

8. Transfer and Possession Sentences

Summary

A transfer is a dynamic sentence or verb which alters the physical or mental relationship between its object and a third party. The third party is usually a person and is called a recipient. The resultant sentence of a transfer is the stative physical or mental relationship between the recipient and the object, which is called a possession.

A transfer differs from a transitive or intransitive sentence in that a transfer does not directly alter its object, and includes a recipient. The resultant sentence of a transitive or intransitive is a state or condition of its object, expressed by an attribute or identification. The resultant sentence of a transfer, a possession, is a relationship between two entities, the object and an animate recipient.

Transfers take three forms: a dative sentence, in which the subject is the agent, instrument, or object, a receptive sentence in which the subject is the recipient, and an adoptive sentence in which the subject is both the agent and the recipient. This chapter is concerned with dative sentences, and receptive and adoptive sentences are considered in Chapter 9. Chapters 8. and 9. also only discuss transfers and possessions whose object is stative.

A dative sentence may have an instrument, and be agential or instrumental. If the agent or instrument is the subject, it is called active. It may be expressed with the object as subject; by analogy with a transitive sentence, this is called dative passive.

Language includes a very wide range of relations which an animate person enters into with an object, including ownership, perception, supposition, and opinion. All of these are expressed by some sort of transfer and possession. 12 different categories of transfer and possession sentence, covering these relations, are identified and described.

A possession sentence may be expressed with the recipient as subject, either of a possession verb or of a recipient participle. Alternatively, it may be in topic position but linked to the possession indirectly. This “indirect recipient” construction is widely attested. In all, seven different possession sentence constructions are listed. Alternatively, the object may be the subject, connected to the recipient by an attribute called a possessive participle. These participles may be used to construct general sentences.

A communication is the transfer of a new mental impression to a recipient, and a perception is the possession of that mental impression. A communication and perception sentence can be restructured with the object, if definite, as topic, and the communication or possession elements embedded as part of the comment. If the object of the communication or perception is indefinite, the sentence can be restructured as existential, with the communication or possession elements embedded as part of the circumstance.

A representation involves both an action of creating the representation, and its communication, and therefore combines the functions of a transitive and transfer sentences.

A mental attitude or opinion arises in general either from the object of the opinion or from an intention by the recipient. The first of these is expressed by an instrumental dative sentence with the object as instrument. The second is expressed by an adoptive sentence with the recipient as agent, as discussed in Chapter 9.

Terms Defined or Introduced

Transfer, possession, dative, receptive, exchange, provision, opinion, communication, perception, embedding, interrogation, volition, imperative, representation.

The Transfer Function

In Chapter 6., we looked at transitive sentences, which alter their object (or patient) to a form expressed by an attribute or noun which we called the resultant. Corresponding to each transitive sentence is a resultant sentence which describes the altered state of the object. In Chapter 7., we looked at intransitive sentences whose subject is altered (voluntarily or involuntarily) to a form represented by a resultant. An intransitive sentence accordingly has a resultant sentence which describes the altered state of the subject.

The theme of this and the following chapter are sentences which do not alter their object, but change the relationship between their object and a third party. The object may be animate or inanimate, but the third party is usually animate. The changed relationship may be physical, or it may be a mental perception in the mind of the third party. In both cases, the construction is the same. The sentences are dynamic, but have an outcome which is stative, indicated with “→”:

“Mary gave the book to John.”	→	“John has the book.”
“Mary showed the book to John.”	→	“John sees the book.”
“Mary taught John geography.”	→	“John understands geography.”
“Mary lent the book to John.”	→	“John has the book on loan.”
“Mary introduced Shirley to John.”	→	“John is acquainted with Shirley.”
“Mary brought John’s attention to the noise.”	→	“John hears the noise.”
“Mary explained the details to John.”	→	“John knows the details.”
“Mary reminded John about the appointment.”	→	“John remembers the appointment.”
“Mary interested John in her work.”	→	“John is interested in Mary’s work.”

If the object is physical, it is affected in that its relationship with the third party is altered. If the object is mental, it is not affected at all: “Mary taught John geography” does not alter geography. The sentences therefore differ in function from transitives and intransitives, and we propose for them a different name: *transfer*. In the examples to the left of the “→”, the subject is the intended performer of the action, which by analogy with transitives and agential intransitives can be called the *agent*. The third party whose relationship with the object is changed is conventionally termed an “indirect object”, but this term does not accurately describe its purpose, and we therefore term it the *recipient*. The structure of a transfer sentence is therefore “agent-verb-object-recipient”.

The outcome of these transfers, to the right of the “→”, are stative sentences which express the changed relationship of the object with the recipient. They are called *possessions*, and are discussed further in the following section. In these examples, the subject of the possession sentence is the animate recipient and the object is what is possessed. Examples in this and the following chapter illustrate the wide range of possessive relationships. Since the possessions describe the state arising from the action, they can be called the *resultant sentence* of the transfers by analogy with the terminology of transitives and intransitives. However, a transfer sentence does not itself include an element “resultant”.

Transfer sentences may also have an instrument, in which case their structure is “agent-verb-object-recipient-instrument”:

“Mary sent the book to John through the post.”
“Mary explained the information to John with the aid of diagrams.”

Accordingly, an instrumental transfer construction is possible: “instrument-verb-object-recipient”:

“The post delivered the book to John.”
“The diagrams explained the information to John.”

In some of the transfers cited, the object is direct and the recipient is connected to the verb by a link word (“to”) or an equivalent inflexion (“dative”). This is so for the verbs “give”, “show”, “introduce”, “lend”, and “explain”, although English has the alternative construction “Mary gave John the book”, etc. For others verbs (“teach”, “remind”, “interest”), the recipient is direct in English and connected by “to” or its equivalent in other languages. In each case, the construction conforms to the transfer model.

The function of a transfer in the above examples is to provide new information on the agent or instrument, which are therefore the subject. Consistent with the terminology of transitive sentences, we may call them *active*. In these examples, no element is in focus:

“Mary gave the book to John.” “The diagrams explained the information to John.”

In the following sentences, “Mary” and “the diagrams” are in focus and therefore the comment. The remainder of the sentences are the topic:

“It was Mary who gave the book to John.”
 “It was the diagrams which explained the information to John.”

It is usually also possible to construct a transfer sentence with the object as subject. By analogy with a transitive sentence (Chapter 6.), this sentence is termed *passive*. Transfers in which the subject is the agent, instrument or object are called *dative*. In English and some other languages, it is also possible to construct a transfer with the recipient as subject, a construction we shall call *receptive*. The dative passive and receptive versions of the first four sentences above are:

“The book was given to John by Mary.”	“John was given the book by Mary.”
“The book was showed to John by Mary.”	“John was showed the book by Mary.”
“Geography was taught to John by Mary.”	“John was taught geography by Mary.”
“The book was lent to John by Mary.”	“John was lent the book by Mary.”

However, even in English some dative verbs do not have a receptive form:

“The information was explained to John by Mary.”	
	*“John was explained the information by Mary.”
“Shirley was introduced to John by Mary.”	*“John was introduced to Shirley by Mary.”

An English construction using an auxiliary verb is however possible: “John had the information explained to him by Mary”; “John received an introduction to Shirley from Mary”.

