Demonstrative and (Non-)restrictive Relative Clauses in Mandarin Chinese
Yenan Sun & Jackie Yan-Ki Lai

Background

Chinese relative clauses (RC) can co-occur with demonstratives (Dem) and appear in pre-/post-Dem position.

Dem in Chinese

- [Dem] in Chinese

[ying-le bisai de] zhe/ nei wei [ying-le bisai de] xuexheng

win-PERF game DE this/that CL student

"this/that student (who) won the game"

Previous claims: whether a RC is restrictive or appositive (/nonrestrictive) is correlated with its position

- Restrictive

pre-Dem RC restrictive appositive restrictive restrictive

post-Dem RC restrictive restrictive restrictive appositive/appositive

Main Claim

This paper argues for a correlation between different uses of Dems and restrictives/appositives: - Deictic: use the relative clauses which co-occur with the demonstratives can only be appositive; - Anaphoric: use the relative clauses which co-occur with the demonstratives can be restrictive/appositive.

Test A: Non-deniability

Appositives as conventional implicatures are not susceptible to epistemic riders (Potts 2005, Constant 2011):

(1) If a student won the game, then the student [appositive, Dem, who won the game] was lucky.

(2) If the student [appositive, who won the game] was lucky, if he won the game. (the order is irrelevant)

If the result is "yes" -> can only be appositive; "no" -> can be restrictive, but can also be appositive (blocked)

Results of Test A

- Deictic use

(5) a. [pointing to Jackie] #zhe/ nei wei [ying-le bisai de] xuexheng hen xingyung, ruguo ta ying-le bisai.

this/that CL win-PERF game DE student very lucky if he win-PERF game

b. [pointing to Jackie] #zhe/ nei wei [ying-le bisai de] xuexheng hen xingyung, ruguo ta ying-le bisai.

win-PERF game DE this/that CL student very lucky if he win-PERF game

"This/that student, who won the game, was very lucky, if he won the game."

- Anaphoric use

(6) a. ruguo you yi wei xuexheng ying-le bisai, zhe/ nei wei [ying-le bisai de] xuexheng hen xingyung.

if have one CL student win-PERF game this/that CL student win-PERF game DE student very lucky

b. ruguo you yi wei xuexheng ying-le bisai, [ying-le bisai de] zhe/ nei wei xuexheng hen xingyung.

if have one CL student win-PERF game win-PERF game DE this/that CL student very lucky

"If a student won the game, this/that student who won the game was very lucky."

Results of Test B

(8) ruguo you yi wei xuexheng ying-le bisai, if have one CL student win-PERF game

a. zhe/ nei wei [laoshishuo hen xingyung de] xuexheng yiding hen xingfen.

this/that CL frankly very lucky DE student must very excited

b. [laoshishuo hen xingyung de] zhe/ nei wei xuexheng yiding hen xingfen.

frankly very lucky DE this/that CL student must very excited

"if a student won the game, then this/that student, who is frankly very lucky, must be very excited."

Analysis

Promotion/Raising Analysis of RCs (Anoun & Li 2003, Gobbo 2010, Lin & Tsai 2014):

(9) [DP [rc, ying-le bisai de] [dp, zhe/ nei wei xuexheng ] ]

win-PERF game DE this/that CL student

Deictic Dems (Dem*)

- Presuppose the existence of a unique salient (due to demonstration: C) referent (Roberts 2002, 2003)

- RCs cannot further restrict a type c DP, thus can only be appositive (by CI application; Potts 2005)

(10)

Anaphoric Dems (Dem")

With an extra argument slot for an indexical property (Schwarz 2009, Jenks 2018); if it is taken up by:

- the RC => Restrictive (as in (11))

- a referential index => then the RC => Appositive (11)

Derive the linear order of post-Dem RCs: successive head movement to yield the Dem-CL sequence (Constant 2011), which has no semantic consequences. The X* complex can further move into a higher focus position:

(12) [DP [f, Dem-CL [DP ... [DP, <Dem-CL> [CLP <CL> NP]]]]]

Conclusions

The often-claimed correlation between pre-/post-Dem position and restrictive/appositive distinction of RCs is illusory; Deictic/anaphoric uses of demonstratives should be clarified when applying the tests.