

# On Type: The So-called Causativization in Persian

Arsalan Golfam

Dept. of Language and Linguistics, University of Tarbiat Modares, Tehran, Iran  
Email: golfamar@modares.ac.ir

Masoud Dehghan

Dept. of Language and Linguistics, University of Tarbiat Modares, Tehran, Iran  
Email: masoud.dehghan@modares.ac.ir

**Abstract**—The present study mainly aims to indicate a general classification of causative construction in modern Persian. In this context, transitive and inchoative structures are also analyzed in modern Persian. In this paper, three causative Persian constructions are identified based on Comrie's classification on causative construction. And also different morphological and syntactic strategies of causativizing in passive construction are analyzed. In general, the term causative (henceforth CAUS) describes that which yields a consequence or an effect. On the other hand, the term causation refers to the relationship between a cause and an effect; logically, a cause must exist in order for an effect to take place. In the description of a natural language, causative normally selects a verb or verbal affix that describes causation.

**Index Terms**—causative, transitive, inchoative, Persian

## I. INTRODUCTION

In language typology, a causative (henceforth CAUS) is a form indicating that a subject causes someone or something else to do or be something, or causes a change in state of a non-volitional event. All languages have ways to express causation, but differ in the means. Some languages have morphological devices; such as inflection, for instance in Persian; xordan "to eat" → xorāndan "to cause / make to eat" that change verbs into their causative forms, or adjectives into verbs of *becoming*. Other languages employ periphrasis, with idiomatic expressions or auxiliary verbs. All languages also have lexical causative forms (such as Persian *oft ādan* "to fall" → *and āxtan* "to cause / make to fall").

An inchoative/causative verb pair is defined semantically: It is a pair of verbs which express the same basic situation (generally a change of state) and differ only in that the causative verb meaning includes an agent participants who causes the situation, where as the inchoative verb meaning excludes a causing agent and presents the situation as occurring spontaneously (Haspelmath, 1993, p. 90).

Shibatani (2001) lists three criteria for entities and relations that must be encoded in linguistic expressions of causation:

1. An agent causing or forcing another participant to perform an action, or to be in a certain condition.
2. The relation between the two events [the causing event, and the caused performing/being event] is such that the speaker believes that the occurrence of one event, the "caused event," has been realized at t<sub>2</sub>, which is after t<sub>1</sub>, the time of the "causing event"
3. The relation between causing event and caused event is such that the speaker believes the occurrence of the caused event depends wholly on the occurrence of the causing event- the dependency of the two events here must be to the extent that it allows the speaker a counterfactual inference that the caused event would not have taken place at a particular time if the causing event had not taken place, provided that all else had remained the same. (1976a, pp. 1-2)

This set of definitional prerequisites allows for a broad set of types of relationships based, at least, on the lexical verb, the semantics of the causer, the semantics of the causee and the semantics of the construction explicitly encoding the causal relationship. Many analysts Comrie (1981), Dixon (2000) and others have worked to tease apart what factors semantic or otherwise account for the distribution of causative constructions, as well as to document what patterns actually occur cross-linguistically.

## II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study attempts to provide a comprehensive theoretical background to the study of causative constructions. The aim of this paper is to describe the causative structure (henceforth CAUS) with the survey of data in Persian language. Thus, based on the Persian Causative Structure, the main purposes of this study are to indicate a general classification of causative constructions in modern Persian. And Causative construction can be classified into three groups; the first one is *Morphological* causatives which are made by adding the suffix '*ān(i)dan*' to the present stem; for

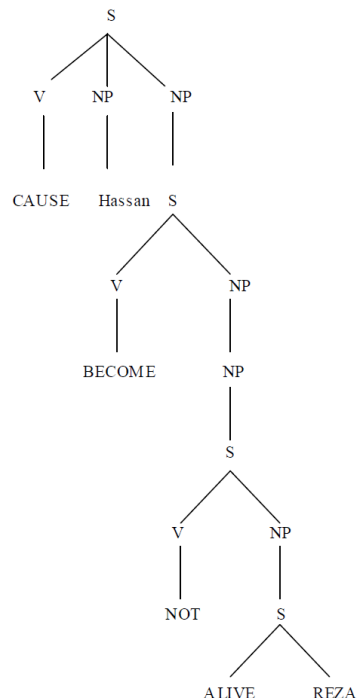
example, the causative form of 'šekastan' "to break" becomes 'šekândan' / 'šekânidan'. The second one is *Lexical* causatives, and the third one is *analytic* causatives. In § V below, this paper provides an analytic framework for analyzing this issue.

