Causative generics in Korean:
Non-agentivity and new typology of causativization

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1. Overview

- Morphological causativization in Korean (using *-i/hi/li/ki/wu/kwu/chwu*) applies across four semantic verb classes: statives, non-causative change-of-state verbs, activities, causatives.
- I mainly argue for a new typology of causativization in Korean:
(i) I account for different behaviors of causativization with respect to different semantics of input verbs.
(ii) I further extend the typology of causers in the support of previously unattested type of causative, covert generic causatives.

2. Previous approach on causativization

- Directness of causation (Bittner 1999; Fodor 1970)
1. Lexical cauusatives (e.g., *kill*): give rise to **direct causation**, which does not include an intermediate cause

2. Periphrastic causatives (e.g., *cause to die*): compatible with **indirect causation**, which is compatible with an intermediate cause

- Causatives in Korean
1. Lexical causatives (e.g., *pwusu-* 'break'): give rise to direct causation

2. Periphrastic causatives (e.g., *cwuk-key ha-* 'cause to die'): compatible with indirect causation

3. Morphological causatives (e.g., *cwuk-i* 'kill'): direct/**sociative** causation

(1) *sensayngnim-i   haksayngtul-ul yek-kkaci kel-**ly**-ess-e.*
teacher.HON-NOM students-ACC station-to walk-CAUS-PST-IND
'The teacher walked the students/directed the students to walk to the station.'

- Sociative causation falls in between direct and indirect causation (Jo 2021; Shibatani & Chung 2002)
-- vs. direct causation: the causer plays less direct role in the event; (1) is compatible with a reading in which the teacher supervised the students walking to the station but did not necessarily walk with them.

-- vs. indirect causation: the causer plays more direct role and frequently is the one that has initiated the action; (1) is not compatible with a reading in which the teacher stayed at school (✓ periphrastic causatives).

- Previous approach on causativization: analyzed as a semantic process that uniformly adds a causer to the meaning

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

Limitation: morphological causatives are assumed to be compatible either with **direct** or **sociative causation**.

(3)

Direct	Sociative	Indirect
-i/hi/li/ki/wu/kwu/chwu		*-key ha-*

3. Revisiting causativization and agentivity constraint

- <u>Observation 1</u>: Different implications of morphological causatives

(3) Direct causation
a. *emma-ka   kil-ul   nelp-**hy**-ess-e.*
mother-NOM road-ACC wide-CAUS-PST-DECL
'Mother widened the road.'
... ✓The road was widened by the mother.
(stative)

b. *emma-ka   elum-ul el-**ly**-ess-e.*
mother-NOM ice-ACC be.frozen-CAUS-PST-DECL
'Mother froze the ice.'
... ✓The ice was frozen by the mother.
(non-causative change-of-state verb)

(4) Sociative causation
a. *emma-ka   ai-lul   wus-**ky**-ess-e.*
mother-NOM child-ACC laugh-CAUS-PST-DECL
'Mother made the child laugh.'
... ✓The child/*The mother laughed.
(activity verb)

b. *emma-ka   ai-lul/eykey   sakwa-lul kkakk-**y**-ess-e.*
mother-NOM child-ACC/DAT apple-ACC peel-CAUS-PST-DECL
'Mother made the child peel the apple.'
... ✓The child/*The mother peeled the apple.
(causative)

- <u>Observation 2</u>: Agentivity of the causers
-- [English] Underspecified (agentive/non-agentive) vs. agentive causers

(4) a. John/The hammer/The wind/John's stupidity broke the vase.
    b. John/*The hammer/*The wind/*John's stupidity murdered Mary.

-- [Korean] Lexical/morphological causatives strictly require their causer subjects to be **agentive**.

(5) *sala-ka/*mangchi-ka/*palam-i/*sala-uy   mengchengham-i kil-ul*
Sarah-NOM/hammer-NOM/wind-NOM/Sarah-GEN stupidity-NOM   road-ACC
*nelp-**hy**-ess-ta.*
wide-CAUS-PST-DECL
Intended: 'Sarah/The hammer/The wind/Sarah's stupidity widened the road.'

- I argue that (Krifka 1998):
(i)   By default, causativization adds a causer, giving rise to direct causation: patient-subject verbs, e.g., (3)
(ii) Sociative causation arises due to the property *uniqueness of participants*: agent-subject verbs, e.g., (4)
-- if an input verb already has an agent in its meaning, such property triggers to find an alternative way for causativization to add a causer which is to add a participant as a sociative causer.

