

The polysemous *liāh* 力 in Early Modern Southern Min and its contemporary fate

Anonymised

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1 Introduction

The character 力 *liāh* was used in Early Modern Southern Min¹ for multiple purposes. It not only retained its original meaning as a lexical verb, ‘to catch, to take, to seize’ (Lien 2002), but also developed alternative verb uses, and furthermore underwent grammaticalisation into a polysemous case marker. Productive as it was in the Ming dynasty, however, 力 *liāh* might well have suffered twists and turns with the vicissitude of Chinese dynasties, and is only used as a verb contemporarily, with only a few fossilised traces of grammatical morpheme. This paper aims to account for the main functions of 力 *liāh* in the Ming dynasty with typological analyses. In the first place, in Section 3, I will briefly discuss the etymology of 力 *liāh*; Section 4 describes the verb uses of 力 *liāh*. In Section 2, I will talk about the orthographic variants of this morpheme, 力 and 掠 in different versions of script plays. From Section 5 to Section 7, 力 *liāh* as a grammatical morpheme will be taken care of, before Section 8 comes up with the ambiguous constructions concerning this character. In Section 9, competing markers such as 共 and 甲 will be mentioned. Section 10 focuses on the contemporary uses of 力 *liāh* and the paper comes to a conclusion in Section 11 with a discussion.

2 Orthographic variants

The morpheme *liāh* has three orthographies in Ming and Qing dynasties, 力, 扞 and 掠.

力 is the only character used in the *Jiājìng* version of *Lì Jìng Jì* (1522-1566) and *The Classical theatre and art song of South Fukien* (van der Loon 1992) (dating from 1604, within the reign of 萬曆 *Wànli* (1572-1620) in the Ming dynasty), which indicates the Chôan-Chiu (泉州) origin of their authors. In contemporary Chôan-Chiu, 力 is pronounced *liāk* (Lín 1993), not sounding too far from *liāh*; we however have enough evidence to show that this contemporary pronunciation is irregular: in the historical Chôan-Chiu dictionary of *Hùyīn miàowù* (Hóng 1996), dating back to 1800, the colloquial pronunciation of 力 (represented as 掠) was under

¹c.f. The Southern Min spoken in the Ming Dynasty. The main resource we refer to is the 嘉靖 *Jiā Jìng* version of 荔鏡記 *Lì Jìng Jì*, which dates to the 16th century (Wú 2001a).

the rhyme class 京 *-iaⁿ*, indicating *liāh* or *liāⁿh*, without the velar coda.

扞 is found in *Arte de la lengua Chio Chiu* (Klöter 2009) (Chioⁿ-Chiu 漳州 dialect), with two glosses: ‘to catch, to hold’ as a verb and classifier of textiles. We are not sure if 扞 as a classifier is of the same origin of *liāh* in this paper, therefore it will not be discussed here.

With *Hüiyīn miàowù*, we know that 掠 was accepted by Chōan-Chiu people in 1800. However, the script play case must be studied separately. 掠 is the only character used in script plays of two periods: the reign of *Wànlì*, with 明萬曆刊荔枝記 *Míng Wànlì Kān Lìzhījì* (Wú 2001b), 蘇六娘 *Sūliùniáng* (Wú 2002a) and 金花女 *Jīnhuānǚ* (Wú 2002b); and the reign of 乾隆 *Qiánlóng* of the Qing dynasty, with 同窓琴書記 *Tóngchuāng Qínshū Jì* (Wú 2003). In other script plays including 清順治刊荔枝記 *Qīng Shùnzhì Kān Lìzhījì* (Wú 2001d), *Zhèng Qīng Dàoguāng Kān Lìzhījì* and 清光緒刊荔枝記 *Qīng Guāngxù Kān Lìzhījì* (Wú 2001c), 力 is overwhelmingly used, whereas 掠 is also occasionally found, with 2 instances each in *Shùnzhì*, *Dàoguāng* and *Guāngxù*.

The choice of 掠 to represent *liāh* shows that its users spoke a dialect in which 力 did (and probably still does) not sound similar to *liāh*. Such dialects are generally spoken in the Southern part of Southern Min speaking regions. It is presumably the Tiê-Chiu 潮州, as Wú (2001b) suggests in the preface. In Tiê-chiu, 力 is pronounced *lak⁵* and 掠 *lia²⁵* (Lín and 陳小楓 *Xiǎofēng Chén* 1996: 283, 293). Furthermore, apart from 看 *khò^a* ‘to look’, we notice the coexistence of 体 *thóⁱ* in these resources, which is the common word for ‘to look’ in modern Tiê-Chiu dialects².

Therefore, the versions with 掠 as *liāh* should be treated with caution that it might reveal dialectal variance in Early Modern Southern Min.

The figures below show the photocopies of 力 and 掠 in their original appearance.

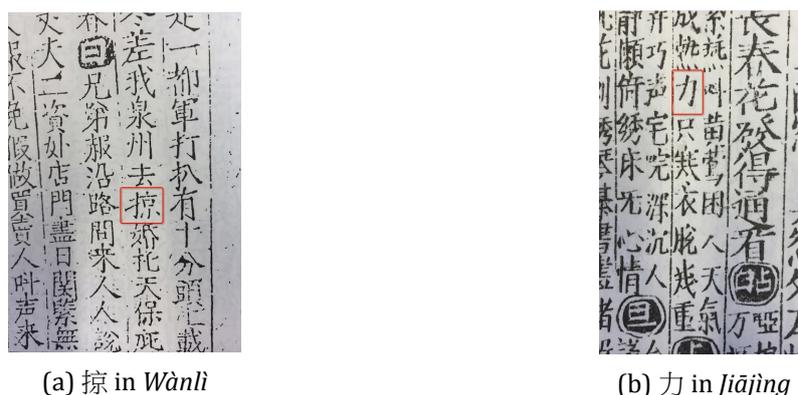


Figure 1: Examples of 力 and 掠 in script plays

²In *Jiājìng* 5.025, we also attest an example of 体 *thóⁱ*, which is said by Lim-Tōa, a character of Tiê-chiu origin

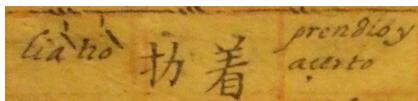


Figure 2: 拏 in *Arte de la lengua Chio Chiu*

3 Etymology of 力 *liāh*

As Lien (2002, 2010) suggests, the etymology of 力 *liāh* should be 拏, *nuò* in Mandarin. I would like to take this opportunity to add more comments on this etymology.

The original meaning of the character 拏, as in 說文 *Shuōwén* (100-121 AD), was ‘to press’³. The *Guǎngyùn* 廣韻 (1008 AD) has two entries for 拏, both with the meaning ‘to catch’ or ‘to hold’⁴. Duàn Yùcái (段玉裁), in his Commentaries on *Shuōwén*, underlines that the meaning ‘to catch, to hold’ is recent⁵. Combined with the *Guǎngyùn* evidence, it is clear that the meaning of 拏 had already shifted to ‘to catch, to hold’ before the Ming Dynasty. Therefore, semantics-wise, the 拏 hypothesis is plausible.

