

Chapter III

Theoretical Foundations

Derivational and lexicalist accounts of causativity were reviewed in the previous chapter. They have different viewpoints as regards causativity of Mandarin causatives. Three frameworks are used in this chapter to find more evidence to determine the veracity of these accounts of causativity. They are directness in Section 3.1, force-dynamics in Section 3.2 and transitivity in Section 3.3.

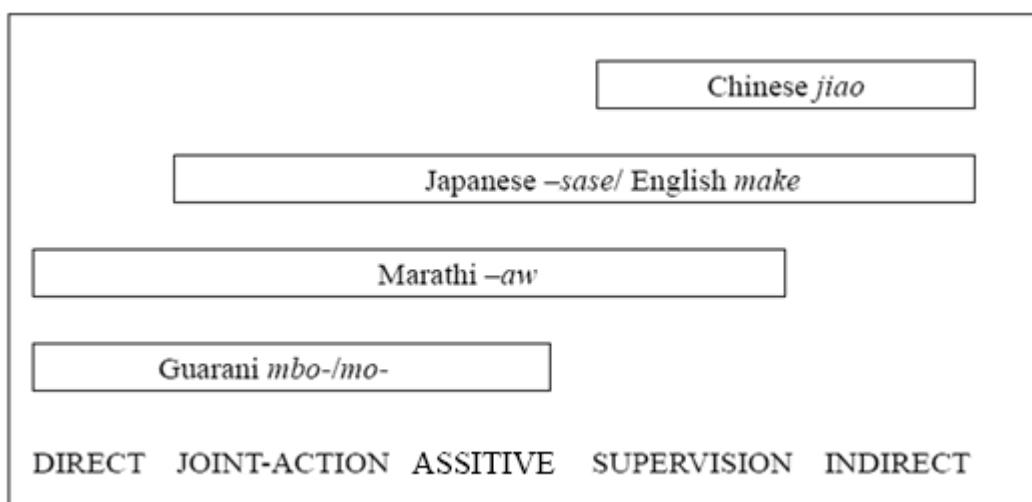
3.1 Directness

3.1.1 Shibatani and Pardeshi 2001

Shibatani and Pardeshi (2001) propose the notion of a causative continuum to classify causation based on the use of verbal semantics. Direct causation is at one end of this linear system and indirect causation is at the other. Causative verbs are examined according to the event structures. The causation is considered to be direct if the causing event and the caused events occur within the same spatio-temporal frame, and indirect if the event structures of the causing and caused events occur in different spatio-temporal frames. In addition to these

categories, the authors note a third type, sociative causation, which includes certain causative constructions that cannot neatly fit in the two categories. In this causation, the causing and the caused event overlap within the spatio-temporal relationship. Sociative causation includes assistive, joint-action, and supervision. One important rule to identify sociative causation is that “both joint-action and assistive sociatives entail physical involvement in the caused event.” However, the supervision sociatives allow for differences in the spatial frames. The authors exemplify the distribution of the causative continuum by different languages.

(1)



(Shibatani & Pardeshi 2001:102)

Not only do Shibatani and Pareshi propose a continuum of causative directness, they also suggest a continuum of a formal dimension. In terms of degree of synthesis or lexicalization, the sequence is as follows in an example from Marathi: pure lexical > fusional > agglutinative > analytic/syntactic. At the

same time, this continuum also shows the different degrees of regularity/productivity. In other words, a purely lexical is low in regularity and productivity but high in the analytic/syntactic. This also reflects the grammaticalization of the causative forms.

(2)

High <Degree of synthesis/lexicalization/grammaticalization> Low			
Low <Degree of regularity/productivity> High			
Pure lexical	<	Fusional	< Agglutinative < Analytic/syntactic

(Shibatani & Pardeshi 2001:109)

In addition to the continuum scale of causation, the authors also observe that certain causative forms correspond to the various categories. Specifically, lexical causatives are usually direct causatives and syntactic causatives are indirect causatives. Finally, in this model, the concept of productivity is used to account for the fact that this continuum shows not only the degree of directness but also the degree of lexicalization and grammaticalization.

Although this continuum offers another aspect of analysis for causatives, it only focuses on the time dimension. Song (1996) argues that the time distance between the caused and causing event can not in itself give details as to the nature of the causation.

