

A Comparative Study on the Verb Way Construction: English and Dutch

Mija Kim
(Kyung Hee University)

■ ABSTRACT ■

This paper is intended to describe the idiosyncratic aspects of the verb way construction in English, clarifying the productivity property of this construction and to elucidate the claim that this construction displays the properties of language-general, not a language-particular by comparing the behaviors from Dutch. And this paper will argue against the lexical approach and explain the drastic mismatches in syntax and semantics responsible for the constructional properties as one type of directional motion constructions by proposing a constructional analysis in HPSG.

Key Words

verb way construction, constructional approach, mismatches, HPSG

1. Introduction

In describing various linguistic behaviors, the notion of 'headness' has traditionally been regarded as a crucial element syntactically and semantically to identify the relationship between the elements involved in a sentence. In this process, some of attention was turned to make an attempt to cover a lot of mismatch behaviors between syntax and semantics, which were considered as intricate issues to explain them in terms of this notion. One of them was to introduce the concept of 'construction' in which the relationships between elements in a sentence are decided by the properties of a lexical head and by the constructional meaning imposed on the structural pattern that some specific elements are combined. This viewpoint has been judged to give one way to cover many mismatch behaviors between syntax and semantics. Among the issues on the construction comes 'the way construction' with which Jackendoff (1990) treated it as a constructional idiom and Goldberg (1995) proposed as an instance of a construction. The verb way construction can be illustrated as in (1).

- (1) a. Sam pushed his way out of the room.
- b. Mrs. Rae moaned her way up the stone stair.
- c. Millions of silver termites busily devoured their way through a rotten log at my feet.
- d. He had inched his way to the dark bathroom.

The elements in object position are not licensed by the verb and the verbs in (1) do not seem to be rather restricted in the sense that their transitive or intransitive uses can be allowed.

This paper is intended to investigate the idiosyncratic features of the verb way construction in English,

clarifying the productivity property of this construction and to make clearer the claim that this construction has the property of language-general, not a language-particular through carefully examining and comparing the behaviors from Dutch and German. As well, this paper will argue against the lexical approach and explain the drastic syntactic and semantic mismatches of this construction by proposing a constructional analysis within the framework of HPSG.

2. The verb way construction

The first attention on the verb way construction in English was mainly paid by Jackendoff (1990), Marantz (1992), Goldberg (1995) and Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995). As Jackendoff puts it, this construction was regarded as “a fairly outrageous example of mismatch between syntax and semantics.” Verhagen (2002, 2003), Van Egmond (2006) and Poß(2010) turned the attention to the constructions in Dutch equivalent to the verb way construction. This paper, especially in the second section, will examine the characteristics of the verb way construction in both languages and make an attempt to judge whether Dutch has the constructions comparable to the verb way construction in English. As well this paper will strongly argue that this construction should not simply be treated as one of the idiomatic phrases by exhibiting the similar syntactic and semantic patterns of the verb way constructions in especially English and Dutch, and also a bit of German.

2.1 Verb one's way construction in English

2.1.1 The inherent property as a new construction

The verb way construction in English can be found in the following sentences (BNC corpus): the verb is followed by a fixed word¹⁾ *way* modified by a possessive pronoun coindexed with the subject. The next position is occupied by the PP and it should necessarily be a directional prepositional phrase, as in (2).

- (2) a. Jenna made her way to the kitchen to fix herself a milky drink.
- b. He had inched his way to the dark bathroom.
- c. She beat her way out of the crowd.
- d. A few cars honked their way through the crowds and cyclists rang their bells.
- e. The vine clawed its way up the wall at the end.
- f. I drank my way through the whole pot.
- g. The government hopes that Japan can build its way out of the recession.
- h. We slowly sweated our way up the steep mountainside on wet, slippery grass.

The structure of these sentences can informally be represented as the following pattern in (3).

- (3) The structure of the verb way construction
 [NP_i [V [one's_i way] PP]]

It is necessary to deduce the meaning of these sentences from the sentence pattern (3) by using

1) This term is intended to reflect the fact that the expression '*way*' does not undergo the inflection even in plural as in (d)

the paraphrase and entailment relation. First, as for the paraphrase, Jackendoff (1990) provides it as in (4). From this paraphrase we guess that this construction can be interpreted as two kinds of meaning. One is that the verb takes a role of instrument in the sentence and the other is that the verb denotes another action simultaneously accompanied by the motion. Getting started from Goldberg (1995), these are called means and manner roles respectively.

