A Movement and Resumption Approach to VP-Ellipsis in Mandarin Chinese*

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the identity of the missing elements following the three variants of Mandarin VP-ellipsis, *ye-shi*, *ye/(que)*-Aux, and *ye/(que)*-V. Each of these is surveyed from the points of view of adverbial deletion, backwards anaphora, island effects, pragmatic antecedents, the third reading, and indefinite correlates. In line with Shlonsky (1992) and Aoun, Choueiri, and Hornstein (2001), we propose a movement and resumption analysis, assuming that the base-generated empty category after each variant is motivated to be raised to the initial position of the second conjunct for further construal with its correlative antecedent, in order to fulfill the topic-comment predication between conjuncts. Each empty category is licensed by a head remnant, *shi*, Aux, or V. We find that the semantically-rich licensing heads, Aux and V, differ from the semantically-bleached focus marker *shi*, in that they provide the following empty categories with definite clues to their referents. This further leads to legitimacy regarding backwards anaphora, pragmatic antecedent, the third reading, and even the use of a resumptive device for island amelioration. That is why resumption, as a last resort in syntax, can interpret the island repair effect in the cases of *ye/(que)*-Aux/V, especially when the movement of the nominal or predicate operator is blocked by islands. In contrast, a ban on resumption causes *ye-shi* to strictly respect island effects. Finally, we conclude that the empty cate-

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gories can be a variable, resumptive element, and even E-type *pro*, which refers to an indefinite NP correlate.

Key Words: VP-ellipsis, operator movement, variable, resumptive pronoun, E-type *pro*, island repair effect

1. Introduction

In the literature, there are two main approaches to the interpretations of the missing materials after VP-ellipsis. One is the *Pro*-form analysis (Bach and Partee 1980, Rooth 1981, Klein 1987, Chao 1987, Lobeck 1995, Hardt 1993, 1999, etc.); the other is the LF structure approach with two variants: the PF-deletion and LF-copying analysis. In PF-deletion analysis, the missing constituent is deleted at PF but remains intact at LF (Chomsky and Lasnik 1993, Fox 2000, Huang 1988, 1991, Otani and Whitman 1991, Li 2002, Wu 2002, etc.). As to LF-copying analysis, the missing material is truly empty until copying the parallel elements from the antecedent clause is implemented at LF (Fiengo and May 1994, Li 2007, etc.). The purpose of this study is to interpret the syntactic identity of the unpronounced materials after the three variants of Mandarin VP-ellipsis, *ye-shi*, *ye/(que)*-Aux, and *ye/(que)*-V in a uniform way.[1] Each of them will be empiri-

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1. Ai (2006) has also done a thorough survey on Mandarin VP-ellipsis. Against Goldberg's (2003) diagnostics on Mandarin VP-ellipsis, he proposes that according to the degree of the pragmatic/linguistic control (strong, weak, extremely weak), the possible analyses of the null object in the Null Object Constructions (NOCs), our *ye*-V here, can be analyzed as a *pro*, variable, null epithet, or VPE in disguise (deletion) in terms of Sag's (1976) and Hankamer and Sag's (1976) typology of anaphora. In addition, he considers *ye-shi* as an instance of deep anaphora, not an instance of vPE. As to his modal licensed *v*PE, our *ye*-Aux here, its distribution is regulated by a necessity factor, a negative morpheme (stripping-like), or a negative morpheme along with modal, all of which can be accounted for either via PF-deletion or via the interpretative approach, depending on which perspective the analysis has taken.

