The role of additive focus particles in concessive expressions*

Mitsuko Narita Izutsu

1. Introduction

This paper tries to clarify the role of additive focus particles in concessive expressions. Additive focus particles constitute a part of concessive connectives in a wide variety of languages (e.g. English even if; Japanese -demo, -temo, -keredomo; German auch wenn; French même si). These particles exclusively express the concessive meaning when used with clause-combining morphemes. The contrast meaning never arises despite their semantic similarities.

The connection between additive focus particles and concessive connectives has already been discussed by König (1985a, 1985b, 1988, 1991) and Harris (1988), but they do not explain precisely what kind of property of additive focus particles is associated with the concessive meaning and why the use of these particles exclusively renders the concessive, not contrast, reading. In this paper I will show that additive focus particles have a function of specifying the concessive relation between clauses, and argue that this concessivity-specifying function of additive focus particles comes from their semantic property of instructing the hearer to evoke the assumption which is in conflict with the propositional content of the main clause.

In Section 2 and 3, the terms used in the present study will be explained, opposition (contrast and concessive) and additive focus particles (simple and scalar). In Section 4, the concessivity-specifying function of additive focus
particles will be examined in detail. Section 5 will show that this concessivity-specifying function pertains to the assumption-evoking property of the two kinds of additive focus particle. And Section 6 will present a brief account of why additive focus particles cannot express the contrast meaning.

2. Opposition: contrast and concessive

In Izutsu (1998), the relations of opposition are classified into two semantic categories: contrast and concessive, whose examples are given in (1) and (2), respectively:

(1) John is rich, but Tom is poor. (contrast)
(2) Although he had just joined the company, he was treated like all the other employees. (concessive)

Contrast is characterized as a conflict relation between two propositional contents. Concessive is characterized as a conflict relation between one propositional content and an assumption evoked from the other. The term ‘conflict’ used here is defined as in (3):

(3) CONFLICT: Two conceptual units are in a conflict relation when they contain different compared entities which occupy different regions in the same semantic domain. (Compared entities may be different in that they are located in different situations.)

Sentence (1) shows a conflict relation between the propositional contents of the two clauses. The two entities coded in the clauses (‘John’ and ‘Tom’)
The role of additive focus particles in concessive expressions (Mitsuko Narita Izutsu) occupy different regions in the semantic domain of RICHNESS ('John' is located at the higher extreme of the domain, whereas 'Tom' at the lower extreme). This semantic configuration is described in Figure 1.

![Diagram showing the semantic domain of RICHNESS with 'John is rich' and 'Tom is poor'.](image)

**Figure 1: The semantic structure of CONTRAST**

Concessive does not designate such a direct conflict relation between two propositional contents; it involves a conflict relation between the propositional content of the main clause and an assumption evoked from the propositional content of the subordinate clause. In (2) (repeated below), what is inferentially evoked from the propositional content of the subordinate clause is an assumption such as (2'):

(2) Although he had just joined the company, he was treated like all the other employees.

(2') (If he had just joined the company), he wouldn't be treated like all the other employees.

This assumption is in conflict with the propositional content of the main
clause (*he was treated like all the other employees*), in that two different compared entities (the 'he' in the expected situation and the 'he' in the linguistically coded situation) occupy different regions in the same semantic domain (the domain of TREATMENT IN A COMPANY). Figure 2 depicts the semantic structure of this sentence. As the figure shows, the conflict relation between an assumption and a propositional content is a distinguishing property of the concessive meaning.

