A construction analysis of [be done X]
in Canadian English

by

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Abstract

This thesis is an analysis of the Canadian English construction 'be done X' [bdX], where *X* is a direct object noun phrase, as in 'I'm done my homework'. The study is grounded in a cognitive linguistics framework, which examines the relation of language structure to cognitive principles and mechanisms not specific to language, including pragmatic and interactional principles. It is based on a corpus created from Canadian web blogs and investigates the syntactic, semantic, and discourse level properties of the construction. The results provide empirical evidence that a cognitive approach can account for the many layers of meaning that are conveyed in this construction. This thesis addresses the larger question of how constructional meaning is arrived at, and suggests that the current cognitive theory needs to be expanded to allow for a fuller account of meaning in a constructional framework.

Keywords: cognitive linguistics; construction grammar; Canadian English; viewpoint

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List of Acronyms

AE	American English
API	Application programming interface
BCE	Bank of Canadian English corpus
CE	Canadian English
CG	Cognitive Grammar
COCA	Corpus of Contemporary American English
CxG	Construction grammar
CL	Cognitive linguistics
ICE	International Corpus of English
ICE-Canada	Canadian portion of International Corpus of English (ICE)
LGSWE	Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English
[bdX]	*be done X*
[bfX]	*be finished X*
[bdwX]	*be done with X*
[bdV-ing]	*be done V-ing (gerund form)*
[hdX]	*have done X (present perfect)*

1.   Introduction

Going back to the time of the classics, there is a long tradition of viewing the purpose of language as the construction and communication of meaning (Fauconnier, 1999). This stands in contrast to the goal of mainstream linguistics since Chomsky invigorated the field in the 1950s, which has primarily been to discover language structure. However, the older view has seen resurgence in the last few decades. Since the seminal work in the 1980s investigating language and the mind, cognitive linguists (led by Wallace Chafe, Charles Fillmore, George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker, and Leonard Talmy, among others) have turned away from the study of language primarily as a study of language-internal structural properties, and returned to the older tradition of viewing language as an entity that is about constructing and construing meaning. As Cienki states, the purview of cognitive linguists is to investigate "the system of communication that reflects the world as it is construed by humans" (Cienki, 2007: 170).

This view of linguistics, which considers language as a 'window into the mind' is grounded in cognition. It holds that "features of our thinking, cognitive processes and social interactions need to be brought in to the picture and correlated with their linguistic manifestations" (Fauconnier, 1999: 96). In the cognitive approach, form is important not for its internal structural properties, but because "behind form is not a thing at all but rather the human power to construct meaning" (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002: 6). This brings us to the topic of this thesis: an expression unique to Canadian English, 'be done X', as in the statement 'I'm done my homework'. In examining this expression in natural usage through a corpus study, this research probes the relationship between form and meaning construal that is so critical to cognitive linguists. My contribution to the cognitive linguistics puzzle is to investigate, on the basis of this construction, all the layers of meaning conveyed by such a short sentence, and importantly, *how* this meaning construal is arrived at. To begin, I explain my discovery of the phenomena under discussion.

While traveling in the United States, whose variety of English is very similar to my own Canadian English, I asked an American colleague at a café, 'Are you done your tea?'. I wanted to know if I could take his cup (i.e., was his cup empty?). Though ubiquitous in Canadian English, this formulation was entirely unacceptable to him. His disbelief that I could ask the question in this way was surprising to me given that I had assumed this was entirely standard in any variety of English. Upon further investigation it soon became apparent that this was a little-noted but wide difference between the two varieties of English. Generally stated, Canadians think that everyone in the English-speaking world, or at least North America, can say this, and Americans are shocked that the utterance exists. Furthermore, the conversation soon became a vehement discussion of the difference for Canadians between the phrases 'I am done my homework', and the variant using *with*, 'I am done with my homework', which is common to both dialects.

In this thesis I present a construction analysis of the Canadian expression 'be done X' (henceforth referred to as [bdX]). Drawing on a cognitive linguistic framework I investigate the syntactic, semantic and discourse-level elements of this construction. I provide evidence that a cognitive approach can account for the different marriages of meaning and form that allow for the variation in usage between the Canadian [bdX] and the alternative 'be done with X' [bdwX] that is ubiquitous in both Englishes.

Furthermore, I demonstrate here, using [bdX], that beyond the syntactic, semantic and discourse-level features that contribute to meaning, frames-based knowledge structures and viewpoint are integral to the construal evoked by [bdX]. These elements thus need to be considered as part of a full analysis of the form and function of language utterances. This is precisely where the strength of a cognitive approach to language lies: seeing language as a cognitive process that operates in concert with other cognitive and social processes allows the integration of all of these elements. Analyses of patterns in language need to be both broad and deep, that is, they must account for *all* meaning conveyed in a language utterance. I chose to work in the cognitive and constructionist approach to language as it allows a unified analysis of *what* meaning is conveyed by a particular language event, and consequently examines *how* it is conveyed. I use a corpus study as a tool to examine many instances of the construction in context. Corpus work is a methodology well-aligned with the research

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interests of cognitive linguists. Here I rely on data collected from Canadian web blogs to inform my analysis.

The paper is organized as follows: in the remaining section of this introduction, I give an overview of the [bdX] pattern, its usage and distribution. Chapter 2 provides an introduction to the field of Cognitive linguistics, which informs the approach taken here, and an overview of literature about the use of the web as a corpus. In Chapter 3 I describe the methodology behind this project, including the creation of a corpus from Canadian web blogs, and in the following Chapter 4, I describe the corpus data. The full construction analysis is presented in Chapter 5. The formal syntactic and semantic properties of the construction are introduced, in addition to discourse elements of the construction. In the final section of Chapter 5 I bring together the additional elements available in a cognitive analysis, namely the role of frames as a mental structuring of knowledge, and viewpoint. I conclude with a functional motivation for the construction based on all of these properties.

1.1. The pattern

English contains a variety of lexemes and argument structure phrases to express that an activity has been completed. Examples (1) and (2) are standard present perfect constructions with the main verb lexemes *done* and *finished* respectively.

(1)   I have finished my homework.
(2)   I have done my homework.

American and Canadian usage also contain the pattern 'be done/finished + PP', in the form 'be done with X' and 'be finished with X', as in (3) and (4)[1], where auxiliary *be* is followed by a prepositional phrase headed by *with*:

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[1] I henceforth refer only to [bdwX], as I consider 'be done with X' and 'be finished with X' to be the same construction with possible alternation between the main verbs *done* and *finished*.

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(3)   I am done with my homework.
(4)   I am finished with my homework.

Both varieties of English also include the gerund form *be done V-ing* [bdV-ing], as in (5) and (6):

(5)   I'm done arguing about it.
(6)   When the kids are done playing, it folds up for convenient storage.

In Canadian English (CE), however, speakers have an utterance of the form 'be done X' [bdX] where X represents a direct object noun phrase, as in Examples (7)-(12):[2]

(7)   I'**m done my finals** on Dec 9th, and then head home for Xmas.
(8)   Martin **is done his bass tracks** and we are ready to start vocals.
(9)   By the time I **am done dinner**, I don't want my side snack.
(10)   My parents would extend his time block because he **was not done his homework.**
(11)   So many bloggers I read are doing this. One is already **done her 50,000 words**!
(12)   This will be particularly important once you**'re done the tattoo** and need to leave the shop.

This construction is widely accepted in all varieties of CE, while being highly *un*acceptable in American English (AE). In fact, it is accepted so widely and naturally that speakers of CE are usually shocked to find out that speakers of AE do not have this usage in their everyday speech.

