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致使动词与致使结构的 句法-语义接口研究

Causative Verbs and Causative Constructions
at the Syntax-Semantics Interface

阙哲华 著



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内 容 提 要

本书以致使动词和致使结构的语义和句法为研究对象,综合了词汇关系结构理论、分布形态学理论、Voice 假说和方位主义观,提出 Kratzer-Marantz 式动词结构模型。基于该模型,本书较好地解决了致使-起始交替动词的彼此生成之争,并对各类致使动词和复杂致使结构的句法生成做出一致的解释。本书还论述了现代汉语动结式与古代汉语 V-O-V 结构的渊源关系及其与英语中的复杂致使结构平行对应,从而为两种语言貌似不同的结构做出统一的解释。本书将为研究论元结构和词汇的句法生成提供有益的启示。

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Preface

P r e f a c e

This book is a study of the semantics and syntax of causative verbs and causative constructions, or causatives for short, focusing on how the semantics of causatives and related arguments are represented in and construed from syntactic configurations. It assumes a syntax-semantics interface approach which suggests a direct correlation between event structure and the syntax (e. g. , Hale and Keyser 1993, 1998; Kratzer 1996; Marantz 1997; Cuervo 2003; Lin 2004). Three types of heads are assumed to be responsible for licensing events and arguments. They are little *v* (event introducer), Voice (external argument introducer) and root (complement/internal argument introducer).

Throughout this book is the view of syntactic decomposition of events, recently revived in the theory of Lexical Relational Structure (Hale and Keyser 1993, et seq.; Mateu 2002), Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993, 1994; Marantz 1997), Voice Hypothesis (Kratzer 1994, 1996), and the Localist Theory (Jackendoff 1972, 1983, 1990). Synthesis of these theories in this book gives birth to a more fine-grained model of the Kratzer-Marantzian verbal structure: (i) the event structure of verbal meaning is reflected in the syntax; (ii) the argument structure alternation is determined structurally by the type of eventive head *v* with which the verb root merges; (iii) verbs (causatives or non-causatives) are formed not in the Lexicon, but in the syntax; (iv) CAUSE is not a semantic primitive, but a combination of two eventive heads: $v_{DO} + v_{BE}$ implicating eventive

causatives; $v_{BE} + v_{BE}$, stative/property causatives.

Based on this model, causative-inchoative alternation verbs, denominal verbs, de-adjectival verbs are revisited in terms of their derivations, with a unified account of various causatives such as transitive denominal verbs (location verbs, locatum verbs, goal verbs), de-adjectival verbs, ObjExp psych verbs, as well as of various complex causatives (CCs) such as the causative-resultative construction, the caused-motion construction and the “time” away construction. This book argues that noun/adjective roots for the denominals/de-adjectivals, psych-state elements in ObjExp psych verbs, and the resultatives or secondary predicates in various types of CCs are measuring-out elements in Tenny’s (1994) sense. They compete with each other for the same syntactic position. This hypothesis predicts that (i) resultative secondary predicates do not co-occur with denominal verbs or de-adjectival verbs; (ii) two distinct resultative phrases do not co-occur; (iii) the impossibility of co-occurrence of resultatives with Goal arguments. A comparative study is also made of Ancient Chinese V-O-V construction (roughly a counterpart of Modern Chinese V-V-O construction) with Modern English V-O-Particle/AP/PP construction.

