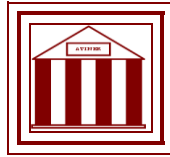


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Italy**

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## **Resultative Verbs in Chinese are Compounds?**

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### **Abstract**

In all languages the concept of *word* is something that belongs to all speakers: it is an intuitive concept from which it doesn't seem people can do without (Sapir, 1921). Nevertheless, the notion of *word* is escaped until now all the attempts of a convincing and comprehensive definition. Despite this all speakers can successfully define the words as simple or complex, where the simple ones are the words without an internal structure, whereas the complex ones are those formed through word formation rules, derivation or compounding.

In Chinese, which is an isolating language, compounding is the most productive process of formation of word (Packard, 2000). One of the most used category is *Verb*, both as category of entrance both as category of exit. One of the constructions created by verbs are called *Resultative verbs* which are formed by two verbs in which the second points out the result of the action of the first one.

In this paper I try to prove that these constructions are real compounds. To do this I first analyzed the definition of compounds, in particular *Resultative verbs* (Scalise, 1994; Abbiati 1992) and therefore I analyzed a corpus of Chinese compounds to see their internal structure.

The results show that can be different types of *Resultative verbs*, according to the grammatical relationship between V1 and V2 or to V2 that can behave as a verb or as a suffix (Starosta et al., 1998-Chao, 1968). I noticed that when V2 is a independent verb and it behaves as a word the all construction have all the features of a compound. Whereas in the other cases we can talk about derivation with the same morphological morpheme as in the compounds which here is used as a suffix and so it gives a different meaning to all the structure.

**Keywords:** Chinese-Word-Verbs-Adjectives

## Introduction: Word

In all languages the concept of *word* is something that belongs to all speakers: it is an intuitive concept from which it doesn't seem people can do without (Sapir, 1921). Nevertheless, the notion of word is escaped until now all the attempts of a convincing and comprehensive definition. The words can be defined according to different aspects, morphological, syntactic, phonetic, but it is still difficult to find a single and universal definition.

Despite this, however, we can classify words as simple or complex: the first type has no internal structure (most likely contained in the lexicon), whereas the complex are those formed through rules of word formation such as derivation or compounding.

In this paper I focused my attention on the complex words made by compounding.

### Compounding

Compounding is a morphological process that allows the formation of new words, from existing words. The category of the new one can coincide or not with the category of the constituents, as in (1), which is the scheme proposed by Allen (1978) and used by Scalise (1983, 1994):

$$(1) [ ]_x [ ]_y \rightarrow [[ ]_x \# [ ]_y]_z$$

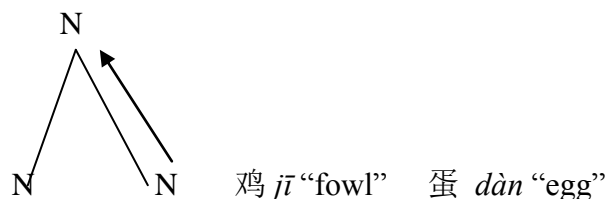
In Chinese compounding is the most productive process of word formation. Compounding bound free word and in an isolating language, as Chinese, compounding is more frequent because has more words to create something new.

The head is something which can be defined according to the position, usually it is on the right because of the fact the order is Modifier + X:

- (2) a. N + N = N 地图 *dìtú* earth-illustration “geographical map”  
 b. N + N = N 鸡蛋 *jī dàn* fowl-egg “hen’s egg”

Packard (2000) generalizes the position of the head depending on the kind of compound: if a compound is a nominal one with the structure X+N, X is the modifier and N is the head, but if a compound is a verbal one with the internal structure V + C, *verb + complement*, the head is on the left because the complement doesn't modify the verb(3):

- (3) a. 鸡蛋 *jī dàn* “hen’s egg”



In Chinese compound can create Adjectives, Noun and Verbs. In the last type it's possible to find the structure SV or VC, according to the syntactic order in the sentence SVO- subject+ verb+ object/verbal complement:

- (4) a. S + V 地震 *dì zhèn* earth- to shake “earthquake”  
           胆小 *dǎn xiǎo* bravery- (be) small “coward”  
       b. V + C 钓鱼 *dào yú* to fish- fish “to fish”  
           吃饭 *chī fàn* to eat- rice “to eat”

In this language there are also a lot of verbal compounds formed by two verbs called *resultative verbs*.

