An RRG Account of English Double Object Construction and Dative Construction*

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Park, Kiseong. 2011. An RRG Account of English Double Object Construction and Dative Construction. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal. 19*(2). 15-33. The purpose of this paper is to investigate English double object construction and dative construction in terms of Role and Reference Grammar [RRG], with some reference to corresponding Korean constructions. In this paper, it is argued that the double object construction and the dative construction in English both involve the asymmetric (i.e., non-neutral alignment) structures typologically. The asymmetric structures are claimed to support the claim that the linking algorithm in RRG should be regarded as a lexical approach, and should reflect the different meanings in the Logical Structures. It is also claimed that beneficiary applicative mechanisms are employed to account for the marked undergoer selection of non-core arguments in English double object construction. Furthermore, it is shown that the same asymmetric structures should be posited for English beneficiary applicatives. It is also argued that there should be a single undergoer in English clause. This claim is naturally associated with the asymmetric structures for the double object construction.

Key Words: double object construction, dative construction, beneficiary applicative, English, RRG

1. Introduction

This paper aims to provide an RRG account of English double object construction and the dative construction. It builds on the controversy about

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monosemy vs. polysemy hypothesis in English, which is one of the topics which concern the relation between the double object construction and dative construction in English(see J. Jeon, 2006). In this paper I claim that the two constructions in English involve the two different meaning structures. Korean counterparts, however, are claimed to have only the dative construction, and they do not employ any clear distinction between monosemy vs. polysemy. I assume that the apparent double object construction in Korean is used only for focus purposes, and do not serve any real double object construction(see Park, 1995).

With regard to the monosemy vs. polysemy hypothesis, there emerge several technical issues we may discuss in the framework of RRG theory. The first issue is to discuss the linguistic typology of English double object construction in terms of Dryer's (2007) classification. It is suggested in this paper that both the double object construction and its corresponding dative construction involve the asymmetric (non-neutral) structure type. The second issue is concerned with which approach (syntactic or lexical) the RRG approach should take for the analysis of English double object constructions and dative constructions. Traditionally the syntactic approaches typically argue for the synonymy of the two constructions in English, while the lexical approach for the different but related meanings. The specific claim I would like to point out is that the RRG analyses which Van Valin (2007) and other RRG scholars propose are in a sense dubious over which approach it takes. In this paper it is argued that the RRG approach should follow the lexical approach and then elaborate its Logical Structures. I argue that an elaborated Logical Structures confers an explanatory adequacy to RRG by providing the unmarked vs. marked choice in linking with a semantic motivation. Hence it is claimed that different Logical Structures should be posited for the two constructions in English.

The third issue is concerned with the beneficiary applicative mechanisms which are associated with the marked undergoer selection of non-core arguments. I claim that English employs beneficiary applicative mechanisms, but they depend on the so-called 'movement' mechanism rather than serial verb mechanism as in some Asian languages. The fourth issue concerns the number of macroroles which the double object construction includes. There are two positions about the issue. This paper takes the classical view and claims that the

number of undergoers in English double object construction should be just one.

2. Typological Classifications

In this section I discuss the typology of ditransitive verbs which give rise to double object constructions. Ditransitive verbs are verbs with two arguments in addition to the subject: a 'recipient' and a 'theme(or goal)' argument. Locative alternation patterns in the "load/spray" verb type are not included in the category of ditransitive constructions, since they involve actor-theme-location arguments. Hence the term 'ditransitive predicate' is narrower than 'three place predicate'. According to Haspelmath (2008), there are three main types of the ditransitive constructions cross-linguistically: dative(or indirect object) construction, double object construction, secondary object construction. In addition to them, we sometimes need to distinguish a fourth type, which shows a mixture of constructions. In the dative construction, the theme argument is coded like the monotransitive patient, while the recipient is coded differently, for example, by a dative case prefix. The theme argument is referred to as direct object, and the recipient argument as indirect object. In the double object construction, both the theme and the recipient of the ditransitive verb are coded like the monotransitive patient, which means that the two non-subject arguments bear the accusative case. In the secondary object construction, the recipient of the ditransitive verb is coded like the monotransitive patient, while the ditransitive theme argument is coded differently. In this construction, the monotransitive patient argument and the ditransitive recipient argument have the same function as primary object, whereas the theme argument has the function as secondary object. The fourth type, which involves a mixture of constructions, is shown in English in that the verb 'give', for instance, can occur both with an indirect object construction and with a double object construction.

