

*Adjunct¹ relative clauses in Mandarin Chinese

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1. Where is the preposition?

There is a quite strange phenomenon in Mandarin Chinese adjunct relative clauses: disappearance of the preposition (Aoun et Li 2003:173):

- (1) ta xiu che de fangfa
 he fix car DE way
 ‘the way that he fixed the car’

Cf.

- (2) ta *(yong) na fangfa xiu che
 PRO.3SG.² with DEM. way fix car
 ‘He fixed the car in that way.’

- (3) ta yong xiu che de fangfa
 Intended meaning: ‘the way that he fixed the car’
 Real meaning: ‘the way that he fixed the car, he (did something else)’

Where is the preposition? (Aoun et Li 2003:173):

« It cannot be correct that the object of P is moved directly to the Head position and the P is subsequently deleted. »

2. Two language-specific constraints in Mandarin Chinese

Particularities of the elements concerned: prepositions and pronouns

D prepositions: no preposition stranding in Mandarin Chinese (cf. Huang (1982)). (Aoun et Li 2003:174):

- (4) yong na-ge fangfa, ta xiu hao na-bu che
 use that-CL way he fix well that-CL car
 ‘In that way, he fixed that car.’

Cf.

- (5) *na ge fangfa, ta (yong) xiu hao che.

* This study is funded by the CL² project (Complexité, Langage et Langues) of DDL (Dynamique du langage) laboratory, which I would like to thank. I thank also Denis Creissels and Frédérique Gayraud, whose remarks and comments allowed much improvement of the article. Of course, all remaining errors are mine.

¹ «Adjunct» refers to other positions than subject, accusative, dative and genitive, so it corresponds more or less to the notion of « oblique » in Keenan & Comrie (1977).

² Abbreviations: ACC ‘accusative’, AUX ‘auxiliary’, CL ‘classifier’, COMP ‘complementizer’, DAT, ‘dative’, DEM ‘demonstrative’, DET ‘determiner’, FEM ‘feminine’, IMPERF ‘imperfective’, NEG ‘negation’, NOM ‘nominative’, PART ‘participle’, PASS ‘passive’, PAST ‘past tense’, PL ‘plural’, PRO ‘pronoun’, REL ‘relativizer’, SG ‘singular’ and numbers for grammatical person.

II) Pronouns: [+human] (他/她), but only rarely [-human] (它):

- (6) *zhe ge ren, wo bu xihuan ta* (他/她)
DEM. CL. person PRO.1SG. NEG. like PRO.3SG.
'This person, I do not like him/her'
- (7) *zhexie ren, wo bu xihuan tamen* (他们/她们)
DEM.PL. person PRO.1SG. NEG. like PRO.3PL.
'These persons, I do not like them.'
- (8) *zhe ben shu, wo bu xihuan* (??/*ta(它))
DEM. CL. book PRO.1SG. NEG. like PRO.3SG.
'This book, I do not like it.' (cf. ??Ce livre, je ne l'aime pas LUI.)
- (9) *zhexie shu, wo bu xihuan* (*tamen(它们))
DEM.PL. book PRO.1SG. NEG. like PRO.3PL.
'These books, I do not like them.' (cf. ??Ces livres, je ne les aime pas EUX.)
- (10) *zhe zhong shi, wo congmei jianguo* (*ta(它))
DEM. CL. thing PRO.1SG. never see PRO.3SG.
'Such a thing, I have never seen it.' (cf. 'Ce genre de chose, je ne l'ai jamais vu cela/*lui/*elle.)

3. Two constraints vs. three strategies

In relative clauses, these two constraints still exist and should not be violated. This explains the three following strategies for adjunct relative clauses:

i) Resumptive pronoun if the domain noun is [+human]:

- (11) *wo wei *(ta) gongzuo de ren*
PRO.1SG. for PRO.3SG. work COMP. person
'the person that I work for'

ii) "Disappearance" of the preposition (probably only for deverbal prepositions (cf. Hagège (1975))):

- (12) *wo *(yong) xiezi de bi*
PRO.1SG. with write COMP. pen
'the pen that I write with'

Cf.

