

CAUSATIVE CONSTRUCTION IN ACEHNESE LANGUAGE: X-BAR THEORY ANALYSIS

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Abstract

*Causative Constructions are central to understanding how languages encode cause-and-effect relationships. In Austronesian languages, they exhibit diverse strategies ranging from affixation to periphrastic structures. This research investigates causative constructions in Acehnese language with the aim of identifying their main types and analysing their structures through X-Bar Theory. Data were collected from native Acehnese speakers via field observations, semi-structured interviews, and supported with written texts, and were analysed using a qualitative descriptive approach. The findings reveal two structural patterns: mono-clause (single-clause) and bi-clause (two-clause) constructions. Within these, three causative types emerge: (1) morphological causatives, formed with prefixes such as *peu-* and *seu-* that increase a verb's argument structure (valency); (2) paraphrastic causatives, employing auxiliary verbs such as *geu-yue* and *peu-gèt* in bi-clause constructions; and (3) semantic causatives, where verbs like *geu-plén* inherently encode causative meaning without structural modification. Morphological and semantic causatives are generally mono-clause, while paraphrastic causatives are typically bi-clause. Applying X-Bar Theory enables a formal representation of how the causer (initiator), cause (event), and causee (affected participant) are hierarchically organized in Acehnese syntax, revealing systematic patterns of valency shift and clause complexity. Unlike most previous studies, which have largely offered descriptive accounts, this research demonstrates how X-Bar Theory—rarely applied to Acehnese language—can capture the interaction between morphology, semantics, and syntax in a formal model. In short, this research not only enriches the description of Acehnese language causatives but also fills a theoretical gap by contributing a formal syntactic representation of Acehnese language causatives through X-bar theory, an approach rarely explored in previous researches and contributed to broader discussions of syntactic theory in Austronesian languages.*

Keywords: Causative Construction, Acehnese Language, X-Bar Theory, Syntax

INTRODUCTION

Causative constructions are a fundamental phenomenon in syntactic studies, reflecting cause-and-effect relationships between two events: the cause (the causing event) and the effect (the caused event). These relationships are often expressed through complex sentence structures. Causative constructions allow the representation of an agent who influences or causes an event to occur in another subject (Comrie, 1989). In linguistic theory, causative constructions are typically categorized into three types: morphological, syntactic, and semantic. Morphological causatives involve affixes that add a causer role to verbs, syntactic causatives employ additional clauses to express the cause-effect relationship, and semantic causatives refer to verbs that inherently express causation, such as "to kill" or "to open" (Shibatani, 1976); (Shibatani, 2022)."

In the context of Acehnese, causative constructions exhibit a rich morphological system that allows for the expression of causality through both affixes and auxiliary verbs. Acehnese uses the affixes "peu-" and "seu-" to form causative constructions, thereby increasing the valency of verbs by adding causative arguments. For example, the sentence "*Mak peu-geu-jatuh boh mangga nyan*" illustrates the use of the affix "peu-" to indicate an agent causing an event. Additionally, syntactic and semantic causative constructions in Acehnese employ auxiliary verbs such as "geu-yue" and "peu-gèt" in bi-clausal constructions (Goddard, 2011). These constructions provide important insights into how Acehnese expresses complex causal relationships and the syntactic mechanisms involved (Goddard, 2011).

Acehnese also demonstrates a distinction between monocausal and bi-clausal causative constructions. In monocausal constructions, one clause suffices to express the causal relationship, while bi-clausal constructions involve two clauses to represent the cause and the effect more explicitly. The complexity of bi-clausal constructions lies in the way the matrix clause (the causing event) and the embedded clause (the caused event) interact. This distinction highlights the unique syntactic flexibility of Acehnese in representing causal events, as explained by Mulyadi (2004) and Kalapos (2024). The ability of Acehnese to express two simultaneous events demonstrates a sophisticated syntactic mechanism that allows for deeper representation of causal relationships (Kalapos, 2024).

The study of causative constructions in Acehnese is enriched by the application of X-Bar theory, a theoretical framework developed by Chomsky et al (1970) that provides a hierarchical structure for syntactic analysis (Chomsky et al., 1970). X-Bar theory posits that sentences are organized into a matrix clause, which dominates an embedded clause, forming a hierarchical structure that helps explain syntactic relations in causative constructions. The use of X-Bar theory enables a deeper analysis of the syntactic hierarchy within causative constructions, examining how causative predicates and their arguments are organized within the syntactic tree. This approach provides significant contributions to understanding how causative affixes function and how causative arguments are integrated within the clause structure (Guasti, 2017).

Causative constructions have been studied extensively across languages, revealing various mechanisms involved in expressing cause-and-effect relationships. Notably, studies on Bantu and Japanese languages (Bjorkman & Hall, 2020). highlight the universal patterns shared by causative constructions, while also emphasizing that each language utilizes unique syntactic and

morphological strategies to express causality. For example, in the Aceh Singkil language, Syafriani and Mulyadi (2018) show structural similarities with other languages, reinforcing the idea that causative constructions rely heavily on morphological, syntactic, and semantic mechanisms (Sari, 2020).

Many studies in the field of syntactic theory, including Sari (2020), apply X-Bar Theory to investigate syntactic hierarchies in causative constructions. X-Bar Theory, which focuses on the hierarchical structure of syntactic categories, has been particularly useful in understanding how morphological affixes in causative constructions integrate arguments into the clause structure. Sari's (2020) research which utilizes X-Bar Theory to analyse causative affixes in Acehnese, supports the argument that this theoretical approach effectively captures the syntactic complexity of causative constructions. However, despite the insights provided, the application of X-Bar Theory in the analysis of Acehnese causatives remains underexplored, especially with respect to bi-clausal constructions (Radford, 2009).

