Causative constructions in Igbò

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Abstract
Causativity is a universal category in human cognition and its grammar has been widely investigated in many languages. These investigations make cross-linguistic comparisons and seek to understand deeper the centrality of causativity in human cognition. In spite of the great deal of scholarly interest in the grammar of causativity, Anyanwu (2007) is the only major work on causativity in Igbo. Igbo scholars have largely paid a fleeting interest in the phenomenon. Anyanwu's (2007) approach is to designate formal rules for the derivation of causative structures in the language. This approach detracts from the cognitive perspective, hence, the centrality of causativity in Igbo life and culture. Therefore, this work sets out to describe data that is faithful to the conceptualisation of causativity by the Igbo speaker. The study adopts a descriptive approach where the interaction of the morphology, syntax and semantics of causative constructions express the prominence of this phenomenon in the Igbo speaker's lexicon and cognition. The data reveals three categories of causative constructions. The first is the lexical causative construction, for example, chí ńtị̀ 'become deaf', kpọ́ ụ́kwụ́ 'stumble and stagger' and hụ́ égbé 'frighten a hawk'. These constructions include autonomous linguistic units entrenched in the lexicon and their contextual use must be learned by the speaker. The second category is the morphological causative construction. It involves the suffixation to causative verb roots of evaluative morphemes like –ghé, tá and gbọ́. It also comprises the verb-verb compounding of -gbú 'kill', to the roots of causative activity verbs. This category is highly productive in the language. The third category which is the analytical causative construction comprises schematic clauses that seem to be standard answers to Wh-questions with the Wh-element ònyé. This category is the

most unproductive in the language. The data in this work compares with data on causativity in other languages and the descriptive methodology facilitates the representation of the Igbo speaker's conceptualization of causativity and how this phenomenon is central to the cultural and physical realities of Igbo life.
Keywords: causativity, cognition, conceptualization, morpho-syntax, Igbo culture

1.0 Introduction

Causativity is a fundamental concept in grammar and the philosophy of language, as well as, the sociology of language. It is a straightforward account of the way human beings organise 'their cultural and physical realities' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:69). The centrality of causativity in human relationships has stimulated a wide-ranging literature on its grammar. Indeed, for Shibatani (2002:1), no grammatical description can be complete without a discussion of causative constructions because every language has at least one strategy for expressing causativity. The cross-linguistic study of causativity has shown it to be significant in delineating verb classes, more so, as the morphology of causativity is a parameter for delimiting the essential properties of verb classes as reported in Levin (1993), Rappaport-Hovav and Levin (2000) and Van Valin (2005). In addition, the study of causativity in any language 'involves the interaction of various components of the overall linguistic description including semantics, syntax and morphology' (Comrie 1989:165). This interaction of the components of linguistic description is actually noticeable in cross-linguistic studies.

In the literature, there are two approaches to the conceptualisation of causative constructions. The first is the structural linguistic approach and in this, causative constructions are regarded as resulting constructions from two or more original syntactic or semantic structures. This notion is dominant in Baker (1988), Radford (1997), Dixon (2000) among others. The second approach which is the semantic

approach is pronounced in the works of Wierzbicka (1988), Comrie (1989), Kemmer and Verhagen (1994) and Shibatani (2002). Kemmer and Verhagen (1994) sum up the abiding features of the semantic approach as:

> Structurally and conceptually modelled on simple constructions as extensions and elaborations of non-causative clauses; namely two participant clauses and three participant clauses of ditransitive or transitive plus instrumental types.
> Kemmer and Verghagen (1994:115-116)

The claims of Kemmer and Verhagen (1994) is that the structural features of causative constructions are the systematic manifestations of the semantic properties of the language. The structuralist and semantic approaches to causativity have spurned the diverse linguistic frameworks that have been adopted for the analysis of the grammar of causation.

Wierzbicka (1988) makes known the fact that there is a vast literature on the syntactic structure of causative constructions but in contrast, there is a noticeable lack in their semantics and pragmatics. Shibatani (2002) in a seemingly bold attempt to fill this gap has detailed a vast array of literature on causativity, and with the enduring task of discussing it within the context of the meaning the speakers of the language have adduced to the structure and not primarily on how it is derived. I will adopt this approach in discussing the Igbo data in this work. This is because previous studies on causativity in Igbo have centred on the derivation of the syntactic structure of causative constructions and neglected the perspective on how causativity is entrenched in the Igbo lexicon. This is the goal of this investigation. In Section 1.01 below I shall explain the concept and the characterisation of causation adopted in this work with reference to Fleck (2002).

