國 立 交 通 大 學

外國語文學系外國文學與語言學碩士班

碩 士 論 文

閩南語動詞後否定句式「V 有/嘸 NP」之再探究

A Reinvestigation of the *so-called* Taiwanese
Postverbal Negation [V *u/bo* 'have/not-have' NP]

研 究 生：黃惠瑜

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摘　　　要

　　此篇論文主要探討閩南語「V 有/嘸 NP」謂語的語義歧異現象及句法結構。此「V 有/嘸 NP」謂語結構主要涉及兩種語義：(一) 指涉恆常的特性，例如「阿明做嘸歹誌。」；(二) 指涉某單一事件的發生，例如「阿明坐嘸位。」本論文首先論證吾人可以藉由動詞後名詞組的有指/無指 (referential/non-referential) 之語意特性來決定此「V 有/嘸 NP」謂語的語義。亦即，當名詞組有指時，句子涉及某單一事件的發生；當名詞組無指時，句子則指涉某恆常的特性。此外，本論文亦提出五項原則來輔助判斷在「 V 有/嘸 NP 」謂語裡，動詞後名詞組何時可以作為有指，何時可以作為無指。

　　本論文並探討「V 有/嘸 NP」謂語的句法結構，以林宗宏 (2001) 之輕動詞分析為架構，論證此一謂語結構乃是由兩層動詞組 (two VP layers) 結合而成。其中，上層動詞組之核心為輕動詞 DO，用來統括只有動態動詞 (activity verb) 才能出現在此謂語結構的限制；下層動詞組，即「有/嘸」，所涉及之核心為輕動詞 GET，用來說明為何有些動態動詞與「有/嘸」可以同時出現在「V 有/嘸 NP」結構中，而有些卻不行。

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the semantic ambiguity and syntax of the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] configuration in Taiwanese Southern Min. Semantically the sentence involving the [V *u/bo* NP] construction is ambiguous between a generic reading and an episodic reading, and we propose that its being generic or episodic is determined by the referential/non-referential interpretation of the associated postverbal noun phrase: the sentence is generic if and only if the postverbal noun phrase is interpreted as non-referential, and the sentence is episodic if and only if the postverbal noun phrase is interpreted as referential. We further provide five principles to pin down the referentiality of the postverbal noun phrase with respect to the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] construction.

Syntactically we will show that the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] is not a resultative verbal compound (Huang 2003, Wang 2008). Instead, based on Lin (2001), we argue that the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] is a phrasal structure composed of two VP layers, where the higher V is headed by the light verb DO and that the lower V is headed by the light verb GET.

Acknowledgement (誌謝)

　　於此論文完成之際，我也不知一時之間錯綜複雜的心情該以怎麼樣的文字才能完整表達，唯一想得到的詞彙，就是「謝謝!」二字吧。

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Chapter 1
Introduction

In English, a negative noun phrase like *nobody* is free to occur in the object position, as seen in (1). In Taiwanese Southern Min (henceforth Taiwanese), one can observe a similar phenomenon.[1] A negative marker *bo* preceding a noun occurs in the object position, as seen in (2).[2,3]

(1)   John found nobody.

(2)   Abing   chue   bo   lang.

       Abing   search   NEG   person

       'Abing failed to find the person.'
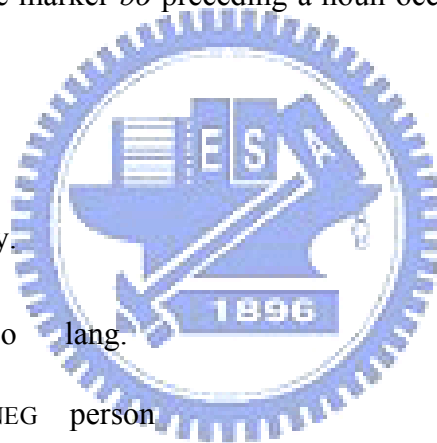
Such a phenomenon in Taiwanese was already discussed in Huang (2003) and Wang (2008). They have shown that the negative marker *bo* does not form a constituent with the following noun phrase, hence not a postverbal negative NP. Instead, they argued that *bo*, literally 'not-have', and its affirmative counterpart *u* 'have' alike serve as a resultative verbal complement

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[1] Taiwanese Southern Min is a dialect of the Chinese language.
[2] The TLPA (Taiwanese Language Phonetic Alphabet) is used for the transcription of Taiwanese data in this thesis; irrelevant tones are omitted here.
[3] The abbreviations used in this article as glossed as follows: AFFIRM: affirmative marker; ASP: aspect; AUX: auxiliary; CL: classifier; EXT: extension marker; NEG: negation; POSS: possessive marker; Q: question particle; SFP: sentence final particle.

of their preceding verb. This idea is also held among other linguists (cf. Teng 1992, Li 1996, Tang 1996, Cheng 1997).

However, sentences which involve *u/bo* in terms of the [V *u/bo* (NP)] construction still have an intriguing phenomenon that has not been investigated. That is, the sentence is ambiguous between a generic reading and an episodic reading (cf. 'potential modality' and 'existential aspect' in Cheng's terminology), as illustrated in (3) and (4), respectively.

(3)   Abing   lia   u/bo   hi.

        Abing   catch   AFFIRM/NEG   fish

        'Abing can/cannot catch fish.'

(4)   Abing   chue   u/bo   sosi.

        Abing   search   AFFIRM/NEG   key

        'Abing found/failed to find the key.'
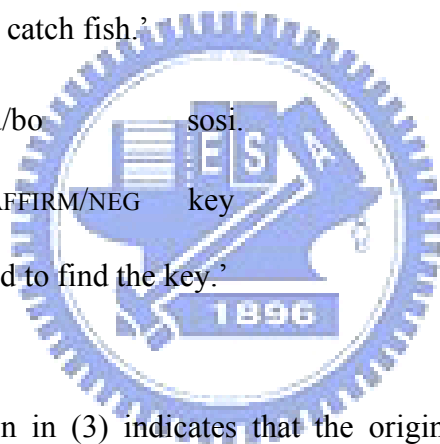
The English interpretation in (3) indicates that the original sentence is associated with a potential property. It states that the agent *Abing* has or does not have the ability to catch fish. Unlike the potential sentence which indicates a permanent state or truth, the example with a so-called existential aspect *u/bo* in (4) refers to a completed event. The agent *Abing* was searching for the key, and ended up having or not having the key at some reference time.

In light of the above findings, we are curious about why there is such an ambiguity here. Regarding the stative, or potential interpretation, one might turn to its Mandarin counterparts [V-*de/bu*-V] construction as a step toward a possible explanation. The example in (5) below is the Mandarin counterpart of sentence (3).

(5)   Aming   zhua   de/bu   dao   yu.

        Aming   catch   DE/NEG   get   fish

        'Aming can/cannot catch fish.'

We notice that the English interpretation of both (3) and (5) unequivocally utilizes a modal element *can* which appears to be inherent in the verbal complement *u/bo* or *de/bu* in the original sentences. Indeed, *de/bu* in Mandarin and *u/bo* in Taiwanese alike are taken to be modal elements in certain works, whether in an explicit or implicit manner (cf. see Tsai 2001a,b and Wu 2004 for Mandarin Chinese; also see Cheng and Sybesma 2004 for Cantonese and Hakka). Though previous studies have gained insights into the complex problem of postverbal affirmative/negative elements in various aspects, the episodic interpretation involved in Taiwanese is still left unaccounted for. This hence calls for reconsideration of both syntactic and semantic statuses of *u/bo*.

     Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to reinvestigate sentences involving the [V *u/bo* NP] configuration in Taiwanese. Regarding the semantic ambiguity, we argue that their being generic or episodic is determined by the referentiality/non-referentiality of the postverbal noun phrase and propose five principles to help judge the referentiality of the noun phrase. Furthermore, this thesis will deal with syntax of the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] structure. Based on the framework of Lin (2001), we propose that the predicate consists of two VP layers, where the higher V is headed by a light verb DO and that the lower V is headed by a light verb GET.

     The thesis proceeds as follows: Chapter 2 will review previous studies of the [V *u/bo* NP] structure, revealing their problems, and also provide more observations concerning this structure. Chapter 3 will start from a general literature review of the generic/episodic distinction and set out to deal with the semantic ambiguity involved in the [V *u/bo* NP]

structure. In Chapter 4, we will discuss the syntax of [V *u/bo* NP] construction and offer a cursory comparison between Taiwanese [V *u/bo* NP] and its Mandarin counterpart [V *de/bu dao* NP]. Chapter 5 will conclude this thesis.

Chapter 2

Previous Analyses, Problems, and More about the [V *u/bo* NP]

Previous studies have looked at the [V *u/bo* NP] contour from different points of view. Some of them consider it a resultative verbal compound without any argumentation (cf. Teng 1992, Li 1996, Tang 1996, Cheng 1997 among others). From another standpoint, Huang (2003) insightfully adopts a cross-linguistic point of view to discuss the distribution of negative noun phrases and then looks into the Taiwanese data currently discussed. He concludes that the latter two elements in the [V *u/bo* NP] construction do not form a constituent, hence not a negative noun phrase. Instead, he suggests that *u/bo* is the resultative verbal complement of its preceding verb. We will discuss his ideas in Section 2.1. In addition to the above discussions, Wang (2008) regards the [V *u/bo* (NP)] construction as a main verb taking a small clause as its complement. In her analysis, the affirmative *u* and the negation marker *bo* serve as an adjunct AffirmP/NegP of the lower VP in the syntactic structure. We will also discuss her work in Section 2.2. In Section 2.3, we will point out the remaining problems of previous analyses and in Section 2.4 we will see there are more about the [V *u/bo* NP] configuration.

2.1 Huang (2003)

Examining the distribution of negative NPs in English, Japanese, Mandarin and Taiwanese, Huang (2003) argues that the postverbal negative NPs in Taiwanese as in (6-7) are just apparent.

(6)   Goa   caikhi   thak   bo   che

        I   morning   read   no   book

        'I read no book this morning.'

(7)   I ti   kong   sann, goa   long sa   bo   liao-a   mng.

        he at   say   what, I   all   grasp no   cottage   door

        'Whatever his is talking about, I am grasping no cottage door. (I got totally lost.)'

Indeed, it is said that Taiwanese patterns with Mandarin with respect to the distribution of negative NPs in that they can occur in the position of a topic, a subject, or a preverbal adjunct but not occur as a postverbal object of the verb, the object of a preposition, a postverbal complement, or as a possessive determiner. The so-called postverbal negative NPs in Taiwanese are then suggested to be viewed as separate parts rather than as a whole. More precisely, he suggests that the postverbal negative marker *bo* and its affirmative form *u* may each form a resultative compound with the preceding verb instead of forming a negative NP with the following bare nominal. One piece of his evidence comes from the following example:

(8)   Li   cinn   than   bo,   thaolo   a   chue bo,   mainkong

        you money earn not-have, job   also   find not-have, needless-say

        boo ma   chua   bo.

        wife and marry not-have

        'You have been unsuccessful in money-making, also in job-hunting, then needless to say you are also unsuccessful in [your efforts to] get married.'

In (8), the negation marker *bo* does not form a constituent with its object since the bare

nominals such as *cinn* 'money', *thaolo* 'job' and *boo* 'wife' alone can be extracted into the preverbal position.

Another piece of evidence for the postverbal negative NPs to be apparent is that the ostensible negative NPs are preceded only by accomplishment verbs; statives are always ruled out, as shown in (9-10).
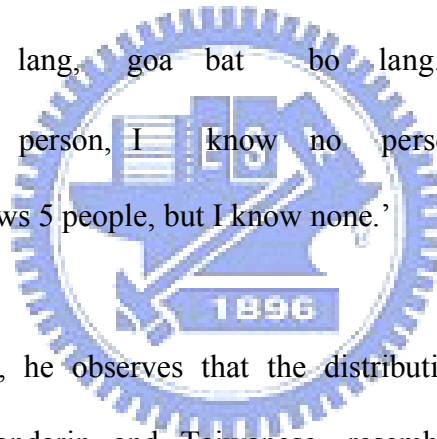
(9)   *Goa   ai   bo   lang.

       I   love no   person

       Intended: 'I love no one.'

(10)   *Yi   bat   go-e   lang,   goa   bat   bo   lang.

       he   know   5-CL   person, I   know   no   person

       Intended: 'He knows 5 people, but I know none.'

More importantly, he observes that the distribution of negative NPs in Chinese languages, including Mandarin and Taiwanese, resembles the Norwegian pattern. He therefore argues that both Chinese and Norwegian languages allow negative NPs only where they could be derived from the conflation between a sentential negation Neg and a polarity item like *anybody* which is adjacent to it. Under the circumstances a postverbal *meiyou ren* 'nobody' in Chinese is never allowed because the verb does not move to I and, therefore, not to C. The unavailability for verbs to move to I, contra to certain verbs in Norwegian, in turn precludes a negation *meiyou* 'not' from being adjacent to a polarity item *renhe ren* 'any person.' The result is that a postverbal polarity item *renhe* 'any' and the the negative licensor *meiyou* 'not' are always separated by the verb, as illustrated by the Mandarin example in (11).

(11)   [IP Zhangsani [I'...meiyou [VP ti kanjian   renhe   ren]]]

     Zhangsan   not   see   any   person

     'Zhangsan did not see anyone.'

