

# Analysis of Verb-result Complement Acquisition and Errors in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

Yanmei Lu

Xinxiang Medical University, Xinxiang, Henan, 453000

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**Abstract:** Verb-result complement refers to grammatical phenomenon of Chinese verb plus the results, which is often appear in the spoken language and regulations. Moreover, verb-result complement is also one of the important grammatical points in the elementary to intermediate stage of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. In this paper, literature review, corpus analysis and data statistics are used to make a brief review of the current research on the verb-result complement in the academic circle, including the research on the modern Chinese verb-result complement grammar, as well as the study on the acquisition error of verb-result complement in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. In addition, through the statistical analysis of the errors by international students in HSK dynamic composition corpus and relevant books, and the errors in teaching practice, the errors of Chinese verb-result complement by international students are summarized, which can be mainly divided into three categories: incomplete components, redundant components, and improper word order.

**Keywords:** Verb-result complement; Chinese; Acquisition Error

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## 1. Introduction

Verb-result complement is an important part of modern Chinese complement, which cannot be ignored in the study of Chinese grammar. In the grammar teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, its teaching is also one of the key contents. Result complement in teaching Chinese as a foreign language belongs to elementary level grammar project. In recent years, more and more second language teachers believe that only by combining the research and practice of teaching and learning, understanding, analyzing and mastering the characteristics and rules of students' acquisition, the second language teaching can be more effective. In the modern sense, the study of second language error is not only the frontier of language acquisition and study, but also the bridge between acquisition research and teaching research.

Moreover, the gap between the rules of interlanguage and target language represented by errors is an interlanguage phenomenon. In the process of language teaching, it is very necessary to study and analyze the errors. Corder (1967), who did the earliest error analysis systematically, argues that errors can make teachers to understand the situation of learning, allow researchers to understand how learners learn a language and also enable learners to discover the rules of the target language.

Errors analysis is not only one of the important methods of language research and language teaching but also the important content of Chinese as a foreign language discipline construction. The study and teaching of Chinese as a foreign language cannot be separated from the analysis of errors. Chinese error analysis is an important method to study the process of foreigners' acquisition of Chinese. It can not only analyze the causes of errors, but also predict the possible errors of learners, and then effectively eliminate the interference of mother tongue and other factors so as to make the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language more targeted.

Error analysis and contrastive analysis are closely related to interlanguage. Error analysis is formed and developed under the guidance of the theory of interlanguage. Its purpose is to reveal the rules of second language acquisition by analyzing the error phenomenon of learners in the process of learning a second language so as to understand the learning process, learning steps and learning strategies of students. The theory of interlanguage should be demonstrated by error analysis and its establishment ultimately depends on the results of error analysis.

## 2. Literature Review of Verb-result Complement

The research on verb-result complement has become one of the focuses of the academic circle since the 1980s. In recent years, many grammarians have discussed verb-result complement, and the perspective has gradually shifted from the single definition of scope and time to more profound fields.

In the past 30 years, Mei Zulin (1991) was the first scholar to make a clear definition of verb-result complement, and it was called resultative construction at that time. "A resultative construction is a compound verb made up of two elements, the former being transitive verb and the latter being an intransitive verb or adjective." "The meaning of resultative construction is that the action of the doer represented by transitive verbs leads to the result of patient represented by an intransitive word or adjective." Du Chunzi (2003) analyzed Mei Zulin's definition. He believed that Mei Zulin's classification mixed resultative construction with compound verbs, and determined that verb-result complement belongs to the category of phrase, while the predicate complement compound words belong to the category of word. Liang Yinfeng (2003) thinks that "this structure is a compound verb rather than a phrase, so it should be limited to the lexical level." Shi Yuzhi (2003) cited Li Na and Thompson's definition of Chinese resultative construction structure: "Resultative construction structure is a verb compound composed of two components, and the relationship between the two components is action and result". Such a definition captures the most important feature of resultative construction structure that is a compound grammatical structure composed of two components. Shi Chunhong (2007) believes that "verb-result complement refers to the cohesive articulatory structure such as '看懂, 笑疯' ". Although scholars differ in the selection range of the semantic structure types of verb-result complement, they basically agree on the understanding of verb-result complement, "All refer to the occurrence or change of the state expressed by the verb complement due to the action expressed by the verb predicate."

There is still no more detailed or authoritative result on whether verb-result complement is a word or a phrase, which is one of the reasons why the verb-result complement as a performative complement structure has different opinions.

