

The Order of 'Verb-Complement' Constructions in Taiwan Southern Min

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ABSTRACT

In sharp contrast to Taiwan Mandarin (TM) boasting an impressive array of Verb-Complements (VC) which can be immediately followed by an Object (O) Taiwan Southern Min (TSM) resists such a word order in favor of the sequence of V-O-C or O-V-C in the majority of cases. In this paper I propose a historical explanation of such a difference in word order. Previous studies show that the V-C's as adhesive units in TM evolve from the contraction of earlier coordinate clauses and subsequent intransitivization of two juxtaposed transitive verbs. Specifically, the intransitivization which is responsible for the genesis of V-C's occurs at two stages: (1) the intransitivization of the second verb and (2) the intransitivization of the first verb. There is a simple explanation for the absence of VC-O in TSM: TSM neither undergoes contraction nor intransitivization in most cases.

TSM is uniquely rich in chronological strata which are well-attested in phonological, lexical and syntactic distinction. The word order constraint in question provides another piece of evidence for the existence of chronological strata in syntax. In short, TSM sees the coexistence of the Han stratum, the Nan-Bei-Chao stratum and the Song stratum, as far as the variation of word order goes: the first two strata accounts for the preference of OVC and VOC over VCO in most cases, and the third stratum underscores the existence of VCO in minor cases. In terms of intransitivization discussed above TSM proceeds no farther than the first period. An upshot of this is that there are definitely no instances of V-C's realized by two successive intransitive verbs, a construction quite prevalent in TM. On a grander scale I try to motivate a lexically dependent approach to the variability in word order; in particular, the formation of V-C's may well be an aggregate of a protracted period of syntactic development propagated through lexical diffusion. The working out in full detail of the schedule and scenario of syntactic change of such a magnitude promises a challenging yet extremely rewarding task to be undertaken.

Key words: historical explanation; chronological strata; verb-complement; word order; lexical diffusion

0. Introduction

This paper studies the word order of the 'Verb-Complement' (V-C) constructions with respect to Objects (O) in Taiwan Southern Min (TSM).¹ Whereas Taiwan Mandarin (TM)² is rich in the V-C compounds, TSM is relatively modest in this respect and follows a different pattern in forming the V-C constructions. Even since the Song period Mandarin has witnessed a gradual change of word order yielding a host of V-C O constructions.³ TSM seems to move in that direction, too, presumably under the abiding influence of TM. However, there are some tenacious traces of earlier patterns of V-C constructions in which V and C are separated by O.

On the strength of spoken and written data we have found the coexistence of conservative patterns (i.e., V-O-C) and innovative patterns (i.e., C-V-O). A detailed account will be given of the distribution of these coexisting patterns in the light of earlier and modern Southern Min data. We will also examine a variety of the plain V-C constructions in TSM and bring the synchrony of these patterns to bear on the diachrony and evolution of V-C constructions in Chinese.

Between §0. introduction and §4. closing words the bulk of the paper consists of three sections: § 1. a comparison between TSM and TM with respect to the

* This paper was presented at the Third International Conference on Chinese Linguistics, sponsored by Language Information Sciences Research Centre, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong, July 14-17, 1994. I am grateful to Anne O-K Yue-Hashimoto, Audrey Y-H Li and Tsulin Mei for discussions and stimulating suggestions. Thanks are also due to three anonymous reviewers for their very helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper. Errors are, of course, mine.

1. Taiwan Southern Min is a variety of Southern Min dialects spoken in Taiwan. An important feature of TSM is the neutralization of many subdialect-specific distinctions, such as the neutralization of the mutually exclusive reciprocal adverbs *sa"* and *sio*, as discussed in Lien (1994).
2. Taiwan Mandarin is a full-fledged version of Mandarin that has gradually taken shape in Taiwan after World War II. It has unique characteristics of its own. See Cheng (1985), for example, for discussion of some grammatical features which set Taiwan Mandarin apart from Peking Mandarin.
3. Unless otherwise noted, Mandarin dealt with in this paper is TM, a variety of Mandarin as spoken in Taiwan. The examples in TSM and TM are based on my own intuition; however, they are verified by the intuition of other native speakers as well as current written materials. In full cognizance of the importance of corpora our linguistic analysis will still have to rely on the intuition of the native speaker to some extent since however large the corpora are some badly needed examples are just beyond reach. (see Fillmore (1992) for discussion of a balanced view of corpus linguistics and armchair linguistics)

order of V-C and O, §2. the order of verb, complement and object (2.1. plain constructions in TSM, 2.2, potential constructions in TSM and 2.3. the formation of potential constructions in Chinese), and §3. a historical explanation.

