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SYNCRETISM OF APPLICATIVE AND CAUSATIVE MARKERS
IN NORTHERN SINITIC LANGUAGES

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Abstract

Les applicatifs sinitiques appartiennent au type bénéfactif, le type le plus commun d'un point de vue translinguistique (Polinsky 2013), et dans lequel le nom appliqué, à savoir, le nom gouverné par le marqueur applicatif, est soit le destinataire, soit le bénéficiaire de l'action. Dans cet article, les constructions applicatives des langues sinitiques du Nord, une zone qui comprend les dialectes mandarins de Lan-Yin et des Plaines centrales, ainsi que le chinois Jin, sont examinées et comparées au chinois standard.

Ces marqueurs applicatifs prennent généralement la forme d'un enclitique postverbal, comme [kei⁰]=gei en chinois standard, qui se développe à partir du verbe 'donner', [kei²¹³] gěi 给. Leur fonction est d'augmenter la valence de la phrase d'une unité dans le cas des verbes bivalents qui sont typiquement de nature volitive. Néanmoins, ils sont également utilisés avec des verbes de transfert qui sont intrinsèquement trivalents, et n'augmentent pas la valence. Ils peuvent être considérés comme « facultatifs ».

Nous soutenons que pour cette région du nord-ouest de la Chine, les principales différences avec le chinois standard sont (i) l'extension de VERBE=DONNER à tout verbe volitif, y compris un certain sous-ensemble de verbes intransitifs volitifs, sinon (ii) au verbe 'donner' lui-même. Pour certaines langues sinitiques, il existe également une contrainte morphosyntaxique qui exige que l'objet indirect soit préverbal et soit marqué par le cas accusatif/datif: -ha~xa. Enfin, dans plusieurs langues, il existe un (iii) syncrétisme avec le marqueur causatif dont les relations diachroniques possibles sont étudiées. La conclusion souligne le rôle de l'analogie dans l'extension du marqueur applicatif aux verbes intransitifs non accusatifs, créant ainsi les conditions d'un changement sémantique et l'émergence de la fonction causative.

1. Introduction

Sinitic applicatives generally belong to the benefactive type, the most common type crosslinguistically (Peterson 2007: 46 Polinsky 2013), such that the applied noun, the noun governed by the applicative marker, is either the recipient or the beneficiary of the action. Furthermore, the applicative markers are based first and foremost on the verb ‘give’ and increase clause valency by one in the case of bivalent verbs that are typically volitional in nature. Nonetheless, they are also used with verbs of transfer that are inherently trivalent, and thus do not increase the valency, a type which Peterson defines (2007: 45) as ‘optional’, in which the applicative construction is seen to have ‘an alternative oblique instantiation for the applicative object’. For both types, obligatory and optional, the applied noun syntactically represents the primary object.

In recent years, most of the research on the subject of applicatives in Chinese languages has been, however, carried out in the framework of generative grammar and mainly on the standard language, Mandarin Chinese or *pǔtōnghuà* (see Sun 2009, 2015, 2019 Tsai 2018 *inter alia*), apart from the functional approach taken in Xiao (2019, this volume). Notable exceptions are Yang (2014) and Zhao (2019) on the non-standard Mandarin varieties of Gangou Chinese and Djamouri (2015) on Tangwang Chinese. In this paper, I will analyse the applicative construction in a sample of Northern Sinitic languages, an area which includes the Lan-Yin and Central Plains Mandarin dialects as well as Jin Chinese. The applicative markers generally take the form of a postverbal enclitic, such as [kei⁰] = *gei* in Standard Mandarin, and they develop from the related verb of giving, [kei²¹³] *gěi* 给 and its cognates.

I consider the extension of the applicative use of =*gei* to an even wider range of verbs than in Standard Chinese, attested in the above-named group of Northern Sinitic languages. The aim is to assess whether or not these functions conform to crosslinguistic predictions about the syntactic and semantic behaviour of applicatives.

In some of these languages, the applicative marker appears to further extend to an important new function of forming causative constructions with mainly intransitive, but also a few labile verbs. This is remarkably similar to the patterning reported for some Australian, Austronesian and Amerindian languages.

For the purposes of comparison, first of all, a brief outline of ditransitive constructions in Sinitic languages is given in §2 to provide the necessary basis for the ensuing discussion, since one of these is the matrix from which applicative constructions emerge. Second, a survey of applicatives will be made in §3 with respect to for the strikingly different

behaviour of non-standard Mandarin languages in Northwestern China, compared with the standard language.¹ In a fourth section, the syncretism of applicatives with causative markers is examined and possible diachronic relationships discussed. An epilogue on the language contact issue is found in §5.

1.1. Sinitic languages

The ten main Sinitic languages (or Chinese dialect groups) currently recognized are Mandarin 官话, Xiang 湘语, Gan 赣语, Wu 吴语, Min 闽语, Kejia (or Hakka) 客家话, Yue 粤语, Jin 晋语, Pinghua 平话 and the Hui dialects 徽语 (as, for example, in the atlas compiled by the Zhongguo Shehui Kexueyuan Yuyan Yanjiusuo, 2nd edition, 2012). The linguistic diversity of the Sinitic languages is immense and, as yet, is neither fully explored nor its full extent acknowledged. For example, there is little mutual intercomprehensibility between the spoken forms of the dialect groups – a speaker of Fuzhouese (Min) will not be able to follow the conversation of a speaker from Wenzhou (a Wu dialect). Sinitic or Chinese languages can with ease be considered as heterogeneous as European languages.

The enormous Mandarin branch is itself further classified into eight subgroups. Nonetheless, the greatest linguistic diversity for Sinitic is concentrated in the southeast of China where eight of the non-Mandarin dialect groups are located. Only the northern Jin group is co-territorial with Mandarin (see also Chappell & Li 2016).

Sinitic languages are essentially tonal S-V-O languages with head-final marking for the NP, while they are mainly head-initial in the VP. Both lexical and morphological tone can be identified. Topic-chaining with ellipsis of arguments is common in spoken varieties. In general, adpositions are used to mark case roles in prepositional phrases which are largely placed in preverbal position. Verbal complementation is remarkably rich in its expression of frequency, result, potential mode, direction and manner while reduplication serves a variety of functions including intensification, plurality and aspectual categories. Aspect can also be marked on the verb in many Sinitic languages, but in general there are neither case paradigms nor person, gender or number marking, the

¹ Lan-Yin Mandarin 兰银官话 and Central Plains Mandarin 中原官话 are the two main subgroups found in Northwestern China belonging to the enormous Mandarin cluster, the target area of our study. We will thus avoid the common English translation of Lan-Yin Guanhua as ‘Northwestern Mandarin’ to avoid any confusion. «Lan-Yin» is an amalgamation of the toponyms, Lanzhou and Yinchuan, the capitals of Gansu and Ningxia Hui A.R. respectively.

exception being found in the Northwest of China where the development of case systems in the Mandarin languages of the Gansu-Qinghai Sprachbund is quite striking (cf. Zhu et al 1997, Janhunen et al 2008, Xu & Ran 2019 *inter alia*).

Belonging to the Beijing subgroup of Mandarin, Standard Chinese, the object of comparison in §2 and §3, was promulgated as the official language of China in 1958. Its use has since been effectively implemented across China through the domains of education, government and media as the national *lingua franca* (Chen 1999: 124).