While X-Bar Theory has been widely applied to syntactic structures in many languages, it is important to compare it with other theoretical frameworks to understand why it is particularly suited for this research. For instance, Government and Binding Theory (GB) and the Minimalist Program offer different perspectives on clause structure and argument representation. GB, as proposed by Chomsky (1981) focuses on the principles that govern the structure of syntactic trees but may not provide as detailed an analysis of hierarchical relations within causative constructions (Chomsky, 1981). Meanwhile, the Minimalist Program, which emphasizes the role of economy in syntactic structures (Chomsky, 1995), might not capture the specific mechanisms by which causative affixes and auxiliary verbs function in Acehnese. In contrast, X-Bar Theory's emphasis on hierarchical structure and the role of intermediate projections makes it a more appropriate choice for analysing the complex syntactic interactions found in both mono-clause and bi-clausal causative constructions in Acehnese (Chomsky, 1995).

Despite extensive research on causative constructions across various languages, there remains a gap in understanding how X-Bar Theory can be applied to Acehnese causatives, particularly in relation to bi-clausal constructions that involve auxiliary verbs. These constructions, which link two clauses to express a cause-and-effect relationship, require a more nuanced syntactic explanation. The use of auxiliary verbs in bi-clausal causatives introduces additional syntactic complexity, which has not yet been fully addressed in the existing literature. A systematic application of X-Bar Theory is necessary to account for this complexity and to explain how causative affixes function within these constructions. In addition to the theoretical gaps, the Acehnese language itself presents unique challenges in the analysis of causative constructions. While morphological causatives in Acehnese involve affixes such as "*peu-*" (Mulyadi, 2004), syntactic causatives are more intricate, as they involve the use of auxiliary verbs like "*peu-gèt*" in bi-clausal constructions. The relationship between these affixes and the auxiliary verbs, and how they contribute to the overall syntactic structure, has not been adequately explored. Pykkänen (2008) demonstrates that in languages like Japanese, auxiliary verbs play a significant role in linking clauses in causative constructions (Pykkänen, 2008). Similarly, Kayne (1980) highlights the importance of syntactic analysis in distinguishing between different types of causatives, including mono-clause and bi-clausal constructions (Kayne, 1980). These studies suggest that understanding

the interaction between affixes and auxiliary verbs in Acehnese requires a detailed syntactic analysis that accounts for both the morphological and syntactic elements involved.

Guasti (1993) further emphasizes the importance of hierarchical analysis in causative structures. Her research shows that in bi-clausal causatives, there are two distinct clauses, each contributing to the causative relationship (Guasti, 1993). This hierarchical approach is essential for understanding how causative arguments are represented syntactically in languages like Acehnese, where bi-clausal constructions involve more complex relationships between the clauses (Nelson & Vihman, 2018). Given the importance of hierarchical structure in Acehnese causatives, X-Bar Theory is particularly well-suited for this analysis, as it allows for a detailed examination of the hierarchical relationships between elements within and across clauses (Legate et al., 2020)

This research aims to fill the gap in the literature by applying X-Bar Theory to Acehnese causatives, providing a comprehensive analysis of both mono-clause and bi-clausal constructions. By integrating relevant syntactic and semantic theories, this research offers a deeper understanding of how causative relationships are syntactically represented in Acehnese, contributing to a broader understanding of causative constructions in a typologically diverse range of languages (Nash, 2020). This research seeks to answer the following questions: (1). How are causative arguments represented in Acehnese using X-Bar theory? (2). What syntactic distinctions exist between mono-clause and bi-clause constructions in Acehnese.

By addressing these questions, this research aims to deepen the understanding of how causative constructions are represented in Acehnese and contribute to the broader theoretical framework of causative syntax. Specifically, this research explored how the integration of morphological affixes, auxiliary verbs, and syntactic structures in Acehnese enhances our understanding of causality in language (Legate, 2021).

The findings of this research are expected to contribute to the development of causative syntax theory by offering insights into how the Acehnese language uniquely represents causal events (Juliana & Mulyadi, 2024). Through the lens of X-Bar theory, this research provides a detailed analysis of how syntactic structures in Acehnese work to represent cause-and-effect relationships. In doing so, it enriches existing linguistic theories and expand our knowledge of languages with rich morphological systems, offering a fresh perspective on causative constructions in languages beyond the more widely studied ones, such as English or Japanese (Radford, 2009); (Liu & Li, 2022).

METHOD

Research Design

This research used a qualitative descriptive design to analyse causative constructions in the Acehnese language (Sudaryanto, 1993). The primary theoretical framework is X-Bar Theory, which provides a hierarchical approach to syntactic structure. Additionally, Binding and Government Theory complements this framework, specifically addressing the relationships between elements such as verbs and their arguments in causative constructions. This section outlines the data sources, participant criteria, procedures, and analytical methods used in the research.

The analysis in this research primarily relies on X-Bar Theory which focuses on the hierarchical structure of syntactic categories (Chomsky, 2014). X-Bar Theory helps to examine how elements within a sentence, such as verbs and arguments, are structured in a syntactic tree. This approach is particularly useful for analysing causative constructions because it provides a clear understanding of the positions of specifiers, inflections, and verb phrases within the clause. Binding and Government Theory is also applied to analyse the syntactic relationships between verbs and their arguments, offering insights into how causative constructions are formed and how verb category shifts (from intransitive to transitive) influence meaning (Haegeman, 1994).

