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The Semantic Aspect of the Result Compliment (结果补语) in Chinese

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Abstract: ***From the point of view of language learning, the most important issue is the study of 补语 (complements) in Chinese. For many foreign students who are studying the Chinese Language, 补语 (complement) is an unfamiliar part of the sentence. Usually students easily learn parts of sentence such as "subject", "predicate", "determiner", "adverbial modifier" because of their existence in almost every language.However, 补语 (complement)is socomplicated for students to learnsince it is almost impossible to find complements in any other languages except Chinese. 补语 (complement) is used after an adjective or verb to make the predicate more meaningful. In Chinese object is also used after verb, but there is a difference between object and 补语 (complement): the object usually represents something or someone that is involved in or related to the action, therefore, in most cases they are used as a noun predicative; meanwhile 补语 (complement) is used as a verb predicative which completes the person or thing involved in the action, and gives additional meaning to the predicate.***
Keywords: 补语, 结果补语, 趋向补语, 可能补语, 程度补语, 见, 住, 着.

I. INTRODUCTION

As the name suggests, resultative complements describe the result of an action. Resultative complements commonly appear as part of the verb itself and so are placed between the verb and its object, as in 吃完饭 “to finish eating the meal”. See 语法 grammar – 句子成分分析 sentence parsing– 补语 complements – 结果补语 resultative complements. Chinese is one of the most complex languages in terms of its morphological features and it has 6 parts of speech. Main parts: 主语 (zhuyu) subject and 谓语 (weiyu) predicate, secondary parts of the sentence: 定语 (dingyu) determiner, 宾语 (binyu) object, 状语 (zhuangyu) adverbial modifier and 补语 (buyu) compliment.

II. MAIN PART

补语 compliment is used after adjectives and verbs and makes the sentence more meaningful. There is a peculiarity in the use of complements, which are studied in 7 groups [2, p39]. The structure of complements has some similarities, that is, most of them contain two different expressionsin common.

For instance, they include two types of expressions like: “我喝醉了” - “我喝 (酒)”, “我醉了”; “他打破了一个杯子” - “他打 (了杯子)”, “杯子破了”; “老师走进教室” - “老师走” , “老师进教室”; “我打开窗户”- “我打窗户”, “窗户开”; “他高兴得跳起来了”- “他高兴”, “他跳起来了”; “他气得妈妈直哭”- “他气妈妈”, “妈妈直哭”. In terms of semantic relations, when the predicate contains two different expressions, verb or adjective coming first usually means cause, and the following complement means result. For example: :“他喝(酒) - cause; “醉了”– result; “老师走”- cause，“进教室”- result；“他高兴”- cause，“跳了起来”– result.

In other languages it is very rare to see the phenomenon of acomplementssimilar to Chinese. Instead, different ways are used to express the meaning of 补语 (complement), it may be expressed by two sentences, for example. Therefore, it is considered by many language learners that 补语 (complement) is the most difficult part of Chinese grammar.

In Chinese object is also used after verb, but there is a difference between object and 补语 (complement): the object usually represents something or someone that is involved in or related to the action, therefore, in most cases they are used as a noun predicative; meanwhile 补语 (complement) is used as a verb predicative which completes the person or thing involved in the action, and gives additional meaning to the predicate. Thus, myriad of the compliments are not noun predicative apart from complement of quantity [3, p484]. 补语 (complement) is divided into seven groups according to its structure and meaning: 1. Compliment of result

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(结果补语); 2. Compliment of direction (趋向补语); 3. Complement of potentiality (可能补语); 4. Modal complement (情态补语); 5. Compliment of degree (程度补语); 6. Compliment of quantity (数量补语); 7. Complement of the prepositional phrase (介词短语补语).

In general, compliments are more common in oral and narrative forms, and less common in articles and written texts.

