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CAUSATIVES IN BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE

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0. INTRODUCTION

An interesting phenomenon in Romance syntax has been that of causative constructions. These structures have long been studied, particularly in French and Italian, and generalizations for Romance have been made based on such observations. However, previous analyses which characterize Romance languages in general are problematic, given that Brazilian Portuguese (BP) causatives display different characteristics. The most noteworthy variations found in BP include a restricted word order of SVO (and not VOS) in the embedded clause, the inability of clitics corresponding to the embedded object to climb to the matrix clause, complement clauses which contain inflected infinitives, and the ability of the embedded subject to passivize in subordinate clauses to both perception and causative verbs. This paper will examine BP causatives and offer a contrasting analysis between BP and other Romance languages, in particular, Spanish and French. I will claim that while causatives in Spanish and French are syntactically distinct from other complement clauses, causatives in BP are merely semantic and are syntactically not different from other biclausal structures.

1. REVIEW OF ROMANCE CAUSATIVES

Causatives have traditionally been categorized not only because of their semantic content (although obvious in some contexts), but mainly due to unique syntactic characteristics that render them atypical as compared to other biclausal structures. As a result, *causatives* in Romance include causative verbs like *faire* (French to make) and *dejar* (Spanish to let) as well as perception verbs such as *ver* (Portuguese to see) and *ouvir* (Portuguese to hear).

As has been noted in previous studies on French, there are several properties of the embedded clause to causative and perception verbs that distinguish them from other structures. In particular, most causative and perception verbs allow for both SVO and VOS word order, an option not otherwise freely available in most complement clauses. With SVO word order, the embedded subject can be realized with either dative or accusative Case (as evidenced by clitics). Clitics corresponding to the embedded subject obligatorily

climb to the matrix clause while clitics corresponding to the embedded object surface either in the main or the subordinate clause. Finally, in Spanish and French, passivization of the embedded subject, which carries objective Case, is ungrammatical with causative verbs (but permitted with perception verbs) while passivization of other objectively marked DPs renders grammatical.

Contrary to French and Spanish, BP causatives do not exhibit the above mentioned attributes. French has a restricted word order of VOS in the complement clause to *faire*.¹ Spanish causatives allow for both VOS and SVO word orders. However, BP is in direct contrast to French in that only SVO order is found in the complement clause. A summary of this paradigm is seen below:

- (1) a. J'ai fait manger la pomme à Jean.
I made eat the apple Jean
- b. *J'ai fait Jean manger la pomme.
I made Jean eat the apple
- (2) a. Yo hice comer el flan a Isa.
I made eat the flan Isa
- b. Yo hice a Isa comer el flan.
I made Isa eat the flan
- (3) a. Eu fiz Carlos tomar o sorvete.
I made Carlos eat the ice cream
- b. *Eu fiz tomar o sorvete Carlos.
I made eat the ice cream Carlos

Previous analyses which have primarily focused on French causatives and have assumed that the default underlying word order in the subordinate clause is SVO. VOS word order (as seen in ((1a), (2a), and (3a)) is accounted for by a series of movements in the embedded clause. In Maier (1996), I claim that the underlying word order for Spanish and French causatives is VOS and further assert that SVO is derived by movement of the embedded subject due to a strong focus feature. However, this appears to only be the case for Spanish and French where VOS is a permitted option. Such an analysis cannot account for BP given that the only possible word order is SVO.²

¹ This is not the case with *laisser* (to let) which allows for both VOS and SVO. For example:

- (i) a. J'ai laissé manger la pomme à Jean.
b. J'ai laissé Jean manger la pomme.

This same pattern is observed in Spanish with *dejar* (to let). For further discussion, see Kayne (1975), Aissen (1979), Quicoli (1980), among others.

² This does not appear to be the case for unaccusatives. For further discussion, see Silva (forthcoming).

In addition to verbs such as *faire* and *hacer*, which are semantically causative, prior studies have illustrated that complements to perception verbs display similar syntactic patterns. Most characteristic is that of word order, as seen in (4)-(6):

- (4) a. Elle a vu Jean lire le livre.
She saw Jean read the book
- b. Elle a vu lire le livre à Jean.
- (5) a. Vi a Pedro comer el flan.
I saw Pedro eat the flan
- b. Vi comer el flan a Pedro.
- (6) a. Eu vi as meninas tomar o sorvete.
I saw the girls eat the ice cream
- b. ?*Eu vi tomar o sorvete as meninas.³

As demonstrated by the above examples, BP again does not pattern with French and Spanish in that VOS in complement clauses to perception verbs results questionable to ungrammatical. Assuming with previous analyses that VOS is the underlying word order for causatives, the lack of this available word order in BP complements to perception verbs as well as causative verbs is somewhat puzzling.