- (4)
- a. Sam joked his way into the building
 - a) Sam got into the building by joking.
 - b) Sam went into the building (while) joking.
 - b. Bill belched his way out of the restaurant.
 - a) Bill went out of the restaurant belching
 - c. Bill lied his way into the meeting.
 - a) Bill went into the meeting by lying

As for the entailment relation of this construction, Goldberg (1995) explains it with following examples. This construction basically implies that the subject moves along a path designated by the prepositional phrase.

- (5)
- a. Frank dug his way out of the prison (*but he has not gone yet)
 - b. Frank found his way to New York (*but he has not gone yet)

Taking these semantic relations into consideration, we can describe the meaning of the verb way construction as follows: an individual denoted by the subject moves along the path designated by the PP by means of the action expressed by the verb. It is noted that the fixed word 'way' does not contribute to any meaning of the sentence.

2.1.2 Some prominent characteristics of the construction

As the key properties of the verb way construction in English, this paper will mention the four aspects: syntactic variation with directed motion sentences, the linguistic behaviors of the verbs, the fixed expression *one's way*, and the typical type of PP, in which we can obviously observe three mismatches between syntax and semantics.

First, as for the syntactic pattern, this construction exhibits a syntactic variation between directed motion sentences. When the English verbs take a directional phrase as one of the arguments as in (6), they form directed motion sentences which gives an interpretation of the subject's motion to the goal and in this case the argument structure and directional meaning of a sentence are determined by the construction itself, in favor of the constructional view. The verb just occupied in the syntactic verbal position functions as a means or manner for getting to the goal.

- (6)
- a. The young girl danced into the room
 - b. The young girl danced her way into the room.

Under the syntactic environment of directional motion, the verb way construction type as in (6b) can only be used instead of (6a) in order to describe the event that the individual in the subject position is confronted with certain uncomfortable situations to traverse the path. In other words, the sentence (6a) will not imply that the theme is under any difficult situations in traversing the path. The verb

way construction can informally be said to be one type of motion constructions which is involved with difficulties. Now on the notion of the difficult situations, two possible situations can be thought over. One is that the difficult situation or any obstacles can be said to be relative, not absolute. It means that the difficulties totally depend on the person. Some kinds of difficulties can be regarded as being trivial to others. The other is that even the sentences with manner interpretation taken from Goldberg (1995) can also express the difficulties (or difficult situation) in the sense that the agent regards it as being uneasy situation and (s)he can feel the necessity of accompanying other actions at the same time; for example, in order to relieve their boring work (or time) in crossing the designated goal.

The second is on the properties of the verbs realized in this syntactic pattern. The linguistic behavior of the verbs in this construction causes one of mismatches between syntax and semantics. The two complements followed by the verb and consisting of this construction are not licensed by the verb. By this behavior the verb types which can occur in this construction are allowed as both intransitive and transitive verbs. Even more, in the case of transitive verbs the true complement participating in the verb action can not typically occur in the object position. In other words, the element which syntactically happens in the object position will not semantically be the second argument of the verb.

In addition, this mismatch triggers the recoverable option of the unrealized argument. For instance, the verb *build* in (2g) is regarded as a transitive verb because it takes an agent argument in subject position.

We will further scrutinize the linguistic behavior involved in their true argument realization of transitive verbs, which is triggered by the mismatch between syntax and semantics of the verbs occurring in the verb way construction. More additional examples will be illustrated in (7) (BNC Corpus). These examples in (7) will be the crucial evidence of the claims that a transitive verb type is also allowed to occur in the verb way construction and it takes optional complement at least in this construction. The verbs in (7) are all transitive verbs and the next elements following them are not directly related to them, even though they turn up in object position of the sentence. The goal NP within directional PPs of the sentences (7a-e) would be the true semantic arguments of the verbs and the sentences (7f-g) would be that of the second PP occurred additionally and the optional complement takes a role of adjunct.

- (7)
- a. She hated having to eat her way through the ham salad and bread and butter.
 - b. Not even Julius would be able to break his way through that very solid door.
 - c. Magee pushed his way carefully through the crowd until he reached the front.
 - d. Anne Scott cut her way through wire fencing at RAF Upper Heyford in Oxfordshire.
 - e. We cut our way through shrubs and trees to get there.
 - f. She danced her way to success with a waltz.
 - g. Millions of silver termites busily devoured their way through a rotten log at my feet.