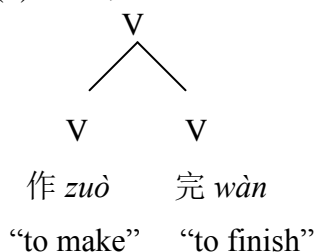
#### *Resultative Verbs*

These verbs have the structure V1+ V2, where V2 expresses the result of the action of V1 (5):

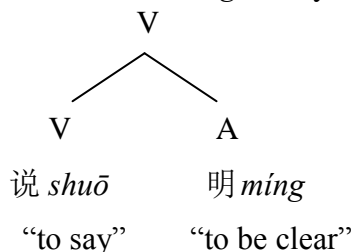
- (5) 看到 *kàn dào* to look- to reach “to see”  
       答对 *dá duì* to answer- to be right “answer correctly”

Between the two Verbs there is a temporal relationship of cause and effect. The first Verb can be any kind of verb, the second one is a resultative verb (resultative complement) which can be a verb (6.a) or an adjective (6.b). In this case the adjective behave as a verb<sup>1</sup>.

- (6) a. 作完 *zuò wán* to make- to finish “to finish making”



- b. 说明 *shuō míng* to say- to be clear “to explain”



<sup>1</sup>This situation is called categorial ambiguity because there is a linguistic element which can have more functions according to the context (Chao Yuen Ren, 1968).

The resultative complement can have a slightly different meaning if used in these structures:

- (7) a. 完 *wàn* “to finish”  
b. 写完 *xiě wàn* “to stop writing”

完 *wàn* is the depletion of the action expressed by V<sub>1</sub>.

- (8) a. 到 *dào* “to reach”  
b. 看到 *kàn dào* to look- to reach “to see”

到 *dào* is the attainment of the objective of the action expressed by V<sub>1</sub>.

- (9) a. 见 *jiàn* “to see”  
b. 听见 *tīng jiàn* to listen- to feel “to hear”;  
c. 看见 *kàn jiàn* to look at- to feel “to see”;

见 *jiàn* is the achievement of a perception.

- (10) a. 在 *zài* “to stay”;  
b. 住在 *zhù zài* to live- to stay “to live in”;

在 *zài* is before the locative object.

- (11) a. 给 *gěi* “to give”;  
b. 卖给 *mài gěi* to sell- to give “to sell to”;

给 *gěi* is before the recipient of the action.

- (12) a. 成 *chéng* “to become”;  
b. 翻译成 *fānyì chéng* to translate- to become “to translate into”;

成 *chéng* introduces the result of a transformation.

- (13) a. 好 *hǎo* “to be good”;  
b. 写好 *xiě hǎo* to write- to be good “to write well”;

好 *hǎo* is the successful completion of the action.

Resultative verbs have an ambiguity which is difficult to explain. Starosta, Chao e Li are not sure if these verbs are compounds or not. If a compound is the combining of two or more free words, resultative verbs can be defined as

compounds. The problem is to define something which is so various in a universal definition.

## Corpus

### Introduction

*I analyzed a corpus of 100 resultative verbs in Chinese, from different sources, that I propose in the table below.*

I analyzed the verbs according to their structure, their meaning, the grammatical relationship between the two constituents.

In the verbs below both the constituents are verbs or adjectives with a predicative behaviour.

**Table 1.**

COMPOUND	STRUCT	EN DO	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st-C	1-CA T	2nd-C	2-CA T	PĪN YĪN	MEANING	OBS
写完	V+V	Y	V	L	写	V	完	V	xiě wán	to write- to finish "to finish writing"	V+Suff*
看清楚	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	看	V	清楚	A/ V	kàn qīngcǐ hu	to see- to be clear "to see in a clear way"	V+ post VC
找到	V+V	Y	V	L	找	V	到	V	zhǎo dào	to seek- to reach "to find"	V+Suff*
跑到	V+V	Y	V	L	跑	V	到	V	pǎo dào	to run- to reach "to manage to run"	V+Suff*
看到	V+V	Y	V	L	看	V	到	V	kàn dào	to look- to reach "to see"	V+Suff*
讲清楚	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	讲	V	清楚	V	jiǎng qīngcǐ hu	to explain- to be clear "to explain in a clear w	V+ post VC
收到	V+V	Y	V	L	收	V	到	V	shōu dào	to collect- to reach "to receive"	V+Suff*
娶错	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	娶	V	错	A/ V	qǔ cuò	to marry- to be wrong "to marry the wrong	V+ post VC