3.1.2 Wolff (2003)

Wolff distinguishes direct and indirect causatives based on the *no-intervening*

cause hypothesis. According to this theory, direct causatives can be defined as a single event without an intervening causer. Take the following examples for illustration:

(3) Sara caused the door to open.

Sara opened the door.

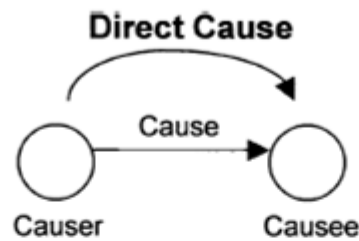
(4) Sara caused the door to open.

Sara opened the window, and the wind blew in, and the door open.

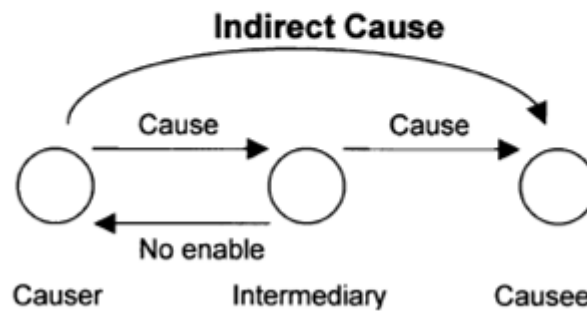
* Sara opened the window.

The scenario of the first set of sentences should be that Sara opened the door with use of her own power without other intervening causer. Wolff claims that this situation is a typical example of direct causation since Sara directly performed the act by herself. Thus, people would also use causative verb sentences to describe the scene. However, in the next set of sentences, Sara was not the one who directly opened the door, rather, she opened the window which allowed the wind to blow in to accomplish the action. The wind here functions as an intervening causer, the cause for the final result. Because Sara might have not intentionally caused the door to open, and was not the direct force of causation, it would be unacceptable to say ‘Sara opened the door.’ Wolff concludes that an intervening causer is the key point to differentiate the direct and indirect causation based on the different linguistic coding of the two scenarios. Wolff’s no-intervening cause hypothesis can be summarized as follows:

(5) a.



b.



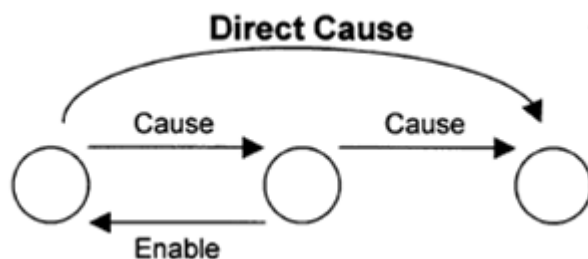
(Wolff 2003: 5)

The first figure illustrates \ direct causation without an intervening causer. Next, the figure for indirect cause demonstrates that an intervening causer performs the causative action with no intention to help the causer. In other words, the causer does not expect for the intervening causer's action and the result. Take (4) as an example, that Sara opened the window does not attempt to close the door.

Therefore, the door closed only because of the coincident result of the blowing of the wind. And this situation conforms to the definition of indirect causation according to the hypothesis.

However, another situation happens when the causer utilizes the intervening causer to accomplish the result. According to the framework, such effect belongs to direct causation.

(6) Sara opened the door with a key.



(Wolff 2003: 5)

Example (6), based on the diagram, can be interpreted as that Sara used a key, and the key caused the door to open. Moreover, Sara's use of the key is not accidental, but serves as representing Sara's desire that the action of the opening of the door occur. In this context, Wolff regards this as a direct causation.

However, Shibatani and Pardeshi (2001) and Wolff (2003) accounts are still both insufficient and serve chiefly as complements to each other, even though they both relate to direct causation. First, Shibatani and Pardeshi use a spatio-temporal frame as a standard to judge the directness. However, they may not be able to tell the difference between "Sara opened the door" and "Sara caused the door to open" if they both exist within the same spatio-temporal frame. Wolff, on the other hand, perceives that the way of performing the caused event is also highly correlated to the directness. This point fulfills the first model. Nevertheless, the Wolff's categorization is not a very refined one because the boundary of two kinds of direct causation is vague and unclear, and the direct/indirect situation should not

necessarily be binary. To solve the problem, we may employ Shibatani and Pardeshi's concept of continuum. In other words, the pattern of (6) is less direct than (5a), but more direct than (5b).