The English dative passive and receptive constructions employ the perfective participle of the transfer verb: “given”, “showed”, “taught”. The other methods of forming the dative passive summarised in Chapter 6. (The Passive Construction) also apply. Japanese, Indonesian, and Swahili alter the active verb:

Japanese:	
“Jon wa sensei ni shitsumon o shita.”	(dative)
“John asked his teacher a question.”	
[John _(topic) teacher-to question _(object) put.]	
“Sensei wa Jon ni shitsumon o sareta.”	
“The teacher was asked a question by John.”	(receptive)
[Teacher _(topic) John-by question _(object) was-put.]	
Indonesian/Malay: (“serah” = “transfer”)	
“Kepala kantor menyerahi kami tugas itu.”	(dative)
“The office head handed us that task.”	
[Head office handed us task that.]	
“Tugas itu diserahkan oleh kepala kantor kepada kami.”	(passive)
“That task was handed by the office head to us.”	
[Task that was-handed by head office to us.]	
“Kami diserahi kepala kantor tugas itu.”	(receptive)
“We were handed that task by the office head.”	
[We were-handed head office task that.]	

Inuit adds a suffix “-ut” (or its variant “-up”), which converts a verb into a dative form. It is here translated as “to”. “niqar” is the passive suffix:

“Nassippaa” “He sends him it.” [Send-he-it.]	(dative)
“Nassiupaa” “He sends it to him.” [Send-to-he-it.]	(dative)
“Nassiunniqarpuq.” “It was sent.” [Send-to-(passive)-it.]	(passive)
“Nassinniqaqpuq.” “He was sent.” [Send-(passive)-he.]	(receptive)

Inuit can also form dative sentences by attaching a suffix (underlined> to the object given:

“Atisassipparma.” “You gave me clothes.” [Clothes- <u>give</u> -you-me.]
“Ursuirniarpugut.” “We are selling blubber.” [Blubber- <u>sell</u> -we.]
“Akisugissaa <u>vuq</u> .” “He complained that it was too expensive.” [Expensive- <u>complain</u> -he.]
“Niaqururpa <u>anga</u> .” “He hit me on the head.” [Head- <u>hit</u> on-he-me.]

German, like many languages, permits a passive but not a receptive version of a dative verb. The receptive is expressed by placing the recipient in the topic position, but in the dative case, a construction we can call “indirect recipient”:

“Der Geschäftsführer bot dem Arbeitslosen eine Stelle an”	(dative)
“The manager offered the unemployed man _(dative) a job.”	
“Die Stelle wurde dem Arbeitslosen vom Geschäftsführer angeboten.”	
“The job was offered to the unemployed man by the manager.”	(passive)
[The job was to the unemployed man _(dative) by the manager offered.]	
“Dem Arbeitlosen wurde eine Stelle vom Geschäftsführer angeboten.”	(receptive)
“The unemployed man was offered a job by the manager.”	
[To the unemployed man _(dative) was a job by the manager offered.”	

Similarly in Russian:

“Vam soobshchat ob etom.” “You will be informed about that.”	(receptive)
[To-you _(dative) they-inform about that.]	

Romance languages employ the same construction. A passive form of the verb is used, or a reflexive construction of the active verb:

Spanish: “Le fue mandada una carta.” “He was sent a letter.”	(receptive)
[To-him was sent a letter.]	
“Se le mandó una carta.” “He was sent a letter.”	(receptive)
[Itself to-him sent a letter.]	
Italian: “Promisero il libro allo studente.”	(dative)
“They promised the student the book.”	
[They-promised the book to the student.]	
“Il libro fu promesso allo studente.”	(passive)
“The book was promised to the student.”	
“Allo studente fu promesso/si promise il libro.”	(receptive)
“The student was promised the book.”	
[To-the student was promised/itself promised the book.]	

Languages which employ an impersonal construction for the transitive passive also use it for the dative passive and receptive:

Welsh: “Dysgir Cymraeg gan yr athro.” “Welsh is taught by the teacher.”	
[There-is-teaching of Welsh by the teacher.]	(passive)
Finnish: “On esitetty kolme ehdotusta.” “Three suggestions have been put forward.”	
[There-are put-forward three suggestions.]	(passive)
French: “On lui a rendu l’argent.” “The money has been given back to him.”	
[One to-him has returned the money.]	(receptive)

Hungarian can place the object in topic position to achieve the passive:

“Azt a filmet akarom megnézni.” “I want to watch that movie.”
 [That the movie _(object) I-want to-watch.]
 “Ugyanazt a térképet vettem meg, mint te.” “I bought the same map as you.”
 [Same the map _(object) bought-I _(perfective), as you.]

The Possession Function

At the start of the previous section, it was noted that the resultant sentence of a transfer expresses a stative relationship between the recipient and object, called a *possession*. We can now consider these examples further:

“John has the book.”	“The book is owned by John.”
“John sees the book.”	“The book is seen by John.”
“John understands geography.”	“Geography is understood by John.”
“John has the book on loan.”	“The book is on loan to John.”
“John is acquainted with Shirley.”	“Shirley is acquainted with John.”
“John hears the noise.”	“The noise is heard by John.”
“John knows the details.”	“The details are known to John.”
“John remembers the appointment.”	“The appointment is remembered by John.”
“John is interested in Mary’s work.”	“Mary’s work is interesting to John.”

It can be seen that possession sentences can have two forms, unlike the resultant sentence of a transitive or intransitive sentence which has the single form “subject-attribute/noun”. In the first, the recipient is the subject and the verb expresses his/her possession of the object, whether material or mental: “has”, “owns”, “feels”, “sees”, “understands”, “knows”, “remembers”, or “is interested in”. These are *possession* verbs, and the construction is “recipient-possession-object”. In the second, the object possessed is the subject (generally inanimate) and the verb expresses its ownership by the recipient: “is owned”, “is felt”, “is seen”, “is understood”, “is interesting”, etc. This form of verb is similar to the perfective participle of a transitive, intransitive, or dative verb, but differs from them in that the verb from which it is derived is stative. We can call it the *possessive participle*. The construction is “subject-possessive participle-recipient”.

In Indonesian, the relationship between the dative sentence and the resultant possession may be transparent. In this case, the dative is formed with the suffix “-kan”:

“Mereka menontonkan hasil kemajuan yang terakhir.”
 “They display the results of the latest progress.”
 “[They make-viewed result progress which latest.]
 “Pengunjung menonton hasil kemajuan yang terakhir.”
 “The visitors viewed the results of the latest progress.”
 [Visitor view result progress which latest.]

Language includes a very wide range of relations which an animate person enters into with an inanimate object, including ownership, perception, benefit, access, or control. All of these are covered by some sort of possession sentence. Further examples of transfer sentences and their possession resultant sentences are:

“The tooth gives John pain.”	→	“John feels a pain in his tooth.”
“John’s appearance suits him to light clothing.”	→	“Light clothing suits John.”
“John received a share in the reward.”	→	“John shared in the reward.”
“Our contract entitles us to two weeks’ holiday.”	→	“We have the right to two weeks’ holiday.”
“The argument was explained to John.”	→	“The argument was clear to John.”
“His brother lent John £4000.”	→	“John owes £4000 to his brother.”
“John was assigned responsibility for this debt.”	→	“John is responsible for this debt.”

object”, where “link” is a link as in Chapter 4. (Links) or an auxiliary verb expressing that link, such as “have as”.

- (vii) A suffix is attached to the object possessed, the whole forming a verb meaning “have...”.

All these constructions place the recipient in topic position. Except for the last two, they can usually be adapted to place the object in topic position. However, in the indirect recipient and topic-comment constructions the recipient is not the subject of the verb. The constructions are various attempts to adapt the constructions “subject-verb-object” and “subject-attribute”, which are suited to a transitive sentence, to the concept of possession.

The seven possession constructions are illustrated under (a) to (g) below.

- (a) As already mentioned, the recipient is the subject of the verbs “have” and “need”:

French: “Il a beaucoup d’argent.” “He has plenty of money.”
“J’en ai peur.” “I am afraid of him.” [I of-him have fear.]
“Nous avons besoin de vacances.” “We need a holiday.”
[We have need of holiday.]

