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PAN-SINITIC OBJECT MARKING*

漢語方言的處置標誌

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Abstract

In Chinese languages, when a direct object occurs in a non-canonical position preceding the main verb, this SOV structure can be morphologically marked, for example, by *kā* 共 < ‘to accompany’ in Southern Min, *lau*¹¹ 搵 < ‘to mix’ in certain Hakka dialects, *pau*¹¹ 幫 < ‘to help’ in many Huizhou dialects, or *bǎ* 把 < ‘to hold’ in standard Mandarin and the Jin dialects. In general, these markers are used to highlight an explicit change of state affecting a referential object. For reason of their highly transitive nature, they are often called ‘disposal constructions’ or *chùzhìshì* 處置式 in Chinese linguistics. This analysis addresses the issue of diversity in such object-marking constructions in order to examine the question of whether areal patterns exist within Sinitic languages.

There are five main parts to this analysis: the first section provides the theoretical background to the issue; the second identifies the principal lexical sources of these grammaticalized object markers in Sinitic while the third section proposes a set of corresponding grammaticalization pathways from source to object marker. The fourth part concentrates on the range of syntactic configurations for these disposal constructions in ten principal Sinitic languages. In conclusion, the fifth part presents preliminary findings in terms of an areal typology of four main linguistic zones. These are established on the basis of grammaticalization channels for object markers, attested in these Sinitic languages.

At least five types of ‘disposal’ construction are identified in this study in combination combined with three main semantic domains as the sources for the object markers. In terms of structural types, several southern Sinitic languages use

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more than one strategy for coding affected objects, including configurations with clause-initial objects followed by their object marker, as in certain Min and Wu dialects, not to mention hybridized forms, with double marking, as in Southern Min.

It is shown that verbs of taking such as *Bǎ* 把 and *Ná* 拿, well-described for Mandarin, are far from being the sole source of object markers in Chinese languages.¹ Two new lexical sources are uncovered which involve respectively (i) comitatives and (ii) verbs of giving and helping.

This is the first treatment of this particular cluster of construction types from within a pan-Sinitic typological perspective. The analysis explores the possibility of establishing four major linguistic zones in China on the basis of preferred grammaticalization channels.

1. BACKGROUND TO THE ISSUE:

In the case of transitive verbs, it is uncontroversial to state that a common word order in Sinitic languages is for direct objects to follow the main verb without any overt morphological marking:

Subject – Verb_{transitive} – Object

Thus, when a direct object occurs in a non-canonical position preceding the main verb, this can be signalled by a special marker generally preposed to it, for example, *bǎ* 把 in standard Mandarin.² An example from a spoken narrative follows.

Subject – [*Marker* – Object] – Verb_{transitive}

(1) Standard Mandarin object marking construction with *bǎ* 把³

(NP_{CAUSE/SUBJECT}) – [OBJECT MARKER [*bǎ* 把] + NP_{DIRECT OBJECT}] – VP

天	黑	了,	我	就	能	把	帽子	摘	了,
<i>Tiān</i>	<i>hēi</i>	<i>le,</i>	<i>wǒ</i>	<i>jiù</i>	<i>néng</i>	<i>bǎ</i>	<i>màozi</i>	<i>zhāi</i>	<i>le,</i>
sky	dark	INC,	1SG	then	able	OM	cap	doff	INC

把	辮子	放在	兜裏...
<i>bǎ</i>	<i>biànzi</i>	<i>fàng-zai</i>	<i>dǒu-li...</i>
OM	plait	place-at	pocket-in

‘When night falls, I can take off my cap and put my plait in my pocket.’
(Zhang and Sang 1987: 488 *Shijie zhi zui* 世界之最)

This type of syntactic construction is known as the ‘disposal construction’ 處置式 or *chùzhìshì* in Chinese linguistics. It has been well-studied for standard Mandarin, in particular, for its semantic and syntactic constraints. These can be summarized as the two main following ones:

- (i) the requirement of a referential direct object
- (ii) the constraint that the direct object code a semantic patient that undergoes an explicit change of state (causativity element; cf Chappell 1992, Bisang 1992)

The direct object often codes referents that represent given or old information (cf. Chafe 1987) in the sense that they have already been mentioned earlier in the conversation or text. In fact, this constraint is often described less precisely in terms of ‘definiteness’ of the direct object. In example (1), the narrator’s very long, luxuriant hair is in fact the topic of the story – and how it has made her famous – while another fact mentioned earlier in the narrative, that she hides her plait under her cap during the day while at work, means that both ‘hair’ or related coreferential terms such as ‘plait’ and ‘cap’ can be potential candidates for morphological marking.

The second causativity constraint is realised in the complexity of the predicate: completive types of aspect marking, resultative verbs and postposed locative prepositional phrases all represent ways of expressing the change of state. The variety of syntactic means available is described in Liu (1997). Again, in example (1), the predicate *fàng-zai dǒu-li* ‘to put in my pocket’ codes an explicit displacement for the object ‘plait’ as too does *zhāi* ‘take off’. Note that these constraints may not necessarily be in operation in all of the Sinitic languages. This is an important task for future research in this area, but remains outside the scope of the present discussion.⁴

The present study represents an enlargement of an earlier survey of this construction type using mainly a single representative variety for seven Sinitic languages, presented in Chappell (2006) to ten Chinese dialect groups and an expanded database of secondary reference materials numbering over 200 dialects. It is possible to identify the basic syntactic configuration for the *bǎ* 把 construction in standard Mandarin as the most common kind of disposal construction crosslinguistically in Sinitic, being in fact possessed by all ten main dialect groups. For example, the same syntactic configuration, but often with quite different sources for the object marker, is found in Xiang, Gan, Hui, Wu, Min, Yue, Jin, Pinghua and Hakka dialects, not to mention in the unclassified Waxiang language (Chappell and Wu, to appear). Here is an example from the Xiang dialect of Chenxi, whose object marker is also used synchronically as the lexical verb ‘to help’:

(2) Chenxi Xiang basic disposal construction with *pau*⁴⁴ 帮 ‘help’:

(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [MARKER_{OM} + NP_{DIRECT OBJECT}] – VERB PHRASE

