

A Contrastive Study of Subjective Epistemic Modals In English and Uyghur

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O. Sawada (1993) discusses the Syntactic and Semantic properties of Subjective Epistemic Modals (hereafter SEM) in English and Japanese and presents the following four constraints which rule phenomena of SEM.

- (1) SEM (Epistemic Adv) is not included in the scope of Negation.
- (2) SEM is not involved with the timeframe of Past.
- (3) SEM cannot be made Interrogative.
- (4) In principle, SEM (Epistemic Adv) dose not appear in the time/conditional Adverbial Clause.

The present study is concerned with what happens to the SEM in the Uyghur language in the framework of the SEM theory proposed by Sawada, and with the question whether the SEM theory is applicable to the particular language. The English exmaples are derived from Sawada except for the specifically mentioned.

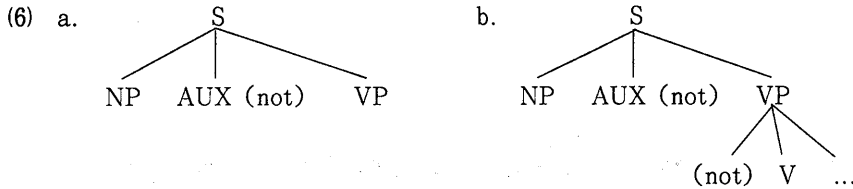
1.1. English SEM in relation to Negation

According to Sawada, SEM's in such sentences as are presented below are not included in the scope of Negation. What is acquired from (5) supports this constraint. ('E' stands for Epistemic Modal, and 'R' for Root Modal) .

- (5) a. John may [not have gone hunting yesterday]. (E)
b. Mary $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{must} \\ \text{should} \\ \text{wo} \end{array} \right\}$ [n't have swum in this river]. (E)
c. The boy [can't] have spoken English then. (E)

For further discussion of this constraint, Culicover (1982) explains that there is a type of structure which generates Not's at two differrent levels, as is shown in (6a). Accordingly the sentences in (7) where two Not's co-occur are constructed in order to draw a clear distinction of Internal Negation.

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- ① Uyghur is a language spoken in Central Asia, mainly in the Xinjiang Province, China.
 - ② The author wishes to thank Professor Harumi Sawada at Gakushuin University for his comments on earlier drafts of this paper and my gratitude also goes to Grixian Ablimit for her assitance as an informant.



- (7) a. You simply can't not take advantage of this offer.
 b. Charley wouldn't not have been looking out of the window.
 (Culicover 1982)

1.2. Uyghur SEM in relation to Negation

What we obtain from the results of sentences (8)–(10) is that the SEM in Uyghur can be in the scope of Negation.

- (8) (Objective)

ئەتە مەكتەپكە بارغىم يېزىق
 (I don't want to go to school tomorrow.)

- (9) (Subjective)

ئەتە يامغۇر يېغىشى مۇمكىن ئەمەس.
 (It will not rain tomorrow.)

- (10) (Intermediate)

روىشە نىنە قۇستى ئېچىۋاتقاندا ئەمەس.
 (Roxian does not seem to be hungry.)

2.1. English SEM in relation to Past Tense

(11) and (12) provide hard evidence that SEM does not have contents of Past Tense. In (12), what is concord with 'last night' is not 'must', but 'have rained', thus excluding Past Tense from SEM.

- (11) a. On that day, the street could be frozen. [E]
 b. That would be his mother. [E]
 c. They should be home by now. [E]
 (12) He must have drunk last night. [E]

2.2. Uyghur SEM in relation to Past Tense

It is safe to judge that the Uyghur SEM and Past Tense co-occur. Therefore, the Uyghur language probably does not agree with the constraint (2).

- (13) (Objective)

دەلىبەر ئوغۇلىنى قۇچا قىلىشى كەپكەتتى.
 (Deliber wanted to hug her son.)

- (14) (Subjective)

دەلىبەر ئوغۇلىنى قۇچا قىلىش مۇمكىن.
 (It is probable that Deliber hugged her son.)