3. Two types of additive focus particle

Additive focus particles are of two kinds: scalar additive focus parti-
The role of additive focus particles in concessive expressions (Mitsuko Narita Izutsu) cles (e.g. English *even*; German *selbst, sogar*; French *même*; Japanese *-sae*) and simple additive focus particles (e.g. English *also, too*; German *auch*; Japanese *-mo*). On the basis of some previous studies (Fraser 1971, Fauconnier 1975, Karttunen and Peters 1979, Kay 1990, König 1991, Quirk et al. 1985), these two types of additive focus particle can be characterized as in (4) and (5), respectively:

(4) **Scalar additive focus particles** conventionally implicate:
   a. In addition to the referent of the focused item, there exist(s) some other member(s) for which the situation described in the sentence holds.
   b. The referent of the focused item ranks lower in the likelihood scale of the situation.

(5) **Simple additive focus particles** conventionally implicate:
   a. In addition to the referent of the focused item, there exist(s) some other member(s) for which the situation described in the sentence holds.
   b. (no scalar assumption)

English examples of these two types of particle are given in (6) and (7).

(6) *Even* Bill came.  
    a. Other people came.  
    b. Bill is a less likely person to come.

(7) *Bill also* came.  
    a. Other people came.  
    b. (Bill also came, but he is not a less likely person to do so.)

(6) conventionally implicates not just that other people besides Bill came, but that Bill is a less likely person to do so. (7) does not conventionalize
this latter kind of scalar implicature. This is shown by the fact that the scalar assumption of (7) can be canceled without contradiction as in (7b).

4. The concessivity-specifying function of additive focus particles

The two types of additive focus particle are used as a part of concessive connectives in many languages.²

(8) a. Even if it rains, we'll go on an excursion. (English)
    b. Ame-ga hut-temo, ensoku-ni ik-u. (Japanese)
       rain-NOM fall-even:if excursion-to go-NONPAST
    c. Auch wenn das Wetter schlecht ist, machen wir doch (German)
       also if the weather bad is make we nevertheless
       unser *en Ausflug.
       our excursion
    d. Etsi tempestas non serena erit, proficiscemur. (Latin)
       even:if weather not fine will:be we:will:set:out

Scalar additive focus particles are found in concessive expressions such as English even if. Simple additive focus particles are used in concessive expressions such as Japanese -temo 'even if', German auch wenn 'even if', Latin etsi 'even if'. English (al)though is included in the latter group: OE peah is traced back to PIE *to-u-kʷe, where *to- is a demonstrative constituent and *-kʷe is a simple additive focus particle meaning 'also' (cf. Latin -que) (OED, KDEE though). There are many other concessive expressions a part of which additive focus particles constitute. The following list exemplifies this:
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(9) Japanese -tomó (arch.) ‘even if’, -domó (arch.) ‘even though’, -keredomo ‘(al)though’, (-)demo ‘though, but’; English even when/while/where; German selbst wenn ‘even if’, sogar wenn ‘even if’; French même si ‘even if’, même quand ‘even when’; Latin etiamsi ‘even if’; Spanish aun cuando ‘even when’; Italian seppure ‘even if’, anche se ‘even if’, Portuguese mesmo que ‘even if’; Russian если даже ‘even if’, если (…) у ‘even if’; Irish fiú (amhain) ma ‘even if’; Finish joskin ‘even though’; Korean -al(-eo)do ‘even if’, -deorado ‘even if’, geuraedo ‘but’; Ainu yakka ‘even if, even though’, korka ‘though’

The particles in these expressions do not appear alone; they always occur with clause-combining morphemes such as English if, Japanese -te.³ This phrase-formation pattern is illustrated in Table 1, which shows the

| Table 1: The patterns of the formation of the concessive expressions in the four languages |
|--------|--------|--------|
|        | additive focus particle | clause-combining morpheme |
|        | simple | scalar |
| (ENGLISH) |        |        |
| even if/even when | even | if, when, while, where, etc. (conditional/temporal/spatial conj.) |
| (al)though | PIE*-kʷe | PIE*-to- (demonstrative constituent) |
| (JAPANESE) |        |        |
| -tomó | -mo | -to (the case particle of quotation) |
| -domó | -mo | the izen form (the realis ending) |
| -keredomo | -(do)mo | the izen form (the realis ending) |
| -temo | -mo | -te (connective particle) |
| (-)demo | -mo | -de (the adverbial ending of a copula) |
| (GERMAN) |        |        |
| auch wenn/wenn (...) auch | auch | wenn (conditional conj.) |
| selbst wenn/sogar wenn | selbst/sogar | wenn (conditional conj.) |
| (LATIN) |        |        |
| etsi/etiamsi | et/etiam | si (conditional conj.) |
formal make-up of the concessive connectives of four languages (English, Japanese, German, Latin).

