

## **9. Receptive and Adoptive Sentences**

### **Summary**

For some transfers, a sentence can be constructed in which the recipient is the topic, and receives the object without reference to an external cause. This is called a receptive sentence. The resultant sentence is that the recipient possesses the object. Receptive sentences also include those in which a recipient loses or misses an object, the resultant sentence being that the recipient lacks or needs the object.

Languages construct receptive sentences in the same ways as possession sentences. The principal constructions either have the recipient as subject, or connect the recipient to the verb by a link word (indirect recipient). In some languages, all or most actions affecting a person are indirect recipient, with or without an external cause being stated.

For some transfers, a sentence can be constructed in which an agent transfers the object to him or herself as recipient. This is called an adoptive sentence. The resultant sentence is that the agent/recipient possesses the object. Adoptive sentences correspond with most but not all transfer functions, including all opinions and volitions. An adoptive sentence cannot be instrumental.

Adoptive sentences generally have the agent as subject, and take three principal forms: a particular verb, an auxiliary verb with a noun, and a dative reflexive. They may also take a passive form with the object as subject.

Receptive and adoptive perceptions may be constructed as the object as topic, with the receptive or adoptive elements embedded in the comment. If the object is indefinite, the sentence can be restructured as existential, with the receptive or adoptive elements embedded in the circumstance.

This chapter is only concerned with reception and adoption of a stative object.

### **Terms Defined or Introduced**

Receptive, adoptive, dative reflexive, possession.

### **Overview**

In Chapters 6. and 7., we looked at the structures of a transitive and intransitive sentence and the relation between them. The action of a transitive sentence may be expressed intransitively if there is no need to mention its cause, with a construction called inceptive:

“The radiator heated the room up.” → “The room was hot.” (transitive)  
“The room heated up.” → “The room was hot.” (inceptive)

The sentences have the same resultant sentence, marked with “→”. The same inceptive construction is used if the cause is outside human control:

“The sun rose.” → “The sun is risen.”

A sentence is also intransitive if its agent operates on him/herself, with a construction called agential intransitive or reflexive. In this case, the actions and therefore their resultant sentences differ between transitive and intransitive:

“John drove his father home.” → “John’s father was home.” (transitive)  
“John drove home.” → “John was home.” (agential intransitive)

In both the intransitive constructions, the patient or object of the transitive verb has become the subject of the intransitive verb.

If we now look at the dative sentence described in Chapter 8.:

“John gave the book to Mary” → “Mary has the book”/  
“The book belongs to Mary”,

we find that there is no intransitive sentence of which “book” is the subject, other than the dative passive form: “The book was given to Mary.” However, there is a dynamic sentence which describes the transfer action without reference to its cause:

“Mary received the book.” → “Mary has the book”/  
“The book belongs to Mary.”

We can call this sentence *receptive*. This term has already been used in the previous chapter for “Mary was given the book”, which expresses the same concept.

There is also a dynamic sentence in which the agent of the transfer acts so that he or she gains the object:

“John took the book.” → “John has the book”/  
“The book belongs to John.”

This is equivalent to “John gave the book to himself”. We can call this construction *adoptive*, and as we shall see, it has widespread application.

In these variations of a transfer, the recipient of the dative sentence is the subject of both the receptive and the adoptive sentences. This is analogous to the relation between the inceptive and agential intransitive constructions and a transitive sentence, and is a further indicator of the difference between the transitive and transfer sentence structures. Receptive and adoptive sentences are now examined in greater detail, with the restriction that we are only concerned with those with a stative resultant. Those with a dynamic resultant are considered in a Chapter 11.

### The Receptive Sentence

A receptive sentence is a dynamic sentence in which a recipient spontaneously or involuntarily receives an object, whether physically or mentally. The resultant sentence is that the recipient possesses the object. Examples are:

“Mary received her payslip.” → “Mary has her wages.”  
“John learned French.” → “John knows French.”  
“We gained some new neighbours.” → “We have some new neighbours.”  
“She found the pen in a drawer.” → “She has got the pen.”  
“We noticed that the grass had been cut.” → “We know that the grass had been cut.”  
“They heard the noise.” → “They are aware of the noise.”  
“A good idea occurred to him.” → “He had a good idea.”  
“George caught the ball.” → “George is holding the ball.”  
“She came to prefer coffee to tea.” → “She prefers coffee to tea.”  
“They realised they were lost.” → “They knew they were lost.”  
“She felt a pain in her wrist.” → “She had a pain in her wrist.”

