

**UCLA**

**UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

**Title**

A Discourse Approach to the Functions of Major Chinese Grammatical Constructions and Their Alternations in Conversation

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9qj934xr>

**Author**

Su, Danjie

**Publication Date**

2017

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

A Discourse Approach to the Functions of  
Major Chinese Grammatical Constructions and Their Alternations in Conversation

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in Asian Languages and Cultures

by

Danjie Su

2017

© Copyright by

Danjie Su

2017

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Discourse Approach to the Functions of  
Major Chinese Grammatical Constructions and Their Alternations in Conversation

by

Danjie Su

Doctor of Philosophy in Asian Languages and Cultures

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Hongyin Tao, Chair

Given alternative grammatical options, how do native speakers make the choice in a given communicative context? Drawing data from 300 videotaped conversations from a spontaneous talk show in Mandarin Chinese (100 hours; one-million words), this study is the first to use a discourse adjacent alternation method to investigate how real-life speakers in a single conversation use alternative grammatical constructions to describe the same event.

This study proposes the concept of LENS as speakers' subjective evaluation of reality, especially their attitudes towards an event. This study reveals four lenses that can influence Chinese native speakers' linguistic choice-making in conversational discourse, as well as the prototypical functions of four major Chinese grammatical constructions: 1) Significance: highly

consequential, challenging, or important. The *ba*-construction is a significance marker that can present a transitive event as highly consequential, highly important, or highly challenging. 2) Factuality: a fact or a truth. The unmarked passive construction is a factuality marker that can present the result of a transitive event as a fact or a truth. 3) Uncontrollability: Participants having little control over the occurrence of the event. The *rang*-construction is an uncontrollability marker that can present the affectee of a transitive event as having little control over the situation, be it an emotional or perceptual reaction, a passive consequence, a beneficial result, or a requested action. 4) Adversity: undesirable for the affectee or speaker sympathizing with the affectee. The *bei*-passive construction is an adversity categorizer that can categorize the nature of a transitive event as adverse for the affectee.

A theoretical contribution of this study is the proposal of “lens” as a new aspect of construal. The findings raise questions as to how other languages encode these lenses and what other lenses may exist. A methodological contribution is the outline of the discourse adjacent alternation method. The analysis provides valuable material for future research in Chinese linguistics. The findings also carry implications for utilizing authentic materials for language teaching and for teaching Chinese as a second language. In all, this study sheds light on the pragmatic factors in linguistic choice-making during social interaction.

The dissertation of Danjie Su is approved.

Charles Goodwin

Shoichi Iwasaki

Sung-Ock Shin Sohn

Hongyin Tao, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2017

This dissertation is dedicated to  
my father Shuxu Su  
my brother Jiehao Su  
all my other family members  
and in loving memory of my mother Miaoxing Su

献给

我的父亲苏树旭先生

弟弟苏杰浩先生

及其他所有家人

纪念我亲爱的母亲苏妙杏女士

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract of the Dissertation  
List of Figures  
List of Tables  
Transcription Conventions  
Glossary  
Acknowledgements  
Vita

### CHAPTER 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Overview of the Study
- 1.2 Research Question: The Alternative Puzzle
- 1.3 Gap in the Literature
- 1.4 Overview of Research Method and Data
- 1.5 Contribution of this Study
- 1.6 Definitions of Terms
- 1.7 Scope of Grammatical Construction Investigated
  - 1.7.1 Analytic causatives
  - 1.7.2 Passives as an alternative to typical causatives
- 1.8 Broader Theoretical Background
  - 1.8.1 Native Selection
  - 1.8.2 Studying Grammar as System and Grammar as Choice
  - 1.8.3 Grammar, Subjectivity, Discourse, and Interaction
  - 1.8.4 Construction Grammar
  - 1.8.5 Context
- 1.9 Overview of the Dissertation's Structure and Contents

### CHAPTER 2. Literature Review

- 2.1 Overview of Literature Review
- 2.2 Previous Studies on Multiple Ways to Describe a Transitive Event
- 2.3 Previous Studies on Construal
- 2.4 Previous Studies on Causation
- 2.5 Previous Studies on Causatives and Passives
  - 2.5.1 Typological Approach
  - 2.5.2 Semantic Approach
  - 2.5.3 Formal Approach
  - 2.5.4 Corpus Approach
- 2.6 Previous Studies on Major Chinese Syntactic Constructions
  - 2.6.1 Previous Studies on the (把) *Ba*-construction
  - 2.6.2 Previous Studies on the (被) *Bei*-passive Construction



- 2.6.3 Previous Studies on the Unmarked Passive Construction
- 2.6.4 Previous Studies on the (让) *Rang*-construction
- 2.7 Summary of Literature Review

### **CHAPTER 3. Data and Methodology**

- 3.1 Data Description
- 3.2 Justification of Data
- 3.3 Studying Grammatical Construction through Adjacent Alternation
- 3.4 Three Datasets and Research Design

### **CHAPTER 4. Distribution and Alternation of 22 Major Grammatical Constructions**

- 4.1 22 Chinese Transitive Grammatical Constructions Actually Used by Speakers
  - 4.1.1 Coding of Chinese Transitive Grammatical Constructions
  - 4.1.2 Coding of Speech Features
- 4.2 Distribution of Major Chinese Transitive Grammatical Constructions
- 4.3 Alternation of Major Chinese Transitive Grammatical Constructions

### **CHAPTER 5. Functions of *Ba*-Constructions and Related Alternation Patterns**

- 5.1 Significance as a Lens
- 5.2 Highly Consequential from the Speaker's Point of View
- 5.3 The Speaker's Explicit Blaming or Praising of the Causer
- 5.4 Highly Important from the Speaker's Point of View
- 5.5 Highly Challenging to Achieve from the Speaker's Point of View
- 5.6 A Comprehensive Example of *Ba* Alternation
- 5.7 Variation within Subtypes of *Ba*-constructions
- 5.8 Summary

### **CHAPTER 6. Functions of Unmarked Passives and Related Alternation Patterns**

- 6.1 Factuality as a Lens
- 6.2 The Speaker's Presentation of the Result as a Fact
- 6.3 The Speaker's Presentation of the Result as a Universal Truth
- 6.4 A Comprehensive Example of Unmarked Passive Alternation
- 6.5 Summary

### **CHAPTER 7. Functions of *Rang*-Constructions and Related Alternation Patterns**

- 7.1 Uncontrollability as a Lens
- 7.2 Variation within Subtypes of *Rang*-constructions
- 7.3 *Rang*-causative and Uncontrollability over an Emotional or Perceptual Reaction
- 7.4 *Rang*-benefactive and Uncontrollability over a Beneficial Result
- 7.5 *Rang*-imperative and Uncontrollability over a Requested Action
- 7.6 *Rang*-passive and Uncontrollability over a Passive Consequence

- 7.7 A Comprehensive Example of *Rang* Alternation in Self-repair
- 7.8 Summary

## **CHAPTER 8. Functions of Bei-Passives and Related Alternation Patterns**

- 8.1 Definitions of Adversity and Categorization
- 8.2 Undesirable for the Affectee from the Speaker's Point of View
- 8.3 The Speaker's Sympathy for the Affectee
- 8.4 Adversity as a Lens
- 8.5 Categorization of the Event Nature
- 8.6 A Comprehensive Example of *Bei*, *Ba*, and Unmarked Passive Alternation
- 8.7 Summary

## **CHAPTER 9. Conclusion**

- 9.1 Summary of Findings
- 9.2 Significance of the Study

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3-1: Snapshot of the talk show <i>Three Companions</i>	52
Figure 4-1: Distribution of the 22 grammatical constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset	83
Figure 5-1: Snapshot of Xu defending himself and denying the responsibility Dou has assigned to him	125
Figure 5-2: Snapshot of Dou's laughter after the use of a <i>ba</i> -construction	125
Figure 5-3: Snapshot of Zhu (the female on the right) joining Dou's laughter	126
Figure 6-1: Dou's hand gesture when he uses an unmarked passive (use #2, line 8)	143
Figure 6-2a: Intensity (yellow) of parts of the <i>ba</i> -construction (line 23)	149
Figure 6-2b: Intensity (yellow) of parts of the unmarked construction (line 57)	150
Figure 6-3: Xu uses an emphasizing hand gesture with the unmarked passive sentence (line 57)	151
Figure 7-1: Intensity (green) and pitch (blue) of <i>rang</i> in use #1 <i>bu neng rang</i> (line 38)	169
Figure 7-2: Intensity (green) and pitch (blue) of <i>ba</i> in use #2 <i>bu neng ba</i> (line 40)	170
Figure 8-1: The use of <i>bei</i> -passive increases the degrees of marked adversity or positivity	184
Figure 8-2: <i>Bei</i> -passives mark the event as adverse for the affectee regardless of whether the event is adverse in an objective sense	186

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1-1: Chinese syntactic constructions describing the event of a boy having broken a window	3
Table 1-2: Ten parameters of transitivity in Hopper & Thompson (1980)	7
Table 4-1: Frequencies of the 22 grammatical constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset	80
Table 4-2: Frequencies of the subtypes of <i>ba</i> -constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset	84
Table 4-3: Frequencies of the subtypes of <i>rang</i> -constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset	84
Table 4-4: Frequencies of the subtypes of <i>bei</i> -passives in the 1,000-minute dataset	85
Table 4-5: All the alternations of the 22 grammatical constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset	86
Table 4-6: All the 165 nonself-repair alternations of the four constructions in the 100-hour database	88
Table 4-7: All the 26 self-repair alternations of the four constructions in the 100-hour database	88
Table 4-8: Frequencies of all the 2-form <i>ba</i> alternations in the 100-hour database	89
Table 4-9: Frequencies of all the 2-form unmarked passive alternations in the 100-hour database	90
Table 4-10: Frequencies of all the 2-form <i>rang</i> alternations in the 100-hour database	90
Table 4-11: Frequencies of all the 2-form <i>bei</i> alternations in the 100-hour database	90
Table 7-1: Frequencies of subtypes of <i>rang</i> -constructions in the 100-hour dataset	156

Table 7-2: All the <i>rang</i> -causatives and <i>shi</i> -causatives (使) in the 100-hour dataset	159
Table 8-1: The use of <i>bei</i> -passive increases the degrees of marked adversity or positivity	184
Table 8-2: <i>Bei</i> -passives mark the event as adverse for the affectee regardless of whether the event is adverse in an objective sense	185

## TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

### I. Temporal and sequential relationships

[	The point where the current talk is overlapped by the talk of another, which appears on the next line attributed to another speaker.
=	A “latching” relationship, where there is no discernible silence between the end of a prior turn and the start of a next turn.
(0.8)	Periods of silence, represented in tenths of a second.
(.)	A hearable “micropause,” ordinarily less than two-tenths of a second.
(...)	A longer pause. The more dots, the longer the pause.

### II. Aspects of speech delivery, including intonation and voice quality

::	Noticeable prolongation or stretching of the sound immediately preceding them. The more colons, the longer the stretching.
°	The talk it precedes is markedly quiet or soft relative to surrounding talk.
becau-	A sudden cut-off of the current sound or self-interruption, often done with a glottal or dental stop.
<i>because</i>	Some form of stress or emphasis which may be signaled by changes in pitch and/or amplitude.
↑	A sharper rise in pitch, or it may mark a whole shift, or resetting, of the pitch register at which the talk is being produced.

hhh	Hearable aspiration, the more the number of "h"s, the more aspiration.
.hhh	An inhalation.
@ @ @	Laughter. The length of laughter is proportional to the number of "@"s.  Words between two "@" symbols indicate that the stretch of talk is produced with a laughing voice: @really@.

### III. Other markings

<x x>	Talk that is too obscure to transcribe. Words or letters inside such parentheses represent a possible transcription of what is being said.
< >	Transcriber's comments, or descriptions of events, rather than transcriptions
→  <b>because</b>	Arrows in the margin point to the lines of transcript that are relevant to the point being made in the text. Boldface serves the same function.
<u>because</u>	Utterances underlined contain the grammatical constructions in question.
( )	Words in parenthesis are not used in the original Chinese utterances but are added to make the English translation grammatical or to make it closer to the original meaning of the Chinese utterances.

The symbols above are adapted from the CA transcription system (Sacks et al. 1974: 731–733), Du Bois et al. (1993), and suggestions by Hongyin Tao and Charles Goodwin.

#### IV. Markings of adjacent alternation invented in this study

=>	Direction-specified alternation (For example, <i>ba =&gt; bei</i> alternation means speak(s) first uses a <i>ba</i> -construction to describe an event, then switch(es) to using a <i>bei</i> -construction to describe the same event.
<=>	Direction-unspecified alternation
Use #1	The first use of a grammatical construction in an adjacent alternation.
Use #2	The second use of a grammatical construction in an adjacent alternation.
Use #3	The third use of a grammatical construction in an adjacent alternation.



## GLOSSARY

1PL	first person plural
1SG	first person singular
2PL	second person plural
2SG	second person singular
2SGH	second person singular honorific
3PL	third person plural
3SG	third person singular
ADV	adverbializer <i>de</i> 地
ASP	aspect marker
ASSOC	associative marker <i>de</i> 的
BA	<i>ba</i> 把 construction
BANG	<i>bang</i> 帮 construction
BEI	<i>bei</i> 被 construction
CLF	classifier
COMP	complement
COND	conditional
COP	copular verb <i>shi</i> 是
CRS	currently relevant state <i>le</i> 了
DE	resultative complementizer <i>de</i> 得
DUR	durative aspect marker <i>zhe</i> 着
DVC	degree verb complement
EM	emphasis marker <i>jiu</i> 就
EXP	experiential aspect <i>guo</i> 过
GEI	<i>gei</i> 给 construction
GEN	genitive marker <i>de</i> 的
JIAO	<i>jiao</i> 叫 construction
JIU	temporal linker <i>jiu</i> 就
LING	<i>ling</i> 令 construction
NA	<i>na</i> 拿 construction
NEG	negation
NOM	nominalizer <i>de</i> 的
PFV	perfective <i>le</i> 了
PL	plural marker <i>men</i> 们
PRT	particle, e.g., <i>ma</i> 吗, <i>ne</i> 呢, <i>ba</i> 吧, <i>ma</i> 嘛, <i>la</i> 啦, <i>ya</i> 呀, etc.
PST	past tense
RANG	<i>rang</i> 让 construction
SHI	<i>shi</i> 使 construction
SHOU	<i>shou</i> 受 construction
ZAO	<i>zao</i> 遭 construction

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A project like a dissertation is the work of an entire community. This work could not have been completed without the inspiration, support, help, and love of many people.

An enormous debt is owed to my chair advisor, Professor Hongyin Tao, for his inspiration, guidance, advice, support, help, intellectual challenges and constructive criticism, and for sharing his deep insights with incredible generosity. I owe an awful lot of my research abilities to Professor Tao, who turned me into a discourse Chinese linguist&applied linguist. My research is inspired by Professor Tao's data-driven and genre-specific discourse approach to Chinese linguistics, as well as his vision for integrating Chinese linguistic research and language teaching, especially using authentic materials for language pedagogy. I'd like to thank Professor Tao for instilling in me a deep respect for the complexities of the data, and for sharing his wisdom and methodologies. His contribution to this dissertation cannot be measured. I appreciate his inspirational studies on related topics and his critical perspectives and guidance on the central arguments of this dissertation, including the lens metaphor, the discourse adjacent alternation method, and almost every other aspect. In addition to the much-appreciated research assistantships, I was also grateful to assist Professor Tao in teaching many classes in Chinese linguistics, language and culture, and Asian linguistics. I learned tremendously how Professor Tao trained undergraduates as researchers, and so much more.

Words cannot describe how much I appreciate this brilliant scholar's role as an advisor, mentor, teacher, collaborator, and friend over the past several years. The difference Professor Tao has made in my academic growth is like day and night. I could give some examples of the things I have learned from him, such as empirical research skills, Chinese linguistics and discourse, functional linguistics, corpus linguistics methodologies and corpus

construction, discourse-based language pedagogy, academic writing and publishing, research presentation, teaching Chinese linguistics and culture, guiding student research, supporting student success, working with Chinese language program, grant application, organizing academic conferences, reviewing and editing scholarly works, critical thinking, organization and clarity, communication skills, teamwork abilities, and being humble, but the list is endless. I'm blessed to have had these positive impacts from Professor Tao, for which I am eternally grateful. I could not have asked for a better role model.

Professor Tao and my other three advisors deserve special recognition for their extraordinary mentorship, teaching, insight, and support. It was at UCLA that I was trained as a discourse linguist&applied linguist. In addition to this enormous intellectual debt, I am also deeply grateful for my advisors' tremendous support for my career development. I only wish I could provide this level of guidance to my future students.

My advisor Professor Charles Goodwin is the teacher who first introduced me to discourse analysis – through his expertise and his seminar *Discourse Analysis* and *Discourse Lab*. His enduring insights have profoundly influenced this work and my other works in innumerable ways. A pioneer in video-based discourse analysis of talk-in-interaction, Chuck taught me systematic methods for fine-grained multimodal discourse analysis, which plays a critical and far-reaching role in both this dissertation and my research in Chinese linguistics and second language acquisition&pedagogy in the long run. I learned a great deal from Chuck because this brilliant mind is full of revolutionary ideas on human knowledge, action, and language. I am always inspired by Chuck's extraordinary vision on interaction and his incredible abilities to train discourse analysts (and effectively present the analysis). Owing to Chuck's teaching and his discovery of the co-operative, transformative organization of human action and knowledge, as

well as the guidance of my other advisors, a course paper, half of which I did with him (the other half for Professor Sung-Ock Sohn's seminar), was published in *Discourse Studies*. I

wholeheartedly thank Chuck for his insightful comments on many major aspects and arguments of this dissertation, and for having shaped my scholarly trajectory and vision profoundly.

My advisor Professor Shoichi Iwasaki's insightful direction has been critical both to the realization of this project, as well as to my growth as a scholar. His Multiple Grammars theory, along with the inspiration from Professor Tao on genre-specific discourse analysis, has contributed to the publication of a course paper I did with both of them in *Chinese Language and Discourse*. His seminar *Functional Linguistics* kindled my interest in discourse functionalism and broadened my intellectual perspective. It directly contributed to the formulation of the research question of this dissertation. It was through his teaching and guidance that I got hooked on Native Selection, and later with the guidance from Professor Tao and my other advisors, I started working on the issue of linguistic choice-making in this dissertation. The questions Professor Iwasaki raised regarding the data coding of my dissertation and the guidance from him and my other advisors were very helpful in the development of a more reliable coding scheme. Not only did Professor Iwasaki offer deep insights on my research, he is also very supportive of other aspects of my academic growth, such as guiding conference organizing. I have a deep appreciation for his steadfast mentorship and support and scholarly influence.

I am also immensely grateful to my advisor Professor Sung-Ock Sohn for her insightful advice, guidance, and teaching, which have deeply influenced my work as well. Her research on the role of frequency and interaction in shaping the emergence of grammar has greatly inspired my published work in this area. Not only did I benefit from her scholarly brilliance and the enlightening discussions (e.g., regarding the key concepts), I also learned tremendously from

her seminar in interactional linguistics. Much as what Professor Tao offered in his seminars and publications, what was particularly inspiring was Professor Sohn's encompassing approach bringing together several convergent fields, including discourse-functionalism, conversation analysis, and corpus linguistics. This inspires the use of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in my dissertation. Her suggestions regarding sequential analysis have been very valuable too. I have also found her Language Alliance workshops on language pedagogy very helpful for my research in applied linguistics and my teaching. I can never thank Professor Sohn enough for her wisdom and deep insights, as well as her great support and encouragement.

Working with the UCLA Chinese language faculty has been an extremely joyful and rewarding experience. In addition to my chair advisor, I also thank Liancheng Chief, Yan Shen, Michelle Fu Smith, Xiaoxin Sun, and Yu-wen Yao for valuable consultation, support, and amazing collaboration and friendship. You were an important part that made UCLA home to me. Special thanks to Xiaoxin Sun for her caring support and the holiday memories together.

Other members of the UCLA faculty contributed in countless ways to my education. I am indebted to the highly supportive faculty in my home department Asian Languages and Cultures. They include William Bodiford, Robert Buswell, Jack Chen, Robert Chi, Hung-Hsiang Chou, Torquil Duthie, George Dutton, Michael Emmerich, Christopher Hanscom, Stephanie Jamison, Jennifer Jung-Kim, Yumiko Kawanishi, Namhee Lee, Min Li, Gyanam Mahajan, Thu-Huong Nguyen-Vo, Asako Hayashi Takakura, Timothy Tangherlini, Juliana Wijaya, and many others. I wish to thank Dean David Schaberg for his support for student success and his profound advice on academic development.

I also wish to thank other scholars at UCLA and in other parts of the world who have kindly offered me consult and support, including Amy Ohta, Bernd Heine, Brenna Byrd, Deborah

Tannen, Deirdre Wilson, Francis Bailey, Istvan Kecskes, John Heritage, John Schumann, John W. Du Bois, Julie Human, Lyle Bachman, Marjorie H. Goodwin, Milena Minkova, Olga T. Yokoyama, Paul Hopper, Steve Clayman, Elinor Ochs, Tanya Stivers, Teun A. van Dijk, and many others.

This dissertation is a culmination of near a decade working in the area of Chinese linguistics and applied linguistics. Many scholars in the fields provided excellent formal and informal guidance along the way and should be acknowledged, especially my informal mentors: Jianming Lu, for his training in Chinese linguistics, his profound advice, and our research collaboration; Xiaobing Zhou, for his training in Chinese applied linguistics and second language acquisition, as well as his trust, leadership, and collaboration in research, teaching, and service while I was teaching at the School of Chinese as a Second Language at Sun Yat-sen University; William S-Y. Wang, for offering insightful feedback and comments that stimulated improvements in this dissertation, for the collaboration with his lab on a paper, and for his visionary advice on academic research; Sandra A Thompson, for sharing her insightful advice on scholarly growth and her many enlightening papers, as well as her seminal works on the research subjects of this dissertation. This research also benefited enormously from the extraordinary expertise of Zhuo Jing-Schmidt, whose influential work directly inspired me and whose advice and support gave me the direction and strength to deal with the challenges our research subjects entail. I must also thank Agnes Weiyun He, Olga Kagan, and Numa P. Markee for their incredible mentorship in second/heritage language studies and their kind support.

I wish to thank these scholars for helpful discussions in Chinese linguistics/applied linguistics and beyond: Anne O. Yue, Audrey Li, Bojiang Zhang, C. T. James Huang, Chaofen Sun, Chengzhi Chu, Chih-p'ing Chou, Chunhong Shi, Dana Bourgerie, Danqing Liu, Feng Shi,

Feng-hsi Liu, Gang Peng, Guozhen Peng, Honggang Jin, Hongming Zhang, James H.-Y. Tai, Jiaxuan Shen, Jinming Zhao, K. K. Luke, Lening Liu, Marjorie Chan, Mei Fang, Meichun Liu, Min Zhang, Peter Wong P. K., Rui Guo, Shengli Feng, Tianwei Xie, Weidong Zhan, Xiaohong Wen, Xiliang Cui, Yang Shen, Yiming Yang, Yea-Fen Chen, Yuming Li, Yutaka Furukawa, Zev Handel, Zheng-sheng Zhang, Zhiqiang Yu, Zhiqun Xing, and many others.

I would also like to thank my students, who constantly inspired me with their creative perspectives and vibrant enthusiasm for learning. Their questions (which I couldn't answer) also challenged and motivated me to conduct the research in this dissertation and beyond.

I received highly efficient support from the staff in my home department, and I wish to thank them, especially Shan Shan Chi-Au and Phuong Truong.

Chapter 5 has been accepted for publication in *Journal of Pragmatics*. I thank the publisher Elsevier for permission to include material from: Significance as a Lens: Understanding the Mandarin Ba Construction through Discourse Adjacent Alternation, *Journal of Pragmatics*, forthcoming.

For funding, I thank UCLA, especially the Graduate Division, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, the College Deans, and the Confucius Institute, as well as the Los Angeles Unified School District and Dr. Adeline Mah from the Chinese Character A Day Foundation, for offering me a variety of fellowships, grants, and awards for research, teaching, and service. For data, I thank Phoenix Television for the talk show *Qiang Qiang San Ren Xing* and the Chinese speakers in the show. I also thank Zidong Xu for his helpful response to my questions about the talk show. I also wish to thank the editors the *Journal of Pragmatics* and the two anonymous referees for their constructive comments on a chapter of this dissertation. Naturally, all mistakes in this work belong to me solely.

I am very grateful to my fellow graduate students and friends who helped with both this dissertation and my graduate studies through their friendship and encouragement. They include Mayumi Ajioka, Clara Bergen, Liz Carter, Lance Crisler, David Hull, Seunggon Jeong, Jaehyun Jo, Don Lee, Heeju Lee, Yuhui Lee, Wanmeng Li, Ruey-Ying Liu, Helen Wan, Nan Wang, Wei Wang, Ying Yang, Meimei Zhang, Yunshuang Zhang, Yan Zhou, and others. I must thank my dear friend Haiping Wu, whose friendship, support, and tremendous help with my research, graduate study, job search, and everything else (e.g., holiday dinners and memories) have been crucial since my first day studying in the U.S. My dear friends outside academia also offered endless support and much love throughout these several years away from home, for which I am deeply grateful.

I owe a lifelong debt to my parents, and my other family members. It can be hard at times living thousands of miles away from some of the people I love the most, but my family has always been a great source of love, happiness, joy, support, and understanding. My father Shuxu Su showed me the values of knowledge, integrity, hard work, and responsibility; my mother Miaoxing Su also showed me the importance of kindness, discipline, and optimism. My brother Jiehao, a photo-based artist, inspires me constantly with his creativity, wisdom, hard work, and perseverance, as well as the pursuit of his dreams. I am endlessly grateful to my other family members as well. I love you all.

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, especially the memory of my beloved mom. 谢谢母亲.



## VITA

### EDUCATION

M.A., Modern and Contemporary Chinese Literature, Sun Yat-sen University, June 2008

B.A., Chinese Language and Literature, Sun Yat-sen University, June 2006

### PUBLICATIONS

#### ■ In Peer-Reviewed Journals

- Su, Danjie. (Accepted). Significance as a lens: Understanding the Mandarin *ba* construction through discourse adjacent alternation, *Journal of Pragmatics*.
- Lee, Heeju, Danjie Su, & Hongyin Tao. (Accepted). A crosslinguistic study of some extended uses of what-based interrogative expressions in Chinese, English, and Korean, *Chinese Language and Discourse* 8.2.
- Su, Danjie. (Accepted). Book Review: The Oxford Handbook of Chinese Linguistics, edited by Wang, William S-Y. and Chaofen Sun, *Studies in Language*.
- Su, Danjie. 2017. Semantics and Chunking in Written and Conversational Discourses: A Corpus Study of Two Near-synonymous Words in Mandarin, *Chinese Language and Discourse* 8.1: 51–94.
- Su, Danjie. 2016. Grammar Emerges through Reuse and Modification of Prior Utterances. *Discourse Studies* 18.3: 1–24.
- Su, Danjie. 2014. Book Review: Request Strategies: A Comparative Study in Mandarin Chinese and Korean, by Rue & Zhang. *Language and Linguistics*, 15.4: 597–600.
- Peng, Gang, Diana Deutsch, Trevor Henthorn, Danjie Su & William S-Y. Wang. 2013. Language experience influences non-linguistic pitch perception. *Journal of Chinese Linguistics*, 41.2: 447–467.
- Su, Danjie. 2012. Construction as a chain of chunks: Theoretical framework of the Construction-Chunking Approach. *Yuyan Kexue [Linguistic Sciences]*, 58. 3: 241–253.
- Su, Danjie. 2012. Rethinking the *jīānyǔ* sentence patterns in Mandarin: Insight from the Construction-Chunking Approach. *Yuyan Yanjiu [Studies in Language and Linguistics]*, 32. 2: 100–107.
- Su, Danjie. 2012. Chunks as a pivotal unit between constructions and words: The case of “V *qǐ* NP *lái*” patterns in Mandarin. *Journal of Sun Yat-sen University (Social Science Edition)*, 52.1: 69–77.
- Su, Danjie. 2011. The essence of the Construction-Chunking Approach: An empirical study on teaching the Chinese *jīānyǔ* sentence patterns. *Yuyan Jiaoxue Yu Yanjiu [Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies]*, 148.2: 16–22.
- Su, Danjie. 2011. Book review: An International Dictionary of Chinese Neologisms, by Benjamin K. Tsou and Rujie You. *Chinese Language and Discourse* 2.2: 301–306.
- Su, Danjie & Jianming Lu. 2010. The Construction-Chunking Approach for syntactic analysis and second language teaching. *Shijie Hanyu Jiaoxue [Journal of Chinese Teaching in the World]*, 24.4: 557–567.
- Su, Danjie. 2010. A survey study on teaching vocabulary in intermediate Chinese listening class. *Journal of Yunan Normal University (Edition of Research on Teaching Chinese as a Second Language)*, 45.4: 6–12.
- Su, Danjie. 2010. On the Construction-Chunking Approach: An experimental study on teaching Chinese existential sentence patterns. *Hanyu Xuexi [Journal of Learning Chinese Language as a Second Language]*, 176.2: 83–90.

Su, Danjie. 2009. Book review: Using Chinese Synonyms, by Grace Qiao Zhang. *Geolinguistics (Journal of the American Society of Geolinguistics)*, 35: 124–128.

#### ■ Invited or in Proceedings; Non-Peer-Reviewed

Su, Danjie & Hongyin Tao. 2014a. Teaching Discourse Pragmatics in the Spoken Mode: The Case of *Working with Spoken Chinese*. *Linguistics and CSL Teaching and Learning: Theories and Practices in the Training of Pragmatic Abilities*, 144–162, Hong Kong: The Commercial Press.

Su, Danjie & Hongyin Tao. 2014b. Using authentic materials in teaching spoken language and material development: Interview with Dr. Hongyin Tao, the author of *Working with Spoken Chinese*. *Guoji Hanyu [World Chinese Language Journal]*, 3: 105–112.

Su, Danjie. 2012. Vocabulary explanation in Chinese pedagogical lexicography: Interview on the construction and publication of *Hanyu Tujie Cidian*. *Guoji Hanyu [World Chinese Language Journal]*, 2: 110–117.

Su, Danjie. 2011. International cooperation in compiling Chinese teaching materials: Interview with the Editor of *Zou Bian Zhongguo*. *Guoji Hanyu [World Chinese Language Journal]*, 1: 99–103.

Su, Danjie & Jinglian Gao. 2010. On the development of multi-media web resources for learning Chinese characters. In Yan Yuan & John Jing-hua Yin, eds., *Chinese as a Foreign Language Teaching Practice and Reflections*, 431–434. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Su, Danjie. 2010. Web resources for teaching and learning Chinese as a second language. In Pu Zhang, Jihua Song, and Juan Xu, eds., *Technology-Based Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language Practice and Reflection*. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press.

Lu, Jianming & Danjie Su. 2010. Teaching Chinese characters, sound system, lexicon, and grammar to second language learners online. In Pu Zhang, Jihua Song, and Juan Xu, eds., *Technology-Based Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language Practice and Reflection*, 12–20. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press.

#### ■ EDITED PROCEEDINGS

Tao, Hongyin, Yu-Hui Lee, Danjie Su, Keiko Tsurumi, Wei Wang & Ying Yang, eds., 2015. *Proceedings of the 27<sup>th</sup> North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics*. Volumes I and II. UCLA and Ohio State University online publications.

#### EDITORIAL SERVICE

Editor: *Guoji Hanyu [World Chinese Language Journal]*, Volumes 2010, 2011, 2012

Ad hoc reviewer: *Discourse, Context & Media* (an international journal published by Elsevier), 2016

*Ampersand* (an international journal published by Elsevier), 2016

*Yuyan Kexue [Linguistic Sciences]*, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016

#### HONORS & AWARDS:

- Excellence in Teaching, Department of Asian Languages & Cultures, UCLA, 2017
- Nominee, Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award, UCLA, 2015
- Charles E. and Sue K. Young Graduate Student Award, UCLA, 2013 (\$10,000)
- Annual Award for Outstanding Achievements in Research and Teaching, School of Chinese as a Second Language, Sun Yat-sen University, 2010
- Best Master's Thesis, Sun Yat-sen University, 2008
- Excellent Graduate of Sun Yat-sen University, 2006
- Best Bachelor's Thesis, Sun Yat-sen University, 2006

#### FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS:

- External research funding on developing a mobile game for learning Chinese characters, Chinese Gems, Chinese Character A Day Foundation, 2014 (\$10,000)
- University Fellowship, Educational Fee Grant, UCLA, 2012-2013, 2013-2014
- University Fellowship, Educational Fee Grant, Departmental Fellowship, UCLA, 2011-2012 (\$47,400)
- National Fellowship for Excellent Graduate Students, Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2006, 2007
- Educational Fee Grant for Excellent Graduate Students, Sun Yat-sen University, 2006, 2007
- University Fellowship for Excellent Undergraduates, Sun Yat-sen University, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006

# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Overview of the Study

In this study, I ask the question of how a speaker comes to choose a particular grammatical construction out of all the grammatical choices s/he has available. I then use a dataset of 300 videotaped spontaneous conversations from a Mandarin talk show and the discourse adjacent alternation method that I develop in this study to investigate the alternative choices Chinese native speakers in a single conversation make to describe the same event, an area that previous research has not adequately studied.

I wish to propose the concept of LENS as speakers' subjective evaluation of reality, especially their attitudes towards an event. I will show four lenses that can affect how Chinese native speakers make linguistic choices:

1) “Significance”: the choice of presenting an event as being highly consequential, challenging, or important. I will discuss how the *ba*-construction in Mandarin is a linguistic device for the construe of significance of transitive events. I will show the discourse evidence that speakers tend to choose a *ba*-construction to present a transitive event as being significant – in other words, an event that is highly consequential, for which the causer deserves explicit blaming or praising, that has highly important meaning or worth, or is highly challenging to achieve.

2) “Factuality”: the choice of presenting an event as being a fact or a truth. I will discuss how the unmarked passive construction in Mandarin is a linguistic device for the construe of factuality of transitive events. I will show the discourse evidence that speakers tend to choose an unmarked passive construction to present the result of a transitive event as a fact or a truth.

3) “Uncontrollability”: the choice of presenting the affected party of an event as having little control over the occurrence of this event. I will discuss how the *rang*-construction in Mandarin is

a linguistic device for the construe of uncontrollability of transitive events. I will show the discourse evidence that speakers tend to choose a *rang*-construction to present the affectee of a transitive event as having little control over the situation, be it an emotional or perceptual reaction, a passive consequence, a beneficial result, or a requested action.

4) “Adversity”: the choice of presenting an event as being undesirable for the affectee and for the speaker to explicitly sympathize with the affectee. I will discuss how the *bei*-passive construction in Mandarin is a linguistic device for the construe of adversity of transitive events. I will show the discourse evidence that speakers tend to choose a *bei*-passive construction to categorize the nature of a transitive event as adverse for the affectee, regardless of whether the event is adverse in an objective sense.

I will also discuss the theoretical implications of this study.

## **1.2 Research Question: The Alternative Puzzle**

In any given language, there are different ways to describe the same event. A major event in human languages is the transitive event, in which an agent performs some action that affects an entity to a certain degree. The event structure of a transitive event typically involves an agent (or causer), an affectee, a cause, and an effect. For example, the event structure of a boy having hit and broken a window involves a causer – the boy, an affectee – the window, a cause – to hit, and an effect – broken.

To describe this event, an English speaker can use either an active sentence (1) *He broke the window* or a passive sentence (2) *The window was broken by him*. A Mandarin Chinese speaker has more grammatical options: There are at least eight different syntactic constructions that can be used to describe such an event (Table 1-1).

Table 1-1: Chinese syntactic constructions describing the event of a boy having broken a window

1	<b>把 <i>Ba-</i> construction</b>	(3)	他 把 窗 打 破 了。
	He hit and broke the window.		3SG BA window hit break PFV
2	<b>被 <i>Bei-</i>passive</b>	(4)	窗 被 他 打 破 了。
	The window was hit and broken by him.		window BEI 3SG hit break PFV
3	<b>让 <i>Rang-</i>passive</b>	(5)	窗 让 他 打 破 了。
	The window was hit and broken by him.		window RANG 3SG hit break PFV
4	<b>Unmarked passive</b>	(6)	窗 打 破 了。
	The window was hit and broken.		window hit break PFV
5	<b>给 <i>Gei-</i>passive</b>	(7)	窗 给 他 打 破 了。
	The window was hit and broken by him.		window GEI 3SG hit break PFV
6	<b>叫 <i>Jiao-</i>passive</b>	(8)	窗 叫 他 打 破 了。
	The window was hit and broken by him.		window JIAO 3SG hit break PFV
7	<b>使 <i>Shi-</i>causative</b>	(9)	他 使 窗 破 了。
	He caused the window to break.		3SG SHI window break PFV
8	<b>SVO</b>	(10)	他 打 破 了 窗。
	He hit and broke the window.		3SG hit break PFV window

The existence of these different grammatical options presents the **Alternative Puzzle**: Given alternative grammatical options, how do native speakers make the choice in a given communicative context? This is the research question the current study asks. Specifically, this study uses empirical Chinese conversational data and takes a discourse approach to explore the question of how Chinese native speakers make grammatical choices when there are multiple grammatical options to describe a transitive event.

### 1.3 Gap in the Literature

There is an extremely extensive literature on these Chinese grammatical constructions.

Previous studies have provided many important pioneering findings regarding the syntactic properties and functions of these grammatical constructions, which are of particular value to the current study. However, there is very little empirical research on how alternative grammatical constructions are used to describe the same event in real life. Because the existing research focuses on how individual grammatical constructions are used, we still cannot adequately answer the question of how Chinese native speakers actually make grammatical choices when multiple grammatical options for the same event are available. This question will be addressed in the current study.

#### **1.4 Overview of Research Method and Data**

My method is to study grammatical constructions through what I called “discourse adjacent alternation,” namely, alternative grammatical constructions used to describe the same event in real life. This study analyzes cases of high adjacency: Alternative constructions commenting on the same event are used within a single spontaneous natural conversation that lasts no longer than 30 minutes.

The data consist of 300 spontaneous conversations in Mandarin, a total of 100 hours in video form and 1 million (1,129,437) words in transcript form. Each conversation lasts between 20 minutes to 25 minutes. They are from an unscripted and almost unedited spontaneous talk show *Qiang Qiang San Ren Xing* 锵锵三人行 ‘Three Companions’ (aired from 2013 to 2015).

My first dataset consists of a total of 1,000 minutes of conversation. I manually and exclusively coded all the actual grammatical structures that are used by the speakers to describe a transitive event that involves a causer, an affectee, a cause, and an effect. I ended up having 1,583 actual occurrences of grammatical constructions that covered 22 major types and 44 subtypes of Chinese grammatical constructions. The four most frequent grammatical

constructions turned out to be the *ba*-construction, the unmarked passive construction, the *rang*-construction, and the *bei*-passive construction. The total occurrences of these four grammatical constructions account for 70.1% of all the 1,583 actual occurrences. Therefore, these four grammatical constructions became the main subjects of my investigation.

I then watched all the 300 videos along with their transcripts and identified 191 adjacent alternations involving 470 alternative uses – instances of these four grammatical constructions used in the same conversation for the same event. These 470 alternative uses constitute my second dataset, which is the main dataset. This second dataset was used to study the alternation patterns and functions of these four major grammatical constructions.

My third dataset consists of 5,679 single uses of these four grammatical constructions in the entire corpus. With the aid of a corpus software program, this third dataset was used to quantitatively capture the alternation tendencies of the four major grammatical constructions and their semantic features.

### **1.5 Contribution of this Study**

Theoretical contribution: This study proposes the concept of “lens” as a new aspect of linguistic construal, which refers to speakers’ subjective evaluation of reality, especially their attitudes towards an event. This study reveals four linguistic lenses that can influence Chinese native speakers’ linguistic choice-making in conversational discourse: significance, factuality, uncontrollability, and adversity.

Methodological contribution: This study outlines a discourse adjacent alternation method for studying the functions of grammatical constructions in natural discourse. The study presents large-scale videotaped authentic conversational data on the use of grammatical constructions and

analyzes linguistic choice-making on a discourse adjacent alternation method. This is the first study that analyzes such data by examining adjacent alternation in discourse.

Contributions on Chinese linguistics and applied linguistics: The analysis provides valuable material for future research both in Chinese linguistics and on other languages whose speakers may be using a similar resource. The findings also carry implications for teaching Chinese as a second language. For example, the findings can help teachers further inform learners how to use these notoriously difficult grammatical constructions.

In all, this study is dedicated to the understanding of how speakers make the choice among all possible grammatical options. The findings shed light on the pragmatic factors in linguistic choice-making during social interaction.

## **1.6 Definitions of Terms**

Since this study investigates transitive events, which typically involve the use of causative constructions, let me first discuss my use of some related terms here.

**Transitivity** is a central notion in the study of grammar. This is because it deals with the linguistic representation of a common experience in human's life and the world we live in – whether and how an agent impacts an entity. As Hopper and Thompson (1980) commented, “Transitivity is a central property of language use. Transitivity is a crucial relationship in language... A mass of evidence suggests the significance of the notion of Transitivity in the grammars of the world's languages.” Transitivity is one of the three areas of syntactic choice in Halliday's (1967) theory of grammar. Halliday's (1967) notion of transitivity is an encompassing one, where transitivity is deemed “the set of options relating to cognitive content, the linguistic representation of extralinguistic experience.”

Hopper and Thompson's (1980) notion of transitivity is also a broad one. In their theory,



transitivity is considered a continuum – all clauses can be characterized as being on a continuum of more or less transitive. Hopper and Thompson identify ten parameters of transitivity, each of which suggests a scale according to which clauses can be ranked (Table 1-2).

Table 1-2: Ten parameters of transitivity in Hopper & Thompson (1980)

#	Parameters	High in transitivity	Low in transitivity
A	Participants	two	one
B	Kinesis	action ( <i>I hugged Sally</i> )	non-action ( <i>I like Sally</i> )
C	Aspect	telic ( <i>I ate it up</i> ) (completed & bounded)	atelic ( <i>I am eating it</i> )
D	Punctuality	punctual ( <i>kick</i> )	non-punctual ( <i>carry</i> )
E	Volitionality	volitional ( <i>I wrote your name</i> )	non-volitional ( <i>I forgot your name</i> )
F	Affirmation	affirmative	negative
G	Mode	realis (happened or is happening)	Irrealis
H	Agency	A high in potency ( <i>George startled me</i> )	A low in potency( <i>The picture startled me</i> )
I	Affectedness	O highly affected ( <i>I drank up the milk</i> )	O not affected ( <i>I drank some of the milk</i> )
J	Individuation	O highly individuated	O not individuated

This study adopts Hopper and Thompson’s (1980) notion of transitivity. At the same time, it is noted that Hopper and Thompson’s model is primarily for clausal structure and does not specify the event structure. Based on the examples in Hopper and Thompson’s article, events that have only one participant (such as the event described in the clause (11) *Susan left*) are also included in their scope of investigation. In this study, I focus only on the events that have at least two participants in the event structure, even though there may only be one participant in the clausal structure (e.g., as in the case of the Mandarin unmarked passive construction); this is what I mean by “transitive events.”

Transitive events, which have two participants, typically involve the use of causative

constructions. In the research literature, causative construction is mainly defined in terms of the cognitive category it denotes, namely, causative situation (or event) (see Comrie 1981: 158). This study adopts Comrie's definition of **causative situation**:

*Any causative situation involves two component situations, the cause and its effect (result).*

*Let us imagine the following scene: the bus fails to turn up; as a result, I am late for a meeting. In this simple example, the bus's failing to turn up functions as cause, and my being late for the meeting functions as effect. These two micro-situations thus combine together to give a single complex macro-situation, the causative situation. In this case, it would be natural to express the macro-situation in English by combining the two clauses together, e.g. as the bus's failure to come caused me to be late for the meeting, or the bus didn't come, so I was late for the meeting, ... Very often, however, the expression of one of the micro-situations, usually the cause, can be abbreviated, giving rise to sentences like John caused me to be late: here, the effect is clearly that I was late, but the expression of the cause has been abbreviated. (Comrie 1981:158–159)*

Comrie's notion of causatives is a rather broad one that can include "causative or resultative conjunctions (*because, so that*) or prepositions (*because of, thanks to*), the use of a separate predicate of causation (e.g. the verb *to cause*...), or of a predicate that includes within itself the notion of cause, as in *John killed Bill*" (Comrie 1981: 159). The key concept in a causative situation is the co-existence of two events on the conceptual level: the causing event and the caused event (Talmy 1975: 52). These two events constitute an underlying complex structure. Comrie (1976: 303) states that causative constructions result from "the compression of an underlying complex structure with embedding into a derived structure simple sentence." The notion of a causing event and a caused event being united in a causative relation has been widely

recognized in the existing research (for some early literature see Shibatani 1976: 1; Talmy 1975: 58; Facchi 1987: 104; Kulikov & Sumbatova 1993: 327). My study is built on this common ground.

Shibatani (1976: 1–2) provides a similar yet more detailed definition of causative situation: *Two events qualify as a causative situation if (a) The relation between the two events is such that the speaker believes that the occurrence of one event, the ‘caused event’, has been realized at  $t_2$ , which is after  $t_1$ , the time of the ‘causing event’; and if (b) the relation between the causing and the caused event is such that the speaker believes that the occurrence of the caused event is wholly dependent on the occurrence of the causing event; the dependency of the two events here must be to the extent that it allows the speaker to entertain a counterfactual inference that the caused event would not have taken place at that particular time if the causing event had not taken place, provided that all else had remained the same.*

Although Shibatani’s (1976) definition may appear to be more rigorous than Comrie’s, they nonetheless share the same essence, namely, the dependency and compression of two events – causing event and caused event. This position is adopted in my study.

Corresponding to these two events are the two semantic roles: **causer** and **affectee**. In a study that details the characteristics of the conceptual structure of causatives, Kemmer and Verhagen (1994) note that the basic semantic roles in a causative situation are the causer and the causee (affectee). The causer is “the entity viewed as causing the entire event.” The causee (affectee) is “the entity carrying out the activity designated by the effected predicate.” For example, in the causative situation denoted by the English sentence, *She made it fall over*, the causer is *she*, and the affectee is *it*, which is the participant that falls over.