Clause-combining morphemes alone can be used for the concessive relation, as shown in the (a) sentences below. However, this concessive meaning is not guaranteed by the presence of a clause-combining morpheme. The single use of the morpheme may indicate some other kinds of inter-clausal relation:

(10) a. We’ll finish the work if it takes us all day. (concessive)
    b. If you have written the letter, I’ll post it. (conditional)

(11) a. Itiniti zyouzikan hatarei-te tukare-nai-nante a:day ten:hours work-CP be:tired-not-ADP
    kare-wa taisita-mono-da. he-TOP great-thing-COP
    ‘He is a great man; he is not tired even after working ten hours a day.’
    b. Kabin-ga tana-kara oti-te ware-ta. (causal)
    vase-NOM shelf-from fall-CP be:broken-PAST
    ‘The vase was broken because it fell down from the shelf.’
    c. Kyoo gakkoo-ni it-te repooto-o dasi-ta. (sequential)
    today school-to go-CP paper-ACC hand:in-PAST
    ‘Today I went to school and handed in a paper.
    d. Saikin asa atatakaku-te yoru-ni naru-to samui. (contrast)
    these:days morning warm-CP night-to become-CP cold
    ‘The morning is warm and the night is cold these days.’

(12) a. Der grösste Teil des Unheils entsteht bloß, (concessive)
    the most part the:GEN disaster:GEN occurs only
    weil Menschen zu nachlässig sind, ihre Zwecke recht kennen
    because men too careless are their purposes right come
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zu lernen und, wenn sie solche kennenlernen ernsthaft darauf los to know and if they such:ACC know seriously on:them off zu arbeiten to work.

‘The most part of the disaster occurs only because the men are too careless to know their purposes properly and, even if they know the purposes, (the men are too careless) to work toward them seriously.’

b. Wenn es morgen regnet, verschiebe ich meinen Besuch bei ihm. (conditional) if it tomorrow rains postpone I my Besuch bei ihm.

‘If it rains tomorrow, I will postpone my visit to him.’

(13) a. Si mihi bona re publica frui (concessive) if me good:ABL government:ABL public:ABL enjoy non licuerit, at carebo mala. not it:would:be:allowed yet I:will:keep:away:from bad:ABL

‘Even if I would not be allowed to enjoy a good government, yet I will keep away from a bad one.’

b. Si vis pacem, para bellum. (conditional) if you:hope:for peace:ACC prepare:for war:ACC

‘If you hope for peace, prepare for a war.’

The concessive meaning of each (a) sentence obtains by the inference from the propositional contents of two clauses, not by means of any special linguistic coding — we infer an incompatible relation between the two states of affairs by way of our world knowledge. Notice that this inferentially understood concessive meaning can be explicitly coded by additive focus particles and other interpretive possibilities are ruled out with the use
of these particles:

(10')a. We’ll finish the work *even if* it takes all day.

(11')a. *Itiniti zyuuzikan hatarai-temo tukare-nai-nante kare-wa taisita-monoda."

(12')a. ..., *weil Menschen zu nachlässig sind, ihre Zwecke recht kennen zu lernen und, auch wenn sie solche kennen, ernsthaft darauf los zu arbeiten.*

(13')a. *Etsi mihi bona re publica frui non licuerit, at carebo mala.*

The observations so far suggest that additive focus particles serve to specify the concessive relation inferred from the propositional contents of two clauses; hence, they have a concessivity-specifying function when used with clause-combining morphemes (e.g. English *if*; Japanese -te). The next section argues that this concessivity-specifying function is ascribed to a semantic property of additive focus particles, namely, the property of instructing the hearer to evoke the assumption which is in conflict with the propositional content of the main clause.

