

Causative constructions and restructuring: two evergreen topics

Jan Casalicchio

Università degli Studi di Siena

jan.casalicchio@unisi.it

Peter Herbeck

Universität Wien & Bergische Universität Wuppertal

peter.herbeck@univie.ac.at



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1. Introduction

This special issue is constituted by ten papers that evolved from the topics discussed at the workshop on causative, perception and restructuring verbs in Romance, which took place on 26-27 May 2022 in Palermo.¹ The idea of this workshop was born some months before, when we attended a workshop on *Linguistic Variation at the Interfaces* (VarInt) organised by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (18-19 November 2021). In this venue, we realised that the topic of causative, perception and restructuring verbs, which originated an important line of research starting in the

¹ See <https://sites.google.com/unipa.it/scup22> for more details.

1970ies, has come back as an important topic of discussion, which is fed by contributions from different countries and from different angles. Furthermore, while in the past decades the studies focused on few Romance languages, nowadays these constructions are studied in lesser-known Romance languages as well, and there are new studies that offer a cross-linguistic perspective.

This Special issue deals with two types of predicates, causative and restructuring verbs. Although they do not form a uniform class, they show several similarities with respect to transparency phenomena, and therefore they are often analysed together. The papers by Clémentine Raffy, Marta Donazzan & Klaus von Heusinger, Georg A. Kaiser & Klaus von Heusinger, Paolo Lorusso & Linda Badan, Maria Rita Manzini & Anna Roussou, Francisco Ordóñez, and Eva Remberger deal with causative verbs. Those by Anna Cardinaletti, Sara Cerutti & Francesca Volpato, Alexandra Fiéis & Ana Madeira, Marc Olivier, Raffaella Folli & Christina Sevdali, and Anna Paradis focus on restructuring verbs.

These contributions approach the topic of this Special issue from various angles. Thus, they deal with a range of empirical phenomena in different Romance languages: besides French, Italian, Spanish, European Portuguese and Catalan, also data from Occitan and Sardinian are taken into account, and comparative perspectives to Chinese (paper by Lorusso & Badan) and Arbëresh (paper by Manzini & Roussou) are topics of investigation. Furthermore, the contributions of this Special issue contain synchronic analyses (e.g. Remberger's paper), while others deal with the diachronic evolution of a specific construction (e.g. the paper by Olivier, Folli & Sevdali). The approaches also vary: some papers offer an experimental perspective (e.g. Raffy, Donazzan & von Heusinger's and Fiéis & Madeira's papers), while others are based on corpus data (e.g. the contributions by Kaiser & von Heusinger and Olivier, Folli & Sevdali) or they offer a theoretical perspective (as for example in the papers by Ordóñez and by Paradis). Finally, syntax is the leading level of description of several contributions, but some papers make claims about semantics or language acquisition (Raffy, Donazzan & von Heusinger, and Cardinaletti, Cerutti & Volpato, respectively).

In Section 2 we briefly introduce the topic of causative verbs and the contributions dealing with them; thereafter, in Section 3 we outline the phenomenon of restructuring and the papers relevant to this topic.

2. Causative verbs

Causative verbs in Romance are an intriguing topic, because they show some peculiarities that set them apart from all other verb types; in addition, they show interesting cross-linguistic variation, even within the same language family, as various papers in this Special issue show. An additional peculiarity of the Romance causative constructions is that historically they underwent a dramatic change in the passage from Latin to Romance. On the one hand, the typical transparency effects found in the current Romance languages seem to be generally unattested in Latin. On the other hand, Latin could encode causation not only syntactically, but also morphologically (Vincent 2016). In addition, causative constructions with verbs like *iubere* 'order' and complement clauses with the subjunctive were very frequent in Latin, but they

disappeared in the passage from Latin to Romance (with the exception of subjunctive clauses in Romanian and some Spanish varieties, Simone & Cerbasi 2001).

These particularities of Romance causative constructions have attracted the attention of scholars since the 1970ies. In the space of four years, three seminal works on causative constructions in Spanish (Bordelois 1974), French (Kayne 1975) and Italian (Radford 1977) were written. Kayne's *French Syntax* (1975), the first work that was published, also introduced the terms *faire-inf* and *faire-par*, a crucial distinction in the analysis of Romance causative verbs. These early works paved the way for a huge number of studies on this topic in Romance: in the 1980ies and first half of the 1990ies, causative constructions were analysed in the new framework of GB-theory. Among the numerous studies, we can cite Zubizarreta (1982, 1985) and Treviño (1993) on Spanish, Burzio (1986) on Italian, Authier and Reed (1991) and Reed (1992) on French. Guasti (1993) is mainly focused on Italian, but it also considers French and Spanish (as well as other languages like Arbëresh and Chichewa), contrasting them to Italian.

