ON THE DERIVATION OF CAUSATIVE AND INCHOATIVE VERB FORMS IN POLISH

In Comparison with English and Other Languages
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*Generative Linguistics in Wroclaw* (GLiW) is meant to provide a suitable forum for the presentation and discussion of the Polish research within the field of generative linguistics. We are interested in studies that employ generative methodology to the synchronic or diachronic analysis of phonology, semantics, morphology, and syntax. Apart from that, we express a keen interest in interdisciplinary research that is based on typology, diachrony, and especially experimental methods taken from psycho- or neurolinguistics and applied so as to provide a psycholinguistic reality to purely theoretical research. We believe that the dissemination of ideas is fundamental to any scientific advancement and thus our choice is to publish research studies in the form of e-books, which are available for free on our website.

Joanna Błaszczak
on behalf of the Editorial Board
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. The issue

A causative form of verbs, as the name suggests, denotes some action and an entity that brings this action about — the reason for this action to take place (Shibatani 2001). In Latin *causa* means “reason” so *causa*-tive form of verbs has the meaning of “giving reason for an action”.

(1.1)  *Kate opened the door.*

For example, in (1.1) Kate is the reason why the action of opening took place. Presumably, without Kate the door would not have opened. In fact, two actions take place here: the action executed by Kate — the causing event, and the action executed by the door — the caused event (Comrie 1976). The caused event cannot take place if the causing event does not.

The causative form of a verb is frequently compared with an inchoative form of a verb which in turn denotes that an action took place without an entity causing it or without mentioning the entity that might have caused it (Shibatani 1976; Haspelmath 1993); cf. (1.2).

(1.2)  *The door opened.*

The action in (1.2) took place spontaneously and it is not expressed in any way what or who made it happen (Shibatani 1976; Haspelmath 1993). This alternation of causative and inchoative verb forms is differently realized in natural languages; cf. (1.3) (from Haspelmath 1993: 91).
There are languages, like for example English (see (1.1) and (1.2)), that do not need any extra morphological marking on any of the two forms to create either causative or inchoative member of this alternation. Example (1.3), however, shows that the morphology of the verbs may change depending on whether the causative or the inchoative form is created. This also takes place in the alternation of Polish verbs; cf. (1.4).

(1.3) a) French
    *se fermer — “close” (inchoative)
    fermer — “close” (causative)

b) Russian
    katat’-sja — “roll” (inchoative)
    katat’ — “roll” (causative)

c) Arabic
    darasa — “learn” (inchoative)
    darrasa — “teach” (causative)

As can be seen in (1.4b), the verb, which is the inchoative member of the alternation, takes an additional morphological marker się (REFL). Example (1.4c) shows that się is necessary for the inchoative form, which is ungrammatical without it. For some verbs, it is not enough to get się and some additional affixes are required; cf. (1.5).
(1.5)  

a) \*Lepszyłam swoją sytuację.  
better\textsubscript{1st.p.sg.past} my situation  
Intended meaning: “I made my situation better.”

b) Polepszyłam swoją sytuację.  
better\textsubscript{CAUSE.1st.p.sg.past} my situation  
“I made my situation better.”

c) \*Moja sytuacja lepszyła się.  
my situation better\textsubscript{3rd.p.sg.past} REFLECTIVE  
Intended meaning: “My situation got better.”

d) Moja sytuacja polepszyła się.  
my situation better\textsubscript{CAUSE.3rd.p.sg.past} REFLECTIVE  
“My situation got better.”

The sentences in (1.5a) and (1.5c) are ungrammatical without \textit{po-} affix, which suggests that extra morphology is also needed to create the causative form, not only the inchoative one.\textsuperscript{1} In addition, there are also such verb forms that can only be inchoative and have no causative version.

(1.6)  

a) Balon pęknął.  
ballon popped\textsubscript{INCH}  
“The balloon popped.”

b) \*Kasia pęknęła balon.  
Kate popped\textsubscript{CAUSE} balloon  
Intended meaning: “Kate popped the balloon.”

As (1.6) shows, there is something about the Polish verb \textit{pękć} “to pop” that makes it impossible to have a causative form. Additionally, (1.6a) does not need \textit{się} in opposite to (1.4c), which does need it.

The causative form of verbs has been widely investigated before and came out to be a very complex phenomenon in human languages. To give a clear and in-depth view on these

\textsuperscript{1} This issue will be explained in Section 3.2.1.
verb forms, an overall linguistic research is needed that will combine semantic, morphological, and syntactical theories.

1.2. The organization of the investigation

The present study is an attempt to investigate Polish causative and inchoative verb forms and, more precisely, to answer the question of how causative and inchoative verb forms are derived in Polish. All the data presented above show different issues connected with these two verb forms in Polish, which will be investigated further on.

First, some basic theoretical notions and assumptions about the causative and inchoative alternation will be presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 will be divided into three major parts that will focus on different problems. The first problem is connected with the semantic properties of the causative and inchoative verb forms, that is, with the question of what semantic specification verbs should have in order to alternate or not (see (1.4) and (1.6)). Additionally, there are restrictions on the arguments, especially the external one, which will also be studied in the semantic analysis. The second problem concerns the morphological structure of causative and inchoative verb forms. The role of the prefixes, such as po- in (1.5), needs to be explained and the question should be clarified as to why they are vital to the derivation of these verb forms. Furthermore, also suffixes -yć, -ić, -ać, -nqć seem to be important for causative and inchoative verb forms and for their alternation (compare (1.4) and (1.6)) and that is why their role will be also investigated. Finally, the role of reflexive się will be explained to give a full morphological analysis of Polish causative and inchoative verb forms. The third problem will concern the syntactic representation of sentences with both verb forms. The VP-shell analysis will be used here to account for the semantics and morphology of causative and inchoative verb forms.

Finally, in Chapter 4, conclusions will be drawn and, as thoroughly as possible, the problematic issues will be explained in order to give an in-depth analysis of the two alternating verb forms. All this together is to present the complexity of the causative and inchoative verb forms in Polish and account for all the data presented above.
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Before the problems presented in the previous chapter can be investigated, some basic notions must be first introduced and defined, beginning with what causality in language actually is. Moreover, the question of how causative and inchoative verb forms meet requirements for being causative or inchoative will be answered.

2.1. Causation in language

The causative form of a verb is in fact one kind of constructions that allow expressing causation. As Shibatani (1976) suggests, the best way to explain a causative construction is to define a causative situation, expressed by the causative construction. The causative situation is such that there are two events, related to each other: the causing event and the caused event. The relation between them is resultative, which means that the causing event brings about the caused event and the caused event — the result of the causing event — would not have taken place without the causing event occurring first. The following examples show the instances of causative and not causative situations.

(2.1) a)  *Kate told John to leave.*  
  b)  *Kate want John to leave.*  
  c)  *Kate opened the door.*  
  d)  *Kate sent John to the shop.*

Sentences (2.1a) and (2.1b) do consist of two events, but we cannot actually say that the latter event would or would not take place if the first one did. The event of John’s leaving in (2.1a) and (2.1b) does not depend on the subject’s action of telling John to leave. These two
sentences are not causative because the relation between the two events of telling or wanting are not causing John to leave; thus, the relation between them is not resultative. John might have left even if Kate did not want him to or did not tell him to do so. In (2.1c) and (2.1d), on the other hand, the subject’s action does influence the other event and, in addition, this event would not have taken place if the subject had not did something before it took place (Shibatani 1976). Sentences (2.1c) and (2.1d) present the causative constructions that precisely express the resultative relation between the caused and the causing event. Both sentences are also transitive, so they have the internal argument, which is THEME or PATIENT, and the external argument, which is AGENT-CAUSER (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995). This observation may lead to an overgeneralization that all transitive verbs are causative, which is not the case. In (2.2) two sentences show what is the major difference between causative and simple transitive constructions (from Shibatani 1976: 2).

(2.2)  

(a) \textit{I kicked (at) the ice and nothing happened to it.}  

(b) \textit{*I melted the ice and nothing happened to it.}  

Example (2.2a) presents an ordinary transitive verb which does not contain the relation that Shibatani (1976) acknowledges. The event of kicking (at) the ice, even successful with actual touching the ice with one’s foot, does not make the ice change in any way, inside or outside ice is still ice. In (2.2b), however, the event of melting the ice influences it, thus something happens to it (it changes its physical state). The first event of melting is the causing event, subsequently, the caused event is the event of ice turning into water. The result of this causative event should be confirming this relation; here it denies the caused event. Thus, in (2.2b) the result following from the causing event of melting is the event of nothing happening to the ice, which is illogical and contradicts the earlier causing event. This, in turn, explains why the sentence is unacceptable.

2.2. Causative verb forms

In this subsection the causative constructions will be characterized and the specific group of verbs that the present study deals with will be presented.
Shibatani (1976) refers to causative verb forms as morphologically irregular and nonproductive ones. Other types of causative constructions that Shibatani (ibidem) takes into account are morphologically regular and productive and, in most languages, they pattern as “cause to happen”:

\[(2.3) \text{ Kasia sprawiła, że lód stopniał.} \]

Kate caused that ice melted

“Kate made the ice melt.”

For Shibatani (1976) this construction is productive because any possible verb can be causativised using this fixed construction. Comrie (1992) defines this construction as analytical causative construction in which each of the elements expresses particular meaning: cause or a similar verb (make, have, get) gives the causative meaning — that is the matrix verb, and lexical verbs that give a specific meaning of the causative situation (melt, pop, smile) are in the embedded clause.

The causative verb forms, defined by Shibatani (1976) as nonproductive irregular morphological causative constructions, are divided into two groups by Comrie (1992): morphological causatives and lexical causatives. In the first group, a verb becomes a causative form after receiving extra morphology, as in example (2.4).

\[(2.4) \text{ Morphological causative verb forms} \]

a) \[*\text{Lepszyłam swoją sytuację.}\]

better\textsuper\textsubscript{1st.p.sg.past} my situation

“I made my situation better.”

b) \[\text{Polepszyłam swoją sytuację.}\]

better\textsubscript{CAUSE.1st.p.sg.past} my situation

“I made my situation better.”

In the second group, there are verbs that in the causative/inchoative alternation have forms derived from different roots, as in (2.5).
(2.5) Lexical causative verb forms

a) \( \text{Zabiłam zwierzę.} \)
   \begin{align*}
   &\text{kill}_{1\text{st.p.sg.past}} \quad \text{animal} \\
   &\text{“I killed an animal.”}
   \end{align*}

b) \( \text{Zwierzę umarło.} \)
   \begin{align*}
   &\text{animal} \quad \text{die}_{3\text{rd.p.sg.past}} \\
   &\text{“The animal died.”}
   \end{align*}

This division introduced by Comrie (1992) seems to make sense for lexical verbs since they are causative or inchoative as lexical items in the lexicon. The morphological causatives are derived from roots and come to existence by affixation, so the causative and inchoative forms will have the same root and some affixes. On the other hand, this division into morphological and lexical subgroups could be avoided since, as Shibatani (1976) observes, the two classes are nonproductive and predictable (predictable in the sense that these verbs always alternate in the same form, they are “fixed”). The present investigation will focus on the derived, morphological, nonproductive causative forms of verbs in Polish, since this is the group of verbs that is problematic and presents the complexity of such constructions.

2.3. The causative-inchoative alternation

As previously mentioned, this alternation is a way of contrasting the transitive causative forms of verbs and their intransitive inchoative counterparts (Haspelmath 1993). For Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995), causative forms are dyadic (they can have two arguments or slots for two arguments) and inchoative forms are monadic (they can have only one argument). The causative form expresses an event in which there is \text{CAUSER of ACTION, ACTION, and CAUSEE} — the object undergoing the action caused by \text{CAUSER} (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995; Haspelmath 1993). The inchoative form of a verb expresses an event in which \text{ACTION} and \text{CAUSEE} are relevant, but \text{CAUSER} is absent and not implied by any morphology or semantics of the verb form \text{(ibidem)}. Example (2.6) presents an alternation with a) the causative form and b) the inchoative form. It is crucial to notice that the majority of the references used for the present study use the term inchoative not in the traditional sense.
of beginning of state, but as a change of state that happened without anyone causing it to happen; cf. (2.6).

