

A Reanalysis of Double Object Constructions and Dative Constructions in English: A Construction Grammar Approach

Lee, Ki Taek

차 례

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I . Introduction

It is not only interesting but also confusing that alternation of the Double Object Construction (henceforth, DOC) and the Dative Construction (henceforth, DC) is possible with some types of verbs but not with others. The sentences in (1a, b) are classic examples of dative alternation.

- (1) a. John gave the book to Mary.
- b. John gave Mary the book.

It is problematic that verbs with similar meanings such as *donate* cannot be used in DOC as shown in (2a, b):

- (2) a. John donated the money to the charity.
- b. *John donated the charity the money.

The sentences in (1) and (2) show that there are some restrictions on the types of verbs that can undergo this kind of dative shift.

Furthermore, verbs that do undergo dative shift sometimes do not allow alternation under certain circumstances, as illustrated in (3a, b) and (4a), and in the ill-formedness of (4b).

- (3) a. John sent the parcel to Mary.
- b. John sent Mary the parcel.

- (4) a. John sent the parcel to the States.
- b. *John sent the States the parcel.

The difference between (3a) and (4a) is that the prepositional phrase *to Mary* has the semantic role of recipient, whereas the prepositional phrase *to the States* does not have such a semantic role. It would appear that without the recipient role, a noun phrase cannot be the first object in a DOC sentence. Such selectional restrictions on verbs that undergo dative alternation have led to important questions in linguistics. Explanations based on monosemy, polysemy and information structure have been put forth, but none is completely satisfactory as there are still many

exceptions.

I also argue that there are prototype effects in each construction. Linguistic constraints and principles are obeyed in extensions of each construction and these in turn will affect the prototypical meanings of the constructions. I have revised and adapted some of their models to offer my own interpretation of how we use and understand prototypical and peripheral constructions.

In Chapter 2, I examine several approaches, i.e., the monosemy approach, the polysemy approach, and the information structure approach, comparing the DC and the DOC and their respective characteristics within each framework.

Chapter 3 deals with the phenomena of DC and DOC through the construction grammar approach, which appears to have more explanatory power than other grammar frameworks with respect to the above-mentioned restrictions and problematic data.

II. Different Views of Dative Alternation

Dative alternation has been accounted for in a number of different ways. In the following sections, four of the main approaches will be introduced: the monosemy view, the polysemy view, the information structure view, and the construction grammar view.

2.1 The Monosemy View

The monosemy view argues that dative verbs have a single meaning that gives rise to two different but derivationally-related syntactic structures.

The two variants are taken to have identical truth-conditional meaning, and this approach seems to be syntactically motivated. There are a number of different versions of this view. Larson (1988) assumes that DC is basic and that DOC is a derived structure:

- (5) $[_{VP} \text{ send}_1[_{VP} \text{ a letter } [_{V'} t_1 [_{PP} \text{ to Mary}]]]] \Rightarrow$
 $[_{VP} \text{ send}_1[_{VP} \text{ Mary}_2 [_{V'}[_{V'} t_1 t_2] \text{ a letter}]]]]$

Larson (1988) accounts for the well-known syntactic asymmetries of the dative alternation by positing a hierarchical structure in the VP involving two VP-shells. In his analysis, the Theme is generated as the specifier of the lower VP, and the Goal as its complement.

The dative shift alternation results when a passive-like operation applies to this lower VP, moving the Goal to the specifier position and generating the Theme in an adjunct position, analogous to the position of the by-phrase in a passive.

Larson's (1988) analysis was inspired by the facts observed by Barss and Lasnik (1986), who pointed out that there are asymmetric aspects within DOC with regard to the licensing of anaphora. Larson (1988) accounts for these asymmetries by assuming a double verb phrase structure. Barss and Lasnik's (1986) asymmetries also suggested that NP₁ should have a wider scope than NP₂, which can be narrowed down by movement theory as seen in examples in (6a, b), (7a, b) and (8a, b):

- (6) a. I showed Mary herself.
 b. *I showed herself Mary.
- (7) a. I showed no one anything.
 b. *I showed anyone nothing.

- (8) a. Susan sent every owner_i his_i dog.
 b. *Susan sent his_i owner every dog_i.

