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On the interclausal syntactic relations of Toda Seediq evaluative complex predicates[1]

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1. Introduction

In some Formosan (Austronesian, Taiwan) languages, there exists a type of little-studied monoclausal multi-verb constructions, as exemplified in (1)-(2).

(1) Squliq Atayal (Yeh 2015:134; glosses mine)

blaq	*niq-un*	*qu'*	*ringo'*	*qa'*.[2]
good.AV	eat-PV	NOM	apple	this

'This (type of) apple tastes good.'

(2) Amis (Wu 2023:975; translation mine)

Koesit	*a*	*sowal-en*	*cira.*
difficult	LNK	say-UV	3S.NOM

'He is difficult to talk to.'

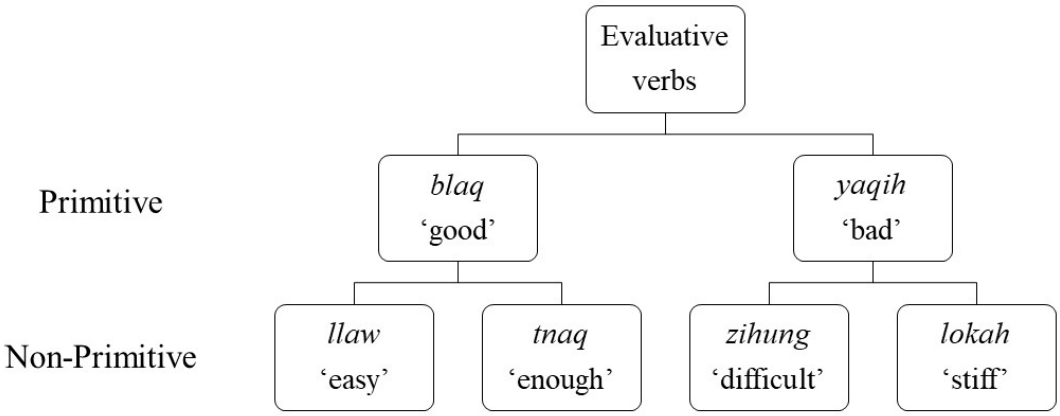
Yeh (2015:115) identifies the function of the first verb (V1) of the construction in question as that of 'evaluating' and refers to verbs of such as 'evaluative verbs', rather than just that of 'commentating' (Hare 1952, Noonan 1985), for she argues that this classes verbs not only contains words "with positive value", but also those "with negative value" (ibid. 135). Moreover, since in Squliq Atayal, the V1s of the constructions in question are mostly *blaq* 'good', based on Wierzbicka's theory of 'semantic primitives', Yeh (2015:136) proposes a hierarchical distinction between 'primitive' and 'non-primitive' evaluative verbs, as illustrated in Figure 1. In addition, because speakers of Squliq Atayal use *blaq* 'good' more often than *yaqih* 'bad' for socio-pragmatic reasons, Yeh (ibid.) refers to the constructions in question as 'BLAQ UV *qu'* NP constructions',

[1] This paper was based on my presentation, titled 'The juncture-nexus types and the interclausal relations of the evaluative complex predicates in Toda Seediq', at *The 18th International Conference on Role and Reference Grammar* (RRG) held on July 14 and July 15, 2025, hosted by the Graduate School of Humanities, Kobe University. I would like to thank my advisor, Prof. Joy J. Wu for her invaluable suggestions for the draft of my conference presentation, and also Prof. Chien-hung Lin and Prof. Ronald Schaefer for their comments on my presentation. In addition, I would like to show my gratitude to my Toda consultants, for their generous provisions of language data with me.

[2] The interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glosses in this paper follows the Leipzig Glossing Rules (https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php), with additional abbreviations of glosses listed in the following: AUG, augmentatives; AV, actor voice; EXTNEG, external negation; INTNEG, internal negation; NV, neutral voice; S, singular; UV, undergoer voice; UVP/PV, plain undergoer patient voice; UVL, locative applicative undergoer voice.

where ‘BLAQ’ is a label for evaluative verbs, reflecting the concept of unmarkedness.