我 帮 月毛毛 放 啞 床上 好 吗?
*ŋo*³³ *pau*⁴⁴ *nye*²¹³ *mau*²¹³ *mau*²¹³ *fau*²¹⁴ *ta*³¹ *dzaur*²¹³ *sa*³¹ *xau*³¹ *ma*⁴⁴
 1SG OM baby put at bed on OK Q
 ‘May I put the baby to bed?’ (Wu 2005: 204)

In terms of diachronic syntax, this construction type evolves from a serial verb construction found in vernacular texts of the Late Medieval Chinese period (7th - 13th centuries):

(NP_{SUBJECT}) – VERB₁ – NP_{DIRECT OBJECT (i)} – VERB₂ (– PRO_{DIRECT OBJECT (i)}) >

(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [PREPOSITION – NP_{DIRECT OBJECT (i)}] – VERB₂ (– PRO_{DIRECT OBJECT (i)})

where the first verb is reanalysed as a preposition (Peyraube 1988, 1996), in this case, one that signals that the following noun or pronoun is the direct object. Depending on the Chinese dialect, the redundant coreferential pronoun in clause-final position may eventually be omitted (see section 4 on Cantonese and Hakka for retention of this pronoun).

In the following section, I examine linguistic diversity from the angle of principal lexical sources for these object markers in Sinitic languages.

2. SOURCES FOR OBJECT MARKERS

There are three main sources for object markers in Sinitic languages, broadly defined as (i) verbs of taking and holding, (ii) verbs of giving and helping and (iii) comitatives (Chappell 2006). This is confirmed by the enlarged survey undertaken for this analysis. *Take* verbs superficially appear to be the most common source in Sinitic languages and also crosslinguistically, as is the case in many West African Benue-Kwa languages of the Niger-Congo family (see Lord 1993; Heine and Kuteva 2002) and in many creoles (Muysken and Veenstra 1986):⁵ A sample of principal exponents for this category in Sinitic follows:

- (i) **Verbs of taking and holding** > Object markers, e.g.:
- cognates and synonyms of *bǎ* 把 ‘to take’ as in Standard Mandarin, Zhongyuan Mandarin; the Jin dialects (N.B. the verbal use has been lost in Mandarin)

- *jiāng* 將 ‘to take, lead’ as evidenced in more formal registers of the Southern Sinitic languages, Hakka, Min and Cantonese;
- *ná* 拿 ‘to take, hold’ in Wu, Xiang and Gan dialects; e.g. *nɔ̃⁵³* in Shanghainese
- *laq⁷* 擲 ‘to take’ in Gan dialects; also *pa³* 把 as a borrowed form from Mandarin
- *tæ⁴⁴* 擔 ‘to carry, take’ in Xiang dialects (e.g. Dongkou)

A second frequent source is represented by verbs of giving, which appears to be extremely unusual in the languages of the world as a source for object markers. For example, this possibility is neither identified or discussed in the major crosslinguistic study of *give* verbs presented in Newman (1996), nor similarly in Heine and Kuteva’s lexicon of grammaticalization pathways (2002).

(ii) Verbs of giving and helping > Object markers, e.g.:

- cognates and synonyms of *gěi* 給 ‘to give’ as in Beijing Mandarin, , Southwestern, Jianghuai and Zhongyuan Mandarin
- *bǎ* 把 = ‘to give’ in many Hunan Xiang dialects, E’dong Jianghuai Mandarin, Nanchang Gan;
- *te⁵* 得 ‘to give’ in Xiang dialects, *tet* 得 in Dabu Hakka;
- *bāng* 幫 ‘to help’ in Wu, Huizhou and Xiang dialects; e.g. Jinhua (Wu)
- *dei¹¹* 代 ‘to help’ in Wenzhou (Wu)

The same observation applies to comitatives for which grammaticalization into object markers is hardly described in the relevant crosslinguistic literature, if at all.

Crosslinguistic documentation shows that comitatives typically develop into instrumentals, allatives, manner and even ergative markers, but never into accusative or object markers (*pace* Stolz 2001 on the instrumental and ergative association; see also Heine and Kuteva 2002 for a similar listing of comitative targets to Stolz). Sinitic languages thus show a special pathway in this respect which has heretofore not been attested in other language families (see Chappell 2000 for this source in Southern Min). Listed below are the dialect groups and individual dialects, uncovered to date, which show this pathway for Sinitic.

(iii) Comitatives > Object markers, e.g.:

- cognates and synonyms of *kā* 共 in Min dialects;
- *t’ung¹¹* 同 and *lau¹¹* 𠂇 in Hakka dialects
- *tse⁷⁵* 則 in Shaoxing Wu;
- *kən⁴²* 跟 in Jiang-Huai Mandarin dialects of Jiangsu province (Shuyang, Huaiyin); Southwestern Mandarin in Hubei province (Suixian)
- *kɛ⁵⁵* 跟 in Waxiang (Hunan)

These markers all have the source meanings in the semantic domain of ‘to accompany’, ‘to mix’ or ‘to follow’ (see Wu Fuxiang 2003).

3. PATHWAYS OF GRAMMATICALIZATION FOR OBJECT MARKERS IN SINITIC

A brief explanation is in order as to how these different verbal and comitative sources develop into object markers:

(i) Verbs of taking and holding

TAKE/HOLD > instrumental > direct object

Verbs of manipulation including ‘take’ and ‘hold’ semantically bleach into object markers, often via an instrumental stage (cf. *yǐ* and *jiāng* in Medieval Chinese). This is also the source of object markers in languages of Southeast Asia, including Hmong, Vietnamese, Thai and Khmer (Bisang 1992). Further afield, this pathway has been well-described for Benue-Kwa languages (Lord 1993) and for creoles, as mentioned earlier. Hence, I will not dwell on the grammaticalization process here.

(ii) Verbs of giving and helping

GIVE/HELP > beneficiary > direct object

I decided to merge the two semantic domains of verbs of giving and helping for the reason that their grammaticalization pathways are most likely parallel: It is well-known that verbs of giving develop into markers of the dative or the beneficiary role (Newman 1996). More specifically, in the first stage of grammaticalisation, this semantic class of verbs grammaticalizes into prepositions marking the beneficiary ‘for’, ‘on behalf of’ in V_1 position of a serial verb construction in the case of Sinitic languages:

From this stage, they develop further, in the given Sinitic languages, into object markers. Although this is not common, it can be explained in terms of the closely related semantic change from DATIVE > ACCUSATIVE in Indo-European languages, described in Heine and Kuteva (2002: 103, 37), for example, the use of dative *a* as an accusative preposition with Spanish animate nouns; also for the diachronic change between the Old English and Modern English periods for the pronouns *hire*_{DAT} > *her*_{DAT>ACC}, *him*_{DAT} > *him*_{DAT>ACC} which involves reanalysis of a former dative as an accusative/dative; and finally for Persian *râ* (Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer 1991: 165-168).

