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## **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 *-pi*, 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 *-pi* 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 *-pi*, 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 *-pi*, 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<sup>1</sup>: the causative construction with the *-pi* morpheme, having the ‘make’ reading, and the causative construction with the ‘let’ reading, in which the morpheme *-pi* 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-*t#pi*, used to form nouns.

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<sup>1</sup>The Waimiri Atroari people, who call themselves *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**

Case marking		ROOT	Verbalizer Nominalizer	Causative Negation Imperative Desiderative	TAM		
Clitic	Prefix				Tense-aspect-- mood suffixes	Interrogative clitic	
see	aa= 1O		-ini- see		-pi -CAU	-pia IMD.PAST	
		h- 1A	-ini- see		-pi -CAUS	-pia IMD.PAST	
		m- 2A	-ini- see			-pi IMD.PAST	=e' INT
vomit	aa= 1O		-wen- vomit	-ta VERBL	-pi CAUS	-pia IMD.PAST	
		hu- 1A	-wen- vomit	-ta VERBL	-pi CAUS	-pia IMD.PAST	

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  
1<sub>PRO</sub> Kaina   1<sub>S</sub>-tell-CAUS-IMD.PAST                      snake                      see-PURP.MOT  
‘I told/dictated Kaina to see the snake’.

- (2) Aa Mipini h - ari - **pi** - pia mepiri ini - se  
 1PRO Mipini 1S-tell-CAUS-IMD.PAST tapir see-PURP.MOT  
 itxi tanime  
 jungle from  
 ‘I told/dictated Mipini 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) Amira 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) Amira 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** - pian  
 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’.

(11) Ka            ram    aa – ima - **pi** - pia        sina    kaka  
          3PRO            2PART    1O -jump-CAUS-IMD.PAST    water    LOC  
 ‘He made me jump in the water’.

(12) Kika            Joanico hi – ma - **pi** - pia        sina    kaka.  
          1+2PRO        Joanico 1+2s-jump-CAUS-IMD.PAST    water    LOC  
 ‘We made Joanico jump in the water’.

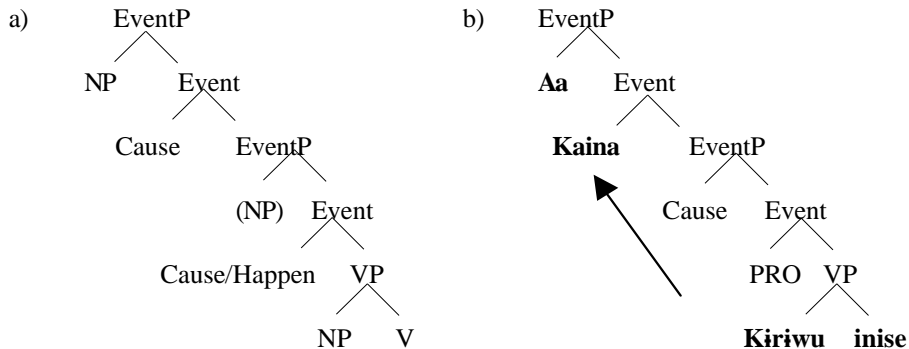
(13) Aa            ram    ka        hu – pakah - **pi** - pa.  
          1PRO            2PART    3PRO    1s-wake up-CAUS-REM.PAST  
 ‘I made him wake up’.

(14) Aa    ram    Kaina    ia                    kiriwu    h – ini - **pi** - pia  
          1PRO 2PART Kaina AGT.PART            snake    1s - see-CAUS-IMD.PAST  
 ‘I made Kaina see the snake’.

In the cases described above, we may note that when an intransitive verb, such as *shout*, *rest*, *wake up*, *laugh*, *jump*, *threw 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 *ia* (Meira 1999, Gildea, 1998, Tavares 1995).

Interestingly, in example (1), *Aa Kaina haripia* [*PRO kiriwu inise*], 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 *ki*ri*wu inise* is what the causee has to do.



## 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’me*, 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’me            h - aminjaki - piani            a – wenpa - tɪpah  
 1PRO            clay - VAL            1s-permit/let-REC.PAST            2O -learn - in order

**tre’me**            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’me**  
 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’me* 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 - tɪpa            **tre’me**  
 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 REFLX-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 REFLX-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.  
 DogAGT. PART REFLX-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** timere 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 kiriwu huwa  
 1PRO 2PART meat look for-T/ASP jungle LOC snake ?  
**ia** aa - iika - paiki  
 AGT.PART 1O - bite - after  
 ‘I was hunting when the snake bit me’.
- (25) k - eme aa **ia** timere 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<sub>-caus</sub>], 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/volitionality 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 2- Summary of the causative construction

Causative with the 'made reading'	Causative with the 'let reading'
S V <sub>-caus</sub> O (examples 5-13)	S O V <sub>let reading</sub> CP (examples 15 and 16)
S CAUSEE (ia) O V <sub>-caus</sub> (example 14)	
S CAUSEE V <sub>1-caus</sub> O V2 (examples 1-4)	

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### Abbreviation

Agt.Part	Agentivity particle	Imd. Past	Immediate Past
Caus	Causative	Imp	Imperative
Dat	Dative	Loc	Locative
Desid	Desiderative	Neg	Negation
Dev	Devaluative	O	Objetc
Dir	Directional particle	Pro	Pronoun
Purp. Mot	Motion Purpose	Verbl	Verbalizer
Rec. Past	Recent Past	1 Pos	1 possessive
Rem. Past	Remote Past	1	First Singular
Reflex	Reflexive	2	Sing/Plural
S	Subject	3	Sing/Plural
T/Asp	Tense/Aspect	1+2	Dual incl
Val	Valuative	2part	Second position particle

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