

CAUSATIVE, PERMISSIVE, AND YIELDING: THE MANDARIN CHINESE VERB OF *RANG**

Chuan-Hui Weng
National Tsing Hua University and Hsuan Chuang University

1. Introduction

How many different argument structures can a verb have? It's surprising that many Chinese verbs can easily have two or three meanings and each meaning has its own argument structures. For example, *dao* 'arrive' can be followed either by a goal as in *dao chezhan* 'arrive the station', a time as in *dao mingtien* 'to/till tomorrow', or a result (*drunk*) *dao zhan bu wen* means 'so drunk that he can barely stand'. Moreover, there are even some Chinese verbs exhibiting ample possibilities in their argument structures and resulting in six or more diverse argument structures, such that *ho* 'give', in Taiwanese¹ and *yao* 'want' in Mandarin both have six meanings. According to Cheng et al., *ho* 'give', has six different sentence patterns, which are double object construction, *ho* attaching to a transaction verb to form a double object construction, dative construction, serial verb construction, passive construction, and causative construction.²

* The author wishes to thank the audience in the Cambridge-Nanzan-Tsing Hua workshop at Nanzan University (2006) for very helpful comments and suggestions.

¹ Taiwanese (Taiwan Southern Min) is one of Chinese dialects spoken in Taiwan and part of southern China.

² (i) to (vi) is the illustration of the six usages of *ho* 'give' from Cheng et al. (2000):

(i) gua ho li saⁿ -ba ko
 I give you three-hundred dollar

 'I gave you three hundred dollars.' (DOC)

(ii) gua san ho yi jit -bun chet
 I send give he one-CL book

 'I send him a book.' (DOC with another transaction verb)

(iii) gua hêng saⁿ -ba ko ho yi
 I return three-hundred dollar give he

 'I returned three hundred dollars to him.' (Dative)

Another interesting example *yao* ‘want’ assumes different readings according to its hierarchy (Lin 2006). These readings are: the verb reading *want*, the obligation-modal reading, the aspectual reading, the control reading, the conditional meaning, and the obligation reading.

The property of these verbs is that their diversity of meaning seems to come from their compositionality, argument structures, as well as positions in the structure. Mandarin Chinese verb *Rang* serves as another good example to demonstrate this complexity. This paper tries to offer a unified analysis for the argument structures of *rang* and will show a developmental process of *rang* from a main verb ‘yielding’ to a light verb and finally to a ‘permissive’ verb and a ‘causative’ verb.

2. An Interesting Phenomenon in Mandarin Chinese

We have seen that Chinese verbs can have a bundle of meanings and interesting array of properties in their syntax. What is the relation between their meanings and syntactic behavior? According to Lin and Liu (2006), “what syntax does in Mandarin Chinese is on a par with what lexicon does in English (p.23).” Therefore, the polysemies in Chinese result directly from syntax and the event structures are represented syntactically. The example in Lin and Liu’s paper is *fan* ‘turn-over’, which can be used in three different senses:

- (1) a. Laowan fan zhuozi
 Laowan turn-over table
 ‘Laowan turned the table over.’

-
- (iv) Gua tiao ho li khòan
 I jump five you see
 ‘I dance for you to see.’ (SVC)

- (v) hitle tsabolang ho yi phiàn ki a
 that woman give he cheat away Perf
 ‘That woman was cheated by him.’

- (vi) gua ho yi tit te-it-miâ
 I give he get first prize
 ‘I cause/let him to get the first prize.’

In addition to these readings, *ho* can also denote permissive meaning, as in (vii).

- (vii) gua ho yi khi ritbun seng
 I ho she go Japan play
 ‘I permit him to travel around Japan’

b. ??zhuozi fan le
table turn-over SFP

(2) a. Na-sao chuan fan le
hat-CL boat turn-over SFP

‘That boat capsized.’

b. ??Hai-lang fan -le na-sao chuan
sea-wave turn-over-PERF that-CL boat

‘(Intended) The waves capsized that boat.’

c. Hai-lang da-fan -le na -sao chuan
sea-wave hit-turn-over-PERF that-CL boat

‘The waves capsized that boat.’

(1) and (2) examine *fan*₁ and *fan*₂. In (1b) the unaccusativized use is unacceptable while it is possible in (2a) of *fan*₂. In addition to the differences above, *fan*₁ and *fan*₂ have distinct behavior in the occurrence use, as in (3).

(3) a. Zuotian/ chunzi-li fan -le liang-sao chuan
yesterday village-in capsize-PERF two -CL boat

‘(Lit.) There capsized two boats yesterday/in the village.’

b. ??Zuotian/ chunzi-li fan-le liang-zhang zhuozi
yesterday village-in capsize-PERF two -CL boat

‘(Lit.) There flipped two tables yesterday/ in the village.’

*Fan*₃ can be used agentively in (4a) as *fan*₁, but the theme has to be pages. The contrast is shown in (4a) and (4b). Unaccusative use (4c) is also possible; moreover, it can have the stative use, as in (4d).

(4) a. Zhangsan fan -le san -ye (de) shu
Zhangsan turn-over-PERF three-page MOD book

‘Zhangsan turned over three pages of the book.’

b. ??Zhangsan fan -le san -ye (de) shu
Zhangsan turn-over-PERF three-page MOD book

‘Zhangsan turned over three books.’

- c. (Feng yi chui,) shu fan -le san ye
 wind as blow book turn-over-PERF three page
 ‘(As the wind breezes,) three pages of the book turned over.’
- d. Zidian fan zai zhui-shang, (ni ziji cha)
 dictionary turn-over at table-on you self check
 ‘The dictionary is on the table open; you go check by yourself.’

