

A Non-derivational Approach to Anticausative Constructions*

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Kim, Jae Min. (2016). A Non-derivational Approach to Anticausative Constructions. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 24(2), 25-40. The aim of this paper is to support the non-derivational approach to the Anticausative constructions using English, Korean and other language examples. For the relationship between Causatives and Anticausatives, there are two most significant parameters of theoretical variation. The first parameter is that Anticausatives derived from Causative counterpart, that Causatives are derived from Anticausative counterparts, and that they are derived independently. The second parameter is that Anticausative constructions involve implicit causation. In this paper I argue that Causatives and Anticausatives should be derived independently, and the claim—Anticausatives are underlyingly causal—be mistaken. I present two pieces of evidence: The first one is that there is asymmetry in the variants of Causative/Anticausative alternation. The second one is that there are many examples that have non-direct causation PPs in Anticausative constructions. A Causer PP may or may not appear in the Anticausative constructions. An applicative can directly introduce a direct causation into Anticausative construction regardless of the underlying causal component. I regard the sentential Causer PP in Anticausatives as a circumstantial or background option which arises at an after-syntactic interface.

Key Words: Causatives, Anticausatives, Derivational/Non-derivational Approach, Applicative

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1. Introduction

The transitive/intransitive alternation exemplified in (1) has received a lot of attention for the research on argument structures. (1a) construction which has NP V NP order is generally called Causative or transitive construction, and (1b) is called Anticausative, Inchoative, Middle or intransitive construction. Of the many questions in the alternation, I will focus on the causal relation between the two structures and suggest an appropriate syntactic structure for the anticausatives in this paper.

- (1) a. John/the draught broke the vase.
 b. The vase broke.

Korean has also the same alternating structures¹⁾;

- (2) a. Insu-ka os- ul mal-i -ess-ta.
 NOM clothes ACC dry-NACT Past-Dec.
 'Insu dried the clothes.'
 b. os- i mal-ass-ta.
 clothes- NOM dry-Pas-Dec
 'The clothes dried.'
- (3) a. uri-ka san- ul pol- su- iss - ta.
 we-NOM mountain-ACC see - Aux-Pres-Dec
 'We can see the mountain.'
 b. san- i po - i- n - ta.
 mountain-NOM see - NACT-Pres-Dec
 'We can see the mountain.'

1) In Korean, there are two kinds of Inchoatives; the first one is the so-called Anticausatives which have the have *-i*, *-hi*, *-li*, *-ki*, *-u*, *-ku* morpheme as in (2b), and the second one is the Middle constructions which do not have any morpheme as (3b). Thus, in this paper, I will use both constructions as Anticausative examples in Korean. Also, the Inchoative morphemes are used in Korean Passives, and, thus, I will call them non-active(NACT) morphemes. (cf. Kim 2014, Kim 2009, Bae 1988)

Though, as can be seen in the examples, the objective NPs in the intransitive anticausatives in (1b) and (2b) appear in the subject position like the Passive constructions, they lack a grammatically active external argument differently from the passive constructions (cf. Levin and Rappaport 1995, Reinhart 2000;2002, among others). Passive construction licenses different types of agentive or causer modifiers, as in the examples (4) and (5);

- (4) a. The vase was broken by John/the draught.
 b. The vase was broken with hammer.

- (5) a. kil -i cumin- eyuyhay mak- hi- ess- ta.
 road NOM inhabitants- by close-NACT Past Dec
 'The road was closed by the inhabitants.'
 b. kil- i tayphung- ttaymuney mak-hi- ess- ta.
 road- NOM typhoon- because close-NACT Past Dec
 'The road was closed because of the typhoon.'

Such PP modifiers cannot appear in anticausatives (5) and (6);

- (6) a. *The vase broke by John/the draught.
 b. *The vase broke with the hammer.

- (7) a. *os- i Insu-eyuyhay mal-ass-ta.
 clothes-NOM by dry-Past-Dec
 'The clothes dried by Insu.'
 b. ??*nun- i haybyech-eyuyhay nok-ass-ta.
 snow NOM sunlight- by melt-Past-Dec
 'Snow melted by the sunlight.'