Another attribute unique to Romance causative constructions regards the placement of clitics corresponding to embedded objects. The ability of the clitic to climb to the matrix clause has been claimed to be correlated to the word order of the subordinate clause.⁴ More specifically, with SVO word order, the clitic corresponding to the embedded object must obligatorily appear in the complement clause while with VOS, the clitic climbs to the matrix clause. This is seen in (7) and (8):

- (7) a. Marta hice estudiar la lección a Pablo.
Marta made study the lesson Pablo
- b. Marta **la** hice estudiar a Pablo.
Marta it (acc) made study Pablo
- c. *Marta hice estudiar**la** a Pablo.

³ The pragmatic oddity, and in some cases complete ungrammaticality, is claimed by some of my informants to be due to the lack of the inflected infinitive in the complement clause. The inflected infinitive will be examined in further detail in section 4.1.

⁴ See Kayne (1975) and Quicoli (1976) for two of the initial studies to observe this fact.

- (8) a. Marta **hice** a Pablo estudiar la lección.
 b. Marta **hice** a Pablo estudiar**la**.
 c. *Marta **la** **hice** estudiar a Pablo.

Given the facts presented thus far, we would expect that clitics corresponding to embedded objects in BP never to appear in the matrix clause.⁵ Indeed, this appears to be the case:

- (9) a. Nós fizemos as meninas tomá-**lo**.
 We made the girls eat it (acc)
 b. *Nós **o** fizemos as meninas tomar.

Since VOS is not a viable option for BP causatives, the ungrammaticality of (9b) is not too surprising.

One final syntactic trait of causatives pertains to the inability of the embedded subject to passivize in complements to causative verbs, while such passivization is permitted with perception verbs.

- (10) a. *Jean sera laissé lire ces livres-la.
 Jean will be made to read those books there
 b. Pierre a été entendu réciter les poèmes (par les enfants)
 Pierre was heard recite the poems (by the children)
- (11) a. *Los niños fueron hechos estudiar por la maestra.
 The children were made to study by the teacher
 b. ?María fue visto beber el café (por Juanita).
 María was seen drink the coffee (by Juanita)
- (12) a. ?As meninas foram feitas escrever uma carta.⁶
 The girls were made to write a letter

⁵ It should be noted that third person clitics are not used frequently in spoken BP, however, they are observed in written examples. All of my informants, although they prefer to not use the clitics when speaking, could provide judgements on such sentences.

⁶ For some speakers, passivization with *deixar* is unacceptable while for my informants, it is marginally acceptable. Those who do not accept (12a) prefer the following structure:

(i) As meninas foram levadas a escrever uma carta.

- b. Os alunos foram vistos escrever uma carta.⁷
The students were seen write a letter

The ability of the embedded subject to passivize with perception verbs in Spanish and French ((10b) and (11b)) is rather perplexing given the ungrammaticality which results with causative verbs. Even more intriguing is the fact that the embedded subject in BP can passivize with perception verbs (and marginally with causative verbs). Guasti (1993) suggests that passivization with perception verbs is restricted to ‘ECM’ type constructions (SVO word order). This is evidenced, as claimed by Guasti, by the inability of the clitic corresponding to the embedded object to climb.

- (13) a. Pedro fue visto robarlo por Juan.
Pedro was seen steal it by Juan
- b. *Pedro lo fue visto robar por Juan.
Pedro it was seen steal by Juan
(*op. cit.*:66)

As noted from the above examples, causatives in BP are distinct in that the syntactic properties of the complement clause to both causative and perception verbs once again do not display the same syntactic properties as seen in Spanish and French. Such evidence argues for a different analysis for BP causatives, one that is not parallel with French and Spanish. However, before discussing the proposal for BP causatives, I will first review my analysis for causatives in Spanish and French.

2. CAUSATIVE MARKER PHRASE

Exactly what is it that renders causatives syntactically distinct in Romance? Returning to Spanish and French, causatives are differentiated from other complement clauses because of word order variation, optional clitic placement, Case relation facts, and lack of passivization. This would appear to suggest that causative complement clauses have a different phrase structure. In languages such as Chichewa, previous studies have claimed that causatives, which are morphologically marked, do in fact have a different phrase structure than other clauses. For example, one way to form causation is by merging a causative morpheme with the verb.

