The Behavior of *Lose* and *Receive* in the Double Object and Indirect Reflexive Constructions

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Abstract

This paper argues that the idea of conceptual (in)compatibility between semantic roles (Nakau (1994)) plays a crucial role in accounting for the opposite behavior of *lose* and *receive* in the double object construction and the indirect reflexive construction. Source is conceptually compatible with both Causer and Agent while Goal is compatible with neither. By hypothesizing such localist semantic roles as Source and Goal, one can account for the behavior of *lose*, *receive*, and related verbs in various constructions.

1. Introduction

There are linguistic theories which assume that apparatuses used for the analysis of spatial location and motion are used for the analysis of states of affairs that are not of a spatial nature. These kinds of theories can be called localist theories (e.g. Anderson (1971, 2006)). For example, Jackendoff (1983: 188) proposes the Thematic Relations Hypothesis (TRH), which assumes such semantic roles as Location, Source, and Goal. In his framework, possible semantic representations for verbs like *lose* and *receive* will be like the following:

(1)   a.   Beth lost the doll.

        b. $[\text{GO}_{\text{Poss}} ([\text{DOLL}], [\text{FROM}_{\text{Poss}} ([\text{BETH}])])]$

(2)   a.   Beth received the doll.

        b. $[\text{GO}_{\text{Poss}} ([\text{DOLL}], [\text{TO}_{\text{Poss}} ([\text{BETH}])])]$

                          (Jackendoff (1983: 192), with slight modifications)

Here, the only difference between the representations in (1b) and (2b) is the employment of FROM or TO. The surface subject of *lose* is the argument of the function FROM in the representation and thus bears the Source role. The surface subject of *receive* is the argument of the function TO in the representation and thus bears the Goal role. In both representations, the first argument of the function GO receives Theme. The subscript Poss indicates that the

functions, whose arguments are mapped to syntactic structure, apply in the semantic field of possession.

Linguists have been interested in how the world is construed by speakers of natural languages and how that construal is (syntactically) reflected in natural languages or is analyzable by means of (localist) semantic roles. This is perhaps why linguistic researches based on localist ideas or theories of semantic roles are abundant (Anderson (e.g. 1971, 2006), Culicover and Wilkins (1984, 1986), Dowty (1991), Jackendoff (e.g. 1972, 1983, 1990, 2002, 2007), Landau (2010), Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995), Ostler (1979), Rappaport and Levin (1988), Reinhart (e.g. 2000, 2002), Sowa (2000), Van Valin and Lapolla (1997), among many others).

Following a hypothesis like the TRH, Nakau (1994) proposes a localist theory of semantic roles, in which he argues for the idea of conceptual compatibility between semantic roles. He argues that Agent is conceptually compatible with Source, but not with Goal. The conceptual (in)compatibility between semantic roles, Nakau argues, enables us to explain the difference in acceptability of the sentences in (3):

(3)　　a.　　　John lost the game intentionally.

(Nakau (1994: 395), Gruber (1965/1976: 159))

　　　　b.　＊ John received the book from Bill intentionally.　　(Gruber (1965/1976: 157))

The appearance of the adverb *intentionally* in (3) makes the subject arguments bear Agent in addition to the role already assigned by the verb. According to Nakau, Source and Agent are not mutually exclusive; thus sentence (3a) is acceptable. Goal and Agent, on the other hand, are mutually exclusive; thus sentence (3b) is not acceptable.

In this theoretical framework, the present study deals with the behavior of the verbs *lose* and *receive* in the double object construction (DOC) and the indirect reflexive construction (IRC). The DOC and the IRC are exemplified in (4a) and (4b), respectively:

(4)　　a.　　　Sally baked her sister a cake.　　　　　　　　　　(Goldberg (1995: 141))

　　　　b.　　　He actually gives himself possible names.(*Mindhunter*, season 2-2, 23:58 left)

The IRC is an instance of the DOC whose indirect object position is occupied by a reflexive pronoun referring to the same referent as the subject referent. In (3), *lose* and *receive* behave in the opposite way. It will be demonstrated in the ensuing discussion that the same kind of behavior can be observed in instances of the DOC and the IRC where these verbs appear. The present study attempts to provide a localist explanation for it.