III. COMPLIMENT OF RESULT (结果补语).

Compliment of result (结果补语) represents the result of an action and manner. It makes a change in the state of subject or object of the action [3, p485]. For instance, “打破了一个瓶子”, here, under the influence of “打” (action) “瓶子” (receiver of the action) is changed, that is, broken. Some compliments of result evaluate and identify the action: “作业做完了”. In this sentence the function of “完” (compliment of result) is to evaluate and identify the sentence. In Chinese, a complement is used to describe a sentence in which a certain result is due to an action or situation. Let's take a look at the mistakes made by students:

*医生们紧张地工作, 希望他们一定会救她。

Here the speaker expresses his confidence that the doctor will "save his life". So, the example needs to be changed as following:

医生们紧张地工作, 希望他们一定会救活她

Another example:

*虽然今天学的生词很多，但李凤很快就全记了。

What is meant by this statement “李凤记生词” is not action, but there is already a result in action “记住了生词”. Therefore, in this sentence “住” (compliment of result) should be used after verb:

虽然今天学的生词很多，但李凤很快就全记住了。

Note that the compliment of result is not used in the same function with the dynamic auxiliary word “了” which indicates complementary action that already taken place or the state of the situation. A dynamic auxiliary word “了” indicates a complementary action that already occurred; meanwhile the compliment of result represents a particular result influenced by a complementary action. As a result, if we confuse the compliment of result with “了”, an expressed meaning becomes unclear [1, p225].

For instance: * 这本书我到处托人买，今天可买了一本。

The speaker is not referring to the fact that the action of “买” (to buy) has already taken place, but to the fact that the action of “买” (to buy) has achieved the goal and result.Therefore, we need to change this sentence as the following:

这本书我到处托人买，今天可买到了一本。

Semantic aspects of the result compliment and problems of its usage with objects

The semantic aspects refer to which component is semantically related to the complement in the sentence.

The result compliment is semantically more related to object and subject, and partly related to verb predicative.The complement refers to the recipient of the action, and most importantly to the object of the verb or the object of the sentence "把", and the subject of the sentence “被” [4, p153].

For example: 他擦干净桌子, 扔掉一个空烟盒和一些碎纸。 (他—擦，桌子—干净)
那时你…在阿勒泰山的雪坡上拖走一根粗大的木头。(你一拖, 木头一走)
凶手是我带去的, 可是我能对谁来讲清这一切呢? (我一讲,一切一清)
他颠着手划亮一根火柴, 点燃一支香烟。(他一划，火柴一亮)

Also, “赶走了敌人”, “打破了一个杯子”, “哭倒了长城”, “扔掉了旧衣服”, “记住了三两个字”, “栓牢了绳子”, “打跑了小偷”, “寄走了一封信”, “吓哭了孩子” can be examples too.
If the verb predicative is transitive, in this type of complementas in the examples above, in this case the object may follow the verb. Some verbs are intransitive and do not actually have an object, but with the help of complement they can also have anobject.

For instance:
听了他这句话，大家笑弯了腰，笑疼了肚子。
为了给你买这双鞋，我跑断了腿，可是你还不领情。
Also, “跑丢了一双鞋”, “哭红了眼睛”, “说破了嘴皮子”, “睡花眼”, “憋红了脸”, “熬红了眼睛”, “气崩了肚子”, “屋子里坐满了人” can be examples too.

This type of complement is often used in “把” sentences:

老农民和东郭先生一起把狼打死了. (老农民和东郭先生—打, 狼—死)
我打算明天就把这笔钱寄走 .（我—寄，钱—走）

我……将把“晋陕峡谷”四个字改成 “伟大的晋陕峡谷”

Structural features of sentences with complement of result

Negative form of result compliment

Usually “没” is used as the negative form of result compliment, because it indicates whether an action or change has an effect or not. “没” comes before verb predicative or adjective when compliment of result is negative. “没 + verb + result compliment” represents that the action of the work did not achieve any result. For instance,

1. 个故事我没听懂。2. 还有一次，裁判员没看清楚，判错了。

The meaning of these two sentences is "heard" but "did not understand"; "seen", but "not clear, indefinite."
Only in the intended casesthe result complement takes “不” and gives negative meaning:

1. 我不做完练习不去游泳。 2. 不打倒敌人，我们决不停止战斗。

It is not possible to use any components between verbs and adjectives. After compliments “了”, “过” (dynamic auxiliary verbs) can be used, but not “着”. Object can follow the result compliment and “了”, “过”:

他从来没打断过别人的发言。

Problems relating to objects

In some cases object comes before the result compliment. This object is not of verb, but is of compliment:

我看见了一个人。
Some intransitive verbs do not take an object, but when they are used with result compliment they can take the object:

1. 他跑丢了一只鞋。 2. 这件事听了叫人笑破了肚皮。 3. 小姑娘哭红了眼睛。

Adjective and verb – acting the function of result compliment

Only adjectives and adverbs can take turns the function of compliment of result. Since complement is a common grammatical phenomenon in spoken language, single-syllable adjectives, which are widely used in oral speech, are usually considered as complements, and double-syllable adjectives can also be used as complements of result [5, p275]. The verb can also be used as

complement. The most common of them are followings: 见、成、懂、走、跑、哭、笑、往、掉、着、倒、翻、倒、作、为、死、透、丢、到、在、给

These verbs do not represent definiteactions (“走” and “跑” means “离开” when they are used as result compliments). When the verb comes in a complementary function, the action represented by the predicative verb indicates passive action of the subject or the object of the action:

1. 把妹妹气哭了. 2. 我把桌子上的东西碰掉了. 3. 你怎么把他推倒了.

“哭”、“掉”、“倒”, the compliments in this sentence refers to passive action. It there is an active action like “由于孩子气妈妈，结果妈妈打了孩子”, in this case the compliment of result is not utilized:

* 孩子气打妈妈。* 妈妈气打了孩子。

The lexical meaning of some verbs changes when they represent result compliments. Here are most commonly used verbs:

“见”actually means “to have a result – 看到”. When “见” takes the function of compliment, it is used after verbs of sense and perception (“看”, “瞅”, “望”, “听”, “闻”) to express the result of an action [6, p151].

Examples:

1. 孩子们看见我来了，都非常高兴。2. 这种物体发出的声音太小，我听了半天也没听见。3. 一进门我就闻见一股香味。

“见” and “遇”, “碰”,“梦” are used as compliment:

1. 你遇见老王告诉他一声，今晚在家里等我。2. 我昨天梦见了我的一个老朋友。

“住”represents the stabilization of someone or something through a certain action [7, p53].

Examples:

1. 他听了我的话立刻站住了。2. 我紧紧握住老李的手。3. 门挡住了面的灯光。4. 咱们可别叫他给吓住啊。5. 这些生词我记住了。

“着” (zháo)

a) Indicates that the action has achieved a specific goal. Often used in spoken language: 1. 你说的那本书我借着了。2. 这个谜语我没猜着。

The negative form "着”used in this sentence is pronounced strongly when "没”precedes it, and the positive form is usually pronounced slightly.

b) Means an action or circumstance has bad consequences for a person or things when it is used with certain verbs or adjectives:

1. 这个小孩儿穿得太少，冻着了。(because “冻”, 病 may cause bad consequences) 2. 你们休息一会儿，小心别累着。(because “累”, it may adversely affect health)

These types of verbs “着” are usually slightly pronounced and they are followings:

“热着, 捂着, 饿着, 撑着, 烫着, 凉着, 吓着”

c) “入睡” (go to bed): 他看着看着书，睡着了。

d) “燃烧” (to burn): 我划着了火柴，点上了灯。

e) “应该，有资格、有责任” means responsibility: 你不是我的老师，你管不着！你也不是我的上级，批评不着我！

“着” in c, d, e is strongly pronounced.

