

ON HAKKA VERB-COMPLEMENT CONSTRUCTION FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF PRESUPPOSITION-FOCUS STRUCTURE

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摘 要

由於客語之動補結構具有一些特殊之句法及語意行爲，使得著重在探討主要述語之國語動補結構，無法充分地對其提出合理的解釋。故本文擬運用「預設」和「焦點」的分析方法，周延地說明客語動補結構之特性。

分析之結果顯示，客語動補結構是以「到」字區分為「預設」及「焦點」兩部份，而其所表現的特殊句法及語意行爲，正是為了彰顯出「到」後之補語為言談中最重要的「焦點」。

The so-called verb-complement construction in Hakka is exemplified by sentence (1a) or (1b), which contains two portions with *to* serving to mark the relation between them. The relations between the two portions are generally of two types: sentences like (1a) are traditionally referred to as descriptive complement constructions, with the part after *to* describing the manner of the action or process named by the preceding verb, and those like (1b) as resultative complement constructions, with *to* introducing the result of the action or the process named by the verb.

- (1) a. ki² tseu⁴ to⁴ tang³ kiak⁵. (descriptive)
he run TO very fast
'He runs very fast.'
- b. ki² tseu⁴ to⁴ tang³ t'iam³. (resultative)
he run TO very tired
He ran and thus felt very tired.'

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This paper aims at proposing a plausible analysis of such a *to* construction in Hakka. In what follows, we will first examine the general syntactic and semantic characteristics of the *to* construction in Hakka. Secondly, we will discuss two recent analyses of the corresponding *de* construction in Mandarin and point out the inadequacies of both analyses. Then, we will propose that the relationship between the two portions connected by *to* in such a construction is actually that of presupposition and focus. Finally, we will explore the status of *to* in such a *to* construction.

1. Syntactic and Semantic Characteristics of the *To* Construction

In a *to* sentence, when the portion after *to* denotes a description, only an adverbial phrase can appear in the position after *to*, as shown in (1a) above. When the portion after *to* denotes a result, a complete sentence or a verb phrase, as well as an adverbial phrase (as shown in (1b)) may appear after *to*. Examine the following.

- (2) a. ki² kieu⁴ to⁴ muk⁵-tsu¹ fung² fung². (resultative)
he cry TO eye red red
'He cried so much that his eyes became very red.'

- b. ki² seu⁴ to⁴ k'i¹ m² hi³ loi².
he laugh TO stand not rise come
'He laughed so much that he couldn't stand up.'

In some descriptive complement constructions, *to* may be used optionally, as shown in (3);

- (3) ki² tseu³ (to⁴) tang³ kiak⁵. (descriptive)
he run TO very fast
'He runs very fast.'

while in a resultative complement construction, the occurrence of *to* is obligatory, as shown in (4).

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- (4) a. ki² tseu³ to⁴ tang³ t'iam³. (resultative)
 he run TO very tired
 'He ran and thus felt tired.'
- b. *ki² tseu³ ϕ tang³ t'iam³.
 he run ϕ very tired

However, there are some sentences in which both descriptive and resultative meanings can be denoted. In such cases, *to* has to appear with either the descriptive or resultative interpretation. For instance, (5) may have either the descriptive interpretation(i) or the resultative interpretation (ii); yet in either case, *to* must occur to introduce the description or result.

- (5) ki² kau³ to⁴/* ϕ tang³ t'iong⁴.
 he play TO very happy
 (i) 'He played very happily.'
 (ii) 'He played to the point of being very happy.'

No matter in a descriptive or in a resultative construction, if the predicate before *to* is a transitive verb and has its direct object, the verb must be reduplicated before *to*, as shown in (6) and (7).

- (6) a. ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
 he sing song sing TO very sweet
 'He sings very sweetly.'
- b. *ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
 he sing song TO very sweet
- (7) a. ki² k'i² ma¹-e³ k'i² to⁴ tang³ t'iam³.
 he ride horse ride TO very tired
 'He was very tired from horse riding.'
- b. *ki² k'i² ma¹-e³ to⁴ tang³ t'iam³.
 he ride horse TO very tired

Furthermore, the direct object in such a construction may be preposed to the sentence-initial position, or it may occur alone without the predicate in the second position of the sentence. In either case, repetition of the verb is blocked. Compare the following.

- (8) a. ko^1-e^3 , ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ (* $ts'ong^4$) to^4 $tang^3$ $ho^3-t'ang^1$.
 song he sing sing TO very sweet
 'He sings very sweetly.'

- b. fan^4 , ki^2 tsu^3 (* tsu^3) to^4 $tang^3$ ho^3-sit^6 .
 rice he make make TO very delicious
 'He made delicious meals.'

- (9) a. ki^2 , ko^1-e^3 , $ts'ong^4$ (* $ts'ong^4$) to^4 $tang^3$ $ho^3-t'ang^1$.
 he song sing sing TO very sweet
 'He sings very sweetly.'

- b. ki^2 , fan^4 , tsu^3 (* tsu^3) to^4 $tang^3$ ho^3-sit^6 .
 he rice make make TO very delicious
 'He made delicious meals.'

Alternatively, the verb and the object together may be preposed to the initial position of a sentence, in which case the verb has to be reduplicated before *to*, as shown in (10).

- (10) a. $ts'ong^4$ ko^1-e^3 , ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 $tang^3$ $ho^3-t'ang^1$.
 sing song he sing TO very sweet
 'As to singing songs, he sings very sweetly.'

- b. $k'i^2$ ma^1-e^3 , ki^2 $k'i^2$ to^4 $tang^3$ $t'iam^3$.
 ride horse he ride TO very tired
 'He was very tired from horse riding.'

In addition to the properties discussed above, a *to* construction is also unique in that it is the predicate after *to*, rather than the one before it, that is sensitive to some grammatical processes. First of all, the predicate after *to* can enter into a CV ia^4 m^2 CV question, but not the one before *to*. Sentences with the predicate

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in front of *to* questioned will become ill-formed, as shown in the following examples.

