

Height and interpretation of the third argument in ditransitives

Languages which, unlike English, have one morphological means of encoding the third argument are similar to English in instantiating two hierarchical structures (Barss & Lasnik 1986, Larson 1988). Russian and Georgian dative ditransitives (denoting animate goals) will enable us to see that in spite of constant morphological shape, due to their licenser Appl (Wood & Marantz 2017), datives can c-command and be c-commanded by the theme in each language.

The relevant syntactic distinction for ditransitives is a distinction between locational and non-locational interpretations. Locational vs. non-location reading hinges on the presence of a transfer component, semantically encoded by the presence of the Path scale. Syntactically, the Path is selected by V, and can be realised as a PP or, in case of animate locations, as ApplP.

Syntactic manifestation of Path plays a key role in classification of datives: low datives are part of a Path denoting configuration; they are c-commanded by the theme, and encode animate locations. High datives, c-commanding the theme, are also introduced by ApplP, this time above VP; they are non-locational, and are not related to any particular type of scalar structure. Their interpretation is vague; depending on the context, they can be understood in various ways, as a possessor, bene-/male-ficiary, experiencer.