COMPOUND	STRUCT	EN DO	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st-C	1-CA T	2nd-C	2-CA T	PĪN YĪN	MEANING	OBS
										person"	
加错	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	加	V	错	A/ V	jiā cuò	to marry- to be wrong "to marry the wrong person"	V+post VC
哭红	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	哭	V	红	A/ V	kū hóng	to cry- to be red "to be red from crying"	V+ post VC
作完	V+V	Y	V	L	作	V	完	V	zuò wán	to do- to finish "to finish doing"	V+Suff*
听到	V+V	Y	V	L	听	V	到	V	tīng dào	to listen- to reach "to hear"	V+Suff*
吃饱	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	吃	V	饱	A/ V	chī bǎo	to eat- to be full "to be full up of eating"	V+ post VC
说破	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	说	V	破	A/ V	shuō pò	to say- to be broken "to break a secret"	V+post VC
听见	V+V	Y	V	L	听	V	见	V	tīng jiàn	to listen- to perceive "to hear"	V+Suff*
看见	V+V	Y	V	L	看	V	见	V	kàn jiàn	to see- to perceive "to look at"	V+Suff*
碰见	V+V	Y	V	L	碰	V	见	V	pèng jiàn	to bump- to perceive "to meet casually"	V+Suff*
累死	A/V+ V	Y	V	R	累	A/ V	死	V	lěi sǐ	to be tired- to die "to be tired to death"	Avv+V* MET.
喝醉	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	喝	V	醉	A/ V	hē zuì	to drink- to be drunk "to be drunk from drinking"	V+ post VC
挤满	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	挤	V	满	A/ V	jǐ	to crowd- to	V+ post



COMPOUND	STRUCT	EN DO	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st-C	1-CAT	2nd-C	2-CAT	PINYIN	MEANING	OBS
	V							V	mǎn	be full "to fill"	VC
吃惯	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	吃	V	惯	A/ V	chī guàn	to eat- to get used to "to get used to eating"	V+ post VC
推倒	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	推	V	倒	A/ V	tuī dǎo	to push- to fall "to fall by pushing"	V+A/Vsuff f*
打坏	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	打	V	坏	A/ V	dǎ huài	to hit- to be broken "to ruined smt by hitting"	V+post VC
骂烦	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	骂	V	烦	A/ V	mà fán	to scold- to be tired "to be tired of scolding"	V+ post VC
扎紧	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	扎	V	紧	A/ V	zā jǐn	to tie- to be tight "to tie tight"	V+ post VC
走累	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	走	V	累	A/ V	zǒu lěi	to walk- to be tired "to be tired from walking"	V+ post VC
喝够	V+V	Y	V	L	喝	V	够	V	hē gòu	to drink- to reach "to have enough of drinking"	V+V=post VC
浇遍	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	浇	V	遍	A/ V	jiāo biǎn	to water- to be flat "to water smt flat"	V+ post VC
烫坏	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	烫	V	坏	A/ V	tàng huài	to iron- to be damaged "to ruin by ironing"	V+post VC
哭湿	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	哭	V	湿	A/ V	kū shī	to cry- to be wet "to be wet of crying"	V+ post VC
跑累	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	跑	V	累	A/ V	pǎo lěi	to run- to be tired "to be tired from running"	V+ post VC

COMPOUND	STRUCT	EN DO	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st-C	1-CA T	2nd-C	2-CA T	PĪN YĪN	MEANING	OBS
打倒	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	打	V	倒	A/ V	dǎ dào	to beat- to tumble "to knock down"	V+post VC
读成	V+V	Y	V	L	读	V	成	V	dú chén g	to read- to become "to read in a certain way"	V+Suff*
调动	V+V	?	?	?	调	V	动	V	diào dòng	to transfer- to make movement "to move"	????
走到	V+V	Y	V	L	走	V	到	V	zǒu dào	to walk-to reach "to manage to walk"	V+Suff*
说明	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	说	V	明	A/ V	shuō míng	to say- to be clear "to explain"	V+post VC
答对	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	答	V	对	A/ V	dá duì	to answer- to be corre "to answer in a correct way"	V+ post VC
念完	V+V	Y	V	L	念	V	完	V	niàn wán	to read- to finish "to finish reading"	V+Suff*
放好	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	放	V	好	A/ V	fàng hǎo	to put- to be good "to put properly"	V+Suff*
拿走	V+V	?	?	?	拿	V	走	V	ná zǒu	to take- to walk " to take smt away"	????
说清楚	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	说	V	清楚	A/ V	shuō qīngc hu	to say- to be clear "to speak in a clear way"	V+ post VC
学会	V+V	Y	V	R	学	V	会	V	xué huì	to study- to know "to know by studying"	V2=sema ntic head
写清楚	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	写	V	清楚	A/ V	xiě qīngc hu	to write- to be clear "to write"	V+post VC