### III. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the context of causativization, we present a general classification of causative construction in modern Persian, based on Comrie's classification on causative construction. The types of causative structures are different from each other from semantic valency perspective. Of course, this difference is shown in their syntactic structure. In general, the term causativization refers to the contrast among causative, non-causative, and inchoative verbs.

The paper made by Lakoff (1965) and MacCawley (1968) which a causative verb like "kill" is derived from a complex semantic structure that contains an abstract verb "cause" has put out many disputes. For instance, MacCawley Madeleine a structure like (b) for deriving sentence (a) below:

- a. Reza mord.  
Reza<sub>NOM</sub> die - PAST.  
b. Hassan Reza râ košt.  
Hassan<sub>NOM</sub> Reza<sub>ACC</sub> Kill – PAST  
Hassan killed Reza.



The capitalized CAUSE, BECOME, NOT, and ALIVE represent abstract semantic material underlying the lexical items like 'cause', 'become', 'not', and 'alive' (Patterson, 1974).

#### A. Fillmore

Fillmore (1971) defined causativization as a consequence relation between two events; the occurrence one event is a causing event if it has the occurrence of another event as its consequence. So the following sentence is analyzed as two events:

- a. Hassan wrote a letter to his old friend who was living abroad.  
In the analysis of the above sentence, there are two following events:  
1a. CAUSING EVENT: his writing a letter.  
2a. RESULTING EVENT: a letter sending to his friend.

The events (clauses) are embedded in a higher predicate that has a meaning suggested by the word 'cause', predicating the event – causative relation between the two clauses (Fillmore, 1971, p. 46). A sentence like "John killed the rat" is analyzed by Fillmore as "John's action caused the rat to die"; with John's doing something as one event and the rat's dying as another (p.50). This view is shared McCawley (1972, p. 140) who stated that a notion of causativization 'is a relation between an action or event or event and event but not between a person and an event.

#### B. Comrie

Comrie (1981, pp. 158-177) focuses on the typology of the syntax and semantics of causative constructions proper. Crucially, Comrie (and others to be discussed here) distinguish between the linguistic encoding of causal relations and other, extra-linguistic concerns, such as the nature of causation itself, and questions of how humans perceive of causal relations. While certainly not irrelevant, these extra-linguistic questions will, for now, be left aside. Comrie usefully characterizes causative events in terms of two (or more) micro events perceived of composing a macro event, and encoded in a single expression (of varying size and form). Formally, he categorizes causatives into three types, depending on the contiguity of the material encoding the causing event and that encoding the caused event. They are:

1) Lexical causatives, in which the two events are expressed in a single lexical item, as in the well-discussed case of English kill.

2) Morphological causatives, in which the causing event and the caused event are encoded in a single verbal complex via causative morphology, and, prototypically, morphological marking showing the status of affected arguments.

3) Finally, Comrie discusses analytic causatives, in which the causing event and the caused event are encoded in separate clauses.

Comrie's work is also noteworthy for having brought the notion of syntactic hierarchy to bear on the typology of causative constructions. A hierarchy of grammatical relations had already been formulated to help explain possibilities for relative clause formation (first presented as Keenan and Comrie's (1972) NP accessibility hierarchy; see Croft 1990, p. 147), and Comrie (1989) argued that a similar hierarchy was in play, at least in some constructions, in the marking of the original A argument when a base transitive clause is causativized. The hierarchy is as follows:

- subject > direct object > indirect object > oblique > genitive

Comrie's argument was, in short, that some causativized-transitive constructions mark the new A as belonging to the leftmost available slot in the above hierarchy. Dixon (2000) fleshes out a version this analysis in more detail.

