

Covert Generic Causatives as Dispositional Ascriptions

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What are covert generic causatives?

Covert generic causatives

- The construction consists of:

- a sole causer subject which is strictly **non-agentive** (*agentive subject)
- a verb which is strictly **non-causative** (*causative verb)

- (1) **chong**-(n)un **cwuk**-e.
gun-TOP die-DECL
'Guns kill e.g., people'

- They describe a dispositional causative property of the subject that brings about a result state described by the verb.

Proposal in a nutshell

- The verb undergoes **covert causativization** (i.e., \emptyset -causativization)
 - (i) Locally unexpected: Korean already has an overt causativizing strategy
 - (ii) Typologically unexpected: covert causativization shows a restriction on one semantic domain, namely non-agentive causers.

Morphological causatives in Korean

- They are derived via overt causativization using *-i/hi/li/ki/wu/kwu/chwu*.
- Semantic properties
 1. They require their subject to be strictly **agentive**.
 2. They give rise either to **direct** or **sociative** causation.

Overt causativization

- I adopt previous analyses on causativization (Jo 2021).

(2) $\llbracket \text{Caus} \rrbracket = \lambda P \lambda e \exists v [P(v) \ \& \ \text{cause}'(e, v)]$ (where v indicates e 'event' or s 'state')

- I argue that when causativized:
 - Patient-subject verbs (i.e., stative, inchoative) give rise to **direct** causation.
 - Agent-subject verbs (i.e., activity, causative) give rise to **sociative** causation.
- ⇒ Explained by the property *uniqueness of participants* (Krifka 1998):
a participant cannot be added when a participant of the same thematic role already exists in the meaning.

Semantics of covert generic causatives

■ Semantic properties (covert generic causatives)

1. They only take **non-agentive** causer subjects.
2. They always give rise to **direct** causation.

■ General causativization paradigm in Korean

	overt causativization (adds agentive causer)	covert causativization (adds non-agentive causer)
patient-subject verbs	direct causation	direct causation
agent-subject verbs	sociative causation	∅

1. Non-agentive causers: a paradigmatic alternative causative form to overt/morphological causatives.
2. Direct causation: The non-agentivity of an added causer directly contradicts with the property of sociative causers who are agentive in nature.
⇒ This further explains why the verbs of this construction is never an agent-subject verb.

Typology of middles & dispositional ascription analysis

As a type of dispositional middles

- Covert generic causatives show key properties of dispositional middles, despite the difference in what their dispositional description is about (i.e., patient vs. causer).
 - (i) Are generic
 - (ii) Are intransitive
 - (iii) Involve causative semantics
 - (iv) Involve an unexpressed argument in their meaning

Dispositional ascription analysis (Lekakou 2004)

- Dispositional ascriptions are restricted to be subject-oriented.
 - ⇒ This follows the accessibility relation proposed by (Brennan 1993)
- This property explains why covert generic causatives are always generic.
- Dispositional ascription allows non-agentive causers to appear in a subject position.

Theoretical implications

- Covert generic causatives are a type of causative, and also a type of middles formed through the process of dispositional ascription.
- Locally: The construction not only fits into a causativization paradigm in Korean, but also adds a non-agentive puzzle piece into the paradigm.
- Typologically: The construction extends a typological understanding of both causatives and middles, by representing two new constructions of typological interest:
 - (i) Causatives with non-agentive causers
 - (ii) Middles with causer subjects

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