Data Source and Data

This research used both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data consists of native Acehnese speakers who meet the following criteria: (a). Age 45 years or older. The decision to limit participants to individuals over 45 years old is to ensure that the language data reflect more traditional, standardized forms of Acehnese, as younger speakers may be more influenced by modern dialectal shifts. However, future studies could include younger speakers to explore potential dialectal variations and changes in causative constructions. (b). Fluent in Acehnese, with proficiency in both formal and informal contexts and (c). Willing to participate in the research.

Secondary data consist of written texts in Acehnese, such as folk tales, articles, and traditional manuscripts. These texts provide additional examples of causative constructions and complement the primary data obtained from the speakers.

Data Collection

The data collection for this research follows several methods designed to capture a broad range of causative constructions in Acehnese:

1. **Listening Method:** The researcher listened to natural conversations in Acehnese to identify and record causative constructions. This ensures that the data are representative of spoken language use in everyday contexts.
2. **Semi-structured Interviews:** Interviews were conducted with native Acehnese speakers to clarify the patterns, meanings, and structures of causative constructions. The semi-structured format allows for flexibility in exploring specific issues related to causative constructions, while still maintaining consistency across informants.
3. **Documentation:** In addition to spoken data, written texts—such as folk tales, articles, and traditional manuscripts—are analysed to identify causative constructions in written form. These texts help broaden the data set, allowing for the exploration of both formal and informal uses of causative constructions in Acehnese.

The main tools used in data collection include an interview guide, a voice recorder, and field notes to ensure that all relevant information is accurately recorded.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed in a series of stages, as outlined below:

1. **Identification and Coding of Causative Constructions:** The first step in analysis involves identifying causative constructions in both the primary and secondary data sources. Sentences containing morphological, syntactic, and semantic causative constructions are

identified. Data are then coded based on syntactic features such as sentence type (mono-clause or bi-clause), verb category (intransitive, transitive, or ditransitive), and the use of causative affixes.

2. Analysis of Causative Structure: Using X-Bar Theory, the hierarchical structure of causative constructions is analysed. This step involves identifying the positions of key syntactic elements, such as specifiers, inflections, and verb phrases, within the syntactic tree. Binding and Government Theory is applied to examine how the elements within each causative construction relate to each other.
3. Interpretation of Data: Once the syntactic structures are identified, the results are interpreted in light of Binding and Government Theory. This interpretation provides insights into how causative constructions are formed in Acehese, with a focus on verb category shifts and the relationship between arguments and predicates.
4. Drawing Conclusions: The final stage involves drawing conclusions from the analysis, generalizing the syntactic and semantic patterns found in Acehese causative constructions. These conclusions also address the implications of the findings for syntactic theory, particularly in relation to the hierarchical structure of causative constructions.

Ethical approval for this research was obtained from Head of Paya Demam Village. All participants provided informed consent, and anonymity was maintained throughout the research process. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any time without consequence, and all data were anonymized to ensure confidentiality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Causative constructions in Acehese can be categorized into three types: morphological causatives, syntactic causatives, and lexical causatives. Below are detailed examples of each type, along with explanations of their syntactic structures, transformations, and valency changes.

Morphological Causatives

Morphological causatives in Acehese are marked by the use of prefixes such as *peu-* and *seu-*, which increase the valency of the verb by adding a causer argument. These constructions transform intransitive verbs into transitive ones, creating a clear cause-and-effect relationship. Example1:

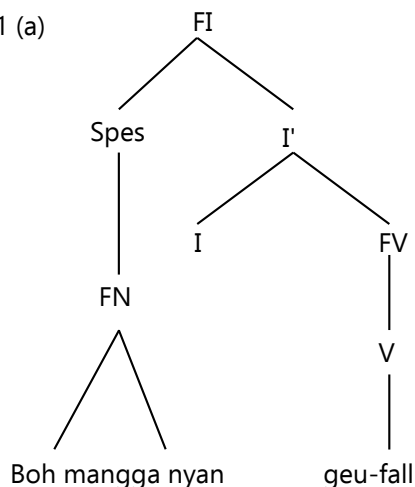
Sentence 1 a (Intransitive)

Boh mangga nyan geu-jatuh

the mango fruit was 3SG-falling

'The mango is falling'

1 (a)

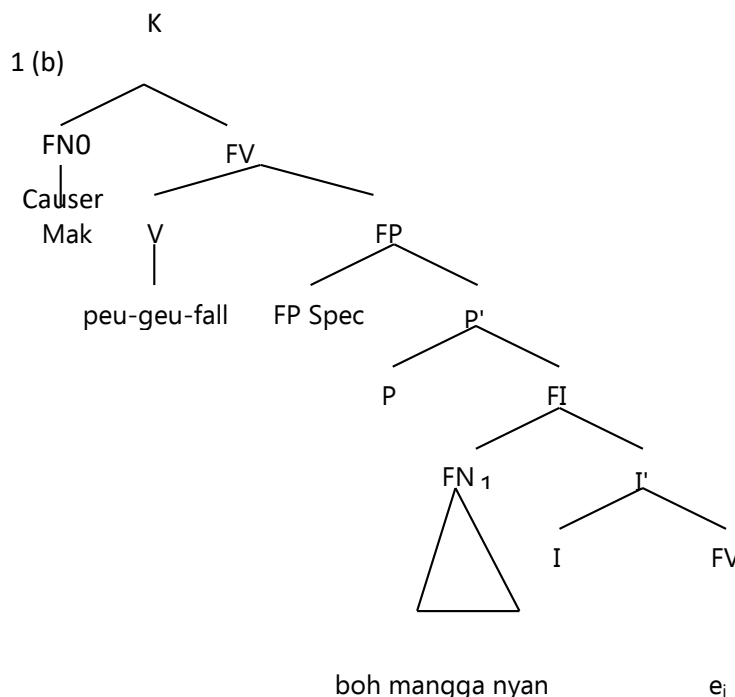


Sentence 1 b: (Transitive)