4. Introducing covert generic causatives

- Covert generic causatives appear with three types of non-causative change-of-state verbs: underived verbs (e.g., *tachi-* 'become hurt'), derived verbs with a stative root (e.g., *ppalka-yci-* 'become red') and derived verbs with a causative root (e.g., *yel-li-* 'become open')

- Despite that the verb form is non-causative, the construction:
(i)   consists of a sole **causer** subject, which is strictly **non-agentive**
(ii) gives rise to **direct causation** (incompatible with contexts of indirect causation)
-- a causative reading in which a dispositional property of the causer brings about a result state described by the verb.

(6) a. *khal-un   **tachy**-e.*
knife-TOP become.hurt-DECL
'Knives hurt e.g., people.'

b. #*sala-nun   **tachy**-e.*
Sarah-TOP become.hurt-DECL
'Sarah hurt e.g., people.'

-- with agentive subjects, the sentence only gives rise to a canonical non-causative reading in which the subject is a patient of the non-causative verb.

5. Subjecthood of the causer

- Contra previous research that analyzes the relation between the causer and the verb as purely pragmatic (Ahn, Kim & Lee 1992), I argue for the subjecthood of the causer based on three converging lines of evidence.

- The data shows that covert generic causatives exhibit subject-like properties oriented toward an expressed causer, rather than a hypothetical patient semantically tied to a non-causative verb.

1. <u>The verb does not show referent honorific agreement toward the patient.</u>

(7) ** khal-un   tachi-**sy**-e.*
knife-TOP get.hurt-HON.REF-DECL
Intended: 'Knives get people (HON) hurt.'

c.f. ** elusin-tul-un   tachi(-**sy**)-e.*
elder.HON-PL-TOP get.hurt-HON.REF-DECL
Intended: 'Elders (HON) get people hurt.'

2. <u>Only adverbs that are oriented toward the causer can appear sentence-initially, which conforms with subject properties.</u> (e.g., *Clumsily, John spilled the beans.*)

(8) a. *hwahakcekulo ppang-un   salccy-e.*
chemically   bread-TOP become.fat-DECL
'Chemically, bread makes, e.g., people, to become fat.'

b. ** kepwukhakey   ppang-un   salccy-e.*
uncomfortably bread-TOP become.fat-DECL
Intended: 'Uncomfortably, bread makes, e.g., people, to become fat.'

3. <u>Subject-control phrases pattern only with the causer and not with the patient.</u>

(9) a. *ppang$_i$-un [PRO$_i$ sinsenha-l   ttay] salccy-e.*
bread-TOP   fresh-COMP when become.fat-DECL
'Bread$_i$ fattens when PRO$_i$ fresh.'

c.f. reflexive pronoun *caki* 'self'
rationale clause *wihay* 'in order to'

b. ** swul$_i$-un [PRO$_j$ manhi masi-l   ttay] ppalka-ycy-e.*
alcohol-TOP   much drink-COM when red-become-DECL
Intended: 'Alcohol$_i$ reddens (e.g., people$_j$) when PRO$_j$ drinking a lot.'

6. A rescue strategy for non-agentive causers

- I propose that covert generic causatives are a rescue strategy for lexical/morphological causatives to take non-agentive causer subjects to avoid the agentivity constraint that causatives impose on their subjects.

(10) a. Agentive (direct) causer ⇒ **non-agentive** (direct) causer   [rescue]
b. Agentive sociative causer ⇒ ****non-agentive** sociative causer [conceptually impossible]

- This explains why covert generic causatives only give rise to direct causation.
-- Indirect causation: non-agentive causers can already appear as the subject of a periphrastic causative; thus, a rescue strategy is not activated.
-- Sociative causation: the nature of non-agentivity of the causer conflicts with it to be sociative which naturally requires animacy.

7. Theoretical implications

- This paper proposes a new typology of causativization in Korean.
- Covert generic causatives provide richer understanding of the causer paradigm in Korean: non-agentive causers (e.g., subject of covert generic causatives) as well as agentive causers (e.g., subject of lexical/morphological causatives) and underspecified causers (e.g., subject of periphrastic causatives).

Selected References

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