's house.

(Cheng and Wen 2008: 83)

Cheng and Wen argue that the event of "Laoli repaired three doors of Wang's house" do not cause the transfer of 'the three doors', and this DOC actually indicates a relation between the indirect object 'Wang's family' and the event that "Laoli repaired three doors of 'Wang's house'". Therefore, it is not suitable to analyze the DOC in (30) as a low applicative.

Based on this argument, Cheng and Wen claim that Chinese DOCs should be analyzed as high applicatives. They further suggest that the high applicative head can be analyzed as a light verb with the meaning of "undergo". This light verb takes the VP as complement and the applied argument as specifier. Semantically, DOCs in Chinese indicate that the applied argument *undergoes* the event described by the VP.

¹² Cheng and Wen do not provide evidence or statistic data to support this claim.

2.5.3.2.2 Limitations of Cheng and Wen's proposal

Cheng and Wen correctly observe that some Chinese DOCs do not indicate a transfer of the DO *to* or *from* the IO; however, their proposal faces empirical challenges too.

First, Cheng and Wen's claim that the *majority* of Chinese DOCs do not indicate the transfer of the direct object probably does not conform to data in Chinese. As illustrated in this chapter, Chinese has many DOCs which clearly indicate a transfer of the direct object *to* or *from* the indirect object.

Second, according to Pylkkänen (2002), in a high applicative, the applied object bears no direct semantic relation to the direct object within the VP. However, in *stealing* DOCs, the indirect object does bear a direct semantic relation to the direct object, and is interpreted as the possessor of the direct object (Sun and Li 2010). For example in (29a), repeated as (31) below, the indirect object *zushi* 'organization' is interpreted as the possessor of the direct object *henduo mimi* 'many secrets'. Obviously, a high applicative analysis cannot capture this semantic property.

- (31) ta xielu le zuzhi henduo mimi.
 he betray ASP organization many secret
 He betrayed many of the organization's secrets on the organization.

Third, Cheng and Wen's hypothesis that Chinese DOCs are high applicatives and that the applicative head can be analyzed as a light verb meaning "undergo" cannot capture the adversity meaning of some *stealing* DOCs. In Chinese, some *stealing* DOCs have the meaning that the indirect object is adversely affected, as illustrated by (31) above.

According to Cheng and Wen, (31) is to be interpreted as “the organization *underwent* the event that he betrayed many secrets”. However, this “undergoing” interpretation does not necessarily imply that ‘the organization’ was adversely affected, especially considering that the indirect object ‘the organization’ is supposed not to bear any semantic relation to the direct object ‘many secrets’. Thus, Cheng and Wen’s analysis cannot capture the semantics of this clause.

In this thesis, I partly adopt Cheng and Wen’s (2008) proposal. I will argue in Chapter 4 that some, but not all, Chinese DOCs can be analyzed as high applicatives in Pylkkänen’s (2002) high/low applicative typology.

2.6 Summary

In this chapter, I introduced “oblique object” constructions and DOCs in Chinese. I then introduced previous approaches to these two constructions in the literature. I demonstrated that, while these previous studies capture part of the facts about “oblique object” constructions and DOCs in Chinese, they also face empirical challenges.

On the basis of these previous studies, I will carry out a further analysis on “oblique object” constructions and DOCs in Chinese from an applicative perspective in Chapters 3 and 4.

Chapter 3 An applicative approach to “oblique object” constructions

3.1 Introduction

For the applicative approach to “oblique object” constructions proposed in the literature (e.g. Sun 2009), one issue that deserves further study is the properties of the oblique object. Consider example (1). In (1a), a normal simple clause in Chinese, the oblique argument *shitang* ‘restaurant’ is introduced into the clause in an adjunct PP. In contrast, in (1b), the oblique argument *shitang* ‘restaurant’, from the applicative perspective, is introduced by an applicative head, and realized as an (applied) object of the verb.

- (1) a. Normal simple clause
 ta zai shitang chi fan.
 he at restaurant eat meal
 He eats at a restaurant.
- b. “Oblique object” construction
 ta chi shitang.
 he eat restaurant
 He eats at a restaurant.

Given the contrast between (1a) and (1b), and especially considering that the essence of an applicative construction is to realize an oblique argument as an object of the main verb, it is reasonable to infer that this oblique argument, *shitang* ‘restaurant’ in (1b), for example, might demonstrate properties like a theme object on one hand, and properties different from the object of an adjunct PP on the other hand.

These inferences, however, have not been tested in a systematic manner so far. The task of this chapter is to examine what object properties the oblique object has, and in what respect(s) it behaves differently from a theme object and from the object of an adjunct PP. To give a preliminary answer to this question, I compare the behaviors of the theme object, the oblique object, and the object of adjunct PPs. As I will explore an applicative approach to DOCs in Chapter 4, I also include the indirect object of DOCs in this comparison as well.

The rest of this chapter includes 3 sections. In 3.2, I investigate six syntactic properties of the theme object, the oblique object, the object of adjunct PPs, and the indirect object in DOCs. In 3.3, I discuss the implications of the similarities and differences. 3.4 is a summary of this chapter.

3.2 Six properties of the four types of objects

The six properties this chapter tests are listed below:

- (A) The ability to move to subject position in passives
- (B) The ability to be shifted in *BA* constructions
- (C) The ability to convert to “theme-subject” clauses
- (D) The relativization pattern
- (E) The ability to be modified by adjectives
- (F) The ability to become *wh*-phrases

Among these six properties, only properties (A), (B), and (C) are associated with typical theme objects. Properties (D), (E), and (F) are not “objecthood” properties per se, but rather syntactic properties which differ for theme objects and oblique objects. I test these six properties with the purpose of illustrating how the oblique object behaves like a theme object, indirect object, or the object of a preposition, and how it behaves differently from these.

The characteristics of the four types of objects are summarized in Table 3-1.

| Properties | Theme object | Indirect object in DOCs | Oblique object | Object of adjunct PPs |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| The ability to move to subject position in passives | yes | some DOCs: yes some DOCs: no | no | no |
| The ability to be shifted in BA constructions | yes | some DOC: yes some DOC: no | no | no |
| The ability to convert to “theme-subject” clauses | yes | no | no | no |
| The relativization pattern | adjective or pronoun is not needed | personal pronoun and demonstrative adjective are needed | demonstrative adjective is needed | demonstrative pronoun and adjective are needed |
| The ability to be modified by adjectives | full ability | full ability | limited ability | full ability |
| The ability to become <i>wh</i> -phrases | yes | yes | some: yes some: no | yes |

Table 3-1: Six properties of four types of objects

(The shadowed properties are associated with theme objects in Chinese)

3.2.1 The ability to move to subject position in passives

In Chinese, the pattern of converting a typical SVO clause to a passive is to move the object to the subject position, and insert the particle *bei*(被), which indicates passive, in front of the VP. The agent can optionally appear immediately after *bei*. These four types of objects demonstrate different properties in the ability to move to the subject position in passives.

3.2.1.1 The theme object

The theme object can move to the subject position in passives, as illustrated in (2).

(2) a. Clause containing a theme object

wo chi fan.

I eat meal

I eat the meal.

b. The theme object moves to the subject position in a passive

fan bei wo chi le.

meal bei me eat ASP

The meal was eaten by me.

3.2.1.2 The oblique object

The “oblique object” constructions cannot convert to passives by moving the oblique object to the subject position, as illustrated in (3).

(3) a. “Oblique object” construction

ta chi shitang.

he eat restaurant

He eats at a restaurant.

b. Moving the oblique object to the subject position in a passive

shitang bei ta chi le.

restaurant bei him eat ASP

The restaurant is eaten by him.

(3b) is grammatical; however, its meaning is absurd. Exactly, “oblique object” constructions in Chinese cannot be passivized. Here I cite Xu’s (2003) argument as an explanation. Xu (2003: 11) argues that a semantic prerequisite for a construction to be passivized is that the object needs to bear a direct semantic relation to the verb, be affected by the verb, and experience change due to the effect of the verb. Since the object in the “oblique object” constructions does not bear a direct semantic relation to the verb, but bears a relation to the event described by the VP, these constructions cannot be passivized.¹³

3.2.1.3 The object of an adjunct PP

The object of an adjunct PPs cannot move to the subject position to form a passive either, as illustrated in (4).