A **causative construction** is “a reflection of a causative situation rendered into a linguistic utterance” (Rawoens 2011). According to the basic tenet of Construction Grammar (e.g., Goldberg 1995), the causative construction itself has its meaning – causative, which is independent of its component parts. Instances of causative construction are often referred to as **causatives** in the literature. These definitions and common understandings about what constitutes causation and causative expressions are adopted in my study.

Below are the definitions of the new terms this study uses.

*Lens* is an aspect of linguistic construal. Lens refers to speakers’ subjective evaluation of reality, especially their attitudes towards an event. The same event can be evaluated in different ways; for example, highly significant or adverse. Using an analogy – “lenses” are like colorful camera lenses; they paint different pictures of reality. By choosing a particular grammatical construction, the lens of an event that a speaker construes can be expressed linguistically.

For mere expository purposes, my definition of lens here does not make an explicit reference to cases where the speaker is lying, in which case the lens account still applies. For example, the speaker actually thinks that an event is not significant, but for some reason, the speaker wants others to believe that the event is highly significant. In such case, the speaker still needs to use the linguistic device that can construe significance of an event. In other words, the speaker still needs to choose the grammatical construction for the significant lens.

*Adjacent alternation* refers to the discourse phenomenon in which alternative grammatical constructions are used to describe the same specific event in real life. The notion of “adjacency” is that of a continuum: Of higher adjacency are cases in which alternative grammatical constructions commenting on the same event are used in proximity in a single conversation or text; of lower adjacency are cases in which alternative constructions commenting on the same

event are used not in a single conversation or text but across different conversations or texts. An alternation that involves the use of  $n$  ( $n > 1$ ) alternative grammatical constructions is called an  $n$ -form alternation. An alternation can be notated with either a path-specified or path-unspecified notation. Whereas the path-specified notation “ $\Rightarrow$ ” indicates the temporal order of the constructions used in an alternation, the path-unspecified notation “ $\Leftrightarrow$ ” does not. For example, in an unmarked passive  $\Rightarrow$  *ba* alternation, the speaker(s) first use(s) an unmarked passive construction to describe an event and then switch(es) to using a *ba*-construction to describe the same event. *Alternative use* refers to the occurrence of a grammatical construction in an adjacent alternation. *Single use* refers to the occurrence of a grammatical construction in a discourse environment other than an adjacent alternation.

The *discourse adjacent alternation method* is a discourse analytical method that investigates the actual alternation of grammatical constructions in natural (conversation & written) discourse. This method could be used to study lenses, functions of grammatical constructions, speakers/writers’ evaluations of a situation, social relationships among participants of a conversation, language ideology, and possibly some other aspects of verbal communication.

I would like to end this section with a brief note on my use of labels for the grammatical constructions investigated, such as the *ba*-construction, the *bei*-passive construction, the *rang*-construction, and the unmarked passive construction. In some occasions, such as discussing the different types of *ba*-constructions, these labels are used in a plural way, and on some other occasions, such as discussing the prototypical function of the *ba*-construction as a whole (compared to, say, the *rang*-construction), they may be used in a singular way.

## **1.7 Scope of Grammatical Construction Investigated**

### **1.7.1 Analytic causatives**

Based on the way causation is encoded, Comrie (1981: 160–161) outlines three major types of causatives: lexical causatives, morphological causatives, and analytic causatives.

Lexical causatives are cases “where the relation between the expression of effect and the expression of causative macro-situation is so unsystematic as to be handled lexically, rather than by any productive process” (Comrie 1981: 161). A typical example is the English verb *kill* as the causative of *die*. Lexical causatives are verbs “that are discernibly semantically causative, but are not formally analyzable into two morphemes (e.g. English *break, open*)” (Kemmer & Verhagen 1994).

Morphological causatives are cases where causation is encoded “by affixation or whatever other morphological techniques the language in question has at its disposal” (Comrie 1981: 160). A typical example is the Japanese causative morpheme *-(s)ase*, which is a suffix that can be attached to an intransitive or transitive predicate to form a causative (Iwasaki 2013: 170). For example, the causative form of the verb *tabe-ru* ‘to eat’ is *tabe-sase-ru* ‘to be made to eat.’

Analytic causatives are cases “where there are separate predicates expressing the notion of causation and the predicate of the effect” (Comrie 1981: 160). An example in English is (12) *I caused John to fall down*, where there are separate predicates: *cause* (cause) and *fall down* (effect). In analytic causatives, the causing event and the caused event are compressed into one clause but are still distinguishable. Analytic causatives are sometimes referred to as periphrastic causatives (e.g. Dixon 2000; Gilquin 2010).

My study focuses on analytic causatives in Mandarin Chinese (referred to as Mandarin or Chinese in this study). Chinese is a language that lacks morphological inflection. Morphological causatives are basically absent in this language. Chinese relies heavily on analytic causative constructions and has a large number of constructions that can express causation. The existence

of a large set of analytic devices makes Chinese an excellent language to study analytic causatives. My study will not be directly concerned with lexical causatives, although passing reference to them may be made when relevant.

Analytic causatives in human languages have received much attention in the literature (e.g., Wierzbicka 1998; Stefanowitsch 2001; Guasti 2006; Gilquin 2010; Levshina et al. 2013). For instance, using corpora consist of written English and Dutch newspaper texts, Levshina et al. (2013) details the semantic classes of the causer, the affectee, and the effect predicate, and creates a common conceptual space of semantically related constructions in English and in Dutch. Following Goldberg's (1995) construction grammar approach to causatives, Stefanowitsch (2001) discusses how the meaning of English analytic causatives emerges from an aggregation of simpler constructions, which individually have fairly abstract semantics, but which in combination encode very specific event types. Stefanowitsch (2001) identifies three causation event types of analytic causative constructions: manipulate (an animate causer intentionally acts on an affectee); trigger (an event occurs which influences a cause); and the prompt (an event occurs and an affectee decides to react).

The focus of the previous research on analytic causatives has been on abstract discussions of the semantic features of causatives isolated from context. Little attention has been paid to how speakers make the choice among multiple grammatical constructions, an area this study explores.

### **1.7.2 Passives as an alternative to typical causatives**

Passive constructions will also be analyzed in this study. The purpose is to see under what circumstances speakers tend to use a passive instead of a typical analytic causative, and vice versa. Like causative, passives are often used for transitive events. Some authors even consider passives to be causative in nature (Washio 1993; Zhang [张伯江] 2001; Cheng [程琪龙] 2001;

Zhou [周红] 2004, 2008). It is not uncommon for studies on causatives to include a discussion of passives. For example, Shibatani (2002) includes the adversative passive in Japanese in the scope of causatives; Stefanowitsch (2001) discusses passivization of matrix or embedded clauses in analytic causatives; Mugari (2013) explores “passivisation possibilities” in the analysis of causatives.

Passive is not a semantic concept but a syntactic concept. Whereas causatives are defined in a semantic way, passives are defined in a syntactic way. From a semantic point of view, “the passive and causative senses are shown to share a basic conceptual structure” (Washio 1993).

In some cases, the causative situation can be expressed by constructions that are sometimes labeled passive structures. For instance,

(13) Causative: *Jenny broke the window.*

(14) Passive: *The window was broken by Jenny.*

One can see from sentences like (13) and (14) that passives, as a type of non-typical causatives, can be alternative to typical causatives. In order to study why the speaker chooses a form over the others in describing a causative situation, it is necessary to include passives in the scope of analysis.

Besides causatives and passives, there are also some other grammatical constructions investigated in the current study. They included intransitives, resultatives, existential construction, etc. Because they do not turn out to be the frequently used forms in my data, I will not pursue a separate introduction of them here. Chapter 4 provides a list and examples of all the 22 types of Chinese grammatical constructions investigated in this study.

## **1.8 Broader Theoretical Background**

### **1.8.1 Native Selection**



Native speakers possess the ability of Native Selection (Pawley & Syder 1983); that is, the ability to choose an expression that is not only grammatical but also nativelike among a range of grammatically correct paraphrases. Below is an example adapted from Pawley and Syder (1983).

When a man proposes to a woman, he would usually say:

(15) *Will you marry me?*

The same objective information, however, can be conveyed in many different ways using grammatical sentences other than *Will you marry me?* For instance,

(16) a. *Can I be wedded to you?*

b. *Do you desire to become married to me?*

c. *Is marrying me what you desire?*

d. *Isn't becoming my spouse what you want?*

e. *Would you like to be in a marriage with me?*

f. *Do you want to be wedded to me?*

g. *Can you become my spouse?*

h. *Do you wish to be married to the man who is asking you this question?*

i. *You are willing to marry me, aren't you?*

j. *You desire to become married to me, don't you?*

k. *Tell me if this is right - not marrying me is the least thing you want.*

l. *Don't you want to wed me?*

m. *Your becoming married to me is what you wish to happen, isn't it?*

n. ....

This list could go on and on. Whereas an exact search of the sentence *Will you marry me* yielded 1,840,000 results on the search engine Google.com, not a single result was found for the

sentences in (16)<sup>1</sup>. Although the sentences in (16) could possibly be used if the man wants to say something creative, in real life, men usually choose the conventional way *Will you marry me* over any other options when proposing to a woman.

Pawley and Syder argue that the key to Native Selection lies in the mastery of “lexicalized sentence stems” that are idiomatic (p. 191). I agree that Native Selection is an important aspect of language capacity. However, there is also another dimension to explore – What if all options are grammatical, nativelylike, and idiomatic, as is in the case of the Alternative Puzzle? I believe that to unveil the Alternative Puzzle, we need to look beyond idiomaticity.

### **1.8.2 Studying Grammar as System and Grammar as Choice**

The idea that grammatical constructions are options in a system has a long tradition in linguistics, a tradition can be traced back to Ferdinand de Saussure. In Saussure’s most influential work – one of the seminal linguistic works, *Course in General Linguistics* ([1916] 1959), he maintains that “language is a system of signs that express ideas” (p.16), “a system of distinct signs corresponding to distinct ideas” (p. 10). This line of thought that views language as a system has been extended, in some cases with substantial modifications, to several major schools of modern linguistics. To name a few, it first initiated the structural linguistics (e.g., Saussure [1916] 1959; Bloomfield 1933; Harris 1951). As a reaction to structural linguistics (especially, Harris 1951) and behaviorism (e.g., Skinner 1938), generative grammar (e.g., Chomsky 1955, 1957) appeared in the late 1950s and takes syntax as a recursive logic system (which is not the orientation of the current study). Saussure’s view of language as a system also has a direct impact on the Prague School – the earliest functionalist framework, as well as a far-reaching impact on

---

<sup>1</sup> On March 22, 2014.

major frameworks of functional grammar later (e.g., Dik 1980; Hopper 1987; Thompson 1997; Bybee 1998).

Saussure's notion of language as a system and Firth's idea of polysystemicity contribute to the advent of Systemic Functional Linguistics (e.g., Halliday [1969]2003, 1973), which expands on the notion of linguistic systems as paradigmatic sets of choices. The notion of choice is fundamental in Systemic Functional Linguistics, which posits that every grammatical structure involves a choice from a set of options made on many scales. In Halliday's words, "the underlying notion in the grammar is that of choice, and this is represented through the concept of a system" (Halliday [1969]2003: 183). For instance, a part of the outcome of a clause must be from the realization of a choice from the system of "voice." In the case of Mandarin, if it is "dispositive voice," it must be either "receptive" (similar to "active") or "operative" (similar to "passive") (Li 2007: 200). For example, using the systemic functional theory, Li (2007: 198–208) analyzes the *bei*-construction as a choice of 'receptive' voice, "which is comparable, but not identical, to the English 'passive'" and has a typical order of elements as "Goal ^ (circumstance) ^ *bei* + Actor / Agent ^ Process" (p. 200). Li also analyzes the *ba*-construction as a choice of the 'operative' option, which has a typical order of elements as "Actor / Agent ^ (circumstance) ^ *ba* + Goal ^ Process" (p. 200). In Li (2007), the choice of *bei*- and *ba*- in discourse is discussed in terms of the flow of information (pp. 201–206).

In recent years, Halliday (e.g., 2013) further articulated his theory of choice: "The semiotic activity of choosing what to mean can be represented as selecting a path through various networks of systems" (2013: 18).

*"[T]he activity of choosing - choice viewed as a procedure... (a) There are specified conditions under which the choice is available; (b) there is a specified realisation of*

*whichever of the options is selected; (c) there is specifiable likelihood that any one choice will be made...In any one semiotic event, many 'moments' of choice will be being activated, across many locations within the total architecture of the language. Each system is just one address within a complex network of systems, where the output of one system becomes the condition of entry to another.” (Halliday 2013:19)*

I agree with Halliday that choice making is fundamental when it comes to grammar. Linguistic choice-making is a complex issue. This study attempts to provide further insights into speakers' subjective aspects in linguistic choice-making.

### **1.8.3 Grammar, Subjectivity, Discourse, and Interaction**

Earlier on, Saussure [1916]1959: 74) notes that “language is a product of social forces.”

Recent years have witnessed a burgeoning trend towards understanding the link between language and social interaction as well as the subjectivity of language. Major domains of inquiry in this direction include conversation analysis, discourse analysis, Interactional Linguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, among others.

The relationship between language and its social context has been one of the main concerns for discourse analysis and related areas (e.g., Voloshinov [1929]1986; Labov 1966; van Dijk 2008, 2009; Goodwin 1979, 2013; Tannen 1989, 2005; Duranti & Goodwin 1992; Halliday 1978; Linell 2009). Research on discourse and grammar (e.g., Hopper 1987, 1998; Tao & Thompson 1994; Tao 1999a, 2003a&b, 2007a; Iwasaki 1995, 2015; Du Bois 2003; Sohn 2010; Tao & Meyer 2006; Sohn & Kim 2008) demonstrates the importance and fruitfulness of studying grammar as it is situated within discourse. Considering language the primary domain of ideology, Critical Discourse Analysis (e.g. Fairclough 1985; van Dijk 1995) is concerned with power abuse, dominance, and inequality (re)produced by ideologically based discourse (e.g., van Dijk 1995).

Interactional Linguistics (e.g., Ochs, Schegloff & Thompson 1996; Tao 1996, 2007a; Couper-Kuhlen & Selting 2001; Thompson 2002; Thompson & Couper-Kuhlen 2005; Thompson, Fox & Couper-Kuhlen 2015; Kim & Sohn 2015; Su 2016) maintains that linguistic forms are greatly shaped by interactions among participants in talk-in-interaction. The beginnings of the emergence of grammar can be found in individual interactions where participants are constantly reusing and modifying prior utterances to achieve current interactive goals (Su 2016). Conversation analysis (e.g., Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974; Heritage 1984; Markee 2000; Heritage & Clayman 2010; Sidnell & Stivers 2012) considers that speaking is not just a mere matter of putting words together based on grammatical rules, but is driven by speakers' intentions and actions in interaction.

How speakers position themselves in relation to the ongoing interaction – speakers' stances – are drawing attention in a growing number of studies (e.g., Du Bois 2007; Goodwin 2007; M Goodwin, Cekaite & Goodwin 2012; Iwasaki & Yap 2015; Su 2016; for Mandarin, see e.g., Biq 2004, 2015; Tao 2007b; Jing-Schmidt & Tao 2009). The existing research reveals that speakers simultaneously take up stances as they use certain linguistic resources. “Language mediates and represents the world from different points of view” (Stubbs 1996:128). The use of different grammatical devices can present reality in different ways, e.g., different morpho-syntactic markings can construct different “facts” (Duranti 1990); different syntactic patterns can be used to encode different ideologies (Stubbs 1996).

My study is situated within this broader theoretical background – and in terms of linguistics theoretical orientation – the landscape of usage-based functionalism (e.g., Bybee 2006, 2010; among many others). My focus is on the adjacent alternation of syntactic constructions in conversation. That is, different grammatical forms used in a single conversation to describe the

same event in real life. This is a topic that has not yet been systematically investigated.

### 1.8.4 Construction Grammar

In the last two decades, there is another burgeoning field of inquiry – construction grammar (CxG) (e.g., Fillmore, Kay & O'Connor 1988; Goldberg 1995; Croft 2001). It is a model of grammar that takes grammatical constructions to be the central units of grammatical representation. There are several frameworks within construction grammar. What this study adopts is a common belief among different groups of construction grammar: Our knowledge of language is based on a collection of “form and function pairs” (e.g., Goldberg 2006) at the surface level.

In terms of the method for analyzing the internal semantic structure of a construction, this study uses the construction-chunking approach (Su [苏丹洁] 2010, 2011 a&b, 2012a, b&c, Su [苏丹洁] & Lu [陆俭明] 2010), which maintains that a syntactic construction consists of a chain of semantic chunks. For example, existential constructions in many languages can be analyzed as a chain of chunks that consist of [existential location] [existential relation/manner], and [existential entity] (see the following examples from Su 2010).

(17)	[Location]	— [Relation/Manner]	— [Entity]
Chinese	[桌上]	[有/放着]	[一瓶水]
Spanish	[en la mesa]	[hay]	[una botella de agua]
German	[Auf dem Tisch]	[steht]	[eine Flasche Wasser]
Russian	[На столе]	[стоит]	[одна бутылка воды]
Romanian	[Pe masă]	[se află]	[o sticlă cu apă]
Indonesian	[Di atas meja]	[ada]	[satu botol air]
Vietnamese	[trên cái bàn]	[đặt]	[một cốc nước]

	[Location]	— [Entity] —	[Relation/Manner]
Japanese	[机の上に]	[一瓶の水が]	[置いてあります]
Korean	[책상위에]	[물한병이]	[놓여있다]

Specifically, this study adopts the analysis that the Mandarin *ba*-construction consists of a semantic chunking chain of [causer]-*ba*-[affectee]-[cause]-[effect] (Su 2011 b, 2012a). This way of analyzing the internal semantic structure of a construction will be applied to the 22 grammatical constructions coded in this study (see Chapter 4).

### 1.8.5 Context

This study is also built on the idea that the meaning of linguistic signs is dependent on the context it appears. This idea can be traced back to the Firthian tradition and its earlier influences, especially Malinowski’s (1923) notion of “context of the situation.” Malinowski (1923: 476–477) argues that the meaning of words is dependent upon the context of the situation of communication. This thought is taken further in Firth’s notion of “meaning by collocation.” Firth ([1951]1957: 195–196) maintains that the collocation of a word is not just a juxtaposition but an abstraction at the syntagmatic level. In Firth’s well-known quotation, “you shall know a word by the company it keeps” (Firth [1935] 1957: 11). This line of thought is further pursued by Sinclair (1966), who takes the co-occurrence of words to be playing an important role in defining the meaning of words – lexical items on each side of a node are relevant to that node (p. 415).

This view is further taken when Sinclair (1991) defines the notion of collocation in corpus linguistics: “Collocation is the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text. Collocations can be ... important in the lexical structure of the language because of being frequently repeated” (p. 170). Sinclair suggests that collocation is not random: some

words or syntactic patterns tend to favor certain other words or patterns. I will adopt this idea of linguistics co-occurrence in my analysis of the adjacent alternation (Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8).

I also adopt a broader notion of context, which is the version that was outlined in communications theory and adapted to linguistics by Jakobson (1953), and later summarized by Hymes (1964):

*1,2) The various kinds of participants in communicative events-senders and receivers, addressors and addressees, interpreters and spokesmen, and the like; 3) the various available channels, and their modes of use, speaking, writing, printing, drumming, blowing, whistling, singing, face and body motion as visually Subjective, smelling, tasting, and tactile sensation; 4) the various codes shared by various participants, linguistic, paralinguistic, kinesic, musical, and other; 5) the settings ...; 6) the forms of messages, and their genres; 7) the topics and comments that a message may be about; 8) the events themselves, their kinds and characters as wholes. (Hymes 1964)*

This line of thinking is also articulated in Schumann, Favareau, Goodwin, Lee, Mikesell, Tao, V éronique, and Wray (2006):

*What seems to be required is that the referent for the elided item be understood from context. Here the context might be prior speech in the discourse, the ecological surround in which the discourse takes place, gesture, eye gaze and/or shared background knowledge. (Schumann et al. 2006)*

These statements expand our understandings of what constitutes “context” for language. Given that nonvocal behavior can create context for talk (Duranti & Goodwin 1992), this study uses videotaped data to examine the grammatical constructions in an embodied (e.g., Goodwin 2000) context where multimodal semiotic resources are taken into consideration.



## 1.9 Overview of the Dissertation's Structure and Contents

This dissertation consists of nine chapters.

Chapter 1, *Introduction*, introduces the research question, the gap in the literature, the overview of data and methodologies, definitions of terms, the scope of the grammatical constructions investigated, the broader theoretical background, the main findings and contributions, and the overview of the dissertation's structure and contents.

Chapter 2, *Literature Review*, reviews previous studies on multiple ways to describe a transitive event, causation, construal, relevant Chinese syntactic constructions, and different (typological, semantic, formal, and corpus) approaches to the study of causatives and passives.

Chapter 3, *Data and Methodology*, provides a data description, justifications of data, an introduction of the three datasets, as well as explanations of the research design and method of studying grammatical construction through adjacent alternation in natural discourse.

Chapter 4, *Distribution and Alternation of 22 Major Grammatical Constructions*, reports quantitative findings on the distribution and alternation patterns of 22 Chinese transitive grammatical constructions. The four most frequent constructions were revealed: the 把 *ba*-construction, the unmarked passive construction, the 让 *rang*-construction, and the 被 *bei*-passive construction.

Chapter 5, 6, 7 and 8 discuss the prototypical functions of these four grammatical constructions through their adjacent alternations in discourse, as well as the four lenses that are associated with these four grammatical constructions: significance, adversity, uncontrollability, and factuality.

Chapter 5, *Functions of Ba-Constructions and Related Alternation Patterns*, discusses the prototypical function of the *ba*-construction and its common alternation patterns, as well as the

significance lens. It finds that speakers tend to choose a *ba*-construction over the other constructions to present a transitive event as “significant”, i.e., an event: that is highly consequential, for which the speaker explicitly blames or praises the causer, that has highly important meaning or worth, or is highly challenging to achieve. The chapter concludes that the *ba*-construction is a linguistic device for the construe of significance of transitive events.

Chapter 6, *Functions of Unmarked Passives and Related Alternation Patterns*, discusses the prototypical function of the unmarked passive construction and its common alternation patterns, as well as the factuality lens. It finds that speakers tend to choose an unmarked passive over the other constructions to present a transitive event as “factual”, i.e., the result of the event is a fact or a truth. The chapter concludes that the unmarked passive construction is a linguistic device for the construe of factuality of transitive events.

Chapter 7, *Functions of Rang-Constructions and Related Alternation Patterns*, discusses the prototypical function of the *rang*-construction and its common alternation patterns, as well as the uncontrollability lens. It finds that speakers tend to choose a *rang*-construction over the other constructions to present an event as being “uncontrollable” for the affectee, namely, the affectee cannot avoid or control a spontaneous emotional or perceptual reaction; the affectee has no power over the causer and has to let a passive consequence occur; the affectee is at the mercy of the causer to fulfill a beneficial result; or the affectee is being directed to conduct a requested action and is not in a position to say no. The chapter concludes that the *rang*-construction is a linguistic device for the construe of uncontrollability of transitive events, i.e., the ability to present the affectee of a transitive event as having little control over the situation, be it an emotional or perceptual reaction, a passive consequence, a beneficial result, or a requested action.

Chapter 8, *Functions of Bei-Passives and Related Alternation Patterns*, discusses the prototypical function of the *bei*-passive construction and its common alternation patterns, as well as the adversity lens. It finds that speakers tend to choose a *bei*-passive over the other constructions to present a transitive event as having an “adverse” nature, i.e., an event that is undesirable for the affectee or for which the speaker explicitly sympathizes with the affectee. The chapter concludes that the *bei*-passive construction is a linguistic device for the construe of adversity of transitive events, i.e., the ability to categorize the nature of a transitive event as adverse for the affectee, regardless of whether the event is adverse in an objective sense.

Chapter 9, *Conclusion*, provides a summary of the main findings, as well as theoretical contributions and implications.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Overview of Literature Review

Modern Chinese syntactic constructions have a most extensive literature in Chinese linguistics. One of them, the *ba*-construction is often deemed “arguably the most famous grammatical construction in linguistics. Equally famous is the fact that it is one of the most poorly understood linguistic phenomena” (Jing-Schmidt & Tao 2009) and the ‘most well-known construction in Chinese linguistics’ (Sun 2015: 429). Numerous studies have contributed to the research on the function of this construction (e.g., Chao 1968; Wang [1980] 2001; Lü [1948] 1984; Thompson 1973; Li & Thompson 1981; Chappell 1991; Sun 1996; Sybesma 1999; Tao & B. Zhang 2000; B. Zhang 2000; R. Guo 2003, 2009; Liang 2003; Ye 2004; Wan 2004; S. Guo 2004; Zhou 2005; Jing-Schmidt & Tao 2009; Shi 2010; Su 2011b; Lu 2016; among many others). There have been over twenty accounts on the function of the *ba*-construction. Among them, the most influential one is “disposal” (Wang [1943] 1984), meaning “how a person is handled, manipulated, or dealt with; how something is disposed of; or how an affair is conducted” (Wang [1943] 1984) or “what happens to the direct object” (Li & Thompson 1981: 468). The *bei*-passive construction also has an extensive literature (e.g., Li & Thompson 1981: 493; H. Wang 1983; Chen 1986; Li 1986; Zhou 1992). Many authors agree that *bei*-passives “express an adverse situation, one in which something unfortunate has happened” (Li & Thompson 1981: 493). The unmarked passive construction is believed to be expressing a “non-adverse situation” (e.g., Li & Thompson 1981: 499), and the *rang*-passive construction is often considered a colloquial version of the *bei*-passive construction (e.g., Zhu 1982: 178–179).

Previous studies share at least two common basic features: First, focus on how individual grammatical constructions are used. There are almost no empirical studies investigating how

multiple Chinese grammatical constructions are used to describe the same event in a single conversation. Although there are a few particularly valuable studies that compare multiple constructions, such as B. Zhang (2001) on the *ba*-construction and the *bei*-construction (even though based on introspective data), the focus is on when it is grammatical to use *ba* and not grammatical to use *bei*, and vice versa. Very little research has attempted to answer questions like the Alternative Puzzle: How do speakers in a given communicative context make the choice among multiple options that are all grammatical?

Second, previous studies are mostly based on introspective data, and when empirical data are used, the data are mostly in written form. Spoken language and written language are the two main components of human language, there is yet little research using spoken data. For the few studies that do use spoken data, the data are very small (a few hours at large) and are mostly scripted conversations used in movies and TV dramas, which are written language in nature.

A limitation of the existing research is that we still know very little about how speakers make the choice among multiple grammatical options in conversational discourse and how these grammatical constructions differ from each other in terms of their functions. As Li and Thompson (1981) commented, “the *bei*-construction also expresses disposal in the same manner as the *ba*-construction does” (Li & Thompson 1981: 501). If this is the case, what is the special function of the *ba*-construction? Why does a speaker need to use a *ba*-construction when the use of a *bei*-construction would also be grammatical? Based on my review of numerous previous studies, including several book-length studies, a question still remains to be answered: How do Chinese native speakers actually make grammatical choices when there are multiple grammatical options to describe the same event? This is why I am dedicating the current study to this question.

## 2.2 Previous Studies on Multiple Ways to Describe a Transitive Event

This study uses a discourse adjacent alternation method to study Chinese grammatical constructions for transitive events. Since this method is regarding how different grammatical constructions present the same event differently, let me review some relevant studies.

I would like to first briefly note a structuralism approach in the study of modern Chinese grammar – the syntactic transformational analytical method (句式变化分析法) (e.g., Shao [邵敬敏] 1982; Zhu [朱德熙] 1986; Lu [陆俭明] 1990, 1993, 2001: 236–246, Lu [陆俭明] & Shen [沈阳] 2004: 74–91), which is an application of Harris' (1951) transformational theory to the study of Chinese syntax. Using introspective data, the syntactic transformational analytical method is mainly used for solving the problems with ambiguous sentences – sentences that have multiple semantic interpretations in terms of their truth-values. Therefore, it is not a method for studying why speakers make the choice among alternative grammatical options.

It has been long noted that different grammatical constructions may frame the same event in slightly different ways (e.g., Fillmore 1977). There have been extensive studies in this area, especially in cognitive linguistics. However, most studies are not based on naturally-occurring language data. Since my study is empirically grounded in natural discourse, below I will focus on the review of three particularly relevant studies that are based on naturally-occurring language data. These three studies are of particular usefulness and relevance to my study.

The first study I am reviewing concerns the assignment of agency through the use of certain grammatical resources. In a study arguing that anthropology needs the grammarian, Duranti (1990) reveals how certain “facts” can be constructed through the use of specific grammatical recourses. Duranti shows that the use of a verb that takes an ergative agent in legal and political Samoan discourse “points an accusatory finger at someone by foregrounding or making public his

or her inappropriate or blameful doings.” In other words, by using a transitive clause with an explicit agent, a speaker brings certain social actors into the foreground as the events’ initiators, whose actions have consequences for a third party. Duranti gives an example of how the same event is framed with two different morpho-syntactic markings: an ergative marking that assigns agency and a genitive marking that focuses on the patient rather than on the agent. Duranti observes the different ways in which different grammatical resources can frame a transitive event:

*There are accusations to be made or avoided, there is blame or mitigation, (someone can be) made into either a willful agent or an ignorant victim... Each grammatical choice made by a speaker becomes important.* (Duranti 1990)

Duranti’s position regarding how different grammatical framings construe different “facts” is adopted in the current study.

Another particularly relevant study is Stubbs’s (1996) comparison of transitive clauses with agent and agentless clauses with an ergative verb. Stubbs investigates ergative verbs (such as *close*) in two texts: a secondary school book on geography and a secondary school book on environmentalist. Ergative verbs can take three forms (examples from Stubbs1996):

[transitive] *several firms have closed their factories*

[passive] *factories have been closed*

[intransitive] *factories have closed*

Using corpus methodologies, Stubbs extracted all occurrences of ergative verbs in the two texts and studied their occurrences in concordance lines of 132 characters. Stubbs finds that the environmentalist text has many more transitive forms, whereas the geography text has many more passives and intransitives. Stubbs explains that because the environmentalist text explicitly

orients to the responsibility for environmental problems and solutions, it attributes both events and knowledge more frequently to their agents.

Stubbs insightfully concludes that “the same events can always be talked about in different ways” (p. 126) and that “the systematic usage of different syntactic patterns encodes different points of view” (p. 130). This position is adopted in the current study. At the same time, it is noted that Stubbs (1996) is an investigation of written examples of transitive events that happen to use the same verbs. It is not a study on adjacent alternations of multiple grammatical constructions for the same event, which is the main research subject of the current study.

Another particularly inspiring study is Jing-Schmidt and Tao’s study (2009) on the comparison of the *ba*-construction and the *jiang*-construction. By carefully comparing the uses of these two constructions across different registers in written and spoken corpora, Jing-Schmidt and Tao insightfully conclude that the *ba*-construction and the *jiang*-construction “form the system of disposal in which they share the basic meaning of entity manipulation but contrast in the semantic-pragmatic substance of subjectivity and emotionality,” namely, *ba* is for subjective disposal and *jiang* is for objective disposal. I am greatly inspired by Jing-Schmidt and Tao’s method of studying these Mandarin grammatical constructions as a system and will further address this issue with an investigation of adjacent alternation in the current study.

### **2.3 Previous Studies on Construal**

How speakers conceive the world through linguistic symbols – the issue of construal and perspectivization – is fundamental in Cognitive Linguistics. “Construal is our multifaceted capacity to conceive and portray the same situation in alternate ways” (Langacker 2007).

Langacker (1987: 487–488) defines the construal relationship as “the relationship between a speaker (or hearer) and a situation that he conceptualizes and portrays, involving focal



adjustments and imagery.” Langacker (2007) proposes the following classification of the aspects of construal:

- a. Specificity: degrees of precision and detail (e.g., *do* → *act* → *move* → *run* → *lope*);
- b. Prominence: 1) profile and base (e.g., *iris* and *pupil* profile different portions of the eye); 2) trajectory and landmark (The semantic contrast between *before* and *after* resides in whether the later event is invoked as a landmark for purposes of situating the earlier one, or as a trajectory that is being situated);
- c. Perspective: 1) vantage point (e.g., *Come up into the attic* and *Go up into the attic* presuppose different speaker locations); 2) subjectively or objectively construed: whether the entity functions as a subject or object of conception (e.g., pronouns like *I* and *you*); 3) scope (e.g., a central domain for *next year* is the conception of one year following another, in an endless sequence.)
- d. Dynamicity: how a conceptualization develops through processing time. (e.g., *She argued about religion with her dentist* and *She argued with her dentist about religion* reflect the different orders in which the components symbolized by the prepositional phrases are incorporated in the overall event conception.)

There are some other similar classifications of construal operations (e.g., Talmy 2000: 40–84; Croft & Cruse 2004: 43–46; see a review in Verhagen 2007), with the Perspective category being the one that most proposals agree upon (Verhagen 2007). As Verhagen (2007) rightly comments, one should not expect that an exhaustive classification of construal operations. What the current study adds to this body of research is a new dimension of construal: Lens.

## 2.4 Previous Studies on Causation

Causation is a basic concept in human cognition and language (e.g., Talmy 2000). It is

estimated that almost every human language possesses a means to express the notion of causation (see Shibatani's 2002:1 and Song's 1996 causative examples in 408 languages collected from various previous studies). For example, a causative construction in English could take the form of the followings<sup>2</sup> and others.

X make Y do something:

(1) e.g., *My mom makes me eat my vegetables.*

X cause Y (to do) something:

(2) e.g. *Living without my mom causes me daily pain.*

Lexical causative:

(3) e.g. *Jenny broke the window.*

In Mandarin Chinese, there are several grammatical constructions that can be used to describe a causative situation. Table 1-1 in Chapter 1 is copied here for some examples.

Table 1-1: Chinese syntactic constructions describing the event of a boy having broken a window

1	<b>把 <i>Ba-</i> construction</b>	(4)	他 把 窗 打 破 了。
	He hit and broke the window.		3SG BA window hit break PFV
2	<b>被 <i>Bei-</i> passive</b>	(5)	窗 被 他 打 破 了。
	The window was hit and broken by him.		window BEI 3SG hit break PFV
3	<b>让 <i>Rang-</i> passive</b>	(6)	窗 让 他 打 破 了。
	The window was hit and broken by him.		window RANG 3SG hit break PFV
4	<b>Unmarked passive</b>	(7)	窗 打 破 了。
	The window was hit and broken.		window hit break PFV
5	<b>给 <i>Gei-</i> passive</b>	(8)	窗 给 他 打 破 了。
	The window was hit and broken by him.		window GEI 3SG hit break PFV
6	<b>叫 <i>Jiao-</i> passive</b>	(9)	窗 叫 他 打 破 了。

<sup>2</sup> These example sentences are from Google.com.

	The window was hit and broken by him.	window JIAO 3SG hit break PFV
7	<b>使 <i>Shi-causative</i></b>	(10) 他 使 窗 破 了。
	He caused the window to break.	3SG SHI window break PFV
8	<b>SVO</b>	(11) 他 打 破 了 窗。
	He hit and broke the window.	3SG hit break PFV window

Over the past four decades, the research on linguistic expressions of causative situation (or event) has spawned a vast amount of literature and has built up a significant body of work in grammatical theories. To name a few, the research on causatives and causation has laid the groundwork for Generative Semantics and has played an important role in the development of linguistic typology (e.g. Comrie 1974, 1976, 1981; Song 1996) and cognitive grammar (e.g. Langacker 1987). It has also sparked a number of research areas in formal theories, including semantics in generative grammar (Chomsky 1996), Government and Binding (GB) theory, Lexical-Functional Grammar, and the elimination of D-structure and S-structure (see Hoshi 1994 in support of Chomsky 1992). The theoretical principles built on the analysis of causative constructions also constitute one of the basic components of construction grammar (e.g., Goldberg 1995).

As my review in the following section will show, this extensive literature focuses on abstract discussions of the “truth values” of causative construction. Even in typological research, the focus has been on potential forms that are based on native speakers’ intuition. There is little empirical research on the actual patterns of these causative constructions in natural language, especially conversational discourse. Even less research has examined how speakers actually make grammatical choices with these different causative constructions.

## **2.5 Previous Studies on Causatives and Passives**

### **2.5.1 Typological approach**

Linguistic typology is one of the earliest approaches to causatives. The existence of causative constructions in a large number of human languages (c.f. the samples in the 408 languages Song 1996 collected) has made causatives an excellent subject of investigation for Linguistic Typology. Endeavors in this field have mainly been dedicated to establishing a typology of causative constructions (Comrie 1976, 1981; Song 1996) among human languages. There have been fruitful discussions regarding the typology of causation based on semantic properties (Talmy 1975; Comrie 1981; Shibatani 1976, 2002b; see the next section for more details), emergence of causatives and passives (e.g., Yap & Iwasaki 2007), morphosyntactic features of causatives (e.g. Comrie 1976; Aissen 1979), and semantic-morphosyntactic matching relationship (e.g., Song (1996) categorizes causative constructions into three classes: COMPACT, AND and PURP).

The focus of the typological approach in this tradition is mainly on potential forms based on native speakers' intuition. A typical example in this respect is Song (1996), an extensive study on the typology of causatives based on samples from by far the most languages. While Song's study should be applauded for the wide range of languages investigated – 408 languages – its focus is on potential forms in these languages, and not on forms that are actually occurring. Song's data mainly comes from examples (including construed examples) in various previous studies. For instance, Song's data of Mandarin causatives is mainly from a few example sentences in Li and Thompson (1976), which are introspective data. In addition, no statistical inference is made in Song's study, an area where future research can contribute to.

### 2.5.2 Semantic approach

The semantic approach to causatives is widely adopted in many schools of linguistic study, including linguistics typology, generative semantics, cognitive grammar, construction grammar, and functional grammar, etc.

In linguistics typology, the focus has been on revealing the causative types among human languages with regard to the semantic makeup of causative constructions. For instance, the distinction between direct causation and indirect causation (Comrie 1981: 164–167), which has drawn much attention even outside of the scope of linguistics typology. In direct causation (Comrie 1981: 164–167), the causer is animate and in control of the action (Rawoens 2011). For example, (12) *I made the vase fall* (Comrie 1981: 164). In indirect causation, the causer does not have full control of the causal events and the affectee (Comrie 1981: 164–167, Shibatani 2002:7, Rawoens 2011). For example, (13) *I let the vase fall* (Comrie 1981: 164). In addition to making distinctions among different causative types, some studies also examine the relationship between causative types and semantics cross-linguistically (e.g., Dixon 2010). The research on potential types of causatives is valuable in providing a list of all the potential forms, which can then be taken as a point of departure for empirical discourse research to further investigate the actual distributions of these forms and how speakers actually choose among them.

In generative semantics (in particular, Lakoff’s framework), the semantic properties of lexical components in causative construction are depicted in painstaking detail. For instance, the semantic meaning of the English word *bachelor* is broken down as “unmarried man” [count, concrete, animate, human, male] (Lakoff 1976). In discussing these examples of causatives, (14) *John enraged Bill*. (15) *John made Bill very angry*. (16) *John made Bill become very angry*, Lakoff (1976) points out that the meaning of *enrage* must contain the meanings of *make*, *become*,

*very*, and *angry*. Besides semantic components, generative semantics is also interested in the relationship between semantic properties of lexical units and their syntactic properties.

In cognitive grammar (especially Langacker's 1987 framework), the conceptual space of causation (or causative event) has been extensively studied – in particular, the salient semantic dimensions and causation types (e.g. Levshina et al. 2013). Cognitive grammar is also interested in the case marking of causative constructions and the action chain in causatives (e.g., the causative subject is “an agent or at least the action-chain head” and the causative object is “a single focal participant, usually a theme”) (Langacker 1987: 208–411). Cognitive grammar also provides theoretical accounts for the cognitive foundations of the causative / inchoative alternation (e.g., see Conceptual Autonomous and Dependent Alignment proposed in Langacker 1987).

In the construction grammar approach to causatives, much attention has been paid to the semantic class of arguments in causative constructions (Goldberg 1995; Stefanowitsch 2001) and the semantic relationship among different causative constructions (Goldberg 1995). For example, the relation between caused-motion construction and resultative construction (Goldberg 1995: 88). The focus of the analysis is on the “truth values” of the internal semantic makeup of a construction.

The semantics of causal expressions has also spawned some interests in Functional Grammar (Givon 1975; Talmy 1976). The topics in this line of research are centered on the semantic classes of the arguments, such as animacy and control (for a recent discussion, see Rawoens 2011), transitivity, e.g., transitivity of causative verbs (Kulikov 2013), and transitivity-decreasing causatives (Kittila 2013), etc.

Overall, the focus of these semantic approaches in different schools of thoughts has been on

the “truth values” of causative construction. Most previous studies discuss the components in causatives in isolation. Although this kind of discussion is certainly useful and valuable, much remains unknown as to what speakers actually do with these semantic components. My study thus focuses on this issue.

### **2.5.3 Formal approach**

A major focus of the formal approach to causatives is on the derivational relationship of different forms. One of the main concerns in this literature is on the derivational relation between inchoative sentences like (17a) *The window broke* and causative sentences like (17b) *John broke the window*. Regarding the causative-inchoative alternation, there have been debates on whether (17b) is derived from (17a), or (17a) is derived from (17b), or (17a-b) are derived independently (for a detailed survey, see Lyutikova & Tatevosov 2013 and the literature reviewed therein).

In the formal literature on causatives, much attention has been paid to the syntax and semantics interface. In a classic study, Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995) examine the behavior of verbs from a range of semantic classes in diverse syntactic constructions. Following Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995), Kwon (2013) provides a detailed classification of the semantic class of verbs associated with causation and a discussion of their syntactic behaviors. Kwon (2013) groups intransitive verbs with causative alternation into two classes: verbs of externally-caused change of physical state (e.g. *open, break*) and verbs of motion taking place in a particular manner (*slide, float*). Kwon (2013) also discusses the derivational relationship of different forms. For example, (18) “*the dog walks in the park* functions like a word-stem. After a few steps of derivation, *I walk the dog in the park* - a sentence of improvised causative construction is formed” (Kwon 2013).

Overall, the main problem with the formal approach to causative is that forms are

investigated in a way that is isolated from context and arbitrary alternation between different forms is made at the expense of ignoring the fundamental communicative functions that would otherwise be treated as important by native speakers.

#### **2.5.4 Corpus approach**

Recent years have witnessed a growing interest in using corpora to investigate forms used in transitive events, such as causatives. Such a computer-aid quantitative approach has been fruitful in revealing certain patterns of causatives. However, due to the much smaller number of conversational corpora available, the existing findings are usually concerning the written discourse, leaving the conversational discourse much less explored. For instance, using corpus data consisting of newspaper texts, Rawoens (2011) obtains frequency information regarding five analytical causative constructions in Swedish and reveals some interesting semantic features of the five causative verbs (e.g., semantic roles of causer: agent, author, force, semantic roles of causal predicate: action, process, position, state, etc) and the causative constructions they form. However, the analysis is mainly within the sentence level without taking the larger context into consideration. In addition, since the data come from written texts (newspaper), it remains to be investigated as to how speakers use these forms in conversation.

A notable study in this respect is the one on English causatives by Gilquin (2010). Gilquin (2010) studies ten English analytic causative constructions with the use of both corpus data and experimental data. The corpus data is a selection of 10 million words, half written and half spoken, from the British National Corpus (BNC). Gilquin's study should be applauded for paying attention to the difference between written and spoken genres and for a thorough empirical investigation on a large scale. The focus of Gilquin's study is on combining corpus methodology with a cognitive approach, and most of the analysis is done within a cognitive



framework (such as the notion of action chain). Although Gilquin's study insightfully paid attention to the lexical collocation profiles of causative constructions (e.g., see Ch 7: 169–191 for lexical co-occurrence in causative constructions and Ch 8: 193–221 for collexemes in the effect slot), the scope of analysis is mainly constrained within the sentence level. The interactional aspects among the participants were basically not investigated. In addition, the spoken part of BNC is considered “not ideal for the study of conversational discourse” (Aston 1998), in part because the paralinguistic features are only roughly indicated.

There are also some studies that use a corpus approach to investigate Chinese causatives. These studies will be reviewed in the following section. Overall, the above-mentioned corpus studies have provided empirical findings on the use of causatives in natural discourse, yet much still remains unknown as to how speakers make the choice when there are multiple grammatical options, especially in conversational discourse.

## **2.6 Previous Studies on Major Chinese Syntactic Constructions**

Chinese syntactic constructions are a topic that has inspired the most extensive literature in the study of Chinese grammar. Beginning with the author who wrote the first grammar of Chinese *Ma's Grammar* (Ma [马建忠] [1898] 1983), numerous Chinese linguists have discussed various aspects of Chinese syntactic constructions (to name a few, Lü [吕叔湘] [1948]1984; Chao [赵元任] 1968; Song [宋玉柱] 1979, 1981; Wang [王力][1980]2001; Li & Thompson 1981; Zhu [朱德熙] 1982; Li [李临定] 1986; Sun [孙朝奋]1995; Tao [陶红印] & B. Zhang [张伯江] 2000; Shen [沈家煊] 2002; Tao [陶红印] & Liu [刘娅琼] 2010a&b; Lu [陆俭明] 2016, Sun [孙朝奋] 2015: 429–442, among many others).

Chinese causative constructions have mostly been approached with either a structural or cognitive approach. In this research tradition, Chinese causative constructions were usually not

investigated under the holistic concept of causation or causatives. Rather, individual causation constructions were often studied separately in previous studies.

Studying various Chinese constructions under the holistic concept of causation is a rather recent practice. These studies usually are book-length studies (e.g., Liang [梁晓波] 2003; Wan [宛新政] 2004; Guo [郭姝慧] 2004; Zhou [周红] 2005). While these studies have provided many interesting findings on Chinese causatives, they have the same limitations as most studies on Chinese individual causatives, namely, grounding the analysis on decontextualized isolated sentences; relying on written texts and using written texts as spoken data (i.e., using novels as spoken data). The problem with using artificial spoken data to study spoken discourse cannot be underestimated. Interested readers may consult Chafe (1982), Miller & Weinert (1998), Tao (1999a), Iwasaki (2015), among others, for a systematic account of the importance of grounding grammatical investigations on specified discourse genres.

Based on a review of the hundreds of existing studies on Chinese causatives, no published studies have used large-scale data from videotaped face-to-face natural conversation among Mandarin native speakers to systematically study causatives. The current study will be the first to use videotaped interactive data on a large scale to study Mandarin speakers' linguistic choice-making in transitive events.

