

THE CAUSATIVE/PERMISSIVE

使役動詞 しえきどうし

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THE CAUSATIVE -“SHIEKI-DOSHI”

使役動詞

Formation

i. ICHIDAN Verbs:

Full form:

Add “-saseru” to negative base.

たべる → たべない → たべ+させる = たべさせる／食べさせる

The resulting verb is still an ICHIDAN verb.

Short form:

Add “-sasu” to negative base.

食べる → たべない → たべ+さす = たべさす／食べさす

The resulting verb now inflects as a GODAN verb.

ii. GODAN Verbs:

Full form:

Add “-seru” to negative base.

言う → いわない → いわ+せる = いわせる／言わせる

書く → かかない → かか+せる = かかせる／書かせる

出す → ださない → ださ+せる = ださせる／出させる

持つ → もたない → もた+せる = もたせる／持たせる

The resulting verb inflects as ICHIDAN

Short form:

Add “-su” to negative base.

言う → いわない → いわ+す = いわす／言わす

書く → かかない → かか+す = かかす／書かす

出す → ださない → ださ+す = ださす／出さす

持つ → もたない → もた+す = もたす／持たす

The resulting verb inflects as GODAN

IRREGULAR Verbs “kuru” & “suru”

くる／来る has irregular formation こそせる／来させる

short form こそす／来さす

する has irregular formation させる

short form さす

Usage.

At the time of writing it would seem that comment on the the acceptability or otherwise of the use of the short form is avoided by many writers on the subject of Japanese language education. My impression is that, perhaps because shorter is easier, the short form is being used more as time passes. In anycase, usage may be seen as being in a state of change, (isn't it always?) and at present I have not been able to find much agreement regarding the questions as to whether the short form has any special meaning or whether it is always an acceptable alternative. For the learner, the long forms (-saseru and -seru) are safe at least until life in Japan teaches what is and is not used.

The “Causative” has no simple parallel with English. There are two complications:

- i. **The causative can be said to have two meanings which seem to an English speaker to be quite the opposite of each other, namely:**

*to **MAKE** someone or something do something, and secondly, to **LET** someone do something.*

This may seem strange, but what they have in common is that the same vertical relationship of authority is involved in either case. In other words, one could *make / let someone do something* only if there is a relationship such as exists between parent and child, teacher and pupil, human and animal, human and inanimate object.

- ii. As implied above this verb form involves **cultural factors related to the way Japanese classify relationships** and how these are expressed in language. Where such a relationship of accepted authority as mentioned above does not exist, then the causative verb construction may not be appropriate, even though the English way of expressing such a situation may suggest it is the same as that in which the Japanese might use the causative.

For example, in English we often say:

“I will get X to do Y” as in “*I’ll get the electrician to come*” or,
“*I got Tanaka san to translate it.*”

In such cases because I am not in a position of accepted authority over these people the causative is not appropriate. Instead, the Japanese might use **verb + te + morau or itadaku:** e.g,

でんきやさんにきてもらう。

電気屋さんに来てもらう。

I’ll get the electrician to come.

たなかさんにやくしていただきました。

田中さんに依頼していただきました。

THE CAUSATIVE AND INANIMATE OBJECTS:

The Causative is used not only for influence over people. It may be used to express the idea of causing inanimate objects to act.

このおどりをおどって、あめをふらす／ふらせる。

この踊を踊って、雨を降らす／降らせる。

We will do this dance and make it rain.

ビールをながく入れすぎたから、こおらして／こおらせて しまったんです。

ビールを長く入れすぎたから、凍らして／凍らせて しまったん です。

I put the beer in for too long and froze it.

まいしゅうにちようび、このこうえんでなんにんかのひとがちいさなひこうきをリモコンでとばす／とばせる。

毎週日曜日、この公園で何人かの人が小さな飛行機をリモコンで 飛ばす／飛ばせる。

On Sunday every week at this park, some people fly small planes by remote control.

THE CAUSATIVE AND TRANSITIVE VERBS:

Transitive verbs already have an object. When used in the causative, an extra object is made, i.e. the thing which was the original object and now the thing or person made or allowed to act. But in Japanese the object particle を can only occur once for each verb. So, the following sentence pattern is used:

person influenced + に, original object + を + causative verb.