(4) a. Clause containing an adjunct PP

ta zai shitang chi fan.
 he at restaurant eat meal
 He eats his meal at the restaurant.

b. The object of an adjunct PP cannot move to the subject position in a passive

* shitang bei ta zai chi fan.
 restaurant bei him at eat meal
 The intended meaning: The restaurant is being used by him for eating his meal.

¹³ It should be noted that while Xu (2003) provides a reasonable explanation to why “oblique object” constructions in Chinese cannot convert to passives, his analysis might not be extended to some other cases. For example, the clause *wo kanjian ta le* which literally means ‘I saw him’ can convert to a passive as *ta bei wo kanjian le* ‘He was seen by me’, even though, in this example, the object is not “affected by the verb, and experience change due to the effect of the verb”, as Xu (2003) claims.

3.2.1.4 The DOC indirect object

In converting to passives, DOCs in Chinese include two cases. In one case, the indirect object can, but the theme object cannot, move to the subject position, as in (5).

(5) a. DOC

wo rang le ta san bu qi.
I concede ASP him three move chess
I permitted him to make three moves of chess.

b. The indirect object moves to the subject position in a passive

ta bei wo rang le san bu qi.
he bei me concede ASP three move chess
He was permitted by me to make three moves of chess (before I made my move).

c. The theme cannot move to the subject position in passives

* san bu qi bei wo rang le ta.
three move chess bei me concede ASP he
The intended meaning: He was permitted by me to make three moves of chess
(before I made a move).

In the other case, the theme object, but not the indirect object, moves to the subject position in converting to passives, as in (6).

(6) a. DOC

Zhangsan song le Lisi yi ben shu.
Zhangsan send ASP Lisi one copy book
Zhangsan sent Lisi a book.

b. The theme object moves to the subject position in a passive

yi ben shu bei Zhangsan song le Lisi.
one copy book bei Zhangsan send ASP Lisi
A book was sent to Lisi by Zhangsan.

c. The indirect object cannot move to the subject position in a passive

* Lisi bei Zhangsan song le yi ben shu.
Lisi bei Zhangsan send ASP one copy book
The intended meaning: Lisi was sent a book by Zhangsan.

The difference between (5) and (6) in the object that moves to the subject position in passives will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 (4.2). Both (5) and (6) belong to *giving* DOCs in Chinese. In Chapter 4, I will suggest dividing Chinese *giving* DOCs further into two subtypes, “*giving* DOCs with concrete-transfer” and “*giving* DOCs with abstract-transfer”. I will show that the two subtypes of *giving* DOCs have different semantic and syntactic properties, including the difference in the object that moves to the subject position in passives.

With regard to converting to passives, only the theme object and the indirect object in some DOCs can move to the subject position; the other objects examined here, namely, the oblique object, the object of adjunct PPs, and the indirect object in other DOCs, do not have this ability.

3.2.2. The ability to be shifted in *BA* constructions

The four types of objects have different properties in their ability to be shifted in *BA* constructions, as demonstrated below.

3.2.2.1 The theme object

Clauses containing theme objects can be converted to *BA* constructions by inserting *BA* in front of the verb and shifting the theme object to a position immediately following *BA*, as illustrated in (7).

- (7) a. Clause containing theme object
 wo xian chi fan.
 I first eat meal
 I will have the meal first.

b. *BA* construction

wo xian *BA* fan chi le.
 I first *BA* meal eat ASP
 I will have the meal first.

3.2.2.2 The oblique object

The “oblique object” constructions cannot convert to *BA* constructions, as in (8).

(8) a. “Oblique object” construction

wo chi shitang.
 I eat restaurant
 I ate at a restaurant.

b. *BA* construction

wo *BA* shitang chi le.
 I *BA* restaurant eat ASP
 I have eaten the restaurant.

In this example, (8b) is grammatical; however, its meaning is absurd.

3.2.2.3 The object of an adjunct PP

Like the oblique object, the object of an adjunct PP cannot move to a position immediately following *BA*, as shown in (9).

(9) a. Clause containing an adjunct PP

ta zai shitang chi fan.
 he at restaurant eat meal
 He ate his meal at the restaurant.

b. Converting to a *BA* construction by shifting the prepositional object

* ta zai *BA* shitang chi fan. or * ta *BA* shitang zai chi fan.
 He at *BA* restaurant eat meal he *BA* restaurant at eat meal
 The intended meaning: He ate his meal at the restaurant.

3.2.2.4 The DOC indirect object

DOCs in Chinese include two cases in converting to *BA* constructions. In one case, the indirect object is shifted to the position immediately following *BA*, and the theme

object cannot be shifted, as in (10).

(10) a. DOC [Repeated from (25b) in Chapter 2]

women dui da le tamen dui yi ge quanleida.
 we team hit ASP they team one CL homerun
 Our team hit a homerun on their team. (Tsai 2008: 4)

b. The indirect object is shifted in converting to a *BA* construction

women dui BA tamen dui da le yi ge quanleida.
 our team BA they team hit ASP one CL homerun
 Our team hit a homerun on their team.

c. The theme object cannot be shifted in converting to a *BA* construction

* women dui BA yi ge quanleida da le tamen dui.
 our team BA one CL homerun hit ASP their team
 The intended meaning: Our team hit a homerun upon their team.

In the other case, the theme object shifts to the position immediately following *BA*

and the indirect object cannot be shifted, as illustrated in (11).

(11) a. DOC

Zhangsan song le Lisi yi ben shu.
 Zhangsan send ASP Lisi one copy book
 Zhangsan sent Lisi a book.

b. The theme object shifts in converting to a *BA* construction

Zhangsan BA yi ben shu song le Lisi.
 Zhangsan BA one copy book send ASP Lisi
 One book was sent to Lisi by Zhangsan.

c. The indirect object cannot be shifted in converting to a *BA* construction

* Zhangsan BA Lisi song le yi ben shu.
 Zhangsan BA Lisi send ASP one copy book
 The intended meaning: Zhangsan sent Lisi a book.

In converting to *BA* constructions, only the indirect object of some DOCs has the property like the theme object. The oblique object, the object of an adjunct PP, and the indirect object of some other DOCs, do not have this property.

3.2.3 The ability to convert to “theme-subject” clauses

A clause containing a theme object can convert to a “theme-subject” clause by moving the theme object to the subject position; however, a clause containing an oblique object cannot follow this pattern and convert to an “oblique-subject” clause by moving the oblique object to the subject position (see 2.4.3.2).

The object of an adjunct PP cannot move to the subject position to make a similar “prepositional-object subject” clause, as shown in (12).

(12) a. Clause containing an adjunct PP

zai shitang chi fan.
at restaurant eat meal
Someone eats his meal at the restaurant.

b. Moving the prepositional object to the subject position

* shitang zai chi fan.
restaurant at eat meal
The intended meaning: The restaurant is where somebody eats his/her meal.

DOCs cannot convert to “IO-subject” clauses by moving the indirect object (IO) to the subject position either, as in (13).

(13) a. DOC

song le Zhangsan yi ben shu.
send ASP Zhangsan one CL book
(Somebody) sent Zhangsan a book.

b. moving the indirect object to the subject position

Zhangsan song le yi ben shu.
Zhangsan send ASP one CL book
Zhangsan sent a book (to somebody).

(13b) is grammatical; however, its meaning is different from the original DOC, as the translation indicates.

With regard to the properties of converting to “theme object” constructions, only the theme object has the ability to move to the subject position to make a “theme object” construction. The other three types of object, the oblique object, the object of adjunct PPs, and the indirect object in DOCs, do not have this ability.

3.2.4 The relativization pattern

In Chinese, the basic pattern of relativizing a DP is to insert the particle *DE* (的) before the relativized DP, which is in turn preceded by the relative clause from which the relativized DP is extracted. In some cases (as discussed below), a demonstrative or personal pronoun in the extraction site and/or a demonstrative adjective before the relativized DP (after *DE*) is also needed. The four types of objects have different properties in this respect.

3.2.4.1 The theme object

A theme object can be relativized by directly inserting *DE* before it, and no demonstrative pronoun or adjective is needed, as demonstrated in (14).

(14) a. Clause containing a theme object

ta zhengzai du shu.
 he ASP read book
 He is reading a book.

b. Relativizing the theme object

ta zhengzai du de shu hen youqu.
 he ASP read DE book very interesting
 The book he is reading is very interesting.

3.2.4.2 The oblique object

When relativizing an oblique object, besides the insertion of *DE*, a demonstrative adjective preceding the oblique object is needed too, as illustrated in (15) and (16).

