

Chinese truck-drivers in Distributed Morphology

The Distributed Morphology (DM) framework postulates a Y model of word formation by a theory of late insertion. Acategorial roots ( $\sqrt{\quad}$ ) and category defining heads ( $n^\circ$ ,  $v^\circ$ ,  $a^\circ$ ) are hierarchically arranged by syntactic principles and operations, prior to Vocabulary Insertion at PF and semantic interpretation at LF (Halle & Marantz 1993). Harley (2008) proposes a DM analysis of English synthetic nominal compounds, such as truck-driver, according to which non-head nouns incorporate into the acategorial root of the head noun, prior to its own incorporation into its category defining  $n^\circ$  head (a roll-up incorporation). The current study provides a DM account for Chinese synthetic nominal compounds, in which non-head nouns do not incorporate into the acategorial root of the head noun, instead, it is the encompassing root that incorporates into the category defining  $n^\circ$  head (a pied-piping incorporation).

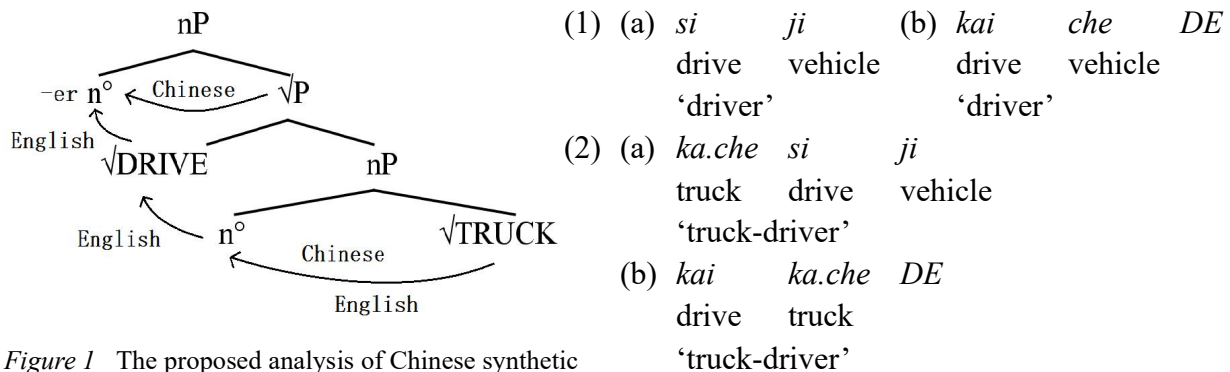


Figure 1 The proposed analysis of Chinese synthetic nominal compounds with comparison to English.

In Chinese, “driver” is expressed either as a synthetic nominal compound, *si ji* (1a), or a nominal phrase, *kai che DE* (1b). While *si* and *ji* are considered bound morphemes that are used in combination with other morphemes in restricted contexts such as compounding constructions, both *kai* and *che* are free morphemes that are used individually in phrasal constructions. Generally speaking, each synthetic nominal compound has a corresponding *DE* construction, but not vice versa. The *DE* particle has been analyzed as various functional heads within a nominal phrase, such as  $CL^\circ$  (Cheng & Sybesma 2009),  $D^\circ$  (Simpson 2002),  $C^\circ$  (Lin 2010), or  $MOD^\circ$  (Rubin 2003). From a DM perspective, since *DE* is an inserted Vocabulary Item at PF, the morpho-syntactic analysis of *DE* need not be homogeneous. The current study proposes that *DE* be analyzed as a  $n^\circ$ , and *DE* constructions be analyzed as the “deep structures” from which the corresponding synthetic nominal compounds are derived. Specifically, it is proposed that synthetic nominal compounds are the suppletive forms of *DE* constructions, with suppletion always taking place in the highest incorporated structure within an nP, namely,  $n^\circ$  and its sister  $\sqrt{P}$ . This analysis predicts that *si ji* is inserted to a non-terminal node as an indivisible unit, therefore, *si* or *ji* alone should not be subject to modification. On the other hand, *kai* and *che* are subject to modification, because both of them are terminal nodes in the “deep structure”/*DE* construction. This prediction is affirmed by the difference in the forms of “truck-driver”, as *ji* cannot be replaced with *ka.che* (2a), whereas *che* is replaced with *ka.che* (2b).

In conclusion, the current study contributes a pied-piping analysis to the cross-linguistic generalization of compounding structures and a non-terminal analysis of suppletion to DM.

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