

ON THE STATUS OF REALITY MARKING IN TSOU*

Shuanfan Huang and Huei-ju Huang

ABSTRACT

In this paper we investigate, on the basis of corpus data, how Tsou marks 'realis' and 'irrealis' events in a number of syntactic environments. In environments commonly believed to attract 'irrealis' markers we show that 'irrealis' auxiliary verbs are sharply limited to just one functional domain, namely future potential events. But use of irrealis markers in Tsou to mark future potential events is largely predictable on universal grounds. We therefore argue that although irrealis auxiliary verbs in Tsou can be used to indicate potential and unactualized events, this is best seen as a consequence of their function as tense-aspect markers rather than as a reflex of their function as reality markers and that it would be wrong to continue to assume that the auxiliary verb system in Tsou (and perhaps in all of the other Formosan languages) is a system for marking reality. Given these findings, we propose to reconceptualize the auxiliary verbs in Tsou as follows: the auxiliary verbs in Tsou encode temporal and aspectual information, but not reality information. Where they appear to mark irrealis potential events, the appearance is deceptive and is simply a manifestation of their functions as tense-aspect markers to code futurity. What has been claimed to mark irrealis in Tsou on closer investigation can be shown to be either a consequence of the functions of tense-aspect markers in Tsou, or of the functions of the construction as a whole in supplying the 'irrealis' interpretation.

Keywords: realis/irrealis; tense-aspect; modality; Tsou

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1. INTRODUCTION

A number of researchers (Zeitoun 1996:510, Zeitoun 2000:101, Weng 2000:90) have argued that Tsou morphologically marks the reality status of events on its auxiliary verbs and that every sentence is obligatorily marked with either a realis or irrealis auxiliary verb, as shown in Table 1, taken from Zeitoun (2000:101).

Table 1 The tense and aspect system in Tsou (Zeitoun, 2000:101)

Reality status	Realis		Irrealis			
Focus	AF	NAF	AF or NAF			
Proximate	mio,mo, mi-	i-	Habitual	Future	Hypothetical	Counterfactual
Remote	moso, mo(h)-	o-	la	te,tena Ta-	nte	ntoso, nto(h)-

Although Table 1 correctly describes, in general, the distribution of auxiliary verbs in relation to reality, the question remains as to what exactly constitutes a realis or irrealis event in the grammar of Tsou. H. Huang (2001:480) points out for the first time that the conditional construction, while generally believed to attract irrealis marking, does not always do so in Tsou. Assuming that the auxiliary verb system in Tsou is a system for reality marking, the question is: what exactly counts as an irrealis event and what exactly do the auxiliary verbs mark with respect to reality in the language?

In this paper we argue that although irrealis auxiliary verbs seem to be used to indicate potential events, this is best seen as a manifestation of their function as tense markers and that it would be wrong to continue to assume that the auxiliary verb system in Tsou (and perhaps in all of the other Formosan languages) is a system for marking reality. In other words, we propose that Table 1 be recast as Table 2 below:

Table 2 Auxiliary verbs in Tsou

	-future		habitual	+future		
	factual	Non-factual		-hypothetical	+hypothetical	
	AF	NAF	la ¹			
proximate	mio, mo, mi-	i-		ntoso, nto(h)-	te-	n-te ntena
remote	moso, mo(h)-	o-			ta-, tena ²	

Detailed arguments for why Table 2 must be the correct representation for the auxiliary verbs in Tsou constitute the core of the present study. This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 is a brief sketch of those aspects of the grammar of Tsou that are germane to the present concerns. In Sections 3 and 4, we first investigate the contexts where ‘reality’ marking is explicitly present or absent, and then extend the investigation to more complex environments where ‘reality’ marking appears to be indeterminate, or even conflicting. In Section 4, we discuss how the truth-value of a complement sentence in complement constructions interacts with the coding of reality. Section 5 is the conclusion. Note that, for ease of understanding, in the following presentation we continue to defer to the ‘traditional’ practice of glossing auxiliary verbs in example sentences as either realis or irrealis, although, given our arguments below and the conclusions they lead to, we would have preferred to substitute them with –future (for realis auxiliary verbs) and +future (for irrealis auxiliary verbs) as shown in Table 2. Still we think it appropriate to surround the terms ‘realis’ and ‘irrealis’, whenever they appear, with scare quotes to suggest that their status as analytic concepts are of questionable validity in the context of Tsou grammar.

The corpus data used for the present study comes from the Taita Spoken Corpus of Tsou, which comprises both narrative and

¹ Two types of *la*'s must be distinguished: auxiliary verb *la* refers to habitual situations; preverbal *la* indicates remoteness in time, either distant past or distant future, and must occur with a remote auxiliary verb (i.e., *moso*, *mo(h)-*, *o-*, *ta-*, *tena*). In the present study, habitual *la* will be glossed as Hab (for ‘habitual’), and preverbal *la* simply as La.

² As shown in Table 1 and Table 2, *tena* is treated differently. Based on our informants, both *ta-* and *tena* indicate remote future situations.



conversational data. There are two types of narrative texts. The first type of narrative includes eight texts about the myth, folklore and cultural lives of the Tsou people; the second type of narrative includes five texts of retellings of the well-known “Pear Film”, a six-minute long film with no dialogue. The conversational data in the Corpus comprises four conversations between family members or friends, each with two or more participants. Field notes in the example sentences refer specifically to elicited data and are to be treated separately from the naturally occurring data represented in the Corpus.

2. BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE GRAMMAR OF TSOU

Tsou has a Philippine-style focus system, a system of verbal affixation which allows different arguments to be placed in the “subject” position, thereby marking them as identifiable, and which signals the presence of a particular semantic role associated with the subject. The focus system has also been referred to in the literature as a voice system or a trigger system (cf. Shibatani 1988, Cumming et al. 1987, Wouk 1996). The term ‘trigger’ is used by some researchers to eschew a possible incorrect identification of the focused NP in the Austronesian languages with a constituent that represents the center of attention in the usage of non-Austronesianists and is thus meant to suggest that it is the different semantic roles of the NPs (in Austronesian languages) that trigger the choice of different morphology on the verb. Tsou exhibits an innovative focus morphology: its non-Agent focus affixes in Tsou are PF -a, LF -i, IF/BF -(n)eni, which are believed to have derived from the forms of the Proto-Austronesian atemporals (Ross 1995). Although Tsou, like any other Western Austronesian language is a language with a focus system, our research into the pragmatics of focus suggests that Tsou falls clearly on the more conservative side in this regard since it has retained more of the discourse features common to both Formosan and Philippine-type languages with respect to their focus systems (S. Huang 2002a).

Tsou has a complex and vibrant system of case marking, with a set of nominative markers indicating ‘subject’ and another set of oblique markers indicating non-subjects and genitive NPs and the language can be given a straightforward analysis as a morphologically ergative analysis.



In terms of word order, Tsou, unlike Saisiyat, for example, is strongly verb-initial, with some limited pragmatically conditioned variation. Moreover, word order and focus are interdependent and mutually predictive. The most frequent word order for transitive AF³ clauses is either Aux VOA or A Aux VO and for NAF clauses, Aux VAO, where A, as is customary in typological literature, refers to the agent of a transitive clause and O to its patient. If there are pronominal arguments, they must be cliticized to aux as enclitics. This is a rule, not a tendency.

It is important to stress that pronominal attraction or cliticization in Tsou turns out to be a critical processing strategy, since the pronominal arguments that are attracted to preverbal position or cliticized to the utterance-initial auxiliaries are generally agents, and agents are known to be the central participants in discourse and tend to be maintained as topics in successive clauses. As such, it makes eminent processing sense for them to gravitate toward sentence-initial position (see S. Huang 2002a for details).

Relative clauses in Tsou may occur to the right or left of their head noun, although there is a decided preference, by a factor of 10 to 1, based on our corpus data, for right-headed relative clauses. The most common grammatical role of the head noun is as O (object of a transitive clause) in the main clause, and as S (the sole argument of an intransitive clause) in the relative clause. Particularly noteworthy is the finding that either a focused NP, marked with a nominative case marker, or an unfocused NP, marked with an oblique case marker, may serve as the head noun of a relative clause, as illustrated below:

³ In this paper, the following abbreviations are used:

AF: agent focus NAF: non-agent focus PF: patient focus LF: locative focus
Nom: nominative case marker Obl: oblique case marker Acc: accusative case
marker Asp: aspect marker EVI: evidential marker Gen: genitive Hab: Habitual
Neg: Negative Cau: causative RI: relative clause marker R: realis Irr: irrealis 1st:
first person singular 1st.pl: first person plural
La: preverbal la 2nd: second person singular 2nd: second person plural
3rd: third person singular 3rd: third person plural PF: Pause filler
DM: discourse marker lin: linker RED: reduplication



- (1) ho⁴ aUIU yupte'IU to mo cihi ci mo hmUhmUskU
 Conj happen meet Obl R.AF one Rl R.AF similar
 ci mamespingi (Pear 3:59)
 Rl girl
 '(He) happened to run into a girl who was similar to him.'

3. SYNTACTIC ENVIRONMENTS FOR REALIS AND IRREALIS MARKERS

It is generally believed that an event which is perceived as either having taken place or at least having been initiated will be marked as realis in a language with a reality marking system. In languages with a tense-aspect system, one can reasonably predict that positive indicative statements with non-future tenses are also likely to be marked realis (Elliott 2000:68). In Tsou, what are traditionally known as 'realis' auxiliary verbs occur only in non-future events, as in Sentences (2), (3) and (4).

- (2) moso esmi no mo eainca yatU'nUa
 R.AF arrive.AF Obl R.AF so called have cliff.AF
 "(He) reached an area where there were cliffs." (Bear:8)
- (3) i-si cu pamacoconi ta nasi
 R.NAF-3rd Asp Cau-pl-RED-one.NAF Obl pear
 'e mo tuyu ci 'o'oko
 Nom R.AF three Rl child.pl (Pear3:94)
 "The three children were each given a pear by him."
- (4) o-si cu aha'va lehtothomneni na 'e yatatiskova
 R.NAF-3rd Asp suddenly wrestle-RF DM Nom male
 "The man was unexpectedly wrestled with by the mother bear."

⁴ The transcription system used in this paper is based essentially on Tung (1964). However, for purposes of typing convenience, the following symbols are used instead to represent specific sounds in Tsou.

Tsou	Tung's transcription (1964)	Transcription in this paper
Velar nasal	ŋ	ng
High middle vowel	ɯ	U (Capital U)
Glottal stop	ʔ	' (apostrophe)



(Bear:41)

Unlike realis events, an irrealis event is something imaginable or possible, and is located in an unreal world rather than in the real world. Languages differ significantly as to events that are evaluated as actual (and thus coded by realis marking) and non-actual (and thus coded by irrealis marking)(Chung & Timberlake 1985:241). However, the distinction between realis/irrealis is not always clear-cut. According to Elliott (2000:70), there are seven most common environments which attract ‘irrealis’ marking: potential events, commands, negation, habituais, interrogatives, conditionals, and events which are qualified by modality. In the following discussion we will examine how Tsou auxiliary verbs behave in each of these environments.

3.1 Potential event

Events which have the potential to occur but which have not yet been actualized often attract irrealis marking. In Tsou, potential events are marked with irrealis auxiliary verbs *te-/ta-/tena*.

- (5) tena boemi ta hpongU ho zohpongi ’o
Irr use.AF Obl forked_stick Conj pinch.PF Nom
sUnU-si ho ta-he cu tUtpUta
neck-3rd.Gen Conj Irr-3rd.pl Asp catch-PF
“(They) will use a forked stick to pinch its neck, and then catch
(it).” (Snake:257)

Chung & Timberlake (1985) observe that many languages do not distinguish morphologically between future tense and potential irrealis mood and that if there are morphological differences between them, the future tense is used for events presumed to be certain to occur. Elliott (2000:71) also notes that future events which are thought of as certain to occur tend to attract realis marking. In Tsou, a future event presumed to be certain to occur is still marked with an ‘irrealis’ auxiliary verb, as in (5), and the level of certainty can be inferred from the presence of the change of state particle *cu/c’u* that occurs following an irrealis auxiliary verb, as in (6).



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- (6) ta-hin'i cu mon'i mevcongU
Irr-3rd.pl Asp soon be_married.AF
"They are soon to be married." (field notes)

Sentence (6) shows that a future which is certain to occur in Tsou does not attract 'realis' marking.

3.2 Imperatives

A considerable number of languages with a reality marking system require 'irrealis' marking in imperatives, since imperatives refer notionally to potential and unrealized events (Elliott 2000:76). In Tsou, imperatives are marked with an irrealis auxiliary verb, as in (7):

- (7) te-ko iachi aiti na i-ko UmnUa
Irr-2nd self see.LF NomR.NAF-2nd like.PF
"Take a look yourself at which (pair of shoes) you like."
(Buying shoes:6)

Sometimes different types of imperatives are marked differently, however. For example, in Wardaman, an Australian prefixing language, there is no reality status marking on positive imperative marking, but prohibitives use the irrealis form of the verb together with a negative particle (Elliot 2000:76). In Tsou, such distinction in reality status marking does not exist and both hortative and prohibitive imperatives are marked as 'irrealis'.

- (8) hortative
ta-to aiti (field notes)
Irr-1st.pl see.LF
"Let's take a look."

- (9) prohibitive
a. o'a te ana 'e yoskU (field notes)
Neg Irr eat.PF Nom fish
= 'o-te bonU ta yoskU
Neg-Irr eat.AF Obl fish
"Don't eat fish."



- b. t(e)-av'a fii to peisu taini (field notes)
 Irr-Neg give.AF Obl money 3rd
 "Don't give him money."

The preceding discussion seems to show that imperatives in Tsou, whether positive or negative, attract irrealis marking. However, a check through our corpus data shows that an overwhelming majority of imperatives are not marked with any auxiliary verbs. Thus, out of a total of 625 clauses in the Taita Tsou corpus, there were a total of 9 imperative sentences and 7 of them were marked with a zero auxiliary verb. That is, 77.78% of the imperative clauses received no auxiliary verb marking. Two such imperative clauses are given in (10).

- (10) a. Ø⁵ amzocni c'o mameoi (Snake:461)
 hold_on only old_man
 "Hold on! My ancestor!"

- b. Ø ahtu ehohamo no te 'oci cocvo
 ever.AF tell_story.AF Obl Irr intend laugh
 "(Why not) tell a funny story?" (Daily:65)
 "(Let me) tell a funny story."

Given the size of our corpus, the percentage may not be significant enough to tell us about reality marking on imperative clauses in general; however, a statement like Zeitoun's (1996:509) that "auxiliary verbs are required in each verbal clause" is clearly not borne out by the present corpus data. Moreover, H. Huang (2003) finds that, based on the Taita Corpus, four types of non-indicative clauses in the language occur with a significantly high frequency of zero auxiliary verb (100% for interjection clauses, 88.5% for if-clauses in conditionals, 80% for *mainci* 'why' clauses and 77.78% for imperatives and that in indicative clauses the percentage is as high as 20%.) Further discussion on zero auxiliary verbs, a very interesting topic in its own right, cannot be attempted here, but interested readers are referred to H. Huang (2003) for detail.

⁵ Ø represents zero marking in the position of auxiliary verb.



3.3 Negative and interrogative

In some languages, positive clauses are marked as ‘realis’, and their negative counterparts attract ‘irrealis’ marking (Elliott 2000:77). However, this is not the case in Tsou.

(11) a. moso la yon ta emo tan'e 'e voyu
R.AF La stay Obl house here Nom Voyu
“Voyu lived in this house in the past.” (field notes)

b. o'a moso la yon ta emo tan'e 'o voyu
Neg R.AF La stay Obl house here Nom Voyu
“Voyu did not live in this house in the past.” (field notes)

(12) a. te bonU ta yoskU (field notes)
Irr eat.AF Obl fish
“Eat fish!”

b. 'o-te bonU ta yoskU (field notes)
Neg-Irr eat.AF Obl fish
“Don't eat fish.”

In numerous languages, questions about potential situations are generally categorized as irrealis, and questions about actualized events categorized as realis (Mithun 1995:380). This is also true of interrogatives in Tsou, as seen in (13) and (14), but we interpret the marking phenomenon to mean that non-future events in the language must be marked with a non-future auxiliary verb, as in (13), and future events with a future auxiliary verb, as in (14).

(13) moso la mainenu na nia a'UmtU 'a'auna-si? (Daily:134)
R.AF La how Nom past real.AF situation-3rd
moso supeohU?
R.AF fall_down.AF
“What really happened? Did he fall down?”

(14) te-ta n'a ana 'e naveu? (field notes)
Irr-3rd Asp eat.PF Nom rice
“Is she going to eat the rice (later)?”



3.4 Habituals

Givón (1994: 270) argues that habitual is a swing modal category, for it has been grouped in some languages with ‘realis’ and others with ‘irrealis’. From a communicative perspective, habitual-marked clauses tend to be strongly asserted, i.e., realis in a pragmatical sense. Semantically, however, they resemble ‘irrealis’ in two fundamental respects: first, a habitual-marked assertion does not refer to any particular event occurring at any specific time, and secondly, the grammatical object is always indefinite in habitual clauses.

In Tsou, in either temporally proximate habitual situations, or in timeless, generic statements, the auxiliary verb *la* occurs in the preverbal auxiliary verb position.

(15) a. temporally proximate habitual situation

la i'nUskU uh ne taihoku ho la homueina
 Hab once go Obl Taipei Conj Hab summer
 “Every summer, (he) goes to Taipei once.” (field notes)

b. timeless generic situations

la pak'i 'o av'u ho la yaokoa (field notes)
 Hab fierce Nom dog Conj Hab have_child
 “Dogs are fierce when they are pregnant.”

It is true that the auxiliary verb *la* in Tsou marks habitual situations, but it remains controversial whether it is used to mark realis or irrealis. Zeitoun (2000:101) considers it to be an irrealis marker (see Table 1), but it is just as plausible to consider it to be a unique marker in its own right, independent of the distribution of realis and irrealis. This indeed is the position taken on the status of *la* in the present study. In other words, the auxiliary verb system in Tsou can be shown to make a three-way distinction between -future/habitual/+future, as shown in Table 2.

A partial support for Table 2 comes from results of a fill-in-the-blank test we conducted with native Tsou speakers. These native speakers were given a sentence such as (16) and were asked to fill in the blank with an auxiliary verb they thought appropriate.



- (16) (la-'u / mi-'o) 'so aavaho man'i ci hioa,
 Hab-1st/R.AF-1st because moreover many Rl work
 a'a s'a ahtu meelU mai no nte to'tohUngU
 Neg ever can.AF like Irr think
 "Moreover, there is so much work; (I) cannot do as (I) wish."
 (Informant:2)

Sentence (16), taken from the Taita Tsou Corpus, contains zero auxiliary verb in the preverbal position originally. Results of the test show that speakers chose either the auxiliary verb *la* or *mi-* in the first slot. Thus the test-takers seemed to understand the sentence as reporting a present situation (with *mi-'o*) or someone's recent general situation (with *la-'u*). In this example, then, *la* tends to align with the realis meaning, at least based on the responses of the test-takers.

On the other hand, in the narrative text 'Snake', which describes the habits, or Tsou people's folk knowledge about snakes, the auxiliary verb *la* is often used, as in (17a) and (17b). By contrast, in the narrative text 'Ba'eton'u', which describes the processes involved in a ritual ceremony known as *Ba'eton'u* "the Millet", 'irrealis' auxiliary verbs *te/ta-/tena* are frequently used, as in (18a). Similar situations also obtain in 'Snake', in which the narrator talks about the sequential steps one takes to catch a snake, and the 'irrealis' auxiliary verbs *te/ta-/tena* occur with a very high frequency, as in (18b). In these cases, *la* tends to align with irrealis meaning.

- (17) a. ho te yuyafo 'e ba'efkoi, **la**
 Conj Irr emerge.AF Nom snake Hab
 couno yuyafo ho tena c'u ataveisi no
 always emerge.AF Conj Irr Asp after Obl
 seovcoha (Snake:100)
 rainy_season
 "When the snake emerges, (it) always emerges after a rainy season."
- b. la-he toehunga ucia i'ima to
 Hab-3rd.pl all_people intend.PF find.PF Obl
 puutu.
 Han_people
 "All the Han people want to find (snakes)." (Snake:168)



- (18) a. ne **ta-'u** cu hafa maine'e, ho **ta-'u** cu hafa,
 at Irr-1st Asp carry.PF go_home Conj Irr-1st Asp carry.PF
ta-'u cu ec'Uvi 'o la teongongasi
 Irr-1st Asp raise_up.LF Nom Hab lay_previously
 ci mo cono futa
 Rl AF one_bundle
ta-'u cu aepoha hafa maine'e
 Irr-1st Asp together carry.PF home
 ho hafa 'o ba'i-si (Ba'eton'u:20)
 Conj carry.PF Nom grandma-3rd.poss
 "When I take (it) home, I will pick up the (one) bundle laid down
 previously. I then take it home together with the oldest part (of the
 millet)."

- b. i'o mo cono, **la** aeocU moeai to (Snake:275)
 Nom R.AF one Hab in_advance make.AF Obl
 mo tacvohi ci kaapana to mo mameoi
 R.AF long Rl bamboo_pole Obl AF old
 ho mahteUcU ci kaapana.
 Conj solid.AF Rl bamboo_pole
tena c'u poamo'ofeihni to kaapana
 Irr Asp make_stretch_along.PF Obl bamboo
 'o mo sUmcU ci teesi to o'a te IUa
 Nom R.AF firm.AF Rl rope Obl Neg Irr easily
 antUhU.
 break
 ho **ta-he** cu paepo'isa to pempingna
 Conj Irr-3rd.pl Asp tie_with_rop.AF Obl top
 to kaapana ho eskoveia na i'o teesi
 Gen bamboo_pole Conj draw_a_coil.PF DM Nom rope
 ho poa-yafeongoa
 Conj Cau-make_circle.PF
 "(They) make a long bamboo pole in advance, an old and solid
 bamboo pole. Then, (they) make a firm rope, which will not
 easily break, stretched along the bamboo pole. Then they tie
 the top of the bamboo pole and draw a coil with the rope, and
 they make a circle."

In these sentences, it is the non-specific, potential and unrealized



nature of the events being talked about that leads to the use of ‘irrealis’ *ta-/tena*, since no particular realized event is being discussed. Apparently, the ritual ceremonies in Tsou conception are often thought of as ‘unactualised’ and they are to be distinguished from habitual events or from generic knowledge.

3.5 Conditionals

The conditional construction in Tsou is composed of an if-clause, which is marked by one of the subordinators *ho/hoci/honci*, and a then-clause with an irrealis auxiliary verb, as shown in (19) and (20).

(19) hypothetical condition

honci-’u yaa peisu, **n-te**-’u mihia emoo
If-1st . have money Irr-1st buy.AF house
“If I had money, I would buy a house.” (Zeitoun 2000:142)

(20) counterfactual condition

honci-’u yaa peisu, **nto**’u mihia emoo
If-1st have money Irr-1st buy.AF house
“If I had money, I would buy a house.” (Zeitoun 2000:142)

Zeitoun (1997: 134) points out that, in Tsou as well as in some other Formosan languages such as Rukai Labuan, Bunun Isbukun, and Northern Paiwan, temporal clauses referring either to a generic or to a future event use the same subordinate marker as the one found in hypothetical clauses, as shown in (21) and (22).

(21) Rukai Labuan (Zeitoun 1997:134)

- a. **nu**-maka-twatuman-naku ka wakan-naku ku aga
when/if-finish-work-1S.Nom eat-1S.Nom Obl rice
“After/when I finish working, I (usually) eat.”
- b. **nu**-maka-twatuman-naku ka aykan-naku ku aga
when/if-finish-work-1S.Nom will_eat-1S.Nom Obl rice
“When/if I finish working, I will eat.”

- (22) Tsou (Zeitoun 1997:134)
- a. **te-ta** asonU bonU to tacUmU
 Irr-3rd maybe eat.AF Obl banana
ho te-'u esmi
 Conj Irr-1st come_in
 “When/if I come in, he may be eating a banana.”
- b. **ho** tena-'u aiti 'o yangui, 'a **te-'u**
 Conj Irr-1st see.LF Nom yangui EVI Irr-1st
 eUsvUta
 tell
 “When/if I see Yangui, I will tell her.”

However, our corpus data paint a slightly different picture of Tsou. Temporal clauses marked with the subordinator *ho* in Tsou do not have to refer to a generic or future event. (23) and (24), for instance, refer to situations in the remote past, and yet the subordinator *ho* is used.

- (23) **o'a mo** mako smU'iei no poyave no sUngcU
 Neg R.AF even wear.AF Obl knife Obl straight
ho⁶ **moso** yupteUIU na cmoi (Bear:63)
 Conj R.AF meet.AF Nom bear
 “When (he) met the bear, (he) did not even carry a straight knife.”
- (24) moh-cu moyafu **ho** moh-cu asonU
 R.AF-Asp go_out.AF ConjR.AF-Asp probably
 so yopsi (Eatiou:13)
 evening
 “(He) went out probably at the time of evening.”

Coming back to the question of reality marking in the conditional construction, Zeitoun (1997) observes that the main clause in a

⁶ One of the reviewers questions the acceptability of Sentence (23), stating that *ne* must be preferred in such a context. Sentence (23), however, is taken directly from the Bear story of the Taita Tsou Corpus. The narrator of the story, Gan Amei, 50 years old at the time, speaks the Tfuya dialect. We do not wish to dispute the fact that temporal clauses referring to past situations are often introduced by *ne*, though as (23) and (24) show, this need not be the case.



conditional construction in Tsou attracts the ‘irrealis’ auxiliary verb *nte* or *nto*. Again, however, Sentence (25) shows that this is not necessarily the case, since the main clause in (25), taken from our corpus, uses the ‘realis’ auxiliary verb *mo*.

- (25) **ihonci**⁷ eno mimo to hmuyusi, **mo** c’o na’no
if DM drink.AF Obl blood-3rd R.AF very
akameosU UmnU ’o la maica ci tma’congo
immediately Good.AF Nom Hab this_way RI symptom
‘‘If (you) drink its blood, (it) would be good immediately for pain
like this. (Snake:157)

It is important to note that our corpus data show that 100% (21/21) of the *ho*-marked if-clauses occurred with an auxiliary verb, but of the *hoci/honci*-marked if-clauses, fully 88.46% (23/26) appear with a zero auxiliary verb. These results suggest that *ho* must be distinguished from *hoci/honci* as far as reality marking in conditional constructions is concerned, an issue to be explored in the following sections.

The conditional construction consists of two clauses: protasis, or the ‘if’ clause, and apodosis, the ‘then’ clause. The actuality of the apodosis clause is related to the actuality of the protasis clauses. Semantically, conditional constructions are divided into two basic types: real and unreal conditionals. The distinction between real and unreal conditionals is based on whether they refer to a ‘real situation’ or ‘unreal situation’. As English examples in (26) show, real conditionals are those which refer to actualized, habitual (or generic) or past situations.

- (26) real conditionals (Thompson & Longacre 1985:190)
a. present *If it’s raining out there, my car is getting wet.*
b. Habitual/generic *If you step on the brake, the car slows down.*
c. Past *If you were at the party, then you know about Sue and Fred.*

⁷ The status of *i-* in *ihonci* is at this stage of our research indeterminate, though *i-* is found to occur frequently with sentence initial case markers ’o, ’e, yielding *i’o* and *i’e*. Based on our informants and corpus data, *hoci* and *honci* are basically equivalent in meaning and function. Affix *-n-*, based on Yang (2001:59), indicates the tentative inference and uncertainty of a speaker. However, such a distinction does not seem to exist in the language of younger generations.



And unreal conditionals are further divided into two types: imaginative, which is what might be (hypothetical) or what might have been (counterfactual), and predictive, which is what we predict will happen, as in English examples (27).

- (27) unreal conditionals (Thompson & Longacre 1985:190)
- a. hypothetical *If I saw David, I'd speak Barai with him.*
 - b. counterfactual *If you had been at the concert, you would have seen Ravi Shankar.*
 - c. Predictive *If he gets the job, we'll all celebrate.*

There is considerable diversity in the way reality in conditional clauses is marked in the world's languages. The protasis and apodosis may be treated identically, or they maybe differentiated in reality marking. Thompson & Longacre (1985:192) remark that, in imaginative conditionals, it is very common to find special marking, as seen in the use of English 'would' in apodosis. Elliott (2000:72) also suggests that in some languages, predictive conditionals do not attract irrealis marking, since the strong possibility of the realization of the apodosis event in the predictive conditional construction makes it more like a realis event. However, the relationship between reality status and syntactic marking appears to be much more complicated in Tsou. Table 3 presents the distribution of auxiliary verbs in conditional clauses, and Table 4, distilled from Table 3, focuses on the distribution of 'realis' and 'irrealis' auxiliary verbs.



Table 3 Distribution of auxiliary verbs in conditional constructions

Protasis \ Apodosis	ho							hoci / honci						
	Ø	mi-type	la	te/ta/tena	n-te	n-to	total	Ø	mi-type	la	te/ta/tena	n-te	n-to	total
Ø	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
mi-type	0	6	2	0	0	0	8	5	1	0	0	0	0	6
La	0	3	0	2	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
te / ta- / tena	0	1	0	7	0	0	8	13	2	0	0	0	0	15
Nte	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Nto	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	0	10	2	9	0	0	21	23	3	0	0	0	0	26

$X^2=13.901$ $df=4$ $p<0.05$

$X^2=0.854$ $df=4$ $p=0.931>0.05$

Table 4 Distribution of realis/irrealis auxiliary verbs in conditional constructions

Protasis \ Apodosis	ho					honci/hoci				
	Realis	Irrealis	la	Ø	Total	Realis	Irrealis	la	Ø	total
Realis	6	0	2	0	8	1	0	0	5	6
Irrealis	1	7	0	0	8	2	0	0	16	18
la	3	2	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
Ø	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Total	10	9	2	0	21	3	0	0	23	26

$X^2=13.901$ $df=4$ $p<0.05$

$X^2=0.419$ $df=2$ $p=0.811>0.05$

The columns in Table 3 and Table 4 represent the auxiliary verb type distributed in protasis (if-clause); they are further divided into two groups: *ho*-marked protasis and *hoci/honci*-marked protasis. The rows indicate the auxiliary type appearing in the apodosis (then-clause). Numbers in the two tables indicate the tokens of a particular protasis and apodosis pair of a conditional sentence.

In Table 4, it is apparent that neither protasis nor apodosis in a



conditional sentence obligatorily attracts irrealis auxiliary verbs. In protasis, 57.14% (12/21) of the *ho*-marked protasis are marked with a non-irrealis auxiliary verb, and, surprisingly, none of the *honci*-marked protasis is marked with an irrealis auxiliary verb. Moreover, 88.46% (23/26) of the *hoci/honci*-marked protasis occur with a zero auxiliary verb. In apodosis, 61.9% (13/21) of the main-clauses in *ho*-marked conditionals are marked with a non-irrealis auxiliary verb, and 30.77% (8/26) of apodosis in the *honci*-marked conditionals are marked with a non-irrealis auxiliary verb. Finally, in the conditional clauses with the subordinator *ho*, auxiliary verbs occur in both protasis and apodosis clauses. Chi-square tests ($X^2=13.901$, $df=4$, $p<0.05$) show that there is a strong association between the occurrences of auxiliary verbs in protasis and those in apodosis in *ho*-marked conditionals. However, in *hoci-honci* marked conditionals the distribution of auxiliary verbs is entirely different. There is no association at all between the occurrences of auxiliary verbs in protasis and those in apodosis ($X^2=0.419$, $df=2$, $p=0.811>0.05$). All in all, the only agreement between the *ho* conditionals and *hoci/honci* conditionals is that, in the then-clauses, the ‘irrealis’ auxiliary verbs are *not* the only choice to mark reality status. Indeed, using non-irrealis auxiliary verbs in these environments is either the preferred choice (in the *ho*-marked then-clauses), or is strongly instantiated (in the *hoci*-marked then-clauses). We conclude then that, since the use of realis auxiliary and irrealis auxiliary verb accounts for about half each of the occurrences in the if-clause of *ho*-marked conditionals, one can not really say that *ho* functions to introduce realis or irrealis clauses. On the other hand, the predominant pattern in the *honci/hoci* conditionals is to use zero auxiliary verb in the if-clause, and an ‘irrealis’ auxiliary verb in the then-clause.

Although X^2 tests show that there is a strong association between the auxiliary types in protasis and apodosis of *ho*-marked conditionals, there are a number of ‘exceptional’ cases in Table 4 which must be addressed. First of all, there is one *ho*-marked conditional clause with a realis auxiliary verb in protasis but an irrealis auxiliary verb in apodosis, as shown in (28).



- (28) ma **te**-’o yainenU **ho** o’a **mi**-’o mah
 EVI Irr-1st what_to_do.PF Conj Neg R.AF-1st take.AF
 no te-’o tititha (Snake:420)
 Obl Irr-1st take_instrument_for_hunting
 “What should I do when I am not with any instrument for
 hunting?”

The speaker of (28) says that: given that I don’t have any instrument for hunting, what should I do? Thus the situation associated with the if-clause in (28) is assumed to be true, and taken to be real by the speaker.

The other ‘exceptional’ cases in *ho*-marked conditionals pertain to the use of habitual auxiliary verb *la*, either in protasis or in apodosis.

- (29) o’a **la** s’a aUnpUnpa eUa **ho** **i**-si
 Neg Hab Adv at_will.PF find.PF Conj R.NAF-3rd
 ucia i’ima (Snake:94)
 want.PF look_for.PF
 “(The snake) is not found just randomly when one tries to look for
 it.”

