DEMARCATING EMAI DATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

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1. Introduction

This paper investigates the formal and functional character of a dative relation and two additional structural relations in Emai, an Edoid language of West Benue Congo stock (Bendor-Samuel 1989, Williamson and Blench 2000). Each relation is grammatically expressed by a common morphophoneme. Postverbal particle li/ni marks Emai dative constituents. In addition, li/ni codes a limited range of subordinate clause types within complex sentences, and within noun phrases it designates a subset of modifying constituents. To bridge the common formal marking across these structural relations, we postulate their identification of a semantic ground type (within a figure-ground complex) characterized by spatial collectivity and temporal continuity. Our overall conclusion thus pertains to the function of perspective taking in grammar and its formal marking (Talmy 2000), with special emphasis placed on the dative relation.

Emai is a relatively strict SVO language. It employs grammatical tone across clauses characterized by verb serialization, verb plus postverbal particle or a combination of the two. Since prepositions and inflectional morphology are rare in Emai, it exhibits no passivization and minimal diathesis alternation of verb arguments.

2. Grammatical marking by li/ni

Emai utilizes the morphophoneme li/ni to signal a range of structural relations. Among these is the dative. Additional relations grammatically expressed by li/ni are clause

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1 Orthographic conventions for Emai are consistent with those in Schaefer and Egbohare (2007), where $\sigma$ represents a lax mid back vowel, $\epsilon$ a lax mid front vowel, and $vb$ a voiced bilabial approximant. High tone is marked by an acute accent, low tone by a grave accent, and high downstep by an acute accent followed by an apostrophe.
subordination and nominal modification. Although dative is our principal focus, we consider subordination and modification in order to investigate whether these relations have a common semantic character.

Emai marks a dative relation with a postverbal applicative (APP) particle \textit{li/ni} that takes a [+human] noun phrase complement (e.g. \textit{émè}).

\begin{equation}
\text{òjè ré éghó’ ní émè.}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation*}
\overset{\text{Oje take money APP me}}{\text{‘Oje gave money to me.’}}
\end{equation*}

This particle has no synchronic verb as a counterpart, as is evident in the Emai lexical entries of Schaefer and Egbokhare (2007) and as revealed by analysis of Emai double object verbs (Schaefer and Egbokhare 2003a), which tend to encode events of forceful, physical contact, and of alignment relations (Schaefer and Egbokhare 2010b), where zero coding of ditransitive theme and monotransitive patient align relative to \textit{li/ni} marking of recipient.

The Emai applicative particle is registered orthographically as either \textit{li} or \textit{ni}.\textsuperscript{2} The form \textit{li} occurs when the dative complement, invariably [+human], is a lexical noun.

\begin{equation}
\text{ólì òkpösò shén ólí émà li álëkè.}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation*}
\overset{\text{the woman sell the yam APP Aleke}}{\text{‘The woman sold the yam to Aleke.’}}
\end{equation*}

The \textit{ni} form appears when the dative complement assumes a pronominal shape (3a) or when the complement occurs in clause-initial focus position, for example (3b).

\begin{equation}
a. \text{ólì òkpösò shén ólí émà ní ãìn.}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation*}
\overset{\text{the woman sell the yam APP her}}{\text{‘The woman sold the yam to her.’}}
\end{equation*}

\begin{equation}
b. \text{álëkè li ólí òkpösò shén’ ólí émà ní.}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation*}
\overset{\text{Aleke PF the woman sell the yam APP}}{\text{‘It was Aleke that the woman sold the yam to.’}}
\end{equation*}

\textsuperscript{2} Abbreviations used throughout this paper include the following: APP=applicative, ASS=associative, C=continuous, CL=change of location, CON=conative, CS=change of state, DS=distributive, F=factative, H=habitual, HOR=hortative, IND=indicative, LOC=locative, NEG=negative, PF=positive focus, PRED=predictive, PRT=particle, PUR=purpose, R=relator, RES=resultative, SC=subject concord, SEQ=sequential, SUB=subsequent, SUBJ=subjunctive.
Applicative \textit{li/ni} governs a class of pronouns, exemplified by second person \textit{alá} (4a), that are distinct from direct object pronouns (4b-c) and, for that matter, deictic locative pronouns (4d).

(4) a. \textit{ólì òkpòsò shén ólí émà ní á.}
\hspace{1cm} the woman sell the yam APP you
\hspace{1cm} ‘The woman sold the yam to you.’

b. \textit{ólì igbómògbómó shén’ é.}
\hspace{1cm} the kidnapper sell you
\hspace{1cm} ‘The kidnapper sold you.’

c. *\textit{ólì òkpòsò shén ólí émà ní é.}
\hspace{1cm} the woman sell the yam APP you
\hspace{1cm} ‘The woman sold the yam to you.’

d. *\textit{ólì òkpòsò shén ólí émà ní èvbò.}
\hspace{1cm} the woman sell the yam APP there
\hspace{1cm} ‘The woman sold the yam to that place yonder.’

A comprehensive listing of indirect object and direct object pronominal forms by person and number is arranged below. A formal distinction among these forms is particularly evident in second and third person singular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indirect Object Pronouns</th>
<th>Direct Object Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1p</td>
<td>́émè</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2p</td>
<td>á</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3p</td>
<td>́áìn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Emai \textit{li/ni} form is a member of a closed class of postverbal particles prototypically conveying event change: change of state (CS) \textit{a} (5a), change of location (CL) \textit{é} (5b) and change of possession \textit{li/ni} (5c). In event change constructions, the tone of the postverbal

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize
3 Emai’s deictic locative pronouns include ̀ààn ‘right here,’ ̀áàìn ‘right there,’ ̀èàn ‘over here,’ ̀éàìn ‘over there,’ and ̀èvbò̀ ‘there yonder.’
\end{footnotesize}
particle as well as the tone of the verb vary according to clause level polarity, mood and
aspect (Schaefer & Egbokhare 1999b).

