

Cognitive-Functional Structuring Of Conceptual Causality In English

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Received: 15 September 2025; **Accepted:** 08 October 2025; **Published:** 12 November 2025

Abstract: This article explores the conceptual structuring of causality in the English language through cognitive and functional linguistics. Causality is interpreted as a dynamic conceptual model that reflects how human cognition perceives and verbalizes causal relations between events. The research examines analytical causative constructions involving make, let, have, get, and cause, emphasizing their role in representing event-relational meaning in discourse. The study argues that causality in English is realized not only by morphological and lexical means but also through syntactic patterns and contextual configurations that manifest conceptual motivation. The results demonstrate the interdependence of grammatical form, semantic function, and conceptual structure, expanding the understanding of causality as a multidimensional linguistic category and opening new prospects for contrastive studies with agglutinative languages such as Uzbek.

Keywords: Conceptual structuring, causality, cognitive linguistics, functional grammar, valency, event-relational meaning, analytical construction, English language.

Introduction: In the modern paradigm of cognitive and functional linguistics, the category of causality is no longer interpreted as a purely grammatical or logical phenomenon but as a fundamental conceptual mechanism that organizes human perception of the world. The study of causal relations occupies a central position in understanding how speakers process and interpret inter-event dependencies through linguistic structures. Proceeding from stated above, causality is viewed not simply as a relation between two events but as a dynamic conceptual structure reflecting the speaker's interpretation of agency, control, and intentionality. Consequently, the exploration of causality requires a synthesis of semantic, syntactic, and cognitive approaches that jointly reveal its multi-layered nature.

The English language, due to its predominantly analytical structure, provides rich material for

examining how causal meaning is represented through various syntactic and lexical patterns. Analytical constructions involving the verbs make, let, have, get, and cause illustrate how causative semantics is actualized by means of grammatical and conceptual interaction. These constructions demonstrate the close interaction between linguistic form and conceptual content, showing how speakers select particular configurations to express different degrees of causal involvement and agent. Thus, causality in English is not a static category but a flexible and dynamic representation of event-relational cognition.

The topicality of the research is determined by the growing interest in the cognitive mechanisms underlying language structures and their typological manifestations. While numerous studies have addressed causativity from syntactic or morphological perspectives, relatively fewer works have explored its conceptual organization within the functional-

cognitive model of language. The present research aims to fill this gap by providing an integrative interpretation of causality as a conceptual and communicative category. This approach enables a deeper understanding of how linguistic expression reflects mental conceptualization and how cognitive and grammatical factors interact in the formation of meaning.

The object of the research is the system of linguistic means expressing causality in the English language.

The subject of the study is the conceptual and functional mechanisms that determine the realization of causality in syntactic constructions.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the ways in which causal relations are structured, and interpreted in modern English from a cognitive-functional perspective. The main tasks of the study include:

1. identifying the linguistic markers and syntactic models that express causality;
2. examining the interaction between causative semantics and event structure;
3. determining how cognitive principles of conceptualization influence grammatical expression.

The research methodology combines structural-semantic, functional, and cognitive analyses supported by contrastive-typological and discourse approaches. This methodological synthesis allows for a comprehensive study of causality as a multidimensional linguistic phenomenon includes formal, semantic, and conceptual aspects.

The scientific novelty of the research is the reinterpretation of causality as a form of conceptual structuring rather than a mere grammatical category. By integrating cognitive and functional approaches, the article reveals how causality serves as a mediator between linguistic form and mental representation, reflecting the speaker's subjective construal of events.

The results contribute to the development of contemporary linguistic theory and can be applied to contrastive studies, particularly between English and agglutinative languages such as Uzbek.

The structure of the article includes an introduction, a theoretical framework analyzing the concept of causality within cognitive and functional linguistics, a section on the linguistic mechanisms of causality realization in English syntax, and concluding remarks summarizing the main findings and potential directions for further research.

Linguistic representation of causation underdetermines the mental model to which it corresponds: that is the normal state of affairs for any

linguistic representation. Causation is a relation between a two events and a caused event. Causation has a temporal dimension: the causing event must precede the caused event. Causation is counterfactual: if the causing event had not occurred, the caused event would not have occurred either.