- (11) a. $ki^2 ko^1-e^3 ts'ong^4 to^4 ho^3-t'ang^1 ia^4 m^2 ho^3-t'ang^1?$
 he song sing TO sweet or not sweet
 'Does he sing sweetly?'
- b. $*ki^2 ko^1-e^3 ts'ong^4 ia^4 m^2 ts'ong^4 to^4 tang^3 ho^3-t'ang^1?$
 he song sing or not sing TO very sweet
- (12) a. $ki^2 fan^4 tsu^3 to^4 ho^3-sit^6 ia^4 m^2 ho^1-sit^6?$
 he rice make TO delicious or not delicious
 'Did he make delicious meals?'
- b. $*ki^2 fan^4 tsu^3 ia^4 m^2 tsu^4 to^4 tang^3 ho^3-sit^6?$
 he rice make or not make TO very delicious

Furthermore, the predicate in front of *to* can never cooccur with aspect markers like $-e^1$, $-ko^4$, $-ten^3$ or $-hi^3-loi^2$, as shown in (13).

- (13) a. $*ki^2 kieu^4-hi^3-loi^2 to^4 muk^5-tsu^1 fung^2 fung^2.$ (inchoative)
 he cry asp. asp. TO eye red red
- b. $*ki^2 kieu^4-ten^3 to^4 muk^5-tsu^1 fung^2 fung^2.$ (progressive)
 he cry asp. TO eye red red
- c. $*ki^2 kieu^4-e^1 to^4 muk^5-tsu^1 fung^2 fung^2.$ (perfective)
 he cry asp. TO eye red red
- d. $*ki^2 kieu^4-ko^4 to^4 muk^5-tsu^1 fung^2 fung^2.$ (experiential)
 he cry asp. TO eye red red

Rather, it is the predicate after *to* that may take an aspect if it is semantically compatible with the aspect in question. Examples in (14) show that the predicate after *to* can take an inchoative as well as a perfective aspect.

- (14) a. ki^2 $kieu^4$ to^4 muk^5 - tsu^1 $fung^2$ - hi^3 - loi^2 le^1 . (inchoative)
 he cry TO eye red asp. asp. FP
 'He cried so much that his eyes started to become red.'
- b. ki^2 $kieu^4$ to^4 muk^5 - tsu^1 $fung^2$ - e^1 $tsang^4$ $tiam^1$. (perfective)
 he cry TO eye red asp. then stop
 'He cried very sadly, and he stopped crying till his eyes became red.'

Likewise, negation of a *to* construction is usually done by inserting a negative particle in front of the post-*to* predicate. Thus, the negative marker m^2 can only occur in front of the predicate after *to*, but not in front of the predicate before *to*. Compare the following.

- (15) a. ki^2 , fan^4 , tsu^3 to^4 m^2 ho^3 - sit^6 .
 he rice make TO not delicious
 'He didn't make delicious meals.'
- b. ki^2 , ko^1 - e^3 , $ts'ong^4$ to^4 m^2 ho^3 - $t'ang^1$.
 he song sing TO not sweet
 'He sings very harshly.'
- (16) a. $*ki^2$, fan^4 , m^2 tsu^3 to^4 ho^3 - sit^4 .
 he rice not make TO delicious
- b. $*ki^2$, ko^1 - e^3 , m^2 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 ho^3 - $t'ang^1$.
 he song not sing TO sweet

Notice that what is negated in the two sentences in (15) is not that 'he made meals' ((15a)) and that 'he sings a song' ((15b)). It is rather 'the deliciousness of the meals which he made' in (15a) and 'the gentleness with which he sings' in (15b) that are negated.

Nevertheless, sometimes the negative marker mo^2 may occur in front of the predicate before *to*. Consider the following.

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- (17) a. ki² fan⁴ mo² tsu³ to⁴ tang³ ho³-sīt⁶.
 he rice not make TO very delicious
 'It isn't true that he made delicious meals.'
- b. ki² ko¹-e³ mo² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
 he song not sing TO very sweet
 'It isn't true that he sang very sweetly.'

In either sentence of (17), *mo*² occurs in front of the predicate before *to* respectively. Yet, *mo*² does not negate the predicate before *to*. What is negated is still the part after *to*. In other words, one cannot say '*He didn't make meals, but made the meals very delicious.' or '*He didn't sing but sang very sweetly.'

Moreover, the predicate after *to* may serve as a short answer to questions whereas the one before *to* cannot. Observe the following examples.

- (18) a. Q: ki² t'uk⁶ su¹ t'uk⁶ to⁴ ŋiong¹ nge^{2?}
 he read book read TO how way
 'How is his study going?'

A: (t'uk⁶ to⁴) tang³ ho³.
 read TO very good
 'Very good.'

*t'uk⁶.
 read

- b. Q: kia² t'eu²-lu⁴ ŋiong¹ nge^{2?}
 his job how way
 'How is his job?'

A: (tso⁴ to⁴) i⁴ su⁴-li⁴.
 do TO very smooth
 'Very successful.'

*tso⁴.
 do

The question and answer pairs in (18a) and (18b) show that the predicate after *to*, rather than the predicate before *to*, must be retained as a short answer. Moreover, the [verb *to*] portion may be omitted not only when it is a repetition of a part of the question (as in (18a)), but also when it is not such a repetition (as in (18b)).

Finally, the predicate after *to* is usually modified by some adverbials like intensifiers no matter in descriptive or in resultative constructions.

- (19) a. ki² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ t'ai⁴-san¹.
he sing TO very big voice
'He sings so loudly.'

- b. *ki² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ t'ai⁴-san¹.
he sing TO big voice

- (20) a. ki² tseu³ to⁴ tang³ t'iam³.
he run TO very tired
'He ran and thus felt very tired.'

- b. *ki² tseu³ to⁴ t'iam³.
he run TO tired

With the demonstration of the syntactic and semantic characteristics of the *to* construction, the questions that arise now are: what function *to* serves in such a construction, what relations are between the two predicates connected by *to*, and why the *to* construction would exhibit the characteristics mentioned. Since previous studies on the construction are scarce,¹ we will briefly look at two recent approaches to the corresponding *de* construction in Mandarin.

2. Previous Analyses on the Mandarin *De* Construction

The corresponding construction in Mandarin of the *to* construction in Hakka is the so-called *de* complement construction. Consider the following.

- (21) a. wǒ pǎo de hěn kuài.
I run DEvery fast
'I run very fast.'

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- b. *tā tiào dé hěn lèi.*
 he jump DEvery tired
 'He jumped till he got very tired.'

Each of these sentences has two predicates. We will henceforth refer to the predicate before *de* as V1 and the predicate after *de* as V2 respectively. In (21a), V1 is *pǎo* 'run' and V2 is *kùai* 'fast'. In (21b), V1 is *tiào* 'jump' and V2 is *lèi* 'tired'.