Previous studies have provided valuable pioneering findings regarding these Chinese grammatical constructions, many of which have inspired the current study. However, an important issue still has not been adequately studied – one that would be critical in revealing speakers' grammatical capacity: the ability to make the choice among all grammatical options in a given communicative context. For example, why does a speaker need to use a *ba*-construction while the use of other constructions is also grammatical? Previous studies cannot adequately

answer questions like this one.

### 2.6.1 Previous Studies on the (把) *Ba*-construction

The notoriously elusive *ba*-construction has received the most attention in Chinese linguistics (e.g., Chao [赵元任]1968; Wang [王力] [1980] 2001; Lü [吕叔湘] [1948]1984; Thompson 1973; Li & Thompson 1981; Chappell 1991; Sun [孙朝奋] 1996, 2015; Sybesma 1999; B. Zhang [张伯江] 2000; R. Guo [郭锐] 2003, 2009; Liang [梁晓波] 2003; Ye [叶向阳] 2004; Wan [宛新政] 2004; S. Guo [郭姝慧] 2004; Zhou [周红] 2005; Shi [施春宏] 2010; Sun [孙朝奋] & Traugott 2011; Su [苏丹洁] 2011b; Yu [俞志强] 2011; Lu [陆俭明] 2016). It is often considered one of the most challenging topics in the study of Chinese grammar. To date, there are still debates over the syntax, semantics, and function(s) of the *ba*-construction(s). Due to the space limit, I will only review the most relevant studies here. Interested readers may consult some review articles on the literature of *ba* (P. Liu [刘培玉] 2001; Zheng [郑杰] 2002; Yuan [袁莉蓉] 2003) or a review in Jing-Schmidt [井茁] (2005) and Su [苏丹洁] (2011b) for more details.

Given this extensive literature, one may wonder what *ba* actually means. There are no equivalents of the Chinese *ba* in English. The English sentence *I already sold my car* can be translated into two different sentences in Chinese: (19a) and (19b) (examples from Li & Thompson 1981:483).

(19) a.

我 已经 卖 了 我 的 汽车。

wo yijing mai le wo de qiche

1SG already sell PFV 1SG ASSO car

‘I already sold my car.’

b.

我 已经 把 我 的 汽车 卖 了。

wo yijing **ba** wo de qiche mai le

1SG already **BA** 1SG ASSO car sell PFV

‘I already sold my car.’

Whereas example (19a) is a sentence with a common structure (subject-verb-object) where causation is expressed by the use of a verb compound *mai le* ‘sold’, in (19b) the causation is also expressed by the use of a *ba*-construction (subject-*ba*-object-verb).

Based on the over 160 studies on *ba* reviewed in Su (2011), there have been over twenty accounts<sup>3</sup> (some of which may be overlapping to some extent) on the prototypical function of the *ba*-construction, including:

1. semantic disposal (Wang [1943]1985; Deng 1975; Li & Thompson 1981)
2. syntactic disposal (H. Wang 1984; Song 1979, 1981; P. Liu 2009)
3. broad disposal (Pan 1978)
4. narrow disposal (Sun 1995)
5. subjective disposal (Shen 2002)
6. *jishi* (Wang [1943]1985)
7. transitive (Thompson 1973; Deng 1975)
8. adverse (W. Lü 1994)
9. caused result and cause state (Shao 1985)

---

<sup>3</sup> In Chinese: 语义处置(王力 1943 ; 邓守信 1975)、句法处置(王还 1984 ; 宋玉柱 1979、1981 ; 刘培玉 2009)、广义处置(潘文斌 1978)、狭义处置(孙朝奋 1995)、主观处置(沈家煊 2002)、处置 (Jing-Schmidt & Tao 2009)、继事(王力 1943)、及物(邓守信 1975)、不如意(吕文华 1994)、致果/致态(邵敬敏 1985)、导致(薛凤生 1987)、话题-说明(Tsao 1987 ; 薛凤生 1989)、变化(萧国政 1994)、使动(Tai 1989)、目的(张旺熹 1991)、结果/情态矢量(崔希亮 1995)、结果/情态/动量(金立鑫 1997)、完全变化(张伯江 2000)、双事件致使(叶向阳 2004 ; 郭锐 2003、2009 ; 施春宏 2010 ; 等等)、终结性(杨素英 1998)、空间位移(张旺熹 2001)、处置/意外/致使(陈立元 2005)、戏剧化(Jing-Schmidt 2005)、事象界变(张黎 2007)、致使(苏丹洁 2011)、等等。

10. causing (Xue 1987)
11. topic-explanation (Tsao 1987; Xue 1989)
12. change (Xiao 1994)
13. cause passive (Tai 1989)
14. purpose (W. Zhang 1991)
15. result / *shiliang* state (Cui 1995)
16. result / state / *dongliang* (Jin 1997)
17. complete change (B. Zhang 2000)
18. double-event causative (Ye 2004; Guo 2003, 2009; Shi 2010)
19. terminating (Yang 1998)
20. space movement (W. Zhang 2001)
21. disposal / surprise / causative (Chen 2005)
22. dramatic (Jing-Schmidt 2005)
23. *shixiangjiebian* (L. Zhang 2007)

The most influential account is “disposal.” It was first noted in Wang [王力] (1943) and was widely adopted. “The disposal form states how a person is handled, manipulated, or dealt with; how something is disposed of; or how an affair is conducted” (translation of Wang [王力] 1943 by Li Y. 1974). “Disposal has to do with what happens to the direct object” (Li & Thompson 1981: 468). Shen [沈家煊] (2002) insightfully extends the disposal account of the *ba*-construction to “subjective disposal,” namely, *ba* “is used to signify the speaker’s subjective establishment of a disposal relationship between two participants of an event.” (Shen 2002, translated by Jing-Schmidt & Tao 2009). Shen (2002) and the other few studies such as Jing-Schmidt (2005) and Jing-Schmidt & Tao (2009) that extend this account should be applauded for

acknowledging the subjectivity of the *ba*-construction. The disposal account recognizes a salient syntactic and semantic feature of the function word *ba* itself, namely, to syntactically introduce the object and semantically highlight that the object is being “disposed” (or “affected” in my view). However, according to Li and Thompson (1981), disposal is not the unique function of the *ba*-construction: “The *bei*-construction also expresses disposal in the same manner as the *ba*-construction does” (p. 501). Jing-Schmidt (2005: 65–66) also makes a valid point that because of the flexible capacity of the morpheme *ba* to hold both OV and SV sequences, the function of *ba* cannot be anything (such as disposal) that marks only syntactic relationship between the individual constituents.

Because I am using a discourse approach to study the *ba*-construction, I would like to review a discourse account in the literature – high transitivity (e.g., Thompson 1973; Hopper & Thompson 1980): “The *ba* construction is a highly transitive clause-type: it must show an A [agent] behaving actively, volitionally, and totally upon a definite or referential O [object]” (Hopper & Thompson 1980). I agree with this insightful position regarding the *ba*-construction being a highly transitive clause-type. At the same time, it can also be noted that the agent of the *ba*-construction does not necessarily have to behave “actively” (e.g., the agent can be inanimate), “volitionally” (see B. Zhang 2001) (e.g., 不小心 *bu xiaoxin* ‘accidentally’ can be used with *ba*: A 不小心把 O+VP), or “totally” (e.g., partial quantity such as 一半 *yiban* ‘half’ can be used with *ba*) and the object of the *ba*-construction does not necessarily have to be definite or referential (e.g., 一个人 *yi ge ren* ‘anyone’ in (20) 他会把一个人脑瘤转移到他身上<sup>4</sup> *Ta hui ba yi ge ren naoliu zhuan yi dao ta shen shang* ‘He can transfer anyone else’s brain cancer to him’). In this *ba*

---

<sup>4</sup> #20130724

sentence, (21) 衣服稍微把她自己本身的气质压掉<sup>5</sup> *Yifu shaowei ba ta ziji benshen de qizhi ya diao* ‘Her clothes downgrades her character a little bit’, the agent 衣服 *yifu* ‘clothes’ is not behaving “actively,” “volitionally,” or “totally” upon the object. Therefore, I would suggest a slightly revised version of Hopper and Thompson’s (1980) account of the *ba* construction being a highly transitive clause-type: it typically shows an A (agent) behaving actively, volitionally, and totally upon a typically definite or referential O (object).

Although I think this high transitivity account is valid and powerful in capturing the transitive nature of the *ba*-construction, it still cannot fully account for the distinctive function of the *ba*-construction. This is because some other constructions can also be highly transitive clause-types. For example, the SVO (subject-verb-object) clause with resultative complement that denotes causation (e.g., (8) 他打破了窗 *Ta da po le chuang*. ‘He hit and broke the window’) is also a highly transitive clause-type: the A (agent) is typically behaving actively, volitionally, and totally upon a typically definite or referential O (object). Nevertheless, the finding of my study on the *ba*-construction being a significance lens is in general consonant with Hopper and Thompson’s account of high transitivity, in the sense that both marking an event as highly consequential and explicitly blaming or praising the causer are specific manifestations of high transitivity. What my findings add to the high transitivity account (Hopper & Thompson 1980) are: 1) specifying some manifestations of high transitivity, and 2) revealing the distinctive function of the *ba*-construction.

Another important discourse account is **dramaticity** (Jing-Schmidt 2005). Jing-Schmidt finds that the *ba*-construction signals high discourse dramaticity, which is manifested in two ways: cognitive salience; subjectivity and emotionality. These pioneering discourse pragmatic

---

<sup>5</sup> #20131126

findings, empirically grounded on a systematic analysis of the *ba*-construction in written discourse, further advance our understandings of the subjectivity of the *ba*-construction. As for the exclusive function of the *ba*-construction, Tao (2008) rightly comments that signaling high discourse dramaticity may not be a function exclusively possessed by the *ba*-construction. Nevertheless, the finding of my study on the *ba*-construction being a significance marker is in general consonant with the discourse dramaticity account, in that marking an event as significant is a way of signaling discourse dramaticity.

Another area where future studies may contribute to concerns the use of data and methodology. With a few notable exceptions, most existing studies focus on potential forms and meanings based on intuition or written data. In recent years, with the availability of computer-processed electronic texts, more studies have started to use natural data. In such cases, however, the data are almost exclusively limited to written data, especially literature texts such as novels. Even for studies that claim to have taken spoken discourse into consideration (e.g., Wan [宛新政] 2004; Du [杜文霞] 2005), the data are actually written in nature (i.e., novels that have contrived dialogues). Jing-Schmidt (2005), a study that uses data from written texts (mostly novels), rightly notes that the *ba*-construction may be used differently in conversational discourse and calls for future research with the use of conversational data.

Natural interactive data provide an important window into speakers' knowledge of the *ba*-construction. There are a few notable studies that have used authentic spoken data and have revealed many important patterns concerning the use of the *ba*-construction in spoken discourse. For example, Jing-Schmidt et al. (2015) uses the colloquial language sub-corpus of the Peking University CCL Corpus and provides useful findings regarding the high-frequency subtypes of the *ba*-construction. Tao and Liu (2010) is another notable study that uses conversational data; it



reveals valuable findings of how the *ba*-construction is used in repair sequences. These studies shed light on our understanding of the *ba*-construction in conversational discourse and demonstrate the fruitfulness of using conversational data.

## 2.6.2 Previous Studies on the (被) *Bei*-passive Construction

An example of the *bei*-passive construction is:

(22)

你	太	早	接受	到	被	称赞	哪	...
ni	tai	zao	jieshou	dao	bei	chengzan	na	
2SG	too	early	receive	PFV	<b>BEI</b>	praise	PAR	

‘(If) you are praised too early,’

对	长大	也	没	什么	好处
dui	zhangda	ye	mei	shenme	haochu
for	grow up	also	NEG	what	good

‘(It does) no good for (the child) as (the child) grows up.’

(#20140124)

The *bei*-construction is also an extensively studied topic in Chinese linguistics. Previous research on the *bei*-construction basically considers that it expresses an adverse situation. For instance, Li and Thompson (1981: 493) note that: “The *bei* passive in Mandarin, like those of Japanese, Vietnamese, Thai, and other Asian languages, is used essentially to express an adverse situation, one in which something unfortunate has happened.” I agree with the basic idea of the adversity account. However, two questions remain in Li and Thompson’s account: 1) unfortunate for whom? An event can be unfortunate for some people yet fortunate for some other people. For example, in the event of a criminal being arrested by the police officers, it is an unfortunate event for the criminal yet a certainly fortunate event for the police officers and the society. 2)

Unfortunate from whose point of view? Is it the speaker or the person/people being affected (i.e., the affectee)?

Sugimura (1998) states that “verbs that have positive meaning are incompatible with *bei*-constructions and will result in ungrammatical sentences” (see also: Wang [王还] 1983; Chen [陈建民] 1986; Li [李临定] 1986; Zhou [周换琴] 1992). However, as example (22) shows, speakers in natural discourse have no problem using verbs that have positive meaning with the *bei*-construction. In the current study, I will also quantitatively investigate the verbs that are actually used with the *bei*-construction by conversational participants.

### 2.6.3 Previous Studies on the Unmarked Passive Construction

Unmarked passives are topic-comment constructions in which the direct object of the verb is serving as the topic (Li & Thompson 1981: 499). The unmarked passive construction is a type of passives in Mandarin. An example of unmarked passives is:

(23)

美国 都 打 跑 了<sup>6</sup>

meiguo dou da pao le

America already hit away PFV

‘The American (army) has already (been) beaten away.’

This passive construction is called “unmarked” (R. Lü et al. 1983: 50), because the patient (美国 *Meiguo* ‘America’) is in a preverbal position without any lexical marking of passiveness such as 被 *bei*.

Unmarked passives have received much less attention in the literature, although in this study, the unmarked passive construction turns out to be the second most frequent syntactic

---

<sup>6</sup> 20140319

construction for transitive events in conversational discourse. In the literature of Chinese linguistics, unmarked passives are often called patient-as-subject sentences (受事主语句), with the transitive verb expressing the passiveness (see e.g., Zhu [朱德熙] [1980]2010: 166–167, 1982: 188; English translation see, e.g., Lin 1990: 271–274; C. Zhu 1996: 400). In the previous studies, unmarked passives are usually taken as an alternative to *bei*-passives, i.e., *bei*-passives are used for adverse situations, while unmarked passives are mainly used for “non-adverse” situations (Li & Thompson 1981: 499; Tao & Liu 2010a). Unmarked passives are considered passive constructions with neutral or positive connotation (Tao & Liu 2010a).

#### 2.6.4 Previous Studies on the (让) *Rang*-construction

The *rang*-construction has also received relatively less attention in the research literature. Following the thoughts of some pioneering Chinese grammarians such as Zhu [朱德熙] (1982:178–179), the *rang*-construction is usually simply treated as a colloquial version of the (被) *bei*-passive construction and the (使) *shi*-causative construction. An example of the *rang*-construction is:

(24)

让 我 觉得 很 矛盾<sup>7</sup>

**rang** wo juede hen maodun

**RANG** 1SG feel very conflicted

‘Make me feel very conflicted’

Previous studies have identified several subtypes of the *rang*-construction: passive and (typical) causative (Zhou [周文华] 2007), typical causative, request causative, permit causative, and passive (Liang [梁国栋] 2012b). Typical *rang*-causatives function in a similar way as *shi*-

---

<sup>7</sup> 20140117

causatives (Chen [陈小英] 2005), but *rang* is more colloquial (Hu [胡云晚] 2002). Based on a dataset of about 50 example sentences from some written texts, Hu [胡云晚] (2002) finds that *shi* is often used to express results or states but *rang* is often used to express purposes or action. *Rang*-passives (Qu [屈哨兵] 2008) are considered a colloquial version of *bei*-passives (Yang [杨国文] 2002; Liang [梁国栋] 2012a).

## 2.7 Summary of Literature Review

Despite the many insightful and important findings in the existing research, there are still some major areas yet to study. First of all, previous studies on syntactic constructions are mainly restricted to isolated and decontextualized sentence grammar, and the discussions are mainly centered on the “truth values” of the semantic properties of the lexical components. A major problem with such an approach is articulated in Tao (2001):

*“I call this the label-centric approach, since most of what the researcher does is look at the label (e.g., 'mental-state verb') in isolation and try to construe the potential meanings the label might entail. The problem with this methodology is that analyses of labels often turn out to be at variance with how speakers actually use labels... Since the decomposition of semantic properties of verbs is usually done out of context, there is always the question of whether semantic analysis based on isolated sentences is interactionally real for participants in social interaction.”*

Second, much of the existing research is based on introspective data. When the investigator does use authentic language data, the data has been almost exclusively written. Although there are a few studies that use spoken data, in most cases the data is written in nature (e.g., scripted dialogues in novels). There has been little research that uses face-to-face spontaneous conversational data.

Most importantly, previous studies did not adequately address an important issue – one that would be critical in revealing native-like grammatical capacity: the ability to make the choice among all grammatical options. Namely, given all these grammatical options, how do native speakers make the choice in a given communicative context?

This question will be addressed in the current study. I will investigate how speakers in a single conversation actually alternate the use of multiple constructions to describe the same event, an area that the existing studies have not yet looked at.

## CHAPTER 3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Data Description

The data of this study consist of 100 hours of video and one-million-words (1,129,437) of transcripts of face-to-face spontaneous conversations in Mandarin Chinese drawn from 300 episodes of a famous talk show in China – *Qiang Qiang San Ren Xing* 锵锵三人行 ‘Three Companions.’ The talk show, which is on the Phoenix Chinese Channel, is produced by the Phoenix Television and is broadcasted in China. This popular talk show has been airing on every weekday for 18 years since 1998. Each episode features a conversation that lasts between 20 to 25 minutes. The conversations in this talk show are unscripted and basically unedited (detailed descriptions will be given later in this chapter).



Figure 3-1: Snapshot of the talk show *Three Companions* (episode of January 10, 2014)

The talk show features a three-person conversation in a casual setting (Figure 3-1). The long-time host Wentao Dow (窦文涛), born in northern China, is a native speaker of Mandarin Chinese. Almost all the guests are Chinese native speakers. Only a few guests are non-native

speakers who possess native-like Chinese proficiency<sup>8</sup>. These non-native speakers were on the show for only a few episodes, and these episodes were excluded in my data. “The show invites a variety of guests from mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan who are media professionals, academics, cultural critics, novelists, filmmakers, economists, and reporters.”<sup>9</sup> The most frequently invited guests are Zidong Xu (许子东) and Wendao Liang (梁文道). Since 2006, the talk show has been recorded both in Hong Kong and in Beijing, with about half of time being recorded in Beijing.

## **3.2 Justification of Data**

### **3.2.1 Suitable for the methodological orientation**

The talk show has been broadcasted on television since April 1, 1998. The format of the talk show remains unchanged during these past 18 years: approximately 22 minutes per episode, one episode per weekday, and five days a week. Starting from 2015, approximately three more minutes were added to each episode. For 18 years, the talk show has maintained its basic structure of a three-party spontaneous conversation that is meant to resemble the casual chatting style among friends.

What makes this talk show particularly valuable to the current study is that the participants often comment on the same social event with different points of view. In other words, “participants [are] juggling different versions of past events and different images of certain people’s involvement” (Duranti 1990: 662). This feature has made the talk show suitable for my research purpose: how the same event is presented differently with the use of different grammatical constructions.

---

<sup>8</sup> An example of these exceptions is Run Hu (胡润, English name Rupert Hoogewerf), whose is Chinese is native-like. He has studied Chinese language since 1990 and has been living in China for about twenty years.

<sup>9</sup> <https://threetorches.wordpress.com/directions/> Accessed on March 22, 2014.

On a macro level, the large-scale data allowed me to conduct corpus analysis to obtain quantitative patterns and tendencies. On a micro level, the conversational data allowed me to use discourse analysis methodologies to analyze the interactional context of the grammatical constructions in question. The videotaped data has made it possible for analysis of not only the verbal language but also the multimodal semiotic resources (such as prosody, gaze, and gesture) used by the participants (See Goodwin 1979, 2009, 2013 for the importance of using videotaped data), which is useful for investigating how the grammatical constructions in question are actually used.

### **3.2.2 Transitive especially causative events are abundant**

The talk show covers a wide range of topics – from news to entertainment, from sports to politics, from history to vacations, from popular topics in the contemporary Chinese society to less popular academic subjects, and from everyday personal matters to philosophical and cultural subjects.

An important characteristic of this talk show makes it particularly useful for the study of the grammatical constructions related to transitive (especially causative) events: the participants often talk about the cause and effect of some recent events in China or in the world. For example, the topic for the episode on March 19, 2014 is regarding who/what has caused the disappearance of the Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370. In this single 21-minute episode, as many as 40 cases of analytic causatives covering 10 major types and 18 sub-types of Chinese grammatical constructions were identified.

### **3.2.3 Constant setting in 18 years constitutes a consistent genre**

In recent years, more and more linguists have come to the understanding that research on grammar needs to be based on genre-specific data (e.g., Chafe 1982; Miller & Weinert 1998; Tao



1999; Iwasaki 2015). The conversational settings, style, and content of this talk show have remained consistent during the past 18 years, making the features of the data rather consistent.

In order to create a casual chatting environment, this talk show maintains a simple setting<sup>10</sup>: one desk, three chairs, and three cups. There is no background music or any other audio effects. There are no incoming calls or any audience on the recording site. “Nothing but the table and chairs, props, and the three speakers are actually real.”<sup>11</sup> According to the director of this talk show Jinhui Liang<sup>12</sup>, the desk is specially designed to have a trapezoidal shape, so that the faces of the three interlocutors can be better captured by the camera.

### 3.2.4 Intended nature of this talk show: chatting with friends

This talk show is a successful show that has attracted billions of viewers. The great success of this talk show can in part be attributed to its intended nature of conversation – chatting with friends. There are two common participant layouts: 1) the host and two old friends (i.e., two regular guests); 2) the host, an old friend (i.e., a regular guest), and a relatively new friend (i.e., a less regular guest). Either one, there are old friends in the conversation.

This feature reflects a deliberate thought of the host Wentao Dou. According to Dou<sup>13</sup>,

---

<sup>10</sup> 胡尧熙 2008 《锵锵三人行》的节目形式与技巧 In 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年，《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008ng2.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008ng2.html)

<sup>11</sup> Commented in the blog Three Torches. <https://threetorches.wordpress.com/tag/%E9%94%B5%E9%94%B5%E4%B8%89%E4%BA%BA%E8%A1%8C/> Accessed on March 22, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> 何雄飞 1998 锵锵经济学：一张嘴的生产力. In 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年，《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008nfy.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008nfy.html)

<sup>13</sup> “文涛说那天的电视新闻正好播放了一则关于飞机失事的新闻，自己就假想如果把这个话题放到节目里自己要怎么说呢，一下子他恍然大悟，其实生活里每天都有这样的事情在发生，就是我们每天都会和同事们和朋友们聊天，大家聊得都是热点的话题，在聊的时候是那么享受，这不就是聊天嘛，大家为的就是享受聊的这个过程。仔细想来，其实我们和朋友、同事在平时的聊天中并不是为了真的得到什么真理或者去解决什么问题，就是为了乐趣而聊，享受谈话。想明白这一点后，真的就是一通百通了，节目的思路就这样出来了。其实在节目中就找合适聊天的朋友来聊天就好了，也不一定非得就请什么专家学者，我们在平时约朋友畅聊时，也不事先就定好话题，定好谁起头，谁结尾，谁去总结，就那么自然地发生了。虽然在节目中做不到像生活中那么仿真的聊天，但是有了这个感觉，其他的事情就是水到渠成的了。” 窦文涛：锵锵 15 年 我的那些事 [http://phtv.ifeng.com/star/douwentao/detail\\_2013\\_05/29/25840838\\_0.shtml](http://phtv.ifeng.com/star/douwentao/detail_2013_05/29/25840838_0.shtml)

people talk about things happening in the world and in life with their friends every day. People enjoy exchanging thoughts and feelings through chatting. When people are chatting with friends, they do not set a fixed topic for a conversation in advance, nor do they prescribe who should do the opening and who should do the ending or summary. The conversation simply flows naturally. The talk show uses this format of talking to resemble everyday conversation with friends. There was even a time when the host Dou talked a lot about his own personal matters in the show<sup>14</sup>. For instance, who he met earlier today; what kinds of flowers he grew at home; where he went last night, etc. The entire episode could be all about these kinds of personal subjects.<sup>15</sup>

A most regular guest Zidong Xu<sup>16</sup> commented that “while participants in other talk shows may be talking to the audience, in our talk show we simply chat for ourselves.” The director at Phoenix Television who oversees this talk show also said that “there isn’t much preparation for this talk show because the goal is to create an environment that allows casual chatting among old friends – What needs to be prepared before you talk with old friends?”<sup>17</sup>

This feature has been welcomed by both viewers and reviewers. The host Wentao Dou has a well-received reputation for the person who “makes people on television speak like real human beings.”<sup>18</sup> The Wikipedia entry for this talk show describes that “the atmosphere is very casual

---

<sup>14</sup> “有一段时间文涛在节目中更多的是讲述自己的私人故事，今天见了什么人了，家里养了什么花了”《锵锵三人行》15年不冷场 [http://phtv.ifeng.com/star/douwentao/detail\\_2013\\_05/29/25841168\\_0.shtml](http://phtv.ifeng.com/star/douwentao/detail_2013_05/29/25841168_0.shtml)

<sup>15</sup> “之后有一段时间，窦文涛想聊什么就聊什么，很多时候都是聊自己的事，比如昨天晚上在哪儿玩了，遇到了什么人，这都可以聊一集。”胡斐 2008 《锵锵三人行》十年发展史. In 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年. 《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008ng5.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008ng5.html)

<sup>16</sup> 许子东：“其他脱口秀都是说给观众听，我们是聊给自己听。”胡尧熙 2008 《锵锵三人行》的节目形式与技巧 In 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年. 《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008ng2.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008ng2.html)

<sup>17</sup> “到了 1998 年 4 月，节目正式开播。曹景行回忆说，之前只做了一次样片，并没有太多的准备，因为这个节目要营造的就是老朋友聊天的气氛，话题也都是嘉宾提前碰一下，“老朋友聊天还需要准备什么呢？”胡斐 2008 《锵锵三人行》十年发展史. In 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年. 《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008ng5.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008ng5.html)

<sup>18</sup> 他让中国电视开始说“人话”。——2004 年“新锐 200”窦文涛评语. 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年，

and enjoyable, like old friends having a fireside chat at night.”<sup>19</sup> A viewer of this talk show observes that “there is very little scheming and manipulating in this show. Also, since it is five days a week, there is not much time for planning ahead. Therefore, in the host Dou’s own words, this talk show ‘is like chatting with friends in everyday life.’”<sup>20</sup> A reviewer comments: “It (this talk show) wants to change the way how the TV media talk, i.e., not performing for the audience by following what is in the script – instead, chatting naturally in a way that resembles authentic conversation in everyday life. Therefore, this talk show often wanders off the topic, changing topics constantly in the conversation. But this is not a problem at all. In fact, this is what it intends to be.”<sup>21</sup>

### 3.2.5 Unscripted and unedited unless violates a ban

“*Three Companions* is almost like a live show.”<sup>22</sup> “It is this kind of improvisation and the quasi-live way that has made *Three Companions* unique and successful.”<sup>23</sup>

To find out how much scripting and editing was involved in this talk show, I emailed one of the two most regular guests on the talk show in the past 18 years – Dr. Zidong Xu [许子东], a

---

《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008ng8.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008ng8.html)

<sup>19</sup> “现场气氛轻松愉快，如老友围炉夜话。”

<http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E9%94%B5%E9%94%B5%E4%B8%89%E4%BA%BA%E8%A1%8C>

<sup>20</sup> “在处理谈话氛围时，《锵锵三人行》很少进行过多策划与包装，而对于每星期五次的节目播出量，对每一期谈话内容事前都进行周详的策划也不太可能。因此，用主持人窦文涛的话来说，这个节目“就是我们平常朋友聊天这一类，我们就是用本色，把生活中的聊天尽量本色地搬上电视”。“聊天往往是强调一个聊的过程，……大家都是性情中人，畅所欲言，享受的是这个……”朋友之间的谈话主题大多宽泛、随意、跳跃。《锵锵三人行》聊天话题很广，可以谈谈政治，如台湾大选与陈水扁；也可以聊聊社会热点话题如华南虎照片事件；或是讲讲情感类话题婚姻与爱情；还可以“八卦”一下，评论一下娱乐界人物，如陈冠希的艳照门风波等等。”

<http://wenku.baidu.com/view/d63a74c48bd63186bdebbc04.html>

<sup>21</sup> “它想要改变一种电视说话的方式，不要按照台本来演给观众看，而是很真实、很自然的聊天。所以这个节目经常跑题跑不停，也无所谓，要的就是这个状态。”胡斐 2008 《锵锵三人行》十年发展史。In 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年。《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008ng5.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008ng5.html)

<sup>22</sup> “锵锵是一个准直播的聊天节目”。《锵锵三人行》15 年 不冷场 [http://phtv.ifeng.com/star/douwentao/detail\\_2013\\_05/29/25841168\\_0.shtml](http://phtv.ifeng.com/star/douwentao/detail_2013_05/29/25841168_0.shtml)

<sup>23</sup> “正是这种即兴性和准直播方式给予了《锵锵三人行》独特的生命价值。”窦文涛：做任何事都要像做一件艺术品 2008 大学生周刊 <http://edu.people.com.cn/GB/8216/123327/124857/7385054.html>

professor of modern and contemporary Chinese literature at Hong Kong Lingnan University. Dr. Xu told me that<sup>24</sup>: “The conversation is pretty much spontaneous and almost no cutting or editing is done unless in some very rare situations where the opinions violate a ban. Guests do not prepare in advance either. The guests are usually told a general topic one day ahead or even a few hours before the show.” This response confirms what I have learned from other sources.

Dr. Xu has also given similar descriptions of the talk show on some other occasions. For instance, he notes that “while other shows all have planned what to say in the show, our show has no scripts. We don’t know what to say before we actually sit down and talk.”<sup>25</sup> The other most frequent guest, Wendo Liang [梁文道], also said that: “We do not have any scripts. All we have is a broad sense. This is actually an advantage of our show.”<sup>26</sup> The staff costs of this famous talk show are rather low. According to the host Dou<sup>27</sup>, there are only two and “a half” full-time staff members for this show: the host, an assistant that sends invitations to the guests in Beijing, and a third person who also has to work for another TV show. Other people are interns. This is not surprising because this talk show does not require the kind of heavy editing typically needed for television shows.

Here is another piece of evidence showing that the talk show is lightly or not edited. In the episode on March 17, 2015, the host apologized for having shown a movie trail in a prior episode,

---

<sup>24</sup> Original response (Mar 22, 2014): “基本上照录照播，一般不剪辑，除非有个别言论犯禁。嘉宾事先也不做什么准备。提早一天或数小时知道大概话题。”

<sup>25</sup> 许子东：“所有其他的节目都是准备好要说什么。我们的节目没有字幕，谈话之前并不知道要说什么。”胡尧熙 2008 《锵锵三人行》的节目形式与技巧 In 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年，《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008ng2.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008ng2.html)

<sup>26</sup> 梁文道：“大卫 莱特曼那么优秀的人，但他的脱口秀都是有几十个编剧给他写台本。所以美国编剧一罢工，他就有点顶不住。而我们没有台本，只有一个大致的方向，这反而是优势。”胡尧熙 2008 《锵锵三人行》的节目形式与技巧 In 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年，《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008ng2.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008ng2.html)

<sup>27</sup> 何雄飞 1998 锵锵经济学：一张嘴的生产力。In 《锵锵三人行》之窦文涛：一个话痨的十年，《新周刊》第 269 期 2008 年 2 月 15 日上市 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008nfy.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008nfy.html)

which made that episode look like an embedded advertisement for the movie. The host said that the reason they needed to play that movie trail was that they had recorded that prior episode ahead of time, but the talk show had a new change in format – adding three more minutes. Therefore, the episode they had already recorded was three minutes short for this new format. This was why the host had to show the movie trail to fill up that three additional minutes.<sup>28</sup>

### 3.2.6 Linguistic characteristics resemble that of everyday conversation

#### 1) Constantly running off the topic

According to the host Dou<sup>29</sup>, the talk show usually starts with a news topic, and then the topic can change freely into any other topics. The conversation is unrestrained and moves naturally. The talk show even earned such a reputation – “Three Companions; Constantly Running off the Topic” – soon after it was launched. A famous magazine in China even considers that “the high viewing rates of this talk show can be attributed to the host’s ‘idle chatting style,’”<sup>30</sup> a feature that is welcomed by the viewers<sup>31</sup>.

---

<sup>28</sup> 窦文涛：访徐静蕾像宣传电影 我向观众道歉 [http://phtv.ifeng.com/a/20150318/41015402\\_0.shtml](http://phtv.ifeng.com/a/20150318/41015402_0.shtml)

窦文涛：《锵锵三人行》，今天我们可以谈谈主旋律了。主旋律的电视剧《平凡的世界》，当然，我们可不是宣传，又做定影宣传，这个我得跟大家有件事儿说在前头，就是最近我们又犯错误了。我虽然隔了春节一个这么久远，但是我还要欠大家一个道歉，这个道歉也对了解我们节目，对我也很有启发。为什么呢？我就是有两点感触，一点感触就是我们这个节目虽然说很小，但是甚至我自己都没意识到我们有什么特色，可是在观众心目当中，特别在咱们老观众心目当中，我们是有我们的气质的，我们是有我们的性格的。我们有些事儿是不适合干的。

周轶君：是有节操的。

窦文涛：对。为什么呢？因为好家伙，那个微博上，我先看到很多人就骂，骂什么呢，骂徐静蕾，不是骂徐静蕾，徐静蕾并没有错，徐静蕾前一阵拍的那个电影在我们这儿不是播了几集吗？很多人就骂，说你们已经沦为给徐静蕾的电影做这样的宣传。所以，我就说第一就是要道歉，第二告诉大家这个事儿是怎么来的，其实没有，我们今年《锵锵三人行》这个节目承蒙领导重视，一个是时间提前到十一点播出，再一个整整给加长了三分钟。但是加长了三分钟。去年年底12月录的徐静蕾的三集访问但是还没播，电影人家情人节才上映，人家不让播。人家说我们答应你们采访的条件就是，你们必须在那个时候才播，OK，好，跨了今年这个节目时间不就短了三分钟，于是这个编导就跟我谈，怎么办呢，说怎么办呢，你录了也不能不播呀。好，他说咱们我把两集并一集，反正就是原来短，现在需要更长的时间，怎么办呢，他说我还是三集，可是我可以加一些电影片段进去。

<sup>29</sup> “锵锵每期的节目都由一个新闻话题聊开去，文涛管这个叫“话由”，他说每次由一个话由开始，聊着聊着就天马行空，信马由缰了，节目在最初创办时有句话是“锵锵三人行，跑题跑不停”，就是因为跑题，采取避实击虚的方式，才能绕开一些不懂的、不好说下去的话题。锵锵讲究的是为了乐趣在聊天，所有的话由都只是引子，其实过程中一直在跑题，但是观众们却享受着节目里的聊天乐趣。”《锵锵三人行》15年不冷场 [http://phtv.ifeng.com/star/douwentao/detail\\_2013\\_05/29/25841168\\_0.shtml](http://phtv.ifeng.com/star/douwentao/detail_2013_05/29/25841168_0.shtml)

<sup>30</sup> “锵锵的收视率源于窦文涛的‘掰扯’”。胡起超 柯勇 2008 谁在看《锵锵三人行》《新周刊》2008年02月14日 [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_4900756601008ng0.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4900756601008ng0.html)

## 2) Speech errors remain uncut

In this talk show, sometimes either the host or the guests may misspeak a name (see the episode on February 24, 2014, #20140224). The host may even say a guest's name wrong for multiple times (see example #20140121 and #20140404). This kind of speech errors is kept unedited in the show.

(#20140224)

- 160 Host: 哦杨沫, Oh, (it's) **Yang, Mo**,
- 161 不是杨绛。 **not Yang, Jiang.**
- 162 Li: 唉哟口误了, Ah, I misspoke.
- 163 杨沫, Yang, Mo.
- 164 对不起, Sorry.

---

<sup>31</sup> Online BBS discussion thread, <http://book.douban.com/subject/4826483/>

By 寂静的手指 2010-05-05: 《锵锵三人行》这档节目, 还真的很难定位, 好像社会奇闻、名人轶事, 诸多话题, 被窦文涛和另外两个人抓起来就聊, 聊着聊着又岔到别的什么话题上去了。说是散, 好像长期看下来, 又有它的某种魔力在, 让人看着上瘾, 大呼上瘾。

Online BBS discussion thread, <http://tieba.baidu.com/p/2971609739>

Question(By 奋青牙医): 最近一直关注《锵锵三人行》总是发现一个问题, 三个人聊着聊着话题老是跑偏, 没有一个中心思想, 乌七八糟的, 一会还谈着时政, 结果大篇幅的再讲文章事件, 婚外恋。我的天。这算什么东东啊? 该讲不讲, 不该讲瞎讲。

Answers:

河阳新人: 跑题是特色。

新手中的老手: 跑题跑不停, 是他们的一大特色。

脸上写着帅: 这节目还有规定的主题嘛, 看了这么久还真不知道。

逍遥灵圣: 这节目就这个特色。

cp11sd: 这就是为什么能办 16 年的原因, 人家办了 16 年你才刚关注, 不喜欢就换台。

二丫讲楚: 锵锵三人行, 跑题跑不停。

自由画匠: 跑题是聊天的本真, 不跑题那是作报告, 是官样文章, 是 CCTV。

max21011985: 一本正经的聊, 谁看啊。

太虚观看门人: 不跑题不锵锵。

中透钓具天猫店: 你就当是朋友聊天 真要每天聊点东西出来耶不现实 他们也只是懂得稍微多的普通人。

武当山刘喇嘛: 锵锵十五周年那里面就特别注明, 这是一档永远跑题的谈话节目。

散\_花: 没法儿, 事先没有稿子。

蓬蒿人 6: 跑题也挺有意思的~突然发现现在自己讲话也有点这样, 经常讲着讲着就跑了。

艺文爱桥边: 本来就是跑题节目啊。

165 我得道歉, I have to apologize (to you).  
167 杨沫, Yang, Mo.  
168 对不起。 Sorry.  
169 Host: 没事, It doesn't matter.

(#20140121)

246 Host: 你要不要跟幼婷说一下, Do you want to tell **Youting.**  
247 按说道德上讲我要不跟幼婷 Morally speaking, if I don't tell  
说呢, **Youting.**  
248 不是幼婷, **Not Youting,**  
249 玮婕、 **Weijie.**  
250 玮婕。 **Weijie.**  
251 Weijie: 你看! See!  
252 我都露了三公分的腿还叫我 I have already (put on a short skit  
别名字, that) shows three inches of my legs  
and **you still call me the wrong**  
**name.**  
253 我要哭了。 I want to cry.  
254 Host: 你头一次露, This is the first time you show your  
legs (on the show).  
255 头一次露。 The first time (you) show.

256 Ma: 你回去重看锵锵, If you watch the previous (episodes  
of) *Three Companions*,

257 人家是露五公分的。 (you can see that on this show)  
Youting showed five inches of her  
legs.

258 Weijie: 可能第一次总是比较紧张一 Maybe it is because this is the first  
点嘛, time (I show my legs), I am  
relatively nervous.

259 你给我个机会吧。 Please give me a chance.

260 Host: 开关还没转过来, I haven't gotten used to (your  
showing your legs).

261 我就说你要不要跟玮婕说 I was saying that do you want to  
呢, tell Weijie.

(#20140404)

472 Host: 我跟你讲幼婷。 I tell you, Youting.

473 Weijie: 你看! See!

474 Host: @@@ @@@

475 玮婕, Weijie

478 Weijie: 然后一直叫错, Always call me the wrong name.

479 第八百两千万次这样。 (This is) the 800<sup>th</sup> or the 20,000,000<sup>th</sup>  
time (you say my name wrong) like this.

480 Host: 完了完了完了。 I'm done. I'm done. I'm done.



- 481 Weijie: 完蛋了记恨了。 You're done. I've held grudges.
- 482 Host: 诶，算了，算了。 Never mind. Never mind.
- 483 Ma: 玮婕 Weijie,
- 484 她是玮婕。 She is Weijie.
- 485 Weijie: 我下次自备一个名牌。 Next time I will prepare a name card myself.

### 3.2.7 Excluded data

These two types of data, although rare, were excluded from the analysis of the current study. 1) Lines that I could not hear clearly while transcribing the conversation. 2) Written language. Reading off from a text rarely happens in this talk show. But when it did happen<sup>32</sup>, the written lines were excluded from the analysis of the data.

### 3.3 Studying Grammatical Construction through Adjacent Alternation

My method is to study grammatical constructions through adjacent alternation, namely, alternative grammatical constructions used to describe the same event. I focus on cases of high adjacency – utterances produced within a single spontaneous natural conversation that lasts no longer than 30 minutes. Below is an example.

#### (1) UP => *ba* alternation

- 1 Dou: [Unmarked 垃圾都随身带走了。 (Even) the trash (was) all  
passive] taken away.

<sup>32</sup> For example, (#20140314)

窦文涛：冯小刚说今天李总理的报告当中，  
他听明白了，  
他说，

<今年要再取消和下放行政审批事项两百项以上，深化投  
资审批制度改革，取消或者简化前置性审批>，  
就是之前的这个审批，

((Written texts are excluded from  
the data analysis))

2		这东西挺有意思。	It's quite interesting.
3	Zhou:	我觉得这一点做得还挺好，	I think (they) did a good job on this.
4	[Ba]	<u>你最后把垃圾都带走。</u>	In the end, <u>you (even) took all the trash away.</u>

(#20150514<sup>33</sup>)

In example (1), the speakers are talking about a tourist group of 6,000 Chinese people who went to France in May 2015 and took all the trash away as they left France. The first speaker, Dou, uses an unmarked passive construction to describe the event of taking all the trash away (line 1). Immediately following Dou's comment, the second speaker, Zhou, uses a *ba*-construction to describe the same event (line 4). The two grammatical constructions appear in close proximity in the same conversation and are describing the same event in real life.

An adjacent alternation, or sometimes referred to as “alternation” in this study for short, is counted when there are at least two alternative grammatical constructions commenting on the same event. Example (1) has one alternation; it is a 2-form alternation that contains two alternative forms: the unmarked passive construction and the *ba*-construction. Because these two constructions both appear once in this alternation, there are counted as two alternative uses. An alternative use is an occurrence of a grammatical construction in an adjacent alternation. If the speaker Zhou in example (1) had used the *ba*-construction twice, there would be three alternative uses in this alternation, but the number of alternative forms would still be two: the unmarked passive construction and the *ba*-construction.

An alternation can be notated with either a path-specified notation or a path-unspecified

---

<sup>33</sup> The number of the example corresponds to the actual date of the talk show. In this case, the sequence 20150514 means that this example is from the talk show airing on May 14, 2015.

notation. Whereas the symbol of the path-specified notation “=>” indicates the temporal order of the constructions used in an alternation, the symbol of the two-way notation “<=>” does not indicate the temporal order. Using the path-specified notation, example (1) can be noted as an unmarked passive => *ba* alternation, which means that the speaker(s) first use(s) an unmarked passive construction to describe an event and then switch(es) to using a *ba*-construction to describe the same event. Using the path-unspecified notation, example (1) can be noted as an unmarked passive <=> *ba* alternation or a *ba* <=> unmarked passive alternation, which notes that speaker(s) use(s) an unmarked passive construction and a *ba*-construction to describe the same event without specifying the temporal order of the grammatical constructions used.

### **3.4 Three Datasets and Research Design**

My first dataset consists of a total of 1,000 minutes of conversation from 50 episodes of the talk show, which aired from January 1 to March 27, 2014. I further transcribed the conversations using the incomplete transcripts provided on the website of Phoenix Television. Based on the transcripts, I manually and exclusively coded all the actual grammatical structures that are used by the speakers to describe a transitive event that involves a causer, an affectee, a cause, and an effect. I ended up having 1,583 examples that involved 22 major types of grammatical constructions (such as the *bei*-passive construction) and 44 subtypes of grammatical constructions (such as long *bei*-passives and short *bei*-passives). The four most frequent grammatical constructions turned out to be: the *ba*-construction, the unmarked passive construction, the *rang*-construction, and the *bei*-passive construction. The total occurrences of these four grammatical constructions account for 70.1% of all the 1,583 cases. These four grammatical constructions thus became the main subjects of my investigation.

I then watched all the 300 videos along with their transcripts and identified 191

alternations involving 470 alternative uses – occurrences of these four grammatical constructions in the same conversation commenting on the same event. These 470 alternative uses, which were identified from the entire 100-hour database, constitute my second dataset, which is the main dataset.

My third dataset consists of 5,679 single uses of these four grammatical constructions, which were identified from the 100-hour database. They include 1) 5,431 single forms involving all the uses of the *ba*-construction (2,526), the *rang*-construction (1,507), and the *bei*-passive construction (1,397) exclusively found in the 100-hour database. This task was conducted using the corpus tool AntConc 3.4.4<sup>34</sup> and was manually checked. The raw data were 5,593, but 163 cases in which the target words were not used as special particles for syntactic constructions (such as 被子 *beizi*, ‘blanket’) were excluded. 2) 249 unmarked passive manually and randomly identified from the 100-hour database. This third dataset was used to quantitatively capture the alternation tendencies of these four major grammatical constructions and some semantic features of them.

For data analysis, I combine discourse analysis with corpus linguistics. One of the common features of both methodologies is that they do not focus on individual words or sentences isolated from context but instead focus on real communicative contexts and language use beyond the sentence level in natural discourse. Discourse analysis is a qualitative analytical tool that can be used to study why certain grammatical structures are used in certain contexts. Corpus linguistics is a quantitative research tool for analyzing large collections of language data.

The combination of these methodologies is a reflection of a methodological trend in linguistic research. Tao (2003c) is among the earliest advocates for utilizing the advantages of

---

<sup>34</sup> Software developed by Laurence Anthony, Waseda University, Japan. <http://www.laurenceanthony.net/>

both corpus approach and conversation analysis (CA) in linguistics study. Tao (2003c) notes that “it has been amply demonstrated that in investigating matters of interaction and grammar, detailed analyses of single episodes of interaction as exemplified by many classic studies in the CA tradition have distinctive advantages” and that “computer-assisted analysis of large amounts of data can complement CA to some extent.” This methodology of combining computer-assisted analysis of large amounts of data and fine-grained conversation and discourse analysis has been proven fruitful in some recent publications (e.g., Tao 2003c; Sohn & Kim 2008; Thompson & Tao 2010; Sohn 2010; Couper-Kuhlen 2014).