(15) a. “Oblique object” construction

tade erzi zhengzai du daxue.
his son ASP read university
His son is studying at a university.

b. Relativizing the oblique object

tade erzi zhengzai du de *(nage) daxue hen youming.
his son ASP read DE (that) university very famous
The university at which his son is studying is quite famous.

(16) a. “Oblique object” construction

[Repeated from (8b) in Chapter 2]

women xiu libailiu.
we rest Saturday
We rest on Saturdays.

b. Relativizing the oblique object

women xiu de *(nage) libailiu xiayu le.
we rest DE (that) Saturday rain ASP
The Saturday on which we rested was a rainy day.

3.2.4.3 The object of an adjunct PP

In relativizing the object of an adjunct PP, besides inserting *DE* before the object, a demonstrative adjective before this object (following *DE*), and a resumptive pronoun in extraction site, are also needed, as illustrated in (17).

(17) a. Clause containing an adjunct PP

ta zai shitang chi fan.
he at restaurant eat meal
He is eating his meal at a restaurant.

b. Relativizing the prepositional object

ta zai *(nali) chi fan de *(nage) shitang hen youming.
he at there eat meal DE (that) restaurant very famous
The restaurant where he eats is very famous.

3.2.4.4 The DOC indirect object

In relativizing the indirect object of DOCs, besides inserting *DE* before the indirect object, a demonstrative adjective before the indirect object (following *DE*), and a resumptive pronoun in the extraction site, are also needed, as illustrated in (18).

(18) a. DOC

wo gei le pengyou yi ben shu.
 I give ASP friend one CL book
 I gave a friend a book.

b. Relativizing the indirect object of DOC

wo gei le *(ta) yi ben shu de *(nage) pengyou jiao Wang.
 I give ASP (him) one CL book DE (that) friend call Wang
 The friend to whom I gave a book is called Wang.

The above analysis indicates that the four types of objects demonstrate different properties in relativization. In relativizing a theme object, no demonstrative pronoun or adjective is needed; in relativizing an oblique object, a demonstrative adjective before the oblique object is needed; in relativizing the object of an adjunct PP, a resumptive pronoun in the extraction site and a demonstrative adjective before the object are needed; and in relativizing the indirect object in a DOC, a resumptive pronoun in the extraction site and a demonstrative adjective before the object are needed.

3.2.5 The ability to be modified by adjectives

The four types of objects demonstrate different properties in their ability to be modified by adjectives.

3.2.5.1 The theme object, the object of an adjunct PP, and the DOC indirect object

The theme object, the object of an adjunct PP, and the DOC indirect object have the

full capacity to be modified by adjectives and/or relative clauses. Examples in (19) show that they can be modified by adjectives.

(19) a. Theme object modified by an adjective

ta zhengzai du yi ben youqude shu.
 he ASP read one CL interesting book
 He is reading an interesting book.

b. The object of an adjunct PP modified by an adjective

ta zai yi suo youmingde daxue dushu.
 he at one CL famous university study
 He is studying at a famous university.

c. The DOC indirect object modified by an adjective

wo song le nage gaogezide nanhai yi ben shu.
 I send ASP that tall boy one CL book
 I sent that tall boy a book.

The theme object, the object of an adjunct PP, and the DOC indirect object can also be modified by relative clauses, and the position for the modifying relative clauses are before these objects, as illustrated in (20).

(20) a. Theme object modified by a relative clause

ta zhengzai du ta pengyou song ta de shu.
 he ASP read he friend send him DE book
 He is reading the book that his friend sent him.

b. The object of an adjunct PP modified by a relative clause

ta zai yi suo gang chengli de daxue dushu.
 he at one CL just establish DE university read
 He is studying as a university that was just established.

c. The DOC indirect object modified by a relative clause

wo song le nage xihuan xiao de nanhai yi ben shu.
 I send AS that like smile DE boy one CL book
 I sent a book to the boy who likes to smile.

3.2.5.2 The oblique object

The oblique objects, generally speaking, have only a limited ability to be modified by adjectives. In some cases, as mentioned in 2.4.3.2.3, the oblique object needs to be a bare DP, as illustrated in (21) repeated from (19b) of Chapter 2.

(21) “Oblique object” construction

chi (* sange / * ganjingde) shitang
eat (three / clean) restaurant.
to eat at three/ a clean restaurant

In other cases, oblique objects can be modified by adjectives, as illustrated in (22).

(22) a. wo gege shui da chuang, wo shui xiao chuang.

I brother sleep big bed, I sleep small bed

My brother sleeps on the big bed, and I sleep on the small one.

b. wo hen xingyun wo du le yige hao daxue.

I very lucky I read ASP one good university

I am very lucky that I had the opportunity to study at a good university.

As to when the oblique objects can be modified by adjectives and when they cannot be modified, the literature provides no clear answer so far, and this is still an issue for future research.

3.2.6 The ability to become *wh*-phrases

The four types of objects have different properties in their ability to become *wh*-phrases in converting to *wh*-questions, as demonstrated below.

3.2.6.1 The theme object, the object of an adjunct PP, and the DOC indirect object

Clauses containing a theme object, a DOC indirect object, and an object of an adjunct PP can convert to *wh*-questions by replacing the targeted object with the relevant *wh*-phrase, as shown in (23)-(25).

(23) a. Clause containing a theme object

ta zhengzai du shu.
 he ASP read book
 He is reading a book.

b. *Wh*-question targeting the theme object

ta zhengzai du shenmo?
 he ASP read what
 What is he reading?

(24) a. Clause containing an adjunct PP

ta zai Beijing xuexi.
 he in Beijing study
 He studies in Beijing.

b. *Wh*-question targeting the object of the adjunct PP

ta zai nali xuexi?
 he at where study
 Where does he study?

(25) a. Clause containing an indirect object in a DOC

wo gei le nage nanhai yi ben shu.
 I give ASP that boy one CL book
 I gave that boy a book.

b. *Wh*-question targeting the indirect object in a DOC

ni gei le shui yi ben shu?
 you give ASP whom one CL book
 Who did you give a book to?

3.2.6.2 The oblique object

The “oblique object” constructions, on the other hand, include two cases in converting to *wh*-questions targeting the oblique object. In one case, the oblique object is replaced with the relevant *wh*-phrase, as illustrated in (26).

(26) a. “Oblique object” construction

womende hangban mingtian fei Shanghai.
 our flight tomorrow fly Shanghai
 Our flight will fly to Shanghai tomorrow.

- b. *Wh*-question targeting the oblique object
 womende hangban mingtian fei nali?
 our flight tomorrow fly where
 Where will our flight fly tomorrow?

In the other case, this strategy is unavailable. The “oblique object” constructions need to be converted to equivalent PP constructions first; then convert the PP constructions to *wh*-questions¹⁴ (Sun 2009), as illustrated in (27).

- (27) a. “Oblique object” construction

wo meitian chi shitang.
 I every day eat restaurant
 I eat at a restaurant every day.

- b. *Wh*-question targeting the oblique object
 * ni meitian chi shenmo/ nali/ zenmo?
 you every day eat what/ where/ how?
 The intended meaning: How do you eat every day?

- c. *Wh*-question targeting the oblique object
 ni meitian zenmo chi fan?
 you every day how eat meal
 How do you eat every day?

To my knowledge, so far, the literature has not provided a clear discussion on what types of “oblique object” constructions can convert to *wh*-questions targeting the oblique object directly, as in (26), and what types cannot, as in (27). I leave this matter for future research.

¹⁴ For the “oblique object” constructions which have no equivalent PP constructions, such as *chuang hong deng* literally ‘to rash a red traffic light’, there is no simple way to convert them to *wh*-questions. I will not go into this case in this thesis.

3.3 The implications of the similarities and differences of these objects

The DPs following the verbs in “oblique object” constructions have long been regarded as objects in the literature. From an applicative approach, they are also viewed as (applied) objects. However, the tests in this chapter indicate that— except that they occupy the location immediately after the verb, a characteristic location for theme objects— oblique objects in Chinese “oblique object” constructions behave quite differently from theme objects, or in other word, have limited object properties.

First, among the six properties that have been tested, the first three, namely, the ability to move to the subject position in passives, the ability to be shifted in *BA* constructions, and the ability to convert to “theme-subject” clauses, are associated with theme objects in Chinese (Xu 2003, Sun 2009). This study indicates that oblique objects have none of these properties. Oblique objects also have a different relativization pattern from theme objects.

