Fake attributives in Chinese
A prosodic grammar perspective

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Fake attributives in Chinese are the result of the interaction between syntax and prosody. For syntactic reasons, certain objects of complex verbal constructions and verbal quantifiers cannot be realized in situ; but they can be spelled out in some roundabout ways, one of which is to form fake attributives through de-insertion. In the forming process of fake attributives, the clitic de plays an important role, and de-insertion is frequently resorted to in facilitating the correspondence between the phonological structure and the syntactic structure, with the aim of ensuring meaning conveyance. It is concluded that fake attributives are initiated, to some extent, by mismatches between syntactic and phonological structure and derived when de is inserted to enhance their correspondence.

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