If the receptive sentence is perfective, the resultant sentence expresses the actual state. If it is imperfective, the resultant sentence is the state expected after the action is completed.

This construction also applies to a sentence in which the recipient involuntarily loses or misses an object, the resultant sentence being that he/she no longer has or does not have it:

“George lost his spectacles.” → “George’s spectacles are not to hand.”  
“Sheila missed the ball.” → “Sheila is not holding the ball.”

It will be seen that in most of these examples, the recipient is the subject. A passive construction is also possible in which the object is the subject, for example:

“Her pen was found in a drawer.” “The noise was heard by them.”

As with other constructions, an element can be put into focus:

“It was John who learned French.” “It was French which John learned.”

In these sentences, “John” and “French” are the respective comments, and the remainder are the topics.

The perception of receptive verbs of perception comprises two parts: an object, and that which is perceived concerning the object, as with other verbs of perception (Chapter 8., The Communication and Perception Functions):

“We noticed the grass had been cut.”/“The grass was seen to have been cut.”

If the object of the perception is indefinite, the sentence can be existential:

“We noticed some grass had been cut.”/“There was some grass which we saw had been cut.”

As noted in the previous chapter, it is often unclear when mental impressions start and end. Some verbs of perception are therefore the same as their corresponding receptives. “She remembered the appointment” and “She felt her hands freezing” can be both a dynamic receptive and its stative resultant sentence.

Receptive sentences include those in which a possession is the resultant sentence of an inchoative verb (Chapter 11., The Inchoative Function):

“We began to feel cold.”	→	“We felt cold.”
“We continued to have doubts”	→	“We still had doubts.”
“We lost sight of the car.”	→	“We no longer saw the car.”

A receptive sentence therefore has the structure “recipient-verb-object” or “object-verb-recipient”. This is the same as the structure of its resultant possession. We can therefore expect that the various constructions which languages use to express a possession sentence apply also to the receptive. In Chapter 8. (The Possession Function), we noted eight of these, of which six are relevant: subject-verb-object, indirect recipient, reflexive, topic-comment, recipient-attribute-object, and recipient-possession-object. In all of them, the recipient or the object may be the topic, but for indirect recipient and topic-comment the recipient is not the subject of the verb.

As the above sentences illustrate, there are receptive verbs in different languages which conform to the subject-verb-object pattern, including in languages for which the possession is constructed as indirect recipient:

Russian: “poluchat’ pis’mo” “to receive [a] letter”  
“Ya zametila na stole pis’mo.” “I noticed a letter on the table.”  
[I noticed on table letter.]

Welsh: “Cafodd y plant ganiatâd i fynd.” “The children got permission to go.”  
[Got the children permission to go.]

Irish: “Fuairias litir óm mháthair ar maidin.”  
“I got [a] letter from [my] mother this morning.”

We have already met the indirect recipient construction in Chapter 8., in languages without a receptive version of the transfer verb:

German: “Dem Arbeitlosen wurde eine Stelle vom Geschäftsführer angeboten.”

“The unemployed man was offered a job by the manager.”  
[To the unemployed man was a job by the manager offered.]”

Russian: “Vam soobshchat ob etom.” “You will be informed about that.”  
[To-you they-inform about that.]

Spanish: “Le fue mandada una carta.” “He was sent a letter.”  
[To-him was sent a letter.]

Italian: “Allo studente fu promesso il libro.” “The student was promised the book.”  
[To-the student was promised the book.]

Examples in other languages are:

English: “It occurs to me that you will need some money.”

Finnish: “Laulajalta meni ääni.” “The singer lost his voice.” [Singer-from went voice.]

