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## CAN 'UA BE EVIDENTIAL WITH STATIVES IN REO TAHITI (TAHITIAN)?<sup>1</sup>

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Most grammars<sup>2</sup> of the Tahitian language stipulate that state verbs such as *au*<sup>3</sup> (to like), *here* (to love), *'ite* (to know), *fa'aro'o* (to believe), *pāpū* (to be sure) must be used with the *'Ua*<sup>4</sup> marker which is typically defined as the *perfect* aspectual form (when used with dynamic verbs), whereas the English or French counterparts of these statives are used in the present tense<sup>5</sup> (e. g. *I like beer, I love Mary*, etc.). In this context Lazard and Peltzer state :

« The particle *'Ua* is actually a marker of the perfect. With verbs denoting a telic process, it has a resultative meaning [...] but it is also very often used with a directional and deictic marker as a narrative past. With verbs denoting an atelic process it expresses a state. In an appropriate context it can refer to the future. » (my translation [Lazard & Peltzer, 2000 : 30]).

I will adopt the view that *'Ua*, although morphologically simple, is in fact a binomial marker. In a first section, I will try to show that a comparison with other oceanic languages gives support to such a proposition. In a

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank those colleagues who made comments on this paper, more particularly G. Girard-Gillet and M.-E. Ritz for their suggestions and J. Arloff for discussing this article and his help with certain English expressions.

<sup>2</sup> I refer to L. Peltzer, M. Paia, and J. Vernaudo, see the general references.

<sup>3</sup> The word *au* refers to homonyms (*au*<sup>1</sup>, the verb, meaning « to like », or *au*<sup>2</sup>, refers to the pronoun meaning 'I' (1st Pers.). The morphology of the first person pronoun varies according to the phonetic preceding context (the pronoun *au* is used after words ending in *-e* or *-i*, and *vau* is used after words ending in *-a*, *-o*, *-u*).

<sup>4</sup> Morphologically, the Tahitian marker *'Ua* is introduced by a glottal stop, conventionally represented in writing by <'>, but often not used.

<sup>5</sup> In English you can use the present perfect form but only if you use quantifying expressions which specify the duration and its limits: *I have liked beer + all my life*, or *since 1965, for years*. Without such phrases the present perfect is unacceptable with these verbs \* *I have liked beer*.

second section, I will present some uses of 'Ua. The literature on evidentiality is abundant [DAHL 1985], [CHAFE & NICHOLS 1986], [OSWALT 1986], [WEBER 1986], [GIVÓN 1989, 1993], [WIERZBICKA 1996], [HEINE 1991], [TRAUGOTT 1991], [HOPPER 1993], [BYBEE 1994], [ANSCOMBRE 1994], [DE MULDER 1994], [DENDALE 1994], [TASMOWSKI 1994], [GUENTCHEVA 1994], [NØLKE 1994], [NUYTS 1994], [VET 1994], [VOGELEER 1994], [TALMY 2003], [C. SMITH 2006], among others. In a third part, I will discuss Goddard's concepts of 'evidential and experiencer constructions' [1998 : 314-320]. I will then conclude with a discussion of some additional examples.

### *1. The composite nature of 'Ua : a brief comparison with Rapa Nui and Tongan*

To understand the semantic and syntactic roles of 'Ua, it is useful to see that it corresponds to a binomial marker derived from two markers which have been blended into one functional unit. A comparison with other related languages is enlightening because it provides an image of different stages of the evolution of the markers. Rapa Nui (Easter Island), Tahitian (Tahiti and the Tuamotu islands), Marquesan (Marquesas), and Tongan (Tonga). These languages are typologically related languages. Their respective perfect markers are : *Ko* ... 'a, for Rapa Nui, *Ku'o* ... 'a, for Tongan, 'Ua ... ø, for Tahitian and Marquesan. The indices used in the following examples do not refer to footnotes but relate to the corresponding units in the sentence. The symbols PFT and RES refer to « perfect 'tense' » and « resultative », respectively [Du Feu 1996 : 7-8].

