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THE *BA* RESULTATIVE CONSTRUCTION: A COMPREHENSIVE
STUDY OF MANDARIN *BA* SENTENCES

by

Sizhi Ding

B.A., Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1992

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department
of
Linguistics

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Approval

Name: Sizhi Ding
Degree: Master of Arts
Title of Thesis: The *Bǎ* Resultative Construction: A Comprehensive Study of
Mandarin *Bǎ* Sentences

Examining Committee:

Chair: Dr. Zita McRobbie

Nancy Hedberg
Senior Supervisor
Assistant Professor
Department of Linguistics

Richard DeArmond
Associate Professor
Department of Linguistics

Edwin Pulleyblank
External Examiner
Professor, Emeritus
Department of Asian Studies
University of British Columbia

Date Approved: July 21, 1993

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Abstract

The present thesis studies a perennial problem in Chinese linguistics -- the *bǎ* sentence. Three types of commonly found *bǎ* sentences are identified to belong to the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction (BRC), in which *bǎ* is argued to have developed an abstract meaning of 'bringing about a resultative state'. *Bǎ* is consequently proposed to be the main verb of the periphrastic resultative construction. The complexity of the *bǎ* problem is elucidated with a complex structure in semantic, pragmatic, and syntactic studies of BRC. Semantically, a *bǎ* sentence in BRC is complex in that it typically involves an underlying action and a resultative state. With *bǎ* as a verb, a complex structure is inevitable in the syntactic analysis of BRC. Interestingly, *bǎ* sentences in BRC also possess a pragmatically complex structure: an embedded topic structure.

As a comprehensive study, the thesis adopts a multi-faceted approach. Following an introduction of the *bǎ* problem in Chapter 1, the constructional meaning of BRC is investigated in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 tackles the syntactic structure of BRC within the Government-Binding Theory while Chapter 4 focuses on the pragmatic features of BRC. After an examination of the construction in these three major linguistic areas, a lexical study of *bǎ* itself is pursued in Chapter 5. Finally, conclusions are drawn in Chapter 6, and the thesis ends with suggestion of feasible future research on BRC.

*AL TIUJ, KIUJ KREDAS MIRAKLON, KAJ PLI GRAVE,
KIUJ HAVAS FIDON JE SI.*

*TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN MIRACLE, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY,
WHO HAVE FAITH IN THEMSELVES.*

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Preface

*Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

-- Robert Frost

Writing of this thesis has been a very special experience, not just because it is the first one of its kind. The experience cannot be described in pure academic terms; it is a rather personal one to me. For this, I owe unmeasurable debts to many people.

I sincerely thank the members of the Examining Committee: Dr. Richard DeArmond, Dr. Nancy Hedberg, and Dr. Edwin Pulleyblank, for their interest in participating in my thesis defence. I am especially indebted to my senior supervisor Dr. Hedberg, who untiringly read several early drafts of the thesis and took pains to correct my stubborn foreigner's English grammar while offering comments and suggestions on my analysis of the *bǎ* problem. Her willingness to take part in and eventually to go through the adventure of my thesis preparation undoubtedly deserves my gratitude in the first place.

The topic of the thesis was originated when I was a senior student at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. I would like to express special thanks to Dr. Usha Lakshmanan, who first brought the *bǎ* problem to my attention, and then helped me in many ways until I completed the conference paper '*Bǎ* as a matrix verb in the resultative construction.' Two other former professors of mine, Dr. Geoffrey Nathan and Dr. Margaret Winters, have constantly encouraged me in my pursuit of being a student of linguistics. I am grateful to them for their unfailing moral support and care about my study.

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assistance as a kind of support at a time when I needed it the most.

Finally, thanks go to the audiences at the Fourth North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics and at the Ninth Northwestern Linguistics Conference.

Vancouver,
July 1993

Picus Sizhi Ding
Simon Fraser University

Symbols and Abbreviations

Symbols/Abbreviations	Meaning
#	Infelicity due to pragmatic reasons
*	Ungrammaticality due to syntactic or semantic reasons
?, ??	Limited acceptability in judgment of grammaticality or felicity
<i>e</i>	Non-overt entity
∅	Zero Anaphor
↔	Existence of a semantic relationship
AP	Aspect marker
AT	Attributive marker
AV	Auxiliary Verb
BRC	<i>Bă</i> Resultative Construction
CL	Classifier
DRC	<i>De</i> Resultative Construction
ET	Extent marker
IT	Interrogative marker
LP	Locative Particle
NG	Negative marker
PF	Perfective aspect
PS	Passive marker
PT	Particle
RV	Resultative Verb

Chapter I

Introduction

In resemblance to English, Mandarin has a basic word order of SVO. With the advent of *bǎ* sentences in the late Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618-907), some linguists (e.g. Li and Thompson 1974a; So 1976) submit that word order in Mandarin is shifting towards SOV. One of their supporting arguments is derived from the treatment of *bǎ* as an 'object marker'. Without discussing the issue of word order change in the language, the present study focuses on the perennial problem of *bǎ* sentences per se. The conclusions of the thesis can be pinpointed as follows:

- (a) *Bǎ* is still a verb -- a resultative verb.
- (b) The so-called '*bǎ*-construction' is a periphrastic resultative construction: the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction.
- (c) *Bǎ* is a tri-argument verb which subcategorizes two NPs and a verbal complement with a resultative meaning.
- (d) An embedded topic structure features in the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction.

Each of the above propositions will be presented in independent chapters in pursuing a study of *bǎ* sentences with a breadth and depth of knowledge to the extent possible within the scope of this thesis.

1.1 A Taxonomy of *Bǎ* Sentences

The '*bǎ*-construction' refers to a wide range of sentences containing a phrase headed by *bǎ*, in which *bǎ* does not denote a concrete meaning. In order to eliminate

confusion and obscurity generated by various kinds of *bǎ* sentences, a taxonomy of the '*bǎ*-construction' is necessary. This section will briefly classify the most commonly found *bǎ* sentences into four major groups.

Those in Type A are called the 'regular type' since they are often referred to as the basic form of *bǎ* sentences. The object of *bǎ* is interpreted to be identical to the direct object of the verb in a *bǎ* sentence of this type. Type B gives rise to a baffling problem for many analyses with the so-called 'retained object' in *bǎ* sentences. Since the object of *bǎ* is different from the overt postverbal object, the object of *bǎ* cannot be construed as the direct object of the verb and its relation to the verb becomes unclear. Type C is termed the 'causative type' on account of the causative reading implied by the *bǎ* sentences of the group: The meaning of the sentences can be expressed with a causative verb such as *jiào* and *ràng* in lieu of *bǎ*. Finally, Type D represents those which can be paraphrased with *bǎ* being supplanted by repetition of the verb in a *bǎ* sentence.

A. *The regular type*

- (1) bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài shāo le.
father RV leftover wood burn PF
'Father has burned the leftover wood.'
- (2) nǐ bǎ qián ná huí-lái.
you RV money take back
'Take the money back.'
- (3) táifēng bǎ fángzi gěi chuī zǒu le.
typhoon RV house PS blow away PF
'The typhoon has blown the house away.'

B. *The object-retained type*

- (4) bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài dǎ le yī jiān gǒuwū.
father RV leftover wood build PF one CL doghouse
'Father has turned the leftover wood into a doghouse.'

- (5) wǒ bǎ qián mǎi le cǎipiào.
 I RV money buy PF lottery ticket
 'I have taken the money to buy lottery tickets.'
- (6) tā bǎ zhè jiàn shìqing xiě le yī ge bàogào.
 s/he RV this CL matter write PF one CL report
 'S/He has written a report on this matter.'

C. The causative type

- (7) nǐ bǎ wǒmen jí de bùdéliǎo.
 you RV we distressing ET excessively
 'You have excessively distressed us.'
- (8) nèixiē xiǎo háizi bǎ tā lè-kāi le.
 those little child RV s/he happy PF
 'Those little children have delighted him/her.'
- (9) háizide yīfu bǎ māma xǐ de lèi jí le.
 child's clothes RV mother wash ET tired extremely PF
 'Washing the children's clothes has got Mother extremely tired.'

D. The substitute type

- (10) mèimei bǎ gēge huà de xiàng xīngxing yīyàng.
 sister RV brother draw ET like chimpanzee same
 'Sister drew a picture of Brother (so badly) that he looked like a chimpanzee.'
- (11) wǒ bǎ lùnwén zhǔnbèi le yī nián. xiànzài kāishǐ xiězuō le.
 I RV thesis prepare PF one year now start writing PT
 'I have prepared the thesis for a year, and now I started the writing.'
- (12) tā bǎ dìzhǐ xiě de bùqīngchu. xìn gěi tuìhuí le.
 s/he RV address write ET unclear letter PS return PF
 'S/He did not write the address clearly, and the letter was returned.'

1.2 Terminology

The major purpose of the preceding classification is to provide a convenient reference to particular groups of *bǎ* sentences in the later discussion of their syntactic and/or semantic characteristics. The thesis will focus on those *bǎ* sentences that fall into the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction (BRC, hereafter). This includes all the sentences from Type A to Type C. These *bǎ* sentences are generally considered to belong to a common construction (cf. Hashimoto 1971; Mangione 1982; and Tsao 1987, etc.), and they will be collectively referred to as BRC even in reference to prior works.

Although details of the proposed resultative construction are proffered in Chapter 2, readers may find a brief clarification of terminology used in this thesis helpful. The concepts of resultative and causative are so interwoven that they are frequently regarded as one under the rubric of causative. Theoretically it is practicable to subsume resultative under causative, especially when causative is vaguely construed as 'a change of state'. While I recognize the significant extent of overlapping between the two and appreciate the generalization in capturing the fundamental commonality of the two notions, I do not perceive resultative as entirely covered by causative. The degree of overlapping between the two plausibly varies from language to language. This study treats resultative and causative in Mandarin¹ as two concepts on their own rights, but with conspicuous interlacement.

Parallel to the use of 'causative verb' to refer to the verb that marks a periphrastic causative construction, *bǎ* is called 'resultative verb' in BRC. Distinction should be noted between 'resultative verb' and 'resultative verb compound'. The latter involves a morphological process of joining two verbal morphemes together; whereas the former denotes a syntactic construction.

¹ The term 'Mandarin' will be used in the present study to refer to the standard national language of China rather than to a specific dialect.

1.3 Methodology in the Study

As a classical problem, the vexing construction of *bǎ* sentences has accumulated an enormous number of works in the literature over decades of studies. Given the goal of the thesis and constraints on time and resources, I will adopt a simple methodology without substantial polemics against any particular study of the *bǎ* problem. Instead of a thorough evaluation and comparison of the new proposal to existing analyses, what will be aimed at is the legitimate categorial membership of *bǎ* and the nature of the construction, with a challenge to the conventional view that *bǎ* is a preposition in a 'disposal' construction. (The view is very much reflected in Li and Thompson 1981.)

Table 1-1 *A glance at five classical studies of bǎ sentences*

	Treatment of <i>Bǎ</i>	Name of Construction	Focus of Analysis
L. Wang	Auxiliary Verb	<i>Chǔzhì shì</i> (the 'disposal' form)	Semantics
Frei	'Inertial' Preposition	Ergative Construction	Syntax
Chao	Pretransitive Verb	Pretransitive Construction	Syntax, Pragmatics and Semantics
Hashimoto	Verb	Executive Construction	Syntax
Li & Thompson	Preposition	<i>Bǎ</i> -Construction	Pragmatics and Semantics

For a quick reference, Table 1-1 presents the various treatments of *bǎ* and different

approaches to the construction of five selected analyses of *bǎ* sentences.² Chronologically they are: L. Wang (1947), Frei (1956, 1957), Chao (1968), Hashimoto (1971), and Li and Thompson (1981). Some of the analyses will be further discussed in the course of the study. Generally the common defect in previous studies of *bǎ* sentences lies in the lack of a convincing argument for their treatments of *bǎ*. Subsequently, the category of *bǎ* proliferates under all kinds of presumption. This is a severe drawback and has left the investigation of the *bǎ* problem in an impasse. To avoid repeating the same mistake, the present study will culminate in a meticulous examination of *bǎ* after an investigation of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction.

1.4 Layout and Purview of the Thesis

Given the interlocking relation between the category of *bǎ* as a verb and the construction of *bǎ* sentences, I will first assume that *bǎ* is a resultative verb in the next three chapters when the construction is under scrutiny. Chapter 2 concerns the concept of resultative and furnishes a working definition for the propounded construction. Chapter 3 analyzes the syntactic structure of BRC within the Government-Binding Theory. Two empty categories -- PRO and *pro* -- are posited to exist in the verbal complement of *bǎ*. Chapter 4 brings attention to the pragmatic aspect of BRC. An embedded topic structure and the contrast function of *bǎ* sentences are exhibited to be two discourse-pragmatic properties of BRC. Chapter 5 is devoted to an in-depth inquiry into the controversial categorial status of *bǎ*. In light of semantic change, an endeavor is submitted to associate the central constructional meaning of resultative with the key element *bǎ*. Moreover, the treatment of *bǎ* as a verb will be fully justified with findings of the construction in precedent

² The selected publications in the Bibliography should provide sufficient references for those who wish to have a wider spectrum of the *bǎ* problem. Cheung (1973) or M. Wang (1987) can serve as a good start.

chapters. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the study along with feasible directions for future research on BRC.

Even though the thesis is undertaken in a multifaceted fashion, which calls upon semantics, syntax, pragmatics, and historical linguistics in the investigation of *bǎ* sentences, the present study is by no means a complete examination of the *bǎ* problem. This work is solely a first step towards a genuine understanding of *bǎ* sentences. Many interesting constructions and related areas will inevitably be passed by without further pursuit. Likewise, the potential impact and implication of the new analysis will not be addressed either. It is important to bear in mind that the thesis renders itself as the beginning of a new stage in the study of the *bǎ* problem rather than the end of the problem. Findings and hypotheses of the study need to be confirmed or modified with more profound research in the future.

Chapter II

Constructional Meaning of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction

Fruitful research on any construction relies on the researcher having a genuine comprehension of the meaning of the construction. Overlooking the fundamental semantic aspects of the *bǎ* problem has circumscribed inquiry of the syntactic structure of *bǎ* sentences to a rather superficial level. In order to facilitate delving into the profound nature of *bǎ* sentences, this chapter will closely study the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences with the concept of resultative. As a general linguistic notion, resultative duly captures the correlation between *bǎ* sentences and other constructions such as the causative and the locative in Mandarin. Moreover, with the notion of resultative, a well-defined construction -- the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction -- can be distinguished from the rubric of the so-called '*bǎ*-construction'. Finally, using the proposed construction as an archetype allows us to unfold the intricate relationships between a variety of *bǎ* sentences.

2.1 Semantics of *Bǎ* Sentences

The least controversial issue in studies of the *bǎ* problem is probably the meaning of *bǎ* sentences. Even so, there exist two schools with utterly opposite standpoints. One view (e.g. Hashimoto 1971, Cheung 1973, J. Huang 1982, and Mangione 1982) regards the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences as semantically empty; whereas the other (e.g. L. Wang 1947, Y. Li 1974, Li and Thompson 1981, Hsueh 1989, and Ding 1992) perceives a similar semantic relation between the object of *bǎ* and the subsequent clause. The meaning of *bǎ* sentences is expressed in different manners, however. For example, Hsueh (1989: 111) interprets the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences as:

- (1) A *bǎ* B + C

'In connection to A, B turns out to be what C describes.'

In L. Wang's (1947) terms, the relation between B and C will be: A disposes of B in the manner of C. The ensuing discussion will first point out the explanatory difficulty encountered by those who advocate an empty meaning view of *bǎ* sentences, and then illustrate the advantages of the resultative notion over 'disposal'.

2.1.1 The Semantically Empty View

The prevailing school, represented mostly by syntacticians, minimizes or ignores the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences by claiming that there is no semantic difference between a *bǎ* sentence and its counterpart with a postverbal form. In their opinion, the discrepancy between (2) and (3), if any, can be stated merely in terms of emphasis. To account for the ungrammaticality of the sentences in (4), they have recourse to a phonological constraint which rules out monosyllabic verbs in *bǎ* sentences (cf. Chao 1968; Mangione 1982).³

- (2) Zhāngsān bǎ Lǐsì piàn le.
 RV cheat PF

'Zhangsan has cheated Lisi.'

- (3) Zhāngsān piàn le Lǐsì.
 cheat PF

'Zhangsan cheated Lisi.'

- (4)a *Lǐsì bǎ shǒujuàn shī.
 RV handkerchief wet

- b *Zhāngsān bǎ shū mài.
 RV book sell

³ Such *bǎ* sentences are acceptable in song composition, however.

The explanation is unconvincing. First of all, a *bǎ* sentence with a disyllabic verb can still be ungrammatical if a resulting meaning is not properly encoded, e.g. (5)a. On the other hand, the problematic *bǎ* sentence in (5)a becomes grammatical thanks to the resulting meaning implied by the added aspect marker in (5)b.

