

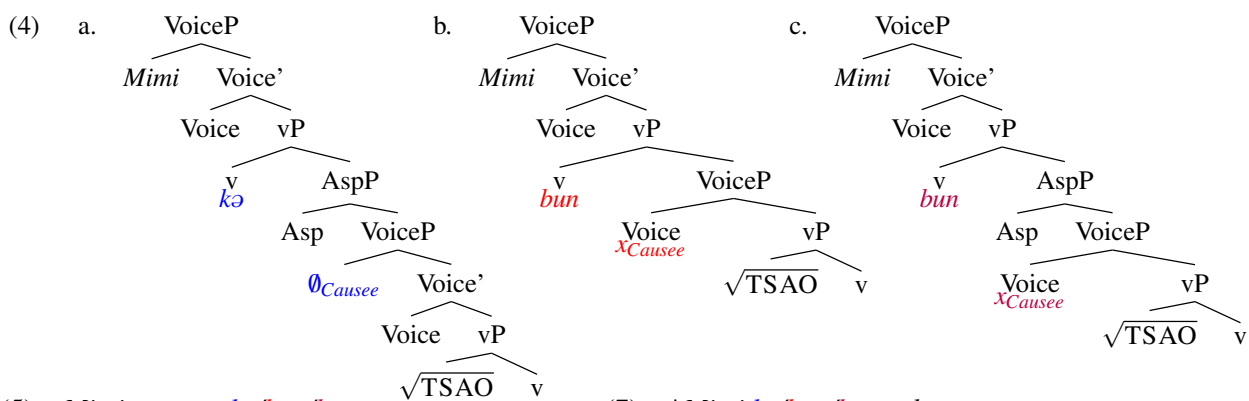
Taxonomy of implicit causees in Teochew causatives

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Introduction: Implicit arguments as empty categories have been receiving much attention in the literature and recent studies have acknowledged they do not form a homogeneous category (Laudau, 2014; Legate, 2014; Šereikaitė, 2021; Akkuş, 2021, a.o.). This study contributes to this discussion by exploring three different implicit causees of periphrastic causatives in Teochew (Southern Min, Sinitic). I show they have different syntactic, semantic and pragmatic properties, providing implications for argument structure and enriching typology of impersonal pronouns. **Data:** In Teochew, causees in the *kə* ‘give’-causative (1) and the *bun* ‘separate’-causative ambiguous between ‘courtesy’ (2) and ‘permissive’ reading (3) can be implicit.

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| <p>(1) <i>Mimi kə tsao.</i> Mimi give run ‘Mimi causes someone to run.’ (Lit. ‘Mimi gives the running to someone.’)</p> | <p>(2) <i>Mimi bun tsao.</i> Mimi separate run ‘Mimi causes someone to run by giving precedence to that one out of courtesy.’</p> | <p>(3) <i>Mimi bun tsao.</i> Mimi separate run ‘Mimi of higher social status causes someone of lower social status to run by giving permission to that one.’</p> |
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The causative structures are given in (4). **Basic structure:** All causatives have recursive vPs: the bi-eventuality can be diagnosed by independent manner adverbs (5). They have no embedded CP: both left-clefting the embedded object to the right of the causative verb and embedding an overt complementizer are ungrammatical (examples omitted). Following Lin (2006), I assume Sinitic languages do not have TP layer. Only the *bun*-causative does not embed an AspP: preverbal progressive marker *lo* can occur in embedded structures of other two constructions but not in this one (6). They have no embedded NegP: embedding negative *bo* is disallowed (7). Following Alexiadou et al. (2015) among many others, I assume causers are introduced by VoiceP. **Causee introduction:** All causatives can have unergative, transitive or ditransitive as embedded predicates but not unaccusatives and statives (examples omitted), showing that they all require their complements to have an external argument (Harley, 1990; Folli&Harley, 2007). Following Kratzer (1996), I assume causee as an external argument is syntactically severed from the verb. The causee-introducing head cannot be ApplP: in all examples, causees are not introduced by *gaʔ*, an obligatory morpheme to introduce applied arguments (cf. Lee, 2012), and causees can co-occur with applied arguments (8). This head also cannot be CauseeP allowing an active-passive alternation (Akkuş, 2021, 2022): embedded structures of these causatives pattern as canonical actives: (i) they have no passive morpheme required in passives and (ii) they show voice match with actives in sluicing (Merchant, 2013) (examples omitted). Therefore, causees can only be introduced by VoiceP. **Causee syntactic status:** Only \emptyset_{Causee} in the *kə*-causative is syntactically-projected: it can license (i) reflexives, (ii) reciprocals and (iii) depictives while the others cannot (9). It is introduced as an argument not adjunct: it blocks the passivization of an embedded object (10). I assume the two non-syntactically-projected causees are introduced as free variables x_{Causee} at Voice head (Heim, 1982; Akkuş, 2021, a.o.).