From the situations which these examples describe, we can deduce the semantic argument of the verbs in this construction: the examples in (7) will be found as '*the ham salad and bread and butter, that very solid door, the crowd, wire fencing, shrubs and trees, a waltz, a rotten log*'. These arguments actually turn up as the category of PP. This means that in this case these elements display two grammatical functions: as a true argument of the verb and as a goal in the sentence.

In addition to these argument properties of the verb, let us look at the roles of the verb itself in

this construction. As was examined at the syntactic variation above, although none of these verbs encode motion in their inherent meaning, they readily occur in directed motion sentences. According to the BNC corpus data, quite frequently or typically used verbs with the way construction were searched as '*make, think, pay, worm, elbow, munch, inch, wind, etc.*', which denote or involve motion itself. It means that this construction can also belong to one type of directional motion constructions. All verbs except them play the roles of means or manner. The evidence will be given by the semantic interpretations from Jackendoff (1990) and Goldberg (1995) above.

The third is about the properties of the fixed phrase. Syntactically the fixed pattern like 'possessive pronoun coindexed with the subject' plus 'way' should appear in the object position, irrespective of what kind of verbs happen after it. This verb way construction does not allow the possessive pronoun to be substituted by other elements like '*a*' or '*the*', whose shift triggers other constructions as in (8) (Jackendoff 1990). According to Jackendoff (1990), it is preferable that the phrase following the verb in the sentences (8b-c) form one constituent with the PP.

- (8) a. Bill belched his way out of the restaurant.
 b. Bill belched the whole way out of the restaurant.
 c. He found a way to New York.

It is arguable whether the word '*way*' in this construction semantically refers the path, which is the typical meaning of the '*way*'. It seems to be a quite plausible view that the lexical item *way* does not indicate anything at all because it is hard to deduce the meaning of 'path' from the semantic interpretation of paraphrasing above and considering the syntactic behavior that this item is modified by an adjective, which will later be mentioned in more detail. Although this fixed pattern looks rather strict, it unexpectedly takes modifiers as in (9) (8a-d: Jackendoff 1990).

- (9) a. Sam joked his insidious way into the meeting.
 b. The barrel rolled its ponderous way up the alley.
 c. Bill belched his miserable way out of the restaurant.
 d. *He belched his quick way home.
 e. Sam fought his idiotic-ass way through the crowd.
 f. John found his ideal way into the annals of history.
 g. Rory made her wooden way to the dressing-room

The adjectives like *insidious, miserable, ponderous, ideal, wooden* are allowed as the modifying expressions whereas the adjective *quick* as in (9d) makes the sentence ungrammatical. This behavior leads us to think the role of the fixed phrase over. Jackendoff (1990) gives the semantic interpretations by paraphrasing the examples (9a-b) as (10).

- (10) a. Sam insidiously got into the meeting by joking.
 b. Sam, insidious (as ever), got into the meeting by joking.
 c. The barrel went ponderously up the alley, rolling.
 d. The barrel, ponderous (as an elephant), went up the alley rolling.

Therefore, we can more precisely clarify the meaning of fixed phrase by carefully looking at the modified fixed phrase. We can easily understand that the phrases - *his insidious or miserable way*,

its ponderous way, his ideal way - do not refer to the insidious path or ponderous path, etc.. The phrase '*his insidious way*' is not assigned the meaning of 'a new path' because it sounds quite odd to say that the way is insidious or that the way has an insidious property. From all this it is highly probable that the phrase '*his insidious way*' designates the fact that the agent or what the agent is doing is insidious. From this clarified meaning, we can conclude that this fixed expression functions as a role of sentence modifier and here we can also observe another mismatch between syntax and semantics in the sense that the expression syntactically occupied in the object position semantically takes a role of sentence modifier. This semantic restriction imposed on this fixed phrase will easily be explained by the behavior that the expressions like '*his quick way*' are not allowed in this position.

In addition, we can for a moment think over another possibility in which this fixed expression can be regarded as other kind of object like a fake object. Even though the lexical item '*way*' seems to be semantically empty, it can behave like a fake object in the resultative constructions because it still takes up the object position. In order to show whether it can be a type of resultative construction, it is simply necessary to switch the fixed phrase with a reflexive object coindexed with the subject as in (11). They all sound bad or weird, in particular, semantically. Especially, the verb *make* in (110a) does not give a motion-like interpretation. It means that though the way construction syntactically looks like the fake resultatives, it cannot be a type of resultative construction (12) in the sense that the second event in the resultative construction signifies one of the possibilities on the result of the first event because it denotes that the second event is a result of the first event in a sentence. Contrary to this, the verb way construction simply implies the motion to the goal.

