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Prepositional and Indirect Objects in the Grammatical Description of English

Završni rad

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Summary:

In this paper we show how two clausal syntax functions - the indirect and the prepositional objects - are explained in some grammatical descriptions of the English language, viz (Biber 1999), (Givón 1993), (Quirk 2010), (Alexander 1989), (COBUILD 2011), and (Huddleston 1984). In the first part we show the problematic points and the variety in defining the two functions and offer some of our ideas concerning their definition and analysis, while in the second part of the paper we study the criteria that the selected grammars use in describing the indirect and the prepositional objects, focusing on the following three grammars: (Alexander 1989), (COBUILD 2011), and (Huddleston 1984). We also present possible arguments in favor of the 'prepositional verb + direct object' analysis as opposed to the 'verb phrase + prepositional object' analysis.

Key words: clausal syntax, indirect object, prepositional object

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1. Introduction[1]

The aim of this paper is to show how the two functions - the indirect and the prepositional objects - are explained in some grammatical descriptions of the English language, viz (Biber 1999), (Givón 1993), (Quirk 2010), (Alexander 1989), (COBUILD 2011), and (Huddleston 1984). The main reason why we chose the Oi and the Op in particular is because the two have shown to be the least consistent in the grammars studied. It can be speculated that the reason behind this (at least in part) is the fact that both of them are formally realized as PP - Oi only in some cases, which is the reason the two are often placed in the same functional category. Another reason for the inconsistencies is the application of different criteria. AS will become obvious later in the paper, some use e.g. passivization to prove something to be an object, while others, like Huddleston, do not exclusively rely on this behavioral property in defining objects. In the category of object as a syntactic function, there are typically two main subtypes: the direct object and the indirect object. However, some grammarians also distinguish the prepositional object, which adds some complexity to the grammatical description of English and has been one of the main bones of contention among different syntacticians.

Our main goal, therefore, will be to study the criteria that the selected grammars use in describing the indirect and the prepositional objects, to the extent that the latter category is acknowledged at all. We will try to find and evaluate different approaches the standard grammars use in analyzing the particular structure of a verb phrase coupled with a prepositional phrase[2] when there is reason to claim that the prepositional phrase functions as some kind of object, albeit a prepositionally marked one. This means that we will consider cases where the PP could be analyzed (by some criteria at least) as either the Oi or the Op, and that we will not take into account cases where the PP functions as an adverbial (although some reference will be made to cases of that kind). Moreover, leaving aside the Oi category, we will zoom in on the issue of the Op and illustrate some of the pro and con arguments put

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[1] I would like to thank prof. Gabrijela Buljan for useful comments and suggestions on an early draft of this paper.
[2] Under the term 'prepositional phrase', we understand a unit at the level of phrasal syntax, no matter the function of the particular unit at the clausal syntax level (which could be different).

forward, especially by Huddleston, for the two possible ways of formally analyzing structures like this. One that allows for a separate syntactic function for the prepositionally introduced object – viz. the Op, and another one, which favors the reinterpretation of the preposition as a part of the predicator, leaving the Od category free.

Despite the fact that there are arguments both in favor of the Op category and against it (cf. p. 14), in our opinion, the advantage of the latter approach is the simplification of the category of object by attributing the preposition to the verb functioning as the predicator of the sentence, and thus transferring the complexity to the predicator, which becomes a prepositional verb. This is possible because prepositional verbs (verb + preposition) function as a single semantic unit - only their form is complex, not the meaning.

In the first part of the paper, we will describe the properties of the two objects as found in the most comprehensive grammars at our disposal[3] and convey some of our ideas concerning their syntactic analysis. As will be obvious below, there are three sets of criteria that are variously used by different authors to define syntactic functions: formal (such as coding properties), semantic (e.g. semantic roles), and behavioral (e.g. passivisation). It will be obvious that different authors attach different value to the different criteria - some seem to hold the coding properties the most decisive for assigning something into this or that category, others use behavioral properties, and others till take the most healthy and comprehensive approach and take into account a range of different criteria in their definition of syntactic functions. The downside of this latter approach is that degrees of membership have to be acknowledged because syntactic categories tend to be heterogeneous, with some members exhibiting more, some less of the properties of the category prototype. In the second part of the paper we will explore the approach to the subject taken in several standard grammars, viz. (Alexander 1989), (COBUILD 2011), and (Huddleston 1984). In part three we lay out a brief summary of the main ideas presented in our paper.

