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Passivization of the English Ditransitive Construction:
With Special Focus on the Status of the Primary Object

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Passivization of the English Ditransitive Construction:
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Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction	1
 Chapter 2. Previous Studies: Analyses of the English Ditransitive Construction	 7
2.1 Transformational Approach	8
2.1.1 The Transformational View	8
2.1.2 Disadvantages of the Transformational Approach	10
2.2 Lexicosemantic Approach	12
2.2.1 Constraints on English Verbs	12
2.2.1.1 Semantic Constraints	13
2.2.1.2 Morphological and Phonological Constraints	15
2.2.1.2.1 From a Historical Viewpoint	15
2.2.1.2.2 The Morphophonological Constraint	16
2.2.2 Thematic Cores	18
2.2.3 The Narrowly-Defined Semantic Classes	20
2.2.4 Representation	23
2.3 Constructional Approach	27
2.3.1 The Notion of Construction	27
2.3.1.1 Definition	27

2.3.1.2 Constructional Meaning.....	29
2.3.2 Constructional Polysemy	31
2.3.3 Relations among Constructions	34
2.3.4 Other properties of Ditransitives	38
2.3.4.1 Specific Constraints on the Arguments.....	38
2.3.4.2 Metaphors.....	41
2.4 Usage-Based Approach	44
2.4.1 The Choice between the Constructions.....	44
2.4.1.1 Properties of the Arguments.....	45
2.4.1.2 Verbs' Preferences.....	48
2.4.1.3 Structural Priming.....	49
2.4.2 The Grammar Network.....	51
2.5 Summary of Chapter 2.....	54
Chapter 3. Analyses of the English Passivization	57
3.1 Overview of the English Passive Construction.....	57
3.1.1 The Nature of Passive.....	57
3.1.2 The Circumstances Passives Prefer.....	61
3.2 Requirements for the Passivization.....	63
3.2.1 The Agent-Patient Relationship.....	63
3.2.1.1 Agency of S.....	66
3.2.1.1.1 The Thematic Hierarchy Condition.....	66
3.2.1.1.2 Volitionality.....	68

3.2.1.2 Patienthood of O	69
3.2.1.2.1 The Notion of Patienthood	69
3.2.1.2.2 Evidence	71
3.2.1.2.3 Affectedness and Passives	72
3.2.1.2.3.1 Affectedness and Transitive Passives	73
3.2.1.2.3.2 Affectedness and Prepositional Passives	74
3.2.1.2.4 Individuality (Referentiality)	77
3.3 Summary of Chapter 3	80
Chapter 4. Passivization of the English Ditransitive Construction	81
4.1 Passive Behavior of the English Ditransitive Construction	81
4.1.1 Passivization of the <i>To</i> -Dative Ditransitives	82
4.1.2 Why O ₂ cannot be Passivized	83
4.1.3 Passivization of the <i>For</i> -Dative Ditransitives	84
4.2 Revisiting the Two Hierarchies	86
4.3 The Quest for Truth	88
4.3.1 Reconsideration of the Two Ditransitives	88
4.3.2 Further Considerations	96
4.4 Summary of Chapter 4	99
Chapter 5. Suggestions for English Education	101
5.1 A Critical Analysis of Textbooks	102
5.2 The Grammaticality Judgement Task	104

5.3 The Proposal	108
5.4 Summary of Chapter 5	111
Chapter 6. Conclusion	113
6.1 Summary	113
6.2 Future Prospects	117
Notes	118
Appendix	124
Bibliography	127

Chapter 1

Introduction

Why does language exist in our world? Cannot we humans live without language? The answer is that of course we cannot. Language is indispensable and ubiquitous for our lives. Specifically, through language, we communicate with others, such as expressing our own ideas or inferring others' intentions. Also, we humans can collect knowledge and share it with others in the mediation of language. Language also functions as an instrument for thinking. For example, in most cases, we humans organize our thoughts into coherent order with the aid of language. Moreover, language is the principle means by which human societies are constructed and cultures are developed. In fact, Genetti (2014) argues that the intellectual achievements of humankind are essentially embodied in language, and that this is not only true of the written books that formally encapsulate our knowledge, but also true of the huge body of indigenous knowledge held by speakers of thousands of languages around the world. In short, it can be stated that language cannot be separated from our lives.

Now, let us turn our eyes to language use. Language use is a cooperative activity that is driven by interlocutor's communicative intention (Diessel, 2019). In other words, speakers (often) choose particular linguistic expressions based on what they think listeners know and see, and then listeners interpret the chosen expression based on the assumption that speakers construct sentences according to this strategy. From this viewpoint, language use can be seen as a collaborative activity performed by the speech participants.

The English language, for example, is known for its repository of expressions. As Diessel (2019) points out, in English, there are always multiple expressions of saying more or less the same thing. See the following examples:

- (1) a. I sent Tom a letter.
b. I sent a letter to Tom. (Diessel, 2019, p. 24)

- (2) a. Jack sprayed paint on the wall.
b. Jack sprayed the wall with paint. (Levin, 1993, p. 51)

- (3) a. Oswald assassinated Kennedy.
b. Kennedy was assassinated by Oswald.
(Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 1427)

- (4) a. The ball rolled.
b. John rolled the ball. (Pinker, 2013, p. 9)

These paraphrasings between constructions can be referred to in English linguistics as “constructional alternations,” and a large number of linguists have studied the phenomena of constructional alternations from different viewpoints.¹ Through the studies, it has been pointed out that although the two sentences which are involved with the constructional alternation might be apparently similar, they do not express the identical meaning. For example, consider the example (2), which involves the “spray-paint alternation.” It has been known that (2b) has

an implication that the whole wall has been sprayed with paint, whilst (2a) does not have such an implication.² This difference becomes clear, if they are placed in the following context:

- (5) a. Jack sprayed paint on the wall, but the wall didn't get any paint on it.
b. *Jack sprayed the wall with paint, but the wall didn't get any paint on it.

(Adapted from Kishimoto, 2001, p. 107)

(5a) is felicitous because the former part does not necessarily imply that the whole wall has been sprayed and thus no problem occurs if it is followed by *but the wall didn't get any paint on it*. On the other hand, (5b) sounds odd because *Jack sprayed the wall with paint* implies that the whole wall has been sprayed with paint and it is logically inconsistent with the latter part.

As Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004) put it, probably, the most widely discussed case of constructional alternation in English is the “dative alternation” that is concerned with the alternation between the ditransitive construction and the prepositional dative construction, as seen in the example (1). The ditransitive construction is considered to mainly be classified into the following two types based on its corresponding paraphrase: (i) the ditransitive construction alternated with the *to*-dative construction (the *to*-dative ditransitives), and (ii) the ditransitive construction that is paraphrased with the *for*-dative construction (the *for*-dative ditransitives):³

- (6) a. Mina sent Mel a book. (the *to*-dative ditransitive)
b. Mina sent a book to Mel. (Goldberg, 2006, p. 26)

- (7) a. Sam baked Chris a cake. (the *for*-dative ditransitive)
- b. Sam baked a cake for Chris. (Goldberg, 2019, p. 30)

The English ditransitive construction and the phenomenon of the dative alternation have intrigued a large number of linguists around the world for a long time, and as described in Chapter 2, a plenty of fruitful research results on them have been reported (e.g., Allerton, 1977; Bock, 1986; Diessel, 2016, 2019; Dryer, 1986; Fillmore 1965; Goldberg, 1993, 1995, 2006, 2019; Gries & Stefanowitsch, 2004; Gropen et al. 1989; Kaga, 2012; Kishimoto, 2001; Kodama, 2003, 2008; Levin, 1993; Perek, 2015; Pinker, 1989, 2007, 2013; Toshioka, 2008). Nevertheless, these studies appear to mainly focus upon the properties of the English ditransitive construction in its active form, and what is not fully touched is what kind of behavior this construction shows when passivized. For example, Goldberg, who is a distinguished linguist for her minute analyses of the English ditransitive construction from the viewpoint of Construction Grammar, scarcely mentions the passivization of this construction in her works (cf. Goldberg, 1993, 1995, 2006, 2019).

One of the few findings on the passivization of the English ditransitive construction is that the *for*-dative ditransitives are commonly unlikely to be passivized than the *to*-dative ones. See the following passives of the *to*-dative ditransitives (8) and those of the *for*-dative ditransitives (9):⁴

- (8) a. The police were given the information.
- b. I was offered the job, but I refused it.
- c. The men were paid £400 to do the work. (Murphy, 2004, p. 88)

- (9) a. ?Bob was baked a cake by Sam.
b. *?Bob was built a house by Sam.
c. *Bob was earned a promotion by his hard work. (Pinker, 2013, p. 260)

As shown in the examples, all the passives of the *to*-dative ditransitives are felicitous, while all the passives of the *for*-dative ditransitives are somehow unnatural or completely rejected. Although many linguists have pointed out this point (e.g., Declerck, 1991; Fillmore, 1965; Goldberg, 2006; Kishimoto, 2001; Pinker, 2013; Visser, 1963), none of them present a compelling explanation for why the two types of ditransitive have a different acceptability of passivization. Therefore, the central thesis of this work is, through the detailed analyses of the English ditransitive construction and of the English passivization, to identify the cause why the *for*-dative ditransitives are generally less likely to be passivized than the *to*-dative ditransitives. This paper is structured as follows:

The following two chapters are designed to overview previous studies. Chapter 2 makes analyses of the English ditransitive construction from four different perspectives. The chapter unveils various properties of the construction by comparing its corresponding prepositional dative construction. In addition, what is to be discussed in the chapter is the specific differences of the two ditransitives (the *to*-dative ditransitives VS the *for*-dative ditransitives). The subsequent chapter, Chapter 3, in turn, explores the English passive construction and the English passivization. Moreover, the chapter presents one crucial requirement for the English passivization, and considers the passivizability of active sentences based on the criterion.

Chapter 4 corresponds to the core of this work. This chapter, through making use of

plenty of knowledge found in the previous studies, tackles the above mystery of ditransitive passives.

Chapter 5 is concerned with the applicability of the discussed fruitful findings to contemporary English education. The chapter aims for a better English teaching of ditransitive passives for Japanese high school students.

Finally, Chapter 6 presents a conclusion of the whole discussion, and this paper ends, making some remarks on future prospects.

Overall, this paper contributes to removal of the mysterious veil from the passivization of the English ditransitive construction that has not sufficiently been explained in contemporary English linguistics, and encourages readers to gain profound insights into ditransitive passives.

Chapter 2

Previous Studies: Analyses of the English Ditransitive Construction

This chapter is aimed at making analyses of the English ditransitive construction from multiple viewpoints and revealing its particular properties. The English ditransitive construction is typically defined as the syntactic form in which a particular verb is followed by two noun phrases. The noun phrases are realized as the primary object and the secondary object respectively.¹ The example of this construction is as follows:

- (10) John sent Mary a letter. (Kishimoto, 2001, p. 127)

In (10), the subject *John* is an agent, the primary object *Mary* is a recipient, and the secondary object *a letter* is a thing (theme) transferred to the recipient.

Many ditransitive expressions have corresponding prepositional dative constructions:

- (11) a. John sent Mary a letter.
b. John sent a letter to Mary. (ibid.)

- (12) a. John found Mary a job.
b. John found a job for Mary. (ibid.)

As stated in Chapter 1, the ditransitive construction is mainly divided into two types: like (11a), the ditransitive construction that alternates with the *to*-dative construction, and like (12a), the one that can be paraphrased with the *for*-dative construction. These two ditransitives bear the same surface form (S V O₁ O₂), and share many semantic and pragmatic properties, but as discussed later, they can be differentiated in several ways.

Again, the main thesis of this work is to determine the cause why the *for*-dative ditransitives are unlikely to be passivized than the *to*-dative ones. In order to tackle this puzzle, it is crucial to capture the overall picture of the ditransitive construction and to understand particular differences of the two ditransitives.

2.1 Transformational Approach

2.1.1 The Transformational View

Basically, this approach is based on the assumption that morphologically related, truth functionally synonymous sentences must share a level of representation. Based on this view, transformationalists consider that since the initial level of representation must be the same for all synonymous expressions, if the two synonymous expressions are different on the surface, one or both must be derived from this shared level of representation (Goldberg, 1995, p. 103). In addition, two synonymous expressions are related by transformational rules.

In the case of the two construction involved with the dative alternation, it can be argued that except for some subtle pragmatic differences, the ditransitive construction and the prepositional dative construction bear the same truth-functional meaning, and the two sentences are derived from a single underlying form. The question is which sentence is more basic than the other. In many cases, it is assumed that the prepositional dative construction is

more fundamental than the ditransitive construction and that the latter is derived from the underlying structure of the former.

For example, Dryer (1986) proposes that the *to*-dative construction is more basic than the ditransitive construction. Dryer argues that the *to*-dative construction is more basic because it involves a single syntactic level. On the other hand, the ditransitive construction is less basic in that it involves two levels, namely an initial level at which the grammatical relations are identical to those in the *to*-dative construction, and a final level at which the initial indirect object advances to become the final direct object by a rule of Indirect Object Advancement, and the initial direct object becomes a final *chômeur*. Based on this view, (13a) is considered to be derived from (13b):

- (13) a. John gave Mary the book.
b. John gave the book to Mary. (Dryer, 1986, p. 811)

Furthermore, Fillmore (1965) considers that the string underlying the ditransitive construction is generated from the underlying structure of the prepositional (*to* / *for*) dative construction through the application of the “Indirect Object Rules” consisting of the deletion of the preposition *to* or *for* and the transposition of the two objects to this underlying structure. According to his view, it is assumed that (14a) is derived from (14b) and (15a) is derived from (15b):

- (14) a. He offered me a job.
b. He offered a job to me. (Fillmore, 1965, p. 10)

(15) a. I saved your sister some cake.

b. I saved some cake for your sister.

(Fillmore, 1965, p. 11)

In summary, based on the transformational approach, the ditransitive construction and the prepositional construction share bear the same (truth-functional) meaning, and in many cases, it is assumed that the prepositional dative construction is more basic than the ditransitive construction and that the latter can be derived from the underlying structure of the former.

2.1.2 Disadvantages of the Transformational Approach

The transformational approach has often been disputed because this approach cannot account for the semantic differences of two related forms. In fact, as Goldberg (1995) argues, many expressions related by transformations do not have identical truth conditions. For example, see the following example which involves the spray-paint alternation.

(16) a. He sprayed the wall with paint.

b. He sprayed paint onto the wall.

(Goldberg, 1995, p. 103)

As pointed out in Chapter 1, only in (16a), it is implied that the whole wall has been sprayed. On the other hand, (16b) would be true if used to refer to a situation where only a drop of paint is sprayed on the wall (Goldberg, 1995, p. 103). For the transformational approach, in many cases, the synonymy of two expressions is the only motivation to posit derivational relationships between them, if they have semantic differences, such a motivation itself would

be destabilized.

Another weakness of the transformational approach is the existence of some expressions as follows:

- (17) a. Goldie drove her minibus to the lake.
b. *Goldie drove the lake her minibus. (Pinker, 2007, p. 58)

- (18) a. Amie lifted the box to him.
b. *Amie lifted him the box. (ibid.)

These *to*-dative expressions (17a, 18a) are predicted to accept the dative alternation, but actually they cannot dativize. As Fillmore argues, if it is assumed the ditransitive construction is derived from the underlying structure of the prepositional dative construction, a large number of ungrammatical sentences like (17b) and (18b) would be overproduced.

On the other hand, some verbs exist which take only the ditransitive construction:

- (19) a. The IRS fined me a thousand dollars.
b. *The IRS fined a thousand dollars to me. (Pinker, 2007, p. 58)

- (20) a. Friends, Romans, countrymen: Lend me your ears!
b. *Friends, Romans, countrymen: Lend your ears to me! (ibid.)

In addition, some metaphorical expressions as seen in (21) participate in only the ditransitive:

- (21) a. She gave me a headache / a kiss / an idea.
b. *She gave a headache / a kiss / an idea to me. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 106)

If the ditransitive construction is generated from the underlying structure of the prepositional dative construction, it is unnatural that these metaphorical expressions take only the output form, skipping the input form.

To conclude, the transformational approach has these weaknesses, and thus it is hard to state that this approach can perfectly describe the full picture of the ditransitive construction and of the dative alternation. Challenging this approach, many linguists have explored them from different perspectives. To put it another way, it is no doubt that the transformational approach has sparked subsequent research on constructional alternations.

2.2 Lexicosemantic Approach

The main interest of the lexical semantic (lexicosemantic) approach is in classifying verbs according to their lexical semantics, in revealing their correlations with the construction in which they appear, and in interpreting the meaning of the whole sentence including the verb. For example, Levin (1993) classifies over 3,000 English verbs according to their meaning and behavior. What Steven Pinker focuses upon is also the subtle semantic differences of verbs, and he considers the dative alternation as an epiphenomenon caused by lexical rules which change the semantic structure of verbs. The following presents more details.

2.2.1 Constraints on English verbs

What Pinker has attempted is to limit verbs which are allowed for the dative alternation (dativizable verbs) by placing various constraints on verbs. First, the following discusses semantic constraints. Next, morphological and phonological constraints are referred to.

2.2.1.1 Semantic Constraints

Pinker (2013: 56) states that dativizable verbs share a semantic property: they must be capable of denoting prospective possession of the referent of the secondary object by that of the primary object. When a verb takes the *to*-dative construction, the oblique is merely a ‘goal’ to which the transferred thing goes. However, when the verb appears in the ditransitive construction, the primary object is interpreted as the “possessor” of the transferred thing. What should be noted is that in fact, with many verbs such as *give*, *send*, *hand*, or *tell*, the ditransitive construction implies that the referent of the primary object actually possesses that of the secondary object (Pinker, 2007, 59–60). Pinker (2013) refers to this semantic property inherent in the ditransitive construction as the “possessor effect.” The possessor effect is illustrated in the following example:

(22) ?Pedro threw him the ball, but a bird got in the way. (ibid.)

The former ditransitive part implies that he actually possessed the ball, while the latter part says that a bird got in the way (so, he could not catch the ball), so a logical inconsistency is caused in the whole sentence.

Similarly, when a verb which takes the *for*-dative construction enlists into the ditransitive construction, the primary object not only must be the beneficiary of an act but also must come

to possess a thing as the result. However, note that the *for*-dative ditransitive construction does not necessarily imply that the referent of the primary object actually possesses that of the secondary object. Pinker (2013, p. 259) states that in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction, the actual action such as creating, performing, or obtaining something would be a means to realize the intention of making the referent of the primary object possess that of the secondary object, although this intention itself need not actually be realized. For example, in the following example (23a), it is unobvious whether Pat actually possessed the cake:

- (23) a. Chris baked Pat a cake.
b. Chris baked a cake for Pat. (Kodama, 2003, p. 250)

However, in the ditransitive form (23a), whether Pat actually possessed the cake or not, it is no doubt that he is interpreted as a possessor of the cake. On the other hand, as discussed later, in the *for*-dative construction like (23b), there are ambiguities in interpretation.

The holism effect serves to account for why in many cases, the ditransitive construction is considered to be ungrammatical when the primary object is filled with an inanimate being:

- (24) a. John sent a package to the boarder.
b. John sent the boarder a package. (Pinker, 2013, p. 56)

- (25) a. John sent a package to the border.
b. *John sent the border a package. (ibid.)

The ditransitive form (24a) is felicitous because the primary object is filled with the animate being *the boarder*, which can be interpreted as a possessor of the package. On the other hand, the ditransitive form (25b) is ill-formed because the inanimate being *the border* cannot possess the package or anything else.

To summarize the discussion thus far, in the ditransitive construction, the referent of the primary object must be interpreted as a possessor of that of the secondary object. In addition, in many verbs such as *give* or *send*, this construction implies that the referent of the primary object actually possesses that of the secondary object. Moreover, it has been confirmed that the possessor effect explains the ill-formedness of many ditransitive expressions with an inanimate being in the primary object.

2.2.1.2 Morphological and Phonological Constraints

2.2.1.2.1 From a Historical Viewpoint

It has been pointed out that the English ditransitive construction tends to prefer Germanic verbs to Latinate ones; examples are given below:

- (26) a. John gave / donated / presented a painting to the museum.
b. John gave / *donated / *presented the museum a painting.

(Pinker, 2013, p. 53)

- (27) a. Sue built / constructed / designed the house for us.
b. Sue built / *constructed / *designed us the house.

(ibid.)