Consider the following which has an object indicated by を and a “shudai” indicated by は.

うちのこは まいにちピアノを ひきます。

うちの子^は 毎日ピアノ^を 弾きます。

If we re-express it using the causative, both “piano” and “our child” will become something like objects of the new causative verb ひかせる as follows:

うちのこ^に まいにちピアノ^を ひかせます。

うちの子^に 毎日ピアノ^を 弾かせます。

I make/let our child play the piano every day.

A similar example:

まいにち、うちのこ^に このくすり^を のませます。

毎日、うちの子^に この薬^を 飲ませます。

I make/let* my child take this medicine every day.

* “let” is logically unlikely but grammatically possible.

わたくしは まいにち、うちのこに このくすりを のませます。

私は 毎日、うちの子に この薬を 飲ませます。

But if we use this sentence as a subordinate clause は is replaced by が:

わたしが まいにちうちのこに このくすりを のませているのをしていますか。

私が 毎日うちの子に この薬を のませているのを知っていますか。

Do you know I am making* our child take this medicine everyday?

* “let” is logically unlikely but grammatically possible.

THE CAUSATIVE AND INTRANSITIVE VERBS:

Intransitive verbs have no object so normally they have no use for the case particle を. However, when used in the causative the person or thing caused to act can be considered an object. Therefore, **we can find either を or に used with the causative of intransitive verbs**, but they are not always interchangeable.

うちのこ を／に ちゅうごくへいかせた。

うちの子 を／に 中国へ行かせた。

I made/let my son/daughter go to China.

こども を／に こうえんであそばせた。

子供 を／に 公園で遊ばせた。

I made/let the children play in the park

In the above, a strong preference for “o” was voiced by a number of native speakers I consulted. It was also suggested that “ni” would sound right if “uchi no ko” were stressed. Another suggestion is that while “o” sounds rather objective like a mere report of some action taken, the use of “ni” sounds as if there is more empathy or feeling between the causer and causee.

More on this topic under # 2 below.

More Information to consider:

THREE DIFFERENCES, THE “CAUSATIVE - PASSIVE” AND THE VERBAL SUFFIX “-GARU” .

- 1) The difference between “make” and “let.”
 - a) with “helping words” to make the difference clear
 - b) with verbs for “giving” & “receiving” (やる. くださる. くれる. もらう etc.)
- 2) The difference between を and に, when there is a choice.
- 3) The difference between the long and short forms of the causative.
- 4) When verbs are made “causative” in the long form, they inflect like ICHIDAN verbs and the meaning includes “make someone do something.” This meaning lends itself easily to being made passive with the “causative” as the “shuda” or as the subject. The resulting expression then means “(I) am/ was made to do something.”
- 5) The causative with adjectives expressing states of mind and body, including the “-tai” form of verbs.

1) HOW TO EXPRESS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “MAKE” & “LET.”

1a) by using extra words to enhance the meaning:

While it is not completely obvious in the simple examples given above whether “make” or “let” is the intended meaning, in normal use there is little need for ambiguity. Clarity will come from either or both the context or the extra words which can be used to make the meaning clear. Examples of such additional “helping words” to enhance the meaning are:

いやがる	not want to/dislike
むりに／むりやり	forcibly, against someone’s will.
すきなだけ	as much as one likes

eg ひとにビールをのませる。
人にビールを飲ませる may mean either: “make or let someone drink beer.”

But by adding the above expressions any ambiguity can be removed.

いやがる ひとにビールをのませるのはだめですよ。

嫌がる 人にビールを飲ませるのは駄目ですよ。

You shouldn’t pressure people to drink beer when they don’t want to.

This meaning is even stronger if **むりに／無理に** or **むりやり** is used:

いやがる ひとにビールを **むりやり** のませるのはだめですよ。
嫌がる 人にビールを **無理に** 飲ませるのは駄目ですよ。
Don't force people to drink beer against their will.

こんばん、みんなにビール **すきなだけ** のませましょうか。
今晚、皆にビールを **好きなだけ** 飲ませましょうか。 can only mean:
Tonight, shall we let everyone drink as much beer as they like?

HOW TO EXPRESS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "MAKE" & "LET." CONT.

