Psych Predicates and Causation in Hakka: A Constructional Approach**

Huang Han-chun*

Abstract

This paper investigates the properties of Hakka psych predicates with a focus on the interaction of lexical semantics and syntax. Based on syntactic realization, psych predicates in Hakka are divided into two types: experiencer-subject (such as the verb *fear*), including *xiag4* "to like," *seu5* "to worry," *nau1* "to dislike," *giang1* "to fear," and *kien2* "to get angry," and stimulus-subject (such as the verb *frighten*), including *hag4* "to frighten." All data in this paper are corpus-based and reflect real-world usage of Hakka psych predicates.

Psych predicates of the experiencer-subject type have similar syntactic distributions such as allowing degree modification and occurring in result/extent constructions. Psych predicates of the stimulus-subject type express causation in terms of lexical (e.g. *hag4* "to frighten"), morphological (e.g. V-*xi2*

compounds), or analytic (i.e. periphrastic, syntactic) means (e.g. [bun_1+NP+V] and [ded_4+$ngin_5$+V], though the latter is fossilized, or lexicalized). The morphological and analytic causatives have the function of converting psych predicates of the experiencer-subject type into those of the stimulus-subject type. Thus they may be viewed as a kind of mechanism to counteract the asymmetry that lexical psych predicates of the stimulus-subject type are outnumbered by those of the experiencer-subject type in Hakka.

We adopt the theory of Construction Grammar (Goldberg 1995) which argues that the basic building blocks in grammar are constructions (form-meaning pairings). It has the advantage of explaining the interaction of the psych predicates and the seven sentential constructions (three of the experiencer-subject type and four of the stimulus-subject type) discussed in this paper, without having to resort to additional, ad hoc senses of the psych predicates.

1. Introduction

Psych predicates have been a hotly debated topic in the linguistics literature. It is unique in that, unlike typical transitive verbs which have clear-cut distinction between the more agent-like argument (realized as the grammatical subject) and the more patient-like argument (realized as the grammatical object), there is a kind of "flip-flop" phenomenon found in the psych predicates of the world's many languages. This phenomenon is due to the peculiarity of the arguments in psych predicates: their argument roles Experiencer and Stimulus are close in the Proto-Agent-Proto-Patient axis in the sense of Dowty (1991).

This paper follows the framework of Construction Grammar (Goldberg 1995) and discusses the interaction of lexical semantics and syntax of Hakka psych

predicates.[1] Based on distributional properties, psych predicates can have either an experiencer-subject like the verb *fear* or a stimulus-subject like the verb *frighten*. The following Hakka psych predicates will be discussed in this paper: 惜 *xiag4* "to like," 愁 *seu5* "to worry," 惱 *nau1* "to dislike," 驚 *giang1* "to fear," 譴 *kien2* "to get angry," and 嚇 *hag4* "to frighten."[2]

The issue of causation also plays a role in the discussion of psych predicates. We distinguish between three types of causation: lexical, morphological, and analytic (or periphrastic, or syntactic). Besides lexical causatives like *hag4* "to frighten," the morphological causative [V-*xi2*] and the analytic causatives [*bun1*+NP+V] and [*ded4*+*ngin5*+V] will be discussed. They are superficially parallel, but they have different syntactic behaviors.

This paper is organized as follows: Besides this introduction, Section 2 presents a literature review of psych predicates and causation; Section 3 describes the theoretical framework of Construction Grammar; Section 4 discusses psych

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1   The term "predicate" used here covers what is traditionally called verbs and adjectives. Since the distinction between verbs and adjectives in Hakka as well as in other Sinitic languages cannot be made based on morphological (i.e. derivational and inflectional) properties alone, and relies also on syntactic distributions, it is controversial to claim a clear-cut distinction between a verb and an adjective. To avoid this uncertainty, the term "predicate" is used throughout this paper, though the formulaic symbol V is still used in expressing constructions such as [*bun1*+NP+V].

2   The romanization of Hakka here follows the Sixian (四縣) dialect version of the Romanization Proposal for Taiwan Hakka (臺灣客家語拼音方案) adopted by the Ministry of Education (MOE). To improve visual layout and avoid confusion with footnotes, subscripted numbers are used to mark tones (this applies to data from Mandarin Chinese and Taiwan Southern Min as well). The numbers represent the following tones in Sixian Hakka: 1 for rising; 2 for falling; 3 for high level; 4 for low entering; 5 for low level; 8 for high entering. The romanized spelling is preceded by the corresponding character based on Recommended Characters for Written Taiwan Hakka (臺灣客家語書寫推薦用字) announced by MOE. Note that the list of psych predicates here is not meant to be exhaustive. Psych predicates are part of the lexicon, and their open-class nature makes it difficult to enumerate all of them. Those listed here are chosen because of their high frequency of occurrence and monosyllabicity. Thus excluded are disyllabic psych predicates used nominally as well as predicatively like 歡喜 *fon1hi2* "delighted," 快樂 *kuai3log8* "happy," and 艱苦 *gan1ku2* "sad."

predicates of the experiencer-subject type; Section 5 discusses issues of causation and psych predicates of the stimulus-subject type; Section 6 concludes this paper.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews some significant works related to our discussion of Hakka psych predicates here. The first part gives a review of psych predicates in some languages, and the second part presents formal and semantic properties of causation.

2.1. Works on Psych Predicates

Psych predicates exhibit diverse mapping from lexical semantics to syntax. Belletti and Rizzi (1988) suggest that two θ-roles exist for psych verbs: Theme and Experiencer. The mapping from θ-grids to syntax is determined by case-grids. Grimshaw (1990) explains the syntactic realization of psych verbs by resorting to the interaction of Thematic Tier and Aspectual Tier. Based on the four event types: activity, accomplishment, achievement, and state, Van Voorst (1992) claims that all psych verbs belong to the event type of achievement, which cannot express measurable or delimitable events. Levin (1993) distinguishes between four groups of psych predicates, *amuse/admire/marvel/appeal* based on transitivity and argument positions.

Most, if not all, psych predicates have two arguments. The first is less controversially called *Experiencer*, while the second is argued to be either *Stimulus*, or *Cause*, or *Theme*. Based on distributional properties, Jackendoff (2007: 217) distinguishes between two types of psych predicates: (1a) has an experiencer-subject and a stimulus-object, while (1b) has a stimulus-subject and an experiencer-object.

(1) a. John fears sincerity.

　　b. Sincerity frightens John.

