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# A Note on Some Causative Verbs of *Come* and *Go*

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## Preface

The purpose of this paper is to try to examine Eve V. Clark's<sup>1</sup> analysis of the motion verb *send* as a transitive form of *go*, that is, 'CAUSE to begin to go', and find out why *send* could be regarded as a transitive form of *go* on some occasions and why not on other occasions.

## §1

*Come* and *go* are known as deictic verbs, and as verbs of motion — i. e. verbs denoting a process in the course of which some entity changes its physical location. And these deictic verbs of motion have been discussed in considerable detail by C. J. Fillmore.<sup>2</sup> He has pointed out that the main difference between these verbs lies in the goal or destination of an entity's locomotion. In what has been called SPEAKER-ADDRESSEE deixis, the goal of *come* may be the speaker's or the addressee's location at either the coding time (i. e. the time of the utterance) or the referent time in the utterance. The destination of *go*, on the other hand, is specified as somewhere other than where the speaker is at the time of the utterance. In short, *go* implies that an entity's movement is not toward the speaker. Fillmore deals with these facts in relation to the concept which he calls the 'deictic center'.

In English, the motion verbs *come* and *go* have a great number of non-

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1. "Normal states and evaluative viewpoints" in *Language* 50 (1974), pp. 316-332.

2. For example, in *Santa Cruz Lectures on Deixis* (1971), reproduced by I. U. L. C. (1975).

literal or idiomatic uses in which they refer not to motion but to change of state. It is semantically natural: since an entity can be moved from its source-location to its goal-location by an agent, the concept of physical locomotion can imply abstract locomotion from one state to another.

- (1) The girl {  $\begin{smallmatrix} *came \\ went \end{smallmatrix}$  } mad.
- (2) The apple {  $\begin{smallmatrix} *came \\ went \end{smallmatrix}$  } bad.
- (3) The man {  $\begin{smallmatrix} *came \\ went \end{smallmatrix}$  } bald.
- (4) The doctor {  $\begin{smallmatrix} *came \\ went \end{smallmatrix}$  } insane.
- (5) The woman {  $\begin{smallmatrix} *came \\ went \end{smallmatrix}$  } deaf.

The destination of *go* is specified as somewhere other than at the deictic center. It should, therefore, be noted that *go* occurs only to indicate departure from a normal state and entry into a non-normal one: the destination of *go* can be characterized as the non-normal state.

- (6) The man {  $\begin{smallmatrix} came \\ *went \end{smallmatrix}$  } back to his senses.
- (7) The patient {  $\begin{smallmatrix} came \\ *went \end{smallmatrix}$  } out of the coma.
- (8) The orphan {  $\begin{smallmatrix} came \\ *went \end{smallmatrix}$  } into a lot of money.  
[=inherited]
- (9) The girl {  $\begin{smallmatrix} came \\ *went \end{smallmatrix}$  } of age in January.
- (10) The boy {  $\begin{smallmatrix} came \\ *went \end{smallmatrix}$  } round very slowly.  
[=regained consciousness]

The acceptable uses of *come* in the examples above would predict that idioms with *come* should always indicate entry into some normal state. The reason for it can be found in the fact that the motion verb *come* always has as its destination the deictic center itself.

## § 2

The syntax and semantics of causative constructions have been extensively discussed in recent years in relation to the hypothesis of lexical decomposition. According to what is probably the most widely accepted formulation of this hypothesis, both the valency and the meaning of the transitive verb *kill*, for example, would be accounted for in terms of the embedding of an intransitive structure containing the verb *die* (more precisely speaking, a complex predicator meaning ‘come-to-be-not-alive’) as the object of the abstract verb CAUSE. The meaning of CAUSE would also enter into the meaning of such verbs as *cause*, *make*, or *get*, which denote various kinds of agentive initiation and take a variety of complements.

