

Fuzhou Negatives: The Phenomena of Word-formation and Phrasal-formation

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Abstract This paper mainly tackles the word-internal formation and word-external formation of each negative in Fuzhou dialect. Four negatives in Fuzhou dialect are discussed: 唔 [iN⁵⁵], 袂[ma²⁴²], 無 [mo⁵³], and 未 [mui²⁴²]. Each of them displays unique features in phrasal constructions and encodes peculiar meanings in lexicalization. The key problem is to determine whether the negative in question is an independent word or an affix. If the negative is an independent word, the combination with other elements is formed on the level of phrases or syntax (word-external); however, if the negative is an affix, the combination is formed on the level of words (word-internal). This is a thorny problem because, up to now, there is no final conclusion for distinguishing these two formations in Chinese or in Chinese dialects and the opinions are widely divided among Chinese linguists, too.

From the criteria set up by many scholars (e.g. Wang Li, Y. R. Chao, C. T. James Huang, and C. F. Lien), we sum up and derive three important criteria in this paper: (1) lexical Integrity, (2) grammatical category, and (3) compositionality. The three criteria should be considered as a whole as none of them is sufficient.

Keywords Fuzhou dialect, negative, word-formation, phrasal-formation, lexical integrity, compositionality

1. Introduction

Generally, negatives are regarded as adverbs and belong to the closed class in most languages. They seldom occur in isolation, and are so-called “fixed-position morpheme¹”, being immovable, in sentences and phrases. Due to the grammatical restrictions, negatives are more like function words and they are bound morphemes in combination with other morphemes.

This paper deals with only the preliminary grammatical properties of Fuzhou negatives, and focuses on their formations and derivations. Four negatives in Fuzhou dialect are discussed: 唔 [iN⁵⁵], 袂[ma²⁴²], 無[mo⁵³], and 未[mui²⁴²]. Each of them displays unique features in phrasal constructions and encodes peculiar meanings in lexicalization. Close attention will be focused mainly on the morphological aspect of

these negatives to serve as the stepping-stone for probing the world of Fuzhou negatives.

Each example² in Fuzhou dialect in this paper is given in four forms: (i) Chinese characters, (ii) phonetic symbols, (iii) word-for-word translation in English, and (iv) free translation (paraphrase) in English.

2. Word-Internal Formation vs. Word-External Formation

When investigating the morphology of negatives, the first issue to be dealt with would be the difference of an affixal negation and a phrasal negation. This issue is concerned with two respects of word formation: “word-internal (words) formation” and “word-external (phrases / syntax) formation”.

Due to the uniqueness of Chinese language, opinions are widely divided regarding the distinction between word and phrase. The criteria for marking off the demarcation line between “word-internal formation” and “word-external formation” still do not meet the accepted opinions and final conclusion.

2.1. Analyses in Early Stages

The first scholar who proposed the criteria for identifying “two-characters words” is Wang Li (王力) in 1943. The crucial criterion is “insertability” (Pan et al., 1993: 127-128). Wang argues that if a two-morpheme string can be separated by the insertion of other morphemes and still interpretable after insertion, it is not a compound. For example, 說話 (shuo¹ hua⁴) (“to talk”) is interpretable when it is separated by 大 (da⁴) (“big”), as in 說大話 (shuo¹ da⁴ hua⁴) (“to talk big”). On the contrary, a compound is recognized if the insertion causes the interpretation to be unaccountable, as exemplified by 故意 (gu⁴ yi⁴) (“deliberately”). In 1975, Lu Zhiwei (陸志韋) also proposed the idea of “extensibility” as a theoretical extension of Wang’s “insertability” (Lu 1975: 4-8).

2.2. Y. R. Chao’s Criteria

To identify words, Chao proposes five criteria (Chao 1985: 302-304). If one or more of the criteria are met, the item is a word or compound:

- a. Part of the item is a bound form.
- b. Part of it is neutral-toned.
- c. The meaning of the whole is not compositional of its parts.
- d. The internal structure is exocentric.
- e. The parts are inseparable from each other.

The third and the fifth criteria are more controversial. Huang (1984: 63) claims that the third criterion must be excluded because many idiomatic phrases are not regarded as words though they are non-compositional in meaning, as shown in (1):

(1) 掛羊頭, 賣狗肉

gua⁴ yang²-tou², mai⁴ gou³-rou⁴

Hang sheep head sell dog meat

“To try to palm off something inferior to what it purports to be.”

Criterion (e) may bring about a paradoxical situation in some items, such as 慷慨 [kang¹ kai³] (“generous”) (Chao 1985: 433). 慷慨 is a compound and inseparable from each other in compliance with the criterion. However, in (2), 慷慨 is a phrase, and can be separated by other elements. In this regard, criterion (e) is not always a viable one for deciding “words”.

(2) 慷他人之慨

kang¹ ta¹ ren² zhi¹ kai³

“He is gen- with other people’s -erous.”