(5) a. ólí óvbèkhàn gbé ólí ákhè á.
    the youth break the pot CS
    ‘The youth broke the pot.’

    b. ólí ókpòsò kú évbì ò vbí émàè.
    the woman pour palm.oil CL LOC food
    ‘The woman poured palm oil onto the food.’

    c. ólí ókpòsò háé ósà li ólí ònwìmè.
    the woman pay debt APP the farmer
    ‘The woman paid a debt to the farmer.’

Change of state and change of location particles each combine with applicative li/ni.

(6) a. àlèkè ò ó fòò ólí ómí á lì ólí ómò.
    Aleke SC C cool the soup CS APP the child
    ‘Aleke is cooling down the soup for the child.’

    b. òjè ré óbò ó vbí ébè li àlèkè.
    Oje take finger CL LOC paper APP Aleke
    ‘Oje signed / put his mark on the paper for Aleke.’

There are constructions in Emai other than those marked by li/ni that require a [+human]
noun phrase. Among these are allative (ólí ònwìmè 7a), source (ólí ókpòsò 7b), replacive (ólí ómòhè 7c) and comitative (òjé 7d). Some have English translation equivalents marked by ‘to’
or ‘for,’ but others translate as ‘with’ or ‘from.’ However, none of these noun phrase positions
accepts an indirect object pronoun.

(7) a. ólí ómòhè róó ùhài yé ólí ònwìmè.
    the man pick.out arrow move.to the farmer
    ‘The man took an arrow to the farmer.’

    b. ólí ómòhè dé’ émá vbí óbò isi ólí ókpòsò.
    the man buy yam LOC hand ASS the woman
    ‘The man bought yam from the woman.’
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c. ôlì ọmòhè kpàyè àlèkè gbè ôlì ọfè.
the man replace Aleke kill the rat
‘Instead of Aleke, the man killed the rat.’

d. ôlì ọmòhè ò ó kpàyè ójé dán.
the man SC C accompany Oje wrestle
‘The man is wrestling with Oje.’

Additional structural relations are designated by the form li/ni. It signals rhetorical questions in discourse, subordinate clauses relative to main clauses in complex sentences, and modifying constituents relative to head units within noun phrases. Regarding discourse, li/ni is one element of a grammatical complex signaling purposive rhetorical interrogatives. Purposive (PUR) li/ni occurs in construction with the question word émé’ ‘what’ (8a). Since no responses are expected for such questions, they are tightly integrated into discourse context. They contrast with information questions (8b), which incorporate an explicit ‘cause’ verb (ze) and indicative (khi) marked sentence complement.

(8) a. émé’ ójé dúé’ ábò li àlèkè ní?
what Oje rub hands APP Aleke PUR
‘What did Oje plead with Aleke for?’

b. émé’ ó zé-i’ khi ójé dúé’ ábò li àlèkè?
what it cause-F IND Oje rub hands APP Aleke
‘Why did Oje plead with Aleke?’

Li/ni also designates adjunct clauses of purpose and result. Compared to other adjunct clauses, purpose and result constrain subject reference as well as mood. Both require a pronoun in subject position that is coreferential with either main clause subject or direct object. Their subject pronoun must also exhibit right edge high tone; low tone is ungrammatical. Neither clause allows perfect or imperfect aspect. Relative to their accompanying main clause, purpose and result clauses reveal a high degree of both spatial collectivity through participant coreference and temporal continuity through an obligatory irrealis condition. Purpose clauses, for example, require subjunctive marking with conative (CON) preverb óó (9a) or hortative (HOR) auxillary i (9b).

(9) a. ójè khú ôlì àwà li ó i óó è ôlì éànmì.
Oje chase the dog PUR it NEG CON eat the food
‘Oje chased the dog in order that it not go to eat the food.’
b. òjè gbé ólí óókhò li ó i kpè mié éànmì è.
Oje kill the chicken PUR he HOR SUB find meat eat
‘Oje killed the chicken in order to find meat to eat.’

Result clauses with li/ni require concessive (CONC) auxiliary re (10a). They manifest a temporally durative character (evidenced by ‘until’ in translation) in contrast to the punctual, discrete nature of events in a corresponding serial verb construction, contrast (10a) with (10b).

(10) a. òjè gbé àlèkè li ó rè ú.
Oje beat Aleke RES she CONC die
‘Oje beat Aleke until she died. / *Oje killed Aleke.’

b. òjè gbé àlèkè ú.
Oje beat Aleke die
‘Oje beat Aleke and she died.’

An additional subordinate clause type designated by li/ni serves as a sentence (S) complement. In contrast to khi marked S-complements with indicative (IND) mood (11a), li/ni S-complements require subjunctive (SUBJ) mood (Schaefer & Egbokhare 2007). With obligatory right edge high tone on the grammatical subject (élí ívbékhán ‘the children’) and low tone on the initial verb phrase element (è ‘eat’), li/ni-marked subjunctive complements exhibit temporal continuity relative to their main clause (11b).

(11) a. àlèkè één-í khi élí ívbèkhàn è ólí émàè.
Aleke know-F IND the youths eat the food
‘Aleke knew that the youths have eaten the food.’

b. àlèkè ó ó hòò lí élí ívbèkhàn è ólí émàè.
Aleke SC C want SUBJ the youths eat the food
‘Aleke wants the youths to eat the food.’

Structural relations marked by li/ni also occur within noun phrases. As a relator (R) particle positioned after a head constituent, li/ni complements establish a spatial and temporal continuum bound to the head noun. Li/ni links a relative clause (ó gbé ólí éwè) to its head noun (óvbékhán) in (12a) or an attributive phrase (ébin') to its head noun (éwè) in (12b).