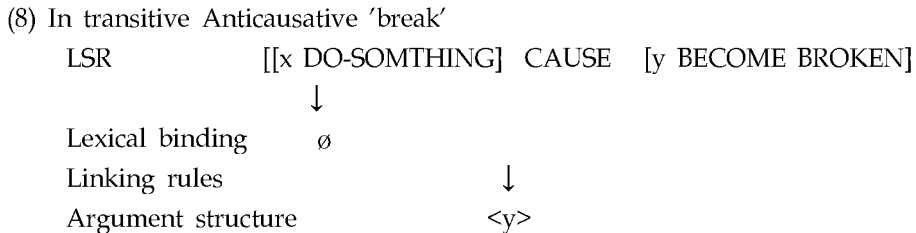
Because transitive and anticausative/passive constructions like (1a), (1b) and (4a) have the same objective argument NPs and verbs, it is very natural to look into their argument and syntactic structures comparatively. Here we may have three options for the relationship among them; (i) Anticausatives are derived

from Causatives, (ii) Causatives are derived from Anticausatives, (iii) they are derived independently.

In this paper I will argue that the relevant Korean evidence supports the non-derivational approach for the anticausatives. In other words, Anticausative verbs have no causal semantics, and thus anticausative structures are not inherently causative. In section 2 I will review the claim that the anticausative and causative constructions have started from the same semantic and syntactic structure. In Section 3, some examples are presented to show that the derivational approach fails to explain them effectively, and to support a non-derivational approach to the causative/anticausative alternations.

2. Causation represented in syntax: an overview of the literature

This approach basically has originated from the idea of Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995:108), in which they interpret the causative/anticausative alternation as the evidence of the existence of semantic dyadic structures, as follows;

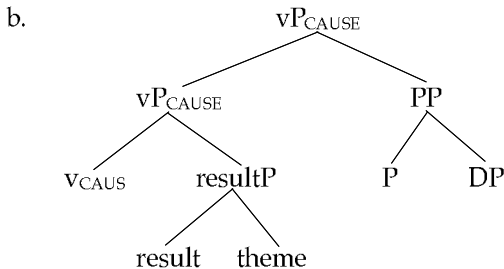


In (8), they argue that intransitive 'break' has essentially the same semantic structure as the transitive counterpart inasmuch as an underlying cause predicate is assumed to be present in the lexical semantic representation (LSR) of both constructions. It is true that the argument does not suggest any direct syntactic representation of the causal relation of the alternation. However, the lack of an obvious trait of an external argument in anticausatives does not necessarily imply that causality is also absent.

- (9) a. The vase broke from the earthquake.
 b. nun- i haybyeth ttaemuney nok- ass- ta.
 snow-Nom sunshine because of melt- Past- Dec
 ‘Snow melted because of the sunshine.’
 c. (Greek) i supa kaike me ti dinati fotia
 the soup burnt.NACT with the strong fire
 (Alexiadou & Doren 2012;17)
 ‘The soup burnt because of the strong fire.’

As the above examples show, the Anticausative constructions are widely attested cross-linguistically to have the apparent Causer PPs. (cf. Alexiadou 2006,2012, Kim 2014) Thus, many syntacticians place causation directly into the syntactic representation of anticausatives. For example, Kallulli (2006; 2007) argues that anticausatives always have a defective vP, which has not a regular external argument but a [+cause] feature on its head, and thus the interpretable [+cause] feature on v₀ makes the realized PPs interpreted as a cause. Similarly, Alexiadou et al. (2006) and Schafer (2008a,b) use two distinct syntactic projections introducing an external argument and a causal layer: VoiceP and vP_{CAUSE}/CauseP, respectively. Thus they argue that a regular anticausative (10a) has the following syntactic structure (10b);

- (10) a. The vase broke from the draught.