1. A comparison between TSM and TM with respect to the order of V-C and O

In TM the V(erb)-C(omplement) construction is a highly productive device for compressing into a single verb a sequence of two elements denoting action and result respectively. Historically, the V-C construction did not come into being until Tang times. (Ohta 1958, Shimura 1984 and Mei 1991, 1994) An important yardstick for ascertaining the wordhood of the V-C construction is the occurrence of V-C before O.⁴ The versatile features of the V-C construction and its rich and complicated semantic relation with associated arguments have sparked linguists to propose various theories to account for the interesting phenomena.⁵

In contrast, TSM is still in an emergent state in its development of V-C constructions. One solid piece of evidence is the rare occurrence if not a total absence of V-C O constructions. As shown below, in TSM the predicates denoting action and result have not been integrated to a single verb and are separable by other elements: (The skeleton of each sentence is highlighted by the elements enclosed in the parentheses on the right-hand side)⁶

The VC's in the TM examples are complex predicates that are historically derived by a contraction of two coordinate clauses. (Uchida 1951) Each complex predicate is a verb-complement construction which can be immediately followed by the object. The conflation of coordinate clauses brings about a rich and complicated semantic relation between the complex predicate and the argument. The main verb, be it transitive (1 through 3) or intransitive (4), is predicated of the subject in all the above examples. However, the semantic role of the complement varies with each set of examples: the complement in (1a&b), (2) and (4a&b) is predicated of the object, whereas the complement in (3a&b) is predicated of the subject. The object in (1) and (3), but not (2) and (4), refers to a sentient being, and the feature 'dynamicity' further distinguishes the objects in (1) and (3). In

4. See Chao (1968: 473-480) for a discussion of the V-C O construction.

5. See (Lu 1980,1990, Lü 1984b, Cheng and Huang 1994, Tang 1989,1992, among others)

6. The church romanization of TSM is based on Douglas (1873), and TM is rendered in the Pinyin system. I am grateful to Shou-hsin Teng, whose phonetic fonts make the diacritics possible.

(1a)	TSM	Goá mã" kah i khâu chhut-lai. (S V Kah S V-CC) I scold until he cry-I(NCHOATIVE) A(SPECT).
	TM	Wǒ mã-kū le tā le (S V-C O) I scold cry P(ERFECT) A(SPECT)-he-IA
		'I scolded him until he cried.'
(1b)	TSM	kā gín-a lāng chhiò a (ka O V C) O(BJECT) M(ARKER) child-SUF(FIX) tease laugh IA
	TM	dòu xiào le háizi le (V C O) tease laugh PA child
		'The child was teased into laughing.'
(2)	TSM	kā soh-a koah tng a. (ka O V C) OM rope-SUF cut broken IA
	TM	gē duàn le shēnzi. (V-C O) cut broken PA rope
		'The rope was cut off.'
(3a)	TSM	Lím chiú tsüi (V-O-C) drink wine drunk
	TM	Hē zuǐjiǔ (V-C-O) drink-drunk-wine
		'(He/She) got drunk.'
(3b)	TSM	Tsu khò" siēn a (O-V-C) book read tired IA
	TM	kān juàn shū le (V-C-O) read tired book tired IA
		'(He/She) is tired of reading.'
(4a)	TSM	bákchhiu khâu kah âng kóngkóng. (O V kah V-CC) eye cry until red-VI(VID) RED(UPLICATION)
	TM	kū hóng yǎnjīng (V-C O) cry red eye
		'(He/She) cried until his/her eyes reddened.'
(4b)	TSM	khâu kah chhiúkun-a tâm-loklok (V kah O V-CC) cry until handkerchief-SUF wet-VI RED
	TM	kū shī shǒupà (V-C O) cry wet handkerchief
		'(He/She) cried until his/her handkerchief became wet.'

sharp contrast, TSM does not undergo the conflation of simplex predicates as far as the above examples go.

As shown below, in order to avoid the sequence of VC-O for some verbs TSM adopts the strategy of preposing the object and separating the V and C by a causative or benefactive marker + a pronominal object *kah. i* other than the extent marker *kah* in the above examples.

(5)	TSM	kongkhò siá hō. i hó ⁷ (V hō. -i C) homework write cause it finish
	TM	Xiě hǎo gōngkè (V-C O)
		'You should finish your homework.'
(6)	TSM	Siochiú kā lim hō. i ta. (O kā V hō. i C) wine OM drink cause it dry
	TM	Hē guāng jiǔ. (V C O) drink finished wine
		'Drink up the wine.'

However, TSM embraces the V-C O construction in some proverbs or maxims:

(7)	Chiáh kín lóng phoah oá ⁿ (V-C O) eat fast cause broke bowl
	'Hasty eating bursts the bowl.'
(8)	Kā phái gín-a toā-sōe (V-C O) teach bad child old-and-young
	'You corrupt everybody.'
(9)	Mēng-khiu ⁿ lú kháu tó bānlí-tāngsiā ⁿ (V-C O) M.-K.-l. cry fall Great Wall
	'Meng khiu ⁿ lu's wailing crumbled the Great Wall.'

In what follows we will try to provide a historical explanation of the coexistence of the VOC construction and the VCO construction in TSM. But before doing that let us first examine in more detail the variegated syntactic patterns in

7. *hō• i* can be collapsed as *ho.h*, *ho.* or *he.* The fact that *Vt* and *Vi* can be separated by *hō• i* 'cause it/him/her' shows that *Vt* and *Vi* may well be two separate verbs rather than a verb-complement construction in TSM.

