

Grammatical Multifunction via Causativity: Evidence from Morpheme *Po⁵⁵* in the Yanzhou (Jiande) Dialect

Vincent Ji-Xin Wang¹, Hua-Hung Yuan²
Zhejiang International Studies University¹
National Taipei University of Business²

Abstract

The morpheme *po⁵⁵* in the Yanzhou (Jiande) dialect functions as either a verb of giving or an object marker (Cao 2017). In the former case, *po⁵⁵* patterns with the ditransitive verb *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese, where the mode of transfer is semantically underspecified, while in the latter case, *po⁵⁵* marks distinct thematic roles of the post-*po⁵⁵* NP, akin to *bǎ*. The multifunction of *po⁵⁵* results from the grammaticalization pathway from verb of giving/helping to object marker, as defined by Chappell (2007). Through the extensive comparison with *bǎ* and *bǎ*-sentences in this paper, we argue that the post-*po⁵⁵* NP must be affected in a specific way and is always associated with the resultative state, due to the realization of the event denoted by the VP. By employing the linking framework in Randall 2010, we propose a unified treatment of *po⁵⁵* based on causativity, which ultimately leads to the conclusion that causativity constitutes the crucial component of the underlying Conceptual Structure of *po⁵⁵*, while the morpheme *po⁵⁵* is lexicalized as a strict causative item, albeit its dual status in the grammar.

Keywords

Yanzhou (Jiande) dialect, morpheme *po⁵⁵*, object marker, causativity, linking

1 Introduction

This paper is concerned with the grammatical functions of the *po*⁵⁵ morpheme in the Yanzhou (Jiande) dialect, comparing it with *bǎ* and *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese.¹ The Yanzhou dialect comprises four sub-dialects: Chun'an, Shouchang, Jiande, and Sui'an. The Jiande dialect, mainly spoken in Jiande district, serves as the standard form, influenced by both the Hui and Wu dialects due to the district's geographical location at the intersection of Zhejiang and An'hui Provinces (Zhengzhang 1986, 1987, 2002; Zhao 2012; among others).

Cao (2017) categorizes it as a transitional form between the Hui and Wu dialects, emphasizing its similarities with the Wu dialect in phonetics and vocabulary. However, his research lacks a comprehensive analysis of the grammatical aspects of these dialects when compared to Mandarin Chinese and other Chinese dialects. Further in-depth studies on the Yanzhou dialect's grammar are necessary.

As mentioned earlier, we focus on the morpheme *po*⁵⁵, which in the Yanzhou (Jiande) dialect (in following abbreviated as YJ) serves as a verb of transfer akin to *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese (abbreviated as MC). Additionally, it also acts as an object marker, resembling the functions of *bǎ* or *gěi*.

- (1) a. *po*⁵⁵ = the verb *gěi*
 ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³ iəŋ⁵-ka³³⁴ tɔ³³⁴.
 he po⁵⁵ I one-CLF peach
 'He gave me a peach.'
 (Cao 2017: 329)
- b. *po*⁵⁵ = the object marker *gěi*
 lɔ²¹⁰o³³⁴ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³ sɔm³³-ləŋ⁵ iəŋ⁵-pin³³⁴ tɛiəu³.
 Laowang po⁵⁵ I send-PFV one-CLF alcohol
 'Laowang gave a bottle of alcohol to me as a present.'
- c. *po*⁵⁵ = the object marker *bǎ*
 lɔ²¹⁰o³³⁴ po⁵⁵ məŋ²-tsa⁵⁵ uɛ²¹³ k^hɔ⁴²-p^hɑ²¹⁴ pəŋ⁵.
 Laowang po⁵⁵ that-CLF bowl hit-broken SFP
 'Laowang has broken that bowl.'

Chappell (2007: 188–189) notes that in Sinitic languages, verbs related to giving and taking often serve as primary sources for object markers. *Bǎ*, originating from a verb of taking, has lost its verbal meaning and is predominantly employed as a unique object marker. Meanwhile, *gěi* maintains both its verbal and prepositional status. In the case of *po*⁵⁵, it aligns with *gěi* in terms of its “dual role” in grammar. On the other hand, *po*⁵⁵ seems to overlap with *bǎ* and *gěi* when functioning as an object marker, indicating, for instance, the patient role (1c) and the goal role (1b), which are associated with *bǎ* and *gěi*, respectively, but not vice versa.²

¹ The Yanzhou dialect transcription is based on Cao's (2017) phonetic description.

² Here are the relevant abbreviations used in this paper: BFC = benefactive marker; CLF = Classifier; OM = object marker; CL_v = verbal classifier; DE = postverbal complement marker *tə*²⁶; SFP =

Furthermore, *po*⁵⁵, as an object marker, can co-occur within the same sentence, introducing distinct thematic roles such as the patient and goal role. In Mandarin Chinese, however, these roles in one sentence must be realized by different morphemes.

- (2) a. YJ: *po*⁵⁵ *məʔ²-tɕie³* *i⁴²so²¹³* *tɕ⁴²* *po*⁵⁵ *taŋ²¹³*.³
*po*⁵⁵ that-CLF clothes bring *po*⁵⁵ I
 ‘Give that piece of clothes to me.’
 (Cao 2017: 329)
- b. MC: *Bǎ/*Gěi* *nà-jàn* *yīfú* *gěi/*bǎ* *wǒ*.
 OM/to that-CLF clothes to/OM I
 ‘Give that piece of clothes to me.’

The morpheme *po*⁵⁵ is notable for its multifunctionality in YJ, raising several intriguing questions. Firstly, as a verb of transfer, what syntactic and semantic properties does *po*⁵⁵ reflect? Secondly, as an object marker, which thematic roles does *po*⁵⁵ introduce, and how are these thematic roles linked to the corresponding syntactic realizations using *po*⁵⁵, considering the linking mechanisms of *bǎ* and *gěi*? Thirdly, given that there is not a one-to-one relationship between *po*⁵⁵ and *bǎ* or *gěi*, to what extent does *po*⁵⁵ correlate with these morphemes in questions in MC? Can we initially conclude that *po*⁵⁵ is grammatically equivalent to both *bǎ* and *gěi* simultaneously? Lastly, what is the underlying semantic and conceptual structure of *po*⁵⁵, to which the distinct functions of *po*⁵⁵ are subject?

The structure of this paper is as follows: In Section 2, we will provide a brief introduction to Cao’s (2017) descriptive study, which discusses the function of *po*⁵⁵ and the typology of object-marking constructions as presented by Chappell (2007, 2015). This introduction serves as empirical motivation for applying the linking theory established by Randall (2010) based on the works of Baker (1988), Jackendoff (1990), Levin and Rappaport Hovav (2005), etc. This framework allows us to develop a unified treatment of *po*⁵⁵ both as a verb of giving and as an object marker at the syntactic-semantic interface. Sections 3 and 4 will delve into the analysis of *po*⁵⁵, examining its roles as a verb of giving and as an object marker that indicates specific thematic roles. The analysis of *po*⁵⁵ includes a comprehensive comparison with *bǎ*, drawing inspiration mainly from the research of Sybesma (1999) and Huang et al. (2009). We contend that the underlying semantics of *po*⁵⁵ involves causativity and should be regarded as a strict causative item when compared to *bǎ*. The conclusion is presented in Section 5.

sentence final particle; PASS = passive marker *iā*⁵⁵; GL = goal marker; EXP = experiential aspect *ku*⁵⁵; PFV = perfective.

³ In YJ, there are two pronouns indicating the first person in singular: *aŋ²¹³* and *taŋ²¹³*. The latter form is mainly used by elder generations.

2 Theoretical backgrounds

2.1 The basic function of *po*⁵⁵ in Cao 2017

Cao (2017: 303–305) suggests that *po*⁵⁵, as an object marker, denotes two thematic roles: the patient role, as seen in (3a), and the agent role, akin to *bǎ* and *bèi* in MC, as shown in (3b). It is worth noting that in the latter case, Cao (2017) views *po*⁵⁵ as functionally equivalent to the passive marker in MC.

- (3) a. n²¹³ po⁵⁵ men³³⁴ kuɛ⁴²-so²¹ kʰi⁵⁵!
 you po⁵⁵ door close-up go
 ‘Close the door, please!’
 (Cao 2017: 329)
- b. məʔ²-tsa⁵⁵ uɛ²¹³ po⁵⁵ ki³³⁴ kʰɔ⁴²-pʰa²¹⁴ pəʔ⁵.
 that-CLF bowl po⁵⁵ him hit-broken SFP
 ‘That bowl was broken by him.’
 (Cao 2017: 330)

Additionally, Cao (2017) highlights that *po*⁵⁵ can be used in ditransitive constructions to express the transfer of an object or co-occur with another verb of transfer (e.g., *tɛ*⁴² ‘bring’ in (4b)), similar to the morpheme *gěi*, as demonstrated in (4).

- (4) a. ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³ iəʔ⁵-ka³³⁴ tɔ³³⁴. (= (1a))
 he po⁵⁵ I one-CLF peach
 ‘He gave me a peach.’
- b. po⁵⁵ məʔ²-teie³ i⁴²so²¹³ tɛ⁴² po⁵⁵ taŋ²¹³. (= (2a))
 po⁵⁵ that-CLF clothes bring po⁵⁵ I
 ‘Give that piece of clothes to me.’

Clearly, Cao (2017) recognizes the “dual role” attributed to the morpheme *po*⁵⁵. However, there are a couple of issues to address in his work. First, Cao’s classification of the thematic roles marked by *po*⁵⁵ appears to be coarse-grained. For instance, when *po*⁵⁵ co-occurs with a verb of transfer, as in (4b), the pronoun *taŋ*²¹³ ‘me’ does not assume the patient role from *po*⁵⁵ but rather the goal/recipient role, if we adopt the thematic role system proposed by Jackendoff (1990) and Dowty (1991). However, all these semantic relations to the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP can be understood in terms of affectedness, as discussed in Section 4.

Second, Cao (2017) asserts that *po*⁵⁵, on a par with *bèi*, can introduce the agent role to create an explicit passive sentence, which is a point of disagreement. Based on our survey, all native speakers we encountered insert the morpheme *iā*⁵⁵ to mark the agent in a passive sentence instead of *po*⁵⁵, as illustrated in (5).⁴ For contemporary native speakers, *iā*⁵⁵ is unquestionably the correct choice for constructing a passive sentence.

⁴ We investigated 8 native speakers in February 2023, including 5 males and 3 females. Their age range is between 40 and 80 years old.

- (5) mǝʔ²-tsǝ⁵⁵ uɛ²¹³ iǝ⁵⁵ ki³³⁴ k^hɔ⁴²-p^hǝ²¹⁴ pǝʔ⁵.
 that-CLF bowl PASS he hit-broken SFP
 ‘That bowl was broken by him.’

Cao’s (2017) study on YJ leaves certain aspects unexplained, particularly on what *pɔ*⁵⁵ accomplishes at the syntactic-semantic interface. In Sections 3 and 4, we aim to address this issue from a linking perspective, but first, we will briefly examine more general object-marking patterns in Sinitic languages.

2.2 Object-marking patterns in Chappell 2007, 2015

Object-marking constructions in Chinese, often referred to as disposal constructions since Wang 1954, vary from one dialect to another in terms of the object marker used before a specific object and the semantics conveyed by these structures (cf. Li and Chappell 2013a, 2013b). Previous studies on disposal constructions in MC introduced two fundamental semantic constraints: (i) the direct object must be referential, and (ii) it must undergo a particular change of state (Lü 1990; Wang 1984; Bisang 1992; Chappell 1992; Sun 1995, etc.).

