EXPRESSIVE OBJECT CONSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH. A CORPUS BASED ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This article aims to explore the way speakers report verbal and nonverbal communication in complex constructions of the type "She smiled her agreement" (Levin's "Reaction Object Constructions"). These expressive constructions report the manifestation of a mental state transmitted by means of a sound or gesture. The speaker decodes the message into a condensed nominal object. The verb denotes the code, or manner of communication. The analysis of over 3000 corpus examples reveals different syntactic and semantic properties of this construction.

Key words: reaction objects, manner of speaking verbs, gesture verbs, (non)verbal communication.

Resumen

Este artículo se propone analizar la manera en que los hablantes transmiten actos comunicativos verbales y no verbales mediante construcciones complejas del tipo "She smiled her agreement" ("Construcciones de Objeto de Reacción" según Levin). Estas construcciones expresivas describen la manifestación de un estado mental transmitido mediante un sonido o gesto. El hablante decodifica el mensaje y lo condensa en un sintagma nominal abreviado. El verbo denota el código o la manera de comunicación. El análisis de más de 3000 ejemplos extraídos de corpus muestra diferentes propiedades sintácticas y semánticas de esta construcción.

Palabras clave: objeto de reacción, verbos de manera de hablar, verbos gestuales, comunicación verbal y no verbal.

INTRODUCTION

Levin, under the rubric "Reaction Object Construction," discusses an alternation involving the transitive use of typically intransitive verbs:

(1) a. Pauline smiled her thanks.
b. Sandra beamed a cheerful welcome.
c. She mumbled her adoration. (Levin 98)

According to Levin (98), such a verb belongs to the class of Manner of Speaking (henceforth MS) verbs or to the class of verbs of gestures and signs, while the object expresses a "reaction," specifically "an emotion or disposition." The semantics of the construction —"express (a reaction) by Ving"— suggests a communicative setting, which includes a resultative object, the message.

The term "reaction" as used by Levin implies that there is a previous event, or "stimulus," causing this expressive event. Thus, in (1a) we may assume that something positive is done for Pauline and she reacts with an act of thanks. It could also be argued that in (1b) Sandra's welcome is a "reaction" to someone's arrival. However, the object in (1c) does not necessarily express a reaction; it denotes an emotional attitude with a possible longer extension over time, for example, "She mumbled that she adores her (and has always adored her)." It seems more appropriate, therefore, to use the term "expressive" to refer to all these objects that convey a thought or feeling ("an emotion or disposition" in Levin's words).

Expressive Object Constructions (henceforth EOC) have received little attention to date. Some researchers analyze them in relation to Cognate Objects (Massam, Felser and Wanner, Mirto). Ross's study on declarative sentences touches upon these constructions "whose main verbs denote nonverbal communication" (239), and Martínez-Vázquez ("Effected Objects") discusses them along with other cases of non-subcategorized resultant objects.

From a syntactic point of view the object has been described as "a non-subcategorized DP that originates in an argument position within the VP headed by an intransitive verb" (Felser and Wanner 5). Mirto underscores the importance of the relation between the object and the clausal subject. Thus, "She nodded her approval," paraphrased as "she approved (of something) by nodding", entails both "she approved" and "she nodded." The object is thus considered predicative, sharing the clausal subject with the verb. Kogusuri also underlines this coreferential relation. He bases his analysis of these objects as arguments on their status as effected objects and the coreferential constraint imposed on the possessive NPs.

Major English grammars such as Quirk *et al*. do not discuss these expressive objects, even though resultant, cognate and eventive objects are considered (749-752). Huddleston and Pullum (305) briefly discuss the examples reproduced as (2) under the rubric "object of conveyed reaction":

(2) a. He grinned his appreciation.
b. I nodded my agreement.
c. He roared his thanks. (Huddleston and Pullum 305)

There is general consensus that examples like those in (1) involve non-subcategorized objects expressing an emotion or disposition closely associated with the action denoted by the verb. However, an absence of empirical data leads to a poor characterisation of all those elements which may be involved in the EOC; it is thus reasonable to conclude that the construction is more productive and creative than normally assumed. This article sets out to explain the formation of these constructions on the basis of an analysis of extensive corpus data. The remainder

of the paper is structured as follows: section 2 describes the data and methodology used; section 3 analyses the data and discusses the different elements which may appear in EOCs; finally, section 4 summarizes the main conclusions.

