The Syntactic Grounding and Conceptualization of Hakka BUN and LAU[*]

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With regard to the syntactic coding exhibited by the BUN construction and the LAU construction in Hakka, this study claims that their different syntactic grounding reflects their different conceptual reification. The issues are investigated from three aspects—semantic constraints, co-occurrence restrictions, and word order variations. It is argued that the seemingly overlapping functions of the BUN construction and the LAU construction differ in their attributed semantic constraints. Such constraints in turn govern the co-occurrence restrictions associated with the two constructions. It is also proposed that the syntactic configurations correlate with the relative prominence of the event participants pragmatically and cognitively.

Key words: conceptualization, syntactic grounding, semantic constraints, trajector-landmark alignment, proximity principle

1. The issues

Hakka BUN and LAU, two polysemous morphemes, both demonstrate intricate syntactic and semantic complexity (cf. Lai 2001, 2003a, 2003b). Lai (2001) has argued that the various grammatical and semantic functions associated with BUN are derived from the very original meaning of BUN as a verb denoting 'to give.' Two paths of developments are proposed—one from verb-of-giving through adposition-of-goal to purpose subordinator, and the other from verb-of-giving through verb-of-causative to agent marker. Like BUN, LAU originally denoting 'to mix,' has developed into several grammatical constructions carrying various semantic functions (Lai 2003b). Unlike BUN, however, LAU in the LAU construction, more like a chameleon morpheme, picks up its grammatical and semantic functions from those of the components of the construction. Lai (2003a) maintains that the five functions associated with LAU—the commutative sense, the goal sense, the source sense, the benefactive sense and the patient sense—come from the integration of the inherent features of the components of the LAU construction.

The seemingly two separate studies turn out to be interrelated when scrutinized closer. Specifically, both BUN and LAU seem to be able to be associated with the goal function, as illustrated in examples (1a) and (1b), and at the same time both seem to be able to be associated with the benefactive function as in (2a) and (2b).[1]

[1] The Hakka data used for analysis are mainly based on Northern Sixian Hakka. Dialectal variations are
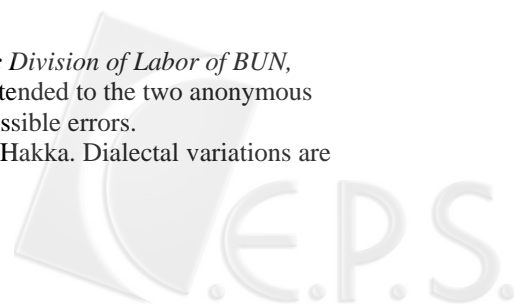
(1) a. 佢分一本書分阿英。

    Gi   bun yit bun su   BUN   Ayin.

    he   give one CL book   to   Ayin

    'He gave a book to Ayin.'

    b. 佢佬阿英寫一封信仔。

    Gi   LAU   Ayin   xia   yit   fung   xin-e.

    he   LAU   Ayin   write one   CL   letter

    'He wrote a letter to Ayin.'

    'He wrote a letter (to someone else) for Ayin.'

(2) a. 佢買一坵田分阿英。

    Gi   mai yit kiu tien BUN   Ayin.

    he   buy one CL land for   Ayin

    'He bought a piece of land for Ayin.'

    b. 佢佬阿英買一坵田。

    Gi LAU   Ayin   mai yit kiu tien.

    he   LAU   Ayin   buy one CL land

    'He bought a piece of land for Ayin.'

    'He bought a piece of land from Ayin.'

In example (1a), a postverbal BUN phrase is used to mark a goal of the double object construction. In contrast, example (1b), carrying ambiguity, has a preverbal LAU phrase, marking either the goal to whom the letter is written or the benefactive third party who wants the letter to be written to someone else and who benefits from the letter-writing event.   Similarly, in example (2a), a postverbal BUN phrase is used to mark a beneficiary who not only obtains the piece of land but also benefits from the event of land buying.   Example (2b) indicates a case where a preverbal LAU phrase is used to denote the beneficiary that benefits from the land-buying event.   Moreover, this example is ambiguous: given appropriate context, either a benefactive sense or a source sense can be associated with the LAU phrase.   Obviously, similarities and, more importantly, differences can be detected between these two morphemes.   In the next section, three aspects—semantic constraints, co-occurrence restrictions, and word order variations—will be addressed to account for the phenomena.