TSM.

2. The order of verb, 'complement' and object

In this section we will explore the word order of verb and 'complement' with respect to the positioning of O. Plain V-C constructions with no potential markers will be examined in 2.1., and potential constructions, viz., the V-C construction with the positive/negative potential marker functioning as an infix-like element, will be discussed in 2.2. We will also highlight the formation of potential construction in Chinese in 2.3.

For the concatenation of O(bject) and the V-C constructions there are three coexistent structures: (1) VCO, (2) VOC and (3) OVC. Only when followed by O is V-C a genuine and full-fledged VC construction. When 'V' and 'C' are separable by O, it may well be a serial verb construction. That is, 'C' is not a complement but still a predicate.

2.1. Plain constructions in TSM

The word order of V-O-C differs with respect to the kind of complements and verbs involved. It seems that for certain types of complements the determination of word order depends on what lexical elements are involved. In the following we will examine the interaction of complements and verbs with regard to the constraint of word order. The C's to be discussed include 2.1.1. phase markers, 2.1.2. resultatives, 2.1.3. frozen complements, and 2.1.4. overlapping types of complements.

2.1.1. Phase markers

Here we will examine the phase complements such as (1) *tiòh*, (2) *ū/bô*, (3) *kê*, and *hó*, *liáu*, *oân*, *soah*, & *khi*.⁸

Tiòh bearing a neutral tone has been grammaticalized as a phase marker⁹ and combined with the verb into an adhesive verb-complement construction. Therefore, VERB-*tiòh* can occur before an object, but it can not be separated by a noun phrase, as shown below:

8. See Lien (1995b) for a discussion of completive phase markers such as *hó*, *liáu*, *oân*, *soah*, and *khi* in TSM.

	(1).tiòh ¹⁰
	VCO, *VOC, OVC
a.	liáh tiòh chit chiah tho.-a 'catch a rabbit'
	grab get one CL(ASSIFIER) rabbit-SUFFIX
b.	khoã ⁿ tiòh chit chiah tsûn 'spot a boat'
	watch get one CL boat

ū and *bô* as phrase markers indicate the success and failure of an event respectively. As shown below, verb-*ū* and its negative counterpart verb-*bô* have each yielded a tenacious whole and can be followed but cannot be disrupted by an object:

	(2) <i>ū</i> and <i>bô</i> ¹¹
	VCO, *VOC, OVC
c.	bôe <i>ū</i> mñghkiã ⁿ 'have bought something'
	buy have thing
d.	bôe <i>bô</i> mñghkiã ⁿ 'have bought nothing'
	buy have-not thing
	*VCO, VOC, *OVC
e.	khoã ⁿ lī <i>bô</i> 'look down on you' ¹²
	look you have-not

9. Verb-*tiòh* as a verb-complement construction denotes achievement in the sense of Vendler (1967:97-121).

10. The complement *tiòh* is quite versatile and can take the following verbs other than *liáh* and *khoãⁿ*:

bāng- 'to net'(C2), *tū*- 'meet with'(C28), *āi*- 'fall in love'(D72), *siūⁿ*- 'think of'(D78), *thiaⁿ*- 'hear'(D80), *thāi*- 'kill'(E90), *khô*- 'succeed in exam'(D114), *phīⁿ*- 'smell'(D122), *giū*- 'tug'(C28), *hiat*- 'hit'(D72), *tit*- 'get'(E60)

The above data are taken from a set of written documents compiled by Hu (1993abc and 1994ab). Here as well as elsewhere in this paper the capital letter in the parentheses stands for the abbreviation of each item of the books shown below and the numeral refers to the page number in which the example appears:

Hu 1993a (=A), Hu 1993b (=B), Hu 1993c (=C), Hu 1994a (=D), Hu 1994b (=E).

11. Here are more examples: *chhē ū* 'find'(E90); *liáh bô* 'do not catch'(C4), *chhē bô* 'do not find'(D90), *khoãⁿ bô* 'do not see'(A130).

12. The idiomatic sense is lost in the word order of *VCO and *OVC.

The experience marker *kê* is wavering between two kinds of word order (viz., VCO and VOC) as indicated below:¹³

	(3) <i>kê</i>
	VCO, VOC, OVC
f.	<i>chiáh kê tsoâbah</i> 'have eaten snake'
	eat pass snake-meat
	<i>chiáh tsoâbah kê</i>
	eat snake-meat pass

Cheng (1992:185), Mei (1994: 88-89) and Yang (1991: 213-283) converge in the view that V + phase marker can not be followed by an object in TSM. In other words, V-C O is not tolerated when C is a completive phase marker like *hó*, *liáu*, *oân*, *soah* and *khì*. A way out is to prepose the object, as shown below:

	(4) - <i>hó</i> , - <i>liáu</i> , - <i>oân</i> , - <i>soah</i> and - <i>khì</i> .
	OVC, *VCO, *VOC
<i>hó</i> .	<i>saⁿ chhīng hó</i> 'put on the clothes'
	clothes wear finish
<i>liáu</i>	<i>chiⁿ īng liáu</i> 'use the money up'
	money use finish
<i>oân</i>	<i>tsu tâk oân</i> 'finish reading the book'
	book read finish
<i>soah</i>	<i>pñg chiáh soah</i> 'finish the meal'
	cooked rice eat end
<i>khì</i>	<i>īng saⁿ kho. gūn khì</i> 'spend three dollars'
	use three CL silver go

2.1.2. Resultatives

There are also two types of the V-C construction involving the resultative complements with respect to the positioning of objects: unlike *sī* and *kīⁿ* in (5), *pá*

13. See Cheng 1992:(185-186) where both are given. Two coexistent syntactic constructions actually represent two chronological strata. It is quite plausible that VCO is a newly rising and vibrant stratum whereas VOC as an older stratum is on the brink of extinction.

and *tsūi* in (6) as well as *sək* and *tīⁿ* in (7) cannot be followed by an object. However, the resultative complements in (6), but not (7), can occur in VOC, as shown below:

	(5) <i>sí</i> and <i>kīⁿ</i>
	VCO, *VOC, OVC
- <i>sí</i> ¹⁴	<i>hāi sí in bó</i> 'kill his wife'
	hurt dead his wife
<i>kīⁿ</i>	<i>khoàiⁿ kīⁿ chit bé thāng</i> 'see a worm'
	look see one CL worm
	(6) <i>pá</i> and <i>tsūi</i> .
	VOC, *VCO, OVC
<i>pá</i>	<i>chiáh pāng pá</i> 'have had enough'
	eat full cooked rice
<i>tsūi</i>	<i>lim chiú tsúí</i> 'get drunk'
	drink wine drunk
	(7) <i>sək</i> and <i>tīⁿ</i> .
	*VOC, *VCO, OVC
<i>sək</i>	<i>pāng tsú sək</i> 'The rice is done.'
	cooked rice cook done
<i>tīⁿ</i>	<i>tê thīn tīⁿ</i> 'fill (a cup) with the tea'
	tea pour full

2.1.3. Frozen complements

In the following examples the complements such as *jíp*, *loh* and *bô* and the object noun have combined into frozen complements. That is why VCO rather than VOC and OVC is allowed.

14. Here are attested examples: *hāi sí* 'kill'(B84), *thái sí* 'kill'(E78), and *siā sí* 'shoot to death' (E76).

	VCO, *VOC, *OVC
a.	khùn jìp bìn 'fall asleep'
	sleep enter sleep
b.	khùn lóh bìn 'fall asleep'
	sleep fall sleep
c.	kiâ" bô lô. 'have no way out'
	walk not road
d.	tsáu bô lô. 'there is no escape'
	run not road

2.1.4. Overlapping types of complements

When the complement remains constant, the word order varies with the kinds of individual verbs that fill the slot of V. It is quite obvious that the first verb plays an important role in the determination of word order. As shown below, a complement in each set cuts across different types of word order. The existence of overlapping complements may well be a reflection of the coexistence of chronological strata that accumulate over the years.

	(8) ū/bô
a	VCO, *VOC, OVC
	thần ū chi" 'have made a profit'
	earn have money
	thần bô chi" 'have made no profit'
	earn have-not money
b	*VCO,VOC, *OVC
	khoã" i ū 'think highly of him/her'
	look he have
	khoã" i bô 'look down on him/her'
	look he have-not

	(9) soah
a	VCO, *VOC, OVC
	poa ⁿ soah hì 'The show ended'
	perform finish show
b	*VCO, *VOC, OVC
	p̄ng chiáh soah 'have eaten the meal'
	rice eat end
c	*VCO, VOC, *OVC
	m̄ p̄ng i soah 'do not let him/her off scot-free'
	not let he end

	(10) tiâu
	VCO, *VOC, OVC
a	khó tiâu t̄aihák ¹⁵ 'pass the college entrance exam.'
	examine fastened university
	*VCO, *VOC, OVC
b	hun chiáh tiâu 'become addicted to smoking'
	cigarette eat fastened

In the following table which encapsulates the examples of the above plain constructions in TSM the symbols * and v mean absence and presence of sentence patterns I and II respectively. The absence of I, as in (1) and (2), viz., 'VC' can not be followed by O, means that the sequence of 'VC' is not a verb-complement construction, but a serial verb construction. The presence of I, as in (3) and (4), means that the sequence of 'VC' is a bona fide verb-complement construction. There is a host of examples which are overlapping complements marked by the superscript ^o on the right-hand side of each word in question.

	I	II	
	VCO	VOC	examples
(1)	*	*	hó, liáu, oân, tiâu ^o , soah ^o
(2)	*	v	pá, tsùi, khi, soah ^o , ū/bô ^o
(3)	v	*	kī ⁿ , tióh ^o , sí, jip, loh, soah ^o , tiâu ^o , ū/bô ^o
(4)	v	v	kè, tióh ^o

15.cf. *kào-qū dāxuē* or *kào-shāng dāxuē* in TM.

