A corpus-based perspective on the comparison between directional complement constructions in Hakka and Mandarin Chinese

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Directional complement construction (DC) is a common linguistic structure in Chinese dialects. The target language of my project is Hakka. The similarities and differences between DCs in Hakka and Mandarin Chinese are studied by means of a spoken corpus of Hakka and the currently available results of Mandarin Chinese DCs. After annotating 1591 Hakka DCs, the preliminary result shows that Hakka DCs have 121 tokens (7.6%) is comparably different from that in Mandarin Chinese, whereas the majority of the Hakka DC use, 1397 (87.8%), are comparable. 73 tokens (4.6%) are partially comparable. As we are also concerned with the issue of phonetic reduction and grammaticalization, i.e. the interface between sound and structure, we have designed a production experiment for collecting read and spontaneous data of DCs including the other word categories related to the components of DCs. The experimental results are expected to provide empirical evidence of grammaticalization in Hakka and Mandarin Chinese.

Keywords: Hakka, Mandarin Chinese, Directional Complement, Grammaticalization Theory, Corpus-based Linguistics, Contrastive Analysis