Recent studies on the *de* construction in Mandarin have focused on the discussion of whether V1 or V2 is the main predicate of the sentence. One approach would treat V1 as the main predicate and V2 as the secondary predicate, as proposed by Huang, C-T James (1988) in terms of phrase structure constraints and Mei (1988) in terms of case marking. An alternative would analyze V2 as the main predicate and V1 as the secondary, as proposed by Li & Thompson (1981:623-30), Chu (1983b:260-70), Paris (1987), Tsao (1987c) and Huang & Mangione (1985).²

Chu (1983b:260-70), Huang & Mangion (1985),³ Li & Thompson (1981:623-30) propose that it is V2 in the *de* construction that is the main predicate. Their arguments are mainly based on the facts about a V-not-V question formation, distribution of aspect markers, placement of the negative marker *bù*, the different behaviors of V1 and V2 in answering questions and the placement of monosyllabic adverbs. Examine the following examples.

- (22) a. *tā fàn zuò dé hǎo-chī bù hǎo-chī?* (V-not-V question)
 he rice make DE delicious not delicious
 'Does he make delicious meals?'

- b. **tā fàn zuò bù zuò dé hǎo-chī?*
 he rice make not make DEdelicious

- (23) a. *tā pǎo dē diào-ē xiézi.* (distribution of an aspect)
 he run DElose asp. shoe
 'He ran such that he lost his shoes.'

- b. **tā pǎo-lē dē diào xiézi.*
 he run asp.DE lose shoe

(24) a. *tā zuò dē bù hǎochī.* (placement of the negative marker)
 he make DE not delicious
 'He did not make it tasty.'

b. **tā bù zuò dē hǎochī.*
 he not make DE delicious

(25) a. Q: *tā nànn shū nànn dē zěnmē yàng?*
 he studybook study DE how way
 'How is his studying going?'

A: *(nànn dē) bù tài hǎo.* (serving as a short answer)
 study DE not too good
 'Not too good.'

b. Q: *nǐdē gōngzuò zěnmē yàng?*
 your work how way
 'How is your work?'

A: *(zuò dē) hěn yǒuyìsì.*
 work DE very interesting
 'I am interested (in my work and as a result of doing it!).'

(26) a. *tā fàn zuò dē zhēn hǎo-chī.* (a monosyllabic adverb)
 he rice make DE really delicious
 'He really makes delicious meals.'

b. **tā fàn zhēn zuò dē hǎo-chī.*
 he rice really make DE delicious

Examples in (22) show that V2 can enter into a V-not-V question, while V1 cannot. In the *de* construction, V2 can allow the occurrence of an aspect marker, whereas V1 cannot, as shown in (23). Examples in (24) show that the negative marker *bù* occurs in front of V2 but not in front of V1. V2 in the *de* construction has to be retained in answering questions, whereas V1 may be omitted; in addition, the "verb *de*" portion is omissible not only when it is a repetition of a part of the question but also when it is not such a repetition, as shown in (25). Finally, the adverbs

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Like *zhēn* ‘really’, typically occur in front of V2 but not in front of V1 in the *de* construction, as shown in (26). Based on the above facts, Li & Thompson and others thus argue that in the *de* construction, V2 is the full predicate while V1 comes from a subordinate structure.

Unlike Li & Thompson and others who treat V2 as the main predicate, Huang, C-T James (1988:274-93), on the other hand, holds that V1 is the main predicate while V2 is dominated by a maximal AP or S’ which occurs as an adjunct, or secondary predicate in the *de* construction in Mandarin. He further argues that the arguments held by those who treat V2 as the main predicate are simply non-arguments. Specifically, he maintains that the distribution of a V-not-V question and *bù* as well as *-lē* suffixation are independent of the syntactic notion of main-verbhood. Consider the following.

(27) a. *nǐ rènwéi [tāmēn huì-bú-huì lái]*?

you think they willnotwill come

‘Do you think that they will come or do you think they won’t?’

b. *Zhāngsān yǐwéi Lǐsì dǎ-lē tā.*

Zhangsan think Lisi hit asp. he

‘Zhangsan thought that Lisi hit him.’

(28) a. *tā méi-yǒu pǎo dē hěn kuài.*

he not have run DEvery fast

‘He did not run very fast.’

b. *tā yǒu - méi-yǒu pǎo dē hěn kuài?*

he have not have run DEvery fast

‘Did he run very fast?’

(29) a. **tāmēn pǎo-lē dē hěn kuài.*

they run asp. DEvery fast

b. **tāmēn pǎo-lē dē hěn lèi.*

they run asp. DEvery tired

Huang gives examples as shown in (27) to argue that a V-not-V question and the suffix *-le* may occur in an embedded clause. In addition, Huang also notices that

there do exist some *de* sentences in which V1 can be preceded by *bu* or V-not-V questioned as long as it is supported by an element in INFL, as shown in (28a) and (28b). Moreover, Huang further explains the nonoccurrence of the aspect *-le* with V1 in terms of Li & Thompson's notion of "bounded event". According to Li & Thompson (1981:185-206), a central requirement for the use of the suffix *-le* is that the predicate to which it is attached must be one that denotes a 'bounded event'. Since V1 in a *de* construction (either descriptive or resultative) does not refer to bounded events, the attachment of *-le* is impossible, as illustrated in (29a) and (29b). Having pointed out the inadequacies of the arguments for V2 as the main predicate, Huang (1988:295-309) thus goes on to propose some arguments for V1 as the main predicate on purely formal grounds within the framework of GB Theory.⁴

As we consider the above two treatments closely, we find that both seem to have their points, but they seem to be discussing phenomena at different levels. It is true, as Li & Thompson and others point out, that in a *de* construction, V2 rather than V1 has such properties as entering into a V-not-V question formation, taking aspect markers, serving as a short answer, etc. However, as Huang criticizes, those criteria are simply irrelevant to the identity of the main-verbhood of the predicate in question. Specifically, since such properties as negation and interrogation in Chinese have much to do with the semantic scope and the information structure than with the syntactic structure of the sentence, the phenomena will be more appropriately accounted for at the discourse level. Li & Thompson and others, however, attempt to explain discourse phenomena in terms of the syntactic notion of main-verbhood. Thus, their conclusion does not offer a satisfactory explanation of the *de* construction.

Huang, C-T James (1988), on the other hand, was right in pointing out the irrelevance of the properties to the identity of the main-verbhood of the *de* construction. Nevertheless, it is actually indisputable that V2 rather than V1 in a *de* construction can enter into a V-not-V question, take aspect markers, serve as a short answer, have the negative marker *bù* and take monosyllabic adverbs. Even if V1 is treated as the main verb, the question still remains to be solved as to why in a *de* construction, V2 would have those peculiar behaviors.