It is well known that object-marking constructions can transform the canonical word order “subject-transitive verb-object” into an S-O-V structure with the assistance of a specific morpheme, as demonstrated in (6). Chappell (2007: 188–189) proposes three primary sources of object markers constituting object-marking constructions in Chinese: (i) verbs of holding and taking; (ii) verbs of giving and helping; and (iii) comitatives.

- (6) S(subject)-V(erb)_{transitive}-O(bject) ⇒ S-[object marker-O]-V_{transitive}

Based on her generalizations, Chappell (2007, 2015) tentatively delineates four linguistic areas, referred to as the Northern Zone, Central China, Southeastern Zone, and Southern Zone.⁵ In terms of grammaticalization pathways, Chappell (2007) argues that verbs of holding and taking are the most common sources of object markers in Chinese dialects. Such a grammaticalization pathway is also widely observed in differential languages worldwide (cf. Heine and Kuteva 2002).

However, the second pathway involving object markers derived from verbs of giving and helping, is not well-documented in typological literature, though it regularly appears in Chinese dialects found in Central China (Chappell 2015). As illustrated in (7), YJ follows the second pathway, sharing similar characteristics with certain dialects in Hui and Southern Wu.

⁵ As stated in Chappell 2015, the classification of four linguistic areas in China revises the North-South linguistic division advocated by Hashimoto (1986) and Norman (1988), which is further refined by Matisoff (1991).

(7) Object Marker < Verbs of Giving

a. *po*⁵⁵ as a verb of giving

ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ lo²¹o³³⁴ iə²⁵-pin³³⁴ tɛiəu³.
 he po⁵⁵ Laowang one-CLF alcohol
 'He gave Laowang a bottle of alcohol.'

b. *po*⁵⁵ as a beneficiary marker

lo²¹o³³⁴ po⁵⁵ ki³³⁴ ue²¹³ tʰa⁵⁵-xə⁵⁵ pəʔ⁵.
 Laowang po⁵⁵ he bowl wash-finished SFP
 'Laowang washed the bowl for him.'

c. *po*⁵⁵ as a goal marker

ki³³⁴ liəu³³⁴ po⁵⁵ lo²¹o³³⁴ iə²⁵-pin³³⁴ tɛiəu³.
 he keep po⁵⁵ Laowang one-CLF alcohol
 'He kept a bottle of alcohol for Laowang.'

d. *po*⁵⁵ as a patient marker

ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ kʰɛ⁵⁵men³³⁴ kue⁴²-tʰiə²¹ pəʔ⁵.
 he po⁵⁵ window close-drop SFP
 'He closed the window.'

The dual role of *po*⁵⁵ strongly supports Chappell's grammaticalization pattern. However, the verbal nature of *po*⁵⁵ undergoes significant weakening during the grammaticalization process. It no longer allows the attachment of aspectual particles like normal verbs, and it tends to co-occur with other transfer verbs. We postpone this issue to Section 3.

Furthermore, Chappell (2007) identifies four additional object-marking constructions in Chinese:

(8) a. Pattern II: The main VP followed by a co-referring pronoun

(NP_{subject})–[object marker-NP_{direct object (i)}]-VP-Pronoun_(i)

b. Pattern III: The object marker followed by a pronoun co-referring with an NP at the initial position

NP_{direct object (i)}–[object marker-Pronoun_(i)]-VP

c. Pattern IV: The object marker followed by a null form

NP_{direct object}–[object marker-Ø]-VP

d. Pattern V: Hybrid form with two object markers

(NP_{subject})–[object marker₁-NP_{direct object (i)}]-object marker₂-Pronoun_(i)-VP

In this context, we are particularly interested in pattern III, which can be found in YJ. Co-referring pronouns in pattern III are known as resumptive pronouns (Huang et al. 2009).⁶ YJ generally permits such pronouns in object-marking constructions, whereas patterns II and IV are not legitimate, and pattern V is even impossible because *po*⁵⁵ is the unique object marker.

⁶ As mentioned by an anonymous reviewer, Mandarin Chinese also allows constructions with resumptive pronouns if the preposed object denotes human. However, in the light of [+HUMAN] or [-HUMAN] property, the Yanzhou dialect seems to be more tolerant when constructing sentences of pattern III.

- (9) a. $kəʔ^2$ $tɕie^3$ $i^{42}so^{213}$ $lɔ^{21}o^{334}$ po^{55} ki^{334} $tʰa^{55}$ $kɛ^{42}ɕin^{55}$ $pəʔ^5$. (pattern III)
 this CLF clothes Laowang po^{55} it wash clean SPF
 ‘This piece of clothes, Laowang has gotten it washed.’
 b. $kəʔ^2$ - $tɕa^{55}$ $pin^{55}ku^{213}$ $lɔ^{21}o^{334}$ po^{55} ki^{334} $tɕʰiəʔ^5$ - $tiə^{213}$ $pəʔ^5$. (pattern III)
 this-CLF apple Laowang po^{55} it eat-up SPF
 ‘This apple, Laowang has eaten it.’
 c. $*n^{213}$ po^{55} $kəʔ^2$ - $tɕa^{55}$ $pin^{55}ku^{213}$ $tɕʰiəʔ^5$ - $tiə^{213}$ ki^{334} . (pattern II)
 you po^{55} this-CLF apple eat-up it
 Intended: ‘You can eat up this apple.’
 d. $*kəʔ^2$ - $tɕie^3$ $i^{42}so^{213}$ po^{55} $tʰa^{55}$ - $kɛ^{42}ɕin^{55}$. (pattern IV)
 this-CLF clothes po^{55} wash-clean
 Intended: ‘You should wash this piece of clothes.’

As noted by Chappell (2007), pattern III is geographically constrained to Central and Southeast China, especially common in the Southern Min and Wu dialects. The fact that this pattern appears rarely in the Hui dialect may suggest that, to a certain extent, YJ aligns more with other Wu dialects.

In summary, Chappell (2007, 2015) challenges the traditional North-South division of linguistic areas and instead proposes four fundamental linguistic areas in China. For our study, Chappell’s work highlights one significant point: Verbs of helping are the primary source of object markers in the Hui dialects, while the Southern Wu dialects typically use verbs of giving. Consequently, po^{55} more closely reflects the latter source of grammaticalization. In this regard, investigations into extensive grammatical phenomena significantly contribute to a nuanced typology of Chinese dialects. A comparative study of grammatical aspects in YJ provides an essential perspective to re-evaluate its nature.

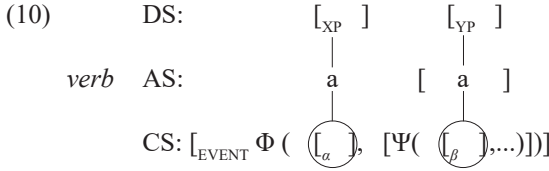
2.3 Linking in Randall 2010

For a unified analysis of po^{55} at the syntactic-semantic interface, we introduce the linking mechanism outlined by Randall (2010), referred to as “the geometry of argument structure”.

In a nutshell, linking is concerned with the mapping between the interpretations of words and their syntactic realizations (Chomsky 1986; Baker 1988; Dowty 1979; Jackendoff 1990; Larson 1990; van Valin 1999; Levin and Rappaport Hovav 2005; among others). Following Jackendoff (1990), Randall (2010: 16) posits that specific thematic information resides at a particular Conceptual Structure (CS), and constituents containing such information are designated as linking to the syntax. Furthermore, linking is achieved through an additional level of representation called the Argument Structure (AS).⁷ AS serves as an interface where syntactically

⁷ According to Randall (2010), AS should not be viewed as a distinct level of representation. AS plays a crucial role in achieving the objectives of studies at the syntactic-semantic interface.

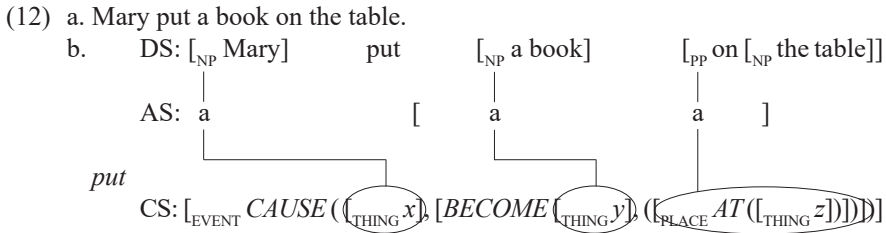
relevant thematic information is registered, and it explicitly signifies the argument positions of a syntactic head (Randall 2010: 19). The diagram below provides a basic representation of the fundamental concept of linking.



The subscripted Greek letters indicate the ontological type of an argument, such as THING, PLACE, etc., which is required by the function symbolized by capital Greek letters. Each function in CS is associated with a conceptual primitive, like CAUSE, BECOME, BE, and GO, as defined by Dowty (1979) and Jackendoff (1987). The entire CS represents a kind of eventuality.⁸ As shown in (10), the constituent within the CS (the circled part) links to only one syntactic category in the Deep Structure (DS) via a corresponding argument in the AS. The argument outside the brackets is syntactically realized as the external argument, while the one inside serves as the internal argument. In Randall's linking theory, not only nouns but prepositional phrases function as arguments and can be linked to a specific conceptual constituent to maintain thematic information. For instance, a causative verb like *put* possesses the CS in (11), adopted from Randall 2010: 105.



Hence, the linking of (12a) proceeds as described in (12b).⁹



The CS in (12b) comprises three constituents THING (entities like a person, a physical or even abstract object), all embedded in other conceptual components to construct a larger constituent. Consequently, the CS represents that “x causes a change in the state of y so that y has now taken the place of z”. Via the arguments in the AS, these conceptual constituents ultimately link to the external NP, internal NP, and the PP in D-Structure, respectively.

⁸ In this paper, we employ the general definition of eventuality as discussed by Bach (1986).

⁹ To simplify the notation, we will no longer use the bracket notation for [THING] and instead utilize variables like x and y to represent specific entities, unless it is necessary to specify otherwise.

The linking process described in (12b) involves composition: The CS of a predicate is composed with the CSs of its arguments, which is ensured by a specific rule stated in (13).

(13) **Argument Fusion** (Randall 2010: 299)

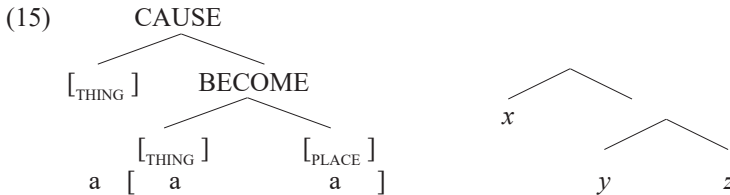
For each argument position, *a*, in the AS of a head, *H*, (a verb, preposition, noun, or adjective), fuse the CS of the syntactic XP that satisfies *a* into the constituent in the CS that *a* links to.

Another crucial rule in (14) that effectively prevents the generation of ungrammatical sentences is the Prohibition Against Double Fusion. Due to (14), sentences like “**Mary put a book on the table into a bag.*” cannot be constructed. This is because the conceptual constituent [PLACE] links twice per fusion, violating this rule.

(14) **Prohibition Against Double Fusion** (Randall 2010: 299)

Fusion cannot apply more than once to a CS constituent.

Following Randall (2010: 54), a typical causal CS can be schematically represented with a simplified syntactic tree, corresponding to the argument template with one external and two internal arguments.



Randall’s (2010) hypothesis asserts that the structured geometry of CS is preserved at AS: the terminal nodes at CS are isomorphically reflected in a hierarchical relation between the nodes at AS. This principle is formalized as the Isomorphic Linking Hypothesis (ILH).¹⁰

(16) **Isomorphic Linking Hypothesis** (Randall 2010: 298)

The linking nodes at CS map isomorphically into the terminal nodes at AS.

