

On sentence completeness marker and its syntactic relation to evaluative adverbs in Chinese

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Abstract: Words sequence may fail to be successfully spelt out as a sentence if it is incomplete in grammar. This paper aims to investigate the function of “yǒu” (有, lit. have) in Chinese as a sentence completeness marker. Evidence is provided from examples where “yǒu” is followed by verbal phrase, adjective phrase or passive construction. This paper also analyzes the syntactic structure of “yǒu” by comparing it to evaluative/speaker-oriented adverbs in Chinese, and places “yǒu” on the universal hierarchy of adverbs (Cinque 1999), attested by its relative order with subject, voice, negation, as well as other functional heads. The findings suggest that “yǒu”, being a sentence completeness marker, locates between TP and CP, serving as the head of EvaluativeP with an adverb specifier.

Keywords: sentence completeness makers, “yǒu”, evaluative/speaker-oriented adverbs
For instance,

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. 他有去上海。
tā yǒu qù Shànghǎi.
he have go Shànghǎi
'He has gone to Shànghǎi.' | b. 我有被感动（到）。
wǒ yǒu bèi gǎndòng (dào)
I have PASS. moved (arrive)
'I have been moved.' |
| a. *他去上海。
tā qù Shànghǎi.
he go Shànghǎi
(cf. 'He has gone/went to Shànghǎi.') | b. *我被感动（到）。
wǒ bèi gǎndòng (dào)
I PASS. moved (arrive)
(cf. 'I was moved.') |

Syntactic description (to be revised)

[CP ... [EvaluativeP *què shí*^① [Evaluative' [Evaluative *yǒu*]]...[TP...]]

① *què shí* (确实 lit. indeed)

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