Thus, both approaches are somehow inadequate in the analysis of the *de* construction in a discourse-oriented language such as Chinese. Essentially, they do not distinguish the syntactic level from the discursal level. Whether V1 or V2 is the main verb in a *de* construction is not so crucial concerning the peculiar behaviors of V2 in such a construction. Rather, what is critically involved in a *de* construction is the structure of presupposition and focus. In other words, the phenomena in the *de* construction can have a unified treatment with the presupposition-focus analysis.

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Since the Hakka *to* construction owns so many syntactic and semantic characteristics similar to the *de* construction in Mandarin, in what follows, we will discuss the characteristics of presupposition and focus, and then we will examine how the presupposition-focus analysis can adequately account for the peculiar behaviors of the *to* construction in Hakka.

3. The Hakka *To* Construction as a Presupposition-Focus Construction

Instead of arguing whether the predicate before *to* or the one after *to* is the main verb, we propose to analyze the *to* construction in Hakka as a presupposition-focus construction. First, let us see the characteristics exhibited by presupposition and focus.

3.1 Presupposition and Focus

Lyons (1977:503) claims that “every statement that can be made by uttering a simple sentence expresses a proposition, which, if it is informative, provides the answer to either an explicit or an implicit question.” If we want to make our question explicit, we have to make certain presuppositions about the situation to which the question pertains. In other words, in any question that we might put relating to the components or circumstances of a situation, there is something that is presupposed and something that is in focus. For example, in asking *Who is X?*, we presuppose that *X* is a person and focus our question upon his identity; in asking *What happened?*, we presuppose that some event or process occurred and want to know what it was; in asking *Why did John come home late?*, we presuppose that John came home late and are interested in finding out why.

Since every statement can be seen as providing an answer to either an explicit or implicit question, an utterance will have one rather than another prosodic contour imposed upon it. For instance, the statement

(30) John is working in the stúdy.

(with heavy stress on the form *study*) answers the question

(31) Where is John working?

The question and answer pair in (30) and (31) employs stress as a device to indicate a presupposition-focus structure.

Very similar to (30) in the demarcation between focus and presupposition are sentences like (32) and (33) below, where the grammatical devices of clefting and wh-clefting are used respectively to indicate the distribution of presupposition and focus in the sentences.

(32) It's in the stúdy that John is working.

(33) The stúdy is where John is working.

Thus, the presupposition-focus demarcation may be expressed in terms of either grammatical or phonological devcies: stress, intonation, word order, the so-called cleft-sentence construction, etc. No matter what devices are employed to manifest the presupposition-focus structure, sentences in (30), (32) and (33), for example, have the same presuppositions, and they provide an answer to explicit or implicit questions.

What is peculiar of these presuppositions is that they remain constant under negation and interrogation. Compare the following.

(34) a. John isn't working in his stúdy.

b. Is John working in his stúdy?

Both sentences presuppose that John is working somewhere. (34a) states the place where John is working is not in the study but at some other place; and (34b) questions whether the place where John is working is in the study.

Presupposition-focus structure is also a widespread phenomenon in Hakka. For example, the statement in Hakka

(35) ngai² ti¹ ki² hi⁴ nai⁴.

I know he go where

'I know where he has gone.'

presupposes that he has gone somewhere. When (35) is negated or questioned, the presupposition still remains constant, as shown in the following.

(36) a. ngai² m̃² ti¹ ki² hi⁴ nai⁴.

I not know he go where

'I don't know where he has gone.'

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- b. ngai² ti¹ ia⁴ m² ti² ki² hi⁴ nai⁴?
 I know or not know he go where
 'Do I know where he has gone?'

Both sentences in (36) presuppose that he has gone somewhere. (36a) negates the fact that I know the place where he has gone, whereas (36b) questions whether I know the place where he has gone.

A similar example is observed in (37).

- (37) ki² tiam¹-tiam¹-me³ hang² ɲip⁶ tso⁴-ha².
 he quietly walk into kitchen
 'He quietly walked into the kitchen.'

The statement in (37) presupposes that he walked into the kitchen. When it is negated or questioned, the presupposition remains constant. Compare the following.

- (38) a. ki² m² tiam¹-tiam¹-me³ hang² ɲip⁶ tso⁴-ha².
 he not quietly walk into kitchen
 'He didn't quietly walk into the kitchen.'
- b. *ki² tiam¹-tiam¹-me³ m² hang² ɲip⁶ tso⁴-ha².
 he quietly not walk into kitchen
- (39) a. ki² iu¹ tiam¹'-tiam¹-me³ hang² ɲip⁶ tso⁴-ha² mo²?
 he have quietly walk into kitchen QP
 'Did he walk quietly into the kitchen?'
- b. *ki² tiam¹-tiam¹-me³ hang² ia⁴ m² hang² ɲip⁶ tso⁴-ha²?
 he quietly walk or not walk into kitchen

Both sentences presuppose that he walked into the kitchen. (38a) negates the quietness of his walking into the kitchen, and (39a) questions whether the manner of his walking into the kitchen is quiet. Owing to the constancy of presupposition under negation and interrogation, it is quite natural that the negative marker and a V-not-V question formation will not occur in the presupposed part of a sentence, as shown in the above examples in (38b) and (39b). Rather, they will fall on the communicatively most prominent part, i.e., the focus, of a sentence.⁵

3.2 *To* Construction as a Presupposition-Focus Construction

In addition to the sentences discussed in the above section, the peculiar behavior of the *to* construction can also be accounted for by the presupposition-focus structure. Observe the following examples.

- (40) a. $ki^2 ts'ong^4 to^4 tang^3 ho^3-t'ang^1$.
he sing TO very sweet
'He sings very sweetly.'
- b. $ki^2 tsu^3 to^4 tang^3 ho^3-sit^6$.
he make TO very delicious
'What he made was very delicious.'

Example (40a) presupposes that he sings and focuses on the gentleness of his singing. Similarly, (40b) presupposes that he made something and focuses on the deliciousness of what he made. The presupposition in either of the two sentences is indicated by the predicate before *to*, $ts'ong^4$ 'sing' and tsu^3 'make', respectively.

The corresponding V-not-V question formations and the negative forms of the two sentences are illustrated in the following. Compare the following examples.