In essence, Randall’s theory establishes a clear framework for mapping thematic information in CS into syntactic realizations through a corresponding argument template. Suppose each CS constituent is assigned a specific semantic role; for instance, the arguments in (12a) can be interpreted as AGENT, THEME, and GOAL, respectively. Therefore, linking strictly operates at the syntactic-semantic interface.

¹⁰ We have chosen to adopt the preliminary version formulated in Randall 2010 because it is robust enough to handle the analysis of different *po*³⁵-sentences.

In the following sections, we will utilize Randall's framework to explore the multifunctionality exhibited by *po*⁵⁵. Our analysis suggests that *po*⁵⁵ specifies a unified CS related to causativity, despite its dual grammatical function. However, the D-structures involved in each case differ from one another, leading to distinct linking processes in each scenario.

3 *Po*⁵⁵ as a verb of giving

As laid out in Sections 2.1 and 2.2, *po*⁵⁵ as a verb of giving conveys a transferred possessive relation, on a par with *gěi*.¹¹ The verbal *po*⁵⁵ emphasizes that a specific object has been transferred from the person in the subject position to someone else denoted by the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP, with the exact mode of transfer being somewhat suppressed. Semantically, *po*⁵⁵ can be paraphrased as *tē*⁴² *po*⁵⁵ 'bring' or *səm*³³ *po*⁵⁵ 'give something as a gift', as exemplified in (18).

- (17) a. *ki*³³⁴ *po*⁵⁵ *lɔ*²¹*o*³³⁴ *iəŋ*⁵-*pin*³³⁴ *tɛiəu*³. (= (7a))
 he *po*⁵⁵ Laowang one-CLF alcohol
 'He gave Laowang a bottle of alcohol.'
 b. *ki*³³⁴ *po*⁵⁵ *ɑŋ*²¹³ *iəŋ*⁵-*kɑ*³³⁴ *tɔ*³³⁴. (= (1a))
 he *po*⁵⁵ I one-CLF peach
 'He gave me a peach.'
- (18) a. *ki*³³⁴ *səm*³³ *po*⁵⁵ *lɔ*²¹*o*³³⁴ *iəŋ*⁵-*pin*³³⁴ *tɛiəu*³.
 he give *po*⁵⁵ Laowang one-CLF alcohol
 'He gave Laowang a bottle of alcohol as a gift.'
 b. *ki*³³⁴ *tē*⁴² *po*⁵⁵ *ɑŋ*²¹³ *iəŋ*⁵-*kɑ*³³⁴ *tɔ*³³⁴.
 he bring *po*⁵⁵ I one-CLF peach
 'He brought me a peach.'

However, *po*⁵⁵ appears to lack a significant characteristic found in ordinary Chinese verbs: Neither of the aspectual markers (*lǎo*²⁵ or *kū*⁵⁵) can be attached to *po*⁵⁵, contrary to normal verbs.

- (19) a. YJ: **ki*³³⁴ *po*⁵⁵-*lǎo*²⁵ *lɔ*²¹*o*³³⁴ *iəŋ*⁵-*pin*³³⁴ *tɛiəu*³.
 he *po*⁵⁵-PFV Laowang one-CLF alcohol
 Intended: 'He gave/brought Laowang a bottle of alcohol.'
 b. YJ: **ki*³³⁴ *po*⁵⁵-*kū*⁵⁵ *ɑŋ*²¹³ *iəŋ*⁵-*kɑ*³³⁴ *tɔ*³³⁴.
 he *po*⁵⁵-EXP I one-CLF peach
 Intended: 'He gave/brought me a peach.'

The observation that *po*⁵⁵ does not allow the attachment of aspectual markers, despite having a similar argument structure to *gěi*, is intriguing. The process of grammaticalization from a pure verb to an object marker suggests that the verbal status of *po*⁵⁵ has significantly weakened. Additionally, *po*⁵⁵ tends to co-occur with

¹¹ In our approach, we use the terminology "post-*po*⁵⁵ NP" in line with the literature dealing with *bǎ*-constructions, such as Sybesma 1999, Huang et al. 2009, among others.

other verbs of transfer such as *səm*³³, *tɛ*⁴², or *mɑ*⁵⁵ ‘buy’, which lexically specify the mode of transfer. However, when an aspectual marker is attached to the V-*po*⁵⁵ combination, it results in ungrammaticality, whereas the V-*gɛi* combination in MC to some extent allows an aspectual marker to appear post-verbally.

- (20) a. *lɔ²¹o³³⁴ sɔm³³/mɑ⁵⁵/tɛ⁴² po⁵⁵-lɔ²⁵ aŋ²¹³ iə²⁵-pen⁵⁵ ɛy⁴².
 Laowang give/buy/bring po⁵⁵-PFV I one-CLF book
 Intended: ‘Laowang gave/bought/brought me a book.’
 b. */²⁵lɔ²¹o³³⁴ sɔm³³/mɑ⁵⁵/tɛ⁴² po⁵⁵-ku⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³ iə²⁵-pin³³⁴ tɛiəu³.
 Laowang give/buy/bring po⁵⁵-EXP I one-CLF alcohol
 Intended: ‘Laowang gave/bought/brought me a bottle of alcohol.’
 c. Lǎowáng sòng/mǎi/ná-gěi-le wǒ yī-běn shū.
 Laowang give/buy/bring-to-PFV I one-CLF book
 ‘Laowang gave/bought/brought me a book.’

When the combination of *po*⁵⁵+NP can appear sentence-finally, the aspectual marker can be attached to the main verb. In instances like (20–21), *po*⁵⁵ functions as an object marker indicating the goal of the transfer rather than as a verb. This matter will be addressed in Section 4.

- (21) a. lɔ²¹o³³⁴ sɔm³³/tɛ⁴²/mɑ⁵⁵-lɔ²⁵ iə²⁵-pen⁵⁵ ɛy⁴² po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³.
 Laowang give/bring/buy-PFV one-CLF book po⁵⁵ I
 ‘Laowang gave/brought a book to me//bought a book for me.’
 b. lɔ²¹o³³⁴ mɑ⁵⁵-lɔ²⁵ iə²⁵-pin³³⁴ tɛiəu³ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³.
 Laowang buy-PFV one-CLF alcohol po⁵⁵ I
 ‘Laowang bought a bottle of alcohol for me.’
 c. lɔ²¹o³³⁴ tɛ⁴²-lɔ²⁵ iə²⁵-ka³³⁴ tɔ³³⁴ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³.
 Laowang bring-PFV one-CLF peach po⁵⁵ I
 ‘Laowang brought a peach to me.’

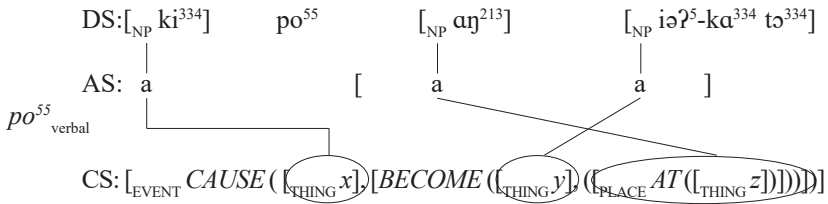
We conclude that the verb *po*⁵⁵ demands three arguments and assigns the agent role to the external argument (the person performing the transfer), the goal role to the first internal argument (where the transfer terminates), and the patient/theme role to the last internal argument (what undergoes the transfer).

The linking for *po*⁵⁵ resembles the one postulated for *put* with a CS related to causativity. In this structure, the subject causes a change in the possessive relation of a specific object concerning the person denoted by the first post-*po*⁵⁵ NP. We assume the following CS for *po*⁵⁵.

- (22) *po*⁵⁵_{verbal}: [_{EVENT} CAUSE ([_{THING}], [BECOME ([_{THING}], ([_{PLACE} AT([_{THING}]))]))]

Accordingly, the linking associated with sentences such as (17b) is realized as the pattern in (23):

- (23) ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³ iə²⁵-ka³³⁴ tɔ³³⁴. (= (17b)) (tentative version)
 he po⁵⁵ I one-CLF peach
 ‘He gave me a peach.’



Note that the internal arguments are linked to the relevant conceptual constituents in reverse order. The first NP corresponds to the entire AT-component, signifying the transfer's goal. Meanwhile, the second NP is conceptually related to the first constituent embedded in BECOME. With this understanding, we can correctly interpret (23): "He causes a change in the possessive relation, so now a peach belongs to me."¹²

Summing up, *po⁵⁵* as a verb of giving conveys the notion of object transfer, specifically the alteration of a possessive relationship concerning an object and someone. In this regard, the verbal *po⁵⁵* is considered a ditransitive verb, assigning thematic roles to its arguments, akin to *gěi*. However, *po⁵⁵* does not permit the attachment of aspectual markers. Unfortunately, we cannot provide an adequate explanation and will leave this issue for further research. It is also observed that *po⁵⁵* tendentiously co-occurs with other verbs of transfer, and the entire *po⁵⁵*-NP tends to appear sentence-finally. The next section deals with various types of *po⁵⁵*-sentences and elucidates how *po⁵⁵*-sentences fit into the causative template by means of linking.

4 Po^{55} as an object marker

This section explores *po*⁵⁵ as an object marker. Initially, we will investigate whether *po*⁵⁵-sentences align with all the *bǎ*-constructions in MC. We will examine essentially if *po*⁵⁵-sentences can encompass all the different types of *bǎ*-sentences discussed in traditional literature. Finally, the linking framework adopted here will provide a compelling perspective on how the concept of causativity is reflected in *po*⁵⁵-sentences. This leads to the conclusion that *po*⁵⁵ should be regarded as a strict causative item when compared to *bǎ*.

4.1 Data

Numerous prior studies have explored the $b\bar{a}$ -construction, yielding valuable insights. While we cannot list all of these studies, notable ones include Wang 1954, Lü 1990, Chao 1968, Yue-Hashimoto 1971, Li and Thompson 1981, Wang 1984, Sun 1996, Liu 1997, Sybesma 1999, and Huang et al. 2009, among many others.

¹² Note that AT is an abstract predicate in CS, which is not only associated with concrete places, but also states triggered by a specific action.

In traditional literature, the *bǎ*-sentence is also described as the disposal construction, a term introduced by Wang (1954), Chao (1968), and Wang (1984), among others, since the post-*bǎ* NP is “disposed” or “affected” in the event denoted by the VP. However, this notion has been subject to debate, primarily because in many *bǎ*-sentences, either the subject is inanimate or the post-*bǎ* NP is not strictly affected (cf. Li and Thompson 1981). Our aim is not to categorize the *bǎ*-construction, but rather to examine whether there exists a one-to-one correspondence between it and the *pó*⁵⁵-construction.

If we focus solely on the essential property of whether the subject exerts control over a particular event that affects the post-*bǎ* NP, we can differentiate between the canonical disposal construction (24) and the causative construction (25). The morpheme *pó*⁵⁵ seems to be compatible in both of these contexts.