(12) a. òjè záwó ólí óvbékhàn li ó gbé’ ólí éwè.
Oje see the youth R he kill the goat
‘Oje saw the youth who killed the goat.’
b. élí éwè li élín’
the goats R dark
‘the dark goats’

With numeral complements, li/ni distinguishes collective from distributive expressions. It establishes a collective interpretation, bringing the whole of a quantity into perspective, compared to the distributive interpretation of bare (unmarked by li/ni) numeral complements. In addition, a collective li/ni expression induces high tone spread on its head noun (ímóhè) and relies on English translation with ‘group of, collection of,’ whereas a head noun followed by a numeral unmarked by li/ni receives lexical tone (ímóhè) and a non-collective, distributive translation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imóhè</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>‘Group of’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Li évá</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>‘Group of two men’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li ógbàn</td>
<td>Thirty</td>
<td>‘Group of thirty men’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li éélé</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>‘Group of four men’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Li/ni marks not only collective numeral complements in noun phrases. It links head nouns to durative temporal complements. Relative to day-unit nominals, li/ni only accepts òdè ‘yesterday’ (13a). Corresponding expressions with éènà ‘today’ and ákhò ‘tomorrow’ are ungrammatical (13b).4

(13) a. ópiá li òdè
cutlass R yesterday
‘yesterday’s cutlass / the cutlass from yesterday’

b. *ópiá li éènà / ákhò
cutlass R today tomorrow
‘today’s cutlass / tomorrow’s cutlass’

Complements defined by òdè do not attribute a physical property to a head noun; rather, they provide a temporal vantage point from which to identify the head noun referent. The

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4 Collective phrases with their wholistic character are distinct from possession phrases. Emai possession is typically marked by the associative (ASS) particle ísì, where possessum precedes possessor (Schaefer 1999), e.g. ãwá ísì òjè [dog ASS Oje] ‘dog of Oje’.
more durative, fixed temporal frame provided by ôdé ‘yesterday,’ compared to éènà ‘today’ and ãkhò ‘tomorrow,’ establishes the necessary temporal continuity of part and whole that parallels the spatial co-location of collective numeral expressions with li/ni. Indeed, temporal continuity and spatial collectivity of a subordinate or modifying structural part relative to a complex sentence or noun phrase whole define common elements of a particular type of ground perspective. These elements are fundamental to li/ni marking; they allow a common vantage point from which to view a main clause or a head noun, and, as we will see shortly, a subject-verb-direct-object or a subject-verb predication.

3. Theoretical background for dative

“Dative” has received typological attention from various sources. Palmer (1994) advances it as a grammatical relation more neutral than “indirect object,” thus making it equally applicable to noun phrases in accusative and ergative systems. Palmer’s dative relation is prototypically linked to either of the semantic roles recipient or beneficiary. Most often, these roles are limited to noun phrases headed by human nouns. In addition, Palmer also acknowledges dative marking of event participants “indirectly affected” or “less fully affected” by an action.

Dative receives further characterization in Blake (2001:143). It is the primary “noncore” case in his review of grammatical case systems and their semantic roles. His list of grammatical relations for dative reveals its frequent link to indirect object:

- Indirect object of three-place verbs (e.g. give)
- Indirect object of two-place verbs with low transitivity (e.g. like)
- Indirect object of detransitivized constructions (antipassives)
- Indirect subject of certain verbs in certain aspects
- Direct object in certain tense/aspects

Blake’s list of semantic roles for dative-marked noun phrases (shown below) agrees in large measure with Palmer. “Beneficiary” is recognized by both. Blake’s “destination” seems akin to but broader than Palmer’s “recipient”; “possessor” appears to be an addition.

- Beneficiary (on behalf of) or purpose
- Destination (as opposed to allative)
- Possessor

Lists of this sort certainly have utility for heuristic purposes and for the identification of crosslinguistic possibilities. Even at a very general level, however, they provide little insight into possible combinations of grammatical relations and semantic roles that can arise through common grammatical articulation in individual linguistic systems. Within a single language
for instance, do each of the grammatical relations indirect object and direct object realize each of the semantic roles beneficiary and destination? Alternatively, does the indirect object relation accept the roles beneficiary, destination and possessor? Does grammatical relation in any way constrain appearance of these roles?

As an initial step toward addressing questions of this nature, consider the languages of West Africa, where the coding of dative is non-uniform for ‘give’ type events. The dative notion and its prototypic recipient semantic role are coded as direct object, object of a verb in a series, or as first verb in a double object construction. Emai’s neighbor to the west, Yoruba, articulates ‘give’ type expressions with either a verb plus particle construction or a serial verb construction (Atoyebi, Haspelmath, and Malchukov 2010; Lord 1993). As sole verb of a ‘give’ predication (14a), the form fun takes a direct object expressing recipient in construction with particle ni taking a nominal conveying a theme role. Fun also occurs as a coverb in series with a range of verbs, e.g. ta ‘sell,’ and marks recipient (14b) in addition to beneficiary and addressee.

(14) a. bólá fun adé ni ìwé.
   Bola give Ade PRT book
   ‘Bola gave Ade a book.’

b. wón ta ókó náà fun àdé.
   they sell farm the give Ade
   ‘They sold the farm to Ade.’

Emai’s neighbor to the east, Igbo, expresses ‘give’ type expressions exclusively in a double object construction with the first object realizing recipient and the second object theme (Uwalaka 1988).

(15) a. àdha nyè-rè ucè egho.
   Adha give-past Uce money
   ‘Adha gave Uce money.’

b. ùghò kuzii-ri ojìi oru.
   Ugho teach-past Ojìi trade
   ‘Ugho taught Ojìi a trade.’

