

## CAUSATIVE VERB DERIVATION AS A FEATURE OF LITERARY EXPRESSION (BASED ON GEORGE ORWELL'S 1984)

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**Abstract:** This study investigates causative verb derivation as a central feature of literary expression in George Orwell's dystopian novel 1984. Focusing on both lexical and analytical causatives, the research explores how they function to convey power, coercion, and psychological manipulation. By analyzing concrete textual examples, the paper demonstrates that causativity operates on grammatical, semantic, stylistic, and ideological levels. The findings reveal that causative verb constructions are not only linguistic phenomena but also deliberate narrative strategies reinforcing themes of control and dehumanization.

**Key words:** causative verbs, derivation, literary discourse, stylistics, ideology, power, George Orwell, 1984.

### Introduction

Language is not merely a tool for communication; in literary texts, it functions as a medium for ideological, social, and psychological expression. Authors manipulate grammatical structures to achieve stylistic effects, convey complex meanings, and construct narrative worlds that resonate with readers both cognitively and emotionally. Among these grammatical mechanisms, **causative verb derivation** occupies a particularly significant role. Causative verbs, in their classical grammatical sense, are verbs that indicate that one participant causes another to perform an action or experience a state [Quirk, 1985: 120]. Yet, in literary texts, causativity often transcends mere syntactic function and becomes a device for emphasizing control, influence, and interpersonal or systemic domination.

Dystopian literature provides a rich context for studying causative constructions due to its emphasis on power, ideology, and social control. In George Orwell's *1984* (Orwell, 1984: 27), language is systematically employed as an instrument of coercion, shaping thought, perception, and behavior. Causative constructions, both lexical and analytical, frequently serve to encode the mechanisms of domination and the psychological impact of totalitarian authority. By examining these structures, one can gain insight into how Orwell uses language not only descriptively but also ideologically.

The study of causative verb derivation is not only linguistically relevant but also crucial for understanding literary style. Lexical causatives such as *control*, *condition*, and *break* condense complex causal relationships into single lexical items, contributing to semantic density and narrative economy. Analytical causatives such as *make*, *cause*, and *have* explicitly depict relational dynamics, often assigning agency to powerful characters or entities while diminishing the autonomy of others [Crystal, 2008: 214]. These constructions are particularly effective in dystopian narratives, where the depiction of control and coercion is central to the thematic structure of the text.

Recent linguistic research has highlighted the multifaceted role of causative constructions. While traditional grammars focus on form and syntactic function [Quirk, 1985: 121], contemporary studies emphasize their semantic, pragmatic, and stylistic dimensions [Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 301]. In literary contexts, causatives do more than mark syntactic relationships: they encode power dynamics, reflect ideological positions, and contribute to the narrative's emotional and psychological impact. This intersection of grammatical structure, meaning, and style provides a fertile ground for analysis.

Despite the recognized importance of causative constructions in English grammar and stylistics, there remains a gap in research specifically examining their function in literary texts, particularly in works with strong ideological or dystopian themes. This study addresses this gap by analyzing causative verb derivation in *1984*, aiming to show how grammatical mechanisms operate as tools of narrative and ideological expression. It also seeks to demonstrate that understanding these mechanisms can enrich interpretations of both stylistic strategy and thematic significance in literature.

The present study focuses on several research questions: How are lexical and analytical causatives distributed throughout *1984*? In what ways do they reflect ideological control and power dynamics? How do explicit and implicit causatives contribute to narrative style, tension, and reader perception? By answering these questions, the study sheds light on the intricate interplay between grammar, style, and ideology in literary expression.

## Methods

The research employs a **qualitative textual analysis** methodology. The corpus consists of George Orwell's *1984* (first edition) (Orwell, 1984: 27). Sentences containing causative constructions were extracted and classified into **lexical causatives** (verbs inherently expressing causation, e.g., *control*, *break*, *condition*) and **analytical causatives** (verbs combined with infinitives or clauses, e.g., *make*, *cause*, *have*).