Jackendoff (2007: 218) lists the following basic sentence patterns of psych predicates. Since the subject is always present while the object is not, those in (2a)-(2c) are called Experiencer-Subject (henceforth ES) type, and those in (2d)-(2f) are

called Stimulus-Subject (henceforth SS) type.

(2) a. I'm bored.   (Experiencer-Adjective)

    b. I'm bored with this.   (Experiencer-Adjective-Stimulus)

    c. I detest this.   (Experiencer-Verb-Stimulus)

    d. This bores me.   (Stimulus-Verb-Experiencer)

    e. This is [boring / detestable] to me.   (Stimulus-Adjective-Experiencer)

    f. This is [boring / detestable].   (Stimulus-Adjective)

The notion of ES-type and SS-type psych predicates also applies to Mandarin Chinese, but the lexical properties and syntactic behavior are different from those in English. Here we briefly review Wu (1993) and Chang et al. (2000), since the issues there concern us the most. [3]

Based on transitivity and causation, Wu (1993) distinguishes between *psychological causatives* like 振奮 *zhen4fen4* "to excite," *psychological statives* like 擔心 *dan1xin1* "to worry," and *psychological intransitives* like 震驚 *zhen4jing1* "to be shocked," which correspond to Jackendoff's (2007) SS-type transitive, ES-type transitive, and ES-type intransitive, respectively. However, there is a gap here: the SS-type intransitive, which is absent in Wu (1993), can be exemplified by 有趣 *you3qu4* "interesting."

Chang et al. (2000) discuss near-synonyms of "verbs of emotion" in Mandarin Chinese. On top of distributional criteria, two types of verbs (grouped into seven semantic categories of happiness, depression, sadness, regret, anger, fear, and worry) of emotion are distinguished. Type A verbs (like 高興 *gao1xing4* "happy") are predominantly used as predicates while Type B verbs (like 快樂 *kuai4le4* "happy") are much more often used in their nominalized forms (arguments or nominal modifiers). Generally speaking, Type A verbs tend to express transition while Type B verbs are often used to indicate homogeneity. The morphological structures of these verbs are also resorted to: All Type A verbs are non-VV

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3 Other works on psych predicates in Mandarin Chinese include Yang (2000), Liu (2001), and W. Lai (2004), to mention only a few.

compounds, while most Type B verbs are (Chang et al. 2000: 76-77).

To the knowledge of the author, works on psych predicates in Taiwan Southern Min and Hakka are rare, if not non-existent. Based on the rationale that Taiwan Southern Min and Hakka are also Sinitic languages, we believe that the discussions above can be extended to the study of psych predicates in Taiwan Southern Min and Hakka as well.

2.2. On Causation

Causation is a complex concept with heavy philosophical overtones. Linguistically, it can be tackled in terms of formal markings and semantic parameters. For example, Shibatani (1976) distinguishes between *lexical causative* and *productive causative* based on formal markings, and between *manipulative causative* and *directive causative* based on semantic parameters. This subsection presents previous works on formal and semantic properties of causation, with emphasis on three related Sinitic languages: Mandarin Chinese, Taiwan Southern Min, and Hakka.

2.2.1. Formal Properties of Causation

From a typological perspective, Comrie (1989) gives a three-way distinction among *analytic causative, morphological causative*, and *lexical causative*. Analytic causatives express causation in syntactic structures like complex sentences, containing causative verbs like *cause* or *have* as in English. Morphological causatives express causation using affixation. For example, the Turkish verb *öl-dör* "to kill" is formed by suffixing the non-causative verb *öl* "to die" with the causative suffix *–dir* (along with vowel harmony). Lexical causatives are verbs that are causative themselves. One sense of the English verb *sink* is "to cause to sink," making this verb a lexical causative. Finer distinction on causation can be found in Dixon (2000).

The three-way distinction of Comrie (1989) extends to causatives in Mandarin Chinese. Causative verbs like 使 *shi₃*, 令 *ling₄*, 教 *jiao₄*, 叫 *jiao₄*, and 讓 *rang₄* discussed in Chang (2005) are analytic causatives which, together with the simplex

verbs, form complex syntactic structures traditionally termed *pivotal constructions*. Morphological causatives are for the most part V-V compounds (specifically verb-complement compounds, or resultative-verb compounds) as shown in Huang (1988), Li (1990, 1995), and Cheng and Huang (1994), to mention only a few. Monosyllabic lexical causatives are rare, if not impossible, in Mandarin Chinese. Tang (2002) observes that the monosyllabic verb 開 *kai1* "to open," like other compound verbs, participates in the causative-inchoative alternation.

Inspired by R. Cheng (1974, 1985), Lien (1999) offers a detailed discussion of causatives in Taiwan Southern Min. Analytic (i.e. syntactic, periphrastic) causatives in Taiwan Southern Min include verbs like 與 *hoo7* "to give," 拍 *phah4* "to hit," and 創 *chhong3* "to make." [4] Synthetic (or morphological) causatives in Taiwan Southern Min can be classified based on the difference between simplex and causative verbs. Tonal alternation is exemplified by 斷 *tng7* "to break" and 斷 *tng2* "to cause to break," while initial alternation is exemplified by 上 *chiunn7* "to ascend" and 上 *chhiunn7* "to cause to ascend." Lexical causatives in Taiwan Southern Min are either labile causatives, where the simplex verb and the causative verb share the same form, e.g. 起 *khi2* "to rise" and 起 *khi2* "to raise," or suppletive causatives, where no morphological relationship is found between the simplex verb and the causative verb, e.g. 食 *chiah8* "to eat" and 飼 *chhi7* "to feed."

The word 分 *bun1* is originally a verb meaning "to give; to separate" in Hakka. Lai (2001) shows that *bun1* exhibits multiple grammatical functions and discusses its two-cline grammaticalization. One function that concerns us here is the causative (or, more precisely, permissive) marker. [5] Thus *bun1* is an analytic causative in the sense of Comrie (1989). Verb-complement constructions in Hakka sometimes express causatives when the complement is a result (Chiang 2007); they are morphological causatives.

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4   The verb *hoo7* can also be used in dative and passive constructions, in additional to causatives. See Cheng et al. (1999).

5   Chiang (2006) also considers *bun1* a causative marker in the Dongshi dialect of Hakka.

2.2.2. Semantic Properties of Causation

Talmy's (2000) model of Force Dynamics provides a significant perspective on how entities interact under the cover term *causation*. The two entities are called the *Agonist* (the focal force entity) and the *Antagonist* (the force element that opposes it). Each entity has intrinsic force tendency of being toward action or being toward rest. The resultant of the force interaction is either *action* or *rest*, based on which entity is stronger. The Agonist interacts with Antagonist according to parametric variations. This model explains causation subtypes such as helping, letting, preventing, and overcoming.