COMPOUND	STRUCT	EN DO	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st-C	1-CAT	2nd-C	2-CAT	PINYIN	MEANING	OBS
										clearly"	
拉开	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	拉	V	开	A/ V	lā kāi	to pull- to be open "to pull smt open"	V+post VC
打碎	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	打	V	碎	A/ V	dǎ suì	to strike- to be in pieces "to break by striking"	V+post VC
吓死	A/V+ V	Y	V	R	吓	A/ V	死	V	xià sǐ	to be frightened- to die "to be frightened to death"	Avv+V* MET.
买到	V+V	Y	V	L	买	V	到	V	mǎi dào	to buy- to reach "to manage to buy"	V+Suff*
问住	V+V	Y	V	L	问	V	住	V	wèn zhù	to ask- to stay "to stump"	V+Suff*
放大	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	放	V	大	A/ V	fàng dà	to put- to be big "to magnify"	V+post VC
坐满	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	坐	V	满	V	zuò mǎn	to seat- to be full "to seat to capacity"	V+ post VC
关紧	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	关	V	紧	A/ V	guān jǐn	to close- to be tight "to close tightly"	V+post VC
听懂	V+V	Y	V	L	听	V	懂	V	tīng dǒng	to listen- to understand "to understand by listen"	V+post VC
看懂	V+V	Y	V	L	看	V	懂	V	kàn dǒng	to see- to understand "to understand by seeing"	V+post VC
做好	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	做	V	好	A/ V	zuò hǎo	to do- to be good "to do smt well"	V+Suff*
笑疼	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	笑	V	疼	A/ V	xiào téng	to laugh- to be hurt "to be hurts from"	V+post VC

COMPOUND	STRUCT	EN DO	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st-C	1-CA T	2nd-C	2-CA T	PĪN YĪN	MEANING	OBS
										laughing"	
气哭	A/V+ V	Y	V	R	气	A/ V	哭	V	qì kū	to be angry- to cry "to cry for be angry"	????
哭累	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	哭	V	累	A/ V	kū lěi	to cry- to be tired "to be tired from crying"	V+post VC
醉红	A/V+ A/V	N	0	B	醉	A/ V	红	A/ V	zuì hóng	to be drunk- to be red "to be red from being drunk	????
打死	V+V	Y	V	R	打	V	死	V	dǎ sǐ	to hit- to die "to beat smo to death"	Avv+V* MET.
弄湿	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	弄	V	湿	A/ V	nòng shī	to make- to be wet "to make wet"	V+ post VC
弄脆	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	弄	V	脆	A/ V	nòng cuì	to make- to be crisp "to make crisp"	V+post VC
摔碎	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	摔	V	碎	A/ V	shuāi suì	to fall- to be in pisces "to break by falling"	V+post VC
运走 ?????					运		走		yùn zǒu	TRANSPORT ARE- CAMMINA RE	
穿滥	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	穿	V	滥	A/ V	chuān làn	to wear- to be falling apart "to fall apart by wea	V+post VC
用滥	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	用	V	滥	A/ V	yòng làn	to use- to be falling apart "to fall apart by using"	V+post VC
压扁	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	压	V	扁	A/ V	yā biǎn	to press- to be flat "to press flat"	V+post VC
跑开	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	跑	V	开	A/ V	pǎo kāi	to run- to be opened "to run away"	V+post VC
扩大	V+A/	Y	V	L	扩	V	大	A/	kuò	to extend- to	V+post

