

AN APPOSITIVE ANALYSIS OF MANDARIN DISTRIBUTOR *GE*

Jie Cheng


South China Normal University, Guangzhou

ABSTRACT

This article presents an alternative argument that Mandarin distributor *GE* (GE_{DIS}) is a pro-form to be merged as an appositive to a plural nominal, verb or adverbial. GE_{DIS} performs a distributive function of matching a set of individuals to a set of predications, thus requiring the obligatory co-occurrence of a distributive host, i.e., an antecedent plural nominal, verbal or adverbial phrase, and a distributive target, i.e., a following syntactic constituent that helps to separate the predication. The canonical syntactic position of GE_{DIS} is immediately to the right of the distributive host. An appositive analysis of GE_{DIS} is proposed to the effect that GE_{DIS} is merged as an appositive to the distributive host. This new analysis improves upon the existing adjunct analysis, which takes GE_{DIS} as a quantificational adverb that adjoins to VP or vP. The appositive analysis is further supported by the convincing view that GE_{DIS} is a pronoun rather than an adverb and can be extended to cover two new facts about GE_{DIS} , where the

Acknowledgements The author acknowledges the support of this study by Center for Language Cognition and Assessment, Guangdong Provincial Key Research Base for the Humanities and Social Sciences in Universities and Colleges. He is indebted to Allyson Ettinger and Jeffrey Green at University of Maryland (College Park), who read an earlier version of the manuscript and made valuable suggestions for its improvement. He also thanks the JCL reviewers for their insightful comments on the manuscript and the JCL editors for their patient guidance for perfecting the format of this article.

Jie Cheng (程杰) [chengjie@m.scnu.edu.cn]; School of Foreign Studies/Center for Language Cognition and Assessment (Guangdong Provincial Key Research Base for the Humanities and Social Sciences in Universities and Colleges), South China Normal University, No. 55 Zhongshan Avenue West, Guangzhou, Guangdong 510631, P. R. China.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0830-6085>

distributive host is a plural verb phrase or a plural adverbial phrase. The conclusion reached is that GE_{DIS} is a pro-form that is semantically associated with and syntactically apposed to a plural antecedent in the capacity of a nominal, a verb or an adverbial.

KEYWORDS

GE Distributor Mandarin Appositive Syntax

1. INTRODUCTION

Gè ‘each’ (GE hereafter) in (1) is a common word in Standard Mandarin, as evidenced by *The CCL Corpus of Chinese Texts* (Zhan, Guo and Chen 2003), which registers 526,754 instances of *gè* ‘each’ among its 581,794,456 Modern Mandarin characters. The word has been recognized as an adverb that modifies an event, a distributive quantifier that performs a matching function between two sets of individual entities, and an adjunct that adjoins to a VP or *vP* in syntactic derivation (Kung 1993; Lin 1998, 2004; Soh 2005; Lee, Zhang and Pan 2009). We refer to this sort of view about GE as the *adjunct analysis*. This article presents an alternative view, arguing that GE in (1) is a pronoun that entails a distributive relationship between its antecedent and an extensionally separable predication, and hence it is an appositive conjoined with its antecedent in a configuration like (2). For convenience of exposition we refer to GE in this context as distributor GE (GE_{DIS} hereafter) and this new idea of handling GE_{DIS} as the *appositive analysis*.

- (1) 孩子们 各 吃了 一个 苹果。
 Háizi-men GE chī-le yī-gè píngguǒ.¹
 child-PL GE eat-PFV one-CLF apple
 ‘The children each ate one apple.’

- (2) [DP [DP háizi-men] [GE]]

We start with a reconsideration of the semantic functions and syntactic positions of GE_{DIS}, aiming to clarify some misconceptions about GE_{DIS} in the literature (Section 2). Then we make a brief review of the adjunct analysis, pointing out its major problems, and, on this basis, we

对普通话分配词“各”的同位语分析

程杰

华南师范大学

摘要

本文讨论普通话分配词“各”的句法属性，提出分配词“各”作为复数名词、动词或副词性短语同位语的新观点。“各”具有分配功能，表达一个个体集合与一个述谓集合之间的映射，必需前有由复数名词、动词和副词性短语构成的分配主体，后有由可分割述谓的成分构成的分配目标。在句法推导中，分配词“各”作为分配主体的同位语合并在其右边毗连位置。对分配词“各”的同位语分析优于前人提出的附加语分析，即分配词“各”作为量化副词附加于 VP 或 vP。分配词“各”的词性属代名词而非副词的观点进一步支持了同位语分析。充当“各”的分配主体的成分不仅是名词短语，还可以是复数动词和副词性短语。本文的结论是，分配词“各”是一个与由名词、动词或副词性短语充当的复数先行语在语义上相联、在句法上同位的代词。

关键词

各 分配词 普通话 同位语 句法