Dating as far back as Gruber (1965/1976) and Fillmore (1968), it has been argued for and pleaded that semantic roles deserve a place in the grammar. Some researchers argue for non-localist theories of semantic roles (e.g. Reinhart (e.g. 2000, 2002)). The present study is an attempt to claim that the hypothesizing of such localist semantic roles as Source and Goal is

indispensable and essential to properly analyzing the verbs *lose* and *receive* and related predicates.

The present paper is organized as follows: section 2 overviews the idea of conceptual compatibility between semantic roles; section 3 shows that verbs like *lose* and *receive* behave in the opposite way in the DOC and the IRC, and accounts for it; section 4 briefly demonstrates other instances of the two constructions; section 5 offers concluding remarks.

2.   Conceptual compatibility between semantic roles

This section takes up the idea of conceptual compatibility between semantic roles. I assume here without further discussion that a semantic role assigned by a verb to its argument and a semantic role assigned by a construction to its argument can be compatible with each other, and that the verb can successfully appear in the construction (cf. Goldberg (1992, 1995)). In this section, I will deal with Source, Goal, Agent, and Causer. Agent and Causer are conceptually compatible with each other and with Source, but *not* with Goal. I attribute mainly to Nakau (1994) the relevant idea that is employed in the present study.

Holisky (1987), Nakau (1994), and Van Valin and Wilkins (1996) propose that Agent is a role that pragmatically overlays others. Nakau (1994), in particular, proposes a two-way distinction between semantic roles: those that are assigned by predicates and are called "basic semantic roles"; and those that are determined pragmatically and overlay a basic semantic role.[1] The former group includes roles like Goal, Source and Theme, and the latter includes Agent. Taking the sentences in (5a, b) as examples, the subject arguments bear Source and Goal, respectively.

(5)   a.   She lost a lot of money.

        b.   He received a ticket.

Source is associated with an argument from which a Theme argument moves or starts; Goal is associated with an argument to which a Theme argument moves. By definition, Source and Goal are mutually exclusive.

Agent is sometimes defined as the intentional source of the activity denoted by the predicate (e.g. Gruber (1967: 943), see also Anderson (2006: 105)). It appears that Nakau (1994: 322) defines Agent in this way as well. Bearing this definition of Agent in mind, examine the sentences in (6), where there is an adverb that explicitly denotes that the subject referent has or had the intention of doing a certain act.

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[1] For example, Culicover and Wilkins (1984, 1986) and Jackendoff (1990, 2007) advocate the idea of two-way distinction between semantic roles as well.

(6)　　a.　　　John is standing in the corner intentionally.

(Nakau (1994: 398), Gruber (1965/1976: 161))

　　　　b.　　　John lost the game intentionally.

(Nakau (1994: 395), Gruber (1965/1976: 159))

In addition to bearing Theme and Source, respectively, the subject arguments in the sentences in (6a, b) have themselves overlaid with Agent.

　　　Nakau's theory is systematic, in that not all basic semantic roles can have themselves overlaid with Agent; in other words, not all basic semantic roles are conceptually compatible with Agent. For example, Source can have itself overlaid with Agent; on the other hand, Goal cannot. This (in)compatibility is illustrated in the following examples:

(7)　　a.　　　John lost the game intentionally.　　　　　　　　　　　　　(= (6b))

　　　　b.　　* Will inherited the money intentionally.

(Nakau (1994: 395), Jackendoff (1972: 32))

The subject arguments of the sentences in (7a, b) bear Source and Goal, respectively. As we saw above, Agent can be regarded as the intentional source of the activity denoted by the predicate. Thus, it can be considered to be conceptually compatible with Source; on the other hand, it cannot be conceptually compatible with Goal, which is not the source of motion or an action. Thus, Agent cannot overlay a Goal-bearing argument.

　　　The same reasoning can, Nakau claims, explain the difference in acceptability of sentences which have a purpose clause beginning with, for example, *so that* or *in order to*. Examine the following sentences:

(8)　　a.　　? John lost the money so that he could get sympathy.

　　　　b.　　* John received the book from Bill in order to read it.

(Nakau (1994: 402), Jackendoff (1972: 32))

As we saw in the sentences in (7), the subject argument of the verbs *lose* and *receive* is associated with the basic semantic roles of Source and Goal, respectively. As has been discussed, Source is conceptually compatible with Agent while Goal is not. Thus, only (8a) is acceptable.[2]

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[2] One can find an example where *receive* co-occurs with *in order to*, as in the following one:

(i)　　　　　The crux of the complaint was that Fitzgerald, after leaving San Antonio, had requested and <u>received funds in order to secure Caleb Deschanel</u>, the cinematographer of The Passion of the Christ, as the director of Myriam, and then did not secure those services.　　　　　　　(COCA, underline added)

I continue the discussion on the basis of Jackendoff's judgement, as Nakau did. One reviewer's comment led to the finding of the example in (i).