### C. Dixon

Dixon (2000), in his authoritative typology of causatives, discusses the syntax and semantics of all types of causative constructions, in much more detail than can be recounted here. One research question he begins to tackle is the following: Many languages, as he and many others have documented and attempted to categorize, have at least two causative constructions. Leaving aside for now the issue of lexical causatives (except where zero-derivation has been demonstrated to be a productive morphological process), these are often broadly divided into "more compact" and "less compact", with labels, differing by analyst, indicative of relative length of the forms in question (e.g., Comrie's straightforward "morphological"/"syntactic", or Song's (1996) "COMPACT"/"AND"). Earlier works had attempted to summarize the semantic differences under the vague (though preliminarily useful) rubric of the "Iconicity Principle", which basically posits a correlation between the degree of formal compactness of the linguistic material encoding the causative macroevent and the perceived directness of the relationship between causing event ([V<sub>cause</sub>]) and caused event ([V<sub>effect</sub>]): i.e., shorter forms, on the whole, were posited to encode more direct causation than longer forms, as in the classic English *I killed him*. [direct causation] vs. *I caused him to die*. [less direct causation] examples.

The Iconicity Principle is a good first step, but does not really explain any fine-grained semantic distinctions that may be in play. The first attempt to take the analysis further, to my knowledge, was Comrie's (1981, pp.164-7) discussion of directness and control, which began looking at the semantics of the causer and causee as possible semantic fagents influencing the distribution of different causative constructions.

### D. Talmy

Talmy (2003 v.2, pp. 67-101) contains an in-depth investigation of different types of causal relations. Talmy refers to these as "lexicalization patterns," a term which remains unclear to me, given that few of the examples given in his discussion are lexical items, and most interpretations of "different types of causation incorporated in the verb root" are in fact wholly dependent on other morphosyntactic material in the clause. Let us first examine his list of possible (semantic) causative types (Talmy, 2003, pp. 69-70), with examples:

- autonomous events (non-causative): *šiše šekast* "The window broke".
- resulting-event causation: *šiše az barxord-e toop b â ân šekast*. "The window broke from a ball's rolling into it".
- causing-event causation: *barxord-e toop b â šiše ân r â šekast*. "A ball's rolling into it broke the window".
- instrument causation: *toop šiše r â šekast*. "A ball broke the window".
- author causation (unintended): *man âz barxord-e toop be šiše ân r â šekastam*. *I broke the window in rolling a ball into it*".
- agent causation (intended): *man b â zadan-e toop be šiše ân r â šekastam*. "I broke the window by rolling a ball into it".
- undergoer situation (non-causative): *zam âni ke oft âdam dastam šekast*. "My arm broke when I fell".
- self-agentive causation: *man t âp ârk pej âde raftam*. "I walked to the park".
- caused agency (inductive causation): *man ?u: r â be d ânešg ân ferst âdam*. "I sent him to University".

## IV. CAUSATIVIZATION AND PASSIVIZATION IN PERSIAN

In Persian we can make passive verbs by adding the suffix /-e/ as a participle marker to the verb stem after the auxiliary verb 'šodan' "to become" (Windfuhr 1979, p. 105). The agent can be expressed with a by-phrase *be-vasile-je* in the passive clause. However, in Persian, the agent usually remains unexpressed, as illustrated in the examples below.

(1)

- a. Hassan      n âne      -r â      neveš   -t.  
 Hassan<sub>NOM</sub>    letter      -ACC   write -PAST -3SG.  
 Hassan wrote the letter.
- b. n âne      (be- vasil-je Hassan)   neveš   -t      -e      šo      -d  
 letter<sub>NOM</sub>      by Hassan      write -PAST PRT   become   -Past-3SG  
 The letter was written (by Hassan).

However, in these sentences, the agent can be expressed by the compound preposition *be-vâsile-ye* 'by'.

#### Causativizing the Passive Construction

When expressing about causativizing the passive construction, we can express the different morphological and syntactic strategies in modern Persian language as you consider in the examples below.

(2)

- a. Hassan      matlab      -r â      fahmi      -d  
 Hassan<sub>NOM</sub>    topic      -ACC   understand -PAST- 3SG  
 Hassan understood the topic.
- b. man      b âres šodam   ke      Hassan      matlab      -r â      be-      fahm      -ad  
 1SG<sub>NOM</sub>    cause      COMP   Hassan<sub>NOM</sub>    topic      -ACC   INFL-   understand -PAST -3SG  
 I caused Hassan to understand the topic.