前言

本书探讨致使动词与致使结构的语义和句法,着重研究相关论元在句法结构中的投射和释义。基于事件结构与句法结构直接对应的句法-语义接口理论(Hale 和 Keyser 1993, 1998; Kratzer 1996; Marantz 1997; Cuervo 2003; Lin 2004),本书认为有三类中心语负责引入事件和论元。小 *v* 负责引入事件, Voice 负责引入外论元,词根负责引入内论元或补足语。

从句法的角度对事件(谓词)进行分解是纵贯全书的一个中心思想。该思想也见诸于以 Hale 和 Keyser (1993) 和 Mateu (2002) 为代表的词汇关系结构理论、以 Halle 和 Marantz (1994) 和 Marantz (1997) 为代表的分布形态学理论、以 Kratzer (1994, 1996) 为代表的 Voice 假说和以 Jackendoff (1972, 1983, 1990) 为代表的方位主义观。本书在综合这 4 家理论的基础上提出一个更为精细的 Kratzer-Marantz 式动词结构模型。主要观点有:①动词所表示的事件结构与句法结构同构;②论元结构变化取决于事件中心语小 *v* 的类型;③动词在句法而非词库中通过合并而生成;④“致使”(CAUSE)并非“原子”语义成分而是事件的复合: $v_{DO} + v_{BE}$ 复合表示事件致使, $v_{BE} + v_{BE}$ 复合表示状态/属性致使。

基于该模型,本书对致使-起始交替动词的彼此生成之争做出了比较满意的解释,并对各类致使动词(如及物的形源动词和及物的方位动词、动体动词和目标动词等名源动词)和复杂致使结构(如致使-结果句式、致使-位移句式、“时间”消耗句式)的句法生成做出一致的解释。本书认为名源动词和形源动词赖以派生的名词性词根和形容词性词根、复杂致使结构中的结果成分、ObjExp 心理致使动词中表示心理状态的成分都是 Tenny (1994) 意义上的“量定”成分,赋予该句子所示的事件是一个终结事件。

它们均在同一位置上生成,从而可以解释:①结果谓词与名源动词或形源动词不能同现;②两个不同的结果成分不能同现;③结果成分不能与目标成分同现。此外,本书还论述了现代汉语 V-V-O 结构通常可在古代汉语中找到意义对应的 V-O-V 结构,从而与现代英语中的“V-O-小品词/形容词/介词”结构,即复杂致使结构平行。这种平行性使我们对两种语言中貌似多样的结构做出统一的解释成为可能。

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Causative verbs and causative constructions, or causatives for short, are most commonly used to express the semantic notion of causation, i. e. , causative situations. A causative situation can be constituted by two events if the following two conditions are satisfied:

- The relation between the two events is such that the speaker believes that the occurrence of one event, the “caused event”, has been realized at t_2 , which is after t_1 , the time of the “causing event”.

- The relation between the causing and the caused event is such that the occurrence of the caused event is wholly dependent on the occurrence of the causing event; the dependency of the two events here must be to the extent that it allows the speaker to entertain a counterfactual inference that the caused event would not have taken place at that particular time if the causing event had not taken place, provided that all else had remained the same.

(Shibatani 1976: 1-2)

Briefly, CAUSE or causation is a relation between two events rather than between an individual and an event (see also Parsons 1990). Under this view, the meaning of the causative sentence (1a) below is roughly paraphrased as (1b):

- (1) a. John melted the ice.
b. John was an Agent of some event that caused a melting of the ice.

Here the causative sentence has two relations that its corresponding non-causative sentence, *the ice melted*, does not have: (i) a causation relation relating the causing event to the caused event, and (ii) a thematic

relation between the causing event and the individual, the Agent of the causing event, expressed as the external argument (Parsons 1990).

1.2 Objectives of study

To have a general picture of the objectives and frameworks of this book, let us “microfilm” them in the causative-inchoative alternations exemplified by (2). In fact, any theory about the basic elements of argument structure must take a stand on how the semantic and syntactic composition of causative predicates, such as the one in (1a), repeated in (2a), relates to that of their non-causative counterparts, (2b). Examples are from Pykkänen (2000).

- (2) a. John melted the ice. (= (1a))
b. The ice melted.