Rapa nui : *Ko* + *V* + 'a

- (1) **Ko**<sup>1</sup> piha<sup>2</sup> 'a<sup>3</sup> te<sup>4</sup> vai<sup>5</sup> [Du Feu 1996]  
**PFT**<sup>1</sup> boil<sup>2</sup> **RES-particle**<sup>3</sup> the<sup>4</sup> water<sup>5</sup>  
 The water has boiled

Tongan : *Ku'o* + *V* 'a

- (2) **Ku'o**<sup>1</sup> lea<sup>2</sup> 'a<sup>3</sup> Pita<sup>4</sup>  
**PFT**<sup>1</sup> speak<sup>2</sup> **RES-particle**<sup>3</sup> Pita<sup>4</sup>  
 Pita has spoken

Tahitian : 'Ua + *V*

- (3) 'Ua<sup>4</sup> reva<sup>2</sup> te<sup>3</sup> pahī<sup>4</sup>  
**PFT**<sup>1</sup> leave<sup>2</sup> the<sup>3</sup> boat<sup>4</sup>  
 The boat has left

Marquesan : 'Ua + V

- (4) 'Ua<sup>1</sup> he'e<sup>2</sup> te<sup>3</sup> poti<sup>4</sup>

PFT<sup>1</sup> leave<sup>2</sup> the<sup>3</sup> boat<sup>4</sup>

The boat has left

The four means of expressing the perfect are related and seem to represent three morphosyntactic ways of linking two components. With *Ko*<sup>1</sup> ... 'a<sup>2</sup> in Rapa Nui, we have a discontinuous expression of the 'perfect'. With Tongan *Ku*<sup>1</sup>'o<sup>2</sup> the second 'component' has moved closer to the first, but there is a glottal stop between them. With 'Ua in Tahitian and Marquesan the two units have blended diachronically. The glottal stop ['] before 'U- represents the trace of the former *k-*.) Du Feu [1996] and Conte [1996, 2000] provide interesting glosses for sentences such as (5), in Rapa Nui :

- (5) *Ko*<sup>1</sup> piha'a<sup>2</sup> 'a<sup>3</sup> te<sup>4</sup> vai<sup>5</sup>

PFT<sup>1</sup> + boil<sup>2</sup> + Result-particle<sup>3</sup> + the<sup>4</sup> + water<sup>5</sup>

The glosses they propose make clear that the two separate elements are endowed with semantic import, respectively : perfect or perfective<sup>6</sup> (PFT) & resultant state<sup>7</sup> (RES).

- (6) 'UA<sup>1</sup> haapiha'a<sup>2</sup> te<sup>3</sup> vai<sup>4</sup>

PFT + RES<sup>1</sup> haapiha'a<sup>2</sup> + te<sup>3</sup> vai<sup>4</sup>

The Tahitian glottal stop ['] is the result of an evolution which has not taken place in Rapa Nui and Tongan. In the former, the 'U- marker is related to *Ko* in Rapa Nui and *Ku* in Tongan. The particle 'a which follows the verb in Rapa Nui has moved and is attached to 'U- in Tahitian, and expresses the meaning of result (see note 6). This again suggests that we have a complex operator : we have a binomial construction both of whose two components are meaningful.

<sup>6</sup> Depending on the context or the construction, PFT, in Tahitian, refers to the Perfect or the Perfective (past simple). In this paper, I follow Comrie [1976 : 52-64 & 16-24] and Engel & Ritz's [2000 : 120] distinction.

<sup>7</sup> RES refers either to the (perfective) "successful completion of a situation [...] the event of *entry* into the appropriate state" [COMRIE 2000 : 20] or the meaning of "Perfect of result" describing "a state which is referred to as being the result of some past situation" (*I've had a bath = I'm clean ... I don't need another bath*) [COMRIE 1976 : 56.] OR [HEINE 1994 : 87]. Since PFT and RES have blended in Tahitian, there may be some overlap between the two in some cases, but when necessary, the context and the construction conspire to filter out the irrelevant interpretation.

## 2. Some uses of 'Ua

### 2.1. Dynamic telic verbs and states

As mentioned before, the composite nature of 'Ua facilitates the existence of different meanings or uses in accordance with the type of the verb (stative or dynamic telic) or the verb phrase, the arguments, the context, etc.