(Barss and Lasnik 1986)

The ungrammaticality of (8b) relates to information structure rather than to the properties of the verb. In (8b), the recipient 'every owner' is more prominent than the theme 'his dog.'

By contrast, Aoun and Li (1989) assume that DOC is basic and that DC is a derived structure, as shown in example (9) below:

- (9) [VP give [SC Beth [VP e the car]]] ⇒
 [VP give [SC the car₁ [VP [VP e t₁] to Beth]]]

Butt, Dalrymple and Frank (1997) argue that there are also non-derivational monosemy accounts, in which "one and the same thematic structure can be realized by two distinct syntactic patterns" in (10). Butt, Dalrymple and Frank's mechanism is illustrated below:

- (10) Theta roles of verb: give (AGENT, THEME, GOAL)

Possible realization of theta roles:

THEME: (SUBJ), OBJ, OBJ_{THEME}

GOAL: (SUBJ_p, OBJ, OBL_{GOAL})

Ranking of grammatical functions: (SUBJ)>OBJ> {OBJ_∅, OBL_∅}

Grammatical functions in DOC and DC:

send [Mary] OBJ [a letter] OBJ_{THEME}.

send [a letter]OBJ [to Mary] OBL_{GOAL}

(Butt, et al. 1997)

Both constructions are ranked equally, as OBJ_∅, and OBL_∅ are ranked

equally. Most monosemy accounts do not consider semantics to be an important factor and do not discuss the restriction of the dative alternation to particular verbs.

2.2 The Polysemy View

This viewpoint is a non-derivational analysis of the dative alternation. According to this view, dative verbs have two distinct meanings, each of which has its own realization of argument. This approach seems to be motivated by lexical semantic considerations. Alternating verbs have core meanings compatible with two-event schemas. The alternate argument realizations arise because profiled arguments satisfy the semantic conditions for mapping to a direct object in each variant.

- (11) a. 'X causes Y to have Z', giving rise to the double object variant.
 b. 'X causes Z to be at Y', giving rise to the to-variant

The polysemy view assumes that verbs pre-select the syntactic environments in which they occur. Pinker (1989) tries to show that arbitrary restrictions on dative alternation are semantically motivated. In order to occur in DOC, the verb needs to possess the correct semantic properties. In this case, the underlying meaning of DOC is that 'X causes Y to have Z.' Therefore, Y must be a prospective possessor of Z. If the verb does not have this property then the construction cannot be grammatical, as shown in (12b), where 'London' is not a prospective possessor of a letter.

- (12) a. Ann sent a package to London.
b. *Ann sent London a package.

(Krifka 2001: 2)

2.3 The Information Structure View

The information structure view (Erteschik–Shir 1979) holds that meaning differences are not important but differences in the information structure are key. Information structural approaches attribute dative alternation to contextual or processing factors such as information structure, animacy, definiteness, heaviness, and morphological constraints (Arnold et al. 2000, and Rappaport–Hovav and Levin 2002).

There is also a difference between DOC and DC with respect to the possibility of passivization, depending on information structure. Examples (13a, b, c) and (14a, b, c), below provide further evidence that constructions obey constraints other than verb semantics or movement rules.

- (13) a. Sandy sent Terry the package.
b. Terry was sent the package by Sandy.
c. *The package was sent Terry by Sandy.

- (14) a. Sandy sent the package to Terry.
b. The package was sent to Terry by Sandy.
c. *Terry was sent the package to by Sandy.

Testing the grammaticality of these passivized sentences can show the existence of a topic position¹⁾ right after the verb, while testing the grammaticality of wh–replacement can show the existence of a focus

position at the end of a sentence.²⁾ Passives should be related to the topic, and wh-replacement should be related to the focus position.

The recipient 'Terry' is in the topic position in (13a). It can therefore be passivized, as seen in (13b). However, the direct object 'the package' in (13a) is in the focus position. This cannot be passivized, as seen in (13c). The theme NP 'the package' is in the topic position immediately following the verb in (14a) and so it can be passivized as in (14b). Thus we see that in both DC and DOC, only the NP following the verb in topic position can be passivized. It is not the argument itself but the position of the argument that determines the possibility of passivization.

