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## CAUSATIVES AND THE PROBLEMS AMONG INDONESIAN LEARNERS

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### ABSTRACT

Grammar concerns with the principles of constructing acceptable formation of words, phrases, and sentences as well as the principles of interpreting the meaning (Radford, 2002: 1). However, grammar which is taught in the level of university, especially in such of English Department, will be more complex such as learning how to make a noun phrase, how to use and distinguish certain auxiliaries, and how to understand the deep structure of a sentence. One of the materials taught of English Grammar in English Letters Department is Causative.

Causative is a group of verbs including some of transitive verbs, intransitive verbs, and auxiliary verbs that indicate the underlying structure of 'cause' towards something implicitly or explicitly (Kastovsky, 1973: 256). Causative is taken as the material for the research due to some reasons. First, the material of Causative is considered difficult to be learned by the students of in English Letters Department of Universitas Sanata Dharma. Second, the form of Causative in English is different from the form of Causative in Indonesia. English has several verbs such as *make*, *have*, *get*, *cause*, and *force* to mark the Causative sentence. In the other side, Indonesian has suffixes added to the verb in order to label the Causative verb, for example prefix {*mem-*} and affix {*-kan*} in *menidurkan*. Due to these reasons, the researcher decided to take Causative *make*, *have*, *get* as the research object. The sample for the study would be Seventh Semester Students who had already learned the material in the second, fourth, and fifth semester.

The scope of this research covers: 1) the different form of Causative *make*, *have*, *get* in English and Indonesian; and 2) the errors that are found in learning Causative *make*, *have*, and *get*. The researcher hypothesized that the seventh semester students have difficulties in learning English Causative of *make*, *have*, *get* due to its difference structure in Indonesian and English and the rarity of English Causative form in speaking and writing.

This research applies the syntactic analysis on causative verbs in English and Indonesian to find out deeper understanding on causative verbs. A test is given to the seventh semester students to identify their mastery of the Causative, especially *make*, *have*, and *get*; some problems that they have, and some factors that may lead to their errors. It is expected that by conducting this research, some problems related to the mastery of causative verbs can be revealed to help both the teachers and students improve their understanding of causative verbs.

Keywords: Causatives, mastery, syntactic analysis, error analysis

### INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, there are two types of language that are commonly used in business and educational communication, Indonesian and English. Therefore, English as a foreign language has been included in the school curriculum from Junior High School, Senior High School, and University level in Indonesia. For this reason, students in Indonesia begin to learn English which is started from understanding English Grammar. In the level of University, especially in the English Letters Department, students are taught more specific and complex English grammar that is not found in junior or senior high school. One of the materials of English Grammar is causative.

The causative verbs involve an agent who does such an action to cause another agent to do an action as the agent intended (Celce-Murcia and Larsen Freeman, 1999: 653), or to cause another thing to produce a change from its preceding position or situation. Therefore, the involvement of two or more people in causative construction is divided into two: the causer and the causee (Stefanowitsch, 2001: 35). The causer is the entity, animate or inanimate, that brings about the caused event or generally known as a subject or an agent (Gilquin, 2003: 127). The causee is the opposite which is the entity or event that is changed or influenced by the causer and carries out the effect of the caused event which is usually has the function as the object (Gilquin, 2003: 127). For example, the sentence 'I have my brother pick up some meals in grocery store' has *I* as the causer and *my brother* as the causee.

Causative verbs indicating this process include *make*, *have*, *get*. Although they have a similar purpose, they have differences in the usage. *Make* causative includes a sense of 'forcing' someone to do something; *have* includes a sense of 'request', and *get* causative includes a sense of 'persuade' in its use (Azar, 1999: 339). They also have a different structure in a sentence. *Make* and *have* causatives have the form of subject + *make* + object + bare infinitive. Meanwhile *get* causative has the form of subject + *get* + object + to-infinitive. The form in passive causative between each verb is also different. *Have* and *get*

causatives have the form of subject + *have/get* + complement + past participle + by-causer. In the other side, the passive form of *make* causative is rarely used.

Causatives are taken as the object of the research due to some reasons: 1) the material is considered difficult by students of English Letters in Universitas Sanata Dharma; 2) causatives have different form in structure compared with Indonesian. English has verbs such as *make*, *have*, *get* to notify the causative sentence. Meanwhile, Indonesian has the structure suffixes to be added in a verb, a noun, or an adverb to mark causative sentence (Moeliono, 1997: 108). For instance, it will need prefix {*mem-*} and affix {*-kan*} in *tidur* and cause *menidurkan*, which means 'to cause someone to sleep'.