Mak peu-jatuh boh mangga nyan.

mom CAUSED the mango to fall

'Mak dropped the mango'



The base verb *jatuh* ('to fall') is intransitive and is transformed into a transitive verb with the addition of the *peu-* prefix. This prefix increases the verb's valency, changing the structure from one argument (the falling mango) to two arguments (the causer: Mak and the causee: the mango). The structure can be represented as: [K [FNO Mak] [FV [V *peu-jatuh*] [FN₁ boh mangga nyan]]]. This structure demonstrates how *peu-* directly marks the causative relationship, transforming the verb from intransitive to transitive.

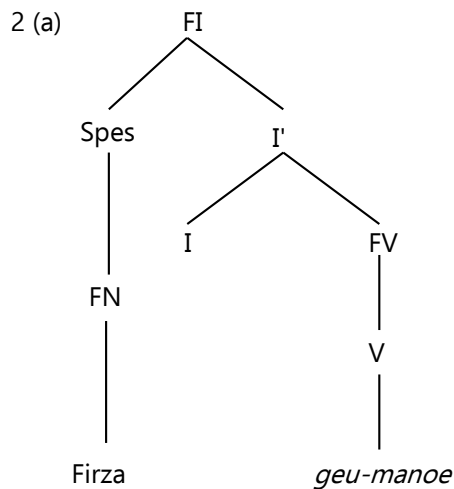
Example 2:

Sentence 2 (a) Intransitive

Firza geu-manoe

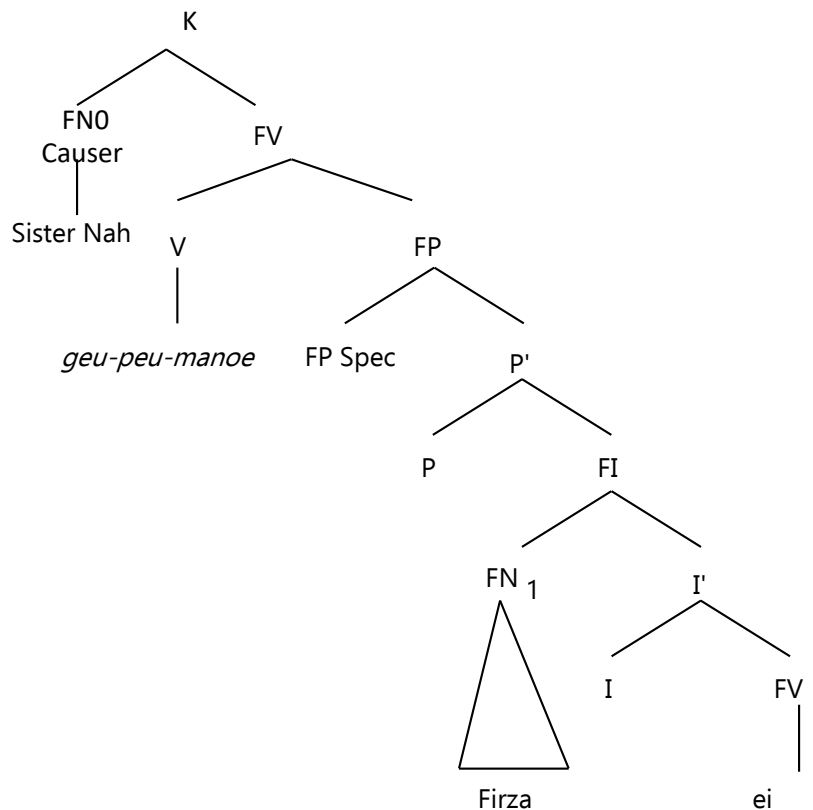
Firza 3SG-bath

'Firza takes a shower'



Sentence 2 (b): Transitive
Kak Nah geu-peu-manoe Firza.
 Kak Nah 3SG-CAUS-bath Firza
 'Kak Nah bathed Firza'

2 (b)



The base verb *manoe* ('to bathe') is intransitive. The addition of the *peu-* prefix makes it transitive, with Kak Nah as the causer and Firza as the causee. The structure is represented as: [K [FNO Kak Nah] [FV [V geu-peu-manoe] [FN1 Firza]]]. This further demonstrates how the *peu-* prefix operates in morphological causatives, changing the valency of the verb.

Periphrastic Causatives

Syntactic causatives in Acehese use auxiliary causative verbs such as *geu-yue* ('to order') and *peu-gèt* ('to make'), forming bi-clause structures. These causatives explicitly express a cause-and-effect relationship by joining two independent clauses.

