

ACTION-MOTION EXPRESSED BY SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTIONS IN STANDARD MANDARIN CHINESE AND JINJIANG SOUTHERN MIN


Ying Fan

Fujian University of Technology, Fujian

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the phenomenon that the same combination of verbs denoting the meaning of action-motion can occur in two different syntactic subtypes of Serial Verb Construction, i.e., the nuclear serialization and core serialization, based on the general distinction made in studies that adopt a variety of theoretical frameworks. Despite the similar meaning expressed by the two constructions and their instantiations that share the same component verbs, the nuclear and core serializations can be distinguished from each other in terms of their argument structure and constituency structure. In this paper, I attempt to offer an adequate description of the properties of these syntactic subtypes of action-motion SVC attested in two Sinitic varieties: Standard Mandarin Chinese and Jinjiang Southern Min. In addition, I argue that only the directional verb (V2) in the core serialization can be optionally followed by a locative noun phrase due to its partly independent argument structure

Acknowledgements I would like to thank Prof. Eva Schulze-Berndt and Prof. John Payne at the University of Manchester for their continuous discussions with me regarding this topic. The Jinjiang Southern Min data were collected during two fieldwork trips sponsored by the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures at the University of Manchester. I am also indebted to Dr. Tiansong Lin for checking the Jinjiang Southern Min data presented in this article. I appreciate all the helpful comments and suggestions given by the anonymous reviewers on different versions of this paper. All errors are my own.

Ying Fan (范莹) [yingfan3@gmail.com]; School of Humanities, Fujian University of Technology, Tian Jia Bing Building, 33 Xuefu Nan Road, Minhou, Fuzhou, Fujian Province, 350118, P. R. China;  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8316-3224>

in the core serialization, a characteristic not observed in the nuclear serialization. While both syntactic subtypes of action-motion SVC can be found in Mandarin Chinese, in Jinjiang Southern Min, the meaning of action-motion can only be encoded by the core serialization. The use of contrasting structures to encode action-motion expressions in Mandarin Chinese and mainland Southern Min also indicates the diversity of grammar found in different Sinitic varieties (also see Chappell 2015; Chappell and Li 2015).

KEYWORDS

Serial Verb Construction Event Fusion Argument Coindexation

In this paper, I aim to offer an adequate description of the syntactic properties of a particular semantic type of Serial Verb Construction¹ (hereafter SVC), the action-motion SVC, by adopting a theory-neutral approach to the data of two Sinitic varieties, Standard Mandarin Chinese (hereafter Mandarin) and Jinjiang Southern Min (hereafter Jinjiang)².

The Sinitic languages can be classified into ten branches that include Mandarin, Wu, Min, Yue, Hakka, Xiang, Gan, Jin, Hui and Pinghua mainly on the basis of their phonological and lexical characteristics, according to *Language Atlas of China* (Zhang 2012). The Min variety can be divided further into five sub-varieties, including Southern Min, Northern Min, Central Min, Eastern Min and Puxian (Yuan 2001, 235), and they are not mutually intelligible (Chappell and Li 2015, 618). Southern Min is the largest group of the Min sub-varieties, the speakers of which in mainland China amount up to 27 millions; in mainland China, it is mainly spoken in the southeast of coastal Fujian province in China, including cities such as Xiamen, Zhangzhou and Quanzhou, northeastern and southern Guangdong and on Hainan Island (Chappell 2018).

This paper discusses the action-motion SVC in Jinjiang. Jinjiang city is a county-level city of Quanzhou. Jinjiang is a variant of Quanzhou Southern Min (Lin 2009, 15). As other Southern Min dialects, it shows distinct linguistic features in phonology, morphology and syntax, by means of which they can be distinguished from other Sinitic varieties. For

汉语普通话与晋江闽南话中 表述“动作-位移”意义的连动式

范莹

福建工程学院

摘要

本文基于多项研究中显示的关于连动式的一般性区别,集中探讨用以表述“动作—位移”义的共同的一组动词可出现在句法类别不同的连动式(即大、小核心连动式)中的现象。虽然大、小核心连动式可以表达相似的语义且相同的连续动词可以出现在结构不同的连动式中,但是它们在论元结构和组成结构方面表现不同。本文试图为汉语普通话和晋江闽南话中表述“动作—位移”意义但句法结构不同的连动式提供充分的描写。此外,本文论证,正是因为其部分独立的论元结构,只有大核心连动式中的方向动词(V2)才允许其后选择性出现地点名词短语,这一特点在小核心连动式中则观察不到。在汉语普通话中,大、小核心连动式均可用以表述“动作—位移”义,而晋江闽南话只用大核心连动式表述相似的意义。汉语普通话与内陆闽南话用不同的结构编码“动作—位移”义也表明了汉语方言语法的多样性(也参见 Chappell 2015; Chappell and Li 2015)

关键词

连动式 事件融合 论元同标