The Copied Verb as a Case of Differential Object Marking in Mandarin Chinese

In the paper I argue that the copied verb in bold in the manner V-*de* construction (1) is not a real verb, but a kind of differential object marking [DOM] (see Bossong 1985, Aissen 2003 Rodríguez-Mondoñedo 2007). The following object *shu* ('book') has undergone internal topicalization, which also echoes the proposal by Garcia Garcia (2005) and Gustsetseg (2009) for the co-relation between DOM and internal topicalization.

(1) Zhangsan **kan** shu kan [de hen zixi].
Zhangsan read book read DE very carefully
'Zhangsan read books very carefully.'

As noted in Huang, Li and Li (2009), in the manner V-*de* construction, when the object is [-animate], the copied verb is optional. But it becomes obligatory when the object is [+animate] as in (3).

(2) Zhangsan (**kan**) shu kan [de hen zixi].
Zhangsan read book read DE very carefully
'Zhangsan read books very carefully.'

(3) Zhangsan ***(da)** Lisi da [de hen youngli].
Zhangsan hit Lisi hit DE very hard
'Zhangsan hit Lisi very hard.'

The animacy restriction in (2) and (3) is reminiscent of the DOM cross-linguistically. Yang and van Bergen (2007) have proposed that BA is also a case of DOM in Mandarin. Unsurprisingly (4) and (5) show the same animacy restriction as in (3) and (4).

(4) Zhagnsan **(ba)** shu kan [de hen zixi].
Zhangsan BA book read DE very carefully
'Zhangsan read books very carefully.'

(5) Zhagnsan ***(ba)** Lisi da [de hen youngli].
Zhangsan BA Lisi hit DE very hard
'Zhangsan hit Lisi very hard.'

In addition, there is also evidence showing that the object *shu* ('book') in (1) is in the IP domain, which is a typical location for the internal topics. As shown in (6), the object is higher than the epistemic modal, which marks the *v*P periphery (see Tsai 2009, 2010).

(6) Zhangsan **kan** shu yinggai kan [de hen zixi].
Zhangsan read book should read DE very carefully
'Zhangsan should read books very carefully.'

The derivation of example (1) goes as follows: Following Huang, Li and Li's (2009) proposal, I assume that there is a PF adjacency requirement between the original main verb and the *de*-phrase in (7). When the *de*-phrase is merged into the structure, the object first moves to the

edge of the phase *v*P because of the activation condition by Bošković (2007). The complement of VP in (7) is then sent to PF under the multiple spell-out system and the adjacency filter can be activated. If the object stays postverbally, the derivation crashes.

(7) [$_{vP}$ book$_i$ *v* [$_{VP}$ read t$_i$ de-phrase]

(8) [$_{IP}$ **read** book$_i$ [$_{vP}$ t$_i$ *v* [$_{VP}$ read t$_i$ de-phrase]

If the moved object stays at Spec, *v*P, we can form a BA construction as in (3). The BA projection has been argued to be located right above *v*P by Li (2006). The object can also undergo internal topicalization as in (8). Note that the emergence of the copied verb does not violate the Phase Impenetrability Condition by Chomsky (2000, 2001, 2004). Although the VP complement has been sent to PF and is not accessible to any syntactic operations, it is "visible" from the higher domain. Hence the same verb can be copied and forms a VP constituent (see the sideward movement proposal by Cheng 2007). This VP constituent is predicted to be able to undergo external topicalization as in (9).

(9) [**Kan** shu], Zhangsan kan [de hen zixi].
read book Zhangsan read DE very carefully
'Zhangsan read books very carefully.'

Selected References:

Aissen, Judith. 2003. Differential object marking: Iconicity vs. economy. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 213:435-448.

Bossong, Georg. 1985. *Empirische Universalienforschung. Differentielle Objekt markierung in der neuiranischen Sprachen*. Tübingen: Narr.

Bošković, Ž. 2007. On the locality and motivation of Move and Agree: An even more minimal theory. *Linguistic Inquiry* 38: 589-644.

Cheng, L. L-S. 2007. Verb copying in Mandarin Chinese. In *The Copy Theory of Movement*, Corver, Norbert and Jairo Nunes (eds.), 151–174.

Rodríguez-Mondoñedo, M. 2007. The Syntax of Objects: Agree and Differential Object Marking. UConn Doctoral Dissertation.

Tsai, Wei-tien Dylan. 2010. Tan hanyu motaici qi fenbu yu qunshi de duiying guanxi [On the syntax semantics correspondences of Chinese modals]. *Zhongguo Yuwen* [Studies of the Chinese Language] 3: 208–221.

Yang, N. and G. van Bergen. 2007. Scrambled objects and case marking in Mandarin Chinese. *Lingua* 117.9: 1617-1653.