Lin and Liu (2006) suggest that the different senses of *fan* ‘turn-over’ arise from the theme affected and the event structure or light verbs that the world knowledge that comes along with the theme. Take *fan*₁ and *fan*₂ for example, a table can be affected or ‘turned-over’ by human force with agentivity. On the other hand, the turnover of a boat is beyond the capability of human force, and seems to be the result of a more powerful force, such as the waves. Following the event structure analysis, the differences above can all be explained. I also suggest that the concept event structure (i.e. light verbs) and the affected theme play important roles in different senses of *rang* ‘yielding’.

3. Data

This paper will present the interesting example *rang* in Mandarin. *Rang* exhibits a close relation between seven different sentence patterns, which are, transitive, ditransitive (dative), Serial verb construction (SVC), causative, passive, permissive (control), and a special construction taking a measure phrase as its complement. Most readings are similar to the examples of Taiwanese *ho* ‘give’. The notable structures among these six are the permissive one and the usage with the measure complement. The examples of seven readings are shown from (5) to (11) respectively:

I. Transitive ‘concede’:

- (5) a. gege yao rang didi
 elder-brother have to RANG younger-brother
 ‘An elder brother has to concede to his younger brother.’
- b. wo rang-guo ni hao ji ci le
 I RANG-past you good manytimePERF
 ‘I have yielded to you for many times.’

This usage denotes a simple event of giving up advantage or right to someone. It can take an aspect marker as (5b) shows.

II. DOC and Dative:

- (6) a. Zhangsan rang Lisi liang-ben shu
 Zhangsan RANG Lisi two -CL book
 ‘Zhangsan gives Lisi two books without competing with him.’
- b. Zhangsan rang gei Lisi liang-ben shu
 Zhangsan RANG give Lisi two -CL book
 ‘Zhangsan gives Lisi two books without competing with him.’
- c. Zhangsan rang liang-ben shu gei Lisi
 Zhangsan RANG two -CL book give Lisi
 ‘Zhangsan gives two books to Lisi without competing with him.’
- d. Zhangsan ba liang-ben shu rang gei Lisi
 Zhangsan BA two-CL book RANG give Lisi
 ‘Zhangsan gives Lisi two books without competing with him.’
- e. liang-ben shu bei Zhangsan rang gei -le Lisi
 two -CL book BEI Zhangsan RANG give -PERFLisi
 ‘Two books were given to Lisi without Zhangsan’s competition.’

This sentence pattern includes the double object constructions (6a-b) and the dative construction (6c). The difference between (6a) and (6b) is the appearance of *gei* ‘give’. The appearance of *gei* ‘give’ is the property of Chinese; therefore, I assume that there’s an unpronounced *gei* ‘give’ in (6a) and the transaction comes from this verb. Sentences (6c) to (6e) are the alternations of DOC in Chinese. The theme, *liang-ben shu* ‘two books’, here is required to be specific and substantial which can be possessed by the goal of the transaction.

III. With measure phrase:

- (7) a. Zhangsan rang Lisi shi gongchi
 Zhangsan RANG Lisi ten meters
 ‘Zhangsan yields ten meters to Lisi (in a competition).’
- b. *Zhangsan rang gei Lisi shi gongchi
 Zhangsan RANG give Lisi ten meters
 ‘Zhangsan yields ten meters to Lisi (in a competition).’
- c. Zhangsan rang Lisi yi -zhi shou
 Zhangsan RANG Lisi one-CL hand
 ‘Zhangsan yields to Lisi by using one hand (in a competition).’

Interestingly, this type has a word order akin to the ditransitive construction (6a) in Type II which is also followed by two NPs. However, *rang* in (7a) and (7b) can't be followed by *gei* 'give' and thus is unable to denote transaction meaning here. Lacking of the transaction resulting in different selection on the NP—contrary to the DOC, the theme *shi gongchi* 'ten meters' here can't be transferred and possessed; therefore, all the alternations of DOC above ((6c), (6d), and (6e)) are unacceptable, either.

IV. Serial Verb Construction (SVC)

- (8) Zhangsan mai che rang Lisi kai
 Zhangsan buy car RANG Lisi drive
 'Zhangsan buy Lisi a car for Lisi to drive it.'

Descriptively, SVC indicates a purposive situation which is illustrated by the clause following *rang*. The noun phrase *che* 'car' also serves as the object of the embedded verb *kai* 'drive'.

V. Causative:

- (9) a. zhuchiren rang guanzhong hahadaxiao
 host RANG audience laugh
 'The host made the audience laugh.'
- b. *zhuchiren rang -le guanzhong hahadaxiao
 host RANG-PERF audience laugh
- c. zhuchiren shi guanzhong hahadaxiao
 host make audience laugh
 'The host made the audience laugh.'
- d. *zhuchiren shi -le guanzhong hahadaxiao
 host make -PERF audience laugh

The causative construction can be further divided into strong causative 'cause' and weak causative 'let' and the distinction will be formalized later. *Rang* of this sentence pattern can't be attached by any aspect marker and this is the property shared by Chinese causative verbs as in (9b). (9c) is another Mandarin causative and the aspect marker in (9d) also makes it ungrammatical. But only *rang* can denote a weak causative meaning 'let'.

VI. Passive:

- (10) a. na ben shu rang Zhangsan jie zou -le
 that CL book RANG Zhangsan borrow away -PERF
 'That book was borrowed by Zhangsan.'

- b. na ben shu rang Zhangsan gei jie zou -le
that CL book RANG Zhangsan give borrow away -PERF

‘That book was borrowed by Zhangsan.’