5. **The assumption-evoking property of additive focus particles**

5.1 **General consideration**

First, consider the following passage:

(14) (At a hospital. The head nurse received an emergency call from one of the inpatients, and said to a nurse.)

I’ll ask Dr. Smith to see the patient. *So you don’t have to go if he goes.*

Either conditional or concessive interpretation is possible in the last sen-
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tence. The decision of which interpretation is more plausible than the other largely depends on the background assumptions we hold in construing the inter-clausal relation of this sentence. If we assume that a single doctor is enough to see the patient, the simple conditional reading is possible, but if we assume that a doctor usually requires the assistance of a nurse, the sentence will be interpreted as concessive.

However, this ambiguity is removed by the use of *even*, so that only the concessive interpretation obtains:

(14')(At a hospital. The head nurse received an emergency call from one of the inpatients, and said to a nurse.)
I'll ask Dr. Smith to see the patient. So you don't have to go even if he goes.

Whether a sentence has the concessive meaning or not varies with the background assumptions of language users. Since assumptions differ from person to person, the simple use of a clause-combining morpheme does not ensure the concessive idea between clauses. When the hearer of (14) has a different assumption from the speaker, his/her interpretation of the sentence may differ from the intended interpretation. To mark the concessive idea explicitly, an additive focus particle is in order because it instructs the hearer to evoke the assumption intended by the speaker (the kind of assumption that a doctor usually requires the assistance of a nurse, in the case of (14')). This suggests that additive focus particles have the following property:

(15) Additive focus particles instruct the hearer to evoke the assumption intended by the speaker.
5.2 Scalar additive focus particles

The property stated in (15) does not specify what kind of assumption is evoked by the use of additive focus particles. The following two sections answer this question in terms of the semantics of scalar and simple additive focus particles discussed in Section 3. Let us first consider the case of scalar additive focus particles.

(16) Even if it rains, we'll go on an excursion.

The background assumptions underlying the use of *even* in (16) can be considered similar to those of *even* modifying a single phrase as in (6) (repeated below), except that the alternative members postulated in the assumptions of (16) are a set of conditions rather than a set of individual entities.

(6) *Even* Bill came.
    a. Other people came.
    b. Bill is a less likely person to come.

Thus, as (6) conventionally implicates (6a) and (6b), (16) conventionally implicates two assumptions (16'a) and (16'b), of which the latter is scalar:

(16')a. We'll go on an excursion under other conditions.
    b. It is less likely that we will go on an excursion if it rains.

The scalarity of assumption (16'b) is illustrated more clearly in the following set of sentences:
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(17) a. ??Even if it is fine, we'll go on an excursion.
    b. ?Even if it is cloudy, we'll go on an excursion.
    c. Even if it rains, we'll go on an excursion.

The gradience in acceptability results from our scalar assumption, such as 'it is less likely to go on an excursion if it is cloudy, and far less likely to go on an excursion if it rains,' as schematically described in Figure 3:

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more likely
   (a) if it is fine
   (b) if it is cloudy
   (c) if it rains
less likely
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Figure 3: The likelihood scale of the situation 'we go on an excursion'

The use of *even* is the most appropriate in (17c) because it modifies a clause whose designated situation is the least likely to realize the situation coded in the main clause.