(5)a *jīnglǐ bǎ Wángwǔ kāichú.
 manager RV fire

b jīnglǐ bǎ Wángwǔ kāichú le.
 manager RV fire PF
 'The manager has fired Wangwu.'

(6)a Lǐsì bǎ shǒujuàn { *shī le }
 { kūshī le }
 RV handkerchief wet PF/cry-wet PF

'*Lisi got the handkerchief wet./Lisi got the handkerchief wet by crying.'

b Zhāngsān bǎ shū { mài le }
 { mài bùwán ... }
 RV book sell PF/sell unfinished

'Zhangsan has sold the book(s)./Zhangsan is unable to sell all the books ...'

The examples in (6) further demonstrate the vitality of the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences. While the perfective aspect marker *le* can signify a resulting state, it may not always denote an appropriate one. That its presence does not guarantee grammaticality of a *bǎ* sentence is exhibited in the first case of (6)a. Neither is the marker the only way to express a resulting state. As manifested in (6)b, resulting states encoded in different manners can also save a *bǎ* sentence from ungrammaticality although the meanings of the sentences may vary from one another. Evidently, the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences plays a central role in the well-formedness of *bǎ* sentences.

2.1.2 The 'Disposal' View

L. Wang (1947) introduces the concept of *chǔzhì shì*, or the 'disposal' form, as follows (emphasis is mine):⁴

The disposal form states **how** a person is handled, manipulated, or dealt with; **how** something is disposed of; or **how** an affair is conducted.

The 'disposal' notion has legitimately embodied two semantic aspects of *bǎ* sentences: action and state. Thus, the *bǎ* sentence in (7) conveys that Lisi has been cheated as a result of Zhangsan's manipulation. In (8) the leftover wood was disposed of by means of burning, and in (9) the matter was written out as a report in handling the affair.

(7) Zhāngsān bǎ Lǐsì piàn le
RV cheat PF
'Zhangsan has cheated Lisi.'

(8) bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài shāo le.
father RV leftover wood burn PF
'Father has burned the leftover wood.'

(9) tā bǎ nèi jiàn shìqìng xiě le yī ge bàogào.
s/he RV that CL matter write PF one CL report
'S/He has written a report on this matter.'

The 'disposal' concept reveals the meaning of *bǎ* sentences of the regular and the object-retained types without difficulty. However, the concept cannot properly interpret the meaning of *bǎ* sentences of the other two types. (10) and (11) belong to the causative type. These two *bǎ* sentences express a causative meaning rather than disposal or manipulation. It makes little sense to construe (10) as conveying that somebody has been 'manipulated, handled, or dealt with' by a group of children. Neither can (11) be interpreted as some

⁴ The English translation is taken from Y. Li (1974: 200-201).

people being 'handled, manipulated, or dealt with' by a problem. The inadequacy of a 'disposal' reading is even more apparent in the substitute type of *bǎ* sentence. No trace of 'disposal' can be discerned in (12) from regarding money as of great importance, nor in (13) from the drawing of a brother turning out to be a picture of a chimpanzee.

- (10) nèixiē xiǎo háizi bǎ tā lè-kāi le.
 those little child RV s/he happy PF
 'Those little children have delighted him/her.'
- (11) nèi ge nántí bǎ tāmen xiǎng dāi le.
 that CL problem RV they think dull PF
 'Deliberating on that problem has got them all dull.'
- (12) yǒu xiē rén bǎ qián kàn de tài zhòngyào le.
 have some person RV money regard ET too important PT
 'Some people overvalue money.'
- (13) mèimei bǎ gēge huà de xiàng xīngxing yíyàng.
 sister RV brother draw ET like chimpanzee same
 'Sister drew a picture of Brother so badly that he looked like a chimpanzee.'

2.1.3 The Resultative View

The major problem of 'disposal' lies in the notion being too specific, and hence applicable merely to certain types of *bǎ* sentences without room for extension to the other types. In addition, the 'disposal' concept is ad hoc for Mandarin *bǎ* sentences. In light of these shortcomings, I propose that 'resultative' replace 'disposal' as the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences. Not only does the new concept incorporate the essential meaning of 'disposal', but more significantly it also benefits the study of *bǎ* sentences with a typological comparison to resultative constructions of other languages.

In their typological study of resultative constructions, Nedjalkov and Jaxontov (1988: 6) point out the distinction between the stative and the resultative as follows:

The stative expresses a state of a thing without any implication of its origin, while the resultative expresses both a state and the preceding action it has resulted from.

Further, on the basis that the two share a number of important properties, they adapt the notion of resultative in a broader sense to encompass both the stative and the resultative. The resultative notion in its narrow sense is on par with 'disposal' inasmuch as both action and state are taken into account. On the other hand, 'resultative' in its broad sense differs from 'disposal' in that it can denote a state alone. While the term 'resultative' will be adopted in its broad sense in the present study, 'resultant' will be used to refer to the narrow sense of the resultative, thus 'resultative' = 'resultant' + 'stative'. Finally, a more general term 'resulting' will be used to denote all kinds of results in the vaguest sense. With the new concept of resultative, the essence of *bǎ* sentences is expressed as in (14):

(14) NP₁ *bǎ* NP₂ + Resultative

2.2 The *Bǎ* Resultative Construction: A Definition

The resultative state of a *bǎ* sentence can be detected with the simple test given in (15). NP₁ is parenthesized because it may not be overtly realized on certain occasions.

(15) (NP₁) *bǎ* NP₂ *zěnyàng* *le?*
 RV how PF
 'What has happened to NP₂ (because of NP₁)?'

Given a *bǎ* sentence, the test can be applied to it as demonstrated in (16). From (16)a to (16)d, the *bǎ* sentences belong to the regular type, the object-retained type, the causative type, and the substitute type, respectively. Unlike the first three types of *bǎ* sentences, the last type cannot serve as a proper response to the testing question. In other words, the substitute type of *bǎ* sentence does not express a resultative state. The state in (16)d solely

describes the result of the drawing, or the extent to which the drawing skill has manifested itself.

- (16)a Zhāngsān bǎ Lǐsì { zěnyàng le?
piàn le. }
- RV cheat PF
'Zhangsan has cheated Lisi.'
- b tā bǎ nèi jiàn shìqìng { zěnyàng le?
xiě le yī ge bàogào. }
- s/he RV that CL matter write PF one CL report
'S/He has written a report on this matter.'
- c xiǎo háizi bǎ tā { zěnyàng le?
lè-kāi le. }
- little child RV s/he happy PF
'Those little children have delighted him/her.'
- d mèimei bǎ gēge { zěnyàng le?
??huà de xiàng xīngxīng yīyàng. }
- sister RV brother draw ET like chimpanzee same
'Sister drew a picture of Brother so badly that he looked like a chimpanzee.'

Seeing that the resultative concept distinguishes three types of the most frequently found *bǎ* sentences, it will be beneficial to formally recognize their commonality. Therefore, the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction (BRC) is proposed to be the underlying construction of these *bǎ* sentences. A working definition of the construction is provided in (17):

(17) **Definition of BRC**

A *bǎ* sentence belongs to the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction if, and only if, the object of *bǎ* holds a proper semantic relationship with the successive clause that denotes a resultative state. The semantic relation between the object of *bǎ* and the clausal complement can be PATIENT-and-resultant, or EXPERIENCER-and-stative.⁵

⁵ Terms written in capital letters denote semantic roles.

2.3 A Classification of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction

With the identification of BRC, a window opens to the typology of resultative constructions cross-linguistically. A classification of the construction in accordance with diathesis types of resultatives will be undertaken in this section.

2.3.1 Diathesis Types of Resultatives

In terms of 'the scheme of correlations between the underlying roles (agent, patient) and surface constituents (subject, object)', Nedjalkov and Jaxontov (1988: 8-17) discuss six major diathesis types of resultatives: the subjective, the objective, the possessive, the oblique-objective, the subjective-impersonal, and the objective-impersonal. A concise distinction between these resultatives are summarized in Table 2-1 with regard to the syntactic role that the affected entity plays in a particular underlying action.

Table 2-1 *Role of affected constituent in six types of resultatives*

Types of Resultatives	Syntactic Role in Underlying Action
Subjective Resultative	Subject
Objective Resultative	Direct Object
Possessive Resultative	Subject as possessor of the object
Oblique-objective Resultative	Indirect Object
Subjective-impersonal Resultative	Subject
Objective-impersonal Resultative	Other than Subject

The distinction between the first two types is straightforward. It is realized by whether the resultant state bears on the subject or the direct object of an underlying action. The subjective resultative is undeveloped in English but the objective resultative is prevalent. (18) exemplifies the objective resultative. With the italic sentence presenting an underlying action, the affected entity in (18) is obviously 'food', the direct object of the underlying action 'to cook'.⁶

(18) Charlie cooked the food black. *Charlie cooked the food* ⇒ The **food** is black

The possessive resultative is a special case of the objective resultative. The subject, however, is interpreted as being affected on the grounds that it is in an intimate relationship with the direct object. Sentence (19) exhibits the possessive relationship prominent in this kind of resultative. As suggested by the underlying action in italics, what has been affected by the act of closing is the direct object 'eyes'. Nonetheless, the subject 'Mary' has inherited the affected role from the object, which is a body part of the subject.

(19) Mary has her eyes tightly shut. *Mary shut her eyes* ⇒ **Her eyes** are shut

The remaining types are less common in the world's languages. Depending on the syntactic role taken by the affected constituent, the oblique-objective resultative can be further distinguished as the locative-objective resultative, the dative-objective resultative, and so on. The locative-objective resultative is exemplified with (20), in which the affected entity 'stove' functions as locative in the underlying action of cooking.

(20) Fred cooked the stove black. *Fred cooked on the stove* ⇒ The **stove** is black

The impersonal-resultative construction is characterized by a null subject in the surface form. When a state is derived from an impersonal verb which does not take an

⁶ The English examples in (18) and (20) are adapted from Jackendoff (1990: 226-227); example (19) is due to Kozinskij (1988: 516).

overt subject, the construction is of the subjective-impersonal resultative type. If the direct object or some other constituent in the surface form is construed as affected by the resultative state, the construction is considered to be the objective-impersonal resultative.

2.3.2 Five Diathesis Types of BRC

Except for the subjective-impersonal resultative, all the other types of resultatives are found in BRC. The construction can thus be classified into five diathesis types as exemplified on the successive pages. BRC is a typical objective resultative construction. Sentences like (23) and (24) -- the objective resultative -- and (25) and (26) -- the possessive resultative (a special kind of objective resultative) -- are rampant in BRC. This has resulted in a stereotype of the construction: A *bǎ* sentence refers to what happens to the object in the sentence (cf. Y. Li 1974; Li and Thompson 1981). The prevalence in BRC of the objective resultative has also given rise to the misconception that the object of *bǎ* is always identical to the object of the verb following it. *Bǎ* sentences of the subjective resultative such as (21), along with counterexamples from other resultative types, e.g. (28), and (29), furnish strong evidence against this oversimplified view of the relation between the object of *bǎ* and the successive verb.

The subjective resultative of BRC is remarkable in that the object of *bǎ* is often interpreted to be the AGENT of the verb following it. Thus in (21), the subject of *xiǎng* 'think' is *tāmen* 'they'. Moreover, the resultant state also bears on the subject of the verb, and hence *tāmen* 'they' experiences the state of being dull as a result of the deliberation. This very nature of subjective resultative is often regarded as implying a causative meaning. Nevertheless, the causative implication may not always be observed in the subjective resultative of BRC. For example, the subjective resultative in (22) does not render a causative reading.⁷

⁷ The nice minimal pair of subjective resultative versus objective resultative in (22) and

A. *The Subjective Resultative*

(21) nèi ge nántí bǎ tāmen xiǎng dāi le.
that CL problem RV they think dull PF
'Deliberating on that problem has got them all dull.'
they deliberated on a problem ⇒ **they** get dull

(22) nǐ bǎ fàn chībǎo le.
you RV rice eat-full PF
'You have eaten the rice (until you are) full.'
you ate the rice ⇒ **you** are full

B. *The Objective Resultative*

(23) nǐ bǎ fàn zhǔlàn le.
you RV rice cook-soft PF
'You have cooked the rice soft.'
you cooked the rice ⇒ the **rice** is soft

(24) wǒ bǎ qián mǎi le cǎipiào.
I RV money buy PF lottery ticket
'I have taken the money to buy lottery tickets.'
I took the money to buy lottery tickets ⇒ the **money** is gone

C. *The Possessive Resultative*

(25) Wáwa bǎ yǎnjīng bì shàng le.
RV eye close up PF
'Wawa has her eyes closed.'
Wawa closed her eyes ⇒ **Wawa's eyes** are closed

(26) wǒ bǎ qiánbǎo sòng le gěi tā.
I RV wallet send PF to s/he
'I have sent my wallet to her/him as a gift.'
I sent my wallet as a gift ⇒ **I** no longer possess the **wallet**

(23) are due to Chao (1968: 347).

D. *The Locative-Objective Resultative*

(27) tāmen bǎ míngzi kè zài shùgàn shàng.

they RV name inscribe at trunk LP

'They have inscribed their names on the trunk.'

they inscribed their names on a trunk ⇒ the trunk is inscribed with names

(28) tā bǎ hòuyuàn zhòng le xǔduō mòlihuā.

s/he RV backyard plant PF many jessamine

'S/He has planted a lot of jessamine in the backyard.'

s/he planted jessamine in the backyard ⇒ there is jessamine in the backyard

E. *The Objective-Impersonal Resultative*

(29) bǎ zǒnglǐ yě bìng le.

RV premier also sick PF

'Even the premier got sick.'

Unknown ⇒ the premier is sick

The inadequacy of the 'disposal' notion is manifested outside the objective resultative. Neither (27) nor (29) can be properly understood in terms of 'disposal'. Although a secondary resultative meaning can be attached to the object *míngzi* 'name' in (27), the primary resultative meaning resides in the locative *shùgàn* 'trunk', which is the entity that has suffered from the consequence of the action *kè* 'inscribe'. Hence, the sentence represents a kind of oblique-objective resultative -- the locative-objective resultative. When the underlying locative surfaces as the object of *bǎ*, as in (28), the *bǎ* sentence can be paraphrased with a locative sentence. Compare (28) to (30):

(30) tā zài hòuyuàn zhòng le xǔduō mòlihuā.

s/he at backyard plant PF many jessamine

'S/He planted a lot of jessamine in the backyard.'

Lin (1974: 71) observes that the paraphrase is feasible only with a particular type of locative

construction that takes the form 'zài X' + Verb + Object. A condition on the locative construction specifies that 'X is the place where the action of the verb takes place, and it is also the place the object of the verb reaches or appears as a result of the action of the verb.' In other words, a resultant state in the locative construction is indispensable in paraphrasing a locative sentence with a *bǎ* sentence.

Representing one of the most interesting forms of *bǎ* sentences, (29) attracts attention in two respects: First, the sentence has no underlying subject, and secondly the object of *bǎ* is construed as the subject of the following verb. It should be noted that the null subject is not an outcome of anaphoric ellipsis, although it is possible to assume it to be some kind of natural force, especially a malicious one bringing about adversity. Based on the first characteristic, the sentence is obviously an impersonal-resultative construction. It can be further regarded as the objective-impersonal resultative because the affected entity is other than the null subject. Unlike *bǎ* sentences in other types of resultatives, (29) does not involve an underlying action. Therefore, the resultative state must be perceived as stative instead of resultant. As Li and Yip (1979) point out, a causative implication is associated with this kind of *bǎ* sentence. How did BRC acquire this causative meaning? The answer will be pursued in the next section.

2.4 Extended Use of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction

The foregoing classification of BRC in terms of diathesis types of resultatives has facilitated comprehension of the rich variety of *bǎ* sentences. This section will address the extended usage of BRC in detail. It will be exhibited that the causative type of *bǎ* sentence is closely related to BRC and can be treated as a subtype of BRC; whereas, the substitute type can merely be regarded as distantly associated with the construction but not belonging to BRC.

2.4.1 The Causative Type: Daughter of BRC

Overlapping between resultative and causative is a common linguistic phenomenon.⁸ The following discussion on Mandarin resultative verb compounds will elucidate the extension from resultative to causative in BRC.

