

‘Give’ constructions in Thai and beyond: A cognitive and grammaticalization perspective

Shoichi IWASAKI and Foong-Ha YAP
University of California

Many languages of the world can express both benefactive and causative meanings with a single morpheme, e.g. Khasi (a Mon-Khmer language) (Henderson 1976), Austronesian languages, Indonesian (Tampubolon 1983) and Javanese (Horne 1961), Southern Sierra Miwok (a central Californian Indian language) (Broadbent 1964) and Swahili (a Bantu language) (Driever 1976), to name a few. In Indonesian, for example, the suffix *-kan* exhibits both a causative meaning and a benefactive meaning as shown in (1).

- (1) Indonesian suffix *-kan*
Benefactive: *mem-beli-kan* ‘to buy X for Y’ < *beli* ‘to buy’
Causative: *me-manas-kan* ‘to make X hot’ < *panas* ‘hot’

This phenomenon can be understood as a consequence of the valence increase required for sentences with causative and benefactive meanings. However, it should be also be noted that in some languages the morpheme employed for these meanings can be traced to the lexical verb meaning ‘give.’ Thus in Lahu the verb *pî* (‘give’) appears in a benefactive construction, as in *chɔ pî* ‘chop give’ (=chop for him/her/them), and in a causative construction, as in *vəʔ pî* ‘wear give’ (= dress someone), as shown in (2).

- (2) Lahu verb *pî* ‘give’ (Matisoff 1991:427-428)
Benefactive: *chɔ pî*
 chop give = ‘chop for him/her/them’
Causative: *vəʔ pî*
 wear give = ‘dress someone’

Thai, Vietnamese, and Khmer also employ the word ‘give’ to express these meanings in their periphrastic constructions, but what is particularly interesting about these languages is the fact that the ‘give’ morpheme appears in different positions in a sentence. That is, in these languages, the ‘give’ morpheme appears as an adjunct after a clause in the benefactive sentence, while it appears before a clause in the causative sentence. These are illustrated in (3) to (5) on the next page. In (3a), the Thai benefactive sentence, the ‘give’ morpheme appears after the clause “Deang read a book” and specifies *chán* as the benefactee. The same structure can be

In other words, the benefactive and causative present a mirror image of each other as schematically presented below. In the subsequent section, we will only consider Thai data to represent the three languages, but for the most part, the same descriptions apply to Vietnamese and Khmer as well.

Causative: NP GIVE [clause]

<i>Benefactive</i>	<i>Causative</i>
<p>Thai</p> <p>(3a) deɛŋ àan nǎŋsǔu hây chán Deang read book GIVE me ‘Deang read a book for me.’</p> <p>Vietnamese</p> <p>(4a) nó go'i tho' cho tôi 3 sent letter GIVE me He sent a letter (to sm) for me.’ (Clark 1978:24)</p> <p>Khmer</p> <p>(5a) kǎat teñ trəi ʔaoy khñom 3 Buy fish GIVE me ‘He bought the fish for me.’ (Schiller 1989:287)</p>	<p>Thai</p> <p>(3b) mēɛ hây lǔuk pay duu nǎŋ mother GIVE child go see movie ‘Mother let her child go see a movie.’ (Newman 1996:189)</p> <p>Vietnamese</p> <p>(4b) ông ây không cho tôi thôi HON 3 NEG GIVE me resign ‘He wouldn’t let me resign.’ (Matisoff 1991:429)</p> <p>Khmer</p> <p>(5b) khñom ʔaoy ʔo:pùk tēñ siəvphýu I GIVE father buy book ‘I had my father buy the book(s)’ (Newman 1996:173)</p>

The mirror image of these structural patterns observed in these languages is significant because it allows us to consider possible developmental paths of the morpheme ‘give’ into different functions through structural re-analysis. The purpose of this paper, then, is to first show how structural re-analysis paves the way for new constructions to emerge, and to then consider semantic characteristics of the ‘give’ morpheme and relevant structures of the ‘give’ constructions, to suggest how structure and semantics influence the way in which linguistic changes occur. Our emphasis on structure is important, given the current trend in grammaticalization research which strongly emphasises cognitive and semantic motivations for language changes.

