



## Analysis

*Yin.n'ang* takes an unpronounced propositional anaphor:

- (6)  $[[pro=p]_F \text{ yin-na}] =\text{yang } q$   
COP-COND EVEN

Literal LF: EVEN ( if it's  $[p]_F, q$  )

(7) **Deriving counterexpectation:**

- a. Let  $P$  be a set of relevant alternatives to  $p$  — propositions  $p'$  where the conditional “if  $p', q$ ” is relevant to consider.
- b. EVEN requires that the conditional “if  $p, q$ ” be less likely than “if  $p', q$ ” for all  $p' \in P$ . (Horn 1969; see also Bennett 1982, von Stechow 1994)
- c. This scalar condition requires very low credence in “if  $p, q$ ,” which is incompatible with an expectation that “if  $p$ , likely  $q$ .” We therefore reason that “if  $p$ , unlikely  $q$ .”

( In other words, EVEN is used to build a *concessive* (‘although/even though’) relation from a *causal* one, as is cross-linguistically common (König 1991: 82–83). See also Ippolito 2004 for related discussion of the analysis of concessive *still*. )

(8) **Deriving the commitment to  $q$ :** (via commitment to  $p$ )

- a. The proposition  $p$  was asserted prior by the same speaker or by another speaker and not denied, committing the speaker to  $p$ .
- b. The speaker asserts “if  $p, q$ .”
- c. By Modus Ponens, the speaker is committed to  $q$ .

(9) **Deriving the commitment to  $q$ :** (without commitment to  $p$ )

Assuming that  $P$  in (7) exhausts all relevant possibilities, this is what Bennett (1982) calls an “introduced” *even if* conditional. In such cases, the assertion “EVEN if  $[p]_F, q$ ” implicates the truth of the consequent  $q$ . See von Stechow 1994: §5.3.3 for discussion.

## 3 On *yin.n'ang* in argument position

Taking the morphology of *yin.n'ang* at face value — COPULA + CONDITIONAL + EVEN (4) — *yin.n'ang* is a conditional clause (with EVEN).

- But in *yin.n'ang*'s focus particle and *wh*-FCI uses,  $X/wh=yin.n'ang$  is in an argument position! This is especially problematic in examples such as (10), where the whole  $=yin.n'ang$  structure takes dative case:

(10) ***Wh=yin.n'ang* with dative case:**

Context: Pema is very friendly.

མོ་རང་སྤྱིན་ནའང་ལ་སྐད་ཆ་བཤད་གི་རེད།

Mo.rang [su yin.n'ang]=la skad.cha bshad-gi-red.

she who YIN.N'ANG=DAT speech talk-IMPF-AUX

‘She talks (habitual) to **anyone**.’

We can think of  $X/wh=yin.n'ang$  as a clausal structure in an argument position which describes that argument; i.e. as a *head-internal relative* or *amalgam* (Lakoff 1974; also Kluck 2011):

- (11) John is going to I think it's Chicago on Saturday. (Lakoff 1974: 324)

...but many approaches to head-internal relatives and amalgams will not apply here, as the embedded clause is a *conditional* clause.

- I propose to adopt the Shimoyama 1999 anaphora approach for (Japanese) head-internal relatives:<sup>2</sup> the clause is interpreted as adjoined to the main clause at LF, with its surface position interpreted as a pronoun.<sup>3</sup>

- (12) a. Literal (10): She talks to [even if it's who]  $\Rightarrow$

- b. LF: [even if it's who], she talks to  $them_i$   $\Rightarrow$   
EVEN [if it's who, she talks to  $them_i$ ]

<sup>2</sup>Tibetan also generally has head-internal relatives (DeLancey 1999, Erlewine 2019a).

<sup>3</sup>Rahul Balusu (p.c.) observes that Hirsch 2016 seems to have independently proposed an analysis much like (12) for the interpretation of English *ever* free relatives.

## 4 Concessive scalar focus particle

### (13) Spanish *aunque sea* in a conditional (Lahiri 2010):

Si lees **aunque sea** UN libro, vas a aprobar.  
 if you read AUNQUE SEA one book, you'll pass  
 ≈ 'If you read **even just** one book, you'll pass.'

Concessive scalar particles...

- Alonso-Ovalle (2016: 185): "trigger a characteristic interpretation: they convey a strengthening effect in downward entailing environments, a 'settle for less' interpretation in modal contexts..." and
- Crnič (2011: 5): "The associate [of a concessive scalar particle] is the lowest element on the pragmatic scale."

