A Syntactic Interpretation of the Applicative-Causative Syncretism

Ludovico Franco
Università degli Studi di Firenze (<ludovico.franco@unifi.it>)

Abstract:

This paper deals with the applicative-causative syncretism, which is a pattern of morpheme polysemy attested in many different natural languages. We basically interpret the causative-applicative syncretism as based on a shared syntactic configuration. Specifically, we argue that the syncretic morpheme under investigation is the 'applicative' counterpart of an adpositional/case elementary relator (Manzini and Franco 2016; Franco and Manzini 2017a), attaching instrumental or benefactive obliques (High Applicatives, cf. Pylkkänen 2002, 2008) to the verbal spine. We follow Bellucci (2017), Manzini and Savoia (2018) in assuming that causees in causative constructions can be introduced as obliques, linked to the same structural position as High Appls. The causative reading of the sentence is driven by interpretive means (cf. Franco and Manzini 2017a). This readily explains the possibility of encoding causative and applicatives with the same lexical items.

Keywords: *Applicative, Causative, Oblique, Syncretism, Instrumental*

1. Introduction: the applicative-causative syncretism

This paper deals with the applicative-causative syncretism, which is a quite overlooked pattern of morpheme polysemy attested in various natural languages. The applicative is usually understood as "a construction in which a verb bears a specific morpheme which licenses an oblique, or non-core, argument that would not otherwise be considered a part of the verb's argument structure" (Jeong 2007: 2). Baker (1988), Bresnan and Moshi (1990) argue that the extra-arguments associated to applicative morphemes typically encode benefactive or instrumental participants.

Typologically, however, applicative constructions commonly licence other theta-roles, among which goal, locative, and source relations (Baker 1992; Peterson 2007, *inter alia*).

In current generative literature the terms "applicative" (Marantz 1993; Pylkkänen 2002, 2008; Cuervo 2003, 2010 *inter alia*) is also used to refer to oblique/indirect objects of the verb that precedes the theme/patient object in languages like English without an overt applicative marker. For instance, Marantz (1993) assumes that English double objects of the type of *I gave Mary a letter* actually instantiate applicative structures with a covert applicative morpheme.

In this work, we analyze the syntax of those languages which have *morphological* devices that change verbs into their *causative* forms and in which such causative morphemes happen to have the same lexical shape as an applicative introducing a non-core (oblique) argument. The applicative=causative syncretism is quite widespread from a cross-linguistic point of view, as documented in McDonnell (2013). Consider the data in (1) to (3), where the applicative=causative morpheme is highlighted in bold.

(1) Kinyarwanda (Jerro 2017: 753)
  a. Habimana   y-a-men-a   igi-kombe
      Habimana   1.SBJ-PST-break-IPFV   7-cup
      'Habimana broke the cup'
  b. Habimana   y-a-men-**esh**-eje   umw-ana   igi-kombe
      Habimana   1.SBJ-PST-break-CAUS-PFV   1-child   7-cup
      'Habimana made the child break the cup'
  c. Habimana   y-a-men-**esh**-eje   igi-kombe   in-koni
      Habimana   1.SBJ-PST-break-APPL-PFV   7-cup   9-stick
      'Habimana broke the cup with a stick'

(2) Javanese (Hemmings 2013: 168ff)
  a. kucing   mangan   iwak
      cat   eat   fish
      'the cat ate fish'
  b. aku   mangan-**i**   kucing   iwak
      1SG   eat-CAUS   cat   fish
      'I fed the cat fish'
  c. pelem   nyeblòk-**i**   gentèng   ómah-ku
      mango   fall-APPL   roof   house-1SG.POSS
      'a mango fell on the roof of my house'
  a'. ès   nyair
       ice   melt
       'the ice melted'
  b'. aku   nyair-**aké**   ès
       1SG   melt-CAUS   ice
       'I melted the ice'

c'. aku   masak-**aké**   Karolina   jajan
     1SG   cook-APPL   Karolina   cake
     'I baked Karolina a cake'

(3) P'orhépecha (Capistrán Garza 2015:145ff)
     a. Xwánu   xwá-s-∅-ti   tsíri
         Juan   bring-PRF-PRS-3IND   corn
         'Juan brought some corn'
     b. María   xwá-**ra**-s-∅-ti   Xwánu-ni   tsíri
         Maria   bring-CAUS-PRF-PRS-3IND Juan-OBL   corn
         'Maria made Juan bring some corn'
     c. xí   tsúntsu-ni   xwá-**ra**-s-∅-ka-ni   its
         1SG   pot-OBL   bring-APPL-PRF-PRS-1/2IND-1SG.SBJ water
         'I brought some water with a pot'

The examples in (1) illustrates the causative=instrumental applicative syncretism in Kinyarwanda, a Bantu language spoken in Rwanda (Kimenyi 1980; Jerro 2017). In this language, the applicative morpheme –*ish/-esh* introduces both a causative and an instrumental applicative reading. The example in (1a) shows a canonical transitive sentence with an external and an internal argument, while the verb bearing the –*ish/-esh* morpheme in (1b) and (1c) introduces three participants. In (1b), the reading is causative: an agent causes the child to break the cup. Conversely, in (1c), we are faced with an instrumental reading: an agent directly acts on the cup, by using a stick in order to break it. As extensively illustrated in Jerro (2017), the causative=instrumental syncretism is very pervasive in Kinyarwanda. Jerro (2017: 753) argues that: "neither traditional analyses of causatives nor applicatives can naturally be extended to syncretic morphemes such as –*ish* since causativization is an operation that adds a new causer subject, while applicativization is an operation that adds a new object." The question is: do the features of the added participant ensure that the instrumental is a object? We will show that there are languages in which it is possible to assume an oblique status for the extra-participant licensed by the applicative morpheme.

In Javanese (Austronesian), the applicative morpheme –*(n)i* encodes a locative relation (2c). As illustrated in Hemmings (2013), this item is also used as a causative morpheme with verbs of an underlying transitive verbs, especially ingestive verbs such as "eat", "drink" and "smell", as in (2b). This suffix also functions as a causative with intransitive verbal roots, typically those denoting states or "inactive situations" (Shibatani and Pardeshi 2001).[1] In addition, the suffix -*aké* is commonly used as a

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[1] For instance, the pair die-kill (=cause to die) is rendered via the addition of the suffix –(n)i in Javanese, as shown in (i).

causative marker with intransitive verbs that denote change of state like "open" and "melt", as shown in (2b'). The suffix –*aké* also encodes benefactive relations, as illustrated in (2c').

Finally, the examples in (3) illustrated the causative=instrumental applicative in P'orhépecha, a language isolate spoken in the North-Western region of Michoacán in Mexico. The suffix –*ra* (and its allomorphs, cf. Capistrán Garza 2015) introduces both a causative (3b) and an instrumental reading (3c). Note that the added participants, namely the causee in (3b) and the instrument in (3c), bear an oblique –*ni* inflection. This is crucial for assuming that the applied argument retain oblique status (cf. Section 3 and 5). We will mainly use P'orhépecha to illustrate our analysis of the causative=applicative syncretism.