First, for the semantic relationship between these two sentences, one can say that (2a) necessarily entails a state in which the ice is melted, (2b). Many linguists (e.g., McCawley 1968; Lakoff 1970) conclude, concerning the entailment of the transitive verb *melt*, that the meaning of *melt_{tr}* can be decomposed into “cause to be melted”; the transitive sentence involves a causing event (John melting the ice) and a resulting event (the ice being melted). A question that naturally arises is whether such decomposition of verb meanings (e.g., *melt* into “cause to be melted”) is only a fact about concept formation, prevalent in generative semantics in the 1960’s, or whether it also tells us something about the linguistic basis for the entailments associated with verbs like *melt*, *kill* and *open*. One of the goals of this book is to reveal empirical evidence from English and Chinese in favor of the latter view. Certain facts in these languages even force us to take the predicate decomposition view that even monomorphemic verbs (and other elements like resultative adjectives) can be decomposed into smaller syntactic pieces. Hence, predicate decomposition theory, or rather, the spirit of this theory, is one of the frameworks that is adopted in this book (see Chapter 2).

Second, the causative-inchoative alternation as in (2) gives rise to a question, that is, which one is the base form and which one is the derived form? Or whether causative verbs (e.g., *melt_{tr}*, *open_{tr}*) are derived from inchoative verbs (e.g., *melt_{intr}*, *open_{intr}*) or vice versa. This is a very intriguing question and many linguists have got involved in the debate: the causativization of inchoatives ($V_{\text{cause}} = V_{\text{inch}} + \text{CAUSE}$) or the decausativization of causatives ($V_{\text{inch}} = V_{\text{cause}} + \text{INCH}$). Both camps postulate one of the following alternative views; either an inchoative verb is taken as

the basic form or a causative verb is taken as the basic form, while the other alternate is derived from it. In McGinnis' (2004) words, both can be called "dependent theory", in the sense that, whatever it is, one form is dependent on the other form. In this book, it is argued that the dependent theory is crosslinguistically inadequate in accounting for the causative-inchoative alternation on the basis of two facts: a paradigmatic relation between a causative morpheme and an inchoative morpheme that compete for the same syntactic position, and ambiguity of the "again" modification. These facts, in turn, provide evidence for the claim that the causative-inchoative alternation results from combining the same $\sqrt{\text{Root}}$ and different flavors of the eventive v head: $v_{\text{CAUSE}} + \sqrt{\text{Root}}$ for causatives and $v_{\text{INCH}} + \sqrt{\text{Root}}$ for inchoatives. Both v_{CAUSE} and v_{INCH} denote a resultant state indicated by $\sqrt{\text{Root}}$. That is, whether it is caused by some external argument (i.e., causatives) or occurs spontaneously (i.e., inchoatives) a resultant state turns out in both cases. The analysis of independent derivations of the causative-inchoative alternation verbs in this book is conducted in the framework of Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1994; Marantz 1997; Harley and Noyer 1999), which decomposes words into a category-neutral $\sqrt{\text{Root}}$ and a category-defining functional head (v , n , a) and allows the same root to be inserted in more than one syntactic environment (see Chapter 2).

Third, how is the Causer argument linked to the Subject position, or technically and more generally, how an external argument is introduced into the sentence? Is it regulated by thematic hierarchy and/or perhaps aspectual hierarchy, as some researchers assume, or introduced by the main (lexical) verb in the clause, i.e., Subjects originate internally within VP, as is posited by VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis (Speas 1986)? Recall the two sentences in (2). Unaccusative Hypothesis (Perlmutter 1978; Burzio 1986) is generally accepted to account for the derivation of the Subject *the ice* in (2b). According to this hypothesis, unaccusatives only subcategorize for one internal argument, to which they cannot assign either the external θ -role or accusative case, however. Therefore, in the line of GB theory, their D-structure Object undergoes NP movement to the Subject position at S-structure, where it receives case. The moved NP, as *the ice* in (3b), leaves a trace in the Object position, co-indexed with the surface Subject:

- (3) melt_{intr}. <1>
 a. *e* melted [the ice]. (D-structure)
 b. [The ice_i] melted *t_i*. (S-structure)

It follows that *the ice* in (2b) is not a (true) external argument base-generated at the Subject position, but a derived external argument. This is in sharp contrast with (2a), in which *John* is a true external argument and *the ice* is an internal argument. One question then naturally arises, how is the external argument introduced into the sentence? Based on Marantz's (1984) observation of the Subject-Object asymmetry and his proposal that the Object is licensed by the verb (V) and the Subject is licensed by the predicate, i. e., verb phrase (VP), Kratzer (1994, 1996) advances the Voice Hypothesis, which states that a Voice head with $[+Tr]/[+Active]$ feature is responsible for introducing external argument, while a Voice head with $[-Tr]/[-Active]$ feature does not introduce external argument (see Chapter 2). Voice Hypothesis has cross- and intra-linguistically great explanatory power and has become a standard assumption in Chomskian Generative Grammar. The discussion of causatives in this book takes the Voice Hypothesis as a fundamental theoretical framework.

Fourth, how are syntactically relevant semantic properties, as induced above, represented in the structural configurations? And is there any generalization, drawn from the above-mentioned causative-inchoative alternation, applicable to other causative verbs (e. g., *shelve*, *saddle*, *powder*) and causative constructions (e. g., the caused-motion construction, *John sneezed the napkin off the table*, the "time" away construction, *John drank the night away*)? To address these questions, insights are drawn on from the theory of Lexical Relation Structure (LRS), a configurational approach to theta-theory advanced by Hale and Keyser (1991, 1993) and developed by Hale and Keyser (1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002), Chomsky (1995, 1998), Mateu (2001, 2002), Harley (1995, 1998), Folli (2001), Lin (2004), among many others. Chomsky (1995: 312, 315) adopts Hale and Keyser's "configurational approach to theta-theory" (see Chapter 2). The only difference is that in Chomsky (1998) a light verb v is introduced to replace the higher V, which Hale and Keyser (1991, 1993) postulate for the structure of a causative/agentive predicate. Built on this theory, this book makes a more fine-grained distinction of v : v_{DO} , v_{GO} ($= v_{INCH}$, v_{BECOME}), v_{BE} . These event introducers serve to build syntactic pieces into various event structures: v_{DO} , v_{GO} and v_{BE} , for simple activities, inchoatives (changes) and states, respectively; while $v_{DO} + v_{BE}$ and $v_{DO} + v_{BE}$ combinations for complex events, causatives (see Chapter 2).

1.3 Scope of Study

Various linguistic devices are used to convey causative semantics.

Among them causative verbs (like *melt* in (1a)) and causative constructions are most frequently used. Typologically, causative verbs can be divided into lexical causative verbs (e.g., *kill*, *melt*, *clear*) and morphological causative verbs (e.g., *standardize*, *beautify*, *widen*) (Comrie 1976; Shibatani 1976). Briefly, the former are zero-derived causative verbs (hereafter, zero-causatives),^① while the latter are produced by affixation of, say, English *-ize/-ify/-en*, to the base noun or adjective from which they are derived. On closer inspection, lexical causative verbs can be further divided into at least causative denominal verbs, e.g., location verbs (e.g., *shelve*, *bottle*), locatum verbs (e.g., *saddle*, *flour*), and goal verbs (e.g., *powder*, *fool*), which are derived from a base noun, de-adjectival verbs (e.g., *open*, *empty*) which are derived from a base adjective, and Experiencer-as-Object psych verbs (hereafter ObjExp psych verbs) like *frighten*, *please*, etc. Examples are as follows:

- (4) a. John shelved the book.
 b. John saddled the horse.
 c. John opened the door.
 d. The dog frightened the child.

All these verbs in their transitive use are argued to be causative in nature, contributing causative meaning to the sentence in which they occur (Hale and Keyser 1993; Pesetsky 1995).

