

**The obligatory fronting of the undergoer argument in the
Mandarin Excessive serial verb construction**
[普通話過度義連動式受事論元的強制性提前]

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Abstract

This paper discusses the unmarked obligatory fronting of the undergoer argument in the Excessive serial verb construction (hereafter SVC) in Mandarin Chinese. Acknowledging the existing description of the semantic-syntactic characteristics of the Excessive SVC (see for example, Li 1994, Shen & Peng 2010, Zhang 2014, Fan 2017), we provide an explicit monoclausal account for the phenomenon of obligatory fronting of the undergoer argument, arguing that it directly correlates with the monoclausal structure. By doing so, we contrast our analysis with the existing analysis by Fan (2017). Furthermore, we argue that despite the flexible ordering of the actor and the undergoer arguments at the similar surface forms of the Excessive SVC, they take different positions in expressions that are in different sequences. In this case, the undergoer argument is always the subject; the actor argument functions as an external topic when it occurs before the undergoer argument and it shows similarities to an inner topic when it occurs after the undergoer argument. Nevertheless, unlike with inner topics, the actor argument that occurs after the subject of the Excessive SVC is restricted to the actor/causer role.

Keywords: serial verb construction, excessiveness, obligatory unmarked fronting, argument structure

關鍵詞：連動式、過度、強制性無標記提前、論元結構

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