The subsequent studies are based on the Minimalist Program. Manzini & Savoia (2005 *et seq.*) offer a discussion of these and other constructions in a number of Italian dialects. A cartographic analysis of restructuring verbs is Cinque (2003), which also discusses perception and restructuring verbs. Although the focus is on Italian, the structure proposed by Cinque is conceived as universal, and various facts of other – Romance and non-Romance – languages are also considered. Hornstein, Martins & Nunes (2006) discuss infinitival complements of causative and perception verbs in European Portuguese and English. Tubino-Blanco (2011) analyses Spanish causatives in contrast with other languages, such as English and Hiaki, an Uto-Aztecan language. Recently, Ciutescu (2018) discussed causative and perceptive constructions in Catalan, Spanish and Rumanian, while Martins (2018) offered a diachronic analysis in Portuguese. Finally, recent analyses deal with the interplay of causatives and passives, from different point of views (Labelle 2013, Belletti 2017, 2022, and Sheehan & Cyrino 2018, 2023).

One reason for the interest in the complementation patterns of causative verbs is the huge cross-linguistic variation. Partly as a consequence of this variation, various analyses have been proposed: they range from Exceptional Case Marking (ECM; or *accusativus cum infinitivo*, a term stemming from the grammar of Latin; cf. Mensching 2017:382) to subject-to-object raising, from Small Clauses to verb incorporation. Not only do these analyses make different predictions, but they also imply different views of the general properties of the matrix verbs. An ECM-analysis, for example, treats causative verbs as two-place predicates; on the other hand, analyses postulating a control structure interpret the matrix verbs as trivalent (Moore 1996). In addition, various recent studies claim that the infinitival clause selected by these verbs can have different sizes (e. g. Sheehan & Cyrino 2018, Sheehan 2020), depending on the language but also on the matrix verb used.

2.1 The contributions on causative verbs

The contribution by **Georg Kaiser and Klaus von Heusinger**, “On the emergence of argument encoding in causatives constructions in Romance”, is a diachronic analysis that targets three Romance languages: Italian, Spanish and French. The analysis is carried out on a comparative Bible corpus that contains eight versions, four from the

15th-17th century and four contemporary ones. The main focus is on the nature of the embedded clause selected by the causative verbs ‘make’ and ‘let’, and in particular on the extension of ECM complements. The overall picture that emerges shows that the three languages differ significantly: in French, ECM is already attested in the Middle French translation (when the causee is a clitic), while it hardly ever occurs in the Italian versions. Spanish occupies an intermediate position, with ECM that seems to emerge in the most recent version (2015) only.

Paolo Lorusso and Linda Badan’s paper “A cross-linguistic comparison of clausal embedding with causatives” offers a cross-linguistic, comparative view of the complements of causative verbs, focusing on data from Italian, Southern Italian varieties, Balkan languages and Chinese. Building on work by Manzini (2022), the authors propose an analysis according to which the observed differences between languages and configurations arise from the (non-)defectivity of the embedded clause, the related phasal status of the embedded CP, and the (un-)availability of *Agree*. In Chinese, on the contrary, φ -*Agree* is generally not available. The authors propose an analysis of causative constructions in this language in terms of θ -feature checking, in that embedded subjects enter a simultaneous θ -checking operation with the embedded and matrix verbs.

Maria Rita Manzini and Anna Roussou’s paper “Italian and Arbëresh (Albanian) causatives: Case and *Agree*” is a contrastive analysis of how the mechanisms of Case and *Agree* work in Italian and Arbëresh, a regional variety of Albanian spoken in various villages scattered across Southern Italy since the conquest of the Balkans by the Ottoman Empire. Arbëresh is thus a useful testbed for theories on language contact, since the local communities have lived in contact with Italo-romance speakers for centuries; in addition, there is quite a few diatopic variation, since the Arbëresh communities developed independently from each other. In this paper, the authors focus in particular on the realization of the causee: in Arbëresh it can be in the nominative even in transitive clauses (with a finite clause as complement), an instance of hyper-raising. This pattern is also found in (Standard) Albanian. In addition, Arbëresh also has two different options, one of which resembles Italian, because it is based on ergative alignment.