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[3] *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* by Biber et al., and *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* by Quirk et al.

2. Indirect object (Oi)

Quirk et al (1985: 727) define the indirect object as a type of object which denotes some kind of transference of some entity between two animate participants. Compare also Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 245):

> The general definition of indirect object is that it is a distinct element of clause structure characteristically associated with the semantic role of recipient. Again, this is not the only role we find (though the range is much narrower than with the direct object), but indirect objects behave grammatically like the NP expressing the recipient with verbs like *give, lend, offer, sell.*

The above characterization essentially relies on the semantic criterion. Sometimes, this is accompanied by some further defining criteria of a more formal type, e.g., the coding properties of Oi, which in fact are the most problematic of all. According to Alexander, an Oi is typically realized as an NP or a Pron. P., when in position after the predicator (i) (Alexander 1989: 5). When in position after the direct object (predicator - Od - Oi) then it is in the form of a PP, which can be governed by a preposition 'to' or 'for' (ii). This is Alexander's definition, while, of course, there are different approaches to defining the coding properties of Oi. Some claim that the Oi can only be an NP, while some take it to the limits, such as Givón (1993: 95-124) who calls every PP (which is a necessary complement to the verb) the Oi. He does not recognize the prepositional object as a separate syntactic function (e.g. in the sentence 'Mary looked at John', 'at John' is described as the patient indirect object (Givón 1993: 118). Nevertheless, we accept Alexander's definition as relevant.

Also, indirect objects (marked in bold in (i) below) are said to follow ditransitive verbs only, which have three obligatory complements: the subject, the indirect object, and the direct object (Biber 1999: 128).

Examples:

(i)

The man sold **Mark** a car. (NP)

The man sold **him** a car. (Pron. P)

(ii)

The man sold a car **to Mark**. (PP)

He bought a car **for somebody**. (PP)

As for the bolded phrases in (ii) there are differences of opinion when it comes to their syntactic – functional status. Quirk et al. (2010) seem to be reluctant to accept the Oi in its PP form, and decide instead to assign it to the category of the Op (727). Biber et al. (1999: 130) in turn, call a structure as 'to Mark' (ii) "recipient adverbial"; they also often use similar terms such as the 'oblique object' (Biber et al. 1999: 130) which unnecessarily complicate the analysis of the Oi. Occasionally, authors call such units 'neutral PP complements' (Huddleston 1984: 203).

Generally speaking, it is normal for one and the same syntactic function to have many different formal realizations (e.g. a subject may be realized as an NP, clause, even PP as in *Before 5 and 6 is fine with me*). That is why it is legitimate to question the need for introducing new object types every time the formal shape of the object does not fit the NP prototype. This naturally calls into question the need to have an Op category whenever the object of the verb is introduced by a preposition. However, unlike the admittedly problematic Op, fewer authors will dismiss the Oi category as invalid, if for no other reason, then because there are ditransitive verbs that are obligatorily complemented by two NPs, both of which are objects, e.g. *give* in *I gave Mary a flower*. After all, the two NPs are sufficiently and consistently semantically distinct, one is always some kind of recipient in the action denoted by the predicator. Following the same logic introduced at the beginning of this paragraph, there is no reason to reject *to Mary* as an Oi in *I gave a flower to Mary* just because the indirect object is prepositionally marked. There is still a strong semantic parallel between the PP recipient *to Mary* and the NP recipient *Mary*. Moreover, there is a special type of syntactic operation, called the dative shift, which points to the strong syntactic parallel between the two.

Still, not all authors share this view and we see quite a bit of inconsistency in how the semantic recipients of ditransitive verbs are handled when they are realized differently on the formal syntactic level. In the sections that follow we will concentrate fully on what seems to be the more problematic of the two syntactic functions, the Op.

3. Prepositional object (Op)

The term prepositional object is used in at least two different ways. On the one hand, the term is used to denote a prepositionally marked object of a verb. E.g. in Quirk et al (1972: 831) we find the following explanation:

"Sentences with prepositional objects, which should really be termed 'objects after prepositional verbs' (see 12.28), can occur in the pasive just like sentences with non-prepositional objects as:

   (i) John searched the room – The room was searched (by John)

   (ii) John searched for the key - The key was searched for (by John)".