1.1 Characterization of causative constructions

Fleck (2002) citing Shibatani (1976a:1) states the conditions that are necessary for a causative situation to occur. The first condition is that the speaker realises the sequential occurrence of the events, and believes that the occurrence of one event, T_2 (the time of the caused event), has been realised at T_1 (the time of the causing event) and that T_2 occurs after T_1. The second condition is that of the dependency relations between the two events. This means that the occurrence of the caused event, T_2, is absolutely dependent on the causing event, T_1, and that the speaker is able to deduce from the sequence of events that in an ideal situation, T_2 cannot take place without T_1 taking place. The proposal of these two conditions is motivated by the characterisation of prototypical causative events in Langacker (1987: 54-55). These characteristics include the fact that in a causative situation, there is a single agent that does something to a single patient and this patient undergoes a change to a new state of affairs.

Moreover, the action of the agent on the patient takes place in spatiotemporal dimensions. In other words, the preliminary action of the agent and the consequent change in state of the patient is a unique event that overlaps in time and space. This one-off event is further characterised by the fact that the agent is human, with a will to act, control the action and bear responsibility for both the action and the change in state of the patient. The action of the agent is carried out with some body parts or instrument and this action and change in the patient is perceptible to both the agent and the patient. These characterisations reveal that prototypical causative constructions indicate the 'direct manipulation' of the patient by the agent. These characterisations which have influenced the categorisation of causative constructions in the literature has guided the identification of Igbo causative constructions for this study.

In the descriptive approach to causativity, these categorisations include the well-known opposition between 'direct' versus 'indirect' causation. In direct causation the agent physically manipulates the patient and the resulting caused event is wholly dependent on the agent without the voluntary participation of the patient. For indirect causation, the

patient voluntarily participates in the caused event. In direct causation, the spatiotemporal profile of the causing and caused event is not distinct but can be conceptualised. However, in the indirect causation, the spatial and temporal profiles are distinct in the sense that the place and time of the causing event should be autonomous from the place and time of the caused event and clearly decipherable. The terms 'direct' versus 'indirect' causation subsumes other distinctions found in Kemmer and Verhagen (1994:120). Here they propose three parameters for categorising causativity: physical vs nonphysical; direct versus mediated and cause per se vs enablement and permission. Dixon (2000:61-78) proposes an additional nine interwoven parameters for the distinction between direct and indirect causation. He attributes direct causation as depicting states and indirect causation as depicting activities. In direct causation, the agent has the parameters of directedness, intentionality, naturalness and involvement while the patient has the parameters of affectedness only. In indirect causation, the agent has the aforementioned features of direct causation but the patient now has the parameters of control, volition and affectedness. The study adopts these categorisations and parameters in describing causativity in Igbo. The goal is to show how the facts of Igbo contribute to the knowledge of causativity in human languages.

Furthermore, the 'direct' vs 'indirect' distinction introduces the idea of formal parameters in the classification of causative constructions. Dixon (2000) and Comrie (1989) claim that there is a relationship between the form taken by the causative construction and the interaction between the participants in the causative event. Comrie (1989:166) makes a three-way typological distinction. These include lexical causatives, morphological causatives and analytical causatives.

Lexical causatives are morphologically unanalysable. They represent a situation where 'the relation between the expression of effect and the expression of causative micro-situation is so unsystematic as to be handled lexically' (Comrie 1989:168). In other words, lexical causatives represent a situation where the participants and spatiotemporal profile of the caused event and the causing event cannot be conceptualised as

distinct units. A typical example is the verb *die*, in the clause *John died*. Here the causing event of John's death and the caused event of his dying are indistinct. Lexical causatives are actually listed in the lexicon of the language and their use has to be consciously learned.

Morphological causatives are expressed in morphologically complex constructions which result from non-causative predicates by affixation, reduplication, lengthening, tonal change or other morphological processes. A salient feature of morphological causatives is that it is productive in the language (Comrie 1989; Dixon 2000; Shibatani 2002).

In analytic causatives, the construction contains 'separate predicates expressing the notion of causation and the predicate of the effect.' Comrie (1989: 167) gives the following example to illustrate analytic causatives: *I caused John to go*. Here there are two separate predicates *cause* (cause) and *go* (effect).