Francisco Ordóñez’s paper “Spanish causatives: two specs for causees and two ways to resolve case” investigates the position of causees in infinitival complements of causative verbs in Spanish, with comparative remarks on Catalan, French and Italian. Taking as a starting point the observation that Spanish, contrary to Catalan, Italian, and French, allows causees in pre-infinitival position, the author argues that the clausal spine of infinitival complements in causative constructions licenses an additional position for causees. Adopting a cartographic approach, it is assumed that there is a CauseeP above TP. This higher position for causees is derived by movement and constitutes a criterial position. Furthermore, the paper argues that in Catalanian Spanish, the higher CauseeP is an applicative projection with case assigning capabilities, which explains the uniform dative case assignment (via *Agree*) independently of the transitivity of the embedded verb. The fact that in some other varieties of Spanish and in Catalan, French and Italian, different case solutions exist which depend on the transitivity of the embedded nonfinite verb, is taken as evidence for the assumption that apart from Case assignment via *Agree*, Dependent Case is made available by UG.

The paper by **Clémentine Raffy, Marta Donazzan and Klaus von Heusinger** “The syntax and semantics of *laisser* in causative constructions: an experimental investigation” starts from the observation that in French *laisser* can take two types of complements (clause union and ECM), and it can have two readings: ‘authorize’ and ‘not-intervene’. The question is thus whether the two readings are associated with the two different types of complements, as hypothesized by various scholars (e.g. Kayne 1975). To test this hypothesis, the authors present the results of three different forced-choice tasks, which show that the reading assigned to the tested sentences does not depend so much on the syntactic configuration, but rather on semantic and pragmatic factors.

Eva-Maria Remberger investigates the Sardinian causative construction in her paper “The range of causatives with *fàchere* ‘make’ in Sardinian: Hybrid impersonal constructions between mono- and biclausality”. In this regional language, *fàchere* ‘make’ has some peculiarities; in particular, it allows an impersonal construction that expresses a modal value (‘to be able to, to be possible’). In addition, in some varieties this construction comes in two fashions, either with or without number agreement. The author analyses these data by resorting to Comrie’s (1981) distinction between strong and weak causatives, the impersonal construction being closer to the weak value. In addition, she suggests that, structurally, *fàchere* takes an infinitival CP as complement or adjunct: it is a complement when the causative verb is in a default 3rd person singular, while it is an adjunct when the verb shows number agreement with the internal argument of the infinitive, which occurs when it is left dislocated.

3. Restructuring and restructuring verbs in Romance

Since the seminal works of Rizzi (1976; 1978/1982) and Aissen & Perlmutter (1976), “restructuring” or “clause reduction” has been a major topic of investigation in the Romance languages. Several works have also been dedicated to the study of individual Romance languages, such as Italian (Burzio 1986; Cardinaletti & Giusti 2003; Cardinaletti & Shlonsky 2004; Cinque 2006), Spanish (Aissen & Perlmutter 1976; Luján 1980; Suñer 1980; Zubizarreta 1982; González López 2008; Ordóñez 2012; Herbeck 2014), (European and Brazilian) Portuguese (Gonçalves 1999; Martins 2000; Andrade 2010; Cyrino 2010; Modesto 2016), and Catalan (Hernanz & Rigau 1984; Solà 2002; Paradis 2019), among many others (see Paradis 2019 for a complete overview and discussion).

In the early works on restructuring, it is assumed that there is a transformational rule – a “restructuring rule” (Rizzi 1976, 1978) – which turns an underlying biclausal structure into a monoclausal one. Among the most typical verbs to which this rule applies are modal (such as ‘want’, ‘can’, ‘shall’, ‘must’, ‘may’ etc.) and aspectual (such as ‘begin’, ‘start’, ...) verbs. What these verbs have in common is that they show transparency effects with respect to several tests, such as clitic climbing, long passives, or long object movement (see Aissen & Perlmutter 1976).

Other versions of such ‘transformational’ approaches can be found in verb or VP-movement approaches, which assume that the embedded, nonfinite verb (or VP) moves into the matrix domain, either overtly (see e.g. Ordóñez 2007; 2018; Herbeck

2014 for Spanish) or covertly (see e.g. Grewendorf & Sabel 1994 for German 1994; see also Guasti 1997 for discussion of causatives).

Another strand of analyses considers the presence vs. absence of restructuring phenomena as the result of the functional vs. lexical status of a verb. In this vein, restructuring verbs are generated in a functional projection on top of the nonfinite lexical verb (e.g. Cinque 2004; 2006), while non-restructuring verbs are lexical, taking a nonfinite CP (or TP) complement. With verbs that optionally show restructuring effects, one and the same verb can thus be analyzed as having a derivation in which it can be used as a functional verb (when restructuring effects arise) or as a lexical verb (when no restructuring effects arise); see e.g. Cardinaletti & Shlonsky (2004).

