



To Pronounce or Not to Pronounce: Locating Silent Heads in Chinese and English

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Abstract

We argue that functional categories, on a par with silent nouns (Kayne 2005), may exist in silent/unpronounced forms in syntax. Based on modifiers in the nominal domains, we provide a diagnostic for such silent projections. Our hypothesis is evidenced by two apparent NP-modifiers: *whole/zheng* and *same/tong*. We show that they should not be analyzed as modifiers of NP, but modifiers of nominal functional categories. The former modifier *whole/zheng* provides evidence that English, like Chinese, should have a projection of classifier, but unlike Chinese, such a classifier projection is unpronounced. The latter modifier *same/tong* indicates that Chinese can also have a silent definite article. The analysis therefore supports the hypothesis of uniform syntax.

Keywords

silent head, comparative syntax, classifier, determiner, NP-modifier

此處無聲勝有聲：論漢語與英語的無聲中心語

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提要

本文採用 Kayne (2005) 的無聲名詞理論，並且進一步提出無聲成分在句法中能以功能詞形式出現。根據出現在名詞性領域的修飾語成分，本文提供了新的方法來診斷無聲中心語出現的位置，並且利用兩個名詞性的修飾語來驗證我們的假設：“整 (whole)” 跟 “同 (same)”。我們首先指出這些修飾語不能夠被分析為名詞本身的修飾語，反而應當被分析為出現在更高句法位置的功能詞的修飾語。第一個修飾語 “整 (whole)” 提供了證據指出，如同漢語，英語的句法應當會投射量詞的中心語，並且這個中心語是一個無聲的功能詞。另一方面，“同 (same)” 提供了相對稱的證據指出，與英語一致，漢語在功能詞結構中會投射一個無聲的限定詞中心語。本文的分析因此支持了普遍句法的假設。

關鍵詞

無聲中心語，比較句法，量詞，限定詞，名詞性修飾語