Into this complex of coding strategies, we bring Emai. We analyze the range of semantic roles associated with dative-marked nominals. Our data emanate from on-going documentation incorporating oral narrative texts (Schaefer & Egbokhare 1999) as well as dictionary (Schaefer & Egbokhare 2007) and grammar description (Schaefer & Egbokhare nd).
3.1 Analysis of Dative. Emai’s li/ni particle frames a dative grammatical relation. Li/ni combines with verbs of object manipulation such as ze ‘scoop,’ roo ‘pick out’ and vo ‘fetch’ to convey possession transfer of a direct object referent from one participant to another (Schaefer 2000). In these constructions, translated with English ‘give,’ li/ni marks the transfer to event recipient.

(16) a. ólì òkpòsò zé émàè li ólì ònwìmè.
    the woman scoop food APP the farmer
    ‘The woman gave food to / scooped food for the farmer.’

b. ólì òkpòsò róó ólì ònwìmè.
    the woman pick.out the arrow APP the farmer
    ‘The man gave the arrow to / picked out the arrow for the farmer.’

c. ólì omòhè vó óràn li ólì ókpósòdiòn.
    the man fetch wood APP the old.woman
    ‘The man gave wood to / fetched wood for the old woman.’

It is important to recognize that these verbs do not convey a ‘give’ relation without li. They convey simple object manipulation for events of scooping, picking out, or fetching.

(17) a. ólì òkpòsò zé émàè.
    the woman scoop food
    ‘The woman scooped food.’

b. ólì òkpòsò róó ú hàì.
    the woman pick.out arrow
    ‘The man picked out an arrow.’

c. ólì omòhè vó óràn.
    the man fetch wood
    ‘The man fetched wood.’

Dative marking is not limited to expressions of possession change involving recipients. Datives occur where no grammatically expressed referent transfers from one participant to

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5 To reiterate a point made earlier, the form li/ni has no verbal counterpart meaning ‘give’ in transitive constructions (e.g. *óli òkpòsò li émàè ‘The woman gave food’) or as a verb in a double object construction (e.g. óli òkpòsò li ójé émàè ‘The woman gave Oje food’).
another. In these constructions li/ni marks semantic beneficiary: one who benefits from event occurrence.

(18) a. ólì óvbèkhàn fi àgbò lí ólì òkpòsò.
the youth blow flute APP the woman
‘The youth blew a flute for the woman.’

b. élí ivbèkhàn ọ ọ gbè ábó lí ọjè.
the youths SC C hit hands APP Oje
‘The youths are clapping their hands for Oje.’

c. ólì óvbèkhàn ráá ọtòi ní émè.
the youth smoothen ground APP me
‘The youth smoothened the ground for me.’

Transitive verbs conveying entity transfer to a human participant do not uniformly accept li/ni. Verbs like fi ‘throw’ and bume ‘fling,’ that convey ballistic change of position rather than change of possession, do not admit li/ni. Instead, they require an allative construction, noted above in (7a) and shown as (19b, 19d), where verb in series ye marks a human noun as recipient of a re-positioned object.6

the man throw stick APP Ohi
‘The man threw a stick to Ohi.’

b. ólì ómòhè fi úkpóràn yé ọhí.
the man throw stick move.to Ohi
‘The man threw a stick to Ohi.’

c. *ólì ómòhè búmé àgá lí ọhí.
the man fling chair APP Ohi
‘The man flung a chair to Ohi.’

d. ólì ómòhè búmé àgá yé ọhí.
the man fling chair move.to Ohi
‘The man flung a chair to Ohi.’

6 Allative constructions appear to utilize the change of location verb ye ‘move toward’ (ólì ómòhè yé ọwé ‘The man moved toward the house’), which has similar phonological shape and a related semantic sense.
Dative and allative constructions where *li/ni* and *ye* stand in minimal contrast reveal some of their distinguishing properties vis-à-vis object transfer. Important among these is durativity. *li/ni* assumes a permanent object transfer (i.e. possession change) compared to *ye*’s more temporary object transfer (i.e. location or position change). This distinction, evident in contrasting constructions employing the same main clause verb (e.g. *nwu* ‘take hold of’), is reflected in their respective English translations: ‘give’ for *li/ni* and ‘take’ for *ye*.

(20)  
\[\text{a. } òlì òkpòsò nwù èmà li òlì ènwìmè.}\]  
the woman take.hold yam APP the farmer  
‘The woman gave yam to the farmer.’

\[\text{b. } òlì òkpòsò nwù èmà yé òlì ènwìmè.}\]  
the woman take.hold yam move.to the farmer  
‘The woman took yam to the farmer.’

Dative and allative constructions exhibit contrasting implications with respect to the co-location of participants. (20a) implies (21a) (the farmer to whom the yam is given and the woman subject exist in a relation of physical co-location) not (21b), whereas (20b) implies not (21a) but (21b), the farmer to whom the yam is taken and the woman exist in a relation of dislocation.

(21)  
\[\text{a. } òlì ènwìmè rìì vbí áàìn.}\]  
the farmer be LOC right.there  
‘The farmer is right there.’

\[\text{b. } òlì ènwìmè í è vbí áàìn.}\]  
the farmer SC NEG be LOC right.there  
‘The farmer is not right there.’

Dative relations expressed by Emai’s applicative *li/ni* particle are not limited to transitive verbs. They are found with intransitive verbs as well. The resulting constructions tend to manifest readings where *li/ni* marks a beneficiary (22b-g), although recipient also seems to occur. While spatial collectivity of participants and temporal continuity of event elements are not physically required for beneficiary readings, they are conceptually evident. At times, it is difficult to distinguish between beneficiary and recipient, especially when one begins to construe grammatically unexpressed elements as transferring from one participant to another (i.e., entities brought about through *érómọ* ‘prayers’ in (22g) where the verb is *sẹ* ‘be sufficient’). With a recipient reading, (22a) implies that a possession relation will exist at some future time between subject and dative participants, the subject as possessum and dative as possessor, i.e. *òká isi èmè* [maize ASS mine] ‘maize of mine.’ With a benefactive reading,
(22a) implies that, between these same participants, a relation presently exists that will benefit the dative marked participant.

