The Causative Construction in Waimiri Atroari

ABSTRACT: In Waimiri Atroari, two kinds of causative construction may be observed: one in which causativization is morphologically marked with the suffix -\( pî \), generally with the semantic interpretation ‘make somebody do something’ or ‘make/cause something without resistance’ and the other with the ‘let’ reading, where the morpheme -\( pî \) does not occur.

KEYWORDS: Causative constructions; Waimiri Atroari language.

RESUMO: Em Waimiri Atroari são observados dois tipos de construções causativas: um em que a causativização é morfologicamente marcada com o sufixo -\( pî \), geralmente com a interpretação semântica “causar alguém fazer algo” ou “fazer algo sem resistência”. O outro tipo de construção com uma leitura de “deixar/permitir que faça” onde o sufixo – \( pî \), não ocorre.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Construções causativas; Língua Waimiri Atroari.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper describes and analyzes the two types of causative construction in Waimiri Atroari\(^1\): the causative construction with the -\( pî \) morpheme, having the ‘make’ reading, and the causative construction with the ‘let’ reading, in which the morpheme -\( pî \), does not appear. The structure of the verb in Waimiri Atroari is basically prefix-stem-suffix. It can take a large set of different grammatical markers indicating person, tense-aspect-mood, negation, and causativization, as well as a specific derivational, suffix-\( tîpî \), used to form nouns.

\(^1\)The Waimiri Atroari people, who call themselves \textit{kinja} ‘people’ and whose language belongs to the Carib family, live today in an area in the northern part of the State of Amazonas and in the southern part of the State of Roraima. The total population is 1,113 individuals (PWA, Waimiri Atroari Program, November 2005). Linguistically, using Gildea’s classification (1998) based on the morphosyntactic properties of each verbal system, the Waimiri Atroari language belongs to the set I system (nominative or inverse/split-S). Waimiri Atroari is a chronically underdescribed language. There are few linguistic studies on Waimiri Atroari, most of them being phonological sketches (Hill and Hill 1985; Lacerda 1991, and Bruno 2003, 2004, 2005).
Table 1 - Structure of Waimiri Atroari Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case marking</th>
<th>ROOT</th>
<th>Causative</th>
<th>TAM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clitic</td>
<td>Verbalizer</td>
<td>Negation</td>
<td>Imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see</td>
<td>-ini-see</td>
<td>-pi-CAU</td>
<td>-pia-IMD.PAST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pass</td>
<td>-ini-see</td>
<td>-pi-CAUS</td>
<td>-pia-IMD.PAST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vomit</td>
<td>-wen-vomit</td>
<td>-ta VERBL</td>
<td>-pi CAUS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The organization of the paper is as follows: Section 1 gives a short background on the Waimiri Atroari language; Section 2 provides a description and analysis of causative constructions in this language and, in addition, gives some examples of the particle ia that marks agentivity. Some remaining issues are discussed in the conclusion in section 3.

2. DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

In Waimiri Atroari, two kinds of causative construction may be observed. In the first kind, causativization is morphologically marked with the suffix -pi, generally with the semantic meaning ‘make somebody do something’ or ‘cause something without resistance’. The second kind has the ‘let’ reading, and the morpheme -pi does not occur.

2.1. The Construction with the ‘made’ reading

In this kind of construction, Waimiri Atroari allows two possible structures, one of them in which the causative morpheme appears on the lexicalized made/cause verb, as in examples (1) to (4), and the other structure in which this lexicalized verb does not appear, as in the examples (5) to (13).

1) Aa Kaina h - ari - pi - pia kiriwu ini-se
   1PRO Kaina 1S-tell-CAUS-IMD.PAST snake see-PURP.MOT
   ‘I told/dictated Kaina to see the snake’.
Bruno: The Causative Construction in Waimiri Atroari

(2) Aa Mipini h - ari - **pi** - pia mepiri ini - se
   1PRO Mipini 1S-tell-caus-IMD.PAST tapir see-PURP.MOT

itxi tanîme
jungle from
‘I told/dictated Mîpîni to see the tapir that came from the jungle’.

(3) Paruwe aa - iri - **pi** - pia woki iri - ki
    Paruwe 1O – tell - caus-IMD.PAST banana give-IMP

Marta inaka.
Marta DAT
‘Paruwe told/dictated me to give banana to Marta’.

(4) Amîra mikika m - ari - **pi** - pia mikika ini - se
    2PRO 3PRO 2S-told/ordered-IMD.PAST 3PRO see-PURP.MOT

‘You told him to see him’.