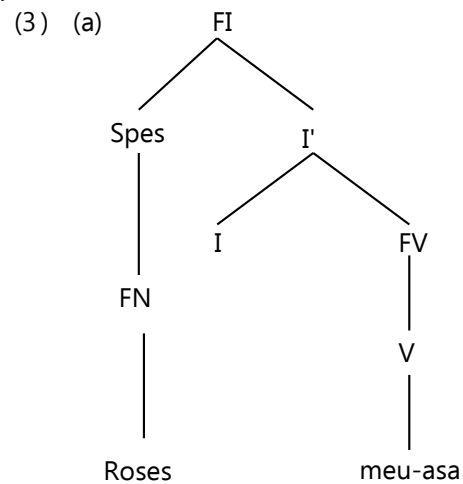
Example 3:

Sentence 3 (a)

Rose meu-asa

3SG-cooked roses

'Cooking roses'



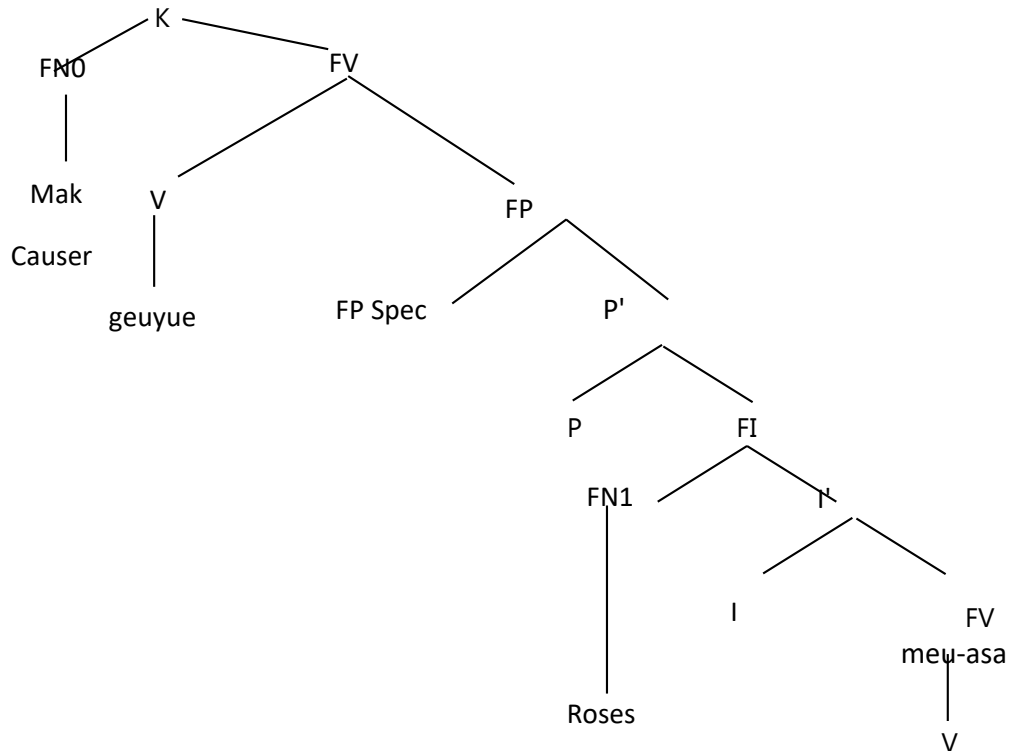
Sentence 3 (b)

Mak geu-yue mawar meu-asa

CAUS-mother-rose-cooking

'Mom told Mawar to cook'

3. (b)



The sentence structure is: [K [FN0 Mak] [FV [V *geu-yue*] [FP [FN1 Mawar] [I' [I *meu-*] [VP [V *asa*]]]]]. The auxiliary verb *geu-yue* introduces a bi-clause structure. The first clause (*Mak geu-yue*) shows the causer (Mak), and the second clause (*Mawar meu-asa*) shows the causee (Mawar). The *geu-yue* verb increases the verb's valency by adding a causee argument, explicitly marking the causal relationship between the two clauses.

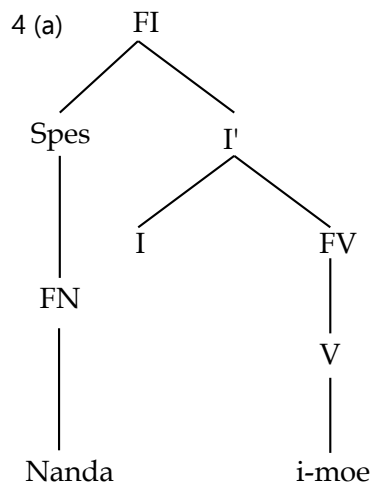
Example 4:

Sentence 4 (a)

Nanda i-moe

Nanda 3SG-back

'Nanda is home'



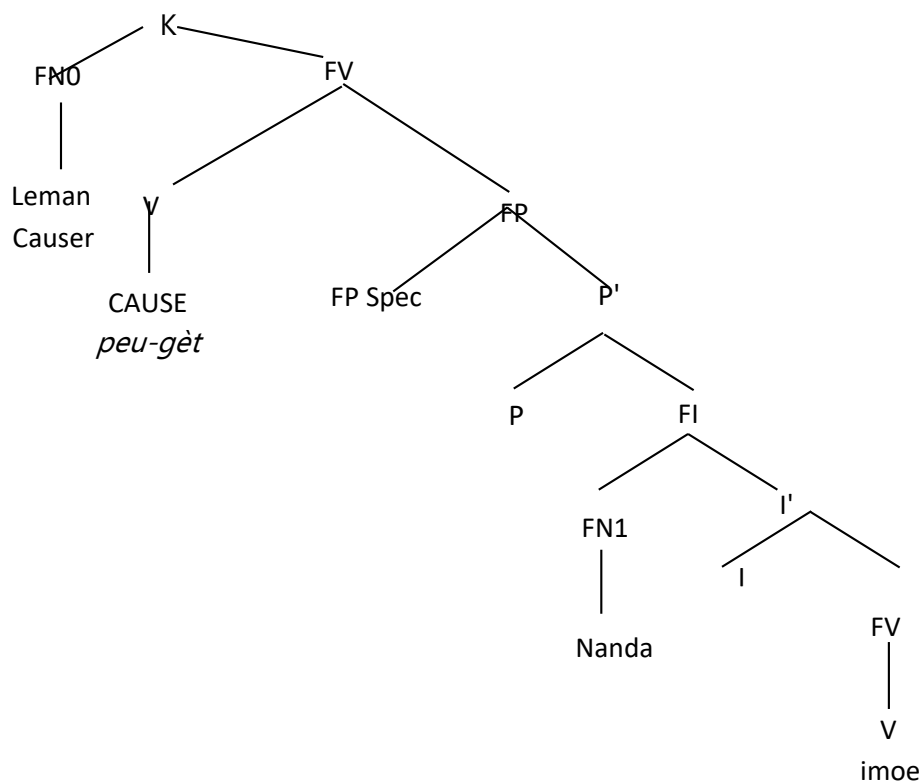
Sentence 4 (b)