(2.6)  
\[ \begin{align*} 
\text{a)} & \quad \text{Kasia ugotowała obiad.} \\
& \quad \text{Kate cook} \text{3rd.p.sg.past dinner} \\
& \quad \text{“Kate made a dinner.”} \\
\text{b)} & \quad \text{Obiad ugotował się.} \\
& \quad \text{dinner cook} \text{3rd.p.sg.past REFL} \\
& \quad \text{“The dinner made itself.”} 
\end{align*} \]

2.3.1. Direction of the alternation

One of the basic questions concerning this alternation is what its direction is. Is the inchoative form more basic and from it the causative is derived or is it the other way round? As Haspelmath (1993) suggests, the alternation can take both directions, so some verbs can have the inchoative form as more basic one and the causative form is derived (2.7a), other verbs can have the opposite direction, so the causative form is the more basic and inchoative form derived from it (2.7b). Haspelmath (\textit{ibidem}) also gives the third option in which it is impossible to say which form was first and is more basic, and he calls such alternations “non-directed” (2.8). They can be subdivided into equipollent, where both forms are derived from the same root (2.8a), suppletive (2.8b), which Comrie (1992) calls “lexical alternating pairs” and whose members are derived from different, unrelated roots (recall Section 2.2), and labial, in which both forms are identical and have the same morphology (2.8c); examples form Haspelmath (1993: 91–92).

(2.7)  
\[ \begin{align*} 
\text{a)} & \quad \text{INCHOATIVE } \rightarrow \text{ CAUSATIVE (CAUSATIVE ALTERNATION)} \\
& \quad \text{Georgian} \\
& \quad Duy-s \rightarrow a-duy-eb \quad \text{“cook”} \\
\text{b)} & \quad \text{CAUSATIVE } \rightarrow \text{ INCHOATIVE (ANTICAUSATIVE ALTERNATION)} \\
& \quad \text{Russian} \\
& \quad katat’ \rightarrow katat’sja \quad \text{“roll”} 
\end{align*} \]
As the examples in (2.7) and (2.8) show, the alternation has a lot of variation and, depending on a language, can be differently directed.

2.3.2. The anticausative alternation

The subsequent section will provide an analysis of Polish alternating causative and inchoative verb forms to decide what the direction of alternation is in Polish. The Polish examples presented so far in this study, compared with the ones above, suggest that the alternation in Polish is similar to the alternation in Russian:

(2.9) a) Russian

\[ katat' \rightarrow katat'sja \]

“roll”

b) Polish

\[ toczyć \rightarrow toczyć się \]

“roll”

This type of alternation is called “anticausative” (Haspelmath 1993; Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995), the term used first time by Nedjalkov and Sil’nickij (1969) to describe such an alternation. As the name suggests, the verb is causativised first and then, when the event is being expressed without AGENT — the participant of the causing event — it becomes
anticausativised. This can be demonstrated by looking at the derivation of verbs such as *naprawiać* “to fix” in (2.10).²

\[(2.10)\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{(a)} & \quad \text{Kasia na-prawiła telewizor.} \\
& \quad \text{Kasia \ CAUSE fixed TV} \\
& \quad \text{“Kate fixed the TV.”} \\
\text{(b)} & \quad \text{*Kasia prawiła telewizor.} \\
& \quad \text{Kasia \ fixed TV} \\
& \quad \text{Intended meaning: “Kate fixed the TV.”} \\
\text{(c)} & \quad \text{Telewizor na-prawił się.} \\
& \quad \text{TV \ CAUSE fixed REFL} \\
& \quad \text{“The TV fixed itself.”} \\
\text{(d)} & \quad \text{*Telewizor prawił się.} \\
& \quad \text{TV \ fixed REFL} \\
& \quad \text{Intended meaning: “The TV fixed itself.”}
\end{align*}\]

The causative form in (2.10) requires a prefix *na-* to become causative, but the inchoative form also requires this prefix in order to create a grammatical sentence. This suggests that the causative form is more basic and by the use of reflexive *się* and change in transitivity, the form changes into anticausative form of an originally causative verb form. This issue will be thoroughly dealt with in the subsequent sections of the present investigation.

2.3.3. Restrictions on the alternating verbs

The causative/inchoative alternation is not an unrestricted phenomenon. Not all causative forms can be anticausativised and not all inchoative forms come from causative forms:

\[(2.11)\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{(a)} & \quad \text{Kasia przeciela kartkę.} \\
& \quad \text{Kasia \ cut 3rd.p.sg.past sheet} \\
& \quad \text{“Kate cut a sheet of paper.”}
\end{align*}\]

² It will be shown in Section 3.2. that the role of *na-* prefix is different from that of CAUSE.
Example (2.11a) shows a verb that has the causative form but the anticausative form is totally unacceptable. (2.11b), on the other hand, presents the opposite situation, where the inchoative form is correct and the causative unacceptable. The question is what is special about these verbs’ meanings that they cannot take part in the alternation. Haspelmath (1993) suggests that the verbs that can take part in the alternation must: a) refer to the change of state of the object or a going-on, b) have no agent-oriented meaning, c) be spontaneous. These conditions exclude three groups of verbs which are: states, which cannot be the inchoative member of the alternating pair; actions, which are not changes of state (help, read), which cannot be causative members of the alternating pair; and agentive intransitive verbs (talk, dance), which are not occurring spontaneously. Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995) also present groups of verbs that alternate and these are unaccusative verbs (without the external argument — AGENT) and verbs of change of state. The unergative verbs, with the agentive argument as the only one in the structure alternate irregularly, depending on a language. For example, in English the unergative verb śmiać się “to laugh” does not alternate and in Polish it perfectly does: *Antoni rozśmieścił Kasię.* “*Anthony laughed Kate.*” The ability of taking part in the alternation depends on the extent to which an event is considered spontaneous (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995). Hence, the group of verbs of emission does not alternate, since these verbs are said to be very spontaneous and there is no external force that can make something shine or rustle, for instance (*ibidem*). In other words, inchoative forms in order to come to existence must be derived from events that happen spontaneously, but these events should be also possible to occur with someone or something bringing them about. These ideas will be
accounted for in detail, along with the restrictions on the arguments, in the following sections of the present study.

2.4. Interim conclusion: Stating the problem

The main issue that this study will investigate is how causative and inchoative verb forms are derived in Polish. So far it has been stated that the alternation of the causative and the inchoative verb forms is a tool used for presenting the differences between the two forms. Verbs that alternate must express a change of state or “a going-on” and cannot have an agent-oriented meaning of the causative member of the alternating pair, and a spontaneous event as the inchoative member of the alternating pair. The direction of an alternation can vary across languages and for Polish it seems to be the case that the causative form is the more basic one and the inchoative is derived from it by morphological marker się and de-transitivization of the causative verb; in other words, this is the anticausative alternation.

All the theoretical assumptions presented in this chapter will be further on developed and used as a basis for solutions to the problems connected with Polish alternating verb forms. The next chapters will focus on the semantics, morphology, and syntax of the verbs under discussion and will be an attempt to account for all the data presented till now. Since, as previously mentioned, the phenomenon of causative-inchoative alternation is complex and makes different abilities work together (language-specific and other cognitive abilities), which, in turn, makes it impossible to account for all the issues connected with them using only one part of linguistic knowledge, the analysis will, by using broad cross-linguistic perspective, combine various specific semantic, morphological, and syntactic aspects of the verb forms under investigation.
CHAPTER 3: THE ANALYSIS

3.1. Semantic analysis of the causative and inchoative verb forms

As stated in the previous chapter, the causative-inchoative alternation is a lexical relation between the causative and the inchoative form, such that the inchoative form expresses a change of state and the causative form expresses how the change of state was brought about, i.e., what caused it to happen (Shibatani 1976; Comrie 1992; Haspelmath 1993; Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995; Piñón 2001). The following section will focus on the question which verbs specifically may alternate. Further sections of the semantic analysis will focus on the restrictions on the arguments and the correlation between the restrictions on the verbs and those on the arguments.

3.1.1. Restrictions on the alternating verbs

Verbs that fulfill the requirements for the inchoative member of an alternating pair are commonly known as unaccusative verbs, whose subgroup are verbs of changes of state (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995). Particular verb groups that alternate, more or less regularly, are as follows: roll verbs, motion around an axis verbs, break verbs, bend verbs, zero-related to adjectives verbs, change of color verbs, -ify, -ize, and -ate verbs (-fikować, -izować and -ować for Polish), amuse-type psych-verbs (Levin 1993). Typical groups of verbs that do not alternate are the following: verbs of change of possession (give verbs, contribute verbs, verbs of future having), verbs of cutting, verbs of contact by impact, touch verbs, destroy verbs, verbs of killing, verbs of appearance and disappearance (ibidem). Unaccusative verbs are very often contrasted with unergative verbs, which usually do not alternate, but this is not a regular pattern across languages; cf. (3.1) and (3.2).
(3.1) a) *Dzieci tańczą.
    “Children are dancing.”
b) *Rodzice tańczą dzieci.
    Intended meaning: “Parents made children dance.”

(3.2) a) Kasia śmieje się.
    “Kate is laughing.”
b) Antoni rozśmieścił Kasię.
    “Anthony made Kate laugh.”

Both dance and laugh are unergative verbs in Polish; however, laugh, enriched by extra morphology — it is ungrammatical without się — can alternate as if it were unaccusative. Its morphology patterns along with alternating verbs of change of state; cf. (3.3).

(3.3) a) Unaccusative alternating verb
    Wazon rozbił się.
    “The vase broke.”
b) Unergative alternating verb
    Kasia roześmiała się.
    “Kate started to laugh.”
In (3.2) the alternation is presented and, as can be seen, the inchoative form is derived from a different root than the causative form: śmiech (noun) → śmiać się (inchoative); śmieszny (adjective) → śmieszyc (causative), which might suggest that they are simple lexical alternating verbs. Albeit, the definition of lexical (suppletive for Haspelmath 1993) forms states that the two forms are unrelated, here the relation is distant but still present. Assuming that the relation is close enough for the two forms to be derived from one verb root, the causative and inchoative form of Polish verb śmiać się/śmieszyc “laugh/make laugh” should be treated as equipollent, in Haspelmath’s (1993) sense, with interim stems of a noun and an adjective; cf. Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Possible equipollent alternation of Polish verb śmiać się “to laugh”](image)

At this point, a question arises if this verb is the only equipollent alternating verb in Polish. If it is, then it can be called an anomaly! If it is not an exceptional case and other verbs also alternate as equipollent forms, then does the assumption (supported by morphological causative-inchoative forms) that Polish alternating verbs are anticausativised hold?

The verbs that usually do not alternate express events that cannot take place without the causative factor expressed and also depend on the doer’s will or conscience. For example, an event of dancing would not take place if the dancing participants did not decide to dance, or a person would not say a word if they did not consciously choose to open their mouth and speak. Semantically, these events cannot occur without an active AGENT, who will volitionally and consciously make these events happen. This idea is mirrored by syntax, where the derivation of the subject of unergative verbs takes place in the position of the external argument with the absence of the internal argument. The unaccusative alternating verbs expressing changes of state are derived in the intransitive form with the absence of the external argument, so they are opposite to the unergative verbs for that matter; however, these constructions do not exclude the presence of the external argument, unlike unergative verbs,
which usually do not have the internal argument.\(^3\) As suggested by Haspelmath (1993) and Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995), “the looseness” of this construction is due to the fact that the structure with the external argument — the causative form — is more basic. This matter will be investigated in the following subsection of the present chapter.

