

How 'give' and 'receive' Provide Structure for More Abstract Notions:
The Case of Benefactives, Adversatives, Causatives, and Passives

Author(s): Tomoko Yamashita Smith

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**How 'give' and 'receive' provide structure for more abstract notions:
The case of benefactives, adversatives, causatives, and passives***

Tomoko Yamashita Smith
University of California, Berkeley

1. Introduction

This paper examines cross-linguistic categories of grammatical constructions and proposes that such categories can be polysemously related through metaphor. Lakoff and others have argued that the human conceptual system fundamentally involves metaphorical structure (e.g. Lakoff & Johnson 1980). Moreover, other work has suggested metaphorical patterns in grammar. For example, much has been written on the metaphorical extension from the space domain to the time domain (e.g. Traugott 1975, Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Svorou 1993). It has also been suggested that metaphor is one of the forces that can drive the process of grammaticalization (Sweetser 1988, 1990, Heine et al. 1991). Finally, Goldberg (1995) argues that constructions can be related by metaphorical mappings.

In this paper, I discuss how the semantics of four classes of grammatical constructions — 'benefactives', 'adversatives', 'causatives', and 'passives' — are related. I also argue that there is a cross-linguistic tendency for the notions expressed by the four constructions to be explicable in terms of 'giving and receiving' and that, therefore, 'giving and receiving' must be able to serve as concrete basis for languages to express the more abstract notions of the constructions in question. To support this claim, I show that (1) many unrelated languages have grammaticalized 'give' and 'receive' to fill a range of these related notions; (2) within one language two of the constructions can share a single syntactic form; and (3) a member of one of these classes of constructions may develop other meanings from this semantic "family" over time.

Some examples of the four construction types are given below. One kind of benefactive construction is exemplified in the English sentence (1), where the beneficiary is coded as the direct object.

- (1) *Mark baked Linda a cake.*

Adversative constructions are yet to be studied in-depth. However, it is known that they may take a variety of forms. To give just one example, Even, a Tungusic language, has adversative constructions that use an adversative marker, *-v*. These constructions express an action or event unfavorable for the subject, as in the following example (Malchukov 1993: 2).

- (2) *Huličan-Ø bodel-Ø-i ene-le-v-re-n.*
fox-NOM feet-NOM-REF POS SG hurt-INCH-ADV-NONFUT-3SG
'The fox's paws began to hurt; he was negatively affected.'

Although they may not be as common as causatives or passives, languages can have distinct adversative constructions. Thus, it is important to view the adversative construction as a separate grammatical category.¹

The semantics of causatives are very complex, and there are many semantic subclasses including, for example, the ‘coercive’ causative as in *Mark made Linda eat the cake* and the ‘permissive’ causative as in *Mark let Linda eat the cake*. This paper will treat both types.²

The passive category also has various subclasses, among which are the direct and indirect passives. Japanese allows both transitive and intransitive verbs to be passivized, as in (3) and (4), resulting in a direct and indirect passive, respectively. In (3), Ken is a regular subject of the transitive passive, but in (4) Ken is an added argument, referred to as an “affectee”.

- (3) *Ken ga Mari ni koros-are-ta.*
 Ken SUB Mari AGT kill-PASSIVE-PAST
 ‘Ken was killed by Mari.’
- (4) *Ken ga akatyan ni nak-are-ta.*
 Ken SUB baby AGT cry-PASSIVE-PAST
 ‘Ken was adversely affected by the baby crying.’

If syntax alone is used to compare the direct passive and indirect passive, it is difficult to treat them alike; however, using the cognitive framework I propose in section 2, their similarity can be captured.³

1.1. Previous research

There are countless studies of the semantics of both causative and passive constructions (e.g. Shibatani 1973, Talmy 1988, Kemmer & Verhagen 1994, Song 1996 for causatives and Davison 1980, Siewierska 1984, Keenan 1985 for passives). There are numerous studies on the benefactive construction, including a cross-linguistic study by Shibatani (1996). There are also some studies on the adversative construction (Oehrle & Nishio 1981, Wierzbicka 1988, Shibatani 1994). Moreover, there has been research on the relationship between some of the above.