- (11) a. ?# Rory made herself to the dressing-room.
 b. ?#Magee pushed himself through the crowd until he reached the front.
 c. *A few cars honked themselves through the crowds.
 d. ?#Mary whistled herself through a pine forest.
 e. ?#He shouted himself through the crowd.
- (12) a. He shouted himself hoarse.
 b. He shouted his voice hoarse.

The fourth property is on PP in the last obligatory position. The prepositional phrase should show the directional interpretations. In BNC Corpus data, the prepositions with relatively high frequency were shown to be *to, through, into* rather than *out of, towards, from, along, up, past, down etc.*, This tendency probably shows that this construction would rather pragmatically describe the goal-oriented situations than other source-oriented.

2.1.3 The peculiar features of the adverbs

In the examples so far, we could identify the grammatical functions of the fixed expression in a sentence. This section it is necessary to look back over again the adverbs available in the verb way construction. Thus this paper investigated the available positions of adverbs in the verb way construction by using corpus data in order to more clearly identify the roles of a fixed phrase and as well to clarify the relationship between the adjectives followed by a fixed word *way* and the adverbs occurring within the sentence. The result showed three prominent syntactic behaviors of the adverbs in the verb way construction. First, as other construction taking prepositional phrase as the complement, the adverbs can syntactically be positioned at least in two places within a sentence²⁾: before the verb and the prepositional

phrase. Interestingly, we found in the corpus data that another lexical entry with identical meaning to the adverbs can also be realized in the position between a possessive pronoun and the expression *way* as a *way*-modifying adjective, as in (13): (BNC)

- (13) a. Yanto was full of anticipation as he carefully picked his way across one of the rock bridges.
 b. Nicandra plodded her careful way to Aunt Tossie's bedroom door.
 c. Magee pushed his way carefully through the crowd until he reached the front.

These three expressions all denote a cautious attitude of the agent when the individual in the subject position moved toward the goal designated by the prepositional phrase, because the sentences depict the process of getting to the goal by means of the verb motion. The following adverbs displaying the identical behavior to the case of (13) can be found in (14a). The following six modifiers (adverbs and adjective) share the three positions, where they can occur in the same sentence: *carefully* (careful), *cautiously* (cautious), *slowly* (slow), *steadily* (steady), *unsteadily* (unsteady), *laboriously* (laborious). The adverbs in (14b) share two positions followed by verbs as well as by PP.

- (14) a. *carefully, cautiously, slowly, steadily, unsteadily, laboriously...*
 b. *easily, gingerly, hastily, quickly, rapidly, silently, somehow, successfully, virtually...*

Secondly, the adverbs that at least more than one position is permitted are not allowed to appear in two places at the same time, as in (15). This would more firmly support the claim that the *way* expression does not convey any semantic meaning.

- (15) a. ??##Bill belched his disgusting way quickly out of the restaurant.
 b. Bill belched his way quickly out of the restaurant.
 c. Bill belched his disgusting way out of the restaurant.

Thirdly, the majority of the adverbs available at three positions displays the meaning of manner or attitude, as shown in (16).

- (16) a. adverbs before verbs
already, actually, allegedly, almost, also, always, at last, automatically, busily, carefully, cautiously, clearly, confidently, currently, easily, eventually, evidently, explicitly, finally, forever, frantically, gingerly, gradually, hastily, hurriedly, immediately, inadvertently, increasingly, incrementally, inevitably, inexorably, insistently, instead, just, kind of, laboriously, largely, later, literally, manfully, maybe, nearer, nearly, normally, occasionally, often, patiently, perversely, positively, possibly, probably, professionally, promptly, quite, quickly, rapidly, rarely, rather, really, recently, resolutely, seriously, silently, simultaneously, single-mindedly, skilfully, slowly, somehow, sometimes, subsequently, suddenly, successfully, soon, speedily, still, then, traditionally, twice, undoubtedly, universally, unsteadily, usually, virtually, wearily, yet,
- b. adverbs before PP
alone, apt, at once, blindly, blithely, briefly, carefully, cautiously, conscientiously, daintily, delicately, desperately, desultorily, determinedly, directly, dramatically, early, easily, effortlessly, embarrassingly, enthusiastically, expertly, fully, generally, gently, gingerly, happily, hastily, heavily, hungrily,

2) 'Two places within a sentence' here exclude the positions of sentence initial and final.