German: “Wir haben ein neues Auto.” “We have a new car.”
“Wir brauchen frische Luft.” “We need [some] fresh air.”
“Ich habe Hunger.” “I’m hungry.”

Czech: “Mám svůj deštník.” “I have [my] umbrella.”

Greek: “Έχω μόνο τρεις λίρες.” “I have only three pounds.”

Persian: “do bab xane darad” “He has two houses.” [Two unit houses he-has.]

Also in this pattern are most verbs of perception:

French: “J’entendais le bruit de la circulation.” “I heard the noise of the traffic.”

German: “Ich verstehe, was Sie gesagt haben.” “I understand what you said.”
[I understand, what you said have.]

Russian: “Ya ikh khorosho znayu.” “I know them well.” [I them well know.]

Arabic: “yaʿrifu ʔasbābahā ʔakθara minnī”
“He knows the causes of it more than I do.”
[He-knows causes-its more than-I.]

Chinese: “Dàjiā dōu kàn bù jiàn hēibǎn shang de zì.”
“Nobody could see the words on the blackboard.”
[Everybody all look not see blackboard-on-of words.]

- (b) The indirect recipient construction is a very common way of expressing “have”, “need”, “feel”, and “concern”, and the usual way of expressing “suit”. It also occurs with verbs of perception:

French: “Il leur faudra cent francs.” “They will need 100 francs.”
[It to-them will-be-necessary 100 francs.]
“Mon bras me fait mal.” “My arm hurts.” [My arm to-me does harm.]

German: “Dieses Auto gehört meinem Bruder.” “This car belongs to my brother.”
“Es fehlt mir an nötigen Gelde.” “I lack necessary funds.”
[It lacks to-me at necessary funds.]
“Unserem Nachbar war das nicht neu.”
[To our neighbour was that not new.]

“Mir ist kalt.” “I feel cold.” [To-me is cold.]
“Mir ist traurig zumute.” “I feel sad.” [To-me is sad to-mood.]

Italian: “Mi era occorso l’aiuto dei miei studenti.” “I needed my students’ help.”
[To-me was needed the help-of-the my students.]
“A Giorgio manca il passaporto.” “George lacks his passport.”
[To George lacks the passport.]
“Mi duole il dito.” “My finger hurts.” [To-me hurts the finger.]
“La Piazza San Pietro le era sembrata un regno incantato.”
“St Peter’s Square had seemed to her an enchanted kingdom.”
[The square St Peter to-her was seemed an enchanted kingdom.]
“A Giorgio non giova depistare la gente.”
“To sidetrack the people is of no use to George.”
[To George not is-useful to-sidetrack the people.]

Russian: “U menya novyi kostyum.” “I have a new suit.” [With me new suit.]
“Detyam nuzhen khoroshii ukhod.” “Children need good care.”
[To-children necessary good care.]
“Eto menya vpolne ustraivaet.” “That will suit me perfectly.”
[That of-me fully suits.]
“Vam udobno?” “Do you feel comfortable?” [To-you comfortable?]
“Ucheniku veselo.” “The pupil feels cheerful.” [To-pupil cheerful.]

Finnish: “Rasialla on outo historia.” “The box has a strange history.”
[Box-at there-is strange history.]
“Minulta puuttuu jotakin.” “Something is lacking in me.”
[Me-from lacks something.]
“Hänen ei sovi mennä nyt.” “It does not suit her to go now.”
[Of-her not suit to-go now.]

Hungarian:
“Jóska feleségének jó állása van.” “Joska’s wife has a good job.”
[Joska wife-his-to good job-her is.]
“Lajos bácsinak fáj a feje.” “Mr Lajos has a headache.”
[Lajos Mr-to hurts the head-his.]

Welsh: “Y mae’r fased gan Mair.” “Mary has the basket.”
[There-is the basket with Mary.]
“Y mae eisiau bwyd ar y bachgen.” “The boy needs food.”
[There-is need food on the boy.]

Irish: “Tá gúna nua ag Eibhlín.” “Eileen has a new dress.”
[Is new dress at Eileen.]
“Tá eolas an bhaile go maith aige.” “He knows the town well.”
[Is knowledge of-the town well at-him.]

Greek: “Σου πάει αυτή η φούστα.” “This skirt suits you.”
[To-you goes this the skirt.]
“Δύσκολο μου φαίνεται.” “It seems difficult to me.”
[Difficult to-me it-seems-itself.]

Turkish: “Evin bahçesi var.” “The house has a garden.”
[House-of garden-its there-is.]

Arabic: “lahu banūna fī l-jāmi‘ati” “He has sons in the University.”
[For-him sons in the-University.]
“ma‘ī l-ʔāna 71,5 frank” “I had with me 71.5 francs.”
[With-me 71.5 francs.]

Persian: “in be man marbut nist” “This does not concern me.”

[This to me connected is-not.]
“in hava be man misazad” “This climate suits me.”
[This climate to me suits.]

Hindi: “mere pās ek gārī hai” “I have a car.” [Me-with a car is.]
“hame~ ye pustke~ nahī cāhie” “We don’t need these books.”
[To-us these books not necessary.]
“unko uskā nām mālūm thā” “They knew his name.”
[To-them his name known was.]
“āj kā din mujhe hameśā yād rahegā” “I shall always remember today.”
[Today-of day to-me always mind will-remain.]
“mujhe bhūkh lagī hai” “I am hungry.” [To-me hunger attached is.]

Japanese: “Watashi ni nanika ga hitsuyō da.” “I need something.”
[Me-to something (subject) necessary is.]
“Watashi ni wa ki no ue no chīsana tori ga mieta.”
“I could see small birds on the tree.”
[I-to (topic) tree-of top-of small bird (subject) were-visible.]
“Watashi ni wa uguisu no koe ga yoku kikoeru.”
“I can clearly hear the cries of a nightingale.”
[I-to (topic) nightingale-of voice (subject) well is-audible.]

Swahili: “Kalamu ina mwalimu.” “The teacher has the pencil.”
[Pencil is-with teacher.]

- (c) In the topic-comment possession construction, the comment may be an existential sentence or a statement about some attribute of the possession. If the verb is existential, for example “ada” in Malay or “yǒu” in Chinese, its purpose is very similar to “have” in English, and it is often translated as that:

Arabic: “al-masraḥīyyatu l-šīriyyatu lahā xaṣāʾiṣu tumayyizuhā”
“Poetic drama has distinguishing characteristics.”
[The-drama the-poetic, for-it characteristics distinguishing-it.]

Malay: “Dia ada rumah baru.” “He has a new house.” [He there-is house new.]

Chinese: “Wǒ yǒu gè dīdī.” “I have a younger brother.”
[I there-is unit younger-brother.]
“Dǒngshìzhǎng xīnshuǐ shífēn gāo.”
“The director of the board has an extremely high salary.”
[Board-director salary extremely high.]
“Wǒ méiyǒu qián yòng.” “I haven’t any money to spend.”
[I not-there-is money use.]
“Wǒ yǒu yī fēng xìn yào xiě.” “I have got a letter to write.”
[I there-is one unit letter want write.]

Japanese:
“Kono kuruma ni wa kā sutereo ga aru.”
“This car has a car stereo.” [This car-in (topic) car stereo (subject) there-is.]
“Kono kuruma wa gasorin ga takusan iru.” “This car needs a lot of gas.”
[This car (topic) gas (subject) a-lot needs.]
“Zō wa hana ga nagai.” “Elephants have long trunks.”
[Elephant (topic) trunk (subject) is-long.]
“Watashi wa samuke ga shimasu.” “I feel a chill.” [I (topic) chill (subject) feel.]
“Watashi wa Eigo ga wakarimasu.” “I understand English.”
[I (topic) English (subject) is-understandable.]

