

Iraqi EFL Learners use of Causative verbs

Prof. Razzaq N. Mukheef

Mr. Yasir Mohammed Saleh

Aseel Amer Mohammed

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 The problem

Iraqi EFL cannot use causative verbs appropriately. They may misunderstand the behavior of the causative verbs. Causative verbs express causality which means that there is something or someone causing something else to happen or occur and such meaning maybe expressed differently, for example the causative "have" has a construction which is different from the construction of "make" as a result the learners have a semantic difficulty as well as structural one.

1.2 The Aims

The present study aim at:

1. Presenting a comprehensive study about the causative verbs.
2. Identifying the difficulties faced by the learners.

1.3 Hypotheses

The researcher hypothesizes that:

1. Iraqi EFL can't differentiate between the verbs that express causes such as (make, have and get).
2. Iraqi EFL can't understand the causative verbs semantically and syntactically and even they understand that the subject of the following sentence is the doer of the action, for example "**Tom** had his hose painted".
3. Most of the learners mix the causative verbs with past perfect semantically and structurally.

1.4 Significance

This paper is of some significance to the learners, teachers, and the researchers.

1.5 Limits

The researcher limits herself to three kinds of causative verbs which are (get, make, and have). The sample of the test is limited to the fourth year students at the Department of English / College of Education / University of Babylon.

1.6 Procedures

The following procedures will be followed in this research:

1. Giving a general explanation about the concept of causative verbs as well as about the causes of certain causative verbs.
2. Presenting a comprehensive study about three kind of causative verb which are (get, make, and have).
3. Applying a test to the fourth year students.
4. Presenting conclusion.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Study of Causative Verbs

2.1 The concept of causative Verbs

Leech et al.(1989:78) state that the causative verbs express the meaning of causality which means that some one or maybe something makes something else to happen or occur. There are important and essential causative verbs in English such as (make, get, have, open, skill, start, ...). Here are different example on the causative verbs:

1. His awful jokes made us all laugh.
2. how do you get your kids to behave so well?
3. I have my hair done every week. (I bid.)

In term of structure, Quirk and Green baum (1973: 365) show that the causative verbs such as (have, let, make)take infinitive verb, for example:

4- They had / let / made Bob teach mary.

Also Alexander (1988 :247) adds that causative verbs may take past participle, for example:

5- I've just had my car repaired.

Look at the example (3) to have another example on such structure.

Mubarak (1999 :6) states that causative verbs hold between two events which are involved in a sentence whether a causative verb is a stative or dynamic, for example:

6- Susan's screaming caused Fred to drop the tray.

Mubarak (1999 :7) states that the most clearest method of understanding the concept of the causative verbs is by referring to the situation which is called "the causative situation" that a expression clarifies as a result there should be two happenings to form "causative situation" if the following states are available:

- 1- "The relation between the two events is such that the speaker believes that the occurrence of one event, the caused event has been realized at time (t_2), which is after time one (t_1), the time of causing event"
- 2- The relation between the causing event and the caused event is that the occurrence of the caused event is completely dependent on the happening causing event.

2.2 The Causes of Causative Verbs

2.2.1 The Agent

Quirk and Green boum (1974: 171) state that a subject may take the role of AGENT, causing something to be happened by the virtue of a verb and the subject in this case is supposed to be (animate), for example;

7- John opened the door.

While Leech and svartvik (1975: 103) clarify that a subject in a clause is supposed to take the role of 'ACTOR' when the subject is a person who is achieving an event, for example:

8- some children started the fire (i.e 'caused the fire to start)

(Ibid.) add that a subject may take the role of "AGENT" in a passive only, for example:

9- It was started by some children.

In this sentence, the researcher finds that since this sentence is in a passive so the semantic role of the subject which is preceded by "by prepositional" is "AGENT".

