

ON THE BIG SILENT APPOSITIVE TIME  
IN *DÀ NP DE* CONSTRUCTION IN CHINESE:  
A COMPOSITIONAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the compositionality of [*dà NP de*] construction in Chinese. The NP should be a direct time-denoting NP<sub>TIME</sub> or an indirect time-denoting NP<sub>ITIME</sub>. Following Kayne (2016), we assume there is a silent TIME following *de*. Meanwhile, a less-discussed use of *de*—that is, the equational/appositional use of *dé* (Chao 1968), has been revived to link the silent TIME and NP<sub>TIME</sub>/NP<sub>ITIME</sub>. This analysis of *de* helps explain why the NP is preferably time-related, as it is easier for a time-denoting NP to establish an equational/appositional relation with the silent TIME. *Dà* ‘big’ is neither a size-denoting adjective, nor an evaluative morpheme. It is analyzed as an element like the restrictive adjective *very* (e.g., *the very book*) in English. *Dà* modifies the appositive conjunction phrase [NP *de* TIME], bringing emphasis to the construction, which in turn imposes certain semantic and pragmatic constraints on its subsequent clauses.

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**Acknowledgements** A draft of this paper was presented at the “Young Scholars’ International Symposium on Formal Linguistics” held at Beijing Language and Culture University on Dec. 19, 2016. I am grateful to Shengli Feng, One-Soon Her, James Huang, Audrey Li, Jinglian Li, Victor Pan, Fuzhen Si, Sze-Wing Tang, Qingwen Zhang and Wei Chin, for the relevant discussion and shared articles during or after the symposium. JCL editors and anonymous reviewers deserve special thanks for their constructive revision suggestions, both in content and form. All remaining errors are mine. This research is partly supported by the National Social Science Fund of China [Key Project 21AYY002].

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(The syntactic analysis of English and Chinese temporal adverbial constructions: A study based on the cartography of preposition phrases). *Waiyu jiaoxue yu yanjiu* 外语教学与研究 1: 16–28.

## “大”的无声的时间同位语：“大NP的”结构之组合分析

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### 摘要

本文主要探讨“大NP的”结构是如何通过组合的方式生成的。本文认为该结构中的“大”既非指涉尺寸大小的形容词，也非表示评价的语素，而是一个表示强调的限制形容词，其用法类似于英文 *the very book* 中的 *very*。受Kayne(2016)的启发，我们假设该结构的“的”字之后有个没有语音实现形式的时间名词TIME。受Chao(1968)启发，我们认为该结构中的“的”是“的”的一种特殊用法，即“的”等同/同位用法，用来连接表示时间的NP和无声的TIME。“NP的TIME”是一个同位结构，受“大”修饰。由于“大”的强调作用(Lü 1999)，“大NP的”结构具有强调义，继而要求其后续子句在语义和语用上与之匹配，从而对后续子句产生一定的限制。

### 关键词

“大” TIME “的”的等同/同位用法 限制形容词 *very*