

Original Paper

The Subjective Tendency of Separable Phenomenon of the Separable Words

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Abstract

The separation structure of separable words is a construction that functionally expresses the speaker's subjective tendency, which is the inherent law governing the phenomenon of separation of separable words. With the deepening of linguistic research, people have also begun to recognize the importance of linguistics in communication. Language is not just about expressing propositions and narrating events, it has a deeper meaning: it can serve as the speaker's emotions or attitude, and so on. The subjective characteristics of language are also becoming the most important aspect of verbal communication.

Keywords

separable words, segregation form, subjective tendency

1. Introduction

1.1 About the Subjectivity of Language

In previous linguistic studies, the dominant schools have always been structural linguistics and formal linguistics. Many linguists do not recognize the subjectivity of language, arguing that the function of language is to express propositions “objectively”. The study of the “subjectivity” of language is at most limited to the scope of literary research. Modern British and American linguists have always had a rationalist bias, Lyons notes, “that language is basically for propositional thought” (Wang, 2008, p. 94). With the continuous deepening of linguistic research, people have come to a deeper understanding that language is not primarily used to narrate events or express propositions, but rather to express attitudes and convey emotions. That is, language is a tool for expressing subjectivity. This understanding actually goes back to the essence of language, which is a product of society and the most important

communication tool for humanity. What are the main tasks of human communication? It is obvious to communicate information and ideas. Narrating events or expressing propositions is only an attachment form for people to express their thoughts. Dai Haoyi (1990) pointed out that language is the main communication tool for human beings. When we speak, we incorporate our thoughts into words and convey to others what we do, feel, see, think, and intend to do (Wang, 2008, p. 94). When we listen, we convert words into thoughts and grasp the actions, emotions, perceptions, thoughts, and intentions that others want us to know.

“Subjectivity” refers to the speaker’s “self-expression” in the process of language expression. The speaker expresses their position, attitude, and emotions while speaking, thus leaving their own imprint in the speech. Speakers always express “selves” through the sentence structure, words, pronunciation, intonation, and body language they use.

In the late 20th century, with the rise and development of functional linguistics and cognitive linguistics, people gradually paid attention to the subjectivity of language and found that subjectivity plays a very important role in human communication. From a certain perspective, subjectivity influences the formation and interpretation of meaning. In recent years, subjective research has continued to deepen and develop. People have shifted their focus from studying explicit forms of subjectivity (such as Japanese) to studying implicit forms of expression (such as English). From semantic change research to subjective research in grammaticalization.

1.2 The Isolated Form of Separable Words

Based on the global interlanguage corpus, the paper studies the separations of 207 separable words in the Outline of Chinese Level Vocabulary and Chinese Character Hierarchy and concludes that there are 7 kinds of separations.

- 1) “A+了(+other forms)+B”
- 2) “A+着(+other forms)+B”
- 3) “A+过(+Other Forms)+B”
- 4) “A+complement+B”
- 5) “A+quantifier+B”
- 6) “A+noun/pronoun+B”
- 7) “A+的+B”

1.3 The Subjective Tendency of the Isolated Form of Separable Words

The current consensus on the subjectivity of language is that it is mainly reflected in three aspects:

- (1) The speaker’s perspective
- (2) The speaker’s emotions
- (3) The speaker’s understanding

However, these three aspects are often interrelated, intertwined, and difficult to separate. We find that the separation form of separable words reflects the subjectivity of language to varying degrees.

2. The Separation Form of Separable Words Reflects the Speaker's Perspective

“Perspective” refers to the speaker's perspective on observing objective situations or the starting point for narrating objective situations.

2.1 Insert the Component “着(zhe)/了(le)/过(guo)” into “AXB”

The insertion of elements such as “着(zhe)/了(le)/过(guo)” in “AXB” best reflects the changes in the speaker's perspective.