To summarize, there are two types of V-C constructions: one type in which VC can be followed by O, and another type in which VC cannot be followed by O. These two types of constructions cut across each variety of complements, viz., phase markers and resultatives. Whether an Object NP in that position is tolerated depends on how closely V and C are built into a coherent unit or put differently lexicalized. The lexically dependent variation of syntactic structure seems to lend support to the thesis that syntactic change takes place through lexical diffusion.¹⁶ Syntactic change does not involve only a shift of structural patterns. It is also linked to the individual words, and put more exactly, pace of change of structural patterns is correlated lexically. For a type of syntactic change there may well be a period in which competing changes among lexical items herald a new syntactic pattern.

2.2. Potential constructions in TSM

In this section we will look into the potential constructions, viz., the ‘verb-complement’ construction with the positive/negative potential marker $\bar{e}/b\bar{e}$, in TSM. If we take the third person pronoun as the object of the sentence, there occurs the construction of V-O- $\bar{e}/b\bar{e}$ -C, but not *V- $\bar{e}/b\bar{e}$ -C-O, where C embraces a. *tó*, b. *tiòh*, c. *tiâu* and d. *kè*, as shown below:

1.	*V- $\bar{e}/b\bar{e}$ -C-O, V-O- $\bar{e}/b\bar{e}$ -C
a. <i>tó</i>	<i>kà i ē/bē tó</i> ‘can/cannot teach him/her’ teach he can/cannot fall
b. <i>tiòh</i> ¹⁷	<i>liáh i ē/bē tiòh</i> ‘can/cannot catch him/her’ catch he can/cannot get
c. <i>tiâu</i>	<i>lâu i ē/bē tiâu</i> ‘can/cannot keep him/her’ keep he can/cannot fastened
d. <i>kè</i>	<i>phiàn i ē/bē kè</i> ‘can/cannot cheat him/her’ cheat he can/cannot pass

16. See Mei (1980), Tottie (1991), Hsieh (1992), Yue-Hashimoto (1992, 1993b), Her (1994) and Lien (1994) for the idea and deliberation on the thesis of lexical diffusion in syntactic change. Cf. Thompson (1973), which also concludes that verb-resultative complements are generated in the lexicon. I owe a debt of gratitude to Tsu-lin Mei for calling my attention to this paper.

In contrast, when an object noun is involved, we find the construction V- \bar{e} / $b\bar{e}$ -C-O rather than *V-O- \bar{e} / $b\bar{e}$ -C in which C is exemplified by \bar{e} . *khí*, f. *lòh*, g. *chhut*, and h. *khui*, as in

2.	V-e/ $b\bar{e}$ -C-O, *V-O-e/ $b\bar{e}$ -C
e. <i>khí</i> ¹⁸	òh \bar{e} / $b\bar{e}$ <i>khí</i> kanghu 'can/cannot learn the skill'
	learn can/cannot up skill
f. <i>lòh</i> ¹⁹	chiáh \bar{e} / $b\bar{e}$ <i>lòh</i> p̄ng 'can/cannot have rice'
	eat can/cannot fall cooked rice
g. <i>chhut</i>	kōng \bar{e} / $b\bar{e}$ <i>chhut</i> chhūi 'can/cannot speak'
	speak can/cannot out mouth
h. <i>khui</i>	kiâ ⁿ \bar{e} / $b\bar{e}$ <i>khui</i> kha 'can/cannot bear to part from'
	walk can/cannot open foot

One may ascribe the difference in word order shown in the above two sets of sentences to the syntactic category of the object; that is, Set 1 takes the pronominal object and Set 2, the nominal object. Such a position does not hold since the following set of examples (viz., Set 3) in TM, the counterpart of Set 1 in TSM, follow a different word order even though both Set 3 and Set 1 share the pronominal objects:

3.	V-de/bu-C-O, *V-O-de/bu-C
a. <i>liǎo</i>	jiāo de/bu <i>liǎo</i> tā 'can/cannot teach him/her'
	teach can/cannot finish he/she
b. <i>dào</i>	zhuā de/bu <i>dào</i> tā 'can/cannot catch him/her'
	catch can/cannot fastened he/she
c. <i>zhù</i>	liú de/bu <i>zhù</i> tā 'can/cannot keep him/her'
	keep he can/cannot fastened he/she
d. <i>guō</i>	piān de/bu <i>guō</i> tā 'can/cannot cheat him/her'
	cheat can/cannot pass he/she

17. This construction is supported by examples such as *khoàⁿ lí bô tiòh* 'do not see you' (D92) and *liáh í bē tiòh* 'do not catch him/her' (D160).

18. The word order varies with the type of main verbs involved, as in *khoàⁿ goá bē khí* 'look down on me' (B58). A new way of expressing the same meaning would be *khoàⁿ bē khí goá* probably under the influence of TM.

19. Cf. *tsòe bē lòh chhiú* 'do not have the heart to do it' (E120).

I will propose in §3 that such a difference in word order is a result of the historical development of syntactic patterns in Chinese. Before proceeding to that point I will first provide a short description of the formation of potential constructions based on previous studies.