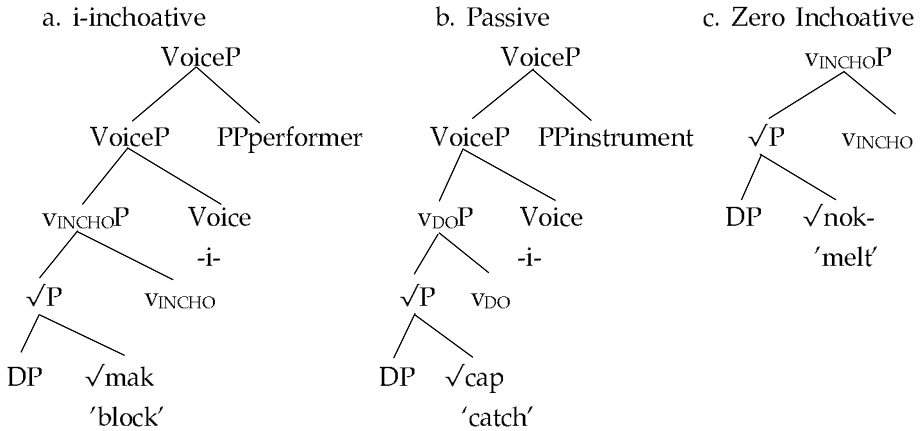


In this representation, *from*-PP is adjoined to vP_{CAUSE} to detect the presence of the syntactically coded causal relation either via the [+cause] feature or via a vP_{CAUSE} layer, which are coded directly in syntactic representation.

Following the above analysis, Kim (2009:251) suggests Korean anticausative

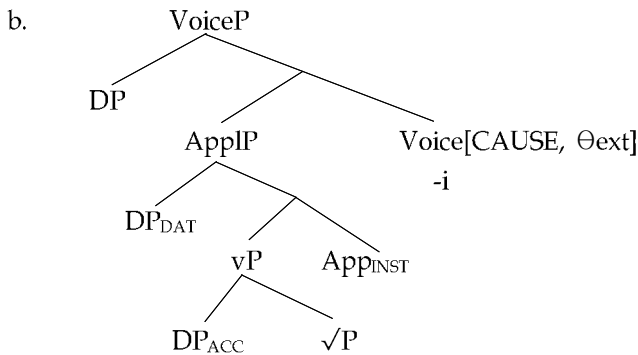
structure as follows;

(11) (=Kim's 31, 32 &33)



Also she proposes the tree diagram of Causative construction as follows in Kim(2011;500);

(12) a. Suni-ka Minsu-eykey chayk-ul ilk- hi- ess-ta
 NOM DAT book-ACC read-NACT-Past-Dec
 ‘Suni had Minsu read the book.’



As can be seen in the above diagrams (11a,b,c), basically she argues that in Korean there are two types of vs that correspond one-to-one to two basic types of events, namely vDO and VINCHO. vDo corresponds to an event type of an

activity, and v_{INCHO} corresponds to an event type of change of state. Kim (2009:252) argues that because the anticausative structure (11a) has v_{INCHO} , its structure can have performer PP, and because (11b) passive/active alternation structure has v_{DO} , instrument PP can appear in it. In the Causative structure (12), causer DP is introduced by the feature [CAUSE] in the Voice head which is the complement of the Applicative phrase.

Here, Voice is an external argument introducer, and v is a verbalizing head by combining with a lexical root, and introduces an event of the predicate. (cf. Cuervo 2003, Pylkkänen, 2008). For the analyses of Causative/Anticausative alternations like (11) and (12), Kim(2009) and other derivational approachers share the contention that they contain a causatively interpreted syntactic layer of decomposition or a feature of the Voice, and it is this layer or the feature that licenses the causer PP. By separating the two types of structures, she argues that the differences and similarities of the adjunct phrases in the types of inchoatives can be captured as well as their morphological relationship with the passive. The appearance of a cause phrase and 'by itself' phrase can be explained by v_{INCHO} , and the instrument phrase by VoiceP.

3. Evidence for Non-derivational Analysis

In this section, I will argue that alternating verbs are lexically associated with the internal argument only, and that Causatives and Anticausatives are derived independently, along with Rappaport Hovav & Levin (2012) and Rappaport Hovav(2014). For the non-derivational approach of the anticausative constructions, I will present two kinds of evidence; one is the asymmetrical availabilities of the causative/anticausative variants, the other is the appearance of the Causer PPs as a sentential modifier.