independently, ineptly, jovially, laboriously, lamely, lazily, leisurely, methodically, miserably, nervously, nonchalantly, placidly, purposefully, quickly, rapidly, respectfully, rhythmically, roughly, rudely, safely, silently, slowly, steadily, slightly, somehow, successfully, swiftly, tactfully, thankfully, thoughtfully, together, uncomfortably, unhurriedly, unsteadily, unceremoniously, violently, unerringly, uneasily, visually, virtually, woodenly

c. way-modifying adjectives

ambitious, careful, cautious, cold, courageous, dangerous, faltering, faultless, filthy, insidious, laborious, leisurely, noisy, perilous, remorseless, roaring, romantic, secret, sedate, self-important, shameful, slow, solitary, solemn, staggering, stately, steady, tentative, theatrical, tuneless, unsightly, unsteady, weary, weary, winged, wristy, wretched

2.2 Verb oneself a way construction in Dutch

This paper in this section will explore the way construction in Dutch and judge whether there exist equivalents to English by comparing the syntactic and semantic aspects of the verb way construction in English. In fact, it is arguable that there exists the verb way construction in Dutch equivalent to English. Verhagen (2002, 2003, 2004), Van Egmond (2006) and Poß(2010) suggest that Dutch has at least two kinds of the way construction. But it is not the issue in this paper how many the verb way constructions there are in Dutch. This paper will focus on whether Dutch has the equivalents to the verb way construction in English and what are the similarities and differences between them. In order to identify the syntactic and semantic properties of the way construction in Dutch, this paper will first investigate the construction commonly introduced by many researchers.

2.2.1 The Structure

The verb way construction in Dutch can be found in the following examples as in (17). The elements following the verb correspond to a weak reflexive³⁾ 'zich', a way with an indefinite article 'een weg' and PP. The PPs should also denote directional meaning. It is fairly conspicuous that the two phrases form the fixed expressions: 'zich + een weg'. This structure can be represented as the pattern (18).

- (17) a. *Braid virus baant zich een weg door email.* (Poß 2010)
Braid virus makes REFL a way through email.
'Braid virus makes its way through email.'
- b. *Bezoekers zoeken zich met computers een weg door het gebouw.* (Verhagen 2003)
Visitors seek REFL with computers a way through the building.
'Visitors try to find their way through the building with computers.'
- c. *Twee bussen boren zich een weg naar het hart van Istanbul.* (Poß 2010)
Two buses drill REFL a way to the heart of Istanbul.
'Two buses drill their way to the heart of Istanbul.'
- d. *We slingeren ons een weg naar de guesthouse van het Nationaal Park...*(Poß 2010)
we wind REFL a way to the guesthouse of the N. P.
'We are winding our way to the guesthouse of the National Park.'
- e. *Robot baant Zich Een Weg Door De Menigte* (ZIE.NL)
Robot pushes REFL a way through the crowd.
'Robot pushes its way through the crowd.'
- f. *Belg spaart zich een weg door de crisis* (augustus 11th, 2010 Nieuws België)

3) The reflexive pronoun in Dutch has two forms: *zich* (weak form) and *zichzelf* (strong form). The weak form tends to be no stressed, topicalized, conjoined, etc.,. Both forms are not marked for gender. They distributes differently but do not show complementary distribution.

Belgians earn REFL a way through the crisis.
'Belgians earn their way through the crisis.'

- (18) Syntactic pattern
[NP [V zich [een weg] PP]]

As for the semantic interpretation of these sentences, almost all of the researchers follow the meaning of Goldberg (1995). It means that the verb way construction is assumed to be included the meaning of 'a path' within the sentence. For instance, Verhagen (2003) gives an interpretation like this: "the subject referent creates a (possibly metaphorical) path and/or removes obstacles on it, and travels it."

2.2.2 The properties of the construction

The peculiar properties of the verb way construction in Dutch will be investigated with three aspects in this section: the verbs, the reflexive, a way, and PP.

The first is on the roles of the verb in this construction. As shown in (18), the verbs in this construction are not necessarily required for the motion verb and as well the obligatory complements following them are not predictable by the verb. Here we can also find the first mismatch between syntax and semantics in this construction. Once the verbs take a prepositional phrase as the final argument, the sentences give the motion-like interpretation in Dutch. Of course, this sentence in Dutch also implies that the theme is under any difficult situations in traversing the path.

