

A study on “youdian+X” construction

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Abstract

As an adverb of degree, “youdian” widely adopted in Modern Chinese is able to collocate with other words. This paper focuses on “youdian + X” construction, trying to figure out what types of words can act as “X” through linguistic corpus. According to our study, it has been found that as a degree adverb, “youdian” can collocate with positive abstract nouns to express an evaluation meaning. It can also collocate with predicate words and idioms with negative meaning to illustrate slight degree or deviation from the standard meaning. In changing, counter-expectation and other specific context, “youdian” can also collocate with predicate words with positive meaning. This paper examines focuses on the description of “X”.

Keywords

Youdian, adverbs of degree, negative meaning

1. Introduction

Eight Hundred Madarin Words (1980) written by Lv Shuxiang has pointed out that “有点 (Youdian)” (a little bit) refers to “low degree”. It is normally used in the negative context, such as “有点脏(youdian zang)/粗糙(cucao)”. Cheng Meizhen(1989), Ma Zhen(1989), Shen Jiaxuan(1999), Sun Zhihui(2008) have conducted studies on the collocations of “youdian” and “adjectives/verbs”. Their studies mainly focus on the sentiment of the adjectives and verbs. The conclusion states that “youdian” tends to collocate with negative and neutral adjectives, such as “有点累(youdian lei)/ 恶心(e’xin)/ 大(da)/ 高(gao)”. Some of the researchers have discussed the selectivity of verbs and the reason why “youdian” tends to collocate with negative adjectives. The previous studies stress on the collocation of “youdian” and negative predicates. The study concerning collocation of “youdian” and positive predicates and “NP” has barely looked into. Therefore, most of the present studies are fragmented and isolated analysis and description. Also the conclusion is

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vague and unsystematic. As a result, the main goals of this article are giving a systematic study on “youdian+X” construction, and dividing “X” into three categories: NP/AP/VP.

2. “youdian+NP” construction

There are two different kinds of “youdian+NP” in Chinese. The first one cannot collocate with “很(hen)/颇(po)”. Such as :*很有点水(hen youdian shui) *很有点粮食(hen youdian liangshi) *很有点事情(hen youdian shiqing) *很有点矛盾(hen youdian maodun). The second one can collocate with “hen/po”, like”很有点文化(Hen youdian wenhua)、很有点学问(hen youdian xuewen)、很有点知识(hen youdian zhiqi)、很有点才气(hen youdian caiqi)、很有点气魄(hen youdian qipo)、很有点见识(hen youdian jianshi). This article is going to discuss the second type.

2.1. “hen+youdian+NP” construction and the features of “NP”

We have conducted a preliminary investigation based on CCL and BCC corpus. 184 NPs which can enter “hen+youdian+NP” construction are categorized into several groups:

Type1: Inside and Outside Quality. 自信(Zixin)、勇气(Yongqi)、运气(Yunqi)、志气(Zhiqi)、才气(Caiqi)、福气(Fuqi)、名气(Mingqi)、骨气(Guqi)、书生气(Shushengqi)、灵气(Lingqi)、江湖气(Jianghuqi)、气质(Qizhi)、气派(Qipai)、气场(Qichang)、气魄(Qipo)、气概(Qigai)、气势(Qishi)、胆量(Danliang)、胆识(Danshi)、胆略(Danlve)、谋略(Moulve)、教养(Jiaoyang)、修养(Xiuyang)、内涵(Neihan)、绅士(Shenshi)、风采(Fengcai)、思想(Sixiang)、出息(Chuxi)、信心(Xinxin)、风度(Fengdu)、风范(Fengfan)、姿色(Zise)、档次(Dangci)、女人味(Nvrenwei)

