

Semantic Characteristics of Events in MAKE Causative Constructions

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Abstract:

Semantic features are concerned with the meaning of a sentence. Without proper semantics and grammatically correct arrangement of words, the meaning of a sentence will be completely different. Linguists divide semantics into many different categories, including lexical semantics and semantic relationships between sentence elements. In this article, semantic features with analysis of lexical meanings of components in two events cause and effect in the causative constructions will be studied.

Research Methods

There are two phases of research sample:

- 1) We used Sketch Engine software - a word-tagging software to collect data from the British National Corpus repository and obtained 24464 examples of MAKE causative constructions with 5 types: [N1 make N1 Vinf], [N1 make N2 Adj], [N1 make N2 Vpp], [N2 be made to V] and [N1 make N2 Noun].
- 2) In order to take samples for analysis the syntactic features of the components in the MAKE causative

constructions, we use the number of examples for according to the formula.
$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \times e^2}$$
 (Yamane Taro (1967)).
 The result samples are as followed:

Forms	N1 make N2 Vinf	N1 make N2 Adj	N1 make N2 Vpp	N2 be made to-V	N1 make N2 Noun	Total
Total examples	7343	13011	658	3257	195	24464
Samples	380	389	249	356	131	1505

Key Word: Semantics, causative constructions, MAKE

Date of Submission: 02-04-2023

Date of Acceptance: 14-04-2023

I. Introduction

The study of causative constructions in many languages around the world, so far, is not new. There have been many large and small research works in Vietnam and abroad by many well-known authors on categories in causative constructions such as direct causation, indirect causation, causative predicate, etc. The authors have studied the problem in many different approaches. Typically in the direction of lexical syntax such as Givón (1984), Goddard (1997), Holmes (1999), Kemer and Verhagen (1994), Hale and Keyser (1991), Goldberg (1995) or lexical semantics such as Shibatani (1973); typology such as Song (1996), Nedjalkov (1973). In the syntactical direction, the meaning of causation is represented by a sequence of verb constructions consisting of at least two predicates, one representing the cause/causing events and the other indicating the result of the cause. These are two partial events in a causative construction expressing:

- (1) the impact on the object expressed by the noun complement and then
- (2) makes this object have a new property or perform a certain operation.

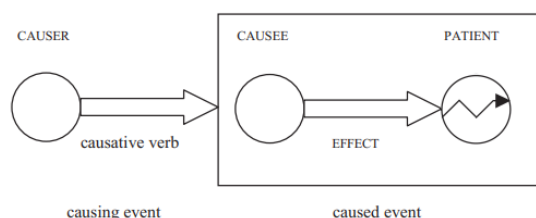
Two events (1) and (2) occur in the order of time and are bound to each other. This chronological sequence begins with the effect event and follows with the resulting event. Sometimes these chronological sequences are so intertwined that it is difficult to clearly determine the timing of the effecting event and the resulting event. However, it cannot be denied that the resulting event always occurs after the impact event. The article will in turn analyze the semantic characteristics of events in causative constructions with MAKE.

II. Results

There are two partial events in MAKE causative constructions which are (1) the cause/effect event in which the causer performs or creates a certain activity on the affected object/ causee and (2) the consequential affect in which the causee is subject to perform an action, or is subject to a change of state or condition. These two events are always present in a causative structure.

The causer which is the beginning of the chain of action, the original source of energy transmits its energy further. This transfer of energy is done by the causative verb MAKE and together with the causee, it forms the causal event. By transferring its energy to a causee, the causer produces another event, the resulting event, in which the causer is no longer directly involved.

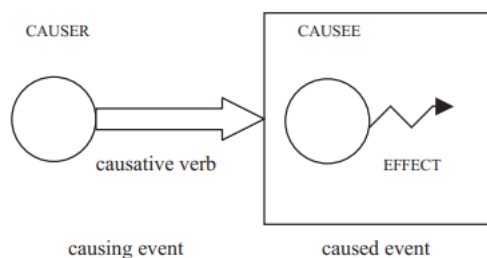
Thanks to the energy of the causer, the causee is placed in the chain of motion and is therefore able to transfer the energy it has received from the causer to another participating object, the patient. The patient represents the end of the action sequence, where energy is absorbed.



Without the patient, all other components of the causative construction must still be present in the sequence of actions although only at the conceptual level but not at the language level. The presence of a patient is not required for the formation of a causative structure. For example:

(2.1) The Queen made Snow White die.

