

*Give*  
**Constructions  
across  
Languages**

*edited by*  
Myriam Bouveret

**John Benjamins Publishing Company**

## *Give* Constructions across Languages

# *Constructional Approaches to Language*

ISSN 1573-594X

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## **Volume 29**

*Give Constructions across Languages*

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# *Give* Constructions across Languages

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Myriam Bouveret

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John Benjamins Publishing Company  
Amsterdam / Philadelphia



The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences – Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

DOI 10.1075/cal.29

**Cataloging-in-Publication Data available from Library of Congress:**

**LCCN 2020054319**

ISBN 978 90 272 0842 2 (HB)

ISBN 978 90 272 6015 4 (E-BOOK)

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# Acknowledgments

This book is the result of a collective study which took place in different places and is the outcome of work with many people starting with Nicholas Evans, University of Canberra and Eve Sweetser, University of California at Berkeley. I would like to thank all the colleagues at the Lattice CNRS-ENS-Paris3 team, and in particular Catherine Fuchs, initiator in France of cognitive (linguistics) studies.

This book is the outcome of collective research coordinated since 2015 at the Lattice and at the Ecole Normale Supérieure with several researchers, post-doctoral researchers and colleagues around a Labex project. During the summer of 2011 at the LSA Summer institute in Boulder (Colorado, United States), Eve Sweetser and I taught a class and that LSA Institute was a special place for many discussions with scholars of the cognitive community. Before that, while I was a visiting researcher at Berkeley, encountering Charles J. Fillmore, was – as for many of us – a wonderful gift in my life and a great motivation to conduct further research in Cognition exploring either frames or constructions. Most of all, I must express my gratitude to Elizabeth Traugott, who, when I visited her in her office once at Stanford, gave me a paper on linguistic change and said “I hope this will be of interest to you”. My Master’s research had already focused on language change, but from a lexical point of view. This motivation of studying language change has now enlarged to encompass lexicon and grammar, and has turned towards collaborations involving other languages of the world thanks to all the wonderful researchers I also met at the ICLC cognitive linguistics conferences and the ICCG conferences on construction grammar.

The Ecole Normale Supérieure has always been of great support in my research projects on Constructions and Cognitive Grammar, and I warmly thank in particular Annabelle Milleville. This work has received support from the Labex TransferS (laboratoire d’excellence, program “Investissements d’avenir” ANR-10-IDEX-0001-02 PSL\* and ANR-10-LABX-0099). As a member of the Lattice team, I particularly thank the Labex and the MSH for two post-doctoral grants on this project, allocated to Linda Badan and Karolina Krawczak. The results of their research are presented here. Last but not least, I greatly thank the readers of this manuscript, Debra Ziegeler, Linda Badan, Eric Melac and two anonymous readers.



We would like to thank Amanda Edmonds, Xénia De Heering, Françoise Robin, Camille Simon, and Debra Ziegeler for their valuable comments, which allowed us to deepen our understanding of this paper's topic.

Myriam Bouveret, December 2019

## INTRODUCTION

# Lexicalization, grammaticalization and constructionalization of the verb *give* across languages

## A cognitive case study of language innovation

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This cognitive contrastive study across ten languages (Chinese, Dalabon, English, French, Spanish, Romanian, Kurdish, Khmer, Polish, Tibetan) focuses on the verb *give* and its syntactic-semantic interface based on six main points, namely argument structure, lexical semantics and event structure, role marking in the three-argument construction and in other constructions, lexicalization, grammaticalization and constructionalization of the verb from a cognitive construction grammar point of view (the lexicon-grammar continuum). Transfer of possession is a basic concept in human experience; we hypothesize (a) that basic semantic features motivate the meaning and grammatical extensions of the verb *give* inside a single system and (b) that a similar set of core semantic dimensions represent the meaning of the form across languages, and motivate a variety of meaning extensions across time. We propose, following Brinton and Traugott 2005, Croft 2001, and Ruppenhofer and Michaelis 2001, that a continuum approach to grammar and lexicon is needed to describe the typological and historical facts. We argue that there is a concrete and abstract transfer, a ‘cluster model’ involving coverage of lexical and grammatical extension or bleaching phenomena and that the semantic extensions (metaphorical and otherwise) exploit various portions of this schema. This book proposes analyses of various phenomena illustrating and proving the grammar to lexicon continuum, in synchrony and diachrony: language innovations, grammaticalization chains, constructionalization analysis, and an invariant hypothesis of the verb *give* as a basic verb in human cognition. This introduction chapter illustrates the general hypothesis of the book and explains in particular the syntax-semantics interface of *give* constructions partly through a cognitive frame and constructions principle. The present book studies *give* across ten languages, looking at constructions through the concept of an image schema of TRANSFER (Source/Causation/Direction/Goal Location) which cognitively motivates the different *give* forms and functions across languages, in particular its polyfunctionality throughout language

innovation processes (as 1. a full verb (in all the languages) as 2. a directional preposition (e.g. in Chinese) or as 3. a causative in “serial verbs”/complex predicates/verbal periphrases (e.g. Kurdish, French, Romanian) or as 4. a support/light verb (e.g. Khmer, Tibetan, Kurdish)) showing a universal grammaticalization path such as *go* or similarly to *have* as a commonly and frequently used verb. Each language throughout the volume, however, shows its own specifications in meaning, grammar and culture of the giving events: e.g. comitative in Dalabon for concrete/abstract TRANSFER constructions or e.g. honorific *gnang*/humilific *phul* GIVE verbs in Tibetan, alternations such as e.g. perfective/imperfective *give* forms in Polish *dać/dawać* or the learning of *give* transitive/intransitive constructions by children in English through the acquisition of giving-event scenarios.

**Keywords:** diachrony, grammaticalization, grammaticalization chain, image schema, lexicalization, constructionalization, language innovation, polysemy, polyfunctionality

## 1. Hypothesis and new findings of the book

This cognitive contrastive study across ten languages (Chinese, Dalabon, English, French, Spanish, Romanian, Kurdish, Khmer, Polish, Tibetan) focuses on the concept expressed by the verb *give* in English and its equivalents in these languages and on the syntactic-semantic interface based on six main points, namely argument structure, lexical semantics and event structure, role marking in the three-argument construction and in other constructions, lexicalization and grammaticalization of the verb from a cognitive construction grammar point of view (lexicon-grammar continuum), central and extended meanings, and support verb constructions. The verb *give* has several typical characteristics studied in the cognitive literature (Newman 1996, 1998; Goldberg 1995, 2006): its early acquisition by children, its vivid polysemy and a wide variety of constructions. This volume adds another original characteristic: its polyfunctionality in several languages.

This book is to our knowledge the first study of *give* that focuses on the grammar-lexicon continuum as it plays out in different languages. Transfer of possession is a basic concept in human experience; we hypothesize (a) that basic semantic features motivate its meaning extensions and grammatical extensions inside a single system, and (b) that a set of similar core semantic dimensions are shared across languages which motivate a variety of meaning extensions across linguistic systems in synchrony and diachrony and through language innovations in usage. We propose, following Brinton and Traugott 2005, Croft 2001, and Ruppenhofer and Michaelis 2001, that a continuum approach to grammar and lexicon is needed to describe the typological and historical facts. We argue that there is a concrete

and abstract transfer ‘cluster model’ involving coverage of lexical and grammatical extension or bleaching phenomena and that the semantic extensions (metaphorical and otherwise) exploit various portions of this schema. The book presents various methodologies (elicitation, comparative statistics, comparable corpora), as well as various corpus genres. It offers both rich data analysis and findings of general import to cognitive linguists.

The book aims in particular to explore the mechanism of lexicalization, grammaticalization and constructionalization (Brinton and Traugott 2005; Heine and Kuteva 2002; Sweetser 1990; Traugott & Trousdale 2013) across languages, following a cline from more lexicalized constructions to more grammaticalized constructions of the *give* form-meaning patterns. We hypothesize that the cognitively basic meaning of transfer, along with the two dimensions of source and goal location, fertilize the mechanism of lexicalization and grammaticalization of the formal patterns across languages. We observe that this basic semantics of the *give* schema accounts for both meaning extensions and bleaching among the constructions under study.

Moreover, we find:

- a. Cross-linguistic analyses of transfer-predication constructions substantiate a framework in which lexical and phrasal patterns are licensed by mechanisms of the same basic type.
- b. By leveraging the components of an embodied schema for transfer we gain elegant generalizations about both the syntactic behavior of *give* verbs and the semantic enrichments that occur when non-transfer verbs receive transfer implications in context. The book relies on written and oral corpora in a wide array of languages of different families, including Castilian, Chinese, English, French, Polish, Romanian. In addition, it offers studies of four understudied languages, Dalabon (Northern Australia, Guniwinyguan, non-pama-nyungan family), Khmer, Kurmandji Kurdish and Tibetan.

The present book explores constructions through the concept of an image schema of TRANSFER (Source/Causation/Direction/Goal Location) which cognitively motivates the different *give* forms and functions across languages, in particular its polyfunctionality throughout language innovation processes (a full verb (in all the languages), or a directional preposition (Chinese) or a causative in “serial verbs”/complex predicates/verbal periphrases (Kurdish, French, Romanian), or as well a support/light verb (Khmer, Tibetan, Kurdish) showing a universal grammaticalization path such as *go* or *have* as a commonly and frequently used verb. Each language throughout the volume, however, shows its own specifications in meaning, grammar and culture of the giving events (e.g. comitative in Dalabon for concrete or abstract TRANSFER constructions, honorific *gnang*/humilific *phul* GIVE verbs in

Tibetan, or alternations such as perfective/ imperfective *give* forms in Polish (*dać/ dawać*) or the learning of *give* transitive/intransitive constructions by children in English through the acquisition of giving scenarios.

## 2. A study of *give* across languages from a cognitive frames and constructions point of view

The concept of GIVING, as a fundamental, basic concept according to Rosch 1976 and Lakoff 1987 is shared by all cultures as a human experience. Emile Benveniste 1951 in *The Gift and Exchange in Indo-European vocabularies* follows in France Marcel Mauss's study on the gift, published in the *Sociological Year* 1923–1924. The two studies combining the linguistic, sociological and anthropological points of view show the importance of the concepts of gift and counter-gift. The verb is part of the basic vocabulary (Newman 1996), ranked in English as a top ten verb learned by children (Casenhiser and Goldberg 2005; Goldberg and Casenhiser 2006; Tomasello 2003; Tomasello and Brooks 1998). Each language described in the present book attests for this verb a great variety of grammatical constructions. The verb is subject to a widespread polysemy across languages (see Enfield 2002; Lord, Ha Yap and Iwasaki 2002; Margetts 2007; Newman 1996, 1997; Nolan, Rawoens and Diedrichsen 2015; Paris 1982; Reesink 2013; Von Waldenfelds 2012). From this point of view, similar to the words of our current and everyday lexicon with sources of many polysemic uses or metaphorical extensions, the polysemy of *give* as a common lexeme is motivated by its very frequent use. The verb *give* refers to a culturally rich and varied concept.

As a commonly-used verb, *give* in French for example is close to the grammaticalization path of the verbs *go* or *have* in English (*donner* 'give' full verb = TRANSFER OF POSSESSION > *donner VInf* 'give VInf' semi-auxiliary of causation = CAUSE). Following four stages, the verb *have* in English (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 108–109) and similarly in French (except for stage four as a clitic), evolves diachronically from a full verb (*avoir*/have = to possess) to an auxiliary (*avoir*/have = TAM auxiliary). The *have* auxiliary illustrates a grammaticalization chain of lexical verb > semi-auxiliary > auxiliary > clitic. Unlike the verb *have*, the verb *give* has a more reduced course in French since it developed from a stage 1, full verb in *The Oaths of Strasbourg* at the Xth century (910), towards a stage 2 in the XIIIth century as a vector verb, which can also be called a semi-auxiliary on the model of a factitive verb (*donner à* 'give to' = 'make' VInf). The infinitive construction *donner Vinf* 'give VInf' in French appears later associated with cognition verbs (e.g. *think, know*), then eating/drinking/dining verbs or any type of verb expressing an everyday event. Thus, the construction *give VInf* in French follows the "scheme of universal grammaticalization", direction > intention in its modal uses, as is also the

case for the English verb *go* in the example proposed by Traugott and Dasher 2002 (1. *go* = full verb, 2. *go* = auxiliary of immediate future). Nonetheless, *give* only goes through two stages. We posit the hypothesis that a prototypical construction of TRANSFER is the source of the semantic and syntactic extensions of the form across languages. The central dimension of ‘direction’, concrete or abstract, allows for example the extension towards an ‘intention’ dimension, found in the deontic modal value of the *donner VInf* construction (e.g. *donner à faire* ‘order someone something to be done’).

## 2.1 A unified syntax-semantics approach

We focus in this volume on the processes of redeployment of the verb *give* across ten languages from various families (Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, Austro-Asiatic, Macro-Gunwinyguan) according to a cognitive principle of categorization. Most studies in the book are written from the perspective of cognitive construction grammar (CCG, Boas 2013; Goldberg 1995; Fried and Boas 2005). We therefore rely on the concepts of construction, categorization, radial polysemy, prototypes and extensions, grammaticalization/lexicalization (Traugott and Dasher 2005) and constructionalization (Traugott and Trousdale 2013).

Our research questions are:

- a. Which meaning components can give rise to extensions?
- b. To what extent are these extensions semantic or morpho-syntactic?
- c. What is the relationship between semantic frames and syntactic frames (predicative frames)?
- d. What semantic dimensions are shared by all the languages in the study?
- e. How are the paths of lexicalization or grammaticalization realized, starting from a verbal lexical unit towards less typical constructions?

The typical predicative framework of the verb *give* is a double complementation construction in the ten languages studied, morphologically marked on the verb or realized syntactically in the verb argument structure. The various constructions in the languages studied include in particular the double complementation in the three Romance languages studied (French, Romanian and Spanish); a translational ditransitive construction in English; a passive auxiliary and at a stage of advanced grammaticalization, a recategorization verb > preposition of direction in Mandarin Chinese; serial verb constructions (SVCs) are attested in Khmer, and light verb constructions (LVC) are described in Khmer, Tibetan and Kurmandji.

We therefore propose a unified syntax-semantic approach of the *give* form, for which the central sense of transfer according to a process of foregrounding–backgrounding of the cognitive semantic frames, could explain the grammaticalization

and lexicalization paths of the verb across languages. The existence of a transfer schema is explored and questioned throughout the different studies. We hypothesize that the central dimension which motivates these extensions is a ‘direction’ dimension, present in concrete or abstract syntactic and semantic frames and constructions.

The prototypical construction of *give* as a concrete verb of transfer is typically represented in English by the ditransitive construction in alternation with a dative prepositional construction: *I gave Mina a book / I gave a book to Mina*, existing for *give* and for several other transfer constructions: *Mina bought Theo a book / Mina bought a book for Theo*, *Mina sent Theo a book / Mina sent a book to Theo* (see Goldberg 2006; Hilpert 2014). According to Haspelmath 2015 and in a typological approach, the ditransitive construction is defined as a semantic construct with two central meanings. One is said to be possessive as a Caused-Possession construction and expresses a concrete transfer of object, whereas the second one is ditransitive, a communication Caused-Result construction expressing a metaphorical transfer of communication.

A ditransitive construction is a construction with a verb denoting the transfer of an entity (T) from an agent (A) to a recipient (R), such as *Mary gave Paul a box*. This is most often a possessive transfer (concrete as in *give*, *lend*, *hand over*, *bequeath*, or more abstract as in *offer* and *promise*). Additionally, cognitive transfer verbs (*show*, *teach*) typically behave in much the same way and are normally included in the ditransitive domain.

The hypothesis pursued in the present book is that of a radial polysemy, in clusters, which motivates semantic extensions. The hypothesis proposed in the present introduction goes further and concerns also grammar, in synchrony and in diachrony. It is therefore compatible with the proposals of Hopper and Traugott 2013, Traugott and Dasher 2002, Sweetser 1990, and Kronning 1996. We observe, as stated by Hopper and Traugott 2013:

(...) that certain forms share conceptually related meanings (polysemy) (see Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff 1987; Sweetser 1990)(...)

It is often argued that the fine, sometimes minimally discrete, meaning distinctions between various stages of grammaticalization or between focal clusters on a cline call for a theory in which different meanings may be closer or more distant (see G. Lakoff 1987 on the concept of “networks” of polysemies). For example, mental and physical ability are more closely related to each other than to permission among the polysemies of *can*). In general, from the perspective of grammaticalization it is methodologically essential to assume polysemy if there is a plausible semantic relationship, whether or not the forms belong to the same syntactic category, because otherwise relationships between more and less grammaticalized variants of the same form cannot be established on pragmatic factors, either diachronically or synchronically. (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 77)

We explore two directions in the present book: *Give* as a three-place predicate (Section 2.2) and *Give* constructionalization across languages (Section 2.3.).

## 2.2 *Give as a three-place predicate?*

*Give* raises first a typological question, that of a universally three-place predicate: “Some further universalizing claims with counterevidence: verbs for ‘give’ always have three arguments (Gleitman 1990) – Saliba is a counterexample (Margetts 2007)” (Evans and Levinson 2009: 59).

Two studies on Papua New Guinean languages, a first one on the Saliba language (Margetts 2007), as well as a second study by Reesink 2013, contravene this universality statement of a three-place predicate. According to a study of seventy-two languages of Papua New Guinea, Reesink 2013 shows that *give* is not a predicate universally marked with three arguments. His study includes 33 languages belonging to the Trans New Guinea (TNG) family, and 39 other non-TNG lines. The following results appear in the 33 TNG languages where two types, (1) and (2), are distinguished:

- (1) The receiver is indexed on the verb as a direct object.
- (2) The theme (the given object) is indexed as a direct object on the verb, while the receiver is oblique.

Three languages out of 33 (Kaluli, Suena and Wambon) are of type (2), the theme is the only possible choice as a direct object marked on the verb. According then to Reesink (2013: 217–266) these languages are counter-examples to the claim that *give* verbs always receive three arguments.

The Menya language (TNG) marks the receiver indexed by a prefix on the verb (type 1). The Girza language (not TNG) also illustrates type (1), the beneficiary is marked on the verb, thus profiling the dimension ‘human interaction’ more than the object of the transfer:

- (3) *Wa kü-rü katam k (ü) -lión-órr.*  
 3SG.SUBJ 1SG-GEN banana 1SG.OBJ-give.PL-3SG.PAST  
 ‘He gave me bananas’ (Van Bodegraven and Ellis 2004: 25, ex. (73b))

In the other study, Margetts (2007, 2011) discusses the Saliba language, another Oceanic Papuan New Guinea language. In Saliba the verb *give* allows a suppletive paradigm: *le/mose-i*. For *le*, a transitive verb, the transfer is marked with an object prefixed on the verb. A choice between two verbs is allowed as in Examples (4) and (5): *le* ‘give’ (transfer of possession) or *hai* ‘take/get’. In (6) *mose-i* is required when the 3rd person is the receiver. The theme or the receiver are alternately indexed with an object prefixed on the verb (see Margetts 2011):



- (4) *Bosa kesega ye le-ya-ma*  
 basket one 3SG give-3SG.OBJ-towards.SPKR  
 ‘He gave me/us one basket.’
- (5) *Bosa kesega ye le-ya-wa.*  
 basket kesega 3SG give-3SG.OBJ-towards.ADDR  
 ‘He gave you (SG/PL) one basket.’
- (6) *Bosa kesega ye mose-i-Ø.*  
 basket one 3SG give-APPL-3SG.O  
 ‘He gave her one basket.’

In (4) and (5) the subject and the object are indexed on the verb, but not the receiver whereas in (6) the receiver is marked with a pronominal suffix on the verb. “The Saliba paradigm combines the absorption strategy with the directional strategy for first and second person recipients, and with the applicative strategy for third person recipients. This results in a difference in argument structure within the paradigm of ‘give’” (Margetts 2007: 436).

In the Kalam language, another language of Papua New Guinea studied by Pawley et al. 2011, the form for ‘give’,  $\tilde{N}$ , is extremely polysemic and may form serial verbs, which is a very specific Kalam peculiarity. These data are partially extracted from the Kalam dictionary (Pawley et al. 2011) and have been corrected and completed by Pawley (personal communication, data provided by Pawley, March 2014). We illustrate here the form for ‘give’,  $\tilde{N}$ , with two meanings, the concrete meaning in (7) and a ‘give’,  $\tilde{N}$ , form preceded by a causative *g*, producing thus the causative construction *g ñ-* in (8). The object and receiver arguments are not indexed on the verb. (Cf. Pawley et al., 2011.)

#### $\tilde{N}$ . Transitive verb

- (7) Give, transfer something into someone’s possession (direct object the thing given, indirect object the recipient).  
*e.g.*  
*Leo yalk-nup you ñak*  
 Leo Yalk-him axis give-3SG-PAST  
 ‘Leo gave an axis to Yalk.’
- (8) (in *g ñ-*) Move a thing into close-fitting and stable contact with another object or surface. CAUSE / DIRECTION / CLOSE POSITION  
*Katam g ñan*  
 Door do connect-2SG.IMP CAUSE  
 ‘Close the entrance!’

In Nen, another New Guinea Papuan language, the following data were provided by Nicholas Evans (personal communication data collected by the author March 2014):

*Warams* ‘give’

- (9) *Ymam*                      *wagib*                                      *tawa-rama/nda*  
 3SG.ERG fish (ABS) 1SG.OBL 3SGA>1SGU.P.PF- BENGIVE PERFECTIVE  
 ‘She gave me a fish.’
- (10) *Ymam warama / nda ta ämbs pus nne ämbs*  
 3SG-ERG 3SGA> 1SGU.FV.PSTgive PERFECTIVE 1 SGOB on six yam one  
 ‘He gave me seven yams.’

(For Example (10); see also Malchukov and Comrie 2015.) In (9) and (10) the receiver is indexed on the verb but not the theme.

The second direction of the book is looking at constructionalization across languages as follows.

### 2.3 Give constructionalization across languages

The meaning of the verb *give* and of the GIVE concept in the languages studied is deployed from the concrete prototypical central meaning towards extended meanings, concrete or abstract. This polysemy is made possible through extension mechanisms motivated by semantic, concrete or abstract dimensions. A model of radial polysemy (Lakoff 1987) emerges from the present studies, which implies extension mechanisms of a metonymic and metaphorical nature (Dancygier and Sweetser 2014). All the dimensions present in the central, prototypical, concrete transfer direction, even a minimal ‘causation’ dimension, might extend towards concrete or abstract extensions, new meanings or new syntactic constructions, provided that the semantic dimension is perceived as being a core dimension and linked to a transfer schema. These central dimensions semantically motivate, according to a *principle of semantization*, the different lexical or grammatical constructions of the verb.

According to Newman 1997, the dimensions that characterize the verb *give* are as follows:

‘a donor, a thing transferred and a receiver’ / ‘interaction between the donor and the thing’ / ‘interaction between the receiver and the thing’ / ‘movement between the thing and the donor to the receiver’ / ‘change of control of the transferred thing passing from the donor to the receiver’, ‘from hand to hand in the most typical cases’ / ‘the action is carried out intentionally’ / ‘the action is usually performed for the benefit of a receiver’.

(Newman 1997: IX)

Then, following this decomposition, Newman adds:

There are three crucial entities (a GIVER, the THING transferred, and a RECIPIENT);  
 there is an interaction between the GIVER and the THING;  
 there is an interaction between the RECIPIENT and the THING;  
 THING from the GIVER to the RECIPIENT;  
 THING, passing from the GIVER to the THING; in the most typical kind of giving,  
 the hands of the GIVER and the RECIPIENT are both involved;  
 the giving is done intentionally;  
 the giving is usually done for the benefit of the RECIPIENT so that the RECIPIENT  
 can make some use of the THING transferred (Newman 1997: 9)

Unlike Newman 1997 and Newman 1996, we do not consider the ‘hand-to-hand’ dimension as a central dimension in our unified perspective of language change and polysemic extensions through constructionalization changes. The ‘hand-to-hand’ dimension is certainly part of the prototypical representation of the concrete meaning across languages and is indeed an important semantic dimension of the word’s lexicographic meaning (*sème inherent* / ‘intrinsic component’ (Rastier 1987)); nonetheless, the ‘hand-to-hand’ dimension is not part of the image schema of the GIVE conceptualization. An abstract extension of this lexical dimension ‘from hand to hand’ is, for example, a bleached ‘proximity’ meaning between the source and the location in the indirect transitive construction *donner sur* in French (*la chambre donne sur la cour* ‘the room overlooks the courtyard’). However, this component is linked to the central frame of *giving*, as one of the central elements of this frame, rather than belonging to the general *transfer* schema which explains mother and daughter constructions and motivates the processes of constructionalization and linguistic innovation through extensions or bleaching of the *give* form across the different languages. Our approach is therefore dynamic and conceptual, consistent with the frame semantics approach and the Fillmorean model of frames (Fillmore 1980, Fillmore and Atkins 1982). Our approach is also in some way very similar to the analysis of Michaelis and Ruppenhofer 2001. We propose a unified syntactic and semantic approach from a cognitive point of view, more than a semantic decomposition of a lexicographic type, even if both methods have to be considered in the meaning analysis.

The following definitions of the three phenomena, (a) grammaticalization, (b) lexicalization, and (c) constructionalization are provided by Hopper & Traugott (2003) and Traugott & Trousdale (2013):

a. “Grammaticalization is the change whereby in certain linguistic contexts speakers use parts of a construction with a grammatical function. Over time the resulting grammatical item may become more grammatical by acquiring more grammatical functions and expanding its host-classes.” (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 121)

b. “Lexicalization, a process of language change, has been conceptualized in a variety of ways. Broadly defined as the adoption of words into the lexicon, it has been viewed by some as the reverse process of grammaticalization, by others as a routine process of word formation, and by others as the development of concrete meanings.” (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 129)

c. “Constructionalization is the creation of new meaning from new (combinations of) signs. It forms new type nodes, which have new syntax or morphology and new coded meaning, in the linguistic network of a population of speakers. It is accompanied by changes in degree of schematicity, succession of micro-steps and is therefore gradual. New micro-constructions may likewise be created gradually, but they may also be instantaneous. Gradually created micro-constructions tend to be procedural, and instantaneously created micro-constructions tend to be contentful.” (Traugott and Trousdale 2013: 22)

We focus in these studies mainly on grammatical constructionalization. An example of it is the historical development of *give* as a plain verb (XthC) > causation semi-auxiliary in French (XIIIthC). This grammatical constructionalization corresponds to “a grammatical form-meaning pair that differ from their lexical source in being less referential, more abstract and procedural” (Traugott and Trousdale 2013: 23). This grammatical change is due to a metaphoric extension since the meaning is extended from a concrete to an abstract-communication meaning (*donner* ‘give’ > *donner à penser* ‘make someone think’). The infinitive causation construction in French is first attested in a 1269–1278 text as *donner à entendre* ‘make hear’ (example 11) and increases in the XVth C (example 12):

(11) 1269–78 (Atilf), J. de Meung, *Roman de la rose*, ed. F. Lecoy  
*donner à entendre*  
 Give.INF to listen.INF  
 ‘make hear’

(12) MAROT Jean, *Le Voyage de Gênes*, 1507: 88  
*Au roy te plains, luy donnant*  
 To.DET.DEF.SG. king you.2.SG.REFL complain.PST, to him.OBL  
*à entendre (...)*  
 give.PRS.PTCP to hear.INF  
 ‘Complaining to the king, letting him know (...)’

The causation construction *donner VInf* in French in diachrony is also found combined with a second group of eating/drinking/dining verbs (example 13) as described in Gougenheim 1929 and a third group of verbs expressing an everyday event. The three values of this construction have been studied in Bouveret 2012 throughout diachronic corpora.

- (13) \*ANONYME, *Les enfances Garin de Monglane, 1400* : 11  
*Donna a boire au duc une telle pouisson*  
 Give-PST to drink.INF to.DET.DEF.M.SG. duke DET.INDF.F.SG. such potion  
 ‘He gave the Duke such a potion to drink’

In French as well, two cases of lexicalization are encountered, metonymy in (14) and fusion in (15).

In addition, in French, a modal towards evidential meaning can be distinguished in the nowadays various constructions, in (14) the infinitive construction and in (15) the passive or impersonal construction. Within the (14a–14b) group and within the (15a–15b) group, a gradation is similarly encountered, from weak causation to strong causation (14), and from an evidential internal point of view towards an external point of view in both (15a) transitive and (15b) passive constructions:

- (14) a. *La religion leur a donné à penser*  
 DET.DEF. F.SG. religion 3.PL.OBL give.PRS.PRF to think.INF  
 ‘Religion let them think’  
 b. *Ils nous ont donné la vaisselle à faire*  
 3.PL.NOM 2.PL.OBL give.PRS.PRF the dishes to do.INF  
 ‘They asked us to wash the dishes’

In (14) there is a gradient ranging from a simple causation (‘to be heard’) to a deontic modality (‘giving to do’). The causation value is then also added with a force, from weak causation - (14a) > strong causation + (14b).

- (15) a. *On le donne vainqueur*  
 IND.NOM 3.SG.OBJ give.PRS vainqueur  
 ‘He is given as the winner’  
 b. *Il est donné pour connaisseur*  
 3.SG.NOM give.PST.PASS as connaisseur  
 He is known as a connaisseur’

Cases of grammatical constructionalization are also described in Chinese for *gei* full verb (16) > directional preposition (7) (see Badan, this volume, or Matthews and Yip 2009):

- (16) Zhangsan *gei* [wo]<sub>io</sub> [zhe ben shu]<sub>do</sub> le.  
 Zhangsan *gei* 1SG this CLF book fp  
 ‘Zhangsan gave me a book’  
 (17) a. \*Zhangsan *ti yi ge qiu gei* le Lisi.  
 Zhangsan kick one clff ball *gei* PFV Lisi

- b. Zhangsan ti le yi ge qiu *gei* Lisi.  
 Zhangsan kick PFV one clff ball *gei* Lisi  
 ‘Zhangsan kicked the ball to Lisi’ (Huang & Mo 1992:17)

Badan (this volume) proposes that *gei* in the right post verbal position remains a verb, instead of viewing it as a preposition, which raises then the question of the polyfunctionality of the form, an issue also discussed in Corre (this volume) about Khmer and Mélaç and Tournadre about Tibetan (this volume).

We posit that it is the prototypical construction of transfer, as a mother construction, which is the source of the semantic and syntactic extensions of the form-meaning units across languages but that certain portions of the image schema can be activated, provided that they are strong semantic dimensions. This language innovation process then gives rise to the polyfunctionality of the form *give*.

Thus, in this cognitive hypothesis of a transfer schema, motivating all the *give* form extensions throughout the languages studied, we note the following dimensions: they are central, typical and concrete dimensions of the basic TRANSFER concept which allows semantic and syntactic extensions of meanings and constructions: ‘source’, ‘theme’, ‘direction’, ‘causation’, ‘receiver’/‘goal’. We therefore postulate from the perspective of a unified approach of linguistic innovation of the *give* forms across languages that ‘directionality’ and ‘causation’ are two central dimensions of the verb motivating many of the constructionalization phenomena in various languages in the present book (Akin and Bouveret, Badan, Corre, Mélaç and Tournadre this volume) and constructions observed in other studies of the verb cited above (Enfield 2002; Lord, Ha Yap and Iwasaki 2002; Margetts 2007; Newman 1996, 1997; Nolan, Rawoens, and Diedrichsen 2015; Paris 1982; Reesink 2013; Von Waldenfelds 2012). These components underlie the polysemic extensions of form. They constitute two essential dimensions that also motivate the phenomenon of lexicalization-grammaticalization, the constructional changes of *give*, towards verbal forms or other grammatical categories, a decategorization (preposition, co-verb, semi-auxiliary) in the different languages of the study. According to Paris 1989, Peyraube 2015, and Badan (this volume), in Mandarin Chinese, ‘directionality’ is the semantic dimension that motivates the grammaticalization of the verbal form *gei* towards a passive marker or the *gei* preposition, two cases of recategorization. These dimensions of ‘directionality’, ‘source’, ‘theme/object of transfer’, ‘receiver/beneficiary’, ‘cause’ form the image schema of TRANSFER and underlie the dynamic cognitive processes of language innovation of *give* across languages. This hypothesis meets the comparative work on a set of transfer verbs, called “causation verbs, permission and transfer” namely *get*, *take*, *put*, *give* and *let*, in research conducted by Nolan, Rawoens and Diedrichsen 2015.

### 3. Frames and constructions of *give*: semantic dimensions and extensions

Starting from a prototypical transfer construction, these dimensions forming the image schema of TRANSFER are observed through the comparative analysis of the ten languages described in the present study: ‘directionality’, ‘source’, ‘theme/object of transfer’, ‘receiver/beneficiary’, ‘cause’. These principles of extension are illustrated below. The numerous examples provided in this study, attest that semantics can motivate syntax:

#### 1. ‘DIRECTIONALITY’

- *gei* ‘give’ verb > preposition in Chinese (Peyraube 2015)
- *da jos* (‘to give down’ = to go down), *da la* (‘to give direction to’ = give on) in Romanian (see Bouveret and Stavinschi 2014)
- *donner sur* ‘overlook’ in French

#### 2. ‘SOURCE’

- *da el sol* (‘the sun gives’ = the sun shines) in Spanish (David this volume)

#### 3. ‘RECIPIENT’

The recipient is an essential dimension in the constructionalization of the *give* forms across languages, as we have seen in Oceanic Papuan Languages described by Reesink 2013 and Margetts 2011 above, or in Japanese (Newman 1996; Reesink 2013): *kudasaru* / *sashiageru*

The directionality of the donation according to the status of the recipient can be expressed by a verb indicating the direction up, *sashiageru* (a) or down, *kudasaru* (b); (see Newman 1996: 26, 103).

- a. *Watashi wa sensei ni hon o sashiage-mashita*  
 I TOPIC teacher DAT book give-PAST  
 ‘I gave the teacher a book.’
- b. *Sensei Ga watashi ni hon o kudasai-mashita*  
 teacher NAME me DAT bookACC give-PAST  
 ‘The teacher gave me a book.’

#### 4. CAUSATION > RESULT > EXISTENCE

The causation is illustrated for example in the following constructions:

- *gei* in Chinese (see Badan, this volume) full verb > passive construction
- *G ñ* in serial verbs in Kalam (see Pawley 2011, 2012) as a causation form
- *give to* + infinitive clause in French (Bouveret 2012) or *dan* as causation semi-auxiliaries (see Akin and Bouveret this volume), similarly in Khmer (see Corre, this volume)
- *donner un bleu* ‘produce a bruise’ in French or *es gibt* (‘es ist’ = there is) in German (Newman 1996): ‘causation’ according to a gradient causation > existential construction.

We therefore conclude that:

- a. Each of the semantic dimensions of the central meaning can give rise to extensions or restrictions of meaning through metaphors and metonymies.
- b. Extension mechanisms may be based on concrete or abstract dimensions.
- c. Extension mechanisms may concern the lexicon or grammar (lexicalization or grammaticalization). The dimension of 'direction' is the most central and the most productive one. It is the source of various possible semantic, pragmatic (see examples in Japanese in Newman 1996, or in Tibetan in Mélaç and Tournadre, this volume) and grammatical extensions. GIVE, as an essential concept in human interaction, provides a wonderful illustration in synchrony and diachrony of language change and processes of constructionalization across languages.

#### 4. The three parts of this volume

This volume is composed of three parts. The following aspects are studied in the book chapters: *Frames and extensions* in part I (David, Morgenstern and Chang); *The Transfer Constructions* in part II (Krawczak, Legallois, Ponsonnet); and *Grammaticalization and Lexicalization* issues in part III (Corre, Mélaç and Tournadre, Badan, Akin and Bouveret).

Our main research issues throughout this collective study are the following ones:

- the argumental structure of the verb
- transfer of possession or control in the transfer construction
- hypotheses about radial network polysemy and metaphoric extensions
- processes of language innovation through lexicalization, grammaticalization and constructionalization.

##### 4.1 Part I: Frames and extensions

In Chapter 1, Oana David illustrates the cognitive concept of an image schema showing thus the groundedness of meaning through frames and constructions. She studies meaning extensions as being motivated by the argument structure of the verb, and how the verb is grounded in its pragmatic scenario. The author, relying on Lakoff's radial polysemy principle, observes a core sense grounded in the Object Transfer scenario and studies the constructionally-motivated metaphoric and metonymic extended meanings, as well as idiomatic uses of the verb. An account of *give*



verbs in three Romance languages is offered, with a focus on *a da* in Romanian, *dar* in Spanish, and *donner* in French.

The concept of frame is central in the Morgenstern and Chang study in Chapter 2, viewed as a pragmatic scenario grounded in child-language learning. How do children learn to think and talk about giving? The event of giving is in this chapter very interestingly described as being decomposable into subevents and phases of events, from the pregiving phase (source oriented) to the acknowledging of the receiving event (beneficiary oriented), going through the transfer frame (event oriented). Each facet of the giving frame – or ‘domain’ in a Langacker description – can be reinforced by a multimodal dimension in the children’s/parents’ world. Each phase of the giving frame can be accompanied by linguistic constructions that allow the participants to negotiate and coordinate their plans and actions. In English, for example, phrases like *Want more? Here you go*, and *Thank you*, though lacking any verbs of giving, clearly mark specific phases of a giving frame. The analysis illustrates how the complex event structure of giving, and the variety of ways of talking about it, provide the means for a concurrent development of language and conceptualization.

#### 4.2 Part II: The transfer constructions

The transfer construction is a central abstraction of giving events. In Chapter 4, Dominique Legallois studies a striking property of *give* transfer verbs in French defined as *enantiosemy*, a property by which a lexical unit has two opposite meanings. The same construction is at the origin of contradictory interpretations. Other transfer verbs, even if not centrally giving verbs, inherit the transfer frame when used in a ditransitive construction (DTC), verbs more or less equivalent to *give* such as for example, *take*, *lend*, *borrow*, *learn*, *rent*. In the DTC, such as *J’ai acheté une voiture à Paul* (‘I’ve bought a car from/for Paul’), in a first “allative” interpretation, Paul is the person for whom I bought the car, the beneficiary, whereas in a second “ablative” interpretation Paul has no longer the role of beneficiary, but is the source of the transfer. This exchange frame is grounded in transfer verbs. The author shows that the French *give* DTC involves two scenarios, one that can be accounted for by the antonymous Meta-Predicates GIVE and TAKE, and a second one that can be accounted for by the Meta-Predicates LEAVE and KEEP, which therefore correspond to two additional scenarios. It is shown that the four Meta-Predicates GIVE, TAKE, LEAVE, KEEP are the terms of a system of relations of contrariety and contradiction that a logical square can account for.

Maïa Ponsonnet in Chapter 5 presents very original properties of several transfer constructions in the Dalabon language (North Australia) related to comitative (expressing accompaniment) constructions and expressions of transfer/removal, a malefactive construction. In addition, she shows that the comitative construction

has developed a cross-linguistically unusual semantic extension towards the notion of transfer. When combined with verbs of attainment ('get', 'pull', etc.), Dalabon comitative constructions express malefactive transfer (or removal, i.e. the opposite of gift). This extension is not limited to the Dalabon language, but also occurs in Bininj Gun-wok and Rembarrnga, neighboring languages of the same family. In addition, the Dalabon comitative constructions can also express the transfer of content of communication with verbs meaning 'tell' or 'ask'. The other lexical and contextual properties revealed by the author about these transfer constructions is that the criterion for using benefactive constructions is the animacy of the benefactive participant, whereas the criterion for using comitative constructions is semantic: the Dalabon comitative marker selects arguments with typical "comitative" meaning (accompaniment and instrument).

In Chapter 3, another point is discussed about *give* transfer constructions: the aspectual marking of the construction. The alternation, obtained between two dative constructions, is here investigated in association with the verb *give* in English and its perfective and imperfective equivalents in Polish, i.e., *dać/dawać*. The question which Karolina Krawczak asks in her study is whether the polysemy of a lexeme can offer a key to understanding a speaker's choice of alternative constructions. The importance of lexical semantics in constructional inquiries is here explored empirically in relation to the dative alternation constructions.

### 4.3 Part III: Grammaticalization, lexicalization and constructionalization

In the third part of the volume, a unified account of the grammaticalization and lexicalization processes of *give* is discussed in relation to multi-functionality patterns and constructions. A constructional account of *give* is provided in these chapters. The polyfunctionality of the *give* form-meaning lexical unit across three languages is studied in relation to context and the construction; the constructionalization of *give* verbs is thus described.

In Chapter 6 Eric Corre refers to a polyfunctionality of the form for *give* in Khmer. The phenomenon of *multifunctionality* is described by Trousdale 2013. For Corre, the transfer meaning can appear either in a lexicalized form or in a grammatical component. For Mélac and Tournadre (Chapter 7), the same phenomenon is attested in Tibetan. For Akin and Bouveret (Chapter 9), polyfunctionality is found in Kurdish, too. In the three studies, *give* is attested amongst its varied constructions, either as a plain verb or as a light verb construction (LVC).

The lexeme for *give* in Khmer, *aoj*, is extremely polyfunctional, similar to several other serial verbs that are found in South-East Asian languages. *Aoj* frequently occurs in verb serialization. One cognitive mechanism has been found to lie at the source of the meaning extensions, namely the notion of Transfer, as with other *give*

verbs, but with the condition that the recipient acquire control (autonomy) over the object transferred. The author shows that this specification gives rise to several metaphoric extensions, some of which are not found in other languages. In particular, one important extension for *aoj* consists in signaling a change of subject for an embedded clause with the expectation that another protagonist (the subject referent of that clause) takes action. In yet another use, namely the causative-resultative, the control and autonomy components translate as an interactional component, particularly in imperative sentences, when the speaker incites the addressee to take action to ensure that his goals be met.

Mélac and Tournadre also explore the semantic relations between the various forms that can express ‘give’ in Tibetan: *sprad*, *btang*, *gnang* and *phul* on the basis of previous lexicographic and descriptive research on Lhasa Tibetan, as well as a corpus of spoken Lhasa Tibetan (TSC). While *sprad* is not used as a light verb, its honorific and humilific counterparts are very productive light verbs. They show that the humilific construction is not the symmetrical opposite of the honorific construction. They explore the productivity of *gnang* and *phul*, which can be explained by the fact that giving is one of the most basic interpersonal actions of human behaviour, it therefore establishes a link between two humans, which is essential in order for the honorific and humilific notions to emerge.

In Chapter 8, Linda Badan shows that *gěi*, ‘give’ in Mandarin Chinese, even if widely discussed in many studies, is so far the object of analyses focusing only on some of the possible structures where *gěi* appears, whereas in this volume she aims at tracing a taxonomy of all the *gěi* constructions found in the literature and collected with questionnaires. The author proposes a unified analysis of *gěi* that overarches as many *gěi* structures as possible with an interpretation of grammaticalization that links all the different occurrences of *gěi* considered as one element in different structures. For the author, *gěi* is always a predicate whose different positions and interpretations can be seen as different stages of grammaticalization that make it either a full verb or a weaker predicate. However, all the distinct stages of grammaticalization in which *gěi* appears within a sentence maintain the general sense of “orientation” (in terms of Paris 1978, 1992). When *gěi* is not a full lexical verb itself, its presence with its general meaning of “orientation” has an effect on the transitivity of the verb that precedes or follows: on the one hand, when *gěi* is preverbal, it highlights the role of the agent of the verb, on the other hand, when *gěi* is postverbal, it reinforces the recipient role. Although syntactic, the approach is highly compatible with a frame semantics understanding of meaning and also illustrates the core dimension of ‘directionality’ in the GIVE image schema, seen as a source of grammaticalization and constructionalization processes.

In the final chapter, Akin and Bouveret discuss the grammaticalization of *dan* ‘give’ in Kurmanji Kurdish, mainly through two verbal constructions, as a light

verb and in its various causative constructions finding properties of either strong or weak predicate, as a plain verb or as a causative auxiliary. The authors focus on these two dominant grammatical categories used in Kurmanji Kurdish, light verb constructions (LVC) and causative constructions to illustrate the properties of language innovation in contemporary Kurdish through Press corpora. LVC is a common use of *give* in many languages, it is a dominant use of *dan* 'give' verbal constructions in the Kurdish language attested in everyday language and in dictionaries. The Kurdish Kurmanji dialect is a very dynamic language, new words appear commonly in the newspapers, as well as innovative lexicalization and grammaticalization phenomena. New grammatical constructions, new idioms and new compounds formed with *dan* can be motivated by the need for expressivity, which illustrates the usage-based grammar principle and the *pragmatic inference mechanism* described by Traugott 1989 and Bybee 2014. This last chapter analyzing in particular the grammaticalization of *dan* in Kurmandji Kurdish as a causative semi-auxiliary also illustrates a typological fact of causation meaning found in other languages of the world (Gougenheim 1929; Von Waldenfelds 2012; Newman 1996, 1997; and Lutz-Hughes's PhD dissertation in progress 2019 at the University of Sydney, personal communication) and being illustrated as well in other chapters of the book (cf. Badan, Corre, David, in this volume).

## Conclusion

This book illustrates several notable properties of constructionalization of the verb-form *GIVE* across languages. Its vivid polysemy and high productivity allow a wide range of meanings and constructions. We propose in this volume an analysis of various facts illustrating the grammar to lexicon continuum, in synchrony and diachrony: language innovation, grammaticalization chains, constructionalization analysis and, also discussed in several chapters, an invariant hypothesis of the verb *give* as a basic verb in human cognition. This introductory chapter has illustrated the general hypotheses of the book and explained the syntax-semantics interface of *give* constructions through cognitive frame and constructions principles. The whole book provides findings about *GIVE* across ten languages from a diversity of language families, amongst them, four under-researched languages. It also provides illustrations in several languages of the radial polysemy principle, putting forward metaphor and metonymy as extension phenomena. All the chapters provide altogether original studies about constructions and the way a verb depending on its contextual use can bear different meanings and functions but most of all, the studies assembled propose an illustration of the constructionalization patterns of the verb amongst different language families of the world.

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PART 1

# Frames and extensions





# Metaphor meets grammar in a radial network of *give* verbs in Romance

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Verbs of giving exhibit similar semantics across languages, even when used to express something other than the physical act of transferring an object from a giver to a recipient. Existing studies of various dimensions of *give* verbs in Germanic (Joseph 2000), Slavic (Janda 1998, von Waldenfels 2015) and other language families have identified some commonalities across frame structures and grammatical patterns. However, questions remain as to the delineation of different senses, and the relationship among those senses, especially considering that most uses of *give* verbs in common parlance do not refer to concrete transfer scenarios.

I suggest that a radial polysemy network for senses of *give* in their constructional contexts, complete with metaphoric extensions that involve high-level universally-available primary metaphors, can account for common yet often puzzling senses. (Consider the use of Romanian *give* in *a da de gol* (to give someone away, to betray), and Spanish *dar* in *dar de sí* (to become loose)).

The semantics of verbs of giving depends in large part on the semantics of the argument structure construction co-occurring with the verb. In this paper, an account of *give* verbs in Romance is offered, with a particular focus on *a da* in Romanian, *dar* in Spanish, and *donner* in French. I put forth a radial network account, starting with a core sense grounded in the Object Transfer scenario, and extending into metonymic and metaphoric senses. A detailed analysis of constructionally-motivated metaphoric senses reveals that metaphor is built into the argument structure construction for many idiomatic uses of *give*.

**Keywords:** diachrony, grammaticalization chain, lexicalization, constructionalization, language innovation, polysemy, polyfunctionality

## 1. Introduction

Verbs of giving exhibit similar semantics across languages, even when used to express something other than the physical act of transferring an object from a giver to a recipient. Existing studies of various dimensions of *give* verbs in Germanic (Joseph 2000), Slavic (Janda 1998, von Waldenfels 2015) and other language families have identified some commonalities across frame structures and grammatical patterns. However, questions remain as to the delineation of different senses, and the relationship among those senses, especially considering that most uses of *give* verbs in common parlance do not refer to concrete transfer scenarios. Do senses of *give* form polysemy networks, or can it even be claimed that the *give* in *give someone a nudge* is related by some predictable semantic operation to a more canonical sense such as in *give someone a book*? Here, I make the case that indeed, these senses are connected, a fact that is revealed by probing into the semantics of the grammatical argument structure constructions themselves, rather than solely the verb.

Often, *give* is analyzed as a light verb, one that has shed some (albeit not all) meaning compared to its lexical counterpart (Jespersen 1965, Butt 2010). Brugman (2001) has questioned the status of light verbs, a category of verbs that *give* verbs often tend to qualify as cross-linguistically. I share Brugman's position, namely that light verbs are not semantically vacuous or 'light,' rather they contribute significant meaning to the overall semantic compositionality of a clause. For this reason, the light verb/non-light verb distinction will not occupy a position of importance in the current discussion. I argue that the light verb carries a large semantic load in the image schema structure of argument structure constructions, whatever that may mean for the light verb/non-light verb distinction.

Taking the analysis one step further, I suggest that a radial polysemy network for senses of GIVE in their constructional contexts, complete with metaphoric extensions that involve high-level universally-available primary metaphors, can account for common yet often puzzling senses. (Consider the use of Romanian *give* in *a da de gol* (to give someone way, to betray), and Spanish *dar* in *dar de sí* (to become loose)).

The analytic model I use is in the spirit of radial structure analyses such as Brugman (1988), Lakoff (1987), Tyler & Evans (2001, 2003) and Brugman & Lakoff (2006). These models propose that lexical polysemy is systematic, and relational links among word senses are categorizable as image schematic, metonymic, or metaphoric. Further, as Brugman & Lakoff (2006) point out, the semantic layer forming the lexical polysemy taps into a cognitive topography of the semantic space, which is largely structured by image schemas and their prototypes (pp. 112). This layering is our solution to the generalizability problem; it allows us to make more general claims about why polysemy networks tend to operate fairly similarly

across typologically different languages, while still allowing for language-specific idiosyncracies.

In furthering the radial network model of polysemy, I focus here on data from Romance, specifically the diverse physical and metaphoric uses of the verbs *a da* in Romanian, *dar* in Spanish and *donner* in French. Beyond its status in these languages, *give* is an interesting semantic domain, and has been the focus of many cognitive linguistic studies on the immense cross-linguistic variety and motivated similarity in the polysemies, usage patterns, and syntactic versatility of *GIVE* verbs (cf. Newman 1996, 1997). For the purposes of the current study, I hone in on the non-prototypical and the figurative senses of *give*, and their syntactic expression in argument structure constructions in Romance. I dedicate a big portion of the discussion to and allocate most examples from Romanian, since this is a language that has received little attention in the literature on *give* semantics (as well as in cognitive linguistics at large), and one that provides several interesting usages non-conformant with other Romance languages. Examples (1)–(3), showing cognate constructions in French, Spanish and Romanian, illustrate some of the phenomena to be systematically considered in the rest of the paper.

- (1) a. darse              cuenta                                      (Spanish)  
         give.INF.REFL realization
- b. a-și        da        seama                                      (Romanian)  
         INF-REFL give.INF realization  
         ‘to realize’ (lit. to give oneself realization)
- (2) a. se    ha    dado    a    la    bebida                                      (Spanish)  
         REFL has given to the drink
- b. s-a        dat    la    băutură                                      (Romanian)  
         REFL-has given to drink  
         ‘(he) turned to drinking’ (lit. to give oneself to the drink)
- (3) a. dă        soarele                                      (Romanian)  
         give.3SG sun.DEF
- b. le    soleil    donne                                      (French)  
         DEF sun give.3SG  
         ‘the sun is coming out’ (lit. the sun gives)<sup>1</sup>

Newman (1996, Chapter 4) initiates a discussion on figurative *give*, addressing common cognitive uses such as *give an idea* and social uses such as *give a favor*. Here I extend the analysis to an in-depth metaphor analysis based on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory model of metaphors in order to address the full range

1. As opposed to merely meaning ‘the sun is shining,’ this has a distinctly inchoative meaning, more akin to ‘the sun is starting to shine,’ specifically after breaking through the clouds.

of non-physical and non-canonical uses of *give*. More precisely, using data from French, Romanian and Spanish, I show how certain primary conceptual metaphors underlie the grammatical constructions in which GIVE verbs find expression. A large portion of the discussion is focused on examples such as (3), in which physical scenes (such as the sun shining) are metaphorically depicted in terms of giving.

The discussion of verbal polysemy is necessarily tied in to the discussion of constructional polysemy. Grammatical constructions are form-meaning pairings, where the meaning component is an image schema grounded in basic embodied experience. Image schemas encode physical scenarios, along with their respective participants and force-dynamics (Goldberg 1995). The senses of a lexical item are not polysemous in an isolated way in the lexicon. In accordance with a usage-based model of grammar, verbs and their senses never occur in syntactic, nor in communicative isolation. Rather, these senses interact with grammatical constructions motivated by frame semantics (per the program set out in Fillmore 1976 and after). Similar dissections of the vast interrelated frame networks evoked by verbs include the study of the polysemy of *stand* by Gibbs et al. (1994), and the studies of CUT and BREAK domains by Bouveret & Sweetser (2009, 2010) in French and English. What is distinctive about these types of frame semantic studies, (and implicitly the aim here as well) is that they seek the embodied grounding of verb meanings in image schemas, even when verb senses exhibit language-specific polysemous extensions.

The connection between grammatical constructions and metaphor was introduced in Lakoff (1987, 1996) and Goldberg (1995),<sup>2</sup> but was most extensively developed in Sullivan (2007, 2013). She found that adjectives and their modified nouns pattern predictably with respect to metaphor. That is, the semantically autonomous element introduces the source domain, and the semantically dependent element introduces the target domain of the metaphor. Sullivan's work begins a program for systematic taxonomy of metaphoric grammatical constructions. Towards that end, in David (2016) I extend this theory to a consideration of argument structure constructions, providing a taxonomy of metaphoric construction-verb pairings in terms of which constructional element evokes the source domain of the metaphor.

Upon close inspection, some metaphoric construals are achieved by virtue of the grammatical construction, while others arise by virtue of the verb itself (ibid, pp. 90). For instance, in a sentence such as *You gave me a great idea*, the operating metaphor is COMMUNICATION IS OBJECT TRANSFER, and IDEAS ARE OBJECTS (i.e., the Conduit metaphor, Reddy 1979, Sweetser 1990). The source domain is evoked

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2. There are many more works exploring the metaphor-grammar interface (cf. Deignan 2006, Steen 2007). Here, we are concerned specifically with metaphor as defined in Conceptual Metaphor Theory, and grammar as defined in those Construction Grammars which take a view of meaning as image schematic and embodied.

by the verb *give*, and the target is evoked by the arguments, more saliently the direct object *idea*. However, this is a vastly different kind of metaphoric construction than that found in a sentence such as *He cajoled her into marriage*, in which the verb is instead evoking the target domain, as is the salient argument, the direct object *marriage*.

So how is the latter sentence metaphoric? The grammatical Caused Motion construction with an *into*-PP is situating the target-domain frame elements (the cajoler, the cajoled, and the outcome of cajoling) inside a metaphor for which the source domain (namely, caused motion) is evoked not by the verb, but by the construction itself. This means that the psychological activity of cajoling only has force dynamics because of the way its frame structure is instantiated in English grammar – the psycho-social activity is metaphoric because of the Caused Motion construction with an *into*-PP. What this says for conceptual metaphor is that it manifests as the end result of a combination of factors, both lexical and constructional, and is not a property of the verb alone.

Interestingly, due to the metaphor-evoking power of grammatical constructions, we are also able to metaphorically construe one physical or concrete scene in terms of another physical or concrete scene. For instance, *He tied the rope into a knot* is metaphoric, using the metaphors ACTION IS MOTION, STATES ARE LOCATIONS and RESULTING STATE IS A GOAL OF MOTION (TO A BOUNDED REGION) via the above-mentioned metaphoric use of the Caused Motion construction. However, in the scene described by the latter sentence, there is physical tying taking place, and there is a physical resulting state of being in a knot, but there is no physical ‘into,’ at least not in the sense that a trajector starts at a source location and ends up at a goal location inside of a bounded region or container.

For the purposes of exposition in the current paper, we will call the first kind of metaphoric constructions discussed above lexically-evoked metaphor (LEM) (e.g. *give an idea*), while the second we will call constructionally-evoked metaphor (CEM) (e.g. *cajole into doing*, *tie into a knot*). The former is evoking the source domain of the metaphor via its semantic head, (in the examples, the verb), while the arguments instantiate the metaphoric target domain. Hence, there are clear lexical triggers for both target and source. In the case of *give an idea*, the verb is evoking the Object Transfer frame in the source domain of COMMUNICATION IS OBJECT TRANSFER, while the direct object argument, *an idea*, evokes the target, Communication.

On the other hand, CEMs are only metaphoric because of the metaphor-triggering fillers of the grammatical components of the argument structure construction itself (in English, the preposition *into* in the examples). The argument structure construction, in both examples of CEMs above is the metaphoric Caused Motion construction. Depending on the typological classification of the language in question, the constructional triggering component may be a prepositional head, for instance

*into* in English. But it may also be a verb, as we will see, is the case with Romance, especially with so-called light verb constructions.

The CEM has two varieties: the target domain is either intersubjectively inaccessible (CEM-II), or it is intersubjectively accessible (CEM-IA). Intersubjective (in)accessibility is introduced and explained with respect to metaphor in Dancygier & Sweetser (2014).<sup>3</sup> In the latter examples, a cognitive activity like cajoling is intersubjectively inaccessible, because it pertains to the activities of the mind, which cannot be verified through shared sensorimotor input by all parties in a communicative space. On the other hand, the activity of tying can be verified through visual, tactile, etc. means by all involved in the communicative space. In cases such as *tie into a knot*, one concrete, intersubjectively accessible domain (tying) is metaphorically expressed in terms of another concrete, intersubjectively accessible domain (motion into). The metaphor is achieved by means of a metaphoric argument structure construction into which the two domains are mapped.