Greek: “Μου κάνει κέφι να τρώω φρούτο μετά το φαΐ.”  
“It amuses me to eat some fruit after a meal.”  
[To-me it-makes fun that I-eat fruit after the meal.]  
“Μου κλέψανε το αυτοκίνητο.” “My car has been stolen.”  
[To-me they've-stolen the car.]

Irish: “Do bhuaile Seán umam.” “I met John” [Struck John about me.]  
“Tá an leabhar caillte ag an ngarsún.” “The boy has lost the book.”  
[Is the book lost at the boy.]

Hindi: “us kām ke lie use sau rupae mile” “He got 100 rupees for that work.”  
[That work-for to-him 100 rupees accrued.]  
“us samay mujhe rām yād āyā” “At that moment I remembered Ram.”  
[That moment to-me Ram mind came.]  
“use tīn aurte~ acānak dikhaī dī” “She suddenly saw three women.”  
[To-her three women suddenly visible gave.]  
“mujhe thaṇḍ lag rahī hai” “I'm getting cold.” [To-me cold attaching is.]

The reflexive construction is also used to express a receptive sentence, although it is much more frequently used for the adoptive, as we shall see:

Italian: “Mi ricordo di quel giorno.” “I remember that day.” [Myself I remind of that day.]  
“Mi ero accorto che il treno era di nuovo in moto.”  
“I realised that that train was again in motion.”  
[Myself I-was realised that the train was again in motion.]

In the Japanese topic-comment construction, a material receptive sentence is constructed with the “-te” form of the verb and “morau”:

“Yamakawa-san wa Hashimoto-san ni uisuki o moratta.”  
“Mr Yamakawa received whiskey from Mr Hashimoto.”  
[Yamakawa-Mr<sub>(topic)</sub> Hashimoto-Mr-from whiskey<sub>(object)</sub> received.]  
“Watashi wa chichi ni kamera o katte moratta.” “My father bought a camera for me.”  
[I<sub>(topic)</sub> father-by camera<sub>(object)</sub> buying received.]

For a perception receptive, the verb “tsuku” (“attach”) may be used:

“Watashi wa henna oto ni ki ga tsuita.” “I noticed an odd sound.”  
[I<sub>(topic)</sub> odd sound-to attention<sub>(subject)</sub> was-attached.]

Those possession constructions which employ a recipient participle use its inceptive form to express the corresponding receptive:

“We became aware of your dissatisfaction.”  
 → “We are aware of your dissatisfaction.”  
 “We became sure that the train would be on time.”  
 → “We were sure that the train would be on time.”

A noun of possession can be received by a recipient:

“She received £20 as a reward.” → “Her reward was £20.”  
 “He was given flat 102 as his quarters.”  
 → “His quarters were flat 102.”

The receptive construction can also be used to express the removal of an object from a recipient, as in these Indonesian examples:

“Mobil Tomo dicuri.” “Tomo’s car was stolen.” [Car Tomo stolen.]  
 “Tomo kecurian mobil.” “Tomo has suffered the loss of his car.” [Tomo suffered-theft car.]  
 “Wang Tomo hilang.” “Tomo’s money is lost.” [Money Tomo lost.]  
 “Tomo kehilangan wang.” “Tomo has lost his money.” [Tomo suffered-loss money.]

### The Adoptive Sentence

In a dative sentence, an agent transfers an object or provides a service to a third-party recipient. The result is that the recipient possesses the object transferred, whether material or mental. An *adoptive sentence* has the same outcome, but the recipient is the same as the agent; the agent transfers the object to him/herself. We may alternatively say that the agent takes or causes him/herself to possess the object. As in a dative sentence, the object may be material or mental. If the object is mental, it may be in two parts: the object, and that which is perceived concerning the object.

