

Verb Restriction and Syntactic Derivation of the Causative Alternation

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This talk introduces the verb restriction and syntactic derivation of causative and anti-causative alternation in Mandarin Chinese and Japanese respectively. Firstly, the verbs which are allowed to appear in the causative alternation in Mandarin Chinese and Japanese are stable, although they are realized in different manners. In Japanese, the causative alternation is realized through the morpheme markings, either from transitivity or intransitivity. In Mandarin Chinese, the resultative verb compounding is usually applicable in the causative alternation, as well as the very rare mono-morphemic verbs, as widely discussed in existing literature. Secondly, the derivational and non-derivational controversy of the causative alternation is introduced, and this talk emphasizes a non-direct-derivation-relation between the causative and anti-causative alternants in two languages, both of which are derived from a common base: Cause[√Root+Theme]. The common base expresses a resultant state, and the predicate Cause introduces a causal relation between a causing event and a resultant state. They only differ in the presence or absence of an external argument introducer, which is added in the causative alternant, but lacks in the anti-causative alternant. The typology of the causative alternation is unanimously discussed in both Mandarin Chinese and Japanese, although the morphemic inflectional properties vary across languages.

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