

## Abstract

In this study, I examine how a specific Chinese construction consisting of three components in sequence: (1) a modifier, (2) the prenominal particle *de*, and (3) a noun head, is used in Mandarin conversation for self-initiated self-repair. Despite prior research reveals the pervasiveness of the prenominal particle *de* (的) in Mandarin (Da, 2004a, 2004b; Huang 2013), how it is mobilized by participants in moment-by-moment interaction remains underexplored. Given the structural nature of this construction—and drawing on Schegloff’s observation that “a repair can expand a noun phrase by a descriptor or modifier” (Schegloff, 1979: 263)—this study treats the [modifier + *de* + noun] structure as a construction and investigates how this linguistic device may afford self-repair and through which operations. In the specific [modifier + *de* + noun] environment, previous studies have identified four major semantic relations between the modifier and noun: associative, genitive/possessive, relative, and attributive (Li & Thompson, 1981; Simpson, 2000; Shi & Li, 2010; Yip & Remington, 2006). Yet, little to no attention has been paid to its use from an interactional linguistic perspective. Using CA, this paper analyzes the self-repair operations carried out by the participants mobilizing the construction and the action types ascribed. The data was drawn from CABank Mandarin Taiwan Corpus (Chui & Lai, 2008) with roughly 13 hours of audio recordings. After reviewing the corpus, 109 instances of the [modifier + *de* + noun head] construction used in conversational interaction for repair were identified. Of these, 86 were self-initiated by the participant within the same turn. The analysis shows a total of three action types, including searching (n=22), specifying (n=56), and correcting (n=8), are accomplished through the construction by executing a simple operation of recycling, a simple operation of inserting, and a combination of operations of recycling and replacing, respectively. The findings contribute to expanding the study of syntax-for-conversation by offering insights from Mandarin conversation (Schegloff, 1979). That is, despite self-repair operations being universally available, unique linguistic characteristics might shape the way how an operation is executed in social interaction given the organizational structures, constraints, and resources in different languages (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2018).

## References

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