The insertion of the element “着(zhe)” in “AXB” indicates that the event is in an unfinished state, which is a conclusion drawn from observations made within the event. For example:

(1) 所以连日来，武契奇和布尔纳比奇当着陈大使的面所做的表态，显然也有打消外界疑虑的意图。(So in recent days, the statements made by Vucic and Brnabic in the presence of Ambassador Chen clearly have the intention of dispelling external doubts.)

In example (1), “当着面” is not an action that people need to pay attention to in daily communication. From the perspective of the speaker, understanding the events in the sentence, the action of “当着面” is ongoing and has not yet completed, while the subsequent “dispelling external doubts” can better reflect the continuous progress of the action.

Insert the component “了(le)” in “AXB”. The perfect aspect “了(le)” is used after a verb to not only describe a past event but also indicate the speaker's perspective in discourse. Shen Jiaxuan pointed out that using the perfect aspect of the verb “了(le)” indicates that “the speaker views the event from the present moment (i.e., the moment when the sentence is spoken) and associates it with the “now”. For example:

(2) 会泽县农业农村局局长饶彦章感叹：“关键时刻，队员帮了我们大忙！”(Rao Yanzhang, Director of the Agriculture and Rural Bureau of Huize County, lamented, “At a critical moment, the team members helped us a lot!”)

In example (2), “helped us a lot (帮了我们大忙)” indicates that from the speaker's perspective, it is already a completed event. At some point before speaking, this “help” has already been completed. The words of Rao Yanzhang quoted later illustrate how this “help” was carried out. When “A+B” appears, it indicates that the speaker's perspective is no longer the grammatical subject of the sentence itself, but rather the speaker as the subject of human affairs.

The inserted component in “AXB” is “过(guo)”. This “过(guo)” to some extent reflects the completion of the action. Although this incident has already happened and ended, it is still related to the present. When people express past events, they usually use “过(guo)” to explain. The meaning represented by “过(guo)” in Chinese can be understood as a representation of the past tense, indicating an event that occurred once or was repeated multiple times before. Put it in a past tense that no longer exists when speaking, but is still related to the current situation. For example:

(3) 张家的老四前年里头给我回过一封信，这几年就没再联系。(The fourth son of the Zhang family replied to me a letter a year ago, but he hasn't contacted me again in the past few years.)

In example (3), “reply” is a separable word, with the tense particle “过 (guo)” inserted in the middle to indicate that the event occurred in the past.

2.2 The Insertion Component in AXB is a Directional Complement

The insertion of directional complements in “AXB” is similar to the insertion of “着 (zhe)” in “AXB”. The forms of directional complements such as “起来 (qilai) 、下去 (xiaqu)” also observe events from the perspective of the current speaker, using the present as the main reference point to view the start and duration of events. For example:

(4) 好吗，这会你倒发起火来了，早干什么去了。(Come on! You’re getting angry now. What did you do earlier!)

The “Come on!” in Example (4) introduces a related topic, which is a transition between two different topics and reflects the changes in time. When “起 (qi)” is inserted, it represents a specific situation of the time state. The phrase “发起火来” in the example sentence indicates the beginning of the “发 (fa) 火 (huo)” action.

2.3 Inserting Quantifiers/Pronouns into AXB

The inserted components in “AXB” are quantifiers/pronouns. Whether the “quantifier” in “number+quantifier” is a noun quantifier, momentum quantifier or time quantifier, the inserted components in “AXB” are all from the speaker’s demonstrative perspective, indicating the speaker’s recognition of things or situations and reflecting the speaker’s subjectivity.

The structure of “number+noun quantifier+name” includes “one household”, “one family member”, “one bottle of beverage”, and so on. Among them, “household”, “door”, and “bottle” have their own parts of speech as nouns, and are used as quantifiers here because from the speaker’s perspective, words with such noun parts of speech are used as quantifiers. The speaker uses “household” as a quantifier to describe “family”, referring to physical things like “a house” as virtual things like “a family”. The use of “door” to describe “marriage” also has the same principle as the traditional Chinese concept of “matching doors”. Using “bottle” as a quantifier to modify “beverage” is described by observing the container in which the beverage is placed. It can be seen that the quantifier of “number+noun” better reflects the speaker’s indicative perspective.