- (30) **ho** **te** yuyafu ’e ba’efkoi, **la** couno yuyafu
 Conj Irr emerge.AF Nom snake Hab always emerge.AF
 ho tena c’u ataveisi no seovcoha (Snake:100)
 Conj Irr Asp after Obl rainy_season
 “When the snake is about to emerge, it always emerges after
 a rainy season.”

- (31) ne ngeesangsi **ho** **la**-’u mhino ta mo maica ci
 Obl plain Conj Hab-1st buy.AF Obl R.AF like.AF RI
 sapiei, aa **mo** s’a maica na hia pepe
 shoes Neg R.AF Adv like.AF Nom how high
 “In the plains, when I buy shoes like these, (they are) not
 that expensive.” (Buying shoes:22)

Examples (29) and (30) refer to the speaker’s folk knowledge about habitual behaviors of snakes, and (31) is related to the speaker’s assessment of the market price of shoes. The habitual auxiliary verb *la*



in the three examples, either in protasis or apodosis, indicates that the situations are perceived to be habitual or general by the speakers. The sentences show that, once again, *la* is best seen as an auxiliary verb in its own right independent of distinction between ‘realis’ and ‘irrealis’, since in these sentences, *la* sometimes aligns with the ‘realis’, sometimes with the ‘irrealis’ auxiliary verbs.

We next turn to some of the ‘exceptional’ sentences in *hoci*-marked conditionals. Recall in Table 3 and Table 4 that fully 88.46% (23/26) of the *hoci*-initial conditional sentences appear with no auxiliary verbs in protasis. Among them, there are 5 tokens of *hoci*-marked conditionals with a zero auxiliary verb in the protasis, and a realis auxiliary verb in the apodosis, as shown in (32) and (33).

- (32) ko’koeno maitan’e, **hoci** Ø elU ta ba’efkoi ho peela
 therefore nowadays if find.AF Obl snake Conj can.PF
 tUtpUta ho ya ho phieni, **mo** na’no pepe
 catch.PF Conj have-AF Conj sell R.AF very high
 na i’e huphinasi (Snake:163)
 DM Nom value
 “Therefore if the snake is found and could be caught, the value would be very high when it’s sold nowadays.”

- (33) **mo** pepe ci macucuma **hoci** Ø peelUi eaa
 R.AF high matter if can.LF find.PF
 “It is very preciously high-valued if it can be found.”(Snake:217)

In (32) and (33), the speakers, based on the situations described in the protasis, seem to be saying that what the apodosis clauses state must be generally accepted truths, given their folk knowledge.

There are three sentences in *hoci*-marked conditionals where realis auxiliary verbs are used in the protasis, rather than the more general zero auxiliary verbs, as shown in (34), (35) and (36).

- (34) ’a i-si asona ucia p’enza to ba’i to Xiao-zhen
 EVI R.NAF-3rd possible want ask Obl grandma Obl name
 na mocmo-si **hoci** i-si o’te acUha hioa.
 Nom other-3rd if R.NAF-3rd Neg whole work
 “The grandma of Xiao-zhen wants to ask for the remaining parcels of lands, if he doesn’t work the whole lot.” (Conversation 4:25)



- (35) 'a **nto**-^u la 'anana'va usa (Daily:62)
EVI Irr-1st La actually.PF go.PF

hoci mi-su mai to mo meméalU ehohamo
if R.AF-2nd like.AF Obl R.AF be_good_at.AF tell_story.AF
“If you could tell stories, I would like to go (visit you).”

- (36) **honci i-ko** o'te tum'um'i, **ta**-^u eUsvUta
if R.NAF-2nd Neg pull_out.NAF Irr-1st tell.PF
to keisacu (Conversation 4:77)
Obl police
“If you don't pull out (those plants), I will call the police.”

The protasis clauses in (34), (35) and (36) are all marked with a 'realis' auxiliary verb. In (34), the situation described in protasis is hypothetical, but the auxiliary verb in the apodosis clause is realis *i-*, contrary to the general pattern. In (35), *nto* in the apodosis indicates a counterfactual event, and the 'irrealis' in the protasis is signaled by *hoci*. In (36), the speaker is giving the hearer a warning about an impending sanction if the latter fails to act as prescribed.

To conclude the preceding discussions, it seems clear that reality marking in the conditional sentences in Tsou is jointly achieved through the combined effect of the subordinators *ho/hoci/honci* interacting with the auxiliary verbs in the protasis and apodosis. It is true that auxiliary verbs occurring in either the protasis or the apodosis of the *ho*-marked conditionals tend to code 'realis' events, but this is only a pragmatic tendency and one cannot state categorically that *ho* introduces realis events. However, in *hoci/honci*-marked conditionals, the coding strategy is different. The protasis clauses of the *hoci/honci*-marked conditionals are predominantly marked with a zero auxiliary verb and thus reality in these clauses must be said to be signaled via *hoci/honci*.

3.6 Modality

Auxiliary verbs in Tsou have been shown to code potential events. Predictably they can also be used to indicate deontic modality, as in (37)-(40), and, often with the aid of a modal verb, also epistemic commitment and agent-oriented modality, to borrow a term from Bybee et al. (1994:177), as in (41)-(44).



- (37) **te-'o** n'a yuevaha 'e yunku
 Irr-1st Asp borrow.PF Nom basket
 "I want to borrow this basket." (field notes)
- (38) 'a **nte** hioa (field notes)
 EVI Irr work.AF
 "(I) should do (the thing)."
 "(I) plan to do(the thing)"
- (39) **nte-ko** hioa (field notes)
 Irr-2nd work
 "You ought to do (the thing)."
- (40) 'a **nto-'u** hioa (field notes)
 EVI Irr-1st work
 "I should have done (the thing at that time)."
- (41) **mi-ta** asonU bonU no beahci (field notes)
 R.AF-3rd maybe eat.AF Obl fruit
 "He may have eaten / be eating fruit."
- (42) **te-he** la asonU uhne fuengU ho yahioa
 Irr-3rd.pl La maybe go.AF mountains Conj work
 "They will probably go to mountains and work there in the future"
 (field notes)

In (37), the speaker reports his desire to undertake the action; (38) refers to either the speaker's willingness or obligation; (39) indicates the agent's obligation and in (40), *nto* denotes a past unfulfilled obligation. In (41) and (42) it is the modal verbs *asonU* 'maybe' and *peelUi/meelU* 'can; may' that clinch the epistemic and agent-oriented modality interpretations for the sentences.

- (43) 'a **te-ko** **peelUi** o-epUnga 'e naveu
 EVI Irr-2nd can.NAF eat-finish.PF Nom rice
 "You may eat all rice." (field notes)



- (44) **la-ko meelU mouyoyai keUpU** (Daily life:28)
 Hab-2nd can.AF make.AF basket
 “Can you make sack-bag?”