- (15) (Intermediate)

دەلىبەر ئوغۇلىنى قۇچا قىلىشقا كەتتى.
 (Deliber seemed to be anxious to hug her son.)

- (16) (Intermediate)

مۇتقىزم دەلىبەر ئوغۇلىنى قۇچا قىلىشى يالغان ئەمەستى.
 (*Surely, Deliber must have hugged her son.)

3.1. English SEM in relation to Interrogative

Questions about the speaker's subjective supposition and judgement can not be asked, as the following examples demonstrate.

- (17) A: *{May/Must/Can't/Should} John have left? (E)
 B: Yes, he {may/must/can't/should}. (E)
 (18) A: {Can/Might/Could} they be lost? (E)
 B: Yes, they {can/might/could} be. (E)

3.2. Uyghur SEM in relation to Interrogative

From what we obtain from the following data, the postulate (3) functions on the Uyghur SEM as well.

- (19) (Objective) سۈزنىڭ ئىنىڭىزنىڭ ئىنگلىسچە ئۆگەنئىسى بارمۇ؟
 (Does your brother want to study English?)
 (20) (Subjective)
 a. سۈزنىڭ ئىنىڭىز ئىنگلىسچە ئۆگەنئىۋاتامدۇ؟
 (Will your brother be studying English now?)
 b. بۇنىشى مۇمكىنمىكى؟ بەلكىم سۈزنىڭ ئىنىڭىز ئىنگلىسچە ئۆگەنئىۋاتقان
 (* Probably, will your brother be studying English now?)

4.1. English SEM in relation to the time /conditional Clause

- (21) and (22) are evidence that on principle, SEM does not occur in the time/conditional Clause.
 (21) a. John must take drugs. (R/*E)
 b. If John must take drugs, I will give him money for them. (R/*E)
 (22) a. John might come, I'll help him out. (*R/E)
 b. *If John might come, I'll help him out.

Though (23b) below seems to be indicative of a counter-example of the constraint, it is, in reality, not the case, because on closer observation the 'will' in the conditional Clause does not provide the Subjective Attitude of Mind.

- (23) a. If you are alone at Christmas, let us know about it.
 b. If you will be alone at Christmas, let us know about it.
 (Leech 1987)

4.2. Uyghur SEM in relation to the time/conditional Clause

All the data from below show that the postulate (4) can perfectly be applied to the Uyghur SEM.

- (24) (Objective) بۇئاسا ئۆيۈپچىلىك قىلىنلىپ قالار. ئەگەر مەسكۇت ئىشلىگەنسى كەلمەيدىغان.
 (If Maskut doesn't want to work, it will cause everyone a problem.)
 (25) (Subjective) مۇمكىن بۇئاسا سېنىڭ ئويلىغۇننىڭ خاتا بولغىنى ئەگەر مەسكۇت ئىشلىگەن بولغىنى.
 (*If Maskut would have worked, I took it wrong.)

(26) (Intermediate)

بۇلدا مېنىڭ ئويلىغۇنمىڭ خاتا بولغۇن، ئەگەر مەن سەتتەن مەزس ئىشەنەن ئاتقاندا.

(?? If Maskut seem to be working now, I took it wrong.)

(27) (Intermediate)

بۇلدا مېنىڭ ئويلىغۇنمىڭ خاتا بولغۇن، ئەگەر مەن مەسەتتەن ئىشەنەن ئاتقاندا.

(*Probably, if Maskut seem to be working now, I took it wrong.)

5. From what we have acquired through observing how SEM functions in the Uyghur language, we have ascertained that the Uyghur SEM can be applicable to the constraints (1), (3), and (4), while it does not accord with the constraint (2) unlike the English SEM. It is safe to propose that the SEM theory has obtained strong support in dealing with the Uyghur language in terms of the research of its Modal system. However, a lot of problems concerning the Uyghur SEM remain unsolved and await further studies in the future.

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