On the other hand, Mubarak (1999: 21) clarifies that verbs which express causality can adopt agency role of subjects whether the subject is animate or inanimate regardless of whether a sentence is in passive or active, for example;

10- The fire killed John. (inanimate)

11- John opened the door. (animate)

2.2.2 The Instrument

Leech and Svartvik (1975: 103) show that with absence of the actor, the instrument or means takes places and replaces the position of the actor, for example:

12- The train brought the supplies.

While Mubarak (1999: 23) states that if the agent is absent, the subject will take the role of instrument which is supposed to be inanimate, for example:

13- When it was fired, the gun killed many people.

14- The avalanche destroyed several houses. (Quirk and Green baum: 1974: 172).

2.3 The Various Forms of Causative Verbs

Alexander (1988: 246) gives a table which shown the causative verb occurs in different forms such as (present + its branches, past, future and its branches and modals). The following table shown the tendency of a causative verb in behaving just like other verb. The researcher takes (HAVE) as a sample of causatives.

Table (1): The forms of the causative verbs

No.	<i>The forms of tenses</i>	<i>The application of the forms on (HAVE)</i>
1.	Present Simple	- We have our house decorated every year
2.	Present continuous	- We having our house decorated soon
3.	Present perfect	- We have just had our house decorated
4.	Past simple	- We had our house decorated last year
5.	Future (simple)	- We will have our house decorated next year
6.	Future (progressive)	- We will be having our house decorated next year
7.	Modal with progressive aspect	- We may be having our house decorated soon

Salim (2005: 124) shown the same idea of different forms of tenses in which causative "have" has undergone the same application of tenses which Alexander shows. Also Salim adds that by applying the different forms of tenses on "have" , we will have "passive causative". The researcher finds that there is similarity between Alexander's and Salim's tables so the researcher finds that there is no need to repeat the same pattern or table, referring that salim has the same idea of causatives to occur in different forms.

2.4 "HAVE" as Causative Verbs

Salim (2005: 121) states that causality can be expressed by the verb "HAVE", indicating that someone performs something for somebody else. The verb "HAVE" occurs in different constructions showing the sense of causality so the researcher will come across to these constructions one by one. The first construction is as follows:

- Have (in any form) + object + past participle.

Such construction is used to show that there is something done for somebody to fulfill (services), for example / 15- kate had her house cleaned.

Or to show (accidents or happenings), for example: (Ibid).

16- Jane had her arm broken.

Or to show and express (misfortunes, bad omens), for example:

17- They had their house burgled. (Ibid).

Foley and Hall (2003: 106) indicate that the construction of (HAVE + object + past participle) gives passive meaning which is achieved to the subject by external one and such action is bad, for example:

18- Liz had her passport stolen.

Alexander (1988 :248) adds various uses of the construction (HAVE + object + past participle). All the following uses of causative "HAVE" express meaning. The first use is "the sense of experience" shown that someone has undergone for experience, for example:

19- You have had it explained often enough!

In the above example, the addressee has undergone an ample explanation for something that is to say a topic or a specific subject.

The second use is to express sense of allowance for example:

20- I refuse to have my house used as a hotel.

The third use is to describe the present result of action in the past, for example:

21- we now have the problem solved. (Ibid).

The second construction of causative "have" is as follows:

(HAVE + object + infinitive)

Swan (2005: 209) clarifies that the second construction is used to give order instructions by a speaker to a listener, for example:

22- I'm ready to see Mr. Smith. Have him come in, please.

23- the manager had everybody fill out a form. (Ibid).

While Radford (2004:99) through out giving examples on the construction (Have + object + infinitive), gives impression that "Have" shows the meaning of experience when there is occurrence of an infinitive with causative "Have", for example:

24- The teacher had students walk out on her.

25- I've never had anyone send me flowers.

The third construction of causative "have" is as follows: Have +object + verb(ing)

Swan (2005: 209) shows that to use the above structure means "case somebody to be doing some thing.

For example / 26- He had us laughing all through the meal.

2.5 "GET" as Causative Verbs

Alexander (1988: 248) shows that, in comparing between "have" and "get", causative "Get" can convey the sense of causality which "contains a stronger idea of action by the subject", for example:

27- I must get this car serviced soon.