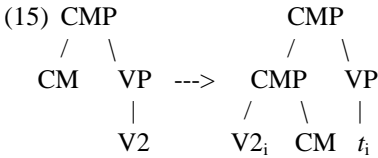
- (14) Mtsikana anau-gw-ets-a mtsuko.
girl AGR-fall-made-ASP water pot
The girl made the water pot fall
(Baker 1988:148)

⁷ For my informants, the following sentence is questionable:

(i) ?Os alunos foram vistos escrevendo uma carta.
The use of the gerund rather than the bare infinitive renders this sentence more acceptable.

In previous work, I have proposed that the complement clauses in both analytical and morphological causatives are analogous in that both contain a functional category where causation is syntactically checked.⁸ This functional category is what I refer to as the Causative Marker Phrase (CMP). The CMP is semantically void in that it is merely a functional projection which hosts the formal morpheme CM, and is not needed for the semantic interpretation of causation. Languages such as Chichewa, which has two different structures for causatives, allow for the merging of either the embedded verb with the causative morpheme or the merging of the causative morpheme with the matrix verb. As pointed out by Baker (1988), *its/ets* is an affix and morphologically must attach to another verb. However, this affix can surface in two distinct positions.

My proposal for Spanish and French is that the causative affix found in morphological causatives is phonologically empty. Most analyses claim that there is an obligatory merger of either the embedded verb or some part of the complement clause with the causative verb.⁹ Instead, I suggest that there is a merger between the embedded verb and the causative marker in the functional category in the complement clause, the CMP.¹⁰ This will give the structure found in (15).



To summarize the argument thus far, in Spanish and French causatives, the embedded verb merges with the causative marker in the CMP of the embedded clause. The movement of the embedded verb to the CMP is not for checking of an overt morphological feature, but rather it moves in order to license the empty causative morpheme. Causatives, whether they be morphological or analytical, contain a CMP.

3. LACK OF TP IN FRENCH AND SPANISH CAUSATIVES

In the Minimalist Program (c.f. Chomsky 1995b), which strives to construct derivations in the most *economical* and *minimal* way possible, an interesting question emerges concerning the representation of a complement clause containing an infinitival

⁸ See Maier (1996) for further exposition.

⁹ See Baker (1988), Guasti (1992), Reed (1991), Rosen (1990), and Treviño (1994) for further discussion.

¹⁰ The existence of a CMP in the embedded clause in French and Spanish is evidenced by adverb placement in the subordinate clause. For example:

- (i) a. Marie a fait boire *rapidement* le vin à Pierre.
 Marie made drink rapidly the wine Pierre
- b. *Marie a fait *rapidement* boire le vin à Pierre.

Pollock (1988) proposes that the surface word order of verb-adverb-object is evidence that there has been overt verb movement. The order *boire-rapidement-le vin*, therefore, indicates that the embedded verb has moved to a functional category prior to Spell-Out.

verb form. Do infinitives in complement clauses to causatives project a TP? Tense is projected not only for semantic conditions, but also for structural reasons in that it checks the Case feature of the subject and the tense feature of the verb. In addition, Tense also provides a position where the subject can merge and establish a structural relationship with both the verb and object. The occurrence of *PRO* with an infinitive occurs when the Case of the embedded subject is checked by the head of the infinitival instead of a functional category higher than VP. Consider the example in (16):

- (16) a. I expected [PRO to [*t* leave early]]
 b. I expected [someone to [*t* leave early]]
 (Chomsky, 1995b:345)

As claimed by Chomsky, the Extended Projection Principle (EPP) is fulfilled in examples such as (16a) and (16b) because there is a strong nominal feature in both infinitival clauses. In (16a), the subject (PRO) is assigned null Case by the head, *to*; this null Case is checked in [Spec, TP]. In the ECM structure (16b), *someone* is not assigned Case by *to* and must consequently raise to the checking domain of AgrO in the matrix clause. *Someone* will first raise to check the strong nominal feature of the embedded Infl (EPP). The distribution of subjects realized as PRO or an overt DP is dependent on where strong nominal features are checked (which in turn is determined by whether or not an element enters with null or objective Case).

In (16a) and (16b), the data demonstrate the presence of a TP for an infinitival in the complement clause by the manifestation of *to* as well as the ability of PRO to surface as the subject. For causative constructions with SVO word order, I have proposed that there is a TP in the complement clause to the causative verb.¹¹ However, the TP projected in subordinate clauses in causatives is distinct from the TP found in other complement clauses (such as Control) in that it never contains a null Case feature. Proof that this claim is correct for causatives is seen by the inability of PRO to serve as the subject of the embedded verb, as seen in (17):

- (17) a. *J'ai fait [PRO] manger les pommes.
 I made PRO eat the apples
 b. *Yo hice [PRO] correr por el parque.
 I made PRO run through the park
 c. *Eu fiz [PRO] escrever uma carta a seu amigo.
 I made PRO write a letter to his/her friend

¹¹ On the contrary, for VOS I propose that TP is not projected into the complement clause. Evidence for this claim is provided by clitic climbing facts in addition to other syntactic properties. See Maier (1996) for further details.