Criterion (d) is relatively reliable: words usually involve an exocentric construction. In Southern Min Dialect, the inner structure of 牽手 [k^han ts^hiu] is [V+N]. The verb is the head of the construction, and its meaning is transparent. However, if it is given an idiomatic interpretation, viz., “(one’s) wife”, the expression is a noun, and its inner structure is exocentric. In this regard, 牽手 is a compound (Lien 2000: 63).

2.3. C.T. James Huang’s Criteria

One of the criteria that Huang (1984: 60) proposes for determining “Chinese words” or “Compounds” is “Lexical Integrity Hypothesis”:

The Lexical Integrity Hypothesis:

“No phrase-level rule may affect a proper subpart of a word...natural language typically exhibit several “autonomous” levels of structure, autonomous in the sense that the internal structure of one level is often inaccessible to the rules that apply at another level, or that rules applying at one level are often blind to the internal structure of another level.” (Huang 1984: 60)

It means that the rule that applies to the level of “words or lexicons” is inaccessible to the rule that applies in the level of “phrases or syntax”. For example, (3) would not be reduced to (3’) because 火車 [huo³-che¹] (“train”) is a lexical item, in which its component is immune from a syntactic rule.

(3) 火車跟汽車

huo³-che¹ gen¹ qi⁴-che¹

Fire-car and gas-car

“Train and automobile”

(3’) * 火跟汽車

huo³ gen¹ qi⁴-che¹

Fire and gas car

As Huang applies the criterion extensively to the discussion of Chinese Compounds, paradox occurs. The status of a word and a phrase both will do for some compound-like items, like 擔心 [dan¹ xin¹] (“to worry”) (Huang 1984: 64). 擔心 is a VO-compound, which is followed by one constituent 這件事 [zhe⁴ jian⁴ shi⁴] (“this matter”), but in (4-1) through (4-4), 擔心 is separated by either the insertion or topicalization of the object 心 [xin¹] (“heart”). Based on the “Lexical Integrity Hypothesis”, 擔心 is a phrase, or more exactly an idiomatic phrase.

(4) 他很擔心這件事

ta¹ hen³ dan¹-xin¹ zhe⁴ jian⁴ shi⁴

He very worry this matter

"He is very worried about this matter."

(4-1) 他擔什麼心?

Ta¹ dan¹ shen² me xin¹

He carry what heart

"What was he worried about?"

(4-2) 他擔了三年的心

Ta¹ dan¹-le san¹ nian² de xin¹

He carried LE three year DE heart

"He has worried for three years."

(4-3) 心, 我一點都不擔

Xin¹, wo³ yi⁴ dian³ dou¹ bu⁴ dan¹

Heart, I a bit all not carry

"Worried, I am not at all"

(4-4) 心, 我想他是會擔的

Xin¹, wo³ xiang³ ta¹ shi⁴ hui⁴ dan¹ de

Heart, I think he be will carry DE

"Worry, I think he will."

Huang argues that all items of this kind belong to "phrases" in lexicon. While in sentence-final position, the phrase remains; while in sentence-medial position, followed by another object, the phrase would undergo a process of "lexicalization", and turns into a "word". The rule of lexicalization is only optional. Its application is required for saving the "Phrase Structure Condition". Those phrases are often "idiom phrases", and only under specific circumstances can they become words.

2.4. A sum-up

All the criteria examined above boil down to two essential criteria to determine the difference between words and phrases: (A) the Lexical Integrity, and (B) the Grammatical Category in addition to an auxiliary criterion of (C) the Compositionality, defined as follows. Based on the criteria (A) (B) and (C), we will establish the demarcation line between "affixal negations (words)" and "phrasal negations (phrases)".

(A) Lexical Integrity: Phrase-level rules may not affect a proper subpart of a word. The rules that apply onto a word are often inaccessible to rules that apply on the level of phrases. Both the form and the meaning are integral.

(B) Grammatical Category: Word-externally, the grammatical category of the formation is consistent with the one of its root or head, namely "endocentricity". On the other hand, word-internally, the grammatical category of the derivation is changed (exocentricity).

(C) Compositionality: When the formation is word-internally, the word meaning is mostly non-compositional. In other words, the compositionality is the nature when the formation is

word-externally.

For example, 不管 (bu⁴ guan³) (“despite; disregard”) in Mandarin is formed word-internally and functions as conjunction, as in (5). However, 不管 (bu⁴ guan³) is formed word-externally and functions as a verb phrase, as in (6).

(5) 不管你去不去, ...

bu⁴ guan³ ni³ qu⁴ bu² qu⁴, ...

Not control you go not go, ...

“Whether you would go or not, ...”

(6) 他上班經常遲到, 我們不能不管。

Ta¹ shang⁴ ban¹ jing¹ chang² chi² dao⁴, wo³ men² bu⁴ neng² bu⁴ guan³.

He go to work usually late, we cannot not manage

“We cannot disregard his coming late to work so often.”

