THE COMBINABILITY OF MONOTRANSITIVE AND DITRANSITIVE VERBS

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Annotation: *Transitive verbs are English verbs that take one or more objects. Monotransitive verbs take only a direct object. Ditransitive verbs take two objects, either a direct object and an indirect object or a direct object and an object complement.*
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Many verbs describe events that must in addition to the subject, involve someone or something else. Some of these verbs can only be used in monotransitive clauses. Now let's see the examples taken from William Shakespeare's drama "*The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*" written in 1604.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who is there?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

This means that they are followed by a direct object: *He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.*

Many verbs which are only used in monotransitive clauses can take a large range of objects. For example, there are many things you can 'want': *money, a rest, success, and so on.*

She wanted some help.   I put my hand on the door.

She described her background.   I still support the government.

He had liked Mr Phillips.   Japan has a population of about a hundred million.

Some monotransitive verbs have a restricted range of objects, because of their meaning. For example, the object of the verb '*kill*' must be something that is alive. The object of the verb '*waste*' must be something you can use such as *time, money, or food.*

They killed huge elephants with tiny poisoned darts.

Why waste money on them?

He was a gentleman on whom I built An absolute trust.

Had he not resembled My father as he slept, I hadn't done.

Here is a list of verbs which are monotransitive:

achieve	*cut*	*get*	*maintain*	*Rent*
address	*damage*	*Give*	*Make*	*report*
admire	*defy*	*grant*	*Mean*	*respect*
affect	*demand*	*guard*	*Mention*	*reveal*
afford	*describe*	*handle*	*Name*	*Risk*
avoid	*design*	*hate*	*Need*	*See*
bear	*desire*	*have*	*Own*	*Seek*
believe	*destroy*	*hear*	*Plant*	*Sell*
blame	*discover*	*heat*	*Please*	*shock*
Build	*discuss*	*Hire*	*Prefer*	*specify*
buy	*display*	*Hit*	*Prevent*	*Spot*
Calm	*do*	*include*	*Process*	*support*
carry	*dread*	*influence*	*Produce*	*Take*
catch	*enjoy*	*introduce*	*pronounce*	*tease*
Claim	*equal*	*issue*	*Protect*	*Test*
commit	*exchange*	*justify*	*Provide*	*threaten*
complete	*expect*	*keep*	*Raise*	*trust*
concern	*experience*	*Kill*	*Reach*	*upset*
consider	*express*	*know*	*Receive*	*Use*
control	*favour*	*lack*	*recommend*	*value*
convince	*fear*	*Like*	*Record*	*want*
correct	*fill*	*List*	*Release*	*waste*
cover	*find*	*love*	*remember*	*wear*
create	*free*	*lower*	*Remove*	*welcome*

Verbs that '*do*' and '*have*' are also very often used as auxiliaries. '*Have got*' and '*has got*' are often used instead of the present tense of '*have*' when talking about possession. The forms of '*have*' behave like auxiliaries when used like this before '*got*'. '*Had got*' is sometimes used when referring to the past, but '*had*' is often used instead.

I'<u>ve got</u> an umbrella.   She'<u>s got</u> a degree.   He'<u>d got</u> over fifty horses.

Smells wooingly, here; no jultly, frieze, Buttreis, nor coign of vantage, but this bird (W. Shakespeare).

'*Measure*' and '*weigh*' are sometimes considered to be monotransitive verbs when used to state measurements and weights. '*Cost*' is used to state the cost of something, as in '*An adult ticket costs 90p*'. When you are talking about something that affects a person rather than a thing, it is normal in English to say who that person is. Therefore, verbs such as '*anger*', '*thank*', and '*warn*', which involve affecting people, usually occur in monotransitive clauses.

My questions <u>angered</u> the crowd.

Her sudden death <u>had surprised</u> everybody.

Blue <u>suits</u> you.   Money did not <u>interest</u> him very much.

Lebel <u>briefed</u> Caron on the events of the afternoon.

Here is a list of verbs which usually have a human object:

anger	contact	suit	thank
brief	frighten	surprise	trouble
comfort	interest	tease	warn

With some monotransitive verbs, you have to give additional information about what is going on by using an adjunct after the object of the verb. Some verbs typically have a prepositional phrase beginning with a particular preposition after their object.

The judge <u>based</u> his decision <u>on constitutional rights</u>.

He <u>had subjected</u> me <u>to the pressure of financial ruin</u>.

Mr. Claude Cheysoon <u>regards</u> the third world <u>as his top priority</u>.

Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle. (W. Shakespeare)

Here is a list of verbs which always or usually have a particular preposition after their object:

regard as	deprive of	condemn to	subordinate to
view as	remind of	confine to	~
~	rid of	consign to	acquaint with
mistake for	rob of	dedicate to	associate with
swap for	~	entitle to	confront with
~	accustom to	liken to	engrave with
dissociate from	ascribe to	owe to	pelt with
prevent from	attribute to	return to	play with
~	compare to	subject to	trust with

With the following verbs, there is a choice of preposition:

divide by	~	~	present to
divide into	base on	entrust to	present with
~	base upon	entrust with	supply to
incorporate in	lavish on	equate to	supply with
incorporate into	lavish upon	equate with	~

An adjunct, but not one containing a particular preposition typically follow other verbs. The adjunct is often an adjunct of place.

