

**Summer Institute of Linguistics and  
The University of Texas at Arlington  
Publications in Linguistics**

Publication 107

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**Language in Context:  
Essays for  
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**A Publication of  
The Summer Institute of Linguistics  
and  
The University of Texas at Arlington  
1992**

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Library of Congress Catalog No: 92-80356

ISBN : 0-88312-183-2

ISSN: 1040-0850

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Cover design by Hazel Shorey

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## **A Typology of Causatives, Pragmatically Speaking**

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The purpose of this paper is to give a brief overview of the typology of causative constructions and to suggest that, in addition to the syntactic and semantic factors governing causative constructions, explicit pragmatic explanations are needed to give an adequate account of their behavior. Let us first examine a brief summary of linguistic typologies, specifically of causative constructions, then some of the pragmatic considerations involved in languages' usage of causative construction.

Linguistic typologies are the classification of languages into different types on the basis of their variation from one another. More than just a simple taxonomy of languages, typologies serve to explain the nature of languages as well as provide proof of language universals.

Not all typologies are of great interest or significance, but those that interact with implicational universals usually are. For example, Greenberg (1966) found a number of implicational universals stemming from word-order typology. He found correlates in the order of the genitive constituent as well as adjectives following the noun it modifies, and the existence of prepositions within the basic word order of VO languages.

The particular causative typology described here is based upon PROTOTYPES, suggested by Givón (1984). He proposes that languages fall along a continuum, with no discrete boundaries existing between actual types. The prototypes can be determined by a bell curve where the most typical qualities and the most frequent occurrence of those qualities occur. As a result, the prototypes are sometimes more ideal than real, but serve as a basic model of a given type.

Causality presupposes two conditions: the dependency of the effect event on the causing event and the required sharing of certain referential points, such as time, space, and agency. The scope of causality in this paper does not include interclausal constructions, instrumental causatives, or permissive cause *per se*.

Comrie (1981) and Shibatani (1975) have extensively described the typology of causative constructions. To a lesser extent, Syeed (1985) has also described causative typology in terms of affectivity. My work has simply been to combine all three of these descriptions, to test their validity on a wide sample of languages taken from secondary sources, and to introduce the pragmatic considerations which are necessary to explain the patterns found.

### 1. Causative prototypes

Languages typically use one or more of three causative prototypes: morphological, analytical, and lexical causatives. An example of each type is presented in (1).

- (1) a. MORPHOLOGICAL [Kewa, Papua New Guinea (Franklin 1971:73)]  
*nipú-mí onaa ma-píraa-ria*  
 3s<sup>^</sup> AG people CAUSE-sit<sup>^</sup> 3s-PST  
 He made the people sit down.
- b. ANALYTICAL [Thai (Vichit-Vadakan 1976:468)]  
*sàákhàá tham deen roóhàáy*  
 Saka cause Daeng cry  
 Saka caused Daeng to cry.
- c. LEXICAL [English]  
*She shoved her sister off the cliff.*

Causative typology interrelates with two other typologies, morphological and word order. Morphological typology divides languages into isolating, agglutinating, inflecting, and polysynthetic types. A language's morphological type will govern in part the type of causative construction most favored. A continuum can be made with isolating languages to the left while polysynthetic ones are to the right. Analytical and lexical causatives occur in isolating languages while morphological causatives occur in polysynthetic languages:

isolating	agglutinating	inflecting	polysynthetic
lexical-analytical	analytical-morphological	morphological	

Word-order typology is concerned with the normal order of subject (s), verb (v), and object (o) constituents. It has been found that vo languages are usually more isolating, and that they, therefore, usually use analytical causatives. ov languages are generally more agglutinating, so that morphological causatives are more prevalent. This is explained on the premise that causative constructions are underlyingly made up of two predicates, which in surface structure come into close proximity bringing about agglutination in the case of ov languages.

## 2. Semantic factors

In addition to interaction with other typologies, causative constructions are sensitive to a number of semantic contexts. Shibatani (1975) presents four pairs of semantic factors that determine the use of a language's causatives in specific contexts. These pairs are referred to as: COERCIVE VERSUS NONCOERCIVE, DIRECTIVE VERSUS MANIPULATIVE, DIRECT VERSUS INDIRECT, and BALLISTIC VERSUS CONTROLLED.

COERCIVE causation has to do with the amount of (physical) force exerted by the causer on the causee. It implies resistance on the part of the causee, which usually requires the causee to be animate. NONCOERCIVE causation is oftentimes permissive in nature.

(2) a. COERCIVE [English (Shibatani 1975:41)]

*I made the doctor come.*

b. NONCOERCIVE

*I had the doctor come.*

DIRECTIVE causation implies the submissive volition of causee. Directives are frequently verbal instructions or demands, so that an animate causee is required that can volitionally and physically respond. MANIPULATIVE causation frequently involves inanimate causees which must be physically manipulated and cannot volitionally resist. If a language can use more than one strategy, it generally uses the lexical form to express manipulation while the morphological form is used for directive causation. Sentence (3b) becomes ungrammatical if 'child' is substituted for 'stick'.