Before we account for the use of ‘give’ in benefactive and causative sentences in Thai, we should note that the benefactive function of ‘give’ has come

about from its lexical verb source via its function as a dative marker. This process is *well attested in many unrelated languages and is easily reconstructed* (Lord 1993; but see Heine et al. 1991 for a benefactive>dative argument). The idea is that the fundamental function of 'give' as a lexical verb is first re-analysed as marking the goal of a transfer object in a serialised or chained clause context, triggering a metaphorical extension to the goal of a transferred favour. This process is illustrated below by some examples from Japanese (which is geographically removed and genetically and typologically distinct from Thai, Vietnamese and Khmer.)

(6) Lexical verb: *yatta* (< *yaru* 'give')

taroo	ga	hon	o	katte,	hanako	ni	yatta
Taro	NOM	book	ACC	buy:TE	Hanako	DAT	give:PST

'Taro bought a book (and then) gave (it) to Hanako.'

(7) Auxiliary showing Goal: *-yatta*

taroo	ga	hanako	ni	hon	o	katte-yatta
Taro	NOM	Hanako	DAT	book	ACC	buy:TE-give:PST

'Taro bought a book for Hanako.'

(8) Auxiliary showing Benefactive: *-yatta*

taroo	ga	hanako	ni	hon	o	yonde-yatta
Taro	NOM	Hanako	DAT	book	ACC	read:TE-give:PST

'Taro read a book for Hanako.'

In (6), two clauses are connected through clause chaining with the first verb marked by the medial verb form, *katte* 'buy:TE.' The verb *yatta* 'gave' in this sentence is a lexical verb. Being a transitive verb specifying only the agent and patient, *katte* by itself cannot contain the goal argument, so the second clause with *yatta* must be included in the sentence. In (7), the two verbs are concatenated with the second member functioning as an auxiliary verb. This sentence is basically a benefactive sentence meaning 'Taro bought a book for Hanako', but the sense of a goal in the process of transferring an object (i.e. the book) is still strong because the verb *katte* 'buy:TE' typically involves a manual activity which can easily extend into another manual activity of giving the object to someone, i.e. handing over a thing. (8), on the other hand, clearly indicates the benefactive meaning. In this situation no concrete object is transferred because the verb, *yonde* 'read:TE', involves a verbal activity rather than a manual activity. What is transferred in (8), then, is the favour of reading a book. The three Japanese sentences above thus show one possible developmental path of grammaticalization from the lexical verb 'give' to a functional word of auxiliary capacity with the meaning of dative and benefactive. The following Yoruba (West Africa) data show another possible development of the lexical verb 'give' into more functional words, namely, dative and benefactive case markers (Lord 1993:35-36).

- (9) Lexical verb: *fún* 'give'
 ớ fún mi l-ớwớ
 he give me part.-money
 'He gave me some money.'
- (10) Dative/Benefactive marker
 ớ tà-á fún mi
 he sell-it give me
 (a) 'He sold it to me'
 (b) 'He sold it for me.'
- (11) Benefactive marker
 ẹ pè ế fún mi
 call him give me
 'Call him for me.'

In (9), *fún* is the lexical verb 'give.' In (10), it can be interpreted as a dative preposition if the item actually transferred to 'me', or it can be interpreted as a benefactive preposition if no actual transfer of the item occurred but the action of selling it on 'my behalf' did. The 'give' morpheme in (11) is clearly a benefactive preposition because calling someone is an action which can be only interpreted as a favour. In both the Japanese and Yoruba data, the lexical word (verb) has developed into a functional word (an auxiliary verb for Japanese and a preposition for Yoruba). This is consistent with the overwhelming tendency of grammaticalization which develops a more functional word from a more lexical word. Based on this cross-linguistic tendency, it is reasonable to assume that a preposition-like function associated with *hây* in Thai has also developed from the lexical verb *hây* in the evolution of the language. That is:

- (12) Lexical verb: *hây*
 ɗɛɛŋ hây ɲən chán
 Deang GIVE money me
 'Deang gave me some money.'
- (13) Dative marker
 ɗɛɛŋ sũũ năŋsũũ hây chán
 Deang buy book GIVE me
 'Deang bought a book (and gave it) to me.'