Leman peu-gèt Nanda i-moe

Leman CAUS-Nanda 3SG-back home

'Leman made Nanda come home'

4. (b)



The sentence structure here is: [K [FN0 Leman] [FV [V *peu-gèt*] [FP [FN1 Nanda] [VP [V *i-moe*]]]]]. In this case, the auxiliary verb *peu-gèt* connects the two clauses, forming a bi-clausal structure where Leman (the causer) makes Nanda (the causee) perform the action of coming home. This is an example of a syntactic causative, where the auxiliary verb introduces an explicit cause-and-effect relationship between two clauses.

Lexical Causatives

Lexical causatives in Acehnese are formed with verbs that inherently express causative meaning, without requiring any morphological modification or auxiliary verbs. These verbs directly convey a cause-and-effect relationship within the verb itself.

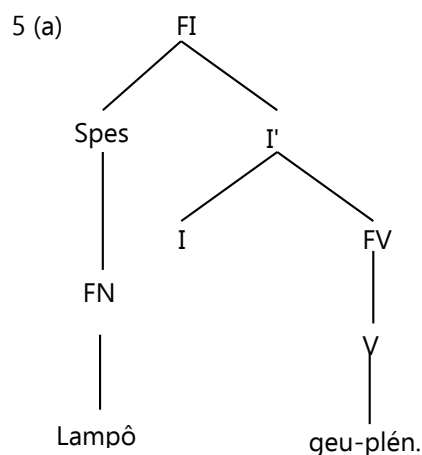
Example 5:

Sentence 5 (a).

Lampô geu-plén

3SG lights-off

'Lights out'

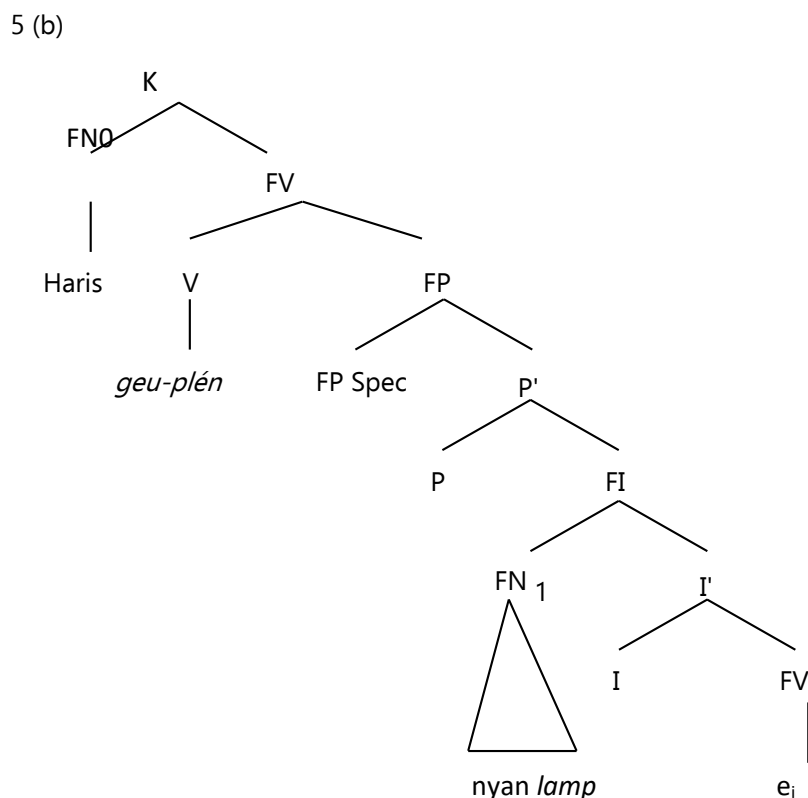


Sentence 5 (b)

Haris geu-plén nyan lamp.

Haris 3SG.AGT-turn off that light

'Haris turned off that light'



The verb *plén* ('to extinguish') inherently contains a causative meaning. No morphological changes or auxiliary verbs are necessary to form the causative relationship. The construction *Haris geu-plén nyan lamp* is a lexical causative, as the causativity is directly implied by the verb *geu-plén*, which inherently expresses the cause-and-effect relationship.

