



CAUSATIVE VERB FORMATION IN BODO LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is to describe causative verb formation of the Bodo language. It belongs to the Bodo-Garo sub-group of Tibeto-Burman sub family of languages (Benedict, 1972). Bodo has many monosyllabic intransitive verbs which form causative verbs with the help of adding prefixes. The paper will focus how the intransitive and transitive verb forms the causative verb in Bodo language. Bodo uses causative prefix and suffix to form causative verbs and some of the causative verbs are formed by the process of suppletion. The paper will discuss causativization by affixation and causativization by suppletion. It will be noticed here direct and indirect causativization in Bodo language. The paper tries to focus on causative construction of the Bodo language. Most of the data of this paper are collected from the primary sources i.e. standard native speakers in different age, groups and sex during my PhD research work (2011-2016). Standard Bodo speakers are found mainly in Kokrajhar and Chirang districts of Assam.

KEYWORDS - Bodo Language, Causative Formation, Affixation, Suppletion Direct-Indirect Causativization

1. THE LANGUAGE

The Bodo is one of the major tribes of Northeastern India. The people who speak this language calls Bodo language. It is one of the Tibeto-Burman languages. G. A. Grierson (1903), Benedict, (1972), Joseph and Burling (2006) describe that Bodo belongs to the Bodo-Garo sub-branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family. The language closely connects with the cognate languages i.e. Dimasa, Kokoborok, Bru (Reang), Garo, Rabha and Tiwa. It is a recognized language in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution. Genetically, Bodo

belongs to the Mongoloid stock of the Indo-Mongoloids. According to P. C. Bhattacharya (1977:1) “the ‘Bodo’ word is first applied by Hodgson”. The Bodo is known as Bodo or Boro, Kachary, Kirata, Mech etc. in different places and at different times. In course of time, they came to be known as simply Bodo or Boro. The Bodo speakers are mainly found in Assam as well as some adjacent areas of West Bengal, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and some parts of Nepal and Bhutan. According to 2001 census of India the total population of Bodo speakers in Assam are 13, 52,771 having 61.3% literary rate.

Bodo has some dialects but also they are mutual intelligibility viz. Kokrajhar and Chirang area’s dialect that is Standard Bodo language, West-Bengal area’s dialect that is called *Mech or Mes*, Nepal area’s dialect that is called *Meche or Mesi*, Gowalpara dialect, Udalguri area’s dialect that is called *Sanzari*, Bengtol area’s dialect that is called *Bwrdown*.

2. DEFINITION OF CAUSATIVE FORMATION

Causative verbs are found in many languages. Thus, studies on the causative formation become an important area in Linguistics. Comrie (1981) points out that causative construction have played an important role in the recent history of Linguistics, not only from a typological viewpoint, and also represent an important area of convergence between Linguistics and such adjacent disciplines as Philosophy and Cognitive Anthropology. According to him, any causative situation involves two component situations, the cause and its effect, for example in English *John caused me to be late*: here, the effect is clearly that I was late and in that sentence *John* is the instance of cause. According to Crystal (1980), causative “refers to the causal relationship between alternative versions of a sentence. For example, the pair of sentence *the cat killed the mouse* and *the mouse died* are related, in that the transitive *kill* can be seen as a ‘causative’ version of the intransitive *die*”. Comrie (1985) Dixon (1979), Blake (1987) and Austin (2005) clearly mention that transitive verbs can be different from the intransitive verbs in many languages. Intransitive verbs may be converted into the transitive verbs by regular morphological process known as causativization or causative formation. Comrie (1981) states there are three types of causatives i.e. morphological causative, lexical causative and periphrastic causatives. Morphological causative forms by adding affixes to the verbs, lexical causatives are formed by suppletion. There is no morphological similarity between the base verb and the causative verb in lexical causatives. Periphrastic causative indicates causation with the help of verb. For example in English *Ram made the child cry* here, the verb *make* is expressing the causative action along

with the verb *eat*. The present paper intends to provide a detailed description of the causative verb formation of the Bodo language.