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expected for some of the data. *Pinyin* system is rendered for the romanization of the data. The tone marks are omitted. The corresponding Chinese characters are provided when possible. The following abbreviations are used for their corresponding grammatical functions: CL, classifier; NEG, negations; PART, particles.
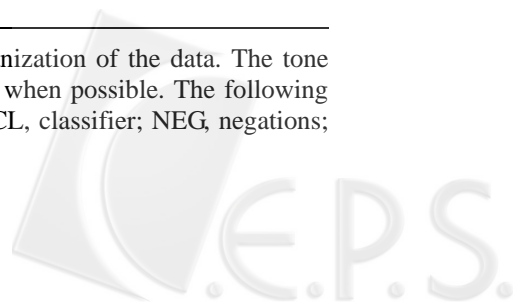
2. The account
2.1 Semantic constraints

What is relevant to the discussion here involves the verb of giving sense and the goal-marking sense of BUN. Just as LAU can mark a goal after being decategorized, so BUN can be a goal-marking adposition when decategorized from a verb of giving (Lai 2001, 2003b). The issue called into question is whether the goal sense that is marked by LAU and BUN is the same. Or, other than the difference of their syntactic positions, what different essence does the LAU-marking goal as illustrated in (1a) have with respect to the BUN-marking goal as shown in (1b)?

A closer examination of the two examples in (1) provides a clue to answer this question. Let us consider (1a) with BUN first. Example (1a) is a double object construction that can have dative alternation. Alternatively, Hakka allows another construction where the direct object can precede a pronominal indirect object without being mediated by an adposition. Examples given in (3a) and (3b) illustrate these two alternative constructions.

(3) a. 佢分阿英一本書。

    Gi   bun Ayin   yit bun su.

    he   give Ayin   one CL book

    'He gave Ayin   a book.'

    b. 佢分一本書阿英。

    Gi   bun yit bun su   Ayin.

    he   give one CL   book   Ayin

    'He gave a book to Ayin.'

cf. (1a) 佢分一本書分阿英。

    Gi   bun yit bun su   BUN   Ayin.

    he   give one CL   book   to   Ayin

    'He gave a book to Ayin.'

Lai (2001) maintains that in a giving activity, the possession of the object is changed from the giver to the recipient through the act of giving (cf. also Xu 1994). Hence, as the most prototypical predicate to denote the sense of giving, BUN is, when decategorized into an adposition, used to mark the goal of giving—the person who receives the object.

Given this line of argument, it follows that in such a scenario, the controller of the given object will be transferred to the recipient after the successful transfer of possession in the book-giving event. Now the three examples show that they are

incompatible if the following discourse denies the recipient's possession of the given object.   Examine the following:

(4)   a. ??佢分阿英一本書，毋過阿英無收著。

    ??Gi   bun   Ayin   yit   bun   su,   m-go   Ayin   mo   su-do.

    he   give   Ayin   one   CL   book, but   Ayin   NEG   receive

    '??He gave Ayin a book, but she didn't receive it.'

b. ??佢分一本書阿英，毋過阿英無收著。

    ??Gi   bun   yit   bun   su   Ayin,   m-go   Ayin   mo   su-do.

    he   give   one   CL book   Ayin,   but   Ayin   NEG   receive

    '??He gave a book to Ayin, but she didn't receive it.'

c.   ?佢分一本書分阿英，毋過阿英無收著。

    ? Gi   bun   yit   bun   su   BUN   Ayin, m-go   Ayin   mo   su-do.

    he   give   one   CL   book   to   Ayin   but   Ayin   NEG   receive

    '?He gave a book to Ayin, but she didn't receive it.'

While (4c) might be acceptable to a certain degree, (4a) and (4b) are unacceptable. All the examples in (4) indicate that once the book-giving event occurs, successful transfer of the possession of the book follows conceptually.   Since speakers tend to look for a target linguistic expression that can appropriately convey what they want to express, and since the scenario involved with all these constructions carries the implication of successful transfer of possession, speakers will choose these constructions when their conceptualization of the context indicates such a transfer. In other words, if successful transfer of possession of the book did not happen to begin with, speakers could choose other constructions that would better convey what they want to express instead of the three examples under discussion.

From the perspective of whether successful transfer of possession occurs or not, the semantic contrast between BUN and LAU stands out immediately.   Crucially, example (1b), which includes the LAU-marking goal, does not necessarily imply that successful transfer of possession of the object to the goal occurs.   In general, the goal sense associated with LAU derives from the context-induced reinterpretation of the comitative sense when the predicate is an illocutionary verb of communication (Lai 2003a).   A predicate of communication presumably denotes a conversation activity involving not transfer of possession of an object but transmission of messages between the conversation participants.   After gaining its semantically independent status to co-occur with predicates other than predicates of communication, the goal sense, still carrying the "accompanied-by" flavor, hence extends to denote an entity that is the end point of an activity such as letter writing.   Therefore, unlike those
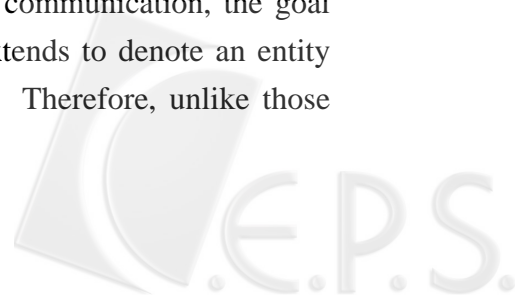
examples in (4), the example below is felicitous even though the following discourse indicates that successful transfer of the object is not maintained.