3. Affixal Negation vs. Phrasal Negation

In its literal sense, “affixal negation” means the negative formation within the domain of words, and the negative is regarded as an affix; in other words, it is a word-internal formation. “Phrasal negation” means the negative formation among words is a word-external formation. This differentiation is crucial for our analysis.

Several morphological properties related to “affixal negation” of Fuzhou negatives to be discussed in the following sections include the “syllable number of roots, the productivity of the formation and the endocentricity (or exocentricity) of the derivation, and the compositionality of output meaning”.

3.1. 唔 [iN⁵⁵]

3.1.1. Assimilated Variations

唔 is a productive negative adverb and never used in isolation. 唔 constructs its sandhi forms under the influence of the onset of the following morpheme, and meanwhile, the sandhi form modifies the following onset, as exemplified in (7) (8) and (9):

(7) 唔 /iN⁵⁵/ + 使 /sai³³/ = [in⁵³ nai³³] = [n⁵³ nai³³] (“do not have to”)

(8) 唔 /iN⁵⁵/ + 拍 /pa²⁴²/ = [im⁵³ pa²⁴²] = [m⁵³ ma²⁴²] (“do not want to beat”)

(9) 唔 /iN⁵⁵/ + 去 /k^ho³¹/ = [iN⁵³ No³¹] = [N⁵³ No³¹] (“do not want to go”)

The coda of the isolation form of 唔/iN⁵⁵/ is regressively assimilated according to the articulate features of the onsets (i.e. labial, alveolar, velar) of the following syllables, and turns into nasals n, m, or N. The nasality of 唔 then progressively assimilates the onset of the next syllable in question. The phenomenon is “mutual assimilation”, and can be rendered by two following phonological rules:

Rule One: Regressive assimilation (homorganic assimilation)

N → [α place] / ____ # [α place]

(α is a variable for indicating the place of articulator, and # indicates the word boundary.

[N] would be homorganic with the segment that follows.)

Rule Two: Progressive assimilation

[- nasal] → [+ nasal] / [+ nasal] # ____

(The non-nasal onset will acquire nasality when it follows a nasal segment.)

Note that the vowel in [iN] will be left out, especially in allegro speech. After assimilation, [iN] will drop its vowel and become [N], [n] and [m], like the forms after the second equal sign in example (7)(8)(9). [N], [n] and [m] are allomorphs each of which is conditioned by its immediate environment.

In (9) 唔去 is a phrasal formation. Tone sandhi still takes place and crosses the word boundary. In this regard, the phonological condition for tone sandhi within words is not fitting for distinguishing words and phrases in Fuzhou dialect. In Lien's discussion of morphological issues (2000: 63), he also mentions that the criteria of phonology (e.g. stress, sandhi, and phonetic modification) are relatively restricted in the range of its use.

3.1.2. Words or Phrases

In this subsection, we look into the distinction between word-formation and phrasal-formation of 唔 to capture the different situations for these two kinds of formation, and see if the negative have any effect on the formations.

唔 means for the most part, but not necessarily, the subjective unwillingness of doing something. Being an adverb, 唔 typically takes verbs or verb phrases as heads. The heads can have more than one morpheme, as in (10):

(10) 今旦我唔去學校

kiN⁵³ naN³¹ Nuai³³ N⁵³ No³¹ au³¹ hau²⁴²

Today I not go school

"I do not want to go to school today."

唔 also forms a complex negatives with certain morphemes, which are used as a single unit. For example, (11) 唔使 and (12) 唔通 are negative units and take another verb or verb phrase as the complement.

(11) 汝唔使去

ny³³ n³¹ nai³³ k^ho⁵³

You not use go

"You do not have to go."

(12) 汝唔通這款想

ny³³ n⁵³ nOyN³³ tsu²⁴² uaN³³ suoN³³

You not allowed this way think

"You should not think this way."

In the phrasal formation, 唔 combines with either verbs or verb phrases, as in (13) to (14), or modal verbs, as in (15) to (16), to indicate "the denial of intention" or the "prohibition". The combination of 唔 with common verbs is infinite; however, the limited number of modal verbs would set bounds to the productivity of the combination with modals. The grammatical categories of the negative outputs are

consistent with those of their original heads³, namely the verb, and their meanings are compositional. These prove that the formation is phrasal.

(13) 伊唔聽我講

i⁴⁴ n⁵³ niaN³¹ Nuai³³ kuon³³

He not listen I speak

“He will not listen to me.”

(14) 伊唔是學生

i⁴⁴ n⁵³ nei²¹³ ho²⁴² seiN³³

He not be student

“He was not a student.”

(15) 我唔要伊送其乜

Nuai³³ n³¹ ni⁵³ i⁴⁴ sOyN³¹ e³¹ no²⁴

I not want he send DE things

“I did not want the things that he gave.”

(16) 若無必要，伊絕對唔肯來

na³¹ mo³¹ pi⁵³ iu³¹, i⁴⁴ tsO³¹ tO³¹ N⁵³ NiN³³ ni⁵³

If no necessity, he absolutely not willing to come

“If it was unnecessary, he was absolutely unwilling to come.”