In recent years, some linguists<sup>1</sup> have noted that *bring* can be analyzed as a causative, transitive, or agentive form of *come*. Since *come* can be used to refer to entry into a normal state of being, its transitive form *bring* would also obey the same constraints imposed upon *come*; and since a change of state can be caused by some agent or instrument, the transitive form should also be able to occur in change-of-state idioms. See below;

(11) \*John came into a coma last night.

(12) John went into a coma last night.

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1. R. I. Binnick (1971), ‘Bring and come’ in *Linguistic Inquiry* 2, pp. 260-265, J. Lyons (1977), *Semantics* 2, p. 494, J. S. Gruber (1976), *Lexical Structures in Syntax and Semantics*, etc.

- (13) \*John went out of the coma last night.
- (14) John came out of the coma last night.
- (15) \*The treatment brought John into a coma last night.
- (16) The treatment brought John out of the coma last night.

The fact that (12), (14), and (16) are acceptable whereas (11), (13), and (15) are not can be strong evidence for *bring* being a causative form of *come*: the destination of *bring* is the normal state just as that of *come*. There seems nothing odd about the joint presence of the agent and the object affected at the goal when the goal is the normal state. Eve V. Clark, then, analyzes *bring* as ‘CAUSE to come’.

The sentences below also show that *come* can be incorporated into *bring*.

- (17) John came round very slowly. [=regained consciousness]
- (18) Ben came to after a few minutes. [=regained consciousness]
- (19) George quickly came back to his senses.
- (20) Clint came down from his high. [=recovered from a high]
- (17') \*John went round very slowly.
- (18') \*Ben went to after a few minutes.
- (19') \*George quickly went back to his senses.
- (20') \*Clint went down from his high.
- (21) The doctor brought John round very slowly.
- (22) The cold water brought Ben to after a few minutes.
- (23) The lawyer quickly brought George back to his senses.
- (24) The doctor brought Clint down from his high.

Again we can say that the non-literal uses of the transitive *bring* should obey the same constraints as its intransitive form *come* when used to describe a change of state, since the destination of both forms is always the normal

state. But the sentences (21) – (24) are differently accepted by native speakers of English<sup>1</sup>. I asked two Englishmen and two Americans to judge if the sentences are acceptable. The result is this: one Englishman – none of them are acceptable, one American – (23) and (24) are acceptable whereas (21) and (22) are definitely out, the other people – (21) – (24) are all acceptable. These different responses to the acceptability of (21) – (22) lead us to think that though *come* and *go* are said to have transitive forms of their own, they are not completely equivalent to each other in every case.

### § 3

Another deictic verb *take* can function as a causative or transitive form of *go*.

- (25) Nelly went into a coma yesterday.
- (26) \*Nelly went out of the coma yesterday.
- (25') \*Nelly came into a coma yesterday.
- (26') Nelly came out of the coma yesterday.
- (27) \*The treatment took Nelly out of the coma yesterday.

The sentences above will lead us to the idea that *go* is incorporated into *take*. Then the following sentence can be predicted as possible, since (25) is completely acceptable;

- (28) \*The treatment took Nelly into a coma yesterday.

But (28) cannot actually occur in English. The reason for its nonoccurrence can be sought in this point: in the case of departure from a normal state such

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1. I would like to thank Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Karkavelas, Mr. Pendergast, and Mr. Stirk for their helpful and insightful suggestions and comments on this paper.

as sanity or consciousness, it is generally impossible for the agent to accompany the object being moved all the way to the goal<sup>1</sup>. Clark decomposes *take* into something like ‘CAUSE to go’.

§ 4

Clark asserts that the verb *send* is also a transitive form of *go*. Before we proceed to examine whether or not her assertion is true, a point should be made about some difference between *take* and *send* used as transitive forms of *go*.

- (29) \*Sandra brought a book to me but didn’t come with the book.
- (30) \*Sandra took her dog to the park but didn’t went there [=to the park] with it [=her dog].
- (31) Sandra sent a letter to her mother instead of taking it [=the letter to her [=her mother] in person.