In this study, the research question of how native speakers make the choice among a range of options that are grammatically correct and semantically similar is addressed both quantitatively and qualitatively. On a macro scale, a corpus-based analysis was applied to two datasets: 1) the first dataset that contains the transcripts of the 1,000-minute conversations. All the occurrences of the 22 major types and 44 sub-types of Chinese grammatical constructions were coded. Statistical analysis was conducted to retrieve distributions of the grammatical constructions that were actually occurring. 2) The second dataset that contains one-million-word transcripts of the 100-hour conversations. Statistical analysis was conducted to retrieve alternation rates of the four grammatical construction as well as some semantic features of the *bei*-passive construction and the *rang*-construction. On a micro scale, a question was investigated using discourse analysis: Within a single conversation, when speakers alternative different grammatical constructions to describe the same event, how and why do they switch among different forms?

## CHAPTER 4. DISTRIBUTION AND ALTERNATION OF 22 MAJOR GRAMMATICAL CONSTRUCTIONS

As Chapter 3 noted, I used three datasets to study the distribution and alternation tendencies of 22 major grammatical constructions. The first dataset contains a total of about 1,000 minutes of conversation. Based on this dataset, I exclusively coded all the actual syntactic constructions that are used by the speakers to describe a transitive event that involves a causer, an affectee (or affectee), a cause, and an effect. I ended up having 1,583 actual occurrences that involved 22 major types and 44 subtypes of grammatical constructions. The second and third datasets are from the 100-hour database. For the second dataset, I coded a total of 191 adjacent alternations involving 470 alternative uses of major grammatical constructions. The third dataset contains 5,679 single uses of four grammatical constructions: the *ba*-construction, the unmarked passive construction, the *rang*-construction, and the *bei*-passive construction. In this chapter, I will report the distribution and alternation tendencies of the 22 major grammatical constructions investigated.

### 4.1 22 Chinese Transitive Grammatical Constructions Actually Used by Speakers

#### 4.1.1 Coding of Chinese transitive grammatical constructions

According to Song (1996: 19–21), the lexical components of a causative event fall into four categories: causer, affectee, cause, and effect. Using the construction-chunking approach (Su [苏丹洁] 2010, 2011 a&b, 2012a, b&c, Su [苏丹洁] & Lu [陆俭明] 2010), I consider the Chinese grammatical constructions that can be used for a causative event to have a semantic chain that consists of these four semantic chunks: [causer], [affectee], [cause], and [effect]. For example, the *ba*-construction can have a semantic chunking chain of [causer]-*ba*-[affectee]-[causer]-[effect] (Su [苏丹洁] 2011 b, 2012a). This way of coding is applied to all grammatical constructions

investigated. The 22 major types and 44 subtypes of Chinese grammatical constructions coded are listed below.

**Code A. Mixed form**

A-C1F2: Mix of C1 and F2

A-C1F2 ([causer]) + *ba* + [affectee] + *gei* + [cause] + [effect]  
 [你] 先 把 [空气] 给 [弄] [坏了]  
 [2SG] first BA [air] GEI [make] [bad PFV]  
 ‘You first make the air polluted.’ (#20140108)

**Code B. Type #1: The *shi* (使) causative construction (*shi* ‘to make, to cause’)**

B1: ([cause(r)]) + *shi* + [affectee] + [effect]  
 [他] 使 [中国的这个变化的节奏啊] [失序了]  
 [3SG] SHI [the tempo of change of China] [disorder PFV]  
 ‘He has caused the tempo of change in China to become disordered.’ (#20140310)

**Code C. Type #2: The *ba* (把) construction**

C1: ([causer]) + *ba* + [affectee] + [cause] + [effect]  
 [我] 把 [你的利润] [压] [到最低]  
 [1SG] BA [your profit] [suppress] [to the lowest]  
 ‘I then reduce your profit to a minimum.’ (#20140101)

C2: ([causer]) + *ba* + [affectee] + [cause]  
 把 [那个] [灌模]  
 BA [that one] [make a mold]  
 ‘Make a mold of that one.’ (#20140123)

C3: ([causer]) + *ba* + [affectee] + [effect]  
 [他] 把 [道德的底线哪] [就在人性的这条线上]  
 [3SG] BA [bottom line of moral] [merely on the line of humanity]  
 ‘He set the bottom line of his moral standards merely on humanity.’ (#20140228)

C4: ([causer]) + *ba* + [affectee] + [cause / effect]  
 把 [女人] [物化]  
 BA [women] materialize  
 ‘Materialize women’ (#20140213)

C5: ([causer]) + *ba* + [affectee]  
 [你] 把 [我女人]  
 [2SG] BA [my woman]  
 ‘You have done something to my woman.’ (#20140214)

**Code D. Type #3: The *bei* (被) passive construction**

D1: ([affectee]) + *bei* + [causer] + [cause] + [effect]  
 [自己的男人] 都被 [她] [整] [死了]  
 [Own man] even BEI [3SG] [torture] [to death PFV]  
 ‘Even her husband was caused to die by her (i.e. a different woman).’ (#20140224)

D2: ([affectee]) + *bei* + [cause] + [effect]  
 被 [封杀] [了]  
 BEI [ban] [PFV]  
 ‘was banned’ (#20140120)

D3: ([affectee]) + *bei* + [causer] + [cause / effect]



被 [父亲哪] [割喉]

BEI [father PRT] [cut throat]

‘The throat was cut by the father.’ (#20140103)

D4: ([affectee]) + *bei* + [cause / effect]

[我] 现在 被 [劫机]

[1SG] now BEI [hijack a plane]

‘I am (/ the plane is) now hijacked.’ (#20140319)

D5: ([affectee]) + *bei* + [causer]

被 [人]

BEI [people]

‘was ... by other people’ (has some adverse implications) (#20140206)

D6: *bei* phrase as a noun

被害人

BEI-hurt-person

‘victim’ (#20140102)

**Code E. Type #4: The *rang* (让) construction** (*rang*: ‘to let, allow, cause, make’ or a passive marker)

E1: *rang*-passive (“interchangeable” with *bei* 被)

([affectee]) + *rang* ( $\approx$ *bei*) + [causer] + [cause] + [effect]

让 [人] [扔] [路边去了]

RANG [people] [throw] [side of the road PFV]

‘would be thrown away on the side of the road by some people’ (#20140212)

E2: *rang*-causative (“interchangeable” with *shi* 使)

[[cause(r)]]	<i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>shi</i> ) +	[affectee] +	[effect]
	让	[我]	[觉得很矛盾]
	RANG	[people]	[feel very conflicted]

‘make me feel very conflicted’ (#20140117)

E3: *rang*-benefactive (“interchangeable” with *gei* 给) (*rang*: ‘to allow’)

[[causer]]	<i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>gei</i> ) +	[affectee] +	[cause / effect]
[美国]	到现在还不让	[他]	[入境]
[America]	until now still	[3SG]	[enter the country]
	not RANG		

‘To date, the United States still has not granted him the permission to enter the country.’

(#20140116)

E4: *rang*-imperative (“interchangeable” with *jiao* 叫 or *shiling* 使令 causative construction)

[[causer]]	<i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>jiao</i> ) +	[affectee] +	[cause / effect]
[人们]	老让	[他]	[唱《一无所有》]
[people]	always RANG	[3SG]	[sing <i>Possessing Nothing</i> ]

‘People always ask him to sing (his famous song) *Possessing Nothing*.’ (#20140122)

**Code F. Type #5: The *gei* (给) construction (*rang* ‘to give’)**

F1: *gei*-passive (“interchangeable” with *bei* 被)

[[affectee]] +	<i>gei</i> ( $\approx$ <i>bei</i> ) +	[[causer]] +	[cause] +	[effect]
[机上的乘客]	不定给		[关]	[在什么地方]
[passengers]	might GEI		[lock]	[at some place]

on the plane]

‘The passengers on the plane might have been locked somewhere.’ (#20140319)

F2: (“interchangeable” with *ba* 把+ [affectee])

([causer]) +	<i>gei</i> ( <i>≈ba</i> ) +	([affectee]) +	[cause] +	[effect]
[他]	给		[关]	[了]
[1SG]	GEI		[turn off]	[PFV]

‘He has turned it off.’ (#20140319)

F3: *gei*-benefactive (meaning ‘to be allowed, to be made possible’)

([causer]) +	<i>gei</i> ( <i>≈ba</i> ) +	([affectee]) +	[cause / effect]
	不能给	[她]	[喝加多宝]
	NEG can GEI	[3SG]	[drink <i>Jiaduobao</i> ]

‘She should not be allowed to drink *Jiaduobao*.’ (#20140117)

F4: (“interchangeable” with *bang* 帮)

([causer]) +	<i>gei</i> ( <i>≈bang</i> ) +	([affectee]) +	[cause]
	给	[你]	[打激素]
	GEI	[2SG]	[inject hormones]

‘Inject some hormones into your body’ (#20140123)

F5: ([causer]) +	[cause] +	<i>gei</i> +	[affectee]
	[传染]	给	[我们]
	[infect]	GEI	[1PL]

‘infect us’ (#20140123)

F6: ([causer]) +	<i>gei</i> +	[affectee] +	[cause / effect]
------------------	--------------	--------------	------------------

给 [人的安全感] [带来多一些安慰]

GEI [people's sense of security] [bring some more comforts]

'bring more comfort to people and reinforce their sense of security' (#20140319)

F7: ([causer]) + *gei* + [cause] + [effect]

有人 给 [用] [上了这个]

[someone] GEI [use] [COMP PFV this]

'Someone (even) used this on (a street sculpture in Wuhan)'' (#20140109)

F8: ("interchangeable" with *shi* 使)

([causer]) + *gei* ( $\approx$ *shi*) + [affectee] + [cause / effect]

给 [祖先] [丢人丢家门的]

GEI [ancestors] [humiliating]

'humiliate the ancestors' (#20140205)

### Code G. Type #6: Unmarked passive construction

G1: [affectee] + [cause] + [effect]

[美国] 都 [打] [跑了]

[America] all/already [beat] [away PFV]

'(The) American (army has) already (been) beaten away.' (#20140319)

### Code H. Type #7: The *V de* (得) causative construction

H1: ([causer]) + [cause] + *de* + ([affectee]) + [effect]

[说] 得 [我] [鸡皮疙瘩都起来了]

[talk] DE [1SG] [goose pimples broke out over skin PFV]

'caused me gooseflesh all over.' (#20140319)

### Code I. Type #8: Resultative complement (freestanding)

I1: [cause] + [effect]  
 [气] [死了]  
 [make... angry] [die PFV]  
 ‘make...angry to death’ (#20140220)

I2: [cause] + [effect] [affectee]  
 [杀] [红了] [眼]  
 [kill] [red PFV] [eyes]  
 ‘Killing (too many people) has caused (their) eyes turn red.’ (#20140320)

**Code J. Type #9: The *shiling* causative construction (使令句)**

J1: ([causer]) + [cause] + [affectee] + [effect]  
 [逼着] [你] [复盘]  
 [force] [2SG] [redo the chess]  
 ‘force you to redo the chess’ (#20140319)

**Code K. Type #10: The subject-predicate as predicate construction (主谓谓语句)**

K1: [affectee] + [causer] + [cause / effect]  
 [科学发展观] [他] [没有贯彻]  
 [The Scientific Concept of Development] [3SG] [NEG implement]  
 ‘The Scientific Concept of Development was not implemented (by) him. (#20140109)

**Code L. Type #11: The *bang* (帮) construction (*bang*: ‘to help’)**

L1: ([causer]) + *bang* ( $\approx$ *shi* 使) + [affectee] + [cause] + [effect]  
 帮 [自己老板] [评] [上院士]  
 BANG [own boss] [elect] [COMP academician]

‘helped his advisor get elected academician’ (#20140108)

L2:	([causer]) +	<i>bang</i> (≈ <i>gei</i> 给) +	[affectee] +	[cause / effect]
		帮	[他]	[汇集材料]
		BANG	[3SG]	[collect materials]

‘helped him collect materials’ (#20140108)

**Code M. Type #12: The verb-copying construction (动词拷贝句)**

M1:	([affectee]) +	[cause] +	[effect]
		[打]	都[打残废了]
		[beat]	EM [beat disabled PFV]

‘being beaten to the point that (the person) becomes disabled’ (#20140210)

**Code N. Type #13: The covert affectee construction (致使对象隐含句)**

N1:	[causer] +	[cause] +	[effect]
	[我们]	[全列入]	[国防预算]
	[1PL]	[all include]	[national defense budget]

‘We included (them) all in the national defense budget.’ (#20140319)

**Code O. Type #14: Clause 1 + *jiu* (就) + clause 2 (*jiu*: ‘then’)**

O1:	[cause] +	<i>jiu</i> +	[effect]
	[一亲]	就	[晕倒]
	[being kiss]	JIU	[faint]

‘Whenever (he) is kissed (by a woman), he faints.’ (#20140304)

**Code P. Type #15: The *shou* (受) passive construction (*shou*: ‘to receive, get’)**

P1:	([affectee]) +	<i>shou</i> +	[cause / effect]
-----	----------------	---------------	------------------

[她的心理]            受到                            [很大的打击]

[her mind]            SHOW COMP                    [very big hit]

‘Her mental (status) got a very big hit.’ (#20140120)

**Code Q. Type #16: The *na* (拿) construction (*na*: ‘to take’)**

Q1:     ([causer]) + *na*(≈*ba* 把) +     [affectee] +     [cause] +     [effect]

[你]            拿                            [他]            [当]            [成普通人]

[2SG]            NA                            [3SG]            [treat]            [as ordinary person]

‘if you really treat him as an ordinary person’ (#20140116)

**Code S. Type #17: The *zao* (遭) passive construction (*zao*: ‘to suffer’)**

S1:     ([affectee]) +                            *zao* +                            [cause / effect]

[整个地球的环境圈]                            是怎么遭到                            [变化]

[Entire the earth environment sphere]    COP how ZAO COMP    [change]

‘how the entire sphere of the Earth environment suffered from change’ (#20140101)

**Code T. Type #18: Intransitive construction that is semantically causative**

T1:     [affectee] +                            [effect]

[这几百个人他] 就                            [没了]

[These several hundred people 1SG] EM    [disappear PFV]

‘These several hundred people were just (made) disappeared.’ (#20140319)

**Code U. Type #19: The double object causative construction (双宾致使句)**

U1:     [cause] +                            [direct affectee] +                            [indirect affectee]

[扒]                            [你]                            [一层皮]

[scrape]                            [2SG]                            [a CLF skin]

‘scrape skin off you’ (#20140116)

**Code V. Type #20: The serial verb construction (连动句)**

V1: ([causer]) + [cause] + [affectee] + [effect]  
我 要[送] [你] [到隔壁的那个公立医院]  
[1SG] will [send] [2SG] [to that public hospital next door]  
‘I will send you to that public hospital next door.’ (#20140219)

**Code W. Type #21: The *ling* (令) causative construction (*ling*: ‘to make, let, [cause]’)**

W1: ([causer]) + *ling* + [affectee] + [cause] + [effect]  
令 [我] [想] [起水墨画家]  
LING [1SG] [think of] [COMP ink-and-wash painters]  
‘made me think of ink-and-wash painters’ (#20140226)

**Code X. Type #22: The *jiao* (叫) passive construction**

X1: ([causer]) + *jiao* + [affectee] + [effect]  
叫 [我] [感动]  
JIAO [1SG] [move]  
‘moved me’ (#20140312)

Each occurrence in a repetition sequences was coded individually.

**4.1.2 Coding of speech features**

Investigations on speech features can provide a window into the process of how a speaker selects a certain form over the other options; for instances, in a self-repair sequence, why and how does the speaker abandon the use of a particular construction in favor of the other.

**Code R. Self-repair**



RE1	prior	很多小姐就拼命挣钱就是能够让 <u>让 RANG</u> , <给 <u>GEI</u> 自己父母盖个房子或怎么样>
RE2	repair1	<很多小姐就拼命挣钱就是能够让 <u>RANG</u> >, <u>给 GEI</u> 自己父母盖个房子或怎么样

(#20140106)

**Code Y. Cut-off**

然后这就是让，我我个人理解就是(#20140102)

‘Then this is RANG, my personal understanding is that’

**Code Z. “Ungrammatical” in the traditional view**

大家自觉的把它受到一定的限制(#20140227)

‘Everybody self-conscientiously BA it SHOWDAO certain restrictions.’

**4.2 Distribution of Major Chinese Transitive Grammatical Constructions**

The overall distribution can be seen in Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1. The four most frequent types of grammatical constructions turned out to be: the *ba*-construction (22.4%, 354/1583), the unmarked passive construction (18.2%, 288/1583), the *rang*-construction (15.2%, 240/1583), and the *bei*-passive construction (14.3%, 227/1583). The total uses of these four grammatical constructions account for 70.1% of all the 1,583 cases identified.

Table 4-1: Frequencies of the 22 grammatical constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset

Coding (types)	Percentage (within 22 types)	Frequency	Percentage (within a type)	Coding (subtypes)	Frequency	Percentage (within 22 types)
				A*	59	3.7%
B	0.7%	11		B1	11	0.7%
<b>C</b>	<b>22.4%</b>	354	87.9%	C1	311	19.6%
			0.6%	C2	2	0.1%
			0.8%	C3	3	0.2%
			3.1%	C4	11	0.7%
			7.6%	C5	27	1.7%
<b>D</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	227	13.2%	D1	30	1.9%
			29.1%	D2	66	4.2%
			16.3%	D3	37	2.3%
			32.6%	D4	74	4.7%
			4.0%	D5	9	0.6%
			4.8%	D6	11	0.7%
<b>E</b>	<b>15.2%</b>	240	0.4%	E1	1	0.1%
			54.2%	E2	130	8.2%
			10.4%	E3	25	1.6%
			19.6%	E4	47	3.0%
			3.8%	E2&E3&E4	9	0.6%
			5.4%	E2&E3	13	0.8%
			2.1%	E2&E4	5	0.3%

			4.2%	E3&E4	10	0.6%
F	6.4%	101	15.8%	F1	16	1.0%
			25.7%	F2	26	1.6%
			9.9%	F3	10	0.6%
			29.7%	F4	30	1.9%
			1.0%	F5	1	0.1%
			14.9%	F6	15	0.9%
			2.0%	F7	2	0.1%
			1.0%	F8	1	0.1%
<b>G</b>	<b>18.2%</b>	288		G1	288	18.2%
H	0.8%	13		H1	13	0.8%
I	7.5%	119	58.8%	I1	70	4.4%
			41.2%	I2	49	3.1%
J	2.3%	36	97.2%	J1	35	2.2%
			2.8%	J2	1	0.1%
K	2.3%	37		K1	37	2.3%
L	0.3%	5		L1	1	0.1%
				L2	4	0.3%
M	0.1%	2		M1	2	0.1%
N	0.3%	5		N1	5	0.3%
O	0.9%	14		O1	14	0.9%
P	1.4%	22		P1	22	1.4%
Q	0.4%	7		Q1	7	0.4%

S	0.3%	4	S1	4	0.3%
T	0.2%	3	T1	3	0.2%
U	0.1%	1	U1	1	0.1%
V	0.4%	6	V1	6	0.4%
W	0.1%	1	W1	1	0.1%
X	0.1%	1	X1	1	0.1%
			Y*	22	1.4%
			Z*	5	0.3%

# Frequencies of forms

(n=1,583)

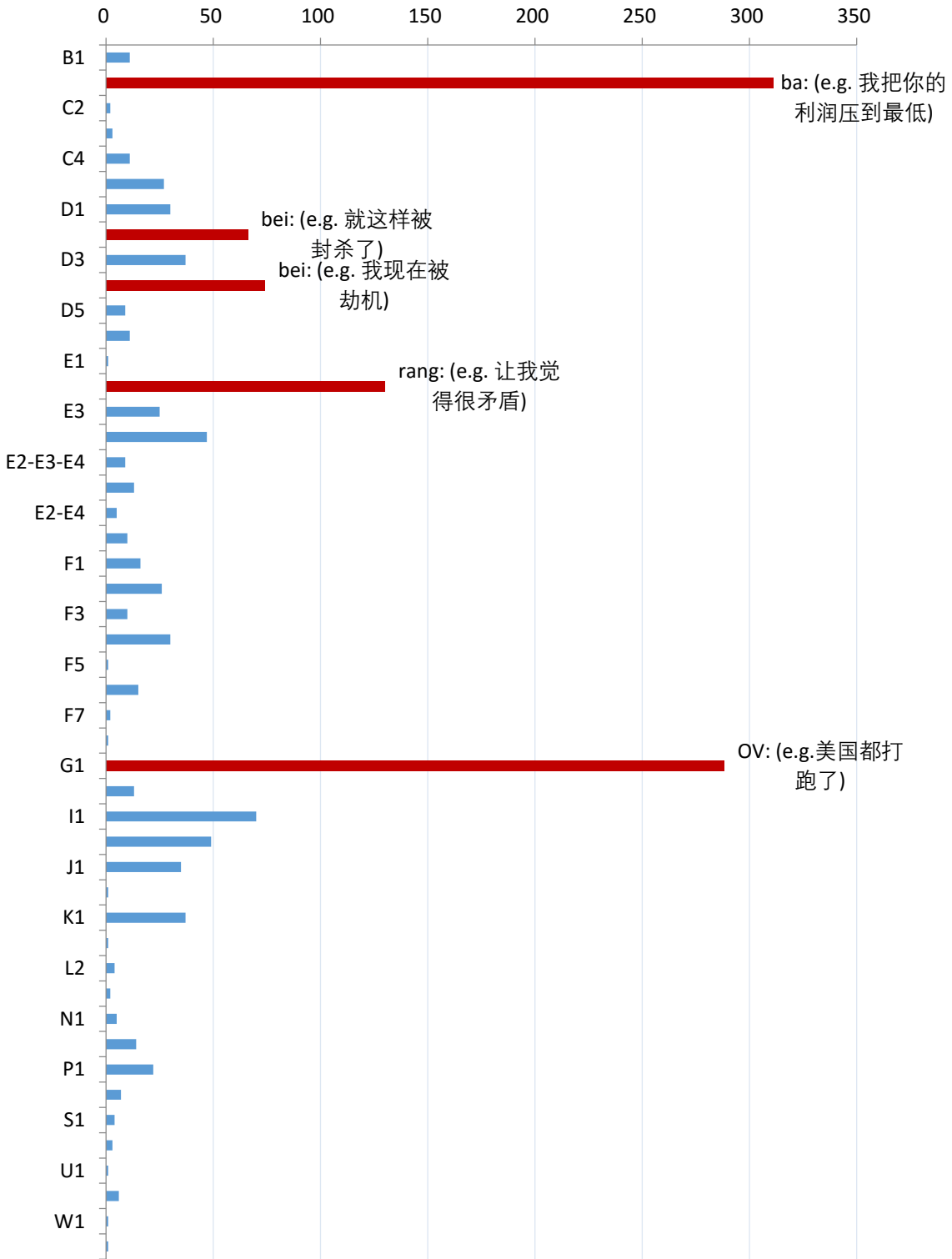


Figure 4-1: Distribution of the 22 grammatical constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset

1) The most frequent transitive construction: The *ba*-construction

Table 4-2: Frequencies of the subtypes of *ba*-constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset

<b>C1</b>	87.9% (312/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee + cause + effect
C2	0.6% (2/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee + cause
C3	0.8% (3/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee + effect
C4	3.1% (11/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee + cause / effect
C5	7.6% (27/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee

The predominant (87.9%) subtype of the *ba*-construction is the full version C1: (causer) + *ba* + affectee + cause + effect. In Chapter 5, I will come back to this feature and explain it in relation to the prototypical function of the *ba*-construction.

2) The second most frequent transitive construction: Unmarked passive

In an unmarked passive, the object precedes the verb without any lexical marking (such as *ba* or *bei*). This is similar to the basic word order in Japanese and Korean. My data reveals that unmarked passives are the second most frequent transitive construction in conversation. This fact was not fully recognized in previous studies. In Chapter 6, I will discuss the prototypical function of the unmarked passive construction.

3) The third most frequent transitive construction: The *rang*-construction

Table 4-3: Frequencies of the subtypes of *rang*-constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset

<b>E1</b>	0.4% (1/240)	<i>rang</i> -passive (“interchangeable” with <i>bei</i> ) (affectee) + <i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>bei</i> ) + (causer) + cause + effect
<b>E2</b>	54.2% (130/240)	<i>rang</i> -causative (“interchangeable” with <i>shi</i> )

---

		(causer) + <i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>shi</i> ) + affectee + cause + effect
E3	10.4% (25/240)	<i>rang</i> -benefactive (“interchangeable” with <i>gei</i> ) permission (causer) + <i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>gei</i> ) + affectee + cause / effect
E4	19.6% (47/240)	<i>rang</i> -imperative (“interchangeable” with <i>jiao</i> or <i>shiling</i> causative construction) (causer) + <i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>jiao</i> ) + affectee + cause / effect

---

Two features regarding the *rang*-construction can be noted: 1) The most frequent subtype of the *rang*-construction is E2 *rang*-causative, in which *rang* is semantically and syntactically similar to a causative marker *shi* 使. In fact, these E2 clauses are considered “interchangeable” with *shi* clauses in many previous studies that use a structuralism approach. In Chapter 7, I will compare the differences between the *rang*-causatives and the *shi*-causatives.

4) The four most frequent transitive construction: The *bei*-passive construction

Table 4-4: Frequencies of the subtypes of *bei*-passives in the 1,000-minute dataset

---

D1	13.2% (30/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + causer + cause + effect
<b>D2</b>	29.1% (66/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + cause + effect
D3	16.3% (37/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + causer + cause / effect
<b>D4</b>	32.6% (73/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + cause / effect
D5	4.0% (9/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + causer
D6	4.8% (10/227)	<i>bei</i> phrase as a noun

---

Two features regarding the *bei*-construction can be noted: 1) The most frequent subtype of the *bei*-construction is a reduced version D4, in which the [causer] is not specified and the [cause]

and the [effect] merge into one semantic chunk. In D4, *bei* is only used with a single verb. 2) The second most frequent type of *bei*-constructions is also a reduced version – D2, in which the [causer] is not specified, and the [effect] is usually manifested by a perfective marker *le* 了. The semantic makeup of D2 is indeed very similar to that of D4 – the only difference being that the [cause] and the [effect] of D2 are not as highly merged as that of D4. Combining these two most frequent types, the conclusion is that *bei*-constructions are often (61.7%) used without specifying the [causer] and with the [cause] and the [effect] syntactically merging into one lexical unit. In Chapter 8, I will come back to this feature and explain it in relation to the prototypical function of *bei*-passives.

### 4.3 Alternation of Major Chinese Transitive Grammatical Constructions

In the first dataset (1,000 minutes), 21 alternations involving the 22 Chinese transitive constructions were exclusively identified (Table 4-5). In Table 4-5, for example, “*ba* => unmarked passive” means that the speaker(s) first use(s) a *ba*-construction and then switch(es) to using an unmarked passive to describe the same event.

Table 4-5: All the alternations of the 22 grammatical constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset

<i>ba</i>	=>	resultative	
<i>ba</i>	=>	resultative	
<i>ba</i>	=>	resultative	
<i>ba</i>	=>	UP (unmarked passive)	
<i>ba</i>	=>	UP (unmarked passive)	
<i>ba</i>	=>	UP (unmarked passive)	
<i>ba</i>	=>	UP (unmarked passive)	
<i>ba</i>	=>	series verb	
<i>ba-gei</i>	=>	resultative	
<i>bei</i>	=>	<i>shou</i>	
<i>bei</i>	=>	<i>ba</i>	
<i>bei</i>	=>	UP (unmarked passive)	
<i>bei</i>	=>	<i>ba</i>	=> UP (unmarked passive)
covert causee	=>	<i>ba</i>	
<i>gei</i>	=>	UP (unmarked passive)	
<i>gei</i>	=>	UP (unmarked passive)	



<i>na</i>	=>	<i>ba</i>	
unmarked passive	=>	resultative	
<i>rang</i>	=>	UP (unmarked passive)	
resultative	=>	<i>ba</i>	
series verb	=>	<i>ba</i>	=> resultative

The first dataset reveals three main alternation tendencies: 1) Among all the 22 grammatical constructions, the *ba*-construction is most likely to alternate with other constructions. 71.4% (15/21) of all the alternations involve *ba*. This may be due to the fact that the *ba*-construction is the most frequent construction among them. 2) The unmarked passive construction tends to alternate with the *ba*-construction and not others. 3) The *rang*-construction tends to not alternate with others.

To check whether these findings regarding the alternation tendencies are supported in a much larger dataset, I used the entire 100-hour database to investigate the alternations of these four most frequent transitive constructions: the *ba*-construction, the unmarked passive construction, the *rang*-construction, and the *bei*-passive construction. I watched the videos of the 300 conversations and manually identified all the adjacent alternations of these four constructions. A total of 191 adjacent alternations were identified, including 165 nonself-repair alternations and 26 self-repair alternations. The findings revealed in the first dataset were confirmed, and more alternation tendencies were revealed. The tables (4-6, 4-7, 4-8, 4-9, 4-10, and 4-11) below provide a quantitative overview of all the alternations identified.

Table 4-6: All the 165 nonself-repair alternations of the four constructions  
in the 100-hour database<sup>35</sup>

Ty pe	ba alternation (n=110)	Fr.	UP alternation (n=44)	Fr.	rang alternation (n=9)	Fr.	bei alternation (n=61)	Fr.
2- form	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>SVO</i>	28	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	23	<i>rang</i> <=> <i>SVO</i>	3	<i>bei</i> <=> <i>SVO</i>	22
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	23	<i>bei</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	5	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>rang</i>	4	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i>	11
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>res</i>	20	<i>UP</i> <=> <i>SVO</i>	5	<i>rang</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	1	<i>bei</i> <=> <i>norm</i>	7
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i>	11	<i>UP</i> <=> <i>res</i>	1	<i>bei</i> <=> <i>rang</i>	1	<i>bei</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	5
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>rang</i>	4	<i>UP</i> <=> <i>gei</i>	1			<i>bei</i> <=> <i>int</i>	3
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>exist</i>	2	<i>rang</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	1			<i>bei</i> <=> <i>shou</i>	2
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>gei</i>	2					<i>bei</i> <=> <i>res</i>	4
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>int</i>	2					<i>bei</i> <=> <i>rang</i>	1
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>norm</i>	1						
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>na</i>	1						
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>S-PP</i>	1						
3- form	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>SVO</i> <=> <i>res</i>	4	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	2			<i>bei</i> <=> <i>SVO</i> <=> <i>int</i>	1
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	2	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>SVO</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	2			<i>bei</i> <=> <i>SVO</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	1
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>SVO</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	2	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>UP</i> <=> <i>norm</i>	2			<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	2
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>UP</i> <=> <i>norm</i>	2	<i>bei</i> <=> <i>SVO</i> <=> <i>UP</i>	1			<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i> <=> <i>gei</i>	1
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i> <=> <i>gei</i>	1						
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>SVO</i> <=> <i>gei</i>	1						
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>SVO</i> <=> <i>int</i>	1						
	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>int</i> <=> <i>norm</i>	1						
4- form	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i> <=> <i>UP</i> <=> <i>SVO</i>	1	<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i> <=> <i>UP</i> <=> <i>SVO</i>	1			<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i> <=> <i>UP</i> <=> <i>SVO</i>	1

Table 4-7: All the 26 self-repair alternations of the four constructions in the 100-hour database

Alternation	Frequency
<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i>	2
<i>ba</i> <=> <i>gei</i>	1
<i>ba</i> <=> nominalization	1
<i>ba</i> <=> <i>rang</i>	3
<i>ba</i> <=> resultative	2

<sup>35</sup> res: resultative

exist: existential

int: intransitive

norm: nominalization

S-PP: The Subject-Predicate as Predicate construction 主谓谓语句

<i>ba</i> <=> <i>shi.de</i>	1
<i>ba</i> <=> SVO	3
<i>bei</i> <=> nominalization	2
<i>bei</i> <=> resultative	2
<i>bei</i> <=> <i>shou</i>	1
<i>bei</i> <=> SVO	4
<i>na</i> <=> <i>rang</i>	1
<i>rang</i> <=> <i>gei</i>	1
<i>rang</i> <=> <i>shi</i>	1
<i>rang</i> <=> SVO	1

Table 4-8: Frequencies of all the 2-form *ba* alternations in the 100-hour database

Alternation Pattern	Alternation (n=95)	Percentage (%)	Alternative use (n=223)	Percentage (%)
<i>ba</i> <=> SVO	28	29.5	67	30.0
<i>ba</i> <=> UP	23	24.2	50	22.4
<i>ba</i> <=> resultative	20	21.1	41	18.4
<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i>	11	11.6	30	13.5
<i>ba</i> <=> <i>rang</i>	4	4.2	8	3.6
<i>ba</i> <=> existential	2	2.1	6	2.7
<i>ba</i> <=> <i>gei</i>	2	2.1	5	2.2
<i>ba</i> <=> intransitive	2	2.1	7	3.1
<i>ba</i> <=> nominalization	1	1.1	4	1.8
<i>ba</i> <=> <i>na</i>	1	1.1	3	1.3
<i>ba</i> <=> S-PP <sup>36</sup>	1	1.1	2	0.9

<sup>36</sup> S-PP: The Subject-Predicate as Predicate construction 主谓谓语句

Table 4-9: Frequencies of all the 2-form unmarked passive alternations in the 100-hour database

Alternation Pattern	Alternation (n=36)	Percentage (%)	alternative use (n=78)	Percentage (%)
UP <=> <i>ba</i>	23	63.9	50	64.1
UP <=> <i>bei</i>	5	13.9	11	14.1
UP <=> SVO	5	13.9	11	14.1
UP <=> resultative	1	2.8	2	2.6
UP <=> <i>gei</i>	1	2.8	2	2.6
UP <=> <i>rang</i>	1	2.8	2	2.6

Table 4-10: Frequencies of all the 2-form *rang* alternations in the 100-hour database

Alternation Pattern	Alternation (n=9)	Percentage (%)	alternative use (n=18)	Percentage (%)
<i>rang</i> <=> <i>ba</i>	4	44.4	8	44.4
<i>rang</i> <=> SVO	3	33.3	6	33.3
<i>rang</i> <=> UP	1	11.1	2	11.1
<i>rang</i> <=> <i>bei</i>	1	11.1	2	11.1

Table 4-11: Frequencies of all the 2-form *bei* alternations in the 100-hour database

Alternation Pattern	Alternation (n=55)	Percentage (%)	alternative use (n=133)	Percentage (%)
<i>bei</i> <=> SVO	22	40.0	53	39.8
<i>ba</i> <=> <i>bei</i>	11	20.0	30	22.6

<i>bei</i> <=> nominalization	7	12.7	16	12.0
<i>bei</i> <=> UP	5	9.1	11	8.3
<i>bei</i> <=> intransitive	3	5.5	8	6.0
<i>bei</i> <=> <i>shou</i>	2	3.6	4	3.0
<i>bei</i> <=> resultative	4	7.3	9	6.8
<i>bei</i> <=> <i>rang</i>	1	1.8	2	1.5

I used the second dataset that contains the 470 alternative uses and the third dataset that contains 5,679 single uses to calculate the alternation rates. The alternation rate of a grammatical construction was calculated in this way: the number of total occurrences in a corpus divided by the number of occurrences in 2-form alternations. To avoid ambiguity in the analysis of alternation tendencies, I chose to use the 2-form alternations for the calculation of alternation rate. This is due to the consideration that there is no direct evidence to prove that, for example, in the case of a 3-form alternation *ba* => UP(unmarked passive) => *bei*, the *ba*-construction alternates with the *bei*-construction – owing to the fact that there is another alternative construction in between the two. The third dataset consists of the exclusive examples of the *ba*-construction (2,526), the *rang*-construction (1,507), and the *bei*-passive construction (1,397) the entire 100-hour database, as well as 249 examples of the unmarked passive construction randomly identified in this database. Below I will discuss the overall alternation tendencies of the four grammatical constructions illustrated in these tables (4-6, 4-7, 4-8, 4-9, 4-10, and 4-11).

1) The *rang*-construction tends not to alternate with the other constructions. Only 0.6% (9/1507) of the *rang*-clauses alternate with other constructions, compared to 5.3% (136/2526) alternation rate of the *ba*-construction and 5.4% (78/1398) alternation rate of the *bei*-passive

construction, which are at least nine times higher than the alternation rate of the *rang*-construction. In Chapter 7, I will further discuss this alternation tendency.

2) An analysis based on all the 2-form alternations of the *ba*-construction reveals that the *ba*-construction most frequently (29.5%) alternates with the SVO construction, followed by *ba* <=> unmarked passive alternation (24.2%), *ba* <=> resultative alternation (21.1%), and *ba* <=> *bei* alternation (11.6%). In Chapter 5, I will come back to these alternation tendencies and explain them in relation to the prototypical function of the *ba*-construction. Compared to the other three constructions, the most distinctive *ba* alternation tendency is the alternation with resultatives: 21.1% of the *ba* 2-form nonself-repair alternations involve resultatives, compared to only 7.5% of the *bei* 2-form nonself-repair alternations, 2.8% of the unmarked passive 2-form nonself-repair alternations, and 0% of the *rang* 2-form nonself-repair alternations. Furthermore, in 87.0% (20/23<sup>37</sup>) of the *ba* <=> resultative nonself-repair alternations, the *ba*-construction is immediately followed by the resultative, with no other intervening lexical items appearing in between these two constructions. In Chapter 5, I will further discuss these alternation tendencies.

3) An analysis based on all the 2-form alternations of the unmarked passive construction reveals that the unmarked passive construction most frequently (63.9%) alternates with the *ba*-construction, followed by *bei* <=> unmarked passive alternation (13.9%) and SVO <=> unmarked passive alternation (13.9%). In Chapter 6, I will further discuss these alternation tendencies.

4) An analysis based on all the 2-form alternations of the *bei*-passive construction reveals that the *bei*-passive construction most frequently (40.0%) alternates with the SVO construction, followed by *bei* <=> *ba* alternation (20.0%) and *bei* <=> nominalization alternation (12.7%).

---

<sup>37</sup> The original number is 24, but one alternation (*ba* <=> SVO <=> resultative, #20130307) was excluded for this calculation for the consideration that this alternation contains both the case of a *ba* preceding a resultative and the case of a resultative preceding a *ba*-construction.

Compared to the other three constructions, the most distinctive *bei* alternation tendency is the alternation with nominalization: 12.7% of the *bei* 2-form nonself-repair alternations involve nominalization, compared to only 1.1% of the *ba* 2-form nonself-repair alternations, 0% of the unmarked passive 2-form nonself-repair alternations, and 0% of the *rang* nonself-repair alternations. In Chapter 8, I will further discuss these alternation tendencies.

## CHAPTER 5. FUNCTIONS OF *BA*-CONSTRUCTIONS AND RELATED ALTERNATION PATTERNS

This chapter discusses the prototypical function of the *ba*-construction<sup>38</sup> and the related alternation patterns, as well as the significance lens. The Mandarin *ba*-construction refers to clauses or sentences such as (1), where the so-called preposition *ba* 把 is used to mark the patient (窗 *chuang* ‘window’) in a preverbal position:

- (1) 他        把        窗        打        破        了。  
ta        ba        chuang    da        po        le  
3SG     BA     window   hit       break (COMP)   PFV  
‘He hit and broke the window.’

In Chapter 4, we have seen that among all the major transitive clausal units, the *ba*-construction ranks the most frequent construction in the corpus. The main *ba* alternation tendencies (revealed in all the 2-form alternations of the *ba*-construction) are *ba*  $\Leftrightarrow$  SVO alternation (29.5%), *ba*  $\Leftrightarrow$  unmarked passive alternation (24.2%), and *ba*  $\Leftrightarrow$  resultative alternation (21.1%), and *ba*  $\Leftrightarrow$  *bei* alternation (11.6%). Compared to the other three constructions, the most distinctive *ba* alternation tendency is the alternation with resultatives.

In this chapter, I will discuss the prototypical function of the *ba*-construction based on its usages found in the corpus and the relevant alternation patterns<sup>39</sup>. Specifically, I will explain the *ba*-construction as a linguistic device for the SIGNIFICANCE lens, namely,

---

<sup>38</sup> As I have shown in Chapter 4, there are different types of *ba*-constructions. This chapter may use the singular form “*ba*-construction” or the plural form “*ba*-constructions” when focusing on different connotations. The use of the singular form focuses on the *ba*-construction as a whole and especially in comparison to other major grammatical constructions such as the *bei*-passive construction, the unmark passive construction, etc. The use of the plural form refers to different types of *ba*-constructions. This applies to my use of terms for the other constructions investigated in this study.

<sup>39</sup> Needless to say, like any other empirically-based studies, the findings of this study should be understood as only representative of the type of data used.



*The ba-construction prototypically marks a transitive event as a significant consequence, contribution, or action, which is highly consequential, highly challenging, or highly important.*

I will first discuss the definition of significance, as well as the textual manifestations of significance with examples of *ba* alternations, and then discuss variation within subtypes of *ba*-constructions. Finally, I will summarize the overall finding on the function of the *ba*-construction as a significance marker for transitive events.

### **5.1 Significance as a Lens**

Since I am claiming that the *ba*-construction is what I call a “significance lens”<sup>40</sup> that is mainly used to mark a transitive event as significant, let me begin with a discussion of what I mean by “significance.” Admittedly, notions such as “significance” can be highly subjective and elusive. Therefore, both clear conceptualization and textual evidence are necessary when capturing the degrees of significance presented through the use of language resources.

As a lens, *significance* refers to speakers’ subjective evaluation of an event as being highly consequential, challenging, or important. The significance lens marks an event as being major (non-trivial), highly consequential thus deserving explicit blaming/praising, highly challenging thus entailing special efforts, or having notable worth or importance thus deserving special attention. For any event to be identified as being presented through a significant lens, it has to have at least one of the following conceptual and textual properties:

- i. Presented as being highly consequential: Highly consequential events have more significant impacts. A major textual manifestation of consequentiality is through co-occurrence with a series of results (e.g., denoted in resultatives) that follow the

---

<sup>40</sup> This account does not mean that *ba* itself as a word is a significance marker for the object. What it means is that the *ba*-construction as a whole is a significance marker. This is a basic idea of Construction Grammar (e.g., Goldberg 1995), namely, the construction as a whole has a meaning that is independent of the meanings of its lexical components. In the case of the *ba*-construction, the scope of the function as a significance marker covers the entire construction.

construction.

- ii. The speaker assigns responsibility and accountability to the causer through explicit blaming, or assigns credibility to the causer through explicit praising: A more significant consequence is more likely to incur explicit blaming on the causer; a more significant contribution is more likely to incur explicit praising on the causer. A major textual manifestation is through co-occurrence with lexico-syntactic items or multimodal descriptions that explicitly assign responsibility and accountability or credibility to the causer.
- iii. Presented as having highly important meaning or worth: The more significant an event is, the more it deserves serious attention of the speaker, and the more important meaning or worth it has for the speaker. A major textual manifestation is through co-occurrence with lexico-syntactic items or multimodal descriptions that explicitly indicate the important meaning or worth of the event and/or how it matters to the speaker.
- iv. Presented as being highly challenging to achieve: The more challenging an action is to conduct or a result is to achieve, the more significant it means for the speaker. A major textual manifestation is through co-occurrence with lexico-syntactic items or multimodal descriptions that explicitly indicate high degrees of difficulty.

In the following four sections, I will illustrate them with examples of *ba* alternations.

## **5.2 Marking an Event as Highly Consequential**

This textual manifestation of significance concerns the impact of an event. Highly consequential events have a more significant impact. The degree, duration, and magnitude of the change an action results in an entity, an individual, a group, or a society are a manifestation of how consequential an event is. For example, an event is more consequential to the American

society in, say, (2) *They have made a change to the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution* than in (3) *The company has made a change to the date of the meeting by moving it to the following day.*

One of the parameters in Hopper and Thompson's (1980) framework of transitivity is affectedness: "The degree to which an action is transferred to a patient is a function of how completely that patient is affected; it is done more effectively in, say, *I drank up the milk* than in *I drank some of the milk.*" Consequentiality differs from affectedness in that affectedness is an objective measurement of how completely the affectee in a transitive event is affected, whereas consequentiality is a subjective perception of how much impact a transitive event has on the affectee, the speaker, or a related entity, individual, group, or society. Thus, a transitive event can have lower degrees of affectedness yet higher degrees of consequentiality than another transitive event, and vice versa. To use English as an example, the affectee in (2) *They have made a change to the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution* is "the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution." The affectee in (3) *The company has made a change to the date of the meeting by moving it to the following day* is "the original date of their meeting." The affectedness in (3) can be the same as, if not higher than, that in (2) because in (3) the affectee (i.e., the date) is completely changed. However, the consequentiality for the American society can be higher in (2) than in (3).

Based on speakers' roles in an event, in real life situations, different speakers may consider the same event to be of different degrees of consequentiality. For example, a Chinese businessman living in China may not consider a change to the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution highly consequential for him but may consider a change to the date of a meeting in the United States that he is attending to be highly consequential for him.

A major textual manifestation of consequentiality is through co-occurrence with resultatives that follow the construction in question. In my data, it is found that 21.1% of all the *ba* 2-form nonself-repair alternations involve resultatives. This may not appear to be too notable in isolation, yet when this is compared to only 7.5% of the *bei* 2-form nonself-repair alternations involving resultatives, 2.8% of the 2-form unmarked passive nonself-repair alternations involving resultatives, and 0% of the *rang* 2-form nonself-repair alternations involve resultatives, the result is quite remarkable (see Table 4-9, 4-10, 4-11, and 4-12 in Chapter 4 for more details). Furthermore, in 87.0% of the *ba* <=> resultative nonself-repair alternations, the *ba*-construction is immediately followed by the resultative, with no other intervening lexical items appearing in between these two constructions.

Overall, the alternation pattern here is that when speakers mark a transitive event as highly consequential, they tend to choose a *ba*-construction and not the other constructions. Below I will use three examples to illustrate the alternation patterns. The first one is an SVO => *ba* alternation; the second and the third one are *ba* <=> resultative alternations.

(4) SVO => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [SVO Dou: 早就开始收英语词, 就 <Subject ellipsis> have **long since**  
(VO)] 直接英语字母词。 started to include English words (in  
Chinese dictionaries). That is,  
directly (including) English  
alphabetic words.