(iii) Comitative source:

Object markers generated by the morpheme *KĀ* 共 in most Min dialects evolved from an original verb meaning ‘to gather, share’, while *tung¹¹* 同 in many Hakka dialects can be traced back to the basic lexical meanings of ‘to be the same as’, ‘to accompany’ in Archaic Chinese. In certain Hakka dialects, *lau¹¹* 搵 is still used as a verb ‘to mix’ alongside its comitative and other grammatical functions. These verbs grammaticalize first into adverbials with an adjunct function, next into comitative markers ‘with’, and later into a coordinative conjunction ‘and’ in certain Sinitic languages (Liu and Peyraube 1996 on the history of *gòng* 共 from Archaic Chinese to Early Modern Mandarin and Wu Fuxiang 2003 on the diachronic and synchronic dialectal situation for the coordinative conjunction pathway). In other Sinitic languages, such as the Min group, a somewhat different pathway is followed whereby *KĀ*, having reached its comitative marker stage ‘with’, further grammaticalizes into an oblique marker of addressee, benefactive and ablative case roles, then specializes into an accusative or object marker via the beneficiary meaning (Chappell 2000, Lai 2003a, 2003b).

The morpheme 跟 GEN used as an object marker in certain Mandarin dialects and in Wuxiang is associated with the verb ‘to follow’ while *tse⁴⁵* 則 in Shaoxing Wu is likely to have 着 *zhuó* ‘to stick together’ as its source and not 則 as given in Xu and Tao (1999) (Wu Fuxiang pers. comm.). Hence, the lexical verbs which occur as sources for the comitative all share the notion of being together, if not being in the same place.

This pathway shares the last stages of its grammaticalization with *give* and *help* verbs, that is, from beneficiary to object marker.

STAGE I > STAGE II >	STAGE III	>	STAGE IV
	↗ addressee		
VERB > COMITATIVE > oblique marker	→ beneficiary	>	direct object
	↘ ablative		

Two Meixian Hakka examples follow which show firstly the comitative and verbal use; and secondly the object marking function of *lau¹¹* 搵 (see also Lai 2003):

- (3) Meixian Hakka – Comitative and verbal use of *lau¹¹* 搵
 NP – [*lau¹¹* + comitative NP] – Verb₁ – (Verb₂)

糯米酒	搵	葡萄酒	搵	唔	合
<i>nó mì tsiòu</i>	laō	<i>p'ou t'aô tsiòu</i>	laō	<i>mġ</i>	<i>kâp</i>
rice:wine	COM	grape:wine	mix	NEG	together
‘le vin de riz mêlé au vin de raisin n’est pas bon’					

[‘Rice wine and grape wine don’t mix well together.’]
(Rey 1926: 479)

- (4) Meixian Hakka – Object use of *lau*¹¹
(NP_{AGENT}) – [*lau*¹¹_{OM} + NP_{DIRECT OBJECT}] – Verb₁ – (Verb₂)

我 搵 屋 買 到 (了)
ngai lau vuk mai tò le
1SG OM house buy COMP CRS
‘I (successfully) bought the house.’ Lin (1990: 79)

Possible exceptions :

Before concluding, it behoves us to point out that there are necessarily exceptions to this proposed typology : In my survey of current literature on the topic of disposal constructions, several sources for object markers turned up which do not belong to my three proposed lexical fields : These are :

- (i) 招 [tʂao⁵³] in Xinjiang, Shanxi province 新絳 (山西), thus possibly a Jin dialect (affiliation not given). The lexical source is not indicated apart from what might be inferred from the character chosen, ‘to beckon’ in Mandarin. Again, this may more likely be related to 着 *ZHUÓ, ZHAO* ‘to adhere to’ a verb source which possesses multiple grammaticalization pathways, such as into complementizers, aspect, causative and passive markers in certain Sinitic languages. Without further proof, this hypothesis can only remain speculative at this point of time.
- (ii) 对 [tui²¹⁴] in the Chaozhou dialect of Southern Min (潮州话), according to Zhan Bohui (1991). The gloss is not provided at all so it can only be remarked that in Chaozhou and other Min dialects, this lexeme also has the meanings of ‘to face’ and ‘from’. The construction appears, however, to be used alongside those with other markers such as *KĀ 共* < COM discussed above.
- (iii) 到 [tɿe³²⁴] in the Yixian dialect of Huizhou 黟縣話 (徽州) according to Pingtian Changsi (1998 : 280). Note that this marker is used alongside [pei] 畀 ‘to give’. Again, the lexical source is not indicated, apart from what might be inferred from the character chosen which means ‘to arrive’ or ‘to’ in Mandarin.

These remain unsolved for the present, awaiting further research. However, given the small number, I believe it is plausible to maintain the overall trends and patterns for the three principal lexical sources of the object markers.

4. CONSTRUCTION TYPES

At least five types of disposal construction can be identified in Sinitic languages, defined in terms of their syntactic configuration. Even though the word order varies considerably, all construction types share the feature of explicit morphological marking of the direct object. This supplies the justification for the combined treatment as object-marking or disposal constructions.

