Abstract
            The author begins this paper with, "Let us
recognize as axiomatic the statement that sentences in
natural languages have the properties of structured,
organic wholes." She feels that this statement has several
important theoretical consequences, the most interesting
(in so far as the current controversy over "surfacism" is
concerned) being pattern-meaning. It follows as a corollary
of her opening statement that syntactic patterns have a
meaning of their own, a meaning that is conditioned by, but
not reducible to, the features of intercategorial
relationships of the parts. The simplex "The thought
frightened John" and its causative paraphrase "The thought
made John frightened" are both simple in their deep
structure because in each of the sentences each of the
categorial relationships occurs just once. (See AL 002
096.) These two sentences differ in configuration
properties, or pattern-meaning. The author explains the
differences in pattern-meaning and discusses the effects of
verbal clitics on pattern-meaning in Spanish. She feels
that there is "no choice but to accept the fact that
patterns have meanings, and the patterns with their
inseparable meanings do fulfill communicative purposes."
(DO)

PATTERN - MEANING

IN

SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES

Sandra Scharff Babcock
2451 Fishinger Road
Columbus, Ohio 43221
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at the July meeting of the Linguistic Society in 1969.

Let us recognize now as axiomatic the statement that sentences in natural languages have the properties of structured, organic wholes. This statement has several important theoretical consequences. The most interesting of these consequences, in so far as the current controversy over 'surfacism' is concerned, is pattern-meaning. It follows as a corollary of our most general statement above that syntactic patterns have a meaning of their own, a meaning that is conditioned by, but not reducible to, the features or intercategorial relationships of the parts. It is the nature of pattern-meaning that will be the concern of today's discussion.

I begin by restating for you the similarities between the simplex The thought frightened John and its causative paraphrase, The thought made John frightened. As I demonstrated in my 'Paraphrastic Causatives' paper last December, the case grammar interpretation of this pair of alternants is that they are simple in their deep structure. The justification for this interpretation is that in each of the sentences, each of the categorial relationships occurs just once. The noun thought bears the same Instrumental relationship to make frightened in the causative paraphrase that it bears to frighten in the simple alternant. And the noun John bears the same Locative relationship to frighten in the simple alternant that it bears to make frightened in the causative paraphrase. Exactly the same set of relational statements establishes the deep structural simplicity of John trembled with fear and its causative paraphrase, Fear made John tremble; and exactly the same statements allow me to explain in simple

and quite direct ways my conviction that it is just not <u>so</u>

that the stative passive sentence <u>The letter is written</u>

is imbedded in <u>John has the letter written</u>; and that what <u>is</u>

so is that the only in-depth difference between the two sen-

tences is that the former does not, and the latter does,

have an Agent. It is furthermore <u>so</u> that their status as

stative-resultative passives is a function of their alternant

relationship to the present perfect sentence, <u>John has written</u>

<u>the letter.</u> And from this there follow certain consequences

for the interpretation of <u>The thought made John frightened.</u>

The first of these is that resultative, or stative, or statal,

passives, as they have variously been called, distinguish

themselves sharply from other passive constructions and so-

called stative adjective constructions in that when the auxiliary

is in the present tense, the tense reference of the stative

passive participle is present perfect. And when the

auxiliary is in the past tense, the participle is in the

past perfect. <u>The letter is written</u>, then, is in effect

paraphrasable as <u>The letter is in a state of having been written</u>.

Now, having described the ways in which <u>The thought</u>

<u>frightened John</u> and <u>The thought made John frightened</u> are similar,

we must ask how they differ. The answer is that they differ

in configuration properties--that is, they differ in pattern-

meaning. We begin our pattern explorations with what we'll

call the 'Actor-Action-Goal-Transitive.' Goal-transitives

are characterized by an active subject -- that is, an Agentive

or Instrumental subject -- by the active subject's activity;
and by the affective connection of the subject's activity with
the goal or object. Thus the subject affects the object or
does something to the object. If the subject is an Agent,
the sentence may also contain an appropriate Instrumental phrase.