On the other hand, in the “affixal formation”, the situation is more complicated. In (17) to (19), the structure underlined is [Neg. + be-V + N]:

(17) 這儂唔是乜，汝著注意

tsia³¹ nOyN⁵³ n³¹ ni⁵³ no²³, ny³³ tuo³¹ tsy³³ ei²¹⁴

This guy not be things, you must pay attention

“This guy is villainous. You must watch out.”

(18) 這隻儂野唔是胚

tsi³¹ ie²⁴² nOyN⁵³ ia³¹ n³¹ ni⁴⁴ p^hui⁴⁴

This CL guy really not be strains

“This guy is really loathsome in personality.”

(19) 搶來搶去，真唔是款

ts^huoN³³ ni⁵³ ts^huoN³³ No³¹, tsiN³¹ n³¹ ni⁵³ k^huaN³³

rob come rob go, truly not be patterns

“To grab at each other is truly ill mannered.”

There are two ways to cope with examples like (17) to (19). One is to view the combinations as [唔是] and a monosyllabic noun, and the formation is word-internal. The three criteria, “Lexical Integrity”, “Grammatical category”, and “Compositionality” support such an analysis.

First, in terms of “Lexical Integrity”, a Chinese noun can be modified by a numeral and a classifier, as in 蜀匹貨 [so²⁴ p^hei²⁴ huo³¹] (“a shipment of cargo”) and 蜀張面 [so²⁴ t^huoN³³ meiN²¹³] (“a face⁴”).

However, no constituent can be inserted between 唔是 and N. Thus, [唔是+N] is a noun rather than a phrase, as exemplified in (20) and (21).

(20) *唔是[蜀張]面

n⁵³ nei²⁴² so²⁴ t^huoN³³ meIN²¹³

Not be one sheet face

(21) *唔是[蜀大批]貨

n⁵³ nei²⁴² so²⁴ tuai⁵³ Bei²⁴² huo³¹

Not be one big shipment cargo

Second, despite the ostensible VP structure, 唔是乜 (“villainous”) is used as an adjective to describe a person with disgusting characters for it can be modified by degree adverbs, like 真[tsiN³³]. The output is an exocentric formation; hence, it is a word. Note that the correspondent expression in Mandarin 不是東西 [Bu² shi⁴ dong¹ xi¹] is also an adjective though 東西 is a noun.

Third, the meaning of the output cannot be composed literally. 唔是乜 (“villainous”) is not the composite of 唔是 (“be not”) and 乜 (“things”). The non-compositionality of the derivative meaning is also a proof.

Though non-compositionality is not always a reliable condition for distinguishing words and phrases, armed with “Lexical integrity” and “Change of grammatical category”, we can determine [唔是 + N] to be formed word-internally.

Another way to cope with these examples is to treat 唔 as an affix, and the formation would be parsed as [唔+是N]. However, the problem is that the positive expression like [是N] is absent in this dialect. 不是東西 [bu shi dong xi] in Mandarin is just the same. There is no usage like *是東西 [shi dong xi]⁵

Given the existence of bound roots, as in “edible”, “malleable” and “potable” in English, it would be justifiable alternatively to parse [唔是 N] as [唔+是 N] where the root [是 N] is bound. The whole [唔+是 N] is a word-internal formation.

3.2. 無 [mo⁵³]

3.2.1. Grammatical Functions

無⁶, a portmanteau word, denies the occurrence of an event or a state, and corresponds to 沒有 (mei you) (“not have”) in Mandarin Chinese. It has dual grammatical categories, viz., verb and adverb.

無 as a verb is followed by nouns and adjectives, and denotes the non-possessiveness and non-existence, as in (22) and (23).

(22) 我無行李

Nuai³³ mo³¹ xiN³³ ni³³

I no luggage

“I have no luggage.”

(23) 今晡無乜食

kiN³³ muo³³ mo³¹ no²⁴ sie⁵³

Tonight no things eat

“There is nothing to eat tonight.”

When functioning as an adverb, it modifies verbs and adjectives to deny the occurrence of an event or a state, as in (24) and (25).

(24) 汝無看見伊

ny³³ mo³¹ kaN⁵³ NieN³¹ i³³

You not see him

“you did not see him.”

(25) 這張相片無好看

tsi³¹ luon³³ nuoN⁵³ mieN³¹ mo³¹ ho³³ aN³¹

This sheet photo not good look

“This photo was not beautiful.”

無 also serves as a comparative marker placed in front of the standard or norm, as in (26) and (27). It also indicates a state that is inferior to or not as good as the qualification described in estimation and evaluation:

(26) 伊無我懸

i⁴⁴ mo⁵³ Nuai³³ keiN⁵³

He not I high

“He is not as tall as me.”

(27) 伊無彼滿瘦

i⁴⁴ mo⁵³ xi²¹ maN³¹ sOy³³

He no that thin

“He is not that thin.”

