Polarity Emphasis in Kavalan*

Dong-yi Lin
Ghent University
lindongyi@gmail.com

1. Introduction

1.1. Function of Polarity Emphasis

- “polarity emphasis arises when the polarity of the proposition conflicts with that of a background assumption” (Breitbarth, de Clercq, & Haegeman 2013: 1-2)

(1) The problem is that women are not standing. When they DO stand they have just the same chance of getting the post as a man, but they are not putting themselves forward. (*Observer* 22.08.2010, from Breitbarth, de Clercq, & Haegeman 2013: 2)

(2) mai szmaqen ti-utay qan-an-na ni buya ya Rusipan, NEG believe NCM-Utay eat-PV-3ERG ERG Buya ABS scorpion magen=ti qan-an-na ni buya ya Rusipan indeed=PFV eat-PFV-3ERG ERG Buya ABS scorpion ‘Utay doesn’t believe that Buya ate the scorpion, but Buya DID eat the scorpion.’

- as reassurance or confirmation

(3) He promised to eat the scorpion and he DID eat it. (Kandybowicz 2013: 53)

(4) s<m>anu ti-buya Rasa=pa=iku tu lepaw ta-banqiao-an, <AV>say NCM-Buya buy=FUT=1SG.ABS OBL house LOC-Banqiao-LOC magen-an-na=ti m-Rasa lepaw ta-banqiao-an indeed-PV-3ERG=PFV AV-buy house LOC-Banqiao-LOC ‘Buya said, “I will buy a house in Banqiao”, and he DID buy the house in Banqiao.’

- polarity emphasis as “a function over proposition-denoting expressions that yields enriched assertions encoding the level of speaker commitment to those propositions” and “a vehicle for graded forceful assertions” (Kandybowicz 2013: 54)

---

* This research is funded by Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (FWO: 2009-Odysseus-Haegeman-G091409).
I’d like to thank Abas and Ngengi for teaching me their language.

1 Glossing conventions in this paper follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules. Additional glossing conventions are as follows: AV – Agent voice; EXIST – Existential; I – Inclusive; NCM – Non-common noun marker; PV – Patient voice; .
1.2. Syntax of Polarity Emphasis

- two types of emphatic polarity markers (EPM) with regard to syntactic distributions (Batllori & Hernanz 2013; Breitbarth, de Clercq, & Haegeman 2013; Danckaert & Haegeman 2012; Kandybowicz 2013)
  - high vs. low EPM
- high EPM
  - restricted to root/main clauses only
  - ungrammatical in (central) adverbial clauses, restrictive relative clauses, complements of factive verbs
  - Spanish *bien* and *sí* (Danckaert & Haegeman 2012; Hernanz 2007), Italian Veneto dialect *no* (Poletto 2009), Nupe *ni* (Kandybowicz 2013)

(5) Spanish (Danckaert & Haegeman 2012: 158)
Si Pepe (*bien*) acaba a tiempo su tesis, ya te lo haré saber.
If Pepe well finish.3SG on time his thesis I you it let.FUT.1SG know 'If Pepe finishes his thesis on time, I'll let you know.'

(6) Nupe (Kandybowicz 2013: 57)
*Ebò na Musa gi kinkere na *ni:*, Gana á zè ewùn bè because COMP Musa eat scorpion PRT ni: Gana PRF turn anger with wu:n yin.
3.SG PRT
'(I assure you) Because Musa DID eat the scorpion, Gana was mad at him.'

- high EPM as Main Clause Phenomenon (MCP)
  - syntactic operations restricted to root clauses and a subset of subordinate clauses (Danckaert & Haegeman 2012; Emonds 2004; Haegeman 2012; Heycock 2006)
  - e.g., argument fronting, locative inversion, and speaker-oriented adverbials

(7) (Danckaert & Haegeman 2012: 133-134)
  a. *If these exams you don’t pass, you won’t get the degree.*
  b. *If upstairs live his parents, things will be much simpler.*
  c. ??*If frankly he’s unable to cope, we’ll have to replace him.*

- high EPM in FocusP or EmphP of Rizzi’s (1997) split CP (Batllori & Hernanz 2013; Kandybowicz 2013): “a designated left-peripheral functional projection encoding focus on the polarity of the sentence” (Breitbarth, de Clercq, & Haegeman 2013: 4)
- The restrictions on the syntactic distributions of high EPM can be attributed to the same account of MCP: either truncation or intervention (Haegeman 2012)