1.2. Applicatives cross-linguistically viewed

In crosslinguistic studies, the marking of the applicative is generally considered to fall into the domain of verbal morphology (Payne 1997) and to be particularly common in languages which use little or no case-marking (Polinsky 2013). The applicative, narrowly defined, is considered as a means to promoting an oblique constituent to the core role of object in the clause, thereby increasing the verb valency by one in comparison with the initial or basic construction (Dixon 2012, Polinsky 2013).² In this paper, we adopt the broader definition of applicativization proposed by Creissels (*forthc.* 47) in which ‘a term of the derived construction other than A or S, designated as the APPLIED PHRASE, expresses a semantic role which, in the initial construction, either can only be expressed with a non-core coding, distinct from its coding in the derived construction, or cannot be expressed at all.’

Peterson (2007: 45-47) proposes a useful distinction between obligatory and optional applicatives: unlike the optional type, the *obligatory* type has no alternative initial construction.³ Such is the case for the semantic role of beneficiary in many Bantu languages, integrated as an applied patient in an obligatory applicative construction, the only solution for coding this role, since such languages possess neither benefactive case markers nor benefactive adpositions (see Creissels *forthc.*, pp. 477-478; Creissels & Bassène, *this volume*).

² In some languages, the promotion of an oblique participant may however lead to demotion of the initial object, in which a referent is thus ‘denucleativized’, *qv.* Creissels (*forthc.* §14.2.2.2, pp.482-483 *pers.comm.*), as seen in his Central Alaskan Yupik and Halkomelem (Salish) examples.

³ Thus, logically, there is no valency increase involved for the obligatory type of applicative in Peterson’s view. In terms of the derived or applicativized verb itself, however, an extra argument is present compared with its non-derived form.

2. Optional versus obligatory applicative constructions in Sinitic

The semantic domain of transferral is one of the crucial elements or building blocks of ditransitive and related constructions in Sinitic languages and the diversity of construction types is great, as an investigation by Zhang (2008) shows. Since transferral is intimately linked and overlaps with the applicative constructions in Northern Sinitic, we briefly illustrate the unmarked double object construction in Standard Chinese which is restricted to ditransitive verbs of transferral – VERB IO DO – and its applicative $V=gei$ counterpart.

In the optional type of applicative construction with a ditransitive verb, that is, a trivalent verb, there is no apparent change in syntactic status for the applied object. Compare the minimal pair of a basic double object construction in Standard Chinese in (1) with the applicative $V=gei$ construction in (2):

(1) Basic double object construction in Standard Chinese

VERB IO DO

Tā sòng-le wǒ yí-shù huā.⁴

3SG offer-PFV 1SG one-CLF_{<bunch} flower

‘He offered me a bouquet of flowers (as a present).’

他送了我一束花。

(2) Applicative construction with enclitic =*gei*

VERB=GEI IO DO

Tā sòng=gei wǒ yí-shù huā.

3SG offer-**gei** 1SG one-CLF_{<bunch} flower

‘He offered me a bouquet of flowers (as a present).’

他送给我一束花。

The shared features of the two objects are a lack of any overt, dependent marking on the IO and the position of the IO which directly follows either a verb of transferral or the derived verb with enclitic =*gei* as primary object. In (2) however, discourse prominence is additionally given to the IO (see Peterson 2007: 49-50, Payne 1997: 186, also Chappell 1983 on the semantics of this construction).

In contrast to this, when the obligatory subtype of the Northern Sinitic applicative construction is used with a non-transferral transitive verb, it does add an extra argument to the valency. In this situation, neither the

⁴ The *pīnyīn* system, in use in China since 1958, is adopted for the Standard (Mandarin) Chinese examples.

applicative enclitic =*gei* nor its following applied noun, the indirect object and recipient, may be omitted to form an independent clause.

(3a) Wǒ xiě-gei tā yì-fēng xìn.
 1SG write-APPL 3SG one-CLF letter
 ‘I wrote her a letter.’ 我写给她一封信。

(3b) Omission of IO
 *Wǒ xiě-gei ∅ yì-fēng xìn.
 1SG write-APPL one-CLF letter

(3c) Attempted double object construction : Verb IO DO
 *Wǒ xiě-∅ tā yì-fēng xìn
 1SG write 3SG one-CLF letter

It follows that enclitic =*gei* followed by its applied noun are obligatory constituents with certain non-transferral verbs in Standard Chinese which reflects a measure of integration into the verb complex, particularly for enclitic =*gei*.

Furthermore, the verb complex, VERB=APPL, generally codes a completive meaning of change of possession, implicating a change of location for the direct object without needing aspectual marking (cf. Li & Thompson on perfectivizing use of =*gei* 1981: 205). The same is true in the northwest of China, as, for example, in the non-standard variety of Lanzhou Mandarin (Jia 2016 :162).

2.1. Further criteria for identifying applicatives

Applicative markers are claimed to lie closer to the verb stem than aspect marking and other complements. Thus, the applicative enclitic =*gei* may not be separated from its verb head, for example, by aspect marking, a point made by Li & Thompson (1981), Chappell (1983), with respect to ditransitive constructions for Standard Chinese, but which applies also to the languages in Northwestern China, such as Taiyuan Jin (Shen 2002):

(4) **sòng-le-gei*
 *offer-PFV-APPL *送了给

In sum, applicatives are clearly derivational in nature, rather than inflectional. The applicative governs an applied noun, the primary object, which pertains first and foremost to the semantic role of the Beneficiary or Goal (Recipient) in Sinitic. This is the most common cross-dialectally

for Northern Sinitic, as reported in the relevant literature for many other unrelated languages. By contrast, applicatives coded by clitics appear to be a rarer phenomenon in other branches of Sinitic located in central, eastern and southern areas of China.

2.2. Characteristic co-occurring verb classes

In Standard Chinese, the small set of verbs that take the enclitic =*gei* can be briefly summarized as follows for the purposes of comparison with the Mandarin languages of the Northwest (cf. Chao 1968, Zhu 1979, Li & Thompson 1981, Chappell 1983, and Xiao 2019 for more detailed lists):

First, as explained above, the applicative marker is mainly used with volitional, transitive verbs of TRANSFER in the direction of the Recipient or Indirect Object NP, albeit ‘optional’ in nature. Hence, the following sample of verbs can be used in the double object construction without any marking or in the V=*gei* applicative:

- (3) TRANSFER verbs
huán 还 ‘return’, *fù* 付 ‘pay’, *jìe* 借 ‘lend (to)’, *péi* 赔
 ‘compensate’, and *sòng* 送 ‘offer as a present’, as shown in
 example (2) above.

The applicative is, by contrast, obligatory with non-transfer, volitional action verbs that allow themselves to be ‘semantically coerced’ to express transferral through their occurrence in this construction. Thus, the Verb=*gei* complex in Standard Chinese can integrate verbs such as those found in the sample in (6) through the use of this enclitic:

- (4) VOLITIONAL ACTION verbs
jiāo 交 ‘pass, deliver’, *dài* 带 ‘carry’, *xiě* 写 ‘write’, *mài* 卖 ‘sell’,
jièshào 介绍, ‘introduce’, *zuò* 做 ‘make’

Nor can these verbs occur in the basic double object construction, described above, and exemplified by (1).

