

# Objects and diatheses

*(based on material by Manfred Krifka)*

# Direct and indirect object

- How are di-transitive constructions coded?
- example: German

Patient of transitive and patient of ditransitive clause are both coded in accusative

Recipient of ditransitive clause is coded differently (dative)

Der Lehrer hat **dem Schüler** **den Roman** gegeben.  
Der Schüler hat **den Roman** gelesen.

# Direct and indirect objects

- general pattern

transitive	Patient	
ditransitive	Patient	Recipient

Patient marking NP is called **direct object**  
and recipient marking NP **indirect object**

# Direct and indirect object

- Similar patterns in many languages

Latin:

*Cassius Bruto equum dat.*

Cassius.NOM Brutus.DAT horse.ACC gave  
'Cassius gave Brutus a horse.'

*Cassius equum pusabat.*

Cassius.NOM horse.ACC beat.  
'Cassius beat a horse.'

# Direct and indirect objects

- Korean, marking via postposition:

*Tongmini nun Nami eykey kkoch ul ponay-ss-ta*

Tongmin TOP Nami DAT flower(s) ACC sent

'Tongmin sent flowers to Nami.'

*Tongmini nun Nami lul manna-ss-ta.*

Tongmin TOP Nami ACC met.

'Tongmin met Nami.'

# Primary and secondary objects

- Several languages use different pattern:

**Patient** of the **transitive** clause and **recipient** of the **ditransitive** clause have same marking: **Primary Objects**

**Patient** of **ditransitive** clause has different marking: **Secondary object**

Example: Lahu (Tibeto-Burman)

a tha? tafl dofl?

1.SG OBJ NEG.IMP beat

'Don't beat me.'

Li? chi a tha? pifl?

book that 1SG.OBJ give

'Give me this book.'

# Primary and secondary objects

- general pattern

transitive	Patient	
ditransitive	Patient	Recipient

transitive patient/ditransitive recipient: **primary object**  
ditransitive patient: **secondary object**

# Primary and secondary objects

- Example: Swahili, head marking

*Mw-alimu a-li-wa-pa wa-nafunzi vi-tabu.*

1-teacher 1-PAST-2-give 2-student 8-book

'The teacher gave the students the books.'

*wa-nafunzi wa-li-vi-sema vi-tabu.*

2-student 2-past-8-read 8-book

'The students read the books.'



# Double object constructions

- Some languages/constructions mark both objects identically

Example: Dagbani (Gur, Niger-Congo)

*Doo maa ti paga maa sima.*

man DEF give woman DEF peanuts

'The man gave the woman peanuts.'

Also mixed systems, e.g. English:

*The man gave the woman peanuts.*

*The man gave peanuts to the woman.*

# Ditransitive marking

- [WALS map](#)

# Motivations

- Direct/indirect object system: consistent patient marking
- primary/secondary object system:
  - recipient is usually animate and patient is inanimate
  - preference to mark animate arguments with a “higher” grammatical function than inanimate ones

# Split systems

- Some languages (like German) consistently mark recipient/beneficiary in dative
- split object marking

*Der Lehrer hat dem Schüler geholfen.*

*Der Vater hat dem Sohn verziehen:*

*Der Verkäufer hat dem Kunden gedankt.*

transitive	Patient	Recipient/ Beneficiary
ditransitive	Patient	Recipient/ Beneficiary

# Diathesis

- Passive: ([WALS map](#))
  - occurs in accusative languages
  - decreases valency of verb
  - patient -> subject, agent -> optional oblique argument

*The thugs will mug bugs./Bugs will be mugged (by the thugs).*

K'ekchi (Penutian, Guatemala)

*X-at-in-bok (lian)*

TNS-2-1-call I

'I called you.'

*X-at-bok-e' (laat) (in-ban)*

TNS-w-call-PASS you 1-by

'You were called by me.'



# Diathesis

- Antipassive ([WALS map](#))
  - occurs in ergative languages
  - decreases valency of verb
  - agent -> nominative, patient -> optional oblique argument

Example: Inupiaq (Inuit: Greenland and Canada)

*Anuti-m umiaq qinig-aa tirrag-mi*  
man-ERG boat see-3.3 beat-at  
'The man sees the boat that the beach.'

*Anun umiag-mik qiniq-tuq tirrag-mi.*  
man boat-MOD see-3 beat-at  
'The man sees a boat at the beach.'

# Object diatheses

- Applicative diathesis: ([WALS map](#))
  - indirect object -> direct object

example: German

*Der Lehrer schenkte dem Schüler den Roman.*

*Der Lehrer **beschenkte** den Schüler (mit dem Roman)*

Original object can be expressed optionally with a prepositional phrase.



# Object diatheses

- “kriegen”/”bekommen”-Passiv
  - indirect object -> subject

*Der Lehrer schenkte dem Schüler den Roman.*

*Der Schüler kriegte/bekam (von dem Lehrer) den Roman geschenkt*

- possible to combine several diatheses

*Der Lehrer schenkte dem Schüler den Roman.*

*Der Lehrer beschenkte den Schüler (mit dem Roman)*

*Der Schüler wurde (von dem Lehrer) (mit dem Roman) beschenkt.*