The distribution of 'be done' constructions in AE and CE is summarized in Table 1 below. The phenomenon described in this thesis relies on the fact that while both Englishes use [bdV-ing] and [bdwX], only Canadian English allows the [bdX] variant.

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[2] Unless otherwise noted, examples are from the corpus developed for this study as outlined in Chapters 3 and 4.

Construction	CE	AE
[bdV-ing]: "I'm done shopping"	✔	✔
[bdwX]: "I'm done with the salt"	✔	✔
[bdX]: "I'm done my homework"	✔	**

Table 1. ***Distribution of 'be done' constructions in CE and AE***

I will turn now to the geographical distribution of this variation, followed by a description of why the pattern merits in-depth investigation.

The pattern described above has been attested across a wide variety of Canadian dialects in distinct geographical areas. According to interviews and qualitative surveys conducted by Yerastov (2008; 2010a; 2010b) speakers of CE in Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia have reported the grammaticality of the [bdX] variant. Yerastov also attests that some speakers of Northeast Vermont English (NEVE) (in Orleans, Essex, Caledonia, and Lamoille counties) and some speakers in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania also accept and produce this variant.[3] In contrast, in grammatical judgement tasks conducted by Yerastov, speakers of American English from Massachusetts, upstate New York, Minnesota, Illinois, and Washington State found the construction grammatically unacceptable. The distribution of the pattern [bdX] is shown in Figure 1, where the dots indicate areas where the construction was found.

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[3] Note that not all speakers in Northeastern Vermont and Philadelphia accept this variant, in contrast to Canadian English – where it is acceptable in all regions.
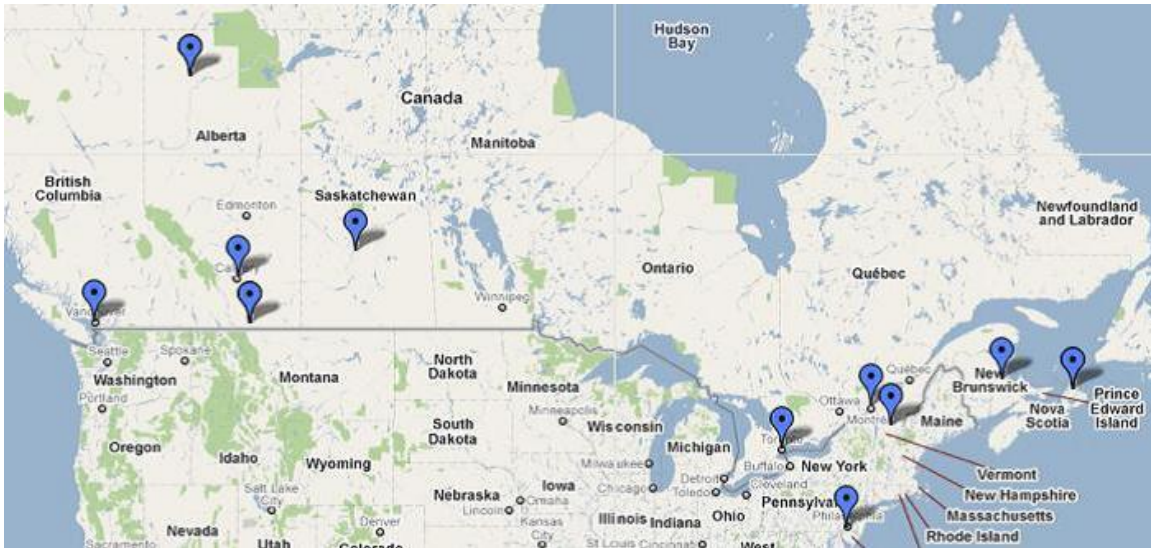
Figure 1. ***Distribution of [bdX] in North America***

Note.   (Yerastov, 2010b)

There are several factors that demand investigation in [bdX]. These are outlined in A-C below:

A. [bdX] shows syntactic variation among standard varieties of English. Generally speaking, while the phonetic markers of CE as compared to AE are noted (for example, the well-known phenomenon of Canadian raising, where a Canadian's *out and about* sounds like *oot and aboot* to an American and elicits no end of laughs at mixed nationality gatherings of Linguistics students), it is less common to have markers of a syntactic nature between these two standard varieties of English. To be sure, there are syntactic differences, but they are more usually regional, as in the case of the double modal construction in the American south, which is equally unacceptable to a speaker in New York as it is for someone from Toronto or Vancouver. In [bdX] we have a construction that is accepted in CE but not accepted at all (except for the tiny pocket noted in North Eastern Vermont and Pennsylvania) south of the border.

B. The second reason for the particular interest in this construction is the existence of two variants in CE, [bdX] and [bdwX], that have similar, but not the same, semantics. This is important in a constructionist approach, which posits a one-to-one

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form-meaning pairing (that is, a different form indicates a different function). I will argue that the two variants are not synonymous or interchangeable. Rather, [bdX] expresses *exhaustivity* or the final completion of a process, including the exhaustion of any entity referred to, and [bdwX] expresses *satiety*, or a sense of having had enough (thus *sated).* It indicates the completion of a stage in the process, but not necessarily the final stage. Crucially, [bdX] can *only* carry the exhaustive meaning. This thesis examines the following questions that arise from these preliminary observations: 1. Can the corpus study presented here demonstrate the semantic difference posited above between [bdX] and [bdwX]? 2. How does AE express this semantic contrast? 3. Is the AE [bdwX] always ambiguous? (This is especially important form a constructionist perspective: if AE does not have the contrast between [bdX] vs. [bdwX], then CE has a one-to-one form/meaning mapping, and AE has a two-to-one form/meaning mapping, which results in ambiguity).

C. Thirdly, in contrast with the [bdwX] variant, [bdX] is not entirely productive. As we will see in the description of data, it cannot be combined with just any NP, or any determiner, in any context. The corpus data show that [bdX] has very particular characteristics that need to be accounted for.

While the present study is restricted for reasons of scope to CE and AE, I conducted a cursory search to establish whether other varieties of English exhibit a [bdX] pattern. A search for 'am done my' on UK web blogs (using the same corpus-building tool as was used for the CE and AE data, WebCorp,[4] yielded the following examples:

(13)   I myself **am done my** schooling and now work at a Calgary moving company.
(14)   But once I **am done my** studies and I go back to Canada, how do I become
(15)   I am currently on 60 mgs and **am done my 5th month** in a week.

(13) and (14) openly refer to Canada, and are thus assumed to be written by Canadians posting on UK blogs. A search for [bdX] with the definite determiner of the form 'am done

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[4] http://www.webcorp.org.uk

the' yielded 8 instances. However, again, looking at the utterance in its context on the blog showed that the source location of 4 of those 8 blog comments was in Canada, or made reference to growing up in Canada. The results for a search of Australian blogs proved more definitive, with no instances of 'am done my', and one instance of 'am done the'. Based on the paucity of data from these searches, I believe Australian and British English can be assumed not to have the [bdX] construction.

As outlined in this introduction, the [bdX] construction provides data through which to examine the constructionist approach. In turn, the constructionist approach gives us tools to explore how to provide a unified account for the layers of meaning encoded in the construction. In the next section we examine related constructions, before profiling in Chapter 2 the cognitive and constructionist framework adopted for this research.