Due to their inherent semantics, DEPRIVE verbs are not able to form an applicative construction with the enclitic =*gei* in Standard Chinese, since it is clearly impossible to construe the applied object as a beneficiary or

recipient in these cases⁵. These include the following verbs as well as certain communication verbs:

- (5) DEPRIVE and COMMUNICATION verbs
tōu 偷 ‘steal’, *mǎi* 买 ‘buy (from)’, *qiǎng* 抢 ‘snatch’
 but also some COMMUNICATION verbs *wèn* 问 ‘ask’ and *huídá* 回答 ‘answer’⁶

By way of contrast, DEPRIVE and COMMUNICATION verbs are able to be used in the relevant applicative constructions in Lan-Yin and Central Plains Mandarin, as well as the Jin languages of northwestern China.

Second, intransitive verbs and predicative adjectives do not co-occur with enclitic *-gei* at all: **pǎo-gei* ‘run-APPL’ **跑给* *gāoxìng-gei* 高兴给 ‘happy-APPL’ in Standard Chinese, whereas, to different degrees, this is similarly possible in the Northwest. Third, note that the verb ‘give’ itself may not occur in the applicative construction in Standard Chinese: **gěi=gei* **给给*, while such a combination is found in widespread use in Lan-Yin and Central Plains Mandarin languages and dialects, as well as in the Jin dialects.

Notably, the use of GIVE-enclitics as applicative markers turns out to be largely a Northern Sinitic feature. Even though the same classes of verbs can be distinguished in the different kinds of pan-Sinitic ditransitive constructions, the benefactive applicative does not seem to be attested in Central or Southern Sinitic languages. To take one example, in the Keqiao dialect of Shaoxing Wu, spoken in Zhejiang province, the VERB=GEI IO DO applicative construction is not a feature of its syntax. TRANSFER, DEPRIVE, COMMUNICATION and DESIGNATIVE verbs may take part in either the double object construction VERB IO DO or in a serial verb construction VERB DO [GIVE IO], subject to various syntactic constraints (see Sheng 2021: 259-263). Once =pe?⁵⁻³³ ‘give’ is omitted in the following example (6), the clause becomes grammatical.

- (6) Shaoxing Wu (Keqiao dialect) *VERB=GIVE IO DO
**soŋ*⁵⁵⁻³³=*pe?*⁵⁻³³ *fii*¹³¹⁻³³ *k^hue*⁵⁵⁻³³ *pu*⁵⁵
 offer=give 3SG CLF cloth

⁵ DEPRIVE verbs are, however, possible in a subtype of the double object construction in which the IO expresses the source from which something is taken away (see Li & Thompson 1981).

⁶ By contrast, the communication verbs *shuō* 说 ‘say’, ‘speak’ and 告诉 *gàosu* ‘inform’ may be used with applicative *-gei*.

(Attempted: ‘Give her some cloth.’) *送拔渠块布。
(Sheng 2021:260)

- (7) Shaoxing Wu (Keqiao dialect) VERB IO DO
 feŋ⁵⁵⁻³³ ŋoŋ⁵⁵⁻³³ pɿ⁵⁵-gəŋ²⁻⁵⁵ beŋ¹³¹⁻²⁴ ku⁵³⁻³¹
 divide 1SG half-CLF apple
 ‘Give me half the apple.’ 分佻半个苹果。
 (Sheng 2021:260)

From the angle of typology then, the VERB=GIVE applicative construction is far from being a shared feature Pan-Sinitic (for details, see Zhang 2008) and appears to uphold the broad North-South division in typological profiles.

3. Northwestern China

Mandarin languages of the Lan-Yin group form a small *Sprachbund* that straddles the border between Gansu and Qinghai provinces. Under the impact of long-term contact with Turkic, Mongolic and Tibetic languages, their evolution has diverged quite radically from other Mandarin dialect areas. These include languages such as Gangou 甘沟话, Hezhou or Linxia 临夏话, Tangwang 唐汪话, Xining 西宁话, Lanzhou 兰州话 and Wutun 五屯话 (Janhunan et al 2008). The extended use of =gei as an enclitic is not however restricted to this *Sprachbund*. It can also be identified in Ningxia for Yinchuan 银川话, Longde 隆德 and Guyuan 固原 dialects, for Urumqi 乌鲁木齐 in Xinjiang, and in the Jin dialects, an example being the Taiyuan 太原 dialect of Shanxi (Shen 2002).

While case systems, aspect and directional marking and the atypical SOV word orders of the Mandarin languages of the Northwestern regions have been extensively described in the past twenty years, far less has been the case for applicative verbal morphology. Languages in this area which extends from Xinjiang in the far northwest to Ningxia, Qinghai, Gansu and Shanxi provinces are included in the present small survey to the extent that data is available on the use of cliticized GIVE verbs as applicatives. In none of the reference grammars or articles consulted do we, however, find sufficient data or explanation to make a full comparison with Standard Chinese. In spite of this, for the purpose of opening up this frontier of research, it is possible to present a broad overview on this intriguing topic.

In these Mandarin languages of the Northwest, the applicative function of enclitic =*gei* shows a striking extension to a much broader range of verb classes located in these peripheral areas of China. The enclitic appears to be cognate with Standard Chinese =*gei* in most of these languages, although this is a subject of debate (cf Song 1990 on the influence of Mongolic). The main differences with Standard Chinese are (i) the extension of VERB=GIVE to *any volitional verb*, including a certain subset of volitional intransitive verbs, if not to (ii) the verb ‘give’ itself. For some languages, there is also a morphosyntactic constraint requiring the primary object and semantic beneficiary to occur preverbally and that it be marked by the syncretized accusative/dative case: *-ha~xa*. Finally, frequently (iii) a syncretism with the causative marker is noted, which is discussed in §4.

3.1. GANGOU MANDARIN, QINGHAI

Gangou Chinese is a non-standard Mandarin variety in close contact with Mongolic languages such as Monguor, but also with Amdo Tibetan (Zhu et al 1997: 434). It displays the typical SOV order and case marking for this area. Yang (2014 :232) observes that *-kei* 给 in Gangou has an applicative function when it follows the main verb in clause-final position, treating it as a verbal suffix. He provides revealing examples of the applicative verb complex which do not have equivalents in Standard Chinese, such as the following:

(8) Gangou obligatory applicative with enclitic =*gei*

ni	vɤ-a	tʂɿ-pən	fu	kʰan=kei.
2SG	1SG-ACC/DAT	this-CLF	book	read=APPL<GIVE

‘You read this book for me.’ (Yang 2014 :232)

你我啊这本书看给。

The applicative marker clearly has the same form as the verb ‘give’ in Gangou, as in (11):

(9) Gangou double object clause with ‘give’

Vɤ	ni-ha	fu	yi-pən	kei-liao.
1SG	2SG-ACC/DAT	book	one-CLF	give-PFV

‘I gave you a book.’ (Zhu et al 1997: 444)

我你哈书一本给了。

In Standard Chinese, such verb complexes as (10) above and the following would translate into ungrammatical sentences.

