

Interrogative *hows* as Syntactic Predicates: Evidence from Tsou and Saisiyat

In this paper, we argue that interrogative *hows* serve as syntactic predicates rather than as adjuncts in two Formosan languages (Tsou and Saisiyat) for the following reasons: (i) interrogative *hows* can stand alone as main verbs predicated of a subject (1a-b); (ii) interrogative *hows* can license an external/internal argument in association with Voice markers (2a-b). Furthermore, we analyze instrumental interrogative *hows* as matrix verbs, taking as their complements *v*Ps that represent the events associated with them based on the following evidence: (i) interrogative *hows* can take voice morphology and tense/aspect auxiliary that scope over the entire sentence (3a-b); (ii) interrogative *hows* taking Patient-Voice (PV) markings trigger canonical restructuring, witness the long-distance object shift (4a-b). It is also important to note that the size of the complement of a verbal interrogative *how* should be minimal, presumably, VoiceP/*v*P, given that its complement clause cannot accommodate high functional categories such as tense/modality (5a-b). The implications of this study include (i) Carstens and Diercks' (2013) Adjunct analysis cannot carry over to Tsou and Saisiyat; (ii) the Neo-Davidsonian analysis (Parsons 1990, Tsai 2008) of adverbials needs to be modified despite its theoretical appeal — Recall that interrogative *hows* may take external arguments (see also Chang 2024); (iii) Tsou and Saisiyat exhibit the initial state of interrogative *hows* in the Proto-Austronesian where interrogative *hows* have not yet evolved into adverbs/adjuncts (Blust 2013).

Examples (Tsou--VOS; Saisiyat—SVO):

- (1) a. *Mi-su* *m-ainenu* *maitan'e?* (Tsou)
 NF.AV-2S.NOM AV-do.how today
 ‘How are you doing today?’
 b. *So'o* *nak'ino* *'ila?* (Saisiyat)
 2S.NOM do.how.AV COS
 ‘How come about you?/ What happened to you?’
- (2) a. *Os-ko* *yainenu* *si* *ohaesa-su?* (Tsou)
 NF.NAV-2S.GEN do.how.PV NOM brother-2S.POSS
 ‘What did you do to your brother?’
 b. *Siya* *niSo'* *taka'ino'-on* *ila?* (Saisiyat)
 3S.NOM 2S.GEN do.how-PV COS
 ‘What did you do to him?’
- (3) a. *Te-ko* *m-ainenu* *ho* *maine'e?* (Tsou)
 FUT-2S.GEN AV-do.how COMP go.home.AV
 ‘How will you go home?’
 b. *'am* *nak'ino'* *rima'* *walo'?* (Saisiyat)
 FUT do.how.AV go.AV PLN
 ‘How can I get to Tungho?’
- (4) a. *Te-ko* *yainenu* *ho* *pei'i* *'e* *yoskx?* (Tsou)
 FUT-2S.GEN do.how.PV COMP cook.PV NOM fish
 ‘How will you cook the fish?’

- b. *Taka'ino'-on* 'am 'a'apol sa *tatiroSa'?* (Saisiyat)
do.how-PV PRT divide.AV divide.two.AV
'How do we cut him in half?'
- (5) a. **Te-ko* *yainenu* *ho* *te-ko* *pei'i* 'e *yoskx?* (Tsou)
FUT-2S.GEN do.how.PV COMP FUT-2S.GEN cook.PV NOM fish
Intended for: 'How will you cook the fish?'
- b. **'am* *nak'ino'* *'am* *rima'* *walo'?* (Saisiyat)
FUT do.how.AV FUT go.AV PLN
Intended for: 'How can I get to Tungho?'

Abbreviations: AV=Actor-Voice, COMP=complementizer, GEN=genitive case, PRT=particle
Keywords: interrogative *how*, syntactic predicate, restructuring, adjunct, complement.

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