Of the two assumptions implicated by the use of *even* (such as the ones given in (16'a) and (16'b)), the scalar-type assumption is the more relevant to the concessive meaning of (16) than the non-scalar type. The former necessarily entails the latter because a scale always requires a set of members, not a single member, ordered with respect to a certain standard, as suggested by the awkwardness of the sentence *Only even John laughed.* Thus, the assumption evoked by the use of a scalar additive focus particle
is schematically summarized as in (18b):

(18) a. Even if $X$, $Y$. ($X$=it rains; $Y$=we'll go on an excursion)
    b. Assumption evoked (as a conventional implicature):
       
       It is less likely that $Y$ (if $X$).
    c. Assumption (b) is in conflict with $Y$.

(18b) is apparently in conflict with the propositional content of the main clause, as shown in (18c). This is more clearly described in Figure 4.

In Section 2, I have explained that the concessive meaning arises from a conflict relation between one propositional content and an assumption evoked from the other (see Figure 2). This suggests that the concessive meaning of (16) comes from the fact that the scalar assumption evoked by the use of *even* is semantically in conflict with the propositional content of the main clause.
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The present analysis of *even* shows that scalar additive focus particles have the concessivity-specifying function because they have the property of evoking the assumption which is in conflict with the propositional content of the main clause. This explanation applies to the scalar additive focus particles of other languages as far as they evoke the scalar assumption as stated in (18b).

5.3 Simple additive focus particles

As discussed earlier, simple additive focus particles differ from scalar ones in that they do not induce an ordering for the set of alternatives postulated in the assumption of a sentence. Thus, (7) (repeated below) conventionally implicates (7a), but not (7b):

(7) Bill *also* came.

a. Other people came.

(b. Bill is a less likely person to come.)

This suggests that simple additive focus particles do not seem to work as effectively as scalar ones in evoking an assumption opposed to the propositional content of the main clause.

Compare, however, the following two sets of Japanese sentences:

(19) a. *Kyonen-wa zyuugatu-ni nat-temo*
    
    *last:year-TOP October-in become-even:if*
    
    *kuuraa-ga hituyoo-dat-ta.*
    
    *air:conditioner-NOM necessity-COP-PAST*
    
    ‘Last year we needed an air-conditioner even in October.’

b. *Ame-ga hut-temo, siai-wa okonawa-re-ru.*
rain-NOM fall-even:if game-TOP hold-PASS-NONPAST

'Even if it rains, the game will be held.'

c. Sono-suugaku-no mondai-nara,
the-mathematics-GEN problem-COP
shoogakusei-ni kii-temo
elementary:school:student-DAT ask-even:if,
tadasii kotae-o osie-te-kureru-daroo.
correct answer-ACC teach-CP-give-CONJECT

'Even if you ask the mathematical problem to an elementary school
student, s/he can tell you a correct answer.'

(19') a. ??Kyonen-wa sitigatu-ni nat-temo kuuraa-ga hituyoo-dat-ta.

'Last year we needed an air-conditioner even in July.'

b. ??Hare-temo siai-wa okonawa-re-ru.

'Even if it is fine, the game will be held.'

c. ??Sono suugaku-no mondai-nara, suugaku-no sensei-ni kii-temo,
tadasii kotae-o osie-te-kureru-daroo.

'Even if you ask the mathematical problem to a mathematics
teacher, s/he can tell you a correct answer.'

The Japanese particle -mo normally indicates a simple addition, but it is
often the case that the particle does not introduce simple additional infor-
mation. The unacceptability of the sentences in (19') shows that the
particle -mo in these sentences cannot modify a clause which describes a
natural, predictable circumstance for the realization of the situation de-
scribed in the main clause. As shown in the sentences in (19), the particle
can modify a clause whose designated situation is unlikely to realize the
situation of the main clause. This suggests that the simple additive focus
particle -mo often carries an implication that the situation of the main
The role of additive focus particles in concessive expressions (Mitsuko Narita Izutsu) clause is unlikely to happen under the situation of the subordinate clause.4

This property of simple additive focus particles is explained pragmatically. The original function of simple additive focus particles is to give additional information about a person/thing, or to add another fact to what is already understood. However, the sentences in (19') show that it is often pointless to add the information which is already known or predictable. In terms of the pragmatic account of communication (Sperber and Wilson 1986), the act of conveying predictable information results in an inefficient behavior. When information is additionally offered, the communicative act must be rewarded for its processing effort. Since the best way to reward this effort is to add something unpredictable rather than something known, simple additive focus particles are often used to introduce a clause describing unpredictable information.