Mandarin resultative verb compounds are conspicuous in that they can take an additional argument even when the compound is formed by two intransitive verbs, e.g.:

- (31)a tā $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} *kū \\ *shī \\ kūshī \end{array} \right\}$ le shǒujuàn.
 s/he cry-wet PF handkerchief
 'S/He cried so much that the handkerchief got wet.'
 s/he cried using a handkerchief to wipe tears ⇒ the handkerchief is wet
- b lěng shuǐ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} *dòng \\ *huài \\ dònghuài \end{array} \right\}$ dìdì le.
 cold water chill-bad brother PT
 'The cold water really got Brother chilled.' ⇒ Brother is chilled

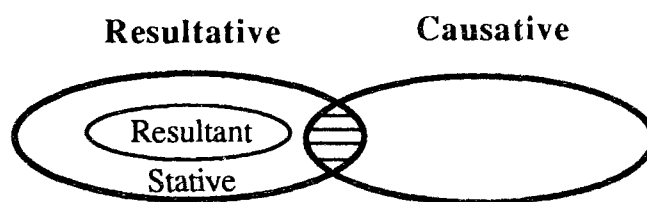
The additional argument occupies a typical object position in Mandarin, and therefore, it is generally regarded as the object of a resultative verb compound.⁹ While the semantic role of the object *shǒujuàn* 'handkerchief' in (31)a may be reckoned as PATIENT, the object *dìdì* 'brother' in (31)b apparently receives a semantic role of EXPERIENCER. In the latter case, the sentence is construed with a causative reading: The subject of the resultative verb compound functions as the CAUSER, and the object of the verb as the EXPERIENCER.

⁸ Interestingly, S. Huang's (1974) analysis of *bǎ* sentences as an event causative construction comes rather close to the proposed BRC in terms of the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences.

⁹ Whether the additional argument should be analyzed as an object or not is an intriguing question. For the time being, I simply follow the traditional practice and refer to it as the object of a resultative verb compound.

It should be stressed that the nature of the resultative states in (31)a and (31)b diverge from each other. Denoting a result from the act of crying, the state in (31)a is a resultant one; whereas in (31)b a stative one with no implication of any underlying action. The causative meaning of (31)b is attributed to two factors: its association with a stative state *dònghuài* 'chill-bad', and the animacy of the object *dìdì* 'brother'. The object argument must be animate in order to receive the semantic role of EXPERIENCER. This relation between resultative and causative appears to hold valid generally in Mandarin. Portrayed in Figure 2-1 is a diagram of the overlapping between resultative and causative. Notice that the overlapping does not occur beyond the stative.

Figure 2-1 *Overlapping of resultative and causative*



With its resultative content, a resultative verb compound in general can appear in BRC with little difficulty.¹⁰ The sentences in (31) can both be expressed in BRC, as shown below:

- (32)a tā bǎ shǒujuàn kūshī le.
 s/he RV handkerchief cry-wet PF
 'S/He got the handkerchief wet with her/his crying.'
s/he cried using a handkerchief to wipe tears ⇒ the **handkerchief** is wet
- b lěng shuǐ bǎ dìdì dònghuài le.
 cold water RV brother chill-bad PF
 'The cold water really got Brother chilled.' ⇒ Brother is chilled

¹⁰ When a resultative verb compound conveys a potential resultative meaning, however, it cannot occur in a *bǎ* sentence. Cf. Li and Thompson (1981: 476-478)

The underlying resultative states of the sentences are maintained in the *bǎ* sentences. The inanimate object *shǒujuàn* 'handkerchief' in (32)a is affected to being wet as a result of the crying. Thus the sentence belongs to the objective resultative. The basic meaning of the sentence is not causative. In contrast, the stative state *dònghuài* 'chill-bad' and the animate object *dìdì* 'brother' in (32)b contribute to a causative reading for the sentence. The examples demonstrate that the overlapping of causative with stative in BRC is precisely parallel to that in resultative verb compounds.

Insofar as the notion of resultative in BRC is extended to include the stative state, the causative type of *bǎ* sentence can be considered a subtype of the construction. The extended causative meaning of BRC coincides with a single kind of causation only -- to cause someone to experience a stative state. Thus the causative relation in the subjective resultative, as in (33), is observed solely between the CAUSER (children's clothes), the EXPERIENCER (Mother), and the stative (being tired).

- (33) háizide yīfu bǎ māma xǐ de lèi jí le.
 child's clothes RV mother wash ET tired extremely PF
 'Washing the children's clothes has got Mother extremely tired.'

Causation of an action is not implied in *bǎ* sentences. This explains why a bona fide causative verb such as *jiào*, *ràng*, or *shǐ* can always replace *bǎ* in a causative sentence, but the reverse is not necessarily practicable.¹¹ For instance, sentence (34) can be rewritten as (35) with little semantic difference. However, the displacement of the causative verb *jiào/ràng/shǐ* in (36) by *bǎ* results in the ungrammatical sentence in (37). This restricted implication of causative indicates that *bǎ* must not be mistakenly regarded as a causative verb (cf. Teng 1989).

¹¹ Similar to English 'get', *jiào* and *ràng* in Mandarin can also appear in a passive sentence (cf. Mangione 1982; Li and Thompson 1981). The overlapping is not discussed here.

- (34) dìdi bǎ wǒ dānxīnsǐ le.
brother RV I worry-dead PF
'My younger brother has worried me to death.'
- (35) dìdi jiào/ràng/shǐ wǒ dānxīnsǐ le.
brother get I worry-dead PF
'My younger brother got me awfully worried.'
- (36) zhèi ge xiāoxi jiào/ràng/shǐ wǒ gǎibiàn le zhǔyì.
this CL news get I change PF idea
'The news made me change the idea.'
- (37) *zhèi ge xiāoxi bǎ wǒ gǎibiàn le zhǔyì.
this CL news RV I change PF idea

2.4.2 The Substitute Type: Cousin of BRC

The name 'substitute' in the last type of *bǎ* sentence is due to the characteristic that *bǎ* can be replaced by repeating the other verb in the sentence, as shown in (38):

- (38)a yǒu xīe rén bǎ qián kàn de tài zhòngyào le.
have some person RV money regard ET too important PT
- b yǒu xīe rén kàn qián kàn de tài zhòngyào le.
have some person regard money regard ET too important PT
'Some people overvalue money.'

Frei (1956, 1957) suggests that the use of (38)a for (38)b is motivated by avoiding repetition of the verb. The suggestion runs into difficulty in (39). The sentence becomes unacceptable if *bǎ* is substituted for the first occurrence of the repeated verb.

- (39) nǐ { jiào } tā jiào de dàshēng diǎr. tā ěrlóng dene.
 { *bǎ }
you call/RV s/he call ET loud bit s/he deaf PT
'When you call her/him, be louder. S/he is half deaf, you know.'

To paraphrase a sentence with a *bǎ* sentence of the substitute type, verb copying is a necessary condition, but not a sufficient one. Another necessary condition is the existence of a state implying some result in the sentence. Given these conditions, this type of *bǎ* sentence is plausibly the outcome of an analogical change. Serving as the model for analogy, the *bǎ* sentence in (40) represents a typical instance of BRC with a resultative meaning bearing on the object of *bǎ*. The one in (41)b, on the other hand, belongs to the substitute type of *bǎ* sentence. It is apparent that the resulting meaning of (41)b is relevant to the event of drawing as a whole, but irrelevant to any particular entity. On this ground, the *bǎ* sentence is not regarded as BRC.

(40) jūnduì bǎ dírén dǎ de luò-huā-liú-shuǐ
troop RV enemy hit ET fall-flower-flow-river
'The troop has utterly routed the enemy.'
the troop fought with the enemy ⇒ the **enemy** is defeated

(41)a mèimei huà wǒ huà de xiàng xīngxīng yīyàng
sister draw I draw ET like chimpanzee same

b mèimei bǎ wǒ huà de xiàng xīngxīng yīyàng.
sister RV I draw ET like chimpanzee same

'Sister drew a picture of me so badly that I looked like a chimpanzee.'

sister drew a picture of me ⇒ the figure in the picture looks like a chimpanzee

Apart from the syntactic similarity between (40) and (41)a in their surface forms, i.e. S + *bǎ* + O + DRC vis-à-vis S + V + O + DRC, a more important factor contributing to the analogical change is the resulting meaning conveyed by the *De* Resultative Construction (DRC).¹² The state denoted by DRC describes either a manner or an extent concerning the performance of an act, i.e. a descriptive or a resulting state. Of the examples of DRC in (42), a descriptive state is found in (42)a. In (42)b the state can be understood as either

¹² The term 'resultative' in the name of the construction is used in a vague and broad sense to include both descriptive and resulting.

descriptive or resultant. As resultant, its effect is realized with the object *yīfu* 'clothes'.

The state in (42)c is resultant, but it bears on the subject *māma* 'mother'.

- (42)a *māma xǐ yīfu xǐ de hěn kuài.*
mother wash clothes wash ET very fast
'Mother washes clothes very quickly./Mother washed the clothes very quickly.'
- b *māma xǐ yīfu xǐ de hěn gānjìng.*
mother wash clothes wash ET very clean
'Mother washes clothes very clean./Mother washed the clothes very clean.'
- c *māma xǐ yīfu xǐ de hěn lèi.*
mother wash clothes wash ET very tired
'Mother washed the clothes to such an extent that she was tired.'

All the sentences in (42) involve copying of the verb *xǐ* 'wash'. When turning them into *bǎ* sentences, several points should be noted: (i) The new sentences in (43) refer to the result of a particular clothes-washing rather than washing in general. (ii) (43)b is the only *bǎ* sentence that can be regarded as BRC. (iii) Replacement by *bǎ* in (43)c has led to an abnormal meaning, and thus the *bǎ* sentence is unacceptable.

- (43)a *māma bǎ yīfu xǐ de hěn kuài.*
mother RV clothes wash ET very fast
'Mother washed the clothes very quickly.'
- b *māma bǎ yīfu xǐ de hěn gānjìng.*
mother RV clothes wash ET very clean
'Mother washed the clothes very clean.'
- c **māma bǎ yīfu xǐ de hěn lèi.*
mother RV clothes wash ET very tired
'*Mother washed the clothes to such an extent that the clothes were tired.'

Evidently, the *De Resultative Construction* may coincidentally express a resultative meaning required by BRC, e.g. (43)b. This serves as an analogical bridge for DRC to

appear in the form of *bǎ* sentences even when a sentence does not properly convey a resultative meaning crucial to BRC, e.g. (43)a. The situation is illustrated in Figure 2-2: Diagram 1 shows that the two resultative constructions have some degree of overlapping. As the analogical change has taken place, the *De* Resultative Construction is further drawn towards *bǎ* sentences, as exhibited in Diagram 2. Consequently some DRC sentences are now considered as a kind of *bǎ* sentence, the substitute type, though not belonging to BRC.

Figure 2-2 *Effect of analogy on the resultative constructions*

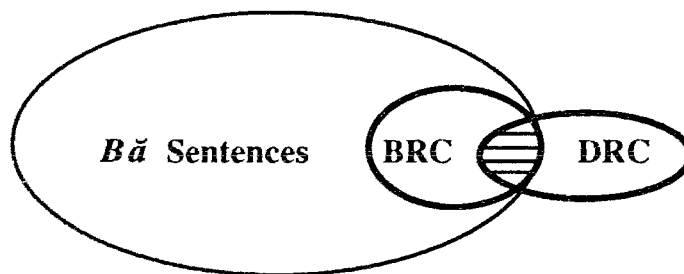


Diagram 1: Before Analogy

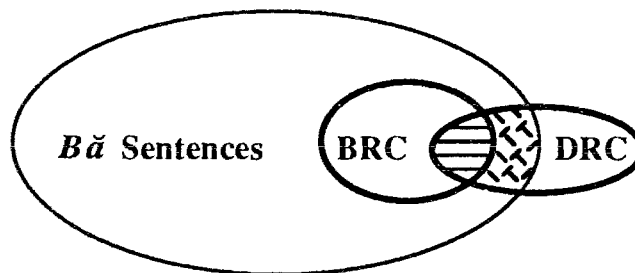


Diagram 2: After Analogy

The discussion thus far has relied on DRC to manifest the salience of the resulting meaning in the analogical change. Nonetheless, the process can and does occur outside DRC if the two conditions -- verb copying and resulting meaning -- are satisfied. For instance, (44)a does not belong to DRC, but it implies that the starting of writing comes as a consequence of the prolonged preparation of the thesis. With the implicit resulting meaning, the sentence can undergo the analogical change, and appear as a *bǎ* sentence of the substitute type in (44)b.

- (44)a wǒ zhǔnbèi lùnwén zhǔnbèi le yī nián. xiànzài kāishǐ xiězuō le.
 I prepare thesis prepare PF one year now start writing PT
 'I have prepared the thesis for a year, and now the writing can start.'
- b wǒ bǎ lùnwén zhǔnbèi le yī nián. xiànzài kāishǐ xiězuō le.
 I RV thesis prepare PF one year now start writing PT
 'I have prepared the thesis for a year, and now I started the writing.'

To conclude, *bǎ* sentences of the substitute type result from an analogical change of sentences with verb copying and a certain resulting meaning. Given that the resulting meaning in this kind of *bǎ* sentence is often unlikely to be interpreted as resultative, the substitute type is not considered a subtype of BRC.

2.5 Summary

In this chapter the intrinsic nature of *bǎ* sentences has been argued to be resultative. Under the new resultative notion, the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction is advanced for those *bǎ* sentences demonstrating a semantic relation of either PATIENT-and-resultant or EXPERIENCER-and-stative between the object of *bǎ* and its clausal complement. The resultative construction can be sorted into five diathesis types: the subjective, the objective, the possessive, the locative-objective, and the objective-impersonal, with the objective resultative being the most prominent.

As the resultative meaning has extended, BRC has acquired a new causative usage. Thus, a causative type of *bǎ* sentence exists in the resultative construction. Through analogical change, a distinct group of *bǎ* sentences, the substitute type, has emerged. While this kind of *bǎ* sentence also displays a certain resulting state, the meaning is too vague to be considered as resultative. Hence, the substitute type is excluded from BRC.

Chapter III

Syntactic Structure of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction

After understanding the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences, the syntactic structure of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction will be tackled within the Government-Binding Theory in this chapter. Despite its major concern with syntactic analysis, the chapter will also show that the resultative meaning is vital for comprehending the coreference and control of empty categories. The chapter begins with the subcategorization of *bǎ*. The more complicated problems of the embedded verb are then examined in detail.

3.1 Subcategorization of *Bǎ*

Now that *bǎ* is recognized as a verb, there are at least two verbs in a *bǎ* sentence. Determining the matrix verb of a resultative construction, such as the *De* Resultative Construction in (1), is another issue of much debate.

- (1) wǒ zǒu de hěn lèi a.
I walk ET very tired PT
'I walk so much that I am very tired.'

Dai (1992) convincingly demonstrates that the matrix verb, or the 'head', in DRC should be the first verb *zǒu* 'walk' rather than the second one *lèi* '(be) tired'. Due to the scope of this thesis, *bǎ* will simply be regarded as the matrix verb of BRC.¹³ As a verb, *bǎ* is always transitive, but it subcategorizes an additional verbal complement in BRC. Therefore, *bǎ* is a ditransitive verb taking three arguments: two NPs, and a verbal complement.

¹³ *Bǎ* is also treated as a main verb in Hashimoto's (1971) analysis.

- (2) Resultative *bǎ*: three argument verb
 one NP (subject)
 one NP (object)
 one tenseless clause (embodying a resultative state)

The object of *bǎ* almost always appears in the form of an overt NP.¹⁴ By contrast, the subject of *bǎ* can be fulfilled by a zero anaphor or a statement which is construed as an independent sentence.¹⁵ For example, the subject of *bǎ* in (3) is expressed by a zero anaphor referring to *jǐejie* 'sister'; whereas in (4) *bǎ* has taken the statement *zhème jiǔ hái bù lái* 'this long yet not come' as its subject. The term NP will be extended to include these general phenomena pertaining to the subject argument in Mandarin.

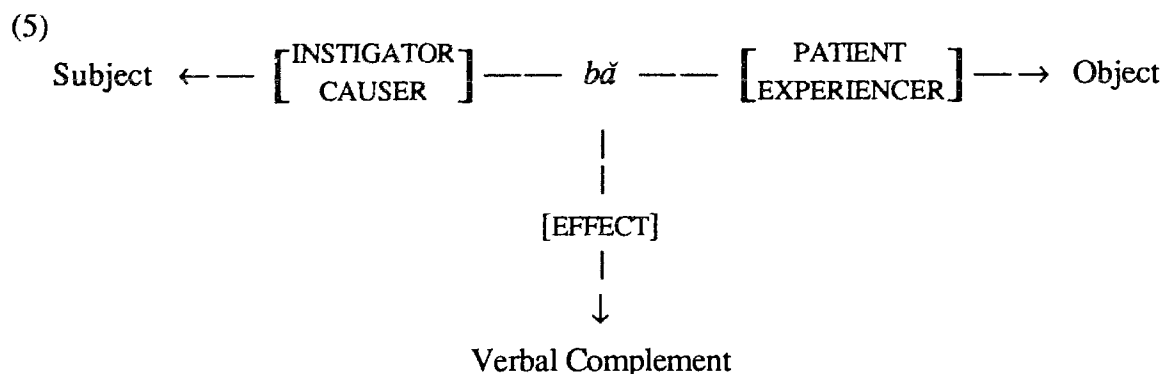
- (3) *jǐejie hěn xǐhuān nèi běn shū, bǎ tā cáng dào zhěntóu xià.*
 sister very like that CL book RV it hide LP pillow under
 'My sister likes that book very much. She has kept it under the pillow.'
- (4) *zhème jiǔ hái bù lái, zhēn bǎ rén jíjí le.*
 this long yet NG come real RV person anxious-dead PF
 'That s/he did not come yet for so long really drove me crazy.'