Each structure has been given a descriptive label, to be regarded purely as a mnemonic device to aid in distinguishing each from the other:

- I. Common disposal construction
(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [MARKER_{OM} + NP_{DIRECT OBJECT}] – VERB PHRASE
- II. “Medieval” disposal construction with a resumptive pronoun following verb
(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [MARKER_{OM} + NP_{DIRECT OBJECT(i)}] VERB₁ – (VERB₂) – PRONOUN_(i)
- III. Disposal construction with clause-initial object and its resumptive pronoun introduced by the object marker
NP_{DIRECT OBJECT(i)} – [MARKER_{OM} + PRONOUN_(i)] – VERB PHRASE
- IV. “Archaic” disposal construction with clause-initial object followed by the object marker and a zero anaphor
NP_{DIRECT OBJECT} – [MARKER_{OM} + ____] VERB PHRASE
- V. Hybrid disposal construction with two object markers
(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [CHIONG_{OM} – NP_{DIRECT OBJECT(i)}] – KĀ_{OM} – PRONOUN_(i) – VERB PHRASE

I. COMMON DISPOSAL CONSTRUCTION
(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [MARKER_{ACC} + NP_{DIRECT OBJECT}] – VERB PHRASE

All the Sinitic languages examined in this brief survey possess at least one type of disposal construction, which I have labelled ‘the common disposal construction’ for convenience. In other words, it is found in Mandarin, Jin, Xiang, Gan, Wu, Huizhou, Min, Yue, Pinghua and Hakka. As this has already been exemplified above for Mandarin and Xiang, just one further example is provided below from Taiwanese Southern Min⁶:

- (5) Taiwanese Southern Min disposal construction with
- kā*
- :

(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [*KĀ*_{OM} + NP_{DO}] – VERB PHRASE

啊	汝	共	汝	的	氣力	攞
<i>a</i>	<i>li</i>	<i>kā</i>	<i>li</i>	<i>ê</i>	<i>khui-lat</i>	<i>lóng</i>
PRT	2SG	OM	2SG	GEN	strength	all
用去		啊				
<i>iòng-khì</i>		<i>a</i>				
use-DIR		PRT				

‘You used up all your strength.’ (Jesse’s Story: 823)

II. “MEDIEVAL” DISPOSAL CONSTRUCTION WITH A RESUMPTIVE PRONOUN FOLLOWING VERB

The second type of disposal construction appears to mainly form positive imperatives. I have located it in Meixian Hakka, Cantonese Yue, Shanghainese Wu, Jianghuai Mandarin (Yingshan and Chaoxian) and Southwestern Mandarin (Gong’an). It is possibly a reflex of an isomorphic structure found in Medieval Chinese (see examples and discussion in Peyraube 1996 of this structure with a postverbal resumptive pronoun taken from Tang dynasty vernacular texts; also Chappell 2006):

(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [MARKER_{OM} + NP_{DIRECT OBJECT(i)}] VERB₁ – (VERB₂) – PRONOUN_(i)

- (6) Northeastern Hakka: Jiayingzhou or Meixian Hakka

(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [*TSIŌNG*_{OM} + NP_{DIRECT OBJECT(i)}] VERB₁ – (VERB₂) – PRONOUN_(i)

將	裡	隻	雞	拿來	食帛	佢
<i>tsiōng</i>	<i>li</i>	<i>tchâc</i>	<i>kē</i>	<i>nā-loī</i>	<i>chīt-p’êt</i>	<i>kī</i>
OM	this-CLF	chicken	bring	eat-COMP		3SG

De cette poule, n’en laissez rien.

[‘Eat up all this chicken.’] (example from Rey (1926: III))

- (7) Hong Kong Cantonese disposal construction with
- jēung*
- and a postverbal pronoun:

(NP_{SUBJECT}) – [*JEUNG*_{OM} + NP_{DIRECT OBJECT(i)}] VERB₁ – (VERB₂) – PRONOUN_(i)

千祈	唔好	將	D	頭髮
<i>Chìnkèih</i>	<i>mh.hóu</i>	<i>jēung</i>	<i>dī</i>	<i>tàuhfaat</i>
be:sure	NEG:IMP	OM	CLF _{PL}	hair
染黑	佢			

yíhm-hāk *kéuih*
 dye-black 3SG
 ‘Be sure not to dye your hair black.’ (example from Cheung 1992)

III. DISPOSAL CONSTRUCTION WITH CLAUSE-INITIAL OBJECT AND ITS RESUMPTIVE PRONOUN INTRODUCED BY THE OBJECT MARKER

In a third construction type, the direct object is placed in clause-initial position and an anaphoric pronoun follows the object marker. It appears to be restricted geographically to the central and southeast of China, specifically to certain Min and Wu dialects: Taiwanese, Xiamen, Shantou, Chaozhou and Hainan (Southern Min), Fuzhou (Mindong), Min dialects of southern Zhejiang, Wenzhou (Wu) and other Zhejiang Wu dialects including Shanghainese, Shaoxing, Zeguo (Yuan 1960: 286; Xu and Tao 1999, Huang 1996).

$NP_{\text{DIRECT OBJECT}(i)} - (NP_{\text{SUBJECT}}) - [\text{MARKER}_{\text{OM}} + \text{PRONOUN}_{(i)}] - \text{VERB PHRASE}$

- (8) Taiwanese Southern Min accusative *kā* construction with a clause-initial object: $NP_{\text{OBJECT}(i)} - [KAH_{\text{ACC}} + \text{PRO}_{\text{DO}(i)}] - \text{VP}$

門 共 伊 關 起來
m̄ng *kā* *yī* *kuíⁿ* *khi-lâi*
 door ACC 3SG close INCH
 ‘Close the door.’

[more literally: the door, take it and close] (example from Tsao 1991: 383).

- (9) Wenzhou dialect accusative *dei¹¹* construction with a clause-initial object: $NP_{\text{OBJECT}(i)} - [DEI^{11} + \text{PRONOUN}_{\text{OBJECT}(i)}] - \text{VP}$

蘋果 代 渠 吃 交
beŋ³¹ku³⁵ *dei¹¹* *gei³¹* *ts^hɿ³¹³* *ɦuɔ⁰*
 apple OM 3SG eat PRT

‘Eat up the apple!’ [more literally: apple, take it and eat]
 (example from Xu and Tao (1999))

In both construction types II and III, the pronoun is necessarily coreferential with the direct object preposed to it, not to mention, typically in third person singular form. This contrasts strikingly with the case for standard Mandarin which does not possess either structural subtype for its *bǎ* construction.