In his typological survey, Peterson (2007) assumes that there are two kinds of applicative/causative syncretism ("isomorphism" in his terminology): benefactive/malefactive applicative/causative and comitative/instrumental applicative/causative. We have seen, with the examples from Javanese, that we may also find locative-applicative/causative syncretism. Peterson (2007) argues that there is a "dividing line" between benefactive applicatives and causatives, marked by the semantics of the verbal predicate involved: only intransitive (unaccusative) predicates would be turned into causatives by the "benefactive applicative". According to Petersen, transitive predicates cannot encode a causative reading when they bear a benefactive applicative marker. Peterson (2007: 133-134) says that "benefactive constructions are often based on a schema of giving, and because of this, benefactive constructions often require that there be associated with the event they depict the normal participants in a giving frame. In particular, there must be a giver, a recipient, and, crucially, there must be a gift to be transferred. Hence, an intransitive base event will not have enough participants to work in the construction, but a transitive base event will".

Actually, cross-linguistic data do not seem to support Peterson's claim. As shown in Sneddon (1996), the Indonesian benefactive-applicative morpheme –*kan*, illustrated in (4), can encode a causative meaning with a set of transitive verbal roots, as in (5).

(i)   Javanese (Hemmings 2013: 168ff)
       a.   wòng   kaé   mati
               man   dem   die
               'that man died'
       b.   aku   matè-ni wòng   kaé
               1sg   die-caus man   dem
               'I killed that man'

(4)   Indonesian (Sneddon 1996: 80)
    a.   pelayan   mengambil   segelas   air
         waiter   take   a.glass.of   water
         'The waiter took a glass of water'
    b.   pelayan   mengambil-**kan**   tamu segelas air
         waiter   take-APPL   guest   a.glass.of   water
         'The waiter brought the guest a glass of water'

(5)   Indonesian (Sneddon 1996: 74, 76)
    a.   wanita   itu   mencuci   pakaian   saya
         woman   that   wash   clothes   1SG
         'That woman washes my clothes'
    b.   saya   mencuci-**kan** pakaian   wanita   itu
         1SG   wash-CAUS   clothes   woman   that
         'I have my clothes washed by that woman'

Peterson proposes an externalist explanation also for the instrumental applicative=causative isomorphism. He claims that: "as long as a language allows causees to be inanimate, then the possibility of interpreting an inanimate causee as an instrument is available; this seems like a minor extension to make" (Peterson 2007: 135-136). We recognize that Peterson's intuition is on the right track in assuming that instruments are nothing else than inanimate causee-like arguments (cf. Franco and Manzini 2017a, and the discussion in Section 5). However, we will try to avoid shift of meaning and potential grammaticalization patterns in accounting for the syncretism between the causee role and the benefactive/instrumental/(locative) one in those languages that make use of verbal affixes to encode them. We will provide instead an explanation based on the idea that the construction involved may share the same syntax and that syntax drives those interpretations that are (structurally) allowed.

To our knowledge, there are no formal syntactic attempts trying to capture Caus=Appl. Recently, Jerro (2017) provides a semantic analysis of the syncretism between instrumental applicative morphology and causative morphology in Kinyarwanda assuming an operation that adds a novel layer (and the associated participant) into the causal chain denoted by the event. Specifically, Jerro's idea is that this new causal layer can be interpreted as either initial in the overall causal structure – deriving a causative reading – or intermediary – deriving an instrumental reading. Jerro leaves a precise syntactic implementation of his proposal for his future research. In this paper, we will show that the causal nature/interpretation of the morpheme adding a new participant to an event is actually possible given a very basic 'inclusion' relation instantiated by the applicative/causative morphology. Franco and Manzini (2017a) dubbed this loose relation "concomitance" with an event. We adhere to their view, assuming that a "concomitant argument" can be

variously interpreted as the causee, the instrument, the beneficiary of a given event, under the right syntactico-pragmatic conditions.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. In Section 2 we provide a theoretical background for our proposal, assuming that the syntactic projections of predicates and functional features/categories is mediated by the lexicon, which organizes these contents in different language-specific manners. In Section 3, we introduce our interpretation of applicatives, arguing that they are not qualitatively different from oblique cases, adpositions or serial verbs: all these items are different lexical realizations of a relational 'inclusion' predicate, whose role is to add non-core participants to the verbal spine. In Section 4 we will sketch a possible syntactic template for causatives, based on the idea that causees may be encoded as oblique (external) arguments put forth in recent work by Bellucci (2017), Manzini (2017), Franco *et al.* (forthcoming). In Section 5 we formulate an analysis for the Appl=Caus syncretism, interpreting such phenomenon as relying on a shared syntactic configuration, based on data from P'orhépecha. The Conclusions follow.

2. *Theoretical Background: syncretism beyond paradigms/categories*

Our working hypothesis, stemming from Manzini and Savoia (2011), is that the map of functional categories should be redrawn, by considering that the functional lexicon is not precompiled in the universal (computational) component of syntax in a cartographic fashion (cf. Cinque and Rizzi 2010). Conversely, we assume that functional categories are drawn from the same conceptual inventory as lexical ones.

The main idea is that functional categories externalize properties and relations that are not qualitatively different from those realized by the substantive lexicon, only more elementary, and therefore typically partitioning the conceptual universe into much vaster classes than the exponents of (traditional) lexical categories (i.e. nouns, verbs, adjectives, cf. Baker 2003). Essentially, we take a view under which the lexicon precedes syntax, and projects it, in keeping with the minimalist postulate of Inclusiveness (Chomsky 1995; Manzini, Savoia 2011, 2018; Manzini 2017). Thus, the question how the items projected from the lexicon, including the "isomorphic" applicative and causative morphemes focus of the present study, interact with one another under syntactic Merge (effectively projecting syntactic structures) becomes crucial.

We take as our starting point the existence of a universal conceptual inventory; at least the categories of the conceptual system recruited by language must therefore be universal. While the underlying conceptual organization is universal, the linguistic lexicon cuts it in language-specific manners, accounting for the largest portion of language variation. Following Manzini and Savoia (2011, 2018), Manzini *et al.* (2015), Manzini and Franco (2016), Franco and Manzini (2017a, 2017b), among others, we take the position,

formalized by Distributed Morphology (DM) (Marantz 1997, 2007), that predicative contents are listed in the lexicon without any sort of categorization (as bare roots). Thus nouns, verbs, adjectives are defined by the merger of some a-categorial predicative content with a nominalizing, verbalizing or adjectivizing functional head. Despite this, we do not follow DM in assuming that functional categories form a separate, potentially universal lexicon, a sort of "Platonic ontology" of natural languages (see Manzini 2017; Manzini and Savoia 2018). On the contrary, we argue that externalization of predicative contents and externalization of functional features/categories pass through the same lexicon.