As seen in examples (15a, b, c) and (16a, b, c), below, the topic element position in both DOC and DC tends not to be replaceable by a wh-element. This is because the topic element gives old information, when wh-elements should substitute for new information.

- (15) a. John gave her the package.
 b. *Whom did John give the package?
 c. What did John give her?

- (16) a. John gave the package to her.
 b. To whom did John give the package?
 c. *What did John give to her?

Furthermore, heavy elements tend to be found in the end position, following the end weight principle, as follows:

1) The NP following the verb is the topic position.
 2) The NP at the end of a sentence is the focus position, which is the preferred position for new information.

- (17) A: Who did he give the book to?
B: He gave the book to Beth.
B': He gave Beth the book. (dispreferred)
- (18) A: Chris gave Terry a bowl of Mom's traditional cranberry sauce.
B: Chris gave a bowl of Mom's traditional cranberry sauce to Terry. (dispreferred).

(Krifka 2001: 2)

Thus, it is information structure that decides which argument is preferred in a particular context, i.e., as in the cases of passivization and *wh*-element substitution. I will show other factors that affect the grammaticality of sentences and the possibility of dative alternation in the following chapters.

III. Characteristics of Dative Alternation

In this chapter we look at syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, morphophonological, and information structural restrictions on dative alternation. These restrictions lead to differences in implication for verbs that can occur in both DOC and DC.

3.1 Morphophonological Restrictions

3.1.1 Prototypical Verbs in DOC

Germanic origin verbs or native English verbs such as *envy*, *save*, *cost*, and *forgive* are found only in DOC, as illustrated in (19–21):

- (19) a. Smith envied Jones his good fortune.
b. *Smith envied his good fortune to Jones.
- (20) a. John can forgive you that comment.
b. *John can forgive that comment to you.
- (21) a. The recession cost my grandfather a raise.
b. *The recession cost a raise to my grandfather.

According to Green (1974: 78), Latinate verbs on the other hand, such as *donate*, *report*, *explain*, *distribute*, *illustrate*, *recite*, and *transport*, do not allow for DOC (Green 1974: 78).

In examples (19–21), the Germanic verbs can occur in DOC but not in DC, while the Latinate verbs can occur in DC but not in DOC. It appears that the etymological origin of verbs may have a strong influence on the way native language users generalize patterns.

3.1.2 Prototypical Verbs in DC

Prototypical verbs in DC are mostly those of Latin origin such as *introduce*, *suggest*, *announce*, and *explain*. They cannot be used in DOC, because it is a Germanic construction as follows:

- (22) a. John introduced himself to the students
b. *John introduced the students himself.
- (23) a. John suggested moving to the countryside to his wife.
b. *John suggested his wife moving to the countryside.

- (24) a. John announced his resignation to the staff.
b. *John announced the staff his resignation.

In examples (19–21) and (22–24), we observe that the Germanic and native English verbs tend to consist of fewer syllables or receive initial stress, while the Latinate verbs tend to be polysyllabic and receive non-initial stress. This helps elucidate how Germanic or native English verbs are perceptually differentiated at the level of morphophonology, leading to their contrastive behavior with respect to DOC and DC.

3.2 Differences in Implication

So far we have primarily looked at verbs that occur only in DOC or in DC exclusively. Many verbs can be used in both constructions, but there are interesting shades of difference in meaning that arise with such verbs between the DC and DOC forms of otherwise identical sentences. In particular, DOC often implies a sense of completion that may be lacking in DC. Green (1974) reports that (25a) may be true even if the students did not learn French, whereas (25b) suggests that the students learned it. Similarly, (26b) suggests that Beth got hold of the ball, whereas (26a) is more neutral.

- (25) a. Beth taught French to the students.
b. Beth taught the students French.

- (26) a. Ann threw the ball to Beth.
b. Ann threw Beth the ball.

(Krifka 2001: 5)

However, these are tendencies at best. Rappaport-Hovav and Levin (2001) observe that even DOC does not entail completion but only implies it, as illustrated in (27):

- (27) Ann threw Beth the ball, but it didn't reach her because of the strong wind.