- c. *na ben shu rang jie zou -le
that CL book RANG borrow away -PERF

(Intended) That book is borrowed.

The passive construction of *Rang* can only be a long passive construction, that is, the dethematized agent *Zhangsan* must be specified. Thus, sentence such as (10c) is not grammatical.

VII. Permissive:

- (11) zhuxi rang yiyuan lunliu zhixun buzhang
chair RANG councillor take turns interpellant minister

‘The chair permits the councillors take turns to interpellant the minister.’

Yiyuan ‘councillor’ is the direct object of *rang*. This reading is not easily divided from the weak causative reading in some sentences, but the following sections will show that they have different argument structures and the implication of their meaning is not the same.

This paper will provide an observation on the sentence patterns of *rang* and the structures above will be discussed respectively in the following section. Section 4 examines Type I (transitive yielding) and Type III (yielding with measure phrase structure). Section 5 discusses the DOC and the dative construction. In section 6, it is shown that causative construction, Serial Verb Construction, passive reading, and permissive reading are related in their meaning derivation and their syntactic construction. Section 7 is the conclusion.

4. Yielding *Rang*

This section provides examples and an analysis for the yielding reading which includes the mono-transitive construction and the construction with the measure phrase. It will start by looking at the simplest mono-transitive usage.

4.1. Transitive Usage

The transitive construction is simple and the meaning is clear.³ In this pattern, *rang* takes an NP as its complement. (12a) and (12b) illustrate a situation in which the subject yields or concedes the advantage to another. The subject is the agent who yields the advantage to the beneficiary. It’s unclear why a goal or beneficiary is preferred in the object position. The

³ The original meaning is ‘blame’ which has no relation with these usages; therefore, I ignored this usage in this paper.

theme undergoes the yielding event is not specified. For example, (13a) and (13b) are not good because a theme can't follow *rang*. However, the sequence that a theme follows *rang* is acceptable in archaic Chinese.⁴ (13a) is ungrammatical because yielding *rang* denotes atelic situation and it can't take aspect markers. The ungrammaticality of (13b) results from a book which can't be a beneficiary.

- (12) a. wo rang ni
I RANG you
'I yield (advantage) to you.'
- b. qiche yao rang xingren xian guo
car should RANG pedestrian first past
'The car should give precedence to the pedestrian.'
- (13) a. *wo rang -guo/ le/ zhao ni
I RANG-PAST PERF PROG you
- b. *wo rang yi -ben shu
I RANG one-CL book
- c. ??Zhangsan rang zuihou yi -bei shui
Zhangsan RANG last one-CL water
'Zhangsan yields the last cup of water.'

The property that *rang* can't take an aspect marker shows that it is like a stative verb; accordingly, the yielding verb can be paraphrased as 'in a position of concession to' and this state is generated from the will of the subject. Consequently, the syntactic representation of (12) is as follow:

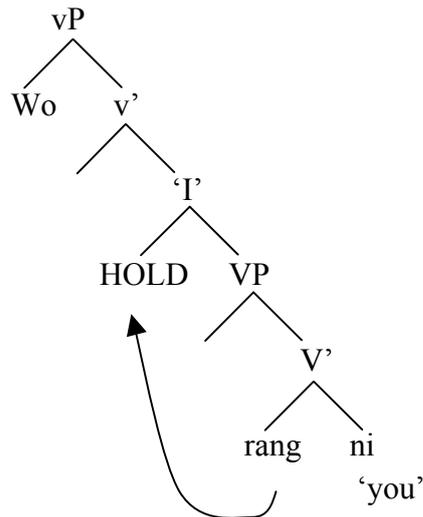
⁴ In Archaic Chinese, a theme following *rang* is acceptable and common:

- (i) Kongrong rang li
Kongrong RANG pear
'Kongrong yielded a pear (to his brother)'

Or the goal or beneficiary has to follow another verb:

- (ii) rang che yu furen zuo
RANG car give woman sit
'Yeild a car to a woman so that she can take a ride.'

(14) Transitive:



Although the analysis proves that the object of the transitive verb is a goal or beneficiary rather than a theme, the word order that a theme directly follows *rang* is preferred in some phrase but the usage that a theme attaches to *rang* is very limit and lexicalized now. For example, *rang zuo* ‘yield-seat’ or *rang lu* ‘yield-road’. In addition, *rang* is always in the second position in verb compounds:

Verb compounds:

(15) a. *li-rang* manner-concede

qiche yao li-rang xingren
car should manner-concede pedestrian

‘Cars should give precedence to pedestrians (out of courtesy).’

b. *tui-rang* withdraw-concede

che-chang bakong zhai zhengfu de tui -rang xia yuanman
this-CL strike at government DE withdraw-concede undersatisfactory
jieshu
end

‘This strike satisfactorily ended up with conceding of the government’s.’

Nevertheless, *rang* does take a NP other than beneficiary, as shown in (16a).

(16) ta rang -le yi -bu
he RANG-PERF one-step

‘He conceded (to someone) by one step.’

Note that this sentence can take the aspect marker *-le* and thus it differs from the transitive reading. So what is the role of *yi-bu* ‘one step’ and what’s special about it?

Descriptively, *yi-bu* ‘one step’ is a measure phrase, besides it cannot be processed or be given to anyone, that is, it’s not a theme. I assume that it is a construction with a measure phrase and the object (beneficiary) is omitted in (16). This usage will be discussed in 4.2.