This taxonomy is well-represented across the various uses of GIVE verbs in Romance, as well as in English. However, the constructional type CEM-II is not available to the large extent in Romance, but in fact is abundant in English (that is, *he cajoled her into marriage* would not be possible in Romance). This may have to do with the differences in how these two language groups encode manner and path lexically and clausally (Slobin 1996 and after). In satellite-framed languages such as English, in which prepositional phrases express path of motion, prepositional phrases do much of the work in capturing a constructional metaphor (CEM). English is also known to be a manner-encoding language, such that the verb often includes additional information about the manner of action or motion. These encoding schemes are retained in metaphoric uses of verbs and prepositions as well, such that in English one can say both *he danced into the room* and *he cajoled her into marriage*. In verb-framed languages, as Romance languages tend to be, the verb encodes path, and not as much manner. Nevertheless, we do encounter the CEM-II type with all sorts of verbs of cognition in Romance, e.g. *penser en* (French, ‘think about’), *a decide asupra* (Romanian, ‘to decide on/about’).

On the other hand, LEM and CEM-IA type constructions are quite common in Romance. In sentences (4)–(7), metaphor is present by virtue of constructions that use GIVE verbs to construe a scene in which no transaction is depicted by the verb, even though the verb canonically means object transfer. The metaphoric object given is not instantiated at all, only the metaphoric goal instantiated as some kind of PP.

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3. Intersubjective (in)accessibility is a useful concept in qualifying the source and target domains of metaphors, and captures the dynamics of these types of domains more accurately than the typical terms ‘concrete’ and ‘abstract’ tend to do. It allows us to explain how a metaphor such as MORE IS UP can exist, even though both the domain of quantity and the domain of verticality are concrete, physical, embodied domains.

- (4) geamurile    dau    la stradă    (Romanian)  
 windows-DEF give.3PL to street  
 ‘The windows face the street.’
- (5) Toutes les    chambres donnent sur la    mer.    (French)  
 all.PL    DEF rooms    give.3PL over DEF sea  
 ‘All the rooms face the sea.’
- (6) a    da    cu    făină / prin    făină    (Romanian)  
 INF give with flour / through flour  
 ‘To sprinkle / rub (something) with flour’
- (7) dar    con la    puerta en las narices    (Spanish)  
 give.INF with DEF door in the noses  
 ‘to slam the door in someone’s face (lit. give in the nose)’
- (8) donne-moi    un    exemple    (French)  
 give.IMP-me.DAT INDEF example  
 ‘give me an example’
- (9) Tenemos que dar    ánimos al    equipo.    (Spanish)  
 must.1PL COMP give.INF spirit to.DEF team  
 ‘We must cheer on the team. (lit. give spirits to the team)’

In (4) and (5), there is a physical configuration between the windows/rooms and the street/sea, but that configuration does not literally qualify literally as ‘giving.’ Similarly, in (6) and (7), there is physical object manipulation, respectively of the flour and the door, but not one that entails giving in the sense that there is a recipient of some kind of transferred object. More so, it qualifies as a type of passing or more general causing to move. Examples (4)–(7) are very different from (8) and (9). As LEMs, the latter illustrate what one may recognize as more typical metaphoric uses, where the target domains are respectively communication (communicated idea, an example) and emotion stimulus.

In this paper I organize these, and other senses of *give*, and the constructional configurations in which they occur in terms of the metaphors motivated by these constructions in the case of CEMs, and lexical verbs and their arguments, in the case of LEMs. The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, I outline some literal uses of *give* that do not conform to a prototypical Object Transfer scenario, but instead are frame extensions from this core scenario. The radial structure is outlined, establishing the Object Transfer scenario at the center, and motivating additional frames that extend from this, including Application, Submission and Creation frames. In these frame senses of *give*’s polysemy, concrete object transfer occurs, but the senses profile different inferences and frame elements. In Section 3, we move outwards in the radial network, towards senses that have less and less to do with actual object transfer, but still pertain to physical scenes. Section 3 details



the metaphors motivating most CEMs in Romance, and provides examples from several metaphoric entailments of primary causation and event structure metaphors. These are specifically:

- CAUSES ARE FORCES (THAT ARE GIVEN OBJECTS)
- CAUSATION IS FORCED MOTION (OF AN OBJECT TO A GOAL)
- END STATES ARE GOALS OF OBJECT TRANSFER
- ENABLEMENTS IN STATE CHANGE ARE AIDS TO / PATHS IN / MOTIVATORS FOR MOTION
- INITIAL CAUSATION IS IMPACT WITH AN OBJECT
- CAUSAL RESULT IS GOAL LOCATION OF MOVED OBJECT

To reiterate, these metaphors are evoked by the argument structure constructions themselves, and are therefore able to be used to talk about physical scenarios. Finally, Section 4 details the metaphoric senses that have target domains not pertaining to physical scenes, but to intersubjectively inaccessible domains, namely cognition, social interaction, emotion, action, events, etc. This includes classic metaphoric examples such as *give an idea*.

Finally, I will also show that CEMs are leveraged towards uses that are more of the LEM kind, creating metaphor chains. For instance, *dar una vuelta* (to make a turn around, to circle around' in Spanish) can be used to talk about ideas and ideologies, (e.g., to change one's mind can be expressed as 'turning around' on an idea). *Dar una vuelta* is independently metaphoric, construing change of location as giving. It is further metaphoric if used to talk about thinking an idea over. In this way, CEMs feed into metaphor chains, and we are left with multiply layered metaphoric meanings.

The generalizations and examples put forth here are drawn from the TenTen corpora, a set of web-based corpora available for multiple languages including the ones studied here. Each corpus consists of billions of words from systematic web scrapes during several consecutive days, and there is uniformity in the methodology of corpus compilation across languages (Jakubíček et al. 2013). For our purposes, these corpora are useful in painting a good initial picture of the most frequently-occurring collocations involving the verbs *a da*, *dar* and *donner*, with a high degree of likelihood of being equally representative, within their respective languages, of usage frequency and likelihood of co-occurrence.<sup>4</sup> The corpora

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4. This is helped by the fact that the word sketches provide not only frequency information, but also a measure of lexical association in the form of a log dice score. The log dice score is a measure of the typicality of a collocation. For a full description of the calculation of log dice and its statistical significance, see Rychlý (2008).

are searched using Sketch Engine ([www.sketchengine.eu](http://www.sketchengine.eu)), which provides a useful word sketch function that shows verb collocates categorized by grammatical pattern (rather than just by proximity). Table 1 summarizes the corpus data.

**Table 1.** Corpus summaries for TenTen corpora

	EnTenTen (English)	RoTenTen (Romanian)	EsTenTen (Spanish)	FrTenTen (French)
Year	2013	2016	2011	2012
Total words in corpus	22.7 billion	3.1 billion	11 billion	11.4 billion
Total tokens of <i>GIVE</i> verb	22,289,988 / 981 per million	3,228,673 / 1,027 per million	14,648,278 / 1,332 per million	9,050,397 / 791 per million

## 2. Prototype and extensions

Senses of *give* all stem from a central frame depicting an Object Transfer scenario. Importantly, they provide one particular perspective on this scenario – the giver’s perspective – and deprofile the recipient’s perspective. This perspectivization of the Object Transfer scenario constitutes the Giving frame, which is structured by the following process sequence and inferences.

- i. In the initial stage, the giver is the source of the object transfer, and is collocated with the object. The giver initially possessed the object.
- ii. In the intermediate stage, the giver transfers the object towards a recipient, away from the giver’s location.
- iii. In the final stage, the recipient is the goal of object transfer, and is now collocated with as well as possesses the object.
- iv. The object is the same object in the initial, intermediate, and final stages.

The force-dynamics and image schema structure of *give* is laid out in detail in Newman (1996), and we will not be delving into its details extensively here, aside from the inferential structure that is relevant to the metaphoric extensions exemplified by the expressions below. The above sequence describes the prototypical Object Transfer frame. Additional frames extend from the core by virtue of the explicit profiling, or alternatively, explicit flaunting of some of these inferences.

For instance, in a sense of *give* evoking the Creation frame (10–11), the recipient receives an object, or an object reaches a goal location, but that object did not exist at the initial stage when the giver initiated the transfer process (thus flaunting inference iv). Specific instances of the Creation frame are the Birthing and Production frames, both of which operate on the assumption that a Theme comes

into being in the process of being transferred. There are of course additional deviations from the core scene ('to the light' is metonymic, and vines are not agentively giving), but these are elaborations on the basic Creation frame.

- (10) dar a la luz (Spanish)  
 give.INF to DEF light  
 'give to the light (to give birth)'
- (11) La vigne n'a pas donnee cette annee. (French)  
 DEF vine NEG-has NEG given this year  
 'the vines have not yielded (crop) this year'

Within the Object Transfer scenario, one can also zoom in on the Theme's arrival at its goal location. Two common subframes exemplifying this are the Application frame and the Submission frame. The Application frame is common in Romanian and Spanish uses of *give*, as in (12) and (13), but not present for French *donner*.

- (12) a da (ceva) cu şprei / cu cremă (Romanian)  
 INF give (something) with spray / with cream  
 'to spray (something) / to apply cream (to something)'
- (13) Sé lo difícil que es dar (con) una crema que (Spanish)  
 know.1SG that difficult COMP is give.INF (with) INDEF cream that  
 trate las arrugas pero no engrase la piel.<sup>5</sup>  
 treats.SBJV DEF wrinkles but not fatten.SBJV DEF skin  
 'I know how hard it is to apply a wrinkle cream that isn't greasy.'
- (14) a da la facultate (Romanian)  
 INF give to college  
 'to apply to college'
- (15) a da faliment (Romanian)  
 INF give bankruptcy  
 'to go bankrupt'
- (16) Şi-a dat demisia. (Romanian)  
 REFL-have.3SG given resignation  
 '(He) quit. (lit. (He) handed over his resignation.)'

Sentences (14)–(16) illustrate a Submission frame, with metaphoric and metonymic extensions. In these sentences, a message is submitted formally in an institutional setting. There is also a COMMUNICATION IS OBJECT TRANSFER metaphor present, since in many cases, these formal messages are only delivered verbally and are not accompanied by a physical paper submission. However, this metaphor arises out of a

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5. Sketch Engine token number #431108260, document #1052002.

metonymy within the source domain. In the metaphor, there is a frame-metonymic association between the physical submission of paperwork and the communicative force of making an announcement declared in that paperwork (about one's candidacy for college, one's bankruptcy, or one's notice of quitting a job).

There are other frame-metonymic and not necessarily metaphoric senses of physical *give* that are entrenched as the standard, and often only way to express that meaning.

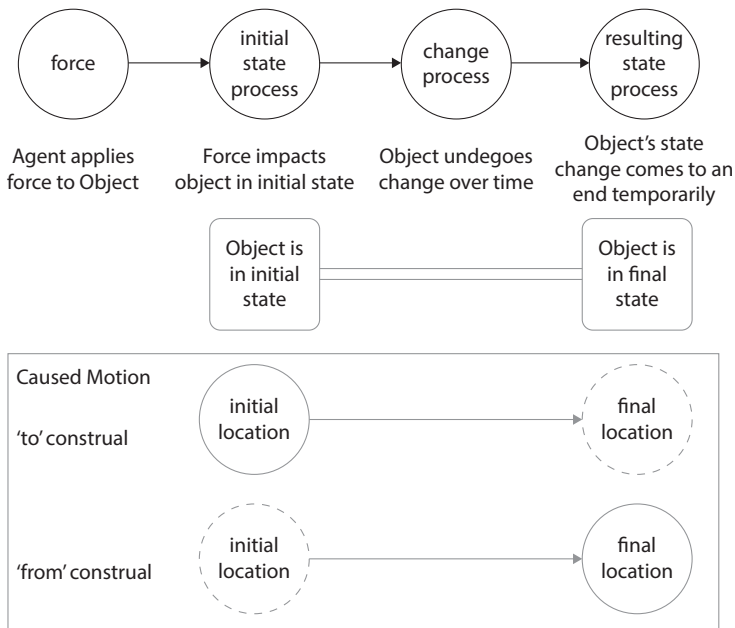
- (17) a da (cuiva) de mâncare (Romanian)  
 INF give (someone) of food  
 'to feed someone'
- (18) Los blogs no dan mucho dinero. (Spanish)  
 DEF blogs not give.3PL much money  
 'Blogs don't pay well.'
- (19) donner un escroc a la police (French)  
 give.INF INDEF crook to DEF police  
 'turn/deliver/hand a crook over to the police'
- (20) Dai o bere? (Romanian)  
 give.2SG INDEF beer  
 'Will you treat me to a beer?'

In (17)–(20) there is no metaphor; they all express physical delivery of an object to a recipient or a new location. In the case of (17), this is the standard complex expression to mean 'feed.' In each case, the physical transfer act is only one piece of the greater frame being evoked, and this transfer act is therefore metonymically accessing the whole scene. For instance, in (20) the broader frame is the Arrest frame, in which only one small component is the actual delivering of the criminal to the police.

### 3. Metaphoric constructions expressing physical scenes

There are several frames that are not subcases of the Object Transfer scenario, but directly result from the profiling of particular inferences in the Object Transfer scenario. Such frames immediately become metaphoric by virtue of abstracting those inferences away from the core scenario. The abstraction is made possible by virtue of the rich force-dynamic inferences holding in concrete transfer scenarios. Further, the Object Transfer scenario is acting as a prototypical subcase of the Caused Motion image schema. Therefore, *GIVE* verbs in these languages come to mean causation more generally, or particular sub-components of causation, such as causal force, causal result, and enablements or obstacles to causal action more specifically.

Languages differ in the types of argument structure constructions and argument realization patterns they have available to highlight these different components of the Caused Motion image schema. However, regardless of the differences, several principles hold true cross-linguistically. Each language possesses only a handful of grammatical constructions and morphological patterns to capture these fine-grained force-dynamic construals. When they do, the grammatical construction inevitably renders the construal of the force-dynamic scene metaphoric, because it forces coercion of events into reified metaphoric objects, often as nouns. The general principles by which grammar construes force dynamics is elaborately laid out in Talmy (2000) and similar work. Verbs of giving in many languages, and for our purposes in the Romance languages discussed here, are subject to this grammatical bottleneck effect. Object Transfer inherits from Caused Motion image schema, because transferring an object to a new location or recipient entails applying force to that object and causing its motion to a new location. The force dynamic event sequence of the type of causal scene necessary for the interpretation of *give* looks something like the schematization in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Force-dynamic sub-processes in Caused Motion image schema.

This event sequence is not unique to transfer events, and is not constrained by grammatical patterns, but is a schematic generalization over possible construals. When a causal agent interacts with an object, there are several force-dynamic sub-processes

generalizable in the scene between the agent's initial force application and the object's final state. When that causal action is specifically caused motion, as is the force-dynamic interaction involved in object transfer, not only does the object undergo a state change, but it also simultaneously undergoes a location change. This is evident in sentences like (21) and (22), where the transferred object or person is not only undergoing a change of location, but also a change of state (e.g., from being worn to not being worn).

(21) a-și        da haina jos                                       (Romanian)  
 INF-REFL give coat down  
 'To remove one's coat.'

(22) a        da afară (câinele / pe cineva)                       (Romanian)  
 INF give outside (the dog / someone)  
 'To kick (the dog / someone) out.'

In these cases, physical caused motion is happening, but it does not qualify as giving since there is no recipient, but there is nevertheless an instantiated goal location. The senses here qualify more as instances of Putting and Delivering frames, respectively. This resultative translational construction involving *a da* in Romanian, schematized as [GIVE (NP) AdvP] meaning to place or to transfer to a new location, seems to not be available for Spanish *dar* and French *donner*.

Cross-linguistically, two argument structure constructions tend to exemplify motion: the transitive caused motion construction and the intransitive self-motion construction. In the latter, causation happens internally – the mover causes himself to move (is both causer and mover) – while in the former, causal force is expelled externally, and the causer and mover are two different entities. The constructions profile one of the sub-processes in Figure 1. The constructions (in combination with the verb) also create a perspective on the Caused Motion scenario. For instance, in *from*-PP Caused Motion constructions, the initial location or initial state is profiled, while in *to*-PPs, it is the final location or final state. Locations entail states (the state an entity possesses while being at a location), while states do not necessarily entail locations. For this reason, when locations are involved there is a high chance that the primary metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS is at play. When this is the case, all of the event structure metaphors and change metaphors are also possible.

In the latter examples, caused motion is construed by the verb as specifically giving. But what does the physical act of giving have to do with the implicit change of state that comes with a change of location? – Causation is metaphorically construed as the giving of force to the affected object, and force is therefore reified as an object.

The following subsections highlight some of the metaphoric entailments of the event structure metaphors that are relevant to some of the more common

expressions using GIVE verbs in Romance. In all of these cases, causation is expressed as giving with two possible mapping patterns: either the thing given is the force applied to the object (object event structure metaphor) or the thing given is the affected object itself, the latter being transferred to a new location or recipient (location event structure metaphor). This metaphoric duality is well-studied in expressions of time (e.g., Núñez & Sweetser 2006).

### 3.1 Metaphoric duality in the grammar of causation

One common sense of *give* is that exemplified in a CEM that uses a light verb *give* with a reified force as the direct object. The (metaphoric) giver applies causal force onto the object transferred, resulting in the metaphor CAUSATION IS FORCED TRANSFER OF AN OBJECT. As the prototypical type of Object Transfer, Giving is the natural choice as the frame from which the verb grammaticalizes as part of the CEM construction.<sup>6</sup> The mappings for the metaphor underlying this construction are listed in Figure 2.

1. causal force	←	given object
2. causer	←	giver
3. causal inertia	←	path of motion (of given object)
4. causal result	←	goal location of given object
5. affectee (of causal force)	←	recipient of given object

**Figure 2.** CAUSATION IS THE TRANSFER OF FORCE metaphoric mappings

Not all of these mappings listed in Figure 2 are instantiated in every linguistic use of the metaphoric construction. The mappings are available as a bundle in the conceptual metaphor, and different argument structure constructions profile different combinations of mappings. The following examples are instances of the constructional profiling of the first listed mapping, CAUSAL FORCES ARE GIVEN OBJECTS. The transitive Caused Motion constructions in sentences (23)–(27) below show that the causal force (the metaphoric object) can either be syntactically instantiated or not. In (23, 24), the causal force is instantiated as the push or slap, while in (25) it is a causal effect more abstractly. Both constructionally manifest as direct objects of transitive Caused Motion constructions.

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6. Although *put*, *take*, and other object transfer verbs are also common across the world's languages.

- (23) a da (un) brânci / (o) palmă cuiva (Romanian)  
 inf give (INDEF) push / (INDEF) slap someone.DAT  
 ‘To give someone a push / a slap.’
- (24) da-le un golpe (Spanish)  
 give.IMP-DAT INDEF punch
- (25) donner de l’effet à une balle (French)  
 give.INF of DEF-effect to INDEF ball  
 ‘to put a spin on a ball (upon hitting it)’

On the other hand, when omitted as in (26)–(27), the causal force is vague, but understood relative to the frame introduced collectively by the rest of the arguments in the sentence. In (26), it is understood that the sentence refers to self-motion, and therefore the causal force is the internal propulsion to self-move. Alternatively, in (27) the missing object is not linked to the internal force of self-motion, but to force applied to external objects, in this case the pedal. (In English a similar metaphor occurs in *give it more gas*, another expression used in vehicular propulsion).

- (26) Dă ø înainte! (Romanian)  
 give.IMP forward  
 ‘Go on! Move it!’
- (27) a da ø la pedală (Romanian)  
 INF give to pedal  
 ‘To apply force to a pedal (on a bicycle).’

Sometimes, a metonymic argument interchangeability relation forms between the causal force and the object upon which the force operates. In (28), for instance, the null direct object, if instantiated, would necessarily be the entity upon which the force is applied, e.g. a box. In this related construction, in the same resultative family as (21) and (22), the null element can never be understood as the reified force that is applied.

- (28) a da ø la o parte (Romanian)  
 INF give to INDEF side  
 ‘to move (something) to the side’

The argument omission of the syntactic direct object argument is possible when the constructional meaning is metaphoric, such as the senses described for the CAUSAL FORCE IS OBJECT TRANSFER metaphor in this section. But in Romance, particularly in Romanian, it is also possible with the concrete prototypical instance of *give*, which is not usually the case in English, (although register-specific exceptions exist, such as in *give ø here!*).



Often, the type of force that is reified as an object is a sound, resulting in the specific metaphor THE FORCE OF SOUND IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT. In this case the target domain frame is a specific subcase of Causation, namely Causation in the auditory domain (caused sound emission or caused perception). This metaphor leads to the common use of *give* as verbs of emission.

- (29) Dă volumul mai tare. (Romanian)  
 give.2SG.IMP volume-DEF more strong  
 ‘Turn up the volume.’
- (30) la radio donne trop fort (French)  
 DEF radio give.2SG too strong  
 ‘The radio is too loud.’

In fact, GIVE verbs often acquire the sense of emission, whether sound (29–32), image (33–34), heat (35), or any other sensory stimulus (sentence (3) also qualifies, since the sun emits both heat and light). In these cases, an intangible but perceptible force is reified as an object that is given off of its source, and received by the perceiver. In English, this is evident in emission-specific expressions such as *give off* (light, sound). The emission-object is often uninstantiated syntactically, as in the Spanish examples below.

- (31) el reloj dio las cinco (Spanish)  
 DEF clock give.PST DEF five  
 ‘the clock struck five’
- (32) me puse a dar alaridos (Spanish)  
 REFL start.1SG.PST to give.INF screams  
 ‘I started to scream’
- (33) da bien en pantalla (Spanish)  
 give.3SG good in screen  
 ‘it looks good on screen’
- (34) l-au dat la televizor (Romanian)  
 him-have.3PL gave on television  
 ‘he was on TV (lit. they gave him on TV)’
- (35) ça donne chaud (French)  
 that give.2SG warm  
 ‘it makes warm, it warms up’

A *da* is the common verb to indicate self-initiated caused motion of body parts in Romanian (36–37), but it is not the standard body motion light verb in Spanish and French. It also expresses self-motion with the body as a whole, either instrumentally using another object (38), or reflexively (39). This use is also related to caused

motion of an instrumental object or effector using *with*-instrumental constructions, as in (40–41).

- (36) a da din cap / umeri (Romanian)  
 INF give from head / shoulders  
 ‘to shake one’s head / shoulders’
- (37) a da cu pumnul în masa (Romanian)  
 INF give with fist.DEF into table  
 ‘To hit the table with one’s fist.’
- (38) a se da în leagăn / cu sania (Romanian)  
 INF REFL give in swing / with sled  
 ‘to swing in a swing / to use a sled’
- (39) a se da pe spate (Romanian)  
 INF REFL give on back  
 ‘to bend over backwards’
- (40) a da cu mătura / aspiratorul (Romanian)  
 INF give with broom.DEF / vacuum.DEF  
 ‘to sweep / to vacuum’
- (41) Le di con un paño húmedo. (Spanish)  
 DAT give.1SG.PST with INDEF cloth wet  
 ‘I wiped (it) with a wet cloth (e.g. the table).’

These latter examples show that the [GIVE (WITH)-PP] construction has come to be used as an instrumental, similar to the Application frame discussed earlier. In these uses, the effector is an extension of the body, as is the case with most grooming instruments and appliances. This is found in Spanish as well, as in (41), but more often in Spanish instrumental manipulation is expressed with *pasar* (pass) or other caused motion verbs.

In all of these cases, there is no physical object transfer, rather, a metaphoric giving of a force, either to oneself to move through space, a part of oneself, or an instrumental extension of oneself. In the CEM construction, the metaphoric thing given is the force exerted by the causer and sunk into the manipulated object, body part, or whole body. Once again, this can result in metaphoric idiomatic constructions, such as *a se da la* exemplified in (42).

- (42) S-a dat la mine. (Romanian)  
 REFL-have.3SG given to(wards) me  
 ‘He made a sudden advance at me.’

The expression in (42) is a grammaticalized form of expressing physical aggression in a one-on-one confrontation. Due to the reflexive construction, the force

giver and the force are one and the same, and in the metaphor they map to the source domain object given. The construction can be generalized as [REFL GIVE motion-PP], because it can co-occur with PPs using several motion prepositions, including *la* (to), *spre* (toward), *către* (toward), and more complex prepositions that also serve adverbial functions (e.g. *încoace* ‘this-a-way’, *încolo* ‘that-a-way’, etc.)

Another sense often encountered in Romanian and Spanish, but not in French is that of impact or sudden contact, leading to a metaphor INITIAL CAUSAL PHASE IS IMPACT WITH AN OBJECT. This meaning exploits the initial causal process in Figure 1, which is usually the process during which the force is sunk into the affected object. As the Spanish (44) shows, this is also relevant to the instrumental sense, while (45) illustrates the whole body movement sense for Spanish. The sense of impact is achieved more so by the frame-based knowledge about the force-dynamic interaction between the specific effector and the specific landmark. In the case of (43), we know that if some effector comes into contact with a bar, there will normally be an impact. In Romanian, the impact sense is also aided by the lack of use of the reflexive; in the presence of a reflexive, the reading becomes instrumental, much like in (38) above, and the meaning of (43) ends up being ‘ride the bar’ rather than ‘knock up against the bar’.

- (43) a da în bară (Romanian)  
 INF give in/into bar/beam  
 ‘to knock up against the bar/beam’
- (44) dar con una caña (Spanish)  
 give.INF with INDEF cane  
 ‘to hit with a cane/reed’
- (45) dio con su cuerpo en el suelo<sup>7</sup> (Spanish)  
 give.3SG.PST with POSS body in DEF ground  
 ‘(he) slammed to the ground’

In the latter examples, the thing given is once again a force, but the distinct sense achieved is that of sudden impact, rather than simply caused motion, because the profiled portion of the causal process is the initial stage. This makes sense, since much of the prototypical caused motion scenarios begin with a sudden impact on the moved object (e.g. kicking a ball).

In addition to using a CEM metaphor, (46) also feeds the metaphor into a LEM metaphor, by virtue of the metonymic connection between eyes and their perceptual product, sight.

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7. Sketch Engine token number #3184852, document #7845.

- (46) a da (cu ochii) de ceva (Romanian)  
 INF give with eyes.DEF upon something  
 ‘to spot something’ (lit. to give-hit one’s eyes upon something)

This sense reads as if the eyes are the instrument used to hit upon something, thereby resulting in one perceptually encountering it. Thus, in addition to CAUSATION IS OBJECT TRANSFER OF A FORCE, the expression also puts across SEEING IS TOUCHING and SIGHT IS A LINE (THAT PROJECTS FROM THE EYE AND TOUCHES THE THING SEEN). These additional mappings, introduced by the verb (source) and its arguments (target) making this an LEM. In Romanian, *a da de* (without mention of the eyes) is an entrenched expression, meaning find or encounter, and it is used both for literal encountering and for understanding. The same is true for *dar con* in Spanish. In some uses, it is simultaneously used to mean physically hit, and cognitively encounter, as in (47).

- (47) Am dat de fundul fântânii. (Romanian)  
 have.1SG given of bottom.DEF well.GEN  
 ‘I hit the bottom of the well.’ (lit. to give-hit upon the bottom of the well)

In the latter case, one simultaneously physically touches the bottom as becomes aware that the bottom has been reached. Across all of these simultaneous senses – physical impact with a sought object, awareness, and finding after a search – the metaphor CAUSAL FORCE IS OBJECT TRANSFER (where the transferred object is a force) is present by virtue of the CEM in the argument structure construction that includes the verb *a da*.

Often, the fourth mapping in Figure 2, (causal result ← goal location of given object) is profiled in the construction, which via an adverbial phrase or PP expresses the result of some action. This constructionally translates as the entailed metaphor END STATES ARE GOALS OF OBJECT TRANSFER in a Caused Motion constructional form. It is an entailment of the primary metaphors STATES ARE LOCATIONS and CHANGE OF STATE IS MOTION TO A NEW LOCATION. This mapping usually arises in the context in which the thing given is the affected object and the goal location is its new state (the location event structure metaphor). Thus, if instantiated, the affected entity in (48), water, is construed as changing location when in fact it is only changing state.

- (48) a da (apa) în clocot (Romanian)  
 INF give (water.DEF) in boiling state  
 ‘to bring (the water) to a boil’

Alternatively, the attainment of a new state is expressed via the alternate metaphor in the duality, the object event structure metaphor STATES ARE OBJECTS, and

CHANGEING STATE IS GIVING AN OBJECT. The difference, constructionally, is that the state (metaphoric thing given) is expressed as the direct object of a transitive construction.

- (49) a da foc (la ceva) (Romanian)  
 INF give fire (to something)  
 ‘to set (something on) fire’
- (50) ça donne un bleu (French)  
 it give.2SG INDEF blue (bruise)  
 ‘it causes a bruise’

What sets these metaphoric uses apart from the previous ones is that the thing given is not a force, but a state. Much like the duality seen for causation metaphors, STATES ARE LOCATIONS and STATES ARE OBJECTS are a common metaphoric dual part of the object-location duality system.

Finally, there is a subclass of constructions that express the entire event as the direct object of a transitive construction. These construction types are also common in English (Brugman 1988, Stein 1991), not only with *give* but with *have* and other light verbs, (as is the case with *have* in *have a look* and *give something a cleaning*).

- (51) a da o tură (Romanian)  
 INF give INDEF tour  
 ‘to take a tour, to take a look around’
- (52) dar una vuelta (a algo) (Spanish)  
 give.INF DEF turn (to something)  
 ‘go around (something), take a tour (of something)’
- (53) a da o fuga (pâna la magazin) Romanian  
 INF give a.INDEF run (up to DEF store)  
 ‘to make a quick run (to the store)’
- (54) a da click / like (Romanian)  
 INF give click / like  
 ‘to click, to hit ‘like’ (online)’

The thing given in each of these cases is the action holistically construed, usually expressed metonymically via a salient subcomponent of the action. For instance, in (54) the button that is hit is called the ‘like’ button, and the reified action of hitting the button is accessed via the button’s name. These uses of *give* can often be paraphrased with non-light versions of the sentence, e.g. with *a fugi* (to run) for (53) and *volver* (to turn) for (52).

Finally, a common sense of give verbs in Romance is that of enablement or allowing, more so in the domain of physical constraints. This sense is also available for English *give*.

- (55) jerseys que no den de sí con tanta facilidad<sup>8</sup> (Spanish)  
 jerseys that don't give.3PL.SUBJV of self with such ease  
 'jerseys that don't loosen up so easily'
- (56) These pants don't have any give. (English)

The thing given is an enablement for elastic extension of the material in question, and usually tends to mean more generally 'loosen' with respect to taut materials. In addition to Spanish having an idiomatic expression, *dar de sí*, meaning 'to loosen up,' in both Romanian and Spanish the loosening sense can be expressed grammatically with a reified path. It arises from the inference that, when the giver gives the object, he is letting go of the object, and enabling its motion along a path towards the recipient. The path comes to metonymically stand for the enablement via MEANS ARE PATHS.<sup>9</sup> The giver relinquishes physical control over the object during the giving phase of the process, and sets it in motion along a path, thus making a metonymic reference to the path possible.

- (57) a da drumul la apă / la prizonier (Romanian)  
 INF give way.DEF to water / to prisoner  
 'to turn on the water, let the water flow / to let go of, release the prisoner'
- (58) dar curso a algo (Spanish)  
 give.INF way to something  
 'to initiate something'

A similar expression exists in English, *give way*. However, the inferences in English and Romanian are exactly opposite: in Romanian, *a da drumul* expresses a force-dynamic construal in which an antagonist or obstacle to motion is removed, and the agonist is free to follow its inertia of motion. The sense is positive, and active. Because there is an agentive removal of the antagonist, this complex verb most often appears in transitive argument structure constructions, or in unergative intransitives. In English, *give way* refers to a failure of the antagonist to continue doing its job of preventing the agonist's impending inertia of motion. The focus is on the antagonist itself, and therefore the expression most often appears as an unaccusative intransitive construction, e.g., *the embankment gave way to the flood water*. In English, the sense is negative and passive.

8. Sketch Engine token number #38524100, document #94404.

9. This is not to be confused with the enablement expressions *dar lugar* (Spanish), *donner lieu* (French), and *a da loc* (Romanian), which mean 'to give rise to.' These are used exclusively as LEMs, while *a da drumul* and *dar curson* can be used as both CEMs and LEMs.

#### 4. Metaphoric senses in COGNITION, EMOTION, COMMUNICATION, and SELF domains

In the above section, the main type of metaphoric constructions described were of the CEM type, in which it is the construction as a whole that evokes the metaphor, rather than a lexical unit combining with the construction. Specifically, the examples discussed were of the CEM-IA type, in which the construction coerces a physical scenario into a metaphoric understanding, by virtue of the metaphoricity inherent in the construction itself. In Romance, the construction itself happens to have a key filler, the GIVE verb, that makes the construction metaphoric as one of several metaphoric entailments of an event structure metaphor (ESM) (either object or location ESM).

In this section, I focus on constructions of the LEM type. In these constructions, it is a head lexical item, usually the verb, that triggers the source domain of the metaphor, while the arguments tend to instantiate the mappings to target domain roles. The lexical verb and the lexical arguments participate in the metaphoric meaning, while the construction is simply acting as the scaffolding by which these mappings are supported. In these cases, the image schema semantics of the argument structure construction tends to perfectly match the image schema semantics of the source domain evoked by the lexical head. In these cases, the source domain of the metaphor usually is the prototypical Object Transfer scenario, and in the metaphor, communication, emotion, social interaction, interaction with the self, and interaction with ideas are construed as object manipulation and object exchange. Sentences (59)–(61) illustrate uses of *give* in the emotional, psychological, and social domains in which LEMs usually operate.

- (59) donner a quelq'un l'envie de faire (French)  
 give.INF to someone DEF-hankering of do  
 'to make someone feel like doing something'
- (60) a da o favoare (cuiva) (Romanian)  
 INF give INDEF favor (someone.DAT)  
 'to do a favor (for someone)'
- (61) No le di ninguna importancia. (Spanish)  
 not 3SG.DAT give.1SG.PST any importance  
 'I didn't pay attention to (it/him/etc.).'

Constructionally, LEMs are unremarkable. The lexical heads straightforwardly evoke the metaphoric source domains. For instance, (59) is about the instilling of a feeling of wanting to do something, but this emotional causation is expressed through *donner* in the metaphor CAUSING AN EMOTION IS GIVING AN OBJECT. The verb evokes the source domain, Giving, while the arguments evoke the target domain, Causing emotional state. This is a subcase of the object event structure metaphor STATES ARE

OBJECTS, and CAUSATION IS GIVING AN OBJECT, but it is specifically in the domain of emotional impact. (This is in stark contrast with CEMs, in which the arguments would not be evoking a target domain).

*Dar* and *donner* are generally used to mean ‘cause state’ when the state in question is of an emotional nature but has some psychological implication. Examples include *ça donne envie* in French (‘it makes me feel like ~’, lit. it causes a hankering in me), and *me da miedo* in Spanish (‘it scares me’, lit. it causes me fright). Interestingly, this use of *give* is seldom available in Romanian. Table 2 summarizes this causative sense for the three languages, showing that where Spanish and French use *give*, Romanian usually uses *a face* (to do).

**Table 2.** Emotional-psychological causation with GIVE<sup>10</sup>

	French		Spanish		Romanian	
cause	<i>donner envie</i>	32	<i>dar gana</i>	7.8	<i>a face chef</i>	N/A
a hankering		9.67		7.96		
cause	<i>donner peur</i>	0.1	<i>dar miedo</i>	5.5	<i>a face frica</i>	N/A
fear		1.09		7.44		
					( <i>a da frica</i> )	(6 <sup>11</sup> )
						(-1.36)
cause	<i>donner nausée</i>	1.03	<i>dar asco</i>	2.6	<i>a face greață</i>	N/A
nausea		5.06		6.38		
cause	<i>donner confiance</i>	(38)	<i>dar confianza</i>	2.9	<i>a da încredere</i>	0.7
confidence		(-1.97)		6.27	(* <i>a face încredere</i> )	4.39
cause	<i>donner gêne</i>	(59)	<i>dar vergüenza</i>	2.4	<i>a face rușine</i>	N/A
embarrassment		-1.35		6.27		

A wide variety of uses of *give* in Romance instantiate the COMMUNICATION IS OBJECT TRANSFER metaphor, a phenomenon quite common in the world’s languages (cf. Rangkupan 2007 for Thai, Levshina 2015 and Newman 1996 for a survey of languages). A sampling of the most frequent and most salient instances of this linguistic metaphor from our Romance languages in the TenTen corpora, exhibiting the characteristic mapping IDEAS/INFORMATION ARE OBJECTS GIVEN, are listed in Table 3.

10. Numbers are represented as normalized frequencies (NF) per 1,000, and the log dice score is also reported below it. The log-dice score is the NF is calculated on the basis of total results for the verb-direct object collocation patterns only. Table 3 organizes the data in descending NF for each language.

Log dice scores tend to fall under 10, with 14 representing a language in which all occurrences of lexical item X and lexical item Y are with each other (which does not exist in any language). Negative values indicate no statistical significance of co-occurrence (Rychlý 2008: 9).

11. Parenthetical numbers are reported as raw frequencies.



Table 3. Give expressing COMMUNICATION IS OBJECT TRANSFER

French		Spanish		Romanian	
<i>donner avis</i>	20	<i>dar una respuesta</i>	21	<i>a da dovadă</i>	17
give warning	9.07	give an answer	9.35	give proof	9.09
<i>donner une idée</i>	12	<i>dar un exemplo</i>	6	<i>a da exemplu</i>	17
give an idea	8.04	give an example	7.52	give an example	9.07
<i>donner une raison</i>	11	<i>dar razón</i>	6	<i>a da dreptate</i>	11
give a reason	8.04	give a reason	7.47	to concede	8.42
<i>donner un exemple</i>	11	<i>dar una idea</i>	5	<i>a da un sfat</i>	9
give an example	7.86	give an idea	7.29	give advice	8.16
<i>donner un ordre</i>	9	<i>dar explicación</i>	5	<i>a da voie</i>	7
give an order	7.75	give an explanation	7.37	give permission	7.81
<i>donner une réponse</i>	8	<i>dar información</i>	5	<i>a da telefon</i>	4
give an answer	7.59	give information	7.15	give a call	7.15
<i>donner la parole</i>	8	<i>dar un orden</i>	4	<i>a da un răspuns</i>	3
give the password	7.68	give an order	7.00	give an answer	6.65

This table shows only the most frequent expressions found in the TenTen corpora, and there are many more. More or less, those metaphoric expressions that are most frequent and scoring highest in lexical association across these languages are those meaning ‘give an answer,’ ‘give an example,’ ‘give a warning/advice,’ ‘give an order’ and the like. They appear within comparable ranges across the three languages, both in normalized frequency (per 1,000 words) and in log dice score.

The latter all instantiate the object event structure metaphor, whereby the idea communicated is the object given. However, the location event structure metaphor can also be found in the domain of cognition and communication. The common metaphoric duality between objects and locations allows the thing given to be either the causal force itself, or the entity being affected by that causal force. In the latter case, the communicative addressee is propelled to a new location that maps to a change in understanding or cognitive state. (62) illustrates a location event structure metaphor.

- (62) a da (pe cineva) în judecată (Romanian)  
 inf give (on.DOM<sup>12</sup> someone) in judgment  
 ‘to sue (someone) / to take someone to court’

The meaning essentially is that someone is submitted for judgment, or that the circumstances surrounding someone’s legal situation, (and by metonymic extension,

12. DOM is Differential Object Marking, a grammatical property specific to many typologically different languages, including some Romance and Balkan Sprachbund languages (cf. Bossong 1991). In Romanian, it is expressed with the spatial preposition *pe* (on).

that person him- or herself) are put forth for consideration by a judge and jury. This meaning is achieved via a caused motion construction: [GIVE *pe* (human NP) *în-PP*]. Rather than being an extension of the Object Transfer scenario, this is a metaphoric extension of one of its subcases, the Submission frame detailed in Section 2.

Finally, the self is often conceptualized metaphorically as a type of subject-self object manipulation. A group of uses of *give* common in Romanian is one grounded in the subject-self object event structure metaphor. The semantics of realization, for example, is expressed as a complex metaphoric expression equivalent to something like ‘to give oneself an account or an insight’ – *darse cuenta* (Spanish), and *a-și da seama* (Romanian). This is also, simultaneously, a cognition object event structure metaphor, whereby ideas and cognitive states are reified as objects that are given. The semantics of ideas as object transfer is retained, but a subject-self metaphor is added. In the realization case, the object transferer is the subject, and the object recipient is the self – the subject, being the locus of consciousness and reason (Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 269) is in charge of imparting this reason to its self or selves.

There are different versions of the subject-self metaphor; in some, as is the case above, the metaphoric object being transferred is knowledge or realization, making this a subject-self Conduit metaphor: IDEAS ARE OBJECTS, COMMUNICATION IS OBJECT TRANSFER, COMMUNICATOR IS THE SUBJECT and ADDRESSEE IS THE SELF. In other cases, the transfer is made externally, such that the recipient is another person, or the world at large. We see these cases in English as well, as is evident in (63) and (64), and a variety of subject-self manipulation uses in Romance in (65)–(67).

(63) He gave himself to the church.

(64) Don’t pass yourself off as an expert.

(65) *se donner de l’importance* (French)  
REFL give.INF of DEF-importance  
‘to give oneself much importance’

(66) *S-a dat drept avocat.* (Romanian)  
REFL-have.3SG given as lawyer  
‘He passed himself off as a lawyer.’

(67) *Se dio por perdido.* (Spanish)  
REFL give.3SG.PST for lost  
‘He passed himself off as lost.’

Rather than being solely Conduit metaphors expressing communication, in these sentences, the subject is manipulating the self and exposing the self to the world. The meanings correspond to more than a singular idea or communicative content, and pertain more to one’s character and overall substance.

## 5. Extending CEMs to LEMs

Metaphor plays a non-trivial role in the appearance of GIVE verbs with particular constructions. Indeed, that metaphoricity is a property of the grammatical construction, rather than of the verb itself, is illustrated by the many instances of metaphoric construals of physical scenes. This category of metaphoric constructions (CEMs) forms the core of the radial network of *give*'s polysemy structure.

Nevertheless, CEMs can be used wholesale for LEM purposes, resulting in two layers of metaphor. For instance in (68), Creation is first construed as Giving, specifically in the context of yielding crop. In producing new fruit, the vines are seen as 'giving' the fruit to the world. In turn, this metaphoric expression is used idiomatically to refer to a cognitive target domain – intellectual effort. (We recognize this as an LEM because the subject argument, 'effort,' is evoking the target domain; even in the absence of the overt instantiation of the target-domain evoking argument, the target domain is understood in context as referring to effort). This results in a metaphor chain, with the embedding hierarchy as expressed by the brackets: [INTELLECTUAL PRODUCTIVITY IS [PHYSICAL PRODUCTIVITY IS GIVING]].

- (68) Efortul nostru a dat roade. (Romanian)  
 effort.DEF our have.3SG.PST given fruit  
 'Our efforts have borne fruit.'
- (69) A dat în bară cu tipa aia. (Romanian)  
 have.3SG.PST given in bar with girl that  
 'He struck out with that girl.'
- (70) Esto es todo lo que da de sí la democracia.<sup>13</sup> (Spanish)  
 this is all that that give.3SG of self def democracy  
 'This is as far as democracy goes (all the benefits democracy offers).'
- (71) Ça me donne un fil a retordre. (French)  
 that me.DAT give.3SG DEF thread to twist again  
 'That's really giving me a hard time.'

(68) is a metaphoric extension of (11), where the metaphoric mapping construes effort in action as a fruit or crop yield within the metaphor PEOPLE ARE PLANTS (with the specific entailment EFFORT PEOPLE PUT IN THEIR ACTIONS ARE CROP YIELDS). Similarly, (69) is a metaphoric extension of (43), where the internal metaphoric layer is IMPACT IS GIVING FORCE AS AN OBJECT, while the outer layer is SOCIAL INTERACTIONS ARE COLLISIONS. (70) is an LEM extension of the loosening sense in (55), this time in the domain of political ideology: [SOCIAL IDEOLOGY IS

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13. Sketch Engine token number #222004128, document #532200.

A FABRIC (THAT IS LOOSE), [LOOSENESS IS GIVING ALLOWANCE]]. In the latter case, more slack is better, meaning there is more area covered by that material. Therefore, in its metaphoric LEM sense, *dar de sí* comes to mean ‘go a long way’ or ‘yield benefit.’ In French, (71) is a complex expression wholistically construing a physical scene (twisting thread) as a means to express difficulty in some action. Like (70), it also uses the metaphor of fabric or material to express social or interpersonal interactions, as well as internal subjective experiences of difficulty. (In this case, it is giving force or tension, rather than giving slack).

Finally, as an example accounting for a large swathe of the data, commonly in Romanian and Spanish a construction taking on the form [GIVE *de*-PP] is an LEM extension of the CEM constructions that construe impact in examples (43–45) above, and is exemplified here.

- (72) M-ai                                      dat    de gol.                                      (Romanian)  
 1SG.ACC-have.2SG.PST given of empty  
 ‘You gave me away / you betrayed me.’

The verb *a da* is doing metaphoric work twice over – once in the argument structure construction, which puts across the metaphor INITIAL CAUSATION IS IMPACT, and again in the target domain of the sentence overall (social revelation). In these CEM-LEM chaining effects, multiple metaphors layer on top of each other from both constructional and lexical sources. The examples above show that CEMs in a language often act as the constructional foundation on which metaphors pertaining to more abstract domains – activities of the mind, emotions, and social relations – are built.

The use of *give* in CEMs is quite common in Spanish and Romanian, but not as widespread in French. In French, most figurative uses of *donner* are seen as LEMs that extend directly from the core Object Transfer scenario, as discussed in Section 4. French does not as extensively implement the type of metaphor inherent in the grammatical construction itself. While senses conveying general causation, and specific CEM uses as in the light emission sense in (3b) and the ‘facing’ sense in (5), most metaphoric uses of *donner* are clearly about activities of the mental, emotional and social world.

## 6. Conclusion

I have outlined several broad families of primary metaphors pertaining to causation and states motivating the main uses and senses of GIVE verbs in three Romance languages, and to a limited extent also in English for comparative purposes. Grammatical constructions using *give* were analyzed and categorized relative to

the main metaphoric type to which they belong. This is a move away from a light verb / non-light verb dichotomy analysis, as it delves into the subtle nuances in the deep semantics the verb is contributing to the overall meaning of a sentence, including the meaning contributed by the argument structure construction itself.

We saw that metaphoricity is achieved in any given construction in one of two ways: either as a constructionally-evoked metaphor (CEM) or as a lexically-evoked metaphor (LEM). CEMs are special because they have metaphor as a part of the construction itself, and have the power to impose a metaphoric reading on a physical scene. Some of the metaphoric frames common among CEMs include (but are not limited to) the use of *give* to mean Facing, Hitting, Emission, and Caused Motion. Setting aside sense extensions of *give* that are subcases of literal object transfer (e.g. the Creation and Application frames), most of the standard, idiomatic, and characteristic uses of *give* in these languages are in one way or another metaphoric.

The fact that in Romance languages *give* is the verb of choice to capture various windowings of causation – including the initial, intermediate and resulting states of various processes – reinforces the generally-accepted view that Giving is a prototypical instance of object manipulation and caused motion. As such, the general GIVE verb in these languages appears in many light verb and other CEM constructions. Surprisingly, Romanian exhibits the most extensive use of the CEM constructional types, as does Spanish. French, however, mostly relies on the LEM constructional type as an extension of the prototypical Object Transfer scenario, and extended metaphorically to typical metaphoric domains, such as communication, cognition, social interaction and the self. These differences illustrate that we cannot assume equivalency across word senses or across constructions purely on the basis of language family membership. Even among closely related languages, differences emerge that can only be uncovered by an inspection that probes into both lexical and constructional sources of metaphor.

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## Talking about giving

### From experience to language in child language

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How do children learn to think and talk about giving? Despite the central role such verbs and their associated dative constructions have played in linguistic and developmental theory, relatively few studies have focused on how the linguistic and conceptual underpinnings for giving events are first established. In this paper, we present a study of the earliest utterances and interactions involving transfer events, defined here as an intentional transfer of possession or control. We elaborate the structure of transfer scenes in terms of both its participant structure and its different temporal phases, and catalogue the kinds of linguistic constructions the participants use to negotiate and coordinate their plans and actions. We then present a longitudinal study of parent-child interactions from the *Providence Corpus*, in which we have coded transfer events for linguistic form (utterance, constructions, speaker), participant structure (giver, recipient, gift), event phase, and pragmatic function (self-initiated, cooperative initiation, request). Results highlight several patterns, with the child using increasingly better-formed language for each phase while also becoming an increasingly active participant in initiating and managing transfer scenes. This progression may indicate that the child has mastered the “script” of such interactions, where the predictable nature of the event structure provides a convenient entry point to language (Nelson 2007). We further observe extended interactions in which the phases above each involve multiple steps; in these situations, it may instead be the well-established language associated with simpler events that provides the conceptual scaffold for the child to grasp more complex events. Overall, our analysis illuminates how the complex event structure of giving, and the variety of ways of talking about it, provide the means for the concurrent development and mutual reinforcement of language and conceptualization.

**Keywords:** giving events, first language acquisition, give construction



## Introduction

How do children learn to think and talk about giving? The intentional transfer of an object is frequent and salient in children's experience. Yet the earliest productions involving verbs like *give* are observed relatively late (Pine et al. 1998), well after they have mastered simpler argument structures – and, crucially, long after they have become competent event participants. Despite the central role such verbs and their associated dative constructions have played in linguistic and developmental theory, relatively few studies have focused on how the linguistic and conceptual underpinnings for giving events are first established.

We present a study of the earliest utterances and interactions involving giving events, defined here as an intentional transfer of possession or control. We extend the participant structure of the giving scene or *frame* (Fillmore 1976) with a richer decomposition into three main phases: initiation (where giver or recipient prompts, requests or announces the transfer), execution (physical act of transfer), and acknowledgment (completion of transfer). Each phase can be accompanied by linguistic constructions that allow the participants to negotiate and coordinate their plans and actions. In English, for example, phrases like “Want more?”, “Here you go”, and “Thank you”, though lacking any verbs of giving, clearly mark specific phases of giving. We then present a longitudinal study of parent-child interactions from the Providence Corpus (CHILDES, MacWhinney, 2000), coding transfer events for linguistic form (utterance, constructions, speaker), participant structure (giver, recipient, gift), event phase, and pragmatic function (self-initiated, cooperative initiation, request).

### 1. Setting the stage: The development of *give*

The English verb *give* has long figured prominently in discussions of argument structure, in both theoretical linguistics and developmental studies. Not only is it the prototypical three-argument verb, but it is also strongly associated with the dative alternation. Most acquisition work on *give* has focused on which of the two alternative argument structure patterns is acquired first and arguments for over-generalization (Gropen et al. 1989; Mazurkewich & White, 1984).

From a construction grammar perspective, however, both of these constructions must still be learned from the child's exposure to input data. Moreover, many of children's earliest utterances including *give* are partial in that they express only a subset of the arguments. These utterances are difficult to categorize as instances of one or the other argument structure construction; rather, they can be viewed as demonstrating that children incrementally build their way toward more complete

structures. This idea is consistent with a growing body of evidence from the constructivist, usage-based perspective (Tomasello, 2003) that focuses on how children initially learn verb-specific patterns that hew closely to what they have observed and only later begin to generalize toward adult argument structure constructions. A number of studies suggest children's ability to learn verbal constructions is highly sensitive to the input (Choi 1999). Verbs must appear frequently in a wide range of semantically accessible contexts and with a wide range of possible arguments for children to learn to use them (Slobin 1985). Theakston et al. (2001) have demonstrated that the sentential frames mothers use with a particular verb is a clear predictor of those used by their children.

But even verb-specific patterns are not necessarily learned all at once. Rather, children go through stages in which they do not express all of the required verbal arguments. Studying such phenomena requires fine-grained longitudinal examination of how different arguments come to be expressed. Just such a study was undertaken by Morgenstern & Parisse (2012), focusing on the developmental trajectory of a variety of common French verbs with 1, 2 and 3 arguments. A subsequent bilingual study extended these results to encompass English *give*, examining how three English-speaking children come to acquire *give*-based constructions (Morgenstern & Chang 2014).

In that study, our focus was when and how the different arguments of *give* are expressed. In contrast to the focus on the particular alternative constructions observed in adult usages, children use *give* with a variety of argument patterns that reflect both the semantic and pragmatic features of the situation, the speech act and the stage of their linguistic development. Interestingly, development seems to involve not just imitation of observed input but also creative analysis and reanalysis of the input, as indicated by novel instances observed especially when the children start using complete patterns. One child (Naima) first used *give* around 2;0, then showed piecemeal learning of how to express the various arguments; the other two did not use *give* at all until around 3;0, but once they did, seemed to settle fairly rapidly into consistent usage of all arguments.

Given the limitations in both the number of children and the data available for each child, one plausible explanation could be that we simply did not observe previous *give* utterances that the two late bloomers may have been using. But these differences immediately raised the more fundamental issue, even for the most precocious child, of how children communicate about the act of giving before they start using *give* constructions. Assuming children are active participants in such events much earlier, how (if at all) do they talk about such events? That is, what happens before their usage of *give* stabilizes? What are they saying and why aren't they saying *give*?

## 1.1 Events in cognition and language

Happily, we are not the first to ask what children are doing before they get to full-blown verbal argument structure. A large body of work addresses conceptual development, and it seems clear that giving – prototypically the transfer of a manipulable inanimate object from one animate agent to another – is ubiquitous and frequent in the child’s experience. It is often cited as a basic child scene though this claim is based in part on the cross-linguistic centrality of verbs of giving in acquisition.

In truth, it is difficult to separate conceptual and linguistic development, especially when it comes to the input, which after all generally contains communicative actions (in various modalities) along with other kinds of actions. Indeed, several researchers have long underscored the importance of joint interaction, communicative and otherwise, for children’s entry into language (Bruner 1983, Nelson 2007). Language – a social phenomenon – is captured, internalized and reconstructed again and again by each individual child thanks to its transmission by caregivers in their daily interactions with their upspring. “Meaning comes about through praxis – in the everyday interactions between the child and significant others” (Budwig 2003, 108). Joint parent-child action/interaction provides the scaffold for children’s growing ability to grasp both what is happening around them, and what is being said in the situation. They learn to understand language and action together, each providing support for the other. Duranti explains that language is “a mediating activity that organizes experience” (1984, 36) but of course, experience is conversely a mediating activity that organizes language. To examine how children come to use language in general, one must examine the broader context in which the child experiences events and interaction. The hypothesis is that joint parent-child action/interaction provides the scaffold for children’s growing ability to grasp both what’s happening around them, and what’s being said in the situation. They learn to understand language and action together, each providing support for the other.

More specifically, children’s cognitive and linguistic development centers on learning how to act and interact in the context of events, which serve as the basic unit of experience. That is, the continuous and dynamic flow of sensation, action and experience is structured in terms of discrete events, which involve various participants and props, temporal structure with a flow from beginning to end, and significant defining moments. It is the regularity and predictability of these events that allow children to master them as basic building blocks of experience; not only can they start recognizing typical and less typical examples of events, but they can gradually use them to make sense of much more complex sequences of events, and eventually themselves learn to construct even more sophisticated mental structures. Indeed, as proposed by Nelson (2007: 15), « events range in size from small-scale momentary happenings to temporally extended components of large-scale activities.

Familiarity with events enables the comprehension of large ‘slices’ of experience ». This approach is very similar to the one adopted in a study of giving, the action of transferring an object to a partner, as an action schema (Tatone et al. 2015) which demonstrates that infants as young as 12 months interpret giving as a social action through observing object-transfer episodes. Children’s understanding of the giving schema thus predates their active use of the *give*-construction.

These works suggest that to examine how children come to use language in general, one must examine the broader context in which the child experiences events and interaction. And to analyze how they learn more specific constructions, it may be useful to examine the specific kinds of associated events. For the current study, this means taking giving (or transfer) events as our starting point and investigating children’s experience of these events, encompassing both the actions and interactions involved in giving and the kinds of language typically used around giving.

## 1.2 Event-centered methodology

Our goal for this study poses some novel methodological challenges. Much classic work in the study of child language acquisition is based on observation of children in naturalistic interactions, from parental diary studies as far back as the 19th century up through larger-scale longitudinal language sampling (Ingram 1989), such as represented in the CHILDES database of parent-child interactions (MacWhinney, 2000). More recently, the explosion of available data (thanks to ever more sophisticated recording equipment and corpus linguistics techniques) has yielded a wealth of insights. In particular, many works have added statistical, data-driven rigor to ideas previously motivated by observational, diary and anecdotal data. Rich audio and video data are typically transcribed and then maintained in easily searchable databases, leading to a growing body of fine-grained analyses of the development of particular lexical items and other kinds of constructions.