In brief, Huang takes a broad view of negative NPs cross-linguistically and offers a neat explanation of why Chinese languages do not allow negative NPs in certain syntactic positions. Due to his clarification, we understand that to look upon the postverbal [*bo* NP] as a negative NP in Taiwanese cannot be true, but how to get to the bottom of its status, say, *u/bo* in that regard? This has not been fully elucidated in Huang's analysis and we will come back to this issue later.

2.2   Wang (2008)

Regarding the negation marker *bo*, Wang (2008) notices that when *bo* occurs in the postverbal position, the sentence pertains to an abilitative deontic modal meaning (i.e. we take as a 'generic interpretation' throughout this article). As illustrated in (12), the negation marker *bo* negates the agent's ability to find a job.

(12)   Li-e   che   bo   thaoloo.

    Li-e   find   NEG   job

    'Li is unable to find a job.'

This is taken as a contrast to *bo* occurring in the preverbal position, where the negation marker serves to negate the verb, as in (13).

(13) Li-e bo   che   thaoloo.

 Li-e NEG   find   job

 'Li did not apply for the job(s).'

In order to account for the abilitative deontic meaning, she first follows Huang's (2003) idea by taking [V *u/bo* NP] as a resultative verbal compound (henceforth RVC) construction. It is then proposed that there is a phonetically null verbal head ACHIEVE responsible for the abilitative deontic meaning in this construction. The syntactic representation is as shown in (14).

(14)
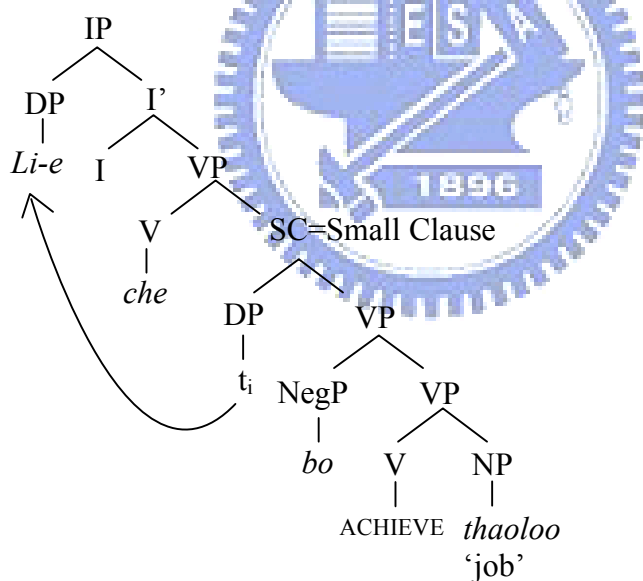
In this analysis, the affirmative *u* and negation marker *bo* each adjoin to the verbal phrase headed by the null ACHIEVE, deriving the meaning that the agent has or does not have the competence to achieve the requirement.

Basically, her argument for the RVC status of the [V *u/bo* NP] construction comes

from the syntactic parallelism between the [V-*u/bo*-V] and [V-*u/bo*-NP] sentences in terms of the verb copying construction and *ka*-construction, as in (15) and (16), respectively.

(15)   *Verb Copying*

    a.   A-Bi   ca   ponn ca   bo   pa.   (V-*u/bo*-V)

          A-Bi   eat   rice   eat   NEG full

          'A-Bi ate but didn't feel full.'

    b.   Li-e che thaoloo che   bo.   (V-*u/bo*-NP)

          Li-e find job   find   NEG

          'Li-e is unable to find a job.'

(16)   *Ka-Construction*

    a.   *A-Bi **ka** ponn ca bo   pa.   (V-*u/bo*-V)

          A-Bi   KA rice   eat NEG   full

          'A-Bi ate but didn't feel full.'

    b.   *Li-e **ka** thaoloo che   bo.   (V-*u/bo*-NP)

          Li-e   KA job   find   NEG

          'Li-e is unable to find a job.'

Through analogy, she argues that the [V-*u/bo*-NP] and [V-*u/bo*-V] sentences belong to the same type of subject-result RVC construction.

    Furthermore, she provides a circumstantial evidence for the existence of a null head in Taiwanese [V-*u/bo*-NP] sentences. It is argued that the [V-*u/bo*-NP] construction corresponds to the [V-*de/bu*-V] construction in Mandarin Chinese because they both also share similar

properties in relation to the verb copying and *ka*-construction/*ba*-construction.[4] Consequently,

the null head ACHIEVE as in (18) is assumed to be like its Mandarin counterpart *dao* 'reach'

as in (17), which she classifies into the ACHIEVEMENT event type of verbs.

(17) *Mandarin Chinese*

Zhangsan zhao de/bu **dao** gongzuo.

Zhangsan find DE/NEG reach job

'Zhangsan is (un)able to find a job.'

(18) *Taiwanese*

Li-e che u/bo **ø** thaoloo.

Li-e find AFFIRM/NEG **ø** job

'Li is (un)able to find a job.'
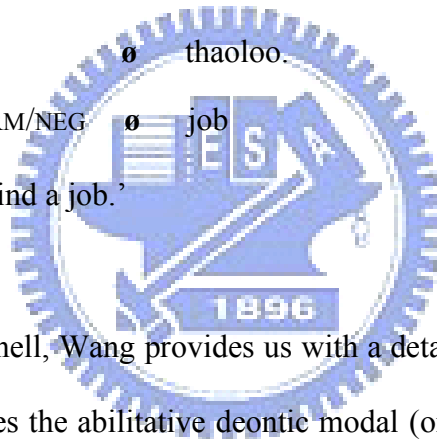
    To put it in a nutshell, Wang provides us with a detailed analysis of the Taiwanese [V

u/bo NP] and also captures the abilitative deontic modal (or generic interpretation) by means

of the null verb ACHIEVE that heads the lower VP. Nonetheless, the other possible

interpretation, that is, the episodic reading, has been excluded from this approach. In the

following section, we will reexamine both previous analyses under scrutiny and specify the

problems in their analyses.

2.3 Problems Faced by Previous Analyses

Huang (2003) and Wang (2008) have shown a keen awareness of the issue posed by the [V

u/bo NP] construction, but upon closer inspection we will find their analyses are still

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[4] Wang (2008) assumes Mandarin *ba*-construction is similar to Taiwanese *ka*-construction.

challenged by the following problems.[5] First we will raise two questions for Huang's analysis. For one thing, if [V-*u/bo* (NP)] were a compound in Taiwanese, how come we can still insert adverbs like *tih-be* 'almost' , *long* 'always' between the verb and *u/bo,* as illustrated in (19-20)?

(19)   Abing   che   tih-be   u   thaoloo   a.

Abing   find   almost   have   job   SFP

'Abing is almost getting a job.'

(20)   Abing   che   long   bo   thaoloo.

Abing   find   always   not-have   job

'Abing is always unable to find a job.'

For another thing, if Chinese languages do not allow postverbal negative NPs for the precondition that a postverbal negation is never adjacent to the polarity item that it licenses, how do we offer an explanation when in effect Taiwanese allows a postverbal negation marker *bo* immediately followed by such polarity items as *puann* 'any' and *sann* 'any', as shown in (21-22)?

(21)   Cin   ki-kuai,   nai   khuann   bo   puann   e   lang?

really   strange,   how-come   see   not-have   any   CL   person

'How strange! Why didn't we see anyone (here)?'

(22)   Abing   thak   bo   sann   che.

Abing   study   not-have   any   book

'Abing is unable study well.'

Next we provide a few arguments against Wang (2008). The first counterexample, despite being partial, is still worthy of consideration. In Taiwanese, there is another negative marker *be* 'not-able', and it can replace *bo* 'not-have' in [V *bo* V] sentences to denote an abilitative deontic meaning, as shown in (23-24). According to this, on one hand since the null head ACHIEVE serves to derive an abilitative deontic meaning, intuitively the [V *be* N] with the abilitative meaning would have been taken as the essential construction. On the other hand, if [V *bo* N] sentences parallel [V *bo* V] ones as argued by Wang, we would predict [V *be* N] sentences to be as grammatical as [V *be* V] ones. However, the test results in (25-26) bear none of our predictions.

(23)   Abing   cia   be   pa.
       Abing   eat   not-able   full
       'Abing eats but cannot feel full.'

(24)   Abing   cao   be   kin.
       Abing   run   not-able   fast
       'Abing runs but cannot run fast.'

(25)   *Abing   che   be   thaoloo.
        Abing   search   not-able   job
        Intended: 'Abing cannot find any job.'

(26)   *Abing   thak   be   che.
        Abing   study   not-able   book

Intended: 'Abing cannot study well.'

In addition, if the null verb ACHIEVE, which heads the lower VP, is to account for the potential interpretation of the [V *u/bo* NP] construction, as in (27-28), then clearly the episodic interpretation involved in the sentences in (29-30) would be left unaccounted for.

(27) Abing kam cia u   leng-wann peng?

  Abing Q   eat AFFIRM two-CL   rice

  'Is Abing able to eat two bowls of rice?'

(28) Abing cing bo   chai.

  Abing grow NEG vegetable

  'Abing cannot grow any vegetable.'

(29) Abing jim bo   so-si.

  Abing take NEG key

  'Abing failed to take out the key (from his pocket).'

(30) Abing ka   bo   cin-ka.

  Abing trim NEG nail

  'Abing failed to trim his nails.'

Moreover, the RVC in Chinese refers to those which consist of a verb and a particle that denotes the result brought about by the main verb.[6] As the name suggests, it is also important that semantically it reveals a certain type of causal relation (cf. Kratzer 2004). Shen

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[6] For details of Chinese RVC, also see Li (1990) and Huang and Cheng (1995).

and Lin (2006) observe that Taiwanese generally does not permit RVCs to be of the V_1-V_2 compounding form, which corresponds to the Mandarin pattern as in (31). To express the same causal proposition, the causative morpheme *ho* must be inserted between the two verbs, as seen in (32). Under the circumstances we would expect the RVC [V *u/bo* NP] to have a causative morpheme *ho* between V and *u/bo*. However, the illicit examples in (33-34) do not bear out Wang's hypothesis.

(31) Laowang   tui-kai   le   men.

      Laowang   push-open   ASP   door

      'Mr. Wang pushed the door and caused it open.'

(32) Ong-e   (wu)   sak   ho   meng   kui.

      Laowang   have   push   CAUSE   door   open

      'Ong-e pushed the door and caused it open.'

(33) *Abing   thak   ho   bo   che.

      Abing   study   CAUSE   not-have   book

      Intended: 'Abing studied the book and caused it to disappear.'

(34) *Abing   tio   ho   u   hi-a.

      Abing   catch   CAUSE   have   fish

      Intended: ??'Abing caught the fish and caused it to appear.'

To recap, in this section we have seen that there are still some remaining problems for both previous analyses. In Section 2.4 we will demonstrate more properties which have not even been noticed.

2.4   More about the [V *u/bo* NP] Construction

First of all, Cheng (1997) observes that verbs which denote 'disposing' meaning such as *be* 'sell', *chit* 'erase', or *tan* 'throw' are not compatible with the [V *u/bo* NP] construction as seen in (35) unless what follows them has the interpretation pertaining to quantity or quality, as in (36).

(35)   *Abing   chit   bo   opang.

     Abing   erase   not-have   blackboard

     Intended: 'Abing failed to clean any blackboard.'

(36)   Abing   chit   bo   leng-te   opang.

     Abing   erase   not-have   two-CL   blackboard

     'Abing failed to clean two blackboards.'

Second, as already mentioned in the previous section yet still repeated here for the reader's sake, Huang (2003) observes that the verbs preceding *u/bo* are restricted to accomplishment verbs, or activity verbs which can be turned into accomplishments by the addition of the resultative portion *u/bo*, as shown in (37-38). Statives are not allowed to occur before *u/bo*, as seen in (39-40).

(37)   Abing   be   u   chai.

     Abing   buy   have   vegetable

     'Abing bought vegetables.'

(38)   Abing   than   bo   cinn.

     Abing   make   not-have   money

'Abing cannot make any money.'

(39)　*Abing　ai　　bo　　　　lang.

　　　Abing　love　not-have　person

　　　Intended: 'He does not love anyone.'

(40)　*Abing　sin　　bo　　　　kao.

　　　Abing　believe　not-have　religion

　　　Intended: 'Abing does not believe in any religion.'

　　　Third, we notice that *u/bo* has not lost its lexical meaning completely and in some cases we still get two clear-cut meanings concerning *u/bo*. These include 'obtain' and 'understand', as exemplified by (41) and (42) in the order given.

(41)　Abing　than　bo　　　　cinn.

　　　Abing　earn　not-obtain　money

　　　'Abing attempts to earn money but fails to earn any.'

(42)　Abing　thak　bo　　　　　che.

　　　Abing　study　not-understand　book

　　　'Abing cannot study well. (Abing does not understand any book.)'

　　　Fourth, adverbs or other negation markers which indicate irrealis property can occur before *u*, as indicated by Cheng's (1997) examples in (43-46).[7]

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[7] Cheng regards these elements as infixes and the *u/bo* a resultative complement, though.

(43) Yi choa tih-be u boo a.

he marry almost have wife SFP

'He is about to have a wife.'

(44) Yi boo choa ia-be u leh.

he wife marry not-yet have SFP

'He has not been able to get a wife yet.'

