

Counterexpectation, free choice, and concessives in Tibetan

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The Tibetan expression *yin.n'ang* is a counterexpectational particle ('but/however') (1), forms *wh*-free choice items (FCI) (2), and is a concessive scalar particle (CSP; see e.g. Lahiri 2010; Crnič 2011a,b) (3).

- (1) ... **Yin.n'ang** spyang.po mi-'dug. (2) Mo.rang [su **yin.n'ang**]=la skad.cha bshad-gi-red.
 YIN.N'ANG clever NEG-AUX she who YIN.N'ANG=DAT speech talk-IMP-F-AUX
 [Tashi's tall.] 'But [he] isn't smart.' [Pema is very friendly.] 'She talks to **anyone**.'
- (3) [Dep [gcig]_F **yin.n'ang** klog-na] yig.tshad mthar.'khyol-gi-red.
 book one YIN.N'ANG read-COND exam succeed-IMP-F-AUX
 [Don't worry, the exam is easy.] ≈ '[You] will pass the exam [if [you] read **just at least** one book].'

Morphologically, *yin.n'ang* is transparently: (4) *yin* (COPULA) + *na* (CONDITIONAL) + *yang* (EVEN)

I document these uses of *yin.n'ang* from original fieldwork and propose a compositional semantics which derives these uses from (4). The analysis is extended to Japanese *demo*, which has the same range of uses and also historically derives from the ingredients in (4), and similar combinations in Dravidian languages.

This work supports Lahiri's (2010) approach to CSPs as "(reduced) concessive conditional[s]" and similarly leads to an approach to FCIs as (reduced/head-internal) (un)conditionals (cf Rawlins 2013's "constituent unconditionals"), both following the Shimoyama 1999 approach to head-internal relative clauses.

Deriving counterexpectation With antecedent proposition *p*, 'but/however *q*' implicates an expectation that "if *p*, not *q*." My analysis is similar to Ippolito's (2004) compositional semantics for concessive *still*. Let *yin.n'ang* in (1) be literally "even if it's [*p*]_F," with an unpronounced propositional anaphor; here, *p* = 'Tashi is tall.' EVEN requires that the conditional "if *p*, *q*" be less likely than "if *p'*, *q*" for alternative relevant conditions *p' ∈ P*. This scalar condition requires very low credence in "if *p*, *q*," resulting in the counterexpectational inference that "if *p*, not *q*." Furthermore, the truth of "EVEN if it's [*p*]_F, *q*" implicates the truth of all more likely "if *p'*, *q*." Assuming that *P* exhausts all relevant possibilities, the assertion of "EVEN if it's [*p*]_F, *q*" will implicate the truth of the consequent *q* (von Stechow 1994: §5.3.3).

On the syntax of *yin.n'ang* in argument position Taking the morphology in (4) at face value, Tibetan *yin.n'ang* is a conditional clause (with EVEN). But in their FCI (2) and CSP functions (3), they appear in argument positions. This is especially problematic in (2), where *wh-yin.n'ang* takes a dative case particle.

I propose to adopt the Shimoyama 1999 E-type anaphora approach for (Japanese) head-internal relatives. (Tibetan also generally has head-internal relatives.) The clause itself is interpreted at LF as adjoined to the main clause, with its surface argument position interpreted with an E-type pronoun. For example:

- (5) a. Literal (2): She talks to [even if it's who] ⇒ b. LF: [even if it's who_i], she talks to *them_i*

Deriving free choice In a two-dimensional Roothian Alternative Semantics, *wh*-words have an alternative set ranging over its domain (e.g. all individuals for 'what') but no ordinary value (Ramchand 1997; Beck 2006; Kotek 2014). For EVEN to have a prejacent (ordinary value) to compute its meaning in (5b), I adopt Erlewine 2018's \exists operator which defines an existential ordinary value without affecting the alternative set:

- (6) a. $[\exists \alpha]^o = \vee [\alpha]^{\text{alt}}$ (for propositional α ; cf. Kratzer and Shimoyama 2002) b. $[\exists \alpha]^{\text{alt}} = [\alpha]^{\text{alt}}$

The complete LF for (2) is as in (7), with prejacent *p* and alternative set *Alt* for EVEN:

- (7) LF for (2): EVEN(if \exists [they_i're *who*], she talks_(HABITUAL) to them_i)
 $p = \text{if it's } \textit{someone}_i, \text{ she talks to them}_i$ $Alt = \{ \text{if it's } x_i, \text{ she talks to them}_i : x \text{ human} \}$

The prejacent *p* expresses that she talks to anyone (as long as they exist), which asymmetrically entails each alternative in *Alt*. This satisfies the scalar presupposition of EVEN.