The following long list of English examples illustrates the range of material and mental adoptive sentences, together with their possessive resultant sentences. They are classified by the different sorts of possession described in the previous chapter:

#### Material Possession and Perception

“John borrowed/took the book from the library.”  
 → “John has the book.”  
 “Mary has bought a new car.” → “Mary owns a new car.”  
 “We have acquired some antiques.” → “We own some antiques.”  
 “John earns a large salary.” → “John has a large salary.”  
 “James has found his spectacles.” → “James has his spectacles available.”  
 “Sheila took a share in the enterprise.”  
 → “Sheila shares in the enterprise.”  
 “The Smiths settled in Blackpool.” → “The Smiths’ home is in Blackpool.”  
 “The students looked at the experiment.”  
 → “The students saw the experiment.”  
 “They listened to the birdsong.” → “They heard the birdsong.”  
 “Henry searched for the papers.” → “Henry found the papers.”  
 “We are studying Greek.” → “We know Greek.”  
 “George investigated the fault.” → “George understands the fault.”  
 “I have read your book.” → “I am familiar with your book.”  
 “We ascertained that the door was bolted.”  
 → “We are sure that the door is bolted.”  
 “We imagined what we might do.” → “We had ideas on what to do.”  
 “The contractor accepted the terms.” → “The contractor was in agreement with the terms.”  
 → “They are determined to come tomorrow.”  
 “They decided to come tomorrow.” → “They are determined to come tomorrow.”  
 “He took comfort from the news.” → “He was comfortable at the news.”  
 “We expected her to succeed.” → “We waited for her to succeed.”

### Opinion

“We took pleasure in the play.”	→	“The play pleased us.”
“She took an interest in his work.”	→	“His work interested her.”
“He took satisfaction in his appearance.”	→	“He was satisfied with his appearance.”
“We considered our next move.”	→	“We thought of our next move.”
“She took pity on their distress.”	→	“She pitied their distress.”
“She takes pride in her work.”	→	“She is proud of her work.”
“We take the matter seriously.”	→	“The matter is serious for us.”
“He took a liking to skiing.”	→	“He likes skiing.”
“He took objection to the proposal.”	→	“He disliked the proposal.”
“She took offence at the offer.”	→	“The offer offended her.”
“They took confidence from the information.”	→	“They were confident of the information.”
“We took fright at the prospect.”	→	“We feared the prospect.”
“I take hope that you will recover.”	→	“I hope that you will recover.”
“He took shame at his performance.”	→	“He was ashamed at his performance.”

### Interrogation

“I wondered why he had applied for the job.”  
→ -

### Volition

“I intend to go to London today.”	→	“I wish to go to London today.”
“Lisa and I have decided to marry.”	→	“Lisa and I wish to marry.”
“She chose coffee rather than tea.”	→	“She prefers coffee to tea.”

Also covered by the adoptive construction are sentences which convey that the agent rejects or renounces ownership of the possession. The result of these is that the recipient does not possess or no longer possesses it:

“We renounce all worldly goods.”	→	“We do not have any worldly goods.”
“We have given up the cottage.”	→	“We no longer have the cottage.”
“He rejected the opportunity.”	→	“The opportunity is no longer available to him.”

In the case of a material possession, benefit, or perception, both a dative and an adoptive sentence are equally likely to be the cause. “He took the pen” and “He was given the pen” both result in “He has the pen”. “We studied Greek” and “We were taught Greek” both result in “We know Greek”. However, possessions which are the result of a mental process such as an opinion or volition arise more usually from voluntary action by the recipient than from an external agency. “She is proud of her work” is more commonly the result of “She takes pride in her work” than any dative sentence. “I wish to go to London” is generally the result of a personal choice by the recipient. Adoptive sentences are therefore an essential construction in expressing both opinions and volitions. Conversely, a representation is by its nature intended for a third party and therefore not likely to be adopted.

By its nature, an adoptive sentence cannot be instrumental.

In all the examples given so far, the agent is the subject. Many adoptive verbs can additionally be constructed as a passive with the object as subject; others cannot:

“The experiments were looked at.” “The delay was taken advantage of.”  
\*The enterprise was taken a share in.”

As with other constructions, an element can be put into focus:

“It is a new car which Mary has bought.” “It was Mary who bought a new car.”

In these sentences, “new car” and “Mary” are the respective comments, and the remainder are the topics.