(5) 佢㧯阿英寫一封信仔，毋過阿英無收著。

Gi	LAU	Ayin	xia	yit	fung	xin-e,
he	LAU	Ayin	write	one	CL	letter

m-go	Ayin	mo	su-do.
but	Ayin	NEG	receive

'He wrote a letter to Ayin, but she didn't receive it.'

The first part of example (5) denotes a letter-writing event whereby *lau Ayin* signifies the goal to whom the letter is written.   But the following discourse denies that she actually received the letter. Notice that in addition to the goal sense, the LAU phrase in example (1b) can also denote a benefactive sense.   In such a case, *lau Ayin* signifies a beneficiary participant in the event frame of letter writing.   In other words, *Ayin*, like an accompanying role in the scenario, is a third-party participant who wants the letter to be written to someone else, and who benefits from the event when the letter is written.   Hence, the benefactive sense, which is derived from the goal sense, is coherently compatible with the claim that LAU does not necessarily imply successful transfer of possession of an object.

The distinction observed between BUN and LAU in the two examples in (1) helps elucidate the difference between (2a) and (2b) mentioned above.   Not a double object construction (dative alternation is not allowed for this example), example (2a) with a transaction verb *mai* (買) 'to buy' uses a BUN phrase to denote the participant who not only obtains the land but also benefits from the land-buying event.   In other words, successful transfer of the object, the land in this scenario, is observed in the event frame.   However, in example (2b), the LAU phrase only indicates a potential beneficiary who may benefit from the land-buying event.   A father, for instance, may buy a piece of land so that he can give it to his children later on. In such a scenario, the LAU phrase indicates not only a potential recipient who may obtain the land in the future but also a current beneficiary who benefits from the buying of the land. Moreover, in example (2b), the LAU phrase can also denote a source from whom the land is bought.   Again, the source sense associated with LAU is compatible with the implication that successful transfer of the possession does not necessarily happen.[2]

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[2] What has been discussed here about the semantic distinction between the roles associated with the two constructions brings up a very interesting empirical case concerning the essence of the thematic roles. As pointed out in Dowty (1991), although a wide range of discussions of thematic roles can be found in the literature, there is still an absence of consensus about their explicit semantic content.
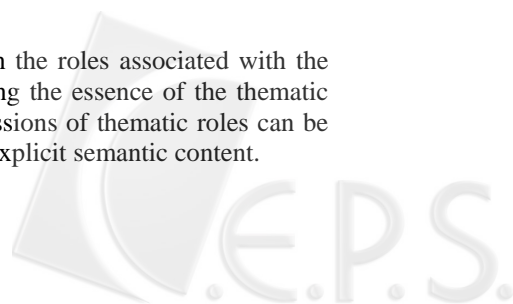
2.2 Co-occurrence restrictions

The semantic constraints attributed by the two constructions entail different senses of the predicates that can be involved in the two constructions. Canonically, a BUN construction and a LAU construction differ in their syntactic configurations as indicated in (6a) and (6b), respectively.

(6) a. BUN construction: NP V NP BUN NP
    b. LAU construction: NP LAU NP V NP

However, the semantic representations of the two constructions vary. Essentially, the BUN construction unequivocally requires three participants in an act of giving—the agent, the patient, and the recipient—whereas the LAU construction, a constructional polysemy in Goldberg's (1995) sense, picks up its meaning by the holistic integration of the components of the construction. Because of their semantic division of labor, they share the labor as to the distribution of the predicates that can occur in either of the two constructions as well. Presumably, predicates that can be associated with either of the skeletal constructions have to be compatibly integrated with the semantic constraints of the constructions. Hence, predicates that can be linked to the BUN construction as in (6a) are much more restricted than those that can occur in the LAU construction as in (6b).

Crucially, predicates that specify the meaning of successful change of the possession of the object can be linked to the BUN construction. In other words, dativizable verbs such as *bun* (分) 'to give,' *sung* (送) 'to send,' *mai* (賣) 'to sell,' *jia* (借) 'to lend,' or *fu* (付) 'to pay,' among others that denote a giver causing the recipient to possess an object through the act of giving, can be linked to the BUN construction (cf. Pinker 1989, Her 1997). In addition, verbs of future having (following Pinker 1989) such as *liu* (留) 'to leave' and *song* (賞) 'to award,' among others that specify some commitment of changes of possession in the future, can be associated with the BUN construction as well.[3] In fact, because of the semantic constraint of successful transfer of possession, these verbs can not be linked to the LAU construction, which arguably does not imply such a semantic constraint. Observe the following examples:

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[3] According to Her (1997), three types of verbs in Mandarin Chinese can be classified regarding the thematic structure <agent, goal, theme> (cf. also Tang 1985), depending on whether they allow dative alternation or not.
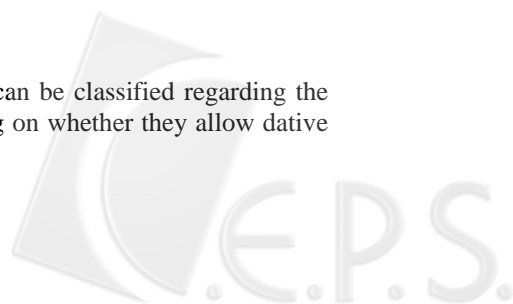
(7) a. 佢分一坵田分阿英。

　　　Gi　　bun yit kiu tien BUN　　Ayin.

　　　he　　give one CL　land to　　　Ayin

　　　'He gave a piece of land to Ayin.'

　　b. 佢分阿英一坵田。

　　　Gi　　bun Ayin　　yit　kiu　tien.

　　　he　　give Ayin　　one CL　land

　　　'He gave Ayin a piece of land.'

　c. *佢佬阿英分一坵田。

　　*Gi　LAU　　　Ayin　　　bun　　　yit kiu tien.

　　he　LAU　　　Ayin　　　give　　　one CL land

　　'*He gave a piece of land for Ayin.'

(8) a. 先生賞一本書分阿英。

　　　Xinsang　　song　　yit bun su　　BUN　Ayin.

　　　teacher　　award　　one CL book　to　　　Ayin

　　　'The teacher awarded a book to Ayin.'

　　b. 先生賞阿英一本書。

　　　Xinsang　　song　　Ayin　　yit bun su.

　　　teacher award　　Ayin　　one CL　book

　　　'The teacher awarded Ayin a book.'

　c. *先生佬阿英賞一本書。

　　*Xinsang　LAU　　　Ayin song yit bun　su.

　　teacher　　LAU　　　Ayin award one　CL　book

　　'*The teacher awarded a book for Ayin.'

Example (7a) contains a verb of giving *bun* (分) 'to give,' which can undergo dative alternation as shown in (7b). Because of the semantic incompatibility between the verb meaning and the LAU construction, example (7c) is not acceptable. Likewise, examples in (8) contain a verb of future having *song* (賞) 'to award,' which can undergo dative alternation as in (8b) but which cannot be associated with the LAU construction as indicated in (8c).

Furthermore, as argued previously, some verbs can be combined with both of the two constructions presumably because they do not strongly imply whether successful transfer of possession occurs or not. Such predicates as *xia* (寫) 'to write' and *mai* (買) 'buy,' which relax the semantic constraints, belong to this type. Speakers are left with two options, depending on their conceptualization of the event frame (cf. Langacker 1987, 1991, 1999, Talmy 2000). When successful transfer of possession

does occur, a BUN construction is often chosen. On the other hand, a LAU construction is preserved for the benefactive sense or the source sense, which cannot be associated with the BUN construction. The following examples in (9) and (10) can clearly illustrate the point. Whereas the BUN phrase in example (9a) unequivocally denotes a recipient, the LAU phrase in example (9b) preferably denotes the source sense. Similarly, example (10a) delineates a goal sense of the BUN construction, whereas example (10b) preferably signifies the benefactive sense of the LAU construction.

(9) a. 佢買一坵田分阿英。

      Gi   mai yit kiu tien BUN   Ayin.

      he   buy one CL land for   Ayin

      'He bought a piece of land for Ayin.'

    b. 佢摎阿英買一坵田。

      Gi   LAU   Ayin   mai yit kiu tien.

      he   LAU   Ayin   buy one CL land

      'He bought a piece of land from Ayin.'

(10) a. 佢寫一封信仔分阿英。

      Gi   xia   yit fung xin-e   BUN   Ayin.

      he   write   one CL letter   to   Ayin

      'He wrote a letter to Ayin.'

    b. 佢摎阿英寫一封信仔。

      Gi   LAU   Ayin xia   yit fung   xin-e.

      he   LAU   Ayin write   one CL   letter

      'He wrote a letter (to someone else) for Ayin.'

Additionally, because of the semantic compatibility between BUN and LAU and the event frames of letter-writing and land-buying, alternatively, they can co-occur, as illustrated in the following examples.

(11) 佢摎阿英寫一封信仔分厥妹仔。

    Gi LAU   Ayin xia   xin-e BUN gia   moi-e.

    he LAU   Ayin write   letter   to   her   daughter

    'He wrote a letter to Ayin's daughter for Ayin.'

(12) 佢摎阿英買田分厥妹仔。

    Gi LAU   Ayin   mai tien BUN   gia moi-e.

    he LAU   Ayin   buy land for   his daughter

    'He bought land from Ayin for his daughter.'