- (10) Gangou Mandarin
 V_r-a tʂaŋtʂɿ-kə kai-kei
 1SG-ACC/DAT seal-CLF stamp-APPL<GIVE
 ‘Stamp (it) for me.’ (literally: to-me stamp-give a seal)⁷
 我啊 章子个盖给。(Yang 2014: 231)

A preverbal benefactive prepositional phrase could be used instead to express this meaning:

- (11) Standard Chinese equivalent
 Gěi wǒ gài ge zhāng.
 for 1SG stamp CLF seal
 ‘Stamp it for me.’ (literally: for me stamp a seal)
 给我盖个章。

Yang (2014: 232) explicitly analyses the structure *N-ha ... V=gei* as an applicative construction which he calls *zēngyuán gōushì* 增元构式 in Chinese – ‘a valency increasing construction’ – and exemplifies the different semantic roles that the *N-ha* may take including dative, benefactive, substitutive (deputative) and addressee. The next example is of a deputative kind of benefactive applicative, noting that the dative~accusative case suffix is *-ha~-a*:

- (12) Gangou deputative ~ benefactive applicative
 ata ai-teia tʂɿ vava-a ɕinli ʂouʂɿ-kei-tʂɿ li
 father 3P MOD son-ACC/DAT luggage pack-give-PROG PRT
 ‘Father is packing the bags for his son.’ (Yang 2014:231)
 阿大暖傢的娃娃啊行李收拾给着哩。

Using a Gangou story, Zhu et al (1997) show that structurally it corresponds very neatly, word by word and in the same order, to the Monguor translation. Note that the gloss for =*gei* as ‘causative’ appears to be erroneously applied here.⁸

⁷ I thank Dr Zhao Lüyuan, CASS, Beijing for her advice on Gangou and for providing the IPA transcription of the Gangou examples. Note also that the glossing and translation are mine (HMC) for all examples that are not from English-language sources.

⁸ In this section of the narrative, there are five examples of sentences with *zhe-gei* glossed as pick-CAUS but translated as ‘for you’ or ‘for us’ with the benefactive applicative sense.

(13) Gangou and Monguor compared

Ada,	zhi-ge	huar -ha,	wo-liar-ha	zhe= <i>gei</i>
Father	this	flower-ACC	we-two-ACC/DAT	pick-CAUS
<i>Ada,</i>	<i>ni-ge</i>	<i>qijige-ni</i>	<i>da-ghula-du</i>	<i>chuangmu-gha</i>

‘Father, pick a flower for us two.’ (Zhu et al 1997 : 444)⁹

As can be seen from example (13), the corresponding form to =*gei* in Monguor (Mongolic) is =*gha*. Despite the incorrect gloss for =*gei* in (13) above, there is indeed a causative use of enclitic =*gei* in Gangou. In the next example, it is found with an intransitive motion verb and its directional affix which is transitivity by the use of the causative affix =*gei*. The omitted head noun is ‘fried cakes’:

(14) Causative affix =*gei* 给 in Gangou on an intransitive verb

Ai,	Laotian,	kuo	duo-xiar	ha-lai= <i>gei</i> .
EXCL	old.heaven	another	more-some	down-come=CAUS

‘Ai, Old-Heaven God, send some more down.’
(Zhu et al 1997 : 444)

(15) Causative affix =*gei* 给 in Gangou on a resultative verb compound

Nege	you-bingzi	re-zhi	liar-ren-ha
that	fried.cake	hot-CHAIN	two-person-ACC

tang-si-guo=*gei*-liao
burn-die-INTENSE-CAUS-PERF
‘Because those two fried cakes were so hot, they burned the parents to death.’ (Zhu et al 1997: 438-439)

Note an important syntactic difference from the applicative use of =*gei* in the causative use, the affix also occurs after the verb but allows aspectual markers to intervene between it and the verb.

To foreshadow the discussion in §4, Zhao (2019) provides a very detailed description of the causative function of V=*gei* in Gangou. She points out that the derivational type based on intransitive verbs is the most frequent and is highly productive and, moreover, that the causatives so formed belong mainly to the semantic type of coercive or directive

⁹ I reproduce the transcriptions of Zhu et al (1997) and their translations for their Gangou examples.

causative constructions, including the notion of manipulation (cf. Shibatani & Pardeshi 2002).

(16) Causativization of an intransitive verb in Gangou

kou	sɿ-tiau	liau.	>	t ^h a	kou-a	sɿ-tiau-kei	liau
dog	die-ACH	PFV		3SG	dog=ACC	die-ACH	PFV
'The dog died.'				'S/He caused the dog to die.'			
狗死掉了。				他狗啊死掉给了。			

(Zhao 2019 :216)

The intransitive verb class also includes predicative adjectives such as 'happy', 'angry', 'worried', 'full (satiated)', and 'dry', as in the next example, embedded under a modal verb.

(17)	vɿ	teinkan	iʂaŋ	kan-kei-tʂɿ	iau-li
	1SG	quickly	shirt	dry-CAUS-NOMLZR	need-FUT
	'I need to have my shirt dried quickly.'				
	我紧赶衣裳干给的要哩。				

As can be seen, the intransitive verbs and adjectives belong to the unaccusative non-control subtype in their underived form.

Contrasting to the situation for intransitive verbs, Zhao (2019) explains that the causativization of transitive verbs is unproductive in Gangou with the coercive meaning, but possible with a permissive 'let' reading in a limited number of cases. It is pertinent that most examples are of labile, that is, ambitransitive, verbs: 'drink', 'eat', 'read' and 'sleep'. Despite this, there are also a few unergative verbs such as 'come' and 'go out'. Nonetheless, speakers tend to prefer the benefactive applicative interpretation with transitive verbs, rather than the causative one, another important point made by Zhao:

(18)	lauʂɿ	meimei-xa	gə	tʂ ^h aŋ-kei	tʂɿ
	teacher	girl-ACC/DAT	song	sing-CAUS/APPL	PRT
	<i>Causative:</i> 'The teacher lets the girl sing (a song).'				
	<i>Applicative:</i> 'The teacher sings a song for/on behalf of the girl.'				
	(Zhao 2019 : 219) 老师妹妹啊歌唱给着。				

(19)

lauʃɿ vɿmu-xa teiant^hian pauku tʂ^hɿ-kei liau
 teacher 1PL-DAT every.day corn eat-CAUS/APPL PFV

Causative: ‘Every day the teacher let us eat corn.’

Applicative: ‘Every day the teacher ate corn for us.’¹⁰

(Yang 2014:232, Zhao 2019 : 219) 老师我们哈见天苞谷吃给了。

Example (8) above may also have the permissive causative reading of ‘You let me read this book’, according to Yang (2014:232). Hence, there is a clearly defined semantic division of labour between the productive coercive causatives based on unaccusative intransitive verbs, and applicatives with *volitional* verbs of all valency types. The permissive ‘let’ causatives with volitional labile verbs lie in an intermediate position and so do not challenge this basic division, since their meaning is distinct. They possibly represent the bridging stage between the applicative and causative construals, passing through the permissive subtype to coercive causation. We will take up this issue again in §4.

3.2. Tangwang Mandarin, Gansu

Djamouri (2015: 261) independently describes the similar phenomenon of the applicative use of the verb ‘give’ *ki ~ ki* 给 in Tangwang and observes that it is obligatory to use the case suffix *-xa* with *ki* in its valency-increasing function. The suffix *-xa* can code either accusative or dative, a regular phenomenon for this *Sprachbund*, as earlier remarked. The indirect object takes precedence over the direct object for overt marking in a ditransitive construction, although both may be marked, according to Xu (2017 :86-87), noting that its use is obligatory for the IO.