Bǎ in BRC will be considered a special kind of verb: a resultative verb. Causative implications of *bǎ* will be treated as an extended use of the resultative verb rather than a separate causative verb. As depicted in (5), three semantic relationships exist between *bǎ* and its arguments: INSTIGATOR, PATIENT and EFFECT.¹⁶ In the case of causative use of *bǎ*, the first two semantic roles are reinterpreted as CAUSER and EXPERIENCER respectively while the last one remains unchanged.

¹⁴ Exceptional cases will be noted in §4.1 of Chapter 4.

¹⁵ The term 'zero anaphor' is used to refer to a special kind of empty category in Mandarin. Its actual identity in GB is still under investigation. The problem was addressed in J. Huang (1984) and Xu (1986), among others.

¹⁶ The term PATIENT is used in the thesis to refer to both PATIENT and THEME.



3.2 Investigation of the Verbal Complement

The verb regarded as the main verb of a *bǎ* sentence in the vast majority of analyses is considered a subordinate verb here, but its importance in the construction is not to be diminished. Characteristics of a particular embedded verb in BRC is reflected by the sundry types of *bǎ* sentences: When the subordinate verb takes a non-overt object, the *bǎ* sentence appears in the regular type. If the object is overt, then the sentence belongs to the object-retained type. Should an intransitive stative verb serve as the embedded verb, the *bǎ* sentence acquires a causative reading.

Recognition of *bǎ* as a matrix verb in BRC has led to a complex structure in which the non-overt arguments of the embedded verb demand a detailed study. This section will identify the null subject of the subordinate verb as PRO and the non-overt object of a transitive verb as *pro*. In spite of the coexistence of PRO and *pro*, *bǎ* sentences can generally be construed without ambiguity. This will be explained in §3.3 when the coreference hierarchy is introduced. The tenselessness of the subordinate verb in BRC will be addressed first in the following.

3.2.1 Tense of the Embedded Verb

Tense is not morphologically marked in Mandarin, but it is justifiable to conceive of tense in an abstract sense just like the notion of abstract Case. Based on the use of the

passive marker *gěi* in the clausal complement of some BRC sentences, it is hypothesized that the subordinate verb is tenseless.

One of the puzzling phenomena of BRC is the occurrence of the passive marker *gěi*, as seen in (6). The use of the marker is particularly noticeable in colloquial speech.

- (6) táifēng bǎ fángzi (gěi) chuī zǒu le.
 typhoon RV house PS blow away PF
 'The typhoon has blown the house away.'

Nevertheless, the morpheme has not been recognized as a passive marker in previous studies. For instance, L. Wang (1947: 165) simply submits that the optional presence of *gěi* is for emphatic purposes (cf. also Li and Thompson 1981). With the proposed resultative construction, the optional passive marker is easily explained. While *gěi* in (7) signifies that the example is a passive sentence, in (6) it operates at a morphological level rather than at a syntactic level. It does not mark a passive construction, but a passive form of a verb instead. As the passive form of a verb typically denotes some kind of resulting state, it is compatible with and perhaps preferred in BRC.

- (7) fángzi $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} b\grave{e}i \\ g\check{e}i \end{array} \right\}$ chuī zǒu le.
 house AV blow away PF
 'The house was blown away.'
- (8) fángzi $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} b\grave{e}i \\ g\check{e}i \end{array} \right\}$ huǒ g\check{e}i shāo le.
 house AV fire PS burn PF
 'The house was burned by fire.'

It appears that the linguistic level at which the passive marker *gěi* operates, may predict the tense of the verb/clause that it modifies. While the passive sentence in (7) is marked by *gěi* at a syntactic level, and thus tensed, the morphological function of *gěi* in (8) marks the verb *shāo* 'burn' to be passive and tenseless. Notice that the tense of (8) is

signified as tensed by the first passive marker.¹⁷ In short, as an auxiliary verb marking a passive construction, *gěi* implies a tensed clause. When the passive marker does not denote a passive sentence, it renders a participial form of a verb.

The fact that *gěi* can optionally modify a verb without affecting the voice of the sentence as a whole, as exemplified in (9)a and (9)b, suggests that the embedded verb in BRC possesses some kind of tenseless form. Although it is not mandatory to signify the passive form of a verb morphologically in Mandarin, its existence in the language is attestable from a subtype of verb that occurs exclusively in the passive form. As a member of this type of verb, *gézhi* 'dismiss' can appear in a passive sentence as in (9)c, but its active counterpart (9)d is ungrammatical.

- (9)a zhǔxí bǎ cáiwùyuan gézhí le.
 chair RV treasurer dismiss PF
 'The chair has dismissed the treasurer.'
- b zhǔxí bǎ cáiwùyuan gěi gézhí le.
 chair RV treasurer PS dismiss PF
- c cáiwùyuan gěi zhǔxí gézhí le.
 treasurer PS chair dismiss PF
 'The treasurer was dismissed by the chair.'
- d *zhǔxí gézhí le cáiwùyuan.
 chair dismiss PF treasurer
 'The chair dismissed the treasurer.'

3.2.2 Subject of the Embedded Verb

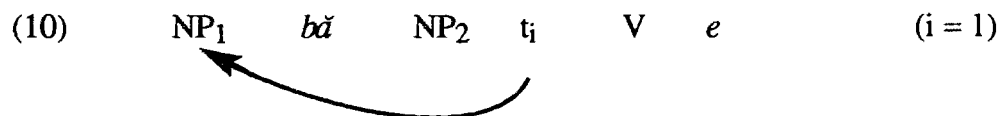
Because the subject of *bǎ* is frequently found to be identical to that of the embedded verb, the basic meaning of a *bǎ* sentence can be maintained even when *bǎ* is treated as a preposition or some kinds of markers. The causative type of *bǎ* sentence departs from

¹⁷ Example (8) is adapted from Chao (1968: 331).

other *bǎ* sentences in that the object of *bǎ* is interpreted as the subject of the subordinate verb. Crucially, the semantic subject of the embedded verb in this kind of *bǎ* sentence will be posited here to be syntactically base-generated in the object position of *bǎ*.

The hypothesis that the NP successive to *bǎ* is generated in the subject position of the embedded verb would immediately encounter a serious problem. Recall that the subordinate verb in BRC has been posited to be tenseless. Hence, it would be impossible for the overt subject of the embedded verb to receive Case from the verb.¹⁸ To solve the problem, BRC might have recourse to Exceptional Case Marking at the expense of the unified subcategorization of *bǎ* in (2). On the other hand, the NP in question does not cause any problems if it is hypothesized to occupy the object position of *bǎ*. This hypothesis is desirable with its simplicity and concord with all types of BRC. The subject of the lower verb in BRC can thus be considered as never overt.

Getting to the business of identifying the category of the null subject, is it possible that the subject of the embedded verb has moved to the initial position of the *bǎ* sentence and left a trace behind, as shown in (10)?



A negative answer is borne out by two pieces of evidence. First, the ability of *bǎ* to take an object is unequivocal at least in those *bǎ* sentences with retained objects. If the subject position of *bǎ* were filled by a fronted subject, *bǎ* would be incapable of assigning Case to its object according to Burzio's generalization (quotation from Haegeman 1985: 63):

A verb which fails to theta-mark its subject also fails to assign ACCUSATIVE CASE to its complement-NP; and, conversely, a verb that assigns ACCUSATIVE CASE to its complement-NP also theta-marks an external argument.

¹⁸ Following J. Huang (1982), I assume that only tensed verbs can assign Case to the subject position.

Secondly, the hypothesis fails to account for any causative reading in BRC, as it precludes the feasibility that the object of *bǎ* may be construed as the subject of the lower verb.

The empty category in question is unlikely to be *pro* or a zero anaphor. Although J. Huang (1984) regards Mandarin as a 'pro-drop' language, he confines the occurrence of *pro* as a non-overt subject to tensed clauses exclusively. It will thus be ruled out for the tenseless verbal complement in BRC. As for the zero anaphor, a characteristic it reveals is practicable alternation with an overt NP under certain circumstances (cf. Li and Thompson 1981). Without going into the details of the alternation condition, the observation that the lower subject is always covert sufficiently signifies that its category is other than a zero anaphor. With the properties that the embedded verb is tenseless and its subject is never overt in BRC, it is not difficult to identify the null subject as PRO.

Seeing that the subject of the subordinate verb is often construed as the subject of *bǎ*, a subject control pattern obviously exists in BRC.¹⁹ Nonetheless, PRO can also be controlled by the object NP on certain occasions. The conditions giving rise to this kind of control pattern will be looked at closely in §3.3.

3.2.3 Object of the Embedded Verb

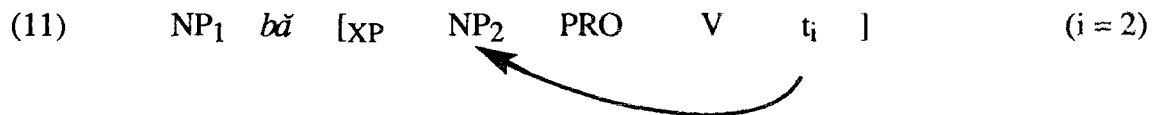
The other empty category needing examination is the null object of the embedded verb in the regular type of *bǎ* sentence. The true identity of this covert object is obscure. I will aim at an acceptable hypothesis rather than a final solution to the problem in the ensuing discussion.

Situated in the object position of the subordinate verb, the empty category is governed and theta-marked by the verb. Therefore, it cannot be PRO. Its inability to be overt is probably due to a lack of Case. It was submitted in §3.2.1 that the lower verb in

¹⁹ Though the terms subject control and object control are somewhat misleading. They are used here to contrast control of PRO by the subject of *bǎ* vis-à-vis by the object of *bǎ*.

the complement is tenseless. The tenseless form may affect Case assignment of the verb as seen in English past participle, which is unable to assign Case to its object position.²⁰ If Case plays an important role here, the hypothesis of an NP trace is quite appealing. A movement of the object NP to a position immediately behind *bǎ* can be motivated in view of its need for Case.

The movement hypothesis, however, is undesirable inasmuch as it abandons the unified subcategorization of *bǎ* in (2), and more seriously it is incompatible with the covert subject PRO.



As illustrated in (11), *bǎ* would subcategorize only a verbal complement under the movement hypothesis. Even with some SPEC position available as the landing site for the transposed object NP₂, conflict on identification of the node XP is insurmountable: PRO requires the node to be a CP so that it can be protected from being governed; on the other hand, for Exceptional Case Marking to take place, the node must be a TP (or an IP in a different terminology) so that Case can be assigned without crossing any barriers. With such difficulties, the possibility of the null object as an NP trace is ruled out.

The remaining possibilities for the covert embedded object in BRC include *pro*, variable and zero anaphor. Insofar that understanding of the Mandarin zero anaphor is deficient and the precise category to which it belongs in GB is uncertain, it will not be deliberated here. As for the variable hypothesis, feasible as it may be in (12), an additional null operator is called for. Thus, given that no evidence is available for supporting the variable hypothesis nor rejecting the *pro* hypothesis, I will advocate the null object of the

²⁰ In what precise manner the tenseless form of a verb bears on Case assignment in Mandarin will need to be explored more in the future.

embedded verb in BRC to be *pro*.²¹

(12) NP₁ *bǎ* NP₂ [CP O_i [TP PRO V t_i]] (i = 2)

An advantage of the *pro* hypothesis resides in the straightforward accountability for the *bǎ* sentences in (13)b. Parallel to that in Italian (cf. Rizzi 1986), *pro* is licensed by the embedded verb as its governor, and its content is recovered by means of theta-role matching. In (13)a *pro* functions as the direct object of the embedded verb *gěi* 'give', and thus receives the theta role of PATIENT, which allows it to coindex with the NP *shū* 'book' by virtue of its common theta role. The sentence is grammatical with the successful recovery of *pro*. On the other hand, *pro* in (13)b serves as the indirect object of *gěi* 'give'. Instead of being theta-marked as PATIENT, it has the theta role of GOAL. Thus, it is impossible to legitimately coindex *pro* with *wǒ* 'I', which is theta-marked as PATIENT by the matrix verb *bǎ*. (13)b becomes ungrammatical as a result of the failure to recover the content of *pro*.

(13)a gēge bǎ yī běn shū PRO gěi le wǒ *pro*.
 brother RV one CL book give PF I
 'My older brother has given a book to me.'

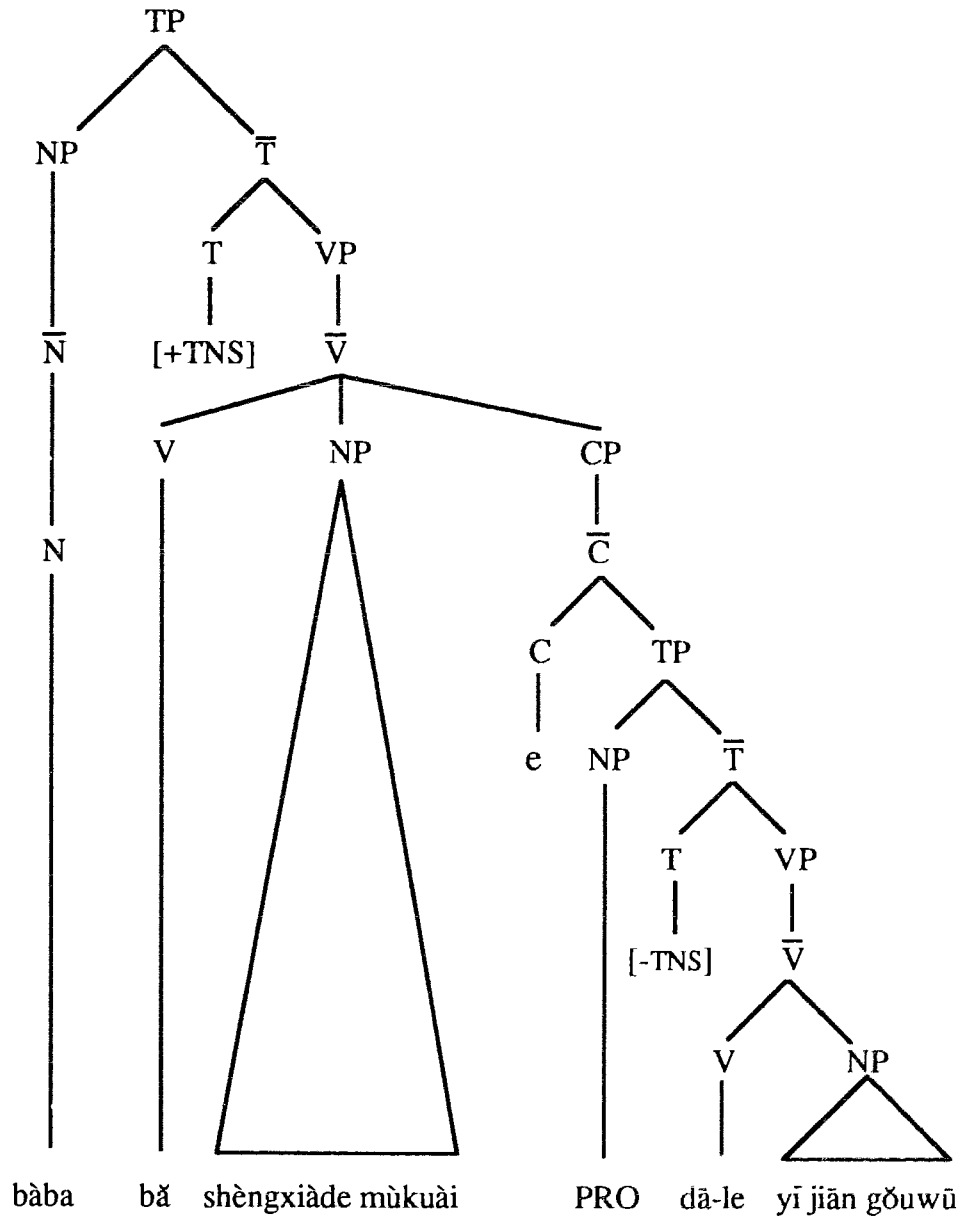
b *gēge bǎ wǒ PRO gěi le *pro* yī běn shū.
 brother RV I give PF one CL book

3.3 Control and Coreference

After investigation of the covert arguments of the embedded verb, a syntactic structure of BRC emerges as rendered in Figure 3-1.