The language frequencies among the four types are as follows (Haspelmath, 2005, p. 426).

Table 1. The frequency of the four constructions

| Construction	Occurrences
1. indirect object construction	189
2. Double object construction	84
3. Secondary object construction	66
4. Mixed	39
Total	378

According to Haspelmath (2005), ditransitive constructions are related to some typological factors. First, dependent-marking languages with case marking tend to occur with the indirect object pattern, and head-marking languages with verb indexing tend to co-occur with the secondary object pattern. On the other hand, languages with no case marking tend to show the double-object pattern.

Before we proceed to discuss the approaches to ditransitive constructions, we need to discuss the typological patterns, depending on whether it is theme or recipient argument that is treated like the monotranstive undergoer(patient-like argument of transitive verb). As Dryer (1986, 2007) pointed out, the relationship between the two object arguments in ditransitive clauses can be represented in the following way (see Haspelmath, 2008).
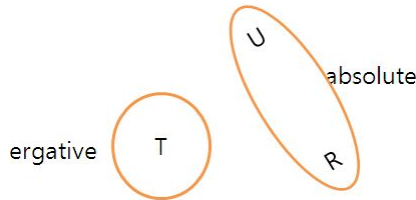
(1) a. indirective alignment
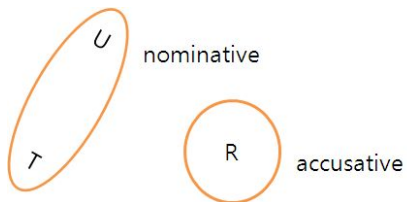
b. neutral alignment
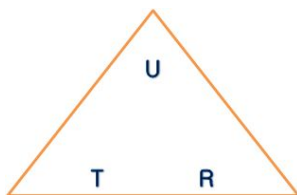
c. secundative alignment

We get two different non-neutral alignment patterns and a neutral pattern, as shown above. Consider the non-neutral alignment patterns. In the indirective alignment, T(Theme) and U(Undergoer) show accusative case, as in (1a), while in the secundative alignment only T shows a preposition, as shown in (1c). In the neutral alignment, however, U, T and R(Recipient) show accusative case, as shown in (1b).

Now let us consider what type of alignment English double object construction shows. As the first possibility, consider the neutral alignment pattern. According to Haspelmath (2008, p. 89), an example of a language in which both the T and the R are coded with the same case (Accusative) is the Pama-Nyungan language Martuthunira. In this language both the R and the T may be passivized.

(2) a. Ngunhu pawulu yungku-yangu   murla-a
   that-Nom child give-Pass.PFV   meat-ACC
     nganaju-wu-lu   yaan-tu
     I-GEN-EFF wife-EFF
     'That child was given meat by my wife.'
  b. Nhiyu   murla yungku-yangu   yirna
    this.NOM meat give-PASS.PFV   this.ACC
     kanyara-a   jngulu   wartirra-lu
     man-ACC   that·EFF   woman-EFF
     'This meat was given to this man by that woman.'