In Mandarin Chinese, S. Huang (1974: 360) distinguishes between *event causatives* (3a) and *factive causatives* (3b). While an event causative contains a causal link between an event and a state, the cause in a factive causative must be interpretable as a fact or fact-like entity, e.g. idea, notion, thought, motion, or proposal, etc.

(3) a. 張三把他踢死了 [6]

   zhang1san1   ba3 ta1   ti1-si3   le
   Zhangsan   BA 3SG   kick-dead   ASP

"Zhangsan kicked him/her dead."

b. 照片把我嚇了一跳

   zhao4pian4   ba3   wo3   xia4   le   yi2tiao4
   picture   BA   1SG   scare   ASP   one:jump

"The picture scared me so I jumped up."

The term *indirect imperative* is first used in Teng (1989: 229) to categorize the semantics involved in pivotal constructions where the main verbs are 催 *cui1* "to urge," 勸 *quan4* "to persuade," or 請 *qing3* "to ask," and the like. In her diachronic

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6   Abbreviations used in the glosses of Mandarin Chinese data: ASP for aspect marker; NEG for negation marker; PRT for particle; SG for singular; 1/2/3 for first/second/third person, respectively. Function words that retain their forms in the glosses are BA (for 把 *ba3*, a disposal marker), JIANG (for 將 *jiang1*, a disposal marker), and RANG (for 讓 *rang4*, a causative/passive marker).

study of causativization of verbs such as 使 *shi₃,* 令 *ling₄,* 教 *jiao₄,* 叫 *jiao₄,* and 讓 *rang₄,* Chang (2005) argues for three major tendencies involved in the history of these verbs: from *shi₃-yi₄* (使役), or indirect imperatives, to causatives, from deliberate causatives to non-deliberate causatives, and from general causatives to descriptive causatives. For brevity I will not explain all the terms above, but instead resort to a brief demonstration of the distinction between *shi₃-yi₄,* as in (4a), and descriptive causatives, as in (4b):

(4) a. 我攔住河沿，不讓他回去，務要將他擒了 [7]

   wo₃   lan₂   zhu₄ he₂yan₄, bu₂   rang₄   ta₁   hui₂qu₄, wu₄
   1SG   intercept ASP riverbank NEG RANG 3SG return   definitely

   yao₄ jiang₁ ta₁   qin₂   le
   want JIANG 3SG catch   PRT

   "I will intercept him at the riverbank, and not allow him to return. He must be caught."

   b. 他這種情形真讓我擔心 [8]

   ta₁   zhe₄ zhong₃ qing₂xing₂ zhen₁ rang₄   wo₃ dan₁xin₁
   3SG   this kind   situation   really RANG 1SG worry

   "The situation he is in really worries me."

The distinction of *shi₃-yi₄* (i.e. indirect imperative) and descriptive causative shows that "causation" is a cover term for a bunch of related but different concepts. It is descriptive causative that is relevant to our study of psych predicates here.

3. Theoretical Framework

The term *Construction Grammar* is a cover term for a family of theories which view grammatical constructions as the basic building blocks in language, as opposed

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7   From Chang (2005: 128) with my translation, originally from Chapter 22 of *Journey to the West* (西遊記), one of the Four Great Classical Novels of Chinese literature.

8   From Chang (2005: 137) with my translation.

to the traditional view that syntactic rules and the lexicon alone shape the language. Early pioneering works of Construction Grammar include, among others, Fillmore et al. (1988), Michaelis and Lambrecht (1996), Jackendoff (1997), and Kay and Fillmore (1999). Goldberg's (1995, 2006) idea of a constructional argument (in contrast to a verbal argument) is employed in her books to account for argument mismatches in many argument structure constructions.

A construction is a pairing of form (syntax and phonology) and meaning (semantics, pragmatics, etc.). Goldberg (1995: 4) gives the following definition of a construction: "C is a construction iff$_{def}$ C is a form-meaning pair <F_i, S_i> such that some aspect of F_i or some aspect of S_i is not strictly predictable from C's component parts or from other previously established constructions."

Thus a construction is nonredundant. It can be of various scales: as short as words or phrases, e.g. *let alone* in Fillmore et al. (1988), or as long as sentences, e.g. ditransitive and resultative constructions in Goldberg (1995). Constructions may contain constants and variables alike. The elements in the *let alone* construction are solely constants (*substantive*); those in ditransitives and resultatives are solely variables (*schematic*). Some constructions are mixtures of both, e.g. the *V-ing NP away* construction (Jackendoff 1997) and the *What's X doing Y?* construction (Kay and Fillmore 1999). A cline of constructions is summarized in Goldberg (2003: 220).

In this sense, constructions are basic building blocks of grammar. There is no need to distinguish grammar from lexicon, as everything is a construction in the widest sense. One of the advantages of Construction Grammar is that implausible verb senses are avoided. The examples below are from Goldberg (1995: 9). The verbs below appear in sentence patterns that they are normally incompatible with: in (5a), *sneeze* appears in a sentence where *take* normally appears; in (5b), *bake* appears in a sentence where *send* normally appears; in (5c), *talk* appears in a sentence where *make* normally appears.

(5) a. He sneezed the napkin off the table.

b. She baked him a cake.

c. Dan talked himself blue in the face.

One can easily propose that there are two argument structures out there for each of the verb above, but the cost is the proliferation of word senses. The verbs above do not alter their meanings; they simply retain their original senses. It makes no sense to add ad hoc argument structures simply to explain the sentences in (5).

Construction Grammar can avoid this proliferation by attributing the senses to the sentential constructions per se. Sentences are constructions which provide meanings, as well as contribute to argument structures. (5a) is a caused-motion construction; (5b) is a ditransitive construction; (5c) is a resultative construction. Different constructions have different constructional arguments. The integration of semantically compatible *verbal* and *constructional* arguments determines the meaning of the whole sentence.

In this paper, Construction Grammar is adopted to explain the syntactic distributions of psych predicates in Hakka. But before that, we have to present data for psych predicates in Hakka.

Based on argument realization, psych predicates can be either of the ES-type or the SS-type. An ES-type psych predicate has an experiencer-subject and an optional stimulus-object. Contrarily, an SS-type psych predicate has an stimulus-subject and an experiencer-object. In the following two sections, Section 4 discusses ES-type psych predicates, while Section 5 discusses SS-type psych predicates and the typology of causation.

