

MISCELLANY

ACCOUNTING FOR THE CONSTRUCTIONAL BEHAVIOR OF “FETCH,” “FIND,” “GATHER” AND “REACH”

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to shed light on the different kinds of constructional realization for the verbs “fetch,” “find,” “gather” and “reach” by contrasting them with “bring,” “search,” “collect,” and “extend” respectively in the ditransitive and the dative constructions. To this end, I will make use of Levin’s lexical semantics and the explanatory tools developed by the Lexical Constructional Model (henceforth LCM), as proposed by Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal (“Levels”; “Constraints”). The LCM has developed a set of internal and external constraints that define the conditions for lexical-constructional integration or subsumption.

KEY WORDS: Ditransitive construction, dative construction, Lexical Constructional Model, subsumption.

RESUMEN

Este artículo se propone arrojar luz sobre los distintos tipos de realización construccional para los verbos “ir a por”, “encontrar”, “recoger” y “alcanzar”, contrastándolos con “traer”, “buscar”, “reunir” y “extender” en la construcción ditransitiva y la construcción dativa. Con este fin, usaré la semántica léxica de Levin y las herramientas explicativas desarrolladas por el Modelo Léxico Construccional (MLC), propuesto por Ruiz de Mendoza y Mairal (“Levels”; “Constraints”). El MLC ha desarrollado una serie de restricciones internas y externas que definen las condiciones para la integración léxico-construccional o subsunción.

PALABRAS CLAVE: construcción ditransitiva, construcción dativa, Modelo Léxico Construccional, subsunción.

1. INTRODUCTION

Functionalist approaches to language like Role and Reference Grammar (Van Valin and La Polla; Van Valin) and cognitively-oriented constructionist theories of verb meaning (Goldberg, *Constructions: A Construction; Constructions at Work* see also Michaelis; Lakoff, *Women, “Contemporary”*; Lakoff and Johnson) have long tried to find an explanation for the relationship between the lexicon and the grammar. According to Butler and González-García and Golzávez-García and Butler over the

last few years functional and cognitive and/or constructionist approaches have started to share similar views on some substantive theoretical and methodological issues. Nevertheless, none of these models of language can offer a fully adequate account on meaning construction. On the one hand, functionalists claim that morphosyntactic structure can be derived from the information coded in a lexical item by applying a set of linking rules. On the other hand, constructionist models consider that constructions are the overall determinants of sentence meaning, thus overlooking the crucial role of verbal semantics. The theoretical assumptions on which the present study is based are drawn from the Lexical Constructional Model (LCM henceforth), as outlined in Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez and Mairal Usón ("Levels"; "Constraints"). The LCM arises from the need to bridge the gap between the aforementioned theoretical frameworks and makes use of the achievements of the Functional Lexematic Model (Faber and Mairal Usón) in order to provide robust generalizations about the integration of verbs into given constructions. The departing point of the LCM is the assumption that the constructional meaning interacts in various ways with verbal semantics. Sometimes there is a perfect match between the constructional and verbal semantics, as can be seen in the case of the verb "give," whose inherent notion of transfer is not contributed by the ditransitive construction. Some other times, the meaning of a lexical unit has to adjust to the overall meaning of a construction in order to be compatible with it, as illustrated by the verb "laugh," which undergoes a subcategorial conversion process in order to fit in a caused-motion construction like "The audience laughed the soloist off the stage." This example is a case of figurative caused motion which is used to denote the result of emotional impact. On some other occasions, it is an internal predicate variable that constrains the nature of both the predicate and its constructional arguments. A case in point is that of the use of the caused-motion construction with the verb "gather." This verb denotes the idea of a coherent totality of entities, thus predicting the nature of the prepositional slot, which can only describe a coherent whole (e.g. "She gathered her straggly hair into a bun at the back of her head..." BNC HJH 1691). This study analyzes four main verbs extracted from Levin's list of "get" verbs, namely "fetch," "find," "gather" and "reach." My aim is to find out what principles regulate the integration of these verbs into two main constructions, namely the ditransitive and the dative constructions. In addition, related verbs (i.e. "bring," "search," "collect," and "extend"), which were not included in the inventory of verbs in Levin, will be discussed and contrasted with the existing verbs. I have used Levin's taxonomic work because this is the only exhaustive listing of verbs within the change of possession dimension. In line with the usage-based character of the LCM, I have been adopted a corpus-based approach. My analysis is carried out on naturally-occurring data taken from the original edition of the British National Corpus (BNC henceforth), and The Corpus of Contempo-

* Financial support for this research has been provided by the Spanish Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación, grant no. FFI 2010-17610/FILO. Center for Research in the Applications of Language (CRAL), Universidad de La Rioja.

rary American English (COCA henceforth). Additionally, I have taken the liberty of constructing some of the examples for the sake of theoretical debate. However, the grammaticality of these examples was previously checked by native speakers.