Full neutrality of this sort has been a problem for many grammatical approaches such as Relational Grammar and RRG. In Relational Grammar, 1, 2, and 3 are universal relations, so R and T are predicted to be distinguishable in

all languages. The prediction, however, does not work for the example in Martuthunira. The same kind of problem applies to RRG. RRG would have to postulate two undergoers or no undergoer to account for the neutrality in the specific construction. A question arises at this point: Does English double object construction truly correspond to this neutral alignment pattern? I would suggest that English object construction does not follow the neutral alignment pattern. Rather it is claimed that the construction takes secundative alignment pattern. This hypothesis results from the fact that English double object construction does not show symmetrical passivization, unlike in Martuthunira. Look at the following examples.

(3) a. My wife gave this meat to that child.
    b. My wife gave that child this meat.
    c. This meat was given to that child by my wife.
    d. That child was given this meat by my wife.
    e. *That meat was given that child by my wife.

As shown in (3d) and (3e), English double object construction does not allow symmetrical passivization and only the recipient argument can be the subject of the passives. Korean ditransitive equivalent has only the dative construction, and does not allow symmetrical passivization, either. Unlike in English, only theme argument can be the subject of the passives. Hence Korean equivalent seems to correspond to the indirective alignment pattern in that Recipient argument takes dative case, while only theme argument takes accusative case.

3. Syntactic or Lexical Approach

In this section, I will review the characteristics of syntactic and lexical approaches, and suggest that an RRG position should be interpreted in a way that it follows the lexical approach by elaborating the Logical Structures. Several approaches have been proposed for the syntactic analysis. A standard transformational account is proposed by Baker (1988), who argues that the double object constructions are derived from dative constructions by the

transformation of Dative Movement. The well-known VP-shell analysis by Larson (1988) posits the same D-structures for the two constructions. The double object constructions are derived by passivizing VP and making the case marker nonessential for the construction.

Within the transformational tradition, however, there have emerged several approaches which posit two different D-structures since 1990's. Bowers (1993), for example, argues that the goal(or recipient) argument can be base-generated either as the internal subject of [$_{VP}$ [$_{PrP}$ GOAL [$_{Pr'}$ [$_{VP}$ THEME V]]]] or as the PP complement of [$_{VP}$ [$_{PrP}$ THEME [$_{Pr'}$ [$_{VP}$ V GOAL PP]]]]. The former gives rise to the double object construction, while the latter the dative construction. The similar line of argumentation is given by Harley (2002) and Hale and Keyser (2002). The Relational Grammar approach is another syntactic approach for the construction. The double object construction is described by the operation of 3-to-2 Advancement, which changes the grammatical relation of the recipient from 3 at the initial stratum to 2 at the surface("final") stratum.

Now let us consider the lexical approaches. Lexical approaches tend to treat the two constructions in terms of the two different lexical and semantic units. In Construction Grammar, for example, Goldberg (1995) suggests the different structures for double object constructions and dative constructions: the Transfer-Caused-Motion Construction for dative construction and Ditransitive Construction for double object construction. The similar kind of analysis is found in Pinker's (1989) approach. The double object construction refers to the STATE$_{effect}$ which involves the semantic primitive 'possession', while the dative construction to the EVENT$_{effect}$ which involves the movement of the theme argument. The meaning contrast in the two constructions can be seen in the following examples.

(4) a. The revolution gave the country a new government.
    b. *The revolution gave a new government to the country.

(5) a. The noise gave Mary a headache.
    b. *The noise gave a headache to Mary.

(6) a. *John sent New York a letter.
    b. John sent a letter to New York.

As shown by the contrast in (4) through (6), the behaviour of double object construction implies that the first complement NP is understood as the prospective possessor of the second complement NP. In (4) and (5), the first NPs 'the country' and 'Mary' should be understood as the possessor of the second NPs under normal contexts. Furthermore in giving a new government or a headache, there is no movement to a goal, and so the dative construction which involves allative semantics is not permitted. In (6), however, it is not a natural reading for 'New York' to be the possessor of the second complement NP, so (6a) is judged ungrammatical. In sending a letter, there is a movement to goal. Hence the double object construction is argued to be associated with "possessive" semantics and the dative construction with "allative" semantics with the meaning of movement to the goal (see J. Jeon 2006).