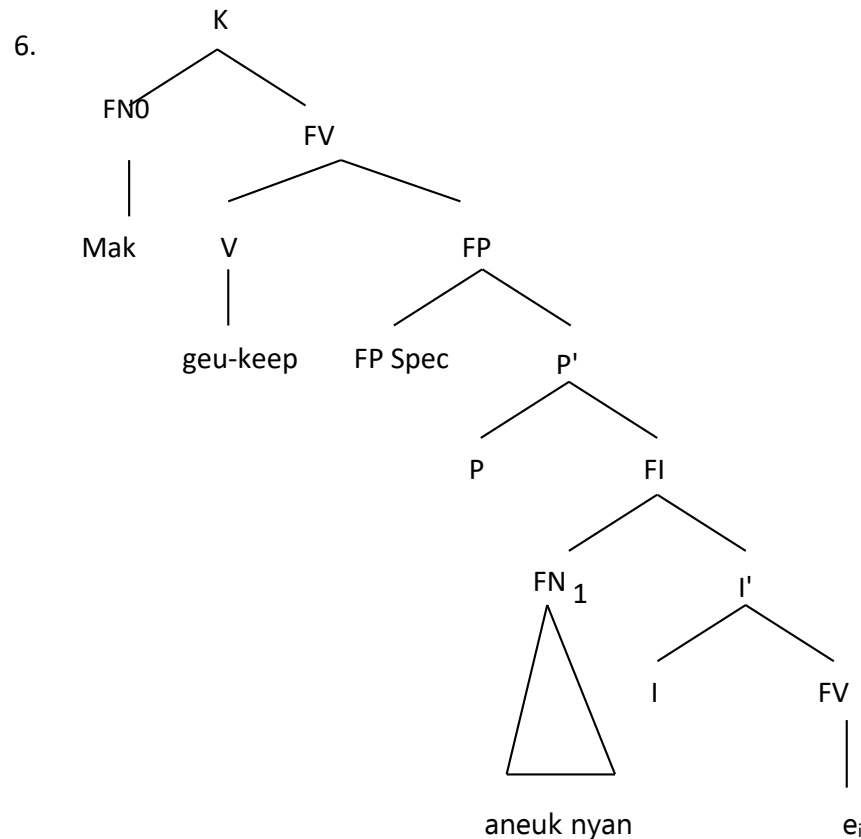
Example 6:

Sentence 6.

Mak geu-jaga aneuk nyan

Mother 3SG.AGT-keeps the child

'Mother looks after the child'



In this example, the verb *jaga* ('to look after') semantically implies causation. The verb *geu-jaga* directly expresses the action of the subject (Mak) causing the action of looking after the child, without needing any additional morphemes or auxiliary verbs. This is a lexical causative construction.

Discussion

Morphological Causatives

The morphological causative construction in Acehnese is marked by the prefix *peu-*, which increases the valency of a verb by introducing both a causer and a causee argument. This mechanism transforms intransitive verbs into transitive ones, as in *Mak peu-jatuh boh mangga nyan* ('Mak dropped the mango'). The originally intransitive verb *jatuh* ('to fall') gains

transitivity through affixation, allowing a causative interpretation. According to Comrie (1985), such morphological causatives are common in languages with rich affixal morphology. These findings align with Li & Thompson (1981), who noted that affixation is a central method for expressing causation in many languages. Siewierska (2004) further asserts that valency alteration through derivational morphology like *peu-* allows causation to be expressed efficiently without altering syntactic structure. In Acehnese, the use of *peu-* to encode direct causation illustrates a typical Austronesian morphological strategy (Schäfer, 2024).

From a formal syntactic perspective, these morphological constructions can be represented in the X-Bar schema as mono-clause. The causative verb with the *peu-* prefix heads the VP, which takes a direct NP object (causee) and possibly a Theme. This configuration reflects a single projection under a unified TP, consistent with theories of mono-clause causatives in X-Bar Theory (Shibatani, 1976). From a formal syntactic perspective, these morphological constructions can be represented in the X-Bar schema as mono-clause. The causative verb with the *peu-* prefix heads the VP, which takes a direct NP object (causee) and possibly a Theme. This configuration reflects a single projection under a unified TP, consistent with theories of mono-clause causatives in X-Bar Theory (Schäfer, 2024).

Syntactic (Periphrastic) Causatives

In contrast to morphological causatives, syntactic or periphrastic causatives in Acehnese employ auxiliary causative verbs such as *geu-yue* or *peu-gèt*, yielding bi-clause constructions. For example, in *Mak geu-yue Mawar meu-asa* ('Mother told Mawar to cook'), the verb *geu-yue* functions as the causative predicate, introducing an embedded clause.

This pattern illustrates a syntactic structure where the main clause (causer) dominates a complement clause (causee + event), consistent with Shibatani's (2006) definition of syntactic causation (Harley, 2012). These periphrastic constructions are explicitly bi-clause, as evidenced in X-Bar representation by two distinct verb phrases (VPs) under separate TP nodes. The causative verb projects a higher VP that selects a CP or TP complement containing the embedded action.

This structural layering supports the claim by Haspelmath (1993) and Harley (2012) that analytic causatives are typically biclausal in nature, offering greater syntactic transparency and flexibility (Haegeman, 2020). In Acehnese, this type of causative allows the expression of indirect causation, where the causee retains a higher degree of agentivity. For instance, *Abang geu-yue lon meu-bayar utang nyan* ('Abang told me to pay the debt') clearly delineates the roles of causer and causee in separate clauses, a syntactic property aligned with Haegeman's (2020) insights on biclausal complementation (Legate et al., 2020).