Type2: Feature. 特色(Tese)、特点(Tedian)、心机(Xinji)、心计(Xinji)、韧劲(Renjin)、韧性(Renxing)、个性(Gexing)、耐性(Naixing)、党性(Dangxing)、原则性(Yuanzexing)、纪律性(Jilvxing)、组织性(Zuzhixing)、计划性(Jihuaxing)、代表性(Daibiaoxing)、典型性(Dianxingxing)、民族性(Minzuxing)、系统性(Xitongxing)、逻辑性(Luojixing)、普遍性(Pubianxing)、艺术性(Yishuxing)、可塑性(esuxing)、规律性(Guilvxing)、针对性(Zhenduxing)、启发性(Qifaxing)、煽动性(Shandongxing)、实力(Shili)、眼力(Yanli)、潜力(Qianli)、魅力(Meili)、魄力(Poli)、功力(Gongli)、威力(Weili)、势力(Shili)、创造力(Chuangzaoli)、竞争力(Jingzhengli)、表现力(Biaoxianli)、感染力(Ganranli)、吸引力(Xiyinli)、号召力(Haozhaoli)、说服力(Shuofuli)、公信力(Gongxinli)、生命力(Shengmingli)、战斗力(Zhandouli)、想象力(Xiangxiangli)、爆发力(Baofali)、影响力(Yingxiangli)

Type3: Ability and Knowledge. 能力(Nengli)、才情(Caiqing)、才华(Caihua)、才艺(Caiyi)、才干(Caigan)、才学(Caixue)、才能(Caineng)、眼光(Yanguang)、口才(Koucai)、(Jishu)技术、手艺(Shouyi)、前途(Qiantu)、知识(Zhishi)、学问(Xuewen)、文化(Wenhua)、智慧(Zhahui)、主见(Zhujian)、远见(Yuanjian)、见地(Jiandi)、见识(Jianshi)、文采(Wencai)、(Benshi)本事、(Benling)本领、(Jiuliang)酒量、(Tounao)头脑、(Tianfu)天赋、(Shuizhun)水准、(Chengjiu)成就

Type4: Status. 背景(Beijing)、来头(Laitou)、来历(Laili)、面子(Mianzi)、地位(Diwei)、派头(Paitou)、分量(Fenliang)、身份(Shenfen)、声望(Shengwang)、威望(Weiwang)、名望(Mingwang)、名声(Mingsheng)

Type5: Effect and Value. 效果(Xiaoguo)、疗效(Liaoxiao)、价值(Jiazhi)、效率(Xiaolv)、成效(Chengxiao)

Type6: Temperament. 抱负(Baofu)、野心(Yexin)、耐心(Naixin)、雄心(Xiongxin)、决心(Juexin)、责任心(Zerenxin)、同情心(Tongqingxin)、自尊心(Zizunxin)、事业心(Shiyexin)

Type7: Moral Quality. 原则(Yuanze)、觉悟(Juewu)、信誉(Xinyu)、正义感(Zhengyigan)、责任感(Zerengan)

Type8: Psychological Feeling. 荣誉感(Rongyugan)、成就感(Chengjiugan)

Type9: Insights. 看法(Kanfa)、想法(Xiangfa)、见解(Jianjie)、办法(Banfa)、创意(Chuangyi)

Type10: Interest. 雅兴(Yaxing)、兴趣(Xingqu)、兴致(Xingzhi)、乐趣(Lequ)、情调(Qingdiao)

Type 11: Good Fortune. 口福(Koufu)、眼福(Yanfu)

Type12: Others. 激情(Jiqing)、知名度(Zhimingdu)、深度(Shendu)、难度(Nandu)、经验(Jingyan)、交情(Jiaoqing)、交情(Guanxi)、感情(Ganqing)、看头(Kantou)、道理(Daoli)、名堂(Mingtang)、作为(Zuowei)、食欲(Shiyu)、人缘(Renyuan)、好感(Haogan)、诗意(Shiyi)、研究(Yanjiu)、把握(Bawo)、意思(Yisi)、争议(Zhengyi)、手段(Shouduan)、诚意(Chengyi)、味道(Weidao)、问题(Wenti)、看点(Kandian)、分寸(Fencun)、门道(Mendao)、分量(Fenliang)