This may be due to the connotation of generalized possibility that comes with atelic verbs. When it comes to telic verbs such as *copy*, they cannot be denied because they imply the completion of the verb meaning as seen below:

- (28) ?Ann copied the manuscript, but she didn't finish it.
(Krifka 2004: 6)

So far I have compared the DC and DOC constructions to shed light on differences between them by examining various solutions to problematic data exhibiting dative alternation.

IV. A Construction Grammar Approach

Construction Grammar supposes that lexical units have no fixed semantic representation, but provide access to an infinite number of cognitive domains. It also assumes that they can be used in different constructions, as long as their various features do not conflict with those of the construction. They typically have several related meanings that form a network that has radial structures and that shows prototype effects.

A central thesis of this approach is that basic sentences of English are

instances of constructions of form–and–meaning correspondences that exist independently of particular verbs. It is argued that constructions carry meaning, independently of the words in the sentence. Construction Grammar proponents contend that language–specific generalizations across constructions are captured via inheritance networks much like those that have long been posited to capture our non–linguistic knowledge.

The Construction Grammar approach has already led to new ways of explaining the aforementioned aspects of language. I will make use of this approach to account for many aspects of the dative alternation that have not yet been satisfactorily explained by any theory.

4.1 Argument Roles and Participant Roles

Constructions specify argument roles (agent, patient, goal), as distinguished from participant roles based on lexical meanings (**mailer**, mailee, **mailed**). According to Goldberg (1995: 44), the profiled participant roles that are marked in bold are the roles whose expressions are normally obligatory in finite clauses. Each verb is assumed to be conventionally associated with a certain number of participant roles. Only a subset of those roles is obligatorily expressed. For example, *rob* and *steal* at first appear to be synonymous, despite their differing syntactic realizations:

- (29) a. Jesse robbed the rich (of all their money).
 b. *Jesse robbed a million dollars (from the rich).

- (30) a. Jesse stole money (from the rich).
 b. *Jesse stole the rich (of money).

(Goldberg 1995: 45)

The difference in the grammaticality of the sentences above can be accounted for by a semantic difference in profiling. In the case of *rob*, the profiled roles are the target and the thief, while in the case of *steal*, the profiled roles are the valuables and the thief. The boldfaced words in the following examples represent the profiled roles:

(31) rob <**thief target** goods>

(32) steal <**thief** target **goods**>

(Goldberg 1995: 45)

The profiled participant roles must be fused with argument roles, which are realized as direct grammatical functions. Example (33b) is ungrammatical because the participant roles of *put* are **agent**, **theme**, and **location**. However, those of *fix* are only **agent** and **theme**, so (34b) is grammatical.

(33) a. John put the book on the table.
b. *John put the book.

(34) a. John fixed the car in the garage.
b. John fixed the car.

Examples (33) and (34) show that the difference in their grammaticality can be explained by whether or not their argument roles are profiled. If they are profiled, then they must be linked and realized in the sentences and the profiled arguments cannot be deleted.

4.2 Dative Alternation through Construction Grammar

Goldberg (1995) regards DOC and DC as two independent constructions. In Goldberg's approach, the basic and central sense of DOC is the successful transfer of a concrete object to a recipient, and Goldberg (1995) argues that this metaphor allows the caused–motion construction to be used to encode the transfer–caused– motion construction as follows:

- (35) a. Joe kicked the bottle into the yard.
b. Joe gave his house to the Moonies.
(Goldberg 1995: 90)

The semantic extension via metaphor of the caused–motion construction is semantically synonymous with that of the ditransitive construction. Since the ditransitive construction and the caused–motion construction are not syntactically related, the semantic synonymy³⁾ of the two constructions does not constitute a motivation link.

The ditransitive construction tends to be selected when the recipient is marked by an indefinite noun phrase but not focused, and when the transferred object is the focus and is commonly marked by a personal pronoun. The edge position in each sentence is a focused position and prefers to have new information, while old information tends to be located away from this edge position. This can support the information structure approach. When these constraints are violated, as in (36a) and (37a), the expressions are ungrammatical:

3) It is represented by a dashed line in the diagram above.

- (36) a. *She gave an old man it.
b. She gave it to an old man.

