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Pseudopartitives, DP Internal Structure, and Predicate Inversion

Abstract:

The goal of this paper is to (1) investigate and compare the relationship between the elements in pseudopartitives (e.g. *yi dui* ‘a bunch’ and *shu* ‘book’ in *yi dui shu* ‘a bunch of books’) (2) derive the linear word order of the pseudopartitive cases *shu yi dui* ‘book a bunch’ and *yi dui shu* ‘a bunch book’, under a quantity-denoting reading.

The organization of the paper is as follows. In section II, I argue that there is a subject (N2)-predicate (N1) relationship between N1 and N2 in a pseudopartitive construction N1 of N2. Thus, there is a thematic relationship from N1 to N2. In section III, I show that the string *yi dui shu* surfaces in all contexts, while *shu yi dui* surfaces in specific contexts, which leads to the logical possibilities for the derivation in section V. In section IV, some constituency tests show *yi dui shu* and *shu yi dui* are both constituents in Chinese. In section V, two logical possibilities concerning the derivation of *shu yi dui* and *yi dui shu* are discussed. In section VI, I argue that *shu* and *yi dui* in [[shu][yi dui]] structurally form a specifier-predicate relationship (i.e. sisterhood in structure), while *yi dui* and *shu* in [[yi dui][shu]] form an adjunction relationship. In section VII, I argue that the base-generated form of [shu (book)] and [yi dui (a bunch)] should be [[shu][yi dui]], and [[yi dui] [shu]] is the derived form, for the following reasons: (i) to preserve the sisterhood requirement of theta-role assignment (ii) to account for the Chinese as well as English data of parallel phenomena in which a subject-predicate relationship is involved (iii) to account for the data that *shu* and *yi dui* has entered a classifier-noun relationship in *yi dui shu* ‘a bunch book’ but not in *shu yi dui* ‘book a bunch’ (iv) to account for the structural relationships between the elements in [shu yi dui] and [yi dui shu], namely, *yi dui* ‘a bunch’ and *shu* ‘book’ are structurally sisters in [shu [yi dui]] ‘book a bunch’, but *yi dui* ‘one bunch’ is adjoined to *shu* ‘book’ in [yi dui shu] ‘a bunch book’. In section VIII, I adopt the nominal structure with three functional projections, namely, DP, Num(ber)P, Cl(assifier)P, and a lexical projection NP, following Li (1998) and Borer (2005), and assume that under a quantity-denoting reading, only NumP, ClP, and NP project, following Li (1998). In section IX, I show that measure elements are phrasal in nature. After establishing the above, in section X, the derivation of the measure phrase [yi dui shu] is executed. In section XI, I give a summary of what has been shown in this paper. Lastly, in section XII, few further research directions are provided.