3.2 Force dynamics (Talmy 2000)

Force dynamics, according to Talmy (2000), is a system to describe "how entities interact with respect to force." In this system, two main forces are involved: one is the force of the compulsion used by an agent in compelling an action and the other is the force of the resistance by the object to the action. The basic components are as the in following chart.

(7) Force-dynamic framework

a. Force Entities

Agonist (Ago): ○

Antagonist (Ant):]

b. Intrinsic force tendency

Toward action: >

Toward rest: •

c. Resultant of the force interaction

Action: —>—

Rest: —•—

d. Balance of strengths

Stronger entity: +

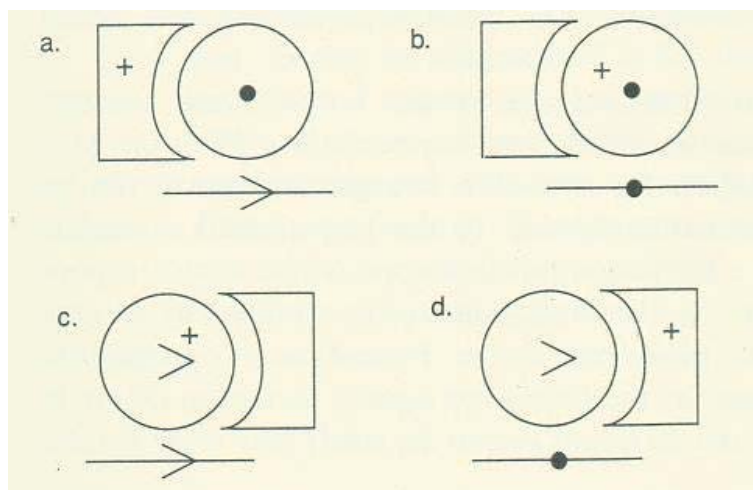
Weaker entity: —

(Talmy 2000: 414)

This system is "a generalization over the traditional notion of 'causative' in the linguistic literature" (Talmy 2000). However, differing from Shibatani and

Pardeshi's model of causation, this framework also allows for "letting". The concept of causative can be expressed by the following four diagrams:

(8) The basic steady-state force-dynamic patterns



(Talmy 2000:415)

In (8a) and (8b), the agonists tend to rest and the antagonists intend to push them. The agonist in (8a) is forced to move but in (8b), it remains in place. The agonists in (8c) and (8d) desire to move but are blocked by antagonists. Nevertheless, the agonist in (8c) overcomes the hindered antagonist, but in (8d), the agonist is totally stopped. Moreover, (8a) and (8d) are general types of causation. The former one is called the "onset causation of action," and the later one is the "onset causation of rest." The property of the causation is that the result of the action of the agonist is in opposition to its intrinsic actional tendency. Based on this framework, type (8a) and (8d) demonstrate the strongest force necessary for causation.

3.3 Transitivity (Hopper and Thompson 1980)

Transitivity, a feature found across languages, is a clause feature indicating an activity “transferred” from one subject to another object. If the act of transference is successful, then its transitivity is high. Hopper and Thompson (1980) seek to capture all dimensions of transitivity, not just for verbs but also for clauses. Therefore they pose ten features to examine a clause and to check its degree of transitivity.

(9) Transitivity (Hopper and Thompson, 1980: 252)

Transitivity Features	High	Low
A. Participants	Two or more participants, A and O	One participant
B. Kinesis	Action	Non-action
C. Aspect	Telic	Atelic
D. Punctuality	Punctual	Non-punctual
E. Volitionality	Volitional	Non-volitional
F. Affirmation	Affirmative	Negative
G. Mode	Realis	Irrealis
H. Agency	A high in potency	A low in potency
I. Affectedness of O	O totally affected	O not affected
J. Individuation of O	O highly individuated	O non-individuated

The following two sentences are examples to illustrate the nature of transitivity.

(10) a. Jerry likes beer.

b. Jerry knocked Sam down.

To begin with, both sentences involve two participants, affirmative and realis.

However, in regard to kinesis, (10a) is a state while (10b) describes an action.