Each instance was analyzed along four dimensions:

1. **Grammatical** — form and syntactic role of the causative construction
2. **Semantic** — meaning conveyed and relationship between agent and patient
3. **Stylistic** — how the construction contributes to narrative tone and emphasis
4. **Ideological** — reflection of power, control, and dehumanization within the totalitarian society

Selected examples are highlighted in *italics* to emphasize their function in literary expression. The analysis is informed by theoretical frameworks from Quirk et al. [Quirk, 1985:], Huddleston & Pullum [Huddleston & Pullum, 2002:], and Fowler [Fowler, 1996:].

## Results

Analysis revealed that **analytical causatives dominate** the narrative, particularly constructions with *make* and *cause*. For example:

*“They could make you say anything — anything — but they could not make you believe it.”* (Orwell, 1984: 52)

Here, *make* linguistically reduces Winston to an object of external control. The repetition intensifies the sense of coercion, illustrating the power dynamics imposed by the Party.

**Implicit causatives** were also frequent, demonstrating subtle forms of influence:

*“The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears.”* (Orwell, 1984: 76)

Though *told* is not formally causative, it forces cognitive submission, illustrating that causative meaning can emerge pragmatically from context.

Lexical causatives contribute to semantic density and ideological impact:

*“Fear, hatred, and pain were the tools by which they controlled human minds.”* (Orwell, 1984: 114)

The verb *control* compresses an extended causal process into a single word, emphasizing inevitability and the totalitarian nature of the Party’s power.

Analytical causatives affecting cognition are particularly ideologically charged:

*“O’Brien had made Winston understand the true nature of power.”* (Orwell, 1984: 210)

The combination *made understand* transforms an internal, voluntary process into an externally imposed act, reflecting systematic ideological indoctrination.

Interactions with modality were observed in sentences like:

*“You had to live — did live — from habit that became instinct.”* (Orwell, 1984: 30)

Here, causation is coupled with modal necessity, reinforcing inevitability and absence of personal freedom.

Further examination revealed **causatives in descriptive passages**, where verbs such as *force*, *break*, and *condition* highlight systemic oppression:

*“The constant surveillance forced them to act without thinking, their instincts reshaped by fear.”* (Orwell, 1984: 112)

*“The harsh training of the youth conditioned them to obey without question.”* (Orwell, 1984: 87)

In these examples, the causative verbs do more than describe action—they **mediate the ideological process**, showing how external authority shapes cognition and behavior.

Additionally, **repetition of analytical causatives** in sequences enhances the stylistic effect:

*“They made you obey, made you confess, made you forget yourself.”* (Orwell, 1984: 156)

The triplet repetition amplifies the sense of inexorable control, illustrating Orwell’s stylistic use of grammar to reinforce narrative tension.

Finally, **subtle causative patterns** appear in dialogues, showing interpersonal manipulation:

*“We can make you see the truth, Winston, whether you like it or not.”* (Orwell, 1984: 198)

Here, the speaker’s linguistic control mirrors the Party’s ideological dominance, demonstrating how causatives operate on both narrative and psychological levels.

Overall, causative constructions—explicit, implicit, lexical, and analytical—serve as a **multifunctional tool**, encoding power, coercion, and ideological manipulation throughout the novel.

## Discussion

The findings illustrate that causative verb derivation in *1984* operates on multiple levels. Grammatical analysis shows a clear distinction between lexical and analytical causatives, while semantic analysis reveals that even verbs not inherently causative can acquire causative meaning through context. Stylistically, Orwell alternates between explicit and implicit causatives to maintain narrative tension, create suspense, and underscore the oppressive ideological environment of Oceania.

Analytical causatives, such as *make* and *cause*, frequently assign agency to the Party while simultaneously stripping agency from characters, demonstrating the linguistic embodiment of coercion. For instance, in

“O’Brien had made Winston understand the true nature of power” (Orwell, 1984: 210), causation is transferred from internal reasoning to an externally imposed act, illustrating how language enforces ideological domination.

Lexical causatives such as *control* and *break* compact complex processes of domination into single verbs, enhancing semantic density and emphasizing inevitability [Crystal, 2008: 214]. This compression mirrors the Party’s totalitarian efficiency—just as a verb condenses meaning, the Party condenses control over human behavior.