#### 2.1.1. Dynamic telic verbs ('amu + i + te vī = eat the mango)

(7) Tē<sup>1</sup> 'amu<sup>2</sup> nei<sup>3</sup> au<sup>4</sup> i<sup>5</sup> te<sup>6</sup> vī<sup>7</sup>

Tē<sup>IMP</sup>PERF<sup>1</sup> + eat<sup>2</sup> + here-now<sup>3</sup> + 1st Pers<sup>4</sup> + i<sup>5</sup> accusative + the<sup>6</sup> + mango[s]<sup>7</sup>

I am eating the mango(s)

(8) 'Ua<sup>1</sup> 'amu<sup>2</sup> ø<sup>3</sup> au<sup>4</sup> i<sup>5</sup> te<sup>6</sup> vī<sup>7</sup>

PFT<sup>1</sup> + eat<sup>2</sup> + ø<sup>3</sup> + 1st Pers<sup>4</sup> + i<sup>5</sup> accusative + the<sup>6</sup> + mango[s]<sup>7</sup>

I

I have eaten the mango(s)

(9) 'Ua<sup>1</sup> 'amu<sup>2</sup> ø<sup>3</sup> au<sup>4</sup> i<sup>5</sup> te<sup>6</sup> vī<sup>7</sup> inanahi<sup>8</sup>

PAST<sup>1</sup> + eat<sup>2</sup> + ø<sup>3</sup> + 1st Pers<sup>4</sup> + i<sup>5</sup> accusative + the<sup>6</sup> + mango[s]<sup>7</sup> + yesterday<sup>8</sup>

I ate the mango(s) yesterday

The verb 'amu (to eat) refers to a dynamic verb used with the relevant object whose quantity is measurable [TENNY 1994 : 2] ; [CORRE 2009 : 195]. The VP corresponds lexically to an accomplishment. However, in (7) the 'viewpoint aspect' (cf. C. Smith [2003], for the corresponding concept in English) is imperfective (cf. *te ... nei*). On the other hand, (8) must be interpreted as a present perfect, and (9) as a past.

#### 2.1.2. State verbs (au + ... + i + te pía = (to) like something)

Let us consider example (10) :

(10) 'Ua<sup>1</sup> au<sup>2</sup> vau<sup>3</sup> i<sup>4</sup> te<sup>5</sup> pía<sup>6</sup> [PELTZER & RICHAUD 2009 : 27]

'Ua<sup>1</sup> + like<sup>2</sup> + 1st pers<sup>3</sup> + accusative particle<sup>4</sup> + (the<sup>5</sup>) + beer<sup>6</sup>

I like beer

In (10), the verb *au* (= *to like*) does not on its own refer to an event, it is a stative verb. In English, statives require the present simple unless there is a quantifying phrase specifying the interval (*I have liked beer for years*) :

(10') I like beer / \* I have liked beer / <sup>OK</sup> I've liked it for years.

The counterpart of *I love you* in Tahitian requires the marker 'Ua although we do not have a present perfect construction. 'Ua represents the link between the anterior interval and the following domain. When we have a dynamic verb (or verb phrase) referring to accomplishments, or achievements in Vendler's terms [1967], the event introduced by 'Ua is viewed as having a *terminative* point and is interpreted perfectly. When the verb (or the verb phrase) is stative it is not possible to envisage a telic perfective interpretation. Instead, the speaker envisages some *prior event* likely to cause the relevant *resulting* state. In other words, certain Tahitian stative verbs (*like, love, believe, be sure, be furious, etc.*) behave like resulting states and attract 'Ua and profile the resultant component of this complex marker. In (10), it is the resultant state which is profiled (the resultant state is « *I like beer* », the *source* of « my present state » is implied by « my past experience »). By contrast, in dynamic (8) and (9), the terminative point is profiled (the *mango* is no longer there after the eating, except for the stone, perhaps).