3.2.2. Words or Phrases

Generally, 無 is a versatile negative and its derivations are quite productive, especially in phrasal formation, as shown in previous examples. It goes with any verb, adjective and noun.

無 also has affixal derivation, and takes both monosyllabic roots, as in (28)(29) and disyllabic roots, as in (30) and (31). 無 is a prefix attached to a noun, e.g. 心[sɪN⁴⁴] (“mind”) and 衣食[i⁴⁴ li⁵] (“auspicious”). The outputs are adjectives, and exocentric to the original nominal heads. The construction is a word, not a phrase.

(28) 若是無心, 事計就做袂好

na³¹ li³¹ mo³³ siN⁴⁴, tai⁵³ tsie³¹ tsiu⁵³ tso³¹ me⁵³ ho³³

If be no heart, matter then do not well

“If one is unmindful, then nothing would be done well.”

(29) 這事做遠無板去

tsia⁵³ tai²⁴² tso³¹ au³¹ mo³³ paN³³ No³¹

The matter do arrive no pattern go

“The matter was done far away from what was normal.”

(30) 我無心緒陪伊

Nuai³³ mo³¹ liN³¹ nOy²⁴² p^hui²⁴² i⁴⁴

I no the state of mind accompany him

"I am in no mood to keep him company."

(31) 過年講呆話真無衣食

guo²⁴² nieN⁵³ kuoN³³ Nai³¹ ua²⁴² tsiN³¹ mo³¹ i⁴⁴ li⁵

Pass year speak bad words truly no auspiciousness

"It is not auspicious to say anything bad during the New Year's Day."

We know that "compositionality" is not always a reliable condition for determining the distinction between word and phrase. Here, though the formations in (28) through (31) are word-internal, the meaning is transparent and can be derived from the composite of the negative and the noun. 無 indicates the absence of the quality encoded in the noun.

However, some expressions, which are word-internally constructed, may be non-compositional, and need further understanding, as in (32) through (35):

(32) 我無儂面，八其儂袂濟

Nuai³³ mo³¹ nOyN³¹ meiN²¹, pai²⁴ e³¹ nOyN⁵³ me⁵³ sa²⁴²

I no people face, know people not many

"I am nobody, and know few people."

(33) 伊真無後手，離開也無關電光

i⁴⁴ tsiN³¹ mo³¹ au⁵³ ts^hiu³³, nie²⁴² k^hui³³ ia³¹ mo³¹ kuoN³³ nieN³³ NuoN³³

He truly no back hand, leave too not turn off electric light

"Heedlessly, he did not turn off the light before leaving."

(34) 我野無頭神，書袂記帶來

Nuai³³ ia³¹ mo³¹ lau³¹ liN⁵³, tsy³³ me⁵³ kei²¹³ tai³¹ ni⁵³

I truly no head spirit, book forget bring come

"I was too forgetful to bring the book here."

(35) 伊規日無命做，都無休息

i⁴⁴ kuoN³³ ni⁵³ mo³¹ miaN²⁴² tso³¹, tu³¹ mo³¹ hui⁵³ lei²⁴²

He whole day no life do, all no rest

"He is working desperately all day long, and does not take a rest."

Like the frozen (idiomatic) expression 無三不四[mo³¹ saN³³ mu⁵ sei²¹³] ("indecent"), expressions in (32) to (35) have an idiomatic meaning, and cannot be composed literally. 無儂面 does not mean the non-possessiveness of human face. 無後手 does not mean the absence of a hand behind; it is a judgment on a thoughtless manner. 無頭神 does not simply mean the non-possessiveness or non-existence of "the spirit in head". 無命 denotes neither the non-existence nor non-possessiveness of life. It is a modifier for describing a manner of acting.

3.3. 袂 [ma²⁴²] / [mE⁵³]

3.3.1. Grammatical Functions

It is widely believed that 袂 is a portmanteau morpheme⁷ obtained by fusing two morphemes, a negative 唔 [iN⁵³] (not) and a modal verb 會[a²⁴²] / [E⁵³]⁸ (able). 袂 corresponds with 不會 [bu huei] (“cannot”) in Mandarin. The character 袂 is a phonetic loan to encode the [ma²⁴²]/[mE⁵³] in Fuzhounese. 袂 expresses the meaning of “unlikelihood, impossibility” and “incapable” of doing something, and it has a dual grammatical function: a modal auxiliary verb and an adverb.

The auxiliary verb 袂 combines with verbs to show impossibility and incapability of a state of affairs, as in (36) through (40).

- (36) 伊這隻儂，無請袂來

i⁴⁴ tsi⁵³ ie²⁴² nOyN⁵³, mo³³ ts^hiaN³³ mE³³ li⁵³

He this CL people, not invite not come

“He was such a person that he would not come if not invited.”

- (37) 才過蜀年，衣裳就袂穿得了

tsia³¹ kuo³¹ so²⁴ nieN⁵³, i⁴⁴ nuoN²⁴² tsiu³¹ mE⁵³ sOyN²⁴² li³¹ lau³³

Only pass one year, clothes then cannot wear Infix Asp.