Phonology-wise, *Guǎngyùn* gives two pronunciations of 拏: 女角切 (*ŋæwk*) and 女白切 (*ŋæk*). The two pronunciations in Middle Chinese have several different reflexes in Modern Southern Min. As for 女角切, we would expect **lōh* in Modern Southern Min, which does not seem to be the right paraphrase; on the other hand, in the case of 女白切, we would well expect *liāh* as a regular correspondence, as unrounded rhymes in the 梗 *gěng* rhyme class, regardless of the rhyme grade, appear as *-iah* in Modern Southern Min (Lo 1930).

The Eastern Min cognate of *liāh* is *nie?* (Fúzhōu dialect, Chén and 李如龍 Lǐ Rúlóng 1991: 116). The correspondence Eastern *-ie?* :: Southern *-iah* traces back to Proto-Min **-iak*, which matches perfectly the Middle Chinese unrounded 梗 *gěng* rhymes (Norman 1981: 70). The *n*-onset of Eastern Min also indicates that the etymology cannot be 掠, another candidate, whose onset comes from Proto-Min **l-*.

Summing up all the evidence above, 拏 ‘to press, to hold, to catch’ seems to be the best candidate for the etymology of 力 *liāh*.

4 Verb uses

The original meaning of *liāh*, ‘to catch, to hold’, is attested in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, examples are shown below:

- (1) a. 你是乜人卜力阮
lí sī mīh lâng beh liāh góan
 2SG be what man want catch 1PL

³按也，從手弱聲 *àn yě, cóng shǒu ruò shēng* ‘To press, its meaning follows the ‘hand’ part (手) and its pronunciation follows the ‘weak’ part (弱).’

⁴持也 *chí yě* ‘to hold’; 捉拏又正也 *zhuō nuò yòu zhèng yě* ‘to catch, or to straighten’

⁵拏猶捉也。此今義、非古義也。 *nuò yóu zhuō yě. cǐ jīnyì, fēi gǔyì yě.* 拏 means to catch. This is a recent meaning, not an archaic one.

Want to arrest me? Who are you?⁶ (嘉靖 43.013)

- b. 亞娘使-小七天邊去力鳥都著去
a.niû sái-sió.chhit thiⁿ.piⁿ k^hi liāh chiáu to' tiōh k^hi
mistress CAUS-sio.chhit edge.of.sky go catch bird as.well must go
Mistress, I will do it even if you want me (Sió-chhit) to go beyond the horizon to
catch a bird. (光緒 39.022)
- c. 伊力荔枝便搥-落-來
i liāh nāi.chi piān taⁿ-lōh-lāi
3SG seize lychee CONJ throw-downwards-come
She took a lychee and threw it down. (順治 7.111)

The structure of example 1c is similar to the transitive constructions that we are going to talk about in Section 5, in which *liāh* will be analysed as an object marker. However, in this example, the conjunction 便 *piān*, marking the succession of two events, indicates that *liāh* should be the predicate of the first event.

Other verb uses are illustrated in 2.

- (2) a. 掠我不-值半文錢
liāh góa m̄-tāt pòⁿ.būn.chiⁿ
consider 1SG NEG-worthy half.a.penny
She thought that I was not worth half a penny. (金花女 迫姑掌羊)
- b. 任伊有千-軍共万-馬,我力一片-忠心
jīm i ū chhian-kun kāng bān-má góa liāh
no.matter 3SG have thousand-army and ten.thousand-horse 1SG have
it-p^hjàn-tiong.sim
one-CL-loyalty
I do not care how powerful an army he has, I have all my loyalty. (絃管 滿天春 下)
- c. 力阮情迷
liāh góan chêng-bê
CAUS 1SG be.passionate
That makes me passionate. (絃管 滿天春 下)

In 2a (written as 掠), *liāh* takes the meaning of a perception verb, 'to consider as'; 2b is an antithetical pair of clauses, with 有 *ū* 'to have' in the first clause corresponding to our 力 *liāh*

⁶In this case, 阮 *góan* '1PL' is in its singular use.

in the second. These two verbs should have similar meanings given the situation, therefore, *liāh* in this case has less of an action verb meaning, and more of a stative one: ‘to possess, to have’; In 2c, *liāh* appears as a causative verb, ‘to cause to do’.

5 Transitive object

In Southern Min of the Ming Dynasty, *liāh* has already developed into a grammatical word, with the first function of *liāh* to be noticed being the object marker of transitive constructions.

liāh occurs formally in the following syntactic constructions as an object marker (see also Lien 2010: 46):

- (3) 1. Monotransitive constructions
- (a) *liāh* + NP + V
 力-媒姨打
liāh-bôe.î *phah*
 LIAH-match-maker hit
 hit the match maker
- (b) *liāh* + NP + V + resultative/phase compound
 力-只-門掩-上
liāh-chit-mîg *ám-siōng*
 LIAH-DEM-door shut-up
 shut the door up
2. Ditransitive constructions
- (a) *liāh* + NP₁ + V + (resultative/phase compound) + NP₁
 力-荔枝手帕獻乞-我
liāh-nāi.chi.chhiú.phè *hiàn khit-góa*
 LIAH-handkerchief.with.lychee give DAT-1SG
 give me the handkerchief with lychee inside

As an object marker, *liāh* is deeply grammaticalised with no room for an alternative verbal analysis. First, contrary to a real verb, *liāh* is never attested with a TAM marker (I use the asterisk symbol “*” to indicate that we do not find this sequence of constituents):

- (4) a. 力-玉盞打-破-除
liāh-giōk.chóaⁿ phah-phò-tú
 OBJ-jade.cup hit-break-PFV
 He broke the jade cup. (嘉靖 18.020)

- b. *力-除玉盞打-破
 **liāh-tû giōk.chóaⁿ phah-phò*
 OBJ-PFV jade.cup hit-break

Second, unlike a verb, *liāh* can never be formally negated. The negation of a *liāh* construction has always the negator on the main verb:

- (5) a. 力-阮不-做-人
liāh-góa m̄-chò-lâng
 OBJ-1SG NEG-do-man
 They don't take me as a human being. (絃管 滿天春 下)
- b. *不-力-阮做-人
 **m̄-liāh-góa chò-lâng*
 NEG-OBJ-1SG do-man

Thirdly, unlike many Sinitic languages (Chappell 2006), resumptive pronouns never occur with *liāh*. The prohibition of resumptive pronoun indicates that the marker itself is capable of taking on objects.