This three-way categorisation forms a continuum across various languages. This continuum goes from morphological to lexical to analytical, and corresponds to the continuum from indirect to direct causation. This means that there is an intermediate category between direct and indirect causation that shows the various shades of semantic space bounded by indirect causation on one end and direct causation on the other (Shibatani and Pardeshi 2000; Dixon 2000). Dixon (2000) uses terms like' sociative causative'; 'associative causative'; 'comitative causative'; 'instrumental causative'; involved/not involved, to point to this category.

1.2 The previous study of causativity in Igbo

Although, there exists a substantial body of cross-linguistic literature on causativity, for the Igbo language, Anyanwu (2005 and 2007) represent the only significant investigation of Igbo causative constructions. I acknowledge the passing references to causativity in the works of Lord (1975:31), Uwalaka (1988:22-23; 1995:157-160) and Mbah (1999:147-149).

Anyanwu (2007), which is a more extensive effort than Anyanwu (2005) adopts a narrow approach by focussing on data solely from the Ńgwà

dialect of Igbo. This mono-dialectal approach engenders a negligible database and this makes it very difficult to make valid generalisations of causativity in Igbo. Besides, the theoretical perspective of Minimalist Syntax used in the data analysis concentrates on the syntactic movements involved in the derivation of causative constructions. This formalism undermines the centrality of causation as a cultural and physical reality in the lives of Igbo speakers. Anyanwu (2007) succeeds in showing how the parameters of Igbo (Ngwa) confirm or modify the principles of the English-centred Minimalist Program.

Therefore, the present study includes a purely descriptive analysis of causation in five representative dialects of Igbo, with a view to determining how causative meaning is conveyed by the interaction of syntax, morphology and semantics. This method should bring to the fore the facts of Igbò and contribute more meaningfully to the cross-linguistic literature.

1.3 Methodology

The data is the result of the field work that involved the recording of spontaneous speech by speakers of five Igbo dialects viz: Onitsha, Nnewi, Nsụkka, Owerri and Ngwa. These speakers make up a fair geographical depiction of Igbo as spoken in the five Igbo States, in Southeast Nigeria. . The utterances of these speakers were transcribed. Additional data were collected from Igbo music played on radio and CDs. There is a creative use of the language by Igbo musicians and quite a number of utterances involving causative constructions were recorded and transcribed. Two hundred causative constructions were transcribed and categorised. The data was then presented to the five speakers of each of the aforementioned dialects for dialectal interpretation and verification. The author made up some of the data by intuition as a competent native speaker of the language.

The paper is organised as follows. Section 1.3 discusses the argument structure of the Igbo verb because the basic notion of causativity is encoded in the internal structure of the verb. In Section 2.0 is the description of Igbo data akin to lexical causatives in other studied

languages. While in Section 3.0, the morphological processes involved in causative constructions are discussed. Section 4.0 is the concluding part of the work.

1.4 The argument structure of the Igbo verb

At the core of the causative event in Igbo is the causative verb. A study of the argument structure of the Igbo verb in general is the prerequisite to an account of causative events in the language. The affirmation by Emenanjo (1978; 1975b and 2005) is that the morphosyntactic structure of the Igbo verb 'is made up of three mutually obligatory and complementary elements.' These obligatory elements comprise the verb itself, the complement and the bound cognate noun (BCN). The construction in (1) below, with the causative verb *me*[1] 'make/do' illustrates the argument structure of the Igbo verb.

1. Òbí mè-rè èmèmmé
   Obi do-IND [2]feast
   'Obi staged a feast'

In (1) above, the verb *mé* 'make/do' obligatorily co-occurs with the nominal element *èmèmmé* 'feast'. The claim here is that every Igbo verb must co-occur with a nominal element which serves as its complement. The idea of the bound cognate noun is illustrated in (2) below.

[1]The transcription follows standard Igbo orthography: à (low tone); á (high tone); and ā downstep. All tones are marked to avoid ambiguity due to lexical variance among the dialects. Igbo has phonological features of vowel harmony where the eight vowels in the language are neatly divided into two sets. One set comprises vowels produced with the Advanced Tongue Root (+ATR) while the other set comprises vowels with –ATR. In standard Igbo, -ATR vowels are represented with the sub-dot, e.g, [ọ] while the +ATR vowels do not have the sub-dot.