4. ES-Type Psych Predicates in Hakka

This section presents ES-type psych predicates in Hakka. Their syntactic behaviors are discussed in each of the following subsections. They can engage in transitive alternation, allow modification, or be followed by extent/result phrases.

4.1. Psych Predicates in Transitive Alternation

The psych predicates *xiag4* "to like," *seu5* "to worry," *nau1* "to dislike," *giang1*

"to fear," and *kien₂* "to get angry" have experiencers as their subjects, and stimuli as their objects, as shown in (6).

(6) a. 吾家娘毋惜𠊎 [9]

    nga₅   *ga₁ngiong₅*   *m₅*   *xiag₄*   *ngai₅*

    1SG.G   mother-in-law   NEG   like   1SG

  "My mother-in-law does not like me."

  b. 佢愁愛樣般過去

    gi₅   *seu₅*   *oi₃*   *ngiong₂ban₁*   *go₃*   *hi₃*

    3SG   worry   want   how   cross   go

  "He was worried about how he could go across."

  c. 頭擺有一個心臼惱家娘

    teu₅bai₂   *iu₁*   *id₄*   *ge₃*   *xim₁kiu₁*   *nau₁*   *ga₁ngiong₅*

    past   have   one   CL   daughter-in-law   dislike   mother-in-law

  "Once upon a time, there was a woman who disliked her mother-in-law."

  d. 你驚麼个

    ng₅   *giang₁*   *ma₂ge₃*

    2SG   fear   what

  "What are you afraid of ?"

  e. 頭擺吾姆當肥，有一擺因為譴吾爸常常飲酒賭徼，就絕食抗議，<u>幾下</u>日結果就瘦下來 [10]

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9   Part of the examples used in this paper are from the NCCU Corpus of Spoken Hakka（國立政治大學客語口語語料庫）at http://140.119.172.200/ and Hakka data collected and transcribed by teachers and research assistants at related departments/institutes of various universities in Taiwan, whose efforts and kindness in sharing the data are heartily appreciated. Abbreviations used in the glosses are: ASP for aspect marker; CL for classifier; G for genitive case; NEG for negation marker; PRT for particle; SFX for suffix; SG for singular; 1/2/3 for first/second/third person, respectively. Nominative and accusative cases are not distinguished and thus unmarked. Function words that retain their forms in the glosses are BUN (for 分 *bun₁*, a multi-functional marker; see Lai 2001), DO (for 到 *do₃*, a result/extent marker, distinct from 著 *do₂*, an aspect marker; see S. Li and Lai 2011), and GE (for 个 *ge₃*, a possessive/adjective marker or a nominalizer, distinct from demonstrative 該 *ge₃* and classifier 個 *ge₃*).

10 The underlined characters 幾下 *gi₂ha₃* expresses the combined and reduced form *gia₁*.

teu5bai2　nga5　me1　dong1pi5,　iu1　id4bai2　in1vi3
past　1SG.G　mom　very chubby　have　once　because

kien2　nga5　ba1　cong5cong5　im2　ziu2　du2gieu2,　qiu3
angry　1SG.G　dad　often　　　drink　wine　gamble　then

qied8siid8　kong3ngi3,　gia1　ngid4, gied4go2　qiu3 ceu3　ha1loi5
hunger:strike　protest　several　day　so　　　then slender　come:down

"My mom was very chubby. Once she went on hunger strike to protest against my dad's alcohol abuse and gambling. She became slender within several days."

　　If the stimulus is understood contextually, the object can be omitted in syntax, though semantically the stimulus is still present, as shown in (7).

(7) a. 吾爸頭擺已惜偃唷，啊這下就毋惜了

nga5　ba1　teu5bai2　i3　xiag4　ngai5　io2,　a3　ia2ha3　qiu3
1SG.G　dad　past　　　very　like　1SG　PRT　PRT　now　　then

m5　xiag4　le2
NEG　like　PRT

"My dad used to like me, but not any more."

b. 你毋使愁，偃有辦法做，你去睡

ng5　m5sii2　seu5,　ngai5　iu1　pan3fab4　zo3,　ng5　hi3　soi3
2SG　need:not　worry　1SG　have　method　do　2SG　go　sleep

"Don't worry. I can do it. Go sleep!"

c.「十人九痔」，講到痔仔，儕儕都驚，儕儕都惱

"siib8　ngin5　giu2　cii3,"　gong2　do3　cii3-e2,　sa5sa5　du3
ten　person　nine　pile　talk　DO　pile-SFX　everyone　all

giang1,　sa5sa5　du3　nau1
afraid　everyone　all　worried

"'Nine out of ten people have piles.' When it comes to piles, everyone is afraid and worried."

d. 喊佢做麼个佢亦毋會譴

hem₁   gi₅   zo₃   ma₂ge₃   gi₅   id₈   m₅   voi₃   kien₂
order   3SG   do   what   3SG   also   NEG   will   angry
"When asked to do something, he doesn't get angry."

Besides the basic pattern, ES-type psych predicates can be modified by degree adverbs or result/extent phrases. The discussions are in the next subsection.

4.2. Modification by Degree Adverbs or Result/Extent Phrases

Psych predicates are mostly gradable, and therefore modification by degree adverbs is possible, as shown in (8). Degree modification has nothing to do with transitivity: (8a) and (8c) are transitive, while the others are intransitive.

(8) a. 丈人哀盡惜滿女

cong₁min₅oi₁   qin₃   xiag₄   man₁   ng₂
mother-in-law   very   like   youngest   daughter
"The mother-in-law likes the youngest daughter very much."

b. 毋過厥姆看著倈仔一日一日瘦了去，心中盡愁

m₅go₃gia₁   me₁   kon₃   do₂   lai₃-e₂   id₄   ngid₄   id₄   ngid₄
but   3SG.G   mom   look   ASP   son-SFX   one   day   one   day

ceu₃   le₂   hi₃,   xim₁   zung₁   qin₃   seu₅
slender   ASP   go   heart   inside   very   worried
"But his mom saw him getting thinner and thinner day by day, which worried her a lot."

c. 大家一定都當惱寒天伯公

tai₃ga₁   id₄tin₃   du₃   dong₁   nau₁   hon₅tien₁   bag₄gung₁
everyone   definitely   all   very   annoyed   winter   granduncle
"Everyone is definitely very annoyed with Winter Granduncle." (In storytelling)

d. 佢看著恁樣，已傷心又當驚

gi₅   kon₃   do₂   an₂ngiong₅,   i₃   song₁xim₁   iu₃   dong₁   giang₁
3SG   look   ASP   so   very   sad   and   very   scared
"When he saw such things, he became very sad and scared."

e. 佢爸佢姆當譴

gia5   ba1   gia5   me1   dong1   kien2

3SG.G   dad   his   mom   very   angry

"His parents were very angry."