The last three Japanese examples can also be indirect recipient:

“Zō ni wa hana ga nagai.” “Elephants have long trunks.”

“Ο Δημήτρης χρειάζεται χρήματα.” “Dimitris needs money.”
 [The Dimitris needs-himself money.]

Latin also has deponent verbs of perception:

“Omnia potiora fide Iugurthae rebatur.” (Sallust)
 “He thought all the best of Jugurtha’s good faith.”
 [All preferable in-faith of-Jugurtha he-thought-himself.]

- (f) The great majority of relations between an object and a person are possessive in nature. The relation may be expressed not by a verb, but by a noun called a *possession* which is connected both to the recipient and to the object possessed. For example, in English the auxiliary “have as” may be used:

“Mary loaned the book to John.”	→	“John has the book as a loan.”/ “The book is a loan to John.”
“We were given Mr Smith as our teacher.”	→	“We have Mr Smith as our teacher.”/ “Our teacher is Mr Smith.”
“Mrs Jones was elected our Chairman.”	→	“We have Mrs Jones as our Chairman.”/ “Mrs Jones is our Chairman.”
“We bought a Ford Focus.”	→	“Our car is a Ford Focus.”
“I was given a tiepin as a present.”	→	“I have a tiepin as a present.”

“My daughter is an accountant” could equally be expressed as “I have a daughter in accountancy”.

These constructions are used because no word exists in English for “have as a loan”, “have as a teacher”, “have as an example”, “have as a Chairman”, “have as a car”, “have as a present”, “have as a daughter”, etc.

In fact, as Chapters 12. (Possession) will show, any possession relationship can be expressed by a possession noun.

- (g) Inuit expresses possession as a suffix (underlined) to the object possessed. It differs from other stative concepts in Inuit which are mostly expressed by distinct words. “-qar-” means “there is” and is used when the possession is indefinite; “-ra-” means “have as” and is used when the possession is definite:

“Aninngaasaatiqarpunga.” “I have some money.” [Money-some-have-I.]
 “Ilinniartitsisuraarput.” “He is our teacher.” [Teacher-have-we-him.]
 “Atisassaaliqirvunga.” “I lack clothes.” [Clothes-lack-I.]
 “Mattanngirpunga.” “I love mattak.” [Mattak love-I.]
 “Niaqunguvuq.” “He has a headache.” [Head-haspain-he.]
 “Qilaatirpaarpuq.” “One can hear a drum” [Drum-audible-is.]

The Transfer and Possession Functions

We have summarised the transfer and possession functions on the basis of many examples, and it may be helpful to review their common features. In a transfer, an agent (or instrument) transfers an object to a recipient (usually animate), so as to establish a relationship between the recipient and the object. This relationship is expressed by a stative sentence called a possession. This schematic description covers the vast range of possible relations which can occur between persons and objects and persons and other persons. The justification for summarising them under the single construction of “transfer” and “possession” is that they can all be expressed in the single form: “agent-verb-object-recipient” and “recipient-possession-object”. Each possession relationship is characterised by the possession which connects the recipient and the object, and the function of the transfer sentence is to transfer that possession to the recipient.

If we examine the examples given, it seems that possessions can be classified into 12 broad categories, although these could evidently be varied by further analysis:

- (i) Material object: property, gift, loan. These arise from transfers such as “give”, “lend”, “buy”, or “sell”.

There are possessions which do not necessarily or evidently arise from any transfer sentence:

- (ii) Convenience/inconvenience: suitability, comfort, pain: “That dress suits you”; “I find this seat uncomfortable”.
- (iii) Truth/falsehood: (French) “Vous avez raison.” “You are right.” [You have right.]
- (iv) Personal relations: family member, public/private offices, friend/acquaintance: “John is our Secretary”; “My father knew Lloyd George.”

Some categories of possession require further comment which is given in the rest of this chapter. These transfer and possession sentences may include further elements than those listed above:

- (v) In an exchange, the possession is transferred in exchange for a compensation. It is usually a material object or a benefit.
- (vi) A provision is a material object which is designed to provide a service to the recipient.
- (vii) Mental attitudes such as interest, pleasure, conviction, or satisfaction are possessions, called “opinions”, which are directed towards and stimulated by an external object. They may arise from a transfer verb of which the external object is the instrument.
- (viii) Mental perceptions such as sight, hearing, understanding, or memory, are possessions which arise from communication transfers such as “show”, “say”, “teach”, “explain”, or “remind”. The perception and communication may refer both to an external object and a statement concerning that object.
- (ix) An interrogation is a transfer which communicates an enquiry concerning an object. The possession sentence is that the recipient is aware of the enquiry.
- (x) A volition is possessed by someone who desires an object, action, or state which has not yet occurred. Since it expresses a lack, it can but does not necessarily arise from the withdrawal of the object from the recipient.
- (xi) An imperative is a transfer which communicates a wish that the recipient should perform an action. The possession sentence is that the recipient is aware of the wish.
- (xii) A representation is an image or transformation of an object.

Since the consequences of an interrogation and an imperative depend on the reaction of the recipient, these transfer functions do not have an immediate resultant sentence in the sense of other transfer sentences.

These 12 categories of possession all have a stative object. In addition, there are transfer and possession sentences with a dynamic object, called respectively a facilitative and modal sentence. These are discussed in Chapter 11.

Like other stative concepts, possessions can be negative: “He lacks a car”; “Vous avez tort”; “She is not interested in stamps”; “We do not hear the noise”, etc. This lack or need of a possession may arise because the recipient has never had it, or because he/she has renounced it (a construction which is discussed in Chapter 9.), or because it has been withdrawn: “He gave up his car”; “They took away his car”, etc. A withdrawal or removal is therefore a sort of transfer with negative effect.

The Exchange Function

Some transfer sentences refer to a transfer to the recipient of a benefit in return for a compensation. This implies two transfer sentences, one describing the benefit and one the compensation. We may call this an *exchange*. In the benefit and compensation sentences, the elements agent and recipient are reversed:

“She sold the book to a friend for £10.”
 “Her friend bought the book for £10.”/“Her friend owes £10 for the book.”

“He rescued his companion.”
 “His companion thanked him for rescuing him.”

“Mary won a good grade for her work at school.”
 “The school congratulated Mary for her work.”

In German, compensation verbs take the dative case even when they do not in English:

“Sie hat mir 10 euro bezahlt.” “She paid me 10 euros.” [She has to-me 10 euros paid.]
 “Ich danke dir für das Geschenk.” “I thank [to] you for the present.”
 “Wir gratulieren ihm zum Geburtstag.” “We congratulate [to] him on [his] birthday.”

Similarly, in Chinese “congratulate” is “towards” the recipient:

“Wǒ dàibiǎo dàijiā xiàng nín zhùhè.” “On behalf of everybody I congratulate you.”
 [I represent everybody towards you congratulate.]

Exchange possessive participles include:

“£10 is owed for the book.”
 “The rescue was deserving of thanks.”
 “Mary’s work was praiseworthy.”

Exchange recipient participles include:

“Her friend is in debt for £10 for the book.”
 “His companion was grateful for the rescue.”
 “Mary merited praise for her work.”

The Provision Function

Some transfer verbs refer to the supply of material goods or services, expressed by a noun called a *provision*. The provision verb is derived from the provision noun (in brackets):

“The consultancy manned the team with accountants.”	(man)
“The soldiers were armed with rifles.”	(arms)
“The ostler fed the horses.”	(feed)
“They named their son Frederick.”	(name)
“Tenniel illustrated ‘Alice in Wonderland’.”	(illustration)
“The aid workers clothed the victims.”	(clothes)
“The workers were housed in cottages on the estate.”	(house)

Hungarian:

“Ebből a pénzből nem tudok felruházkodni.” (ruha = “dress”)
 “I can’t provide myself with clothes with this money.”
 [This-with the money-with not I-can clothe-myself.]