1.2. Other 'done' constructions

There are many constructions in English with *done* as the main verb: the exclamations 'I'm done!', 'It's done', and the exclamation often used interacting with children, 'All done!', for example. There is also the regular present perfect with *done* as the main verb, as in 'I have done my homework', and the slightly more idiomatic 'done with X' as in 'I'm done with that'. It has been suggested that [bdX] is the same as one of these other 'done' constructions, for example that [bdX] is a form of the [bdwX] construction with the *with* elided.[5] Others have suggested that [bdX] is a variation of null complementation as in 'I'm done'. In the null-version, the complement of the verb is implied, whereas [bdwX] the complement is explicit. Under the null complement

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[5] This was suggested on the email list-serve of the American Dialect Society in 2004 by Arnold Zwicky.

interpretation, [bdX] would be considered an extension of the resultative form 'be done' and the two forms would have the same underlying structure.[6]

In order to investigate these claims, I present here an analysis of several 'done' constructions, and argue that there are clear differences between [bdX] and [bdwX], [bdV-ing], the passive [be V-en], and the regular present perfect [have done X].

1.2.1. [bdX] vs. [bdwX]

There are clear similarities between the syntactic behaviour of [bdX] and [bdwX]. Firstly, they can both be interpreted as expressions of future tense, either through implication, as in the pair in (16) and (17), or with future tense morphology (the *will* auxiliary in English) as in (18) and (19).

(16)   When are you done school today?
(17)   When are you done with school today?

(18)   When will you be done school today?
(19)   When will you be done with school today?

Secondly, they can both be reduced to absolute clauses, as in (20) and (21):

(20)   When I'm done with my class → When done with my class
(21)   When I'm done my class → When done my class

In these cases, *done* patterns like other predicate adjectives[7] such as *ready*, as in (22).

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[6] A similar null-complement occurs with the alternation between *on top* and *on top of it* (p.c. Dr. Line Mikelsen, UC Berkeley).

[7] The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language defines predicate adjectives as "dependents in clause structure licensed by particular verbs such as intransitive *be* and *seem* or transitive *find*" (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002).

(22)   When I'm ready for school → When ready for school

However, we can see that *done* is not a predicate adjective in either [bdX] or [bdwX], as it does not behave as a predicate adjective in other ways. For example, predicate adjectives cannot take a noun phrase complement, shown in the acceptability of (23) as compared to the unacceptability of (24).

(23)   I'm done my homework.
(24)   *I'm ready my homework.

So far we have seen that [bdX] and [bdwX] pattern together in some ways. However, there are crucial differences between the two constructions. Their behaviour with adverbials, for example, demonstrates that [bdX] is not simply an elided variant of [bdwX] as suggested by Zwicky and noted above. Firstly, [bdX] is incompatible with stative adverbials. In (25) and (26) we see that [bdwX] is fine with the adverbial 'for now'.

(25)   Ok I think I'm done with the perfect game for now...
(26)   Yep. I'm done with this for now.

In contrast, in the [bdX] corpus, the only instance of 'for now' was found as a pre-posed adverbial, as in (27):

(27)   But for now I'm done my rant.

This is attested in acceptability judgements performed by Yerastov, who found that speakers judged sentences like that in (28), where [bdwX] is followed by a stative adverbial, as highly acceptable, and rated the variant with [bdX] in combination with a stative adverbial, as in (29), with a low acceptance rating (Yerastov, 2010b: ch.4)

(28)   I'm done with the book for now
(29)   *I'm done the dishes for now

I will argue in Chapter 5 that the unavailability of [bdX] with a stative adverbial is due to the aspect that is conveyed by the construction, which is one of completion. That is, (29) is unavailable because [bdX] entails that the activity has reached a state of final completion, and thus cannot be modified by 'for now'. I will introduce further differences between the [bdX] and [bdwX] variants in the section on semantics in Section 5.2.

1.2.2. [bdV-ing]

[bdX] has a similar pattern to [bdV-ing], as shown in the pair given in (30)-(31), where the first is the [bdX] construction and the second uses the [bdV-ing] construction:

(30)   I'm done my teeth.
(31)   I'm done brushing my teeth.

In these two examples, the 'X' slot is filled by a noun phrase and a gerund phrase, respectively. Because gerunds share the same –*ing* form as active participles, it is often difficult to ascertain whether the –*ing* form is a gerund or participle clause, as in (32) and (33).[8]

(32)   When I was done talking, she'd hand me the napkin.
(33)   When I was done revisiting these volumes, I was left wishing I could follow the sisters to America.

However, while the gerund cannot be preposed because it is the direct object and complement of the verb, participle clauses are adjuncts and therefore can move freely. This is shown in the pairs in (34) and (35), where the preposed version is not acceptable in the gerund in (34), but is acceptable in (35), where the participle phrase is preposed.

(34)   a) I was done working on my homework.
        b) * Working on my homework I was done.

(35)   a) I solved five equations working on my homework
        b) Working on my homework I solved five equations.

Since [bdV-ing] is a gerund form, as shown here, I consider it another instant of [bdX], where X is a nominal gerund phrase rather than a regular NP headed by a determiner.

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[8] Because in creating my corpus I searched only for NPs whose first element is a determiner, there are no instances of the *V-ing* form in my own data. However, it is widely attested in standard corpora. The examples given here are as they appear in Yerastov (2010b) and are from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA).

1.2.3. Passive: [be V-en]

[bdX] also bears resemblance to the passive form in English, characterized as [be V-en] to reflect its use of the auxiliary *be* and a main verb with an '-en' ending, as in *The book was written*. A passive with *done* as the main verb would be *The homework was done*, for example. While the passive form with *done* as the main verb and [bdX] share a similar structure, [bdX] is clearly not a passive construction. It cannot, for example, take an optional agent in a by-phrase, whereas the regular passive can, as is shown in (36) and (37) as compared to (38):

(36)   The book was written by you.
(37)   The homework was done by the tutor.

(38)   *I'm done my homework by me

In a constructionist approach the passive is considered a construction of the following form: [subj aux VPpp (PP-by)], as in 'The armadillo was hit by a car' (Goldberg, 2006: 5). The (PP-by) term in this notation is the optional prepositional *by*-phrase of (36) and (37). The fact that [bdX] does not occur with inanimate subjects (as will be shown later in the data description) further supports that the conclusion that [bdX] is not a passive construction.

1.2.4. Present perfect: [have done X]

The last construction we will examine as a possible source of [bdX] is the present perfect. With *done* as the main verb, the present perfect is *have done X* [hdX]. Features that [bdX] shares with [hdX] include the presence of an auxiliary followed by a past participle, and a complement that is a direct object noun phrase. Is [bdX] simply a variant of the perfect construction, with an alternating auxiliary? I believe not.

It is widely noted cross-linguistically that transitive verbs prototypically combine with the auxiliary *have* and intransitive verbs with the auxiliary *be.* However, an account positing that [bdX] is the present perfect with an auxiliary alternation using *be* rather than *have* would have to account for what is special about *done* that it takes this alternation. Secondly, it would have to account for the fact that the regular present perfect exists as well, leaving both forms available in CE: *have done X* and *be done X.*

To demonstrate that [bdX] and [hdX] are not interchangeable, we turn to their behaviour in combination with adverbs and modals. This shows that these two constructions differ in more than simply their auxiliary alternation. Firstly, adverbs provide evidence that these constructions are not syntactically the same construction with alternating auxiliaries. While [bdX] and [hdX] are both compatible with the adverb *all*, as is shown in (39) and (40), the element that is modified by *all* differs.

(39)   I am all done my homework.
(40)   We have all done our homework
(41)   We are all done our homework

In the singular *be* perfect in (39), *done* modifies the verb as a degree of 'done-ness'. In the *have* perfect in (40), on the other hand, *all* modifies the subject *we* (it could be paraphrase *all of us have done our homework*). Interestingly, however, (41) is ambiguous: *all* can modify either the subject or the main verb to give both readings. In this case prosody and intonation would be relied upon to disambiguate these two interpretations.