4.2. With Measure Phrases

Rang of this reading is similar to the transitive one above and both of them denote a yielding event except this usage specifies the quantity or instrument of the event. But this sentence pattern differs from the transitive usage in their syntactic structure. *Rang* in this sentence pattern can take either two arguments, as shown in (17a) and (17b) or it can take only one measure phrase as given in (16). The yielding events of (17a) and (17b) are about ten meters and one hand respectively; in (17c) it is in terms of an instrument- using the left hand.

- (17) a. wo rang ni shi gongchi
I RANG you ten meter
‘I yield to you by ten meters.’
- b. wo rang ni yi -zhi shou
I RANG you one-CL hand
‘I yield to you by using one hand.’
- c. wo yong zuo-shou rang ni
I use left-hand RANG you
‘I yield to you by using my left hand.’

These sentences are commonly used in competitions. For example, (17a) can describe a race in which you run ten meters less than I do. In this sentence pattern, the meaning is akin to the transitive usage but with specified manner. Both transitive usage and this sentence pattern describe situation of giving advantage to others, but the first one says nothing about the quantity or manner. On the other hand, this usage is similar to the DOC (this reading will be discussed in the next section) in surface structure but they have different selectional restriction on the theme: DOC selects entities that can undergo transaction and thus be owned by the goal or the beneficiary. Contrary to DOC, this usage does not have a transaction relation and thus can’t entail a possessive result; therefore, *ni* ‘you’ is an experiencer but not a possessor in (17a-c). This relation could be further verified by replacing the quantity by *liang-bai kuai* ‘two hundred dollars’. The ungrammaticality reading of (17d) is due to the un-transactional theme. The yielding reading is fine in some context, but not in the DOC.

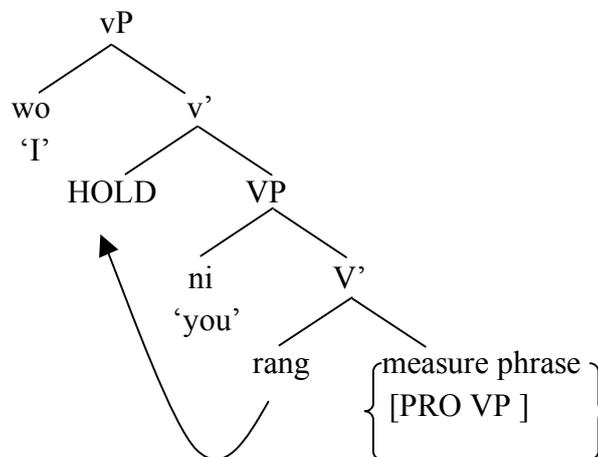
- (17) d. wo rang ni liang-bai kuai
 I RANG you two -hundred dollar
 ‘I yield to you by two hundred dollars (in a competition).’
 *‘I yield to you and you get two hundred dollars.’

In this usage, there is a more complex subtype which is a control construction.

- (18) Zhangsan rang Lisi xian pao shi gongchi
 Zhangsan RANG Lisi first run ten meter
 ‘Zhangsan yields to Lisi by Lisi running ten meters first.’

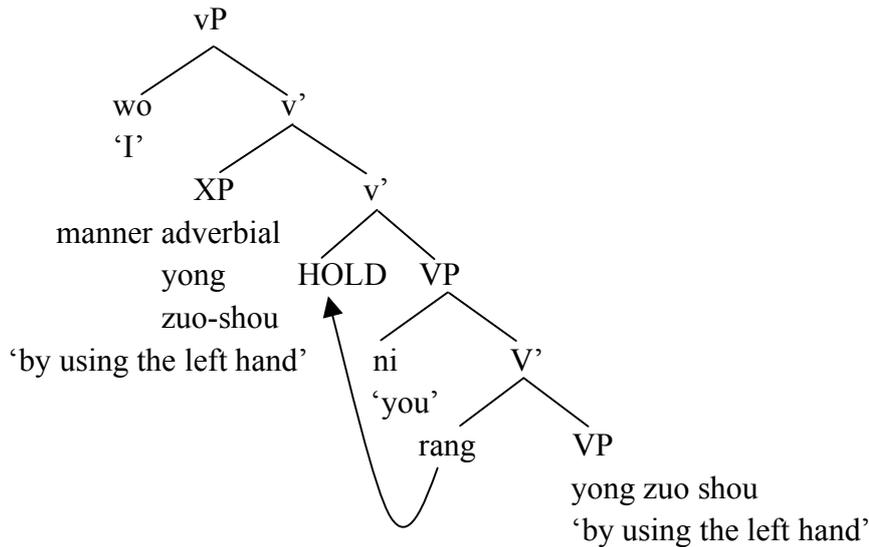
The structure representation of (17a) and (17b) is (19a). *Rang* incorporates to the light verb DO and the measure phrase is in the objection. This is also different from the transitive pattern. I propose that there is a light verb DO rather than a light verb HOLD because this usage can take an aspect marker and thus it’s not a stative verb. (18) can also be analyzed by this structure and the embedded clause is the complement of *rang*.

- (19) a. With measure phrase:



In addition to a measure phrase in (17a) and (17b), the instrument appears in front of *rang* in (17c) exhibits the various possibility of this pattern. The syntactic representation is (19b). The instrumental phrase can either appear in the object position or adjoin to the v’.

(19) b. With measure phrase:



We have seen that the measure phrase is more important than beneficiary and thus the beneficiary can be omitted in (16). Why the measure phrase is required? In a competition the results of a competition depends on the measure and thus it's more basic in the structure. Moreover, the examples above show that the argument in the pattern is quite free—it can be an instrument, a measure phrase or a VP. This indicates that the arguments in Chinese are relatively free. These different arguments can emerge because they are possible to be involved in a competition.