²¹ Although *pro* receives Case while occurring at the subject position, Case is not essential to *pro* as to an overt NP. I will posit that no Case is assigned to *pro* in the embedded clause of BRC.

Figure 3-1 Syntactic structure of the Bǎ Resultative Construction



Before the final issue of control and coreference in BRC is pursued, the structural meaning of the construction must be underscored again. As pointed out in Chapter 2, a crucial condition on BRC is a semantic relationship between the object of *bǎ* and the verbal complement. From a syntactic perspective, the link between the matrix object and the complement can be described in terms of coreference: The object of *bǎ* must be

appropriately coindexed with a constituent in the verbal complement. Although the embedded object is the ideal constituent for establishing the link, the linkage condition occupies such a momentous position in BRC that it must be satisfied at all costs. Thus in the event that a subordinate verb is intransitive, the ordinary subject control pattern of PRO concedes to the essential linkage condition by changing to object control.

Ambiguity generally does not result despite the existence of two empty categories as the coreference is accomplished in a hierarchical fashion. Table 3-1 illustrates that at the top level of the hierarchy sits the object of the subordinate verb. The conditions for successful coindexing at this level require that an overt embedded object holds some kind of semantic relation with the matrix object, e.g. part and whole, possessor and possessee, material and product, etc., and that a covert embedded object *pro* shares a theta role in common with the matrix object. Together with subject control of PRO, control and coreference at Level I renders the ordinary interpretation of BRC.

Table 3-1 *Coreference hierarchy in BRC and its correlation with control*

Level	Coreference to Matrix Object	Control of PRO
I	Object NP of the embedded verb	Subject Control
	∨	
II	Subject NP in nested DRC	Either
	∨	
III	PRO	Object Control

PRO is considered merely in the case that no other options are available, since exploitation of PRO will unavoidably lead to a shift of control pattern. If the verbal complement appears in the form of DRC, the nested subject NP, overt or non-overt, has a

higher priority over PRO.²² A *bǎ* sentence may become ambiguous when coindexing of the matrix object is accomplished at this level. This is because PRO can be controlled either by the matrix subject or the matrix object at Level II. When both control patterns yield an acceptable interpretation, the sentence becomes ambiguous as shown below:

- (14) [TP mèimeij [VP bǎ māmaj [CP PRO_k [VP kū de [CP ø_i hěn shāngxīn]]]]].
 sister RV mother cry ET very sad
 a. 'Sister cried so much that Mother was very sad.' (i = k, j = l)
 b. 'Sister has got Mother to cry very sadly.' (j = k, j = l)

(14) is ambiguous because the preferred empty category *pro* for coreference to the matrix object *māma* 'mother' is unavailable. Consequently, the coreference process moves on to Level II. The verbal complement VP has the form of DRC with a zero anaphor as subject of its subordinate verb. When the matrix object is coreferential with the zero anaphor i.e. j = l, the linkage condition of BRC is satisfied. Coindexing of the matrix object at Level II, however, opens the question of the control of PRO. Since both kinds of control patterns are feasible, ambiguity arises in the sentence: Subject control of PRO yields the meaning in (14)a, while object control of PRO renders the other in (14)b.

3.4 A Complete Syntactic Analysis

With comprehension of the process of control and coreference, the scrutiny of the syntactic structure of BRC has reached its end. The following furnishes a complete analysis of the variegated types of BRC, in bracketing notation.

Starting from the example illustrated in Figure 3-1, repeated in (15), *bǎ* in this sentence conforms to the subject control pattern of PRO (i = k) because a link between the

²² The term 'nested subject' refers to a subject that is further embedded in a subordinate clause within another one: [(matrix) subject [embedded subject [nested subject]]]

matrix object and the embedded object is semantically realized, $j \leftrightarrow 1$ -- *mùkuài* 'wood' can be related to *gǒuwū* 'doghouse' as material and product. The analysis in (15) represents the syntactic structure of the object-retained type.

- (15) [TP bàba_i [VP bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài_j [CP PRO_k [VP dā le yī jiān gǒuwū_l]]]].
 father RV leftover wood build PF one CL doghouse
 'Father has turned the leftover wood into a doghouse.' (i = k, j ↔ l)

In (16) the embedded verb *shāo* 'burn' has its object in the form of *pro*. After the matrix object and *pro* are coindexed with each other through theta role matching, i.e. $j = 1$, the matrix subject assumes control of PRO, and thus $i = k$.

- (16) [TP bàba_i [VP bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài_j [CP PRO_k [VP shāo le pro_l]]]].
 father RV leftover wood burn PF
 'Father has burned the leftover wood.' (i = k, j = l)

Bǎ sentences with an optional passive marker can be analyzed in precisely the same manner. Although the embedded verb *gézhi* 'dismiss' in (17) cannot assign Case to its object, it can assign a theta role of PATIENT to it. Thanks to the common theta role, *pro* can be coindexed with the matrix object to establish a link, hence $j = 1$. Subsequently, subject control of PRO is realized with $i = k$. This is the typical situation of control and coreference for the regular type of BRC.

- (17) [TP zhǔxí_i [VP bǎ cáiwùyuan_j [CP PRO_k [VP gěi gézhí le pro_l]]]].
 chair RV treasurer PS dismiss PF
 'The chair has dismissed the treasurer.' (i = k, j = l)

Unlike the other types of BRC, the causative type requires PRO to have object control; or more accurately, the causative meaning in BRC is engendered with object control of PRO. As seen in (18), PRO is the single constituent through which the matrix object *wǒmen* 'we' can be connected to the verbal complement. The grammaticality of the sentence is achievable only when PRO is controlled by the object *wǒmen* 'we'.

- (18) [TP n_i [VP bǎ wǒmen_j [CP PRO_k [VP jí de bùdéliǎo]]]].
 you RV we distressing ET excessively
 'You have excessively distressed us.' (j = k)

When a resultative verb compound serves as the subordinate verb in BRC, as exemplified in (19), it is uncertain whether the *bǎ* sentence should be analyzed as having *pro* in the verbal complement.

- (19) dìdi bǎ wǒ dānxīnsǐ le.
 brother RV I worry-dead PF
 'My younger brother has worried me to death.'

The examples in (20) show that the EXPERIENCER of a resultative verb compound can occur in two possible positions. Rendering a causative reading for the *bǎ* sentence in different manners, both the analyses in (21) are acceptable to the proposed structure of BRC.

- (20)a dìdi dānxīnsǐ wǒ le.
 brother worry-dead I PT
 'My younger brother worried me to death.'

- b wǒ dānxīnsǐ le.
 I worry-dead PT
 'I am worried to death.'

- (21)a [TP dìdi_i [VP bǎ wǒ_j [CP PRO_k [VP dānxīnsǐ *pro* le]]]]. (i = k, j = 1)
 b [TP dìdi_i [VP bǎ wǒ_j [CP PRO_k [VP dānxīnsǐ le]]]]. (j = k)
 brother RV I worry-dead PF
 'My younger brother worried me to death.'

Taking the hypothesis in (21)a, the resultative verb compound *dānxīnsǐ* 'worry-dead' will need to assign a theta role of CAUSER to PRO and a theta role of EXPERIENCER to *pro*, parallel to that in (20)a. After the object of *bǎ*, *wǒ* 'I', is coindexed with *pro* and the subject *dìdi* 'brother' with PRO (i.e. j = 1, i = k), the sentence is interpreted with a causative

meaning. On the other hand, the theta role assignment of the resultative verb compound under the hypothesis of (21)b is identical to that of (20)b: Only a leftward assignment of EXPERIENCER takes place. Like the other *bǎ* sentences of the causative type, the object of *bǎ*, *wǒ* 'I', must be coindexed with PRO (i.e. $j = k$) so as to construct a link between the object and the verbal complement. As a result, the sentence gains a causative meaning. For reasons of economy and simplicity, I will adopt the latter hypothesis, in support of a uniform analysis of all the *bǎ* sentences in the causative type of BRC.

3.5 Summary

A meticulous investigation of the syntactic structure of BRC has been accomplished in this chapter. The findings of the properties of the matrix verb *bǎ* and its subordinate verb are summarized in eight points below:

- a. *Bǎ* subcategorizes three arguments -- two NPs and one verbal complement denoting a resultative meaning.
- b. Semantic role assignment of *bǎ* is: [INSTIGATOR/CAUSER] to the subject, [PATIENT/EXPERIENCER] to the object, and [EFFECT] to the verbal complement.
- c. Unlike *bǎ*, the embedded verb is tenseless.
- d. The null subject of the embedded verb is PRO, which is under subject control in general.
- e. If the embedded verb is transitive, its object can be an overt NP or *pro*.
- f. *pro* is licensed by the embedded verb and its content is recovered through theta role matching.
- g. The embedded object, overt or covert, is the preferred candidate for coreference to the matrix object.
- h. PRO is located at the bottom level of the coreference hierarchy. Once it is coindexed with the matrix object, the *bǎ* sentence gains a causative meaning.

Chapter IV

Pragmatic Features of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction

This chapter concentrates on the pragmatic aspects of BRC. The definiteness of the object NP in *bǎ* sentences has been noted in various works, e.g. Chao (1968), Hashimoto (1971), Y. Li (1974), Li and Thompson (1981), and so forth. Tsao (1987) is the first attempt to explain the observed feature of the object NP by means of a pragmatic approach. Based on the definiteness characteristic, Tsao treats the object of *bǎ* as a special kind of topic, but is unable to specify its precise nature. The special kind of topic will be identified as an embedded topic in this chapter. Further, another discourse function of BRC is demonstrated to be the contrastive use of *bǎ* sentences. Finally the condition for felicitous use of BRC is argued to be referentiality instead of definiteness.

4.1 Embedded Topic in the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction

The definiteness of the object NP in *bǎ* sentences has been pointed out since early studies of the *bǎ* problem.²³ With a pragmatic viewpoint on the diagnostic test for the resultative meaning in (1), a definite reading of NP₂ is predictable. By answering the question in (2), not only does the sentence in (3) reveal its resultative meaning, but also signifies that the noun phrases *bàba* 'father' and *shèngxiàde mùkuài* 'leftover wood' are topics of the sentence. It is obvious that the underlined constituent in (3) contains new information as a response to (2). Hence it is the comment of the sentence. Given that the testing device in (1) is exactly concerned with the resultative state in BRC, the majority of

²³ According to Hashimoto (1971), the phenomenon is first described as 'determinate accusative' by Mullie in 1932.

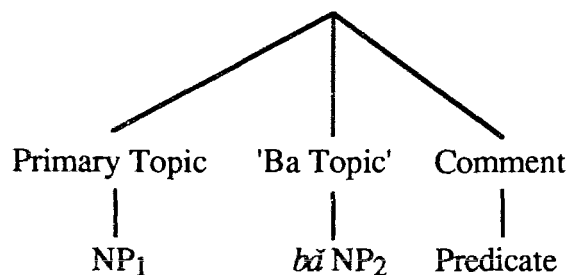
bǎ sentences can be analyzed as a kind of topic-comment structure in proper contexts.

- (1) (NP₁) *bǎ* NP₂ *zěnyàng* *le*?
 RV how PF
 'What has happened to NP₂ (because of NP₁)?'
- (2) *bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài zěnyàng le*?
 father RV leftover wood how PF
 'What has happened to the leftover wood because of Father?'
- (3) *bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài shāo le.*
 father RV leftover wood burn PF
 'Father has burned the leftover wood.'

4.1.1 Embedded Topic-comment Structure of BRC

Tsao (1987) advances to regard *bǎ* as a topic marker in a topic-comment structure as in Figure 4-1. Nevertheless, the treatment is problematic, since NP₂ cannot always be construed as a topic. Examples like (4) and (5) indicate that some *bǎ* sentences do not have a definite object NP, and hence the object cannot be a topic. Likewise, it is infeasible to interpret the subject of a *bǎ* sentence such as (6) to be a topic due to its lack of definiteness. Therefore, it must be kept in mind that while the topic-comment structure is common in BRC, it is by no means present in every single *bǎ* sentence.

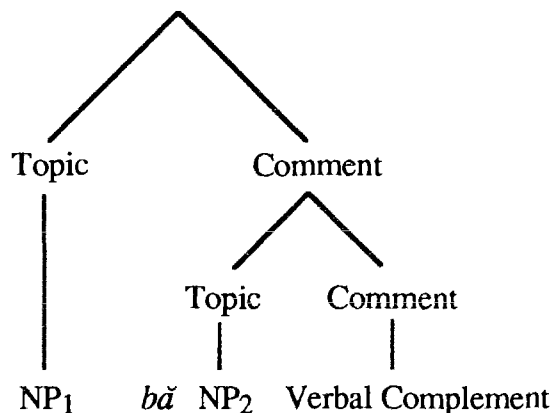
Figure 4-1 *Tsao's topic-comment structure of BRC*



- (4) zuótiān tā bǎ yī zhī bǐ fàng zài nǐde zhuōzi shàng.
 yesterday s/he RV one CL pen put at your table LP
 nǐ yǒu kànjiàn ma?
 you AP see IT
 'Yesterday s/he put a pen on your desk. Did you see it?'
- (5) [After hearing a crash from the kitchen.]
 nǐ yòu bǎ shénme dōngxi dǎpò le?
 you again RV what thing hit-broken PF
 'What have you broken again?'
- (6) [Submitting a purse to a policeman.]
 yǒu rén bǎ qiánbāo diū le.
 have person RV wallet lose PF
 'Someone has lost his wallet.'

The present study will replace Tsao's topic-comment structure with the embedded topic structure in Figure 4-2. Consequently, an embedded topic emerges in place of the so-called '*Bǎ* Topic'. The proposed embedded topic structure consists of two levels of topic-comment relationships, with the embedded topic being part of the matrix comment. The complex topic structure is not observed when either of the topics cannot be successfully established. For instance, NP₁ in (7) is not definite. Neither is NP₂ in (8). Neither of these *bǎ* sentences can be regarded as having an embedded topic-comment structure because

Figure 4-2 *The embedded topic-comment structure of BRC*



the former lacks a matrix topic and the latter an embedded topic.

- (7) *yī ge nánrén bǎ háizi bàozǒu le.*
one CL man RV child carry away PF
'A man has carried the child away.'

- (8) *zhèi xiǎomāo, wǒ gāng bǎ yī tiáo yú gěi le tā.*
this kitten I just RV one CL fish give PF it
xiànzài yòu yào chī le.
now again want eat PT
'This kitten, I have just given it a fish. Now it wants some food again.'

The short dialog in (9) constructs a context in which the embedded topic structure of a *bǎ* sentence can be clearly illustrated. The scenario runs like this: A little girl who had been promised a wooden horse ran to her grandfather to make a complaint about her father. Crying, she murmured only the utterance in (9)a. The question made by the grandfather in (9)b signifies *bàba* 'father' to be a topic. The child's incomplete reply in (9)c, on the other hand, suggests that *bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài (shāo le)* 'RV leftover wood (burn)' is the comment to the topic at this (matrix) level. The further question that the grandfather asked in (9)d introduces another topic -- the embedded topic *mùkuài* 'wood'. With the complete *bǎ* sentence answered in (9)e, it is apparent that within the matrix comment *bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài shāo le* 'RV leftover wood burn' exist an embedded topic *shèngxiàde mùkuài* 'leftover wood' and an embedded comment *shāo le* 'burn'.

- (9)
- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a | Yéye, yéye! Bàba ... bàba ... | Grandpa, Grandpa! Daddy ... Daddy ... |
| b | Bàba zěnyàng le? | What about Daddy? |
| c | Bàba, bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài ... | Daddy, Daddy, the leftover wood ... |
| d | Bàba bǎ mùkuài zěnyàng le? | What has Daddy done to the wood? |
| e | Bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài shāo le! | Daddy has them burnt! |

The information encoded in the three arguments of *bǎ*, the two NPs and the verbal complement, do not share equal weight in terms of salience. With emphasis on the resultative state, BRC frequently highlights the verbal complement as the focal part of a *bǎ* sentence. This is adequately captured in the proposed embedded topic structure. If binary value of 0 and 1 are assigned to the nodes Topic and Comment respectively, the disparity among the three constituents becomes apparent, as shown in (10).

- (10)
- NP₁ (Subject of *bǎ*), dominated by Topic alone: 0
 - NP₂ (Object of *bǎ*), dominated by Topic and Comment: 0 + 1 = 1
 - Verbal Complement, dominated by Comment and Comment: 1 + 1 = 2

The different statuses of the three constituents are also discernable in anaphoric ellipsis. NP₁ represents old information, which has been introduced and discussed in the discourse, and therefore it can be understood even if it is left out as in (11). NP₂, on the other hand, contains a lesser degree of retrievable information. Its omission in (12)b is viable thanks to sufficient supporting information provided in (12)a (cf. Chao 1968: 330-331 for more examples). It should be noted that the three constituents of the *bǎ* sentence -- *tā* 's/he', *mùkuài* 'wood', and *shāo* 'burn' -- have all been introduced in (12)a. In the process of omission, NP₁ *tā* 's/he' remains intact because of its role as the shift of focus from the subject *bàba* 'father' in (12)a. Representing new information in BRC, the verbal complement never undergoes ellipsis. Its absence in (12)c results in ungrammaticality.