- (24) a. MC: Wǒ bǎ huā chā zài huāpíng lǐ le.
 I OM flower stick at vase in SFP
 ‘I stuck the flowers into the vase.’
 (Sybesma 1999: 132)
 YJ: aŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ xo⁴² tʂo⁵⁵ tɕ³³ xo⁴²pin³³⁴ li⁵⁵təu³³⁴ pəʔ⁵.
 I po⁵⁵ flower stick to vase inside SFP
 ‘I stuck the flowers into the vase.’
- b. MC: Lǎowáng bǎ chuānghù guān-shàng le.
 Laowang OM window close-up SFP
 ‘Laowang closed the window.’
 YJ: lə²¹o³³⁴ po⁵⁵ tʂo⁴²men³³⁴ kue⁴²-tʰio²¹ pəʔ⁵.
 Laowang po⁵⁵ window close-drop SFP
 ‘Laowang closed the window.’
- c. MC: Tā bǎ fàn shāo-hǎo le.
 he OM rice cook-finished SFP
 ‘He (has) cooked the meal.’
 YJ: ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ fe⁵⁵ sɔ¹-xɔ⁵ pəʔ⁵.
 he po⁵⁵ rice cook-finished SFP
 ‘He (has) cooked the meal.’
- (25) a. MC: Fēng bǎ shù chuī-dǎo le.
 wind OM tree blow-down SFP
 ‘The wind blew down the tree(s).’
 YJ: foam¹ po⁵⁵ ɛy⁵⁵ tɕ^hye⁴²³-tɕ²¹³ pəʔ⁵.
 wind po⁵⁵ tree blow-down SFP
 ‘The wind blew down the tree(s).’
- b. MC: Yī-bēi jiǔ jiù bǎ tā hē-zuì le.
 one-glass alcohol then OM he drink-drunk SFP
 ‘Only one glass of alcohol made him drunk.’
 YJ: iəʔ⁵-pe⁴²³ teiəu³ ɛiəu⁵⁵ po⁵⁵ ki³³⁴ tɕ^hiəʔ⁵-tɕi³³⁴ pəʔ⁵.
 one-glass alcohol then po⁵⁵ he eat-drunk SFP
 ‘Only one glass of alcohol made him drunk.’

- c. MC: Zhè-jìan shì bǎ wǒ xià-le yī-tiào.
 this-CLF matter OM I scare-PFV one-CL_V
 ‘This matter scared me.’
 YJ: kəʔ²-kəʔ⁵ sɿ³³kɛ⁵⁵ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³ xɑ⁵⁵-ləʔ⁵ iəʔ⁵-tse⁴²³.
 this-CLF matter po⁵⁵ I scare-PFV one-CL_V
 ‘This matter scared me.’

Nonetheless, the postverbal constituents of the *bǎ*-construction exhibit various syntactic types that influence the degree of adequacy of *bǎ*-sentences, as discussed in Li and Thompson 1981. Particularly, postverbal constituents play an even crucial role in determining the well-formedness of *po*⁵⁵-sentences. Thus, it is inevitable to investigate which types of postverbal constituents *po*⁵⁵ is (in) compatible with. Based on the classification of the *bǎ*-construction in Sybesma 1999, our data indicate that *po*⁵⁵ only partially covers the cases of *bǎ*.

The first type includes resultative postverbal constituents that consist of an event and a state part, with the post-*bǎ*/*po*⁵⁵ NP interpreted as the entity bearing the resultative state. As depicted in (26), *po*⁵⁵ fits such contexts.

- (26) a. MC: Lǎowáng bǎ fángjiān dǎsǎo-gānjìng le.
 Laowang OM room swipe-clean SFP
 ‘Laowang swiped the room until it became clean.’
 YJ: lə²¹o³³⁴ po⁵⁵ fo³³kɛ⁴² so³³⁴-kɛ⁴²ɛin⁵⁵ pəʔ⁵.
 Laowang po⁵⁵ room swipe-clean SFP
 ‘Laowang swiped the room until it became clean.’
 b. MC: Tā bǎ chē tíng dào wàimiàn le.
 he OM car park to outside SFP
 ‘He parked the car outside.’
 YJ: ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ tsho⁴²³ tin³³⁴ to³³ ua⁵⁵təu³³⁴ pəʔ⁵.
 he po⁵⁵ car park to outside SFP
 ‘He parked the car outside.’
 c. MC: tā bǎ shū fàng zài chuáng shàng.
 he OM book put at bed on
 ‘He put the books on the bed.’
 (Sybesma 1999: 135)
 YJ: ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ ɛy⁴²³ kʰo³³⁴ to³³ so³³⁴pʰu³³⁴ kə⁴²təu²¹³.
 he po⁵⁵ book put to bed high-head
 ‘He put the books on the bed.’

The second type is referred to as “the prepositional dative *bǎ*-sentences”. In YJ, postverbal constituents of this type are frequently expressed by the *po*⁵⁵-NP structure. As a result, two *po*⁵⁵-NPs exist in parallel. It becomes an intriguing question how these two instances of *po*⁵⁵ correlate with each other.

- (27) a. MC: Tā bǎ shū sòng gěi wǒ le.
 he OM book give to me SFP
 ‘He gave the book to me as a gift.’

- YJ: ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ ey⁴²³ sɔm³³ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³ pəʔ⁵.
 he po⁵⁵ book give to me SFP
 ‘He gave the book to me as a gift.’
- b. MC: Lǎowáng bǎ xìn jì gěi Lǎoli le.
 Laowang OM letter send to Laoli SFP
 ‘Laowang sent the letter to Laoli.’
- YJ: lɔ²¹o³³⁴ po⁵⁵ ein³³⁴ tɛi³³⁴ po⁵⁵ lɔ⁵⁵li²¹³ pəʔ⁵.
 Laowang po⁵⁵ letter send to Laoli SFP
 ‘Laowang sent the letter to Laoli.’

In the third group, the postverbal constituent is lexicalized by a durative or frequentative phrase. Note that *po*⁵⁵-sentences become deviant, if the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP is not strictly affected in a specific manner.¹³ A more natural way to construct sentences in (28) is to prepose the direct object either before the VP or even before the subject, without inserting *po*⁵⁵, as represented in (29). Only if the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP is genuinely affected physically or psychologically can *po*⁵⁵-sentences be judged as adequate, as in (30).

- (28) a. MC: Wǒ bǎ zhè-běn shū kàn-le liǎng-gè xiǎoshí.
 I OM this-CLF book read-PFV two-CLF hour
 ‘I read this book for two hours.’
 (Sybesma 1999: 136)
- YJ: ʔ²¹aŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ kəʔ²-pen⁵⁵ ey⁴²³ k^hɛ³³-ləʔ⁵ nie²¹³-kəʔ⁵ tsaom⁴²təu²¹³.
 I po⁵⁵ this-CLF book read-PFV two-CLF hour
 Intended: ‘I read this book for two hours.’
- b. MC: Tā bǎ zhè-gè wèntí xiǎng-le hěn jiǔ.
 he OM this-CLF problem think-PFV very long
 ‘He thought of this matter for a long while.’
- YJ: ʔ²¹ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ kəʔ²-kəʔ⁵ men⁵⁵ti³³⁴ tsen²¹³-ləʔ⁵ məʔ⁵lɔ⁵⁵lɔ⁵⁵ sɿ³³təu⁵⁵.
 he po⁵⁵ this-CLF problem think-PFV many time
 Intended: ‘He thought of this matter for a long while.’
- (29) a. aŋ²¹³ kəʔ²-pen⁵⁵ ey⁴²³ k^hɛ³³-ləʔ⁵ nie²¹³-kəʔ⁵ tsaom⁴²təu²¹³.
 I this-CLF book read-PFV two-CLF hour
 ‘I read this book for two hours.’
- b. kəʔ²-kəʔ⁵ men⁵⁵ti³³⁴ ki³³⁴ tsen²¹³-ləʔ⁵ məʔ⁵lɔ⁵⁵lɔ⁵⁵ sɿ³³təu⁵⁵.
 this-CLF problem he think-PFV many time
 ‘He thought of this matter for a long while.’
- (30) a. aŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ ki³³⁴ k^hɔ²¹³-ləʔ⁵ iəʔ⁵-ten³³⁴.
 I po⁵⁵ he beat-PFV one-CL_v
 ‘I gave him a dressing down.’

¹³ By “affected in a specific manner” we mean that the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP, for instance, undergoes a physical or psychological change caused by the relevant event.

- b. lɔ⁵⁵sɿ⁴² po⁵⁵ xu²¹³se⁴² mo⁵⁵-ləʔ⁵ iəʔ⁵-kəʔ⁵ tsaom⁴²təu²¹³.
 teacher po⁵⁵ student scold-PFV one-CLF hour
 ‘The teacher scolded students for one hour.’

The fourth type is similar to the first type in that the postverbal component represents a “resultative entity”, albeit expressed in nominal form. It is relatively straightforward to create *po*⁵⁵-sentences in this type.

- (31) a. MC: Wǒ bǎ xīguā qiē-le hǎo jǐ-kuài.
 I OM watermelon cut-PFV so several-piece
 ‘I cut the watermelon into pieces.’
 YJ: ɑŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ ei⁴²ko²¹³ tɕ^hie⁵⁵-ləʔ⁵ xɔ²¹³ tɕi⁵⁵-k^hue⁰.
 I po⁵⁵ watermelon cut-PFV so several-piece
 ‘I cut the watermelon into pieces.’
 b. MC: Wàipó bǎ bái zhǐ zhé-le yī-duǒ huā.
 grandmother OM white paper fold-PFV one-CLF flower
 ‘The grandmother folded the paper and made it into a flower.’
 YJ: ɑ⁰pu³³⁴ po⁵⁵ pɑ²¹ tsɿ²¹³ tsɿ⁵⁵-ləʔ⁵ iəʔ⁵-tu²¹³ xo⁴²³.
 grandmother po⁵⁵ white paper fold-PFV one-CLF flower
 ‘The grandmother folded the paper and made it into a flower.’

In the fifth class the postverbal NP is semantically or pragmatically linked to the post-*bǎ* NP in such a way that either the former is possessed by the latter, or the two NPs are in a part-whole relationship. In YJ, *po*⁵⁵-sentences of this type can be constructed, but only if the postverbal NP is moved before the VP.¹⁴

- (32) a. MC: Wǒ bǎ fǎngjiān zhuāng-hǎo-le mén.
 I OM room install-finished-PERF door
 ‘I finished installing the door in the room.’
 YJ: ɑŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ fo³³ke⁴²
 I po⁵⁵ room
 { *tso⁴²xɔ²¹³-ləʔ⁵ men³³⁴, men³³⁴ tso⁴²xɔ²¹³ -pəʔ⁵ }.
 install-finish-PERF door door install-finish SFP
 Intended: ‘I finished installing the door in the room.’
 b. MC: Tā bǎ tóngxué dǎ-duàn-le tuǐ.
 he OM classmate beat-break-PFV leg
 ‘He broke his classmate’s leg by beating it.’
 YJ: ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ taom³³xu³³⁴
 he po⁵⁵ classmate

¹⁴ The reason why the postverbal NP must be preposed in YJ is currently unclear. It is worth noting that in typical sentences with a disyllabic verb, native YJ speakers tend to move the object NP before the verb. For a relevant and intensive research on the comparison of word order in MC, Cantonese and the Luqiao dialect see Sybesma 2021.

- {*k^hɔ⁵⁵-tɛ²¹³-lɔ⁷⁵ t^he²¹³, t^he²¹³ k^hɔ⁵⁵-tɛ²¹³ pə⁷⁵}.
 beat-break-PFV leg leg beat-break SFP
 Intended: 'He broke his classmate's leg by beating it.'
- c. MC: Wǒ bǎ júzi bāo-diào-le pí.
 I OM tangerine peel-drop-PFV skin
 'I peeled the tangerines.'
- YJ: aŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ tɛyɔ⁷⁵tsɿ⁵⁵
 I po⁵⁵ tangerine
 {*pu⁵⁵-thio⁵-lɔ⁷⁵ pi⁰, pi⁰ pu⁵⁵-thio⁵ pə⁷⁵}.
 peel-drop-PFV skin skin peel-drop SFP
 Intended: 'I peeled the tangerines.'

