

# He jumped off the bridge CAUS she told him to: Indirect speech as a means of expressing indirect causation in Wubuy

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Causation is usually described as consisting of two main types: direct and indirect causation. These are often conceptualised as the poles of a semantic continuum, and crosslinguistically, this semantic continuum reflects a pattern of grammaticalisation/lexicalisation (Shibatani 1976, c.f. Comrie 1981, Shibatani and Pardeshi 2001). However, this tendency has received little attention within the Australian context, where the focus has been on morphological causative forms. I begin to address this gap by considering how both morphological and syntactic methods are used to express causation in Wubuy, a language from northern Australia. I find that direct causation can generally be expressed via morphological derivational processes, whereas indirect causation cannot. When the causation is indirect, Wubuy speakers favour a syntactic construction that has never before been described for this language and which is also typologically uncommon for Australian languages more generally: indirect speech. This both contradicts Heath's (1984: 559) claim that Wubuy has no indirect speech construction and supports the crosslinguistic generalisations in the literature.

**Keywords:** reported speech; causative constructions; causation; argument structure; Australian indigenous languages.

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## 1. Introduction

Causation is usually described as consisting of two main types: direct and indirect causation. These are often conceptualised as the poles of a semantic continuum, and crosslinguistically, this semantic continuum has been shown to reflect a pattern of grammaticalisation/lexicalisation, with direct causation being more associated with unanalysable lexical units and indirect causation more often expressed with productive syntactic constructions (Shibatani 1976, c.f. Comrie 1981, Shibatani and Pardeshi 2001). Nonetheless, this crosslinguistic tendency has received little attention within the Australian context, where the focus has been predominately on morphological causative forms. In this paper, I begin to address this gap by considering how both morphological and syntactic methods are used to express different kinds of causation in Wubuy (also referred to as Nunggubuyu (Heath 1980, 1980, 1982, 1984, 1986)), a polysynthetic head-marking language from south-east Arnhem Land in Northern Australia.

Through a re-examination of Heath's (1980, 1982, 1984) volumes on Wubuy, as well as the collection of new data, it has been found that direct causation is usually expressed in Wubuy using morphological derivational processes, an example of which has been provided below with the derivational suffix *-jga* presented in bold font:<sup>1</sup>

- (1)    *ana-lhagabunulg*            *nginggu-yaalibi-jga-na*  
          NEUT.TOP-dust        NEUT/3FSG<sub>A</sub>-cough-**CAUS**-PRS<sup>2</sup>  
          'The dust makes her cough'

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise specified, the data reported in this paper comes from my fieldnotes from fieldwork carried out with Wubuy speakers in Darwin and Numbulwar between April-July 2012. Examples given here should not be further cited without seeking additional permission from the author and giving explicit acknowledgement of the source.

<sup>2</sup> The following abbreviations are used which are not covered by the Leipzig glossing rules: Ag – agent; ANAPH – anaphoric; COLL – collective noun class; FCI – future continuous imperative; FP – future potential; HUM – human; NEUT – neuter noun class; PC – past continuous; PP – past punctual; Pt – patient; RDP – reduplication; REL – relational; VEG – vegetable noun class. There are two series of pronominal agreement prefixes on verbs (represented by A and B subscripts), both of which have intransitive and transitive forms, and these are distributed according to the tense/aspect/mood (TAM) and polarity of the verb. In transitive prefixes, the subject gloss precedes / and the object gloss follows. Also note that the treatment of gender and noun class used in this paper differs slightly from Heath (1984). See Horrack (2010) for further details.

This morphological expression of causation is typical of Australian languages, with syntactic causatives being rare (or at least rarely discussed). However, I have found that in Wubuy, although direct causation can generally be easily expressed with morphological derivational processes, indirect causation cannot. Instead, when the causation is indirect, Wubuy speakers favour a syntactic construction that has never before been described for this language and which is also typologically uncommon for Australian languages more generally: indirect speech.

By considering notions of direct and indirect causation and by widening the focus to include syntactic causatives, this paper will present an account that clarifies the distribution of forms and constructions that are used to express causation in Wubuy. Not only does this account support typological observations in the literature that the distinction between direct and indirect causation reflects a pattern of grammaticalisation/lexicalisation, it also contradicts Heath's (1984: 559) claim that Wubuy has no indirect speech construction and presents the first description of indirect speech and syntactic causation in this language.