Second, in the two properties of the ability to be modified by adjectives and the ability to become *wh*-phrases, some oblique objects share properties with theme objects. However, this does not mean that these oblique objects have objecthood properties, since these properties do not necessarily reflect objecthood and some other grammatical relations, such as the indirect object in DOCs and the objects of adjunct PPs, also demonstrate these properties.

Third, when we compare the six properties of oblique objects and the object of

adjunct PPs, we find that the oblique objects and the object of adjunct PPs demonstrate the same characters in three properties, namely, the ability to move to the subject position in passives, the ability to be shifted in *BA* constructions, and the ability to convert to “theme-subject” clauses; for the property of the relativization pattern, oblique objects and the object of adjunct PPs behave differently; and for the properties of the ability to be modified by adjectives and the ability to become *wh*-phrases, some oblique objects share the characters with the object of adjunct PPs, and other oblique objects behave differently from the object of adjunct PPs. On one hand, this confirms the expectation that oblique objects should demonstrate different properties from the object of adjunct PPs; on the other hand, it seems that the differences between them are limited.

It should be noted that the indirect object in some DOCs seems to have acquired some object properties. Some DOCs indirect objects have the ability to move to the subject position in passives and to be shifted in converting to *BA* constructions, behaving like theme objects.

In summary, these tests indicate that the oblique objects, which have long been viewed as objects that bear various thematic roles, actually have limited object properties. This brings forward a challenge to the applicative approach to the “oblique object” constructions in Chinese. Should we regard this phenomenon as a language-specific characteristic, or should we find a different approach to these “oblique object” constructions? This issue needs to be further studied.

3.4 Summary

In this chapter, I analyzed the properties of four grammatical relations including the theme object, the oblique object, the object of an adjunct PP, and the DOC indirect object. I have demonstrated that the oblique objects in the “oblique object” constructions actually have quite limited object properties.

In this chapter, I just demonstrated the six properties of four grammatical relations (objects), with the purpose of highlighting the properties of the oblique object in “oblique object” constructions. I did not make syntactic analyses of these properties, which I leave for future work.

In next chapter, I will explore an applicative approach to Chinese DOCs.

Chapter 4 An applicative approach to DOCs in Chinese

4.1 Introduction

Zhang (1998) suggests a “double VP” hypothesis for Chinese DOCs; Sun and Li (2010) suggest that Chinese DOCs can be analyzed as low source applicatives; Cheng and Wen (2008) argue that Chinese DOCs are high applicatives. While these previous studies capture some properties of Chinese DOCs, they also face empirical challenges, as discussed in Chapter 2.

In this chapter, I put forward a different proposal: *giving* DOCs in Chinese are low recipient applicatives; *stealing* DOCs include both high and low applicatives. Specifically, *stealing* DOCs in which the indirect object bears a possessive relation to the theme can be analyzed as low source applicatives, and *stealing* DOCs in which the indirect object and the theme bear no direct semantic relation can be analyzed as high malefactive applicatives. This proposal is summarized in Table 4-1.

| Type of DOC | Type of applicatives |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>giving</i> DOCs | Low recipient applicatives |
| <i>stealing</i> DOCs with a possessive relation between the IO and the theme | Low source applicative |
| <i>stealing</i> DOCs without a possessive relation between the IO and the theme | High malefactive applicatives |

Table 4-1: Different types of applicatives in Chinese DOCs

The rest of this chapter includes three sections. In 4.2, I explore an applicative approach to *giving* DOCs in Chinese. In 4.3, I explore an applicative approach to *stealing* DOCs. Finally, 4.4 is a summary.

4.2 An applicative approach to *giving* DOCs

Sun and Li (2010) argue that Chinese DOCs are low applicatives, and they have explored analyzing *stealing* DOCs (but not *giving* DOCs) from an applicative approach. In this thesis, I adopt Sun and Li's analysis on *stealing* DOCs in Chinese, and I will likewise explore an applicative approach to *giving* DOCs in Chinese. This section includes two subsections. In 4.2.1, I demonstrate that *giving* DOCs in Chinese can be analyzed as low recipient applicatives in Pykkänen's (2002) typology. Chinese low recipient applicatives include two subtypes: applicatives indicating a concrete transfer of the theme, and applicatives indicating a so-called "abstract transfer". A marked characteristic of Chinese low recipient applicatives is that its two subtypes demonstrate quite different properties. I illustrate the different properties of the two subtypes in 4.2.2.

4.2.1 *Giving* DOCs as low recipient applicatives and the two subtypes

4.2.1.1 Chinese *giving* DOCs are low recipient applicatives

In this thesis, I adopt Zhang's (1998) analysis concerning Chinese DOCs. As introduced in 2.5.2.1, Zhang has made the following claims about the syntactic meaning and syntactic structure of Chinese DOCs.

- i . Semantically, Chinese DOCs indicate that the subject causes the transfer of the direct object (DO) *to* or *from* the indirect object (IO), whereby the IO is “getting” or “losing” something.
- ii . The syntactic structure for Chinese DOCs is a double VP structure (Figure 4-1).
The head of the low VP contains a verbal element whose function is to indicate the transfer direction of the direct object.

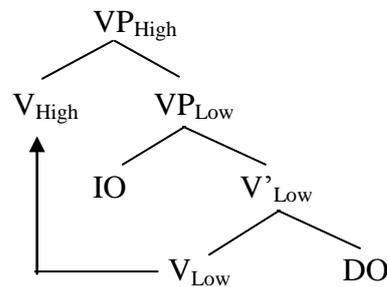


Figure 4-1: Double VP structure for Chinese DOCs (repeated from Figure 2-6)

Zhang’s hypothesis about the syntactic structure of Chinese DOCs implies the following points:

- i . Both the theme and the indirect object are base-generated within VP.
- ii . There exists a head (V_{Low}) that merges with the theme as complement and the indirect object as specifier, and in such a configuration, the indirect object c-commands the theme.
- iii. The head of the low VP relates the indirect object and the theme, and indicates the transfer of the theme *to* or *from* the indirect object.

Referring back to Pylkkänen's (2002) hypothesis introduced in Chapter 1, we can see that Zhang's hypothesis concerning Chinese DOCs tallies with Pylkkänen's hypothesis of low applicatives. Though Zhang hypothesizes a low verbal head (a lexical category) while Pylkkänen hypothesizes a low applicative head (a quasi-functional category like *v*), they basically suggest the same structure for DOCs. On this basis, I argue that *giving* DOCs in Chinese can be analyzed as low applicatives. Considering that, in Chinese *giving* DOCs, the direction of the transfer is *to* the indirect object, that is to say, the indirect object bears the recipient thematic role, I further propose that Chinese *giving* DOCs can be analyzed as low recipient applicatives.

4.2.1.2 The two subtypes of low recipient applicatives in Chinese

Low applicatives in some languages (e.g. English, Finnish) include two subtypes: applicatives indicating a *concrete* transfer of the theme, and applicatives indicating an *abstract* transfer, or in other words, a sense of losing or benefiting on the part of the indirect object, but not a concrete transfer of the theme. For example, (1a) indicates that the theme 'a cake' is intended to physically transfer to the indirect object 'my friend'; therefore this is a concrete-transfer applicative. In (1b), in contrast, the indirect object 'me' does not get the theme 'the paper', but rather the visual experience of it, which is abstract.

(1) a. *English low recipient applicative indicating concrete transfer*

I baked my friend a cake. (Pylkkänen 2002: 19)

b. *English low recipient applicative indicating abstract transfer*

He showed me the paper. (Pylkkänen 2002: 48)

Usually, the low recipient applicatives with concrete and abstract transfer have the same properties. The two clauses in (1) above, for example, demonstrate the same properties in the key aspects of passivization and relativization.

4.2.1.2.1 Concrete-transfer low recipient applicative in Chinese

Chinese low recipient applicatives also have these two subtypes. In one subtype, the low recipient applicatives clearly indicate the transfer of the theme to the indirect object, as shown in (2), and I will refer to this subtype as the “concrete-transfer low recipient applicative”.

- (2) a. Zhangsan song le Lisi yi ben shu.
 Zhangsan send ASP Lisi one copy book
 Zhangsan sent Lisi a book. (Zhang 1998: 184)
- b. wo you gei le ta yi zhang heka.
 I mail give ASP him one CL card
 I mailed him a card.

4.2.1.2.2 Abstract-transfer low recipient applicative in Chinese

In the other subtype, the low recipient applicatives just indicate that the indirect object is given an advantage or chance, but no actual transfer is involved, only an abstract transfer is indicated, as shown in (3). I refer to this subtype as the “abstract-transfer low recipient applicative”.