These results are also borne out in the corpus data, where sentences such as those in (42) - (44) are frequent. The first two examples demonstrate the modification of *done*, though due to the singular subject there is no possibility of ambiguity. However, in (44), the plural subject in combination with *all done* leads to an ambiguous (at least in written form) utterance:

(42)   I'll see who wins out in the Spring. I'm all done my Fall planting except for the Dutch bulbs.
(43)   And, even better, I'm ALL DONE my paper and schoolwork!!! WOO. :)
(44)   …front hall, living room, and dining room. When we were all done those jobs, we convened in the bathroom to do that together

As expected, a corpus search for *all done* with the present perfect in Canadian English yielded only sentences such as (45) and (46), where *all* intensifies the number marking on the subject.

(45)   We have all done this at some point in our lives
(46)   The Krita team have all done some absolutely fantastic work on the program

The interpretation with the adverb modifying the 'done-ness' of the verb is not available in [hdX] as it is in [bdX].

Behaviour with modals also disfavours an analysis that considers [bdX] and [hdX] as variants of the same present perfect construction. While both can be combined with modals, the semantics of time and aspect conveyed by the expressions are very different. As we saw earlier with regards to future tense interpretations, with modals [bdX] and [bdwX] refer to future events as in (47); however, when the present perfect is combined with a modal it refers to the past, as shown in (48):

(47)   I should be done my flower planting shortly and will post some of my backyard pictures

(48)   I suppose I should have done my homework prior to getting hooked up with HD

Another comparison shows that the reduced form of [bdX] and [bfX] construction can be used in reduced relative clauses as in (49), whereas other perfect participles resist reduction, as in (50):

(49)   a) When done/finished your homework, you can get a lollipop.
(50)   a) * When begun your homework, you can get a lollipop.
       b) * When ended your homework, you can get a lollipop.
       c) * When worked on your homework, you can get a lollipop.

(Yerastov 2010:30)

With regards to focus and fronting, which we will discuss in the section on discourse properties of the construction (5.3), here I simply note that the direct object NP of [bdX] is highly resistant to fronting and focalization, as in (51). The present perfect is felicitous when fronted and focussed, as in (52):

(51)   a) * What were you done?
       b) * It was homework that I was done.
(52)   a) What have you done?
       b) It's homework that I have done.

(Yerastov 2010:30)

As Yerastov (2010b: 30) points out, there are also semantic differences between these constructions, with the present perfect allowing continuing, anterior interpretations as in (53), which [bdX] in (54) does not allow:

(53)   I have never done my homework (in my entire life)
(54)   * I am never done my homework (in my entire life)

(Yerastov 2010:30)

Also, when modified by a durative adverbial, which forces an iterative interpretation, [bdX] is unacceptable. Examples (55) and (56) show the present perfect with durative adverbial modifiers, whereas (57) and (58) show that [bdX] does not allow this modification.

(55)   I have not done my homework for the whole year
(56)   I have not done my homework since 6th grade

(57)   * I am not done my homework for the whole year
(58)   * I am not done my homework since 6th grade

(Yerastov 2010:30)

In this section we have seen that the construction [bdX] behaves in distinct ways from other constructions that use 'done', such as [bdwX], [bdV-ing], the passive [be V-en] and the present perfect [hdX]. This chapter has introduced the phenomena, and defined that [bdX] is not simply a variant of another construction. In Chapter 2 I introduce the theoretical framework for this study.

2. The framework

2.1. Cognitive linguistics: an introduction

Cognitive linguistics (CL), the framework for this thesis, grew out of research in the1970s that approached language as one of many facets of cognition. According to Croft and Cruse (2004: i) "language is governed by general cognitive principles, rather than by a special-purpose language module". Research in CL examines the relation of language structure to cognitive principles outside language, including "principles of human categorization; pragmatic and interactional principles, and functional principles in general, such as iconicity and economy" (Kemmer, 2010: 12) . Thus within the larger field of Linguistics, CL shares strong ties with research areas of functional/usage-based linguistics, linguistic description, psycholinguistics, pragmatics and discourse studies.

One of the important assumptions shared by scholars working in CL is that meaning is "so central to language that it must be a primary focus of study" (Kemmer, 2010). This is in contrast to the focus on language-internal structural principles that characterizes generative linguistics. To cognitive linguists, since linguistic structures serve the function of expressing meaning, the mappings between meaning and form should be at the forefront of linguistic analysis.

Influential scholars in the first wave of CL include Wallace Chafe, Charles Fillmore, George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker, and Leonard Talmy. Although these scholars adopted very different descriptive mechanisms, the work of Fillmore, Lakoff, and Langacker, in particular, was related in crucial ways. Fillmore's ideas developed into Frame Semantics and Construction Grammar (Fillmore, Kay, & O'Connor, 1988); Lakoff established himself in metaphor research (Lakoff, 1987, 1989, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, 2003); and Langacker's ideas later became known as Cognitive Grammar (1987; 2008). Giles Fauconnier's work also became integrated in the field as he developed a theory of Mental Spaces (Fauconnier, 1997; Fauconnier & Sweetser, 1996; Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). Together with Mark Turner's contribution to their research, this became known as the theory of Conceptual Blending, which has been acknowledged as "mesh[ing] in interesting ways with both Langacker's Cognitive Grammar and Lakoff's

theory of Metaphor" (Kemmer, 2010). Further developments in the field include the formalism known as Construction Grammar, developed by adherents of the scholars listed above. Each of these approaches will be described below as an introduction to CL.

Since CL is intimately related to semantics, the study of meaning, it is worth noting how the cognitive approach to semantics differs from other approaches. Different approaches to semantics have taken different focal points for their analysis: structural semantics analyzes types of semantic relations among words, such as hyponymy and antonymy; Lexical semantics has proposed that word concepts can be broken down into semantic features (e.g. STALLION is [EQUINE, MALE], and MARE is [EQUINE, FEMALE]); and in the logical tradition concepts are defined by their truth conditions, the conditions under which a concept does, or does not apply to a situation in the world. The cognitive linguistics approach asserts that concepts (also) belong together because they are associated in our *experience* of the world (Croft & Cruse, 2004: 7).[9] For example, a RESTAURANT is not simply a service institution; it is associated with a number of other concepts: CUSTOMER, WAITER, ORDERING, EATING, BILL. According to Croft and Cruse (2004: 7), "these concepts are not related to RESTAURANT by hyponymy, meronymy, antonymy or other structural semantic relations; they are related to RESTAURANT *by ordinary human experience"* (italics mine). This emphasis on the grounding of language form in experience is a unifying emphasis in CL approaches, as we will see in the next sections introducing frame semantics, mental spaces/conceptual blending, cognitive grammar and construction grammar.

2.2. Frames and mental spaces

One of the most influential proposal in cognitive linguistics is the notion of *frame* introduced by Fillmore (1976; 1985). Fillmore's Frame Semantics can best be understood as a research program in empirical semantics that emphasizes the

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[9] I follow the convention of Fillmore, Langacker and Lakoff in writing a word in upper case to refer to the concept, and in italicized lower-case to refer to word forms.

relationship – or more aptly, the continuity – between language and experience. Fillmore developed Frame Semantics as a model to examine the "full, rich understanding that a speaker intends to convey in a text and that a hearer constructs for that text" (Croft & Cruse, 2004: 8). Under this model, a frame is any system of concepts related such that to understand any individual concept one needs to understand the system in which it is grounded. When one concept is introduced it evokes all the related concepts. Put a different way, the internal structure of meaning is determined relative to the background frame in which it occurs. In his own words, Fillmore describes framing as "the appeal, in perceiving, thinking, and communicating, to structured ways of interpreting experiences" (1976: 20).