- (41) a. $ki^2 ts'ong^4 to^4 ho^3-t'ang^1 ia^4 m^2 ho^3-t'ang^1?$
he sing TO sweet or not sweet
'Does he sing sweetly?'
- b. $*ki^2 ts'ong^4 ia^4 m^2 ts'ong^4 to^4 ho^3-t'ang^1?$
he sing or not sing TO sweet
- (42) a. $ki^2 tsu^3 to^4 ho^3-sit^6 ia^4 m^2 ho^3-sit^6?$
he make TO delicious or not delicious
'Was what he made delicious?'
- b. $*ki^2 tsu^3 ia^4 m^2 tsu^3 to^4 ho^3-sit^6?$
he make or not make TO delicious
- (43) a. $ki^2 ts'ong^4 to^4 m^2 ho^3-t'ang^1$.
he sing TO not sweet
'He sings very harshly.'

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- b. *ki² m² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he not sing TO very sweet

- (44) a. ki² tsu³ to⁴ m² ho³-sit⁶.
he make TO not delicious
'What he made was not delicious.'

- b. *ki² m² tsu³ to⁴ tang³ ho³-sit⁶.
he not make TO very delicious

As was pointed out, presupposition remains constant under negation and interrogation. It makes no sense to question or negate something which remains constant under negation or interrogation. It is thus quite reasonable that the predicate after *to* rather than the predicate before *to* in a *to* construction can enter into a V-not-V question formation and have the negative marker, since the predicate before *to* is the presupposed part, and the predicate after *to* represents the communicatively focused part of the *to* construction.

Nevertheless, there seem to exist counterexamples. Examine the following.

- (45) a. ki² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ mo² tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he sing TO no very sweet
'He didn't/hasn't sing/sung very sweetly.'

- b. ki² mo² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he no sing TO very sweet
'same as (45a).'

Examples in (45) show that the allomorphic negative marker *mo* may occur not only in front of the predicate after *to*, as shown in (45a) but also in front of the predicate before *to*, as shown in (45b). This seems to directly counter our argument that the predicate before *to* is the presupposed part and will not be negated. However, the occurrence of *mo*² is closely related to the occurrence of its affirmative counterpart *iu*¹ in a sentence, whose peculiar behavior will be briefly discussed in what follows.

*Iu*¹ in Hakka may occur in front of a predicate which denotes the completion of an action. Observe the following examples.

(46) a. ki^2 iu^1 sia^3 sin^4-ne^3 pun^1 $ngai^2$.

he have write letter to I

'He has written a letter to me.'

b. ki^2 iu^1 loi^2 .

he have come

'He has come.'

Example (46a) indicates that he has completed the action of writing me a letter, and (46b) indicates that he has completed the action of coming.

Likewise, in a *to* sentence, iu^1 can freely occur either in front of the predicate after *to* or the predicate before *to* to indicate the completion of an action because iu^1 is an auxiliary and normally an auxiliary can freely occur in front of the predicate of a sentence. Since the occurrence of iu^1 denotes the completion of an action, the sentence with the occurrence of iu^1 will refer to a specific event. Compare the following.

(47) a. ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 $tang^2$ $ho^3-t'ang^1$.

he sing TO very sweet

'He sings very sweetly.'

b. ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 iu^1 $tang^3$ $ho^3-t'ang^1$.

he sing TO have very sweet

'He sang/has sung very sweetly.'

c. ki^2 iu^1 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 $tang^3$ $ho^3-t'ang^1$.

he have sing TO very sweet

'same as (47b).'

Example (47a) means that habitually he sings very sweetly, whereas (47b) and (47c) with the occurrence of iu^1 denote that he did sing/has sung very sweetly.

Hakka does not have the negative form ' $\dots iu^1 \dots m^2 \dots$ '. Rather, m^2 and iu^1 have to cooccur together and be spelled out as mo^2 . The negative counterparts of (46a) and (46b) are shown as follows.

(48) a. ki^2 mo^2 sia^3 sin^4-ne^4 pun^1 $ngai^2$.

he no write letter to I

'He hasn't written a letter to me.'

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- b. ki² mo² loi².
he no come
'He hasn't come.'

Similarly, the negative sentences of (47b) and (47c) are as follows.

- (49) a. ki² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ mo² tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he sing TO no very sweet
'He didn't/hasn't sing/sung very sweetly.'
- b. ki² mo² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he no sing TO very sweet
'same as (49a).'

Examples in (49) show that the negative counterpart of *iu*¹ occurs wherever *iu*¹ originally occurs. This is because *iu*¹ and the negative marker *m*² have to cooccur and *m*² will be attracted to the place where *iu*¹ occurs, and be spelled out as *mo*². Thus, *mo*² can occur either in front of the predicate after *to* or the one before *to* as *iu*¹ can.

Notice that despite the different distribution of *mo*², the presupposition of the two sentences in (49) still remains intact. When *mo*² occurs in front of the predicate after *to*, as shown in (49a), because the sentence presupposes that he sang/has sung something, and the negative marker *mo*² occurring in front of the predicate after *to* negates the gentleness of his singing. When *mo*² occurs in front of the predicate before *to*, as shown in (49b), the presupposition of the sentence 'he sang/has sung something' remains constant. What is negated in this sentence is also the gentleness of his singing, as illustrated by the English translation. In other words, even if *mo*² occurs in front of the predicate before *to*, which is the presupposed part, the scope of negation is still the focus of the sentence, i.e., the part after *to*. Thus, instead of countering our assumption, the occurrence of *mo*² in the *to* construction in Hakka reinforces the argument that in the *to* construction, the predicate before *to* is the presupposition of the sentence and remains constant under negation, whereas the predicate after *to* is the semantically focused part, which is usually the candidate for negation.

In addition to V-not-V question formation and negation, the distribution between the predicate before *to* and the one after *to* can be shown in their different behaviors in answering a question. Observe the following examples.

- (50) Q: ki² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ ŋiong¹ nge¹?
he sing TO how way
'How does he sing?'

A: a. (ts'ong⁴ to⁴) tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
sing TO very sweet
'Very sweetly.'

b. *ts'ong⁴.
sing

Examples in (50) show that when serving as a short answer to a question, the predicate after *to* has to be retained while the one before *to* can be omitted. This is to be expected under our presupposition-focus analysis. In answering a question, a speaker is supposed to answer what is being asked, not what is presupposed. The answer in (50b) is infelicitous, since it retains the presupposed part and omits the communicatively most prominent part, the focus, of the sentence.