DATA AND METHOD

Levin mentions two classes of verbs which may form EOCs: MS verbs and verbs of gestures or signs. On similar lines, Huddleston and Pullum (305) distinguish constructions with verbs of "non-verbal communication" ("grin", "laugh", "nod", "sigh", "smile" and "wave") and MS verbs ("mumble", "roar", "scream" and "whisper"). With the aim of delimiting the potential elements in EOCs, extensive searches for these two classes of verbs and their constructional and usage contexts were conducted using the *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (henceforth COCA).[1] The searches were run in the four genres represented in COCA: Fiction, Magazine, Newspaper, Academic and Spoken. The first search involved the collocational patterning of MS and gesture verbs followed by a possessive determiner and a noun (e.g. "She smiled her agreement"). A second set of searches was made for constructions with an indefinite determiner (e.g. "He smiled a welcome"). Finally, strings with a noun directly attached to the verb (e.g. "She nodded agreement") were searched for. The results were filtered manually to assure the coreferencial relation between both NPs. Thus, examples like "They clap their approval" were selected, whereas examples like "They applauded his performance when he left" were not.

Sentences with a metalinguistic noun standing for a direct or indirect speech act with MS verbs (e.g. "She screamed her name/her message/her story") were also discarded in that they are regular objects which pronominalize and passivize, showing the same behaviour as objects with verbs of speaking.

More than 3000 EOCs were found. The aim was not to extract all the EOCs in the COCA, but to identify the different items which may take part in the construction. For this purpose, additional searches for any verb with prototypical expressive objects were conducted.

All EOCs involving the most frequent gesture verbs were gathered, as a means of gaining information on their productivity. This was not possible with MS verbs, since they form a much more extensive class and co-occur in other constructions which, although formally similar, are functionally different.

[1] The COCA is a 450 million words corpus, parsed and made available online by Mark Davies. Unless otherwise stated, all the examples cited in this paper are from COCA. The searches were carried out during August-November 2013. Some examples have been shortened for clarity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Manner of speaking and sound emission verbs

MS verbs are closely related to the *verba dicendi* class (e.g. "say", "tell"). The verbs in both classes share a sound component, but while MS verbs only involve the emission of sounds, speaking verbs include the sound as a subcomponent of the act of speaking. A way of extending the meaning of an otherwise neutral verb of transfer of information is to take a sound component that is conceived of as a salient ingredient of the speaking process which substitutes it. This SOUND FOR SPEECH metonymy explains the conventionalized transitive usage of some MS verbs (Martínez-Vázquez, "Communicative Constructions"). For example, the verbs in (3) share a loud sound component that may be perceived as "aggressive." This salient feature will be responsible for instantiating the metonymic usage of the verb. The sound emission verb acquires a new meaning, "to communicate with an aggressive type of sound."

(3) a. They screeched that Medicare would be the demise of quality medical care.
b. Congressional candidate Eric Massa [...] roared that those who challenge them are insulting the people who made this country great.

These extended communicative uses of MS verbs are acknowledged in dictionaries. In fact, MS verbs, like speaking verbs, take subordinate "that" clauses (as in 3), allow pronominalization of their objects (4), and may undergo passivization (5).

(4) a. People whisper his name, as if saying *it* too loud would cause him to appear in the room, guns ablaze.
b. My father would whistle his phrase, my mother would try to whistle, then hum *hers* back.

(5) a. Orders are yelled.
b. Adults feel the same way when commands are barked at them.
c. Warnings were shouted, and the Elves poured back through the breach.
d. For three months, night and day, orders are screamed at young men and women to try to cut that umbilical cord from home.

Huddleston and Pullum (305) note that "objects of conveyed reactions" with verbs of nonverbal communication hardly express an argument of the verb, and for this reason cannot be made into the passive (see 6b). MS verbs, on the other hand, take a wider range of objects and may appear in passive constructions (6d):

(6) a. She smiled her assent.
b. *Her assent was smiled.
c. He roared the command.

d. On the parade ground commands must be roared, not whispered. (Huddleston and Pullum 305)

However, the subject of the passive sentence in (6d), like those of the examples in (5), has a generic reference; thus it cannot be claimed to be the object of an EOC, which must be coreferential with the agent of the MS verb. Notice that these passive sentences are open to an interpretation like that in (7), where the agent of the MS verb ("yell") and that of the expressive event ("order") do not coincide:

(7) As the captain's orders were being constantly yelled the crashing waves drowned out the only human sound during an evil and malevolent night. (*books.google.com/books?isbn=1426925018)*

In fact, Huddleston and Pullum's example of "object of conveyed reaction" with a MS verb, reproduced as (6c), cannot be considered an EOC, since its object takes a definite article, which implies a prior mention to this noun; hence, its referent cannot be a product of the verbal action. The objects in EOCs are "released" by the participant in subject position as a result of the action denoted by the verb, thus they cannot show a prior external existence. The coreferential relation in EOCs is marked by the presence of a possessive determiner, as in (8a), which bans passivization (8b), following Massam's generalization: "[i]f the direct object contains a bound variable, passive is impossible (whether or not this element is syntactically explicit)" (Massam 180).

(8) a. A hundred keening widows screech their lamentations as a hundred shovels break the earth.
b. *Their lamentations were screeched.

The number of potential MS verbs in EOCs is very extensive. The following verbs from Levin's list were attested in EOCs in COCA:

(9) "babble," "bark," "bawl," "bray," "bellow," "bleat," "boom," "burble," "chant," "chatter," "chirp," "cluck," "coo," "croak," "croon," "crow," "cry," "drawl," "groan," "growl," "grumble," "grunt," "hiss," "holler," "hoot," "howl," "lisp," "moan," "mumble," "murmur," "mutter," "purr," "rage," "rasp," "roar," "rumble," "scream," "screech," "shout," "shriek," "sing," "snarl," "squeal," "stammer," "stutter," "thunder," "trill," "trumpet," "wail," "wheeze," "whimper," "whine," "whisper," "whistle," "yap," "yell," "yelp,"and "yodel."

Notice that Levin's class of MS verbs includes verbs which are cross-listed in other classes. Hence, many MS verbs may be used as verbs of animal sounds and/or verbs of sound emission "if sounds with similar characteristics are associated with animals and/or inanimate entities" (Levin 206). Some MS verbs are also included in her list of verbs of nonverbal expression: "cackle," "cry," "groan," "growl," "howl"

and "whistle." In fact, she points out that all the verbs in this class "could show properties of manner of speaking verbs" (Levin 219).

Our data confirm this cross-classification of verbs with a sound component in EOCs. For example, (10) shows instances of EOCs with the verb *roar* alternatively associated with human, animal and inanimate subjects. The SOUND FOR COMMUNICATION metonymy explains the association of verbs of animal sounds to human beings, as in (10a). Example (10b) reveals a type of EOC which involves unintentional transmission of information. Finally, (10c) illustrates a non-agentive EOC, which involves more complex metaphorical mappings:

(10) a. The audience roared their approval.
b. During those times, Tiger roared his dissatisfaction into the night and went looking for other prey.
c. Well, the markets roared their approval over Greenspan's renomination.

Our corpus analysis shows that the potential list of MS verbs involved in EOCs is unlimited. It includes verbs already acknowledged as reporting verbs —"murmur," "whisper," etc.— but also other verbs of sound emission which may potentially be associated with a speaker. For example, verbs related to the release of air through the mouth are easily linked to speaking events, as illustrated in the following examples:

(11) a. How many handsome fellows had sighed compliments to Aly.
b. The young man exhaled his words in a stream of smoke.

Not surprisingly, verbs like "exhale," "puff," "sigh," "cough" or "belch" have been attested in EOCs:

(12) My wife exhaled her frustration, letting me know it had been the same for her.
(13) He puffed relief, fear draining from his charged muscles.
(14) Kip sighed his pleasure.
(15) But I have no sympathy for what I consider the intellectual and moral offense of coughing discouragement on people.
(16) "Burgers in five!" calls Shirley. Eldon belches acknowledgment and the screen door chinks shut.

Moreover, sounds produced when inhaling air, like "sniff" or "inhale," which are physically incompatible with the release of air involved in articulating speech —indeed, they rather express the opposite: perception, rather than expression, as in (17a)— are, nevertheless, also used in EOCs, as in (17b):

(17) a. Wolfgang inhales their disappointment.
b. He sniffed his contempt.