While modal verbs have been analyzed as unambiguous instances of restructuring verbs, it has long been observed that there is considerable (inter-speaker and cross-linguistic) variation with respect to the verbs that allow restructuring phenomena (see Hernanz & Rigau 1984, Paradis 2019:150ff for discussion and references). In fact, in recent studies on restructuring, it is argued that we are dealing with degrees and that there might be different processes and structures being responsible for apparently similar surface effects. Wurmbrand's (2001) seminal study of German restructuring configurations postulates that nonfinite complements can appear to various degrees as defective structures. Thus, a (complete) CP complement would constitute a typical structure that blocks transparency phenomena, but complements can also be TPs (allowing for some tests), vPs and VPs. Furthermore, restructuring can be lexical or functional.

Also with respect to the notion of “deficiency” of clausal complements, several proposals have been put forth, either in terms of truncation of the functional layers constituting a clause (i.e. CP, TP, vP, VP), and/or the (in-)completeness of the features (such as phi and Tense) constituting a nonfinite clause and, relatedly, the phasal status of the embedded infinitive (for extensive discussion, see Wurmbrand 2001, Landau 2000, Paradis 2019, and references cited therein; for causatives, see Sheehan & Cyrino 2018, 2023; Manzini 2022, among others).

3.1 The contributions on restructuring

The following papers contained in the current special issue deal with aspects related to restructuring configurations in Romance:

The paper “On the acquisition of clitic placement in restructuring: A study on monolingual Italian children” by **Anna Cardinaletti, Sara Cerutti & Francesca Volpato** deals with the acquisition of clitic placement in restructuring by monolingual Italian children. Following a sentence repetition task, the results show that children were more accurate with proclisis than enclisis and there were sometimes placement changes in their reproductions, most often resorting to clitic climbing. Thus, clitic climbing appears to be the preferred option over non-climbing. Furthermore, some clitic reduplications were found in the study and no difference between modal and motion verbs was detected. The authors conclude that children have full availability of restructuring and that monoclausal and, thus, smaller structures are preferred, despite the longer dependency established by clitic climbing. This is taken as evidence that children are guided by an interaction of the principles of *Structural Economy* and *Derivational Economy*.

Alexandra Fiéis & Ana Madeira's contribution "Control, restructuring and temporal interpretation: a view from Portuguese" investigates the relation between the process of restructuring and the temporal deficiency of embedded infinitives. The authors investigate corpus data of both diachronic and synchronic nature as well as data from an acceptability test with respect to the possibility of clitic climbing. They argue against a clear-cut correlation between temporal dependence and restructuring, but in favor of the view that restructuring depends on the selectional properties of the matrix verbs. The paper shows that, on a diachronic level, there is a change from a clear preference of clitic climbing in Old Portuguese to an optionality in Modern Portuguese and, thus, a change in the selectional properties of control verbs. The synchronic data suggest that there is considerable variation in the set of control verbs triggering restructuring. The analysis of the acceptability test indicates that factors like e.g. the type of clitic influence the acceptability of clitic climbing.

A diachronic analysis of restructuring is the topic of the paper "Infinitive fronting as a transparency effect in Old and Middle French" by **Marc Olivier, Raffaella Folli and Christina Sevdali**. It analyses the occurrences in which the infinitive is fronted in Old and Middle French (9th-16th century). Infinitive fronting is taken as a diagnostics for the existence of monoclausal restructuring in the history of French (alongside other well known properties like clitic climbing). According to the authors, the infinitival *v*P is moved to Spec,TP when it is fronted, because its position is between the subject (when it is overt) and the verb. This makes it different from Stylistic fronting, as it has been documented for Scandinavian languages (in particular for Icelandic): unlike the latter, Old and Middle French infinitive fronting does not require a subject gap, and it does not obey an Accessibility hierarchy, while this is the case in Scandinavian Stylistic fronting. The whole discussion about infinitive fronting in Old and Middle French shows that in order to better understand restructuring as a whole, the analysis of phenomena different from clitic climbing is crucial, as the authors correctly observe.

Anna Paradis' paper "There is no need to climb! Clitic climbing as a facultative epiphenomenon of restructuring" deals with clitic climbing and its correlation with restructuring, discussing Catalan data from a cross-linguistic perspective. In particular, the author argues that restructuring is universal and languages differ in how this phenomenon becomes visible, i.e. variation concerns the types of transparency effects (such as clitic climbing) that arise. The paper argues in favor of a biclausal approach to restructuring in which transparency effects are the result of a defective C_{def}/T_{def} and of the temporal properties of the embedded clause. In order to account for the presence or absence of clitic climbing in particular languages, the author argues that apart from the deficiency of C/T, the embedded *v* is also decisive: those languages displaying clitic climbing additionally have an embedded *v*-head that is person-defective.

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