An empirical issue that crucially interacts with the organization of the lexicon is syncretism. DM basically says that syntax operates on abstract features, roughly corresponding to the descriptive categories of traditional grammar (Calabrese 1998, 2008). Opacization operations, which blur the syntactic (full) feature specification, give rise to syncretisms. Specifically, given a realizational conception of the lexicon of the type assumed by DM, certain abstract clusters of features may be realized by certain phonological strings – with syncretisms simply treated in terms of Underspecification and other morphological readjustments (i.e. Impoverishment, Fusion, Fission, see Noyer 1992; Halle 1997; Harley 2008, inter alia). A stronger position could in principle be assumed – namely that syncretisms correspond to natural classes and operate outside the paradigms of traditional categories (cf. Manzini and Franco 2016).[2]

To the extent that paradigms are the traditional layout of teaching and descriptive grammars, there is no doubt that they are capable of presenting an exhaustive picture of the entire (say) nominal or verbal declension of a language. Nevertheless, the theoretical framework adopted here predicts that paradigms exist nowhere in the competence of speaker-hearers; in other words linguistic data are organized in non-paradigmatic fashion: primitives are too fine grained and the combinatorial possibilities afforded by Universal Grammar too many to achieve a perfect match to descriptive (macro)classes.

In short, we adopt the junction of externalization processes and the syntactic module as our main domain of research and this paper is part of a series of works on and around the domain of (cross-categorial) syncretism (e.g. Manzini, Savoia 2018; Franco 2018, Franco *et al.* forhcoming, *inter*

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[2] The idea that syncretisms correspond to natural classes is certainly not novel. Jakobson (1936) assumes that syncretism can be taken to reveal the fine-grained structure of a set of underlying (binary) featural distinctions. In recent literature this idea is strongly associated with the work of Gereon Müller (cf. e.g. Müller 2007). This is deemed to be too strong a position face to empirical evidence – yet the conclusion is based on assuming/revising the traditional repertory of categories and features (cf. also Stump 2001; Baerman *et al.* 2005; Grimm 2011, among others).

alia), starting from the (radical) assumption that paradigms have no theoretical status, not even as derived constructs. So, we will use the term "syncretism" to refer to homophony/isomorphism outside of paradigms (as, for instance, in Francez and Koontz-*Garboden* 2016, 2017). An alternative label for the kinds of phenomena that we will address in our work could be "polyfunctionality". Actually, we are not interested in individuating functionalist grammaticalization paths (cf. e.g. Heine, Kuteva 2002), but in detecting an inventory of lexical primitives shaping morpho-syntactic derivations – as we will try to outline in what follows, targeting applicatives.

3. On the nature of Applicative heads: relations beyond categories

As we have highlighted in Section 1, applicatives are constructions employed to license an oblique/ non-core participant within a given sentence. Thus, it is fairly intuitive to link applicatives with other devices commonly employed, cross-linguistically, to introduce oblique arguments, namely cases and adpositions.

We adopt the intuition of Fillmore (1968), for whom oblique cases are the inflectional equivalent of adpositions and assume that applicatives are nothing else than adpositions or case morphemes attached (incorporated) to the main verb (cf. also Aikhenvald 2008). Basically, this is also the idea of Baker (1988), who claims that applicatives are the result of the incorporation of a prepositional head into the verb by head movement.[3] According to Baker, applicatives reorganize the argument structure in such a way that the applied object is licensed as the direct object, while the direct object is turned into an oblique. Baker also assumes that applicatives are allowed for transitive verbs and are generally prohibited from appearing with intransitive predicates. This would follow from the fact that intransitives have no Case to assign, so the applied object would happen to be licensed with no case, violating the Case Filter (Chomsky 1981).

Actually, as we have seen in P'orhépecha in (3c) the applied object *tsúntsu* bears the oblique inflection *-ni* (cf. Section 5 for a full description of the *-ni* morpheme in P'orhépecha). Thus the idea of Baker that applied objects are always licensed as direct internal arguments cannot be maintained. Furthermore unaccusatives are free to licence applied objects in P'orhépecha, as illustrated in (6).

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[3] A similar approach to applicatives is the one sketched in Caha (2009). He basically analyzes applicative morphemes on the verb as the spell out of features of an oblique adposition.

(6) P'orhépecha (Capistrán Garza: 122, 124)
    a.   tsakápu   wekórhi-**ku**-s-∅-ti   Xwánu-ni
         stone   fall-APPL-PRF-PRS-3IND   Juan-OBL
         'The stone fell on Juan/near Juan'
    b.   mésa-ni   kweráta-**ku**-sïn-∅-ti   ma xantsíri
         table-OBL   be.missing-APPL-HAB-PRS-3IND   one leg/foot
         'The table is missing a leg'
    c.   ú-**ku**-s-∅-ti   ma   k'waníntikwa María-ni
         do/make-APPL-PRF-PRS-3IND one   shawl   Maria-OBL
         'S/he made Maria a shawl'

In P'orhépecha the applicative morpheme *ku* (and its allomorph *–chi*) introduces participants with respect to whom a given event takes place. Thus, in (6a) the applied argument delimits the space/domain where the unaccusative event ('falling of the stone') is located and *Juan* is not a patient-like participant. The same logic applies to (6b), where an unaccusative predicate expressing incompleteness introduces the (un)possessor ('the table') as an oblique/applied argument. The example in (6c) shows that the applicative morpheme *–ku* also (canonically) introduces beneficiaries: the item Mary, namely the participant for whose benefit the action takes place, is again encoded as an oblique.

Hence, it seems that Baker's original characterization of applicative arguments is not supported by the P'orhépecha data illustrated above. Nevertheless, we agree with Baker in assuming that applicatives are adpositional-like elements attached to the verbal spine. There is plenty of evidence that this is the correct characterization of applicatives on cross-linguistic grounds. For instance, Craig and Hale (1988) provide strong arguments in favour of an adpositional source for applicative markers in Amerindian languages. Moreover, as illustrated in Kimenyi (1980, cf. Peterson 2007; Jerro 2017) many applicative markers in Bantu languages are of manifestly adpositional nature. Consider the Kinyarwanda examples in (7), where the allative morpheme *mu* can appear as a preposition (7a) or as a morpheme cliticized (applied) on the verb (7b).

(7) Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 1980: 89, 94)
    a.   umwaana   y-a-taa-ye   igitabo   **mu** maazi
         child   he-PST-throw-ASP   book   in   water
         'The child has thrown the book into the water'
    b.   umwaana   y-a-taa-ye-**mu**   amaazi   igitabo
         child   he-PST-throw-ASP-APPL   water   book
         'The child has thrown the book into the water'

The same pattern holds in Oceanic languages. For example, Durie (1988) shows that in Mokilese, a Micronesian language spoken on Mwoakilloa, the instrumental morpheme *–ki* can appear as an applicative affix on the verb in (8a), or as an adpositional (stand-alone) item in (8b).