He also adds that causative "Get" contains the sense of difficulty and in this point Larsen freeman (1999: 653) agrees with Alexander adding that in conveying the sense of difficulty by using "Get" there should be two subject. The first subject which is the subject of the main clause uses persuasion to convince the second subject of the embedded clause to do something for the first subject, for example:

28- I got Ray to give me five dollars. (Ibid).

The causative "Get" can have the first construction (get + person + to + verb) to trick someone to do something which seems to be unpleasant to the receiver, for example: (<http://www.englishpage.com>) .

29- Susie got her son to take the medicine even though it tasted terrible.

Foley and Hall (2003: 106) show that the causative "get" can have the second construction (get + object + past participle) to present passive meaning which done to the subject by some one else and this is not good, for example:

30- John got his tyros slashed by some hooligans.

Also the previous construction can be used to give orders, for example:

31- Get that mess cleaned up at once! (Ibid).

Swan (2005: 200) introduces the third pattern of causative "get" is : (Get + object + v(ing)). This pattern is used to show the idea that there is somebody or something is beginning to do something else, for example:

32- don't get him talking about his illness.

33- Once we get the heater going the car started to warm up. (Ibid).

2.6 "MAKE" as Causative Verbs

Mubarak (1999: 12) gives certain features about causative "make" doesn't admit progressive aspect as a causative. The second feature is that the verb "make" as a causative doesn't permit complement with "the perfective aspect" and "make" in this feature contradicts "oblige" as a causative .

Larsen Freeman (1999: 653) clarifies the fact that the causative "make" shows that the subject of "the main clause" has some sort of power on "the subject of the infinitive, for example:

34- He made a stranger on the street give him five dollars.

The causative "make" has the following structure (Subject + Make +person + base form of verb) to express the fact that someone wants someone else to specific thing. ([esl.about.com/od/grammar_structures/a/causative .htm](http://esl.about.com/od/grammar_structures/a/causative.htm) google).

For example:

35- peter made her do her home work.

36- The teacher made the students study after class.

On the other hand, "make" as a causative occurring in the same previous structure can express the idea of obligation or force. (<http://www.englishpage.com>)

For, example:

37- My teacher made me apologize for what I had said.

38- She made her children do their home work.

39- Did somebody make you wear that ugly hat?

Swan (2005: 314) adds another structure of causative "make" in which "make" is either followed by myself or yourself or other reflexive pronouns and past participle with certain of perception such as (heard, understood), for example:

40- I don't speak good French, but I can make myself understood.

41- She had to shout to make herself heard.

(Ibid) adds another construction for "make" which is (make + to+ infinitive) to indicate passive meaning, for example:

42- She was made to repeat the whole story.

Chapter Three

The test

3.1 Testing

Al-Joboury (1999:1) define a test as a systematic way of measuring the student's performance in the language to have a conclusion of what the student can do with language and what can't do.

3.2 The Characteristics of a good test

3.2.1 Validity

Brown (2004:22) define validity as "the extent to which inferences made from assessment results are appropriate, meaningful, and useful in terms of the purpose of the assessment". It must be borne in the mind that a test has both face validity and content validity.

3.2.1.1 Face Validity

Boyle and Fisher (2007:65) state that face validity basically means "does the test look as if it measures what it says it measures". (1)

3.2.1.2 Content Validity

(Ibid) show that content validity can be defined as "the degree to which the test questions fairly represent what the test is intended to measure".

(1) In this concern, the test has been approved by the following Jury:

1. Asst. Prof. dr. Riyadh Tariq Al-Ameedi.
2. Lect. Hussain Hameed Mayuff.
3. Lect. Dunya Mohammad.

3.2.2 Reliability

Brown (2004: 20) states that a test is said to be reliable if the test is given to the same student under different occasions with the same results.

3.3 The Sample

The test has applied to the students from fourth class of Department of English college of Education / Safi Al-Deen Al-Hilli University of Babylon /during the academic year 2011 – 2012.