- (6) a. 子期死-後力-琴-不-彈
chí.kí sí-āu liāh-kîm-m̄-tôaⁿ
 Chi.Ki die-after PATIENT-chinese.zither-NEG-play
 After the death of Chi Ki, he never played the zither. (道光 27.016)
- b. *子期死-後力-琴-不-彈-伊
 **chí.kí sí-āu liāh-kîm-m̄-tôaⁿ-i*
 Chi.Ki die-after PATIENT-chinese.zither-NEG-play-3SG

The grammatical status of *liāh* is therefore not in doubt.

In the following subsections, I will first examine the referentiality of *liāh*-marked objects in 5.1, and the affectedness of the verbs available for *liāh* constructions from 5.2 to 5.3.

5.1 Referentiality and definiteness

Referentiality, as defined by Li and Thompson (1989), is the fact that a noun phrase is used to refer to an entity. This entity may be physical or conceptual, real or hypothetical, singular or plural. A referential noun phrase can be definite or indefinite.

Southern Min is overwhelmingly an SVO language. However, when the object marker is used, the object itself must be preposed. Such construction is often referred to as the 'disposal construction' in the Sinitic tradition, and a great deal of accounts have been put forward for Standard Mandarin and other Chinese dialects.

In Standard Mandarin, for instance, the disposal construction in 把 *bǎ* is used with strict semantic constraints. In her forthcoming chapter on differential object marking in Sinitic languages, Chappell (2014) observes that preverbal objects in Standard Mandarin must be referential and affected by a highly transitive predicate (which causes a change of state or a change of location).

In Early Modern Southern Min, disposal constructions exhibit a similar pattern concerning referentiality of the object. In many a case, the object is also marked by the definite marker 只 *chit*, as shown by the examples below:

- (7) a. 力-只-寒衣脫-幾重
liāh-chit-gôaⁿ-i thng-kú-i-tiông
 PATIENT-DEF-cold.clothes take.off-several-time
 I took off several layers of my winter clothes.
- b. 力-只-春來-留滯
liāh-chit-chhun lâi-lâu.tè
 PATIENT-DEF-spring come-let.stay
 To let this spring stay⁷.

Ten out of 62 examples of *liāh* as an object marker are attested with the definite marker 只 *chit*. In other examples, we find pronouns, person names and body parts, etc., which are most likely to be specific and referential.

Even those objects without any formal indication of referentiality can be proven to imply definite referentiality:

- (8) 故意力-鏡打-破
kò.ì liāh-kiàⁿ phah-phò
 deliberately PATIENT-mirror hit-break

You deliberately broke the mirror. (嘉靖 19.216)

In the episode from which example 8 is drawn, Tân-Saⁿ (陳三), who disguised himself as a mirror polisher, deliberately broke the mirror of Ngō-Niû (五娘), whom he had a crush on. In order to be able to see Ngō-Niû, he tried to frame the maidservant, Ek-Chhun (益春) with the breaking of the mirror. Driven mad, Ek-Chhun shouted at Tân-Saⁿ, “It’s you that were trifling with the expensive mirror and *it’s you that deliberately broke the mirror!*”

Given the situation, it is obvious that 鏡 *kiàⁿ*, even though unmarked, is actually referential to the expensive mirror owned by Ngō-Niû, and broken by Tân-Saⁿ. It represents old or given information.

Examples involving a noun phrase marked by *liāh* marked by the character 一 *chit* ‘one’ are rare, only 7 examples are found in all the five versions of Lì Jìng Jì:

⁷We will see in Section 8 that this example can also be interpreted as a causative construction, while it would better be understood as a disposal one, according to the context (c.f. Example 14a)

(9) 力-一-鼎打-破

liāh-chit-tiáⁿ phah-phòà
 PATIENT-one?-wok hit-break

He broke the wok. (順治 9.384)

To account for this irregularity, we have two hypotheses. First, these examples are all from the versions of the Qing dynasty, more than a hundred years later than the first version. It could be due to the evolution of the marker, for which the semantic constraints have become looser. Second, we suspect that the character — *chit* is a mistaken form for the homophonous definite marker 只 *chit*. We cannot determine which of the hypotheses to choose, but the rarity of — *chit* does not have a big enough impact on the general referential reading of the noun phrase marked with *liāh*, even if — *chit* is really an exception.

5.2 Affectedness Hierarchy

Before looking into the semantic roles of the objects and the verbs suitable for *liāh* constructions, it is worthwhile to introduce Tsunoda (1985)'s AFFECTEDNESS HIERARCHY which deals with transitive verb types. In this paper, we adapt a simplified version of the Hierarchy, presented in the following table:

Table 1: Affectedness Hierarchy

1		2	3	4	5	6	7
Direct effect on object		Perception	Pursuit	Knowledge	Feeling	Relationship	Ability
1a Resultative	1b Non-resultative						
打破 <i>phah.phòà</i> 'break'	打 <i>phah</i> 'hit'	看 <i>khòà</i> "look at'	等 <i>tán</i> 'wait'	記得 <i>ki.tit</i>	畏 <i>ù</i>	有 <i>ū</i> 'have'	看 <i>gâu</i> 'be good at'

In the hierarchy, the leftmost type of verb, having a direct affect on object, tends to have an argument that is most likely to be marked as patient (if the language in question does mark the patient). The degree of patient-likeness decreases as the hierarchy goes rightwards. Therefore, if we consider the Mandarin case, we can easily find that only the resultative verb (Type 1a), implying a change of state on the patient, is suitable for the disposal *bǎ* construction. In the following subsections, I will discuss the case of Early Modern Southern Min.

5.3 Patient

5.3.1 Proto-typical patient

Type 1a verbs (resultative verbs) in Earlier Southern Min often involve a second resultative verb such as 破 *phòà* 'break' or 上 *siōng* 'up'; others might not have any additional element, and can only be identified through semantic context.

We have already seen examples of the prototypical patient marked with *liāh* in 8 and 9 with the resultative transitive verb 打破 *phah phòà*.

More examples are provided in 10.

- (10) a. 且力-只-門掩-上
chhiá liāh-chit-mîg am-siōng
 CONJ PATIENT-DEM-door shut-up
 So I shut the door. (嘉靖 28.021)
- b. 元來三哥力-火點-光光只-處睏
gôan.lâi saⁿ-ko liāh-hóe tiám-kng.kng chit-chhù khùn
 turn.out Saⁿ-Ko PATIENT-fire kindle-bright DEM-place sleep
 It turns out that Saⁿ-Ko lit the candle and slept there. (嘉靖 29.023)
- c. 益春力-鋪陳收-起
ek-chhun liāh-pho'.tîn siu-khí
 Ek-Chhun PATIENT-bed.clothes pack-up
 Ek-Chhun, pack up the bed clothes. (道光 31.064)

5.3.2 Non-resultative patient

Type 1b verbs (non-resultative verbs) do not necessarily cause a change of state in the patient. Examples include:

- (11) a. 你力-媒姨打是乜道理
lí liāh-bôe.î phah sī mih tō.lí
 2SG N.R.PATIENT-match-maker hit be what reason
 Why did you hit the match maker? (嘉靖 14.254-55)
- b. 煩你力-書收
hōan lí liāh-chu siu
 please 2SG N.R.PATIENT-letter receive
 Please take this book. (嘉靖 25.225)
- c. 力-君來-攬
liāh-kun lâi-lám
 N.R.PATIENT-2SG come.embrace
 Let me embrace you. (嘉靖 48.088)

Such constructions are ungrammatical in Standard Mandarin (at least for the author), while well attested in Earlier Southern Min.