Use #2 [ba Lei: 有的人认为你把这个收 Some people think that if you  
了, 那还叫汉语吗? include this (i.e., English alphabetic  
words), can (the language) still be

## called Chinese?

(#20131025)

In example (4), an SVO => *ba* alternation, the prior speaker Dou uses an SVO (VO) construction (use #1), whereas the subsequent speaker Lei uses a *ba*-construction (use #2). Both grammatical constructions are used to describe the event of including English alphabetic words in Chinese dictionaries. Dou's focuses are on two things: 1) such a phenomenon is not new: 早就 *zaojiu* 'have long since;' 2) the practice of directly including English alphabetic words without translating them into Chinese: 直接 *zhijie* 'directly' and 字母 *zimu* 'alphabet.' Dou is not talking about how consequential this event is, and he does not use a *ba*-construction. On the other hand, Lei is quoting some people's opinion opposing the inclusion of English alphabetic words in Chinese dictionaries. Lei uses a *ba*-clause to indicate that such an event is highly consequential, namely, the Chinese language can no longer be called 'Chinese' (那还叫汉语吗 *na hai jiao hanyu ma*).

One major manifestation of consequentiality is the appearance of a series of elements indicating some kind of results. As mentioned earlier in this section, it is found that 21.1% of all the *ba* nonself-repair alternations involve resultatives. In 87.0% of the *ba* <=> resultative nonself-repair alternations, the *ba*-construction is immediately followed by the resultative. The pattern is:

*ba*-construction

→ consequence 1: result indicated by a resultative

→ consequence 2

The following example illustrates a *ba*-construction being immediately followed by two consequences. The first consequence is indicated by a resultative 推翻掉 *tuifan diao* 'to overthrow (e.g., a government).' The second consequence is indicated by the use of a

conjunction 就 *jiu* ‘then’ and a verb 变成 *biancheng* ‘to become,’ which together signal a result.

(5) *ba* => resultative alternation

- |   |      |                 |          |   |
|---|------|-----------------|----------|---|
| 1 | Wen: | [ba]            | 你把总统推翻掉。 | <u>You threw the President (of</u>      |
|   |      |                 |          | <u>Ukraine) out of office.</u>          |
| 2 |      | [res.]          | 推翻掉      | <b>(After) <u>throwing</u> (the</b>     |
|   |      | (consequence 1) |          | <b><u>President) out of office,</u></b> |
| 3 |      |                 | 怎么样?     | <b>what happened?</b>                   |
| 4 |      | (consequence 2) | 就变成现在这样。 | <b>It has since become what it is</b>   |
|   |      |                 |          | <b>now (in Ukraine).</b>                |

(#20140430)

In example (5), a *ba* => resultative alternation, the speaker Wen first uses a *ba*-construction (line 1). Immediately followed the *ba*-construction, Wen uses a resultative (line 2) to introduce the first consequence of the event the *ba*-construction denotes: the President being overthrown. The first consequence is then followed by the second consequence, which is prompted by the use of a question 怎么样 *zenme yang* ‘what happened’ (line 3): Ukraine has become the country we know about today (line 4).

The number of consequences that follow the use of a *ba*-construction can be more than two. In such cases, the consequential result after a *ba*-construction is often introduced by a resultative and a temporal expression 之后 *zhihou* ‘after; later’ or 以后 *yihou* ‘after; later.’ *Zhihou* and *yihou* can be used to introduce consequences (Su 2017). The pattern is:

*ba*-construction

→ consequence 1: result indicated by a resultative

→ (resultative) + 之后 / 以后 *zhihou / yihou* ‘after; later’

→ consequence 2

→ (consequence 2) + 之后 / 以后 *zhihou / yihou* ‘after; later’

→ consequence 3

The following example illustrates a *ba*-construction being immediately followed by three consequences. The first consequence is indicated by a highly lexicalized resultative 通过<sup>41</sup> *tong guo* ‘pass (e.g., an act).’ The second and third consequences are both introduced by the use of a temporal expression 之后 *zhihou* ‘after; later.’

(6) SVO => *ba* => resultative alternation

- |   |              |                                       |  |
|---|--------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Zhang:       | 大家都非常愤慨的时候,                           | When the public is very angry,   |
| 2 |              | 你通过什么都能通过                             | you can pass whatever you want to pass.  |
| 3 | Use #1 [SVO] | 所以他<i.e.,罗斯福总统><br><u>一天就能通过两部法案,</u> | So <u>he &lt;i.e., President Roosevelt&gt; was able to pass two acts in one day.</u> |
| 4 |              | 而这两部法案在之前是通<br>过不了的,                  | And in the past, these two acts could not be passed,                                 |
| 5 |              | 因为利益集团是不让你通<br>过的,                    | because the stakeholders would not allow you to pass.                                |

---

<sup>41</sup> This verb complement is highly lexicalized; however, the two elements “通” *tong* and “过” *guo* are still detachable, and one can insert a negation in between the two elements – 通不过 *tong bu guo* ‘cannot pass.’

6		你通过了利益集团是不好的。	If you pass (these two acts), it is not good for the stakeholders.
7	Use #2 [ba]	<u>所以老罗斯福顺水推舟把这个通过了,</u>	<u>So President Roosevelt seized the opportunity (and) had them (lit. this) passed.</u>
8	Use #3 [res.]	<u>通过</u>	<b>(They were) <u>passed</u></b>
	(consequence 1)		
9		之后	<b>After (that),</b>
10	(consequence 2)	他这个安全体系建立起来	<b>the (food) safety system was established.</b>
11		之后,	<b>After (that),</b>
12		第二步我觉得是值得我们借鉴的,	The next step, (which) I think is worthy for us <i.e., China> to adopt,
		...	...
	(consequence 3)	保护中小企业	<b>(is) protecting small business.</b>

(#20140101)

In example (6), an SVO => *ba* => resultative alternation, the speaker Zhang uses three different constructions, an SVO construction, a *ba*-construction, and a resultative construction to describe the same event – President Roosevelt passing two acts. In line 3, Zhang is making a point that it is very easy to pass an act when the public is angry. When his emphasis is on how easy it is, the



speaker Zhang does not use a *ba*-construction but an SVO construction.

In line 7, the speaker uses a *ba*-construction, which is followed by three consequences: The first consequence, introduced by the use of a resultative (line 8), is that the acts have been passed. The second consequence, introduced by the use of a temporal expression 之后 *zhihou* ‘after; later,’ is that the (food) safety system has been established (line 10). The third consequence, introduced by the use of a temporal expression 之后 *zhihou* ‘after; later’ and a positive evaluation of its significance (值得我们借鉴 *zhide women jiejian* ‘worthy for us <i.e., China> to adopt’), is that small business is protected (line 12). In this example, *ba*-construction is used to describe an event that is highly consequential.

To summarize, the examples discussed in this section illustrate how the *ba*-construction, and not the other constructions, is used by the speakers to mark highly consequential and thus significant events.

### **5.3 The Speaker’s Explicit Blaming or Praising of the Causer**

A more significant consequence is more likely to incur explicit blaming on the causer; likewise, a more significant contribution is more likely to incur explicit praising on the causer (i.e., contributor). It is found that when speakers describe a transitive event that entails responsibility and accountability through explicit blaming or entails credibility through explicit praising, they tend to use a *ba*-construction and not the other constructions.

A major textual manifestation of explicit blaming or praising is through co-occurrence with lexico-syntactic items that explicitly assign responsibility or credibility to the causer of the transitive event. It is found that in all the *ba* alternations that involve explicit blaming or praising, 90.9% (10/11) of the time the lexico-syntactic items that carry the tone of explicit blaming or praising co-occurs with the use of the *ba*-construction, and not the other constructions used. For

the rest of the time (9.0%, 1/11), the lexico-syntactic items that carry the tone of explicit blaming or praising co-occurs with both the *ba*-construction and the other construction used. Such lexico-syntactic items can include the following kinds:

1) Clauses that explicitly assign responsibility to the causer, such as 你们要负责 *nimen yao fuze* ‘you should be responsible’ (see examples 7, 8, and 9).

(7) Intransitive => *ba* alternation

Use #1	[Intr.]	从此她儿子， <u>12 岁的儿子没有了。</u>	Since then, her son, <u>the 12-year-old son has disappeared.</u>
Use #2	[ba]	<immediately follows use #1> 于是上访的目的又变成了找 我的儿子，你们要负责， <u>你们把我儿子弄丢了。</u>	<immediately follows use #1> Therefore, the purpose of (her) appealing to the higher authorities for help became – <b>You should be responsible; you lost my son.</b>

(#20130201)

(8) *bei* => *ba* & *gei* alternation

Use #1	[ <i>bei</i> ]	<u>山海关 5A 级景区最近被摘牌</u> ，出现新闻是因为旅游局长哭了。	<u>Shanghai Pass was recently delisted from “(China’s) 5A Tourist Resorts.”</u> (It) was on the news because the Minister of Tourism cried.
Use #2	[ <i>ba</i> &]	那现任旅游局长就哭了，说	The current Minister of Tourism cried, saying that “ <b>I am to blame,</b>

*gei* 都怪我呀，在我手上，我们把这个给丢了。

(because) in my hands, we have lost this <i.e., the title China's 5A Tourist Resort>."

(#20151021)

(9) Existential => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [*existe* 这个偷车贼就打电话报警，  
*ntial*] 哪哪哪有辆车，车里有一个孩子，人就走了。

This car thief then called the police, (saying that) there is a car somewhere, (and that) there is a child in the car. (After making the phone call), the thief just left (the scene).

Use #2 [*ba*] 像纽约只要你把8岁以下的  
小孩单独留在车里面，就要  
检控你。

For example, (in) New York, as long as you leave a child under 8-year-old alone in the car, (they) **will charge you.**

(#20130307)

2) Rhetorical questions such as 怎么能 *zenme neng* 'how can' and 干吗 *gan ma* 'how come' to explicitly blame the causer (See examples 10 and 11).

(10) *bei* => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [*bei*] 他发现车不见了，后来说是  
被城管把那个锁剪了。

He found that (his) bike was gone. Later (he heard that its lock was cut by some urban management officials (and the bike was taken

away).

Use #2 [ba] 但是你应该人性执法，你干  
吗把我自行车弄走？  
But you should conduct law  
enforcement with humanity,  
**how come you took my bike**  
away?

(#20151209)

3) Derogatory terms to call villains, such as 禽兽 *qinshou* ‘beast, impudent and wicked people’ (See example 11).

(11) *ba* => UP (unmarked passive) alternation

Use #1 [ba] 怎么能把老人扔在街上，是  
禽兽。  
**How could (they) abandon a senior**  
citizen on the street? (They) **are**  
**(simply) beasts.**

Use #2 [UP] 你会说这人怎么能这样，父  
母能这么，老人能这么丢在  
街上吗？  
You would say, **how can** this  
person (do) this, can parents,  
can a senior citizen (be)  
abandoned on the street?

Use #3 [UP] 我也想到，就那天他们说这  
个老人扔在那儿。  
I also thought about (it) – that  
day they said that this senior  
citizen (was) abandoned there  
(i.e. on the street).

(#20150407)

4) Explanations of why the causer has done something wrong (see examples 12 and 13).

(12) *ba* => SVO alternation

Use #1 [ba] 不查详情，就把人开除了。 **Without checking the detailed situation**, <subject ellipsis> simply fired that person.

Use #2 [SVO] 否则我们也会，也只好开除他。 **Otherwise, we also would, also would have to fire him**.

(#20150624)

(13) *ba* & *gei* => UP alternation

Use #1 [ba & *gei*] 说是疏忽，也把他给一起录入了。 (It was) said that **because of negligence**, (the police officers) also recorded him (in the criminal case).

Use #2 [UP] <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
 Unmarked passive 因此造成了这种长期以来，当年的案底就录成了他的资料。 **Therefore, (it) has caused this (consequence): for a long time, that (criminal) case (was) recorded with his information**.

(#20150519)

5) Clauses that explicitly praise the causer, such as 做得好 *zuo de hao* ‘did a good job’ (see examples 14).

(14) UP (unmarked passive) => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [UP] 李金元接受了报纸的访问，说我们这次活动非常成功， Li accepted a newspaper interview. (He) said, our event was very successful. (Even) the trash (was)

垃圾都随身带走了。 all taken away with (us).

Use #2 [ba] <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
我觉得这一点**做得还挺好**， I think (they) **did a good job on**  
你最后把垃圾都带走。 **this**. In the end, you (even) took  
all the trash away.

(#20150514)

Below I will use an example to discuss in greater detail how the *ba*-construction is chosen over the other construction to describe an event that entails the speaker's explicit blaming on the causer.

(15) SVO => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [SVO Dou: 至今这还是个疑案，说 To date, this is still a  
(VO)] 是不是他<i.e.,顾城, 著名 mystery/unsettled case. (People)  
中国现代诗人>先拿斧 suspect that he <i.e., Gu, Cheng,  
子。拿斧子砍了他老 a famous modern Chinese poet>  
婆，伤了他老婆，然后 first used an ax, used an ax to cut  
自己又上吊自杀。 his wife, hurt his wife, and then  
committed suicide by hanging  
himself.

Use #2 [ba] Dou: 所以我听到过两种相反 I have heard about two opposite  
的意见，一种意见就是 opinions. One opinion is that Gu,  
说顾城这个人怎么说 Cheng, this person, how do I put  
呢，到最后就是疯了 it, in the end, went crazy. How  
could (he) kill (his) wife?

吧，怎么能把老婆给杀

了？

(#20140203)

In example (15), an SVO => *ba* alternation, the speaker Dou uses two different constructions, an SVO (VO) construction and a *ba*-construction, to describe the same event – Gu Cheng causing his wife to death. Gu Cheng is a famous Chinese modern poet. His wife is known to be very committed and devoted to him. However, in 1993, Gu Cheng attacked his wife with an ax and then hanged himself. His wife died later on the way to a hospital. In this excerpt, Dou was first talking about the documentary of Gu Cheng and how he died. Such a narrative with the use of an SVO construction (use #1) does not involve explicit blaming. After the narrative, Dou introduces two opinions towards Gu Cheng’s responsibility in his wife’s death. One opinion considers Gu Cheng to be crazy and blames him for killing his wife. When introducing this accusatory opinion, Dou uses a *ba*-construction (use #2). The *ba*-construction is used with a rhetorical question 怎么能 *zenme neng* ‘how can,’ further reinforcing the tone of blaming.

The use of a *ba*-construction can mark the result as a significant consequence to blame the agent for having caused such a serious consequence. This is especially the case when the *ba*-construction is used with verbs or verb phrases that have negative connotations (such as 害 *hai*, ‘to harm’). The *ba*-construction carries this function even when its lexical items have neutral lexical meanings (such as 收 *shou*, ‘to include’), in which case, the *ba*-construction typically co-occurs with other lexical elements (such as 那还叫汉语吗 *Na hai jiao hanyu ma* ‘Can it still be called ‘Chinese’’) to mark the seriousness of the consequence. To assign responsibility, the *ba*-construction often takes a syntactically explicit causer, which can be a pronoun (such as 你 *ni* ‘you’), a person name, or an address term. I will illustrate these points with the following

example.

(16) Intransitive => intransitive => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [Intr.] Xu: 我在香港医院做抽神经，然后抽到一半医生就停下来了，告诉我说他针掉在里面了。  
I was doing tooth nerve killing at a hospital in Hong Kong. Half way through the process, **the doctor** stopped and told me, his needle dropped in (my tooth).

Use #2 [Intr.] <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
然后转一个专科，医生很老实，他就说你针掉在里边了，不敢动了。  
...  
Then (I was) transferred to (see) a specialist. **The doctor** was quite honest, he said, you, the needle dropped inside (the tooth), and (I) am afraid to move it.

Use #3 [*ba*] Ba o: 大陆如果是大夫我把一根针断里头了，而且这个针取不出来，他们这件事情肯定会闹得没完没了的，肯定会闹到最低限度就是一定要赔钱的。这件事情一定要赔钱的。  
In Mainland China, if the doctor, I, have dropped a needle inside (a tooth), and the needle cannot be taken out, **they <i.e., the patient and his or her family> would definitely force a wild scene**



的。

**without an end. (The patient and the family) would definitely demand (the hospital), at least, that is, will definitely demand compensation. An incident like this would definitely demand compensation.**

(#20151019)

In example (16), an intransitive => intransitive => *ba* alternation, the prior speaker Xu uses two intransitive clauses (uses #1 and #2), whereas the subsequent speaker Bao uses a *ba*-construction (use #3). Both grammatical constructions are used to describe the event of the doctor accidentally dropping a needle inside the patient's tooth. The two intransitive clauses are quotations of the hypothetical doctors. It is not in the doctors' best interest to blame themselves for having caused this medical accident. Therefore, no *ba*-sentence is used in the doctors' accounts<sup>42</sup>. Instead, both doctors use an intransitive clause: the needle dropped – as if the needle dropped on its own, and no one is responsible for such an incident. On the other hand, the speaker Bao, in order to argue that such an incident would have a serious consequence in Mainland China, uses a *ba*-construction to mark the result as a highly significant (i.e., serious) consequence and to assign responsibility for the doctor who has caused such a medical accident.

The use of a *ba*-construction can also mark the result as a significant contribution to praise and assign credit to the agent for having made such a contribution. This is especially the case when the *ba*-construction is used with verbs or verb phrases that have positive connotations. *Ba*-

---

<sup>42</sup> Or in the speaker's quotations of the doctors' accounts.

construction carries this function even when its lexical items have neutral lexical meanings (such as 带走 *daizou*, ‘to take away’), in which case, the *ba*-construction typically co-occurs with other lexical elements (such as 我觉得这一点做得还挺好 *wo juede zhe yi dian zuo de hai ting hao* ‘I think (they) did a good job on this’) to indicate the significance of the contribution. To assign credit, the *ba*-construction often takes a syntactically explicit causer, which can be a pronoun such as 你 *ni* ‘you,’ a person name, or an address term. I will illustrate these points with the following example.

(17) UP (unmarked passive) => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [UP] Dou:	李金元接受了报纸的访问， 说我们这次活动非常成功， <u>垃圾都随身带走了。</u> 这东西挺有意思。	Jinyuan Li accepted a newspaper interview. (He) said, our event was very successful. <u>(Even) the trash</u> <u>(was) all taken away with (us).</u>  <b>It’s quite interesting.</b>
------------------	--	---

Use #2 [ <i>ba</i> ] Zhou:	<immediately follows use #1> 我觉得这一点做得还挺好， <u>你最后把垃圾都带走。</u> 以前 都觉得好像中国游客在外面 挺丢人，能做到这个，我觉 得还是修正一下这个形象。	<immediately follows use #1> <b>I think (they) did a good job</b> <b>on this. <u>In the end, you (even)</u></b> <b><u>took all the trash away.</u></b> In the past, (we used to) think that Chinese tourists tended to (do) embarrassing (things) (while traveling) abroad. <b>(This time,</b> <b>Li and his 6,000 employees)</b>
----------------------------	--	---

**could accomplish this. I think they were able to fix the (embarrassing) image of (Chinese tourists) to some degree.**

(#20150514)

In example (17), a UP => *ba* alternation, the prior speaker Dou uses an unmarked passive (use #1), whereas the subsequent speaker Zhou uses a *ba*-construction (use #2). Both grammatical constructions are used to describe the event of 6,000 Chinese tourists, who were employees of Li's company, taking their trash away when they left France in May 2015. Dou's description 垃圾都随身带走了 *laji dou suishen dai zou le* '(even) the trash (was) all taken away with (us)' is in the form of a quotation. Regardless of what the original speech is, here Dou's point is that this event is "funny" (这东西挺有意思 *zhe dongxi ting you yisi*). Dou is not focusing on how significant the event is, and he does not use a *ba*-construction. On the other hand, the subsequent speaker Zhou gives a positive evaluation of this event and emphasizes that Li and his 6,000 employees have made a significant contribution – fixing the embarrassing image of Chinese tourists to some degree (修正一下这个形象 *xiuzheng yixia zhe ge xingxiang*). Zhou uses a *ba*-construction to mark the result as a significant contribution and assign credit to Li and his employees.

To summarize, the examples discussed in this section illustrate how the *ba*-construction, and not the other constructions, is used by the speakers to explicitly blame or praise the causer.

#### **5.4 Marking an Event as Highly Important**

The use of a *ba*-construction can mark an action as highly important, in which case, the

speaker is usually using the *ba*-construction to request someone to execute such an important action. This is especially the case when *ba*-constructions are used with future events. A major textual manifestation of importance is through co-occurrence with lexico-syntactic items or descriptions that explicitly indicate the importance of the event and / or how it matters to the speaker. It is found that when speakers describe a transitive event that is marked important, they tend to use a *ba*-construction, and not the other constructions. I will illustrate this point with the following examples.

(18) UP (unmarked passive) => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [UP] Xu: 所以应该赶快做碟嘛，很多人都呼吁这个 15 年的节目应该灌在这个碟里边。  
So (you) should make a disc soon. Many people advocate that the talk show episodes over the past 15 years should (be) put on a disc.

Use #2 [*ba*] Dou: 你以为我没想到，他们问我说 15 周年了，咱们搞些什么活动，是什么讨论会、晚会，什么见面会什么的，我说这些我都不喜欢对吧，我说我只有一个要求，我说我只有一个要求，现在有哪个硬盘，1.5T 存几千张唱片  
You thought I hadn't thought about it? They asked me, it's the 15 year anniversary (of this talk show). Let's plan some ceremonies, such as a symposium, a public party, a media event, and things like these. I said I don't like any one of these. Right? **I said I only have one request. I said I only**

的，1.5T、2T 的那种东西。我说你把这 4,000 期节目能不能全刻进去，我说我愿意自己花钱买。

**have one request.** If somewhere (you can find) such a hard drive, 1.5 T, that can store thousands of albums, 1.5 T or 2 T that kind of stuff. I said, will you be able to put all the 4,000 episodes on (this hard drive)? **I said I would even be willing to pay it out of my own pocket.**

(#20130329)

In example (18), a UP => *ba* alternation, the prior speaker Xu uses an unmarked passive (use #1), whereas the subsequent speaker Dou uses a *ba*-construction (use #2). Both grammatical constructions are used to describe the action of putting all the episodes of the talk show in a digital storage medium. Xu focuses on the need to do it sooner (赶快 *gankuai* ‘immediately, soon’) instead of later; Xu does not use a *ba*-construction.

On the other hand, Dou gives an elaborate account showing how highly important this action is for him as the host of this talk show. Dou first reports a conversation between him and the TV station executives regarding the 15 year anniversary of this talk show. Dou lists a range of ceremony proposals suggested by the executives. Dou rejects every proposal of them before he finally voices his own request. To convey that his request matters to him greatly and is the thing he cares most, he says: ‘I only have one request’ (我只有一个要求 *wo zhiyou yi ge yaoqiu*). Dou even uses a repetition to reinforce this sense of importance. After that, Dou goes on to talk about the kind of hard drives that have a large storage. After setting up this elaborated context, Dou

finally uses a *ba*-construction to make his request – putting all the episodes of the talk show on one hard drive (你把这 4,000 期节目能不能全刻进去 *ni ba zhe 4,000 qi jiemu neng bu neng quan ke jin qu*). After the use of a *ba*-construction, which marks the action as significant, Dou continues to reinforce the sense of how important this action means to him – he would be willing to pay it out of his own pocket even as the host of this talk show (我说我愿意自己花钱买 *wo shuo wo yuanyi ziji hua qian mai*).

(19) UP (unmarked passive) => *ba* => UP (unmarked passive) alternation

Wen:	我觉得中国今天出现了一个很奇怪的现象...年轻人比中老年人更懂礼数，更有礼貌。	I think there is a strange phenomenon in China today... Young people know etiquettes better and are more polite than middle-aged and senior people.
------	---	---

Use #1 [UP] Jing:	我北京一个朋友的女儿，她说她爸爸，她很小。她爸爸刷牙的时候 <u>水一直不关</u> ，	The daughter of one of my friends in Beijing, she corrects (lit. to speak, to criticize) her dad('s behaviors). She is very little. Her dad leaves the water running (lit. <u>the water (is) not turned off at all</u> ) while brushing his teeth.
-------------------	--	--

Use #2 [ <i>ba</i> ]	<immediately follows use #1> 她就说爸爸你不能这样，非	<immediately follows use #1> she then said, Dad, you cannot be like this. <b>There are many</b>
----------------------	--	--

洲还有很多人喝不着水。你 **people in Africa who do not**  
怎么能这样，刷牙的时候一 **have access to water (lit.**  
定要刷的时候就把水关掉。 **cannot drink water)**. How  
can you be like this? While  
brushing (your) teeth, (you)  
**must turn the water off** while  
brushing.

Use #3 [UP] Wen: 但你知道水不关的那个人会 But you know what is on the  
想什么？因为这个话题我曾 mind of that person who does  
经真的跟人谈过，说跟中年 not turn the water off (lit. the  
人谈节俭的这个问题，谈类 water (is) not turned off)? (I  
似的话。我们很多中年人的 know it) because I have ever  
第一个反应居然是什么？这 really talked about this topic  
水我花钱给的，我不能用 with others. (I) talked with  
啊？说人家那我碍着他什么 (some) middle-aged people  
事，他碍着我什么事，你就 about being thrifty, and topics  
看到两代人的价值观已经完 like that. Unexpectedly, the  
全变了。 first reaction of many of us  
middle-aged people was what  
– I pay for the water; why can't  
I use it? It's my own business.  
It's none of the others'  
business. **You can see that the**

**values of these two  
generations are completely  
different.**

(#20150210)

In example (19), a UP => *ba* => UP alternation, the two speakers use two different constructions – two unmarked passives and a *ba*-construction – to describe the same event – turning (or not turning) the water off while brushing one’s teeth.

The two speakers use an unmarked passive when they are providing a neutral factual account. The first unmarked passive by the female speaker Jing is a descriptive – 她爸爸刷牙的时候水一直不关 *ta baba shuaya de shihou shui yizhi bu guan* ‘her dad leaves the water running (lit. the water (is) not turned off at all) when he brushes his teeth.’ The second unmarked passive by the male speaker Wen is also a descriptive – 水不关的那个人 *shui bu guan de na ge ren* ‘that person who does not turn the water off (lit. the water (is) not turned off).' This descriptive syntactically serves as a modifier for the noun phrase 那个人 *na ge ren* ‘that person.’

After the narration of the little girl’s dad not turning the water off while brushing his teeth (use #1), the speaker Jing gives a reported speech of the little girl to her dad. This reported speech contains a request carried by a *ba*-construction: 刷牙的时候一定要刷的时候就把水关掉 *shuaya de shihou yiding yao shua de shihou jiu ba shui guan diao* ‘While brushing (your) teeth, (you) must turn the water off while brushing.’ Here the *ba*-construction co-occurs with a modal auxiliary verb 一定 *yiding* ‘must’ to indicate that it is something important to the speaker (i.e., the original speaker – the little girl). Saving water is an important thing to the little girl. This is based on what she told her dad: 非洲还有很多人喝不着水 *Feizhou hai you henduo ren*



*he bu zhao shui* ‘there are many people in Africa who do not have access to water.’

Upon hearing this reported speech, Wen does not comment on the specific topic regarding saving water, but instead ties it back to the initial topic of the conversation regarding the differences between the younger and older generations in China. Wen’s point is that ‘the values of these two generations are completely different’ (两代人的价值观已经完全变了 *liang dai ren de jiazhi guan yijing wanquan bian le*). Wen could have used a *ba*-construction and say: 不把水关掉的那个人 *bu ba shui guan diao de na ge ren* ‘that person who does not turn off the water.’ However, Wen does not use a *ba*-construction, because his focus is not on how important it is to save water, but on how different the values are.

This example also shows that in some cases, there can be multiple manifestations of significance in one instance of the *ba*-construction. In this example, the *ba*-construction in “你怎么能这样，刷牙的时候一定要刷的时候就把水关掉” (use #2) has the manifestation of “explicit blaming or praising” (你怎么能这样 *ni zenme neng zheyang* ‘how can you be like this’) and the manifestation of “highly important for the speaker” (一定要 *yiding yao* ‘must’).

To summarize, the examples discussed in this section illustrate the finding that speakers tend to choose the *ba*-construction over the other constructions to mark a transitive event as being highly important.

### **5.5 Marking an Event as Highly Challenging**

A major textual manifestation of an action or result being highly challenging to achieve is through co-occurrence with lexico-syntactic items that explicitly indicate high degrees of difficulty, such as 特别难 *tebie nan* ‘very difficult’, 千辛万苦 *qianxinwanku* ‘innumerable hardships.’ It is found that when speakers want to present a transitive event as a challenging

action or result, they tend to use a *ba*-construction and not the other constructions. Below I will use two examples to illustrate this finding.

(20) SVO => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [SVO] Pan: 这几年人家<i.e., 桑兰>都生  
孩子了 In recent years, she <i.e., Sang,  
Lan> has even delivered a  
child.

Use #2 [*ba*] <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
你想想一个截瘫到这儿的 Think about this: as someone  
人, 人家千辛万苦把孩子生 who **has paralysis from the**  
下来。 **mid-chest down, she has gone**  
**through innumerable**  
**hardships <lit. thousands of**  
**hardships and ten thousands**  
**of bitter things> to deliver a**  
**child.**

(#20151202)

In example (20), an SVO => *ba* alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, an SVO construction and a *ba*-construction, to describe the same event – Sang Lan’s having delivered a child. Sang Lan is a famous former Chinese gymnast who was seriously injured in a competition in New York in 1998. Her injury has since then resulted in paralysis from the mid-chest down. Over a decade later, she gave birth to a child in April 2014. The speaker Pan is talking about this event. He first uses an SVO construction 这几年人家都生孩子了 *zhe ji nian renjia dou sheng haizi le* ‘in recent years, she <i.e., Sang Lan> has even delivered a child.’ He

then goes on to say that it is not easy for Sang Lan to deliver a child, indeed, it is very challenging. To make such a point, he first notes that she has paralysis from the mid-chest down (截瘫到这儿 *jietan dao zhe'r*). Then he uses a *ba*-construction to mark it as a highly challenging event. The sense of challenge is reinforced through the use of a Chinese idiomatic expression 千辛万苦 *qianxinwanku* ‘innumerable hardships.’ This expression is not used with the SVO construction.

(21) *ba* => UP (unmarked passive) => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [*ba*] Shao: 我尽量地想让大家 <i.e. 电视观众>多知道一些。通过讲故事，通过比喻，通过一些各种语言把它描述的复杂问题简单化，但这个特别难。  
I try to let everyone <i.e., TV audience> know more (about it). Through (methods such as) telling stories, through metaphors, through the use of all kinds of language (techniques), to simplify the complicated issues that it involves. But this is **particularly difficult**.

Use #2 [UP] <immediately follows use #1> 复杂问题复杂化特容易，囫圇吞枣。  
It is **particularly easy** to complicate complicated issues (lit. complicated issues (be) complicated). (Like) swallowing a date without chewing <- to accept the

knowledge hastily and without thinking>.

Use #3 [ba] <immediately follows use #2> <immediately follows use #2>  
但是你要把它复杂问题简单化很难。 But if you want to simplify complicated issues, (it is) **very difficult**.

(#20150922)

In example (21), a *ba* => unmarked passive => *ba* alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, a *ba*-construction and an unmarked passive, to describe the same event – transforming (either simplifying or complicating) materials when presenting them. The speaker uses two *ba*-clauses for the thing that he considers “particularly difficult” (特别难 *tebie nan*) and very difficult (很难 *hen nan*), and switches to using an unmarked passive for the thing that he considers “particularly easy” (特容易 *te rongyi*). These three sentences occur one after another in the same turn.

To summarize, the examples discussed in this section illustrate the finding that when speakers describe a transitive event that they consider highly challenging to achieve, they tend to choose a *ba*-construction over the other constructions.

### 5.6 A Comprehensive Example of *ba* Alternation

Because the *ba*-construction signals a transitive event as significant, it is found to be often used for blaming, praising, and requesting. Specifically, *ba*-constructions can mark the result as a significant consequence for blaming and assigning responsibility to the causer, can mark the result as a significant contribution for praising and assigning credit to the causer (contributor), or can marking an action as significant for requesting. Below I will use a more comprehensive

example to illustrate this point in detail. In this excerpt, the speaker Dou is making fun of his good friend Xu by using a *ba*-construction, which explicitly blames the causer (i.e., Xu). In other words, Dou is making use of the explicit blaming function of the *ba*-construction to achieve a joking effect.

(22) SVO => *ba* alternation

- |    |                    |                              |                                      |
|----|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1  | Xu:                | 我觉得...                       | I think...                           |
| 2  | Zhu: [SVO]         | <u>这其实害了, 害了李吧?</u>          | <u>This actually does harm, does</u> |
|    | Use #1             |                              | <u>harm to Li, right?</u>            |
| 32 | Xu:                | ...                          | ...                                  |
|    |                    | <Xu giving a long statement> | <Xu giving a long statement>         |
|    |                    | 你[明白这个问题没有?]                 | You [understand this issue?]         |
| 33 | Dou: [ <i>ba</i> ] | <u>[许老师, 你这番话把]李家</u>        | <u>[Prof. Xu, what you just said</u> |
|    | Use #2             | <u>害得更深。 [@@@]</u>           | <u>(lit. these words of yours)]</u>  |
|    |                    |                              | <u>causes even greater (lit.</u>     |
|    |                    |                              | <u>deeper) harm to Li's family.</u>  |
|    |                    |                              | <u>@@@</u>                           |
| 34 | Xu:                | [哦, 没有, 没有, 不,               | [Oh, no, no, no, no, no]             |
|    |                    | 不, 不]                        |                                      |
| 35 | Zhu:               | [@@@]                        | [@@@]                                |

(#20130717)

In example (22), an SVO => *ba* alternation, the prior speaker Zhu uses an SVO construction (line 2), whereas the subsequent speaker Dou uses a *ba*-construction (line 33). Both sentences are commenting on how harmful an event is to the affectee Li. However, they differ in terms of the

indications of how serious the consequence is and whether there is an agent who should be held accountable for the consequence. The use of the *ba*-construction correlates with the situation in which the speaker is emphasizing higher degrees of consequentiality and assigning responsibility to the causer – Xu. A few pieces of textual evidence show that the speaker Dou, who uses the *ba*-construction, is indicating that there is a serious consequence and that Xu is responsible.

- 1) To assign responsibility, the *ba*-construction takes a syntactically explicit causer – both a person pronoun 你 *ni* ‘you’ and a person name 许老师 *Xu laoshi* ‘Xu (lit. Teacher Xu).’ The *ba*-construction also specifies what it is about the causer that has caused such as consequence – 这番话 *zhe fan hua* ‘these words / this statement.’ At the risk of redundancy, the speaker uses three devices – person pronoun, person name, and person-related entity – to assign and specify the responsibility. This feature is even more salient if we compare the *ba*-sentence with the SVO sentence: The SVO sentence only takes an unspecified demonstrative 这 *zhe* ‘this’ and no human causer is specified.
- 2) To mark how significant (i.e., serious) the consequence is, the *ba*-sentence explicitly upgrades the affectee from merely one person (李 *Li*, ‘Li’), which is the case in the SVO sentence, to the entire family (李家 *Li jia*, ‘Li’s family’).
- 3) To mark how significant (i.e., serious) the consequence is, the *ba*-sentence explicitly upgrades the seriousness from zero specification in the SVO sentence to a specified comparative grade 更深 *geng shen* ‘deeper.’
- 4) The SVO sentence is used with a sentence final particle 吧 *ba* (not the same word as the one in the *ba*-construction) to indicate the speaker Zhu’s uncertainty about whether there is such a consequence. The *ba*-sentence does not contain this sentence-final particle.
- 5) Because the *ba*-construction here carries a strong effect for blaming and assigning

responsibility, the addressee Xu strongly defends himself upon hearing the accusation carried in the *ba*-sentence. This is done by the use of a denying hand gesture (Figure 5-1) as well as a series of repetitions with variation 没有, 没有, 不, 不, 不 *meiyou, meiyou, bu, bu, bu*, ‘no, no, no, no, no’ to verbally deny the accusation.



Figure 5-1: Snapshot of Xu defending himself and denying the responsibility Dou has assigned to him

- 6) Because the *ba*-construction here carries a strong effect for blaming, Dou uses it to make fun of his good friend Xu. This joking effect is evident in a series of laughs (Figure 5-2) that immediately follows the use of the *ba*-construction (line 33) by Dou. The joking effect is picked up by Zhu as she joins in Dou's laughter (line 35) (Figure 5-3).



Figure 5-2: Snapshot of Dou's laughter after the use of a *ba*-construction



Figure 5-3: Snapshot of Zhu (the female on the right) joining Dou’s laughter

In terms of structure, this example also shows that when there is a verb complement (such as resultative, descriptive, and directional complements), speakers tend to use a *ba*-construction (line 33) instead of a SVO (line2).

### 5.7 Variation within Subtypes of *Ba*-constructions

In the previous sections, I have focused on the alternation patterns involving *ba*- and non *ba*- constructions. However, as I have discussed in Chapter 4, there are actually five subtypes of *ba*-constructions and their frequency of occurrences varies greatly. This section will address the reason why there are such variation patterns within the *ba*-construction.

In Chapter 4, we have seen that the predominant subtype of *ba*-constructions, which occurs at a high frequency (87.9%), is the full version that syntactically encodes the most semantic components – [(causer)], [affectee], [cause], and [effect]. Table 4-2 in Chapter 4 is copied below for a detailed view.

Table 4-2: Frequencies of subtypes of *ba*-constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset

<b>C1</b>	87.9% (312/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee + cause + effect
<b>C2</b>	0.6% (2/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee + cause



C3	0.8% (3/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee + effect
C4	3.1% (11/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee + cause / effect
C5	7.6% (27/354)	(causer) + <i>ba</i> + affectee

Below I will use a *ba* alternation to illustrate the finding that when speakers use a *ba*-construction, they usually specify all the semantic components and would even elaborate on some components. In other words, the *ba*-construction usually takes a highly complex form, compared to a relatively less complex form the other constructions take when they are used to describe the same event.

(23) UP (unmarked passive) => *ba* alternation

Use #1 [UP] Chen: 今天的最大问题是什么东西 都保存下来了。 The biggest problem today is that everything is kept.

Use #2 [ba] <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
 当我们把所有的细节、有用的、没用的，所有的东西都保存下来以后，不用说多的，一个人当你晚年回首的时候，听一遍你都听不过来了，还要做一个历史研究。  
 After we keep all the details, the useful, the useless, all the things, needless to say, when you are in your later years and look back upon your past, you won't be able to finish listening to them even once, let alone doing a historical study (on all the things kept).

(#20130715)

In example (23), a UP => *ba* alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, an

unmarked passive and a *ba*-construction, to describe the same event – keeping everything in this digital era. Both forms are embedded as a nominal phrase within a larger clause. Given this syntactic constraint, both forms are expected to have a relatively shorter shape. This is the case with the unmarked passive, 什么东西都保存下来了 *shenme dongxi dou baocun xialai le*, which has a semantic makeup of [affectee + cause + effect]. In contrast, this is not the case with the *ba*-construction. Despite having the same syntactic constraint, the *ba*-construction is much longer, more elaborate, and more complex than the unmarked passive: 我们把所有的细节、有用的、没用的, 所有的东西都保存下来 *women ba suoyou de xijie, youyong de, meiyong de, suoyou de dongxi dou baocun xialai*. This *ba*-construction has a semantic makeup that is more complex: [causer + *ba* + heavily elaborated affectee + cause + effect]. It also has a complex long-term consequence: 不用说多的, 一个人当你晚年回首的时候, 听一遍你都听不过来了, 还要做一个历史研究 *buyong shuo duo de, yi ge ren dang ni wannian huishou de shihou, ting yi bian ni dou ting bu guo lai le, hai yao zuo yi ge lishi yanjiu* ‘needless to say, when you are in your later years and look back upon your past, you won’t be able to finish listening to them even once, let alone doing a historical study.’

An interesting question arises as to why the full version of the *ba*-construction accounts for as high as 87.9% among all the subtypes of the *ba*-construction, compared to, for instance, only 13.3% of all the subtypes of the *bei*-construction being the full version. I maintain that this syntactic feature can be explained by the function of the *ba*-construction: A full version with the most semantic components (i.e., [(causer)], [affectee], [cause], and [effect]) being specified is an effective way to explain why an event is significant. Specifically,

- 1) if one is claiming that an event is highly consequential, one is usually expected to specify what the consequence is; therefore, the [effect] is likely to be specified. In

such case, one would also be expected to explain who or what is being affected to the extent that constitutes a significant consequence; therefore, the [affectee] is required.

- 2) if one is explicitly blaming or praising the causer of a consequence or the contributor of a contribution, one is usually expected to specify who (or what) the causer or contributor is; therefore, the [causer] is likely to be specified. In such case, one would also be expected to explain who or what is being affected to the extent that deserves the speaker to explicit blame or praise the causer; therefore, the [affectee] is required.
- 3) if one is claiming that an event has highly important meaning or worth, one is usually expected to specify what that particular event is, hence the [cause] (and [effect]).
- 4) if one is claiming that an action is highly challenging to conduct, one is usually expected to specify what that action is, hence the [cause]. Likewise, if one is claiming that a result is highly challenging to achieve, one is usually expected to specify what that result is, hence the [effect].

## **5.8 Summary**

This chapter investigates adjacent alternations of the *ba*-construction with other constructions. It is found that speakers tend to choose a *ba*-construction over the other constructions to present a transitive event as being “significant,” in other words, an event that is highly consequential, for which the causer deserves explicit blaming or praising, that has highly important meaning or worth, or is highly challenging to achieve. Because the *ba*-construction signals the event as significant, it is often used to mark the result as a significant consequence for

blaming the causer, to mark the result as a significant contribution for praising the contributor, or to mark an action as significant for requesting.

The main *ba* alternation tendency, *ba*  $\Leftrightarrow$  SVO alternation, can be explained by the prototypical function of the *ba*-construction as not being a mere narrative of the event (as is in the case of the SVO construction) but a subjective evaluation of the event. The main *ba* alternation tendency, *ba*  $\Leftrightarrow$  unmarked passive alternation, can be explained by the prototypical function of unmarked passives as marking the event as a neutral fact or truth (Su 2017a), as opposed to the functions of the *ba*-construction to explicitly blame or praise the causer. The main *ba* alternation tendency, *ba*  $\Leftrightarrow$  *bei* alternation, can be explained by the prototypical functions of these two constructions: The *bei*-passive construction and the *ba*-construction provide two different kinds of subjective evaluations regarding the two different participants in a transitive event – the *bei*-passive construction evaluates the event as adverse for the affectee, whereas the *ba*-construction evaluates the event as significant due to the accountability or contribution of the causer. The most distinctive *ba* alternation tendency, *ba*  $\Rightarrow$  resultative alternation, is a textual manifestation of the high consequentiality associated with the *ba*-construction as a significance marker.

Based on the discussions on how native speakers in real-life communication choose a *ba*-construction over the other constructions, I conclude that the *ba*-construction is primarily a significance marker for transitive events.

## CHAPTER 6. FUNCTIONS OF UNMARKED PASSIVES AND RELATED ALTERNATION PATTERNS

This chapter discusses the prototypical function of the unmarked passive construction and the related alternation patterns, as well as the factuality lens. The Mandarin unmarked passive construction refers to clauses or sentences such as (1), where the patient (窗 *chuang* ‘window’) is in a preverbal position without any lexical marking of passiveness:

- (1) 窗        打        破        了。  
chuang    da        po        le  
window   hit        break   PFV  
‘The window (was) hit and broken.’

In Chapter 4, we have seen that among all the major transitive clausal units, the unmarked passive construction ranks the second most frequent construction in the corpus. The main UP (unmarked passive) alternation tendency is the UP  $\Leftrightarrow$  *ba* alternation (63.9%). In the end of this chapter, I will explain this alternation tendency in relation to the functions of the unmarked passive construction and the *ba*-construction.

In this chapter, I will discuss the prototypical function of the unmarked passive construction based on its usages found in the corpus and the relevant alternation patterns. Specifically, I will explain the unmarked passive construction as a linguistic device for the FACTUALITY lens, namely,

*The unmarked passive construction prototypically marks the result of a transitive event as a fact or a truth.*

I will first discuss the definition of factuality, and then discuss two textual manifestations of factuality with examples of UP alternations. Finally, I will summarize the overall finding on

the function of the unmarked passive construction as a factuality marker for transitive events.

### 6.1 Factuality as a Lens

Since I am arguing that the unmarked passive construction is a “factuality lens” that is mainly used to mark a transitive event as factual, let me begin with a discussion of what I mean by “factuality.” “Factuality” is a lens that presents an event as being a fact or a truth. In my analysis of the data, for any event to be marked as “factual,” it has to have one of the following conceptual and textual properties.

- v. The speaker’s presentation of the result as a fact, i.e., something that truly exists or happens.
- vi. The speaker’s presentation of the result as a universal truth, i.e., a statement or idea that is true or accepted as true.

In the following sections, I will illustrate them with examples of UP alternations.

### 6.2 The Speaker’s Presentation of the Result as a Fact

Overall, the alternation pattern here is that when speakers present the result of a transitive event as a fact, they tend to use an unmarked passive construction, and not the other constructions. Below I will use three examples to illustrate this alternation pattern.

#### (1) Serial verb & *ba* => UP (unmarked passive) alternation

Use #1 [Serial verb & <i>ba</i> ]	Wen: 有没有听过一个电影挺有名的，叫《嫁给大山的女人》？那个电影拍的就是她的故事，几年前拍。那时候拍的时候，剧组还答应说这	Have (you) heard of a famous movie, called “The Story of an Abducted Woman?” The movie is based on her story. (It was) shot a few years ago. When (they were) shooting
-----------------------------------	---	--

个故事很感人，得拿钱帮他 (that movie), the production crew said, (because) the (real) story is very moving, (the production crew) agreed to give (them some) money to help them repair that mountain road.

Use #2 [UP] <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
 结果后来电影拍了，上了，钱也没拿去给修路。 It turned out that in the end, the movie was shot and screened, (but) the money was not given to repair the road.

(#20150813)

In example (1), a serial verb & *ba* => UP alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, a serial verb & *ba* combined construction and an unmarked passive construction, to describe the same event – giving (or not giving) money to repair a mountain road in Xia’an village, Hebei Province, China.

The use of a *ba*-construction marks the event of donating money to help the poor village repair its main road as something important for the original speaker – the movie production crew. This is because the production crew is moved by the real story on which their movie is based (这个故事很感人 *zhe ge gushi hen ganren*, in use #1). The real story is about a girl (Yanmin Gao) being abducted to this village in 1994. After several unsuccessful attempts to escape and suicide, she became a teacher for the local mountain children. This story was made into a movie in 2007.