Returning to the hypothesis that null Case is checked by TP of the embedded clause, the inability of PRO to occur in (17) provides evidence for the claim that the TP in the embedded clause in causatives cannot check null Case.

4. BP CAUSATIVES

BP causatives are unlike Spanish and French in that there cannot be VOS order in the embedded clause. In fact, as seen in (18) and (19), word order in BP in both main and subordinate clauses is always SVO:

- (18) a. Eu recomendei aos meninos descansar durante as férias.¹²
I recommended to children to rest during the holidays
- b. *Eu recomendei descansar aos meninos durante as férias.
- (19) a. Eu sei que Simone comeu toda a melancia.
I know that Simone ate all of the watermelon
- b. *Eu sei que comeu toda a melancia Simone.

How, then, are BP causatives to be analyzed if they do not demonstrate any of the patterns found in other Romance languages? Given that subordinate clauses in BP causatives do not demonstrate unique syntactic properties as compared to other complement clauses, I propose that causatives in BP are semantic and not syntactic. Recall that French and Spanish were claimed to be different given the syntactic properties already discussed. This was the motivation behind proposing that the phrase structure for the subordinate clause was unique and contained a CMP. Since BP does not exhibit any peculiar syntactic properties in the complement clauses to causative and perception verbs, there is no empirical motivation for suggesting that the phrase structure is any different with causative complements as compared to other complement clauses.

Although the claim thus far is that causatives in BP are not unique given their lack of similarity with other Romance languages, BP does have one distinguishing property. This entails the ability of a class of matrix verbs to project for a bare infinitive as well as an inflected infinitive. This will be the topic of the next section.

¹²Note that for some speakers this sentence is pragmatically odd in that they prefer to use the subjunctive rather than a bare infinitive (although my informants accepted the bare infinitive as a possibility). For example:

(i) Eu recomendei aos meninos descansarem durante as férias.

The significance of this example is to show that for those speakers who accept the bare infinitive, the word order is SV in the complement clause and not VS.

4.1 Inflected Infinitives

One of the most discussed issues in Portuguese syntax is the phenomenon of the inflected infinitive. What makes this particular aspect so original is that in Portuguese, Agr is apparently present not only with finite verbs, but also with infinitives in certain constructions.

- (20) A professora lhes aconselhou (a) ir a Espanha.
irem

The professor to them recommended to go (Agr) to Spain

- (21) Eu obriguei meus alunos a ir a palestra.
irem

I forced my students to go (Agr) to the lecture

In these examples, *irem* is the inflected infinitive. Various studies have attempted to outline the conditions on the existence of the inflected infinitive and postulate syntactic constraints on its usage. It has been observed (Cintra (1985), Raposo (1987), and Quicoli (1988), to name a few), that the inflected infinitive does not appear in main clauses, but rather in subordinate clauses. In particular, the distribution of the inflected infinitive in complement clauses seems to be restricted to certain classes of verbs. For example, the inflected infinitive can freely occur with epistemic verbs (*pensar*) and control verbs (*forçar*, *obrigar*) but not with volitional verbs, like *querer* (Raposo, 1987). It is interesting to note that inflected infinitives can also appear in complements to causative and perception verbs. Consider the following examples:

- (22) Eu fiz os alunos lerem o artigo.
I made the students read-Agr the article

- (23) Maria fez as crianças cantarem.
Maria made the children sing-Agr

- (24) Gláucia deixou seus amigos lerem sua tese.
Gláucia let her friends read-Agr her dissertation

An interesting situation results with the occurrence of the inflected infinitive in the causative construction. Using the same data as earlier, we see that clitic placement with the inflected infinitive is similar to the bare infinitive in that clitics corresponding to embedded objects can only surface in the complement clause.

- (25) a. Nós fizemos as meninas tomarem o sorvete.
We made the girls eat the ice cream
- b. Nós fizemos as meninas tomarem-**no**.
We made the girls eat-Agr it (acc)
- c. *Nós **o** fizemos as meninas tomarem.
- (26) a. Eu ouvi as meninas tocarem o piano.
I heard the girls play-Agr the piano
- b. Eu ouvi as meninas tocarem-**no**.
I heard the girls play-Agr it (acc)
- c. *Eu **o** ouvi as meninas tocarem.