Secondly, it is quite peculiar that the verb way construction in Dutch reveals more idiomatic-like property in the position of the second complement: unlike the English, the weak reflexive happens in the position without any inflections in number and gender. Then as the immediate element, the expression corresponding to 'a way' comes next. These two elements behave as fixed phrases in this construction because they do not undergo any inflections. These elements (two NPs) are equivalent to the 'one's way' (one NP) in English. Like that of English, this noun phrase is modified by an adjective and this modifier takes a role of sentential adjunct even though it is an adjective modifying the following noun phrase, as in (19). The adjective like *langzaam* (slowly) is not allowed in this position because it cannot occur in the position of sentential adjunct. Now we can also see the second mismatch between syntax and semantics in this construction.

- (19) a. ... *en zich een moeizame weg door een oneindige zandvlakte gebaand.*(Poß 2010)
and REFL a laborious way through an endless sandplain gebaand.
'... and made his laborious way through an endless sand plain'
b. ... *baande Merckx zich een eenzame weg door de gutsende regen.*(Poß 2010)
baande M. REFL a lonely way through the pouring rain.
'... Merckx made his lonely way through the pouring rain.'

Through this mismatch behavior we can observe the fact that the expression 'way' does not imply any semantic meaning in that it sounds odd that the way is laborious or lonely. Finally, the final element should be a prepositional phrase with the meaning of directional goal.

2.2.3 Transition to Location construction (TLC)

Previous researchers including Verhagen (2002) suggest that there are two types of the way construction in Dutch and they are called as 'transition to location construction (henceforth, TLC)' and 'the way construction. This paper in this section will, in detail, investigate the former construction type and

evaluate whether this construction can also be regarded as the type of the verb way construction equivalent to that of English. We can see the examples of TLC, as illustrated in (20) (Poß 2010).

- (20) a. *Domingo zingt zich naar de top.*
Domingo sings REFL to the top.
'Domingo sings his way to the top.'
- b. *De kankercel vreet zich door het lichaam.*
the cancer-cell eats REFL through the body.
'the cancer cell eats its way through the body.'
- c. *Marien heeft zich in twee minuten in de finale gezwommen.*
Marien has REFL in two minutes in the final swum.
'Marien swam his way into the final in two minutes'

Many researchers assume that the TLC shows similar properties to that of the way construction in syntactic and semantic aspects. Syntactically the TLC also exhibits the similar syntactic pattern except for the fixed expression "een weg" and this construction is also interpreted as 'transition to a stative location' by means of verb action. Poß (2010) points out two differences in LTC; the two events in the TLC are temporally disjoint and the action expressed by the verbs does not denote the iterative meaning. In addition to these properties, the TLC similarly shows the first mismatch behavior between syntax and semantics.

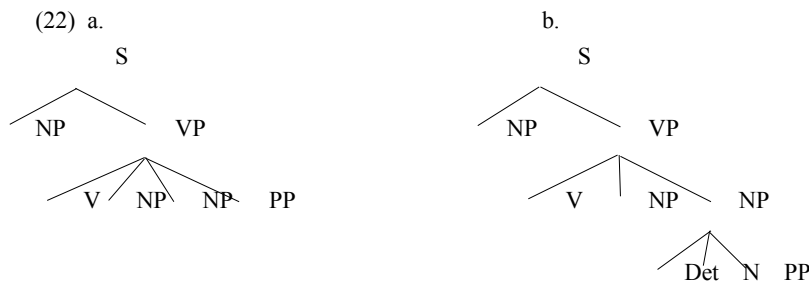
Otherwise, this paper argues against their assumption because the TLC in Dutch can also be found in other type of construction in English corresponding to that of Dutch, as in (21) (Google search).

- (21) a. The Times could cut itself out of market.
b. It is now Oct. 31st and the card has slashed itself down to 32.99!
c. Israel has dug itself into a deep hole with no exit.
d. He heaved himself out of bed.
e. She sung herself into a whole other stratosphere!
f. ...instead of innovating and turning the lumbering old ways into new innovative tech, it just sat and ate itself to death.

The syntactic pattern of these sentences consists of 'verb + oneself + directional PP', in which it looks as if the fixed phrase 'one's way' is switched into the reflexive 'oneself'. As well, the verbs in (21) can also be used in the way construction. The marked difference from the verb way construction is that the TLC implies the change of location whereas the way construction. From the viewpoint of Goldberg's construction grammar, the sentences of this structural pattern belong to the resultative constructions. Thus this paper excludes the TLC in the way construction in Dutch because the TLC needs regarding to other type of construction.

2.2.4 The syntactic structure of the verb way construction in Dutch

The majority of the previous researchers insists that the syntactic structure of the verb way construction in Dutch should be represented as in (22b). One of the reasons is that the constructions in Dutch do not generally have the ditransitive structure as in (22a). The other is that the position between 'zich' and 'een' can be inserted by the adverbs. They prefers the second structure to the first one. It means that the last element PP plays a role of an adjunct, not a complement of the main verb.