3.1.1.1. Semantic analysis of anticausative alternation

For Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995), the basic criterion for the direction of the alternation, is the basic adicity — the ability to take arguments. As they observe, unergative verbs can take only one argument — the external one — and no other arguments are allowed. Unaccusative verbs take the internal argument as the basic one and the addition of the external argument is allowed; thus, they alternate.\(^4\) In other words, unergative verbs are inherently monadic and unaccusative verbs are inherently dyadic like causative forms, which is why they take part in the anticausative alternation. This suggests that causative forms are more basic than inchoative since they fully realize the inherent adicity overtly, whereas the anticausative form is inherently dyadic, but overtly realizes only the internal argument and the external argument is somehow blocked for realization.\(^5\)

Another argument supporting the claim that the inchoative members of causative-inchoative alternation are derived from the causative members is that entities entering argument position should meet different selectional properties of verbs; cf. (3.4) (examples from Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995: 85).

\[(3.4)\]
\[\begin{align*}
\text{a) Antonia broke the vase/the window/the bowl/the radio/the toaster.} \\
\text{The vase/The window/The bowl/The radio/The toaster broke.} \\
\text{b) *Antonia broke the cloth/the paper/the innocence.} \\
\text{*The cloth/*The paper/*The innocence broke.} \\
\text{c) He broke his promise/the contract/the world record.} \\
\text{*His promise/*The contract/*The world record broke.}
\end{align*}\]

\(^3\) The internal argument can be present in sentences like \textit{We danced a dance}, in which \textit{we} is the external argument and \textit{a dance} is the internal argument. Sentences such as \textit{We danced} can be analyzed in such way that the internal argument \textit{dance} is incorporated into an “empty” verb (cf. Hale and Keyser 1993). However, this does not influence the present discussion.

\(^4\) Here the distinction unergative-unaccusative is overgeneralized. Levin and Rappaport Hovav say that it is to show the most basic and rough distinction between these two groups of verbs. It has many exceptions, though.

\(^5\) The question as to how the external argument might be blocked will be answered in the syntactic analysis in the present chapter.
The main restrictions are imposed on the object of the causative form which is the subject of the inchoative form, since entities entering this position need to have such properties that allow them either to change by themselves (only changes of states alternate) or to be changed by the action of the subject. Example (3.4a) shows that the entities such as a toaster or a vase have both properties. They can break by themselves or be broken by someone or something. Examples (3.4b) and (3.4c) present a situation when the object of an alternating verb does not have the needed properties, here the property of being able to break. What follows from this is the fact that the number of possible entities entering the slot of the object of the causative form or the subject of the inchoative form is larger than the number of entities that enter only the position of the inchoative subject. Thus, again the causative form seems to be more basic. These two ideas together suggest that the inchoative form of an alternating verb is derived from the causative form of a verb, thus anticausative (Haspelmath 1993; Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995; Alexiadou 2006). Levin and Rappaport Hovav call this a causative analysis of the causative-inchoative alternation.

Another way of looking at the anticausative alternation is presented by Piñón (2001). He suggests that it is not the two forms, causative and anticausative, that alternate, but the verb stem itself, and these two forms are just morphological representations of the stem’s alternation. If this is the case, the anticausative alternation should be equipollent (according to Haspelmath’s (1993) division). Piñón (ibidem) also claims that Polish causative forms simply do not mark morphologically the causativity and the anticausative forms mark their anticausativeness by się. This assumption, if true, should also explain cases such as polepszyćć “get better”, where the causative form cannot exist without the prefix po-. If this prefix is indeed causative, then the alternation must be anticausative. However, if the prefix does not carry the CAUSE meaning but some other meaning, then Piñón’s idea might be true. A verb that might confirm this idea is the problematic Polish verb śmiać się. As suggested in this section, this verb might alternate as two equipollent forms derived from a shared root through interim stems and thus it could be a proof that Polish verbs alternate as equipollent forms derived from the same root.

To support this idea, it is important to mention that many verbs alternate deriving two intransitive forms out of which one is typically inchoative (it has no się) and the other is anticausative derived from the causative form (it always has się). For example, verbs of

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6 The role of po- prefix will be explained in Section 3.2. The issue of what might carry the CASUE meaning will be explained in Section 3.3 of the present chapter.
change of color or verbs such as *palić (się)/płonąć* “to burn” can have the causative form and the anticausative form derived from it, denoting that an event took place because someone or something caused it, but this causing entity is not expressed in the sentence and, additionally, an inchoative form which expresses a spontaneous, autonomous event without anyone’s or anything’s influence. In other words, the anticausative form has the CAUSE meaning included but not expressed in any way and the inchoative form does not have this meaning and cannot be interpreted in the way that the inchoative event is caused and not happening autonomously; cf. (3.5) and (3.6).

(3.5) 

a)  
*Kasia czerwieniła  ścianę.*  
Kate reddenedCAUSE lips  
“Kate was reddening a wall.”

b)  
*Kasia czerwieniła* / *czerwieniła jabłka.*  
Kate reddenedCAUSE / reddenedINCH apples  
Intended meaning: “Kate caused apples to turn red.”

c)  
*Jabłka czerwięły się.*  
apples reddenedANTICAUSE REFL  
“The apples were reddening.”

d)  
*Jabłka czerwieniły.*  
apples reddenedINCH  
“The apples were getting red.”

e)  
*Ściana czerwieniała.*  
wall reddenedINCH  
Intended meaning: “The wall was getting red.”

f)  
*Ściana czerwieniła się.*  
wall reddenedANTICAUSE REFL  
Intended meaning: “The wall was reddening.”

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7 This sentence is correct in the literal meaning: “Kate put red paint on the apples”.

---
(3.6) a) Kasia spaliła list.
Kate burned \textit{CAUSE} letter
“Kate burned the letter.”
b) *Kasia spłonęła list.
Kate burned \textit{INCH} letter
Intended meaning: “Kate made the letter burn.”
c) List spalił się.
letter burned \textit{ANTICAUSE} REFL
“The letter burned.”
d) List spłonął.
letter burned \textit{INCH}
“The letter burned.”

Verbs alternating in the same way as the ones in (3.5) and (3.6) have two forms expressing the event without the external argument present. One form is anticausative with \textit{się}, the other is inchoative without the reflexive morpheme and it does not have its causative equivalent (see (3.5b) and (3.6b)). A possible reason for this abundance of forms may be the fact that events expressed by these verbs can be caused or can happen without anyone causing them. Apples in (3.5c and d) redden by themselves, nobody or nothing can make them turn red intentionally, unless we assume that someone might make apples turn red by putting paint on them (cf. Footnote 7). On the other hand, wall in (3.5a) cannot redden by itself. In other words, the event can be either with or without \textit{CAUSER} and the inchoative/anticausative event can happen as caused one (reddening of the wall) or as a totally spontaneous action that cannot be caused (reddening of apples). In (3.6d) the burning of a letter is spontaneous in the sense that a letter all of a sudden might start to burn (it is made of flammable material). It is not a usual situation that a letter starts to burn on its own, but language allows expressing this situation due to the ability of a letter to burn. Besides, there are entities that are able to burn on their own, without anyone or anything “helping” them to burn (for example, fuel or hydrogen), which is why the inchoative form is possible for a derivation. This means that the roots of verbs that have this richness of forms, contain the causative meaning (that can be turned into anticausative) and the inchoative meaning. This, in turn, means that the roots are somehow prepared and ready to express all the possible events, the causative, the
anticausative, and the inchoative one. This idea will be also supported by the morphological analysis in further sections of the present work.

3.1.1.2. Spontaneity of events

The adicity and selectional restrictions on the arguments are not the only criteria which decide whether a verb takes part in the alternation or not. As previously stated, the main characteristic is that we have an unaccusative verb which is a change of state and the event expressed by it occurs spontaneously (Haspelmath 1993). If this was the only criterion, verb groups of (dis-)appearance and light or sound emission would be included but they are not; cf. (3.7) and (3.8).

(3.7) Verbs of (dis-)appearance

a) Kasia zniknęła (*się).

Kate disappearedREFL

“Kate disappeared.”

b) *Antoni zniknął Kasię.

Anthony disappearedCAUSE Kate

Intended meaning: “Anthony made Kate disappear.”

(3.8) Verbs of sound/light emission

a) Liście zaszumiały (*się).

leaves rustledREFL

“The leaves rustled.”

b) *Kasia zaszumiała liście.

Kate rustledCAUSE leaves

Intended meaning: “Kate made the leaves rustle.”

c) Robaczek świętojański zaświecił.

firefly beamedINCH

“A firefly beamed.”

d) *Kasia zaświeciła robaczka świętojańskiego.

Kate beamedCAUSE firefly

Intended meaning: “Kate made the firefly beam.”
All these verbs express events that are perceived as happening spontaneously in the sense that no-one or nothing from the outside can make these events happen; moreover, they are changes of state (compare (3.5) and (3.6)). Here, it should be noticed that, for example, one can light a lamp (so to light should be allowed to alternate), but a lamp is an entity that was made by human hands and the fact that it can light on its own is also due to a human who manufactured it, so, in a sense, a lamp can never light without assigning the event of lighting it to human factor, unlike the firefly.

To explain this more precisely, Levin and Rappaport Hovav call the events such as lighting of a firefly *internally caused* and the events such as lighting of a lamp *externally caused*. When it comes to unergative verbs (*play, speak*), they are said to be internally caused and the force that brings them about is the will of the animate external argument. The internally caused events expressed by unaccusative verbs of appearance or emission are brought about by some inherent force that the subject (internal argument) has. The externally caused events are brought about externally, so they need an external force that will bring them about. In terms of spontaneity of these events, it can be said that the internally-caused events are more spontaneous than the external ones in the sense that it is impossible to say that something in an exact moment will glow or make noise, but it is possible to say if something will be caused by an external force. For example, the aforementioned firefly is unpredictable in terms of when it starts glowing, but, in contrast, door is predictable in terms of closing or opening (from a draft, for example). Making dinner is predictable, because there is someone who is going to actually make it, but no-one can decide when the stars start to shine or leaves to rustle. This also concerns verbs showed in (3.5) and (3.6). The apples redden due to the internal changes (they get ripe) and the letter burns after someone or something sets it on fire (anticausative) or on its own, because it is made of flammable material (inchoative), fuel or hydrogen can start burning spontaneously and all this is not predictable in any way.

The idea of grading the events from the least spontaneous to the most spontaneous was generalized by Haspelmath (2005) on a spontaneity scale which shows that the more spontaneous an event is, the more unlikely it is to take part in the causative/inchoative alternation. Haspelmath (*ibidem*) introduces some regularities among languages and tries to turn these regularities into universals that would give a frame for all the causative forms in all languages. For example, if a language has a derived causative form of a monotransitive stem, it also has to have a derived causative form of an intransitive stem, so the intransitive stem is unmarked and the transitive is more marked (for example, Turkish, Japanese, Finnish, Tuvan
(a Turkic language spoken in south-central Siberia in Russia). Going further, if a language can have a derived causative form from a di-transitive stem, then again it must have a derived intransitive form (for example, Tuvan); cf. Table 1.

**Table 1. The spontaneity scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>di-transitive</th>
<th>mono-transitive</th>
<th>unergative</th>
<th>automatic</th>
<th>costly</th>
<th>agentful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“give”</td>
<td>“cut”</td>
<td>“play”</td>
<td>“freeze”</td>
<td>“break”</td>
<td>“be cut”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transitive</td>
<td>agentive</td>
<td>patientive</td>
<td>unergative</td>
<td>unaccusative</td>
<td>agent-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intransitive</td>
<td>no agent-oriented manner specification in clausal member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


What this scale presents is how causative forms are related in terms of the spontaneity of events. The thick black rightmost line divides the table into agent-oriented and no agent-oriented verbs. Generally, there is no language that has the rightmost form, a causative verb of a construction such as “be cut” as in *Zostalam ucięta (“I got cut”) with the intended meaning “I caused myself to be cut by myself”. A possible construction in Polish to express this would not be with the reflexive się, but a się of a different kind (see Section 3.2.3): *Ucięłam się, “I cut myself”, which does not contain the causative meaning.

Languages such as aforesaid Tuvan have the causative forms of the two leftmost groups of di- and monotransitive verbs and they usually have forms belonging to the three middle groups of intransitive verbs (as explained at the beginning of this subsection). Polish verbs belong to the intransitive group, divided into unergative and unaccusative automatic and unaccusative costly verbs. To be precise, the unergative group is not a regular one, only some verbs alternate (śmieć się/smieszyć “to laugh/make laugh”), that is why the line between the unaccusative and unergative groups is broken. The events that are the most spontaneous are the costly ones, the more to the left from this group, the less spontaneous the events are. This scale, more or less accurate, presents certain regularities among languages, and it is Haspelmath’s attempt to somehow order the verbs. In his further research on this scale (Haspelmath 2006), some statistics are presented and they show that languages such as Polish

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8 Here “automatic” means that the more likely encoding of these verbs is causative, and “costly” means that the more likely encoding is anticausative. This reading is costly since it requires deriving the causative first and then anticausativising it (Haspelmath 2005).
or German, i.e., those belonging to the middle groups of the table, are in majority, which suggests that the anticausative alternation is the most unmarked alternation.