In terms of our observation, this kind of “NP” are all abstract nouns. Abstract nouns are not the result based on the understanding of tangible entity. Normally they reflect the summary of abstract items. So abstract nouns have a clear sense of quality meaning (Zhang Bojiang, Fang Mei 1996). Such kind of nouns don't have a direct relation with specific things and phenomena. What's more significant is that this kind of nouns can show the state, quality and value of the things. However, not all of the abstract NPs can enter this format, such as *很有点消息(hen youdian xiaoxi) *很有点标准(hen youdian biao zhun) *很有点空间(hen youdian kongjian). We have summarized some features of these NPs as follows:

a. *Most of the NPs which can enter “hen+youdian+NP” format have positive meaning.*

(1) 刘伟说, 每人有每人的活法, 自己对经商和从政都没有把握, 但在学校教书、读书、写书、做学问却感到很有点乐趣, 尽管有些清苦, 有些酸楚。

Liu Wei said that everyone had his own lifestyle and he wasn't sure about doing business or politics, but he felt it was interesting to teach, read and study in school though there was some sorrow and grief.

Only a few words have a neutral or negative meaning.”味道(Weidao)/问题(wenti)/心机(xinji)/心计(xinji)”

b. *NPs which can enter “hen+youdian+NP” format have a descriptive meaning.* Shi Chunhong(2001) has distinguished concerned semantic features from descriptive semantic features. Descriptive semantic features refer to the commentary content which has a function of describing and modifying nouns. It reveals the descriptive semantic features of nouns. Thus it is part of semantic feature that can indicate the properties of nouns, such as attributes, characteristics, relationships and other specific performances. The NPs that can enter “hen+youdian+NP” are a kind of description of people's and thing's attributes, characteristics, relationships. Most of the NPs are used to describe people. Only a few of

them are used to describe things. Also, very few of the NPs can be used to modify both people and things, such as “很有点知名度(hen youdian zhimingdu)”.

c. Besides, these NPs have degree meaning. No matter it is used to describe attributes or used to describe characteristics, these NPs can show the degree meaning. The level of degree can be reflected by 高(gao), 低(di), 大(da), 小(xiao), 深(shen), 浅(qian), 强(qiang), 弱(ruo), 一般(yiban), 突出(tuchu) and other aspects. The degree attribute of the NPs can be proved by the combination of degree adjectives and nouns.

In summary, all the NPs that can enter “henyoudian+NP” are abstract nouns. It has properties like [+positive attributes], [+description meaning], [+degree meaning].

2.2. Syntactic and Semantic differences between two different types of “hen+youdian+NP”

From the semantic point of view, the grammatical meaning of two different types of “hen+youdian+NP” are different too. The first type has two meanings: 1) Basic property rights and possessive relation, the possessor owns the things. 2) It represents objective existence. For example:

(2)现在那些乡下地方也就只有豪门世家和普通的小地主有点粮食和银子，可这些人还真不好动，因为这些都是宋金书的人了。(匪帅《泣风尘》)

Now only those wealthy families and little landowners have some money in the countryside. But those people are not easy to deal with, for they are adherents of Song Jinshu. (Fei Shuai 《Weep Dust》)

(3)他吃完一个，还想再拿，但是忽然停住了手，站起来走到缸前，朝里边一看，缸里还有点水。(徐淦生《悲情曹雪芹》)

He ate one and wanted more, but he suddenly stopped. He stood up, walked toward the vat and looked into it, and find there was some water. (Xu Gansheng 《sadness of Cao Xueqin》)

The second “youdian+NP” is used to describe the attributes of people and thing, which can highlight people’s and thing’s features. For example:

(4)正当各家拿起扫帚扫街时，那大门堂里出了一位颇有点风度的青年。(陆文夫《清高》)

When each family was cleaning the street, a gentle man walked out from the hall. (Lu Wenfu 《Lofty》)

As the two types of “youdian+NP” have different grammatical meanings, they also have different performances in syntax. The first type of “youdian+X” are used to express possession and existence, it can only act as predicate part.

(5)他已经编好一个故事，这位很有礼貌的门房，并不想听，很快地接着道：“只可惜我们庄主今天恰巧有点事，一定要赶到城里去。”(古龙《圆月弯刀》)

He has made up a story, but the polite concierge doesn’t want to listen to, he said: “Unfortunately our lord has something to deal with today, so he must go to the downtown”. (Gu Long 《Full Moon Scimitar》)

The second type can highlight people and thing’s attribute and state. In syntax, it can act as predicate and attributive adjunct.