While vast quantities of data are undoubtedly a welcome development, the typical methodology is not especially well suited to our current task. Most work focuses on the textual transcriptions alone, or uses them to find relevant data for a given construction. They also tend to focus on the children’s productions, and only recently has the adult input begun to be studied in closer detail. But data annotations beyond phonemic, morphological and occasionally syntactic tiers are extremely rare, and it is as yet not possible to automatically extract all scenes of a particular semantic or pragmatic type.

Another family of work from the conversation analysis framework does examine information of this type, focusing on how utterances function in the context of interaction, for both adult conversation and parent-child interactions (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989; Forrester, 2008). This kind of work is much closer to the level

of analysis we seek, but extremely laborious to do in a complete manner for a sizeable corpus.

The challenge is to strike a balance that is useful for studying linguistic development and its role within situational interactions. For our current focus on how children and adults communicate about transfer, with or without verbal predicates, we chose to observe and manually annotate a representative sample of episodes for transfer events only. Any transfer events (including both actual physical transfers and those that are referred to or proposed in discourse) were richly annotated for syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features. In other words, instead of seeking utterances containing a particular expression, we took a scene-based or event-based approach to annotation. Each such event was examined in terms of the overall broader parent-child interaction, including but not limited to its various associated linguistic events. While this approach is still extremely labor-intensive, we believe it is the best way to help us gain a better understanding of the pragmatic and functional aspects of cognitive and linguistic development.

It is worth noting the separate trend of experimental methods that have shed light on the linguistic capacities of ever-younger subjects. These methods allow the researcher to control the myriad environmental factors that may affect language acquisition and usage and are ideal for exploring how children react under particular circumstances. They are not, however, as well suited for studying very young children (including those in the preverbal and early stages we focus on here), who may be resistant to controlled procedures. More importantly, we are specifically interested in identifying the rich contextual and interactive factors that shape children's transition into communicative competence, along with the ways in which actions are interwoven with language. These factors clearly favor studying children under the most naturalistic settings possible.

### 1.3 Current goals

Given the novel requirements posed by the approach we are taking, the current work is an initial case study designed to illuminate the theoretical and practical issues involved in applying an event-centric methodology to transfer events and constructions. Our specific goal is to understand how children come to talk about transfer events, focusing on the stages before they achieve stable *give* constructions. How do adults and children communicate about these events, and does this change over time? How competent or "correct" are children's linguistic contributions in the context of the transfer scene? What contextual and discourse cues might interlocutors rely on to help effect a transfer? How does the constant flow of action and dialogue shape the child's linguistic development?

The paper is structured as follows. In Section 2 we give an overview of the data and methods used in this study, highlighting how we addressed the representational challenges involved in annotating both transfer events and the language adults and children use to talk about them. Section 3 summarizes some quantitative results based on our representative (and not exhaustive) coding of the data; they nevertheless present a picture of the general course of development of ways of talking about giving. Sections 4 revisit some specific scenes of the data to highlight some key phenomena observed in the data. We conclude by explaining how our study complements and enriches ideas previously suggested in the literature but until now not examined at this level of detail.

## 2. Data, representations and methods

### 2.1 Data

Based on our previous study of the development of *give*-constructions, we chose to center our case study on the Naima data from the Providence corpus (Evans & Demuth, 2012). Naima's linguistic development has been well studied as part of a larger research effort (Caët 2013; Salazar-Orvig & Morgenstern, 2015), including the previous study on *give* (Morgenstern & Chang, 2014). Besides these advantages, it is also part of the densest American English data available, with relatively frequent recordings across the relevant period of development. The data consists of scenes recorded by fixed cameras set up by the parents (that is, with no external observer present); the settings and interactions are thus quite natural, with the caveat that the video quality (and often even the camera angle) is uneven.

We chose recordings spanning the period from roughly ages 1;1 to 2;1, at intervals of one to two months, favoring those with better video quality (see Table 1). The sessions generally involve the child and her mother or father (or both), either in a living room play context or a dining room meal context. The recording sessions chosen range in duration from 35 to 82 minutes. For each session, all transfer events – including both those observed or those merely discussed or referred to, and including both those successfully completed and those initiated and aborted along the way – were annotated using a coding scheme developed for this project (described below in Section 2.3). Table 1 also gives an indication of the general frequency and duration of such events, which mostly ranged between 5 and 10 percent of the duration of the entire recording. (The first session recorded is an outlier at 19 percent, though this session included an extended feeding event in which almost every interaction involved a proposed or effected transfer.)

**Table 1.** Information on the data used for the coding, Naima

Session	Age	MLU	# events	Total length of <i>give</i> events / total	Verbal development
1	1;1	1.3	140	12 / 64 min (19%)	Preverbal
6	1;2	1.4	15	1.3 / 35 min (4%)	Preverbal / grunting
11	1;4	1.8	60	4.2 / 79 min (5%)	Mostly 1-arg
14	1;5	2.0	57	9.2 / 82 min (11%)	Mostly 1-arg, some 2-arg
20	1;6	2.2	17	4.9 / 62 min (8%)	Verge of complete structures
27	1;8	2.3	26	3.9 / 68 min (6%)	Mostly complete <i>give</i> structures
44	2;1	3	33	7.5 / 82 min (9%)	More complex <i>give</i> structures

As shown in Morgenstern & Chang (2014) and in Caët (2013), Naima's Mean Length of Utterance (MLU) as well as the studies of her verbal argument structure, her use of pronouns, and her lexical development, indicate that she is quite a precocious child. She also starts using the verb *give* itself at 1;3; complete *give* structures are already sometimes produced at 1;8 and systematically produced as of 1;11 as shown in the following table.

**Table 2.** Examples of Naima's first uses of *give* constructions

Age	Utterances
1;03	Naima give Give Mommy
1;08	Give it Daddy card Give it to Lily Give it back to her
1;11	Mommy gave me some apricot juice to drink
2;01	I'm giving Mummy the cake Who gave us the cake?
2;05	Daddy, give me your piece of egg yolk
2;08	I want you to give me another one
3;10	No, I don't take things back that I give. And then we're supposed to give you things that you don't want.

From 1;3 to 1;7, 98% of Naima's utterances with *give* are incomplete. There are a number of phonological deviations and instability, and mostly the recipient is expressed. The following examples show how the recipient is usually Mommy or Daddy at the beginning of the data. The mother provides the perfect scaffolding for Naima to figure out the construction and to add the missing arguments ("you" and "coffee-filter").

## (1) Naima 1;04,18 (comment about a photograph).

Mother: what's in this picture ?

Child: Daddy .

Mother: oh there's a picture of Daddy, mmmm .

Child: yy<sup>1</sup> .

Child: give Daddy .

Child: give Daddy, yy .

Mother: oh you're giving Daddy the coffee filter in that picture aren't you

Mother: what are you giving him ?

From 1;8 to 2;3, there are still deviations but she uses numerous phonological fillers and seems to try to extend her utterances. She usually fills more than two slots for arguments: 75% of her utterances are complete with two or three arguments, which are often pronouns. After 2;3, most of the patterns are stable and her utterances become more complex.

Since Naima has more occurrences than the two other children we studied, we were able to analyse her construction types. At the beginning, there is an idiosyncratic profile dominated by “give mummy” but the later period patterns look very much like the adults' as they include the two main alternations, double-object and prepositional dative. Stage 3 is really similar to the adult profile.

Table 3. Naima's verbal construction types

	Child (all)		Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3		Adult	
Double object	69	33%	3	3%	16	44%	50	62%	160	79%
Prep dative	33	16%	3	3%	14	39%	16	20%	30	15%
Transitive	5	2%		0%		0%	5	6%	2	1%
give+REC	73	35%	71	79%	2	6%		0%	1	0%
give+OBJ	5	2%	3	3%	2	6%		0%		0%
GVR+give	1	0%	1	1%		0%		0%		0%
give (lex)	6	3%	6	7%		0%		0%		0%
GVR+give+REC	1	0%		0%	1	3%		0%		0%
give-out+OBJ	2	1%		0%		0%	2	2%	4	2%
give-back+OBJ	2	1%		0%		0%	2	2%	1	0%
Idiomatic	1	0%		0%		0%	1	1%	3	1%
ambiguous/other	9	4%	3	3%	1	3%	5	6%	1	0%
TOTAL	207		90		36		81		202	

The analysis of Naima's uses of give constructions in her longitudinal data seem to show that she fits the description for a constructionist child. Her early productions do not demonstrate a coherent formal grammar but initially consist instead of a set of item-based constructional islands. As Cameron-Faulkner et al. (2003) show

1. The use of yy indicates that the child's production was not comprehensible.



for their data, a great number of the most frequent and repetitive components of Naima's first *give* constructions are those she hears from the adults around her. Her productions differ from the input for both pragmatic reasons (use of imperatives in child-directed speech, infrequent in the children's productions except in set expressions) and cognitive-developmental reasons (missing arguments). But over time, thanks in part to her cognitive capacities, experience and amount of exposure, and in part to the adults' recasts, reformulations and expansions in conversational exchanges (Clark 1998, Chouinard & Clark 2003; Morgenstern et al. 2013), she will fully acquire the adult patterns.

But before she acquires the give constructions, she experiences giving scenes in which *give* as well as other types of verbal productions tied to actions, form scripts that scaffold her internalization of giving events and their verbalization.

## 2.2 The giving scene

The purpose of our manual annotation was to identify giving scenes, which varied along several dimensions. In some episodes, an actual physical transfer takes place; other transfers are merely discussed or proposed. Verbs related to giving (such as *give* and *get*) appear in the transcript in some cases, but in many others they do not. And in some cases the giving event may be inferred from the text, but even in these, the sequence of events is not always clear without reference to the video.

A representative example from age 0;11.28 is shown below, including both utterances and key actions (shown in italics). Both parents are present in this living room play scene and engaging the child in various activities. In line 1, the mother directs the child's attention to a ball on the ground. Then, once the child is attending to the ball, she makes the suggestion (line 2) that she retrieve it; the child complies, as is also evident from the mother's subsequent comment in line 3, you got the ball. This preceding context leads to the main giving event, initiated by the mother's suggestion (line 4) that the child give the ball to her father. Again compliant, the child moves toward her father and – somewhat ungracefully but nevertheless with clear intention and eventual success – releases the ball into her father's possession, as acknowledged by his comment in line 5, hey, thank you!.

### (2) Naima, 0;11.28

Mother: there's the other ball.

*Action: Child looks at ball on ground.*

Mother: there, can you get it ? Get it.

*Action: Child picks up ball from the ground.*

Mother: you got the ball.

Mother: give Daddy the ball.

*Action: Child approaches father and transfers ball to father.*

Father: hey, thank you !

At a high level, one can summarize this giving event in terms of the semantic roles traditionally associated with giving (and *give*-based constructions): the giver is the child, the recipient is the father and the theme (i.e., the item given) is the ball. But this description fails to capture the temporal flow of the scene. In this case, the giving event is marked and demarcated by lines 4 and 5, which respectively initiate and acknowledge the successful execution of the transfer. That is, there are three main stages, during which the different participants are related in different ways:

- The Mother INITIATES the give action with her utterance.
- The child EXECUTES the give action (by physically bringing him the ball).
- The father ACKNOWLEDGES the give action (with “thank you”).

Giving can be defined based on this scene as intentional physical transfer between two cooperative agents (parent and child). Additional complexity here comes from the fact that there are multiple agents with multiple intentions and plans, all of which must be coordinated/negotiated in the situation, through a combination of language, gesture, action, etc. Note that in this case the text alone is sufficient in this case to infer something about the intervening action, though many details about the physical actions effecting the transfer are visible only in the video (as will be discussed further).

Language marks different stages or plans of complex events. Different associated constructions provide ways of signaling and recognizing the different interwoven intentions involved with multiple agency (establishing joint intention, physical execution, fulfillment of goal). Table 4 shows some common utterances produced by Naima’s parents occurring in our data, based on both fixed and variable constructions.

**Table 4.** Constructions used by the parents in giving scenes to refer to phases of the whole giving event.

Initiation	Execution	Acknowledgment
Where’s X?	Here.	Thank you.
Are you gonna bring X?	Here you go.	You’re giving X to me.
I’m gonna give you X.	There.	Good job.
Can you give me X?	Here it is.	
How about some X?	Here’s some X.	
Will you go get X?		
Give Daddy X.		
Want to give Daddy X?		

Not surprisingly, children do pick up on all of these constructions. But note that children’s earliest language about giving events does not involve the *give* verb. Rather, the utterances are tied to more specific phases of giving – and they are based on fixed expressions for those specific event phases.

The verb *give* may be more associated with the overall plan of transfer and not the specific individual stages of a transfer event. Since transfer events are discontinuous/extended, language may be the only/best way to bring the whole event into focus. But we also observed many subtler patterns emerging, based on our rich observation of the language used with complex giving events.

### 3. Detailed analyses

#### 3.1 From context to language: Contextual uptake of linguistic structure

The earliest talk about giving is based on fixed expressions, associated regularly with stages of known events.

##### (3) Naima, 1;3,12 – first fixed phrases

CHI: play.  
 MOT: play.  
 MOT: I'm gonna put my gloves on.  
 CHI: glove.  
 MOT: I have two gloves on.  
 CHI: **here Mommy**. Mommy.  
 MOT: **thank you**.  
 CHI: **thank you**. ['tʌk 'jɪ]

As we can see in this extract, the child has taken up lines from the typical giving script, even though she still hasn't mastered their functions. The predictable nature of the event structure provides a convenient entry point to language (Nelson 2007). The child can take up words and phrases from previous situations.

Those words or phrases could be “misused”. Indeed, the child repeats « thank you » at the end of this extract even though she is the giver. It is the wrong role but it is placed in the right stage of the giving event and is the expected phrase after the act of giving. She is in the process of learning what construction is associated with which part of a set event.

##### (4) Naima 1;4,10 – piecemeal arguments

CHI: **give Mommy**  
 MOT: you're giving me  
 this one? OK, thank you.  
 CHI: **Naima give**  
 MOT: Naima's giving it to Mommy  
 CHI: **Naima**  
     **blueberries**  
     blu bl-Naima  
     bluies naima  
     bluies naima

Naima follows the general pattern that she uses at that age throughout the session at 1;4: a fixed pattern of two-word utterances. Instead of producing Successive Single Word Utterances (Bloom 1973) as she did two months before, she uses what we could call “Successive Two-Word Utterances”. She expresses only the verb and the recipient “give Mommy” as she hands the blueberry to her mother. It is not an imperative in the situation nor is it not a complete construction. It is most likely derived from the numerous situations when she has heard directive speech acts “give Mommy” or “give typically along with the object”. She is replicating the script that is usually produced as part of a giving scene in which she, Naima, is the agent, as she accomplishes the act of giving her mother blueberries. She then expresses the agent and the verb “Naima give” and then in the next production, the agent and the object. She therefore completes the whole structure by the end of the dialogue but with a little scaffolding from her mother. Instead of one-word “vertical constructions” (Scollon, 1976), Naima at 1;4 uses two-word vertical constructions that are reformulated by her mother (“Naima’s giving it to Mommy”). Each utterance is telegraphic, but together they express a complete event. The same conventional participant structure gives Naima a way to express each of the different arguments semi-independently. The mother and child are thus co-constructing the three-argument structure together and providing the child with all the tools that will enable her to master this complex script as soon as she is able to combine the three arguments in the same utterance.

### 3.2 From language to concept

It seems that the concept of giving provides the scaffold for learning to talk about giving. But there is scaffolding the other direction too. Some giving events are quite complex, consisting of multiple concrete physical actions.

#### (5) Naima, 0;11.28 – Extended giving event

FAT: Daddy’s gonna put these papers away okay ?	Prelude / intention
<b>Will you go get that one for me ?</b>	Initiation / request
Naima ?	
will you get that paper ?	
<b>will you get that paper and give it to me please ?</b>	
<i>Naima starts walking towards the newspaper</i>	
<b>thank you.</b>	Acknowledgment (start motion)
<i>Naima pick up the paper</i>	Acknowledgment (pick up paper)
<b>thank you sweetie pie.</b>	
<i>Naima hands him the paper</i>	
<b>thank you Boo Boo.</b>	Acknowledgment (transfer)

Although this discourse concerns one unified transfer event, multiple utterances correspond to each stage of the event. Specifically, the adult makes three separate requests, and then three separate acknowledgments, each at a crucial point of the action.

Words play the role of reassuring the child that all is going according to plan. This reassurance also helps to reinforce the general concept of transfer, and chain together simple physical actions into larger compound events. Language may help to regulate the giving event and show how the basic concept can be extended to broader scenarios.

#### 4. Joint action and interaction

Even after the child has syntax and the event concept is under control, she still needs to solve the problem of how to play the right roles in joining action and interaction; she must learn the transfer script.

##### (6) Naima, 2;5,7

CHI: give Daddy this piece.

FAT: mmmm I'm chewing it and I'm swallowing it .

[...]

CHI: and yy Daddy [voc] give me your piece of egg yolk .

FAT: I don't want egg yolk, thank you Naima, you should eat it .

[...]

CHI: I'm giving a, a yy, xx of egg yolk, white to Dad.

FAT: you did, thank you .

We can note that Naima now produces complex syntax, but she still takes multiple roles in interaction scripts. She does what the literature calls “pronominal reversal” (Evans & Demuth 2012; Morgenstern 2012) using “me” for “you” and “your” for “my” in “Daddy give me your piece of egg yolk” as she is the one who just gave her Daddy the egg yolk. The child designates herself in an utterance that is very similar to what the adult usually says or could say in similar situations, as if these utterances had been internalized as part of a script triggered in specific situations and produced by the “wrong” speaker: the child instead of the adult. In these contexts, children « reverse » pronouns and speak with the others’ voice, taking their interactional role as if they were the addressee (Chiat 1986; Morgenstern, 2012). Naima needs to master the pragmatic skills necessary to fully play her role in the dialogue.

Children eventually learn to alter and control the flow of events by expressing their own intentions. They are increasingly able to express their will and responsibility for action and interaction as in the following example.

## (7) Naima, 2;9,25

MOT: do you have seven dollars ?

CHI: let me check .

MOT: okay .

CHI: I'm **yy gonna find seven dollars to give to you** .

MOT: mmmm (o)kay .

[child looks in the money she already has earned in the game]

MOT: oh do you think you have seven in there ?

CHI: no I don't .

CHI: I **yy** don't have seven.

MOT: how many do you have ?

CHI: I **have dollars that I don't wanna give you. None of those dollars are seven dollars.**

This episode is from later on, at 2 years and almost 10 months, when the child has really mastered the issues that eluded her before. Naima has become increasingly able to express will and responsibility. Here utterances are correct syntactically. They include complex argument and predicate structure. She is able to announce her intentions. The final utterance shows that she can even alter the expected flow of action by expressing her own intentions: “I have dollars that I don't wanna give you”.

We can now return to the progression we observed for Naima. As her giving constructions were developing, she used fixed, simple expressions for different aspects of giving events that were frequent in her input. In parallel, it is important to trace her pragmatic development and observe how she masters the scripts of interaction and the role she is to play as she participates in various types of giving scenes.

Children need all three components – basic scene structure, verbal arguments, plan/script mastery – in order to fully participate as agents and speakers in giving events. Individual differences in children's pathways in the mastery of the intricate relationship between events and language may be due to lags in one dimension or another. Since Naima is a particularly precocious speaker, her pragmatic understanding of her role in dialogue and how to express it is at first slightly behind her syntactic development and her use of complex constructions. But she eventually learns how to manipulate interactional cues and express her own positioning in dialogue.

## Conclusion

Giving events provide a rich domain for investigation, with complex multi-stage and multi-agent structure to learn from and build upon.

We used an event-centric methodology. We started with the events and investigated verbalization with a natural, holistic (but time-consuming) approach.

Our analyses highlight several patterns. Early utterances fall mainly into two categories: a parental request for a child to give her something, or a parental

commentary about either her own or the child's giving action. Later, the child takes a more active role in initiating transfers, using increasingly better-formed language for each phase. This progression may indicate that the child has mastered the "script" of such interactions, where the predictable nature of the event structure provides a convenient entry point to language (Nelson 2007). We further observe extended interactions in which the phases above each involve multiple steps; in these situations, it may instead be the well-established language associated with simpler events that provides the conceptual scaffold for the child to grasp more complex events. Overall, our analysis illuminates how the complex event structure of giving, and the variety of ways of talking about it, provide the means for the concurrent development and mutual reinforcement of language and conceptualization.

Giving scenes present the key challenge of having to master multiple perspectives, roles and intentions. The child must learn conventional patterns while maintaining the potential for creativity in following and subverting the set script. Children need language, concept and interaction and they master verbal control over giving only when they have both cognitive and linguistic tools.

In our future studies hope to compare giving event scripts with other types of scripts and to explore other cultures and languages, in line with some chapters of this volume. We believe such fine-grained constructional investigations are crucial for helping us better understand how experience and language are tied together and how their relation feeds child language acquisition.

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PART 2

## The transfer constructions



# The role of verb polysemy in constructional profiling

## A cross-linguistic study of *give* in the dative alternation

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This study employs corpus-based quantitative methods to investigate the interaction between the semasiological structure (polysemy) of a single verb and the onomasiological (near-synonymous) structuring of the dative alternation in English and Polish. More precisely, the verbal category examined here is *give* in English and its equivalent in Polish. The primary objective is to examine the relationship between morpho-syntactic variation and lexical semantic variation. More specifically, the study addresses the importance of accounting for variation in lexical semantic structure while modeling morpho-syntactic structure. It is argued here that the polysemous nature of lexemes licensed by constructions has an impact on the choice of alternate constructions. In other words, some meanings of a given lexeme are likely to be more distinctly associated with one construction than the other. The empirical results obtained in the study for both English and Polish provide supporting evidence for this claim.

**Keywords:** dative alternation, GIVE-verbs, semasiology, onomasiology, multivariate statistics, cross-linguistic, English, Polish

### 1. Introduction

The present study<sup>1</sup> addresses the importance of semasiological variation (polysemy) of a lexeme licensed by a given construction<sup>2</sup> to explaining onomasiological variation (near-synonymy) observed in morpho-syntactic structure. More precisely,

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1. I wish to extend my thanks to the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments. Any shortcomings remain my own.
  2. Construction is here understood in the Goldbergian sense of a “form and meaning pairing” (Goldberg, 2006).

the question to be posed here is whether accounting for the polysemy of a lexeme associated with a given constructional alternation can offer a key to understanding speaker's choice in this regard. The importance of lexical semantics in constructional inquiries has been pointed out before (e.g., Boas, 2003; Glynn, 2004), but it is a question that is yet to be explored empirically in relation to the otherwise extensively studied dative alternation. This challenge is taken up here from a multivariate corpus-based perspective. In doing so, the study seeks to improve upon prior explanatory results regarding the alternation in question.

The dative alternation, which is the object of this study, obtains between two constructions, illustrated in (1) and (2), and it is investigated here in association with the verb *give* in English and its equivalent in Polish, i.e., *dać* PERF / *dawać* IMPERF.

- (1) Cx A: ['give' + RECIPIENT + THEME ]  
 a. *She gave* [*Peter*<sub>NP RECIPIENT</sub>] [*the keys*<sub>NP THEME</sub>].  
 b. *Dała* [*Piotrowi*<sub>DAT NP RECIPIENT</sub>] [*klucze*<sub>ACC NP THEME</sub>].
- (2) Cx B: ['give' + THEME + RECIPIENT]  
 a. *She gave* [*the keys*<sub>NP THEME</sub>] [*to* [*Peter*<sub>NP RECIPIENT</sub>]<sub>PP</sub>].  
 b. *Dała* [*klucze*<sub>ACC NP THEM</sub>] [*Piotrowi*<sub>DAT NP RECIPIENT</sub>].

The formal difference between the two constructions lies in their word order. Construction A, as exemplified in (1a) for English, where the proper noun designating the recipient precedes the theme, is referred to as the double object construction. The other construction, Cx B, illustrated for English in (2a), where the order of participants is reversed, is known as the prepositional dative. In Polish, both variants could be referred to as double object constructions, where the two participants in the argument structure are distinguished on the basis of case marking, with the Dative denoting the RECIPIENT, and the Accusative indicating the THEME. In addition, in Polish, the verb slot can be instantiated by either the perfective or imperfective form of the lexical category 'give'.

At the level of function, even though the sentences in (1) and (2) and the respective constructions that they instantiate refer to the same described situation, they cannot be considered "simple grammatical variants" (Langacker, 1987, p. 40). We can observe a subtle difference in their meaning, which can be understood in terms of a shift in topicality and focus, or what Langacker (e.g., 1987) would refer to as "construal". While Cx A profiles the new possessor and the state of possession or control which is transferred, Cx B foregrounds the possessed object and its change of location (cf. e.g., Newman, 1996, p. 62f.; Goldberg, 2002). In other words, in Cx A, it is the POSSESSION schema that is more salient, whereas in Cx B, the PATH schema is in focus. As Bresnan et al. (2007) point out, the function of the former

constructional choice focuses on “causing a change of state (possession)”, while the latter on “causing a change of place (movement)”. This realization can be attributed, among others, to Green (1974) and Pinker (1989).

The remainder of the article is structured as follows: Section 2 presents relevant prior research that serves as the basis for the empirical analysis. First, in 2.1, we review the findings obtained for the dative alternation, focusing specifically on the usage characteristics that have been demonstrated to be significant predictors determining the choice between the two constructions. Following this, in 2.2, we discuss the polysemous network of ‘give’, as analyzed in Newman (1996). Section 3 presents the main objectives of the study and its hypotheses. Section 4 introduces the methodology, presents the data, and explains the analysis. The empirical results are presented and discussed in Section 5 in light of the study hypotheses. Finally, Section 6 provides concluding remarks.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Dative alternation: Prior findings

Prior research on the dative alternation is extensive, particularly in English, where the construction has received considerable attention from different theoretical paradigms (e.g., Arnold et al., 2000; Gries, 2003b; Wasow & Arnold, 2003; Bresnan et al., 2007; Bresnan & Ford, 2010; Bresnan & Hay, 2008; Bresnan & Nikitina, 2009; Theijssen, 2012; Wolk et al., 2013).<sup>3</sup> This extensive research has identified a range of formal and discursive variables that were demonstrated to explain the grammatical variation adequately. These explanatory variables include: (a) Animacy of Recipient, (b) Definiteness of Recipient / Theme, (c) Pronominality of Recipient / Theme, (d) Givenness of Recipient / Theme, (e) Length of Recipient / Theme, and (f) Person of Recipient. In this context, Collins (1995) puts forward the so-called “Receiver / Theme Differentiation” principle, which Bresnan et al. (2007) link to what in Optimality Theory is known as Harmonic Alignment. This principle states that objects that are given, definite, shorter and pronominal come before those that are non-given, indefinite, longer, and nominal. Put differently, objects that

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3. In Polish, to the best of the author’s knowledge, hardly any research has been conducted on the dative alternation as such, the exception being Kizach & Mathiasen (2013), a study on the dative alternation in Polish and Danish from an experimental perspective. Naturally, the Polish dative itself has received considerable attention, as exemplified by works such as Wierzbicka (1986), Rudzka-Ostyn (1992, 1996) or Dąbrowska (1994, 1997), to mention but a few.

are less demanding in terms of cognitive processing are more likely to be aligned with the “immediately post-verbal position”, whereas those that require expending more mental energy to comprehend are more likely to occur in the sentence-final position (Bresnan et al., 2007). This principle, which is further motivated by the “end-weight” rule (Behaghel, 1910; Arnold et al., 2000; Wasow, 2002), is claimed to override any other constraints.<sup>4</sup>

Another related proposal that also explains the variation by focusing on the clause-final position of a given element is referred to as a “principle of dominance” (Erteschik-Shir, 1979, p. 451, as quoted in Williams, 1994, p. 40). It holds that those elements that the speaker intends to bring to the interlocutor’s attention and that are discursively dominant will come at the end of a sentence. Thompson (1987), with regard to the immediate post-verbal position within the construction, posits that it is most likely to be allocated to “topicworthy” objects, which, in addition to being characterized by the features listed above for this slot, also tend to designate animate things and be instantiated by proper nouns (Thompson, 1987, cited in Williams, 1994, p. 41).

As already mentioned above, none of the prior studies examining the dative alternation has included among its predictors the polysemy of the verbs pertaining to this constructional variation. What is more, in one of the most influential works in the field, Bresnan et al. (2007) treat the variable as random in their final logistic regression analysis, thus excluding it from the predictive modeling of this linguistic phenomenon. One reason why the semantic variation of the verbs partaking in the alternation has not been taken into account may be the overwhelming scope of the task. To account for the multiple meanings of even only the most frequent verbs associated with the alternation would present a considerable challenge. To reduce the complexity, this study focuses on the semasiological structure of a single verbal category, i.e., GIVE, which is the basic-level exponent of the TRANSFER category and its most prototypical member (cf. Newman, 1996).

## 2.2 Polysemy of GIVE

The polysemy of GIVE has been discussed in detail by Newman (1996), who draws a map of the various semantic extensions radiating from the central literal sense of physical transfer of an object between animate agents. It is this network of meanings that has served as the basis for establishing the values for which to annotate

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4. It is noteworthy that in Polish word order in transitive constructions, as noted by Siewierska (1993, p. 233f.), the ‘form-driven’ principle seems to be of secondary importance and it is the pragmatic principle of information structure that exerts a much greater influence on linearization preferences.

the uses of GIVE attested in the dataset (see Table 2 for the list of values). Let us, therefore, discuss the internal semantic distinctions within the GIVE category, as proposed by Newman (1996). The central and literal sense of GIVE involves the movement of a certain entity not only from one physical entity to another, but also from one control zone to another (Newman, 1996, p. 144). In addition to this focal meaning, which provides the conceptual source for figurative mappings, Newman (1996, p. e.g., 134, 233) identifies eight such metaphorical extensions, noting that even though the list is not in itself exhaustive, it represents accurately most of the extended uses that are possible. Among the senses thus enumerated that are also relevant to the present study we find the following (after Newman, 1996, p. 134, 233): (i) “interpersonal communication”; (ii) “emergence”; (iii) “causation”; (iv) “enablement”; and (v) “schematic interaction”. Before we briefly discuss each of the senses,<sup>5</sup> it is noteworthy that the common denominator of all the figurative extensions is a sense of “abstract motion” of an entity from one point to another, where the origin of the motion is conceived of as the trajector, while the thing in motion and its destination (if present) constitute two distinct landmarks (Newman, 1996, p. 138, 224).

Now, with regard to the first sense, i.e., interpersonal communication, it concerns interactive events between animate agents, with the latter understood literally or metonymically. This usage can be illustrated by such interpersonal acts as *giving advice* or *giving an order*, both of which have their respective equivalents in Polish – *dać radę*, *dać rozkaz*. This extension, as noted by Newman (1996, p. 137f.) relies heavily on the conceptualization of communication in terms of the CONDUIT metaphor, first introduced by Reddy (1979). The next metaphorical extension is subsumed under the umbrella term of emergence. In uses that fall into this category, one entity (a landmark) comes *out of* another (a trajector), being thus produced. Some pertinent examples in English that instantiate this usage include *giving shade* (about a tree) or *giving warmth* (about the sun or fire). The Polish exponent of GIVE can be used in the same manner, as evidenced by *dać cień* (‘give shade’) or *dać ciepło* (‘give warmth’). Causation and enablement are the next two senses identified by Newman (1996), where the occurrence of one thing is engendered or made possible by another, as in *give sb a job / a promotion* or *give sb the right to do sth* and the respective equivalents in Polish, i.e., *dać komuś pracę / awans*, *dać komuś prawo do czegoś*. Another clear example of causation would be Polish *dać komuś coś do zrobienia* (‘have sb do sth’), while enablement could be illustrated by *dać komuś coś zrobić* (‘let sb do sth’). The last subsense of GIVE that is relevant here has to do with schematic interaction between entities, as in *give sb a kiss*, which finds

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5. The discussion of the subsenses along with the examples is based on Newman (1996, p. 136ff.).



its correspondence in Polish – *dać komuś coś*. In such constructions, as noted by Newman (1996, p. 202), it is the nominal element that elaborates on the otherwise “schematic” semantic structure of GIVE. It should be pointed out, however, that the scaffolding provided by GIVE in such uses also adds an element of intentional and telic behavior on the part of the instigator (Newman 1996, p. 202). As we will see in Section 2, the senses discussed above are further refined in light of the usage nuances found in the data.

### 3. Study goals and hypotheses

The present study has a number of descriptive *goals*. In the most general terms, the objective is to test the findings of Bresnan et al. (2007) for the dative alternation in English. However, there are three important differences between their study and the present inquiry. Firstly and most importantly, based on the assumption that semasiological variation (polysemy) of the verb contributes crucially to the onomasiological structuring of constructions, this study includes lexical semantic contribution to the constructional profiling. As already mentioned, Bresnan et al. (2007) exclude lexical effects from their logistic regression model by treating verb sense as a random variable. To make this inclusion feasible, the analysis here is limited to only one lexeme. In so doing, we also avoid the problem pointed out, for example, by Gries & Stefanowitsch (2004), namely that different verbs that are licensed by the dative constructions will often have their own preferences for one constructional variant or the other. Secondly, in order to verify the results for English, the study employs a different type of data: spontaneous, dialogic and blog-based. Such data can be said to lie between written and spoken registers, as used by Bresnan et al. (2007), where the former is more typically well thought through and carefully edited. Finally, the analytical tools will also be applied to another language, Polish, to test the relevance of the predictors to explaining the variation in a language that has not been analyzed in this respect before.

There are three corresponding *hypotheses* that will be tested in the study. Firstly, it is expected that the results obtained in Bresnan et al. (2007) will be confirmed for the new dataset for English. Secondly, it is assumed that the integration of the semasiological variation of the verb into the model will improve the descriptive and predictive accuracy of the analysis. Finally, it is also hypothesized that the results will extend to Polish, thus explaining in a statistically significant and predictively accurate model the choice between the two constructions in this language.

#### 4. Method, data, and analysis

The method employed in the present study is known as the *Profile-based Approach* (Gries, 1999, 2003a, 2006, 2010) or the *Multifactorial Usage-Feature Analysis* (Glynn, 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2014). It has been developed within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics in the work of Geeraerts et al. (1994, 1999), Gries (1999, 2003a, 2003b, 2006, 2010), Heylen (2005), Gries & Stefanowitsch (2006), Divjak (2006), (Glynn, 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2014), Speelman & Geeraerts (2009), Glynn & Fischer (2010) or Glynn & Robinson (2014). It aims at identifying frequency-based behavioral profiles of the linguistic phenomenon under investigation, which is achieved in a two-step procedure. Firstly, all the contextualized examples are annotated manually for a range of usage characteristics, which may include purely morpho-syntactic features, but which may also incorporate semantic and socio-linguistic values. Depending on whether these variables are directly observable or operationalizable in such terms, the process of data annotation can be automatized to varying degrees. This procedure of data annotation results in a complex matrix of multifactorial interactions, whose processing and subsequent interpretation calls for dedicated analytical tools. The metadata are therefore submitted to multivariate statistical modeling, which makes pattern identification possible. Multivariate methods, as the name suggests, allow us to account *simultaneously* for the impact of all the variables that we deem crucial to explaining the linguistic behavior in question. Importantly, such methods, in addition to revealing the frequency-based behavioral profiles, allow us to test our hypotheses in a rigorous manner.

The data in this study amount to over 600 occurrences of the two constructions in Polish and American English. The summary of the data is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Data summary

Construction	American English	Polish	Total
Cx A: S GIVE RECIPIENT THEME	160	146	306
Cx B: S GIVE THEME RECIPIENT	153	153	306
<b>Total</b>	313	299	612

The observations were extracted from the blog-based components of the *TenTen* corpus for the two languages (SketchEngine, Kilgarriff et al., 2014). The extraction was based on regular expressions, which was followed by manual cleaning of the data. In the cleaning process, any observations that did not contain all three arguments (i.e., Subject, Theme, Recipient) or that were highly idiomatic were excluded from the analysis.<sup>6</sup> In Polish, 170 observations were found for the perfective aspect

6. Bresnan et al. (2007) also exclude such observations from their analysis.

of the verb (*dać*) and 129 for the imperfective aspect (*dawać*). All the contextualized examples were then manually annotated for a clearly defined set of usage-features. In addition to the variables found significant in Bresnan et al. (2007), i.e., variables (i)–(viii) in Table 2, the data were also tagged for verb sense, which is crucial here as it relates to the central claim of the paper, i.e., the importance of verb polysemy to the onomasiological choice between the two alternating constructions. The complete annotation schema is presented in Table 2, where all the variables and their respective features (or values) are enumerated.

Table 2. Annotation schema

	Variable	Feature
i.	Recipient Animacy	Animate, Inanimate
ii.	Definiteness	Definite, Indefinite
iii.	Pronominality	Pronominal, Nominal
iv.	Givenness	Given, Non-Given
v.	Theme Concreteness	Concrete, Abstract
vi.	Person of Recipient	First, Second, Third
vii.	Number	Singular, Plural
viii.	Length	Calculated as the natural log of the difference in the number of words btw. Theme & Recipient
ix.	Lexical Sense	Causation, Change of State, Communication, Emergence, Enablement, Physical Contact, Render Available, Transfer of Possession

We will now consider examples for the variables that require some explanation with regard to the decision process that was followed in the annotation. The variables that are more directly observable, i.e., Animacy, Definiteness, Pronominality, Givenness, and Concreteness are illustrated in Examples (3) and (4) and then discussed in greater detail below.<sup>7</sup>

(3) *So everything we have in our home is very new, 8 years old or younger so I have been looking for older things to give the home a warmer, aged feeling.*

(Definite, Inanimate & Given Recipient; Indefinite, Abstract & Non-Given Theme)

(4) *I'll give you an example.*

(Pronominal, Animate & Given Recipient; Nominal, Non-Given & Abstract Theme)

7. It should be noted here that the expression in (4) could also be used in Cx B, as attested in corpora such as COCA (Davies, 2008) or iWeb (Davies, 2018), but it represents a more marked usage.

With regard to the first variable of Recipient Animacy, both human and animal objects were tagged as animate. This is in line with what Bresnan et al. (2007) propose in their analysis, having thus simplified the more complex schema adopted by Garreston et al. (2004). Metonymic referents in this position were also annotated as animate, as illustrated in (5).

- (5) *Our planning reforms will put local communities in the driving seat by giving new powers to neighborhoods to write their own plans.*

Definiteness was a feature ascribed to objects that were personal pronouns, proper nouns or that were accompanied by a possessive pronoun, a demonstrative determiner or definite article. The last usage characteristic is absent in Polish, where articles do not exist, which is why the task was slightly more complex for this language. However, reliance on the immediate context normally sufficed to address the problem, as illustrated in (6), where the previous sentence makes it clear that the Recipient, even though not preceded by any determiner, is specified and definite. Example (3), in turn, provides an illustration in English of a clearly definite object occupying the Recipient position and an explicitly indefinite object designating the Theme.

- (6) *Zaproponowałam więc, żeby troszkę konie rozluźnić i zakłusowałyśmy, a chwilę później pozwoliłyśmy koniom wyciągnąć nogi w galopie. ... Zwolniłyśmy po jakimś czasie,*  
*dałyśmy koniom chwilę wytchnienia w stępie*  
 gave-1PL horses-DAT moment-ACC rest-GEN in walk-LOC  
 ‘So I suggested relaxing the horses a bit and we trotted, and a moment later we let the horses stretch out their legs in a gallop. It was wonderful ... We slowed down after a while, we gave the horses a moment to rest in the walk and Max used it to play with the waves attacking his legs.’

The next variable for which the data were annotated is Pronominality, where objects “headed by pronouns (personal, demonstrative, and indefinite)” (Bresnan et al., 2007) were assigned the feature Pronominal. All other objects were classified as Nominal. An example of a pronominal object in the Recipient position is given in (7), where the pronoun *ktoś* (‘someone’) is used:

- (7) *Ja jeśli już daję komuś +*  
 I if at all give-1SG someone-DAT +  
*to za to, że udzielił najlepszej odpowiedzi ...*  
 ‘If I give someone a plus at all, it is because they have provided the right answer.’

The discourse status of the object, i.e., its newness vs. givenness, also referred to as “accessibility in discourse” (Bresnan et al. 2007), was established on the basis

of whether or not it was possible to identify its co-referent in the preceding few sentences. In addition, personal pronouns referring to the first and second person singular and plural were also treated as discursively accessible to the addressee. The same practice is followed in Bresnan et al. (2007), where, in turn, the authors adopt the procedure employed by Prince (1981) and Michaelis & Hartwell (2007). Examples (3) and (4) given above are a clear illustration of both values.

The last variable that was also demonstrated to be a significant predictor in Bresnan et al. (2007) and that calls for some clarification is Theme Concreteness. The feature <Concrete> was assigned to objects that were spatially defined and could be described as experienceable through perception (cf. Krawczak et al. 2016), whereas objects that had no perceptible physical form were annotated as Abstract. These two values are illustrated in Examples (8) and (3), respectively.

- (8) *The fever itself rose very slowly throughout the week, despite our **giving her intravenous antibiotics** three times a day at home, and it looked like we might have to hospitalize her, but Thursday evening the fever dropped, and was gone by Friday.*

Finally, let us turn to the different senses that were identified for the verbal category GIVE in the uses that were attested in the data. As already indicated, these values are largely based on the semasiological network proposed by Newman (1996), as discussed in Section 1. Sentences (9)–(16) illustrate the individual values of <Lexical Sense>, which were decided on the basis of contextual clues. We will here only discuss those senses that have not been explained above, i.e., <Change of State>, <Physical Contact> and <Render Available>, as illustrated in (10), (14) and (15), respectively.

- (9) *Chyba nie pójdę na plastykę we wtorek. **Dałam mamie rysunek** (od dwóch tygodni go robi). Rysowała grubym ołówkiem a potem stwierdziła że ona nie da rady.*  
 ‘I don’t think I will attend my arts and crafts class on Tuesday. I gave mom a picture (she has now been working on it for two weeks). She was drawing it with a thick pencil and then decided she wouldn’t be able to do it.’ (Causation)
- (10) *It **gives me great comfort** to belong to this huge family.* (Change of State)
- (11) *Today, I was trying to drown out the noise do something on my computer as Nick **was giving me a running commentary** on a television show he was watching.* (Communication)
- (12) *Ich zieloną i kwitnącą oprawę stanowią drzewa, tak często rosnące przy kapliczkach. **Dają cień wędrowcom**, odwiedzającym nadszańskie okolice.* (Emergence)  
 ‘Their green and blossoming frame is provided by trees, so often growing near chapels. They give shade to travellers visiting the area.’

- (13) *Mityng Weltklasse dał okazję kilku światowym gwiazdom do rewanżu.*  
(Enablement)  
'Mityng Weltklasse gave an opportunity to a few world stars for revenge.'
- (14) *The results seemed promising and so today after I picked him from the ground and gave him a big hug.* (Physical contact)
- (15) *Na szczęście ruszyła się, usiadła. Jedyna myśl to szybko zadzwonić po pogotowie. Dałam mamie moją komórkę.* (Render available)  
'Fortunately, she moved, sat up. My only thought was to quickly call an ambulance. I gave mom my mobile phone.'
- (16) *The complete run was marked at \$10, but Retailer Tim gave it to me for five bucks.* (Transfer of possession)

<Change of State> refers to situations in which GIVE is used to indicate that a given entity, which is most likely to be animate, moves metaphorically from one state to another, as in (10).

The next semantic value ascribed to GIVE designates <Physical Contact> between the grammatical subject of the verb and the Recipient. The type of contact between the two entities is determined by the Theme, as can be witnessed in (14). This feature is related to what Newman (1996) refers to as <Schematic Interaction>, but it is more specific in that it only involves events of physical interaction.

The last sense that has been identified here and that differs from the list proposed by Newman (1996) is <Render Available>, where an entity passes from one zone of control to another, but this is likely to be a temporary state or to involve situations where a thing or service are provided voluntarily. The former case is exemplified in (15), where the speaker passes her phone to her mother so that she can make a phone call.

All the observations of the two constructional variants were manually annotated for the variables presented in Table 2 and discussed above. The annotation was performed methodically for the two languages, resulting in a complex grid, where each observation was accompanied by nine tags specifying its usage characteristics. In order to identify the contextual environments that determine the choice between the two constructions and to test the hypotheses put forward at the end of Section 1, the metadata were submitted to multivariate statistical modeling in R (R Core Team 2014) in the form of logistic regression analysis.

## 5. Results and discussion

Four logistic regression models were fitted, two for English (see Tables 3 & 4) and two for Polish (see Tables 5 & 6). All the models were checked for multicollinearity and none of the factors had variance inflation of more than 3.28. This highest value was found for Model 2 (Table 6). With regard to the two models for English, one of them (Table 2) included only the factors accounted for in Bresnan et al. (2007), the other (Table 3) also included the lexical senses of the verb. The reason behind having two models was to check whether the integration of the semantic variable into the analysis would improve the predictive power of the model, as hypothesized here. With respect to the two models for Polish, the same procedure was followed, i.e., Model 2 (Table 6), unlike Model 1 (Table 5), includes <Lexical Sense> in the predictors. Let us turn now to Model 1 for English, presented in Table 3, to see which of the variables considered by Bresnan et al. (2007) prove significant in our analysis.

Before we consider the results, let us explain briefly how to interpret the table. The first column of Table 3 lists all the variables (or predictors) and their respective values that were found to be statistically significant in this logistic regression analysis. The other two columns of the table specify the effect size and level of significance of the correlation identified between a given value of the predictor and one of the two constructional variants. The correlations that we observe here provide only partial support for the findings of Bresnan et al. (2007), indicating that the dimensions of Pronominality, Givenness, Definiteness and the Length Difference between the Recipient and the Theme are indeed significant in distinguishing between the use of the two constructions in English. Interestingly, however, no confirmation is obtained for the importance of Recipient Animacy and Theme Concreteness, which, could arguably be a result of the relatively small size of the dataset employed here.

**Table 3.** English model 1. Fixed-effects binary logistic regression dative alternation ~ Bresnan features

Predictors	Effect size / coefficient & significance	
	Cx A: Recipient – theme	Cx B: Theme – recipient
Recipient Pronominality: Pronominal	1.4787 (***)	-----
Recipient Givenness: Non-Given	-----	1.8281 (***)
Theme Definiteness: Indefinite	1.1360 (**)	-----
Theme Pronominality: Pronominal	-----	1.4394 (***)
Length (log scale): Longer Recipient	-----	1.8984 (***)
<b>Model Statistics</b>		
C statistic: 0.94		
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup> : 0.70		
AIC: 211.10		

Signif. codes: \*\*\* < 0.001; \*\* < 0.01; \* < 0.05; . < 0.1

Looking more closely at the correlations revealed here, we can see that Pronominal Recipients are significantly associated with the double object construction (Cx A), while Pronominal Themes are significantly correlated with the prepositional dative (Cx B). Similarly, Indefinite Themes are important predictors for the double object construction (Cx A), whereas Non-Given and longer Recipients are significantly linked to the prepositional dative (Cx B). This confirms the Harmonic Alignment principle mentioned in Section 1. No multicollinearity was identified in this model, with the variance inflation factor of no more than 1.25. The overall performance of the model can be evaluated as exceptionally good with the C statistic at 0.94 and the Nagelkerke  $R^2$  at 0.70, where normally “acceptable discrimination” is achieved with the C statistic measure of 0.70 (Hosmer & Lemeshow 2000: 162). Let us now see what happens when the semasiological variation of the verb is added to the model. Table 4 shows the results of this analysis.

Analysis of variance (anova), which enables us to compare models, reveals that the difference between English Model 1 (Table 3) and English Model 2 (Table 4) is statistically significant with  $p=0.0105$ (\*). This means that adding the variable of <Lexical Sense> represents an important improvement in the predictive modeling procedure. The findings obtained here confirm the importance of the same explanatory variables that were identified as significant predictors of the linguistic choice in the simpler model presented in Table 3. The Harmonic Alignment rule is thus again fully corroborated here. More importantly, the results clearly show that, in line with our hypothesis, the descriptive accuracy and predictive power of the model are indeed improved when the semasiological variation of the verb is added

**Table 4.** English model 2. Fixed-effects binary logistic regression dative alternation ~ Bresnan features + lexical sense

Predictors	Effect size / coefficient & significance	
	Cx A: Recipient – theme	Cx B: Theme – recipient
Recipient Pronominality: Pronominal	1.5649 (***)	-----
Recipient Givenness: Non-Given	-----	1.6835 (***)
Theme Definiteness: Indefinite	0.9924 (*)	-----
Theme Pronominality: Pronominal	-----	1.7380 (***)
Length (log scale): Longer Recipient	-----	2.0519 (***)
Lexical Sense: Causation	4.1879 (*)	-----
Lexical Sense: Communication	-----	1.8092 (·)
Lexical Sense: Render Available	-----	1.3706 (*)
<b>Model Statistics</b>		
C statistic: 0.95		
Nagelkerke $R^2$ : 0.742		
AIC: 207.16		

Signif. codes: \*\*\* < 0.001; \*\* < 0.01; \* < 0.05; . < 0.1



to the analysis. This can be evaluated on the basis of the C statistic and Nagelkerke  $R^2$  scores, both of which are higher in Model 2. At the same time, even though the complexity of the model is increased, its parsimony is comparable, if not improved, as can be observed on the basis of the AIC score.

What is more, as indicated by the coefficients, it is the semantic variable that is the most important predictor in this model, with the effect size of 4.769 for the value <Lexical Sense: Causation>. The correlation identified in this respect predicts that when GIVE is used in its TRANSFER function to designate “Causation”, it is Cx A, where the Recipient precedes the Theme, that will be chosen by the speaker. This tendency identified here is not unmotivated. It is only natural that in uses encoding causation, the speaker should opt for a word order that finds its reflection in experience, i.e., the instigator of the caused process (causer) impacts upon the receiver so that the end-result is engendered. This can be observed in (17), where the speaker complains about being given a challenging project to work on by their boss at a time when they are exhausted.

- (17) *You know one of those weeks where you're so tired you're stumbling and your boss of course chooses to give you yet another boring but incredibly difficult project*

This observed correlation between Cx A and the meaning of causation provides supporting evidence for a more general association proposed in prior research (e.g., Green, 1974; Pinker, 1989; Bresnan et al., 2007) and discussed in Section 1, whereby Cx A is said to express the schematic meaning of “change of state”. The two other values of <Lexical Sense> that are identified here as significant predictors, i.e., the senses “Communication” and “Render Available”, both are correlated with Cx B, where the Recipient occurs in the clause-final position and is preceded by the Theme, as in Examples (18) and (19), respectively:

- (18) *We got the mainsail down, and with Twinkle Toes on the helm giving instructions to Santa Claus on the throttle, we pulled into the slip in triumph.*
- (19) *She is very active in the local chapter of Amnesty International, she goes once a week to the train station to give medical care to homeless people, she took a second job at the major's office.*

The word order predicted for these two senses could be said to be a more natural reflection of the perceived directionality of events in reality, where the giver provides something that s/he has and is in control of to the Recipient. This correlation also supports the claim discussed in Section 1 that Cx B encodes the abstract meaning of “change of location”. Finally, it should be noted that in the analysis presented in this model, the highest variance inflation factor score is 3.7 for the variable <Lexical Sense> and, more precisely, the usage feature <Enable>, which is not returned as a significant value.

Let us now turn to the logistic regression model in Table 5, which presents the results for Polish. We can see that four of the factors that Bresnan et al. (2007) find to be significant predictors of the dative alternation in English emerge as such for Polish, i.e., <Recipient Pronominality>, <Recipient Givenness>, <Theme Givenness>, and <Length Difference>. Compared to the independent variables that were revealed to be significant in explaining the alternation in English (Tables 3 and 4), <Definiteness> of either the Recipient or the Theme is not a significant predictor for Polish. Why this should be so is not immediately clear. One of the reasons could be the relatively small size of the dataset. We do find, however, that <Theme Givenness>, which was not found to be significant for English in our analyses above, is a significant predictor here.

**Table 5.** Polish model 1. Fixed-effects binary logistic regression dative alternation ~ Bresnan features

Predictors	Effect size / coefficient & significance	
	Cx A: Recipient – theme	Cx B: Theme – recipient
Recipient Pronominality: Pronominal	0.9873 (**)	-----
Recipient Givenness: Non-Given	-----	0.6314 (*)
Theme Givenness : Non-Given	0.7515 (·)	-----
Length (log scale): Longer Recipient	-----	1.7151 (***)
<b>Model Statistics</b>		
C statistic: 0.851		
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup> : 0.467		
AIC: 295.40		

Signif. codes: \*\*\* < 0.001; \*\* < 0.01; \* < 0.05; · < 0.10

With regard to the correlations that are identified here as significant in predicting the choice between the two constructional variants, we can see that, similarly to the findings obtained for English, the results for Polish also support the claim that objects that are nominal, inaccessible in previous discourse and longer occur in the final position in the dative construction. The highest variance inflation factor here measures 1.23, which is indicative of there being no multicollinearity between the independent variables. The overall performance of the model is excellent, as evidenced by the C statistic or the Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup> scores. Let us see now what happens when we add the <Lexical Sense> to the analysis (Table 6).

Firstly, analysis of variance (anova) performed on the two models, i.e., Polish Model 1 and Polish Model 2, demonstrates that the difference between them is statistically significant with  $p=0.0062$  (\*\*). Similarly to what we have observed for English, this means that adding <Lexical Sense> to the list of predictors improves the performance of the explanatory model in a statistically significant manner.

**Table 6.** Polish model 2. Fixed-effects binary logistic regression dative alternation ~ Bresnan features + lexical sense

Predictors	Effect size / coefficient & significance	
	Cx A: Recipient – theme	Cx B: Theme – recipient
Recipient Pronominality: Pronominal	1.1234 (**)	-----
Recipient Givenness: Non-Given	-----	0.6494 (*)
Theme Givenness : Non-Given	0.8112 (·)	-----
Length (log scale): Longer Recipient	-----	1.7766 (***)
Lexical Sense: Causation	2.5242 (*)	-----
Lexical Sense: Render Available	2.9575 (**)	-----
<b>Model Statistics</b>		
C statistic: 0.870		
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup> = 0.527		
AIC = 290.03		

Signif. codes: \*\*\* < 0.001; \*\* < 0.01; \* < 0.05; . < 0.1

Looking at the correlations, we find that the same variables that we have seen as statistically significant in Polish Model 1, are also returned as such here. The most important finding in Model 2 is that, in line with our hypothesis, the semasiological variation of the verb is again significant in differentiating between the two constructions. More importantly still, and similarly to what we have observed in the analysis for English, presented in Table 4, <Lexical Sense> is also the strongest predictor of the constructional choice, as demonstrated by the effect sizes of its two levels that are significant, i.e., <Lexical Sense: Causation> and <Lexical Sense: Render Available>. Interestingly, these are the two levels of the predictor that we have also found to be statistically significant for English. In the Polish model presented in Table 6, however, both these values of <Lexical Sense> are predictors of Cx A, where the Recipient precedes the Theme, as in Examples (15), for “Render Available” and in (9), for “Causation”. With regard to <Lexical Sense: Causation>, it should be noted that in (9), the caused event is encoded elliptically and it is the context that specifies the meaning of “Causation”. The full causative construction would be complemented by *do zrobienia* (‘to do’). We have already discussed the motivation for the correlation between Cx A and this sense of GIVE for English, where the same observation was made. With respect to <Lexical Sense: Render Available>, this correlation for Polish is predicted as a significant contextual clue for Cx A, and not Cx B, as was the case for English. This divergence between the two languages is an interesting finding that should be further explored. Interestingly, it should be pointed out that the grammatical Aspect of the verb (i.e., PERF *dać* vs. IMPERF *dawać*) was not found to be a significant predictor of the choice between the two constructions in either model in Polish.

The performance of Polish Model 2 and its goodness of fit are improved when compared to Polish Model 1. This can be assessed on the basis of the C statistic and Nagelkerke  $R^2$  measures. With the C statistic score at 0.87, the model can be evaluated as descriptively and predictively accurate with an excellent degree of discrimination between the two constructional variants. Comparing the AIC scores of the two Polish models shows that their parsimony is comparable, despite the addition of <Lexical Sense> in Model 2. We should also indicate that there is no risk of multicollinearity in the model, where the highest variance inflation factor is at 3.28, a value observed for <Lexical Sense: Enable>.

The prediction that <Lexical Sense: Causation> is correlated with Cx A in both English and Polish, while <Lexical Sense: Render Available> is associated with Cx B in English and with Cx A in Polish warrants two remarks. The former finding, which is consistent for the two languages, is intuitively interpretable in light of the schematic meaning of “change of state” that is attributed to Cx A in the relevant literature (e.g., Green, 1974; Pinker, 1989; Bresnan et al., 2007). Overall, it shows that Cx A, with its specific profiling (meaning), coerces this particular verb sense and does so irrespective of the language.<sup>8</sup> With regard to the latter finding, we see that <Lexical Sense: Render Available> predicts the choice between the two constructions differently in English and in Polish. The correlation observed for English, associating this sense of the verb with Cx B, corresponds more closely to what we would expect. It is more natural that this verb sense, which clearly focuses on what is being temporarily transferred to another location, whether literally or figuratively, should be coerced by the schematic meaning of Cx B, i.e. “change of location”. However, the same correlation is not found for Polish. This unexpected result was closely examined in several unreported logistic regression models, including a model where the only predictor was the category of <Lexical Sense>. Despite being counter to expectations, the observed correlation proved systematically significant. This leads us to two conclusions. On the one hand, the correlation between this lexical sense and Cx A is clearly not just a matter of other predictors impacting upon the result. On the other hand, the tendency that we would expect cannot be universal and so factors other than just the schematic meaning of the construction must be at work. What these factors should be warrants further analysis. In general, this finding for Polish, where the schematic meaning of the construction does not seem to coerce the verb sense as expected, supports the results obtained in Boas (2003) or Glynn (2004), stressing that coercion cannot be the only factor and that the proposed “Override Principle” (e.g., Michaelis & Ruppenhofer, 2001; Michaelis 2003) might be better understood as a tendency rather than a rule.