Figure 1. A hierarchy of evaluative verbs in Squliq Atayal (Based on Yeh 2015:136)



What makes these constructions intriguing is (i) their syntactic relations and (ii) the argument sharing of the verbs. According to Yeh (2015), they exhibit ‘a fusion of serial verb constructions (SVCs) and commentative complement clause constructions (CCCs), for she finds that BLAQ UV *qu’* NP constructions syntactically exhibit obligatory sharing of arguments, tense-aspect-mood (TAM) information, and polarity value just as SVCs do, but the AV-UV manifestation on verb sequence can only be found in commentative CCCs but not SVCs (as illustrated in Figure 2 below). Therefore, she argues that SVCs have “syntactic imports” on BLAQ UV *qu’* NP constructions, whereas the commentative CCCs have “semantic imports”, with the UV marking on the second verb (V2) exclusively designated to the evaluated undergoer that is marked by the nominative *qu’* (ibid. 151-3).

Following Yeh’s (2015) terminology, Wu (2023) terms the constructions in question in Amis as ‘evaluative constructions’. In addition, Wu (2023:975) points out there are in fact two (sub)types of evaluative constructions: one that is equivalent to the English sentence ‘*The food tastes good*’ (e.g. (1)), and the other, ‘*It is difficult to do this job*’ (e.g. (2)).[3] The difference between the two subtypes lies in the ‘semantic’ sharing of nominative (NOM) arguments: In the ‘taste-good’ type, the NOM arguments are semantically the core arguments of the two verbs, while in the ‘difficult’ type, the NOM arguments are the core arguments of the (eventive) V2s but not those of the evaluative V1s. Hence, the Parameter (B) that is adopted by Yeh (2015) for the syntactic tests can only account for the ‘syntactic’ sharing of NOM arguments, but not the ‘semantic’ one.

[3] In my opinion, the English sentence ‘This job is difficult to do’ is more appropriate for exemplification, as the sentence is structurally more analogous to the constructions in question.

Figure 2. A comparison of the three types of constructions in Squliq Atayal
(Based on Yeh 2015:148)

Construction types / Parameter	SVCs	BLAQ UV qu' NP constructions	Commentative CCCs
(A) Manifestation of voice in verb sequences	(a) AV AV (b) UV AV	AV UV	(a') AV AV (b') AV UV
(B) Sharing of arguments	Obligatory	Obligatory	Optional
(C) Sharing of TAM information	Obligatory	Obligatory	Depends
(D) Sharing of polarity values	Obligatory	Obligatory	Optional

Wu (2023:978) further argues that the Role and Reference Grammar (RRG; Van Valin and LaPolla 1997, Van Valin 2005, Bentley et al. 2023) approach might provide a more straightforward answer to why the AV-UV sequence on verbs is obligatory. She explains that the AV marking on the 'intransitive' V1 should actually be seen as that of the 'neutral voice' (NV), which selects an 'undergoer' argument as the NOM one, for the sole argument of an intransitive verb intrinsically bears the semantic macrorole of undergoer, from RRG's perspective. And in this way, the NOM arguments are both the semantic arguments of the two verbs in the constructions in question, rather than Yeh's (2015) account that only the UV-marked V2s control the selection of the NOM arguments. Nevertheless, in spite of the more convincing proposals made by Wu (2023), the problems regarding the exact syntactic relations of the two (sub)types of evaluative constructions remained unsolved, and Wu has only focused on the semantic argument sharing of the 'taste-good' type, but not the 'difficult' type.

In Toda Seediq, another under-described Formosan language, the two subtypes of the constructions in question can also be found, with examples given in (3a-d). The primitive evaluative V1s *malu* 'good' and *naqah* 'bad' can also semantically extend to the meanings of 'easy' and 'difficult', as in (3c-d), respectively.

(3) Toda Seediq (Personal fieldnotes)

a. *Malu* *equn* *ka* *siyang* *ni.*
good.NV eat.UVP NOM fatty_pork this
'This fatty pork tastes good.'

b. *Naqah* *equnka* *sari.*
bad.NV eat.UVP NOM taro
'Taro(s) taste bad.'

c. *Malu=bay* *diyun* *ka* *puting* *ni.*
good/easy.NV=very use.UVP NOM hunting_knife this
'This hunting knife is easy to use.'

d. Naqah paqun qhuni ka kaur ni.
bad/difficult.NV=very kill.UVP tree NOM sickle this
'This sickle is difficult to cut down the tree(s).'