- (37) a. *She sold a slave trader him.
b. She sold him to a slave trader.

(Goldberg 1995: 92)

This phenomenon can also explain the relation and the difference between the ditransitive construction and its metaphorical extension, the caused-motion construction.

The caused-motion construction, which is a metaphorical extension of the ditransitive construction, is used when the focus is on the goal or recipient. For instance, example (38a) is somewhat dispreferred because the focused information is not the recipient but the transferred object ‘a brand new house.’ This difference in pragmatic structure between the ditransitive construction and the caused-motion construction can be used to explain why some metaphorical extensions are not felicitous in the prepositional construction as follows:

- (38) a. #John gave a brand new house to his son.
b. John gave his son a brand new house.

(Goldberg 1995: 92)

It is not necessary for a speaker to have heard each of these expressions in order to spontaneously generate them or recognize them as acceptable sentences of English. However, we will need to constrain the use of the metaphor to prevent the following (b)-expressions, which involve the caused-motion constructions:

- (39) a. She gave him a kick.
b. *She gave a kick to him.
- (40) a. She gave him a kiss.
b. *She gave a kiss to him.
- (41) a. She threw him a parting glance.
b. *She threw a parting glance to him.
- (42) a. She gave him a headache.
b. *She gave a headache to him.

(Goldberg 1995: 94)

The fact that these metaphorical extensions cannot readily occur with the prepositional construction can be attributed to a difference in their pragmatic specifications. Whereas *kick* can readily be used when the focus is not on the action performed, metaphorical expressions such as *give a kick* focus attention on the action denoted by the nominal, here *a kick*. This is what distinguishes *give a kick* from the verbal form *kick*.

Similarly, in metaphorical expressions involving the effecting of some result, the result is typically new or focused information. Therefore the pragmatic properties of the ditransitive argument structure are particularly well suited to the expressions such as *give a kick* or *give a headache*, while the pragmatics associated with the caused–motion construction are less well suited. In other words, metaphorical extension is better motivated as an extension of the ditransitive construction, because it can accommodate more information through inheritance.

V. Asymmetry Phenomena: A Construction Grammar Approach

The English dative alternation has already been discussed from various perspectives: the monosemy view, the polysemy view, the information structure view and the construction grammar view. In each case, we have examined various aspects of the approach and we have seen some constraints and principles through many examples involved in dative alternation.

The meaning of DC is 'X causes Y to move to Z' and that of DOC is 'X causes Z to have Y' and there are prototype effects in each construction. These prototype effects can be decided according to the degree of match between the features of constructions and those of the words, especially with verbs. These features are not one way but reciprocal. In other words, they are correlated and this is why the match can be called a matter of degree.

In DC, the meaning of this construction is 'X causes Z to move to Y,' which implies a change of location. Thus, it is natural that certain movement verbs such as *throw*, *toss*, and *kick*, are prototypical. Furthermore, the theme or the real object needs to be concrete to move, and this can be extended to less concrete examples, although there is a limit to every extension.

In DOC, the meaning of the construction is 'X causes Y to have Z,' which means a change of possession. The indirect object after the verb needs to have the semantic role of possessor to satisfy this construction meaning. It is therefore natural that some telic verbs, which imply an accomplishment or completeness, are prototypical and their metaphorical extensions are stronger than those of DC. The fact

that there are more metaphorical DOC expressions in English can be taken as evidence for the prototypicality of DOC.

Other linguistic constraints apply as well. They work cooperatively in deciding the prototypicality as well as the grammaticality of the resulting sentences. I will show how prototype effects, metaphor and conceptual blending play crucial roles in dative alternation. For example, for intransitive and transitive verbs to be used in other constructions such as DC and DOC, which require three arguments for their complements, they need to integrate conceptual structure for extension of constructions. One way to integrate these extension events is to blend the constructions with an already integrated event structure.

I make the following diagrams of linguistic constraints, Table 1 and Table 2, based on examples of dative alternation, which have been discussed not only for good examples but also for counter-examples in the various frameworks. The following are tables of linguistic constraints of DC and DOC:

Table 1. Linguistic Constraints of the Dative Construction:
The meaning of DC is "X causes Z to move to Y."