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8. I am grateful to one of the reviewers for this comment.

It should also be noted that for both English and Polish when <Lexical Sense> was entered as a random variable – a procedure adopted in Bresnan et al. (2007), the results of the models presented in Table 3 and Table 5, respectively, did not change. The mixed-effects logistic regression analyses performed equally well, the only difference being that the effect sizes of the correlations identified therein were lower.

## 6. Conclusion

The present study pursued two main objectives and sought to test corresponding hypotheses. Firstly, the goal was to test the findings of Bresnan et al. (2007) on a new dataset for English and on another language, i.e., Polish, with a focus on just one verb participating in the alternation under analysis. It was expected that the results obtained in Bresnan et al. (2007) would be confirmed for both languages. As we have seen, in our analysis, we gained support for the importance of only some of the explanatory variables. Importantly, however, the variables that were found to be statistically significant do demonstrate that the “end-weight” principle operates in both English and Polish behind the choice of the constructional variant of the dative alternation.

Secondly and more importantly, the other objective in this inquiry was to investigate the interaction between semasiological lexical structure and constructional profiling in determining the use of alternate constructions. The central claim here was that lexical semantics should not be excluded from the analysis, as it is not random, but rather constitutes one of the determining variables that condition constructional choice. Our findings clearly show that the semasiological variation contributed by the lexeme is indeed an important predictor of the use of the two variants in the dative alternation. This is true for both English and Polish, where <Lexical Sense> was identified as the highest rank predictor. What is more, in both languages, the models that contained <Lexical Sense> among the predictors outperformed the models that disregarded lexical semantics. In addition, the correlations revealed here, especially in English, provide support for the claim that Cx A, where the Recipient precedes the Theme, is significantly linked to the schematic meaning of “change of state”, whereas Cx B, where the Recipient follows the Theme, encodes the abstract sense of “change of location” (cf. Green, 1974; Pinker, 1989; Bresnan et al., 2007). In general terms, this shows how the meaning of a construction coerces a specific verb sense. Importantly, however, the finding for Polish where a verb sense that we would expect to be coerced by Cx B is associated with Cx A lends some quantitative evidence to claims that factors other than the schematic meaning of a construction may well constrain the behavior of a lexical item and that the override principle represents a tendency rather than a law (cf. Boas, 2003; Glynn, 2004).

Overall, the fact that lexical sense should be the strongest predictor of a constructional choice is an important finding both in descriptive and theoretical terms. Descriptively, it informs the rich body of research on the dative alternation and on GIVE. Theoretically, it sheds light on the interaction between lexicon and grammar. More precisely, it shows that, in the investigation of constructional choices, apart from accounting for the impact of structural and discursive factors, we should also incorporate the effects of lexical semantics. As Goldberg (2002, p. 349f.) notes, “the meaning of a clause is more than the meaning of the argument structure construction used to express it”, which is why in trying to identify the behavioral profiles of alternations or grammatical choices, we should not disregard “individual verbs”. We have here seen a clear example of how the semasiological variation of a single verbal category, such as GIVE, can help us map more accurately the structure of onomasiological variation in grammar, such as the dative alternation.

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# The French ditransitive transfer construction and the complementarity between the meta-predicates GIVE, TAKE, KEEP, LEAVE

## The hypothesis of a grammatical enantiosemy

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We revisit in this chapter the status and meaning of the French Ditransitive Transfer Construction. We show that the construction allows four interpretations that can be accounted for by the antonymous Meta-Predicates GIVE, TAKE, LEAVE and KEEP. But how can the same construction be at the origin of contrary and even contradictory interpretations? The answer, in our opinion, lies in a particularity of the lexicon that is seldom taken into account in semantics and lexicology, namely *enantiosemy*, a property by which a lexical unit has two opposite meanings. Thus, we formulate the hypothesis that the Ditransitive Transfer scheme itself is an enantiosemic construction.

**Keywords:** enantiosemy, Ditransitive Transfer Construction, meta-predicat, contrary relation, contradictory relation

### 1. The problem

In this paper, we study a particular function of ditransitive transfer constructions<sup>1</sup> in French. The ditransitive transfer construction (henceforth DTC) has the following structure:

$$X_{\text{subject}} + \text{VERB} + Z_{\text{object}} + \grave{\text{a}} + Y_{\text{indirect object}}$$

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1. For a typological overview on ditransitive constructions, see Malchukov, Haspelmath and Comrie (2010); there is also in French a “secundative” alignment (Haspelmath 2005). For example: depuis vingt ans, il sert sa clientele en clichés réactionnaires. Lit. For twenty years, he has served his clientele with reactionary clichés (De Clerck, Bloems, Colleman 2012).

For example:

- (1) donc mon copain a passé l'argent à son petit frère + son petit frère l'a amené à part + il lui a rendu l'argent + (CFPP<sup>2</sup>)  
 Lit.<sup>3</sup>. my boyfriend passed the money to his little brother + his little brother took him aside + He gave the money back to him

This example illustrates both the lexical (*à son petit frère* – ‘to his little brother’) and the clitic (*lui* – ‘him’) realization of the DTC.

The interest of this construction is that it functions in a very particular way, the explanation of which remains a challenge. It appears that with certain verbs such as *prendre* (‘to take’), *laisser* (‘to let’), *acheter* (‘to buy’), a sentence, considered out of context, can have two different interpretations. For example:

- (2) J'ai acheté une voiture à Paul  
 Lit. I have bought a car to Paul

In a first interpretation, (an “allative” interpretation) Paul is the person for whom I bought the car, and who, therefore, becomes the owner of the car. There is a transfer of the car to Paul, so Paul is the beneficiary. In a second interpretation (an “ablative” interpretation) Paul is a garage owner (for example), and I bought a car *from* him; the result is that Paul hasn't got the car *any more*. There is a transfer of the car from Paul to the subject. Paul no longer has the role of beneficiary, but is the source of the transfer. However, in both cases, *à Paul* (‘to Paul’) is an indirect object (the dative). Whatever the interpretation, the indirect object is pronominalized by *lui*:

- (3) Je lui ai acheté une voiture  
 Lit. I to him have bought a car

Of course, *acheter* (‘to buy’) has exactly the same meaning in both interpretations; there is neither polysemy nor homonymy. It can therefore be said that

- (4) X acheter Z à Y

is an ambiguous, or more exactly, ambivalent structure: sometimes it triggers an ablative reading, sometimes an allative one<sup>4</sup>. The following two examples are somewhat different in that the verb *souffler* “to blow” is polysemic: *souffler* can mean “to whisper, to suggest” or “to pinch something from somebody”:

2. Corpus de Français Parlé Parisien (oral corpus of French Parisian speech). Site: [www.cfpp.org/](http://www.cfpp.org/)

3. We give a literal translation of the examples.

4. “Ablative” and “allative” here refer exclusively to types of interpretation.

- (5) Quant à mon projet de pizza, c'est une amie qui nous invite demain midi qui m'a soufflé mon idée (Internet)  
 Lit. As for my pizza project, it is a friend who invites us tomorrow at noon who blew my idea  
 As for my pizza project, a friend who's invited us for lunch tomorrow pinched my idea'
- (6) bon je n'ai que l'embarras du choix mais tu m'as soufflé mon idée, des ravioles dont je parlais sur mon blog il y a peu mais j'ai encore pas mal d'idées (Internet)  
 Lit. well I have only the embarrassment of choice but you blew my idea of the ravioles I mentioned on my blog a few days ago but I still have quite a few ideas.  
 Well, I'm spoiled for choice but you suggested the idea of the ravioles I mentioned on my blog a few days ago but I still have quite a few ideas'

In (5) there is a transfer of the idea from the subject agent (the friend) to the receiver, whereas in (6) the orientation is reversed: the subject agent “takes” the idea of ravioles from the referent of the indirect object.

The functioning illustrated by (2) or by (5) and (6) is sometimes mentioned in the literature but has not really been given a precise explanation, apart from the hypothesis of the existence of a non-lexical dative, a hypothesis that we present and criticize in the second part of this paper. The third part presents the theoretical framework in which we deal with the question. The framework is that of *Construction Grammar*, which considers that the DTC itself (that is to say the schematic structure  $x_{\text{subject}} + \text{VERB} + z_{\text{object}} + \grave{\text{a}} + Y_{\text{indirect object}}$ ) has a meaning, independently from the lexicon. We first show that the construction involves two scenarios - that is to say two types of relationship between the participants - that can be accounted for by the antonymous Meta-Predicates GIVE and TAKE, which we will use to gloss many of the realizations of the DTC. We will see that the data are in fact more complex, since some sentences cannot be glossed by GIVE or TAKE and two other scenarios are possible; it is necessary to add the Meta-Predicates LEAVE and KEEP, which therefore correspond to two additional scenarios. It is shown that the four Meta-Predicates GIVE, TAKE, LEAVE, KEEP are the terms of a system of relations of contrariety and contradiction that a logical square can account for.

The fourth and last part revisits the status and meaning of the DTC. Since the construction allows four interpretations (or four scenarios), it can be legitimately argued that it has a generic, “undifferentiated” or “underspecified” meaning: the scenarios are determined thanks to the specificity of the lexicon and the context. But how can the same construction be at the origin of contrary and even contradictory interpretations? The answer, in our opinion, lies in a particularity of the lexicon that is seldom taken into account in semantics and lexicology, namely enantiosemey, a property by which a lexical unit has two opposite meanings. According to the

literature on the subject, it is very often the lexical units involving a transfer that are, in languages, the most often enantiosemic units (for example, verbs more or less equivalent to *to give, to take, to lend, to borrow, to learn, to rent*, etc.). Insofar as we consider that the DTC behaves like a lexical sign (an association between a form and a meaning), it is legitimate to consider that enantiosemy plays a role in the ambivalence of sentences such as (2).

## 2. Lexical dative and non lexical dative

The dative in French participates in different constructions; we briefly present these constructions by taking the classification of Melis (1996) and his examples, and limiting ourselves to the three-term constructions of which the DTC is part.

### 2.1 Datives of equivalence

In the case of the dative of equivalence, there is a confrontation between the object and the dative which leads to a difference or a partial equivalence between them:

- (7) Il lui préfère Hélène  
*He prefers Helen to him/her*

Examples of verbs involved in this structure are: *assimiler* ('assimilate'), *associer* ('associate'), *comparer* ('compare'), *confronter* ('confront'), *opposer* ('contrast'), *préférer* ('prefer'), *subordonner* ('subordinate'), *unir* ('unify'), etc.

### 2.2 Lexical attributive datives

In the case of lexical attributive datives, the object and the dative are lexically encoded in the meaning of the verb. A first group comprises verbs that express the transfer of an object from the owner to another person: *affirmer* ('assert'), *allouer* ('allocate'), *communiquer* ('communicate'), *confier* ('entrust'), *destiner* ('intend'), *distribuer* ('give out'), *donner* ('give'), *léguer* ('bequeath'), *rendre* ('give back'), *répondre* ('answer'), etc.

- (8) Ses parents lui ont donné trois livres  
 His parents gave him three books

A second group comprises verbs that express a process which is oriented from the dative to the subject: *acheter* ('buy'), *arracher* ('snatch'), *emprunter* ('borrow'), *ôter* ('take away'), *prendre* ('take'), *voler* ('steal').

### 2.3 Non-lexical attributive datives

In this case, the dative is not encoded in the meaning of the verb (hence the term “non-lexical”). The process brings the object into existence or affects it. The dative is a beneficiary:

- (9) Elle lui tricote un pull  
Lit. she is knitting a sweater to him  
She is knitting a sweater for him
- (10) Tu lui as déjà chauffé le potage  
Lit. You have already warmed up the soup to him  
You have already warmed up the soup for him

### 2.4 Lexical partitive datives or epistemic datives

Some verbs of perception and epistemic verbs form part of a three-term construction with a dative and a direct object: the direct object refers to a typical attribute (such as a body-part or garment) or to a psychological property of the dative:

- (11) Elle te trouve le nez bien fait  
Lit. she finds the nose well-made to you  
She thinks that you have a nice nose
- (12) On ne lui avait jamais vu cette robe  
Lit. We never saw this dress to her  
She had never been seen in that dress before

Some of the verbs involved in this structure are: *connaître* (‘know’), *croire* (‘believe’), *découvrir* (‘discover’), *trouver* (‘find’), *voir* (‘see’), etc.

### 2.5 Non-lexical partitive dative

In the case of the non-lexical partitive dative, there is also a part/whole relationship between OBJ and DAT, a relationship of which the most typical realization is the alienable possession. (Melis, 1996 :48)

- (13) Maman lui a lavé les cheveux  
Lit. Mum washed the hair to him  
Mum washed his hair

It is mainly the lexical attributive datives and non-lexical attributive datives that interest us here, since the former *systematically* express a transfer, and the latter may *in certain cases* express a transfer<sup>5</sup>.

## 2.6 Distinction between lexical dative and non-lexical dative

The distinction between lexical dative and non-lexical dative (or extended dative) was first proposed by Leclère (1978). A lexical dative verb is a verb which sub-categorizes a complement of the type “to-NP”, a sub-categorization which corresponds to the (lexical) meaning of this verb. A non-lexical dative can sometimes be realized as a NP, but most often it is a dative clitic with a verb which, by virtue of its meaning, does not sub-categorize a “to-NP” complement. Rooryck (1988) proposed formal criteria for distinguishing the lexical dative from the non-lexical dative, in particular the passive criterion, arguing that the non-lexical dative is incompatible with the passive, so that (15) is the passive alternative of (14):

- (14) Pierre a acheté trois livres à Marc  
Lit. Pierre bought three books to Marc
- (15) Trois livres ont été achetés à Marc par Pierre  
Lit. Three books have been bought to Marc by Pierre

According to Rooryck, *à Marc* unequivocally represents the source (the seller). In other words, when *acheter* is used with a lexical dative, the dative represents the source (ablative reading); when it is used with a non-lexical dative, the dative represents the beneficiary (allative reading). This analysis is unfortunately too simple, since even in its passive form, the example remains ambivalent. Take the following example, of which we give, in a first step, just a part:

- (16) Ce sac *m'a été acheté* par une jeune femme (Internet)  
Lit. This bag has been bought to me by a young woman.

The speaker may be either the seller or the beneficiary. In other words, the passive does not transform the sentence into a univocal statement. The end of the utterance makes it possible to disambiguate the reading:

- (17) Ce sac *m'a été acheté* par une jeune femme qui cherchait un sac pour transporter ses cours.

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5. Some cases of non-lexical dative are unrelated to the idea of transfer: for example, it would be an exaggeration to consider that there is really a transfer in an utterance such as *je lui ai tondu la pelouse* “I have mowed the lawn for him”.

Lit. This bag has been bought to me by a young woman who was looking for a bag to carry her notes.

This bag was bought from me by a young women who was looking for a bag to carry her lecture notes.

Moreover, it is quite possible to find attested examples which are not ambiguous, in which the subject is undoubtedly the beneficiary (allative reading). For example:

- (18) Elle devra ensuite consentir à ce qu'on la pare du bijou qui *lui a été acheté par son époux* et se plier au rituel du henné. (Internet)

Lit. She will then have to consent to be adorned with the jewel that was bought to her by her husband and to submit to the ritual of henna.

The woman is obviously the beneficiary of the purchase. The same holds for (19):

- (19) Alors attention, on ne dit pas que pour être sexy, un homme doit porter le même pull orange depuis qu'il *lui a été acheté par sa mère* en 2004.

(Internet)

Lit. So be careful, no-one says that to be sexy, a man must wear the same orange sweater since it was bought to him by his mother in 2004.

So be careful, no-one says that to be sexy, a man must wear the same orange sweater that his mother bought for him in 2004.

The transfer of the object passes from the mother to her son. The use of *acheter* in a passive form is therefore entirely compatible with an allative interpretation. Rooryck's formal approach<sup>6</sup> and more generally, the "lexicalist" approach according to which the argument structure of a verb is determined by the meaning of the verb, is based on a questionable conception: the verb (or the predicate) has a fixed argument structure. It is therefore claimed that the "non-lexical" dative is not a "true" dative. Even if the data show that *acheter* (or *prendre* – 'to take') prefers an ablative reading to a large extent, the linguist must be able to account for statements such as (17) and (18) which, although less frequent, are not atypical.

It is therefore necessary to adopt another approach. The one adopted here is the Construction Grammar framework.

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6. Rooryck also gives two other criteria: (1) the relativation (in fact, a cleft sentence), but the author's judgments of acceptability are highly debatable; (2) the non-lexicalization of the extended dative, which cannot be discussed in detail here for lack of space.



### 3. Constructional approach and meta-predicates

Contrary to the “lexicalist” conception, our approach is constructional in that it considers that the syntactic schema [ $X_{\text{subject}} + \text{VERB} + Z_{\text{object}} + \grave{\text{a}} + Y_{\text{indirect object}}$ ] is a construction, that is to say, a form with a meaning (cf. Goldberg 1995, 2006; Langacker 1987). It is then a question of examining the relation between the participants of the construction. This relation can be expressed by the predicate, which is more or less abstract, *avoir* (‘to have’). Thus Barnes (1985) and Herslund (1988) highlight a double predication, noted by Herslund:

$$X_s \text{ CAUSE } (Y_{\text{OI}} \text{ HAVE } Z_o) \quad (\text{Herslund, 1988: 103})$$

In fact, Herslund applies this double predication to the argument structure of attribution verbs. Here, we apply it to the construction of transfer itself. The formulation of this double predication is quite close to that of Goldberg (1995) for the ditransitive construction in English. The meaning of the construction thus involves an agent (the subject), a transfer object (the indirect object), a third participant who can be a beneficiary (target of the transfer) or a source (of the transfer). The first predication (CAUSE) is the action initiated by X, the second (HAVE) is the result. One might think, given the examples discussed above and the problem of ambivalence, that there are two possible meanings of the transfer construction:

$$\begin{aligned} [X \text{ CAUSE } (Y \text{ HAVE } Z)] : & \text{ je donne un livre \grave{a} Marie (I give a book to Marie)} \\ [X \text{ CAUSE } (Y \text{ NOT HAVE } Z)] : & \text{ je prends un livre \grave{a} Marie (I take a book from Marie)} \end{aligned}$$

These two contrary meanings make it possible to account for the ambivalence of (2) and (16). But things are more complicated, and we will see that there are actually four meanings or *scenarios*. These scenarios correspond to the meta-predicates GIVE, TAKE, KEEP, LEAVE.

#### 3.1 Scenario 1: GIVE

Consider the example:

- (20) et j’ lui donne une petite pi\ec{e} tous les matins. (CFPP)  
Lit. And I give him a little coin every morning.

The relation between the participants is written: [ $X \text{ CAUSE } (Y \text{ HAVE } Z)$ ], since it is a matter of ensuring that the person (a beggar) has a coin. Also, as is well known, the object may be an “object” of speech:

- (21) je sais pas si des gens leur ont pos\ee la question. (CFPP)  
Lit. I do not know if people asked them the question.

The relation is still relevant for cases of non-lexical datives, for which there is a clear movement towards the target Y:

- (22) c'était des logements qu'on leur avait fabriqués. (CFPP)  
 Lit. It was housings that one had built to them.  
 It was accommodation that had been built for them
- (23) On leur mijotera un frichti Grand Siècle ! (San Antonio, *La fête des paires*).  
 Lit. We will simmer them a frichti Grand Siècle!  
 We'll cook them up some delicious grub!

For convenience, this scenario is denoted synthetically by the meta-predicate GIVE. The GIVE thus corresponds to [X CAUSE (Y HAVE Z)]<sup>7</sup>

### 3.2 Scenario 2: TAKE

Consider the example:

- (24) ...les personnes âgées ++ pour leur soutirer de l'argent + (CFPP)  
 Lit. ... the elderly ++ to get them money +  
 the elderly... to get money out of them.

The most natural interpretation is obviously this: [X CAUSE (Y NOT HAVE Z)]. Non-lexical datives can share the same interpretation:

- (25) ma voiture était garée et euh: on m'a carrément arrachée le rétro du côté  
 trottoir (CFPP)  
 Lit. My car was parked and uh: one just pulled off the rearview mirror to me  
 by the sidewalk my car was parked and someone just ripped off my rearview  
 mirror on the curb side.

This type can be denoted by the meta-predicate TAKE (with the sole meaning, "remove something from somebody").

Scenarios 1 and 2 are generally discussed in studies on the dative; they are prototypical transfer scenarios. The relationship between GIVE and TAKE is said to be one of contrariety. This implies, according to the logical tradition, that scenarios 1 and 2 cannot be true simultaneously. For example:

---

7. Consider this remark by Kemmer and Verhagen: "It is not unusual to find examples of causative structures that are obligatorily used for notions which in other languages are expressed in a simple ditransitive predicate. In Ainu, even the concept 'give', in most languages expressed as a verb in a ditransitive structure, is expressed as a causative of a verb of possession: kor 'have' vs. kor-e (have + CAUS) 'give', literally 'make have'". (Kemmer and Verhagen 1994, 128).

- (26) *Elle lui a acheté pas moins de deux voitures* (Internet)  
lit. She bought him no less than two cars

If [X CAUSE (Y HAVE Z)] is true, therefore [X CAUSE (Y NOT HAVE Z)] – the other interpretation of (14) – is false. In other words, if GIVE is true, TAKE is not. But if [X CAUSE (Y HAVE Z)] is false, this does not imply that [X CAUSE (Y NOT HAVE Z)] is true. Therefore, if GIVE is false, TAKE can also be false.

Linguists have rarely addressed the question of the DTC in terms of logic. This may explain why two other relations between utterances have not been taken into consideration.

### 3.3 Scenario 3: KEEP

Indeed, transfers may not take place. Thus, one can have a configuration in which it is not really for X “TO CAUSE Y NOT HAVE Z”, but rather “NOT TO CAUSE Y HAVE Z”. For example:

- (27) *Toi aussi viens découvrir les amis qui t'ont caché leur relation!* (Internet)  
Lit. You too, come and discover the friends who have hidden to you their relationship!  
You too, come and discover the friends who have hidden their relationship from you!

To hide something from someone is obviously not to GIVE him that thing, but it is not to TAKE it either; it does not make the transfer happen. Hence the scenario: [X NOT CAUSE (Y HAVE Z)]. The word *passer* (‘to pass’) has a very interesting behavior. This verb is synonymous with *donner* (‘to give’), for example:

- (28) *Un joueur passe le ballon à son coéquipier vers l'avant. C'est une faute car on ne peut passer le ballon que vers l'arrière.* (Internet)  
lit. A player passes the ball to his teammate forward. It is a foul because you can only pass the ball backwards.

The utterance expresses the transfer of an object, and corresponds to the GIVE scenario.

There is another type of use of *passer* in the DTC. This use is highly constrained since the statement must be used in a deictic situation, the dative is a second person pronoun, and the object refers to a linguistic concept:

- (29) *je vous passe les détails*  
lit. I pass the details to you

The literal translation is misleading; (29) must be glossed by:

- (29') je ne vous dis pas les détails  
I won't tell you the details

*Passer* has therefore a synonym *sauter le passage* ('to skip the passage'):

- (30) Bref, *je vous saute* le passage d'explications hein, on sait tous comment on fait.  
(Internet)  
Lit. In short, I skip the passage of explanations to you, eh, we all know how we do

and becomes, in the following example, an antonym of *donner*:

- (31) mais moi je sais tout quand j' vais le soir au lit m' dit t'as vu ça je + j' lui donne le détail et ça j' lui donne le détail et ça + arrête + je peux plus +. (CFPP)  
Lit. But I know everything when I go to bed in the evening I say you saw it I + I give him the detail and I give him the detail and that + stops + I can more +  
But I know everything when I go to bed in the evening I say you saw it I + I give him the details and I give him the details and that + stop + I can't go on.

Thus, when the sentence expresses the fact that the object is not transmitted, one is dealing with a third scenario represented by the *KEEP* meta-predicate. Let us give another example, with a non-lexical dative (the verb *bloquer* – 'to block'):

- (32) en c'moment oui ils ont beaucoup d'mal ils sont endettés et euh les banques en plus leur bloquent tout hein ils sont d'une dureté terrible. (CFPP)  
Lit. In this moment yes they have a lot of trouble they are in debt and ah the banks in addition block them all eh they are of a terrible hardness.  
Right now, yes, they're in a lot of trouble they're in debt and what's more the banks have blocked all their accounts, they're terribly tough.

### 3.4 Scenario 4: LEAVE

Yet another relationship is possible; let us take this example, pronounced by a person (A) divorced from B:

- (33) Je te laisse les enfants ce weekend.  
Lit. I'll leave the kids to you this weekend.

Again, there are two readings: in the first one, A says to B that s/he will "give" the children to him/her. We are in the case of a transfer and the *GIVE* scenario. But another interpretation is possible: A says to B that s/he will not take the children (and that, therefore, B will continue to keep them).

- (34) quand j'ai commencé les communications donc avec IE Groupement on m'a proposé une série de pays ; j'en avais choisi à ce moment-là / trois ou quatre / et on m'a laissé euh / principalement la Suède parce-que les autres / poseraient des difficultés (Valibel)

Lit. When I started the communications so with the IE Group I was offered a series of countries; I had chosen three or four of them at that time, and they left mainly Sweden to me because the others would have posed difficulties

*laisser la Suède* ('to leave Sweden') implies not only that Sweden is not taken from him (TAKE), but also that nothing is done to take it from him. Some uses of the verb *abandonner* (to abandon), when the object is determined by a possessive in co-reference with the dative, enter this configuration:

- (35) l'État s'étant pavoisé des couleurs françaises depuis si longtemps, depuis la Révolution française, je lui abandonne son drapeau. (Internet)

Lit. The French State being proud so long of the French colors, since the French Revolution, I have abandoned its flag to it. / I have left its flag to it.

- (36) Vendredi 15 Avril 2005: Derniers jours en Australie... Je quitte Margaret River demain, et comme dans un divorce mal négocié, je lui abandonne ses vagues étincelantes, ses forêts envoutantes, et son si doux rythme de vie. (Internet)

Lit. Friday, April 15, 2005: Last days in Australia ... I leave Margaret River tomorrow, and as in a poorly negotiated divorce, I abandon its sparkling waves to it, its captivating forests, and its sweet rhythm of life.

Scenario 4 is therefore noted: [X NOT CAUSE (Y NOT HAVE Z)], and corresponds schematically to the meta-predicate LEAVE.

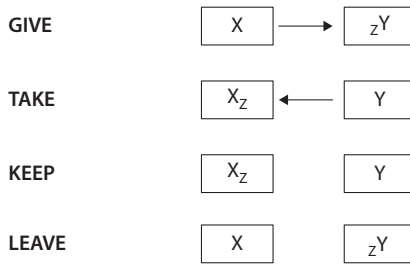
We see then that other scenarios are possible than those generally mentioned in work on the dative. Scenarios 3 and 4 can be considered as associated with contexts in which an agent could act, either to GIVE or TAKE, but ultimately does not do so. Therefore, the agent KEEPS (for himself) or LEAVES (to someone else) the object, as the case may be.

### 3.5 Discussion

While scenarios 1 and 2 are in a relation of contrariety, types 1 and 3 on the one hand, and 2 and 4 on the other hand, are in a contradiction relation; the propositions [X CAUSE (Y HAVE Z)] / [X NOT CAUSE (Y NOT HAVE Z)] and [X CAUSE (Y NOT HAVE Z)] cannot be true or false at the same time. In another words, if GIVE is true, KEEP is false; if GIVE is not true, KEEP is true. If TAKE is true, LEAVE is false; if TAKE

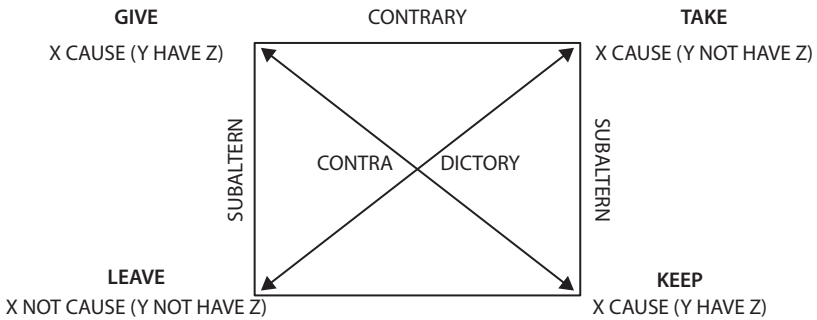
is false, LEAVE is true: two terms are said to be contradictory when the affirmation of one is equivalent to the negation of the other and vice versa.

Moreover, the relations between GIVE and LEAVE, on the one hand, and TAKE and KEEP, on the other hand, are said to be subaltern: [X NOT CAUSE (Y NOT HAVE Z)] cannot be false when [X CAUSE (Y HAVE Z)] is true (LEAVE cannot be false when GIVE is true)]; [X NOT CAUSE (Y HAVE Z) cannot be false when [X CAUSE (Y NOT HAVE Z)] is true (KEEP cannot be false when TAKE is true). These relationships between participants in the ditransitive construction can be represented by several figures. So if we look at the scenario globally, we get the schema:



**Figure 1.** Relations between participants and Meta-Predicates

A less elementary but a more formalized representation of these relations can be given in the form of a logical square:



**Figure 2.** Logical Square of the DTC

The logical square accounts for the four scenarios expressed by the DTC instances in a discrete – i.e. polarized – representation. But we can also propose a cyclic representation showing, in fact, the continuity between the different scenarios glossed here by the Meta-Predicates:

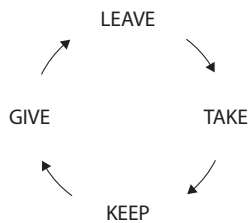


Figure 3. Cyclic representation of the scenarios

These representations are based either on implicative logical relations (square) or on implicative and successive relations (cycle).

#### 4. The enantiosemic hypothesis

In the previous section, we proposed four possible scenarios. But what is the status of these scenarios? We assume that they are specifications of the meaning of the DTC. Does this mean that [N1 V N2 à N3] is polysemic? And if the construction is polysemic, what motivates the relationships between the four scenarios? In the following, we do not adopt the model often used by cognitivist linguists, which consists in considering that polysemy can be explained by the extension of a central, prototypical meaning to more marginal meanings (for example, Goldberg 1995; for a different approach, see Kay 2005). Rather, based on the logical relations between the various interpretations, we consider the possibility of applying to the syntax a property generally reserved only for the lexicon. This property is traditionally referred to as *enantiosemy* (gr. *eneontos* “opposite”). Enantiosemy is defined by the fact that the same word has two opposite meanings. The hypothesis formulated in this work is that a syntactic construction, independently of the lexicon, can manifest several ambivalent meanings; this ambivalence is a case of complex enantiosemy.

##### 4.1 Lexical enantiosemy: Very brief historical overview

The German linguist Abel developed in his work (1882, 1884) on ancient Egyptian a semantic perspective that was somewhat original in the West<sup>8</sup>: certain words that he studied showed two opposite meanings. For example, some prepositions in Egyptian or Coptic:

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8. But no doubt less unprecedented in the Arabic grammatical tradition (cf. the notion of *ad’dad* – “opposites”).

Among Egyptian prepositions there are many in which the difficulty of grasping abstract ideas is sought to be overcome by reference to opposite notions. No more vivid illustration of the primitive practice of thinking by thesis and antithesis could be afforded. Hieroglyphic 'm' means alike "into something", "toward something", and "away from something", according to the context; 'er' means not only "away from something" but also "toward something" and "together with something"; 'hr' and 'xetf' mean both "for" and "against"; 'xont', "in" and "under", etc. In Coptic, 'ute' and 'sa' denote both "away from something" and "into something".

(Abel, 1882: 238–239)

Abel saw in this phenomenon the persistence or the trace of a characteristic of a primitive language, in which the distinction between opposites does not yet require a distinction between signifiers. This view was shared at the same period by the Russian linguist Šercl (1884/1977)<sup>9</sup>. We know that Freud found this an attractive thesis and transposed it in his 1910 article to the psychic domain. A year later, Bleuler (1911) proposed the term *Ambivalenz* to denote the coexistence of two opposing psychic tendencies – ambivalence being firmly linked to schizophrenia, of which Bleuler himself was the "inventor". But ambivalence was soon to be recognized as the fundamental ambiguity of human nature.

Enantiosemey – sometimes called *autoantonymy* or *self-antonyms* or *Janus word* – is therefore one of the linguistic manifestations of ambivalence. Although studies on polysemy have rarely addressed the field of enantiosemey – which has remained at best an amusing curiosity – some linguists, not the least among them, have discussed the relevance of the notion. For example, Benveniste, in an article commissioned by Lacan (1956/1966), was extremely critical of the phenomenon.

## 4.2 Lexical enantiosemey: Some examples

Based on the literature, we give here some cases of enantiosemey. In French, the verb *chasser* ('to hunt') refers to two opposing movements: to catch, to "bring to oneself" and "to chase away" (*chasser la cannette* – 'to look for cans' / *chasser les mouches* – 'to drive away flies'). The nouns *hôte* (host) and *ospite* in Italian designate either the person who receives or the one who is hosted, i.e. either the host or the guest. *Jurer* ('to swear') is an illocutionary act of taking an oath, but also an act of blasphemy – and in the same vein, it is known that *sacré* ('sacred') means both "holy" and "cursed"<sup>10</sup>. The noun *personne* ('person') refers to an individual, but the pronominal use means nobody (*personne n'est venu* – nobody came). *Ecran*

9. Cf. Velmezova, 2005

10. This ambivalence is in fact present in Latin, since *sacer* means "sacred, holy" and "accursed, infamous".



(‘screen’) (Cadiot and Tracy 2003) refers to an object that allows the “monstration” of something (television screen), as well as an object that makes it possible to hide something (smoke screen). Moreover, in English *to screen* can mean “to show” or “to hide”. *Bad* obviously means “not good”, but in English slang it can mean “possessing an abundance of favorable qualities” (OED, s.v. *bad*, a., A.1.4.b)<sup>11</sup>; this is a case of ironic misappropriation. The Russian word *pogoda* ‘weather’ means ‘fine weather’ in some Russian dialects (namely, southern and western dialects) and ‘bad weather, foul weather’ in most other dialects (Shmelev 2016: 70). The French verb *apprendre* (to learn), and the English verb *to learn* are enantiosemic lexemes:

- (37) Il apprend le violon.  
He is learning the violin.

One can say that A learns B from C. But in (38) C teaches B to A.

- (38) Il lui apprend le violon.  
Lit. He learns the violin to her.

Until the eighteenth century, *crépuscule* (‘twilight’, ‘dusk’) referred to both sunset and sunrise (according to the *Trésor de la Langue Française*). In the context of crossing a river by boat, contemporary French distinguishes the ferryman (*passeur*) from the passenger (*passager*). In the sixteenth century, the word *passager* could denote both.

Caffi (2010) proposed the term enantiopraxis to denote discourse particles manifesting an ambivalence. The author analyzed the expression  $\omega\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\pi\omicron\varsigma \epsilon\iota\pi\epsilon\iota\nu$  in Plato’s *Gorgias*, which can have two opposite values: an attenuator value (so to speak), and a reinforcement value (to use the right word). *Littéralement* (‘literally’) is also an enantiopraxeme insofar as it is used either to indicate that a given word must be understood in its proper meaning, or to indicate that it is the object of a metaphorical use. One can sometimes explain the origin of a word by a type of enantiosemic motivation such as antiphrasis. This is the case of *obesus* “who eats into” in Latin, which is the past participle of *obedere* and which gave in French *obèse* (‘obese’); yet the original meaning of *obesus* is “eaten into” hence “skinny, all skin and bone” (Henault 2008, 293).

Other examples will be given below, but for the moment these few cases are sufficient to show that enantiosemic constitutes a lexical property which semantics cannot ignore. We do not claim to be dealing with a homogeneous phenomenon. Among the examples cited, some are cases of ironic use, others are dialectal variants, or diachronic evolutions. One set of cases is of particular interest to us here, namely those which are or have been used with a generic meaning.

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11. Cf. Koch 2016: 52.

We can then ask the following semiotic question: if these words possess (or have possessed) two different (opposite) meanings, can we not consider that there is a “hyper-lexeme” which in a way covers the oppositions? Thus, for *passager*:

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*Passager*

/ participant in the crossing of a watercourse /

*Passager*

/who ferries [people, goods] across a river/

*Passager*

/ the person ferried across the river/

---

The notion of hyper-lexeme must be specified: it is not to be understood as a hyper-lexeme that dominates two lexemes, but as dominating two different (and therefore opposed) meanings determined in use. When these meanings still remain ambiguous, the language then proceeds to specify matters. For example, *passeur* (ferryman) superseded *passager* (who ferries people across a river) in the history of French.

### 4.3 Undifferentiated meaning

The existence of a hyper-lexeme implies a level of schematic categorization, and therefore a semantic undifferentiation. The linguist C. Hagège has clearly explained the approach advocated here:

In fact, there is no enantiosemey, but the overlapping of the two senses by a global sense. Languages have the property of being able to subsume the multiple and the double under flexible and extensive classes, whose vague character facilitates the capture of objects of the world, while at the same time it contributes to creating the dynamics of vocabularies. (Hagège 1985: 197)<sup>12</sup>

This notion of a neutral or undifferentiated state has been pointed out at the semantic level of certain lexemes in Semitic languages (Bohas, 1997; Dat, 2009)<sup>13</sup>.

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12. En fait, il y a non énantiosémie, mais recouvrement des deux sens par un sens global. Les langues ont la propriété de pouvoir subsumer le multiple et le double sous des classes souples et extensives, dont le caractère vague facilite la captation des objets du monde, en même temps qu’il contribue à créer la dynamique des vocabulaires [...] Coiffer les contraires par les traits de sens qu’ils ont en commun, c’est, loin d’aboutir à la contradiction, rendre plus facile la généralité (C. Hagège 1985: 197).

13. Concerning the notion of undifferentiation, in his book on the notion of opposition, the French sociologist and philosopher G. Tarde conceived the existence of a neutral (or zero) state necessary for the constitution of the opposing elements: “The passage from the concave figure to the convex figure, or vice versa, is conceivable only by means of a state zero, a nothingness of convexity and concavity. The passage from pleasure to the corresponding pain is possible only by the interposition of a state of non-pleasure and non-pain.” (Tarde, 1897: 23).

We will keep the term enantiosemy, but we therefore consider that for a number of examples above, there exists a hyper-lexeme with a general, undifferentiated meaning, a “notional invariant”. Can this lexical property be transposed into the Ditransitive Construction? We have seen that we have to envisage several possible interpretations of the construction, depending on the verb, but also the other lexemes (especially the direct complement) and of course the context. We hypothesize an enantiosemic functioning of the Ditransitive Construction, a hypothesis that is reinforced by a strong argument: many enantiosemic lexemes involve a transfer relationship of an object by an agent to a receptor, the very relationship that contributes to the meaning of the construction. Again, some examples: The verb *louer* (to rent) is the enantiosemic lexeme par excellence in French (the same applies to GIVE (X CAUSE (Y HAVE Z) and TAKE (X CAUSE (Y NOT HAVE Z)). The verb *affermer* (rent a farm), which is now unusual, behaves in the same way. The Norwegian verb *låne* means both “to borrow” and “to lend”, as does the Russian *odolzhit* or the German *leihen*. Teubert (2010: 4) argued that a process of standardization by dictionaries has led *to borrow* and *to lend* to become two differentiated lexemes in standard English, although in many English dialects they can still be used interchangeably. The Czech verb *brát* means ‘dispossess’ in *brát nikomu peníze* (take money [away] from someone), while in *brát od někoho peníze* it means ‘accept, receive’ (money from someone) (Klégr, 2013: 10). Nowadays, the French noun *marchand* (merchant) no longer denotes anyone who professes to buy, but in the seventeenth century, everybody taking part in the market, the buyer as well as the seller, was called *un marchand*; it also applies to *dette* (debt), which means “money borrowed” or “money lent”. The creditor could therefore claim his debt (Huguet, 1967: 63)<sup>14</sup> but the word *créancier* (creditor) could also denote the one who contracted the debt (the debtor).

These examples are strongly linked to the notion of transfer (especially commercial, financial, real estate). Thus, we think it quite plausible (and even natural) that the grammatical construction of transfer itself has an enantiosemic dimension - in fact, a double enantiosemic dimension since it is not only the relation of contrariety that is at stake, but also that of contradiction. We then consider NP V NP à NP as a hyper-construction, in the same way as a hyper-lexeme. This hyper-construction does not index one or more scenarios, but a frame in which these scenarios can make sense. This frame corresponds to Fillmore’s frame notion to a certain extent – but it is a generic, relatively abstract frame. Proposing a gloss for this framework is obviously difficult because of its indeterminacy, but it is conceivable that it has to do with the fact that “someone/something acts or does not act for someone/something to have or not have someone/something”.

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14. We could have proposed yet another exotic example, the Shaowu (a Sinitic language of Northwestern Fujian) verb [tie] which means ‘to get’ in a mono-transitive construction, and which is relexified to mean ‘to give’ in a ditransitive construction (Ngai, 2015)

## 4.5 Consequences

We would like to put forward a few arguments to answer the questions that these reflections cannot fail to raise, addressing two questions in particular: (1) What is the cognitive status for speakers of this undifferentiated construction? (2) Are there other grammatical constructions that could be called enantiosemic?

### 4.5.1 *Cognitive status of the ambivalent construction*

It goes without saying that the undifferentiated construction that we postulate is not cognitively accessible to speakers. By its schematic nature, and its absence of lexical saturation, the ambivalent construction is rather elusive. Nevertheless, we contend that it is significant and structuring. How can this phenomenon be explained? We suggest that it can be explained through the theory of usage in linguistics. In this theory, linguistic forms can be apprehended from specimens or exemplars stored in memory because of their frequency. These exemplars may lose their specificity, becoming more and more general. But even in this case, they always remain, for speakers, lexically determined.

We can thus assume that the form *NP1 donner NP2 à NP3* is a schematic exemplar of the DTC, like *NP1 prendre NP2 à NP3*, because of the high frequency of the verbs *donner* and *prendre* in the construction (hence our meta-predicates GIVE and TAKE). But the generic form *NP1 V NP2 à NP3* and its meaning possess a high degree of schematicity. Although it underlies the various realizations in speech, and although it constitutes a linguistic unity, the construction manifests itself only through its effects<sup>15</sup>.

### 4.5.2 *Grammatical construction and ambivalence*

Grammatical ambivalence is not, strictly speaking, an ambiguity, but a very natural operating principle in linguistics. If we adopt a semantic perspective on syntactic schemes, we can consider that other cases of constructions are ambivalent, without, however, illustrating the same complexity as the DTC – which is, remember, “doubly enantiosemic”. We will give three brief examples:

1. the construction *NP1 V NP2 de INF*, in which *INF* can realize a past infinitive; it is used both in positive (39) and negative (40) orientations:

- (39) *Je l'approuve d'avoir voulu défendre son bien.* (Internet)  
 Lit. I approve him of having wished to defend his property.  
 I approve of his having wanted to defend his property.

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15. One could also conceive of an operation as described by Langacker (1988): some extensions based on prototypes and a schematization that would correspond to the hyper-construction.

- (40) Il commence par la blâmer d'avoir épousé Jorgen Tesman. (Internet)  
Lit. He begins by blaming her for marrying Jorgen Tesman.

The meaning of the construction could be expressed as follows: "N1 sanctions the behavior of N2 for the effective or non-effective performance of V by N2". Recall that the verb *sanction* is enantiosemic.

2. The construction with *noms de qualité* (ce N1 de N2) with a dysphoric value in (41).

- (41) Ce salaud de linguiste.  
Lit. This bastard of a linguist.

Or with a euphoric value, as in (42).

- (42) Cet amour de petit bonhomme.  
Lit. This love of a little man.  
This darling little boy.

We therefore claim that the construction, without lexical saturation, is not neutral, nor even neutralized, but ambivalent in its various realizations. Its function is to communicate an expressive euphoric or dysphoric evaluation (Foolen, 2004).

3. The transitive construction

The simple transitive construction also exhibits an enantiosemic functioning if understood in terms of the relation of contact between the subject and the object. Without going into detail (see (Hamelin and Legallois 2016, Legallois 2017), the transitive construction places the subject in contact with the subject: *Paul touche Marie* – 'Paul touches Marie' (physical contact), *Paul rencontre Marie* – 'Paul meets Marie' (social contact), *Paul regarde Marie* – 'Paul looks at Marie' (perceptual contact), *Paul émeut Marie* – 'Paul moves Marie' (emotional contact with an effect on the patient, etc.). Sometimes, the contact is maintained: *Paul garde son secret* – 'Paul keeps his secret', *Paul maintient son avis* – 'Paul maintains his opinions'. But the same pattern may mean the opposite relationship – a non-relation or dis-contact: *Paul évite Marie* – 'Paul avoids Marie', *Paul a perdu ses clefs* – 'Paul has lost his keys', *Paul oublie son texte* – 'Paul forgets his lines', *Paul contourne la ville* – 'Paul bypasses the city', and so on. In these cases, the subject is not or is no longer in contact (whatever the nature of this contact) with the object. The transitive construction can be seen as a hyper-construction, on which two scenarios depend.

All these examples show that enantiosemey, or the ambivalent nature of constructions, is a general phenomenon and an important semiotic principle.

## Conclusion

This article has attempted to show that by considering syntactic patterns as meaningful linguistic units, one can legitimately evoke the problem of enantiosemey, which strictly speaking concerns opposing interpretations and more generally grammatical ambivalence. Enantiosemey concerns all semiotic phenomena; it is natural for some linguistic forms to be intrinsically ambivalent, even if they are unambiguous in their actual realizations in discourse. The GIVE, TAKE, LEAVE, KEEP Meta-Predicates inherent in the French construction of transfer therefore correspond to interpretive scenarios. These Meta-Predicates maintain logical relations between one another, which can be conceived as implicative or not. These Meta-predicates are dominated by a hyper-construction, which is itself endowed with a meaning, but with a “schematic” meaning in the sense that it is “undifferentiated”: this hyper-construction makes the actants and possible relations between actants available to each scenario, but only the lexical specification and the context can direct the interpretation towards a specific scenario or meta-predicate.

This function is not marginal since it has been identified in different languages at the lexical level; we have been able to show briefly that it also characterizes other types of constructions.

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# Transfer and applicative constructions in Gunwinyguan languages (non-Pama-Nyungan, Australia)

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This article describes the syntax and semantics of benefactive and comitative constructions in Dalabon, a Gunwinyguan language of Australia (non-Pama-Nyungan). After having described the respective subcategorisation operations and meanings of each of these constructions, I show that the criterion for using benefactive constructions is the animacy of the benefactive participant, whereas the criterion for using comitative constructions is the semantic role of the argument: the Dalabon comitative marker selects arguments with typical “comitative” meaning (accompaniment and instrument). In addition, I show that the comitative construction has developed a cross-linguistically unusual semantic extension towards the notion of transfer. When combined with verbs of attainment (‘get’, ‘pull’, etc.), Dalabon comitative constructions express malefactive transfer (or removal, i.e. the opposite of giving). Comparing Dalabon with neighbouring languages of the same family reveals that this extension is not limited to the Dalabon language, but also occurs in Bininj Gun-wok and Rembarrnga, including with comitative markers that are not cognate with the Dalabon marker. In addition, the Dalabon comitative constructions can also express the transfer of contents of communication with verbs meaning ‘tell’ or ‘ask’, an extension that is not attested in Bininj Gun-wok or Rembarrnga.

**Keywords:** valence, diathesis, benefactive applicative, comitative applicative, animacy, polysynthesis, transfer semantics, Dalabon, Gunwinyguan, Australian Aboriginal languages

## 1. Introduction

This chapter explores the semantic extensions from the comitative domain to the notion of transfer: either to malefactive transfer – i.e. removal, the opposite of giving, which is the topic of this volume – or to the transfer of contents of communication

(speech). The semantic extension of a comitative marker to cover malefactive transfer had apparently not been reported in the literature on the comitative domain so far. The present article describes and analyses this extension as it occurs in Dalabon, an Australian language of the Gunwinyguan family (non-Pama-Nyungan).

There are few published linguistic studies on the notion of “comitative” or “concomitances” (Lehmann & Shin, 2005), and the core definition of this label varies across authors. Arkhipov (2009) for instance, following Maslova (1999) and Stassen (2000), defines the “comitative” markers as those capable of expressing accompaniment in the sense of (co-)participation to an event. Other authors focus on semantic extensions of accompaniment such as manner, material, ingredients, instruments – all expressed by ‘with’ in English (Schlesinger, 1995, p. 61). In their typological study of the functional domain of concomitance, Lehmann & Shin (2005) include partner and companion, vehicle, tool, material and manner or circumstance as “concomitant” roles. I have not found any mention of transfer listed as a semantic extension of comitative markers – but this extension is well attested in some Australian languages, as I illustrate here with the Dalabon language.

Overall, the semantics of Dalabon comitative applicative constructions is consistent with the concepts considered in the above-cited studies: they frequently express accompaniment, instrument and material. The expression of participant sets is only very marginal (see Section 5.1), and the expression of manner is absent. In addition, Dalabon comitative constructions also express of malefactive transfer and transfer of content of communication. In fact, the semantic extension from comitative to malefactive transfer (removal) is not only attested in Dalabon, but also across several other languages of the Gunwinyguan family, including for comitative markers that are not cognates of the Dalabon marker. The semantic extension from canonical comitative roles to transfer is therefore a significant addition to our understanding of the comitative domain, as well as of how notions of transfer (gift or removal) can be expressed by means of constructions across the world’s languages. These semantic extensions of the Dalabon comitative applicative are discussed in detail in this article, and compared with comitative applicative constructions in two neighbouring languages of the same Gunwinyguan family, namely Bininj Gun-wok and Rembarrnga.

Before we can understand malefactive transfer constructions, it is necessary to describe the semantics of benefactive applicative constructions, which play a key role in describing recipient participants. In Dalabon, the syntactic and semantic articulation between benefactive and comitative constructions underpins the malefactive transfer constructions identified above. The discussion of this articulation paves the way to the analysis of the malefactive transfer construction.

In Section 2 and 3 I present the languages discussed in this study and provide some details about Dalabon grammar, in particular the morphological encoding of

arguments on the Dalabon verb complex. The following sections describe the two applicative constructions available in Dalabon. Section 4 discusses benefactive applicative constructions (prefix *marnu-*), used to add a supplementary animate participant to the subcategorisation frame of a predicate. Section 5 describes Dalabon comitative applicative constructions (prefix *ye-*), used to add an inanimate participant or an animate participant in a comitative role. In this section, I also show how Dalabon comitative applicative constructions contrast with benefactive applicative constructions, where benefactives and applicatives specialise respectively for benefactive and malefactive transfer i.e. removal, the opposite of giving malefactive transfer. Dalabon remains in focus throughout the article, but comparisons with neighbouring Bininj Gun-wok and Rembarrnga will be offered along the way.

## 2. The languages in this study

Dalabon is an Australian language of the Gunwinyguan family, among the non-Pama-Nyungan group. Prior to colonisation, Dalabon was spoken by a few hundred people in the western part of the region now called Arnhem Land, in the Northern Territory of Australia. Today, Dalabon is severely endangered and fluently spoken by less than half a dozen persons in remote Aboriginal communities to the east of the town of Katherine (Barunga, Beswick, Bulman, Weemol). My analyses of the Dalabon language are based on first-hand data (60-hour corpus) collected in Weemol, Beswick and Barunga between 2007 and 2012 with five main speakers, all of them above sixty years old, and all but one of them female.

There exists no full grammar of Dalabon at this stage, but there is a dictionary (Evans, Merlan, & Tukumba, 2004), and a number of articles and theses describe various aspects of the language, including the verbal template, tense/aspect/mood categories, person prefixes (Evans, 2006; Evans, Brown, & Corbett, 2001; Evans & Merlan, 2003), demonstratives (Cutfield, 2011), prosody (Evans, Fletcher, & Ross, 2008; Ross, 2011), nominal subclasses (Ponsonnet, 2015), the vocabulary of emotions (Ponsonnet, 2014), among other things.

This article systematically compares Dalabon constructions with functionally equivalent constructions across two other languages of the same family (Gunwinyguan, non-Pama-Nyungan): the Bininj Gun-wok dialect chain and Rembarrnga. Bininj Gun-wok is a dialect chain spoken by approximately 1,600 persons, to the north-west of the Dalabon region. According to Evans (2003, p. 33), Dalabon and Bininj Gun-wok both belong to the central Gunwinyguan branch, and are therefore more closely related than they are to Rembarrnga (eastern branch). Rembarrnga is severely endangered, with probably a few dozen speakers left. It has been classified by Evans (2003, p. 33) within the eastern Gunwinyguan branch, i.e.

the branch adjacent to Dalabon. However, possibly due contacts and borrowing (see for instance Ponsonnet (2015, p. 4) on noun incorporation), the grammatical resemblances between Dalabon and Rembarrnga are perhaps as significant as between Bininj Gun-wok dialects and Dalabon. In spite of greater differences in lexical forms Rembarrnga has been extensively described in McKay's (2011) detailed grammar, and Saulwick (2003) provides further analyses of the Rembarrnga verb complex.

Like most languages in non-Pama-Nyungan families, Dalabon, Bininj Gun-wok dialects and Rembarrnga are all polysynthetic, agglutinative, and head-marking. In the following section, I present the aspects of the Dalabon grammar that will be necessary for the reader to follow the rest of the argument.

### 3. The dalabon verb complex

In Dalabon, clausal arguments are systematically cross-referenced by prefixes on predicates. There are also some nominal case suffixes, including an optional ergative suffix (Luk & Ponsonnet, 2019). Dalabon polysynthetic verb complexes follow a regular template outlined in Figure 1 (see Evans & Merlan (2003) or Ponsonnet (2014, pp. 61–64) for more extensive accounts). Dalabon word order is syntactically free and pragmatically determined.

-11	-10	-9	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3/4	+5
Object pron.	Person pref.	Status	Focus	Sequential	Misc. Adverbs	<b>Benefactive</b>	Misc. adverbs	Incorporated nom.	Number prefix	<b>Comitative</b>	ROOT	Ref./Recip.	TAM	Case/Poss. endl.	Diminutive

**Figure 1.** The Dalabon verb template and of its slots. Adapted from Evans & Merlan (2003, p. 271) and Evans, Fletcher & Ross (2008, p. 95). Shaded columns indicate compulsory slots.

While the template numbers 15 slots, in ordinary speech only a fraction of these are filled in a given utterance. As illustrated in (1), many verb complexes only fill the four obligatory slots. In Example (2), the verb complex has two aspectual markers and an incorporated noun, amounting to six morphemes, which is also very common.

20120706b\_000\_MT 043 [Film]<sup>1</sup>

- (1) *Woy, dja-h-dokka-n ngarra-h-bo-niyan, wudjirru-ba-n*  
 INTJ.hey 2SG-R-get.up-PRS 1PL.incl-R-go-FUT APPR:1du>2SG-leave-PRS  
*barra-h-yin.*  
 3du-R-say/do:PRS  
 ‘Hey, get up, we’re going, or we’ll leave you here they say.’

20120705b\_004\_MT 118 [Film]

- (2) *Bunu ka-h-na-ng, barra-h-dja-Ing-kakku-yurd-minj.*  
 3du 3SG>3-R-see-PP 3du-R-FOC-SEQ-really-run-PP  
 ‘She looked at them two, they were running fast.’

Dalabon verbs are lexically defined as either transitive or intransitive, in the sense that they pick one of two sets of obligatory prefixes and clitics. One of the sets is intransitive and encodes just one argument, like *dja-* second person singular in the first line of (1) above for instance. The other set is transitive and encodes two arguments. This is done either by means of clitics like *bunu* in (2) above, which cross-references a dual third person as the second argument of the transitive verb *nan* ‘see’; or by portmanteau prefixes, like *wudjirru-* in (2), which encodes the action of first person dual upon second singular (in the apprehensive mood).

In this article, I will use the letters S, A and O to refer respectively to the single argument of an intransitive clause, and to the first and second argument of a transitive clause.<sup>2</sup> In addition, I will use ‘second object’ or O2 for the third argument of ditransitive clauses. Second objects are not cross-referenced on Dalabon predicates, as illustrated in (3) where the cross-referenced O is first person plural inclusive, i.e. the persons to whom the Theme *yang* ‘language’ is being shown. The Theme is an O2 expressed as an incorporated noun and is not cross-referenced by the verbal prefix. Note that in Dalabon, animate participants tend to have priority in terms of cross-referencing on the verb. That is, there is a strong preference for treating animate participants as clausal arguments, encoding them on the verb.

30024/2007 – 14’ (JW) [ContEl]

- (3) *Bulu-ngokorrng-yih ngorr ka-h-yang-buyhwo-n.*  
 father-1PL.incl.POSS-ERG 1PL.incl 3SG>1-R-language-show-PRS  
 ‘Our father God taught us [gave us] languages.’

1. Glosses in capitals indicate an etymological meaning not used in synchrony.

2. Here, the roles S, A, O and O2 refer uniquely to the morphological cross-referencing by verbal prefixes and clitics, irrespective of purely syntactic relations such as the notion of a syntactic subject.