## **2. Wubuy: brief overview**

Wubuy is a polysynthetic, nonconfigurational and headmarking language from the Top End of the Northern Territory in Australia. It has been classified as a member of the Gunwinyguan language family (Alpher et al. 2003), and is mainly spoken around Numbulwar, a remote community in SE Arnhem Land on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria. There are also speakers living on Groote Eylandt to the east of Numbulwar and some who have migrated to Darwin. Wubuy is highly endangered; there are currently about sixty first language speakers, all of whom are over the age of fifty, and it has not been fully acquired by children since the 1950s (although there are varying degrees of proficiency in these younger generations) (Baker et al. 2010).

## **3. Reported speech in Wubuy**

'Reported speech' is generally defined as encompassing all methods by which a given utterance represents other utterances (Vološinov 1973: 112, c.f. McGregor

1994: 64). Within the Australian context, many indigenous languages, including Wubuy, have been described as having only one type of reported speech, ‘direct’ speech, with ‘indirect’ speech said to be relatively uncommon (Heath 1984: 559, McGregor 1994: 71, Aikhenvald 2011: 299).<sup>3</sup> These direct and indirect speech types are the main two that are discussed in the reported speech literature, and they have often been distinguished by the ‘perspective’ or ‘point of view’ from which they represent the reported utterance (c.f. Coulmas 1986, De Roeck 1994, McGregor 1994, Hirose 1995, Evans 2012).<sup>4</sup> For example, Evans (2012: 68-70) explains that in canonical direct speech, utterances are reported from the point of view of the original speaker in (what he calls) the ‘reported speech event’ (RSE), and this is represented by the fact that all features of the reported utterance “retain the deictic and other relevant values they would have in the RSE” (Evans 2012: 68-70). To demonstrate this, imagine I have just said to you in English, *She asked him, “Why are you jumping off the bridge?”*. Here, the second person pronoun ‘you’ in the reported utterance does not actually refer to you, the person listening to me; it refers to ‘him’, the third male singular addressee in the RSE. Canonical indirect speech, on the other hand, depicts the point of view of the reporting speaker in the ‘primary speech event’ (PSE), and all of these features in the reported utterance are instead “recast with the values they would have if calculated from the PSE” (Evans 2012: 68-70). Thus, if I said to you, *She asked him why he was jumping off the bridge*, the person of the pronoun in the reported utterance matches the person of the addressee in the RSE, as it is my point of view as the speaker in the PSE that is being represented.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The following are some examples of Australian languages described as having only a direct type of reported speech: Dyirbal (Dixon 2008); Ngalakan (Merlan 1983); Ngarinyin (Rumsey 1990); Mangarayi (Merlan 1982); Wubuy (Heath 1984).

<sup>4</sup> There is also a discussion in the literature on reported speech about the lack of a clear-cut distinction between direct and indirect speech, which results from descriptions of reported speech types that fall somewhere in between these extremes (c.f. Coulmas 1986, Haberland 1986, De Roeck 1994, Evans 2012). At this stage, it is unclear whether such an approach is appropriate for Wubuy due to currently limited data, so I leave this for future investigation.

<sup>5</sup> Evans’ (2012) terminology relating to the ‘primary speech event’ (PSE) and the ‘reported speech event’ (RSE) will continue to be used throughout this paper. However, note that terminology in the reported speech literature varies (e.g. McGregor (1994) uses ‘speech situation’ (SS) and ‘referent speech situation’ (RSS) to refer to PSE and RSE respectively).