Causer is conceptually compatible with Agent and Source, but *not* with Goal. Following, for example, Takeuchi (2015: 113ff., 2016, 2018, 2019) (cf. Rappaport Hovav and Levin (2008)), I assume that the subject argument of the DOC constructionally bears the Causer role.[3] Observe the sentences in (9):

(9)   a.   The exam gave Mary a headache.   (Fujita (1996: 149))

       b.   Interviewing Nixon gave Mailer a book.   (Oehrle (1976: 44))

The subject argument of these sentences functions as cause of the emergence of the relation denoted by the object arguments. Takeuchi (2019) adds the Causer role to the group of basic semantic role.

Causers do not presuppose any intentional participation in the eventuality denoted by the sentence (Klingvall (2005: 94)). Thus, Takeuchi claims, instances of the DOC can have in them the adverb *accidentally*, which explicitly denies the existence of intention on the part of the subject referent. He takes sentence (10) as an example:

(10)   You remember the list – this guy I knew made a list on his computer of all the women he ever had relations with, then <u>he accidentally gave me the list</u> when he gave me a bunch of other computer files… What a freak. And he doesn't even know I know, and he wants to be pals with me.

(*Autumn Reason*, Sydney Anderson (1996), underline added)

Takeuchi also demonstrates that the subject of the DOC can have itself overlaid with Agent, as illustrated in (11):

(11)   John intentionally gave Mary a bouquet of wilted roses. (Kroeger (2005: 58))

It is argued that one can justify Agent overlaying Causer by observing the data in (12).

(12)   The window broke from the pressure.   (Alexiadou and Doron (2012: 19))

The preposition *from*, which denotes source, can introduce a Causer argument (e.g. Clark and Carpenter (1989), Croft (1991)). Agent can be defined as the intentional source of activities. It is thus claimed that since Causer and Agent both denote a source of an action or an event, they are not mutually exclusive.

Although Takeuchi (2019) does not mention it explicitly, the data in (12) also illustrates that Causer and Source are compatible with each other. The very fact that the preposition *from* can introduce Causer indicates their conceptual compatibility with each other.

Causer is *not* conceptually compatible with Goal. This claim is corroborated by the fact that a Causer argument cannot be introduced by elements that can introduce a Goal argument. Observe the following:

(13)   John sold a book to Bill.   (Gruber (1965/1976: 81))

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[3] Green (1974) and Oehrle (1976) observe that the DOC can describe causes of events.

(14)　　　　* The window broke to the pressure.　　　　　　　　　　　(cf. (12))

A Goal argument can be introduced by the preposition *to*, as illustrated in (13); this element cannot introduce a Causer argument, as illustrated in (14).

　　Note that the indirect object argument of the DOC and the IRC, which is one instance of the DOC, can be a Goal argument (e.g. Jackendoff (1990)):

(15)　a.　　Joe painted Sally a picture.　　　　　　　　(Goldberg (1995: 143))

　　　b.　　Bob told Joe a story.　　　　　　　　　　　(Goldberg (1995: 143))

The indirect object arguments in the sentences in (15) function as Goals to which the direct object arguments are (metaphorically) given. The same relation is observed in the IRC in (16):

(16)　a.　　Berkowitz also gave himself a symbol with initials.

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(*Mindhunter*, season 2-2, 23:37 left)

　　　b.　　He actually gives himself possible names.　　　　　(= (4b))

The subject and indirect object arguments in these cases happen to refer to the same referents. These arguments in the DOC and the IRC are specified to bear two different semantic roles. Not only can different referents bear these roles, but also one and the same referent(s) can.

　　It should be noted further that the sentences in (16) do not violate a general constraint prohibiting "a sharing of Theme" by more than one Goal at the same time (Shibatani (1994: 63ff.)). According to Shibatani, this constraint accounts for the ungrammaticality of sentences like (17):

(17)　　　　* John gave Mary a book to Martha.　　　　　　(Shibatani (1994: 63))

In this case, one and the same Theme, *a book*, is simultaneously shared by two Goals, *Mary* and *Martha*. As we saw, the subject and indirect object arguments in the sentences in (16) bear different semantic roles; only the indirect object arguments bear the Goal role. Thus, the sentences do not violate the constraint on Theme-sharing.