(6)金秀说：“金枝，我知道你爱逗，可你也得有点分寸。(陈建功《皇城根》)

Jin Xiu said:” Jin Zhi, I know you like joking, but you need to balance.” (Chen Jianguo 《Huangchenggen》)

(7)每一个有点知识的人都应当挺起胸来，担当这个重任。(老舍《四世同堂》)

Every knowledgeable man should stand up and take this responsibility. (Lao She 《Four Generations》)

In summary, we’ve figured out that they are two different types of “youdian+NP” in Chinese. The first structure cannot be modified by “hen” or “po”. Normally it acts as predicate part in sentences. From semantic point of view, it can express possession and existence meaning. The second structure can be modified by “hen” and “po”. Most of the NPs are abstract, they have features like [+positive attribute], [+description meaning], [+degree meaning]. It can act as predicate and attribute adjunct in sentences. Semantically, it is a kind of description of people and thing’s attribute, and it can highlight people and thing’s features.

3. “youdian+AP” construction

3.1. Grammatical meaning of “youdian+AP”

“youdian+AP” has two different types of grammatical meaning: Low degree and minor deviation from the standard.

Low degree: the collocation of adverbs of degree and adjectives is one of the most common collocation types in Chinese. When “youdian” collocates with adjectives, it limits the property of adjective. Most of the “youdian+AP” are used to express this meaning.

(8)他的左腿在战场上受过伤，所以走路微微有点瘸，这使他经常缓缓而行，更显得老练稳重。(老舍《西望长安》)

His left leg was injured in the war, so he walked a little lame, which made him walk slowly and seem more experienced and steady. (Lao She 《watching Chang’an towards west》)

Deviation from standard: In some context, “youdian+AP” has the meaning of deviation from the standard.

(9)施南生解释道：“她年纪有点大。”(李可《杜拉拉升职记》)

Shi Nansheng explained: “She is a little bit old.” (Li Ke 《the promotion story of Du Lala》)

It is necessary to point out that metric adjectives are often used to express deviation from the standard.

有点大/小 有点深/浅 有点高/低/矮 有点快/慢

Youdian da/xiao youdian shen/qian youdian gao/di/ai youdian
man/man

It is because that metric adjectives are used to measure things. During the measuring process, people tend to compare the objectives with existing standard. In comparatively comparison, it is very easy to generate deviation.

3.2. The syntactic function of “youdian+AP”

The syntactic functions of “youdian+AP” are very abundant. It can act as predicate and adverbial part. Sometimes, it can also act as objective, attribute and complement in the sentence.

(10)那天她和我跳舞的时候，我眼睛时不时往下溜，发现事情并不像别人说的那样，也许因为我和她长着一样的眼睛，也许是因为我的年龄比她小三岁，我有点茫然。(苏童《桑园留念》)

That day when she was dancing with me, my eyes moved down and found that things were not like what others said. Maybe it was because I had the same eyes as hers, or because I was three years younger than her. I felt lost. (Su Tong 《Mulberry Picture》)

(11)这种新奇的有点神秘的生活使得她在慌乱和忧虑中却掺杂着某种程度的喜悦。(杨沫《青春之歌》)

This kind of novel and magic life made her feel some joy in the fluster and anxiety. (Yang Mo 《Song of Youth》)

(12)一家人都激动得失掉了控制，有点紧张地注视着兆鹏的举动。(陈忠实《白鹿原》)

The whole family was too excited to control themselves. They stared the behavior of Zhao Peng with tension. (Chen Zhongshi 《White Deer Plain》)

3.3. The sentiment of AP in “youdian+AP” structure

Normally, the AP in “youdian+AP” structure can be negative and neutral words, only few of them are positive words. Tian Hongmei (2006) has conducted statistical research on the semantic prosody of AP based on corpus. She found that APs with negative meaning account for 82%, APs with neutral meaning account for 12%, APs with positive meaning only account for 6%.