Furthermore, the necessity for the predicate after *to* to be intensified provides another piece of evidence for our presupposition-focus analysis of the *to* construction. In a *to* construction, the predicate after *to* is usually modified by intensifiers or is usually reduplicated to intensify the extent of the predicate. Consider the following.

- (51) a. ki² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he sing TO very sweet
'He sings very sweetly.'

b. ?ki² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ ho³-t'ang¹.
he sing TO sweet

- (52) a. ki² kieu⁴ to⁴ muk⁵-tsu¹ fung² fung².
he cry TO eye red red
'He cried so sadly that his eyes became very red.'

b. ?ki² kieu⁴ to⁴ muk⁵-tsu¹ fung².
he cry TO eye red

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Examples in (51) and (52) show that the predicate after *to* is intensified either with modifying adverb or with reduplication. Sentences with the predicates after *to* not intensified are unacceptable, as shown in (51b) and (52b). The intensification of the predicate after *to* will make it heavier to serve as an informationally most prominent part and thus justifies our claim that it is the focus of the *to* sentence.

3.3 “Verb-Copying” in the *To* Construction

We have tried to account for the peculiar behavior of the *to* construction in terms of the presupposition-focus structure. At first glance, our analysis appears to be rather similar to the one proposed by Li & Thompson and others in Section 2, since both treatments may account for the peculiar syntactic and semantic characteristics of the predicate after *to*. However, the two analyses make different claims in analyzing the “verb-copying” phenomenon in the *to* construction. In what follows, we will briefly review the treatment of the “verb-copying” in the *to* construction proposed by Tsao and others, then we will show our presupposition-focus analysis can subsume their analyses and achieve a unified treatment of the *to* construction in Hakka.

As mentioned in Section 1, when the predicate before *to* in a *to* construction is a transitive verb and contains its direct object or complement, *to* cannot immediately follow the object. Rather, the first verb must be “reduplicated”, as shown in (53) and (54).

- (53) a. ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he sing song sing TO very sweet
'He sings very sweetly.'

- b. *ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he sing song TO very sweet

- (54) a. ki² k'i² ma¹-e³ k'i² to⁴ tang³ t'iam³.
he ride horse ride TO very tired
'He was very tired from horse riding.'

- b. *ki² k'i² ma¹-e³ to⁴ tang³ t'iam³.
he ride horse TO very tired

Traditionally this process has been termed “verb copying” since a new copy of the first verb has occurred between the direct object and *to*. Even if there is a verb “copied” in the portion before *to* in a *to* construction, it is the predicate after *to* that usually has the syntactic and semantic characteristics discussed. Observe the following.

(55) a. *ki² ts'ong⁴ ia⁴ m² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹?
 he sing or not sing song sing TO very sweet

b. *ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ ts'ong⁴ ia⁴ m² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹?
 he sing song sing or not sing TO very sweet

c. ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ ho³-t'ang¹ ia⁴ m² ho³-t'ang¹?
 he sing song sing TO sweet or not sweet
 ‘Does he sing very sweetly?’

(56) a. *ki² m² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
 he not sing song sing TO very sweet

b. *ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ m² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
 he sing song not sing TO very sweet

c. ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e¹ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ m² ho³-t'ang¹.
 he sing song sing TO very not sweet
 ‘He sings very harshly.’

(57) Q: ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ ho³-t'ang¹ ia⁴ m² ho³-t'ang¹?
 he sing song sing TO sweet or not sweet
 ‘Does he sing sweetly?’

A: a. *ts'ong⁴₁.
 sing

b. *ts'ong⁴₂.
 sing

c. ho³-t'ang¹.
 sweet
 ‘Sweetly.’

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Examples in (55), (56) and (57) show that it is the predicate after *to*, rather than the one before *to*, that can enter into a V-not-V question formation, have negative marker and serve as a short answer.

Tsao (1987c), Paris (1987), Chu (1983b) and Li & Thompson (1981:442-47) analyze the “verb-copying” phenomenon from the viewpoint of topic-comment construction.⁶ According to their analyses, the original verb has been deverbalized and the original verb and its object form a ‘frozen’ unit which behaves like some kind of a topic, whereas the “copied” verb is the full verb of the comment. Tsao (1987c:17-20) summarizes the general properties of a topic as follows:⁷

- (58) a. Topic invariably occupies the S initial position of the first sentence in a topic chain.
- b. Topic can optionally be separated from the rest of the sentence in which it overtly occurs by one of the four pause particles: *a* (*ya*), *ne*, *me* and *ba*.
- c. Topic is always definite or generic in reference.
- d. Topic is a discourse notion: it may, and often does, extend its semantic domain to more than one sentence.
- e. Topic is in control of the pronominalization or deletion of all the coreferential NPs in a topic chain.
- f. Topic, except in sentences where it is also subject, plays no role in such processes as reflexivization, passivization, Equi-NP deletion, and imperativization.

Examples can be given to show that the unit of the original verb and its object as a whole owns these properties. Examine the following.

- (59) a. ki^2 [$ts'ong^4$ ko^1-e^3] $ts'ong^4$ to^4 $tang^3$ $t'ai^4-san^1$, iu^4 $ts'ong^4$ to^4
he sing song sing TO very big voice also sing TO
 $tang^3$ $nan^2-t'ang^1$.
very hard hear
'He sings loudly and harshly.'

- b. ki² [ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³] o²/ho², ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ t'ai⁴-san¹, iu⁴
 he sing song o sing TO very big voice also
 ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ nan²-t'ang¹.
 sing TO very hard hear
 'same as (59a).'
- c. ki² [ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³] ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ t'ai⁴-san¹, —
 he sing song sing TO very big voice
 iu⁴ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ nan²-t'ang¹, — mo² n̄in² oi⁴ t'ang¹.
 also sing TO very hard hear no person want hear
 'He sings so loudly and harshly that nobody wants to hear.'

Example (59a) shows that the unit in brackets heads a topic chain of more than one comment clause; therefore, it owns properties in (58a) and (58d). Example (59b) shows that it can be separated from the rest of the sentences by pause particles, o² or ho². Sentence (59c) shows that it may be in control of the deletion of all the coreferential NPs in a topic chain. Except (58f), which is irrelevant in this particular case, the unit in brackets has almost the properties described in (58). Thus, the verb together with its object is some kind of a topic.

The treatment of the unit of the original predicate and its object as some kind of a topic finds further support from the fact that it can be promoted to the initial position, which is usually the position of a primary topic. Consider the following.

- (60) [ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³], ki² ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ t'ai⁴-san¹, —
 sing song he sing TO very big voice
 iu⁴ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ nan²-t'ang¹.
 alsosing TO very hard hear
 'same as (59a).'

