

ON THE PARADIGM OF CAUSATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

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Linguistics of the early 20th century used to deny the paradigmatic aspect of syntax thus restricting paradigmatic relations to morphology. The reconsideration of structural linguistics in the latter half of the 20th century led to recognition of universal paradigmatic ties attributed to all the levels of the language including syntax. Basic phrase and sentence models are now considered capable of building up paradigms, which makes it possible to establish the determination of certain structural types.

The so-called ‘nuclear’, or elementary, sentence is selected as the basic derivation model (Blokh, 2003: pp. 105–106), which is structurally a non-extended monopredicative of model (1):

$$(1) NP + VP \Rightarrow S$$

Naturally not every sentence can be built according to the model, as its structure reveals certain gaps, like that in the position of a direct object. Compare the following:

- (2) a. *John opened the door.*
b. [?]* *John opened [...].*

To avoid such gaps fractional categories are applied to some verbs, which have valence exceeding one point (see, for instance, Dowty, 1982, 2000). A fractional category denotes that the verb takes a certain element to build a basic category. Thus, the model for a transitive verb is as follows:

$$(3) VP/NP + NP \Rightarrow VP$$

Now let us consider a minimal structural model for a sentence capable of expressing a causal situation. It’s clear enough that a non-extended sentence of model (1) would not meet the requirement inasmuch as a causal situation implies a link between a subject and an object of causation. It is also obvious that a sentence of SVO model (like 2–a) can express a causative relation and, in this particular case, the subject and object of causation coincide with grammatical subject and object. Thus, to reflect a causal link either a ‘cumuleme’ (linear sequence) of at least two monopredicative non-extended sentences (4–a) or an extended simple sentence (4–b) is required:

- (4) a. *John fired. Bill dropped down.*
b. *John shot Bill.*

It is also to be noted here that a subject and object of causation do not necessarily have to be grammatical subject and object respectively. Moreover it seems pointless (however alluring the idea) to mix up lexical and syntactic rules meaning to represent lexical causatives as derivatives of syntactic structures. Particularly, M. Shibatani (1976) shows the insolvency of such a representation.

Two separate sentences can be linked within a single equivalence paradigm in different ways, obtaining several types of surface structures. A complete fragment of a construction equivalence paradigm includes six derivation stages (Blokh, 2002: 133).

Stage one implies a ‘cumuleme’, i.e. a unit of two basic sentences. Stage two is the formation of a compound sentence out of basic sentences. Stage three is the complex sentence construction. Stage four is a semi-compound sentence. Stage five is a semi-complex. Finally, stage six is the simplification, i.e. the formation of a monopredicative equivalent of two (or maybe more) basic sentences.

It is absolutely possible that one or even more paradigmatic forms are missing in this or that

particular case. The cause of this may be either semantics of the basic sentences or their structure. Thus, M.Y. Blokh, while giving possible paradigmatic variants for cumuleme

(5) *He slowed down the car. He had to turn round the corner,* notes that ‘a causal link alongside with the modality of obligation’ do not allow any transformations of the cumuleme into a strictly monopredicative construction (Blokh, 2002: 133). This, however, doesn’t mean that causality cannot possibly be expressed by such a construction.

Consider the complete paradigm for the following cumuleme: *The wind was blowing. She was shaking.* Here we represent it as a sequence of stages mentioned above, not giving all the possible variants for every stage for saving the space:

- (6) a. *The wind was blowing. She was shaking.*
 ↓
 b. *She was shaking, for the wind was blowing.*
 b'. *The wind was blowing, and she was shaking.*
 b''. *The wind was blowing, so she was shaking.*
 ↓
 c. *She was shaking because the wind was blowing.*
 c'. *The wind was blowing so that she was shaking.*
 ↓
 d. [...]
 ↓
 e. *The blowing of the wind made her shake.*
 e'. *The wind blowing, she was shaking.*
 ↓
 f. *She was shaking because of the wind.*
 f'. *She was shaking in the wind.*

The paradigmatic sequence presented in (6) is to illustrate the syntactic abilities of the language in expressing a particular semantics, causative in the case. It is also of import that a semantic unit of two sentences (cumuleme) is not an arbitrary combination adopting a causal meaning in a strictly determined discourse but an element of a paradigm simplest in its structure among all the possible elements. Semantically most complicated element – a monopredicative construction – is acceptable in the paradigm (6), and is not of a SVO model. The causal subject here is the modifier (6f, f'). The fourth stage (semi-compound 6 d) fails the paradigm due to the necessity to present two subjects, which makes it impossible to skip over at least one of them to make up the required construction.

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