Pinker considers that this correlation is considered as a mirror of the many peculiar developments in the English history. According to Visser (1963), the construction containing the indirect object and the direct object was extremely common in Old English. At that time, the functional relation was indicated by the indirect object participating in the dative case and the direct object in the accusative case. After the Old English period, the dative case eroded, resulting in 'V NP_{goal} NP_{theme}' verb phrase similar to the ditransitive construction of contemporary English. The *to*-dative construction began to appear at the beginning of the Middle English period, and the number strikingly increased because of the adoption of numerous French verbs with the goal phrase including the preposition *à*. Then, when the French argument structure was translated, the preposition *to* was adopted as the translation of *à* in order to mark the goal argument. The English native verbs (e.g., *give*, *tell*, *ask*) then took this argument structure in the backward order. Therefore, from a historical viewpoint, it can be summarized that the ditransitive construction is more fundamental to the English language than the *to*-dative construction which developed posteriorly under the influence of French, and that the ditransitive construction is more compatible with English native (Germanic) verbs than Latinate ones.

2.2.1.2.2 The Morphophonological Constraint

As stated above, the English ditransitive construction has a tendency to occur with Germanic (native) verbs. Germanic verbs are generally short and consist of one syllable (e.g., *give*, *buy*, *ask*, *tell*), whilst Latinate verbs tend to be longer and often include recognizable parts (e.g., *re-*, *pre-*, *mit*, *-fer*) or contain stress on the second syllable (e.g., *transfer*, *purchase*, *request*, *explain*). Based on these statements, Pinker (2013) proposes the “morphophonological

constraint”, which argues that the ditransitive construction is restricted to monosyllabic verbs or polysyllabic verbs which contain stress on the first syllable. In fact, Pinker reports that although the verb *donate* commonly has accent on the second syllable, some speakers use it in the ditransitive construction by shifting the stress from second to first syllable so as to conform the morphophonological constraint. See the following example in which capital letters within the verb expresses the part gains accent:

- (28) a. IBM doNATED / DOnated some computers to them.
 b. *IBM doNATED them some computers.
 c. ?IBM DOnated them some computers. (Pinker, 2013; p. 54)

Furthermore, Gropen et al. (1989) demonstrated that the morphophonological constraint might be psychologically active. In the study, adult participants were asked to rate the acceptability of nonsense verbs. Through the experiment, they found that when a verb involved the concept of change of possession, which corresponded to the core meaning of the ditransitive construction, the participants judged the sentence with monosyllabic verbs as being significantly more acceptable than that with polysyllabic verbs. This implies that the morphophonological constraint may psychologically exist and work in English native speakers.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that not all English verbs obey the morphophonological constraint. For example, the verb *transmitter*, which consists of three syllables and contains stress on the second syllabus, can take the ditransitive construction:

- (29) a. We transmitter the new to Meg.

b. We transmitted Meg the news.

(Okada, 2001, p. 179)

Regarding this point, Pinker (2013) assumes that verbs which have their roots in nouns (denominal verbs) are perceived to be neither Germanic nor Latinate, and thus they are insensitive to the morphophonological constraint.

To summarize, the ditransitive construction places not only the semantic constraint but also the morphophonological restrictions on English verbs, and the latter constraint is considered as the residue of one of the many peculiar developments in the history of English. In addition, it has been found that not all English verbs equally obey the morphophonological constraint, and that verbs derived from nouns are perceived to be insensitive to this constraint.

2.2.2 Thematic Cores

Pinker (2013) argues that the ditransitive construction and the *to/for* dative constructions are associated with independent “thematic cores.” The notion of the thematic core is very close to that of a constructional meaning in Construction Grammar,² but they can be distinguished as follows: While the constructional meaning refers to the inherent meaning that the construction itself has within its syntactic form, the thematic core is defined as an example of a conflation of semantic elements consisting of variables standing for the participants in the event and the elementary semantic functions such as “act,” “cause,” or “go.” Pinker (2013) describes the thematic cores of the constructions involved with the dative alternation as follows:

(30) a. Ditransitives: X causes Y to have Z.

b. Transitives with oblique containing *to*: X causes Y to go to Z.

- c. Transitives with oblique containing for: X acts on Y for the benefit of Z.

The thematic core of the ditransitive construction is “X causes Y to have Z,” which highlights the concept of a possession change. On the other hand, the thematic core of the *to*-dative construction is “X causes Y to go to Z,” which foregrounds the concept of an object’s motion. For example, consider the following example:

- (31) a. John gave Sam a dish.
b. John gave a dish to Sam. (Pinker, 2013, p. 8)

In the ditransitive form (31a), the concept of a possession change is foregrounded: it implies that the possession of the dish changes from John to Sam. On the other hand, in the *to*-dative form (31b), the concept of an object’s motion is highlighted. To put it another way, this sentence specifies the manner in which the dish is moved, and thus (31b) is apathetic about whether Sam actually possesses the dish as the result of the movement.

Above, it has been discussed that the English ditransitive construction is closely related with the concept of a possession change. This effect especially holds for the *to*-dative ditransitive construction. To put it the other way around, in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction, this effect of a possession change is significantly weakened.³ Instead, in this type of ditransitive, what is paid more attention is benefactive relations. See the following example:

- (32) She played us her trombone. (Pinker, 2013, p. 135)

It is clear from this example sentence that the referent of the primary object does not physically possess that of the secondary object, and thus no actual possession change occurs. However, *us* is expected to gain some benefit as the result of the verbal action. Perhaps, they may be relaxed to listen to the soft and beautiful sound of her trombone. In the sense that the recipient is predicted to gain some benefit, it is construed as the metaphorical possessor.

In summary, the two types of ditransitive are concerned with the concept of a possession change, but in the case of *for*-dative ditransitive expressions, this effect is significantly weakened, and instead benefactive relations are more highlighted. However, based on Pinker's analysis, regardless of the corresponding prepositional datives, the referent of the primary object in the ditransitive construction is interpreted as a possessor of that of the secondary object. In this way, it can be concluded that from a broad perspective, the English ditransitive construction is an expression which cannot be separated from the phenomenon of possession.

2.2.3. The Narrowly-Defined Semantic Classes

Pinker (2013) classifies English verbs into dativizable / nondativizable verbs based on their subtle semantic differences. Specifically, he lists the following specific classes of verbs which enjoy the dative alternation (dativization):

(33) Dativizable verbs

1. Verbs that inherently signify acts of giving: e.g., *give, pass, hand*
2. Verbs of sending: e.g., *send, mail, ship*
3. Verbs of continuous causation of accompanied motion in a deictically specified direction: *bring, take*

4. Verbs of instantaneous causation of ballistic motion: e.g., *throw, toss, kick*
5. Verbs of future having: e.g., *promise, offer, bequeath*
6. Verbs of future not having: e.g., *cost, charge, fine*
7. Verbs of communicated message: e.g., *tell, ask, show*
8. Verbs of instrument of communication: e.g., *telegraph, radio, telephone*
9. Verbs of creation: e.g., *make, bake, cook*
10. Verbs of obtaining: e.g., *find, get, buy*

The verbs which belong to the classes 1 to 8 alternate between the *to*-dative construction and the ditransitive construction. The verbs which are classified into the class 9 or 10 participate in the *for*-dative construction and the ditransitive construction. In other words, according to Pinker's (2013) classification, it appears that dativizable verbs which are alternated with the *for*-dative construction are only two types: verbs of creation and verbs of obtaining:

- (34) a. Sam baked Chris a cake.
b. Sam baked a cake for Chris. (Goldberg, 2019, p. 30)

- (35) a. John found Bob a job.
b. John found a job for Bob. (Kishimoto, 2001, p. 142)

Pinker (2013) refers to the conditions which characterize the preceding set of dativizable classes as "motivation" for a category. As the motivation for the dativizable classes, he argues that since the thematic core of the ditransitive construction involves an agent acting on a

recipient in such a way that causes them to possess something, verb subclasses suggesting that the action inherently involves the beneficiary as patient in some direct fashion would be more likely to undergo dativization.

Pinker also introduces the subclasses of verbs which refer to the same kinds of general events as the ones listed but do fail to dativize:

(36) Nondativizable verbs

1. Verbs of continuous causation of accompanied motion in some manner:

e.g., *carry, push, pull*

2. Verbs of fulfilling: e.g., *present, credit, reward*

3. Verbs of manner of speaking: e.g., *shout, scream, whisper*

4. Verbs of proposition and propositional attitudes: e.g., *say, assert, claim*

5. Verbs of choosing: e.g., *choose, select, pick*

These subclasses of verbs are excluded from the dative alternation because of their semantic incompatibility with the thematic core of the ditransitive construction or of the violation of the morphophonological constraint. For example, compare the verb *pull* with *throw*. Although these verbs are apparently synonymous, they can be differentiated on close examination of their meanings. Concretely speaking, *throw to X* involves aiming in the direction of the receiver concurrently with causing the motion, whereas *pull to X* can be initiated without having the receiver in mind and can have an everchanging goal throughout its duration. In other words, in defining the action of *throw*, the receiver is more involved and can be more naturally analyzed as a patient, therefore only *throw* can enjoy the dative alternation. Next, consider the two verbs:

give and *donate*. Although these verbs have very similar meaning, but only *give* is seen as a dativizable verb because *donate* cannot take the ditransitive construction due to the violation of the morphophonological constraint.

To take another example, while the class of verbs of communicated message (e.g., *tell*, *show*, *ask*) and that of verbs involving manner of speaking (e.g., *shout*, *whisper*, *yell*) are apparently synonymous, only the former class is allowed for the dativization. For instance, compare the verb *tell* and the one *whisper*:

(37) a. Joe told Mary a story.

b. *Joe whispered Mary a story. (Goldberg, 1993, p. 61)

As shown above, *tell* can take the ditransitive form because the main focus of this verb is on conveying the content of the utterance to the listener. Thus, the existence of the receiver is more involved in defining the action. On the other hand, *whisper* cannot take the ditransitive form because this verb is choosy about the manner in which the speaker sends the message and does not pay much attention to the listener.

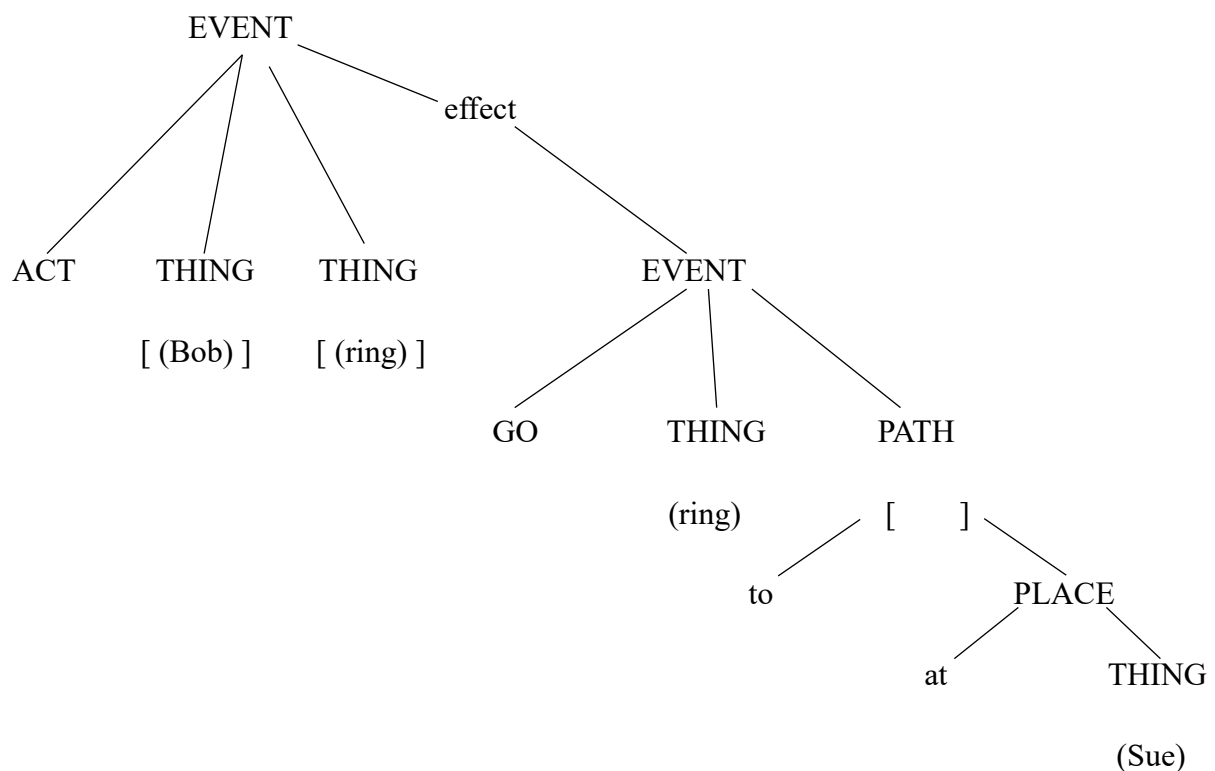
To summarize, Pinker (2013) classifies English verbs into dativizable / nondativizable verbs according to their subtle semantic differences. In addition, some verbs which are semantically compatible with the thematic core of the ditransitive construction are excluded from the dative alternation because of their disobedience to the morphophonological constraint (e.g., *donate*, *explain*).

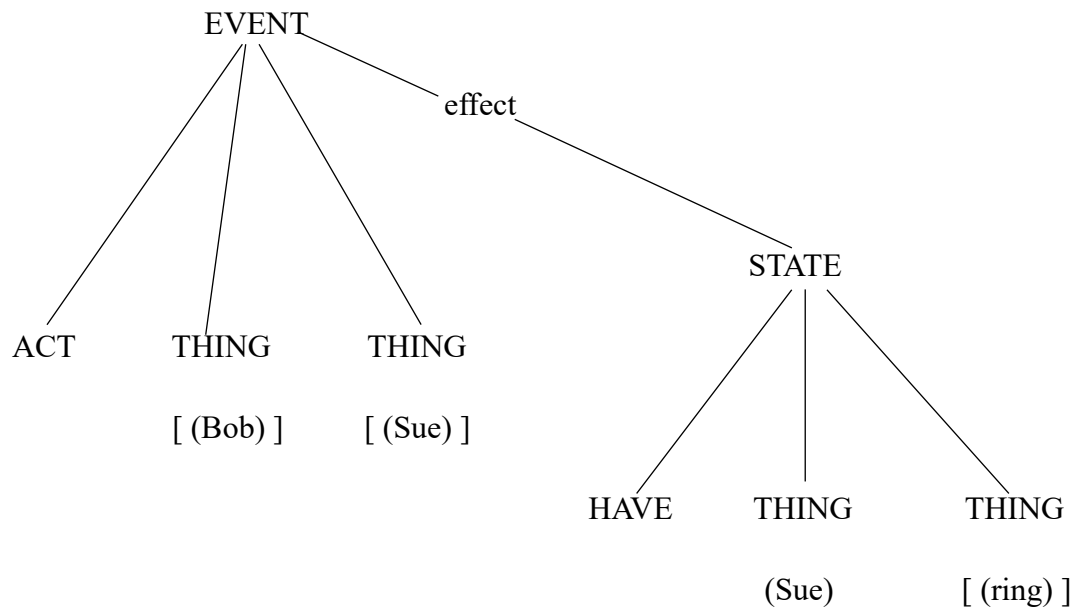
2.2.4 Representation

Pinker (2013) displays the thematic cores of the two ditransitives and those of their prepositional dative constructions with using elementary functions (e.g., EVENT, ACT, GO). First, the followings show the thematic core of the *to*-dative form and that of its corresponding ditransitive form:

Figure 2.1⁴

The Thematic Core of the To-dative Construction and that of its Corresponding Ditransitive Construction



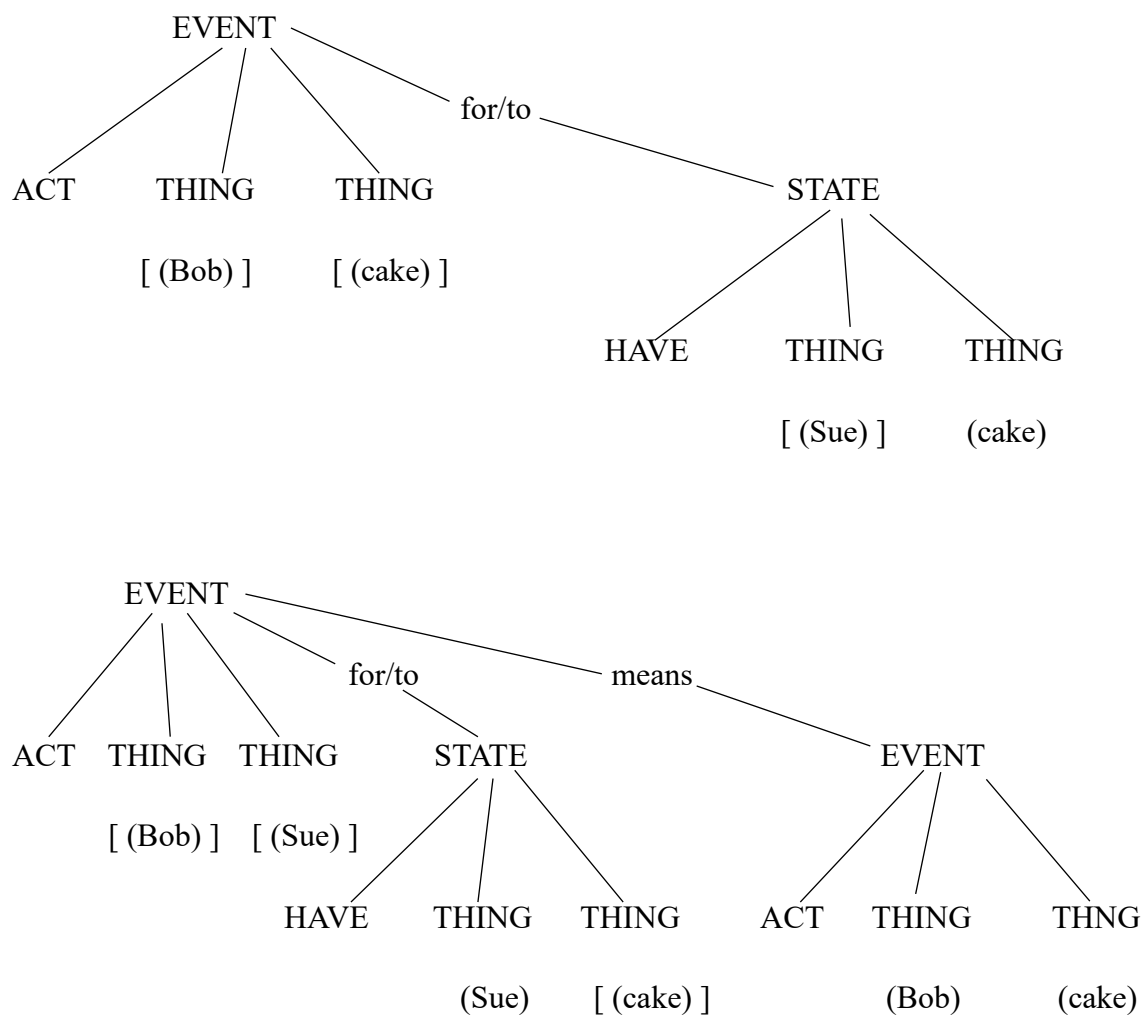


The two thematic cores are different in several ways. Firstly, the former structure is designed so that Bob acts on the ring, while the latter structure is designed so that he acts on Sue. In other words, the two different argument structures can be differentiated in that which argument is identified as the affected entity, namely as the patient. Secondly, in the former structure, the subordinate event mainly consists of the function GO, whereas in the latter structure, the main component of the subordinate event is HAVE, which contributes to their conceptual semantic differences as stated above.

Next, what is illustrated below is the thematic core of the *for*-dative construction and its corresponding ditransitive construction:

Figure 2.2⁵

The Thematic Core of the For-dative Construction and that of its Corresponding Ditransitive Construction



What should be noted is that in the thematic core for the ditransitive construction the act of Bob on the cake is demoted to the role of the means of fulfilling an intention with regard to beneficiary and that now Sue is thereby linked to the primary object. This thematic core can be translated as, “Bob acts on Sue, in order for Sue to have a cake, by means of acting on the cake,”

which suggests that Bob baked a cake so that Sue would possess it. According to the representation of the thematic cores above, it can be claimed that the *for*-dative ditransitives signify ‘intended transfer’ and do not necessarily imply that the referent of the primary object actually comes to possess that of the secondary object.

In the conclusion of lexicosemantic approach, what is placed on English verbs is the semantic and morphophonological constraints, and limited verbs which meet these strict criteria are allowed for the dative alternation. In addition, it has been confirmed that the two ditransitives, namely, the *to*-dative ditransitive and the *for*-dative ditransitive, share several properties, but they can be differentiated because in the former type, the concept of a possession change is foreground, whilst in the latter type this effect is weakened and benefactive relations are more highlighted.