“The clothes became too small in just one year.”

- (38) 這件大衣過花，我袂穿

tsi³¹ yoN²⁴² tuai³³ i³³ kuo³³ hua³³, Nuai³³ mE⁵³ sOyN²⁴²

The CL big clothes too fancy, I not wear

“The coat was so loud that I would not wear it.”

- (39) 我袂開車

Nuai³³ mE³¹ k^hui³³ ts^hia³³

I cannot drive car

“I do not know how to drive.”

- (40) 我袂食這麼濟乜

Nuai³³ mE³³ sie⁵³ tsi³¹ maN²⁴² sa²⁴² no²⁴

I cannot eat such much things

“I cannot eat that much.”

When referring to incapability, 袂 can be replaced by a more colloquial complex-negative 袂八 [mE³¹ Bai²¹³ / mE³¹ BE³¹] (“do not know/do not”), as in (41).

- (41) 我袂八開車

Nuai³³ mE³¹ BE³¹ k^hui³³ ts^hia³³

I cannot know drive car

“I do not know how to drive.”

The adverb 袂 goes with psych-verbs or adjectives, which indicate the change of state or show the absence of a quality, as in (42) through (45):

- (42) 我真袂中意伊做其

Nuai³³ tsiN³¹ mE³¹ tyN⁵³ ei²¹³ i⁴⁴ tso³¹ e³¹

I truly not to one's liking he did

"What he did was really not to my liking."

- (43) 汝這款做，伊真袂歡喜

ny³³ tsu²⁴² uaN³³ tso³¹ i⁴⁴ tsiN³¹ mE³¹ xuaN⁵³ xi³³

You this way did, he really not delighted

"He was really unhappy about your way of doing it."

- (44) 有病唔去看醫生，實在是袂好

u³¹ BaN²⁴² N⁵³ No³¹ aN31 i⁴⁴ leiN⁴⁴ si³¹ tsai²⁴² si³¹ mE⁵³ xo³³

Have illness not go see doctor, really be not good

"It was really bad for not going to see a doctor when ailing."

- (45) 桌面怎樣拭都袂清氣

to⁵³ meiN³¹ tsu-uoN²⁴² ts^hei²⁴ tu³¹ mE³¹ ts^hiN⁵³ k^hei²¹³

Table face how wipe all not neat and tidy

"The table remained dirty despite cleaning."

3.3.2. Words or Phrases

The phrasal formation of 袂 is relatively productive, and goes with almost any verb or adjective. Since the formation is phrasal, the grammatical categories of the outputs are endocentric. (47)袂記 is a verbal phrase in which the head 記[kei²¹³] ("remember") is a verb. (49)袂平 is an adjectival phrase where the head 平[paN⁵³] ("even; level") is an adjective. 袂 as a functional category does not affect the grammatical category of the element it negates.

[袂 + verbal heads]

- (46) 伊袂捨我離開

i⁴⁴ mE⁵³ lia³³ Nuai³³ lie²⁴² k^hui³³

He cannot let go my leaving

"He was very reluctant to let me leave."

- (47) 我袂記得關門

Nuai³³ mE⁵³ kei²¹³ li³¹ kuoN³³ muoN⁵³

I not remember close door

"I forgot to close the door."

- (48) 我真袂中意伊做其

Nuai³³ tsiN³¹ mE³¹ tyN⁵³ ei²¹³ i⁴⁴ tso³¹ e³¹

I truly not to one's liking he did

"What he did was really not to my liking."

[袂 + adjectival heads]

- (49) 地兜袂平

ti³³ lau³³ mE³³ BaN⁵³

Floor not even

“The floor was uneven.”

(50) 彼隻老儂頭腦真袂清楚

hi⁵³ tsie²⁴² nau³³ nOyN⁵³ nau³³ no³³ tsiN³¹ mE³¹ ts^hiN⁵³ nu³³

That CL old man head really not lucid (clear)

“That old man was really benighted.”

(51) 汝這款做，伊真袂歡喜

ny³³ tsu²⁴² uaN³³ tso³¹, i⁴⁴ tsiN³¹ mE³¹ xuaN⁵³ xi³³

You this way did, he really not delighted

“He was really unhappy about your doing this.”

Basically, 袂 forms negative phrases; however, some cases would show that word-internal derivatives are possible. Examples are given below in pairs. [袂+VP] in (52-1)(53-1)(54-1) are phrases, whereas in (52-2)(53-2)(54-2) are word-internal.

[袂+VP] can be adjectives, and intensified by degree adverbs, 真[tsiN³³](“very”). It is an exocentric construction, since the grammatical category of [袂+VP] formation is not the same as its original verbal head. [袂+VP] is therefore a word.

(52-1) 我袂載伊這麼大其禮

Nuai³³ mE⁵³ tsai²¹³ i⁴⁴ tsi³¹ maN²⁴² tuai²⁴² e³¹ iE³³

I cannot sustain he such big present

“I cannot sustain the big present that he gave to me.”