2.3. The formation of potential constructions in Chinese

In Yue's (1984) study of written documents (cf. Li 1992) the placement of VC constructions with positive/negative markers with respect to the object shows the following schedule of development:

(1) The constructions with the positive potential marker *de*

	A1	A2	A3
	V-de-O-C	V-de-C-O	V-O-de-C
Tang (618-907)	onset	onset	
Song (960-1279)	spread out	limited	appeared
Yuan (1271-1368)	still existed	spread out	petered out
Ming (1368-1644)	more dominant	less dominant	
Qing (1644-1911)	dramatically reduced	sharply increased	

(2) The constructions with the negative potential marker *bu*

	B1	B2	B3	B4
	V-O- <i>bu</i> -C	V- <i>bu</i> -C-O	V- <i>bu</i> -de-O-C	V-C-O- <i>bu</i> -de
Tang	existed	existed		
Song	more dominant	less dominant	onset	onset
Yuan/Ming			more examples	more examples
Qing	greatly reduced	gradually increased	vanished	vanished

In overall terms the tendency is for the complement to be attracted to and eventually integrated with the verb amounting to a change of VOC to VCO in line with an insightful remark made by Lü as early as 1944 (see Lü 1984a: 132-144).

As shown in Table 1 above, A1 (V-de-O-C) appeared earlier than A2 (V-de/bu-C-O) and A3 (V-O-de-C), and there was a stage, approximately the Song period, when the three patterns coexisted side by side. The same kind of chronological strata is observed in Table 2 where B1 (V-O-bu-C) antedates B2 (V-bu-C-O). However, B3 and B4 show no difference in this respect. If the positive/negative marker is stripped off, we find A1/B1 (V-O-C) appear earlier than A2/B2 (V-C-O). It is not wide off mark to observe that with minor exceptions, TM features V-C-O, whereas TSM embraces V-O-C. As a further proof, here are some more examples of early Southern Min attesting to the existence of the VOC construction gleaned from three Ming and Qing scripts of plays written in the indigenous language:²⁰

	WLLZJ [1581AD] (Wu 1967)
A.	ē tit i tiòh (07:072) 'can get her'
	can get he/her hit-the-mark
B.	pê tit niû" kiã" khí(17:158) 'can pay for your mirror'
	compensate can the lady mirror up
C.	lí phièn goá bē kē (17:168) 'You cannot fool me'
	you cheat me cannot pass
D.	phah i bē chhiã (18:053) 'cannot tilt it'
	strike it cannot oblique

20. The scripts of plays were written in Chaozhou and Quanzhou subdialects, both being a variety of the Southern Min dialect. However, the following examples are given in the TSM pronunciation. The first piece (viz., WLLZJ) dates back to Ming times, and the other two pieces (viz., SZLZJ and TCQSJ), early Qing times. The serial numerals separated by a colon in the parentheses after each example represent the sequential order of both acts and instances.

	SZLZJ [1651AD] (Wu 1968)
E.	bē tit tiòh (4:383) 'cannot get (him/her)'
	cannot get he/her hit-the-mark
F.	pê tit lín kià" khí(9:480) 'can pay for your mirror'
	compensate get you mirror up
G.	bē khi goá kè (11:694) 'cannot fool me'
	cannot cheat me pass
H.	goá tàu i bē kè (11:695) 'cannot overcome him'
	I contend he/her cannot pass
I.	lâu i bē tiâu (14:278) 'cannot keep him'
	keep he/her cannot fastened
	TCQSJ [1782AD] (Wu 1975) ²¹
J.	tàn ā bē tit i tiòh 'throw (the thing) but fail to hit it'
	throw too cannot get it hit-the-mark

3. A historical explanation

The resistance to the word order of V-C O in TSM may have its roots in historical development of the language, in particular the gradual formation of the V-C construction. The full-fledged V-C construction did not spring into being overnight; it assumes its present form as a result of a prolonged process of evolution. Although linguists differ on the exact date of the fruition of the V-C construction, Middle Chinese may be a more plausible period of its fermentation and gradual maturity.

Mei (1991) proposes a schedule for the development of the V-C construction. In the O(ld) C(hinese) period, there were two types of juxtaposed verbs: (1) Vt1 + Vt2 and (2) Vt-Vi/Adj with a very rigid constraint on the associated argument types, as shown below:

21. This example appears in the act called *tàn oan-iu* "Tossing Mandarin ducks".

(1)	Agent	+	Vt1-Vt2	+	patient
(2)	Patient	+	Vt-Vi/Adj		
(3)	*Agent	+	Vt-Vi/Adj		
(4)	*Agent	+	Vt-Vi/Adj	+	patient

(Vt = transitive verb, Vi = intransitive verb and Adj =adjective; * means that the constructions did not occur in the OC period)

In OC, whereas there were (1) and (2) where Vt2 is instantiated by *shā* 'kill' and Vi/Adj by *sǐ* 'dead', there was no occurrence of (3) and (4). The transitivity relation is signaled by the make-up of the predicate, and unlike modern Mandarin the semantic role of the subject is not open to an ambiguous interpretation. Furthermore, juxtaposed verbs as a coordinate construction had not been lexicalized as a single V-C verb.²² It was not until the 5th century in the M(iddle) C(hinese) period that (3) and (4) began to emerge. (Mei 1991)

From the MC period onward many changes occurred including the lexicalization of juxtaposed verbs, the intransitivization of Vt2 in Type (1) leading to the emergence of (4), and the relaxation of the constraint on the semantic roles of the subject leading to (3), and the extension of Vt1-Vt2 through Vt1-Vi/Adj to Vi-Vi by lexical diffusion.