The last three types, which include bare *bǎ*-sentences (33) lacking postverbal constituents, locative *bǎ*-sentences (34) where the post-*bǎ* NP marks the place of the action's termination, and what Sybesma (1999) refers to as Rest *bǎ*-sentences which are essentially rhetorical or literary expressions, do not have direct counterparts in YJ (and the last type can even not be formulated in YJ).

- (33) a. MC: Tā bǎ fàn chī le.
 he OM rice eat SFP
 'He has finished his food.'
 (Sybesma 1999: 137)
- YJ: *ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ fɛ⁵⁵ tɛ^hiɔ⁷⁵ pə⁷⁵.
 he po⁵⁵ rice eat SFP
 Intended: 'He has finished his food.'
- b. MC: Tā nǚér bǎ zhū mài le.
 he daughter OM pig sell SFP
 'His daughter sold the pig.'
- YJ: *ki³³⁴ no⁵⁵n⁰ po⁵⁵ tsɿ⁴²³ mɔ⁵⁵ pə⁷⁵.
 he daughter po⁵⁵ pig sell SFP
 Intended: 'His daughter sold the pig.'
- (34) a. MC: Tā bǎ huāpíng chā-le yī-duǒ huā.
 he OM vase stick-PFV one-CLF flower
 'He stuck a flower into the vase.'
- YJ: *ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ xo⁴²pin²¹³ ts^ho⁵⁵-lɔ⁷⁵ iɔ⁷⁵-tu²¹³ xo⁴²³.
 he po⁵⁵ vase stick-PFV one-CLF flower
 Intended: 'He stuck a flower into the vase.'
- b. MC: Tā bǎ zhuōzi pū-le yī-zhāng bái bù.
 he OM table spread.out-PFV one-CLF white cloth
 'He spread out a piece of white cloth on the table.'
- YJ: *ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ tsu⁵⁵n⁰ p^hu⁴²³-lɔ⁷⁵ iɔ⁷⁵-tsɛ⁴²³ pa²¹³ pu³³⁴.
 he po⁵⁵ table spread.out-PFV one-CLF white cloth
 Intended: 'He spread out a piece of white cloth on the table.'

In summary, the observation that *po*⁵⁵-sentences cover fewer types than *bǎ*-sentences suggests that *po*⁵⁵ is subject to more stringent semantic constraints. The insertion of *po*⁵⁵ is feasible only when the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP is affected in a specific way and a particular change of state in question has taken place.

4.2 Characteristics of *po*⁵⁵-sentences

Building upon the data in Section 4.1, we illuminate the distinction between the *po*⁵⁵- and *bǎ*-constructions by considering factors such as affectedness, postverbal constituents, and the thematic roles marked by *po*⁵⁵. The findings underscore that causativity is conceptually integrated into the semantic structure of *po*⁵⁵.

4.2.1 Affectedness

It has been discussed that the *bǎ* construction denotes the total affectedness of an event on the object of the verb (Sun 1995; Liu 1997; Sybesma 1999). Huang et al. (2009: 160) highlight that in the *bǎ*-construction, it is not always the post-*bǎ* NP that is affected. The following example illustrates how the subject rather than the post-*bǎ* NP is affected, as the act of eating rice causes them to become full.

- (35) Wǒ bǎ fàn chī-bǎo-le jiù lái.
 I OM rice eat-full-PFV then come
 ‘I will come when I am full.’
 (Huang et al. 2009: 160)

In contrast, sentences like (35) are not licensed in YJ if the affected entity pertains to the subject, as shown in (36a). However, sentences become acceptable either when *po*⁵⁵ is omitted, as in (36b), or when the resultative state is connected to the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP, as in (36c).

- (36) a. *aŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ fɛ⁵⁵ tɕʰiəŋ⁵-pɔ²¹³ ɕiəu⁵⁵ lɛ³³⁴.
 I po⁵⁵ rice eat-full then come
 b. aŋ²¹³ fɛ⁵⁵ tɕʰiəŋ⁵-pɔ²¹³ ɕiəu⁵⁵ lɛ³³⁴.
 I rice eat-full then come
 ‘I will come when I finish my meal.’
 c. aŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ fɛ⁵⁵ tɕʰiəŋ⁵-tʰiə⁵/tɕʰiəŋ⁵-ke⁴² ɕin⁵⁵ ɕiəu⁵⁵ lɛ³³⁴.
 I po⁵⁵ rice eat-up eat-clean then come
 ‘I will come when I finish my meal.’

Another interesting observation in Huang et al. 2009 is concerned with the semantic ambiguity of affectedness in *bǎ*-sentences. For instance, sentence (37a) can be interpreted as either ‘my hand has become swollen’ or ‘my beating caused their hands to become swollen’. However, the counterpart (37b) only allows for the latter interpretation.

- (37) a. Wǒ bǎ tāmen dǎ de shǒu dōu zhǒng le.
 I OM them beat DE hand all swollen SFP
 ✓ Reading I: ‘I hit them such that my hands got swollen.’
 ✓ Reading II: ‘I hit them such that their hands got swollen.’
 (Huang et al. 2009: 179)

- b. aŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ ki⁵⁵la⁵⁵ k^hɔ²¹³ tɔ⁷⁵ səu²¹ tu²¹³ tsaom²¹³ pɔ⁷⁵.
 I po⁵⁵ them beat DE hand all swollen SFP
 × Reading I; √ Reading II.

Li and Thompson (1981) acknowledge that it is not always straightforward to ascertain when and how an NP following *bǎ* is affected. The example (38), partly drawn from Li and Thompson (1981: 469), indicates that there is no explicit affectedness of the post-*bǎ* NP, largely because of the semantic characteristics of the verbs involved.¹⁵

- (38) a. Wǒ bǎ tā ài/ hèn de yào sǐ.
 I OM her love hate DE want die
 ‘I love/hate her to death.’
 b. Tā bǎ nǐ xiǎng de fàn dōu bù kěn chī.
 he OM you miss DE rice even not willing eat
 ‘He misses you so much that he does not want to eat his meals.’
 (Li and Thompson 1981: 469)

Li and Thompson (1981: 469) attempted to account for the acceptability of these sentences by suggesting that the combination of the verbs with an added intensifier expression creates a hyperbolic image that impacts the post-*bǎ* NP. However, as shown in (39), the YJ pendants are all ungrammatical. We assume that *po*⁵⁵ carries a stronger presupposition of affectedness on the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP, which cannot be equated with emotional intensification or an imaginary situation.

- (39) a. *aŋ²¹³ po⁵⁵ ki³³⁴ xue⁴²ɛi²¹³/ xen²¹³ tɔ⁷⁵ iɔ³³⁴ ɛi²¹³.¹⁶
 I po⁵⁵ him/her love hate DE willing die
 Intended: ‘I love/hate him/her to death.’
 b. *ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ n²¹³ tsen²¹³ tɔ⁷⁵ fe⁵⁵ tu²¹³ fɔ⁷⁵ k^hen²¹³ tɕhiɔ⁷⁵.
 he po⁵⁵ you think DE rice even not willing eat
 Intended: ‘He misses you so much that he does not want to eat his meals.’

Liu (1997: 93–94) provides another pertinent example to critique the inadequate explanation of *bǎ*-sentences in terms of affectedness. Similarly, the YJ counterpart is not acceptable. Huang et al. (2009) also challenge this ambiguous concept, yet it appears to be crucial for the grammaticality of *po*⁵⁵-sentences.

- (40) MC: Tā bǎ yī-gè dà hǎo jīhuì cuòguò le.
 he OM one-CLF big good opportunity miss SFP
 ‘He missed a very good opportunity.’
 YJ: *ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ iɔ⁷⁵-kɔ⁷⁵ me⁴² xɔ²¹³-kɔ⁷⁵ tɕi³³⁴ue⁵⁵ tshu³³ku⁵⁵ pɔ⁷⁵.
 he po⁵⁵ one-CLF very good-DE opportunity miss SFP
 Intended: ‘He missed a very good opportunity.’

¹⁵ Psycho-verbs and verbs of perception are semantically stative, as assumed in the event semantics (Davidson 1967; Vendler 1967; Maienborn 2011).

¹⁶ The Mandarin verb *ài* ‘love’ can be only expressed as *xue*⁴²ɛi²¹³ ‘like, love’ in YJ.

The re-examination of affectedness can be summarized as follows: (i) *po*⁵⁵ presupposes that only the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP can be affected. Contrary to the *bǎ*-construction, the affectee in the *po*⁵⁵-construction can never refer to the subject; and (ii) the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP must be affected in a specific way.

4.2.2 Resultative state

The data in Section 4.1 implies that *po*⁵⁵ is licensed in a sentence where the involved VP conveys a specific resultative state triggered by an action, which is semantically related to the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP. This can be exemplified as follows:

(i) The post-*po*⁵⁵ NP entity obtains a new physical state, which is distinct to the previous one as in (41), or it is affected psychologically as in (42).

(41) a. lə²¹⁰o³³⁴ po⁵⁵ fo³³ke⁴² sɔ³³⁴-kɛ⁴²ein⁵⁵ pəʔ⁵. (= (26a))

Laowang po⁵⁵ room swipe-clean SFP

‘Laowang swiped the room until it became clean.’

Laowang cleaned the room. ⇒ The room is now clean.

b. a⁰pu³³⁴ po⁵⁵ pa²¹ tsɿ²¹³ tsɿ⁵⁵-ləʔ⁵ iəʔ⁵-tu²¹³ xo⁴²³. (= (31b))

grandmother po⁵⁵ white paper fold-PFV one-CLF flower

‘The grandmother folded the paper and made it into flower.’

⇒ The white paper is now in the form of a flower.

(42) a. kəʔ²-kəʔ⁵ sɿ³³ke⁵⁵ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³ xa⁵⁵-ləʔ⁵ iəʔ⁵-tsɛ⁴²³. (= (25c))

this-CLF matter po⁵⁵ I scare-PFV one-CL_v

‘This matter scared me.’ ⇒ I am now scared.

b. lə⁵⁵sɿ⁴² po⁵⁵ xu²¹³sɛ⁴² mo⁵⁵-ləʔ⁵ iəʔ⁵-kəʔ⁵ tsaom⁴²təu²¹³. (= (30b))

teacher po⁵⁵ student scold-PFV one-CLF hour

‘The teacher scolded students for one hour.’

⇒ The state of the student’s being scolded lasts for one hour.

(ii) The post-*po*⁵⁵ NP entity undergoes the change of location, which can be comprehended either as a spatial concept or as a possessive relation.

(43) a. ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ tsʰo⁴²³ tin³³⁴ tɔ³³ uə⁵⁵təu³³⁴ pəʔ⁵. (= (26b))

he po⁵⁵ car park to outside SFP

‘He parked the car outside.’ ⇒ The location of the car is outside now.

b. ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ ɛy⁴²³ sɔm³³ po⁵⁵ aŋ²¹³ pəʔ⁵. (= (27a))

he po⁵⁵ book give to I SFP

‘He gave the book to me as a gift.’ ⇒ The book is now in my possession.

(iii) The entity undergoing a change of state is not directly the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP but instead exists in a part-whole or inalienably possessive relation with another NP.

(44) a. ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ taom³³xu³³⁴ tʰe²¹³ kʰɔ⁵⁵-tɛ²¹³ pəʔ⁵. (= (32b))

he po⁵⁵ classmate leg beat-break SFP

‘He broke his classmate’s leg by beating it.’

