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THE PURPOSIVE GEI-CLAUSE IN CHINESE(*)

RESUME

Il y a deux types de phrases finales en chinois (qui suivent la phrase matricielle), à savoir la phrase finale ayant un sujet explicite marqué par ế in lieu que la phrase finale avec un sujet vide. Le syntagme verbal dans la phrase finale en ế doit être approprié, i.e. prédictible sur la base de l'objet direct de la phrase matricielle, alors que le rapport entre le SV de la phrase finale sans sujet apparent et la phrase matricielle peut être plus lâche, pourvu qu'il soit sémantiquement ou pragmatiquement plausible. Quant à la relation entre une phrase complexe contenant une phrase finale en ế (NP V NP ế NP VP) d'une part, et une phrase avec un syntagme en ế postverbal (NP V NP ế NP) d'autre part, pour les verbes autres que les verbes de don, la deuxième structure dérive de la première. Car la position postverbale est réservée aux arguments sous-catégorisés par le verbe, et seuls les verbes de don prennent comme deuxième argument un destinataire (marqué par ế). Pour les autres verbes, la structure 'NP V NP ế NP' doit être analysée comme résultat d'une restructuration de la phrase finale en ế comme syntagme en ế.

(*) This article presents the revised version of chapter 5 of my doctoral thesis (Paul 1986). I am especially indebted to James Huang who gave me the initial idea for the analysis proposed here, though the way I developed his suggestion is mine. My thanks equally go to Marie-Claude Paris and Alain Peyraube whose remarks and comments have considerably improved the form and content of this article. I am also grateful to Sue Manners for having corrected my English. Any remaining errors are mine.

The following abbreviations have been used in the word for word translation of the examples:

BA  marker of the preverbal direct object; CL  classifier; GEI  marker of the recipient and the benefactive as well as other functions; NEG negation (bù, méi); PART sentence final particle; PERF perfective aspect (-le); PL  plural (e.g. 3PL = 3rd person plural); SG  singular; SUB  subordinator (-de).

0. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to analyse complex sentences containing a purposive clause introduced by *gēi* (cf. (1)) and to examine whether there is any relation between that kind of *gēi-* clause, i.e. the purposive *gēi-* clause, and a postverbal *gēi-* phrase as in (2):

(1)  
\[ Wo\, qi\, cha\, gēi\, nǐ\, hē\]  
1SG - brew - tea - GEI - 2SG - drink  
I make some tea for you to drink.

(2)  
\[ Wo\, qi\, cha\, gēi\, nǐ\]  
1SG - brew - tea - GEI - 2SG  
I make some tea for you

Given the complexity of the problems linked to *gēi*, I will first give a detailed summary of the most exhaustive study on *gēi*, i.e. of Zhu Dexi (1979, 1983). I will then criticize it point by point and propose my own analysis which differs from Zhu's, especially in that of complex sentences with a purposive *gēi-* clause: 'NP V NP *gēi* NP V (NP)'. Whereas Zhu considers these complex sentences as the extension of corresponding (simple) sentences with a postverbal *gēi-* phrase: 'NP V NP *gēi* NP', I will show that for verbs which are not verbs of giving, a sentence with a postverbal *gēi-* phrase is in fact derived from a sentence with a purposive *gēi-* clause, and not the other way round, as Zhu suggests.

1. ZHU'S (1979, 1983) ANALYSIS

In this section, I will present Zhu Dexi's article on "Bāohán dōngcí 'gēi' de fùzā jūshī" [Complex constructions with the verb *gēi* ] published in 1983. His article dating from 1979 "Yǔ dōngcí 'gēi' xiāngguān de jūfǎ wèntí" [Sentences containing the verb *gēi* ] and dealing with more or less the same problem will only be taken into consideration here if it contains some information which is relevant to the problem but which has not been mentioned in the later article.

In order to facilitate reference to Zhu's article, I have followed his terminology as far as the summary is concerned. In the critical comment as well as in the presentation of my own analysis, however, I have sometimes - for the sake of convenience - preferred to use terms different from Zhu's.

Zhu Dexi (1983) distinguishes the following six construction types containing *gēi*: