A Semantic Analysis of Experiential Construction in Hokkien

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Abstract
In this article the author discusses the analysis of the experience of construction and the subject of experiencer (dative) in Hokkien. In Semantic studies, experiential construction is a process or method used to form meaning that has experiencer as a human participant who accidentally experiences a mental or physical state. The concept of experience explains 5 subdomains of experiential verbs, namely bodily sensations (thirst, hunger, pain, itching), emotions (anger, pleasure, fear), desire (want), cognition (thinking, knowing, remembering), and perception (see, feel, hearing), as well as forms of experiential adjectives, namely curious, clever, forgetful, and confused. Each language has terms that are bad, good, and neutral emotions and can be described through symptoms outside the body, such as red and pale. This research is a qualitative descriptive study and was compiled using the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) theory. The author analyzes the data in this article by using data...
collection methods from respondents with referring, engaging, and proficient techniques. The research data is taken from written and verbal sources. The experiential construction in Hokkien may use both transitive and intransitive experiential verbs in experiential assignment as object and or subject datives. In Hokkien, subject experiencer is taking the position of direct subject, while the object experiencer is taking the position as dative subject.

**Keywords:** Experiential construction, Verbs, Dative, Hokkien, Experiencer
1. Introduction

1.1 Problems of the Study

This paper is about experiential construction in Hokkien. It has its focus on semantic analysis of Hokkien and addresses three major questions:

1) What is experiential construction?

2) How is the experiential construction in Hokkien?

3) What are differences and similarities among previous researches of other languages and Hokkien?

1.2 The Significances of the Study

In this paper, there are two significances of the study. Theoretically, this paper deals with Hokkien used in Medan by showing the sentence construction in terms of experiential verbs. So, it is aimed to give information to the readers about how the construction is formed along with the meaning if subject, object, agent, or patient is placed. Practically, this paper is significant for the readers to use Hokkien properly. This paper will help them to be aware of Hokkien as one of the mother tongues used in Medan.

1.3 The Relevant Scholarship

In order to support this paper, the writer uses some relevant related paper which are wished to support findings in the field so that the theory can be strengthened and the data can be accurate. The theory is the semantic analysis of experiential construction. They are the paper by Dahl (2012) entitled The Argument Structure of Experience: Experiential Construction in Early Verdic, Homeric Greek, and Old Latin, and Lam (2014) entitled A Unified Analysis to Surpass Comparative and Experiential Aspect. According to Dahl, experiential verbs differ from agentive verbs in Early Verdic Homeric Greek, and Old Latin. Dahl distinguishes between generalized construction where the experiencer is encoded like an agent and inverted construction where the stimulus is also encoded as an agent. While Lam investigates the morpheme gwo3 in Cantonese has two construction, namely the surpass-comparative and the experiential perfect, and argues that gwo3 should be analyzes with the same syntax and semantics based on the syntactically question formation and the semantically specificity and quantification.

2. Method

The writer collects the data by using the techniques by Sudaryanto (2015) which allow the writer to observe conversation among Hokkien native speakers in Medan, get involved in it, get the chance to have the conversation with the speakers, and finally write or transcribe their language into wordings. The method itself is based on Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) approach by Wierzbicka (1996). It deals intensively with language and cognition, and language and culture. A semantic analysis in the NSM approach results in a reductive paraphrase called an explication that captures the meaning of the concept explicated. An ideal
explication can be substituted for the original expression in context without changing the meaning.

A local variant of Hokkien spoken in Medan, Indonesia is the lingua franca in Medan as well as other northern city states of North Sumatra surrounding it, and is characterized by the pronunciation of words according to the Zhangzhou dialect, together with widespread use of Indonesian and English borrowed words. It is predominantly a spoken dialect: it is rarely written in Chinese characters, and there is no standard romanization.

Construction is the process, method, or way in which words are used together and arranged in a sentence with meaning. Experiences can be understood as participants of humans or living beings who experience unintentional mental or physical states arising from or caused by some external triggers that are unknowingly characteristic of being involved in the situation. In Mulyadi (2010), experience is an argument that experiences certain mental states indicated by its predicate (Broekhuis, 2008: 1). In the predicate of two places, experience occupies the first argument (Van Valin and LaPolla 1999: 114). Stimulus is limited as an argument that triggers or becomes the target of experiential psychological responses (Kearns, 2000: 190), or entities absorbed by experience (Klein and Kutscher, 2005: 1-2). Therefore, experiential construction is a process or method used to form meaning that has experience as a human participant who accidentally experiences a physical mental or physical state, with the role of experiential verbs or experience adjectives. As explained in Verhoeven's book (2007: 35) in Chapter 3, the experience concept explains 5 subdomains of experience, namely sensations of the body, emotions, volition, cognition, and perception. Each language has terms that are bad, good, and neutral emotions and can be described through symptoms outside the body, such as red and pale. Wierzbicka (1999) in Verhoeven's book (2007: 36) asserts that all languages explain emotions through the inner body with sensations such as feeling hot as a reaction to emotional situations. Wierzbicka (1996, 1999) also gives an example of the verb of emotions, cognition and volition by being interpreted as thinking, knowing, wanting, feeling, and experience adjectives as shocked, jealous, jealous. Whereas Verhoeven (2007: 159) describes the forms of experiential adjectives, as follows: satisfied, curious, proud, amazed, smart, intelligent, forgetful, confused, ignorant, strong, fragile, powerful, blind, happy, excited, angry, scared, shy.

3. Results

Since Masica (1976) has suggested that the dative subject is a common areal feature in the Indian subcontinent, dative subject' has become one of the most popular topics among linguists studying South Asia. Secondly, Abbi has demonstrated the similarity among Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Mundari of experiencer noun marking as follows: "Typologically Indo-Aryan, Mundari and Dravidian languages more or less share the patterning of direct and oblique experiencer noun marking" (1994: 79). She has described the postposition ke as a dative case marking and the noun phrase marked by the postposition ke as an experiencer in Mundari.

Thirdly, Dahl and Fedriani (2012: 26) note that emotion verbs have a far broader range of argument realization options than the other types of experiential predicates, being compatible
with all of the six construction types distinguished. While it is hardly surprising as this class of experiential verbs includes predicates denoting a broad variety of fundamentally different attitudes towards very different kinds of stimuli, that is, smaller or greater semantic distinctions which might be expected to have morphosyntactic repercussions. Verbs of perception and volition contrastedly seem to be more strongly connected with a single construction type. Moreover, in the same manner as certain verb classes are compatible with multiple construction patterns, some individual verbs have multiple argument realization options, as for instance the Early Vedic verb śrav- ‘hear, listen’ and the Homeric Greek verb κλύω ‘I hear, listen’ which invariably selects generalized constructions but was shown to alternately select a stimulus argument in the accusative, genitive or dative.

It is well known that construction is process, method, or way where words are used altogether and arranged in structured way to form meaningful sentences, on the other hand, verbal construction like love, envy and fear tend to have a far less unitary morphosyntactic expression than, for instance, prototypically agentive verbs like ‘murder’, ‘break’ or ‘build’ both within and across languages. Experiencer roles can be understood as participants in humans or animate beings who experience unintentional mental or physical states arising from or caused by some external stimuli that are unknowingly characteristic of being involved in the situation. The agent and the experiencer have in common that they both tend to be understood as human or animate entities.

Therefore, experiential construction is a process or method used to form meaning that has experiencer as a human participant who accidentally experiences a physical mental or physical state, with the role of experiential verbs or experience adjectives. Related points can be made with regard to the role of the stimulus which in a sense causes a change in the state of the experiencer so that it resembles an agent. The more evidence shows that the manifestation system of arguments is sensitive to lexical requirements such as control and involvement of the will, such as feelings, emotions or unspecified physical conditions related to these parameters, so it is reasonable to assume that this has an impact on linguistics.

Experiencers vary greatly as to the degree of control they project on different feelings, also from a cross-linguistic perspective. In Hokkien, the verb kʰ4 sɛŋ4 te3 ‘to get angry’ requires a special valency pattern and cannot take an accusative-marked Experiencer because it is categorized as an intentional action (Chandralal 2010). Similarly, Becher (2003: 29) reports that in Wolof verbs expressing love and hate do not conform to the general coding prototype of experiential verbs because they are seen as mental activity verbs.

The particular status of experiencers is mirrored in their vague characterization in the literature. For example, Lehmann (1991) uses the label ‘ambivalent status’, Nass (2007) describes experiencers as ‘volitional undergoers’, while Smith (1993) speaks of ‘bilateral involvement’ and Pustet characterizes the experiencer as a ‘syntactic chameleon’ to capture the ambiguous status of a participant which is both patient-like and actually capable of independent action (Bossong 1998, Croft 1993).

The underspecified character and ambivalent status of both the experiencer role and the stimulus role gives rise to a tension between a tendency to assimilate Experiential
constructions to the transitive prototype and a tendency to differentiate these two construction types. Both experiencers and stimuli appear to be equally poor candidates for the relational primacy associated with the syntactic status of subject, as both of them have rather different properties than prototypical agents or patients (see Croft 1993, Butt et al. 2006 and Malchukov and de Swart 2009 for discussion). Nevertheless, experiencers may be selected because of their animacy and stimuli because of their being the source or cause of a state or event. As a result, we find causative experiential verbs where the stimulus is chosen as subject and the experiencer as object, as well as non-causative experiential verbs where the experiencer is encoded as subject and the stimulus as object (see also Dowty 1991, Primus 1999).

3.1 Intransitive, Transitive, Causative, and Passive

The verbal stem in Hokkien is either transitive or intransitive. The intransitive verbal stems have two subsets. One is a small set of purely intransitive verbs (1a), which never take the transitive marker. The other intransitive verbs are fluid (2b), i.e., they can be used transitively.

Transitive verb stems are given in (1c).

1 a. thɪtɪ ʰ o2 '(to) play', ʰ phu2 kəŋ1 '(to) dawn', ke4 gau2 '(to be) dumb', etc.
   b. ce3 '(to) sit', jip1 '(to) enter', kʰ ʌk1 kʰua3 '(to) fast', etc.
   c. cɪk1 '(to) eat', kua3 '(to) see', liak1 '(to) catch', etc.

Transitivity is demonstrated by the ability to take object pronominal affixes on verbs. The transitive marker and intransitive marker play a crucial role for causativisation and passivisation. When the fluid type of intransitive verb is used transitively, it is considered as a causativized form of an intransitive verb (2). On the other hand, when a transitive verb is used intransitively, it can be considered as a passivised form of a transitive verb (3). For example,

2 a. Lisa təŋ3 km1 ce3 km4 kʰi1 tʰɔ3 kʰa1.
   Lisa now-CONT sit-INTR-IND at-ground
   Lisa is sitting on the floor now.
   b. Linda ho3 ha0 le1 gi1 na4 gi1 na4 ce3 km4 kʰi1 tʰɔ3 kʰa1 ləu4.
   Linda give those-DEMPRO-PL child-PL sit-TR-IND at-ground PERF
   Linda has seated those children on the floor.

3 a. kəŋ4 tʰət3 liak1 tək3 ha0 le1 no3 kəu2 tʰət3 ləu4.
   Police-PL:SUB arrest-TR those-DEMPRO-PL two-DU thief-PL PERF
   The police have arrested those two thieves.
b. ha0 le1  nɔ3 kau2  tfɔtɔ3  tok3 lal1 lau4.

Those-DEMPRO-PL  two-DU  thief-PL  arrest-PASS-INTR-IND-PERF

Those two thieves have been arrested.

3.2 Subject and Object Markings

When the subject NP and object NP are animate, subject and object agreement elements can be affixed to the verb. The following personal pronominal suffixes are used for subject-object agreement:

4. personal pronouns  singular  object  plural

First  wa4 (I)  wa4 (me)  wa4 luj2 (we / us)

Second  lu4 (you)  lu4 (you)  lu4 laj2 (you)

Third  ie0 (he / she)  ie0 (him / her)  ie0 laj2 (they / them)

The same forms are used for subject and object, and occupy the same slots. The subject agreement element is attached as a clitic either to the end of the verb or to the preverbal NP which may be in a subject or a non-subject role. The- object agreement element occurs before the indicative marker lau4 and after the transitive marker ho3 / tok3 in unmarked sentences.

As Comrie states, "there is no nominal morphological distinction between subject and object". Further, the word order is not fixed for subject NP and object NP. Subject and object agreement, therefore, is very important for the signaling of grammatical relations. But in some cases, ambiguity cannot be excluded. When the subject NP and object NP have the same person and number the sentence is ambiguous:

5 a. Cindy  ka3  ie1  mrau1.

Cindy  bite-TR-IND  3SG:OBJ-cat

Cindy bit the cat.

b. ie1  mrau1  ka3  Cindy.

3SG:SUB-cat  bite-TR-IND  Cindy

The cat bit Cindy.

On pragmatic side, meaning (5a) may be less likely. But if mrau1 tfhu4 ‘mouse’ is placed in the first position instead of Cindy, the sentence is totally ambiguous.

6 a. ie1 mrau1 tfhu4  ka3  ie1  mrau1.

3SG:SUB-mouse  bite-TR-IND  3SG:OBJ-cat

The mouse bit the cat.

b. ie1  mrau1  ka3  ie1  mrau1 tfhu4.
The cat bit the mouse.

One construction in which subjects and objects may be distinguishable is in relative clause constructions. The head NP in relative clauses can be a subject or an object in Hokkien. But the transitive marker and intransitive marker can be used to distinguish the NP subject head from the NP object head. Thus,

7 a. ɪe1 mɪa1 u1        ka3        ɪe1 mɪa1 tʃhu4        e si4 lɪau4.
   3SG:SUB-cat    bite-TR-IND    3SG:OBJ-mouse    die-INTR-IND
   The cat which bit the mouse has died.

   b. ɪe1 mɪa1 u1 ɪe1 mɪa1 tʃhu4        ka3        e si4 lɪau4.
   3SG:SUB-cat    3SG:OBJ-mouse    bite-INTR-IND    die-PERF-INTR-IND
   The cat which the mouse bit has died.

The subject marking and object marking are discussed here. As shown above, these marking systems can indicate grammatical relations in Hokkien to some extent. However, the subject and object agreement element can be marked only when the subject NP and object NP are classified as animate nouns, which will be discussed in detail in the next section.

3.3 Animacy Hierarchy

The cross-linguistically valid animacy hierarchy has been much discussed by many linguists. The animacy hierarchy can be formulated as follows:

speaker / addressee > 3rd person pronouns > human proper nouns > human common nouns > other animate nouns > inanimate nouns

This hierarchy means that "NPs higher on the inherent salience hierarchy tend to occupy more prominent syntactic positions than NPs lower on it" (Foley & Van Valin 1985: 288). The animacy hierarchy originated from discussions of the phenomenon of 'split ergativity'. In other words, it is based on the semantic nature of NPs (Dixon 1979: 85).

In Hokkien grammar, the distinction between animate and inanimate nouns play an important role, as below:

3.4 Subject, Agent, dan Object

The following terms for grammatical relations from Dixon (1979, 1994) will be mentioned: S for intransitive subject, A for transitive subject, O for transitive object. The first criterion will be given to assign the NPs to grammatical relations in Hokkien in (8):

8. If S, A, O are animate nouns, the grammatical relations can be identified by the subject and object marking system in the verbal morphology.

9. A NPs are basically animate nouns.
According to Dixon the animacy hierarchy denotes the likelihood of functioning as transitive agent (Dixon 1979: 85). There is usually a cut-off point for functioning as a transitive agent in the hierarchy. In Hokkien the cut-off point is between other animate nouns and inanimate nouns. Thus, example (10) is not grammatical because its agent is inanimate.

10. \(\text{ɪ e1 mɪk3 kra0 crak1} \ ʰ\text{au1 tɔk1} \ ʰ\text{a0 le1} \ ʰ\text{il na4 gi1 na4 lau4}.\)  

\begin{verbatim}
Food-SUB  poison-PERF-TR-IND those-DEMPRO-PL  child-PL:OBJ  PERF
\end{verbatim}

The food has poisoned those children.

As the agent NP \(mɪk3 kra0 crak1 'food'\) is inanimate, so sentence (10) is unacceptable. Instead the instrumental postposition \(ʰɔ3\) is normally used in a passive construction.

11. \(\text{ʰa0 le1} \ ʰ\text{il na4 gi1 na4 hɔ3} \ ʰ\text{el mɪk3 kra0 crak1} \ ʰ\text{a0 tɔk1 tɔk3}.\)  

\begin{verbatim}
those-DEMPRO-PL  child-PL:SUB  by  food  poison-PERF-TR-IND
\end{verbatim}

Those children have been poisoned by the food.

Some inanimate nouns denoting natural objects, which are capable of automatic locomotion, can occupy the agent slot. In that case, the subject agreement element gets marked on the verb like an animate agent NP. This is called animatization. As with a regular transitive clause only the animatized agent argument gets cross referenced by a bound pronoun irrespective of the animacy of the object NP. For example,

12. \(\text{ʰa0 le1} \ \text{kaŋ4} \ \text{co1} \ \text{fua1} \ (ʰ\text{ui4 ʰuə3} \ ʰ\text{ua3}).\)  

\begin{verbatim}
that-DEMPRO-SG  river  make-TR-IND  mountain  carry-TR-IND  sand
\end{verbatim}

That river made mountain by carrying the sand.

13. \(\text{ʰa0 le1} \ \text{kaŋ4} \ \text{co1} \ \text{ʰa0 le1} \ ʰ\text{il na4} \ \text{lau2}.\)  

\begin{verbatim}
that  river  make-TR-IND  that-DEMPRO-SG  kid:3SG-OBJ  drown-TR-IND
\end{verbatim}

That river drowned that kid.

Among inanimate nouns, only natural power, e.g. \(ʰɔŋ1 'wind', ʰɔ3 'rain'\) etc., can be animatized.

It is very easy to identify animate NPs as subject on the basis of (9), because an animate subject is always marked by a clitic pronoun. However, there is an exception, as inanimate NPs can be assigned to agent slot with a certain class of verbs. This is the topic in the next section. The term "construction" is used in many ways in the linguistics literature, often in ways which conform to a certain degree with its technical use here.

Individual constructions and classes of constructions have had a prominent place in the description of languages since the ancient grammarians, and certainly through modern,
generative linguistic descriptions. One of the features of construction is that the proximal agent of the caused event, NP, is being made to be willing to perform the act.

3.5 Experiencer Verbs

As mentioned above, the inanimate NP cannot normally occupy the agent slot. But with some verbs, inanimate NPs can do this. The semantic range of these verbs is restricted to the following:

14. a. sensory and mental experiences
   b. emotional experiences
   c. physical and biological experiences

These are called experiential verbs. This semantic range almost corresponds, interestingly with dative subject predicates in Indo-Aryan (Klaiman 1986, Abbi 1994). Dative / accusative cases, generally related to indirect objects, are most common used cases in referring non-canonical subjects in some languages. In semantic map point of view, Hokkien is a quite logic choice as its addressee argument is semantically closed to the experiencer argument (see Haspelmath, 2003).

There are two types of sentence in experiential verbal constructions in Hokkien, as follows:

15. wa4 t⁶au⁴ bi3 tok1  kua3 səŋ1 e bi3 sə3.
   I-1SG:SUB smell-CONT-INTR-IND sweat smell
   I am experiencing a smell of sweat.

16. cə0 lu⁴ e  hua1 ho3 wa4 bi3 tok1 pʰəŋ1 e bi3 sə3.
   This-DEMPRO-SG flower make me-1SG:OBJ smell-CONT-TR-IND good fragrance
   This flower has made me experience a good smell.

17. wu3 cə3 si2 re0 ləŋ2 car1  hua3 hi⁴ t⁶au⁴ tʰiau⁴ bu⁴.
   Previous time they-3PL:SUB experience-PERF-INTR-IND joy through dancing
   In the previous time they had experienced joy through dancing.

18. ha0 le1 e bu⁴ co3 re0 ləŋ2 hua3 hi⁴.
   That-DEMPRO-SG dance make-TR-IND them-3PL:OBJ feel joy
   The dance made them experience joy.

It can be seen that there is a distinction between the direct subject (15), (17) and the dative subject (16), (18), because it is almost identical with subject experiencer (taking direct subject) and object experiencer (taking dative subject) in Hokkien Further, it is interpreted that the verbs show volitional act as in (15) and (17), but show a non-volitional act in (16) and (18).
If the criterion (8) assigns the NP to grammatical relations by the morphological marking system, the subjects are either nothing, or inanimate nouns in (16) and (18) and the objects are *wa4 'me' in (16) and *te0 *laŋ2 'them' in (18). Thus, the term 'dative subject' is misleading. As how the grammatical relations explained above, these criteria will be kept throughout the paper. A new analysis of experiential verbal constructions will be further discussed.

3.6 Experiencer and Stimulus

In this part, we shall adopt the term 'experiencer' and 'stimulus'. The experiencer denotes the human experiencer of sensory, mental, emotional, physical and biological states expressed by the experiential verbs, while the stimulus is the source or cause of experience.

Further we shall adopt the notion of 'experiencer-subject' from Croft (1991, 1993) for a typological analysis of mental verbs, where experiential verbs assign the experiencer to the subject position in (15) and (17).