Pace of syntactic development varies across geographically far-flung dialects. TSM as a descendant of Min dialects exhibits its unique syntactic behavior as an aggregate of historical development. It seems that with the exception of minor cases the proto-Min as an ancestral source of TSM did not undergo the post-MC lexical and syntactic change that early Mandarin did. This accounts for why TSM is shy of V-C O construction, be it (4) as shown above or (5) as a more recent development:

(5) Agent + Vi-Adj/Vi + Patient

Construction (5), a Mandarin-unique structure which came into being supposedly only very recently, may well be a result of the lexical diffusion of (4). That is, the intransitivization of verbs in the V-C construction may not be accomplished at one stroke, but through a prolonged process of word-to-word diffusion. The working out in full detail of the schedule and the scenario of such a change is beyond the scope of the present study, but it promises to be a fascinating topic

22. This is an important point that tells Ohta (1958), Shimura (1984: 227-257) and Mei (1991, 1994) from Wang (1958). The latter dates the emergence of the V-C construction in the OC period.

to work on in the future. A question may arise as to why there is no structure like (5) in TSM. There is a ready answer for it since in the majority of cases TSM has not developed Construction (4) in the first place.²³

Southern Min is famous for its rich distinction in chronological strata that accumulate over the past more than two millennia. According to Norman (1979, 1983 & 1991) on top of an Austroasiatic substratum and in addition to later strata there are three chronological strata in Min dialects: (1) the Han stratum, (2) the Nan-Bei-Chao stratum and (3) the Tang Stratum. The Han stratum stands for the popular and illiterate language documentally attested in the Jiangdong dialect located to the south of the Yangtze river, whereas the Nan-Bei-Chao stratum is the learned and literary language epitomized in the rime book *Qieyun*. The Tang stratum is based on the standard Chang'an dialect in the late Tang dynasty. The three chronological strata are not only motivated on phonological and lexical evidence, as pioneered in Norman (1979, 1983 and 1991), but also on grammatical grounds. (see Mei and Yang 1995, and Lien 1995a)

There is in TSM a general tendency to resist the sequence of VCO. One of the ways to avoid the structure of $Vt_1\text{-Adj}/Vi + \text{Patient}$ is for O to undergo topicalization, i.e., to prepose O and put it in the sentence-initial position. Another strategy is to use a patient marker *kā* to prepose the object. Unlike *bǎ* in Mandarin *kā* is not always associated with a disposal verb since the predicate can be a simple, monosyllabic verb, as in *kā i phah* 'beat him/her', as long as dynamicity is involved.²⁴ Topicalization or object preposing is possible only when the argument O stands in a transitivity relation to the verb. (Teng 1995) Viewed from a diachronic perspective, however, topicalization is not called for in the first place since OVC is inherited from Construction (2) where O is unambiguously a patient. In terms of chronological strata TSM can be seen as attesting to the existence of the Han stratum (vi., OVC) in syntax as well as phonology and lexicon.

In the development of juxtaposed verbs to the V(erb)-C(omplement) construction there is an intermediate stage of VOC which appeared in the 5th century within the Nan-Bei-Chao period. (Mei 1991)²⁵ VOC is a construction in which VC has not been lexicalized as an adhesive unit since it is still separated by O. As discussed in §2, TSM also has a set of examples of VOC showing the existence of the Nan-Bei-Chao stratum in it. Moreover, it has some instances of

23. I am indebted to Tsulin Mei for enlightening me on the scenario of the formation of the V-C construction in Mandarin. For discussion of semantic roles of argument of V-C constructions see Lu (1980,1990), Lü (1984b), Tang (1989,1992) and Cheng & Huang (1994)

24. See Li (1989) and Teng (1982,1995) for discussion of disposal verbs in TSM.

the V-C O construction dating back to the Song period (960-1279 AD). In terms of the variability in word order, then, there are three chronological strata identifiable in TSM, viz., the Han stratum (OVS), the Nan-Bei-Chao stratum (VOC) and the Song stratum (VCO). The notion of chronological strata means that all the strata except the native stratum are imported from a single alien system or many systems. Therefore, given such a concept the Song stratum may be regarded as an importation from early Mandarin. But another possibility that cannot be ruled out offhand is that the V-C O construction may well be a result of internal development that takes place independently in Min dialects, nevertheless parallel to the development in Mandarin dialects.

