

# Bunun auxiliaries in a Formosan perspective

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# Introduction

- Bunun, Austronesian, Taiwan
- Takivatan dialect (De Busser 2009)
- Corpus:
  - Transcription of real-world narrative discourse
  - Elicited sentences based on free association
  - Attestation > grammaticality

# Auxiliaries

- What are auxiliaries?
- How can we identify them?
- How are they distinct from:
  - Full verbs functioning in serial verb constructions?
  - Full verbs function in complementation constructions?
- How can we compare them in a Formosan perspective?

# Auxiliaries

- Working definition:  
“ ‘Auxiliary verb’ is here considered to be an item on the **lexical verb-functional affix continuum**, which tends to be at least somewhat semantically bleached, and **grammaticalized to express one or more of a range of salient verbal categories**, most typically aspectual and modal categories, but also not infrequently temporal, negative polarity, or voice categories. [...]”

(Anderson 2006:4–5)

# Auxiliaries

- Working definition:

“Auxiliary verbs can thus be considered to be an element that **in combination with a lexical verb forms a monoclausal verb phrase** with some degree of (lexical) semantic bleaching that performs some more or less definable grammatical function; [...]

(Anderson 2006:4–5)

# Auxiliaries

Auxiliary verb:

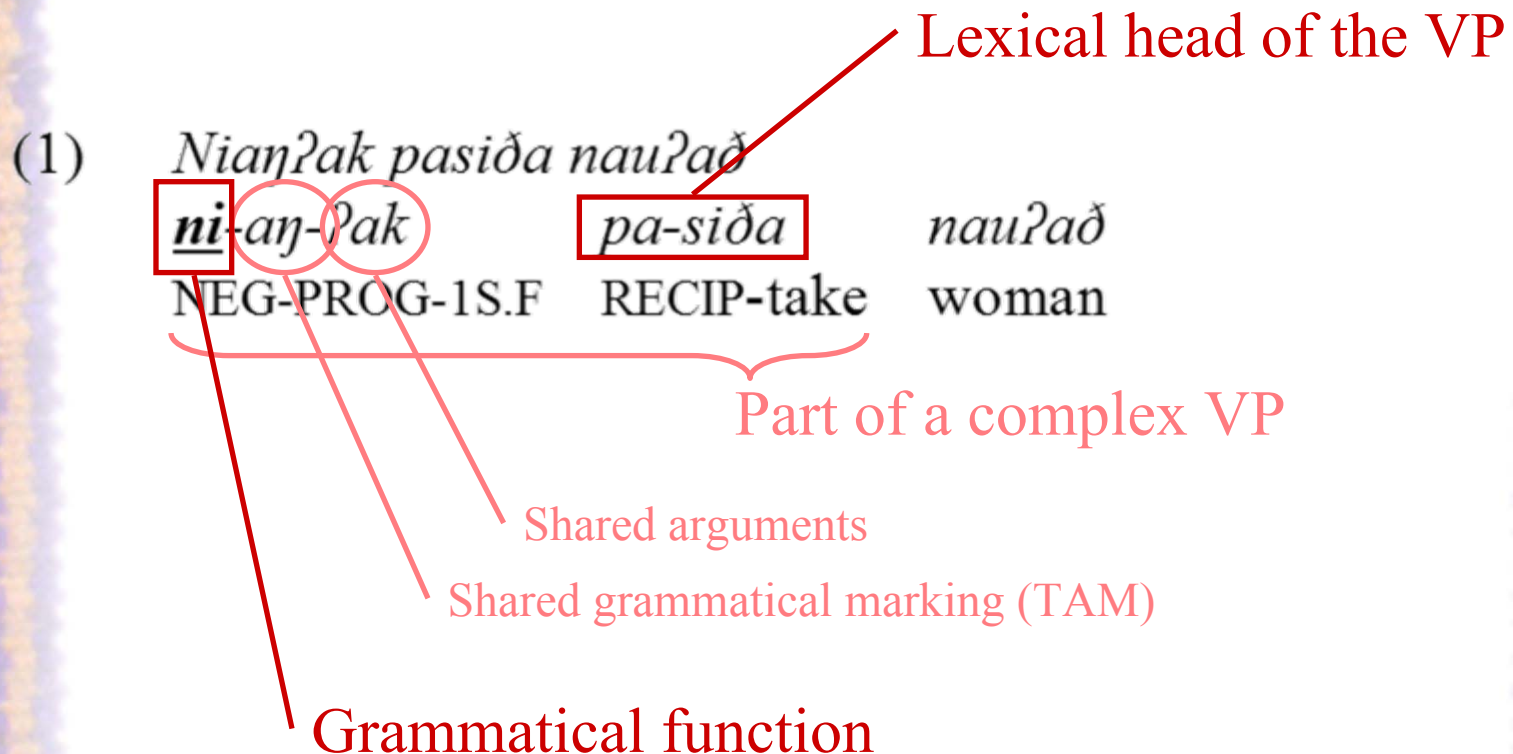
- Part of a complex VP
  - Shared arguments
  - Shared grammatical marking
- Grammatical function
  - Not the (one of the) lexical head of the VP
  - Expresses a grammatical function
- Evidence of grammaticalisation