3. The Separation Form of Separable Words Reflects the Speaker’s Emotions

The main function of language is not to express propositions, but to express human attitudes and convey emotions. In addition to expressing the speaker’s subjective perspective and understanding, the separation form of separable words also expresses the speaker’s “emotions” in a sentence. In a broad sense, the speaker’s “emotions” generally include the speaker’s emotions, emotions, intentions, attitudes etc.

3.1 Inserting Components as Result Complements in AXB

From the analysis of “好 (hao)”, it can be seen that “好 (hao)” can insert the most separable words

after supplementing the result complement, for example:

(5) 对于这次事件的发生原因，我们要及时的做出相关调查，尽快找出主要原因和负责人，同时让相关生产厂家严格把好关，避免因为产品质量的问题造成这次的损失。(For the cause of this incident, we need to conduct relevant investigations in a timely manner, identify the main cause and responsible person as soon as possible, and have relevant manufacturers strictly control it to avoid losses caused by product quality issues.)

(6) 强烈要求将他派到门岗去，在几天的时间里，小区发生的事情太多了，业主们都有点焦躁不安了，没日没夜站好岗，放好哨，就是为了让业主们放心，物业在安全方面一直都很重视。(I strongly demand that he be sent to the gate post. In the past few days, there have been too many incidents in the community, and the owners have become a bit restless. They stand guard day and night, set up their guard, just to reassure the owners. The property management has always attached great importance to safety.)

(7) 班主任看到妈妈后，对她讲到孩子的字一直以来都太差了，这次因为字写的不好，试卷上的内容阅卷老师看不清，丢了不少分，想要写好字，还需要家长用点心。(After seeing her mother, the head teacher told her that the child's handwriting had always been too poor. This time, because of the poor handwriting, the teacher could not read the contents of the examination paper clearly, and lost a lot of points. If you want to write well, parents need to use Dim sum.)

(8) 爆炸之后，团里响起了紧急集合的铃声，还没有等战士们排好队，团长就开始部署起工作来，让战士们尽快的帮助前线的战士补充防线。(After the explosion, the emergency assembly bell rang in the regiment. Before the soldiers could line up, the regimental leader began to deploy work, asking the soldiers to help the frontline soldiers replenish their defenses as soon as possible.)

In the above example sentences, it can be seen that the separation form of the separable word is inserted with “好 (hao)”, which better reflects the speaker's subjective intention. After inserting the word “好 (hao)” into the separable word, there are still related complements, such as “尽 (jin)”, “碎 (sui)”, “足 (zu)”, and so on which makes itself more subjective. After modifying A as a complement, the separation form of “AXB” has subjective characteristics and expresses the speaker's obvious emotions.

3.2 Insert Component in AXB as “个 (ge)”

As for the function of “个 (ge)” between verb and noun components, some people believe that the function of the “个 (ge)” between verb and noun components is to “add an irrational meaning of” light and casual “to the entire verb object structure”; some people believe that adding “个 (ge)” can add meaning such as casualness, convenience and carelessness. Some people believe that adding a character can express the speaker's emotions of excitement, dissatisfaction, or depression.

We believe that “个 (ge)” should be a “subjective marker”, indicating the structure containing “个 (ge)” to express the speaker's subjective emotions (from the perspective of the story protagonist). For example:

(9) 这个城市的日常生活，样样都离不开排队：买鱼、买鸡、买鸭要排队，买萝卜、白菜、豆腐、要排队，买米、买油要排队，买车票、戏票、电影票要排队，买根油条、买个包子要排队，理个发、洗个澡也要排队……一句话，要生活就离不开排队；不排队，就简直无法生活。(Everyday life in this city is inseparable from queuing: queuing for fish, chicken, duck, radish, cabbage, tofu, rice, oil, car tickets, theater tickets, movie tickets, deep-fried dough sticks, steamed stuffed buns, haircuts and baths... In a word, queuing is indispensable for life. Without queuing, life is simply impossible.)

