Morphological Causatives Versus Resultative Compounds in Taiwan Southern Min*

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In Taiwan Southern Min V-hoo-V morphological causatives and V-V resultative compounds are semantically similar; that is, they both denote cause and effect. Their forms are also related in that they only differ in the presence/absence of the causative marker -hoo-. However, not every morphological causative has a resultative compound as its counterpart. What is more, these two forms are used in different contexts. This paper thus aims to discuss their semantic similarity, explore their close syntactic relation, and point out their different usage.

Key words: Taiwan Southern Min, analytic causative, morphological causative, lexical causative, resultative compound

1. Introduction

Causation is a common concept in human language. As such, every language has a means of expressing this concept. In a typological sense, causatives are often classified into three types: analytic, morphological, and lexical (Comrie 1981, Shibatani and Pardeshi 2001). Among the three types of causative, morphological causatives are particular intriguing in Taiwan Southern Min (TSM) as they are so closely related to resultative compounds that some even also consider the latter a subtype of causative constructions (Lien 1999). Regarding morphological causatives and resultative compounds in TSM, this paper aims to discuss their semantic similarity, explore their close syntactic relation, and point out their different usage.

2. Defining causatives

2.1 Form and meaning of causatives in general

The meaning of causative constructions consists of the cause component and its

* Research for this paper was supported by a grant from the National Science Council (NSC 94-2411-H-194-015).
effect (result) component, and the forms of causative constructions can be classified into three types: analytic causative, morphological causative, and lexical causative (Comrie 1981). To illustrate, (1a) is a case of analytic causative in English, where two separate verbs cause and go are used to indicate cause and effect, respectively. The Turkish word ye-dir ‘feed/cause to eat’ in (1b) is a morphological causative, which is derived after the causative suffix -dir is attached to ye ‘eat’. In (1c) kill in English encodes both the meaning of cause and effect in one form while holding no regular formal relationship with the word denoting the effect ‘die’, and thus kill is considered a lexical causative.

(1) a. I caused him to go. analytic causative  
    b. ye-dir morphological causative  
       eat-CAUS  
       ‘feed/cause to eat’  
    c. kill lexical causative

In English, there are also many causatives formed without any morphological change to their non-causative counterparts. Melt in (2a) is this kind of lexical causative and its non-causative counterpart is shown in (2b).

(2) a. The sun melted the ice.  
    b. The ice melted.

2.2 Causatives in Taiwan Southern Min

Taiwan Southern Min (TSM) is the variety of Southern Min spoken in Taiwan and it is spoken by more than 80% of people living in Taiwan (Cheng 1985). There are other varieties of Southern Min spoken in Fujian and Guangdong provinces in China. The causatives in TSM can also be classified into the three types defined by Comrie (1981). Sentences involving the use of causative verbs such as hoo ‘cause’, kio ‘cause’, su ‘cause’, etc. are analytic as shown in (3), where cause and effect are expressed by two separate verbs. For instance, in (3a) the verb hoo ‘cause’ denotes cause while the stative verb huannhi ‘happy’ indicates the effect. In (3) the two verbs in each example are underlined. Even though these three verbs hoo, kio, and su are all causative, they do slightly differ in their meaning. The exact meaning for kio is actually ‘order someone to do something’, and su is used in a rather formal and literary context. Among these three, hoo is used most often and it does not carry any extra meaning other than causativity.
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(3) a. cit e ho siausit hoo gun cin huannhi.1 analytic causative
    this ASSOC good news cause we very happy
    ‘This good news made us very happy.’

b. bo-cing e miaun kio gua likhui li.
    merciless ASSOC fate cause I leave you
    ‘Merciless fate caused me to leave you.’

c. i e koosu cin su lang kamtong.
    he ASSOC story very cause people feel-touched
    ‘His story touched everyone.’