These examples illustrate the syntactic argument for referring to the bolded structure in (ii) as an object in the first place.

     Semantically speaking, the Op, by this definition, is a PP that completes the meaning of a certain verb, e.g. e.g. I believe **in you**.; We relied **on him**, According to this view, the preposition is observed relatively to the verb and goes in favor of the analysis 'prepositional verb + Od' (cf. the quote from Quirk et al above and the argument below), which is best seen on the example such as:

<div align="center">The committee will <i>look into</i> the issue.</div>

Op, i.e. the preposition in Op, contributes to the meaning of the verb, or better, it changes the meaning of the verb. We notice that 'look' changes into 'look into' which is a synonym for 'examine', whereas 'observe/watch' would be some of the synonyms for 'look'.

     The example shows that 'look' and 'into' form a semantic unit and this proves that the verb and the preposition make a prepositional verb which functions as the predicator of the clause, whereas the NP functions as a direct object. There are some other arguments in favor of this analysis, which are not semantic, such as passivization (The issue will be **looked into** by the committee.), or cleft-sentence test (It is this issue that will be **looked into** by the committee.), or question test (What will the committee **look into**?). But there are also alternative views (see below, p. 15ff).

As for the second sense of the term prepositional object, it is useful to refer back to the same passage quoted above from Quirk et al, where the argument continues as follows (1972: 831): "The **prepositional object** (*emphasis is mine*) may be a noun, a pronoun, an ing, or a – wh clause, e.g. *He concentrated on (the song, that, singing, what they would sing)*". It is obvious from this quote that the term 'prepositional object' is also used to refer to the structure introduced by the preposition within the prepositional phrase. Sometimes this structure, typically an NP, is called a prepositional object, sometimes a prepositional complement.

Whatever the label, it is obvious that the P + NP constituent is a unit on the level of phrasal syntax, where the NP is considered as the object (or complement) of the preposition. Since we have taken sense (a) as supportive of the 'prep. verb + Od' analysis, we analyze this sense as more conducive to the 'VP + Op' analysis, because it goes to show that "the preposition is the mediating element between the complement of the preposition and the predicator", which would mean that "the syntactic relation between NP and the verb is not a direct one" (Huddleston 1984: 203), but the NP "needs" the preposition to govern it, so they together make a syntactically acceptable unit.

Actually, the second interpretation is used (or it should be) in analyses at the phrasal syntax level, while sense (a) at the clausal syntax level. It is important to differentiate between them, because what is P+NP at the phrasal syntax level, could be Op, Adv[4] or Oi (as mentioned earlier in the text) at the clausal syntax level.

To sum up, at the level of the phrase, things are straightforward. There is a simple P + NP constituent. It is only at the level of syntactic functions (CS) that things get complicated. We have to find reliable criteria to decide whether this phrasal unit functions syntactically as a Oi, Op or perhaps as an Adverbial. And it is here that we find inconsistencies when studying different authoritative reference grammars.

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[4] Not only can the complement of a preposition or the object of a preposition function as an Op, but it can also be e.g. a NP in a PP postmodifying the head of a larger NP (the man **with a black hat**), or even an NP in a PP functioning as an adverbial (He drove the car **into the garage**.), hence not necessarily functioning as a prepositional object. Which means that those two terms (the comp. of a prep., and the obj. of a prep.) are also used to describe things at the phrasal syntax level.
Therefore, in our opinion, the term 'prepositional object' should be used exclusively at the clausal syntax level, and the 'comp. of a prep., and the 'obj. of a prep'. at the phrasal syntax level.

Even if we clearly differentiate between the Oi, the Adverbial and the Op function, there are, as already suggested above, two ways in which the 'Op' can be analyzed: one can either append the preposition to the verb, making the prepositional verb + Od combination (but this interpretation excludes the need for Op as a syntactic function!) or acknowledge the Op as an independent syntactic function, where things get complicated, because of the reasons mentioned above.

In our opinion, the 'prepositional verb + Od' analysis is preferable because that way we get less complication concerning the object, and we toss the ball in the predicator's court (for some counter-arguments see below, p.15 ff). By explaining away the Op in terms of the Od, the predicate grows more complex - at least considering the number of words. There are no categories for the predicator, as there are for the object (direct, indirect, prepositional), and hence by this transformation we get one category less altogether: Op which we subsume under the Od, at the cost of having more complex predicators. What we gain by this is didactic and systematic simplicity.