(22)  

a. ólì ókà sè ní èmè.  
the maize be.sufficient APP me  
‘The maize is sufficient for me.’

b. òhí bíá’ lí ólì òkpòsò.  
Ohi work APP the woman  
‘Ohi worked for the woman.’

c. ólì óbò bó ní èmè.  
the seer divine APP me  
‘The seer divined for me.’

d. yàn á sié lí òjè.  
they C play APP Oje  
‘They are playing for Oje. / They are entertaining Oje.’

e. ólì òkpòsò déé rè lí ólì ómò.  
the woman lower arrive APP the child  
‘The woman bent down for the child.’

f. yàn rúó’ lí égbè.  
they boast APP each.other  
‘They boasted for each other (to do it).’

g. érómó isi ójè èrèmè sè’ ní àin.  
prayers ASS Oje all be.sufficient APP him  
‘All Oje’s prayers came true for him / were answered.’

3.2. Some Complexities of Possessional Functions. While dative li/ni designates recipients and characterizes possession change, it sometimes does so for verbs that inherently appear incompatible with recipient. An inversion with respect to the linking of grammatical relations and semantic roles, for instance, affects the verb momo. In simple transitive structures it has the sense of ‘borrow.’
(23) ólí ómòhè mómó ólí imátò.
the man borrow the car
‘The man borrowed the car.’

Maintaining this meaning, momo accepts vbí óbò designating the source or pre-event possessor (ólí ónwìmè), while direct object conveys possessum (úvbíágháé). Subject expresses a temporary recipient or post-event possessor (ólí ómòhè).

(24) ólí ómòhè mómó úvbíágháé vbí óbò ísì ólí ónwìmè.
the man borrow knife LOC hand ASS the farmer
‘The man has borrowed a knife from the farmer.’

When momo and li/ni frame a construction, the sense is ‘lend/loan to’ (25), the converse of ‘borrow.’ The dative complement of li/ni designates recipient or post-event possessor (òjè), subject the source or pre-event possessor (ólí ónwìmè), and direct object the possessum (éghó’).

(25) ólí ónwìmè mómó éghó’ li òjè.
the farmer lend money APP Oje
‘The farmer lent money to Oje / loaned money to Oje.’

Sense change or semantic inversion of this type is not generally true of transfer verbs or verbs of financial transaction.7 The verb dé ‘buy,’ without a change in sense, marks source with vbí óbò ‘from’ and recipient with li/ni ‘to.’

(26) a. ólí ómòhè dé’ émá vbí óbò ísì ólí ónwìmè.
the man buy yam LOC hand ASS the farmer
‘The man bought yam from the farmer.’

b. ólí ómòhè dé émà li ólí ónwìmè.
the man buy yam APP the farmer
‘The man bought yam for the farmer.’

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7 Among postverbal particles, it is not only li/ni that induces sense change in the verb. A similar semantic effect is engendered by the change of state particle a. The verb khuye in simple transitive structures conveys the sense ‘close’ (ólí ómòhè khúyé iwíndò ‘The man closed the window’). In construction with the change of state particle a, khuye expresses the sense ‘open’ (ólí ómòhè khúyé iwíndò à ‘He opened up a window’).
Another issue of semantic interpretation bearing on possession and affecting dative constructions occurs with verbs of tying and itching. Uniformly, these verbs mark beneficiary with \textit{li/ni} (27a-b).

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{ólí ómòhè} \textit{zè} \textit{étò} \textit{li} \textit{inyò} \textit{óì}.
the man shave hair APP mother his
\end{enumerate}

‘The man shaved his hair (in observance of) for his mother.’

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{ólì òkpòsò} \textit{gbá} \textit{ògbèlè} \textit{li} \textit{òjè}.
the woman tie baby.sash APP Oje
\end{enumerate}

‘The woman tied on her baby sash for Oje (tied the sash on herself).’

They also maintain a possession relation that existed prior to event onset. This lack of possession change leads to a beneficiary rather than recipient interpretation. For recipient readings, a direct object possessum and a \textit{li/ni} possessor are disjoint prior to an event but adjoined after the event. For beneficiary readings, an adjoined relation between subject possessor and direct object possessum exists both before and after the event. Let’s call this the prototypical beneficiary reading.

Emai also exhibits non-prototypical beneficiary readings. Relevant constructions show a possession relation holding between direct object possessum and \textit{li/ni} possessor throughout an event. Each example in (28) assumes and maintains a possession relation between direct object possessum and \textit{li/ni} possessor. The \textit{li/ni} complement serves as beneficiary, with no change of possession taking place. Significantly, the possessum in these constructions is a body-part or body-part related term, although, as (27a) above indicates, body-part terms alone are not sufficient to induce the non-prototypical beneficiary reading.

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{ólí óvbèkhàn} \textit{tóló} \textit{àwè} \textit{li} \textit{àlèkè}.
the youth itch feet APP Aleke
\end{enumerate}

‘The youth itched the feet of Aleke / itched Aleke’s feet for her.’

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{òhí} \textit{ã} \textit{ò} \textit{zòò} \textit{írú} \textit{li} \textit{àlèkè}.
Ohi SC C pick.out lice APP Aleke
\end{enumerate}

‘Ohi is picking lice from Aleke / picking out Aleke’s lice.’

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{ólì òkpòsò} \textit{gbáló} \textit{úhùnmì} \textit{li} \textit{àlèkè}.
the woman tie.DS head APP Aleke
\end{enumerate}

‘The woman wrapped Aleke’s head for her / wrapped the head of Aleke.’

Returning to recipient readings for the moment, we find only one type of possession relation. The prototypical recipient reading is defined by a direct object possessum linked to a
pre-event subject possessor but a post-event dative possessor. There do not appear to be any *li/ni* marked recipient constructions defined by a direct object possessum linked to pre-event dative possessor and to a post-event subject possessor. Linkage works in only one direction for recipients but not for beneficiaries.