IV. “HAN DYNASTY” DISPOSAL CONSTRUCTION WITH CLAUSE-INITIAL OBJECT FOLLOWED BY THE OBJECT MARKER AND A ZERO ANAPHOR

$\text{NP}_{\text{DIRECT OBJECT}(i)} - [\text{MARKER}_{\text{OM}} + \text{___}] \text{VERB PHRASE}$

In a similar fashion, a fourth structural type places the direct object into clause-initial position preceding the object marker. However, there is no ‘double marking’ of this object by means of a resumptive pronoun: in fact, the object marker directly precedes the predicate. In my survey of the literature on this topic, it was identified just for the small number of following dialects: Dongkou (Xiang); Huaiyin (Jianghuai Mandarin); and Xiuzhuan Hakka.

(10) Dongkou Xiang

$\text{NP}_{\text{DIRECT OBJECT}(i)} - [\text{MARKER}_{\text{OM}} + \text{___}] \text{VERB PHRASE}$

衣衫	担	脱	咖
<i>i⁴⁴sæ²¹</i>	<i>tæ⁴⁴</i>	<i>t^hɔ⁴⁴</i>	<i>kua²¹</i>
clothes	OM	take:off-ASP	

‘Take off your clothes.’ (example from Wu 2005: 205, data recorded by Tang Zuofan in Wu 1996: 472-473)

This does not appear to be a case of the development of a passive prefix as in Taiwanese Southern Min (Cheng and Tsao 1995) since the object marker may also precede intransitive verbs such as ‘to go’; see example (11) below. In other words, this is a kind of serial verb construction where the verbs share the same object.

(11)	書	担	去	賣	咖
	<i>sɿ⁴⁴</i>	<i>tæ⁴⁴</i>	<i>tɕ^hɿ²⁴</i>	<i>mai⁴⁴</i>	<i>kua²¹</i>
	book	OM	go	sell	ASP

‘(Go and) sell these books.’ (example from Wu 2005: 205)

V. HYBRID DISPOSAL CONSTRUCTION WITH TWO OBJECT MARKERS

$(\text{NP}_{\text{SUBJECT}}) - [\text{CHIONG}_{\text{OM}} - \text{NP}_{\text{DIRECT OBJECT}(i)}] - \text{KĀ}_{\text{OM}} - \text{PRONOUN}_{(i)} - \text{VP}$

A fifth structure found in Southern Min involves hybridization, whereby both the vernacular and literary markers of the disposal construction co-occur, as well as the use of a resumptive pronoun. The double marking strictly follows the order of the literary marker first, that is, *chiong*, followed by the vernacular marker *kā*. I have only found it described for the two Southern Min dialects of Taiwanese and Chaozhou.

- (12) Taiwanese Southern Min hybrid form with two object markers:
 (NP_{SUBJECT}) – [CHIONG_{OM} + NP_{DO(i)}] – [KĀ_{OM} + PRONOUN_{DO(i)}] – VP

將	門	共	伊	關	起來
<i>chiong</i>	<i>mâng</i>	<i>kā</i>	<i>yī</i>	<i>kuiⁿ</i>	<i>khì-lái</i>
OM ₁	door	OM ₂	3SG	close	INCH

‘Close the door.’
 [more literally: take the door, take it and close]
 (example from Tsao 1991: 383)

This ends the overview of lexical sources and construction types for object-marking or disposal constructions in Sinitic languages. The fifth and final part of this description concentrates on the typological analysis of Sinitic languages, according to the source of the object marker in the basic disposal construction for which the most data are available.

5. LINGUISTIC ZONES IN CHINA

According to a preliminary survey of approximately 200 Sinitic languages and dialects from secondary references (in addition to the main sources quoted above), four linguistic areas can be discerned, and tentatively established, according to the main source of the object marker:

- (1) NORTHERN ZONE: Mandarin and Jin, Northern Wu
- (2) CENTRAL CHINA TRANSITIONAL ZONE: Xiang, Gan, Hui and Southern Wu, many central and southern Mandarin dialects including Zhongyuan, Jianghuai and Xinan Guanhua areas
- (3) SOUTHEASTERN ZONE: Min and certain Hakka and Wu dialects, and a non-contiguous area comprised of several Jianghuai and Southwest Mandarin dialects, also Waxiang (Hunan)
- (4) SOUTHERN ZONE: Yue and Hakka dialects.

Discussion:

For the **Jin**, **Northern and Northwestern Mandarin dialect groups**, *take* verbs are in the majority, as is the case for the **Northern Wu** dialect region (the Taihu cluster). In the centre of China, however, we find a swathe of *give* and *help* verbs used as object markers as the primary lexical source. This is particularly apparent in the transitional zones of the **Xiang, Gan, Hui** and **Southern Wu** dialects for areas south of the Qiantang River (see Xu and Tao 1999 on Wu dialects). It also holds for the **non-northern Mandarin** dialect groups (see further remarks below).

In the central south provinces of Hunan and Jiangxi, **Xiang and Gan** languages show similarities in having *take* verbs as a second, less frequent, source. Often it is difficult to identify the basic lexical meaning of the verb associated

with the object marker from the reference materials, since in these central transitional zones, depending on the dialect, *give* can mean *take* or *take* can mean *give* (temporarily using the Mandarin meaning as the departure point for this observation). For example, the meaning of *na*² 拿 and *laq*⁷ 搵 in Gan dialects of Nanchang alternates between ‘give’ in some or ‘take’ in others, whereas the first verb can only mean ‘hold’, ‘take’ in standard Mandarin (the second verb is not used in Mandarin). Similarly, *TE* 得 in certain Guangdong Hakka and Southwestern Mandarin dialects of Hunan means ‘to give’. In other dialects its core meaning may be the opposite of ‘to obtain’, as is true of standard Mandarin.

It is interesting to note that many Mandarin dialects of the Zhongyuan (Central Plains), Jianghuai and Xinan (Southwestern) groups also use object markers based on *give*, and not *take*, unlike the northern groups of Mandarin dialects, including the standard language, *pǔtōnghuà*. An exception to this generalization would however be the vernacular form of the Beijing dialect (Northern Mandarin) in which *gěi* 給 ‘give’ is the object marker, not *bǎ* 把 < ‘hold’ (see Chirkova, forthcoming 2006; example from her transcribed conversations follows).

(13) Colloquial Beijing dialect

一個	小廟	給	它	換成	黃	琉璃瓦嗎。
<i>Yīge</i>	<i>xiǎo miào</i>	<i>gěi</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>huànchéng</i>	<i>huáng líuliwǎ</i>	<i>ma?</i>
one:CLF	little temple	OM	3SG	change:into	yellow tile	Q

‘Otherwise, how would a tiny little temple get covered with yellow glazed tiles?’

