

16.1.2 Disposal

In addition to adversity, the *bèi* construction also expresses disposal in the same manner as the *bǎ* construction does (see chapter 15 on the *bǎ* construction). That is, the *bèi* sentence describes an event in which an entity or person is dealt with, handled, or manipulated in some way. This is why, just as with the *bǎ* construction, *bèi* is not found with verbs that do not signal disposal, even if they have adverse meaning. The following sentences are, thus, unacceptable:

- (35) *Lìsì bèi tā hèn — le
 Lisi BEI 3sg hate — PFV

(Lisi was hated by him/her.)

- (36) *tā bèi qì — le
 3sg BEI anger — PFV

(S/He was angered.)

- (37) *wǒ bèi tā tāoyàn — le
 I BEI 3sg be:sick:of — PFV

(S/He was sick of me.)

Since the *bèi* passive conveys the notion of disposal precisely as the *bǎ* construction does, our description of the disposal function of the *bǎ* constructions is applicable as well to the *bèi* passive, which, of course, has the added function of signaling adversity. We will therefore not repeat that description here. Instead, we will provide a brief summary and examples of the main points concerning the notion of disposal as they apply to the *bèi* construction. For the details, the reader is referred to chapter 15 on the *bǎ* construction.

(i) Just as with *bǎ*, the *bèi* construction allows the affected entity to be a noun phrase other than the direct object:

- (38) wǒ bèi tā bāng — le yī — zhī tuǐ
 I BEI 3sg tie — PFV one — CL leg

I had one leg tied up by him/her.

- b. *zhèi — běn xiǎoshuō bèi wǒ mǔqīn
 this — CL novel BEI I mother

xiě LE
 write PFV/CRS

Sentences (32)–(34) provide some more examples, similar to (31), in which the Mandarin equivalent of an English passive is a *shì* . . . *de* construction:

- (32) a. zhèi — ge fángzi shì Zhāngsān shèjì de
 this — CL house be Zhangsan design NOM

This house was designed by Zhangsan.

- b. *zhèi — ge fángzi bèi Zhāngsān shèjì LE
 this — CL house BEI Zhangsan design PFV/CRS

- (33) a. zhèi — ge zhèngcè shì tā tuījiàn de
 this — CL policy be 3sg recommend NOM

This policy was recommended by him/her.

- b. *zhèi — ge zhèngcè bèi tā tuījiàn LE
 this — CL policy BEI 3sg recommend PFV/CRS

- (34) a. nèi — fú huà shì tā huà de
 that — CL painting be 3sg paint NOM

That painting was painted by him.

- b. *nèi — fú huà bèi tā huà LE
 that — CL painting BEI 3sg paint PFV/CRS

The above examples illustrate that in Mandarin, it is the *shì* . . . *de* construction, not the *bèi* construction, which serves the function of placing the agent noun phrase in focus when the topic of the sentence is the direct object.