As mentioned above, the set of prefixes assigned to a given verb is lexically defined: verbs cannot freely alternate between one valence or the other. Instead, valence alternations must be sanctioned by valence changing morphemes, in particular two applicative operators: the benefactive applicative *marnu-* and the comitative applicative *ye-*. As shown in Figure 1 above, both of them are verbal prefixes that occur between the person prefix and the root. In Dalabon, the comitative applicative *ye-* occurs in constructions semantically specialised for transfer. Given that this semantic specialisation of the comitative applicative is the clearest when contrasted with the benefactive applicative, both applicatives will be discussed in turn, and then compared.

#### 4. Benefactive applicative constructions

The basic function of the Dalabon applicative prefix *marnu-* is to allow for an animate who is involved in the event but is not included in the lexically defined subcategorisation of the verb to be formally encoded as an argument on the verb. As discussed below, this usually results in raising the valence of the predicate by one (intransitive > transitive, transitive > ditransitive). Verbal affixes with very similar morphological and semantic behaviours have been described for several Gunwinyguan languages. Bininj Gun-wok dialects have the cognate form *marne-* (Evans, 2003, pp. 427–432), and Evans also reports the cognate *marnaj-* in Kunbarlang (Gunwinyguan). In addition, Rembarrnga has a non-cognate form *bak-* with a very similar behaviour to the Dalabon *marnu-*, as described by McKay (2011, pp. 261–282) and Saulwick (2003, pp. 208–226).<sup>3</sup> Some fine differences between Dalabon and Rembarrnga are discussed in Section 5.2.

Example (4) illustrates the subcategorisation alteration operated by the Dalabon prefix *marnu-* with a lexically intransitive predicate as a base, where *marnu-yenjdjung* ‘talk to’ is preceded by *bulu ka-*, third singular acting upon third plural. Without *marnu-*, *yenjdjung* ‘talk’ is intransitive and can only cross-reference a single argument.

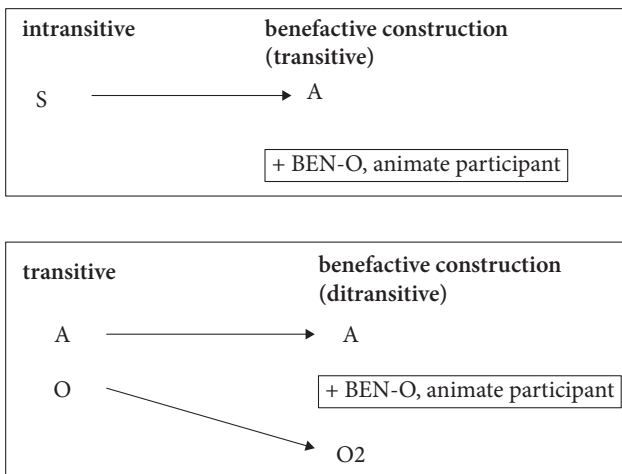
20120721\_003\_LB 009 [Film]

- (4) *Bulu ka-h-yinmiwo-ng bulu ka-h-marnu-yenjHyenjdju-ng.*  
 3PL 3SG>3-R-tell-PP 3PL 3SG>3-R-BEN-talk:REDUP-PRS  
 ‘He tells them, he talks to them.’

3. The Rembarrnga *bak-* prefix also has cognates in two other Gunwinyguan languages, Ngalkagan (Merlan 1983, p. 47;94) and Ngandi (Heath 1978, p. 81).

In (5), with the lexically transitive base ‘take’, the prefix *buka-* encodes the action of third singular upon third singular higher in animacy, encoding the animate owner of the tobacco as O. Without *marnu-*, an inanimate object such as the tobacco would be encoded on the verb, using *ka-* third person singular acting upon third person singular. Figure 2 presents the modification in subcategorisation operated in each case (intransitive and transitive bases) by the benefactive *marnu-*.

- 20110526b\_001\_MT 021 [ContEl]  
 (5) *Men-mungu kanh beka buka-h-marnu-m-e.*  
 idea-unintentionally DEM tobacco 3SG>3SG.H-R-BEN-get:PP  
 ‘He unintentionally took her tobacco [to her detriment].’



**Figure 2.** Subcategorisation operations of the Dalabon benefactive applicative *marnu-* upon an intransitive (top) and transitive (bottom) predicate.

The label “benefactive” is convenient here because it is standard terminology for applicative markers, yet it is partially misleading, because it suggests that the applicative in question selects the arguments it introduces on the basis of their semantic role. The Dalabon benefactive prefix *marnu-* (like its cognates in other Gunwinyguan languages) can introduce arguments with a large variety of the semantic roles, and ultimately the semantic role of the argument depends upon the lexical sense of the base verb (as suggested for the Rembarrnga *bak-* by Saulwick (2003, p. 222)). Instead of the semantic role of the participant, the availability of *marnu-* constructions depends essentially on the animacy of the participant: participant introduced by *marnu-* must be high in animacy (humans or personified animals). Given that the benefactive selects animate participants involved in the event, they are often benefactees or malefactees, as in (6) and (7) below.



*Benefactee*

20120707b\_000\_MT 414 [Narr]

- (6) *Mmm, byunrul yila-h-marnu-yidnja-ninj-wurd.*  
INTJ.approv funeral 1PL.excl>3-R-BEN-have-PI-DIM  
'Mmm, we had a small funeral for her.'

*Malefactee*

20120706a\_001\_MT 113 [ContEl]

- (7) *ngorr bula-h-marnu-ngu-yan.*  
1PL.incl 3PL>1-R-BEN-eat-FUT  
'They will eat it on us [our food].'

However, depending on the base verbs, the applicative argument can also be an emotional stimulus (8), an addressee (4 above), a goal or location (9), a possessor (10), and probably more. Note that possessors can often be construed as benefactees or malefactees, as in (5) or (6) above, but this is not very clearly the case in (10), where the benefactive construction is simply another way of encoding possession.

*Emotional stimuli*

20120707b\_000\_MT 204 [Narr]

- (8) *Mak bula-Ing-bukku-yurr-mi, kahke-no, kardu*  
NEG 3PL>3-SEQ-?-give.in.return-IRR NEG maybe  
*bula-h-marnu-djong-m-inj.*  
3PL>3SG-R-BEN-FEAR-INCH-PP  
'They didn't take revenge at all, maybe they were afraid of them.'

*Location*

20110605\_002\_LB\_ND 123 (LB) [Stim]

- (9) *Darnki ka-h-bo-n, buka-h-marnu-bo-ninj darnkih.*  
close 3SG-R-go-PRS 3SG>3SG.h-R-BEN-go-PI close  
'He comes close, he was coming close to him.'

*Possession*

20120706a\_000\_MT 036 [El]

- (10) *Dja-h-marnu-labbarl-n-iyen.*  
1SG>2SG-R-BEN-pond-see-FUT  
'I will see your pond (billabong).'

This list of semantic roles is very consistent with the list provided by Evans (2003, pp. 427–432) for the cognate prefix *marne-* in Bininj Gun-wok dialects, as well as with the one provided by Saulwick (2003, pp. 208–226) for the non-cognate prefix *bak-* in Rembarnga.

## 5. Comitative applicative constructions

### 5.1 Syntax and semantics

Like the benefactive applicative *marnu-*, the comitative applicative prefix *ye-* sanctions the addition of an argument in the subcategorisation pattern of the predicate. But unlike the benefactive construction, the comitative valence-change operation is driven mostly by the semantic role of the applicative argument, and it somewhat less syntactically systematic. Cognate prefixes are found in Bininj Gun-wok (*yi-* for most dialects and *re-* in Kune, see Evans (2003, pp. 432–437)) and in Rembarrnga, where *yi-* and *re-* are described as two different comitative prefixes by Saulwick (2003, pp. 227–236) (see also McKay, 2011, pp. 151–154). Evans (2003, p. 437) indicates that these verbal prefixes originated in nominal comitative suffixes of the form *-yih* (Dalabon), *-yi* (Bininj Gun-wok) and *-yi(nda)* (Rembarrnga) – the Rembarrnga *-yi(nda)* can actually incorporate to verb complexes following incorporated nouns. Given that *r/y* correspondences are attested morpheme initially within the Gunwinyguan family<sup>4</sup> the three items *yi-* > *ye-* > *re-* form a cognate set, with the order of historical derivation supported by the form of the original nominal comitative suffixes (*yi(nda)*). Rembarrnga also has a third comitative prefix *bardda-*,<sup>5</sup> which is not cognate with Dalabon *ye-*. Overall, the functions and meanings of comitative prefixes across these three Gunwinyguan languages seem largely consistent, although Rembarrnga, with three different prefixes (*yi-*, *re-* and *bardda-*), appears to offer further functional and semantic nuances (see Section 5.2). In all three languages, the comitative markers support a malefactive-transfer construction, described in Section 5.3. Dalabon also has a communication-transfer construction discussed, in Section 5.3, which is not reported either in Bininj Gun-wok or in Rembarrnga.

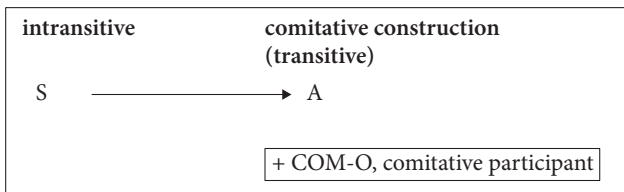
While the Dalabon benefactive *marnu-* can only add animate arguments and imposes their cross-referencing by the person prefix on the predicate, the argument added when *ye-* is used can be either animate or inanimate, and their being cross-referenced on the verb or not depends on their animacy. When the base predicate is intransitive, the resulting predicate with *ye-* becomes transitive, as illustrated in (11) below. *Dudj(mu)* ‘return’ is intransitive, and a first person plural exclusive S should be encoded by *yala-*, but with *ye-*, the prefix becomes the transitive *yila-*,

4. E.g. *rawoyh-* in Dalabon and *yawoyh-* in Bininj Gun-wok for the verbal prefix ‘again’, Harvey (2003, p. 257)).

5. *bartta-* in the orthography used by McKay (2011) and Saulwick (2003).

first person plural exclusive acting upon third singular. Figure 3 presents the corresponding subcategorisation operation.

- 20100720b\_009\_MT 077 [Narr]  
 (11) *Yila-h-ye-dudj-mu wulk-no.*  
 1PL.excl>3-R-COM-return-PRS fat-FILL  
 ‘We bring back some fat.’



**Figure 3.** Subcategorisation operation of the Dalabon comitative applicative *ye-* with an intransitive predicate as a base.

When the base verb is transitive, the comitative *ye-* makes it ditransitive, and whether the new comitative participant or the original O is encoded on the verb depends upon their respective animacy: the participant with the highest degree of animacy is cross-referenced as O on the comitative predicate. In (12), the participant added by the benefactive construction is an inanimate instrument (teeth), while the patient of the base verb is animate (someone being bitten). As a result, the comitative participant is not cross-referenced on the verb, because it is lower in animacy. Thus, *njel ka-* cross-references third singular acting upon third plural exclusive. The same prefix and clitic would have been expected for *bang* ‘bite’ alone without the comitative construction, so that the original O is not demoted to O2. Instead, the inanimate comitative object is treated as O2.

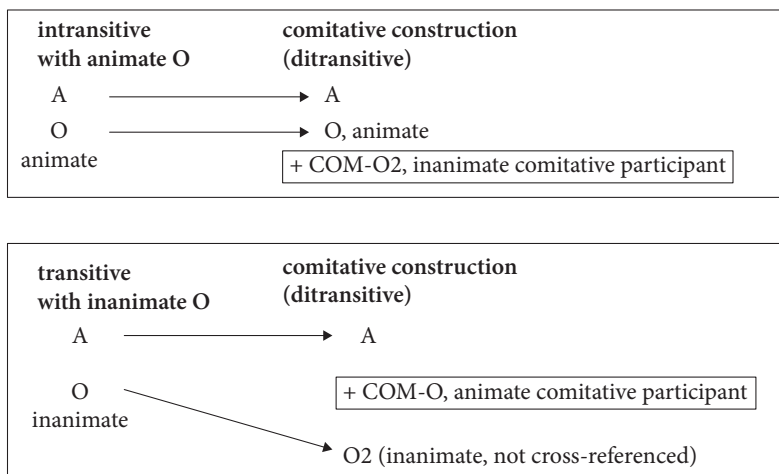
- 20100724\_004\_MT 096 [Stim]  
 (12) *Nunda njel ka-h-ye-ba-ng.*  
 this 1PL.excl 3SG>1-R-COM-bite-PRS  
 ‘[The crayfish,] this [its teeth] is to bite us with.’

In Example (13), the original A and the comitative participant are a participant set undertaking an action together: “they look after the land with us”. Note that this configuration is reported by Evans (2003, p. 423) to be impossible in Bininj Gun-wok. Contrary to what was observed in (12), here the comitative participant, which is semantically a co-agent, is cross-referenced as O on the verb (*njel* for first person plural exclusive O). The theme, which is the incorporated *kurnh* ‘country’ being looked after, is inanimate. It would have been encoded as O on a bare verb *nahnan* ‘look after’ (*bula-h-nahna-n*, ‘they look after it’), but in the applicative

comitative construction it is superseded by the animate comitative participant, so that the theme *kurnh* ‘country’ is no longer cross-referenced on the verb.

- 20100722b\_008\_MT 085 [ConvEI]  
 (13) *Rembarrnga njel bula-h-kurnh-ye-nahna-n.*  
 prop.n 1PL.excl 3PL>1-R-country-COM-see:REDUP-PRS  
 ‘The Rembarrnga people [ethnic group], they look after the land with us.’

These two cases illustrated respectively in (12) and (13) imply two slightly different subcategorisation operations.<sup>6</sup> As shown in Figure 4, in the first case (top), when the original O is animate, a comitative participant is added as a non-cross-referenced second object. In the other case, when the original O is inanimate and the comitative participant is animate, the comitative participant is cross-referenced on the verb, and the original O is demoted to the non-cross-referenced function O2.



**Figure 4.** Subcategorisation operations of the Dalabon comitative applicative *ye-* with a transitive predicate, when the original O is higher in animacy than the comitative participant (top), and when it is lower in animacy (bottom).

Semantically, the comitative applicative *ye-* covers many of the contexts typically covered by markers called “comitative markers”, i.e. the domain of “concomitance” (Lehmann & Shin, 2005; Schlesinger, 1995). The senses attested for Dalabon *ye-* are

6. Given the semantics of comitative participants (see below), in a large number of cases, both the comitative participant and O are inanimate. Since inanimates do not attract plural agreement in Dalabon, in such cases it is not possible to tell which argument is encoded on the verb, because they would both be encoded in the same way anyway, as third person singular. My corpus does not contain any occurrence where both the original O and the comitative participant are animate.

largely consistent with those reported for the comitative prefixes in Bininj Gun-wok dialects (Evans, 2003, pp. 432–437) and in Rembarrnga (see also McKay, 2011, pp. 151–154; Saulwick, 2003, pp. 227–236). The Dalabon constructions can encode accompaniment, whether in movement (11 above) or in static postures (14 below); conjoint location as in (15) below; accompaniment in action as in (13) above; as well as material and instruments (12 above).

*Accompaniment in static posture*

20110605\_002\_LB\_ND 083 (LB) [Stim]

- (14) *Buka-h-ye-naHna-n* *kanh djenj.*  
 3SG>3SG.h-R-COM-see:REDUP-PRS DEM fish  
 ‘He looks at him with the fish [holding the fish].’

*Conjoint location*

20100722b\_003\_MT 123 [Narr]

- (15) *Buka-h-ye-yoyo* *wulkun-no.*  
 3SG>3SG.h-R-COM-lie:REDUP:PP brother-3SG.POSS  
 ‘He was sleeping with his brother.’

The Dalabon comitative construction was not found to encode manner (e.g. “walking away with grace” in English), but it was found in contexts where it generally describes an action done *because of* something (comitative participant), as in (16).

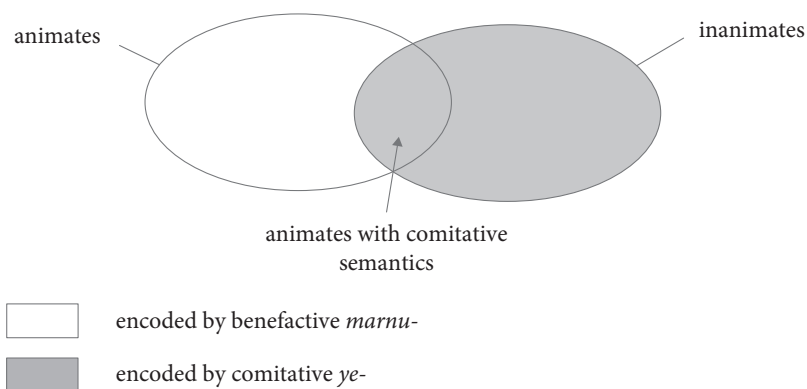
*Causation*

20100722b\_003\_MT 147 [Narr]

- (16) *Yang djehmeng bunu burra-h-ye-mulw-uy.*  
 as.if 3du 3du>3-R-COM-leave-IRR  
 ‘They (two) should have left them (two) alone about this [they should have minded their own business].’

## 5.2 Distribution of labor between the comitative and benefactive applicative markers

The distribution of semantic labor between the Dalabon benefactive *marnu-* and comitative *ye-* is interesting because it is determined both by the animacy of the applicative participant (for the benefactive applicative *marnu-*) and by the semantic role of the applicative participant (for the comitative applicative *ye-*). As illustrated in Figure 5, the comitative *ye-* is used to encode all inanimate applicative participants, as well as animate participants with “comitative” semantics (as defined by Lehman (2005), Schlesinger (1995)). The benefactive *marnu-*, on the other hand, is used to encode all animate applicative participants, except the ones with typically comitative semantics. Based on this distribution, the benefactive applicative may be better qualified as an “animate” or “non-comitative” applicative marker rather



**Figure 5.** The distribution of labor between Dalabon benefactive applicative (*marnu-*) and comitative applicative (*ye-*) constructions.

than “benefactive”. As discussed in Section 4, it supports most semantic roles apart from comitative ones.

Based on Saulwick (2003, pp. 227–242), it appears that the distribution of labor between applicative prefixes differs slightly in Rembarrnga, where there are three comitative prefixes (*yi-*, *re-* and *bardda-*) and one benefactive prefix (*bak-*). According to Saulwick (2003, p. 228), *yi-* introduces “non-human comitative arguments with intransitive verbs”; *re-* and *bardda-* introduce “any type of comitative argument (i.e human, non-human, animate or inanimate, and may be used with verbs of all transitive values)”; and the prefix *bak-* is used with human participants (Saulwick, 2003, p. 222), and can occasionally be found with semantically comitative arguments if they are human/animate. Therefore, according to Saulwick (2003), the distribution of the Rembarrnga benefactive applicative *bak-* and comitative applicative *yi-* are primarily determined by the animacy of the participant, irrespective of its semantic role. In Dalabon on the other hand, as discussed above, the choice between the benefactive *marnu-* and the comitative *ye-* is governed partly by an animacy criterion, partly by semantic roles. Given that the Rembarrnga system of applicative prefixes is richer than the Dalabon or Bininj Gun-wok one, it is possible that Rembarrnga is developing further distinctions, with animacy gaining ground as a decisive criterion.

### 5.3 Malefactive transfer constructions

In addition to the semantic contexts listed in Section 5.1, the Dalabon comitative marker *ye-* can express transfer when it combines with certain verbs. In a first case, described in this section, the comitative construction denotes a malefactive

transfer of good between two participants – i.e. the removal of a possession, the opposite of a gift. The second case, discussed in Section 5.4, concerns the transfer of content of speech.

The malefactive-transfer construction, which is the most frequent, occurs with transitive verbs expressing “attainment” – i.e. grasping, holding etc. This is illustrated in (17) and (18) with *mang* ‘get’. Example (17) presents the bare use of *mang*, where the theme (here *bad-ngong*, ‘all the money’) is treated as O (*yila-*, first person plural exclusive acting upon third person singular).

- 20100724\_000\_MT 35 [Narr]  
 (17) *Nunh kanh bad-ngong yila-h-ma-nginj, njel bula-h-ngabbu-ninj.*  
 DEM DEM money-group 1PL.excl>3-R-get-PI 1PL.excl 3PL>1-R-give-PI  
 ‘We used to take all the money, that they gave us.’

In Example (18), we see that a comitative construction applied to the verb *mang* ‘get’ means ‘take away from someone’. Here the O argument of *mang* ‘get’ is no longer the theme (the food being taken away is not expressed in the utterance), but the persons being deprived of the food, encoded as *ngorr*, first person plural inclusive. This conforms to the comitative subcategorisation operation presented in Figure 3 in Section 5.1: given that the original O is inanimate, it is demoted to an O2 position, while the new animate participant sanctioned by the comitative applicative prefix *ye-* is cross-referenced as O on the verb.

- 20120706a\_001\_MT 113 [ContEl]  
 (18) *Wurrhwurrungu ngorr bula-h-ye-ma-ng,*  
 old.person 1PL.incl 3PL>1-R-COM-get-PRS  
*ngorr bula-h-marnu-ngu-yan.*  
 1PL.incl 3PL>1-R-BEN-eat-FUT  
 ‘They take it [food] from us old people, they eat it on us [they eat our food].’

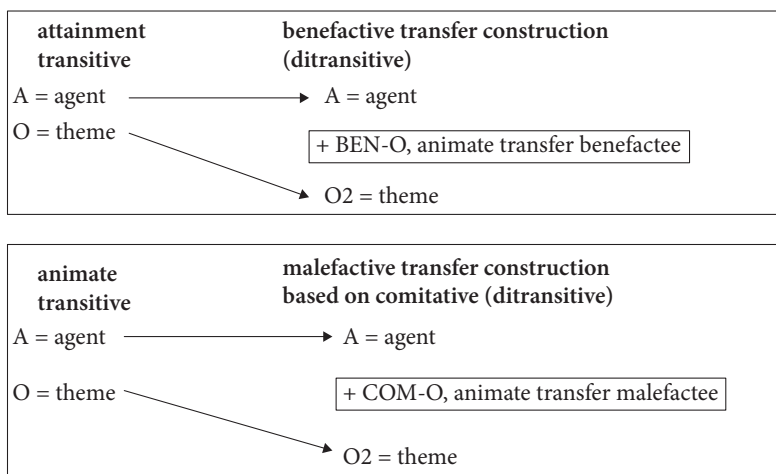
Semantically, this “comitative” construction expressing malefactive transfer reaches out of the cross-linguistically typical comitative range, because there is no sense of accompaniment. It is easy to see that the malefactive transfer relates to the notion of accompaniment to the extent that the A participant goes away *with* the theme. Yet, the action that is undertaken with the theme is not expressed by the verb. Given that attainment verbs like *mang* ‘get’ do not express either movement or location, and given that neither O (the persons being deprived of food) nor the theme (the food) are either an instrument or a material etc., we cannot translate (18) using the English “with” for instance. The notion of transfer is not conveyed by a compositional combination between the verb *mang* ‘get’ and the comitative *ye-*, but by the construction itself. McKay (2011, p. 150) and Saulwick (2003, p. 234) state that Rembarrnga comitative constructions apply to arguments that “lack control”, in line with both their semantic status as comitative participants and their usually lower

degree of animacy. Indeed, malefactive-transfer constructions describe situations where the added participant (the malefactivee, not the theme) in spite of being animate, lacks control over the item being taken away from them.

The participant added by the comitative applicative *ye-* in this transfer construction is neither semantically comitative, nor inanimate. Therefore, this participant could in principle be taken charge of by a benefactive construction (see Sections 4 and 5.2). But instead, the transfer construction contrasts neatly with its sister benefactive (*marnu-*) construction, presented in (19). Here the benefactive participant is encoded as *bulu* third person plural, the O2 is *burningkird* ‘wild plum’, and the whole construction expresses benefits for O: “A gets plums for O”.

- 20120710b\_001\_MT 111 [Narr]  
 (19) *Burningkird bulu bula-h-marnu-ma-nginj.*  
 wild.plum 3PL 3PL>3-R-BEN-get-PI  
 ‘They [the mothers] used to get wild plums for them [the children].’

As discussed in Section 4, benefactive participants can in principle be malefactivees as well as benefactivees, but in this case, the benefactive construction is restricted to benefactivees – “get something for someone” –, and malefactive interpretations are taken care of by the comitative-based transfer construction illustrated above in (18) above – “take something away from someone”. Figure 6 shows that the benefactive and the comitative constructions share identical subcategorisation patterns and only differ in meaning, with the construction based on the comitative *ye-* yielding a malefactive-transfer meaning.



**Figure 6.** Subcategorisation operations of applicative comitative (top) and benefactive (bottom) constructions with verbs expressing attainment.



Thus, the transfer meaning of comitative constructions applied to verbs of attainment is adequately described as a lexicalised semantic value of this construction. The construction applies productively with verbs of attainment, as illustrated for *durrk(mu)* ‘pull out’ in (20). *Durrk(mu)* is lexically ditransitive, with the person being deprived treated as O, and the theme treated as a second object. In (20), the subcategorisation remains the same, except that the second object is now a comitative participant, due to the presence of *ye-*. The comitative marker does not really alter the construction, and neither does it change the sense of the verb. In other words, it is somewhat pleonastic, but does impart a malefactive dimension to the otherwise neutral verb *durrk(mu)* ‘pull out’. In this case, the comitative prefix may impart emphasis on the malefactive dimension, as the speaker is talking about how some of her siblings were taken away from her parents by government authorities – i.e. a particularly hurtful removal.<sup>7</sup>

- 20110519b\_001\_LB\_ND 034 (LB) [Narr]  
 [Reported speech from the speaker’s parents.]  
 (20) *Njel bula-h-ye-durrk-minj.*  
 1PL.excl 3PL>1-R-COM-pull.out-PP  
 ‘They took them from us [your elder siblings].’

In addition, the malefactive transfer construction also occurs in cases where the verb already implies malefactive transfer, so that the construction becomes entirely pleonastic. In (21), the verb *djirdmang* ‘steal’ already expresses the idea of malefactive transfer, but the construction is nevertheless used because its lexicalised semantics matches the event being described.

- 20110520\_001\_LB 118 [ConvEl]  
 (21) *Bulu bula-h-ye-djirdjirdma-nginj kirdikird-bulng.*  
 3PL 3PL>3-R-COM-steal:REDUP-PI woman-3PL.POSS  
 ‘They used to steal their wives.’

This malefactive-transfer construction is attested with comitative prefixes for attainment verbs in both Bininj Gun-wok and Rembarrnga. Evans (2003, p. 435) calls it “eventual possession” and Saulwick (2003, p. 228;238) calls it “deprivative”, but the construction and its meaning are the same. In Rembarrnga, the construction is available for both *re-* and *bardda-*, i.e. for all the comitative suffixes that can occur with transitive verbs. In (22), this is illustrated for the Gun-djeihmi Bininj Gun-wok dialect with a verb where the attainment is figurative. Examples (23) and (24) illustrate it with the Rembarrnga transitive verb *ma* ‘get’, cognate with Dalabon *mang* ‘get’.

7. As part of the government policy now known as the “Stolen Generation”, see Commission on Human Rights and Equal Opportunity’s (1997).

(Bininj Gun-wok, Gun-djeihmi dialect, Evans 2003: 435)

- (22) *Ban-warde-yi-birrbme-ng.*  
 3/3PL-money-COM-clean-PP  
 ‘She cleaned them out of money.’

(Rembarrnga, Saulwick 2004:233)

- (23) *Nga-re-ma-ngara.*  
 1>3-COM-get-FUT  
 ‘I’ll get it off him/her.’

(Rembarrnga, McKay 2011: 151)

- (24) *Dambakku banga-bardda-ma-ngara.*  
 tobacco 1>3a-COM-get-FUT  
 ‘I’ll get some tobacco from them.’

Thus, the semantic extension of comitative markers to encode malefactive transfer is not language specific. On the contrary, the phenomenon occurs in several languages across the Gunwinyguan family, for markers that are cognates (*yi-*, *ye-*, *re-*) but also for markers that do not belong to this cognate set (*bardda-* in Rembarrnga). This suggests that this semantic extension to malefactive transfer is a cross-linguistically significant semantic extension of applicative comitative markers. It remains an open question for future research whether this extension occurs in other language families, in Australia and elsewhere.

#### 5.4 Communication transfer constructions: Transfer of content of speech

In addition to malefactive transfer, the comitative construction has another lexicalised transfer meaning, namely the transfer of contents of communication. This meaning occurs with verbs of verbal communication *wokan* ‘tell someone/something’ and *djawan* ‘ask something to someone’. Unlike the malefactive-transfer construction above, this construction related to communication is not reported in Bininj Gun-wok or in Rembarrnga. Semantically, both *wokan* ‘tell someone/something’ and *djawan* ‘ask something to someone’ have three main standard participants, namely an agent, an addressee, and a theme which is the content of speech. Lexically, in Dalabon *wokan* does not subcategorise for three but only two arguments: it is lexically transitive, not ditransitive. However, the semantic mapping of these two arguments varies. A is always the agent i.e. the person who is speaking, but O can be either the recipient of the speech content, or the speech content itself, i.e. the theme in terms of semantic role. In (25), O is *bulu* third person plural or ‘them’, i.e. the recipient, and the theme is not expressed. In (26), by contrast, the theme is *dawo* ‘story’, cross-referenced on the verb with *da-* which is second person singular acting upon third singular; the recipient is not expressed.

20120710a\_000\_MT 279 [Film]

- (25) *Kanh-kun mak bulu ka-h-Ing-woka-n.*  
 DEM-GEN NEG 3PL 3SG>3-R-SEQ-tell-PRS  
 ‘That’s why he’s not going to tell them.’

2007/30089 – 1’ (MT) [E1]

- (26) *Kirribuk dawo da-h-woka-n.*  
 true story 2SG>3-R-tell-PRS  
 ‘You’re telling a true story.’

As expected given the comitative subcategorisation patterns described in Section 5.1, a comitative construction makes *wokan* ‘tell someone/something’ ditransitive: *ye-wokan* ‘tell something to someone’. Also as expected given the Dalabon animacy hierarchy, the recipient of the speech content is normally animate and therefore cross-referenced on the verb. The theme, which is inanimate, is second object. This is illustrated in (27), where the recipient is cross-referenced as O on the verb with *nol* second person plural, and the theme is the comitative participant *dawo*, treated as O2 and therefore not cross-referenced on the verb.

20110601\_003\_MT 53 [ConvE1]

- (27) *Kanh dawo nol nga-h-woh-ye-woka-n.*  
 DEM story 2PL 1SG>2-R-a.little-COM-tell-PRS  
 ‘This is the small piece of news I’m telling you.’

It is unclear which of the addressee or theme is the added comitative participant, given that the base verb allows for both to occur as O. Evans (2003, p. 434) reports that in Bininj Gun-wok dialects, the cognate verb *wokdi* ‘talk’ occurs in comitative constructions where the comitative participant is a language, i.e. *yi-wokdi* ‘talk in [language name]’. This conforms with typical comitative semantics, namely an instrumental sense (Schlesinger, 1995, pp. 63–66). However, this Bininj Gun-wok usage is not attested for Dalabon *wokan* ‘tell someone/something’. Note that the transitive *wokan* ‘tell someone/something’ can take part in benefactive applicative constructions as well, with an equivalent meaning as the comitative applicative construction. We see in (28) that with the benefactive *marnu-*, the recipient of the speech content is cross-referenced on the verb by *dja-* third person singular acting upon second person singular, and the speech content, or theme, is a subordinate clause. However, this benefactive applicative construction is only marginally attested with *wokan* ‘tell someone/something’, while the comitative applicative construction is frequent.

20120718a\_000\_MT 020 [ContEl]

- (28) *Mulah-ngu ka-ye-do-nj,*  
 mother's.sister-2SG.POSS 3SG-SUB-die-PP  
*nah-ngu dja-h-marnu-woka-ng [...].*  
 mother-2SG.POSS 2SG-R-BEN-tell-PP  
 'When your maternal aunt's died, your mother told you [...].'

The behaviour of the verb *djawan* 'ask something to someone' in comitative constructions confirms that with both verbs, *djawan* and *wokan* 'tell someone/something', the comitative construction encodes transfer. *Djawan* is lexically ditransitive, so that the bare verb readily subcategorises for the agent who is the author of the request, the recipient of the request, and the theme – the request itself. In (29), O is the recipient, cross-referenced on the verb as *njel* first person plural exclusive. The theme is *manjh kanj-no* 'meat', treated as O2 without a cross-reference.

20100718b\_006\_MT 021 [ContEl]

- (29) *Manjh kanj-no njel ka-h-djawa-n.*  
 meat flesh-FILL 1PL.excl 3SG>1-R-ask-PRS  
 'She asks us for meat [she asks us meat].'

Given that it is already ditransitive, in principle there is no reason why *djawan* 'ask something to someone' would take part in valence-raising comitative constructions. But it does, as illustrated in (30), where the comitative construction is pleonastic: it does not modify either the subcategorisation frame or the meaning of the verb. Confirming to the frame described above for this verb, the recipient of the request is cross-referenced as O with *buka-* third person singular acting upon third person animate; and the request or theme, *dah-no* 'wood', is a second object, now treated as a comitative participant although it is part of the subcategorisation frame of the bare verb.

20120708b\_007\_MT 24 [ContEl]

- (30) *Yoan, kanh dah-no, buka-h-ye-djawanj [proper name].*  
 prop.n DEM wood-FILL 3SG>3SG.h-R-COM-ask-PP [proper name]  
 'Yoan, [proper name] asked him for firewood.'

Here the syntactic input of the comitative construction is nil, but it flags transfer semantics. The sense of the clause does remind of malefactive transfer since asking something to someone relates semantically to taking it from them. In addition, the meaning and construction in (30) also echo the pattern observed with *ye-wokan* 'tell something to someone' construction in (27): in both cases, the transfer of the content of speech in the context of verbal communication that is being flagged. Acts of communication can easily be interpreted as transfer of communication. In

this Dalabon construction, neither the recipient of the request nor the request or theme conform to the cross-linguistically standard “comitative” semantic domain. It is not clear which of the canonical cross-linguistic meanings of comitative constructions, as discussed in Section 1, could have offered a bridge towards transfer of content of communication. Therefore, a good candidate explanation for this semantic extension is an analogy with the malefactive transfer construction presented in Section 5.3. Constructions where a language is treated as a comitative participant for verbs denoting speech, like *yi-wokdi* ‘talk in [language name]’ in Bininj Gun-wok, may also have favoured this extension – although they are not attested in Dalabon in synchrony, they may have existed in the past.

## 6. Conclusions

This article has described both Dalabon applicative constructions, namely the benefactive applicative construction with the verbal prefix *marnnu-*, and the comitative applicative construction with the verbal prefix *ye-*. Both constructions raise the valence of the main predicate by one. Benefactive applicative constructions are used in most of the contexts where the new participant is animate. Comitative applicative constructions are used for participants in comitative semantic roles, including animate participants. Therefore, benefactive applicative constructions can introduce participants in a broad range of semantic roles, as long as these participants are animate. Comitative applicative constructions introduce participants in typically comitative roles such as accompaniment of main participants (with movement or static), instrument, material. These semantic roles are often assigned to participants with lower animacy, which often lack control in actions undertaken by animate participants.

With respect to applicative constructions, Dalabon is relatively similar to neighbouring, related languages, the Bininj Gun-wok dialect chain and Rembarrnga, but I have highlighted some nuances. For instance, in Rembarrnga, where there exists a broader set of comitative verbal prefixes, one of them solely targets inanimate participants, to the exclusion of animate ones. Therefore, while in Dalabon the distribution between benefactive and comitative applicative constructions is guided by animacy and semantic roles combined, in Rembarrnga some of the constructions rely exclusively upon an animacy criterion.

In addition, Dalabon comitative applicative constructions also cover semantic roles that are not typically comitative typologically. These are for instance the notion of “cause” (e.g. “fight ‘over’ something”), as well as notions of transfer. I have shown how the Dalabon comitative marker *ye-* expresses malefactive transfer (i.e.

removal, the opposite of giving) when combined with verbs of attainment (e.g. ‘get’). This sense is a plausible semantic extension from the notion of accompaniment of movement (‘to go *with*’), which is a core comitative notion. Another atypical semantic extension of the Dalabon comitative is the notion of transfer of content of communication. Since this notion can hardly be construed as an extension from one of the standard comitative meanings of the Dalabon marker, it is more likely that comitative constructions came to describe the transfer of contents of communication via semantic assimilation with malefactive transfer, possibly combined with constructions where the comitative participant is the language used to speak in (i.e. a sort of instrument).

While the transfer of content of communication construction is only attested in Dalabon, the malefactive transfer construction is also attested in other languages of the same Gunwinyguan family such as Bininj Gun-wok and Rembarrnga, including with comitative markers that are not cognate with the Dalabon comitative prefix *ye-*. Therefore, the semantic extension from comitative to malefactive transfer is not a unique scenario but could – as may be revealed in future research – be more widespread across the region, across the continent, and possibly elsewhere.

## Acknowledgements

I am immensely grateful to all the Dalabon speakers who have shared their knowledge with me over the years. The data presented and analysed in this chapter was collected under a grant from the Endangered Language Project of the Hans Rausing Foundation (IGS0125).

## Gloss abbreviations not listed in the Leipzig Glossing Rules

APPR	apprehensive mood
DIM	diminutive
FILL	morphological filler
FOC	focus prefix
H	high(er) on scale of animacy
INCH	inchoative marker
INTJ	interjection
PI	past imperfective
PP	past perfective
R	realis mood
REDUP	reduplication
SEQ	sequential
SUB	subordinate marker

## Data type abbreviations

[ContEl]	contextualised elicitation
[ConvEl]	conversation in the course of elicitation
[El]	standard elicitation
[Film]	comment on movie
[Narr]	narratives
[Stim]	response to elicitation stimuli

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PART 3

# **Grammaticalization, lexicalization and constructionalization issues**



## *Aoj* ‘give’ in Khmer

### Meaning extensions and construction types

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*To the memory of Joseph Deth Thach*

The lexeme for give in Khmer, *aoj*, is highly polyfunctional (Robert 2004, Heine 2013, Do-Hurinville & Hancil 2015) and it frequently occurs in verb serialization (Durie 1997, Aikhenvald & Dixon 2006:

*Jau:k samla: tev aoj chkae si: tev!*  
take soup go give dog eat then  
‘Give the soup to the dog, then!’

In this example we find three verbs in a row which all serve to describe a single macro-event (an event of transfer), which gets decomposed in Khmer into three subevents: “taking the soup, going somewhere with it and giving it to the dog.” This pattern of lexicalization is particularly frequent for verbs describing a path of motion, and it is often accounted for using both cultural and cognitive principles (Durie 1997, Vittrant 2015); in this chapter we insist on the cognitive and structural (i.e., constructional) aspects of the verb *aoj*. After providing a summary of the main uses of *aoj*, our research questions will be the following: the first and most difficult issue is that of categorization; according to the function it fulfills in the clause/sentence, *aoj* is called a verb (lexical/main verb, pre-auxiliary verb, causative verb, modal verb, etc.), a preposition, a conjunction, etc. We need to look for other types of solutions, and one such solution will be to endorse a constructional treatment (of *aoj*) in line with Croft (2013)’s proposals. This will in turn allow us to explore an important point raised by Newman (1996) in his extensive study of *give* verbs, which is that the constructional type of the language (namely, the omnipresence of SVCs) favors the polyfunctionality of *aoj*, compared to English *give* or French *donner*, which are far less polysemous. Finally, we tackle the thorny issue of the meaning contribution of *aoj* in the constructions it occurs in.

**Keywords:** *aoj*, causative construction, light verbs, serial verbs, polyfunctionality

## Introduction

The lexeme for ‘give’ in Khmer, *aoj*, is extremely polyfunctional (Robert 2004, Heine 2013, Do-Hurinville & Hancil 2015), like a handful of serial verbs (Durie 1997, Aikhenvald & Dixon 2006) that are found in South-East Asian languages. The different uses can be placed on a lexicon-grammar continuum, where in Indo-European languages we find different morphemes. *Aoj* is a good example of an item frequently occurring in verb serialization:

A single serial verb complex (SVC) describes what is conceptualized as a single event. [...] ... a SVC can often be best translated into a nonserializing language using a single, mono-verbal clause. (Durie 1997:91)

- (1) *Jau:k samla: tev aoj chkae si: tev!*  
 take soup go give dog eat then  
 ‘Give the soup to the dog, then!’

In (1), which features a typical example of serialization, we find three verbs in a row which all serve to describe a single macro-event (an event of transfer), which gets decomposed in Khmer into three subevents: “taking the soup, going somewhere with it and giving it to the dog.” This pattern of lexicalization is particularly frequent for verbs describing a path of motion, and it is often accounted for using both cultural and cognitive principles (Durie 1997, Vittrant 2015); in this chapter we will focus on the cognitive and structural (i.e., constructional) aspects of the verb *aoj*.

After providing a summary of the main uses of *aoj*, our research questions will be the following: the first and most difficult issue is that of categorization; in linguistic articles, monographs and grammar books, according to the function it fulfills in the clause/sentence, *aoj* is called a verb (lexical/main verb, pre-auxiliary verb, causative verb, modal verb, etc.), a preposition, a conjunction, etc. We will of course adopt this classification in the glossing of our examples, but we need to look for other types of solutions, and one such solution will be to endorse a constructional treatment (of *aoj*) in line with Croft (2013)’s proposals. This will in turn allow us to explore an important point raised by Newman (1996) in his extensive study of *give* verbs, which is that the constructional type of the language (namely, the omnipresence of SVCs) favors the polyfunctionality of *aoj*, compared to English *give* or French *donner*, which are far less polysemous. Finally, we tackle the thorny issue of the meaning contribution of *aoj* in the constructions it occurs in. Two solutions are possible: considering that the meaning of transfer seems to be lost in the most “grammatical” uses of *aoj* (see below), one could assume an abstract semantics for *aoj*, in a monosemic type of approach (Paillard 2011); alternatively, one can follow Newman (1996)’s path, who advocates a Brugman & Lakoff (1987) style

of radial network analyses of polysemy, by positing transfer as a sanctioning sense from which the other uses are derived following certain general cognitive principles. Complementary to this approach, one often finds the concept of pragmatic strengthening, in the way in which Song (1998) uses it to account for the extension of a manner sense from a purposive sense for the ‘give’ morpheme in Korean.

This chapter is organized as follows: in the first part, we describe the main uses of *aoj* and the problems of categorization this poses. In the second part, we turn to the issue of grammaticalization as a possible explanatory principle for *aoj*’s polyfunctionality, and we choose to explore another principle that seems to apply, called “Chesherization” (Matisoff 1973, in Heiman 2011). Finally, after proposing solutions for the categorization of *aoj*, we raise the issue of *aoj*’s central meaning and figurative extensions. This study is essentially an empirical investigation into the diverse meanings that *aoj* can take on, and the theoretical problems this poses.

## 1. Main uses and problems of categorization

The corpus for this study comes from three Khmer stories (tales): *A:nji: and A:lo;* *Story of A:le:v; The Rabbit and the Tigress* (about 3500 words), two language textbooks (*Modern Spoken Cambodian*, Huffman 1970, and Assimil S. H. Nut & M. Antelme, 2014), and the invaluable help of an informant, native Khmer speaker and linguist, Dara Non<sup>1</sup>.

### 1.1 Ditransitive and benefactive

The first use corresponds to the basic verb of transfer ‘give’ in a family of constructions, some of which are roughly reminiscent of the ditransitive constructions in French or English. The qualification “roughly” is intended to capture the fact that we often find the verb *aoj* in what I will call (more details in Section II) a “full” transfer construction which often involves several (serialized) verbs, as in (2). In this example, a particular object gets manipulated and subsequently transferred, or simply moved in a given direction, and the verb *jau:k*, ‘take’ is often found. But a transfer scene can also be expressed by the simple verb *aoj* ‘give’ in (3), often reinforced by a directional verb-preposition (‘directional verb’, Huffman 1970) *mau:k*, ‘come’ (“orientation of action toward the speaker”, Huffman *ibid*: 59), with the recipient omissible:

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- (2) *knjom jau:k robah teang nih mau:k aoj koat.*  
 1SG take things all these come aoj 3SG  
 ‘I’ve come to bring/give him all these objects.’ (literally, “I TAKE all-objects COME GIVE him”)
- (3) *Aoj (knjom) muaj kilo mau:k*  
*aoj* (1SG) one kilo come  
 ‘Give me one kilo.’

Another example is (4), where we find both *aoj* alone (glossed as *aoj*<sup>2</sup>), and *aoj* exemplifying the benefactive construction (*aoj*<sup>1</sup>), i.e. one in which *aoj* introduces a peripheral beneficiary argument:

- (4) *Knjom tenj sidi: camriang ceun meucut aoj<sup>1</sup> hi:e,*  
 1SG buy CDs song Chinese collection aoj 2SG  
*tae knjom nwnng aoj<sup>2</sup> hi:e louh tra: tae hi:e sanneja: tha:*  
 but 1SG FUT aoj 2SG on-condition-that you promise that  
*nwnng choup cyunlo: cyunlenj knjom.*  
 FUT stop tease 1SG  
 ‘I bought you a collection of Chinese CDs, but I will give them to you on the condition that you promise to stop teasing me.’

This benefactive construction, in which *aoj* functions like a preposition, is often found in serial-verb constructions (5, 6, 7), with other verbs (‘pour’, ‘cut’) that do not typically encode transfer, with *aoj* ‘give’ omissible for discourse reasons (in 6):

- (5) *Cak aoj pu: muajpenj mau:k*  
 pour aoj 1SG a-fill-up come  
 ‘Fill up the tank for me.’
- (6) *Cak tae muajpej li:t mau:k*  
 pour just twenty liters come  
 ‘Just pour me 20 liters!’
- (7) *Kap aoj knie phaw:ng, pontae kap cia dom thom thom na:.*  
 cut aoj 1SG please however cut be chunk large large PART  
 ‘Cut it for me please, but cut it into large chunks.’

These two constructions together:

- the *give*-DONOR (AGENT *aoj* THEME [RECIPIENT] [*mau:k*, ‘come’])
- and the *give*-BENEFACTIVE (AGENT verb 1 verb 2... THEME *aoj* BENEFICIARY), correspond to the ditransitive construction associated with scenes of transfer (as in Goldberg 2006).

## 1.2 Causative, permissive

The polysemy/polyfunctionality does not stop here: *aoj* is often used as a causative or a permissive marker, which is one frequent cross-linguistic extension of meaning for *give* verbs. When it is causative, *aoj* often occurs after explicit causative verbs like *tveu:*, ‘do, make’, *banda:l*, ‘cause, lead to’:

- (8) *Rueng nih tveu: aoj knjom jum*  
 story this do *aoj* 1SG cry  
 ‘This story makes me cry.’
- (9) *Nih tveu: aoj knie neuk khu:nj mae thloap ni’jiaj tha:...*  
 this do *aoj* 1SG think see mother used-to say that  
 ‘This reminds me of mother, who used to say that...’
- (10) *Bae mwn meu:l aoj cia sralah, a:c banda:l aoj slap.*  
 if NEG watch *aoj* be cleared-up can cause *aoj* die  
 ‘If one doesn’t watch it until it’s completely cleared up, it can cause death.’

In initial position, without a causative verb like *tveu:*, *aoj* usually takes on a permissive meaning:

- (11) *Aoj ba:ng proh ko:n aeng cih moto: dup!*  
*aoj* elder man child 2SG take motorcycle  
 ‘Let your big brother take a motorcycle!’
- (12) *Aoj knie khtej luj aeng 700 dolla:*  
*aoj* 1SG borrow money 2SG 700 dollars  
 ‘Let me borrow (Lend me) 700 dollars from you.’

Several observations are in order here. The construction with *aoj* as a causative marker (8, 9, 10) is generally as follows: [subject] VERB (*tveu:*, *banda:l*, etc) *AOJ* [object] VERB. Whether it takes on a causative or a permissive function, *aoj* is either called a “causative verb” (Heiman 2011) or a “preverbal auxiliary” (Huffman 1970). Again, we observe a strong tendency of *aoj* to form SVCs, in complex lexical units (in 9, we find the SV ‘make give see think’ which means ‘remind’). But what is more noteworthy is the difficulty in pinning down the exact contribution of *aoj* in Example (10): the presence of *aoj* between the verbs *banda:l* (‘cause’) and *slap* (‘die’) is exactly the position that *aoj* occupies when it takes on a manner adverbial and/or resultative meaning, as we will see below.



### 1.3 Purposive

As a purposive marker, *aoj* usually occurs alone or in combination with the conjunctions *dambei*, “in order to, so that” (13), or *samrap*, “so that, for” (14), and is called a “switch-reference marker in control constructions” (Enfield 2002), or “change-of-subject marking complementizer” (in Heiman 2011: 309): suppressing *aoj* in (13) and (14) is impossible because the subject of the embedded clause is different from that of the matrix. Calling it a purposive marker is actually a misnomer, because it is the conjunctions that express purpose, *aoj* simply signals a different subject for the subordinate clause:

- > (CLAUSE) or (CONJUNCTION) AOJ subject2 (CLAUSE)
- (13) *Knjom tveu: ka: dambej aoj yeu:ng mian pteh thom.*  
 1SG do work so-that *aoj* 1PL have house big  
 ‘I work so that we can have a big house.’
- (14) *O: mian santha:ki:e thom thom l'aw: l'aw: samrap aoj puak*  
 oh there-are hotel large large good good for *aoj* group  
*tee:sacaw: snak nev!*  
 tourist reside stay  
 ‘Oh, there are very large and good quality hotels for tourists to stay in!’

In (15), (16), (17), without the conjunction with purposive semantics, *aoj* “becomes” a complementizer on its own selected by the matrix verb, especially with manipulative verbs like *cang*, ‘want’, *cat*, ‘order’, etc.:

- (15) *Knjom cang aoj mi:ng kat aw aoj knjom*  
 1SG want *aoj* 2SG cut blouse *aoj* me  
 ‘I want you to sew a blouse for me.’
- (16) *Ni: ba:n bangrian knie aoj tveu: samla: metju: moan cnganj.*  
 Ny PST teach 1SG *aoj* make soup bitter chicken tasty  
 ‘Ny taught me (how) to make good bitter chicken soup.’
- (17) *Ejlev nih awngka: cat ta: aeng aoj tev jiam camka:*  
 now organization order 2SG *aoj* go guard field  
 ‘Now the organization orders you to go /that you go and guard the field.’

The construction is : (subject1) [VERBmanipulative] AOJ subject2 (CLAUSE)

What is remarkable is that, provided there are enough contextual elements to retrieve the meaning of purpose, the manipulative verb in the matrix clause can be deleted altogether; (18) is a follow-up of (15), which had the verb *cang*, ‘want’:

- (18) *Mja:ng tiat knjom aoj mi:ng kat de:aekasawnta:n seh pi: komphle:*  
 once again 1SG *aoj* 2SG cut uniform disciple two sets  
 ‘Once again, I want you to cut me two school uniforms...’

What the sentence literally says is: ‘I *aoj* you cut a uniform...’. This phenomenon, called “Chesherization” (Heiman 2011), will be dealt with below.

#### 1.4 Causative resultative

Another frequent meaning extension for *aoj*, less common for *give* verbs cross-linguistically, includes a resultative particle, with a “completedness” sense (Newman 1996: 233), also called a “target” construction (Paillard 2011):

- (19) *khnie bok krueng aoj mat haeuj*  
 1SG crush spices *aoj* thin PST  
 ‘I’ve already crushed the spices thinly enough/until they become thin enough.’
- (20) [a husband tells his wife who says she might be pregnant, and is terribly hungry :]  
*Njam aoj c’aet tyâh!*  
 eat *aoj* be-full PART  
 ‘Just eat to your heart’s content, then!’

The serial construction here is:

> (subject) VERB1 (object) *AOJ* VERB2 (‘verb of quality, or ‘adjectival verb’, Huffman 1970, Heiman 2011)

Description of this use is problematic; in this construction, sometimes *aoj* seems to be used to form simple manner adverbials, admittedly with causative semantics, but with little resultative semantics:

- (21) *Riap-cawm kluan aoj chap tev*  
 get ready body *aoj* be-fast PART  
 ‘Get yourself ready quickly/and make it quick!’
- (22) *Knjom nwnng panjual aoj cbah.*  
 1SG FUT explain *aoj* be-clear  
 ‘I’ll explain it clearly /, making it clear.’

Another reason why it is difficult to describe is that a resultative/completedness sense can appear without *aoj*:

- (23) *Pee:l A. ba:n nom camnej ba:j samlaw: si: Ø c'aet haeu:j, via kaw:*  
 when A. get cake food rice stew eat Ø be-full PST 3SG so  
*tveu: damnaeu tev ktau:m aopuk...*  
 make trip go hut father  
 'When A. had eaten enough rice cakes until he was full/to his heart's content,  
 he made a trip to his father's hut.'

As in (20), Example (23) has the sequence "eat... be full", but *aoj* is not necessary in the latter example. These facts confirm Paillard (2011: 128)'s observation that the presence of *aoj* in those constructions allows the speaker to explicitly specify the state as a target to be reached for the addressee. One also notes that (23) is assertive (it is a statement of fact), contrary to (20–22), which feature non-factual contexts. We come back to this important observation in Section (III.4) when we discuss in more detail the extensions from the purposive to the manner adverbial sense, using Song (1998)'s account.

### 1.5 Other uses

*Aoj* has many other uses. A particularly productive one is the formation of the equivalent of adjectives expressing potentiality, with the auxiliary *kua*, 'should, worthy':

- (24) *Rwang nih kua aoj (pu:) cap aram.*  
 story this worthy *aoj* (2SG) be-interested  
 'This story is interesting (for you).'
- (25) *Siavphev nih l'aw: nah: kua aoj cang meu:l.*  
 book this good very worthy *aoj* want read  
 'This book is very good; it's worth reading.'

*Aoj* also occurs in serialized lexical compounds (26, 27) and special complementation patterns for certain verbs (28), especially in serial verb constructions:

- (26) *Rut cang noam aoj skoal prapu:en tmej robah koat*  
 Rith want lead *aoj* know wife new of 3SG  
 'Rith wants to introduce his new wife to you/ wants to get you to know his new wife.'
- (27) *Tae po:a nwnng ru:p prasa:t nih damna:ng aoj ej ?*  
 but color and picture temple this represent *aoj* what  
 'But what do the colors and picture of this temple represent?'
- (28) *Ma ha:m ko:n mwn aoj cenj pi: pteah.*  
 1SG forbid child not *aoj* go-out from house  
 'I forbade you to leave the house.'

(26) is a good example of a serial verb construction that corresponds to one lexeme in French or English: “lead give know” means “introduce (someone)”. In (27), the verb “represent” often occurs with *aoj* (“represent give”), and in (28) the verb *ha:m*, “forbid, ban” selects for a complement headed by *aoj*.

There are other uses of *aoj*, of course, some of which will be occasionally discussed in the rest of the chapter. But let us sum up our main observations of the main uses we have presented in this section:

- The transfer/benefactive sense is one of the multiple semantic realizations for *aoj*;
- The tendency for *aoj* to appear in SVCs is ubiquitous: it is a strongly entrenched typological feature of the language, and might go some way toward explaining the polyfunctionality of *aoj*, as suggested by Newman (1996);
- The category membership for *aoj* is an unresolved question: is it a verb, a preposition, a conjunction, a particle, an affix? This difficulty strongly argues in favor of a constructional treatment of *aoj*: the ‘nature’ of *aoj* ultimately depends on the construction it appears in;
- One question that arises immediately as a consequence of the multiple category membership of *aoj* is that of grammaticalization. It is a legitimate working hypothesis: conjunction *aoj* or resultative particle *aoj* could well be derived from main verb *aoj*. This in turn compels us to explore two apparently competing hypotheses to account for the meaning extensions: are we dealing with a central sanctioning sense (e.g., transfer) with subsequent metaphorical extensions based on general cognitive principles, as in Newman (1996)? Or is it more realistic, in the face of these multiple extensions, to posit an abstract semantics for *aoj* in a monosemic type of approach? Both hypotheses will be explored; we begin with the discussion of grammaticalization, because the senses described above could well be explained away arguing that they are cases of “bleaching” from a central sanctioning sense.

## 2. A case of grammaticalization?

One could argue that a process of grammaticalization as known from Indo-European languages has applied in the case of *aoj*, starting from a lexical unit (*give*) to a conjunction, preposition (*for, so that*), etc. Yet there are good reasons to believe that it is not the case, at least not in the sense in which we commonly think of.

## 2.1 Grammaticalization and polyfunctionality

Bisang (2009) argues that the distinction between lexical and grammatical items is not as fixed as in Indo-European languages. Khmer has an impoverished system of inflectional morphology, although it does have a fair amount of derivational morphology. It has a handful of markers that take on lexical and grammatical functions, among which *aoj* is a good example. Others include *trev*, “touch, be touched (accidentally)”, *ba:n*, “acquire, obtain”, and verbs of direction (*tev*, “go”, *mau:k*, “come”, *dal*, “arrive”), etc. Bisang argues in favor of a different definition of grammaticalization: he contends that

the synchronic representation of the relation between the different functions of a grammatical marker [in Khmer] is not that of a cline or path of grammaticalization (...) but rather that of *an initial source concept that simultaneously radiates into different directions*. (Bisang 2009:3; our highlighting)

His definition is therefore not based on diachrony, but on synchronic polyfunctionality. The issue is then to try and determine that source concept which enables these meaning extensions. We will try to do just that in our Section III, arguing that transfer and control are good candidates, but it is equally important to take seriously into account the constructions that *aoj* enters into.