The Opinion Function

A category of transfer sentence includes the bringing of an object to the attention of a recipient (a communication) and the resultant perception of that object by the recipient. These communication and perception functions are discussed further in a later section of this chapter:

“She pointed out the mistake to him.”	→	“He saw the mistake.”
“She reminded him of the appointment.”	→	“He remembered the appointment.”
“She explained the procedure to him.”	→	“He understood the procedure.”

A person can also engage in a mental process or reaction towards an object, in addition to or in consequence of his/her perception. There are large number of such mental processes or reactions, which we can call an *opinion*. Since they are a voluntary connection between a person and an object, they can be expressed by a possession or dative passive sentence in which the holder of the opinion is the recipient:

Possession sentence

“Sam enjoys visiting the cinema.”
“Everyone likes Sarah.”
“I believe in the principles of democracy.”
“We trust his leadership.”
“She suspected him of stealing the tarts.”
“She objected to his behaviour.”
“He was contemptuous of their ideas.”
“She resented not being promoted.”
“They respected his experience.”
“The team were proud of the final result.”
“She pitied the destitute.”
“The fans admired the star.”
“We rely on her expertise.”
“They fear what may happen.”
“They regret their past conduct.”
“He envied her success.”
“They thought much about the problem.”
“It mattered to them very much.”

Dative Passive sentence

“The cinema was enjoyed by Sam.”
“Sarah is liked by everyone.”
“The principles of democracy are believed in.”
“His leadership is trusted by us.”
“He was suspected of stealing the tarts.”
“His behaviour was objectionable to her.”
“Their ideas were contemptible to him.”
“Her not being promoted was resented.”
“His experience was respected by them.”
-
“The destitute were pitiful to her.”
“The star was admired by the fans.”
“Her expertise is reliable.”
“What may happen frightens them.”
“Their past conduct is regrettable.”
“Her success is enviable.”
“The problem was much thought about by them.”
-

Most opinions can be the result of a conscious decision by the recipient to adopt them: “Everyone took a liking to Sarah”; “She took objection to his behaviour”; “The team took pride in the final result”, etc. This is a dynamic function expressed by an *adoptive sentence*, and is considered in greater detail in the next chapter. Some opinions can additionally be stimulated by an external argument or incident, which can be expressed by a corresponding dative verb, often instrumental. In a similar manner to an effect (Chapter 6., The Effect Function), the object of the opinion is the same as the instrument of the dative verb:

Instrumental dative

“Your proposal interests us.” →
“The performance pleased him.” →
“The contract satisfied us.” →
“His argument convinced the tribunal.” →
“ Our reputation shames us.” →
“The stadium impressed observers.” →
“The results give the company hope for a return to profit.” →
“Whether they will be enough gives us doubt.” →

Opinion

“We are interested in your proposal.”
“He was pleased by the performance.”
“We are satisfied with the contract.”
“ They were convinced by his argument.”
“ We are ashamed of our reputation.”
“ The observers were impressed by the stadium.”
“ The company hopes for a return to profit.”
“ She doubted whether they would be enough.”

As the following examples show, the possessive opinion can be expressed in English in at least three different ways, which vary between concepts. For some, all three are available and for others only two:

<u>specific verb</u>	<u>possessive</u>	<u>attributive</u>
"She doubts it."	"She had doubts about it."	"She is doubtful of it."
"We fear it."	"We have fears about it."	"We are fearful of it."
"He despised them."	"He had contempt for them."	"He was contemptuous of them."
"They hoped for it."	"They have hopes for it."	"They are hopeful of it."
"We trust him."	"We have trust in him."	"We are confident in him."
-	"He had pleasure in it."	"He was pleased at it."
-	"We have satisfaction in it."	"We are satisfied with it."

According to the terminology used earlier, the attributive form of an opinion is a *recipient participle* with the recipient as subject, and a *possessive participle* with the object as subject. Because it is often not evident when the recipient begins or ceases to hold an opinion, the distinctions between a specific and a general opinion, and a dynamic and stative opinion, are often not precise:

<u>recipient participle</u>	<u>possessive participle</u>
"We are confident in his leadership."	"His leadership is trustworthy."
"She was suspicious of his motives."	"His motives were suspicious (to her)."
"He was envious of her success."	"Her success was enviable (to him)."
"We are interested in your proposal."	"Your proposal is interesting (to us)."
"He was pleased by the performance."	"The performance was pleasant/ pleasurable (to him)."
"We are satisfied with the contract."	"The contract was satisfactory (to us)."
"They were convinced by his argument."	"His argument was convincing (to the tribunal)."
"We are ashamed of our reputation."	"Our reputation was shameful (to us)."
"The observers were impressed by the stadium."	"The stadium was impressive (to observers)."
"The company is hopeful of a return to profit."	"The results are hopeful for a return to profit."
"She was doubtful whether they would be enough."	"Whether they will be enough is doubtful."

A further pattern which can be observed for opinions is that they can often be expressed entirely with auxiliary verbs: "give" for the dative, "have" for the possessive, and "take" for the adoptive:

<u>dative</u>	<u>possessive</u>	<u>adoptive</u>
"It gave him pleasure."	"He had pleasure in it."	"He took pleasure in it."
"It gave them pride."	"They had pride in it."	"They took pride in it."
"It gave us a fright."	"We have fear of it."	"We took fright at it."
"It gave us satisfaction."	"We have satisfaction in it."	"We took satisfaction in it."
"It gives us shame."	"We have shame in it."	"We took shame at it."

As already noted, opinions show a superficial resemblance to effect attributes which express a mental response, such as "He was angry at them", "We are happy to see you", "She was surprised at the outcome" or "I am disappointed at your behaviour" (Chapter 6., The Effect Function). The difference is that an effect is something that its subject "is", and is an involuntary and immediate response, while an opinion is something that its recipient "has" and is a voluntary and considered view. The distinction appears in the sentence giving rise to the mental state: one does not "give" anger or surprise, while one does "give" pleasure, pride, fear satisfaction, and shame. It also appears, as we shall discuss further in Chapter 9., in the adoptive construction: one does not "take" anger, surprise, or disappointment, while one does "take" satisfaction, pleasure, shame, etc.

The object of an opinion can be a sentence:

"We are satisfied that the contract is on the right terms."
 "We are convinced that the contract will be fulfilled."

“We are pleased that our reputation has improved.”
“We are impressed that the contract has been fulfilled.”

In languages other than English, opinions show the same five different constructions that we noticed for other possession sentences. They occur with the recipient as subject:

German: “Was hat er dagegen, daß wir früher anfangen?”
“What has he got against us starting earlier?”
[What has he against-it, that we earlier start?]

Finnish: “Pidättekö hänestä?” “Do you like her?” [Do-you-like from-her?]

Hungarian:
“Kíváncsi volt a gyerek véleményére.” “He was interested in the child’s opinion.”
[Curious he-was the child opinion-her-onto.]
“Büszke a gyerekeire.” “She is proud of her children.”
[Proud the children-her-onto.]
“Szeretném befejezni ezt a dolgot.” “I would like to finish this [the] paper.”

Russian: “Ya vozrazhayu protiv togo, chtoby vy shli tuda.”
“I object to your going there.” [I object against it, that you go there.]

Hindi: “mai~ kutto~ se ðartā hū” “I’m afraid of dogs.” [I dogs-by afraid am.]

An Indonesian opinion may be a verb taking a direct object or an equivalent verb taking an indirect object. The following both mean “Mr Basri loves his wife”:

“Pak Basri mencintai istrinya.” [Mr Basri loves wife-his.]
“Pak Basri cinta akan istrinya.” [Mr Basri loves to wife-his.]