V-hoo-V forms such as phah-hoo-si ‘hit-CAUS-dead’ as in (4) are considered morphological causatives for the following reasons. As Comrie (1981) argues, morphological causatives must demonstrate two characteristics. One is that “the causative is related to its non-causative predicate by morphological means.” The other is that “this means of relating causative and non-causative predicates is productive” (Comrie 1981:167). V-hoo-V forms in TSM are argued to be related to resultative V-V compounds (Lin 2001). For instance, phah-hoo-si ‘hit-CAUS-dead’ is derived from phah-si ‘hit-dead’ by inserting the infix -hoo-. Moreover, this type of derivation is highly productive as most, if not all, resultative compounds have causative counterparts. More examples of resultative compounds and their causative counterparts are listed in (5).

(4) li hit ciah lagia ai phah-hoo-si. morphological causative
    you that CL spider must hit-CAUS-dead
    ‘You must kill that spider.’

(5) resultative compounds morphological causatives
    ciah-liau ‘eat-up’ ciah-hoo-liau
    lim-ta ‘drink-up’ lim-hoo-ta
    sau-chutkhi ‘sweep-out’ sau-hoo-chutkhi
    chong-hai ‘do-break’ chong-hoo-hai

Kill-type lexical causative verbs are hard to find in TSM.3 As pointed out by Tai

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1 Romanization used in this paper is according to the TLPA (Taiwan Language Phonetic Alphabet), which is promulgated by the Ministry of Education in Taiwan in 1998.
2 Abbreviations used in this paper are listed below:
3 As discussed in section 3, even though Lien (1999) proposes that verbs such as chi ‘feed’, si ‘die’, and thau ‘untie’ are lexical causatives, these verbs no longer denote result or have a causative use in modern TSM.
the Chinese counterparts of accomplishment verbs like *kill* and *build* are resultative compounds such as *sha-si* ‘kill-dead’ and *gai-hao* ‘build-finished’ in Mandarin, whose counterparts in TSM are *thai-si* ‘kill-dead’ and *khi-ho* ‘build-finished’. Lexical causatives in TSM are more like *melt*-type verbs in English. For instance, causative verbs/compounds such as *kiann* ‘scare’ in (6a) and *kiann-si* ‘scare (sb) to death’ in (7a) in TSM come closer to the category of lexical causatives, since they bear the same form as their non-causative counterparts as shown in (6b) and (7b).

(6) a. li mai kiann lang a. lexical causative
    you not scare people PRT
    ‘Don’t scare people.’
    b. i e kiann.  ergative
    he will feel-scared
    ‘He will feel scared.’

(7) a. li mai kiann-si lang a. lexical causative
    you not scare-dead people PRT
    ‘Don’t scare people to death.’
    b. i kiann-si a.  ergative
    he scare-dead PRT
    ‘He felt scared to death.’

Among these three types of causative, this paper will mainly discuss morphological causatives and further compare them with resultative compounds. Resultative compounds are not considered a subtype of causative in this paper; however, scholars such as Lien (1999) do classify resultative compounds as causatives. Before going into the analysis for morphological causatives, I will summarize Lien’s typological study of causatives and then make a comparison between his classification and the classification proposed in this paper.

3. Lien’s (1999) typological study of causatives in TSM

In Lien’s (1999) typological study of causatives in TSM, he classifies causatives into three types: lexical, synthetic (morphological), and analytic (syntactic, periphrastic). Lexical causatives are further classified into two subtypes: labile causatives and suppletive causatives. Labile causatives are simplex verbs used as causatives with zero derivation such as *kiann* ‘scare’ as illustrated in (6). Suppletive causatives refer to causatives such as *kill* in English which denote both cause and result while holding no morphological relationship with the word denoting the result. Examples of suppletive causatives in
TSM given by Lien are verbs like *chi* ‘feed’, *si* ‘die’, and *thau* ‘untie’. However, these so-called suppletive causatives either do not denote result or are not used as causatives in modern TSM. For instance, *thau* ‘untie’ alone as in (8) does not denote result and that is why the result can still be negated by the following clause *thau-bo-khui* ‘do not succeed in untying it’. To express that the result is achieved, one has to add a stative verb such as *khui* ‘open’ to denote the result of untying as in *thau-khui* ‘untie-open’. With the addition of the stative verb *khui*, *thau-khui* does denote that a result is achieved and thus the negation of the result renders the sentence unacceptable as illustrated in (9).