# Auxiliaries

- Problems:
  - Following these criteria, Takivatan would have an unusually large and diverse set of auxiliaries
  - Do these all belong to a single wordclass (AUX)? Or to different subclasses?
  - How do they fit into the general Formosan picture?

# Takivatan Bunun auxiliaries

- Negator





# Takivatan Bunun auxiliaries

- Modals

(2) *naʔasaun pinqansiap isia*  
*na-asa-un pin-qansiap i-sia*  
IRR-must-UF CAUS.INCH-understand POSS-ANAPH  
We must make him understand (TVN-008-001:4)

(3) *Na maqtu aipun maqansiap tu*  
*na maqtu aipun ma-qansiap tu*  
CONS may DEM.S.MED.VIS DYN-understand COMPL  
May he therefore understand [...] (TVN-008-001:16)

# Takivatan Bunun auxiliaries

- TAM

- (4) *Qanaqtuŋinʔak taldanav.*  
*qanaqtuŋ-in-ʔak taldanav*  
be.finished-PRV-1S.F wash  
I did already wash my face. (TVN-xxx-xx1:165)
- (5) *Nakitŋa kuḁakuḁa*  
*na-kitŋa kuḁakuḁa*  
IRR-begin work  
They would start to work (TVN-012-001:42)

# Takivatan Bunun auxiliaries

- Comparative and quantitative expressions

(6) *Muađak taqu isti maupa siatia mastaʔan*  
*muađ-ak taqu isti maupa sia-ti-a mastaʔan*  
merely-1S.F tell 3S.PROX thus ANAPH-DEF-LDIS most  
I only told him this thing in this such a complete way.  
(TVN-008-002:235)

(7) *Masmuavin Bantalaŋ madaqvas*  
*masmuav-in Bantalaŋ ma-daqvas*  
more-PRV Amis STAT-high  
'The Amis are very tall' (TVN-xx2-004:41)

# Takivatan Bunun auxiliaries

- Participant-related expressions

(8) *Namuskun ʔata maun*  
*na-m-uskun ʔata maun*  
IRR-DYN-together II.F eat  
‘We will eat together’ (TVN-xx2-001:66)

(9) *Nahamun qaimaŋsuð matakunav.*  
*na-hamu-un qaimaŋsuð ma-takunav*  
IRR-take.together-UF thing DYN-throw.away  
‘Take these things together with other things and throw  
them away.’ (TVN-xx2:005:34)

# Takivatan Bunun auxiliaries

- Manner expressions

- (10) *Daukdaukun qaimaṅsuḍtun maʔuman.*  
*daukdauk-un qaimaṅsuḍ-tun ma-uman*  
slowly-UF      thing-DEF      DYN-take.away  
‘Take these things away slowly.’ (TVN-xx2-005:41)