The researchers decided to analyze student's comprehension of *make*, *have*, *get* causatives in function and meaning as well as their comprehension of the active and passive causative structure. Besides analyzing student's comprehension in causative, the researchers also analyzed student's comprehension in translating causative in Indonesian to English and the contrary.

The focuses then will be tested and the errors that the students made in the test will be examined further. Errors are those parts of composition or writing that deviate from selected norm of mature language performance (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, 1982 : 38). According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen there are four types of errors. First is omission which is the absence of an item that should appear in a sentence. Second is addition that is the presence of an item which should not appear in a sentence. Third is misformation which is the use of the wrong form of a morpheme or structure. Fourth is misordering that is the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in a sentence.

It is believed that the four types of errors happen because two kinds or sources: interlingual and intralingual errors. Interlingual errors are the mistakes done because the learners try to adapt their mother tongue language into the second language. For instance, 'She beautiful' is derived from the Indonesian language 'Dia cantik'. In the other side, the intralingual errors are the errors that commonly happen in the progress of second language learning. These errors include the mistakes in syntax and word formation such as the overgeneralization of past simple form of {-ed} in go which becomes goed, are for be following will, etc (Brown, 1987: 178). The error analysis will be done to categorize what types and causes that most of the students had in learning Causative.

## METHODOLOGY

In this research, the researchers conducted a test given to seventh semester students of English Letters Department in Universitas Sanata Dharma. Seventh semester students were chosen as the respondents because they had learned Causatives before in second, fourth, and fifth semester during their study. It was believed that seventh semester students had well acknowledged the topic.

The researchers decided to conduct two types of test. The purpose of the first test was to examine the validity of the questions. There were 24 students who were given 46 questions about Causatives. The result shows that 15 questions had been proved valid. These 15 questions were then tested into 87 students. Besides the test, the researchers also gave questionnaires for additional data related with Causative learning.

The test was designed into several parts. These parts are divided on different purposes such as to test student's comprehension about different meaning and function of *make*, *have*, *get* causatives; to analyze student's understanding in active and passive causative form; and to analyze the students' second language acquisition. The error analysis is started with syntactic method and continued with translation method.

## ANALYSIS

### The Errors in Students' Answers

The error that mostly found in students' answers is misformation. Here are the examples of misformation errors:

1	We got our landlord fix the broken window.
2	The computer have to be checked by someone.

Example 1 shows an error in the use of *got* as the causative verb. It may be caused by the interference of student's first language. In English, the meaning of *get* is: to be connected with somebody. If it is combined with the meaning of *get* in students' first language, the sentence can be translated as: '*Kami menghubungi pemilik tanah untuk memperbaiki jendela yang rusak*'. If it is so, the sentence will

produce a new meaning: the one who fixes the broken window is not the landlord but the subject *we*. It is an error because the correct causative verb in the sentence should be *had* which has a function to show a process of service frame between the causer (*we*) and the causee (landlord). The sentence also shows an error by the wrong structure of *get* that it should be followed by to-infinitive.

The instruction in example 2 is to change the sentence with active causative into the one with passive causative. Here, the question is '*We need to have someone check out our computer for viruses*'. Therefore, there are two types of error in the sentence: misformation and omission. Misformation error can be seen from the change in the verb into modal *have*. The reason why student omitted *need to have* and changed it into modal *have* probably was because of the meaning of *need* itself. Based on the meaning in Oxford Dictionary, *need* has the meaning of: to show what you have to do. Due to this reason, it is logical if students thought that the sentence can be changed into passive form of modal because both of *need* and modal *have* have the same sense. Nonetheless, the answer is incorrect because the sentence should be changed into passive causative form which is: '*We need to have our computer checked out for viruses*'. The omission in the example can be seen from the absence of *out* and *for viruses*.

Addition error is can also be found. The example of the error is illustrated in the change of the active sentence: '*Where did you get someone to repair your car?*' into the passive sentence '*Where did you get your car to be repaired?*'. The correct answer should be '*Where did you get your car repaired?*'. The addition *to be* before the verb results an error. The form of active causative where *get* is followed by to-infinitive may cause this error. That is why the student kept writing *to* after the object and added *be* to form the passive voice. The student seemed not to acknowledge that the passive form of *get* causatives omits *to* in the passive form.

Beside addition, students also omitted some words that must not be omitted in the sentence. For example is the passive form that student wrote: '*He got his homework helped*' in the question '*He got his sister to help his homework*'. The absence of *his sister* is a significant error in such of passive sentence. It is because *his sister* gives a new information to the hearer (Murcia, Celce-Murcia and Larsen Freeman, 1999: 355). However, it is stated by Murcia that most analyses show that there are about 15-20 percent of agent absence in passive voice (1999: 354).

