

This talk proposes the role of deixis in four types of multi-verb sequences in English, the *V-to-V*, *V-Ving*, *V-and-V*, and *V-V* sequences. In this talk, the V1(first verb) slot is always a single verb and the V2 (second verb) slot can be either a single verb or a verb in a verb phrase. The V1 and V2 can be either intransitive or transitive. The notions ‘regularity’ and ‘irregularity’ play an important role in understanding the nature of multi-verb sequences. Many previous studies have treated only regular multi-verb sequences. The regular multi-verb sequence, as in (1), includes two verb phrases because of the existence of two verbs.

- (1) a. I like to put lots of ketchup on my fries.
- b. My father always enjoyed playing golf.
- c. You’ll have to wait and see what happens.
- d. He helped organize the party.

This means that the regular multi-verb sequence has a fully syntactic structure. In contrast, the previous studies have hardly treated irregular multi-verb sequences. This talk hypothesizes that the irregular multi-verb sequence, as in (2), does not include two verb phrases despite the existence of two verbs.

- (2) a. He went to see ‘Twelfth Night’.
- b. He went sobbing up the stairs.
- c. He went and bought thirty doughnuts.
- d. Go wash your hands.

This means that the irregular multi-verb sequence has a reduced structure. Many existing studies ignore the obvious fact that multi-verb sequences are divided into regular and irregular multi-verb sequences. This talk focuses on the characteristics of irregular multi-verb sequences.

Based on the *Collins Wordbanks Online* corpus, this talk shows that the V1s in irregular multi-verb sequences are limited to the deictic verbs *come* and *go*, plus for some cases *run*, *sit*, *stand*, *start*, *try*, and *up*. The most distinctive feature is that only the deictic verbs *come* and *go* can occur in all the four types of multi-verb sequences. This talk also shows that there are two constraints on irregular multi-verb sequences, the integrity constraint and the subject constraint. The integrity constraint is that no word can be inserted between the V1 and the word following the V1 in the irregular multi-verb sequence. The subject constraint is that the V1 and V2 in the irregular multi-verb sequence share the same subject. Viewing the integrity constraint from the opposite side, a word or more than one word can be inserted between the V1 and the word following the V1 in the regular multi-verb sequence. The subject constraint is not relevant to four types of multi-verb sequences in the regular multi-verb sequences. The two constraints reveal that ‘irregularities’ in the multi-verb sequences are, in fact, regular properties of the irregular multi-verb sequences. From the above discussion, it is fair to state that the deictic verbs *come* and *go* play a vital role in forming irregular multi-verb sequences. It is also reasonable to conclude that deixis is significantly related to irregular multi-verb sequences.