- 1b) by using the causative + verbs of giving and receiving (referred to as Type 3 verbs in this programme)

A common and useful construction using the causative, is the combination of “-te form” with one of the 6 verbs:

やる	あげる
くれる	くださる
もらう	いただく

The meaning of this structure can be understood more easily by interpreting the verb in the causative as meaning “*permission to do.....*” while the verbs above mean “*to give or receive*” then the combination means “*give/receive permission to.....,*” as in “*I was allowed to go home early.*” “*The teacher let me go home earlier.*” “*I let him swim in the river.*” “*May I use this.*” e.g:

(せんせいに) はやくかえらせて もらいました／いただきました。
(先生に) 早く帰らせて もらいました／いただきました。

I was allowed to go home early (by the teacher.)

せんせい は／が はやくかえらせて くれました／くださいました。
先生は／が 早く帰らせて くれました／くださいました。

The teacher let me go home early.

かわでおよがせて やりました／やった。
川で泳がせて やりました／やった。*

I let him swim in the river.

* As “**ageru**” is in theory used only when giving to an “equal” or “superior” it should be difficult but perhaps not impossible to conceive a situation when it would be right to combine “**ageru**” with the idea of “giving permission,” (i.e., to a superior) but younger Japanese are now using “**ageru**” with less discrimination and use it even when “giving to inferiors.” Such language use would have been inconceivable a generation ago and reflects a general change in the observance of what might be

つかわせていただけますか。
 使わせていただけますか。
 May I use this please?

つかわせて もらいました／いただきました。
 使わせて もらいました／いただきました。
 I was given permission to use this, (and am grateful.)

つかわせていただけないでしょうか。
 使わせていただけないでしょうか。
 I wonder if you might be good enough to let me use this.

せんせいにつかわせていただきました。
 先生に使わせていただきました。
 The teacher was good enough to let me use this.

See also the footnote at the end of these notes.

MORE ABOUT THE 6 VERBS OF "GIVING & RECEIVING"

Note the function of these 6 verbs to express an action or favour being given or received between people related by some kind of vertical relationship, referred to as "jo-ge kankei." (上下関係) See Ex E5

Note how the use of the particles and the direction of "giving ⇔ receiving" changes depending on which pair of verbs is used.

やる : あげる

receiver	the subject is giver		direction of giving the
	I, we (は／が)	→→→→→→→	you, him/her, they (に)
	you (は／が)	→→→→→→→	him/her, they (に)

くれる : くださる

s/he, they (は／が)	→→→→→→→	you, me, us (に)
you (は／が)	→→→→→→→	me, us (に)

もらう : いただく

the subject is receiver	direction of giving	the giver
I (は／が)	←←←←←←←	you, him/her, them (に : から)
you (は／が)	←←←←←←←	him/her, them (に : から)

2) THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN を AND に WHEN EITHER IS POSSIBLE

When the verb in the causative is transitive “o” is not an option, and “ni” will be used with the word for the person or thing caused or allowed to act. Note that the particle “o” is still needed to accompany the original object with the causative of the transitive verb, as in the examples already given:

うちのこにまいにちピアノをひかせます。
うちの子に毎日ピアノを弾かせます。

まいにち、うちのこに このくすりを のませます。
毎日、うちの子に この薬を 飲ませます。

However when the verb is intransitive either を or に is possible but not interchangeably. In “A Dictionary of Basic Japanese Grammar” Makino & Tsutsui say (P389):

“When *ni* is used, the causee has taken the action *intentionally*. For example *ni* is ungrammatical in (1) because the causee did not intend to go to the party:

- (1) ちちは わたしを／*に* むりやりパーティーへ いかせた。
父は私を／*に* むりやりパーティーへ行かせた。
My father made me go to the party (against my will.)

Also, *ni* is ungrammatical in (2) because the causee is a non-volitional entity (*in ordinary English that means it can't make decisions by itself. P.K.*) and therefore can not take voluntary action:

- (2) わたしはハンカチを／*に* しめらせた。
私はハンカチを／*に* 湿らせた。

I dampened my handkerchief.

Note: I have slightly edited the above quote. (P.K.)

Therefore according to this explanation, it would also be correct to report the fact that by washing one's residential windows one can invariably cause it to rain, using the particle “o,” but not with “ni.”