The main goal of this paper is to determine the exact syntactic relations displayed by the two subtypes of constructions in question. Since the current functional-typological frameworks (e.g. Aikhenvald and Dixon 2006 on SVCs, and Noonan 1985 on complementation) cannot fully account for this issue, here I choose to follow Wu (2023) and adopt RRG as the main theoretical framework for analysis, as RRG has proposed as of the finest classifications of interclausal syntactic relations among linguistic theories. Notice that in (3) I have already adopted Wu's (2023) analysis and the RRG perspective for glossing. Furthermore, in the following of the paper, I will refer to the construction in question as 'evaluative complex predicates' (ECPs), and the two subtypes, the '*sensory*-ECPs' and the '*difficulty*-ECPs' respectively, in order to faithfully reflect their semantic contents. As can be observed in (3a-d), the ECPs in Toda Seediq sequentially consist of 'evaluative predicates' (EvalP), 'eventive predicates' (EventP), sometimes oblique (OBL) arguments of the EventP, and the NOM arguments that undergo the evaluation. In particular, in sensory-ECPs, the EventPs are denoted by sensory verbs with the EvalPs meaning 'good' or 'bad', whereas in difficulty-ECPs, the EvalPs denote 'easy' and 'difficult', with the EventPs being the plain activity ones.

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 will briefly introduce the grammar of Toda; the analysis of ECPs will be given in Section 3; and Section 4 will conclude this paper.

2. An overview of Toda Seediq grammar

Typologically speaking, typical of Formosan languages, Toda Seediq exhibits a Philippine-type four-way 'symmetrical voice' system: not a single type of voice constructions is morphologically basic (Himmelmann 2005), and there is no demotion of core arguments as peripheral, oblique arguments, which are found in languages with passive voices (e.g. nominative-accusative languages) or antipassive voices (e.g. ergative-absolutive languages). In traditional grammatical analyses, the four types of voices are actor voice, patient voice, locative voice, and circumstantial voice. Each type of voice selects arguments with particular 'thematic relations' (in the sense of RRG, semantic microroles[4]) as the NOM arguments of their own. Nevertheless, in general, the thematic relations of the NOM arguments in the latter three types of voices are all 'undergoer-like'. Therefore, from RRG's viewpoint, these voices can be categorized under a broader category of 'undergoer voice' (UV). Also, as mentioned in Section 1, in some intransitive actor voice clauses, the NOM arguments are 'undergoer-like' , in addition to the actor-like NOM arguments in transitive actor voice clauses. Hence, following RRG's non-unified approach, two voice categories should be distinguished in terms of the umbrella term 'actor voice': the 'neutral voice' (NV) and the genuine, plain actor voice (AV). Figure 3 below provides the information about each type of voices in Toda Seediq, including the classification, the type of semantic macroroles of NOM argument they select, their M(acrorole)-transitivity (reflected by the macrorole number), and their corresponding morphological markers, etc.

[4] The term is borrowed from Hartmann et al. (2014).

Figure 3. Voices in Toda Seediq

Voice	Subtypes	Macrorole of NOM Argument	Macrorole Number	Markers
Neutral Voice (NV)	—	None/ Undergoer	0 (M-atransitive) / 1 (M-intransitive)	*ø, <m>, m-, mp*
Actor Voice (AV)	—	Actor	1 (M-intransitive)	
Undergoer Voice (UV)	Plain (UVP)	Undergoer (default)	2 (M-transitive)	*-un*
	Locative Applicative (UVL)	Undergoer (marked choice)	2 (M-transitive)	*-an*
	Circumstantial Applicative (UVC)	Undergoer (marked choice)	2 (M-transitive)	*s-*