- low EPM
  - not restricted to root/main clauses
  - grammatical in (central) adverbial clauses, restrictive relative clauses, complements of factive verbs
  - English emphatic *do*; Nupe verbal repetition (Kandybowicz 2013); Flemish particle *en* (Breitbarth & Haegeman 2014; Haegeman 2002)
(8) If he DOES win, I’ll be the first to congratulate him. (Danckaert & Haegeman 2012: 160)

(9) Nupe (Kandybowicz 2013: 59)
A: wo labari gánnán Musa gi kinkere gi.
3.PL hear news COMP Musa eat scorpion eat
‘They heard the news that (apparently) Musa DID eat the scorpion.’

(10) West Flemish (Haegeman 2002: 181)
Oa-t nie en regent moe-j de blommen woater geven.
if/when-it NEG EN rains must-you the flowers water give
‘If/when it DOESN’T rain, you have to water the plants.’

- low EPM in a TP-internal focus position: inner FocusP or EmphP (“vP-related”) (Batllori & Hernanz 2013; Breitbarth & Haegeman 2014; Kandybowicz 2013)

1.3. **Kavalan *maqen***

- Main claim of the present paper

  ★ Kavalan *maqen* as a low EPM

- Road map
  - Section 2. Morphology of *maqen* → *Magen* as a verb
  - Section 3. Distributional Contrast between *maqen* and Other TP-internal Adverbials → *maqen* as a low EPM below functional projections of epistemic expressions
  - Section 4. High vs. Low EPM: Main Clause Phenomenon → *Magen* not restricted to root clauses
  - Section 5. High vs. Low EPM: Interpretive Differences → *Magen* as a low EMP associated with a weaker commitment to truth
  - Section 6. The Structural Position of Low EPM: A Puzzle → PV-marked vs. non-PV-marked *maqen*
  - Section 7. Conclusion

2. **Morphology of *maqen***

- *Magen* exhibits morphosyntactic properties of a verb.
  - clause-initial slot
  - aspect markers
  - voice affixes
  - imperative suffix

(11) a. *maqen=ti* m-Rasa tu lepaw ti-imuy
indeed=PFV AV-buy OBL house NCM-Imuy
‘Imuy DID buy a house.’

b. *maqen-an-na=ti* ni imuy m-Rasa ya lepaw
indeed=PV-3ERG=PFV ERG Imuy AV-buy ABS house
‘Imuy DID buy the house.’

2 For a pragmatic account of low EPM, please refer to Wilder (2013).
c. **maqen-ika** m-liyam ya sudad
   indeed-IMP AV-read ABS book
   ‘DO read the book!’

- PV *-an on *maqen* as verb-defining v or Voice, which can determine the argument structure of a sentence
  - PV *-an* (on “non-canonical verbs”) is associated with a volitional external argument and an affected theme (Lin 2013, to appear).
  - incompatibility of PV-marked *maqen* (*maqen-an*) with intransitive or unaccusative verbs

(12) a. **maqen**=ti m-laydaw ti-abas
    indeed=PFV AV-sad NCM-Abas
    ‘Abas WAS sad.’
  b. * **maqen-an**=ni ni abas m-laydaw
    indeed-PV-3ERG=PFV ERG Abas AV-sad

(13) a. **maqen**=ti masuzeq ti-buya
    indeed=PFV AV.arrive NCM-Buya
    ‘Buya HAS arrived.’
  b. * **maqen-an**=ti ni buya masuzeq
    indeed-PV-3ERG=PFV ERG Buya AV.arrive

- The fact that *maqen* can be affixed with *-an* thus suggests that it is a head that is initially merged below vP or VoiceP.
- low EPM (TP-internal, “vP-related”) instead of high EPM (split CP)

3. **Distributional Contrast between maqen and Other TP-internal Adverbials**

- a comparison between *maqen* and adverbial verbs
  - Kavalan aspect-related and manner adverbials as verbs (Chang 2006, 2010; Lin 2014)

(22) a. paqanas-an-ku=ti m-liyam ya sudad
    slowly-PV-1SG.ERG=PFV AV-read ABS book
    ‘I read the book slowly.’
  b. pataz-an-na ni utay m-qila ya sunis-na
    often-PV-3ERG ERG Utay AV-scold ABS child-3SG.GEN
    ‘Utay often scolds his children.’

