

组合构成还是整体演成？

——“越来越”历史形成诸问题的考察

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摘要

本文对“越来越”的始见年代、形成机制和演变过程等问题作了进一步调查和讨论。主要观点是：(i)表时间进展倚变的“越来越”是清代后期出现的，以往所引清代中期的书证均不可靠；(ii)“越来越”并非由动词“来”代入“越……越……”组合构成，而是在空间和时间歧解的语境中，在同形的空间趋向倚变结构的基础上，整体衍生而成了一个熟语性构式；(iii)该过程是语义变化驱动句法结构变化，韵律因素（句调限定律）对汉语倚变构式前后分句的凝缩与融合，起到了不可忽视的规制和塑造效应；(iv)“越来越”衍生形成后又发展出一些“越来”和“越”拆开分用的例子。本文提出这是正式语体和非正式语体“异源叠置”的结果，是一个“高位正式体”和“低位口语体”对立的典型例证。视觉语言的特点为“越来越”拆用提供了方便。

关键词

越来越 组合性 熟语性 构式化 语体

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COMPOSITIONAL OR IDIOMATIC: ON THE DIACHRONY OF *YUE LAI YUE*... IN CHINESE

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the diachronic development of *yue lái yue* 越来越 (lit. 'more come more', meaning more and more) construction, a type of comparative correlatives in Chinese. It is argued that (i) the earliest usage of *yue lai yue* can be traced back to the late Qing dynasty (late 19th century), instead of the middle period as is widely accepted previously; (ii) contra Zhu (2010) and Long (2013) which syntactically decompose *yue lai yue* into *yue...yue* and the pro-verb *lai*, we propose an idiomatization analysis. More specifically, *yue lai yue* is derived from its spatial-oriented correlative homograph which appears in spatial-temporal ambiguous contexts; (iii) the evolution of *yue lai yue* is driven by its semantic change and the whole process involves four aspects of change, namely, desemanticization, decategorialization, context extension, and phonological erosion. Meanwhile, the prosody, namely Constraint on Sentential Intonation (CSI) in Chinese also plays an important role in shaping the coalescence of *yue lai yue*; (iv) *yue lai yue* can still be used separately as *yue lai...yue...* in certain contexts, even when the coalescence has completed. However, this kind of special usage is licensed by formal registers, evidenced by the fact that *yue lai...yue...* is only allowed in formal (literary) registers but not in informal ones. The study in the paper supports the argument that formal registers go upward to higher syntactic positions whereas informal registers go downward to lower syntactic positions. Furthermore, the characteristics of visual language (versus auditory language) is crucial to the development of *yue lai yue* as well.

KEYWORDS

Yue lai yue Compositionality Idiomaticity Constructionalization
Register