Causative constructions mainly include the analytic (syntactic) causative construction, the caused-motion construction, the “time” away construction, and the causative-resultative construction. In all of these constructions, the lexical verbs do not necessarily have inherent causative meaning. It is the construction that they enter into that “coerces”, to borrow Goldberg’ (1995) terminology, them to take on the causative meaning. For example, the constructions *John sneezed the napkin off the table* and *John drank the night away* definitely express a caused-motion meaning and a causing time consumed meaning, respectively; nevertheless, the lexical verbs *sneeze* and *drink* are in no way causative verbs. In fact, even in analytic (syntactic) causative construction, like *John made Mary smile*, the lexical verb (*smile* in this case) need not be causative verbs.

Traditionally, sentences with causative verbs as the matrix verb are

① This type of word formation is also called conversion, zero derivation or functional shift in the literature (Clark and Clark 1979; Quirk et al 1985).

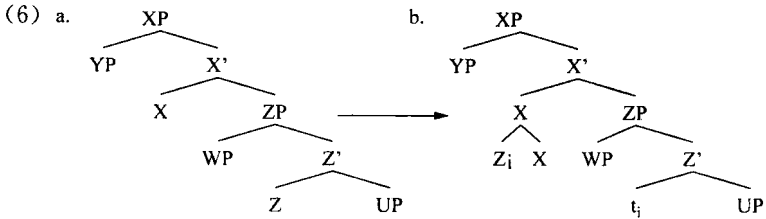
syntactically mono-clause structures, while causative constructions have been argued to possess a bi-clausal structure. Under this view, one might as well refer to lexical and morphological causative verbs as simplex causatives, and causative constructions like the caused-motion/-resultative and the “time” away constructions as complex or compound causatives. The analytic (syntactic) causative construction is a special case of complex/compound causatives in that it is bi-clausal as other causative constructions are, on the one hand, and its causative meaning is lexically specified (by a causative auxiliary *make/let/have*) but not compositionally derived from relevant syntactic constituents as other causative constructions are, on the other hand. Nevertheless, it consists of two lexical items, an independent higher predicate *make/let/have* and an embedded base predicate, a defining distinction between one-word simplex causatives and two-word complex/compound causatives. The constructions mentioned above share the common property that they contain two predicates which encode a causal relation. Regarding this property, two correlated questions arise:

- (5) a. What structures are the constructions assigned? Are they lexically formed or syntactically driven?
- b. How is a causal construction defined as a unit (i. e. , complex/compound predicate) with regard to its syntactic and semantic properties?

It has been controversial whether *Lexicon*, a grammatical component responsible for word formation (Chomsky 1970), exists as an independent module. Thus, there has been ongoing theoretical debate between two opposing approaches, lexical approach and syntactic approach. In the lexical approach, the word formation component, *Lexicon*, exists as an autonomous module in grammar, and it is assumed to be ordered prior to syntax. Thus morphology does not interact with syntax, or does in very limited ways (e. g. , Li 2005; Lieber 1981; Williams 1981). However, in the syntactic approach, the word formation is characterized as part of syntactic operation, and it is assumed to be regulated by syntactic principles. Thus, morphology is not thought of as an independent module (e. g. , Baker 1988; Hale and Keyser 1993, 1998, 1999, 2002), or at least exists after syntax in late-insertion models such as Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993; Marantz 1997; see Chapter 2).

Baker (1988) introduces the notion of “incorporation”, later updated as “conflation” in Hale and Keyser (1993, see Chapter 2), to provide a unified account for various grammatical function (GF) changing processes such as causatives, passives and applicatives (see Pylkkänen 2002 for a

detailed study of applicatives). Incorporation is a syntactic operation by which semantically independent morphemes form a morphological unit that brings out a GF-changing. The word formation via incorporation can be roughly represented as in (6), in which a head is adjoined to another head by syntactic head movement.