Tangwang, too, has both optional and obligatory applicatives. The applicative *-ki* is optional with TRANSFER verbs, as in Standard Chinese, and as an enclitic, it may also be used simultaneously with its verbal function. It is suffixed to the main verb preceding the aspectual and directional markers as well as any verbal classifier phrases. This is proof once more of the marker being well-integrated into the morphology of the verb, as might be predicted on the basis of cross-linguistic studies on applicatives (cf. Payne 1997).

¹⁰ Admittedly, the context for the applicative interpretation is rather absurd, but such it would be, according to Zhao (2019 :219) who gives the example for the purpose of contrasting applicative and causative meanings.

(20) Tangwang ‘optional’ applicative construction

Mɛtə nə-*(xə) jã*(xə) ki-(**ki**)-tʂɛ
 Mɛtə 3SG-XA sheep-XA give-(**APP**)-IMPF
 ‘Mɛtə gives him the sheep.’
 麦德那*(哈)羊 *(哈) 给(给)寨。(Djamouri 2015: 261)

By contrast, with non-transfer verbs, *-ki* is an obligatory suffix on the main verb. As for Gangou (§3.1) and in Wutun (§3.3), applicative *-ki* may be used with non-transfer verbs such as *tʂu* ‘make’ 做, *tʂɥ* ‘eat’ 吃 or *wɛ̃* ‘knit’ 绾.

(21) Tangwang ‘obligatory’ applicative construction

wɔ nə-**a** jãzɯ-xa thẽ-la khi-**ki**-tʂɛ
 1SG 3SG-DAT mutton-ACC coal-INSTR roast-**APPL**-IMPF
 ‘I roast mutton for him with coal.’ (Djamouri 2015:257 Xu 2017 :87)

Furthermore, the same marker has extended in use to both locative and instrumental roles, according to Djamouri (2015: 270), which neatly conforms with crosslinguistic predictions regarding the hierarchy of semantic roles for the applicative (cf. Payne 1997, Polinsky 2013). In the next example, the location, a toponym, is promoted to direct object status by the use of *-ki*.

(22) Locative applicative in Tangwang

Kæi tʰãwã-xa tsu-**ki**-ljɔ
 Kæi Tangwang-OBJ go-**APPL**-PERF
 ‘Kæi went to Tangwang.’ 尕西唐汪哈走给寨。
 (Djamouri 2015: 270)

The applicative *-ki* also has a causative usage in the same position, affixed to the main verb. Note that the causative use of *-ki* is possible with intransitive verbs, as for Gangou (§3.1) and can be used with volitional activity and labile verbs such as ‘ride’ in (23) and ‘eat’, with unergative intransitive verbs ‘come.down’ in (24), and even with transitive verbs that denote a state such as ‘know’ (25) which again points to a pivotal bridging stage between applicatives and causatives.

(23) Causative use of *ki* in Tangwang

ly-sã tʂɥ-**ki** tʂɛ.
 donkey-POST ride=**CAUS** MOD-PRT
 ‘(He let her) ride the donkey.’ (Xu 2017 :121)

- (24) *tha tɛi nyey tɛiəu pa tha fu*
 3SG GEN bridegroom then OM 3SG support
tʂə xalɛ-ki.
 CONV come.down=CAUS
 ‘The bridegroom helped her to get off the donkey.’
 (Xu 2017:111)

- (25) *ny³¹ lɛ⁵³-ɣ və²²⁴-xa tʂ²⁴tɔ³¹-ki ji²⁴-xa³¹*
 that.one come-COND 1SG-DAT know=CAUS once
 ‘When he comes, let me know.’ (Lee-Smith 2011: 879)

The data are exiguous on causative use of *-ki*. Nonetheless, we can see that a similar pattern is emerging in Tangwang to Gangou.

3.3. Wutun, Qinghai

In Wutun, the verb ‘give’ is *ka* [k^ha] and it may be used as the main verb on its own.

- (26) Wutun Chinese lexical verb ‘give’
je nguwo-dera ngu ngu-de pa-dera
 this thing-PL 1SG 1SG-ATTR friend-PL
ka-gu-lio
give-COMPL-PFV
 ‘I gave these (particular) goods to my friends.’
 (Sandman 2016:50)

Wutun is located in the same region as Gangou and Tangwang and there have been claims that it is a mixed or creolized language. It presents a quite different case to Gangou and Tangwang, for Wutun does not possess any applicative affix on the main verb (Janhunnen et al 2008: 63, 93-95) but rather uses the verb ‘give’ in auxiliary function in clause-final position with volitional verbs. The main verb is nominalized by the marker *-de* and in this two-verb structure, both verbs can take other markers such as aspect.

Verbs of transfer, including **ka** ‘give’, **song** ‘offer’, **dai** ‘carry’ and verbs of communication, including **sho** ‘say’, and **wen** ‘ask’ do not need to use the auxiliary verb **ka** ‘give’ in clause-final position to allow the inclusion of a beneficiary or recipient (Sandman 2016: 251-253), but this is nonetheless possible:

- (27) Wutun plain ditransitive clause
 Ggaiggan lhoma-**ha** zhejek jhi-ge wen-lio
 teacher student-**OD**¹¹ question several-REF ask-PFV
 ‘The teacher asked the students many questions.’
 (Janhunen et al. 2008: 92)

Animate recipients are marked by **-ha**, and take priority over the marking of direct objects, just as in Tangwang.¹²

The applicative construction *per se* is formed with two verbs. If the main verb co-occurring with the auxiliary *ka* is also a TRANSFER verb, it is nominalized by *de*, as evident in the next example:

- (28) Wutun applicative auxiliary with a TRANSFER verb
 Gu nga-**ha** yo-de ka-lio.
 3SG 1SG-OBL.FOC lend-NMLZ BEN-PRF
 ‘She lent (it) to me.’ (Janhunen et al. 2008 : 67)¹³

Predictably, according to our definition, in the case of non-TRANSFER verbs such as ‘throw’ and ‘buy’, the use of the auxiliary verb ‘give’ becomes obligatory in Wutun.

- (29) gu gu rek yi-ge da
 3SG that meat-one then

 ek-gu-ma haba-**ha** ka-gu-lio
 throw-COMPL-COORD dog-**OD** give-COMPL-PFV
 ‘S/he threw that piece of meat to the dog.’
 (Sandman 2016: 253)

This corresponds to what Creissels has described with respect to one kind of serial verb language (2010 :38) that has a non-autonomous lexical verb

¹¹ OD = optional dative marker in Sandman’s transcription.

¹² Sandman (2016) calls the (dative) marker *-ha* ‘non-agentive’ and also an ‘optional dative’ (OD), whereas Janhunen et al (2008) label it as an oblique focus marker. It can basically mark any role apart from Subject and Agent and conforms well to the features in our definition of an applicative construction.

¹³ Janhunen et al (2008 :62-65) discuss their notion of grammatical focus (FOC), as found in examples (28) and (31), and claim that the use of *-ha* is distinct from case, even though it has a close connection with both accusative and dative functions, as in other Mandarin languages of the northwest. They define it as a ‘discourse-oriented, pragmatically motivated focus marker’ that ‘highlights selected constituents of the sentence and makes them more prominent in the discourse’ (2008 :62). The context is not however provided for these examples.

used in clause-chaining with an independent, inflected GIVE verb, and these combine to form a complex predicate. This analysis seems to be well-adapted to the Wutun case.

In sum, Wutun structurally distinguishes semantic fields of verb classes by its use of the verb *ka*, ‘give’, which acts with the same function as an applicative device, but as part of the clause-final auxiliary verb morphology.