This article is structured as follows. Section 2 describes the “internal” and “external constraints” that operate on the integration process between the aforementioned “get” verbs and argument structure constructions. Section 3 provides a bird’s-eye view of the salient semantico-syntactic properties of the ditransitive and the dative constructions. In section 4 my main focus is on factors that either license or block out the unification between “fetch,” “find,” “gather” and “reach” and the ditransitive and the dative constructions. The final section summarizes all the findings of the present research.

2. THE ANALYTICAL APPARATUS OF THE LEXICAL CONSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

The Lexical Constructional Model (LCM) is a usage-based model of language that features four different levels of description: level 1 focuses on argument structure lexical and constructional specifications; level 2 deals with implicational constructions; level 3 with illocutionary meaning and level 4 is concerned with discourse configurations. In the present research my main interest is in level 1 argument structure constructions. The LCM regards lexical-constructional integration or “subsumption” as a “stepwise meaning production mechanism that consists in the principled incorporation of lower levels of semantic structure (captured in the form of lexical and constructional templates) into higher levels of syntactically-oriented structure” (Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal, “Levels” 377). Lexical-constructional subsumption is a basic cognitive process that is regulated by a set of internal and external constraints, which filter out impossible combinations of lexical items with constructions. Internal constraints make reference to those licensing or blocking factors that take into consideration the conceptual composition of lexical and constructional configurations (viz. their encyclopedic and event structure makeup). In contrast, external constraints take the form of high-level metaphoric and metonymic operations (see Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal, “High-level”).

In the remainder of this section I provide an overview of those internal and external constraints that will be employed later in my analysis. The Event Identification Condition stresses that there should be a matching between the subevents specified by the lexical template and those encoded by the constructional template. For the sake of illustration, contrast the conative construction “Tom hit at the wall with *Tom petted at the cat.” In the first sentence the verb “hit” moulds into the conative construction because the verb and the construction share the same event structure that is both have a motion and a contact subevent. The second example shows that the fusion process becomes no longer possible when the verb involved is an activity predicate describing only a contact subevent. It is also important to show how the Internal Variable Conditioning works since this internal constraint is widely attested in my analysis. The world-knowledge information associated to an internal

predicate variable restricts the nature of both the predicate and its constructional arguments. Consider the use of the verb “drive” in the resultative construction. The causative use of “drive” is usually associated with the loss of control for the object (e.g. in a sentence like “He drove the car” it is clear that the direct object is controlled by the subject). Because of this, the tendency of the Z element is to be axiologically negative as in “drive someone mad/crazy/insane/nuts,” and so forth.

All the examples above illustrate the activity of internal constraints on lexical-constructional subsumption. In what follows I will describe how high-level metaphors and metonymies determine the incorporation of a lexical predicate into a given construction. Thus, the high-level metaphor A COMMUNICATIVE ACTION IS AN EFFECTUAL ACTION licenses the combination of the verb *talk* with the caused-motion construction (cf. “A guy I’d known at college talked me into a job with the Defense Department” COCA HR7 W_fict_prose). In addition, the analytical apparatus of the LCM encompasses high-level metonymies originally formulated by Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez such as INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION (e.g. “John shipped Thomas a package”) or OBJECT FOR ACTION (e.g. “He began [drinking/canning/selling] the beer”). Jackendoff accounted for examples like this last one in terms of “enriched composition.” The verb “begin” canonically subcategorizes (i.e. requires as a complement) an action (“He began drinking the beer”). Jackendoff rightly observes that sometimes this verb is followed by an NP as in “He began the beer.” The action (drinking) is implicit, so it is not possible to say that the meaning of “begin the beer” results from combining the meanings of “begin” and “beer.” For Jackendoff this phenomenon is an enrichment of the meaning of the complement from beer to whatever action is performed on the beer (e.g. drinking it). In Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez it is argued that this process is in fact metonymic: an object (the beer) stands for the action that is performed on the basis of this object (drinking/selling/distributing/canning the beer).