### (14) X *yin.n'ang* licensed by a conditional:

དེབ་གཅིག་ཡིན་ནའང་སློབ་ན་ཡིག་ཚད་མཐར་འཁྲུལ་གི་རེད། / # ... གསུམ་ ... = (2)  
 [Dep [gciɡ/#gsum]<sub>F</sub> yin.n'ang klog-na] yig.tshad mthar.'khyol-gi-red.  
 book three/#three YIN.N'ANG read-COND exam succeed-IMPF-AUX  
 ≈ '[If [you] read **even just** one/#three book(s), [you] will pass the exam.'

### (15) X *yin.n'ang* licensed by negation:

བཀྲ་ཤིས་ཨང་གསུམ་པ་ཡིན་ནའི་ལེན་མི་འདུག། / \* ... ལེན་འདུག།  
 bKra.shis ang [gsum]<sub>F</sub>-pa yin.n'i len-\*(mi)-'dug.  
 Tashi number three-ORD YIN.N'ANG receive-NEG-AUX  
 'He didn't **even** get [third]<sub>F</sub> place.'

### (16) X *yin.n'ang* licensed in an imperative:

ཁ་ལག་ཁྲིས་ཡིན་ནའི་བ་དང།  
 Kha.lag [tis]<sub>F</sub> yin.n'i za-(dang)!  
 food a little YIN.N'ANG eat-IMP  
 ≈ 'Eat **at least** a little food!'

## Analysis, in the spirit of Lahiri 2010<sup>4</sup>

### (17) Licensing in a conditional (14):

- LF: EVEN [<sub>α</sub> if it<sub>i</sub>'s [one/three]<sub>F</sub> book,  
 [if you read it<sub>i</sub>, you will pass the exam] ]
- $[[\alpha]]^{\text{alt}} = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \wedge \text{if it}_i\text{'s } n \text{ books, [if you read them}_i, \\ \text{you will pass the exam]} \end{array} : n \geq 1 \right\}$
- With a weak element, 'one':  
 $[[\alpha]]^{\circ} = \wedge \text{if it}_i\text{'s } \underline{\text{one}} \text{ book, [if you read it}_i, \text{ you will pass the exam]}$   
 The prejacent  $[[\alpha]]^{\circ}$  is the least likely within  $[[\alpha]]^{\text{alt}}$ , satisfying EVEN.
- With a stronger element, 'three':  
 $[[\alpha]]^{\circ} = \wedge \text{if it}_i\text{'s } \underline{\text{three}} \text{ books, [if you read it}_i, \text{ you will pass the exam]}$   
 $[[\alpha]]^{\circ}$  is *not* the least likely alternative and so EVEN is infelicitous.

### (18) Licensing by negation with 'even' reading (15):

Consider only first, second, third places here.

- LF: EVEN [<sub>α</sub> if it<sub>i</sub>'s [third]<sub>F</sub> place, Tashi didn't get it<sub>i</sub> ]
- $[[\alpha]]^{\circ} = \wedge \text{if it}_i\text{'s } \text{third place, Tashi didn't get it}_i$   
 $[[\alpha]]^{\text{alt}} = \{ \wedge \text{if it}_i\text{'s } n\text{-th place, Tashi didn't get it}_i : n \in \{1, 2, 3\} \}$   
 Assuming getting first place is less likely — or more noteworthy (Herburger 2000) — than second, etc., *not* getting third place will be the least likely, satisfying EVEN.

This reasoning relies on the negation to reverse likelihood relations, and thus follows the general logic of weak elements associating with EVEN to form NPIs (Lahiri 1998; see also Lee and Horn 1995).

<sup>4</sup>Lahiri 2010 discusses the distribution and interpretation of Spanish *aunque sea*, which appears to be *even if* + (subjunctive) *copula*, and discusses possible compositional accounts. He also relates this to the Greek concessive scalar *esto ke*, which is also *even + if* (Giannakidou 2007).