This explanation helps to understand a close connection between simple additive focus particles and concessive connectives. Figure 5 depicts the semantic structure of (19a). The particle -mo in this sentence introduces a circumstance (zyuugatuni nattemo) in addition to what is normally understood as appropriate circumstances for the situation of the main clause (e.g. 'sitigatuni nareba, (kuuraaga hituyoodaroo)'). According to the pragmatic preference for adding unpredictable information, the simple additive focus particle introduces the information which does not normally go well with the situation of the main clause. This means that the clause modified by this particle designates a situation which is unlikely to realize the situation of the main clause. Behind the use of this particle lies an assumption such as 'zyuugatuninareba kuuraawa hituyoonaidaroo.' And this assumption is semantically in conflict with the situation of the main clause; hence, the concessive meaning obtains for this sentence.
The schematic description of this explanation is given in (20):

(20) a. \( X \cdot \text{temo}, Y. (X = \text{zyuugatuni naru}; Y = \text{kuuraaga hituyooda}) \)

b. Assumption evoked (as a non-conventional implicature):

It is unlikely that Y (if X).

c. Assumption (b) is in conflict with Y.

The difference from (18) is that scalar additive focus particles effect the evocation of an assumption as a conventional implicature, that is, as a conventionalized part of their meaning, while simple additive focus particles generate an assumption on the basis of the pragmatic principle of communication. Except for this difference, these two types of particle are the same in respect of the property stated in (21) (the revised version of (15)). And it is this property that motivates to employ additive focus particles for expressing the concessive meaning.
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(21) Additive focus particles instruct the hearer to evoke the assumption which is in conflict with the propositional content of the main clause.

6. Why contrast disallowed?

Of the two relations of opposition I have explained in Section 2, additive focus particles only express the concessive meaning. The contrast meaning is disallowed with the use of these particles.

The sentences in (22) and (23) normally have the contrast interpretation:

(22) a. Grief hallows hearts while it ages heads.
    b. Little things do great works, when great things will not.

(Selden Table-T [OED when 9b])

(23) a. Saikin asa atatakaku-te yoru-ni naru-to samui.
    b. Watasi-no otto-wa ryoori-o tukuruno-wa tokui-de
    I-GEN husband-TOP cooking-ACC make-TOP good:at-COP
    atokatazuke-wa nigate-da.
    clearing:the:table-TOP poor:at-COP
    'My husband is good at cooking and poor at clearing the table.'

In (22a), for example, hearts and heads are compared in respect of the effects of grief. Similarly, in (23a), the morning and the night of the same day are compared in respect of their temperatures. However, when an additive focus particle is attached to each clause-combining morpheme, the contrast meaning disappears and the concessive meaning emerges:

(22')a. Grief hallows hearts even while it ages heads.

(Bailey Festus (ed.3) 12/2 [OED age v.])
b. Little things do great works, even when great things will not.

(23') a. Saikin asaatatakaku-temoyoru-ninaru-tosamui.

b. Watasi-nootto-waryoori-otukuruno-watokui-demoatokatazukewa
   nigateda.
   'My husband is good at cooking, but poor at clearing the table.'

A similar fact is observed in the following sets of sentences:

(24) a. While Samantha is a quiet, secretive girl, her twinsister is, in
   contrast, outgoing and friendly.

b. ??Even while Samantha is a quiet, secretive girl, her twinsister is, in
   contrast, outgoing and friendly.

c. Even while Samantha is a quiet, secretive girl, her twinsister is
   outgoing and friendly.