3. THE DITRANSITIVE AND THE DATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

The ditransitive (e.g. “Peter gave Mary a book”) and the dative constructions (e.g. “Peter gave a book to Mary”) make up the “dative alternation,” also termed “dative shift.” The former is a dative realized by double objects [NP/SUBJ [VP/PRED NP/OBJ1 NP/OBJ2]] or an “internal” dative (Wierzbicka) whereas the latter is a dative realized by a prepositional phrase, namely “to” or “for” [NP/SUBJ [VP/PRED NP/OBJ PP/OBL]] or an “external” dative (Wierzbicka). In this paper the term “construction” will be adopted since the notion of “syntactic alternation” is somehow reminiscent of the Chomskyian derivations and in Construction Grammar this concept is treated as epiphenomenal, that is a consequence of more powerful postulates called “surface generalizations” (Goldberg, “Surface”; *Constructions: A Construction*). The dative alternation displays a single surface argument structure form rather than two related forms where the first one activates the frame of ‘giving’ while the second one foregrounds the transfer of possession. The ditransitive

construction, which specifies the result obtained in a process, can be schematized as follows: [LS1] CAUSE [LS2], where LS is the logical structure. This construction comprises a cause-consequence relationship like BECOME **pred'** (y) which encodes a static end result of an event as described by Van Valin. In this schema, the first template is an activity or a causative accomplishment whilst the second lexical template includes a BECOME operator: [**do'** (x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME [**pred'** (y, z)]. This template can be interpreted as follows: an effector (x) carries out an unspecified event (Ø) that causes a Patient (z) to come into the possession of a recipient (y). The ditransitive construction “John read Mary a book,” which contains an activity predicate, can be represented by the next logical structure: [**read'** (John, book)] CAUSE [BECOME [**have'** (Mary, information in the book)]. A ditransitive construction can also contain a causative accomplishment predicate as in “John gave Mary a book.” The logical structure of such a sentence looks like this: [**hand'** (John, book)] CAUSE [BECOME [**have'** (Mary, book)]. In contrast, the dative construction displays the following constructional template: [**do'** (x, y)] CAUSE [BECOME **be-LOC'** (y, z)]. This template is similar to Pinker’s semantic variant in which [X acts on Y (in our case X does something to Y, i.e. manipulates with the hands)] effecting (causing) that [Y goes to Z (in our case Y is located in Z’s sphere of control)]. This template suggests that there is an overlap between the locative role and the recipient role and it conveys the idea of movement through the change of location. According to Goldberg (*Constructions: A Construction*), the English ditransitive construction (X CAUSES Y TO RECEIVE Z) is characterized by the following properties:

- (1) It contributes transfer semantics that cannot be attributed to the lexical verb.
- (2) The goal argument must be animate (recipient rather than patient).
- (3) Two non-predicative NPs are licensed in post-verbal position.
- (4) The construction links recipient role with object function.
- (5) The subject role must be filled with a volitional agent who intends transfer.

The LCM treats the dative construction as a subcase of the caused-motion construction and dativity comes from the combination of a transfer verb and a human recipient (e.g. “Peter gave a book to Mary”). Goldberg (*Constructions: A Construction; “Surface”*) also regards the dative construction as a daughter construction of the caused-motion construction. Pesetsky, Panther, Harley, and Krifka (“Semantic”), to name a few, are other linguists that have interpreted the dative construction as a case of caused-motion construction. The caused-motion construction (e.g. “The man kicked the dog into a corner...” BNC FRK 664) has the semantics X CAUSES Y TO MOVE Z, where the Z element describes the path of motion expressed by the Oblique or directional PP (prepositional phrase). Moreover, Goldberg (*Constructions: A Construction*) contends that the caused-motion construction has the following features:

- (1) It contributes caused-motion semantics that cannot be ascribed to the lexical verb itself.

- (2) It supplies the caused-motion semantics that cannot be attributed to the preposition.
- (3) The Causer argument cannot be an Instrument.

4. THE LEXICAL CONSTRUCTIONAL MODEL ACCOUNT OF “FETCH,” “FIND,” “GATHER” AND “REACH”

As pointed out in the introductory section, this paper is concerned with offering a descriptively and explanatorily adequate account of the constructional behavior of four dichotomous pairs of verbs, namely “fetch” versus “bring,” “find” versus “search,” “gather” versus “collect,” “reach” versus “extend”. “Fetch”, “find,” “gather” and “reach” are grouped by Levin among “get” verbs and they participate in the ditransitive construction since all of them meet the sine-qua-non condition of the “transfer” model, that is the agent possesses the entity to be transferred and can do without it.