(3)

- a. matlab      fahm      -id      -e      šo      -d  
 topic<sub>NOM</sub>    understand -PAST -PRT   become -PAST-3SG  
 The topic was understood.
- b. man      b âres šodam   ke      matlab      fahm      -id      -e      be-      šav      -ad  
 1SG<sub>NOM</sub>    cause      COMP   topic<sub>NOM</sub>    understand -PAST -PRT   INFL-   become -3SG  
 I caused the topic to be understood.

Another way is that the embedded passive clause in a syntactically causative construction in Persian language like the example below that can be causativized morphologically.

(4)

- man      b âres šodam   ke      matlab      be-      Hassan      fahm      -â      -d      -e      be-  
 1SG<sub>NOM</sub>    cause      COMP   topic<sub>NOM</sub>    DAT-   Hassan    understand -CAUS -PAST -PRT INFL-  
 šav      -ad  
 become -3SG.  
 I caused someone to make the topic be understood by Hassan.

In modern Persian language, there is a morphological strategy of causativization where the causative suffix/- â/ is added to the verb stem to make a passivized form; i.e, the sentence is first causativized and then passivized, as illustrated in the example below.

(5)

- a. Hassan      matlab      -r â      fahm      -id  
 Hassan<sub>NOM</sub>    topic      -ACC   understand -PAST- 3SG  
 Hassan understood the topic.
- b. man      matlab      -ra      be-      Hassan      fahm      -an      -d      -am  
 1SG<sub>NOM</sub>    topic      -ACC   DAT-   Hassan    understand -CAUS -PAST -1SG  
 I made Hassan understand the topic.
- c. matlab      be      Hassan      fahm      -an      -d      -e      šo      -d  
 topic<sub>NOM</sub>    DAT-   Hassan    understand -CAUS -PAST -PRT   become -PAST-3SG  
 Hassan was made to understand the topic.  
 (Lit. The topic was made to be understood by Hassan)
- d. \* matlab      Hassan      -ra      fahm      -an      -d      -e      šo      -d  
 topic<sub>NOM</sub>    Hassan      -ACC   understand -CAUS -PAST -PRT   become -PAST-3SG

At the above example (5), the declarative sentence in 5a is causativized in 5b, and then passivized, in 5c. In 5c, the agent remains in the DAT case after passivization, and cannot take place in the ACC case as shown by the ungrammaticality of 5d.

#### V. DATA ANALYSIS

In Persian, the causative member is marked and derived from the inchoative member. In the causative alternation, the inchoative verb is basic and the causative verb is derived (Haspelmath, 1993). The aim of this paper is to describe the causative construction (henceforth CAUS) with the survey of data in Persian language Causative construction can be classified into three groups; *morphological causatives*, *lexical causatives*, and *analytic causatives*.

### Causative Constructions

#### 1. Morphological Causatives

In Persian, causative form of the verb is made by adding *ân(i)dan* to the present stem. All V+ *ân(i)dan* combinations exhibit similar morphophonological properties, indicating the indivisible nature of the single phonological word constructed by – *ân(i)dan* affixation. Here the inchoative verb is base and the causative verb is derived like the examples below:

(6)

Galtidan "roll"	(inchoative)	→	Galt ândan "to cause/make to roll"	(causative)
jošidan "bubble"	(inchoative)	→	još ândan "to cause/make to bubble"	(causative)
šekastan "break"	(inchoative)	→	šek ândan "to cause/make to break"	(causative)
tarsidan "fear"	(inchoative)	→	tars ândan "to cause/make to fear"	(causative)
xoškidan "dry"	(inchoative)	→	xošk ândan "to cause/make to dry"	(causative)
daridan "lacerate"	(inchoative)	→	dr ândan "to cause/make to lacerate"	(causative)
terekidan "burst"	(inchoative)	→	terek ândan "to cause/make to burst"	(causative)
xordan "to eat"	(inchoative)	→	xorândan "to cause/make to eat"	(causative)
xandidan "to laugh"	(inchoative)	→	xand ândan "to cause/make to laugh"	(causative)
x âbidan "to sleep"	(inchoative)	→	x âb ândan "to cause/make to sleep"	(causative)

In this case, consider the following sentences:

(7)

šišē                      šekas -t  
window<sub>NOM</sub>      break -PAST-3SG

The window broke [Inchoative]

#### Causative:

Hassan              šišē              -r â              šek              -ân              -d  
Hassan<sub>NOM</sub>      window      -ACC      break      -CAUS      -PAST-3SG

Hassan broke the window [transitive]

man              b âres šodam      ke              Hassan              šišē              -r â              be-              šek              -ân              -ad  
1SG<sub>NOM</sub>      cause              COMP      Hassan<sub>NOM</sub>      window      -ACC      INFL-      break      -CAUS      -PAST-3SG

I caused Hassan to break the window.