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| <p>(5) <i>Mimi meme kə/bun/bun manman tsao.</i> Mimi quickly give/separate slowly run ‘M. quickly causes someone to slowly run.’</p> <p>(6) <i>Mimi kə/bun/*bun lo tsao.</i> Mimi give/separate PROG run ‘M. causes someone to be running now.’</p> | <p>(7) <i>*Mimi kə/bun/bun bo tsao.</i> Mimi give/separate NEG run Intended: ‘M. causes someone not to run.’</p> <p>(8) <i>Mimi kə/bun/bun *(gaʔ) nang tsao.</i> Mimi give/separate BEN people run ‘M. causes someone to run for others.’</p> |
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- (9) a. *Mimi_j kə/*bun/*bun yi-gagi_i/yin-gagi_i/* (10) **Mimi kə muegia kə tsia.*
 Mimi give/separate 3sg-self/3pl-self/ Mimi give stuff PASS eat
tsuitsui-gai_i tsao. Intended: 'M. causes some foodstuff to be
 drunk-MOD run eaten by someone.'
- 'M. causes someone to run oneself.' or (11) *Mimi bun tsao*
 'M. causes someone drunk to run.' Mimi separate run
- b. *Mimi_j kə/*bun/*bun bits'ə_i siogi.* *o/ku.*
 Mimi give/separate each.other meet
 'M. causes someones to meet each
 other.'
- PERF^{neutral/positive}/PERF^{negative}
 'M. has did the causing-someone-to-run
 thing (and that one has run).'

Causee interpretation: Though embedded predicates of these causatives are the same activity verb 'run' and all causees are introduced by VoiceP (4), these implicit causees have unusual and different interpretations. First, all causees fail agentive diagnostics including instrumental phrases, agent-oriented adverbs, agent-oriented comitatives and purpose clause (Bruening, 2013; Alexiadou et al., 2015) (12). I argue one reason for this is that these causatives are 'probabilistic causative': one of the nine evidence is that the result can be negated (13). I argue this causal event structural interpretation results from a universal volitional modality with a circumstantial base (Portner, 2009) encoded in causative verbs (cf. Martin&Schfer, 2017), which contextualizes the causee interpretation (c.f. Schäfer, 2012; Alexiadou et al. 2015; Wood&Marantz, 2017) into a 'Prospective DOER' (c.f. Lundin 2003) with a much 'reduced agency' interpretation (cf. Sigurðsson&Wood, 2021). Second, *xCausee* is additionally interpreted as BENEFICIARY receiving a 'courtesy' from the causer (2). Evidence: Teochew marks the speaker's attitude in the form of perfective markers: *o* (neutral/positive) and *ku* (negative); the *bun*-causative is only compatible with *o* (11). Following Kratzer (2006) and many others, I assume that a universal epistemic modality is also encoded in *bun*, influencing the event structural interpretation that contextualizes the *xCausee* interpretation. Third, *xCausee* is also interpreted as being pragmatically interacting with the causer: it is interpreted as of lower social status (3). Evidence: the sentence-final emphatic yes/no-question marker *meh* can only target an event participant of higher social status in the context, regardless its syntactic position; it can only target the causer not the *xCausee* in the *bun*-causative (14). Again, this pragmatic effect is contributed by the causative verb. All of these together show the argument interpretation is not listed with individual verbs or specific syntactic positions (cf. Chomsky, 1981; Stowell, 1981; Baker, 1988), but contextualized by linguistic (syntax, semantics&pragmatics) environment.

- (12) a. **Mimi kə/bun/bun eng gu?bangl* (13) *Mimi kə/bun/bun tsiao, dansi*
 Mimi give/separate use skateboard/ Mimi give/separate run but
uyise?gail do Xingy gai siohu bo-nang tsao.
 intentionally/ LOC Xingy POSS help NEG-people run
e tsao. 'M. causes someone to run, but no one runs.'
- under run
 Intended: 'M. causes someone to use a (14) *Mimi bun tsao meh?*
 skateboard/intentionally to run.' Mimi separate run Q
 'Is Mimi that cause someone to run by giving permission to that one for running?'
- b. **Mimi kə/bun/bun tsao kə səng.* NOT 'Is someone that Mimi causes to run by giving permission to that one for running?'
- Mimi give/separately run to play
 Intended: 'M. causes someone to run for playing.'

Causee and impersonal pronouns All causees have no [number/gender/human] selectivity, attested by adverbial modifiers 'alone/together' or embedded predicates selecting (fe)male/(non)-human subjects. All causees must be [+animate], attested by embedded predicates selecting (in)animate subject. \emptyset *Causee* and *xCausee* have no [person] selectivity; but *xCausee* must be [3rd]. I show \emptyset *Causee* allows both generic and arbitrary readings and these [person] selectivity issues correspond to the generic vs. arbitrary distinction of impersonal pronouns (Egerland, 2003a, b). This also corresponds to the (non)existence of AspP of each causative in (4), following Cinque's (1998) observations on the (non)-co-occurrence between different readings of impersonal pronouns and specific time references. The uniqueness of \emptyset *Causee*, compared with Teochew overt impersonal pronoun *nang* 'people' and other Germanic/Romance-language ones, is that it can be [-human], a pattern also observed in Thai (Holmberg&Phimsawat, 2015). Its only syntactic distribution as an external argument, however, still follows the typological observations in Fenger (2018). **Conclusion** This study on different Teochew implicit causees shows empty categories are not deficient but rich in many ways with important theoretical implications.