2.3 Constructional Approach

In lexical semantics, a construction is considered to arise solely from the verb’s semantics and have no innate semantics. On the contrary, constructionists have enthusiastically sought to find the significance in constructions themselves. What is described in the following is properties of the ditransitive construction from the viewpoint of Constructional Grammar, especially based on the study of Goldberg (1995).

2.3.1 The Notion of Construction

2.3.1.1 Definition

Adele Goldberg (1995) defines a construction as follows:

- (38) C is a CONSTRUCTION iff_{def} C is a form-meaning pair $\langle F_i, S_i \rangle$ such that some aspect of F_i or some aspect of S_i is not strictly predictable from C's component parts or from other previously established constructions. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 4)

What should be paid most attention here is that Goldberg conceives a construction to be a form-meaning pair. To put it another way, a surface form itself has an inherent meaning within its syntactic form, and its pair of meaning and form can be defined as a construction. For example, the idiomatic expression *let alone* is seen as a construction because the whole meaning of the expression cannot be inferred from that of *let* and that of *alone*. Moreover, Goldberg (1995) argues that expanding the prethoretical notion of constructions, morphemes are clear instances of constructions in that they are pairings of meaning and form that are not predictable from anything else.

In addition, Goldberg (1995) points out the weakness of the lexical semantic approach, citing the following example:

- (39) He sneezed the napkin off the table. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 9)

Sneeze is an intransitive verb and does not have a transitive usage. As this proof, the example sentence (39) will be judged ungrammatical if the prepositional phrase (*off the table*) is removed from the sentence. In order to account for this sentence, a lexicosemantic theory would have to argue that *sneeze* inherently has a three argument sense, 'X CAUSES Y to MOVE Z by sneezing,' which appears to be unreasonable. On a constructional approach, the need of positing such an implausible meaning on the verb is avoided, and the interpretation of

the caused motion is considered to be contributed by the construction.

2.3.1.2 Constructional Meaning

Goldberg (1995) argues that a construction bears an inherent meaning which cannot be derived from its component parts. This meaning is called the “constructional meaning.” According to Goldberg, the ditransitive construction and the caused motion construction are directly associated with the following constructional meanings:⁶

- (40) a. Ditransitive: X CAUSES Y to RECEIVE Z
b. Caused Motion: X CAUSES Y to MOVE Z (Goldberg, 1995, p. 3)

In the ditransitive construction, X, Y, and Z are realized as the subject, the primary object, and the secondary object respectively. In the caused motion construction, X, Y, and Y are realized as the subject, the object, and the oblique individually. Like the thematic cores introduced in the previous section, these constructional meanings serve to explain the differences in semantic interpretations of the two synonymous constructions.⁷ For instance, see the following.

- (41) a. Chris kicked Pat the ball.
b. Chris kicked the ball to Pat. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 34)

(41a) is associated with the meaning “X CAUSES Y to RECEIVE Z,” so this sentence roughly expresses “Chris caused Pat to receive the ball,” in which the meaning of a caused possession is foregrounded. In this sentence, it is implied that as the act of transfer, Pat actually received

the ball. On the other hand, (41b) is related to the constructional meaning “X CAUSES Y to MOVE Z,” and thus this sentence expresses something like “Chris caused the ball to move to Pat,” in which the meaning of a caused motion is highlighted. Since this sentence focuses upon the motion of an object, it is indifferent to whether Pat actually received the ball.

Next, consider the example involving the ditransitive construction and the *for*-dative construction:

- (42) a. Chris baked Pat a cake.
b. Chris baked a cake for Pat. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 34)

The ditransitive form (42a) is associated with the constructional meaning (40a), but in this case, it is not strictly implied that Pat actually received the cake. What is implied by this sentence is that Chris baked a cake *with the intention* of giving it to Pat. On the other hand, the *for*-dative form (42b) has many possibilities of interpretation. For example, it can be used in the context where Chris baked a cake for someone else instead of Pat baking it because Pat was injured in his dominant arm. Alternatively, this sentence may refer to a situation where Chris gave a demonstration of the cake baking for Pat. In addition, the sentence can be used if Chris baked the cake with the intention of throwing it at Pat, in which Pat is not a beneficiary. However, if the verb *bake* takes the ditransitive form (42a), these ambiguities vanish and the only construal is left that Chris baked a cake with the intention of giving it to Pat.

To conclude, in Construction Grammar, it is assumed that a construction within its syntactic form bears an inherent meaning which cannot be derived from its component parts. Furthermore, thanks to these constructional meanings, the differences in semantic

interpretations between the ditransitive construction and the prepositional dative construction have been made clear.

2.3.2 Constructional Polysemy

Goldberg (1995) argues that a construction is typically associated with a family of closely related senses rather than a single, fixed abstract sense. For example, English ditransitive expressions typically imply that the agent argument acts to cause transfer of an object to a recipient. She adds that the basic sense of the construction in this case of actual successful transfer is the basic sense of the ditransitive construction. However, what should be paid attention is that not all English ditransitive expressions strictly imply that the patient argument is successfully transferred to the potential recipient. For instance, see the following *for*-dative ditransitive:

(43) Chris baked Jan a cake.

(Goldberg, 1995, p. 32)

As stated above, this kind of expression does not strictly imply that the recipient actually receives the thing. Perhaps, this sentence may be applied to the context in which Jan could not receive the cake because Chris was mugged by cake thieves on the way over to Jan's (Goldberg, 1995, p. 32). It appears that in general, *for*-dative ditransitive expressions do not strictly imply that the agent causes the potential recipient to actually receive the theme argument.

To take another example, ditransitive expressions involving verbs of refusal (e.g., *refuse*, *deny*) do not imply actual successful transfer. This kind of ditransitive expresses the negation of transfer:

(44) Joe refused Bob a raise in salary.

(Goldberg, 1995, p. 33)

Goldberg argues that here transfer is relevant in that the possibility for successful transfer has risen, but the agent is understood to refuse the act as the causer of it.

As seen above, the English ditransitive construction is not associated with a fixed sense. Rather, it expresses several different but related senses. The following summarizes the multiple senses associated with the ditransitive construction:

(45) Polysemy of the English Ditransitive Construction

a. “X CAUSES Y **to RECEIVE Z**” (central sense)

Example: Joe gave Sally the ball.

b. Conditions of satisfaction imply “X CAUSES Y **to RECEIVE Z**”

Example: Joe promised Bob a car.

c. “X ENABLES Y **to RECEIVE Z**”

Example: Joe permitted Chris an apple.

d. “X CAUSES Y **not to RECEIVE Z**”

Example: Joe refused Bob a cookie.

e. “X INTENDS to CAUSE Y **to RECEIVE Z**”

Example: Joe baked Bob a cake.

f. “X ACTS to CAUSE Y **to RECEIVE Z** at some future point in time”

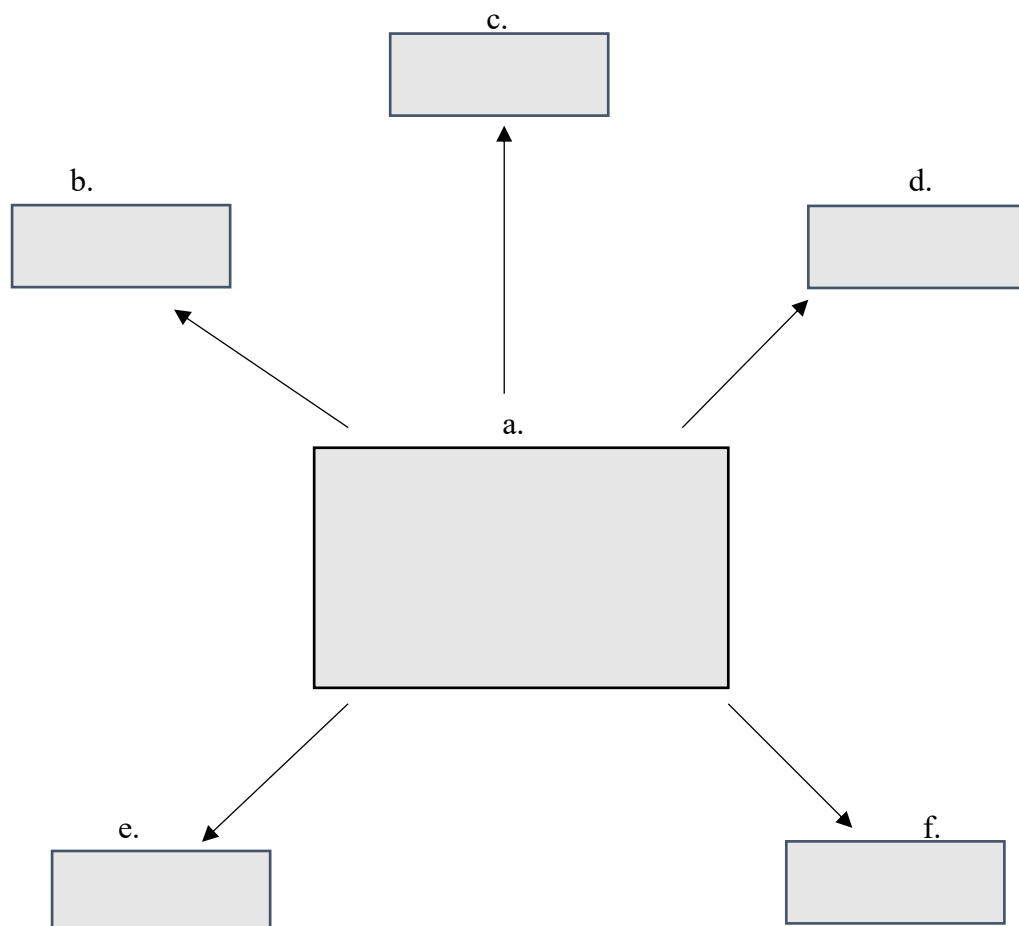
Example: Joe bequeathed Bob a fortune.

(Kodama, 2003, p. 274–275; emphasis added)

Although these senses are somewhat different, as the emphases indicate, the abstract sense “to RECEIVE Z” is shared in all of them. This sense is understood to be inherited from the central sense (a) to the other senses (b) to (f), which can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 2.3⁸

The Polysemy of the Ditransitive Construction



In summary, the English ditransitive construction refers to a fixed syntactic form (S V O₁ O₂), but its form is associated with a set of different but systematically related senses. Moreover, the abstract sense “to receive Z” is shared in all types of ditransitives through inheritance from the central sense.

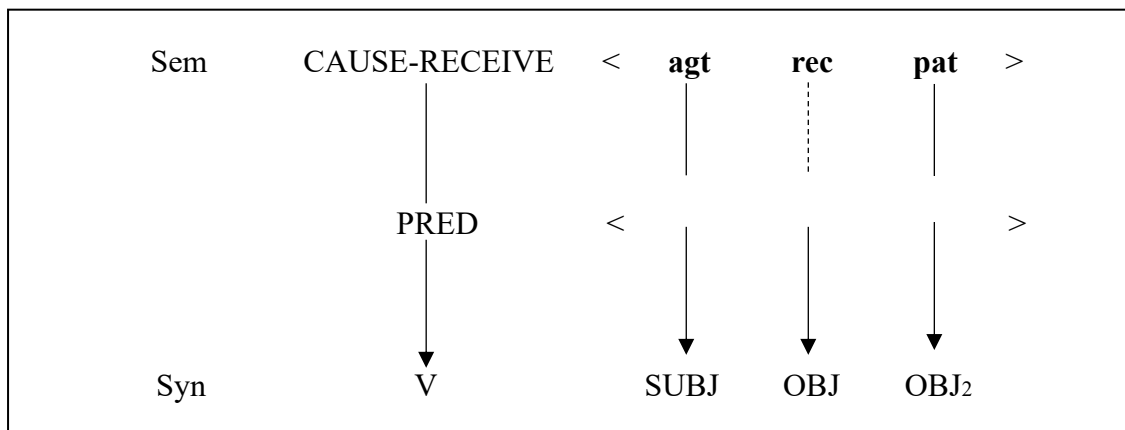
2.3.3 Relations among Constructions

According to Goldberg (1995), it is assumed that if construction A inherits some information (properties) from construction B, then B *motivates* A. To capture the relations of motivation, what is placed between the associated constructions is an asymmetric *inheritance link*. Inheritance links can be subclassified into polysemy links, metaphorical links, extension links, subpart links, and instance links. In the case of ditransitives, the polysemy links are posited between the central sense of the construction and its extensions from this sense in order to capture the nature of their semantic relations. Note that each of the extensions inherits all information about syntactic specifications from the central sense. Goldberg represents the relations between the central sense of the ditransitive construction and its benefactive extension (namely, the *for*-dative ditransitive) as follows, with information that is inherited from the central sense italicized:

Figure 2. 4 ⁹

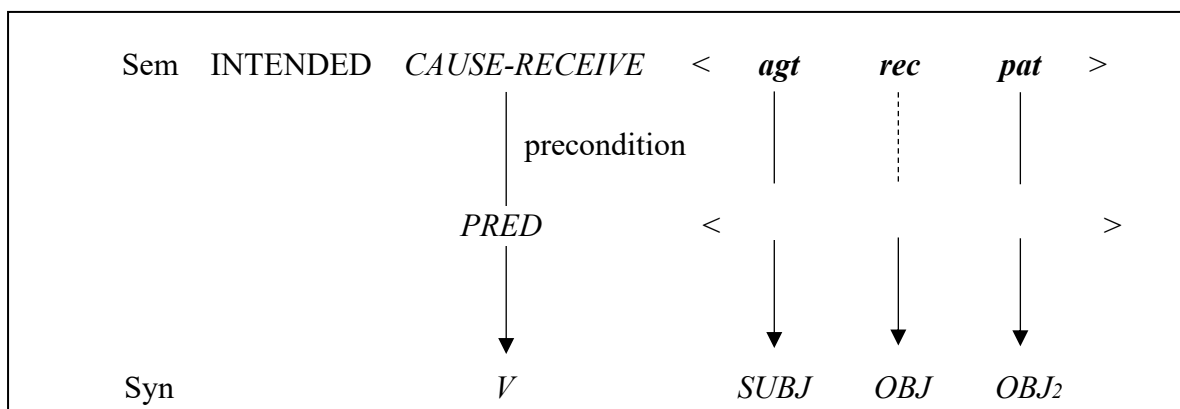
The Relation between the Central Sense of the Ditransitive Construction and its Benefactive Extension

Ditransitive Construction



Ip: intended causation

Benefactive-Ditransitive Construction



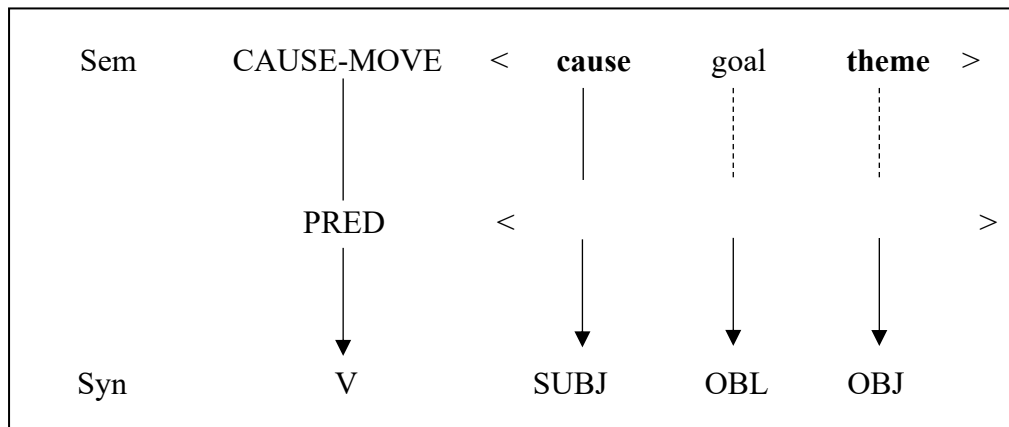
The polysemy link between the dominating construction and the dominated construction is one that relates causation to intended causation. It licenses expressions such as *Chris baked Pat a cake*.

The term *motivation* needs some consideration. A given construction is motivated to the degree that its structure is inherited from other constructions in the language. In other words, what has a significant influence on the formation of motivational links is the structural similarity of the two constructions. It is assumed that constructions with unrelated forms, whether or not they encode the same or closely related meanings, are not related by motivational links. In the case of the ditransitive construction and the *to*-dative construction, such a link is not formed between them. Remember that the *to*-dative construction is metaphorically extended from the caused motion construction. Since the ditransitive construction and the caused motion construction are not related syntactically (S V O₁ O₂ VS S V O Obl.), even though they are semantically synonymous, a motivation link is not shaped between them. Therefore, it is plausible to consider that a motivational link is not formed between the ditransitive construction and the *to*-dative construction which shares the syntactic form with the caused motion construction. These relations among the three constructions can be summarized as seen in the next page.

Figure 2.5¹⁰

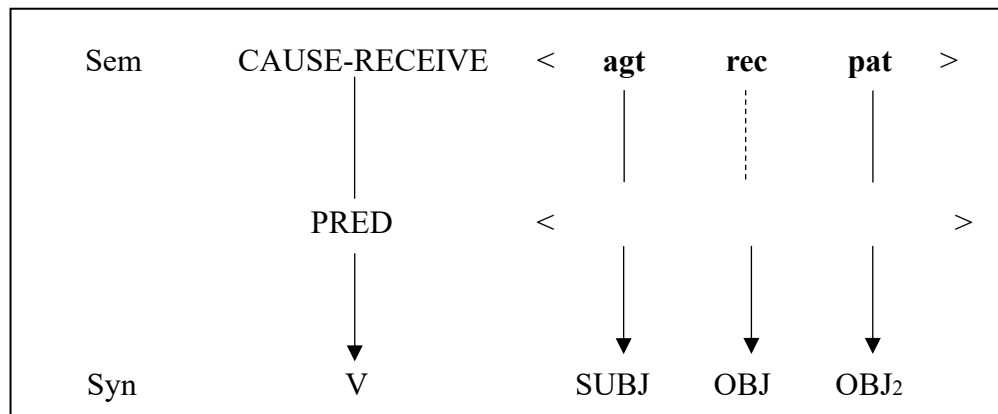
The Relations among the Caused-motion, the To-dative. and the Ditransitive Constructions

Caused-motion

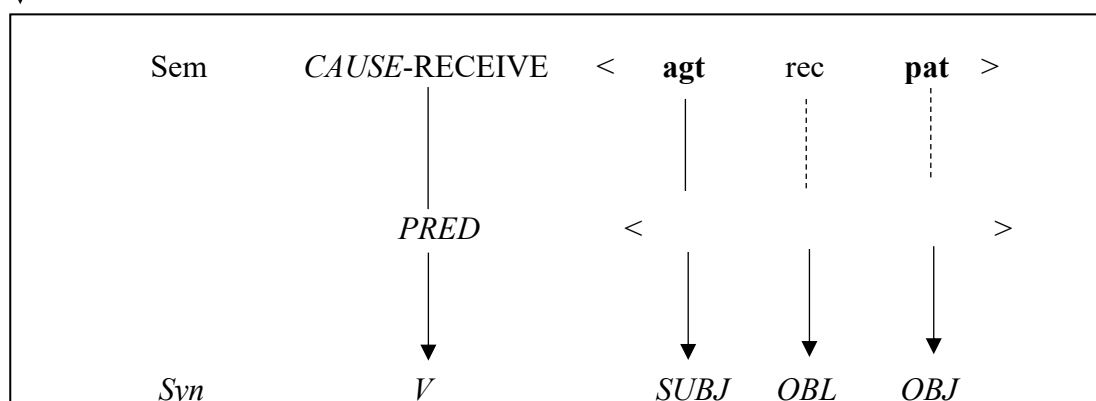


I_M: Transfer of Ownership as Physical Transfer

Ditransitive



To-dative



To summarize, the relations between the central sense of the ditransitive construction and its extensions are captured by the asymmetric polysemy links. In addition, based on Goldberg's (1995) view, although the ditransitive construction and the *to*-dative construction are apparently synonymous, since they are not related syntactically, a motivational link is not formed between them. To put it another way, the two constructions are considered to have "nonderivational relationships."

2.3.4 Other Properties of Ditransitives

2.3.4.1 Specific Constraints on the Arguments

Goldberg (1995) highly specific semantic constraints directly associated with the English ditransitive construction. Specifically, the central sense of the ditransitive construction is argued to involve successful transfer between a volitional agent and a willing recipient. The following considers these constraints in detail.

Firstly, according to Goldberg, the subject argument in the ditransitive construction must be interpreted as a *volitional* agent. She adds that the volitionality must extend so that not only is the action described by the verb performed agentively, but also with the relevant transfer intended. For example, see the following:

(46) Joe painted Sally a picture.