3.4 Test Material

Most items of the test have been selected from the references mentioned in chapter two.

3.5 Test Design

The test consists of two questions. The first question is set to measure the answers at the recognition level and this question consist of ten items. There are three kinds of causative verbs used in question one which are (get, make, and have) and also these verbs used to convey another meaning which totally differs from the causative one. The student's task is to differentiate whether the following verbs (get, make, and have) express causality or not.

The second question is designed to measure the student's performance at the production level. It consists of ten items as well as the student's are given example on each the following causative verbs (get, make, and have) to assist them to formulate a sentence with causative verb.

3.6 Analysis of The results of The test

Table (2) shown the findings of the test of question one and table (3) shown the finding of the test of question two.

Table (2): The results of the test at the recognition level

<i>items</i>	<i>No of correct answer</i>	<i>percentage</i>	<i>No of incorrect answer</i>	<i>percentage</i>
1.	16	64 %	9	36 %
2.	21	84 %	4	16 %
3.	13	52 %	12	48 %
4.	22	88 %	3	12 %

5.	15	60 %	10	4 %
6.	16	64 %	9	36%
7.	20	80 %	5	20 %
8.	17	68 %	8	32 %
9.	15	60 %	10	40 %
10.	13	50 %	12	48 %
Total	168	67 %	82	59 %

Item (4): the number of the correct answer in this item which rates (22,88%) is higher than the number of incorrect answer because in brief, this question depends on guessing and actually the students are good at guessing and also they may cooperate among each other to pass the answer for this item. Also the same matter for other items of the correct answer which have higher rates than the rates of incorrect answer.

Table (3): The results of the test at the production level

<i>items</i>	<i>No of correct answer</i>	<i>percentage</i>	<i>No of incorrect answer</i>	<i>percentage</i>
1.	9	36 %	16	64 %
2.	4	16 %	21	84 %
3.	17	25 %	8	32 %
4.	17	25 %	8	32 %
5.	16	64 %	9	36 %
6.	18	72 %	7	28 %
7.	16	64 %	9	36 %
8.	6	24 %	19	67 %
9.	4	16 %	21	84 %
10.	7	28 %	18	72 %
Total	114	37 %	136	53 %

Concerning question two which measures the production level, item 92):the number of correct answer which rates (4,16%) is lesser than the number of incorrect answer because the students face semantic and structural difficulties in understanding the behavior of causative verbs. Two signs for the difficulties. The first one is that the students solve item (2) as if it was past perfect so the follow the causative verb with another verb in past participle and again this shows that the students face another

difficulty in understanding the subject of the causative verb. The second sign is that some of the students deal with the sentence that contains a causative verb with strange ordering of the elements of the sentence. This oddness in dealing with a sentence that contains a causative verb is shown through out the placing of the verb with past participle at the end of the sentence and this is done in most of the answer of this item so again this reflects that the students misunderstand the causative verbs structurally and semantically.

Item (6): the number of correct answer rates (18,72%) is more than the number of incorrect answer because item (6) is easy in structure as well as in semantics so the students can easily write the required answer. Also the same for other items such as items(3, 4, 5, 7) which have rates higher than the rates of the incorrect responses due to the ease of the structure.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

The number and percentage of correct answer of question one, which measures the recognition level, (168,67%) which are more than the number and the percentage of incorrect answer (82,59%) these difference are caused by the fact that question one depends on guessing only so the students may guess the correct answer without having any piece of knowledge about the subject. The higher number and percentage of correct answer are justified by the idea of guessing and it is normal to have a higher percentage in question one.

All the production level, the number and the percentage of correct answer (114,37%) are lesser than the number and percentage of incorrect answer (136,53%). These differences between the correct and incorrect answer are justified by the fact that the students face real problem in producing causative verbs and fitting the causative within the structure of the sentences. Further more, the students mix the construction of causative verbs with the construction of past perfect and this is ample evidence that students are unaware of how to use the causative verbs in sentences to get causative meaning.