And in terms of word order, Toda Seediq is predicate-initial and PSA-final. The PSA or topic of a clause is marked by the nominative case marker *ka*. Other than *ka*, there are also two cases in the language: the genitive case that marks the possessor of a possessed NP, or the actor argument of the UV clauses, and the oblique case that marks the non-macrorole arguments. However, in Toda Seediq, the genitive case and the oblique case are not formally distinguished, as the genitive marker has been dropped. Nevertheless, there are two other ways that can help one identify which argument bears which case. The first is through the indexing of the pronominal enclitics on the clause-initial elements. Only the nominative and genitive arguments would be indexed. The second way is the constituent order of the arguments. The genitive arguments would immediately follow the main verb, with the OBL arguments coming after and preceding the *ka*-marked NOM arguments.[5]

3. The analysis of ECPs and their interclausal syntactic relations

3.1 The RRG approach to clause linkage

Before the analysis, it is important to address how clause-linking phenomena are classified by the RRG theory. In RRG, the syntactic relations of complex sentences (including complex predicates) are classified based on the combinations of different types of 'junctures' and 'nexuses'. The 'junctures' refer to the syntactic level where the clausal linkage occurs. RRG distinguishes four levels of junctures: nuclear, core, clausal, and sentential, which are directly relevant to the sizes of the linked units. A nucleus contains only a predicate itself. A core consists of a predicate and its semantic core argument(s). A clause is constituted of a core and potentially arguments that are not those of the core(s) (i.e. 'non-arguments'). And a sentence is a clause plus 'detached positions' that may host topics or 'peripheries' hosting locative or temporal phrases. As for the 'nexuses', the term refers to the "abstract linkage relations" rather than referring to particular formal

[5] However, in the ECPs there would be no pronominal enclitics on the clause-initial elements, and the reason is beyond the scope of this paper and will not be discussed hereafter. Thus, the only remaining type of arguments other than NOM arguments in ECPs can only be the oblique ones.

construction types (Van Valin 2023:72). There are three types of nexuses recognized in RRG: coordination, subordination, and cosubordination. The distinction of nexuses involves the notions of 'structural dependence/y' and 'operator dependence/y'. First, 'coordination' shows no structural dependence; each linked unit can structurally stand alone as a single, grammatical construction, and is able to be modified by operators (i.e. grammatical morphemes) of their own. '(Daughter) subordination', on the other hand, involves a syntactic unit that is an argument of another matrix unit.[6] As for 'cosubordination', it involves 'operator dependency' or 'operator sharing': the modifying scope of the operator must range over all the linked units. In RRG, each type of operators works on different syntactic levels, as Table 1 illustrates below.

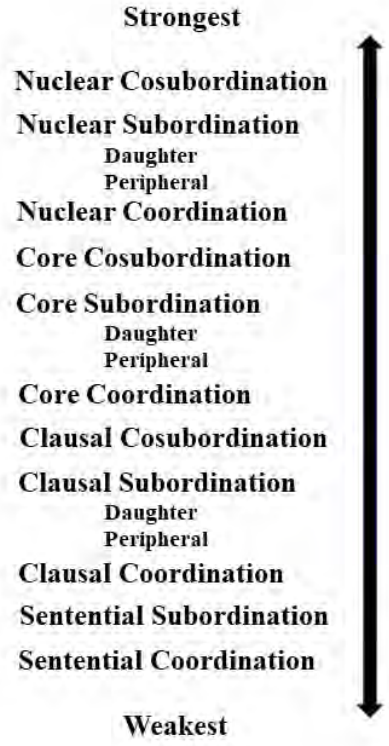
By combining all levels of junctures and types of nexuses, over 16 juncture-nexus types can be yielded. Figure 3 below presents the 'Interclausal Syntactic Relations Hierarchy' (ISynRH), with all the possible juncture-nexus types ranked from tightest/strongest integration (top) to the loosest/weakest (bottom). The degree of syntactic integration is determined by the tightness of junctures and that of nexuses. In terms of the former, the ranking naturally follows that from the smallest (nuclear) to the largest (sentential). As for the tightness of nexuses, cosubordination entertains the tightest integration, for the obligatory operator sharing makes few or no possibilities of locational variances for the linked units. Subordination is looser than cosubordination, as structural variance of the subordinate units may be allowed. The loosest is coordination, since the linked units are independent of one another. Note that in juncture-nexus types involving subordination, the 'juncture' parts actually refer to the 'size of the subordinate units', not the level of juncture or the size of the matrix unit where subordination takes place.