Notice, however, that although these verbs incorporate a sound component they are not used as MS verbs, but as verbs of nonverbal communication. In fact, any sound which may be "interpreted" in a given situation may lexicalize in a nonverbal EOC, as the following more creative examples illustrate:

(18) a. I have great respect for the work you are doing. Seed tut-tuts his thanks.
b. I simply do not have time to go back in there. I honk good-bye to Charles and Faye.
c. The butcher store was crowded, and as we stepped inside the door jingled a welcome.

In sum, verbs with a sound component may potentially appear in EOCs conveying either verbal or nonverbal messages. Table 1 shows a scalar illustration of EOCs, ranging from verbal to nonverbal communication. At the top, human MS verbs closely related to the *verba dicendi* class produce verbal messages. At the bottom of the scale, EOCs with verbs associated with inanimate beings, as in (g), denote non-linguistic messages. The closer the sound is to human production the more probabilities it has of conveying linguistic messages in their EOC formation. The limits, however, are fuzzy. For example, in examples (c) and (d), it is difficult to tell whether "thanks" stands for a speech act or a guttural thanking signal.

TABLE 1. VERBAL AND NONVERBAL EOCS WITH MS VERBS.

verbal	a I murmured my thanks in Arabic.
	b He mumbled his thanks, merci, and turned left to exit the market.
	c The Japanese grunted his thanks.
	d I gurgled my thanks and lay my head back, closing my eyes.
	e Young squeals her approval.
	f The baby crowed his delight.
nonverbal	g Protesters in Cadillacs and pickup trucks honked their opposition outside the state Capitol.

VERBS OF SIGNS AND GESTURES

Beside sounds, which may be used to produce both linguistic and nonlinguistic signs, gestures are an important source of nonverbal communication. But facial expressions, or hand movements, are not assigned a fixed meaning, so they must be interpreted within an unambiguous context.

In order to appear in EOCs, gesture verbs must be easily associated with a specific communicative scene, and their objects must denote a feeling or disposition compatible with the act denoted by the verb (Martínez-Vázquez, "Effected Objects"). For example, the act of nodding is pragmatically understood, at least in Western culture, as an affirmative sign, as illustrated in (19); hence, the verb is felicitous in an EOC to express an act of transmission of this affirmation, as in (20). In fact, the semantic matching is so precise here that the object is perceived as redundant.

(19) a. Appreciative nods of assent all around.
b. She nodded her head in assent to her evaluation.
c. He nodded approvingly.
d. He nodded in approval.
e. I nodded and said okay again.

(20) Marisa nods her assent.

Sniffing suggests a feeling of dislike or distaste; hence, this gesture may be taken as a means of expressing contempt, as in (17b) above. Acts of smiling are usually concomitant with positive communication; therefore, smiling verbs appear in EOCs to convey manner of positive expression:

(21) a. The white-haired bus driver grinned his sympathy.
b. He dearly enjoyed seeing her grin, and he smiled his pleasure.

Huddleston and Pullum (305) point out that verbs of nonverbal expression are more constrained in their EOC formation than MS verbs. But note that the issue of being or not being a MS verb is a matter of linguistic and extralinguistic context; sound verbs may convey both verbal and nonverbal messages, as was shown in table 1. Thus, a human sound emission verb like "murmur" takes a wide variety of objects, that is, one can "murmur" any type of message. However, a more specific type of sound, one associated with an animal, for example, is pragmatically restricted in its metonymic association to a speaker, while an inanimate sound, like "honk," is difficult to turn into speech. When a sound verb is used to convey nonverbal signals, contextual information is essential for its interpretation. For example, "whistle" conveys opposite communicative functions in (22); its interpretation relies on the previous context, and the modulation of the sound, which is also significant:

(22) a. Artoo whistled his assurances.
b. Gerry whistles his disapproval.

The potential messages transmitted through gestures are even more limited by contextual information. As Ross (267) claims, the objects of sentences like (23) must be "mental states which can be behaviorally manifested." Thus, abstract nouns like "belief," "recklessness," "prejudice," "greed," "hope" or "kindness" are not allowed:

(23) a. Tom$_i$ frowned his$_i$ disbelief of the witness's story.
b. ?*Tom$_i$ nodded/smiled/grinned his$_i$ belief in the witness's story. (Ross 267)

Contextual information plays a crucial role in the formation of these constructions. For example, the verb "frown," which suggests disapproval or displeas-

ure, appears 7 times in EOCs in COCA with the following objects: "displeasure," "confusion," "annoyance," "disapproval" and "agreement." The latter noun here seems not to match the connotations of "frown." However, the context reveals that the expresser "agrees" with a statement of disapproval, which thus matches the frowning gesture:

(24) He stares right at me. "Clears two or three murders, bitch thinks she's a dick." Our Watch LT frowns agreement and checks the camera.