(8)  i thau te-a thau nng pai a, mko long thau-bo-khui.
     he untie bag untie two time PRT but all untie-not-open
     ‘He tried to untie the bag twice but did not succeed.’

(9)  *i te-a thau-khui nng pai a, mko long thau-bo-khui.
     he bag untie-open two time PRT but all untie-not-open
     ‘He untied the bag twice but did not succeed.’

*Si* ‘die’ is another verb that is taken to be causative by Lien; however, in modern TSM *si* does not have the transitive usage anymore. Even when *si* is followed by a noun phrase, the noun phrase does not serve as the object of *si* as shown in (10).

(10) i choekin si ang.
     she recently die husband.
     ‘She lost her husband recently.’

As a result, in this paper the lexical causatives in TSM only refer to the *melt*-type causatives, that is, verbs such as *kiann* ‘scare’ in (6).

For Lien, morphological causatives are those that are morphologically related to their non-causative counterparts. For instance, *tng*\(^2\) ‘cause to break’ is related to *tng*\(^7\) ‘break’ through tonal alternation; *thit* ‘straighten’ is related to *tit* ‘straight’ through initial alternation. These two types of morphological relation, however, are not productive. This paper will look to productive morphological causatives with the form V-*hoo*-V such as *lim-hoo-ta* ‘drink-CAUS-up’. As mentioned in section 2.2., V-*hoo*-V is taken to be a morphological causative for the reason that this form is morphologically related to V-V resultative compounds; that is, the causative V-*hoo*-V form is derived from resultative V-V after the insertion of the infix -*hoo*-. Moreover, this morphological relation is productive and most resultative compounds have causative counterparts.

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4 (10) is taken from Teng (1995:5, (1)).
Lien also considers the sequence of the causative verb *hoo* followed by an object and a predicate such as the example in (3a) an analytic causative. Moreover, Lien proposes another subtype of analytic causative, that is, V-V resultative compounds. By definition, resultative compounds are compounds where the second verbal element (V2) describes the result caused by the event denoted by the first verbal element (V1). Sinitic languages such as Mandarin Chinese and TSM abound with resultative compounds. For instance, in *phah-si* ‘hit-dead’ of TSM, *phah* denotes the activity of hitting while *si* represents the result of being dead. More examples of resultative compounds are listed in (5). Since semantically the components of resultative compounds also denote cause and result, one might be tempted to treat resultative compounds as causatives as Lien does. Lien further indicates that most resultative compounds can take an infix-like element *hoo* (i) ‘CAUS he/she’ as in *phah-hoo* (i)-*si* ‘hit-CAUS he/she-dead’. The resultant form V-*hoo* (i)-V, however, is taken to be a morphological causative in this paper.

Although V-V resultative compounds and V-*hoo*-V morphological causatives are similar in meaning and related in form, they do differ in their usage, which will be elaborated in the following section. Due to the differences in form and usage, resultative compounds are thus not considered true causatives in this paper.

**4. More differences between morphological causatives and resultative compounds**

In terms of semantics, both morphological causatives and resultative compounds denote cause and result. Speaking of form, resultative compounds differ from morphological causatives in the lacking of the causative marker -*hoo*-. The close relationship between these two forms is obvious. However, resultatives are not classified as one subtype of causative in this paper for they do have different usages from causatives. As discussed in Allen (1995, 1996, 1998) and Shirai, Miyata, Naka, and Sakazaki (2000), imperatives are often related to causatives. As such, causative forms are often used to express the imperative meaning. To illustrate, *ciah-hoo-liau* ‘eat-CAUS-up’ in (11) expresses an imperative meaning, while its resultative counterpart *ciah-liau* ‘eat-up’ as in (12) lacks such an imperative meaning and thus is not compatible with the second person subject *li* ‘you’. (12) is improved after the subject is changed to other persons such as the third person singular pronoun *i* ‘he/she’ as in (13).