[2]The abbreviations used here are: IND-indicative, DET-determiner, PRON-pronoun, EMPH-emphasiser, PL-plural, S-singular, 3s (subj)-third person singular for subjects, 3s (obj)-third person singular for objects, 3pl-third person plural, PROG-progressive, AGR-agreement marker,

2. Òbí mè-rè èmèmmé émé
   Obi do-IND feast EMPH
   'Obi indeed held a feast/Obi indeed caused a feast to be held'

Émé is a morphological derivation of the verb *mé* 'do/make' and it serves as an emphasiser morpheme. In the literature this is known as the Bound Cognate Noun or BCN. All Igbo verbs have the BCN, which always occur bound to the verb and follows it in the construction as shown in (2) above and illustrated again in (3).

3. Ó mè-rè émé
   3s do-IND EMPH
   'It was made to happen indeed/It indeed happened'

In examples (2) and (3) above the nominal element *èmèmmé* and the BCN *émé* are regarded as arguments and/or direct objects of the verb, respectively (Emenanjo 1978:129). However, Agbo (2013), relying on cross-linguistic evidence, claims that the subject (external argument) of the verb is the participant in the clause that initiates the action represented by the verb, while the object (internal argument) is the participant that is completely affected by the action of the subject as it is represented by the verb. Therefore, while the nominal element *èmèmmé* is an argument because it is a participant that is completely affected by the action of the verb, the BCN *émé* is simply a morphological derivation of the verb *mé* and not its argument or direct object. Although the study adopts the term 'complement' to label the nominal element, the sense differs from Emenanjo's perspective. It is used in the sense of Langacker (1987; 1991) and Croft (2001; 2003) where the verb and its complement is referred to as a construction that is fixed in the mind of the language user as a symbolic unit. In other words, the verb and its complement is a piece of the lexicon of the language and must be used in context matter-of-factly. This perspective will become clearer presently, during the discussion of Igbo verbs in causative events.

2.0 Lexical causative constructions

The data I label lexical causative constructions derive from the predicate structure of a class of verbs in Igbo that Uwalaka (1988:43-52) designates 'subject-object' switching verbs. This class of verbs has the exclusive feature of being able to occur in constructions where the subject and the object of the verb can inter-change positions. It is assumed that there is no difference in meaning between the derived construction and the primary one. However, the claim in this work is that a causative reading of the construction results when there is an inter-switch of the subject and the object positions, with the object assuming an agentive and manipulative role which affects the hitherto subject. In other words, the change of positions results in the re-interpretation of the sequence of events depicted by the construction. While the primary construction depicts a single event, the switch in position presents two sequential events in a causative situation. The data in examples (4) below show 'subject-object' switching verbs that are characterised as causative verbs in this study, following the statements in Section 1.01 above.

4.

a.	chí ńtì	'Be deaf
b.	kpọ́ ụ́kwụ́	'Stumble'
c.	mé íhéré	'Be ashamed'
d.	gbá ọ́kụ́	'burn'
e.	gbá ọ̀chị́chị́rị́	'darken'
f.	zé úzéré	'sneeze'

Examples (5a-f) below, are canonical constructions, where the verbs in (4a-f) occur in non-causative constructions.

5.

a. Ńwóyè chị̀-rị̀ ńtì

Nwoye close-IND ear
'Nwoye is deaf'
b. Òbí kpọ̀-rọ̀ ụ́kwụ́
Obi upturn-IND feet
'Obi stumbled'
c. Àdá mè-rè íhéré
Ada do-IND shame
'Ada is ashamed'
d. Ụ́lọ̀ yá gbà-rà ọ́kụ́
House 3s burn-IND fire
'His house got burnt'
e. Ébé níílé gbà-rà ọ̀chị́chị́rị́
Place all engulf-IND darkness
'Everywhere is engulfed in darkness'
f. Ézè zè-rè úzéré
Eze sneeze-IND sneezing
'Eze sneezed'

The causative counterparts of (5a-f) are shown in (6a-f) below. The difference between the constructions in (5) and (6) is the inter-change of positions between the nominals in these constructions. For example in (6a) below derived from (5a) above, the nominals *nwóyè* and *ńtì* have inter-changed positions. This has consequently resulted in a causative reading of the construction. Therefore, while (5a) represents the canonical SVC structure of Igbo, (6a) takes a new CVS structure. This new structure agentifies the verbal complement *ńtì* and imbues it with the human attributes of the will to act and control.