I furthermore propose that the assertion of p in (7), rather than any stronger individual alternative in Alt , yields a conversational implicature that ‘someone’ in the conditional clause in p can be verified by multiple individuals. This yields Kratzer and Shimoyama 2002’s so-called “distribution requirement” on FC indefinites (also: Giannakidou 2001’s “quasi-universal effect”), and explains the unavailability of *wh-yin.n’ang* in episodic and veridical contexts, i.e. deriving FCI distribution (Giannakidou 2001).

Deriving the concessive scalar particle use Concessive scalar particles are licensed in a range of non-veridical environments, associating with a weak element (Giannakidou 2007; Lahiri 2010; Crnič 2011a,b; Alonso-Ovalle 2016). Following the syntactic proposal in (5), example (3) has the LF in (8):

- (8) LF for (3): $EVEN(\text{if it's } [one]_F \text{ book}_i, [\text{if you read it}_i, \text{ you will pass the exam}])$
 $Alt = \{\text{if it's } n \text{ books}_i, [\text{if you read them}_i, \text{ you will pass the exam}] : n \geq 1\}$

Example (3) is felicitous in a context where (a) reading one book is considered little and (b) you can also pass the exam by reading more than one book. $EVEN$ in (8) is licensed in such a context. Furthermore, the fact that stronger alternatives in Alt are necessarily true explains the (b) requirement.

This analysis also applies to the licensing of *yin.n’ang* CSPs in other speech acts such as imperatives.

A context where (9) are natural is, for example, when directed at a child who refuses to eat: the request to eat a little is a bare minimum requirement, but eating more is also acceptable.

(9) Kha.lag [tis]_F **yin.n’ang** za-(dang)!
 food little YIN.N’ANG eat-IMP
 ≈ ‘Eat **just at least** a little food!’

- (10) LF for (9): $EVEN(IMP(\text{if it's a little food}_i, \text{ you eat it}_i))$

IMP represents the imperative speech act in (10). Here I adopt a *noteworthiness* scale for $EVEN$ (Herburger 2000), to avoid the evaluation of “likelihood” over alternative imperatives. In a context where a stronger request — e.g. $IMP(\text{if it's a lot of food}_i, \text{ you eat it}_i)$ — is also appropriate, the speaker’s choice to make the weaker request with ‘little’ is noteworthy, satisfying $EVEN$. We thus derive the “settle for less” flavor of CSPs. I extend this analysis to other licensing environments in the talk, building on Lahiri 2010.

Extension to Japanese *demo* and Dravidian *EVEN-IF* The range of uses of Tibetan *yin.n’ang* is exactly the same as that of Japanese *demo*. The Japanese examples (11–13) parallel the Tibetan (1–3), with the same felicity and truth conditions. The equivalent of the imperative in (9) is also possible with *demo*.

- (11) ... **Demo** atama=wa yoku-nai. (12) Kanojo=wa [**dare=to demo**] hana-su.
 DEMO head=TOP good-NEG she=TOP who=DAT DEMO talk-NONPAST
 [Tashi’s tall.] ‘**But** [he] isn’t smart.’ [Pema is very friendly.] ‘She talks to **anyone**.’
- (13) [Hon=o [is-satsu]_F **demo** yom-eba] shiken=ni gookaku su-ru.
 book=ACC one-CL DEMO read-COND exam=DAT pass do-NONPAST
 [Don’t worry, the exam is easy.] ≈ ‘[You] will pass the exam [if [you] read **just at least** one book].’

The morphology of Japanese *demo* is however less clear than Tibetan *yin.n’ang* (4), although *-mo* appears to be the scalar additive particle and *-de* appears to be a copular ending (Nakanishi 2006, Shimoyama 2006, a.o.). I argue to extend the analysis for Tibetan *yin.n’ang* as COPULA + CONDITIONAL + $EVEN$ to Japanese *demo*. Balusu 2019 presents similar facts from a range of Dravidian languages, in some cases with clearer copular and conditional morphology. My analysis may also be extended to these cases.

Selected references Balusu 2019 “The anatomy of the Dravidian unconditional,” GLOW in Asia XII • Crnič 2011b “On the meaning and distribution of concessive scalar particles,” *NELS* 41 • Erlewine 2018 “Wh-quantification in Alternative Semantics,” ms. • von Stechow 1994 *Restrictions on quantifier domains* • Giannakidou 2001 “The meaning of free choice,” *L&P* 24 • Ippolito 2004 “An analysis of *still*,” *SALT* 24 • Kratzer & Shimoyama 2002 “Indeterminate pronouns: The view from Japanese” • Lahiri 2010 “Some *evens* are *even (if) ... only*,” ms. • Onodera 2004 *Japanese discourse markers: Synchronic and diachronic discourse analysis* • Shimoyama 1999 “Internally headed relative clauses in Japanese and E-type anaphora,” *JEAL* 8