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|----------|------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Syn | NP | V | NP | ⇒ | PP |
| Sem | | | +CONCRETE | +PATH | |
| Prag | | | +TOPIC | +MOVE | +FOCUS |
| | | | +OLD | | +NEW |
| Morphophonology | +LATIN | | | | |
| Information Structure | | | | | +HEAVINESS |

By referring to Table 1, we can predict that sentence (43) will be ungrammatical:

(43) *The explosion gave a headache to Beth.

This sentence is unacceptable because there are multiple points of mismatch between its features when they are measured against those shown in Table 1. First, *the explosion* cannot be a volitional agent, which prevents it from being able to transfer anything. Second, *a headache* is an abstract theme, and so movement of it is blocked. Third, the indefinite article *a* which precedes *headache* marks it as new information, which should be located in the end position rather than in the middle. Fourth, the heaviness of *a headache* when compared with *to Beth* reinforces its preference for the end position. Finally, the fact that *give* is a Germanic verb is in agreement with its preference for DOC.

Table 2. Linguistic Constraints of the Double Object Construction:
The meaning of DC is "X causes Y to have Z."

| Syntax | NP | V | NP | ↔ | NP |
|----------------------|----|---|------------|-------------|------------|
| Semantics | | | +POSSESSOR | -CONTINUOUS | |
| Pragmatics | | | +TOPIC | +STATE | +FOCUS |
| | | | +OLD | | +NEW |
| Morphophonology | | | +GERMAN | | |
| InformationStructure | | | | | +HEAVINESS |

Turning now to Table 2, we can similarly predict that sentences (44) and (45) will both be ungrammatical:

(44) *Ann sent London a package. (DOC +Possession)

(45) *John pulled Bill the box. (DOC - Path)

The first sentence fails for several reasons. *London*, being a place, does not have the semantic role of possessor. Hence it cannot be a willing recipient, as required in DOC. The indefiniteness of *a package*, which marks it as representing new information, along with this theme's heaviness in comparison with *London*, both mean that *a package* should move to the end of the sentence.

The second sentence fails because although the roles of volitional agent and willing recipient are now fulfilled by *John* and *Bill*, the verb *pull* requires continuous imparting of force, which is proscribed in DOC. The grammaticality judgments of these example sentences will be elaborated in the sections to follow through diagrams of conceptual blending adapted from Fauconnier and Turner (1998).

There is one more factor to consider, which is that the match is a matter of degree. Designations such as +features or –features are not absolutes but preferences, and they work cooperatively so that the strength of features can vary based on the features of words such as verbs, argument structure, heaviness, concreteness in relation to those of constructions.

- (46) a. *The explosion gave a headache to Beth. (DC: +CON)
 b. The explosion gave Beth a headache. (DOC: ±CON)
 (Krifka 2001: 3)

This sentence is unacceptable not because of the verb but because of the theme, which lacks the semantic feature of concreteness. Although the movement meaning of DC can give a path role, it also requires a concrete theme. Therefore (46b) fails the grammaticality test because the theme is not concrete.

DOC involves the proposition of NP₁ possessing NP₂ after the verb

event. NP₁ (the possessor) must satisfy the selectional restrictions for possession, as shown in (47):

- (47) a. Ann sent a package to London. (DC: ±POSS)
 b. *Ann sent London a package. (DOC: +POSS)
 (Krifka 2001: 2)

In DOC, the verb must not express a continuous imparting of force or control, as follows:

- (48) a. John pulled the box to Bill. (DC +Path)
 b. *John pulled Bill the box. (DOC – Path)
 (Pinker 1989: 239)

Sentence (48b) is ungrammatical due to the fact that the path role, as required by the verb *pull*, incorporates the sense of a continuous imparting of force. This role cannot be assigned in a DOC sentence because such a sentence has a stative meaning.

This adapted diagram can explain the asymmetry of dative alternation especially with regard to similar verbs such as *kick*, *toss*, *throw*, *pull*, and *hand*. For example, the verb *kick* does not require the path role to be assigned because it is not assigned by the verb.