Regardless of whether the subject is an Agent or an
Instrument, the goal-transitive pattern predicates activity
only of the subject. In the sentence John opened the door,
John himself, with his hand on the knob, and/or his key
or lock-picker in the lock, carries out the activity
of opening. He has contact with the door throughout the activity.

There is more to be said about the goal-transitive
pattern. What this more-to-be-said concerns, is what the
sentences The thought frightened John and John opened the door
do not tell us -- their silences, if you will -- because what
they do not say is as much a part of their meaning as what
they do say. For example, what the sentence John opened the
door neither tells nor implies to us is that the door opened,
or was open, or that the Verb open, qua member of the Agentive
goal-transitive pattern, has an inchoative, or a causative, or
a stative component. All the goal-transitive sentence tells
us about is the subject's activity, not the object's.

It is a fact, and certainly not a surprising one, that
the syntax of motion reflects physical reality; or rather, it
reflects our perceptual-motor responses to reality, which,
as it turns out, are generally quite objective. I have
been convinced for a long and very lonely time that if one

penetrates far enough into the intricacies of motion patterns, which include metaphorically and universally temporal, Factitive, and change-of-state patterns -- which include, that is, most patterns --one can't help coming to the conclusion that syntactic structures are not logical, they are teleological; they are not logical, they are physiological; they are not logical, they are biological.[1] And accordingly, I am taking

[1] In my paper on Syntactic Dissimilation, currently undergoing final revision, I demonstrate the 'motion characteristics' of numerous cognate object-verbs. Of particular interest is the behavior of the verbs of the senses, which participate paradigmatically in motion sentences in which the subject is the goal of motion: I smell (the smell of)honey . Here the surface object, honey, is a Source adverb in the deep structure, reflecting the fact that we perceive the smell of something as something that emanates from the object.

the position here that the semantic features assignable to a Verb in any one of its occurrences must be limited to those that are relevant to its function in the pattern selected.

Edward Keenan, in his lucid paper on presuppositions at the Columbus semantics festival last April, defined logical presuppositions as relations between deep structures and the world, and pragmatic presuppositions as relations between utterances and their contexts. His distinction was based, I presume, on the assumption that only deep structures are relevant to semantic interpretation. But since, in fact, surface structures do have meanings of their own, I believe we must ask whether it might not well be the case that only pragmatic presuppositions are relevant to the explanation of how we become speaker-hearers of language. I am taking the pragmatic position here, with the qualification that logical presuppositions, when they are relevant to the meaning of a sentence, are also

pragmatic presuppositions. I realize I'm putting myself out on an unnecessary limb, since I'm protected by the case framework, but let me illustrate my position anyway with John opened the door.

The Verb open in John opened the door identifies the action as a whole -- an aspectually undifferentiated whole. That the activity was perfected is signaled by the past tense morpheme. But the fact that the motion has to be begun before it can be ended is not part of the meaning of the sentence. And only those aspects of the reality of motion that are communicated by the sentence are relevant to its interpretation. Motion can be perceived as a whole, or as beginning, or continuing, or ending; and we have patterns for communicating these various ways in which motion can be perceived. For example, for motion beginning we have John began to open the door.

The next point to be belabored is that the Agentive subject-relationship exists in contrast with the causal Instrument relationship. We must distinguish between the sense in which an Agent does something himself and the sense in which the Instrument causes something to happen. In short, the subject of 'cause to be' or 'cause to abstractly be' is always an Instrument.

Well, then, what about the sentence The door opened? Again the transitive sentence doesn't tell us about the door's motion, but about the subject's motion. Furthermore, The door

<u>opened</u> is not implied at all by the Agentive transitive sent: ence, but by the paraphrastic causative sentence, <u>Something caused the door to open</u>, as we will see momentarily. The only sentence implied by <u>John opened the door</u> is the passive, <u>The door was opened by John</u>.....what I'm arguing at this point, of course, is that for one sentence to be implied by another, it must exist as an alternant of that sentence -- not necessarily as a grammatical sentence, but at least as a natural one.