- (14) Benefactive marker
 deɛŋ àan nəŋsǔu hây chán
 Deang read book GIVE me
 'Deang read a book for me.'

The word *hây* is a lexical verb in (12). It is a dative marker in (13), which crucially entails an actual act of giving. This interpretation is often emphasised when the first activity is a kind of activity which involves some manual manipulation such as 'buying.' Note also that with this interpretation, the act of buying and that of giving are perceived to be in temporal iconic order, and in fact that may be the only relationship between them. In other words, the buying activity and giving activity may be simply coincidental. It is also possible, however, to conceive that the 'giving' activity is the very purpose of the first activity from the outset, and in this interpretation *hây* in (13) is a benefactive marker. That is, Daeng bought a book with an intention of giving it to 'me.' With this interpretation, the two actions of buying and giving are no longer perceived as being temporally iconic, but are instead coterminous. The reason why (14) is more naturally interpreted as a benefactive sentence is because "reading a book" is a verbal (not manual) activity and actual 'giving' is not possible. The internal structures of (13) and (14) may be expressed as follows.

For (13): [Agt buy book] [give me] (dative interpretation)
 or [Agt buy book [give me]] (benefactive interpretation)

For (14): [Agt read book [give me]] (benefactive interpretation)

Now we turn to the structural mirror image observed earlier between the benefactive and causative in Thai. To understand this structural property, we must first look at another type of construction, namely the purposive sentence. Compare the benefactive meaning of sentence (13) above and the purposive sentence shown in (15) below.

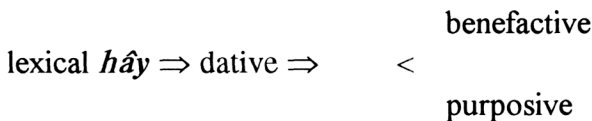
- (15) Purposive marker
 deɛŋ sǔu nəŋsǔu hây chán àan
 Deang buy book GIVE me read
 'Deang bought a book for me to read.'

Structurally, these two sentences are minimally distinct, with the purposive having an extra word, *àan* 'read.' Compare the structural description for (14) and that for (15) below.

For (15): [Agt buy book [give me/I read]] (purposive interpretation)

Conceptually, the two constructions are understood to highlight different aspects of the benefactive event (Newman 1996:53-54, 190-191). In a restricted sense, a benefactive event consists of a 'benefactor', 'action as a favour transferred' and 'benefactee', but in an extended framework, the additional notion of *manipulation* of the benefactive action *on the part of the recipient* is also included. Purposive sentences like (15), highlight such intended manipulation overtly, whilst benefactive sentences like (14) only imply it. This suggests that when the 'give' morpheme extends its meaning from a more concrete goal orientation to a *more abstract benefactivity*, the purposive construction naturally emerges (recall earlier that we had alluded to the fact that the benefactive construction has this purposive intention as part of its inherent meaning which distinguishes it from the dative construction). What we need to bear in mind here is that languages with a productive clause serialisation mechanism (as in the case of Thai) can easily develop the purposive structure from the dative construction simply by adding the verb that specifies the intended action of the recipient of the object. Our proposal thus far is summarised as follows:

Proposed development of *hây* (Part I)



How does the causative structure develop from here? Recall that in the benefactive construction, *hây* appears as an adjunct to a clause at its end and was schematised as [clause] GIVE NP. In the purposive construction *hây* is positioned between two clauses as seen in sentence (15) (= [clause] GIVE [clause]). This is a pivotal structure that leads to the development of the causative construction, in which *hây* is positioned at the pre-clause site (= GIVE_i [clause]). Now, the structure of the purposive construction was earlier suggested as:

Purposive: [A buy a book [give B read]]

This structure may be re-analysed as follows when the purpose is highlighted. Note that the two clauses are still viewed as a single coterminous event, and are thus not subject to any temporal iconic constraints.