In some cases, the students also incorrectly arranged the form of causative sentences in their answers. For example, students changed the active form of '*He got his sister to help his homework*' into the passive form '*He got helped his homework by his sister*'. To be looked closely, there is a structure of inseparability of *get* and the verbs. It is general knowledge that *get* passive is used in informal conversation. In the example such as: '*Barry got invited to the party*' has *get* as an alternative to *be* (Celce-Murcia and Larsen Freeman, 1999: 345). According to this fact, the student decided to put *be* *get* and the verbs together in *get* causative and cause misordering of the sentence. The objects *his homework* should be put between *get* and the verb *helped*.

The researchers also gave questions in Indonesian to be translated into English. The most common mistake done by students is misunderstanding the differences of *make* and *get* in English as causatives. One example is '*Ketika masih kecil, orang tua saya selalu memaksa saya berjalan untuk pergi ke sekolah*'. Students translated the sentence as '*When I was little, my parents always got me to walk to school*'. Here, students translated *memaksa* with *got* as the causative verb while the answer should be *made*. It is stated in the Oxford Advance Dictionary the meaning *get* as 'to make' which it can be translated '*memaksa*' in Indonesian.. By this view, the students may have knowledge that *get* and *make* share similarities in meaning. This meaning of *get* and *make* as the verbs in dictionary causes student to misinterpret the meaning of *make* and *get* as the causative verbs.

However, the result also shows that students successfully understand the active form of causative. There were 34 students correctly answered the question of active causative form of *make* in past tense, and 69 students correctly answered the question of active causative form of *get*. In the matter of second language acquisition, the students also had correctly transferred the meaning of '*membuat*' into '*make*' in English.

The following data is the result of the test ranged by the score.

Score	Number of Students
80-93	6
60-73	14
40-53	36
20-33	24
7-13	3

Based on the data, there are 63 students who get the score of 7-53. Meanwhile, there are only 20 students who achieve the score above 60.

### Causes of Errors

Based on the analysis it can be identified that the errors happen because of the intralingual errors and interlingual errors. Intralingual errors or developmental errors are the errors caused by the lack of knowledge. The errors such as misformation, omission, addition, and misordering show the intralingual errors which cover the errors in developing false concept, errors in grammar and syntax, and errors in interpreting the meaning. The errors in the answers cover the error in understanding the difference between *make*, *have*, *get* causatives and the structure of passive causative form.

The linguistic complexity of causative seems to influence the intralingual errors such as: it has two kinds of verbs involving in the sentences and the different structure in passive voice. The other source of intralingual errors is the overgeneralization of: *get* and *have* causatives in meaning, *get* and *make* causatives in meaning, regular passive form with passive causative, *have* as a modal and *have* as a causative verb, and *get* as a causative verb and *get* as alternative to be in passive. The students also seemed to simplify the passive form by omitting by-phrase. Intralingual errors done by seventh semester students toward causative could also be worsened by the decreasing memory of the causative since they learned it in Structure V which was one year ago.

The second is interlingual errors which are the errors caused by the interference of first language. The students applied the structure form of their first language while the form itself is different from English. The difficulty felt by students is probably resulted from the differences of passive-causative structure in English and Indonesian. English uses causative verbs of *make*, *have*, *get* as the be then followed by object and the main verb whereas Indonesian commonly has the structure of adding {di-} before the verb to mark the passive sentence. The other cause is because of the overgeneralization in meaning of *make* and *get* into *memaksa* and *menyuruh*.

Last but not least, the researcher also tried to seek the cause of errors by giving a questionnaire. As the result, there were 30 students admitted that they had difficulties learning active and passive causatives and 46 students confessed that they had problems in understanding the different function of *make*, *have*, *get* causatives. Averagely, there were 46 students who answered 50% toward the percentage of the comprehension of *make*, *have*, *get* causatives. Forgetful learners are the most common cause due to the result. There were 58 students admitted that they needed to learn more about *make*, *have*, *get* causatives.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the data taken from 83 students of seventh semester in English Letters Department, it can be concluded that the seventh semester students have not mastered the use of *make*, *have*, *get* causatives yet. The factors that lead to this condition is that they still have difficulties in differentiating the function and meaning of each causative as well as in forming sentences with passive causative. The acquisition of the material is also influenced by the first language which causes the students to produce the errors. However, the result shows that most of the students had understood the active form of causatives.

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