

Applicative Voice: Geminate Causatives in Sason Arabic

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On the basis of the geminate causatives (GC) in Sason Arabic (SA, southeastern Turkey), this paper provides independent evidence for Legate’s (2014) analysis of the passive. Legate (2014) treats passive as a variant of a functional head that introduces a DP in its specifier, a configuration that is common to both VoiceP and ApplP. This predicts that an active-passive-like alternation should be available in ApplP as well, which this paper argues is the case in SA. We do so by demonstrating that the GC in (1) contain a second, embedded VoiceP with active-passive alternation; however, this VoiceP exhibits properties that warrant identifying it as a distinct type, which we identify as *applicative VoiceP* (Legate, 2014).

The causee in the GC can be expressed either as a DP, as in (1b), or a PP headed by *mışa* ‘to, for’, as in (1c).

- (1) a. kemal ku i-qri lala kitab
 kemal be.3M 3M-read.IPFV this.M book
 ‘Kemal is reading this book.’
- b. o:retman ki tı-qarri kemal lala kitab
 teacher be.3F 3F-read.CAUS kemal this.M book
 ‘The teacher is making Kemal read this book.’ (Yakut, 2013, 33a)
- c. o:retman ki tı-qarri lala kitab mışa kemal
 teacher be.3F 3F-read.CAUS this.M book to kemal
 ‘The teacher is making Kemal read this book.’ (Yakut, 2013, 33b)

Active-passive alternation. We first provide evidence that the embedded clause with a DP causee, (1b), is active, whereas with an optional PP causee, as in (1c), it behaves like passive. The diagnostics for this alternation and the adjunct status of the PP include (i) sluicing, (ii) nonpassivizable idioms, (iii) the interpretation in the absence of the causee, and (iv) secondary predicates.

In SA, VP ellipsis may in some cases allow voice mismatching, whereas sluicing does not, in line with Merchant’s (2013) generalization. In the GC, the embedded clause with a DP causee behaves like a canonical active for sluicing, as in (2a), such that the remnant cannot be headed by a preposition. With a PP causee, the embedded clause behaves as passive for sluicing, (2b).

- (2) a. leyla qarr-e nes-ma alu kitabad, hama m-o-re (*mışa) ande
 Leyla read.CAUS-3F person-a these.M books, but NEG-1SG-know to who
 ‘Leyla made someone read these books, but I don’t know who.’
- b. leyla qarr-e alu kitabad (mışa nes-ma), hama m-o-re *(mışa) ande
 Leyla read.CAUS-3F these.M books to person-a, but NEG-1SG-know to who
 ‘Leyla had these books read (by someone), but I don’t know by who.’

SA has a class of nonpassivizable idioms, such as *qarf fayz le şeytan* ‘to break the devil’s leg’. These idioms are another test for the active-passive alternation (Kayne 1975; Folli & Harley 2007). These idioms may occur in the GC only in the case of a DP causee, as in (3a), but not a PP causee, (3b).

- (3) a. nihayet qarrıf-tu kemal fayz le şeytan
 finally broke.CAUS-1SG Kemal leg of devil
 ‘I finally made Kemal get lucky.’
- b. nihayet qarrıf-tu fayz le şeytan (mışa kemal)
 finally broke.CAUS-1SG leg of devil to Kemal
 ‘I finally had the devil’s leg broken (by Kemal).’
 NOT: Kemal finally got lucky.

Unlike non-passivizable idioms, passivizable idioms impose no such restriction and are compatible with both a DP and a PP causee, as in (4), preserving the idiomatic interpretation.

- (4) a. *imm-u harray-e Leyla ro le Kemal*
 mother-his burned.CAUS-3F Leyla heart of Kemal
 ‘His mother made Leyla break Kemal’s heart.’
- b. *imm-u harray-e ro le Kemal (mışa Leyla)*
 mother-his burned.CAUS-3F heart of Kemal to Leyla
 ‘His mother had Kemal’s heart be broken (by Leyla).’

(iii) The causee is optional, and the null causee is interpreted as existential (like a missing ‘by’-phrase) rather than pronominal (like a pro-dropped argument). In addition to depictive licensing, a fifth clue for the active-passive alternation comes from the passivization asymmetries. When causee is a DP, it raises to become the grammatical subject. However, when the causee is a PP, it is the theme argument that ends up as the grammatical subject, as such shows verbal agreement.

Applicative VoiceP. Despite the active-passive alternation, the embedded VoiceP differs from a canonical VoiceP. This embedded VoiceP assigns a different θ -role (causee versus initiator); thus (i) no agent-oriented adverbs are associated with the causee, (5), instead they exclusively target the matrix causer. Moreover, (ii) agent-oriented instrumentals or (iii) comitatives, which pick out an initiator (Bruening 2013; Alexiadou et al. 2015), are not associated with the causee.

- (5) a. *o:retman ki tı-qarri kemal lala kitab bı sabır*
 teacher be.3F 3F-read.CAUS kemal this.M book with patience
 ‘The teacher is making Kemal read this book patiently.’
 YES: The teacher is patient. / NOT: Kemal is patient.
- b. *o:retman ki tı-qarri lala kitab mışa kemal bı sabır*
 teacher be.3F 3F-read.CAUS this.M book to kemal with patience
 ‘The teacher is making Kemal read this book patiently.’
 YES: The teacher is patient. / NOT: Kemal is patient.

(iv) The causee in the GC is introduced with a different preposition, *mışa* ‘to, for’, than agents in canonical passives, (6), or in the passives of the ‘make’-causatives are introduced with, i.e. *mi* ‘by, from’.

- (6) *ala cam mı kemal in-qaraf bı-l-qasti.*
 this glass by Kemal PASS-broke.3M with-the-intention
 ‘This glass was broken by Kemal deliberately.’

We argue that the GC embeds an applicative VoiceP, which shows an active-passive voice alternation like a VoiceP. The causee may be introduced in the specifier of the ApplP and receive a causee θ -role from the Appl head. Alternatively, the causee may be introduced like the initiator in the canonical passive: in a PP adjunct, in which the P assigns a causee θ -role to its DP complement, this causee being tied semantically to the causee θ -role introduced by Appl, as in. This analysis highlights the parallels between applicative head and the more canonical Voice, while providing for their distinct properties.

References

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