

- (59) tā { jiào } dí — bīng gēi shā LE
3sg enemy — soldier kill PFV/CRS

S/He was killed by the enemy soldier.

- (60) fángzi { ràng } tā gēi shāo LE
house 3sg burn PFV/CRS

The house was burned by him/her.

The occurrence of *gēi* in addition to *jiào/ràng* in a sentence having the form of (57) seems to strengthen the disposal function of the construction. It is, therefore, not surprising that this *gēi* may also occur in the *bǎ* construction for the same function (see chapter 15 on the *bǎ* construction):

- (61) tā bǎ nimen — de qiánchéng
3sg BA you:PL GEN future
gēi dānwù LE
ruin PFV/CRS

S/He ruined your future.

Notes

1. This chapter has benefited greatly from ideas found in Wang (1957), Chu (1973), and in (unpublished) lectures given by Stephen Wallace ('Adversative Passives') and Timothy Light ('Actively Passive').
2. Kiernan in turn credits these ideas to Paul Kratochvil. The comments in brackets have been added by us.
3. There isn't a grammatical category of instrument noun phrase in Mandarin. If a noun phrase is to denote an instrument, it is expressed grammatically as the direct object of the verb, *yòng* 'use', as in:

- (i) tā yòng yàoshi kāi mén
3sg use key open door

{ S/He opens doors with keys.
S/He uses keys to open doors. }

CHAPTER 17

Presentative Sentences

A *presentative sentence* performs the function of introducing into a discourse a noun phrase naming an entity. There are two ways in which this can happen: either the entity being introduced by this noun phrase can be claimed to exist or be located somewhere, as in (1), or it can be introduced by a verb of motion, as in (2):

- (1) chéng — lí yǒu gōngyuán
city — in exist park

There are parks in the city.

- (2) lái — le yí — ge kèrén
come — PFV one — CL guest

Here comes a guest.

In most languages of the world, the noun phrase naming the entity being presented in a presentative sentence is indefinite. It represents new information, information that the speaker assumes the hearer does not have at the time, and it typically occurs after the main verb of the presentative sentence. These two properties are true of the noun phrase being presented by the Mandarin presentative sentence as well: in fact, since sentence-initial position is the position for topics in Mandarin, and since noun phrases introduced for the first time into discourse cannot be topics (see chapter 4, section 4.1.1), it is clear why a presented noun phrase must follow the main verb of the presentative sentence. Let's consider in greater detail the two ways in which a noun phrase can be presented.