- (3) a. DIRECTIVE [Japanese (Shibatani 1975:55)]  
*Boku wa kodomo ni tat-ase-ta*  
 1s NOM child DAT stand<sup>^</sup>up-CAUSE-TNS  
 I had the child stand up.
- b. MANIPULATIVE  
*Boku ga boo o tate-ta*  
 1s NOM stick ACC stand up-TNS  
 I stood the stick up.

DIRECT causation implies a straightforward means of bringing about the effect event, while INDIRECT causation makes use of a secondary or intermediary means. Both direct and indirect causation can be accomplished by physical or verbal acts. Direct causation is frequently expressed by lexical causatives; there is some evidence that the lexical form represents the perception of the speaker of the caused event. That is, lexical causatives represent only one event in the speaker's mind, rather than two. Indirect causation entails a secondary means of achieving the effect event, usually a human causee who retains a degree of control. Analytical causatives are generally used to express indirect causation.

- (4) a. DIRECT [Blackfoot, U.S. & Canada (Frantz 1971:65f)]  
*nitsiikstakiipiaawa nitana mamiiksi*  
 1s<sup>^</sup>COUNT<sup>^</sup>INTR<sup>^</sup>CAUSE<sup>^</sup>3 1s<sup>^</sup>daughter<sup>^</sup>3 fish<sup>^</sup>PL  
 I made my daughter count the fish.
- b. INDIRECT  
*nitsiikstakiattsawa nitana mamiiksi*  
 1s<sup>^</sup>COUNT<sup>^</sup>INTR<sup>^</sup>CAUSE<sup>^</sup>3 1s<sup>^</sup>daughter<sup>^</sup>3 fish<sup>^</sup>PL  
 I had my daughter count the fish (by some intermediary means).

BALLISTIC and CONTROLLED causation might better be understood as instigating and accompanying causation. The implication is that in ballistic causation the causer instigates a cause event which will bring about the effect event, but the causer is not involved beyond the initial control of the causee. In controlled causation, there is accompaniment or continuous control exerted by the causer from the moment of inception until the final effect event is accomplished.



- (5) a. BALLISTIC [English (McCawley 1976:117, 119)]  
*The explosion made the building shake.*
- b. CONTROLLED  
*John dressed the child in five minutes.*

The correspondence of the three types of causative constructions with the four pairs of semantic factors can be summarized by saying that lexical causatives generally convey the meaning of manipulation, directness, coercion, and—at least in English—ballisticness. Analytical and morphological causatives generally express the meanings of directive, indirect, noncoercive, and permissive causation. These semantic features overlap in almost every example; e.g., if there is direct causation, there is likely to be manipulation and coercion as well.

Lastly, the impact of affectivity on the choice of causative constructions should be given a cursory examination. Affective causative verbs are ones that have a benefactive effect on the causee, such as receiving or benefiting from the action of the verb. Examples in (6) demonstrate affective-noncausative, affective-causative and nonaffective-noncausative constructions:

- (6) a. AFFECTIVE-NONCAUSATIVE [Kashmiri (Syed 1985:57f)]  
*me h'očh aribī tas niš*  
 1s learn Arabic 3s near  
 I learned Arabic from him.
- b. AFFECTIVE-CAUSATIVE  
*təm' hechinōvus bi aribī*  
 3s learn-CAUS 1s Arabic  
 He taught me Arabic.
- c. NONAFFECTIVE-NONCAUSATIVE  
*me tsot kul tas niš*  
 1s cut tree 3s near  
 I cut the tree near him.

### 3. Pragmatic conditions

So far only the briefest of sketches has been given to describe causative typology and factors which govern its usage. Now, we turn to pragmatic conditions which may also regulate a speaker's choice of causative

constructions. Pragmatics is defined in accordance with *International Pragmatics Association working document 1*, which posits that it is a perspective on language, rather than a separate discipline or theory, that examines the objects, levels, stages, degrees, and functions of adaptation that are made by speakers (Verschueren 1987).

First, the INTENT OF THE SPEAKER of a causative construction would seem to be of tremendous significance in determining the strategy used. What the speaker is trying to accomplish through his statement of causality affects the way in which he will express it. Specifically, it seems that causative statements are frequently used for one of two speech events. One event or purpose is the speaker's desire to boast or take the credit for an action; in that situation, the speaker is the causer and, via the expressive means available to him in a specific language, he emphasizes his own role in causing an event (or state). A possible English example is presented in (7), with emphatic stress on the subject pronoun.

(7) *I defeated the incumbent candidate by a landslide vote.*

English relies on both the fronting of the causer and the intonation pattern to place emphasis on the speaker. Note that a lexical causative construction is used to express an event which is noncoercive, more directive than manipulative, and indirect in nature.

The second common event or purpose of causative constructions is evaluation, specifically shifting the blame for something onto someone else. Franklin (personal communication) comments that the morphological causative construction is only used in Kewa when the speaker intends to emphasize the causer's responsibility for bringing about something. This is illustrated by English again, as in (8).