- (13) *wo *(yong) bi xiezi*
'I write with a pen.'

A variant for (12)

- (14) *wo xiezi yong de bi*

iii) Reverbalsation of deverbal prepositions:

- (15) *wo yong *(lai) xiezi de bi*
 PRO.1SG.use come/in order to write COMP. pen
 ‘the pen that I use in order to write’

Lai ‘come’ reverbalses *yong*.³

Otherwise, relativization is just impossible, for example denominal preposition adjuncts:

- (16) *genju zhe tiao falü, lisi bei pan youzui.*
 according to DEM. CL. law Lisi PASS. sentence guilty
 ‘According to this law, Lisi is found guilty.’

- (17) **genju lisi bei pan youzui de falü*
 Intended meaning: ‘the law according to which Lisi is found guilty’

4. Similar relativization in non-standard French and in English

The second strategy still remains unexplained. However, similar constructions are found in non-standard French and in English.

In French, four strategies can be used in relativization according to registers:
 relative pronoun

- (18) *l’ homme de/à qui je parle*
 DET. man of/to who 1SG.NOM. talk
 ‘The man about/to whom I talk’

resumptive pronoun (Zribi-Hertz 1984:75)

- (19) *Voici l’ homme que Marie lui a parlé*
 here is DET. man COMP. Mary 3SG.DAT. AUX. talk.PART.
 ‘Here’s the man that Mary talked to (him)’

gap without preposition (Blanche-Benveniste 2000:104)

- (20) *La chose que je vous parlais*
 DET. thing COMP. 1SG.NOM. 2PL.DAT. talk.PAST.IMPERF.
 ‘the thing that I talked (about) with you’

or gap with the preposition stranded (Zribi-Hertz 1984:78)

- (21) *Voici la maison que Marie est passée devant (?elle)*
 here is DET. house COMP. Mary AUX. pass.PART. before PRO.3SG.FEM.
 ‘Here is the house that Mary passed before (her)’

In spite of the general tendency that French prepositions cannot be stranded (Zribi-Hertz

³ For an analysis on *lai* ‘come’, see Zhang (2001).

1984:57, 65):

(22) **Pierre, je viens d'aller chez.*
 Pierre 1SG.NOM. go.PAST. at
 'Pierre, I have just went to (his home).'

(23) *Marie, j' étais venu avec ?(elle) (cf. (21))*
 Mary 1SG.NOM. AUX. come.PART. with PRO.3SG.FEM.
 'Mary, I had come with (her).'

exceptions do exist (cf. Zribi-Hertz (1984)). The so-called “disjoints” pronouns (*moi, toi, lui, elle, nous, vous, eux, elles*) are in general used only for human referents (Zribi-Hertz 1984:65):

(24) *Cette valise, j' étais venu avec (?elle) (cf. (21) & (23))*
 DEM. suitcase 1SG.NOM. AUX. come.PART. with PRO.3SG.FEM.
 'This suitcase, I had come with (her).'

In English, prepositions can be stranded, but not all

- (25) *For that reason, I didn't come yesterday.*
 (26) **the reason that I didn't come yesterday for*
 (27) *the reason that/why I didn't come yesterday*
 (28) *In that way, you can repair your car.*
 (29) **the way that you can repair your car in*
 (30) **the way in which you can repair your car*
 (31) *the way (that) you can repair your car*

Cf.

- (32) *la façon que tu me parles* (colloquial)
 DET. way COMP. 2SG.NOM. 1SG.DAT. talk
 'that way that you talk to me'
 (33) *la façon dont tu me parles* (standard)

So it seems that in Mandarin Chinese as well as in non-standard French (and to some extent in English, too), if prepositions cannot be stranded and it is impossible to use resumptive pronouns because of the feature [+human] of pronouns, the only strategy is the “disappearance” of the preposition. But what does “disappearance” mean? Deletion after base-generation or simply non-generation?