3.1 Asymmetries in availability of variants

As the derivational evidence of Causative/Anticausative constructions, [+CAUSE] feature in Voice is assumed, as was shown in the previous section. In other words, Causative and Anticausative constructions share the feature

[+CAUSE] and they can be altered in any cases. The following examples, however, show that anticausative or causative constructions are sometimes impossible even if the verbs meet the lexical specification of the class of alternating verbs;

- (13) a. The sky cleared.
 b. *The yard cleared (of debris). (Rappaport Hovav 2014;16)
 c. We cleared the yard of the debris.
- (14) a. The day lengthened.
 b. *The skirt lengthened. (Levin & R Hovav 1995:105)
 c. The dressmaker lengthened the skirt.
- (15) a. The vase broke.
 b. *His promise broke. (R Hovav 2014:17)
 c. He broke his promise.

For the example (13a), it can be assumed that ‘the sky’ was cleared because of the outside causer. This assumption, however, is not possible for the examples (13b&c). In other words, though it may be assumed that the theme NP of (13b) ‘the yard’ is cleared because of the outside causer as in (13c), the example (13b) is ungrammatical. The same can be observed in (14b) and (15b). Though the verbs ‘clear’, ‘lengthen’, and ‘break’ can have the Anticausative expressions as in (13a), (14a), and (15a), the Causatives (13c), (14c), and (15c) do not have the Anticausative counterparts. The following Korean examples show the same asymmetries:

- (16) a. inkan- (uy) sumuyng- i nul- ess- ta.
 human-GEN life-span- NOM increase-Past- DEC
 ‘The life span of human being lengthened.’
- a’. hyentay uyhak- i inkan sumuyng- lul nul - li - ess- ta.
 modern medicine-NOM human life-span- ACC increase NACT- Past DEC
 ‘Modern medicine lengthened the life span of human beings.’

- b. i tosi-uy inku- ka nul- ess- ta.
 this city-GEN population-NOM increase Past-Dec
 'This city's number of population increased.'
- b'. ??*hyentay uyhak- i i tosi-uy inku- lul nul- li- ess- ta.
 modern medicine NOM this city-GEN population-ACC increase NACT-Past-Dec
 'Modern medicine increased the number of population of this city.'
- (17) a. phipu- ka tha- ss- ta.
 skin- NOM burn-Past-Dec
 'Skin burnt.'
- b. ku- nun phipu- lul thae- u- ess- ta.
 he- Top skin- ACC burn- NACT-Past- Dec
 'He burnt the skin.'(liter.).
- c. *ku ttemuney phipu-ka tha-ss-ta.
 he because of skin-NOM burn-Past-Dec
 ??*'Because of him, the skin burnt.'
- (18) a. nac- i kil- eji- ta.²⁾
 daytime- NOM long- NACT-Dec
 'The daytime lengthened.'
- b. yelum- ilaese nac- i kil-ta.
 summertime- because daytime-NOM long
 'Because of the summertime, daytime lengthened.'
- c. *eylum- i nac- ul kil- keyha- ess- ta.
 summer- NOM daytime-ACC lengthen- Caus- Past- Dec
 'Summer made the daytime long.' (lit.)
- (19) a. kkoch- i phi- ess- ta.
 flower-NOM blossom- Past - Dec
 'The flower blossomed.'

2) Lim(2015) and Nam(2011) regard *-eci* as an Anticausative morpheme in Korean, and I just adopt their arguments without discussion.

- b. *cengwonsa- ka kkoch- ul phi- u- ess- ta.
 gardener- NOM flower-ACC blossom- NACT Past- Dec
 '??A gardener blossomed the flower.'

The Korean Anticausatives in (16) - (19) do not have Causative counterparts or the possible Causer NPs do not exist. In (16) there may be various and unspecifiable reasons for the 'increase' of the population of the city. And in the Causative construction (17b), the Subject NP is not a Causer, and the sun may be a Causer. It is not possible to locate the Causer for the Inchoative construction (18a), though a Causer PP can appear in the sentence as in (18b). The same explanation can be applied to the examples in (19).