The correlation between the causative and the passive has been much discussed (e.g. Shibatani 1985, Haspelmath 1990, Washio 1993). For example, Ikegami (1981) compares Japanese causatives and passives and gives a framework for the two constructions based on localist theory. He uses the notion of ‘cause’ for causatives and ‘get’ for passives.

Tuggy (1988) offers an account of the relationship between causatives and benefactive applicatives in an Aztec language, Tetelcingo Nahuatl, where an identical verbal suffix is used in both constructions. He argues that causatives and benefactive applicatives are similar since benefactive applicatives also involve a kind of causation, namely, the causing of ‘possession’.

While the previous treatments make good points, they explain only parts of the big picture. None posits a relationship between the four constructions. Moreover, in discussions of the causative, the term 'cause' alone is often used to explain the notion of 'causation'. However, as Lakoff (1977) and later Lakoff & Johnson (1980) point out, despite the fact that causation is a basic human concept, it is not an undecomposable primitive. I argue that the notions involved in all four constructions, including the notion of causation, can be construed in terms of the prototypical 'giving and receiving' scene.

2. Object exchange model: metaphorical mappings of the constructions

I argue that causative, passive, adversative, and benefactive constructions express semantic categories that are construed metaphorically and that there is a cross-linguistic tendency for the four constructions to reflect construal as metaphorical transfers.⁴ In other words, people can construe prototypical benefactive, adversative, causative and passive scenes as structured by a 'giver'- 'object'- 'recipient' relationship, and this construal is reflected in languages. I will call this construal of the four construction types the "object exchange model". Below, I discuss the metaphorical mappings likely to be involved in it.

With both benefactives and adversatives, the agent is mapped onto the giver, and the affectee is mapped onto the recipient. What is "transferred" from the giver to the recipient is the event and its effect — a positive effect, or benefit, in benefactive constructions and a negative effect in adversative constructions.

In passives, the agent is mapped onto the giver and the patient (of the direct passive) or affectee (of the indirect passive) is mapped onto the recipient. What is transferred is the event and its direct or indirect effect on the patient/affectee.

In causatives there are two mappings. Essentially, the causer is understood as the giver and the causee as the recipient. What is transferred in this case is the effect of the primary agent's causal agency onto a secondary agent, the causee.⁵ However, the causer is also understood as the recipient of the event and its effect, and the causee is mapped onto the giver. In prototypical causative situations, the causer is a volitional entity. S/he wants the causee to carry out the event and wants an effect that the event will produce. The following is a summary of the metaphorical mappings of the four constructions.

Table 1. Mappings

Constructions	Giver	Recipient	Transferred object
benefactive	agent	affectee	event & its positively evaluated effect
adversative	agent	affectee	event & its negatively evaluated effect
passive	agent	patient/affectee	event and its effect
causative	causer	causee	effect of causal agency
	causee	causer	performed action and its effect

3. Supporting evidence

3.1. Uses of 'give' and 'receive/get' as benefactives, adversatives, causatives and passives

There are synchronic and diachronic data to support the object exchange model. First, 'give' and 'receive/get' are used either in full lexical or grammaticalized form to express the four relevant notions in a variety of unrelated languages (see Tables 2 and 3). It should be noted that with all but the causative construction the use of one verb or the other ('give' or 'receive') reflects only a difference in point of view, not in the mapping as shown in Table 1. For example, if 'give' is used in a benefactive construction, then the subject is an agent; if 'receive/get' is used, then the subject is a beneficiary. Yet, in both cases, the mapping remains the same. In causative constructions, however, the use of 'give' involves one mapping and 'receive/get' another: a 'give' causative indicates that the causee receives an effect, while a 'receive' causative indicates that the causer receives the event.

