

Marked causatives as *voice*-driven contextual allomorphy

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Introduction: In the Polynesian language Samoan (VSO, split-ergative, dependent marking), predicates that enter the causative-alternation are productively derived by the prefix *fa'a-* in the causative but appear unmarked in the inchoative and simple state (1) (Koopman 2012, Mosel 2004, Mosel & Hovdaugen 1992). In recent syntactic approaches to event decomposition, the realization of change-of-state (COS) morphology is attributed to functional heads (e.g. *voice*, *v*) in specific configurations within the verbal domain (Alexiadou et. al. 2015, Marantz 2013b). By examining the morphosyntactic properties of *fa'a*-causatives, I will argue that causative morphology in Samoan is determined by language specific spell-out rules of the verbalizer *v* that are sensitive to the presence of *voice* in bieventive contexts (contextual allomorphy; Marantz 2013a, Embick 2010). Thereby, this paper not only provides a first syntactic investigation of the causative alternation in Samoan, but also adds a new cross-linguistic perspective to the recent discussion on bundling phenomena in the verbal domain (Harley 2017, Pylkkänen 2008).

Data: The causative alternation in Samoan (Polynesian, Oceanic, Austronesian) is given in (1). Here, while verbal property concept roots (PC; e.g. *mamā* 'clean') occurs unmarked in stative and inchoative contexts (1a), prefixation with *fa'a-* give rise to a causative interpretation by additionally adding a causer agent which is marked with ergative case (*e a'u* 'I') (1b).

- (1) a. 'Ua mamā lo'u tino
 PERF clean 1.SG.POSS body
 'My body was/became clean.' (Milner 1966:127)
- b. 'Ua fa'a-mamā e a'u le ta'avale
 PERF CAUS-clean ERG 1SG.PRON SPEC car
 'I have cleaned the car.' (Hohaus 2016:107)

This distribution relates Samoan to languages that exhibit morphologically marked causatives (e.g. Japanese; Miyagawa 2017), but contrasts with argument structure alternations found in other languages such as English in which PC-roots show the same morphological marking in the inchoative and causative (2a) or Tzeltal that stacks inchoative and causative morphology (2b) (see Beavers et. al 2017 for an overview).

(2)

	Root	Simple state	Inchoative	Causative
a. English	\sqrt{flat}	<i>flat</i>	<i>flat-(t)en</i>	<i>flat-(t)en</i>
b. Tzeltal	\sqrt{tut} 'small'	<i>tut</i> 'small'	<i>tut-ub</i> 'become small'	<i>tut-ub-tes</i> 'cause to be small'
c. Samoan	\sqrt{malu} 'soft'	<i>malu</i> 'be.soft'	<i>malu</i> 'become soft'	<i>fa'a-malu</i> 'cause to be soft'

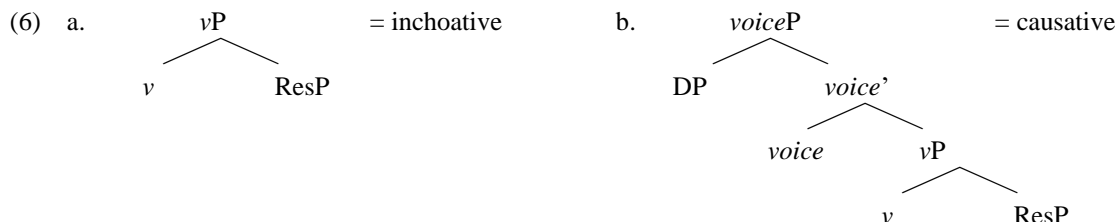
Based on own fieldwork, corpus data (Ambati & Hunkin 2018) and data available in current literature, I will argue that the distribution of causative morphology present in Samoan can be explained by a language specific sensitivity of *v* to the presence of *voice* in bi-eventive contexts.

Analysis: To explore the syntactic properties of Samoan causatives, I first classify Samoan *fa'a-* causatives according to Pylkkänen's (2008) typology of causatives as phrase-selecting. Evidence for this classification comes from the application of language specific tests: *fa'a-* is able to take transitive complements, (3) (Tollan 2018); the constraint that only internal arguments can undergo pseudo noun-incorporation also holds for embedded predicates, (4) (i.e. argument structure is persevered under causativization; Collins 2016); and categorizing morphology, like the stativizer *ma-*, may occur between *fa'a-* and the root (5). Moreover, *fa'a-* is restricted by the syntactic category of its complement as it attaches to verbal constituents only.