The content of the research. F.F. Fortunatov, A.I. Smirnitsky, M.V. Panov and other followers of Moscow linguistic school proceeded from the interpretation that the word is always grammatically formulated and its not the simple sum of meanings of its morphemes, but a phraseological unit taken together. English word structure also is divided into main and formal parts, for example, in the words tables, benches we find two parts: 1) table -, bench-, 2) - s, -es. Most of the English words such as a book, a pen, a chair coincide with the Uzbek words bola, kitob, qalam where the root and formulated independent word coincide formally. Linguistic analysis of these words shows that these words which are similar to their roots are divided into the main and formal parts. The formal part is expressed implicitly that is by the zero morpheme. The zero morpheme's grammatical meaning is defined on the basis of the binary opposition with the other form of this word, for example:

- 1) write \emptyset (Present Simple)→wrote (Past Simple);
write \emptyset (Active Voice)→is written (Passive Voice);
write \emptyset (Indicative Mood)→(You) write (Imperative Mood).
- 2) boy \emptyset (singular)→boys (plural);
boy \emptyset (common case)→boy's (genitive case).

The definition of the character of the word structure in the English language is important in this article as the expression of causal meaning of the verb will be defined within the limits of one and the same lexical meaning where non-causative form of the verb acquires some shade of causative meaning being formulated synthetically or analytically.

Analysis of the English fiction shows that the meaning of causation is productively expressed by the combination of the auxiliary verb let/make/cause/get/have with the notional verb. In connection with productivity of the auxiliary verbs let, make, cause, have, get in combination with notional verbs in order to give the latter additional causal meaning, these auxiliary verbs are reasonable to consider not as link verbs, but as analytical forms paralleled to the affixal morphemes.

The examples selected from the English novels show that causal meaning given by these auxiliary verbs in combination with notional verb is so standardized that it is reasonable to consider them as the analytical

markers of causation. They differ from the link verbs which are used to form compound nominal predicate in the sentences like "I am a teacher", "The wall is white", where the auxiliary verb "to be" is used in the function of the link verb; let, make, cause, have, get differ from their lexical and grammatical homonyms, used in the sentences like "That makes it five hundred and fifty-five.", "I had my bicycle stolen.", "He makes a good husband."

In English, together with the usage of auxiliary verbs combined with the notional verbs for expressing causal meaning there exists the usage of the direct object after the intransitive verbs in order to express causative meanings. In this case we must pay attention to the binary opposition of non-causative with the causative form:

1. He worked his servants hard. → He worked hard; 2. The captain marched him off. [D.2, p. 513]. → The captain marched off.

As we have seen in the given above examples the usage of the direct object after the intransitive verb makes the latter transitive attaching the additional meaning of causation to its lexical meaning, at the result of which the lexical meaning of the verb is preserved. In this case the causative meaning is expressed by the order of words on the syntactical level of the language. The usage of the direct object after the intransitive verb can be transformed by the usage of one of the auxiliary verbs make/let/cause/have/get in combination with the notional verb: 3. "Poor fellow, he isn't used to walking, and I've hurried him on so", said Eliza [S., p. 93]. → 3b. "Poor fellow he isn't used to walking, and I've made him hurry on so", said Eliza. 4. I led that boy a dog's life [St., p. 73]. 5. It's something scandalous the way they work us, poor devils. [L.1, p. 154]. 6. They ran the car to the end and both got off. [D.2, p. 454].

This way of expressing the meaning of causation can be used in the Passive voice either: 7. She was worked to death. [L.1, p. 40].

In the article the expression of the meaning of causation is considered on the basis of whether the causative usage of the verb enters the binary opposition with its non-causative form, whether the form has the meaning of causation and whether the causative meaning has the causative form, as the form and the meaning are interconnected and interdependent on each other. Proceeding from this interpretation it is reasonable to speak about the real and the pseudo-causative usage of the transitive/intransitive verb in combination with the direct object:

Examples: 8. When you have roused the wild beast that sleeps in people and set it on the church ... [V., p.

310]. 9. Miss Ophelia had several times tried to awaken her material fears about Eva, but to no avail. [S., p. 349]. 10. But the one influence that was ... changing him now was his infatuation for Hortense Briggs. [D.1, p. 124]. 11. As soon as Ben Gunn saw the colours he came to a halt, stopped me by the arm, and set down. [St., p. 153].