Frame Semantics arose out of Fillmore's work on case frames (1968), a model of grammar in which the semantic roles of the arguments of predicates were considered crucial to the characterization of verbs and clauses. Case frames were understood as "characterizing a small abstract 'scene' or 'situation', so that to understand the semantic structure of the verb it was necessary to understand the properties of such schematized scenes" (Fillmore, 1982: 115). In order to analyze a sentence, a language user would be required to have access to the properties of the knowledge schema, or cognitive structure, known as the Frame (or 'scene' in earlier terminology), which is invoked by the linguistic material, i.e., by the words in the mind of the speaker/hearer.

What follows from this is that the grammatical properties of the verbs and the syntactic patterns in which they occur, i.e., which elements of the frame may be realized, in which positions, and whether they are obligatory or not, are tied to the frame semantics in which the verb occurs. Let us take for example the *buying*, or Commercial Transaction Frame, whose elements include a buyer, a seller, goods and money. There is a large set of semantically related verbs linked to this frame, for example *buy, sell,* and *trade.* Each of these verbs profiles a different aspect of the frame. *Buy* profiles the buyer and the goods, and backgrounds the seller and the money, whereas *sell* focusses on the seller and the goods, backgrounding the buyer and the money. In Fillmore's case frame analysis of this frame, while these two verbs share meaning 'slots' for *buyer* and *seller*, *money* and *goods*, the syntactic order of these elements depends on which part of the frame is profiled. Furthermore, knowing the meaning of *buy, sell* and *trade* requires an understanding of what takes place in a commercial transaction – of the different forms a

transaction can take. Knowing the meaning of any of those verbs means knowing the meaning of all of them.

A further example of the syntactic features that are inherent in the description of a frame is evident when one considers the description of nouns that are linked to the money transfer frame – e.g. *tip, refund, honorarium, bounty, retainer, bonus,* and *child support.* Using any of these terms to describe a sum of money requires knowledge of a much larger scene, in which the transfer of money is but a small part. For example, using the noun *tip* invokes a scene with a waiter, whereas *child support* invokes a scene that could include divorce, lawyers, and court orders, for example. Furthermore, scene information is conveyed in the choice of determiner. If the money is not expected, the indefinite article is used, as in *She got a bonus this year.* However, if a person is expecting a bonus, it would be expressed with a possessive pronoun: *she got her bonus.* The choice also depends on when the talk about the money takes place, i.e., before or after an agreement about the transfer is made. For example, compare *I will give you an honorarium* and *here's your honorarium*. Before the agreement, an indefinite article can be used, whereas afterwards only a definite article or possessive pronoun can be used. Fillmore's Frame Semantics thus demonstrates that the semantics of the determiner system interacts with the semantics of the frame activated by the noun, leading a listener to interpret the scene partly in response to the determiner chosen.

In his work in CL Lakoff takes a similar experiential, frame-based approach whereby a speaker's construal of a situation is crucial to meaning in the communicative act. Lakoff argues that certain concepts are understood in terms of a cluster of distinct frames, called 'idealized cognitive models' (ICMs) (see also Cienki (2007) for a review of the terminology and notions of ICMs and Frames). In his seminal work *Women, Fire and Dangerous things* (1987) Lakoff elucidates this concept using the example of *mother*. Lakoff asserts that under classical theory it should be possible to give "clear necessary and sufficient conditions for *mother* that will fit all the cases and apply equally to all of them" (Lakoff, 1987: 74-76). This definition might be something like *a woman who has given birth to a child*. However, given that there are numerous models by which *mother* can be defined (the birth model; the genetic model; the nurturance model, etc.), *mother*, Lakoff argues, involves a complex model that combines all of these basic models. Thus he describes *mother* as an example of a radial category, that is, a category with a central

or prototypical subcategory where all the models converge, with extensions from that prototype for specific models such as *adoptive mother, surrogate mother,* and *foster mother* (Lakoff, 1987: 76).

Crucially for this thesis, frames are integral to semantics as conveyed through grammar. Take for example the semantic difference in the prepositions *on* and *in*, as in Examples (59) and (60):

(59)   The children played on the bus.
(60)   The children played in the bus.

(Fillmore, 1985: 235)

Where the first sentence describes a scene in which the bus is in operation, and the children on it are playing, the second would more likely describe children playing in an abandoned bus in a vacant lot, for example. Sentence (59) could not be used to describe the second scenario. Thus the meaning of a small functional lexical item here is responsible for the creation of the meaning of the sentence by invoking in its entirety the appropriate frame. It is not simply a matter of the meaning of the sentence relying on meaning encoded in a basic understanding of the preposition *on*. Rather, meaning here relies on knowledge of the details of the situation framed by *on* and *in* respectively (Fillmore 1985:235). As we will see in the analysis in Chapter 5 of [bdX], there is a similar reliance on frame structure in arriving at the appropriate meaning of the construction.

Another example of the syntactic applications of this cognitive approach to semantics comes from a leading construction grammarian, Adele Goldberg (1995; 2006). Goldberg illustrates the lexical profiling of participants in two related verbs, *rob* and *steal*, as in (61) and (62):

(61)   a) Jesse robbed the rich (of all their money).
        b) *Jesse robbed a million dollars (from the rich).
(62)   a) Jesse stole money (from the rich).
        b) *Jesse stole the rich (of money).

(Goldberg, 1995: 45)

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The distributional facts presented here can be accounted for in the semantic difference that is the result of the profiling capacity of the verb. While *rob* profiles the victim and the robber (agent), *steal profiles* the robber and the valuables. (This is similar to the Commercial Transaction Frame outlined above). Goldberg suggests the following argument structure for *rob* (63) and *steal* (64) (profiled elements in bold):

(63)   rob <**thief target** goods>
(64)   steal <**thief** target **goods**>

Thus different syntactic realizations of participant roles are shown to follow from the semantic frame of the verb and differences in profiling. The distinction in the verb's frame semantics "underlies or motivates the difference in profiling" (Goldberg, 1995: 43).

In sum, Frame Semantics takes as a goal a "uniform representation for the meanings of words, sentences and texts" (Petruck, 1996), where word meaning is characterized in terms of experience-based schematizations of the speaker's world. Also, and importantly, a word is defined in relation to its background frame, rather than in relation to other words. Thus a word's meaning depends on its conceptual underpinnings, and knowledge of the frame, and of its related frames, is critical to correct usage.

While semantic frames represent one of the two main organizing principles for conceptual structure, the other important organizing principle is that of *mental spaces*.[10] Croft and Cruse (2004: 32) illustrate this by way of the sentences in Example (65):

[10] For a more exhaustive introduction to mental spaces, see Fauconnier and Turner's seminal work *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind* (2002), which outlines what has become known as Blending Theory (see also Coulson 2001).

(65)

      a)   Gina bought a sports car.
      b)   Giorgio believes that Gina bought a sports car.
      c)   Paolo believes that Gina bought a pickup truck.
      d)   Gina wants to buy a sports car.
      e)   Gina will buy a sports car.
      f)   If Gina buys a sports car, then she will drive to Paris.

In a truth conditional semantics (a) is unproblematic, but (b-f) are problematic. In (b) things are stated as belief rather than facts, these beliefs may be at odds with the facts (c) and with other beliefs (d), statements that are predictions about the real world (e), events are hypothetical (f), are problematic. In truth-conditional semantics, situations are presented as belonging in possible worlds: there is the *real* world, and then worlds where situations are possible but not necessarily actual. A person's beliefs or mental attitudes are identified with possible worlds.