(11) li png ciah-hoo-liau.
you meal eat-CAUS-up
‘You must eat up your meal.’
(12) ?li png ciah-liau a.
   you meal eat-up PRT
   ‘You finished eating your meal.’
(13) i png ciah-liau a.
    he meal eat-up PRT
    ‘He finished eating his meal.’

Because of the close relationship between resultative compounds and morphological causatives, children sometimes get confused about these two and misuse one form for the other. For instance, as illustrated in (14) the child sometimes omitted the causative marker -hoo- and resulted in V-V sequences, which are resultative compounds. The use of the resultative compound in this context, however, is not appropriate, since an imperative use is required in that particular context. That is, luah-tit ‘comb-straight’ was wrongly used to replace luah-hoo-tit ‘comb-CAUS-straight’ in (14). That means the child sometimes misused resultative compounds as morphological causatives to express the imperativeness.

(14) INV: koh thaumng koh khiukhiu ne.
    still hair still curly PRT
    ‘The hair is still curly.’
CHI: Target: luah-hoo-tit.
    Error: *luah-tit e.
    comb-straight PRT
    ‘Comb it straight.’

The mistake made by the child once more confirms that resultative compounds and morphological causatives are related in form and meaning but differ in their usage. Next section then moves on to discuss the relationship between the forms of resultative compounds and morphological causatives.

5. The analysis

Resultative compounds are taken to be analytic causatives by Lien for the reason that they allow the insertion of hoo (i) ‘CAUS he/she’ and thus like phrases they are more analytic than compounds. However, it should be noted that resultative compounds

5 The data is taken from Taiwan Child Language Corpus developed by Tsay (2005). INV stands for investigator and CHI stands for child.
behave more like simplex verbs in that they can take postverbal objects as shown in (15).

(15) gua phah-si hit ciah lagia a.
     I hit-dead that CL spider PRT
     ‘I killed that spider.’

To account for the dual properties of resultative compounds, Lin (2001) proposes that resultative compounds are derived in the syntax. To illustrate, (16) is the D-structure of (15). In (16) V2 moves up to incorporate with V1 and thus the resultative compound phah-si is derived. The idea of deriving a word from domains other than the lexicon comes from Borer (1988). She provides a different view on word formation by arguing that morphology is parallel to the other three components of grammar: lexicon, syntax, and phonology. Morphology is not linearly ordered before or after syntax, and it is also distinct from the lexicon where morphemes, idiosyncratic words, idioms, and lexically formed words are stored. Yoon (1989) also proposes that morphology as a rule system is distinct from grammatical components, such as the lexicon and syntax, and that the rules of morphology can occur in different components. Compounding at the post-syntactic level is similarly proposed by Shibatani and Kageyama (1988) for Japanese post-syntactic compounds. The insertion of -hoo (i)- in resultative compounds is captured by the extra phrasal projection CAUSP between VP1 and VP2 as shown in (17).
Even though resultative compounds and morphological causatives are closely related, not every morphological causative has a resultative counterpart. For instance, the morphological causative *phah-hoo-si ‘hit-CAUS-dead’ has a resultative counterpart *phah-si ‘hit-dead’, while chiunn-hoo-thiann ‘sing-CAUS-listen’ as in (18) does not have a resultative counterpart *chiunn-thiann ‘sing-listen’ as shown in (19). This paper thus moves to investigate what kind of morphological causatives have resultative counterparts.

\[
\text{(17)} \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{ASPP} \\
\text{NP} & \text{ASP'} \\
\text{li} & \text{ASP} & \text{VP1} \\
\text{NP} & \text{V1'} \\
\text{hit ciah lagia} & \text{V1} & \text{CAUSP} \\
\text{phah} & \text{CAUS} & \text{VP2} \\
\text{-hoo-} & \text{NP} & \text{V2'} \\
\text{pro} & \text{V2} \\
\text{si} \\
\end{array}
\]