Likewise, the objects attested with the verb "smile" in (25) do not directly imply a positive outcome, but the context provides a key to unambiguous interpretation:

(25) a. She never argued; she joked. She smiled her disapproval.
b. Mom tenderly held my hand and said in a low voice: "Do what your father tells you. I don't like it either..." And she stoically smiled her courage to always surrender.

EOCs with the verb "nod", which are associated with affirmative events, as in (19-20), allow for a certain amount of variation, if provided with enough contextual information. For example, the objects in (26) do not denote affirmation directly; their assertive meaning is achieved through anaphoric reference. Therefore, even though noun phrases like "our familiarity with the genre" or "their wishes to help" refer to mental states which cannot be externally manifested, the previous context makes them perfectly "perceivable."

(26) a. "Are you all familiar with gangster rap?" McPherson asked. [...] While we each nodded our familiarity with the genre, McPherson reached into a shopping bag he'd brought and removed a magazine.
b. What can we do, Paul? [...] The two girls nodded their wishes to help too.

The list of gesture verbs appearing in EOCs is more limited than that of MS verbs. Table 2 shows the total number of EOCs with verbs used to convey nonverbal messages in COCA, plus their percentage share of the overall token count for that verb in the corpus.[2]

[2] Verbs with less than 5 EOC occurrences, like "wag," "bow," "bob," "weep," "chortle," "chuckle" and "cough" are not included in this table.

TABLE 2. INSTANCES OF GESTURE VERBS IN EOCS AND OVERALL PERCENTAGE.		
Type	in EOCs	percentage
kiss	926	5,10
nod	693	2,19
wave	507	3,28
hug	103	1,20
smile	92	0,20
snort	26	0,97
sigh	25	0,21
shrug	15	0,12
glare	10	0,24
blink	10	0,14
whistle	9	0,28
frown	7	0,10
clap	5	0,14
wink	5	0,18

Some recurrent gestures in our daily lives lexicalize into EOCs without the need for explicit extralinguistic information. For example, the act of kissing evokes a highly conventional greeting ritual, so the verb "kiss" is frequently attached to a small number of greeting formulae ("goodbye," "good night," "good morning," "bye" and "hello").[3] These semi-fixed constructions rank as the most frequent EOCs in COCA (926 examples). Since the verb is transitive, it includes a subcategorized object, the affected participant, which is also the recipient of the greeting expression:[4]

(27) Their first date she had kissed him goodnight.

This greeting scenario is also lexicalized with "hug," as in (28a). Two examples of the equivalent Romance verb, "embrace," have been attested, as illustrated in (28b):

(28) a. She pauses to hug a friend goodbye.
b. I expected to embrace Roddy's widow goodbye, but this time she only gave me her thin, strong hand.

[3] These formulae appear with different spellings in COCA, such as "good-night," "good night" and "goodnight."

[4] For a detailed analysis of the "kiss goodbye" construction see Haïk (2011).

It is surprising, however, that other pragmatically fixed greeting rituals, like shaking hands, do not lexicalize into these abbreviated constructions, though some creative uses were found:

(29) a. [...] mutton-chop hands so impossibly large that yours get lost in their folds when you shake hello.
b. It s a place near his office, and he hands out hellos all around as he makes his way over to my table.

The signal verb "wave" is used quite recurrently in EOCs, typically with a recipient introduced by "to," as in (30a), but it also appears in the dative construction with the recipient in object position (30b). This verb mostly combines with greeting nouns ("good-bye," "hello," "farewell") though it also appears with the object "thanks" (13 instances).

(30) a. He waved good-bye to a few acquaintances.
b. They shriek and wave him good-bye.

Since greetings are generally interpreted as reciprocal actions, verbs like "hug," "kiss," "embrace" and "smooch" are also found in the intransitive reciprocal construction:

(31) a. Marla let them hug their hellos.
b. And I look the other way as they are kissing their hellos.
c. And there they embraced goodbye.
d. One day I suddenly realized that our morning routine of smooching good-bye at the train station had somehow fallen by the wayside.