In addition to being modified directly by degree adverbs, psych predicates can also appear in result/extent phrases introduced by 到 *do3* (which is also a verb meaning "to arrive" originally).

(9) a. 𠊎對佢恁好恁好，惜佢惜到恁仔

ngai5   dui3   gi5   an2   ho2   an2   ho2,   xiag4   gi5   xiag4   do3   an2-e2

1SG   treat   3SG   so   well   so   well   like   he   like   DO   so

"I treat him so well, and like him so much."

b. 𠊎斯愁到毋知愛樣結煞

ngai5   sii5   seu5   do3   m5   di1   oi3   ngiong5gad4sad4

1SG   then   worried   DO   NEG   know   want   what:to:do

"Then I am so worried that I don't know what to do."

c. 阿珍仔分賊仔手項三摸四摸，驚到會死

a1ziin1-e2   bun1   ced8-e2   su2   hong3   sam1   mia1   xi3   mia1,

name-SFX   BUN   robber-SFX   hand   above   three   touch   four   touch

giang1   do3   voi3   xi2

scared   DO   will   die

"Several times, the robber touched Aziin by the hand, and she was scared to death."

d. 害該主人就譴到無命了

hoi3   ge3   zu2ngin5   qiu3   kien2   do3   mo5   miang3   le2.

harm   that   host   then   angry   DO   NEG   life   PRT

"[This] made the host so angry that he died."

If the stimulus-object must be present as in (9a), then verb-copying is used to create another syntactic position for the stimulus-object.

Note that since result/extent is a kind of modification, there is no way for this sentence pattern to be modified again by degree adverbs. Likewise, if a degree adverb is present before an ES-type psych predicate, it is impossible for the sentence

to be followed by a result/extent phrase introduced by *do₃*.

4.3. A Summary of the ES-Type Psych Predicates

The distributional properties of ES-type psych predicates found in Sections 4.1-4.2 are summarized below. The codenames C1, C2, and C3 stand for the three constructions.[11]

(10) a. C1: [Exp Pred (Sti)]

    b. C2: [Exp (Deg) Pred (Sti)]

    c. C3: [Exp Pred (Sti Pred) *do₃* Result/Extent]

C1, C2, and C3 share the property of having an experiencer-subject and an optional stimulus-object, with possible modification by a preverbal degree adverb or a result/extent phrase introduced by *do₃*. Note that the parenthesized elements in C3 stand for the optional verb-copying. We will compare the constructions with those found in SS-Type psych predicates later.

5. Causation and SS-Type Psych Predicates in Hakka

This section discusses the ways causation of psych predicates can be expressed in Hakka. We follow Comrie's (1989) distinction among lexical causatives, morphological causatives, and analytic causatives. Causative psych predicates in Hakka are all SS-type, whatever their internal structures might be (some may contain ES-type lexical items).

5.1. Lexical Causatives

This subsection presents data concerned with *hag₄* "to frighten." This verb is intrinsically causative, but it exhibits dual properties of SS-type and ES-type psych predicates. The verb *hag₄* "to frighten" selects a stimulus subject (which may

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11   Abbreviated forms are used here: Exp=experiencer; Pred=predicate; Sti=stimulus; Deg=degree adverb; Result/Extent= result/extent phrase.

be omitted if contextually understood) and an experiencer object, as in (11a) and (11b). When it occurs in a passive sentence introduced by *bun₁*, as in (11c), the subject becomes the experiencer. Here the verb *hag₄* behaves like an SS-type psych predicate.

(11) a. 變鬼來嚇𠊎

bien₃   gui₂   loi₅   hag₄   ngai₅

become   ghost   come   frighten   1SG

"[Someone] became a ghost in order to frighten me."

b. 阿叔嚇細人

a₁sug₄   hag₄   se₃ngin₅

uncle   frighten   child

"Uncle frightened the child."

c. 這下𠊎正經分佢嚇著了

ia₂ha₃   ngai₅   ziin₃gin₁   bun₁   gi₅   hag₄   do₂   le₂

now   1SG   really   BUN   3SG   frighten   ASP   PRT

"Now I'm really frightened by him."

Interestingly, *hag₄* also behaves like an ES-type psych predicate. When *hag₄* is used intransitively (*id₄ha₃* being a postverbal aspectual complement), we have an experiencer-subject here, as in (12).

(12) 轉到家門口，佢嚇一下

zon₂   do₃   ga₁   mun₅   heu₂,   gi₅   hag₄   id₄ha₃

return   DO   home   door   mouth   3SG   frighten   one:below

"Arriving at the door of his house, he was frightened."

Although *hag₄* does not seem to allow degree modification, it can occur in result/extent construction as in (13). The verb *hag₄* here can be replaced by the ES-type psych predicate *giang₁* "to fear" without changing its meaning.

(13) a. 白頭公仔嚇到衝上衝下

pag₈teu₅gung₁-e₂   hag₄   do₃   cung₁   song₃   cung₁   ha₃

Chinese:bulbul-SFX   frighten   DO   rush   above   rush   below

"The Chinese bulbul was so frightened that it rushed up and down."

b. 姓謝个嚇到會死

xiang₃   *qia₃*   *ge₃*   *hag₄*   *do₃*   *voi₃*   *xi₂*

surname   Qia   GE   frighten   DO   will   die

"The guy named Qia was very much frightened."

We see that *hag₄* shows properties of both SS-type and ES-type psych predicates. As an SS-type psych predicate, it can express causation and occurs in passive sentences. As an ES-type psych predicate, it does not allow degree modification but can appear in result/extent constructions. This duality must be explained either lexically (assuming two senses of *hag₄*) or constructionally (assuming one sense of *hag₄* which can be overridden when a particular construction requires), the latter approach being preferred. We turn to the rationale behind this choice later.

5.2. Morphological Causatives

As a Sinitic language, Hakka is productive in resultative-verb compounds. The examples below show resultative-verb compounds with a psych predicate and a result 死 *xi₂* "dead":

(14) a. 會嚇死人

voi₃   *hag₄-xi₂*   *ngin₅*

will   frighten-dead   person

"[It] will frighten people to death."

b. 看著實在驚死𠊎

kon₃   *do₂*   *siid₈cai₃*   *giang₁-xi₂*   *ngai₅*

look   ASP   really   afraid-dead   1SG

"When I saw it, it really frightened me to death."

c. 算命先生會譴死𠊎

son₃miang₃   *xin₁sang₁*   *voi₃*   *kien₂-xi₂*   *ngai₅*

fortune:telling   sir   will   angry-dead   1SG

"The fortune teller really made me furious."