For Wutun, it is also pertinent to mention the description of a distinct causative affix, *-ge*, which increases the valency of the verb by one. Janhunen et al (2008: 79-80) claim is related to *gěi* ‘give’ in other Mandarin dialects, whereas Sandman (2016: 260) takes the view that it is related to the Mongolic causative marker **ki-* ‘to do’, as do Lee-Smith & Wurm (2011:890-891). Once again, this causative use belongs to the coercive, if not manipulative type. Although there is no syncretism with the applicative, it is highly pertinent to note the same patterning for verb classes that co-occur with the Wutun causative marker as in Gangou and Tangwang Mandarin.

(30) Wutun causative morphology

Gu-jhege	nga-ha	zek	xaige	xhe-ge-lio
3P-PAUC	1P:SG:OBL-FOC	wine	much	drink-CAUS-PRF

‘They made me drink a lot of wine.’ (Janhunen et al 2008:79-80)

Further examples of derived causative verbs come from Chen (1989: 35) and Lee-Smith & Wurm (2011:890) which all have intransitive verbs as their base:

(31)	tso	‘sit’	tso-gə	‘make sit down’
	ʃanle	‘come up’	ʃanle-gə	‘bring up (make come up)’
	bian	‘change’	bian-gə	‘cause a change’
	xepa	‘be frightened’	xepagə	‘make frightened’, ‘startle’

Examples can furthermore be found of the permissive causative type with volitional transitive verbs:

(32)	sa	-dəkan-guo	-ge	-lio-dərə
	race	-RECP -COMPL	CAUS	PST SUBJECTIVE.STANCE

‘(someone) let them race against each other’ (Chen 1989: 37)

- (33) da -dəkan -guo -ge -lio -dzɿli
 beat RECP -COMPL -CAUS -PST -OBJECTIVE.STANCE
 ‘(someone) let them fight each other’ (Chen 1989: 37)

Two other languages in the Northwest of China are briefly mentioned for which less data are available, before beginning the discussion of causative and applicative syncretism.

3.4. Lanzhou Mandarin, Gansu

In Lanzhou, the verb ‘give’ is *ku*¹³ and it can be used as a dative~benefactive preposition as well as an applicative enclitic to the main verb. Once again, the use of the applicative construction is much broader in comparison with Standard Chinese. Listed below are some of the verbs which may take the enclitic, atonal =*ku*.

- (34) fɿ¹³=ku ‘speak to’ 说给 iə¹³=ku ‘request to’ 要给
 k‘ɿ¹³=ku ‘engrave for’ 刻给 tʂɿ¹³=ku ‘point out to’ 指给
 (Jia 2016 : 164-170)

Lanzhou shows another variation in the form of its applicative construction: the Indirect Object, either a recipient or a beneficiary, occurs preverbally in a prepositional phrase and is introduced by the preposition *ku*¹³ < ‘give’. It is an obligatory constituent, as the following example shows :

- (35) Benefactive applicative use of -ku in Lanzhou
 lo⁴⁴ʂɿ⁵³fu *(**ku**¹³ vɿ⁴⁴) k‘ɿ¹³=**ku** kɿ¹³ tʂəŋ⁵³tsɿ.
 old master TO<GIVE 1SG engrave-APP<GIVE CLF seal
 ‘The master craftsman engraved a seal for me.’
 (Jia 2016: 164)

The enclitic =*ku* may be used with the verb ‘give’ itself, as is common in Wutun, Tangwang, Gangou, Urumqi and even in Dungan Chinese, spoken by a community inside the Russian border, as Hashimoto has observed (1986). This possibility is excluded in Standard Chinese.

- (36) la⁵¹pa¹³ ye¹³tʂ‘ɿ *(**ku**¹³ vɿ⁴⁴) ku¹³=**ku** lo.
 3SG OMkey to<GIVE 1SG give-APPL<GIVE PRT
 ‘He gave me the key.’ (Jia 2016: 164)

We do not have information on any causative use of =*ku*.

3.5. Ningxia Lan-yin and Central Plains Chinese

The Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region is divided in two dialectally: Most of its northern half is classified as Lan-Yin Mandarin while the southern area largely belongs to the Central Plains subgroup. In the Yinchuan dialect, the different functions of the GIVE verb are tonally differentiated (Lin 2012: 186).

- (37) (i) as the verb : ‘give’
 ku⁵³ citation tone & ku³⁵ context tone
 (ii) as a preposition : ku¹³
 (iii) as an enclitic : =ku
 (iv) as a verbal prefix : ku-

Apart from allowing a wide range of volitional verbs with the applicative enclitic, the Yinchuan verb ‘give’ may co-occur with its derived form and also with its prepositional use, seen in the following example:

- (38) Yinchuan Lan-Yin Mandarin
 ε⁵³, nⁱ⁵³ ku¹³ t‘ə⁴⁴ ku⁵³=**ku** ti t‘iä⁵³
 ITJ 2SG to 3SG give=APPL MOD money

 t‘ε¹³ tuə⁴⁴ lə !
 too much CRS
 ‘Oh, the money that you have given to him is too much !’ (Lin 2012: 191)

This small survey reveals a clear areal division for Sinitic languages with respect to applicative enclitics. First, in particular, it appears to be a Northern feature. Within this area, in Standard Chinese, the use of Verb=*gei* is restricted to mainly verbs of transfer as well as a group of verbs that can be construed as expressing a transfer in the direction of the IO, once they are used in this construction, such as ‘sell’, ‘toss’, ‘write’.

Second, in contradistinction to this, in Northwestern China, principally in Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia, the Mandarin dialects, from both the Lan-Yin and Central Plains subgroups as well as some Jin dialects in Shanxi, have extended the use of Verb=GIVE to a much larger group of volitional verbs that do not inherently involve any kind of transfer in their meaning, including ‘stamp (a seal), ‘walk’, ‘roast’, ‘fill’, ‘beat’, ‘pack’, ‘run’, ‘engrave’ and so on. In some of these Mandarin languages, the dative~accusative case marker *-ha ~ -xa* must be affixed

to a preverbal Indirect Object, as in Gangou, Wutun, Gangou and Tangwang. In other languages, such as Lanzhou, the Indirect Object has to occur preverbally in a prepositional phrase governed by the dative~benefactive preposition which, too, is derived from ‘give’. Furthermore, the different functions of the GIVE verb may co-occur with this extended function, a feature also excluded from use in the standard language. The third point of interest is the extension of the enclitic to the function of causativizing intransitive verbs which we discuss next in a final section.

4. Causatives of applicatives : syncretism

The further morphologization of APP<GIVE to a CAUSATIVE enclitic is an equally striking phenomenon which goes contrary to the early strict distinction made between applicativization and causativization (cf. Payne 1997, Comrie 1981, Dixon 2012).

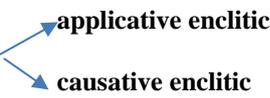
For both processes, there is said to be a valency increase :

* In *applicativization*, an oblique is added or promoted to a non-subject and non-agent role.

* In *causativization* (both analytic and morphological types), a causer argument is added to the valency and the former subject/agent is demoted to a causee role. Hence, the causer acts as the new agentive subject.