- (3) a. ni shi haizi, suoyi wo rang ni san bu qi.
 you are child, so I concede you three move chess
 You are a child, so (in this match) I will allow you an advantage by permitting you to make three moves of chess before I make a move.

- b. na bi daikuan, women jue ding huan ni yi nian de qi.
 that CL debt, we decide postpone you one year DE due date
 As to that debt, we have decided to postpone its due date and allow you one more
 year to pay it back.

One marked characteristic of low recipient applicatives in Chinese, which are different from the two subtypes of low applicatives in some other languages, is that its two subtypes have quite different semantic and syntactic properties. In next section, I will demonstrate these differences.

4.2.2 Different properties of the two subtypes of low recipient applicatives in Chinese

First, let's refer back to examples (2) and (3) above. On the surface, (2) and (3) have the same structure, and in previous studies on Chinese DOCs (e.g. Cheng and Wen 2008, Huang 2007, Zhang 1998), they have not been compared or distinguished. Examined from the applicative perspective, they both belong to low recipient applicatives, with the only difference that (2) indicates a concrete transfer and (3) indicates an abstract transfer. However, as I will demonstrate, clauses in (2), which represent concrete-transfer low recipient applicatives, and clauses in (3), which typify abstract-transfer low recipient applicatives, have quite different semantic and syntactic properties.

The contrasts between concrete-transfer and abstract-transfer low recipient applicatives in Chinese are summarized in Table 4-2. (For the sake of convenience, I will refer to the two subtypes as concrete-transfer LRAs and abstract-transfer LRAs).

| Semantic and syntactic properties | Concrete-transfer LRAs | Abstract-transfer LRAs |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Compatibility with transfer verb <i>gei</i> | yes | no |
| Compatibility with static verbs | no | yes |
| Argument moved in passives | theme | indirect object |
| Argument moved in <i>BA</i> constructions | theme | indirect object |
| Possibility of corresponding PP structure | yes | no |

Table 4-2: Different properties of the two subtypes of LRAs

4.2.2.1 Compatibility with the transfer verb *gei* ‘give’

In concrete-transfer LRAs, the verbs can always, sometimes even obligatorily, combine with the transfer verb *gei* ‘give’, which indicates a recipient thematic role of the indirect object; while in abstract-transfer LRAs, the verbs can never combine with *gei* ‘give’.

In Chinese, concrete-transfer LRAs can be constructed on three groups of verbs or compound verbs.

i . The verb *gei* ‘give’, as shown in (4).

- (4) ta gei le wo yi ben shu.
 he give ASP me one copy book
 He gave me a book.

ii . The verbs which contain a meaning of “giving” or “transferring”, and can also indicate the direction of the giving action by themselves. These verbs include *song* ‘send’,

huan ‘return’, *jiangli* ‘award’, and a few others. (5a) is given as an example.

- (5) a. laoshi song / huan / jiangli le ta yi ben shu.
 teacher send / return / award ASP him one copy book
 The teacher sent / returned / awarded him a book.

- b. laoshi song (gei) / huan (gei) / jiangli (gei) le ta yi ben shu.
 teacher send (give)/ return (give) / award (give) ASP him one copy book
 The teacher sent / returned / awarded him a book.

For the concrete-transfer LRAs based on this group of verbs, an optional *gei* ‘give’ can always combine with the verb to intensify the recipient semantic role of the indirect object, as illustrated in (5b) above.

- iii. The verbs which have the meaning of transfer, but cannot indicate the direction of this transfer by themselves. For this type of verbs, they must form compound verbs with *gei* ‘give’ to construct concrete-transfer LRAs. Without *gei* ‘give’, the meaning would be ambiguous, as illustrated in (6).

- (6) a. wo you **gei** le ta yi ben shu.
 I mail give ASP him one copy book
 I mailed him a book.

- b. # wo you le ta yi ben shu.
 I mail ASP him one copy book
 It can be: I mailed a book to him, or I mailed one of his books to sb. else.

What is crucial here is that the verbs in concrete-transfer LRAs can always combine, or are even required, with *gei* ‘give’, while the verbs of abstract-transfer LRAs, on the other hand, can never combine with *gei* ‘give’, as illustrated in (7).

- (7) a. na bi daikuan, women jue ding huan (***gei**) ni yi nian de qi.
 that CL debt, we decide postpone (give) you one year DE due date
 As to that debt, we have decided to postpone its due date and allow you one more year to pay it back.

- b. ni shi haizi, suoyi wo rang (***gei**) ni san bu qi.
 you are child, so I concede (give) you three move chess
 You are a child, so I will allow you an advantage by permitting you to make three moves before I make a move.

4.2.2.2 Compatibility with static verbs

Another difference between concrete-transfer and abstract-transfer LRAs is that the concrete-transfer LRAs cannot be based on verbs that are incapable of indicating a concrete transfer, like ‘see’ or ‘like’, as in (8). Following Pykkänen (2002), I refer to this class of verbs as “static verbs”.

(8) Concrete-transfer LRAs are impossible with static verbs

- a. * wo xihuan le ta yi ben shu.
 I like ASP him one copy book
 The intended meaning: I somehow let him have a book by liking that book.
- b. * ta kanjian le wo yi ben shu.
 he see ASP me one copy book
 The intended meaning: He somehow let me have a book by seeing that book.

Abstract-transfer LRAs, however, are possible with static verbs, as in (9).

(9) Abstract-transfer LRAs can base on static verbs

- a. wo dang le ta yi nian de baomu.
 I be ASP him one year DE nurse
 I was a nurse for him for one year.
- b. Aqiu xiu le Zhaojia san shan men.
 Aqiu repair ASP Zhao’s house three CL door
 Aqiu repaired three doors of Zhao’s house. (Tsai and Yang 2008: 3)

4.2.2.3 Argument moved in passives

Concrete-transfer and abstract-transfer LRAs differ in which argument moves to the subject position in passives. In concrete-transfer LRAs, the theme, not the indirect object, moves to the subject position, as shown in (10).

(10) a. Concrete-transfer LRA

Zhangsan song le Lisi yi ben shu. [Repeated from (6) of Chapter 3]
 Zhangsan send ASP Lisi one copy book
 Zhangsan sent Lisi a book.

b. The theme moves to the subject position in a passive

yi ben shu bei Zhangsan song le Lisi.
 one copy book bei Zhangsan send ASP Lisi
 A book was sent to Lisi by Zhangsan.

c. The indirect object cannot move to the subject position in a passive

* Lisi bei Zhangsan song le yi ben shu.
 Lisi bei Zhangsan send ASP one copy book
 The intended meaning: A book was sent to Lisi by Zhangsan.

In abstract-transfer LRAs, however, it is the indirect object, not the theme, which moves to the subject position, as shown in (11) and (12).

(11) a. Abstract-transfer LRA

wo rang le ta san bu qi. [Repeated from (5) of Chapter 3]
 I concede ASP him three move chess
 I permitted him to make three moves of chess.

b. The indirect object moves to the subject position in a passive

ta bei wo rang le san bu qi.
 he bei I concede ASP three move chess
 He was permitted by me to make three moves of chess (before I made my move).

c. The theme cannot move to the subject position in a passive

* san bu qi bei wo rang le ta.
 three move chess bei me concede ASP him
 The intended meaning: He was permitted by me to make three moves of chess
 (before I made a move).

(12) a. Abstract-transfer LRA

na bi daikuan, women jue ding huan ni yi nian de qi.
 that CL debt, we decide postpone you one year DE due date
 As to that debt, we have decided to postpone its due date and allow you one more
 year to pay it back.

- b. The indirect object moves to the subject position in a passive
 na bi daikuan, wo bei tamen huan le yi nian de qi.
 that CL debt, I bei they postpone ASP one year DE due date
 As to that debt, I was allowed one more year to pay it back.
- c. The theme cannot move to the subject position in a passive
 * na bi qian, yi nian de qi bei tamen huan le wo.
 that CL debt, one year DE due date bei they postpone ASP me
 The intended meaning: As to that debt, the due date was postponed for me for one
 year.

It should be noted that Pylkkänen (2002) does not postulate a connection between movement to subject position and applicative types. McGinnis (2008) discusses relation between applicative types and movement to subject position and analyzes the patterns with which applicatives vary. In this thesis, I just point out that concrete-transfer and abstract-transfer LRAs differ in the object that moves to the subject position in passives, and I will not make further syntactic analysis here.