Fauconnier proposes an alternative model for representing the status of knowledge, namely that of *mental space.* According to Fauconnier (2006: 307), mental spaces are: "small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action." Mental spaces are structures that are partial assemblies containing elements, and are structured by frames. They are interconnected, and can be modified as thought and discourse unfold (Dancygier, 2011a). Fauconnier uses the notion of mental space to replace the widely held term a *possible world*, and argues that a mental space is a cognitive structure rather than as "some as yet unclear metaphysical space" (Croft & Cruse, 2004:33).

Because a mental space is a general cognitive mechanism, rather than a linguistic one, non-word structures can also be connected and mapped onto other cognitive structures. Sweetser and Dancygier (2005) give the example of two mental spaces mapped onto each other – the first being a mental list of customers in a restaurant and the other a list of their orders – as the structure behind the allowances of expressions such as *The ham sandwich wants his cheque now*. Dancygier relates mental spaces to framing in her discussion of this example as well, asserting that the most important aspect of framing is "the possibility to access the entire frame when only one aspect of it is mentioned" (2011a: 35). This was outlined above in the example of the Commercial Transaction Frame, in which, for example, buying a new car invokes other aspects of the frame that are not explicitly mentioned, such as selling and transfer.

However, in the *ham sandwich* example above, the linguistic expression *the ham sandwich* is used to stand for an associated aspect of the frame (the customer) and to evoke the entire frame (the customer eating the ham sandwich); this is called a frame-metonymy. Thus a frames and mental spaces approach to cognitive structure addresses issues that are normally left to the purview of pragmatics and will be shown to be relevant to [bdX]. Croft and Cruse agree when they assert that "this [mental spaces] is metaphysically more attractive and allows for elegant solutions to a number of problems in semantic and pragmatic analysis" (Croft & Cruse, 2004: 33).

To further illuminate the concept of mental spaces, I briefly outline a few examples here from Sweetser and Dancygier's work on conditional constructions in their 2005 book *Mental Spaces in Grammar: Conditional Constructions*(2005). They begin with the notion that an *if*-clause sets up a mental space – "a partial or local model of some aspect of mental content" (2005: 29). For example, in a scenario where someone says 'if I tie my handkerchief on it [a cut] it'll stick', the speaker is using the *if*-clause to set up a mental space wherein s/he ties his/her handkerchief on the cut, and only in that envisioned situation does the handkerchief stick to the cut. The job of *if* is to set up the mental space. Similarly, a predictive conditional sets up a correlation of parameters that structure mental spaces. Sweetser and Dancygier (2005: 32) give the following example from a digital gaming environment in which Hiro is a hacker who is being offered a 'hypercard' by another avatar:

(66)   If Hiro reaches out and takes the hypercard, then the data it represents will be transferred from this guy's system into Hiro's computer.

Here the Base Space is that Hiro is offered a hypercard. There are two alternative mental space set-ups, which are both interpreted as potential futures of the current base space. The first mental space contains the *if* space, in which Hiro accepts the hypercard, and its *extension space*, in which the data is transferred. The second space is the *alternative* future in which Hiro does not accept the card, and the data is not transferred. Only these two 'local' contexts are considered here. According to Sweetser and Dancygier (2005: 35), the properties and purposes of predictive mental space construction ensure that the *iff* interpretation will be the normal one, since speakers and hearers will construct and adjust a mental space according to the content of the *if*-clause. In more recent work, Dancygier (2011a) takes a blending approach to narrative

in *The Language of Stories.* She gives the example: *When I learn to surf, I will move to California*, which "assumes the availability of two mental spaces: the future space in which I am a surfer and I move to California, and the present reality where this is not the case" (Dancygier 2011: 35).

As we have seen, what is crucial to the field of Cognitive Science in general and CL in particular is the discovery that the same cognitive principles are operating in areas that were once viewed as entirely separate (Fauconnier & Turner, 2006: 303). Prior to CL, our ability to interpret word meaning, build syntactic structures, understand sentence meaning, work with discourse and pragmatic principles, produce metaphoric language, and execute other language related skills, were ascribed to separate processes. However, the recurrent finding in Cognitive Science has been that "key notions, principles, and instruments of analysis cut across all these divisions and in fact operate in non-linguistics situations as well" (Fauconnier, 2006). These include frames; analogical mappings and metonymy; viewpoint, once the purview of higher levels of narrative structure but since shown to be present at the level of 'ordinary grammar' as well (cf. Dancygier and Sweetser (2012)); and mental space mappings, which as we have seen can account for reference phenomena normally the purview of discourse semantics, and also tense/mood distributions such as the conditional (Fauconnier & Sweetser, 1996). CL thus offers a new way to look at semantics and syntax in form-meaning pairings. It is to the grammatical side of Cognitive linguistics that we now turn to examine two primary constructionist approaches to this pairing.

2.3. Cognitive Grammar and Construction Grammar

In the words of Langacker, the primary premise of Cognitive Grammar is that "grammar is meaningful" (2008: 3). He means this in two respects: firstly that the elements of grammar have meanings in their own right, and secondly that grammar allows us to "construct and symbolize the more elaborate meanings of complex expressions [...] and is thus an essential aspect of the conceptual apparatus through which we *apprehend and engage* the world" (2008: 3). Already one can hear echoes of the words of Fillmore, Lakoff, and Fauconnier as described above. Rather than being

considered a discrete and self-contained cognitive system, grammar is instead "not only an integral part of cognition but also a key to understanding it" (Langacker, 2008: 4).

Although Cognitive Grammar is not a direct outgrowth of the linguistic theories introduced here, it is fundamentally compatible with research programs outlined in this chapter. A basic claim of CG is that grammar is symbolic in nature, where a symbol is a pairing between meaning and phonological shape. According to Langacker "if language serves a symbolic function, establishing systematic connections between conceptualizations and observable phenomena like sounds and gestures, it would seem both natural and desirable to seek an account such that grammar is itself symbolic" (2008: 6). The basic tenet of CG is that "nothing beyond symbolic structures need be invoked for the proper characterization of complex expressions and the patterns they instantiate" and more specifically, "lexicon and grammar form a gradation consisting solely in assemblies of symbolic structures" (Langacker, 2008: 5).

A second constructionist grammatical framework, and the one that influences most heavily the analysis presented in this thesis, is Construction Grammar (CxG). CxG grew directly out of the informal representation system for semantics and the lexicon developed by Fillmore and colleagues. CG and CxG share the notion that constructions are conventionalized form-meaning pairings. Goldberg defines *construction* as "any linguistic pattern where some aspect of its form or function is not strictly predictable from component parts or other recognized constructions" (Goldberg 1995: 5). Under a CxG approach, "all levels of grammatical analysis are understood to involve pairings of form with semantic or discourse function, including morphemes or words, idioms, partially lexically filled and fully general phrasal patterns" (Goldberg 2006: 5). Both CG and CxG are also non-derivational, in that one construction is not 'derived' from another, but rather is related to it in a network of inheritances. And, importantly for the [bdX] pattern as will be shown later, in both of these cognitive approaches, grammatical patterns are viewed as inseparable from the semantic and pragmatic purposes they serve. That is, there is no strict division assumed between the lexicon and syntax; lexical and syntactic constructions are essentially the same type of data structure, though they "differ in their internal complexity" (Goldberg, 1995: 7).

Some examples of constructions will illuminate the main pillars of Goldberg's CxG framework. We start with examples from basic sentence patterns, which in a constructionist approach are considered to be constructions where the main verb combines with an argument structure construction (e.g. transitive, intransitive, passive) to construct the meaning of the sentence. (The alternative generative approach assumes that the form and interpretation of basic sentence patterns are specified by the syntax and/or semantic information encoded in the verb itself.) Take the following two examples:

(67)   Jo gave Mary a cake.
(68)   Mary put the cake on the table.