⇒ The classmate’s leg is now broken.

- (47) a. po^{55} $\underline{aŋ^{213}}$ _{beneficiary} $i^{42}so^{213}$ $t^h\alpha^{55}-t^h\dot{\iota}o^{55}!$
 po^{55} I clothes wash-drop
 ‘Wash my clothes for me!’
 b. ki^{334} po^{55} $\underline{l\dot{o}^{21}o^{334}}$ _{beneficiary} $ia^{55}f\epsilon^0$ $s\dot{o}^1-x\dot{o}^5$ $p\dot{a}ʔ^5$.
 he po^{55} Laowang dinner cook-finished SFP
 ‘He cooked the dinner for Laowang.’
 c. n^{213} $ten^{21}xo^{213}$ po^{55} $\underline{pa^{33}pa^{42}}$ _{beneficiary} $t^h\dot{\iota}^{55}$ $s\dot{o}^{334}-k\epsilon^{42}cin^{55}$.
 you later po^{55} dad ground swipe-clean
 ‘You should clean dad’s room for him later.’
- (48) a. n^{213} $p\epsilon^{423}/$ $p\epsilon^{42}t^hen^{213}/$ $*po^{55}$ $aŋ^{213}$ $i\dot{a}ʔ^5-x\dot{o}^{55}$.
 you help help po^{55} I one-CL_v
 ‘You (come to) help me.’
 b. $p\epsilon^{423}/$ po^{55} $aŋ^{213}$ $i^{42}so^{213}$ $t^h\alpha^{55}-t^h\dot{\iota}o^{55}!$ (= (47a))
 help po^{55} I clothes wash-drop
 ‘Wash my clothes for me!’

It raises the question of how the beneficiary role is linked to the attribute of affectedness displayed in the post- po^{55} NP. Note that such a post- po^{55} NP must semantically correlate with the object-NP of the verb so that the object-NP maintains a specific genitive relationship with it.¹⁷ In situations where the clothes do not belong to the speaker or the dinner is not intended for Laowang, the involved po^{55} -sentences become deviant. However, verbs of helping are not constrained by this semantic limitation. Inserting another relevant clause in (50) yields a similar result as a diagnostic for this distinction.

- (49) Context 1: The clothes belong to my father (e.g., my father’s clothes).
 a. po^{55} $\{\#aŋ^{213}, aŋ^{213} pa^{33}pa^{42}\}$ $i^{42}so^{213}$ $t^h\alpha^{55}-t^h\dot{\iota}o^{55}!$
 po^{55} I my dad clothes wash-drop
 Intended: ‘Wash my father’s clothes for him!’
 b. $p\epsilon^{423}$ $aŋ^{213}$ $i^{42}so^{213}$ $t^h\alpha^{55}-t^h\dot{\iota}o^{55}!$ (= (48b))
 help I clothes wash-drop
 ‘Wash the clothes for me!’
- Context 2: The dinner is not prepared for Laowang, but me (e.g., my dinner).
 a. ki^{334} po^{55} $\{\#l\dot{o}^{21}o^{334}, aŋ^{213}\}$ $ia^{55}f\epsilon^0$ $s\dot{o}^1-x\dot{o}^5$ $p\dot{a}ʔ^5$.
 he po^{55} Laowang I dinner cook-finished SFP
 Intended: ‘He cooked my dinner for me.’
 b. ki^{334} $p\epsilon^{42}t^hen^{213}$ $l\dot{o}^{21}o^{334}$ $ia^{55}f\epsilon^0$ $s\dot{o}^1-x\dot{o}^5$ $p\dot{a}ʔ^5$.
 he help Laowang dinner cook-finished SFP
 ‘He helped Laowang to cook the dinner.’

- (50) a. n^{213} $ten^{21}xo^{213}$ po^{55} $aŋ^{213}$ $i^{42}so^{213}$ $t^h\alpha^{55}-t^h\dot{\iota}o^{55}$
 you later po^{55} I clothes wash-drop

¹⁷ Cf. the similar phenomenon for German dative case pointed out by Hole (2014).

- (, # $\epsilon i\omega^{55}$ $s\eta^{213}$ $a\eta^{213}$ $s\text{om}^{33}$ $p\alpha^{33}p\alpha^{42}$ $m\alpha^{\text{?}2}\text{-teie}^3$).
 that be I give dad that-piece
 ‘You wash my clothes for me later! # The one I gave to my dad as a gift.’
- b. n^{213} $ten^{21}x\text{o}^{213}$ po^{55} $a\eta^{213}$ $i^{42}so^{213}$ $t^h\alpha^{55}\text{-t}^hi\text{o}^{55}$
 you later po⁵⁵ I clothes wash-drop
 (, $\epsilon i\omega^{55}$ $s\eta^{213}$ $p\alpha^{33}p\alpha^{42}$ $s\text{om}^{33}$ $a\eta^{213}$ $m\alpha^{\text{?}2}\text{-teie}^3$).
 that be dad give I that-piece
 ‘You wash my clothes for me later! The one my dad gave to me as a gift.’
- c. ki^{334} po^{55} $a\eta^{213}$ $ia^{55}f\epsilon^0$ $s\alpha^1\text{-x}\alpha^5$ $p\alpha^{\text{?}5}$ (, # $p\alpha^{33}p\alpha^{42}$ $ten^{21}x\text{o}^{213}$ $t^hi\alpha^{\text{?}5}$).
 he po⁵⁵ I dinner cook-finished SFP dad later eat
 ‘He cooked my dinner for me. # Dad will eat later.’
- d. ki^{334} po^{55} $a\eta^{213}$ $ia^{55}f\epsilon^0$ $s\alpha^1\text{-x}\alpha^5$ $p\alpha^{\text{?}5}$ (, $a\eta^{213}$ $ten^{21}x\text{o}^{213}$ $t^hi\alpha^{\text{?}5}$).
 he po⁵⁵ I dinner cook-finished SFP I later eat
 ‘He cooked my dinner for me. I will eat later.’

In fact, beneficiary post-*po*⁵⁵ NPs, along with those NPs in the fifth class, can be generalized under the concept of “free datives” according to Hole (2014). In his exploration of German datives, Hole (2014) argues that datives must be locally bound, and dative binding triggers a locality effect. This means that the dative pronoun in (51) must be co-referenced with the relevant noun within the clause, resulting in an obligatory possessive interpretation.

- (51) Paul hat seiner Tochter über die Haare gestrichen.
 Paul have his-dative daughter over the hairs stroked
 ‘Paul stroked his daughter by the hair.’
 (Hole 2014: 145)

Dative binding: Paul hat [seiner Tochter]_i über die..._i... Haare gestrichen.
 Enforced reading: Paul hat [seiner Tochter]_i über ihre_i Haare gestrichen.

Dative binding leads to an interpretation where the definite article obtains a “bound possessor variable”. We contend that post-*po*⁵⁵ NPs in such cases are indeed free datives, and the noun following them must be assigned a bound possessor variable.

- (52) a. n^{213} po^{55} [$a\eta^{213}$]_i $i^{42}so^{213}$..._i... $t^h\alpha^{55}\text{-t}^hi\text{o}^{55}$! (= (47a))
 you po⁵⁵ I clothes wash-drop
 ‘You wash my clothes for me!’
- b. $a\eta^{213}$ po^{55} [$fo^{33}k\epsilon^{42}$]_i men^{334} ..._i... $tso^{42}x\text{o}^{213}$ $p\alpha^{\text{?}5}$. (= (32a))
 I po⁵⁵ room door install-finish SFP
 ‘I finished installing the door in the room.’

With dative binding and the associated possessive reading, we can establish a connection between the post-*po*⁵⁵ NPs as free datives and affectedness, paraphrased as “X is affected in a specific way such that X’s Y is now at the Z-state, due to the realization of the event”.

4.2.4 Summary: The semantic properties of *po*⁵⁵-sentences in comparison with *bā*-sentences

- i. The post-*po*⁵⁵ NP must be specifically and strictly affected in a particular way.

ii. The affectedness pertains exclusively to the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP and does not involve the subject.

iii. The VP must represent a change-of-state event where the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP acts as the bearer of the resultative state brought about by the event. This implies that the VP itself is viewed as bounded.

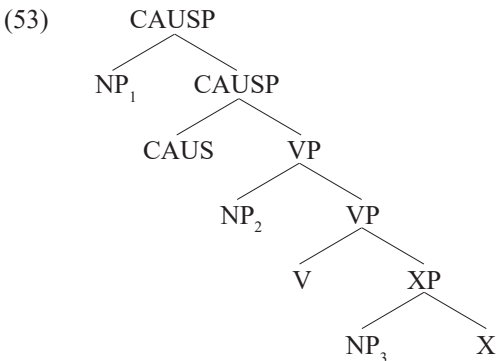
iv. Affectedness is semantically correlated with the change of state and can be generalized as “X is affected in an internal/external manner, or even in terms of possessive relation, such that either X or X’s Y is now in the Z-state, due to the realization of the event”.

v. The post-*po*⁵⁵ NP can be marked as the theme/patient, the goal role, or the beneficiary role, which can be further categorized as free datives.

4.3 *Po*⁵⁵ and causativity

The essential properties of *po*⁵⁵-sentences verify our consideration that the semantics of *po*⁵⁵ is rooted in causativity. In the realm of Chinese linguistics, treating *bǎ* as a causative is not a new concept (Yue-Hashimoto 1971; Sybesma 1999, etc.).¹⁸ We briefly introduce the proposal for *bǎ* as presented by Sybesma (1999), which from our point of view is more suitable for *po*⁵⁵.

In a nutshell, Sybesma (1999) proposes that *bǎ* occupies the head of the causative phrase (CAUSP) so that *bǎ*-sentences should be always viewed as causative. The syntactic structure is represented in (53), where the post-*bǎ* NP is initially base-generated in a position embedded under the resultative small clause and occupies its surface position through movement (Sybesma 1999: 170). Semantically, the subject of a *bǎ*-sentence is interpreted as the causer and the post-*bǎ* NP as the causee which is affected.



¹⁸ There are many differentiated treatments for *bǎ* in previous studies. For instance, Li (1985, 1990) assumes that *bǎ* is a base-generated preposition assigning thematic roles to the post-*bǎ* NP, while Huang (1982, 1990) considers *bǎ* as an inserted case-marker.

However, the causative analysis appears to fall short in explaining many *bǎ*-sentences, as criticized by Huang et al. (2009). We mainly unfold two arguments here: The first one is semantic and has been already discussed in Section 4.2. Derived from the notion of affectedness, the causative analysis predicts that the post-*bǎ* NP is always the bearer of the resultative state, which is unfortunately too strong. The examples (35) and (37) show that it is possible to generate a reading where the subject of the sentence is affected. The second is syntactic. Huang et al. (2009: 166) point out that *bǎ* and the post-*bǎ* NP can be preposed as a unit to the sentence-initial position, as illustrated in (54). This diagnostic contradicts the syntactic structure in (53), since according to Sybesma (1999: 169) the post-*bǎ* NP is adjoined to the VP, and therefore, the two items cannot form a single constituent.

- (54) Bǎ nà-kuài ròu, nǐ xiān qiēqiē ba!
 OM that-CLF meat you first cut-cut SFP
 ‘Cut the meat first!’
 (Huang et al. 2010: 166–167)

Contrary to *bǎ*, we contend that there is no issue in treating *po*⁵⁵ as the causative head. First, the analysis in Section 4.2 already shows that affectedness consistently applies to the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP. Second, *po*⁵⁵ and the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP do not constitute a single syntactic unit and hence cannot be displaced sentence-initially.