Indirect recipient opinions occur particularly with verbs meaning “like”, “please”, “matter”, “regret”, or “shame”:

French: “Ça va lui faire plaisir.” “He will be pleased at that.”
[That will to-him cause pleasure.]

Spanish: “Le daba vergüenza contestar.” “He was too ashamed to answer.”
[To-him gave shame to-answer.]

German: “Wie gefällt Ihnen diese Musik?” “How do you like this music?”
[How is-liked to-you this music?]

Italian: “Ti importa che egli lo venda?” “Does it matter to you if he sells it?”
[To-you it-matters that he it sells (subjunctive)?]
“Gli dispiaceva che essi non venissero.” “He was sorry that they would not come.”
[To-him was displeasing that they not came (subjunctive).]
“Ci sono piaciute le tue poesie.” “We liked your poems.”
[To-us are pleased the your poems.]

Welsh: “Y mae’n well gennyf i weithio yn yr ardd.” “I prefer to work in the garden.”
[It is better with me to work in the garden.]
“Y mae’n ddrwg gennyf i glywed am eich dannoeidd.”
“I’m sorry to hear of your toothache.” [It is bad with me hearing of your toothache.]

Irish: “Bhí eagla orthu.” “They were afraid.” [Was fear on-them.]
“Cad ba mhaith leat i gcóir do dhinneir?” “What would you like for dinner?”
[What would-be good with-you for dinner?]
“Ní miste leis fanúint leat.” “He does not mind waiting for you.”
[It-is-not harm with-him waiting for you.]
“An dhóigh leat go mbeidh sé fuar um thráthnóna?”

“Do you think it will be cold this evening?”
 [Is-it likely with-you that will-be it cold in evening?]
 “Ba chóir go mbeadh áthas ar Chaitilín.” “Kathleen ought to be delighted.”
 [Was right that would-be joy on Kathleen.]

Hungarian:

“Nekem nagyon tetszik a rövid szoknya.” “I like short skirts very much.”
 [To-me very like the short skirt.]

Greek: “Δε μου αρέσει αυτό το κρασί.” “I don’t like this wine.”
 [Not to-me it-likes this the wine.]

Russian: “Eta p’esa mne sovsem ne ponravilas’.” “I didn’t like this play at all.”
 [This play to-me at-all not is-liked.]
 “Nam bylo zhal’ ego.” “We felt pity for him.” [To-us was pity of-him.]
 “Bratu nadoyelo rabotat’.” “My brother is bored with working.”
 [To-brother boring to-work.]

Arabic: “kamā kāna yaḥlū li-R.H. ḡan yuqaddima nafsahu”
 “as R.H. liked to introduce himself”
 [as was pleasing to R.H. that he-introduced himself]

Persian: “in ketab mara pasand amand” “I liked this book.”
 [This book to-me pleasant came.]

Hindi: “mujhe bahut mazā āyā” “I enjoyed it a lot.” [To-me much enjoyment came.]
 “mujhe āpkī nāī film pasand āī” “I liked your new film.”
 [To-me your new film pleasing came.]
 “mujhe tumhārī bāto~ par viśvās nahī hai” “I don’t trust what you say.”
 [To-me your words-on trust not there-is.]
 “tumhe~ śarm nahī āī?” “Aren’t you ashamed?” [To-you shame not comes?]
 “hame~ rīnā par bahut garv hai” “We are very proud of Rina.”
 [To-us Rina-on much pride is.]

The topic-comment construction occurs in languages which show it for other possession sentences:

Hindi: “itihās me~ merī bahut dilcaspī hai” “I’m very interested in history.”
 [History-in my great interest there-is.]

Japanese:

“Boku wa futtobōru ga sukida.” “I like football.” [I_(topic) football_(subject) is-liked.]
 “Watashi wa chīzu ga kiraida.” “I don’t like cheese.”
 [I_(topic) cheese_(subject) is-disliked.]
 “Watashi wa jazu ni kyōmi ga aru.” “I am interested in jazz.”
 [I_(topic) jazz-in interest_(subject) there-is.]

Opinions are also expressed by reflexives, and by their equivalent deponents in (modern) Greek and Latin:

Italian: “Mi vergogno di averlo fatto.” “I am ashamed of having done it.”
 [Myself I-shame of having-it done.]
 “Mi rammarico di averlo scritto.” “I regret having written it.”
 [Myself I-regret of having-it written.]

Russian: “On interesuetsya literaturoi.” “He is interested in literature.”
 [He interests-himself with-literature_(instrumental).]

Greek: “Φοβάται μήτως δεν τη συναντήσει.” “He is afraid he might not meet her.”
 [He-fears-himself lest not her he-meets.]
 “Λυπάμαι που έχασε ο Νίκος τη δουλειά του.” “I am sorry that Nikos lost his job.”

[I regret-myself that lost the Nikos the job his.]

Latin: “Aliquem suspicor.” “I suspect someone.” [Someone I-suspect-myself.]
“Aliquem vereor.” “I fear someone.” [Someone I-fear-myself.]
“Ingenium tuum admiror.” (Cicero) “I admire your talents.”
[Talents your I-admire-myself.]

The reflexive construction for an opinion is taken from the adoptive construction, of which it is the stative resultant sentence (Chapter 9., The Adoptive Sentence.). Further examples are given under that heading.

The Communication and Perception Functions

The communication and perception sentences illustrated earlier in this chapter were limited in only having a single word as object:

“She pointed out the mistake to him.”
→ “He saw the mistake.”
“She reminded him of the appointment.”
→ “He remembered the appointment.”
“The report stated the decision.” → “She knew the decision from the report.”
“He gossiped about his neighbours.”
→ “They knew about his neighbours.”

In fact, the majority of communications and perceptions consist of two parts: an object which the communication or perception concerns, and information about the object which is being communicated or perceived. The subject of the communication is the agent and of the perception is the recipient:

“She reminded him that the appointment was due.”
→ “He remembered the appointment was due.”
“She had heard him described as an indifferent correspondent.”
→ “She knew him to be an indifferent correspondent.”
“He said that his neighbours had a large family.”
→ “They understood that his neighbours had a large family.”

However, when the object is definite, these sentences can often be restructured with the object in subject position:

“The appointment was due, she reminded him.”
→ “The appointment was due, he remembered.”
“He had been described to her as an indifferent correspondent.”
→ “He was known to her as an indifferent correspondent.”
“His neighbours were described as having a large family.”
→ “His neighbours were understood to have a large family.”

Italian: “Ti credevo già partita.” “I thought you’d already gone.”
[You I-thought already gone.]
“Vi direbbero nati negli anni sessanta.” “They said you were born in the 1960’s.”
[You they-said born in-the years sixty.]

This construction is called *embedding*, since it embeds the transfer or possession element in the communication or perception. The sentence can be simply analysed as a topic-comment construction, with the object of the communication or perception as the topic and the agent, verb, and other entities as the comment.

Similarly, a communication or perception concerning a new entity can be an existential sentence:

“She pointed out that there was a mistake in the text.”

→ “He saw there was a mistake in the text.”

“The report stated that a decision had been reached.”

→ “She knew from the report that a decision had been reached.”

In these examples, the object is indefinite. They can be restructured with the existential element at the start, as for other existential sentences described in Chapter 1 (Existence and Non-Existence):

“A mistake was pointed out by her in the text.”

→ “A mistake was seen by him in the text.”

“A decision had been reached, the report stated.”

→ “A decision was known from the report to have been reached.”

This is a further example of embedding. The perception sentences can be reformulated:

“There was a mistake seen by him in the text.”