(8) Mokilese (Durie 1988: 8)
    a. ngoah   insengeh-**ki** kijinlikkoano nah   pehno
        1SG   write-APPL letter   his   pen
        'I wrote the letter with his pen'
    b. jerimweim   koalikko   pokihdij   erimweim   siksikko **ki**
        boy   big   hit   boy   little   with
        suhkoahpas
        stick
        'The big boy hit the little boy with a stick'

Furthermore applicative items have the same shape as (serial) light verbs in many different languages (cf. Peterson 2007; Creissels 2009). For instance in Kwaza (Amazonian Isolate), a Sino-Tibetan language the benefactive applicative marker –*wady* is actually the verb for "give" in that language, as shown in (9b).

(9) Kwaza (van der Voort 2004:373)
    a. Kudεrε-'wã   mãmãñẽ-**wady**-da-ki.
        Canderé-OBL   sing-APPL-1SG-DECL
        'I sang for Canderé'
    b. Wεra-'wã   haru'rai   **wady**-**wady**-taʔỹ-ra.
        Vera-OBL   armadillo   give-APPL-1SG-IMP.
        'Give the armadillo (meat) to Vera for me'

In Chickasaw, a Native American language spoken in Southeast Oklahoma, a serial verb form (labelled converbial form in the descriptive literature) of the verb *ishi* 'take', as in (10a), can be attached to the main verb, and the resulting structure is that of an instrumental applicative, as illustrated in (10b).

(10) Chickasaw (Munro 2000)
    a. tali'   **ish**-li-**t**   isso-li-tok
        rock   take-1SG.ACT-CONV   hit-1SG.ACT-PST
        'Taking a rock, I hit him'
    b. tali'   **isht**-isso-li-tok
        rock   APPL-hit-1SG.ACT-PST
        'I hit him with a rock'

Franco (2018), focussing on (light) serial verb meaning GIVE and TAKE commonly used as 'valency-increasing' devices (encoding benefactives, instrumentals, comitatives, goal datives, etc.) in Creole/Pidgin languages, argues that they are relational predicates employed to introduce oblique arguments, just as cases and adpositions. Given the cross-linguistic evidence provided above, nothing prevents a given language to use applicative morpheme for

this purpose: sometimes the different between an adposition and an applicative morpheme or a serial verb and an applicative morpheme is blurred, as highlighted above. We propese that the underlying syntax is nonetheless largely the same.

Oblique cases, adpositions, serial verbs and applicatives are different lexical realization of relational predicates whose role is to add non-core participants to a verbal predicate. Following a series of recent works by Manzini and Savoia (2011), Franco *et al.* (2015), Manzini *et al.* (2015), Manzini and Franco (2016), Franco and Manzini (2017a, 2017b), among others, we lay out an analysis of the syntax and interpretation of obliques (genitive *of*, dative *to*, instrumental *with*, etc.), based on the idea that these items are endowed with an elementary relational content (inclusion, part-whole) interacting with the internal organization of the predicate/event.

We provide an approach to categorial variation in (oblique) argument marking, trying to outline a unified morpho-syntactic component, by which so-called "cases", "adpositions" or "applicatives" do not configure a specialized lexicon of functional features/categories – on the contrary they help us gain some insight into the basic ontology of human languages, of which they pick up some of the most primitive relations (cf. Section 2). These elemental relations are expressed by different lexical means: case, adpositions, light verbs, applicatives.

We start from the encoding of dative items. As for dative *to*, the line of analysis of ditransitive verbs initiated by Kayne (1984) is defined by the hypothesis that predicates like *give* take as their complement a predication whose content is a possession headed by *to*. Following in part Kayne (1984), Pesetsky (1995), Beck and Johnson (2004), Harley (2002), among others we may argue that in (11) a possession relation holds between the dative (*Jack*) and the theme of the ditransitive verb (*the book*). We characterize the content of *to* in terms of the notion of "(zonal) inclusion", as proposed by Belvin and den Dikken (1997) for the verbal item HAVE (cf. also Kim 2012). We associate this content to an elementary part/whole predication and notate it as $\subseteq$, so that (11a) is roughly rendered as in (11b). In (11b) the result of the causative event is that *the book* is (zonally) included by *Jack* (cf. Manzini and Franco 2016).

(11) a. I give the book **to** Jack
     b. [$_{VP}$ give [$_{PredP}$ the book [[$_\subseteq$ **to**] Jack]]]]

In the line of analysis illustrated in (11), the alternation between Dative Shift (as in *I give Jack the book*) and DP-to-DP structures is not encoded derivationally (as in e.g. Larson 1988), but as an alternation between two different base structures. It is possible to assume that the head of the predication postulated by Kayne for English double object constructions is an abstract

version of the verb "have".[4] Franco and Manzini (2017a) argue that this abstract HAVE head assumed for Dative Shift is the covert counterpart of the adposition 'with' (see Levinson 2011). Indeed the *with* preposition can be overtly seen in the English minimal pair in (12):

(12) a.   I presented the picture **to** the museum
      b.   I presented the museum **with** the pictures

Thus, it is possible to assume for (12b) the representation in (13), paralleling the one in (11b). We notate the relation encoded by *with* as ($\supseteq$), assuming that the possessum/inclusee is the complement of the adposition and the possessor/inclusor its external argument. Substantially, we face with a relation which is the "mirror image" of *to* datives where the possessor is the complement of $\subseteq$ and the possessum is its external argument.

(13) [$_{VP}$ present [$_{PredP}$ the museum [[$\supseteq$ **with**] the pictures]]]]

We also propose that oblique case is simply the name given to elementary predicative content when lexicalized as an inflection on a noun. Furthermore, syncretism depends on shared content, namely $\subseteq/\supseteq$ in the instances discussed here.

Specifically, in this paper, we claim that applicatives act as $\subseteq/\supseteq$ relators, providing support for the model of grammatical relations just sketched. We will show that the applicative/causative syncretism is explained in this model.

In the next section, we introduce an analysis of the syntax of causatives, which we will help us to set up our analysis of applicatives. We will show that causatives rely on a process of obliquization of the causee. Given the oblique nature of causees, as well as of instrumentals, beneficiaries, etc. it is predictable that natural languages may choose to project the same lexical elements in the syntactic component to express these kinds of meanings.

4. Causatives and the obliquization of the causee

Recently, Bellucci (2017), Manzini (2017), Franco *et al.* (forthcoming) argue that causees in causative constructions can be analyzed as oblique agents, configuring a syncretism of goals and agents in Italian (and, potentially, elsewhere). Consider the data in (14).

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[4] For Harley (2002) the head of the predication in an English Dative Shift sentence is an abstract preposition P$_{HAVE}$, for Beck and Johnson (2004), the head of the predication is an abstract verb HAVE. Pesetsky (1995) limits himself to an abstract characterization of the predicate head as G.

(14) Italian
  a. Ho fatto pulire la stanza **a/da** Gianni
     'I made Gianni clean the room'
  b. Ho dato un libro **a** Gianni
     'I gave Gianni a book'
  c. Michele è stato ucciso **da** Gianni
     'Michele has been killed by Gianni'

The example in (14a) shows that causees in Italian can be introduced indifferently by the adposition *a* or by the adposition *da* (with a set of possible restrictions not taken into consideration here, cf. Folli and Harley 2007). The preposition *a* is the common device to introduce goals/recipients, as shown in (14b). In (14c), we may see that the adposition *da* is linked to the expression of agents in passives.