Consider now the following verbs and their possession relations. Dative complements interact with transitivity values for a limited number of verbs to reveal a distinctive grammatical pattern. The verb *kuee* ‘present’, in its ritualistic sense of ‘betrothal’, requires augmented transitive structures with *li/ni* (29a); simple transitive structures lacking *li/ni* are ungrammatical (29b).

(29) a. élí édiọn kúéé ólí òkpòsò *li* òhí.
   the elders present the woman APP Ohi
   ‘The elders betrothed the woman to Ohi.’

   b. *élí édiọn kúéé  ólí òkpòsò.
      the elders present the woman
      ‘The elders betrothed the woman.’

*kuee*’s direct object, serving as notional possessum (*ólí òkpòsò*), undergoes a ritualized transfer to the dative complement’s post-event possessor or recipient (*òhí*). Dative constructions of this nature pose no particular interpretation problem.

Equally unproblematic are structures with transitive *kuee*, a dative-marked complement and the indefinite subject pronoun *a* ‘one’.

(30) à kúéé ólí òkpòsò *li* òhí.
    one present the woman APP Ohi
    ‘The woman was betrothed to Ohi.’

However, *kuee* also appears in an intransitive structure with a *li/ni* complement and indefinite subject pronoun *a* ‘one’ (31). Despite the overt change in transitivity and the consequent loss of overt possessum, the dative complement continues to mark recipient. Few Emai verbs exhibit this pattern.

(31) à / *élí édiọn kúéé *li* òjè.
    one the elders present APP Oje
    ‘Oje got betrothed.’

In other Emai constructions, dative complements serve as neither recipient nor beneficiary. While these constructions assume no possession change, they do assume a possession relation. The intransitive verb *gha* ‘be proportionately shaped’ (32a) accepts a *li/ni*
complement that expresses possessor (ólì òkpösò). As subject, gha requires the body-part noun égbè ‘body.’ The latter conveys possessum relative to dative possessor. No change in this relation is asserted or assumed.

(32)  
a. égbè ghá’ lì ólì òkpösò.  
body be.proportionate APP the woman  
‘The body of the woman is shapely / The woman is well-proportioned.’

b. *égbè isì ólì òkpösò ghá-ì.  
body ASS the woman be.proportionate-F  
‘The body of the woman is shapely.’

c. *ólì òkpösò ghá-ì vbi égbè.  
the woman be.proportionate-F LOC body  
‘The woman is shapely in her body.’

Absent a dative construction, one might have expected possessor and possessum to be subsumed under a single grammatical relation such as subject (32b). However, the latter is ungrammatical. Alternatively, one might have expected a disjoint grammatical expression of the possession relation, with possessor (ólì òkpösò) as subject and possessum (égbè) as locative complement (32c). This, too, is ungrammatical. The intransitive verb gha requires a disjoint grammatical expression of its assumed possession relation, with possessum as subject and possessor as dative. Given this obligatory linguistic disjuncture of the possession relation, gha li/ni constructions seem best viewed as manifesting an obligatory external possessor relation in which possessum and possessor, rather than occurring within a single constituent (égbè isì ólì òkpösò, 32b), appear in distinct constituents and reference a more fully affected external possessor compared to a less fully affected internal possessor (Schaefer 1999). In

8 External possessors in Emai most often show a leftward shift of the possessor from the possessum, frequently characterized crosslinguistically as possessor raising (Shibatani 1994). In Emai, external and internal possessor constructions differ along an affectedness dimension in which external possessors are assumed to exhibit a conjoint relation of nonseparation vis-à-vis possessum and so be more fully affected by verb event, example (ia), while internal possessors exhibit a disjoint relation of separation relative to possessum and are assumed to be less affected by verb event, example (ib).

(i)  
a. ólì òkpösò tóó ójé úkpùn á.  
the woman burn Oje cloth CS  
‘The woman burned up (all of) Oje’s cloth.’

b. ólì òkpösò tóó úkpùn isì ójè á.  
the woman burn cloth ASS Oje CS  
‘The woman burned up (some of) the cloth of Oje.’ (continued)
this respect, it is not simply a possessor role that is associated with dative à la Blake (2001) but an external possessor. And unlike Palmer’s implicit claim, the dative marked possessor accompanying gha is more, not less fully affected as to shapeliness.

3.3. Additional Semantic Roles. In addition to recipients, beneficiaries and possessors, dative constructions express two additional semantic roles. Li/ni establishes spatial co-location of human participants and temporal continuity of event elements when it marks addressee and locative reference point. The grammatical position associated with these roles requires a human referent and accepts a dative pronoun. Attached to speaking verbs, dative complements mark the semantic role addressee with li/ni. Relative to a prototypical speaking event, the dative-marked addressee is assumed to be spatially co-located with the subject speaker, and the speaking event is assumed to be temporally continuous with a hearing event. Addressee expression requires a serial verb structure where the verb hon ‘hear’ is preceded by a clause anchored to a verb of speaking and a li/ni phrase (33).

(33) a. ólí ómòhè tá étà lì òlì ókpósó hòn.
   the man speak word APP the woman hear
   ‘The man spoke to the woman / spoke his words to the woman.’

   b. ólí ómòhè kpé itàn lì òlì ókpósó hòn.
   the man narrate saying APP the woman hear
   ‘The man narrated a saying to the woman.’

The dative complement of li/ni (ólí ókpósó) must be coreferential with the understood subject of hon. The permissive modality (Palmer 2001) of the hon clause is signaled by right edge high tone of li/ni’s complement (ólí ókpósó) and low tone on hon.9 Absent the verb hon, transitive speaking verbs in construction with li/ni phrases are unacceptable (34a-b). When both li/ni and the verb hon are absent, that is no addressee role is articulated, speaking verb constructions are grammatical (34c-d).