5.3.3 Ditransitive constructions

Ditransitive constructions can also be marked by *liāh*, illustrated by the sentences below:

- (12) a. 你力-荔枝手帕獻乞-我做-乜
lí liāh-nāi.chi.chhiú.phè hiàn khít-góa chò-mih
2SG PATIENT-handkerchief.with.lychee give DAT-1SG do-what
Why did you give me the handkerchief with the lychee inside? (道光 22.202)
- b. 力-拙-恩愛全頭共-伊細說
liā-choat-un.ài chôn.thâu kāng-i sè-seh
PATIENT-DEM-love from.the.beginning DAT-3SG carefully say
Tell her carefully about this love right from the beginning. (嘉靖 8.073)

5.3.4 Perception

The next category in the Hierarchy, Type 2, perception verbs, are available for *liāh* constructions. Examples are shown in 13. 13a and 13b illustrate the perception use with simple transitive verbs, and 13c is somewhat structurally ambiguous, in which 力 *liāh* can be understood as the predicate, or alternatively, a grammatical word marking the observed object, 有心 *iú.sim* 'care', while 做 *chòe* 'make' being the predicate. Following the latter analysis, the construction can be termed a *double-object perception construction*.

- (13) a. 力-我不-撇采
liāh-góa m̄-chhiu-chhái
PERCEPT-1SG NEG-take.notice
She ignores me. (順治 15.346)
- b. 且力-只-水影來照看
chhiá liāh-chit-chúí.iáⁿ lái chiò.k^hò^aⁿ
CONJ PERCEPT-DEM-reflection to look.at
Let me look at my own reflection in the water. (絃管 百花賽錦)
- c. 力-伊有心做無心
liāh-i iú.sim chòe bô.sim
PERCEPT-3SG care make heartlessness
To (mistakenly) regard his care as heartlessness. (嘉靖 18.010)

5.3.5 VO Constructions

liāh constructions, with an OV word order, can go back to their VO versions without changing the semantics (but not *vice versa*).

In Episode 24 of *Lì jìng jì*, in a moonlit night, Tân-Saⁿ went to Ngō-Niū's garden, but hesitated about going in. He started making noises, in the hope that Ngō-Niū would hear him. Ngō-Niū did hear the noise, and asked Ek-Chhun, her maidservant if someone was outside. Ek-Chhun thought it was just a cuckoo, and this caused Ngō-Niū to fall into melancholy: springtime was too short, and even a cuckoo sang sad songs about it. Ek-Chhun asked Ngō-Niū if she was able to let springtime stay, and Ngō-Niū felt powerless to help. The question, uttered by Ek-Chhun, is in 14a, with a *liāh* construction. What Ngō-Niū answered about it is in 14b, with the same meaning, but using the VO construction.

- (14) a. 啞娘今有乜計力-只-春來-留滯
a.niū taⁿ ū mih kè liāh-chit-chhun lâi-lâu.tè
 mistress now have what solution PATIENT-DEF-spring come-let.stay
 Mistress, have you got any idea how to let springtime stay? (嘉靖 24.088)
- b. 愛卜共-伊人留春想都無計
ài.beh kāng-i.lāng lâu chhun siúⁿ to' bô kè
 want BEN-3SG let.stay spring think even not.existent solution
 I want to let springtime stay, but I know it is impossible. (嘉靖 24.089)

Other VO constructions with Type 1 and 2 verbs are listed below.

- (15) a. 你偁年卜打破-阮-鏡
lí chai.ní bēh phah.phóa-góan-kiàⁿ
 2SG how.come want hit.break-1PL-mirror
 Why did you break my mirror? (嘉靖 19.282)
- b. 不-惜-福句卜打-人
m̄-sioh-hok koh bēh phah-lāng
 NEG-cherish-happiness still want hit-person
 You not only don't cherish your good luck, but also want to hit people. (順治 19.133)
- c. 看許-樓上娘仔揸-乜-落-來
khòan hit-lâu.sióng niū.á taⁿ-mih-lōh-lái
 look DEM-building-up girl throw-what-downwards-come
 See what the girl from upstairs threw down. (嘉靖 17.106)
- d. 請入-內食-些兒-茶飯

chhiáⁿ jīp-lāi chiāh-kóa.jī-tê.pāng
 please enter-inside eat-some-tea.food
 Please come in and have a meal. (嘉靖 14.203)

- e. 看日落在-天邊
khòaⁿ jīt.lōh tsāi-tīⁿ.piⁿ
 look sunset LOC-edge.of.sky
 Watching the sun setting down on the horizon. (嘉靖 4.206)

We can see that the referentiality constraint is not applicable for VO constructions, as 15b, 15c and 15d show.

liāh is never found with verb types lower than Type 2 in the Hierarchy, only VO constructions are permitted in these cases:

- (16) a. **Pursuit**
 須等-鳳凰來宿
su tán-hōng.hōng lâi siok
 must await-phoenix come dwell
 Must wait for a phoenix to come and live here. (嘉靖 26.061)
- b. **Knowledge**
 那畏後去祿-記得-小妹
nā ùi āu.kʰi bē-kì.tít-sió.mōe
 that be.afraid after NEG-remember-little.girl
 I'm afraid that you won't remember me. (嘉靖 23.044)
- c. **Feeling**
 又畏-伊-爹媽
iū ùi-i-tia.ma
 then be.afraid 3SG-parents
 But she is afraid of her parents. (嘉靖 28.065)
- d. **Possession**
 伊-娘有-一个-照身寶鏡
i-niū ū-chit.ê-chiò.sin.pó.kiàⁿ
 3SG-mistress have-one-expensive.mirror
 Her mistress has an expensive mirror. (嘉靖 18.096)
- e. **Ability**
 人客即是肴-說話

lâng-kheh chia.h.sī gâu-seh.ōe
 guest really be.good.at-talking
 You are really eloquent. (順治 9.094)

5.3.6 Interim summary

As an object marker, I have shown *liāh* is compatible with transitive verbs having a direct effect on object and perception verbs, which occupy the first and second slots of the Affectedness Hierarchy. See Table 2 for a better view of its distribution:

Table 2: *liāh* Constructions in Affectedness Hierarchy

1		2	3	4	5	6	7
Direct effect on object		Perception	Pursuit	Knowledge	Feeling	Relationship	Ability
1a Resultative	1b Non-resultative						
打破 <i>phah.phò</i> 'break'	打 <i>phah</i> 'hit'	看 <i>khò</i> 'look at'	等 <i>tán</i> 'wait'	記得 <i>ki.tit</i>	畏 <i>ù</i>	有 <i>ū</i> 'have'	看 <i>gâu</i> 'be good at'

6 Instrumental

Early Modern Southern Min also uses *liāh* to mark the instrument. This construction resembles a serial verb construction, and may be interpreted alternatively as a serial verb construction, as Lien (2002) suggests. See 17 for an example.