- (55) a. **po*⁵⁵ mǎʔ²-khiue³³⁴ nyǎʔ¹² n²¹³ ɛie⁴² tɛ^hie²¹³-xo²¹³!
*po*⁵⁵ that-CLF meat you first cut-CL_v
 Intended: ‘Cut the meat first!’
 b. **po*⁵⁵ lǎ²¹o³³⁴ ki³³⁴ ia⁵⁵fɛ⁰ sǎ¹-xǎ⁵ pǎʔ⁵.
*po*⁵⁵ Laowang he dinner cook-finished SFP
 Intended: ‘He cooked Laowang’s dinner for him.’
 c. **po*⁵⁵ fo³³kɛ⁴² lǎ²¹o³³⁴ sǎ³³⁴-kɛ⁴²ɛin⁵⁵ pǎʔ⁵.
*po*⁵⁵ room Laowang swipe-clean SFP
 Intended: ‘Laowang cleaned the room.’

Based on our analysis, we conclude that *po*⁵⁵ is indeed a strict causative item positioned at the head of the causative phrase. Now we employ the linking mechanism to provide a unified analysis for *po*⁵⁵. Albeit the dual function of *po*⁵⁵, we propose that the semantics of causativity is integrated into the CS of both *po*⁵⁵ variants and is inherited throughout the process of grammaticalization.

Following Talmy (1976) and Dowty (1979), we specify the causing event E_1 and caused resultative state E_2 in the causative relation expressed by a *po*⁵⁵-sentence as the following.

- (56) a. lǎ²¹o³³⁴ *po*⁵⁵ ts^ho⁴²men³³⁴ kuɛ⁴²-t^hio²¹ pǎʔ⁵. (= (24b))
 Laowang *po*⁵⁵ window close-drop SFP
 ‘Laowang closed the window.’
 E_1 : (Laowang) close (the windows) $\rightarrow$ E_2 : (the windows) be closed

b. ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ taom³³xu³³⁴ t^he²¹³ k^ho⁵⁵-t^e²¹³ pəʔ⁵. (= (32b))

he po⁵⁵ classmate leg beat-break SFP

‘He broke his classmate’s leg by beating it.’

E₁: (he) beat (the classmate) → E₂: (his classmate’s leg) be broken

c. ki³³⁴ po⁵⁵ ts^ho⁴²³ tin³³⁴ t^o³³ ua⁵⁵təu³³⁴ pəʔ⁵. (= (26b))

he po⁵⁵ car park to outside SFP

‘He parked the car outside.’

E₁: (he) park (the car) → E₂: (the car) be outside

The CS of *po*⁵⁵ can be categorized as a complex one, comprising two elements: the first constituent embedded in CAUSE represents an event involving the subject, while the BECOME part establishes the resultative state predicated on the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP. We postulate the CS of *po*⁵⁵ as in (57).

(57) *po*⁵⁵: [_{EVENT} CAUSE ([...]^e, [BECOME ([_{THING}], [_{PLACE} AT ([_{STATE} < >])])])]¹⁹

The notation [...]^e indicates that the causer is an event with a simple or complex event-CS, depending on the internal structure of the VP. For instance, the causing event in (56a) entails the resultative state of being closed, while in (56c) the parking event is a type of activity and the resultative state is contributed by the post-verbal constituent *outside*. The associated structures are represented in (58).

(58) a. [_{EVENT} CAUSE (x, BECOME (y, AT ([_{STATE} < CLOSED >])))]^e

b. [_{EVENT} PARK (x, y)]^e

But now we are confronted with a new problem: the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP must be linked twice since it also denotes the affected entity realized as the first argument of BECOME. This violates the stipulated rule of Prohibition Against Double Fusion (see (14)). Randall (2010) provides a solution defined as Clausal Fusion, the key idea of which is that the CS of [...]^e is treated as being inherited from the CS of the VP, and the BECOME part is identified as a result clause whose first argument overlaps with the internal argument of the VP in the AS.

(59) *po*⁵⁵: [_{EVENT} CAUSE ([...x...y...]^e, [BECOME (y, ([AT ([< ... >])])])])]

1st argument of CAUSE
2nd argument of CAUSE

= CS inherited from the VP
= result clause

Given Clausal Fusion, fusion is not restricted to conceptual constituents but can operate at clausal level (Randall 2010: 171). In the case of *po*⁵⁵, the second variable *y* need not link to the same argument twice and can be automatically identified with the internal argument in the inherited CS. This means that the post-

¹⁹ The element in < > is defined as conceptual constant whose realization depends on the semantics of the relevant lexical entry.

po^{55} NP can simultaneously fulfill the affected role derived from the VP and the bearer role associated with the resultative state.

Let us show how to approach po^{55} in a unified way employing the CS postulated in (57). Consider the typical disposal po^{55} -sentences, where the post-verbal constituents are realized as an adjective complement (60a), a noun phrase (60b), or a prepositional phrase (60c). (60b) in prose: The white paper is affected in such a way that it is now in the form of a flower, due to the realization of the folding event by the grandmother.

- (60) a. $lo^{21}o^{334}$ po^{55} $fo^{33}ke^{42}$ $so^{334}-ke^{42}ein^{55}$ $pəʔ^5$. (= (26a))

Laowang po^{55} room swipe-clean SFP
 ‘Laowang swiped the room until it became clean.’

DS: $[_{CP} [_{CAUSP} [_{NP1} lo^{21}o^{334}]] po^{55} [_{VP} [_{NP2} fo^{33}ke^{42}] so^{334}-ke^{42}ein^{55}]] pəʔ^5]$

AS: $\begin{array}{c} a \quad [\quad a \quad] \\ | \quad | \\ po^{55} \end{array}$

CS: $[CAUSE ([SWEEP ((x), y))]^e, [BECOME (y, [AT([<CLEAN>])])]]]$

- b. a^0pu^{334} po^{55} pa^{21} $tsɿ^{213}$ $tsɿ^{55}-ləʔ^5$ $iəʔ^5-tu^{213}$ xo^{423} . (= (31b))

grandmother po^{55} white paper fold-PFV one-CLF flower
 ‘The grandmother folded the paper and made it into a flower.’

DS: $[_{CAUSP} [_{NP1} a^0pu^{334}] po^{55} [_{VP} [_{NP2} pa^{21}tsɿ^{213}] tsɿ^{55}-ləʔ^5 [_{NP3} iəʔ^5-tu^{213} xo^{423}]]]$

AS: $\begin{array}{c} a \quad [\quad a \quad] \quad a \quad] \\ | \quad | \quad | \\ po^{55} \end{array}$

CS: $[CAUSE ([FOLD ((x), y))]^e, [BECOME (y, [AT([<FLOWER>])])])]$

- c. $aŋ^{213}$ po^{55} xo^{42} ts^ho^{55} $tə^{33}$ $xo^{42}pin^{334}$ $li^{55}təw^{334}$ $pəʔ^5$. (= (24a))

I po^{55} flower stick to vase inside SFP
 ‘I stuck the flowers into the vase.’

DS: $[_{CP} [_{CAUSP} [_{NP1} aŋ^{213}] po^{55} [_{VP} [_{NP2} xo^{42}] ts^ho^{55} [_{PP} tə^{33} xo^{42}pin^{334} li^{55}təw^{334}]]]] pəʔ^5]$

AS: $\begin{array}{c} a \quad [\quad a \quad] \quad a \quad] \\ | \quad | \quad | \\ po^{55} \end{array}$

CS: $[CAUSE ([STICK ((x), y))]^e, [BECOME (y, [AT([IN(z)])])])]$

In the case of free datives, we argued that such a post- po^{55} NP must be bound locally, and the locality effect suggests a “bound possessor variable” ...*i.*... for the second NP (e.g., X’s Y). We modify the first argument of BECOME as POSS (z, y), indicating that z and y stand in a particular genitive relation (z’s y).

- (61) a. ki^{334} po^{55} $lo^{21}o^{334}$ $ia^{55}fe^0$ so^1-xo^5 $pəʔ^5$. (= (47b))

he po^{55} Laowang dinner cook-finished SFP
 ‘He cooked the dinner for Laowang.’

marks the theme role, and the second the goal role. Thus, (63a) predicts a double causativity in one sentence. We assume that (63a) is derived from (63b), where the construction of po^{55}_2 is embedded under po^{55}_1 , and semantically, there are two post- po^{55} NPs to be affected.

- (63) a. po^{55} $məʔ^2-teic^3$ $i^{42}so^{213}$ $tɛ^{42}$ po^{55} $taŋ^{213}$. (= (2a))
 po^{55} that-CLF clothes bring po^{55} I
 ‘Give that piece of clothes to me.’
 b. $[_{CAUSP} po^{55}_1 [_{CAUSP} [_{NP} məʔ^2-teic^3 i^{42}so^{213}_i] po^{55}_2 [_{VP} tɛ^{42} [_{NP1} aŋ^{213}] [_{NP2} e_i]]]]]$

The linking strategy we employ here is also based on Clausal Fusion: In (64), the outermost CAUSE constituent reflects the CS of po^{55}_1 , where its first argument is once again a causative structure inherited from po^{55}_2 . Hence, the advantage of the linking mechanism lies in enabling the embedding of one causative structure within another.

- (64) DS: $[_{CAUSP} po^{55}_1 [_{CAUSP} [_{NP} məʔ^2-teic^3 i^{42}so^{213}_i] po^{55}_2 [_{VP} tɛ^{42} [_{NP1} aŋ^{213}] [_{NP2} e_i]]]]]$
 AS: $[\quad a \quad \quad \quad a \quad]$
 po^{55}
 CS: $[CAUSE ([CAUSE ([CAUSE (...x, \textcircled{1}, \textcircled{2})...)])^e, [BECOME (y, [AT(z)])]]]$
 The causative CS inherited from po^{55}_2

In summary, we have successfully established a unified treatment for po^{55} . We conclude that in comparison with $bǎ$, po^{55} is a strict causative item that functions either as a causative verb or as an object marker connecting the causing event to the caused resultative state. The underlying causativity in the CS remains consistent, even through its process of grammaticalization from a verb of giving to an object marker.

5 Conclusion

This paper investigates the multifunctionality of the morpheme po^{55} in the Yanzhou (Jiande) dialect, a phenomenon that follows the grammaticalization pathway from a verb of giving to an object marker, as discussed by Chappell (2007, 2015).

On one hand, po^{55} can act as a verb of giving with an underspecified mode of transfer, requiring two arguments to be realized as indirect and direct objects, akin to the ditransitive verb *gěi* in Mandarin. However, the verbal nature of po^{55} weakens in the process of grammaticalization, as it does not permit the attachment of aspectual markers anymore.

On the other hand, the preposition-like po^{55} marks distinct thematic roles of the post- po^{55} NP, including the theme, the goal, or the beneficiary role. In comparison to *bǎ*-sentences, the distinctions of po^{55} as an object marker with its Mandarin pendant can be summarized in the following table.