Purposive in focus: [[A buy a book] [give B read]]

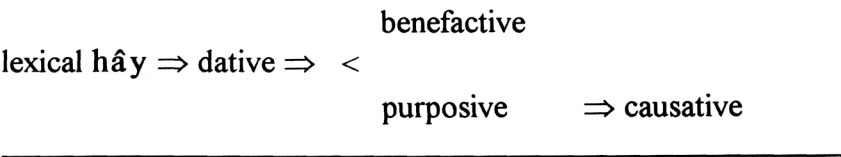
When focus on the purpose becomes so central that the (intended) result becomes the sole concern for the speaker, the enabling event represented in the first clause of the purposive construction inevitably gets backgrounded, often by means of a generalised enabling (or factitive) verb such as ‘do’ or ‘make’ or ‘give’, and the reduced purposive clause then becomes re-analysed as a causative construction.

- Causative 1: [A do/make [give B read]]
- Causative 2: [A give [B read]]

Both types of causative constructions are attested in Thai, the former as a *tham hây* construction, and the latter as a preverbal *hây* construction (see examples (16) to (20) below.) With respect to the first type of causative construction, the ‘give’ construction is still ambiguous between a purposive and causative interpretation, whereas in the second type of causative construction, the ‘give’ morpheme is now reinterpreted as the pivotal verb of a complex causative predicate.

The above account seems to be consistent with the position advocated by Song (1996:91-99) who provides ample examples from a variety of languages to show the development of causative from purposive. At the same time, however, we need to acknowledge an alternative view which proposes that the causative construction has developed directly from the lexical verb ‘give.’ This proposal is reasonable since, as Newman (1996) shows with Finnish, Polish and Jacaltec, as well as Thai and Khmer, there is a fairly strong cognitive motivation to link giver to causer and recipient to causee. Thus, {A GIVE B SOMETHING} can be directly re-interpreted as {A CAUSE (B HAVE SOMETHING)}, and then {A CAUSE (B DO SOMETHING)}. However, in the case of Thai, Vietnamese and Khmer, the structural overlap between purposive and causative strongly suggests that a development from the purposive is more reasonable. However, we also recognise that the structural shift from a purposive to a causative sentence is probably orchestrated synergistically by a cognitive tendency to associate the ‘give’ morpheme with causation.

Proposed development of *hây* (Part II)



The proposal for the 'purposive' to 'causative' development is also supported by the peculiar semantic restriction imposed on the *hây* causative in Thai, which requires that both causer and causee be agentive and volitional. Causative sentences in Thai can express permissive/directive causation as shown in examples (16) and (17), but not coercive causation as shown in example (18)¹.

- (16) Permissive causative
 dɛɛŋ hây chán pay dūay
 Deang GIVE me go too
 'Deang let me go, too.'
- (17) Directive causative
 dɛɛŋ hây sunii pay sǎu kâpkhâaw
 Deang GIVE Sunii go buy side-dish
 'Deang had Sunii go buy some side dishes.'
- (18) Coercive causative (ungrammatical)
 *dɛɛŋ hây sunii rǒŋhây
 Deang GIVE Sunii cry
 'Deang made Sunii cry.' (except in acting)

The permissive and directive causatives shown in (16) and (17), respectively, are non-implicative, so it is possible that the causee did not comply with the causer's intention. To make (18) grammatical an assisting verb *tham* ('do') must be employed as in (19) (This construction has been already mentioned as Causative 1 earlier).

- (19) Coercive causative (grammatical)
 dɛɛŋ tham hây sunii rǒŋhây
 Deang DO GIVE Sunii cry
 'Deang made Sunii cry.'

This restriction of the *hây* causative is easily understood if we properly capture the nature of the purposive construction, which we propose is the source for the causative construction. A purposive sentence consists of a clause denoting a triggering event and a clause denoting a purpose event. A triggering event is within the power of its agent, but the purpose event is only intended to take place after a

¹If (18) is to be interpreted as a director's instruction to an actor, it then becomes a directive causative, and in that sense this sentence is acceptable. It can be also interpreted as a permissive causative, i.e. Suni wanted to cry and Deang gave her permission (Kingkarn Thepkanjana, personal communication). However, if (18) is used instead to refer to a situation involving physical manipulation (e.g. by hitting), here called "coercive" causative, then it is not acceptable.

triggering event is realised; thus by definition, it is within the domain of irrealis. That is, the triggering event can never guarantee the successful realisation of the purpose event. It only provides a possible means for the purpose event to take place. This weak causation implicit in the purpose clause is transferred to the causative sentence, and becomes realised as non-implicational permissive and directive causatives.