Consequently, the hitherto subject, *Nwóyè* assumes a patient role in the new construction with the attributes of the undergoer of the agent's action. A causative situation ensues with this new construction. This situation results from the reading of the spatial and temporal events encoded in the construction. Example (5a) is a single event occurring at a unique time but (6a) encodes two sequential events with spatial and temporal dimensions. The first event in (6a) comprises the agentive

action of stopping *Nwoyè*'s hearing by *ńtì* while the second event is the resulting situation of Nwoye's deafness. The conceptualisation of these events shows that the closing of Nwoye's ear occurs at a time before the resultant state of Nwoye's deafness. The chronological timing of these events is indistinct but can be conceptualised all the same. The parameters of causation manifest here as the new agent acts with intention and directs its action to the new patient which it completely affects and change to a new natural state. These parameters relate to direct causation (cf Section 1.01). The examples in (6b-f) derived from (5b-f) follow the trend of explanation in (6a).

6.

a. Ńtì chị̀-rị̀ Ńwóyè
Ear close-IND Nwoye
'Nwoye is deaf'

b. Ụ́kwụ kpọ̀-rọ̀ Òbí
Feet upturn-IND Obi
'Obi stumbled'

c. Íhéré mè-rè Àdá
Shame do-IND Ada
'Ada is ashamed'

d. Ọ́kụ́ gbà-rà ụ́lọ̀ yá
Fire burn-IND house 3s
'His house got burnt'

e. Ọ̀chị́chị́rị́ gbà-rà èbé níílé
Darkness engulf-IND place all
'Everywhere is engulfed in darkness'

f. Úzéré zè-rè Ézè
Sneezing sneeze-IND Eze
'Eze sneezed'

g. Ézè rì-rì jí
Eze eat-IND yam
'Eze ate some yam'

h. *Jí rì-rì Ézè
Yam eat-IND Eze

'Yam ate Eze'

The verbs in the constructions in (6a-f) belong to a unique class in the Igbo lexicon. Therefore not all Igbo verbs have the features of inter-switching its subject and object as the case may be. For example, the construction in (6h) derived from (6g), is ungrammatical because the verb *rí* 'eat' does not belong to this unique class. This fact shows the limited productivity of lexical causative constructions. As a result, the context of use of the causative constructions in (6) must, as a matter of fact, be learned by the speaker because the constructions are autonomous linguistic units with restricted use in the language.

It is noteworthy that these causative constructions represent stative events. One of the parameters of a direct causation is that they are states of affairs. Therefore, examples (6-f) reveal the conceptualisation of the causes of some physical realities that become permanent states in Igbo life. Other lexical causatives in my data include the root verbs *yí*, *hụ̀* and *họ̀* which give causative readings when they take the essential nominal element of the verb as exemplified in (7a-e) below. The obligatory nominal elements of the verb as sequentially shown in (7a-g) are: *égwù* 'fear', *àgbà* 'appointment', *ánú* 'animal', *m̀gbánù* 'punctuality', *égbé* 'hawk', *ákwụ́kwọ́ ńrí* 'edible leaves', and *ụ́kwà* 'breadfruit'.

7.

a.	Yí égwù	'frighten'
b.	Yí àgbà	'make an appointment
c.	Yí ánū	'transform into an animal
d.	Hụ̀ m̀gbánụ̀	'cause anxiety for punctuality'
e.	Hụ̀ égbé	'frighten a hawk to release its prey'

f.	Họ̀ ákwụ́kwọ́ ńrī	‘rip edible leaves into tiny bits’
g.	Họ̀ ụ́kwà	‘peel off the carapace of breadfruit’ seeds’

The examples (8a-g) illustrate the causative constructions where the verbs in (7a-g) occur. A careful reading of these constructions makes known the fact that they all encode causative situations. In (8a) the agent *ágwọ́* ‘snake’ takes a preliminary action of may be hissing angrily at the patient, *yá* ‘3s’. This preliminary action changes the state of calm of the patient to a state of fear. The agent adopts the human attribute of the will to act and control. So its action is intended to cause fear in the patient and make him/her run away from the agent. The patient is completely affected by this fear and has no part in the causing of the fear in him/her. There are two sub-events here. The first is the frightening action taken by the agent, *ágwọ́,* and the second is the resultant state of fear in the patient, *yá*. These two sub-events are conceptualised as sequential but indistinct events. This indistinctness is because the verb *yí* is a root verb and it is unanalysable. The parameters of direct causation as explained in Section 1.01 above are noticeable in the agent and the patient. This description of the causativity in example (8a) is representative of other constructions in (8b-g) as they can be similarly conceptualised.