(17) 不免力-扇連-面-遮-除

m̄.bián liāh-siⁿ liān-bīn-chia-tû
 inevitably INSTR-fan whole-face-cover-PFV

She inevitably cover her face with a fan. (絃管 滿天春 上)

liāh not only marks real instruments, but is also a marker of instrumental noun phrases denoting means or manner, which are generally abstract nouns and cannot be held by the hand. This is illustrated in 18.

(18) a. 再力-金蓮步行進

chài liāh-kim.liān.pō hêng.chìn
 then INSTR-female.trotting.manner walk

And then, she walks in a female manner. (絃管 郭華買胭脂)

b. 又力-言語來-氣-阮

iū liāh-giân.gí lâi-khì-góan
 CONJ INSTR-speech to-irritate-1PL

And he irritated me with bad words. (絃管 深林邊、招商店)

c. 力-只-醜事相-侖譬

liāh-chit-chhiú.sū sio-lûn.phì

INSTR-DEM-scandal DETRAN-compare

To compare that with this scandal (絃管 蒙正冒雪歸窠)

As Givón (1995: 27) notices, noun phrases marked with instrumental *liāh* are *characteristically indefinite, non-referential and non-topical*, which is totally the reverse case of the patient marker *liāh*. Examples like 18c with the definite marker are not many.

In 19 below, we have an antithetical pair of sentences with the general instrumental marker 用 *èng*⁸ corresponding to *liāh* in the second. This example confirms the instrumental use of *liāh*.

(19) 莫-閑-苦痛枉奔波,莫-力-青春空煩惱

bōk-èng-khó'.thiàⁿ óng phun.pho bōk-liāh-chheng.chhun khang hôan.ló

PROH-INSTR-pain vainly toil PROH-INSTR-youth vainly worry

Stop toiling with pain in vain, don't waste away your bloom of youth with sadness. (同窓琴書記 仙伯遊春)

7 Summary of the functions

A summary of the functions of *liāh* is provided in Table 3⁹ below.

Table 3: Functions of *liāh* and their proportions

	Verb (to catch)	Verb (causative)	Verb (stative)	Verb (consider as)	Object (patient)	Object (Perception)	Instrument
JJ (98)	28/33 (28.6%/33.7%)	0/10 (0%/10.2%)	0	0	51/63 (52%/64.3%)	2/5 (2%/5.1%)	1/5 (1%/5.1%)
WL (48)	18/21 (37.5%/43.8%)	0/3 (0%/6.3%)	0	3/3 (0.1%/0.1%)	15/21 (31.3%/43.8%)	4/4 (8.3%/8.3%)	2/2 (4.1%/4.1%)
SZ (125)	43/49 (34.4%/39.2%)	1/13 (0.8%/10.4%)	0	0	56/74 (44.8%/59.2%)	2/2 (1.6%/1.6%)	4/6 (3.2%/4.8%)
DG (67)	10/13 (14.9%/19.4%)	0/10 (0%/14.9%)	0	0	36/51 (53.7%/76.1%)	4/4 (6%/6%)	2/5 (3%/7.5%)
GX (102)	40/47 (39.2%/46.1%)	0/11 (0%/10.8%)	0	0	36/56 (35.3%/54.9%)	4/5 (3.9%/4.9%)	1/5 (1%/4.9%)
JS (27)	2/2 (7.4%/7.4%)	0/1 (0%/3.7%)	0	9/9 (33.3%/33.3%)	12/13 (44.4%/48.2%)	1/1 (3.7%/3.7%)	1/1 (3.7%/3.7%)
TC (20)	1/1 (5.00%/5.00%)	0	0	1/1 (5%/5%)	15/15 (75%/75%)	2/2 (10%/10%)	1/1 (5%/5%)

The first five rows show the data of different versions of *Lì Jìng Jì* in their chronological order. The last three lines are those of the other resources, also chronologically ordered. The

⁸I accept Wú (2003: 19)'s reading that the character 閑 *èng* 'spare time' is mistaken and that 用 *èng* 'to use, INSTR' should be the right word

⁹The numerator indicates non-ambiguous counts of each function, and the denominator the total counts. The corresponding percentages are indicated within parentheses. Resource abbreviations: JJ: *Jiājìng* version of *Lì Jìng Jì*; WL: *Wànlì* version of *Lì Jìng Jì*; SZ: *Shùnzhì* version of *Lì Jìng Jì*; DG: *Dàoguāng* version of *Lì Jìng Jì*; GX: *Guāngxù* version of *Lì Jìng Jì*; JS: *Jīnhuānǚ* and *Sūliùniáng*; TC: *Tóngchuāng Qínshū Jì*. Total counts of *liāh* are parenthesised behind the names of the resources.

grey-coloured rows are texts using 掠 as *liāh*.

The data listed in the table above are not directly usable without the following precisions:

1. The sample size of *liāh* is relatively small for a detailed and significant statistic analysis. Resources with total *liāh* counts lower than 70 are to be treated with caution.
2. We are not including the data of [van der Loon \(1992\)](#), as in many cases, the characters are hardly recognisable or simply missing. However, examples will be cited when necessary.
3. Script plays with 掠 may show diactectal variance, which will be discussed later on. They are to be treated separately.

7.1 Summary of verb uses

Looking through the five versions of *Lì Jìng Jì*, we can see that the meaning ‘to catch, to hold’ is relatively stable, of around 30% to 40% (the *Dàoguāng* version, with lower than 20%, has however only 67 occurrences of *liāh*, which is hardly significant).

Most of the causative verbs are in ambiguous constructions (c.f. 8), we have only one instance of pure causative use, in [van der Loon \(1992\)](#) (see example 2c).

The stative meaning of *liāh* is extremely uncommon, only found in [van der Loon \(1992\)](#) (example 2b).

The distribution *liāh* meaning ‘to consider as’ (including the fossilised expression 掠做 *liāh.chò* ‘to consider as’), interestingly, is found to be limited to the script plays using 掠. This could indicate the early innovation of South-Western Southern Min, probably the Tiê-chiu dialect.