However, according to the speaker Wen, after the movie was made and screened, the production crew did not give the village the money to repair that mountain road. The speaker is describing this event as a fact by focusing on what was done (i.e., the movie was made and screened 电影拍了, 上了 *dianying pai le, shang le*) and what was not done (the money was not given to repair the road 钱也没拿去给修路 *qian ye mei na qu gei xiulu*). The speaker Wen uses two unmarked passives for these two events, which are introduced by the use of a transition word that introduces a result: 结果 *jiegu* ‘as it turns out; the result is that.’

(2) *ba* & *gei* => UP alternation

Use #1 [ <i>ba</i> & <i>gei</i> ]	Dou: < “他” here refers to an innocent person – 李先生> 同名的人, 当时大连那边公安在录入这个案底的时候, 说是疏忽, <u>也把他给一起录入了。</u>	<“He” here refers to an innocent person – Mr. Li> (He) has the same name as (the actual criminal). At that time, when the police officers in Dalian city were recording this criminal case, (it was) said that because of negligence, (the police officers) <u>also recorded him (in the criminal case).</u>
Use #2 [UP]	<immediately follows use #1> 因此造成了这种长期以来, <u>当年的案底就录成了他的资料。</u>	<immediately follows use #1> Therefore, (it) has caused this (consequence): for a long time, <u>that (criminal) case (was) recorded with his information.</u>



In example (2), a *ba* & *gei* => UP alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, a *ba* & *gei* combined construction and an unmarked passive construction, to describe the same event – the police officers recording Mr. Li, an innocent person whose name is the same as a criminal, in a criminal case.

The speaker is making a point that such an event is highly consequential. The high consequentiality is manifested as a long-term consequence: 因此造成了这种长期以来 *yinci zaocheng le zhezhong changqi yilai* ‘Therefore, (it) has caused this (consequence): for a long time.’ The responsibility is assigned through the naming of the causer (大连那边公安 *dalian na bian gong’an* ‘the police officers in Dalian city’) and the specification of the kind of misconduct (疏忽 *shuhu* ‘negligence’). When the speaker is focusing on the high consequentiality of the event and the responsibility of the causer, he uses a *ba*-construction (use #1).

The speaker then continues to talk about what that consequence is, namely, what happened was that for a long time that criminal case was recorded with Mr. Li’s (i.e., an innocent person) information. When the speaker is focusing on what happened, he uses an unmarked passive (use #2), indicating that the result is a fact.

(2) *ba* & *gei* => UP alternation

Use #1 [UP] Chen: 今天的最大问题是什么东西 都保存下来了。 The biggest problem today is that everything is kept.

Use #2 [*ba*] <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
当我们把所有的细节、有用 的、没用的, 所有的东西都 After we keep all the details, the useful, the useless, all the

保存下来以后，不用说多  
的，一个人当你晚年回首的  
时候，听一遍你都听不过来  
了，还要做一个历史研究。

things, needless to say, when  
you are in your later years and  
look back upon your past, you  
won't be able to finish  
listening to them even once, let  
alone doing a historical study  
(on all the things kept).

(#20130715)

In Chapter 5, I have used this example to illustrate the complex form of *ba*-construction and a function of the *ba*-construction: highly consequential. In this chapter discussing the unmarked passive construction, I would like to compare the functions of the unmarked passive construction and the *ba*-construction.

In example (2), a UP => *ba* alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, an unmarked passive construction and a *ba*-construction, to describe the same event – keeping everything (such as photographs and videos) in this digital era.

At first, the speaker is talking about a current situation in people's life, which he considers to be the biggest problem today: Everything is kept in this digital era. When talking about this existing situation (in the speaker's eyes), the speaker uses an unmarked passive construction: 什  
么东西都保存下来了 *shenme dongxi dou baocun xialai le* 'everything (is) kept' (use #1).

The speaker then switches to the use of a *ba*-construction and talks about a long-term consequence: 不用说多的，一个人当你晚年回首的时候，听一遍你都听不过来了，还要做一个历史研究 *buyong shuo duo de, yi ge ren dang ni wannian huishou de shihou, ting yi bian ni dou ting bu guo lai le, hai yao zuo yi ge lishi yanjiu* 'needless to say, when you are in your later

years and look back upon your past, you won't be able to finish listening to them even once, let alone doing a historical study (on all the things kept).' When the speaker is focusing on the high consequentiality of the event, he uses a *ba*-construction (use #2).

To summarize, the examples discussed in this section illustrate how the unmarked passive construction, and not the other constructions, is used by the speakers to mark the event as a fact.

### 6.3 The Speaker's Presentation of the Result as a Universal Truth

Another alternation pattern is that when speakers present the result of a transitive event as a universal truth, they tend to use an unmarked passive construction, and not the other constructions. A major textual manifestation of "a universal truth" is through co-occurrence with modal auxiliary verbs that indicate high degrees of deontic modality, which are regarding permission and duty and are often used to describe regularities, laws, and other kinds of universal truths, such as 应该 *yinggai* 'ought to; should,' 可以 *keyi* 'can,' or high degrees of epistemic modality, which are regarding the possibility of propositions being true, such as 一定 *yiding* 'must,' 必定 *biding* 'definitely; undoubtedly.'

It is found that in all the UP alternations that involve the use of deontic modal verbs or epistemic modal verbs, 72.7% (8/11) of the time these modal verb co-occurs with the use of the unmarked passive construction, and not the other constructions used. For the rest of the time (27.3%, 3/11), the deontic modal verbs or epistemic modal verbs co-occur with either both of the two constructions or the non-UP constructions.

The following examples show that in a UP alternation, the deontic modal verbs that express deontic modality 可以 *yike* 'can' (example 3 and 7), 应该 *yinggai* 'should' (example 4 and 5), 能 *neng* 'can' (example 6) often co-occur with the unmarked passive construction and not the other constructions. Note that the word 能 *neng* 'can; be able to' in examples 3 and 5 is a

dynamic modality that expresses one's ability to do something, and not a deontic modality or epistemic modality.

(3) SVO => UP alternation

Use #1	[SVO]	咱们不能 <sup>43</sup> 接受真相,	<u>We have difficulty accepting the truth</u> <lit. cannot>.
Use #2	[UP]	<immediately follows use #1> <u>很多真相是不可以接受的。</u>	<immediately follows use #1> <u>Many truths <b>cannot</b> (be) accepted.</u>

(#20150402)

(4) SVO => UP alternation

Use #1	[SVO]	不是 <u>我回来去给你做饭</u> ,	Not <u>I (i.e., the husband) come back to cook for you (i.e., wife).</u>
Use #2	[UP]	<immediately follows use #1> 是我回来 <u>应该是饭做好的</u> 。	<immediately follows use #1> It should be that when I am back, <u>the meal <b>should</b> (have been) cooked.</u>

(#20140213)

It is noted that unmarked passive tends to co-occur with the kind of *shi...de* (是...的) construction that “explain[s] a situation by affirming or denying some supposition (Li & Thompson 1981: 589). For example, in (3) and (4), the unmarked passive construction, and not the other construction, co-occurs with *shi...de* construction.

(5) UP => *ba* alternation

---

<sup>43</sup>能 *neng* ‘can’ here is a dynamic modality that express one’s ability to do something, and not a deontic modality or epistemic modality.

- Use #1 [UP] 很多人都呼吁这个 15 年的节目应该灌在这个碟里边。 Many people say that the talk show episodes over the past 15 years **should** (be) put on a disc.
- Use #2 [ba] 现在有个硬盘，1.5T 存几千张唱片的，1.5T、2T 的那种东西。我说你把这 4,000 期节目能不能全刻进去。 If somewhere (you can find) such a hard drive, 1.5T, which can store thousands of albums, 1.5T or 2T that kind of thing. I said, will you be able to put all the 4,000 episodes on (this one hard drive)?  
(#20130329)

(6) *ba* => UP alternation

- Use #1 [ba] 我就担心万一上不去，我们的情绪又把它跟国家挂在一起。 I am just worried that by any chance if (the score) does not go up, our emotion will again link it to the nation.
- Use #2 [UP] <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
我们的国运不能跟足运挂在一起。 The fate of our nation's **cannot** (be) linked to football.  
(#20150121)

In a UP alternation, the epistemic modal verbs that express epistemic modality such as 完全 *wanquan* ‘definitely’ (example 7), 必定 *biding* ‘definitely; undoubtedly’ (example 8) often co-occur with the unmarked passive construction and not the other constructions. In example (7),

both the epistemic modal verb and the deontic modal verb (可以 *yike* 'can') co-occur with the unmarked passive construction.

(7) SVO => UP alternation (short version)

- Use #1 [SVO] 说我不会给你消炎药的。 <Subject ellipsis> said: I will not give you anti-inflammatory drugs.
- Use #2 [UP] 消炎药完全不会，可以给你。 <self-repair> Anti-inflammatory drugs **definitely** will not, **cannot** (be) given to you. <self-repair>
- (#20140123)

(8) *ba* => UP alternation (short version)

- Use #1 [*ba*] 哦，就把你的幸福感建立在他人的不幸<x 之 x>上。 Oh, (you) just build your happiness upon other people's misfortune.
- Use #2 [UP] 人的幸福是必定建立在他人 的痛苦上。 It is that the happiness of human beings (is) **undoubtedly** built upon other people's misery.
- (#20140123)

Below I will use an example to illustrate how the unmarked passive construction is chosen over the other construction to present an event as a universal truth.

(7) SVO => UP alternation (full version)

- 1 Use #1 [SVO] Dou: 消炎药， (Speaking about) anti-inflammatory drugs, if you ask  
你要跟香港医生说，

- a Hong Kong doctor,
- 2 我就咳嗽能不能开开开消 “I am coughing. Can you  
 炎药, prescribe some anti-  
 inflammatory drugs?”
- 3 香港医生, The Hong Kong doctor (would  
 不行, 我不会给你消炎药 say): ‘No, I will not give you  
 的。 <in Cantonese<sup>44</sup>> anti-inflammatory drugs.’ <in  
 Cantonese>
- 4 说我不会给你消炎药的。 (The doctor would) say: ‘I will  
 <in Mandarin> not give you anti-inflammatory  
 drugs.’ <in Mandarin>
- 5 我说, 这这这这。 I say, this this this this.  
 <meaning: ‘I am speechless.’>
- 6 Use #2 [UP] 你知道吗? You know?
- 7 他, 他就觉得啊, 就说, He <i.e. the doctor>, he just  
 thinks that, that is,
- 8 消炎药完全不会, 可以给 anti-inflammatory drugs  
你。 definitely will not,  
cannot (be) given to you.

(#20140123)

<sup>44</sup> This talk show is in Mandarin. This is a very rare case where the speaker (a Mandarin native speaker from Mainland China) is using Cantonese for this reported speech. This particular Cantonese utterance is excluded in the scope of my data.

In example (7), an SVO => UP alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, an SVO clause and an unmarked passive construction, to describe the same event – a Hong Kong doctor's not giving the patient anti-inflammatory drugs. The speaker Dou is reporting some hypothetical speech and thoughts of a Hong Kong doctor.

The SVO clause in line 4 (我不会给你消炎药的 *wo bu hui gei ni xiaoyanyao de* 'I will not give you anti-inflammatory drugs') uses a dynamic modal verb 会 *hui* 'will' to express willingness. Dynamic modal verbs such as 会 *hui* 'will' are regarding the subject's own ability or willingness to act. The use of a dynamic modal verb with a negation 不会 *bu hui* 'will not' indicates the speaker's (the hypothetical speaker) unwillingness to prescribe anti-inflammatory drugs. The phrase "will" or "will not" do something expresses the speaker's individual intention and is not a description of a universal truth.

On the other hand, when uttering an unmarked passive sentence (line 8), the speaker abandons the use of a dynamic modal verb 会 *hui* 'will' in favor of a deontic modal verb 可以 *keyi* 'can': 消炎药完全不会, 可以给你 *xiaoyanyao wanquan buhui, keyi gei ni* 'Anti-inflammatory drugs definitely will not, cannot (be) given to you.' Deontic modal verbs are regarding permission or duty, and therefore, they often used to describe regularities, laws, and other kinds of universal truths. This self-repair sequence (line 6) reveals the speaker's choice of stating a universal truth over expressing individual willingness. The fact that such a self-repair sequence occurs with the unmarked passive clause indicates that the unmarked passive construction is used to express the state of a proposition being a universal truth. When saying 完全不会, 可以 *wanquan buhui, keyi* 'definitely will not, cannot' with an unmarked passive clause,





2	Wen: 嗯?	Yeah?
3	你的余生啊,	(for) the rest of your life,
4	这个病一直等着你,	this disease will always be with you <lit. wait for you>,
5	会不会更加有点绝望?	would (you) feel even more hopeless?
6	Wen: [对啊]	[Right.]
7	Xu: [在这]种时候怎么办呢?	[At this] time, what <lit. how> can (you) do?
8	你就看数据,	You (should) just look at (some) statistics.
9	我就会鼓励自己,	I would then encourage myself,
10	原来中国每年哪,	In fact, in China, every year,
11	Wen: 嗯?	Yeah?
12	Xu: 180 万人, 呃生癌,	1.8 million people, uh, have cancer,
13	Wen: 哦::	Oh::
14	Xu: 死于癌的是 140 万,	1.4 million (people) die from cancer.
15	平均@@每 3 秒钟就有 1.3 个人在癌症上死亡,	On average @@, in every 3 seconds, there are 1.3 people who died from cancer.

- 16                                    你想想你多么幸福啊。                    Think about how happy you  
are.
- 17                    Wen: 为什么?                                    Why?
- 18                    Xu: 这么多人就这么死掉了。                So many people died in this  
way (i.e., cancer).
- 19                    Wen: 然后呢?                                    So what?
- 20                    Xu: 这不是你啊,                                It is not you.
- 21                                    你没挤进在这个行列,                    You are not in this group.
- 22                                    你完全有可能[挤进在这个                You could well become a  
行列里。]                                    member of this group.
- 23 Use #1 [ba] Wen: [哦::就把你的幸福感建立                Oh, (you) just build your  
在他人的不[幸<x 之 x>                    happiness upon other people's  
上。]                                    misfortune.
- 24                    Xu: [<x x>]那要不怎么办呢?                [<x x>] Then what else can  
we do?
- 25 - 32                Xu: <self-defense>                            <self-defense>
- 33                    Xu: 但是你要想到有些病你是                But you have to think that  
不会好的,                                    some diseases are incurable.
- 34                                    咦哟告诉你吃这个药,                    You are told <lit. tell you> to  
take this medicine,
- 35                    Wen: 嗯?                                        Yeah?

36 Xu: 就是 lifetime, (It) is then lifetime.

37 你仔细想一想, Think about it carefully.

38 你是很绝望的。 You are (indeed) hopeless.

47 这个时候你不是看看统计 (At) this time, (why) don't you  
数据, take a look at the statistics,

48 想想中国那么多我们美好 think about those many good  
的同胞, fellow-citizens in our (mother  
country) China.

49 他们无缘无故的, For no reason, they (just died  
because of some incurable  
diseases).

50 对不对[啊。] Righ[t?]

51 Dou: [你]看, [You] see,

52 没有别人的不幸, without other people's misery,

53 他就活不下去。 he simply cannot live.

54 Dou: [@@@] [@@@]

55 Wen: [@@@] [@@@]

56 Xu: [怎么办? ] [What (else can we) do?]

57 Use #2 [UP] Xu: 人的[幸福]是必定建立在 It is that the [happiness] of  
[他人的痛苦上。] human beings (is) undoubtedly  
built upon [other people's  
misery.]

58	Wen: [可是]	[but]
	<Overlaps with Xu's 幸福, but Wen gives up the floor.>	<Overlaps with Xu's <i>xingfu</i> 'happiness', but Wen gives up the floor.>
	[人从来都在病]	[People get sick all the time.]
59	就是说,	That is,
60	我的意思是说人,	What I mean is, people,
61	比如说我们每天都在,	For instance, we, everyday, are
62	从小就算你以为自己很健 康的时候,	Since (we) were kids, even (during the time) when you thought you were healthy,
63	其实都会有一些病,	(you) would actually be having some kinds of illnesses.

(#20140123)

In example (8), a *ba* => UP alternation, the prior speaker Wen uses a *ba*-construction (line 23), whereas the subsequent speaker Xu uses an unmarked passive construction (line 57). Both sentences are commenting on the event of building one's happiness upon other people's misfortune. The use of a *ba*-construction explicitly blames the causer (Xu) for having done something wrong, whereas the use of an unmarked passive emphasizes that nothing is wrong and that nobody (including Xu) should be held responsible because they are just following a universal way of thinking and acting (i.e., a universal truth). A few pieces of evidence show that the speaker Xu, who uses the unmarked passive construction, is indicating that building one's

happiness upon other people's unhappiness is a universal truth, and therefore, he (i.e., Xu) should not be blamed for thinking in a universal way.

First, a strong piece of evidence comes from the speaker roles and the real stakes involved. Because Xu has been “accused” (albeit in a joking way) on this national public television show for having done something inappropriate (i.e., building his happiness upon cancer patients' misfortune), it is in his best interest and out of his natural reaction to defend himself. His agenda after Wen's “accusation” is to prove that he is “innocent” because what he does is no different from anyone else in the world. In other words, he is merely following a universal way of thinking or acting. Xu takes 27 lines (from line 24 to line 50) to defend himself. At the end, Xu resorts to a final attempt for defense – using an unmarked passive to indicate that building one's happiness upon others' unhappiness is a universal truth.

Second, the unmarked passive does not appear until the “accusation” has been doubled – another speaker (i.e., Dou) joining (see lines 51–53) Wen's “accusation” and the two people burst into laughter (lines 54–55) at the joking effect of accusing Xu. Being “laughed at” and “accused by” both people (who are his good friends), Xu now has to defend himself even more strongly. Under this circumstance, he uses the unmarked passive construction to mark this way of thinking and acting is a universal truth and nothing is wrong.

Third, after Xu uses the unmarked passive, his interlocutors Wen and Dou no longer “accuse” him. This is evidenced in lines 58–63 when Wen pursues a different topic: People get sick all the time without even noticing themselves.

Fourth, the *ba*-construction (line 23) takes a specific definite pronoun 你 *ni* ‘you’ to assign responsibility, whereas the unmarked passive construction (line 57) does not take any definite reference but an indefinite reference 人 *ren* ‘human being’ to suggest a universal truth.

Fifth, the *ba*-construction (line 23) does not co-occur with any epistemic modal verbs. On the other hand, the unmarked passive construction (line 57) co-occurs with an epistemic modal verb that emphasizes unquestionable factuality: 必定 *biding* ‘undoubtedly.’

Sixth, the speaker of the *ba*-construction (line 23) Wen stresses two words 把 *ba* and 他人 *taren* ‘other people’ (Figure 6-2a). The pitch and intensity were captured by the phonetics software Praat<sup>45</sup>. The yellow line at the bottom of Figure 1-2 indicates intensity. The two peaks of intensity (highlighted in bold yellow lines) correspond to the words 把 *ba* and 他人 *taren* ‘other people.’

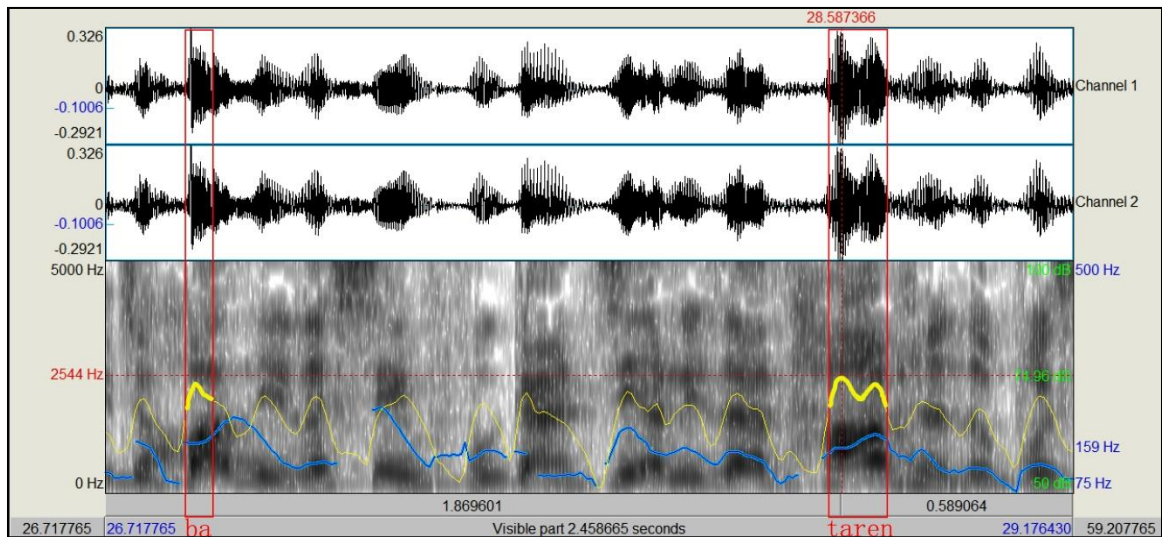


Figure 6-2a: Intensity (yellow) of parts of the *ba*-construction 就把你的幸福感建立在他人不幸 (line 23)

On the other hand, the speaker of the unmarked passive stresses the words 必定 *biding* ‘undoubtedly’ and 建立在 *jianli zai* ‘built upon’ (Figure 6-2b). For emphasis and articulation, the speaker Xu even breaks the word 必定 *biding* into two separate intonation units (Tao 1996): 必

<sup>45</sup> Praat (version: 6008\_win64), developed by Paul Boersma and David Weenink, Phonetic Sciences, University of Amsterdam. <http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/>

*bi* and 定 *ding*. Xu's words 必 *bi* and 定 *ding* are not only articulated with separate intonation units and high intensity, but also the high pitch values (See the blue lines in Figure 6-2b). The three peaks of intensity (highlighted in bold yellow lines in Figure 6-2b) correspond to the three words 必 *bi*, 定 *ding*, and 建立在 *jianli zai*. Unlike the speaker of the *ba*-construction who primarily stresses a human related words, the speaker of the unmarked passive construction does not stress any human related words even though there are human related words (人的幸福 *ren de xingfu* 'human beings' happiness' and 他人的痛苦 *taren de tongku* 'other people's misery') on the syntactic level.

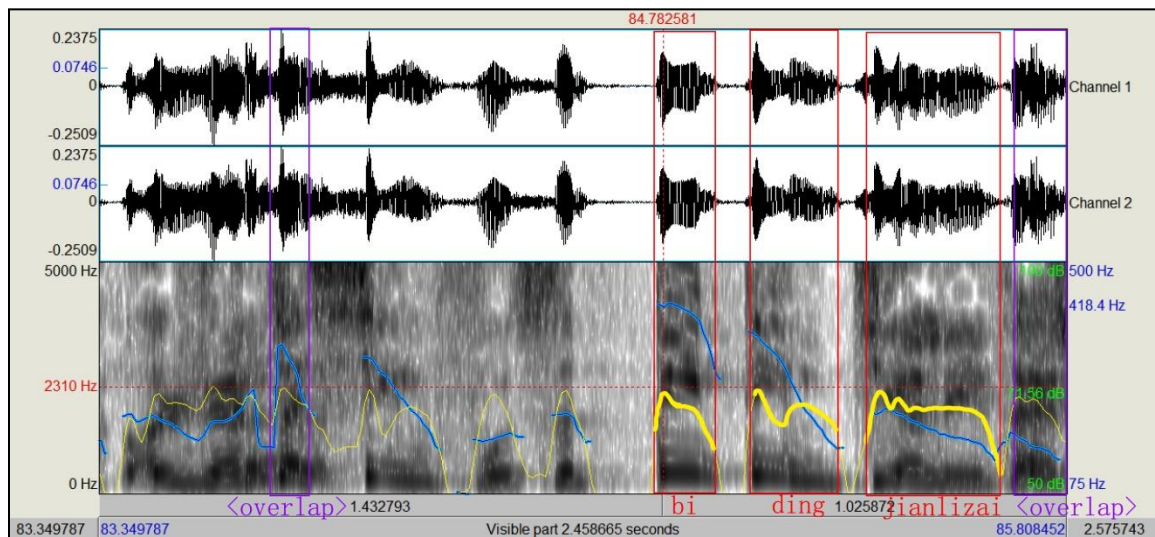


Figure 6-2b: Intensity (yellow) of parts of the unmarked construction 人的[幸福]是必定建立在 [他人] (line 57)

Finally, the speaker (Xu) also uses an emphasizing hand gesture (Figure 6-3) when he is articulating the unmarked passive sentence (line 58), emphasizing that what is being said is undoubtedly a truth.





Figure 6-3: Xu uses an emphasizing hand gesture with the unmarked passive sentence (line 57)

## 6.5 Summary

This chapter sets out to answer a question: Why does a speaker need to use an unmarked passive construction while the use of other constructions is also grammatical? Unlike previous studies, which focus on the use of the unmarked passive construction as an individual form, I investigate adjacent alternations of the unmarked passive construction with other forms. It finds that speakers tend to choose an unmarked passive construction over the other constructions to present a transitive event as being “factual,” in other words, an event that denotes a result that the speaker considers a fact or a universal truth. I conclude that the unmarked passive construction is primarily a factuality marker for transitive events. The finding that unmarked passives tend to alternate with *ba*-constructions can be explained by the prototypical function of unmarked passives as marking the event as a neutral fact or truth, as opposed to the functions of *ba*-constructions to explicitly blame or praise the agent of a transitive event.

## CHAPTER 7. FUNCTIONS OF *RANG*-CONSTRUCTIONS AND RELATED ALTERNATION PATTERNS

This chapter discusses the prototypical function of the *rang*-construction and its alternation patterns in relation to its four different subtypes, as well as the uncontrollability lens. An example of the Mandarin *rang*-construction can be seen in (1), where the patient (窗 *chuang* ‘window’) is in a preverbal position with a lexical marking 让 *rang*, which can mean ‘to let, allow, cause, make’ or a passive marker.

- (1) 窗            让            他            打            破            了。  
chuang      rang      ta      da      po      le  
window    RANG    3SG    hit    break    PFV

‘The window was hit and broken by him.’

In Chapter 4, we have seen that among all the major transitive clausal units, the *rang*-construction ranks the third most frequent construction in the corpus. We have also seen that the *rang*-construction seems to be a “loner” with regard to adjacent alternation, namely, it tends to not alternate with other constructions. 1) Within a database of 5,679 single forms, only 0.6% (9/1,507) of the *rang*-clauses alternate with other constructions, compared to 5.3% (136/2,526) alternation rate of the *ba*-construction and 5.4% (79/1,398) alternation rate of the *bei*-passive construction, which are at least nine times higher than the alternation rate of the *rang*-construction. In the last section of this chapter, I will explain why the *rang*-construction tends to not alternate with other constructions.

In this chapter, I will discuss the prototypical function of the *rang*-construction based on its usages found in the corpus and the relevant alternation patterns. Specifically, I will explain the *rang*-construction as a linguistic device for the UNCONTROLLABILITY lens, namely,

*The rang-construction prototypically implies that the affectee of a transitive event has little control over the situation, be it an emotional or perceptual reaction, a passive consequence, a beneficial result, or a requested action.*

I will first discuss the definition of uncontrollability, followed by a discussion of the variation within different subtypes of *rang*-constructions, and then discuss four textual manifestations of uncontrollability in relation to the four major subtypes of the *rang*-construction. After that, I will analyze a more comprehensive example of *rang* alternation in a self-repair sequence. Finally, I will summarize the overall finding on the function of the *rang*-construction as an uncontrollability marker for transitive events.

### **7.1 Uncontrollability as a Lens**

Since I am arguing that the *rang*-construction is an “uncontrollability lens” that is mainly used to mark a transitive event as uncontrollable for the affectee, let me begin with a discussion of what I mean by “uncontrollability.” “Uncontrollability” is a lens that presents the affectee of an event as having no option and lacking the ability to avoid, manage, or fulfill a transitive event. In my analysis of the data, for any event to be marked as “uncontrollable,” it has to have one of the following conceptual and textual properties.

- i. The affectee cannot control a spontaneous emotional or perceptual reaction.
- ii. The affectee is at the mercy of the causer to fulfill a beneficial result.
- iii. The affectee is being directed to conduct a requested action and is not in a position to say no.
- iv. The affectee has no option but to let a passive consequence occur.

In the following sections, I will illustrate them with examples of *rang* alternations.

### **7.2 Variation within Subtypes of *Rang*-constructions**

There are four subtypes of *rang*-constructions: *rang*-causative, *rang*-passive, *rang*-benefactive, and *rang*-imperative.

1) *rang*-passive (“interchangeable” with *bei* 被)

([affectee]) +	<i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>bei</i> ) +	[causer] +	[cause] +	[effect]
	让	[人]	[扔]	[路边去了]
	RANG	[people]	[throw]	[side of the road PFV]

‘would be thrown away on the side of the road by some people’ (#20140212)

2) *rang*-causative (“interchangeable” with *shi* 使)

([cause(r)])	<i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>shi</i> ) +	[affectee] +	[effect]
	让	[我]	[觉得很矛盾]
	RANG	[people]	[feel very conflicted]

‘make me feel very conflicted’ (#20140117)

3) *rang*-benefactive (“interchangeable” with *gei* 给) (*rang*: ‘to allow’)

([causer])	<i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>gei</i> ) +	[affectee] +	[cause / effect]
[美国]	到现在还不让	[他]	[入境]
[America]	until now still	[3SG]	[enter the country]
	not RANG		

‘To date the United States still has not granted him the permission to enter the country.’

(#20140116)

4) *rang*-imperative (“interchangeable” with *jiao* 叫 or *shiling* 使令 causative construction)

([causer])	<i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>jiao</i> ) +	[affectee] +	[cause / effect]
[人们]	老让	[他]	[唱《一无所有》]

[people]            always RANG    [3SG]            [sing *Possessing Nothing*]

‘People always ask him to sing (his famous song) *Possessing Nothing*.’ (#20140122)

In Chapter 4, we have seen that the most frequent subtype of *rang*-constructions is *rang*-causative. Table 4-3 in Chapter 4 is copied below for a detailed view.

Table 4-3: Frequencies of subtypes of *rang*-constructions in the 1,000-minute dataset

E1	0.4% (1/240)	<b><i>rang</i>-passive</b> (“interchangeable” with <i>bei</i> ) (affectee) + <i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>bei</i> ) + (causer) + cause + effect
E2	54.2% (130/240)	<b><i>rang</i>-causative</b> (“interchangeable” with <i>shi</i> ) (causer) + <i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>shi</i> ) + affectee + cause + effect
E3	10.4% (25/240)	<b><i>rang</i>-benefactive</b> (“interchangeable” with <i>gei</i> ) permission (causer) + <i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>gei</i> ) + affectee + cause / effect
E4	19.6% (47/240)	<b><i>rang</i>-imperative</b> (“interchangeable” with <i>jiao</i> or <i>shiling</i> causative construction) (causer) + <i>rang</i> ( $\approx$ <i>jiao</i> ) + affectee + cause / effect

This finding is confirmed with the entire dataset of 100-hour conversations, where *rang*-causative is found to be the most frequent subtype (Table 7-1). As I will show in the next section, the *rang*-causative construction frequently (65.4%) co-occurs with expressions of emotion, such as 快乐 *kuai*le ‘happy,’ 生气 *sheng*qi ‘angry,’ 痛苦 *tong*ku ‘sad,’ 失望 *shi*wang ‘disappointed,’ and verbs that express mental perception, such as 觉得 *ju*de ‘to feel; to think’ 知道 *zhi*dao ‘to know,’ 想到 *xiang*dao ‘to realize,’ etc. These verbs are typically incompatible with the use of the *ba*-construction or the *bei*-construction.

Table 7-1: Frequencies of subtypes of *rang*-constructions in the 100-hour dataset

Subtypes of <i>rang</i> -constructions	Occurrences	Percentage
E1: <i>rang</i> -passive	19/1,507	1.3%
<b>E2: <i>rang</i>-causative</b>	787/1,507	52.2%
E3: <i>rang</i> -benefactive	296/1,507	19.6%
E 4: <i>rang</i> -imperative	256/1,507	17.0%
E 2&3	44/1,507	2.9%
E 2&4	40/1,507	2.7%
E 3&4	50/1,507	3.3%
E 2&3&4	15/1,507	1.0%

Another unexpected feature is that the *rang*-construction is rarely (1.3%) used as passives. Contrary to the common belief that *rang* is one of the major passive markers, especially in the spoken mode (e.g., Lü [吕叔湘]1982: 37), the findings based on my relatively large-scale contemporary conversational data (100 hours, 1 million words, 1,507 instances of the *rang*-construction) shows that it is no longer valid to consider *rang* a major passive marker. The usage of *rang* as a passive marker actually did not emerge until the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Chang [张丽丽] (2006) and Qu [屈哨兵] 2008). Why is it disappearing in such a rapid manner? This would an interesting topic for future studies on grammaticalization.

Another feature of the *rang*-construction is that a notable use is for ambiguity (9.9%, combining E2&3, 2&4, 3&4, 2&3&4). It shows an interesting grammatical and pragmatic phenomenon that ambiguity is a necessary and useful function for speakers. In the structuralism tradition of Chinese linguistics, there have been considerable efforts, especially with the use of the syntactic transformational analytical method (句式变化分析法), to solve the problems

occurring with ambiguous sentences. There have been much less research on how speakers in actual communication favorite the use of an ambiguous construction. This question would be another interesting topic for future studies.

Below I will discuss the prototypical functions and alternation patterns of these four subtypes of *rang*-construction.

### 7.3 *Rang*-causative and Uncontrollability over an Emotional or Perceptual Reaction

The prototypical function of the *rang*-causative construction is found to be marking the affectee's lack of controllability over a causative consequence – usually a spontaneous emotional or perceptual reaction. A major textual manifestation of emotional reaction is through co-occurrence with emotion expressions, such as 高兴 *gaoxing* 'happy,' 快乐 *kuai*le 'happy,' 生气 *shengqi* 'angry,' 痛苦 *tongku* 'sad,' 失望 *shiwang* 'disappointed,' etc. A major textual manifestation of perceptual reaction is through co-occurrence with verbs that express mental perception, such as 觉得 *juede* 'to feel; to think,' 知道 *zhidao* 'to know,' 想到 *xiangdao* 'to realize,' etc. It is found that *rang*-causatives often co-occur with emotion expressions and mental perception. Below I will use a *rang* alternation to illustrate the finding that when speakers report emotional or perceptual reactions over a causative event, they tend to use a *rang*-causative, and not the other constructions.

#### (1) *rang* => SVO alternation

Use #1 [ <i>rang</i> ]	Dou: 对娱乐这个概念, 有时候你	Regarding the concept of
	觉得哭也是娱乐, 对吗? 一	“entertainment,” sometimes you
	个电影, 一个大片, 它让你	feel that (being made to) cry is
	<u>喜怒哀乐</u> ,	also (a way) of (being)
		entertained, right? A movie, a

successful (lit. big) one, it  
makes you happy, angry, sad,  
and amused/joyful.

Use #2 [SVO <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
 (VO)] 抓住你的心都叫娱乐。 (As long as it can) catch your  
heart, (it) can be called  
 “entertainment.”

(#20140304)

In example (1), a *rang* => SVO alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, a *rang*-causative construction and an SVO (VO) construction, to describe the same event – movies moving the viewer’s heart. The speaker uses the *rang*-causative when specifying the viewers’ uncontrollable emotional reactions upon seeing a movie: 喜 *xi* ‘happy,’ 怒 *nu* ‘angry,’ 哀 *ai* ‘sad,’ 乐 *le* ‘joyful.’ When describing the effect of a movie that can catch the viewer’s “heart,” the speaker switches to using an SVO construction, in which no emotion is mentioned. This example shows that speakers tend to choose a *rang*-causative when they describe spontaneous emotional reactions.

In general, emotional and perceptual reactions are spontaneous reactions that are relatively difficult to control by human beings. A comparison of all the *rang*-causatives and *shi*-causatives in the entire dataset (Table 7-2) shows that *rang*-causatives are often used to describe emotional or perceptual reactions, a feature that makes the *rang*-causatives distinctive from the *shi*-causatives, which is syntactically interchangeable with *rang*-causatives.

Table 7-2: All the *rang*-causatives and *shi*-causatives (使) in the 100-hour dataset

	<i>rang</i> -causatives	<i>shi</i> -causatives
--	-------------------------	------------------------



	(n=787)		(n=48)	
<b>Non-emotion &amp; non-perception</b>	272	34.6%	31	<b>64.6%</b>
Emotion	277	35.2%	5	10.4%
Perception	238	30.2%	12	25.0%
<b>Emotion or perception</b>	515	<b>65.4%</b>	17	35.4%

As Table 7-2 indicates, approximately 2/3 (65.4%) of the *rang*-causatives are used for emotional or perceptual reactions, whereas approximately 2/3 (64.6%) of the *shi*-causatives are used for non-emotional and non-perceptual causative consequences. Given that emotional and perceptual reactions (such as the emotion of sadness, happiness or the perception of realizing, knowing, etc) are spontaneous and difficult to control in general, I consider the *rang*-causatives being marking the affectee's uncontrollability over a causative consequence that typically manifests as an emotional or perceptual reaction.

#### 7.4 *Rang*-benefactive and Uncontrollability over a Beneficial Result

The prototypical function of the *rang*-benefactive construction is found to be marking the affectee's lack of controllability over the realization of a beneficial result, i.e., the affectee is at the mercy of the causer to fulfill a beneficial result. For example, (2) 这个扶手电梯...你尽量靠右站, 让左边的人上去。 *Zhe ge fushou dianti... ni jinliang kao you zhan, rang zuobian de ren shangqu* '(Speaking of) (lit. this) escalators..., you (should) try to stand on the right and let the people behind you walk up from your left side.' (#20150728) In this example, the affectee (i.e., the people behind) is at the mercy of the causer (i.e., the person at a higher position of an escalator) to fulfill a beneficial result: letting them walk up the escalator. Here is another example: (3) 吕秀莲为他<i.e., 陈水扁>绝食, 说再不让他出来, 吕秀莲就要绝食。 *Lü*

*Xiulian wei ta <i.e., Chen Shuibian> jueshi, shuo zai bu rang ta chulai, Lü Xiulian jiu yao jueshi*  
 ‘Annette Lü threatened to fast against the imprisonment of Chen Shui-bian, saying that if <the government> does not release him <i.e., Chen> from prison <lit. to let him out>, she will fast against it.’ (# 20150114) In this example, the affectee (i.e., the person in prison) is at the mercy of the causer (i.e., the government) to fulfill a beneficial result: releasing him from prison.

It is found that when speakers report events in which the affectee is at the mercy of the causer (who typically has social or institutional power over the affectee) to fulfill a beneficial result, they tend to use a *rang*-benefactive, and not the other constructions. Below I will use a *rang* alternation to illustrate this finding.

(4) *ba* => *rang* alternation (self-repair)

Use #1	[ <i>ba</i> ]	Dou: 这照咱们看来, 是不是就得, 你赶快把人家户口,	This, in our opinion, should (the government), you (should) quickly <u>BA-their hukou</u> <the official household registration record in China>,
--------	---------------	-------------------------------	--

Use #2	[ <i>rang</i> ]	<immediately follows use #1> 你让他还活着的时候, 让他太太有户口。	<immediately follows use #1> While he is still alive, you <i.e., the Shenzhen Government> (should) allow him, <u>allow his wife to have hukou.</u>
--------	-----------------	---	---

(#2015042)

In example (4), a *ba* => *rang* alternation in a self-repair sequence, the speaker abandons the use of a *ba*-construction in favor of a *rang*-causative to describe the event of the government

granting an official household registration record (i.e., hukou) to a woman whose husband is dying from cancer. The hukou is a record in the system of household registration required by law in China. It is highly difficult for an outlander to obtain a hukou in some most developed metropolitan areas such as Shenzhen city – what the speaker in this conversation is talking about.

The speaker is talking about an event in which the affectee is at the mercy of the causer to fulfill a beneficial result, namely, the woman is at the mercy of the government to grant her a Shenzhen hukou. In this case, the causer (i.e., the government) has legislative and institutional power over the affectee (the woman), and the affectee has little control over the situation: she has to rely on her husband to get a hukou, but her husband is dying from cancer. If her husband dies before the official hukou granting date, which is set by the government, the woman will not be able to get the hukou.

To describe such a situation in which the woman and her husband have little or no control of, the speaker abandons the use of a *ba*-construction and turns to the use of a *rang*-benefactive. This example illustrates that the *rang*-benefactive construction marks that the affectee has little control over the realization of a beneficial result.

### **7.5 Rang-imperative and Uncontrollability over a Requested Action**

The prototypical function of the *rang*-imperative construction is found to be marking the affectee's lack of controllability over a requested action, i.e., the affectee is being directed to conduct a requested action and is not in a position to say no. For example, (5) 王安忆: 不是愿意的事情, 是他们让我当, 那我就当了。 *Wang Anyi: Bushi yuanyi de shiqing, shi tamen rang wo dang, na wo jiu dang le.* 'Wang: (This) is not something (I am) willing to do. It is because they asked me to take that position; I had to take it.' (# 20151001) In this example, the affectee (i.e. the speaker Wang) reports a situation when she was directed to conduct a requested action

(i.e., to take that position) and was not in a position to say no. Another example is (6) 她可以对你提任何要求, 让你跪下你就跪下, 让你学狗叫就学狗叫。 *Ta keyi dui ni ti renhe yaoqiu, rang ni guixia ni jiu guixia, rang ni xue gouxiao jiu xue goujiao*. ‘She can request you to do anything: (if she) asks you to kneel down, you must kneel down; (if she) asks you to mimic dog barking, you must mimic dog barking’ (#20130124). In this example, the affectee (i.e. “you”) is being directed to conduct two requested actions that are humiliating in Chinese culture (i.e., to kneel down and to mimic dog barking) and is not in a position to say no (i.e., “she can request you to do anything,” “you must kneel down,” “you must mimic dog barking”).

It is found that when speakers report events in which the affectee is not in a position to say no to a requested action, they tend to use a *rang*-imperative and not the other constructions. Below I will use a *rang* alternation to illustrate this finding.

(7) *ba* => *rang* alternation

Use #1 [ <i>ba</i> ]	Dou: 到最后 <u>我就把我这个话呀剪掉了</u> ,	In the end, <u>I just (had someone) cut this (part) of my words from (my online news report)</u> .
Use #2 [ <i>rang</i> ]	<immediately follows use #1> 临发出临上线之前 <u>我就让他们剪掉</u> 。	<immediately follows use #1> Right before (the video for my online news report) was sent out, was put online, <u>I let them &lt;i.e., the speaker’s assisting staff&gt; cut (this part of my words)</u> .

(#20150120)

In example (7), a *ba* => *rang* alternation, the speaker, a famous TV host, uses two different

constructions, a *ba*-construction and a *rang*-imperative, to describe the same event – having his assisting staff cut a part of his words (that may stir controversy) from his online news report. When the speaker uses the *ba*-construction, he does not explicitly mention his assisting staff. On the other hand, when he uses the *rang*-imperative, he explicitly mentions his assisting staff: 他们 *tamen* ‘they; them.’ In general, assisting staff are not in a position to say no to a legitimate and reasonable request at work from their supervisors. In this example of a *rang*-construction, the causer has intuitional power over the affectee.

This example shows that a *rang*-imperative can be chosen over the other constructions in situations where the affectee is not in a position to say no to a requested action due to the intuitional or social roles of the participants.

### 7.6 *Rang*-passive and Uncontrollability over a Passive Consequence

The prototypical function of the *rang*-passive construction is found to be marking that the affectee has no option but to let a passive consequence happen. For example, (8) 窦文涛：王老师今天来就是准备让人骂的。王福重：对。梁文道：他习惯了。 *Dou: Wang Laoshi jintian lai jiu shi zhunbei rang ren ma de. Wang: Dui. Wen: Ta xiguan le.* ‘Dou: Wang Laoshi came today prepared to be scolded by people <i.e., TV audience>. Wang: Right. Wen: He is used to it.’ (#20151214) In this example, Dou is talking about Wang’s (the affectee) readiness to be scolded by the TV audience (because of Wang’s controversial public statements). Dou uses a *rang*-passive implying that the affectee has little control over the passive consequence (i.e., being scolded). Wang’s response 对 *dui* ‘right’ confirms Dou’s assumption. Wen’s explanation 他习惯了 *ta xiguan le* ‘he is used to it’ further supports the interpretation that Wang has little control over such a consequence but has to let it happen.

It is found that when speakers report events in which the affectee has little control over a

passive consequence but to let it happen, they tend to use a *rang*-passive, and not the other constructions. Below I will use a *rang* alternation to illustrate this finding.

(9) *ba* => *ba* => *rang* alternation

1	Xu: 医生...	The doctor... He just said, the
	他就说你针掉在里边了	needle dropped in your tooth.
2	你留在里边呢,	If you keep (the needle) inside.
3	百分之九十几	90+% (of the chance) you
	是没问题的,	would be fine.
4 Use #1 [ <i>ba</i> ]	就 <u>把它封掉</u> ,	<u>(The doctor) just sealed it.</u>
5 Use #2 [ <i>ba</i> ]	<immediately follows use #1>	<immediately follows use #1>
	就 <u>把它封了</u> 的。	<u>(The doctor) just sealed it.</u>
6 Use #3 [ <i>rang</i> ]	<immediately follows use #2>	<immediately follows use #2>
	那 <u>我就只能让他封了</u> 。	Under that circumstance, <u>I &lt;i.e. my tooth &gt; had to be sealed by him.</u>
7	我到现在这个牙的根里边就	Until now, deep inside this
	有个针,	tooth of mine, there is a needle.
8	那我也没办法。	(But) I had no other choices.

(#20151019)

In example (9), a *ba* => *ba* => *rang* alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, two *ba*-clauses and a *rang*-passive construction, to describe the same event – letting his doctor seal his tooth with a needle inside, which was accidentally dropped by the doctor. When the speaker

uses the *ba*-clauses, he does not use the word 只能 *zhineng* ‘can only; have to; without other choices.’ On the other hand, when he uses the *rang*-passive, he uses the word 只能 *zhineng*. After the use of the *rang*-passive, the speaker explicitly says 那我也没办法 *na wo ye mei banfa* ‘(but) I had no other choices.’ This example shows that a *rang*-passive can be chosen over the other constructions in situations where the affectee has little control but has to let a consequence happen.