Table 1 Distinction between *po*⁵⁵ as an object marker and Mandarin *bǎ*

	<i>bǎ</i> and <i>bǎ</i> -sentences	<i>po</i> ⁵⁵ and <i>po</i> ⁵⁵ -sentences
Types of post-verbal constituents	i. Resultative state denoted by adjectives, prepositional phrases, and noun phrases ii. Durative or frequentative phrases iii. NPs bound by a possessor variable iv. Bare <i>bǎ</i> -sentences v. Locative <i>bǎ</i> -sentences vi. Rest <i>bǎ</i> -sentences	i. Resultative state denoted by adjectives, prepositional phrases, and noun phrases ii. Frequentative phrases (conditioned) iii. NPs bound by a possessor variable
Affectedness	The post- <i>bǎ</i> NP or the subject can be affected.	Only the post- <i>po</i> ⁵⁵ NP is affected in a specific way.
Property of VP	The VP is viewed as semantically bounded.	The VP must denote a change of state event associated with a resultative state; the boundedness is entailed.
Causative meaning	Not available for all types of <i>bǎ</i> -sentences	The causative meaning is always strictly imposed on <i>po</i> ⁵⁵ -sentences.
Syntactic structure	Canonical structure: NP ₁ + <i>bǎ</i> + NP ₂ + VP	i. Canonical structure: NP ₁ + <i>po</i> ⁵⁵ + NP ₂ + VP ii. Structure with a resumptive pronoun (Pattern III in Chappell 2007)

Affectedness and the resultative state associated with the post-*po*⁵⁵ NP strongly indicate that *po*⁵⁵ can be regarded as a strict causative item, situated at the head of the causative phrase, and conveys the essence of causativity. Through the application of linking proposed by Randall (2010), we have achieved a unified treatment of *po*⁵⁵, where causativity is consistently incorporated into its Conceptual Structure. Consequently, the entire *po*⁵⁵-sentence is paraphrased as “X is affected in a specific way such that X or X’s Y is now in the Z-state, due to the realization of the event”. We argue that causativity is a fundamental property inherent in *po*⁵⁵, and it remains constant throughout the process of grammaticalization.

Acknowledgments

This research is supported by the Major Project of National Social Science Foundation (22&ZD295). We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to the anonymous reviewers who generously dedicated their time and expertise to review and provide constructive feedback on this research paper. Any remaining errors are our own responsibility. Our sincere gratitude goes to all the participants of native Yanzhou (Jiande) dialect speakers for providing their language intuition.

References

Bach, Emmon. 1986. The algebra of events. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 9. 5–16.

- Baker, Mark. C. 1988. *Incorporation: A theory of grammatical function changing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bisang, Walter. 1992. *Das Verb im Chinesischen, Hmong, Vietnamesischen, Thai und Khmer: Vergleichende Grammatik im Rahmen der Verbserialisierung, der Grammatikalisierung und der Attraktorpositionen*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Cao, Zhiyun. 2017. *Huiyu Yanzhou fangyan yanjiu* [A study on the Yanzhou Hui dialects]. Beijing: Beijing Language and Culture University Press.
- Chao, Yuen-Ren. 1968. *A grammar of spoken Chinese*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Chappell, Hilary. 1992. Causativity and the *ba*-construction in Chinese. In Hansjakob Seiler & Walfried Premper (eds.), *Partizipation: Das sprachliche Erfassen von Sachverhalten*, 563–584. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Chappell, Hilary. 2007. Hanyu fangyan de chuzhi biaoji de leixing [A typology of object-marking constructions: A pan-Sinitic view]. In Beijing Daxue Zhongguo Yuyanxue Yanjiu Zhongxin Yuyanxue Luncong Bianweihui [The editorial committee of Essays on linguistics, Centre for Chinese Linguistics, Peking University] (ed.), *Yuyanxue luncong* [Essays on linguistics] 36, 183–209. Beijing: The Commercial Press.
- Chappell, Hilary. 2015. Linguistic areas in China for differential object marking, passive, and comparative constructions. In Hilary Chappell (ed.), *Diversity in Sinitic languages*, 13–52. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1986. *Barriers*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Davidson, Donald. 1967. The logical form of action sentences. In Nicolas Rescher (ed.), *The logic of decision and action*, 81–95. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Dowty, David. 1979. *Word meaning and Montague grammar: The semantics of verbs and times in generative semantics and in Montague's PTQ*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Dowty, David. 1991. Thematic proto-roles and argument selection. *Language* 67(3). 547–619.
- Filip, Hana. 2019. Aspectual class and Aktionsart. In Paul Portner, Klaus von Heusinger & Claudia Maienborn (eds.), *Semantics: Noun phrases and verb phrases*, 274–312. Berlin, Boston: Mouton de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110589443-009> (accessed 12 March 2025).
- Hashimoto, Mantaro J. 1986. The Altaicization of northern Chinese. In John McCoy & Timothy Light (eds.), *Contributions to Sino-Tibetan studies*, 76–97. Leiden: Brill.
- Heine, Bernd & Tania Kuteva. 2002. *Word lexicon of grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hole, Daniel. 2014. *Dativ, Bindung und Diathese*. Berlin & Boston: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Huang, C.-T. James. 1982. *Logical relations in Chinese and the theory of grammar*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology dissertation.
- Huang, C.-T. James. 1990. Complex predicates in generalized control. Unpublished manuscript, University of California, Irvine.
- Huang, C.-T. James, Yen-Hui Audrey Li & Yafei Li. 2009. *The syntax of Chinese*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Jackendoff, Ray. 1987. The status of thematic relations in linguistic theory. *Linguistic Inquiry* 18(3). 369–411.
- Jackendoff, Ray. 1990. *Semantic structures*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Krifka, Manfred. 1998. The origins of telicity. In Susan Rothstein (ed.), *Events and grammar*, 197–235. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Larson, Richard K. 1990. Double objects revisited: Reply to Jackendoff. *Linguistic Inquiry* 21(4). 589–632.
- Levin, Beth & Malka Rappaport Hovav. 2005. *Argument realization*. New York: Cambridge University Press
- Li, Charles N. & Sandra Thompson. 1981. *Mandarin Chinese: A functional reference grammar*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Li, Lan & Hilary Chappell. 2013a. Hanyu fangyan zhong de chuzhishi he “ba”ziju, shang [Disposal and *bǎ* constructions in Chinese dialects (Part I)]. *Fangyan* [Dialect] 1. 11–30.
- Li, Lan & Hilary Chappell. 2013b. Hanyu fangyan zhong de chuzhishi he “ba”ziju, xia [Disposal and *bǎ* constructions in Chinese dialects (Part II)]. *Fangyan* [Dialect] 2. 97–110.
- Li, Yen-Hui Audrey. 1985. *Abstract case in Mandarin Chinese*. Los Angeles: University of Southern California dissertation.
- Li, Yen-Hui Audrey. 1990. *Order and constituency in Mandarin Chinese*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Liu, Feng-Hsi. 1997. An aspectual analysis of *ba*. *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 6. 51–99.
- Lü, Shuxiang. 1990. Beiziju, baziju dongci dai binyu [Verbs with objects in *bei* and *ba* sentences]. In Shuxiang Lü (ed.), *Lü Shuxiang wenji, di'er juan, Hanyu yufa lunwenji* [Lü Shuxiang collection, vol. 2, collection of papers on Chinese syntax], 200–208. Beijing: The Commercial Press.
- Maienenborn, Claudia. 2011. Event semantics. In Claudia Maienenborn, Klaus von Heusinger & Paul Portner (eds.), *Semantics: An international handbook of natural language meaning*, vol. 1, 802–829. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Matisoff, James A. 1991. Areal and universal dimensions of grammaticalization in Lahu. In Elizabeth Closs Traugott & Bernd Heine (eds.), *Approaches to grammaticalization*, vol. 2, *Focus on types of grammatical markers*, 383–454. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Norman, Jerry. 1988. *Chinese*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Randall, Janet. H. 2010. *Linking: The geometry of argument structure*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Sun, Chaofen. 1995. Transitivity, the *ba* construction and its history. *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 23(1). 159–195.
- Sybesma, Rint. 1999. *The Mandarin VP*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Sybesma, Rint. 2021. Voice and little *v* and VO-OV word-order variation in Chinese languages. *Syntax* 24(1). 44–77.
- Talmy, Leonard. 1976. Semantic causative types. In Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), *Syntax and semantics*, vol. 6, *The grammar of causative constructions*, 41–116. New York: Academic Press.

- van Valin, Robert D. 1999. Generalized semantic roles and the syntax-semantics interface. In Francis Corblin, Carmen Dobrovie-Sorin & Jean-Marie Marandin (eds.), *Empirical issues in formal syntax and semantics*, vol. 2, *Selected papers from the Colloque de syntaxe et sémantique de Paris (CSSP 1997)*, 373–389. The Hague: Thesus.
- Vendler, Zeno. 1967. *Linguistics in philosophy*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Wang, Huang. 1984. “*Ba*”*ziju* he “*bei*”*ziju* [*Ba* sentences and *bei* sentences]. Shanghai: Shanghai Educational Publishing House.
- Wang, Li. 1954. *Zhongguo yufa lilun* [Theory of Chinese grammar]. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Yue-Hashimoto, Anne. 1971. Mandarin syntactic structures. *Unicorn* 8. 1–149.
- Zhao, Youxin. 2012. Huiyu [Hui dialects]. In Zhenxing Zhang (ed.), *Zhongguo yuyan dituji*, di’er ban, *Hanyu fangyan juan* [Language atlas of China, 2nd edn, Chinese dialects], 146–151. Beijing: The Commercial Press.
- Zhengzhang, Shangfang. 1986. Wannan fangyan de fenqu, gao [Distribution of dialects in southern Wan, draft]. *Fangyan* [Dialect] 1. 8–18.
- Zhengzhang, Shangfang. 1987. Anhui nanbu de fangyan fenbu [Distribution of dialects in southern Anhui]. In Rong Li, Zhenghui Xiong, Zhenxing Zhang, Maoji Fu, Jun Wang & Bu Dao (eds.), *Zhongguo yuyan dituji*, diyi ban [Language atlas of China, 1st edn], B10. Hong Kong: Longman.
- Zhengzhang, Shangfang. 2002. Huiyu [Hui dialects]. In Jingyi Hou (ed.), *Xiandai Hanyu fangyan gailun* [Introduction to Modern Chinese dialects], 88–115. Shanghai: Shanghai Educational Publishing House.

Vincent Ji-Xin Wang
 Mailing address: School of European Languages and Cultures, Zhejiang International
 Studies University
 No. 299, Liuhe Rd. Hangzhou City, Zhejiang Province, 310023, China
 Email: loewenzahn@126.com

Hua-Hung Yuan
 Mailing address: Department of Applied Foreign Languages, National Taipei
 University of Business
 No.321, Sec. 1, Jinan Rd., Zhongzheng District, Taipei City 100, Taiwan
 Email: yuan.huahung@gmail.com

致使性視角下的語法多功能性： 以嚴州（建德）方言詞素“把”為例

王繼新¹、袁華鴻²

浙江外國語學院¹、臺北商業大學²

提要

嚴州（建德）方言的詞素“把”（po⁵⁵）既可作為給予動詞亦可作為賓語標記使用（曹志耘 2017）。前一種情況下，po⁵⁵ 相當於普通話中的三價動詞“給”，其中物體轉移的方式在語義上是非確定的，而後一種情況下，po⁵⁵ 用於標記其後名詞的不同題元角色，類似普通話的“把”。Po⁵⁵ 的多功能性源於 Chappell（2007）所定義的語法化路徑，即從給予 / 幫助類動詞到賓語標記。通過與“把”及“把”字句的深入對比，我們認為 po⁵⁵ 後名詞必須經受特定形式的影響，並且總是與因動詞短語所示事件的實現而引出的特定結果狀態相聯繫。在 Randall（2010）連接理論框架的基礎上，我們提出了對 po⁵⁵ 的基於致使性的統一處理。這使我們最終有理由相信，致使性構成了 po⁵⁵ 內在概念結構的核心部分，且 po⁵⁵ 詞彙化為嚴格意義上的致使單位，儘管它具有語法上的雙重特性。

關鍵詞

嚴州（建德）方言，詞素 po⁵⁵，賓語標記，致使性，連接理論