“There was a decision known from the report to have been reached.”

As with other existential sentences, all that part which is not the subject (“a mistake”; “a decision”) is the circumstance.

There are a large number of ways to describe a communication, expressed by different words; “say”, “tell”, “assure”, “show”, “reply”, “declare”, “inform”, “mention”, “announce”, “complain”, “allege”, “claim”, “hint”, “telephone”, and “testify” is a small selection. They all have the structure “agent-communicate-object-information-(recipient)”. The embedded structure can be summarised “object-communicate-agent-information-(recipient)”. Following are examples from various languages:

French: “Je lui ai expliqué comment aller à Londres.” “I told him the way to London.”

[I to-him have explained how to get to London.]

German: “Sie hat gesagt, sie hätte es verstanden.” “She said that she understood it.”

[She has said, she had _(subjunctive) it understood.]

Russian: “On skazal, chto pridët.” “He said that he would come.”

[He said, that he-will-come.]

Arabic: “’iddaʕat ʔannahā kānat fī manzilihā” “She claimed that she was in her home.”

[She-claimed that-she was in home-her.]

Persian: “be u goftam ke namiayam” “I told him I was not coming.”

[To him told-I that not-come-I.]

Malay: “Pergi katakan kepada Encik Ahmad ada orang hendak berjumpa dia.”

“Go and tell Mr Ahmad that there is someone wanting to see him.”

[Go say to Mr Ahmad there-is someone want meet him.]

Hindi: “usne mujhse kahā ki āp acchī hindī bolte hai”

“He told me that I spoke Hindi well.”

[He _(agent) me-to said that you good Hindi speaking are.]

As we have observed, a perception has the structure “recipient-perceive-object-information”, which if embedded is “object-perceive-recipient-information”. The examples at the start of this section are of a perception arising from an external stimulus or agency. Many perceptions arise spontaneously in the mind of the recipient, and these are described in Chapter 9. (The Receptive and Adoptive Sentences). The following are further examples:

French: “Il croit vous avoir vu.” “He thinks he has seen you.” [He thinks you to-have seen.]

Greek: “Βλέπω το Γιάννη να σου χαμογελά.” “I see John smiling at you.”
[I-see the John that to-you he-smiles _(subjunctive).]

Arabic: “ʿaraftuhu ḥāfiẓan li-kalimatihī” “I knew he was someone who kept his word.”
[I-knew-him keeper of word-his.]

Malay: “Polisi mengamatinya melepon sejumlah orang dari terminal.”
“Police observed him telephone a number [of] people from [the] terminal.”

Chinese: “Wǒ xiāngxìn dìqiú shì yuán de.” “I believe [the] earth is round.”

The above illustrate that five separate constructions are used for the comment of a communication or perception:

- The comment follows the topic immediately, as in the above Chinese example and the second Malay example.
- The comment is a subjectless verb (infinitive), the topic being assumed as the subject, as in the above French examples and in Latin (see below).
- The comment is a verbal noun, qualified by the topic: “I see John smiling at you.”
- The topic and comment are expressed as direct speech:
“The appointment is due, she reminded him.”
→ “He recalled: ‘The appointment is due’.”
- The topic and comment are a sentence expressed in indirect speech, often preceded by “that”, as in the other examples.

If the sentence is posing a question or expressing a doubt whether a perception has occurred, there may also be doubt whether what is perceived has occurred or not. In that case, the perception is indefinable and may be in the subjunctive in those languages which possess that form (Chapter 3. – Hypotheses):

Italian: “Sa che Giovanni è tornato?” “Do you know that John has _(indicative) come back?”
“Non so se sia già partito.” “I don’t know whether he’s _(subjunctive) already left.”

In standard German, all communications are treated as a supposition and accordingly a subjunctive form of the verb (if available) is used for the comment.

In Latin, the object of a communication or perception was put in the accusative case and the new information was expressed with a verbal infinitive. The following are literary examples:

“Constat leges ad salutem civium inventas esse.” (Cicero)
“It is agreed that laws were devised for the safety of citizens.”
[It-is-agreed laws _(object) for safety of-citizens devised to-be.]
“Pompeios desedissee terrae motu audivimus.” (Seneca)
“We have heard that Pompeii has perished in an earthquake.”
[Pompeii _(object) to-have-perished in-earthquake we-have-heard.]

Communication verbs can form a general participle: “informative”, “declarative”, “plaintive”.

The Interrogation Function

An interrogation is a communication which poses a question. It can be expressed as a dative sentence of the form:

“She asked him about his reason for applying for the job.”
“She asked him why he had applied for the job.”
“She asked ‘Why have you applied for the job?’”.

“He asked about the train departure time.”
“He asked the inspector when the train would depart.”

“He asked ‘When will the train depart?’”

The communicated element of an interrogation is a question, which has an object as do other communications, in this case “his application” or “the train”. However, it does not attach new information to the object, but an enquiry: “Why did you make it?” or “When will the train depart?”. The question therefore conforms to the structure of direct questions (Chapter 3., Questions), with the object as the topic of the enquiry.

If the expected answer is “yes” or “no”, the interrogation is preceded by “whether” or its equivalent:

“He asked whether she had been to China.”

“He asked ‘Have you been to China?’”

Arabic: “wa-saʔaltu ʔiḏā kuntu ʔastaʔīʔu ʔan ʔajlisa hunāka”

“And I asked whether I could sit there.”

[And I-asked whether I-am I-can that I-sit there.]

Since the answer cannot be anticipated, an interrogation does not have a resultant sentence.

The Volition and Imperative Functions

A *volition* differs from other perceptions in that it is not a fact or impression of fact, but a desire for something. That which is desired can be an action, a state, or a possession. It can relate to the desirer or a third party:

“I want you to tidy your room today.”

“I want to clean my car today.”

“I wish this flat was larger.”

“I wish I were handsome.”

“I want you to have some muffins for tea.”

“I want some muffins for tea.”

As with other perceptions, there is an object: “you”, “I”, “this flat”. However, instead of new information there is a volition: “tidy your room”, “clean my car”, “be larger”, etc. Other English volitional verbs include “desire”, “prefer”, “hope for”, and “be impatient for” with different degrees of certainty and emphasis. The common feature is a desire for something which is not yet occurring or possessed:

“I desire a larger flat.”

“I would prefer you to tidy your room.”

“I hope that you will tidy your room.”

“I am impatient for you to tidy your room.”

A volition is a stative relation between two elements: the desirer and the desired object, state, or action. It has the characteristics of a possession sentence which are summarised above. The desirer “has” a wish, want, preference, hope, or impatience. The structure can be summarised as “recipient-verb-object-volition”, where “volition” is a possession and “object” may or may not be the same as “recipient”. The sentences can be expressed (sometimes clumsily) in attributive form with the desired object as subject:

“Tidying your room is desired/hoped for.”

“Muffins are preferred for tea.”

By its nature a volition has not occurred, but it may be divided into two categories - that not expected to occur, or which cannot occur as the opportunity has passed, and that expected to occur:

“I wish we had some muffins for tea.”

“I want us to have some muffins for tea.”

Some languages distinguish between these two volitions. The one not expected to occur is indefinable (Chapter 3., Hypotheses), and expressed in the subjunctive if that is available (“I were” and “we had” in these examples). The object is stated whether or not it is the same as the recipient.

If a volition is expected to occur, it may be expressed with the infinitive (subjectless) form of the verb: “to clean”, “to have”, etc, if that is available in the language. In that case, the object does not need to be stated if it is the same as the recipient.

As with perception sentences, it can be structured in English with an “embedded” clause:

“You are desired to tidy your room.”
“Muffins are preferable for tea.”