(19) **Licensing *yin.n'ang* in an imperative (16):**

- a. LF for (16):  $\text{EVEN} [\alpha \text{ IMP}(\text{if it's } [a \text{ little}]_F \text{ food}_i, \text{ you eat it}_i)]$   
 $\text{IMP}$  represents the imperative speech act operator.
- b. As imperatives don't have truth conditions (*pace* Kaufmann 2012), we can't order them by likelihood or entailment. So we adopt a *noteworthiness* scale (Herburger 2000).
- c. In a context where a stronger request — e.g.  $\text{IMP}(\text{if it's } a \text{ lot of food}_i, \text{ you eat it}_i)$  — is also appropriate, the speaker's choice to make the weaker request with 'little' is noteworthy, satisfying  $\text{EVEN}$ .
- d. This derives the "at least" or "settle for less" (Alonso-Ovalle 2016) flavor of the concessive scalar particle: Alternative imperatives with higher values would also be appropriate.

## 5 *Wh* universal free choice item

Universal free choice items ( $\forall$ -FCIs) are licensed in a range of modal/conditional and non-episodic (non-veridical; Giannakidou 2001) environments and lead to *universal free choice inferences*:

(20)  $f(\text{FCI}_x) \Rightarrow$  for any choice of  $x$ ,  $f(x)$  is true

(Giannakidou 2001's "quasi-universal effect"; Kratzer and Shimoyama 2002's "distribution requirement")

### Analysis

(21) **Computing the *wh*  $\forall$ -FCI in (10):**

- a. Literal (10): She talks to [even if it's *who*]  $\Rightarrow$
- b. LF:  $\text{EVEN} [\alpha \text{ if it's } who, \text{ she talks to } them_7]$

I follow the approach to non-interrogative *wh* interpretation that I develop in my ongoing work (Erlewine 2019b)...

- c. *Wh*-words have an alternative set ranging over its domain but no ordinary value (Ramchand 1997, Beck 2006, Kotek 2014):

$$\llbracket su/who \rrbracket^o \text{ undefined} \quad \llbracket su/who \rrbracket^{\text{alt}} = \{x : x \text{ animate}\}$$

- d.  $\text{EVEN}$  requires its complement to have a defined ordinary value (the prejacent). But the ordinary value of the sister of  $\text{EVEN}$  in (12b) — containing 'who' — is undefined.
- e. To fix this problem, I use the following covert  $\exists$ :<sup>5</sup>

$$\llbracket \exists \alpha \rrbracket^o = \bigvee \llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^{\text{alt}} \quad \llbracket \exists \alpha \rrbracket^{\text{alt}} = \llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^{\text{alt}}$$

- f. Complete LF:  $\text{EVEN} [\alpha \text{ if } \exists [it_7\text{'s } who], \text{ she talks to } them_7]$

- g.  $\llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^o = \wedge$  if it's *someone*, she talks( $\text{HABITUAL}$ ) to  $them_7$   
 $\llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^{\text{alt}} = \{\wedge$  if it's  $x$ , she talks( $\text{HABITUAL}$ ) to  $them_7 : x \text{ human}\}$

- h. The conditional restricts the domain of a modal/temporal quantifier (Lewis 1975, Kratzer 1979, 1986, von Stechow 1994):

$\forall$  appropriate situations/times  $s$  and assignments  $g$ ,  
where  $g(7)$  exists and is human in  $s$ , she talks to  $g(7)$  in  $s$

- i.  $\llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^o = \wedge \forall s, g[g(7) \text{ defined, human in } s \rightarrow \text{she talks to } g(7) \text{ in } s]$   
 $\llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^{\text{alt}} = \{\wedge \forall s, g[g(7) = x \rightarrow \text{she talks to } g(7) \text{ in } s] : x \text{ human}\}$   
 $\llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^o$  asymmetrically entails every alternative in  $\llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^{\text{alt}}$ .

The presupposition of  $\text{EVEN}$  is thus satisfied: the prejacent is the least likely alternative.

- **The universal force of  $\forall$ -FCIs comes from the universal modal/temporal quantification** — here, habitual — **which is restricted by the conditional!**

<sup>5</sup>Although the effect of the ordinary value here is that of the existential closure/disjunction operator as in Kratzer and Shimoyama 2002 and Alonso-Ovalle 2006, these previous works work in a one-dimensional Hamblin semantics. The  $\exists$  operator here defines an ordinary value but does not touch the focus semantic value. As it turns out, this feature is important for modeling the interaction of many non-interrogative *wh* with focus particles. See Erlewine 2019b.