Next: if there were a stative proposition implicit in <u>John opened the door</u>, it could only be a resultative-stative passive. First of all, to assume a simple stative as somehow underlying activity, whether transitive or mediopassive, belies the <u>sententially communicated fact</u> that an opened door and a frightened John presuppose a having been opened door and a having been frightened John. <u>The work is done now</u> and <u>John has the work done now</u> presuppose that John has done the work, not that the work was done before John did it. Only <u>John has opened the door</u> and <u>The door has opened/ been opened</u> imply <u>The door is open now</u>. Furthermore, the simple stativity of a Verb such as <u>lie</u> in <u>The Mediterranean lies between Europe and Africa</u> can hardly be said to <u>underlie</u> the active behavior of <u>lay</u> and its alternant, <u>lie</u>. It must be recognized, once and for all, that the statement that <u>lay</u> derives from <u>lie</u> is strictly a morphological one--and a syntactically irrelevant one. What is syntactically relevant about the <u>lay/lie</u> relationship is that the two forms occur in alternation, the form <u>lay</u> being determined by the selection of an Agent and a goal-transitive object; and the form <u>lie</u> determined by the selection of an intransitive pattern. With these Verbs

as with essentially all lexical forms, the lexical shape
is determined by function in the pattern.

Now I'd like to turn our attention to the meaning of
mediopassive intransitives and their in-depth inseparability
from Instrumental phrases. Keeping in mind the tremble/
make tremble alternation illustrated under A in the handout,
let's examine the sentences in part C. The sentence Glass
breaks easily tells us that there is something about the nature
of glass that determines the truth of the predicate, that
determines the principle defined by Aristotle 'whereby only
what is burnable will burn and only what will yield in a
certain way can be broken.' The implication of Glass breaks
easily is a function of its co-occurrence potential in
Glass breaks easily because of its fragility and The fragility
of glass makes it break easily --or, makes it easy to break,....
Notice that the mediopassive subject is a constituent also in
the Instrument phrase. Such a sentence as This glass breaks
easily because John should have bought a better one is not
only nonsense, it is totally unrelated to Glass breaks easily-
presuppositions. Notice also that the Agentive sentence,
One can break glass easily , where easily modifies the subject's
activity, is not an alternant of the mediopassive intransitive
sentence, where easily modifies only the mediopassive subject.
Notice yet again that Mary woke John unwillingly is unrelated
to John woke unwillingly, but John's tendency to withdraw
caused him to wake unwillingly is related to John woke
unwillingly and is a normal sentence, at least linguistically
speaking. What all of these observations add up to is that

the relationship of <u>door</u> to <u>open</u> in <u>The door opened</u> is not
the relationship that exists in <u>John opened the door</u>.
The mediopassive intransitive, and the translative passive
exemplified by <u>John gets frightened at the thought</u> (an alternant
of <u>The thought makes John frightened</u>) are alternants of para-
phrastic causatives.

So now we are obliged to ask as always what is the
difference in meaning between mediopassive sentences and
their causative paraphrases. Paraphrastic causatives differ
from their transitive or mediopassive intransitive alternants ,
first, in the way the subject is related to the activity. In
the causative, the Instrumental subject triggers the verbal
activity, but does not perfect it. The purpose, the reason
for selecting the causative alternant is to make overt
both the active relationship of the Instrument to the activity,
and the involvement of the object in the activity. That is
to say, to make overt the fact that the activity affecting
the object does not cease with the cessation of the subject's
activity. This involvement is signaled by the positioning
of the object between the causative auxiliary and the main
Verb; that is, by placing it in logical subject position, where
the Verb phrase predicates something of the object as well as
the subject. Thus the paraphrastic causative is a more dynamic
construction than the goal-transitive; but more dynamic still
is the mediopassive intransitive. Because what we are doing