The above English adoptive verbs are either particular verbs or an auxiliary verb followed by a noun. Often, this auxiliary verb is “take”. The adoptive construction also includes the idea that the recipient allows him/herself to possess something offered, expressed in English by “accept”:

“Jane accepted the gift of the book.”  
→ “Jane has the book.”  
“Peter accepted my reassurances.” → “Peter is reassured.”

A common alternative construction is to apply the reflexive pronoun in the sense “to oneself”. Verbs with this pronoun appear in the dictionary as reflexive verbs, but are often called in grammars “lexical reflexives” or “pronominal reflexives” to distinguish them from “true reflexives” which are agential intransitives (Chapter 7). This notation suggests that “lexical” or “pronominal” reflexives are somehow improper.<sup>1</sup> As our analysis shows, they are a legitimate construction which accurately expresses the adoptive. A better terminology is “dative reflexive”, as structurally they are a dative verb which transfers its object to the agent. Italian provides good examples, but a parallel list could be prepared in Spanish and French:

“Lui si approfitta della generosità di suo fratello.”  
“He is taking advantage of his brother’s generosity.”  
[He himself takes-advantage of the generosity of his brother.]  
“S’è pentito d’aver detto tante bugie.” “He repented of having told so many lies.”  
[Himself he-is repented of having told so many lies.]  
“Se ti decidessi a prendere la patente, questo non succedrebbe.”  
“If you made up your mind to get your driving licence, this wouldn’t happen.”  
[If yourself you-decided to get a driving license, this not would-happen.]  
“Se tutti si servissero dei mezzi pubblici, non ci sarebbe tanta confusione.”  
“If everyone used public transport, there wouldn’t be so much confusion.”  
[If everyone themselves served of transport public, not there would-be so-much  
confusion.]  
“Si vede che si vergogna.” “One can see that he’s ashamed.”  
[Itself it-sees that himself he-shames.]

Other Italian dative reflexives with adoptive meaning include “accorgersi” (“realise”); “impossessarsi”/“appropriarsi” (“take possession”), “resentirsi” (“resent”); “offendersi” (“take offence”); “avvalersi” (“avail oneself”); “astenersi” (“abstain”); “meravigliarsi” (“wonder”); “annoiarsi” (“get bored”); “ricordarsi” (“remember”); “spaventarsi” (“take fright”); “divertirsi” (“enjoy oneself”); “fidarsi” (“trust”); “figurarsi” (“imagine”); “interessarsi” (“take an interest”); “dilettarsi” (“take delight”). All these are followed by “di” to indicate the object or instrument of the possession or opinion.

German: “Das kann ich mir gut vorstellen.” “I can imagine that well.”  
[That can I to-myself well represent.]  
“Ich habe es mir noch mal überlegt.” “I’ve changed my mind.”  
[I have it to-myself once more considered.]  
“Er hat sich eine Verletzung zugezogen.” “He has incurred an injury.”  
[He has to-himself an injury sustained.]  
“Ich habe mir vorgenommen, das nächste Woche zu tun.”  
“I intend to do that next week.” [I have to-myself intended, that next week to do.]

Russian: “On pol’zovalsya lyuboi vozmozhnost’yu.” “He used every opportunity.”  
[He used-himself with every opportunity (i).]  
“On zainteresovalsya filosofiei.” “He became interested in philosophy.”  
[He interested-himself with philosophy (i).]

<sup>1</sup> See for instance Maiden & Robustelli, 110.

“Ya nadeyus’ vskore uvidet’ vas.” “I hope to see you soon.”  
 [I hope-myself soon to-see you.]  
 “Mogu sebe predstavit’, chto on govoril.” “I can imagine, what he said.”  
 [I-can to-myself imagine, what he said.]  
 “Ona gordilas’ svoim synom.” “She was proud of her son.”  
 [She prided herself with her son (i).]  
 “Ya sovsem ne ispugalsya.” “I’m not at all frightened.”  
 [I at-all not frightened-myself.]  
 “My voskhishchalis’ ikh igroi.” “We admired his acting.”  
 [We admired-ourselves with his acting (i).]