This is a causative construction even though there is only causer and causee. The action sequence is now somewhat different from the 3-argument action sequence. The causer now releases the energy transferred to the resulting event. Here, the energy is released by the causer. In this case, causee is the end of the action sequence. The right arrows indicate that the causee has absorbed energy in the resulting event.



However, it should be noted that even when there are only 2 arguments, the sequence of actions in the causative structure is still fully formed.

The condition for the above two partial facts to constitute a causative construction is based on two factors:

- Time: The time when the caused event occurs (t2) always follows the time (t1) of the causing event.
- Dependency: The outcome is completely dependent on the influencing situation. The dependence here shows that there will be no outcome event at time t2 if at time t1 there is no effect event. This is the semantic relationship in the relationship between two part facts of a causative structure and is also a characteristic attribute to define a causative structure.

The above relationship explains why, in a causation construction, one cannot negate the resulting event. For example:

(2.2) Tom made Mary cry. → Mary cried.

*Tom made Mary cry, but Mary did not.

Thus, the MAKE structure represents a process by which the causer in the causing event performs an action on a causee to produce the resulting situation with a change in the action, process or state or nature of the causee. It should be noted that the above two partial events, although distinct in terms of time (t1 and t2), are integrated in terms of surface structure.

1. Semantics of causal events

1.1. Causer

In terms of position, or in other words in terms of surface structure, the causer is at the top of a causative construction (except for causative construction [N2 be made to V]) and semantically, it is always the first element in the action sequence and is the first of the 2 (if it is a 2-argument construction) or 3 (if it is 3-argument causative construction) arguments of a causative construction.

Regarding the [perception] of the causer, according to the statistics:

Causers		Quantity	Rate
Classification	Events	1124	74.68
	Humans	280	18.60
	Things/animals	101	6.71
Perception	[+perceptive]	208	13.82
	[-perceptive]	1225	81.40
Intentionally	[+intentional]	165	10.96
	[-intentional]	1340	89.04

For example:

(2.3) Daddy's gonna make me eat some tomato.

(2.4) Transactions of this kind must make us pause before we condemn all landlords as Gradgrinds, or make too large assumptions about the nature of medieval serfdom.

(2.5) Toxic leak makes fish unsafe to eat.

The ratio of [+perceptive] and [-perceptive] causers is quite different. This result is similar to what Adamczewski & Delmas (1993) or Salkoff (1999) analyzed about not excluding [+perceptive] causers. However, this is in contrast to the study of Givón's (1993) when it was said that there was never a [+perceptive] causer in causative construction with MAKE.

Thus 18.6% of [+perceptive] causers are human causers. The remainder, 81.4% are [-perceptive] entities which are animals, visible or invisible objects and also unidentified objects as shown in the following examples:

(2.6) Kelly's been and made her hair dyed.

(2.7) Any school can make a lecturer come out, subject to availability of course, to give one of these?

(2.8) Male canaries sing at least in part to make females prepare for reproduction.

(2.9) He reckoned that my blanket made him feel worse.

(2.10) Nocause ever made me fall in love like this.

(2.11) I am glad that Penny is some way has had something that has made her realise what that place was all about.

1.2 Causee

According to many syntacticists, causee can function both as a subject and as an object. It is not only affected by the causer, but it is itself the agent that initiates a new action. In other words, it both receives the flow of energy (from the causer) and transmits it (to the patient). According to the linguists of generative grammar, the causative construction was considered to be biclausal because the same subject, in the causal event, is considered the object, in the resulting event it is transformed can become the subject.

According to Langacker (1991:408), a causative construction is created by adding an argument to the beginning of a clause. Thanks to that the scope of causation is extended compared to the original clause. Consider the following example:

(2.12) The Queen killed Snow White.

(2.13) Jealousy made the Queen die.

In (2.12), the Queen is the starting point of the sequence of actions; and in (2.13), that origin starts from Jealousy. It is added to the action sequence and becomes the source of that sequence, changing the Queen's original position in the sequence.

Thanks to causative construction, a predicate with x arguments in the original clause can become a new clause with x+1 arguments. Consider for example:

(2.14) The baby laughed vs He made the baby laugh. (1 → 2)

(2.15) She changed her mind vs They made her change her mind. (2 → 3)

Analysis from the corpus shows that 32.3% of the causative constructions in the corpus include 3 arguments in the action sequence, the remaining 67.7% are causative constructions with 2 arguments.