In example (11), four participants of the letter-writing event are syntactically realized including the agent, the patient, the recipient and the benefactive. Since the function of the recipient is shouldered by the BUN phrase, the possible ambiguous senses associated with the LAU phrase is disambiguated with the LAU phrase denoting the benefactive. In a similar manner, the four participants in the land-buying event in example (12) are all realized, including the agent, the patient, the recipient and the source; therefore, the LAU phrase unambiguously denotes the source sense with the BUN phrase being associated with the recipient.

With semantic division of labor between BUN and LAU, the predicates that can be associated with the two constructions have to be semantically compatible with the constructions that denote certain event frames (cf. Talmy 2000). At the same time, the semantics of the predicates and the event participants and the semantics of the two constructions are integrated to yield the semantics of the particular expressions (cf. Goldberg 1995).

2.3 Word order variations

One more issue that needs to be taken up has to do with the difference in word order between the LAU phrase and the BUN phrase. Specifically, the LAU phrase has to occur preverbally, in the second position of a LAU construction, whereas the BUN phrase occurs postverbally. In what follows, I would like to argue that the syntactic coding exhibited by the BUN construction and the LAU construction reflects the conceptual saliency of the participants involved in an event frame.

Two peculiar features can be noticed in the LAU construction—one from a semantic viewpoint and the other from a syntactic viewpoint. On the one hand, the LAU phrase denotes various senses as discussed, but the subject denotes an agent across the board for all the different verbs. On the other hand, no matter which sense it marks, the LAU phrase always occupies the second position—the position right after the subject noun phrase—of a LAU construction. This section attempts a closer investigation into these two issues. The examples below characterize the patterns exhibited by LAU constructions:

(13) 阿英佬阿姨共下去街頂。

    Ayin   LAU   ayi kiungha hi   giedang.

    Ayin   LAU   aunt together go   downtown

    agent   *comitative*

    'Ayin, together with her aunt, went downtown.'

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(14) 阿英捐阿姨講故事。

 Ayin LAU ayi gong gusi.

 Ayin LAU aunt tell story

 agent   *goal*

 'Ayin told a story to her aunt.'

(15) 阿英捐阿姨借錢。

 Ayin LAU ayi jia qien.

 Ayin LAU aunt borrow money

 agent *source*

 'Ayin borrowed money from her aunt.'

(16) 阿英捐阿姨洗車仔。

 Ayin LAU ayi se ca-e.

 Ayin LAU aunt wash car

 agent *benefactive*

 'Ayin washed the car for her aunt.'

(17) 阿英捐杯仔打爛咧。

 Ayin   LAU bi-e da-lan le.

 Ayin   LAU cup break PART

 agent *patient*

 'Ayin broke the cup.'

In example (13) with the comitative sense and example (16) with the benefactive sense, the LAU phrase is an adjunct, whereas in example (14) with the goal sense, example (15) with the source sense, and example (17) with the patient sense, the LAU phrase is an argument.[4] In both situations, however, the LAU phrase occurs in the preverbal position right after the subject, which unequivocally denotes an agent.

  The two seemingly separate issues are indeed closely related to one another. First of all, as has been fully discussed previously, each of the five senses of the LAU phrase comes from the integration of the meanings of the components of the construction. The question now is why LAU is used to shoulder all these various functions. To answer this question, two perspectives will be addressed. On the one hand, the comitative sense is supposed to be the original function of LAU. Since the extension from the comitative sense to the other senses is conceptually plausible as argued in Lai (2003b), using the comitative sense to serve as a vehicle to express the other conceptually related senses simplifies the characterization of Hakka grammar,

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[4] One of the reviewers has pointed out that example (14) and example (15) are ambiguous in that LAU NP can be interpreted as comitative as well. The reviewer has also pointed out that the corresponding morpheme of LAU in (13), (14) and (15) is GA whereas that of LAU in (16) is TUNG in Southern Sixian Hakka. Such dialectal variations are significant, and will be left for further investigation.
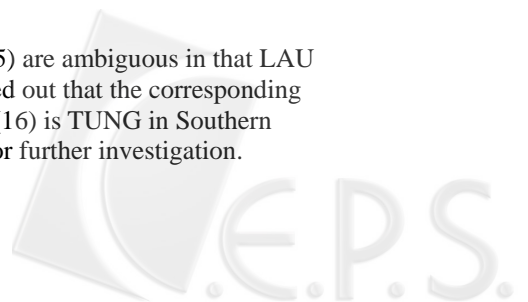
achieving greater economy. Langacker (1987, 1991) points out that to organize linguistic knowledge is an integral part of human cognition and that grammar probes for systematically and accurately describing the structure and the organization of a language, including both general and particular statements that exist in the psychological representation of linguistic knowledge. Speakers' manipulation of polysemy—whether at the lexical level or at the constructional level—demonstrates their tendency to look for patterns. Furthermore, using one single form to express a multiple of related senses tremendously reduces the effort required to establish the cognitive structure. Pervasive in the Hakka language, LAU, just like a chameleon that changes its color to match its surroundings, and originally denoting the comitative sense, therefore expresses the other conceptually related senses in Hakka.