However, clitics corresponding to the embedded subject are only permitted with the bare infinitive.

- (27) a. Nós fizemos as meninas tomar o sorvete.
- b. Nós **as** fizemos tomar o sorvete.
- (28) a. Nós fizemos as meninas tomarem o sorvete.
- b. *Nós **as** fizemos tomarem o sorvete.

(28) demonstrates that clitics corresponding to the embedded subject are prohibited because of the presence of Agr. Note that (27b), which lacks Agr in the subordinate clause, is acceptable.

With inflected infinitives, the embedded subject cannot be realized as a clitic. However, it can be substituted with a pronoun, as seen in (29):

- (29) a. Nós fizemos as meninas tomarem o sorvete.
- b. Nós fizemos **elas** tomarem o sorvete.

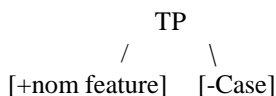
The embedded subject in (29b), which is marked with nominative rather than objective Case, checks its Case against the inflected infinitive and not the causative verb as in previous examples. This then suggests, given previous discussion of the function of TP and structural relations, that for BP causatives a TP is minimally projected in the embedded clause.

4.2 BP Causative and Perception Complements

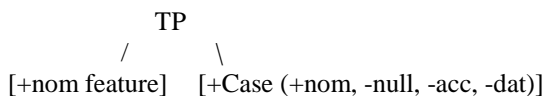
Given the lack of syntactic peculiarity in BP causatives, the projected structure for the complement clause need not be distinguished as in Spanish and French. In fact, there would be no empirical evidence to support such a claim. For SVO word order, as with ECM constructions, the TP in the embedded clause is endowed only with a nominal feature and lacks Case features. This means that the embedded subject will have to raise to the checking domain of the matrix VP after Spell-Out in order to check its accusative or dative Case.

Although causative complements with bare infinitives in BP are unlike Spanish and French causatives in that there is no CMP, BP is unique in that the subordinate clauses is not restricted to containing bare infinitives since it is also possible to have inflected infinitives. Therefore, for BP, there are two potential complement structures to causative verbs, but only one word order. The first possibility is that the embedded clause contains a TP which only has a nominal feature and no Case feature. This is an ECM-type construction. The second structure is one which contains a TP in the complement clause whose head T has a nominal feature and a nominative Case feature. The embedded subject merges with TP in the embedded clause and checks both its nominal feature and nominative Case feature. This is the inflected infinitive construction. Consequently, unlike French and Spanish, the only variation found in BP within the causative construction has to do with the Case checking properties of the always present embedded TP. The properties of the embedded T in BP are summarized in (30):

(30) a. bare infinitives:



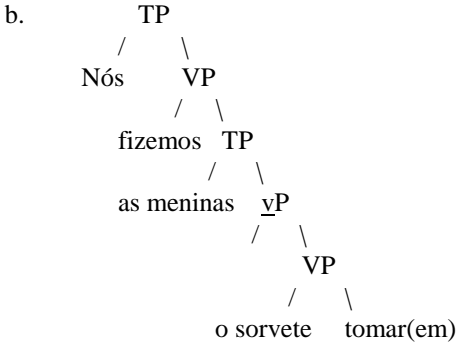
b. inflected infinitive:



With bare infinitives, the embedded subject will check its Case (accusative or dative) against the causative verb. On the other hand, with inflected infinitives, the embedded subject will check both the nominative feature and nominative Case feature in the subordinate TP. With inflected infinitives, only nominative Case can be checked, hence, the inability of PRO to serve as the subject.

The complement clause to causative and perception verbs will be as seen in (31):

(31) a. Nós fizemos as meninas tomar(em) o sorvete.



The structure in (31) has the same phrase structure as would be found in any complement structure in BP. As compared to Spanish and French, the only peculiar syntactic property lies in the function of the embedded TP, which is determined by the presence or lack of the inflected infinitive.

5. CONCLUSIONS

I have shown that causatives in BP are set apart from French and Spanish given that they lack all of the peculiar syntactic properties normally associated with Romance causatives. Instead, BP causatives demonstrate the same syntactic properties found with other biclausal structures. Therefore, the phrase structure is not unique in that it contains a CMP. The distinctive property in BP causatives is the potential of the matrix verb to project an inflected infinitive in the complement clause. This property is not found in either Spanish or French. However, the inflected infinitive is not limited to BP causative complements. Therefore, the lack of syntactic properties evidenced in other other Romance languages in addition to the ability of the inflected infinitive to surface in other subordinate clauses in BP provides strong evidence that BP causatives are only semantic and consequently do not render an analysis that distinguishes them apart from other complement clauses.

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