Table 1. Classes of operators distinguished in RRG (Van Valin 2023)

Scope / levels of operators	**Operators**
Nucleus (Nuclear operators)	Aspect
	Negation
	Directionals (only those modifying the orientation of an action or event without reference to another participant or to the speaker)
Core (Core operators)	Directionals (only those expressing the orientation or motion of one participant with reference to another participant or to the speaker)
	Event quantification
	Modality (root modals, e.g. ability, permission, obligation)
	Internal (narrow scope) negation
Clause (Clausal operators)	Status (epistemic modals, external negation)
	Tense
	Evidentials
	Illocutionary force (IF)

[6] In fact, there is another type of subordination called 'ad-subordination' or 'peripheral subordination', which involves one unit that is the modifier of another unit.

Figure 3. ISynRH in RRG (Based on Van Valin 2023:84)



3.2. Adopting RRG to the analysis of Toda ECPs

After the readers are acquainted with the RRG's approach to clause linkage, now let us see how the problems raised by ECPs may be dealt with by RRG. First, in terms of the juncture, semantically EvalPs are one-place 'core' predicates that only take one core argument: in sensory-ECPs they naturally take the evaluated NOM arguments, and as for in the difficulty-ECPs, they are expected to take propositions as their arguments (e.g. English '*It is difficult to do this.*'). As for the EventPs, they also form cores with the NOM arguments and potentially the OBL arguments. However, they are not grammatically overt clauses that can stand alone, for in ECPs there lack of actor arguments that are normally also the core arguments of the UV-marked verb, as exemplified in (4).[7] In fact, the actors or arguments representing speakers are not allow to appear in the ECPs, otherwise the whole constructions will become ungrammatical. See (5) for exemplification. These facts indicate that both predicates in ECPs are cores.

(4) (Personal fieldnotes)

a.	**equn*	*ka*	*camac*	*ni*
	eat.UVP	NOM	meal	this
b.	**diyun*	*ka*	*yayu*	*way*
	use.UVP	NOM	knife	that

(5) **Naqah=mu* *diyun* *ka* *yayu* *way*.
bad/difficult.NV=1SG.GEN use.UVP NOM knife that
Intended: 'I think that knife is hard to use.' (Personal fieldnotes)

[7] This has also been pointed out by Yeh (2015) on Squliq Atayal ECPs.

Second, regarding the possible nexus relations of ECPs, because the cores formed by EvalPs and their arguments cannot stand alone as clauses, the possibility that ECPs are coordinate structures will be excluded. This indicates that ECPs can only be subordinate or cosubordinate structures. On the other hand, given that the two subtypes of ECPs differ in terms of argument sharing, it may be well argued and predicted that the juncture-nexus types of the two subtypes are **different** (J. Wu, personal communication). Since sensory-ECPs exhibit argument sharing but difficulty-ECPs do not, the former is expected to entertain tighter linkage than the latter. If this prediction is on the right track, it is expected that the nexus relation of sensory-ECPs is cosubordination and that of difficulty-ECPs is subordination.

To test whether ECPs syntactically exhibit subordination and cosubordination, one straightforward way is to see whether they showcase operator sharing, as only cosubordination requires operator dependency. Here five operators and grammaticalized lexical modifiers with different modifying syntactic levels are put to test: (i) *wada* 'PFV' (aspect; nuclear), (ii) *ini* 'INTNEG' (internal negation; core), (iii) *uxay* 'EXTNEG' (external negation; clausal), (iv) *musa* 'FUT' (tense; clausal), and (v) *ya bay* 'probably' (status; clausal). Their compatibilities with sensory-ECPs and difficulty-ECPs are shown in (6) and (7), respectively.