Although the experiencers above are not literally dead, the metaphorical nature

of these examples does not prevent us from arguing that there is causation involved. Since only (14a) contains a lexical causative *hag₄* "to frighten," while psych predicates like *giang₁* "to fear" and *kien₂* "to get angry" are non-causative, the V-*xi₂* compound can be regarded as a kind of morphological causative like the Turkish example *öl-dür* "to kill." For the causative V-*xi₂* compound, it does not matter whether V is causative or not.

5.3. Analytic Causatives

This subsection discusses analytic causatives acting as psych predicates in Hakka. The verb 分 *bun₁* "to give; to separate" is productive in the formation of causative psych predicates, while the verb 得 *ded₄* "to get; to acquire" is less productive. Both verbs mean roughly "to cause" in their respective causative constructions, i.e. [*bun₁*+NP+V] and [*ded₄*+*ngin₅*+V].

5.3.1. The [*bun₁*+NP+V] Construction

In Subsection 2.2.2, the notions of *shi₃-yi₄* (indirect imperative) and descriptive causative are distinguished (Chang 2005). Both can be expressed by the verb *rang₄* in Mandarin Chinese as in (4a) and (4b). Lai (2001) suggests that *bun₁* is a causative marker in Hakka. When co-occurring with psych predicates, *bun₁* expresses descriptive causative, as exemplified below.

(15) a. 你無一件做來分阿爸阿姆滿意个

    ng₅   mo₅   id₄   kien₃ zo₃ loi₅   bun₁ a₁ba₁ a₁me₁ man₁i₃ ge₃

    2SG NEG one CL   do   come BUN dad   mom satisfied GE

  "You haven't done anything that satisfied your dad and mom."

  b. 該隻分阿姆當愁个調皮个細妹仔

    ge₃ zag₄ bun₁ a₁me₁ dong₁ seu₅   ge₃   tiau₅pi₅ ge₃   se₃moi₃-e₂

    that CL   BUN mom very   worried GE   naughty GE   girl-SFX

  "that naughty girl who worried her mom very much"

  c. 恁樣嫁過門去正冊會分人惱哦

    an₂ngiong₅ ga₃   go₃   mun₅ hi₃ zang₃   m₅   voi₃ bun₁

    this:way   marry cross door go   then   NEG will BUN

ngin₅   nau₁   o₂

person   annoyed   PRT

"In this way, you won't annoy the in-laws after you get married."

d. 在屋下肚項，時時愛分阿姆順心

du₃   vug₄ha₁   du₂hong₃,   sii₅sii₅   oi₃   bun₁   a₁me₁   sun₃xim₁

at   home   inside   all:the:time   want   BUN   mom   happy

"At home, you have to keep your mom happy all the time."

We see that *bun₁* is a productive verb in the formation of analytic causatives in Hakka. Psych predicates as different as 滿意 *man₁i₃* "satisfied," 愁 *seu₅* "worried," 惱 *nau₁* "annoyed," and 順心 *sun₃xim₁* "happy" are allowed in this construction.

5.3.2. The [*ded₄+ngin₅*+V] Construction

The [*ded₄+ngin₅*+V] construction is apparently parallel to the [*bun₁*+NP+V] construction; they have similar surface structure and look like analytic (syntactic) causatives, after all. There are, however, some observations that suggest that this is not the case: (i) while the experiencer NP in [*bun₁*+NP+V] is unrestricted, the experiencer *ngin₅* "people" in [*ded₄+ngin₅*+V] is lexically determined; (ii) while the V in [*bun₁*+NP+V] can be virtually any verb or adjective, the V in [*ded₄+ngin₅*+V] is limited to only a few psych predicates; (iii) while degree modification is allowed in the position immediately preceding the V in [*bun₁*+NP+V], it is allowed only before the whole [*ded₄+ngin₅*+V] construction.

Searching the Hakka Corpus for [*ded₄+ngin₅*+V] construction yields 51 instances (30 instances for 得人惜 *ded₄ngin₅xiag₄*, 16 instances for 得人驚 *ded₄ngin₅giang₁*, 3 instances for 得人惱 *ded₄ngin₅nau₁*, and 2 instances for 得人畏 *ded₄ngin₅vi₃*). The following examples show their syntactic distribution.

(16) a. 供一個倈仔又當得人惜哦

giung₃ id₄ ge₃ lai₃-e₂   iu₃   dong₁ ded₄ngin₅xiag₄   o₂

raise   one   CL   son-SFX   again   very   endearing   PRT

"They have a son, who is very endearing."

b. 你看該大老虎恁得人驚

    ng_5 kon_3 ge_3 tai_3 lo_3fu_2 an_2 $ded_4ngin_5giang_1$

    2SG   look   that   big   tiger   so   frightening

  "Look! The big tiger is so frightening."

c. 細老妹盡得人惱

    se_3 lo_2moi_3 cin_3 $ded_4ngin_5nau_1$

    little   sister   very   annoying

  "My little sister is very annoying."

d. 寒天伯公个歌聲，實在得人畏

    hon_5tien_1 bag_4gung_1 ge_3 go_1 $sang_1,$ $siid_8cai_3$ $ded_4ngin_5vi_3$

    winter   granduncle GE   song voice   really   frightening

  "The singing voice of Winter Granduncle is really frightening." (In storytelling)

In (16), the [ded_4+$ngin_5$+V] construction is modified by a variety of degree modifiers: $dong_1$ "very," an_2 "so," cin_3 "very," and $siid_8cai_3$ "really." The English translation suggests that they are like single lexical items, or, to be specific, adjectives ending in *-ing*. The syntactic structure inside does not matter anymore.

If this is the case, then we expect to find them listed in the dictionaries. We looked up Hakka dictionaries published over a wide time span in order to understand the diachronic use of [ded_4+$ngin_5$+V]. The following Hakka dictionaries were consulted, and the results are shown below.