Here is a nice example from Quirk et al. which is "[an] indication of the closeness of a prepositional object to a direct object [which shows] that when a prepositional verb is followed by a *that*-clause or a *to*-infinitive clause, the preposition disappears and the prepositional object merges with the direct object of the monotransitive pattern (B)" (2010: 1178):

E.g.   They *agreed   on* the meeting.

                         (*that*) they would meet.

                          to meet each other.

 (B) They *remembered*   the meeting.

                         (that) they had met.

                          to meet each other.

In addition, the apparent greater complexity of the predicate is also a category mistake: the increased complexity due to the increased number of words is a mistake, since the syntactical

level where we find the subject, the predicator, objects, etc. does not consider the number of words as a complexity-adding factor. Consider an example:

1. John Smith is working.

2. He is working.

The subject 'John Smith' in the sentence (1.) is not viewed as more complex than the subject 'he' in the sentence (2.) just because it consists of two words instead of one – not at the clausal syntax level. This shows that the idea of "complexity" in language is not measured by the number of words out of which the relevant syntactic functions (subject, object, predicator) are composed, but by the number and interactions of the syntactic categories. By analyzing the prepositional object as 'the prep. verb + Od' as suggested, the number of the syntactic categories used can effectively be decreased, and this shows the benefits of our approach.

4. Oi and Op in the Grammatical Description of English

The second part of the paper will show the way in which the issues addressed in the paper are handled in the three other grammars studied[5].

(1) *Longman English Grammar* by Alexander (1989)

Alexander does not speak of a special prepositional type of object, but he in the very start divides the syntactic category of object into direct and indirect object. Nothing even similar to the Op is mentioned, so we presume it would be subsumed under the category of direct object, as we are also proposing, i.e. we could analyze it as a prepositional verb functioning as a predicator + Od. So, we could say Alexander speaks in favor of our thesis.

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[5] *Longman English Grammar* by Alexander, *Collins COBUILD English Grammar*, and *Introduction to the Grammar of English* by Huddleston.

As for the treatment of the indirect object in this grammar, it is different from our proposed treatment. We use an example:

(1) They gave it **to Sam.**

According to Alexander, 'it' (in (1)) is a direct object, whereas 'to Sam' is not explained as an indirect object, but "**a prepositional phrase beginning with *to* (or *for*) [which replaces] the indirect object**" (1989: 7). Therefore, Alexander does not assign the function of Oi to this type of object. It is asserted that the Oi can either be a noun phrase or a pronoun phrase coming immediately after the verb/predicator, not a prepositional phrase. This indicates the mixing of phrasal with clausal syntax, because a PP, which is a phrasal syntax term, cannot substitute a syntactic function.

(2) *Collins COBUILD English Grammar* (2011)

By the authors of this grammar, the object in a clause is used to mention another person or thing affected by the action denoted by the predicator.

e.g. i He closed *the door*. (Od)

 ii Piggy handed *Ralph his glasses.* ('Ralph' as the Oi benefits from the action – receives something)

 iii He *yearned for* academic recognition. ("This use of preposition allows something affected by the action to be mentioned, as the **object of the preposition**" (COBUILD 2011: 139).)

Also, a prepositional phrase (which is actually an adverbial) serves the same purpose:

e.g. She walked *across the street*. (COBUILD uses this example to prove one can mention another person or a thing which is involved using a **PP** (138). The construction is not called an adverbial – at least not at this point.)

This again denotes the fact that this particular grammar mixes clausal and phrasal syntax, because (in the example above) no syntactic role is assigned to the PP, and (in (iii)) the construction we would call Op is referred to as the object of a preposition.

The COBUILD grammar distinguishes two main types of objects: the object of a verb and the object of a preposition. The object of a verb is Od and/or Oi.

The Oi occurs with "a small number of transitive verbs [which] allow you to mention a person who benefits from an action or receives something as a result. The clause then has both a direct and an indirect object" (Collins COBUILD 2011: 138).

e.g. Piggy handed <u>Ralph</u> <u>his glasses</u>.

Also, "instead of putting the indirect object in front of the direct object, it is possible to put it in a prepositional phrase that comes after the direct object" (COBUILD 2011: 159), so we distinguish indirect objects with 'to' and 'for'.

e.g. I handed it <u>to her</u>.