with the mediopassive construction is to predioate activity --
which is always, at least metaphorically, motion--of a par-
ticipant perceived as incapable of producing, or simply not
having produced by itself the activity identified by the
Verb. In the passive, <u>The door was opened</u>, we are not predi-
cating activity of the door, but of the in-this-instance-unnamed
Agent. <u>The door opened</u> tells us about the door's activity, not
about the Agent's. And it is crucial to note that the potential
co-occurrence of mediopassive intransitives with Instrument
phrases, but not with Agentives, is what conditions the meaning
of the pattern. Thus, the difference in apprehension of the
pattern properties of sentences and those of paintings, say,
stems from the fact that sentences are organic wholes. And
our apprehension of pattern-meaning is dependent, not only on
grasping the significance of the integration, but on grasping
what is not -- but could be -- there, which in the case of
the mediopassive is the parenthesized 'presence' --the potential
for hook-up -- with Instrumental phrases, but not Agentives.
If neither an Instrument nor an Agen. is perceived as involved
in the opening of a door, we have yet another pattern in which
to cast the Verb; namely, the simplex, <u>The door came open</u>.

Is this activity pure and simple? I think a brief
consideration of the effects of verbal clitics on pattern-
meaning in Spanish will help answer this question and reveal to
us an integrated concept of intransitive meaning.

Please look at the sentences under D and accept for the moment my claim that the verbal clitics in Spanish are not pronouns -- a claim I have demonstrated in two of the papers listed in my references -- accept my claim that the clitics are ꞏ onominal concord elements of the Verb, just as the o of canto 'I sing' is a concord element; and we can explain some of the apparent mysteries of their behavior.

Note that 1.a. under D, ¿La conoces a María? implies 1.b., Sí, nos conocemos; but sentence 2., Conozco a María, y sé que ella no haría eso, does not tell us that Mary knows me. Notice that in 3., Le rogamos al farmacéutico, que como un favor especial, nos de la medicina de fiado , the le tells us that we are counting on an affirmative response from the pharmacist; whiꞏle the same sentence without the clitic does not tell us that. The function of these by-no-means-always-optional clitics is analogous to that of positioning in .ꞏ the English paraphrastic causative -- that is, what English does positionally in make John frightened, Spanish can do by making the Verb agree in person, case, and/ or grammatical gender, with the object. This concord regis- tration on the Verb marks the object(s) as participants in the sentence event, just as verbal concord marks the subject as a participant in the activity identified by the Verb. Whether or not literal reciprocity is implied as in 1. b., depends on the meaning of the Verb and the underlyirg case categories of the participants.

Spanish also has a set of clitics for marking
analogous involvement relationships between the subject --
or topic -- and the Verb. These are the so-called reflexive
object pronoun, which are neither reflexive, nor objects,
nor pronouns. Looking at the examples under 4., we note
a three-way pattern contrast. 4.a., <u>Olvidé hacerlo</u>, can be
used to belie the meaning of <u>forget</u>. Here the infinitival
complement is in object function, which tells us "I the
subject am connected by forgetting with this object." Though
the sentence does not tell us whether the forgetting is de-
liberate -- Agentive subject -- or non-deliberate,--Locative
subject -- this is the pattern I use to communicate my respon-
sibility for forgetting. This may just be the way I am; I
forget things. In 4.b., <u>Se me olvidé hacerlo</u>, which is general-
ly and accurately translated as 'It slipped my mind to do it,'
I'm telling you it isn't my fault, and that I am the Source
from which the activity departed (taking Source here as
a separate Locative category). I am telling you that
something --circumstances -- caused what happened to me.
(Compare with English 'Mommy, my dolly broke.' In 4.c., on
the other hand, we note that the infinitive is not the object,
but a prepositional phrase, that the Verb, as in the pre-
ceding example, is intransitive, and that the intransitive
use requires <u>se</u>-concord with the subject. Here I am, by
means of accidence, verbal concord elements, prepositions, --
<u>function morphemes</u> -- disconnecting myself from the thing
forgotten and focusing on my forgetting, apart from the thing

forgotten.