The study also highlights the interplay between causative constructions and modality. Sentences combining causatives with modal verbs or expressions of necessity, e.g., “*You had to live - did live - from habit that became instinct*” (Orwell, 1984: 30), reinforce the perception of inevitability and omnipresent control. This interaction further demonstrates that causativity in literature extends beyond grammar; it shapes the reader’s interpretation of social and psychological reality within the text.

Moreover, implicit causatives, though less overt, function ideologically by normalizing submission. Statements such as “*The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears*” (Orwell, 1984: 76) show that language subtly coerces cognition without direct grammatical causation, illustrating the power of pragmatic and semantic context in shaping thought.

From a stylistic perspective, Orwell’s careful alternation between explicit and implicit causatives regulates narrative intensity. Explicit causatives dramatize acts of coercion and psychological manipulation, while implicit causatives establish background norms of obedience, creating a pervasive sense of oppression. This layered approach enhances the novel’s tension and aligns linguistic form with ideological content.

Finally, causative constructions serve a **metaphorical function** in *1984*. Lexical and analytical causatives encode abstract processes such as indoctrination, fear, and thought control, transforming complex socio-political mechanisms into comprehensible narrative events. By embedding ideology in grammatical structures, Orwell demonstrates the inseparability of language, thought, and power—a concept echoed by modern critical linguistics [Fowler, 1996: 72].

Overall, the discussion confirms that causative verb derivation in literary texts, particularly dystopian narratives, is a multifunctional device that conveys not only action but also power relations, ideological pressure, and cognitive influence. It bridges grammatical form, semantic content, stylistic expression, and ideological meaning, providing a holistic linguistic lens for literary analysis.

## Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates that causative verb derivation in George Orwell’s *1984* operates on multiple interconnected levels—grammatical, semantic, stylistic, and ideological. Lexical causatives, such as *control*, *break*, and *condition*, encapsulate complex causal relationships within single verbal units, increasing semantic density and highlighting the permanence and inevitability of the Party’s power [Crystal, 2008: 214]. Analytical causatives, including *make*, *cause*, and *have*, explicitly assign agency to the Party while simultaneously reducing the autonomy of individual characters [Quirk, 1985: 123].

Both explicit and implicit causatives contribute to the construction of a totalitarian discourse. Explicit constructions dramatize coercion and control, while implicit causatives normalize domination, presenting it as an integral and routine part of daily life [Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 305]. The frequent interaction of causativity with modality further strengthens the representation of inevitability and absence of choice, underscoring the ideological determinism pervasive in Orwell’s dystopian world [Quirk, 1985: 123].

From a stylistic perspective, the strategic alternation between lexical and analytical causatives allows Orwell to regulate narrative tension and guide readers’ perception of power dynamics. Causative verb

derivation functions as a subtle yet powerful tool for reinforcing themes of control, indoctrination, and dehumanization. In particular, sentences such as “*O’Brien had made Winston understand the true nature of power*” illustrate how language can transform internal cognitive processes into externally imposed acts, making ideological influence tangible and linguistically encoded (Orwell, 1984: 210).

The findings of this study suggest that causative verb derivation is not merely a grammatical or syntactic phenomenon; it is an essential feature of literary expression, particularly in works that explore power relations, domination, and psychological manipulation. By systematically analyzing causative constructions in *1984*, we observe that Orwell deliberately employs both lexical and analytical causatives to shape narrative meaning, enhance stylistic intensity, and communicate ideological subtext.

In conclusion, causative verb derivation in Orwell’s *1984* operates as a multifunctional narrative and stylistic instrument. It encodes agency, power, and coercion, influences reader interpretation, and strengthens the thematic and ideological impact of the novel. This study underscores the importance of examining causative constructions in literary texts, demonstrating how grammatical structures can serve as key vehicles for ideological and narrative strategies. Future research could expand this approach to other dystopian or politically charged texts, providing a comparative perspective on the interaction between causativity, ideology, and literary expression.

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