The real difference between (10) in Tahitian 'Ua *au vau i te pia* and the present simple in English (e. g. *I like beer*) is that the former implies a source for my *liking* and is explicit about the fact that the present *liking of beer* is necessarily based on past experience of *drinking beer* whereas the latter just assumes it [DENISON 1993 : 63, 75, 79, 80, 89, 90, 93]. Denison shows that diachronically things are not so simple in English [63, 93, 96], the apparent syntactic simplicity of the modern construction hides a complex set of relations which previously involved different constructions and an array of roles (*cause* and *experiencer*). In modern English, *like* has become formally a transitive verb with the « *experiencer* » in the subject position. To return to the Tahitian construction, 'Ua implies that the subject is the 'experiencer' of the 'liking'. In other grammatical persons (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> persons, singular or plural) the experience is not that of the speaker but even in these cases he or she must have some *justification* based on *evidence* ('seeing', 'hearing', 'inference', etc.).

An interesting but brief footnote in Kiparski [2002] on a possibly similar use of the Vedic perfect says: « the event component of an achievement predicate is *suppressed*, leaving only the result ». I will not contradict his proposal, but instead of claiming that an event is *suppressed*, I suggest that 'Ua explicitly requires the addressee to make an inference about an event or a number of repeated events in the past. These inferences may be related to some kind of *evidential* relation in the broad sense of the term.

## 2.2. Perception, cognition verbs and coercion

On its own, the verb *'ite* is ambiguous, but in context a choice has to be made :

(11) 'Ua<sup>1</sup> 'ite<sup>2</sup> au<sup>3</sup> ia<sup>4</sup> na<sup>5</sup> i<sup>6</sup> te<sup>7</sup> fare teata<sup>8</sup> inanahi<sup>9</sup>

'Ua<sup>1</sup> + see<sup>2</sup> + I<sup>3</sup>+Dir Obj.<sup>4</sup> him<sup>5</sup> + at<sup>6</sup> the<sup>7</sup> cinema<sup>8</sup> + yesterday<sup>9</sup>

= I saw him yesterday at the cinema

\*I know him at the cinema yesterday

Example (11) is a good example of the « tensification » of aspect (or *aoristic drift*), now let's turn to (12), in which *'ite* no longer means *see* but *know* :

(12) ['Ua<sup>1</sup> 'ite<sup>2</sup> au<sup>3</sup> [ ē<sup>4</sup> 'ua<sup>5</sup> reva<sup>6</sup> atu<sup>7</sup> 'oia<sup>8</sup> inanahi<sup>9</sup> ra<sup>10</sup>]]

'Ua<sup>1</sup> know<sup>2</sup> I<sup>3</sup> [that<sup>4</sup> Past<sup>5</sup> leave<sup>6</sup> from-here<sup>7</sup> he<sup>8</sup> yesterday<sup>9</sup> away<sup>10</sup>]

I know (now) that he left yesterday

In (12), there is an implicit 'now' attached to the higher predicate 'Ua *'ite*. We have a sentential direct object. The scope of *inanahi* (=Yesterday) is restricted to the subordinate ... *ē ua reva atu 'oia inanahi* = ... *that he left yesterday*. 'Ua in the main clause coerces the verb *'ite* into the meaning *knowing now*. The *knowing* corresponds to a result. A possible gloss might be : *I met him when he left Hawaiï, or someone did, or someone told me, and the present result is : I know now that he left Hawaiï yesterday*. The Tahitian system explicitly grammaticalizes the passage from the past windowing to the present windowing (in Talmy's sense [1999]), in other words, from a dynamic event to a resultant state.

## 3. 'Ua and derived evidentiality

### 3.1. Grammatical evidential markers in specific languages

As already mentioned in the introductory section, there is an abundant literature on the subject of evidentiality. Most of the authors discuss the notion following Chafe and Nichols [1986] and make use of a number of key concepts such as « the access to a source », « the evidential status of the markers related to the source », and « the relevance of evidentiality for (epistemic) modality ». The use they make of these notions differs in some ways according to the concept they foreground and the importance they grant to specific marker(s).