Native English verbs such as *envy*, *save*, *cost*, and *forgive* are found only in the DOC, in contrast to Latinate verbs such as *introduce*, *suggest*, and *explain*. Latinate verbs are found only in DC, as examples (49a, b) illustrate in Figure 5.12. This fact is evidence that the etymological origin of words can affect their usage:

- (49) a. *Smith envied his good fortune to Jones. (DC +Latin)
b. Smith envied Jones his good fortune. (DOC +German)

Prototypical verbs in DC are mostly those of Latinate origin such as *introduce*, *suggest*, *announce*, and *explain*. They cannot be used in DOC, which is a Germanic construction as follows:

- (50) a. John announced his resignation to the staff. (DC +Latin)
b. *John announced the staff his resignation. (DOC +German)

The metaphorical extension of the caused–motion construction is used when the focus is on the goal or recipient. As we have seen, verbs and constructions work cooperatively with the cognitive system in a process of conceptual blending, constrained by morphological, semantic, pragmatic, and informational features.

VI. Conclusion

It has been argued that the central sense of DOC is associated with a highly specific semantic structure: successful transfer between a volitional agent and a willing recipient. DOC and DC may have several systematic metaphors that license extensions from their basic senses. In DOC, the underlying meaning is 'change of possession,' whereas in DC, it is 'change of location.' Either one of these structures may fit the particular semantic requirements of a given verb, but one structure will be strongly preferred. There is also a particular format of lexical representation that allows reference to events, as semantic properties cannot be stated properly except by reference to events.

In addition to setting up particular semantic conditions, DOC and DC also allow for different information structures. Information structure appears to be one of the decisive factors governing the behavior of verbs, such as *give*, that essentially have the same meaning in DC and in DOC. We have seen cases in which information structure appears to override semantic restrictions.

Second, I have argued that although the meanings of different constructions are motivated by the meanings of their parts, the meaning of a construction as a whole cannot be directly imputed from the meanings of its component parts. Grammar provides the constructions and lexicon provides the meaningful elements plugged into these constructions.

Third, I analyzed dative alternation with respect to its polysemy and its partial productivity. This study concentrated on particular semantic constraints, the prototype effect, and metaphorical extensions of the construction based on the degree of match between the features of constructions and those of verbs.

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Abstract

A Reanalysis of Double Object Constructions and Dative Constructions in English: A Construction Grammar Approach

Lee, Ki Taek

The purpose of this paper is to argue that there are prototype effects in each construction. Linguistic constraints and principles are obeyed in extensions of each construction and these in turn will affect the prototypical meanings of the constructions. I have revised and adapted some of their models to offer my own interpretation of how we use and understand prototypical and peripheral constructions. It has also been argued that the central sense of DOC is associated with a highly specific semantic structure: successful transfer between a volitional agent and a willing recipient. DOC and DC may have several systematic metaphors that license extensions from their basic senses. In DOC, the underlying meaning is 'change of possession,' whereas in DC, it is 'change of location.' Either one of these structures may fit the particular semantic requirements of a given verb, but one structure will be strongly preferred. There is also a particular format of lexical representation that allows reference to events, as semantic properties cannot be stated properly except by reference to events. In addition to setting up particular semantic conditions, DOC and DC also allow for different information structures. Information structure appears to be one of the decisive factors governing the behavior of verbs, such as *give*, that essentially have the same meaning in DC and in DOC. We have seen cases in which information structure appears to override

semantic restrictions.

It has also been argued that although the meanings of different constructions are motivated by the meanings of their parts, the meaning of a construction as a whole cannot be directly imputed from the meanings of its component parts. Grammar provides the constructions and lexicon provides the meaningful elements plugged into these constructions.

Finally, I analyzed dative alternation with respect to its polysemy and its partial productivity. This study concentrated on particular semantic constraints, the prototype effect, and metaphorical extensions of the construction based on the degree of match between the features of constructions and those of verbs.

Key Words: double object constructions, dative constructions, alternation, asymmetry phenomena, prototype effects

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이름: 이 기 택

소속: 사이버한국외국어대학교 영어과

주소: 경기도 양평군 양평읍 역전길22 현대성우오스타코아루 3401

이메일: ktleee@hufs.ac.kr