8.
a. Ágwọ́ àhú yì-rì yá égwù
Snake DET cause-IND 3s fear
‘That snake frightened him/her’
b. Há yì-rì àgbà
3pl do-IND appointment
‘They have an appointment’
c. Ó yì-rì ánú
3s do-IND animal

‘She/he transformed into an animal’
d. Ọ́ nà-á-hụ́ m̀gbánụ̀
3s PROG-AGR-do anxiety
‘She/he is anxious about punctuality’
e. Ụ́mụ̀ákà nà-á-hụ̀ égbé
Children PROG-AGR-do hawk
‘The children are frightening the hawk to release its prey’
f. Há họ̀-rọ̀ ákwụ́kwọ́ ńrí
3pl do-IND leaf food
‘They prepared some edible leaves for cooking by ripping them apart’
g. Há họ̀-rọ̀ ụ́kwà
3pl do-IND breadfruit
‘They peeled off the carapace of the breadfruit seeds’

These verb roots in (8a-g) describe atelic events. Consequently, the constructions indicate states (not activities) and this is one of the parameters of direct causation. As mentioned in Section 1.3, the verb and its complement are fixed lexical units that embody certain causative notions in the mind of the speaker. This is why some cultural realities and the causativity therein can be observed from the data. For example, (8c) indicates a cultural fact that one can turn himself into an animal. For (8e), the cultural reality is that a hawk in flight, with its prey clutched in its talons, can be made to release the prey when children make a kind of hooting noise to the flying hawk.

3.0 Morphological causative constructions

Morphological causatives result from three processes. First, is the affixation of an evaluative morpheme to the root of a causative activity verb. The second process is verb-verb compounding where the causative activity verb *gbú* ‘kill’ is suffixed to other verbs and the third is the occurrence of these causative verbs with their complements (cf Section 1.3).

3.1 Morphological causatives resulting from evaluative suffixes

Example (9) below, show causative verbs which are products of the suffixation of an evaluative morpheme to the root of the verb. The facts of the data in this work show that these morphemes only yield a causative situation when suffixed to causative activity verbs. This is why the morphological markings observable in (9g) are unacceptable as morphological causatives even though the verb *dè* 'write' is an activity verb. In the causative constructions in (10) the functions of these evaluative morphemes in the causative situation manifest.

9.

a	Mé- 'do/ make'	Mé-ghé 'open'	Mé-dó 'do repair'	Mé-bì 'cause to spoil	Mé-gídé 'cause offence	Mé-nyụ́ 'extinguish'
b	Gbú 'kill'	'gbú-tá' 'cut and bring'	gbú-pụ̀ 'cut out'	Gbú-ká 'cut into parts'	Gbú-tù 'cut down'	Gbú-wá 'cut open'
c	Tọ́ 'lay'	'Tọ́-gbọ́ 'leave abandon'	Tọ́-ghé 'tear open'			
d	Dọ́ 'pull'	Dọ́-ká 'pull apart'	Dọ́-rì 'tear to tiny bits	Dọ́-bì 'tear into two	Dọ́-tịá 'extend'	Dọ́-ghé 'pull open'
e	Kpá 'cause'	Kpá-tá 'bring about'	Kpá-ghé 'forcibly	Kpá-dó 'dialog		

			open’	ue ahead’		
f	Gbá- ‘do/ make’	Gbá-ghé ‘cause open with a key’	gbá-ké ‘recover from ill health’	Gbá-chí ‘close’	Gbá-tá ‘fetch’	Gbá-nyú ‘extinguish’
g	Dé ‘write’	*Dé-ghé ‘write open’	*Dé-ká ‘write apart’	*Dé-rì ‘write into parts’	*Dé-tá ‘write for’	*Dé-nyú ‘write quench’

The expression of the causative situation in (10a and f) below is made possible by the morphological marking *ghè* on the verbs *mé* and *gbá*. This morpheme indicates that the events denoted by the verb *mé* is distributed spatiotemporally and it holds of two or more participants. Hence, in (10a) the sub-event of Obi standing before the door occurs prior to his opening the door with his hands. While in (10f) Obi stands before the door, and then, opens it with the instrument of a key. The sub-events of the causative situations represented in (10a and f) can be conceptualised as distinct successive events in space and time. The same analysis goes for (10b-e). In this wise, the verbal morphological markings *tá* (10b and e), *gbọ̀* (10c), and *kà* (10d), also indicate two sub-events with two or more participants as the conceptualisation holds.