However, the structure in (22b) cannot explain the obligatory presence of PP in the position because it treats the PP as an adjunct. This structure can cause ambiguity in the position of the second NP: the PP within this NP can give locative or directional interpretation. As well this structure will not be allowed to insert an adverb between PP and a lexical head noun, even though PP in Dutch way construction is modified by an adverb.

2.2.5 The verb way construction in German

In order to understand the general structural pattern of the verb way construction, it will be helpful to inspect that of German language a little more. It is generally assumed that German also has the verb way construction and the example can be seen as in (23).

- (23) a. *Mann pinkelte sich den Weg aus Lawine.* (Ludwig 2005:11, 33)
 man peed REFL the way out.of avalanche
 'Man peed his way out of the avalanche.'

Unlike those of English and Dutch, German takes '*sich*' equivalent to 'itself (*sich*)' or 'possessive pronoun' as the element following the verb in the verb way construction. The '*sich*' undergoes the inflection in person agreement with that of the individual in subject position, unlike the '*sich*' in Dutch. Thus keeping these three structural patterns in mind, it might be proper to posit three elements following the verb as a separate element because it looks rather difficult to make a new constituent by conjoining the elements followed by the fixed word *way* into one constituent.

3. Analysis

The previous analyses on the verb way construction are classified into two main approaches, derivational or nonderivational one. This paper will focus on the latter approach whose attention turns to the lexical or constructional operation and then will argue against the lexical approach.

3.1 Lexical Approach

This approach was taken by Poß (2010) in Dutch way construction under a nonderivational approach. Her key point is that the verb way construction in Dutch is originated from a type of derivational verb lexeme derived from a strictly intransitive lexeme type. Thus in her analysis, she assumes three main points, one of which is that the verb way construction in Dutch or in English is involved with

a process of the lexical level, not of phrasal one. It means that the verb way construction will be constructed by some lexical process and that the process will be predictable from the level of the lexical item. The second is that she takes the sentence structure as in (23b), in which the PP functions as a modifier of the weg-noun rather than a VP adjunct. The last point is that the verb way construction implies the verb action occupying a stretch of time and that the durative and iterative aspectual meaning is encoded in the verb way construction.

However, this lexical approach, first of all, has a strong weakness in semantic compositionality. If the verb way construction is assumed to be originated from a strictly intransitive lexeme, it is impossible to explain the recoverable property of its real object entity. In other words, it means that this approach cannot explain one of the mismatches between syntax and semantics. Since the optional argument of a transitive verb in this construction can sometimes be recoverable in the position of the adjunct, it is said that the verbs available to this construction can be a type of intransitive or transitive verbs. Thus if it assumes that the verbs in this construction should belong to a strictly intransitive type and cannot take two arguments in the argument structure as the property of the lexical head, the element realized in the adjunct position as an optional argument cannot semantically be combined by the lexical verb.

As shown in section 2.1, one of the key properties in the verb way construction is that the unrealized argument of the verb can be turned up in other positions of the sentence as other categories. The following examples also include the ones mentioned in (7) (BNC corpus).

- (24)
- a. She hated having to eat her way through the ham salad and bread and butter.
 - b. Not even Julius would be able to break his way through that very solid door.
 - c. Magee pushed his way carefully through the crowd until he reached the front.
 - d. They finished their drinks and almost silently ate their way through the plate of sandwiches.
 - e. Two other men cut their way through the nets surrounding her.
 - f. He pushed his way through the tables to where I was sitting.
 - g. Yanto was full of anticipation as he carefully picked his way across one of the rock bridges.
 - h. She danced her way to success with a waltz.

The examples (24) exhibit that one of the verb's arguments in this construction can be instantiated inside the directional PP as in (24a-g) or an adjunct as in (24h). If we take the lexical approach and regard this verb way construction as a lexical construction derived from a strictly intransitive lexeme, this derivational construction will lose the opportunity to combine the argument.

The second point to argue against the lexical approach is that we have to be able to easily detect the relationship between the construction built by a way-verb-lexeme construction and the original lexeme type, a strictly intransitive verb lexeme. For instance, the usages of the most frequent verb in this construction, *make* in (25a) have to be predicted by the strictly intransitive verb lexeme, in which can be built as the construction in (25b). Unfortunately, it may be impossible to derive the sentence (25a) from (25b) and to detect the relationship between (25a) and (25b), as in the case of the lexical analysis of '*spray/load*' alternations. In other words, the lexical approach should basically be assumed that the two meanings for each verb are systematically related and then one lexical verb is compatible with two distinct lexical class constructions.