Such a tendency to look for generalizations also provides a clue to explain the syntactic requirement of the LAU phrase in the LAU construction. Although diversified in the semantic senses, the LAU phrase has to appear in the preverbal position right after the first noun phrase. I will investigate this issue from two aspects—trajector-landmark asymmetry (following Langacker 1987, 1991, 1999, 2002) and the proximity principle (following Givón 1995).

Trajector-landmark alignment, advocated by Langacker (1987, 1991, 1999, 2002), signifies a pair of asymmetric semantic notions relating to the internal structure of a relational predication.[5] In a profiled relationship, the prominence of its participants differs in varying degrees. The trajector is the most prominent participant—the major focus that is located, evaluated or described—whereas other salient entities that are secondary focal participants in such a profiled relationship are called landmarks.

The manifestation of the trajector-landmark distinction can be observed at any level of linguistic organization, from lexical to syntactic. For instance, in the relational predication denoted by the verb *choose*, as described in Langacker (2002:3), the actor is identified as the trajector while the chosen object is its landmark. The contrast between *X above Y* and *Y below X*, as argued by Langacker (1987), shows another example of trajector-landmark reversal. What is even more significant for the present study is the characterization of certain syntactic features as well as certain discourse features associated with the subject. The subject usually plays the role for such syntactic properties as verb agreement, the antecedent for reflexivization and pronominalization, or the source of floated quantifiers. Furthermore, the subject has been observed to carry greater topicality than other nominal complements, to have animacy preference, and to have specificity tendency (cf. Givón 1979). As pointed

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[5] Talmy (2000) proposes two different semantic notions, figure and ground, among others. The distinction between figure and ground is similar but not completely identical to the distinction between trajector-landmark alignment. The latter is adopted here for the analysis.
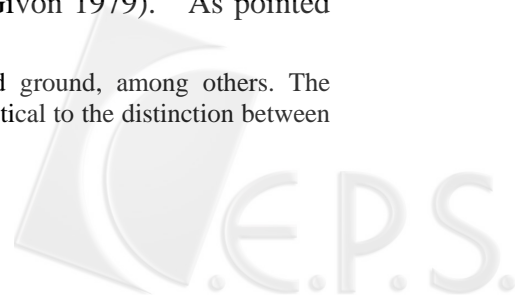
out by Langacker (1987:235f), the inherent prominence of the subject follows from its being the trajector of a relational predication, the most ready candidate for any grammatical processes, as opposed to a direct object or an oblique, which usually plays the role of a landmark. And the subject position, being the unmarked slot for the primary focal participant, favors referents that have been identified by the speaker and the hearer, distinguishing itself from the rest of the entities in a discourse.

Langacker (1999:190ff) provides several examples to illustrate how grammatical constructions manifest such an alignment of reference point. For instance, consider a typical dative-shift construction as *She gave me a watch*. Although without an explicit syntactic marker of possession, the profiled event leads to the first post-verbal constituent coming into possession of the second syntactic element. Such a property of the construction arguably pertains to the referent point relationship of the event participants—the animate human participants, functioning prototypical role archetypes (following Langacker 1999), are being profiled in the event.

Such an asymmetric trajector-landmark distinction provides an insightful point of view for the issue in question. Essentially, the distinction between the first noun phrase and the LAU phrase reflects an asymmetric trajector-landmark alignment in a profiled relationship, manifested at the syntactic, the semantic as well as the discourse level. Crucially, the first noun phrase of the LAU construction, being the first focal participant in the relational predication, occupies the subject position, always serves the agent function, and is more prominent in terms of its discourse role. The LAU phrase, on the other hand, being the secondary focal participant, is syntactically an oblique, serves various semantic functions based on the linguistic environment, and is less prominent in a discourse. The notions of trajector and landmark presumably subsume all the asymmetric distinctions revealed by the first noun phrase and the LAU phrase syntactically, semantically, and pragmatically.

In light of this analysis, it follows that the first noun phrase—the trajector—shows relatively higher topicality than the LAU phrase—the landmark. Extensive data have shown that the subject of the LAU construction has to be an animate being whereas the LAU phrase is less restrictive in terms of its animacy. Furthermore, the two participants—one being the primary and the other being the secondary—are profiled among all the participating entities in a relational predication of an event frame. Hence the speaker tends to exert his attention to the two profiled participants in a discourse.