Weak causation, however, should not be taken to mean the weak agentivity of the causer. On the contrary, the causer in a *hây* causative sentence must be highly agentive and volitional (as must the causee). This high agentivity is what prevents the causative sentence from being re-interpreted as a passive sentence in Thai, unlike some Chinese dialects and colloquial Malay, whose 'give' words otherwise exhibit similar developments to *hây* in Thai (Yap and Iwasaki 1998). In the latter languages, the causer can be interpreted as having extremely low or null agentivity and is also re-interpreted as the patient with respect to the event expressed after the 'give' verb. The next examples are from colloquial Malay. (20) is interpreted as a permissive causative in which "Father" is an agent allowing the event of the man borrowing the hoe, while (21) is interpretable either as a permissive causative, or as a passive, in which 'Father' is the patient of the man's cheating. Notice that the same sentence structure (i.e. NP GIVE [clause]), is used in both sentences.

(20) Ayah bagi orang itu pinjam cangkul kita
 father GIVE person that borrow hoe we
 'Father let that man borrow our hoe.'

(21) Ayah bagi orang itu tipu (dia)
 father GIVE person that cheat (him)
 'Father let that man cheat him.'
 'Father was cheated by that man.'

Although colloquial Malay and Thai exhibit many similarities in constructions with the 'give' morpheme as already mentioned, the above difference leads us to consider potential language-specific influences on the constructions. There are three possible reasons why colloquial Malay allows its 'give' morpheme to appear in passive sentences while Thai does not. First, in the case of Malay, the causative may have developed directly from the lexical verb 'give' (cf. Yap and Iwasaki 1998). That is, the benefactive and causative functions are two independent developments and the purposive is not involved in the development of the causative. Or, the causative-purposive link was established after these functions developed independently. Second, Thai might not have proceeded in its grammaticalization of *hây* to the extent that colloquial Malay has, for Thai still retains the restriction originally imposed by the purposive construction, while colloquial Malay has already dropped such a constraint. This is plausible since the *bagi* construction is employed

almost exclusively in the colloquial mode in which language change may proceed at a faster pace. Finally, the *bagi* construction may be a structural borrowing from some Chinese dialects which exhibit the passive function with their 'give' morpheme (e.g. Cantonese, Hokkien and Mandarin). In any event, we maintain that in Thai it is the purposive structure through which the causative developed.

Before concluding this paper, we would like to consider a peripheral 'inductive' function of *hây*. The two types of inductive sentences are the result-inductive shown in (22) and the manner inductive shown in (23) below.²

(22) Inductive (result)

deɛŋ tîi ɲuu [hây] tâay
Deang beat snake GIVE die
'Deang beat the snake dead.'

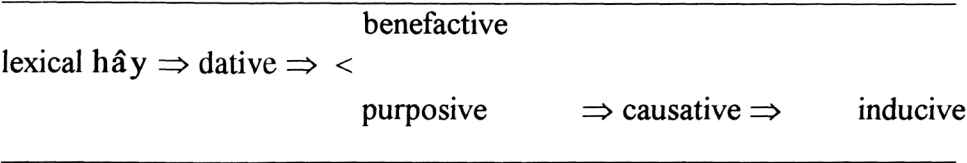
(23) Inductive (manner)

deɛŋ ca nɔɔn hây sabaay [cf. sabaay sabaay]
Deang ASP lie down GIVE comfortable
'Deang will lie down comfortably.'
(Dejthamrong 1970:119)

As discussed earlier, there is a strong agentivity associated with the subject of *hây*, and in its inductive function *hây* supplies the agentivity to an entity which brings about some change of state. That is, in (22) *hây* adds a connotation of vigorously beat the snake until it is dead, and (23) possesses a connotation of the intended manner in which one plans to lie down. In other words, the inductive sentences are also a type of causative sentence. We take this semantic feature as the link between the causative and the inductive and propose that the latter is an extension of the former. Our final proposal is shown below.