The sentences above imply that *send*, unlike *take*, is used not to describe the agent’s accompanying the object all the way to the goal but only to describe the agent’s instigating the object’s movement. According to Clark, *send* should probably be represented as ‘CAUSE to begin to go’ in its underlying structure. Some strong evidence in favor of this lexical decomposition is provided by the fact that in an idiomatic use where it is a change of state to a non-normal state that is at issue in (15) and (28), *send* is the only form that appears to be acceptable:

- (15) \*The treatment brought John into a coma last night.

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1. Clark (1974).

(28) \*The treatment took Nelly into a coma yesterday.

(32) The treatment sent Barbara into a coma in the morning.

In (32), ‘the treatment’ serves only to start ‘Barbara’ on her way into the world of unconsciousness: the agent never accompanies the object to the goal. Namely *send* implies ‘ballistic’. If we look at the verb from this point of view, Clark’s analysis of the verb as ‘CAUSE to begin to go’ seems plausible. Here let’s return to the original use of *send* as a deictic motion verb, from which its idiomatic uses are derived.

(33) If you need money, I’ll send you some soon.

(34) I sent a troop to the battlefield.

(35) I sent a telegram to my deputy.

These sentences seem to show that *go* is incorporated in *send*, since the destination of *send* is specified somewhere other than where the speaker is at the time of the utterance. But how can we handle the following sentence?

(36) Father sent some money to me yeasterday.

In (36), the goal which ‘some money’ reaches is the speaker’s location. Clark’s lexical decomposition cannot satisfy *sent* in (36). If the *sent* in (36) is decomposed into smaller constituents, it must be ‘CAUSE to begin to come’. In summary, *send* should be analyzed as ‘CAUSE to begin to come or go’ if it must be. This seems to be a reason why an English-English dictionary such as *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* classifies such a sentence as ‘This noise will send me mad’ under the item of ‘to cause to have a particular feeling or be in a particular state’ but not under the item of ‘cause to go’.

*Send* can not be regarded as a transitive verb of *go* alone, but it functions



as such on some occasions when it refers to entry into some non-normal state.  
Below are sentences cited from Clark:

- (37) The blow sent him out like a light.
- (38) The crisis sent him out of his mind.
- (39) The continual racket sent him insane.
- (40) The accident sent him off his head.
- (41) The quarrel sent him into a frenzy.
- (42) His friend sent him on a trip. [=gave him drugs]

Each of the sentences suggests departure from a normal state and entry into a non-normal one, and the *send* can be considered as having *go* in it. Below are the examples of the 'go-send' pair noted by Clark:

- (43) a. The milk went sour.  
b. The heat sent the milk sour.
- (44) a. Ada went blind.  
b. It was glaucoma that sent Ada blind.
- (45) a. The bread went stale.  
b. ?The heat sent the bread stale.
- (46) a. Adrian went bald.  
b. ?The hair tonic sent Adrian bald.
- (47) a. The iron went rusty.  
b. \*The rain sent the iron rusty.
- (48) a. The man went lame.  
b. \*The accident sent the man lame.

Clark says: both (45) b and (46) b are borderline at best while (47) b and (48) b are definitely out. However, in English there are causative forms of

these idioms where 'CAUSE to go' is realized as a periphrastic form with *make*, producing *make*. . . *go* in lieu of the more usual *send*:

- (49) The heat made the bread go stale. [Cf. (45) b]
- (50) The hair tonic made Adrian go bald. [Cf. (46) b]
- (51) The rain made the iron go rusty. [Cf. (47) b]
- (52) The accident { made the man (go) lame. } [Cf. (48) b]  
                          lamed the man<sup>1</sup>.

Clark continues to say, "Why the form *make*. . . *go* should be acceptable in such instances, while *send* is not remains unclear." Her puzzlement seems natural especially when we contrast (43) b with (45) b.