Like most Australian languages, Wubuy has a direct form of reported speech, as shown in (2), where the point of view of the RSE is represented through the use of different persons when referring to the same referent in the reported utterance and in the RSE. The relevant pronominal agreement prefixes and glosses have been presented in bold font to highlight this difference:<sup>6</sup>

- (2) “*maduwa*      *manaama*              *ma-yaa-rrii*      ***ngaambu-jarrarri-i***,  
 tide              this.VEG.PROX      VEG-go-PRS      **1INCLPL<sub>B</sub>-move-FCI**  
*wuu-yami-jga-ynjii-ni*  
**3PL<sub>A</sub>-say-APPL-RECIP-PC**  
 “‘This tide is going. We will move quickly’, they were telling each other’  
 (Heath 1980: 128-129)

In this example, it can be seen that in the reported utterance, first person is used in the pronominal agreement prefix on the verb *ngaambu-jarrarri-i* ‘we will move quickly’, and this differs from the third person in the prefix on the reporting verb *wuu-yami-jga-ynjii-ni* ‘they were telling each other’ when referring to the same referent. Furthermore, the tense, aspect and mood (TAM) of the verbs in the reported utterance does not shift to the past continuous TAM used on the reporting verb; rather they retain the deictic reference according to the RSE. Similarly, the demonstrative used in relation to *maduwa* ‘tide’ stays proximate, rather than switching to anaphoric, which is what would be expected if the discourse was indirect (see Heath 1984: 559). Overall, this behaviour is characteristic of direct speech.

Interestingly, it appears that unlike many Australian languages, Wubuy also has an indirect form of reported speech. This runs contrary to Heath (1984: 559), who states that in Wubuy, “[e]ssentially all quotation, including quotation of unspoken decisions and other mental ideas, is direct”. He argues that “there is no well-defined indirect discourse construction of the English type (that complementiser,

<sup>6</sup> The pronominal prefix *wuu-* in (2) is a truncated form of *wurru-* ‘3PL<sub>A</sub>’ (Heath 1984: 78)

here-and-now oriented pronominal and tense usage)”, and the closest Wubuy comes to this is a construction which deals with “mental, rather than spoken, quotations”. This construction takes a nonverbal clause as a complement to the reporting verb and is used in contexts where something has been identified incorrectly by a referent in the narrative being told (Heath 1984: 559), as shown in the following example:

- (3) *ni-injama-yn, wu-lbal-mandhaayung anubani*  
 3MSG-think-PP COLL-country-Mandhaayung that.NEUT.TOP.ANAPH  
*nigawi-wugij ana-lhaal*  
 3MSG-only NEUT-country  
 ‘He thought he was still in his own Mandhaayung moiety country (when he was not)’ (Heath 1980: 150-151)

Heath (1984: 559) states that although tense is indeterminate, the use of third person pronouns and anaphoric demonstratives in the reported thought suggest that this could be a kind of partial indirect discourse (c.f. Heath 1980).

However, in contrast to Heath’s (1984: 559) claims, newer data suggests that there is, in fact, an indirect speech construction in Wubuy:

- (4) *ngarra-mani-nyung ngunu-yami-jga-na*  
 F-woman-HUM.SG 3FSG/3MSG<sub>A</sub>-say-APPL-PRS  
*niwu-juluba-na anu-nuga nigawi-nyinyung*  
 3MSG/NEUT<sub>B</sub>-hide-FCI NEUT-money he-GEN  
 ‘The woman tells him to hide his money’  
 (lit. the woman tells him he will be hiding his money)

- (5) *wunu-yami-jga-a*                      *du*                      *anubani*  
 3PL/3MSG<sub>A</sub>-say-APPL-PC    two(Kriol)    that.NEUT.TOP.ANAPH  
*na-wulmurr-inyung*                      *nivu-burra-ngi*,  
 M-young.man-HUM.SG    3MSG/NEUT<sub>A</sub>-sit.down.CAUS-PC  
*arrgi*    *wu-nuga*                      *oobani*                      *a-budhili-wuy*  
 some    NEUT<sub>REL</sub>-stone    that.NEUT.OBL.ANAPH    NEUT.OBL-bottle-ALL<sup>7</sup>  
 ‘The two (aunties) were telling the boy to put some money in the jar’  
 (lit. they were telling him he was sitting money in the jar)