COMPOUND	STRUCT	EN DO	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st-C	1-CAT	2nd-C	2-CAT	PINYIN	MEANING	OBS
	V							V	dà	be big "to expand"	VC
过惯	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	过	V	惯	A/ V	guò guàn	to spend time- to be accustomed "to get used to spend time"	V+post VC
逗笑	V+V	?	?	?	逗	V	笑	V	dòu xiào	to have a good time- to laugh "to laugh for having"	????
挂歪	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	挂	V	歪	A/ V	guà wāi	to hang- to be crooked "to be crooked by being hang"	V+post VC
穿破	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	穿	V	破	A/ V	chuān pò	to wear- to be broken "to break by wearing"	V+post VC
杀死	V+V	Y	V	R	杀	V	死	V	shā sǐ	to kill- to die "to die by killing"	Avv+V* MET.
漂白	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	漂	V	白	A/ V	piǎo bái	to rinse- to be white "to be white by being bleach"	V+post VC
敲响	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	敲	V	响	A/ V	qiāo xiǎng	to beat- to be rumorous "to make sound by beating"	V+post VC
拉长	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	拉	V	长	A/ V	lā cháng	to pull- to be long "to make long by pulling"	V+post VC
拉紧	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	拉	V	紧	A/ V	lā jǐn	to pull- to be tight "to pull tightly"	V+post VC
翻成	V+V	Y	V	L	翻	V	成	V	fān chéng	to translate- to become "to translate into"	V+Suff*

COMPOUND	STRUCT	EN DO	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st-C	1-CA T	2nd-C	2-CA T	PĪN YĪN	MEANING	OBS
说穿	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	说	V	穿	A/ V	shuō chuān	to say- to be pierced through "to reveal a secret"	V+post VC
修好	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	修	V	好	A/ V	xiū hǎo	to repair- to be good "to repair well"	V+Suff*
梦见	V+V	Y	V	L	梦	V	见	V	mèng jiàn	to dream- to perceive "to dream of"	V+Suff*
拿住	V+V	Y	V	L	拿	V	住	V	ná zhù	to take- to stop "to take firmly"	V+Suff*V 2 sembra avverbio
改好	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	改	V	好	A/ V	gǎi hǎo	to transform- to be good "to transform well"	V+postV C
打破	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	打	V	破	A/ V	dǎ pò	to beat- to be broken "to break by breaking"	V+post VC
算好	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	算	V	好	A/ V	suàn hǎo	to consider- to be good "to consider well"	V+Suff*
跑快	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	跑	V	快	A/ V	pǎo kuài	to run- to be fast "to run fast"	V+post VC
炸透	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	炸	V	透	A/ V	zhà tòu	to explode- to be gone through	V+post VC
走光	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	走	V	光	A/ V	zǒu guāng	to walk- to be smoothed "to smooth smt by walking"	V+post VC
打赢	V+V	?	?	?	打	V	赢	V	dǎ yíng	to bet- to win "to win"	????
谈龙	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	谈	V	龙	A/ V	tán lóng	to talk- to be close to "to reach agreement by talking"	V+post VC

COMPOUND	STRUCT	EN DO	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st-C	1-CAT	2nd-C	2-CAT	PIN YIN	MEANING	OBS
吃完	V+V	Y	V	L	吃	V	完	V	chī wán	to eat- to finish "to finish eating"	V+Suff*
骑累	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	骑	V	累	A/ V	qí lěi	to ride- to be tired "to be tired from riding"	V+post VC
想到	V+V	Y	V	L	想	V	到	V	xiǎng dào	to think- to reach "to manage to think"	V+Suff*
写好	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	写	V	好	A/ V	xiě hǎo	to write- to be good "to write well"	V+Suff*
填好	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	填	V	好	A/ V	tián hǎo	to fill- to be good "to fill well"	V+Suff*
看完	V+V	Y	V	L	看	V	完	V	kàn wán	to see- to finish "to finish to see"	V+Suff*
看好	V+A/ V	Y	V	L	看	V	好	A/ V	kàn hǎo	to see- to be good "to see well"	V+Suff*
回到	V+V	Y	V	L	回	V	到	V	huí dào	to come back- to reach "to manage to come back"	V+Suff*
梦到	V+V	Y	V	L	梦	V	到	V	mèng dào	to dream- to reach "to manage to dream"	V+Suff*
用完	V+V	Y	V	L	用	V	完	V	yòng wán	to use- to finish "to be used up"	V+Suff*

**Legenda:** A= adjective; V=verb; N=noun; Adv=adverb; R=right; L=left; B=both; A/V= adjective+ verb;

### Analysis

In the table above I analyze different aspects of the verbs::

- internal structure;
- head;
- position of the head;
- meaning;

- e) grammatical relation between constituents;
- f) V2;

Internal structure:

All the constructions are:

- (14) a. [V+V] V
- b. [V+A/V] V

(14.a) is a Verb formed by two verbs, (14.b) is a Verb formed by a Verb and a Verb or Adjective as second constituent.