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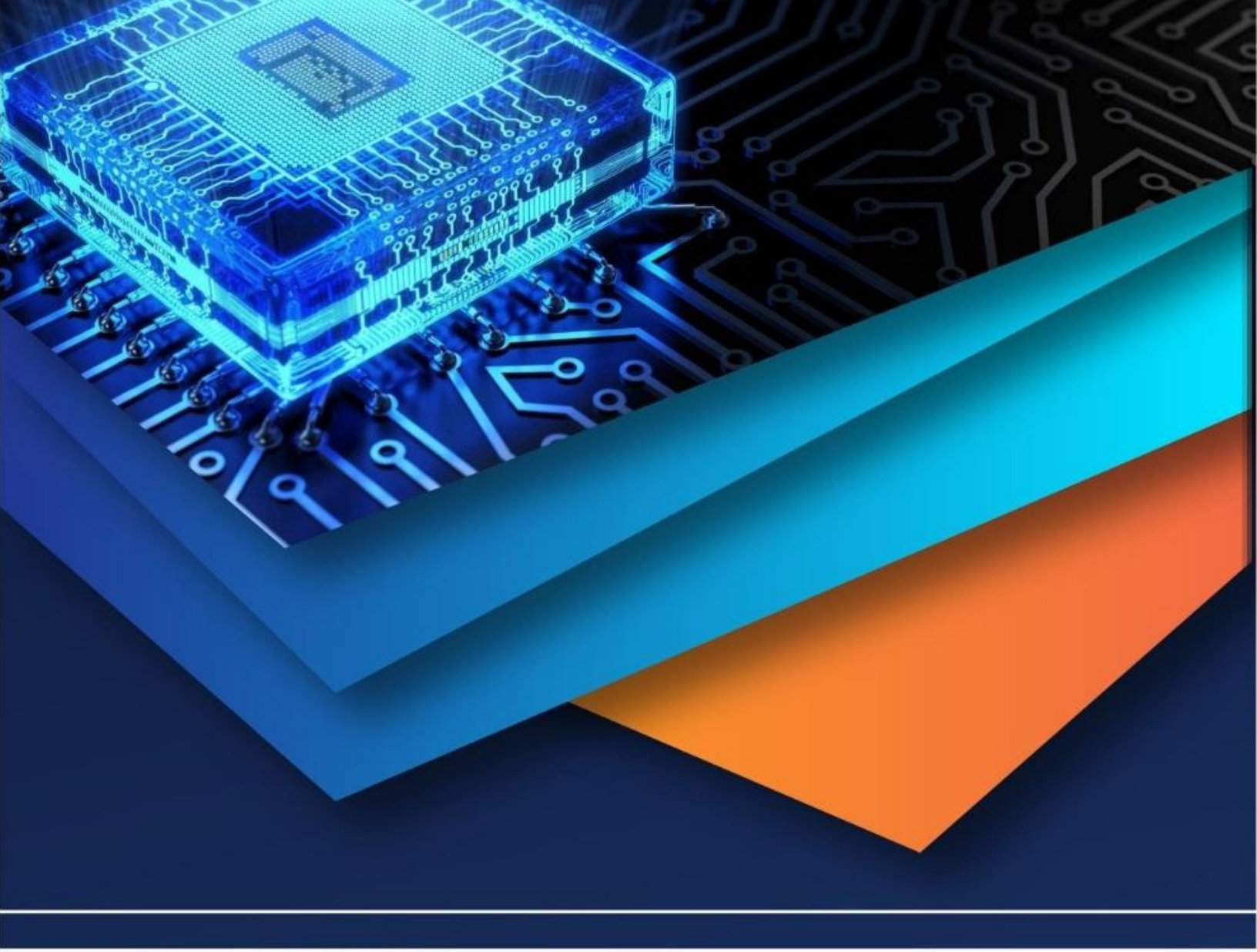
IV. CONCLUSION

Resultative complements 完 is indicating the completion of an action or the depletion or exhaustion of something (something is eaten up, drunk up, or used up), e.g., 都吃完了 “(It has) all been eaten up” or 什么时候能写完? “When can (you) finish (writing) it?” 见 is used with sensing verbs 看 “to look”, 听 “to listen”, 闻 “to smell” to differentiate between the wilful act of trying to perceive with the senses (i.e. looking at or trying to look) and the resulting perception of an object (i.e. see or saw). 住 Indicating that something has been fixed in place as the result of an action.

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