

Review by Anonymous

Does the paper make a novel contribution to the understanding of the topic under investigation? [max 250 words]*

Yes. The paper analyses some causative constructions in Sardinian, defined by the Author "weak impersonal causatives", which have not been thoroughly explored in the previous literature. By analysing sentences in Sardinian (and Regional Italian of Sardinia) taken from translations, dictionaries and linguistic studies, the Author proposes an innovative interpretation of the poorly studied constructions with the impersonal causative *fachere* (3rd person singular or plural) + *a* + infinitive. The Author proposes two analyses: 1) a properly impersonal one for the cases without number agreement (e.g. "cussas mattas faghet a las segai" 'it is indeed possible to cut these plants now'), where the verb remains in 3rd person, sing., and the infinitive embedded clause is interpreted as an argument (as in FI constructions), and 2) a personal analysis of the constructions with number agreement, although still limited to the 3rd person, which can be plural (e.g., "cussas mattas faghent a las segai" 'it is indeed possible to cut these plants now'); in this latter case the infinitive embedded clause is interpreted as an adjunct (as in FP constructions).

The paper clearly describes the framework of causatives (constructions FP and FI, weak and strong causatives, control structures) and presents examples in several languages; then discusses the cases in Sardinian: as a result, the general topic of causatives is enriched by this specific analysis of Sardinian, which highlights some peculiar and apparently unique aspects (e.g., the impersonal weak construction, the loss of the impersonal nature in cases with number agreement, the role of the A).

Is the empirical content of the paper sound (i.e. the data are collected and presented properly, the experiments are well designed, the statistics is well done, the examples contain no spelling mistakes, etc)? [max 400 words]*

Yes. The data are presented properly and in a clear way, and they succeed in strengthening the argumentation. All the examples (from Sardinian and other languages) are taken from the existing literature, but they are analysed under a new light (especially the weak impersonal causative constructions in Sardinian, which – according to the Author – have only been mentioned in previous studies). The linguistic data of Sardinian causatives are plenty and more than enough to justify the analysis. The only problem is that there are several misprints in the translations of the examples and in the glosses, which can compromise the understanding. Furthermore, some numbers of the examples do not correspond to the cases discussed in the text. I highlighted some of these misprints in the attached pdf, but a careful check should be made on the entire paper.

Is the argument coherent and sound, with no major flaws and/or shortcomings, within the context of the theoretical assumptions made by the author? [max 500 words]*

Yes. The argument is coherent and sound, the reasoning is well built and rests on linguistic data and examples which strengthen the analysis. Furthermore, the Author seems to be familiar with the previous literature, both about general frameworks and specific cases in several languages. I find the proposal of Chapter 5 satisfactory, and coherent with my

“instinctive” knowledge of a speaker of Regional Italian of Sardinia. The idea that causative constructions with number agreement (e.g., “cussas mattas faghent a las segai” ‘it is indeed possible to cut these plants now’, cf. p. 18) are losing their impersonal nature, and the verb *fachere* ‘make’ is on its way to be “a personal (though still defective, since reduced to the third person) verb with a proper thematic role, meaning something like ‘to work, to function’.” (p. 18) seems convincing. Hence, as the Author claims, the embedded infinitive clause introduced by ‘a’ should be analysed as an adjunct, similarly to FP constructions. However, as the Author notes, the most stable case is the impersonal one (e.g., “cussas mattas faghent a las segai” ‘it is indeed possible to cut these plants now’), where the CP (a las segai) is an argument, like in FI constructions. Furthermore, the Author discusses some problematic cases (Chapter 6) which might contradict the analysis in the paper, but the explanation proposed (contact phenomena between Sardinian and Italian) seems convincing, especially for the cases in § 6.2. Overall, the Author remains open to further analyses which might lead to new conclusions, in particular about the role of the ‘a’ as a marker of biclausality (it appears also in some monoclausal constructions).

Are there any relevant scholarly works that have been overlooked by the author? If the answer is YES, please provide the full references.*

Not to my knowledge. The paper is enriched with many references, which range from the traditional studies to the most recent ones. The references are accurate both in the general frameworks of causatives, and concerning specific documented cases in some languages (e.g. Romance, German). About Sardinian, the references seem to include all the works made on the subject (considering that weak impersonal causatives haven’t been thoroughly analysed before), and the examples are drawn from several studies, both older (e.g., Jones, 1993) and new (e.g., Casti, 2021).

Have you seen this paper, its content, the proposed analysis, or the conclusions published in other venues? [If your answer is YES, please add the relevant reference.]*

Not to my knowledge.

If you accept the paper with minor revisions, please list the revisions you would advice (you are not required to proofread the paper) [max 500 words]

I would advise to carefully check the misprints (I highlighted some of them in the pdf) to avoid confusion in the examples: in some cases the numbers of the examples do not correspond with the sentences discussed in the text. This might lead to a misunderstanding of the reasoning, which is overall sound, but can be compromised by these misprints. Furthermore, the references should be checked, because some of them (e.g. Lorenzetti 2011) are not present in the bibliography.