うちのまどガラスをみがくといつもあめを／*に* ふらす。
うちの窓がラスを磨くといつも雨を／*に* 降らす。
When I clean the windows at home I always make it rain.

あめを／*に* ふらすには、いえのまどガラスをみがきます。
雨を／*に* 降らすには、家の窓ガラスを磨きます。
To make it rain, you clean your windows at home.

However, I am unable to say that the Makino & Tsutsui distinction is the last word on the subject because native speakers I questioned accept expressions which don't follow this explanation. Another suggestion which perhaps softens but does not contradict the above explanation, is that while “o” sounds rather objective like a mere report of some action taken, the use of “ni” sounds as if there is more empathy or feeling between the causer and causee.

Other examples of the use of “o” and “ni”:

わたしにしょくじだいはらわせてください。

はなこはちょうじょ を／に かいものにかせた。
花子は長女 を／に 買い物に行かせた。
Hanako got her eldest daughter to do the shopping.
(either “o” or “ni” depending on the appropriate nuance.)

たろうははなこをなかせた。
太郎は花子を泣かせた。
Taro made Hanako cry.
(Presumably she didn't want to cry so “o” is correct, but if the circumstances were that Hanako needed Taro's instructions to cry, then “ni” would be correct.)

はなこはかじゅうをこおらせて、デザートをつくりました。
花子は果汁を凍らせてデザートを作りました。
Hanako made some dessert by freezing some fruit-juice.
(The fruit-juice did not, could not volunteer for freezing so “ni” is not appropriate.)

3) THE LONG AND SHORT FORMS OF THE CAUSATIVE.

Note that when the short form of the causative is used the verb then inflects as GODAN whether or not it is originally ICHIDAN or GODAN.

At the time of writing it would seem that comment on the acceptability or otherwise of the use of the short form is avoided by many writers on the subject of Japanese language education. My impression is that, perhaps because shorter is easier, the short form is being used more as time passes. In anycase, usage may be seen as being in a state of change, (isn't it always?) and at present I have not been able to find a consensus regarding the questions as to whether the short form has any special meaning or whether it is always an acceptable alternative. For the learner, the long forms (-saseru and -seru) are safe at least until life in Japan teaches what is and is not used.

One suggested difference (Makino & Tsutsui, **A Dictionary of Basic Japanese Grammar**, P391) in the use of the long and short forms of some verbs is mentioned below, but note that there is not a consensus about the existence of this difference and in any case it is not to be considered rigid.

Note also that some common verbs have what can be viewed as a transitive form which combines the original (often intransitive) meaning with the meaning of the causative. These verbs (examples below) should be considered as **transitive verbs in their own right** and not as causatives. However, in his column in Gekkan Nihongo (April, 1992. P47) Hiromu Kato of Tohoku University describes the theory that such verbs did originate by combining the original form of the verb with the causative auxiliary and subsequently dropping repetitive “s” sounds.

TRANSITIVE VERBS WHICH ARE SIMILAR IN APPEARANCE OR MEANING TO THE CAUSATIVE FORM:

The transitive forms of the verbs listed below partly, but do not completely, replace the need for the normal causative forms of the original verbs: 合う. 利く. 済む. そる. しめる. 酔う. 見る. 乗る. 着る. 寝る. They are so close in meaning to the causative that it is often difficult to identify any difference, if indeed, any real difference exists.

In some cases the “-su” forms listed below actually look the same as the short causative. They are marked ※. This being so, why make a list of them as being separate? The reason for treating them as transitive verbs in their own right, separate from the causative form is that, they are considered to be so and at least in some dictionaries they appear as separate items. For example, you should find “awasu,” “sumasu” and “yowasu” in a dictionary, but you probably will not find “tabesasusu,” “nomasu” or “motasu” unless followed by an instruction to see elsewhere for the original form.

A list of examples of these verbs is given on the next page, with the short and long causative forms of the original verb for comparison.