7.2 Summary of marker uses

From *Jiājìng* to *Guāngxù*, the patient marker use of *liāh* witnesses a slight decrease in frequency. The percentage of perception object use is low but stable, while the one in *Wànli* (another dialect) is higher than the other versions. Instrument use is not common, either, of around 5% in each version. Whether or not the phenomena observed here are related to the evolution of Southern Min will be discussed in Section 11.

8 Ambiguous constructions

Ambiguity may rise due to syntactic, semantic or pragmatic properties. Whereas all types of ambiguity are included in the statistics in Table 3, in this section, I will focus on the syntactic and semantic types. Four main classes of ambiguity will be accounted for, object marker vs causative verb, object marker vs instrumental marker, object marker vs verb ‘to catch’ and verb ‘to catch’ vs instrumental marker.

8.1 Object marker vs Causative Verb

The ambiguity between an object marker and a causative verb rises when the transitivity of the main verb can be interpreted in two ways. For instance, 閃 *siám* in 20a can be either transitive ‘to wrench’ or intransitive ‘to be wrenched’, which leads to two possible translations. 嫁 in 20b can be either ditransitive ‘to marry sb. to sb.’, or intransitive ‘be married to sb.’, the two readings both match the context semantically.

- (20) a. 力我-腰閃-一下
liāh góa-io siám-chit.ê
LIAH 1SG-waist wrench/be.wrenched-one.time
He wrenched my waist.
He caused my waist to be wrenched. (道光 10.015)
- b. 卜力仔嫁乞-林大
bēh liāh kiáⁿ kè khít-lîm.tōa
want LIAH daughter marry DAT-Lîm.Tōa
They want to marry their daughter to Lîm Tōa.
They want to make their daughter marry Lîm Tōa. (嘉靖 14.422)

8.2 Object marker vs Instrumental marker

As in a disposal construction, the object is preposed, it gives room to add another noun phrase as direct object behind the transitive verb, which creates a new OV construction. The original object, already fronted by the marker *liāh*, can be therefore considered demoted into an oblique function. As a result, the addition of the noun phrases 哀怨 *ai.òan* ‘melancholy’ in 21a and 就裏 *chiū.lí* ‘reason’ in 21b cause alternative readings in the examples below.

- (21) a. 力只-琵琶彈-出-哀怨
liāh chit-pí.pé tōaⁿ-chhut-ai.òan
LIAH DEM-pípa play-out-melancholy
(a) play the pípa to convey melancholy
(b) convey melancholy with the pípa (絃管 滿天春 上)
- b. 力只-恩愛從頭共-伊說-出拙-就裏
liāh chit-un.ài chēng.thâu kāng-i seh-chhut choat-chiū.lí
LIAH DEM-love from.the.beginning DAT-3SG say-out DEM-reason
(a) Tell her all about my love from the beginning.
(b) Tell her the reason right from the beginning through my love. (道光 22.067)

8.3 Object marker vs Verb ‘to catch’

This class of ambiguity depends on the semantic interpretation of the text, and is found in ditransitive constructions.

(22) 力我-三哥 送到官司

liāh góa-saⁿ.ko sàng kàu-goaⁿ.si
LIAH 1SG-third.brother send to-government.office

- (a) send my third brother to the government office
- (b) arrest my third brother and send him to the government office

The context of 22 allows the interpretation of ‘to catch’, we therefore cannot determine whether it is a real object marker or an action verb.

8.4 Verb ‘to catch’ vs Instrumental marker

The hesitation to choose between verb ‘to catch’ and instrumental marker is also caused by semantic properties, as 23 shows.

(23) 力只-小扇 撲流螢

liāh chit-si^o.siⁿ phok liū.êng
LIAH DEM-small.fan flick firefly

- (a) take a small fan to flick the fireflies
- (b) flick the fireflies with a small fan (絃管 滿天春 上)

Here, *liāh* can be interpreted either as a verb or an instrumental marker. This example is different from 17 in that the noun phrase following *liāh* is marked with definite article 只 *chit*, which makes it less likely to be a canonical instrumental argument (c.f. Givón 1995).

9 Competing markers

9.1 將 *chiong*

The marker 將 *chiong* can appear as an object marker as well as an instrumental marker in Early Modern Southern Min. Identical constructions of 將 and 力 are put together in 24, 25 (object marker) and 26 (instrumental marker), some of which come from the same texts.

According to (Lien 2002: 192), the noun phrase marked by 將 is more often than not inanimate, unlike the case of 力. We will see that the noun phrases marked by 將 enjoy a larger range than those marked by 力, as far as semantic roles are concerned.

(24) a. 不免將-這-鏡來-打-破

m̄.bián chiong-chiá-kiàⁿ lâi-phah-phò
inevitably PATIENT-DEM-mirror to-hit.break
Inevitably broke this mirror. (嘉靖 19.173)

b. 不免力-只-鏡來-打-破

m̄.bián liāh-chit-kiàⁿ lâi-phah-phò
inevitably PATIENT-DEM-mirror to-hit.break
Inevitably broke this mirror. (嘉靖 19.188)

(25) a. 將-只-禮聘送轉-還-伊

chiong-chit-lé.phèng sàng.tíg-hêng-i
PATIENT-DEM-betrothal.gift send.back-return-3SG
Send this betrothal gift back to him. (嘉靖 14.177)

b. 你力-只-禮聘送轉去-還-伊人

lí liāh-chit-lé.phèng sàng.tíg.khì-hêng-i.lâng
2SG PATIENT-DEM-betrothal.gift send.back-return-3PL
Send this betrothal gift back to them (嘉靖 14.109)

(26) a. 娘仔將-手帕包荔枝

niū.á chiong-chhiú.phè pau nāi.chi
girl INSTR-handkerchief wrap lychee
The girl wrapped the lychee with a handkerchief. (順治 26.053)

b. 伊力-手帕包荔枝掞-落-來

i liāh-chhiú.phè pau nāi.chi taⁿ-lōh-lâi
3SG INSTR-handkerchief wrap lychee throw-downwards-come
She wrapped the lychee with a handkerchief and threw it down. (嘉靖 18.055)

將 has also extended functions, such as marking the path in 27.

(27) 將-門踏入去

chiong-mâng tāh jīp khi
PATH-door step in go
Step inside the door. (光緒 34.037)

It is an analogy of the disposal construction, with 踏入門去 *tāh jīp mâng khi* (step-in-door-go) as the original construction. This example shows that 將 enjoyed looser usage constraints than 力.

9.2 甲 *kap* and 共 *kāng*

甲 *kap* and 共 *kāng* are worth mentioning as they are often found in disposal constructions in Modern Southern Min ((Lien 2002: 194-195)), although not quite so in the Ming dynasty.

Lien (2002) summarises the functions of 甲 *kap* and 共 *kāng* in *Lì Jìng Jì*.

In Southern Min of Ming and Qing dynasties, 甲 *kap* and 共 *kāng* generally marked animate objects, especially human objects.

