The Argument and Event Structure of Non-Volition
Alison Biggs, McMaster University

The syntax of (de)transitivization is classically described in terms of argument demotion or deletion. The role of syntax in semantic correlates of transitivity alternations – such as reduced volition, control, or responsibility – remains debated. Past research derives notions of involitivity by rules on the thematic structure of verbs (Beavers & Zubair 2013), or, more recently, from properties of the extended morpho-syntactic verbal structure in which the verb occurs (Davis et al. 2009, Rivero et al. 2010, Weerasooriya et al. 2022, i.a.). This talk proposes a new analysis of an intransitive in Shantou Teochew (a variety of Teochew (Southern Min) spoken in Shantou city), previously described as an *adversative unaccusative*. This talk shows the adversative unaccusative has a non-volitional interpretation. The data support an analysis in which non-volition derives from the construction's event-structure, and not operations on thematic structure.

Shantou Teochew (like other Southern Min languages) has two unaccusative structures, with (2) described as an adversative variant of (1) (Matthews *et al.* 2005 on Jieyang Teochew; Chen & Yap 2018 on Southern Min). Evidence that (1) and (2) are syntactically unaccusative includes that both license (i) post-verbal subjects under locative inversion, and (ii) resultative secondary predication (which obeys a direct object restriction). Adversity in (2) is realized by the (obligatory) result morpheme; all aspect markers in the language index speaker attitude.

(1) Si tengmun kui   o.
　　CL window   open PERF
　　'The window opened.'

(2) Si tengmun kə yi   kui   ku.
　　CL window   KE 3SG.EXPL open RES
　　'The window opened.'

This study shows (2) also involves a type of non-volition: speakers require that (2) is accidental or 'inevitable', and that, informally, '*no-one* is responsible for Initiation' (cp. Li 1959). (2) can be contrasted with passives (and impersonals), which entail an Initiator (*someone*), and with anticausatives like (1), which may involve, but don't require, spontaneity. Non-volition, not adversity, helps characterize previously unexplained contrasts in (1)-(2). One difference is that only typical causative roots (√MELT,√FREEZE) are natural in (1), but any verb compatible with a direct object can occur in (2), including agentive roots like √CUT, √MURDER (see Chen & Yap 2018): (2) (but not (1)) licenses '*The wood cuts*', meaning 'The wood underwent a cutting (that just happened, accidentally)'. In addition, the *v*P event in (2) must have the potential to be initiated. Weather roots are thus odd in (2), as (e.g.) 'rain' in (2) presupposes rain has potential to be initiated (e.g. by weather gods) - then denies any volition. Weather *v*Ps are natural in (1).

Non-volition in (2) cannot be a direct property of thematic structure: (2) entails a single semantic (Patient) argument and fails to entail an Initiator; (1)-(2) have thematic identity. Instead, I propose non-volition in (2) derives from event structure that is absent in (1). In (3a-b), (1)-(2) have thematic identity because both are unaccusative *v*Ps. In (3b), an expletive 3SG *pronoun* (not reflexive) additionally merges in VoiceP (Schafer 2008); the pronoun is expletive in the sense it is athematic, non-referential, and morphosyntactically invariant. A light verb *kə* embeds expletive VoiceP. Unaccusative *kə* is syncretic with a periphrastic causative verb *kə*, recently analyzed as a universal circumstantial modal (Luo 2024). Evidence from negation, adverb modification, and clefting support extending Luo's causative analysis to unaccusative *kə*. Adapting Weerasooriya et al. (2022) (and previous work), non-volition in (2) emerges from two independent properties of (3b): The causal universal modal *kə* yields an interpretation that the embedded *v*P is inevitable (e.g. 'circumstances are such that the *v*P is the result'); Embedding the expletive pronoun under causal *kə* gives rise to an implicature that 'no-one' is an Initiator.

3)   a. [$_{TP}$ DP$_i$ [$_{vP}$ v-RES ~~DP$_i$~~]]   b. [$_{TP}$ DP$_i$ [$_{vP}$ Kə [$_{VoiceP}$ EXPL [Voice [$_{vP}$ v-RES ~~DP$_i$~~]]]]]

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