Moreover, different scholars have different views on the formation time and mechanism of verb-result complement, etc. Tatsuo Ota (1958) proposed to use "杀、死" as a symbol to determine the time of the generation of verb-result complement, and more scholars also carried out more in-depth discussion on this. Ryoji Shimura (1984) uses the word "愁杀" in "白杨多悲风, 萧萧愁杀人" as a formal symbol, and thinks that this compound word has the identification condition of juxtaposition or making. Since the "杀" in "愁杀" represents the degree of limit, it can be used as an abstract meaning. Thus, Shimura Ryoji judged that "compound verb" had appeared in the Six Dynasties. Mei Zulin believed that verb-result complement had appeared in the Liu Song Dynasty, such as "愁杀○" and "笑杀○". Jiang Shaoyu (2003) believed that in the pre-Qin and Han dynasties, except for a few cases of "V尽", most people only said "尽-V" and there was no "V近" until the Wei, Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties, which indicated that the generation of verb-result complement was in the Wei, Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties. Hu Chirui (2005) has a slightly different view from Jiang Shaoyu. He adopts the "破" corpus and holds that it has both the semantic features of "action" and "character". His conclusion is that "verb-result complement was produced in the Eastern Han Dynasty and developed in the Wei, Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties".

Although the formal marks are objective, the limitations are also very obvious by judging the structure of verb-result complement only based on the sense of language in modern Chinese and some examples of corpus. Therefore, as some scholars have said, the judgment of verb-result complement should pay attention to the semantics but not only that. That is to say, the development and use of verb-result complement should be viewed from a macro perspective.

## 3. Errors of Verb-result Complement based on Error Corpora

The error type of verb-result complement usually varies slightly depending on the analysis angle. At present, scholars

generally divide the types of errors in a consistent way, the most representative of which are Lu Jianji and Chen Qinghe: Lu Jianji divides errors into four categories according to their nature: omission, misaddition, missubstitution and misorder, while Chen Qinghe divides errors into three categories: omission, misaddition and misuse. Based on the existing classification methods and the results of our research and investigation, we divide the error types of verb-result complement into three types, including the error caused by incomplete components, the error caused by redundant components, and the error caused by improper word order.

The unmarked parts of the biased error corpus in this chapter are all from the HSK dynamic composition Corpus, Tong Huijun's Analysis of Wrong Sentences by Foreigners in Learning Chinese (1986) and Cheng Meizhen's Analysis of Nine Hundred Cases of Wrong Sentences in Chinese (1998). A small part of the corpus of sentences are collected by myself in teaching practice and the corpus provided by teachers and students will be marked.

### 3.1 The errors caused by incomplete components

As the result complement is a unique structure in Chinese, and the result complement in verb-result complement is usually served by adjectives or verbs, it leads to the phenomenon that students directly take the word serving as the result complement as the predicate in the sentence, resulting in the lack of predicate verbs in verb-result complement. Some examples are given in the following (missing part in parentheses).

- (1) 两天, 我们 ( ) 完了一课的课文。
- (2) 他看见谁的碗里快 ( ) 完了, 就立刻给谁加。
- (3) 你 ( ) 完了作业来找我吧。

In verb-result complement, the absence of the result complement will directly lead to the sentence becoming a simple predicate sentence, which will not only fundamentally change the structure, but also can no longer accurately and completely express the original meaning semantically. In some cases, it will even completely change the meaning of the sentence. This kind of error accounts for a large proportion in each corpus, which is also one of the difficulties for students to learn. Some examples are given in the following (missing part in parentheses).

- (4) 中国医生接 ( ) 了他的手指, 所以他绣了“友谊” 两个字送给中国人民。
- (5) 星期天我吃 ( ) 早饭就去看朋友。
- (6) 我昨天一天没看 ( ) 他。

Due to the complexity of language, it is not enough to master only the standard format of verb-result complement in the process of using it. Sometimes it is still necessary to add related sentence elements after the result complement to make the sentence more complete in structure and semantics. But students often ignore this point in the process of using verb-result complement.

### 3.2 The errors caused by redundant components

In general, there is only one result complement in a verb-result complement, and this result complement can be composed of simple words or phrases. But in the process of using it by some students, there will be more than one result complement after the predicate verb; (In the following examples, the underlined part is a case of improper use, followed by two correct expressions in parentheses).

- (7) 请你把这张表格填完清楚。(读完/填清楚)
- (8) 我听懂明白你的话了。(听懂/听明白)
- (9) 我见到老师走过来了。(看见/看到)

Example sentences (7) to (9) are the result of adding more than one result complement after the verb. Based on the context and the original meaning of the sentence, a correct choice in the parenthesis should be chosen.

### 3.3 The errors caused by improper word order

The improper word order of verb-result complement is mainly manifested by the inversion of the result complement and object position. The verbs and complements that make up the verb-result complement are often free, but once they are combined, they become inseparable, even if an object is added to form the form “V+C+O”. But the students often put the object in the middle of the verb-result complement, forming a biased error. For example, the following error statements are shown: (The underlined part is

incorrect, followed by the correct form in parenthesis).

(10) 你连一块石头也搬不动, 怎么能搬山走呢? (搬走山)

(11) 照相完了以后, 我们就回学校了。(照完相)

(12) 写信完了, 我就去食堂吃饭。(写完信)

The problem of these examples is mainly the wrong placement of the object position, but also the wrong placement of the resultant complement. In the use of verb-result complement, this kind of biased error is easier to correct from the structure.

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## About the author:

Yanmei Lu (1982-), female, born in Jiyuan, Henan province, master, lecturer, research direction: Applied linguistics and teacher education development.