10.

a. Òbí mè-ghè-rè ụ́zọ̀
Obi do-open-IND door
‘Obi opened the door’

b. Jéé gbù-tá nrí éwū
Go kill-bring food goat
‘Go and get some feed for the goat’

c. Ọ́ tọ̀-gbọ̀-rọ̀ n'ụ́zọ̀
3s drop-abandon-IND on the road
'S/he lay abandoned on the road'
d. Ọ́ dọ̀-kà-rà ákwà ḿ
3s pull-apart-cloth 1s
'S/he tore apart my clothes'
e. Íhé à kpà-tà-rà íhé áhù
Thing DEM cause-bring thing DET
'This thing caused that thing'
f. Òbí gbà-ghè-rè ụ́zọ̀
Obi make-open-IND door
'Obi opened the door with a key'

In examples (10a-f) the agents have the features of the will to act and control. However, unlike the lexical causatives in (9) the patients now have the features of control, volition or affectedness. This can be abstracted in (10a and b) where the patient *ụ́zọ̀* has the ability to remain closed even when the agent Obi tries to open it with his hands or with a key. In other words, *ụzọ* has the features of control which is one of the parameters enunciated for indirect causation. The same features can be adduced to the patients in (10b-e), thereby categorising them as instances of indirect causation. The morphological markings in (10a-f) are productive in Igbo.

3.2 Morphological causatives resulting from –*gbú* suffix

In example (11) below the verb *gbú* when suffixed to a causative activity verb results in a causative verbal compound. The –*gbú* suffix modifies the internal structure of the event expressed by the causative verb. In this case, *gbú* introduces the effect of the agentive action on the patient in the telic event and specifies that the causative situation results in extreme pain or death for this patient. The constructions in (12) demonstrate these events.

11.

a.	Dọ́	Dọ́-gbú	'cause to die by mauling'

b.	Kpá	Kpá-gbú	'cause to die by suffocating'
c.	Mé	Mé-gbú	'cause to suffer'
d.	Gbá	Gbá-gbú	'cause to die by shooting'

As in other examples in Section 3.1, the causative situations in (12a-d), apiece, indicate two successive events. For (12a) the sub-event of the lion pulling down the goat precedes both in space and time its mauling to death. The agent and patient features of the lion and goat are evident as explained in Sections 3.1. The parameters of indirect causation are also evident.

12.

a. Ágụ́ dọ̀-gbụ̀-rụ̀ éwú áhù
Lion pull-kill-IND goat DET
'A lion mauled that goat (and the goat died)'

b. Òbí kpà-gbù òlógbō yá
Obi cause-kill cat 3s
'Obi suffocated his cat to death'

c. Ọ́ nà-é-mé-gbū ụ́mụ́ yā
3s PROG-AGR-make kill children 3s
'S/he maltreats her/his children'

d. Díntá gbà-gbù-rù ágụ̄
Hunter shoot-kill lion
'The hunter shot dead the lion'

The suffixation of *–gbú* to causative verbs is highly productive in Igbo results in a distinct semantic class of causative verbs.

3.3 Morphological causatives resulting from verbal complementation

As mentioned in Section 1.0, the function of the obligatory nominal element of the Igbo verb is to give it lexical integrity. The class of activity verbs in this section assumes a causative reading when they take some nominal complements that modify the internal structure of the

events depicted by the verb. It is noteworthy that these complements are not arbitrarily taken but the verb and its complement represent an encoded construction in the lexicon of Igbo. In (13a) the root *fí* 'support' has lexical and conceptual integrity only when it is complemented with the nominals *ágbú* 'knot' and *ájì* 'a type of wrapper'. This is a morphological process as it involves concatenation of morphemes. Similar constructions are shown in (13b-e). The causative constructions in (14) depict the telic causative situations these verbs represent.

13.

a	fí 'support'	fí ágbú 'tie a knot'	fí ájì 'tie a supporting wrapper'		
b	hụ 'blow'	hụ́ ọ́kụ́ 'blow fire'	hụ́-nwụ́ ọ́kụ́ 'make fire'	hụ́-nyụ́ ọ́kụ́ 'extinguish fire'	
c	kwọ 'grind'	kwọ́ ákpụ́ 'grind cassava'	kwọ́ ósè 'grind pepper'	kwọ́ ọ́kà 'grind corn'	
d	tụ́ 'cause'	tụ́ ímé 'make pregnant'	tụ́ óyí 'make cold'	tụ́ ụ́rá 'make sleepy'	tụ́ égwù 'cause fear'
e	kpụ́ 'mould'	kpụ́ mmá 'sharpen knife'	kpú ísī 'sharpen knife'	kpụ́ ụ́zụ̄ 'mould metal (blacksmithing)'	kpụ́ égbè 'make a gun'