(Goldberg, 1995, p. 143)

Goldberg argues that Joe must be understood to intend to give the picture to Sally. It cannot be the case that Joe originally intended to give the picture to someone else and later happened to

give it to Sally. This constraint accounts for why the following ditransitive expressions are considered to be ungrammatical:

(47) *Joe threw the right fielder the ball he had intended the first base man to catch.

(Goldberg, 1995, p. 143)

(48) *Hal brought his mother a cake since he didn't eat it on the way home. (ibid.)

(47) sounds odd because Joe must be understood to intend to give the ball to the right fielder. Similarly, (48) is infelicitous because Hal performed the action with the intention of giving the cake to his mother.

Secondly, Goldberg (1995) assumes certain semantic constraints on the recipient argument of the ditransitive construction. It has often been pointed out that the recipient argument must be an animate being. This constraint is also referred to as an “animacy restriction” (Levin, 1993, p. 48). The animacy restriction is illustrated in the following example:

(49) a. I brought Pat a glass of water.

b. *I brought the table a glass of water. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 2)

Pat can be interpreted as a recipient (or possessor) of a glass of water, whilst the table cannot receive the object. However, the following ditransitives appear to disobey this constraint:

(50) The painting job gave the car a higher sale price. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 146)

(51) The tabasco gave the baked beans some flavor. (ibid.)

In each of the examples, the recipient is not an animate being. Goldberg (1995) explains that these sentences avoid violating the animacy restriction with the aid of metaphor. In other words, in the source domain of the metaphor, the affected entity is understood to be an animate being. In accordance with this view, for instance, the car is perceived to be affected by the painting job, so it can be construed as an animate being. In addition, Levin (1993) notes that the notion animate can be extended to include organizations and corporate bodies. For example, the following (52b) is usually considered to be infelicitous because the place *London* cannot receive anything else. Nevertheless, Levin (1993, p. 48) states that this sentence is acceptable if London is employed to represent the London office of a company or the British government via metonymy:

(52) a. Bill sent a package to London.

b. *Bill sent London a package. (Levin, 1993, p. 46)

Another constraint on the recipient argument is that this argument must be a *willing* recipient. This constraint is required to explain sentences like the following example:

(53) *Sally burned Joe some rice. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 146)

This sentence is commonly regarded as unacceptable. However, Goldberg (1995) argues that it is acceptable in the context that Joe is thought to prefer burned rice. This constraint also accounts for the ill-formedness of the following sentences:

(54) *Bill told Mary a story, but she wasn't listening. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 146)

(55) *Bill threw the coma victim a blanket. (ibid.)

(54) is unacceptable because Mary cannot be construed as a willing recipient. Similarly, (55) is infelicitous because it is unlikely that the coma victim himself/herself willingly called for the blanket.

To sum up, Goldberg argues that the English ditransitive construction is associated with particular semantic constraints, that of successful transfer between a volitional agent and a willing recipient.

2.3.4.2 Metaphors

Goldberg (1995) reports that the English ditransitive construction is associated with several systematic metaphors. Thanks to these metaphors, the ditransitive expressions such as *She gave him a wink* or *Crush me a mountain*, which are often assumed to be idiosyncratic, can be reanalyzed as extensions from the central sense of this construction. The following considers some important metaphors involved with the ditransitive construction.

Firstly, Goldberg picks up the “conduit metaphor,” which involves communication traveling across from the stimulus to the listener. The listener understands the communication

upon “reception.” For example, this metaphor licenses the following ditransitive expressions:

(56) She told Jo a fairy tale. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 148)

(57) She wired Jo a message. (ibid.)

Another metaphor involves understanding perceptions as entities moving toward the perceiver.

The perception is understood to occur on “reception.” For instance, this metaphor permits the following ditransitive expressions:

(58) He showed Bob the view. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 145)

(59) He gave Bob a glimpse. (ibid.)

The final metaphor thinks of actions which are performed for the benefit of a person as objects which are transferred to that person. The followings are licensed by this metaphor:

(60) Cry me a river. (Goldberg, 195, p. 150)

(61) Slay me a dragon. (ibid.)

In each of the examples, the recipient does not come to possess or receive an actual object, but the person is expected to enjoy some benefit as the result of the verbal action. For example, in

(60), the recipient *me* gains benefit in that through the verbal action, he or she can confirm a token of the interlocutor's confession or love. In this sense, the recipient does not receive an actual object but certainly gains benefit, so the person is interpreted as a metaphorical possessor.

Goldberg (1995) points out that these metaphorical expressions like (60) and (61) are subject to more specific constraints. For example, they are more acceptable as commands:

(62) a. Cry me a river.

b. ?Sally cried me a river. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 151)

Also, they are more acceptable with pronouns in the primary object position.¹¹

(63) ?Cry Joe a river. (ibid.)

Why is this type of ditransitive expression placed more particular constraints than other ditransitives? This is related to their idiosyncrasies. For instance, the verb *give*, which is no other than the prototype of the English ditransitive construction, gives rise to various ditransitive expressions. To put it another way, because of its high semantic compatibility with the ditransitive construction, it enjoys the construction with few restrictions. On the other hand, the verb *cry* is obviously semantically incompatible with the ditransitive construction, and thus this verb is expected not to take the construction. It is considered that instead of the verb's being licensed its occurrence in the ditransitive construction, the use is subject to more particular constraints as seen above.

To conclude the discussion, Goldberg explains that idiosyncratic ditransitive expressions

such as *She gave him a kick* or *Cry me a river* are extended from the central sense through a set of systematic metaphors. In addition, it has been confirmed that these metaphorical ditransitive expressions are subject to more specific constraints.

2.4 Usage-Based Approach

In formal linguistic theory, grammar is regarded as a self-constrained and deductive system consisting of discrete categories and algorithmic rules. Challenging this traditional view, usage-based researchers consider grammar as a dynamic system which is composed of fluid structures and flexible constraints that are shaped by general mechanisms of communication, memory, and processing (Diessel, 2019, p. 1). In the usage-based approach, it is assumed that linguistic knowledge including knowledge of grammar emerges through language use. The final section of Chapter 2 will make an analysis of the English ditransitive construction and the phenomenon of dativization from such a dynamic viewpoint.

2.4.1 The Choice between the Constructions

Imagine an event that involves the act of transfer and can be described either the *to*-dative construction or the ditransitive construction. If language users seek to describe this event with the verb *donate*, which cannot be used in the ditransitive construction due to the violation of the morphophonological constraint, they have to use the *to*-dative construction, even if they pay more attention to a possession change than to the motion of an object. However, in the case of dativizable verbs such as *give* or *send*, they can choose between the two constructions. This constructional choice is of course influenced by conceptual semantic factors: they foreground whether the motion of an object or the change of possession. Nevertheless, the choice of

construction is also motivated by particular pragmatic factors. In what follows, the discussion on this point is unfolded.

2.4.1.1 Properties of the Arguments

Perek (2015) argues that the choice between the constructions has been shown to depend on various properties of the recipient and theme arguments. First, this choice is influenced by the *discourse accessibility* of these arguments. In other words, it has often been pointed out that in our friend the ditransitive construction, the recipient argument is typically already given in the discourse context (typically expressed with a pronoun), whereas the theme argument tends to be new information, and vice-versa in the *to*-dative construction (Perek, 2015, p. 157). This discourse accessibility of the ditransitive construction accounts for why the construction is dispreferred in Standard American English when the theme argument is the third person pronoun *it*:¹²

(64) *John gave Mary it.

(Perek, 2015, p. 157)

Since *it* refers to the information which is already given in the discourse, it is undesirable that such a word with low value of information comes to the place of the theme argument (O₂) that should be filled with new information. That is why sentences like (64) are dispreferred by many English speakers. On the other hand, when the theme argument refers to new information such as a noun followed by an infinite article and the recipient argument denotes old information such as a personal pronoun, native speakers are reluctant to use the *to*-dative construction:

- (65) a. Mary gave him a brand-new house.
b. ?Mary gave a brand-new house to him. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 92)

Note that the particular pragmatic structure of the ditransitive construction also accounts for the reason why the following (66c) sounds odd:

- (66) a. They gave him a satchel.
b. What did they give him?
c. ?Who did they give a satchel? (adapted from Goldberg, 2019, p. 39)

(66b) is correct because the speaker asks the listener information he/she does not know (namely, new information) with the question construction combined with the ditransitive, so the listener is expected to reply to the question, using the same syntactic structure like (66a), in which *a satchel* is expressed as new information. On the other hand, (66c) is less felicitous because the speaker asks new information with the ditransitive construction, and then the listener will answer this question, using the same syntactic form like (66a), in which *him* is expressed as old information. Therefore, if the speaker would like to ask information about the recipient, he/she should use the question construction combined with the *to*-dative construction, like “*Who did they give a satchel to?*” By doing so, the listener will answer like “*They gave a satchel to John,*” in which John is given the status as the oblique which gains focus.

Similarly, the specific pragmatic structure of the ditransitive construction explains why the following (67c) is inappropriate:

- (67) a. They gave him a satchel.
b. It was a satchel they gave him.
c. ?It was him they gave a satchel. (Adapted from Goldberg, 2019, p. 39)

Since in the cleft sentence (*It is X that ...*) the part of *X* is focus, (67c) is inappropriate in that it highlights the old information *him*.

In addition to the discourse accessibility, the choice between the constructions is also motivated by the animacy of the recipient and theme arguments. Remember the animacy restriction, which states that in general the recipient argument of the ditransitive construction must be an animate being. Accordingly, even if a speaker wants to use the ditransitive construction, when the recipient argument refers to an inanimate being and it cannot be construed as a possessor (or recipient) of the transferred entity, the speaker cannot use this construction, and alternatively he/she has to use the prepositional dative construction:

- (68) a. ?She sent that place a package.
b. She sent a package to that place. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 2)

Finally, Perek (2015) points out that the constructional choice is also influenced by the relative length of the recipient and theme arguments. It has been observed that the recipient argument tends to be shorter than the theme argument. Therefore, what is dispreferred is the ditransitive form in which the recipient argument is longer than the theme:

(69) a. Sally told her a story.

b. ?Sally told a little girl the story.

(Goldberg, 2019, p. 42)

Summarizing the discussion thus far, when language users describe the event which involves the act of transfer with a dativizable verb such as *give* or *send*, the choice between the ditransitive construction and the prepositional dative construction is partly motivated by various properties of the recipient and theme arguments, such as their discourse accessibility, the animacy of their referents, and their relative lengths.

2.4.1.2 Verbs' Preferences

It has been reported that some dativizable verbs show their preferences for one construction over the other that can win over the contextual factors. According to Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004), it has been found that some dativizable verbs, such as *give*, *tell*, *show*, *offer*, *cost*, *teach* are statistically biased toward the ditransitive construction.¹³ On the other hand, they have observed that other dativizable verbs, such as *bring*, *play*, *take*, *pass*, *make*, *sell*, are strongly distinctive for the *to*-dative construction.

Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004) assume that the statistical biases of the dativizable verbs can be attributed to their semantic compatibility with either construction. For instance, they have found that *give* is the most distinctive verb for the ditransitive construction. This is because this verb inherently specifies a possession change (Pinker, 2013, p. 98), and thus it is highly semantically compatible with the constructional meaning of the ditransitive construction: the caused possession. On the other hand, according to Gries and Stefanowitsch, the verb *bring* is most statistically biased toward the *to*-dative construction. *Bring*, whose

original meaning is to ‘carry something’ is much more compatible with the constructional meaning of the caused motion construction: the caused motion.

Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004) argues that some dativizable verbs are not especially distinctive for either construction. For example, some verbs like *lend*, *send*, and *get* are not statistically biased toward either of the constructions. To put it another way, these verbs appear in both of the construction almost equally. According to Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004), when these verbs are used in either of the two constructions, their meanings involve both the caused possession meaning associated with the ditransitive construction and the caused motion meaning of the *to*-dative construction. In other words, it is considered that they have flexible semantic structures which correspond to both of the constructions.

To conclude, through the corpus-based study, it has been found that some dativizable verbs show strong preferences for one construction over the other that can win over the contextual factors. These statistical biases of the verbs may be attributed to their semantic compatibility with either construction. In addition, some of the verbs participate in the two constructions almost equally because of their semantic flexibilities.

2.4.1.3 Structural Priming

The choice between the constructions is also influenced by a structural priming which is referred to as a recency effect of language use that facilitates the activation of formally similar structures (Diessel, 2019). What is known for the pioneering study of the structural priming is Bock (1986). In her study, Bock (1986) found that a syntactic form used in a previous utterance had a significant influence on the speaker’s choice of linguistic means in the subsequent utterance.

The procedure of the experiment is described as follows:¹⁴ First, the experimenter read priming sentences aloud that involved either the ditransitive construction or the prepositional dative construction. The following is example of the priming sentences:

- (70) a. A rock star sold some cocaine to an undercover agent.
b. A rock star sold an undercover agent some cocaine. (Bock, 1986, p. 361)

After reading the priming sentences aloud, the experimenter required the subjects to immediately repeat the sentences aloud. Afterwards, target pictures (line drawing) unrelated to the priming sentences were presented, and the subjects were asked to describe what was happening in the pictures with in one sentence without pronouns. These pictures could be described with either the ditransitive construction and the prepositional dative construction. The interest of Bock was in what kind of syntactic form the subjects would produce to describe the pictures. Finally, their utterances were classified into three types: prepositional dative, ditransitive dative, and other.

The result of the experiment was outstanding: when the prepositional dative construction was previously used as a priming sentence, the incidence of the prepositional dative utterance increased by 23% relative to the frequency following the ditransitive prime. On the other hand, when the ditransitive construction was previously introduced as a priming sentence, the incidence of the ditransitive utterance increased by 22% relative their frequency following the prepositional dative prime (Bock, 1986, p. 364). This result suggest that the priming sentences facilitated the activation of more formally similar syntactic forms.

To summarize the discussion on the structural priming, it can be argued that the choice

between the constructions is partly motivated by the structural priming. The previous use of a certain syntactic form increases the probability of that form reused in the subsequent utterance.

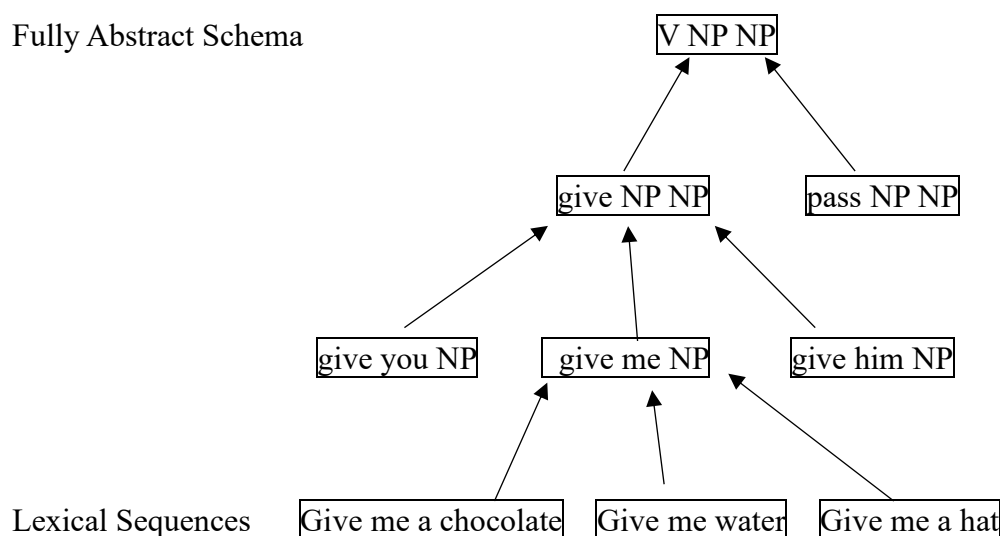
2.4.2 Grammar Network

Diessel (2019) argues that grammar constitutes a dynamic network which is constantly restructured and reorganized under the influence of domain-general processes of language use. He adds that grammar is abstract in that it includes schematic representations of form and meaning that are referred to as constructional schemas. Constructional schemas represent generalizations over lexical sequences with similar forms and meanings. In the usage-based approach, it is unlikely that children have a highly schematic representation like [V NP NP] from the beginning. Rather, they extract the abstract schema in a bottom-up fashion, through language experience with particular lexemes and constructions. For example, the development of the ditransitive schema can be described as follows:

Figure 2.6

The Way the Ditransitive Schema is Constructed

Fully Abstract Schema



First, children experience specific lexical sequences, such as *give me water* or *give me a hat*, and then they generalize these expressions to more abstract schema, like *give me NP*. Through experiencing the similar expressions at this level of abstraction, like *give you NP* or *give him NP*, children subsequently shape more schematic representation, like *give NP NP*, which provides two open slots of expressions that are semantically compatible with the verb. Finally, they extract the fully abstract schema *V NP NP* through generalizations over expressions like *give NP NP* and *pass NP NP*. In this way, children do not have the fully schematic representation from the beginning. Rather, they acquire the abstract schema through language experiences with particular lexemes and constructions. The fully abstract schema shaped in this way is in turn used to categorize novel linguistic experiences or novel tokens.

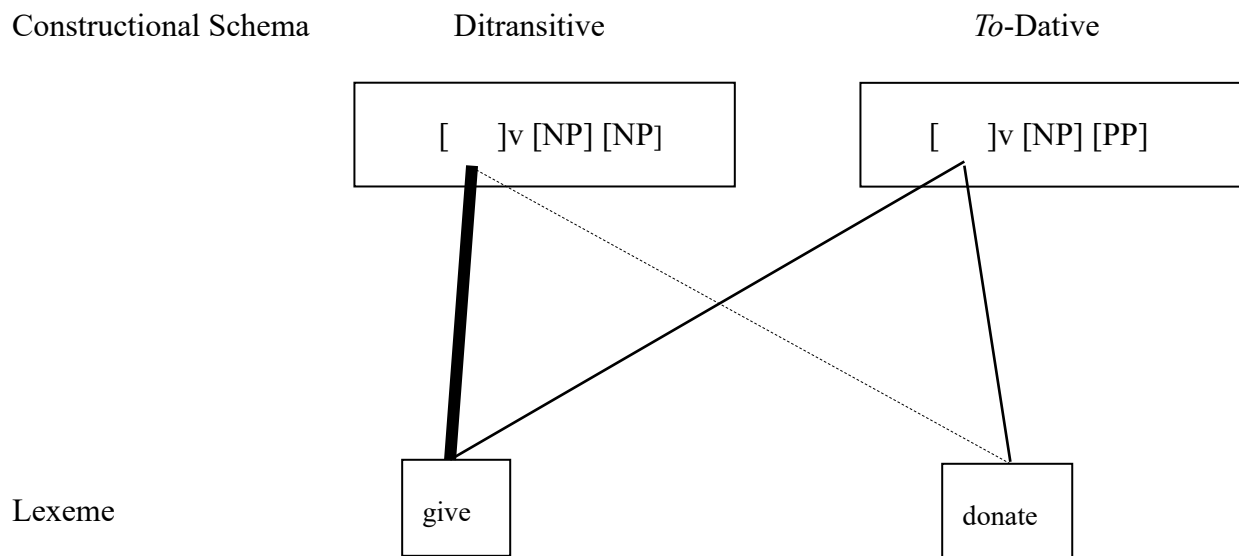
Diessel (2019) argues that what is crucial for the acquisition of constructional schemas is the existence of pathbreaking verbs that constitute the prototype of a new schema. In the case of the acquisition of the ditransitive schema, the verb which serves as the pathbreaking one is no doubt *give*. Children from very early stage use this verb with the first pronoun *me* in the grammatical pattern which corresponds to the origin of the ditransitive construction: ‘give me’ ‘give me hat’ ‘give me water’ or ‘give me car’ (Diessel, 2019, p. 52). Therefore, it is plausible to assume that the verb *give* is essential for the acquisition of the ditransitive schema, and that the properties of this verb, such as its lexical semantics, should be reflected in the ditransitive construction.

