

### Causative construction in Mi'kmaw

Causative morphemes are noted in Algonquian languages (e.g., Goddard 1990, Frantz, 2017, Wolfart 1996, Drapeau 2014). Inglis (1986:291) glosses *-i'* as causative in Mi'kmaw; Abtahian and Quinn (2017:138) note a productive causative *-a'tu*. We ask, what are the characteristics of Mi'kmaw causatives? We propose *-a'-t-u* is a prototypical causative which is a construction, not a single morpheme (cf. authors 2019). According to Zúñiga and Kittilä (2019), prototypical causatives increase the valency of a non-causativized clause, add a causer to the argument structure, are expressed with causer as subject, and are coded formally.

(1-2) illustrate two stems; (a) shows the intransitive, (b) the causative.

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|-----|----|-----------------------------------|---------|
| (1) | a. | kaqam-i-k                         | aptu'n  |
|     |    | stand-v-3s.inanimate              | cane    |
|     |    | 'The cane is standing.'           |         |
|     | b. | kaqam-a'-t-u-Ø                    | aptu'n  |
|     |    | stand-v-Animacy-Voice-1s          | cane    |
|     |    | 'I am standing the cane up.'      |         |
| (2) | a. | ekwij-ia-q                        | kutputi |
|     |    | go.in.water-v-3s.inanimate        | chair   |
|     |    | 'The chair fell in the water.'    |         |
|     | b. | ekwij-a'-t-u-Ø                    | kutputi |
|     |    | go.in.water-v-Animacy-Voice-1s    | chair   |
|     |    | 'I put the chair into the water.' |         |

In our corpus of 1200+ clauses, 57 of the 150+ verb stems have this construction. Causatives occur with stems that don't have an agent (1a-2a). In contrast, stems with an agent yield non-causative constructions – the intransitives in (3a-4a) express what the agent is doing (cf. Denny 1984). Such stems are made transitive through different morphology that introduces an internal argument. (3b-4b) illustrate that causative morphology is ungrammatical with these stems.

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|-----|----|---------------------------------|----------|
| (3) | a. | pewi'k-e-y.                     |          |
|     |    | sweep-v-1s                      |          |
|     |    | 'I am sweeping.'                |          |
|     | b. | pewi'k-a-t-m-Ø/*pewi'k-a'-t-u-Ø | msaqsaqt |
|     |    | sweep-v-Animacy-Voice-1s        | floor    |
|     |    | 'I am sweeping the floor.'      |          |
| (4) | a. | wissukw-a-y                     |          |
|     |    | cook-v-1s                       |          |
|     |    | 'I am cooking.'                 |          |

- b.        wissukw-a-t-m-Ø/\*wissukw-a'-t-u-Ø        wius  
               cook-v-Animacy-Voice-1s                meat  
               'I am cooking meat.'

Causative semantics is produced by the entire construction; *-a'-t-u* as a collocation forms a type of transitive verb – to be specific, a causative; \**kaqam-a'-t-m*/\**kaqam-a-t-u* and \**pewi'k-a'-t-m*/*pewi'k-a-t-u* are ungrammatical and *-a'* or *-u* in other constructions are not causative (not illustrated). We conclude that the Mi'kmaw *-a'-t-u* construction is prototypically causative.

### References

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