(6) (Personal fieldnotes)

a. ?*Wada* *malu=bay* *equn* *ka* *damac* *ni.*
PFV good.NV=very eat.UVP NOM dish this
Intended: 'This dish already tastes good.'

b. ??*Ini* *k-malu* *equn* *ka* *siyang* *ni.*
INTNEG STAT-good eat.UVP NOM fatty_pork this
Intended: 'This fatty pork does not taste good.'

c. *Uxay* *malu* *equn* *ka* *siyang* *ni.*
EXTNEG good.NV eat.UVP NOM fatty.pork this
'It is not the case that this fatty pork does not taste good.'

d. *M-usa* *malu* *equn* *ka* *pnchadaw* *Lawa.*
AV-go good.NV eat.UVP NOM <PFV>cook PN
'(The meal that) Lawa cooked will taste good.'

e. *Ya bay* *malu* *equn* *ka* *h<n>apuy-an* *eqan* *idaw*
probably good.NV eat.UVP NOM < PFV>cook-UVL eat.UVL rice
hini!
here
'The food this restaurant cooks will probably taste good.'

(7) (Personal fieldnotes)

a. ?*Wada* *naqah* *diyun* *ka* *puru* *ni* *da.*
PFV bad/difficult.NV use.UVP NOM axe this COS
Intended: 'This axe is already difficult to use.'

b. ??*Ini* *naqah* *diyun* *ka* *awic* *ni.*
INTNEG bad/difficult.NV use.UVP NOM hoe this
Intended: 'This hoe is not difficult to use.'

c. *Uxay* *naqah* *sluhay-an* *ka* *mriq* *rulu.*
EXTNEG bad/difficult.NV learn-UVL NOM drive.AV car

'It is not the case that driving a car is difficult to learn.'

d. *M-usa* *naqah* *diyun* *ka* *puru* *way.*
AV-go bad/difficult.NV use.UVP NOM axe that
'That axe will be hard to use.'

e. *Ya bay* *naqah* *diyun* *ka* *yayu* *way.*
probably bad/difficult.NV use.UVP NOM knife that
'That knife will probably be hard to use.'

Interestingly, the results for both subtypes are the same. First, *wada* 'PFV' is considered redundant for ECPs by the consultants; its existence in ECPs is more natural, such as when ECPs occur in reason clauses headed by *alaw* 'because'. What is truly surprising is that the core-level internal negator *ini* does not go well with the ECP. Instead, it is the clause-level external negator *uxay* that fits better with ECPs, according to the consultants' intuitions. This also holds true for the other two clause-level operators, *musa* 'FUT' and *ya bay* 'probably'. Such results present an unexpected analytical paradox: what looks to be core junctures (here the ECPs) turn out to seemingly exhibit syntactically looser clausal junctures. However, judging from the argument structures of EvalPs and EventPs, the juncture type of ECPs should have been core junctures. The only assumption we can make is that there are other unexplored grammatical properties of ECPs affecting the results of operator-sharing tests shown in (6)-(7). Now it seems that such a paradox cannot be solved by the RRG theory alone, and borrowing the insights of other theories or frameworks would be needed.

3.3. Evidence outside RRG: the notion of 'qualitative evaluation'

Recall that Yeh (2015) has argued that evaluative verbs contain both words with 'positive' or 'negative' polarity values. In fact, the same idea has also been proposed by other linguists as well, such as those working on the framework of 'Evaluative Morphology' (Grandi and Körtvélyessy 2015a). The linguistic phenomena the followers of Evaluative Morphology focus on are the affixes that exhibit both inflectional and derivational properties. For instance, in Italian, the diminutive *-ino* can express ameliorative meanings in the cases like *fuocherell-ino* 'nice little fire' (Scalise 1984); on the other hand, the Slovak augmentative *-isko* may also express pejorative meanings, such as in *mam-isko* [mother-AUG] (Grandi and Körtvélyessy 2015b:11). Hence, evaluative morphologists consider (prototypical) amelioratives and pejoratives to involve the notion of 'qualitative evaluation' and the semantic shifts on a scale with one end being 'positive' (amelioratives) and the other one 'negative' (pejoratives). Moreover, they also adopt the semantic primitive labels 'GOOD' and BAD' (following Wierzbicka 1989) to represent the prototypicality of amelioratives and pejoratives (Grandi & Körtvélyessy 2015b:12).