This paper proposes that morphological causatives that have resultative counterparts are those in which V2 is an intransitive stative and is predicated of the object of V1 if V1 has an overt object. By definition, V2 in a resultative compound denotes the result caused by the event denoted by V1; therefore, V2 is often a stative verb denoting the resultant state. V2 in a morphological causative, however, is not always a stative verb since the semantics of a causative construction is Event 1 causing Event 2 and V2 can
denote a resultant event, not necessarily a state. To illustrate, the V2 in the morphological causative in (18), i.e. *thiann* ‘listen’, denotes the resultant event of listening to your singing. However, the same verb, *thiann* ‘listen’, cannot serve as the result in a resultative compound as in (19) since it does not denote a state.\(^6\)

The restrictions on resultative counterparts can be explained if we assume that morphological causatives have (17) as their D-structure and their resultative counterparts have a related D-structure as shown in (16). (16) and (17) differ in that (16) lacks the causative projection \(\text{CAUSP}^{\text{hoo}}\). A resultative compound such as *phah-si* as in (15) is derived from a structure like (16) and the PRO in the embedded clause headed by V2 in (16) has to be controlled by the nearest c-commanding NP, according to the Principle of Minimal Distance (Rosenbaum 1970, Chomsky 1980). That is, *si* ‘dead’ must be predicated of PRO, which is controlled by the object of V1, *hit ciah lagia* ‘that spider’.

If V1 in a resultative compound does not have an object, according to the Principle of Minimal Distance, the PRO in VP2 should be controlled by the subject of V1 and a subject-oriented resultative compound should be derived. This prediction is indeed borne out as a morphological causative such as *khun-hoo-pa* ‘sleep-CAUS-full’ in (20) does have *khun-pa* ‘sleep-full’ as its resultative counterpart as shown in (21). In the compound, V2 *pa* ‘full’ is predicated of the main subject *gua* ‘I’ and (21) has the meaning that I felt metaphorically full because I had enough sleep.

\[
\begin{align*}
(20) & \text{ li ai khun-hoo-pa.} \\
& \text{you must sleep-CAUS-full} \\
& \text{‘You must have enough sleep.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(21) & \text{ gua khun-pa a.} \\
& \text{I sleep-full PRT} \\
& \text{‘I had enough sleep.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^6\) Cheng et al. (1999) takes examples such as (i) to be serial verb construction while (ii) is causative. However, these two constructions only differ in the properties of V2. That is, V2 in (i), *thiann* ‘listen’, is transitive while that in (ii), *khun* ‘sleep’, is intransitive. Therefore, this paper does not distinguish these two types of construction just because of their difference in V2 and these two types are both considered causative. More specifically, they are classified as analytic causatives as those examples in (3).

\[
\begin{align*}
(i) & \text{ guo chiumn cit siu kua hoo li thiann.} \quad \text{(Cheng et al. 1999:147, (1D))} \\
& \text{I sing one CL song cause you listen} \\
& \text{‘I will sing a song for you to listen.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(ii) & \text{ guo chiumn cit siu kua hoo li khah ho khun.} \quad \text{(Cheng et al. 1999:147, (1F))} \\
& \text{I sing one CL song cause you more good sleep} \\
& \text{‘I will sing a song for you to sleep better.’}
\end{align*}
\]
However, it should be noted that subject-oriented resultative compounds like *khun-pa* ‘sleep-full’ in (21) are rare in TSM. For example, even though *cau-hoo-thiam* ‘run-CAUS-tired’ is a possible morphological causative as shown in (22), its would-be resultative counterpart is not available as the ungrammaticality of (23) indicates.

\[(22) \text{li to ai it-tit cau, cau-hoo-thiam.} \]
\[\text{you TO must continuously run run-CAUS-tired} \]
\[\text{‘You must keep running to the extent that you get tired.’} \]

\[(23) \text{*gua cau-thiam a.} \]
\[\text{I run-tired PRT} \]
\[\text{‘I ran to the extent that I got tired.’} \]

Nevertheless, (23) does not really invalidate the analysis proposed in this paper. In fact, the Mandarin counterpart of (23) is perfectly acceptable as shown in (24). The reason why many morphological causatives do not have resultative compounds as counterparts is the nature of TSM. That is, TSM is more analytic than Mandarin, which means TSM tends to use phrases or clauses to express the same idea which in Mandarin is expressed by words or compounds.