Much the same comments apply to the sentences under
5, with the exception that in <u>Me perdí el libro</u>, I am the
Source from which the book departed --the one from whom it
is missing. It wasn't anyone else's fault; it wasn't deliberate;
but how could I have done such a thing? Again the focus is on
the subject's experiencing, as conditioned by its underlying
categorial --Source -- relationship to the Verb.

All <u>se</u>- sentences are intransitive. Yet <u>se</u>, like
the middle desinence in Greek, attaches to Verbs in several.
apparently unrelated constructions. Looking at the examples
under 6, where --with one exception -- both the Spanish and
the English sentences are intransitive, we note that 1. is
an intransitivized reflexive. Sentence two has an implicit
reciprocal object; Sentence three is passive; and four is
a mediopassive intransitive --which brings me to the big
question, a question we are absolutely obliged to ask:
what do reflexive, reciprocal, Agentive intransitive, passive,
and mediopassive intransitive have in common that allows for
their being undifferentiated in so far as verbal accidence is
concerned; and which allows for the sometimes massive intran--
sitivization of reflexive and reciprocal object- sentences?
The answer is that the subject in the intransitive pattern is
inactively related to the Verb. Even with Agentive Verbs of
mo tion with underlying reflexive objects, it is the case,
as Aristotle says, that 'whenever anything is self-moving,
we must distinguish between the aspect wherein it produces
the motion and the aspect wherein it receives it.' And so,

since it is a sententially communicated fact that no Agent

can move through space without moving himself, Spanish

economically and obligatorily gets rid of reflexive objects

for all animate Verbs of motion.[2]   The picture in English is

[2]E. Adelaide Hahn has claimed in several places that
in Greek the same Verb may be found now in the active with
a reflexive pronoun as object, now in the middle with no object,
with no difference in meaning. Obviously there is a difference
in meaning; that is, in pattern-meaning. The middle-intransitive
sentence focuses on the subject's activity or experiencing (if
animate), while the transitive sentence with reflexive object
focuses on the affective, goal-transitive connection of Agent
with object.

somewhat different. There are numerous Verbs -- set out and

start off among them -- that are diachronically intransitivized

reflexive-object-Verbs.[3] And there are many others like turn

[3]See Curme's chapter on Voice (Syntax) for a discussion
of the 'drift' from reflexive or reciprocal object-Verbs into
intransitives. He points out that this 'drift' is so old
that it was going on already in Old English. He points out
also that transitive-causative Verbs like lay and set; that is,
those-transitive Verbs that are morphologically derived from
intransitive forms such as lie and sit, existed in alternation
with their intransitive 'bases' in oldest English. It is
thus inaccurate to say, as some people have said, that lay
is historically derived from lie.
        Curme, more than any other traditional grammarian,
recognizes and dwells on the intimate relationship of reflexive
to intransitive, reciprocal, and passive, noting that the drift
to intransitive-cum-passive-meaning reflects the fact that it
is often almost impossible to distinguish reflexive or intran-
sitive meaning from passive meaning.

around and dress, which appear in goal-transitive patterns with

reflexive objects, and in intransitive patterns when the focus

is on the activity with no reference to an object,

        There arises at this point the question of how to

formalize the salient features of intransitive meaning.