(5) Amîra ram ka mu – wen – tah - **pi** - pia
    2PRO 2PART 3PRO 2S – threw up-VERBL-CAUS-IMD.PAST

‘You made him throw up’.

(6) ka ram a - wen - tah - **pi** - pia
    3PRO 2PART 2O - threw up-VERBL-CAUS-IMD.PAST

‘She/he made you throw up’.

(7) ki ka ram ka hu - mini - tah - **pi** - pia
    1+2PRO 2PART 3PRO 1+2S-bleed-VERBL-CAUS-IMD.PAST

‘You made him bleed’.

(8) Ka k-yeepitxah - **pi** - pia
    3PRO 1+2O-laugh-CAUS-IMD.PAST

‘She/he made us laugh’.

(9) Ka ram a – irima - **pi** - piani
    3PRO 2PART 2O - rest- CAUS-REC.PAST

‘He made you rest’.

(10) Ka ram aa - kitah - **pi** - pia
    3PRO 2PART 1O-shout-CAUS-IMD.PAST

‘He made me shout’.
In the cases described above, we may note that when an intransitive verb, such as *shout*, *rest*, *wake up*, *laugh*, *jump*, *throw up*, and *bleed*, takes the causative, it seems to behave as a transitive verb having the following structure: V[Intr +Caus [ S O]]. Moreover, it may be observed in example (14) that when we have a CAUSEE, it is optionally followed by the agentivity particle ıa (Meira 1999, Gildea, 1998, Tavares 1995).

Interestingly, in example (1), Aa Kaina harıpiapia [PRO kirıwı iniše], we can observe a kind of control structure: Kaina can control the subject PRO of the complement. As a result, the old subject Kaina becomes an indirect object by raising. However, as in Japanese, in Waimiri Atroari the causers (as initiators of the events) are generated in the SPEC of the Event Phrase Tree (Harley, 1995). To illustrate this assumption, we decided to use the Event Phrase as suggested by Harley (1995).

In the structure illustrated in (b) above, Aa is the CAUSER, having the highest position in the hierarchy of the tree; that is, it was generated in the first Event Phrase. Kaina is the CAUSEE. The lexicalized cause/made verb was put in the second Event Phrase and finally the VP kirıwı iniše is what the causee has to do.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a) EventP} & \quad \text{b) EventP} \\
\text{NP} & \quad \text{Aa} \\
\text{Event} & \quad \text{Kaina} \\
\text{Cause} & \quad \text{Event} \\
\text{(NP) Event} & \quad \text{Cause} \\
\text{Cause/Happen VP} & \quad \text{Event} \\
\text{NP V} & \quad \text{PRO VP} \\
\text{Kirıwı inise} & 
\end{align*}
\]
2.2. The Construction with the ‘let’ reading

One of the differences between the ‘make’ and ‘let’ causative is that in the ‘let’ causative construction people are not forced to do something, and as a result this does not imply an order and its accomplishment. Therefore, in this case, we observe a particle *tre’mē*, that is used when we permit or order somebody to do something but do not know if the person will do it. In this sense, we agree with Levin (2000) when she argues that ‘causative and accomplishment are independent notions’. Consequently, in (15) below it is not necessarily true that the person will learn how to make a ceramic pan, nor is it necessarily true in (16) that the person will leave to hunt.

(15) Aa wo’nj - e’mē h - aminjaki - piani a – wenpa - tipah
1pro clay - val ls-permit/let-rec.past 2o-learn - in order
*tre’mē* tiruwa kapri piki
part pan make how
‘I permitted/let you tamper in the clay to learn how to make a ceramic pan’.

(16) Aa ka m - injaki - piani witi ipi - na *tre’mē*
1pro evid 2o-permit/let-rec.past meat look for-? part
‘I permitted/let you to leave to hunt’.

The other difference between the two types of constructions is that in the ‘let reading’ construction we do not have the causative morpheme *-pi*. On the other hand, we cannot assume that the particle *tre’mē* is a particularity of the ‘let reading’ causative, because it may occur in examples such as the one below:

(17) Aa k - aa - piani mariba taka a - iwapi - tri
1pro 2o-take-rec.past party/song dir 2o-sing - ?
piki - a - wenpa - tipa *tre’mē*
how 2o-learn - in order part
‘I took you to the party to learn how to sing’.

In this sentence, as in (15) and (16), it is not necessarily true that the person will learn how to sing.

