Benefactives and malefactives: Typological perspectives and case studies (review)

John Newman

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Department of Linguistics, Stony Brook University
SBS S-217, SUNY
Stony Brook, NY 11794-4376
[jbailyn@notes.cc.sunysb.edu]

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Reviewed by John Newman, *University of Alberta*

The juxtaposition of the terms benefactive and malefactive in the title of this volume is natural since they are conceptually well paired; at the same time it is thought-provoking, as we are much more accustomed to seeing the term *benefactive* in grammars than *malefactive*. In their introductory chapter, editors Seppo Kittilä and Fernando Zúñiga provide a succinct and helpful overview of the subject matter of this most interesting volume, covering the coding of benefactives and malefactives, the semantic variability in their interpretation, and the kinds of polysemy that these meanings enter into.

In working through the introductory chapter, one could be forgiven for thinking that this volume is only about benefactives, even if it occasionally makes references to malefactives and maleficiaries. For example, the section titled 'Defining benefaction and malefaction' proposes a definition of beneficiary only, without any invitation to the reader to construct a comparable definition of maleficiary. It is left to the reader to extrapolate from the discussion of the benefactive constructions to the malefactive constructions—something that can be difficult on occasion. Section 2.1.3, 'Serial verb constructions', is introduced with the observation that such constructions are a productive means of expressing both benefaction and malefaction. But the accompanying examples all illustrate benefactive, not malefactive, constructions. The authors observe that it is the verb *give* that figures most prominently as the benefactive marking in these serial verb constructions, alongside verbs such as *replace*, *help*, and *use*. Here, one would be naturally curious to

know which verbs serve to mark the malefactive meaning in the corresponding malefactive serial verb constructions, but the reader is kept in the dark about this and would be guessing to come up with candidates. Even in their concluding section, 'Topics for further investigation', Kittilä and Zúñiga seem more interested in future research on benefaction than malefaction. While acknowledging that extensive future research is necessary for both topics, they emphasize that more investigation is required particularly into multiple ways of encoding benefaction in languages, and into differences between constructional and adpositional behaviors of benefactives.

It does appear that there is a bias toward grammaticalizing benefaction (as opposed to malefaction) in languages, and this is presumably what gives rise to the bias in the editors' introductory chapter as well as in the number of contributions to this volume that address benefaction more than malefaction. It is an interesting bias, however, that warrants more discussion than is given in the introduction. PAULA RADETZKY and TOMOKO SMITH's chapter, 'An areal and cross-linguistic study of benefactive and malefactive constructions' (97–120), includes pertinent discussion about the imbalance in the benefactive and malefactive constructions, and the imbalance in attention given by linguists to them (98–99); their discussion, to some extent, provides information that the introductory chapter could have given. Radetzky and Smith also allude to the challenge that faces typologists working with these categories: that is, the challenge that benefactives and malefactives are either underreported or reported unevenly in published grammars. Their observations strike me as extremely important in constructing any typology of benefactives and malefactives.

The core of the working definition of beneficiary offered by the editors is 'The beneficiary is a participant that is advantageously affected by an event without being its obligatory participant (either agent or primary target, i.e. patient)' (2). This means that in the case of English, all of the underlined items in *she painted the house for me*, *she baked me a cake*, and *she ate up all her food for me* count as beneficiaries, while those in *she benefited from my advice* and *my assistant helped her* do not. The editors emphasize that in the interest of crosslinguistic comparison, the definition is not intended to be so strict as to exclude discussion of other flavors of beneficiaries. And indeed, later chapters discuss instances of benefactives that would fall outside this definition. For example, the chapter by Tomoko Yamashita Smith, 'Cross-linguistic categorization of benefactives by event structure: A preliminary framework for benefactive typology' (71–96), discusses self-benefactive constructions in Papuan and Vietnamese, where the (obligatory) subject of the clause is simultaneously a beneficiary of the action, something akin to English *I get to be my own boss*. Smith further explains that in the Tibeto-Burman language Lai, a shared-benefactive construction is interpreted to mean that the agentive subject performing the action shares the benefits of the action. Smith also includes the interesting case of Japanese *kureru* benefactives, where it is the speaker of the utterance who is a kind of beneficiary rather than any overtly expressed participant in the utterance itself.

Four chapters offer crosslinguistic overviews along various dimensions. DENIS CREISSELS, in 'Benefactive applicative periphrases: A typological approach' (29–70), describes biverbal constructions consisting of a lexical verb and a valency-changing verb-operator that licenses the expression of an additional participant with the semantic role as beneficiary. Creissels appropriately comments on the imbalance between benefactive and malefactive types: he observes that no instances of applicative periphrases that expressed only malefactive meanings were found, accounting for the focus on the benefactive type in this chapter. The verb-operator in these constructions turns out to be either 'give' or a type of giving, for example, 'share', and most of the chapter is concerned with the use of 'give' in such constructions, with interesting notes on the use of 'take' and some other verbs such as 'eat'. Smith provides a crosslinguistic overview of the semantics of benefactive constructions, distinguishing two main types: an AGENTIVE BENEFACTIVE construction, in which there is always an agent and 'the agent intentionally carries out the act FOR the beneficiary' (75), vs. an EVENT BENEFACTIVE, in which an event positively affects a beneficiary. Smith goes on to explain that the event benefactive can also include cases where 'there may be an agent who intentionally performs an action for the beneficiary' (76, n. 6), which seems to make such cases indistinguishable from agentive benefactives and leaves me wondering just what

the real semantic distinction is supposed to be between her two main types of benefactive constructions. Nevertheless, the chapter is rich in data and insight, especially with respect to the subcategorization of agentive benefactives into various types (e.g. unrestricted benefaction, self-benefaction, shared-benefit).