5. Derivation

According to Aoun & Li (2003), deletion after base-generation is not possible. Or, at least, it is less economic than non-generation. Null operator takes the place of the non-generated preposition (Aoun et Li 2003 :175):

Adjunct relativization[[_{CP} Op_i [_{IP} ... [_{PP} t_i] ...]] [_{Head} NP]]

- Head base-generated, operator movement to the Spec of Comp
- Reconstruction of Head to t impossible

This generalization is reasonable, especially because it is impossible to reconstruct the head in *t*. The non-reconstruction invalidates the Raising Analysis, at least concerning adjunct relative clauses in Mandarin Chinese. Another problem is how the domain noun is correctly interpreted inside the relative clause. Kaplan & Whitman (1995)'s proposal seems to be able to answer this question: (Kaplan et Whitman 1995:45):

*Recoverability Condition on Null Relative Operators*An operator O^α in the specifier of CP adjoined to NP may be null iff

- O^α has the syntactic features of the head of NP; or
- O^α has the syntactic features of O^β, where O^β is licensed in the specifier of CP and O^β is overt.

(b) condition makes it possible that the null operator can be different from domain noun, but corresponds to the phrase that the domain noun is part of. But I think that O^β does not have to be overt. It can be overt or non-overt. The non-overt O^β can be considered as kind of empty category corresponding to pied-piped elements:

(34) [_{NP} [_{CP} Op_i [_{IP} wo t_i xiezi] de] [_{NP} bi]](35) [_{DP} la chose] [_{CP} Op_i que [_{IP} je vous parlais t_i]]**6. Conclusion**

The disappearance of preposition in adjunct relative clauses in Mandarin Chinese and in French is explained by two language-specific constraints: no preposition stranding and [+human] feature of pronouns. Relativisation strategies are interrelated with other sub-systems of the language in question, that is why there may be unexplainable mysteries from a typological point of view.

Epilogue: “equi-case strategy” in Modern Hebrew

A particular strategy is used in Modern Hebrew (Givón 2001:vol2:193):

(36) ha-ish **she**-Yoav natan **l-o** et-ha-sefer neelam
 the-man **REL**-Yoav gave/he **to-him** ACC-the-book disappeared
 ‘The man that Yoav gave the book to disappeared.’

(37) *ha-ish **she**-Yoav natan et-ha-sefer neelam
 the-man **REL**-Yoav gave/he ACC-the-book disappeared
 (* ‘The man that Yoav gave the book disappeared’)

(38) **l-a**-ish **she**-Yoav natan (**l-o**) et-ha-sefer eyn kesef
to-the-man **REL**-Yoav gave/he (**to**-him) ACC-the-book NEG/be money

‘The man that Yoav gave the book to has no money’⁴

The standard strategy for dative relatives is resumptive pronoun, like in (36), *she-* being complementizer. The “equi-construction” in (38) shows how O^β -type null operator works: O^α (= *ish = o*) has the syntactic features of O^β (= *l-a-ish=l-o*), where O^β is licensed in the specifier of CP and O^β is overt.

(39) [PP **I**-[_{GD} a-ish_i] [CP Op_i **she**-[_{IP} Yoav natan (**I**-o)/t_i et-ha-sefer]

In Mandarin Chinese and in non-standard French, the “syntactic features of O^β ” are not necessarily formally identifiable, because O^β can be non-overt:

(40) [_{NP} [_{CP} Op_i [_{IP} wo t_i xiezi] de] [_{NP} bi]]

(41) [_{DP} la chose] [_{CP} Op_i que [_{IP} je vous parlais t_i]

But in Modern Hebrew, these syntactic features must be identified formally, which is the condition of “equi-construction”.

⁴ More literally: ‘No money belongs to the man to whom Yoav gave the book.’

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