He left a note <u>for her</u>.

> This structure is used particularly in cases where you want to focus on the indirect object. You use it, for example, when the indirect object is significantly longer than the direct object. e.g. He had taught English <u>to all the youth of Ceylon and India</u>. In addition, it is normal to use this prepositional structure when the direct object is a pronoun such as 'it' or 'them': He passed <u>it to the editor</u>. Also, when the indirect object is new information and the direct object is not, the indirect object is put at the end of the clause (COBUILD 160).

To sum up, this grammar acknowledges the role of the Oi to the PP structure.

As for the Op, this grammar does not credit Op as a syntactic function equal to e.g. Oi. It is mentioned, but not explained and separated from the term object of a preposition.

Important thing to mention is that COBUILD mixes two levels of syntax by mentioning "verbs which take an object or a prepositional phrase" (154). That means that these two terms, 'object' as a clausal syntax term, and 'prepositional phrase' as a phrasal syntax term are treated equally when discussing the object – a clausal syntax topic. Furthermore, prepositional object does not exist as a term equivalent to e.g. Od or Oi; such constructions are analyzed at the level of phrasal syntax. The term prepositional object is only mentioned in the constructions with intransitive phrasal verbs[6] with prepositions, e.g. They

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[6] In this case, 'phrasal verbs' by COBUILD are what we call prepositional verbs. Moreover, phrasal, prepositional, and phrasal-prepositional verbs are all summed up under the term 'phrasal verbs'. (COBUILD 2011: 162).

<u>had dealt with</u> the problem intelligently[7]. Transitive phrasal verbs with prepositions have, by the rules of Collins COBUILD grammar, not prepositional objects, only objects of a preposition.

It is interesting to notice how far the authors are ready to go to avoid the term 'prepositional object', so they use vague expressions such as 'intransitive phrasal verbs with prepositions' etc.

e.g. 'They agreed to <u>let</u> him <u>into</u> their secret.' In this sentence, 'him' is a direct object of the verb, and 'their secret' the object of a preposition. The construction 'into their secret' is not analyzed as the prepositional object, or as an adverbial (figuratively used).

As COBUILD puts it, there is a small group of verbs which can be followed by either an object or a prepositional phrase. The verb 'fight' is one of these verbs, so that, for example, you can say 'He fought the enemy' or 'He fought against the enemy' (154). There is usually little difference in meaning between using the verb on its own and following it with a preposition. For example, there is very little difference in meaning between 'brush' and 'brush against', 'gnaw' and 'gnaw at', and 'hiss' and 'hiss at' etc.

For example: They <u>hissed the Mayor</u> at the ceremony.

Frederica <u>hissed at him</u>.

This is a great argument pro 'prepositional verb + Od' analysis, for the semantics remains unchanged, no matter of the syntactic analysis.

On the other hand, there are examples of the verbs which describe physical movement and can take an object or a PP. The prepositional phrase is the one which indicates place.

e.g. (1) He <u>wandered the hills</u> in his spare time.

(2) He <u>wandered through the streets of New York</u>.

This kind of verb as in (2) actually takes adverbials, for the verb denotes movement. Such adverbials, which typically denote segments of a path (source, trajectory, goal) have the form

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[7] In our opinion, this is a transitive verb according to the criterion of passivization: The problem had been dealt with intelligently.

of a PP; i.e. this PP has an NP as the object of the preposition *through*, but the whole unit is not a prepositional object. This may speak in favor of keeping the term prepositional object, because there is a strong parallel between (1) and (2), and (1) clearly includes an Od; we may actually try and argue that there is such a thing as a prepositionally marked Od – or an Op. However, at the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that 'through the streets' has many of the properties we normally attribute to adverbials. For exmaple, the semantic role - path/direction of movement, a verb of motion functioning as the predicator etc.

Another contra 'prep. verb + Od' argument we propose is that we can distinguish between objects of the prepositions and (direct) objects of the verbs. The object of a preposition can become a direct object if we join the preposition to the verb and call it a prepositional verb. Although prepositional verbs[8] have a meaning of their own, i.e. "by combining a verb and a preposition, we can extend the usual meaning of the verb or create a new meaning, different from any that the verb [and a preposition have on their] own" (Collins COBUILD 162), and we observe them as a single unit, the direct object which the verb takes is different from the object of a preposition, which would be analyzed as a direct object in case of 'prep. verb + Od' analysis.