In these languages of Northwestern China, the applicative extends in use to mark the causee noun and thereby forms a morphological causative. Furthermore, the GIVE enclitic can be marked on both intransitive and a limited number of labile verbs to create different semantic subtypes of causatives.

The question arises as to developmental process : Do we have a case of two separate pathways or just one ?

- (i) **GIVE verb**  **applicative enclitic**
causative enclitic
- (ii) **GIVE verb** > **causative enclitic** > **applicative enclitic**
- (iii) **GIVE verb** > **applicative enclitic** > **causative enclitic**

Djamouri (2015) has suggested that the causative probably represents a separate development from the applicative one in Tangwang, both branching out from the identical source in ‘give’. Shibatani & Pardeshi

argue in favour of pathway (ii) while the present author proposes that the solution is more likely to be the third one, given that there are ambiguous examples which suggest a bridging stage for the Mandarin languages of the Northwest (see examples (18) and (19) above). Providing collateral support, an association between applicative and causative markers exists in unrelated language families, including Australian, Austronesian and Amerindian languages.

Shibatani and Pardeshi (2002:116) draw attention to the fact that “in a fair number of languages, causative morphemes are associated with the applicative function of introducing a comitative, instrumental, or benefactive argument”. They refer to Austin’s research on Australian languages which also show a similar syncretism for the 17 languages in his survey and cite a parallel in Hualapai, an Amerindian language, where it can be clearly perceived that applicatives and causatives are associated with different verb classes.

To take one example, the same suffix *-wo-ò* is used in Hualapai for both benefactive applicatives and causatives, the constructional meaning being determined by the verb class: applicatives with volitional verbs such as ‘sing’, ‘work’, ‘make’, ‘tell’ are opposed to causatives with state and emotion verbs: ‘be mad’, ‘be mean’, ‘cry’.

(39) Hualapai (Yuman, Arizona)

Causativization of ‘be.mad’:

bos	nya	nyi-háda-ch	wà-nyi-miye:- wo -k-wi
cat	1SG	REL-pet-SUBJ	(be.mad)-3/1-be/mad- APPL -3-AUX

‘My cat makes me mad.’

(40) *Applicativization* of ‘make’:

nya-ch	he’	nyi-yo:v-ò-wi-ny
I-SUBJ	dress	1/2-make- APPL -AUX-PAST

‘I made you a dress.’ (Shibatani & Pardeshi 2002 :116)

In Australian languages, it is also typically non-control state and non-control location and postural verbs that are causativized by the same verb suffix which applicativizes volitional verbs. The distinction is a little fluid between the two semantic types, but the generalization holds in the main.

Austin (1997) divides up intransitive verbs into Type A (basically unaccusative) and Type B (basically unergative) to explain their behaviour when transitivity suffixes derive causatives in the first instance and applicatives in the second.

Type A verbs: *fall, burst, split, burn, die, drown, be immersed, be closed, be frightened, be pleased, be sick* (change of state, non-controlled location and postural, internal states)

Type B verbs: *laugh, cry, play, come, go, sit, lie, speak, call, enter, come, go, jump*

In Diyari (Pama-Nyungan, South Australia) there is a separate affix for each function: *-ipa-* forms causatives and *-ilka-* forms applicatives. Austin uses an example with the verb *tharka-* ‘to stand’ to show the distinction in meaning :

(41) Diyari (Pama-Nyungan, South Australia)

Pirta tharka-yi.
stick stand-PRES
‘The stick is standing.’

(42) *Causativization*

Karna-li pirta tharka-**ipa**-yi.
man-ERG stick stand-**TR**-PRES
‘The man stands the stick up.’ (Austin 1997 :6)

Given that the Type A verb class has undergoer subjects, the causatives appear to mainly belong to the coercive type where the causee has no choice or volition in the process of the causing event.

For the Type B unergative verb class, the agentive subject remains as the S in the new applicative construction, while a direct object is either added or promoted from an oblique role, typically a comitative. Depending on the language, the new patient NP may be cross-referenced on the verb or left unmarked on both the verb and the noun which is in absolutive case.

(43) Diyari (Pama-Nyungan, South Australia)

Applicativization
Karna-li pirta tharka-**ilka**-yi.
man-ERG stick stand-**TR**-PRES
‘The man is standing with a stick.’ (Austin 1997 :6)

Other languages that have two transitivity affixes show a subset of verbs that may take both, as in Rembarnga with respect to causativizing *ga-* and applicativizing *-garluk* :

- (44) Rembarnga (non-Pama-Nyungan, Northern Territory)
 garluk ‘to play’ garluk-ga ‘to make play’
 bak-garluk ‘to play with’
- ru ‘to cry’ ru-ga ‘to make cry’
 bak-ru ‘to cry for’
- (Austin 1997 :11)

In short, causativization and applicativization are valency-increasing operations that are distinguished by the use of transitivity affixes in the sample of 17 Australian languages and by the verb class to which they are applied, namely, intransitive verbs belonging to respectively either unaccusative and unergative types, as Austin (1997) explains.

Shibatani & Pardeshi (2002 :119), on the contrary, propose that it is the sociative type of causative which lays the basis for the applicative meanings of benefactive, comitative and instrumental. For the benefactive applicative, they see the link as the assisted benefactive meaning of the sociative causative, as in ‘to help someone dress’. For the instrumental applicative, their explanation is as follows: *if someone causes a knife to cut the meat, this implies that they have cut the meat with a knife*. The comitative applicative involves co-participation in an event such as making a person walk by walking *with* them.

Despite this, in some languages, such as Kinyarwanda, the distinction between causative and applicative constructions rests on the animacy of the noun in question, and not on sociative causation. This constitutes the only difference in the following examples from Kinyarwanda. In (48), the causer and subject ‘he’ is acting on ‘the man’ while in (49) ‘he’ is acting on a pen.

- (45) Kinyarwanda (Bantu, Niger-Congo)
 Umugabo a-ra-andik-**iiš**-a umugabo ibaruwa.
 man 3SG-PRES-write-CAUS-ASP man letter
 ‘The man is making the man write a letter.’

- (46)
 Umugabo a-ra-andik- **iiš** -a ikaramu ibaruwa.
 man 3SG-PRES-write-APPL-ASP pen letter
 ‘The man is writing a letter with a pen.’ (Payne 1997: 190-191).

See also Creissels (forthc. p. 515) on the inherent ambiguity of instruments as both cause of action and causee of manipulation. Shibatani & Pardeshi conclude by trying to account for the fact that causative/applicative syncretism appears to be associated with not only sociative causation but also with a high degree of grammaticalization of the affixes in question and the pressure of lexicalization (2002 :121). This they believe could explain the preference for directive and coercive types of causation that lead to the possibility of an applicative interpretation.

Quite evidently, Austin (1997) and Shibatani & Pardeshi (2002) have arrived at different explanations for the causative and applicative data. Moreover, the data on causatives briefly sketched here from Northwestern China would appear to support the verb class distinction as symptomatic of an analogical development from applicativization of volitional transitive verbs to causativization of the non-control unaccusative verbs.

This is because the causative use of applicative enclitics with GIVE as a source mainly applies to intransitive non-control verbs such as 'happy', 'get angry', 'worried', 'be full', and 'dry', producing coercive and directive causatives as in Gangou Mandarin, according to Zhao's description (2019). In the small number of cases when the enclitic can be used with volitional labile verbs such as 'sing', 'eat', 'sleep' and the motion verbs 'go' and 'come', the causative meaning changes to a permissive one. Otherwise, the rule is for volitional verbs to become applicativized, as we saw in §3.1.