The second most frequent gesture verb in our corpus is "nod." It frequently forms semi-fixed constructions with affirmative nouns like: "acceptance," "affirmation," "agreement," "approval," "assent," "confirmation" and "consent." However, unlike "kiss," "nod" may convey an ample variety of messages relying on contextual interpretation, as illustrated in (26). The following less prototypical nouns have also been attested as expressive objects of "nod":

(32) "acknowledgment," "acquaintances," "acquiescence," "answer," "apology," "appreciation," "awareness," "compliance," "comprehension," "congratulations," "disinterest," "dismissal," "dreads," "encouragement," "farewell(s)," "forgiveness," "go-ahead," "good-bye(s)," "gratitude," "greeting," "hello," "lie," "no," "permission," "recognition," "recrimination," "reply," "satisfaction," "support," "surrender," "thank-you," "thanks," "understanding," and "welcome."

The verb "smile" is also frequently encoded in EOCs (92 occurrences). Other variants ("chortle," "grin," "beam," "chuckle") have been attested occasionally with

expressive nouns. Verbs with gestures socially perceived as negative (e.g. "snort," "sigh," "shrug," "frown") are less common in EOCs (see table 2).

In sum, since gestures convey inaccurate non-linguistic communication, their EOC formation is highly context dependent. Some daily rituals are lexicalized into semi-fixed collocations of the type "nod agreement" or "kiss good-night," but other gesture verbs combine more freely, provided that the context supplies enough information for precise decoding.

OBJECTS IN THE EOC

The objects in EOCs are abstract nouns conceived of as abbreviated communicative events.[5] These nouns are introduced by an indefinite or possessive determiner, but they may also appear directly attached to the verb. As an illustration of this, table 3 shows the distribution of the most recurrent objects in EOCs with the verb "nod." The most frequent collocation is the fixed phrase "nod yes":

TABLE. 3. STRUCTURE OF NPS OF MOST FREQUENT OBJECTS IN EOCS WITH "NOD".

	POSSESSIVE DETERMINER	Ø DETERMINER	INDEFINITE DETERMINER
yes	0	273	7
agreement	71	70	2
approval	79	39	2
thanks	51	20	1
assent	20	21	0
understanding	35	4	0

There are three possible types of object in EOCs. The first of these involves nominalized conventional speech-act formulae (e.g. "hello," "good-bye," "thanks"). These independent speech segments are uttered in socially fixed situations, like greetings, farewells or thanking acts. Their nominal status in EOCs is formally marked by the presence of a determiner, as in (33a-b). When the nominalization is not formally marked, as in (33c), the object resembles a direct speech segment:

(33) a. Aringarosa grumbled his hello.
b. Be prepared for random recordings of children hollering a welcome.
c. Hannah murmured good-bye.

[5] A detailed analysis of the different nominalization processes in EOCs is presented in Martínez-Vázquez ("Nominalized Expressive Acts").

Notice the similarity between the examples with "say" in (34) and "mumble" in (35). The MS verb in (35) only adds a manner component (indistinct and quiet manner of speaking) to ordinary speaking events like those in (34). The use of quotation marks in (34b) and (35b) shows the ambiguous status of these objects, which stand in the fuzzy area between direct speech segments and nouns:

(34) a. The phone rang, and I said hello.
b. Danny says "Hi" to her, and she smiles.

(35) a. I stumbled down the hall to the phone and mumbled hello.
b. He could only mumble "Hi" as he pushed open the door.

Surprisingly, these formulae are found in quotation marks even after verbs of gestures, as in (36), where they are no longer conceived of as verbal messages. The nouns "good-bye" and "hello" in (36) and (37) are parting and greeting signals, respectively, rather than speech acts. These brief conventional formulae used for stereotyped communicative situations extend their use in the EOC to denote the abstract speechless signal performed in the same type of scenarios.

(36) a. She waves "hello" to the receptionist.
b. The elevator doors start to close. LeDuc nods "good-bye."

(37) a. She watched her knight bow good-bye to the Witch.
b. She winks goodbye to the old man.
c. Margie smiled and waved hello to Gil and Harold.
d. He shrugs hello to the band.
e. Most of the artists nod hello to Fred.