Starting from the same complex system, some attach greater importance to the « source of the information » [WIERZBICKA (1996), [GODDARD 1998], [Bybee 1994] and envisage the marker as a means to *fill* a pragmatic gap to get access to the information [VOGELEER 1994 : 70], while Guentcheva [1994 :

8] insists on the 'gap' itself, the 'break' between the asserted situation and the « mediatised » situation (e.g. « 'rupture' médiatisée » [1994 : 16]. This leads her to coin the term « mediatif » after Lazard's use of the adverb « médiatement » [1956 : 148]. The advantage of this position is that the 'mirative' interpretation (e.g. « unexpected information ») is facilitated. Vogelee also suggests avoiding the term « evidentiality » and adopts the French terms « relation point de vue » (Rpv) related to the individual who gets access to the information (Ipv).

The other line of divide concerns the nature of the forms which give access to the evidential information. Some linguists adopt a restrictive concept of evidentiality : they consider a marker as evidential only if the evidential meaning belongs to its basic meaning [ANDERSON 1986 : 274]. Others, taking account of the diachrony of some markers, adopt a less strict point of view and stress the fact that some markers became strict evidentials after pragmatic inferences came to be integrated into their meaning. This permits them to envisage markers which correspond to extensions of an earlier meaning. In this perspective even some uses of the definite article can be considered as extended evidential markers [DE MULDER 1994 : 108 – 118].

I will now address the question of 'Ua's possible evidential dimension making use of some characteristics of the concepts proposed by Wierzbicka [1996], Goddard [1998], Bybee et al [1994]. I will try to assess the relevance of these proposals for the uses of the marker. Wierzbicka defines her position in relation to the volume edited by Chafe and Nichols [1986], she devotes a whole chapter on the subject and argues that the data presented in the volume can be analyzed in terms of universal semantic primitives. Three categories of evidentiality are proposed :

- 1) « direct » sense experience or personal evidence
- 2) « second hand » evidence or hearsay
- 3) conjectural speculation « inference »

According to Wierzbicka's view, these labels stand for very different things in different languages, which can be misleading. She proposes instead to use *universal* semantic primitives such as SEE, HEAR, KNOW, DO, BECAUSE which are integrated in constructions or *formulae*. As we have seen, in the strict perspective, the term *evidentiality* applies to languages which explicitly use specific grammatical markers to « clarify » the speaker's relationship to the content of the sentence they propose to their addressee [WIERZBICKA 1996], [GODDARD 1998]. From these markers the addressee can rank the speaker's statements according to a scale of evidentiality. Wierzbicka refers to Weber [1986] and discusses the three Tarma Quechua suffixes *-mi*, *-shi*,

and *-chi*. Salomon's description [1991 : 32] takes a similar view, which I will make use of. He presents some properties of a related dialect of the language:

« When conveying data learned from personal experience, the speaker uses the witness validator – *mi* [...] which implies that the content of the sentence or (sometimes) larger speech unit is something learned through direct sense experience. When passing on data learned secondhand – for example, an account heard from somebody else, the speaker will switch to the reportive (sometimes called 'hearsay') validator –*si* [...] when speculating without evidence, or when uncertain, the speaker employs the conjectural validator –*cha*. ».

This leads us to make the provisional suggestion that the use of '*Ua* in (10) '*Ua au vau i te pia* = *I like beer* corresponds to a kind of evidential marker implying a first person direct or personal experience of 'drinking'. Wierzbicka [1996 : 428] presents Oswald [1986] study of *Kashaya*, a Northern California language which has a very rich system of verbal suffixes indicating evidentiality. I will try to make use of his glosses and formulae, focussing on what he calls the « Performative-Perfective suffix » marker -*mela*:

-*mela* (Performative-Perfective)

→ I know this

→ Because I *did it* (before) [WIERZBICKA : 429, after OSWALT 1986]

Then, in order to account for this use of the Tahitian counterpart of the verb *like*, I will adapt Wierzbicka's formula, using her primitives DO, KNOW, BECAUSE :

FORMULA 1 :

BECAUSE of <p<sup>1</sup> & p<sup>2</sup>>, (p<sup>1</sup> = I DID something = I tasted beer) & (p<sup>2</sup> = I liked it)

→ I KNOW (now) that it is still the case.