# Takivatan Bunun auxiliaries

- Conjunctors

- (11) *Qaʔal tu pusunkaʔa [...]*  
qaʔal tu ~~pu-sunka-ʔa~~  
although COMPL CAUS.ALL-fill-SUBORD  
‘Although one had filled it to the brim, [if somebody died in those days, you could not eat any millet.]’ (TVN-008-002:61)
- (12) *Muska Lini tupa tu:*  
muska Lini ~~tupa tu~~  
but L. say COMPL  
‘But Lini said: ...’ (TVN-008-002:181)

# Feature-based analysis

- Classification based on grammatical features
  - Problem 1: unusually large set of phenomena is classified as auxiliaries
  - Problem 2: exhaustive feature set must be large, especially for cross-linguistic comparison
  - Problem 3: contradictory and counterintuitive results

# Feature-based analysis

## Morphological criteria

1. Negation of CAUX has/has not been attested
2. Clitic pronouns
  - 2.1. CAUX can attract bound pronouns
  - 2.2. The pronouns on CAUX are shared with the lexical head
  - 2.3. CAUX does not attract clitic pronouns
3. TAM
  - 3.1. TAM marking can be expressed on CAUX
  - 3.2. TAM expressed on CAUX has scope over the entire VP
4. Verbal affixes
  - 4.1. Various verbal affixes can be expressed on CAUX
  - 4.2. ... have scope over CAUX alone / over the entire VP
5. Focus morphology
  - 5.1. ... occurs on CAUX
  - 5.2. ... has scope over CAUX alone / over the entire VP
  - 5.3. ... foreshadows the focus morphology on the lexical verb
  - 5.4. ... has a nominalising function
6. Vowel contraction of CAUX and affixes



# Feature-based analysis

## Syntactic characteristics

1. Obligatoriness: CAUX obligatorily expresses a grammatical category
2. Paradigmaticity: CAUX is part of a paradigm
3. Topic attraction: Topic/SUBJ appears after CAUX rather than after V
4. Complementation
  - 4.1. CAUX ... COMP ... V
  - 4.2. ... and there is / is no Same Subject constraint
  - 4.3. ... and COMP is obligatory / optional
5. Retention in ellipsis
6. Order of CAUX and V can be inverted
7. Transitivity
  - 7.1. CAUX can categorize for DO
8. Cooccurrence
  - 8.1. CAUX can co-occur with other AUX
  - 8.2. CAUX is in complementary distribution with attested AUX

# Feature-based analysis

	<i>asa</i>	<i>maqtu</i>
	<i>'must'</i>	<i>'can'</i>
Attracts topic	✓	✓
TAM marking		
PRV <i>-in</i>	✗	✓
PROG <i>-ang</i>	✓	✓
Focus marking	✓	✗
Bound pronouns	✗	✗
COMP constructions	✓	✗