Let us begin with example (29), which is a repetition of our initial (1) sentence. At least three different construals/translations of *aoj* are possible here, with a general semantic contribution which intuitively seems similar for *aoj* in all three construals (a second entity or situation is being targeted), but which presuppose assigning three different constructions:

- (29) *Jau:k samla: tev aoj chkae si: tev!*  
 take soup go aoj dog eat then  
 ‘Give the soup to the dog, then!’

Depending on how *aoj* is glossed, we get: “Take the soup and go give [*verb*] it to the dog to eat”, which apparently bleaches to “Take the soup and go so that [*conjunction*] the dog eats it”, or “Take the soup and have [*causative auxiliary/particle*] the dog eat it”. The flexibility of the *aoj* morpheme is explained both by the lack of inflectional morphology but also, we claim, by the degree of entrenchment of certain constructions. In (29), it is important to recognize the existence of different autonomous constructions (or constructs) that concatenate to form the whole sentence; the first one is the serial “full” TAKE-construction (“subject TAKE object V2’), with variations, found in examples like:

- subject TAKE object GIVE recipient (‘bring sth to sb’):
- (30) *So:m lu: om mee:tta: jau:k muaj aoj knjom pha:ng*  
 ask aunt be-so-kind-as take one *aoj* 1SG please  
*pee:l tralap tev ...*  
 when return PART  
 ‘Aunt, would you be so kind as to bring me one when you come back?’
- subject GO TAKE object COME GIVE recipient (‘go and get sth to/for sb’):
- (31) *Leekha: tev jau:k kaboo:p mau:k aoj knjom.*  
 secretary go take wallet come *aoj* 1SG  
 ‘The secretary has gone to fetch me the wallet.’
- subject TAKE object GO PUT KEEP place (‘take and leave sth sw/h; put sth smw’):
- (32) *Ni: ba:n jau:k siavphev nih tev dak tuk a:e na:?*  
 Ny PST take book is go put keep where  
 ‘Ny, where have you put this book?’ (> caused-motion Cx)

The common semantic contribution of this *TAKE*-construction is that some object gets manipulated and transferred to a recipient or moved to a place; the rest of the SVCs encode the exact nature of the scene (a giving and coming, a putting scene, etc.). Examples (30) and (31) feature the “directional verb” *aoj* (Huffman 1970), in which we recognize the benefactive construction; the ‘taking’ event is performed in the direction of a target, the beneficiary:

*Benefactive: (V1) AOJ RECIPIENT*

- > *muaj aoj knjom*  
 one *aoj* 1SG  
 ‘give me one’  
 > *kaboo:p mau:k aoj knjom*  
 wallet come *aoj* 1SG  
 ‘give me the wallet’

Finally, we recognize a purposive-causative construal/construction, namely that for (29), ‘the soup is for the dog to eat’, with another verb in a serial construction (here, ‘eat’) and *aoj* marking the switch reference:

*Purposive-causative: Subject1GO AOJ subject2 V2*

- > *samla: tev aoj chkae si:*  
 soup go *aoj* dog eat

This construction can itself be considered a variation of a more general “completive” (Huffman 1970) construction, which is very frequent: “subject VERB1 (theme) (± negation) VERB2 (object)”. Semantically, it conflates the initiation of an action followed by the completion or expected result of that action. In (33) and (34), the

first verbs express an activity (hitting, seeking) and the final verb describes the subsequent result or success of that activity (or lack thereof):

- (33) *koat daj vie ngoap*  
 3SG hit 3SG die  
 ‘He killed him.’
- (34) *Mae cawng tev rau:k a:nwng meu:l*  
 1SG want go seek that-one look  
 ‘I want to go and find that one.’

If a different subject from the subject of V1 is included for V2, then *aoj* can surface, as in:

- (35) *Som ban:g a:n aoj o:n sdap phaw:ng.*  
 ask 2SG read *aoj* 1SG listen please  
 ‘Read for me, please, so that I can listen to it / I know about it too.’

(35) conflates two constructions: “read [newspaper] listen” + *aoj* me”; *aoj* inserted after Verb1 adds an explicit subject for V2. The label “directional verb” for *aoj* used by Huffman (1970) is helpful: the direction becomes abstract (literally, “the reading is directed towards *somebody else’s* listening”). The purposive/causative semantics is read off the construction. The subject for V2 might even be implicit, in a sort of control construction:

- (36) *koat vaj vie aoj rieng*  
 3SG strike 3SG *aoj* give up-doing  
 ‘They beat some sense into him, and he gave up (whatever he was doing that was naughty).’

All these sentences have a causative-resultative flavor: (35) implies reading for the other protagonist to make him/her understand what’s going on, and (36) describes a situation where *he* (a child) will give up doing something naughty as a result of being beaten (i.e., being given a good lesson). The constructions are variations on the “subject VERB1 (VERB2) (negation) (object) VERB<sup>m</sup>” construction, with *aoj* adding purpose/directionality to the action.

The discussion above has shown that it might be worth pursuing Newman’s observation that the extensions of the *give* morpheme can be accounted for by “appealing to already existing construction types” (237); for Khmer, the ubiquitousness of “well-established serial verb type constructions” (*ibid.*) favors this extension. It is therefore tempting to propose one general meaning for *aoj* and then to explain the particular senses/functions taken by that morpheme by appealing to general cognitive principles and to the constructions in which the item is found. In a nutshell, the story goes like this: when appearing in the “subject TAKE object

COME” construction, *aoj* will likely encode transfer and directionality, because the scenario conjured up by that construction is actual motion, whereas its presence in the “activityVERB ( $\pm$  negation) (VERB) object VERB” construction will not encode transfer, but purpose and/or causation, because the construction already carries that semantics: *aoj* merely adds ‘directionality’ towards another subject. In turn, causation and purpose may lead to a quasi-resultative interpretation, as in (37):

- (37) *Ni: a: ba:ng thlaj srej knie ba:n bangrian knie aoj tveu: samla: metju:*  
 Ny sister-in-law 1SG PST teach 1SG *aoj* make soup bitter  
*moan cnganj.*  
 chicken tasty  
 ‘Ny, my sister-in-law, taught me how to make good bitter chicken soup.’  
 > subject TEACH recipient GIVE MAKE object

Just as “GIVE dog EAT” was the outcome (the target) of the “taking-the-soup” event in (29), “GIVE MAKE soup” is the outcome of the “teaching-me” event in (37). How we get from transfer to causation can be explained resorting to cognitive principles, and in turn one general semantics for *aoj* can be proposed. That would be the “initial source concept that simultaneously radiates into different directions” as noted by Bisang (2009: 3). We do not need to posit that *aoj* in (37) has bleached to become a sort of infinitive complementizer (*teach me to make...*). Another strong argument for dispreferring an explanation on grammaticalization lines is Example (18), repeated here as (38):

- (38) *Mja:ng tiat knjom aoj mi:ng kat de:aekasawnta:n seh pi: komphle:*  
 once again 1SG *aoj* 2SG cut uniform disciple two sets  
 ‘One again, I want you to make me two school uniforms, one for a boy, one for a girl.’

Recall that this sentence was a follow-up of a sentence which had the explicit matrix verb *cang*, ‘want’. If sufficiently explicit as it is here, *cang* is suppressed, and only *aoj* remains. This is proof that *aoj* has not bleached to become a complementizer, because complementizers generally cannot stand alone for the whole construction (*\*I to you/that you make uniforms...*). We come back to that in the next subsection.

All these observations strongly invite us to adopt some of the principles that underlie Croft’s Radical Construction Grammar, in particular two of them :

1. “The absence of representational commitments to specific universal categories such as Verb or Direct Object...” (2013: 224) in that framework; nothing (in terms of morphology or distributional criteria) justifies calling these transcategorical markers (like *aoj*) verbs, auxiliaries, prepositions, conjunctions, etc. without further specification;



2. “Constructions themselves, or more precisely the formal structure of constructions, are [...] language-specific. There are no discrete universal construction types such as passive or coordination.” (227) Or a ditransitive construction in the way English or French have developed it, for the matter at hand. It is precisely the point raised by Newman (1996: 237): among the many reasons that might motivate semantic extensions, he observes that the independently existing serial-verb constructional type in Khmer favors this flexible behavior. In particular, the constructional ambiguities we discussed are no doubt a contributing factor in the polyfunctionality of these markers. The data also compel us to adopt a usage-based view of grammar (Bybee 2013): some the constructions reviewed in Section (I) have reached a high degree of entrenchment.

Therefore, at this stage in the discussion it is better to state generalizations about category membership in the following terms:

- *Aoj* is a “directional verb” (Huffman 1970) IN the full transfer construction because it forms a family of constructions with other directional verbs in similar constructions (40):

(39) *Baeuk tvia aoj knjom phaw:ng*  
 open door *aoj* 1SG please  
 ‘Open the door for me, will you?’ (> open door GIVE me)

(40) *Yau:k ejvan nih tev bantup*  
 take things these *tev* room  
 ‘Take these things to the room.’ (> take things GO room)

- *Aoj* is a “modal verb” (Huffman 1970) IN causative-resultative constructions because it forms a family of constructions with other modal verbs in similar constructions (42)

(41) *Ta:e mi:ng a:c kat aoj lwan ba:n te:?*  
 INTERR 2SG can cut *aoj* fast possible INTERR  
 ‘Can you cut this fast/making it fast?’ (> GIVE be-fast)

(42) *Knjom trev tev pteah*  
 1SG touch go home  
 ‘I must go home.’ (> TOUCH go home)

- *Aoj* is a “preverbal auxiliary” (Huffman 1970) IN the permissive construction because it forms a family of constructions with other preverbal auxiliaries in similar constructions (44, 45)

(43) *Aoj knie khtej luj aeng 700 dolla:*  
*aoj* 1SG borrow money 2SG 700 dollars  
 ‘Let me borrow (i.e., lend me) 700 dollars from you.’ (> GIVE me borrow)

- (44) *Soum lu:k baeuk sievphev*  
ask 3SG open books  
'Please open your books.' (> ASK you open)
- (45) *Mau:k tev njam ba:j nev ha:ng nuh seun*  
come go eat rice in shop this first  
'Let's go have something to eat in that shop.' (> COME go)

## 2.2 "Chesherization"

The phenomenon displayed by *aoj* in sentence (38) has been dubbed "Chesherization" or syntagmatic association; the term was originally found in Matisov (1973) to describe phonological factors, and it is taken up by Heiman (2011), described as

The mechanism of dropping essential (core, central, main) words as long as the meaning that they convey is adequately conveyed by incidental (peripheral) words which thereby become 'essential' themselves. (*ibid.* 327)

*Aoj* does exactly that in manipulative/causative constructions. Let us illustrate that with a series of examples from our corpus. The following story takes place under the Khmer rouge regime: the hero is assigned to work in the sugar cane fields by the village organization, and in the context of the time, that means he is being sent to "reeducation" (forced labor). The initial sentence is (17), repeated as (46):

- (46) *Ejlev nih awngka: cat ta: aeng aoj tev jiam camka:*  
now organization order 2SG *aoj* go guard field  
'Now the organization orders you to go and guard the field.'  
> Construction 1: 'causer ORDER causee GIVE go...' > 'the organization orders you to go...'

Afterwards, the hero ponders over this order:

- (47) *Lw: tae awngka: cat aoj tev jiam ampev*  
hear only organization order *aoj* go guard sugarcane  
'When I heard the organization ordered that I go and guard the sugar cane, ...'  
> Construction 2: causer ORDER causee GIVE go... > 'the organization ordered going...'
- (48) *kla: kraeng kee: aoj tev rian so:t*  
fear much 3PL *aoj* go study recite  
'I greatly feared that they were making me go to reeducation.'  
> Construction 3: causer ORDER causee GIVE go... > 'they made (me) go...'

- (49) *Aoj knjom tev jiam camka: ampev rw: pum?*  
*aoj* 1SG go guard field sugarcane or not  
 ‘Am I really to / Do I really have to go and guard the sugarcane?’  
 > Construction 4: causer ORDER GIVE causee go... > ‘am I to go...?’

In (46) the causer creates the condition for the causee (the peasant) to go guard the sugarcane, but in (47) and (48) the causee is left unexpressed; in (48), the manipulative verb *cat*, ‘order’ is dropped, and *aoj* naturally “becomes” a causative marker; only the outcome of the manipulative frame remains (the peasant will eventually go to reeducation); and in (49), the causer of the manipulation frame disappears altogether: only the causee is left. The proposed translations into English (*order sb to, order that; make sb do sth; I am /have to*) blur the common function fulfilled by *aoj* in all these sentences, namely, that of introducing a different subject for the second clause. Let us note again that the construction in sentence (49) is independently licensed by the existence of the “preverbal auxiliary + (S) + V construction” (cf. Examples 43, 44, 45).

To sum up, so far we have taken stock of the main constructions which contain the polyfunctional marker *aoj*, and taken seriously the idea that that polyfunctionality is motivated by the constructional type of the language, that relies on verbal serialization. Our discussion has established that the multiple category membership of *aoj* is inseparable from the (sub)constructions it occurs in. The following sentence with two occurrences of *aoj* illustrates this behavior again:

- (50) *Jau:k tev aoj paa samlieng aoj mut tev!*  
 take go *aoj* father whet *aoj* be-sharp PRT  
 ‘Take it and have your father sharpen it!’

Three sub-constructions concatenate to yield the sentence:

- the full transfer *TAKE* [*object*] *GO* > “take go give father” (i.e., “take it and give it to your father”)
- the preverbal auxiliary construction > “give father whet it” (i.e., ‘let/have your father whet it’)
- the resultative/adverbial construction > “whet give be sharp” (i.e., ‘whet it sharp’)

One further feature for *aoj* is the ability of the lexical head of the construction to drop, leaving *aoj* only – that is called “Chesherization”. All these observations compel us to try and find some general cognitive principles that underlie *aoj*’s ability to undergo so many meaning extensions. That will be the topic of the last section.

### 3. Method and discussion

As we said in the introduction, two solutions are possible: either we go the monosemic way, by setting up a maximally general scenario or frame for *aoj*, and see how this meaning interacts with established construction types to yield the meanings we obtain. That is the solution put forward by Paillard (2011), cast in an utterer-centered framework. Alternatively, we can adopt a Brugman & Lakoff (1987) style of radial network analysis of polysemy, by positing a sanctioning sense from which the other uses are derived following certain general cognitive principles. One caveat is that there need not be a single source meaning (say, transfer) from which all meaning extensions derive, but some senses may actually derive from intermediate senses, as we will see for the connection between Purpose and Manner (Song 1998). We review these hypotheses in turn.

#### 3.1 Monosemy

Paillard (2011: 135), after reviewing the main constructions that *aoj* participates in, observes that the common function of *aoj* is to “relate two events E1 and E2, the first one being introduced as the trigger of the second one”, and that E2 has referential “autonomy... and is introduced independently of E1”. In other words, the intuition, backed by observation of the data, is that the “X *aoj* Y” schematic construction (Y being a participant or an event) focalizes a state of affairs or event which acquires cognitive prominence (the Y part of the equation). There is some truth to that intuition: in the examples we discussed, *aoj* did seem to appear whenever the speaker was directing the focus on a new subject/a new situation. But the problem with such a solution is twofold: the central meaning appears too abstract and not discriminatory enough to rule out some senses that do not appear; or it might be too concrete and fail to predict some of the senses. In the absence of further qualification of the basic scenario proposed by Paillard (2011), we have to abandon that solution, while retaining the intuition that *aoj* sets up a specific target for the event, corroborated by Newman’s observation that *aoj* signals that “X is a *significant contributing factor towards Y*” (171).

In fact, we will take our cue from Newman (1996)’s comprehensive study of *give* verbs, while spelling out in detail the particulars of Khmer *aoj* that sets it apart from other *give* markers that do not know (or marginally know) some of the meaning extensions that Khmer *aoj* does. In particular, we will defend the view that in the putative source transfer scene, *aoj* explicitly specifies not so much the directionality of the giving event, but that the Y element is a target which acquires autonomy. This can be derived from a special interpretation of

the central sanctioning sense of transfer, which accounts for the widespread uses as purposive and resultative, which are indeed dominant uses for *aoj*, contrary to French “donner” or English *give*, which might not be so centered on the second participant/scene. Therefore, we adopt a semantic network type of representation that starts from a basic transfer sense with metaphoric extensions. However, the connection between a resultative sense to a purely adverbial one will require us to propose a different explanation.

### 3.2 Transfer as a sanctioning sense

Recall that the transfer/benefactive meaning is the one that emerges in the absence of other verbs. In the following sentence, which conjures up a buyer/seller relationship frame, *aoj* really expresses transfer, the act of giving:

- (51) *Aoj (knjom) muaj kilo mau:k*  
*aoj* (1SG) one kilo come  
 ‘Give me one kilo.’

Newman (1996) starts off describing the rich structure of a giving act, which involves three entities: a GIVER, a RECIPIENT and the THING being transferred; this frame sets up three types of interaction: GIVER and THING, THING and RECIPIENT, GIVER and RECIPIENT. Therefore, *give* constitutes a salient act both in human interactional terms and in structure (*ibid*: 33). The understanding is that if the *give* item is used in the linguistic configuration NP<sup>GIVER</sup>*give* NP/PP<sup>RECIPIENT</sup> NP<sup>THING</sup>, we are indeed dealing with literal, hence transfer, *give*; this is what happens in French or English:

- (52) a. *Jean donne un uniforme d'école à la dame*  
 b. *Jean donne à la dame un uniforme d'école à fabriquer*

Even though sentence (a) describes an actual gift, and sentence (b) takes on a causative meaning, the notion of transfer is still prevalent. In the Khmer sentence (51), the verb *aoj* is reinforced by the directional deictic verb *mau:k*, ‘come’. But we have to remember that as per Chescherization, *aoj* used alone is no guarantee that we are dealing with the actual transfer of a given object: recall that in sentence (38) above, *Mja:ng tiat knjom aoj mi:ng kat de:aekasawnta:n*, ‘once again I *aoj* you cut uniform’, we obtained a meaning of causation (‘I want you to cut a uniform / I’ll have you cut a uniform’). In that sentence, the focus is on the second event (‘having the uniform cut’), and this reminds us of Paillard’s characterization: “E2 [*viz.*, the second event] has referential “autonomy... and is introduced independently of E1”. In other words, with *aoj*, what matters is the object given (in the case of 51),

or the second event is given cognitive prominence. Likewise, in the full transfer construction (with TAKE), the transfer itself is expressed by *yau:k*, “take”, and *aoj* encodes the endpoint of the transfer: what matters in (53) is that the doctor ends up with the instrument.

- (53) *Tev yau:k pradap voah chiam (mau:k) aoj pu: bantec.*  
 go take instrument measure blood come aoj uncle a-little  
 ‘Go and get me the blood pressure instrument.’

As noted by Newman, with *give* verbs the notion that the RECIPIENT acquires *control* over the THING is important, and I claim that it is particularly important for Khmer *aoj* (what I referred to as E2 prominence in the “E1 *aoj* E2” schema). This prominence of E2 with *aoj* is best brought out if we compare *aoj* to its almost perfect synonym *cu:n*, ‘give, offer’, and to a preposition, *samrap*, often translated as “for” in English or “pour” in French:

- (54) *Pu: cu:n kado:*  
 3SG *cu:n* present  
 ‘I’m offering/making (you) a present.’
- (55) *A:muaj tenj robawh cu:n neak na: klah?*  
 little buy things *cu:n* person who some  
 ‘Littler sister, who did you buy things for?’

*Cu:n* substitutes for *aoj* in a transfer sense (54, 55) when the gift goes to a person judged superior to the speaker, for whom s/he has respect; contrary to *aoj*, where the donor relinquishes the object to the recipient, with *cu:n* the donor merely “goes with” the object, helps reduce the metaphorical path to follow for the object to get to the recipient; hence with *aoj*, the recipient is empowered, acquires autonomy in the sense that it now has and can manipulate the object, not with *cu:n*. In one extension of its uses as a serial verb, *cu:n* means ‘go with, accompany’ (56, 57), when conjoined with a motion verb.

- (56) *a: Map at mau:k cia-muej jeu:ng tee, via tev cu:n mda:j via*  
 PART Map not come with 1PL NEG 3SG go *cu:n* mother 3SG  
 ‘Map is not coming with us, he’s accompanying his mother.’
- (57) a. *Knjom cu:n mak tev phsa:*  
 1SG *cu:n* mother go market  
 ‘I’m accompanying my mother to the market.’
- b. *Knjom aoj mak tev phsa:*  
 1SG aoj mother go market  
 ‘I’m having/making my mother go to the market.’

(57a) means that I'm simply going with (accompanying) my mother to the market, while (57b) means that I'm making her go there; in other words, in (b), *mak*, 'the mother' becomes an autonomous protagonist, the speaker (*knjom*) is giving up control to her and let her do something; in (a), the subject referent merely facilitates the object referent's motion. This notion of the recipient acquiring autonomy for a second event to take place, because the donor has transferred control, is crucial for *aoj*. This dimension is also illustrated when we compare two other near synonyms, *aoj* and *samrap*, 'for, to' in the purposive sense:

- (58) a. *Knie cang sla:*                    *samrap pram neek.*  
 1SG want make-soup for five people  
 'I want to make soup for five people.'
- b. *Knie cang sla:*                    *aoj pram neek \*(nuh)*  
 1SG want make-soup for five people these  
 'I want to make soup for these five people.'

Both sentences imply that five people will benefit from the soup (both *aoj* and *samrap* are translated by 'for'), but with a difference; *samrap* focuses on the quantity of soup necessary for five people ('five people' is a measure), whereas the sentence with *aoj* is only fully acceptable if we consider these five people as actual beneficiaries of the soup (they will end up getting the soup). *Samrap* can be replaced by *aoj* if the beneficiary has full referential status (hence the necessary addition of the deictic determiner *nuh*, 'these'); the five people must be referentially identified if we expect them to "take control" over the soup.

Another clue that the notion of control and referential autonomy for a second event (and therefore a second subject) is important is that *aoj* encodes the RECIPIENT only when there is an actual handing over of something and the expectation that the subject will do something with the thing. In English or French, RECIPIENT marking (by means of the ditransitive construction or dative case marking) extends to a wide range of verbs (communication, e.g.), which is not the case in Khmer. As noted by Newman about Chinese, this construction VERB *aoj* NP in Khmer "does not function in the broad sense of an indirect object" (213). Verbs like *prap*, 'say', *taw:p*, 'answer', *tuarasap*, 'phone', *sasee*, 'write', *luac*, 'steal', etc., use other means to encode the indirect object: either nothing (59), or other verbs/prepositions (*tev*, 'go', *mau:k*, 'come', *kan*, 'hold', etc. 60–63); *aoj* is only possible if the expectation is that the addressee will do something with the object (64):

- (59) *Koat ba:n prap Ø anj tha: ko:n aenj mwn ousa: sah.*  
 3SG PST tell 1SG that child 2SG not hardworking at-all  
 'He told me that you're not hard-working at all!'

- (60) *Prapun knjom ni'jiaj mau:k kan knjom...*  
 wife 1SG speak come hold 1SG  
 'My wife spoke/said to me...'
- (61) *Tuarasap / Sasee mau:k knjom phwa:ng!*  
 telephone write come 1SG please  
 'Phone me/Write (to) me, please!'
- (62) *Knjom mwn tau:p tev prapun knjom*  
 1SG NEG answer go wife 1SG  
 'I did not answer my wife.'
- (63) *Koat luac siavphev Ø knjom*  
 3SG steal book 1SG  
 'He stole a book from me / Il m'a volé un livre.'
- (64) *Knjom ba :n aoj lejt tuarasap daj knjom haeuj*  
 1SG PST give number telephone hand 1SG PST  
 'I've already given [you] my mobile phone number.'

To recapitulate, we have established a specific scenario for *aoj* used in Transfer scenes: the RECIPIENT is highlighted, s/he comes to have the thing, and can manipulate it; as a result, the THING comes to stay with the recipient, in control of the recipient. This may explain why “prepositional” *aoj* has not extended to mark other types of recipient (with verbs like *write*, *phone*, *say*, for which there can be no expectation that a recipient will get it/control the thing); the comparison between *aoj* and its near synonym *cu:n* has established that with the former, the initiator (giver) transfers control of the thing over to the recipient who is then expected to become an autonomous actor herself, something which does not happen with *cu:n*, where the initiator merely goes with the thing but presupposes no handing over of control to the recipient.

### 3.3 Meaning extension to causation and purpose

This handing over of control (“the GIVER is the entity which causes it that the RECIPIENT come to have the THING”, Newman 1996: 172) is at the origin of several related meaning extensions for *aoj*, namely, enablement, causation, purpose, which figure in the same figurative extension domain as transfer (Newman 1996: 233). In the enablement sense (*aoj* glossed as “so that/in order that”), the act of giving transfers a THING to the RECIPIENT and this in turn allows the RECIPIENT to do something she otherwise would not have been able to do (*ibid* 182). Fleshed out in more detail, this analogy rests on the idea that a giver and a human causer are volitional human agents, and that a recipient and a human causee have it in common that a person is



experiencing some change in their behavior due to the actions (or the receiving of a gift) of another person (*ibid.* 174). Let us see in detail how this works for Khmer with examples.

One case in point is manipulative verbs, in which a change of behavior is forced upon the causee. The manipulative frame implies that a causer “hands over” control to another subject, who becomes empowered to act; this has the form of two clauses, with Clause 2 the target event, and Clause 1 the initiating event. We refer the reader back to the discussion of the verb *cat*, ‘order’, in the Khmer Rouge sentences (46) to (49) in Section II.2. Recall that by the time we got to sentence (49), we had reached the end of the extension chain, namely that the RECIPIENT (the young peasant) has control over the THING: the RECIPIENT *cum* CAUSEE recipient is empowered, he acquires subject-like properties, and a new situation has been set up in which he has full control over the second event (in the sense that the causer has altogether disappeared). This explains why *aoj* is often called a “change of subject complementizer” with purpose expressions like *cang*, ‘want’, *dambey*, in order’: *aoj* indicates that a new situation is created in which a new subject takes action, and a favorable frame is one in which a purpose is assigned to that subject. An interesting minimal pair is discussed by Paillard (2011: 129):

- (65) *Knjom noam koat mau:k meu:l pteah*  
 1SG lead 3SG come look-at house  
 ‘I’m bringing him along to see the house’
- (66) *Knjom noam koat mau:k aoj meu:l pteah*  
 1SG lead 3SG come *aoj* look-at house  
 ‘I’m bringing him along to see the house/so he can get a good look at the house.’

The notions of purposefulness and control are crucial to understand the difference between these two sentences. Both sentences express a goal for the referent of the first subject: having someone else see a house. The meaning difference is subtle: according to Paillard, the second subject with *aoj* (in 66) is given autonomy, he acquires subject-like properties: looking at the house becomes a goal for second subject (because e.g., someone is needed as a caretaker for the house). In (65), without *aoj*, seeing the house for the second subject (*koat*, ‘him’) implies no particular goal: the referent of the first subject (*knjom*, ‘I’) simply wants to show him the house. (66) encodes two distinct events. This is what we mean by *aoj* implying an autonomous/referential status for the segment that follows it: in (66), *koat aoj meu:l pteah*, ‘he come *aoj* look at house’, looking at the house is a target, subject 1 is empowering (relinquishing control to) subject 2 because the house is up for grabs and someone is needed to take care of it, or simply because the house is on sale and a buyer is needed.

This semantic peculiarity of *aoj* (giving up control to another protagonist who becomes autonomous) leads us to the discussion of another family of related meaning for *aoj*, namely that of resultativeness, the most difficult to account for.

### 3.4 Causative-resultative meaning extensions

Newman (1996) only briefly evokes this meaning extension, because it is not so frequent in the languages he discusses. He tentatively suggests that resultative or completedness meanings are somehow linked to purposive; a frequent translation for this family of constructions is: “until some state is achieved”; again, we encounter notions of intentionality and purposefulness, linked with the “transfer of control over the thing.” (*ibid* 181) In the projected subsequent action on the THING by the RECIPIENT inherent in the giving act, there is “an intention (and a consequence) that the RECIPIENT will do something with the THING transferred.” (*ibid* 191) To that Newman adds the frequent meaning extension of emergence: “emergence of a thing from a bounded region/of one entity from another” (*ibid* 151). Let us look at an interesting minimal pair, one of which was already presented in Section (I):

- (67) *Yeu:ng trev tae tveu: samla ya:ng na: laeung venj aoj cnganj.*  
 1PL must really make soup so that get again *aoj* be-good  
 ‘We really must make the soup again so that it becomes edible this time.’
- (68) *Ejlev nih yeu:ng ba:n tveu: ja:ng cnganj!*  
 time this 1PL PST make kind be-good  
 ‘This time, we’ve done it well!’

The characters in this exchange have made a soup which was not edible (too much salt in it). (67) is the “full” construction at hand: “MAKE soup so that it BECOME *give* Adjectival verb (*be good*)”. But often, the “so that it BECOME” segment is suppressed, and we get (69), which is a repetition of (19):

- (69) *Khnie bok krueng aoj mat haeuj*  
 1SG crush spices *aoj* thin PFV  
 ‘I’ve already crushed the spices thinly enough/until they become thin enough.’  
 > CRUSH object GIVE Adjectival verb (*be thin*)

(67) and (69) do entail a result to be attained, an explicit goal (“that the soup be good so we can eat it”), contrary to (68) with the same verb *cnganj*, ‘be good’, which is simply depictive (how the soup ended up – good) with the manner particle *ja:ng*, ‘way, manner’. But what we noted in Section (I.4) was that a resultative reading could well emerge without *aoj*, especially in a narrative context (cp. 20 vs. 23). Paillard (2011: 131) gives such a minimal pair:

- (70) *Tveu: la:n aoj ceh seun cam tev*  
 make car aoj work first wait go  
 ‘Fix the car before you leave!’
- (71) *Pe:l knjom tveu: la:n Ø ceh haeuj, knjom ka: riapcawm*  
 time 1SG make car work PFV 1SG then prepare  
*dam ba:j*  
 cook rice  
 ‘After getting the car fixed, I cooked the rice.’

Both examples imply a result: the car will end up getting fixed as a result of the process. This means that *aoj* itself has little to do with the notion of result. We claim that for *aoj* to appear in (70), an interpersonal relation is essential: this is reminiscent of the Transfer frame, wherein the speaker (donor) explicitly gives up control of the object to the recipient (addressee), who is then incited to do something (take over control) because that is relevant in the situational context. We could argue that even in these sentences there is a metaphoric handing over of control: in (70), what *aoj* contributes is an explicit target that the addressee must reach, i.e., getting the car fixed, and it is this explicit request for control that reinforces the resultative meaning. But when no such interpersonal context is present (in a narration of successive events, as in (71)), *aoj* is not required; the two events are part of a depictive chain of events, with the target (“getting the car fixed”) no longer at issue. A final illuminating example is the following, with the adjectival quantifying expression *craeun*, ‘be-lots of, be-much’:

- (72) *Via kaw: tev aoj mae via tveu: nom lngaw: aoj craeun jau:k mau:k*  
 3SG so go aoj mother 3SG make cake sesame aoj be-lots take come  
*tok chej voat.*  
 keep gobble temple  
 ‘And so he went to his mother and had her make lots of sesame cakes which he took to the temple.’

(72) is yet another striking example of verb serialization (“GO GIVE mother MAKE cakes *give* a lot TAKE COME KEEP GOBBLE”). The young boy wants his mother to make lots of cakes so he can take them to the temple. *AOJ* appears in the construction ‘MAKE sesame cakes *AOJ* be-lots’. The presence of *aoj* allows the speaker to insist on the target state (‘that there be lots of sesame cakes’) as being an issue for the subsequent course of events (taking them to the monks). Again, in simple descriptive sentences, in which the interactional component (“setting an explicit goal for the addressee”) is not present, *aoj* is absent:

- (73) *Knong sa'mot mian robawh robaw: miah pee kaev kaw:ng*  
 in sea there-are things of gold jewel glass jewel-treasure  
*pitu:so:rkan Ø craeun nah*  
 be-lots very  
 'On the bottom of the sea there are lots of gold, jewels, treasures.'

Clearly more work is necessary to fully comprehend how this causative-resultative use functions, especially when the semantics of result is almost lost, as in (21), repeated here as (74):

- (74) *Riap-cawm kluan aoj chap tev*  
 get ready body *aoj* be-fast PART  
 'Get yourself ready quickly/and make it quick!'

In this example as well as others (recall 19 and 22 in Section I), *aoj* seems to have bleached to the point of becoming an adverbial indicating manner, and the connection between the initial transfer sense to that sense is not obvious. Song (1998) observes a similar phenomenon in Korean where the marker *-ke* has undergone the same type of shift. To account for this shift from purposive to manner, Song relies on Traugott (1990)'s theory of semantic-pragmatic change, and particularly on the notion of pragmatic strengthening. He tries to explain how the link between the purposive use (which is propositional and textual) and the manner adverbial (which involves the speaker's subjective belief state) is effected. He observes that in the case of Korean *-ke*, "from the purpose of a given action one can implicate the manner of that action" (338). Crucially then, and contrary to Newman's account, this manner use is not directly derived from the transfer sense. It is a conversational implicature that has conventionalized. In Korean, as well as in Thai, Song notes that this manner construction is used only in non-factual situations, and the non-factuality restriction comes from the purposive construction. Clearly, this needs to be further investigated, but all the examples in Khmer of the manner sense also involve non-factual uses, either verbs in the imperative or in the future tense (recall examples 20 vs. 23).

## Conclusion

The goal of this chapter has been to present the extreme polyfunctionality of the marker for *give* in Khmer, *aoj*, and we have given it a cognitive and constructional treatment. One cognitive domain has been found to lie at the source of the meaning extensions, namely the notion of Transfer, as with other *give* verbs, but with the condition that the recipient acquire control (autonomy) over the thing transferred;

we have shown that this specification gives rise to several metaphoric extensions, some of which are not found in other languages. In particular, one important extension for *aoj* consists in signaling a change of subject for an embedded clause with the expectation that another protagonist (the subject referent of that clause) takes action. In yet another use, namely the causative-resultative, the control and autonomy components translate as an interactional component, particularly in imperative sentences, when the speaker incites the addressee to take action to ensure that his goals be met. However, the notion of transfer as the only source of the meaning extensions may not be the whole story, since the particular use of *aoj* to form manner adverbials is more likely to have evolved from the purposive sense, an observation found in other South-East Asian languages (Song 1998).

We have also given flesh to the intuition that the polyfunctionality of *aoj* is favored by the constructional profile of Khmer, which has no inflectional morphology and ubiquitous verb serialization. By proposing a constructional treatment of *aoj*, it has been possible to overcome one difficulty often found in the description of Khmer (and South-East Asian languages), *viz.* the category membership of these polyfunctional items, which can receive better treatment if they are relativized to the constructions they occur in.

However, this study is incomplete for several reasons. First, some meaning extensions have been left aside for space reasons (those merely alluded to in Section III.4), and the resultative uses definitely require more discussion and more (oral) data. Then, the bigger picture this discussion presupposes is the lexicon-grammar continuum in Khmer: *aoj* does not stand alone in having this range of uses; other markers freely straddle the line between lexicon and grammar, especially those that take on temporal and aspectual uses. The concept of “CheshORIZATION” would also require more ample discussion, as it is crucial for accounting for grammatical extensions.

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# The semantics of the verb *give* in Tibetan

## The development of the transfer construction and the honorific domain

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This paper aims to examine the behaviour of the equivalents of ‘give’ in Lhasa Tibetan in order to confirm, qualify or invalidate the universal tendencies that previous cross-linguistic research has unveiled (Newman 1996, Ed., 1997). We will first explore the semantic relations between the various forms that can express ‘give’ in Tibetan: *SPRAD*, *BTANG*, *GNANG* and *PHUL*, on the basis of previous lexicographic and descriptive research on Lhasa Tibetan, as well as a corpus of spoken Lhasa Tibetan (TSC). We will see that the most basic term (*SPRAD*) has not developed much beyond its literal meaning, whereas the hypernymic *BTANG* is used as a light verb whose constructions can be divided into several categories of meaning. *GNANG* is the honorific form of *SPRAD*, and *PHUL* is its humilific form. While *SPRAD* is not used as a light verb, its honorific and humilific counterparts are very productive light verbs. To explain this phenomenon, we will explore the honorific domain, and its systematisation in Lhasa Tibetan (Hajime, 1975; Rdorje *et al.*, 1993; DeLancey, 1998; Tournadre & Sangda Dorje, 1998; Dorje & Lhazom, 2002). We will see that the humilific plane is not the symmetrical opposite of the honorific plane. We will also explore the productivity of *GNANG* and *PHUL*, which can be explained by the fact that giving is one of the most basic interpersonal actions of the human behavioural repertoire. It therefore establishes a link between two humans, which is essential in order for the honorific and humilific notions to emerge.

**Keywords:** give, Tibetan, light verbs, honorific, humilific

### 1. The polyfunctionality of *give*

The verb *give* may be one of the most frequent and basic verbs in the world’s languages, but it captures a complex situational frame (Newman, 1996). Its polyfunctional quality seems to be universally attested, as the verb root is frequently



redeployed into other syntactic categories, and commonly appears as a light verb (Jespersen, 1965; Montaut, 1991; Newman, Ed., 1997; Mohanan, 2006; Tournadre & Pezechki, *forthcoming*, *inter alia*). However, the cross-linguistic descriptions collected on this verb and its equivalents still have to be confronted with more data from typologically and genetically diverse languages, which is the aim of this volume. Newman (Ed., 1997) has explored the use of *give* in many languages belonging to several language families, but no comprehensive study has been conducted on *give* in a Tibetic language so far. Our description of *give* in standard spoken Tibetan will lead us to investigate the link between the transfer construction, the development of light verbs and the honorific domain. It will also allow us to formulate hypotheses on the cognitive and social motivations behind the evolutionary patterns of ‘giving verbs’.

## 2. The various lexical items corresponding to *give* in Tibetan

In order to answer the question of how one says *give* in Tibetan, it is first essential to identify the semantic features that are generally included in the verb *give*, as well as what we mean by the ‘Tibetan language’.

### 2.1 *The polysemy of give*

*Give* is a highly polysemous verb in English, and its most literal meaning is to ‘hand an object over to someone’ (Newman, 1996). However, it is distinguished from the verbs ‘hand’ or ‘pass’ by its abstractness. It is perfectly acceptable to use *give* when the giver, the transferred object and the recipient are not physically in the same place, or even when the three elements of the giving process are abstract entities.

- (1) The station has been **giving** time to stories on education, government, the arts and community issues. (COCA, SPOK; npr\_TalkNation, 2000)

In this example, the *giver* ‘station’, the transferred entity ‘time’ and the recipient ‘stories’ are all immaterial. The meaning that an English speaker can naturally extract from this sentence is more or less that the program director of the radio station has decided that stories on education, government, the arts and community issues should be allowed a certain amount of time. This example shows that in English the verb *give* has become a quick, spontaneous and convenient tool to express complex, abstract ideas.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the general sense of *give* is ‘make another the recipient of (something that is in the possession, or at the disposal,

of the subject)'.<sup>1</sup> However, as the entry contains 112 senses and 17 subentries, it is quite obvious that the definition of *give* is highly complex, and its diverse categories of meaning are not easy to map. In English as well as in probably many of the world's languages, *give* corresponds to a semantic area made up of multiple protrusions with indefinite, ever-evolving boundaries.

## 2.2 'Tibetan' and the tibetic language family

Until the end of the 20th century, most scholars spoke of 'Tibetan dialects' to refer to a number of languages derived from Old Tibetan and spoken mainly in the Tibetan cultural area, currently covering six countries (China, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan and Myanmar). This label is problematic because the so-called 'Tibetan dialects' do not allow mutual intelligibility. In the beginning of the 21st century, the term 'Tibetan dialects' used to designate the languages derived from Old Tibetan has been progressively replaced by 'Tibetan languages' (Zeisler, 2004; Gawne & Hill, 2017). Tournadre (2014) proposed to adopt the term 'Tibetic' to refer to this well-defined language family, and the term is now widely used (Sun, 2014; Gawne & Hill, 2017; Yliniemi, 2017; Hyslop & Tsering, 2017; Chirkova, 2017; Suzuki, 2017; DeLancey, 2017).<sup>2</sup>

The Tibetic family includes at least 50 languages. However, the total number of dialects and varieties certainly amounts to more than 200. The term 'Tibetic languages' is preferable to 'Tibetan languages' because these languages are spoken not only by Tibetans *per se*, but also by other ethnic groups such as Ladakhi, Balti, Lahuli, Sherpa, Bhutanese, Sikkimese, etc. who do not actually consider themselves to be Tibetan.<sup>3</sup> They also do not call their languages 'Tibetan' (*bod.skad* in Tibetan). Similarly, we do not talk of Latin or Italian languages, but of Romance languages, and do not think of French, Portuguese, Italian, Catalan or Romanian as various 'dialects' of Latin or Italian (Tournadre, 2014). Finally, let us note that Literary Tibetan is vastly different from the modern spoken languages.

In order to circumscribe a manageable dataset and conduct an in-depth analysis, we will focus here on one Ü-Tsang spoken dialect that belongs to the Central

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1. Online version (consulted 10/05/2017).

2. The term 'Tibetic' has been used differently by other authors to refer to 'Bodish', 'Bodic', 'Himalayish' languages, or other intermediate groupings within the Tibeto-Burman family. For details, see Tournadre (2014).

3. Conversely, some ethnic groups in Tibet are officially classified as Tibetans (*zangzu* in Chinese) by the People's Republic of China but their native languages are not Tibetic.

Tibetic language group, and which is usually referred to as Lhasa spoken Tibetan or standard spoken Tibetan. We will also consider Old and Classical Tibetan in order to understand the evolutionary paths that ‘giving verbs’ have followed leading to the current linguistic situation in standard spoken Tibetan.

### 2.3 Give in Old and Classical Tibetan

The basic verb expressing *give* in Tibetan has evolved from *SBYIN/BYIN* in Old Tibetan to *sprad*<sup>4</sup> in contemporary standard spoken Tibetan.<sup>5</sup> In Old Tibetan, the verb *SPROD / SPRAD* barely exists whereas *SBYIN/BYIN* is commonly used:

- (2) *di*            *btsun.mo gnang.cen-la*    *byin dang sras yong-pa-r*  
 DEM            queen    Nangchen-OBL give IMP son come-NMZ-OBL  
*'gyur=ro*    *zhes*  
 FUT= FCLT QUOT  
 “ ‘Give it to the queen Nangchen, and you will have a son,’ he said...”  
 (Pt 0981, r099)

In Classical Tibetan, *SBYIN/BYIN* remained the most common verb meaning *give* in a neutral register. However, *SPROD / SPRAD* had already emerged as a slightly less frequent competitor. In *the life of Milarepa* (16th c.), *SPROD / SPRAD* is used around one third of the times as a synonym of *SBYIN/BYIN*.

- (3) *kho-'i ska.rags-kyi mdud.pa bkrol nas 'jim.pa-'i sho*  
 3SG-GEN belt-GEN knot loosen CONN clay-GEN die  
*zhig sprad-byung*  
 one give-CMPL.PAST.REC  
 ‘After loosening his belt, he handed a clay die to me.’  
 (MLNT)

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4. Standard spoken Tibetan has replaced most of its inflectional verbal system by a system of verbal suffixes. Therefore, we use the allomorphs *SPROD / SPRAD* when referring to Old and Classical Tibetan, and only *SPRAD* for standard spoken Tibetan.

5. It is possible to distinguish three main periods of written Tibetan or Literary Tibetan: Old Tibetan (8th-12th c.), Classical Tibetan (13th-19th c.) and Modern Literary Tibetan (20th c.- now). However, some contemporary authors still write in a style close to Classical Tibetan (Tournadre & Suzuki, *forthcoming*). For Old Tibetan, our examples come from a text written in the 8th century. It is one of the Tibetan version of *Rāmāyaṇa* stories found in Dunhuang caves (Pt 0981). The examples in Classical Tibetan come from *the life of Milarepa*, written by Tsangnyön Heruka in the 15th century (*mi la'i rnam thar, gtsang smyon he ru ka*).

The honorific and humilific forms to express *give* are respectively *GNANG* and *'BUL / PHUL*. They are very frequent verbs in Old and Classical Tibetan, as well as in standard spoken Tibetan.

There are other lexical verbs that are attested in Old and Classical Tibetan to convey the concept of 'giving'. Among them are *STER* 'give, bestow, offer', *GTONG / BTANG* 'give, give away, send, let go', and *GTAD / GTOD* 'direct towards, hand over, give'. There are also the less frequent *MCHOD* 'offer, venerate, eat', *STSAI* 'bestow, give', and marginally, *GSOL* meaning 'ask, wear, dress, beg', but also *give* in some expressions such as *MTSHAN GSOL* 'give/award a name title', and in the noun *GSOL. RAS* 'donation', and *'GYED / GYED* 'offer, distribute'.

In the modern Tibetic languages, the most frequently attested verb is *SBYIN*, but the other verbs are also found in some languages. For example, *BTANG* is the main verb for *give* in Ladakh and *GTOD* is used in Spiti (Tournadre & Suzuki, *forthcoming*). In some languages such as Amdo and Sherpa, *SBYIN* and *STER* are used as suppletive verbs to express the completed past versus the imperfective/future of the basic verb *give* (Robin, *forthcoming*; Tournadre *et al.*, 2009).

## 2.4 *Give* in standard spoken Tibetan

The basic way of saying *give* in standard spoken Tibetan is *SPRAD*. Here is one example from the Tibet Student Corpus(TSC):<sup>6</sup>

- (4) *ngul de sprad-song*  
 money DEM give-DIR.CMPL.PAST  
 'He gave the money.' (TSC)

In this dialect, *STER* 'give, offer, treat' is a synonym of *SPRAD*, with a more specific meaning. The verb *GNANG* is the honorific form of *SPRAD*, and is also a frequent light verb. *PHUL* is the humilific form of *SPRAD*, and can also be used as a light verb. *SBYIN* is not used as a verb in standard spoken Tibetan, but the morpheme is found in the compound form *BYIN.RLABS* 'blessing' or *SBYIN.BDAG* 'a benefactor'.

In English, a verb like *give* has many non-literal senses and frequently appears as a light verb in (semi-)fossilized constructions. However, in standard spoken Tibetan, *SPRAD* is very rarely used figuratively and does not appear as a light verb. It might be surprising to note that *SPRAD*, as well as the archaic form *SBYIN / BYIN*,

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6. The Tibet Student Corpus is a semi-guided corpus of spontaneous conversations in standard Tibetan collected in Lhasa in 2010-2011 by Eric Méléac (at the time a doctoral student at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3). It is 4 hours long and includes 8 Tibetan native speakers, aged between 21 and 29, and all studying at Tibet University or the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences (Lhasa, Tibetan Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China).

have not really developed figurative meanings, and do not serve as light verbs. Old Tibetan already had a set of light verbs and many of them are still used today. Among them, *BTANG* can be seen as a verb expressing ‘give, send, let go’ that was already widely used as a light verb in Old Tibetan, and it seems that the other basic verbs expressing *give*, such as *SBYIN/BYIN* and *SPROD/SPRAD*, have never competed for this status.

## 2.5 Give as a light verb

Jespersen (1965) coined the term ‘light verb’ to refer to verbs appearing in an English ‘verb + noun phrase construction’ as in ‘have dinner’ or ‘take a shower’. Light verb constructions are a type of complex verbal lexeme which usually result from the collocational association of a nominal element and a verbal element, the latter being called a ‘light verb’.<sup>7</sup> One of the salient properties of light verbs is their limited semantic weight and their involvement in a linguistic sequence that functions as a complex predicate. It is therefore the verb complement that mostly carries the semantic weight of the construction (Tournadre & Lessan-Pezzechki, *forthcoming*).

Lexical verbs that are good candidates to function as light verbs belong to various semantic classes. There are mainly ‘action verbs’ (‘do’, ‘make’, ‘hit’, ‘eat’), ‘transfer verbs’ (‘give’, ‘put’, ‘carry’, ‘set’, ‘send’, ‘take’), ‘motion verbs’ (‘go’, ‘come’, ‘run’) and ‘state verbs’ (‘be’, ‘have’, ‘become’, ‘stay’) (Tournadre & Lessan-Pezzechki, *forthcoming*).

Light verbs are not as ‘light’ as they seem, as they may convey significant lexical information, and they may also encode some grammatical meaning, particularly in the fields of aspect, modality, voice and diathesis (Simon, 2011; Tournadre & Lessan-Pezzechki, *forthcoming*).

*Give* appears in the list of the verbs that are commonly selected to be used as light verbs cross-linguistically (Mohan, 2006; Tournadre & Lessan-Pezzechki, *forthcoming*). In English, *give* is a light verb in many constructions. As expected with the light verb constructions, their fossilization is quite idiosyncratic and will differ greatly from one language to another, and even from one dialect to another. Light verb constructions raise a problem for translation, since it is not possible to document all of them in a monolingual or in a bilingual dictionary. Therefore, when

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7. One can note however that the complement of a light verb is not always nominal, as it might look like a noun, but have no exact lexical equivalent in this syntactic category, such as in ‘have a go’. In addition, many idiomatic constructions with a generic verb and an adjectival, prepositional or even onomatopoeic complement can be classified as ‘light verb constructions’, such as ‘take into account’, ‘do wrong’ or ‘go boom’.

translating *give* from English into Tibetan, it is first necessary to analyse in what specific construction *give* appears in English before looking for a Tibetan equivalent. We are now going to illustrate this difficulty with a few Tibetan translations of the light verb *give* in English. Starting from English does not mean that English is considered a reference language, or even a language with a typical distribution of the verb *give*. It simply aims to show that the precise mapping of the semantic territory of *give* in two unrelated languages can be highly complex. The following list of possible translations of *give* is based on several lexicographic works available on Tibetan (DeLancey 1990; Kopp 1998; Tournadre & Dorje, 1998, 2003; Tournadre & Jiatso, 2001; Bartee, 2011; Randall, 2016; Mélac, Robin & Simon, 2014):

- a. *The English light verb give can quite often be translated using another light verb in standard spoken Tibetan, especially BTANG, which is the most frequent light verb in this dialect:*

‘Give a hint’ GO.BRDA BTANG (lit., *notification send / give*); ‘give a pat’ CAG.CAG BTANG (lit., *smack send*); ‘give an order’ BKOD.PA BTANG (lit., *order send*); ‘give a punishment’ NYES.CHAD BTANG (lit., *punishment send*); ‘give a hand’ ROGS.PA BTANG (lit., *friend send*), etc.
- b. *Standard spoken Tibetan possesses two other very frequent light verbs that will be favoured when translating some instances of the English light verb give: BRGYAB and BYED.*

‘Give an explanation’ ’GREL.BSHAD BRGYAB (lit., *explain hit*); ‘give an answer’ LAN BRGYAB (lit., *response hit*); ‘give a call’ KHA.PAR BRGYAB (lit., *telephone hit*), etc.  
‘Give a lecture’ LEGS.SBYAR BYED (lit., *lecture do*); ‘give medical care’ SMAN.BCOS BYED (lit., *treatment do*); ‘give credit’ YID.CHEB BYED (lit., *trust do*), etc.
- c. *In quite a number of instances, give is used in English as a light verb to express a verbal communication. In these cases, it is quite frequent to simply find BSHAD or ZER (‘say’) in standard spoken Tibetan:*

‘Give an account’ GNAS.TSHUL BSHAD (lit., *event say*); ‘give one’s opinion’ BSAM.’CHAR BSHAD (lit., *opinion say*); ‘give a teaching’ CHOS BSHAD (lit., *doctrine say*); ‘give thanks’ THUGS.RJE.CHE ZER (lit., *thanks say*), etc.
- d. *Finally, constructions involving the light verb give in English are sometimes translated into Tibetan with a collocational construction, with a compound form, or with a monomorphemic verb:*

‘Give a haircut’ SKRA BZO (lit., *hair make*); ‘give a name’ MING BTAGS (lit., *name attach*); ‘give notice’ DGONGS.PA ZHU (lit., *intent [hon.] ask [hum.]*); ‘give a ride’ MO.TA NANG-LA BSKYAL (lit., *car in carry*), etc.

This analysis and listing of constructions that would be appropriate translations of the English verb *give* reveal several points that are essential to further our analysis of *give* in Tibetan. Firstly, *give* is not only highly abstract and polysemous in English, it also appears as a light verb in a great variety of entrenched constructions, making the predictability of the use of *give* instead of another light verb for a given idiomatic construction quite low.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, although the translation of *give* when it has a basic meaning of ‘handing something over to someone’ is quite straightforward in standard spoken Tibetan (*SPRAD*), the translation of figurative *give* is in no way easy to systematize. Finally, this contrastive analysis illustrates that the Tibetan language has also developed very common light verbs, but *SPRAD* is not one of them.

### 3. The distribution of *SPRAD*, *GNANG* and *PHUL* in standard spoken Tibetan

Now that we know that the answer to the question ‘How do you say *give* in Tibetan?’ is not as simple as it seems, we can adopt a form-to-function approach starting from Tibetan. We will focus on the most common words that can express the notion of ‘giving’ in standard spoken Tibetan and briefly explore their evolution from Old Tibetan.

#### 3.1 The Tibetan verb *SPRAD*

The verb *SPRAD* is the most common way of saying give when it means ‘hand something over’. However, *SPRAD* is quite monosemous, literal and unproductive. In Old Tibetan, and partly in Classical Tibetan, the meaning of *SPROD/SPRAD* was different from its contemporary use in standard spoken Tibetan, since it usually meant ‘meet’ or ‘bring together’.

- (5) *’o.na nga-s mar.pa dang sprad=kyis*  
 then 1SG-ERG Marpa ASSOC bring together= FCLT  
 ‘Then I can arrange for you to meet Marpa...’ (MLNT)

In standard spoken Tibetan, the verb *SPRAD* has lost that meaning and only signifies give. It appears 11 times in the TSC, where it is always associated with a concrete

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9. The use of light verbs is in essence idiosyncratic, as the construction has to be memorised in its entirety. It is for example difficult to explain systematically why in English ‘give a talk’ and ‘make an announcement’ are perfect collocations while ‘\*make a talk’ and ‘\*give an announcement’ are not.

object (money, food, things, socks, gloves...; see example 4). This further confirms that the use of *SPRAD* is quite different from *give* in English, the latter having most often a figurative meaning as shown by large corpus statistics (Gilquin, 2008).

### 3.2 The Tibetan verb *GNANG*

The verb *GNANG* is used as a plain lexical verb in Old Tibetan to mean *give* in the honorific. It can have both a concrete or an abstract meaning. Since the agent of the transfer has to be a high-profile person, it can quite often be translated as ‘grant’.

- (6) *bdag-gyi pha ltar dgum-ba-r gnang zhes gsol=lo*  
 1SG-GEN father like kill-NMZ-OBL give (H) QUOT beg=FCLTS  
 “‘Grant me to be killed just like my father’, he begged.” (Pt 0981, r250)

In Classical Tibetan, *GNANG* is also a very frequent verb expressing *give* when the agent is seen as particularly respectable. There are many instances of it in *the life of Milarepa* (15th c.).

- (7) *gser srang bdun.po gnang-byung*  
 gold ounce seven give (H)-CMPL.PAST.REC  
 ‘She gave me seven ounces of gold.’ (MLNT)

The verb *GNANG* was also already used as a frequent light verb in Classical Tibetan. In *the life of Milarepa*, one can find the following constructions, which are all in the honorific:

*CHOS GNANG* (lit., *doctrine give[hon.]*) ‘teach the Buddhist doctrine’; *MTHU GNANG* (lit., *magic give[hon.]*) ‘grant magical power’; *GDAMS.NGAG GNANG* (lit., *instructiongive[hon.]*) ‘give instructions’; *PHYAG.BEBS GNANG* (lit., *beating give[hon.]*) ‘beat’; *DBANG GNANG* (lit., *power give[hon.]*) ‘give empowerment’; *PHYAG.RTAGS GNANG* (lit., *sign give[hon.]*) ‘give a sign, wave’; *LUNG.BSTAN GNANG* (lit. *prophecy give[hon.]*) ‘predict, prophesy’, etc.

In standard spoken Tibetan, it is used as a lexical verb to convey the honorific meaning of both *SPRAD* ‘give, hand over’ and *BYED* ‘do’ (Tournadre & Dorje, 1998, 2003). It also occurs as an honorific morpheme after an honorific lexical verb such as *GSUNG* (‘say’) or after the light verb *BTANG* (see below).

In the TSC, it appears 24 times. In no occurrence, is it the honorific form of *SPRAD* (‘give, hand over’), but it is the honorific of *BYED* (‘do’) 7 times in the corpus. It appears twice as part of the honorific imperative suffix *-gnang.rogs*. In the remaining 13 occurrences, it is an honorific light verb or is part of an honorific compound verb. It is compatible with different kinds of actions. Here are a few examples from the TSC:



*'TSHAL.GNANG* (lit., *seek.give [hon.]*) 'look for' is the honorific of *'TSHAL*; *DRAN.GNANG* (lit., *remember.give [hon.]*) 'remember' is the honorific of *DRAN*; *MOS.MTHUN GNANG* 'agree' is the honorific of *MOS.MTHUN BYED*; *BZHUGS.GNANG* (lit., *stay [hon.].give [hon.]*) 'stay' is an alternative to the simple form *BZHUGS*, the honorific of *BSDAD*; *GSUNG.GNANG* (lit., *say [hon.].give [hon.]*) 'say' is an alternative to the simple form *GSUNG*, the honorific of *BSHAD*, etc.