4.2.2.4 Argument moved in *BA* constructions

When concrete-transfer LRAs convert to *BA* constructions, the theme, not the indirect object, shifts to a position immediately following *BA*, as illustrated in (13).

(13) a. Concrete-transfer LRA

Zhangsan song le Lisi yi ben shu.
 Zhangsan send ASP Lisi one copy book
 Zhangsan sent Lisi a book.

b. The theme object shifts in converting to *BA* constructions

Zhangsan BA yi ben shu song le Lisi.
 Zhangsan BA one copy book send ASP Lisi
 Zhangsan sent a book to Lisi.

c. The indirect object cannot shift

- * Zhangsan BA Lisi song le yi ben shu.
 Zhangsan BA Lisi send ASP one copy book
 The intended meaning: Zhangsan sent Lisi a book.

In abstract-transfer LRAs, it is the indirect object, not the theme, which shifts to a position immediately following *BA*, as in (14).

(14) a. Abstract-transfer LRA

- wo rang le ta san bu qi.
 I concede ASP him three move chess
 I permitted him to make three moves of chess (before I made a move).

b. The indirect object shifts in converting to *BA* constructions

- wo BA ta rang le san bu qi.
 I BA he concede ASP three move chess
 I permitted him to make three moves of chess (before I made a move).

c. The theme cannot move

- * wo BA san bu qi rang le ta.
 I BA three move chess concede ASP him
 The intended meaning: I permitted him to make three moves of chess.

4.2.2.5 The possibility of corresponding PP constructions

Concrete-transfer LRAs generally have equivalent PP constructions, as in (15).

(15) a. Concrete-transfer LRA

- Zhangsan song le Lisi yi ben shu.
 Zhangsan send ASP Lisi a copy book
 Zhangsan sent Lisi a book.

b. Equivalent PP construction

- Zhangsan gei Lisi song le yi ben shu.
 Zhangsan to Lisi send ASP one CL book
 Zhangsan sent Lisi a book.

Abstract-transfer LRAs, however, do not have equivalent PP constructions, as illustrated in (16).

(16) a. Abstract-transfer LRA

na bi daikuan, women jue ding huan ni yi nian de qi.
 that CL debt, we decide postpone you one year DE due date
 As to that debt, we have decided to postpone its due date and allow you one more
 year to pay it back.

b. Conceived equivalent PP construction

* na bi daikuan, women jue ding xiang ni huan yi nian de qi.
 that CL debt, we decide towards you postpone one year DE due date
 The intended meaning: As to that debt, we have decided to postpone its due date
 and allow you one more year to pay it back.

The above analyses indicate that concrete-transfer and abstract-transfer LRAs in Chinese, which on the surface have the same structure, actually have quite different properties. In this thesis, I just describe these differences, and leave the syntactic analysis about them for future studies.

4.3 An applicative approach to *stealing* DOCs

In this section, I first suggest dividing *stealing* DOCs in Chinese into two subtypes: possessive DOCs and non-possessive DOCs, according to whether there is a possessive relation between the indirect object and the theme. Then I demonstrate that these two subtypes of *stealing* DOCs have different properties, with possessive DOCs corresponding to low source applicatives, and non-possessive DOCs corresponding to high malefactive applicatives. I perform these two tasks under the following two subtitles:

- i . The two subtypes of *stealing* DOCs
- ii . Different properties of the two subtypes of *stealing* DOCs

4.3.1 The two subtypes of *stealing* DOCs in Chinese

Two subgroups are found in Chinese *stealing* DOCs. In one subgroup, the indirect object is obligatorily interpreted as the possessor of the theme. I term this subgroup “possessive DOCs”. Examples in (17) are possessive DOCs.

- (17) a. ta tou le Lisi liang tai diannaoh. [Repeated from (20a) in Chapter 2]
 he steal ASP Lisi two CL computer
 He stole two computers from Lisi.
- b. wo chi le Xiaowang san ge pingguo.
 I eat ASP Xiaowang three CL apple
 I ate three of Xiaowang’s apple on him.

In the other subgroup, the indirect object bears no possessive relation to the theme, and I call this subgroup “non-possessive DOCs”. Examples in (18) are non-possessive DOCs.

- (18) a. wo an le qianmian de siji yi laba. [Repeated from (24a) in Chapter 2]
 I press ASP front DE driver one horn
 I honked at the driver in front of me (thus he is negatively affected).
- b. women dui da le tamen dui yige qianleida. [Repeated from (24b) in Chapter 2]
 we team hit ASP they team one homerun
 Our team hit a homerun on their team.

Stealing DOCs in (17) and (18) have been regarded as having the same structure and have not been distinguished in previous studies; however, as I will demonstrate, possessive and non-possessive DOCs in Chinese exhibit quite different properties, which are summarized in Table 4-3.

| Properties | Possessive DOCs | Non-possessive DOCs |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Possessive relation | yes | no |
| Compatibility with transfer verbs | yes | no |
| Compatibility with static verb | no | yes |
| Compatibility with unaccusative verbs | yes | no |
| Compatibility with unergative verbs | no | yes |

Table 4-3: Different properties of the two subtypes of *stealing* DOCs in Chinese

In the next section I will demonstrate the contrasts between possessive and non-possessive DOCs in these five properties, and how they pattern for Pylkkänen’s low source applicatives and high malefactive applicatives respectively.

4.3.2 Different properties of the two subtypes of *stealing* DOCs

4.3.2.1 Possessive relation

In possessive DOCs, the indirect object bears a direct semantic relation with the theme, in which the indirect object is obligatorily interpreted as the possessor of the theme, as illustrated in (19).

- (19) a. xiaotou tou le Zhangsan_i ta_{i/*j} xin mai de shu.
 thief steal ASP Zhangsan he new buy DE book
 The thief stole Zhangsan of his newly bought book on him. (Sun and Li 2010: 28)

- b. Xiaodi shao le Aqiu_i san zhang tade_{i/*j} nvpengyou de zhaopian.
 Xiaodi burn ASP Aqiu three copy his girlfriend DE picture
 Xiaodi burnt three pictures of Aqiu’s girlfriend on Aqiu. (Sun and Li 2010: 28)

On the other hand, in the non-possessive DOCs, the indirect object bears no direct semantic relation to the theme, but bears a relation to the event described by the VP (Cheng and Wen 2010). For example, in (20), which is repeated from (24b) in Chapter 2, there is no direct semantic relation between the indirect object “their team” and the theme

“a homerun”.

- (20) women dui da le tamen dui yi ge qianleida.
 we team hit ASP they team one CL homerun
 Our team hit a homerun on their team.

Instead, this DOC indicates that the indirect object is adversely affected by the event “our team hit a homerun”. In other words, while both the possessive and non-possessive DOCs semantically indicate a loss or disadvantage on the part of the indirect object, this is indicated in different ways: possessive DOCs indicate that the indirect object loses something of his or her possession; non-possessive DOCs, however, indicate that the indirect object is adversely affected by an event described by the VP.

Here I argue that the semantic difference between possessive and non-possessive DOCs pattern for Pylkkänen’s low and high applicatives, since low applicatives indicate a semantic relation between the applied object and the theme, while high applicatives indicate a relation between an applied object and an event.

4.3.2.2 Compatibility with transfer verb *zou* ‘to go away’ or *diao* ‘to lose, to drop’

Possessive DOCs semantically indicate, or emphasize, the losing of the theme from the possession of the indirect object; while non-possessive DOCs do not indicate this. Evidence for this claim is that the verb in possessive DOCs can always, or even is required to, combine with *zou* ‘to go away’ or *diao* ‘to lose, to drop’ to indicate the theme getting away from the indirect object; verbs in non-possessive DOCs, however, can never combine with *zou* ‘to go away’ or *diao* ‘to lose, to drop’.

In Chinese, *zou* ‘to go away’ and *diao* ‘to lose, to drop’ are usually used to form a compound verb to convey the sense that something has been lost or gone away, as shown by the contrast of the two clauses in (21) and (22) respectively.

- (21) a. *namo duo jingcha, haishi rang xiaotou pao le.*
 that many policeman, still let thief run ASP
 There were so many policemen; however, the thief still successfully escaped.
- b. *namo duo jingcha, haishi rang xiaotou pao **diao** le.*
 that many policeman, still let thief run drop ASP
 There were so many policemen; however, they still had the thief run *away from* them.
- (22) a. *xiaotou tou le wode qianbao.*
 thief steal ASP my wallet
 The thief stole my wallet.
- b. *xiaotou tou **zou** le wode qianbao*
 thief steal go away ASP my wallet
 The thief stole my wallet and therefore my wallet had gone *away from* me.