It is possible to account for the data in (14) assuming that in causative constructions, *a* phrases can be construed as agents (quirky subjects), configuring a common lexicalization (a syncretism in our view, cf. Section 2) of goals and agents (see Franco *et al.* forthcoming).

Baker (1988) argues that causative constructions of the Italian type, as sketched in (14a) are derived by movement of the embedded VP to a position contiguous to the matrix causative verb, from where incorporation of V to the causative predicate can occur. Thus, we are faced with a "restructuring" (Rizzi 1978) of the arguments of the embedded sentence: according to Baker, a complex predicate like *make-clean* in (14a), implying the presence of a causer, a causee and a theme/patient aligns them in the same fashion as ditransitive predicates, namely nominative-accusative-dative. However, ditransitive consistently interpret the dative as a goal. By contrast, goal interpretation does not characterize the causee (see Section 5, where we show, for instance, that the causee-instrumental syncretism spreads far beyond the realm of applicative, cf. also Torrego 2010). Crucially, a problematic aspect of Baker (1988) is that it leaves us without an account for the *da* encoded causee (the so called *faire-par* construction in the literature, starting from Kayne 1975), where an embedded active verb is coupled with an external argument expressed through what appears to be a *by*-phrase (Baker 1988: 487, fn. 38).[5]

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[5] Recently, Belletti (2017) reforms the VP-movement analysis of causatives so as to bring out the parallel with the smuggling analysis of passive. Thus the *a/da* phrase in (14) is constructed as the *by* phrase in Collins (2005). The external argument of transitive (or unergative) predicates embedded under causative verbs, for instance in (14), occupies the Spec, vP/Voice while being case-marked by the *a/da* dummy attached to the sentential spine. We follow Manzini (2017) in rejection the smuggling analysis of passive, as involving again movement of the VP and – generally – the "dummy" nature of adpositional heads.

To overcome these difficulties, here we propose that external arguments in complements of causative verbs simply undergo a process of "obliquization" (Bellucci 2017), as schematized in (15) – where the external argument is in its expected Spec, vP position and the vP is itself *in situ* – for sentence (14a).

(15) [$_{VP}$ fatto … [$_{vP}$v [$_{VP}$ pulire la stanza] [$\subseteq$ **a/da** Maria]]]]

What we must explain is why the complement structure in (15), with the oblique alignment of the external arguments, could not be embedded under any other matrix predicate than the causative verb (or a restricted set of causative/direct perception predicates, cf. also Moreno and Franco 2018). We follow Franco *et al.* (forhcoming) in claiming that a matrix predicate with pure CAUSE content selects directly a vP – or alternatively an IP lacking agreement properties and an EPP position. In either instance, an embedded nominative subject is blocked, forcing obliquization, or existential closure of the external argument variable, as in (16) (see also Manzini 2018 on passives).

(16) Italian

Ho	fatto	pulire	la	stanza
I.have	made	clean	the	room

'I had the room cleaned'

It is possible to wonder why, of all verbal predicates, it is causative ones that select this kind of embedding. Franco *et al.* (forhcoming) state that "causative constructions allow a hyper-complex predicate to be formed, expressing the direct causation (or perception) of a caused event. This must be at the root of their selection properties (as in other treatments it underlies VP-movement or V incorporation or complex predicate formation)." In some languages, as in Italian causativization allows movement of the embedded object to matrix subject position, as in (17). Crucially, the oblique introducing the embedded external argument is indifferently *a* or *da*.

(17) Italian

La stanza	è	stata	fatta	pulire	(a/da	Maria)
the room	is	been	made	clean	to/by	Maria

'One has had the room cleaned (by Mary)'

On the basis of the analysis of causative structures sketched above, we subscribe with Franco *et al.* (forhcoming) analysis of the free alternation of *a* and *da* in (14), or (17), involving the use of the *a* phrase as an oblique agent/causer. This configures an example of shared lexicalization (i.e. syncretism) of goals and agents, which may be understood once we assume that they have the same general $\subseteq$ relator content. With this background in mind we

are ready to address the causative-applicative syncretism, trying to account for it in syntactic terms.

5. *The causative-applicative syncretism: an analysis*

We interpret the causative-applicative syncretism, assuming that the syncretic morpheme is the applicative counterpart of an adpositional/case relator ⊆, which as we have seen for Italian in Section 4 is able to intruduce goals and causee/agents among other roles (e.g. allative, locative, etc.) with the same lexical means. Consider the data from P'orhépecha in (3) repeated in (18) for ease of reference.

(18) P'orhépecha (Capistrán Garza 2015: 145ff)   =(3)
     a. Xwánu   xwá-s-∅-ti   tsíri
        Juan   bring-PRF-PRS-3IND   corn
        'Juan brought some corn'
     b. María   xwá-**ra**-s-∅-ti   Xwánu-ni   tsíri
        Maria   bring-CAUS-PRF-PRS-3IND Juan-OBL   corn
        'Maria made Juan bring some corn'
     c. xí   xwá-**ra**-s-∅-ka-ni   tsúntsu-n its
        1sg   bring-APPL-PRF-PRS-1/2IND-1SG.SBJ pot-OBL water
        'I brought some water with a pot'

The fact that causees and instrumentals (both encoded via the verbal affix –*ra*) in P'orhépecha are oblique participants is ensured by the fact that they usually bear the oblique -*ni* inflection. The direct arguments in (18) do not bear such inflection: they are left unmarked. It is important to notice that P'orhépecha is a language that has Differential Object Marking (DOM), subject to animacy, specificity, definiteness parameters. This explains why direct internal arguments can occur with the oblique -*ni* inflection. In the examples in (19) we illustrated the contrast between the presence or absence of the morpheme -*ni* with internal theme/patient arguments. In (19a-c) the morpheme -*ni* on the internal argument yields a definite reading, while the presence of this morpheme on inanimate indefinite internal arguments yields a specific interpretation, as in (19d).

(19) P'orhépecha (Capistrán Garza 2015: 31-32)
     a. Chalío   pyá-s-∅-ti   ganádu/ganádu-ni
        Chalío   buy-PRF-PRS-3IND   cattle/cattle-OBL
        'Chalío bought some cattle/the cattle'
     b. xuchá   arhá-s-∅-ka   kurúcha/kurúcha-ni
        1PL   ingest-PRF-PRS-1/2IND   fish/fish-OBL
        'We ate fish/the fish'
     c. Páblu   eshé-s-∅-ti   yurhíri/yurhíri-ni
        Pablo   see-PRF-PRS-3IND   blood/blood-OBL
        'Pablo saw blood/the blood'

    d. xí   pyá-a-ka   ma   k'waníntikwa/k'waníntikwa-ni
        1SG   buy-FUT-1/2IND one   shawl/shawl-OBL
        'I will buy a shawl (non-specific/a particular one)'

P'orhépecha does not have any distinction between DOM and dative marking: goal recipients are marked with the same *–ni* inflection, as illustrated in (20).

