

國立臺灣大學語言學研究所

第281次學術演講公告

講題：Is Composition a Source of Construction?

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摘要： We propose a method to compositionally analyze a Construction (as it is understood in the Construction Grammar), which defies strict composition. We allow a compositional unit to be 'modified' or 'enhanced' as it moves up to a higher layer of a multi-layer composition. For example, we can obtain a composition of four units, a, b, c, and d in a four-layer binary composition $S = \langle \langle \langle \langle a1, b1 \rangle_2, \langle c1, d1 \rangle_2 \rangle_3, \langle \langle e1, f1 \rangle_2, \langle g1, h1 \rangle_2 \rangle_3 \rangle_4$, each constituent of which has the form $\langle x_k, y_k \rangle_{k+1}$. This form denotes that a unit x of complexity degree k is composed with another unit y of an equal degree of complexity k, into a composition of complexity degree k+1. In doing so, we spell out the degree of complexity in the bar notion of an x-bar tree in P&P. That is, we rewrite the bar notation $\langle \langle X, YP \rangle, ZP \rangle = X'$ ($\langle \langle \text{drink}, \text{wine} \rangle, \text{daily} \rangle = \text{drink}'$), as $\langle \langle X1, YP \rangle_2, ZP \rangle_3 = X3$. If no enhancement is effected on any layer of the composition, then it is a strict Composition, whose meaning is directly derived from its form, but if an enhancement is effected on one or more layer, then it will become a Construction, whose form yields only part of its associated meaning. Through this enhancement, the x-bar tree and the Construction tree are bridged up. Exactly where an enhancement will take place in the multi-layer composition is not predictable. But if it happens, then we can analyze and describe it explicitly and exactly. Hopefully the source of a Constructional will cease to be a mystery.

We use two examples to explain this meaning enhancement. Consider (1) and (2):

(1) But even if they don't, will driverless cars feel safe enough to deploy?

(2) zhangsan kan qilai hen youqian
Zhangsan look rise very have-money
'Zhangsan looks rich'.

(1) 张三看起来很有钱

(1) can be paraphrased as (1a) But even if they don't, will Google think the human driver of a driverless car will feel that the car is safe and make Google deploy its driverless car. In such a paraphrase, the theme role that feel safe is the human driver, not the driverless car. In (2), Zhangsan is not the theme role that kan qilai, but the speaker is the agent/experiencer role that looks at Zhangsan and perceives that Zhangsan is rich. To insist on strict composition, one could just postulate a second lexical feel for English and a second lexical kan for Chinese. Yet, in doing so, one would be implicitly invoking an enhancement at a particular layer. But in more complex Constructions, we need to formalize the general process in terms of an explicit recursive enhancement procedure that can do enhancement at various levels. And this fact supports our contention that Construction need not stay mysterious, but can be approached as an enhancement-propelled Composition. In other words, composition is source of construction.

時間：2015年5月26日（二）上午10:30-12:00

地點：台大語言所304室（樂學館3F）

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