A generative approach would suggest that, encoded in the lexical features of *give* is a requirement for a three argument verb, whose complements correspond to agent, recipient, and theme. Likewise, *put* would be considered a three argument verb that requires complements denoting agent, theme and location. Since *give* and *put* in these sentences are prototypical verbs, it is difficult to determine whether the pattern of the sentence is a result of the specifications of the main verb or of the construction. However, when we turn to novel uses of language, for example Goldberg's now famous example in (69) and even more creatively in (70) thanks to Canadian children's storytelling icon Robert Munsch, we see that the generative claim that the argument structure is encoded in the verb is not adequate:

(69)   He sneezed the napkin off the table
(70)   He sneezed his tooth right across town[11]

In these sentences, in contrast to (67) and (68), one can see that the pattern cannot be naturally attributed to the main verb *sneeze*: *sneeze* generally is a single argument verb but here is acting as a transitive verb with two arguments. In CxG this is explained by the lexical meaning of the verb combining with the meaning of the construction to give a transitive interpretation of *sneeze.* A generative approach, on the other hand, would have to posit two separate lexical entries for *sneeze.* It is argued in a construction

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[11] Robert Munsch, *Andrew's Loose Tooth*, Scholastic Canada Ltd., 2002

approach that the argument structure construction provides "the direct link between surface form and general aspects of the interpretation" (Goldberg, 2006: 7).[12]

In light of its origins in Fillmore's work on case frames and Frame Semantics, where a frame is a knowledge structure based on real-world experience, it is natural that in CxG "an emphasis is placed on subtle aspects of the way we conceive of events and states of affairs" (Goldberg, 2006: 9). As mentioned above in the introduction to Langacker's work, the subtle aspects of scenes or scenarios are recorded in the construction (or grammar). Take, for example, Goldberg's analysis of the ditransitive, which has the form [Subj V Obj1 Obj2]. The ditransitive is generally accepted to evoke the notion of transfer or giving. Consider the examples in (71) and (72):

(71)   a) Liza bought a book for Zach.
         b) Liza bought Zach a book.

(72)   a) Liza sent a book to storage.
         b) Liza sent Stan a book.
         c) ??Liza sent storage a book

                                                            (Goldberg, 2006: 9)

Whereas (71) could mean that Liza bought a book for another person on behalf of Zach, (71) can only mean that Liza bought a book with the intention of giving it to Zach. In the same way, where (72) can be an expression of caused motion, meaning that Liza caused a book to be sent to storage, the ditransitive pattern in (72) requires that the receiver of the book, or goal argument of the verb, be animate and able to receive. This is why (72) is not felicitous (unless there is a metonymic interpretation whereby 'storage' refers to a person). The implication of transfer is not held in the semantics of the words used here, but rather in the ditransitive construction itself. Metaphorical uses of the notion of transfer add further strength to this argument, in that they imply that a transfer will occur (or not) as in (73) and (74):

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[12] For more on this, see Goldberg's (1995) analyses of English argument structures: the ditransitive, caused motion, resultative, and the way-construction.

(73)   Liza guaranteed Zach a book. (If the guarantee is satisfied, Z. will receive a book)

(74)   Liza refused Zach a book. (Liza caused Zach not to receive a book)

(Goldberg, 2003: 221)

In addition to semantic generalizations, information encoded in constructions includes facts about information structure, register, dialectal variation, for example. This is key to the CL framework: "because they specify a surface form and a corresponding function, constructionist approaches provide a direct way of accounting for these facts" (Goldberg, 2006: 10). As we will see in the construction analysis presented in this thesis, [bdX] is constrained in its information structure, register, and dialectal variation, in addition to other characteristics. All of these elements can be unified under a CxG approach. Furthermore, the semantic difference that exists between the two closely related constructions [bdX] and [bdwX] can also be accounted for in this framework. We have noted that CxG claims a one-to-one form-meaning pairing. That is, when there is a functional difference in a formal pattern, there is also a formal difference, and vice versa. The existence of two different forms in the [bdX]/[bdwX] dichotomy suggests the difference in function that I propose exists between the two variants.

The third main tenet of CxG is that it adopts a 'what you see is what you get' approach to syntactic form; that is, there are no underlying levels of syntax or any phonologically empty elements posited. In other words, and contrary to generative grammar, there are no derivations; a construct can involve other constructs, but one construct is not derived from another. For example, the construction in (75) has inheritance relations with constructions in (76) (Goldberg, 2006: 10):

(75)   [What did Liza buy the child?]

(76)
    a)   Liza, buy, the, child, what, did constructions (i.e., words)
    b)   Ditransitive construction
    c)   Question construction
    d)   Subject–Auxiliary inversion construction
    e)   VP construction
    f)   NP construction

As mentioned, there are no underlying levels of syntax posited. The 'surface form' does not specify a particular word order, rather the order of arguments in the construction in (75) is specified by a combination of a Verb-Phrase (VP) construction with the Question

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construction, which allows the theme argument (w*hat*) to appear in the sentence-initial position.

A last pillar of CxG that is relevant to the analysis of [bdX] is that of combination, or compositionality. Firstly, constructions fail to combine when one or more of the specifications of the construction are in conflict. For example, in the malformed sentence in (72) above (*Liza sent storage a book*), the specification of the ditransitive construction that the recipient be animate conflicts with the meaning of *storage*, thus preventing an acceptable construction from being formed. However, unlike in a generative syntactic model where the meaning of a phrase is a direct result of combining elements in the phrase, in CG and CxG, the combination of simpler structures to yield more complex structures does not result merely in a total being the sum of its parts. Rather, in Langacker's words, "a composite structure has to be regarded as an entity in its own right, not strictly reducible to its components" (Langacker, 2008: 4). Langacker uses the term *partial compositionality* to describe this phenomenon.

In a similar vein, in their work on mental spaces, Sweetser and Dancygier (2005) introduce the notion of *constructional compositionality*, in which partial building blocks combine to give form and function to a complex construction, yet the overall meaning of construction cannot be determined by those building blocks alone. This is an important addition to cognitive approaches to grammar. In the example given above *He sneezed the napkin off the table*, a construction approach helps us understand how *sneeze* acquires a sense of movement inherent in the ditransitive construction in which it is integrated. However, both the lexical verb *sneeze* and the ditransitive construction are present and it is simple to see how the directed motion meaning of *sneeze* is conveyed. In contrast, as we shall see in the analysis of [bdX] presented here, [bdX] conveys meaning that is not captured in the semantics introduced by any one element in the expression. Rather it is the construction as a whole that conveys important semantic, aspectual and viewpointed information.

CxG is a framework that posits that 'theoretical machinery' should be able to account for all instances of language use (Goldberg, 1995: 6). This is in contrast to the generative tradition that aims to account for structures that are determined to belong to 'core grammar', leaving out 'unusual' language usage such as idiomatic expressions.

Due to this general underpinning, the initial, and now-well known grammatical analyses in the CxG framework focussed on idioms.[13] In fact, since much early work in Cognitive linguistics did examine constructions that were of an idiomatic nature, it is seen as a need in the field now to focus investigations on accounting for other, more regular, language phenomena, including acquisition of syntax, for example (Gries, Hampe, & Schönefeld, 2005). This paper is a contribution to addressing this need for analyses of regular (i.e., non-idiomatic) grammatical constructions, their developments and how the cognitive model can account for different elements of meaning: semantic, pragmatic, discourse, viewpoint and others, for example, are relevant in [bdX].

Having seen the development of Cognitive linguistics and examined primary notions in the field, including frames, mental spaces, and cognitive and construction grammar, we now turn to one of the primary methodologies accepted in the field, that of corpus work.