Goddard's characterization adds another level, the meta-verb FEEL replaces the meta-verb KNOW » [1998 : 317] :

« In some respects, the range of Experiencer construction meanings is analogous to that of evidential meanings, except that evidentials involve KNOW, THINK, SAY, whereas experiencer constructions involve FEEL. »

Goddard's proposition enriches formula 1 by introducing the notion of experiencer (KNOW > FEEL). In this perspective, '*Ua* might still be considered to be a kind of evidential. Formula 2 encapsulates the relevant concepts :



FORMULA 2

**Because** of  $\langle p^1 \& p^2 \rangle$ , ( $p^1 =$  I **did** something = I tasted beer) & ( $p^2 =$  I liked it)

→ i **feel** (now) that  $p^2$  is still the case.

But Bybee's position [1994 : 96] emphasizes another interesting aspect

« If in English we say *Mary is gone*, we state that she is not here and also that she has left. [...] the evidential *also describes the past action*, but with the added qualification that it is known through the present results. In each case the change brings the gram closer to *signalling a simple past action* [...] the speaker did not see the action but does see the result which verifies that it did happen. » (my emphasis)

In this case, the « evidence » in question is evidence for a specific past event. The speaker appears to use the evidence in order to prove that the event *did* happen. The fact that *Mary is not here* is evidence for a past action *Mary left, to leave* is dynamic! However, with verbs such as *to like*, the situation is different. In this case, what interests us is not 'the present state as evidence for a past event', but 'the inferred past events as evidence for a present state'. The focus of interest is no longer the past events but the resulting present state.

This suggests that *'Ua* used with statives shares some characteristics with classic evidentials, but it is relatively different : the speaker starts from the state and enjoins his or her addressee to make the inference that there has been one or more past actions. So far, the strategy resembles evidentiality but the crucial element is that this inferred stage must be followed by another one : it must be as it were 'recycled' in order to reinforce the validation of the resulting present state and present its validation as an extrapolation of the prior experienced situations.

This validation of the present state requires a further improvement of Formula 2 :

FORMULA 3

I can *assert*<sup>3</sup> (now) the generalized  $p^3 = \langle$ I like beer $\rangle$  because I *tasted*<sup>1</sup> and *liked*<sup>2</sup> it on one or more occasions before

Since « I tasted x *and* liked x » involve *direct and personal experience*, we have an element which takes us back to one of the three types of evidentiality mentioned above. Note that *tasting beer* does not automatically imply *liking it*. This is why it is necessary to specify the link between « drinking *and* liking » in the prior experiential interval. This determines three intervals or phases :

*Phase 1* : prior experiential interval (n specific instances of drinking beer, not excluding the time of speech)

*Phase 2* : the resulting state ( n specific instances of liking beer)

*Phase 3* : relates Phase 2 to the *epistemic* and *asserting* position of the speaker (the « *enunciator* »<sup>8</sup> positioning). Phase 3 allows the speaker to extrapolate the validity of Phase 2 to the moment of speech, and go one step further, assuming even that unless otherwise stipulated this validity will continue to hold.

As we can see we have moved from the « source » to a type of epistemic modality in the broad sense of the term.

### 3. 2. *Extension of the notions of evidentiality to English and Tahitian*

As Goddard [1998] observes for the English language :

« [it] does not have evidentials in the form of a coherent grammatical system, *though somewhat similar meanings can be expressed* by epistemic (i. e. knowledge related) uses of modal verbs (e.g. *he must be ill, She should be there by now*) and by sentence adverbs such as *reportedly, apparently, and presumably.* » (my emphasis)

Traugott *et al* [1991 : 83] also adopts the view that the meaning of a marker can be evidentially extended, in spoken English :

« verbs such as ‘think’, ‘say’, ‘hear’ or ‘know’ *become evidential markers*, as in : a. They say she’s coming (hearsay) ; b. I understand he’s leaving (hedge) ; c. I think she’s home (inference) ; d. She’s left, y’know (co-option) » (asserting it not with certainty)

More specifically, Dahl [1985] applies the notion to some uses of the English perfect :

« [...] it is not uncommon for PFCT (perfect) to have *secondary ‘inferential’ [...] uses*. In English, this seems particularly typical of the perfect progressive, as in the English version of (Q 59) :

(Q 59 : EN) It has been raining.