### 3.3 The Tibetan verb *PHUL*

In Old Tibetan, *'BUL/PHUL* is a lexical verb that is the humilific form of *SPRAD* 'give, hand over' when the agent of the transfer is presented as inferior to the recipient

- (8) *de.nas phyag byas 'phrin.yig dang rtags so.rdub*  
 then arm (H.) LV letter CONN token ring  
*phul te*  
 give (h) CONN

'After paying respect, he gave her the letter and the ring as a token...'

(Pt 0981, r219)

The same function can be observed in Classical Tibetan:

- (9) *nga-s gser g.yu kun phul te*  
 1SG-ERG gold turquoise all give (h) CONN  
 'I gave you all the gold and Turquoise...'

(MLNT)

Just like the honorific verb *GNANG*, the humilific verb *'BUL/PHUL* was already a well-established light verb in Classical Tibetan. The following constructions appear in *the life of Milarepa*:

*PHYAG PHUL* (lit., *arm [hon.] give [hum.]*) 'prostrate'; *GZIGS PHUL* (lit., *eye[hon.] give [hum.]*) 'show'; *RGYU.MTSHAN PHUL* (lit. *reason give [hum.]*) 'give some reasons'; *GLU PHUL* (lit. *song give [hum.]*) 'offer a song', etc.

In the TSC, the verb *PHUL* only appears once in the idiomatic expression *ZHAL.PARPHUL* ('give a phone call', hum.), in which it is undeniably a light verb.

What is interesting about the verb *PHUL* is that when it is used as a humilific light verb, it does not correspond to the verb *SPRAD* in the ordinary domain, but to other verbs instead. For example, the ordinary form of the humilific *MTSHAN PHUL* 'give a name' is *MING BTAG*, literally meaning 'attach a name'. The ordinary form of *ZHAL.PAR PHUL* 'give a phone call' is *KHA.PAR BRGYAB* (or *KHA.PAR BTANG*). In these two examples, the original meaning of the verb *PHUL* is not much altered, as the act of 'giving a name' or 'giving a phone call' can both be seen as a 'transfer of data' between two people.

However, the meaning of the verb *PHUL* seems to have bleached further in constructions such as *PHYAG PHUL*, meaning ‘prostrate’ (lit., *hand [hon.] give [hum.]*) or *ZHABS.SKOR PHUL*, meaning ‘circumambulate’, i.e. ‘walk around a religious emblem’ (lit., *foot [hon.].turn give [hum.]*). The ordinary form of *PHYAG PHUL* is *PHYAG ’TSHAL* (lit., *hand [hon.] beg*), and the ordinary form of *ZHABS.SKOR PHUL* is *SKOR.BA BRGYAB* (lit., *turn hit*). In order to examine why the humilific and honorific forms *PHUL* and *GNANG* are actually more productive than the ordinary verb *SPRAD*, it is first necessary to understand the mechanics of the honorific domain in Tibetan.

## 4. Give and the honorific domain

### 4.1 The honorific domain in Tibetan

We are using the term ‘domain’ here, as it is slightly misleading to call the honorific system of Tibetan a register, since ‘a register’ refers to a certain linguistic variety that has a diffuse impact on a speaker’s speech and is particularly dependent on social settings. The use of Tibetan honorifics is more specific and systematized than what is usually meant by the notion of register, as it reflects the speaker’s attitude toward the referents of the words he uses by positioning them on the social scale.

In all the world’s languages, there are words, constructions, terms of address and/or grammatical paradigms that encode respect towards the addressee, as well as the things and people that the speaker refers to (Ide, 1989; Agha, 1994, *inter alia*). However, several Asian languages possess an honorific domain that is more pervasive and systematized. For example, there have been numerous studies on the honorific systems of Japanese and Korean (Okamoto, 1999; Strauss & Eun, 2005, *inter alia*). Several scholars have also investigated the honorific domain of Tibetan (Hajime, 1975; Rdorje et al., 1993; DeLancey, 1998; Tournadre & Dorje, 1998, 2003; Denwood, 1999; Dorje & Lhazom, 2002).

Regarding the general conditions of the use of the honorific domain in Tibetan, it can first be noticed that it is quite limited both in regional and social dialects. The Lhasa aristocracy is reputed to be the only Tibetan speakers that use it ‘perfectly’. The vast majority of speakers of standard Tibetan employ an honorific system that is less pervasive and simpler than in the Lhasa upper-class sociolect (Tournadre & Dorje, 1998, 2003). Secondly, it is true that the general register of the sentence will influence the use of the honorific domain, and Tibetan speakers tend to use more honorifics in formal situations. However, in order to really understand how the honorific system of Tibetan functions, it is necessary to take into account several other linguistic parameters.

First of all, the honorific domain affects many linguistic forms, but is systematized differently according to the syntactic category of a given word. In Tibetan, the honorific domain may concern nouns, verbs, pronouns, suffixes and terms of address. Tournadre & Dorje (1998, 2003) distinguish four planes for the honorific domain in addition to the ordinary plane: the honorific, the humilific, the high honorific and the double honorific. The plane for a given linguistic item is chosen according to the social status of the participants mentioned in the sentence (explicit or implicit) with respect to the speaker. The honorific domain not only refers to people, but also to their spheres, that is, the objects and other entities that are related to them. What is special about verbs is that they generally connect several participants in a sentence, which makes all of these planes relevant for some verbs, whereas nouns generally distinguish between only the ordinary and honorific forms at most. The high honorific plane concerns very few verbs and is used to convey a highly reverential attitude. In order to illustrate the other planes of the honorific domain (honorific, humilific and double honorific), we will take *SPRAD* ('give, hand over') as an example.

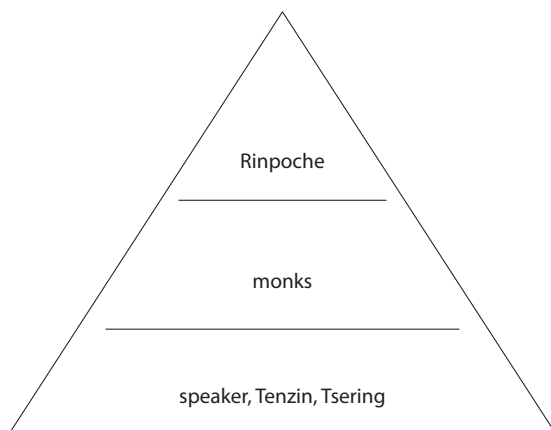
#### 4.2 The functioning of give in the Tibetan honorific system

The special relation that the verb give bears with the honorific domain has already been investigated by Loveday (1986) in his study of Japanese from a sociolinguistic perspective. In Japanese, give possesses several translations depending on the social relationship between the two participants (Loveday, 1986, cited in Newman, 1996).

In Tibetan, in order to understand the honorific system of transitive and ditransitive verbs, the social relationship between the speaker and the addressee is relevant, as well as the social relationship between the participants in the sentence. The basic rules for the use of *SPRAD* (honorific form *GNANG*, humilific form *PHUL* and double honorific form *PHUL.GNANG*) are the following:

- a. *The honorific form GNANG encodes that the agent has a higher status than the speaker*
- b. *The humilific form PHUL encodes that the agent has a lower status than the recipient*
- c. *The double honorific form PHUL.GNANG encodes that the agent has a higher status than the speaker and that the agent has a lower status than the recipient*

In order to illustrate these diverse possibilities, let us consider a few protagonists: some ordinary people (the speaker, Tenzin and Tsering), two monks (high on the social scale) and a *Rinpoche* (a reincarnated lama, considered very high on the social scale).

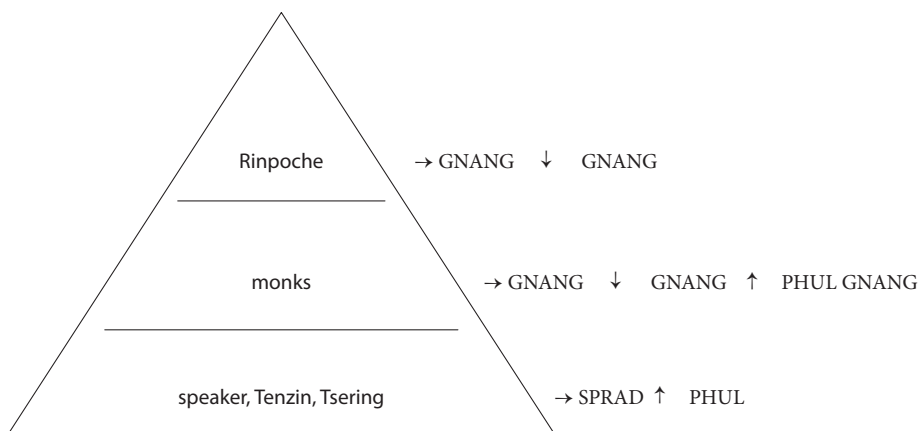


**Figure 1.** Schematic illustration of the Tibetan social scale

With a transfer verb such as *SPRAD*, some of the most common combinations are the following (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** *give* and the honorific domain in Tibetan

Speaker → Tenzin	<i>sprad</i> (ordinary, because speaker on same level as Tenzin)
Tenzin → Tsering	<i>sprad</i> (ordinary, Tenzin = Tsering, and spkr = Tenzin)
Tenzin ↗ monk	<i>phul</i> (humilific, Tenzin < monk, and spkr = Tenzin)
Monk ↘ Tenzin	<i>gnang</i> (honorific, monk > Tenzin, and spkr < monk)
Monk → monk	<i>gnang</i> (hon., monk = monk, and spkr < monk)
Monk ↗ Rinpoche	<i>phul.gnang</i> (double hon., monk < Rinpoche, and spkr < monk)
Rinpoche ↘ monk	<i>gnang</i> (hon., Rinpoche > monk, and spkr < Rinpoche)



**Figure 2.** The form of *give* in Tibetan according to the social positions of the agent and the recipient

What can be noticed from this schematic presentation is first that the humilific plane is not the symmetrical opposite of the honorific plane. The honorific form *GNANG* can encode a downward transfer, and also a horizontal transfer if the agent is higher than the speaker. The humilific form can only be used for an upward transfer with an agent that is not higher than the speaker, and the double honorific form will be appropriate for an upward transfer when the agent is superior to the speaker.

Nevertheless, in addition to the high variation that exists in the use of the honorific system, what makes it even more complex is the strict convention in Tibetan culture for a speaker to pretend that he is not higher on the social scale than anyone else. Therefore, even when a monk or a *Rinpoche* is the speaker, they will never use honorific words in reference to themselves or express that it is an upward transfer when they are recipients.

### 4.3 The emergence of *GNANG* and *PHUL* as light verbs of the honorific domain

Is it now possible to offer some explanations as to why *SPRAD* has not redeployed as a light verb, whereas the honorific form *GNANG* and the humilific form *PHUL* have been quite productive?<sup>10</sup>

It is undeniable that in Tibetan there is a special relation between the honorific domain and the verb *give*. We would argue that this phenomenon is not just a random idiosyncrasy of Tibetan, but may rely on the special cognitive status of the notion of transfer, as capturing social hierarchy quite accurately.

What the cross-linguistic research on light verbs has demonstrated is that light verbs generally come from frequent verbs with a basic meaning (Butt & Lahiri, 2003; Mohanan, 2006). It is the case in Tibetan since the three most frequent light verbs *BYED*, *BTANG*, and *BRGYAB* respectively mean ‘do’, ‘give’, ‘send’, and ‘hit, throw’. What is special about the verb *give* however may be that it refers to one of the most basic interpersonal actions of the human behavioural repertoire. Therefore, *give* is particularly relevant for the honorific domain, and it is indeed one of the rare verbs in standard spoken Tibetan that possesses a humilific form.<sup>11</sup> The verb *SPRAD* is also one of the only two verbs that possess a double honorific form *PHUL.GNANG* (together with *BSHAD* ‘say’, whose double honorific form is *ZHU.GNANG*).

10. It has to be noticed however that there are a few figurative expressions involving *SPRAD*, and that *GNANG* has been far more productive than *PHUL*.

11. The other humilific verbs of Tibetan are *ZHU* ‘eat, drink, say’, the humilific form of *ZA* ‘eat’, *BTHUNG* ‘drink’ and *BSHAD* ‘say’, *BCAR* ‘come close to sb., call on sb., meet sb.’, the humilific form of ‘GO’ ‘go’ or *THUG* ‘meet’, and *MJAL* ‘visit, see’, the humilific form of *THUG* ‘meet’ and *MTHONG* ‘see’.

The verb ‘say’ is similar to *give* in the sense that they are both basic verbs prototypically connecting two human beings.

In Tibetan, the honorific form *GNANG* has become a very frequent light verb (as confirmed by its frequent occurrences in the TSC), and its meaning has bleached so that it does not seem to encode much more than an honorific semantic feature in some of these constructions.

Although the verb *PHUL* is far less frequent and productive than *GNANG*, its meaning has also bleached when it is used as a light verb. Let us consider an example from the TSC:

- (10) *tshe.ring lha.mo-s khong-la zhal.par phul...*  
 Tsering Lhamo-ERG 3SG-OBL phone (H) VBZ (h)  
 ‘TseringLhamo gave her a call...’ (TSC)

In this example, the speaker uses the verb *PHUL*, but it does not mean ‘hand something over’. It expresses a communicative contact between two people, as well as a mark of respect that the agent shows to the recipient. As mentioned before, the ordinary form of *ZHAL.PAR PHUL* is *KHA.PAR BRGYAB* (or *KHA.PAR BTANG*), and not \**KHA.PAR SPRAD* for this meaning, which again shows that the humilific feature of *PHUL* was more important in its selection as a light verb than its basic meaning of ‘giving’.

In some constructions, the ditransitive feature of *PHUL* is not even retained. As we saw in 3.4, *PHUL* is often used as a light verb for religious performances: *MCHOD.PA PHUL* ‘make offerings’, *PHYAG PHUL* ‘prostrate’, *ZHABS.SKOR PHUL* ‘circumambulate’, and *DMAR.MCHOD PHUL* (lit., *sacrifice give*) ‘make a sacrifice’. In these cases, the meaning of *PHUL* has bleached further, as the constructions seem to refer to specific acts without any explicit transfer. However, we would argue that these acts imply an underlying beneficiary to which it is essential for Tibetans to show great respect. Tibetan people perform those rituals in a spirit of devotion to the Buddha or a deity. When we know how essential religious devotion is in Tibetan culture, we can understand why the humilific *PHUL* has emerged as a light verb to refer to those spiritual performances.

## 5. Conclusion

We have collected data on the translation of *give* into Tibetan in order to investigate both the functioning of light verbs and the system of honorific verbs in this language. We have shown that in standard spoken Tibetan, the most basic way of translating the verb *give* when it has the literal meaning of ‘handing over’ is *SPRAD*. However, we noticed that this verb is not used as a light verb in Tibetan. The lack of productivity of *SPRAD* might result from the fact that it has only become the basic and frequent

equivalent of *give* in modern standard Tibetan while other ‘giving verbs’ had already been selected to participate in light verb constructions. The emergence of light verbs in a language can be a relatively slow process involving the semantic evolution of a lexical verb and the crystallization of specific word combinations. For example, the Tibetan verb *BTANG* went through that process, and it already held the position of a light verb involved in transfer constructions in Classical Tibetan, thus being a long-established competitor to *SPRAD* for that function.

What also drew our attention is that, although *SPRAD* has not become a light verb in standard spoken Tibetan, its honorific form *GNANG*, and to a lesser extent its humilific form *PHUL*, have undeniably gone through that process. We argued that this is probably not a mere coincidence, since the honorific domain is particularly relevant when referring to a transfer between two people. The verb *give* triggers a notional and linguistic representation that prototypically involves two human participants, and therefore captures a scene where social relationship is crucial. In order to encode the honorific domain for an abstract transfer, and later even for other types of actions, Lhasa Tibetan has promoted *GNANG* and *PHUL* to the status of light verbs, because they are emblematic of this social domain, which is particularly pervasive in the strictly hierarchical society of the Tibetan capital. As we suggested, it seems that both universal semantic associations and cultural sensitivities can shed light on the motivations behind the selection of those specific verbs as central pivots of the honorific system of Tibetan.

## List of abbreviations

1/2/3	first/second/third person	NMZ	nominalizer
ASSOC	associative case	PAST	past tense
CMPL	completive aspect	QUOT	quotative
CONN	connective	REC	receptive directionality
CR	correlative	SG	singular
DEM	demonstrative	lit.	literally
DIR	direct perceptive evidential	hon.	honorific
ERG	ergative	hum.	humilific
FCLT	sentence final clitic	sb.	somebody
FUT	future	spkr	speaker
GEN	genitive	TSC	Tibet Student Corpus
(H)	honorific	COCA	Corpus Of Contemporary American English
(h)	humilific		
IMP	imperative	MLNT	<i>mi la'irnam thar</i> <i>The life of Milarepa</i> by T. Heruka, 15th c.)
LV	light verb	SPOK	spoken English
OBL	oblique		

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## *GEI*

### Towards a unified account

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*Gei*, ‘give’ in Mandarin Chinese, has been object of many studies due to its multifaceted properties and its ability to appear in a number of different structures. However, previous analyses focus only on some of all the possible structures where *gei* appears, while excluding others. In this paper, I aim at tracing a taxonomy of all the *gei* constructions found in the literature and elicited in questionnaires, and propose a unified analysis of *gei* that encompasses as many *gei* structures as possible. I propose an analysis of *gei* in terms of structure, interpretation and grammaticalization, one that links all the different occurrences of *gei* considered as one element in different structures. More specifically, I propose that *gei* is always a predicate whose different positions and interpretations can be seen as different stages of grammaticalization, which make it either a full verb or a weaker predicate. However, all the distinct stages of grammaticalization in which *gei* appears within a sentence maintain the general sense of “orientation” (in terms of Paris 1978, 1992). When *gei* is not a full lexical verb itself, its presence with its “orientation” general meaning has an effect on the transitivity of the verb that precedes or follows: when preverbal, *gei* highlights the role of the agent of the verb, when postverbal, *gei* reinforces the role of the recipient.

**Keywords:** dative constructions, mandarin chinese, *gei* constructions, give, grammaticalization, syntactic structures, orientation, taxonomy, grammatical categories

## 1. Introduction

Mandarin *gei*<sup>1</sup> ‘give’ has been object of many studies due to its multifaceted properties and its presence in a number of different structures. However, previous analyses isolate and focus only on some of all the possible constructions where *gei* appears, while excluding others.

In this paper, I aim at (i) tracing a taxonomy of all the *gei* constructions that I found in the literature and that I collected with questionnaires; (ii) proposing a unified analysis of *gei* that overarches as many as possible *gei* structures in Mandarin Chinese. I propose an analysis of *gei* in terms of structure, interpretation and grammaticalization. I demonstrate that *gei* is always a predicate whose different syntactic positions and interpretations can be seen as different stages of grammaticalization, which make it either a full verb or a weaker predicate. Crucially, I argue that in every syntactic position and stage of grammaticalization, *gei* maintains the general sense of *orientation*, in terms of Paris (1978, 1982, 1992, 1998). I develop Paris’ proposal arguing that when *gei* is not a full lexical verb itself, its general meaning of *orientation* has an effect on the transitivity of the verb that precedes or follows. On the one hand, when *gei* is in a preverbal position, it highlights the role of the agent of the verb, on the other hand, when *gei* is post-verbal, it reinforces the role of the recipient.

The article is organized as follows: in Section 2 I illustrate and classify the different *gei* constructions. I also argue that *gei* is always a predicate, full or light. In Section 3, I propose that the core meaning of *gei* that links all the *gei* structures is the meaning of *orientation*. In Section 4, I propose that the different categories of *gei* correspond to different stages of grammaticalization. In Section 5, I trace the conclusions of the article.

## 2. Data and categories

*Gei* ‘give’ has been the object of much debate in different fields of linguistics:<sup>2</sup> descriptive grammar (Xu Dan 1994, Zhu 1979, 1982) and semantic analysis (Paris 1978, 1992), functional approach (Li & Thompson 1981), construction grammar (Liu 2006), cognitive linguistics (Newman 1993a, 1993b), historical approach

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1. Mandarin (or Standard Chinese) is a tonal language, i.e. the pitch contour of a syllable is used to distinguish words from each other. It has four main tones: the first tone is described as high; the second as rising; the third as falling-rising; the four as falling, and one neutral tone. *Gei* ‘give’ analyzed in this paper is pronounced with the third tone. In this paper the tones are not indicated.

2. Since the literature on *gei* is vast, I will mention only some selected references.

(Peyraube 1986, 1988, Chappell & Peyraube 2006, 2011), generative grammar (Tang 1979, 2009, Paul & Whitman 2010, Li & Huang 2015, Tsai 2015). *Gei* 'give' has been studied also in different varieties of Chinese, see for instance Chirkova (2008) and Ngai (2015). Generally, the authors mentioned above concentrate their analysis only on some of the constructions where *gei* appears, without taking into consideration the whole set of the different possible structures, including passives and the co-occurrence with *ba*, which precedes a direct object in disposal constructions (see Section 2.4). In this Section, I attempt a taxonomy of as many as possible *gei* constructions that I found in the literature and that I collected via questionnaires with Mandarin Chinese native speakers.

I have classified the different *gei* constructions in distinct groups in Table 1. I will illustrate in detail the syntactic structure and the role of *gei* in each construction in the Sections that follow.

Table 1.<sup>3</sup>

<i>Gei</i> as full lexical verb									
[1]	S				<i>gei</i>		io	do	
[2]	S				<i>gei</i>			do	V
Post-verbal <i>gei</i>									
[3]	S			V		<i>gei</i>	io	do	
[4]	S			V				do	<i>gei</i> io
[5]	S			V				do	<i>gei</i> io V
Two <i>gei</i>									
[6]	S				<i>gei</i>			do	<i>gei</i> io
Pre-verbal <i>gei</i>									
[7]	S		<i>gei</i>			io		V	do
Passive <i>gei</i>									
[8]	SP				<i>gei</i>				V
[9]	SP		<i>gei</i>			Ag			V
[10]	SP			<i>bei</i>		Ag		<i>gei</i>	V
Ba+O and <i>gei</i>									
[11]	S	<i>ba</i>	do				V	<i>gei</i>	io
[12]	S	<i>ba</i>	do				V	<i>gei</i>	
[13]	S	<i>ba</i>	do			<i>gei</i>	V		io V
<i>Geiyu</i>									
[14]	S						<i>geiyu</i>	io	do

3. The abbreviations used in Table 1 are the following: S = Subject; io = indirect object; do = direct object; V = verb; SP = subject with the role of patient; Ag = agent; *bei* = particle that introduces the agent in passive constructions; *ba* = particle that introduces a direct object in disposal constructions.

Importantly, it is assumed in this paper that “argument roles expose fundamental aspects of event conceptualization, such as the direction of energy flow between participants, i.e. which participant is more agent-like energy source and which a more patient-like energy sink” (Västi 2011, p. 81) (see also Langacker, 1991, and Newman, 1996). In particular, I consider a gradient benefactive extension leading from recipients to beneficiaries (Malchukov, 2017).<sup>4</sup> In this research, on the one hand, *recipient* is an argument denoting an animate endpoint of a transfer (cf. Van Valin & LaPolla 1997, p. 86; Luraghi 2003, p. 39). Typically, the transfer results from an intentional act of an explicit or implicit agent. Recipients are target participants in events of giving, communication and getting (Västi, 2011). A typical example for the recipient role I assume here is exemplified in (1a), where Mary is the recipient that is the end point of the event of giving. On the other hand, I consider the benefactive role as exemplified in (1b):

- (1) a. Zhangsan gave a book to Mary.  
 b. John made a cake for Mary. (Yu 2016, p. 131)

As Yu (2016) illustrates, the example in (1b) can have two interpretations: (i) ‘John made a cake in order to give it to Mary’ or (ii) ‘John made a cake in place of Mary’ (because Mary didn’t have time to make it, for instance). I define both instances of Mary as benefactives: in both cases Mary is an adjunct, not an argument, since she does not belong to the conceptual or syntactic core of the constructions. However, Mary is involved and affected in the creation of the cake and she benefits from it in a way or another.<sup>5</sup>

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4. As Shibatani (1996), Van Valin & LaPolla (1997), Kittila (2005) point out, there is a gradient benefactive extension leading from recipients to beneficiaries (and further to possessors). Indeed, as it is well-known from typological literature, the distinction between recipients (of giving events) and beneficiaries is gradual (Malchukov 2017).

5. Kittila (2005) distinguishes two types of beneficiaries as two roles that share a common property: they both generally benefit from the events in which they are involved. The crucial difference is that what Kittila calls a ‘pure’ beneficiary becomes the possessor of an object that enters into the its domain of possession, and that consists in the result of the event. While the other type of beneficiary is involved in an event from which he takes advantage. In this article, I don’t take in consideration such a refined distinction, but I define both cases simply as beneficiary.

## 2.1 *Gei* as full lexical verb

The first group includes constructions where *gei* is undoubtedly a full lexical verb, i.e. constructions [1]<sup>6</sup> and [2]. In these constructions, *gei* is the main verb of the sentence, but its interpretation changes depending of the element that follows. Example (2) represents construction [1], where *gei* has the general meaning of *giving*: It expresses the transfer of possession from an agent who has something (the theme) and passes this thing over to a recipient who receives it.

- (2) *Zhangsan gei [wo]<sub>io</sub> [zhe ben shu]<sub>do</sub> le.* [1]  
 Zhangsan gei 1SG this CLF book FP  
 ‘Zhangsan gave me a book.’

Example (3) represents construction [2], where *gei* is the main verb and is followed by a nominal element together with another verb.

- (3) *Wo yao kan, ta jiu gei [wo]<sub>do</sub> [kan]<sub>v</sub>* [2]  
 1SG want see 3SG then gei 1SG see  
 ‘If I want to look, s/he will let me to look.’ (Newman 1993a: 1e)

In (3), *gei* acts as a control verb: the object of *gei* is also understood as the subject of the verb (*kan* ‘see’), and expresses a permission *allow/let*. In (3) *gei* refers to the transfer of control over the act of seeing.

## 2.2 Post-verbal *gei*

The second group in Table 1 includes cases where *gei* occurs post-verbally. The sentences in (4) and (5) are examples of post-verbal dative alternation: they express a transfer of possession from an agent to a recipient as in (2), but differently from (2), in (4) and (5) *gei* is not the main verb of the clause. In the Example (4) (construction [3]), *gei* appears immediately to the right of the main verb (*mai* ‘buy’) and is followed by the recipient (*fuqin* ‘father’) and the theme (*shoujin* ‘handkerchief’). In Example (5) (construction [4]), *gei* together with the recipient follows the theme, as exemplified in (5).

- (4) *Chuling [mai]<sub>v</sub> gei [fuqin]<sub>io</sub> [yi tiao shoujin]<sub>do</sub>* [3]  
 Chuling buy gei father one CLF handkerchief  
 ‘Chuling bought a handkerchief to his father’ (Paris 1978:4)

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6. The number within square brackets indicates the number of the construction classified in Table 1.



- (5) *Chulin [mai]<sub>V</sub> [yi tiao shoujin]<sub>do</sub> gei [fuqin]<sub>io</sub> [4]*  
 Chulin buy one CLF handkerchief gei father  
 Chulin bought a handkerchief to his father. (Paris 1978:5)

In the sentence in (6), the construction is similar to (5), but with, in addition, an embedded verb (*kan* 'see') at the end of the clause (construction [5]).

- (6) *Zhangsan [na-chu]<sub>V</sub> [yi feng xin]<sub>do</sub> gei [Lisi]<sub>io</sub> [kan]<sub>V</sub> [5]*  
 Zhangsan take-out one CLF letter gei Lisi read  
 'Zhangsan took out a letter for Lisi to read'

Previous studies proposed different analyses about the categorical status of the post-verbal *gei*. *Gei* has been analyzed as a preposition (Teng 1975, Tang 1979, Li & Thompson 1981, Li 1990, Tang 1990, Zhang 1990, McCawley 1992, Cheng & al. 1999, Lin 2001, Paul & Whitman 2010), as a complementizer (Ting & Chang 2004, Her 2006), or as a verb (Huang & Ahrens 1999, Huang & Mo 1992, Lin & Huang 2015). I defend the idea that the post-verbal *gei* is a verb. Some authors argue that *gei* is a preposition, since it cannot be followed by an aspectual marker, which can occur only to the right of the main verb (cf. the position of the aspectual marker *le* in (7a) with (7b)). (The asterisc indicates that the sentence is ungrammatical).

- (7) a. \**Zhangsan ti yi ge qiu gei le Lisi.*  
 Zhangsan kick one CLF ball gei PFV Lisi  
 b. *Zhangsan ti le yi ge qiu gei Lisi.*  
 Zhangsan kick PFV one CLF ball gei Lisi  
 'Zhangsan kicked the ball to Lisi.' (Huang & Mo 1992: 17)

However, the restriction on the position of the aspectual marker can be explained if we analyze *gei* as secondary predicate in a Serial Verb Construction (henceforth SVC)<sup>7</sup> (Huang & Mo 1992, Huang & Ahrens 1999), where only the first verb can be marked with an aspectual marker. In Example (6), *gei* is followed by a nominal phrase and a verb in a purposive clause. In this type of sentences, *gei* can be analyzed as a secondary predicate that controls the subject of the final verb.<sup>8</sup> As a matter of

7. A Serial Verb Construction consists in a sequence of verbs with no overt connective marker; these verbs express simultaneous or immediately consecutive actions that can be conceived as one event. In previous studies, Serial Verb Construction is not a unified notion, see for instance Li & Thompson (1981), Sebba (1987), Lord (1993), Durie (1997), Aikhenvald (2006), Paul (2008) among many others.

8. Lin & Huang (2015) argue that *gei* in a sentence like (5) forms a verbal phrase, which is a secondary predication that constitutes a resultative clause, which converts a resultative expression into a syntactic complement (Higginbotham 1995, Snyder 2001).

fact, the complement *Lisi* selected by *gei* is the subject of the verb *kan* ‘read’.<sup>9</sup> The analysis of *gei* as a control verb is demonstrated by different facts. Firstly, if *gei* is a preposition without any control or predicational relation with the following verb, it is not possible to account for the ungrammaticality of (8), where *gei* together with the nominal phrase *Lisi* is separated from the final verb with the object:

- (8) \**Zhangsan na chu gei Lisi yi feng xin kan*  
 Zhangsan take out gei Lisi one CLF letter read  
 ‘Zhangsan takes out a letter for Lisi to read.’

Huang & Mo (1992: 24), in fact, show that prepositional objects are not eligible controllers in Mandarin:

- (9) *Ta fang le yi ge wan zai zhuoshang hen youni*  
 3SG put PFV one CLF bowl on table very greasy  
 i. ‘S/he put a greasy bowl on the table’  
 ii. \*‘She put a bowl on the greasy table’ (Huang & Mo 1992: 24)

Moreover, if *gei* is a preposition, we cannot explain why a verb like *chang* ‘sing’ (or *fang* ‘to put on’), which does not allow a post-verbal prepositional phrase as recipient, can occur as leading verb of a SVC (cf. (10a) with (10b) and (11a) with (11b)).

- (10) a. \**Wo chang le yi shou ge gei ta.*  
 I sing PFV one CLF song gei her/him  
 ‘I sang a song to her/him.’  
 b. *Wo chang le yi shou ge gei ta ting.*  
 1SG sing PFV one CLF song gei her/him listen  
 ‘I sang a song for her to listen.’ (Her 2006: 50)
- (11) a. \**Zhangsan fang le yi bu dianying gei dajia*  
 Zhangsan play PFV one CLF movie gei everyone  
 b. *Zhangsan fang le yi bu dianying gei dajia kan.*<sup>10</sup>  
 Zhangsan play PFV one CLF movie gei everyone watch  
 ‘Zhangsan played a movie for everyone to watch.’  
 (Huang & Mo 1992: 29)

9. Ting & Chang (2004) define examples like (6) as purposive *gei* constructions.

10. For instance, notice also that in (11) *gei* can be substituted by another control verb like *qing* ‘invite’:

- (i) *Zhangsan fang le yi bu dianying qing dajia xinshang.*  
 Zhangsan play perf one CLF movie invite everyone enjoy  
 ‘Zhangsan played a movie for everyone to enjoy.’ (Huang & Mo 1992:30)

Moreover, if *gei* is a preposition it is not possible to explain why there are restrictions in the choice of the final verb. For instance, *gei* and the indirect object can be followed by a verb like *chi* ‘eat’ or *kan* ‘look’, while verbs like *zuo* ‘make’ or *xi* ‘wash’ are not acceptable (cf. (12a) with (12b)):

- (12) a. *Wo song pingguo gei ni chi.*  
 1SG offer apple gei 2SG eat  
 b. \**Wo ji wo de yifu gei ni xi*  
 1SG send 1SG DET dress gei 2SG wash

The verbal status of post-verbal *gei* is shown also by the fact that it can be modified by an adverb (see (13)). Additionally, if the post-verbal *gei* followed by the nominal phrase is a prepositional phrase, its position at the end of the sentence would be an exception. Prepositional phrases usually occupy preverbal positions in Mandarin. In post-verbal position only secondary predications, resultatives, and locatives are found.

- (13) *Zhangsan song le yi feng xin mimidi gei Lisi.*  
 Zhangsan send PFV one CLF letter secretly gei Lisi  
 ‘Zhangsan sent a letter to Lisi secretly.’ (Li & Huang 2015: 26)

On the basis of the arguments illustrated above, I argue that the post-verbal *gei* in constructions [4] and [5] is a secondary predicate in a SVC.

The sentence in (4) (repeated here below in (14) for the reader’s convenience) exemplifies construction [3], where the post-verbal *gei* immediately follows the verb:

- (14) *Chuling [mai]<sub>V</sub> gei [fuqin]<sub>io</sub> [yi tiao shoujin]<sub>do</sub> [3]*  
 Chulin buy gei father one CLF handkerchief  
 Chulin bought a handkerchief to his father. (Paris 1978:4)

*Gei* that immediately follows the verb has been defined as co-verb (Li & Thompson 1981), as preposition (Tang 1990, Ting & Chang 2004), or as verb (Chao 1968, Li & Huang 2015, Huang & Mo 1992, Huang & Ahrens 1992). I am in line with the authors that analyze *gei* in (14) as a verb that forms a compound with the preceding verb. The fact that *gei* in (14) is not a preposition is demonstrated by different tests. For instance, the main verb and *gei* cannot be separated by the insertion of an aspectual marker, but the aspectual marker must follow both verbs (cf. (15a) with (15b)):

- (15) a. \**Zhangsan ti le gei Lisi yi ge qiu*  
 Zhangsan kick PFV gei Lisi one CLF ball  
 b. *Zhangsan ti gei le Lisi yi ge qiu*  
 Zhangshan kick gei PFV Lisi one CLF ball  
 ‘Zhangsan kicked the ball to Lisi.’ (Huang & Mo 1992: 15)

The restriction on the insertion of an aspectual marker reveals the lexical integrity between the main verb and *gei*,<sup>11</sup> and shows that *gei* cannot be a preposition. Moreover, notice that in Mandarin, the presence of a prepositional phrase in between a verb and an object is not attested:

- (16) \**Ta fang zai zhuoshang yi ben shu*  
 3SG put on table one CLF book  
 ‘He put on the table a book.’ (Huang & Mo 1992: 5)

A number of authors (Lin & Huang 2015, Her 2006, Liu 2006) propose that the verb together with the following *gei* forms a lexical compound. This compound is formed by head adjunction: *gei* is the head of the verbal compound and it is responsible for the ditransitivity of the compound, since it selects the grammatical category of its host; while the verb functions as a manner/mode modifier of *gei*.<sup>12</sup>

### 2.3 Two *gei* in one sentence

In colloquial style, two *gei* can co-occur in the same sentence (construction [6]):

- (17) *Ta gei le [qian]<sub>do</sub> gei (\*le) [Lisi]<sub>do</sub> le.* [6]  
 3SG gei PFV money gei PFV Lisi FP  
 ‘He gave money to Lisi.’

In a sentence with two *gei*, the recipient is highly emphasized. For instance, in (17), the speaker intends to highlight that the recipient of the transfer is *Lisi* and not someone else. I argue that this type of sentence consists of a combination of constructions [1] and [4] discussed above: the first *gei* is the main lexical verb, while the second one is a secondary predication in a SVC. Notice, in fact, that the

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11. When two verbal elements form a compound, the insertion of an aspectual marker is not permitted:

- (i) *Tamen jian (\*le) cha le wo de huzhao.*  
 3PL inspect PFV examine PFV 1SG DET passport  
 ‘They examined my passport.’ (Paul & Whitman 2010:22)

12. In the Generative linguistics framework, Paul & Whitman (2010), argue that the compound formed by the verb and *gei* derives from a syntactic process, due to the fact that *gei* is in a High Applicative syntactic position where the verb moves to adjoin to *gei*. The postulation of an applicative syntactic position holds to explain the presence of *gei* together only with verbs that obligatorily require the presence of *gei* to select the third argument of a ditransitive predication. However, the applicative projection cannot account for cases where the presence of *gei* is optional.

insertion of a perfective marker is possible only after the first *gei*, i.e. in between *gei* and *qian* ‘money’.

## 2.4 Preverbal *gei*

In construction [7], *gei* and the indirect object precedes the main verb as in the following example:

- (18) *Wo gei [ta]<sub>io</sub> [xie]<sub>v</sub> le [yi feng xin]<sub>do</sub> [7]*  
 1SG *gei* him write PFV one CLF letter  
 ‘I wrote a letter for/on behalf of him’

When *gei* followed by the indirect object (henceforth [*gei*+*io*]) precedes the main verb, either it has a benefactive/delegative *on behalf of* interpretation,<sup>13</sup> or it is ambiguous between the benefactive/delegative reading (see for instance Example (19i)) and *allow/permit* interpretation (as in (19ii)). Interestingly, it is never interpreted as recipient (cf. with Example (18iii)):

- (19) *Wo gei Zhangsan ti xingli*  
 1SG *gei* Zhangsan carry luggage  
 i. ‘I carry the luggage for Zhangsan’ (benefactive/delegative *on behalf of*)  
 ii. ‘I allow Zhangsan to carry the luggage’ (*allow/permit*)  
 iii. \*‘I carry the luggage to Zhangsan’ (recipient)

When *gei* in (19) is interpreted as *allow*, the syntactic structure of the sentence corresponds to construction [2] discussed in the previous Section. When *gei* has the benefactive/delegative semantics, it can be substituted by the preposition like *wei*

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13. Lin & Huang (2015) point out that [*gei*+*io*] in preverbal position can have also a maleficiary use as in the following sentence (from Lin and Huang 2015, footnote 10):

- (i) *Zhangsan jingran gei wo pao le*  
 Zhangsan unexpectedly *gei* 1SG run FP  
 ‘Out of my expectation Zhangsan run away from me’

The so-called maleficiary use recalls the ethical dative (Bosse et alii 2012) which introduces an attitude holder or experiencer, like the following example in French:

- (ii) *Je me bois une bière*  
 1SG to.me drink a beer  
 ‘Je me bois une bière.’

Moreover, the maleficiary use has limitation in the person: Chinese can express the *ethical dative* only with the first personal pronoun while, for instance, in French the limitation includes first and second pronouns.

or *ti* ‘for’, which have only the benefactive/delegative interpretation (see Examples (20a) and (20b)). Such a substitution is not possible when *gei* is in post-verbal position, as in (20c). Moreover, the use of the preposition *wei/ti* excludes the ambiguity between benefactive/delegative *on behalf of* and *allow* reading.

- (20) a. *Wo gei ta mai yi jian dayi*  
 1SG gei 3SG buy one CLF coat  
 b. *Wo ti ta mai yi jian dayi*<sup>14</sup>  
 1SG PREP 3SG buy one CLF coat  
 I bought a coat on his behalf  
 c. \**Wo ji le yi feng xin wei/ti Zhangsan*<sup>15</sup>  
 1SG send ASP one CLF letter to Zhangsan

Notice that [*gei+io*] in preverbal position can be interpreted as a recipient only in contexts where [*gei+io*] is pragmatically an old information, i.e. it is a *topic*, a phrase already mentioned or shared in the common ground<sup>16</sup> of the interlocutors. For instance, in Example (21), *Zhangsan* is interpreted as a recipient as he has been mentioned in the previous context by the Speaker A, i.e. *Zhangsan* is the topic (old information) of the sentence:

- (21) Spk. A: *Wo zhidao ni zuotian jian Zhangsan le.*  
 ‘I know that yesterday you met met Zhangsan.’  
 Spk. B: *Dui, wo gei ta dian qian le!*  
 correct 1SG gei him advance money PF  
 ‘Yes, correct, I advanced money to him!’

On the contrary, when it is not a topic, [*gei+io*] in preverbal position is always interpreted as benefactive/delegative. This is shown also by Example (22), where the main verb is *dakai* ‘open’. *Dakai* is an activity verb that does not denote a transfer event, so that it does not select a recipient complement, but only a benefactive/delegative one. [*Gei+io*], in fact, can only precede and never follow it (cf. (22a) with (22b)):

- (22) a. \**Zhangsan dakai le na shan men gei Lisi*  
 Zhangsan open PFV that CLF door gei Lisi  
 b. *Zhangsan gei Lisi dakai le na shan men*  
 Zhangsan gei Lisi open PFV that CLF door  
 ‘Zhangsan opened that door for Lisi’

14. Examples (20a) and (20b) are from (Paris 1978:82).

15. The structure of Example (20c) corresponds to construction [4] in Table 1.

16. *Common ground* is a concept generally intended as the collection of mutual knowledge, mutual beliefs, and mutual assumptions among two or more interlocutors.

On the basis of the observations above, I propose that the syntactic position occupied by preverbal benefactive/delegative [*gei+io*] is different with respect to preverbal [*gei+io*] interpreted as recipient: benefactive/delegative [*gei+io*] is in a syntactic position between the subject and the verb, while [*gei+io*] recipient occupies a higher syntactic position where it is interpreted as a topic, that is the given information within a context.

In what follows, I argue that the benefactive/delegative *gei* is still a predicate, but with a weaker meaning with respect to the full lexical *gei*. I will call it semi-lexical verb (or light verb), since its behavior is not as that of a full lexical verb, but still has some properties of a verb. On the one hand, *gei* cannot be always substituted by a preposition:

- (23) *Zhangsan wei/\*gei zhanyou xisheng le*  
 Zhangsan for *gei* camarade sacrifice PFV  
 ‘Zhangsan sacrificed himself for his camarade’ (Yu and Hu 2014:ft 10)

On the other hand, some previous studies defend the idea that preverbal *gei* is not a verb because it cannot be reduplicated (see Example (24a)) and it cannot take an aspectual marker (see Example (24b)):

- (24) a. \**Zhangsan gei gei Lisi dakai le na shan men*  
 Zhangsan *gei gei* Lisi open PFV that CLF door  
 ‘Zhangsan opened that door for Lisi’  
 b. \**Zhangsan gei le Lisi dakai na shan men*  
 Zhangsan *gei* PFV Lisi open that CLF door  
 ‘Zhangsan opened that door for Lisi’

Interestingly, as Lin and Huang (2015, p. 314) point out, similar behavior is common in Mandarin with some verbs like *shi* ‘cause’ (see Example (25)), which is generally analyzed as a light verb (Grimshaw & Mester 1988, Feng 2003, Zhu 2005, Jie 2008, Basciano 2010). As light verb, in fact, *shi* undergoes to some syntactic restrictions that full lexical verbs do not.

- (25) i. *Zhangsan shi Lisi kaixin*  
 Zhangsan cause Lisi happy  
 ‘Zhangsan made Lisi happy’  
 ii. \**Zhangsan shi-shi Lisi kaixin*  
 Zhangsan cause-cause Lisi happy  
 iii. \**Zhangsan shi-shi le Lisi kaixin*  
 Zhangsan cause-cause PFV Lisi happy

Due to the fact that *gei* is not a preposition nor a full lexical verb, but undergoes the same restrictions as that of a light verb such as the causative *shi*, I propose that the preverbal benefactive/delegative *gei* should be analyzed as a light verb as well, which lost its full lexical verb features in a grammaticalization process (see Section 4). The analysis of preverbal benefactive/delegative *gei* as a light verb could explain a further restriction that *gei* undergoes when it co-occurs with a direct object preceded by *ba*. *Ba* is a particle that introduces the object in contexts where the verb expresses disposal of/action upon the object. Therefore, it is generally used with transitive verbs that indicate an action that has an effect on its object. Interestingly, preverbal benefactive/delegative *gei* cannot co-occur with *ba* and its object, as exemplified (26a). *Gei* can co-occur with *ba* in the same sentence only if it introduces a recipient in post-verbal position, as in the Example (26b) (construction [11]):

- (26) a. \**Lisi ba xin gei ta xie le.*  
 Lisi ba letter gei 3SG write FP  
 b. [*Wo*]<sub>S</sub> *ba [zhe ge xiaoxi]*<sub>do</sub> [*chuan*]<sub>V</sub> *gei [ta]*<sub>io</sub> *le.* [11]  
 I ba this CLF news transmit gei 3SG FP  
 ‘I have transmitted this news to him.’ (Paris 1978:12)

In the literature and questionnaires, I did not find any occurrence of the structure schematized in (27), where [*gei+io*] is interpreted as benefactive/delegative

- (27) S *gei io* Ba do V  
 Not attested

The literature on the function word *ba* is vast (see Paris 1998, Sybesma 1999 and references cited there). What is relevant here is the fact that also *ba* has been analyzed as a light verb, so as such, it cannot co-occur with the preverbal benefactive/delegative *gei*. The impossibility of the co-occurrence of *ba* and preverbal benefactive/delegative *gei* is a further evidence that *gei* is a light verb as well, because two light verbs cannot appear in a sentence at the same time.

## 2.6 *Gei* in passive constructions

Interestingly, *gei* appears also in passive constructions. Constructions [8], [9], [10] in Table 1 represent passive constructions, where *gei* is in preverbal position. The most common passive marker in Chinese is *bei*, which marks passive constructions with or without an agent overtly expressed (respectively in (28a) and (28b)):

- (28) a. *Zhangsan bei Lisi da guo.*  
 Zhangsan bei Lisi beat PFV  
 ‘Zhangsan has been beaten by Lisi.’



- b. *Fangzi bei chai le.*  
 house bei demolish FP  
 ‘The house was demolished.’

In (28a), *bei* introduces the agent, while in (28b) *bei* immediately precedes the verb. On a par with *bei*, *gei* can be used as passive marker appearing immediately on the left of the verb (29a) (construction [8]), introducing the agent (29b) (construction [9]), or in co-occurrence with *bei*, where *bei* introduces the agent and *gei* precedes the verb (29c) (construction [10]):

- (29) a. [*Zhangsan*]<sub>SP</sub> *gei* [*daibu*]<sub>V</sub> *le* [8]  
 Zhangsan gei arrest FP  
 ‘Zhangsan got arrested’ (Huang 2013: 29)
- b. [*Jinyu*]<sub>SP</sub> *gei* [*mao*]<sub>Ag</sub> [*chi*]<sub>V</sub> *le* [9]  
 goldfish gei cat eat FP  
 ‘The goldfish has been eaten by the cat’ (Newman 1996, p. 206)
- c. [*Chuangzi*]<sub>SP</sub> *bei* [*Lisi*]<sub>Ag</sub> *gei* [*dapo*]<sub>V</sub> *le*. [10]  
 Window bei Lisi gei broke FP  
 ‘The window got broken by Lisi.’ (slightly modified from Huang 2013: 36)

*Gei* in passive constructions is a controversial topic in Chinese linguistics. Generally, *gei* has been described either as light verb (Tang 2006), or a semi-lexical category that together with an unaccusative verb forms a middle construction (Shen & Sybesma 2010), or a semi-lexical verb that is part of *passivization continuum* (Huang 2013). In this article, I analyze *gei* in passive constructions as a semi-lexical category in the sense that *gei* behaves like a functional verb, a light verb. By light verb (or semi-lexical verb), I intend an element that behaves like a functional item, while maintaining part of its lexical meaning. On a par with the benefactive/delegative *gei*, in fact, in passive constructions too, *gei* in preverbal position is not a fully independent lexical element, since no aspectual marker can be inserted between *gei* and the verb:

- (30) \**Zhangsan gei le daibu.*  
 Zhangsan gei PFV arrest  
 ‘Zhangsan got arrested.’

*Gei* can be substituted by *bei*<sup>17</sup> that is generally analyzed as a light verb as well.

17. Notice that *bei* and *gei* are not always interchangeable. For instance, *gei* may occur with intransitive verbs, while *bei* cannot; *gei* can co-occur with *ba*+ object, while *bei* cannot (see Shen & Sybesma 2010 for further details, and Paris 1998).

Crucially, I propose that *gei* has an effect on the transitivity of the verb, like an auxiliary, while keeping its *transfer* semantics, and *orientation* as its basic meaning. More precisely, the presence of *gei* gives a strong sense of passivity to the verb it is attached to. *Gei* has a causative sense because it implies an agent. Tang (2001) calls it “affectedness *gei*”, while Shen and Sybesma (2010) point out that the addition of *gei* to a sentence does not affect its independent grammaticality, but it signals the existence of an “external force”. Notice, in fact, that differently from *bei*, preverbal *gei* can co-occur with an object marked by *ba* (construction [13] exemplified in (30)). *Ba* has been analysed as a *semi-lexical* item that “usually focuses attention on how the object is disposed of, dealt with, manipulated or handled by the subject” (Tie 1986, p. 285). As mentioned above, *ba*-construction is generally a highly transitive construction, where *transitivity* is defined as “the carrying over of an activity from an agent to a patient” (Wang 1987).<sup>18</sup> I argue that *ba* and preverbal *gei* co-occur to highlight the transitivity, i.e. the role of the agent that with her action has a strong effect on the patient. In this construction, *ba* and preverbal *gei* can co-occur because *gei* is not an independent light verb, but it behaves like an affix to the following verb, as shown above (see Example (30)).

- (30) [*Zhangsan*]<sub>S</sub> *ba* [*Lisi*]<sub>do</sub> *gei* [*da*]<sub>V</sub> *le*. [13]  
 Zhangsan    *ba*    Lisi    *gei*    hit    FP  
 ‘Zhangsan hit Lisi.’

To reinforce the statement made above, notice that *gei* in passive constructions is generally used in a more unfavorable or detrimental situation like (31):

- (31) a. *Lisi gei piping le*  
 Lisi *gei* criticize FP  
 ‘Lisi has been criticized’  
 b. *Yu gei mao chi le*  
 fish *gei* cat eat FP  
 ‘The fish has been eaten by the cat’

## 2.7 Interim conclusions

In the Sections above, I have traced a taxonomy of all the *gei* constructions that I found in the literature and I collected with questionnaires. I have also illustrated and analyzed the main syntactic and interpretative properties of *gei* related to the different constructions. In particular, I have shown that *gei* is always a predicate,

18. For an overview and a detailed syntactic analysis of *ba* construction see Sybesma (1992) and references cited there.

either it is a full lexical verb or a semi-lexical verb, or an affix that forms a compound with the main verb.

In the following Section, I will define in more details the basic meaning of orientation that is subsumed in *gei* in all the constructions.

### 3. Orientation

When *gei* is a full lexical verb, it has as basic meaning the act of *giving*. It is a ditransitive predicate that selects three arguments involved in an action of *transfer*. In terms of Newman (1993a, p. 437): "...the typical scenario involving the act of giving [is the following]: there is a person who has something and this person passes over the thing with his/her hands to another person who receives it with his/her hands." In other words, *gei* selects three participants in an action where something has been handed over, just as the canonical *give* in English. *Gei*, in fact, is usually translated in English with the verb *give* or with the preposition *to*. However, if we compare *gei* as full lexical verb with *gei* in pre-verbal and post-verbal position, we notice that its effect on the predication changes.

In this Section, I develop Paris' (1982, 1989, 1998) proposal, arguing that the core meaning of *gei* that links all the constructions, which seem apparently disjointed in Table 1, is the *orientation* meaning. I argue that *gei* is a relational predicate that is used in an abstract sense as causal reaction between an agent and a verb. The type of causal reaction depends on its position within the structure. The different causal relations are associated with distinct *orientation* of the causal reaction: either towards the agent or towards the patient. Paris (1989, 1998) defines the orientation meaning as *sense*, a French term that means both *meaning* (in French *signification*) and *direction* (in French *direction*). *Gei*, in fact, plays a crucial role in the *orientation* of transitivity, so that it can be defined as an *orientation* marker of the predicate relation. In order to clarify *gei*'s role in detail, firstly I adopt Hopper & Thompson's (1980, p. 266) definition of transitivity (quoted in Paris 1989:65): "[Transitivity] is a relationship which obtains throughout a clause. It is not restricted to one constituent or pair of constituent. Consequently, the presence of an overt O[bject] is only one feature of a Transitive clause; it coexists with other defining properties (such as Agency, Kinesis [Aspect, Punctuality, Volitionality, Affirmation, Mode, Agency, Affectedness of O, Individuation of O])." Crucially, Hopper & Thompson's definition intends transitivity as a network of relations where the application domain is the whole clause, not only the verb. I advance the idea that *gei* is not an active or passive marker, but it reinforces the expressions of the two types of diatheses in one or another direction, depending on its position within the structure and its co-occurrence with markers such as *ba*, *bei*. Additionally, I show that *gei*'s role of

*orientation* of the causal reaction towards the agent or towards the patient, matches to its syntactic position with respect to the verb. In preverbal position, *gei* reinforces the role of the agent – *agent-oriented* (see Tsai 2015),<sup>19</sup> while in post-verbal position, *gei* reinforces the role of the patient – *patient-oriented*. The generalization of *gei* as *orientation* marker that reinforces the transitivity (in Hopper & Thompson’s sense) in two directions includes also the cases of *gei* as lexical verb, both in its functions as *transfer* verb, and as verb *allow*.

### 3.1 Agent-oriented preverbal *gei*

On the basis of the generalization proposed above, *gei* in preverbal position acts as *orientation* marker that reinforces the role of the agent in the casual relation between the two arguments selected by the main verb. Within the taxonomy in Table 1, *gei* in preverbal position occurs in passive constructions or precedes the object, assuming a benefactive/delegative *on behalf of* interpretation, or as full lexical verb with the *allow* meaning.

As for passive constructions, *gei* emphasizes the role of the agent in different ways. In construction [9] (SP-*gei*-Ag-V), *gei* overtly introduces the agent, i.e. it acts as *bei*, which is a light verb that typically introduces the agent in Mandarin passive constructions.

The analysis of *gei* as semi-lexical verb that has a role in reinforcing the causality relation of predicate is in line with recent studies on Mandarin light verbs (Basciano 2010), with the difference that *gei* is agent-oriented. In the passive structure classified in construction [8] (SP-*gei*-V), *gei* can immediately precede the verb, without the necessity that the agent is overtly expressed. This construction is crucial to demonstrate that *gei* is in preverbal position as an agent-oriented marker. In construction [8], in fact, the presence of *gei* implies the existence of an external force. As mentioned above, Shen & Sybesma (2010) claim that “the addition of *gei* to a sentence does not affect its independent grammaticality, it signals the existence of an ‘external force’ whose identity is somewhat slippery or hard to grasp” (Shen & Sybesma 2010: cited in Huang 2013, p. 108). The sense of action of some external force has been confirmed by all Mandarin native speakers I have consulted.<sup>20</sup> Compare for instance (32a) with (32b): as Shen & Sybesma (2010) claim, the presence of *gei* in (32b) indicates that the bird flew away due to some external force that caused the bird flowing away. Contrarily, (32a) does not imply any external agent.

19. Tsai (2015) points out that *gei* in preverbal position is in an *agent-oriented* domain.

20. More precisely, some native speakers told me that *gei* has a very light pronunciation and that the role of the agent makes the action on the object stronger.

- (32) a. *Xiao xiao fei-zou le*  
 little bird flow-away FP  
 ‘The little bird flew away’
- b. *Xiao xiao gei fei-zou le*  
 little bird gei flow-away FP  
 ‘(Someone or something caused that) the bird flew away.’
- (Shen & Sybesma 2010: 40–41)

Additionally, Shen & Sybesma (2010) point out that, differently from the canonical passive marker *bei*, *gei* cannot occur with unergative verbs, because unergatives have only the agent, but the agent is not an external force whose action has effects on a patient:

- (33) \**Ta gei ku le*  
 3SG gei cry FP  
 ‘He was made to cry’
- (Shen & Sybesma 2010:38)

The co-occurrence of *bei*, the regular marker introducing the agent, and *gei* is possible (construction [10], *SP-gei-V*), even if it sounds redundant.

A further construction that proves the role of *gei* as an agent-oriented marker in preverbal position is construction [7] (*S-gei-io-V-do*), where *gei* introduces a benefactive/ delegative complement on the left of the main verb. Even it is true that the benefactive/delegative refers to a person who is in a way the motivation for some act, the role of the agent who does something *on behalf of* someone else is the crucial part of the action. In the delegative interpretation, we intend the change of the origin of the action or translation of agentivity (see Paris 1982).

