This paper explores the properties of the causative constructions found in some Western NIA languages. It shows that: 1) assignment of instrumental vs. dative/accusative case to the causee reflects the thematic role of the argument in that construction (agent vs. beneficiary); 2) morphological operations (e.g., addition of a second causative morpheme) do not always parallel syntactic operations such as changes in argument structure.

The process of causativization in Western NIA languages depends upon the syntactic and semantic properties of the underlying verbs. Four main syntactic subclasses of verbs may be singled out in Western NIA languages: 1) ‘intransitives’ (of the type ‘to be cut’); 2) the so called ‘ingestive’ transitives (e.g., ‘to eat’); 3) ‘non-ingestive transitives’ (‘to do’ and the like) and ‘double transitives’ (e.g., ‘to give’).

The first level of derivation results in (a) single-object transitive verb if the underlying verb is intransitive: ‘to be cut’ – ‘to cut’; (b) double object transitive verb if the underlying verb belongs to the ‘ingestive’ class: ‘to eat’ – ‘to feed’; (c) causative verb if the underlying verb belongs either to the transitive? class: ‘to do’ – ‘to get done’ or to the class of inherent double object verbs: ‘to give’ – ‘to arrange receiving’. As the verbs of the third class form causatives already at the first level of derivation, the second level of derivation does not imply any addition of an ‘extra agent’ to their verbal case frame. The verbs of the first two classes form causatives at the second level of derivation.

The causee of ‘ingestive’ verbs is Recipient, marked by Dative/Accusative case. The causee of non-ingestive verbs is usually Mediator (causee agent) marked by Instrumental/Ablative case. However, some ‘non-ingestive’ verbs are regularly used with dative causees in special meanings, usually separately mentioned by dictionaries: for example, the causative from 'to write' with the dative causee means 'to dictate', while the same causative with the instrumental or ablative causee means 'to ask to write'.

Non-ingestive verbs form also ‘assistive’ causative constructions where the causee plays the role of Beneficiary. In fact, ‘assistive’ meaning does not incorporate the meaning ‘cause’, but in many mutually unrelated languages it may be expressed by the same marker as used for ordinary causatives. (Kulikov 2001). ‘Assistive’ causatives are usually mentioned but their usage in Western NIA is not really investigated by linguists, that is why they will be discussed in detail in this paper.

The usage of ‘assistive causatives’ varies in different Indo-Aryan languages. Hindi seems to be most intolerant to ‘assistive’ causative constructions when the causer and the causee perform one and the same ‘physical’ action like ‘Ram helped Mohan to lift the luggage’. In Punjabi, Rajasthani and Gujarati equivalents of this construction are not rejected by many native speakers.

‘Assistive’ causatives are most acceptable in all described languages in situations when the causer performs an action different from that of the causee, but both actions are aimed at one and the same result. The causer’s action may be explicitly described: ‘Having poured water mother helped the child to wash face and hands’, or it may be not described, but understood from the context: ‘We arrest you on accusation of helping the criminal to escape’.

‘Assistive’ causatives represent one of the deviations from the general pattern: the causative verb differs from the non-causative counterpart in presence of an extra agent in its case frame (Balachandran 1973), (Kachru 1966), (Kachru 1973), (Kashi Wali 1989), (Mistry 1969), and others. The argument added to the case frame of ‘assistive’ causatives is Beneficiary, not Agent.

The properties of some other causative constructions are incompatible with the claim that morphological operations (e.g., addition of a second causative morpheme) parallel syntactic operations such as changes in argument structure (Baker 1988). When a causative morpheme is added to a verb, an extra argument is not necessarily added to the argument structure of the verb from which the causative morpheme is derived. The paper explores the semantic factors that can encourage the use of the causative construction without changes in the argument structure.
1) Non-volitional causation: the causer may be inanimate, animate non-human and human; the action is always performed unintentionally, accidentally; the human causer may perform some other action, that (without his desire) results in causation of the action expressed by the predicate; the action may affect either the goal or the causer himself (Gujarati does not use causatives when the action affects the causer himself).

2) Volitional causation: a) the causer and the goal demonstrate the ‘whole-part’ relation; b) the causee is unspecified; c) the causatives are used honorifically (mostly in Rajasthani).

REFERENCES