Beyond auxiliary verbs and modal verbs, some frozen modal expressions are also used in Tsou to indicate modality. *na aUmtusi* ‘should; ought’ a fossilized modal adverb, can be used to indicate the agent’s obligation, as in (45), or the speaker’s epistemic commitment, as in (46). Note that in (46), a ‘realis’ auxiliary verb *mi-* is used. Again, as in the preceding discussion, irrealis’ auxiliary verbs are not necessarily required for the sentences to receive epistemic or deontic interpretations.

- (45) ’a **n-te-ta** cu la bonU no beahci
 EVI n-Irr-3rd Asp La eat.AF Obl fruit
na a’UmtUsi (field notes)
 thing_should_be_done
 “He ought to eat some fruit.” (He needs to eat some fruit.)

- (46) ’a **mi-ta** cu mhia kuyai **na a’UmtUsi**
 EVI R.AF-3rd Asp buy.AF car thing_should_be_done
 “He must have bought a car.” (field notes)

nenusi no is another frozen phrase used to convey epistemic modality. In (47), (48) and (49), *nenusi no* ‘probably’ indicates the speaker’s commitment to the truth of the propositions in the sentences. Again, these sentences demonstrate that modality expressions do not necessarily attract ‘irrealis’ auxiliary verbs.

- (47) **nenusi no mo** bonU no beahci
 probably R.AF eat.AF Obl fruit
 “It is probable that (he) is eating fruit.” (field notes)

- (48) **nenusi no la-ta** bonU no beahci (field notes)
 probably Hab-3rd eat.AF Obl fruit
 “It is probable that he eats fruit. (He has a habit of eating fruit.)”

- (49) **nenusi no ta-ta** mhia kuyai
 probably Irr-3rd buy.AF car
 “It is probable that he will buy a car.” (field notes)



It should be obvious now that Tsou does not necessarily express modality and reality via the same marking system. In fact, Tsou clauses with overt modal markers do not necessarily attract ‘irrealis’ auxiliary verbs. In some sense, the ‘irrealis’ meaning comes automatically with the modality expressions.

3.7 Interim summary

So far we have considered how Tsou codes reality in a number of environments generally known to attract ‘irrealis’ markers. Although previous researchers have argued that auxiliary verbs in Tsou code reality as well as temporal and aspectual information, a closer scrutiny of the discourse data has shown that the ‘irrealis’ auxiliary verb has actually a sharply delimited function, that of indicating future potential events. They don’t occur in negative constructions or in hypothetical and counterfactual conditionals (unreal conditionals) where they are most strongly expected. The auxiliary verbs have thus conspicuously failed to live up to their lofty status as reality markers. Instead, the marking of ‘irrealis’ in these constructions is largely accomplished by *hoci/honci*. In the following section, we will investigate the behavior of auxiliary verbs in predicates with embedded clauses. We will explore how reality status is marked in syntactically complex constructions.

4. REALITY MARKING IN COMPLEMENTS

Lin (2002) studies complement constructions in Tsou, and concludes that, of the four types of complements in Tsou she examines, the *ho*-marked complement and \emptyset -marked complement exhibit greater syntactic independence and syntactically approximate an independent clause. Semantically, they usually appear as complements of the verbs of perception, cognition, emotion or evaluation.

- (50) a. *ho*-marked complement (Lin 2002:50)
os-’o cohivi ho mi-ta supeohU
R.NAF-1st know.PF lin R.AF-3rd fall_down.AF
“I know that he fell down.”



- b. Ø-marked complement (Lin 2002:116)
 i-si sua Ø mi-'o uh ne tapangU
 R.NAF-3rd dream.PF R.AF-1st go.AF Obl TapangU
 "He dreamed that I went to TapangU."

In the following discussion the subordinator *ho* in (50a) will be termed a linker that functions to introduce a complement (cf. S. Huang 2003). Note that *ho* as a lexical item is highly polysemous: it has been shown in the preceding discussions to be a subordinator introducing temporal adverbial clauses, much like 'when' in English, or a subordinator introducing 'realis' if-clauses in conditional constructions. Our interest in the present discussion is in the status of *ho* as a linker vis-à-vis reality marking in complement sentences.

The first thing to note about the linker *ho* is that it is used to introduce complements headed by either a factive or a non-factive predicate. In (51) the speakers presuppose the propositions represented by the complements are true and the linker *ho* is used, as expected.

- (51) a. i-si talUa to pasuya **ho** mi-cu
 R.NAF-3rd remember.PF Obl Pasuya lin R.AF-Asp
 mhia kuyai 'o paicU (field notes)
 buy.AF car Nom PaicU
 "Pasuya remembers that PaicU bought a car."
- b. os-'o ta'payo'a **ho** mi-'o cu bonU to beahci
 R.NAF-1st forget.PF lin R.AF-1st Asp eat.AF Obl fruit
 "I forget that I ate fruit." (field notes)
- c. os-'o ta'payo'a **ho** te-ta mhia kuyai
 R.NAF-1st forget.PF lin Irr-3rd buy.AF car
 "I forget that he wants to buy a car." (field notes)
- d. os-'o ta'susuaeza **ho** os-'o ana 'o beahci
 R.NAF-1st regret.PF lin R.NAF-1st eat.PF Nom fruit
 "I regret that I ate the fruit." (field notes)
- e. mi-'o kaebU **ho** mi-ta esmi.(field notes)
 R.AF-1st happy lin R.AF-3rd arrive.AF
 "I am happy that he came."



- f. mi-'o kaebU **ho** te-ta esmi.(field notes)
 R.AF-1st happy lin Irr.AF-3rd arrive.AF
 "I am happy that he will come."

In sentences (52a) and (52b), on the other hand, the speakers only assert their expectation and do not presuppose the truth of the proposition represented by the complement clause in each of the sentences. And yet, the linker *ho* is used.

- (52) a os-'o ta'sona **ho** te esmi 'o paicU
 R.AF-1st expect.PF lin Irr arriveAF Nom PaicU
 "I expect that PaicU will come." (field notes)

- b os-'o ta'sona **ho** mo esmi 'o paicU
 R.AF-1st expect.PF lin R.AF arrive.AF Nom PaicU
 "I expect PaicU to come." (field notes)

Similar observations apply to sentences in (53a), (53b), and (53c). In these sentences the speakers are making an epistemic judgment with respect to some proposition, and are not making any presupposition about the truth of the embedded proposition.

- (53) a. os-'o ta'uzva **ho** te asansanno esmi 'o paicU
 R.AF-1st believe.PF lin Irr surely arrive.AF Nom PaicU
 "I believe that PaicU will come surely." (field notes)

- b os-'o ta'uzva **ho** mi-cu esmi 'e paicU
 R.AF-1st believe.PF lin R.AF-Asp arrive.AF Nom PaicU
 "I believe that PaicU has come." (field notes)

- c. i-si asansanna **ho** te esmi 'o paicU
 R.NAF-3rd surely lin Irr arrive Nom PaicU
 "It is certain that PaicU will come." (field notes)

In (54a), (54b), and (54c), the embedded propositions are hypothetical situations, and the linker *hoci/honci* is used to introduce these hypothetical complements. Note also that in (54c) the realis *i-* is



used in the *hoci*-marked clause.