Remember that Pinker has explained why some English verbs that are apparently compatible with the ditransitive construction are excluded from this construction based on the semantic and morphophonological constraints. For instance, although the verb *donate* is

semantically compatible with the ditransitive construction, it cannot take the construction because of its disobedience to the morphophonological constraint. Diessel (2016) accounts for the undativizability of these verbs from the usage-based model. He argues that language users do not use *donate* in the ditransitive construction because they have never experienced the verb in this grammatical pattern. More detailed explanation is provided below: As noted above, the constructional schema of the ditransitive construction is [[] V [NP] [NP]], and that of the *to*-dative construction is [[] V [NP] [PP]]. Imagine that language users experience the verb *give* in both of the constructions. Then, what is formed between the two schemas and the lexeme is, as shown in Figure 2.7, probabilistic links that reflect the combined effect of semantic factors and frequency of occurrence (Diessel, 2019, p. 20). As Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004) found in the corpus-based study, the verb *give* is highly statistically biased toward the ditransitive construction, which means that language users arguably experience *give* more frequently in this construction than in the *to*-dative construction. As the result of encountering *give* in this grammatical pattern many times, the probabilistic link between them is strengthened in language users' memories. Subsequently, if they encounter the verb *donate*, whose meaning is very similar to *give*, in the *to*-dative construction, they should expect that the verb can take the ditransitive construction as well as *give*, so the probabilistic link is potentially assumed between the schema and the lexeme. However, no matter how long they wait, they never experience *donate* in the ditransitive construction. Accordingly, as the dotted line suggests, the potential link between them is considered to finally disappear.

Figure 2.7

The Connections between the Constructional Schemas and the Lexemes



To summarize the Diessel's discussion, he has put emphasis on language experience and frequency of linguistic expressions. The fully abstract schema of the ditransitive construction ([V] [NP] [NP]) emerges as the result of generalization over lexical sequences with similar forms and meanings. Moreover, even if a verb is semantically compatible with the ditransitive construction, if language users never experience the verb in the grammatical pattern, the probabilistic link potentially assumed between the constructional schema and the lexeme eventually vanishes.

2.5 Summary of Chapter 2

This chapter has made analyses of the English ditransitive construction from the four

different viewpoints. Through comparison with the prepositional dative construction, what has been revealed is the particular various properties of the ditransitive construction. The transformational approach has argued that the two constructions bear the same truth-functional meaning. In addition, in many cases, it is assumed that the string underlying the ditransitive construction is generated from the underlying structure of the prepositional dative construction through the transformational rules. In the lexical semantic approach, it has been stated that the primary object must be interpreted as a possessor of the secondary object, and that with many verbs such as *give* or *send*, the ditransitive form has an implication that the primary object actually possesses the secondary object (Pinker, 2007). The constructional approach has in turn argued that the ditransitive construction bears the inherent meaning (“X causes Y to receive Z”) which cannot be derived from their component parts within its syntactic form. In addition, the ditransitive form is associated with a set of different but systematically related senses. Goldberg notes that although the central sense of the ditransitive construction is actual successful transfer, *for*-dative ditransitive expressions do not strictly have such an implication. Finally, the analysis from the usage-based approach has revealed that the choice between the constructions is partly motivated by the pragmatic factors such as their discourse accessibility, and that the ditransitive schema is gradually acquired in a bottom-up fashion through language experience.

Overall, the English ditransitive construction is concerned with the act of transfer, and its expression is closely related with the phenomenon of possession. Furthermore, the major difference of the two ditransitives is that while in many cases the *to*-dative ditransitives imply a possession change or actual successful transfer, the *for*-dative ditransitives do not strictly have such an implication. Therefore, in the example *John baked Mary a cake*, it is not obvious

whether Mary actually received the cake or not. This difference is the key to untangling the puzzle of the *for*-dative ditransitives being less likely to be passivized.

Chapter 3

Previous Studies: Analyses of the English Passivization

The chief aim of this chapter is to shed light on the phenomenon of the English passivization. This chapter, first of all, focuses on the nature of the English passive construction and reveals its particular properties in comparison with the active construction. After that, the current chapter points out one crucial requirement for the English passivization: the agent-patient relationship, which mainly consists of the two elements: agency of S and patienthood of O. Through examination on into abundant examples, what is confirmed in the current chapter is a close relationship between this condition and the passivization of active constructions.

3.1 Overview of the English Passive Construction

3.1.1 The Nature of Passive

Dixon (2005) defines the English passive construction as an alternative realization of the relation between a transitive verb and its object, and involves an intransitive construction with a subject, a copula like *be* or *get*, a past participial form of the verb, and sometimes a *by*-phrase.¹ What should be noted is that the passive construction is not an automatic transformation of the active one. In fact, even the most ardent advocates of perfect paraphrase admit that concerning the active construction and the passive construction, there is some kind of difference in emphasis, a way of highlighting certain elements so that the two are not always interchangeable

(Bolinger, 1977, p. 9). Specifically, Diessel (2019) argues that the active construction construes a scene from the perspective of the agent, and that the passive construction construes a scene from the perspective of the patient. See the following example:

- (71) a. The man kicked the ball.
b. The ball was kicked (by the man). (Diessel, 2019, p. 29)

In (71a), the agent is the focus of attention and the patient is backgrounded. On the other hand, in (71b), the patient serves the figure and the agent is a secondary focus point. This explains why in many cases the passive construction omits the *by*-phrase (the agent). However, note that even if the *by*-phrase is not expressed clearly, the existence of an agent or an agentive force is entailed in the passive construction. Pinker (2013) refers to this semantic property inherent in this construction as the “agency affect.” This agency effect is illustrated in the following:

- (72) a. The ship was sunk.
b. The ship sank. (Pinker, 2013, p. 107)

Pinker argues that (72a) entails that there was some agent or force that sunk the ship, whereas (72b) does not have such an implication. Meanwhile, if the agent is indicated introduced by the preposition *by*, it receives end-focus as follows:

- (73) The order to arrest the leader of the Opposition was given by the Prime Minister himself. (Declerck, 1991, p. 212)

(73) puts emphasis on the fact that the Prime Minister himself gave the order.

According to Ando (2005), English speakers use passive construction to express the patient as a topic in discourse. Specifically, there is always a preference for a topic to be subject (Dixon, 2005, p. 356), and if speakers use the passive construction, then they can express the patient which is commonly given the object position in active voice as the subject, namely as the topic in discourse. Consider the following example:

- (74) a. John broke the window this morning.
b. The window was broken by John this morning. (Ando, 2005, p. 347)

Ando explains that even if these sentences refer to the same scene, they are distinct in a speaker's point of view. In other words, in (74a) the agent *John* is identified as the topic, whilst in (74b) the patient *the window* is chosen as the topic. Therefore, (74a) answers the following question (75a) and, (74b) replies to the next question (75b) respectively:

- (75) a. What did John do this morning?
b. What happened to the window this morning? (ibid.)

What should be mentioned finally is that not all English verbs in the active construction enjoy the passive alternation (the transformation from the active construction into the passive construction), or the passivization.² First, it is known that English intransitive verbs do not undergo the passivization. For example, the following intransitive construction does not have

a corresponding passive:

- (76) Mary laughed happily. (Ando, 2005: 343)

Concerning English transitive verbs, it has often been pointed out that actional verbs are more likely to be passivized than stative verbs (Pinker, 2013, p. 59):

- (77) a. He was hit by a car.
b. The house was struck by lightning.
c. Russia was invaded by a horde of locusts. (Pinker, 2013, p. 167)

- (78) a. *Five dollars is cost by this pen.
b. *Amy is resembled by Sue.
c. *Four is equated by two plus two. (Pinker, 2013, p. 59)

However, note that this distinction is not absolute. Actually, some stative verbs are allowed for the passivization without any problems:

- (79) a. The book is owned by the library.
b. These drastic measures are justified by the situation.
c. The team was liked by the fans. (Pinker, 2013: p. 59)

As Pinker (2013) points out, the distinction between actional verbs and stative ones is not an

absolute determiner of the passivization, but it is merely a rough indication of the alternation.

To summarize the discussion thus far, it can be concluded that the English passive construction focuses more concentration upon a patient than upon an agent, and that this form is mainly used in order to express the patient as a topic in discourse. In addition, it has been found that some English verbs enjoy the passive alternation, but others are not accepted for the passivization.

3.1.2 The Circumstances Passives Prefer

Dixon (2005, p. 354) states that everything else being equal, English speakers will prefer to use a transitive verb in the active construction with subject and object indicated. Nevertheless, the passive construction may be used in the following circumstances.

Firstly, the passive construction may be used so as to avoid mentioning the subject. Specifically, Dixon (2005) argues that the passive may be used (a) if the identity of the subject is unknown, e.g. *He was killed in the Boer War*; or (b) if the speaker does not wish to reveal the identity of the subject, e.g. *It has been reported to me that some students have been collaborating on their assignments*; or (c) if the identity of the subject is obvious, and does not need to be mentioned, e.g. *I've been promoted*; or (d) if the identity of the subject is not considered important, e.g. *Fresh vegetables are sold at that supermarket*.

Secondly, English speakers use the passive construction so as to focus on the transitive object than on the transitive subject.

(80) a. A boy kicked Mary at the picnic.

b. Mary was kicked at the picnic.

(Dixon, 2005, p. 355)

The above passive sentence highlights the patient *Mary* than the agent *a boy*.

Thirdly, according to Dixon (2005), the passive construction may be used to place a topic in subject relation. In an English sentence, there is always a preference for a ‘topic,’ which is likely to recur in most sentences of the discourse, to be subject. This statement is consistent with what Ando (2005) has argued above: the English passive construction is used in order to express the patient as a topic. In addition, Declerck suggests that English speakers use the passive construction to conform to the principle of “topic continuity.” Declerck (1991, p. 213) states that according to this principle, clauses that have the same discourse topic preferably also have the same clause topic, and the clause topic in question is preferably related to the discourse topic:

- (81) a. The Pope arrived in Madrid this morning and was immediately besieged by reporters.
- b. ?The Pope arrived in Madrid this morning and reporters immediately besieged him. (Declerck, 1991, p. 213)

The sentence (81b) is less natural because it involves an awkward change of clause topic in the latter part.

Fourthly, Dixon (2005) points out that the passive construction may be used to satisfy certain syntactic constraints. It is known that in English if two coordinated clauses share the identical noun phrase which occupies the subject in one and the object in another, then omission is disallowed:

- (82) a. John took off his coat and then Mary scolded John.
b. *John took off his coat and then Mary scolded. (Dixon, 2005, p. 356)

In such circumstances, the passive construction may be used to meet this constraint. For instance, *John* in the second clause can be omitted in the following:

- (83) John took off his coat and was then scolded by Mary. (Dixon, 2005, p. 356)

Finally, according to Dixon (2005), the passive construction involves a participial form of the verb, and this participle is used to describe the result of the activity:

- (84) a. That goal keeper is being rested from next week's game.
b. The cup was chipped by Mary when she washed the dishes.
c. My neighbor was appointed to the board. (Dixon, 2005, p. 357)

To summarize, the current section has argued that the English passive construction is used in the specific circumstances. This construction is chosen when speakers of English pay more attention to a patient than to an agent and express it as a topic in discourse.

3.2 Requirements for the Passivization

3.2.1 The Agent-Patient Relationship

What is one crucial requirement for the English passivization is the “agent-patient relationship.”³ In other words, if the agent-patient relationship is recognized between the subject and the object in an active sentence, then the active construction can be alternated with the passive construction.⁴ Consider the following example:

- (85) a. John broke the vase.
b. The vase was broken by John. (Adapted from Monique, 2009, p. 100)

In the active sentence (80a), the subject *John* is interpreted as an agent because he did the action volitionally, compared with *John accidentally broke the vase* or *The wind broke the vase*, both of which low volitionality. In this sentence, the object *the vase* is construed as a patient because it suffered the damage as the result of the action and its state has been changed significantly (from the original unbroken state to the broken one). Therefore, the agent-patient relationship is recognized, and thus this active sentence can be passivized as seen in (85b).

On the other hand, in general, active constructions in which the agent-patient relationship is unidentified do not undergo the passivization:

- (86) a. The car weighs two tons.
b. *Two tons are weighed by this car. (Monique, 2009, p. 95)

- (87) a. The book costs five dollars.
b. *Five dollars are cost by the book. (Ando, 2005, p. 343)

Neither (86a) nor (87a) can be passivized because in both of them, the agent-patient relationship is not captured: the subject *The car* and *The book* act as a theme, and the object *two tons* and *five dollars* serve as a metaphorical location.

What is essential for the establishment of the agent-patient relationship is one basic semantic condition: the subject acts on the object *one-sidedly*. Therefore, this relationship does not hold for the case where both arguments act on each other.

- (88) a. John broke my computer.
b. My computer was broken by John. (Adapted from Kageyama, 2001, p. 12)

In (88a), John acts on the stationary computer one-sidedly, and as a consequence, the computer is crucially affected. In this sense, the subject and the object are construed as the agent and the patient respectively. On the other hand, consider the following example:

- (89) a. He married her.
b. *She was married by him. (Monique, 2009, p. 95)

(89a) cannot be passivized because although Mary is (psychologically) affected, the two participants act on each other, so the agent-patient relationship is not established.⁵ In general, reciprocal verbs (e.g., *resemble*, *fight*) are not allowed for the passivization because the two participants act on each other.

Pinker (2013) also argues that the agent-patient relationship is essential for the English passivization. According to him, since the passive argument structure expresses an

asymmetrical relation in which the surface subject is in the circumstance characterized by agent's acting upon, any verb for which it is impossible to construe one entity as an agent and another as a patient is excluded from passivization. Pinker adds that this would account for the unpassivizability of some verbs, such as measure verbs (e.g., *cost*, *weigh*) or reciprocal verbs.

In conclusion, what is one crucial requirement for passivization is that the agent-patient relationship is recognized between the subject and the object. In addition, for the establishment of this relationship, it is important that the agent acts on the object unilaterally. The agent-patient relationship mainly consists of the two elements: agency of S and patienthood of O. In the remains of this chapter, each of the elements is discussed in detail.

3.2.1.1 Agency of S

3.2.1.1.1 The Thematic Hierarchy Condition

For passivization, what is emphasized is the importance of a transitive subject being an agent or taking an agentive role. For example, Jackendoff (1972) proposed the following Thematic Hierarchy:

- (90) a. Agent
 - b. Location, Source, Goal
 - c. Theme
- (Jackendoff, 1972, p. 43)

According to Jackendoff, the passive *by*-phrase must be higher on the Thematic Hierarchy than the surface subject. This condition is referred to as the “Thematic Hierarchy Condition.” In

other words, the general spirit of the Thematic Hierarchy Condition is that the passive *by*-phrase must be more agentive than the surface subject. For example, the following passive is well-formed because it meets this requirement:

- (91) The city is being attacked by the rebels. (Declerck, 1991, p. 200)

In (91), the *by*-phrase *the rebels* is an agent, and the surface subject *the city* is a theme, so the *by*-phrase is higher on the above hierarchy than the surface subject.

In addition, Jackendoff (1972) points out that verbs that are ambiguous between an agentive reading and a nonagentive reading of its subject express only the former reading when passivized. For example, consider the following instance:

- (92) John was touching the bookcase. (Jackendoff, 1972, p. 44)

In one reading, *John* is interpreted as the agent doing the action volitionally (perhaps, he may have found the very book he had wanted for a long time and then reached for it strenuously). On the other hand, in the other reading, John is construed as the theme. In this interpretation, it might be that a murder leaned his lifeless body against the secret bookcase. What should be noted here that when this active sentence is passivized, only the agentive reading does survive based on the Thematic Hierarchy Condition:

- (93) The bookcase was being touched by John. (Jackendoff, 1972, p. 44)

In (93), *John* is no longer construed as the dead body, and now he is construed as the agent.

Moreover, Jackendoff (1972) gives an explanation of why verbs of measurement cannot be passivized according to the Thematic Hierarchy Condition:

(94) a. *Five dollars are cost by the book.

b. *Two hundred pounds are weighed by Bill. (Jackendoff, 1972, p. 44)

These passives violate the Thematic Hierarchy Condition in that in each example, the *by*-phrase which is a theme is lower on the hierarchy than the surface subject which acts as a metaphorical location.

To summarize the discussion thus far, the Thematic Hierarchy Condition proposed by Jackendoff has put importance of a transitive subject being an agent or taking an agentive role. In addition, when an active sentence which is ambiguous between an agentive and nonagentive reading of the subject is passivized, only the agentive reading is left.

3.2.1.1.2 Volitionality

The notion of agency is closely related to that of volitionality. Dowty (1991) argues that volitional involvement in the event or state is one property contributing to the Agent Proto-Role. In addition, according to Tsunoda (1985), there is a close correlation between volitionality and agency. Tsunoda adds that these two features always co-vary in all the examples he investigated. It is suggested that volitionality is relevant to passivization (Tsunoda, 1985, p. 394). For example, consider the following:

- (95) a. John met Mary at the station.
b. Mary was met (by John) at the station. (Dixon, 2005, p. 363–364)

Dixon points out that (95a) is ambiguous between (i) a volitional reading and (ii) a nonvolitional reading of *John*. Specifically, in the reading (i), he went to the station to meet her off a train. On the other hand, in the reading (ii), they happened to meet each other there. However, in the passive form (95b), the only reading of (i) is left. In other words, in this passive sentence, John is construed as an agent who did the action volitionally. This example suggests that volitionality that is closely related to agency has a crucial influence on passivization.

3.2.1.2 Patienthood of O

3.2.1.2.1 The Notion of Patienthood

The term ‘patient’ is defined as the person or thing that is affected by the action of the verb (OALD). Also, the ‘patienthood’ is referred to as a notion that indicates an entity affected by the action (Sasaki, 1992). However, what exactly does it mean to be “affected”? Although it is not easy to measure whether an object is actually affected by the verbal action, the one crucial criterion for this judgement suggested by many linguists is a “change of state”: whether the object changes from its original state to another state as a direct result of the verbal event (e.g., Beavers, 2011; Dowty, 1991; Tenny, 1987). For instance, see the following examples:

- (96) She froze orange juice in a plastic freezer container. (Genius, 5th ed.)

(97) John resembles Bill.

(Kuno & Takami, 2016, 27)

In (96), the state of the orange juice has been changed from the liquid to the solid, so the object can be construed as the patient. On the other hand, such a change cannot be seen in (97) because this sentence only describes the apparent similarity of the two persons. Thus, the object cannot be interpreted as the patient.

The notion of patienthood is very similar to that of affectedness. Tenny (1987) argues that affectedness is defined as a property of a verb of denoting an event in which the entity denoted by the direct object of the verb undergoes some change of state or location. Affectedness and patienthood appear to be very close, if not identical. As this proof, both of them can be diagnosed with a pseudo-cleft sentence *What happened to X is Y*:

(98) a. The Romans destroyed the barbarian city.

b. What happened to the barbarian city is that the Romans destroyed it.

(Beavers, 2011, p. 340)

(99) a. They followed the star.

b. *What happened to the star us they followed it. (ibid.)

The well-formedness of (98b) shows that the object *the barbarian city* is affected by the action and it can be construed as a patient, whereas it is indicated from the ill-formedness of (99b) that the object *the star* is unaffected and it cannot be construed as a patient. Like this, patienthood and affectedness are so close that this paper uses the two terms interchangeably.

The following discusses the relationships between affectedness and passivization.

3.2.1.2.2 Evidence

It has been suggested that the English passivization is crucially influenced by affectedness of O (e.g., Bolinger, 1977; Dixon, 2005). As this proof, it is known that when a transitive construction (S V O) which has a corresponding passive construction is transformed into a “connative construction,” the passivizability of the sentence sharply declines.⁶ Kuno and Takami (2016) define a connative construction as the form in which a verb which usually takes a transitive construction is used in an intransitive construction with preposition like *at*. A transitive construction commonly implies that the action is successfully achieved, such as *Mary cut the rope* or *He kicked Mary*. On the other hand, it is characteristic of this connative construction to describe an attempted action without specifying whether the action is actually accomplished (Levin, 1993, p. 42):

(100) a. The boy kicked the ball.

b. The boy kicked at the ball. (Kuno & Takami, 2016, p. 93)

The transitive construction (100a) implies the ball was actually kicked by the boy. On the other hand, what the connative construction (100b) entails is that he swung up his dominant leg with the intention of kicking the ball, so it is unclear whether the ball was actually kicked (perhaps, he may have slipped and his leg may not have reached the ball). The reason the connative construction does not imply the successful action is probably that the action the verb denotes cannot be directly transmitted to the oblique because of the intervention of preposition.

As stated above, when a transitive construction that can be passivized is transformed into a connative construction, the passivizability of the sentence falls sharply. Consider the following examples:

- (101) a. He kicked the box.
b. The box was kicked. (Adapted from Dixon, 2005, p. 371)

- (102) a. He kicked the box.
b. *The box been kicked at. (Adapted from Dixon, 2005, p. 371–372)

The transitive construction (101a) implies that the box was actually kicked by him, and the object was certainly affected. Therefore, the sentence has a corresponding passive (101b). On the other hand, in the connative construction (102a), it is unobvious whether the box has actually been kicked, so it can be stated clearly that the object is truly affected. To put it another way, in this sentence, affectedness of the object is more restricted, so passivization is blocked as seen in (102b).

To sum up, it has been found that a connative construction in which affectedness of O is more restricted is commonly excluded from passivization, which supports the idea that affectedness of O is a crucial element for passivization.