1.3. Identity of the causer and the causee

The theory of force dynamics in causative constructions has been carefully analyzed by Talmy (1986, 2000a) about the relationship between entities to the impact force. According to the author, these forces are not necessarily physical effects, but are mostly symbolic, so it leans more towards sociodynamics and psychodynamics.

In the first case *she persuaded him to come to the meeting*, 'he' tends to rest, but 'she' puts pressure on 'he' to force 'he' to act and 'she' has successfully produced a result. The physical relationship between two entities through the transfer of energy from one object to the other is a fundamental feature of dynamic theory. When combined with sociology, this theory is extended to "a sentient entity that exerts effects, including the use of communication, acts on another sentient entity, and creates a new action".

In the second case, the causee and the causer are not two separate entities but two parts of one psychological entity. This case appears mainly in the lexical causative construction. For example

I refrained from yawning.

The subject is a *self* divided into two opposite entities. Just like in physical interactions, when there is a force acting on an object, the object will naturally have an intrinsic force to counteract that force. In the sentence above, part of the *self* tends to perform the act of *yawn*, the other part tends to resist this action (not to yawn). One of the two halves of the *self* is stronger and produce the results of the action. In this case, the 'no yawning' half is the result of the action. The 'two-sided' conception of the human mind explains why the causee and the causer are sometimes the same. In other words, people can make themselves do something.

In causative constructions with MAKE, because it is not a lexical causative construction, there will appear reflexive pronouns representing the *self* of the subject. Consider the following example:

(2.16) I didn't really want to spare the time because you could imagine that I wanted to get ready to come away, but I made myself sit and really give him time.

'*myself*' is the *self*, a part of a psychological entity that can directly interact with the world by walking, talking, communicating, talking with friends, shopping... 'I' is the subject, considering the situation, making the decision as to what to do in each situation. In the sentence above, the self was hesitant to take the time to talk to Neil because the self wanted to leave. But the subject thinks he should sit back and spend time with Neil because he is a good friend or because he has serious problems. As a result, the subject forced the *self* to sit back and spend time with Neil.

Note that the distinction between subject and self can also result from the ego breaking free of the subject's control and performing an action of its own accord. Consider the following example:

(2.16) But I ate myself silly on them last night and made myself feel sick so I'll never eat them again now.

In the sentence above, being nauseous is not a conscious decision (like the decision above to sit back and spend time with Neil). Here, the subject may not have been able to control himself with the act of eating (too much) happening.

Sometimes, subject and self do not need to be separated by personal pronouns and reflexive pronouns at the linguistic level as in the examples above. Consider the following two examples:

(2.38) She made herself drink the rest of the coffee, though it was cold.

(2.39) I'm never going to make it [old cup of coffee] drunk.

The identity of the causer and the causer will lead to the causee omitting. This happens a lot in the lexical causative construction as analyzed above. In contrast, in syntactic causative constructions, the identity between these two objects is rarely hidden except for fixed constructs such as 'make do' or 'make believe'. In fact, the hidden causee in the above two fixed constructs is only possible at the linguistic level. In fact, causee here is still understood as the 'oneself' of the subject: 'make do' - make myself do, 'make believe' - make myself believe.

The proportion of MAKE causative constructions in which there is a similarity between the causer and the causee is quite small (2.9%), the rest (97.1%) belong to the MAKE causative constructions in which the causer and the causee are two separate entities.

In addition to the identity of the causer and the causee, there is also the identity of the other entities in the causative construction that have MAKE. The causer can be identified with the causee as in the example:

(2.17) A child who is having difficulty in making herself understood may require a great deal of support; a few minutes later that same child dealing with a different topic may become relatively fluent and require a much lower level of adult participation.

Or patient is identified with causee as in the example:

(2.18) But there seems no room for any notion of the decorous in Olson's "objectism", any more than there is room for it in the lawless world of the Cantos, or in Pound himself when he is without a master to translate, whose example makes him surpass himself.

This identity occurs very rarely in the corpus with a very small percentage (1.8% with the structure [X make Y Vinf], and 17.6% with the structure [X make Y Vpp]). However, this identity is sometimes loose. In the following examples, the causee is said to be part of the causer and belongs to the causer (*their impact* is one of the features of *'other molecular techniques'*, *'those comments'* belong to the *'you'* causer).