In these Russian examples, (i) indicates a noun in the instrumental case. In the case of opinions, these denote the instrument of the opinion (Chapter 8., The Opinion Function). Other Russian dative reflexives with adoptive meaning are “zavol’stovat’sya” (“take satisfaction in”); “lyubovat’sya” (“admire”); “naslazhdat’sya” (“delight in”); “obkhoodit’sya” (“make do with”); “khvastat’sya” (“boast of”); “zanimat’sya” (“busy oneself with”). All these take the instrumental case to denote the possession or the instrument of the opinion.

The Welsh prefix “ym-”, used to form a reflexive (Chapter 7., The Agential Intransitive Sentence), can also be a dative reflexive:

“Erbyn hyn mae teulu newydd o foch daear wedi ymgartrefu’n hapus.”  
 “A new family of badgers has now settled in happily.”  
 [By now is family new of badgers after itself-settle in happy.]

Hungarian reflexives are formed with the suffix “-kod-“ or its variants:

“Gondolkodom, tehát vagyok.” “I think[-myself], therefore I am.”

Modern Greek and Latin deponent verbs, which are equivalent to a reflexive, also express adoptives. In Classical Greek and Latin grammars, the term “medio-passive” is often used for this deponent construction. The following examples are Modern Greek:

Greek: “Σκέπτομαι να πάω στην Κρήτη το Πάσχα.”  
 “I’m thinking of going to Crete for Easter.”  
 [I-think-myself that I-go to-the Crete the Easter.]  
 “Ντρέπομαι για τη συμπεριφορά μου.” “I’m ashamed of my behaviour.”  
 [I-shame-myself for the behaviour my.]  
 “Δέχτηκε την πρόταση μας αμέσως.” “He accepted our proposal immediately.”  
 [He-accepted-himself the proposal our immediately.]  
 “Αρνήθηκε ν’ απαντήσει.” “He declined to answer.”  
 [He-declined-himself that he answers (subjunctive)-.]

Latin: “Galba rerum adeptus est.” “Galba acquired things.” (Tacitus)  
 [Galba of-things reached-himself.]  
 “utor sensibus.” “to use the senses” [to-use-oneself with the senses] (Lucretius)  
 “certis fundis frui solitum esse” “to be accustomed to enjoy certain estates”  
 [with certain estates to-enjoy-oneself accustomed to-be] (Cicero)

The Arabic prefix “ta-” is used to form adoptive as well as reflexive verbs:

Arabic: “taṣawwara ʔanna l-baħra fī ṣiqilliyata ʔakṯaru zurkatan”  
 “He imagined that the sea in Sicily is bluer.”  
 [He-imagined-himself that the-sea in Sicily more in-blueness.]  
 “lā ʔataḍakkaru ʔannī ʔalqaytu naẓarī ʔalayhi marratan”  
 “I do not remember that I ever once cast a glance at him.”  
 [Not I-remember-myself that-I cast glance-my at-him once.]  
 “yatawaqqafu xubarāʔu l-ʔaħwāli” “Meteorologists expect.”  
 [Expect-themselves meteorologists.]



“iṭtaqaduhu ṣadīqan” “I believed him a friend.” [I believed-myself-him friend.]  
 “fi l-waḡti llaḏī yatawaqqāʿu l-xubarāʿu...”  
 “at the time that experts are expecting...”  
 [at the-time that expect-themselves the-experts...]

Other Arabic adoptives are formed with the prefix “ista-” or an infixed “-ta-”, translated as reflexive:

“istaslamtu lahu ʿallahu yaḡsilūni”  
 “I submitted to it in the hope that it would cleanse me.”  
 [I-submitted-myself to-it perhaps it-cleanse-me.]  
 “iṭtaraḏa l-iṭnāni ʿalā ṣarāmāti l-qawānīna”  
 “The two men objected to the harshness of the laws.”  
 [Objected-themselves the-two to harshness the-laws.]  
 “ittafaḡati l-wilāyātu l-muttaḡidatu” “The United States agreed.”  
 [Agreed-themselves the-States the-United.]  
 “istaʿmala l-sarīra maḡʿadan” “He used the bed as a seat.”  
 [He used-himself the bed a seat.]