(25) a. Watasi-noani-waspoonubannoode
    I-GEN elder:brother-TOP sports all:round-COP
    xiseki yuushuunanoni-taisite,
    school:record excellent-COP-CP-in:contrast:to
    otooto-wa supootu-ga nigatede
    younger:brother-TOP sports-NOM poor:at-COP
    xiseki-moyoku-nai.
    school:record-also good-not
   'While my elder brother is very good at playing sports and his
    school record is excellent, my younger brother is, in contrast, poor
    at playing sports and his school record is bad.'

b. ??Watasi-noani-waspootubannoode xisekiyuushuunanoni-taisite-mo,
   otooto-wa supootu-ga nigatede xiseki-moyoku-nai.
   'Even while my elder brother is very good at playing sports and his
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school record is excellent, my younger brother is, in contrast, poor at playing sports and his school record is bad.'

The awkwardness of each (b) sentence shows that additive focus particles (English *even* and Japanese *-mo*) cannot co-occur with the markers explicitly signaling the contrast meaning (English *in contrast* and Japanese *-nitaisite*).

This incompatibility of additive focus particles with the contrast meaning can be explained along the lines of analysis discussed in Section 5. It should be recalled that the contrast meaning is characterized as a conflict relation between two propositional contents (see Figure 1); it does not involve an assumption evoked by a language user. In contrast, as stated in (21), additive focus particles necessarily effect the evocation of an assumption; it rules out the possibility of the contrast interpretation.⁵

7. Conclusion

This paper has explained the motivation for the use of additive focus particles in concessive connectives. It has been observed that additive focus particles serve to specify the concessive meaning when they are used with clause-combining morphemes. This concessivity-specifying function of these particles comes from their property of instructing the hearer to evoke the assumption which is in conflict with the propositional content of the main clause. Since the assumption evoked this way is the central semantic property of the concessive meaning, additive focus particles are preferred to be used as a part of concessive connectives in many languages.
Notes

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1 This additional note covers cases such as (i), where the compared entities are identical in reality, but different in the situations in which they are located:

   (i) He was a high school teacher three years ago, but he teaches at a college now.

2 Hereafter I will use the following abbreviation marks in the gloss of examples:


3 In cases such as Korean \(-a(-eo)do\) and Japanese \(-demo\), the additive focus particles are combined with the inflected forms of verbs or adjectives (Korean: the phonological variants of the connective vowel, V-\(a\) or V-\(eo\), Japanese: the adverbial ending of a copula), which have a clause-combining function on their own.

4 This does not mean that the particle \(-mo\) always introduces the unpredictable information:

   (i)\(Eki-ni-wa \quad kuruma-de it-le-mo, \quad basu-de it-te-mo\)
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station-to-TOP car-INS go-CP-also bus-INS go-CP-also
  ik-eru.
go-POSS
‘You can get to the station by car or by bus.’
In (i), -mo indicates a simple addition; hence, the sentence does not express the concessive meaning.
However, it is possible to give the concessive interpretation to (ii):
(ii) Mada juubun jikan-ga aru-node, eki-ni-wa
  still enough time-NOM exist-because, station-to-TOP
  jitensha-de it-te-mo arui-te it-te-mo ik-eru.
bicycle-INS go-CP-also walk-CP go-CP-also go-POSS
  ‘Since you have enough time, you can get to the station
  whether you go by bicycle or on foot.’
The possibility of the concessive interpretation increases if, under normal circumstances, we assume that it is unlikely to get to the station by bicycle or on foot.

5 The property stated in (21) also explains why (i) is bad:
  (i) ??Even if it rains, then the football game will happen.
Dancygier and Sweetser (1997) argue that the if-then conditional forms a sequential and causal connection between the situations described in two clauses. This requirement of a causal link clashes with the semantic import of even if, namely, the implication of a deviation from a natural causal link; hence, the incompatibility of even if with then results.

References


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