He <u>placed</u> the baby <u>on the woman's lap</u>.   I <u>positioned</u> chair <u>outside the room</u>.

He never <u>puts</u> anything <u>away</u>.   He <u>treated</u> his labourers <u>with kindness</u>.

But that myself should be the rot and father, Of many Kings. If there come truth from them… (W. Shakespeare)

Here is a list of verbs which usually have an adjunct of some kind after their object:

bring	escort	lead	rip	store
chuck	fling	place	send	throw
convey	hoist	point	set	thrust
Cram	jab	position	shove	tie
direct	jot	prop	smear	treat
Drag	lay	put	stick	

Some verbs of movement and position are monotransitive, not inmonotransitive; noun groups referring to places rather than by adverbs or prepositional phrases follow them. This is because the verbs themselves indicate that you are talking about movement or position of a particular kind. For example, '*enter*' implies movement '<u>*into*</u>' a place and '*occupy*' implies position '<u>*in*</u>' a place.

As they <u>neared</u> the outskirts of the city the traffic thickened.

It was dark by the time they <u>reached</u> their house.

A small ornamental pool <u>occupied</u> the centre of the room.

Roaring aircraft <u>filled</u> the sky.

But for you husband, He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows… (W. Shakespeare)

Here is a list of monotransitive verbs of movement:

approach	leave	reach
enter	near	round

Here is a list of monotransitive verbs of position:

cover	fill	occupy
crowd	inhabit	throng

Many of the verbs, which can take an object or a prepositional phrase, are verbs such as '*wander*' and '*cross*' which describe physical movement. The preposition is one which indicates place, and so allows you to emphasize the physical position of the subject in relation to the object.

He <u>wandered the hills</u> in his spare time.   I <u>climbed up the tree</u>.

He <u>wandered through the streets of New York</u>.   I   <u>crossed   the Mississippi</u>.

The car <u>had crossed over the river</u> to Long Island.   We   <u>climbed   the mountain</u>.

That tend on mortal thoughts unsex me here, And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top – full, Of direst cruelty! (W. Shakespeare)

Here is a list of verbs which describe movement, and the prepositions that can follow them:

chase (after)	jump (over)	roam (through)	wander (through)
climb (up)	leap (over)	skirt (round)	
cross (over)	roam (over)	walk (through)	

A ditransitive verb (DV) is a trivalent verb that requires a *subject* (S), a *direct object* (Od) and an *indirect object* (Oi) for a complete syntactic complementation. It is necessary for all clause elements to be realisable as noun phrases (NPs): this realisation (S:NP – DV – Oi:NP – Od:NP) is called the basic form of *ditransitive complementation*. If a verb is attested in the basic form of ditransitive complementation in actual language use, it is also considered a ditransitive verb in all other forms of complementation.

All ditransitive verbs and ditransitive complementations are associated with an underlying proposition that represents the situation type of transfer with three semantic roles involved: the ditransitive verb denotes an action in which the *acting entity* transfers a *transferred entity* to the *affected entity*. Now let's analyse some examples from W. Shakespeare's comedies. They all contain the sentences with ditransitive verbs, which illustrate their structural – semantic and functional properties.

He does a great deal for other people; what is done cannot be undone.

He has accomplished more in a week than others have done in a year.

He could not miss them – Had he not resembled, My father as he slept, I had don't – My husband, Alack! I am afraid they have awoked… (W. Shakespeare)

New ditransitive verbs were shown to evolve on grounds of specific licensing strategies (e.g. metaphorical extension) that make it possible to extend the meaning of the verb to the typical ditransitive situation schema. While the process of grammatical institutionalization refers to the periphery of language use, the emergence of frequent routines points to the core area and should thus be seen as a different process, i.e. conventionalization.

Whereas grammatical institutionalization is thus strongly linked to creative language use, conventionalization captures the various kinds of routines in language use. In this context, creativity and routine were defined not as distinct domains but as a gradient from very creative usage to very routinised usage. On this gradient, the various categories of creative/routinized use of ditransitive verbs were plotted, including the emergence of new ditransitive verbs, the concept of lexicogrammatical patterns, and prefabricated units.

Curses not loud but deep, month – honor, breath, Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not… (W. Shakespeare)

In general, this also holds true for ditransitive verbs. The variability of the routines in using ditransitive verbs can be systematized along a gradient from relatively fixed (i.e. formulaic, prefabricated units) over recurrent patterns/pattern frames/idioms (with more or less internal variation) to creative language events that do not follow any kind of linguistic routines (e.g. the use of an extremely rare ditransitive pattern or the use of a pattern that violates a specific principle of pattern selection). The important point in this context is that corpus linguistics should pay particular attention to the wide range of routinised patterns in language use because they form part of the frequent core area of language use. It is here that the quantitative analysis of corpus data is of paramount importance. Repeated events are significant. The first task of corpus linguistics is to describe what is usual and typical. Unique events certainly occur, but can be described only against the background of what is normal and expected. The frequent occurrence of lexical or grammatical patterns is good evidence of what is typical and routine in language use. Now let's analyze some examples from W. Shakespeare's comedies. They all contain the sentences with ditransitive verbs which illustrate their structural – semantic and functional properties.

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