²(23) is possible only in the irrealis context, e.g. the future tense. The type of adverbial in (23) can also be expressed by duplicating the adjective. Thus in place of *hây sabaay*, *sabaay sabaay* can also be used. Note also, as shown in the example, that *hây* can be deleted from (22). Because of the deletability and substitutability of *hây* in the inductive sentences, we argue that these sentences are not *directly* related to the purposive constructions despite their structural similarity. This diametrically opposes the recent proposal made by Song (1997) (i.e. the developmental chain of GIVE > BENEFACTIVE > PURPOSIVE > MANNER), but in light of the absence of any purposive interpretation of sentences like (23) (e.g. "Deang will sleep in order to be comfortable."), the development of an expression of manner from the purposive structure is not strongly supported. Later in this paper we will propose instead that the use of *hây* as a manner adverb emerges from the purposive structure via the causative construction.

Summary: Proposed development of *hây*



In this paper, we have tried to trace the grammaticalization path of the morpheme ‘give’ in Thai. To summarise its development, a clause formation mechanism in Thai assisted the change of the lexical verb into a marker for the dative argument. The dative marker has developed into a benefactive marker, as well as a conjunction-like or complementizer-like word, in a purposive sentence, each of which highlights a different aspect of the benefactive situation. The purposive sentence allowed the word *hây* to appear before a clause, which in turn allowed for the development of the causative construction which also employs *hây* before a clause. This development must have also been assisted by the cognitive affinity between the act of giving and causation. The agentivity associated with *hây* finally extended to the inductive function of *hây*.

Since both benefactive and causative functions with *hây* can be found even in the earliest text available in Thai (13th century), we cannot present textual evidence for the actual development of this morpheme. However, this should not deter us from trying to reconstruct its development. In fact, it is possible, as has been demonstrated in this paper, to propose a reasonable development of different functions of this single morpheme by referring to its positional and semantic characteristics. It has also been emphasised that structural motivation is a strong driving force behind the changes observed in the development of *hây* and works together with the more universal cognitive motivation behind language change.

REFERENCES

- Broadbent, Sylvia M. 1964. *The Southern Sierra Miwok Language*. Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Clark, Marybeth. 1987. *Coverbs and Case in Vietnamese*. Canberra: Australian National University.
- Driever, D. 1976. *Aspects of a Case Grammar of Mombasa Swahili*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske.
- Henderson, Eugénie J.A. 1976. "Vestiges of morphology in modern standard Khasi." In P. N. Jenner, L. C. Thompson and S. Storosta eds., *AS* 1:477-522, Honolulu: University of Hawaii.
- Heine, Bernd, Ulrike Claudi and Frederike Hünemeyer. 1991. *From Cognition to Grammar: Evidence from African Languages*. In Traugott and Heine eds., 149-188.
- Horne, Elinor C. 1961. *Beginning Javanese*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press.
- Lord, Carol. 1993. *Historical Change in Serial Verb Constructions*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Matisoff, James A. 1991. *Areal and Universal Dimensions of Grammaticalization in Lahu*. In Traugott and Heine eds., 383-453.
- Newman, John. 1996. *Give: A Cognitive Linguistic Study*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Newman, John, (ed.) 1997. "The linguistics of giving." *Typological Studies in Language*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Orathai Dejthamrong. 1970. *Grammatical Functions of the Word hây in the Thai Language*. M.A. Thesis, Chulalongkon University.
- Schiller, E. 1989. "Syntactic polysemy and underspecification in the lexicon." *BLS* 15:278-290.
- Song, Jae Jung. 1996. *Causatives and Causation: A Universal-Typological Perspective*. London/New York: Longman.
- Song, Jae Jung. 1997. "On the development of MANNER from GIVE. J. Newman." *The Linguistics of Giving*. 327-348, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Tampubolon, D.P. 1983. *Verbal Affixation in Indonesian: A Semantic Exploration*. Canberra: The Australian National University.
- Traugott, Elizabeth C. and Bernd Heine. 1991. *Approaches to Grammaticalization Vol. II*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Yap, Foong Ha and Shoichi Iwasaki. 1998. "'Give' constructions in Malay, Thai and Mandarin Chinese: A polygrammaticization perspective." *CLS* 34.