5. DOC/ Dative *Rang*

5.1 The Double Object Construction

The ditransitive construction consists of two NPs following *rang*, and the verb *gei* 'give' can follow *rang* immediately as (20b) or it can remain unpronounced as (20a). This sentence pattern exhibits five alternations.⁵ (20c) is the dative alternation. Besides, *rang* displays a complete set of *ba* and *bei* alternations⁶ as in (20d) and 20e) respectively. In this pattern, *rang* denotes a manner of transaction (yielding), and the result is brought about by the giving verb *gei* 'give', namely, the indirect object posses the theme after the yielding. According to this assumption, the result denoting by *gei* 'give' is the head. Thus, the transaction in (20a) comes from the silent *gei* 'give'.

⁵ The dative alternation, the BA construction and the Bei construction are not thoroughly discussed here because they have been discussed in many research and they deserve a full paper to examine them.

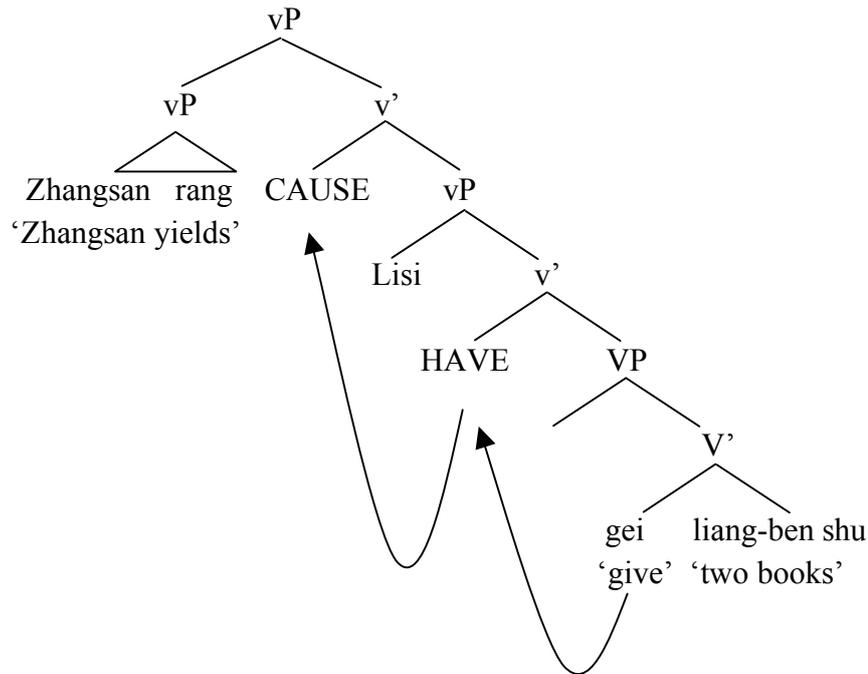
⁶ *Ba* is the disposal construction in Chinese and *bei* is the passive construction. Most Chinese DOC can have *Ba* and *Bei* constructions. In *Ba* construction, the theme is preposed and thus it precedes the goal and follows *Ba*. In *Bei* construction, the theme is preposed to the subject position.

- (20) a. Zhangsan rang Lisi liang-ben shu
Zhangsan RANG Lisi two -CL book
'Zhangsan yields to Lisi by two books.'
- b. Zhangsan rang gei Lisi liang-ben shu
Zhangsan RANG give Lisi two -CL book
'Zhangsan yields to Lisi by two books.'
- c. Zhangsan rang liang-ben shu gei Lisi
Zhangsan RANG two -CL book give Lisi
'Zhangsan yields to Lisi by two books.'
- d. Zhangsan ba liang-ben shu rang (-gei)Lisi
Zhangsan BA two -CL book RANG-give Lisi
'Zhangsan yields to Lisi by two books.'
- e. Zhe liang-ben shu bei Zhangsan rang -gei -le Lisi
this two -CL book BEI Zhangsan RANG-give -PF Lisi
'This book was yielded to Lisi by Zhangsan.'

Following Cheng et al. (2000), and many others, the DOC can be decomposed into a causative construction: CAUSE to Have. In this usage *rang* expresses the manner of the giving event from (20a) to (20e), that is, 'without competing'.

The following syntactic representation illustrates (20a) and (20b). According to Shen and Lin (2005) the result of a compound is the head; therefore, the possessive result bringing out by *gei* 'give' is the head of this construction and the manner *Zhangsan rang* 'Zhangsan yields' is an adjunct:

(21) DOC:



Thus, the grammatical function of *gei* ‘give’ is that the emergence of DOC constructions may be contributed to the verb *gei* ‘give’. *Rang* points out the manner and *gei* ‘give’ sets the result of this conceding event.

The remaining alternation, the dative construction (20c), the *BA*-construction (20d), and the *Bei*-construction (20e) have been intensively discussed in many works and thus will not be discussed here.

5.2. Comparison between DOC and Yielding *Rang*

Comparing the NP₂, (*liang-ben shu* ‘two books’ in DOC and *yi-zhi shou* ‘one hand’ in the measure phrase usage, *didi* ‘the younger brother’ in transitive usage) the one in DOC can be preposed as shown in (20d) and (20e), repeated here as (22a) and (22b). However, (22c) to (22f) are the contrastive sentences of yielding *rang* in which the measure phrase or the beneficiary can’t be preposed.

- (22) a. Zhangsan ba liang-ben shu rang(-gei) Lisi
 Zhangsan BA two -CL book RANG-give Lisi
 ‘Zhangsan yields to Lisi by two books.’
- b. Zhe liang-ben shu bei Zhangsan rang -gei -le Lisi
 this two-CL book BEI Zhangsan RANG-give -PF Lisi
 ‘This book was yielded to Lisi by Zhangsan.’