(17) a. MacIver (1905). *A Chinese-English Dictionary, Hakka Dialect*

    b. Rey (1926). *Dictionnaire Chinois-Français Dialecte Hac-ka*

    c. Zhongyuan Zhoukanshe (1992). *Kehua Cidian*

    d. X. Huang (1998). *Meixian Fangyan Cidian*

    e. He and Liu (2006). *Keyu Ciku*

    f. Xu (2009). *Hakka Dictionary of Taiwan*

Table 1   Examples of [ded_4+$ngin_5$+V] in Hakka Dictionaries

Dictionary	Examples of [ded_4+$ngin_5$+V][12]
MacIver (1905)	惜 $xiag_4$, 惱 nau_1, 畏 vi_3, 怕 pa_3, 愛 oi_3, 愁 seu_5, 服 fug_4, 敬重 gin_3cung_3
Rey (1926)	惱 nau_1, 畏 vi_3
Zhongyuan Zhoukanshe (1992)	惜 $xiag_4$, 惱 nau_1, 畏 vi_3
X. Huang (1998)	惜 $xiag_4$, 惱 nau_1
He and Liu (2006)	惜 $xiag_4$, 惱 nau_1, 驚 $giang_1$, 畏 vi_3
Xu (2009)	惜 $xiag_4$, 惱 nau_1, 驚 $giang_1$, 畏 vi_3

The most productive form, [ded_4+$ngin_5$+V], can be found in MacIver (1905), which lists eight items.[13] Two contemporary dictionaries, He and Liu (2006) and Xu (2009), agree with our corpus-based findings. The rest of the dictionaries contain subsets of the four psych predicates. This may be due to lack of comprehensiveness.

It is interesting to note that psych predicates allowed in the modern form of [ded_4+$ngin_5$+V] are all monosyllabic (unlike that found in MacIver 1905). We believe there are phonological reasons behind this. Lexicalized or idiomatic expressions tend to be neat and concise. Trisyllabic words are much preferred to tetrasyllabic ones during the process of lexicalization. Thus monosyllabic verbs are preferred in the use of the [ded_4+$ngin_5$+V] construction nowadays.

5.4. A Summary of the SS-Type Psych Predicates and the Types of Causation

Based on the discussions in Sections 5.1-5.3, the distributional properties concerned with SS-type psych predicates are summarized below. The codenames

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12 Omitting aforementioned $xiag_4$, seu_5, nau_1, and $giang_1$, we list the meanings of other items below: 畏 vi_3 "to be afraid," 怕 pa_3 "to be afraid," 愛 oi_3 "to love," 服 fug_4 "to succumb," 敬重 gin_3cung_3 "to respect."

13 Note, however, that 得人驚 $ded_4ngin_5giang_1$ is not listed in MacIver (1905). A plausible explanation is that semantically similar expressions 得人惱 $ded_4ngin_5nau_1$ and 得人畏 $ded_4ngin_5vi_3$ are already in use, triggering lexical blocking.

C4, C5, C6, and C7 stand for the four constructions.

(18) a. C4: [Sti Pred Exp]

    b. C5: [Sti Pred-*xi₂* Exp]

    c. C6: [Sti *bun₁* Exp Pred]

    d. C7: [Sti *ded₄ ngin₅* Pred]

The causative verb *hag₄* "to frighten" (lexical causative) can occur in the "Pred" slot of C4. The compound Pred-*xi₂* (morphological causative) allows both ES-type and SS-type in the "Pred" slot of C5. The [*bun₁*+NP+V] and [*ded₄*+*ngin₅*+V] (both analytic causatives) are reformatted as C6 and C7 to conform to other constructions. C4, C5, C6, and C7 all express causation in different means. The following table shows the verbs compatible with each construction and the type of causation involved.

Table 2　Three Types of Causation for Psych Predicates in Hakka

Codename	Construction	Type (Instance) of Pred	Type of Causation
C4	[Sti Pred Exp]	SS-type (*hag₄* only)	Lexical
C5	[Sti Pred-*xi₂* Exp]	Both ES-type and SS-type	Morphological
C6	[Sti *bun₁* Exp Pred]	ES-type	Analytic
C7	[Sti *ded₄ ngin₅* Pred]	ES-type (*xiag₄*, *nau₁*, *giang₁*, and *vi₃* only)	Analytic (lexicalized)

6. Conclusion

Based on our observation in the previous sections, two lines of discussion are presented in this final section. First, the advantages of Construction Grammar in dealing with the change of causativity in Hakka psych predicates will be presented. Second, the role of the two analytic causatives: [*bun₁*+NP+V] and [*ded₄*+*ngin₅*+V] as a balancing mechanism will be discussed. Last, the concluding remarks are presented.

6.1. A Constructional Account of Change in Causativity

In this section, the advantages of Construction Grammar in explaining change in causativity will be presented. First we review the non-causative use of the causative verb hag_4 "to frighten." Then we investigate the rise of the causativity of the V-xi_2 compound where V is usually non-causative.

In (13) of Section 5.1, two examples of hag_4 "to frighten" are presented. They belong to the result/extent construction C3 marked by do_3. The two examples are non-causative like those with ES-type psych predicates in (9). A question naturally arises: how can the causativity of a lexical verb be eliminated in the result/extent construction?

A basic tenet of Construction Grammar is that lexical, phrasal, or sentential elements can be constructions, and these constructions contribute to meaning, in addition to the meanings of the lexical items and their arrangement (i.e. syntax).

The causative verb hag_4 "to frighten" appears in C4 (which is causative) as well as in C3 (which is non-causative). This behavior can be attributed to either the duality of the verb itself, or the properties of the constructions this verb appears in. Below, we argue that the second approach is preferred.

If we adopt a lexical approach, then we have to add a non-causative sense to the verb hag_4 "to frighten," which is an example of proliferation in word senses and thus not preferred. It is not plausible, since no other psych predicates in Hakka have this dual property. Also, although hag_4 "to frighten" can appear in C3, it cannot appear, like typical ES-type psych predicates, in C1 and C2. [14] This casts doubt on the status of hag_4 "to frighten" as simply an ES-type (non-causative) psych predicate. We believe there is something peculiar in hag_4 "to frighten" when it appears in C3.

In the constructional approach, the conflict between causative hag_4 and non-causative result/extent construction C3 can be resolved this way: We maintain the

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14   One may argue that hag_4 "to frighten" cannot appear in C1 because C1 and C4 are structurally similar and there is a motive to avoid ambiguity and misunderstanding. However, this argument fails to explain why hag_4 cannot appear in C2 (unique in its structure) either.

causativity of *hag₄*, while loosening the constraint that the psych predicate in C3 must be non-causative. We propose that the "Pred" slot of C3 can be either ES-type or SS-type. The properties of the "Pred" slot can be overridden, or coerced, by that of C3. This approach has the following advantages: (i) the semantics of *hag₄* as a causative verb is preserved; (ii) proliferation in word senses can be avoided, as has been shown in the discussion of English examples (5) in Section 3; (iii) the problem that *hag₄* can appear in C3, but not C2, is solved.