3.　*Lose* and *receive* in the DOC and the IRC

　　In this section, I will apply the theoretical framework discussed in the previous section to examining the opposite behavior of the verbs *lose* and *receive* in the DOC and the IRC.

　　Section 2 has shown that Causer and Agent are conceptually compatible with each other and with Source. It has also shown that the subject argument of the DOC and the IRC is a Causer argument and can have itself overlaid with Agent. The verb *lose*, whose subject argument bears Source, can appear in the two constructions. Observe the following data:

(18)　a.　　He lost her a lot of money.

　　　b.　　He lost himself a lot of money.

(19)　a.　　He accidentally lost her a lot of money.

　　　b.　　He intentionally lost her a lot of money.

(20)   He'd already done that and lost himself a friend and a slave of great talent…

(COCA)

The verb *lose* assigns the Source role to its subject argument; the DOC assigns the Causer role to its subject argument. Since Source and Causer are conceptually compatible with each other, the sentences in (18) are both grammatical, with the indirect object arguments bearing the Goal role. The sentences in (18) can be uttered, for example, in gambling situations. Sentence (18a), for instance, can express a situation where the subject referent used the indirect object referent's money and caused her a loss. In this case, the indirect object's referent functions as a goal of financial damage. The subject argument of the DOC does not necessarily bear the Agent role, so sentence (19a), where the adverb *accidentally* appears, is acceptable. The adverb *intentionally* can appear in the DOC, as in (19b). In this case, Agent overlays the subject argument. Sentence (20) is an instance of the IRC found in COCA.

Section 2 has also demonstrated that Causer and Agent are *not* conceptually compatible with Goal, and that the indirect object argument of the DOC and the IRC can be a Goal argument. Furthermore, it has introduced a general constraint that prohibits a Theme argument from being shared by two Goal-bearing arguments simultaneously. Then it is predicted that verbs like *receive*, whose subject argument bears Goal, cannot appear in the two constructions. This prediction is borne out. Observe the following data:

(21)   a.   * He received her a lot of money.

       b.   * He received himself a lot of money.

(22)   * He {intentionally/accidentally} received her a lot of money.

Goal is not compatible with either Causer or Agent; thus, the verb *receive* cannot appear in either construction. In addition, the sentences in (21) and (22) violate the constraint on Theme-sharing.

Other verbs whose subject argument is lexically assigned Goal cannot appear in the DOC or the IRC, either. Observe the following data:

(23)   a.   * He inherited her a lot of money.

       b.   * He accepted her a lot of money.

(24)   a.   * He inherited himself a lot of money.

       b.   * He accepted himself a lot of money.

Neither *inherit* nor *accept* can occur in either construction.[4, 5]

Verbs whose subject argument lexically bears Source can in principle have a reflexive

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[4] In Levin (1993: 142), *receive*, *inherit*, and *accept* all belong to the class of *obtain* verbs.

[5] It is known that *obtain* verbs do not occur in the DOC (Levin (1993: 142)). The present study is to give it a localist account.

pronoun referring to the same referent as the subject referent in their Goal-bearing argument position. Examine the following data:

(25)　a.　　He provided her with a lot of money.

　　　b.　　He provided himself with a lot of entertainment.

(26)　a.　　They supplied the villagers with food and water.

　　　b.　　He supplied himself with the answers as he had done countless times before…

(*His Small Shadow,* Sue Hallett-Martin (2012))

The subject argument of *provide* and *supply* bears the Source role (e.g. Gruber (1965/1976)).[6] The subject and (indirect) object arguments can denote both different referents, as in (25a) and (26a), and the same referent(s), as in (25b) and (26b). The data in (25b) and (26b) indicate that the fact that Source and Goal arguments can refer to the same entity is independent of the DOC and the IRC, and is a general phenomenon.

4.　Other instances of the DOC and the IRC

　　　This section takes a brief look at other instances of the DOC and the IRC. Among verbs or verb classes that can appear in the two constructions are found *get* verbs (Levin (1993)), whose subject argument is *not* lexically specified to bear the Goal role as strongly as that of *receive* is. For example, *buy*, a *get* verb, can occur in both constructions.