Another argument for the lexical approach comes from Bresnan and Nikitina (2008). They argue that the alternation between the two constructions is sensitive to the kinds of ditransitive verbs. First, as for the "verbs of instantaneous imparting of force in some manner causing ballistic motion" occur with both constructions, while "verbs of continuous imparting of force in some manner causing accompanied motion" occur only with the dative construction. Let us look at the following examples.

(7) a. Lafleur throws/tosses/flips/slaps/kicks him the puck.
    b. Lafleur throws/tosses/flips/slaps/kicks the puck to him.
    c. *I carried/pulled/pushed/schlepped/lifted John the box.
    d. I carried/pulled/pushed/schlepped/lifted the box to John.

                                        Bresnan and Nikitina (2008, p. 4)

Second, another contrast occurs with the verbs of communication. That is, "verbs of instrument of communication" as in (8a) occurs with both constructions, while "manner-of-speaking" verbs as in (8c) only with the dative construction.

(8) a. Susan cabled/emailed/faxed/phoned Rachel the news.
    b. Susan cabled/emailed/faxed/phoned the news to Rachel.
    c. *Susan whispered/yelled/mumbled/barked Rachel the news.
    d. Susan whispered/yelled/mumbled/barked the news to Rachel.

                                        Bresnan and Nikitina (2008, p. 5)

The argument from English verb classes shows that the alternation between the two constructions in English is influenced by the lexical factors such as verbal classes.
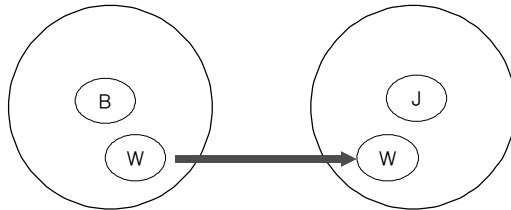
Another lexical approach to the alternation comes from Cognitive Grammar[CG]. The CG account depends on alternate construals of the profiled event. Look at the following examples.

(9) a. Bill sent a walrus to Joyce.
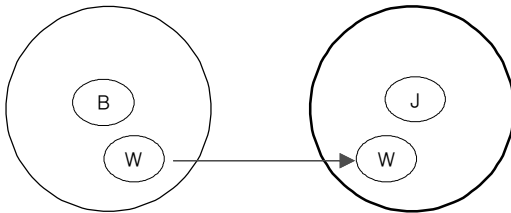   b. Bill sent Joyce a walrus.   Langacker(2006, p. 42)
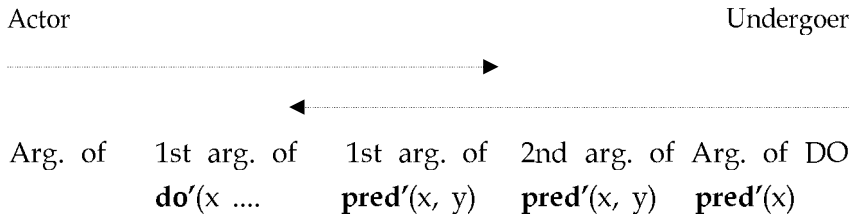
(10)
    a.

    b.

In (10a), the morpheme to specifically designates the path followed by the walrus, while in (10b), the juxtaposition of two nominals (*Joyce* and a walrus) symbolizes a possessive relation. The cognitive approach are considered as a lexical approach in that the two constructions do not depend on the syntactic derivation, but on the alternate construals of the events.

Now let us consider the RRG approach. In RRG, the difference between the dative construction and the double object construction is not explained syntactically, but as the linking relation between the Logical Structures and the Layered Structure of Clause. Let us look at the linking relations. The verb 'give' allows the two kinds of linking relation (Van Valin, 2007, p. 44).