When considering the above examples of reported speech, it can be seen that the use of third person for both the addressee in the RSE (e.g. see *wunu-yami-jga-a* ‘they were telling him’ in (5)) and the subject in the reported utterance (e.g. see *nivu-burra-ngi* ‘he was putting it (NEUT) down’ in (5)) is representing the perspective of the PSE, not the RSE. It is also interesting to note that in (5) the TAM of the verb in the reported utterance matches the past continuous TAM of the reporting verb *yami-jga* ‘to tell’.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, in this example, the demonstratives in the reported utterance are anaphoric, which Heath (1984: 559) argues is an indicator of indirect discourse. As discussed earlier, these are all said to be characteristics of indirect speech.<sup>9</sup>

Not only are these indirect speech reports in Wubuy interesting due to their previously undescribed status and their apparent rarity across Australian languages (or at least across *descriptions* of Australian languages); they are also interesting in

<sup>7</sup> Demonstratives and pronouns in Wubuy have complex morphology which has been simplified for the purposes of this paper. See Heath (1984) for a more detailed account of their morphological breakdown. Also, in this example, *wu-nuga* is a neologism meaning ‘money’ which is created from *nuga* ‘stone’ and the relational noun class prefix *uG-* ~ *wuG-* (see Heath 1984: 624). Furthermore, *burra* is an intransitive verb meaning ‘to sit down/be sitting’ which has become a transitive causative via tense, aspect, mood (TAM) paradigm shift, and *yami-jga* ‘to tell’ is an applicative form of the intransitive verb *yama* ‘to say’. These processes are discussed further in section 4.1.

<sup>8</sup> In (4) and (8), on the other hand the TAM of the reported utterance is located in the future, whereas the RSE is reported with present TAM. This could be an indicator of Evans’ (2012: 88) ‘biperspectival’ speech type. However, as I mentioned in an earlier footnote, I leave this possibility to future investigation due to the currently limited data.

<sup>9</sup> See McGregor (1994: 73) for a description of a comparable direct and indirect speech constructions in Gooniyandi, a non-Pama-Nyungan language from Western Australia.

that they appear to be the preferred means of expressing indirect causation in this language, and periphrastic expressions of causation are another area that has remained relatively understudied within the Australian context (and within the field of linguistics more generally).

#### 4. Expressing causation

Now that we have an overview of reported speech and the indirect speech construction in Wubuy, we can start to look at how this ties into expressing causation. However, first we need an understanding of what a ‘causative’ actually is. Although causation is often acknowledged as a fundamental cognitive category, as “every human language seems to possess a means of expressing the notion of causation” (Shibatani 2001: 1), crosslinguistic accounts have often struggled to provide a general definition of the causative construction according to formal characteristics, and this is largely due to considerable variation in how causation is expressed across the world’s languages. Instead, linguists have often defined the causative construction according to the type of situation or event that it expresses. For example, Song (2013a) defines it as follows (c.f. Shibatani 1976: 1-2, Comrie 1981: 158, Song 2001: 256-259):

The causative construction is a linguistic expression which denotes a complex situation consisting of two component events... (i) the causing event, in which the causer does or initiates something; and (ii) the caused event, in which the causee carries out an action, or undergoes a change of condition or state as a result of the causer’s action (Song 2013a).

He also explains that although the causative construction has been a recurrent topic for linguistic research over the past thirty years or so, most of this research has focused on nonperiphrastic (i.e. morphological) causatives (Song 2013a, 2013b). In fact, many language descriptions “discuss only the nonperiphrastic causative without even indicating whether or not a periphrastic [i.e. syntactic] causative construction is in use as well” (Song 2013a, 2013b). This is the case for Wubuy, with the only discussion of causative constructions being a brief description of a morphological derivational process (see Heath 1984: 393-395). This morphological process is demonstrated in (6) (reproduced from (1)), where the intransitive verb *yaalibu* ‘to cough’ takes the derivational suffix *-jga*, which



increases the verb's valency by introducing the causal argument 'dust', creating a derived transitive:

- (6)    *ana-lhagabunulg*        *nginggu-yaalibi-jga-na*  
          NEUT.TOP-dust        NEUT/3FSG<sub>A</sub>-cough-CAUS-PRS  
          'The dust makes her cough'

However, in certain contexts, the use of this morphological causative is not always acceptable to Wubuy speakers. Consider (7), where the causal argument has changed from 'dust' to 'doctor':