(22) **But what if the conditional restricts a possibility modal?**

a.  $\exists$  accessible  $w$  and assignment  $g$ ,  
where  $g(7)$  exists and is human in  $w$ , she talks to  $g(7)$  in  $w$

b.  $[[\alpha]]^o = \wedge \exists w, g [g(7) \text{ defined, human in } w \rightarrow \text{she talks to } g(7) \text{ in } w]$

$[[\alpha]]^{\text{alt}} = \{ \wedge \exists w, g [g(7) = x \rightarrow \text{she talks to } g(7) \text{ in } w] : x \text{ human} \}$

But here, the prejacent  $[[\alpha]]^o$  is *weaker* than each of the alternatives in  $[[\alpha]]^{\text{alt}}$ . The prejacent cannot be less likely than its alternatives, so EVEN is infelicitous!

► The semantics of EVEN ensures that  $wh=yin.n'ang$  ( $\approx$  *even if it's someone*) conditionals can only restrict universal modal/temporal operators!

(23)  **$\forall$ -FCI with possibility modal in (3):**

a. Literal (3): He can eat [even if the food is what]

b. If the food<sub>i</sub> exists, he CAN eat it<sub>i</sub> × EVEN

c. If the food<sub>i</sub> exists, MUST [ he CAN eat it<sub>i</sub> ] ○ EVEN

$\Rightarrow \forall\text{-FC} > \text{CAN}$

(24)  **$Wh=yin.n'ang$  is ungrammatical in episodic descriptions:**

\*ཁོང་ད་ལྟ་ཁ་ལག་ག་རེ་ཡིན་ནའང་ཟ་བཞིན་འདུག

Khong da.lta [kha.lag **ga.re yin.n'ang**] za-bzhin-'dug.  
 he now food what YIN.N'ANG eat-PROG-AUX

Intended:  $\approx$  'He is/must be eating **any** food right now.'

(25)  $\forall$  epistemically accessible  $w$  and assignments  $g$ ,  
 where  $g(3)$  defined and food in  $w$ , he is eating  $g(3)$  in  $w$

I am exploring two possibilities for the ungrammaticality of (24):

- a. (24) is blocked by a simpler universal quantifier expression.
- b. These conditionals contain specificational copulas which are interpreted as exhaustive (see e.g. Mikkelsen 2005, Romero 2005), leading to contradictions. See also Menéndez-Benito 2010.

## 6 Conclusion

Tibetan  $yin.n'ang$  has three functions:

1.  $Yin.n'ang$  counterexpectational discourse particle
2.  $X yin.n'ang$  concessive scalar focus particle
3.  $wh yin.n'ang$  universal free choice item

► **All three uses can be derived compositionally from its ingredients:**

(4) ཡིན་            ན་                    ཡང་  
 yin            + na                    + yang  
 COPULA      CONDITIONAL      EVEN

► **A new approach to universal free choice**, parasitic on an existing universal/necessity operator via the conditional, enforced by the logical properties of EVEN, motivated by its overt morphology (4).

Extensions:

► If this is really derived from the independent conventional semantics for the copula, conditional, and *even*, we might expect similar expressions in other languages.

Rahul Balusu has recently shown (2019b, 2019a) this to be true in a range of Dravidian languages!

For example, Telugu  $ai-naa$  = COP-EVEN.IF has three functions:

1.  $Ai-naa$  counterexpectational discourse particle
2.  $X ai-naa$  concessive scalar focus particle
3.  $wh ai-naa$  universal/existential free choice item

! But there are subtle differences! For example, Telugu  $wh ai-naa$  also allows  $\exists$ -FCI ('somebody or other') readings. See Balusu 2019a,b.

Japanese *demo* has three functions:

1. *Demo* counterexpectational discourse particle
2. X *demo* concessive scalar focus particle / 'for example'
3. *wh demo* universal free choice item

See the Appendix for some data and one particularly striking parallel between Tibetan *yin.n'ang* and Japanese *demo*.

! But there is a subtle difference! *Demo* has a 'for example' use (Watanabe 2013). See Appendix.

A complication is that *demo* is not a synchronically productive combination of copula, conditional, and *even*.

- Nakanishi (2006: 141): “-*Demo* can be morphologically decomposed into the copular verb *-de* followed by *-mo* [EVEN]. However, it is not clear whether this decomposition is necessary. Indeed, *-demo* is often treated as a single lexical item corresponding to *even*...”
- Onodera 2004 however argues that Japanese *demo* historically derives from the *V-te* (causal/ asymmetric conjunction) + *mo* (EVEN) construction, described by Yamaguchi 1989 as a concessive conditional.
- ▶ The success of the decomposition for Tibetan *yin.n'ang* — as COPULA + CONDITIONAL + EVEN — in turn motivates a similar decompositional approach for Japanese *demo* as well.

ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཚེ། *Thank you!*

Slides and handout: <https://mitcho.com/research/talk-lsa2020.html>

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## Appendix: Japanese *demo*

Three uses:

- (26) **Counterexpectational discourse particle ‘however’:**  $\cong$  (1)  
 Tashi-wa se-ga takai. **Demo** atama-wa yoku-nai.  
 Tashi-TOP height-NOM high DEMO head-TOP good-NEG  
 ‘Tashi’s tall. **However**, [he] isn’t smart.’
- (27) **Concessive scalar focus particle:**  $\cong$  (2)  
Context: Don’t worry, the test is easy.  
 [Hon-o [is-satsu / ??san-satsu]<sub>F</sub> **demo** yom-eba]  
 book-ACC one-CL three-CL DEMO read-COND  
 shiken-ni gookaku su-ru (yo).  
 exam-DAT PASS DO-NONPAST YO  
 $\approx$  ‘[If [you] read **even just** one book], [you] will pass the exam.’
- (28) **Wh universal free choice item:**  $\cong$  (10)  
Context: Pema is very friendly.  
 Kanojo-wa [**dare**-to **demo**] hana-su.  
 she-TOP who-DAT DEMO talk-NONPAST  
 ‘She talks to **anyone**.’

A fascinating parallel between Japanese and Tibetan *wh-FCI*:

- (29) *Dou* is manner ‘how’: (31) *Dou-demo* can’t be used for (33) *But dou-demo* can express strong indifference:  
 Chibetto-ni *dou* ‘any way’;  
 Tibet-DAT how \**Dou-demo* ik-u (yo).  
 ik-u-no? how-DEMO go-NONPAST YO  
 go-NONPAST-Q Intended: ≈ ‘I will go how-  
 ever/in any way.’  
 ‘How will you go to Tibet?’
- (30) རོད་ལ་གང་ལྟ་ལྟོ་ཡི་ལོ། (32) \*གང་ལྟ་ཡིན་ནའང་ལྟོ་ཡི་ལོ། (34) གང་ལྟ་ཡིན་ནའང་འགྲིག་གི་རྟོ།  
 Bod-la gang.dra Gang.’dra yin.n’ang  
 Tibet-DAT how how go-FUT-AUX  
 ‘gro-ya-yin? ‘gro-ya-yin. ‘grig-gi-red.  
 go-FUT-AUX go-FUT-AUX alright-IMPF-AUX  
 ‘How will you go to Tibet?’ Intended: ≈ ‘I will go how-  
 ever/in any way.’ Intended: ≈ ‘Anything is fine.’  
 (Speaker comment: ‘I don’t care.’)

However, Japanese *demo* as a focus particle has a ‘for example’ use that Tibetan *yin.n’ang* lacks:

- (35) Teramura 1991 in Watanabe (37) Watanabe 2013: 208: (39) Ocha-**demo** nomi-masu-ka?  
 2013: 207: Kaze-**demo** hii-ta-no? tea-DEMO drink-POLITE-Q  
 John-ni-**demo** kik-ou. cold-DEMO catch-PAST-Q  
 John-DAT-DEMO ask-let’s ‘Would you like to get tea, for  
 example?’  
 ‘Let’s ask John, for example.’
- (36) \*བཤའ་གིས་ཡིན་ནའང་ལའདྲི་གོ། (38) \*ཁྱེད་རང་ཚམས་པ་ཡིན་ནའང་བརྒྱབ་འདུག་གས། (40) \*ཁྱེད་རང་ཡིན་ནའང་འཇུང་ཡ་ཡིན་པས།  
 bKra.shis-yin.n’ang-la Khyed.rang cham.pa you cold Khyed.rang cha yin.n’ang  
 Tashi-YIN.N’ANG-DAT you cold you tea YIN.N’ANG  
 ‘dri-go. yin.n’ang brgyab’dug-gas? ‘thung-ya-yin-pas?  
 ask-let’s YIN.N’ANG build-AUX-Q dring-FUT-AUX-Q  
 literally ‘Let’s ask *yin.n’ang* literally ‘Will you drink  
 Tashi.’ *yin.n’ang* a cold?’ *yin.n’ang* tea?’