Paula Radetzky and Tomoko Smith's chapter compares certain European and Asian languages with respect to coding of the notions of BENEFACTIVITY and MALEFACTIVITY (terms that appear to correspond to benefaction and malefaction as used elsewhere in the volume). They find that European languages tend to have underspecified 'affectedness' constructions, which, under the right circumstances, allow for either benefactive or malefactive interpretations, as in the uses of the dative case in some Indo-European languages. Asian languages, by contrast, reveal a unique pattern for each of the benefactive and malefactive constructions. The chapter by KARSTEN SCHMIDTKE-BODE, 'The role of benefactives and related notions in the typology of purpose clauses' (121–46), focuses on how benefactive functions come to be associated with purpose clauses, exploring the many and varied interdependencies among allative, benefactive, recipient, and purpose meanings. The chapter includes an especially intriguing discussion of 'negative purpose' or 'avertive' constructions (as in the English *lest* construction), arguing that they have semantic properties very different from the 'positive purpose' constructions. Of particular interest is the observation that benefactives are not sources for the emergence of avertive constructions.

The bulk of the volume is made up of thirteen case studies, most of which focus primarily or exclusively on benefactives. The authors of these chapters and the languages they discuss, given in parentheses, are as follows: KAORU KIYOSAWA and DONNA B. GERDTS (Salish, Canada), MARISA CENSABELLA (Toba, Argentina), FERNANDO ZÚÑIGA (Mapudungun, Chile), TIMOTHY COLLEMAN (English, German, French, Dutch), SEPPO KITTILÄ (Finnish), RENÉ LACROIX (Laz, Turkey), NICOLAS QUINT (Koalib, Sudan), SASCHA VÖLLMIN (Gumer, Ethiopia), RAYMOND BOYD (Chamba-Daka, Nigeria), CHRISTIAN J. RAPOLD (Tashelhiyt, Morocco), MATHIAS JENNY (Thai), JAE JUNG SONG (Korean), and EIJIRO TSUBOI (Japanese). These contributors, as specialists in each of these languages, fully contextualize the data that they deal with (without having to follow any single paradigm), and in so doing, give voice to the subtleties of the languages. All of the chapters, although not individually reviewed in detail here, are rewarding to read, with rare data from lesser-known languages and appropriately sensitive analysis by the authors.

Some chapters include a quantitative dimension to their studies, partially filling a gap alluded to by the editors in their introduction (2, n. 2). Schmidtke-Bode reports on frequencies of the functions (e.g. dative/benefactive, locative, allative) of purpose clauses from his survey of eighty languages. Kiyosawa and Gerdts's chapter, 'Benefactive and malefactive uses of Salish applicatives' (147–84), investigates frequencies of the various functions (dative, benefactive, possessor, source) of redirective suffixes based on examples from grammars and dictionaries of Salish languages. Quint, in 'Benefactive and malefactive verb extensions in the Koalib verb system' (295–316), provides interesting statistics on Koalib, from a substantial lexical database deriving in part from 'exhaustive scrutiny of more than 900 pages of texts' (298, n. 4). Koalib benefactives outnumber malefactives by more than two to one. Additionally, more benefactives than malefactives are produced from transitive verbal bases, whereas more malefactives than benefactives are produced from intransitive verbal bases. The chapter by Rapold, 'Beneficiary and other roles of the dative in Tashelhiyt' (351–76), provides an appendix on statistics relating to the frequency of datives, animacy in dative phrases, and verbs cooccurring with the dative, drawn from a corpus of 83,000 words that contains more than 4,000 datives. The inclusion of quantitative data reporting actual usage is in keeping with a more strongly empirical trend in linguistics and is a trend from which future typological studies can only benefit. Fellbaum's (2005) analysis of English benefactives using the World Wide Web as her corpus is an excellent illustration of the kind of contribution that a usage-based approach can make to theoretical discussions about benefactives.

The subject index is carefully and helpfully prepared. Alongside familiar linguistic keywords such as *dative* and *object*, the index includes the entries *give* and *take*, the only verbs to be accorded this privilege: this is appropriate given the prominence of these verbs, especially 'give' verbs, throughout the volume. The volume lacks an author index, making it difficult to identify

some influential authors and their publications alluded to in several chapters (e.g. Haspelmath 2003, Kittilä 2005, Shibatani 1996).

Overall, this volume marks a major milestone in the study of benefactives and malefactives, not just on account of the quantity of crosslinguistic data and the inclusion of data from less familiar languages, but above all on account of the finely nuanced discussion of the phenomena by the contributors.

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Department of Linguistics
4-32 Assiniboia Hall
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2E7
[john.newman@ualberta.ca]