3. TYPES OF CAUSATIVE FORMATION

Generally, causative verbs are formed by adding affixes in Bodo-Garo languages. Kok-Borok, uses both causative prefix and suffix e.g. *ran* ‘be dry’ *p^hi-ran* ‘make dry’, *munui* ‘laugh’ *munui-ri* ‘cause to laugh’ (Debbarma 2014: 137-138). Tiwa has causative prefix e.g. *nu* ‘see’ *p^hu-nu* ‘show’ (Baishya & Muchahary 2015). Dimasa has both causative prefix and suffix e.g. *nu* ‘see’ *p^hu-nu* ‘show’ (Barman 2012: 64) and *nai* ‘look’ *nai-ri* ‘cause to look’ (Longmailai, elicited data).

Morphologically, the Bodo language has also both causative prefix and suffix use to form causative verbs. There are three types of causative verb formation processes found in the language. The processes are namely **prefixation**, **suffixation** and **suppletion**. These are discussed below with the help of examples.

3.1. CAUSATIVIZATION BY PREFIXATION

Bodo has more causative prefixes than suffix. Most of the **intransitive verbs** are converted into causative verbs by prefixing the causative prefixes /p^hu-/, /p^ho-/, /p^ha-/, /p^hu-/, /p^he-/, /p^hi-/, /su-/, /si-/and /so-/. Except for /p^hu-/ and /su-/, all other prefixes having /p^hV-/ and /sV-/ can be assimilated by vowel phoneme of the verbal base. The vowel phoneme /u/ cannot be influenced by other vowel phonemes in Bodo language. Hence, the prefixes /p^hu-/ and /su-/ are added to the verbal base without modifying in causative formation. The following examples (1a) to (1g) have shown a vowel assimilation of the causative prefixes and the examples (1h) to (1k) have shown without vowel assimilation of the causative prefixes.

Intransitive verb		Causative verb
1a. /zub/ ‘complete’	/p ^h u-zub/	‘cause to complete’
b. /dob/ ‘to bend’	/p ^h o-dob/	‘cause to bend’
c. /ham/ ‘be good’	/p ^h a-ham/	‘make good’
d. /runj/ ‘be loose’	/p ^h u-runj/	‘make loose’
e. /der/ ‘to be big’	/p ^h e-der/	‘make large/ nourish’
f. /gidij/ ‘to move’	/p ^h i-gidij/ or /p ^h i-dij/	‘cause to move’
g. /gól/ ‘to out’	/so-gól/ or /so-k ^h ól/	‘make out/ ‘make lose’

Table 2: Transitive verbs and causative verbs

Transitive verbs	Causative verbs
3a. /bi-yuu p ^h ulis-k ^h uu gi-yw/ he- NOM. police- ACC. fear-HAB. 'He fears the police'	/p ^h ulis-a bi-k ^h uu si-gi-yw/ police- NOM. he- ACC. CAUS.-fear- HAB. 'Police causes to fear him' or 'The police frighten him'
b. /zi-ya bisina-k ^h uu lum-uw/ cloth- NOM. bed- ACC. cover-HAB. 'The cloth full covers the bed.'	/aŋ-uw bisina-k ^h uu p ^h uw-lum-uw/ I- NOM. bed- ACC. CAUS-cover- HAB. 'I make the bed full cover.'

3.2. CAUSATIVIZATION BY SUFFIXATION

There is one causative suffix found in Bodo i.e. /-huu/. It expresses causative action by someone while it is added to the transitive verbs. It can derive causative verb by adding to the transitive and intransitive verbs. The examples (4a) to (4c) have shown causative verbs derive from transitive verb and examples (4d) to (4f) have shown causative verbs from intransitive verbs.

	Transitive verb		Causative verb
4a.	/lir/ 'write'	/lir-huu/	'cause to write (throw someone)'
b.	/luŋ/ 'drink'	/luŋ-huu/	'cause to drink (through someone)'
c.	/nai/ 'look'	/nai-huu/	'cause to look (through someone)'
	Intransitive verb		Causative verb
4d.	/zó/ 'sit'	/zó-huu/	'cause to sit'
e.	/duŋ/ 'to be hot'	/duŋ-huu/	'cause to make hot'
f.	/gáb/ 'cry'	/gáb-huu/	'cause to cry'

There is a difference between derived causative verbs from the transitive and intransitive verbs. If the /-huu/ is added to the transitive verb it shows that action is done by the subject with the help of someone or somebody. If the /-huu/ is added to the intransitive verb it shows that action is done by the subject itself, in this case subject is the core participant agent and the action is done by subject without taking help.