3.1.2. Restrictions on the arguments

The assumptions from the previous section show that the subject of a causative verb must be an active participant of an event and that the arguments in object positions should meet the selectional requirements of verbs (for example, a cloth cannot be broken, so “cloth” cannot be selected by the verb *to break*). The following sections will be devoted to investigating these issues, starting with the restrictions on the subject of causative and anticausative verb forms.

3.1.2.1. Restrictions on the subject of the causative verb form

The entities that enter the subject position of a causative verb have certain requirements to meet. At first, they must be AGENTS — so active participants of the event. Here a question can be asked as to why the active participants that cause something to happen are not simply called CAUSERS. Pylkkänen (2002) explains that AGENT cannot be CAUSER, since then the causative sentences would not differ from ordinary transitive sentences. In languages like Polish or English no proof can be found to say that Pylkkänen (2002) is right; however, languages like Finnish or Japanese show that causative verbs are more than just transitive verbs and that they are more complex in terms of syntactic derivation. In these languages, there are structures such as the passive voice of a causative verb, which remain causative even though no external argument is present. If the external argument were CAUSER and the only source of CAUSE meaning, the passivization should not be possible because the entity that give the CAUSE meaning would be gone. Nonetheless, such constructions are present and prove that AGENT of the causative form of a verb is not CAUSER of an event. AGENT does cause the event, but the causative meaning is not due to the theta role assignment (Pylkkänen 2002).

Other theta roles that can be assigned to the external argument, as Piñón (2001) suggests, are FORCE OF NATURE and INSTRUMENT; cf. (3.9).
CHAPTER 3: THE ANALYSIS

(3.9)  
a) **AGENT**

*Kasia otworzyła drzwi.*  
Kate opened* _cause_ door  
“The Kate opened the door.”

b) **FORCE OF NATURE**

*Wiatr otworzył drzwi.*  
wind opened* _cause_ door  
“The wind opened the door.”

c) **INSTRUMENT**

*Klucz otworzył drzwi.*
key opened* _cause_ door  
“The key opened the door.”

The theta role of **INSTRUMENT** seldom occurs in Polish in the subject position, it is rather realized by means of instrumental case-marking; however, this is not relevant for the present study.

3.1.2.2. Restrictions on the object of the causative verb form

In a causative sentence, the entity which is in the object position is **THEME** or **PATIENT** and when the sentence is anticausativised, it is moved to the subject position of a sentence (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995). As a subject, it must be, similarly to the subject of the causative sentence, able to actively participate in the event. For an anticausative sentence, this active participation means that this subject is able to undergo the change of state and that the external force that executes this event can be omitted in the sentence, but semantically cannot be replaced by an object moved to the subject position. For example, even though the door shuts and the external force causing it is not implied, still the door shuts due to the action of this force and not due to its internal force. In the opposite situation, when the external force has no influence on the event and this event takes place due to the internal force or properties of an entity in the object position, the causative sentence is unacceptable, for example, the firefly mentioned in (3.8d) (Piñón 2001).

The restrictions presented above do not give particular features that subjects or objects should have. These features are verb-specific and depend on the meaning and to what extent the verb has a specialized meaning. For instance, verb *to break* can take as an object only an
entity that has a physical ability to break, that is why a cloth cannot break (3.4b). A cloth does not have a natural property of breaking so it cannot break, unless it is frozen using liquid nitrogen and its internal structure is changed which makes the cloth able to break, but this is not the stereotypical thing than happens to a cloth and in such a situation the verb to break would be used to highlight the fact of cloth becoming able to break.

Furthermore, if a verb has a very specialized meaning, the features that the entities entering argument positions should have also become specialized. The verb to kill has a very general meaning that expresses the event of one entity causing another entity to die. The verb to assassinate expresses the same idea, but it is more specialized in that it is a particular way of causing death, usually a kind of a professional way of killing used by people using professional instruments to do it. That is why a drought — a natural force — can kill thousands of people but cannot assassinate thousands of people and an assassin can either kill or assassinate his or her victim (see Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995: 102–103).

3.1.3. Interim conclusion

In this section some basic constraints on the alternating verbs and their arguments were introduced. A verb that alternates should be a change of state and in most cases, these verbs are unaccusative. For languages like Polish or French also unergative verbs may alternate and other verbs than changes of state. It is important to distinguish between internally and externally caused events. Verbs denoting internally caused events will not alternate and verbs denoting externally caused event alternate.

The more spontaneous occurrence of the event expressed by the alternating pair, the less likely the alternation is. This means that the events must be spontaneous to the extent that still allows an external AGENT, FORCE, or INSTRUMENT to execute an event. The alternation in the semantic sense is anticausative, since the causative form has less strict constraints on what entities may enter the subject and object position in a sentence. However, there is abundance of forms for verbs like changes of colors for which the alternation can be simultaneously anticausative and equipollent (Piñón 2001).

The subject of the causative sentence is AGENT, FORCE OF NATURE, or INSTRUMENT and it is not, as Pylkkänen (2002) suggests, CAUSER. In other words, CAUSE is not a theta role. The object of the causative form and, at the same time, the subject of the anticausative form must meet the selectional restrictions of a verb (the more specialized restrictions, the more specialized an entity must be).
Further sections of this chapter will provide a morphological and syntactic analysis of the causative-inchoative alternation and will account for problematic cases such as the verb śmiać się “to laugh” or the role of po- in polepszyć “make better” and how and where in the derivation the meaning CAUSE is added to the meaning of a verb. Subsequently, this analysis will also account for how and where the anticausative element is added and how the whole process might be executed.

3.2. Morphological analysis of the causative and inchoative verb forms

This section of the present investigation will be devoted to the morphological properties of causative, anticausative, and inchoative verb forms. The roles of prefixes such as po- or na- will be described. Beside, affixes -ić/-yć and -nac and their contribution to the derivation of the alternating forms will be analyzed. Finally, the reflexive się and its role will be investigated.

3.2.1. The role of prefixes

In the previous examples ((1.5) or (2.10)), it was shown that the causative and the anticausative forms of certain verbs cannot exist without a prefix. If the anticausative form is derived from the causative one, it is enough to assume that this prefix must be attached to the causative form first to make it grammatical and then it becomes an inseparable part of the verb form, either causative or inchoative. In Polish there is a whole list of such prefixes that make a verb able to alternate (Olszewska 1974); cf. Table 2.

Olszewska (1974) suggests that these prefixes carry the meaning of CAUSE and that is why they are crucial for a derivation. If they are absent, the verb cannot alternate. This would mean that prefixes are in fact causative prefixes and they are responsible for deriving the causative forms; cf. Figure 2.

\[
\text{prefix}_{\text{CAUSE}} + \sqrt{\text{root}} = \text{causative verb form} \\
\text{po-CAUSE} + \sqrt{\text{lepszy}} = \text{polepszyć} \\
\text{prefix}_{\text{CAUSE}} + \sqrt{\text{better}} = \text{“make better”}
\]

**Figure 2.** Possible morphological derivation of a causative verb form
### Table 2. Prefixes deriving causative and inchoative verb forms and examples with and without the prefixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Causative/inchoative form</th>
<th>Form without a prefix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>na-</td>
<td>naprawić co/się</td>
<td>*prawić coš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o-</td>
<td>oślepić kogoś/się</td>
<td>*ślepić kogoś</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>od-</td>
<td>odnaleźć co/się</td>
<td>*naleźć kogoś</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>po-</td>
<td>polepszyć co/się</td>
<td>*lepszyć coš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prze-</td>
<td>przedłużyć co/się</td>
<td>*dłużyć coš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>roz-</td>
<td>rozwścieczyć kogoś/się</td>
<td>*wścieczyć kogoś</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wy-</td>
<td>wyłączyć co/się</td>
<td>*łączyć coš⁹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w-</td>
<td>włączyć co/się</td>
<td>*łączyć coš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z (s)-</td>
<td>zwijać co/się</td>
<td>*wijać coš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>za-</td>
<td>zatrzymać co/się</td>
<td>*trzymać coš¹⁰</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This idea might be true if all Polish verbs alternated in this way. However, in fact, most of them alternate without a special prefix; cf. (3.10).

(3.10) a) **Kasia wy- suszyła pranie.**
Kate prefix-driedCAUSE laundry
“Kate dried the laundry.”

b) **Kasia suszyła pranie.**
Kate driedCAUSE laundry
“Kate was drying laundry.”

c) **Prasie wy- suszyło się.**
laundery prefix-driedANTICAUSE REFL
“Laundry dried.”

d) **Pranie suszyło się.**
laundery driedANTICAUSE REFL
“Laundry was drying.”

In example (3.10) the prefix has no influence on the alternation. Both forms with and without it are perfectly correct. Moreover, other prefixes are possible: **Kasia pod-suszyła pranie**

⁹ A verb like *łączyć coš* exists but in the meaning of “to put together”, and with the prefix it means “turn off” or “turn on”.

¹⁰ Likewise, *trzymać coš* does exist but in a meaning “to hold something”, and not in the intended meaning of “to make something stop”.

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(“Kate made the laundry a bit more dry”). The prefix has influence on the aspectual interpretation of the sentence and it carries the perfective meaning. It can also have influence on to what extent a verb is specific. This inevitably suggests that the idea presented by Olszewska (1974) is wrong. The role of the prefixes from Table 2 must be other than bringing CAUSE to the root meaning. Here two questions arise: (i) What is the role of prefixes if not that of the carriers of CAUSE? and (ii) What brings the CAUSE meaning to the verb if not such prefixes?

In order to answer the first question, the restrictions on the verb must be recalled. A root that needs a prefix to create a form that is able to alternate must be lacking something in its meaning. As stated in the previous chapter, a verb that can alternate must be a change of state (Haspelmath 1993; Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995). The roots of verbs that do not need the prefix already have the meaning of change of state included; thus, roots that do need a prefix might be lacking this meaning; cf. (3.11).

\[ (3.11) \]

a) \( (\text{wy-})\text{suszyć} = \text{make something dry} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{suchy}} \text{ “dry”} \)

\( (u-)\text{gotować} = \text{make something boiled} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{gotowy}} \text{ “ready”} \)

\( (\text{wy-})\text{prać} = \text{make something clean} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{prać}} \text{ “wash”} \)

\( (z-)\text{budować} = \text{make something built} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{budować}} \text{ “build”} \)

b) \*\( (\text{po-})\text{lepszać} = \text{make something better} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{lepszy}} \text{ “better”} \)

\*\( (\text{na-})\text{prawiać} = \text{make something fixed} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{prawy}} \text{ “good”} \)

\*\( (o-)\text{ślepiać} = \text{make someone blind} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{ślepy}} \text{ “blind”} \)

\*\( (z-)\text{wijać} = \text{make something coiled} \rightarrow \sqrt{\text{wij}} \text{ “coil”} \)

The extracted roots from structures in (3.11a) contain the change of state, more precisely, if something is dry, ready to eat, washed or built, it must have been wet, raw, dirty, or not built before the event expressed by the verb happened. In (3.11b), on the other hand, the roots do not contain this meaning. If something is better now (than something else or than it used to be), this does not imply that it has been made better. If something is good (working well — of an appliance) it does not imply it was broken before, it might be good all the time. If someone is blind now, it does not mean that they were not blind before (they might be born blind). Finally, if something is coiled now, it does not mean that it was not coiled before. These examples show that the change of state is crucial for the derivation and that the prefixes that
are obligatory carry the change of state not the CAUSE meaning. Thus, Figure 2 should be restructured into Figure 3 below.

\[ \text{prefix}_{\text{Change of State}} + \sqrt{\text{root}} = \text{accurate form able to alternate} \]
\[ \text{po-} + \text{Change of State} + \sqrt{\text{lepsz}} = \text{polepszyć} \]
\[ \text{prefix}_{\text{Change of State}} + \sqrt{\text{better}} = \text{“make something become better“} \]

**Figure 3.** Derivation of an accurate verb form with an example

In Figure 3, it is important to notice that beside the meaning carried by the prefix, also the name of the derived form is changed into “accurate verb form able to alternate”. The prefix makes the form acceptable by adding the lacking meaning component. The first question concerning prefixes can now be answered. The prefixes, at first, bring change of state meaning to the derivation of verbs that come from the roots lacking this meaning component. Second, when a root does contain this meaning component, the prefix is irrelevant and carries other meaning such as aspect or other components making the verb more specific.