- c. * Zhangsan ba yi -zhi shou rang Lisi
Zhangsan BA one-CL hand RANG Lisi
- d. * Zhe yi -zhi shou bei Zhangsan rang -le Lisi
this one-CL hand BEI Zhangsan RANG-PERFLisi
- e. * gege ba didi rang
elder-brother BA younger-brother RANG
- f. * did bei gege rang
younger-brother BEI elder-brother RANG

The contrast shows that the only DOC is compatible with *Ba* and *Bei* constructions and denotes transaction relation between the subject and the indirect object. It also provides evidence for the compositional reading of *rang*. The yielding readings (transitive and the measure phrase usage) don't combined with the *gei* 'give' and thus differ from DOC in the sentences above.

6. Serial Verb Construction, Causative, Passive, and Permissive *Rang*

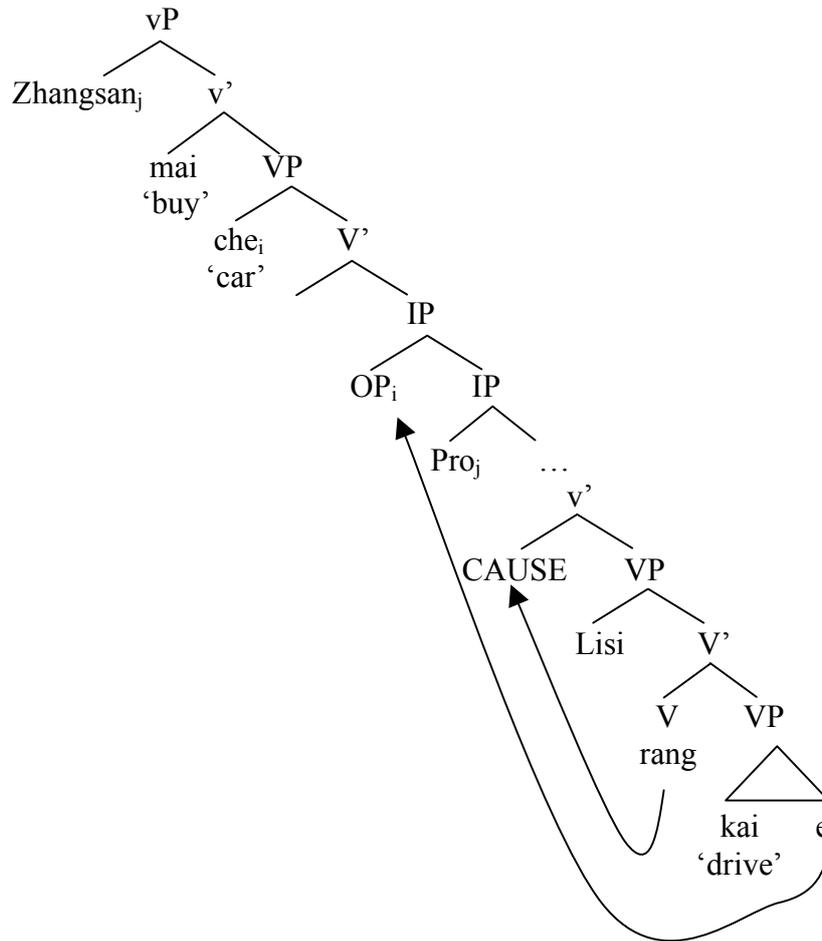
6.1 Serial Verb Construction (SVC)

The object in SVC is pivot to both the matrix verb and the embedded verb, as shown in (23). The car is bought by Zhangsan and then used by Lisi. This usage doesn't denote the yielding meaning but it's more like a purposive reading. The embedded clause is a purposive clause of *mai che* 'buy a car'.

- (23) Zhangsan mai che rang Lisi kai
Zhangsan buy car RANG Lisi drive
'Zhangsan buy Lisi a car for Lisi to drive it.'

In (23), Zhangsan causes Lisi to experience the driving by buying him a car. The structure of (23) is below.

(24) SVC:



6.2 Causatives

This construction should be further divided into strong causative ‘cause’ and weak causative ‘let’. (25a) is strong causative and (25b) is weak causative. (25a) is the repeated sentence of (9a).

- (25) a. Zhuchiren rang guanzhung hahadaxiao
 host RANG audience laugh

‘The host made the audience laugh.’

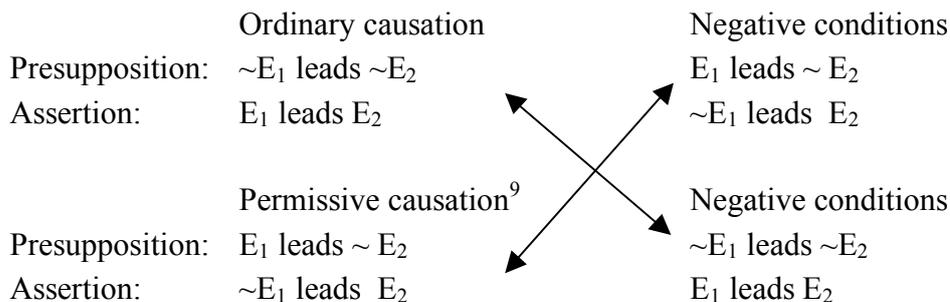
- b. Zhangsan rang qiu fei -guo er -lei
 Zhangsan RANG ball fly -past two-base

‘Zhangsan (the second base) let the ball pass (without stopping it).’