Starosta et al. (1998) distinguish two different kind of resultative verbs: V+A/V and

V+ Suff. In this case the head would be on the right, according to the usual place for the head in Chinese<sup>1</sup>.

Packard (2000) confirm the same idea of Starosta et al. With two types of resultative verbs:

-resultative verbs with 2 free constituent;

-resultative verbs formed by one free constituent (V<sub>1</sub>) and by a bound one (V<sub>2</sub>) with a standard meaning if it's used as a resultative complement. V<sub>2</sub> would have different bound meaning and the same phonological form, so they would be a variation of a morpheme (Packard 2000).

In (14.b) the second constituent can also be an attributive verb, in Chinese, some adjectives that follows a noun have a predicative function:

- (15) 花红 *huā hóng* “the flower is red”
- 红花 *hóng huā* “the red flower”

In (15) 红 *hóng* “red” can behave as an adjective or a verb, according to its position in the sentence. If it is before the noun behaves as an Adjective, if it is after it behaves as a Verb.

In the table above if there is A/V is because the word can behave as both categories according to the context, but in these constructions are verb and modify the previous constituent:

- (16) a. 漂白 *piǎo bái* to bleach- to be white "to be white by being bleach"
- c. 穿破 *chuān pò* to wear- to be broken "to break by wearing"

Head:

All the verbs have a head. Only one is particular, 醉红 *zuì hóng* to be drunk – to be red “to be red of drinking”, which is not clearly a resultative verb because is formed by two adjectives, even if, according to the meaning, it can be defined as a resultative construction, 红 *hóng* is the result of be drunk.

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<sup>1</sup>Cfr. p. 2.



Position of the head:

All the verbs have a head, so it's important so see if I can generalize about the position as Packard (2000). Usually the head in the verbal compounds in Chinese is on the left. According to this idea I will expect to have the head on the left.

There are few cases where is not like this:

**Table 2.**

COMPOUND	CA T	STRUCT	END O	HEAD-C	HEAD-S	1st -C	1-CA T	2nd -C	2-CA T	PĪ N YĪ N	TRANSCRIPTION
杀死	V	V+V	Y	V	R	杀	V	死	V	shā sǐ	to kill- to die "to die by killing"
学会	V	V+V	Y	V	R	学	V	会	V	xué huì	to study- to know "to know by studying"
打死	V	V+V	Y	V	R	打	V	死	V	dǎ sǐ	to hit- to die "to beat smoe to death"
气哭	V	A/V+V	Y	V	R	气	A/V	哭	V	qì kū	to be angry- to cry "to cry for be angry"
吓死	V	A/V+V	Y	V	R	吓	A/V	死	V	xià sǐ	to be frightened- to die "to be frightened to death"
累死	V	A/V+V	Y	V	R	累	A/V	死	V	lěi sǐ	to be tired- to die "to be tired to death"

In this table I collect the verbs with a different head due to their metaphorical meaning:

- (17) 打死 *dǎ sǐ* to hit-to die “to strike until death”
- 吓死 *xià sǐ* to be scared-to die “to be scared to death”
- 累死 *lěi sǐ* to be tired –to die “to be dead tired”

Sybesma (1999) defines these kind of compounds “*resultative metaphorical verbs*”. Their structure is [A /V+V]V. The first constituent is an adjective which here has the function of an adverb to explain the metaphorical cause and the way is going on the action express by V2: V<sub>2</sub> is the syntactic and semantic head.