The second question on what carries the CAUSE if not the prefixes might be answered when the suffixes are taken into account. This issue will be dealt with in the next subsection, in which the role of suffixes will be described.

3.2.2. The role of suffixes

Polish causative and inchoative verb forms can be divided into two basic categories when it comes to their suffixes (Szcześniak 2008). The first category are the verbs that end in the morpheme \text{-i-ć} and the second category are the verbs that end with the morpheme \text{-nq-ć}, where \text{-ć} is a morpheme responsible for making the uninflected infinitival form and \text{-i-} and \text{-nq-} are complementary morphemes that bring verb meaning to a root, but both have different verb meanings (Olszewska 1974; Szcześniak 2008); cf. Table 3.
### Table 3. Examples of verbs with both verbalizing suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Causative (anticausative)</th>
<th>Inchoative non-reflexive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slim</td>
<td>odchudzić (się)</td>
<td>chudnąć (*się)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freeze</td>
<td>mrozić (się)</td>
<td>marznąc (*się)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dry</td>
<td>suszyć (się)</td>
<td>schnąć (*się)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cool</td>
<td>studzić (się)</td>
<td>stygnać (*się)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drown</td>
<td>utopić (się)</td>
<td>utonać (*się)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beautify</td>
<td>upiększać (się)</td>
<td>pięknieć (*się)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Szcześniak (2008: 3).

The suffixes presented in Table 3 basically bring the meaning of a verb to a root. The root expresses a state that is reached while an event takes place and is the result of it. The verbalizing morphemes bring about an action in which change of state is executed from a state before the event into a new state. This new state can be expressed by the past participle form of the anticausative verb form. For example, *Dom jest spalony* (“House is burnt”) is a final state of *Dom spalił się* (“House was burning”). The final state, however, cannot be described by the participle derived from the inchoative form *Dom jest splonąty* (“House is burnt”). The passive sentence does not describe the final state of the action *Dom spłonął* (“The house has burnt”) (Koontz-Gaboden 2006). The participle of the verb *płonąć* is unacceptable; however, the participles of other verbs are perfectly fine and usually appear in the position of a modifier, for example: *wyschnięte jezioro* “a dried lake” (*Jezioro jest wyschnięte* “The lake is dried”), *zamarznięty człowiek* “a frozen man” (*Człowiek jest zamarznięty* “The man is frozen”). On the other hand, participles derived from the causative forms are fully acceptable either in passive sentences or as modifiers, for example, *suszyć “to dry-causative”* → *wysuszone owoce* “dried fruit” (*Owoce są wysuszone* “Fruit are dried”). According to Koontz-Gaboden, this irregularity is due to the fact that the alternating verbs allowing past participles as adjectives are derived from adjectives (for example, *suchy “dry”* → *suszyć “to dry”*) and alternating verbs that disallow participles as modifiers are derived from pure events of changes of state (*płonąć “to burn”*).

The verbalizing suffixes have allomorphs giving the same meaning (Szcześniak 2008). For *-ić* the most common allomorph is *-yć*, also *-ać* and *-ować* is present (*gotować “cook”). For *-nać*, possible allomorphs are *-nieć* and *-iec*. As Table 3 shows, the two verbalizing suffixes have different properties. The suffix *-ić* seems to allow further derivation of anticausative form. On the other hand, the suffix *-nać* seems to be blocking it. Olszewska
(1974) suggests that -iće carries the CAUSE meaning, since it is present in all causative verb forms. This idea seems not to hold when we look at verbs that do not have causative meaning and have the same suffix: lubić “to like”, tańczyć “to dance”. This shows that the CAUSE is not carried neither by affixes nor by suffixes.

Going back to the issue connected with blocking the anticausative alternation by -nąć, Szczęśniak (2008) suggests that this suffix makes it impossible to have the following form: √root- + -nąć + się; and that this rule is regular and has no exceptions. He also implies that the forms in Table 3 are equipollent and that they are derived from the same root. This would confirm the semantic analysis of the causative and inchoative forms in which verbs may have two kinds of alternation: the anticausative and the equipollent (Szczęśniak 2008). If this is the case, then the problematic verb śmiać się/śmieścić “laugh/make laugh” would be accounted for and its equipollence is no more an anomaly. However, Szczęśniak (ibidem) also claims that the two forms, one with -iće and one with -nąć, are derived from different bases that have a common root, which can be seen in Figure 4. Szczęśniak (2008) refers to an alternative solution given by Piñón (2001) that not only the causative and inchoative forms are equipollent, but also the causative and anticausative forms and that they have one common base; cf. Figure 4.

![Figure 4. Model of the derivation of all three verb forms](image)

Figure 4 is a combination of Szczęśniak’s and Piñón’s ideas on the equipollent alternations. It can account for all the verbs that have two possible forms with the two suffixes -iće and -nąć. If this analysis is true, then it can be assumed that the CAUSE is carried by the root and further on by the base that takes part in the anticausative alternation. Subsequently, when the inchoative base is selected, the causative meaning is blocked. As an example, in Figure 5 verb suszyćć “to dry” is derived.
Suszyć “make dry”

Suszyć się “get dry”

Schnać “dry by itself”

\[ \sqrt{\text{such}}_{\text{CAUSATIVE/INCHOATIVE}} \rightarrow \text{such}_{\text{CAUSATIVE STEM}} \rightarrow \text{such}_{\text{CAUSATIVE STEM}} \]

\[ \text{sch}_{\text{INCHOATIVE STEM}} \rightarrow \text{sch}_{\text{INCHOATIVE STEM}} \]

Figure 5. Model of inchoative, causative and anticausative verb forms exemplified

Here, the two meanings on the root, causative and inchoative, are complementary in the sense that the root is able to take more morphology to derive these two meanings, either inchoative or causative at a time. This model seems to pattern for all the verbs that have derived forms with both verbalizing suffixes. However, there are verbs that do not have the inchoative form but only the causative/anticausative one (cf. 3.12), and there are verbs that have causative/anticausative forms even though their only possible way of derivation is through -nać, the form with -ić is unacceptable, and the form with -nać and without się is also unacceptable; (cf. 3.13).

(3.12) a) Kasia przebie- -i- -la balon.

Kate CAUSE pop- -V- -Suffix 3rd.p.sg.past balloon

“The balloon popped.”

b) Balon przebie- -i- -l się.

balloon ANTICAUSE pop- -V- -Suffix 3rd.p.sg.past REFL

“The balloon popped.”

c) *Balon przebie- -na- -l.

balloon INCH pop- -V- -Suffix 3rd.p.sg.past

Intended meaning: “The balloon popped.”

(3.13) a) Kasia zamk- -nę- -la drzwi.

Kate CAUSE close- -V- -Suffix 3rd.p.sg.past door

“The door closed.”

b) Drzwi zamk- -nę- -ły się.

door close- -V- -Suffix 3rd.p.pl.past REFL

“The door closed.”

c) *Drzwi zamk- -nę- -ły.

door close- -V- -Suffix 3rd.p.pl.past

Intended meaning: “The door closed.”
In (3.12) it seems that the verb “to pop” in Polish does not have the inchoative meaning in its root. There is a verb that has the meaning of “to pop” in the inchoative sense (rębenić), but there is no causative alternative with -ić to it and it is in no way derived from one root with the verb przebić “to pop”. In example (3.13), on the other hand, the regularity presented by Szcześniak (2008) is distorted. There are such verb that take -nąc and do not block się, for instance, zamknięć (się) “to close” or równać (się) “to wind”, and these forms are only correct with the reflexive, without it they are unacceptable. Furthermore, they seem to be contradicting Szcześniak’s idea. Here the suffix -nąc not only allows się to be present but also requires causative meaning and disallows the inchoative reading. A possible explanation for such verb forms would be that either -ić and -nąc are not complementary morphemes but allomorphs and something else is responsible for the causative or inchoative reading, or they are complementary, but -nąc is too weak to block się and something else is blocking it. This other blocking factor might be semantic or syntactic but not morphological. If it is a semantic factor, then the verbalizing suffixes definitely are allomorphs and have nothing to do with the derivation of causative, anticausative, and inchoative forms, but simply give them the properties of a verb and the meaning of a process of changing the state. The particular meaning of the root then decides whether the reflexive się is needed or not (internally vs. externally caused). This might be the explanation for all the verbs that pattern regularly with -ić and -nąc, where the root takes -ić for the externally caused events and -nąc for internally caused events. For example, the already mentioned verb płonąć/palici (się) “to burn” patterns, as Szcześniak (2008) suggests; cf. (3.14).

(3.14) a) Świeca pali się, candle burnANTICAUSE REFL
“A candle is on fire.”

b) Świeca płonie.
candle burnINCH
“The candle is burning.”

c) Laptop pali się, laptop burnANTICAUSE REFL
“A laptop is on fire.”
CHAPTER 3: THE ANALYSIS

d) #Laptop płonie.
   laptop burn\text{INCH}
   “Laptop is burning.”

In (3.14a) it is shown by się that there was an external \text{AGENT} (in the causative form) that lighted the candle — made it start to burn. In (3.14b) the candle is burning due to its natural properties and describing the event of changing of state without the external entity executing it is acceptable, just as describing a firefly that starts to glow, (cf. 3.8). In (3.14c) the event of burning of a laptop is acceptable with the reading that someone did something to make it burn. The event of the laptop burning on its own in (3.14d), on the other hand, is awkward in the sense that it is untypical of laptops to burn on their own without anyone or anything setting them on fire. Similarly, the verb \textit{zamknąć} “to close” does not have the inchoative form because it is untypical of a door to close due to an internal factor, and the verb \textit{pęknąć} “to pop” does not have the causative form because this verb’s role is to express an autonomous, spontaneous event and a caused event is expressed by some other form derived from a different root (\textit{przepiąć} “to make something pop”). In other words, the semantic and morphological analysis of the morphemes and the verb forms might give the answer that all the three forms are derived depending on what they are supposed to express. Some of the roots have a wide range of usage (for example, \textit{spalić} “to burn”, \textit{suszyć} “to dry”) and some have very specific usages and cannot be applied for other forms (\textit{zamknąć} “to close”, \textit{przepiąć} “to pop”(causative), \textit{pęknąć} “to pop” (inchoative)).

At this point of the investigation, we return to the second question of what carries all the three meanings, the causative, the anticausative, and the inchoative. As the present analysis proved, neither the prefixes nor the suffixes attached to the roots carry these meanings and their role is only to give the change of state meaning, some particular meanings or to verbalize roots and express the process of change of state. The causative, anticausative, and inchoative meanings, as Szcześniak (2008) and Piñón (2001) suggest, are carried by a root and further on by stems that take part in the anticausative alternation. Moreover, a root carries causative and inchoative meanings, and apparently at the point of derivation of a sentence one or the other meaning is chosen and the remaining one is somehow blocked; cf. Figure 4. The syntactic analysis in Section 3.3 will either confirm or contradict the ideas supported by the semantic and the morphological analysis of the alternating verb forms.
3.2.3. The role of reflexive *się*

The data presented in the previous sections of the present investigation show that *się* is obligatory when the anticausative form is derived (Haspelmath 1987; Piñón 2001). It is attached to the causative form and complementary to the external argument, which means that they cannot occur simultaneously, either one or the other can be present in an anticausative sentence; cf. (3.15).

(3.15) a) *Kasia zbiła okno *się.*
Kate broke CAUSE window REFL
Intended meaning: “Kate made the window break itself.”

b) *Kasia okno zbiło *się.*
Kate window broke REFL
Intended meaning: “Kate made the window broke itself.”