(8) *He made me flunk the test.*

The speaker's intent in constructions similar to (8) is to express, however metaphorically, the coercion, manipulation, and directness of the causer's actions upon the causee. Note that the causee is animate, retaining control and volition. A lexical causative could be substituted in this construction, but only if the causer has the authority to carry out the action, as in *He flunked me on the test*. The implication of the analytical causative in (8), however, is that the causer's action is unjust and demands restitution. The blame or responsibility is clearly placed on the causer. The parallel lexical causative can have two interpretations, one of blame and injustice or another of factivity—implying that the causer's action was probably warranted, although not desired.

The importance of these observations is that the typology of causatives would not explain the occurrences of lexical and analytical causatives in these sentences. The reason appears to be that the choice of causative constructions in these two situations is pragmatically determined, rather than solely syntactically and semantically determined.

A second pragmatic factor to consider is the SOCIAL SETTING in which the causative statement is being made. Within my own Western culture, unless the intention of the speaker is to defame someone, he uses an indirect means to express causation when he is in a public social setting. Figurative speech such as the use of innuendos, euphemisms, passive constructions, and unspecified causers is prevalent, as in (9).

- (9) *They heavily encouraged me to find another job.  
I was fired from my job last week.  
Someone revealed my 'mid-morning cocktails' to my boss.*

In contrast to the public setting, the speaker may use more overt expressions of causality in a private setting, such as in his home or among his closest companions. Contrast the examples of (9) with those of (10).

- (10) *Bob (my boss) sacked me yesterday.  
Bob fired me last week.  
That goodie-two-shoes Sally squealed to my boss that I drink on the job.*

The social setting, whether public or private, plays a role in determining how a speaker will express causation, especially for the purpose of shifting responsibilities. How much of this difference is due to a public versus private setting as compared to shared referential information is difficult to ascertain. Either motivation could prompt the same type of results in English.

A third pragmatic consideration is the SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE SPEAKER TO THE HEARER. Constructions that parallel those used in different social settings are used in formal and informal social relationships. The more indirect expressions of causality are normally used in English if speaking to someone of a higher rank or of a greater social distance. In social relationships that are more intimate, the direct means of causal expression are frequently used; likewise, if the social rank of the hearer is equivalent to or lower than the speaker's, the normative expression is similar to those found in (10).

Another factor to be considered is the CULTURAL OR REFERENTIAL FRAMEWORK OF THE SPEAKER. The existence of cause and effect is a universal quality of man, but its perception, scope, and conditions are culturally

based. What can cause what is defined by a culture's worldview. The animacy of something, which relates to its ability to be a causer and a causee, is specific to the culture of the speaker. Franklin (personal communication) notes that animacy is attributed to ambient entities or forces by the Kewa. To some degree, English allows elements, such as the wind or rain, to function as causer, but it seems it is more figurative than literal in meaning.

What is considered coercion or manipulation is also a culturally defined quality. In English, we imply coercion in statements like (9). Coercion, as well as manipulation, have extended their meanings in English to include situations in which the speaker FEELS as though he is being physically coerced or manipulated. This extended meaning is not necessarily universally held; Shibatani (1975) demonstrates that a cultural expression of manipulation may exclusively refer to an inanimate causee being physically acted upon by an agentive causer, as illustrated in (3).

These pragmatic factors may help to explain some language data that otherwise seem inconsistent with the typology. For example, the use of two different instigative causatives in Blackfoot (4) could possibly be attributed to social setting or relationship factors, as much as to direct or indirect causation.

Both Hawaiian and Ponapean utilize stative verbs extensively; when the causative affix is added, the verbs become inchoative. However, they are understood to be causative. Cultural perception of causality is probably being expressed in that type of construction.

(11) Ponape, Micronesia (Rehg 1981:216)

Adjective	<i>ketiket</i>	'be numb'	<i>mer</i>	'be rusty'
Intransitive	<i>kaketiket</i>	'become numb'	<i>kamer</i>	'become rusty'
		'cause numbness?'		'cause to rust?'
Transitive	<i>kaketiketih</i>	'cause numbness?'	<i>kamere</i>	'cause to rust?'

Angas is a Chadic language that is similar to Hausa, both languages using an analytical causative. Angas, however, always employs the subjunctive mood (Burquest personal communication). It would seem that this expresses something about the culture's concept of causality, perhaps its uncertainty.

Finally, in his description of Yidj, Dixon's decision to label the *-al* controlling construction as CONTROLLING probably reflects the speaker's purpose or something about the culture's perception of causality and animacy. Dixon states:

The important point here is that the only way a man can 'control' a woman's coming (from point A to point B) is to come with her: the semantic structuring . . . is, in essence 'the man controls (the woman comes)'. That is, a *-ŋa-l* form in Yidjɪn cannot mean that someone made someone do something by telling them to do it. The sense of *-ŋa-l* involves control of a physical nature. (Dixon 1977:316)

Specifically in Yidjɪn, the obligatory controlling of a woman's travels by another human agent to ensure her arrival at a destination is a very different cultural view than that of the West, at least among women.

In conclusion, I suggest that the above pragmatic parameters be considered within the framework of causative typology in order to make that typology truly integrated. It goes without saying that further cross-linguistic research is needed to validate these suggestions. Certainly other factors remain to be unearthed.

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