To overcome the difficulties the students face in producing causative verbs more detailed explanations must be given to show the students how causative verbs

behave in sentences and how the causative verb "make" is different from the two causative verbs "have and "get" structurally.

Also the students are supposed to be give details about the subject which means the doer of the action of the causative verbs.

Appendix 1

The Test

Q1) Indicate whether the following verbs are causative or non-causative in the sentences below:

1. His awful jokes made us laugh.
2. sally gets the letter.
3. I got my roof repaired.
4. Bob had been working all the day.
5. liz had passport stolen.
6. Kate had her house cleaned.
7. She makes a good deal to her father.
8. My teacher made me apologize for what I had said.
9. john gets a high mark in physics.
- 10.I got the ceiling painted.

Q2) Complete the second sentence in each of the pairs below, using the italic words in first sentence:

Example: Robert asked the painter to *paint his living room*.

- a. Robert his living room painted.
 - b. Robert has his living room painted.
 - c. Robert made the painter paint his living room.
1. Frank asked the shoe-mender to *repair his shoes*.
- Frank got
 2. Mr. smith ordered the men to *remove his piano into the hall*.
- Mr. smith had
 3. They asked *Bob to teach Mary*.

- They made
- 4. Suha authorized the surgeon to *remove her appendix*.
 - Suha had
- 5. Mike asked the oculist to *test his eyes*.
 - Mike got
- 6. She obliged *her son to cry*.
 - She made
- 7. The mother asked *her daughter to clean the house*.
 - The mother makes
- 8. Mr. Black asked the porter to *put the luggage in the room*.
 - Mr. Black got
- 9. Mr. Wilson told the builder to *build a garage near the house*.
 - Mr. Wilson had
- 10. She asked *her sister to cut her hair*.
 - She must get

Appendix 2.

Q1)

1. Causative.
2. Non- Causative.
3. Causative.
4. Non- Causative.
5. Causative.
6. Causative.
7. Non- Causative.
8. Causative..
9. Non- Causative.
10. Causative.

Q2)

1. frank got his shoes repaired.
2. Mr. Smith had his piano moved into the hall.
3. They made Bob teach Mary.

4. Suha had her appendix removed.
5. Mike got his eyes tested.
6. She made her son cry.
7. The mother makes her daughter clean the house.
8. Mr. Black got the luggage put in the room.
9. Mr. Wilson had a garage near the house.
10. She must get her hair cut.

Bibliography

- Alexander, L.G. 1988. Longman English Grammar. London: Longman.
- Al-Juboury, N. 1999. A language Teacher's Guide to Assessment. Baghdad: university of Baghdad.
- Boyle, J. and Fisher, S. 200. Educational Testing. Oxford: BPS Blakwell.
- Brown, D. 2004. Language Assessment. SN Francisco: Longman.
- Foly, M. and Hall, D. 2005. Advanced Learner's Grammar. Edinburgh: Longman.
- Larsen – Freeman, D. 1999. The grammar Book. U.S.A: Library of congress.
- Leech, G. and Svartvik, J. 1974. A communicative Grammar of English. London: Longman.
- Leech, G. and Cruickshank, B. and Lvanic, R. 1989. An A-Z of English Grammar and Usage. London: Longman.
- Mubarak, L. 1999. the semantic and syntax of English Causative Verbs. Un published.
- Quirk, R. and Green baum, S. 1973. A concise Grammar of Contemporary English. New York: Seminar press.
- Quirk, R. and Green baum, S. 1974. University Grammar of English. London: Longman.
- Radford, A. 2004. English Syntax Ian Introduction. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Salim, N. 2005. An Introduction to English Grammar Syntax. Amman: Dar Al-Mutaz.
- Swan, M. 2005. Practical English Usage. Oxford: Oxford University press.

Internet Sources

- (Esl.about.com/od/grammar structures/a/causative .htm) google. /20/10/2011.
- (<http://www.englishpage.com>) 20/10/2011.