E.g. The sentence 'I'm just asking (you) for information.' nicely illustrates this point. The verb/predicator 'asking' takes a direct object 'you', whereas 'information' is the object of the preposition 'for', and 'for information' a prepositional object. That is the 'verb (+ Od) + Op' analysis[9]. If we analyze 'asking for' as a prepositional verb, which takes a direct object 'information', we notice the change in semantics in the construction, for one can ask 'you' something, but not the 'information'. Syntactically, we could say the 'prep. verb + Od' analysis is possible, but semantically we perceive a change.

On the other hand, the semantics does not play such an important role, for "there is or is not a direct semantic relation between the verb and the object" (Huddleston 1984: 195). We could compare it to a situation where a verb also takes two objects - an Oi and an Od[10], where "the terms 'direct' and 'indirect' reflect the traditional idea that in an example like 'He gave Liz flowers' the flowers are more directly, immediately involved or affected than Liz

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[8] In Collins COBUILD grammar this type of multi-word verbs is called phrasal verbs which consist of a verb followed by a preposition (Collins COBUILD 162).

[9] This is the analysis we propose to prove our point. There are also other alternatives, such as 'you' as Oi, 'information' as Op, cf. the possibility of using the dative-shift transformation in I'm asking information of you.

[10] Instead of the Od and the Op as in the example given above.

inasmuch as they 'undergo' the transfer. The terms are thus based on the associated semantic roles; from a syntactic point of view both Oi and Od are complements of the verb and given the language-particular definition of Oi (…) they are both in a direct syntactic relation to the verb (phrase)" (Huddleston 1984: 200). Therefore, we could calmly say the 'prep. verb + Od' analysis is possible.

As already mentioned above, in Collins COBUILD phrasal verbs (prepositional verbs) are said to be able to take only direct objects and objects of prepositions, not mentioning prepositional objects at all. It is not clear if the author simply does not call the object of a preposition a prepositional object (whereas phrasal and clausal syntax is being mixed) or if he considers only objects of a preposition coming with intransitive phrasal (prepositional) verbs as prepositional objects. The problem is that an object of a preposition (phrasal syntax), with the preposition preceding it being included in the meaning of the structure, can function either as an adverbial or as a prepositional object. Collins COBUILD grammar does not make this point clear.

The last pro 'prep. verb + Od' argument we propose is the following test[11]: the preposition which is part of a prepositional verb cannot be put before its object in a question.

E.g. You have to say '*What* are you **getting at**?' not '**At** *what* are you **getting**?'. This means that the prepositional verb is an indivisible unit, which cannot be set apart easily, so it is logical to treat it as such.

(3) *Introduction to the Grammar of English* **by Huddleston (1984)**

Indirect object:

According to Huddleston, "the indirect object exhibits a certain range of semantic variation. It commonly indicates the addressee of some act of communication – the recipient (He told her the news.), the patient (He gave Sue an examination.), or the situation expressed by the clause

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[11] As found in the COBUILD grammar, p. 171

is the opposite of one where the Oi referent receives something (I'll save you the bother.)" (1984: 200).

As far as the question of the indirect object goes, Huddleston claims that, **from a semantic point of view**, both 'Liz' in 'Ed gave Liz the key' and 'to Liz' in 'Ed gave the key to Liz' **are indirect objects**, and they differ only in thematic meaning. Nevertheless, he introduces a new term - 'neutral PP complement', which he uses to describe constructions such as 'to Liz'. The construction 'to Liz', which comes at the end of the clause is either new information or the core of the message to be transmitted. But "whether or not ['Ed gave Liz the key' and 'Ed gave the key to Liz'] are transformationally related, it is only 'Ed gave Liz the key' that contains an indirect object" (Huddleston 1984: 197). The two have the same semantic role, but from a syntactic point of view, they are not the same. 'Liz' is seen as the Oi, and 'to Liz' as a **neutral PP complement**.