Parallel to the diachronic change of word order in which VOC shifts to VCO is a synchronic distribution of these two types of word order in modern dialects. Although modern Mandarin has shed the old construction (i.e., VOC) in favor of the new construction (i.e., VCO), there are modern dialects in the south such as Wu, Hui, Xiang, Gan, Kejia and Yue as well as Southern Min in which the old construction survives with various degrees of intensity.²⁶ Latitudinal transition manifested in the geographical distribution of linguistic features can often be brought to bear on the longitudinal change through the historical development of a language. (Hashimoto 1978: 45-76) It is not coincidental that southern dialects converge in the retention of the VOC construction. Such a synchronic correlation may throw light on the earlier history of southern dialects. The VOC construction featuring southern dialects only may be identified as one of the unique residual grammatical features of the so-called Jiangdong dialect corresponding to our Nan-Bei-Chao stratum.

4. Closing words

In this paper I bring up the word order constraint in TSM in which, unlike TM, the 'V-C' construction cannot be followed by an object in the majority of cases.

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25. Some of the VOC constructions might still be fairly vibrant in Tang times. In a study of historical development of the *de* construction Lü (1984a: 135-136) concludes that VOC is the dominant word order of Tang times whereas VCO is the dominant word order of Song times.
26. The sources for the dialectal materials involved are given as follows: Wu (Qian 1992: 1056-1057, Yan 1994: 244-247 and Wang 1959 [Shaoxing]), Hui (Meng 1985 [She Xian]), Xiang (Tang 1960 [Dongkou] and Zhang 1985 [Changsha]), Gan (Chen 1991: 367-369), Kejia (He 1993: 52-53, 85-86 and Luo 1988: 272,302), and Yue (Zhan 1981: 477-478). Note that the specific dialect is enclosed in square brackets. General survey of this problem can be found in Lamarre (1986: 494-516) and Yue-Hashimoto (1993a: 177-178).

I discuss the word order of verb and complement with respect to the object in TSM. In particular, I look into two kinds of constructions (viz., plain constructions and potential constructions) with close attention to the types of complements as a determinative factor in the word order constraint. Finally, a historical explanation is given to account for TSM's resistance to the V-C O construction. In terms of variability in word order three coexistent chronological strata in syntax have been identified in TSM: (1) the Han stratum that accounts for the preference of OVC, (2) the Nan-Bei-Chao Stratum which is responsible for the existence of VOC, and the Song stratum that underscores VCO as an emergent word order.

Moreover, I also touch on the issue of the formation of V-C's in TM which owe their inception to the contraction of two coordinate clauses yielding juxtaposed verbs. In short, the bona fide V-C's appeared as a result of the intransitivization of juxtaposed verbs. Intransitivization takes place in two steps: it first engulfs the second verb and then the first verb. It is perhaps not inappropriate to suggest that intransitivization be fruitfully examined in microhistorical terms as a prolonged process of syntactic change through the agency of lexical diffusion.

An important finding in this study is the coexistence of chronological strata in syntax in TSM. Old and new grammatical constructions exist side by side, and no clean-cut line can be drawn between them in purely structural terms. In short, lexical aspect plays a crucial role in grammatical patterning indicating an interaction among syntax, morphology and lexicon.

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台灣閩南語「動補」結構的語序

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摘要

台灣國語動補式相當發達，動補式後面可以緊跟著賓語，形成動補一賓的語序。但是台灣閩南語在大多數情況下却排斥這種語序，而以動一賓一補或賓一動一補的語序為常模。本文從漢語歷史發展的觀點對這種語序的差異提出解釋。根據前人研究的發現，台灣國語的動補式是經過一系列的演變而形成的：首先早期對等子句縮約成兩個並列的及物動詞，然後兩個動詞再分別經歷不及物化的演變。動補式的興起是由不及物化的演變所促成的，不及物化先後分兩個階段進行：(1)第二個動詞的不及物化，(2)第一個動詞的不及物化。台灣閩南語大多數的句式沒有動補賓的語序理由很簡單：它沒有經歷對等子句縮約和不及物化的演變。

台灣閩南語豐富的時代層次，在音韻、詞匯、句法方面都有跡可循。本文所論的語序限制提供句法時代層次的另一個佐證。就語序的多樣性而言，台灣閩南語裡漢代層次、南北朝層次和宋代層次並存：第一、二層次說明何以大多數情況下排斥動補一賓的語序而偏好賓一動補或動一賓一補的語序，第三層次代表少數的動補一賓的語序。就以上述的不及物化而言台灣閩南語只經歷了第一個階段，因此少數的動補式只有及物動詞+不及物動詞的組合，絕沒有不及物動詞+不及物動詞的組合；後一種組合在台灣國語裡很普遍。在更宏大的層面上本文提出詞匯依存的觀點，探討語序的多樣性；動補式的形成從微觀的角度或許可以看成是句法透過詞匯擴散方式長期演化而成的。這種格局大的句法演變的斷代和過程的細緻研究將是一件既有挑戰性但值得一試的工作。

關鍵詞：歷史發展的觀點，時代層次，動補式，語序，詞匯擴散