Help verbs are the predominant source for the **Huizhou** dialects while this source is common alongside *give* in **Southern Wu**.

Yue dialects, including Cantonese, but also many **Hakka** dialects form a second area of *take* verbs in the south but, in the case of Hakka with widely varying sources compared with the Northern area: The Yue dialects show a predilection for the marker *jiāng* 將 and its cognates whereas a range of verbs is attested for Hakka dialects. However, in the literature consulted, many scholars note that morphologically unmarked OV or SVO constructions are preferred to the disposal construction in Yue and Hakka. Furthermore, they observe that the disposal construction with *jiāng* 將 belongs to the more literary or formal register (書面語 *shūmiànyǔ*). For example, see Cheung (1992). Hence, it does not appear to originally have been a ‘native’ strategy for coding objects but has possibly been introduced by the court language in the Medieval period. In Chappell (2006), I discuss some other examples of *take* verbs found in colloquial Hong Kong Cantonese narratives that are used to introduce objects in serial verb constructions.

Out on a limb, we find the **Min** dialects which make use of a comitative source, namely *KĀ* 共 and its cognates, as mentioned in §2 and §3. This is the same semantic field as found for the source of object markers in certain Hakka, **Wu** and

even Mandarin dialects. **Hakka** dialects, including Meixian 梅縣 and some of those located in Taiwan, make use of *t'ung*¹¹ 同 < ‘to accompany’ and *lau*¹¹ 搯 < ‘to mix’, as explained in §2 above. A small segment of Wu dialects, including Shaoxing 紹興 and Ningbo 寧波, have what was originally a comitative marker as their source for object markers (搭), as do a smattering of Jianghuai and Southwestern Mandarin dialects, not to mention the Waxiang language of Hunan, as yet unclassified. The latter groups all use GEN 跟 < ‘to follow’ and its cognates.

A summary form of the data for the four linguistic zones is presented in Table 1 below for ease of reference. A full listing of object markers and the source of information is provided in Appendix 1 while a dialect map of China representing the four linguistic zones is given in Appendix 2.

Table 1 : Principal sources of object markers in the four linguistic zones

LINGUISTIC ZONE	EXAMPLES
<p>(1) NORTHERN ZONE: Mandarin, Jin and Northern Wu 北方話 (北部, 西北部), 晉, 吳北</p> <p>Take verbs (i) 把, 拿</p>	<p>Jin dialects 晉: BA 把 Northern Mandarin dialects 北方官話: BA 把, NA 拿 Northwestern Mandarin dialects Lanzhou 蘭州, Qinghai 青海 (西北 部): BA 把 Northern Wu: (Suhu cluster 蘇戶小片, Shaoxi cluster 苕溪小片): NA 拿</p>
<p>(2) CENTRAL CHINA TRANSITIONAL ZONE</p> <p>1. Give/help verbs: 2. Take verbs</p>	<p>Central, Jianghuai and SW Mandarin dialects 江淮, 中原 和西南官話: GEI 給, BA 把 = 'give' Xiang 湘: BA 把 = 'give' Gan 贛: na² 拿, laq⁷ 搵 = 'give'/'take' Huizhou 徽州: BANG 幫 Southern Wu 吳 (南部): 代、約 Hakka dialects 客家話 a range of <i>take</i> verbs: 將, 把, 提, 捉, 兜來, 擺, 握...</p>
<p>(3) SOUTHEASTERN ZONE Min and certain Hakka and Wu dialects; a sprinkling of Jianghuai and SW Mandarin; Waxiang</p> <p>Comitatives:</p>	<p>Min dialects: KĀ 共 e.g. Fuzhou 福州, Taiwanese 台灣, Xiamen 廈門, Chaozhou 潮州, Dongshan 東山, Quanzhou 泉州, Hainan 海南 Hakka dialects: Meixian ; 梅縣, Taiwan 臺灣: LAU 搵, TUNG 同 Wu dialects 吳: Shaoxing 紹興: ZE 則 (?着); Ningbo 寧波: TA 搭 Jianghuai and SW Mandarin dialects, Waxiang: GEN 跟</p>
<p>(4) SOUTHERN ZONE Yue and Hakka dialect groups</p> <p>Take verbs (ii)</p>	<p>Yue dialects 粵: JIANG 將.</p>

CONCLUSION

Firstly, I have shown that, regardless of the large number of languages and dialects which belong to the Sinitic taxon, there are just three main sources for object markers:

- verbs of taking and holding;
- verbs of giving and helping and
- comitatives.

Secondly, at least five different kinds of object marking constructions can be identified in which overt morphological marking is used to code the direct object. These can be distinguished on the basis of their word order, constituency and the position of the direct object with respect to its marker. This was treated in §4.

Apart from the “common” disposal construction, found in all ten Sinitic languages, a determining feature of some of these constructions was the linking of the direct object with a following resumptive pronoun (types II, III, V). A particularly clear case was the “Medieval-style” construction (II) with a resumptive pronoun following the main verb. Clause-initial direct objects (III) or those constructions with double-marking (that is, the co-occurrence of two different object markers as in certain Southern Min dialects: V) also reveal the use of such a resumptive pronoun but one that is introduced by the object marker in this case. In contrast to this, the ‘Archaic’ clause-initial object construction was followed by its overt marker and a zero anaphor, that is, it did not make use of any resumptive pronoun (IV).

The lack of data on most of these construction types, except for the common one, does not allow for any reliable classification into zones or determining of regional patterning at this point of time. All that can be said is that the degree of variation is particularly prominent in the Central and Southern Sinitic languages, that is everywhere but in the north which uses the one main common disposal construction type. Postverbal resumptive pronouns common in imperative form are found in Wu, Hakka and Yue dialect groups but not in Min where the preference is to prepose the full lexical form of the object into clause-initial position with the pronominal reprise directly following the object marker (including the hybridized form). This type is found in Wu dialects as well.

