

Covert Generic Causatives as Dispositional Ascriptions

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SeYeon Park
Department of Linguistics
The University of Texas at Austin
seyeon.park@utexas.edu
park-seyeon.github.io

What are covert generic causatives?

- Covert generic causatives consist of:
 - a sole causer subject which is strictly **non-agentive** (*agentive subject)
 - a verb which is strictly **non-causative** (*causative verb)
- Is this really a causative?
 - ⇒ Yes! They describe a dispositional causative property of the subject that brings about a result state described by the verb.

My proposal in a nutshell

- I argue that the verb undergoes **covert/zero causativization**.
- Why is this interesting?
 - (i) Locally unexpected: Korean already has an overt causativizing strategy.
 - (ii) Typologically unexpected: covert causativization shows a restriction on one semantic domain, namely non-agentive causes.

Three research questions & my answers

1. Is the causer DP an actual syntactic subject of the verb? \Leftarrow Yes!
2. How does covert causativization differ from overt/morphological causativization? \Leftarrow Basically the same process!

	overt causativization (adds agentive causer)	covert causativization (adds non-agentive causer)
patient-subject verbs	direct causation	direct causation
agent-subject verbs	sociative causation	\emptyset

- The covert process not only fits nicely into a causativization paradigm in Korean, but also adds a non-agentive puzzle piece into the paradigm.

3. What are covert generic causatives? \Leftarrow Middles?

Covert generic causatives vs. dispositional middles

- Covert generic causatives look awful lot like dispositional middles.

(2) *khal-un tachy-e.*
knife-TOP get.hurt-DECL
'Knives hurt e.g., people.'

(3) *This bread cuts smoothly.*
(English)
[Dispositional middle]

- (i) They are both **generic**.
- (ii) They are both **intransitive**.
- (iii) They both involve **causative semantics**.
- (iv) They both involve an **unexpressed argument** in their meaning.

- Only difference: one talks about a causer and the other about a patient.

So...

- If you would like to learn more about this typological beast,
 - A causative with a non-agentive subject/non-causative verb
 - A dispositional middle with a causer subject

**Covert Generic Causatives as Dispositional Ascriptions
(SeYeon Park)**

- Please come see my poster presentation this afternoon!

Thank you!

Selected References

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