(52-2) 汝對我這麼好，我真袂載

ny³³ tO³¹ Nuai³³ tsi³¹ maN²⁴² xo³³, Nuai³³ tsiN³¹ mE⁵³ tsai²¹³

You treat me so good, I very cannot accept

“You treat me so well that I truly cannot accept it.”

(53-1) 我袂捨汝這樣早離開

Nuai³³ mE⁵³ lia³³ ny³³ tsi³¹ maN²⁴² tsa³³ liE²⁴² k^hui³³

I cannot let you so early leave

“I am reluctant to let you leave so early.”

(53-2) 汝這樣早離開我真袂捨

ny³³ tsi³¹ maN²⁴² tsa³³ liE²⁴² k^hui³³ Nuai³³ tsiN³¹ mE⁵³ lia³³

You so early leave I really cannot let go

“Your leaving so early truly makes me feel sad.”

(54-1) 伊袂做這麼濟事計

i⁴⁴ mE⁵³ tso³¹ tsi³¹ maN²⁴² sa²⁴² tai⁵³ tsiE³¹

He cannot do so many matters

“He cannot shoulder so many matters.”

(54-2) 伊真袂做, 我見覺訓練固無夠

i⁴⁴ tsɿN³¹ mE⁵³ tso³¹, Nuai³³ kieN⁵³ NO²⁴ xu⁵³ lieN²⁴² ku³¹ mo³¹ kau⁵³

He really cannot do, I feel training still not enough

"He is really clumsy-handed. I feel that the training is still not enough."

Though the meaning of [袂+V/A] is for the most part compositional, the pragmatic interpretation would be presented in communication, and the further interpretation is sometimes needed. For example (55) carries an idiomatic sense. 袂八死 does not mean that "someone did not know the death / how to die". It describes a careless attitude of a person when he works, and the person disregards the consequence of his doing. 死 [si³³](“die/death”) pictures a serious consequence.

(55) 伊呆事做這麼濟真袂八死

i⁴⁴ Nai³³ lai²⁴² tso³¹ tsi³¹ maN²⁴² sa²⁴² tsɿN³¹ mE³¹ Bei²⁴² si³³

He evil thing did such many truly not know death

"He did so many evil things. He was really heedless of consequences."

3.4. 未 [mui²⁴²]

3.4.1. Grammatical Functions

未 is quite a literary negative, which is often seen in Ancient Chinese texts, and is preserved well in many modern Chinese dialects, such as Fuzhounese. (未 is largely confined in frozen expressions like idioms in modern Chinese, too.)

Both 未 and its another form, 固未[ku³¹ mui²⁴²], correspond to 還沒有 [hai mei you] (“not yet”) in Mandarin Chinese, and can be used in isolation as an answer. 未 primarily indicates the non-occurrence of an event or a change of state that is expected.

As an adverb, 未 combines mainly with verbs, as in (56)(57) and adjectives (58)(59). Though it is more literary, the derivation is relatively productive in dialects. 未 goes with almost any verb and adjective.

(56) 書我未看

tsy³³ Nuai³³ mui⁵³ k^haN³¹

Book I still not read

"I have not read the book yet."

(57) 厝未建好

ts^huo³¹ mui⁵³ k^hi³³ xo³³

House still not build completely

"The house was still under construction."

(58) 這條瓜未熟, 固袂煮得

tsi³¹ leu⁵³ kua⁴⁴ mui³¹ sy⁵³, ku³¹ mE⁵³ tsy³³ li³¹

This CL. squash not yet ripe, still cannot cook particle

"The squash is unripe, so that it cannot be cooked yet."

(59) 伊固未老, 頭髮就已經白咯了

i⁴⁴ ku³¹ mui⁵³ lau²⁴², t^hau³¹ uo²¹³ tsiu³¹ i²¹³ kiN⁴⁴ ma³¹ o³³ lau³³

He still not yet old, hair then already white perf. particle

“Though he is still young, he has already gone gray.”

Based on the “Feature theory”, all the grammatical categories can be decomposed into two syntactic features: [Verb] and [Noun] (Haegeman, 1994: 145-146). From the diagram below, both verbs and adjectives have the feature [+verb].

Verbs have features like [+verb][-noun];

Nouns have features like [-verb][+noun];

Adjectives have features like [+verb][+noun]; and

Prepositions have features like [-verb][-noun]. (Haegeman, 1994: 145-146)

Therefore, when 未 goes with adjectives, those adjectives should be capable of triggering some sort of state changing, like verbal elements, in order to tally with the semantic requirement of 未. Since “the potential of the state changing” is the semantic prerequisite for the complements of 未, I regard all the elements that follow 未 as verbal uniformly.

3.4.2. Words or Phrases

The formations of [未+V/A] are all phrases. The grammatical categories of the negative outputs are endocentric to their original heads, the verb or the adjective. 未 cannot be the head of its formations, and does not cause a change of the grammatical category. Moreover, the meaning of 未 formations is compositional, and it modifies the element that follows and denotes the expected events which does not happen, yielding an irrealis reading.