In general, “youdian” cannot collocate with positive adjectives. Such as “我有点高兴(wo youdian gaoxing)”, which sounds very odd, sometimes even unacceptable. However, in the real speech act, “youdian gaoxing” is quite normal. Thus, the key factor of deciding whether “youdian gaoxing” can be accepted depends on the semantic backgrounds. In the following section we take the collocation of “youdian” and “happy” as an example to describe the semantic background of “youdian gaoxing”.

A background-pave formula: Normally the semantic background of this collocation normally is that firstly there is a background description in previous context. Generally speaking, the background description can make the “person” have a feeling of pleasure. In the meantime, the degree of this feeling is at a low level. The background description paves the way for person’s feeling and makes person’s feeling naturally change to “youdian gaoxing”.

(13)武六一又把镇小学而不是西关小学的事情重说一遍，书记在此期间又和了两把，有点高兴，就说等下个月镇上班子开会，我专题研究一下这个事情。(李承鹏《寻人启事》)

Wu Liuyi repeated things about town primary school instead of Xiguan primary

school, during which the secretary won twice. With joy, he said he would study it on purpose in the meeting the next month. (Li Chengpeng 《Search Notice》)

The background description can be regarded as condition. The feeling of “person” can be seen as the result. The results appear when the condition arises. Therefore, the whole process of the change from the background description to the person’s feeling is very natural.

Change formula:

(14) 他听得家乡的人推崇他为百业的领袖，觉得有点高兴了。(矛盾《子夜》)

Hearing that people in his hometown elect him as the leader of Hundred Industries, he felt a little happy. (Mao Dun 《Midnight》)

Ma Zhen (1989) has pointed out that words with positive meaning can enter “youdian+adj(positive)+le” format. It means things have changed slightly. In (14), when he heard that he was respected as leader, his feeling changed from “calm” to “happy”. However, the degree is not very obvious, we use “youdian” to modify the degree.

Contrast formula: Generally speaking, this structure is used to express two totally different feelings and experiences. “youdian gaoxing” cannot show up independently, it has to be attached by “youdian+ negative words”.

Anti-expected formula: Generally, the semantic background of this structure normally indicates comparison. It means that the actual situation may be totally different to the phenomena under certain condition where it should appear. “youdian” often show up together with “反倒(fandao)” “反而(fan’er)” and other adverbs.

(15) 孙建冬有点狼狈地跟着众人笑道：“哎？费用的问题我们会后再沟通。”心里却对这个麻辣的玩笑感到有点高兴。(李可《杜拉拉升职记》)

Sun Jiandong laughed following the crowd, embarrassedly: “Oh, we would communicate about the expense.” But he felt a little happy on this joke. (Li Ke 《the promotion story of Du Lala》)

(16) 她没预计到茶杯会碰到玻璃上，可是及至玻璃被击碎，她反倒有点高兴，因为玻璃的声音是那么大，颇足以助她的声势。(老舍《四世同堂》)

She didn’t expect that the teacup would hit the glass. But she felt a little happy instead when the glass was broken, because the sound of it was loud enough to strengthen her power. (Lao She 《Four Generations Under One Roof》)

In summary, “youdian” and “gaoxing” can show together in multiple contexts. Such as anti-expected, changing, contrast and so on. The description and summary of the semantic background of “youdian gaoxing” is helpful to the study of the collocation of “youdian” and other positive words. However, many factors are involved in the collocation of words, thus, the semantic background of “youdian gaoxing” can be a reference for the collocation of “youdian” and other positive word, and it cannot be simply presumed.

4. “youdian+VP” construction

Base on “VP”, we’ve distinguished two different “youdian+VP” structures. The single formula is “youdian+verbs”. The VP in single formula are verbs. The attached formula is “youdian + verb phrases”. The VP in attached formula are verb phrases, including verb-object phrase, modification phrase, verb-complement phrase, and other kinds of phrases and common idioms.

4.1. Single formula: Verbs can collocate with "youdian" are very rare. From the semantic point of view. These verbs can be divided into several types:

Verbs that indicate people's psychological and mental activity: pa 怕/xihuan 喜欢 /shangxin 伤心/xianmu 羡慕/baoqian 抱歉/tongqing 同情/gandong 感动 /qinpei 钦佩 /mingbai 明白/了解 liaojie/juede 觉得. These verbs can also co-exist with other degree adverbs, such as: hen 很、 feichang 非常、 shaowei 稍微、 duoshao 多少.