Although “fetch” is semantically similar to the verb “bring,” a number of relevant asymmetries need to be highlighted. Although both of them can take part in the ditransitive construction (cf. “I was upset, so I held the baby while she fetched me a cup of tea” BNC JY0 1271 and “He brought me my food” BNC G07 805), only the second one accepts a dative construction (cf. “You know where the cane is kept. Bring/*Fetch it to me” COCA FPX W_fict_prose). The verb “bring” conveys the idea that someone carries an object from one place to another with or without a purpose. The agent and the recipient can be in the same place but not necessarily so (e.g. “She brought some souvenirs from France”). When there is an overlap in the locations of the agent and the recipient the ditransitive construction is preferred. On the other hand, the dative construction is used when the locations of both the agent and the recipient do not coincide (e.g. “Don Carleton describes how Bill Larnach, Bristol’s retiring University Marshal, brought the wit and tough wisdom of his birthplace, and some more operatic splendours, to generations of Engineering students” BNC H45 668). “Fetch” [move + bring], which is a more complex verb, suggests that the agent and the recipient are in the same place. Therefore, this verb activates a different scenario in which the agent has to move to the place where the desired entity is located and bring it to the recipient. The efforts undertaken by the agent in the case of “fetch” are greater than in the case of “bring.” “Fetch” and “bring” exploit the same frame differently. We assume that the fact that the verb “fetch” already incorporates the idea of movement of the agent to the location of an entity makes it clash with the dative construction, which encodes exclusively the movement of the transferred entity from a location to the recipient’s location. The same explanation is valid for the verb “get” [move+bring] which is also incompatible with the dative construction (cf. “*Get the remote control to me”). The impossibility of this prepositional dative phrase is justified by the fact that the scenario evoked by the verb “get” is made up of two episodes: one in which an agent moves to the location of the entity to be transferred and another one in which the agent, who is now in possession of the entity, moves again to where the recipient is located to cause him/her to have that

entity. It is my contention that the syntactic behavior of “bring” and “fetch” (i.e. the (non)-participation in the dative construction) can be explained by means of the Internal Variable Conditioning according to which the world knowledge information encapsulated in the semantic make-up of the predicate restricts the nature of its constructional arguments. Moreover, the major difference between “give” verbs and “get” verbs is that the former group matches with agents who already possess the entity to be transferred whereas the latter group implies that the agent has to come into the possession of an entity so that they can transfer it to a recipient. How these agents come to have the entity to be transferred gains conceptual prominence over the idea of movement of the entity from an agent to a recipient and this explains why “get” verbs cannot combine with the dative construction. “Get” verbs in themselves only express inception of possession and that is why they must combine with a ditransitive construction, which can supply them with the idea of transfer of an entity from an agent to a recipient. Furthermore, the verb “bring” has been classified as a verb of continuous imparting of force just like “carry,” “pull,” “push” or “lift” but, unlike the rest of the verbs of its class, it displays a different syntactic behavior by allowing both the dative and the ditransitive construction (cf. “She brought me the box” vs. “*She pulled me the box”). In trying to explain how this is possible, Krifka (“Semantic”) postulates a “homomorphic mapping” between the causing event and the motion event in the case of “pull” whereas “bring” expresses a peculiar feature of the causing event, namely the correspondence between the location of the moving entity and the location of the agent.¹

There are some other ways in which a person can come into the possession of an entity. The verb “find,” which means coming upon something unexpectedly or by searching, can be used in the ditransitive construction where it has the meaning of getting something only by searching (you search something in particular with the intention of finding it):

- (2) “Please” find me a new mummy “who will love me a lot and look after me”
(COCA K3T W_newsp_other_report)

The verb “find,” which highlights the result of an activity (searching), can only select the ditransitive construction since this construction focuses on the result of an event (i.e. the possessive relationship between a recipient and an object). That is why a sentence like “*Please search me a mummy who will love me” is deemed ungrammatical, since the verb “search” expresses an unfinished event (“try to find something/someone”). In addition, Rappaport and Levin show that verbs like “find” and “reach” can be classified both as result and lexically telic verbs (i.e. they have

¹ Krifka (“Manner” 8-9) observes that the object that is transferred has “the same location as the agent during the causing event” and at the end of the causing event the object that is brought must be in possession of the recipient.

a terminal point).² Thus, the difference between “find” and “search” can also be explained in terms of telicity, viz. “search” is a non-telic verb whereas “find” is an intrinsically telic verb.