(20) P'orhépecha (Capistrán Garza 2015: 68)
    xí   íntsku-s-∅-ka   itsî(-ni)   maríkwa-ni
    1SG   give-PRF-PRS-1/2IND water-OBL   girl-OBL
    'I gave the girl some water/some of the water'

In ditransitive constructions, the goal argument must be case marked, whereas the theme/patients has the same DOM-like restrictions as the internal argument of mono-transitive structures. Thus, goals in double object constructions are marked by the *–ni* morpheme, even if they are inanimate/indefinite, as illustrated in (21), where the theme is unmarked and the goal necessarily bears the item *-ni*.

(21) P'orhépecha (Capistrán Garza 2015: 69)
    a. inté acháati arhí-s-∅-ti   ampé   ma   anátapu*(-ni)
       that man say-PRF-PRS-3IND (some)thing one   tree-OBL
       'That man said something to a tree'
    b. p'ikú-∅   míkwa   ma   tsúntsu*(-ni)
       take.off/pull.off-IMP lid   one   pot-OBL
       'Take the lid off a pot'

It is relevant to consider that, cross-linguistically, "oblique" dative adposition/case is the preferred externalization for DOM objects (Bossong 1985; Aissen 2003; Malchukov 2008; Manzini and Franco 2016; Manzini *et al.* forhcoming, among others). P'orhépecha is not an exception. We provide just one other example from Sardinian in (22a).

(22) Orroli (Sardinia, Manzini and Savoia 2005):
    a. appu   tserriau (a)   un   ommini/ su   ɣani
       I.have called   DOM   a   man   the   dog
       'I have called a man/the dog'
    b. [$_{vP}$ *v* [$_{VP}$ tserriau [$_{PP⊆}$ **a** [$_{DP}$ un ommini]]]]

According to Manzini and Franco (2016) the syncretism of dative and DOM, is based on the fact that the same lexical content ⊆ (cf. Section 3) is instantiated in both contexts, as seen in structure (22b) for sentence (22a). As illustrated in (22b), object DPs highly ranked in animacy/definiteness/

specificity require for their embedding the same elementary oblique-introducing predicate ⊆ required for goals/recipients (as well as for causees, as we have shown in Section 4). Indeed, we have seen that in (11b) above the arguments of ⊆ are the two DPs, respectively *Jack* and *the book*, the former being in possession of the latter as the result of the event of giving. In (22b), the two arguments of ⊆ (instantiated in Sardinian by the goal adposition *a*) is again its object DP (*un ommini* 'the man') – however it is not clear what its external argument might be.

Manzini and Franco (2016) follow the standard idea of Hale and Keyser (1993), Chomsky (1995), who assume that transitive predicates result from the incorporation of an elementary state/event into a transitivizing *v* layer. Within such a framework, (22b) can be rendered as 'I cause the man to have a call', where 'him' is the possessor of the 'call' sub-event. Therefore the ⊆ relation holds of a DP (*the man*) and of an elementary event 'the call' (see Torrego 2010; Pineda 2014 for different implementations of the same basic idea).

We can assume that the same state of affairs holds in P'orhépecha. For example we can give the representation in (23) for (19c).

(23) [$_{vP}$ *v* [$_{VP}$ eshé [$_{KP⊆}$ [$_{DP}$ yurhíri] $_{K⊆}$ ni]]]

We propose that, given the theoretical approach just sketched above, it is possible to assume that all the NPs bearing the inflection –*ni* in P'orhépecha are oblique participants, requiring a relational predicate to be inserted into the verbal spine.[6] The arguments of adpositions, as in (24a), and applicatives, as in (24b,c), require the same –*ni* inflection.[7]

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[6] An unnoticed (but crucial) fact in providing evidence for a "relational" content of such morpheme, is that the same *ni* is employed to express the lexical item "chest"/"cavity", namely it conveys a (relational, part-whole) body-part meaning. This morpheme may also denote (when *applied* as a verbal affix) a 'part of' the argument encoded in subject function, as in (ia, b), or "an area of" the place where this argument is or becomes located, as in (ic).

(i)   P'orhépecha (Capistrán Garza 2015: 207ff)
    a.   María   p'á-**ni**-s-∅-ti
              Maria   touch-cavity-prf-prs-3ind
              'Maria touched her breast'
    b.   p'orhóta   xawá-**ni**-s-∅-ti
              hole   deepen-cavity-prf-prs-3ind
              'The hole is deep'
    c.   xí   wekó-**ni**-s-∅-ka   kawáru
              1sg   fall-cavity-prf-prs-1/2ind   ditch
              'I fell into the ditch'

[7] As shown in Svenonius (2002, 2007) C-selection, as the determination of syntactic conditions on a dependent, hold only between a head and its complement. For example, a verb usually may determine idiosyncratic case on its internal arguments, but not its external arguments. Cross linguistically, adpositions quite commonly determine the case of a complement. Following Svenonius, this can only be demonstrated using language-specific

(24) P'orhépecha (Capistrán Garza 2015: 106ff)
    a.   María-eri   kúchi   wántiku-na-s-∅-ti   Chalío-ni **ximpó**
        Maria-GEN   pig   kill-PASS-PRF-PRS-3IND Chalío-OBL postp
        'Maria's pig was killed by Chalío'
    b.   imá   acháati   wántiku-p'i-**ra**-s-∅-ti   pistóla-ni
        that   man   kill-INDF.OBJ-APPL-PRF-PRS-3IND   gun-OBL
        'That man killed (people) with a gun'
    c.   María-ni   xanó-appl-s-∅-ti   ma   karákata
        Maria-OBL   arrive-APPL-PRF-PRS-3IND   one   writings
        'A letter arrived for Maria'

Following Franco and Manzini (2017a) we argue that adpositional/applicative items (in languages with or without inflectional obliques), provide restrictions of the basic contents such as (⊆) / (⊇), as illustrated in (25). This is evident in the example in (24a), where at least two structural layers characterize the demoted agent *Chalío-ni ximpó* 'by Chalío'. The deepest layer is the oblique –*ni* case inflection (a (⊆) relator in present terms), simply introducing the additional argument/participant to the spine of the event. We can take the specific agentive relation to be introduced by the Postpostional layer, which can be taken to be an Axial Part (AxPart) shifted to a non-locative domain (Svenonius 2006), or a category which is the non-locative counterpart of AxPart. The same reasoning is possible for instrumental (24b) and benefactive (24c) applicatives in P'orhépecha.

(25) … [_PP_ [_KP(⊇)_ [_N_ Chalío] -ni] ximpó]

Nothing prevents even further layers from specifying the reference of an oblique argument. For instance, in P'orhépecha the applicative meaning can be 'doubled' by adpositional/case inflection values. Indeed, instrumentals can be introduced as obliques via the postposition *ximpó* (26a),[8] through the instrumental case –*mpu* (26b), by the applicative/causative –*ra* and (allomorphs), as already shown in (3b,c)=(18b,c) or by a combination of the applicative morpheme and case/adpositional devices, as in (26c, 26d).