Now we will start to find out some reasons why there are such different degrees of acceptability in (43) b-(48) b. One reason can be sought in the difference between *make* and *send*:

- (53) \*The marshal made the outlaw get out of the town forcibly.
- (54) \*The pain made the patient cry out forcibly.
- (55) The marshal made the outlaw get out of the town.
- (56) The pain made the patient cry out.

The fact that (53) and (54) are unacceptable whereas the others not will predict that there occurs a selection restriction between *make* and *forcibly* to block the combination. That is, *make* entails 'forcible'. Therefore (55) and (56) imply 'the object affected by *make* is forced to complete its activity'. In other words, the causative verb *make* can take an 'object-of-result'<sup>2</sup>. *Send*, on

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1. According to some native speakers, this construction, though grammatical, is avoided for a phonological reason.

2. Lyons, *Semantics* 2, p. 492.

the other hand, cannot imply 'forcible completion of the object's activity', since in (57), for example,

(57) John sent Bill a book.

we do not necessarily imply that the book came to belong to Bill<sup>1</sup>. For the reason so far mentioned, (49)-(52) are all acceptable: (49), for example, entails (45) a. If (49) is true, (45) a is true; also if (45) a is false, (49) is false. This entailment relation is true of (50) and (46) b, (51) and (47) b, and (52) and (48) b, but not true of the pairs (43)-(48). *Send* in (43) b – (48) b serves only to start the object on its way. But there must be something somewhere in them other than in *sent* that makes two of them definitely acceptable and the others not. It can be in *heat*, for example in (43) b, what makes the milk go sour and (45) b entails (45) a. As used in such expressions as 'in the heat of the moment/argument/battle I lost my self-control', the word *heat* evokes in us such concepts as STRONG, VIOLENT, INTENSE, FAST, and so on, which can serve as a substitution for *make*, to some extent if not perfectly.

The next step we have to take is to introduce the following idea for the analysis of the sentence at issue.

(58) Milk goes sour (comparatively) {<sup>fast.</sup>  
quickly. }<sup>2</sup>

(59) \*Milk goes sour (comparatively) slowly.

(58) can be interpreted as a generic sentence since it makes an assertion about

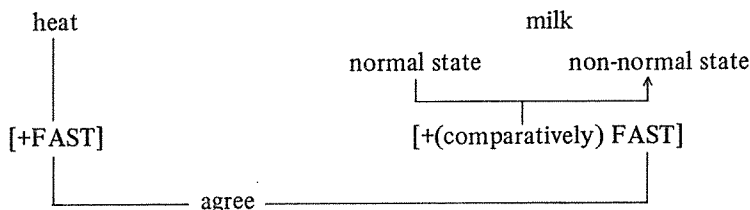
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1. Gruber (1976), p. 78; Anderson (1977), p. 171.

2. (58) is accepted and (59) rejected by Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Pendergast. The judgement of generic propositions is not restricted only to native speakers of English, though.

a whole class of milk whereas (59) can not.

What is mentioned above is a reason why (43) b is acceptable. Although *send* has no force to make milk move from its source-location to its goal-location, *milk* itself arrives at the goal (comparatively) fast. One more reason is illustrated as follows;



Similarly, (61) can be interpreted as generic but (60) can not;

(60) \*Bread goes stale (comparatively { fast.  
quickly. })

(61) Bread goes stale (comparatively) slowly.

In (45) b, the 'fastness' in *the heat* is incompatible with the 'slowliness' with which *the bread* moves from the normal state to the non-normal state: a semantic disagreement occurs between them. But still 'fastness' or 'strength' in *the heat* exerts some influence upon the *the bread's* moving toward the non-normal state, which seems to render an otherwise unacceptable sentence borderline acceptable.