Table 2. 'give'

constructions	languages (language family)
benefactive	Akan, Ewe, Fon, Nupe, Yoruba (Niger-Congo), Saramaccan (West African Creole), Thai (Tai), Vietnamese (Austro-Asiatic), Lahu, Mandarin (Sino-Tibetan), Marathi, Sinhala (Indo-European)
benefactive and adversative	Newari (Sino-Tibetan), Japanese, Korean
passives	Mandarin, Wu, Min, Hakka (Sino-Tibetan), Buyi (Sino-Tibetan or Austro-Tai), Yao (Sino-Tibetan (?)), Li/Hlai (KadaiTai (?))
causative	English, Bulgarian (Indo-European), Nandi, Luo (Nilo-Saharan), Alawa (Australian), Somali (Afro-Asiatic), Thai (Tai), Lahu (Sino-Tibetan), Yao Samsao (Sino-Tibetan or Austro-Tai), Vietnamese, Khmer (Austro-Asiatic)

Table 3. 'receive/get'

benefactive	English (Indo-European), Sgaw Karen (Sino-Tibetan), Vietnamese (Austro-Asiatic), Japanese
passive	English, Welsh (Indo-European), Thai (Tai), Vietnamese (Austro-Asiatic), Tzeltal (Mayan)
causative	English (Indo-European)

As shown in Table 2, many languages use 'give' in benefactives, but 'receive/get' is also used in benefactives in unrelated languages, such as Vietnamese and English, shown in sentence (5).

- (5) *My father is taking me to LA, and I get to go to Hollywood.*

Moreover, some languages, such as Japanese, use both 'give' and 'receive' in benefactives. In Japanese, when 'give' is used, the agent or the giver is coded as the subject, as in (6).

- (6) *Kei ga Naoko ni hon o katte-yat-ta.*
 Kei SUB Naoko DAT book ACC buy-give-PAST
 'Kei did the favor of buying Naoko a book.'

When 'receive' is used, the beneficiary is coded as the subject, as in (7).

- (7) *Naoko ga Kei ni hon o katte-morat-ta.*
 Naoko SUB Kei DAT book ACC buy-receive-PAST
 'Naoko received the favor of Kei's buying a book.'

In Newari, 'give' is used not only in benefactives but also in adversatives, as in (8) and (9).

- (8) *Rām-āñ Gita-yāta lukha cāekā: bila.*
 Ram-ERG Gita-DAT door.ABS open.PP give.PD
 'Ram opened the door for Gita.'
- (9) *Jimi macā mhiga: sinā: bila.*
 my child.ABS yesterday die.PP give.PD
 'My child died on me yesterday.'

'Receive/get' is commonly grammaticalized into a passive marker. Languages that use 'receive/get' in passives include English, Welsh, Tzeltal, and Thai. (Siewierska 1984, Haspelmath 1990).⁶ Sentence (10) is an example from English in which Mary is seen as the recipient of the event.

- (10) *Mary got hit by a car.*

On the other hand, 'give' is also used in passives in dialects of Chinese (Hashimoto 1988). Example (11) is from Mandarin and, in this case, the agent is metaphorically seen as the giver of the action with *gěi* 'give' introducing the agent of a passive sentence.

- (11) *Nèipán cài gěi tā chīguāng-le.*
 That vegetable give him eat-finish-ASP
 'That plate of food was finished by him.' (Tiee 1986: 298)

In the case of the causative, the use of 'give' as a lexical source for causative marking is so common that it can only be explained by postulating a cognitive connection between causation and giving. In other words, it may simply be easy for humans to construe causation as a form of giving.⁷ Example (12) is from Thai and (13) is from Alawa.

- (12) *Saākahaā hây dèk wîŋ.*
 Saka give child run
 'Saka had the child run.' (Vichit-Vadakan 1976:460)
- (13) *Lilmi-r•i mar• a-muta-ya-ngur•u da an-kir•iya.*
 man-ERG carry he-give-PST-her PRT CL-woman
 'The man made the woman carry it.' (Song 1996: 32)

There are also languages in which 'give' is used in the permissive causative, as in (14) from Yao Samsao.

- (14) *Maa pun fu?-cuøy cap budo?-gway*
 mother give child cut fingernails
 'The mother let the child cut his nails.' (Matisoff 1991:428)

In all the examples (12), (13), and (14), the causer is seen as the giver and causee as the recipient. However, it is also possible to see the causee as the giver and the causer as the recipient. That is, the causer receives the action performed by the causee as well as the action's effect. English causatives with 'get', as in (15), should be understood to have the causer as the recipient. I wanted him to stop smoking and I got him to stop smoking.