What has been argued here also accords with the proximity principle, which essentially claims that syntactic coding is not arbitrary, but isomorphic. "Entities that are closer together functionally, conceptually, or cognitively will be placed closer together at the code level, i.e. temporally or spatially" (Givón 1995:51). As a
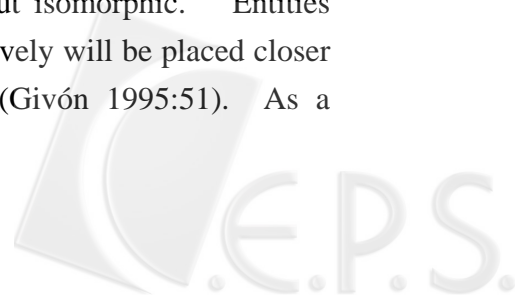
well-attested principle for syntactic organization, the principle is reflected at different levels of syntactic coding.   For instance, the degree of integration of complement clauses with their main clauses manifests this principle. Examine these examples from Givón (1995:52, (10)):

(18) a. She *let go* of him.

　　b. She *let* him *go*.

　　c. She *wanted* him to *go*.

　　d. She *wished* that he would *go*.

　　e. She *forgot* that he had *gone*.

　　f. She *said*: "He's *gone*."

The principle also coincides with the most common case roles identified by language, with respect to the syntactic coding in a descending order as adopted from Givón (1985:209, (36)):

(19) SUBJ/AGT　>　D.O./PAT　>　DAT/BEN

The basic idea is that although the participants that can be observed in an event frame are not limited, their number or nature is both pragmatically and cognitively motivated.   More specifically, the assignment of a particular participant role is governed by the considerations of perceptual saliency.   Accordingly, the agent is prototypically a visible cause that initiates the event, whereas the patient is prototypically the visible effect that undergoes the change brought up by the event. Givón further maintains that the dative/benefactive is a consciously involved participant whose role is not physically defined (p. 209f).

　　What these principles boil down to is in line with an independently motivated principle proposed by Tai (1985) in analyzing the word-order variations of a set of data from Mandarin Chinese. The principle of temporal sequence (PTS) proposed by Tai (1985:50) states that "the relative word order between two syntactic units is determined by the temporal order of the states which they represent in the conceptual world."   Correspondingly, various sequential concatenations at the syntactic level are not arbitrarily determined but strategically governed by the conceptual principle.[6]

　　The semantic- or pragmatic-oriented principles shed light on the syntactic grounding of not only the LAU construction but also the BUN construction.   More specifically, the first noun phrase and the LAU phrase are functionally, conceptually

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[6] Tai (1985) has given an extensive set of data from Mandarin Chinese to support the independently motivated PTS. The reader is referred to the article for a detailed discussion.
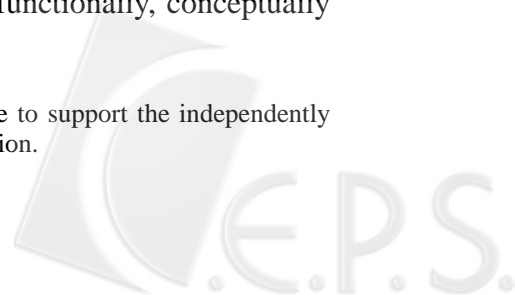
and cognitively closer since they are the two profiled participants in the relational predication denoted by the LAU construction. Hence they are not only placed together syntactically but also put at the most prominent slots—one the subject position and the other the preverbal position. Also, the degree of prominence exhibited by the two entities correlates with the asymmetric distinction between the trajector and the landmark as discussed previously.

This line of argument also sheds light on the syntactic coding of the BUN construction. The semantics of the BUN construction typically denotes an act of giving that causes successful transfer of the possession of the given object. Conceptually speaking, a giving event frame prototypically involves an agent that initiates a change of state of the patient object, causing the transfer of ownership to the recipient. Now following the metaphor of the-transfer-of-ownership-as-physical-transfer suggested by Jackendoff (1972) and cited in Goldberg (1995:89), one can understand the transfer of possession of an object as the movement of the object from the location of the possessor to the location of the recipient. In other words, at first located next to the giver, the patient object has been caused to move to the location of the recipient through the giving event.

Such a metaphorical extension in which a conceptually more abstract concept of ownership is understood as a conceptually more concrete concept of location helps explicate naturally the temporal sequential order reflected by the event participants. Crucially, the agent that is both the cause and the initiator of the giving event represents an earlier state in the conceptual world according to PTS, and hence is temporally coded earlier at the syntactic level. The patient object that represents the state of the direct effect undergoing the change of location comes next after the agent. Both of the participants are conceptually more salient in the act of giving. The recipient that is the end point of this caused-motion giving event therefore occurs in a temporally later position in the syntactic configuration. The relatively lower saliency of the recipient is reflected not only in the sequential word order but also in its syntactic status—an oblique phrase marked by the adposition BUN.

