



snippets

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2.

Xuan Di - CASTL, University of Tromsø; Haskins Laboratories, Yale ***Predicate types in relative clauses and complementizer deletion***

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Leaving all the analyses of *de* aside, let's tentatively call it a complementizer in relative clauses such as (1).

- (1) *Nana mai de shu hen gui.*
Nana buy COMP book very expensive
“The book(s) Nana bought is (are) very expensive.”

A well-known fact (discussed in Liu Danqing 2005 among others) is that *de* is optional when the ‘head noun’ is preceded by a demonstrative (2).

- (2) a. *Nana mai (de) nei shu hen gui.*
Nana buy COMP that book very expensive
“The book(s) Nana bought is (are) very expensive.”
b. *Nana mai (de) nei ben-r shu hen gui.*
Nana buy COMP that CLF-R book very expensive
“The book Nana bought is very expensive.”
c. *Nana mai (de) nei san ben-r shu hen gui.*
Nana buy COMP that three CLF-R book very expensive
“The three books Nana bought are very expensive.”

The purpose of this snippet is to show that when the predicate is resultative (3), or when the main verb (in (4a), *mai* “to buy”) is suffixed with *le*, the relative clauses with these predicates do not allow *de* to be deleted even when the ‘head noun’ is modified by a demonstrative.

- (3) a. *Nana mai dao le nei ben-r shu (le).*
Nana buy arrive LE that CLF-R book LE
“Nana (has already) managed to buy that book.”
b. *Nana mai dao nei ben-r shu le.*
Nana buy arrive that CLF-R book LE
“Nana already managed to buy that book.”
(4) a. *Nana mai le nei ben-r shu (le).*
Nana buy LE that CLF-R book LE
“Nana (has already) bought that book.”
b. *Nana mai nei ben-r shu le.*
Nana buy that CLF-R book LE
“Nana already bought that book.”

Firstly, when the predicate is a resultative compound *mai-dao* [buy-arrive], *de* cannot be deleted for most of the speakers I consulted (5). And even for speakers who find (5b) possible, complementizer deletion with a resultative verb phrase leads to ungrammaticality in contexts like (6), where the complex NP appears in object position of an existential sentence. Other types of resultatives -- *ran-hong* [dye-red], *da-si* [beat-die] etc. -- all behave similarly in terms of disallowing *de* deletions.

- (5) a. *Nana mai dao *(de) (nei) shu hen gui.*
 Nana buy arrive COMP that book very expensive
 “The book(s) Nana got is (are) very expensive.”
- b. *Nana mai dao *(de) nei ben-r shu hen gui.*
 Nana buy arrive COMP that CLF-R book very expensive
 “The book Nana got is very expensive.”
- c. *Nana mai dao *(de) (nei) san ben-r shu hen gui.*
 Nana buy arrive COMP that three CLF-R book very expensive
 “The three books Nana got are very expensive.”
- (6) *zhuo shang fang zhe Nana mai dao *(de) nei ben-r shu*
 table up put ZHE Nana buy arrive COMP that CLF-R book
 “On the table is the book that Nana managed to buy yesterday.”

Secondly, when the verb is suffixed with the aspectual marker *le*, *de* again cannot be deleted (7).

- (7) a. *Nana mai le *(de) (nei) shu hen gui.*
 Nana buy LE COMP that book very expensive
 “The book(s) Nana bought is (are) very expensive.”
- b. *Nana mai le *(de) nei ben-r shu hen gui.*
 Nana buy LE COMP that CLF-R book very expensive
 “The book Nana bought is very expensive.”
- c. *Nana mai le *(de) (nei) san ben-r shu hen gui.*
 Nana buy LE COMP that three CLF-R book very expensive
 “Those three books that Nana bought are very expensive.”

Analyses taking *de* as a D head (Simpson 2000), or as a linker (den Dikken and Singhapreecha 2004), cannot readily explain why the ‘internal’ structure of the relativized predicate has such an effect. How to account for these restrictions remains a challenge.

References

- den Dikken, M. and P. Singhapreecha. (2004) “Complex noun phrases and linkers.” *Syntax* 7:1.
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