(26) P'orhépecha (Capistran Garza 2015: 114ff)
    a.   xí   ichárhuta-ni **ximpó**   xwá-a-ka   p'atsímu
        1SG   canoe-OBL   POSP   bring-FUT-I/2IND reed
        'I will bring reed in the canoe/by canoe'

diagnostics of c-selection We can assume that in P'orhépecha adpositions (and applicatives) consistently mark their complements as obliques.

   [8] Note that the adposition recruited to introduce instrumentals in P'orhépecha is the same introducing demoted agents (cf. (23)). This use of the same lexical item to intruduce agents and instruments is quite common cross-linguistically (cf. Palancar 2002).

b. kachúku-s-∅-ti k'   wirípita   kuchíyu-**mpu**
    cut-PRF-PRS-3IND   meat   knife-INST
    'S/he cut some meat with the knife'

c. karákata-icha   kará-**ra**-na-sïn-∅-ti   lápisï-icha-ni   **ximpó**
    writings-PL   write-INST-PASS-HAB-PRS-3INDpencil-pl-obl   posp
    'Letters are written with pencils'

d. tsïntsîkata-icha ú-**ra**-na-s-∅-ti   kuchára-**mpu**
    fence-PL   make/do-INST-PASS-PRF-PRS-3IND   trowel-INST
    'The fences were built with a trowel'

The availability of different means/layers to encode obliques is very common crosslinguistically. Just consider the Italian pair in (27), where the same instrumental value can be expressed either by the adposition *con* or by the lexical string *per mezzo di* ('by means of').

(27) Italian
   a. Ha avvertito la fidanzata **con** un telegramma
      'S/He alerted the fiancée with a telegram'
   b. Ha avvertito la fidanzata **per mezzo di** un telegramma
      'S/He alerted the fiancée with a knife' (lit. '…for mean of a knife')

Now that we have provided evidence for the oblique status of the 'object' of applicative morphemes (at least in P'orhépecha), we can illustrate our analysis of the applicative=causative syncretism.

We follow Pylkkänen (2002, 2008) in assuming that there are two basic kinds of applicative arguments: a High Applicative which is introduced by a head attaching outside of VP and relating an individual to an event and a Low Applicative argument which is introduced by a head attaching below VP and relating two entities involved in a transfer of possession (i.e. "in a giving environment"). As for interpretation, in the Applicative literature (Pylkkänen 2008: 13), instrumentals and benefactives are assumed to be encoded as High Appls, as opposed to Low Appls like goal datives: High Appl heads appear in an intermediate position between VP and v and express a relation between the oblique argument in their Spec and the VP event. We follow the Appl literature in assuming that instruments/benefactives correspond to High Appls, generated in an intermediate layer between VP and vP. Note that in P'orhépecha instrumental and benefactive applicatives represent the layer most closely associated to the verbal root: no other suffixes can be inserted between them.[9]

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[9] When benefactives, instrumental and causative meanings are lexicalized by different morphemes in natural languages, their ordering in the verbal skeleton is quite free, as shown by Buell and Sy (2006) for Wolof, undermining a cartographic/nanosyntactic approach to

Based on the discussion of instrumentals (and benefactive) in Franco and Manzini (2017a), we propose that these relations can be reduced to an inclusion predicate notated as (⊇) (cf. the representation in (13)). This yields a simplified structure of the type in (28), where the instrumental Appl(⊇) takes as its two arguments the oblique DP instrument and the VP event.[10]

(28) a. xí x wá-**ra**-s-∅-ka-ni   tsúntsu-ni   its
         ısɢ bring-ᴀᴘᴘʟ-ᴘʀꜰ-ᴘʀs-1/2ıɴᴅ-ısɢ.sʙᴊ   pot-ᴏʙʟ   water
         'I brought some water with a pot'
     b.   vP
                          ╱   ╲
                       DP   vP
                       xí   ╱   ╲
                             v   VP
                            ...   ╱   ╲
                                  VP   ApplP(⊇)
                               xwá its   ╱   ╲
                                     Appl(⊇)   DP
                                       ra   *tsúntsu-ni*

In (28) the (⊇) relation holds between 'a pot' and the event of 'water bringing', saying that such event includes 'a pot'. Following Alexiadou *et al.* (2015), Schäfer (2012), Franco and Manzini (2017a), we assume that instruments are naturally associated with transitive events. Nothing prevents however applicative arguments to be introduced by unaccusative predicates (e.g. as causers, locatives, etc.), as we have seen in (6a,b), but instruments are exclusively defined in the presence of an external argument introduced by vP (cf. also Bruening 2012).

Instruments are inanimate objects of APPlP/PP/KP(⊇) included in a caused event. The general interpretation of the structure in (28) is that the object of Appl(⊇) is a "concomitant" participant of the VP result state (cf. the discussion in Section 1). It basically says something like: "I caused brought

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Appl=Caus. Note however that they are still the morphemes more tightly attached to the root and that no TMA markers can be inserted in between.

[10] An anonymous reviewer wanted us to adhere to the structure proposed in Franco and Manzini (2017), in which the instrumental DP is the sister of the relator (⊇) and the VP event is its specifier. We have fulfilled her/his request. Nevertheless, we just point out that, standardly, applied instrumental participants are taken to be generated in Spec,ApplP (cf. Pylkkänen 2008) right above V. Thus, we can imagine an alternative structure in which the (⊇) relation takes the VP event as its complement and the instrumental participant as its specifier. The same holds for causees, as illustrated in the structure in (31b). We leave this issue for future research of the topic.

water and this result includes a pot". Namely, the VP result event is in turn embedded under a causation predicate; in this precise context, it is interpreted with the inanimate oblique playing the role of 'instrument of' the external argument in Spec,vP (the *initiator* of the event, cf. Marantz 1984) (Franco and Manzini 2017a).

Given the characterization of instruments sketched above, it is possible to see how the same syntax as in (28) is able to introduce the causee of causative constructions. We have seen that High Appls are responsible for adding an extra participant to an event and that the P'orhépecha morphemes –*ra* (with the allomorphs -*ta*, and –*tara*) increase the valence of a predicate, given that they introduce an argument which is construed as bearing a causee or instrument role.

As we have show in Section 4, causatives in Italian are expressed by a matrix predicate with pure CAUSE content which selects directly a vP lacking a licensing slot for the expression of the causee as a direct argument (or an IP lacking agreement properties and an EPP position): Such impoverished environments crucially lack a structural case position for the external argument.[11] Applicatives are precisely syntactic devices made available by Universal Grammar for the introduction of additional non-core arguments in the verbal spine, when structural positions are unavailable.

The distinction between causees and instrumentals may be blurred also in language introducing causees and instruments by means of adpositional devices. Just to give an example, in Hindi the causee usually surfaces as an instrumental (Ramchand 2011). Moreover consider the following Italian data.