Following Shibatani (1976), the relation between strong (ordinary) and weak (permissive) causation can be represented by the following chart:⁷

⁷ The term ‘ordinary’ and ‘permissive’ is used by Shibatanu (1976).

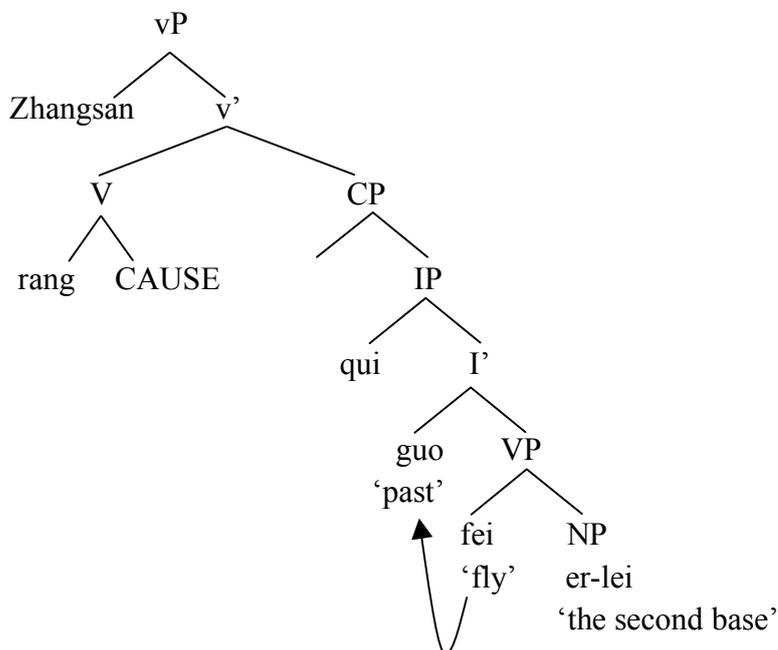
(26)⁸



Take (25b) for example, the sentence denotes weak causative when Zhangsan is the second base; however, if he is the hitter then the strong causative will be derived. Therefore, a weak causative illustrate a condition where the cause fails to prevent the happening of E_2 .

Different from the adjunct status in DOC, *rang* here is a compound because it's not a manner denoting verb as *rang* in DOC. Besides, the meaning is more like the yielding; both of them describe the subject's will. In this reading, the causer actively tries to realize the caused event or s/he tries but fails to realize it.

(27) The construction of causative *rang*:



The weak causative meaning shares the concept of 'not doing or failing/giving up something' with yielding reading but it further combines a causative meaning here. As for the strong causative (the typical causative reading), the causative meaning is strengthened.

⁸ E represents for event.

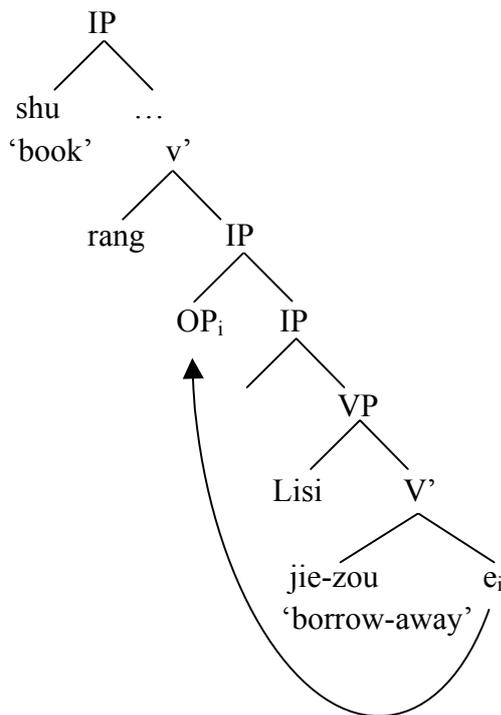
⁹ The term permissive causative is used for weak causative in Shibatani (1976). But this term is used as the verb 'permit' in this paper

6.3 Passives

Passive usage of *rang* is similar to the Mandarin passive *bei* in many ways. However, it does not allow short passive (Huang (1999)), that is, the passive *rang* is formed by clausal complementation. The Agent can't be omitted as 'John was killed' and the movement of PRO from the embedded object to the spec of VP is not allowed. Following Huang (1999), Chinese long passive is a NOP construction and the passive pattern (28a) has a syntactic structure as (28b):

- (28) shu rang Lisi jie -zou -le
 bookRANGLisi borrow-away-PF
 'The book is borrowed by Lisi.'

(29) The construction of passive *rang*:



In addition to the typical passives above, *rang* also has non-gapped passive as in (29):

- (29) Zhangsan rang Lisi ku -de xin-fan-yi-luan
 Zhangsan RANG Lisi cry-Mod confused-in-mind
 'Zhangsan was confused in mind by Lisi's crying.'

The non-gapped passive is observed in most passive constructions in Chinese. As mentioned before, the selectional requirement in Chinese is quite free and thus the appearance of non-gapped passive is not surprising. Although Zhangsan doesn't undergo the crying event, he is

affected by it and thus he gets involved in the event. Therefore, Zhangsan fulfilled the selectional need.

6.4 Permissive

The permissive usage can be viewed as an extension of the yielding by intensifying the concept of ‘by giving up the advantage’; moreover, the subject actively gives the right of decision to the matrix object. As the result, the object the *rang* gains the force of agentivity and then it acquires the subject role of the embedded clause.

In this sentence pattern, *rang* denotes a permissive activity and thus the object *xiao-hai-zi* ‘child’ in (30) can go to Taipei.

- (30) *tamen rang xiao-hai-zi ziji qu Taipei*
 they RANG children self go Taipei

‘They permit the children to go to Taipei by themselves.’