In Section 5.2 on morphological causatives, although a causative verb *hag₄* "to frighten" can appear in the V slot of the V-*xi₂* compound as in (14a), the majority of the verbs in this slot are non-causative, as shown by *giang₁* "to fear" and *kien₂* "to get angry" in (14b) and (14c). The question that naturally arises is: how can a compound be causative when both its components (V and *xi₂*) are non-causative?

One account is that the compound verbs are inherently causative. However, it is not clear how the causative sense arises when the predicate is a compound verb instead of a simple one. Since V-*xi₂* compounds are productive and not listable, there must be a lexical rule for V-*xi₂* compounds that generates causativity during compounding. However, when these V-*xi₂* compounds appear in intransitive sentences, no sense of causativity is observed. Compare (19) with (14b) in terms of causativity:

(19) 厓驚死了

    ngai₅   *giang₁-xi₂*   *le₂*

    1SG   afraid-dead   ASP

"I was frightened to death."

Therefore, the last resort is the constructional approach. We argue that the causative sense results from the whole transitive sentence pattern [NP1 V-*xi₂* NP2]. Except for *hag₄* "frighten," there are "flip-flops" in the realization of the arguments: the stimulus becomes the subject and the experiencer becomes the object. It is not important whether the verb in the V slot is non-causative (ES-type) or causative (SS-type). The whole construction suggests the causative sense, disregarding the causativity of the psych predicate in the V slot.

6.2. The Balancing Mechanism of Analytic Causatives

Although [*bun₁*+NP+V] and [*ded₄*+*ngin₅*+V] are superficially parallel, both allowing ES-type psych predicates in the V slots and can be viewed as SS-type psych predicates as a whole, they have the following differences: (i) they differ in that the former is more productive, compatible with a variety of NPs and a wide range of ES-type psych predicates, whereas the latter is less productive, allowing only *ngin₅* "people" as experiencers and four ES-type psych predicates, i.e. *xiag₄*, *nau₁*, *giang₁*, and *vi₃*; (ii) modification by degree adverbs is allowed in the position immediately preceding the psych predicate in [*bun₁*+NP+V] construction, while it is allowed in the position immediately preceding the whole [*ded₄*+*ngin₅*+V] construction.

Based on the evidence of the lexical restrictions of *ngin₅* and V, and the constraint of modification by degree adverbs, we claim that the [*ded₄*+*ngin₅*+V] construction has undergone reanalysis. Although structurally a serial verb construction, the whole [*ded₄*+*ngin₅*+V] exhibits the properties of an SS-type psych predicate. In other words, [*ded₄*+*ngin₅*+V] has been lexicalized and must be listed in the lexicon.

There must be a motive behind the productivity of analytic causatives in Hakka. We suggest that the two constructions [*bun₁*+NP+V] and [*ded₄*+*ngin₅*+V] exist to compensate for the present situation that, in Hakka as well as other Sinitic languages, lexical SS-type psych predicates are outnumbered by lexical ES-type psych predicates. In Hakka, lexical causative psych predicates are rare. In English, on the contrary, lexical causative psych predicates such as *interest*, *surprise*, and *frighten* are common. Therefore, analytic causatives are usually used in translating English lexical causatives into Hakka, Taiwan Southern Min, and Mandarin Chinese.

6.3. Concluding Remarks

The seven constructions discussed in this paper are summarized below. The distinction between ES-type and SS-type psych predicates applies in both the predicate level and the construction level.

Table 3   Sentence Patterns of Psych Predicates in Hakka

Codename	Construction	Type of Predicate	Type of Construction
C1	[Exp Pred (Sti)]	ES	ES
C2	[Exp (Deg) Pred (Sti)]	ES	ES
C3	[Exp Pred (Sti Pred) do_3 Result/Extent]	ES, SS	ES
C4	[Sti Pred Exp]	SS	SS
C5	[Sti Pred-xi_2 Exp]	ES, SS	SS
C6	[Sti bun_1 Exp Pred]	ES	SS
C7	[Sti ded_4 $ngin_5$ Pred]	ES	SS

At the lexical level, the ES-type psych predicates outnumber SS-type ones in Hakka: hag_4 "to frighten" is the only one that exists to the best knowledge of the author. Therefore, to compensate for this asymmetry, morphological and analytic causatives are employed.

To build on the findings of this paper, further study could include (i) a more thorough investigation into psych predicates in Hakka, particularly disyllabic ones; (ii) a contrastive analysis with Mandarin Chinese, Taiwan Southern Min, or English.

Based on data from the Hakka Corpus, this paper contributes to the description and understanding of psych predicates in Hakka. It also supports a constructional view of grammar. The study of Hakka analytic causatives reveals the division of labor between lexicon and syntax. The lack of SS-type psych predicates in the lexicon is counterbalanced by the use of SS-type syntactic constructions [bun_1+NP+V] and [ded_4+$ngin_5$+V]. Although languages differ drastically in terms of lexicon and syntax, the balancing mechanisms found may be universal and shed light on the evolutionary tendencies of languages.

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從構式語法看客語心理謂語與致使

黃　漢　君*

摘　要

　　本文探討客語心理謂語的性質，特別著重於詞彙語意與句法的互動關係。根據句法表現，心理謂語可分為兩類：感事者主語（如英語動詞 fear）以及起事者主語（如英語動詞 frighten）。客語的「惜」(xiag$_4$)、「愁」(seu$_5$)、「惱」(nau$_1$)、「驚」(giang$_1$)、「譴」(kien$_2$) 為前者，而「嚇」(hag$_4$) 為後者。本文所有的語料皆取自客語語料庫，力求反映客語心理謂語的真實用法。

　　感事者主語類心理謂語具有類似的句法分布，例如接受程度修飾，以及可以出現在結果或程度構式中。起事者主語類心理謂語以各種方式表達致使：詞彙手段如「嚇」，構詞手段如「V- 死」複合詞，句法手段如「分+NP+V」以及「得＋人＋V」（但後者已形成詞彙化之固定用法）。構詞性致使與句法性致使具有將感事者主語類心理謂語轉換成起事者主語類心理謂語之功能。因此兩者皆可視為一種對客語中起事者主語類心理謂語遠少於感事者主語類心理謂語的不平衡現象加以調整之機制。

　　我們採納 Goldberg（1995）所主張的「構式語法」(Construction Grammar) 理論。該理論認為語法的基本組成單位為構式（形式與意義的配對）。其優點為合理解釋客語心理謂語與本文中所討論的七種句式（其中三種為感事者主語類，四種為起事者主語類）的互動關係，而不需要去設立額外且特殊個案式的心理謂語意義。