(17)想到这，他心里有点怕，怕自己一不小心，影响任务的完成。(冯志《敌后武工队》)

Thinking of this, he was a little afraid of influencing the complement of the task due to accident. (Feng Zhi 《Dihou Wugongdui》)

Verbs indicate similarity: 像(xiang)、类似(leisi)、接近(jiejin) These verbs can co-exist with other degree adverbs.

(18)模样虽有点像，但完全没有昭君本人那样可爱。(《中华上下五千年》)

Though they are similar in appearance, she is not as cute as Wang Zhaojun herself. (《Five thousand years of China》)

Verbs indicate physiological state and physiological changes: 发烧(fashao) /发炎(fayan) /发红(fahong) /出血(chuxue) /晕(yun) / 饿(e) /颤抖(chandou) /咳嗽(kesou).

(19)他的脸有点发红，惭愧地说：“余静同志看问题比我全面，我同意她的意见。”

He said shamefully with a flushed face: "Xu Jing look at things more comprehending than me so I agree with her."

Shi verb-object formula: 失败(shibai)、失礼(shili)、失态(shitai)、失控(shikong)、失宠(shichong)、失策(shice)、失措(shicuo)、失衡(shiheng)、失灵(shilling)、失色(shies)、失声(shisheng)、失算(shisuan)、失职(shizhi). These words have negative meaning and they can show together with other adverbs of degree.

(20)另外，量子基金投资“全球星”卫星电话公司也有点失算。(2000年《人民日报》)

In addition, the quantum fund had a little miscalculation in investing "globalstar". (《People's Daily》2000)

Verbs that indicate changing: “变(bian)、变化(bianhua)、改变(gaibian)、下降(xiajiang)、改善(gaishan)、改进(gaijin)、提高(tigao)、消退(xiaotui)” etc.

(21)已经好久没学新的了，弹的热度没退，但学的热度已经有点消退。

Having not been studying new songs, the enthusiasm in playing doesn't disappear but the enthusiasm in learning somewhat subside.

Verbs that indicate attitude: these words are normally linked with people's attitude and comments, such as “健谈(jiantan)、健忘(jianwang)、流行(liuxing)、讲究(jiangjiu)、放纵(fangzong)、妥协(tuoxie)” ect.

(22)月骄有点健忘，什么事情她都记不起来，这也是久受虐待所造成的恶果。

Yue Jiao is a little forgetful, and she could remember nothing, which is the consequence of having been ill-treated for a long time.

According to the classification, we have summarized the semantic features of verbs:

Non-action meaning: Action verbs generally have external physical activity and it is perceptual. Typical action verbs are like“走(zou)、听(ting)、批评(piping)、宣传(xuanchuan)、学习(xuexi)”. Zhao Yuanren (1968) has divided transitive verbs into action

verbs and non-action verbs. Action verbs can collocate with “zhe” and have overlapping forms. However, non-action verbs don’t have this kind of features.

Character meaning: Generally speaking, adjectives can be used to express characters and features of things. Character is the most important semantic feature difference among adjectives, nouns and verbs. Non-action verbs are closer to adjectives in the Noun-Adjective-Verb continuum. Thus we are entitled to think the verbs we listed just now have common traits with adjectives. The verbs we listed have [+character]/[+attribute] semantic features. Like “醉(zui)、发烧(fashao)、失控(shikong)、失灵(shilling)、健忘(jianwang)、流行(liuxing)” etc.

Degree meaning: Adjectives have character meaning, so they can collocate with degree adverbs. Generally, the verbs which can collocate with “youdian” have degree meaning. When collocating with degree adverbs, it highlights the degree meaning. Most of the verbs which can collocate with “youdian” can collocate with other degree adverbs.

4.2. Attached formula of “youdian+VP”

The VPs in Attached formula are verb phrases. They can be verb-object phrases, modification phrases, verb-complement phrases and concurrent phrases based on their types.