    In this work, we will not take Ai's (2006) analyses into account, mainly because of the tremendous differences in judgment with respect to the pragmatic control and the deep anaphora analysis of *ye-shi* type, both of which are oppositely considered as surface anaphora in this work, close to the intuition of Li (2002) and Li (2007). In order to exclude some idiolectal or dialectal factor, our study is only concerned with the VP-ellipsis with overt antecedent clauses, the so-called syntactically controlled environment in Ai (2006). Examples with the pragmatic antecedents, the strong pragmatic control in the sense of Ai (2006), will be partially discussed but only for the purpose of discriminating the three variants. Also, the Antecedent Contained Deletion (ACD) in Mandarin is not within the scope of this study.

cally surveyed from the angles of adverbial deletion, backwards anaphora, island effect, pragmatic antecedents, the third reading, and finally indefinite correlates. We will show that either the LF-structure analyses or the true empty category analysis (TEC, Li 2007) fails to satisfactorily interpret all these phenomena. Therefore, we propose a movement and resumption analysis along the veins of Shlonsky (1992) and Aoun, Choueiri, and Hornstein (2001) on the basis of the assumption that the base-generated empty category after each variant has to be raised to the initial position of the second conjunct. This movement is motivated by the topic-comment predication between conjuncts for the purpose of further construal with its correlative antecedent in the first conjunct. Each empty category has to be licensed by a head, *shi*, Aux, or V. It is found that the semantically-rich licensing heads, Aux and V, differ from the semantically-empty focus marker *shi* in their ability to provide the following subcategorized empty categories with a kind of strong clue to their references, making them analogous to a pronominal element with referentiality. This further leads to their legitimacy in the respects of backwards anaphora, pragmatic antecedent, the third reading and even resumptive device for island repair. That is the reason why resumption as a last resort in syntax can interpret island repair effect in the cases of *ye/ (que)*-Aux/V, especially when a nominal or predicate operator movement is blocked by islands. On the contrary, *ye-shi* strictly observes island effect due to its ban on resumptive use. Finally, we come to the conclusion that the empty categories can be a variable derived from movement, a resumptive element bound by the operator, or an E-type *pro* referring to an indefinite NP correlate.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 briefly introduces the types of Mandarin VP-ellipsis. Section 3 focuses on the comparison of the three variants. Section 4 discusses the difficulties of the LF-structure analyses and TEC analysis. Section 5 analyzes the identity of the missing part in each variant. Section 6 concludes this paper.

2. The Categories of VP-ellipsis in Mandarin Chinese

There are three types of VP-ellipsis generally studied in Mandarin Chinese, including *ye-shi*, *ye*-Aux, and *ye*-V, as shown in (1)–(3), respectively. The obligatory adverb *ye* responds to the correlate clause affirmatively by means of a contrast, indicating that the new information *Lisi* in the elided clause has the same property as *Zhangsan* in the correlate clause. The syntactic structures of the missing materials vary, inclusive of IP, VP, or DP (Li 2002, Li 2007), which are licensed by different heads, *shi* 'be', Modal, or V, respectively (Lobeck 1990, 1995,

Saito and Murasugi 1990).

(1) a. Zhangsan chi pingguo, Lisi ye   shi [$_{IP}$ e]
       Zhangsan eat apple   Lisi also be
       'Zhangsan eats apples, and Lisi does, too.'
   b. Zhangsan bu chi pingguo, Lisi ye   shi [$_{IP}$ e]
       Zhangsan not eat apple,   Lisi also be
       'Zhangsan doesn't eat apples, and Lisi doesn't, either.'
(2) a. Zhangsan hui qu meiguo,   Lisi ye   hui [$_{VP}$ e]
       Zhangsan will go the United States Lisi also will
       'Zhangsan will go to the United States, and Lisi will, too.'
   b. Zhangsan bu hui qu meiguo,   Lisi ye   bu hui [$_{VP}$ e]
       Zhsansan not will go the United States Lisi also not will
       'Zhangsan won't go to the United States, and Lisi won't, either.'
(3) a. Zhangsan chi pingguo, Lisi ye   chi [$_{DP}$ e]
       Zhangsan eat apple   Lisi also eat
       'Zhangsan eats apples, and Lisi does, too.'
   b. Zhangsan bu chi pingguo, Lisi ye   bu chi [$_{DP}$ e]
       Zhangsan not eat apple   Lisi also not eat
       'Zhangsan doesn't eat apples, and Lisi doesn't, either.'