(29) a.   Il medico ha fatto guarire il paziente con le/*alle erbe
         'The doctor made the patient recover with the herbs'
    ->   le erbe hanno guarito il paziente
         'The herbs cured the patient'
    b.   Il medico ha fatto guarire il paziente allo/dallo/#con lo specializzando
         'The doctor made the trainee cure the patient'
    ->   'lo specializzando ha guarito il paziente'
         'the trainee cure the patient'
    a'. Il principe ha fatto eliminare il rivale col veleno
         'The prince has the rival eminated by the poison'
    ->   'il veleno ha eliminato il rivale'
         'The poison eliminated the rival'
    b'. Il principe ha fatto eliminare il rivale al/dal/#con lo scagnozzo
         'The prince has the rival eliminated by the henchman'
    ->   'lo scagnozzo ha eliminato il rivale'
         'the henchman eliminated the rival'

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[11] Following Bellucci (2017), we can assume that oblique causees are formally identical to the oblique subjects found in the ergative alignment.

In (29a, a'-b, b') the causative predicates can be assumed to have "inanimates causees" introduced by the (instrumental) adposition *con*. The fact that these participants can be interpreted as causees in such contexts is ensured by the fact that they can surface as the subjects of the base predicates from which causatives are derived, as illustrated in the examples in (28). Animate causees in the same environments are standardly externalized by the adposition *a/da* (cf. Section 4). If they are introduced by the *con* adposition the only possible reading is comitative, either subject or object oriented (cf. Yamada 2010). Thus, it is possible to assume that the instrumental marked inanimate causees in (29) are nothing else than Differentially Marked Causees, based on an animacy scale. In any event, the link between causees and instruments in ensured by the Italian data provided above.

Nothing prevents multiple adjuncts in minimalist syntax (Chomsky 1995), and both inanimate (instrument) and animate (canonical) causees can be present in the same sentence. Following Franco and Manzini (2017: 31) on the ergative instrumental syncretism, we assume that both the causee and the instrument are adjoined at the VP level. Consider the example in (30a) and the possible representation in (30b).[12] The interpretation is that of a complex causal chain of the type: "the prince cause the henchmen to cause the poison to be involved in the killing of a rival".

(30) a.   Il principe ha fatto eliminare il rivale col veleno al/dal/#con lo scagnozzo
   'The prince had the rival eliminated with poison by the henchman'
     b.

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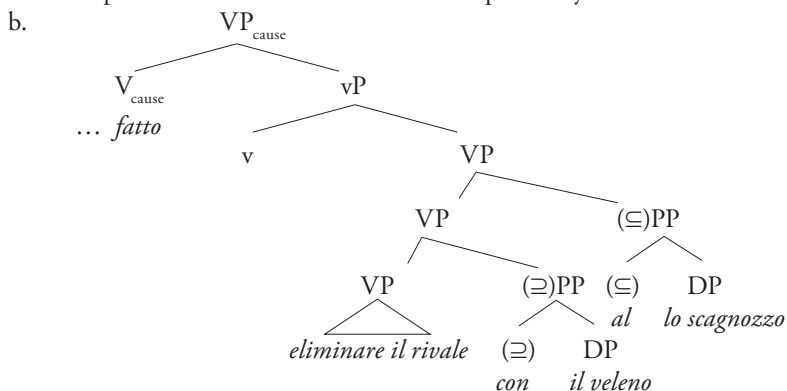
[12] We abstract away from the issue of the orientation of the ⊆ vs. ⊇ relator, possibly instantiated by different lexical means in a given language (e.g. *a* vs. *con* in Italian). For a detailed account, the interested reader may refer to Franco and Manzini (2017a), who assume that (inanimate) instruments are introduced by a ⊆ relator. Here, following Manzini *et al.* (forhcoming), we take that a ⊆ relator introduce the (animate) causee.

Hence, it is easy to see how it is possible to have applicative morphemes recruited to introduce causees and instrumental participants (more generally arguments linked to the high applicative projection). (High) applicatives are elementary relators linking an oblique argument to the event depicted by a VP. As we have seen in Section 3, they are one of the possible devices made available by Universal Grammar to increase the valence of a predicate. Crucially, as already documented in Cole (1983) the syncretism between instrumentals and causees is widespread beyond the realm of applicatives: instrumental adpositions and instrumental cases are often employed as the unmarked way to encode the causee in many different languages (e.g. Hungarian, Kannada, Hindi etc., just to mention some non-exotic examples).

Thus, for what specifically concerns the applicative-causative syncretism, we may simply assume that causees are inserted in the syntax as 'applied arguments' (just as instrumentals, beneficiaries or other roles linked to the High Appl projection). A possible representation is given in (31) for the P'orhépecha example in (18b). We assume that the structure is practically the same as in (28).

(31) a. María   xwá-ra-s-∅-ti   Xwánu-ni   tsíri
         Maria   bring-CAUS-PRF-PRS-3IND   Juan-OBL   corn
         'Maria made Juan bring some corn'

   b.
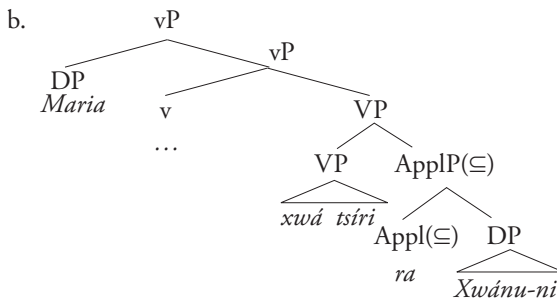
Following Franco and Manzini (2017a), the (⊇) relation between the applied (causee) argument and the VP event in (31) yields inclusion in an event/concomitance with it. The causee applicative (⊇) is in turn embedded under a causation predicate (vP), just like the instrumental applicative. The causative reading is then inferred based on what the structure actually says, namely – for (31): "Maria caused the inclusion of Xwánu (or Xwánu to be included) in the event of 'bringing corn". Thus, the applicative data illustrated in this paper strongly support Franco and Manzini (2017a)'s idea that ⊆ / ⊇ are linked to vP or VP predicates as generic 'oblique' participants. Specifically,

we can assume that causees and instruments are distinguished depending on a rather elementary ontology including the ranking of the event oblique participants in the animacy hierarchy (here, evidently human vs. non-human, cf. also Peterson 2007).

6. Conclusion

This paper addressed the applicative-causative syncretism, which is an overlooked pattern of morpheme polysemy attested in many different natural languages. We interpreted the causative-applicative syncretism as based on a shared syntactic configuration. Specifically, we have argued that the syncretic morpheme under investigation is the applicative counterpart of an adpositional/case elementary relator (Manzini and Franco 2016; Franco and Manzini 2017a), attaching instrumental or benefactive obliques (High Applicatives, cf. Pylkkänen 2002, 2008) to the verbal spine. We follow Bellucci (2017), among others, in assuming that causees can be introduced as obliques, potentially linked to the same structural position as High Appls. The causative reading of the sentence is interpretively driven, while the syntax is basically the same as for the instrumental (cf. Franco and Manzini 2017a). This explains the possibility of encoding causatives and applicatives with the same lexical material.

Acknowledgements

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