- (11) *bàba shuō mùkuài hěn guì, e què yòu bǎ mùkuài shāo le.*
 father say wood very costly but again RV wood burn PF
 'Father said wood was expensive, but then he burned it.'
- (12)a *bàba gàosu tā mùkuài hěn guì, bù yào shāo diào.*
 father tell s/he wood very costly NG AV burn AP
 'Father told him not to burn the wood as wood was expensive.'

- b tā què bǎ e shāo le.
s/he but RV burn PF
'S/He burned it anyway.'
- c *tā què bǎ mùkuài e.
s/he but RV wood

4.1.2 Conversion from Embedded Topic to Ordinary Topic

Given the embedded topic structure, a *bǎ* sentence in general can be converted to a regular topic-comment sentence easily. The generalization can be stated as follows: The embedded topic of a *bǎ* sentence can be promoted to become an ordinary topic in a regular topic-comment structure. For example:

- (13)a bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài (gěi) shāo le.
father RV leftover wood PS burn PF
'Father has burned the leftover wood.'
- b shèngxiàde mùkuài bàba (gěi) shāo le.
leftover wood father PS burn PF
'The leftover wood, Father burned it.'
- (14)a bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài dǎ le yī jiān gǒuwū.
father RV leftover wood build PF one CL doghouse
'Father has turned the leftover wood into a doghouse.'
- b shèngxiàde mùkuài bàba dǎ le yī jiān gǒuwū.
leftover wood father build PF one CL doghouse
'The leftover wood, Father turned it into a doghouse.'

After the permutation, however, the embedded topic structures in (13)a and (14)a vanish with the original *bǎ* sentences. The new sentences in (13)b and (14)b no longer accommodate the complex topic structure.

4.2 Contrast Function of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction

Contrast is another discourse function of BRC. In contexts such as those from (15) to (18) the pragmatic function of *bǎ* sentences is to be analyzed as contrast rather than the complex topic-comment structure.

(15) A: wǒ shuō chuānghu yào guān zhe, shì shéi bǎ tā dǎkāi de?
I say window AV close AP be who RV it open PT
'I said the window had to be closed. Who opened it?'

B: shì CHEN HUA bǎ tā dǎkāi de.
be RV it open PT
'It was Chen Hua who opened it.'

(16)a Héyī bǎ PINGGUO chī le. Wángwǔ bǎ JUZI chī le.
RV apple eat PF RV orange eat PF

b xiànzài shénme shuǐguǒ dōu méi yǒu la.
now what fruit all NG have PT
'Heyi has eaten the apple(s). Wangwu has eaten the orange(s). Now no fruit is left.'

(17)a Zhāngsān yào bǎ mén GUAN zhe. Lìsì yào bǎ mén KAI zhe.
want RV door close AP want RV door open AP

b liǎng ge rén jiù dǎ qǐ-lái le.
two CL person then hit AP PT
'Zhangsan wanted the door closed. Lisi wanted the door open. Then they started to fight.'

(18) A: wǒmén gāi bǎ érzi sòng dào nǎr qù cái hǎo ne?
we should RV son send LP where go then good IT
'Where will it be good to send our sons to?'

B: nǐ bǎ érzi sòng dào JIANGNADA qù. wǒ bǎ érzi sòng dào MEIGUO qù.
you RV son send LP Canada go I RV son send LP U.S.A. go
'You sent your son to Canada. I sent my son to U.S.A.'

All the examples from (15) to (18) express some kinds of contrast. The constituents in primary contrast are given in capital letters.²⁴ It is obvious that the contrasted entities in the sentences vary from one another: It is the subject of *bǎ* in (15); the object of *bǎ* in (16); the embedded verb in (17); and the locative expression in (18).²⁵ (15) is likely to take place in a classroom context when a teacher questions which of his/her students is responsible for the 'misconduct'. The response is encoded in a *bǎ* sentence with the subject *Chen Hua* in contrast to other students in the class. The implicit contrast stresses that Chen Hua alone, and not other students, should be held responsible for the incident.

The contrast function is explicitly shown with a pair of *bǎ* sentences side by side in the other examples. In (16)a the constituent in contrast may also serve as a topic, as (16)b suggests that fruit is the discourse topic. Even though it is possible to have a contrasted topic, the embedded topic structure appears to be out of favor. The exact role of a contrasted topic in *bǎ* sentences like (16)a is beyond the present discussion, but it is apparent that the basic discourse function involved here is contrast. (17) proffers another instance of *bǎ* sentences used for contrast purposes. The *bǎ* sentences in (17)a serve to explain the cause of a fight to an inquirer. It makes little sense to regard the object of the discord *mén* 'door' as a topic in the discourse. Thus an embedded topic does not feature in (17)a.

When the suggestion made by B in (18) is considered under a larger discourse framework of discussion on sending sons abroad, the *bǎ* sentences may be construed with the full embedded topic structure. The interpretation is feasible since the two countries in contrast are situated in the verbal complement. In this case, the contrastive use of *bǎ*

²⁴ Only the primary contrasted element is concerned here. Primary contrast can be identified with the phonological clues such as stress and intonation.

²⁵ The kinds of contrast in the examples are not meant to be exhaustive.

sentences is compatible with the embedded topic structure. Nonetheless, the major function of the *bǎ* sentences in (18) should be identified as contrast.

It is worth mentioning Xing's (1993) quantitative study on the discourse function of contrast and list. The function is defined as follows:

The contrasted or listed NPs refer to entities which are elements of a **set** and the verbs in such a contrasted or listed pair must have either essentially the **opposite** meaning or essentially the **same** meaning.

Table 4-1 renders the statistical results of the functions contrast/list (C&L) versus non-contrast/list in four constructions in Mandarin texts.²⁶ Xing's study supports the contention that contrast is a secondary discourse function of BRC. It can be concluded that the primary pragmatic function of BRC is realized with the embedded topic structure. The function, however, can change to that of contrast depending on adequate pragmatic factors.

Table 4-1 *Discourse functions of four constructions in Mandarin*

Texts	Category	A V P [†]	<i>Bǎ</i>	<i>Bèi</i>	P V
Ming and Ching	C&L	19 (19%)	21 (14%)	24 (30%)	75 (50%)
	non-C&L	81 (81%)	126 (86%)	56 (70%)	75 (50%)
	Total	100	147	80	150
Modern	C&L	23 (23%)	18 (12%)	24 (21%)	49 (49%)
	non-C&L	77 (77%)	132 (88%)	88 (79%)	51 (51%)
	Total	100	150	112	100

[†] A = Agent; V = Verb; P = Patient.

²⁶ The original table contains results of Tang and Song texts, as well.

4.3 A Pragmatic Condition on the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction

After demonstrating the discourse functions of BRC, the remainder of the chapter will focus on a pragmatic condition on the construction. In order to propound a legitimate condition for felicitous use of BRC, it is necessary to understand the definiteness of the object NP of *bǎ*. This issue will be investigated following a cognitive-status approach, which will eventually render the pragmatic condition on BRC to be referentiality, instead of definiteness.

4.3.1 Definiteness of Object NP of *Bǎ*

Hashimoto (1971) adopts an abstract category of Det_d (read as definite Determiner) in Mandarin to account for the definite reading of the object NP in *bǎ* sentences. Although this hypothesis is creative, it is scarcely utilizable. The posited Det_d is unable to predict the definiteness of an NP without the NP in question first being identified as definite. Another possibility is to interpret syntactic movement as a kind of topicalization (e.g. Givón 1990). On the grounds that the movement hypothesis is inapplicable to the construction as a whole, the syntactic analysis of BRC in Chapter 3 has repudiated the superficial movement of the object NP proposed in certain studies of *bǎ* sentences (e.g. Thompson 1973).

While explication of the definiteness feature in syntactic terms is practicable, it may not be as instructive as a pragmatic approach. As a central characteristic of topicality, definiteness can be easily understood in association with topic. The topic-comment approach advocated by Tsao (1987) is appealing, since many *bǎ* sentences represent an embedded topic structure. Nevertheless, Tsao's proposal of treating *bǎ* as a topic marker is problematic and inadequate. (Cf. §4.1.1) Proposed here is an alternative pragmatic approach involving the cognitive status of expressions. Gundel, Hedberg, and Zacharski (1993) have devised a hierarchy for cognitive status of referring expressions in natural language discourse. A sketch of the Givenness Hierarchy is provided in (19), and an

abridged description of the six statuses is presented in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2 *A succinct description of statuses on Givenness Hierarchy*

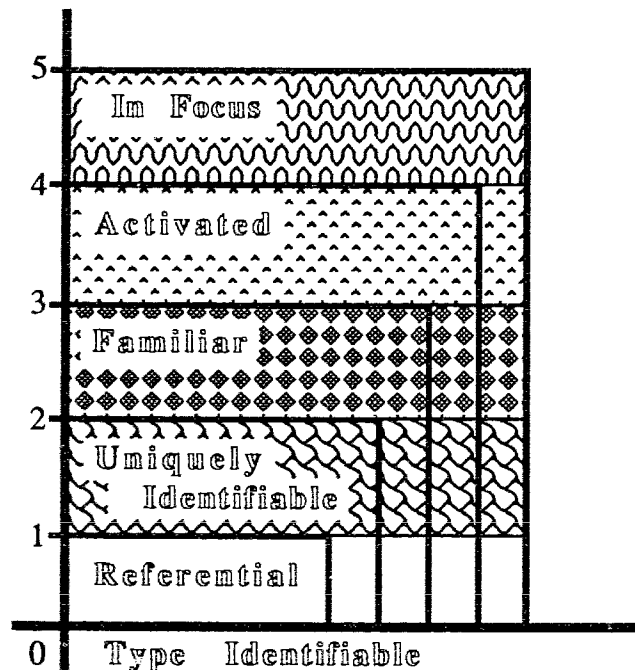
Status	Speaker's Assumption about Addressee's Knowledge
Type Identifiable	Accessible to a representation of the class of objects described by the expression.
Referential	Accessible to an appropriate type-representation, plus ability either to retrieve an existing representation of the referent or to construct a new one with additional information from the current and subsequent sentence(s).
Uniquely Identifiable	Able to identify the referent based on the nominal itself. Identifiability may be based on an already existing representation in the addressee's memory, or may be derived from sufficient descriptive content in the nominal. The status is a necessary condition for all definite reference.
Familiar	Able to uniquely identify the referent on the sole basis of memory, either long-term or short-term memory.
Activated	Able to uniquely identify the referent based on the current state of memory, which may result from the immediate linguistic or extralinguistic context, or may be evoked from long-term memory.
In Focus	Able to interpret the referent as the current center of attention, being the most activated entity.

(19)

In Focus > Activated > Familiar > Uniquely Identifiable > Referential > Type Identifiable

In lieu of the dichotomy of definiteness versus indefiniteness, the Givenness Hierarchy interprets the crucial pragmatic concept relative to a scale of cognitive statuses, varying along a dimension of degree of 'givenness'. The status 'Uniquely Identifiable' is primary in that it is considered as an essential condition for all definite reference. As portrayed in Figure 4-3, all the statuses are represented with rectangles in various sizes, except for 'Type Identifiable'. Notice that the higher a status occupies on the Hierarchy, the more features it possesses. If it is supposed that the 'scale' pattern between 1 and 2 indicates the feature of definiteness, all the statuses beyond 1 will share this feature. In other words, when an expression has a necessary cognitive status higher than or equal to 'Uniquely Identifiable', it ensues that the expression is definite in reference.

Figure 4-3 *The Givenness Hierarchy*



The definite reading of the object NP in the following *bǎ* sentences is completely explicable in terms of cognitive statuses on the Givenness Hierarchy.

- (20) shì Chen Hua bǎ *tā* dǎkāi de.
 be RV it open PT
 'It was Chen Hua who opened it.'
- (21) [After hearing a crash from the kitchen.]
 nǐ yòu bǎ *shénme dōngxi* dǎpò le?
 you again RV what thing hit-broken PF
 'Now what have you broken?'
- (22) yī ge nánrén bǎ *háizi* bàozǒu le.
 one CL man RV child carry away PF
 'A man has carried the child away.'
- (23) bàba bǎ *shèngxiàde mùkuài* shāo le.
 father RV leftover wood burn PF
 'Father has burned the leftover wood.'

The object NPs in the *bǎ* sentences from (20) to (23) each have their own cognitive status.

Given that appropriate interpretation of a third person pronoun depends on the referent being the center of attention in a discourse, the status of the object of *bǎ* in (20) can be inferred as 'In Focus' from the use of the third person singular pronominal *tā* 'it'.

Extralinguistic clues from the crash in (21) tremendously help to establish the status of

'Activated' for the object NP *shénme dōngxi* 'what thing'. With the addressee's ability to construct a representation of the referent from his/her memory, *háizi* 'child' in (22) at least

has the status of 'Familiar'. The status of *shèngxiàde mùkuài* 'leftover wood' in (23) is

most likely to belong to that of 'Uniquely Identifiable', since the referent can be

appropriately understood with the modification of *shèngxiàde* 'leftover'. All the statuses of

the object NPs in the examples are equal to or higher than 'Uniquely Identifiable', the

threshold for definiteness. Therefore, all of them are construed as definite in reference.

4.3.2 Referentiality as a Pragmatic Condition on BRC

Unlike the majority of *bǎ* sentences, the object NPs in (24) and (25) do not suggest any definite reading. Tsao (1987: 8) points out that 'the *bǎ* NP can be specific in the sense that its referent is identifiable by the speaker but not by the hearer'. This kind of discourse condition is associated with the cognitive status of 'Referential' on the Givenness Hierarchy. Indeed the statuses of the object NPs, *yī tiáo yú* 'a fish' in (24) and *yī zhī bǐ* 'a pen' in (25), belong to 'Referential'. Like other referential expressions, the NPs require pragmatic support from subsequent sentences to provide more information about the referent. Without those consecutive utterances, both *bǎ* sentences sound incomplete and their felicity greatly decreases.

- (24) zhèi xiǎomāo, wǒ gāng bǎ yī tiáo yú gěi le tā.
this kitten I just RV one CL fish give PF it
xiànzài yòu yào chī le.
now again want eat PT
'This kitten, I have just given it a fish. Now it wants some food again.'

- (25) zuótiān tā bǎ yī zhī bǐ fàng zài nǐde zhuōzi shàng.
yesterday s/he RV one CL pen put at your table LP
nǐ yǒu kànjiàn ma?
you AP see IT
'Yesterday s/he put a pen on your desk. Did you see it?'

With the Givenness Hierarchy, a refined condition can be submitted between definiteness and indefiniteness. The pragmatic condition on BRC demands that the object of *bǎ* cannot be an indefinite NP, or one with a cognitive status of only 'Type Identifiable'. Hence (26) is infelicitous. Nonetheless, the condition does not entail that the object of *bǎ* must be definite. Instead, an adequate pragmatic condition on BRC should stipulate that the object of *bǎ* must possess a cognitive status of 'Referential' or higher on the Givenness Hierarchy. Given the referentiality condition, the infelicity of the *bǎ* sentence in (26) is

predictable from the cognitive status of the object as only 'Type Identifiable'. More significantly, the condition also properly accounts for felicity of the same sentence in (27), which has upgraded the cognitive status of the object to 'Referential' in the discourse context. In other words, the felicity of BRC is predictable from the cognitive status of the object of *bǎ*. When the status is 'Referential' or higher on the Givenness Hierarchy, the pragmatic condition on BRC is satisfied.

(26) #Xiǎo Liú bǎ yī tǎi diànshìjī mǎi huí-lái.
 RV one CL television buy back
 'Xiao Liu bought a TV (and brought it) home.'

(27) Xiǎo Liú bǎ yī tǎi diànshìjī mǎi huí-lái.
 RV one CL television buy back
 kàn le liǎng ge xiǎoshí jiù huài le.
 watch PF two CL hour then bad PF
 'Xiao Liu bought a TV (and brought it) home. It broke down after watching for two hours.'

4.4 Summary

This chapter has illustrated two discourse functions of BRC. The primary one involves an embedded topic structure consisting of a topic-comment structure in both the matrix and the embedded clauses. With appropriate pragmatic factors, contrast arises as the secondary discourse function. Whether the two functions can be co-existent in a *bǎ* sentence is determined by the particular discourse context. In general, the embedded topic structure is scarcely discernible in a *bǎ* sentence used for contrast.

In a cognitive-status approach to the explication of definiteness in BRC, new light has been shed on the pragmatic condition for felicitous use of BRC. Based on the cognitive status of the object NP of *bǎ*, the proposed condition stipulates that the object of *bǎ* requires a cognitive status not lower than 'Referential' on the Givenness Hierarchy.