A verb-object phrase: The phrases can be divided into three types:

①有点恨他(youdian hen ta)/有点害怕老师(youdian haipa laoshi)/有点糟蹋粮食(youdian zaota liangshi)/有点浪费时间(youdian langfeishijian)

②有点考验人(youdian kaoyan ren)/有点感兴趣(youdian ganxingqu)/有点摆架子(youdian baijiazi)/有点伤脑筋(youdian shangnaojin)/有点埋没人才(youdian maimo rencai)

③有点不是时候(youdian bushi shihou)/有点不是滋味(youdian bushi ziwei)

The verbs in type A can collocate with “youdian” separately such as “有点恨(youdian hen)”、“有点害怕(youdian haipa)”、“有点糟蹋(youdian zaota)”. Verbs in type B cannot collocate with “youdian” separately. It has to collocate with object firstly, then the “verb + object” can collocate with “youdian”.

The verb-object phrase in type B is more stable. And its meaning is integrated.

It’s more like an idiom. And you cannot insert other elements into this phrase. The verb-object phrase which can enter C type is limited. Normally it expresses negative comments.

(23)莫斯科田径世锦赛近在眼前，这伤来得有点不是时候，这样的大赛机会并不多。

Moscow Athletics World Championships is around the corner, and the injury doesn’t come at the right time because there are not too many opportunities like this.

Verb-complement formula: Normally, the verb-complement formula which can be modified by degree adverbs is “V de/bu C”. It has two forms:

①.“youdian+V 不C”. It means that the action’s result and tendency is a little hard to realize. Based on C’s type, “V bu C” can be divided into 3 categories.

a. “youdian+V+bu+V/Adj”, C normally is “起(qi)、住(zhu4)、准(zhun)、过(guo)、通(tong)、透(tou)、惯(guan)、了(le)、消(xiao)、明白(mingbai)、清楚(qingchu), such as: 惹不起(rebuqi)、买不起(maibuqi)、撑不住(chengbuzhu)、坐不住(zuobuzhu)、摸不准(mobuzhun)、信不过(xinbuguo)、想不通(xiangbutong)、看不透(kanbutou)、看不惯(kanbuguan)” etc.

(24)成王年小不大懂事,更闹不清是真是假,对这位辅助他的叔父也有点信不过。

Chengwang was too young to know any better or distinguish truth from falsehood, and distrusted his uncle who assisted him.

b. “youdian+V+bu+tendency verb”, such as 看不上(kanbushang)、做不来(zuobulai)、承受不来(chengshoubulai)、吃不下(chibuxia)、过意不去(guoyibuqu)、看不下去(kanbuxiaqu) etc. For instance:

(25)大赤包有点看不上东阳了,可是不好出头说话;她是所长,不能轻易发言。

Da Chibao a little looked down on Dongyang, but it was not a good idea to speak up; She is the director who cannot easily speak.

c. “youdian+V+bude” such as: 舍不得(shebude)、见不得(jianbude)、看不得(kanbude)、使不得(shibude)、了不得(liaobude)、认不得(renbude). For example:

(26)自下星期起,班治文就要送到别家太太去看管了,我有点舍不得。(梁凤仪《风云变》)

From the next month, Ban Zhiwen will be sent to other family. I hold some grudge. (Liang Fengyi 《Fengyunbian》)

②.“youdian+V+C+le”, which belongs to result complement, like“喝多了(he duo le)”、“喝高了(he gao le)”、“吃多了(ch iduo le)”、“亏大了(kui da le)” etc. For example:

(27)你的脸没有从前那样红润,也有点变长了。(欧阳山《三家巷》)

Your face has never been that red and it is also getting longer. (Ouyang Shan 《Sandjiaxiang》)

Modification phrases: Two kinds of modification phrases can collocate with “youdian”. They are negative adverb type modification phrase and prepositional phrase.

For Negative adverb type modification phrases, “bu” acts as adverbial. Auxiliary verbs and mental verbs are usually the center of the structure. {bu + auxiliary verbs} the entire structure can act as adverbial. It collocates with predicate part, constituting modification phrases. It can be modified by “youdian”.

