On the Causative-Anticausative alternation as principle of affix ordering in the Light of the Mirror Principle, the Lexical Integrity Principle and the Distributed Morphology

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Abstract

During the past 40 years research of causativity belonged to the central themes of the general and comparative resp. typological linguistics. In this respect it is astonishing, that in my opinion from the Slavic side this subject was treated if at all very marginally in the past. My interest was motivated by the fact that Causatives and Anticausatives require an analysis, which touches an interface of morphology, semantics, lexicon, word formation and syntax. Therefore it is also replicable by the Minimalistic Program (with the inclusion of Distributive Morphology). Furthermore, the theme comprises important observations concerning questions of affix ordering, syntactic structures and verb movement. Most syntactic accounts of affix ordering and verb movement follow the theory of incorporation by Mark Baker (1988). In this theory syntactic incorporation is assumed to be an instance of the general syntactic rule Move Alpha, e.g. a syntactic operation that derives morphologically complex words from morphologically basic elements (root, stems, or affixes) by head to head movement via incorporation. Whereas the traditional view on morphology and word formation is that word-formation takes place in lexicon, and that morphological rules are different in nature and apply on different primitive elements than syntactic rules, we shall try to advocate an analysis in which the phenomenon of Anticausatives and Causatives has to be derived from different ROOT-Semantics of verbs projecting different trees and syntactic structures by the operations AGREE and MERGE. The Causative Alternation (CAL) will serve as criteria to distinguish between externally and internally caused causation; with help of the CAL the Unaccusativity will be divided into two subgroups: *alternating Unaccusative* (AU-) *verbs* and *non-alternating Unaccusative* (NAU-) *verbs*. In the following an alternate distinction between

AU- and NAU-verbs will be developed, namely the presence/absence of information about *how the process to be treated was caused.*

The universal concept of the encyclopedic lexicon in the English, German and Czech language seems to assume four different ROOTS of verbs at base to classify the Anti-Causativity-Opposition: √agentive (*murder*, *assassinate*, *cut*), √internally caused (*blossom*, *wilt*, *grow*), √externally caused (*destroy*, *kill*, *slay*) and √cause unspecified (*break*, *open*, *melt*).

Moreover, it will be shown that unergative/causative pairs depict an independent phenomenon, which does not affect considerations about CAL (correspondent to Alexiadou et al. 2006a, b and Marantz 1997, but dissenting Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995 and Reinhart 2000). In sections 5 and 6 I will provide an exact analysis of the roots and the syntactic projections which derive from them.

This talk is organized as follows: in section 1 I propose a formulation of the MP based on syntactic features; the examples will be taken from Causatives and Anticausatives that are derived by affixes (in Russian, Czech, German and some other languages of different types and origins). In section 2 I propose that theta roles are also syntactic Features that merge functional affixes with their stems in a well defined way. In section 3 the system of argument structure changing verbal extensions found in languages of different type and origin, i.e. agglutinative languages, syntactic and analytic Indo-European languages of the flective type and also incorporating languages, is briefly introduced; section 4 describes the order of these affixes and section 5 the order of the corresponding complements. In this section a syntactic test is used to show that the *underlying* order of the complements matches the order of verbal extensions. Finally section 6 provides the conclusions.

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