Thus, it is highly plausible to treat the first verb together with its object as a topic. However, the analysis of Tsao and others that treats the "copied" verb as the main predicate seems to contradict their own analysis. Remember they will regard the predicate after *to* as the main verb, when a *to* construction does not have the first verb "copied", but when reduplication occurs, the "copied" verb in front of *to*, not the verb after *to* is treated as the main one of the comment. What is worse, Tsao and others may not recognize that in a reduplicated *to* sentence, it is still the predicate after *to* rather than the two predicates before *to* that shows the

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peculiar behaviors in negation, interrogation and occurrence in a short answer to a question, although Tsao (1987c:34-36) does point out that the verb and the direct object can be viewed as a theme and that the postverbal adverbial element can be taken as a focus, he does not apply these two notions to account for the “verb-copying” construction.

On the other hand, such inconsistencies as observed in the analysis of Tsao and others do not exist in our presupposition-focus analysis. That is, even though there are two predicates before *to* in the “verb-copying” *to* construction, since they both occur before *to*, they belong to the presupposed part of the sentence, while the predicate after *to* remains to be the focus. This naturally accounts for the fact that in such reduplicated sentences, V-not-V question formation or the negative marker still does not occur in the two predicates before *to* but will occur in the predicate after *to*, as shown in (55) and (56) above.

Besides, the presupposed part expressed by the portion before *to* remains constant under interrogation and negation. Examine the following.

- (61) a. ki^1 $ts'ong^4$ ko^1-e^3 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 $ho^3-t'ang^1$ ia^4 m^2 $ho^3-t'ang^1?$
 he sing song sing TO sweet or not sweet
 ‘Does he sing sweetly?’
- b. ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ ko^1-e^3 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 m^2 $ho^3-t'ang^1$.
 he sing song sing TO not sweet
 ‘He sings very harshly.’

The question in (61a) presupposes that ‘he sings a song’, which is indicated by the portion before *to* and questions the way he sings. The negation in (61b) also presupposes that ‘he sings a song’, and negates the gentleness of his singing a song.

Furthermore, topic and presupposition are closely related notions manifested at different levels. Presupposition often expresses a proposition which indicates that the information of the proposition is part of what the speaker assumes that the hearer already knows due to previous experience or previously shared information in the discourse. Topic, on the other hand, specifies what the speaker is going to talk about. Both a presupposition and a topic stand for the shared background information of the speaker. As Chu (1983a:17) claims that presupposition and topic are parallel concepts realized at different levels — presupposition pertains to a sentence or proposition, and topic to a discourse block. That is, just as presupposition is defined as a true fact to the speaker, a topic stands for a presupposed entity or event from

the linguistic or non-linguistic context assumed by the speaker.

Therefore, there should be possible overlapping between presupposition and topic. In fact, our presupposition-focus analysis does not exclude the analysis of topic-comment proposed by Tsao and others. Yet, as discussed, the topic-comment construction is not so crucial to the analysis of the *to* construction, which can be seen from the inconsistency of the analysis of Tsao and others. Besides, whether the first verb and its object form a topic or not is irrelevant to the explanation for the peculiar behavior exhibited by the predicate after *to*. Furthermore, the layers of topics vary, depending on the semantic relations between the topic and the comments. Observe the following examples.

- (62) a. ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ ko^1-e^3 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 $tang^3$ $t'ai^4-san^1$, $ia^4-m^2-ko^4$
 he sing song sing TO very big voice but
 ($ts'ong^4$ to^4) $tang^3$ $nan^2-t'ang^1$.
 sing TO very hard hear
 'He sings very loudly but very harshly.'

- b. ki^2 (o^2/ho^2), $ts'ong^4$ ko^1-e^3 (o^2/ho^2), $ts'ong^4$ to^4 (o^2/ho^2),
 he o ho sing song o ho sing TO o ho
 $tang^3$ $ho^3-t'ang^1$.
 very sweet
 'He sings very sweetly.'

Example (62a) shows that the layer of the topic can be ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ ko^1-e^3 or ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ ko^1-e^3 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 , depending on whether the elements in the brackets occur or not. Example (62b) shows that the pause particle can occur freely after ki^2 , ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ ko^1-e^3 , or ki^2 $ts'ong^4$ ko^2-e^3 $ts'ong^4$ to^4 , which are the possible topics for the *to* sentence. Thus, it is plausible that the portion before *to* can be treated as different layers of topics. But all the possible topics before *to* pertain to the presupposed part of the *to* construction. Our presupposition-focus analysis can actually not only incorporate the topic-comment approach proposed by Tsao and others, but further have a unified explanation to the peculiarity of the *to* construction in Hakka.

One question that remains to be accounted for in our analysis is why the original verb needs to be "copied" within the domain of a presupposition. Let us first examine the following examples.

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- (63) a. *ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he sing song TO very sweet
- b. ki² ts'ong⁴ ko¹-e³ ts'ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ ho³-t'ang¹.
he sing song sing TO very sweet
'He sings very sweetly.'
- (64) a. *ki² t'uk⁴-su¹ to⁴ tang³ k'oi⁴.
he read book TO very tired
- b. ki² t'uk⁶-su¹ t'uk⁶ to⁴ tang³ k'oi⁴.
he read book read TO very tired
'He read and thus felt very tired.'

Examples in (63) and (64) show that *to* cannot come immediately after the object; rather, it has to be attached to a predicate. As Hakka has no dummy verb such as *do* in English, reduplication of the original verb before *to* is the only alternative when the verb is transitive and followed by its own object in a *to* construction. It is thus quite reasonable why the verb before *to* has to be reduplicated within the domain of a presupposition in a *to* construction.

4. The Status of *To*

So far we have explored the syntactic and semantic characteristics of the two portions connected by *to* and have proposed that the relation between the two parts is that of presupposition and focus. One question needs to be investigated is the status of *to*. *To* serves to link up the two predicates in a *to* sentence, in which the second part may denote a description or a result. Observe the following.

- (65) a. ki² tseu³ (to⁴) tang³ kiak⁵. (descriptive)
he run TO very fast
'He runs very fast.'
- b. ki² tseu³ to⁴/* ϕ tang³ t'iam³. (resultative)
he run TO very tired
'He ran and thus felt very tired.'

Examples in (65) show that *to* can be optional when the part after *to* denotes a description, while *to* is obligatory when what follows it denotes a result.