Chapter V

A Lexical Study of *Bǎ*: Its Meaning and Category

The categorial membership of *bǎ* has remained controversial despite a protracted debate on the issue. Abortive attempts of many prior studies to resolve this issue are due to overlooking the meaning of *bǎ*. Following the scrutiny of the resultative construction in the preceding chapters, the crux of the *bǎ* problem will be carefully examined here. The investigation will ultimately trace back the resultative meaning of the construction to the lexical level and argue that *bǎ* has developed an abstract meaning of 'bringing about a resultative state'. Its semantic content is not empty. Further, difficulty in identifying the verbhood of *bǎ* will be explained in light of its characteristics in the construction. The chapter concludes that it is legitimate to recognize *bǎ* as a full verb in BRC at the present stage of its historical development.

5.1 Semantics of *Bǎ*

Fallacies about the meaning of *bǎ* have obscured the authentic categorial membership of the lexeme. This section will refute three prevailing but misguided claims about the meaning of *bǎ*. With an adequate understanding of its meaning, the category of *bǎ* becomes clear: *Bǎ* is still a verb in BRC although it has developed an abstract meaning.

5.1.1 *Bǎ* in Simplex Sentences: Original meaning of the verb

The origin of *bǎ* as a verb is indisputable. Its central meaning of 'to hold (with hands)' has continued to the modern language. Li and Thompson's (1974a, 1974b, 1981, and elsewhere) claim that *bǎ* no longer functions as a verb in modern Mandarin is factually

wrong. Under the entry of *bǎ* in the Chinese and Chinese-English dictionaries I consulted, it is clearly listed that *bǎ* means 'to hold'. The examples in (1) are taken from *A Chinese-English Dictionary* (1980: 10-11):

- (1)a *bǎ* *zhù lángān*
 hold AP railing
 'hold on to a railing'
- b *bǎ* *zhe shǒu jiào*
 hold AP hand teach
 'take somebody by the hand and teach him/her how to do something'

The original meaning of *bǎ* is vital in understanding the later development of the resultative meaning of the verb. Its use outside BRC in modern Mandarin provides strong evidence against the claim that *bǎ* has completely grammaticalized from a verb meaning 'to hold' to a semantically empty preposition.

5.1.2 *Bǎ* in BRC: From 'holding' to resultative

From a diachronic perspective, it is not difficult to fathom that *bǎ* has semantically changed from 'holding an object' to 'bringing about a resultative state'. The change complies exactly with the general trend for concrete meanings to develop a more abstract sense in language evolution.²⁷ This kind of semantic development is not uncommon. Cross-linguistically, verbs with an original meaning of 'to have', 'to hold', or 'to carry' are frequently found in resultative constructions. The following Latin and Old High German examples are taken from Maslov's (1988: 73) discussion of the development of perfect from resultative.

²⁷ For example, Sweetser (1990) illustrates how a perception verb such as 'see' in English changes from the domain of visual perception to a more abstract domain of mental perception.

- (2) Navem para-t-am { habeo } (Latin)
 teneo }
 ship-acc.sg.f. prepare-pass.part.acc.sg.f. (I) have/hold
 'I have/hold a ship prepared.'
- (3) Wir { habê m } managiu guot gi-saz-tiu. (OH German)
 eigum }
 we have/hold a lot-acc.n. of wealth put-pass.part.acc.n.
 'We have accumulated a lot of wealth.'

A plausible semantic development of a verb from 'holding' to 'resultative' can be formulated as in (4):

- (4)a manipulating \Leftarrow to hold a concrete object
 b resultative \Leftarrow any object \Downarrow

The meaning of the verb first extends from holding exclusively tangible entities to a larger set of items, including intangible objects. From (4)a to (4)b is an illustration of this expansion. When the development of an abstract sense is further propelled in another dimension, the concrete domain of holding something gives rise to the abstract domain of manipulating in (4)a. To elucidate the hypothetical evolution using a cognitive approach, holding an object such as small balls in the hand and moving them around with fingers can be easily conceptualized as a kind of manipulation.²⁸ Parallel to this, holding of an abstract object comes to be conceptualized as bringing it to a resulting state. The resultative meaning of the verb is thus realized, as in (4)b.

Recognizing the resultative meaning of *bǎ* is significant. It renders a new picture of the historical change of the verb: Contrary to the conventional view of its evolution from a verb to a preposition, *bǎ* has maintained its verbal status while an abstract meaning has developed. The semantic content of *bǎ* is not vacuous.

²⁸ Croft (1990) groups the verb 'to hold' in English, along with its equivalents in French, Japanese, and Korean under 'manipulation' with his Idealized Cognitive Model.

5.1.3 Non-instrumental Use of *Bǎ* in BRC

Another fallacy concerning the meaning of *bǎ* in the construction is the so-called 'instrumental' use of *bǎ* as in (5):

- (5) tā bǎ qián mǎi le cǎipiào.
s/he RV money buy PF lottery ticket
'S/He has taken the money to buy lottery tickets.'
s/he took the money to buy lottery tickets ⇒ the money is gone
- (6) tā bǎ yǎnjīng dèng zhe wǒ.
s/he with eye stare AP I
'S/He stared at me with her/his eyes.'
- (7) wǒ { *bǎ } shǒu pāi le tā yī-xià.
I RV/use hand strike PF s/he once
'I gave her/him a strike with my hand.'

The fallacy is in part attributed to the ill-defined '*bǎ*-construction'. To avoid unnecessary confusion, it must be pointed out that the *bǎ* sentence in (5) belongs to BRC; whereas the one in (6) does not.²⁹ The argument here is not whether *bǎ* can express an instrumental sense in Mandarin. Rather, the point is that *bǎ* in BRC does not convey an instrumental meaning. This is clearly illustrated in (7): The deliberate use of *bǎ* results in the sentence being ungrammatical.³⁰ In contrast, *bǎ* in (6) bears no resultative meaning but an instrumental sense, as acceptable in some dialects of Mandarin.

Returning to (5), an instrumental interpretation of *bǎ* in the sentence is inadequate. As revealed by the underlying action in italics, the central meaning of the sentence lies in

²⁹ The *bǎ* sentences can be easily distinguished from each other with the test 'NP₁ *bǎ* NP₂ zěnyàng le?' I will leave this as an exercise for the reader. (hint: cf. §2.2 of Chapter 2)

³⁰ In a survey conducted at Southern Illinois University (Ding 1992), the *bǎ* sentence in (7) was judged to be ungrammatical, with a low score of 1.10 on a 4-point scale.

how the money has been managed rather than with what the lottery tickets are bought. Should the sentence really concern an instrumental meaning, it could employ an instrumental verb directly, as rendered in (8):

- (8) tā yòng qián mǎi le cǎipiào.
s/he use money buy PF lottery ticket
'S/He used the money to buy lottery tickets.'

In spite of approximation in meaning, (5) and (8) differ from each other in a subtle but distinguishable manner. The interpretation of the sentences involves two basic facts: (i) money is consumed, and (ii) money is exchanged for lottery tickets. The focus on these two facts varies from (5) to (8). The former answers what happens to the money, i.e. fact (i) is primary; whereas the latter highlights fact (ii), the exchange for lottery tickets, with an instrumental meaning. Given these differences, it is improper to construe the meaning of *bǎ* in (5) in an instrumental sense.

5.2 Evasive Verbhood of *Bǎ*

If *bǎ* has maintained its category as a verb in BRC, it may be expected to demonstrate some verbal properties. Given the evasive verbhood of *bǎ*, superficial evidence is sometimes submitted to argue for *bǎ* being a preposition rather than a verb. For instance, *bǎ* cannot take an aspect marker, and *bǎ* does not pass the A-not-A test (cf. Mangione 1982; A. Li 1990). Caution must be taken about those categorial membership tests. No tests unfailingly provide conclusive results in determining membership of a controversial item such as *bǎ* in Mandarin, and simple tests like those used in chemistry to distinguish acid from alkali are nonexistent. As McCawley (1992) underscores, while positive results of these tests can serve as evidence for verbhood, negative results are by no means indicative of non-verbhood. This section will provide some positive evidence for

the verbal behavior of *bǎ* in BRC after taking a close look at why the verb fails in various diagnostic tests for verbal properties.

5.2.1 Aspect-taking Test and A-not-A Test

It is true that *bǎ* does not take such aspect markers as *le* and *guo*. But, neither does the copula *shì*, whose verbal category is crystal clear in (9). If the ungrammaticality of (9) does not exclude *shì* from being a verb, neither should the ill-formedness of (10) repudiate the verbal membership of *bǎ*.

(9) *wǒ yǐqián shì $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} le \\ guo \end{array} \right\}$ jiàoshī.
 I before be AP teacher
 'I was a teacher before.'

(10) *wǒ bǎ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} le \\ guo \end{array} \right\}$ gōngkè zuò le.
 I RV AP homework do PF
 'I have done my homework.'

As a matter of fact, the inability of certain verbs to take aspect markers is explicable. Chang (1990: 307-309) notes that aspect markers in Mandarin are sensitive to thematic structure. They tend to attach to verbs with thematic structures of [AGENT, THEME] or [AGENT, PATIENT]. Given that neither *bǎ* nor *shì* possesses this kind of thematic structure, it is comprehensible why aspect markers always shun these verbs.

As for the A-not-A test, the test itself can be an issue. There exist two major pattern variations. Consider the following *bǎ* sentences in A-not-A forms:

(11)a *ní bǎ gōngkè zuò hǎo bú bǎ?
 you RV homework do done NG RV
 b ní bǎ bù bǎ gōngkè zuò hǎo?
 you RV NG RV homework do done
 'Are you going to finish up the homework or not?'

The A-not-A formation of the interrogative has come to be a test without itself having a clear description. Given the grammaticality of (11)b, one may well argue that *bǎ* can pass the test, and disprove the claim that *bǎ* cannot occur in the A-not-A form.³¹

5.2.2 McCawley's Universals Tests

Noting the bewilderment in Mandarin parts of speech assignment, McCawley (1992: 219-220) offers five systematic differences between verbs (V) and prepositions/postpositions (P) for distinguishing them from each other in a scientific manner:

- (i). A P normally combines with exactly one NP, while Vs differ from one another with regard to whether they combine with zero, one, or two NPs.
- (ii). The prototypic use of a P' is as a modifier, that of a V' is as a predicate phrase.
- (iii). Prepositions are subject to Pied-piping, while Vs are not.
- (iv). Objects of Vs usually can undergo extraction or deletion, while objects of Ps are less free in allowing extraction or deletion.
- (v). Ps allow their objects to have scope over higher constituents more easily than Vs do.

In recognizing the resultative meaning of *bǎ*, I will take issue with McCawley in regard to the categorial status of *bǎ*. Of the five universals, McCawley considers the last two items useful to Mandarin. With the 'floated' quantifier *dōu*, a test based on the last universal is developed to detect behavior exhibited by prepositions but not verbs:

- (12)a *tā* [_v *chuān zhe nèi sān jiàn dàyī*] (**dōu*) *shàng guo jiē*.
 s/he wear AP that three CL coat (all) mount AP street
 'S/He once went out wearing those three coats.'

³¹ The issue is further complicated by preference of the pattern variations. The dominant pattern in Mandarin is shown by (11)a. J. Huang (1991) claims that the pattern in (11)b is due to a phonological reduplication of elements (e.g. verb or preposition) in the predicate. Dai (1990), however, refutes Huang's treatment of A-not-A forms.

- b wǒ jiā [p' lí nèi sān ge gōngyuán] (dōu) bù yuǎn.
 I home from that three CL park (all) NG far
 'My home is not far away from all those three parks.'
- c tā [ʔ' bǎ nèi sān ge júzi] (dōu) bō le pí.
 s/he BA that three CL orange (all) peel PF skin
 'S/He has peeled all those three oranges.'

As illustrated above, the proposition *lǐ* 'from' in (12)b allows its object to have scope over higher constituents while the verb *chuān* 'wear' in (12)a does not.³² The result in (12)c suggests that *bǎ* is more like a preposition than a verb. The reliability of the test, however, is questionable. Consider the following examples:

- (13)a tā [v' chuān zhe nèi sān jiàn dàyī] $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} dōu \\ hái \end{array} \right\}$ bù gòu nuǎn.
 s/he wear AP that three CL coat all/still NG enough warm
 'Wearing all those three coats, s/he still did not feel warm enough.'
- b tā [v' hē le nèi sān bēi jiǔ] (dōu) méiyǒu gěi qián.
 s/he drink PF that three cup wine (all) NG give money
 'S/He did not pay after drinking those three cups of wine.'

Both the sentences in (13) contain items clearly classed as verbs, but the results of the test are counter-expected. With the uncertainty shown in (13), I will resist concluding *bǎ* to be a preposition.

Another test, based on universal (iv), calls upon topicalization and anaphoric ellipsis. When applied to *bǎ* in (14), once again *bǎ* is shown to behave like a preposition because it cannot endure 'stranding'. It should be noted that the test is highly pragmatically-oriented. Given the pragmatic conditions involved, discourse characteristics of BRC should be taken into consideration in judging the results of the test.

³² Following McCawley's proposal, I treat *lǐ* as a preposition here.

- (14)a *nèi ge júzi tā bǎ e bō le pí.
 that CL orange s/he BA peel PF skin
- b *[ta bǎ e bō le pí] de júzi
 s/he BA peel PF skin AT orange

Recall that BRC can be analyzed as an embedded topic structure with the object of *bǎ* being the embedded topic. This structure has rendered the object of *bǎ* a low degree of extraction and deletion. Without understanding the embedded topic structure, one can be easily misled to regard *bǎ* as a preposition. Returning to the ungrammaticality of (14), it is apparent that extraction of the object of *bǎ* inevitably destroys the embedded topic structure. (cf. §4.1.2) Therefore, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to topicalize the object of *bǎ* as if it were the object of a general verb. An attempt is made in (15)a with an elaborate context to adduce a more acceptable example of topicalized *bǎ* sentence. The use of *zhè* 'this' at both the beginning and the end of the utterance has created a now-and-here context in (15)a. The result displays that the supporting context for the sentence has improved its acceptability for some speakers to a certain degree. Thus, the unacceptability of *bǎ* sentences with an extracted object like (15)b ought to be regarded as an infelicity rather than an ungrammaticality.

- (15)a ??/#zhè háizi, hǎohaode lízi, bǎ e chī le yībàn jiù rēng zài zhèli.
 this child good pear RV eat PF half then throw at here
 'This child, such a good apple, s/he threw it here after eating half of it.'
- b #wǒmende fángzi dàhuǒ bǎ e shāo le.
 our house fire RV burn PF
 'Our house, the fire burned it.'

As for anaphoric ellipsis, *bǎ* does allow it on exceedingly rare occasions (cf. §4.1.1). The verbhood of *bǎ* should be borne out with sentences like (16), which show the possibility of omission of the object of *bǎ*.

- (16) jiào tā bīe bǎ bēizi dǎpò, tā piàn bǎ e dǎpò le.
 ask s/he NG RV cup hit-broken s/he simply RV hit-broken PF
 '(I) told him/her not to break the cup; then s/he just broke it.'

5.2.3 Evidence for *Bǎ* as a Verb in BRC

Although the verbal behavior of *bǎ* in BRC is elusive, it is not impossible to discern its verbhood. At least two pieces of evidence are available through observations on the negation of *bǎ* sentences, and the occurrence of the passive marker *gěi* in the construction. These will be succinctly discussed in the sequel.

As in many languages, in Mandarin a negative morpheme occupies a position maximally proximate to the element being negated. In sentential negation, an intervening constituent such as a prepositional phrase between a negative marker and its target may result in ungrammaticality:

- (17)a wǒ jiā lí gōngyuán hěn yuǎn.
 I home from park very far
 'My home is far away from the park.'
- b wǒ jiā lí gōngyuán **bù** (hěn) yuǎn.
 I home from park NG very far
 'My home is not (very) far away from the park.'
- c *wǒ jiā **bù** lí gōngyuán (hěn) yuǎn.
 I home NG from park very far
- (18)a tā gēn wǒ shì hǎopéngyou.
 s/he GEN I be good friend
 'S/He and I are good friends.'
- b tā gēn wǒ **bù** shì hǎopéngyou.
 s/he GEN I NG be good friend
 'S/He and I are not good friends.'

- c *tā **bù** gēn wǒ shì hǎopéngyou.
 s/he NG GEN I be good friend .