The concept of 'qualitative evaluation' has later been borrowed for the investigation of evaluation in grammar by typologists, and is defined as "positive or negative attitudes towards people, things or situations" by Dobrushina (2024; bolded part mine). Recent typological studies mostly focus on the reflection of qualitative evaluation in verbal emotional morphemes (e.g. Ponsonnet 2018), but the latest study by Dobrushina (2024) has even extended the research scope to syntactic constructions that are exclusively used for positive or negative contexts.

Since Toda ECPs are themselves syntactic constructions as well, it is worth adopting the concept of qualitative evaluation to the analysis of Toda ECPs. And in the next section, I will demonstrate that the incompatibility of core-level internal negator *ini* is indeed

affected by EvalPs' grammatical properties.

3.4. Toda ECPs revisited

Now it can be sure that EvalPs in Toda certainly involve qualitative evaluation, and if in ECPs they have been grammaticalized to the extent that they contain polarity values, it should be expected that grammatically EvalPs exhibit the denotation of polarity values in some ways. Upon further inquiry of why *ini* 'INTNEG' cannot co-occur with ECPs such as *malu equn* 'taste good', it is found that consultants all agree that the 'best' direct negated form of it should be *naqah equn* 'taste bad', and vice versa. Furthermore, although *uxay* 'EXTNEG' can naturally co-occur with ECPs, in this case, it only means "it is not the case that something is good/easy or bad/difficult", but not necessarily "something is good/easy" or "something is bad/difficult". In fact, they even think that generally there is no need to add negators, just directly saying that things are good or bad. These facts indicate that Toda EvalPs *malu* 'good/easy' and *naqah* 'bad/difficult' may be seen as 'core-level lexical polarity items', for they are antonyms that are direct negated forms of each other, suggesting that the two contain polarity values of their own.

Combining such a viewpoint with RRG's perspective, in the case of ECPs, the positive polarity denoted by *malu* 'good/easy', as well as 'internal negation' that is denoted by *naqah* 'bad/difficult', should also be seen as a type of core-level operator. And since ECPs already project core-level polarity values by themselves, they can no longer co-exist with *ini*, which also denotes core-level internal negation. Consequently, the only slot left for ECPs to be modified by negation is through the addition of the clause-level external negator *uxay*. This analysis can maintain that ECPs are indeed core junctures, at the same time reasonably explaining why they are only compatible with clause-level operators.

Finally, let us turn to the nexus relations of the two subtypes of ECPs. In terms of sensory-ECPs, the NOM argument is shared by both EvalP and EventP in their argument structures. And, according to Viberg (1984), here the sensory EventP entertains the 'copulative' function that semantically takes EvalPs as its predicate complement. This suggests that, when a sensory EventP serve the copulative function, the evaluation process is also entailed in the event structure of sensory EventP. This allows the scope of polarity values denoted by the EvalP to permeate both EvalP and EventP. Thus, syntactically sensory-ECPs exhibit 'core cosubordination'. On the other hand, in difficulty-ECPs, the NOM argument is the semantic core argument of EventP but not that of EvalP. Moreover, the modifying scope of EvalP only covers itself but not also the EventP, for plain activity verbs have not been reported to have the copulative function as sensory predicates do. Hence, it is the EventP along with the NOM argument that is the semantic core argument of EvalP, indicating that the difficulty-ECPs are an example of 'core subordination'.[8]

The analysis confirms the prediction that difficulty-ECPs are structurally looser than sensory-ECPs. Moreover, with the semantic distinctions of the two EventP classes and the modifying scopes of operators taken into account, what was initially a prediction solely grounded in the argument-sharing condition has now gained further empirical and theoretical supports.

4. Concluding remarks

This study demonstrates that sensory-ECPs exhibit core cosubordination, while the

[8] Hence, the NOM arguments in difficulty-ECPs are probably best analyzed as topics.

difficulty-ECPs, core subordination. Also, it is found that lexical EvalPs in Toda can denote polarity values, in addition to grammatical negators. Thus, the case of Toda ECPs serves as an important example that qualitative evaluation can also be manifested grammatically in complex predicates.

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