(45) Li an-ne tai-ci co be u.

you this-way thing do cannot have

'In doing so, you cannot get anything done.'

(46) Li an-ne tai-ci co nae-e u?

you this-way thing do how-can have

'In doing so, how can you get anything accomplished?'
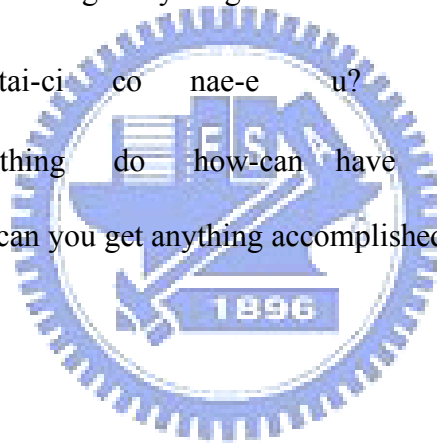
(Cheng 1997: 213)

Fifth, the morphemes *tio* and *ka*, which refer to 'achieve', are allowed to occur between *u/bo* and the object NP. When the postverbal NP is a bare nominal or a definite NP, *tio* is employed like (47-48); when the postverbal NPs are quantifier NPs, *ka* is employed as exemplified in (49). Nonetheless, there are cases where neither *tio* nor *ka* is allowed, as in (50-51).

(47) Abing pha bo tio mang-a.

Abing hit not-have achieve mosquito

'Abing failed to hit the mosquito.'

(48) Abing be u tio hit-pun che.

Abing buy have achieve that-CL book

'Abing bought the book.'

(49) Abing cia bo ka leng-wann peng.

Abing eat not-have achieve two-CL rice

'Abing did not finish two bowls of rice.'

(50) *Abing khuann bo tio/ka jit-gi.

Abing read not-have achieve Japanese

Intended: 'Abing cannot read Japanese.'

(51) *Kiao-gonn e lang co bo tio/ka leng-hang taici.

proud POSS person do not-have achieve two-CL thing

Intended: 'Haughty people hardly accomplish more than two things.'

Sixth, we notice that there is a contrast for the occurrence of a numeral NP with respect to different argument positions. In (52-53), we see that a numeral NP cannot occur in subject position; in (54-55), there is no such restriction in the object position.[8]

(52) *Sann-e lang thak bo che.

three-CL person study not-have book

Intended: 'Three people cannot study well.'

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[8] However, as pointed out by Luther Liu (p.c.), under certain circumstances it is possible for a numeral NP to occur in subject position with respect to this construction, as shown in (i).
(i) Sann-e lang pha bo mann-chok.
   three-CL person hit NEG mah-jongg
   'Three people are not enough to play mah-jongg.'
We will not attempt to offer an explanation of the relative restrictions on numeral NPs in this thesis. But also see Tsai (2001a,b) for a different story of the numeral NP in Mandarin [V-*de/bu*-V] sentences.

(53)   *Go-e   gin-na   chue   bo   Abing.

　　　 five-CL   child   find   not-have   Abing

　　　 Intended: 'Five children cannot find Abing.'

(54)   Abing   cai-khi   thak   bo   sann-pun   che.

　　　 Abing   morning   study   not-have   three-CL   book
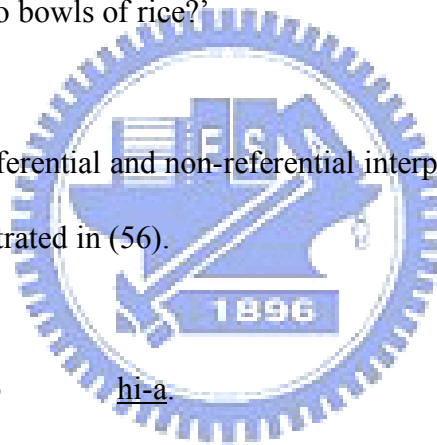
　　　 'This morning Abing read less than three books.'

(55)   Abing   kam   cia   u   leng-wann   peng?

　　　 Abing   Q   eat   have   two-CL   rice

　　　 'Did Abing eat two bowls of rice?'

Moreover, both referential and non-referential interpretations of a bare NP are allowed in object position, as illustrated in (56).

(56)   Abing   lia   bo   hi-a.

　　　 Abing   catch   not-have   fish

　　　 Intended: i) 'Abing failed to catch the fish.'   (referential)

　　　　　　　 ii) 'Abing cannot catch any fish.'   (non-referential)

Finally, it is demonstrated by Krifka et al. (1995) that kind-referring NPs (but not objects) render sentences generic. In the [V *u/bo* NP] construction this argument is born out, too. The kind-referring NPs in subject position render the sentences generic as in (57-58), but kind-referring NPs in object position do not show the characteristic as exemplified in (59-61).

(57) Bai   hahau   co   bo   haksing.

      bad   school   get   not-have   students

      'Bad schools cannot get any student.'

(58) Phua-penn   e   chiu-a   kam   senn   u   kue-cih?

      sick   POSS   tree   Q   produce   have   fruit

      'Can sick trees produce any fruit?'

 (59) Aying   be   bo   sui   sann.

      Aying   buy   not-have   beautiful   clothes

      i) 'Aying failed to buy any beautiful clothes.'

      ii) 'Aying cannot buy any beautiful clothes that fit her.'

(60) Abing   kam   lia   u   tua-cia   hi-a?

      Abing   Q   catch   have   big-CL   fish

      i) 'Did Abing catch any big fish?'

      ii) 'Can Abing catch any big fish?'

(61) Cit-king   hahau   co   bo   he   hakseng.

      this-CL   school   get   not-have   good   student

      i) 'This school failed to get any good student (this year).'

      ii) 'This school (is too bad that it) cannot get any good student.'

        To be brief, Section 2.4 has shown us various properties in sentences involving [V
u/bo NP] construction. In the following chapters we will come up with a proposal to
accommodate the remaining problems and account for these engrossing characteristics.

Chapter 3

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Semantic Ambiguity of the Predicate [V *u/b*o NP]

In this chapter, we will provide a novel analysis of the distinction between a generics and an episode in sentences involving [V *u/bo* NP] construction. In Section 3.1, we will review the generic/episodic distinction in the literature, and focus especially on Carlson (1977), Kratzer (1995) and Chierchia (1995). In Section 3.2, the analysis of how to distinguish a generic interpretation from an episodic interpretation will be spelled out.

3.1   General Review: the Generic/Episodic Distinction

That John was singing is a report of a specific event or occasion. But the statement that the earth turns around the sun is about a general property. In the literature, the former has been taken to be an episodic expression, while the latter a generic expression (Krifka et al. 1995). Though there may be other terms with slightly different definitions (e.g. characterizing, habitual, etc.) for the generic sentences, or even some argue that these terms should be treated differently, in this thesis we lay aside the diversity and concentrate on how either one of the interpretations is obtained.[9]

Before proceeding with the details of recent analyses of episodic and generic sentences, we would like to make a few things clear, so let us digress briefly to think about to what

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[9] See Lin (2003) for reference about Mandarin.

extent the episodic/generic distinction has interacted with the tense-aspect system in the grammar of an individual language. Let's look at the following English sentences, where (62-64) exemplify episodes and (65-67) exemplify generics.
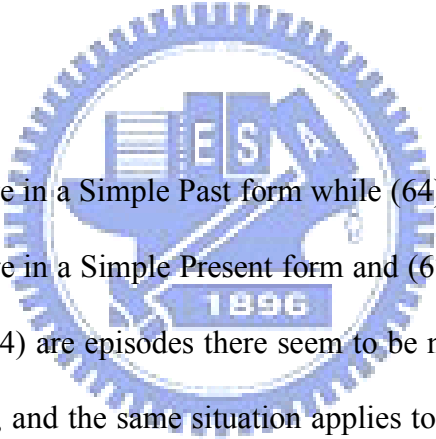
(62)   John slept well.

(63)   John kissed Mary.

(64)   John is singing a song now.

(65)   John sings well.

(66)   John kisses Mary every morning.

(67)   John liked Mary.

Sentences (62) and (63) are in a Simple Past form while (64) is in a Present Progressive form. Sentences (65) and (66) are in a Simple Present form and (67) is in a Simple Past form. It can be seen that, though (62-64) are episodes there seem to be no single property or grammatical form that generalize them, and the same situation applies to the generic sentences in (65-67), too. Also, after investigating 65 languages, Dahl (1995) concludes that it is not an easy task to find clear illustrations of grammatical forms that serve to differentiate episodes from generics. Now the question is, how does an individual language express the temporal information of generics and episodes, when it has no grammatical form to encode either one or both? The following approaches have shed some light on this issue.

3.1.1 Carlson (1977)

Carlson (1977) has tried to tackle this problem of generic/episodic distinction by proposing that predicates, including verbs and adjectives, should be divided into individual-level

predicates and stage-level predicates. We will look at some examples to explain the two types of predicates. In Carlson's terminology, the sentence in (68) would be called a "happening" and the sentence in (69) a "characteristic". The first sentence specifies that there was an occasion on which John engaged in a particular activity; conversely, the second example says that John has some characteristic or property.

(68)   John ate an apple.

(69)   John sings well.

Furthermore, for predicates that are predicated of bare plurals, Carlson finds that by means of there-inserted structures two types of predicates can be detected: those which can occur as the predicates of there-inserted structures, as in (70), and those which cannot, as in (71).
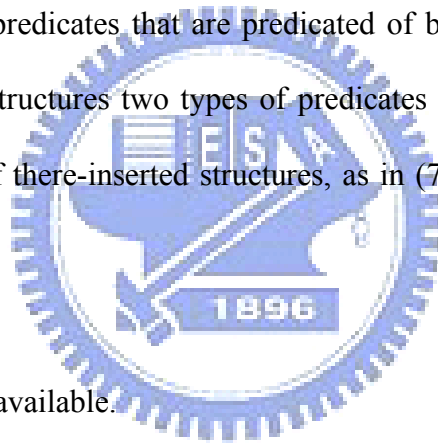
(70)   There are doctors available.

(71)   *There are doctors intelligent.

Thus, the predicate *available* can select only the existential reading of a bare plural, whereas the bare plural predicated by a predicate like *intelligent* has only the universal reading. And, indeed those predicates that select the existential reading of the bare plural are taken as speaking of "happenings"; those which select the universal reading of the bare plural are used to speak of "characteristics".

To formalize these observations, Carlson then applies the individual-level and stage-level predicates to the interpretation of characteristic and happening, respectively. Here is

how they are applied with the examples taken from Carlson. The sentence in (72) is ambiguous between a "characteristics" and a "happening". When concentrating on the characteristic interpretation, we see that running is a general property of Bill. In such case, we look upon the predicate *run* of the sentence as a set of individuals, and the NP *Bill* is treated as denoting the set of properties that Bill has. The semantic interpretation is represented in (73).

(72) Bill ran.

(73) run (b)

So *b* represents the individual Bill, and the formula makes certain that *b* belongs to the set of individuals which is named *run*.

Now we focus on the other reading of (72), that is, the happening. This time, the predicate *run* does not apply to Bill, the individual, but to one of his stages. It can be paraphrased as: There is a stage of Bill which is engaged in running. In order to express the meaning we want, Carlson postulates a "realization" relation R, which is a two-place relation that holds between stages and individuals. Accordingly, R(s, Bill) means that s is a stage of the object Bill. This makes the happening reading of *Bill ran* be like the following representation.

(74) $\exists y^s [R(y^s,b) \ \& \ run(y^s)]$

To summarize, the proposed individual-level predicates have something contributing to the characteristic, or generic, interpretation, while the stage-level predicates are taken to be

how the happening, or episodic, interpretation is derived. This is the basic idea that we learn about individual-level and stage-level predicates. Next we shall discuss how Kratzer (1995) and Chierchia (1995) have further developed the idea of the two types of predicates.

3.1.2 Kratzer (1995)

In Kratzer (1995), she has a different view from Carlson on the essential property of the two types of predicates. It is argued that stage-level predicates and individual-level predicates differ in argument structure. Following Davidson (1967), she proposes that stage-level predicates have an extra argument position for events or spatiotemporal locations; individual-level predicates do not have such a position. So, for Carlson the predicates are sets of different types of entities: individual-level predicates have individuals as their members and stage-level predicates have stages (of individuals) as their members. As for Kratzer's proposal, the difference is more like a syntactic one. The followings are the three evidences that she uses to argue for an extra argument position in stage-level predicates.

The first evidence comes from locatives, with data taken from German sentences.

Stage-level predicates

(75)　　　　...weil　fast　alle　Flüchtlinge in　dieser　Stadt　umgekommen　sind.

　　　　　　since　almost　all　refugees　in　this　city　perished　are

　　a.　'...since almost all of the refugees in this city perished.'

　　b.　'...since almost all the refugees perished in this city.'

(76)　　　　...weil　ihn　fast　alle　Flöhe　in　diesem Bett　gebissen　haben.

　　　　　　since　him　almost　all　fleas　in　this　bed　bitten　have

　　a.　'...since almost all of the fleas in this bed bit him.'

b. '...since almost all the fleas bit him in this bed.'

(77) ...weil fast alle Antragsteller in diesem Wartesaal saßen.

since almost all petitioners in this waiting room sat

a. '...since almost all of the petitioners in this waiting room were sitting.'

b. '...since almost all the petitioners were sitting in this waiting room.'