Several approaches suggest themselves, but a consideration

of them would make this paper unallowably long. However,

no matter how we approach the explanation of pattern-

meaning, we have no choice but to accept the fact that patterns

do have meanings, and that patterns with their inseparable

meanings fulfill communicative purposes. Furthermore, since

for the Spanish patterns discussed here, not to mention the

English structures, the selection of one or another pattern

is a function of --is conditioned by -- underlying, integrated

conceptual relationships of the subject to the Verb and the

other participants, we must accept the fact that these

relationships, which I am here calling categorial, lie

rather deep in the deep structures of natural languages.[4]

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[4]In addition to pattern-meaning, we must recognize
two other consequences of the axiom that syntactic structures
have the properties of structured, organic, wholes. The
first of these is pattern fulfillment --the tendency to self-
fulfillment in structured wholes that allows small gaps to
be ignored or simply not noticed. The second consequence is
that of membership character--the principle that states,
as I have stated and illustrated in several places, that
the elements of a pattern, through a dynamic participation,
alter their formal individuality in becoming constituents of
the whole.

PATTERN-MEANING IN SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES

Sandra Scharff Babcock, 2451 Fishinger Road, Columbus, Ohio 43221

A. Summary of Derivations provided in <u>Paraphrastic Causatives</u>
   (See December, 1968 Meeting Handbook).

   1. <u>Fear made John tremble</u>

      a. <u> M </u>   <u> V </u>   <u> L </u>   <u> I </u>
         past   tremble   inside John   with fear

      b. with fear past   tremble   inside John
      c. fear   past   tremble   inside John
      d. fear   past + make tremble   inside John
      e. fear   past + make tremble   John
      f. fear   made tremble John
      g. fear made John tremble

   2. <u>John trembled with fear</u>

      a. past tremble inside John with fear
      b. inside John past tremble with fear
      c. John past tremble with fear
      d. John trembled with fear

B. Actor-Action-Goal-Transitive Pattern: X does something to
   Y (by means of Z).

   1. <u>John opened the door</u>

      a. <u> M </u>   <u> V </u>   <u> O </u>   <u> A </u>
         past   open   of the doo: by John
      b. by John   past   open ;   of the door
      c. John   past   open | of the door
      d. John   past   open ' the door
      e. John   opened   the door

C. Mediopassive intransitives as alternants of paraphrastic
   Causatives: Activity pure and simple?

   1. Glass breaks easily
      Glass breaks easily because of its fragility
      The fragility of glass makes it break easily

   2. The roof collapsed under the impact of the tree.
      The impact of the tree caused (made) the roof (to) collapse.

D. The effects of verbal clitics on Pattern-meaning in Spanish.

   1. a. <u>¿La conoces a María?</u> Have you met Mary?
      b. <u>Sí, nos conocemos.</u> Yes, we have met.
   2. <u>Conozco a María, y sé que ella no haría eso.</u> 'I know Mary,
      and I know she wouldn't do that.'

   3. <u>(Le) rogamos al farmacéutico, que como un favor especial,
      nos dé la medicina de fiado.</u> 'We will beg the pharmacist
      to give us the medicine on credit as a special favor.'

Babcock, Pattern-Meaning in Syntactic Structures

LSA, July 26, 1967

4. a. <u>Olvidé hacerlo.</u>'I forgot to do it'
   b. <u>(A mí)se me olvidó hacerlo</u> 'It was forgotten from me
      to do it.'
   c. <u>Me olvidé de hacerlo</u> 'I forgot about doing it.'

5. <u>Perdí el libro.</u> 'I lost the book.'
   <u>Se me perdió el libro</u>

   <u>Me perdí el libro.</u>

E. Further observations on intransitivity

   1. <u>Juan se sentó en un banco</u>'John sat down on a bench.'
   2. <u>Sí, nos conocemos</u> 'Yes, we've met.'
   3. <u>Este libro se caracteriza por un estilo casi machadiano</u>
      'This book is characterized by an almost Machado-like style.'
   4. <u>Se abrió la puerta</u> 'The door opened.'

F. References

   1. Babcock (1968). Paraphrastic Causatives (mimeographed).

   2. ———— (1968b) Verbal Clitics and Object Pronouns in
      Spanish (mimeographed).

   3. ———— (1969) The Syntax of Spanish Reflexive Verbs:
      The parameters of the Middle Voice (forthcoming from
      Mouton).