Haspelmath (1987) suggests that this kind of anticausative marking is rather uncommon — it is present in Slavic, Romance, and Germanic languages; cf. (3.16). Other languages represent this form more often by morphological changes (for example, Hungarian, Finnish, Japanese).

(3.16) a) Polish

*Drzwi otworzyły się.*
door opened REFL
“The door opened.”

b) French

*La porte s’ouvrit.*
door REFL open
“The door opened.”

c) German

*Die Tür öffnete sich.*
door opened REFL
“The door opened.”

The fact that the reflexive *się* and external argument are complementary does not mean that *się* appears in the external argument position during the derivation and behaves as one. As
Steinbach (2004) claims, the reflexive *się* is derived in the internal argument position in an anticausative sentences. The consequences of this idea are such that the subject of an anticausative sentence (the object of a causative sentence in the alternation) is derived not as the internal argument as it is usually claimed about unaccusative sentences. The anticausative form of verbs is one of possible ways of realizing alternating unaccusative verbs, the other way is the inchoative form. Unaccusative verbs that do not alternate regularly can be made causative using the analytical causative construction: “make something change the state”, for example, “John made the vase disappear”.

The reflexive *się* is the marker of anticausative constructions in Polish, other Slavic languages and Romance, and some of the Germanic languages. Nonetheless, it is not the only role that it has. It can be used in constructions that express reflexivity or the lack of *AGENT* or impersonality of the events (Grahek 2002; Steinbach 2004; Bułat 2007); cf. (3.17) (examples from Bułat 2007: 69–70).

(3.17) a) reflexive/reciprocal

Juan se viste. (Spanish)

John REFL dress

a’) Jan ubiera się. (Polish)

John REFL dress

“John is getting dressed.”

b) middle/passive

Este coche se conduce fácilmente. (Spanish)

this car REFL drive easily

b’) Ten samochód prowadzi się łatwo. (Polish)

this car drive REFL easily

“This car drives easily.”

c) anticausative/inchoative/unaccusative/ergative

El vase se rompió. (Spanish)

a glass REFL broke

c’) Szklanka rozbiła się. (Polish)

glass broke REFL

“A glass broke.”
d) inherent/intrinsic

Maria se asusta de Juan.  
Mary REFL afraid of John

Maria boi się Jana.
Mary afraid REFL John

“Mary is afraid of John.”

In all these usages, się, or its counterparts in other languages, play an important role. In the reflexive/reciprocal usage (3.17a), it is bound by the c-commanding argument and is actually a pronoun, derived in the internal argument position (Steinbach 2004). This usage can be tested by changing się into siebie “oneself”. It can also alternate and have causative meaning. In the intrinsic usage (3.17d), it co-exists with the external argument, but here it is a morpheme attached to a verb and together they form a lexical entry. In (3.17c) and (3.17d), however, this reflexive form is definitely not a pronoun bound to the external argument and cannot be changed into siebie. According to Steinbach (2004), it is a morpheme which is a part of a lexical entry, as the intrinsic reflexive się. This has a consequence for the lexicon such that the anticausative and causative verb forms would make separate lexical entries, which is not supported by their semantics and morphological structure, especially in Polish. If Steinbach’s idea is correct, then the present investigation might end here, stating that for Polish, similarly to German (investigated by Steinbach 2004), the alternation is in fact in the lexicon not in the syntax. Steinbach supports this statement saying that unergative and unaccusative verbs have the same syntactic structure which is the one of unergative verbs where the only argument of either unergative or unaccusative verb is derived in the external argument position. For anticausative forms, się is derived as the internal argument, whose presence is optional. This idea seems very controversial and problematic. If się is derived as the internal argument, then this means that it should take the theta role of PATIENT or THEME and the entity undergoing the change of state should take the theta role of AGENT, which is not the case. The reflexive się cannot be an argument since it cannot be changed into siebie, thus it does not get a theta role. It is a morpheme, but the question is if it is a part of a lexical entry or an independent morpheme, appearing in one of the vP layers.
An alternative analysis, introduced by Fehrmann, Junghanns, and Lenartová (2010),
shows that Slavic languages can be divided into two groups in which the reflexive się behaves
differently. In the first group, it is the “Man” reflexive and in the second group it is the
argument blocking reflexive. The latter reflexive is present in languages such as Russian,
where the external argument position is blocked by a “dummy” ʒ argument, which still allows
addition a by-phrase, because it is not bound existentially by the Operator at the Semantic
Form (SF) and it is either bound by default at the Conceptual Structure (CS) or co-indexed
with a referent in the allowed by-phrase. This basically means that in anticausative sentences
in Russian it is still possible to add Agent of a verb in a by-phrase, which is totally
unacceptable in Polish. The first type of reflexive się is basically the one used in
reflexive/reciprocal sentences and is always bound by a referent which is the highest
argument in the structure. This reflexive is bound by an Operator at SF, thus no by-phrase is
allowed. In other words, when the reflexive is not bound by an Operator at SF, the slot for
another argument is available, but if it is bound by an Operator at SF, this slot is blocked by
a “dummy” ʒ argument, which makes it impossible to add another argument in a by-phrase.
The FJL’s analysis basically shows that Slavic languages show a variety when it comes to the
reflexive marker się and its counterparts in other Slavic languages. As far as Polish is
concerned, it seems that this reflexive marker blocks the addition of another argument, so
Polish belongs to the second group with the “Man” reflexive, where it is either bound by
a referent or blocks the agentive meaning. Here, however, a problem arises. FJL (2010)
suggest that the meaning of a sentence with the “Man” type of the reflexive się has the
unagentive meaning with no CAUSE reading, which they support by tests on agent-oriented
adverbials and instrumental case. Nonetheless, as the morphological analysis showed so far,
the verb forms with się marker have the anticausative reading of a situation that came to
existence by someone or something causing it. As suggested before, the CAUSE meaning is
still present in the anticausative verb forms, even though the causing event with Agent
causing the caused event is gone. Verb forms without się marker, on the other hand, indicate
that a situation happened autonomously and no-one or nothing had to make it happen, which
would be a counterevidence for FJL’s analysis. There arises a question if się is really the
anticausative marker. If verb forms with się still carry the CAUSE meaning, się may simply
detransitivize the causative verb form or block the external argument. This means that the
anticausative alternation should not be called anticausative but rather unagentive (but not in

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11 Further on, for convenience, these authors will be referred to as FJL.
FJL’s terms) or detransitive in the sense that the external argument with AGENT theta role might be present but, for the sake of expressing only the caused event, *się* blocks its occurrence. This might suggest that *się* is again a layer of vP projection.

To sum up, *się* is a marker of unagentivity in the anticausative verb forms. It does not block the CAUSE meaning, but it makes it impossible to express the causing event in a causative situation. It has many different roles in Slavic, Romance, and some Germanic languages. One of them is to detransitivize causative sentences and give reading of anticausative forms such that the event denoted by them takes place with or without unexpressed someone or something bringing them about. As explained previously, it has wider usage than the inchoative *się*-less form, which exclusively denotes an autonomously happening event without any external intervention.

3.2.4. Interim conclusion

The morphological analysis of causative, anticausative, and inchoative verb forms in Polish showed that their richness is justified and all of the morphemes play an important role in the derivation of these forms.

The obligatory prefixes do not carry the CAUSE meaning, but bring the meaning of change of state to the roots that lack it. The other prefixes that can be attached to the roots simply bring more specific meaning or give the aspectual properties to the verb forms. The suffixes -y and -nq are simply allomorphs and bring the verb meaning and the action of change of state to the roots of the verbs. None of the affixes carry the CAUSE meaning thus it is either on the root, as Szczęśniak and Piñón suggest, or is a part of functional vP projection, as Pylkkänen claims.

The reflexive marker *się* has many different roles and when it occurs in the anticausative verb forms, it blocks the occurrence of the external argument, but it does not block the CAUSE meaning, which might be expressed by the root of the verb. The root may have two meanings — the causative and the inchoative — and one of them is chosen for the derivation. When the causative meaning is chosen, *się* may still stop the derivation of the causative sentence by preventing the external argument from appearing. The question that remains unanswered is whether *się* is a lexeme, part of fixed anticausative verb forms or a part of vP projection.
Further section will be devoted to the syntactic analysis of causative, anticausative (or rather unagentive), and inchoative verb forms and will be an attempt to account for the problems with CAUSE and się that were mentioned in the present work.

### 3.3. Syntactic analysis of the causative and inchoative verb forms

The syntactic analysis presented here applies the traditional view that the subject of unaccusative verbs is first derived in the verb complement position — the internal argument position. It will also focus on the alternative idea presented by Steinbach (2004) and on the assumption presented by Pylkkänen (2002) that CAUSE is not on the root of a verb form but a functional head of vP projection. Also the syntactic role of the reflexive się will be investigated.

3.3.1. CAUSE as a functional head

The present analysis focuses on the derivation of causative verb forms where the root of a verb carries only change of state meaning, and the CAUSE and the verbalizing meanings are realized by functional projection of vP.

According to Pylkkänen (2002), CAUSE is a functional head of vP projection and for some languages, such as Finnish, it is separate from the Voice head and for other languages, such as English, these two heads are bundled into one Voice + CAUSE functional head. When these two heads are separate, the CAUSE head brings the causing event to the situation and the VOICE head gives a slot for AGENT — the external argument. When these two heads are bundled into one, they give the CAUSE meaning and a slot for the external argument at the same time; cf. Figure 6. The CAUSE does not assign the theta role of CAUSER, as mentioned before in the semantic analysis of the present investigation.

![Figure 6](image)

**Figure 6.** Voice and CAUSE as separate functional heads (a) and bundled into one head (b)

Source: Adapted from Pylkkänen (2002: 76).
In Figure 6a the Voice and CAUSE are separate, which means that the causativity of the event and transitivity of the verb are denoted by two independent heads. In Finnish it is possible to derive a sentence that may have the CAUSE head and lack the Voice head; in other words, a passive causative sentence can be derived. When the two heads are bundled, as in English, such a derivation is impossible. The question that arises here is which model represents Polish causative sentences.

If Polish causative verb forms have the two functions bundled, then no passive can be derived, which is the case in Polish, but also if the anticausative form is derived, both heads should be blocked or not present at all, which is not the case, as the morphological analysis showed. The bundled heads introduce both the external argument and the CAUSE meaning to a verb. If this head is somehow gone or unavailable in anticausative sentences, not only the external argument position should be blocked, but also the CAUSE reading, which seems to be still available in sentences such as *Dom palił się* (“The house was on fire”). Unlike, in sentences such as *Dom płonął* (“The house was burning”), where the CAUSE meaning is not present at all.

Assuming that CAUSE is a separate head of a vP projection, the derivation of Polish causative sentence *Kasia zamknęła drzwi* (“Kate closed the door”) might look as in Figure 7. During the derivation of an anticausative sentence, the Voice head would be gone and so the external argument slot, the CAUSE head would stay but somehow blocked or covered by the projection introducing *się*. This idea brings a problem of why introduce the CAUSE head and then block it or cover it by another head that brings the opposite meaning. As mentioned above, the CAUSE meaning might still be available in anticausative sentences with *się*, so this problem seems not to be so serious anymore. On the other hand, this CAUSE reading is weak in a way, which means that it cannot be said that an anticausative sentence with *się* still has the causative meaning underneath. It simply hints that there might have been an external force that brought about the anticausative situation, unlike in inchoative sentences where this reading is totally unacceptable.
If the two functional heads are bundled, however, then, while deriving the anticausative sentence, this bundled head would be blocked, so both the external argument and the CAUSE reading would be gone. This would be a good prediction for the external argument but not necessarily for the CAUSE reading.

The opposite idea presented by Piñón (2001) saying that the CAUSE meaning is carried by the root would solve the problem of the CAUSE meaning still present in the anticausative forms. In such derivations, the derivation of a causative sentence would be the “regular” one and the anticausative marker would simply block the external argument position and thus the Voice. It is important to notice here that if Piñón’s idea is right then functional heads’ bundling is not present.