As for the English examples in (13-15), some Korean Anticausative constructions do not have Causative counterparts, and, depending on DPs chosen as theme, the same verb cannot be used in Anticausatives or Causatives. In other words, sometimes it is very difficult to relate a Anticausative construction with its potential Causative construction. Here I argue that the alternating verbs look to be only associated with the internal argument not with the external argument or causer DP. In these cases, the causer may not actually exist or it may be impossible to find out.

3.2 Causer PP 'ttaemuney' in Korean as Sentential Adverbial: a circumstantial adjunct

It is true that in many cases Causer PP is used as a VP modifier in Korean as well as in many other languages, as follows;

- (20) a. nun-i hayspyeth ttaemuney nok- ass- ta.
 snow-Nom sunlight because of melt- Past- Dec
 'Snow melted because of the sunlight.'

b. He died from exhaustion.

c. (Greek)

i supa ka- ike me ti dinati fortia. (=ALexiadu & Doron 2012:17 (34))

the soup burnt- NACT with the strong fire
 'The soup got burnt with the strong fire.'

Rappaport Hovav(2014), following McCawley(1978) and Rappaport Hovav & Levin(2011), argues that Cause PPs in Anticausatives appear when it satisfies The Direct Causation Condition³). Also she argues that the Causer PPs do not appear, when the causer is recoverable or previously mentioned, and/or the speaker does not know the cause as well as it is not the direct causes, following general maxims of conversation. Therefore the same events of the above sentences can be described by the following examples (91):

(21) a. hayspyeth- i nun-ul nok - i- ess-ta .
 sunlight- NOM snow-ACC melt- CAU Past-Dec
 'Sunlight melted snow.'

b. Exhaustion killed him. (=R Hovav 2014;19 (52b))

c. i dinati fortia ekapse- t i supa. (Alexiadou & Doron 2012)
 the strong fire burnt ACT the soup
 'The strong fire burnt the soup.'

However, in the following examples, though Causer PPs are not the direct causation of the event of the VPs, they can appear in the Anticausatives;

(22) a. She jumped from happiness.
 a'. ??Happiness made her jump.

(23) a. ollimphik- ttaymuney ku saken- i mut- hi- ess- ta.
 olympic -because of the case -NOM bury - NACT- Past-Dec
 'Because of the Olympic, the case buried.'

3) The Direct Causation Condition: a single argument verb may be expressed in a clause with a transitive verb if the subject represents a direct cause of the event expressed by the verb and its argument (RH&L 2012: 160)

- a'. *?? ollimphik- i ku saken- ul mut- ess- ta.
 olympic- NOM the case- ACC bury- Past-Dec
 'Olympic buried the case.'(Lit.)
- b. yelum- iki ttaymuney i sikan- ey nal- i say- ss- ta.
 summer-Nomial because of this time at day-Nom break- Past-Dec
 'Because it was the summer time, the day broke at this time.'
- b. *yelum- i i sikan- ey nal- i say- keyh- ess- ta.
 summer- NOM this time -at day-NOM break CAUS Past Dec
 'Summer made the day break at this time.' (Lit.)

In the examples (23), *ttaymuney* 'because (of)' PPs are sentential adverbials and modify the whole clauses, and they don't have appropriate Causative counterparts. In other words, they appear not because of the [+cause] feature in the vP, but because they are the circumstantial background. Also, as I have argued in Kim (2014), Cause phrase can appear in Medio-passive constructions, too;

- (24) a. phosthe-ka simhan pipalam - ttaymuney cecello kalkikalki
 poster-NOM extreme rain-bearing-wind because of by itself into-pieces
 ccic- ki- ess- ta.
 tear- NACT Past Dec
 'The poster was torn into pieces by itself because of the extreme
 rain-bearing wind.'
- b. simhan pinan- ttaymuney ku- nun cecello ttel- li- ess- ta.
 severe critics because of he- Top by itself fear- NACT- Past- Dec
 'He felt fear by himself because of the severe critics.'