In brief, it is argued that the word-order variations displayed by the BUN construction and the LAU construction are driven by cognitive and functional principles. The syntactic configurations not only reflect their semantic representations in the conceptual world but also coincide pragmatically and cognitively with their perceptual saliency. Signifying the recipient that represents a temporally later state than those represented by the agent and the patient in an act of giving, the BUN phrase is therefore coded later at the syntactic level and occurs in the postverbal position.
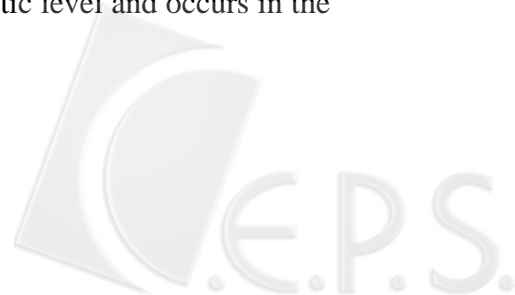
3. Summary and implications

To summarize, it is argued that the seemingly overlapping functions of the BUN construction and the LAU construction differ from each other in their attributed semantic constraints. The constraints in turn govern the co-occurrence restrictions associated with the two constructions. Furthermore, the two semantic notions of trajector and landmark and the proximity principle are employed for the elucidation of the asymmetry between the first noun phrase and the LAU phrase as well as their particular syntactic restrictions. Essentially, the two participants denoted by the two constituents are profiled entities in a relational predication—with the first noun phrase being the first focal participant and the LAU phrase being the secondary focal participant. It then follows that the syntactic coding of the two constituents reflects not only the semantic and conceptual asymmetry inherent in them but also the discourse prominence they exhibit.

As plausible as the account is, three unresolved issues have arisen during the analysis. To begin with, if the arguments proposed in this study in terms of the semantic development are on the right track, a related issue worthy of investigation is what diachronic motivations exist for BUN and LAU, two phonologically distinct morphemes, to share the labor semantically. Historical evidence will be needed to strengthen this line of research.[7]

The second issue has to do with the definition of participant roles. As pointed out by Dowty (1991), "there is in fact a notable absence of consensus about what thematic roles are". While familiar members such as agent, patient, goal, source, and so on are included, a complete list of the members is never given; nor is an explicitly clear-cut definition proposed. The fuzziness of the area even motivates Dowty (1991) to propose Agent Proto-Role and Patient Proto-Role, which contain a set of verbal entailments. Dixon (1991) also argues for a finer-grained analysis of the intricate shadings of patienthood. The participant roles that are adopted here basically follow the traditional definitions given in the literature such as Andrews (1985), Radford (1988), and Jackendoff (1990). Although cross-references to Dowty (1991) and Dixon (1991) are mentioned, no thorough examination of the evaluation of the theories is carried out. In fact, an investigation of the finer-grained analysis of the thematic roles through analyzing empirical data is definitely worthwhile, but this will have to be left for future study.

Furthermore, as a language of the Chinese family, Hakka employs the same strategy as Mandarin for information management. It has been held that both the BA and BEI constructions in Mandarin are devices to topicalize the patient. The LAU

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[7] Thanks to one of the reviewers who brought my attention to this issue.
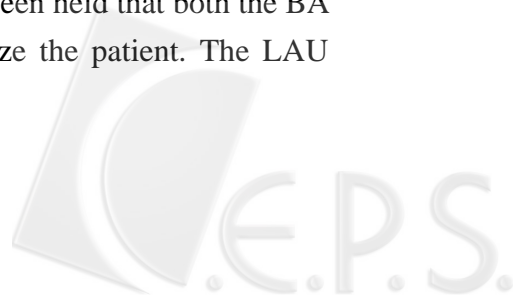
construction in Hakka serves a similar function, coding profiled participants at the syntactic level. In fact the trajector-landmark asymmetry suggested for the account of the two profiled participants in the LAU construction coincides with the theories of topic, especially those proposed by Tsao (1990) and Chu (1998). Tsao (1990) advocates the distinction between the primary topic, the secondary topic and even the tertiary topic if necessary for a language such as Mandarin, which is claimed to be a topic prominent language (cf. Li and Thompson 1981). Chu (1998), on the other hand, proposes a prototype approach to the Chinese topic, suggesting that topics based on a list of attributes can range from the more prototypical ones to the less prototypical ones. Although differing in their approaches, both of them seem to agree that event participants vary in terms of their prominence in the perceptual world, and they in turn manifest at the structural level. Such a syntactic manifestation seems to accord with their trajector-landmark alignment as well. Therefore, an attempt to further examine the correlation between the trajector-landmark alignment on the one hand and the features of topicality on the other will be very valuable for the evaluation of both theories.

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客語「分」與「捞」之概念化與句法行為之關連

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　　本文提出客語「分」字句及「捞」字句展現之句法行為，實為其各自之認知語意之概念化的結果。本文從語意限制、共存限制及句法詞序等三方面來討論。「分」字句及「捞」字句表面上看似重疊之句法功能是其語意限制導致的結果，而其語意限制也同時操縱「分」字句及「捞」字句之共存限制。此外，「分」字句及「捞」字句之句構詞序反應事件參與者之語用及認知之相對重要性。

關鍵詞：概念化、句法行為展現、語意限制、移動物件—背景之對應、
　　　　鄰近原則