Also, the combination between the verb “find” and the dative construction (e.g. “*I found a job to him”) turns out to be ungrammatical since it is impossible to construe this situation as a transfer (people cannot transfer something that does not belong to them or something that they do not have control over). To start with, if the job were the speaker’s, he/she would need to use a different verb (e.g. “I relinquished my job to him”). But, this is not obviously the case. Secondly, if the speaker were looking for a job for someone else, the job would not be the speaker’s when he/she finds it. Lastly, the speaker is not the one who is giving someone the job; he/she only finds the person who is going to provide the job.

Levin classifies “gather” as a “get”-type verb whereas “collect” is listed among “obtain” verbs. “Gather” and “collect” are semantically related verbs but the difference between them is to be found at the constructional level. Thus, the former can be found in the ditransitive construction (cf. “He gathered me some flowers from the garden”) whereas the latter cannot (cf. “*He collected me some flowers from the garden”). Other crucial differences involve the type of concept each invokes. To illustrate, the two verbs are not always interchangeable even in the transitive construction: “He collected/*gathered the rent from the tenants” and “He collected/*gathered the gas in pure form using a small bag.” The verb “gather” adds to “collect” the idea that what you get is put together in a coherent way. If you gather thoughts, you put them together or you assemble them so that they look like one whole. An example that has been extracted from the Bible clearly reinforces this idea:

- (3) “How often I wanted to gather your children together, like a hen gathers her own brood under her wings, and you refused!” (Luke 13.34)

In this verse, Jesus complains about the Jews, who have always been a scattered people because they did not deserve to be protected from other nations and were taken captives into foreign lands. If we were to replace the verb “gather” with “collect,” the sentence would not make sense since the emphasis is on making the scattered people one whole (cf. “How often I wanted to *collect your children together, like a hen *collects her own brood under her wings, and you refused!”). As it was stated before, the verb “gather” can be used in the ditransitive construction, in the context of picking flowers for someone else (cf. “He gathered me some flowers from the garden”). Here, the verb “gather” suggests more than the mere collecting of flowers: they are put together so that the arrangement looks nice. For this reason,

² Rappaport and Levin argue that the notion of result should not be equated with telicity, even though telicity often involves a result state (cf. Dowty; Pustejovsky). A result verb like “cool” can have both telic (e.g. “He cooled the solution in three minutes; it was now at the desired temperature”) and atelic uses (e.g. “He cooled the solution for three minutes”).

this verb fuses straightforwardly into the ditransitive construction, thus placing emphasis on the close relationship between the object and the receiver (including the receiver's possibility of taking joy in holding the object). By contrast, the verb "collect" is not felicitous in this construction since there is a mismatch between the idea of just finding and picking up objects and the emphasis of the ditransitive construction on the relationship between the objects and the receiver. Moreover, the verb "gather" is also compatible with the caused-motion construction, as can be seen in the utterances exemplified below:

- (4) "But before she could say anything further Ross—who had remained silent so far—took a quick step forward" and gathered her into his arms (COCA JXX W_fict_prose)
- (5) "Vi" gathered her forehead into a frown (BNC CEH 2970)
- (6) "Before she could make another move, his mouth covered hers and he" gathered her so tightly to him "that making any move was impossible" (COCA HGD W_fict_prose)
- (7) "She" gathered her straggly hair into a bun "at the back of her head, holding it with her left hand while she pulled down the polo neck of her thin jumper" (BNC HJH 1691)

In these examples, the caused-motion construction clearly reinforces the idea of a coherent and harmonious totality of entities put together as suggested by the verb "gather." In example (7), the verb "gather" and the noun "bun" are in contrast with the adjective "straggly" since the former indicate that the hair changes its shape from an untidy shape to a coherent and more pleasant form. Also example (5) points out the same idea and the noun "frown" encodes a facial gesture that is supposed to be coherent and convey a specific meaning for the people who are looking at Vi. Utterances (4) and (6) make sense only in a context in which the woman is restless and cannot stop moving. These two sentences are accounted for by Lakoff's ("Internal") metaphor THE SCATTERED SELF. This metaphor is part of a more general system of metaphors called THE DIVIDED PERSON, which displays the following general correspondences:

- (1) A person is an ensemble (the subject plus a self).
- (2) The experiencing consciousness is the subject.
- (3) The bodily and functional aspects of a person constitute a self.
- (4) The relationship between subject and self is spatial.