# Feature-based analysis

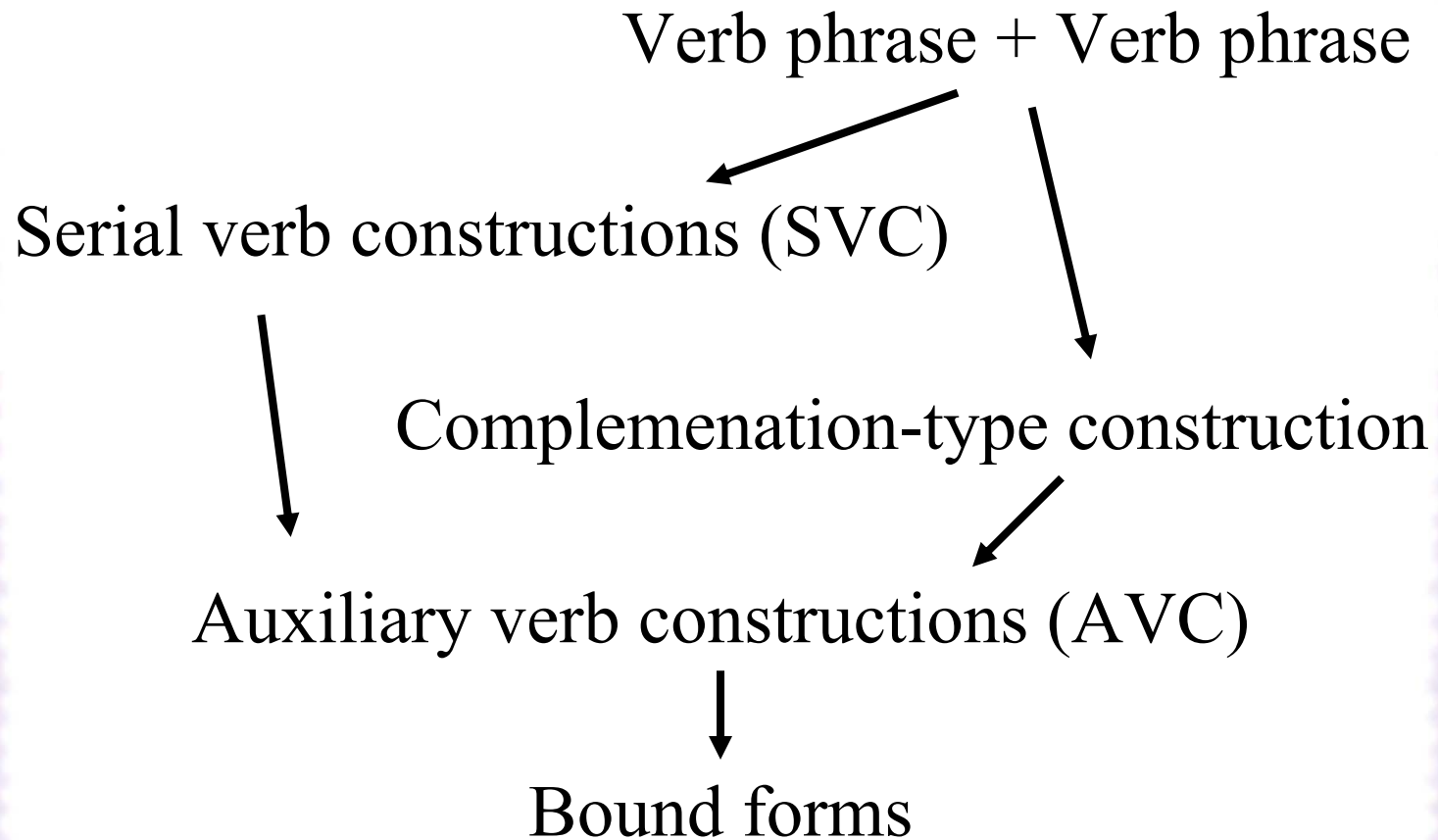
	asa	maqtu
	<i>'must'</i>	<i>'can'</i>
Attracts topic	✓	✓
TAM marking		
PRV <i>-in</i>	✗	✓
PROG <i>-ang</i>	✓	✓
Focus marking	✓	✗
Bound pronouns	✗	✗
COMP constructions	✓	✗

# Grammatical continuum

- For language-internal analysis
- Auxiliary constructions are one step in a fluid grammaticalisation continuum

(Heine 1993)

# Grammatical continuum



Anderson (2004:5); Heine (1993: 48-69)

# Conceptual analysis

- Classification based on comparative concepts (cf. Haspelmath 2011)
  - In the absence of evidence, assume no cross-linguistically grammatical categories
  - Delineate useful concepts for comparison based on similar semantic and grammatical features
  - There might be a discrepancy between language-internal and comparative concepts

# Conclusion

- Formosan auxiliaries are like teenagers:
  - They are annoying because they are fickle, don't like to follow rules, constantly contradict themselves, and often behave irrationally
  - They are by nature in a state of constant flux
  - In order to understand and compare them we might need to give up entrenched ideas

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