In (16) and (18), the experiencer is assigned to the object position. Therefore, it is considered as the experiencer-object construction. This analysis is useful, because it enables us to keep the criteria for subject-object assignment.

Next, a new analysis of experiential construction will be given. In general, an experiential verb is regarded as an intransitive verb (see 15 and 17). Then the writer considers the same experiential verb as a causativized form of an intransitive verb in the object-experiencer construction (see 16 and 18). This analysis fits Croft (1991)'s crosslinguistic findings that "experiencer-object verbs are causative" (1991:215).

The stimulus occurs with the instrumental postposition *tʰau1 in the experiencer-subject construction shown in (15 and 17), and as a subject in the experiencer-object construction shown in (16 and 18). Are the NPs *hua1 in (16) and *bu4 in (18) really subjects? And are the NPs *bi3 *sa3 in (16) and *hua3 *hi4 in (18) really objects? Let's make a syntactic test for subjecthood and objecthood by using a relativization, as demonstrated above in point (7).

19. na0 lu4 pʰəŋ1 e *bi3 *sa3 *hua1 ta1 liau4.
   That-DEMPRO-SG fragrant flower withered-PERF-INTR-IND
   That good-smelling flower has withered.

20. ci3 cu3 laŋ2 cə0 lu4 *hua1 *sa3 pʰəŋ1 e *bi3 *sa3 cau4 liau4.
   People this-DEMPRO-SG flower make fragrant go-PERF-INTR-IND
   The people whom this flower made experience a good smell have left.

21. ha0 le1 cm3 *hua3 *hi4 e *bu4 cu4 *kiŋ3 liau4 liau4.
   That-DEMPRO-SG very happy dance recently end-PERF-INTR-IND
   The very joyful dance has finished recently.

22. ci3 cu3 laŋ2 cə0 traŋ3 *bu4 *sa3 *hua3 *hi4 e təŋ1 tua3 liau4.
   People this-DEMPRO-SG flower make fragrant go-PERF-INTR-IND
   The people whom this flower made experience a good smell have left.
The people whom the dance made joyful have grown up.

As the intransitive marker *e* appears in (19) and (21), the NPs *hua1* ‘flower’ and *bu4* ‘dance’ are subjects. On the other hand, the transitive marker *hɔ3* and *co3* occur in (20) and (22) the NPs *hua1* and *bu4* are objects.

An important note is concerned about subject, agent and object NPs. The stimulus is always an inanimate noun. In other words, agent NPs in the object-experiencer construction are inanimate nouns. For instance, the following sentences are not acceptable:

23. *ca0 ka2 ca3 bɔ4 co3 wa4 bɔ1 tuɔ1 lɔ1 ʌŋ1 e bi3 sɔ3.*
   
   This-DEMPRO-SG girl:SUB make-TR-IND me-1SG:OBJ smell good fragrance
   
   This girl made me experience a good smell.

24. *thɪ ʌ lɔ1 bu4 e co3 co3 ʌə0 lɔ2 ʌŋ2 hu 3 hi4.*
   
   Dancing girl:SUB make-TR-IND them-3PL:OBJ feel joy
   
   The dancing girl made them experience joy.

In order to say the equivalent sentences of (23 and 24) in Hokkien, these should be replaced by (25 and 26) respectively.

25. *ca0 ka2 ca3 bɔ4 e bi3 sɔ3 co3 wa4 bɔ1 tuɔ1 lɔ1 ʌŋ1 e bi3 sɔ3.*
   
   This-DEMPRO-SG girl’s smell-SUB make-TR-IND me-1SG:OBJ smell good fragrance
   
   This girl’s smell made me experience a good smell.

26. *kʰu 3 lɔ1 bu4 e ca3 bɔ4 co3 ʌə0 lɔ2 ʌŋ2 hu 3 hi4.*
   
   See-GER:SUB dancing girl make-TR-IND them-3PL:OBJ feel happy
   
   Seeing the dancing girl made them experience a joy.

Therefore, the writer rewrites the second criterion (see point 9) for subject-object assignment here.

27. Agent NPs are animate nouns except for the object-experiencer construction.

As illustrated above, an experiential verb in Hokkien is considered as an intransitive. In other words, in the experiencer-subject constructions, only the experiencer assigned to stimulus occurs, and the stimulus occurs with the instrumental postposition *tʰau1*. However, a few experiential verbs, ex. *hua3 hi4* ‘to feel happy’, *kʰi4 ʌŋ1 te3* ‘to get angry’, *pʰa14 se3* ‘to feel ashamed’, can act as transitive verbs. In that case, the animate NPs can occupy the objects slot.
not as stimuli, but as beneficiaries. The writer shows the general benefactive construction in (28) and the experiencer-subject and beneficiary-object construction in (29 and 30).