There are two reasons for distinguishing syntactically between the two kinds of complement (Oi as an NP and as a PP):

1) Resistance to fronting

The indirect object, but not the PP complement, is resistant to fronting by various movement processes:

i)   a) Ed gave Liz the key

     b) *Who(m) did Ed give the key?

     c) To whom did Ed give the key?

ii) a) He lent them books

     b) * [He kept a record of those] who(m) he lent books

     c) [He kept a record of those] to whom he lent books

iii) a) He ordered Liz a gin and tonic

     b) * Liz he ordered a gin and tonic

     c) For Liz he ordered a gin and tonic

In i) we have the fronting of the 'wh phrase' in an interrogative clause, in ii) that of the wh phrase in a 'relative' clause and in iii) thematic fronting. Fronting an indirect object is marginally acceptable, but fronting a PP complement is completely acceptable.

2) Passivisation

Unlike the Oi, the PP complement can never be made subject by passivisation, and the Oi, as all objects, can be made subject by passivisation. The failure of 'to Liz' in 'Ed gave the key to Liz' to permit such reassignment to subject function makes it like all other PP complements – compare *To Liz was run by Ed, *For Liz was worked by Ed, *On Liz was relied by Ed, and so on.

On the other hand, "the ability to be made subject by passivisation is not a necessary condition for object status in general, and hence it need not worry us that it is not a necessary condition for indirect object in particular" (Huddleston 1984: 199).

The existence of the prepositional object seems to be excluded and is not even taken into consideration if one considers the "criterion for objects in general [which says that] they may take the form of an NP but not of a PP – in 'Ed relied on Liz' (…) the PP (…) on Liz [is] not an object" (Huddleston 1984: 197).

Huddleston begins the chapter on prepositional verbs with a construction whose analysis he finds problematic:

(i) Ed relied on the minister.

The question is whether the 'on' belongs with the preceding verb or with the following NP; or whether we should analyze the clause as 'relied on' being a prepositional verb followed by an Od, or as a VP followed by the prepositional object. As already mentioned, Huddleston does not mention the prepositional object, for "PPs cannot be objects" (197). The analysis boils down to proving where semantically and syntactically the preposition 'on' belongs. But whatever the outcome of this attempt, Huddleston still introduces a new term for prepositionally marked complements of verbs, i.e. 'neutral PP complement'.

In what follows we shall summarize the main arguments (A1-A6) put forth by Huddleston (1984: 200-203) in favor of and against the 'VP + Op' analysis.

(A1) Pro prepositional verb + Od argument:

The close relation between 'rely' and 'on', such that the verb determines the choice of preposition – it could not be replaced by 'onto', 'in', 'to' or some other particle.

(A2) Con prepositional verb + Od argument / pro VP + Op:

With prepositions we find examples where the preposition follows the first complement:

i He congratulated Kim on her promotion.

ii He accused me of bias.

We shall not want to say that 'Kim' and 'her promotion' are two complements of a verb 'congratulate on': rather we will say that 'congratulate' takes two complements, one an NP, the other a PP with 'on' as a head.

We see the same thing with ditransitive verbs, which take two objects, so that we have the following structure VP + Oi + Od. Therefore, the selectional relation between 'rely' and 'on' can be handled in the lexical entry for 'rely' and does not require that they be analyzed as forming a syntactic constituent (Huddleston 1984: 201).

(A3) Pro / con prepositional verb + Od argument:

Passive clauses might at first be thought to support analysis 'prep. verb + Od': 'The minister could be relied on' – comparison with 'The minister could be trusted' suggest a paradigmatic contrast between VPs 'could be relied on' and 'could be trusted'.

However, the existence of such passives would count as a firm evidence for 'prep. verb + Od' analysis only if it could be shown that the subject of a passive clause always corresponds to an object of an active.

In the following example we see that the 'in' is not uniquely determined by the verb, but is in paradigmatic contrast with other prepositions such as 'on', 'underneath', 'beside', etc. – and 'in that bed' can provide the answer to a 'where' question: Where did she sleep?, which means that 'in that bed' forms a constituent in (ii).

i That bed had been slept in by Queen Victoria.

ii Queen Victoria had slept in that bed.

The passivization can apply in such a way as to pick out the complement in a PP (which is an adverbial), not just the object in a clause.

Huddleston concludes that neither of the arguments offered provides any real evidence in favor of the 'prep. verb + Od' analysis, and turns to the arguments supporting the 'VP + Op' analysis.

