Abstract. This paper discusses unmarked comitative relative clauses activated by comitative relational nouns. Different from canonical relative clauses, these clauses are restricted syntactically and semantically. This paper points out that comitative relative clauses are directly generated by the conceptual structure of comitative relational nouns rather than by transformation, since the semantic structures of these nouns contain comitative prepositions and their arguments. Therefore, comitative relative clauses are presentations of the downgraded predications of comitative relational nouns at the syntactic level. Besides, a questionnaire survey is conducted in this research to investigate the grammaticality of comitative relative clauses, through which, we find that these constructions, which are triggered by comitative relational nouns, are less grammatical than canonical relative clauses, which are generated by syntactic transformation.

Keywords: Relational nouns, Comitative Relative clauses, Semantic structure

1 Introduction

Relativization means to make a syntactic operation of a noun argument in a clause, by which, the whole clause will change to be a modifier of the noun argument. In Mandarin, we are used to prepositioning relative clauses by using the complementizer de (的) to connect adnominal clauses and head nouns. Keenan & Comrie proposed the famous theory of “Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy” through a large number of investigations on languages, which reveals the possibility of relativization of nouns on various syntactic positions. [1] The accessibility hierarchy shows as follow:

Subject > Direct object > Indirect object > Oblique > Possessive > Comparative

Among them, the subjects of clauses have the highest accessibility, while comparatives are most impossible to be relativized. According to implicational universals, if the noun argument ranking behind is allowed to be relativized, those ranking in the front should also get approved. In Mandarin, subjects and direct objects can be relativized directly while arguments behind indirect objects can only achieve marked relativization.
by means of pronominal anaphora in clauses [1]. However, Ning found that oblique is permissible to get unmarked relativization. For example: location, time, way and tool. While other oblique such as comitative can achieve relativization only by means of pronominal anaphora. [2] Such as:

(1) a. 我 和 那 个 女孩儿 跳舞。
   I danced with that girl.
b. *我 跳舞 的 那 个 女孩
   *the girl that I danced

Yet Huang pointed out that comitative relational nouns can be relativized directly sometimes [3]. For example:

(2) 我 跳舞 的 舞伴
   the dancing partner with whom I danced

Based on this idea, we find that, in addition to the word 舞伴 (dancing partner), there still exist other relational nouns allowing unmarked relativization with comitative categories. Such nouns usually refer to people, which are usually constituted by morphemes such as -友 (friend), -伴 (companion) or -同- (together) and -对- (oppose). These words include:

- 酒肉朋友 (a mercenary friend) 盟友 (ally) 难友 (fellow sufferer) 战友 (comrade-in-arms) 队友 (teammate)
- 伙伴 (partner) 旅伴 (travelling companion) 同伴 (companion) 舞伴 (dancing partner)
- 同窗 (classmate) 同党 (partisan) 同僚 (colleague) 同谋 (accomplice)
- 对头 (enemy) 对手 (opponent) 对象 (object)

In this paper, these nouns are considered as exceptions in accessibility of relativization in Mandarin. Meanwhile, this special kind of relative clauses can reveal the competitive relationship between syntactic rules and lexical semantics. Therefore, this paper aims to discuss unmarked comitative relative clauses caused by comitative relational nouns and has an in-depth exploration of their semantic, syntactic features and generative mechanisms.