Anti-locality in *gei*-adversative construction

Introduction: Huang (2013) and Lin & Huang (2015) investigate the syntax and semantics of Mandarin *gei* 'give' across different predicate classes. This paper focuses on the **adversative** use of *gei* analyzed by Huang (2013), exemplified in (1) with the **unaccusative predicate** *pao* 'run'.

(1) a. 給 犯人 跑了。 b. 犯人$_1$ 給 t_1 跑了。
'It happened that the prisoner ran away (and someone suffered).'

Empirical puzzle: We find that unlike the flexibility of argument raising with unaccusative predicates in (1), the raising of the argument of **unergative predicates** is restricted, as shown by the contrast in (2).

(2) a. 給 李四 休息了 五分鐘。 b. *__李四$_1$__ 給 t_1 休息了五分鐘。
'It happened that Lisi rested for five minutes (and someone suffered).'

Analysis: we argue that (2b) is excluded due to **the anti-locality constraint** in (3), which requires Move cross at least one full phrasal boundary (Bošković 2016; Erlewine 2020; Branan 2023). Specifically, assuming with Huang (2013) that adversative *gei* heads an unaccusative VP, the structures of *gei* taking unaccusative/unergative predicates are shown in (4). The raising of the argument of unaccusative predicates to the spec,VP in (5a) does not violate (3) as it crosses two maximal projections, successfully yielding (1b). On the other hand, the external argument of unergative predicates is base-generated at spec,VoiceP (Kratzer 1996), so its raising in (5b) is disallowed because it crosses only the VoiceP.

(3) Movement of a phrase from Spec,XP must cross a maximal projection other than XP.

(4) a. [$_{VP}$ gei [$_{vP}$ v [$_{VP}$ V **DP**]]] (*gei* + unaccusative predicates)
b. [$_{VP}$ gei [$_{voiceP}$ **DP** Voice [$_{VP}$ V…]]] (*gei* + unergative predicates)

(5) a. [$_{VP}$ DP gei [**$_{vP}$** v [**$_{VP}$** V <DP>]]] (argument raising based on (4a))
↑ crossing VP + vP ┘
b. [$_{VP}$ DP gei [**$_{voiceP}$** <DP> Voice [$_{VP}$ V…]]] (argument raising based on (4b))
↑ *anti-locality ┘

Prediction. The anti-locality analysis of (2b) predicts that **the external argument of transitive predicates** is subject to the same constraint: it cannot undergo raising in *gei*-adversative construction because it is also base-generated at spec,VoiceP. This prediction is born out, as evidenced by (6b).

(6) a. (冠軍賽時) 給 翔平 打了三隻全壘打。 b. *(冠軍賽時) 翔平 給打了三隻全壘打。
'It happened that Shohei hit three home runs (in the championship game, and someone suffered).'

Further issues. Note that adversative-*gei* is incompatible with unergative predicates when the measurement phrase is removed as in (7), regardless of the position of the external argument. We will discuss how **the strong affectedness condition** formulated by Law & Hirschberg (2025) can be extended to explain the contrast between (2a) and (7).

(7) a. *給 李四 休息了。 b. *李四$_1$ 給 t_1 休息了。
Intended: 'It happened that he rested (and someone suffered).'

References.

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