The lexical head — the root — as a lexical item, has two possible meanings, the causative and the inchoative (Piñón 2001). One of them is chosen for a numeration and then a derivation follows depending on which of the two meanings is chosen. If the inchoative meaning is chosen, the complement of a lexical verb head becomes the subject of a sentence and neither the causative nor the anticausative reading is available. When the causative meaning is chosen for a numeration, the complement of a lexical verb head becomes the object of a sentence and the external argument that is allowed to be present becomes the subject of a sentence. If the anticausative sentence is the speaker’s intended sentence, then either the anticausative się appears in a numeration along with the root with the causative meaning or it appears during a derivation as an optional functional head above v’ and prevents the external argument from appearing. This will be also investigated in the following section concerning the syntactic role of się.
The traditional analysis of causative verbs (Chomsky 1995; Kalluli 2006) says that CAUSE is carried by v, which is a functional head for lexical V head. Small v head can have either CAUSE or ACTIVITY meaning and these two are complementary. Either a verb expresses causation or activity and assigns the theta role of CAUSER or ACTOR respectively. This idea seems very successful, since it explains even the problematic di-transitive verbs where v has the CAUSE meaning and di-transitive verbs are interpreted thanks to that as give = y CAUSE [x to have z], show = y CAUSE [x to see z], etc. However, the Finnish passive causative constructions might be a problem for this analysis because for deriving the passive sentences, v has ACTIVITY meaning and no CAUSE meaning. Using Chomsky’s idea, passive causative sentences in Finnish should not exist, because they would not have the CAUSE on v, so would not have the causative reading, which is not the case.

So far, all the three presented ideas on where the CAUSE meaning might be located in a derivation show that it is difficult to give one answer. It seems that Piñón’s assumption that this meaning is carried by a root is the least problematic. When combined with Pylkkänen’s idea on functional heads, it might give a better insight into the way the derivation of causative sentences goes. If the CAUSE feature is on a root, then there is no CAUSE functional head and the Voice head is enough to create active causative and passive causative sentences in Finnish. This also explains the derivation for languages such as Polish or German, where the Voice head might be incorporated into v, since all causative sentences in these languages must be active — no passive voice is possible. English behaves similarly to Polish and German with the difference that there are no morphological signs in the causative and anticausative verb forms. Further analysis will show how the anticausative sentences are derived and what happens during the derivation of such sentences.

3.3.2. The reflexive się as a functional head

For Steinbach (2004), the reflexive się is a pronoun (reflexive/reciprocals, middle/anticausative) or a morpheme in a lexical entry (inherent). The first status of się shows that it is more or less independent. In reflexive/reciprocal usage it is bound by a referent and it is treated as an argument reflexive (Steinbach 2004). This means that the position which it occupies in a sentence is an argument position with a theta role and a case assigned. In the middle/anticausative usage się is still a pronoun for Steinbach, but it is a non-argument reflexive, which means that the position which it occupies is not an argument position. The problem with this assumption is that if the middle/anticausative się is not in an argument
position, is it still a pronoun? If it were still a pronoun, it would be caseless and without a theta role and these features on a verb would not be discharged and a derivation should theoretically crash. This problem shows that *się* in anticausative sentences there is something else than a pronoun or morpheme in a lexical item. The solution proposed in the present work is that *się* might be a functional head.

As a functional head, reflexive *się* may change the interpretation of a verb and functional *v* head, which it cannot do as a pronoun or morpheme. As mentioned before, the anticausative sentence is derived with a root that must have CAUSE meaning (for the sake of the present analysis it is assumed that CAUSE is carried by a verb root; cf. Figure 4). This derivation is carried out in the “regular” way up to a point at which *się* should be applied bringing the anticausative reading. This would mean that *się* as a head would block the merge of the external argument and thus create an intransitive sentence with anticausative reading. This idea might be also supported by the fact that *się* does not block the internal argument for movement to the subject position in Spec-TP. If reflexive *się* were a pronoun that appears instead of the external argument, it would be the first argument to be moved to the Spec-TP position and it is not the case. Steinbach (2004) claims that pronoun *się* in German is not merged in the external argument position but in the verb complement position, which for Steinbach is not an argument position in unaccusative sentences. The consequence of this assumption is that unaccusative sentences are derived in exactly the same way as unergative sentences. This would account for the inchoative verb forms, such as *pękać* “to pop”, but this also predicts that the verb complement position has double nature. Once it can be an argument position and once it can be a slot for non-argument reflexive pronoun, depending on the selectional properties of an unaccusative verb. The alternative assumption that the reflexive *się* is a functional head solves the problem of the double nature of the verb complement making it always an argument position. It introduces another kind of *się*, not even similar to the usages of *się* in (3.17); however, the anticausative *się* cannot be treated as other usages of a reflexive, since it does not give a new meaning or lexical meaning but changes the already applied CAUSE into something else. Figure 8 presents a possible derivation of an anticausative sentence *Drzwi zamknęły się* (“The door closed”), applying the assumption that CAUSE is on a verb root and that *się* is a head.
The external argument position in Figure 8a is empty, because się prevented it from being filled with a lexical item. Reflexive się and an item to occupy the external argument position are in complementary distribution, so when się is present in a numeration, this item cannot be present. That is why Figure 8b is also a possible way of deriving an anticausative sentence. If these two elements are complementary and the presence of one excludes the presence of the other, why not assume they appear exactly in the same position? The problem is that Spec-vP is a position for theta role assignment and reflexive się definitely does not get any theta role in anticausative sentences, which makes Figure 8a a more likely model of the derivation of anticausative sentences. This model would also confirm FJL’s idea that reflexive się used for middle and anticausative constructions blocks the external argument in such a way that it cannot even be introduced in a by-phrase in such constructions. Here another idea can be introduced that if a speaker wants to derive an anticausative sentence, they simply put the się functional head in a numeration, which automatically excludes the lexical item meant for the external argument position and forces the derivation of an intransitive sentence with CAUSE meaning still available in the sense presented in the previous subsection. If a speaker wants to derive a causative sentence, on the other hand, they simply take the root with the causative meaning, two lexical items for internal and external argument positions and carry out a regular causative derivation without any extra functional heads changing it.

Another analysis, presented by Schäfer (2008), supports Pylkkänen’s idea that CAUSE and Voice are two functional heads. He claims that they are not bundled for languages such as...
English or German and each time a causative sentence is being derived, the Voice head appears above the CAUSE head and each time an anticausative sentence is derived, the Voice head is absent, only the CAUSE is present. This means that the internal argument becomes the subject of a sentence, but there is no slot for the reflexive się included. This analysis might be a neat explanation for languages such as English, but it needs to be changed to account for languages such as Polish, in which the issue of reflexive się remains unsolved.

All the presented ideas try to explain where in the derivation of causative and anticausative sentences CAUSE and reflexive się appear. Chomsky (1995) claims that CAUSE is complementary with ACTION as features on v functional head. Piñón (2001) provides the most simple and convenient explanation that CAUSE is on a root and the root gets anticausativised semantically. Pylkkänen (2002), supported by Schäfer (2008), suggests that CAUSE is a functional head, either bundled with Voice or not. Steinbach (2004) believes that either reflexive się is a part of a lexical unaccusative verb (a morpheme) or a pronoun that may occupy either an argument position or a non-argument position. His work does not deal with the CAUSE meaning. Schäfer (2008) supports the idea of Pylkkänen; however, his solution, though quite coherent, does not explain what happens with the reflexive się. Szcześniak (2008) supports Piñón’s assumptions and, for Polish causative and inchoative verbs, he shows certain regularity that is a root takes -y- or its allomorphs as the verbalizing morpheme, the causative an anticausative derivation is possible and if a root takes -nq- or its allomorphs, then only the inchoative derivation is possible and there is no causative form with -nq- from which the inchoative form could be derived. This idea has some exceptions which seem to be denying it. Finally, FJL (2010) suggested that reflexive się in Polish anticausative sentences is an argument blocking pronoun, which makes it impossible to add AGENT in a by-phrase.

3.3.3. Causative/inchoative distinction revisited

To account for all the three verb forms presented in this work, the inchoative form needs to be added to the syntactic analysis. As mentioned in the morphological part of the present investigation, if the causative meaning is placed on the root of the verb forms, it is complementary with the inchoative meaning and derived from one base with the anticausative meaning; cf. Figure 4 repeated below as Figure 9.
The first step in the derivation of the sentence with one of the forms from Figure 9 is to choose which meaning of the root will be expressed. A root may have both meanings available, or just one or be a lexical item with się as a lexical morpheme (reflexive verbs). Here, the relevant situation is when a root can derive all the three forms: causative (palić “set on fire”), anticausative (palić się “be on fire”), and inchoative (płonąć “burn”). If the inchoative meaning is selected, then the sentence will be intransitive and unaccusative without the external argument and without any reflexive morphology. If the causative meaning is chosen, two options are still left: either the causative stem is left with its causative morphology, or it is given anticausative morphology – the reflexive się, which might be a functional head, not an pronoun. If this idea is correct, it might be supported by the morphology of such verbs, analysed by Szcześniak (2008) and presented in this work in Section 3.2. If -y- is a causative morpheme and -ną- is an inchoative morpheme, then a root will get the proper morphology in v. Again, here the reflexive się still might be a functional head which may appear only above v with causative -y- and decides on the external argument position not to be filled and not to be available for further operations (FJL 2010). The counterevidence shows that it is not a morphological factor, though; cf. (3.12) and (3.13).

The proposal that CAUSE is a functional head is also problematic. If both CAUSE and the reflexive się are heads, it does not seem to make sense to have two functional heads, where one brings the causative meaning and the very next one saturates it, makes it weak or absent. Besides, here it should also be stipulated that there is an INCHOATIVE functional head for verbs such as płonąć “to burn”, which is not supported by any evidence. If only CAUSE is a head and się is not, there arises a question of a double nature of the verb complement position.

The most optimal and least problematic solution seems to be the case where CAUSE is one of the possible meanings that a root can express and się is a functional head which changes the syntactic construction in such a way that the absence of AGENT is realized and the CAUSE reading is still available; cf. Figure 10.
a) Kasia wysuszyła pranie.
Kate *dried* _cause_ laundry

“Kate dried the laundry.”

\[
\text{Kasia} \quad v' \quad -y- \quad \text{vP} \quad \sqrt{\text{susz}} \quad \text{pranie} \quad [\text{CAUSE}]
\]

b) Pranie wysuszyło się.
Laundry *dried* _anticause_ REFL

“The laundry got dried.”

\[
\text{Ø} \quad \text{się} \quad -y- \quad \text{vP} \quad \sqrt{\text{susz}} \quad \text{pranie} \quad [\text{CAUSE}]
\]

c) Pranie wyschło.
laundry *dried* _inchoative_

“The laundry dried.”

\[
\text{Ø} \quad \text{się} \quad -y- \quad \text{vP} \quad \sqrt{\text{susz}} \quad \text{pranie} \quad [\text{CAUSE}]
\]
As Figure 10 shows, all the three forms can be derived assuming that CASUE and INCH meanings are complementary on a root. The chosen meaning decides on what is going on further in a derivation with only one functional head się, which is able to change the course of the causative derivation. This verb is in a way “flexible” — it can express all the three related, yet different meanings. The causative meaning placed on the root “perforates” to the general reading of the anticausative sentences, in which reflexive się blocks the position for agentive external argument and makes the whole sentence intransitive.

3.3.4. Problematic examples revisited

Let us recall the problematic cases at this point to account for them as well. There are verbs that can have only the causative/anticausative form or only the inchoative form and the counterpart form is derived from a different root or there is no counterpart form at all; cf. (3.18), (3.19), and (3.20) (previous examples repeated and extended below).