3.3. Causativization by Suppletion

There are some causative verbs found in Bodo which are not similarity between the basic verbs and its causative counterpart. Theoretically (Comrie & Dixon) it can be called lexical causatives. The lexical causatives are formed by the process of suppletion. According to Crystal (1980) suppletion is a term used in morphology to refer to cases where it is not possible to show a relationship between morphemes through a general rule, because the forms involved have different roots.

It is to be noticed here that if the non-causative basic verbs begin with unaspirated stop velar sound /g/, it is replaced by the aspirated stop velar sound /k^h/ in causative verb formation. The following examples (5a) to (5f) have shown how the /g/ is replaced by /k^h/, i.e., from voiced unaspirated to voiceless aspirated, during causative formation.

	Non-causative Verb		Causative Verb	
5a.	/gului/	‘fall down’	/k ^h ului/	‘cause to make down’
b.	/gau/	‘to split’	/k ^h au/	‘make split’
c.	/gu/	‘to be loose’	/k ^h u/	‘make loose’
d.	/guma/	‘to lose’	/k ^h uma/	‘make lost’
e.	/geŋ/	‘to open (window)’	/k ^h eŋ/	‘make open’
f.	/geu/	‘to loose (bundle)’	/k ^h eu/	‘make loose’

The examples (5g) to (5l) have shown another type of suppletion. Here, causative verbs are totally different from the non-causative verbs which are derived from different roots.

5g.	/za/	‘eat’	/duu/	‘cause to eat/ feed’
h.	/hab/	‘to enter’	/su/	‘cause to enter’
i.	/k ^h am/	‘to burn’	/sau/	‘cause to burn’
j.	/zo/	‘to section’	/so/	‘make section’
k.	/undu/	‘sleep’	/p ^h ut ^h u/	‘make sleep’
l.	/t ^h ui/	‘die’	/sit ^h ar/	‘kill’

3.4. DIRECT AND INDIRECT CAUSATIVIZATION

The direct causativization is trying to focus a direct participant of the subject that means causative action is directly done by the subject itself and indirect causativization is trying to

highlight here indirectly participant of the subject. In Bodo, there are two kinds of causative action found i.e. directly participant by the agent (subject) and indirectly participant by the agent. When an agent directly participants the causative action then causative prefixes are attached to the intransitive verb. If the agent indirectly participants causative action then the causative suffix /-huu/ is attached to the transitive verbs. Morphologically, the direct causativization process in Bodo is ‘*Causative Prefix + Intransitive Verb > Direct Causativization*’. Some of the direct causatives are derived by the process of suppletion (see the examples (5a) to (5l)). The following examples (6a) to (6d) consider as direct and indirect causativization from the intransitive verb.

Intransitive Verb	Direct Causative	Indirect Causative
6a. /hai/	/p ^h a-hai/	/p ^h a-hai-huu/
‘be down’	‘make down’	‘make down (through someone)’
b. /suŋ/	/p ^h u-suŋ/	/p ^h u-suŋ-huu/
‘be short’	‘make short’	‘make short (through someone)’
c. /t ^h aŋ/	/p ^h u-t ^h aŋ/	/p ^h u-t ^h aŋ-huu/
‘preserve’	‘make alive’	‘make alive (through someone)’
d. /máo/	/su-máo/	/su-máo-huu/
‘to jerk’	‘cause to jerk/ shack’	‘cause to jerk (through someone)’

The order of causativization in the set of examples of indirect causative from (6a) to (6d) occurs as ‘*Causative Prefix + Intransitive Verb + Causative Suffix > Indirect Causativization*’.

The sentence examples (7a) to (7e) have shown the difference between direct and indirect causativization in Bodo language.