Example (9) is a semantic progressive sentence group that lists more than ten types of buying, buying, and buying. It can be seen that the further the list is listed, the more impatient the speaker becomes and their emotions become more intense. And when emotions are most intense, there are three consecutive “V 个 V” in the sentence, and the last two “V 个 V”—“[理个发 get a haircut], [洗个澡 take a shower]” are reinforced by the adverb “也(ye)” that expresses the speaker’s emotions. Barbing and taking a shower may not necessarily be lighter, more casual, or more convenient than buying carrots or rice. So why do you insert “个(ge)” between “haircut” and “taking a shower”? This indicates that “V 个 V” have stronger subjectivity than the preceding “VN” (such as “buying carrots”, “buying rice” etc.).

The presence/absence sentences that introduce event participants with “individual” often contain the speaker’s subjective attitude and evaluation of the participants. For example:

(10) 有一次村里有[个]恶霸想试试贺龙的胆量，就乘贺氏父子与他同桌吃饭之机在桌子底下放了一枪。(Once in the village, there was a bully who wanted to test He Long’s courage. While He Long and his father were dining with him at the same table, he fired a shot under the table.)

(11) 那时候，黄河下游的夷族，有[个]部落首领名叫后羿野心勃勃，想夺取夏王的权力。(At that time, among the barbarians in the lower reaches of the Yellow River, there was a tribal leader named Hou Yi who was ambitious and wanted to seize the power of the Xia King.)

The existing sentences above all contain a certain subjective color. Example (5) “个 (ge)” followed by the noun “bully” with strong attribute colors; Example (6) is a subjective comment sentence.

(12) 村里有[个]姑娘叫小芳，长得好看又善良，一双美丽的大眼睛、辫子粗又长……(There is a girl named Xiaofang in the village, who is beautiful and kind, with a pair of beautiful big eyes and thick and long braids.)

(13) 东方红，太阳升，中国出了[个]毛泽东。他为人民谋生存，他是人民大救星……(The East is red, the sun is rising, and China has produced Mao Zedong. He strives for the survival of the people, he is the great savior of the people.)

Examples (12) and (13) are lyrics that use “个 (ge)” to introduce event participants, expressing the strong emotions of the speaker (singer) towards the introduced event participants. If “个 (ge)” is replaced with “一 (yi) 个 (ge)”, the emotional nature of the existing sentence will be greatly reduced, and even become less natural.

In addition to existential and implicit sentences where “个 (ge)” can reflect the speaker’s subjective emotions, many other sentence structures containing “个 (ge)” also focus on expressing the speaker’s

subjective emotions.

(14) 今天碰到你，蛮高兴的，我们做[个]朋友。(Nice to meet you today. Let's be friends.)

The basic function of the quantifier “个 (ge)” is already very weak, because “个 (ge)” is difficult to replace with “一 (yi) 个 (ge)”. It is very unnatural to say “我们做一个朋友”. Similar examples include:

(15) 不嫌弃，我们做[个]邻居。(Don't mind, let's be neighbors.)

Example (15) is also difficult to change to “我们做一个邻居”. This phenomenon that goes beyond the usage of quantifiers indicates that “个 (ge)” is no longer a syntactic requirement, but emphasizes the speaker's subjective emotions.

4. The Separation Form of Separable Words Reflects the Speaker's Understanding

The subjectivity of the separation form of separable words is also reflected in the speaker's “understanding” of objective events. “Understanding” is mainly related to the modal categories in language. For example:

a. He must be married. (他必须结婚了。)

b. He must be married. (他必定结婚了。)