3.2.1.2.3 Affectedness and Passives

What is discussed in the following is, through examining abundant examples, a strong correlation between affectedness of O and passivization. First, the passivization of a transitive

object is analyzed from the viewpoint of affectedness. Second, it is revealed that affectedness also has a crucial influence on passivization of a prepositional object (oblique). Overall, the whole discussion reconfirms that affectedness of O is closely related to the phenomenon of passivization.

3.2.1.2.3.1 Affectedness and Transitive Passives

The close relationship between affectedness and passivization is suggested in literature. For instance, Bolinger (1977) points out this. First of all, consider the following example:

- (103) a. George turned the pages.
b. The pages were turned by George. (Bolinger, 1977, p. 10)

(103a) is allowed for passivization because the pages are actually affected by the verbal action. However, the following (104a), which is apparently similar to (103a), cannot be passivized:

- (104) a. George turned the corner.
b. *The corner was turned by George. (ibid.)

Bolinger (1977) explains the unpassivizability of this active sentence, arguing that the corner is only where George was at the time and thus it is not affected. Nevertheless, Bolinger notes that if the corner is perceived to be an important point in some kind of marathon or race, one might say as follows:

(105) The corner hasn't been turned yet.

(Bolinger, 1977, p. 10)

In addition, it is suggested from Bollinger that affectedness involves not only physical effect but also psychological one:

(106) a. The stranger approached me.

b. I was approached by the stranger. (ibid.)

In (106a), the object *me* is not physically affected at the time of utterance, but he/she is thinking of how the stranger's approach affect him/her. In this way, the object is psychologically affected, so this sentence can be passivized.

(107) a. The train approached me.

b. *I was approached by the train. (ibid.)

In (107a), *me* is not affected physically or psychologically. This active sentence describes only the geometry of two positions, and thus passivization is blocked.

In conclusion, it has been confirmed that affectedness of O is closely related with passivization of a transitive object. The following discusses the connection between this notion and prepositional passives.

3.2.1.2.3.2 Affectedness and Prepositional Passives

Like a transitive object, a prepositional object can be passivized. This kind of

passivization is also closely related to affectedness. For instance, Monique (2009) shows the following example:

- (108) a. Someone has slept in the bed.
b. The bed has been slept in. (Monique, 2009, p. 102)

Since someone used the bed for sleeping, it is perceived to be affected.⁷ Therefore, this active sentence can be passivized. Furthermore, interestingly, Monique (2009) points out that even if there is a direct object preceding a prepositional one in the sentence, the oblique is often chosen as the passive subject:

- (109) a. Somebody put varnish on the chair.
b. The chair was put varnish on. (Monique, 2009, p. 103)

According to Monique, normally, the noun phrase within the direct object should be passivized, but in this case, the prepositional object *the chair* is chosen as the passive subject. Monique explains this, arguing that in (109a) the chair is clearly affected because it changes color.

In addition, even if the same verb is used in two different sentences, passivizability varies according to the interactions between the two arguments: subject and oblique. For example, note that the following active sentences differ in their passivizability:

- (110) a. George Washington lived in this house.
b. This house was lived in by George Washington. (Ando, 2005, p. 359)

(111) a. George Washington lived in Virginia.

b. *Virginia was lived in by George Washington. (ibid.)

(110a) can be passivized because this house is affected by Washington's residence. For instance, the stairs might be worn out because of his repeated use. On the other hand, (111a) is disallowed from passivization because it is unlikely that the whole state of Virginia is affected by the residence of just one man, even if he is a very famous person in history. Next, the following active sentences have different passivizability:

(112) a. Generations of lovers have walked under the bridge.

b. The bridge has been walked under by generations of lovers.

(Bolinger, 1977, p. 9)

(113) a. The dog walked under the bridge.

b. *The bridge was walked under the dog. (ibid.)

According to Bolinger, in (112a), the oblique is construed as the affected entity because for generations of lovers to pass beneath a bridge makes it a romantic place. On the other hand, (113a) is disallowed from passivization because this sentence only mentions a spatial relationship between the dog and the bridge.

To conclude the discussion thus far, it has been confirmed that affectedness is closely related to passivization of both transitive and prepositional passives. In addition, what has been

revealed that normally a direct object is a primary candidate for passivization, if a prepositional object is perceived to be more affected than a direct object, it can be promoted to the passive subject.

3.2.1.2.4 Individuality (Referentiality)

Before concluding the current chapter, what is finally mentioned is one feature related to affectedness of O: individuality of O. Hopper and Thompson (1980) represent the following (114), in which the referents of nouns with the properties on the left are more highly individuated than those with their counterparts on the right:

(114)	INDIVIDUATED	NON-INDIVIDUATED
	proper	common
	human, animate	inanimate
	concrete	abstract
	singular	plural
	count	mass
	referential, definite	non-referential (Hopper & Thompson, 1980, p. 253)

Hopper and Thompson suggest that individuality of O has a correlation with affectedness of O. In other words, if an object is highly individuated, an action is more effectively transferred to the object, and thus it is more affected. For example, consider the following:

- (115) a. Fritz drank the beer.

b. Fritz drank some beer.

(Hopper & Thompson, 1980, p. 253)

The beer in (115a) is more referential than *some beer* in (115b), and accordingly it can be stated that the former has higher individuality than the latter. This difference of individuality is related to their affectedness: in (115a) there is a possible or even probable implication that he finished the beer, whereas in (115b) such an implication is achieved only with difficulty (e.g., if so little beer was left that drinking any of it was equivalent to finishing it).

What is especially spotlighted among the above elements contributing to individuality is referentiality. It has been pointed out that there is a relationship between referentiality and passivization. For referentiality, Dixon (2005) proposes the following referentiality hierarchy:

(116) Referential Hierarchy

first person pronoun

second person pronoun

proper names of people

human common nouns with determiner or modifier indicating specific reference

human common nouns with indefinite reference

inanimate nouns

(Dixon, 2005, p. 355)

According to Dixon, if a transitive object has a higher position in the referential hierarchy than a transitive subject does, the active construction is allowed for passivization. For example, see the following:

- (117) a. A boy kicked Mary at the picnic.
 b. Mary was kicked by a boy at the picnic. (Dixon, 2005, p. 355)

In (117a), the object *Mary* is a proper name of people and it has a higher position in the referential hierarchy than the subject *a boy*, which is an indefinite human noun, does. In this way, this active sentence satisfies the above condition, and thus it can be passivized. In addition, why the following actives are disallowed from passivization can be explained based on this hierarchy:

- (118) a. I chose the blue cardigan.
 b. *The blue cardigan was chosen by me. (ibid.)
- (119) a. The fat girl is eating an ice cream.
 b. *An ice cream is being eaten by the fat girl. (ibid.)

In each of the examples, the transitive object has low referentiality compared with the transitive subject, and accordingly these sentences do not meet the condition of the referential hierarchy, which consequently leads to their unpassivization.

To conclude, the notion of affectedness has a close affinity with that of individuality: if an object is highly individuated, then an action is more effectively transferred to the object, and thus it gets more affected. In addition, it has been argued that one component of individuality is referentiality, and that this feature is also related to passivization.

3.3 Summary of Chapter 3

To summarize the current chapter, it has been argued firstly that the English passive construction is not an automatic transformation of the English active construction and it has many particular properties. In other words, this construction is defined as an expression which focuses more concentration on a patient than on an agent (which is often omitted in the passive) and express the argument as a topic in discourse.

Furthermore, what has been revealed in the current chapter is that the agent-patient relationship is commonly required for passivization. That is to say, if a volitional subject acts on an object one-sidedly and as a result the object is affected by the action, then the active construction is allowed for passivization.

In addition, the current chapter has given a consideration to the notion of patienthood. This notion indicates an entity affected by the action, but it is difficult to measure whether the object is truly affected. Therefore, what has been shown as the one criterion is a change of state. If an object undergoes some change of state, the object can be construed as an affected entity, namely as a patient.

Finally, through examining abundant examples and referring to the two hierarchies (i.e. the thematic hierarchy and the referential hierarchy), it has been shown in the current chapter that agency of S and affectedness of O, both of which contribute to the composition of the agent-relationship, has a crucial influence on the English passivization of active constructions.

Chapter 4

Passivization of English Ditransitives

The focus of the current chapter is on solving the mystery of *for*-dative ditransitive expressions being unlikely to be passivized than *to*-dative ditransitive expressions. The first section in the current chapter reconfirms behavior of the English ditransitive construction when passivized. Subsequently, what is demonstrated in 4.2 is that the thematic hierarchy and the referential hierarchy, both of which are useful for predicting the passivizability of common transitive constructions (S V O), do not work out the above mystery. The final section 4.3 attempts to tackle this puzzle, making use of the fruitful findings on the English ditransitive construction and on the English passivization mentioned in the previous two chapters. Specifically, based on the assumption that the agent-patient relationship is commonly required for passivization, this section compares the two types of ditransitive with special focus on the patienthood of the primary object, and then states clearly that in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction patienthood (affectedness) of the primary object is somehow more restricted than that of the same argument in the *to*-dative ditransitive construction, which contributes to low passivizability in this type of ditransitive. Overall, the whole chapter is expected to shed light on the problem of ditransitive passive.

4.1 Passive Behavior of the English Ditransitive Construction

4.1.1 Passivization of the *To*-dative Ditransitives

When the *to*-dative ditransitive construction is passivized, the two types of passive are easily assumed: the passive with the primary object in the surface subject and the one with the secondary object in the surface subject. Note that the object which is *not* chosen as the passive subject and remains in the object position is referred to as the “retained object.” Generally speaking, in contemporary English, the passive form is strongly preferred in which the surface subject is filled not with the secondary object but with the primary object. In fact, Kishimoto (2001) reports that while the passive form which posits the secondary object in the surface subject is acceptable in British English, such a form is disallowed in American English:

- (120) a. He gave John the book.
b. John was given the book.
c. *The book was given John. (Kishimoto, 2001, p. 143)

Huddleston and Pullum (2002) note that even in British English, passive forms like (120c) are acceptable in only a limited range of cases.¹ Therefore, it appears better that if a speaker seeks to express the theme argument (O₂) as the passive subject, he/she has to alternate the ditransitive construction with the corresponding *to*-dative construction, which enables the passivization of the argument that now gains the direct object.²

- (121) a. He gave John the book.
b. He gave the book to John.
c. The book was given to John. (Kishimoto, 2001, p. 143)

4.1.2 Why O₂ cannot be Passivized

It is considered that there are mainly two reasons not the secondary object but the primary object is promoted to the passive subject. One point is concerned with topicality. The previous chapter has argued that the English passive construction is used to express the affected entity as a topic in discourse:

- (122) The secret documents were taken from the safe and handed over to an
accomplice who was waiting outside of the window. (Declerck, 1991, p. 207)

What is implied in Ando (2005) is that in contemporary English, the expressions are usually preferred which topicalize or centralize human beings. Therefore, it is not surprising that what is promoted to a passive subject as a topic is not the secondary object which denotes an object transferred to a person but the primary object whose position is commonly filled with a person receiving the object.

The other reason is that in general the primary object tends to bear higher referentiality than the secondary object does. What has been stated in Chapter 2 is that in the English ditransitive construction the primary object is typically already given in the discourse context (generally, expressed with a pronoun), while the secondary object tends to be newer information, as seen in the following examples:

- (123) a. He gave her a fish taco. (Goldberg, 2006, p. 5)
b. She threw him a cannonball. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 131)

Based on the condition of the referential hierarchy, if a transitive object is more referential than a transitive subject, then the active sentence is allowed for passivization. Therefore, it is reasonable that the primary object is chosen as the passive subject in that it is the argument is commonly more referential than the secondary object. In fact, in each of the above examples, the primary object has higher position in the referential hierarchy than the secondary object, so the argument is promoted the passive subject, as seen in *She was given a fish taco* and *He was thrown a cannonball*.

4.1.3 Passivization of the *For-Dative* Ditransitives

As mentioned in Chapter 1, many linguists have pointed out that the primary object of the *for*-dative ditransitive construction is commonly unlikely to be passivized than that of the *to*-dative one. (e.g., Declerck, 1991; Fillmore, 1965; Goldberg, 2006; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002; Pinker, 2013; Visser, 1963). Nevertheless, what should be noted is that not all *for*-dative ditransitive expressions are completely disallowed from passivization. In other words, in this type of ditransitive, there is a kind of gradience for passivizability. For instance, consider the following examples from Pinker (2013):

- (124) a. ?Bob was found a job by Sam.
b. *Bob was gotten a watch by Sam.
c.?? Bob was cut a slice of pie by Sam.
d. ?Bob was baked a cake by Sam.
e.?*Bob was knit a sweater by Sam.

f.*?Bob was built a house by Sam.

g. *Bob was earned a promotion by his hard work.

h. *Bob was gained a friend by his warmth and generosity.

(Pinker, 2013, p. 260)

As shown above, according to Pinker's (2013) judgement, it appears that the acceptability of these passives fairly differs. Especially, what these examples suggest is that the passive forms of the *for*-dative ditransitives with verbs of obtaining are more likely to be considered ungrammatical than those of the *for*-dative ones with verbs of creation. For example, (124b), (124g), and (124h), in which verbs of obtaining are used, are seen as ill-formed, whereas (124c) to (124f), in which verbs of creation are used, are judged to be less ungrammatical, although these expressions are no doubt somewhat unnatural.

What is finally pointed out is that the secondary object of the *for*-dative ditransitive construction cannot be passivized as well as that of the *to*-dative one. That is why if a speaker wants to express this argument as the passive subject, he/she has to alternate the ditransitive construction with the *for*-dative construction, which enables the passivization of the argument which now gains the direct object as follows:

(125) a. We bought her a dress.

b. We bought a dress for her.

c. A dress was bought for her.

(Declerck, 1991, p. 207)

To summarize the current section, it has been revealed that regardless of the types of

ditransitive, the secondary object cannot be passivized. Furthermore, the current section has argued that the primary object of the *to*-dative ditransitive construction is generally allowed for passivization, whereas that of the *for*-dative one is less likely to be passivized. Nevertheless, as Pinker (2013) suggests, this type of ditransitive bears a kind of gradience for passivizability.

4.2 Revisiting the Two Hierarchies

What is discussed in this short section is that the thematic hierarchy and the referential hierarchy, both of which are useful for predicting the passivizability of common transitive constructions (S V O), do not work in order to explain the cause why the *for*-dative ditransitives are commonly unlikely to be passivized.

Firstly, revisit the thematic hierarchy. Remember that if a transitive subject has a higher position in the following hierarchy than its transitive object does, the sentence can be passivized.

(126) Agent

Location, Source, Goal

Theme

(Jackendoff, 1972, p. 43)

Therefore, for passivization, it is important that a transitive subject should be more agentive than a transitive object. Typically, in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction, the role of the subject argument is agent, and that of the primary object argument is recipient.³ For example, consider the following:

(127) Uncle Jim cooked Margaret a meal.

(Allerton, 1977, p. 23)

The subject *Uncle Jim* is an agent who performs the action volitionally, and the primary object *Margaret* is a willing recipient, so the subject is certainly more agentive than the primary object and satisfies the condition of the thematic hierarchy. Nevertheless, (127) cannot be passivized. This shows that the explanation based on the thematic hierarchy does not work out the puzzle.

Secondary, reconsider the referential hierarchy. Remember that if a transitive object has a higher position in the following referential hierarchy than its transitive subject does, passivization is adopted:

- (128) first person pronoun
second person pronoun
proper names of people
human common nouns with determiner or modifier indicating specific reference
human common nouns with indefinite reference
inanimate nouns (Dixon, 2005, p. 355)

Unfortunately, this idea is not useful for explaining why the *for*-dative ditransitives are unlikely to be passivized. See the following example:

- (129) a. He bought me a hat.
b. *I was bought a hat. (Fillmore, 1965, p. 13)

Although in (129a) the primary object has a higher position in the referential hierarchy than

the subject does, passivization is blocked.

To sum up, it can be concluded that although both the thematic hierarchy and the referential hierarchy are useful for predicting the passivizability of common transitive sentences, they do not serve to account for the unpassivizability of the *for*-dative ditransitives.

4.3 The Quest for Truth

The former part of the current section attempts to solve the mystery of ditransitive passives, making full use of the fruitful findings on the English ditransitive construction and on the English passivization discussed thus far. Subsequently, what is discussed in the latter part is that not all *to*-dative ditransitive expressions are equally allowed for passivization.

4.3.1 Reconsideration of the Two Ditransitives

First, compare the following two ditransitives:

- (130) a. John gave Mary a cake.
b. John baked Mary a cake.

(130a) and (130b) share the surface form (S V O₁ O₂), but they can be differentiated in that they alternate with the different prepositional dative constructions: the former corresponds to the *to*-dative construction, while the latter alternates with the *for*-dative construction. These two ditransitives have different acceptability of passivization. Specifically, (130a) is allowed for passivization, whereas the passivization of (130b) may be frowned on:

- (131) a. Mary was given a cake by John.
b. ?Mary was baked a cake by John.⁴

Remember that in order for an active sentence to be allowed for passivization, the agent-patient relationship has to be recognized between the subject and the object. In other words, if a volitional subject argument acts on an object argument one-sidedly and as a result the object is clearly affected by the verbal action, then the active sentence is allowed for passivization. For example, the following actives can be passivized because they fulfill this requirement:

- (132) a. I painted the garage last year.
b. The garage was painted last year. (Declerck, 1991, p. 204)

- (133) a. A grizzly bear killed a hiker.
b. A hiker was killed by a grizzly bear. (Kuno & Takami, 2016, p. 16)

In each of the actives, the volitional subject argument acts on the object argument unilaterally, and as a consequence, the object is undoubtedly affected by the action. In this way, the agent-patient relationship is recognized between the subject and the object arguments, and thus these actives can be passivized.

The interest of this section is in whether this agent-patient relationship is recognized in the two ditransitives (130a) and (130b). If such a relationship is identified, these ditransitives are assumed to be passivized. The following makes an analysis of each ditransitive with special focus on the two elements constituting this relationship: agency of S and patienthood of O.

For agency of S, both (130a) and (130b) meet the condition. According to Goldberg (1995), regardless of the kinds of ditransitive, the subject slot of the English ditransitive construction is commonly filled with a volitional agent (Specifically, in the case of the *for*-dative ditransitive construction, it inherits information about the argument roles from the central sense). Therefore, in (130a), the subject *John* must be understood to do the verbal action with the intention of giving the cake to Mary from the beginning. Similarly, in (130b), John must be understood to intend to give the cake to Mary. It cannot be the case that John baked the cake for someone else and later happened to give it to Mary. In short, both of the subjects are construed as a volitional agent, so it is plausible to state that agency of S is guaranteed.

However, the other half element is more troublesome: patienthood of O. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the term ‘patienthood’ is referred to as a notion that indicates an entity affected by the verbal action, but it is not easy to measure whether the object is actually affected. What has been shown as one criterion of this is a change of state. To put it another way, if an object changes from its original state to another one as a direct result of the verbal event, then it is likely that the entity is affected (namely, construed as a patient). For instance, in the following examples, the two objects certainly undergo such a change, and thus they can be recognized as the affected entity (patient):

(134) This system turned seawater into fresh water. (Adapted from Genius 5th ed.)

(135) She broke her leg when she was skiing. (Genius 5th ed.)

In (134), the state of the object has been obviously changed from seawater to fresh water. Also,

in (135), her leg undergoes a change of state in that its connectivity is lost by the accident. Therefore, both of the objects are construed as the affected entity, namely as the patient.

Now, consider the two ditransitives in (130) from this viewpoint of patienthood of O. First, based on Goldberg's analysis, it can be stated from (130a) that *John gave Mary a cake* faithfully reflects the central sense of the ditransitive construction: actual successful transfer. In other words, this sentence has an implication that as the result of transfer caused by John, Mary successfully received the cake. In this sense, a kind of state change happens to Mary: from the state of not having a cake to that of having a cake. Such a change of state happens to Mary, so she can be construed as the affected entity, namely as the patient. Therefore, it can be stated that in this sentence not only agency of S but also patienthood of O is assured. Note that the direction of force is not bidirectional but unilateral in that John acts on Mary one-sidedly. This sentence does not imply that John gave Mary a cake, and then Mary gave him a return gift. What is implied in this sentence is that John gave a cake to Mary, and she actually received it. It is for these reasons that one can construe the agent-patient relationship between the subject and the object, which consequently enables the passivization of this sentence as shown in (131a). On the other hand, the example (130b) *John baked Mary a cake* does not strictly imply that Mary actually received the cake. As Goldberg (1995) puts it, what is implied by this sentence is that John baked a cake with the intention of giving the cake to Mary. Perhaps, it may be likely that she did not receive the cake because John was mugged by cake thieves on the way over to Mary's. In addition, there is another possibility that only did not Mary receive the cake, but also she did not know the fact that John baked a cake for her. In short, it is unobvious from this simple sentence whether Mary actually received the cake or not, so it is difficult to declare that she undergoes a change of state concerning possession. Therefore, Mary

is less likely to be construed as the affected entity (patient), and this ambiguous patienthood may interrupt the recognition of the agent-patient relationship in this sentence, which finally leads to unpassivization of (130b).

