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Transitivity in Mandarin: A Realistic Account of Argument Structure  
漢語中的及物性：從語用觀點看論元結構

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Abstract

The increasing interest in the relation between discourse and grammar has heightened the centrality of studying grammatical patterns in their natural context of everyday interactional use. Of particular interest to the present study is the notion of Transitivity—a clausal property on a gradient understanding of the degree to which a kinetic event carries over from a volitional agent to an individuated patient. By looking at three conversational fragments in colloquial Mandarin, this study investigates if there is empirical evidence to justify Transitivity as a crucial syntactic property of clauses. Conversational data reveals that clauses in conversational Mandarin exhibit a strong bias toward the "Low" end of the Transitivity continuum proposed in Hopper and Thompson (1980).

Two theoretical implications are drawn based on the low-Transitivity observed in conversational Mandarin. On the one hand, it is suggested that conversational participants rarely orient to the O-participants as a distinct syntactic category. A range of the two-participant clauses, such as those with VO-compounds or sequence-sensitive formats, or non-kinetic predicates, are argued to better be analyzed as low-transitive clauses, suggesting the peripheral status of O in discourse. On the other, it is proposed that subjectivity in conversational discourse gives rise to the recurring patterns of low Transitivity. Conversational participants rarely objectively report events, but subjectively package their perception of real-world events, with many affective factors involved. Under such interactional contexts emerge the recurring low-transitive schemas at the participants' disposal so as to achieve their communicative goals.

Furthermore, an unprecedented step has been taken in hope to establish a realistic account of Mandarin speakers' grammatical representation. Drawing insights from Radical Construction Grammar and discourse-functional grammar, this study culminates in proposing a two-dimensional conceptual map with two competing cognitive-functional principles to capture the emergent nature of syntactic categories. An examination of how people talk has uncovered a hitherto overestimated use of (attributive) modification in universal-typological account for syntactic categories. Speakers' implicit knowledge about syntactic categories constantly interacts with these semantic and pragmatic motivations and different languages will resolve such conflicts in a language-particular way. It is hoped that this radical view of grammar will also be a more realistic sketch of our grammatical knowledge.

Key words : Transitivity; Argument structure; Categorization; Part of speech; Radical construction grammar; Interactional linguistics

### 中文摘要

隨著語言學相關領域對於語境與語法之相互關係的重視，語法研究也逐漸強調如何在日常生活的溝通使用中，重新檢視語法結構。本文重點為子句中的「及物性 (Transitivity)」——即該子句中動態事件由施事者 (agent) 傳導至受事者 (patient) 之程度。藉由分析三則漢語口語語料，本文旨在探究是否在口語語料當中有充分證據顯示「及物性」為漢語子句中的必要句法範疇。根據 Hopper and Thompson (1980) 所提出的「程度及物性 (Transitivity continuum)」概念，口語語料顯示漢語子句表現出強烈的「低及物性 (low Transitivity)」傾向。

根據漢語口語中的「低及物性」傾向，本文提出兩項理論上的建議。首先，本文發現言談會話者鮮少把「受事參與者」(O-participants) 視為一個獨立的句法單位。文中強調，多數的「雙參與者(two-participant)」子句，例如含有動賓複合詞 (VO-compounds)、話輪序列傾向之格式(Sequence-sensitive formats)、或非動態性謂語 (non-kinetic predicates) 的子句，皆應被分析為「低及物性」子句，意即受事者於言談中扮演著邊緣性角色。此外，文中指出口語言談中的主觀性 (subjectivity) 造成了低及物性子句的普遍；言談會話者鮮少客觀地報導事件，反而是主觀地用許多情感成分包裝自己對於現實事件的認知，在這樣的互動環境下，低及物性模組 (low-Transitive schema) 成為了言談會話者達成溝通目的最常使用的句型。

本文更進一步從語用觀點提出漢語詞類的解釋。依據「極端句構語法(Radical Construction Grammar)」以及「言談功能語法(discourse-functional grammar)」的發現，本文提出一個二度空間的語意構圖(Conceptual Map)，此圖以兩個互相衝突的認知—語用原則為軸，用以解釋句法詞類的動態性；實際口語語料顯示過去普遍型態學 (universal-typology) 高估了言談中修飾功能 (modification) 的重要性。因此，本文認為說話者對於詞類的隱性知識 (implicit knowledge) 應是不斷地受到語意和語用兩者相互衝突的影響，且必須經由適當的語境(discourse context)、句構(construction)才能夠賦予該詞一適當之詞類定義，而不同語言則會選擇一獨特方式來化解此語意—語用原則之間的衝突。本文認為從語用觀點所了解的動態語法結構，更能真實地勾勒出說話者的語法知識。

關鍵字：及物性；論元結構；範疇；詞類；句構語法