  **Maqen** must precede aspect-related and manner adverbial verbs.
  - Within Cinque’s (1999) framework of fine-grained IP, this suggests that the functional projection hosting *maqen* is structurally higher than aspect-related and manner adverbials.

(23) a. **maqen** paqanas-an-na ni buya q<m>an ya baut
    indeed slowly-PV-3ERG ERG Buya <AV>eat ABS fish
    ‘Buya DID eat the fish slowly.’
  b. * paqanas-an-na ni buya **maqen** q<m>an ya baut
    slowly-PV-3ERG ERG Buya indeed <AV>eat ABS fish
distributional contrast between *maqen* and epistemic markers like *qawman* ‘certainly’

Unlike *maqen*, *qawman* cannot take voice affixes.

While *maqen* can be suffixed with the imperative marker, *qawman* is incompatible with imperative mood. The compatibility between *maqen* and the imperative mood indicates that it is truly an EPM instead of an epistemic marker.

When *maqen* and *qawman* co-occur in a clause, *qawman* must precede *maqen*

4. **High vs. Low EPM: Main Clause Phenomenon (MCP)**

- high vs. low EPM
  - high EPM (in split CP) as an MCP due to truncation or intervention (Haegeman 2012)
  - High EPM can occur in complement clauses of declarative or epistemic verbs, but not evaluative, directive, or volitive verbs.
  - High EPM cannot occur in restrictive relative clauses.
  - High EPM is incompatible with conditional clauses.

(28) **Spanish** (Batllori & Hernanz 2013: 24)

- Otra persona […] pensando que bien vale la Moncloa
  - another person thinking that indeed is worth the Moncloa
  - una sonrisa…

a. smile
Thinking that being in power is worth a smile indeed, anyone else […]’

b. *Los médicos han decidido/ordenado que el paciente bien
   the doctors have decided/ordered that the patient indeed
tomara pastillas
   take pills

(29) Spanish (Batllori & Hernanz 2013: 24)
*El aria que sí ha cantado la soprano es muy bonita
the aria that yes has sung the soprano is very beautiful

(30) Spanish (Batllori & Hernanz 2013: 25)
Sí (*bien) canta la Caballé, el teatro se llenará
if indeed sings the Caballé the theater CL will be full

➤ Magen is NOT restricted to main/root clauses.
❖ It can occur in subordinate clauses that resist MCP, e.g., complement clauses of
evaluative/directive/volitive verbs, relative clauses, and conditional clauses.3
❖ Magen is low EPM.

(31) qeRas-an-na ni buya ti-imuy pa-magen pa-qibasi
   require-PV-3ERG ERG Buya NCM-Imuy CAUS-Indeed CAUS-wash
tu qudus
   OBL clothes
   ‘Buya requires Imuy to really do the laundry.’

(32) kelisiw-ku ya magen-an-na=ay ni utay qiRuziq
   if indeed-PV-3ERG=REL ERG Utay steal
   money-1SG.GEN ABS indeed-PV-3ERG=REL ERG Utay steal
   ‘What Utay really stole was my money.’

(33) anu magen-an-na ni utay qiRuziq kelisiw, qila-an-na
   if indeed-PV-3ERG ERG Utay steal money scold-PV-3ERG
   ni abas aizipna
   ERG Abas 3SG.ABS
   ‘If Utay DOES steal the money, Abas will scold him.’

5. High vs. Low EPM: Interpretive Differences

---

3 The following examples show that conditional clauses in Kavalan resist MCP, e.g., speaker-oriented
    adverbials and argument fronting.

(i) *anu pasi uzan=pa, mai=ita qatiw sa taypak
    if perhaps rain=FUT NEG=1PL.ABS go to Taipei

(ii) *anu peliya m-uman, mai=tì=ita qatiw sa taypak
    if luckily AV-rain NEG=1PL.ABS go to Taipei

(iii) *anu baqian m-lawut ti-imuy, yau ta-paw-an ti-utay m-lingi
    if elder AV-visit NCM-Imuy EXIST LOC-house-LOC NCM-Utay AV-take.care.of
    tu sunis
    OBL child
semantics differences between high and low EPM

- Nupe *ni:* → in high EmphP above PolP → full commitment to truth/polarity (Kandybowicz 2013)
- Nupe verbal reduplication → in low EmphP below PolP and TP → weaker commitment to truth (Kandybowicz 2013)
- Low EPM emphasizes a proposition “without commitment to its truth-value” (Kandybowicz 2013: 67).