[...] ‘inferential’ uses can be regarded as a natural extension of the primary uses of PFCT [perfect] : the inferential involves making a conclusion about a past event on the basis of its remaining effects, something which will also quite often be true of the ‘perfect of result’ (e.g. when one says ‘he has left’, looking into someone’s empty office) ».

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<sup>8</sup> The adjective « *enunciative* », after Culioli [1990], refers to the fact that the speaker (enunciator) *feels* he or she is in a position to *endorse* (or not) the last phase (operation) which corresponds to the epistemic modality.

Adamczewski [1982 : 132, 133] proposes a similar analysis for this kind of example on the basis of 'smell' (e. g. « *You have been eating fish* », « *you have been drinking* »).

### 3. 3. Testing formula 3

The last version corresponding to Formula 3 is only valid for 'direct' or 'first person « evidentiality », because it focuses on the fact that the same person 'I' did *the drinking*, experienced *the liking* and eventually endorsed the validation of the stative relation *at the moment of speech*. The speaker has been through successive stages : [Agent<sup>1</sup> > Experiencer<sup>2</sup>] > Asserter<sup>3</sup>. This is also true for the first person plural, since the speaker is involved in all the implied phases of (14) :

(14) 'Ua<sup>1</sup> au<sup>2</sup> *matou*<sup>3</sup> i<sup>4</sup> te<sup>5</sup> pía<sup>6</sup>

Ua<sup>1</sup> like<sup>2</sup> we<sup>3</sup> Dir Obj.<sup>4</sup> (the)<sup>5</sup> beer<sup>6</sup>

*We* like beer

But, as is obvious, it is not the case in other persons :

(15) 'Ua<sup>1</sup> au<sup>2</sup> 'oé<sup>3</sup> i<sup>4</sup> te<sup>5</sup> pía<sup>6</sup>

'Ua<sup>1</sup> like<sup>2</sup> you-sg<sup>3</sup> Dir Obj.<sup>4</sup> (the)<sup>5</sup> beer<sup>6</sup>

*You* like beer

(16) 'Ua<sup>1</sup> au<sup>2</sup> outou<sup>3</sup> i<sup>4</sup> te<sup>5</sup> pía<sup>6</sup>

'Ua<sup>1</sup> like<sup>2</sup> you-pl<sup>3</sup> 4 (the)<sup>5</sup> beer<sup>6</sup>

*You* like beer

(17) 'Ua<sup>1</sup> au<sup>2</sup> *ratou*<sup>3</sup> i<sup>4</sup> te<sup>5</sup> pía<sup>6</sup>.

'Ua<sup>1</sup> like<sup>2</sup> they<sup>3</sup> Dir. Obj.<sup>4</sup> (the)<sup>5</sup> beer<sup>6</sup>.

*They* like beer

In examples (15) to (17), the speaker is neither the agent nor the experiencer, but he is the asserter<sup>9</sup>, and as such he may have *seen* the agents drink, *noticed* or *conjectured* the pleasure taken in drinking. In this case he has some kind of *direct experience* on which he bases his assertion, and if he simply *sees a lot of bottles* on a table, he can make an inference and conjecture the validity of the

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<sup>9</sup> The enunciator in Culioli's framework.

resulting state. The number of bottles permits the inference of *liking*. The use of 'Ua comes to mean that although the source of his knowledge is slim, the speaker still *feels* justified in adjusting his *assertion* about the resulting state in accordance with the context, that is to 'enunciate' the resulting state (in Culioli's terms). But the scope of the meta-verb FEEL<sup>10</sup> and its interpretation is not the same in the different examples. In (10), the first person, the agent, the experiencer and the asserter are one and the same, in the other cases the asserter has direct evidence in the *seeing*, and this justifies his assertion, but he is not the experiencer. He may also have *heard* someone pronounce the propositions, in which case we have « second hand » or « hearsay » evidence (and validation by proxy). The grammatical person provides useful information about the source of the information.