(11) a. [do′ (Pat, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME have′ (Kim, book)]
  b. Pat[Actor] gave the book[Undergoer] to Kim.
            (unmarked selection)
  c. Pat[Actor] gave Kim[Undergoer] the book.
   (marked selection)

The relation between macroroles and Logical Structure argument positions is captured in the actor-undergoer hierarchy in (12).

(12) Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy

Actor   Undergoer

Arg. of 1st arg. of 1st arg. of 2nd arg. of Arg. of DO
$do′(x$ .... $pred′(x, y)$ $pred′(x, y)$ $pred′(x)$

According to the hierarchy, the leftmost argument will be the actor and the rightmost argument will be the undergoer (Van Valin, 2007, p. 45).

(13) Marked linking for English double object construction

do′[(Pat, ϕ)] CAUSE [BECOME have′(Kim, book)]
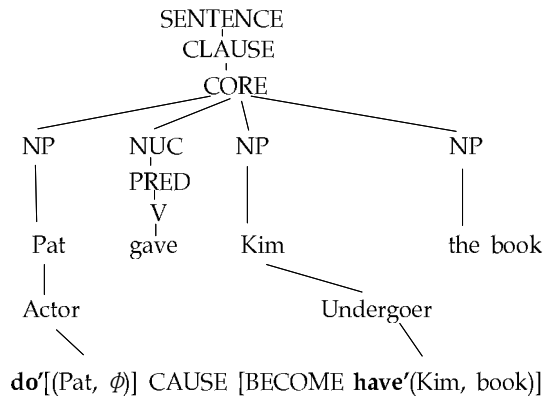
Apparently there is no clue to say definitely that the RRG approach is syntactic or lexical. However we may argue that the approach is lexical rather

than syntactic, in that the linking itself is not motivated by the syntactic reasons such as grammatical relations, but by lexical and semantic ones.

Even though the RRG approach does not provide the elaborated account for the semantic or pragmatic motivations, we may list some motivations which are involved in the choice of the linear ordering. According to Heine and König (2010), for instance, the linear ordering of the ditransitive arguments Recipient and Theme is not arbitrary. They argue that there is a set of principles of processing for the ordering. Look at (14) for the principles (Heine and König, 2010, p. 93).

(14) a. Place prominent before less prominent arguments(prominence)
　　 b. Place heavy after light arguments(weight)
　　 c. Arrange arguments in the order that reflects the temporal sequence in which events occur in the "real world" (iconicity).
　　 d. Place arguments in accordance with syntactic constraints obtaining in the language concerned.

As for the notion of prominence, they argue that the main domains which contribute to prominence are animacy, thematicity, referentiality, anaphoricity, and person. According to Heine and König (2010), prominent arguments precede less prominent arguments in linear ordering. The recipient arguments are more prominent than theme arguments cross-linguistically. Hence when the ordering is fixed, it is expected that the recipients generally precede the theme.

If we adopt marked linking as an account for the double object construction in RRG, we are faced with a couple of problems. The first problem is that it is not clear what motivates the marked selection. The marked selection is taken for granted for English double object construction in RRG. The second problem is that it is not clear in what sense the choice of undergoer is "marked". It may be "marked" in the sense of "abnormal", or cross-linguistically infrequent. As Haspelmath (2008, p. 85) pointed out, however, this possibility is excluded, since it is not the case that the dative construction is necessarily the more frequent pattern. In English, for example, the double object pattern is clearly more frequent pattern, at least in the spoken language. Hence the appeal to markedness cannot be justified.

To solve the problems of the RRG approach which relies on the marked linking, we need to adopt the elaborated lexical approach and claim that there is a clear meaning difference between double object construction and dative construction. The meanings of the two constructions in English are commonly analyzed as follows (see Gropen et al., 1989, p. 241; Goldberg, 1992, p. 45 – 46):

(15) Dative Construction(DC) → 'X causes Y to go to Z'
      Double Object Construction(DOC) → 'X causes Z to have Y'

In DOC, the recipient argument is causally affected, while it is not in DC. The same line of reasoning should also be applied to the RRG account, so we need two different Logical Structures for double object construction and dative construction in English. In addition to the different Logical Structures, we need pragmatic motivations such as prominence, as we discussed earlier.