In (17)c the prepositional phrase *lí gōngyuán* 'from park' has intervened between the negative marker and its target. Thus the sentence is unacceptable as the negative counterpart of (17)a. Likewise is the case with a coverb in (18). The proximity condition on negation rules out (18)c with an intervening phrase. In comparison to the examples in (17) and (18), the verbal property of *bǎ* in (19) is discernible in the negation of *bǎ* sentences:

- (19)a háizi **bǎ** gōngkè zuò wán, cái kěyǐ kàn diànshì.
 child RV homework do finish then may see television
 'The child may watch television only after s/he finishes the homework.'
- b háizi **bù bǎ** gōngkè zuò wán, yě kěyǐ kàn diànshì.
 child NG RV homework do finish also may see television
 'The child may watch television even if s/he does not finish the homework.'
- c *háizi **bǎ** gōngkè **bù** zuò wán, yě kěyǐ kàn diànshì.
 child RV homework NG do finish also may see television

The proximity condition on negation is respected in (19)b, and thus the negative sentence is fine. As for the problem of (19)c, an explanation will be offered later in §5.3.2.

Another piece of evidence comes from the optional use of the passive marker *gěi* in BRC. Being a modifying constituent, a prepositional phrase is generally omissible without changing the fundamental meaning of a sentence. Despite partial loss of information, the basic meaning of (20)a is maintained in (20)b after the prepositional phrase *lí gōngyuán* 'from park' is left out. If *bǎ* were a preposition, a similar omission would not engender any problem. The outcome in (21)b does not confirm the prediction, however. The omission of the phrase *bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài* '(RV) leftover wood' in (21)b has rendered the meaning of the sentence entirely different from the original one in (21)a. Apparently,

the phrase does not function as a modifier in the *bǎ* sentence. Instead, it is a crucial and indispensable part of the sentence.³³

(20)a wǒ jiā lí gōngyuán hěn yuǎn.
 I home from park very far
 'My home is far way from the park.'

b wǒ jiā hěn yuǎn
 I home very far
 'My home is far way.'

(21)a bàba bǎ shèngxiàde mùkuài gěi shāo le.
 father RV leftover wood PS burn PF
 'Father has burned the leftover wood.'

b bàba gěi shāo le
 father PS burn PF
 'Father was burned.'

5.3 Advantages of Considering *Bǎ* as a Verb in BRC

The *bǎ* problem being a generations old debated topic, a convincing solution is difficult to advance. It may be instructive to evaluate the proposed category of *bǎ* from a more practical perspective: What are the benefits of viewing *bǎ* as a full verb? The answers are fairly impressive:

- (a) The transitivity problem in *bǎ* sentences with retained objects does not arise.
- (b) The unusual pattern for negation in BRC can be discarded.
- (c) A unified subcategorization of *bǎ* is feasible for all types of BRC.
- (d) The source of the constructional meaning of BRC can be identified.

³³ One may argue that the problem is caused by the optional passive marker. It should be taken away before the omission. While that is a way to avoid the problem, it certainly does not solve the problem.

5.3.1 Direct Object of *Bǎ* versus 'Semantic Direct Object' of *Bǎ* Sentences

The object-retained type of BRC poses an insurmountable challenge to a large number of analyses. The transitivity of *bǎ* is obviously exhibited in sentences like (22) when both the verbs in the sentence take different objects of their own. Thompson (1973: 220) resorts to the idea of treating the first object as 'semantically the "direct object" of the [*bǎ*] sentence', which is fronted to the preverbal position. The transitivity of *bǎ* is thus treated at the sentential level with much ado. This reinterpretation of the direct object from the lexical level to the constructional level is rather strange, but the practice is followed by those who insist on designating *bǎ* as a preposition (e.g. J. Huang 1982).

(22)a tā bǎ zhè jiàn shìqing xiě le yī ge bàogào.
s/he RV this CL matter write PF one CL report
'S/He has written a report on this matter.'

b tā bǎ shū fāng mǎn le shūjià.
s/he RV book put full PF bookshelf
'S/He has put the books onto the shelf and filled it to capacity.'

On the other hand, when *bǎ* is recognized as a full verb with a resultative meaning, the problem never arises, because *bǎ* itself is transitive. It is merely natural for *bǎ* to take a direct object in BRC as it does outside BRC. Evidently, it is unmotivated to replace the straightforward lexical transitivity analysis of BRC with one advocating an indirect and ad hoc constructional transitivity.

5.3.2 Placement of the Negative Morpheme in BRC

For those who do not recognize *bǎ* as a verb, an unusual phenomenon occurs when a BRC sentence is negated: A negative marker is placed before *bǎ* instead of before the putative verb of the sentence. The ordinary pattern on the other hand, is not acceptable, as seen in (23)c:

- (23)a háizi bǎ dàngāo chī guāng le.
 child RV cake eat up PF
 'The child(ren) has/have eaten up the cake(s).'
- b háizi méi(yǒu) bǎ dàngāo chī guāng.
 child NG RV cake eat up
 'The child(ren) has/have not eaten up the cake(s).'
- c *háizi bǎ dàngāo méi(yǒu) chī guāng.
 child RV cake NG eat up

Like the situation in the preceding discussion, the problem does not even exist when *bǎ* is considered to be a verb. The negation pattern in (23)b conforms precisely to the general formation of negative sentences in Mandarin.

Li and Thompson (1981: 478-479) explain the ungrammaticality of (23)c with the notion of 'disposal'. The declarative sentence in (23)a denotes the result of what the child does to the cake. The negation in (23)c, on the other hand, tries to denote the result of what the child does not do to the cake. If nothing is done to the cake, then there is no result to speak of, and it is inappropriate to use BRC. The semantic explication is essentially legitimate, but it would be more conceivable if *bǎ* were regarded as a verb instead of a preposition: The negation in (23)c is a local one, it merely negates the subordinate verb. In order to negate the whole sentence, the negative morpheme must be placed before the matrix verb *bǎ*.

5.3.3 One-construction-one-*bǎ* versus Scores of 'Homophonous' *Bǎ*

In one of their studies of coverbs, which contains *bǎ* and other putative verbs, Li and Thompson (1974b: 257) explicitly state that the items in question are 'semantically like prepositions, but many of them are homophonous with verbs'. In a similar manner, Li and Yip (1979: 111) suggest that a homophonous causative *bǎ* should be separated from other *bǎ* sentences. It would not be difficult to create a dozen *bǎ*, each designated to carry a

specific characteristic of the verb. The *bǎ* problem would then disappear if all the 'homophones' of *bǎ* were kept distinct -- no more confusion, and no more puzzles.

Nevertheless, in a serious study of language one should not and cannot resort to the idea of homophony when unable to sort out the entangled semantic relationships among various senses of a lexical item. If one fails to recognize the semantic development of a morpheme or a word, a great deal of significant generalization on the behavior of the studied item is lost. This is particularly true in the case of *bǎ*.

An invaluable advantage of identifying *bǎ* as a verb resides in its explicative power to relate diverse types of *bǎ* sentences within and outside the resultative construction, as shown in Chapter 2. Syntactically, a single subcategorization of *bǎ* is sufficient for all kinds of BRC. The unified structure advanced in Chapter 3 has successfully accounted for both the resultative and the causative readings of *bǎ* sentences. The generalization and accountability are feasible when the verbal category of *bǎ* is restored. The peculiarity of *bǎ* in BRC becomes more comprehensible once it is recognized as a resultative verb.

5.3.4 Source of the Resultative Meaning

Approaches towards the *bǎ* problem seem to have reflected a general atmosphere in the field of linguistics to a large extent. Grammarians are preoccupied with syntactic structures insomuch that semantics is often left behind in their analyses. On occasions when semantics is brought into attention, it seldom goes beyond the level of structural meaning. Lexical semantics has long fallen into oblivion, with abstract meaning taken to be semantically vacuous. This situation is uncondusive to fathom a perplexing construction like BRC. While identifying the resultative meaning of *bǎ* sentences is a momentous step towards a complete understanding of the construction, a further step to investigate the source from which the resultative meaning derives is of equal importance.

Li and Thompson (1981) have realized the significance of the constructional

meaning of *bǎ* sentences. With L. Wang's (1947) notion of 'disposal', they are able to explain certain constraints on the construction. Unfortunately their concern with the semantics of *bǎ* sentences ceases at the constructional level. They never inquire about the source of the central 'disposal' meaning.

The membership continuation of *bǎ* as a full verb in BRC is first acknowledged in Hashimoto (1971). Nonetheless, Hashimoto explicitly states that the verb no longer has semantic content. Consequently, little insight is achieved from her observation that a certain relationship holds between the object of *bǎ* and the embedded clause.

Recognizing the abstract meaning of *bǎ*, the relationship is identified to be PATIENT-and-resultant or EXPERIENCER-and-stative. The resultative relation is apparently attributed to the resultative meaning of *bǎ*. The resultative meaning vital to BRC, illustrated in (24) is no longer a concern when a *bǎ* sentence is converted to other forms, as in (25). In contrast to the *bǎ* sentence in (24)b, the sentence in (25)b is still grammatical with no clue of any resulting sense. Undoubtedly, the source of the resultative meaning of the construction can be identified readily when *bǎ* is considered as a resultative verb.

(24)a Wángwǔ bǎ Lǐsì piàn le.
RV cheat PF
'Wangwu has cheated Lisi.'

b *Wángwǔ bǎ Lǐsì piàn.
RV cheat

(25)a Wángwǔ piàn le Lǐsì.
cheat PF
'Wangwu cheated Lisi.'

b Wángwǔ piàn Lǐsì.
cheat
'Wangwu cheats/cheated Lisi.'

5.4 Direction of Historical Change: Where is *bǎ* heading?

Thus far, the categorial status of *bǎ* has been synchronically identified as a verb. Like all matters, language is subject to perpetual change. *Bǎ* may not maintain its present category indefinitely. It might change to other categories in the course of its evolution. This section will briefly address the intriguing question of the direction of change that *bǎ* is likely to undergo.

Due to the scope of this thesis, a detailed argumentation against the conventional view of *bǎ* in BRC (e.g. by Li and Thompson 1974a; Bennett 1981) is dispensed with that *bǎ* has evolved to a preposition via grammaticalization of its use in the serial verb construction. Empirical studies reveal that the emergence of BRC is independent of the serial verb construction (S. Huang 1986; Ye 1988; Her 1991). Given that the serial verb construction is of little relevance to the origin of *bǎ* sentences that are identified as BRC, it will not occupy a place in the present discussion.³⁴

The track of development of *bǎ* ought to be the one found in resultative constructions. The tendency of change of resultative verbs in Indo-European languages indicates the direction of an auxiliary verb to be plausible when the resultative meaning evolves to the actional perfect (Maslov 1988). This is illustrated by the English examples in (26): The resultative verb 'to have' has changed to an auxiliary verb denoting the perfect aspect in (26)a, while in (26)b it is still a verb, though reinterpreted as a causative one.

(26)a He has written the letter.

 b He has the letter written.

The aspect of actional perfect can further 'weaken' to such an extent that it is virtually lost, as is the case in French.

³⁴ The serial verb construction is irrelevant to BRC, but it may bear on a certain type of *bǎ* sentence in some dialects of Mandarin.

The property of the so-called 'perfect tense' in English may be helpful in understanding the constructional meaning of BRC. The actional respect of a verb vis-à-vis its resulting state is still observable in English 'perfect tense'. BRC, likewise, underscores the resultative state rather than the actional component of a verb. The situation can change, of course. Kozinskij (1988: 517) notes that 'various manners of "holding" or "carrying" presuppose a sufficiently high activity of both the subject of the transitive resultative and the subject of the corresponding actional form.' Consequently, the predicate of the resultative sentence appears to indicate an activity rather than a state. This may do justice to those who regard *bǎ* sentences as equivalent to their non-resultative counterparts. They are perhaps ahead of their time in seeing a possible change in the construction.

For *bǎ* to change from a full verb to an auxiliary verb, or even a preposition, several modifications of its use in BRC must take place:

- (i). Instances of the object-retained type ought to be extremely rare, perhaps merely in frozen expressions.
- (ii). Usage of *bǎ* in the causative type of BRC either becomes unacceptable, or it causes *bǎ* to divide into two, with one changing to a bona fide causative verb.
- (iii). The resultative meaning of the construction utterly disappears.

Conjectural as they may look, the first two points are necessary to consider a categorial change of *bǎ* from a verb to an auxiliary verb, and all of them are required should *bǎ* be grammaticalized as a dummy preposition for assigning Case. Then BRC as a distinct construction would not exist any more and a *bǎ* sentence would be freely interchangeable with its postverbal counterpart. Nonetheless, there is still a long way far ahead for *bǎ* to change from the present verbal category to other categories.

5.5 Summary

As a result of the historical development of the verb, this chapter has argued that a semantic change of *bǎ* from 'holding' to resultative is more logically sound than a categorial shift from a verb to a preposition. Cases in which *bǎ* does not show the expected verbal properties are explicable under a meticulous examination of characteristics of the verb. Furthermore, the possibility of omitting the object of *bǎ*, the negation pattern of *bǎ* sentences, and the use of the passive marker *gěi* in the construction all support the verbhood of *bǎ* in BRC.

Recognition of *bǎ* as a resultative verb brings forth a number of advantages. Ad hoc concepts such as 'semantic direct object of *bǎ* sentences' can be relinquished. More significantly, the source of the vital resultative meaning of the construction can be identified. From another angle, discussion of the future development of *bǎ* has also demonstrated the legitimate treatment of *bǎ* as a resultative verb in modern Mandarin.

Chapter VI

Conclusions and Prospects

Like an usher, I have led the reader walking through the veils of semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic peculiarities of *bǎ* sentences until we eventually reach the spacious hall of '*Bǎ*-as-a-resultative-verb'. This may not be what the reader has anticipated from the labyrinth, but in retrospect, we have obviated all kinds of myths about Mandarin *bǎ* sentences when we take an alternative path to pursue the essence of the construction, viz. considering *bǎ* as a verb with a resultative meaning rather than as a semantically vacuous preposition. The advocated path is not a novel contrivance. It is consistent with cross-linguistic observation that a verb meaning 'to hold something' can feasibly develop an abstract sense of resultative.

A key to the constructional meaning of *bǎ* sentences is obtained once the resultative meaning of *bǎ* is recognized. Via typological findings of resultative constructions, the knots of twisting relationships that *bǎ* sentences hold with Mandarin causative sentences and locative sentences are untied. Furthermore, the intricate relation between those *bǎ* sentences identifiable as BRC and those which are non-BRC is elucidated by the abstract meaning of the verb: What these *bǎ* sentences have in common is a resulting state.

Syntactically, one has to cope with a more complicated structure with *bǎ* as a full verb in the construction. Nonetheless, an invaluable generalization about *bǎ* sentences also ensues: All types of *bǎ* sentences in BRC can be analyzed legitimately with a unified subcategorization of the verb. Parallel to the complex syntactic structure is an embedded topic structure in regard to the pragmatic aspect of BRC.

The pragmatic properties of BRC have significant roles in Mandarin discourse,

which have not been dealt with in this thesis. Indeed there exist many lacunae that will need to be addressed before a true comprehension of BRC is achieved. Identifying the elusive construction of *bǎ* sentences as a resultative construction does not signify the end of the *bǎ* problem. Rather, a new area has opened, awaiting more fruitful research. For instance, the acquisition of BRC could be an exciting topic for the study of children's semantic development. It has been noted that English actional passive sentences emerge before non-actional ones in child language. What will children learning Mandarin tell us about the actional component and the more abstract resultative meaning of BRC?

Equally fascinating is the comparative study of BRC among Chinese dialects/ languages and some neighboring languages, e.g. Miao-Yao in southwestern China. Many of these languages share a periphrastic construction similar to BRC, but they may be marked by other verbs with original meanings such as 'to give', 'to carry', and 'to take'. To what extent does the resultative meaning vital to BRC feature in the construction of these languages? Perhaps the investigation will render us a prototype of the periphrastic resultative construction.

It is my hope that with the new light shed on the classical problem of *bǎ* sentences, future endeavors of scholars will lead to an ultimate understanding of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction.

Epilogue

As anticipated, the verbal category of *bǎ* has drawn noticeable suspicion at the thesis defense. Strictly speaking, what the thesis has argued is that the category of *bǎ* is unlikely to be a preposition; although it might not be an authentic verb, *bǎ* is closer to verb rather than any other categories including auxiliary verb. In a delicate framework such as prototype theory, a closer look at the controversial category of *bǎ* may yield a more satisfactory result than the raw finding presented in this initial study.

Another point to be noted bears on the syntactic analysis of the *Bǎ* Resultative Construction. It is apparent and undeniable that studies of Mandarin syntax in North America have been influenced considerably by works on English syntax. The influence may manifest itself even more in a particular framework. There is no doubt about the need for future attestation of the submitted hypotheses such as the issue of tense and the identification of the empty categories in BRC.

Given that much detail of the *bǎ* problem and Mandarin grammar remains unclear to this day, I have indulged myself in making some simplified statements and assumptions about the construction and the language. If the reader has any comments and/or criticisms on the present work, please feel free to contact me at:

Department of Linguistics
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, B.C., Canada
V5A 1S6

E-mail: steng@sfu.ca

[I am also a participant of the Linguist list. In case my e-mail address changes in the future (which is rather feasible), I can be reached via the net.]

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