- (15) *I got him to stop smoking.*

Note that English also has a causative with 'have', which implies that the causer "obtains" the event done by the causee. Thus, the use of 'have' also shows that we can see the causee as a giver and the causer as a recipient.

In summary, the fact that numerous languages have grammaticalized the verbs 'give' and 'receive/get' in benefactives, adversatives, causatives, and passives supports the object exchange model.

3.2. Benefactives and adversatives as extensions of give constructions

Syntactic evidence also supports the object exchange model. That is, in some languages, benefactives and adversatives exhibit the same syntactic pattern as 'give' constructions.

For example, English ditransitives and benefactives have the same structure, as in (16) and (17).

- (16) *Bob gave Mary a cake.*
 (17) *Bob baked Mary a cake.*

As Shibatani (1996) argues, cross-linguistically, benefactives are best construed as extensions of a schema based on the 'give' construction (see also Goldberg (1995) for a similar argument about English).

Moreover, in some Indo-European languages, the dative construction is used to convey either a benefactive or an adversative notion (Wierzbicka 1988, Janda

1993, Shibatani 1994). The affected entity is marked as dative, which suggests that the affectee is seen as a recipient. The Czech sentence (18) demonstrates a benefactive reading.

- (18) *Ludmila mu ukazala cestu domu.*
 Ludmila-NOM him-DAT showed way-ACC home
 'Ludmila showed him the way home.' (Janda 1993: 48)

So far, two types of evidence have been presented to support the object exchange model: evidence from grammaticalization and evidence from syntactic patterning.

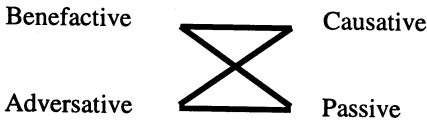
4. The relationship between the benefactive and adversative and between the causative and passive

In this section, I discuss the semantic relations between the constructions. Figure 1 is a schematization of their relations.

Figure 1.

Evaluation of an event

Internal structure of an event



Intuitively, these constructions can be grouped into two pairs, 'causative-passive' and 'benefactive-adversative'. As illustrated in the right column of Figure 1, the 'causative-passive' pair concerns the internal structure of causal events. Although the internal structures of prototypical causative and passive events differ (e.g. the prototypical number of arguments differs), in both cases the causal event includes an initiator and an endpoint.

Moreover, grouping the causative and passive together is supported by the fact that some languages (e.g. English, French, and Korean) use identical constructions to mark these two notions. For example, causative constructions in English and French can denote a passive sense, as in (19) and (20) (see Washio 1993 for more examples and analysis of ambiguity between causative and passive senses).

- (19) *John had his watch stolen.*
 (20) *Jean s'est fait voler sa montre.*

On the other hand, as shown in the left column in Figure 1, 'benefactive-adversative' denotes subjective evaluation of an event: the speaker judges the affectee as positively or negatively affected by the event performed by the agent.

Again, this grouping is supported by the fact that some languages use identical constructions to mark these two notions. For instance, in Lai, a Tibeto-Burman language, the benefactive particle *piak* may also convey the notion of 'adversity', depending on the context (see also the Newari examples (8) and (9)).

- (21) *Tsewmaŋ niʔ law ʔa-ka-thloʔ-piak.*
 Tsewmang ERG field 3s-1s-weed-BEN
 'Tsewmang weeded the field for me.'
- (22) *Tsewmaŋ ʔa-vok ʔan-thaʔ-piak.*
 Tsewmang 3s-pig 3p-kill-ADV
 'They killed Tsewmang's pig on him.'