Moreover, the verb of (10a) is atelic and non-punctual, but the verb in (10b) is

telic and punctual. As for the object, “Sam” is referential and animate, or human,

so it is easier for him to be affected than the non-animate object “beer.” Due to the

presence of the features of action, punctual, telic, total affectedness and the

individuation of O in (10b), it is concluded that (10b) is higher in transitivity than

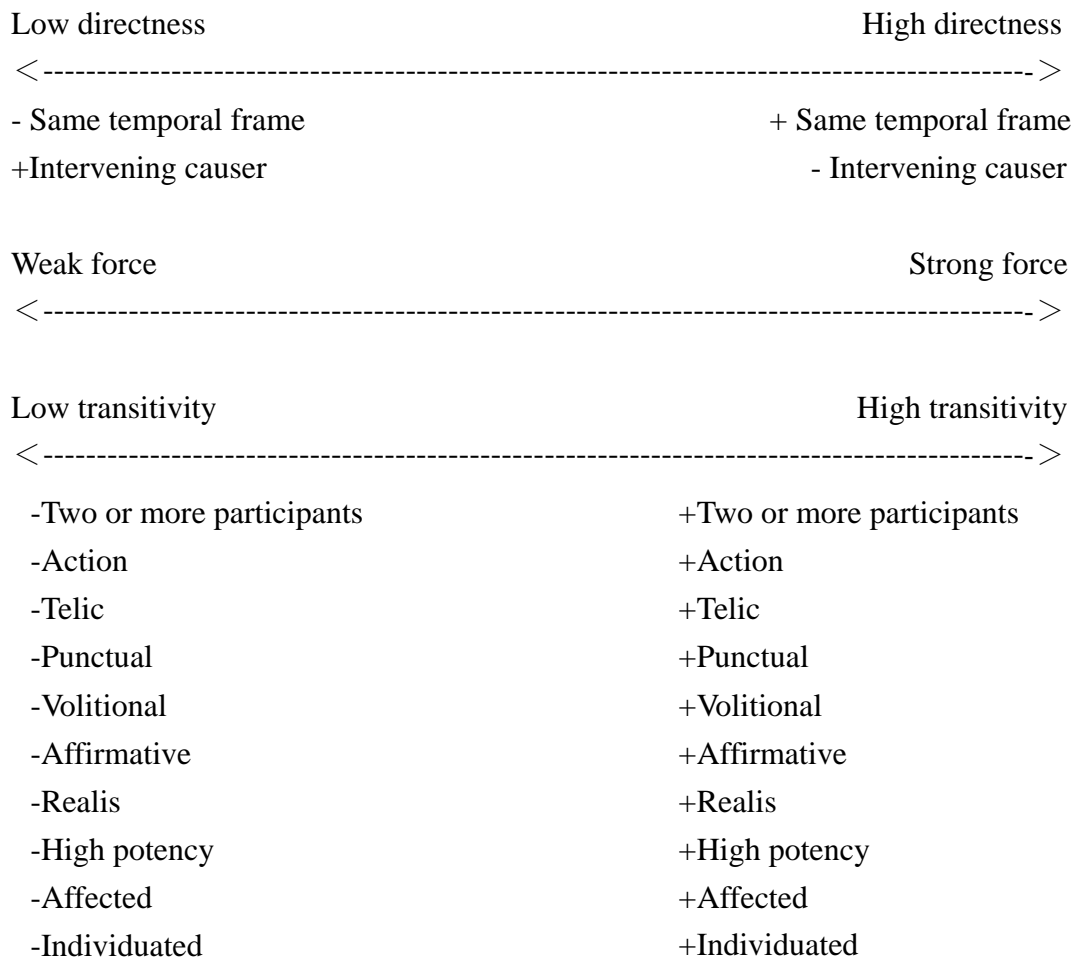
(10a).

Transitivity is a universal across languages, and it can be manifested by linguistic devices such as affixation, case marking, and so on. In addition, many languages also show that causatives have their own features. For example, the authors mention that Indonesian uses the suffix *-kan* to mark the state of the total affectedness of O and causation at the same time. This reveals that causation is related to a high degree of transitivity since causatives mostly involve at least two participants, and the object is affected and highly individuated.

3.4 Remarks

Based on the three frameworks, three scales of measuring causativity are summarized and presented as follows:

(11)



According the models, high and low causativity tends to possess the following

features:

(12) Summary of the model of causativity

Low causativity	High causativity
<----->	
Low directness	High directness
Weak force	Strong force
Low transitivity	High transitivity

This chapter demonstrates how the three frameworks are used to analyze

causatives including the aspects of cognition and linguistic devices. The analysis

based on the frameworks will be presented in the following chapter.