Many Hindi adoptives are expressed by an auxiliary verb and a noun, similar to the above English expressions with “take” or “accept”:

“yah bheṭ svīkār kijie” “Please accept this gift.” [This gift acceptance please-do.]  
 “usne merī bāt par dhyān nahī diyā” “She didn’t pay heed to what I said.”  
 [She <sub>(agent)</sub> my words-on attention not gave.]  
 “ham rāmāyaṇ kā adhyayan kar rahe hāi” “We are doing a study of the Ramayan.”  
 “We Ramayan-of study doing are.”  
 “tum mere kompyūṭar kā istemāl kar sakte ho” “You can use my computer.”  
 [You my computer-of use do can.]  
 “mai āpkī talāś kar rahā thā” “I was searching for you.” [I you-of search doing was.]  
 “ṛṣi ne patra likhne kā vādā kiyā” “Rishi promised to write a letter.”  
 [Rishi-by letter writing-of promise made.]

Similarly in Persian:

“tasavvor mikonam ta hala raside bašad” “I think he will have arrived by now.”  
 [Supposition I-make by now arrived he-is <sub>(subjunctive)-]</sub>

“tasmim gereftand ke beravand” “They decided to go.”  
 [Decision they-took that they go <sub>(subjunctive)-]</sub>

Inuit adoptives, like its dative and possession sentences, are formed by a suffix (underlined) attached to the object acquired:

“Tuttuppuq.” “He caught a caribou.” [Caribou-catch-he.]  
 “Tiiturviisurput.” “They fetched the cups.” [Cups-fetch-they.]  
 “Allursiurpuq.” “He looked for a seal’s breathing-hole.” [Breathinghole-lookedfor-he.]  
 “Tupaṣissaatit.” “You shall buy some tobacco.” [Tobacco-get-will-you.]  
 “Aallalirsaarpuq.” “He intends to leave.” [Leave-intends-he.]  
 “Qaamagaa.” “He thought it was too bright.” [Bright-consider-he.]

## Conclusion

We have seen in Chapters 6. and 7. that the core of a transitive or intransitive sentence is an object, and the state or condition that the object enters into as a result of an action. The core of the sentences we have been discussing in Chapters 8. and 9. is what we have called a possession, that is the interaction between an object (or person) and a human recipient of that object. A possession can be an interaction between a human being and another human being, or a physical interaction of a human being with a material object, or a mental interaction of a human being with a material object. Any of these

interactions can be real or hypothetical, and can be the result of an action. As we shall show in Chapter 12. (Possession), possessions can be expressed by a noun (called a possession), which connects the recipient with the object.

The core elements of a possession sentence are therefore the object, recipient, and possession. Where the possession is mental, a further element is a mental impression which the recipient has of the object, whether spontaneous or considered, supposed or actual. The transfer sentences which describe the actions which gives rise to a possession may include an agent or (more rarely) an instrument, and we call those sentences dative if the agent, instrument, or object is the subject, receptive if the recipient is the subject, and adoptive if the agent is the same as the recipient.

With the exception of a representation, the situations in the world which are described by a possession are distinct from those described by a transitive or intransitive sentence. Possession, dative, receptive, and adoptive sentences are therefore distinct functionally from transitive, intransitive, and attributive ones, even though the same or similar linguistic constructions are employed. Further analysis in Chapter 15. divides possessions and their corresponding dynamic sentences into nine sentence types. Since a communication or proposal does not necessarily result in a perception or supposition, there are a further four sentence types to describe those actions.

For each of these sentence types, and therefore for each category of possession and communication, the agent, instrument, object, recipient, or possession, or a combination of agent and recipient, can be the topic. The role of the sentence in discourse is therefore not related to the nature of the possession or communication. The classification of sentences by their role in discourse, described in Chapters 13. and 14., is the same for transitive, intransitive, and transfer sentences, and for their stative resultants, while Chapter 15. distinguishes between the functional sentence types of transitive, intransitive, transfer, and possession sentences.

Chapter 10. discusses a function common to transitive, intransitive, and transfer sentences, namely that an action can be to the advantage or disadvantage of a beneficiary.