4. Conclusion

This paper deals with the general information of each negative. When talking about the “formation” in linguistics, the key problem is to set up the criteria for distinguishing the “word-internal” and the “word-external” formations. Serious efforts have been made to apply three basic criteria, through their status is still inconclusive, to distinguish the two types of formation. The three criteria (viz., lexical integrity, grammatical categories and compositionality) constitute the major concern in this paper, especially with respect to negative formation.

Notes

¹ “Fixed-position morpheme” is Tang’s *dingwei yusu* (定位語素). It refers to a morpheme, which has a fixed position in sentences and phrases, and cannot be moved at liberty. (Tang 2000: 57-58)

² The language data comes from the author, who is a native speaker.

³ Nevertheless, some [唔 + modal] are exocentric, e.g., adverb “唔啱” [n⁵³ nie²¹³] (not only).

⁴ In Chinese, for the most part, nouns can be classified and then numbered. The fundamental structure is [numeral + classifier / measure word + noun]. The example 蜀張面 [so²⁴ t^huoN³³ meiN²¹³] (“a / sheet / face”) indicates that Chinese people associate cognitively the “face” with the “flat surface”, which is the prototypical feature of a thing to collocate with the classifier 張 (the original meaning is to stretch out and form a plane). The classifier system is unique in Chinese, and reflects human thoughts and cultural concepts as well.

⁵ Professor Tsao Feng-fu (曹逢甫) has commented in the oral defense of my thesis that Mandarin phrase -是東西 can be used in the sentence like follows, and Professor Lien Chinfa (連金發) also reminds me that the positive form only occur in contrast

to its negative form.

我是東西不是東西, 不是由你決定的
(wo³ shi⁴ dong¹ xi¹ bu² shi⁴ dong¹ xi¹, bu² shi⁴ you² ni³ jue² ding⁴ de)
(I am thing not thing, not through you determine)
(Whether or not I am somebody, it is not decided by you.)
or
我是東西不是東西不用你管
(wo³ shi⁴ dong¹ xi¹ bu² shi⁴ dong¹ xi¹ bu² yong⁴ ni² guan³)
(I am thing not be thing no need you bother)
(Whether or not I am somebody, it is not your business).

⁶ In Teng's analysis of Taiwanese Southern Min Negative (Teng 1992: 610), 無[mo²⁴] is also a "di-morphemic" negative, a fusional form of a negative 唔[m³¹] and a modal verb 有[u³³]. To Teng, 唔[m³¹] is the only mono-morphemic negative in Taiwanese Southern Min. Likewise, 無[mo⁵³] in Fuzhounese can be regarded as a fusion of a negative 唔[iN⁵³] and a modal verb 有[ou²⁴], and perhaps 唔[iN⁵³] is the only mono-morphemic negative in Fuzhounese, too.

⁷ It is so-called "bi-morphemic word" in Teng (1992: 610), and also has a formula: negative 唔[m³¹] + modal verb 會[E³³] = 袂 [bE³³].

⁸ According to the historical development, 會 is doubtful for representing the modal meaning of "capability" or "possibility" in many Chinese Dialects. After examining possible candidates in terms of the evolution of sound, meaning and form, several scholars have proposed that 解 [xie (with falling tone)] ("to disassemble") is the etymologically viable word. More studies on this issue in Taiwan Southern Min Dialect can be found in Mei (1999) and Yang (2001).

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福州方言否定詞：詞的建構與詞組的建構

提要 本文針對福州話四個主要否定詞，唔[in⁵⁵], 袂[ma²⁴²], 無[mo⁵³], and 未[mui²⁴²], 個別探討構詞現象，包括“詞的建構 (word-formation)”及“詞組的建構 (phrasal-formation)”兩種。

首先區分“詞組的建構”與“詞的建構”，主要差異在於區辨這四個否定詞在不同構型中是“詞”還是“前綴”。如果該否定詞在整個構型中是獨立的“詞”，則其構型便是在句子層次上組成，稱“詞組的建構”即“詞外”組成；若該否定詞在構型中是“詞綴”，則其構型是在詞內部組成，是為“詞的建構”。

不論研究漢語或漢語方言，要區分是“詞的建構”還是“詞組的建構”，一直是個棘手的問題，到目前，可說沒有一個定論，並且各語言學家意見也相當分歧，無法統一。

本文由多位研究漢語與漢語方言的學者所採用的方法，(如：王力，趙元任，黃正德，與連金發等)，歸納三個重要的判別準則，為本文主要研究依據：(1) 詞彙不可分割性 (lexical integrity); (2) 語法範疇 (grammatical category); (3) 語意組合性 (compositionality)。此三個準則必須一併使用，單一準則無法發揮區辨效果。

關鍵詞 福州方言 否定詞 詞的建構 詞組的建構 詞彙不可分割性 語意組合性

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