The notion expressed by the causative construction contrasts with the notion expressed by the passive. Similarly the notion expressed by the benefactive contrasts with the notion expressed by the adversative. The opposed senses within each pair are mutually exclusive, so that we do not expect to find constructions that can be interpreted as simultaneously passive and causative, or benefactive and adversative. This opposition of senses within a pair also helps speakers to disambiguate, through context, sentences such as the above, since any evidence for one interpretation is evidence against the other.⁸

5. Combinations of the constructions' notions

Interestingly, since the causative-passive and benefactive-adversative pairs express conceptual and semantic parameters that are potentially independent of each other, it is possible to combine the notion expressed by a member of the causative-passive pair with a notion expressed by a member of the benefactive-adversative pair. This is indicated in Figure 1 by solid line connections. The possible combinations of the four constructions are: benefactive passive, adversative passive, benefactive causative and adversative causative.

Examples of such combinations are found among the world's languages. First, 'benefactive passives' exist in Thai, Vietnamese, and Korean (Davison 1980, Siewierska 1984), as shown in the Thai example (23).

- (23) *Phǒm (dâj-)râb chæŋ.*
 I (deferential) receive invite
 'I was invited.' (Noss as cited in Davison 1980: 58)

The second combination, 'adversative passive', also exists in Thai, Vietnamese, Korean, Mandarin, and Japanese (Davison 1980, Siewierska 1984), as shown in the Thai example (24).⁹

- (24) *Khâw thùug chæŋ.*
 he suffer invite
 'He was invited (against his will).'

Sentence (25) is an example from Russian of the third combination, the 'benefactive causative'. Here, the causer is also the beneficiary (Babby 1993).

- (25) *Ona sšila sebe novoe plat'e.*
 she-NOM sewed herself-DAT new dress-ACC
 'She had a new dress made (She had someone make her a new dress).'
 'She made a new dress (she did the sewing herself).'

This sentence has two possible interpretations. The first is the benefactive causative reading, which means that the agent is seen as both the giver and recipient in the causal event. The causer gives the effect of his/her causal agency to the causee and receives the event done by the causee. In addition, this received event is positively evaluated, and therefore the whole scene is understood as a benefactive causative.

An example of the fourth combination, adversative causative, is taken from Even, a Tungusic language (Malchukov 1993).¹⁰

- (26) *Bujuhemŋe-Ø buju-m ila-v-ra-n.*
 hunter-NOM wild deer-ACC stand up-ADV-NONFUT-3s
 'The wild deer stood up: the hunter was negatively affected.'
 (Malchukov 1993: 8)

An alternative translation of (26) is 'because of something the hunter did unintentionally, s/he caused the deer to stand up (indicating that it might flee), which negatively affected the hunter'. Sentences of this type have been described as nonvolitional permissive causatives, because the causal agent does not wish the event to occur but 'permits' it due to his/her own inattentiveness.

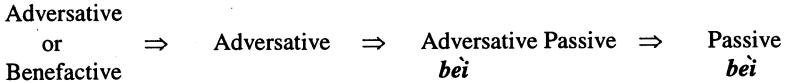
Unlike passives with benefactive or adversative readings, which are simply evaluated positively or negatively, causatives with benefactive and adversative readings seem to express different kinds of causation. Perhaps, the factor that makes the causatives either benefactive or adversative is 'volitionality'. That is, if the causer volitionally acts upon the causee, the causer *wanted* the event to happen, and getting what one wants implies a benefactive notion. This is the case with the Russian benefactive causative, as discussed earlier. However, if the causer involuntarily acts on the causee, what happens is an *accident*, which implies an adversative notion, as in Even's nonvolitional permissive causative.

6. Historical development

Finally, it is possible for one of the constructions in question to develop into another. For example, originally, Mandarin had markers to mark the direction of transitivity and to express 'affectedness', i.e. the subject's being affected by something 'beyond his/her control'. The use of these markers can be found the oracle-bone inscriptions from the 14th-11th C. BCE. Although initially this 'affectedness' could be interpreted as either 'benefactive' or 'adversative', it came to be interpreted as only 'adversative'. Then, by the 1st century BCE, these

adversative markers had been reanalyzed as passive markers, yet they retained their adversative sense as well. Now, in modern Mandarin, one of the markers, *bèi*, has started to function as a pure passive marker, without the original adversative sense, especially under the influence of and association with English passives (see Chen 1994 for a detailed explanation of the development of passive markers). The development of passive marking in Mandarin is roughly represented as follows.