\[(24) \text{wo pao-lei le.} \]
\[\text{I run-tired PRT} \]
\[\text{‘I ran to the extent that I got tired.’} \]

Another difference between the structures in (16) and (17) is that the empty subject in VP2 is pro in (17) but PRO in (16). This difference indicates that the empty subject in (17) can be replaced by an overt NP such as the third person singular *he, she, it*. Therefore, (25) with an overt NP serving as the subject of VP2 is a possible sentence.

\[(25) \text{li hit ciah lagia ai phah-hoo i-si. (cf. (4))} \]
\[\text{you that CL spider must hit-CAUS it-dead} \]
\[\text{‘You must kill that spider.’} \]

This paper would like to propose that in morphological causatives when the subject of VP2 is empty it is actually occupied by a covert third person singular pronoun *he/she*. The evidence for this proposal is that even though the subject of VP2 is not limited to the third person singular when it is overt as shown in (26), when the subject of VP2 is empty it is often interpreted to indicate the third person singular as shown in (18).
(26) li chiunn-hoo guan thiann.
you sing-CAUS we listen
‘You sing for us to listen.’

6. Concluding remarks

Even though both Mandarin and TSM have resultative compounds, only TSM has morphological causatives and this fact is due to the analytic nature of TSM. That is, TSM tends to use phrases or clauses to express semantic concepts that can be further decomposed rather than using words or compounds. Resultative compounds and morphological causatives in TSM are not only semantically similar but also syntactically related. That is, they differ in the presence/absence of the causative marker -hoo-. The close relation between these two forms is captured by their similar D-structures which differ in the presence/absence of CAUSP. However, as similar as they could be, not every morphological causative has a resultative compound as its counterpart. This difference results from the different make-up of these two forms. In a morphological causative, V1 denotes an event and V2 can also denote an event caused by V1. However, in the case of resultative compounds, V2 has to denote a resultant state, and thus only state-denoting verbs can serve as V2 in a resultative compound.

Moreover, even though both subject-oriented and object-oriented resultative compounds can be found in TSM, far fewer subject-oriented ones are available. This phenomenon is again due to the analytic feature of TSM. In Mandarin subject-oriented resultative compounds are not so rare; however, they are proposed to be formed in the lexicon by Lin (1998) because syntactic derivation cannot explain their properties and also they are not as productive as object-oriented resultative compounds. Since phrasal or clausal constructions are more commonly used in TSM, lexical subject-oriented

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Lin (1998) proposes that subject-oriented resultative compounds in Mandarin such as qi-lei ‘ride-tired’ in (i) are derived in the lexicon for the reason that a control analysis cannot account for the fact that the PRO in VP2 is predicated of the main subject Zhangsan rather than the NP closer to the PRO, that is, ma ‘horse’.

(i) Zhangsan qi-lei le ma.
Zhangsan ride-tried ASP horse.
‘Zhangsan got tired from horseback riding.’

This lexical derivation approach, however, is not adopted in this paper for the derivation of subject-oriented resultative compounds in TSM. The reason is that subject-oriented resultative compounds are so rare in TSM and the kind of problematic cases such as khia-thiam ‘ride-tired’ are simply not available in TSM. Therefore, a different mechanism is not needed in order to account for the problematic cases.
resultative compounds are thus not as available to express the same idea as their Mandarin counterparts. Instead, to express the subject-oriented concept, TSM would prefer to use phrasal resultative constructions as illustrated in (27).

(27) gua cau kah cin thiam. (cf. (23))
I run KAH very tired
‘I ran to the extent that I got tired.’

To sum up, in comparison with Mandarin, the analytic nature of TSM is manifested in the prevalence of V-\textit{hoo}-V morphological causatives, which are not available in Mandarin. As to resultative compounds, subject-oriented resultative compounds are not as productive as object-oriented ones in Mandarin. When it comes to subject-oriented resultative compounds in TSM, there are even far fewer examples available.

References