The extensive range of structural possibilities and semantic constraints which shape these different disposal constructions highlights the fact that it is an erroneous exercise to assume a broad syntactic isomorphism between Mandarin and other Sinitic languages, as has often been the case in many earlier grammatical studies (see an earlier paper of mine, Chappell 2006 on this topic). From this it can be concluded that researching Sinitic languages *as a whole* (and not just standard Mandarin) can make an important contribution to typology and

grammaticalization theory, since, for example, comitatives and verbs of giving/helping as sources for object markers are not widely known or attested in the relevant literature.

A comprehensive survey of this construction type would also aid in determining the relevant intra-Sinitic typological parameters that pertain to syntax and morphology and thereby refine the work of pioneers in typology and dialectology such as Li Fang-kuei, Yuan Jia-hua and his team of linguists, Mantaro Hashimoto, Anne Yue(-Hashimoto) and Jerry Norman *inter alia*. There is probably not just a north-south divide, as proposed by Hashimoto, nor even a north-central-south trichotomy, as proposed by Norman, but at least four major zones, identified on the basis of shared morphosyntactic properties. The reason for enlarging the number of linguistic areas is the fact that the Min dialect group typically shows different syntactic strategies to the Hakka and Yue groups of Southern Sinitic.

Support for this research on object-marking strategies can be found in typological studies of other constructions or morphosyntactic categories in Sinitic: for example, in Lamarre (2001) on verb complementation; Ansaldo (1999) on comparative constructions; and my own work on aspect and evidential markers (Chappell 1992b; 2001c) which similarly show that the Min dialect group patterns differently from the rest of Sinitic – it uses different lexical sources for their verb complementizers, comparative and evidential markers. Although Hakka and Yue share the marking strategies for aspect and evidentiality, they make use of different syntactic behaviours and functions for these. Strikingly, a recently completed study on complementizers grammaticalised from quotatives (Chappell to appear) once more reveals that these verbs in Yue and Hakka are at a much younger stage of development than in Southern Min while central zone represented by certain Wu, Xiang and Gan dialects do not turn up this development at all, using spoken data as the basis of the analysis.

Importantly, these linguistic zones or grammaticalization areas crosscut the traditional dialect group boundaries, such as those set up by Li Fang-kuei (1973) and Yuan Jiahua (1960) and which were largely based on phonological and morphological criteria. Further in-depth research is needed however for a much larger set of grammatical constructions before we can claim these zones exist in any confident way. This small study represents an initial step in this direction, hinting at the possibility of using a typology based on grammaticalization pathways, as one crucial diagnostic.

APPENDIX 1:
SURVEY OF OBJECT MARKERS IN SINITIC LANGUAGES BY DIALECT GROUP
(from South to North)

1. **Yue dialect group 粵方言:**
TAKE verbs

將 is the most common marker - the case for 41 / 45 dialects surveyed in Guangdong province with the caveat that many scholars remark on the preference for OV or for SVO structures where Mandarin uses 把.

Miscellaneous : 把, 𠵼 [ŋja⁵⁵]

Sources : Zhan and Cheung (1988) on Pearl River Delta dialects
Zhan and Cheung (1994) on Yue dialects in Northern Guangdong

2. **Hakka dialect group 客家方言:**
TAKE verbs

Hakka dialects show a tendency to use a variety of TAKE verbs as object markers if they use a disposal construction at all. Two studies show an approximately equal usage of either SOV or OV structures as opposed to S Marker O V (Li and Zhang 1992 ; Liu 1999 : 743).

- (i) Hakka in Guangdong province : 5/5 use 將
Source : Zhan and Cheung (1988).
- (ii) Hakka in Jiangxi, Hunan, Fujian and Sichuan provinces : 12/17 can use 把 'take'.
Source : Li and Zhang (1992).
- (iii) Hakka in Jiangxi province : 5/11 use 拿 'give' (p. 633).
Source : Liu (1999 : 743). Hunan Hakka (Huang Borong 1991)

Miscellaneous : other attested TAKE verbs in Hakka dialects :
提, 捉, 兜來, 擺, 揸, 搭

Note that such surveys using elicitation techniques on the basis of standard Mandarin do not turn up object markers with a comitative source at all,

namely, *t'ung*¹¹ 同 and *lau*¹¹ 𠵹 (Chappell 2006). For further detailed descriptions of *lau*¹¹ 𠵹 as an object marker, see Lin (1991) and Lai (2003a, 2003b). 將 is also listed as the main disposal marker in many grammars of Hakka but does not appear to be the native strategy.

3. **Gan dialect group 贛方言:**
GIVE verbs and TAKE verbs

In general, the Gan dialects show a preference for verbs of giving as the source for their object markers, and secondly, verbs of taking.

- (i) Gan dialects in Jiangxi, Hunan, Fujian, Hubei and Anhui provinces : 14/17 use a GIVE verb, particularly 把 with the meaning of ‘give’ (9/17). Two other principal verbs of giving in this survey are *ma*³ 𠵹 (listed with the meaning of ‘give’ on p. 386) (3/17) and *pei*³ 𠵹 (3/17). The two verbs *na*² 拿 and *laq*⁷ 擱 ‘to hold’ are also used ; these can mean either ‘take’ or ‘give’, depending on the dialect. *Source* : Li and Zhang (1992).
- (ii) In Jiangxi province taken alone, verbs of taking appear to prevail but a caveat applies: 8/21 Gan dialects use 把 = ‘take’ while another 4 /21 had 拿 and 1/21, 提 (total 13/21 dialects surveyed). Note that a further 3/21 of Gan dialects with 把 as the OM use this as their *give* verb, while 5/21 Gan dialects had 擱 as their OM similarly meaning ‘give’ (see Liu 1999 : 633 for a list of GIVE verbs in Gan dialects). *Source* : Liu (1999 : 743).

4. **Xiang dialect group 湘方言:**
GIVE verbs and TAKE verbs

Similarly, the Xiang dialects show a preference for verbs of giving as the source for object markers, and secondly, verbs of taking. A further source, third in frequency is found in verbs of helping.

Overall, GIVE is the main source of disposal markers in a survey carried out by Wu (2005 : chapter 6) of 107 Hunan dialects including Xiang, Gan/Hakka and Mandarin: 74/107. In this function, it is the verb 把 ‘give’ which prevails :

62/ 74. Restricting the discussion to just the 33 Xiang dialects in her survey, we obtain the following figures :

GIVE : 把, 给

27 / 33 localities 26/27 把 and 1/ 27 给.

