
Transitive causative constructions with verbs of self-agentive locomotion

NADĚŽDA KUDRNÁČOVÁ
(Masaryk University, Brno)

The aim of this paper is to show that transitive causative constructions with manner of motion verbs expressing self-agentive locomotion (*John walked Mary to the station, The sergeant marched the soldiers to the barracks, John jumped the horse over the fence*) represent, in spite of their marginal status (Filipović 2007), a regular semantico-syntactic pattern. They are an interesting specimen of an interaction between the syntactical configuration, the lexical meaning of the verb and a specific causal patterning of the situation.

These constructions employ manner of motion verbs expressing self-agentive locomotion. In such a motion, the physical energy exerted by the mover is physically confined to their body, which means that these constructions can only express the external causation of a self-agentive locomotion along a volitional axis (Cruse 1972). That is, these inherently monadic verbs enter into a process of causativization (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1994), with a causer as an additional argument (e.g., Wunderlich 2006).

These constructions are realizations of the syntactic configuration 'NP – VP – NP (– PP)', which is a pattern used for lexical causatives: a single clause is a realization of a single event (e.g., Haiman 1985). The causing event and the caused event thus merge. However, both the participants (the causer and the causee) have an agentive status: the causer initiates the causee's movement and executes control over its course (the causer may or may not execute the movement lexicalized in the verb - e.g. the sergeant may march the soldiers to the barracks without marching himself) and the causee is the executor of the movement lexicalized in the verb. That is, in spite of employing a single verb, the construction encompasses two hierarchically ordered events and two agentive participants. From this it follows that this type of construction can only admit verbs whose semantic structure makes it possible to accommodate both the causer and the causee and, at the same time, to allow for their agentivity involving the exertion of volitional control over the action.

Related to this is another requirement that a verb in this type of construction must meet. This other requirement is dictated by grammatical rules, namely by total object inclusion (cf. Anderson 1971): the action of the participant in the direct object position must be wholly covered by the action of the participant in the subject position. (This grammatical stipulation is here a reflection of the merging of the causing and the caused events: the causer and the causee are both arguments of a single verb.) Therefore, these constructions only admit verbs denoting movements that are wholly under the agent's volitional control. This stipulation rules out verbs like *stagger* or *stumble* (the movement is not wholly under the agent's control), verbs that encode information about the agent's physical or mental self (e.g., *scurry*, *scamper*, *trudge* or *wander*), and verbs that carry information about specific external circumstances of the motion (e.g., *wade* – movement in mud or deep water, *paddle* in one of its senses – movement in shallow water, e.g. at the seaside) or about a broader pragmatic anchoring of the

movement (*jog* – run for exercise). These restrictions confirm the validity of the observation made by Boas (e.g. 2006) that there are connections between the syntactic usability of verbs and the richness of their meanings.

Constructions with animal causees admit verbs otherwise barred for constructions with human causees (e.g., *gallop*, *prance*, *amble*) since, owing to the specificity of animal agentivity, the verbs are deprived of their capacity to encode information about the self of the mover (the animal) and only encode a physical patterning of the motion.

On the basis of these observations it seems reasonable to conclude that this type of caused motion construction represents a verb-class-specific construction (cf. Croft 2003).

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