In possessive DOCs, the verb can always combine with *zou* ‘to go away’ or *diao* ‘to lose, to drop’, as illustrated in (23).

- (23) Possessive DOC
- a. *ta na (**zou**) le wo liang ben shu.*
 he take (go away) ASP me two CL book
 He took away two of my books on me.
- b. *wo shao (**diao**) le ta san jian fang.*
 I burn (drop/lose) ASP him three CL house
 I burnt three rooms of his house on him. (Sun and Li 2010: 28)

The verbs in non-possessive DOCs, on the other hand, can never combine with *zou* ‘to go away’ or *diao* ‘to lose, to drop’, as illustrated in (24).

(24) Non-possessive DOCs

- a. wo an (***diao** / ***zou**) le qianmian de siji yi laba.
 I press (lose/ drop) ASP front DE driver one horn
 I honked at the driver in front of me (thus he is negatively affected).
- b. tamen zong kai (***diao** / ***zou**) wo wanxiao.
 they always play (drop/ go away) me joke
 They always play jokes on me.

I regard the different compatibility with *zou* ‘to go away’ or *diao* ‘to lose, to drop’ of possessive and non-possessive DOCs as another piece of evidence that they pattern for Pylkkänen’s low and high applicatives. Specifically, I argue that possessive DOCs in Chinese are low source applicatives, which indicate the transfer of the theme from the indirect (applied) object; non-possessive DOCs are high malefactive applicatives, which indicate the indirect (applied) object is adversely affected by the event described by the VP.

4.3.2.3 Compatibility with static verbs

Possessive DOCs can only be based on verbs that are capable of indicating transfer of possession (loss); and static verbs, which lack this capacity, cannot enter these constructions, as shown in (25).

- (25) a. wo tou / chi le ta sange pingguo.
 I steal / eat ASP him three apple
 I stole / ate three of his apples on him.
- b. * wo xihuan / kanjian le ta tade nvpenyou.
 I like / see ASP him his girlfriend
 The intended meaning: I liked / saw his girlfriend, therefore he is adversely affected in some way.

Non-possessive DOCs, however, can be based on static verbs, as in (26).

- (26) wo you le ta yi mo.
 I be humorous ASP him one humor
 I got (became) humorous and thus he was adversely affected in some way.

As introduced in Chapter 1, one diagnostic used to distinguish high from low applicatives is that low applicatives cannot be based on static verbs, since static verbs are unable to indicate the transfer of the theme; but high applicatives can be based on static verbs, as they indicate a relation between the applied object and an event described by the VP. Here I assume that the contrast between possessive and non-possessive DOCs in the context of static verbs adds another piece of evidence that they pattern for Pytkänen's low and high applicatives.

4.3.2.4 Compatibility with unaccusative verbs

Chinese has a construction termed in the literature “double unaccusative” construction (DUC), which is constructed on unaccusative verbs. A DUC has the following characteristics (Zhan 2009):

- (A) The main verb is an unaccusative verb; the object is the internal argument of the verb, the subject, however, is not selected by the verb.
- (B) There exists a possessive relation between the subject and the object; the subject is the possessor and the object is the possessee.
- (C) Semantically, the possessor is interpreted as bearing some adverse affectedness from the predicate.

The sentences in (27) are DUCs.

- (27) a. Laowang si le laopo.
 Laowang die ASP wife
 Laowang's wife died on him. (Sun and Li 2010: 29)
- b. gongyuan dao le yi du qiang.
 park fall ASP one CL wall
 A wall of the park fell on the park. (Sun and Li 2010: 30)

Sun and Li (2010) claim that DUCs in Chinese conform to the characteristics of low source applicatives in that the subject bears no direct semantic relation to the verb, and the predicate expresses the transfer (loss) of the object from the subject.

Other languages have similar constructions. Pylkkänen (2002) exemplifies this with data from Finnish, as in (28), and analyzes this as low *to/from*-applicative from unaccusatives.

- (28) a. Low *from*-applicative from unaccusative in Finnish
 Liisa -lta tippui avaimet.
 Liisa-ABL dropped keys
 Liisa dropped her keys. (Pylkkänen 2002: 39)
- b. Low *to*-applicative from unaccusative in Finnish
 Liisa -lle tuli kolme kirjettä.
 Liisa-ABL came three letters
 Liisa got three letters. (Pylkkänen 2002: 39)

Based on Sun and Li (2010), I conclude that DUCs in Chinese can be analyzed as low applicatives; I therefore conclude that, in Chinese, low applicatives can be based on unaccusative verbs.

According to Pylkkänen (2002), being able to be constructed on unaccusative verbs is a property of low applicatives; therefore, this can provide support to my claim that

possessive DOCs can be analyzed as low applicatives. However, it should be noted that DUCs in Chinese do not allow a non-possessive malefactive reading for the subject. For example, (27a) above cannot be interpreted as “Somebody else’s wife died, and Laowang is adversely affected by this”. This is somewhat unexpected by Pykkänen’s hypothesis, since according to Pykkänen’s high/low applicative hypothesis, high applicatives can also be constructed on unaccusatives.

4.3.2.5 Compatibility with unergative verbs

Possessive DOCs cannot be constructed on unergative verbs, as illustrated in (29).

(29) a. * wo xiao le ta yi ge pingguo.

I laugh ASP him one CL apple

The intended meaning: I somehow caused him to have an apple by laughing.

b. * wo pao le ta liang tai dianshiji.

I run ASP him two CL TV set

The intended meaning: I somehow caused him to have two TV sets by running.

DUCs, which are canonically based on unaccusative verbs, cannot be based on unergative verbs either, as illustrated in (30).

(30) a. DUCs are based on an unaccusative

Laowang si le laopo.

Laowang die ASP wife

Laowang’s wife died on him.

(Sun and Li 2010: 29)

b. DUCs cannot be based on an unergative

* Laowang kesou le laopo.

Laowang cough ASP wife

The intended meaning: Laowang’s wife coughed on him. (Sun and Li 2010: 29)

On the other hand, Chinese does have constructions which can be analyzed as high malefactive applicatives and which are based on unergative verbs, as illustrated in (31).

- (31) a. zhongguo dui ying le hanguo dui.
 Chinese team win ASP Korean team
 Chinese team defeated Korean team and won. (Huang 2007: 9)
- b. xiaoxin ta, ta hui huai bieren.
 be careful him, he can be bad other people
 Be careful of him, he is apt to be bad on other people.
- c. ni zhen taoyan ren!
 you really be disgusting/annoying people
 You are behaving disgustingly on other people!

These examples seem to indicate that Chinese has malefactive high applicatives that are based on unergative verbs.

According to Pykkänen (2002), another diagnostic to distinguish high and low applicatives is that low applicatives cannot be based on unergative verbs, while high applicatives can. I therefore assume that the contrast between possessive and non-possessive DOCs in their compatibility with unergative verbs adds still another piece of evidence that they pattern for Pykkänen's low and high applicatives.

In summary, based on the above-discussed contrasts between possessive and non-possessive DOCs in Chinese, I suggest that possessive DOCs in Chinese are low source applicatives, and non-possessive DOCs are high malefactive applicatives.

4.4 Summary

In this thesis, I explored an applicative approach to DOCs in Chinese. For *giving* DOCs, I first demonstrated that they can be analyzed as low recipient applicatives. I then showed the different properties between the two subtypes of low recipient applicatives, the

concrete-transfer low recipient applicatives and the abstract-transfer low recipient applicatives.

For *stealing* DOCs, I first suggested further dividing them into two subgroups: possessive DOCs and non-possessive DOCs. I then demonstrated that these two subgroups have distinct properties, and they pattern for Pykkänen's low source applicatives and high malefactive applicatives.

Therefore, unlike Sun and Li (2010) or Cheng and Wang (2008), who claim that Chinese DOCs correspond to only one type of applicatives, an applicative approach to Chinese DOCs in this study indicates a more complex picture.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

This final chapter includes two sections. In 5.1, I summarize the arguments of this study; in 5.2, I show the implications and limitations of this study.

