

## The Category of LAI in Mandarin Purposives

In this paper, I focus on the syntactic status of *lai* ('LAI') in the so-called *lai* purposive as in (1) and argue that it should be treated as a light verb, different from Liao and Lin's (2019) complementizer proposal as an English Purposive Clause. As shown in (1), a typical SVO sentence can be followed by an additional clause to express the subject's intention to do something. Liao and Lin (2019) propose that this additional *lai* purposive is a CP clause, in which *lai* occupies the complementizer position, as shown in (2). However, the existence of the so-called *lai* purposive and *lai*'s syntactic analysis are dubious. In the literature, the *gei* purposive receives the most discussions (i.e. Paul 1988, Huang and Ahrens 1999, Ting and Chang 2005, Lin and Huang 2015). Importantly, it has been noted that an additional *lai* ('LAI') can be added before the *gei* purposive as in (3), and this additional *lai* has been considered as a purposive clause marker by Paul (1998), or as a linker by Ting and Chang (2005). None of them consider *lai* as part of the main purposive clause.

In addition, the complementizer analysis for *lai* in (1) also encounters several problems. Firstly, *lai* has been observed to appear in typical SVO sentences, preceding the main verb as in (4) (i.e. Tang 1979). As noted by Wei (2018), *lai* in (4) is similar to the one in (1) since both denote the intention of the speaker and can be deleted freely without affecting the grammaticality of the original sentences. If this is the case, to apply the complementizer analysis for *lai* in (1) to this similar *lai* in (4) is quite unexpected. Secondly, under Liao and Lin's proposal, the complementizer *lai* takes an IP. However, Wei (2018) has argued that this IP analysis is not tenable. He has shown that the typical IP elements such as temporal adverbs and modals are unacceptable in the so-called *lai* purposives, as shown in (5) and (6). Thirdly, Wei (2018) also shows that while manner how *zenmeyang* is compatible with the so-called *lai* purposive, the reason why *weisheme* is not, as shown in (7) and (8). Tsai (2008) has argued that the reason why *weisheme* is located in the CP periphery, while the manner how *zenmeyang* is located within the VP domain. This then leads Wei (2018) to conclude that what follows *lai* should be a VP, rather than a IP.

Under Dikken's (2006) framework, Wei (2018) has proposed that *lai* is the head of a RP which connects two constituents: the preceding clause and the VP which follows *lai*. Based on Wei's (2018) gist, I believe that his proposal can be simplified further. I propose that the purposive *lai* should be treated as a light verb, located in the *v*P head position and can be optionally realized according to the speaker's intention. Hence example (1) should have the structure in (9). The structure is also similar to the proposal by Liao and Lin (2019), expect that their CP is a *v*P now.

This proposal has the following advantages: Firstly, what follows the light verb *lai* is a VP in (9), which is in accordance with Wei's observations. Secondly, *lai* in a typical SVO sentence as in (4) and the so-called *lai* purposive in (9) receives a unified analysis, in which example (4) has the structure in (10). Finally, *lai* as a light verb is in line with the earlier observations in which it is considered as a marker or linker. In other words, the so-called *lai* purposive does not exist if *lai* is considered an optional syntactic element for emphasis. As shown in (11), note that when a *gei* purposive co-occur with *lai*, *lai* is always optional, but *gei* is always obligatory. That is, if *gei* is missing, the occurrence of the so-called *lai* purposive is ungrammatical. Under the current proposal, example (3) has a structure like the one in (12). Following Lin and Huang (2015), the *gei* purposive in (12) is composed of a *gei* (light) verb and a IP complement. Since *lai* is a light verb which denotes the speaker's intention, it can be optionally realized and cannot exist alone without a verb (i.e. the verb *gei* here). On the other hand, *gei* remains in the verb position when co-occurring with *lai*. Without *lai*, *gei* then moves to the *v* position (i.e. Huang, Li and Li 2009).

### Examples:

- (1) Zhangsan<sub>i</sub> mai-le yi-ben shu [lai PRO<sub>i</sub> du].  
Zhangsan buy-ASP one-CL book LAI read  
'Zhangsan bought a book to read.'
- (2) Zhangsan<sub>i</sub> mai-le yi-ben shu [CP lai [IP PRO<sub>i</sub> du]].
- (3) Zhangsan mai-le yi-ben shu (lai) [gei Lisi song baba].  
Zhangsan buy-ASP one-CL book LAI GEI Lisi give father  
'Zhangsan bought a book for Lisi to give it to his father.'
- (4) Wo (lai) chang shouge gei ni ting.  
I LAI sing CL song for you listen  
'I (come to) sing a song for you to listen.'
- (5) \*Zhangsan<sub>i</sub> mai-le yi-ben shu [CP lai [IP PRO<sub>i</sub> **mingtian** du].  
Zhangsan buy-ASP one-CL book LAI tomorrow read  
'Zhangsan bought a book to read tomorrow.'
- (6) \*Zhangsan<sub>i</sub> mai-le yi-ben shu [CP lai [IP PRO<sub>i</sub> **neng** song Lisi].  
Zhangsan buy-ASP one-CL book LAI can give Lisi  
'Zhangsan bought a book so that he can give it to Lisi.'
- (7) Zhangsan mai-le yi-ben shu lai zenmeyang quyue Lisi?  
Zhangsan buy-ASP one-CL book LAI how please Lisi  
'In what manner did Zhangsan buy a book to please Lisi?'
- (8) \*Zhangsan mai-le yi-ben shu lai weisheme quyue Lisi?  
Zhangsan buy-ASP one-CL book LAI why please Lisi  
'Intended meaning: Why did Zhangsan buy a book to please Lisi?'
- (9) Zhangsan<sub>i</sub> mai-le<sub>j</sub> [VP yi-ben shu t<sub>j</sub> [VP lai [VP PRO<sub>i</sub> du]]].
- (10) Wo [VP lai [VP chang shou ge gei ni ting]].
- (11) Zhangsan mai-le yi-ben shu (lai) \*(gei) Lisi song baba. = (3)
- (12) Zhangsan<sub>i</sub> mai-le<sub>j</sub> [VP yi-ben shu t<sub>j</sub> [VP lai [VP gei [IP Lisi song baba]]]].

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