When the English modal verb “must” indicates “必 (bi) 须 (xu)”, it belongs to the action or moral modality, such as sentence a, which believes that “He” is necessary for marriage. When expressing “必 (bi) 定 (ding) (certain)”, it belongs to the cognitive modality. For example, sentence b is a subjective speculation made by the speaker based on their own knowledge about the possibility that the proposition “he is married” is true. The action modality or moral modality involves the speaker's instructions, commitments, wishes, and evaluations, while the cognitive modality involves the speaker's judgment of the truth of the proposition (generally speaking, the latter is more subjective than the former). The modality in language focuses on the subjectivity of the speaker. (Wang, 2008, p. 141)

4.1 The Insertion of Attributive Noun (的 de) in AXB

(16) 他们发现了，发现我儿子他们破案靠的不是家什，咱们帮的忙，是街道治安联防。(They found out that my son and his team didn't rely on household items to solve the case. What we helped with was the street security joint defense.)

(17) 四虎子是三月里结的婚，天赐在四月才找到了先生。(Sihuzi got married in March, and it was not until April that Tianci found her husband.)

(18) 大风准是为了寻乐才结的婚，她真有点生大风的气了。(Da Feng got married only for the sake of seeking pleasure. She was really a bit angry with Da Feng.)

We found that these separated sentences with inserted “的 (de)” all express the speaker's emphasis on the proposition. Example (16) is when the speaker emphasizes the factual behavior of a responsible person; example (17) is an event that the speaker emphasizes occurring at a certain time and place; example (18) is an event that the speaker emphasizes occurs under certain conditions.

(19) 他们十月份在 D 城的一个乡间舞会上见的面。(They met at a country ball in D city in October.)

Example (19) all involve the speaker confirming the fact that they have met, expressing the speaker's subjective recognition that the proposition is true.

The separation form of inserting “的 (de)” expresses the speaker's subjective recognition that the proposition is true, and there is also evidence that these separation forms of inserting “的 (de)” reflect past events. The events that have occurred are generally true facts, and for the speaker, they are facts that should be believed by the listener.

4.2 The Inserted Component in AXB is a Possible Complement

In AXB, X is a possible complement and the main form of separation that expresses the speaker's subjective understanding. The insertion of possible complements in separable words reflects to some extent the speaker's judgment on the value of the proposition, which is a form of understanding by people. For example:

(20) 后来这样的情况她也就不在意了，当老公出差后，她竟然睡不着觉，可能是老公原本震天的鼾声，在她这里已经习惯了，缺少了鼾声，感觉不到原本睡觉的情形了。(Later on, she didn't care about this situation anymore. When her husband went on a business trip, she couldn't sleep. Perhaps it was because her husband had already become accustomed to his deafening snoring, and without snoring, she couldn't feel like she was sleeping.)

(21) 等他真正能迈得动脚步后，才发现身体还是非常的虚弱，根本不想走起来。(After he was able to take real steps, he realized that his body was still very weak and he didn't even want to walk.)

The words “睡 (shui) 不 (bu) 着 (zhao) 觉 (jiao) (unable to sleep)” and “迈 (mai) 得 (de) 动 (dong) 脚 (jiao) 步 (bu) (able to take steps)” in the above example both indicate the speaker's judgment on the actions and behaviors in the current situation, and also reflect the speaker's own understanding. Yang Qinghui (1995) conducted an investigation and research on separable words and found that in the insertion forms of possible complements and impossible complements, the former is significantly less than the latter. This is closely related to people's cognitive psychology. People are more accustomed to beautiful things and consider them normal, so there is no need for special labeling. However, for those bad things, people believe that they need special treatment, so they become labeled. In terms of cognition, it has convex dominance, and bad things are often more likely to become the focus. For uncertain events, people can only make subjective judgments. So inserting a possible complement in the separation form of a separable word is a direct way to express the speaker's subjective understanding.

5. Discussion

Divide the subjectivity of language into the speaker's perspective, the speaker's emotions, and the speaker's understanding. In fact, these three aspects intersect and are interrelated, making it difficult to completely separate them. The insertion of modifying attributives, pronouns, nouns, verbs, and other

case related attributive forms in the analyzed separable words not only expresses the speaker's emotions, but also expresses the speaker's subjective perspective and understanding in the sentence.

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