### 3.4. Suspension of evidential stance

Interestingly, in some constructions the passage from the status of *agent* to that of *experiencer* (for the grammatical subject) and then to the status of *asserter* for the speaker (enunciator) is suspended or cancelled. This is the case with questions, future, and negation : 'Ua cannot be retained :

(18) E<sup>1</sup> au<sup>2</sup> 'oe<sup>3</sup> i<sup>4</sup> te<sup>5</sup> i'a<sup>6</sup> ota<sup>7</sup> ?

E<sup>1</sup> like<sup>2</sup> you<sup>3</sup> Dir Obj.<sup>4</sup> (the)<sup>5</sup> fish<sup>6</sup> raw<sup>7</sup>?

Do you like raw fish ?

The reason of the rejection of 'Ua in this case is clear : questions imply that the speaker is not in a position to know whether something has taken place (for example, *drinking*) or if the drinking has taken place whether this has had an effect on the referent of the grammatical subject. It follows that he or she is not in a position to *assert* the resulting stative proposition either.

Depending on the scope of negation the asserter may either not have seen the agent drink and manifest any liking or he may have heard someone report that no agent drank any beer, or that someone drank some beer and did not like it. We should remember that 'Ua is related to a positive inference.

(19) Aita<sup>1</sup> vau<sup>2</sup> e<sup>3</sup> au<sup>4</sup> i<sup>5</sup> te<sup>6</sup> pía<sup>7</sup>

Neg<sup>1</sup> I<sup>2</sup> Particle<sup>3</sup> like<sup>4</sup> Dir. Object<sup>5</sup> (the)<sup>6</sup> beer<sup>7</sup>

I do not like mangos

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<sup>10</sup> We should not forget that FEEL here is only a meta-verb.

(20) E<sup>1</sup> au<sup>2</sup> ratou<sup>3</sup> i<sup>4</sup> te<sup>5</sup> píá<sup>6</sup>

FUTURE<sup>1</sup> like<sup>2</sup> they<sup>3</sup> Dir. Obj.<sup>4</sup> (the<sup>5</sup>) beer<sup>6</sup>

They will like beer (in the future)

As (20) shows, the speaker has no grounds to infer the existence of an embedded event in the contextual situation, so no resulting state can be asserted ... yet.

In Tahitian, if a quantifier such as *roa* (= completely, very much) is attached to the predicate, we can no longer have 'Ua, here we have a case of redundancy :

(21) Mea<sup>1</sup> au<sup>2</sup> roa<sup>3</sup> na'u<sup>4</sup> ia<sup>5</sup> 'oe<sup>6</sup>.

Thing<sup>1</sup> love<sup>2</sup> *completely*<sup>3</sup> to-me<sup>4</sup> Dir. Obj.<sup>5</sup> you<sup>6</sup>

I love you so much

'Ua already implies the reaching of a limit. It is impossible to intensify something that is already at its limit (compare ? *very unique*).

### Conclusion

'Ua with dynamic verbs seems to be relatively less problematic : we have perfective phases (sub-events) of the *same* situation. The event *having eaten a mango*, for example, implies *an eaten mango*, and *then* the absence of both the mango and the event.

The use of 'Ua with statives has its specificity : although we still have a *number of phases*, they are *different*. We have an anterior event (or events, e. g. *drinking*) and a resulting state (e. g. *liking*) which have to be envisaged first. Although the speaker refers back to past events the primary focus of interest is the resulting present state, not the inferred past action in itself. There is a kind of loop from present to past and back to the present. When we come back to the present, it is no longer exactly the same, the validation of the predication has been epistemically bolstered by the loop. In the first person, examples ((10), (14)), a state emerged from the subject's *experience* of *drinking beer* or *eating mangos* (with n instances of *liking*). The resulting state is dependent on the prior event[s]. The referent of the grammatical subject has as it were 'acquired' a new taste. The taste is incrementally dependant on the preceding events. This state of affairs still needs to be predicated to be communicated. The use of 'Ua goes beyond the prior phases : in fact, the

speaker *backgrounds* or shades the prior evidential phase (personal, reportive, or conjectural) and *foregrounds* the *validation phase* of the resulting state. Evidentiality is only an ingredient of the construction, not its main purpose. In accordance with its positive status when there is no reliable anterior source for the validation of the state 'Ua is not used.

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