2.3. The Agentivity Particle *ia*

In relation to the agentivity particle *ia*, it is interesting to observe that the particle is not necessarily related to the causative construction. The examples below will demonstrate in what kind of situation it may appear.
(18) ipaikipa naminja ia t - iika - hkipa wikir-eme ni - tam - pia
After dog AGT.PART Reflex-bite-after man-DEV 3s-cry - IMD.PAST
‘After the dog bit the man, he cried’.

(19) naminja ia t - iika - hkipa wikiri ni - tam - pia
Dog AGT.PART Reflex-bite-after man 3s – cry - IMD.PAST.
‘After the dog bit the man, he cried’.

(20) naminja ia t - iika - si-pesa ram txi - pia tipotxe.
Dog AGT.PART Reflex-bite-?-in time 2PART go-IMD.PAST fast/quick
‘In time to be bitten by the dog, he went quickly’.

(21) Amira ram aa - papa ia t mere wo m – ini - pa
2PRO 2PART 1POS-father AGT.PART jaguar kill 2S-see-REM.PAST
‘You saw my father kill the jaguar’ or ‘You saw the death of the jaguar by my father’.

(22) Ka ram aa - mama ia sanja iahkwa ini - piani
3PRO 2PART 1POS-mother AGT.PART manioc flour make see - REC.PAST
‘He saw my mother make manioc flour’.

(23) Aa ram naminja ia k - eme iika h – ini - piya
1PRO 2PART dog AGT.PART 3PRO-DEV bite 3s-see-IMD.PAST
‘I saw the dog bite him’.

(24) Aa ram witi pis - ani itxi ta kiri wu huwa
1PRO 2PART meat look for-ASP jungle LOC snake ?

‘I was hunting when the snake bit me’.

(25) k - eme aa ia t mere wu - si na
3PRO-DEV 1PRO AGT.PART jaguar kill-DESID COP
‘He wants that I kill the jaguar’.

As may be observed, the particle ia has an independent behavior. Therefore, we assume that its occurrence is not obligatory in the causative construction. It will appear only when it is necessary to identify the CAUSEE as the agent of the structure. As a result, we have the following structure: [S CAUSEE (ia) O V _caus_], as see, in example (14).

Another interesting aspect of the particle ia is related to the notion of agency, but this is a topic for further research. According to Mithun (1991:516), the prototypical agent is the ‘participant which performs effects, instigates, or controls the situation denoted by the predicate’. Mithun’s treatment of agentiveness as performance/instigation and control/volitionaly is not perfectly adequate for Waimiri Atroari.
3. CONCLUSION

In this paper, two types of causative construction in Waimiri Atroari were described, the causative with the ‘made’ reading and the causative with the ‘let’ reading. The construction having the ‘made reading’ takes the causative morpheme -pi and implies that an order given by the CAUSER was realized by the CAUSEE. However, the construction having the ‘let’ reading does not take the morpheme -pi, and, unlike the causative ‘made’ reading, the event does not need to be accomplished (see table 2 below). In addition, it was observed that all transitive verbs could take the morpheme -pi.

In the data, we did not find examples in which the particle ia co-occurs with the lexicalized causative verb tell/dictate. Finally, an aspect that we consider needs more analysis is the causative construction with the ‘let reading’, as we have found few examples of this kind of construction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causative with the ‘made reading’</th>
<th>Causative with the ‘let reading’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S V-caus O (examples 5-13)</td>
<td>S O V-let reading CP (examples 15 and 16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S CAUSEE (ia) O V-caus (example 14)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S CAUSEE V1-caus O V2 (examples 1-4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2- Summary of the causative construction

REFERENCES


**Abbreviation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agt.Prt</td>
<td>Agentivity particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caus</td>
<td>Causative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dat</td>
<td>Dative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desid</td>
<td>Desiderative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dev</td>
<td>Devalutative</td>
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<td>Dir</td>
<td>Directional particle</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Motion Purpose</td>
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<td>Rec. Past</td>
<td>Recent Past</td>
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<td>Rem. Past</td>
<td>Remote Past</td>
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<td>Reflexive</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ti/Asp</td>
<td>Tense/Aspect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Val</td>
<td>Valutative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend**

- Incl. Past 1: Immediate Past
- Imp: Imperative
- Loc: Locative
- Neg: Negation
- O: Object
- Pro: Pronoun
- Verbl: Verbalizer
- 1 Pos: 1 possessive
- First Singular
- 2: Sing/Plural
- 3: Sing/Plural
- 1+2: Dual incl
- 2part: Second position particle

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