Transitive verbs which are similar in appearance or meaning to the causative form:

Original verb and meaning	“-su verb”	and meaning
合う to suit, fit → causative forms:	あわす . 合わす ※ 合わせる . 合わす	make something fit
利く to be effective, to work → causative forms:	きかす . 利かす ※ 利かせる . 利かす	apply something for its effect e.g. salt or spice in cooking
済む to end → causative forms:	すます . 済ます ※ 済ませる . 済ます	finish, settle an issue, repay

すみません the apology expression, is this verb. Have you noticed how Japanese people often say “I’m sorry” in inappropriate places? It is because they are thinking of “sumanai.” (In terms of “giri” 義理 “gimu” 義務 and “on-gaeshi” 恩返し, the issue “does not end” 済まない until I have “repaid,” and may not even then.) Read Ruth Benedict’s “The Chrysanthemum & the Sword” for explanation.

そる to be/become curved → causative forms:	そらす . 反らす ※ 反らせる . 反らす	to bend something
しめる get damp→ causative forms:	しめ(ら)す . 湿(ら)す ※ 湿らせる . 湿らす	make something damp
酔う get drunk → causative forms:	よわす . 酔わす ※ 酔わせる . 酔わす	make someone drunk
見る to see → causative forms:	みせる . 見せる 見させる . 見さす	cause to see = show
乗る to get in/on → causative forms:	のせる . 乗せる 乗らせる . 乗らす	cause to get in/on (a vehicle) = give a ride to s.o.
着る to put on → causative forms:	きせる . 着せる 着させる . 着さす	cause someone to wear(clothing, obligation) = to dress, clothe (someone else, to put (an item of clothing) on someone else.
寝る to sleep → (alternative) causative forms:	ねかす . 寝かす 寝かせる 寝させる . 寝さす	put (a baby) down to sleep; also used for putting money aside, or an enzyme or yeast aside to work.

SHORT CAUSATIVE -- A SPECIAL MEANING??

In so far as the short causative has any special meaning distinguishing it from the long causative, it may be that the action is taken by the “causer” not by the person caused or “causee.” For example if the transitive form of きる . 着る (to wear, put on) namely, きせる . 着せる is used as follows then the speaker is not making or letting the baby put on the sweater but is actually taking that action him/herself:

さむくなりそうですから、あかちゃんにセーターをきせましょう。
寒くなりそうですから、赤ちゃんにセーターを着せましょう。

It looks like turning cold, let's put a sweater on the baby.

Similarly, the causative of the ICHIDAN verb たべる is 食べさせる. The short form is therefore 食べさす. According to the above suggestion therefore, the following sentence is different from the one below it because in the second, the patient wields the spoon him/herself. But note that this distinction should not be considered rigid in application and some do not agree that the distinction actually exists .

びょうにんにスープをスプーンでたべさした。
病人にスープをスプーンで食べさした。
I fed soup to the patient with a spoon.

びょうにんにスープをたべさせるつもりです。
病人にスープを食べさせるつもりです。
I intend to make/let the patient eat soup.

However, while the above hypothesis does seem appropriate for some examples, the short form is not used only in this way and may be simply an alternative for the long form.

As suggested earlier, we think the learner needs to be able to form both the long and the short causatives, but that it is better to favour the long form until experience makes you familiar with actual usage.

THE CAUSATIVE - PASSIVE:

When verbs are made “causative” in the long form, they inflect like ICHIDAN verbs and can mean “make someone do something.” This meaning lends itself easily to being made passive with the “causee” as the “shudai” (は . も) or as the subject (が). The resulting expression then means “(I) am/was made to do something.” Note that to say “I was allowed to do something, “-sasete itadaku/morau” etc would be used.
 (* for help with those marked, see below or next page.)

Examples:

しゃちょうはわたしにそのじけんをしらべさせました。
 社長は私にその事件を調べさせました。

Converted into the passive this becomes:

わたしはしゃちょうにその事件をしらべさせられました。
 私は社長にその事件を調べさせられました。
 I've been made to investigate that incident by the boss.

びょういんで3じかんも待ちました。
 病院で3時間も待ちました。

In the causative - passive this would become:

びょういんで3じかんもまたせられました。
 病院で3時間も待たせられました。
 At the hospital I was made to wait for all of 3 hours.

More examples:

わたしはワインがだいすきなのに、いしゃに（ワインを）やめさせられました。
 私はワインが大好きなのに、医者（に）（ワインを）やめさせられました。
 In spite of my great liking for wine, I've been made to give it up by the doctor.