In (6a), Z and X represent semantically independent morphemes, and they occupy the head position of each phrase. After the head movement adjoining Z to X takes place, Z is incorporated into X and they behave as a morphological unit in syntax, as in (6b). Incorporation, or rather, conflation, is regulated by Head Movement Constraint (Travis 1984; Baker 1988).

Recently, Li (2005) proposes an alternative approach for formation of morphologically complex words. He takes a strong lexicalist stand and claims that word formation takes place in the lexicon. Under his Modified Linear Correspondence Axiom (see Li 2005), it is predicted that a morphologically complex word is never formed with head movement in syntax; morphological complex forms are only subject to either lexical compounding or phonological compounding.

It is interesting to find, however, that even though Li strongly argues for word formation in the lexicon, he suggests that some relations between morphological components in a word can be reflected in syntax. This concession of Li's can be seen from his Morphology-Syntax Mapping Hypothesis, which is supposed to regulate the syntactic representation of a word, as in (7).

(7) The Morphology-Syntax Mapping Hypothesis

When a word consists of morphological components X and Y, the relation R between X and Y is reflected in syntax iff

- (i) R is thematic, and
- (ii) The representation of R in *syntax* obeys all syntactic principles.

(Li 1995: 4; *italic mine*)

That is, when the two conditions, (i) and (ii), are satisfied, the compound can be derived (represented) in syntax. It implies that the notion of “lexical word” is not necessarily incompatible with its phrasal syntactic properties.

The causative verbs and causative constructions that will receive an in-depth study in this book are diagramed on the terminal nodes of the tree in Figure 1. For V-V construction, only one specific type is covered, in which two predicates/verbs are connected to express a causal relation, as in the Chinese sentence *meimei ku-shi-le shoupa* ‘(lit.) Little sister cried, as a result the handkerchief was wet.’

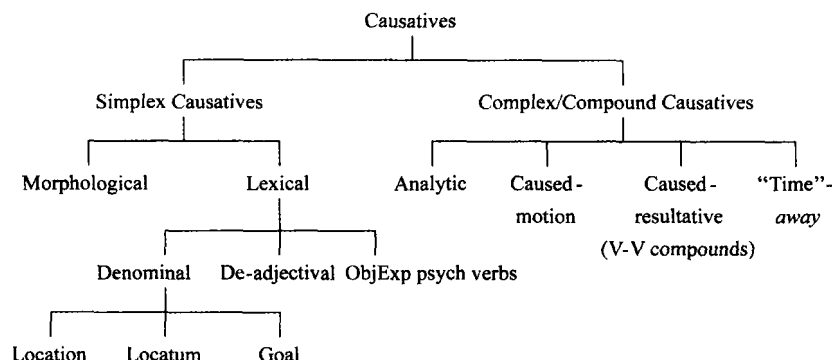


Figure 1 Causative types

Contra the Lexicalist approach, this book argues for a syntactic approach to verbal argument structure, an approach that not only attempts to explain how arguments (e.g., the non-core argument^①, Causer, and core argument, Causee) in causative constructions are syntactically licensed, but also the process by which causative meanings are compositionally constructed from functional heads such as v_{DO} , v_{GO} and v_{BE} , as will be elaborated in Chapter 2. The goal of this book is to represent the verbal argument structure in general in terms of syntactically-encoded primitives. With Hale and Keyser (1993, 1998, 1999, 2002), Marantz (1997),

① According to Marantz (1984), Kratzer (1996) and others, external arguments like Causer are non-core arguments. For example, while one says *John melted the ice*, one can also say *the ice melted* without mentioning the Causer, *John*. This fact indicates that the verb *melt* minimally only needs to combine with an argument describing an entity undergoing the melting (Pylkkänen 2002), rendering the Causer argument additional, optional, or, non-core. See Marantz (1984) for a detailed study of the asymmetries between Subject (external argument) and Object (internal argument).