5.1 Summary of the study

The two Chinese constructions, the “oblique object” construction and the double object construction (DOC), have been much studied in the literature, and the majority of the previous studies view these constructions as two unrelated constructions. From an applicative perspective, however, these two constructions are related, and share a characteristic: they both contain an unselected DP as the object of the verb. On this basis, I conduct this study from the unified applicative approach. Specifically, I approach them from the perspective of Pykkänen’s high/low applicative hypothesis.

In previous studies, the DP following the verb in “oblique object” constructions has generally been regarded as an object, as the term indicates. However, the supposed object properties of this unselected DP have not been tested in a systematic way. In this study, I tested the properties of the oblique objects from an applicative perspective. Since the unselected DP in the “oblique object” construction is analyzed as an (applied) object, I asked which object properties it acquires, and how it demonstrates different properties from the theme object and the object of an adjunct prepositional phrase. To answer this

question, I analyzed and compared six properties of four grammatical relations— namely, the theme object, the oblique object, the indirect object in DOCs, and the object of adjunct PPs. My study indicates that, on one hand, oblique objects have none of the three core properties of theme objects— namely, the ability to move to the subject position in “theme-subject” constructions and in passives, and the ability to shift to a preverbal position in *BA* constructions. On the other hand, oblique objects demonstrate different properties from the objects of adjunct PPs; the differences, however, are limited.

My study of an applicative approach to Chinese DOCs includes two parts, *giving* DOCs and *stealing* DOCs. In analyzing *giving* DOCs, I adopt the proposals of Sun and Li (2010) and Zhang (1998) and analyzed *giving* DOCs as low recipient applicatives. I then demonstrated the contrasts between the two subtypes of low recipient applicatives in Chinese, the concrete-transfer and abstract-transfer low recipient applicatives.

In analyzing *stealing* DOCs, I argued that Chinese *stealing* DOCs actually include two subtypes: possessive and non-possessive DOCs; I then argued that possessive DOCs conform to the characteristics of Pylkkänen’s low source applicatives, and non-possessive DOCs correspond to Pylkkänen’s high malefactive applicatives.

5.2 Significance, limitations, and future research

The syntactic analysis of unselected DPs in Chinese from an applicative approach is still at an exploratory stage, and the present study is one of those explorations. To my

knowledge, this study tested the properties of the oblique object in a systematic manner for the first time. And also, different from previous studies, which claim that DOCs in Chinese include just one type of applicatives, this study demonstrated that Chinese DOCs include different types of applicatives.

Limitations exist in this study in at least the following aspects. According to Pylkkänen (2002), compatibility with depictive predicates is one of the three diagnostics to distinguish high from low applicatives. In this study, this diagnostic was not tested in Chinese. In this study, I demonstrated the contrasts between *giving* DOCs with concrete transfer and with abstract transfer meanings, but I did not provide an explanation for this phenomenon. I based this study primarily on Pylkkänen's high/low applicative hypothesis, and I did not explore the possibility of Cuervo's (2003) stative low applicatives existing in Chinese. In this study, I did not test the object properties in *stealing* DOCs; and I did not provide a theoretical account for the object properties of the oblique objects I have studied either. Therefore, all these issues remain open for future studies.

References

- Baker, Mark. 1988. Theta theory and the syntax of applicatives in Chichewa. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 6: 353-389.
- Bresnan, Joan, and Lioba Moshi. 1990. Object asymmetries in comparative Bantu syntax. *Linguistic Inquiry* 21: 147-85.
- Cheng, Jie, and Binli Wen. 2008. An applicative-construction analysis of two types of Chinese non-core arguments. *Journal of Sichuan International Studies University* 24: 82-87.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.
- 2001. Derivation by phase. *Ken Hale: a life in language*, ed. by Michael Kenstowicz, 1-52. MIT Press, Cambridge MA.
- Cuervo, Cristina. 2003. Datives at large. Doctoral dissertation. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).
- Fan, Xiao. 2006. An Introspection to the Study of Chinese Object. *Chinese Language Learning* 3 3-13.
- Feng, Shengli. 2005. Light verb movement in modern and classic Chinese. *Linguistic Science* 14: 3-17.
- Gao, Yunli, and Yan Fang. 2001. A tentative study of semantic roles of the object of Chinese. *Language Teaching and Linguistic Study* 6: 62-65.
- Gerds, Donna B., and Lindsay Whaley. 1991. Two types of oblique applicatives in Kinyarwanda. In *Proceedings of the Western Conference on Linguistics 4*, ed. by K. Hunt, T. Perry, and V. Samiian, 138-151. California State University, Fresno, CA.
- Hornstein, Norbert, Nunes Jairo, and Grohmann Kleanthes. 2010. *Understanding Minimalism*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Huang C.-T. James. 2007. Thematic Structures of Verbs in Chinese and their Syntactic Projections. *Linguistic Science* 29: 5-23.

- Huang, C.-T. James, Y.-H. Audrey Li, and Yafei Li. 2009. *The syntax of Chinese*. New York: Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Huang, Jie. 2009. Metonymic and Metaphorical Approaches to Two Kinds of “Verb + Object” constructions in Chinese. *Tongji University Journal Social Science Section* 20: 85-90.
- Jeong, Youngmi. 2006. The landscape of applicatives. Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland.
- Kimenyi, Alexandre. 1980. *A Relational Grammar of Kinyarwanda*. University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Larson, Richard. 1988. On the Double Object Construction. *Linguistic Inquiry* 19: 335-391.
- Li, Boyue, and Jingyu Liu. 2005. The exploration of hierarchical classification of double object construction. *Research in Foreign Language and Literature* 5: 52-58.
- Li, Yen-hui Audrey. 1990. *Order and Constituency in Mandarin Chinese*. Kluwer Academic Publisher, The Netherlands.
- Lin, Tzong-Hong. 2001. Light Verb Syntax and the Theory of Phrase Structure. Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Irvine.
- Marantz, Alec. 1993. Implications of asymmetries in double object constructions. *Theoretical aspects of Bantu grammar*, ed. by Sam A. Mchombo, 113-51. CA: CSLI Publications, Stanford.
- McGinnis, Martha. 2008. Applicatives. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 2/6: 1225-1245.
- Meng, Cong, Huaide Zheng, Qinghai Meng, and Wenlan Cai. 1984. *Dictionary of the Usage of Verbs*. Shanghai Dictionary Publishing House, Shanghai.
- Peterson, David. 2007. *Applicative constructions*. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Pylkkänen, Liina. 2002. Introducing arguments. Doctoral dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).
- Sun, Tianqi. 2009. On oblique objects in Chinese. *Chinese Language Learning* 6: 70-76.

- Sun, Tianqi, and Yafei Li. 2010. Licensing non-core arguments in Chinese. *Studies of the Chinese language* 1: 21-34.
- Tan, Jingchun. 1995. On the material object and instrumental object. *Chinese Language Learning* 3: 18-21.
- Tsai, Weiten, and ChYu Yang. 2008. On the Fine Structure of Applicatives and Their Licensing Conditions. www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~TsaiYang_2008applicative.pdf
- Valenzuela, Pilarm. 2010. Applicative constructions in Shipibo-Konibo (Panoan). *International Journal of American Linguistics* 76: 101-144.
- Woolford, Ellen. 1993. Symmetric and asymmetric passives. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 11: 679-728.
- Xie, Xiaoming, and Dongrui Qiao. 2009. On the identifying of object of instrument and typicalness. *Chinese Language Learning* 2: 12-16.
- Xie, Xiaoming, and Yali Gu. 2009. On the identifying of object of material a study on its typicalness. *Studies in Language and Linguistics* 29: 47-52.
- Xu, Jie. 1999. "Dasui-le Ta Sange Beizi" in Chinese and the binding principles. *Chinese Language* 270: 26-32.
- Xu, Shengheng. 2003. Stereotypical Relation: the Study of Syntactic Construction. *Journal of Foreign Languages* 144: 8-22.
- Zhan, Chaohu. 2009. On possessor-subject and possesum-object construction. *Chinese Language Learning* 6: 44-51.
- Zhang, Bojiang. 1999. The ditransitive construction in Mandarin Chinese. *Chinese Language* 270: 16-25.
- Zhang, Ning. 1998. Argument Interpretations in the Ditransitive Construction. *Nordic Journal of Linguistics* 21: 179-209.
- Zhou, Baokuan. 1995. A study on the "theme-subject" clause in modern Chinese. *Journal of Liaoning University* 6: 89-94.
- Zhu, Dongping. 2007. On the Pragmatics of DOCs in Chinese. *Chinese Linguistics* 17: 66-74.