Individual-level predicates

(78) ...weil fast alle Schwäne in Australien schwarz sind.

since almost all swans in Australia black are

a. '...since almost all swans in Australia are black.'

(79) ...weil fast alle Lebewesen auf diesem Planet von der

since almost all living beings on this planet from the

Amöbe abstammen.

amoebe descend

a. '...since almost all living beings on this planet descend from the amoeba.'

(80) ...weil fast alle Schüler in dieser Schule Französisch können.

since almost all students in this school French know

a. '...since almost all of the students in this school know French.'

The above examples show that there are two meanings for the sentences with stage-level predicates and that there is only one interpretation for the sentences with individual-level predicates. The meaning difference relies on the roles modified by spatial and temporal expressions such as *in this city* or *today*. In the (a)-readings, we see that the spatial or temporal expression modifies the restricting predicate of the quantifier *fast alle*. In the (b)-

readings, it is the main predicate of the sentence that is modified by the spatial or temporal expression. Therefore, it is assumed that, if stage-level predicates have a Davidsonian argument whereas individual-level predicates do not, then there is an explanation for why temporal and spatial expressions can modify stage-level predicates but not individual-level predicates.

When-clauses are provided as the second evidence for an extra argument position in stage-level predicates. Let's look at the following English sentences taken from Kratzer.

(81) a.   *When Mary knows French, she knows it well.

b.   When a Moroccan knows French, she knows it well.

c.   When Mary knows a foreign language, she knows it well.

d.   When Mary speaks French, she speaks it well.

e.   *When Mary speaks French, she knows it well.

f.   *When Mary knows French, she speaks it well.

In this case, the variable binding mechanism is used to explain the phenomenon. It is assumed that the antecedents of conditionals simply serve as a function to restrict the domain of some operator. Compared with *if*-clauses, which is also a device for restricting the domain of some operator, *when*-clauses do not seem to be able to restrict epistemic modals, as the contrast shown in (82).

(82) a.   *When the library has this book, it must be on the second floor.

b.   If the library has this book, it must be on the second floor.

Bearing this contrast in mind, we further learn that whenever a conditional sentence introduced by *if* or *when* lacks an overt operator (i.e. a determiner quantifier, an adverb of quantification, or any kind of modal operator), non-overt operators will be stipulated. The available options are assumed to be an adverb of quantification like *always* or an epistemic necessity operator. So, if *when*-clauses cannot restrict epistemic modals, the only option for *when* in sentences (81a-f) is *always*. The analysis is shown as follows.

(83) a.   *Always [knows(Mary, French)] [knows-well(Mary, French)]

      b.   Always$_x$[Moroccan(x) & knows(x, French)] [knows-well(x, French)]

      c.   Always$_x$[foreign-language(x) & knows(Mary, x)] [knows-well(Mary,x)]

      d.   Always$_l$[speaks(Mary, French, l)] [speaks-well(Mary, French, l)]

      e.   *Always$_l$[speaks(Mary, French, l)] [knows-well(Mary, French)]

      f.   *Always[knows(Mary, French)] $_l$[speak-well(Mary, French, l)]

As the assumption says that stage-level predicates do but individual-level predicates do not introduce a variable which can be bound by *always*, we shall be able to explain why sentences (81a,e,f) are ungrammatical, along with the natural prohibition against vacuous quantification as stated in (84).

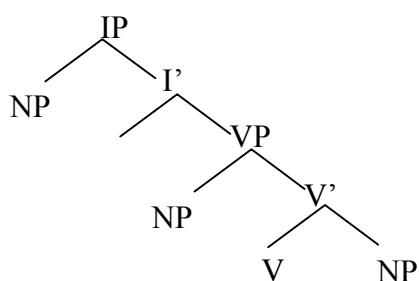(84) *Prohibition against Vacuous Quantification*

      For every quantifier Q, there must be a variable x such that Q binds an occurrence of

      x in both its restrictive clause and its nuclear scope.

The sentence in (81a) is ungrammatical because it is excluded by the prohibition against

vacuous quantification. Since the main predicate in the antecedent and in the consequent is individual-level, there is no Davidsonian argument introducing a variable. Moreover, so long as there is no other expression introducing variables, we see that the quantifier *always* in this sentence so far has no variable to bind, hence violating the prohibition against vacuous quantification. Similarly, the sentences in (81e) and (81f) lack a bindable variable in the consequent and in the antecedent respectively. In (81b) and (81c), the sentences are grammatical since the indefinite in the antecedent and the same one in the consequent introduces variables. As for (81d), we see that it is almost like (81a), but while the former contains a stage-level predicate *speak*, the latter contains an individual-level predicate *know*. If stage-level predicates are to introduce a free variable but individual-level predicates are not, it will be (81a) but not (81d) to violate the prohibition against vacuous quantification.

The third evidence for the extra argument position in stage-level predicates is a syntactic one, which concerns the extraction facts from German. In this argument, Kratzer adopts the theoretical assumption that there are two possible positions for a subject to occupy: one is in the specifier-of-VP and the other is in the specifier-of-IP. The syntactic structure of simple sentences is assumed to be as follows:

(85)

```
            IP
          /    \
        NP      I'
               /   \
             VP
            /   \
          NP     V'
                /  \
               V    NP
```

This kind of structure is concerned with the extraction facts of German as shown in (86-87).

(86) a. ...weil   uns   viele   Lehrer   geholfen   haben.

          since   us   many   teachers   helped   have

          '...since many teachers helped us.'

      b. Lehrer   haben   uns   viele   geholfen.

          teachers   have   us   many   helped

          'As for teachers, many of them helped us.'
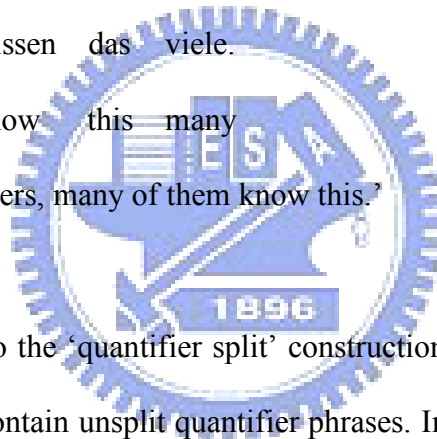
(87) a. ...weil   das   viele   Lehrer   wissen.

          since   this   many   teachers   know

          '...since many teachers know this.'

      b. *Lehrer   wissen   das   viele.

          teachers   know   this   many

          'As for teachers, many of them know this.'

These examples belong to the 'quantifier split' construction in German. In the (a)-sentences, the subordinate clauses contain unsplit quantifier phrases. In the corresponding (b)-sentences, the main clauses employ the verb-second process, allowing the quantifier phrase to split. The verb *help* in (86) is a stage-level predicate, whereas the verb *know* in (87) is individual-level. Through these cases, it is seen that quantifier split is possible with subjects of stage-level predicates but impossible with subjects of individual-level predicates. If subjects of individual-level predicates are base-generated in SpecIP, they will have some options at S-structure. One way is to stay in the original position; the other way is to scramble, which is to adjoin to IP. In neither case are the subjects governed, hence leading to a CED (Huang 1982) violation whenever subjects move. On the contrary, assume that subjects of stage-level predicates are base-generated within VP, they also have several alternatives at S-structure.

When they stay in their original position, they are governed and thus no CED violation occurs when these subjects are moved. But if they move on to Spec IP or scramble, they are ungoverned. In this case, CED violation occurs when there is movement from these subjects.

The above discussions are about Kratzer's idea of the distinction between individual-level predicates and stage-level predicates, and in the next section we are going to see Chierchia (1995)'s discussion on these predicates from another point of view.

3.1.3 Chierchia (1995)

Unlike Kratzer, Chierchia argues that all predicates have a Davidsonian argument ranging over occasions, but that in individual-level predicates there is a generic operator which will bind this argument. Indeed, this argumentation will take individual-level predicates to be inherently generic and the followings show a list of six key properties which are used as criterial for the characterization of individual-level predicates.

The first property of individual-level predicates is that they express stable states. They have similar properties to statives, such as being ungrammatical in the progressive (cf. Vendler 1967, Dowty 1979). There are statives which express episodic qualities, such as tired, happy and so forth. To decide whether a state is generic or episodic, one can use the temporal adverbials as a test. The difference will manifest itself in the behavior of temporal adverbials, as seen in (88).

(88)　a.　John was drunk yesterday/ last month/ a year ago.

　　　b.　??John was tall yesterday/ last month/ a year ago.

(p. 177, ex (2))

The sentence in (88a) is grammatical, but the one in (88b) requires some complex or special ramifications of the scenario.

The second property of individual-level predicates concerns their co-occurrence with locative modifiers. It has been noticed that modification of an individual-level predicate by a locative is generally impossible but that there may be no such restriction for stage-level predicates, as shown by the following contrast.

(89) a. ??John is a linguist in his car.

      b. ??John is intelligent in France.

      c. ??John knows Latin in his office.

(90) a. John is always sick in France.

      b. John works in his office.
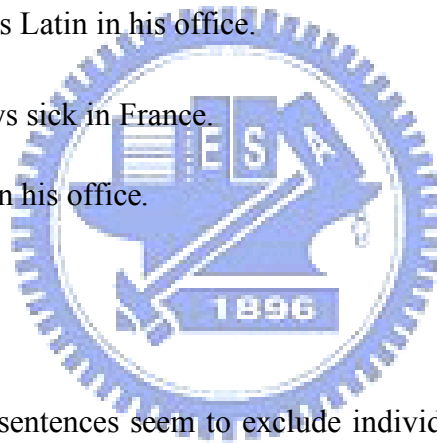
<div align="right">(p. 178, ex 4-5)</div>

Third, perception sentences seem to exclude individual-level predicates but no stage-level predicates, as shown in (91) and (92) respectively.

(91) a. *I saw John a linguist.

      b. *I saw John tall.

      c. *I heard John like Mary.

(92) a. I saw John drunk.

      b. I heard Mary beat John.

<div align="right">(p. 178, ex 6-7)</div>

Fourth, we take *there*-sentences into consideration and find that this kind of sentences can occur with stage-level adjectives but not with individual-level predicates, as in (93).

(93)   a.   There are two men drunk/sick/available,....

       b.   ??There are two men intelligent/white/altruistic,....

                                             (p. 179, ex (8))

Fifth, we come to the interaction between bare plurals and individual-level predicates. While individual-level predicates select the universal reading of the underlined bare plurals in (94), stage-level predicates select the existential reading of the underlined bare plurals in (95) instead.

(94)   a.   <u>Humans</u> are mammals.

       b.   <u>Firemen</u> are altruistic.

       c.   <u>Dogs</u> hate cats.

(95)   a.   <u>Firemen</u> are available.

       b.   <u>Dogs</u> are barking in the courtyard.

                                             (p. 179, ex 10-11)

The sixth property has to do with the interaction between individual-level predicates and adverbs of quantification. Consider the contrast between (96) and (97).

(96)   a.   ??When John knows Latin, he always knows it well.

       b.   ??When John is intelligent, he is always pleasant.

(97)　　a.　　When John speaks Latin, he always speaks it well.

　　　　b.　　When John is drunk, he is always obnoxious.

As shown in (96), the sentences which involve individual-level predicates are awkward, but in (97), the sentences with stage-level predicates are quite natural.

　　　　To be brief, Chierchia's six 'natural' properties are taken to argue for a generic operator in the syntax; nonetheless, it does not seem that the properties can also neatly be applied to the other languages.

　　　　In fact, the generic/episodic distinction has earned itself a notorious reputation in the literature since the distinction varies from language to language and there is dramatic discrepancy among different proposals. The aforementioned approaches to the distinction between a generics and an episodic interpretation have focused upon syntactic or semantic aspects. There are, however, other researches trying to crystallize to what extent the concept of a generics is or should be (Dahl 1975, Geurts 1985, Heyer 1990, Declerck 1991, among others). Furthermore, the more languages we observe (Dahl 1995), the more difficult for us to find a clear-cut distinction between generics and episodics with respect to their grammatical forms. Here in Taiwanese we encounter exactly the same problem. As the sentence in (98) itself can express both generic and episodic interpretations, it seems that no simple test can be used to tell them apart from each other.

(98)　　Abing　　lia　　　bo　　　hi-a.

　　　　Abing　　catch　　NEG　　fish

　　　　i) 'Abing failed to catch the fish.'

ii) 'Abing is unable to catch any fish.'

Yet, were we to take this sentence as a random case, we would find no way out when considering other sentences with the same predicate configuration [V *u/bo* NP], in which the same pattern exists, as shown in (99-100).

(99) Abing ban bo kam-a.

Abing pick NEG tangerine

i) 'Abing failed to pick the tangerine(s).'

ii) 'Abing is unable to pick any tangerine.'

(100) Abing be bo sann.

Abing buy NEG clothes

i) 'Abing failed to buy the clothes.'

ii) 'Abing is unable to buy any clothes.'

So, what is it that determines the interpretation of the sentences? In what follows we would like to point out the possibility of a referential/non-referential noun phrase in the object position to play a role in deciding on the episodic/generic interpretation of sentences of such configurational structure.

3.2 Proposal

3.2.1 Preliminary of NPs in Taiwanese

While investigating the divergence between a generics and an episode with respect to the [V *u/bo* NP] construction, we find that there is an interesting correlation between the

referentiality of the postverbal noun phrase and the generic/episodic interpretation of the sentence. Consider the following examples.