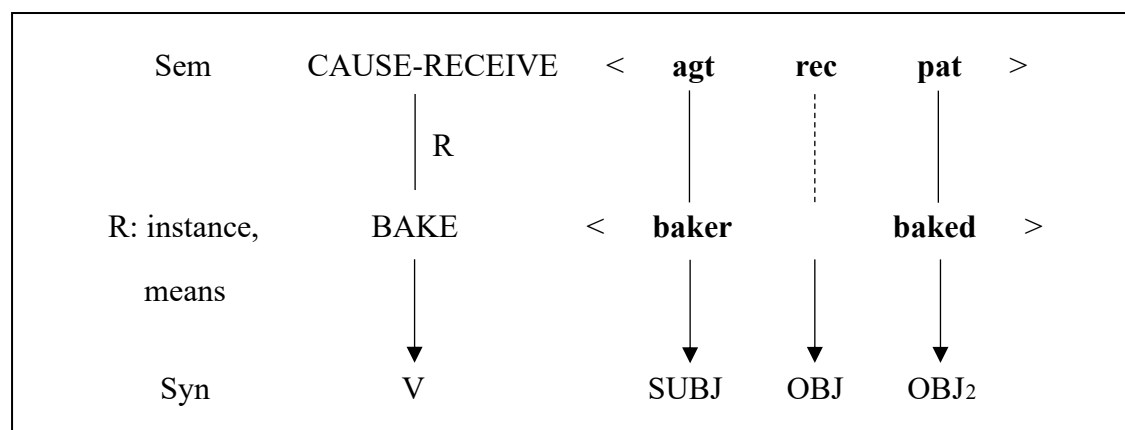
It has been stated above that in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction the primary object has somewhat suspicious patienthood, and that this is attributed to the nonoccurrence of the implication of the actual successful transfer. Goldberg (1995) argues that in general, *for*-dative ditransitive expressions do not strictly imply such an actual successful transfer, but she does not especially refer to the reason. Probably, this problem can be solved based on verbs' lexical semantics. Specifically, in the case of verbs such as *give* and *tell*, which alternate between the ditransitive and the *to*-dative constructions, they intrinsically take three arguments: agent, recipient, and theme (Kishimoto, 2001, p. 137). These verbs are lexically oriented toward giving something to someone. In fact, Pinker (2013, p. 98) states that the verbs like *give* and *tell* inherently specify change of possession: *give* cannot be used to mean the physical motion of an object; *tell* can be used only if there is a listener who extracts the content of the speech. Since a possession change is lexically profiled in these verbs, when they participate in the ditransitive construction, the implication emerges strongly that the primary object actually receives the secondary object, coupled with the constructional meaning of this construction. On the other hand, Kishimoto (2001) points out that verbs such as *bake* or *sing*, which alternate with the ditransitive construction and the *for*-dative construction, originally take only two arguments: the subject argument (agent) and the direct object argument (theme). These verbs inherently specify the actions which are not directly related to the act of giving, such as creation, performance, or obtaining. For instance, *bake* refers to the creative action of cooking something in an oven. To take another example, *sing* expresses the performative action of making musical

sounds. Therefore, it is considered that the act of giving may just follow these main actions circumstantially with the aid of the ditransitive construction. To put it another way, these verbs are inherently less oriented toward giving something to someone, so even if they take the ditransitive construction, the implication of the actual successful transfer does not strictly occur.

Note that in (130a) and (130b), the two primary object have different origins. In other words, in the *to*-dative ditransitive construction (130a), as stated above, the verb *give* originally takes the three arguments (agent, recipient, theme), so in this sentence, the object *Mary* is lexically specified by the verb. In this sentence, the patienthood of the primary object is considered to be high because the verb *give* is inherently designed to act on the recipient argument, and thus the verbal action is more effectively transferred to the recipient, which enables the high patienthood of the object, and consequently the passivization of this sentence. On the other hand, in (130b), the verb *bake* intrinsically takes only two arguments: the subject (agent) and the direct object (theme). To put it the other way around, the recipient *Mary* is not inherently owned by the verb, and this role is considered to be contributed by the ditransitive construction as follows:

Figure 4.1

Composite Structure: Ditransitive + Bake



Therefore, in (130b), *Mary* is not a lexical object but a dummy object. In this ditransitive construction, the patienthood of the primary object is relatively low because the verb *bake* inherently intends to act on the theme such as a cake, and this verb might not prepare enough for operating on the recipient argument that is given from the outside. Accordingly, the verbal action is less effectively transferred to the dummy object, which leads to the low patienthood of the object, and consequently to the unpassivization of this ditransitive.

As a valuable piece of evidence that a dummy object is not passivized, consider the following example:

(136) Sam sneezed the napkin off the table. (Goldberg, 1995, p. 29)

Sneeze is an intransitive verb and has a single profiled participant role: a sneezer. In the above example, the theme role (*the napkin*) is considered to be contributed by the caused-motion construction (Goldberg, 1995, p. 54–55). What should be paid attention is that this dummy object cannot be promoted to the passive subject as follows:

(137) *The napkin was sneezed off the table by Sam.⁵

This supports the idea that passivization is not applied to a dummy object.

In fact, what another linguist has noted is the suspiciousness of patienthood seen in the primary object of the *for*-dative ditransitive construction. For example, Pinker (2013) questions the status of the primary object in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction as a patient, arguing

that in this type of ditransitive, the actual action such as creating or obtaining something would be a means to realize the intention of making the recipient possess the thing, although this intention itself need not actually be realized. Pinker points out the combination of the piecemeal passivizability of this kind of ditransitive and the abstractness of the patienthood.

In addition, the ambiguous patienthood of the primary object in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction is also suggested by the brief survey in which the author asked one English native speaker who was an associate professor at English department in Kyoto University of Education to judge the acceptability of the following two sentences:

- (138) a. What happened to Mary was John gave her a cake.
b. What happened to Mary was John baked her a cake.

The pseudo-cleft sentence (“What happened to X is Y”) is used to diagnose the patienthood of the object (Sasaki, 1992). Interestingly, the native speaker answered that although both of these sounded odd for him, the former sentence was probably better, and that he would not say like the latter. (He also commented that the acceptability of (138b) got better if it could be changed like, *What happened to Mary was she got sick from eating a cake John baked for her.*) To summarize, this survey appears to support the idea that that the primary object in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction is less likely to be recognized as the patient.

Finally, there is one point that is to be mentioned: the ambiguous interpretation of the *for*-dative ditransitive construction *John baked Mary a cake*. As stated above, it is unclear from this simple whether Mary actually received the cake, unlike *John gave Mary a cake*, which has an implication that Mary actually received the cake. To put it the other way around, this

sentence potentially has two interpretations: (i) the cake was successfully transferred to Mary, and she is construed as a ‘real possessor’; (ii) Mary has not received the cake yet, and she is construed as a ‘prospective possessor.’ Which interpretation is selected depends on individual listeners or the surrounding context. For example, if the ditransitive construction is presented in such context as *John baked Mary a cake, and she became sick from eating the cake*, they will select the interpretation of (i). On the other hand, if it is shown in the context like *John baked Mary a cake, but his father ate it!* the interpretation of (ii) will be selected. This leads to one suggestion that the passivization of this sentence is influenced by how listeners interpret it. In other words, it is assumed that if they interpret this sentence as the one that implies actual successful transfer, and Mary as a real possessor, the recipient is identified as the affected entity (patient), so the passivization of this active sentence is admitted. On the other hand, if they select the interpretation of (ii), in which Mary has not received the cake yet, she is not recognized as the patient, so the passivization is dispreferred. In this way, the passivization of such an ambiguous ditransitive expression appears to be influenced by how listeners interpret the active sentence.

4.3.2 Further Considerations

It has been argued repeatedly in the current paper that the *for*-dative ditransitive construction is commonly less likely to be passivized than the *to*-dative one. To put it the other way around, it is meant that the *to*-dative ditransitive constructions are generally allowed for passivization. Although this is true, what should be noted is that not all of them equally enjoy passivization. For instance, consider the following examples from Declerck (1991):

- (139) a. They passed her the sugar.
 b. *She was passed the sugar. (Declerck, 1991, p. 207)
- (140) a. They brought her the sugar.
 b. *She was brought the sugar. (ibid.)

Declerck himself did not especially mention why these actives cannot be passivized, but this can be analyzed from two different viewpoints.

One solution is to examine verbs' lexical semantics. As stated in Chapter 2, most English dativizable verbs show constructional preferences. For example, it has been reported that the verb *give* tends to occur more frequently in the ditransitive construction than in the *to*-dative construction. In the case of *pass* and *bring* in question, according to Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004), both of the verbs are strongly distinctive for the *to*-dative construction. The following illustrates how many times they have been used in each of the constructions in the British component of the International Corpus of English:

Table 4.1⁶

The Occurrence of Pass and Bring in the Ditransitive and the To-dative Constructions

	ditransitive	<i>to</i> -dative
pass	2	29
bring	7	82

Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004) argue that these verbs are more harmonious with the constructional meaning of the *to*-dative construction: caused motion. Therefore, it is considered that in these verbs the aspect of an object's motion is lexically profiled, and on the other hand, they are less concerned about whether its recipient actually receives the transferred object. It is for this reason that even if *pass* and *bring* participate in the ditransitive construction whose central sense is successful transfer, such an implication is less likely to occur. In this way, it is difficult to interpret the patienthood of their primary objects, and the agent-relationship is not firmly established, which consequently leads to unpassivization of these actives.

Furthermore, why the ill-formedness of (139b) and (140b) can be explained from the usage-based approach. To put it briefly, in each example, these ditransitives are disallowed from passivization because the connection between the main verb and the primary object is so strong that the passive transformation breaks off such a tie. The following offers more detailed explanation.

Firstly, Diessel (2016, 2019) points out the strong connection between the verb *give* and the first pronoun *me*. In utterances that early children produce, the verb *give* and the pronoun *me* are so frequently used together, such as 'give me hat,' 'give me water,' or 'give me car,' that the processing of *give me* is gradually automatized, and the expression is eventually entrenched in their memories as one unit, or a chunk. As one piece of evidence that *give me* is a highly frequent expression in the English language, the two words *give* and *me* are often combined and pronounced by English native speakers as one word, like 'gimme.' As children grow older, they make some alternations to the chunk *give me*. Keeping the framework of the unit, they replace the main verb *give* with another verb that also signifies acts of giving such as *pass*, and creates new expressions such as 'pass me the salt' or 'pass me the toy' which are organized

around the unit *pass me*. Afterwards, they begin to use this unit more creatively, replacing the first pronoun with other personal pronoun such as *her* or *him*, and say like ‘pass him the ball’ or ‘pass her the sugar.’ Therefore, it is considered that in the expressions like (139a) and (140a), the connectivity of the verb phrase is strong, so the passivization is dispreferred because the transformation ends up breaking such a close tie.⁷

In conclusion, it has been revealed that not all *to*-dative ditransitive expressions are equally from passivization and that the reason can be accounted for from the two different viewpoints. One approach is to focus on verbs’ lexical semantics. The dativizable verbs such as *pass* or *bring* tend to occur more frequently in the *to*-dative construction, and thus they are more compatible with the meaning of the caused motion and on the other hand, they may have little interest in whether the recipient actually receives the object. It is for this reason that even if they take the ditransitive construction, the implication of successful transfer does not occur. In addition, it has been argued from the usage-based model that the connection between the main verb and the primary object is so strong because of their high frequency of co-occurrence that one may frown upon the passive sentences in which such an entrenched unit is decomposed.

4.4 Summary of Chapter 4

To summarize the current chapter, first of all, it has been argued in the first section that in contemporary English when the ditransitive construction is passivized, a passive construction is commonly assumed in which the slot of the surface subject is filled not with the secondary object but the primary object, and that there is a kind of gradience for passivizability in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction.

The next section 4.2 has stated that the thematic hierarchy and the referential hierarchy,

both of which are useful for predicting the passivizability of common transitive sentences, do not serve to account for why *for*-dative ditransitive expressions are unlikely to be passivized.

The final section has attempted to solve the mystery of ditransitive passives, making use of ample findings on the English ditransitive construction and on the English passivization. On the assumption that for passivization the agent-patient relationship has to be recognized, the two types of ditransitive (*to/for* dative ditransitives) have been analyzed from agency of S and patienthood of O respectively. To summarize the discussion, for agency of S, it has been confirmed that both of the ditransitives satisfy this condition. With respect to patienthood of O, it appears that the status of the two primary objects is somewhat different. Specifically, the *to*-dative ditransitive construction like (130a) has an implication of actual successful transfer. Therefore, the primary object undergoes a change of state concerning possession, so the argument can be construed as the affected entity (patient). Not only agency of S but also patienthood of O is guaranteed, and the direction of force is not bidirectional but unilateral. That is why the agent-relationship can be recognized between the arguments, so passivization is adopted. On the other hand, the *for*-dative ditransitive construction does not strictly imply such a successful transfer. Accordingly, it cannot be asserted that this argument undergoes a change of state, and the argument is less likely to be interpreted as the affected entity (patient), and this ambiguous patienthood may interrupt the recognition of the agent-patient relationship, which finally leads to the unpassivization of this type of sentence.

Chapter 5

Suggestions for English Education

The focus of this chapter is on giving careful considerations to the application of the abundant useful findings on ditransitive passives mentioned thus far to contemporary English education. Especially, this paper intends to discuss the application of the linguistic findings in Japanese high school.

Normally, how the English ditransitive construction behaves when passivized should be taught in the unit of passive voice in the lesson of English Expression, but in the present English education, it appears that plenty of time is spared for teaching the passivization of the third sentence pattern (S V O). Therefore, as pointed out later, it is not uncommon that the passivization of the fourth sentence pattern (S V O₁ O₂) is treated carelessly, or a kind of automatic instruction may be rampant such as making students do the meaningless exercise in paraphrasing, which is unlikely to encourage them to think of the English language profoundly.

Deploing these situations, the current chapter attempts to examine a better English teaching of ditransitive passives, making full use of the ample linguistic findings.

The current chapter is structured as follows. The first section analyses some English textbooks of English Expression for high school students from a critical viewpoint, and then points out their disadvantages. The subsequent section is the outline of the grammaticality judgement task which was conducted by the author. In addition, what is revealed is that students have poor understandings of ditransitive passives. Finally, what is argued in the last section is

the application of the findings on ditransitive passives to contemporary English education. Overall, through the whole chapter, suggestions for better English education are offered.

5.1 A Critical Analysis of Textbooks

The current section makes an analysis of some textbooks of English Expression for high school students from a critical viewpoint, and then points out some problems. What is revealed in this section is that these textbooks are filled with unclear or inappropriate explanations as to passivization of the English ditransitive construction.

The first serious problem is ditransitive passives may be treated somehow carelessly. For example, *BIG DIPPER English Expression I* does not refer to how the ditransitive construction behaves when passivized at all. Unfortunately, this book deals with only common transitive passives (S V O) and some idiomatic expressions, such as *be covered with* or *be known to*. It is unsatisfactory not to mention the passivization of the English ditransitive construction at all because unless a wise teacher compensates for the fault of the textbook, high school students who learn from this book may not still know how to make passive form from the ditransitive construction, which means that even if they seek to express the ditransitive object as the subject, namely as a topic, they cannot do so, and as the result, they have no choice but to repeatedly express a noun phrase which deserves to be a topic in the object position, and such a discourse must be less natural.

The second problem is concerned with unclear or incorrect explanations as to passivization of the English ditransitive construction. For instance, *Breakthrough* states that the fourth sentence pattern (the ditransitive construction) has two objects, so the two passives are shaped in which each of the object is promoted to the surface subject. This unadmirable statement

involves the risk of making students misunderstand all ditransitive expressions equally being passivized, regardless of the types of ditransitive. Consequently, there is a danger of them overproducing infelicitous sentences, such as *Bob was knitted a sweater by Sam* or *Bob was earned a promotion by his hard work*.

Furthermore, *DUALSCOPE English Expression I* provides an inappropriate explanation that the English *to*-dative ditransitive construction has two corresponding passives and shows the following example:

- (141) a. Santa Claus gives children wonderful presents.
b. Children are given wonderful presents by Santa Claus.
c. Wonderful presents are given to children by Santa Claus.

(Kodera et al., 2016, p. 42)

What is worse, this textbook makes students do the exercise as follows:

- (142) Rewrite the sentence in the passive voice.

Lucy sent Jim the email.

→ Jim _____

→ The email _____

(Kodera et al., 2016, p.43)

These do not capture the nature of ditransitive passives. As already stated in Chapter 4, in contemporary English, when the ditransitive construction is passivized, the passive form is

strongly preferred in which the surface subject is filled not with the secondary object but with the primary object. Therefore, (141) and (142) are undesirable in that they tempt students to misunderstand *to*-dative ditransitive expressions always having two corresponding passives. In addition, this textbook cites the example (141), arguing that the English *to*-dative ditransitive construction has two passives, but this example is considered to be completely wrong because precisely speaking, (141c) is not derived from (141a). If (141c) were generated from (141a), one question would be left that where the preposition *to* comes from: such a preposition is not seen in the original ditransitive construction. Accordingly, it is more natural to assume that the passive (141c) stems not from the ditransitive construction (141a) but from its corresponding *to*-dative construction *Santa Claus gives wonderful presents to children*. If one assumes so, the mystery of such a strange preposition is solved. In fact, in so many English reference books, an example like (141) is introduced, and it is wrongly argued that the English ditransitive construction has two passive forms. This is a serious problem to be corrected immediately.

To summarize the current section, it is unavoidable to state that all of the textbooks are filled with unclear or inappropriate explanations as to passivization of the English ditransitive construction. Therefore, unless a wise English teacher compensates for these faults, there is a danger that students acquire incorrect knowledge of ditransitive passives which is far from the linguistic facts.

5.2 The Grammaticality Judgement Task

The author conducted a grammaticality judgement task (Oct, 2020) in order to make sure how well Japanese students understood passivization of the English ditransitive construction. Particularly, the interest of this survey was in confirming whether they acquired the knowledge

that the *for*-dative ditransitives were less likely to be passivized than the *to*-dative ditransitives. The participants were 72 undergraduate students in Japan, and almost all of them were freshmen who had graduated from high school a short time ago, so it was expected that they remembered what had been taught in high school days. If all participants were composed of those who belong to the same department, their performance would be more or less similar. In order to avoid such a situation, the survey was carefully designed so that the participants consisted of those who belonged to the various departments.¹

The procedure is summarized as follows: first of all, the participants were presented 6 English ditransitive sentences (3 *to*-dative ditransitives and 3 *for*-dative ditransitives) and 6 passives transformed from these ditransitives, and then they were asked to judge the grammaticality of the 6 passive sentences (target sentences). On judgement, they were required to write ○ in the sheet if the passive sentence was grammaticality correct, and if not, to write × in the sheet. In the case of ×, they were also required to specify the reason together. Among the 6 passive sentences, all of the 3 *to*-dative ditransitive passives were felicitous, whereas all of the 3 *for*-dative ditransitive passives were ill-formed or unnatural. Therefore, it can be stated that if the participants complete the task perfectly, all of the passives from the *to*-dative ditransitives are judged to be correct (○), whilst all of those from the *for* -dative ditransitives are judged to be incorrect (×). The following shows an example of the grammaticality judgement task. For details, see Appendix in the end of the paper.

(143) San baked Bob a cake.

Bob was baked a cake by Sam. (○ or × is written here.)

(The reason) _____

Also, in addition to these 6 ditransitive passives, 4 filler sentences (2 transitive passives and 2 prepositional passives) were incorporated into the task so as not to make them realize the purpose of this survey.

After finishing the grammaticality judgement task, the participants turned a page and answered the following questions:

(144) Q. Did you know the fact that there are only two verb classes which take the

English *for*-dative construction: verbs of creation and verbs of obtaining?²

(145) Q. Did you know the fact that the English *for*-dative construction is commonly

unlikely to be passivized than the *to*-dative one?