Prepositional structure can act as adverbial. When combined with VP, the whole structure is prepositional type modification phrase. Such as“为他担心”、“替他惋惜”等。

This structure can collocate with “youdian”。如:

(28)这样拿桥桥和水生比,阳春又有点为桥桥抱不平。(蔡测海《远处的伐木声》)

Comparing Qiaoqiao and Shuisheng, Yangchun feels sorry for Qiaoqiao. (Cai Cehai 《Logging sound from a distance》)

Pivotal phrase: Jianyu phrase is made up of object phrase and predicate phrase. Based on the verbs, pivotal phrase can be divided into two types:

Cause type: The verb of this type normally is “让(rang)、使(shi)、令(ling)、叫(jiao)、招(zhao)、惹(re)” and so on. It doesn’t have a specific action meaning. Such as “让人难以置信(rang ren nanyi zhixin)”、“使人害怕(shi ren haipa)”、“令人伤感(ling ren shanggan)”、“令人不安(ling ren shanggan)”、“叫我感到难为情(jiao wo gandao nanweiqing)”、“招人喜爱(zhao ren xi’ai)”、“惹人非议(re ren feiyi)”。Cause type can collocate with “youdian”.

Order type: The verbs in Order type normally is “请(qing3)、派(pai)、托(tuo)、命令、嘱咐”等。It has specific action meaning. Order type cannot collocate with “youdian”. Normally we cannot say “*有点请你吃饭(youdian qing ni chifan)”、“*有点派你去(youdian pai ni qu)”、“*有点托你帮忙(youdian tuo ni bangmang)” etc.

“youdian+idiom”: Idiom is a very important part in Chinese vocabulary. “youdian” can collocate with some idioms like “猝不及防(cubujifang)、冠冕堂皇(guanmiantanghuang)、大材小用(dacaixiaoyong)、半信半疑(banxinbanyi)” and so on. Normally, “youdian” cannot collocate with positive idioms. We don’t say “*有点光明正大(youdian guangmingzhengda)”、“*有点安居乐业(youdian anjuleye)”、“*有点国泰民安(youdian guotaimin’an)”、“*有点百花齐放(youdian baihuaqifang)”等。

In summary, the VP in “youdian+VP” can be object phrase, modification phrase, verb-complement phrase, Jianyu phrase and idioms. The collocation of “youdian” and verb-complement phrase is the most ordinary type. Most of the VPs in attached structure is negative in semantics. It means that action cannot be achieved and action cannot reach the standard.

5. Conclusion

The study on “youdian” is an old problem. Many scholars have discussed this problem from different aspects. However, most of the researches concentrated on the collocation of “youdian” and predicate parts and the researches are neither systematic nor vague or fragmented. This paper takes “youdian+X” as studying goal, and conducts the research based on large-scale corpus. The main conclusions are as follow:

When X is a noun, X is normally abstract and it has [+positive attribute], [+description meaning], [+degree meaning] semantic features, “youdian+Xnoun” normally is the description of people and thing’s features. It can highlight people and thing’s characters and properties. In syntax, it can act as attribute or predicate part.

When X is adjective, this structure has two grammatical meanings: light degree and deviation from the standard. When X is neutral word, the structure means deviation from the standard. From syntactic point of view, “youdian+Xxing” can act as predicate, adverbial, object, attribute and complement part. Normally X has negative meaning. In some special context like contrast and anti-expected context, Xxing can be positive.

“youdian” can collocate with 6 types of verbs. The verbs have [+non-action meaning], [+character meaning], [+degree meaning] semantic features. Phrases which can collocate with “youdian” have 4 types: Object phrase, modification phrase, verb-complement phrase and Jianyu phrase. Some verbs can collocate with “youdian” separately. Sometimes there must be some verbs collocating with object first, then the whole structure can combine with “youdian”.

For verb-complement phrases, “V+bu+C” format can collocate with “youdian” frequently. For Jianyu phrases, if the verb is “rang/jiao/ling” or other words which don’t have specific action meaning, the phrase cannot collocate with “youdian”. If the verb is “qing/pai/tuo” or other words that have specific action meaning, the phrase can collocate with “youdian”. At last, some negative idioms can also collocate with “youdian”.

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