Lexical causatives

Lexical causatives in Acehnese consist of verbs that inherently encode causative meaning without additional morphological marking or syntactic restructuring. Examples include *plén* ('to turn off') and *jaga* ('to guard'), as in *Haris geu-plén lampu nyan* ('Haris turned off the light') and *Mak geu-jaga aneuk nyan* ('Mother is taking care of the child'). In these constructions, causation is conveyed through the semantics of the verb itself. Keenan & Comrie (1977)

categorize such forms as lexical causatives, which rely entirely on the verb's meaning to express causal relations. From a syntactic perspective, these constructions remain mono-clause and exhibit no overt causative morphology. Within the X-Bar framework, the causative verb heads the VP, assigning two arguments: the Agent (e.g., *Haris, Mak*) in the specifier position and the Theme (e.g., *lampu, aneuk*) as its complement.

Semantically, the verb *plén* involves a direct manipulation by the Agent that causes a change of state in the Theme, while *jaga* implies an ongoing action exerted by the Agent over the Theme, often involving intention and volition. Lexical causatives in Acehnese thus present a compact representation of causation, integrating both syntactic economy and semantic richness. Foley & Van Valin (1984) argue that such constructions enable direct encoding of causation with minimal structural overhead. In typological comparison, this pattern reflects a broader Austronesian tendency toward verb-internal causative semantics. These verbs efficiently express cause-effect relationships while maintaining mono-clause simplicity, making them highly frequent and pragmatically unmarked in Acehnese discourse. In synthesizing the findings, it is evident that Acehnese employs a tripartite causative system—morphological, syntactic, and lexical—each with distinct structural and semantic properties. Morphological causatives use affixation (*peu-*) to increase verb valency and are structurally mono-clausal. Syntactic causatives utilize auxiliary verbs like *geu-yue*, forming bi-clause structures that explicitly represent cause-effect relations across clauses. Lexical causatives rely on verb-inherent semantics, encoding causation compactly without structural augmentation.

These variations correspond to different degrees of syntactic complexity and semantic explicitness. The integration of X-Bar Theory in this research provides a formal representation of clause structure, demonstrating how Acehnese encodes causative relations through head-complement configurations, clause embedding, and hierarchical projection. The syntactic behaviour of each causative type—particularly in terms of clause structure and argument realization—offers valuable insights into the typological diversity and theoretical modelling of Austronesian syntax. Ultimately, this research enhances our understanding of Acehnese syntax while contributing to the broader theoretical discourse on causativity. By explicitly mapping causative constructions within the X-Bar framework, it provides a formal account of how argument structure, valency, and clausal configuration interact in a typologically rich Austronesian language.

CONCLUSION

This research provides an in-depth investigation of causative constructions in the Acehnese language, utilizing X-Bar Theory to analyze the syntactic structure of these constructions. The findings reveal three distinct types of causative constructions in Acehnese: morphological causatives, syntactic causatives, and lexical causatives, each of which reflects a unique approach to encoding causation within the language which include; 1) Morphological Causatives: These constructions are formed through affixation, specifically with prefixes such as *peu-* and *seu-*, which increase the verb's valency by converting intransitive verbs into transitive ones. In the X-Bar framework, these constructions are mono-clause, where the causative verb heads the VP and introduces the causee as a complement within a single clause.

This type of causation demonstrates how verb valency can be altered through morphology, providing a simple and efficient mechanism for expressing cause-and-effect relationships, 2) Syntactic (Periphrastic) Causatives: In contrast, bi-clause syntactic causatives involve the use of causative auxiliary verbs such as *geu-yue* and *peu-gèt*, which connect the causer and causee across two separate clauses. In X-Bar terms, these constructions consist of a main clause containing the causative verb and an embedded clause that expresses the action of the causee. The X-Bar representation here highlights how the causative verb projects a higher VP, which then selects a CP or TP complement, demonstrating a more complex syntactic structure compared to morphological causatives, 3) Lexical Causatives involve verbs that inherently encode causation, such as *plén* ('to turn off') and *jaga* ('to guard'). These constructions are mono-clause, with the causative verb heading the VP, and the Agent and Theme arguments realized within the same clause. Unlike the previous types, lexical causatives do not require any morphological modification or syntactic embedding. These constructions demonstrate how causation can be directly encoded within the verb's semantics, with minimal syntactic restructuring.

The X-Bar analysis of these constructions reveals systematic hierarchical relationships between the causer, causee, and the verb in both monoclausal and biclausal structures. These findings underscore the flexibility of Acehnese in representing causal relationships through various mechanisms, whether through morphological affixation, syntactic periphrasis, or lexical semantics. Each type of causative provides a distinct level of syntactic complexity and semantic clarity, reflecting the language's rich and nuanced syntactic structure. This research significantly contributes to the broader theoretical understanding of causativity, especially in the context of Austronesian languages. By applying X-Bar Theory, it offers a formal framework for analyzing the syntactic structures of causative constructions, demonstrating how languages like Acehnese exploit hierarchical projections to express causation. Moreover, this research highlights the typological diversity of causative strategies across languages, showing that Acehnese employs a combination of morphological, syntactic, and lexical strategies to express cause-and-effect relationships. The results of this research challenge the conventional binary categorization of causative constructions as either monoclausal or biclausal. Instead, they suggest that causative constructions should be understood as a spectrum of syntactic complexity, with varying degrees of morphological and syntactic involvement.

By emphasizing the theoretical implications of these findings, this research not only enhances our understanding of Acehnese syntax but also contributes to ongoing debates in syntax theory and cross-linguistic typology. The analysis presented here encourages a more nuanced approach to understanding causativity in languages, highlighting the need for further exploration of how languages combine different syntactic structures to convey causal relationships.

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