- (7)    *?na-doctor*        *ngu-yaalibi-jga-ngi*  
          M-doctor        3MSG/3FSG<sub>A</sub>-cough-CAUS-PC  
          'The doctor was making her cough'

Some Wubuy speakers found this sentence acceptable, while others did not. One speaker who found it unacceptable offered the indirect speech construction in (8) below as an acceptable alternative:

- (8)    *na-doctor*        *ngu-maga-na*                    *angi-yaali-bi-yn*  
          M-doctor        3MSG/3FSG<sub>A</sub>-tell-PRS        3FSG<sub>B</sub>-cough-FP  
          'The doctor tells/asks her to cough'  
          (lit. he tells her she will cough)  
          (Stimulus: the doctor makes her cough so that he can listen to it)

So why is it that the morphological causative is acceptable in some contexts but not always in others? And why might a Wubuy speaker use indirect speech as an alternative means of expressing certain causative situations?

In order to address these questions, I include syntactic causatives in my investigation of causative expressions in Wubuy, and I consider the possible alignment of different methods of expressing causation (i.e. nonperiphrastic vs. periphrastic) with one of two semantic subtypes: direct and indirect. In the literature on causation, the distinction between these types is often conceptualised as a continuum, and crosslinguistically, this semantic continuum has been seen to reflect a formal one, with direct causation being more associated with unanalysable lexical units and indirect causation more often expressed with productive syntactic constructions (Shibatani 1976, c.f. Comrie 1981, Shibatani and Pardeshi 2001). For Wubuy, it will be shown that nonperiphrastic causatives (i.e. morphological processes) are more aligned with direct causation, whereas periphrastic causatives (i.e. syntactic constructions such as indirect speech) are used as the preferred method of expressing indirect causation, which supports these typological observations.

#### 4.1 *Nonperiphrastic causatives*

According to Song (2013a), causative expressions constitute nonperiphrastic causative constructions when they have the following three properties. Firstly, they must be monoclausal, with the expression of the causer's action and the expression of its effect both contained within a single predicate (Song 2013a). Secondly, the causer must have a more grammatically 'prominent' status than the causee (e.g. the causer is subject, whereas the causee is object), and lastly, "the expression of the causer's action, be it an affix or a separate verb, should be without specific meaning" (Song 2013a). That is, it should only express the notion of causation (Song 2013a).

In Wubuy, there are two processes that meet these criteria, both of which increase the verb's valency by introducing a causal/permissive agent into the verb's argument structure (Heath 1984: 393). The first of these is the verb derivational suffix *jga* ~ *jgi*, which is demonstrated below:

- (9) *anubani* *ana-lhuyn,* *wu-rabii-ni*  
 that.NEUT.TOP.ANAPH NEUT.TOP-stringybark NEUT<sub>A</sub>-fall.down-PC  
 ‘that stringybark, it fell down’ (Heath 1980: 118)
- (10) *nirri-madha-madharra-ngi* *nii-rabi-jgaa*  
 1PL/NEUT<sub>A</sub>-RDP-chop-PC 1PL/NEUT<sub>A</sub>-fall.down-CAUS-PC  
 ‘we chopped it [tree] and made it fall down’ (Heath 1980: 467)

In (9), the verb *wu-rabii-ni* ‘it (NEUT) fell down’ licenses a single argument as subject, *lhuyn* ‘stringybark’ from the neuter noun class. If we compare this to (10), we can see the same verb with the derivational suffix *-jga*, which increases the verb’s valency by introducing a causal first person plural argument as subject, leaving the neuter argument to be realised as object instead. Thus, (10) ticks all the boxes for being classified as a nonperiphrastic causative: the causation is expressed in a single clause, the causer is more ‘prominent’ by being realised as subject instead of the causee, and the derivational suffix has no specific meaning.