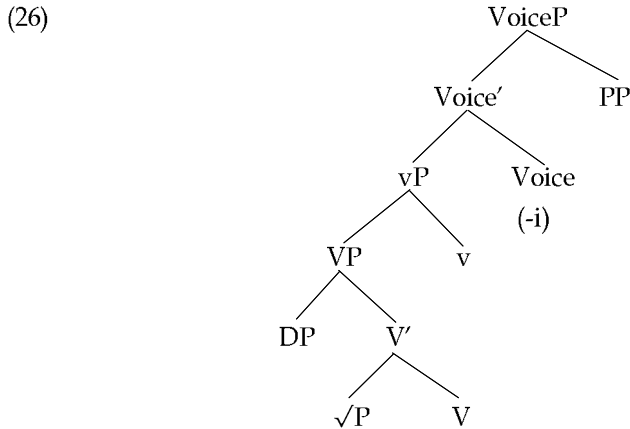
Alexiadou & Doron(2012) also presents the following Greek medio-passive examples that have *by*-phrase;

- (25) a. ha-mexonit nimxaca (al-yedey ha-masa'it).
 the-car squash.SIMPL.MID by the truck
 'The car was squashed (by the truck).'

- b. ha-nisuy hitbacea' (al-yedey ha-xoqer).
 the-experiment perform.INTS.MID by the researcher
 'The experiment was performed (by the researcher).'

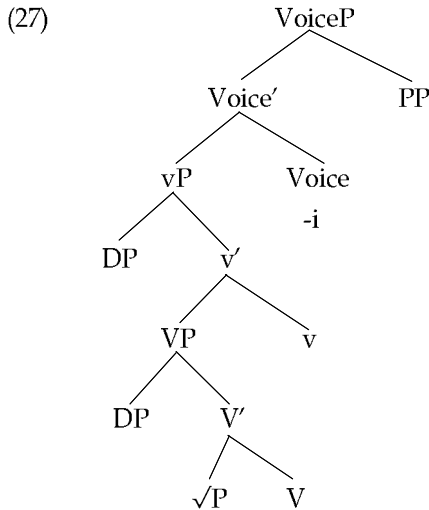
Kim(2014) defines (24a,b) as Medio-passive constructions, which can be interpreted as both Passive and Middle constructions. The examples in (24, 25) show that the assumption that Causer PP or Performer PP in Anticausative construction and the Instrument PP in Passive constructions are complementary distribution respectively is mistaken. I argue that 'by-itself' ('cecello' in Korean) in Anticausative constructions is used to deny the existence of an external instigator or direct causer of the change-of-state, but the appearance of a Causer PPs do not provide evidence that anticausative structures are underlyingly causal. Thus, as Hovav(2014) does, I argue, with Korean examples, that the appearance of the Causer PPs for the alternating verbs is decided by conversational maxim after syntax.

Here I suggest the following diagram for Korean Anticausatives;



The tree diagram (26) is the same as the other normal clauses. In the tree diagram, the VoiceP and the vP node are optional elements, and thus when there is no sentential adjunct or other PP they will not appear in the tree diagram. When a Causer PP appears as a direct causer it will appear in the VP with a V', and if there is an indirect or circumstantial cause it will appear in the

PP of the VoiceP. And Causative construction has the following syntactic structure;



The only difference between (26) and (27) is the appearance of v' , which will introduce apparent direct causer to the Causative construction.

4. Conclusion

For the relationship between Causatives and Anticausatives, there are two most significant parameters of theoretical variation. The first parameter is that Anticausatives are derived from Causative counterpart, that Causative is derived from Anticausative counterpart, and that they are derived independently. The second parameter is that Anticausative constructions involve implicit causation. In this paper I have argued, using Korean, English and other language examples, that Causatives and Anticausatives should be derived independently, and the assumption that Anticausatives are underlyingly causal be mistaken. A Causer PP may or may not appear in the Anticausative constructions. An applicative P can directly introduce a direct causation into Anticausative

construction regardless of the underlying causal component. And a sentential Causer PP in Anticausatives, which I have argued as a background or circumstantial option, may arise at an after-syntactic interface, following general conversational maxim. As evidence, I have presented two things as follows: One is that there are asymmetries in the variants of Causative/ Anticausative alternations. The other is that there are many examples that have non-direct causation PPs in Anticausatives.

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