General volitions can be expressed by a recipient participle or a possessive participle:

“I am hopeful you will tidy your room.” -
“I am willing to clean my car.” -
“I am desirous of a larger flat.” “A larger flat would be desirable.”
“I prefer muffins for tea.” “Muffins are preferable for tea.”

A volition is not necessarily the resultant sentence of a transfer. This is the case if, as we have already noted with “need” and “lack”, a volition expresses a deficiency, which may arise from the removal of what is desired, or from some other cause. If a volition expresses a spontaneous desire by its recipient, it may be the resultant sentence of a facilitative verb such as “persuade” or “encourage” (Chapter 11., The Facilitative and Modal Functions):

“His mother persuaded John to tidy his room.”
→ “John wanted to tidy his room.”

Languages employ the same range of constructions for volitions as for other possessions, for example the recipient is the subject:

German: “Ich wünschte, ich wäre zu Hause.” “I wish I were (subjunctive) at home.”

Italian: “Non desideriamo che Ella accetti.” “We do not wish you to accept.”
[Not we-wish that you accept (subjunctive).]

Russian: “Ya khochu, chtoby vy sdelali eto srazu zhe.” “I want you to do it at once.”
[I-want, so-that you do it at-once.]
“Ona pozhelala emu uspekha.” [She wished to-him success (genitive).]

Greek: “Το βράδι θέλει να βλέπει τηλεόραση.”
“In the evening she wants to watch television.”
[The evening she-wants that she-watches (subjunctive) television.]

Arabic: “yuṛīdūna l-munāqašāṭi ʔan tastamirra” “They want the discussions to continue.”
[They-want the discussions that they-continue.]

Hindi: “maĩ cāhtā hū̃ ki vah hindī sikh le” “I want him to learn Hindi.”
[I want that he Hindi learns (subjunctive).]

Indonesian:
“Ali mau menolong Bill.” “Ali wants [to] help Bill.”

Chinese: “Wǒ xiǎng mǎi xiē shípǐn hé yǐnliào.” “I want [to] buy some food and drink.”

Swahili: “Nataka watoto waje hapa ili tupate kuanza kazi yetu.”
“I want the children to come here so that we can begin our work.”
[I-want children they-come (subjunctive) here so-that we-can (subjunctive) begin work our.]

These examples show the same range of constructions as English shows for volitions which are or are not expected to occur.

The recipient is indirect:

Irish: “Cad tá uait?” “What do you want?” [What is-there from-you?]

Hindi: “us ādmī ko das aṅḍe cāhie” “That man wants ten eggs.”
[That man-to ten eggs are-wanted.]

The recipient is the topic and the object and volition are the comment:

Japanese:
“Watashi wa Yoshida-sensei ni kite hoshii.” “I want Professor Yoshida to come.”
[I (topic) Yoshida-professor-by coming is-wanted.]
“Pamu wa sutereo o hoshigatte iru.” “Pam wants a stereo.”
[Pam (topic) stereo (object) wanting-signs-of there-is.]
“Watashi wa mizu ga nomitai.” “I want to drink some water.”
[I (topic) water (subject) drink-desirous.]

Japanese may also embed a wish in order politely to make it less direct:

“Chotto tetsudatte hoshii no desu ga.” “I want you to help me for a while.”
[A-while helping is-wanted so-it-is.]

The verb of volition is dative reflexive or adoptive (Chapter 9, The Adoptive Sentence):

Arabic: “tamannaytu law tursilī ʔilayya šayʔan” “I wished you would send me something.”
[I-wished-for-myself if you-sent to-me something.]

The volition is a suffix (underlined) to a verb:

Inuit: “Aqagu niriumavaa.” “He wants to eat it tomorrow.” [Tomorrow eat-wants-he-it.]

A volition is very similar in function to an *imperative*, except that for a volition a recipient wishes an action, whereas for an imperative an agent orders it to a recipient. An imperative is therefore a dative sentence, with the structure “agent-verb-recipient-object-volition”. Since the outcome is uncertain, an imperative has no resultant resultant:

“I’m telling you to tidy your room.”
“I order you, tidy your room today!”

If the agent is the speaker, he/she and the verb of ordering can be omitted:

“Tidy your room!” “Let him tidy his room.” “Have some muffins for tea!”

An imperative, being dynamic, has a receptive and dative passive form in English:

“He was told/ordered to tidy his room.”
“Tidying of his room was ordered.”

An imperative also has a possessive participle:

“Tidying of his room was compulsory/obligatory for him.”

The volition of an imperative is expressed in either a subjunctive or an infinitive form, as with a possessive volition. In Chapter 3. (Hypotheses), examples are given of an imperative which uses the subjunctive. Arabic and Swahili use this format:

Arabic: “ṭalaba minhu ʔan yaṭbaʕahā lahu” “He asked him to type it for him.”
[He-asked to-him that he-type-it (subjunctive) for him.]

Swahili: “Mwambie mtoto asiogope.” “Tell the child not to be afraid.”
“Him-tell (subjunctive) child he-not-fear (subjunctive).”

Turkish and Indonesian place the volition verb in the infinitive:

Turkish: “Çocuklara aşağıya inip kendisini sokakta beklemelerini söyledi.”
“She told the children to go down and wait for her in the street.”
[Children-to down go-and themselves street-in waiting-their told-she.]

Indonesian:
“Dia menyuruh saya pergi.” “He ordered me [to] go.”

Inuit attaches a suffix (underlined) to the volition verb:

“Arnap miiraq niqimik aalliqquaa.” “The woman told the child to bring some meat.”
[Woman (agent) child meat-with fetch-tellto-she-she.]

The cognitive distinction between a volition and an imperative is often not great. The first statement (“I would like...”) is often a tactful way of requesting an action (“Please go and buy...”). However, the first statement is possessive (“I have a wish that...”) while the second is dative (“I ask you to...”).

The Representation Function

A *representation* is an image or transformation of an object made in order to represent it to a recipient. Examples are a painting, a photograph, a summary, a description, a translation, or a terminology. The object itself is not altered. Examples of representation sentences are:

“Gainsborough painted his sitter as a country gentleman.”
“The Prime Minister was photographed arriving at the conference.”
“She summarised the article in five lines.”
“We translated the book into Greek.”
“The battle was commemorated by a monument.”

Since the object is not altered and the representation is made for the purpose of communication, a representation sentence is a transfer. Most representations involve an act of creation by the agent, and a representation sentence then combines the functions of a creative sentence (Chapter 6., The Creation Function) and a transfer sentence which communicates the representation to others. Many representation sentences omit a recipient. If there is a recipient, and if the recipient accepts the representation, there can be a possessive resultant sentence:

“Viewers of the painting saw him as a country gentleman.”

Alternatively, the resultant sentence can reflect the act of creation:

“A version of the book was in Greek.”

A representation can be agential or passive:

“We translated the book into Greek”; “The book was translated into Greek”.

Since the representation is of a state that the object is in, it can be a gerund if the object is the subject (Chapter 4., Gerund):

“Arriving at the conference, the Prime Minister was photographed.” (gerund)
“The Prime Minister was photographed arriving at the conference.” (representation)

Spanish uses the gerund form for the representation:

“La pintó tocando el clavicémbalo.” “He painted her playing the harpsichord.”
[Her he-painted playing the harpsichord.]
“Me los describió cazando leones.” “He described them to me as hunting lions.”
[To-me them he-described hunting lions.]

In English, the representation is marked with “as” or “to be”. In Russian, the representation is in the instrumental case:

“On izobrazhën chelovekom neobychainoi sily voli.”
“He was described as a man of uncommon willpower.”
[He was-described man (instrumental) of-uncommon strength of-will.]

Representation verbs can form a general participle: “descriptive”, “narrative”, “photographic”, “symbolic”, “commemorative”.