A second type of object found in EOCs —"approval," "disapproval," "assent"— involves nouns derived from expressive illocutionary verbs ("agree," "disapprove," "assent"). Expressive illocutionary verbs name "forces whose point is to express approbation or discontent which are important in our social forms of life" (Vanderveken 213). Like speech-act formulae, they are addressee-oriented messages, but they imply a higher personal commitment on the part of the expresser. The message is not an empty social formula uttered in a conventional situation like "thanks" or "hello," but a performative individual response to a particular situation.[6]

(38) a. What do you think? Barnett smiles his approval.

[6] The words "yes" and "no" are categorized as formulae for their ability to stand in isolation as direct speech segments, but they share the illocutionary force of nouns like "agreement" and "disagreement," hence "nod yes" is almost synonymous with "nod agreement".

b. "Ahm, okay if I get some of these oranges too?" Brian asks. I shrug agreement, surprised when he fills up a plastic bag with about ten of them.
c. Women have never been allowed to fight. That doesn't mean they can't. All the women nod their assent.

Finally, some EOCs take attitudinal nouns like "admiration" or "disgust," which reveal an emotional state of mind. The expresser is no longer the agent but the experiencer of the corresponding verb:

(39) a. The women of the family murmured admiration.
b. The two Jacksons whisper their disgust at 'all the injustice' they see on TV.

These constructions involve no commitment on the part of the expresser. In fact, attitudinal objects are not necessarily intentional messages; they sometimes denote states of mind unintentionally revealed in a gesture or manner of speaking:

(40) a. She sighed her disappointment, absently looking around at the varnished cabinets gleaming in reflected firelight.
b. "I don't know. I don't really hate him." She puffed derision through her nostrils.

In sum, there are three types of objects in EOCs, as illustrated in table 4:[7]

TABLE 4. TYPES OF OBJECTS IN EOCS.

NOUNS	EXAMPLES
formulaic nouns	The other man nodded his goodbye.
responsive nouns	Merrick hesitates before nodding his assent.
attitudinal nouns	He did it several times until Sakera nodded her satisfaction.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

EOCs are much more diverse and productive than typically assumed. The analysis of more than 3000 examples extracted from COCA has revealed different syntactic and semantic properties of these expressive constructions.

[7] Bouso adds a fourth subtype of reaction nouns: "neutral nouns" (e.g. "Jem muttered some words").

This construction involves two causally linked events: the verbal event, which denotes the means by which the second event —the nominalized expressive act— is revealed. Some verbs of sound or gesture linked to a highly conventional communicative scenario appear in fixed or semi-fixed EOCs (e.g. "nod yes," "kiss good-night"). Alternatively, a verb may take part in the EOC to convey less conventional communicative situations, provided contextual information is supplied (e.g. "At midnight they will have a banquet and dance their love till dawn"). The speaker, a kind of omniscient narrator who interprets the expresser's manifested mental state, condenses it into an abbreviated noun. This message is frequently nominalized through the use of a possessive determiner, which underlines its predicative relation with the subject.

The structure of the EOC is represented in (41), with its ditransitive variant in (42):

(41) EOC: [$SUBJ_i$ [V → [($POSS$)$_i$ message] (OBL)]]

(42) DITRANSITIVE EOC: [$SUBJ_i$ [V → OBJ [($POSS$)$_i$ message] (OBL)]]

The general meaning of the construction can be summarized as follows:

1. An agent performs a sound/gesture.
2. The sound or gesture reveals a state of mind.
3. A receiver may perceive this state of mind.

Our data analysis has revealed three different types of EOCs:

A. Formulaic EOCs ("She grunted/ smiled hello").
   1. A volitional agent performs a sound/gesture.
   2. The sound or gesture is a sign for a socially bound formulaic expression.
   3. A receiver perceives (hears/sees) this formula.
B. Responsive EOCs ("She mumbled/nodded her agreement").
   1. A volitional agent performs a sound/gesture in response to a situation or event.
   2. The sound or gesture is an answer to an antecedent event.
   3. A receiver perceives (hears/sees) this answer.
C. Attitudinal EOCs ("She screamed/sighed her frustration").
   1. A (non)volitional agent performs a sound/gesture.
   2. The sound or gesture reveals an attitude.
   3. A receiver interprets this attitude reflected in the expresser's behavior.

Most EOCs imply direct or intended communication with an explicit or implicit receiver. But in some attitudinal EOCs no receiver is necessarily implied; instead, the focus falls on the first part of the communicative process, viewed as the liberation of a strong emotion, with no reception necessarily implied.

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