4. Beneficiary applicative mechanisms

As mentioned above, the difference between dative construction and double object construction in English should be explained in terms of the marked vs. unmarked linking, when the recipient argument is involved in the alternation. The second type of marked undergoer construction involves the occurrence of a non-argument of the verb as undergoer, the most frequent one being a beneficiary. In this section, we will see that the same asymmetric structures as the double object construction can be found in English beneficiary applicative construction. Look at the examples in English and Sama (Van Valin, 2005, p. 121).

(16) a. Sandy baked a pie for Robin.
     b. Sandy baked Robin a pie.

(17) a. B'lli   ku   taumpa'   ma   si   Andi.
       buy   1sgERG shoes   for   PM   Andy
       'I bought the shoes for Andy.'

b. B'lli-an   ku   si   Andi   taumpa'.
   buy-BEN 1sgERG   PM   Andy   shoes
   'I bought Andy some shoes.'

The logical structures for English *bake* or Sama *b'lli* 'buy' do not contain beneficiary arguments. In (16a) and (17a) these beneficiary arguments are realized as a non-core oblique argument, while in (16b) and (17b), they appear as undergoers. To get the beneficiary argument for undergoer, simple movement mechanism is used in English, while *-an* suffix is added to the verb in Sama. The examples in (16b) and (17b) are typically considered applicatives. Traditionally, applicatives are constructions in which a verb bears a specific morpheme that licenses an oblique or non-core argument that would not otherwise be considered a part of the argument structure of the verb.

First let us consider the previous analyses of English beneficiary applicatives. Contrary to the typical applicatives, English beneficiary applicative construction does not bear any applicative morpheme. Hence it may be dubious whether the construction should be considered as the applicative construction. Marantz (1993), however, proposes that the beneficiary applicative construction in English is actually applicative construction with a non-overt applicative marker. In this paper, I follow Marantz's (1993) position.

On the other hand, Baker (1988) and Bresnan and Moshi (1990) classifies applicatives into two types: so called symmetric and asymmetric applicatives. In asymmetric applicatives, there is asymmetric behavior between the direct object and the applicative object in a way that only the applicative object shows true object properties. In symmetric applicatives, however, both the applied object and direct object behave as the true objects. To distinguish the two types of applicatives in English, let us consider the passive construction.

(18) a. John gave Mary a book.
    b. Mary was given a book (by John).
    c. *A book was given Mary (by John).
    d. A book was given to Mary (by John).

(19) a. John baked Mary a cake.
  b. Mary was baked a cake (by John).
  c. *A cake was baked Mary (by John).
  d. A cake was baked for Mary (by John).

As shown in the above examples, both double object construction in (18) and beneficiary applicative construction in (19) take only the "applicative" objects as the subjects in the passive counterparts, and so English beneficiary applicatives could also be classified into asymmetric applicatives. Hence English applicative construction gets the basically same treatment as the double object construction.

As argued in Shibatani (1994), however, East Asian languages like Korean, Chinese, and Japanese use an overt verbal element with the meaning of giving to introduce beneficiary argument to the applicative construction. Look at the following examples (Y. Jeon, 2006, p. 204).