As Ruiz de Mendoza (264) notes, self-control is envisaged as keeping the subject within a bounded region or in an upright position (vertical orientation). Likewise, in utterance (6) the woman's lack of control over herself, is seen in terms of the scattered self. The action of helping the woman regain control (and thus feel comfortable) by holding her in his arms is seen in terms of someone bringing together into one whole the scattered parts. The use of "gather" instead of "collect" underscores the involvement of the figurative gatherer in helping the woman regain control.

Both “gather” and “collect” can be found in a caused-motion construction but the Z element is of a different nature in each case (cf. “She collected the money #into a pile” versus “She gathered the money into a pile”; “She collected the money into a heap” versus “She gathered the money #into a heap”). “Gather” can only match with the noun “pile,” which denotes a large amount of entities laid on top of each other, and both the verb and the noun convey the idea of a whole. On the other hand, the verb “collect” is more likely to select the noun “heap,” which indicates a large untidy pile of things, thus showing that, in the act of collecting, the entities do not form a coherent whole. It is my contention that the verb “gather” in the caused-motion construction is a clear illustration of how the LCM’s Internal Variable Conditioning constraint works. This verb, which encodes the idea of a coherent totality of entities, predicts and restricts the nature of the Z element, which can only describe a coherent whole. In (5) the noun “frown” indicates a coherent facial expression that is meant to communicate certain feelings. In example (4) the PP slot “into his arms” makes reference to a place where the woman can recover her self-control whereas in (7) the NP “bun” refers to a woman’s hairstyle where the hair is brought together into a round shape at the back of her head.

At this point, I move on to consider the verb “reach,” which, by itself, only expresses that the agent stretches out his/her arm to get or to touch something. This verb must combine with the ditransitive construction in order to indicate a prospective transfer of possession:

- (8) “Can you” reach me three of those small tins “at the top the processed ones?”
(BNC KE3 990)

In this utterance, the transfer is implied by the verb’s satisfaction conditions (the recipient will come to have the tins only if the agent is willing to stretch his/her arms and get the tins for the recipient and only if the agent is tall enough to get to those tins). Like in the case of the verb “extend” the human mind relates the end of motion (extension of the body) with possession. The verb “extend” focuses on the movement of the hand, arm, and so forth, towards an entity (i.e. on the process), while “reach” lexicalizes the result of that movement, that is the successful touching of that entity. A person cannot reach up to where an entity is without stretching a relevant body part (e.g. one of the person’s arms), but doing this does not necessarily mean that the person will reach the desired entity (cf. “I extended my hand to him, but he didn’t respond”). Therefore, these two verbs select different constructions because they focus on different events (cf. the Event Identification Condition); “extend” is compatible with the caused-motion construction (e.g. “I extended my apologies to him”) whereas “reach” is not (“He reached the ball to her”). In its turn, the verb “reach” can appear with a ditransitive construction whereas “extend” cannot (e.g. “*Extend me that box over there”). The verb “reach” is a successful candidate to possession encoding since it fulfils one of Taylor’s (340) prerequisites for the experiential gestalt of possession, namely the agent is in close spatial proximity to an entity and has easy access to it. Finally, the sentence “Reach me your ball” (BNC KPE 2837), which clearly shows that the agent is in close spatial proximity to the

possessee/possessed (the ball), represents a metonymical scenario in which one sequence stands for the whole scenario (the agent's touching of a ball stands for the recipient's subsequent coming into possession of the ball). Experiential grounding makes it possible to use the verb "reach" in the ditransitive construction: touching an entity with your hand and holding it in your hand is associated with having control over it and, consequently, with possessing that entity. The ditransitive construction only contributes the idea of transfer of the entity from its momentary possessor to a recipient.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study has mainly discussed two internal constraints, namely the Event Identification Condition and the Internal Variable Conditioning, that license or block out the subsumption of four dichotomous pair of verbs ("fetch" vs. "bring," "find" vs. "search," "gather" vs. "collect," "reach" vs. "extend") with the ditransitive and the dative constructions. The ditransitive construction implies that any predicate fused into it has to meet a specific requisite, that is the action expressed by the verb has to result in a possessive relationship between a recipient and a patient. Thus, the verb "find" fits easily into the ditransitive construction since it encodes a possessive relationship between the finder and the object found. In contrast, the verb "search," which describes an unfinished event ("try to find someone/something"), cannot appear with this type of construction. Thus, the ditransitive only combines with verbs, whose agents already possess the entity to be transferred or they carry out an action with a possession end-result. It has also been shown that a dative construction like "He gathered her to him" makes use of an external constraint, such as the SCATTERED SELF metaphor. This further testifies to the crucial role of metaphor and metonymy in licensing subsumption processes.

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