

主題冠對台灣兒童表達中文關係子句之影響

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摘要

針對詞頭在尾之中文關係子句的語句理解與表達研究頗多 (Chang, 1984; Cheng, 1995; Hsiao & Gibson, 2003; Hsu, 2006; Lin & Bever, 2006; Su, 2004; Su, 2006)，其中，有一部份研究在於探討是否中文的主語間隙的關係子句比賓語間隙的關係子句容易處理。雖然 Hsu (2006) 的研究對象是兒童之表達，而 Lin & Bever (2006) 的研究為成人之理解，但這兩份研究對於此議題的結論相同：不論關係子句位於句中位置為何，賓語間隙的關係子句都比主語間隙的關係子句難以處理。然而，中文是個主題突出性語言，因此，主題詞的概念可能導致取得目標句構能力的差異，也就是說，主語間隙的關係子句較容易處理可能起因於中文的主語為主題詞，較為突出。這種主題結構與關係結構之間的關聯性在文獻中早已受到注意 (Kuno, 1973; Mak et al., 2006; Portner & Yabushita, 1998)，但是，就筆者所知，目前尚未有實證研究證明這兩者之間的關聯性。當考量主題結構時，主題的分類便成為另一個必須討論的議題。主題種類的分類多樣，但，是否某些特定的主題種類應歸於同一類仍有爭議 (Chen, 1996; Chen & Kao, 2000; Huang et al., 2004; Huang & Ting, 2006; Li & Thompson, 1981; Lu, 2000; Paul, 2002; Shi, 2000; Shi, 2001; Wu & Shi, 2001)。

基於前人之研究，本文旨在探究是否關係子句的先行詞為主題會影響兒童在中文關係子句的表現。主題的分類也納入考量。結果顯示，主題

冠是影響兒童關係子句表達的主要因素。此外，在句法考量上，主題左置與主題化之移位應屬不同分類，而非如同 Chen (1996)提出之合併分類方式。最後，年齡約於五歲八個月之幼稚園中班兒童已能區辨主題種類之差異，並用於表達關係子句。

關鍵字：兒童、關係子句、主題、主語間隙關係子句、賓語間隙關係子句

The Effects of Topichood on Chinese Children's Production of Relative Clauses

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Abstract

A number of studies on Chinese head-final relative clauses in sentence comprehension and production have been conducted (Chang, 1984; Cheng, 1995; Hsiao & Gibson, 2003; Hsu, 2006; Lin & Bever, 2006; Su, 2004; Su, 2006), some of which explored whether subject-gapped relative clauses (SRCs) are easier than object-gapped relative clauses (ORCs) in Mandarin Chinese. Although the main subjects of Hsu's production study (2006) are children and those of Lin & Bever's comprehension study (2006) are adults, there is a consensus on this issue: ORCs are more difficult than SRCs to process, regardless of the sentential position of the relative clause. However, since Chinese is a topic-prominent language, the concept of topic is one possibility which causes the differences in getting the target sentence structure at the message planning level. In other words, the ease of processing SRCs may result from the fact that the head nouns were topics of the source sentences. The correlation between the topic construction and the relative construction has long been observed in the literature (Kuno, 1973; Mak et al., 2006; Portner & Yabushita, 1998). Nevertheless, to our knowledge, no empirical study has been conducted to prove the link between the topic and relative construction. As far as the topic construction is concerned, the categorization of topics is another issue to be discussed. The classification of topic types varies in terms of different perspectives; however, whether certain topic types should be categorized into the same type is still controversial (Chen, 1996; Chen & Kao, 2000; Huang et al., 2004; Huang & Ting, 2006; Li & Thompson, 1981; Lu, 2000; Paul, 2002; Shi, 2000; Shi, 2001; Wu & Shi, 2001).

Grounded on the previous studies, this paper aims to investigate that whether the head nouns of RCs are topics will influence Chinese children's relative clauses performance. The categorization of topics is also taken into consideration. Results showed that topichood is a major factor influencing the children's RC production. Left dislocation and topicalization, both of which were categorized into the same type, namely, instance topic by Chen (1996), should belong to different classes as what the syntactic perspective considers. Finally, children of the second level of Kindergarten, aged about 5;8, are already able to distinguish the differences between topic types for generating RCs.

Key words: young children, relative clause, topic, subject-gapped RCs, object-gapped RCs