(3.18) a) \textit{Kasia przeb- -i- -la balon.}  
Kate \textit{cause pop- V- -Suffix3rd.p.sg.past} balloon  
“Kate popped the balloon.”

b) \textit{Balon przeb- -i- -l się.}  
balloon \textit{anticause pop- V- -Suffix3rd.p.sg.past REFLEX}  
“The balloon popped.”
Example (3.18) shows a situation when the causative and anticausative forms are derived from a different root than the inchoative form. Syntactically, these sentences would be derived in the same way as the verb *schnąc/suszyć* “to dry” in Figure 10. The only change is at the very beginning of the whole process. The root for causative and anticausative verb is unable to express the inchoative meaning because the action of popping in the causative/anticausative sense is controlled by the external force and the action of popping in the inchoative sense is totally spontaneous and depends on the internal properties of a balloon. The inchoative meaning cannot be expressed by the root denoting some control over the action, thus for the inchoative sentence a more appropriate, or even as the only fitting, a root is selected to express the autonomy of the event of popping of a balloon on its own; cf. Figure 11.

![Figure 11](image_url)  
*Figure 11. Causative/anticausative and inchoative forms derived from different lexical roots*

(3.19) a)  
*Kasia zamk- -nę- -ła drzwi.*  
Kate *CAUSE*close- -V- -Suffix 3rd.p.sg.past door  
“Kate closed the door.”

b)  
*Drzwi zamk- -nę- -ły się.*  
door close- -V- -Suffix 3rd.p.pl.past REFL  
“The door closed.”

c)  
*Drzwi zamk- -nę- -ły.*  
door close- -V- -Suffix 3rd.p.pl.past  
Intended meaning: “The door closed.”
In (3.19) the inchoative form is not present at all. This means that the Polish verb *zamykać* “to close” can only express a situation when an external force (causative) or the not mentioned external force (anticausative) causes the door to become closed. There is no such root in Polish that would express this situation in the inchoative sense; cf. Figure 12.

The opposite situation is with verbs of sound and light emission or verbs of (dis-)appearance; cf. Figure 13. Roots for these verbs carry the inchoative meaning but have no causative meaning available.

Finally, the most problematic case of a verb *śmiać się/śmieszzyć* “to laugh/to make laugh” will be explained. As (3.20) shows, this verb alternates in Polish, unlike in English. Its alternation is not as regular as of the verb in Figure 10. Here, the unergative verb has a causative/anticausative counterpart. The reflexive *się* in (3.20a) is a different *się* than the one in (3.20c). In (3.20a) *się* is a morpheme which is a part of a lexical item, the reflexive *się* in (3.20c) is a functional head, blocking the external argument position, but, as the examples show, they have different meanings, which is another proof that the anticausative *się* and other instances of *się* are totally different from each other.

(3.20) a) *Kasia śmieje się.*
Kate laughs REFL
“Kate is laughing.”
CHAPTER 3: THE ANALYSIS

b) \textit{Anthony laugh}_{CAUSE} \textit{Kate} \textit{laugh} \\
\textit{“Anthony made Kate laugh.”} \\
c) \textit{Kate laugh}_{CAUSE} \textit{REFL} \textit{laugh} \\
\textit{“Kate made herself laugh.”}

The unergative and causative/anticausative forms are related, but this relation is more remote than for bases for causative and inchoative verb forms; cf. Figure 14.

![Morphological derivation of the verb śmiać się/śmieżyć](image)

The unergative and the causative forms need interim bases, since they are derived from a noun and an adjective related to each other morphologically. There still remains a question why this verb may have causative/anticausative forms, while other verbs of this kind do not. For example, the verb \textit{płakać} “to cry” has a similar semantics. Just as there is an external factor needed to make someone laugh, there is needed an external factor that makes someone cry. Moreover, someone can make oneself cry, just as someone can make oneself laugh. The possible answer might be such that in Polish verb \textit{śmieżyć} “to laugh/to make laugh” is not the instance of an alternation but the instance of richness of forms. In many other languages this verb does not alternate and behaves like other unergative verbs. In Polish it seems to alternate, but in fact this alternation is not a typical causative/anticausative alternation, but a kind of lexical alternation, an extra way of saying “to make someone laugh”.

3.3.5. Interim conclusion

The insight into the works on the syntax of causative, anticausative, and inchoative sentences showed that there is no simple way of accounting for the derivation of all the three forms. The proposal introduced in the present work and based on the previous analyses of this problem
gives a more or less unified way of deriving all the three alternating forms. This way is a combination of several ideas presented before, where semantic, morphological, and syntactic factors are responsible for complexity of this linguistic phenomenon.

The syntactic analysis presented here states that the most optimal way of deriving all the three types of sentences is to assume that two basic distinctive meanings are located on the root of a verb. These meanings are the causative and the inchoative meaning. Furthermore, the anticausative verb forms are derived from the causative bases during the derivation by applying a functional head się, which blocks the external argument position. This head appears in a numeration and is complementary with an item that is to fill the agentive external argument position, either one or the other may be present in the lexical numeration before the derivation starts.

Finally, all the problematic cases can be accounted for from the level of lexicon and basic semantic and selectional properties of verbs such as verbs of sound and light emission or verbs such as śmiać się/śmiechać “to laugh/to make laugh”. The derivation of the sentences with these verbs is regular in the same way as the derivation of other “ordinary” verbs. The difference is that these verbs lack some semantic or selectional properties to express all the three forms and this is why speakers use other forms to express what they want to convey in their propositions.
CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Conclusions of the analysis

The aim of the present work was to analyze semantically, morphologically, and syntactically Polish causative, anticausative, and inchoative verb forms. Polish was analyzed mainly with respect to Slavic, Romance, and Germanic languages; however, other languages, such as Finnish or Tuvan, were also included. The analysis focused on accounting for some basic problems with the three verb forms in Polish. These problems were oscillating around the main problem which is the direction of the derivation of these forms. Some additional issues also came about during the analysis and they were connected with the placement of the causative and inchoative meanings, the way the causative verb form is anticausativised (or is it the other way round?), and the role of reflexive się that appears in all the anticausative forms.

The theoretical part of the present work provided some basic ideas on what a causative situation is and the fact that it can be deconstructed into two subevents: the causing event and the caused event. It also presented previous divisions of languages in terms of how causative and inchoative forms are derived in them (Haspelmath 1993). What can be inferred from the theoretical assumptions is that the alternation that takes place in Polish is of the anticausative type, which means that the causative form is the more basic one and the derived form is the anticausative form, which has extra morphology and more restricted selectional features.

The first part of the analysis focused on the semantic and selectional properties of the verbs taking part in the causative alternation and the restrictions on their arguments. The semantic analysis showed that a verb that is able to alternate is an unaccusative verb of change of state that is caused externally. But this definition is only a general idea on which verbs might alternate. Languages show a lot of variation in this matter. It is not only
unaccusative verbs that alternate, but also unergative or di-transitive verbs can alternate in a number of languages (for example, Tuvan) (Haspelmath 2006). For languages such as Polish, German, or English, it is required for a verb to be unaccusative change of state externally caused (Leving and Rappaport Hovav 1995). If a verb is internally caused, like verbs of sound or light emission, it usually does not alternate. The verbs that do alternate are inherently dyadic, which means that the causative form is a more basic one from which the anticausative form is derived.

The restrictions on the entity causing the caused event are such that this entity must be either animate or human, or be able to take one of the theta roles able to cause a caused event: AGENT, FORCE OF NATURE, or INSTRUMENT. The entity causing the caused event is not assigned the theta role of CAUSER (Pylkkänen 2002). This is due to the fact that in some languages it is possible to have a caused event in a passive construction and if the causing properties were only on the theta role of CAUSER, such a construction should not be possible.

The arguments undergoing the change of state, so the entities entering the verb complement position or the internal argument position, have one but a very strong restriction. They must have a natural property of undergoing a change of state denoted by a verb. For example, a cloth does not have the property of being able to break (in natural circumstances), so it cannot become a complement of the alternating unaccusative verb of change of state to break. The number of the entities entering the complement position of a causative verb form is larger than the number of the entities entering this position in the anticausative verb, which is another proof that the causative form is the more basic one with a wider range of possible meanings.

The second part of the analysis was an investigation of the morphology of causative, anticausative, and inchoative verb forms, which showed that what is relevant for the derivation of these forms is for a verb to be a change of state. If a verb has this meaning on its root, it does not need any extra morphology. If a root lacks this meaning, prefixes added to it bring the meaning of change of state and, prepared in such a way, a root can take part in the derivation of either causative or anticausative form. The suffixes -y- and -ną- are also relevant for a derivation. They verbalize a root and bring the action of change into the meaning of a verb. In other words, thanks to them the change of state denoted by a root is carried out.

The morphological analysis also showed that none of the affixes gives causative meaning to a root and that this meaning might be placed on a root in the lexicon from the very
beginning. In addition, it also showed that reflexive *się* in anticausative verb forms has a different nature than other reflexives used in Polish.

Finally, the syntactic insight into the derivation of sentences with the three verb forms showed that it is reasonable to assume that the causative meaning is located on a root and that the reflexive *się* is not a morpheme or pronoun but a functional head intervening in the derivation of a causative sentence. This idea also accounts for problematic verb forms, which seemed to contradict the previous ideas about them.

During the derivation of a causative sentence, a proper meaning on a root is chosen and then a derivation goes according to the regular syntactic rules. If in a numeration a root with a causative meaning is chosen, then it has also to be decided if the functional head *się* is needed or an entity entering the external argument position, since they exclude each other. If the entity is chosen, a regular causative sentence is derived. If the anticausative functional head *się* is chosen, an anticausative sentence is derived with the causative reading, still hinting at someone or something causing this event. If at the very beginning the inchoative meaning is chosen, then a derivation produces an inchoative sentence without any functional projection above *v* and without the causative reading available.

4.2. Discussion

The present work offered a possible solution for the problem of how causative, anticausative, and inchoative verb forms are derived in Polish. This solution came to existence by the combination of a number of ideas found in the sources, original ideas presented in the present study, and the exclusion of some ideas found in the existing literature.

One of the excluded ideas is that the external argument in causative sentences is assigned the theta role of CAUSER (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995; Schäfer 2008). The present work adapted Pylkkänen’s idea that the external argument is not CAUSER. If it were, then passive causative constructions in Finnish should not be possible, because they would be lacking the causing entity. If the assumption that the causative meaning is on the root of a verb holds, then for Finnish there should be no problem with the external argument being CAUSER, because the causative reading would be still available for interpretation in the passive construction and no functional head of CAUSE type would be needed. The theta role
of cause could be assigned to the external argument and, in the passive construction without the external argument, the causative reading would still be present in the construction on the same basis as it is still available in the anticausative sentences in Polish.

The second excluded idea was introduced by Szczęśniak (2008), who assumes that the verbalizing morphemes -y- and -na- are in complementary distribution. The morpheme -y- is responsible for the derivation of causative and anticausative forms and the morpheme -na- is responsible for the derivation of the inchoative forms in Polish. The consequence of this is such that it is the morphemes that bring the causative or inchoative meaning to the verbs, not the functional heads or the roots themselves. This idea was rejected in the present work because some counterevidence was found; namely, there are verbs such as zamknąć (się) “to close” that do exactly the opposite to what Szczęśniak assumes. They take the inchoative morpheme to create the causative/anticausative form and, moreover, they do not have the inchoative form. It seems that such counterevidence weakens these morphemes to simple allomorphs that verbalize a root but do not carry the causative or inchoative meaning, which is what the present work assumes. However, Szczęśniak’s idea might be right. If it is the case, then the counterevidence is not an instance of anticausative alternation, but, similarly to Polish verb to laugh, a different kind of some lexical alternation or richness of forms that happens to take an identical morpheme. The morpheme -na- in zamknąć might be a different type of morpheme, possibly used in this form for phonological reasons, which, if true, makes this verb no longer an exception from Szczęśniak’s rule on the verbalizing morphemes. If this assumption were correct, there would be no need to assume that the cause meaning is on a root because it would be on morphemes. This solution might be true, but it requires more investigation into the morphology and the phonology of Polish verbs.

Finally, Steinbach’s (2004) assumption that the reflexive się is a non-argument pronoun in anticausative sentences was also rejected in the present study. This idea came out to be problematic with respect to the dual nature of the verb complement. Nonetheless, it might be true if it is assumed that this pronoun is in a way degenerated, which means that it does not have a full set of the properties of a pronoun or is something more universal than a pronoun and can enter free argument positions, bound argument positions, and non-argument positions. This matter, however, also needs further research and evidence from languages other than German.
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REFERENCES