(27)　　　　John bought Mary a tuna sandwich.　　　　(Nishigauchi (1984: 229))

(28)　a.　　I've bought myself a gramophone and a collection of jazz records.　　(COCA)

　　　b.　　With his El Coqui money, Eddie Haines bought himself a beach house in Malibu.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(COCA)

　　　c.　　Buy yourself a new door lock.　　　　　　(*Giri/Haji*, 1-2, 3:51 left)

In the sentence in (27), the subject and indirect object arguments denote different referents; in the sentences in (28), they happen to denote the same referents.[7]

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[6] In Levin (1993: 140), *provide* and *supply* both belong to the class of verbs of fulfilling.

[7] Other examples of the IRC are given below:

(i)　a.　　He's very self-sufficient. He can darn a sock, and cook himself a dinner, and iron a shirt.　　　　　　　(*Marriage Story*, 2:12:19 left, underline added)

　　b.　　We should've let that suffice as our interview. Saved ourselves a trip out here.

(*Mindhunter* 1-9, 44:36 left, underline added)

It seems safe to say that both *cook* and *save* do not assign the Goal role to their subject argument (e.g. Levin (1993)).

　　　The verb *get* can appear in the IRC as well:

(ii)　a.　　But you got yourself a girlfriend…　　　　(*Mindhunter* 1-4, 45:25 left)

One may assume that the subject argument of *buy* and *receive* always bears the same semantic role, given that these verbs can co-occur with a *from*-phrase which can introduce a Source argument:

(29)   a.   He bought a book from John.   (Gruber (1965/1976: 81))

         b.   He received a book from Bill.   (Gruber (1965/1976: 78))

However, this is not the case.

Nishigauchi (1984) argues that a Goal argument functions as controller for PRO more easily than Location and Source arguments do. He observes that the subject argument of *buy* is a Goal argument when there is no indirect object argument present and functions as controller for PRO, as in (30a). He also observes that the indirect object argument, when present, is a Goal argument and functions as controller for PRO, as in (30b):[8]

(30)   a.   John$_i$ bought a mirror [PRO$_i$ to look at himself in].

         b.   John bought Mary$_i$ a mirror [PRO$_i$ to look at {herself/*himself} in].

                                            (Nishigauchi (1984: 224))

In present terms, these facts point out that the subject argument of *buy* is not lexically specified to bear the Goal role as strongly as one may assume.[9]

Furthermore, according to Gruber (1965/1976), *buy* can co-occur with the adverb *intentionally* while *receive* cannot, indicating that their subject argument should not be treated in the same manner. Observe the following data:

(31)   a.   He bought the flowers from Bill intentionally.   (Gruber (1965/1976: 157))

         b.   * John received the book from Bill intentionally.

                                 (Gruber (1965/1976: 157), (= (3b)))

It should come as no surprise that the two verbs behave differently with respect to their appearance in the DOC and the IRC.

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         b.   I come back up here, get myself a job, a girlfriend.

                                    (*Mindhunter* 1-4, 45:51 left)

         c.   He got himself a brand new TV but can't seem to buy new furniture. (COCA)

For the verb *get* in the DOC, see, for example, McIntyre (2012: 1264ff.).

[8] For possible controllers, see also Pylkkänen (2008: 57ff.).

[9] The same holds true for the verb *get*, as illustrated in the following:

(i)   a.   John$_i$ got a mirror [PRO$_i$ to look at himself in].

         b.   John got Mary$_i$ a mirror [PRO$_i$ to look at {herself/*himself} in].

5.　Conclusion

　　This paper has provided a localist explanation for the opposite behavior of the verbs *lose* and *receive* and related verbs in the double object construction (DOC) and in the indirect reflexive construction (IRC). The subject argument of *lose* is associated with the Source role and thus the verb can appear in both the DOC and the IRC; that of *receive* is associated with the Goal role and thus the verb cannot occur in either construction. Source is conceptually compatible with both Causer and Agent, and Goal is compatible with neither. This paper has pursued and argued for the idea of conceptual compatibility between semantic roles. The idea is mainly attributed to Nakau (1994).

　　By hypothesizing such semantic roles as Source and Goal, the present study has argued for a localist theory of semantic roles. Non-localist theories of semantic roles have been presented (e.g. Reinhart (e.g. 2000, 2002)). The present study has been an attempt to claim that localist semantic roles deserve a place in the grammar.

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