

# The Lexical Causative in the *Zuozhuan*

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## Abstract

The lexical causative IS a prominent phenomenon In Archaic Chinese, which relates to many aspects of the language, including its morphology, syntax (particularly the subcategorization of verbs), semantics, and the interface between semantics and syntax. Moreover, its diachronic change is generally believed to have direct bearings on emergence of the V(erb)R(esultative) Construction-a widely discussed issue in Chinese historical grammar. Though there is now a substantial body of literature on this topic, previous research has been predominantly descriptive and taxonomic in nature, and limited to one aspect or another of the phenomenon. The present dissertation differs from earlier studies in that it provides a comprehensive treatment of the issue based on data from the *Zuozhuan*, and, drawing insights from Construction Grammar and recent research in lexical semantics and typology, prompts a new line of

inquiry into Archaic Chinese syntax. It is argued that the lexical causative should be understood as the result of "fusion" between verbs and two distinct constructions — Direct Causative Construction and Change Construction. Success of the fusion is determined by semantic properties of the constructions and verbs. A new markedness pattern based on the Typological Markedness Theory (Greenberg 1966; Croft 1990, 2001) is proposed to explain the relationships between relevant verbs and constructions. This markedness pattern not only provides a satisfactory account of the *Zuozhuan* data, but also appears to have cross-linguistic validity.