(101)　Abing　lia　　bo　　hi.

　　　　Abing　catch　NEG　fish

　　　　'Abing is unable to catch any fish.'

(102)　Abing　jim　　bo　　so-si.

　　　　Abing　take　NEG　key

　　　　'Abing failed to take the key (out of his pocket).'

In (101), the postverbal noun phrase *hi* 'fish' is interpreted as non-referential and what the sentence denotes is the subject *Abing*'s lack of ability to catch any fish rather than an event on which *Abing* engaged in a catching-fish-activity. On the other hand, the sentence in (102) involves a noun phrase *so-si* 'key' which is interpreted as referential, and the denotation of this sentence is about an activity of taking the key out which is done by the subject (despite the fact that *Abing* did not get that key).

It is therefore shown by the above examples that there is an interaction between the referentiality of postverbal nouns and an episodic meaning of a sentence. But, under close inspection it seems that this observation is based more on the intuition than on any 'observed' forms since the noun phrases under discussion are all bare nouns. So, what we are going to do now is to take a look at the general behaviors of noun phrases in Taiwanese first, and later on postulate a promising method for deciding when a noun phrase in [V *u/bo* NP] can be interpreted as referential and when cannot. In doing so, we hope to preserve our original hypothesis on the distinction between a generic and an episodic interpretation regarding

sentences involving [V *u/bo* NP] construction.

To pave the way for our discussions, we will first provide an overview of how a noun phrase in different syntactic distributions is interpreted concerning its referentiality in Taiwanese.[10] We will take both numeral phrases and bare noun phrases into consideration. The first type to be discussed is the numeral noun phrase. Numeral phrases can be interpreted as referential or non-referential in preverbal position, as seen in (103a-e). In postverbal position, it is also possible for a numeral phrase to be interpreted as referential or non-referential, as shown in (104a-e).

(103) a. <u>Go e lang</u> lai a. (referential)

   five CL person come SFP

   'The five people came.'

   b. <u>Go e lang</u> long-phua po-le. (referential)

   five CL person break glass

   'The five people broke the glass.'

   c. <u>Go e gin-a</u> ho lang pha. (referential)

   five CL child PASS person hit

   'The five children were hit by some person(s).'

   d. <u>Go e lang</u> cia peng, chun-e lang cia minn. (non-referential/referential)

   five CL person eat rice, rest-CL person eat noodle

   i) 'The five people ate rice, and the rest of people ate noodles.'

   ii) 'Five people shall eat rice, and the rest of people eat noodles.'

---

[10] Regarding Mandarin Chinese, Hsieh (2008) argues that both NP and DP layers are needed in a noun, where the former is associated with non-referentiality and the latter is the locus of referentiality. In this article, we do not look further into the structure of a noun, but simply concentrate on the interpretation of a noun (i.e. numeral phrases, bare nouns) with respect to referentiality.

e. <u>Sap e lang</u> cia cia e liau hit thang peng. (non-referential)

    ten CL person perhaps eat can finish that CL rice

    'Perhaps ten people can eat up that bucket of rice.'

(104) a. Abing cia <u>go wann peng</u>. (non-referential/ referential)

    Abing eat five CL rice

    i) 'Abing eats five bowls of rice.'

    ii) 'Abing ate (the) five bowls of rice.'

b. Abing cia <u>go wann peng</u> a. (referential)

    Abing eat five CL rice SFP

    'Abing ate five bowls of rice.'

c. Abing u cia <u>go wann peng</u>. (referential)

    Abing AUX eat five CL rice

    'Abing ate five bowls of rice.'

d. Abing ka-i <u>leng e co-gin-a</u>. (referential)

    Abing like two CL girl

    'Abing likes the two girls.'

e. Abing long-phua <u>leng te po-le</u>. (referential)

    Abing break two CL glass

    'Abing broke two pieces of glass.'

Next we consider the bare nouns. Bare noun phrases behave almost the same as numeral phrases. In preverbal position, bare nouns can have a referential interpretation or a non-referential interpretation, as seen in (105a-e). In postverbal position, a bare noun can also be interpreted as referential or non-referential, as in (106a-d).

(105) a. Niaonn-a   pe-khi   chu   ting.   (referential)

        cat   climb   house   roof

        'The cat crawled to the roof of the house.'

    b. Niaonn-a   te   cia   hi-a.   (referential)

        cat   ASP   eat   fish

        'The cat is eating the fish.'

    c. Niaonn-a   ai   cia   hi-a.   (non-referential)

        cat   love   eat   fish

        'Cats love to eat fish.'

    d. Niaonn-a   cin   ai   cit   cia   niaonn-chi.   (referential)

        cat   very   love   this   CL   mouse

        'The cat loves this mouse very much.'

    e. Niaonn-chi-a   thao   cia   ke-leng.   (referential)

        mouse   stealthily eat   egg

        'The mouse ate the egg(s) stealthily.'

(106) a. Abing   pha-si   niaonn-chi-a.   (referential)

        Abing   hit-dead   mouse

        'Abing killed the mouse by smacking it.'

    b. Abing   cia   gu-bah.   (non-referential)

        Abing   eat   beef

        'Abing eats beef.'

    c. Abing   u   cia   gu-bah.   (referential/non-referential)

        Abing   AUX   eat   beef

        i) 'Abing ate the beef.'

ii) 'Abing eats beef.'

d.　　Abing　the-yia　kao-a.　　　　　　　　　　　　(non-referential)

　　　Abing　hate　　dog

　　　'Abing hate dogs.'

It is seen from the above examples that a noun phrase in Taiwanese can be referential or non-referential no matter it is in subject or object position. So, how do we know when a numeral phrase or a bare noun is interpreted as referential and when as non-referential, especially in the cases involving [V *u/bo* NP], where V is always concerned with activity and that no explicit temporal marker is employed? The following section demonstrates how the principles proposed shall help us to determine the referential interpretation of a postverbal noun phrase in [V *u/bo* NP], whose determination consequently settles the generic/episodic interpretation of the sentence.
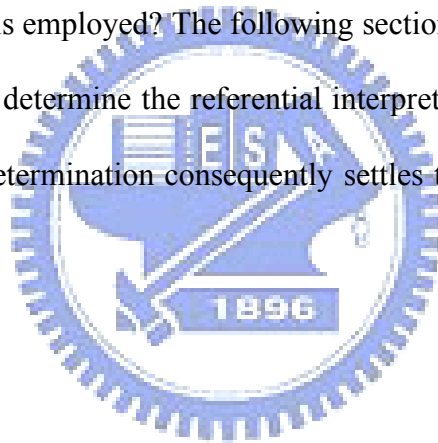
3.2.2　Proposal

In sentences involving the [V *u/bo* NP] construction, we suggest that their being generic or episodic be determined by the referentiality/non-referentiality of the postverbal noun phrase: the sentence is generic if and only if the postverbal noun phrase is non-referential, and the sentence is episodic if and only if the postverbal noun phrase is referential. We provide five principles which can help us to pin down the referentiality of the postverbal noun phrase.

First, we should consider whether an activity denoted by [V-NP] can be taken as the profession of the agent. To see the result, we can make use of the predicate structure [...*si* V-NP *e*] '...is a person who specializes in a certain activity'. Compare the examples in (107) with those in (108).

(107)   Yi [si {lia-hi/chio-kua/cing-chann/kong-kiu}   e].

he is catch-fish/sing-song/grow-field/hit-ball   of

'He is a {fisher/singer/farmer/hitter}.'

(108) *Yi [si {jim so-si/the kha-bang/be au-a/o co-thau/co che}   e].

he is take-out key/take bag/buy cup/dig-up stone/borrow book   of

Intended: 'He is a person who specializes in *{taking out keys/taking bags/buying

cups/digging up stones/borrowing books}.'

This is a principle that is taken to detect whether the NP can be non-referential in [V *u/bo* NP].
In other words, if the NP can occur in [...*si* V-NP *e*] structure, it can be interpreted as non-referential in [V *u/bo* NP]. The reason is that, when the [V-NP] can be realized as an occupation, [V *u/bo* NP] is intuitively realized as a property to denote the agent's ability/inability to do a good job. Therefore, if such kind of [V-NP] is involved in [V *u/bo* NP], the sentences are interpreted as generic, as in (109a-d).

(109) a.   Abing   lia   bo   hi-a.

Abing   catch   NEG   fish

'(As a fisher,) Abing is uable to catch any fish.'

b.   Abing   chio   bo   kua.

Abing   sing   NEG   song

'(As a singer,) Abing is uable to sing any song.'

c.   Abing   cing   bo   chann.

Abing   grow   NEG   field

'(As a farmer,) Abing is uable to grow any crops.'

d.   Abing   kong   bo   kiu.

Abing   hit   NEG   ball

'(As a hitter,) Abing is uable to hit any ball.'

Contrarily, if the [V-NP] predicates are not found to have this kind of 'occupational' usage, the NP can only be interpreted as referential when it occurs in [V *u/bo* NP], hence the sentence will only be taken to denote an episode, as in (110a-e).

(110) a.   Abing   jim   bo   so-si

Abing   take-out   NEG   key

'Abing failed to take the key out.'

b.   Abing   the   bo   kha-bang

Abing   take   NEG   bag

'Abing failed to take the bag.'

c.   Abing   be   bo   au-a.

Abing   be   NEG   cup

'Abing failed to buy the cup.'

d.   Abing   o   bo   cio-thau.
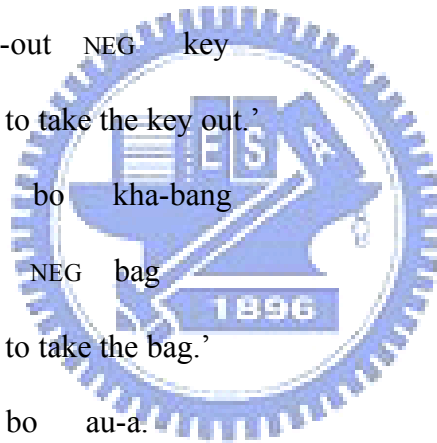
Abing   dig-up   NEG   stone

'Abing failed to dig up the stone.'

e.   Abing   cio   bo   che.

Abing   borrow   NEG   book

'Abing failed to borrow the book.'

The second principle concerns whether the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] itself has been taken to denote a property of a particular kind. In this case we take as a test the sentence type [*Sia-mi khuan e* X̲ [V *u/bo* NP]?] 'What kind of X have/do not have sufficient qualities to do the [V-NP]-thing?' If the postverbal NP can survive the sentences, as in (111a-d), it can be interpreted as non-referential when the associated V and *u/bo* co-occur, as shown in (112a-c). As a result, these sentences will be interpreted as generic.

(111)　a.　Sia-mi　khuan　e　lang　chua　bo　boo?

　　　　　what　kind　of　person　marry　NEG　wife

　　　　　'What kind of people do not have sufficient qualities to marry a woman?'

　　　b.　Sia-mi　khuan　e　lang　co　bo　tai-cih?

　　　　　what　kind　of　person　do　NEG　thing

　　　　　'What kind of people do not have sufficient qualities to do things well?'

　　　c.　Sia-mi　khuan　e　chu-a　cia　senn　u　kue-cih?

　　　　　what　kind　of　tree　just　bear　AFFIRM　fruit

　　　　　'What kind of plants have sufficient qualities to bear fruits?'

　　　d.　Sia-mi　khuan　e　ke-a　senn　bo　leng?

　　　　　what　kind　of　hen　produce　NEG　egg

　　　　　'What kind hens do not have sufficient qualities to produce eggs?'

(112)　a.　Abing　chua　bo　boo.

　　　　　Abing　marry　NEG　wife

　　　　　'Abing does not have sufficient qualities to marry any woman.'

　　　b.　Abing　co　bo　tai-cih.

　　　　　Abing　do　NEG　thing

'Abing does not have sufficient qualities to do anything.'

c.   Cit-cia   ke-a   senn   bo   leng.

this-CL   hen   produce   NEG   egg

'This hen does not have sufficient qualities to produce eggs.'

On the other hand, if the postverbal NP cannot occur in the sentence type [*Sia-mi khuan e* X [V *u/bo* NP]?], as in (113a-c), it can only be interpreted as referential when the associated V and *u/bo* co-occur, as in (114a-c). Under these circumstances, the sentences involving this kind of [V *u/bo* NP] will denote episodes.

(113) a.   *Sia-mi   khuan   e   lang   ce   bo   wi?

what   kind   of   person   sit   NEG   seat

'What kind of people do not have sufficient qualities to take a seat?'

b.   *Sia-mi   khuan   e   lang   cao   bo   loo?

what   kind   of   person   run   NEG   way

'What kind of people do not have sufficient qualities to escape?'

c.   *Sia-mi   khuan   e   lang   puann   bo   yi-a?

what   kind   of   person   take   NEG   chair

'What kind of people do not have sufficient qualities to take chairs?'

(114) a.   Abing   ce   bo   wi.

Abing   sit   NEG   seat

'Abing failed to have the seat to sit on.'

b.   Abing   cao   bo   loo.

Abing   run   NEG   way

'Abing failed to find the way to run.'

c.   Abing   puann   bo   yi-a.

Abing   take   NEG   chair

'Abing failed to take the chair away.'

