

# Definiteness of Object in the Ba Construction

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In this talk, I will discuss the definiteness of Object which is a component of the Ba Construction (roughly speaking, a kind of expression with the Object in front of the Main Predicate) in Mandarin Chinese. Generally, post-Ba Object is known as “definite” or “generic” (Li & Thompson 1989: 465). As to definiteness, I will outline the various syntactic representations of definiteness including both the overt (definiteness consistent in semantic meaning and syntactic form) and the covert (not explicitly definite in relation to syntactic form but still definite by nature). In order to shed light on definiteness, I will further compare Object in the Ba Construction with that in the SVO canonical construction.

However, we can challenge the term definiteness since indefinite cases are also identified. So, the question is: Is every object in the Ba Construction definite? I intend to present explanations for these inconsistent representations of the Ba Object.

Furthermore, I will reflect on the behaviors of indefinite cases in the Ba Construction with particular attention to “One+CL+NP” and “CL+NP” (through examples) which share a number of similarities. Hence, I will address how their indefinite nature stays compatible with the constructional semantics. Meanwhile, these two forms are distinguished from each other in terms of usage and function, and thus they deserve respective investigation. Arguments for these issues are likely to involve integrated discourse and cognitive analyses.

## References

Charles N. Li, Sandra A. Thompson. (1989). *Mandarin Chinese: a functional reference grammar*. University of California, USA.