On the Syntax and Semantics of *zhe* and *le* in the Existential *you*-coda Construction*

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It is observed in this paper that although the imperfective aspect marker *zhe* and the perfective aspect marker *le* may alternate in the locative inversion construction (LIC), their occurrences in the coda of *you*-constructions cause the sentences to be ill-formed. Moreover, the sentence with verb-*le* (V-*le*) is more unacceptable than that with verb-*zhe* (V-*zhe*). We assume that V-*le* is blocked in the *you*-coda construction because the marker *le* is the sentence-final *le*₂ (or perhaps ‘*le*₁ + *le*₂’ and its semantics (or the semantics of the *you*…*le*₂ structure) is incompatible with the homogeneous or [+extended] feature of activity verbs. However, the marginality of the *you*-coda structure with V-*zhe* is due to *zhe*’s being incapable of anchoring tense of the CP complement of *you*. The study on the distributions of *zhe* and *le*, together with other facts, also help us clarify the syntactic status of existential codas: The coda of an LIC is always a secondary predicate, but in the post-*you* construction it might be the predicate of the clausal complement of *you* or it might be a phrase of secondary predication when *you* subcategorizes an NP, depending on the predicate type of the coda and the specificity of the post-*you* NP.

Key words: *zhe, le, syntax, semantics, existential you-coda construction*

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*I would like to express my thanks to Prof. C.-T. James Huang for his many helpful suggestions and encouragement. I am also grateful to Professors W.-T. Dylan Tsai, Gu Yang, Ning Chunyan and Gu Gang for extensive discussion and valuable comments. Thanks also go to the two anonymous reviewers and the editors for their helpful suggestions and constructive comments that have led to the paper’s improvement, in both content and presentation. I am solely responsible for all the remaining errors and inadequacies. This research was supported by Tianjin Philosophy and Social Sciences research planning grant, #TJ05-YW0208.*