- (54) a. os-’o ta’taza **hoci** te asansanno esmi ’o paicU
R.NAF.1st wish lin Irr surely arrive.AF Nom PaicU
“I hope that PaicU will surely come.” (field notes)
- b. i-si aenguca **hoci** o’tte psUIUi ’o vicyu
R.NAF-3rd worry.PF lin Neg buy_and_get.PF Nom rice_wine
“He worries that the rice wine has sold out.” (field notes)
Lit. “He worries that he will not buy and get rice wine.”
- c. os-’o ta’kuv’a **hoci** i-si cu psuipUneni
R.NAF-1st worry.PF lin R.NAF-3rd Asp sold_out-BF
’o vicyu (field notes)
Nom rice_wine
“I worry that the rice wine is old out.”

In counterfactual situations, only the linker *hoci/honci* can be used to introduce counterfactual complements, as in (55).

- (55) os-’o ta’taza **hoci** mo-’u asansanno esmi ’o paicU
R.NAF-1st wish.PF lin R.AF-1st surely arrive.AF Nom PaicU
“I wished that PaicU had come (at that time).” (field notes)

The preceding discussion clearly suggests that for factive predicates, the linker *ho* is used to introduce a presupposed proposition. As for non-factive predicates, if the speaker’s commitment to the truth of the embedded proposition is strong, the linker *ho* is used; otherwise, the linker *hoci/honci* is used.

Some verbs can be followed by either a *ho*-marked complement, or a *hoci/honci*-marked complement, depending on the speaker’s stance with respect to the truth of that complement. Consider *ta’taza* ‘to hope’ in (55) above and in (56) below.

- (56) os-’o ta’taza **ho** mo eakuyai (field notes)
R.NAF-1st envy lin R.AF have_car.AF
“I envy (him) (his) owning a car.”

ta’taza in Tsou has two readings, as shown in (55) and (56). In (55),



ta'taza means 'hope' or 'wish', and the linker used will determine its reading: if the complement is introduced by *ho*, then its meaning is more like 'hope'; if the complement is introduced by *hoci*, then its meaning is more like 'wish'. In (56), our informant insists that 'he has a car' is presupposed to be true, and *hoci/honci* cannot be used here. A similar contrast obtains in (57a) and (57b).

- (57) a. *os-'o* *totea* *ho* *te* *esmi* *'o* *paicU*
 R.NAF-1st wait.PF lin Irr arrive.AF Nom PaicU
 "I am waiting for PaicU to come." (field notes)
- b. *os-'o* *totea* *hoci* *esmi* *'o* *paicU*
 R.NAF-1st wait.PF lin arrive.AF Nom PaicU
 "I am waiting for PaicU to come." (field notes)

Either *ho* or *hoci* may occur in the embedded clause with the matrix verb *totea* 'wait'. The difference is that, in (57a), the speaker considers it highly likely that PaicU will come, but in (57b), the speaker has stronger a reservation about PaicU's coming.

To summarize briefly, complements in Tsou are introduced by either the linker *ho* or *hoci/honci*. When the truth of a proposition is either presupposed or asserted, *ho* is used; when the truth of a proposition is suspected or seriously questioned, *hoci/honci* is used. In factive predicates, the truth of the proposition is presupposed and will not be challenged by the hearer and *ho* is used then to indicate this objective reality. On the contrary, in non-factive predicates, the use of *ho* or *hoci* depends on the speaker's epistemic attitude toward the reality of the proposition.

5. CONCLUSION

We have examined how Tsou marks 'realis' and 'irrealis' events in what Elliott (2000:68) calls the common environments. These environments actually cover a wide range of modal meanings and their formal expression in Tsou varies from construction to construction. In environments commonly known to attract 'irrealis' markers, the present corpus data show that 'irrealis' auxiliary verbs are sharply limited to one functional domain, namely future potential events. But use of the irrealis

auxiliary verbs in Tsou to mark future potential events is largely predictable on universal grounds and little is to be gained by strictly distinguishing between auxiliary verbs as future tense markers and as markers of ‘irrealis’ potential events. In other domains, their status as irrealis markers is equally open to question. In modal sentences, for example, modals create an irrealis world where the marking is principally done by the modal verbs or modal expressions themselves and the auxiliary verbs used are either irrealis, in which case they are redundant, or realis, in which case their presence can hardly be said to code irrealis events. In hypothetical and counterfactual conditionals, where they are strongly expected, the irrealis auxiliary verbs are often conspicuously absent and thus the marking of irrealis is largely accomplished by *hoci/honci* when they occur in these constructions. Finally, in complement clauses, the linker *ho* is used to introduce factive complements or complements whose truth is vouched for by the speaker; when the truth of a complement proposition is simply uncertain, challenged or known to be otherwise, the linkers *hoci/honci* are used. In these cases, it is the linkers together with the main predicates that function to mark reality rather than the auxiliary verbs themselves.

Given the findings above, the conclusion appears inescapable that the auxiliary verbs in Tsou must now be reconceptualized, as follows: the auxiliary verbs in Tsou code temporal information, but not reality information. Where they appear to mark irrealis potential events, the appearance is deceptive and is simply a consequence of their function as tense markers to code futurity. We suspect this is true of all the tense-aspect systems in Formosan languages, although it remains to be demonstrated. What has been claimed to mark irrealis in Tsou has turned out, on closer investigation, to be restricted to one or two sharply delimited functional domains, and these domains are in fact consequences of the functions of tense-aspects markers in the languages in question. Bybee’s (1998) observation is highly relevant in the present context: Instances where the label ‘irrealis’ has been used to characterize the meaning of a grammatical morpheme fall into one of two categories: either they are cases in which a more specific characterization would be more useful or they are cases in which the analyst has tried to come up with a single meaning for an element that is common to many different constructions, where in fact it is the construction as a whole that is supplying the “usually more specific sense”. In other words, it appears that the term ‘irrealis’ is simply too general to be useful, except as a



pointer to a very broad domain.”

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Shuanfan Huang
Graduate Institute of Linguistics
National Taiwan University
sfhuang@ntu.edu.tw

Huei-ju Huang
Graduate Institute of Linguistics
National Taiwan University
r88142001@ntu.edu.tw

鄒語實現態標記之探討

黃宣範 黃惠如
國立台灣大學

本文觀察鄒語自然言談語料中，實現 (realis) 與非實現 (irrealis) 事件在不同句法環境下的標記情形。在一般相信應標記為非實現態的很多句法環境下，鄒語「非實現態」之助動詞並不出現；相反地，實現態與否是由整個句構 (construction) 來標記。因此其所顯示的語法功能比較偏向區別時態，而不是作實現態與非實現態的區別。換言之，鄒語的「非實現態」助動詞是用來標記「未來」；鄒語助動詞不應視為系統性的標記事件的實現與否。