There is one more principle that can also be taken as a test to decide whether the postverbal noun phrase can be non-referential or not. Here is the mechanism: we juxtapose two clauses, where the former one containing the [V-NP] is associated with an individual-level predicate, *mnn-si khun-nan e tai-cih* '...is not a difficult thing,' and that the latter one directly takes this suspected [V *u/bo* NP] as its predicate, as shown in (115a-b).

(115) a.   Sui-len   lia   hi-a   mnn-si   khun-nan   e   tai-cih,   tan-si   yi

although   catch   fish   not   difficult   POSS   thing,   but   he

tio-si   lia   bo   hi-a.

just   catch   NEG   fish

'Although catching fish is not a difficult thing, he is just unable to catch any fish.'

b.   Sui-len   man   te   mnn-si   khun-nan   e   tai-cih, tan-si   yi   tio-si

although   pick   tea   not   difficult   POSS   thing,   but   he   just

man   bo   te.

pick   NEG   tea

'Although picking tea is not a difficult thing, he is just unable to pick any tea.'

If the output of the compound sentence is grammatical, then the NP under discussion can be

non-referential; hence the sentence involving the [V *u/bo* NP] will refer to a generic property of the agent, as seen in (116a-b).

(116) a.   Abing   lia   bo   hi-a.

              Abing   catch   NEG   fish

              'Abing is unable to catch any fish.'

      b.   Abing   man   bo   te.

              Abing   pick   NEG   tea

              'Abing is unable to pick any tea.'

However, if the output of the compound sentence is ungrammatical, as in (117a-c), the NP involved can only be interpreted as referential when it occurs with the associated V and *u/bo*, as seen in (118a-c).
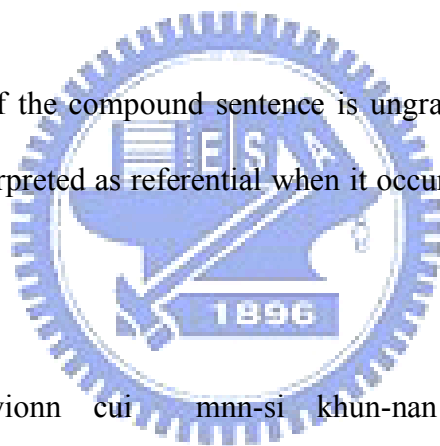
(117) a.   *Sui-len   yionn   cui   mnn-si   khun-nan   e   tai-cih,   tan-si   yi

              although   scoop   water   not   difficult   POSS   thing,   but   he

              tio-si   yionn   bo   cui

              just   scoop   NEG   water

              Intended: 'Although scooping out water is not a difficult thing, he is just unable

                       to scoop out any water.'

      b.   *Sui-len   ka   cin-ka   mnn-si   khun-nan   e   tai-cih,   tan-si   yi

              although   trim   nail   not   difficult   POSS   thing,   but   he

              tio-si   ka   bo   jin-ka.

              just   trim   NEG   nail

Intended: 'Although trimming nails is not a difficult thing, he is just unable to

trim any nail.'

c. *Sui-len   me   au-a   mnn-si   khun-nan   e   tai-cih,   tan-si   yi   tio-si

although   buy   cup   not   difficult   POSS   thing,   but   he   just

be   bo   au-a.

buy   NEG   cup

Intended: 'Although buying cups is not a difficult thing, he is just unable to

buy any cup.'

(118) a.   Abing   yionn   bo   cui.

Abing   scoop   NEG   water

'Abing failed to scoop out the water.'

b.   Abing   ka   bo   cin-ka.

Abing   trim   NEG   nail

'Abing failed to trim the nail.'

c.   Abing   be   bo   au-a.

Abing   buy   NEG   cup

'Abing failed to buy the cup.'

The above three principles are all used to test whether a postverbal noun phrase involved in

[V *u/bo* NP] can be interpreted as non-referential or not. For those NPs which can pass any of

the three principles, we have shown that they can be non-referential. As for those NPs which

pass none of the tests, they can only be interpreted as referential, as illustrated by the

examples in (119a-d).

(119) a. Yi   ce   bo   wi.

      he   sit   NEG   seat

      'He failed to have the seat to sit.'

    b. Yi   jim   bo   so-si.

      he   take   NEG   key

      'He failed to get the key.'

    c. Yi   be   bo   au-a.

      he   buy   NEG   cup

      'He failed to get the cup that he intended to buy.'

    d. Yi   the   bo   kha-bang.

      he   take   NEG   bag

      'He failed to take the bag.'

Now we turn to the fourth principle, based on which we can decide when a noun phrase can be referential. The first thing to consider is the verbal phrases which we have already talked about in the previous principles. We should point out a possibility that, although the NPs that survive the three principles can be interpreted as non-referential, there are normal circumstances under which these NPs can also be interpreted as referential. To explain more clearly, some of the verbal phrases not only depict an occupation or a specific property, but denote an activity which can still be done by ordinary people. For instance, *lia hi-a* 'catch fish' can also mean a catching-fish activity, *khio leng* 'pick up eggs' a picking-up-eggs activity , or *ban kam-a* 'pick tangerines' a picking-tangerines activity. In other words, since this kind of activities are not like the ones which are so specialized that only a certain group of people can do, normal people can simply take them as their pastimes or hobbies in

this regard. Allowing this possibility, we see that the postverbal NP involved might turn up to be referential when it occurs with the associated V and *u/bo*. As a result, sentences containing such kind of verbal phrases might be ambiguous between a generic and an episodic meaning.

To make such a sentence be focusing upon the referential usage of the postverbal noun phrase, we can insert a temporal adverb such as *cang* 'yesterday', in which manner we are brought about a supplement to disambiguate the sentence at the same time, as shown in (120a-b).

(120) a.　Yi　　cang　　　lia　　bo　　hi.

　　　　　he　yesterday　catch　NEG　fish

　　　　　'He failed to catch the fish yesterday.'

　　　b.　Yi　cang　　　　kong　bo　kiu.

　　　　　he　yesterday　hit　NEG　ball

　　　　　'He failed to hit the ball(s) yesterday.'

The temporal adverb insertion is thus taken as the fourth principle to help decide the referential interpretation of the postverbal noun phrase in the [V *u/bo* NP] construction.

So far, there is still one more thing that we would like to clarify. The principles that we use to determine the referentiality of a postverbal noun phrase are not as rigid as they should be once we implement a context by force. In a sentence like (121) we usually think of not having the seat to sit on as a stage-level predicate since we do not expect a person to search for a seat all the time. However, if we insert a frequency adverb such as *tiann-tiann* 'often', then the meaning of the sentence is changed into the denotation of a habitual event. To be more specific, the sentence in (122) means that the event of his finding no seat to sit on

often takes place.

(121) Yi   ce   bo   wi.

     he   sit   NEG   seat

     'He did not have the seat to sit on.'

(122) Yi   tiann-tiann   ce   bo   wi.

     he   often   sit   NEG   seat

     'He often has no seat to sit on.'

But, is the insertion of frequency adverbs always available as long as we implement a context? Say, for a sentence like (123a), would it be felicitous if we insert *tiann-tiann* 'often' to get a sentence like (123b)? In the second sentence we intended to have a meaning that he often takes no key from his pocket, but since to make up such a scenario is almost impossible in our daily life, we therefore get an infelicitous sentence.

(123) a.   Yi   the   bo   so-si.

          he   take   NEG   key

          'He failed to take the key (from his pocket).'

     b.   *Yi   tiann-tiann   the   bo   so-si.

          he   often   take   NEG   key

          Intended: *'He often takes no key (from his pocket).'

We take this context implementation as the fifth principle, which can also subdue the other four principles.

3.2.3 Residual Problems

In sentences that involve the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] construction, we still find out that there are a few examples where no felicitous interpretation can obtain, as in (124-127).

(124) *Abing   pha   bo   tian-nau.

　　　 Abing   play NEG   computer

　　　 Intended: i) *'Abing failed to use the computer.'

　　　　　　　　ii) *'Abing is unable to use any computer.'

(125) *Abing   mong   bo   phinn-ann.

　　　 Abing   touch   NEG   nose

　　　 Intended: i) *'Abing failed to touch the nose.'

　　　　　　　　ii) *'Abing is unable to touch any nose.'

(126) *Abing   long   bo   chia.

　　　 Abing   hit   NEG   car

　　　 Intended: i) *'Abing failed to hit the car.'

　　　　　　　　ii) *'Abing is unable to hit any car.'

 (127) *Abing   wash   bo   min.

　　　 Abing   wash   NEG   face

　　　 Intended: i) *'Abing failed to wash the face.'

　　　　　　　　ii) *'Abing is unable to wash any face.'

We attribute this problem to the syntactic requirement of the predicate [V *u/bo*], and we will discuss this in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

_____

Syntax of the Predicate [V *u/bo* NP]

In this chapter, we provide the syntactic analysis of the [V *u/bo* NP] construction based on the framework of Lin (2001). We review Lin's basic assumptions and the application of light verb syntax in Section 4.1. Then we offer our analysis in Section 4.2 and also a brief comparison between Taiwanese [V *u/bo* NP] and its Mandarin counterpart [V *de/bu dao* NP] in Section 4.3.

4.1   Lin's Light Verb Analysis

Lin (2001) postulates a parametrized approach to lexicalization of the light verb structure, the gist of which is that languages may differ in the phrase structural level at which lexicalization applies to the light verb structure. Following this, English and Japanese are different in that the former has lexicalization applied at the highest point of the light verb structure, leaving all the arguments in a sentence licensed in L-Syntax, and that in Japanese, lexicalization applies at a lower point of the light verb structure, hence leaving the subject argument licensed until S-Syntax. Moreover, what serves as the main concern of this thesis is that, in Mandarin Chinese, the main verb is claimed to remain almost untouched by lexicalization, and the whole light verb structure is sent to S-Syntax intact, hence leaving all arguments licensed in S-Syntax.

Looking back into the origin of the notion of light verb in recent generative literature, Lin further points out that to simply consider the light verb an empty place holder with only elementary semantics is not right. Furthermore, to assume that event structures are completely determined by the syntactic structure will leave examples unaccounted for where an individual syntactic structure contributes to more than one possible event structure, as demonstrated by the *suru* construction in Japanese. For these reasons, Lin adopts Huang's (1997) light verb syntax, which takes light verbs as eventuality predicates with concrete thematic functions and also as syntactic entities that introduce arguments into the sentence structures. This approach aims to capture the correlation between the syntactic structure and the event structure. In the following we will look at the examples which show how Lin applies the new framework of light verb syntax to various constructions, such as the unaccusative-causative alternation, unergatives, denominals, and deadjectivals in Mandarin Chinese.

First let's look at the unaccusative-causative alternation. To causativize a sentence like (128), we need to insert an additional action verb, as shown in (129-131).

(128) Chuangzi   po   le.   *(Unaccusative)*

window   break SFP

'The window broke.'

(129) Laozhang da-po   chuangzi.   *(Agentive)*

Laozhang hit-break window

'Laozhang broke the window.'

(130) Mutou   zhuang-po   chuangzi.   *(Instrument)*

wood   strike-break   window

'The wood broke the window.'

(131) Taifong   chui-po   chuangzi.   *(Natural force)*

typhoon   blow-break   window

'The typhoon broke the window.'

The two verbs in (129-131) can also be separated by the extension marker *de*, as in (132-134).

(132) Laozhang   da   de   chuangzi   po   le.

Laozhang   hit   EXT   window   break   SFP

'Laozhang hit [the window such that] the window broke.'

(133) Mutou   zhuang   de   chuangzi   po   le.

wood   strike   EXT   window   break   SFP

'The wood stroke [the window such that] the window broke.'

(134) Taifong   chui   de   chuangzi   po   le.

typhoon   blow   EXT   window   break   SFP

'The typhoon blow [on the window such that] the window broke.'

These observations lead Lin to the analysis represented in the following diagram:

(135)
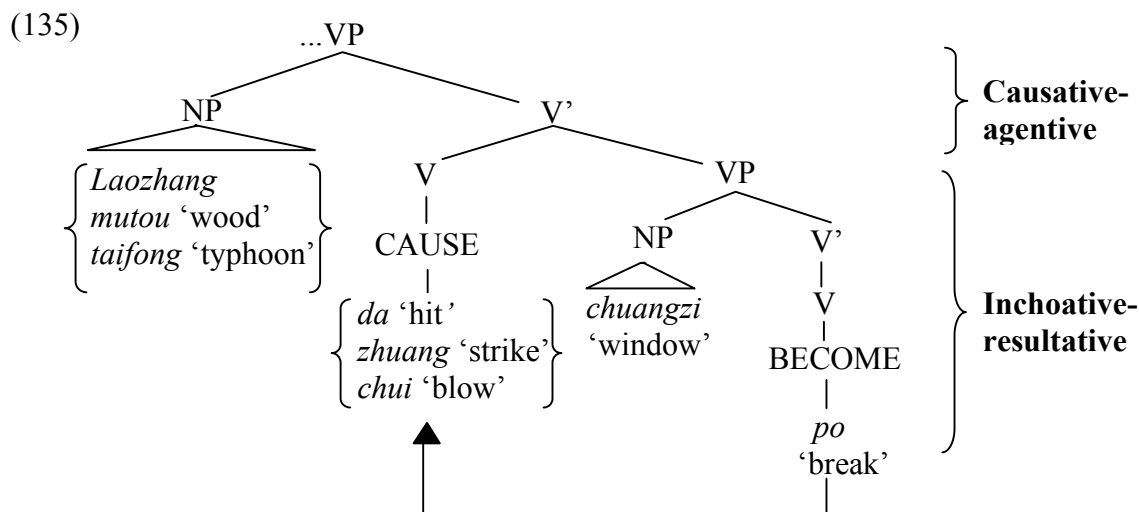
In (135), there are two VP layers which consist of a CAUSE VP and a BECOME VP. When the verb *po* 'break' occurs alone, we get an inchoative eventuality. To have a causative eventuality, a CAUSE VP need merge into the structure, hence the action verb *da* 'hit', *zhuang* 'strike', or *chui* 'blow' occurs. On that ground, the syntactic structure is determined by the eventuality structure of the predicate, namely, the light verbs CAUSE and BECOME.