The example in (13b) represented in the clause in (14b) is remarkable. Here the verb takes the obligatory complement but in addition, there is the suffixation of the evaluative suffixes *nwụ́* and *nyụ́*. In (14b) *nwụ́* specify the consequent event of extinguishing the fire, which is preceded by the agent's initial action of blowing the fire. The parameters of indirect causation discussed in Section 3.1 above are observable in the conceptualisation of the events in (14a-e)

14.

a. Há fì-lì ònyé óhí ágbú
   3pl tie-IND person thief knot
   'They tied the thief in a knot'
b. Jéé hụ́-nwụ́ ọ́kụ́
   Go light up fire
   'Go and light the fire'
c. Àdá kwọ̀-rọ̀ ákpụ̄
   Ada grind-IND cassava
   'Ada ground the cassava'
d. Òbí kpụ̀-rụ̀ mmá yá
   Obi sharpen-IND knife 3s
   'Obi sharpened his knife'
e. Àdá tụ̀-rụ̀ ímé
   Ada make-IND pregnant
   'Ada has been made pregnant'

The examples in (14a, c, d and e) depict physical realities and their causes while (14b) represents both a physical and cultural reality. Here the act of making fire is fundamental to Igbo life because there lies the capacity for warmth in cold weather and also the ability to cook. Making fire is an art in Igbo life.

3.4 Analytical causative constructions

The data for analytical causatives is taken from the Ńgwà dialect examples in Anyanwu (2005:616). This data is represented in (15a-d).

15.

a. Ézè m̀-mè-rè ìtè áhụ̀ à-dhàá
Eze 1s-do-IND pot DET AGR-fall
'Eze caused/made that pot fall'
b. Ézè m̀-mè-rè Àdhá é-ríé jí
Eze 1s-do-IND Adha AGR-eat yam
'Eze caused/made Adha to eat yam'
c. Ézè m̀-mè-rè á-gáá áhíá
Eze 1s-do-IND AGR-go market
'Eze caused/made someone to go to the market'
Anyanwu (2005:616)

The examples (15a-c) are each made up of 'separate predicates expressing the notion of causation and the predicate of the effect' (cf Section 1.01). The predicate expressing the notion of causation is *Ézè m̀-mè-rè*, where the verb *mé* encodes the causative action of the agent and the distinct space and time of this action. The effect of this action is encoded in the following predicates in (15a-c). Therefore, *ìtè áhụ̀ à-dhàá* (15a), *Àdhá é-ríé jí* (15b) and *á-gáá áhíá* (15c) contain the predicates of effect.

Analytical causative constructions in Igbo are schematic hence not productive in the language. The pattern of all analytical constructions take after (15a-c) above, where a clause with the causative verb *mé*, stating the cause of an action is followed by another clause with a non-causative verb expressing the effect of that action. They appear to be proto-typical answers to WH-questions with the WH element *ònyé* 'who' and the causative verb *mé* in the WH-construction. For example, the question, *Ònyé m̀mèrè ìtè àhụ́ ádháá* 'Who caused that pot to fall down?' could be answered with (15a).

4.0 Conclusion

I have tried to show how the Igbo data in my collection can contribute to the universal understanding of causativity across languages. My data shows that causativity is encoded in the semantic features of the verb in a causative construction. Therefore, I have focused on the

dynamics and semantics of causative verbs in causative constructions to describe the phenomenon in Igbo. Igbo has lexical causative constructions which are similar in function to lexical causatives as detailed in Shibatani (2002) English, French, Nahuatl, and Akawaio among others. These constructions belong to a unique set of routinized linguistic expressions embedded in the Igbo lexicon and which the language user encodes as causatives. These constructions have limited productivity Igbo as they are derived from a unique class of Igbo verbs. I would suggest that further enquiry should be done cross-linguistically to confirm this feature in other languages. My Igbo data shows productivity in morphological causative construction as shown in Sections 3.1-3.3. This productivity results from the suffixation of evaluative morphemes to causative verb roots. The analytical causative data discussed in Section 3 are non-representational and unproductive in the language as they seem to be established answers to Wh-questions with the Wh-element *ònyé* and the causative verb *mé* in the Wh-clause.

The discussion of causative constructions in this work includes the interaction of the syntax, morphology and semantics of Igbo. I believe this is an improvement on the previous discussions of Igbo causativity where the focus has largely been on the move-α in syntactic formalism. The approach in this work represents the Igbo speaker's conceptualization of causativity and how this phenomenon is central to the cultural and physical realities of Igbo life.

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