(A4) Pro 'VP + Op' argument:

The preposition together with the following NP may be moved as a unit (just like expressions whose status as a PP is not in question)

e.g. Ed relied on the minister → [the minister] on whom Ed relied[12]

   She cut it with the knife → [the knife] with which she cut it

(A5) Pro 'VP + Op' argument:

Adjuncts can be inserted between the verb and the preposition, but not between the preposition and the NP:

i Ed relied steadfastly on the minister

ii *Ed relied on steadfastly the minister

(A6) Pro 'VP + Op' argument:

The coordination as in the example: 'Ed relied on the minister and on his solicitor.' which points to 'on' + NP forming a constituent.

These last three arguments combine to provide very strong evidence for the 'VP + Op' analysis, and this is the one Huddleston adopts.

He mentions the complicating factor – an argument contra the 'VP + Op' analysis: the tightness of the lexical bond between the verb – preposition pairs, which may vary. However, he adopts the 'VP +Op' analysis for all and allows that various syntactic processes may be inhibited from applying if their effect would be to separate items over which a close lexical tie holds (1984: 203).

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[12] There is of course an alternative form of the relative clause, [the minister] who(m) Ed relied on, but this is not relevant to the issue since it is consistent with both analyses (Huddleston 1984: 202).

Huddleston also introduces two new terms for what was previously called the complement of a preposition. The first is 'oblique' object, "where by 'oblique' [he means] that the syntactic relation between the element and the verb is not a direct one, but is rather mediated by a preposition" (1984: 203). He does not recognize what we called the prepositional object (Op) and says that "there is no term in standard use for the kind of complement illustrated by 'on the minister' in 'He relied on the minister.' [and decides to] call it a **'neutral PP complement'**, with 'neutral' suggesting that there is no constant semantic role associated with it: the interpretation depends on the verb + preposition and will have to be specified in the lexical entry for the verb[13]" (1984: 203).

Also, by introducing the term neutral PP complement, we can analyze the Oi 'to Liz' in 'Ed gave the key to Liz' as a neutral PP complement which comes with a ditransitive (prepositional) verb.

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[13] A pro 'prepositional verb + Od' argument

5. Conclusion

At the end, we lay out a brief summary of the main ideas presented in our work, following the same order of the grammars handled and arguments offered as in the paper.

Firstly, we should mention an important fact, namely, that different authors attach different value to the different criteria while defining and explaining syntactic categories, causing a great mess and many inconsistencies in the field of the English language grammar, and linguistics in general. The reason for this it that when defining syntactic functions, some hold the coding properties the most decisive for assigning something into a certain category, others behavioral properties, while some take into account a range of different criteria, which is the best method, but often does not offer unambiguous solutions.

In the first part we have explained the Oi as we think it should be defined, including some solutions offered by other authors. So, we have concluded that the Oi as a syntactic function usually comes in the form of an NP, Pron. P., or a PP. The latter has been disputed and denied in (Quirk et al. 2010), (Biber et al. 1999), and (Huddleston 1984). The Op was defined in two senses, and, more importantly, at the two different syntactic levels - first as a PP which completes the meaning of the verb, and second as the complement of a preposition. Again, the latter approach was deemed as unacceptable because it describes a phrasal syntax term, while we observed the situation at the clausal level. Yet, almost every grammar studied mixed the two levels, while (COBUILD 2010) fully accepted the 'complement of a preposition' sense.

The second part included a more thorough analysis, i.e. overview of the functions in three very different grammars. Firstly in (Alexander 1989), who did not accept the Oi in PP form, but called it 'a prepositional phrase which replaces the Oi', nor offered a solution for the Op, secondly in (COBUILD 2011) which accepted the PP form of the Oi, but showed a great lack of uniformity when discussing the Op, which is again analyzed at the PS level. Lastly, we dealt with (Huddleston 1984), who introduced a new term – 'neutral PP complement'- which he used to describe the Oi in the PP form, at the same time acknowledging the particular semantics of such PPs. The Op was exposed to a thorough analysis, which should decide whether the 'VP + Op' or 'prep. verb + Od' analysis fits better the existing criteria to defining and explaining things in syntax. Huddleston gave the best

arguments in favor of the 'VP + Op' analysis, which he clearly put forward to prove his point, corroborated with nice and simple examples.

We must agree that his approach offers strong arguments pro 'VP + Op' analysis, yet we think there are some valid reasons in favor of the 'prep. verb + Od' analysis, which could offer primarily the didactic simplicity and some order in the already confusing grammatical description of English.

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