28. \textit{wa4 hɔ3 lu4 muk3 kə3 crak1}. \\
I-1SG:SUB give-TR-IND you-2SG:OBJ food \\
I give you the food.

29. \textit{wa4 pʰə₄ se3 ksk3 lu4}. \\
I-1SG:SUB shame-INTR-IND CONJ you-2SG:OBJ \\
I feel ashamed at you.

30. \textit{wa4 aᵢ₃ ha₀ le₁ ca₃ hɔ₄ gɪ₁ na₄}. \\
I-1SG:SUB like-TR-IND those-DEMPRO-PL girls-PL:OBJ \\
I like these girls.

The sentences (29 and 30) are transitive constructions, but the intransitive marker \textit{e} should follow. Further, there are no experiencer-object constructions corresponding to (29 and 30) in Hokkien.

4. Discussion

Next, let us discover the experiential construction in Hokkien.

31. (=15) \textit{wa₄ tʰau₁ bi₃ tɔk₁ tfau₁ kua₃ səŋ₁ e bi₃ sɔ₃}. \\
I-1SG:SUB smell-CONT-INTR-IND sweat smell \\
I am experiencing a smell by sweat.

32. \textit{ca₀ le₁ kua₃ səŋ₁ co₃ wa₄ bi₃ tɔk₁ tfau₁ e bi₃ sɔ₃}. \\
This-DEMPRO-SG sweat:SUB make-TR-IND me-1SG:OBJ smell-TR-IND bad smell \\
This sweat has made me experience a bad smell.

33. \textit{wu₃ ca₃ si₂ re₀ lɔŋ₂ bə₄ gol tɔk₁; mə₃ gu₁₃ re₀ lɔŋ₂ khə₄₃₁}. \\
Previous time they-3PL:SUB ever-TR-IND-PERF hunger-INTR because they-3PL:SUB poor \\
In the previous time they had experienced hunger; as they had been poor.

34. \textit{muk₃ kə₃ crak₁ co₃ re₀ lɔŋ₂ gol tɔk₁ na₄ si₂}. \\
Food:SUB make-TR-IND them-3PL:OBJ hunger-INTR that time
The food made them experience hunger at that time.

In (31), the experiencer wa‘4 ‘I' smells of his own sweat and everyone perceives his bad smell, while in (32), the smell of sweat reaches the specific experiencer wa‘4 'me' irrespective of other persons' experience. In (33), the experiencer te0 laŋ2 'they' felt hungry constantly, and everyone knew about their condition, while in (34), the appetite caused by the sight of food arose in the specific experiencers te0 laŋ2 'them' irrespective of other persons' experience.

Abbi (1994: 79) has shown similarities between Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Mundari languages from the marker of experiential nouns as follows: "Typologically the Indo-Aryan, Mundari and Dravidian languages share more or less direct and oblique verb patterns". Abbi describes the postposition ke a sign of a dative case and the noun phrase is characterized by postposition ke as experiencer in Mundari language. While Hokkien language itself has two types of experiential construction verbs, namely in the examples (15-18).

The discussion about experiential construction in Hokkien concludes that Hokkien may use both transitive and intransitive experiential verbs in experiential assignment as object and / subject datives. Experiential verb itself is different from agent verb in semantic asymmetry between experiencers and stimulus which are quite different from agents and patients. This is because experiencer and stimulus have some of the same semantic properties as agents, both of which may morphosyntactically assimilate with the latter. agents and experiencers have in common that they both tend to be understood as human entities or animate beings. A stimulus role which in a sense causes a change in state of experience and therefore resembles an agent. Following Bossong (1998), the author distinguishes general constructs where experiencer is encoded like an agent with an inverse construction where stimuli are instead coded like subjects and experiencers are represented as agents who undergo verbs actively and take part in situations.

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References


**Abbreviations**

CONT = continuous  
DEMRPO = demonstrative pronoun  
DU = dual  
GER = gerund  
IND = indicative  
INTR = intransitive  
OBJ = object  
PERF = perfect  
PL = plural  
SG = singular  
SUB = subject  
TR = transitive

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