It is also possible to express causation with certain verbs in Wubuy by shifting their TAM suffixation paradigm and by using a transitive, rather than an intransitive, verb agreement prefix (Heath 1984: 393). In Wubuy, each verb falls into a specific verb class which determines the form of its TAM suffixes. For example, a verb belonging to the NGA<sub>1</sub> verb class will take the suffix *-ngayn* to indicate past punctual TAM, whereas a verb from the A<sub>2</sub> verb class will take the suffix *-yn* to express the same TAM category. Now, rather than taking the derivational suffix *-jga* ~ *-jgi* to create a morphological causative, some intransitive verbs from the NGA<sub>1</sub> verb class will shift their inflectional suffixation paradigm to that of the A<sub>2</sub> verb class, and some intransitive verbs from the A<sub>2</sub> verb class will shift to taking the TAM suffixes of the I<sub>1</sub> verb class. For a demonstration of this, consider the following examples, where the verb has been presented in bold:

- (11) *bagu*                      *wu-burra-ngayn*                      *ana-amadbarrngga*  
 there.ANAPH    NEUT<sub>A</sub>-sit-PP                      NEUT.TOP-barracuda  
 ‘The barracuda sat there’ (constructed example, based on Heath, 1984)
- (12) *bagu*                      *niwu-burri-yn*                      *ana-amadbarrngga*  
 there.ANAPH    3MSG/NEUT<sub>A</sub>-sit.CAUS-PP    NEUT.TOP-barracuda  
 ‘He put a barracuda down there (lit. he sat it down)’ (Heath 1980: 79)

The verb in (11) is the underived intransitive form of the verb *burra* ‘to sit’ from the NGA<sub>1</sub> verb class, so it has an intransitive pronominal agreement prefix and takes the suffix *-ngayn* to indicate past punctual TAM. In (12), by contrast, the same verb has undergone TAM paradigm shift to become *niwu-burri-yn* ‘he sat it (NEUT) down’, with a transitive pronominal agreement prefix and the suffix *-yn* from the A<sub>2</sub> paradigm to express the same TAM category.

Looking at the argument structures of the underived verbs in these examples of nonperiphrastic causatives, both *rabi* ‘to fall’ and *burra* ‘to sit’ are intransitive and license a single patientive argument.<sup>10</sup> However, when they undergo the morphological processes outlined above, the verb’s valency is increased so that it also licenses an agent, and this agent causes the patient to undergo a change of condition or state. Furthermore, in both cases, the agent is realised as subject instead of the patient, which now gets realised as an object. Figure 1 provides a basic representation of this:

<sup>10</sup> The approach to semantic roles and argument structure presented here is influenced by Dowty’s (1991) work on proto-roles and treatments of this in the Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG) literature (c.f. Ackerman 1992, Alsina 1992, Zaenan 1993, Alsina 1996, Alsina 1997, Ackerman and Moore 2001).

Underived		Derived		
<i>rabi</i>	'fall < P <sub>t</sub> >	<i>rabi-jga</i>	'fall-CAUS < Ag, P <sub>t</sub> >	
	SBJ		SBJ	OBJ
<i>burra</i> <sub>NGA1</sub>	'sit < P <sub>t</sub> >	<i>burra</i> <sub>A2</sub>	'sit.CAUS < Ag, P <sub>t</sub> >	
	SBJ		SBJ	OBJ

**Figure 1.** Changes in argument structure and grammatical functions made by morphological causatives

This pattern is relatively consistent throughout instances of these morphological processes, as they usually only take intransitive inchoative or stative verbs as their input (i.e. verbs that do not already license an agentive argument). This suggests that morphological causatives in Wubuy are aligned with direct causation, which is typically conceptualised as a single event involving an agentive causer and a patientive causee, for “[w]hen the causee is patientive, the execution of the caused event is wholly dependent on the causer’s action”, which generally “entails a spatiotemporal overlap of the causer’s activity and the caused event, to the extent that the two relevant events are not clearly distinguishable” (Shibatani and Pardeshi 2001: 89).