Figure 2.



7. Conclusion

I have shown that, in many unrelated languages, verbs meaning ‘give’ and ‘receive/get’ are used in the conventional expression of the benefactive, adversative, causative and passive constructions; that some of the constructions’ syntactic patterns can be identical to those of ‘give’ constructions; that syntactic patterns between pairs of constructions can also be identical; and that the constructions’ notions may combine semantically and even evolve from one into another over time. All of these points provide indirect evidence for the psychological reality of the object exchange model as a basis for the development of the four constructions. If the model is a psychological reality, we can infer that one way in which the human mind structures language is by expanding a basic conceptual framework, such as the giving and receiving scene, in order to encode a broader range of meanings.

Although space does not allow a complete discussion, it should be noted here, briefly, that languages use a variety of words from within the giving and receiving scene as a lexical source for the four constructions. For example, English uses ‘have’ to indicate causation, Japanese can use ‘from’ to mark the agent of a passive; and Lahu can use ‘come’ in benefactive constructions (‘come’ is often part of receiving, because the received object can be perceived as coming to the receiver). Such words illustrate that metaphor can operate systematically within the framework, and suggest that the framework is robust.

This paper is an overview of the general relationship of the four constructions. For a better understanding of these constructions, more detailed study of particular languages is needed (for one such study of Japanese, see Radetzky & Smith to appear). In addition, to shed more light on the cognitive processes involved in the acquisition of the four constructions, studies in first and/or second language acquisition could be beneficial. Finally, it should prove instructive to analyze how the four constructions and the object exchange model fit within the larger picture of event structure.

NOTES

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1. The notion of adversity is sometimes expressed by different constructions such as passives and causatives. For instance, one type of Japanese causative expresses adversity (Oehrle & Nishio 1981). See section 4 for more about two notions co-existing in a single construction.

2. Lexical causatives can be explained with my model; however due to limitations of space, I do not include them as a part of my discussion. Nonetheless, lexical causatives can be understood as metaphorical transfers and have been discussed as such. For example, Lakoff (1993) points out that causation is seen as 'giving or taking'. Also Goldberg (1995: 144) discusses 'causal events as transfers'.

3. Passives have more than one function. One of them is to mark affectedness of the subject (Keenan 1985), and it is this function that is best explained in terms of my giving-receiving framework. Other functions of passives, such as defocusing the agent (Shibatani 1985), which appears to be behind the impersonal passive, are less clearly related to my model.

4. In his detailed cognitive linguistic study of 'give', Newman (1996) observes that 'give' is extended via metaphor cross-linguistically to express various abstract notions, including the 'causative' and 'benefactive' notions. However Newman's account of these constructions differs from mine in some important respects; moreover, Newman does not share my aim to relate these constructions.

5. In a more detailed view, the recipient and transferred object have dual status. The primary agent acts on the secondary, which also makes the secondary 'agent' an 'affectee' (as implied by 'recipient'), and the transferred object is not only the 'effect' of the primary agent's causal agency, but also the 'cause' for the secondary agent to perform the action.

6. Other lexical sources for passives include 'be', 'become', and 'stay'. Languages that use stative or inactive verbs to express passivity focus on the result of the event. This, however, does not refute the fact that passivity can be seen as a transfer.

7. For other lexical sources of causatives, see Li 1991, Pederson 1991, and Moreno 1993.

8. Because the four notions exist within the same framework, identical marking along horizontal and diagonal lines in Fig.1 should also be possible. Indeed, many languages use one morpheme to mark both causatives and benefactives (Frayzyngier 1985, Tuggy 1988, Matisoff 1991). English also uses 'get' in passives and benefactives. Identical marking in these cases, however, exists only in non-identical constructions, unlike identical marking for causative and passive pairs and benefactive and adversative pairs which can be disambiguated even when the form of the constructions is exactly the same.

9. The English get-passive also tends to express an adversative sense (Chappell 1980, Givón & Yang 1994)

10. In fact, this construction also shows characteristics of passive constructions (for a relevant discussion, see Malchukov 1993).

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