The others are formed by two verbs. In this case the head is defined according to a meaning test:

- (18) 杀死 *shā sǐ* to kill- to die “to kill to death”  
 学会 *xué huì* to study- to know “to know thank to study”  
 气哭 *qì kū* to get angry- to cry “to cry because of anger”

Whereas in the resultative verbs  $V_2$  is the modifier, here the head can be on the right or on the left because the only test is the one of the meaning. This implies an interpretation of the meaning which can be arbitrary and not clear for a classification

In the other cases the head is on the left. The compound is a verb because of the category of the first constituent,  $V_2$  is just used to specify the meaning of the action expressed by  $V_1$ :

- (19) 跑快 *pǎo kuài* to run- to be fast “to run fast”  
 弄湿 *nòng shī* to make- to be wet “to make something wet”  
 $V_2$  specify the meaning of  $V_1$  which is more general.

Meaning:

I considered the meanings of the two constituents and the final result given by their sum. The final meaning was useful to decide which was the head of the construction. I didn't consider the elements with the structure [Avv+V]V because the final meaning is partially lexicalized.

The meaning of the two constituents was one of the criteria to identify the head, but not the only one. The reason is due to the fact that in some cases the meaning of the modifier was stronger than the one of the head:

- (20) 听懂 *tīng dǒng* to listen- to understand “to listen by understanding”

At a first sight 懂 *dǒng* seems to be the head because of the final meaning. Nevertheless the head is on the left because 懂 *dǒng* is a resultative complement and because of this is not the categorial head and is just a modifier of the meaning of 听 *tīng*.

There is often the problem regarding the right interpretation of these constructions because

of their meaning. In Chinese translation is a big obstruction and it can be misleading.

According to language, I can find different meaning. For example English is a language more focused on the result, whereas Italian is focused on the cause.

This difference is important to explain that the meaning is something I can use to reinforce an idea, but is not enough to define in an absolute way the nature of the constituents of this kind of constructions.

Grammatical Relation:

The constituents of a compound can have a relationship of subordination or coordination.

All the verbs I analyzed seem to be subordinate because one of the constituent is the modifier and the other is the modified.

In a subordinate compound the non- head element is a complement of the head, like in 钓鱼 *diao yú* to fish- fish “to fish” 鱼 *yú* “fish” is the object of the verb. Whereas in the case of 跑累 *pǎo lěi* to run-to be run "to be tired from running" the first verb is the cause of the second one and there is a consequent relation of time between them.

The classification of subordinate/coordinate is not so good for resultative verbs because these constructions are defined as the first type only because the coordination seem to be worse. Maybe it is necessary to think about different categorizations, more suitable to these particular verbs

### V<sub>2</sub>:

I analyzed the nature of V<sub>2</sub>. I omit the particular constructions and the metaphorical ones about which I already write before.

I analyzed the others in two groups *post VC* or *Suffixes* (Chao, 1968 and Starosta et al., 1998). The first type includes verbs and attributive verb that modify the previous element; *Suffixes* are standard verb called suffixes not to exclude the possibility they are compounds, but to distinguish their nature from the other resultatives.

## **Conclusions**

Resultative verbs are a concatenation of two verbs. As in compounding, the final meaning is not always derived only from one of the constituents, but sometimes is lexicalized.

These constructions can have a head or not and this element is defined both for the meaning, and for the category. As in compounds, it is not possible to put other elements between the two verbs.

The aim of my work was to analyze the nature of the resultative verbs in Chinese. I analyze their structure, their nature, the meaning and other aspects to clear their definition, however without getting to a conclusion. There still a lot of possibilities and definitions.

My idea is that we can talk about compounds, but there are other interesting point of view:

- suffixes;
- phrase.

The first case is the case of the standard complement that are often considered as *Suffixes* because they lose something of their meaning in the resultative constructions. In this case, however, the standard complement has not the function of the head, which instead should have if it was actually a suffix

About the idea of being phrases there are a lot of doubts. In Chinese there is another verbal construction, the potential verbs, which can put an element in the middle of a resultative construction.

The problem is to decide if these two constructions are different or is the same, used in different ways.

For Chao (1968) resultative verbs can behave in different ways according to the context, sometimes they are compounds, and other times they behave as phrases.

The last point of view I considered is the one of the Chinese speakers. Their idea is that these verbs are divided into two types: resultatives and compounds. The first type includes those formed by a standard complement which can be defined as a suffix, and the others are real compounds. This new idea is really strong and it would create a problem because the most of resultatives would not be compounds.

Even if this work hasn't given a clear conclusion and definition of the nature of resultative verbs, I managed to begin some new reflections about these constructions to create new possible investigations in the future.

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