#### 4.2 Periphrastic expressions of causation

When a verb that already licenses an agent is used as the input for a morphological causative process in Wubuy, it may either have an applicative interpretation, where a patient is introduced instead of an agent (McGregor 1998, c.f. Austin 2005), or it is generally deemed to be ungrammatical. When the latter occurs, language informants have offered indirect speech as a more acceptable periphrastic method of expressing the causative situation, as shown in the examples below (which have been reproduced from (4) and (5) respectively):

- (13) *ngarra-mani-nyung*      *ngunu-yami-jga-na*  
 F-woman-HUM.SG    3FSG/3MSG<sub>A</sub>-say-APPL-PRS  
*nivu-juluba-na*                      *anu-nuga*                      *nigawi-nyinyung*  
 3MSG/NEUT<sub>B</sub>-hide-FCI    NEUT-money    he-GEN

‘The woman tells him to hide his money’

(lit. the woman tells him he will be hiding his money)

(Stimulus: the woman made the man hide his money)

- (14) *wunu-yami-jga-a*                      *du*                      *anubani*  
 3PL/3MSG<sub>A</sub>-say-APPL-PC    two(Kriol)    that.NEUT.TOP.ANAPH  
*na-wulmurr-inyung*                      *nivu-burra-ngi,*  
 M-young.man-HUM.SG    3MSG/NEUT<sub>A</sub>-sit.down.CAUS-PC  
*arggi*      *wu-nuga*                      *oobani*                      *a-budhili-wuy*  
 some    NEUT<sub>REL</sub>-stone    that.NEUT.OBL.ANAPH    NEUT.OBL-bottle-ALL

‘The two (aunties) were telling the boy to put some money in the jar’

(lit. they were telling him he was sitting money in the jar)

(Stimulus: the two aunties make the boy put some money in the jar)

Song (2013b) notes that “it is well known that the morphological process involved in the nonperiphrastic causative is rarely completely productive” and “it is very likely that most of the languages shown as employing only the nonperiphrastic causative may also have other means of expressing causation, i.e. the periphrastic causative construction”. He states that unlike nonperiphrastic causatives, periphrastic causative constructions must be biclausal, with the expression of the causer’s action in a different clause to the expression of the causee’s action or change of state/condition (Song 2013b). However, similarly to nonperiphrastic causatives, the causer and the predicate of cause must be more ‘prominent’ or ‘foregrounded’ than the causee and the predicate of effect, and “the expression of the causer’s action should be without specific meaning” (Song 2013b).

Comparing this to Wubuy, the indirect speech constructions above are clearly biclausal, with a transitive reporting verb (such as *yami-jga* in (13) and (14)) encoding the causal agent and introducing the caused event (e.g. the man hiding the money in (13) and the boy putting money in the jar in (14)), which is expressed as a separate predicate and encodes the causee as its agent. The causer and the causer's action also appear to be more prominent, as this reporting verb encodes the causer as subject and the causee as object, and it takes the predicate of effect, in which the causee is an agentive subject, as a complement. However, it is not possible to determine if indirect speech in Wubuy meets the final requirement based on the current corpus, and additional data needs to be collected that demonstrates whether or not the reporting verb is providing semantic information about the causing event being some kind of spoken command. Furthermore, whether or not causation is actually entailed with the indirect speech construction has yet to be investigated. Nonetheless, McGregor (1994: 90) notes the following in relation to reported speech in Gooniyandi, a non-Pama-Nyungan language from Western Australia which has a similar indirect speech construction to Wubuy:

The seriousness of reports in Gooniyandi narratives becomes evident when it is observed that the report is normally tantamount to the doing – lies aside (these are usually indicated as such), a report in the past tense normally indicates that something did occur, and in the future also, and it is not strictly necessary to follow the quote up with a statement that the situation did occur (McGregor 1994: 90).

In the Wubuy indirect speech constructions that have currently been identified, the reporting verb is always in a past or future TAM. Therefore, if it turns out that Wubuy is similar to Gooniyandi in using past and future tense in a reported utterance to indicate that it probably did occur, it is possible that reporting verbs in Wubuy could, in fact, be used in a manner resembling periphrastic causatives. However, even if indirect speech in Wubuy does not meet the criteria of a traditional periphrastic causative, Wubuy speakers still prefer it over morphological processes when expressing causative situations involving multiple agents. This suggests that it may be aligned with indirect causation, as this is usually conceptualised as consisting of two sub-events, a causing event and a caused event, both of which involve an agentive participant (Shibatani and Pardeshi 2001: 89).