### 7.7 A Comprehensive Example of *Rang* Alternation in Self-repair

In this section, I will use a more comprehensive example to illustrate the prototypical function of the *rang*-construction as an uncontrollability marker for transitive events.

#### (10) *rang* => *ba* & *gei* alternation (self-repair)

1	Zhou: 好孩子都不能惯,	Even good children cannot be spoiled.
3	那普京他, 他就是一个上校,	That Putin <i.e., Russian President>, he, he is actually a colonel.
7	你以为他跟中国不硬啊?	You think he is not tough on China?
8	我一再说嘛, 黑瞎岛一半他 拿走了。	I have said this over and over again: Heixia Island, he has taken away half (of it).
9	Dou: <talking to Li> 你瞧这<i.e. Zhou>咬牙切	<talking to Li> You see how (he <i.e., Zhou>) is champing with rage <lit.

	齿。	gnashing his teeth>
10	Zhou: = 那是啊,	= Of course (I am outrageous).
11	关键是,	The key is that,
12	黑瞎岛是我们的,	Heixia Island is ours <i.e. belongs to China>.
13	我还上过黑瞎岛,	I even went to Heixia Island.
18	Li: 我明白为什么周老师说得意 愤填膺了。	I now understand why Zhou is filled with righteous indignation.
19 -32	Zhou: <Keep stating and explaining why Heixia Island belongs to China>	<Keep stating and explaining why Heixia Island belongs to China>
33	Zhou: 你注意这就是两个战略,	Note that these are the two strategies:
34	一个战略就是说我们跟俄罗 斯好, 跟他们西方干,	One strategy is that we friend with Russia and go against with the West (hand in hand with Russia),
35	跟以美国为首的西方包括北 约跟他们干,	go against with the West, which is headed by America and includes NATO.
36	Li: 嗯。	Right.



37	Zhou: 还有一个呢，就是我们跟那 边这个这个好，	Another one (strategy) is that we friend with this and this there <i.e., America and the rest of the West>
38 Use #1	[rang] Zhou: 我们不能 <u>让</u> ，	We cannot <u>let</u> ,
39	Li: [ °我们-]	[ °We-]
40 Use #2	[ba &gei] [不能]把俄罗斯，这叫北北 极熊， <u>给惯坏了</u> 。	[cannot] <u>spoil BA-Russia</u> , the so-called Polar Bear,
41	Li: 哦。	Oh.
42	Zhou: 今天它咬你一口，	Today it bites you once.
40	好 <the speaker claps>	Good. < the speaker claps >
41	过两<x 天 x>他咬你<x 一个 疤 x>，	Two <x days x> later it bites you <x a scar x>.
42	Dou: = 哦::	= Oh::
43	Zhou: = 它咬惯了它逮谁他咬谁， 我跟你讲。	= Once it <i>gets used to biting</i> (others), it will just keep biting whoever it catches. I tell you.
44	Dou: = 哦::	= Oh::
45	Zhou: = 你明白吗？	= You understand?
46	Li: = 哦。	= Oh.

(#20140320)

In example (10), a *rang* => *ba & gei* alternation in a self-repair sequence, the speaker abandons

the use of a *rang*-construction (不能让 *bu neng rang* ‘cannot let’) in favor of a *ba*-construction (不能把 *bu neng ba* ‘cannot BA’) to describe the event of China “spoiling Russia.” In this excerpt, the speaker Zhou is commenting on China’s reaction to the Ukraine Crisis in 2014. Zhou insists that China should not take a position that would “spoil” Russia, because “spoiling” Russia on the Ukraine Crisis might ultimately put China in a negative and passive position under possible future attacks from Russia (lines 42–43).

Throughout the entire excerpt (lines 1–46), Zhou is making the point that China should not “spoil” Russia because “spoiling” Russia is highly consequential for China: 它咬惯了它逮谁他咬谁 *ta yao guan le ta dai shui ta yao shui* ‘Once it gets used to biting (others), it will just keep biting whoever it catches.’ Zhou is trying to show Dou and Li this point. This is evidenced in Zhou’s explicit meta-explanation (我跟你讲 *wo gen ni jiang* ‘I tell you’) and soliciting of appreciation of his point (你明白吗? *ni mingbai ma* ‘you understand?’), as well as Dou’s confirmative responses 哦 *o* ‘oh’ (lines 42 and 44) and Li’s confirmative responses 嗯 *en* ‘right’ (line 36) and 哦 *o* ‘oh’ (lines 41 and 46).

When the speaker is focusing on the significant (i.e., highly consequential) consequence of a transitive event, the speaker (Zhou) chooses the *ba*-construction instead of the *rang*-construction, as evidenced in a self-repair sequence (lines 38 and 40). This indicates that the function of the *rang*-construction is not about marking a significant consequence; instead, the function of the *ba*-construction can be about marking a significant consequence.

A phonetic analysis<sup>46</sup> of this self-repair sequence shows that when the speaker uses the *rang*-construction, his intensity and pitch values are lower (Figure 7-1): 66.77 dB (mean-energy

---

<sup>46</sup> With the use of the software Praat (version: 6008\_win64), developed by Paul Boersma and David Weenink, Phonetic Sciences, University of Amsterdam. <http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/>

intensity) and 120.2 Hz (mean pitch) for the word *rang*. In contrary, when the speaker uses the *ba*-construction, his intensity and pitch values are much higher (Figure 7-2): 79.77 dB (mean-energy intensity) and 133.0 Hz (mean pitch) for the word *ba*. In theory, the mean pitch of the word *ba*, which is of the third tone with a pitch notation of 214, is lower than the mean pitch of the word *rang*, which is of the fourth tone with a pitch notation of 51. That is, the highest (indicated by notation 4) pitch of the third tone is theoretically lower than the lowest pitch of the fourth tone (indicated by notation 5). Despite this, the speaker produces a higher pitch for the word *ba* than *rang*. The higher pitch, especially the much higher intensity of *ba* is in consonance with its prototypical function as a significance marker (see Chapter 5 for a detailed account on this finding).

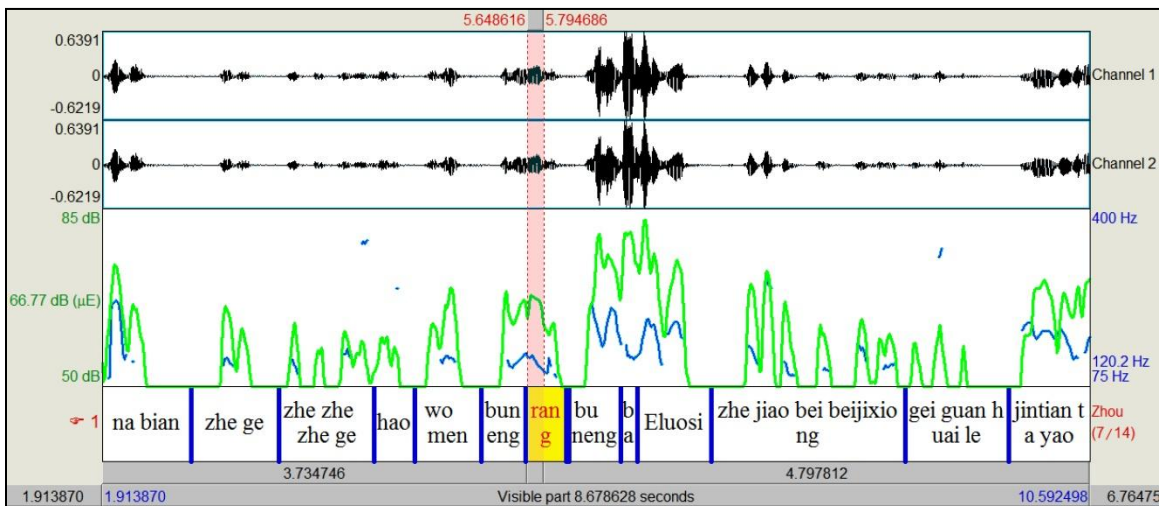


Figure 7-1: Intensity (green) and pitch (blue) of *rang* in use #1 *bu neng rang* (line 38)

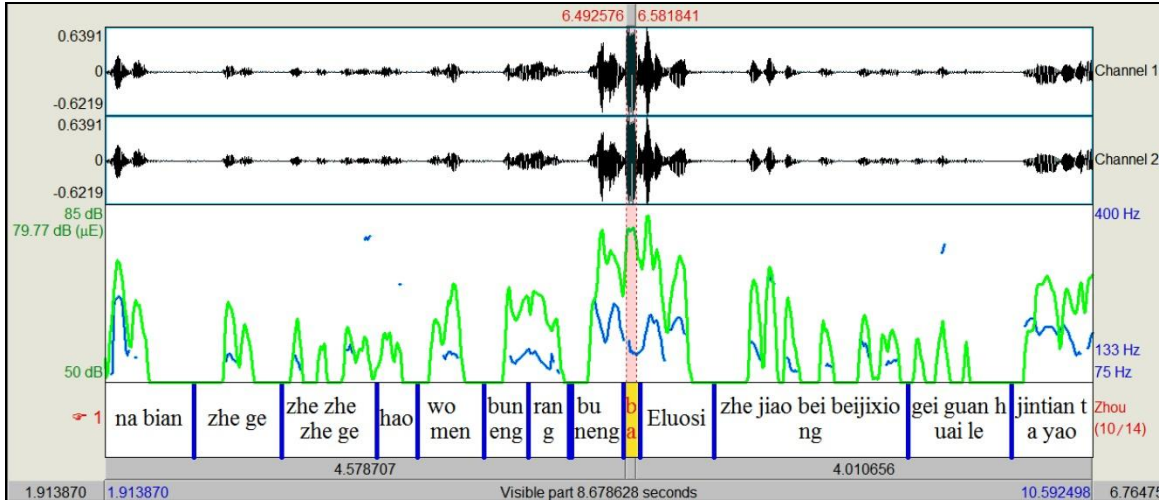


Figure 7-2: Intensity (green) and pitch (blue) of *ba* in use #2 *bu neng ba* (line 40)

The abandoning of a *rang*-construction in this example allows us to investigate the question of under what kind of context the *rang*-construction tends not to be used. Immediately before the abandoned use of a *rang*-construction, the speaker Zhou states that China has two options: 你注意这就是两个战略 *ni zhuyi zhe jiu shi liang ge zhanlue* ‘You note that these are the two strategies’ (line 33); 一个战略就是说 *yi ge zhanlue jiu shi shuo* ‘One strategy is that’ (line 34); 还有一个呢 *hai you yi ge ne* ‘Another one (strategy) is that’ (line 37). This sets an immediate context for the non-preference of the *rang*-construction: When the affectee has control over the situation and has multiple options. This indicates that the *rang*-construction prefers a communicative context where the affectee has little or no control over the situation and has few or no options.

## 7.8 Summary

This chapter sets out to answer a question: Why does a speaker need to use a *rang*-construction while the use of other constructions is also grammatical? Unlike previous studies, which focus on the use of the *rang*-construction as an individual form, I investigate adjacent alternations of the *rang*-construction with other forms. I find that speakers tend to choose a *rang*-

construction over the other constructions to present a transitive event as being “uncontrollable” for the affectee, namely: the affectee cannot control a spontaneous emotional or perceptual reaction; the affectee has no power over the causer and has to let a passive consequence occur; the affectee is at the mercy of the causer to fulfill a beneficial result; or the affectee is being directed to conduct a requested action and is not in a position to say no. I conclude that the *rang*-construction is primarily an uncontrollability marker for transitive events.

The finding that the *rang*-construction tends not to alternate with other constructions can be explained in terms of its prototypical function as an uncontrollability marker: The alternative way is controllability, meaning that the affectee is able to control the realization of the transitive event. In that case, it is likely to not have a transitive event in the first place.

## CHAPTER 8. FUNCTIONS OF *BEI*-PASSIVES AND RELATED ALTERNATION PATTERNS

This chapter discusses the prototypical function of the *bei*-passive construction and the related alternation patterns, as well as the adversity lens. The Mandarin *bei*-passive construction refers to clauses or sentences such as (1), where the patient (窗 *chuang* ‘window’) is in a preverbal position with a lexical marking of passiveness 被 *bei*:

- (1) 窗            被            他            打            破            了。  
chuang      bei            ta            da            po            le  
window    BEI            3SG        hit            break      PFV

‘The window was hit and broken by him.’

In Chapter 4, we have seen that among all the major transitive clausal units, the *bei*-passive construction ranks the fourth most frequent construction in the corpus. The main *bei*-passive alternation tendencies are: SVO  $\Leftrightarrow$  *bei* alternation (40.0%), *bei*  $\Leftrightarrow$  *ba* alternation (20.0%), and *bei*  $\Leftrightarrow$  nominalization alternation (12.7%).

In this chapter, I will discuss the prototypical function of the *bei*-passive construction based on its usages found in the corpus and the relevant alternation patterns. Specifically, I will explain the *bei*-passive construction as a linguistic device for the ADVERSITY lens, namely,

*The bei-passive construction prototypically categorizes the nature of a transitive event as adverse for the affectee, regardless of whether the event is adverse in an objective sense.*

I will first discuss the definitions of adversity and categorization, and then discuss two textual manifestations of adversity. After that, I will discuss the focus of the *bei*-passive construction on categorizing the nature of a transitive event. Finally, I will summarize the overall finding on the function of the *bei*-passive construction as an adversity marker for transitive

events.

## 8.1 Definitions of Adversity and Categorization

Since I am arguing that the *bei*-passive construction is an adversity categorizer that is mainly used to categorize a transitive event as factual, in this section I will discuss what I mean by “adversity” and “categorize.”

I am using the term “categorize” to refer to speakers’ determining the nature of an event without giving too much focus on the related details. In my analysis of the data, for any grammatical construction to be considered a “categorizer,” it has to have the textual property of fewer numbers of semantic components while still keeping the verbal element that specifies what the event is. For example, in the case of transitive events, a grammatical construction that often takes a full syntactic form, which includes all the basic semantic components ([causer], [affectee], [cause], and [effect]), is not considered a “categorizer.” The *ba*-construction is such a case, as we have seen in Chapter 5. On the other hand, the *bei*-construction is considered a “categorizer.” This is because it often takes a reduced syntactic form, which includes fewer numbers of semantic components ([cause] and [effect], or even just [cause]) while still keeping the verbal elements that specify what the event is (i.e., [cause]).

“Adversity” is a term that has been used in many previous studies. For example, Li and Thompson (1981: 493) considers the *bei*-passive construction to “express an adverse situation, one in which something unfortunate has happened.” While I agree with the basic idea of this account, I wish to specify two things, which are not addressed in Li and Thompson’s account, namely: 1) unfortunate for whom? An event can be unfortunate for some people yet fortunate for some other people. For example, in the event of a criminal being arrested by the police officers, it is an unfortunate event for the criminal yet a fortunate event for the police officers. 2)

Unfortunate from whose point of view? Is it the speaker or the person/people being affected (i.e., the affectee)?

I consider adversity a lens that marks an event as either being undesirable for the affectee or through which the speaker explicitly sympathizes with the affectee. Note that my use of the term “speaker” includes cases where the original speaker is quoted in a reported speech. In my analysis of the data, for any event to be marked as “adverse,” it has to have one of the following conceptual and textual properties.

- i. Presented as being undesirable for the affectee.
- ii. The speaker explicitly sympathizes with the affectee.

In the following sections, I will illustrate them with examples of *bei* alternations.

## 8.2 Marking an Event as Undesirable for the Affectee

Overall, the alternation pattern here is that when speakers present an event as being undesirable for the affectee, they tend to use a *bei*-passive construction, and not the other constructions. For example, (2) 明星你自己即便不想营销你都被营销 *Mingxing ni ziji jibian bu xiang yingxiao ni dou bei yingxiao* ‘Movies stars, even you **don’t want** to market and sell yourself, you are being marketed and sold’ (#20150604). In this example, the speaker explicitly says that the event is undesirable for the affectee: 不想 *bu xiang* ‘do not want.’ Below I will use another example to illustrate this alternation pattern in detail.

(3) Intransitive => *bei* => *bei* => *bei* alternation (a repair sequence)

Use #1	[Intr.]	Dou: 这个新加坡立国的那一天	<b>The day when Singapore</b>
		哪, 她在哭啊, 她一直想让	<b>became an independent</b>
		新加坡就跟这个马来西亚合	<b>country, she was crying. She</b>
			<b>had always been wishing to be</b>



一块，但是最后，曾经合到一起，本来是一起，后来又被马来西亚赶出去了。赶出去，她不得不独立。这么一个，一个小国。

**united with Malaysia, but in the end, they were once united, were together at first, (but) in the end (Singapore) was expelled by Malaysia. (After being) expelled, She (Singapore) had to become independent. such a, a small country.**

Use #2 [bei] Wang: <immediately follows use #1> <immediately follows use #1>  
 <Wang corrects Dou> <Wang corrects Dou>  
 = 被独立。 = BEI-become independent.

Use #3 [bei] Dou: <immediately follows use #2> <immediately follows use #2>  
 <Dou smiles and nods> <Dou smiles and nods>  
被独立。 BEI-become independent.

Use #4 [bei] <immediately follows use #3> <immediately follows use #3>  
 = 被独立。 = BEI-become independent.

(#20150325)

Example (3) is a repair sequence. In this example, an intransitive => *bei* => *bei* => *bei* alternation, upon being corrected by the second speaker who suggests the use of a *bei*-passive, the first speaker Dou immediately changes his prior use of an intransitive clause into a *bei*-passive to describe the event of Singapore's being forced by Malaysia to become an independent nation. In this excerpt, the speaker Dou is suggesting that this event is undesirable for the

affectee (Singapore). This is evidenced by his words which explicitly states that becoming independent is undesirable for Singapore: 这个新加坡立国的那一天哪，她在哭啊，她一直想让新加坡就跟这个马来西亚合一块，但是 *Zhe ge Xinjiapo liguo de na yi tian na, ta zai ku a, ta yizhi xiang rang Xinjiapo jiu gen zhege malaixiya he yi kuai, danshi* ‘The day when Singapore became an independent country, she was crying. She had always been wishing to be united with Malaysia, but.’

The speaker Dou considers the event to be undesirable for the affectee; however, he does not use a *bei*-passive at first. Instead, he uses an intransitive clause (use #1). Hearing this, his interlocutor Wang steps in to correct him with the use of a *bei*-passive (use #2). Upon hearing Wang’s correction, Dou nods with smiles and shows his agreement with Wang’s correction by adopting the use of a *bei*-passive (use #3). To show that Dou fully agrees with Wang that the *bei*-passive construction is better in this case, Dou repeats the *bei*-passive without any hesitation (use #4). This example shows that speakers tend to choose a *bei*-passive over the other constructions to present a transitive event as undesirable for the affectee.

### 8.3 The Speaker’s Sympathy for the Affectee

A major textual manifestation of speaker’s sympathy is through co-occurrence with lexical items or phrases that explicitly express sympathy; for example, 同情 *tongqing* ‘to sympathize,’ 替...担心 *ti...danxin* ‘worry about...,’ 对不起 *dui bu qi* ‘sorry for.’ The alternation pattern here is that when speakers use these explicit sympathize phrases on the affectee, they tend to choose a *bei*-passive construction, and not the other constructions. For example, (4) 梁文道： 你还把她拍下来<use #1>怎么样，当然就要开始你是什么居心。...假如今天真的是有了男欢女爱而被 拍<use #2>而被传出来，其实我们是同情他/她。 *Wen: Ni hai ba ta pai xialai <use #1> zen me yang, dangran jiu yao kaishi ni shi shenme juxin. ... Jiaru jintian zhende shi you le*

*nanhuannü'ai er bei pai* <use #2> *er bei chuan chulai, qishi women shi tongqing ta.* ‘Wen: (If) you even videotape it <use #1: *ba*-construction>, of course (people) would start (wondering) what your evil intention was.... If today there is real romantic love making being videotaped <use #2: *bei*-passive> and exposed to the public, **we in fact would sympathize with him/her.**’ (#20130814). In the example, the word 同情 *tongqing* ‘to sympathize’ co-occurs with the *bei*-passive, and not the *ba*-construction. Below I will use two more examples to illustrate this finding.

(5) Intransitive => *bei* alternation

Use #1 [Intr.] Xu:	那个金秀贤 <i.e., a famous Korean actor>可以到商场里转一圈，	Kim Soo Hyun <i.e., a famous Korean actor> can be marketed for money <lit. can show up in the market and turn around>.
Use #2 [ <i>bei</i> ]	<immediately follows use #1> 宁泽涛 <i.e., a famous Chinese athlete>也被他们这么转一圈，你知道现在真替他担心啊。	<immediately follows use #1> Zetao Ning <i.e., a famous Chinese athlete> was also marketed by them <lit. was turned around by them like this>. You know now (I) <b>really worry about him.</b>

(#20150811)

In example (5), an intransitive => *bei* alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, an intransitive construction and a *bei*-passive construction, to describe the same event – a famous male public figure being marketed by their agency for money. With the intransitive clause, the

speaker uses 可以 *keyi* ‘can,’ meaning it is not a problem for the Korean actor to be marketed for money. With the *bei*-passive, the speaker uses 真替他担心啊 *zhen tit a danxin a* ‘really worry about him,’ meaning it is to the Chinese athlete’s disadvantage to be marketed by his agency for money. This example shows that in a *bei* alternation that involves the speaker’s explicit sympathy, the sympathy tends to be expressed with the use of a *bei*-passive construction, and not the other constructions.

(6) *ba* => *bei* alternation

Use #1 [*ba*]    Li: 我就记得以前我们记者采访过一篇文章，我当时看了印象特别深刻，就是复旦大学的把他同宿舍的那个人投毒毒死了，还记得吗？

I remember an interview done by us journalists some time ago. (It) **left a very deep impression on me**. (It) is about the (student) at Fudan University. (That student) poisoned his roommate and caused him to die. You remember it?

Use #2 [*bei*]    在这个监狱里他读了大量的小说之后，律师才发现，你在跟他交谈的时候，他变了，他会掉眼泪了。他说我对不起被我毒死那个叫黄洋。

Then after he read a lot of fictions in prison, the lawyer began to find that, when you speak with him (you would find that) he has changed – he would **cry** now. He said **I am sorry for the (person)** who

was poisoned to death by me.

That (victim) was called

Huang Yang.

(#20151113)

In example (6), a *ba* => *bei* alternation, the speaker uses two different constructions, a *ba*-construction and a *bei*-passive construction, to describe the same event – the student at Fudan University poisoning his roommate to death. When the speaker uses the *ba*-construction, her focus is on how impressive the event was: 印象特别深刻 *yinxiang tebie shenke* ‘had a very deep impression.’ This interpretation is in consonance with the *ba*-construction as marking a transitive event as significant. On the other hand, when the speaker uses the *bei*-passive construction, she is reporting the original speaker’s sympathy towards the affectee of the event: the victim. The original speaker’s sympathy for the victim is evidenced by the use of these lexical phrases: 掉眼泪 *diao yanlei* ‘cry’ and 我对不起 *wo dui bu qi* ‘I am sorry for.’ This example shows that when speakers sympathize with the affectee, they tend to choose a *bei*-passive construction, and not the other constructions.

#### **8.4 Adversity as a Lens**

I consider adversity a lens for the reason that adversity, as encoded in the *bei*-passive construction, is a subjective evaluation of the event by the speakers. That means, regardless of whether the event itself is adverse from a general point of view or from other people’s points of view, the speaker presents the event as being adverse for the affectee. My use of the term “speaker” includes the original speaker. Below I will use an example to illustrate this point.

(7) *Bei*-passive

1	Dou: 但是,这位呢学者他认为,	But this scholar he thinks (that),
2	他说我个人认为 <b>对孩子影响</b>	he says, I personally think (that) <b>it</b>
	<b>不好。</b>	<b>has a negative impact on the</b>
		<b>child.</b>
3	我, 你, 我不太明白这个。	I, you, I don't quite understand this.
4	Zhu: 我想可能很多人不是说,	I think, aren't there many people
		saying
5	就是让小童星例如说太早的	that let little child stars act on the
	在这个荧光幕前, 哦表演哪	screen too early, and things like
	什么,	that,
6	你会提早的, 社会化,	you will (be) socialized too early;
7	[bei] → 或者是说你太早接受到 <b>被称</b>	or (if) you <u>are praised</u> too early,
	<b>赞哪,</b>	
8	可能你在跟同<x qi x>, 同台	maybe when you are with your
	相处的时候呢,	(peers), on the same stage,
9	你会有种这种优越感啊等	you will have a sense of superiority,
	等,	etc.
10	就是当小童星很多时候,	That is, a lot of the time, being a
		child star,
11	在这个好莱坞你看很多,	in Hollywood, you see (it) a lot,
12	长大都大部分都先吸毒了,	(after they) grow up, most (of them)

	@ @ @	take drugs earlier (than their peers)
		@ @ @
13	太早赚钱了,	Making money too early,
14	可能都对他的这个童年,	maybe for his childhood,
15	剥夺了童年,	Being deprived of childhood,
16	对长大也没什么好处,	<b>(does) no good for (the child) as (the child) grows up.</b>
17	所以我想心理学家可能这么 想。	So I think (that) psychologist may be thinking in this way.

(#20140124)

In example (7), the speakers are talking about a psychologist's opinion towards the social phenomenon of child stars receiving too much attention and compliments and being successful at a young age. In this case, the psychologist is the original speaker, whose opinion is that this would have a negative impact on the child: 对孩子影响不好 *dui haizi yingxiang bu hao* 'have a negative impact on the child' (line 2). This example shows two important points regarding "adversity" as a lens: 1) the evaluation of "adversity" is from the original speaker's point of view; 2) the evaluation of "adversity" is on the affectee – in this case, the child stars.

After reporting the original speaker's speech and thoughts, the first speaker Dou says that he does not quite understand why the psychologist considers it adverse for child stars (line 3). At this point, the second speaker Zhu comes in to explain the original speaker's point of view regarding "adversity" (lines 4–17). Zhu explains that these child stars, who act on the screen and are praised at an early age, often turn out to be more problematic (lines 12 and 16) than their peers due to the deprivation of a normal childhood (line 15). In line 7, Zhu uses a *bei*-passive to

describe the event of the child stars being praised. In general, being praised is not a negative thing for most people. However, in this context, where the original speaker suggests that this event is “adverse”: 不好 *buhao* ‘not good,’ the speaker uses a *bei*-passive for the event. This example shows that the *bei*-passive is used to mark adversity on the affectee of a transitive event.

Regarding the sense of adversity associated with the *bei*-passive construction, at least five semantic dimensions can be distinguished: 1) Lexical meaning of the verb, 2) lexical meaning of *bei*+VP (verb phrase), 3) social meaning of the verb, 4) social meaning of *bei*+VP, and 5) the speaker’s attitude towards the affectee. The distinction between verb and *bei*+VP can be illustrated by this example: (8) 我们小时候可能被训练坏了。 *Women xiaoshihou keneng bei xunlian huai le*. ‘When we were little, we were trained and were adversely affected’ (#20150714). The lexical meaning of the verb 训练 *xunlian* ‘to train’ is “neutral;” however, the lexical meaning of *bei*+VP 被训练坏了 *bei xunlian huai le* ‘to be trained and to be adversely affected as a result of the training’ is “adverse.”

In the case of example (7), the lexical meaning of the verb 称赞 *chengzan* ‘to praise’ can be considered at least “neutral” (if not “positive”); the lexical meaning of *bei*+VP 被称赞 *bei chengzan* ‘be praised’ can be considered “positive;” the social meaning of the verb can be considered “neutral;” the social meaning of *bei*+VP can be considered “positive.” However, the speaker’s attitude towards the affectee is “adverse” – as evidenced by the speaker’s own words: 对长大也没什么好处 *dui zhangda ye mei shenme haochu* ‘(does) no good for (the child) as (the child) grows up.’

In the case of example (5), the lexical meaning of the verb 转 *zhuan* ‘to turn’ is “neutral;” the lexical meaning of *bei*+VP 被他们这么转一圈 *bei tamen zheme zhuan yi quan* ‘be turned



around by them’ is “neutral;” the social meaning of the verb is “neutral;” the social meaning of *bei*+VP is “neutral.” However, the speaker’s attitude towards the affectee is “adverse” – as evidenced by the speaker’s own words and the sympathy these words reveal: 真替他担心啊 *zhen ti ta danxin a* ‘really worry about him.’

Here is another example. (9) 白人女性跟警察暴力什么一点个人的关系都没有，真去游行，然后被警察抓起来，跟黑人一起抓，一起坐监狱。 *Bairen nixing gen jingcha baoli shenme yidian geren de guanxi dou meiyou, zhen qu youxing, ranhou bei jingcha zhua qilai, gen hei ren yiqi zhua, yiqi zuo jianyu.* ‘(There was this) white woman who had nothing to do with police violence and things like that. (She) joined the protest and was arrested by the police, together with the African American protesters, together (they) were sent to prison’ (#20150623). In this example, the lexical meaning of the verb 抓 *zhua* ‘to arrest’ is “neutral;” the lexical meaning of *bei*+VP 被警察抓起来 *bei jingcha zhua qilai* ‘be arrested by the police’ is “neutral;” the social meaning of the verb is “positive,” because the verb 抓 *zhua* ‘to arrest’ typically means to arrest criminals who are harmful to the society; the social meaning of *bei*+VP is “positive,” because in general, criminals being arrested by the police is positive for the society. However, the speaker’s attitude towards the affectee is “adverse” – as evidenced by the speaker’s judgment: 跟警察暴力什么一点个人的关系都没有 *gen jingcha baoli shenme yidian geren de guanxi dou meiyou* ‘had nothing to do with police violence and things like that.’

Using this five-dimensional coding scheme, I coded all the instances (1,397) of the *bei*-passive construction in the corpus. The first finding is that the use of the *bei*-passive construction increases the degrees of non-neutral marking of the event (Table 8-1 and Figure 8-1).

Table 8-1: The use of *bei*-passive increases the degrees of marked adversity or positivity

BEI (n=1,397)	Coding	Occurrences	%
Lexical meaning of the verb	Neutral	375	26.8
	Non-neutral	1022	73.2
	(Adverse)	933	66.8
	(Positive)	89	6.4
Lexical meaning of <i>bei</i> +VP	Neutral	286	20.5
	Non-neutral	1111	79.5
	(Adverse)	980	70.2
	(Positive)	131	9.4
Social meaning of the verb	Neutral	522	37.3
	Non-neutral	875	62.7
	(Adverse)	672	48.1
	(Positive)	203	14.5
Social meaning of <i>bei</i> +VP	Neutral	425	30.4
	Non-neutral	972	69.6
	(Adverse)	727	52.1
	(Positive)	245	17.5
Speaker's attitude towards affectee ( <i>bei</i> +VP)	Neutral	70	5
	Non-neutral	1327	95
	(Adverse)	1172	83.9
	(Positive)	155	11.1

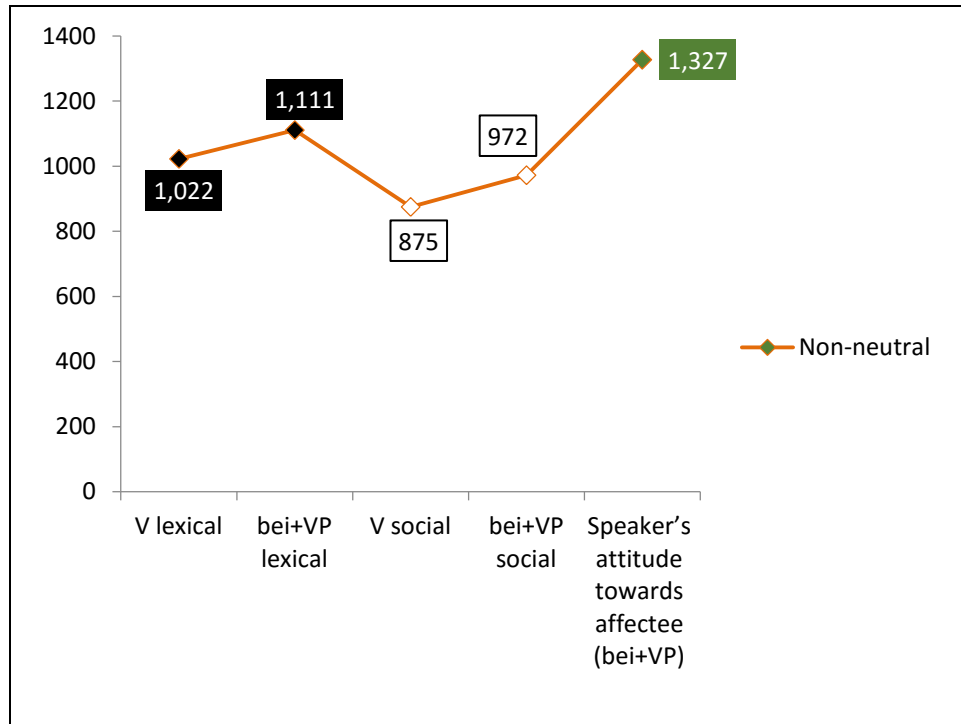


Figure 8-1: The use of *bei*-passive increases the degrees of marked adversity or positivity

As illustrated in Table 8-1 and Figure 8-1, when speakers use the *bei*-passive construction, they spontaneously increase their explicit marking of adversity or positivity. When speakers use the *bei*-passive construction, 95% of the time they are explicitly indicating that the event is non-neutral: 83.9% of the time, they are explicitly indicating that the event is adverse for the affectee, compared to only 11.1% of the time they consider it positive for the affectee.

The second finding is that when speakers use the *bei*-passive construction, they spontaneously increase their explicit marking of adversity of the event (Table 8-2 and Figure 8-2). When speakers use the *bei*-passive construction, 83.9% of the time, they are explicitly indicating that the event is adverse for the affectee, compared to only 16.1% of the time they indicate it as being non-adverse for the affectee. This finding shows that the majority of the *bei*-passives mark speakers' subjective evaluation of the event as adverse.

Table 8-2: *Bei*-passives mark the event as adverse for the affectee regardless of whether the event is adverse in an objective sense

BEI (n=1,397)	Coding	Occurrences	%
Lexical meaning of the verb	Adverse	933	66.8
	Non-adverse	464	33.2
	(Neutral)	375	26.8
	(Positive)	89	6.4
Lexical meaning of bei+VP	Adverse	980	70.2
	Non-adverse	417	29.8
	(Neutral)	286	20.5
	(Positive)	131	9.4
Social meaning of the verb	Adverse	672	48.1
	Non-adverse	725	51.9
	(Neutral)	522	37.3
	(Positive)	203	14.5
Social meaning of bei+VP	Adverse	727	52.0
	Non-adverse	670	48.0
	(Neutral)	425	30.4
	(Positive)	245	17.5
Speaker's attitude towards affectee (bei+VP)	Adverse	1172	83.9
	Non-adverse	225	16.1
	(Neutral)	70	5.0
	(Positive)	155	11.1

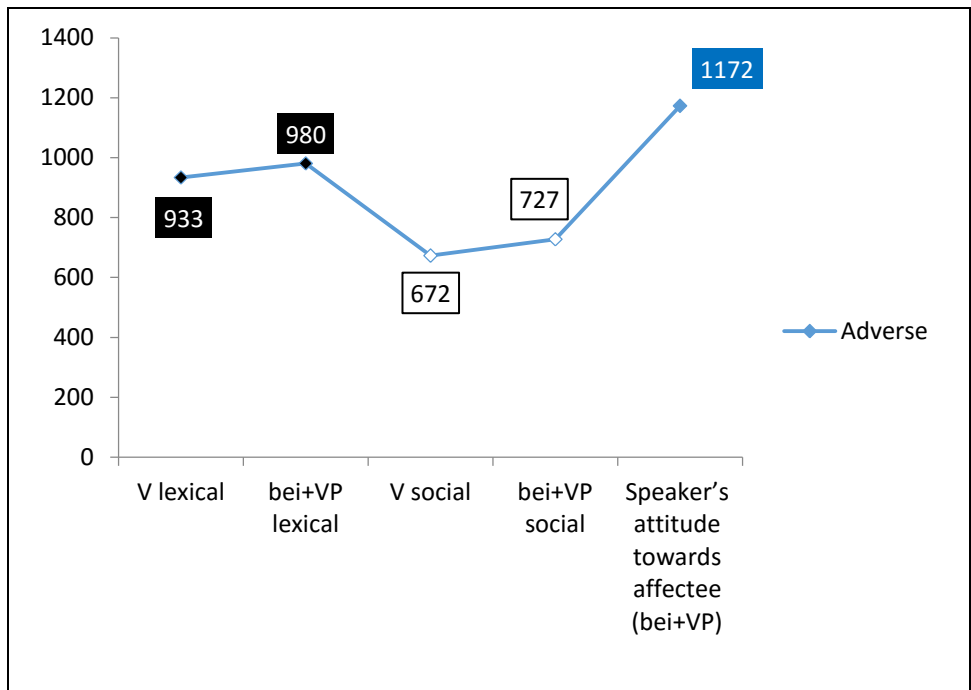


Figure 8-2: *Bei*-passives mark the event as adverse for the affectee regardless of whether the event is adverse in an objective sense

### 8.5 Categorization of the Event Nature

This section discusses the function of the *bei*-passive construction as categorizing the nature of the event (as adverse). Overall, the finding is that, when speakers use the *bei*-passive construction, they are not primarily concerned with the details of the event (e.g., who caused it; to what extent) but are primarily concerned with the nature of the event. A major textual manifestation for categorization is having fewer numbers of semantic components while still keeping the verbal element that specifies what the event is. A transitive event typically has these four basic semantic components: [causer], [affectee], [cause], and [effect]. My data reveals that the *bei*-construction often takes a reduced syntactic form, which includes fewer numbers of semantic components ([cause] and [effect], or even just [cause]) while still keeping the verbal elements that specify what the event is (i.e., [cause]).

There are different subtypes of the *bei*-passive construction. In Chapter 4, we have seen that *bei*- passives are often used without specifying the causer and with the cause and the effect syntactically merged into one lexical unit. Table 4-4 in Chapter 4 is copied below for a more detail.

Table 4-4: Frequencies of subtypes of *bei*-passives in the 1,000-minute dataset

<b>D1</b>	13.2% (30/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + causer + cause + effect
<b>D2</b>	29.1% (66/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + cause + effect
<b>D3</b>	16.3% (37/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + causer + cause / effect
<b>D4</b>	32.6% (73/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + cause / effect
<b>D5</b>	4.0% (9/227)	(affectee) + <i>bei</i> + causer
<b>D6</b>	4.8% (10/227)	<i>bei</i> phrase as a noun

From Table 4-4, we can see that 70.5% (combine D2, 4, 5, and 6) of the time, the *bei*-

construction is used in a reduced form. Only 13.2% of the time the *bei*-construction is used in the full form, and only 16.3% of the time the *bei*-construction is used in a quasi-full form. The most frequent subtype of *bei*-constructions is D4, in which the causer is not specified, and the cause and the effect merge into one semantic chunk (Su [苏丹洁] & Lu [陆俭明] 2010). Syntactically, *bei* is only used with a single verb. 2) The second most frequent subtype of *bei*-constructions is D2, in which the causer is again not specified, and the effect is usually manifested by a functional word 了 *le* indicating perfective aspect. This D2 structure is indeed very similar to D4, with the only difference being that the cause and the effect of D2 are not as highly integrated as that of D4.

In Chapter 4, we have seen that compared to the other three constructions (*ba*, unmarked passive, and *rang*), the most distinctive *bei* alternation tendency is the alternation with nominalization: 12.7% of the *bei* 2-form nonself-repair alternations involve nominalization, compared to only 1.1% of the *ba* 2-form nonself-repair alternations, 0% of the unmarked passive 2-form nonself-repair alternations, and 0% of the *rang* nonself-repair alternations. As I will explain below, this alternation tendency illustrates a textual manifestation of the prototypical function of the *bei*-passive construction as categorizing the nature of the event (as adverse).

There are different linguistic devices for categorizing the nature of an event. Nominalization is one such device. In Mandarin, the nominalization construction X+化 *hua* is a common lexical device for categorization. My data reveal an interesting finding that speakers may use the *bei*-passive construction to explain the meaning of an X+化 nominalization construction. For example, (10) 你现在在用殖民地的话，你用“打的”这个词就叫做自我殖民地化，就是你就被香港的语言殖民了一道。 *Ni xianzai zai yong zhimindi dehua, ni yong 'dadi' zhege ci jiu jiaozuoziwozhimindhua, jiushi ni jiu bei Xianggang de yuyan zhimin le yidao dao.*

‘(If) you use the words (coined or used) in a colony, (for example, if) you use the word *dadi* ‘taking a taxi,’ (you are) called self-colonization. That is, you are BEI-colonized by the language in Hong Kong <Hong Kong used to be a colony> (#20131025). In this example, to explain the meaning of 自我殖民地化 *ziwozhimindhua* ‘self-colonization,’ the speaker uses the *bei*-passive construction, and not the other constructions, indicating that the *bei*-passive construction may share some features with the nominalization construction – categorization as I argue.

In addition to the finding that speakers may use a *bei*-passive to explain a nominal phrase, I also found that speakers may also use a nominal phrase to refer to the event a *bei*-passive describes. For example,

(11) *bei* => nominalization alternation

Use #1	[ <i>bei</i> ]	Xu: 这些有名的画怎么画，都是被炒作的， <u>被市场操控</u> ，被什么什么舆论的	These famous paintings, how (they were) painted, are being commercially publicized, <u>are controlled by the market</u> , are (influenced by) public opinions.
--------	----------------	--	--

Use #2	[norm.]	<immediately follows use #1> 你说 <u>这种操控</u> ，舆论，我们从理论上研究是很有价值。	<immediately follows use #1> <b>This kind of “control”</b> and “public opinion” that you are talking about is worth studying from a theoretical point of view.
--------	---------	---	---

(#20150511)





5		然后你再看这是年轻的时候 Chen,	Then look again. This is Chen when (she was) young.
9		当年亲手在天安门城楼上给 毛主席戴袖章,	(This is Chen) putting a sleeve badge on Chairman Mao at the Tiananmen Rostrum during that year.
30		这个副校长,	This vice principal,
32	Use #2 [bei]	<u>被学生活活打死</u> ,	<u>was beaten to death alive</u> <u>by students.</u>
46		Jin: 关键是你<i.e., Chen>是当时 是在那个	The key issue is that you <i.e., Chen> are in that,
47	Use #3 [ba]	<u>我把这个&lt;X&gt;校长活活打死</u> 的一个暴力集团里头的一 员, 啊,	(you <i.e., Chen> are) a member of the violent group that <u>has beaten the</u> <u>principal to death alive.</u>
79		Xu: 那个副校长的先生好像现在 还健在,	That vice principal's husband seems to be alive still,
80		90多岁,	in his 90s.
81		他呢, 一直在打官司,	He has been going to law.

82 Use #4 [bei]	他当时啊<X>副校长 <u>被打死</u> 他都拍了照，	He, at that time, (the incident of) the vice principal <u>being beaten to death</u> , he took photographs of (this incident).
84	他当时就把证据全留下来，	He kept all the proofs at that time.
140	但是在当时这个情况下，	but at that time under that circumstance,
141	他们不觉得大部分的人不觉得这是罪恶，	They didn't think, most people didn't consider it a crime.
149	那是一个社会风气，你知道...	That was the social morality. You know,...
150 Use #5 [UP]	<u>这个副校长打死在前</u> ，	You know, this <u>vice principal (being) beaten to death</u> (occurred) before;
151	别校章在后，	putting the sleeve badge occurred afterward.
152	当中只差了两个礼拜，	There were only two weeks in between.
153	全国一片欢腾，	The whole country was in

great joy.

(#20140115)

In example (12), a *bei* => *bei* => *ba* => *bei* => UP alternation, the speaker uses three different constructions, a *bei*-passive construction, a *ba*-construction, and an unmarked passive construction, to describe the same event – the vice principal being beaten to death by students. In this conversation, the speakers are talking about this event and whether Chen, one of the students involved in this event, is responsible.

At the beginning of this conversation, the first speaker Dou, who is the host of the talk show, introduces the topic for this episode of the talk show: A vice principal being beaten to death by her students during the 1960s. The topic of a conversation, in general, is a nominalization and categorization of the event, which does not contain too many details. To introduce the topic, the speaker uses a *bei*-passive (use #1). This *bei*-passive clause (use #1) is a reduced form that only has two semantic chunks: [cause] 打 *da* ‘to hit’ and [effect] 死 *si* ‘dead.’ This integrated form (use #1) is embedded in a relative clause: 这个被打死的当时的这个<X> 校长 *zhe ge bei da si de dangshi de zhe ge <X> xiaozhang* ‘the principal who was beaten to death at that time’ (line 1). The fact that the *bei*-passive construction, instead of the other constructions, is used for the topic is an indication of the function of the *bei*-construction as an categorizer.

After the topic is introduced, the speaker Dou uses another *bei*-passive (use #2 in line 32). This time, the *bei*-passive takes a full form: 被学生活活打死 *bei xuesheng huohuo da si* ‘was beaten to death alive by students.’ This example shows that the function of the *bei*-construction as an adversity categorizer can only be understood as a prototypical one. There can be situations when the *bei*-construction is not used as a categorizer, although such cases are relatively less

(only 13.2%, compared to 70.5% of the time as a categorizer).

After the first speaker Dou introduced the topic and some details of the event, the second speaker Jin comes in to say that Chen is responsible for the death of the vice principal (lines 46–47). Jin uses the word 暴力集团 *baoli jituan* ‘violent group’ to highlight the responsibility of the students who were involved in the vice principal’s death. Jin uses a *ba*-construction (use #3) to assign responsibility: 我把这个<X>校长活活打死 *wo ba zhe ge <X> xiaozhang huo huo da si* ‘I have beaten the principal to death alive’ (see Chapter 5 on the function of the *ba*-construction as a significance marker for transitive events).

After the second speaker Jin indicates his opinion, the third speaker Xu provides some information (lines 79–84) regarding what the vice principal’s husband did for her regarding this unfortunate incident of her being beaten to death. When Xu is talking about the event in relation to the vice principal’s husband, he uses a *bei*-passive (line 82) to express his sympathy towards this unfortunate event for the vice principal and her husband. This *bei*-passive (use #4) is embedded in a clause that serves as the topic: 副校长被打死他都拍了照 *fu xiaozhang bei da si ta dou pai le zhao* ‘(The incident of) the vice principal being beaten to death, he took photographs of (this incident).’