(2.19) Other molecular techniques are making their impact felt in microbiology. (2.43) if you have any comments about the work of The Old Church and Society Committee, the work we do for Synod and in the provenc, please make those comments to Catherine or to your district representative!

To sum up, like a normal causative construction, co-argument causative constructions describes a process in which the causer exerts a force on the causee, which may (or may not) be transmitted to the patient. However, there is a difference between these two types of causative construction. In co-argument causative construction, the impact force is transmitted only within 1 entity (or more precisely from one part of the entity) and not between two separate entities. Both types of causative constructions reflect the nature of the sequence of actions and are therefore considered a causative construction but differ in the degree of prototypicality. Lakoff (1987:54) argued that a typical causative construction must consist of a single, deterministic and deterministic causer. This implies that these two entities must be independent of each other. In the co-argument causative constructions, the condition of definiteness and independence between the arguments is absolutely required.

2. Semantics of Result Event

2.1. General semantic structure

When extracting words and phrases indicating the change of the causees, it shows that the semantic characteristics of causative construction with MAKE are mainly in favor of the impact on people/things; physically alter the appearance and internal attributes of people/things, describing the different ways in which people/things are affected. These three semantic fields are represented mainly on the original causative construction [N1 make N2 Vinf] and four variants [N1 make N2 Adj], [N2 be made to V], [N1 make N2 Vpp], [N1 make N2 Noun].

Physical Field		Mental Field		Property Field	
Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
work	3.88	feel	9.20	clear	15.08
look	2.6	look	5.19	easier	7.63
laugh	2.59	sound	3.28	possible	6.37
go	2.22	aware	2.63	difficult	6.26
take	2.28	forget	1.98	impossible	3.81
see	2.2	think	1.89	easy	2.83
do	2	ensure	1.89	worse	2.51
change	1.98	understand	1.70	happy	1.89
come	1.84	realise	1.62	sick	1.30

a. Physical field

This semantic field refers to the physical change of the causee in the causative construction. The verbs in this group include: *jump, ask, build, call, shout, carry, run, hear, climb, come, dance, drink, eat...*

When calculating these semantic fields, the causative construction of the form [N1 make N2 Vinf] and [N2 be made to V] have a higher frequency than the rest of MAKE causative constructions.

Intransitive: *work, go, laugh, feel, sound*. For example:

(2.20) The tone of his voice made Grimma look up.

(2.21) Child-centred education has tried to make children work by diligently on what interests the child.

(2.22) "You're the most horrible Mummy in the world to make Daddy go" she said.

(2.23) She looked up and made herself meet his eyes.

b. Mental field

Cognitive changes, mental changes refer to anything related to the mind or mental processes of the causee. These changes refer to a state of perception (solving logical problems) where actions are mostly abstract. These mental

changes are significant in relation to concepts such as discovery, understanding, or thinking. Cognitive verbs in this semantic field include: *feel, like, love, hate, realize, mind, know, wish, understand, impress, remember, forget, surprise, recognize, learn, imagine, want, perceive, please...*

For example:

- (2.24) I told Miss Ingram something about the Rochester property which made her look quite depressed.
- (2.25) Then he smiled and proceeded to make Ronni feel even prouder - her brother was a pretty decent fellow, too.
- (2.26) The new subject of International Relations must find the best ways of making leaders aware of the dysfunctional nature of war.

c. Property field

Causative construction [N1 make N2 Adj] best represents this semantic field. It is the change in the characteristics, and personality of the causee after being affected by the influence. It can be changes in external appearance or internal properties and characteristics of the causee.

For example:

- (2.27) And here I ought to perhaps make it clear that the circles I provided on the sheet which was distributed, allow for a density of twenty houses per hectare.
- (2.28) Wealth can make life easier, but the things that really make us happy, like friendship, love, and the feeling that we are doing something worthwhile.

In addition, causative construction [N1 make N2 Noun] also shows a change in the characteristics and properties of causee. For example:

- (2.29) You've made me a soldier.
- (2.30) But Mrs Gandhi never forgave Khan's opposition to her scrapping the privy purses, and to his regret she did not make him a minister.
- (2.31) It will make them great soul winners.

The above are just the main semantic fields of causative construction with MAKE, in the following sections, we will present and analyze more clearly the semantics of this causative construction with a clear analysis of the elements in the two events above.