Now we turn to the unergatives, denominals, and deadjectivals. The example in (136) is to demonstrate how an intransitive predicate is derived from a transitive structure.

(136) a.　zou　　lu

　　　　walk　　road

　　　　'to walk'

　　b.　**zou**-le　　hen　　chang　yi-duan　　**lu**

　　　　walk-ASP　very　long　　one-stretch　road

　　　　'to walk for a long distance'

　　c.
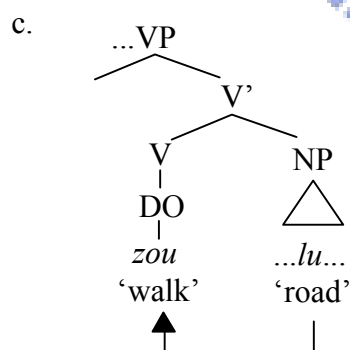
In this example, it is the light verb DO that takes the lexical verb *zou* 'walk'. If the complement of the verb *zou* 'walk' is a bare noun phrase and non-referential, it incorporates to the verb, as shown in (136a). If it is referential, there is no incorporation and the noun phrase remains its phrasal characteristics, as in (136b).

The denominals with the light verb *da* 'hit' employs the same mechanism of noun incorporation. In (137), the light verb involved here is also DO and is lexically spelled out as the verb *da* 'hit'. When the NP complement is non-referential, it incorporates to the light verb, as in (137a); when it is referential, no incorporation is applied, as in (137b).
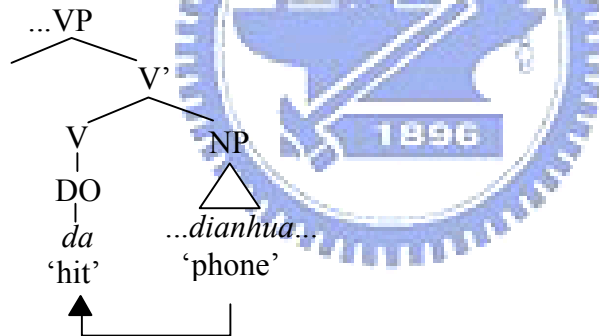
(137) a. da   dianhua

hit   phone

'to make a call'

b. **da**-le   san-ge   **dianhua**

hit-ASP   three-CL   phone

'to make three calls'

c.

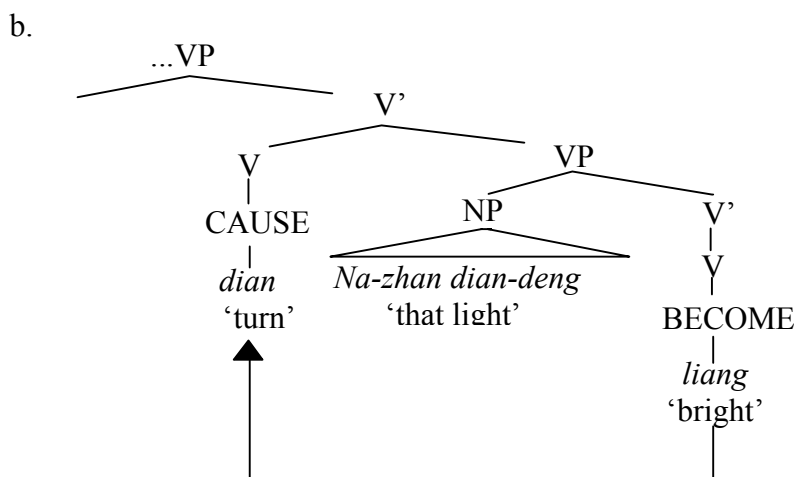Deadjectivals employ a similar mechanism as the causative does. The analysis is shown in (138).

(138) a. dian-liang   na-zhan   dian-deng

turn-bright   that- CL   light

'to turn that light bright'

b.

In sum, Lin proposes to represent the syntactic structures by event structures, and the light verbs are regarded as the eventuality holders. Assuming only those *event-dependent* aspects can be syntactic light verbs, Lin argues that a syntactic structure, such as unaccusative-causative alternation, unergatives or denominals, can be derived through merging different light verbs. In the following section, we will investigate the Taiwanese data based on Lin's framework of light verb syntax.

4.2 Syntactic Analysis of the Predicate [V *u/bo* NP]

Cheng (1997) observes that certain elements can be inserted between the verb and *u/bo*, as exemplified in (139-142) ((43-46) repeated here), which leads us to the analysis that these two verbs are phrasal.[11]

(139) Yi   choa   tih-be   u   boo   a.

　　　 he   marry   almost   have   wife   SFP

　　　 'He is about to have a wife.'

_____

[11] Thanks to Jonah Lin for pointing out this to me.

(140) Yi   boo   choa   ia-be   u   leh.

he   wife   marry   not-yet   have   SFP

'He has not been able to get a wife yet.'

(141) Li   an-ne   tai-ci   co   be   u.
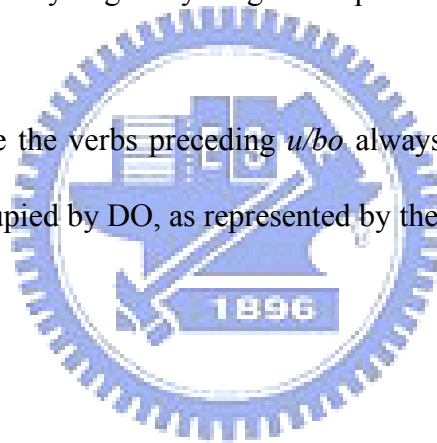
you   this-way   thing   do   cannot   have

'In doing so, you cannot get anything done.'

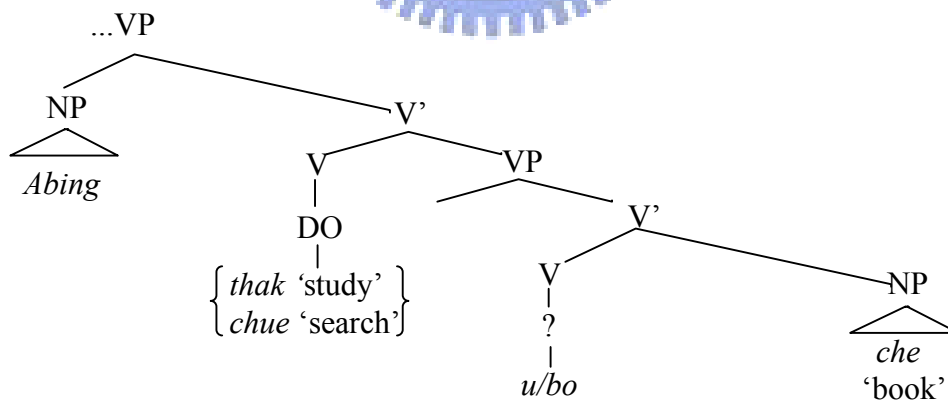(142) Li   an-ne   tai-ci   co   nae-e   u?

you   this-way   thing   do   how-can   have

'In doing so, how can you get anything accomplished?'

Furthermore, since the verbs preceding *u/bo* always denote activity, we propose that the light verb head is occupied by DO, as represented by the tentative diagram in (143).

(143)

But what would be the light verb in the head of the lower VP? We should consider its semantic interpretation.

Let us look at the following sentences first. The (a)-examples are meant to show that

the postverbal noun phrase can serve as the argument of its preceding verb. The (b)-examples all involve the [V *u/bo* NP] construction, and some of them are grammatical (144-145b); some are not (146-151b).

(144) a.   Abing   te   lia   hi-a.

              Abing   ASP   catch   fish

              'Abing is catching the fish.'

        b.   Abing   lia   bo   hi-a.

              Abing   catch   NEG   fish

              i) 'Abind failed to catch the fish.'

              ii) 'Abing is unable to catch any fish.'

(145) a.   Abing   te   yionn   cui.

              Abing   ASP   scoop   water

              'Abing is scooping up the water.'

        b.   Abing   yionn   bo   cui.

              Abing   scoop   NEG   water

              'Abing failed to scoop up the water.'

(146) a.   Abing   te   long   meng.

              Abing   ASP   knock   door

              'Abing is knocking on the door.'

        b.   *Abing   long   bo   meng.

              Abing   knock   NEG   door

              Intended: 'Abing failed to knock on the door.'

(147) a. Abing   te   ching   lai-min.

         Abing   ASP   clean   interior

         'Abing is cleaning the interior (of the house).'

     b. *Abing   ching   bo   lai-min.

         Abing   clean   NEG   interior

         Intended: 'Abing is unable/failed to clean the interior of the house.'

(148) a. Abing   te   se   sin-khu.

         Abing   ASP   wash   body

         'Abing is washing his body.'

     b. *Abing   se   bo   sin-khu.

         Abing   wash   NEG   body

         Intended: 'Abing failed to wash his body.'

(149) a. Abing   te   khuann   ten-si.

         Abing   ASP   watch   television

         'Abing is watching television.'

     b. *Abing   khuann   bo   ten-si.

         Abing   watch   NEG   television

         Intended: i) 'Abing failed to see the television.'

                   ii) 'Abing is unable to understand the TV programs.'

(150) a. Abing   te   ying   ten-naunn.

         Abing   ASP   use   computer

         'Abing is using the computer.'

     b. *Abing   ying   bo   ten-naunn.

Abing   use   NEG   computer

Intended: 'Abing failed to use the computer.'

(151)   a.   Abing   te   khui   meng.

Abing   ASP   open   door

'Abing is opening the door.'

       b.   *Abing   khui   bo   meng.

Abing   open   NEG   door

Intended: 'Abing failed to open the door.'

In fact, after comparing the grammatical sentences with the ungrammatical ones in the (b)-examples, we are offered a clue: the light verb under *u/bo* must engage the meaning of GET. To be more specific, in those (b)-examples which are grammatical, we observe that the activity denoted by verbs preceding *u/bo* entails a GETTING-something result; hence in the lower VP layer we need a light verb GET, which takes the lexical verb *u/bo*. On the contrary, the activity denoted by verbs in those ungrammatical (b)-examples does not entail such a GETTING-something result, and therefore we do not need a lower VP layer, which is headed by the light verb GET holding *u/bo*. This is the reason why we do not see such verbs construe with *u/bo* in the predicate [V u/bo NP] construction. As for the question why some verbs denoting activity have the requirement for GETTING something as their result and some do not, we assume that this piece of lexical information is already encoded in the verbs, and that it simply gets reflected in the light verb syntax.

      Further evidence comes from idioms. As shown in (152-153), the verbs such as *phah* 'hit' in the idiom *phah phok-a* 'clap' and *khuann* 'see' in *khuann yi-sing* 'see a doctor' can never entail a GETTING-something result, so the associated [V *u/bo* NP] construction in the

(b)-examples will lead to ungrammaticality.

(152) a.   Abing   te   phah   phok-a.

                Abing   ASP   hit   clap

                'Abing is clapping his hands.'

        b.   *Abing   phah   bo   phok-a.

                Abing   hit   NEG   clap

                Intended: 'Abing failed to clap his hands.'
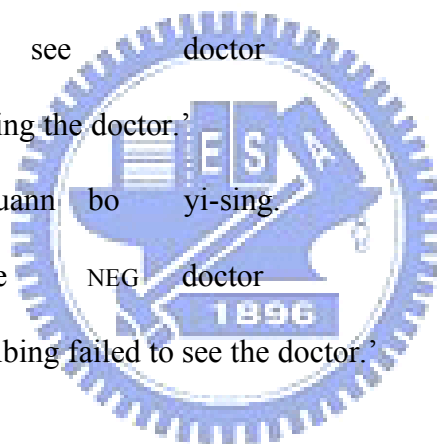
(153) a.   Abing   te   khuann   yi-sing.

                Abing   ASP   see   doctor

                'Abing is seeing the doctor.'

        b.   *Abing   khuann   bo   yi-sing.

                Abing   see   NEG   doctor

                Intended: 'Abing failed to see the doctor.'

The meaning of GET is indeed not trivial, although the postverbal noun phrase might seem to blur interpretation of the predicate [V *u/bo* NP]. So let us elucidate it more. When the postverbal noun phrase is regarded as referential interpretation by means of previous principles, the interpretation of the result entailed by the activity verb is a GETTING of a concrete object denoted by the NP. Take sentence (154) for example. The postverbal NP *cio-thau-a* 'stone' is interpreted as referential, and the interpretation of the GETTING result entailed by the preceding verb *o* 'dig up' is to get the stone.