Yet, this is not always the case. Sometimes, we cannot clearly distinguish whether the portion after *to* expresses a description or a result. In examples (66a) and (66b), the (i) translation reflects the descriptive interpretation, while the (ii) translation reflects the resultative interpretation. *To* has to appear when either description or result can be denoted by the predicate after *to*. Examine the following.

- (66) a. ki² kau³ to⁴ tang³ t'iong⁴.
he play TO very happy
'(i) He played very happily.'
'(ii) He played to the point of being happy.'
- b. ki² sia³ to⁴ tang³ ts'in¹-ts'u³.
he write TO very clear
'(i) He wrote very clearly.'
'(ii) What he wrote was very clear.'

Nevertheless, the (ii) translation is usually the preferred reading in the examples in (66), although both seem to be acceptable. This is due to the fact that a description in Hakka may be expressed in two ways: one is to place a descriptive expression after a verb without the appearance of *to*, like the example shown in (65a); the other is to have the modifying descriptive expression in front of the verb, as shown in the following.

- (67) a. ki² kiak⁵-kiak⁵-ke³ tseu³.
he fast fast run
'He ran very fast.'
- b. ki² tiam¹-tiam¹-me³ sīt⁶.
he quietly eat
'He ate quietly.'

Therefore, when *to* is obligatory in a *to* sentence, the resultative meaning is often denoted; when *to* is optional, the descriptive meaning is denoted.

Besides, *to* cannot come immediately after the direct object or the complement of the predicate before *to*. In this case, the first verb has to be "copied" in front

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of *to*. In other words, *to* has to be attached to a predicate; otherwise the sentence will become ill-formed, as shown in (68).

- (68) a. ki² sia³- si⁴ sia³ to⁴ tang³ ts'in¹-ts'u³.
 he write character write TO very clear
 'What he wrote was very clear.'
- b. *ki² sia³- si⁴ to⁴ tang³ ts'in¹-ts'u³.
 he write character TO very clear

Furthermore, the predicate before *to* represents a presupposition while the predicate after *to* represents the focus, as was discussed above. Therefore, we speculate that *to* behaves like a presupposition particle, which will make the portion before it as the presupposition of a *to* construction. But *to* has to be attached to the predicate before it. In other words, *to* should pertain to the portion before it rather than to the portion after it. This speculation can be supported by one piece of evidence. In some discourse contexts, *to* may appear even though the predicate after it is not explicitly expressed. (cf. Mei, 1978a:525) Examine the following.

- (69) ki'an⁴ ki² si⁶ to⁴...!
 look he eat TO
 'Look at the result of his eating!'

Sentence in (69) can be seen as an omission of the construction [k'an⁴ ki² si⁶ to⁴ ADVP]. Because of *to*, we can infer that the omitted part of the sentence should be a predicate expressing a result even if this is not explicitly expressed.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed the peculiar syntactic and semantic characteristics of the *to* construction in Hakka. We have also reviewed two recent treatments of the corresponding *de* construction in Mandarin and find that neither approach may account for our Hakka data adequately. Instead, we propose that the syntactic level and the discourse level should be distinguished and that the Hakka *to* construction will be more appropriately analyzed from the discourse point of view.

Moreover, we have argued that what is crucially involved in a *to* construction

is the presupposition-focus structure rather than the identification of the main verb. We have further discussed that the predicate before *to* is the presupposition since it usually cannot be negated and questioned and it remains constant under negation and interrogation. The different behavior of the two predicates in answering a question as well as the necessity for the predicate after *to* to be intensified also supports the argument that the predicate before *to* is the presupposed part whereas the one after *to* is the focused part.

Furthermore, we have argued that the presupposition-focus relation can have a unified analysis for the *to* construction, especially for the “verb-copying” *to* construction, and that our presupposition-focus analysis can subsume the topic-comment approach proposed by Tsao and others. We have also pointed out that the reason for the original verb to be “copied” within the domain of a presupposition is due to the occurrence of *to*.

Finally, we have discussed the status of *to* and have argued that *to* is a presupposition particle, which indicates that the portion before it is the presupposed part of a *to* sentence. We have further proposed that *to* as a presupposition particle has to be attached to the predicate before it, and thus should pertain to the portion before it.

NOTES

1. Jang's (1987) Chapter Three, in an attempt to study the complementation construction in Hakka, classifies Hakka complements into five types: descriptive complements, resultative complements, directional complements, complements of extent and verb particle complements. Then she discusses some syntactic and semantic characteristics of each type. However, she makes no distinction between verb-complement construction vs. verb-complement compounds, nor does she further investigate the characteristics and account for the variations among those types. Her study does not help account for the peculiar characteristics exhibited by the *to* construction.
2. They discuss almost the same phenomena of the *de* construction, although they differ in the terminology of this construction. Chu (1983b) calls it the verb complement construction; Li & Thompson (1981), the complex stative construction; Huang & Mangione (1985), the extent adverbial construction. Paris (1987) and Tsao (1987c) mainly focus on the discussion of verb copying phenomena of this construction.
3. Huang & Mangione (1985) treat the *de* construction in terms of lexical functional grammar. We will not go into the details of their discussion, although they also argue for V2 as the main predicate under their framework.
4. Since we are not concerned about the framework of GB theory, we will not discuss

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in details Huang C-T James' analysis of the *de* construction in this paper. See Huang, C-T James (1988) for further reference.

5. As Levison (1983:186-98) points out, a presupposition is defeasible, i.e., a presupposition is liable to evaporate in certain contexts. Examine the following example.
 (a) (i) ki² mo² ts' ong⁴ to⁴ tang³ t' ai⁴-sang',
 he no sing To very big voice
 (ii) in²-vi⁴ ki² kim²-pun³ tsu⁴ mo² ts'ong⁴.
 for he basic then no sing
 'He hasn't sung very loudly because he hasn't
 sung at all.'
 The (i) part of example (a) presupposes that 'he has sung something', but negates the volume of his singing. Nevertheless, in the (ii) part of (a), the presupposition is cancelled because the portion in (ii) indicates that 'he hasn't sung at all'.
6. In addition to the approaches proposed by Tsao and others, Mei (1988) treats the verb-copying phenomenon of the *de* construction in Mandarin in terms of Case Theory. Specifically, he views the first clause of the *de* construction as the matrix and *de* as a complementizer introducing the following complement clause. See Mei (1988) for further reference.
7. Li & Thompson (1976), Lu (1983), Chu (1983a) and Tsao (1978) have investigated the properties of a Chinese topic respectively. See their discussion for reference.

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