The intention of these questions was to inquire whether the participants were equipped with the above two pieces of knowledge that must be indispensable for completing the task perfectly. To put it another way, if they know the distinction of the *to*-dative ditransitives and the *for*-dative ones but are not familiar with the tendency of the *for*-dative ditransitives being unpassivized, then they would not make proper judgements on the passives. On the other hand, if they know such a tendency but cannot distinguish the types of ditransitive, then they will not carry out the task faultlessly. In short, what is expected is that it is not until the participants are equipped with the two pieces of knowledge that they can perform the task perfectly.

The result of the survey was noticeable. First of all, the number of the participants who completed the task perfectly was only 3 people. In other words, only the 3 participants

rightfully judged the *to*-dative ditransitive passives to be correct and the *for*-dative ditransitive passives to be incorrect. To put it the other way around, the other 69 participants made inappropriate judgements on these passives. They showed a variety of wrong answers. For example, some participants answered the 6 ditransitive passives were all correct, others answered that all of them were incorrect. Another participant expressed a view that the *to*-dative ditransitive construction was unlikely to be passivized than the *for*-dative one, which was converse of the linguistic fact.

This result leads to one prediction that most of the participants might not have known the two pieces of knowledge questioned in (144) and (145). Actually, the number of the participants who answered ‘yes’ to both of the questions was just 3 (However, note that these 3 participants were different from the 3 participants who accomplished the task perfectly).

To summarize the current survey, almost all of the participants were not able to accomplish the grammaticality judgement task on ditransitive passives faultlessly, and their low performance may be related with their ignorance of the pieces of knowledge that there are only two verb classes which take the English *for*-dative construction (verbs of creation and verbs of obtaining) and that this type of ditransitive is commonly unlikely to be passivized than the *to*-dative ditransitive construction. It is unobvious whether they had learned these kinds of knowledge in high school and later forgot them or these findings were not taught to them from the beginning, but based on the analysis of the textbooks, the probability of the latter appears to be somewhat higher. According to the result of the survey and the textbook analysis, the preceding section attempts to consider the better application of the beneficial linguistic findings on ditransitive passives to contemporary English education.

5.3 The Proposal

This section is designed to examine a better English teaching of ditransitive passives to deepen students' understandings of English grammar and to contribute to their more meaningful communication. First of all, it is not a good idea that the knowledge of ditransitive passives is directly taught to students in a top-down fashion. Rather, it appears more appropriate to make them deal with the passivization of the English ditransitive construction from the viewpoint of a discourse. In other words, what is proposed here is to make students consider which syntactic form (construction) is proper for expressing each of the ditransitive objects as a topic in discourse. The point of view like this is essential because if students persistently express a noun phrase which deserves a topic as the object position, such a discourse is none other than unnatural. Therefore, in order to realize more natural and coherent English communication, it is meaningful to teach students how to make different use of constructions to express the ditransitive objects as a topic.

Before this, students have to be equipped with the three pieces of previous knowledge. One point is that a topic refers to information which is likely to recur in most sentences of the discourse. Second, they have to learn that in English there is always a preference for a topic to be subject (Dixon, 2005). Finally, what students should learn is that the passive voice is a useful expression which denotes a patient as a topic in discourse. For example, the following (a) is considered to be more natural than (b):

- (146) a. The hold-up man hid in the woods for five days, living on berries, and then
he was caught.

- b. The hold-up man hid in the woods for five days, living on berries, and then the police caught him. (Adapted from Dixon, 2005, p. 356)

Based on these fundamental findings, students consider or discuss with their classmates on which syntactic form is the most preferable to express each of the ditransitive objects as a subject, namely as a topic in discourse. Now, what is utilized here is the fruitful findings on passivization of the English ditransitive construction.

The objects of the English ditransitive construction are divided into four types: the primary object of the *to*-dative ditransitive, the secondary one of the same ditransitive, the primary one of the *for*-dative ditransitive, and the secondary one of the identical ditransitive. Firstly, concerning the primary object of the *to*-dative ditransitive construction, this object can gain the subject position easily through passive transformation:

- (147) a. He gave me a book.
b. I was given a book.

Next, the secondary object in the *to*-dative ditransitive construction is more troublesome. What should be taught to students is that the passivization of the secondary object is significantly dispreferred in contemporary English (e.g., Kishimoto, 2001; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002), and that if they seek to express the theme argument as a subject, they have to alternate the ditransitive construction with its corresponding *to*-dative construction, and then the argument which now gains the status of the direct object can be passivized as follows:

- (148) a. He gave me book.
b. He gave a book to me.
c. A book was given to me.

For the primary object in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction, it is crucial to teach to students that the *for*-dative ditransitives are commonly unlikely to be passivized than the *to*-dative ones, with presenting abundant ill-formed examples such as **I was bought a hat* or **Bob was built a house by Sam*. Therefore, if students hope to express this beneficiary argument as a subject, they should use the alternative form as seen in the following (149b).

- (149) a. He built me a house.
b. I had a house built. (Visser, 1963, p. 627)

(149b) is the fifth sentence pattern in which the verb *have* is used as a causative meaning. If students use this form, they can express the beneficiary argument as a topic without depending on the passive voice. Finally, with respect to the secondary object in the *for*-dative ditransitive construction, what is worth being taught to students is that the secondary object of this type of ditransitive is commonly unlikely to be chosen as the surface subject as well as that of the *to*-dative ditransitive, and thus if they seek to express this theme argument as a subject, they have to alternate the ditransitive construction with its corresponding *for*-dative construction, and then the argument which now gains the status of the direct object can be promoted to the passive subject as follows:

- (150) a. He built me a house.
- b. He built a house for me.
- c. A house was built for me.

To summarize the discussion thus far, the current section has argued that it is not admirable to directly teach students the ample findings on passivization of the English ditransitive construction in a top-down fashion. Rather, what has been proposed is that these useful findings are introduced more naturally in the course in which they consider which syntactic form is proper for expressing each of the ditransitive objects as a topic in discourse. This kind of instruction contributes to their more natural and coherent English communication.

5. 4 Summary of Chapter 5

In conclusion, the current chapter has discussed the applicability of the abundant linguistic findings on the passivization of the English ditransitive construction to contemporary English education. Through the analysis of some textbooks, it has been revealed in the first section that they are filled with ambiguous or inappropriate explanations or exercises on the ditransitives' passivization which do not capture the nature of this phenomenon. In the subsequent section, the overview of the survey on the grammaticality judgement task has been reported, and it has been suggested that the participants' poor performance might be correlated with their ignorance of the ditransitives' passivization. Based on these two sections, what has been proposed in the final section is that the fruitful findings are introduced more naturally in the situation in which students consider which syntactic form is proper for expressing each of the ditransitive objects as a subject, namely as a topic in discourse. This kind of instruction

contributes not only to their profound understandings of English grammar but also to their more meaningful and coherent English communication. As a concluding remark, English teachers are expected to devise teaching of English grammar to polish students' linguistic sensitivities and deepen their insights into language.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Summary

The English ditransitive construction is a crucial expression for English speakers because it denotes the act of transfer that is one of the most fundamental human activities (cf. Sense Encoding Hypothesis). From a historical viewpoint, the construction including the indirect object and the direct object was extremely common in Old English (Visser, 1963), so it can be stated that the ditransitive construction has existed in the English language for a long time. In addition, if one turns his/her eyes to language use by children, it is found that they produce utterances such as ‘gimme car’ or ‘give me water,’ which correspond to the primitive form of the ditransitive construction (Diessel, 2019). As stated in Chapter 1, the English ditransitive construction has intrigued a large number of linguists around the world, and has been studied from a variety of viewpoints. However, these studies have mainly focused upon the properties of the English ditransitive construction in its active form, and what it not fully specified is how it behaves when passivized. The passivization of this construction is filled with mysteries, but one of the few findings on the phenomenon is that the *for*-dative ditransitives are commonly unlikely to be passivized than the *to*-dative ones, but its clear reason may be unobvious. Therefore, this paper has attempted solving the puzzle, based on a plenty of previous studies on the English ditransitive construction and on the English passivization.

First, Chapter 2 has made analyses of the English ditransitive construction from the

multiple perspectives, and through the comparison with the corresponding prepositional (*to/for*) dative constructions, what has been revealed is the particular properties of the ditransitive construction (e.g., possessor effect, morphophonological constraint, animacy restriction, discourse accessibility of the recipient and theme arguments). From a broad viewpoint, it can be concluded that this construction is closely related to the phenomenon of possession. Furthermore, this chapter has referred to the major difference of the two ditransitives: in many cases the *to*-dative ditransitives imply an actual possession change or successful transfer, whilst the *for*-dative ditransitives do not strictly have such an implication, and benefactive relations are more foregrounded.

Subsequent Chapter 3 has in turn focused upon the English passive construction and confirmed the requirements for passivization. It has been pointed out that for passivization typically the agent-patient relationship has to be recognized between the subject and object arguments in an active sentence. To put it another way, a volitional subject acts on an object not bidirectionally but unilaterally, and as the result, the object is affected by the verbal action. In addition, the current chapter has mentioned the notion of patienthood. This notion indicates an entity affected by the action, but it is difficult to measure whether the object is truly affected. As one criterion of this, what has been suggested is a change of state. In other words, if an object changes from its original state to another one as a direct result of the verbal event, then it is likely that the entity is construed as an affected entity (patient).

Chapter 4 has been none other than the core of this work. This chapter has attempted solving the mystery of the *for*-dative ditransitives being less likely to be passivized than the *to*-dative ones. On the assumption that for passivization the agent-patient relationship has to be recognized, the current chapter has given careful considerations to the two types of ditransitive

from agency of S and patienthood of O, both of which constitute this relationship. For agency of S, it has been confirmed that both types satisfy this condition: each of the subject slots is filled with a volitional agent. In both of the ditransitives, there is a difference in patienthood of O. Specifically, in the case of the *to*-dative ditransitive construction in which the certain verbs such as *give*, *pass*, *bring*, *throw*, or *tell* participate, it faithfully reflects the central sense of the ditransitive construction: actual successful transfer. In other words, this kind of ditransitive has an implication that the primary object actually receives the secondary object. In this way it can be asserted that the primary object argument undergoes a change of state concerning possession, so it can be construed as the affected entity, namely as the patient. Therefore, not only agency of S but patienthood of O is guaranteed here, and also the direction of force is not bidirectional but unilateral in that the subject acts on the object one-sidedly. It is for these reasons that the agent-patient relationship can be recognized between the subject and the primary object, so eventually passivization is permitted. On the other hand, in the case of the *for*-dative ditransitive construction, as Goldberg puts it, this type of ditransitive does not strictly imply such a successful transfer, and thus it cannot be stated clearly that a change of state happens to the primary object, so it is difficult to identify the argument as the patient. This suspicious patienthood of the primary object prevents the recognition of the agent-patient relationship, which consequently contributes to unpassivization of this ditransitive construction.

In addition, what the current chapter has suggested is that passivization of the English ditransitive construction is influenced by the origins of the primary object. For example, the verb *give* originally takes the three arguments (agent, recipient, theme). To put it another way, the primary object is lexically specified by the verb, and this object is allowed for passivization. On the other hand, the verb *bake* inherently takes only the two argument, and the recipient role

which can be realized as the primary object is considered to be contributed by the ditransitive construction. This type of dummy object is less likely to be passivized. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a correlation between passivization and the source of the object.

Moreover, what has been pointed out in the current chapter is that the passivizability of *for*-dative ditransitive expressions vary according to the sentential interpretation. It has been repeatedly stated that it is unclear from this kind of ditransitive whether the primary object actually receives the secondary object. To put it another way, this ditransitive construction potentially has ambiguity in interpretation: (i) the primary object actually receives the secondary object (O_1 is a real possessor); (ii) the primary object has not received the secondary object yet (O_1 is an intended possessor). The current chapter has assumed that even if only one *for*-dative ditransitive construction is presented, the acceptability of passivization varies according to how one construes it. Specifically, it is predicted that if one chooses the interpretation (i), then the ditransitive construction is allowed for passivization, and that if the interpretation (ii) is chosen, then the same construction is excluded from the alternation. To summarize, it appears that passivization of the *for*-dative ditransitive construction is influenced by the sentential interpretations.

Chapter 5 has in turn unfold discussions on the application of these useful linguistic findings to contemporary English education. What has been proposed in the chapter is that high school students are encouraged to consider which syntactic form is proper for expressing each of the ditransitive objects as a subject, namely as a topic in discourse, which contributes to their profound understandings of English grammar and to their more natural and coherent English communication.

6.2 Future Prospects

The current paper has set foot in an unexplored domain, or passivization of the English ditransitive construction. The *for*-dative ditransitives are commonly unlikely to be passivized due to its suspicious patienthood of the primary object. In addition, in this kind of ditransitive, the primary object is not a lexically specified object by a verb but a dummy object contributed by the construction, which is concerned with the low passivizability that this type of ditransitive shows. Of course, what should be noted is that the current paper has not completely solved all mysteries of ditransitive passives. For instance, as Pinker (2013) points out, not all of the *for*-dative ditransitives are equally excluded from passivization: there is a kind of gradience in the acceptability of these ditransitive passives. According to Pinker's judgement, the passives of the *for*-dative ditransitives with verbs of obtaining (e.g., *get*, *earn*, *gain*) are more unacceptable than those of the *for*-dative ditransitives with verb of creation (e.g., *bake*, *knit*, *build*). Perhaps, this may reflect varieties of English or dialects of speakers (Steven Pinker is from Montreal, Canada). In addition, this point has been already reported in the first edition of *Learnability and Cognition*, which was published in 1989, so it is inferred that the acceptability of these passives may vary over time, but that is as far as this paper goes.

Nevertheless, as this paper has embodied, it is important to adopt an attitude with which one does not accept descriptions of English reference books or what an authority argues without question and investigates what he/she is interested in or a point in question thoroughly. Doing research with this spirit may enable one to make a great discovery which sheds light on grammatical phenomena that have not been fully clarified one day. Ultimately, if one masters this pursuing attitude, he/she will become a person of great insight and can capture things from a bird's-eye view.

Notes

Chapter 1

1. Note that the alternation between the active construction and the passive construction is different from the other three constructional alternations in that it involves a morphological change of the verb (Pinker, 2013, p. 105).
2. The implication that the place is holistically affected which can be seen in a sentence like (2b) is referred to as the “holism effect” (Pinker, 2007, p. 45).
3. The dative alternation occasionally involves the dative construction with the preposition other than *to* and *for*:

(i) a. I asked him a question.

b. I asked a question *of* him. (Kishimoto, 2001, p. 129; emphasis added)

However, what Kishimoto (2001) emphasizes is that this type of dative alternation is very exceptional.

4. As stated in Chapter 4, when the ditransitive construction is passivized, a passive form is commonly assumed in which the primary object of the ditransitive gains the surface subject.

Chapter 2

1. In traditional grammar, the primary object is called the “indirect object,” and the secondary object is called the “direct object” (Pinker, 2007, p. 57).

2. Pinker (2013) himself admits this point in the preface to new edition of *Learnability and Cognition*.
3. Pinker (2013) notes that even when the dative alternation applied to *for* verbs does involve a change of possession, there is an overlay of benefaction conflated with the possession change.
4. This figure is described by Pinker (2013, p. 247).
5. This figure is described by Pinker (2013, p. 258).
6. In Goldberg (1995), the *to*-dative construction is regarded as metaphorical extension from the caused-motion construction.
7. Goldberg (2019) suggests that the two constructions differ subtly in how their meanings are composed, referring to neurolinguistic work. For details, see Goldberg (2019, p. 33–34).
8. This figure described by Kodama (2003, p. 275).
9. This figure is described by Goldberg (1995, p. 77).
10. This figure is adapted from Goldberg (1995, p. 91).
11. This kind of expression becomes especially more acceptable with the first pronoun or the second pronoun in the primary object position, suggesting that this expression is used in a direct interpersonal communication (Kodama Kazuhiro, p.c.).

 - (i) a. I'll cry you a river.
 - b. ?I'll cry him a river.
12. Diessel (2016) reports that in some northern varieties of British English, notably in the dialect of Lancashire, this type of ditransitive is attested in corpora and accepted by native speakers of this variety.
13. Their observation is based on the British component of the International Corpus of English (Gries & Stefanowitsch, 2004, p. 103).

14. In the experiment, the priming trials were embedded in a recognition memory task in order to minimize subjects' attention to their speech and its structural features (Bock, 1986, p. 359–360).

Chapter 3

1. There is a low possibility that the *by*-phrase is expressed clearly in the passive construction. Dixon (2005) reports that in formal written English, more than 80 per cent of passives are agentless, and that the figure is undoubtedly higher for colloquial, spoken styles.
2. On the other hand, few or no verbs exist only in the passive (Pinker, 2013, p. 106).
3. In the original text, this is referred to as the “actor-patient relationship” (Ando, 2005, p. 343). The term “actor” can be replaced with “agent,” and this paper adopts the latter and uses it consistently.
4. The agent-patient relationship is typically required for passivization, but Ando (2005) admits that the alternation also accepts the experiencer-theme relationship:

(i) a. John loves Mary.

b. Mary is loved by John. (Ando, 2005, p. 347)

5. Interestingly, Kuno and Takami (2016) report that *divorce*, which is the antonym of *marry* can be passivized.

(ii) She was divorced by her husband about 10 years after they married because as he put it, “She was nuts!” (Kuno & Takami, 2016, p. 31)

They explain that concerning the act of divorce, perhaps it may be likely that one brings up the subject of

breaking up one-sidedly, and finally forces the other to acknowledge the divorce. In this sense, the agent-patient relationship is recognized.

6. Note that the following connative construction is exceptionally allowed for passivization.

(iii) a. Someone shot at Mary.

b. Mary was shot at.

(Dixon, 2005, p. 372)

Dixon (2005) explains that the oblique *Mary* is not physically affected, but she is psychologically affected.

That is to say, she will have had a scare, and may realize that she is at risk of a further attack. Therefore, she is construed as a patient.

7. According Dixon (2005), a sentence like (108b) may be used in a situation in which a room clerk in the hotel finds the room messed up and exclaims in annoyance.

Chapter 4

1. Nevertheless, Huddleston and Pullum (2002) report that this kind of expression gets becomes more acceptable when the ditransitive primary object refers to a personal pronoun and *by* phrase is indicated:

(i) a. My grandfather gave me this copy.

b. This copy was given me by my grandfather.

(Huddleston & Pullum 2002, p. 249)

2. In this case, the goal argument cannot be promoted to the surface subject in that it is preceded by a direct object and there is an alternative construction in which the argument is expressed as the direct object (namely, the ditransitive construction).

- (ii) a. John gave an apple to Mary.
- b. An apple was given to Mary.
- c. *Mary was given an apple to.

(Dixon, 2005, p. 372)

3. Goldberg (1995) argues that in the English ditransitive construction the role of the subject argument is only two types: 'agent' or cause.' In the following, the role of (iiia) is an agent, and that of (iiib) is cause.

- (iii) a. She gave him a kick.
- b. She gave him a headache.

(Goldberg, 1995, p. 94)

4. The judgement of the acceptability is based on Pinker (2013).

5. I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Kazuhiro Kodama for giving me this insight.

6. This table is made from Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004, p. 106).

7. It is assumed that for the same reason the metaphorical ditransitives such as 'Cry me a river' or 'Slay me a dragon' resist passivization: these are fixed expressions, and thus such a connectivity of the expression would be lost if the passive transformation were applied.

Chapter 5

1. The breakdown is as follows: 13 students in English department; 6 students in music department; 8 students in home economics department; 11 students in mathematics department; 17 students in social studies department; 9 students in technology department; 8 students in art department.

2. Verbs of choosing (e.g., *pick*, *select*, *choose*) are ruled out from the dativizable verb classes based on

Pinker's (2013) judgement.

(i) a. *John chose Mary a dress.

b. John chose a dress for Mary.

(Pinker, 2013, p. 116)

Appendix

What is shown below is all of the questions involved in the grammaticality judgement task.

.....

“If the following passives are correct, write ○ in the blank. If not, write × and state the reason.”

1. Sam baked Bob a cake.

→ Bob was baked a cake by Sam. _____

(The reason) _____

2. John painted this picture.

→ This picture was painted by John. _____

(The reason) _____

3. He gave John the book.

→ John was given the book. _____

(The reason) _____

4. Several famous people have lived in this house.

→This house has been lived in by several famous people. _____

(The reason) _____

5. Sam got Bob a watch.

→Bob was gotten a watch by Sam. _____

(The reason) _____

6. George turned the pages.

→The pages were turned by George. _____

(The reason) _____

7. He told his mother the information.

→His mother was told the information. _____

(The reason) _____

8. Generations of lovers have walked under the bridge.

→The bridge has been walked under by generations of lovers. _____

(The reason) _____

9. His hard work earned Bob a promotion.

→Bob was earned a promotion by his hard work. _____

(The reason) _____

10. My boss promised me a pay raise.

→I was promised a pay raise by my boss. _____

(The reason) _____

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