The agent-oriented analysis of preverbal *gei* also includes construction [2] (*S-gei-do-V*), where *gei* means *allow/permit*. In line with Newman (1993a, 1993b), I include this type of construction within the *control domain*, where once again the role of the agent is crucial, since it is the argument that has the control granting the permission to someone to perform an act.

### 3.2 Recipient-oriented post-verbal *gěi*

I have demonstrated above that the post-verbal *gei* in constructions [3], [4], [5] is a predicate within a SVC. In this position, *gei* is not used as full verb of transfer, but its meaning is bleached: a post-verbal *gei* does not select three arguments, but it reinforces the orientation towards the recipient of the main verb that follows.

It is crucial to point out that we can make a distinction between *lexical dative* verbs from *extended dative* verbs (Chappell & Peyraube 2011, see also Leclère 1978 and Zhu 1979). Lexical dative verbs presuppose an indirect object, thus the presence

of *gei* is optional. Extended dative verbs do not have the properties to select a third argument, therefore they need the presence of *gei* to express the transfer.<sup>21</sup> In fact, a verb requires the presence of *gei* when alone does not imply any action of transfer, i.e. it does not have the properties to select a recipient. Take for instance the verb *mai* ‘buy’ (see Example (4) repeated here in (34) for the reader’s convenience):

- (34) *Chuling mai \*(gei) fuqin yi tiao shoujin*  
 Chuling buy *gei* father one CLF handkerchief  
 ‘Chuling bought a handkerchief to his father.’ (Paris 1979:4)

The verb *mai*, needs the presence of *gei* to express the idea of buying as a transfer action. As illustrated in Section 2.2, I analyze *gei* in (34) as the second verb within a SVC. In (34), the main action is the act of buying, and *gei* has the function to point out that the act of buying is oriented towards the recipient *fuqin* ‘father’. The recipient-oriented feature of post-verbal *gei* is even more evident when it co-occurs optionally with verbs that do not necessarily require it, because their intrinsic meaning implies the idea of transfer, selecting a recipient. Take for instance the verb *song* ‘offer/give something as a gift to someone’ in (35):

- (35) *Wo song (gei) ta yi ben shu*  
 I offer *gei* 3SG one CLF book  
 ‘I gave him a book as a present’

All the native speakers I have consulted confirmed that the presence of *gei* is a way to reinforce the recipient. Put in other terms, it seems that in (35), *gei* reinforces the transitivity of the action highlighting the recipient. In the lexical compound, in fact, some verbs immediately followed by *gei* do not exhibit the ditransitivity property, but they appear to be fixed (Lin & Huang 2015: footnote 8): *jia-gei* ‘marry’ (*Mali jiagei* ‘Mary is married to’), *shu-gei* ‘lose’ (*Mali shugei Lisi* ‘Mary is lost to Lisi’). As a matter of fact, the verbs listed above do not introduce a third argument, but they confirm the orientation analysis, since they all imply an action strongly oriented towards someone else. In the following clause, *gei* is even used to introduce a second argument:

- (36) *Zhangsan zhai gei Lisi yi duo hua*  
 Zhangsan pluck *gei* Lisi one CLF flower  
 ‘Zhangsan plucked a flower to Lisi’. (Lin & Huang 2015: 30)

21. See Liu (2006) for an exhaustive classification of verbs that obligatorily or optionally require the presence of *gei* to select the third argument of a ditransitive construction.

On the one hand, the definition of *gei* as an orientation marker holds also for *gei* used as full lexical verb with the meaning of *allow*. With the meaning of *allow*, the orientation of *gei* is reinforced towards the agent that controls the action. Notably, this analysis is in line with Newman's (1993a, 1993b) classification of *allow gei* within the *control* domain. On the other hand, the orientation marker analysis holds also for *gei* as a full lexical verb with *give* interpretation. The *give* interpretation, in fact, includes both the orientations, since its meaning of *giving* typically translate the *transfer*, that is, it is a relational predicate that necessarily involves a relation between an agent and a patient.

#### 4. Grammaticalization

I have shown that *gei* is always a predicate whose core meaning is *orientation*. The *orientation* expressed by *gei* can change *direction* depending on the position that *gei* occupies within the structure and its relation with other markers such as *bei*, *ba*. When in preverbal position, *gei* reinforces the orientation of transitivity towards the agent. When in post-verbal position, *gei* reinforces the orientation of transitivity towards the recipient.

Along the lines of Huang (2013), I propose that the shift regarding the *orientation* can be represented in a *causative-unaccusative continuum*. Huang claims that *gei* has two senses, each occurring at one extreme of a causative-unaccusative *continuum*. In particular, speaking about non-canonical passives, Huang (2013, p. 95) states: "Non canonical passives are formed by superimposing on the main predicate a higher semi-lexical verb whose meaning may include one or more points in the causative-unaccusative spectrum... verbs may differ in having different *bandwidths* along the spectrum". Taking Huang's proposal as a basis, I make a step further arguing that the different positions of *gei* in the semantic *continuum* correspond to different stages of a grammaticalization process. With grammaticalisation, I intend the definition proposed by Hopper & Traugott (2003, p. 121): "Grammaticalization is the change whereby in certain linguistic contexts speakers use parts of a construction with a grammatical function. Over time the resulting grammatical item may become more grammatical by acquiring more grammatical functions and expanding its host-classes". The concept of semantic *continuum* and its relation to different stages of grammaticalization is close to the concept of *cline* considered as the basis to work on grammaticalization (see Halliday 1961). The concept of *cline* indicates that from the point of view of change, forms do not shift abruptly from one category to another, but go through a series of small transitions. "Synchronically a cline can be thought of as a continuum: an arrangement of forms along an imaginary line at one end of which is fuller form of some kind, perhaps "lexical", and at the opposite

end a compacted and reduced form, perhaps “grammatical” (Hopper & Traugott 2003, p. 6). In their work of (2004), Hopper and Traugott add that there can be some time of overlap between the different stages of a cline. Therefore, it should not be seen as a clean sequencing but rather as a layering. With *gei*, in fact, it seems the different layers of grammaticalization represented in a cline are synchronic and visible. *Gei* maintains its own morpho-phonological properties, changing functions depending on the position it occupies within the structure. According to Bisang (2004, p. 117) “...in a language like Chinese a lexeme may occur in different syntactic environment with different functions”. Such propensity of lexical items to appear in different slots, supports the reanalysis of lexemes in different functions, and thus enhances the probability of processes of grammaticalization to take place (see also Arcodia 2013). Crucially, according to Bisang (2010, p. 246), “Chinese has two typological properties which fundamentally drive processes of grammaticalization. One of them is the relative freedom with which one and the same lexical item can be assigned to different grammatical functions. The other one is that one and the same surface structure is open to different syntactic analyses”.

As I have shown in detail in the previous sections, *gei* is always a predicate with sense of orientation as its core meaning, however the predication is expressed in different ways depending on the position within the constructions. *Gei* can be a full lexical verb, thus occupying an extreme of the semantic *continuum* expressing a three arguments predicate.

However, the post-verbal *gei* is a predication with a bleached meaning within a SVC, that is *gei* has its transfer meaning weakened through generalization, more specifically loss of contentful meaning (Brinton & Traugott 2005, pp. 108-110). Interestingly, as Li (1990) and Chao-fen Sun (p.c. cited by Huang and Mo 1992) point out, *gei* in SVC’s marks the goal and no longer has the full predicative meaning.

*Gei* in preverbal position represents a further stage of grammaticalization, as it behaves like a semi-lexical verb. In passive constructions, *gei* is a functional element that stresses the role of the agent without the need to make it explicit. In passive constructions, in fact, *gei* loses completely its meaning of transfer verb, which it has as a full lexical verb, but it has exclusively a functional value. I define these stages of grammaticalization as *decategoryalization* in terms of Hopper (1991, p. 22), i.e. a process by which forms “lose or neutralize the morphological markers and syntactic privileges characteristic of the full categories Noun and Verb, and [...] assume attributes characteristic of secondary categories”.

The complete stage of grammaticalization is represented by *gei* used as affix, immediately attached to the right or to the left of the main verb with which it forms a compound. As affix, the role of *gei* is the reinforcement of orientation respectively towards the agent or the recipient. I tentatively push my analysis forward, proposing that the optional post-verbal *gei* that forms a compound with the preceding verb,



actually acts as a sort of *directional* that overtly reinforces the orientation of the predicate towards the recipient in a figurative way. So, if I am on the right track, post-verbal *gei* as suffix could represent a further stage of grammaticalization as a directional element, on a par with verbs like *shang* 'go up/up' that are both full lexical verb and directional. I will leave this hypothesis open for further research.

In line with Bisang (2010, 2014), I suggest that all the stages of grammaticalization of *gei* I have described above are included in what Traugott (2002, pp. 26-27) defines as "primary grammaticalization". Primary grammaticalization is intended as the development of specific morphosyntactic contexts of constructions and lexical categories in functional categories. Primary grammaticalization includes the phenomenon of *gei* as semi-lexical element in pre-verbal positions, with *gei* with the bleached meaning or *gei* as affix.<sup>22</sup> For Bisang (1996, 2004, 2008), in fact, the languages of East-Asia possess typological features that make possible to have highly grammaticalised items retaining their "original" phonological shape. That is, the different stages of grammaticalization are characterized by the absence of coevolution of form and meaning, since even highly grammaticalized items tend to preserve their original shape (see also Arcodia 2013). This is also in accordance with the idea that in Mandarin there is a weak correlation between lexicon and morphosyntax: "One can see the difference between lexical and grammatical items, but it is often difficult to distinguish 'more' or 'less' grammaticalised signs" (Arcodia 2013, p. 149). Bisang interprets this lack of correlation as the relative freedom with which items may occupy a slot. As Arcodia (2013, citing Bisang 2004, p. 117) claims: "whereas we usually assume that lexical items appear in certain syntactic (or construction) slots, in languages as Chinese a lexeme may occur in different syntactic environments with different functions."

In all its stages of grammaticalization, *gei* shows the tendency to express reinforcement of orientation towards the agent or towards the recipient, losing the specific meaning of transfer or becoming a pure functional or as affix, without any change in its morphological form. Crucially, in terms of Traugott (1988) and in line with the analysis of dative constructions in pre-medieval Chinese by Chappell & Peyraube (2011), I argue that *gei* plays a role of strengthening the informativeness through the pragmatic reinforcement, that is the reinforcement of the agentive causality. As Arcodia (2013) points out, the indeterminateness, the weak correlation between lexicon and morpho-syntax of Chinese motivates the predominance of pragmatic inference. Notice, in fact, the strengthening role of *give* is represented in construction [6], where the double presence of *gei* is redundant and it is used only in cases where the speaker wants to strengthen the orientation of the predication

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22. For exhaustive and detailed discussions on grammaticalization and on semantic and syntactic change in Chinese, see also Peyraube (1998b), Peyraube & Ming (2008).

towards the recipient (see Example (16) repeated here in (37) for the reader's convenience).

- (37) *Ta gei le [qian]<sub>do</sub> gei (\*le) [Lisi]<sub>do</sub> le.* [6]  
 3SG gei PFV money gei PFV Lisi FP  
 'He gave money to Lisi.'

Another example of strengthening the orientation is also represented by the full lexical verb *geiyu* 'give' (construction [14]), which is used in formal context, more in written language and usually only with abstract objects:

- (38) *Tamen geiyu women relie de huanying.* [14]  
 3PL give 1PL warm DET welcome  
 'They gave us a warm welcome.'

*Geiyu* 'give' is a compound, formed by *gei* and *yu* 'give'. *Yu* expresses a general act of giving as well and it appears in constructions like [V1+V2+io+do] in pre-medieval periods 2ndBC-2ndAD (Chappell & Peyraube 2011, Chappell & Peyraube 2007).<sup>23</sup> V1 is a verb of giving implying a specific type of giving, like 'transmit, offer, sell, distribute'. V2 is *yu*, which expresses only a general sense of giving.<sup>24</sup> As Chappell & Peyraube (2011, p. 2) state: "the complex construction is obviously redundant as the meaning of *give* expressed by V2 is already included in that of the V1. This is a good example of "strengthening of informativeness (Traugott [1988])".<sup>25</sup>

*Geiyu*, then, is a compound consisting of two words with 'give' meaning. In this sense the informativeness of act of *given* is strengthened by the form of the compound itself.

## 5. Conclusions

In this article, I propose a taxonomy that overarches all *gei* constructions found in the Chinese linguistics literature and in questionnaires tested with native Mandarin speakers. Through syntactic tests and observations related to the different interpretations that *gei* assumes, I have shown that *gei* is always a predicate or an affix

23. For an exhaustive study on the evolution of dative constructions see Peyraube (1986, 1988).

24. The character corresponding to *yu* in *geiyu* is the following: 予. Chappell & Peyraube (2011) specify that verbs in V2 position actually can be three distinct verbs [+give]: 与 予 *yu* 与 and 遗 予.

25. Notice also that *geiyu* can be pronounced also *jiyu*, maybe indicating that a further process of grammaticalization is in act, changing also the phonological properties of *gei*.

forming a compound with the main verb. I also argue that *gei* in all its categorial forms, has the basic meaning of *orientation*, subsumed in all *gei* constructions, which apparently do not seem to possess common properties. The sense of *orientation* brought by *gei*, affects the transitivity of the main verb, reinforcing the role of the agent or the role of the patient. The orientation in the two different senses depends on the syntactic position that *gei* occupies with respect to the main verb. Finally, I propose that the multiplicity of the different categories assumed by *gei* is the result of a grammaticalization process. In particular, I propose that the categories assumed by *gei* can be represented as layers in a grammaticalization *continuum* that is still *visible* in synchronic syntax. *Gei* is a full lexical verb, a verb with a bleached meaning, a light verb, or an affix.

## Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Marie-Claude Paris for her insightful comments and suggestions. All errors remain mine.

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# Grammar in usage and grammaticalization of *dan* ‘give’ constructions in Kurmanji Kurdish

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Belonging to the family of Indo-European languages, Kurdish is part of the Iranian group of this family, which gathers several modern languages such as Balochi, Ossetic, Persian, Tadjik, etc. The two main dialects that are closely related to each other are the *Kurmanji* dialect and the *Sorani* dialect. The *Kurmanji* dialect, spoken by 65% of the Kurds, appears more archaic than the other dialects in its phonetic and morphological structure. We focus on two dominant grammatical categories used with *dan* ‘give’ in Kurmanji Kurdish, light verb constructions (LVC) and causative constructions, illustrating issues of language change. Causative and light verb constructions are dominant in the Kurdish language, as illustrated through our various corpora. We illustrate the grammaticalization of *dan* in Kurmanji Kurdish corresponding to a typological fact found in other languages (Bouveret 2012; Gougenheim 1929; Von Waldenfels 2012; Newman 1997, 1998). We show that the causative use of *dan* as an auxiliary construction is a major grammatical fact in the Kurmanji Kurdish and categorize three kinds of causative constructions.

As discussed in the grammaticalization literature, the wide usage of a very common verb, and its extensive productivity can lead to a bleaching process from full verb towards auxiliary. The grammaticalization process for *dan* is also shown in Kurmanji Kurdish through the use of light verb constructions and the high productivity of the verb in compounds.

**Keywords:** *dan*, causative construction, Kurmanji Kurdish, grammaticalization, language change

## 1. Introduction

Kurdish belongs to the family of Indo-European languages and is part of the Iranian group of this family, which includes several modern languages such as Balochi, Ossetic, Persian and Tadjik. Kurdish is spoken by 35 million speakers living in four



countries: Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey. Due to the absence of national institutions, Kurdish has developed a polydialectal structure and many dialects are spoken: *Kurmanji*, *Sorani*, *Gorani* and *Dimili*. The Kurmanji-speaking area is located in the south-eastern and eastern parts of Turkey, the northern part of Iraq and Syria, as well as in the north-west of Iran. Several Kurmanji-speaking enclaves are scattered throughout Central Anatolia and some former Republics of the Soviet Union. The Sorani-speaking area covers the north of Iraq and the western part of Iran. Dimili-speaking Kurds live in the western part of Kurdish settlements in Turkey, and the Gorani-speaking community is located in the south of Iraqi Kurdistan (Khamandar 2003).

The two main dialects that are closely related to each other are the Kurmanji dialect and the Sorani dialect. The Kurmanji dialect, spoken by 65% of the Kurds, appears more archaic than the other dialects in its phonetic and morphological systems. However, Kurmanji and Sorani are the two dialects that have the greatest number of common linguistic characteristics. The morphological features that distinguish them are a distinct system of case marking (nominative and oblique), and gender marking for nouns and pronouns, as well as an agentive construction for the past tenses of transitive verbs.

In addition to this polydialectal structure, Kurdish is written in three distinct alphabets. The first script that was used to transcribe Kurdish was a slightly modified Arabic alphabet, notably with the addition of diacritic marks. Kurdish had then to adapt itself to the alphabets of the countries in which it failed to be fully recognized. It is therefore written in the Latin alphabet in Turkey and Syria, in the Arabic alphabet in Iraq and Iran, and in the Cyrillic alphabet in the Republics of the former Soviet Union.

Generally speaking, the sociolinguistic situation of Kurdish mirrors the political situation of the Kurds. In Iraq, Arabic and Kurdish are two Iraqi official languages since the adoption of the constitution in October 2005. Kurdish is the official language of the Kurdistan region, the language of education, business and administration (Hirori 2005). Iran and Syria are the two countries where Kurdish does not have any political or institutional status. It is taught neither in public nor in private schools in these countries (Hassanpour 1992). However, the oral and written use of Kurdish is tolerated, and so is the publishing of non-political articles. In Turkey, Kurdish has undergone the most repressive policies with respect to its spoken and written usages, as well as in regard to its teaching and usage in printed material. Since the beginning of the 21st century however, in its attempt to join the European Union, Turkey has abolished the ban on speaking Kurdish, allowed private teaching of the Kurdish language in 2004 and set up a public television channel broadcasting in Kurdish from January 2009, namely TRT-6. However, despite the restricted introduction of Kurdish in the education system as an optional language

(Akin & Araz, 2014), the Turkish government still refuses any possibility of public education in Kurdish in schools, since article 42 of the Constitution forbids the teaching of a language other than Turkish as the primary language of education.

### 1.1 Object of the paper

Grammar is not a static, closed or self-contained system, but is highly susceptible to change and highly affected by language use. (Bybee 2003: 145)

The Kurmanji dialect is neither taught nor standardized, but some workshops in the diaspora are trying to standardize the lexicon and the orthography (Akin 2011), which allows us to observe the emergence of standard constructions and their stabilization.

Our paper will focus on two dominant grammatical categories for which the verb *dan* 'give' is used in Kurmanji Kurdish: light verb constructions (henceforth LVC) and causative constructions. Light verb constructions may be a common use of the verb 'give' in many languages (see Mélaç and Tournadre, this volume), but the dominant use as the causative form is a very salient property of *dan* in the Kurdish language, as illustrated in the various corpora investigated for the present paper, dictionaries, recent online newspapers and the Manchester Kurdish Dialects Database<sup>1</sup>.

The Kurdish Kurmanji dialect is a very dynamic language showing many signs of neological forms: new words appearing in the newspapers, as well as lexicalization and grammaticalization phenomena. New grammatical constructions, new idioms and new compounds formed with *dan* are motivated by the need of expressivity. As stated by Bybee 2014:

In the grammaticization literature, the mechanism of change in this example has been called pragmatic inference (Traugott 1989, Hopper and Traugott 1993). It is widely accepted that an important feature of the communication process is the ability to make inferences (...). When the same pattern of inferences occurs frequently with a particular grammatical construction, those inferences can become part of the meaning of the construction. (Bybee 2014: 156)

Causative constructions with *dan* have never been investigated in the Kurdish linguistic literature, which motivated our choice of analyzing these constructions. The Kurmanji dialect generally uses the light verbs *dan* 'give' and *kirin* 'make'. This pattern of evolution for the verb 'give' has been attested in several languages. It has been described in Gougenheim 1929 for the French verb *donner* 'give'. As described

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1. <http://kurdish.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/>

in the grammaticalization literature, as the usage of a common verb expands to a greater variety of contexts, its large productivity can lead to a bleaching process and a decategorization from a full verb to an auxiliary. The process of semantic bleaching for *dan* can also be observed in Kurmanji Kurdish in light verb constructions (see Table 2) as the high productivity of the verb in compounds, as we will see in the following section. This syntactic and semantic expansion process that is observable with *dan* in Kurdish corresponds to a cross-linguistic phenomenon found in several other languages for the verb *give* (Gougenheim 1929; Von Waldenfels 2012; Newman 1997, 1998).

Even if these constructions are systematic in Kurmanji Kurdish, on the one hand, in the survey on the Kurdish dialects,<sup>2</sup> the test of translation into Kurdish of a causative sentence such as ‘He caused Ahmed to get arrested’ did not trigger any occurrence of *dan* constructions. On the other hand, in the Manchester Kurdish Database<sup>3</sup> the causative *dan* sentences are associated with a lexicalized causative form (see Section 3.3.2) : *guvaştin*, *şidandin*, *jidandin*, *perçiqandin*, *pilçiqandin*, *astenandin*, *perxandin* whereas no occurrence of the causative *dan* verb is attested in Sorani (the Kurdish dialect spoken in Iraq and Iran Kurdistan). Sorani Kurdish uses another form: *kuşîn*, *gûşîn*, *hilşîn*, *helgûşîn*. Studies on causative constructions in Sorani have mainly been discussed so far with respect to the causative morpheme *-an* (see Hiba Gharib 2012) and indeed, in the Sorani dialect, the causative construction with *dan* does not exist.

This paper will illustrate the notion of construction from several perspectives:

- a. Constructions are usage-based entities
- b. Constructions are grouped in small families
- c. Constructions as form-meaning pairs can be polysemic units
- d. Constructions are found within a lexical-grammatical continuum
- e. Phenomena of lexicalization and grammaticalization are illustrated through language use

Our paper further illustrates that a very basic form in human activities, such as *give*, is a very productive form and leads to semantic or syntactic changes. Micro-changes are also observable in synchrony through phenomena of morphological derivation, lexicalization and grammaticalization.

We will first describe the Kurmanji language and its characteristics from the point of view of traditional grammars. In a second part, we will analyze our corpus data, and the different cases of verbal constructions. In a third section, we show

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2. <http://kurdish.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/>

3. Ibidem.

the productivity of the form in nominal compounds. This study will be based on *dan* constructions in three corpora, written and oral ones, described in Section 1.4 below.

## 1.2 Traditional grammars

The early documented descriptions of Kurmanji Kurdish are from the late 18th century and can be considered an attempt of exogrammatization, that is to say the grammatization of an undocumented and unknown language by grammarians (Aurous 1992, 28). Missionaries and orientalist residing in Kurdistan, carried out the first descriptions. Their perspective was mostly a monographic approach on varieties of the regions visited. Father M. Garzoni (1734–1804) is the pioneer of research, with his *Grammatica e Vocabolario della lingua Kurda*, which appeared in Rome in 1787. Abbots Ph.D. Fossum (1919) and P. Béidar (1926) continued the work undertaken by Garzoni, each of them publishing a grammar of the language. Furthermore, British officers serving in Mesopotamia also contributed to the description of Kurmanji (Soane 1919; Jardine 1922).

These grammatical descriptions were continued in the 1930s by Kurdish researchers, writers, politicians, and language activists. D. Bedir Khan (1893–1951) is the author of the first grammar written in Kurdish. In his research, he was assisted by young French officers such as Pierre Rondot and Roger Lescot. In 1970, Lescot published a revised and extended version of Bedir Khan's grammar. The movement continued in the following years with the publication of a grammar by Badilli in Ankara in 1965. In the 1990s, two grammars were published in Europe (Bedir Khan & Lescot 1991; Ciwan 1992). Finally, S. Tan published another grammar in 2000 in Turkey and G. Aygen (2007) published another one in Germany. Much of these grammar descriptions raise several problems, the most important of which is the training of the grammarians. Apart from Aygen (2007), none of the authors had received linguistic training. The motivations for their initiatives can be grouped into two categories: utilitarian approaches in the case of officers and missionaries, and linguistic, political activism in the case of Kurdish authors.

## 1.3 Salient linguistic characteristics of Kurmanji Kurdish

Like the Bask language and other Iranian languages (Osset, Balutchi), Kurdish possesses ergative constructions (Dorleijn 1996, Matras 1992–1993, Haig 2002). These constructions are used for the transitive verbs in the past tenses by marking the subject of the action, which becomes oblique or ergative. In ergative rules, the complement of the object is not marked and remains in absolute case (normally the unmarked case).

However, these constructions currently show significant developments and especially in the language contact context, going from partial ergativity (split ergativity) to lack of ergativity (Dorleijn 1996).

Another specificity of the verb is its temporal system and the use of the evidential as an emerging grammatical category (Akin 2006, Bulut 2000). The origin of evidentiality seems to result from a contrastive difference between the preterit and the perfect tenses. The perfect, also called “narrative preterit” in some grammar textbooks (Bedir Khan & Lescot 1991), is used in two senses: it refers to an action in the past having a result in the present and it expresses an action not observed in the past: hearsay, an indirect experience. Thus, it seems that evidentiality emerges as the second use of the perfect tense, which confers a value expressing the lack of commitment from the speaker.

The dominant word order in Kurdish is Subject-Object-Verb (SOV). Modifiers follow the nouns they modify. Motion and transfer verbs generally modify the word order, which becomes Subject-Verb-Object (SVO).

Verbs have two stems: present and past. Present stems can be simple or secondary. Simple tenses are formed by the addition of personal endings to the two stems. Secondary stems consist of a root + suffixes that indicate transitivity, intransitivity, and causativity. Kurmanji Kurdish has three tenses (present, past, and future), two voices (active and passive), two aspects (imperfective and perfective), and four moods (indicative, conditional, imperative, and potential). The TAM categories are marked with perfective/imperfective suppletion.

#### 1.4 The corpora

Our work is based on three corpora, referred to as corpus A, B, and C. To begin with, three dictionaries (corpus A) are part of our data. The first dictionary, *Le Dictionnaire Kurde-Français* (Kurdish-French Dictionary), has been compiled by August Jaba and published in 1879 in St. Petersburg. The second dictionary, *Dictionnaire kurde-français*, contains the most recent and exhaustive lexicon (85,000 entries) of the Kurmanji dialect published in 2017 by the Kurdish Institute of Paris (Nezan 2017). The third one is a Kurdish-Turkish dictionary published by the Kurdish Institute of Istanbul (Farqin 2005). This dictionary was made on the basis of the Turkish language and contains a significant quantity of neologisms. The corpus will allow us to observe the arising of new forms or productive forms involving *dan*.

Our main corpus is the CCKNT (Corpus of Contemporary Kurdish Newspaper Texts), consisting of 483 written Kurmanji texts, totalling around 214,000 words. It contains texts from two Kurdish publications: *Azadiya Welat*, a weekly Kurdish newspaper, and *CTV*, a company which broadcasted news items in Kurdish on the

Internet. The corpus is available in digital form and is therefore open to a number of computer-aided applications. The CCKNT texts were downloaded from the Internet between April and July 1999. We parsed it with Word Sketch Engine in order to obtain some quantitative data on the use of *dan* in modern language.

This corpus was compiled as part of a project on modern Kurdish syntax, conducted between 1999–2001 at the *Seminar für Allgemeine und Vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft* at the University of Kiel (Germany). The project was funded by a grant awarded to Professor Ulrike Mosel by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*. The CCKNT proved to be an invaluable data base for investigating Kurdish syntax, as well as many other issues of the emergent written language - some potential applications are discussed below. We therefore decided to make it available to other scholars working on similar areas. The corpus and accompanying documentation were designed and compiled by Geoffrey Haig (2001) (Corpus B). The main corpus is completed with another one, made with recent articles from online and written newspapers (Rudaw, Netkurd, Sputniknews) (Corpus C).

## 2. Analysis

### 2.1 Results

Our results show the following ratios:

**Table 1.** *Dan* constructions in corpus B (214,000 words)

Results	LVC	Causative	Others
<i>dan</i> 'to give'	49%	45%	6%
<i>dide</i> 'he/it gives'	66%	32%	2%
<i>didin</i> 'they give'	73%	20%	7%
<i>didan</i> 'they gave'	67%	11%	22%
<i>daye</i> 'he/it has given'	92%	6%	2%
<i>dida</i> 'he/it used to give'	85%	15%	0%
<i>dayî</i> 'given'	100%	0%	0%
<i>dabû</i> 'he/it had given'	90%	10%	0%
<i>bide</i> 'give' (2PS)	97%	1%	1%
<i>bidin</i> 'give' (PL)	75%	17%	8%
TOTAL	79%	16%	5%

The light verb construction (LVC) is the most frequent construction. The causative form in our corpus (see Table 2) is the second construction in use, nearly as frequent as the LVC for *dan* forms with 45% (and less frequent for the other tenses and forms, 6% in total). This means that the verb *dan* is mainly used with a high

degree of semantic generalization. The light verb constructions are cases of semantic bleaching. We can notice that the uses of *dan* are found both in the lexicon and in the grammar, with on one side cases of lexicalization (light verb construction, LVC) and on the other side cases of grammaticalization (causative constructions) which clearly illustrates the capacity of a construction to be found on a lexicon-grammar continuum. We annotated the most frequent forms in use, based on a sample of 100 examples when the sample was available, and we parsed it with Word Sketch Engine. Without syntactic tree-analyses existing for the language, we had to annotate the corpus by hand and could not rely on lemmatization. We therefore annotated the most frequent forms retrieved with Word Sketch Engine and focused on the two dominant categories: light verbs and causative constructions.

## 2.2 Polysemy and productivity of *dan* in synchrony

### 2.2.1 Definition and examples of *dan* in dictionaries

A quick overview of *dan* entries in dictionaries shows that it covers a large domain of grammaticalized and lexicalized uses as a noun, verb, idiom, light verb and in causative constructions. The extensive use of the verb *dan* causes a significant productivity, which resulted in the high polysemy of *dan*.

Only two dictionaries mention *dan* as a noun (Farqîn 2005 and Nezan 2017). *Dan* means *ögün* ‘repast, meal’ *vergi* ‘tax’, *nimet* ‘boon’ (Farqîn 2005: 427), *grain* ‘seed’, ‘solid food’, ‘husked and crushed wheat, not boiled’, and ‘period corresponding to about one third of a day and punctuated by a meal’ (Nezan 2017: 330). The latter meaning seems to be an entrenched calque from Aramic *êdana* ‘time’, which also refers, by extension, to the ‘moment where food is given to livestock’ (id.).

The polysemy of *dan* as a noun is amplified in its use as a verb, which seems to be its generic usage. The first Kurdish-French dictionary edited by Jaba (1879) and the more recent one (Nezan 2017) propose the following forms and meanings. Both dictionaries mention two forms of *dan*; *dàin*, and *dan* in Jaba’s dictionary (p.173) and *dan* and *dayîn* in Nezan’s dictionary (p.331), while Farqîn’s dictionary uses the form *dan* (2005: 427). The forms are significantly close; *dàin* seems to be a phonetic transcription of the archaic form of the verb, as is reflected by *dayîn*. In the current uses of the verb, the form *dan* is recurrent and systematically present in all causatives constructions.

The first two dictionaries mention close meanings: ‘to give’, ‘to clear/to settle’, ‘to offer’ (Jaba); to give’, ‘to offer’, ‘to present’ (Nezan). However, Farqîn’s dictionary offers a big panel of 31 meanings, the first ones being *vermek* ‘to give’, *bahşetmek* ‘to endow’, *atfetmek* ‘to impute/to ascribe’, *iletmek* ‘to transmit’. The meanings presented in Farqîn’s dictionary sharply contrast with Jaba and Nezan’s entries both in quantity and diversity. They seem to be a direct effect of the Turkish language

taken as model in the description of the Kurmanji lexicon. Despite this language contact effect, all dictionaries list a great variety of meanings, which shows the vivid polysemy of *dan*.

Several compounds are formed with *dan* as a verb. Compounds are based on the structure of [X + *dan*], X morpheme being generally a noun: *avdan* (water + *dan*) 'to water', *rûdan* (face + *dan*) 'to happen', *sozdan* ('promise' + *dan*) 'to promise', *nîşandan* ('sign, clue' + *dan*) 'to show', *hewldan* ('effort' + *dan*) 'to strive', etc. Compounds are also made up of *dan* with prefixes, preverbs and prepositions: *hildan* (verbal prefix meaning 'elevation' + *dan*) 'to lift, to rise', *vedan* (preverb meaning 'introduction, going down, closing' + *dan*) 'to separate, to dig, to return', *berdan* ('before, in front of' + *dan*) 'to let, to abandon'. Lexicalized [noun + verb] compounds are also possible, resulting into a noun.

Along these uses, *dan* appears in light verb constructions (LVC) and causatives. LVC seem to be very productive in the canonical structure [noun + *dan*]: *piştgirî dan* ('support' + *dan*) 'to support', *zirar dan* ('damage' + *dan*) 'to damage', *agahî dan* ('information' + *dan*) 'to inform', *ders dan* ('lesson' + *dan*) 'to teach', *sêdare dan* ('gallows' + *dan*) 'to hang', *rûmet dan* ('respect' + *dan*) 'to respect', *can dan* ('life' + *dan*) 'to die', *guh dan* ('ear' + *dan*) 'to consider', *encam dan* ('result' + *dan*) 'to result', etc. In some LVCs, *dan* precedes the noun: *dan dest* (*dan* + 'hand') 'to deliver', *dan der* (*dan* + 'place') 'to show, to exteriorise', *dan çêran* (*dan* + 'insult') 'to insult'. Some other LVCs involve three words: *dan ber hev* (*dan* + 'before' + reciprocity pronoun) 'to compare', *dan ber xwe* (*dan* + 'before' + reflexive pronoun) 'to target'. These constructions with *dan* in the first position are recent neologisms elaborated by lexicographers, whereas in the syntax of the Kurdish language, the light verb generally has a tendency to follow the noun. Evidence of this tendency is also given by two other major light verbs, *kirin* 'to do, to make', and *bûn* 'to be, to become'. No similar construction (LVC verb in first position) was found in the corpus with the two verbs *kirin* and *bûn*. LVC in the Kurdish language conforms to an SOV order, whereas LVC with *dan* use this specific syntactic order, with the verb in the first position. This seems to indicate the specific status of *dan* in light verb constructions.

Finally, causative constructions are mentioned in three dictionaries as a syntactic function of *dan*. Nezan's dictionary explains this function in terms of 'auxiliary verb followed by an infinitive' (2017: 331) and illustrates it with the following examples: *dan çêkirin* 'to make built / construct', *dan kirin* 'to make (someone) make / to make an order'. Two other dictionaries provide many examples in which *dan* has a causative function.

This dictionary overview shows the polysemy and multifunctionality of *dan*. The present chapter focuses essentially on *dan* verbal constructions in Kurmandji Kurdish.



### 2.2.2 Newspapers

In our corpus, *dan* with an agentive subject can be found with a concrete meaning of ‘offer’ (1). The agentive subject construction is attested with a transitive syntax for an abstract meaning of transfer, the most salient being either for a communication meaning (2) or a legal meaning (3). The last case of transitive construction is similar to the French one, with the meaning of producing (4), in a non-agentive construction.

- (1) *Çinê da zanîn ku ew jî dixwazîn*  
 Chine.OBL give.PST.SG know.INF that 3P.DIR also want.PRES.PL  
*leşkeran bidin hêz-ên navneteweyî ya ku li*  
 soldiers.PL give.SUB.PRS force-GEN.PL international GEN that in  
*Kosova-yê bi cih bibin*  
 KOSOVO-ADP install. 3PL.FUT  
 ‘China let us know that they also wanted to send troops to the international forces who would be willing to stay in Kosovo.’
- (2) *Emê der barê çek-ên kîmyewî û bombe-yên*  
 1-OBL.PL about weapon-GEN.PL chemical and bomb-GEN.PL  
*napalm-ê hatine bikaranîn, kurte-agahi-yekê*  
 napalm.OBL come.PERF.3PL use.INF short-announcement-OBL  
*bidin.*  
 give.SUBJ.PRS.3PL  
 ‘We are going to make a short announcement concerning the chemical weapons and napalm bombs.’
- (3) *Bêyî ku agahi-yek bidin birêveberî-yê*  
 Without that information.IND give.SUB.PRS.PL management bord.OBL  
*derî-yên dezgeh-ê mor kirin<sup>4</sup>*  
 door-GEN.PL institution.OBL seal.PRET.3PL  
 ‘Without giving any information to the management, they sealed the doors of the institution.’
- (4) *Dar-ên sêv-ê sêv didin*  
 tree-GEN.PL apple.OBL apple.DIR give.PRS.3PL  
 ‘Apple trees produce apples.’

Phraseological expressions as well as many LVC are attested in our three corpora. Lexicalized expressions are formed with *dan*, more strictly fixed ones, idioms, to less fixed phraseological ones. Both types of constructions are described in the following section, LVC and phraseological verbal constructions (3.1).

4. <https://krd.sputniknews.com/nuce/201701035072464-enstituya-kurdi-seroke-pesin-ape-musa-hat-girtin/>

### 3. Verbal constructions

#### 3.1 Light verb constructions (LVC)

The LVC are encountered as lexicalized units (3.1.1) or as more recently attested fixed units (3.1.2). In both cases, they show great productivity and regular patterns (3.1.3). They are also very frequent constructions, the most frequent ones attested in our data (see Section 2.1).

The following constructions (see Table 2 below) are retrieved from our three corpora A, B and C. Other lexicalized LVCs attested in the dictionaries are presented in Table 1. These constructions show the great productivity of *dan* as a light verb. They are here described through their syntactic frames, with *dan* as a predicate:

Table 2. LVC Kurmanji Kurdish patterns

Scheme	Example	Corpus
1 [DI + <i>dan</i> ]	a. <i>zorê dan</i> : 'to force' b. <i>piştgirî dan</i> : 'to support' c. <i>destek dan</i> : 'to support' d. <i>zirar dan</i> : 'to damage' e. <i>agahî dan</i> : 'to inform' f. <i>Gava wan afiş-ên Newroz û</i> when 3PL.OBL poster-GEN.PL Newroz and <i>afişên din dadixistin,</i> poster-GEN.PL other remove.IMPF 'When (they) remove Newroz's and other posters' g. <i>xwendekar çûn û îhtar dan</i> students.NOM go.PRET and warning give.PRET 'Students went and gave a warning'	A B
2 [ <i>dan</i> + DI] : 4	<i>dan dest</i> : 'to render'	A
3 [ADJ + <i>dan</i> ]	<i>belaş + dan</i> : 'to give for free'	A
4 [ <i>dan</i> +ADV]	<i>dan + pey</i> : 'to run after'	A
5 [ADV + <i>dan</i> ]	<i>pev + dan</i> : 'to fight'	A
6 [ <i>dan</i> +PREP+IO]	<i>dan+pêş+yekî</i> : 'to chase someone'	A
7 [DI+PREP+ <i>dan</i> ]	<i>serî-le-dan</i> : 'to apply for'	A
8 [ <i>dan</i> +PREP+REFL]	<i>dan+ber+xwe</i> : 'to set a goal'	A
9 [REFL + <i>dan</i> +PREP]	<i>xwe-dan-ser</i> : 'to lean on'	A
10 [[ADV+REFL+ <i>dan</i> ]	<i>ber-xwe-dan</i> : 'to resist'	A
11 [DO+REFL+ <i>dan</i> ]	<i>bala+xwe+dan</i> : 'to pay attention'	A

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Scheme	Example	Corpus
12 [REFL+PREP+IO+ <i>dan</i> ]	Du parastvan- ên Hoşyar Zebarî di two body guard-GEN.PL Hoşyar Zebarî in êrîşeke bombeyî de jiyan- a xwe attack.IND bomb life-GEN.SG REFL ji dest dan. lose.PRET	B
13 [ <i>dan</i> +RECIP]	dan+hev 'to put things in order'	A
14 [ <i>dan</i> +PREP+RECIP]	dan+ber+hev 'to compare'	A
15 [PREP+RECIP+ <i>dan</i> ]	li+hev+dan 'to mix' or 'to fight'	A
16 [DO+AFF ASPECT+ <i>dan</i> ]	bêhn + ve+dan 'to rest'	A

### 3.2 Light verbs and reflexive forms

The LVC in Kurdish Kurmanji is a very common structure, which is also found in reflexive constructions. The degree of fixity of the LVC varies from weak to strong either in grammatical or lexical constructions. On the one hand, the reflexive construction is purely grammaticalized (i.) and has a non-compositional meaning (5) on the other hand; it is completely lexicalized as a phrase (ii.) with a concrete *dan* meaning in (6) and an abstract *dan* meaning in (7), (8), (9).

i. Syntactic decompositional pronominal form with a reflexive meaning:

(5) *xwe dan alî* 'to put oneself aside'

ii. Idiomatic construction (lexicalization):

With *dan* concrete:

(6) *can-ê xwe dan* 'to sacrifice oneself':

*Ev welat-ê ku me di ber de can-ê xwe daye*  
this country-GEN.SG that 1PL.OBL for it live-GEN.SG REF give.PERF  
'the country for which we have sacrificed/given ourselves'

With *dan* abstract:

(7) *xwe dan ber* 'to stand in front of/ to intervene'

(8) *dan ber xwe* [dan + Prép + xwe]

*Malikî: xeter-a terorîsm-ê hemû welat-an dide ber xwe*<sup>5</sup>  
Malikî: danger-GEN.SG terrorism-OBL all country-PL target.PRS.3SG  
'Maliki: the danger of terrorism threatens every country'  
[SUBS-OBJ + xwe-dan]

5. <http://kurmanciold.ws.irib.ir/nuce/rojhilata-navin/item/159035-malik%C3%AE-xetera-teror%C3%AEsm%C3%AA-hem%C3%BB-welatan-dide-ber-xwe>

- (9) *Lê digel hemû astengiya Ji çapemeni-ya kurd*  
 despite all barrier.PL also press-GEN.SG Kurdish  
*li ser piyan ma û li ber xwe da*  
 stand up.PST.3S and resist.PST.3SG  
 'Despite all the barriers, the Kurdish Press has stood up and has resisted.'

### 3.3 Various causative constructions with *dan*

We have identified three kinds of causative constructions. Our main focus in this paper is the use of *dan* as a causative auxiliary, that is to say a case of syntactic shift of a frequent verb into an auxiliary following a typical cline of grammaticalization from some content meaning towards grammatical meaning.

Different examples of the causative construction have been found in our corpus, making use of the verb *dan*, and sometimes its equivalent *kirin*. According to Gougenheim 1929, in those causative constructions *give* behaves as a semi-auxiliary of causation. In Bouveret 2012, we developed the analysis further. A similar fact arises in Kurdish, showing a more complicated network of constructions with and without the verb *kirin*. Similar cases of the form [*give* V-Inf] are described in the literature with languages belonging to other language groups than Romance (similar cases are found in French, Italian, Spanish), namely in Russian, Polish and Czech, all three languages belonging to the Slavic family (Von Waldenfelds 2011).

#### 3.3.1 *The causative construction [dan + kirin V-Inf]*

Causative constructions with *dan* are systematic in Kurmanji within the (a) intransitive – (b) transitive alternation. In (b), the morpheme *-and* marks the transitive form of *dan* (see 3.3.2):

- (a) *fir-în* 'to fly'  
 (b) *fir-and-in* 'to make fly'  
 (a) *meş-în* 'to run'  
 (b) *meş-and-in* 'to make run'  
 (a) *ger-în* 'to walk'  
 (b) *ger-and-in* 'to make walk'

We propose to discuss several criteria that allows us to classify the causative constructions. Relying on Levin (1993), Newman (1997), and Shibatani (2002), four criteria can be first applied:

#### A. Direct causation:

##### 1. Internal direct causation:

- (10) *Tay-ên dar-ê şkestin*  
 branch-GEN.PL tree-OBL break.PST.PL  
 'The branches of the tree broke'

## 2. External direct causation:

- (11) *Min ew dav da û ew ket av-ê*  
 1SG.OBL 3SG.DIR push.PST.1SG and 3S.DIR fell.PST.3SG water-DIREC  
 ‘I pushed him and he fell into the water’

## B. Indirect causation:

- (12) *Ba tay-ên dar-ê şkanî*  
 Wind branch.GEN.PL. tree-OBL break.PST.3PL  
 ‘The wind broke the branch’ (without *dan*)

## C. Implicit causation:

- (13) *Zivistan hat, êş-ên koçber-an zêde dibin*  
 Winter arrive.PST.1SG pain.GEN.PL migrant-PL increase.PRS.3PL  
 ‘The winter has arrived, the pain of migrants increased’

## D. Manipulative causation:

- (14) *John zarok rakir*  
 John child stand.PST.SG  
 ‘John stood the boy up’

We add to those criteria one additional distinction based on Gosselin (1996) (a criterion initially applied to modality by the author), which is “the force of validation” from weak to strong causation.

Von Waldenfelds proposes two types of permissive causation, relying on Talmy: a continuum extending from a “non reflected passivity (due to indifference, carelessness or negligence)” to “strong committed sense of granting permission”, further, towards “two focal types from non-interference vs permission” (Von Waldenfelds 2012).

In Kurdish, the continuum is not as wide, going from permission to the facilitative causation, from a weak causation to a strong causation. Our data show the following semantic values based on the “force of validation” criterion: weak and strong causation.

## 1. Agentive and weak causation = ‘let know’

- (15) *Divê enerjî û şûr-ê xwe bi awa-yekî xurt*  
 Necessary energy and awareness-GEN.SG REF in way-GEN.SG strong  
*ji bo azadi-ya gel û civak-ê bide*  
 for freedom-GEN.SG people and community-OBL give.SUBJ.PRS.3SG  
*xebitandin.*  
 run.INF  
 ‘He has to use strongly his energy and his conscience for the liberation of the people and the society.’

- (16) *Li aliy-ê din jî ew dide zanîn ku ewê*  
 On side-GEN.SG other also 3SG.NOM give.PRS.3SG know.INF that 3SG  
*van pankart-an bide berhevkirin.*  
 these sign-PL give.FUT.3SG collect.INF  
 'on the other hand, he informs that he will collect these signs'

## 2. Agentive and strong causation = 'order'

- (17) *Komîte-yê hemû alav-ên aş ên pêwîst peyda kirin*  
 committee-OBL all material-GEN.PL mill GEN.PL necessary find.PST.PL  
*û aş dan xebitandin<sup>6</sup>.*  
 and mill give.PST.PL run.INF  
 'The committee found all needed material of the mill and made the mill run.'

The "force of validation" criterion allows us to establish a continuum between weak (indirect) causation where *dan* means 'let' and strong causation (direct) where *dan* is equivalent to 'order'.

The following section will distinguish the different cases of verbal causation constructions with *dan* in Sections 3.3.2, 3.3.3 and 3.3.4. Amongst these cases of causation with *dan*, simple and double causation must be distinguished, as a single causation using the verbal form [*dan* V-Inf] or as a complex causation using the verbal form *dan* + another verbal form *kirin* [*dan* + *kirin* V-Inf]. The [*dan* V-Inf] construction can also be combined with a morphological causative marker *-and* [*dan* + V-and] described in 3.3.3 below.

### 3.3.2 Simple causation [*dan* V-Inf]

The simple causation construction is the most frequent one in our corpus, not only the most frequent in the different cases of causation, but the causative form is after the light verb construction (LVC) the most frequent of all the constructions retrieved in our corpus as attested in Table (2), in Section 2.1, which is clearly a sign of grammaticalization of the verb towards a periphrastic construction. This simple causation is composed of the form *dan* and the transitive verbs in Examples (18) and (19):

- (18) *dan nasîn* 'make know'  
*Em niştîmanperwerî û kurdayeti-yê bi wan*  
 1PL.NOM patriotism and kurdicity.OBL by 3PL.OBL  
*didin nasîn*  
 give.PRS.PL know.INF  
 'We teach them/make them know patriotism and Kurdicity'

6. <http://ku.hawarnews.com/ase-gire-spi-hate-xebitandin/>

(19) *dan berdan* ‘make free’

*Ji ber vê Mustafa Kemal mecbûr dimîne ku efûyeke taybet*  
 because this Mustafa Kemal have.PERF.3SG that amnesty-GEN.SG special  
*derxe û Teslîm Beg bide berdan*  
 promulgate.SUBJ.3SG and Teslîm Beg give.SUBJ.3SG liberate.INF  
 ‘Because of this, Mustafa Kemal has to promulgate a special amnesty and free  
 Teslîm Beg.’

### 3.3.3 *Double causation with [dan + causative morpheme] and in the transitive/intransitive alternation [dan + V-and]*

This construction shows a case of double causation, one with *dan* and a second one marked with the causative morpheme *-and*. The simple causation with the causative morphologically marked verb appears in (a, b), the double causation with the same construction in addition to a causative *dan* construction is attested in (c) and in Example (19). This *-and* morpheme marks the transitivity of an originally intransitive verb and then at the same time does mark the causativity of the verb. This causation alternation can only be found in the intransitive/transitive pairs. This mark is then bound to the capacity of the verb to be transitivized. In the following examples, (b) is transitive and causative, whereas (a) is intransitive (equivalent to the English intransitive/transitive alternation seen in *walk ~ walk the dog*).

Within the transitive/intransitive alternation, the *-and* causative morpheme in (b) brings agentivity to the causative event. But does the *-and* causative morpheme form come etymologically from *dan*? So far there is no evidence of this due to the lack of research on the etymology of Kurdish.

- a. *nas-in* ‘know’
- b. *nas-and-in* ‘make know’ (transitive and causative)
- c. *dan nasandin* ‘make know’ (transitive, causative and double causation with *dan*)

In some cases, double causation constructions show an interesting characteristic development of the causative locutional form with *dan*. For instance, the following sentence (20) illustrates the fact that *dan* has become such a prominent causative idiom in Kurdish that it is used even when it is not needed. In (20), *runiştandin* being already a lexicalized causative transitive form as seen in examples above would be sufficient and perfectly correct, but the form *dan* is added in the construction, thus providing a double causative construction:

- (20) *Dayik Şemsa Gulbeden ji ber hestewari-ya xwe bi zor li piya*  
 mother Şemsa Gulbeden because emotion-GEN.SG REF hardly on foot  
*girt û dayik-an wê da runiştandin.*  
 stand.PST and mother.NOM.PL 3SG.OBL give.PST.SG sit.INF  
 ‘The mother Şemsa Gulbeden could hardly stand up, and the mothers stood  
 her up.’

In (20) the cause is manipulative with a causer (the mothers) and the causee (the mother Şemsa Gulbeden). In this case the morphological causative lexeme is used in addition to the verb *dan* whereas in other Kurmanji varieties, the ergative can be used (cf. the Ergative construction: *Mamoste em runiştand-in*). In recent online newspapers our google excerpt retrieves 110 occurrences of *dan rûniştandin* (as in 20) whereas the standard grammatical form seems to be as in (c) without *dan*. This fact clearly illustrates a case of spreading (extension) of the *dan* manipulative construction with a double causative construction in everyday language uses.

### 3.3.4 *A complex construction: Light verb and causative constructions:* [*dan* + *kirin* V-Inf]

*Dan* can combine with *kirin*, a standard causative verb attested in Kurdish studies (Manchester Study of Kurdish Language, see note (1)). In those cases, *kirin* is used with a light verb function, thus bringing a causative meaning to the verb, for instance paint becomes 'cause the surface to be spread/covered with painting'. Constructions with *kirin* appear to be lexicalized causative constructions. By using either *kirin* (a lexicalized LVC of causation) and *dan* (a grammaticalized semi auxiliary of causation), the construction becomes a double causation construction, as in 3.3.2. Instead of being a morphological one this time, the construction is a lexicalized one with a light verb construction in [*dan* + *kirin* V-Inf]. In this case, as in the upper section, we can talk about a complex form of causation, a double causation. Those constructions are agentive, exclusively found with external causation; the following Example (21) can be decomposed as: agent + V- (*dan*= make) + V-Inf (*kirin*=causes that) + object Y + result.

(21) *dan çapkirin* 'make print, publish'

*ew ji tirsê nikarin helbêst-ên xwe yên ku di*  
3PL.NOM ADP fear can.PL.PRS.NEG poem-GEN.PL REF GEN.PL that in  
*sal-ên 60 û 70'yî de nivîst-ne, îro*  
year.GEN.PL 60 and 70 ADP write.PERF-ERG today  
*bidin çapkirin.*  
give.SUBJ.PRS edit.INF

'because of fear, they can't publish today the poems they have written in the 1960s and 1970s'

(22) *dan guftûgokirin* 'make negotiate'

*Forûm bi armanc-a ku fikr-a aştî-yê bidin*  
Forum with aim-GEN.SG that idea-GEN.SG peace-OBL give.SUBJ.PRS.PL  
*guftûgokirin' hate lidarxistin*  
negotiate.INF come.PST organize.INF

'The forum was organized to negotiate the idea of peace.'



- (23) *dan qebûlkirin* ‘to make accepted’  
 Wî got: “Bi zor-ê em nikarin aştî-yê bi  
 3SG.OBL say.PST.SG By force-OBL 1PL can.PRS.NEG peace-OBL to  
 dewlet-ê *bidin* *qebûlkirin*”.  
 state-OBL give.SUBJ.PRS.PL accept.INF  
 ‘He said: We cannot make the peace accepted by the state by force’

To sum up, our data show the following syntactic verbal causation categories:

- Simple causation with *dan*
- Double causation with *dan* + causative morpheme *-and* in the transitive/in-transitive alternation
- Light verb causation in a double complex causation with *dan* + *kirin*

As a conclusion, this work has demonstrated that in Kurmanji Kurdish the verb *dan* is extremely productive, as a light verb, as a grammatical form in causation expressions, and as a lexicalized form in compound forms.

## Conclusion

The productivity of the form *dan* is attested and analyzed in this paper as a lexical full verb, as a morphological unit in the nominal and adjectival compounds, as a syntactic unit in causative constructions, as a lexicalized unit, fixed idiom or quasi-fixed idiomatic expressions and as a light verb in LVC. *Dan* illustrates the syntax-lexicon continuum proposed in Croft 2007, that is to say, the capacity of a lexical item to have different functions. In this regard, *dan* is a polyfunctional unit of the Kurdish language. This polyfunctional property has been illustrated in the present chapter with the verb *dan* in Kurmandji Kurdish as a morphological units inside components, as a syntactic unit in causative semi-auxiliary constructions, as a lexical unit or as a syntactic construction within SVC or *dan-kirin* constructions.

This polyfunctionality of the form is also illustrated in other chapters of the present survey study of *give* verbs across languages (see Corre about Khmer, Melac and Tournadre about Tibetan or Badan about Chinese).

The productivity of the form *dan* is also attested through language contact especially with Turkish. This language contact is enhanced with the bilingual capacity of Turkish-Kurdish speakers working in the media. The need of expressivity in communication seems to lead to loan translations based on or borrowed from Turkish. For instance, the compounded verbs *serilêdan*<sup>7</sup> and *jiyana xwe ji*

7. *Malbatên li Sûrê seri li ÎHD'ê dan*  
 familles in Sûr request.PRET ÎHD  
 ‘Families in Sûr adressed [a request] to ÎHD’

<https://www.gazetesujin.net/ku/2017/08/malbaten-li-sure-seri-li-ihde-dan/> (14/08/2017)

*dest dan*<sup>8</sup> ‘to die’ have been recently elaborated from Turkish morphosyntax, respectively from *başvurmak* and *yaşamını yitirmek*. On the other hand, Kurdish diaspora contributed to the emergence of literacy in Kurmanji, especially in Sweden (Scalbert-Yucel 2006). We know for example that contact with European languages resulted in some influences on the construction of reported speech in Kurmanji (Akin 2002). It would then be interesting to study how European languages have influenced constructions with *dan*.

## List of abbreviations

1	First person	NOM	Nominative case
2	Second person	OBL	Oblique case
3	Third person	PERF	Perfective
ADP	Adposition	PL	Plural
GEN	Genitive (Ezafe)	PRS	Present tense
DIR	Direct case	PST	Past tense
DIREC	Directional	PLU	Pluperfect
FUT	Future	REF	Reflexive
INF	Infinitive	SG	Singular
IO	Indirect object	SUBJ	Subjunctive
NEG	Negative		

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### 8. *Meqbûla Ebdulmenan jiyana-xwe ji dest da*

Meqbûla Ebdulmenan life-GEN REF. lost.PRET  
 ‘Meqbûla Ebdulmenan died’

<http://ku.hawarnews.com/meqbula-ebdulmenan-jiyana-xwe-ji-dest-da/> (07/07/2017)

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This cognitive contrastive study of ten languages (Chinese, Dalabon, English, French, Spanish, Romanian, Kurdish, Khmer, Polish, Tibetan) focuses on the concept of giving from six main points of view, namely argument structure, lexical semantics and event structure, role marking in the three argument construction and in other constructions, lexicalization, grammaticalization and constructionalization of the verb from a cognitive construction grammar point of view, and central and extended meanings. It is proposed that a continuum approach to grammar and lexicon is needed in order to describe the typological and historical facts. The volume argues for a concrete and abstract transfer 'cluster model' involving coverage of lexical and grammatical extension or bleaching phenomena and that the semantic extensions (metaphorical and otherwise) exploit various portions of this schema. The volume is deeply anchored in the Cognitive Construction Grammar theoretical movement, and proposes analyses of constructional phenomena to illustrate a grammar to lexicon continuum, in synchrony and diachrony: language change, grammaticalization chains, constructionalization analysis, and an invariant hypothesis of giving as a basic activity in human cognition.

ISBN 978 90 272 0842 2



9 789027 208422

**John Benjamins Publishing Company**