2.2 Causee

As analyzed above, causative construction with MAKE is a two-clause causative construction. The cause and effect clauses are nested into one, the intersection here is the subject. In the causal clause, the causee is the object of the cause effect, affected by the causer, it receives the flow of energy coming from the causer. In the result clause, the causee can act as the subject that begins to have a new nature, state, or new action caused by the causative action of the causer. In the causing clause, it is the object while in the effect it is the subject.

The [perception] nature of the causee is quite similar to that of the causer:

Causee		Quantity	Rate
Classification	Events	305	20.27
	Humans	1061	70.50
	Things/animals	139	9.24
Perception	[+perceptive]	1061	70.50
	[-perceptive]	444	29.50

Causee can be an inanimate object as in the example:

- (2.32) Absolutely so if we move over from Suzanne's boat over to mine, we'll see some of the fittings which make the boat go faster.

Or it can also be a sentient object like in the example:

- (2.33) We were trying to depose the monarchy devalue the pound and make the natives play baseball instead of cricket.
- (2.34) It is time to go home to a wife in curlers like a barrister, who will ask him questions, call him Otto and make him cry.
- (2.35) They make the organizational labyrinth less treacherous.
- (2.36) Love made her sharp-eyed too.

Looking back at the results of the perception nature of the causer and combining with the perception nature of causee, we see that the majority of the [-perceptive] causer affects the majority of the [+perceptive] causee (70.5%) showing that coercion is not the main meaning of causative construction with MAKE.

2.3. Causative result

The result clause in causative construction can be considered through the following points: transitivity, dynamicity and functionality.

In the result clause, the extroverted verb with direct object is used most (96.8%), the rest 3.2% is extroverted verb with 2 direct and indirect objects. In this causative construction, extrovert verbs with 1 direct object in the result clause only make up a few (24.2%), the rest mostly belong to introvert verbs, copular verbs and other amphoteric verbs. For example:

(2.47) And in one respect it's not quite erm as straightforward as I've made it appear, and perhaps after all I'm not wrong in making the claim I did

(2.48) Psychologists are often made to feel the poor relations of biologists.

Causative construction results can be [[+dynamic] or [-dynamic]]. For example:

(2.49) It is important for parents not to supplement the diet with high sugar and salt content snacks in an effort to get their child to eat.

(2.50) The fact that the teacher finds that the child has spelt a word correctly in one context and then perhaps in a sentence or two later may misspell the word, makes the teacher think that this is a question of carelessness.

Functionally, the outcome may belong to one of the three main processes of the transfer system: physical, mental, or relational. The physical process is the action process, the mental process is the sensory process, and the relational process is the existential process. The mental process is considered to be more common than the other two. For example:

(2.51) Isn't going to be much good if it just makes everycauser worry for the first half of their lives?

(2.52) There is nothing secret that will not be made known.

The physical process ranks 2nd after the mental process in the results. For example:

(2.53) My only regret on that particular occasion now is that I didn't organise properly making it videotaped, because it would have been a nice thing to keep.

(2.54) If I made him drive me round now I'll remember which way to go.

In terms of [intention] nature of result clause, a [+intentional] result requires the causee to do it on purpose. In other words, that outcome has to be done proactively. For example:

(2.55) Sometimes, the way you talk makes me think you're older. [+intentional]

In contrast, an outcome is [-intentional] when it is prevented from actively performing the action in the result. For example:

(2.56) Does it [glasses] make me look clever? [-intentional]

The resulting clause can be [+intentional] or [-intentional] depending on the context of the sentence. For example:

(2.57) Karen wears them to a ball, the red shoes make her dance out of town and into the forest [-intentional]

(2.58) The strong beats made me dance almost all night. [+intention]

The fact that most causative constructions have unintentional result clauses again excludes the coercion that many authors ascribe to causative constructions with MAKE. According to Terasawa (1985), three conditions which are necessary to allow the expression of coercion (in the sense of "forcing a person/animal to do something by exercising influence, power or violence", are combined with a dynamic causer, a dynamic causee and the resulting clause are intentional. If at least one of these conditions is not met, the coercion cannot be expressed.

Conclusions

By analyzing the lexical meaning features of the components in two events such as causal events (including causer, causee, causative verb MAKE) and consequent events (causee and resulting predicate), the article has raised the semantic features of two events of the causative structure with MAKE, as a basis for analyzing the relationship between the causer and the causee, the causee and the resulting predicate, causing predicate with result predicate in the following studies.

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Thuy Thi Phuong Do. "Semantic Characteristics of Events in MAKE Causative Constructions."
IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS), 28(4), 2023, pp. 39-46.