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Chinese *ba*: new Voice head and Voice alternations:

Chinese *ba* displays complex empirical differential object marking (DOM) properties which elude a straightforward formal analysis (Li (2006:376)), since it is widely observed that *ba* selects definite/specific objects which are thematically related to the second matrix verb (Zou (1995:59ff), Li (2006:413ff)) and the matrix verb must not be bare but display transitivity (1a)), complementation (1b)), aspect (1c)), adverbial modification (1d)), and multi-syllabicity (1e)), which conforms to its diachronic formation as a 'disposal' marker where *ba* is used in conjunction with transitive/dynamic verb phrases at a more advanced stage rather than a bare verb in its earliest attestations (Feng (2002b), Peyraube (1989)):

1a) *ta   ba   na-difang   likai-le
    He   BA   that-place   leave-ASP
    'He left that place.' (Li (2006:397))

1b) qing   ni   ba   shu   fang *(zai   zhuozi-shang)
    Please   you BA book   put   at   table-LOCALIZER
    'Please put the book *(on the table).' (Li (2006:392))

1c) ta   ba   nei ge   fangzi   gai-*(le)
    He   BA   that-CL   house   build-ASP
    'He built that house.' (Liu (1997:63))

1d) ni   neng   bu   nengba   shu   *(zhengzhengqiqi-de)   fang
    You can   NEG   can BA   book   tidy-ADV   put
    'Can you put the books *(tidily)?' (Feng (2002a:248))

1e) ba   tamen   *(bao)*(wei)
    BA   them   surround
    'surround them' (Feng (2002a:249))

There are numerous movement analyses (Li (2006), Yeo (2015)) which seek to account for the definiteness of the preverbal object via A'-movement to the internal topic/focus projections (e.g. *ba shu fang* (1b)), *ba nei-ge fangzi gai* (1c)), *ba shu… fang* (1d)), *ba tamen baowei* (1e), cf Hsu (2008)) but fail to account for the complex verbal properties of the matrix verb (Li (2006:413-416)). In this paper, it is proposed that Chinese *ba* is a light verb (cf Huang (1997), Lin (2001)) which heads an Active Voice projection above the Passive Voice head which (re-)activises passive predicates, as supported by examples where *ba* precedes passive markers (e.g. *gei*):

2) yi   ba   huo jiu ba   afang   gong   gei   fei   le
    One CL   fire then BA A-Fang   palace   PASS   ruin LE
    'It took just one fire to ruin the palace of A. Fang.' (Chappell and Shi (2016:465-466))

From this double voice representation (Active – Passive), DOM properties follow, since the complement of *ba* (e.g. *gei fei le* (2)) is not a bare verbal predicate (VP) but a passivized predicate (PassP) whose verbal complement (here *fei le*) must be transitive/dynamic so as to be passivisable, which leads to its aspectual/transitivity/complementation/multi-syllabic properties above (1a-e)). Moreover, the preverbal object of *ba* (e.g. *na defang* (1a)), *shu* (1b)), *nei ge fangzi* (1c)), *shu* (1d)), *tamen* (1e)), *aFang gong* (2))) is not preposed by A'-movement to Top/Foc but by A-movement in passivisation (Feng (2002b:147-151, 2012:129-136)), which in turn suggests that the *ba*-subject (e.g. *yi ba huo* (2)) is also similarly (re-)merged in the specifier of *ba* (Active) and coindexed with the internal subject below so as to avoid violation of Minimality in Spec-to-Spec movement (cf Rizzi (1990)). This formal analysis of *ba/bei*, therefore, suggests two highly similar and parallel Voice projections (Active/Passive) which seem to operate on external (re-)merge and coindexation of arguments due to structural constraints in little v rather than internal merge (A-movement) of arguments as seen in Western languages (Roberts (1986:17ff)).

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