(154)   Abing   o   bo   cio-thau-a.

Abing   dig-up   NEG   stone

'Abing failed to dig up the stone.'

On the other hand, if the postverbal NP gets a non-referential interpretation, we see that interpretation of the result entailed by the activity verb is a GETTING of a reward, which is an abstract object denoted by the NP. As shown in (155), the postverbal NP *tai-ci* 'thing' is interpreted as non-referential, and the interpretation of the GETTING result entailed by the preceding verb *co* 'do' is to get the reward.

(155) Abing   co   bo   tai-ci.

       Abing   do   NEG   thing

       'Abing cannot do anything well.'
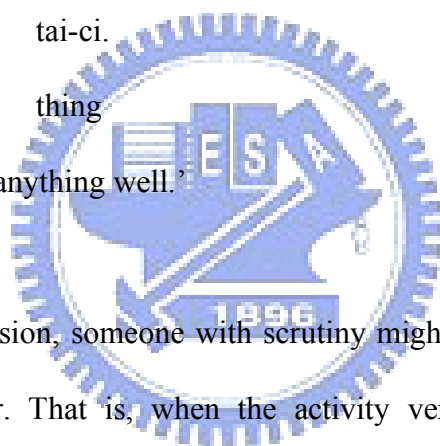
Despite the discussion, someone with scrutiny might still point out a problem for the proposed analysis so far. That is, when the activity verbs preceding *u/bo* also involve perception, such as *thak* 'study', *khuann* 'see', *thiann* 'hear' and *phinn* 'smell', the meaning of the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] does not readily come out right as what we have predicted. See examples in (156-159).

(156) Abing   thak   bo   che.

       Abing   study   NEG   book

       'Abing cannot study well.'

(157) Abing   kuann   bo   opang   e   jih.

       Abing   see   NEG   blackboard   POSS   word

'Abing failed to see the words on the blackboard.'

(158) Abing thiann bo tian-we hit-ping lau-pe kong e we.

Abing listen NEG telephone that-side father talk POSS word

'Abing failed to hear the words his father said on the other side of the phone.'

(159) Abing phinn bo bi.

Abing smell NEG odor

'Abing failed to smell the odor.'

Indeed, we do not need to postulate another light verb to accommodate this problem as long as we make use of the essential property of perception verbs. Being perception verbs, they can involve perception meanings. Accordingly, when they are associated with *u/bo*, the interpretation of the result entailed by the [V *u/bo* NP] is a GETTING of the understanding, sight, hearing or smelling of the NP. And, this analysis also makes a sound prediction: if a verb like *khuann* 'see' involves two types of perception, i.e. sight and understand, it is possible for the associated [V *u/bo* NP] predicate to have at least two interpretations, as shown in the English interpretations of example (160).

(160) Abing khuann bo hia e jih.

Abing see NEG that POSS word

i) 'Abing failed to see those words.'

ii) 'Abing failed to understand those words.'

In this example, the postverbal noun phrase *hia e jih* 'those words' is simply interpreted as referential, while we still get two meanings based on the two possible interpretations of the

verb *khuann* 'see'. What if now we have a postverbal noun phrase which can be interpreted as referential and non-referential alongside the same verb *khuann* 'see'? In fact, we will get four possible meanings, as shown by the example in (161).

(161) Abing khuann bo opang e jih.

Abing see NEG blackboard POSS word

i) 'Abing failed to see the words on the blackboard (, because the words were too small.)'

ii) 'Abing cannot see words on the blackboards (, because he is blind.)'

iii) 'Abing failed to get the understanding of the words on the blackboard (, because the words were unintelligible.)'

iv) 'Abing cannot understand words on the blackboard (, because words are always unintelligible.)'
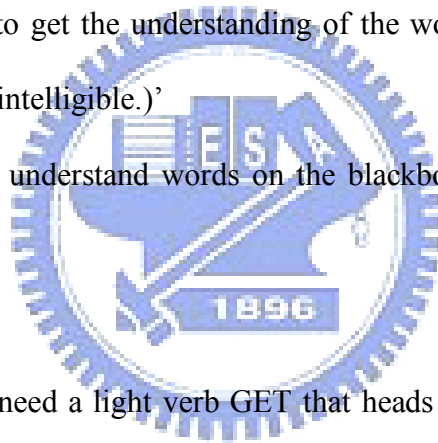
Therefore, we do need a light verb GET that heads the lower VP in the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] construction. The analysis that lower VP is headed by the light verb GET can also account for the previously addressed verbal restriction that verbs which denote 'disposing' meaning such as *be* 'sell', *chit* 'erase', or *tan* 'throw' cannot co-occur with *u/bo* in the [V *u/bo* NP] construction (i.e. (35)), since these two meanings are naturally incompatible with each other. Now the settled syntactic representation of the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] involving two VP layers is illustrated by the diagram in (162).

(162)
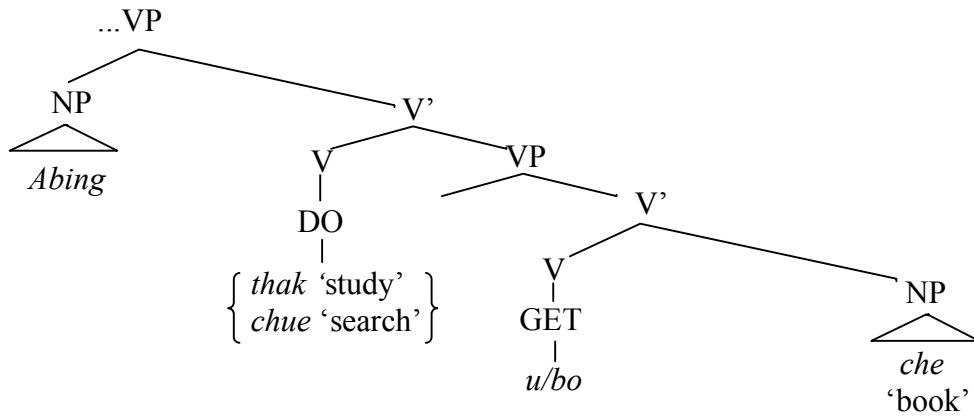
4.3   Comparison: Mandarin [V-*de/bu-dao* NP] vs. Taiwanese [V *u/bo* NP]

Although Mandarin [V-*de/bu dao* NP] is taken to be the counterpart of Taiwanese [V *u/bo* NP], there are a couple of differences between them. First, we look at the sentences in (163-167). The (a)-examples illustrate that Mandarin sentences employ the [V-*de/bu dao* NP] structure; however, the (b)-examples show that the same proposition cannot be conveyed by its Taiwanese counterpart which employs the [V *u/bo* NP] structure. Besides, not only is the same proposition prohibited in Taiwanese counterparts, but also these sentences are ungrammatical.[12]

(163)   *Mandarin*

    a.   Zangsan   kai   de   dao   dian-deng   ma?

        Zangsan   open   DE get   light   Q

        'Is Zangsan able to turn on the light?'

---

[12]   As Luther Liu (p.c.) points out that a sentence like (i) should be ok, the verb type preceding *u/bo* might not be the only factor that plays a role deciding on the correlation between two verbs in the [V *u/bo* NP] construction.
(i) Abing   mong   bo   la-a.
    Abing   touch   NEG-get   oyster
    'Abing failed to get the oyster(s).'

Taiwanese

b.   *Abing   kam   khui   u   ten-hue?

   Abing   Q   open   get   light

   'Is Abing able to turn on the light?'

(164) *Mandarin*

a.   Zangsan   mo   bu   dao   zhu-zi.

   Zangsan   touch   NEG   get   pillar

   'Zangsan is unable to touch the pillar.'

Taiwanese

b.   *Abing   mong   bo   thiau-a.

   Abing   touch   NEG-get   pillar

   Intended: 'Abing is unable to touch the pillar.'

(165) *Mandarin*

a.   Zangsan   shui   bu   dao   chuang.

   Zangsan   sleep   NEG   get   bed

   'Zangsan failed to sleep in bed.'

Taiwanese

b.   *Abing   khun   bo   meng-cheng.

   Abing   sleep   NEG-get   bed

   Intended: 'Abing failed to sleep in bed.'

(166) *Mandarin*

a.   Zangsan   ca   bu   dao   bo-li.

   Zangsan   clean   NEG   get   glass

'Zangsan failed to clean the glass.'

Taiwanese

b.   *Abing   chit   bo   po-le.

Abing   clean   NEG-get   glass

Intended: 'Abing failed to clean the glass.'

(167) *Mandarin*

a.   Zangsan   da   bu   dao   Lisi.
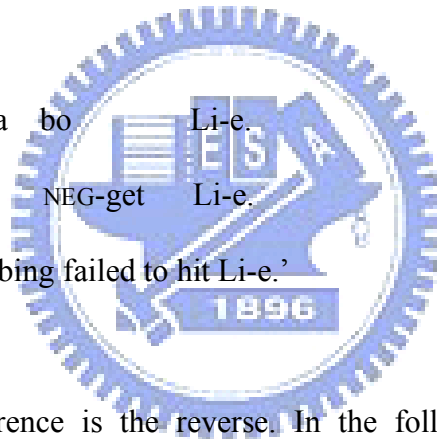
Zangsan   hit   NEG   get   Lisi.

'Zangsan failed to hit Lisi.'

Taiwanese

b.   Abing   pha   bo   Li-e.

Abing   hit   NEG-get   Li-e.

Intended: 'Abing failed to hit Li-e.'

The second difference is the reverse. In the following sentences, while the (b)-examples are allowed to utilize the [V *u/bo* NP] configuration in Taiwanese, the (a)-examples of Mandarin show that the same proposition cannot obtain when the [V-*de/bu dao* NP] configuration is employed. These Mandarin sentences are also ungrammatical.

(168) *Mandarin*

a.   *Zangsan   zuo   de   dao   yi-fu   ma?

Zangsan   do   DE   get   clothes   Q

Intended: 'Can Zangsan make any clothes?'

Taiwanese

b.　Abing　kam　co　u　　sann?

　　Abing　Q　　do　get　clothes

　　'Can Abing make any clothes?'

(169)　*Mandarin*

a.　*Zangsan　zuo　de　dao　shi-qing　ma?

　　Zangsan　　do　DE　get　thing　　Q

　　Intended: 'Can Zangsan do anything well?'

Taiwanese

b.　Abing　kam　co　u　　tai-ci?

　　Abing　Q　　do　get　thing

　　'Can Abing do anything well?'

(170)　*Mandarin*

a.　*Zhe-xie　ji　　sheng　bu　dao　ji-dan.

　　these　　hen　lay　　NEG　get　egg

　　Intended: 'These hens cannot produce any egg.'

Taiwanese

b.　Cia　e　　ke-a　senn　bo　　　ke-leng.

　　these　CL　hen　lay　　NEG-get　egg

　　'These hens cannot produce any egg.'

(171)　*Mandarin*

a.　*Zangsan　zhong　bu　dao　tian.

　　Zangsan　　grow　NEG　get　field

　　Intended: 'Zangsan is unable to grow any crop.'

Taiwanese

b.	Abing	cing	bo	chan.

	Abing	grow	NEG-get	field

	'Abing is unable to grow any crop.'

(172)	*Mandarin*

a.	*Zangsan	zuo	bu	dao	bao-zi.
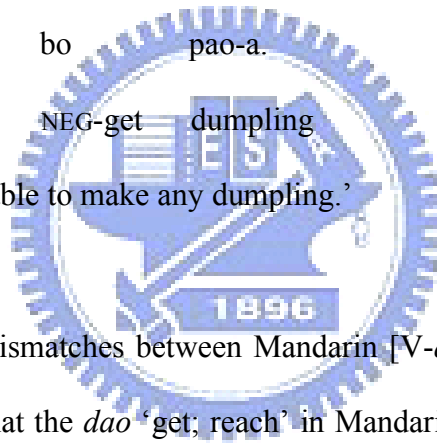
	Zangsan	do	NEG	get	dumpling

	Intended: 'Zangsan is unable to make any dumpling.'

Taiwanese

b.	Abing	co	bo	pao-a.

	Abing	do	NEG-get	dumpling

	'Abing is unable to make any dumpling.'

From the two types of mismatches between Mandarin [V-*de/bu-dao* NP] and Taiwanese [V *u/bo* NP], we can infer that the *dao* 'get; reach' in Mandarin is not exactly equal to the light verb GET under *u/bo* in Taiwanese. But to which extent are they different from each other? We will not discuss this question here due to the limitation of this article and shall leave it for further study.

Chapter 5

_____-72-_____
Conclusion

This thesis deals with the semantic ambiguity and syntax of the [V *u/bo* NP] construction in Taiwanese sentences. We argue that their being generic or episodic is determined by the referentiality/non-referentiality of the postverbal noun phrase: the sentence is generic if and only if the postverbal noun phrase is non-referential, and the sentence is episodic if and only if the postverbal noun phrase is referential. Five principles are also provided to help us to pin down the referentiality of the postverbal noun phrase. Moreover, we demonstrate that the syntax of the predicate [V *u/bo* NP] contains two VP layers. The higher VP is headed by the light verb DO, since the eventuality of verbs preceding *u/bo* is always activity. On the other hand, the lower VP is headed by the light verb GET. Combing the syntax analysis and the proposed five principles, we are able to see through the [V *u/bo* NP]-engaging sentences more clearly.

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