(20) a. na-nun ku-eykey sinmwun-ul   sa-cwu-ess-ta
   I-TOP he-DAT newspaper-ACC buy-give-PAST-DEC
   'I bought him a newspaper. (Korean)
  b. Wó   zuó   fán   gěi   háizi.
   I make rice   give child.
   'I cooked the child rice.' (Chinese)
  c. Taroo-ga Hanako-ni   hon-o   katte yatta.
   T.-NOM H.-DAT   book-ACC buy gave
   'Taro bought Hanako a book.' (Japanese)

As shown in the above examples, Korean, Chinese, and Japanese employ an overt verbal element to introduce beneficiary argument to the basically monotransitive construction with the verbs such as 'sa(buy)' and 'zuó(make)'. Hence it could be argued that the serial verb constructions in the Asian languages serve as the introducer of new core or non-core arguments to make applicative constructions.

5. The number of macroroles

In RRG, the abstract predicates in the Logical Structures can have only zero, one or two arguments, and therefore ditransitive verbs must have complex Logical Structures composed of at least two abstract predicates (see Van Valin, 2007). Look at the following examples, among which (21a) is the general Logical Structures form for the ditranstive verbs (Van Valin, 2007, p. 43-44).

(21) a. [do' (x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME predicate' (y, z)]
b. give : [do' (x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME have' (y, z)]
c. show : [do' (x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME see' (y, z)]
d. teach : [do' (x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME know' (y, z)]

According to Van Valin (2007), all of the verbs above have the variable undergoer linking structure. This means that there is only one undergoer for the predicates to reflect the notion of variable linking. In this paper I will argue for the classical RRG assumption on the number of macroroles and claim that there are two basic macroroles in English: one Actor and one Undergoer.

To the contrary, Haspelmath (2005) argues that we need to posit two additional macroroles, recipient(R) and theme(T), in addition to actor(A) and undergoer(U). There is no mixing of semantic and syntactic information for the definition of macroroles, in that the four macroroles are defined purely semantically.

In this study I follow Van Valin (2005) by claiming that there is no empirical and theoretical need for the third macroroles to account for the double object construction. First, it is not universal, which is different from actor and undergoer. In the languages like Yoruba and Yatye, for instance, a verb meaning 'give' would be serialized with the transfer verb in order to express the recipient. Second, there is no consistent morphosyntactic treatment of the third argument cross- linguistically, while Actor and Undergoer have certain consistent coding properties across languages in that they are either nominative and accusative or ergative and absolutive. It may be a direct argument in the dative case, as in German and Russian, or an oblique argument marked by an adposition such as English and Jakaltek. Third, the third macrorole is less

important for the syntax than actor and undergoer.

Now let us consider another argument that there is a single undergoer in English double object construction. It has to do with the discussion on the superiority effects of the two objects. Polinsky (1998) suggests that there are nearly equal superiority effects for the two objects in English double object constructions, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The superiority effects in English double object constructions

EFFECT	SUPERIOR OBJECT
Passivization, Scope relations, Pronoun binding, Optional deletion, Pronominal expression	Recipient
Licensing of Wh-elements, Relativization, Licensing of negative polarity items, Verb + Obj set phrase	Patient

I would say that the undergoer for double object construction should be the recipient arguments, which means that English double object construction follows the secundative alignment pattern, as I mentioned in section 2. Many scholars have argued that among the superiority effects, passivization is the most critical factor for the choice of superior object or "undergoerhood" in RRG terms (see Downing and Locke, 2006).

6. Conclusion

So far I have claimed that the double object construction and the dative construction in English involve the two different meaning structures and hence polysemy hypothesis. Typologically the two constructions in English both involve the asymmetric (i.e., non-neutral alignment) structures. On the basis of these, I have also claimed that the linking algorithm in the RRG approach should be regarded as a lexical approach, and should be elaborated in the Logical Structures to reflect the different meanings. Second, beneficiary applicative mechanisms are employed to account for the marked undergoer selection of non-core arguments, and the same asymmetric structures should be

posited for the beneficiary applicatives. Third, I have discussed the controversy between just one undergoerhood and more than one undergoerhood in English double object construction, and argued for the classical view that there is a single undergoer in a clause. This claim is naturally associated with the asymmetric structures for the construction.

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