P-Insertion and Ellipsis

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Abstract

The Number + Classifier in Mandarin [Number + Classifier + *de* + NP] can have a property reading—describing the property of the NP, or a quantity reading—expressing the quantity of the entity. The two mainly differ in: (a) *de* required in the property construction but optional in the quantity construction, and (b) *de* licensing NP-deletion in property, not quantity constructions. These differences are due to their structures and the derivation of *de*'s. The [Number + Classifier] expressions in the property construction are just like other prenominal relative clauses modifying the NP [[Number + Classifier]$_{\text{relative clause}}$ + *de* + NP]. *De* is base-generated as a head that can license its complement (the modified NP) to be null. In the quantity reading, the structure should be [Number + [Classifier + NP]], where Classifier is a head taking the NP as its complement. *De* is phonologically inserted —a way to reflect focus-encoding on the quantity via the strategy of phonological phrasing. As focus can also be encoded by stress or pause, *de*-insertion does not always apply (=(a)). When the NP is missing, proper phonological phrasing is achieved without *de*. That is, the apparent failure of *de* licensing NP-deletion in the quantity construction is actually due to the non-application of *de*-insertion (=(b)). As *de* is not inserted phonologically when the NP is null, NP-deletion should apply before *de*-insertion. This ordering follows straightforwardly from the approaches that derive ellipsis structures via deletion-in-syntax or base-generation of empty categories. Support for these claims comes from the corresponding data in Taiwanese, whose tonal behavior reveals a clearer picture.

Keywords

語音嵌入及省略

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提要

漢語名詞短語 [數＋量＋的＋名] 中的 [數＋量] 可以有修飾功用（表質義）或表達數量（表量義）：(a) 表質義結構的 "的" 是必要的，表量義結構的 "的" 可有可無。(b) 只有表質義結構的 "的" 可以允准名詞短語省略。這些區別可歸因於兩者結構不同以及 "的" 的衍生差異。表質義結構中的 [數＋量] 基本上就像修飾名詞的關係子句—[[數＋量]關係子句＋的＋名]。如同一般的修飾結構，"的" 是基礎生成，本身是中心語，允准其後的名詞短語省略。表量義結構則是 [數 +[量＋名]]，其中量詞是中心語，以後面的名詞短語為補足語。"的" 是語音嵌入的，分別出語音群組來標示數量為訊息焦點。由於焦點也可以由重音，停頓其他方式標示，因此語音嵌入 "的" 的手段可以不用—表量義的 "的" 可有可無 (=(a))。另外，如果量詞後的名詞短語不出現，數 − 量本身就是一個語音群組，"的" 就沒有理由嵌入來標示焦點，亦即名詞短語省略時，表量義的 "的" 不嵌入 (=(b))。這表示語音嵌入必須晚於名詞短語省略。這是省略結構是由句法省略衍生或基礎生成空語類的自然結果。這些論點可以比較清楚地從台灣閩南語的聲調變化以及聲調群組反映句法結構的現象得到支持。

關鍵詞

數量詞，質義 "的"，量義 "的"，名詞短語省略，語音嵌入