#### 2. Lexical Causatives

Persian language is rich in semantically, like many languages, related to inchoative/causative pairs of verbs, with overt causativizing or inchoativizing morphology attached to a common root. On the other hand, some verbs have a lexical causative counterpart; they cannot be causativised by the causative suffix. This group of causatives can be classified into three groups; such as:

a) *Equative simple lexical causatives* like the examples below:

(8)

šekastan "to break"	(inchoative)	→	šekastan "to break"	(causative)
boridan "to cut"	(inchoative)	→	boridan "to cut"	(causative)
poxtan "to cook"	(inchoative)	→	poxtan "to cook"	(causative)
rixtan "to pour"	(inchoative)	→	rixtan "to pour"	(causative)
šek âftan "to "	(inchoative)	→	šek âftan " "	(causative)

In the following sentence, we can consider this case:

(9)

tan âb                      bor -id [inchoative]

The rope<sub>NOM</sub> cut -Past-3SG

The rope cut [inchoative]

#### Causative:

Hassan      tan âb      -r â      bor      -id

Ali<sub>NOM</sub>      rope      -ACC      cut      - Past-3SG

Ali cut the rope [causative]

b) *Non-equative simple lexical causatives* like the examples below:

(10)

? ânadan "to come"	(inchoative)	→	? âwardan "to bring"	(causative)
raftan "to go"	(inchoative)	→	bordan "to take"	(causative)
?oft âdan "to fall"	(inchoative)	→	?and âxtan "to make sb/sth to fall "	(causative)

barx âstan "stood up" (inchoative) → boland kardan "stand" (causative)

c) *Non-equative compound lexical causatives*. In modern Persian Language, there are a number of compound verbs formed from a noun or an adjective followed by an auxiliary verb, such as 'šodan' "become", and 'kardan' "do". Compound verbs with the auxiliary verb 'šodan' are in the non-causative or inchoative form, and those with the auxiliary 'kardan' are their corresponding causatives. Consider the given examples below.

(11)

sav âr šodan "to get on" (inchoative) → sav âr kardan "to make sb to get on"  
 garm šodan "to heat sth" (inchoative) → garm kardan "to make sb to heat something"  
 bid âr šodan "to wake up" (inchoative) → bid âr kardan "to make sb to wake up"  
 j âl gereftan "to learn" (inchoative) → j âl d âdan "to make sb to learn"  
 didan "to see sb/sth" (inchoative) → nešân d âdan "to make sb to see sb/sth"  
 ? âaš gereftan "to fire" (inchoative) → ? âaš zadan "to make sth to fire"  
 zamin xordan "to fall" (inchoative) → zamin zadan "to make sb to fall"  
 gul xordan "to cheat" (inchoative) → gul zadan "to make sb to cheat"

### 3. Analytic Causatives

In modern Persian, some verbs can be causativised syntactically, where the verb to be causativised takes place in a complement clause preceded by the compound verb *b âres šodan* "to cause". A causative form or phrase can be thought of as a valency-increasing voice operation, which adds one argument. If the original verb is intransitive, then the causative construction as a whole is transitive: *to fall* → *to make sb/sth fall*, *to topple sb/sth*. If the original verb is transitive, the causative is ditransitive: *to eat (sth.)* → *to make sb eat sth*, *to feed sth to sb*. Consider the examples below.

(12)

Hassan mive -r â xor -d  
 Hassan<sub>NOM</sub> fruit -ACC eat -PAST-3SG  
 Hassan ate the fruit.