In the examples given above causation expressed by the order of words in the sentence, that is by using the direct object after transitive or intransitive verbs, can be expressed by the combination of the causative auxiliaries with the notional verbs: When you have made the wild beast that sleeps in people rouse ...; Miss Ophelia had several times tried to make her material fears awaken ...; But the one influence that was making him change was his infatuation ...; As soon as Ben Gunn saw the colours he came to a halt and made me stop by the arm ...

Pseudo-causative usage of the combination of transitive/intransitive verb with the direct object is of three kinds: 1) lexicalized causative, 2) verbs having causative meaning without causative form, 3) imaginary causative.

1. Lexicalized causative consists of non-causative and "causative forms", where the latter has lost its additional causative meaning and acquired a new lexical meaning which differs from the meaning of the "non-causative": He and my mother run that and the mission. [D.1. p. 216]. It was love that had worked the revolution in him. [L.1, p. 192].

2. Verbs having causative meaning without non-causative form. These verbs are not included in the system of causative forms in the article proceeding from the interpretation given above. These verbs are to set, to frighten, to kill, to show, to bring; the verbs formed from nouns, such as to knife, to empower; the verbs formed from adjectives, such as to lighten, to empty, to warm, to enlarge, to enrich; the verbs formed from adverbs, such as to up (the flag), to aside (the book).

3a. Imaginary causative is the intransitive verb when receiving the direct object becomes transitive and acquires the new lexical meaning: The sailor looked at him and gravely nodded his approval [L.1, p. 41]. In this example the intransitive verb to nod receiving the direct object did not acquire the additional causal meaning, but it acquired the new lexical meaning expressing the means of expressing his consent by nodding his head.

3b. Imaginary causative is intransitive verb which acquires transitivity after receiving the direct object, but in this combination the verb does not acquire the additional causal meaning. In this case we find the

cognate object where the root of the object is originated from the root of the verb: to live a life, to die the death of a hero, to laugh a silver laugh, etc. This phenomenon is used for stylistic aims in order to make the fact emotional.

3c. Imaginary causative is used with the expressive object: to beam satisfaction. Besides, the imaginary causative is used where the preposition of the indirect object is absorbed: to sit – to sit (on) a horse, to talk – to talk (about) business, to chat – to chat (about) a person. This usage of imaginary causative is also used for stylistic aims in order to make the text emotional and colourful.

Analysis of the English texts shows that besides analytical-morphological expression (make/let/get/cause to+object+verb), the grammatical category of causation is observed on the syntactical level of the English language. The interpretation given for the definition of the non-causative/causative forms excludes the phenomena not meeting the method of systemic description at the result of which pseudo-causative cases have been observed and these cases are not included in the system of grammatical expression of causation in this work.

CONCLUSION

The present study has examined the conceptual structuring of causality in the English language through a cognitive-functional approach, revealing that causality functions as a multidimensional linguistic and conceptual category. The analysis of examples selected from the English novels, those involving the auxiliary verbs make, let, have, get in combination with notional verbs demonstrated that causal relations are represented on the morphological level of the language analytically, and those examples where the use of the direct object after intransitive verbs express different shades of causality manifest that causality is expressed on the syntactical level of the language.

The study has shown that English causative constructions serve as analytical markers of event-relational cognition. Their productivity and flexibility indicate that speakers use them to express various shades of agency, control, and intentionality. The observed phenomena of real and pseudo-causative usages confirm the dynamic nature of causal conceptualization, where grammatical structure interacts with conceptual motivation to produce meaning. The syntactic level, in particular, reveals that causality can be expressed through word order and argument structure, further illustrating the systemic interaction between grammar and cognition.

The theoretical significance of the research lies in its reinterpretation of causality as a conceptual

structuring mechanism that mediates between form and meaning. The functional and cognitive approach adopted in this study deepens understanding of linguistic causality as a reflection of mental and communicative processes. The findings contribute to the broader development of typological linguistics and can be effectively applied in cross-linguistic research, especially in comparing English with agglutinative languages such as Uzbek, where causative relations are predominantly expressed morphologically. The practical value of the study is associated with its contribution to linguistic theory, methodology of teaching English syntax and semantics, and translation studies, where understanding the conceptual mechanisms of causality facilitates accurate interpretation and equivalence of meaning. Future research may expand this investigation toward discourse-level analysis and the comparative study of conceptual causality in different language families, providing further insights into the interaction between cognition, grammar, and communication.

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