High EPM, which encodes a full commitment to truth/polarity, is incompatible with ‘perhaps/probably’ and yes/no questions.

Low EMP, which is associated with a weaker commitment to truth, is compatible with ‘perhaps/probably’ and yes/no questions.

(34) Nupe (Kandybowicz 2013: 60)

a. #Wótákílà Musa gí kinkere ni: perhaps Musa eat scorpion ni: ‘(I assure you) Perhaps Musa DID eat the scorpion.’

b. Wótákílà Musa gí kinkere gi: perhaps Musa eat scorpion eat ‘Perhaps Musa DID (apparently) eat the scorpion.’

c. #Ngba Musa gí kinkere ni: yes/no Musa eat scorpion ni: ‘Did Musa apparently/really eat the scorpion?’

d. Ngba Musa gí kinkere gi: yes/no Musa eat scorpion eat ‘Did Musa apparently/really eat the scorpion?’

As *maqen* is a low EPM, it is predicted that it is associated with a weaker commitment to truth and is thus compatible with ‘perhaps/probably’ and yes/no questions.

(35) a. pasi magen ti-buya m-nubi tu kelisiw perhaps indeed NCM-Buya AV-hide OBL money ‘Perhaps Buya DOES hide money.’

b. magen-an-na ni buya m-Rasa lepaw ta-banqiao-an ni? indeed-PV-3ERG ERG Buya AV-buy house LOC-Banqiao-LOC Q ‘Did Buya really buy the house in Banqiao?’

6. The Structural Position of Low EPM: A Puzzle

- low EPM in inner FocusP or EmphP between TP and vP (Batllori & Hernanz 2013; Kandybowicz 2013)
- The contrast between PV-marked and non-PV-marked *maqen* presents a problem for a unified analysis of low EPM.
- PV-marked *maqen*
  - AV-restriction on the lexical verb
  - obligatory host of the perfective clitic =ti

(36) a. magen-an-na=ti ni imuy m-Rasa/*Rasa-an ya lepaw indeed-PV-3ERG=PFV ERG Imuy AV-buy/buy-PV ABS house ‘Imuy did buy the house.’
b. *maqen-an-na ni imuy m-Rasa=ti ya lepaw
   indeed-PV-3ERG ERG Imuy AV-buy=PFV ABS house

- non-PV-marked maqen
  - no AV-restriction on the lexical verb
  - optional host of the perfective clitic =ti

(37) a. maqen=ti m-Rasa tu lepaw ti-imuy
   indeed=PFV AV-buy OBL house NCM-Imuy
   ‘Imuy did buy a house.’

b. maqen=ti Rasa-an-na ni imuy ya lepaw
   indeed=PFV buy-PV-3ERG ERG Imuy ABS house
   ‘Imuy did buy the house.’

c. maqen Rasa-an-na=ti ni imuy ya lepaw
   indeed buy-PV-3ERG=PFV ERG Imuy ABS house
   ‘Imuy did buy the house.’

- PV-marked maqen imposes more grammatical restrictions on the lexical verb than its non-PV-marked counterpart does. (cf. frequency adverbial verbs (Chang 2006))

- Two potential explanations
  - Maqen-an and maqen are lexically different and thus select different complements.
  - Cinque’s syntactic account (Cinque 1999; Laenzlinger 2004): PV-marked maqen and its non-PV-marked counterpart are merged in two different functional projections in the fine-grained IP cartography.
    - PV-marked maqen: below v/Voice → different from low EPM in other languages
    - non-PV-marked maqen: above v/Voice → same as low EPM in other languages
    - problems: any subtle interpretive differences?; proliferation of functional projections

7. Conclusion

- Maqen is a low EPM.
  - morphologically a verb
  - structurally below projections of epistemic markers
  - not MCP
  - weak commitment to truth

- Future research
  - (interpretive) differences between PV-marked and non-PV-marked maqen
  - the structural position of low EPM in different languages

References