共 *kāng* appears often with dative and ablative functions that mark goal (28a) and source (28b).

- (28) a. 待我共-阮-阿娘呷
thāi góa kāng-góan-a.niû tàⁿ
wait 1SG DAT-1SG-mistress say
Let me tell my mistress about it. (萬曆 06.024)
- b. 值人卜共-你-討恩
tī-lâng bēh kāng-lí-thó.un
who want SOURCE-2SG-ask.favour
Who wants to ask a favour from you? (嘉靖 22.280)

甲 *kap* can mark source (29a) and object (29b and 29c).

- (29) a. 甲-啞媽討一對-金花
kah-a.ma thó chit-tùi-kim.hoe
SOURCE-mother require one-pair-gold.flower
Ask the mother for a pair of flowers. (嘉靖 13.114)
- b. 甲-你-鏡打-破-除
kah-lí-kiàⁿ phah-phò-a-tú
PATIENT-2SG-mirror hit-break-PFV
He broke your mirror. (嘉靖 19.346)
- c. 甲-我來-賣-乞-人-飼
kah-góa lâi-bōe-khit-lâng-chhi
PATIENT-1SG to-sell-DAT-person-feed
They sold me to others. (嘉靖 13.050)

10 Contemporary use

Our contemporary data are mainly based on the database of National Tsinghua University, [台語文數位典藏](#), and online dictionaries. The examples include contemporary folklores and narratives and date from 1880 up until now.

The verbal meaning ‘to catch, to hold’ of *liāh* is by far the dominant use in Contemporary Southern Min, which represents over 90% of the occurrences by my estimate.

The meaning ‘to consider as’ is retained, being fossilised with 做 *chò* and other similar verbs: 掠做 *liāh.chò* ‘to consider as’, 掠準 *liāh.chún* ‘to believe firmly’, etc.

(30) 日本人有掠做像一款

jīt.pún.jîn ū liāh.chò chhiū chīt.khóan
Japanese have consider.as be.like same

Japanese people consider them as the same (pronunciation). (日本話e根底 (1896))

Surprisingly, *liāh* as an object marker is extremely rare in the contemporary language. Type 1a verbs of the Affectedness Hierarchy are never found with *liāh*, and I only found one example of Type 1 b verbs:

(31) 固執掠-我-罵 *nē* 做伊倒去

kò.chip liāh-góa-mā nē chòe i tó.khì
Obstinate N.R.PATIENT-1SG-scold CONJ make 3SG return

Obstinate scolded me and returned. (天路歷程2 (1897))

The original version, by John Bunyan, is “(but when they saw that they could not prevail), *Obstinate went railing back* (Bunyan 1684: Part I, Section I, 2.4)”, which shows that *liāh* in this case does mark the object. This example is probably amongst the last productive uses of *liāh* as an object marker.

A limited number of Type 2 verbs are in fossilised construction with *liāh*, as shown in 32.

(32) a. 你莫一直掠-我金金看啦

lí mài it.tīt liāh-góa kim.kim.khòan la
2SG PROH always PERCEPT-1SG stare PART
Stop staring at me!

b. 彼-陣仔毋就掠-臭頭仔做-皇帝囉啦呼

hit-chūn.a m̄ chiū liāh-chhàu.thâu.á chòe-hông.tè lo.la.ho
DEM-period NEG CONJ PERCEPT-ringworm.headed.child make-emperor PART

At that time, they took that ringworm headed guy as the emperor (彰化縣民間文學集十七)

Table 4 shows the contemporary usage of *liāh* in the Affectedness Hierarchy. We can clearly see that *liāh* as a marker moves rightwards to the very end of its old range of use. In the Ming dynasty, it could match verbs of both Type 1 and 2. Later on, it marked the objects of Type 1b and 2 verb and now it is restricted to Type 2 unproductively.

The gaps that it left in Contemporary Southern Min are filled with the generalisation of 甲. Although 甲 usually marked human objects in the Ming dynasty, but as Chappell et al. (2011: 39) pointed out, there is no longer any semantic constraints for this marker.

Table 4: Contemporary *liāh* Constructions

1		2	3	4	5	6	7
Direct effect on object		Perception	Pursuit	Knowledge	Feeling	Relationship	Ability
1a Resultative	1b Non-resultative						
打破 <i>phah.phòà</i> 'break'	打 <i>phah</i> 'hit'	看 <i>khòà</i> "look at"	等 <i>tán</i> 'wait'	記得 <i>ki.tit</i>	畏 <i>ùì</i>	有 <i>ū</i> 'have'	看 <i>gâu</i> 'be good at'

11 Discussion

11.1 The status of *liāh* in Southern Min

We have shown that *liāh* in Early Modern Southern was a polysemous case marker as well as a polysemous lexical verb, and that one function could be ambiguous with another. The coexistence of various functions and different types of ambiguity suggest that *liāh* was undergoing more than one grammaticalisation pathway at that time.

The polysemy and polyfunctionality of the morpheme in question, however, reflects several principles of grammaticalisation put forward by Hopper (1991). First, it is related to the LAYERING principle (Hopper 1991: 22), which states that the emergence of new grammaticalisation layers do not imply the loss of the older ones, which instead might occur in interaction with the new layers. In Early Modern Southern Min, *liāh* was undergoing different layers of grammaticalisation at the same time; second, the PERSISTENCE principle, referring to the fact that the grammaticalised morpheme might retain traces of its original lexical meaning. Persistence explains why we have ambiguous forms wavering between the original lexical verb and a case marker. Lord (1982: 287) observes the same phenomenon with *ke* 'to take/ACC' in Gã (Benue-Kwa, West Africa), which can be interpreted as a lexical verb 'to take' or an object marker.

The contemporary use of *liāh* is virtually restricted to its original verb meaning. Hopper (1991) talks about DIVERGENCE, which points out that while grammaticalisation, the original form may remain as an autonomous lexical element. In Southern Min, *liāh* never lost its original meaning, which moreover seems to be the most persistent one.

11.2 Fossilisation of *liāh*

The traces of the case marker use of *liāh* are all fossilised constructions with meanings similar to ‘to consider as’. Historical resources tell us that *liāh* with this meaning is restricted to the script plays that used 掠 to represent this morpheme, that is to say, dialects in which 力 did not sound like *liāh*. As I mentioned above, I suspect the dialect using 掠 in early script plays was Tiê-chiu, or at least a South-Western variant of Southern Min. Provisionally, we can call it the 掠 *lüè*-dialects, opposed to the 力 *lì*-dialects.

The fossilisation of *liāh* clearly started with the *lüè*-dialects, more precisely, with the perception use of *liāh*. Of all 7 instances of perception use found in the *lüè*-dialects, 6 imply the meaning of ‘to consider as’ together with the main verb. All 13 instances of lexical use meaning ‘to consider as’ are from the *lüè*-dialects, with two of them combined with 做 *chò* ‘to do’.