TAKE : 5 / 33 拿, 担

In this category, 3/5 localities use 拿 and 2/5 use 担 while the latter is overall the most common in Hunan.

HELP : 1/33 帮

帮 is one of the main sources in this category for all of Hunan.

5. **Wu dialect group 吴方言:**

GIVE, HELP and TAKE verbs, and the COMITATIVE

According to Xu and Tao (1999), there are three main sources for object markers which correspond to clearly delineated geographical areas :

(i) TAKE verbs : the region north of the Qiantang river (钱塘江) including Shanghai, Suzhou (Suhu cluster) and Shaoxi clusters.
拿, 捉, 把

(ii) GIVE and HELP verbs : This is the most widespread source for Wu dialects, and is found across the entire region except for the Taihu subgroup。台州, 婺州, 处衢片, 瓯江

GIVE: 拔, 约

HELP: 帮, 代

(iii) COMITATIVE
This source is located within the Taihu subgroup, namely, Shaoxing and Ningbo (Linshao and Yongjiang clusters in central eastern Zhejiang).

绍兴: 则

宁波: 搭

Sources : Xu and Tao (1999)
Qian (1992)

6. **Huizhou dialect group** 徽州方言:

HELP / GIVE verbs

According to Pingtian Changsi's description of 8 Huizhou dialects (1998), the HELP verb 帮 is the most common with 4/8, while GIVE verbs and TAKE verbs have two each (2/8). This means that the combined category of HELP / GIVE is possibly the preponderant one. *Source* : Pingtian Changsi 平田昌司 (1998)

7. **Min dialect group** 閩方言:

COMITATIVES par excellence

(i) In most dialects surveyed, the marker used is the cognate of 共, which also serves as the comitative (Chappell 2000). This includes the Mindong dialect of Fuzhou as well as Southern Min where its use is widespread.

共 Fuzhou *kaʔ* † Huang (1996); Quanzhou *kaŋ* † Lin (1993); Xiamen *kaʔ-kāŋ* Zhou (1991); Dongshan *kǎ*³ (Nakajima 1977); Chaozhou *kaʔ*²; Hainan *kaʔ* † (Nakajima 1979).

(ii) 將 is also used in more formal registers but is not considered as the native strategy (see Tsao 1991 ; Cheng and Tsao 1995).

*tsyɔŋ*⁵⁵ ~ *tsiaŋ* † Fuzhou ; *tsyæŋ*⁵⁵ Putian ; *tsiɔŋ* † Quanzhou ; *tsiɔŋ* † Xiamen ; *tsiaŋ* † Chaozhou ; *tsaŋ*³³ Chaoyang ; *tsiaŋ* † Hainan (references as above)

8. **Mandarin dialect group** 北方話:

TAKE verbs and GIVE verbs

TAKE verbs : 把

Jianghuai (把 Chaoxian, Anhui ; Yingshan, Hubei) 拿 (Taixing, Jiangsu)

Lanyin 把 (Lanzhou, Gansu)

Zhongyuan 把 (Qinghai ; Weinan, Shaanxi)

GIVE verbs : 给

Beijing Mandarin (see Chirkova 2006)

Zhongyuan (Luoyang, Henan ; Suqian, Jiangsu)

Jianghuai (E'dong, Hubei)

HELP verbs

Southwestern Mandarin 帮 (Heqing, Yunnan)

Source : Huang (1996)

9. **Jin dialect group** 晉方言:
TAKE verbs 把

According to Hou and Wen (1993), all 6 Jin dialects in their survey of Shanxi province make use of 把 in the disposal construction ; as does Huhehot in Inner Mongolia ; Jiaocheng, Shanxi (Huang 1996)

Source : Hou and Wen (1993)

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¹ Small capitals, thus *Ná* 拿, with the standard Mandarin *pinyin* romanization are used for quoting an ‘archimorpheme’ or ‘allofam’ (Matisoff) for cognate morphemes that are found widely distributed across Sinitic languages with the same function.

² Note, however, that preposed direct object arguments are not required by the grammar to take such marking – morphologically unmarked OV constructions are common in Chinese languages, where the direct object noun has given information content (but is not necessarily an affected patient).

³ Abbreviations used in the glossing of examples are as follows: ACC = accusative marker preceding affected object noun, ACH=achievement aspect marker, ADV=marker of adverb formation, AGT=agentive marker, ASST=assertive modality particle, CLF=classifier, COMP=completive aspect marker, COMPR=comparative marker, CONT=continuative aspect marker, COP=copula, CRS=sentence-final marker of a currently relevant state of affairs, DEM=demonstrative, DIMN=diminutive suffix, DIR=directional aspect marker encliticized to verbs, EXT=extent, marker of a postverbal complement indicating the extent of an action or its result state: ‘so X that’, GEN = genitive marker, INCH= inchoative aspect marker, LIG=marker of ligature and dependency for attributive phrases, also for relative clauses, LOC=locative, NAME = proper name, NEG=negative adverb, NEG:IMP=negative imperative modal verb, NOM=nominalizer, PFV=perfective aspect marker, PL= plural, PRT=modal or discourse particle, Q=quantifier, SG singular.

⁴ See Teng (1982) for a detailed discussion of these constraints in Southern Min.

⁵ I use the *pīnyīn* romanization system for the **Mandarin** examples, a system adopted in 1958 for transcription and language pedagogy purposes by the Chinese government. Chinese characters in traditional *fántǐzì* form are provided, and where feasible, also for the other Sinitic languages treated in this study. Where a demotic character is not known or attested, the use of an empty box, thus □, is conventional practice in Chinese linguistics.

Tone marks are indicated on all syllables, apart from unstressed ones, and without indicating tone sandhi. For the **Southern Min** examples, I use the Church Romanization system, as exemplified in

the Carstairs Douglas dictionary (1990). **Meixian Hakka** examples follow the romanization devised by McIver (1991), unless examples from Rey (1990) are being quoted which use a francophone system. The **Cantonese** examples from Cheung (1992) use the Yale system while my own data employs the Sidney Lau system. The **Shanghainese, Xiang, Huizhou, and Gan** examples are rendered in the International Phonetic Alphabet.

⁶ Chappell (2006) discusses the construction types in more depth, according to each particular Sinitic language in the sample. Hence, this will not be repeated here.