(34) a. *ólí ómòhè tá étà lì òlì ókpósò.
   the man speak word APP the woman hear
   ‘The man spoke to the woman.’

With a stative verb like gha, our assumption is that the shift is rightward and marked by li/ni. Since a fully affected possessor is required by the meaning of gha, an internal possessor relation is unacceptable. 9 That the particle li/ni is not a complement designating a clause consisting of ólí ókpósó and hon is supported by pronoun shape in this construction, i.e. àìm, the third person dative pronoun, not ò, the third person subject pronoun.
b. *óli ómòhè kpé itàn li óli ókpòsò.
   the man narrate saying APP the woman
   ‘The man narrated a saying to the woman.’

c. óli ómòhè tá étà.
   the man speak word
   ‘The man spoke.’

d. óli ómòhè kpé itàn.
   the man narrate saying
   ‘The man narrated a saying.’

A second semantic role expressed by dative complements is locative reference point. This role surfaces for a select number of motion and position verbs. Constructions with these verbs signal a co-locational or dislocational spatial relation between a subject or direct object as figure (moving object or positional object) and dative as ground or reference point (Talmy 2000). With the dative construction and a moving object, one construes an assumed co-locational relation as becoming dislocational, or an assumed dislocational relation as becoming co-locational. With dative and a non-moving or positional object, one asserts a given spatial configuration of positions as being co-locational. In other words, li/ni marks locative reference point regardless of whether participant co-location or dislocation is asserted.

Consider, first, those constructions that assume or assert co-location of subject and dative participants (35). In la ‘run’ constructions, li/ni establishes the participant (óli ódènyò) relative to which the direction of a running event leading to participant dislocation is asserted. In kpen àó ‘be in front of’ constructions, li/ni indicates the participant relative to whom a co-locational configuration of participants is asserted.

\(35\)  

\(\text{a. } \) óli ómòhè à à lá li óli ódènyò.
   the man SC C run APP the drunkard
   ‘The man is running from the drunkard.’

\(\text{b. } \) óli ókpòsò kpén àó li óli ònwìmè.
   the woman be.next.to front APP the farmer
   ‘The woman is in front of the farmer.’

Corresponding constructions with non-human nouns as locative reference points require distinct verbs or verb complexes, as indicated by comparison of ódènyò ‘drunkard’ (35a) with édá ‘river’ (36a) and ònwìmè ‘farmer’ (35b) with ìwè ‘house’ (36b).
For the position verb *lahee* ‘hide,’ Emai assumes a previous co-location relationship that links reference point to possessor. In non-causative structures (37a), intransitive *lahee* accepts a human noun as *li/ni* complement. The dative complement defines the locative perspective point from which to identify the hidden figure expressed as subject. In causative structures (37b), *lahee* admits a human noun as *li/ni* complement relative to the verb *nwu* ‘take hold’ and its affected object. While dative remains as marker of locative reference point, direct object (*ólí émà*) rather than subject serves as figure or moving object.

Let’s look at these constructions individually. The non-causative structure in (37a) assumes that at some pre-event time subject (*ólí òmòhé*) and dative (*ólí ònwìmè*) participants were spatially co-located, with dative establishing the perspective point or ground from which to view the hiding event. At the time of utterance, the verb asserts a dislocated spatial relation between the subject figure and dative ground or reference point.

On the other hand, the causative structure in (37b) assumes that at some pre-event time the direct object figure (*ólí émà*) and dative ground (*ólí ònwìmè*) existed as co-located participants. This structure leads one naturally to assume a pre-event link between direct object possessum and dative possessor. Thus the dative complement, while establishing the reference point perspective from which to construe the hiding event, also conveys possessor relative to direct object possessum.

‘Hide’ constructions stand in semantic contrast to ‘show’ constructions on the dimensions of possession and location. Asserting collocation and thus assuming a prior state of dislocation, ‘show’ constructions articulate with verb *vbiee* ‘become visible, apparent’ and
verb *re* ‘take.’ Relative to *lahee li/ni* and *nwu lahee li/ni*, we have, respectively, *re égbè vbieè* ‘appear to’ (38a) and *re vbieè* ‘show something to’ (38b).

(38) a. ólì òkpòsò  *ré*  égbè  *vbìéé*  ívbiá  óì.
   the woman  take  body  become.apparent.to children  her
   ‘The woman appeared to her children / made her body visible to her children.’

   b. ójé  *ré’*  úháóbi  *vbìéé*  òhí.
   Oje  take  poison.arrow  become.apparent.to  Ohi
   ‘Oje showed Ohi a poison arrow / made a poison arrow visible to Ohi.’

With another set of Emai verbs, the assumption of spatially co-located subject and dative participants combines with the notion of temporal durativity. Constructions with ‘visit’ verbs assume position change from spatially dislocated to spatially co-located. *Li/ni* signals the locative reference point for these spatial construals as well as temporal longevity of the co-located state.

In simple intransitive constructions the verb *vaan* has the sense ‘branch off, call, visit’ (39a), while in transitive structures the verb *ree* has the sense ‘visit’ (39b).

(39) a. ójè  váán-ì.
   Oje  branch.off-F
   ‘Oje visited / called.’

   b. óré’  réé’  ójè.
   stranger  visit  Oje
   ‘A stranger visited Oje.’

‘Visit’ verbs in construction with dative *li/ni* or allative *ye* reveal significant differences in their temporal properties. Both dative and allative markers take a human noun complement as reference point. Their corresponding grammatical subjects convey event figure or moving object. With a *li/ni* complement (*òhí*), the construction sense is ‘visit for some time,’ dative indicating reference point from which to assess the figure’s length of stay.