This pattern is a control construction. (31) provides evidence for this analysis. The passivized sentence (31b) results in meaning change. In (31a), it is *yi yuan* ‘councillor’ that is permitted to interrogate the minister, while in (31b) it is *buzhang* ‘minister’ that receives the permission to be interrogated by the councillor. The truth condition changes. Therefore, the permissive reading is an object control construction and the representations for (31a) and (31b) are (32a) and (32b) respectively.

- (31) a. *tamen rang yi yuan zhixun buzhang*
 they RANG councillor interpellate minister

‘They permit councillors to interrogate the minister.’

- b. *tamen rang buzhang shou yi yuan zhixun*
 they RANG minister suffer councillor interpellate

?‘They permit the minister to be interrogated by the councillors.’

‘They cause the minister to be interrogated by the councillors.’

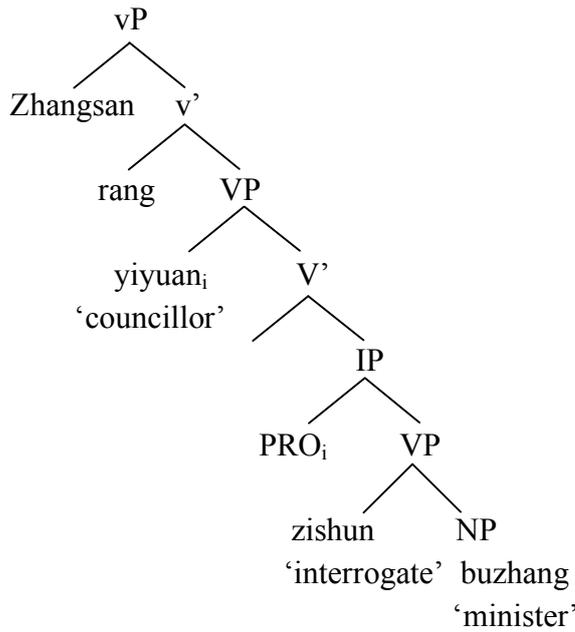
‘They let the minister to be interrogated by the councillors.’

- (32) a. *tamen rang yi yuan_i [PRO_i zhixun buzhang_j]*
 they RANG councillor interpellate minister

- b. *tamen rang buzhang_j [PRO_j shou yi yuan zhixun]*
 they RANG minister suffer councillor interpellate

(33) is the structure representation of (31a):

(33) The construction of permissive *rang*



6.5 Summary

Type I to III, Type V and Type VI are monoclausal while Type IV, VII are biclausal. Among these usages, causative pattern, double object construction and SVC pattern are related to the causative construction. The transitive usage, measure phrase and the permissive usage have to do with the yielding meaning.

Table 1

I. Transitive 'yield'	NP ₁ <i>rang</i> NP ₂
II. DOC 'yield NP ₂ to NP ₃ and thus the goal (NP ₃) can possess it'	NP ₁ <i>rang</i> NP ₂ (<i>gei</i>) NP ₃ NP ₁ <i>rang</i> (<i>gei</i>) NP ₂ NP ₃ NP ₁ <i>ba</i> NP ₃ <i>rang</i> <i>gei</i> NP ₂ NP ₃ <i>bei</i> NP ₁ <i>rang</i> (<i>gie</i>) NP ₂
III. With measure phrase/ clause	NP ₁ <i>rang</i> NP ₂ measure phrase NP ₁ <i>rang</i> NP ₂ V measure phrase
IV. SVC	NP ₁ VP <i>rang</i> NP ₂ VP
V. Causatives a. weak b. strong	NP ₁ <i>rang</i> NP ₂ VP
VI. Passive	NP ₁ <i>rang</i> NP ₂ VP
VII. Permissive	NP ₁ <i>rang</i> NP ₂ [PRO VP] NP ₁ <i>rang</i> NP ₂ [PRO V measure phrase]

Since *rang* has a bundle of relative meanings and similar in the categorical selection as

shown above, we could expect a sentence to be ambiguous. For example, (34) has yielding reading and permissive reading.

- (34) Zhangsan rang Lisi xian pao-le shi gongchi
 Zhangsan RANG Lisi first run-PERF ten meter

 ‘Zhangsan yields to Lisi by Lisi running ten meters first.’
 ‘Zhangsan permits Lisi to run ten meters first.’

But these two readings have different negation forms:

- (35) yielding
 Zhangsan meyou rang Lisi xian pao-le shi gongchi
 Zhangsan not RANG Lisi first run-PERF ten meter

 ‘Zhangsan didn’t yield to Lisi by Lisi running ten meters first.’

- (36) permissive
 Zhangsan bu rang Lisi xian pao-le shi gongchi
 Zhangsan not RANG Lisi first run-PERF ten meter

 ‘Zhangsan didn’t permit Lisi to run ten meters first.’

Meyou in Chinese is used to negate the completion of an event, while *bu* is used to negate the existence of state, such as (37).

- (37) a. ta bu xiao
 he not smile

 ‘He won’t smile.’

 b. ta meyou xiao
 he not smile

 ‘He didn’t smile.’

Therefore, two readings of *rang* in (34) have different event structures depending on their compositional relation with their argument structures.

7. Conclusion

The claim that the possibility of a verb’s meaning coming from its compositional relation with its argument structure is further verified by examining the Mandarin verb *rang*. This typological property of Chinese has been studied in many works and this paper also enriches this claim. In Chinese, the meaning is computed mainly in the syntax. On the contrary, if a language contains rich information in the lexicon, such as English, the meaning is computed in a pre-syntax level.

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