#### Causative:

man b âres šodam ke Hassan mive -r â be- xor -ad  
 1SG<sub>NOM</sub> cause COMP Hassan<sub>NOM</sub> fruit -ACC INFI - eat -PAST-3SG  
 I caused Hassan to eat the fruit.

(13)

Hassan x âb -id  
 Hassn<sub>NOM</sub> sleep -PAST-3SG  
 Hassan slept.

#### Causative:

man b âres šodam ke Hassan be- x âb -ad  
 1SG<sub>NOM</sub> cause COMP Hassan<sub>NOM</sub> INFI- sleep -PAST-3SG  
 I caused Hassan to sleep

### 4. Causative Voice

The causative voice is a grammatical voice promoting the oblique argument of a transitive verb to an agent argument. When the causative voice is applied to a verb, its valency increases by one. If, after the application of the grammatical voice, there are two agent arguments, one of them is obligatorily demoted to an oblique argument. The Persian language is an example of languages with the causative voice as illustrated in the following examples:

(14)

Hassan ket âb h â -r â jam?kar -d.  
 Hassan<sub>NOM</sub> book -ACC collect -PAST-3SG.  
 Hassan collected the books.

#### Causative:

be- Hassan ?ej âxe d âde šod ke ket âb h â -r â jam?Kond  
 DAT- Hassan let COMP book -ACC collect<sub>CAUS</sub>.  
 Let's get Hassan to collect the books.

The Causer (here, *Hassan*) is the nominative-marked subject of the whole sentence. The logical subject of the root verb, referred to below as the causee, is marked with accusative or dative case (here, '*ket âb*' "book", using the accusative variant).

(15)

batfeh â ket âb h â -r â x ân -d -and  
 Children<sub>NOM</sub> book -ACC read PAST-3PL  
 Children read the books.

#### Causative:

man b âres šodam ke batfeh â ket âb h â -r â be- x ân -and

1SG<sub>NOM</sub> cause COMP children book -ACC INFL- read. -PAST-3PL  
 They cause children read the books.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This paper looks at the different ways in Persian to express inchoative / causative verb alternations. The main aims of this paper are to show a general classification of causative constructions in modern Persian. In Persian language as we expressed, the different morphological and syntactic ways of causativization are surveyed where the morphological causatives occur as embedded clauses in the syntactic causative sentences. Also, there is an agent in causative verbs added to inchoative or non causative constructions. And also, non causative verbs have an agent which they have it in their meaning valency and it isn't the result of causativization. Finally this study shows that causative constructions can be classified into three groups; the first one is *Morphological* causatives which are made by adding the suffix '*ân(i)dan*' to the present stem; for example, the causative form of '*šekastan*' "to break" becomes '*šek ândan*' / '*šek ânidan*'. The second one is *Lexical* causatives, and the third one is *analytic* causatives.

## APPENDIX

The following abbreviations are used in the data presented in this paper:

ACC = accusative

PASS = passive

PAST = past tense

CAUS = causative

1SG = first person singular

3SG = third person singular

DAT = dative

NOM = nominative

INFI = infinitive

COMP = complementiser

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**Arsalan Golfam** Ph.D. Associate professor at Univ. of Tarbiat Modares, Dept. of Language and Linguistics, Tehran, Iran. He is from Iran and she was born there. He has Ph.D. degree in Linguistics from the department of language and linguistics at Tehran University in Iran.

He's taught language and linguistics to students at Tarbiat Modares University in Tehran, Iran since 1998. Also, he has many researches

**Masoud Dehghan** Ph.D. Candidate at the Univ. of Tarbiat Modares, Dept. of Language and Linguistics, Tehran, Iran. He is an English teacher at the Department of English Language and Linguistics at Razi University in Kermanshah, Iran.

He's teaching English Language at the department of English language and literature at Razi University in Kermanshah, Iran. Also, he's teaching English Language at university of Applied, Science and Technology in Kermanshah, Iran. His previous researches are: 1- "Discourse and Otherness: A critical Study of the other in the Recent Discourse on Democracy". Int. Conference on CDA. University of Tasmania. February in 2005. 2- "Stylistics and linguistic variations in Forough Farokhzad's Poems". JLTR academy publisher. volume3, Issue 5. September. 2012. 3- "A short analysis of Insertion in Persian". Theory and Practice in Language Studies, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 14-23, January 2012