What can be said about (45) b is true of (46) b, too. (62) and (63) in the following can prove it;

(62) \*Human beings go bald { fast.  
quickly. }

(63) Human beings go bald slowly.

Some may object to acceptability of (63) by saying that one can go bald overnight, but it isn't accepted as a general occurrence. And *tonic* is equivalent to *stimulant* or *kick* in 'get a big kick out of', which means 'anything which increases health or strength' or 'a medicine intended to give the body more strength'<sup>1</sup>. The *hair tonic* is intended to stimulate the roots of the hairs on the head, but it can sometimes cause harmful effects on the hair.

In (44) b, *glaucoma* is 'a disease which causes loss of sight, marked by pressure within the eyeball'<sup>2</sup>. Therefore there is what would appear to be a natural or inevitable connection between 'glaucoma' and 'blindness'. This is why (44) b is semantically acceptable.

Next we will deal with (48) b. The analysis of *send* as 'CAUSE to begin to go' suggests that (48) b entail

(64) \*The man began to go lame.

But (64) is semantically deviant because we cannot say

(65) \*The man is neither lame nor not-lame.

*Begin* implies 'a course' i. e. 'movement from one point to another'. We are lame or not-lame; either. There is no neutral territory between them, just like 'dead' and 'alive', and 'open' and 'closed'. Since (64) is false for the reason mentioned above, (48) b is false. So (48) b is definitely out.

In (47) b *rain* invokes no concepts or notions of the kind which would appear to be involved in *heat* and *tonic*. No direct physical link is postulated

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1. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, p. 1166.

2. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, p. 482.

between the event of its raining and the event of iron's getting rusty. No agency is needed when iron begins to go rusty<sup>1</sup>.

§ 5

In the present paper, I have so far attempted to give account to some idiomatic or non-literal uses of *come* and *go*, mainly of *bring*, *take*, and *send*, which Clark and some other linguists regard as transitive forms of *come* and *go*. It is certain that pairs like 'come-go' and 'go-take', though morphologically unrelated verbs, can stand in the same semantic relation to each other when used to describe an entity's physical locomotion from a source-location to a goal-location. But this is not necessarily true when they refer to change of state. It often happens that neither *bring* nor *take* can function as transitive forms of *come* or *go*. It is more important to realize that *send* could be used as a transitive form of *go* on some occasions, but can be used as a transitive of *come*. *Come-go*, *bring-take*, *come-take*, *go-bring* are pairs of motion verbs which imply either motion toward the speaker or motion away from the speaker. *Send*, on the other hand, has no counterform of its own. The verb is not a deictic verb. For this reason, Clark's analysis of it as 'CAUSE to begin to go' is not satisfactory.

When *send* is used as a causative form of *go* to describe change of state, an NP in subject position must have some force that can cause a change of state

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1. I cannot go any further into the semantic analysis of (47) b. But there is one more thing to say about it. There can be no other factor than 'water and air' to cause iron or some other metals to go rusty; *Rust* presupposes 'water and air'. But the following sentence is acceptable;

(a) The rain will rust the iron roof. (*LDCE*, p. 977)

A transitive verb and its lexically decomposed form are not always equivalents just as *kill* and *cause-to-die*, for example, show (Chomsky, 1970). The difference between *rust* and *send*. . . *go* might be sought in the assumption that the former, being morphologically a single word, can always refer to 'state of result' whereas the latter cannot, as mentioned on pp. 10-11.

embedded as a proposition in the predicate and at the same time a sematic feature in the NP or what can be connoted by it must agree with that of movement proposed in the predicate.

### Acknowledgments

Valuable feedback on the ideas in this paper was provided by a number of people, including Mr. O'Brien (Kinran Women's Junior College), Mr. Karkavelas (Osaka University), Mr. Pendergast (Osaka University of Foreign Studies), Mr. Stirk (Osaka University of Foreign Studies). Of course, they are not to be blamed for any of its shortcomings.

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