The use of GIVE verbs as causative auxiliaries is a common grammaticalization pathway crosslinguistically, particularly in West Africa as well as in East and Southeast Asia. In the Asian linguistic area, it is a recurring semantic shift for GIVE-verbs to form the permissive subtype of causative auxiliary, when they occur in the V₁ slot of a serial verb construction, but not usually in the slot of an enclitic derived from V₂ GIVE, as for the applicative. In this respect, the syntactic configuration is crucial. Moreover, the V₁ position is well-founded and attested for the analytic type of permissive causative in Sinitic (Chappell 2015), as well as in Thai (49):

(47) GIVE verb serialization in V1 position

	GIVE > analytic permissive causative			
	NP _{AGENT}	V _{GIVE}	NP _{RECIPIENT}	X
>	NP _{CAUSER}	V _{1 GIVE >LET}	NP _{CAUSEE}	V ₂ X

(48) Central Thai example

hāj = ‘give’, benefactive particle, purposive causative verb
mê: hāj lū:k kin khənǒm.
 mother give child eat sweets
 ‘The mother lets the child eat sweets.’ (Jenny 2015)

The development of a GIVE verb in V₂ position into an applicative and then a causative enclitic undoubtedly needs to pass through more stages than for the analytic type, and five are proposed below with some brief diachronic notes:

(49) GIVE verb serialization in V₂ position

(i) NP_{AGENT} V₁-V₂_{GIVE} NP_{RECIPIENT} DO

A new ditransitive construction arises in pre-Medieval Chinese during the Han dynasty (201BC – 220AD), based on the double object construction NP V IO DO. Both V₁-V₂_{GIVE} are verbs of transferral.

(ii) GIVE > dative preposition

NP_{AGENT} V₁ [PREPOSITION_< V₂_{GIVE} NP_{RECIPIENT}] DO

V₁ remains a volitional verb of transfer while V₂ becomes restricted to just one verb, *yü* ‘give’ by late Medieval period, ca. 9th century (Peyraube 1988).

(iii) Syntactic reanalysis of verbal complements
 dative preposition > applicative enclitic

NP_{AGENT} [V₁-V₂_< GIVE= APPLICATIVE] NP_{RECIPIENT} DO

V₁ = volitional transitive verb shows an extension to a large set of verbs in Northwestern China some time from the time of the massive Han migrations to this area from the early Ming dynasty onwards, ca. 14th century (Sandman 2016).

(iv) Bridging stage of small group of ambiguous transitive verbs with stative meanings such as ‘know’ or labile verbs such as ‘sing’ that leads to a permissive causative ‘let’ reading

NP_{CAUSER} [V₁[LABILE, STATIVE] =CAUSATIVE_< V₂_{GIVE}] NP_{CAUSEE}

V₁ = non-dynamic transitive verbs, labile verbs, unergative verbs

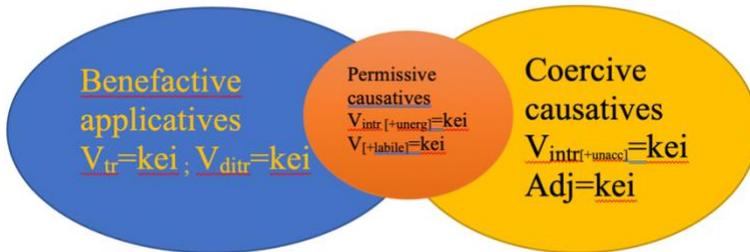
- (v) A new construction arises, isomorphic with the applicative, which is based on an analogical use with non-control unaccusative verbs: applicative enclitic > coercive causative enclitic

$NP_{\text{CAUSER}} [V_1[\text{UNACCUSATIVE}] = \text{CAUSATIVE}_{<V2\text{GIVE}}] NP_{\text{CAUSEE}}$

V_1 = unaccusative intransitive verb

The causative-applicative syncretism in northwestern China thus arises from the analogical use of benefactive applicatives with volitional verbs applied to unaccusative intransitives and predicative adjectives to form causatives. This kind of syncretism is common with applicatives that are based on benefactives, according to Peterson (2007: 64-65, 133). Apart from a middle ground that serves as the pivot for semantic change, where a small set of volitional transitive verbs, labile verbs and unergative verbs are ambiguous and can also have a permissive causative interpretation, the division of labour is quite strict. This is displayed by the following diagram:

Figure 1 : Semantic division of labour between applicatives and causatives



Peterson (2007: 135) also notes that there may be a certain extent of overlapping between the applicative and causative uses, as we have seen in the case of Gangou Chinese. Therefore, it does not seem at all semantically plausible to accept Shibatani and Pardeshi's hypothesis, as

being applicable to Northern Sinitic languages, given their view that the directionality is from

sociative causative > *benefactive applicative*.

This is clearly contradicted by the analysis proposed above and the fact that the source of the Sinitic applicatives is in GIVE-verbs. Even though permissive GIVE-causative constructions are an Asian areal feature, these develop in V₁ position for Sinitic languages, as shown above, whereas the applicative marker arises in an original V₂ position of a verb complex:

benefactive applicative > *permissive causative* > *coercive causative*.

We note also that the causative enclitic is more loosely attached to the verb stem in Northern Sinitic, since aspectual markers may intervene.

5. Epilogue on the issue of language contact

Song (1990) proposes that the extension in use of enclitic=*gei* to a wider set of non-transferral transitive verbs in the area of Northwestern China is due to diffusion from surrounding Mongolic languages, as they also show similar uses of clause-final GIVE verbs. This is taken up in Zhao (2019) on Gangou Mandarin who makes a similar claim.

Despite this, the matrix for this applicative extension in the ditransitive construction with VERB=*gei* is attested in the period of Late Medieval Chinese (8th–9th century), long before the mass migrations began in the early Ming Dynasty, 14th century, which saw Han Chinese colonists move into these areas of northwestern China for the purposes of fortification (Song 1990, Sandman 2016). It could thus be rather a pure case of Sapir's parallel drift along the lines of canonical grammaticalization pathways for GIVE verbs in serializations. Nonetheless, it is certainly reinforced by similar constructions in Mongolic languages and follows Robbeets (2013) concept of shared grammaticalization, in this case – a *grammaticalization cluster* for this one particular feature, found in a micro-area of related and unrelated languages.

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GRAMMATICAL ABBREVIATIONS

1 first person; 2 second person; 3 third person; ACC accusative; ACH achievement; APPL applicative; ASP aspect; ATTR attributive; AUX auxiliary; BEN benefactive; CAUS causative; CHAIN clause chaining marker; CLF classifier; COMPL completive; COND conditional
 CONV converb; COORD coordinative; CRS currently relevant state; DAT dative; ERG ergative; EXCL exclamation; FOC focus; GEN genitive; IMPF imperfect; INSTR instrumental; INTENSE intensifier
 ITJ interjection; MOD modifier linker; NMLZ nominalizer; OBL oblique; OBJ object; OD optional dative marker; OM object marker; P person; PAUC paucal; PAST/PST past; OBL oblique; PERF/PRF perfect; PFV perfective; PL plural; POST postposition; PRES present
 PROG progressive; PRT sentence final particle; RECP reciprocal; REF referential; REL relativizer; SG singular; SUBJ subject; TR transitive

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