Today, *liāh* alone cannot have the meaning ‘to consider as’, only 掠...做 *liāh... chò* and 掠做 *liāh.chò* (with synonyms) are grammatical.

The fossilisation of *liāh* must have moved northwards during the following four centuries. It expanded to the entire Southern Min speaking region.

11.3 *Guāngxù* and Contemporary Southern Min

Although with a decreasing tendency, the *Guāngxù* (1875-1908) version of *Lì Jìng Jì* still contains the productive use of *liāh* as a case marker. However, as we discussed in Section 10, the case marker *liāh* already ceased to be productive at the end of the 19th century. The reason why *Guāngxù* still used *liāh* as a case marker is therefore not related to the natural evolution of language, but probably to the archaism and tradition of script play writing. I will leave this field to more capable researchers.

11.4 Possible evolutionary pathways

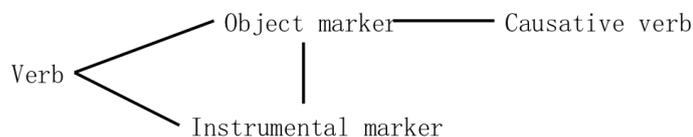
Since *Jiājìng* is the earliest text known in Southern Min, we have no clue of how exactly *liāh* transformed from a verb to a grammatical word. It is however not impossible to put forward hypothetical grammaticalisation pathways based on the data we possess, especially the ambiguous constructions.

We have listed four major types of ambiguous constructions in Section 8:

- (33) 1. Object marker vs Causative Verb
2. Object marker vs Instrumental marker
3. Object marker vs Verb ‘to catch’
4. Verb ‘to catch’ vs Instrumental marker

The following figure shows clearer relations between these ambiguous functions:

Figure 3: Relations between ambiguous constructions



As shown in Section 8, most of the ambiguities arise in ditransitive or double-object constructions, which suggests the grammaticalisation from an actual verb to a case marker come from older serial verb constructions, in which the first verb (*liāh* in our case) is finally reanalysed as a case marker:

$$(34) \quad S + V_1 + NP + V_2 \rightarrow S + \text{MARKER} + NP + V$$

In consequence, the reanalysis is responsible for two new constructions: a **disposal construction** parallel to OV constructions, and an **instrumental construction**.

$$(35) \quad S + V_1 + NP + V_2 \rightarrow S + \text{OBJECT MARKER} + NP + V$$

$$(36) \quad S + V_1 + NP + V_2 + (NP_2) \rightarrow S + \text{INSTRUMENTAL MARKER} + NP_1 + V + (NP_2)$$

It would not be surprising that synchronic confusions between the object marker use and the instrumental marker use occasionally occur, as their surface structures are similar.

The instrumental construction further gives rise, possibly combining forces with the monotransitive perception object use, to the double-object perception formation, e.g. 力...做 (*liāh* + NP₁ + *chò* + NP₂, see example 13c).

These pathways are by no means strange as far as Sinitic languages are concerned. Peyraube (1989, 1996) discusses the same processes in Medieval Chinese, in which the two serial verb constructions, 'V₁+NP+V₂' and 'V₁+NP₁+V₂+NP₂', developed into disposal and instrumental constructions respectively.

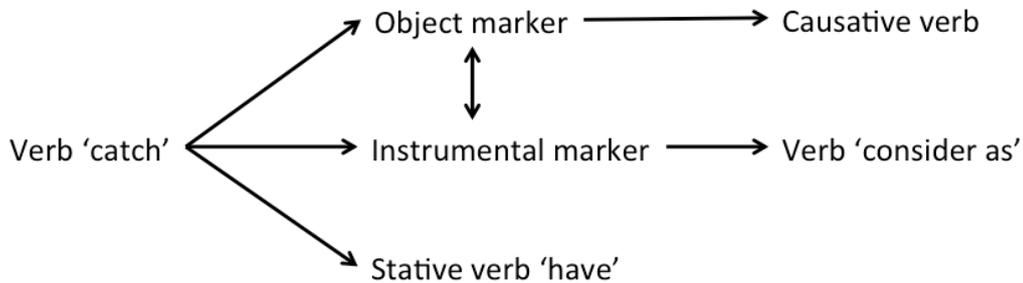
The causative verb is found ambiguous with the object marker only. Chappell (1992) states that the Mandarin disposal marker, 把 *bǎ*, can be conceptually analysed as denoting a causal relationship between an event and an ensuing state of affairs. It is not unclear that many an example of disposal *liāh* can opt for a causative reading, especially with a resultative verb, such as 打破 *p^hah.p^hòa* 'to break' (see example 15a). Therefore, the causative verb use of *liāh* may well have developed from its transitive object use.

The stative use of *liāh* is only found in one example in the entire database (2b). It should have developed from the original verb meaning of the word, while failed to join the common usages.

The dialectal verb use of *liāh* (*lüè*-dialects) is fossilised from double-object perception constructions by combining *liāh* with the main verb, as discussed in the previous subsection.

Summing up, we can represent the hypothetical evolution of *liāh* with the figure below:

Figure 4: Hypothetical evolution of *liāh*



11.5 What next?

Thanks to script plays from the Ming and Qing dynasties, we have been able to find productive uses of 力 *liāh* as a grammatical marker, which is completely extinct today. Nevertheless, the original verb use of 力 *liāh* is preserved in the contemporary language. It might be intuitive that newly emerged functions outlast older ones, the story of 力 *liāh* gives us a counterexample, its marker uses lost in the competition with other markers, and its oldest function persists until today.

Several tasks are to be completed for further studies.

Most of the elaborated works today on Southern Min concern the variants within Taiwan (which is a sad fact) and efforts on exploring and documenting Southern Min dialects in Fujian have not gone enough. Fieldwork in even the smallest villages in the territory of the homeland of Southern Min should definitely be done. We may find more information about *liāh* and even more insightful facts about the language there.

Comparative studies between *lüè*-dialects and *li*-dialects must be put forward. The syntactic and lexical differences may amount to a considerable number concerning the dialectology of Early Modern Southern Min.

We should also look into other Sinitic languages, as well as languages around the world, in order to see how Early Southern Min studies can contribute to linguistic typology.

Abbreviations

- 1SG** first person singular
- 1PL** first person plural
- 2SG** second person singular
- 3SG** third person singular

3PL	third person plural
BEN	benefactive
CAUS	causative
CL	classifier
CONJ	conjunction
DAT	dative
DEF	definite
DEM	demonstrative
DETRAN	detransitive
INSTR	instrumental
LOC	locative
NEG	negative
N.R.PATIENT	patient of non-resultative verbs
OBJ	object
PATH	path
PATIENT	patient
PERCEPT	perception
PFV	perfective
PROH	prohibitive
PART	particle
SOURCE	source

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