- (25)
- a. The others watched him cross the road and make his unsteady way down York Street
 - b. The tide is making fast.

3.2 Constructional Approach

This paper proposes the constructional approach of the verb way construction, in which it will be treated as a construction type that is not inherited from a lexeme, but formed by the elements including a fixed expression combined in a particular phrase. Thus since this verb way construction can be said to be inherited from a head-complement construction type as well as a directional motion construction type, it is a construction type with the properties of both types.

Since the verb way construction belongs to phrasal constructions and it is a predicational head-complement construction type, not a subject- predicate construction type, the mother of the phrasal construct must be a phrase and the daughters must be expression, as in (26).

(26) Predicational Head-Complement Construction

$$\text{pred-hd-comp-ctx} \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{MTR} \left[\text{SYN} \left[\text{VAL} \langle X \rangle \right] \right] \\ \text{DTRS} \langle H \rangle \oplus L : \text{nelist} \\ \text{HD-DTR H} : \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{word} \\ \text{SYN} \langle X \rangle \oplus L \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

Even though the verb way construction is a subtype of the predicational head-complement construction and its structural property is inherited from this type in (26), this construction has its own constructional restriction, which can be represented as in (27)

(27) The verb way construction \Rightarrow

$ \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{MTR} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SYN} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{CAT } \textit{verb} \\ \text{VAL} \langle [1]\text{NP} \rangle \end{array} \right] \\ \text{INDEX } s \\ \text{SEM} \left[\text{FRAMES} \left\langle \begin{array}{l} \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{path-fr} \\ \text{PATH } l \\ \text{THEME } j \\ \text{GOAL } k \\ \text{SIT } s \end{array} \right] \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{m-fr} \\ \text{MEANS/} \\ \text{MANNER } t \\ \dots \\ \text{SIT } s \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \end{array} \right] \\ \text{DTRS} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{word} \\ \text{verb} \\ \text{SYN} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{VAL} \langle [1]\text{NP}, [2]\text{NP} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{FORM} \langle x's \textit{way} \rangle \\ \text{ARG-ST} \langle [3]\text{NP}[\text{Poss}] \rangle \\ \text{X-ARG} \langle [3] \rangle \end{array} \right] \right] \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{CAT } [5]_{\textit{prep}} \\ \text{ARG-ST} \langle [6]\text{NP} \rangle \end{array} \right] \dots \\ \text{SEM} \left[\text{FRAMES} \left\langle \begin{array}{l} \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{motion-fr} \\ \text{MOTION } t \\ \dots \\ \text{SIT } s \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right] $	<p>In the case that the verb denoting motion syntactically has three elements to be saturated in a particular phrase as a noun phrase including a fixed expression <i>way</i> and a prepositional phrase specifying a certain direction, the phrase can form the verb way construction and then the verb additionally functions as manner or means in the course of getting to the direction. Because this is the</p>
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constructional restriction imposed under some phrasal environment, not a lexical level, the verb, a head element of this phrasal construction does not have a restriction on the argument structure. This will reflect that the verbs occurred in the verb way construction can belong to transitive or intransitive lexeme types. As well this will explain the situation where the optional argument of the verb realizes

as an adjunct within the construction.

4. Conclusion

Followed by the awareness of the importance on the concept 'headness', some researchers gradually turned the attention to the necessity of introducing the concept of 'construction'. The amalgam of these two concepts was expected to explain unsolved linguistic behaviors derived from a particular structural meaning driven by a particular structural pattern, in which is not licensed by a lexical head. One of the most appropriate instances introducing the necessity of the construction is the verb way construction. At first glance, it may be regarded as one of the idiomatic expressions in English, but the similar syntactic pattern appears in other languages; at least Dutch and German. These three languages share the properties of similar syntactic structure, semantic interpretation and identical fixed lexical item *way*.

Thus this paper, first, tried to examine the idiosyncratic features of the verb way construction in English, clarifying the productivity property of this construction and to elucidate the claim that this construction displays the properties of language-general, not a language-particular by comparing the linguistic behaviors from Dutch. Focused on the characteristics of these three languages, this paper argued against the lexical approach and explain the drastic mismatches in syntax and semantics responsible for the constructional properties by proposing a constructional analysis in HPSG.

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