After talking about what the vice principal’s husband did for her, the third speaker Xu moves on to talk about his opinion regarding a bigger problem that caused this unfortunate incident – the social morality at that time is a bigger problem, namely, most people at that time did not consider such an event a crime: 他们不觉得大部分的人不觉得这是罪恶 *tamen bu jue de da bu fen de ren bu jue de zhe shi zui e* ‘They didn’t think, most people didn’t consider it a crime’ (line 141). Xu then gives an example to explain his reasoning: the event of the vice principal being beaten to death occurred before the event of Chen putting a sleeve badge on

Chairman Mao, and the whole country was in great joy: 这个副校长打死在前, 别校章在后, 当中只差了两个礼拜, 全国一片欢腾 *zhe ge fu xiaozhang da si zai qian, bie xiaozhang zai hou, dangzhong zhi cha le liang ge libai, quanguo yi pian huanteng*. ‘This vice principal (being) beaten to death (occurred) before; putting the sleeve badge occurred afterward. There were only two weeks in between. The whole country was in great joy.’ When presenting this as a fact that involves a temporal order, the speaker Xu uses an unmarked passive (use #5) (see Chapter 6 on the function of the unmarked passive construction as a factuality marker for transitive events).

This example shows that the *bei*-passive construction emphasizes the nature of the event and the adversity of the event for the affectee; the *ba*-construction emphasizes the responsibility (or contribution in other cases) of the causer and marks the significance of the event; the unmarked passive construction emphasizes the factuality (in this case, the temporal order) of the event and marks the event as a fact.

## 8.7 Summary

This chapter sets out to answer a question: Why does a speaker need to use a *bei*-passive construction while the use of other constructions is also grammatical? Unlike previous studies, which focus on the use of the *bei*-passive construction as an individual form, I investigate adjacent alternations of the *bei*-passive construction with other forms. I find that speakers tend to choose a *bei*-passive construction over the other constructions to present a transitive event as being of an “adverse” nature, in other words, an event: that is undesirable for the affectee, or for which the speaker explicitly sympathizes with the affectee. I conclude that the *bei*-passive construction is primarily an adversity categorizer for transitive events.

The main *bei* alternation tendency *SVO*  $\Leftrightarrow$  *bei* alternation can be explained by the prototypical function of the *bei*-passive construction as not being a mere narrative of the event

(as what the SVO construction is mainly used for), but a subjective evaluation of the event. The main *bei* alternation tendency *bei*  $\Leftrightarrow$  *ba* alternation can be explained by the prototypical functions of these two constructions: the *bei*-passive construction and the *ba*-construction provide two different kinds of subjective evaluations regarding the two different participants in a transitive event – the *bei*-passive construction evaluates the event as adverse for the affectee, whereas the *ba*-construction evaluates the event as significant due to the accountability or contribution of the causer. The most distinctive *bei* alternation tendency, *bei*  $\Leftrightarrow$  nominalization alternation, is a textual manifestation of the prototypical function of the *bei*-passive construction as an (adversity) categorizer, i.e., categorizing the nature of the event (as adverse).

## CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSION

### 9.1 Summary of Findings

In this study, I have made and supported the claims that:

1. “Lens” refers to speakers’ subjective evaluation of reality, especially their attitudes towards an event.
2. “Significance” is a linguistic lens that can affect how speakers make linguistic choices, namely, whether to present an event as being highly consequential, challenging, or important. The *ba*-construction in Mandarin is a significance marker for transitive events. Speakers tend to choose a *ba*-construction to present a transitive event as being significant, in other words, an event that is highly consequential, for which the causer deserves explicit blaming or praising, that has highly important meaning or worth, or is highly challenging to achieve. The function of the *ba*-construction is that it prototypically marks a transitive event as a significant consequence, contribution, or action, which is highly consequential, highly challenging, or highly important.
3. “Factuality” is a linguistic lens that can affect how speakers make linguistic choices, namely, whether to present an event as being a fact or a truth. The unmarked passive construction in Mandarin is a factuality marker for transitive events. Speakers tend to choose an unmarked passive construction to present the result of a transitive event as a fact or a truth. The function of the unmarked passive construction is that it prototypically marks the result of a transitive event as a fact or a truth.
4. “Uncontrollability” is a linguistic lens that can affect how speakers make linguistic choices, namely, whether to present the affected party of an event as having little control over the occurrence of this event. The *rang*-construction in Mandarin is an

uncontrollability marker for transitive events. Speakers tend to choose a *rang*-construction to present the affectee of a transitive event as having little control over the situation. The function of the *rang*-construction is that it prototypically implies that the affectee of a transitive event has little control over the situation, be it an emotional or perceptual reaction, a passive consequence, a beneficial result, or a requested action.

5. “Adversity” is a linguistic lens that can affect how speakers make linguistic choices, namely, whether to present an event as being undesirable for the affectee and whether to explicitly sympathize with the affectee. The *bei*-passive construction in Mandarin is an adversity marker for transitive events. Speakers tend to choose a *bei*-passive construction to categorize the nature of a transitive event as adverse for the affectee. The function of the *bei*-passive construction is that it prototypically categorizes the nature of a transitive event as adverse for the affectee, regardless of whether the event is adverse in an objective sense.

The concept of “function” is, of course, a complex one that has been explored in various functional approaches to grammar (e.g., Halliday 1985). What this study adds to this research literature is the finding on the specific effect of grammatical constructions in influencing language users’ evaluation of reality as they are being used as linguistic devices for various lenses that represent reality in various ways. Speakers’ linguistic choice-making involves many factors, including lens (choosing the grammatical construction that can construe a particular lens) and, for example, information flow. In the case of the *ba*-construction, as some previous studies (Li 2007: 200–206; Lu 2016) rightly show, *ba*-construction places the agent at the initial place of a clause and thus well suits the situation where the information about the agent has been given in the prior context. However, if the information flow requires the agent to be at the initial place, there are



also other grammatical constructions at the speaker's disposal, including the SVO clause and a topic-comment construction in which the agent is treated as the topic. This indicates that information flow alone cannot account for the full picture of why speakers choose a certain grammatical construction over the others.

Likewise, the lens account alone cannot explain the full picture either, especially when different grammatical constructions are combined together. For example, when a *ba*-construction is combined with a *bei*-passive, the use of the *ba*-construction cannot be explained solely on the basis of construal of significance but need to take into consideration the information status of the noun phrase<sup>6</sup> and other factors. While beyond the scope of this analysis, it is indeed a topic worth exploring. I will leave it for future research to explore the cases where different constructions are combined in a clause.

Finally, I would like to discuss how the notion of lens is different from the other aspects of construal that have been discovered in Cognitive Linguistics, such as specificity, prominence, perspective, and dynamicity (Langacker 2007). A major difference is that: specificity, prominence, perspective, and dynamicity focus on the description of spatial and temporal relationships between a speaker (or hearer) and a situation; whereas lens focuses on language users' evaluation of an event, namely, their feelings and attitudes towards the event and how they think of the event and the participants involved. In the case of the *ba*-construction, it has the effect of presenting an event as significant, even though the same event may well be treated as non-significant by a different speaker. In other words, lens is about speakers' subjective assessment of an event, especially their attitudes towards an event.

## **9.2 Significance of the Study**

This study presents authentic language data on the use of grammatical constructions in conversations and analyzes linguistic choice-making on a discourse adjacent alternation method. The conversational data on the use of these constructions presented in the adjacent alternations with other constructions reveals pragmatically motivated decisions behind grammatical choices, which would otherwise be invisible if the uses of these constructions were examined in isolation and out of discourse context. The discourse analysis approach also brings to light syntactic and lexical collocation patterns that serve as contextualization cues of stance, which would otherwise be hidden. This is the first study that uses such data and analyzes it by examining adjacent alternation in discourse.

This study contributes to a growing body of studies that examine the intersection between grammar and social interaction. This study provides valuable findings concerning how native speakers actually use these grammatical constructions in spontaneous conversation. The analysis provides valuable material for future research both in Chinese linguistics and on other languages whose speakers may be using a similar resource.

The findings also carry implications for second language teaching, in terms of the design of teaching materials that contain alternative forms as well as methods for utilizing authentic materials. It also shows the importance of not only teaching the use of a certain grammatical construction but also teaching the non-use of it in a given context. For teaching Chinese as a second language, the findings can also help teachers further inform learners how to use these notoriously difficult grammatical constructions.

In all, this study reveals four linguistic lenses that can influence Chinese native speakers' linguistic choice-making in conversational discourse: significance, factuality, uncontrollability, and adversity. The findings raise questions as to what linguistic devices are used in other

languages to construe these lenses and what other lenses may exist. A major kind of language capacity lies in the ability to select the best grammatical option in a given communicative context. This study is dedicated to the understanding of how speakers make the choice among all possible grammatical options. The findings shed light on the pragmatic factors in linguistic choice-making during social interaction.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aissen, Judith. 1979. *The syntax of causative constructions*. Garland: New York.
- Aston, Guy, 1998. Learning English with the British National Corpus. Paper given at 6<sup>th</sup> Jornada de Corpus, Barcelona: UPF. Retrieved on 16 March 2012.
- Biq, Yung-O. 2004. Construction, reanalysis, and stance: ‘V yi ge N’ and variations in Mandarin Chinese. *Journal of Pragmatics* 36(9). 1637–1654.
- Biq, Yung-O. 2015. Adverbs. In William S-Y. Wang & Chaofen Sun (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of Chinese linguistics*, 415–428. Oxford University Press.
- Bloomfield, Leonard. 1933. *Language*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Bybee, Joan. 1998. A functionalist approach to grammar and its evolution. *Evolution of Communication* 2(2). 249–278.
- Bybee, Joan. 2006. From usage to grammar: The mind’s response to repetition. *Language* 82(4). 711–733.
- Bybee, Joan. 2010. *Language, usage, and cognition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chafe, Wallace. 1982. Integration and involvement in speaking, writing, and oral literature. In Deborah Tannen (ed.), *Spoken and written language: exploring orality and literacy*. Norwood, Ablex: 34–53.
- Chang, Li-li [张丽丽]. 2006. 汉语使役句被动的语义发展 [The semantic development from causatives to passives in Chinese]. *Language and Linguistics* 7(1). 139–174.
- Chao, Yuen Ren. 1968. *A grammar of spoken Chinese*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Chappell, Hilary. 1991. Causativity and the ba-construction in Chinese. In Hansjakob Seiler & Waldfried (eds.), *Premper Partizipation: das sprachliche Erfassen von Sachverhalten*, 509–530. Tübingen: Gunter Narr.

- Chen, Liyuan [陈立元]. 2005. 汉语把字句教学语法, 台湾师范大学华语文教学研究所硕士论文.
- Chen, Jianmin [陈建民]. 1986. 《现代汉语句型论》, 语文出版社.
- Chen, Xiaoying [陈小英]. 2005. 带兼语的“使”与“让”之比较. 《广西社会科学》. 116(2). 156–158.
- Cheng, Qilong [程琪龙]. 2001. 致使概念语义结构的认知研究, 《现代外语》第 2 期, 121–132. (Cheng, Qilong. 2001. A cognitive approach to the conceptual semantic structures of causation. *Modern Foreign Languages (Quarterly)* 24 (2). 121–132.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1955. Logical syntax and semantics. *Language* 31(1). 36–45.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1957. *Syntactic structures*. The Hague/Paris: Mouton.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1992. A minimalist program for linguistic theory. MIT Occasional Papers in Linguistics Number 1.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1996. *Studies on semantics in generative grammar* (Volume 107 of *Janua Linguarum. Series Minor*). Walter de Gruyter.
- Comrie, Bernard. 1974. Causatives and universal grammar. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 73(1). 1–32.
- Comrie, Bernard. 1976. The syntax of causative constructions: Cross-language similarities and divergences. In Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), *Syntax and semantics 6: The grammar of causative constructions*, 261–312, New York: Academic Press.
- Comrie, Bernard. 1981. Language universals and linguistic typology: Syntax and morphology, 158–177. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Couper-Kuhlen, Elizabeth & Margret Selting. 2001. *Studies in interactional linguistics*. John

Benjamins.

Couper-Kuhlen, Elizabeth. 2014. What does grammar tell us about action? *Pragmatics* 24(3). 623–647.

Croft, William & D. Alan Cruse. 2004. *Cognitive linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Croft, William. 2001. *Radical Construction Grammar: Syntactic theory in typological perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cui, Xiliang [崔希亮]. 1995. “把”字句的若干句法语义问题. 《世界汉语教学》第3期.

Deng, Shouxin [邓守信]. 1975. 《汉语及物性关系的语义研究》(侯方等译) 哈尔滨: 黑龙江大学科研处, 1983 版.

Dik, Simon C. 1980. *Studies in functional grammar*. London: Academic Press.

Dixon, R.M.W. 2000. A typology of causatives: form, syntax and meaning. In R.M.W. Dixon & Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald (eds.), *Changing valency: Case studies in transitivity*, 30–83. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Du Bois, John W. 2003. Discourse and grammar. In Michael Tomasello (ed.), *The new psychology of language: Cognitive and functional approaches to language structure*, vol. 2, 47–87. London: Erlbaum.

Du Bois, John W. 2007. The stance triangle. In Robert Englebretson (ed.), *Stancetaking in discourse: Subjectivity, evaluation, interaction*, 139–182. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Du, Wenxiang [杜文霞]. 2005. “把”字句在不同语体中的分布、结构、语用差异考察, 《南京师范大学学报》第1期. 145–150. Du, Wenxiang. 2005. Ba zi ju zai butong yu ti zhong de fenbu, jiegou, yong chayi kaocha. *Journal of Nanjing Normal University* (1).

145–150.

- Duranti, Alessandro & Charles Goodwin (eds.). 1992. *Rethinking context: Language as an interactive phenomenon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Duranti, Alessandro. 1990. Politics and grammar: agency in Samoan political discourse. *American Ethnologist* 17. 646–666.
- Facchi, Paolo. 1987. Causality and verbal forms: Reflections on the linguistic structures of explanation. *KODIKAS/CODE-Ars semeiotica: An International Journal of Semiotics* 10. 95–110.
- Fairclough, Norman. 1985. Critical and descriptive goals in discourse analysis. *Journal of Pragmatics* 9. 739–763.
- Fillmore, Charles, Paul Kay, & Mary Catherine O'Connor. 1988. Regularity and idiomaticity in grammatical constructions: the case of let alone. *Language* 64. 501–538.
- Fillmore, Charles. 1977. The case for case reopened. In P. Cole and J. M. Sadock (eds.), *Syntax and Semantics*. Vol. 8: *Grammatical Relations*. 59–81. New York: Academic Press.
- Firth, John R. [1935]1957. The technique of semantics. In John R. Firth (ed.), *Papers in linguistics 1934–1951*. Oxford University Press.
- Firth, John R. [1951]1957. Modes of meaning, essays and studies, reprinted in John R. Firth (ed.), *Papers in linguistics 1934–1951*, 190–215. London, Oxford University Press.
- Gilquin, Gaëtanelle. 2010. *Corpus, cognition and causative constructions*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Givon, Talmy. 1975. Cause and control: On the semantics of interpersonal manipulation. In John P. Kimball (ed.), *Syntax and semantics*, vol. 4, 59–89. New York: Academic Press.
- Goldberg, Adele E. 1995. *A construction grammar approach to argument structure*, Chicago

and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Goldberg, Adele E. 2006. *Construction at work: The nature of generalization in language*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Goodwin, Charles. 1979. The interactive construction of a sentence in natural conversation. In George Psathas (ed.), *Everyday language: Studies in ethnomethodology*, 97–121. New York: Irvington.

Goodwin, Charles. 2000. Action and embodiment within situated human interaction. *Journal of Pragmatics* 32(1). 489–522.

Goodwin, Charles. 2007. Participation, Stance, and affect in the organization of activities. *Discourse and Society* 18(1). 53–73.

Goodwin, Charles. 2009. Video and the analysis of embodied human interaction. In Ulrike Tivah Kissman (ed.), *Video interaction analysis: Methods and methodology*, 21–40. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Goodwin, Charles. 2013. The co-operative, transformative organization of human action and knowledge. *Journal of Pragmatics* 46(1). 8–23.

Goodwin, Marjorie Harness, Asta Cekaite, & Charles Goodwin. 2012. Emotion as stance. In Marja-Leena Sorjonen & Anssi Perakyla (eds.), *Emotion in interaction*, 16–41. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Guasti, M. T. 2006. Analytic causatives: syntax and semantics. In M. Everaert & H. van Riemsdijk (eds.), *The Blackwell companion to syntax*, vol. 1, 142–172. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Guo, Rui [郭锐]. 2003. 把字句的语义构造和论元结构, 《语言学论丛》第 28 辑, 北京: 商务印书馆.



- Guo, Rui [郭锐]. 2009. 致使的语义类型和把字句的语义差异, 《第十七届国际中国语言学年会论文和提要集》, 巴黎: 法国高等社会科学院.
- Guo, Shuhui [郭姝慧]. 2004. 现代汉语致使句式研究. 北京语言大学 Doctoral dissertation.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 1969. A brief sketch of systemic grammar. *La Grammatica; La Lessicologia*. Bulzoni Editore. Reprinted in M.A.K. Halliday & Jonathan Webster. 2003. *On language and linguistics: Collected works of MAK Halliday*, vol. 3. Edited by Jonathan Webster. Continuum.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 1978. *Language as social semiotic: the social interpretation of language and meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 1985. *An introduction to functional grammar*. London: Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 2013. Meaning as choice. In Lise Fontaine, Tom Bartlett, & Gerard O'Grady (eds.), *Systemic Functional Linguistics: Exploring choice*, 15–36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Halliday, M.A.K. 1967. Notes on transitivity and theme in English (part 2). *Journal of Linguistics* 3(2). 199–244.
- Halliday, M.A.K. 1973. The functional basis of language. In Basil Bernstein (ed.), *Class, codes and control* (vol. 2): *Applied studies towards a sociology of language*, 343–366. London/Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Harris, Zellig. 1951. *Methods in structural linguistics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Heritage, John & Steven Clayman. 2010. *Talk in action: Interactions, identities, and institutions*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Heritage, John. 1984. Conversation analysis. In John Heritage. Garfinkel and ethnomethodology, 245–264. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Hopper, Paul & Sandra A. Thompson. 1980. Transitivity in grammar and discourse, *Language* 56(2). 251–299.
- Hopper, Paul. 1987. Emergent grammar. In Jon Aske, Natasha Beery, Laura Michaelis & Hana Filip (eds.), *Proceedings of the thirteenth annual meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society: General session and parasession on grammar and cognition*, 13. 139–157.
- Hopper, Paul. 1998. Emergent grammar. In Michael Tomasello (ed.), *The new psychology of language: Cognitive and functional approaches to linguistic structure*, 155–175. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Hoshi, Hiroto. 1994. *Passive, causative, and light verbs: A study on theta role assignment*. Doctoral Dissertations. Paper AAI9520003.  
<http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/dissertations/AAI9520003>
- Hu, Yunwan [胡云晚]. 2002. 带兼语的“使”和“让”之比较研究. *松辽学刊(人文社会科学版)* [*Songliao Journal (Social Science Edition)*], 1. 85–87.
- Hymes, Dell. 1964. Introduction: Toward ethnographies of communication. *American Anthropologist* 66(6). 1–34.
- Iwasaki, Shoichi & Foong Ha Yap. 2015. Special Issue: *Stance-marking and stance-taking in Asian languages*, *Journal of Pragmatics* 83. 1–120.
- Iwasaki, Shoichi. 1995. The Northridge earthquake conversation: The floor structure and the "loop" sequence in Japanese conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics* 28. 661–693.
- Iwasaki, Shoichi. 2013. *Japanese* (Revised edition). Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Iwasaki, Shoichi. 2015. A multiple-grammar model of speakers' linguistic knowledge. *Cognitive Linguistics* 26.2: 161–210. doi: 10.1515/cog-2014-0101

- Jakobson, Roman. 1953. Chapter two. In Claude Levi-Strauss, Roman Jakobson, C. F. Voegelin, and Thomas A. Sebeok (eds.), *Results of the conference of anthropologists and linguists*, Memoir 8 of *The International Journal of American Linguistics*; Indiana University Publications in Anthropology and Linguistics, 11–21.
- Jin, Lixin [金立鑫]. 1997. “把”字句的句法、语义、语境特征, 《中国语文》第 6 期.
- Jing-Schmidt, Zhuo & Hongyin Tao. 2009. The Mandarin disposal constructions: Usage and development. *Language and Linguistics* 10(1). 29–57.
- Jing-Schmidt, Zhuo, Xinjia Peng, & Jing-Yun Chen. 2015. From corpus analysis to grammar instruction: Toward a usage-based constructionist approach to constructional stratification. *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association* 50(2). 109–138.
- Jing-Schmidt, Zhuo. 2005. *Dramatized discourse: The Mandarin Chinese ba-construction*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Kemmer, Suzanne & Arie Verhagen. 1994. The grammar of causatives and the conceptual structure of events. *Cognitive Linguistics* 5(2). 115–156.
- Kim, Stephanie Hyeri & Sung-Ock Sohn. 2015. Grammar as an emergent response to interactional needs: A study of final *kuntey* ‘but’ in Korean conversation, *Journal of Pragmatics* 83. 73–90.
- Kittila, Seppo. 2013. Causative morphemes as a de-transitivizing device: what do non-canonical instances reveal about causation and causativization? *Folia Linguistica* 47(1). 113–138.
- Kulikov, Leonid I. & Nina R. Sumbatova. 1993. Through the looking-glass, and how causatives look there. In Bernard Comrie & Maria Polinsky (eds.), *Causatives and transitivity*, 327–341. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Kulikov, Leonid. 2013. Constraints on the causative derivation in early Vedic: Evidence for a

- diachronic typology of transitivity. *Poznań Studies in Contemporary Linguistics* 49(1). 79–101.
- Kwon, Kyongjoon. 2013. Improved causativization. *Studia Linguistica* 67(3). 290–331.
- Labov, William. 1966. *The social stratification of English in New York City*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics. (2006. Second edition: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.)
- Lakoff, George. 1976. Toward generative semantics. In J. D. McCawley (ed.), *Syntax and semantics 7: Notes from the linguistic underground*, 43–61. New York: Academic Press.
- Langacker, Ronald W. 1987. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*. Vol. 1. Stanford University Press.
- Langacker, Ronald W. 2007. Cognitive Grammar. In: Dirk Geeraerts & Hubert Cuyckens (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of cognitive linguistics* (Oxford handbooks), 421–462. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.
- Levin, B. & Rappaport Hovav, M. 1995. *Unaccusativity: At the syntax-lexical interface*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Levshina, Natalia, Dirk Geeraerts, Dirk Speelman. 2013. Mapping constructional spaces: A contrastive analysis of English and Dutch analytic causatives. *Linguistics* 51(4). 825–854.
- Li, Charles N. & Thompson, Sandra A. 1976. Development of the causative in Mandarin Chinese: Interaction of diachronic processes in syntax. In Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), *The grammar of causative constructions*, 477–492. New York: Academic Press.
- Li, Charles N., & Sandra A. Thompson. 1981. *Mandarin Chinese: A functional reference grammar*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Li, Eden Sum-hung. 2007. *A systemic functional grammar of Chinese*. London; New York:

Continuum.

- Li, Linding [李临定]. 1986. 《汉语现代句型》. 商务印书馆.
- Li, Ying-che. 1974. What does 'disposal' mean? Features of the verb and noun in Chinese. *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 2(2). 200–218.
- Liang, Guodong [梁国栋]. 2012a. 对蒙古国留学生汉语教学视野下的“让”字句习得偏误研究. 语文学刊(基础教育版) 1. 20–22.
- Liang, Guodong [梁国栋]. 2012b. 对蒙古国留学生汉语教学视野下的“让”字句研究. 内蒙古师范大学硕士论文.
- Liang, Xiaobo [梁晓波]. 2003. 致使词汇与结构的认知研究. 复旦大学 Doctoral Dissertation.
- Lin, Xingguang. 1990. *Hanyu juxing [Chinese Sentence Patterns]*. Beijing: Zhongguo Guoji Guangbo Chubanshe.
- Linell, Per. 2009. *Rethinking language, mind, and world dialogically: Interactional and contextual theories of human sense-making*. Information Age Publishing.
- Liu, Peiyu [刘培玉]. 2001. 把字句研究评述. 河南师范大学学报(哲学社会科学版), *Journal of Henan Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 28(4). 85–88.
- Liu, Peiyu [刘培玉]. 2009. 关于“把”字句的语法意义, 《汉语学习》第3期.
- Lu, Jianming [陆俭明] & Yang Shen [沈阳]. 2004. 《汉语和汉语研究十五讲》. 北京: 北京大学出版社.
- Lu, Jianming [陆俭明]. 1990. 变换分析在汉语语法研究中的运用. 《湖北大学学报(社科版)》第3期. 又见 陆俭明. 2001. 《陆俭明自选集》. 郑州: 河南教育出版社.
- Lu, Jianming [陆俭明]. 1993. 《八十年代中国语法研究》. 北京: 商务印书馆.

- Lu, Jianming [陆俭明]. 2001. 《20 世纪现代汉语语法八大家: 陆俭明选集》. 长春: 东北师范大学出版社.
- Lu, Jianming [陆俭明]. 2016. 从语言信息结构视角重新认识“把”字句. 《语言教学与研究》 177(1). 1–13. Lu, Jianming. 2016. Re-understanding of the ba-construction from an information structure perspective. *Yuyan Jiaoxue Yu Yanjiu [Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies]* 177(1). 1–13.
- Lü, Ruichang, Yu Yungen, Zhang Fuxing, Li Jiayou, & Zhangxiequan. 1983. *Han Ying fanyi jiaocheng [A textbook of Chinese-English translation]*. Xi'an; Shanxi Renmin Chubanshe.
- Lü, Shuxiang [吕叔湘]. [1948]1984. 把字用法的研究 Ba zi yongfa de yanjiu [On the uses of the word ba] In Shuxiang Lü (ed.), 《汉语语法论文集》 *Hanyu yufa lunwenji [Papers in Chinese grammar]*, 176–199. 北京: 商务印书馆.
- Lü, Shuxiang [吕叔湘]. 1982. 《中国语法要略》, 北京: 商务印书馆.
- Lü, Wenhua [吕文华]. 1994. “把”字句的语义类型. 《汉语学习》第 4 期, 26–28.
- Lyutikova, Ekaterina & Sergei Tatevosov. 2013. Complex predicates, eventivity, and causative-inchoative alternation. *Lingua* 135(SI). 81–111.
- Ma, Jianzhong [马建忠]. [1898] 1983. 《马氏文通》, 商务印书馆.
- Malinowski, Branislaw. 1923. The problem of meaning in primitive languages. Supplement to C. K. Ogden & I. A. Richards (eds.), *The meaning of meaning: A study of the influence of language upon thought and of the science of symbolism*. London: Kegan Paul; New York: Harcourt Brace. 451–510.
- Markee, Numa. 2000. *Conversation analysis*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Miller, Jim & Regina Weinert. 1998. *Spontaneous spoken language – Syntax and discourse*. Oxford [England]: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Mugari, Victor. 2013. Object marking restrictions on Shona causative and applicative constructions. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 31(2). 151–160.
- Ochs, Elinor, Emanuel Schegloff & Sandra Thompson (eds.). 1996. *Interaction and grammar*. Cambridge University Press.
- Pan, Wenyu [潘文娱].1978. 对“把”字句的进一步探讨, 《语言教学与研究》第3期.
- Pawley, Andrew & Frances Hodgetts Syder. 1983. Two puzzles for linguistic theory: nativelike selection and nativelike fluency. In Richards, Jack C. & Richard W. Schmidt (eds). *Language and communication*. London: Longman Pub Group.
- Qu, Shaobing [屈哨兵]. 2008. 被动标记“让”的多角度考察 [A Multi-angled Investigation into the Passive Marker Rang]. 《语言科学》 [*Linguistic Science*] 32. 39–48.
- Rawoens, Gudrun. 2011. Causality and causation: A functional approach to causative constructions in Modern Swedish. *Folia Linguistica* 45(1). 127–163.
- Sacks, Harvey, Emanuel A Schegloff & Gail Jefferson. 1974. A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation, *Language* 50. 731–733.
- Saussure, Ferdinand de. [1916] 1959. *Course in general linguistics*. Edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye in collaboration with Albert Riedlinger, translated by Wade Baskin. New York: Philosophical Library.
- Schumann, John, Donald Favareau, Charles Goodwin, Namhee Lee, Lisa Mikesell, Hongyin Tao, Daniel V éronique, & Alison Wray. 2006. Language evolution: What evolved? *Marges Linguistiques*. Vol. 11, The origin of the Language Faculty and of Languages.

<http://www.marges-linguistiques.com>

Shao, Jingmin [邵敬敏]. 1982. 关于“在黑板上写字”句式的分化和变换的若干问题, 《语言教学与研究》第3期.

Shao, Jingmin [邵敬敏]. 1985. 把字句及其变换句式, 《研究生论文选集-语言文字分册》, 南京江苏古籍出版社.

Shen, Jiaxuan [沈家煊]. 2002. 如何处置“处置式”?——论把字句的主观性, 《中国语文》第5期. Shen, Jiaxuan. 2002. Can the disposal construction be disposed of: On the subjectivity of ba construction in Mandarin Chinese, *Zhongguo Yuwen [Studies of the Chinese Language]* 5. 387–399.

Shi, Chunhong [施春宏]. 2010. 从句式群看“把”字句及相关句式的语法意义, 《世界汉语教学》第3期. Shi, Chunhong. 2010. A study of the grammatical meanings of the ba-construction and other relevant constructions from the perspective of construction group. *Shijie Hanyu Jiaoxue [Journal of Chinese Teaching in the World]*, 3. 291-309.

Shibatani, Masayoshi (ed.). 2002. *The grammar of causation and interpersonal manipulation*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Shibatani, Masayoshi. 1976. The grammar of causative constructions: a conspectus. In Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), *Syntax and semantics 6: The grammar of causative constructions*. Academic Press: New York.

Sidnell, Jack & Tanya Stivers (eds.). 2012. *The handbook of conversation analysis*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Sinclair, John. 1966. Beginning the study of lexis. In C.E. Bazell, J.C. Catford, M.A.K. Halliday & R.H. Robins (eds.), *In memory of J. R. Firth*, 410–430. London, Longman.



- Sinclair, John. 1991. *Corpus, concordance, collocation*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Skinner, B.F. 1938. *The behavior of organisms: An experimental analysis*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: B.F. Skinner Foundation.
- Sohn, Sung-Ock & Jieun Kim. 2008. A corpus-based discourse analysis of icy in Korean: A diachronic and synchronic perspective. *Korean Linguistics* 14. 177–202.
- Sohn, Sung-Ock. 2010. The role of frequency and prosody in the grammaticalization of Korean -canh-. In An Van linden, Jean-Christophe Verstraete, & Kristin Davidse (eds.), *Formal evidence in grammaticalization research*, 245–273. John Benjamins.
- Song, Jae Jung. 1996. *Causatives and causation: A universal-typological perspective*. London; New York : Longman.
- Song, Yuzhu [宋玉柱]. 1979. 处置新解——略谈“把”字句的语法作用, 《天津师范学院学报》第3期.
- Song, Yuzhu [宋玉柱]. 1981. 关于“把”字句的两个问题, 《语文研究》第2期.
- Stefanowitsch, Anatol. 2001. *Constructing causation: A Construction Grammar approach to analytic causatives*. Houston, TX: Rice University dissertation.
- Stubbs, Michael. 1996. *Text and corpus analysis: Computer-assisted studies of language and culture*, 125–156. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Su, Danjie [苏丹洁] & Jianming Lu [陆俭明]. 2010. “构式-语块”句法分析法和教学法. 《世界汉语教学》24(4). 557–567. Su, Danjie & Jianming Lu. 2010. The construction-chunking approach for syntactic analysis and second language teaching. *Shijie Hanyu Jiaoxue [Journal of Chinese Teaching in the World]* 24(4). 557–567.
- Su, Danjie [苏丹洁]. 2010. 试析“构式-语块”教学法——以存现句教学实验为例. 《汉语学

- 习》, 176(2). 83–90. Su, Danjie. 2010. On the Construction-Chunking Approach: An experimental study on teaching Chinese existential sentence patterns. *Hanyu Xuexi [Journal of Learning Chinese Language as a Second Language]*, 176(2). 83–90.
- Su, Danjie [苏丹洁]. 2011a. 构式语块教学法的实质——以兼语句教学及实验为例 《语言教学与研究》, 148(2). 16–22. Su, Danjie. 2011. The essence of the Construction-Chunking Approach: An empirical study on teaching the Chinese jiānyǔ sentence patterns. *Yuyan Jiaoxue Yu Yanjiu [Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies]*, 148(2). 16–22.
- Su, Danjie [苏丹洁]. 2011b. 用构式语块分析法重新审视“把”字句, 国际中国语言学会第十九届年会 (IACL-19) 会议论文, 天津: 南开大学. Su, Danjie. 2011b. A construction-chunking approach to the Mandarin ba-construction. Conference paper presented at the 19th Annual Conference of the International Association of Chinese Linguistics (IACL-19). Nankai University, Tianjin, June 2011.
- Su, Danjie [苏丹洁]. 2012a. 构式是一条语块链——构式语块分析法的理论框架. 《语言科学》, 58(3). 241–253. Su, Danjie. 2012. Construction as a chain of chunks: Theoretical framework of the construction-chunking approach. *Yuyan Kexue [Linguistic Sciences]* 58(3). 241–253.
- Su, Danjie [苏丹洁]. 2012b. 取消“兼语句”之说——构式语块法的新分析. 《语言研究》, 32(2). 100–107. Su, Danjie. 2012. Rethinking the jianyu sentence patterns in Mandarin: Insight from the Construction-Chunking Approach. *Yuyan Yanjiu [Studies in Language and Linguistics]*, 32(2). 100–107.

- Su, Danjie [苏丹洁]. 2012c. 语块是构式和词项的中介——以现代汉语“V 起 NP 来”为例. 《中山大学学报》(社会科学版), 52(1). 69–77. Su, Danjie. 2012. Chunks as a pivotal unit between constructions and words: The case of “V qǐ NP lái” patterns in Mandarin. *Journal of Sun Yat-sen University (Social Science Edition)*, 52(1). 69–77.
- Su, Danjie. 2016. Grammar emerges through reuse and modification of prior utterances. *Discourse Studies* 18(3). 330–353.
- Su, Danjie. 2017. Semantics and chunking in written and conversational discourses: A corpus study of two near-synonymous words in Mandarin. *Chinese Language and Discourse* 8(1).
- Sugimura, Hirofumi [杉村博文]. 1998. 论现代汉语表“难事实现”的被动句. 《世界汉语教学》 [*Chinese Teaching in the World*] 46(4). 57–64.
- Sun, Chaofen & Elizabeth Closs Traugott. 2011. Grammaticalization and word order change. In Bernd Heine & Heiko Narrog (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of grammaticalization*, 379–388. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sun, Chaofen. 1995. Transitivity, the *ba*-construction and its history. *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 23(1). 159–195.
- Sun, Chaofen. 1996. *Word-order change and grammaticalization in the history of Chinese*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Sun, Chaofen. 2015. The grammaticalization of the *ba* construction: Cause and effect in a case of specialization. In William S-Y. Wang & Chaofen Sun (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Chinese Linguistics*, 430–442. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sybesma, Rint. 1999. *The Mandarin VP*. Dordrecht & Boston: Kluwer.

- Tai, James H.-Y. [戴浩一]. 1989. Toward a cognition-based functional grammar of Chinese. In James H.-Y. Tai [戴浩一] & Frank F. S. Hsueh [薛凤生] (eds.), *Functionalism and Chinese Grammar. Chinese Language Teachers Association. Monograph Series No. 1.* 187–226.
- Talmy, Leonard. 1976. Semantic causative types. In M. Shibatani (ed.), *Syntax and semantics 6: the grammar of causative constructions*, 43–116. Academic Press: New York.
- Talmy, Leonard. 2000. Toward a cognitive semantics. Vol. 1, *Concept structuring systems*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Tannen, Deborah. 1989. *Talking voices: Repetition, dialogue, and imagery in conversational discourse*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tannen, Deborah. 2005. *Conversational style: Analyzing talk among friends* (New edition with new introduction). Oxford University Press. (First edition, Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1984.)
- Tao, Hongyin & Bojiang Zhang [张伯江]. 2000. 无定式把字句在近、现代汉语中的地位问题及其理论意义. 《中国语文》第 5 期. 433–446. Tao, Hongyin & Bojiang Zhang. 2000. The status of indefinite ba-constructions in modern and contemporary Chinese and its implications. *Zhongguo Yuwen [Studies of the Chinese Language]* 5. 433–446.
- Tao, Hongyin & Charles F. Meyer. 2006. Gapped coordinations in English: Form, usage, and implications for linguistic theory. *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory* 2(2). 129–163.
- Tao, Hongyin & Sandra A. Thompson. 1994. The discourse and grammar interface: preferred clause structure in Mandarin conversation. *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association* 29(3). 1–34.

- Tao, Hongyin & Yaqiong Liu [刘娅琼]. 2010a. 从语体差异到语法差异(上)——以自然会话与影视对白中的把字句、被动结构、光杆动词句、否定反问句为例. 《当代修辞学》1. 37–44. Tao, Hongyin & Yaqiong Liu. 2010. From register differences to grammatical differences: Grammatical constructions in natural speech and the media (Part 1). *Dangdai Xiuci Xue [Contemporary Rhetoric]* 1. 37–44.
- Tao, Hongyin & Yaqiong Liu [刘娅琼]. 2010b. 从语体差异到语法差异(下)——以自然会话与影视对白中的把字句、被动结构、光杆动词句、否定反问句为例. 《当代修辞学》2. 22–27. Tao, Hongyin & Yaqiong Liu. 2010. From register differences to grammatical differences: Grammatical constructions in natural speech and the media (Part 2). *Dangdai Xiuci Xue [Contemporary Rhetoric]* 2. 22–27.
- Tao, Hongyin 2008. 《戏剧化的言谈：论汉语把字句》(井苗著)述评, 《当代语言学》第3期, 267–271. Tao, Hongyin. 2008. Book review. Dramatized discourse: The Mandarin Chinese *ba*-construction by Zhuo Jing-Schmidt. *Dangdai Yuyan Xue [Contemporary Linguistics]* 3. 267–271.
- Tao, Hongyin. 1996. *Units in mandarin conversation: Prosody, discourse, and grammar*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Tao, Hongyin. 1999a. 试论语体分类的语法学意义, 《当代语言学》第3期. 15–24. Tao, Hongyin. 1999a. Discourse taxonomies and their grammatico-theoretical implications. *Dangdai Yuyanxue [Contemporary Linguistics]* 1(3). 15–24.
- Tao, Hongyin. 2001. Discovering the usual with corpora: The case of remember. In Rita Simpson & John Swales (eds.), *Corpus linguistics in North America: Selections from the 1999 symposium*, 116–144. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

- Tao, Hongyin. 2003a. A usage-based approach to argument structure: *Remember* and *forget* in spoken English. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 8. 75–95.
- Tao, Hongyin. 2003b. Toward an emergent view of lexical semantics, *Language and Linguistics* 4(4). 837–856.
- Tao, Hongyin. 2003c. Turn initiators in spoken English: A corpus based approach to interaction and grammar. In Charles Meyer and Pepi Leistyna (eds.), *Corpus analysis: Language structure and language use*, 187–208. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Tao, Hongyin. 2007a. A corpus-based investigation of *absolutely* and related phenomena in spoken American English. *Journal of English Linguistics* 35. 1–25.
- Tao, Hongyin. 2007b. Subjectification and the development of special-verb existential/presentative constructions. *Language and Linguistics* 8(2). 575–602.
- Thompson, Sandra A. & Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen. 2005. The clause as a locus of grammar and interaction, *Discourse Studies* 7(4–5). 481–505.
- Thompson, Sandra A. & Hongyin Tao. 2010. Conversation, grammar, and fixedness: Adjectives in Mandarin revisited. *Chinese Language and Discourse* 1(1). 3–30.
- Thompson, Sandra A. 1973. Transitivity and some problems with the *bǎ* construction in Mandarin Chinese. *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 1(2). 208–221.
- Thompson, Sandra A. 1997. Discourse motivations for the core-oblique distinction as a language universal. In Akio Kamio (ed.), *Directions in functional linguistics*, 59–82. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Thompson, Sandra A. 2002. 'Object complements' and conversation: towards a realistic account. *Studies in Language* 26(1). 125–164.
- Thompson, Sandra A., Barbara A. Fox & Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen. 2015. *Grammar in*

- everyday talk: Building responsive actions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tsao, Feng-fu [曹逢甫]. 1987. A Topic-Comment Approach to the BA Construction, *Journal of Chinese Linguistics*, 15(1): 1–54.
- van Dijk, Teun A. 1995. Discourse semantics and ideology. *Discourse & Society* 6(2). 243–289.
- van Dijk, Teun A. 2008. *Discourse and context: A sociocognitive approach*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- van Dijk, Teun A. 2009. *Society and discourse: How social contexts influence text and talk*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Verhagen, Arie. 2007. Construal and perspectivization. In: Dirk Geeraerts & Hubert Cuyckens (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of cognitive linguistics* (Oxford handbooks), 48–81. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.
- Voloshinov, V. N. 1929[1986]. *Marxism and the philosophy of language*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Wan, Xinzheng [宛新政]. 2004. 现代汉语致使句研究. 复旦大学 Doctoral Dissertation.
- Wang, Huan [王还]. 1983. 英语和汉语的被动句, 《中国语文》1983 年第 6 期.
- Wang, Huan [王还]. 1984. 《“把”字句和“被”字句》上海教育出版社.
- Wang, Li [王力]. [1943]1985. 《中国现代语法》“汉语语法丛书”本 (1985 年新 1 版) 商务印书馆. Wang, Li. [1943]1985. *Zhongguo xiandai yufa [Modern Chinese grammar]*. Beijing: The Commercial Press.
- Wang, Li [王力]. [1980]2001. *Hanyu shigao [A draft history of the Chinese language]*. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Washio, Ryuichi. 1993. When causatives mean passive: A cross-linguistic perspective. *Journal*

*of East Asian Linguistics* 2(1). 45–90.

- Wierzbicka, Anna. 1998. The Semantics of English causative constructions in a universaltypological perspective. In Michael Tomasello (ed.), *The new psychology of language: Cognitive and functional approaches to language structure*, 113–153. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Xiao, Guozheng [萧国政]. 1994. 汉语“把”字句自足的内在机制, 《现代汉语语法问题研究》武汉: 华中师范大学出版社, 85–104.
- Xue, Fengsheng [薛凤生]. 1987. 试论把字句的语义特性, 《语言教学与研究》第 1 期.
- Xue, Fengsheng [薛凤生]. 1989. “把”字句和被字句的结构意义, 见戴浩一、薛凤生主编 1994 《功能主义与汉语语法》(中译本), 北京: 北京语言学院出版社.
- Yang, Guowen [杨国文]. 2002. 汉语“被”字式在不同种类的过程中的使用情况考察 [An investigation into the usage of the bei construction in different process types in Chinese]. 当代语言学[*Contemporary Linguistics*] 4(1).13–24.
- Yang, Suying [杨素英]. 1998. 从情状类型来看“把”字句, 《汉语学习》第 2 期.
- Yap, Foong Ha & Shoichi Iwasaki. 2007. The emergence of ‘GIVE’ passives in East and Southeast Asian languages. In Mark Alves, Paul Sidwell, and David Gil (eds.), *SEALS VIII: Papers from the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society*, 193–208. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.
- Ye, Xiangyang [叶向阳]. 2004 “把”字句的致使性解释, 《世界汉语教学》第 2 期.
- Yu, Zhiqian [俞志强]. 2011. 论把字句宾语属性明确性与句子语境的匹配, 《世界汉语教学》第 1 期.



- Yuan, Lirong [袁莉容]. 2003. 说不尽的把字句——20 世纪 90 年代以来把字句研究综述. 内蒙古师范大学学报(哲学社会科学版) [*Journal of Inner Mongolia Normal University (Philosophy & Social Science)*] 32(6). 105–109.
- Zhang, Bojiang [张伯江]. 2000. 论“把”字句的句式语义 Lun ‘ba’ ziju de jushi yuyi [On the constructional meanings of ba]. *Yuyan Yanjiu [Linguistic Study]* 38(1). 28–40. Zhang, Bojiang. 2000. On the constructional meanings of ba. *Yuyan Yanjiu [Linguistic Study]* 38(1). 28–40.
- Zhang, Bojiang [张伯江]. 2001. 被字句和把字句的对称与不对称. 《中国语文》第 6 期. 519–524. Zhang, Bojiang. 2001. Symmetries and asymmetries between *bei* construction and *ba* construction. *Zhongguo Yuwen [Studies of the Chinese Language]* 285. 6. 519–524.
- Zhang, Li [张黎]. 2007. 汉语“把”字句的认知类型学解释, 《世界汉语教学》第 3 期.
- Zhang, Wangxi [张旺熹]. 1991. “把字结构”的语义及其语用分析, 《语言教学与研究》第 3 期.
- Zhang, Wangxi [张旺熹]. 2001. “把”字句的位移图式, 《语言教学与研究》第 3 期.
- Zheng, Jie [郑杰]. 2002. 现代汉语“把”字句研究综述, 《语言教学与研究》第 5 期. 41–47.
- Zhou, Hong [周红]. 2004. 现代汉语致使范畴研究. 华东师范大学 Doctoral Dissertation.
- Zhou, Hong [周红]. 2005. 现代汉语致使范畴研究. 复旦大学出版社.
- Zhou, Hong [周红]. 2008. “把”字句、“被”字句与致使力的传递, 《齐齐哈尔大学学报》(哲学社会科学版)第 3 期. 6–10.
- Zhou, Huanqin [周换琴]. 1992. 汉语与斯瓦希里语被动意义表达方式的比较, 《世界汉语教

学》, 1992 年第 3 期.

Zhou, Wenhua [周文华]. 2007. “让”字句功能分析与习得研究. 南京师范大学硕士论文.

Zhu, Chunshen. 1996. Syntactic status of the agent: Its significance for information presentation in translating the passive between Chinese and English. *Multilingua* 15(4). 397–417.

Zhu, Dexi [朱德熙]. [1980]2010. 《语法分析讲稿》. 北京: 商务印书馆.

Zhu, Dexi [朱德熙]. 1982. 《语法讲义》. 北京: 商务印书馆.

Zhu, Dexi [朱德熙]. 1986. 变换分析的平行性原则. 《中国语文》第 2 期. 又见: 朱德熙.

1989. 《语法从稿》 上海: 上海教育出版社.