(40) a. ójè  váán  *li*  òhí.
   Oje  branch.off  APP  Ohi
   ‘Oje visited for some time / called on for some time / stayed with Ohi.’

   b. é  réé’  *li*  òhí.
   they  visit  APP  Ohi
   ‘They visited Ohi for some time / paid a long visit to Ohi.’
When these same verbs are augmented by ye, the construction sense is ‘visit for a short time.’ Allative ye specifies the reference point (òhì) from which to judge the subject figure’s length of stay.

(41) a. òjè váán yé òhì.
    Oje branch.off move.to Ohi
    ‘Oje briefly visited / called on / stayed with Ohi.’

   b. ínyókpá ísì òjè réé yé òhì.
    sibling ASS Oje visit move.to Ohi
    ‘Oje’s maternal sibling visited Ohi for a short time.’

The linear expression of events in discourse vis-à-vis dative and allative ‘visit’ constructions further supports the durativity contrast. In discourse, the expression of (42) would naturally follow (40a) with li/ni but not (41a) with ye.

(42) òjè méhén-i.
    Oje sleep-F
    ‘Oje slept over’

A final construction demonstrates how problematic it can be to restrict li/ni complements to a single semantic role. Consider the verb khoo ‘bathe.’ As a simple transitive verb, it accepts a direct object participant (òlì ómò) linked to patient or affected object.

(43) òlì òkpòsò khọọ òlì ómò.
    the woman bathe the child
    ‘The woman bathed the child.’

Khoo also accepts a dative complement. In the resulting construction, li/ni identifies beneficiary (òjè) and direct object again signals patient or affected entity (òlì ómò).

(44) òlì òkpòsò khọọ òlì ómò li òjè.
    the woman bathe the child APP Oje
    ‘The woman bathed the child for Oje.’

As a verb with no grammatically expressed direct object, khoo occurs with a li/ni complement (45a).
However, the *li/ni* marked noun phrase has shifted semantic roles. Instead of beneficiary, it marks the patient or affected entity (i.e. the participant undergoing the bath). Dative-shift constructions of this type appear only under stringent contextual circumstances. They assume the dative-marked participant was unable to engage normally in the bathing activity, i.e had little control over its outcome. Relative to (45a), for instance, (45b) expresses a suitable constraining circumstance, i.e. Oje was bathed by the woman since he was ill. It is not that the dative-marked participant (*òjè*) is less fully affected by the bathing action; indeed, one could view the dative participant as more fully affected by virtue of the special circumstances suggested in (45b). Dative marking signals a reduced level of control and shifts the affected entity’s assumed level of participation out of immediate focus (focus incorporating subject and direct object) and into event background. Even as a backgrounding device in discourse, dative marking with *li/ni* thus maintains spatial collectivity of human participants and their temporal continuity.

4. Conclusion

This paper has examined a range of structural relations in Emai marked by particle *li/ni*. Most of our attention has rested on the various semantic roles that Emai dative constructions mark with applicative *li/ni*. Emai verbs reveal how this particle, attracting [+human] nouns and its own set of pronouns, expresses the semantic roles recipient, beneficiary, possessor, addressee and locative reference point. Assuming that recipient, addressee and locative converge on Blake’s (2001) “destination,” we note that Emai’s dative grammatical relation encompasses not only this semantic role but also his possessor and beneficiary roles. Moreover, through a transitive verb of bathing and a finely articulated context, we saw how “dative shift” and intransitive expression reveal the reduced control of an erstwhile direct object participant. Rather than being indirectly affected or less fully affected by the action of a verb à la Blake, the shifted participant was more completely affected by a co-participant.

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10 *Li/ni*’s reduced-engagement function of an erstwhile [+human] direct object appears parallel in some respect to preposition *vbi*’s reduction of a quantity function for an erstwhile human affected object in partitive constructions (*òjè é vbi òlì émàè ‘Oje ate from the food’ vs. *òjè é òlì émàè ‘Oje ate the food’*).
More broadly speaking, *li/ni* tends to articulate the parameters of participant co-location and durative temporal effect. While these parameters register physical co-location and durativity in their prototypical condition, they also convey conceptual co-location and durativity. This range from physical to conceptual becomes manifest through dative constructions with verbs characterizing entity manipulation as well as verbs of speaking, motion, displacement and even physical property.

We also showed that the morphophonemic form designating dative in Emai was employed to convey grammatical relations of modification within noun phrases and subordination within complex sentences. In noun phrases, *li/ni* designated numeral complements with collective (co-locational) significance and temporal complements with a durative character. In clauses, *li/ni* identified purpose and result adjuncts, subjunctive S-complements, and purposive rhetorical interrogatives. How are we to interpret these formally unified but semantically diverse functions?

Our hypothesis, as expressed throughout preceding sections, is to view the structural relations designated by *li/ni* from the vantage point of grammatical perspective taking (Talmy 2000). We view the diverse semantic functions associated with *li/ni* as reflecting an abstract ground category within a larger figure-ground complex. For instance, the collective and temporal *li/ni* complements within a noun phrase signal a perspective which construes the head noun referent as a spatial and/or temporal collective. Similarly, subordinate purpose and result clauses as well as subjunctive S-complements provide information of temporal contiguity from which to view and assess the assertion of a main clause (Croft 2001).

In the grammar of perspective taking, dative-marked grammatical relations can usefully be viewed as the ground participant against which to view the in-focus figure complex consisting of subject and direct object participants. Interpretation of the subject-direct object (or subject-verb) unit is functionally dependent on the dative constituent, as suggested by the backgrounding of sense relations for object manipulation verbs in dative constructions (*ze* ‘scoop’ compared to *ze li/ni* ‘give by scooping’). Overall, we find that the grammatical particle designating dative in Emai reflects a semantic ground, one that expresses spatial collectivity of participants and/or temporal continuity of event elements. Additional scrutiny of verb types and their argument structure will no doubt reveal more about the dative relation in West Africa and the semantic interpretation it demarcates.
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