Table 3: Direct and Indirect causativization

Direct causativization	Indirect causativization
7a. /aŋ bi-ni k ^h oro-k ^h uu I he- GEN. head-ACC. p^ha-hai-bai/ CAUS-down- PERF	/aŋ Dabla-nu bi-ni k ^h oro-k ^h uu I Dabla-DAT. he-GEN. head-ACC. p^ha-hai-huu-bai/ CAUS.-down- CAUS.-PERF.

	‘I have made his head down’		‘I have made his head down throw Dabla’
b.	/bi-yuu duruŋ-k ^h uu he-NOM. rope-ACC. <i>p^hu-suŋ-bai/</i> CAUS.-be short-PERF. ‘He has made the rope short.’	/bi-yuu Gobla-nuu duruŋ-k ^h uu He-NOM. Gobla-DAT. rope-ACC. <i>p^hu-suŋ-huu-bai/</i> CAUS.-be short- CAUS.-PERF. ‘He has made the Gobla shorten the rope.’	
c.	/dakt ^h ar-a rugi-k ^h uu Doctor-NOM. patient- ACC. <i>p^hu-t^har-duŋ-muŋ/</i> CAUS.-preserve-RLS-PAST ‘Doctor made the patient alive.’	/ar-uu dakt ^h ar-nuu rugi-k ^h uu I-NOM. Doctor-DAT. patient-ACC <i>p^hu-t^har-huu-duŋ-muŋ/</i> CAUS.-preserve- CAUS.-RLS-PAST ‘I made the Doctor preserve the patient alive.’	
d.	/Ram-a k ^h unt ^h ia-k ^h uu Ram-NOM. post-ACC. <i>sui-máo-duŋ/</i> CAUS.-jerk-RLS ‘Ram made the post jerk.’	/Ram-a Gobla-nuu k ^h unt ^h ia-k ^h uu Ram-NOM Gobla-ACC. post-ACC <i>sui-máo-huu-duŋ/</i> CAUS.-jerk- CAUS.- RLS. ‘Ram made the Gobla jerk the post’	
e.	/ar got ^h o-nuu uŋk ^h am duu-duŋ/ I child-DAT. rice feed-RLS. ‘I fed the rice to the baby.’	/ar got ^h o-nuu bima-k ^h uu uŋk ^h am duu-huu-duŋ/ I child-DAT mother-ACC rice feed- CAUS-RLS ‘I made the baby eat the rice through mother.’	

4. CONCLUSION

On the basis of analysis undertaken the following conclusions on Bodo causative verbs formation can be drawn.

- a. There are three type causative verb formation process found in Bodo i.e. **prefixation**, **suffixation** and **suppletion**.
- b. Causative prefixes are found more than suffix in Bodo. The prefixes are /p^hu-/, /p^ho-/, /p^ha-/, /p^hu-/, /p^he-/, /p^hi-/, /su-/, /si-/and /so-/. Except for /p^hu-/ and /su-/, all other prefixes can be assimilated by vowel phoneme of the verbal base (see (1a) to (1k)).
- c. A few **transitive verbs** can be converted into causative verbs by adding prefixes (see (3a) to (3b)).

- d. Bodo has one causative suffix i.e. /-huu/. It can be added to the transitive and intransitive verbs. If it is added to the transitive verb it indicates the action is done by subject with the help of someone. If it is added to the intransitive verb it shows the action is done by the subject itself (see (4a) to (4f)).
- e. The lexical causatives are formed by the process of suppletion in Bodo. When non-causative basic verbs begin with unaspirated stop velar voiced sound /g/, it is replaced by the aspirated stop velar voiceless sound /k^h/ in causative verb formation.
- f. According subject participant in the sentence, there are direct and indirect causativization found in Bodo (see (7a) to (7e)). The direct causativization process in Bodo is ‘*Causative Prefix + Intransitive Verb > Direct Causativization*’ and the indirect causativization process is ‘*Causative Prefix + Intransitive Verb + Causative Suffix > Indirect Causativization*’.

ABBREVIATIONS

High Tone	=	ˊ	Level Tone	=	unmark
Low Tone	=	ˋ	Accusative Case	=	ACC.
Causative	=	CAUS	Dative Case	=	DAT.
Habitual	=	HAB.	Genitive Case	=	GEN
Nominative Case	=	NOM.	Perfective	=	PERF.

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