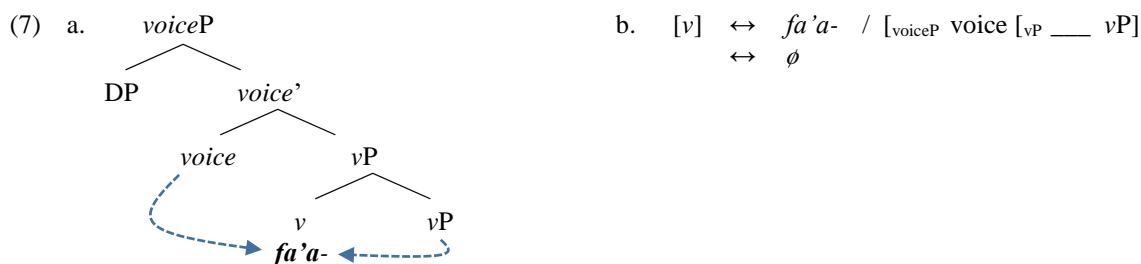
- (3) *Sā fa'a-manao [e le tame] [le teine] [i le masi].*
 PAST CAUS-want ERG SPEC boy SPEC girl ACC SPEC cookie
 'The boy made the girl want the cookie.' (Tollan 2018: 28)
- (4) a. *E fa'a-leaga_{UNACC} i'a le tamaloa.* b. **E fa'a-pese_{UNERG} manu le fafine.*
 PRES CAUS-bad fish SPEC man PRES CAUS-sing bird SPEC woman
 'The man spoils fish.' (Collins 2010) 'The woman makes birds sing.' (Collins 2016: 42)

- (5) a. *ligi* (_{VERG}) → ‘to pour’ b. *ma-ligi* (_{VUNACC}) → ‘to be poured’
 c. *fa’a-ma-ligi* (_{VERG}) → ‘to cause to flow’ (lit. ‘cause to be poured’; Milner 1966: 107)

Secondly, I argue that *fa’a-* is additionally determined by a *voice* head in its higher structure. Following Alexiadou et al. (2015), Marantz (2009) and von Stechow (1996), COS semantics are read off the structural configuration. Therefore, inchoatives and causatives differ structurally in the presence of a *voice* projection: While causatives exhibit a *voice* projection that introduces a causer agent (2b), inchoatives lack a *voice* layer (2a) (Schäfer 2008).



Adopting this approach, I claim that the spell-out of *v* as *fa’a-* is determined by the presence of a higher *voice* head which introduces a causer agent (7) (cf. contextual allomorphy; Embick 2010). Corroborating evidence for this claim comes from non-volitional (natural) causers which are not introduced by *voice* but *vP* internally (Schäfer 2012). As shown in (8), non-volitional causers are introduced as obliques and do not trigger causative morphology in Samoan.



- (8) ‘*Ua mamago ‘ofu i le la.* (9) *E lamu fa’a-malū ai mea ‘ai.*
 PERF dry clothes OBL SPEC sun PRES chew CAUS-soft ANAPH thing eat
 ‘The clothes dried at the sun.’ (Koopman 2008:172) ‘chew the food soft.’ (Mosel & So’o 2000: 62)

Discussion: Recently, the interaction of *voice* and causative morphology has been treated as a bundling phenomenon within the verbal domain (e.g. Harley 2017, Pylkkänen 2008). Following this approach, Samoan would have been analyzed as a kind of *voice*-bundling (i.e. causative morphology would be analyzed as a spell-out of a bundled *voice/v* head like in Chol; Harley 2017). However, resultatives raise a problem for such an analysis in Samoan: While resultatives are expressed as serial verbs, the predicate denoting the PC verb (*V*₂) must obligatorily carry causative morphology (9). Crucially, as it can be independently shown, the *V*₂ is smaller than *voiceP* (presumably the size of *vP*; Hopperdietzel 2018). Therefore, while the data in (9) is unexpected under the bundling approach, it can be explained by the configurational approach presented here. Whether marked causatives should be analyzed as *voice*-driven allomorphy in languages such as Japanese as well is a topic for further research (cf. Oseki 2017).

(Selected) References: Alexiadou, A., E. Anagnostopoulou & F. Schäfer. 2015. *External arguments in transitivity alternations*. Oxford: OUP. • Beavers, J., M. Everdell, K. Jerro, H. Kauhanen, A. Koontz-Garboden, E. LeBovidge and S. Nichols. 2017. Two types of states. *Proceedings of LSA* 2(38). 1-15. • Collins, J. 2016. Samoan predicate initial word order and object positions. *NLLT* 35(1). 35-71. • Embick, D. 2010. *Localism vs. globalism in morphology and phonology*. Cambridge, MIT Press. • Harley, H. 2017. The “bundling” hypothesis and the disparate functions of little *v*. In R. D’Alessandro et.al. (eds.), *The verbal domain*, 3-28. Oxford: OUP. • Hohaus, V. 2016. The inchoative aspect in Samoan. *Proceedings of AFLA* 23. 96-110. • Hopperdietzel, J. 2018. Resultatives in Samoan. Talk presented at the Workshop on the Syntax of Polynesian languages, Toronto. • Koopman, H. 2012. Samoan ergatives as double passives. In L. Brugé et.al. (eds.), *Functional heads*, 168-180. New York: OUP. • Marantz, A. 2013b. Verbal argument structure. *Lingua* 130. 152-168. • Schäfer, F. 2008. The syntax of (anti-)causatives. Amsterdam: Benjamins. • Tollan, R. 2018. Ergatives are different. *Glossa* 3(1). 35. • Von Stechow, Arnim. 1996. The different readings of *wieder* (‘again’). *Journal of Semantics* 13(2). 87-138.