わたしはこどものころからだがいへんよわかったので、まいあさ、ちちにうんどうさせられました。

私は子供のころ体がたいへん弱かったので、毎朝、父に運動させられました。

When I was a child, I was physically very weak so my father made me do exercises every morning.

えいごはへたなのに、わたしはきょう、あたらしいせんせいに30ぶんも、えいごではなさせられました。

英語は下手なのに私は今日、新しい先生に30分も英語で話させられました。

In spite of the fact that I am very bad at it, today I was made to talk in English for all of 30 minutes by the new teacher.

テレビなどのコマーシャルをみて、ものをほしがらせられる。*

テレビ等のコマーシャルを見て、物を欲しがらせられる。*

You look at advertising on T.V. and so on, and that makes you want things.

かねもちのごうかないえをみると、うらやましがらせられなすね。*

VERBAL SUFFIX "-GARU"*with adjectives expressing emotions and states of mind or body.**

Remember that verbs and adjectives expressing emotions and sensations or states of mind and body can not be used of third persons without modification. This list includes any verb in the "-tai" form. One modification is the verbal suffix "-garu" used here.

"-garu" is required with the following when the subject is the third person: Note that the "-garu" verb is often used in the "-te iru" form but can be used with any meaningful inflection.

iya	→ iyagaru 嫌がらせる	xx (will) hate(s) / dislike(s) make xx dislike xxx
hoshii	→ hoshigaruru 欲しがらせる	xx (will) want(s) make xx want
kowai	→ kowagaruru 怖がらせる	xx will be/is afraid cause xx to be afraid
omoshiroi	→ omoshirogaruru 面白がらせる	xx will be/is amused amuse xx (make someone be amused)
kanashii	→ kanashigaruru 悲しがらせる	xx will be/is sad make xx sad
urayamashii	→ urayamashigaruru 羨ましがらせる	xx will be/is envious make someone envious
tabetai	→ tabetagaruru 食べたがらせる	xx will want/wants to eat make xx want to eat
sabishii	→ sabishigaruru 寂しがらせる	xx will be/is lonely make someone be lonely
ureshii	→ ureshigaruru 嬉しがらせる	xx will be/is delighted make xx happy
natsukashii	→ natsukashigaruru 懐かしがらせる	xx will be/is nostalgic make someone nostalgic

The following indicate physical states:

kayui	→ kayugaruru かゆがらせる	xx will be/is itchy cause xx to be itchy
itai	→ itagaruru 痛がらせる	it will be/is painful for xx cause xx to feel pain
kurushii	→ kurushigaruru 苦しがらせる	it will be/is painful for xx cause distress, suffering to xx
samui	→ samugaruru	xx feels the cold (see "samugariya")
atsui	→ atsugaruru	xx feels the heat (see "atsugariya")
kusuguttai	→ kusuguttagaruru くすぐったがらせる	xx is ticklish cause xx to become ticklish
nemutai	→ nemutagaruru	xx will be/is sleepy

Footnote:

This happened to me yesterday and I thought it interesting as a study in how different cultural characteristics of languages reflect the need to say different things in the same situation.

On my way home about 7pm (Kyoto, December 1997) I stopped at a market for some vegetables for the evening meal. I noticed that a 10 kilogramme box of mandarines could be had for 900yen and though I already had two bags to carry, I bought it. This meant a walk of about one kilometre with a bag hanging from each arm while holding the box of mandarines on my head with both hands. About 50 metres from home a car stopped and a woman got out and came over and said she shops in the same market had noticed me buying the mandarines, so seeing me heading in what was apparently the same direction, asked if she could give me a lift home.

I was indeed grateful for her kindness, but the reason for inserting this anecdote here is because of her use of the “**shieki**” inflection when she explained that she shops at the same market, saying in effect something like:

“ I receive your permission to shop at the same market, and saw you buy the mandarines.”

おなじいちばでかいものをさせていただいていますから、おみかんを
かっているのをみました。

同じ市場で買い物させていただいていますから、おみかん
を買っているのを見ました。

As an English speaker, it would never have occurred to me to have used this construction in the circumstances, no matter how much I learn about the language. Depressing thought.