We observe that (*que*)-Aux and (*que*)-V correspond to *ye*-Aux and *ye*-V in the categories of the missing parts but differ in the optionality of the adverb *que* 'however', which, contrary to *ye*, responds to the previous correlate negatively. Thus, the contrastive new information *Lisi* in the elided clause does not have the same property as *Zhangsan* in the correlate clause, as shown in (4) and (5).[2]

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2. The sequence *(que)-shi* 'however be' seems to be a counterpart of *ye-shi*; however, it is disallowed as in (ia). Its ungrammaticality may be caused by the semantic conflict between *que* 'however' and *shi* 'be' (Wei 2009). The former is a negative polarity marker (ΣP, Laka 1990, Soh 2007, etc.), indicating that the meaning of the missing part in the second conjunct is contrary to that of the first conjunct, while the latter is a positive/affirmative one (cf. Soh 2007). This assumption can be verified if we change the affirmative *shi* to the copula verb *shi* 'be' as in (ib). In this case, *que-shi* is licit. For more details of this analysis, the readers can refer to Soh (2007) and Wei (2008, 2009).

   (i) a. *Zhangsan yao qu meiguo,   dansi Lisi (que)   shi.
          Zhangsan   will go the United States but   Lisi however be
          'Zhangsan will go to the United States, but Lisi doesn't.'
      b. Zhangsan bu shi ribenren, danshi Lisi (que)   shi.
          Zhangsan not be Japanese but   Lisi however be
          'Zhangsan is not a Japanese, but Lisi is.'

(4) a. Zhangsan yao qu meiguo,   dansi Lisi (que)   bu yao [vp e].
      Zhangsan will go the United States but   Lisi however not will
      'Zhangsan will go to the United States, but Lisi won't.'

   b. Zhangsan bu yao qu meiguo,   dansi Lisi (que)   yao [vp e].
      Zhangsan not will go the United States but   Lisi however will
      'Zhangsan won't go to the United States, but Lisi will.'

(5) a. Zhangsan meiyou chi pingguo, dansi Lisi (que)   chi le   [DP e].³
      Zhangsan not-Perf eat apple   but   Lisi however eat Part.
      'Zhangsan hasn't eaten the apple, but Lisi has.'

   b. Zhangsan chi pingguo, dansi Lisi (que)   bu chi [DP e].
      Zhangsan eat apple   but   Lisi however not eat
      'Zhangsan eats apples, but Lisi doesn't.'

Therefore, by taking into account the types of idiosyncratic heads as well as the adverbials *ye* and *que*, Mandarin VP-ellipsis can be categorized into three variants, *ye-shi*, *ye/(que)*-Aux, and *ye/(que)*-V.

3. Comparison of the Three Variants

3.1 Adverbial deletion

When manner adverb appears in the correlate clause of the three variants, the elided parts of *ye-shi* and *ye/(que)*-Aux retain the meaning of the same manner adverb as in (6a, b), while that of *ye/(que)*-V does not as in (6c). This supports the analyses of the Li (2002), Xu (2003) and Li (2007), all of whom claim that the discrepancy results from the different syntactic categories of the missing materials. *Ye-shi* and *ye/(que)*-Aux omits an IP and a *v*P, respectively; thus, their missing parts naturally contain the manner adverbs. In contrast, *ye/(que)*-V elides a DP on the surface or a VP (Li 2002), excluding the possibility of the omission of the *v*P-level manner adverbs.⁴

(6) a. Zhangsan hen kuaile-di likai-le,   Lisi ye   shi.
      Zhangsan very happy-Di leave-Asp Lisi also be
      'Zhangsan left happily, and Lisi left happily, too.'

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3. Abbreviations used in this paper: Perf=perfective marker; Part=particle; Prog=progressive marker; Cl=classifier; Asp=aspectual marker; De=appositive clause marker, relative clause marker, possessive marker, or modifier marker; Di=adverbial marker; Pass=passive marker; NOM=nominative case; GEN=genitive case; ACC=accusative case.
4. Li (2002) asserts that *ye-shi* is derived from *v*P-deletion and *ye*-V from VP-ellipsis.