(15) *warra-adadii-ni* *ana-adadin-gny*  
 3PL/COLL<sub>A</sub>-go.up.slope.APPL-PC NEUT.TOP-shore-ALL  
 ‘They [people] were taking them [yams] up onto the shore’  
 (Heath 1980: 437)

In (15), the intransitive verb *adada* ‘to go up slope’ has undergone TAM paradigm shift from A<sub>2</sub> to the I<sub>1</sub>, resulting in an increase in valency and a change of semantics to *adadi* ‘to take up slope/onto shore’, expressing a sense of joint-motion. As discussed by McGregor (1998: 174-175) in relation to a similar construction in Warrwa, another non-Pama-Nyungan language from Western Australia, the third person plural referent that is coded as subject in (15) is most likely to correspond to the original argument in the agnate intransitive clause because it is clearly in control of this joint-motion, seeing as the other argument ‘yams’ is inanimate.<sup>11</sup> This means that rather than introducing another agent into the verb’s argument structure, the TAM paradigm shift introduces a patientive argument. A basic representation of this is provided in Figure 2:

<sup>11</sup> McGregor (1998: 174-175) discusses the difficulty in deciding which of the arguments in an example like (15) corresponds to the single argument licensed by the underived form of the same verb, because in the derived form, both participants necessarily change position. For Warrwa, McGregor (1998: 174-175) argues that there are two reasons why the latter option is more likely, and these are also relevant to Wubuy. Firstly, he states that an examination of the Warrwa corpus usually reveals no examples of the relevant verbs in their intransitive underived forms with inanimate arguments incapable of independent movement (McGregor 1998: 174). Secondly, he argues that “while it is true that both participants in the transitive clause move, it does not appear to be true that their movement would necessarily be describable in terms of the agnate intransitive clause” (McGregor 1998: 174-175).



Underived	Derived
<i>adada</i> <sub>A2</sub> ‘go.up.slope < Ag <sub>i</sub> >’	<i>adadi</i> <sub>I1</sub> ‘go.up.slope.APPL < Ag <sub>i</sub> , Pt >’
 SBJ	 SBJ   OBJ

**Figure 2.** Changes in argument structure and grammatical functions made by morphological applicatives

This appears to be typical of motion verbs in Wubuy that undergo this TAM paradigm shift or take the *-jgi* ~ *-jga* suffix.

Similarly, in (16) below, the verb *amaja* ‘to thief’ already licenses an agent, but when it is put through a morphological causative derivation, it is found to be unacceptable:

- (16) \**nguna-amaji-jga-na*  
 3FSG/3MSG<sub>A</sub>-thieve-CAUS-PRS  
 ‘She is making him thief’

What this seems to indicate is that in Wubuy, it might not be possible (or at least not preferable) for a single verb to license multiple agents, and as a result, it would be uncommon for a single verb to express indirect causation. Instead, when the causation is indirect, meaning that there is both an agentive causer and an agentive causee, it seems that the two agents need to be licensed by different verbs, and this could reflect the fact that “when the causee is an agent with its own volition, a degree of autonomy is accorded to the caused event” (Shibatani and Pardeshi 2001: 89).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> It appears that some intransitive verbs in Wubuy may vary between licensing an agent or a patient. For example, compare (6), which is readily accepted by Wubuy speakers, to (7), which received variable reactions with regard to its acceptability. This could have something to do with the fact that you can cough without volition (i.e. as a patient) or with volition (i.e. as an agent). In (6), ‘dust’ would be a causer of nonvolitional coughing, whereas in (7), the doctor is more likely to be a causer of volitional coughing, which is why some speakers found the use of the morphological causative unacceptable.

## 5. Conclusions

In conclusion, by considering notions of direct and indirect causation and by including syntactic causatives in the investigation of causative expressions, we are able to better account for the distribution of forms and constructions that are used to express causation in Wubuy. Essentially it has been found that direct causation can generally be expressed easily with morphological processes, whereas indirect causation cannot. Instead, indirect causation can be expressed periphrastically with indirect speech, which is interesting as both indirect speech and syntactic causation are relatively rare in descriptions of Australian indigenous languages. This also supports typological observations in the literature that the distinction between direct and indirect causation reflects a pattern of grammaticalisation/lexicalisation, and it represents the first description of indirect speech in this language.

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