2.4. Corpora and the web as corpus

The field of Cognitive linguistics favours corpus work as an increasingly important methodology, as it allows for analysis of frequency and patterns in language. In corpora "facts about the actual use of linguistic expressions such as frequencies and individual patterns that are fully compositional are recorded alongside more traditional linguistic generalizations" (Goldberg 1995: 45). As corpus work is the methodological basis for the present study, in this section I introduce the notion of corpus, and examine the advantages and shortcomings of using the World Wide Web as a corpus. I finish with an outline of WebCorp, the tool I used to construct my own corpus for the study of [bdX].

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[13] Studies of idiomatic expressions included [the X-er the Y-er] (*The more carefully you do your work the easier it will get*) and [Let alone] *(I barely got up in time to eat lunch, let alone cook breakfast)* (Fillmore et al., 1988); the [What's X Doing Y] construction (*What's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this*? or *What is this scratch doing on the table*?) (Kay & Fillmore, 1999); the way-construction (*She giggled her way up the stairs*) (Israel, 1996); the double is construction (*The thing is is that people talk that way*) (Tuggy, 1995) and (Massam, 1999).

Cognitive linguists see the use of corpora as more than simply a supplementary tool to confirm intuitions; rather it is seen as a "fundamental part of theory construction. [A] schema-based approach is well-suited to the task of describing the major and minor patterns of use revealed by corpus analysis" (Barlow, 1996: 2). The growth of corpus studies in the CL framework is slowly addressing the criticism within mainstream linguistics that the Cognitive Linguistic framework has received for "post-hoc flavour and […] lack of predictive force" reported by Gries, Hampe and Schönefeld (2005) (but cf. papers in Barlow and Kemmer, 2000; Boas, 2003; Diessel, 2004; and Goldberg et al., 2004).

In the history of corpus studies there is a lasting discussion on what makes a corpus. McEnery and Wilson respond that a corpus must have the following characteristics: it must be representative, a sampling, finite in size, machine-readable and a standard reference (McEnery, 1996). However, Kilgarriff and Grefenstette (2003) revisit this argument and reframe the question as: 'what is a good corpus for linguistic task X', and define a corpus as "a collection of texts when considered as an object of language or literary study" (Kilgarriff & Grefenstette, 2003). To this I would add that a corpus is generally restricted to facilitate the object of study. For example, in the study presented here, in order to explore [bdX] at it is used in Canada, I restricted my corpus to instances of [bdX] found on Canadian web logs. The web is a corpus, but in order to render it useful, it needs to be reshaped to the purposes of a particular project.

The origins of early corpora were varied as they were built to serve different purposes. In the early 1960s, the Brown corpus was created as a resource for computer-based language study. It contains 500 samples of English-language text, totaling one million words, compiled from works published in the United States in 1961. The corpus was originally lexical, and later tagged for part of speech. In the 1970s Sinclair and Atkins developed the COBUILD (Collins Birmingham University International Language Database) project, which has yielded the Bank of English, a corpus of contemporary texts, as well as the Collins COBUILD English Dictionary, which eventually grew to 8 million words. The COBUILD dictionary was the first to be based completely on corpus data and to give examples of real language in use from corpus data from the Bank of English corpus. Ten years later Atkins was also involved in the development of the British National Corpus, with its 100 million words capturing different varieties of British

English. Corpora are no longer the domain only of computational linguists, but are used regularly by linguists in a wide variety of frameworks as a way to access actual language data. Other large English-language corpora include: the International Corpus of English (ICE), which has sub-corpora for varieties of English; the Switchboard Corpus, a corpus of spontaneous conversations collected at Texas featuring over 240 hours of recorded speech, or 3 million words of text, spoken by over 500 speakers of both sexes from every major dialect of American English; and The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), a 425 million word corpus collected by Brigham Young University between 1990 and 2011.

With the exponential growth of the World Wide Web since the 1980s, linguists have access to a huge amount of natural language data at their fingertips. This virtually limitless repository of actual usage data provides an incredible resource for linguists, with easy access and at no expense. Kilgarriff and Grefenstette have called it a "fabulous linguists' playground" (2003). There are many reasons for this: it is big (hundreds of billions of words); it is often the only available source for the type of language the researcher is interested in (Luedeling, 2007); it is free; and it is instantly available (Kilgarriff, 2003). As is the case with [bdX], the web also allows us to explore phenomena that are sparse in a standard corpus either because they belong to a genre or register not represented in the corpus, or because they stem from a time not covered by corpus data (i.e., the phenomenon is too new) (Luedeling 2007: 14). In these cases the web presents an excellent source of data.

Discussions on whether the web is a corpus usually center on the question as to what a corpus represents. Indeed each corpus is only representative of the texts it uses as a source. The widely used Penn Tree Bank (PTB) is based on articles from the Wall Street Journal, and thus is representative only of the kind of language found in journal articles in that daily newspaper. Similarly the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) claims to be the largest freely-available corpus of English and the "only large

and balanced corpus of American English."[14] However, I would argue that the claim to being the only balanced corpus of American English is misguided: it is balanced among the genres it includes. The Switchboard Corpus is another widely used corpus, but as it is based on recorded telephone conversations, cannot claim to be representative of *all* language any more than the PTB.The problem of representativeness is thus not restricted to the web.

However, there are other well-documented (Kilgarriff & Grefenstette, 2003; Luedeling, Evert, & Baroni, 2007; Renouf, Kehoe, & Banerjee, 2007) problems inherent in using the web as a corpus. Luedeling (2007: 9) states that, in order to search a corpus, one needs:

a) a qualitative description of the items to be found that can be operationalized in the form of search conditions
b) a stable corpus (at least for the duration of data acquisition, but ideally in the long term to enable other researchers to replicate results)
c) linguistic annotation so that the search item can be located (see (a))
d) the possibility to categorize search results according to criteria such as age/gender/genre of speaker

Many of these criteria prove problematic for the web. With respect to a) and c): while many linguists simply use frequency results from Google searches, for example, this is problematic for many reasons. Google weights its search results towards search items that appear in page titles, for example (for a more detailed discussion see Luedeling (2007)). With regards to b), the web is not stable. Users, hosts of websites, and companies, change content on the web innumerable times daily. Thus a search that is conducted at a given point in time can never be replicated. This is not desirable for linguistic research. Lastly, there is no control on the web of who the 'speaker' is, meaning that the information Luedeling lists above as desirable to categorize speakers – age, gender, etc. – cannot be ascertained.

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[14] http://corpus.byu.edu/coca

Despite these weaknesses, however, the web does present a valuable resource due mostly to the volume of data and the aforementioned presence of language utterances not captured in other corpora. There are now tools to operationalize searches of the web that essentially provide a 'layer' between the search term and the search engine and allow the linguists more control in gathering their data. For the study conducted here, I used one such tool, WebCorp (www.webcorp.org.uk) to restrict the searches to Canadian web blogs to capture colloquial Canadian language use. While blogs are by virtue of the medium written text, their language register is more spoken than written, and therefore were well-suited to a search for colloquial Canadian speech. In Chapter 3 I outline the creation of my corpus using the WebCorp interface.

2.5. Conclusion

As we have seen, Cognitive linguistics considers language as "a means of organising, processing, and conveying informational structures in the mind that reflect our interaction with the world" (Cuyckens, Dominiek, & Rice, 1997). In this chapter I have presented the primary tenets of the theoretical framework of cognitive linguistics. I have highlighted Frames as a way of structuring world-knowledge and outlined constructionist approaches that formalize this structuring and its relationship to grammar. Corpus-based methodologies have played a large supporting role in cognitive research, as the study of language *usage* is "no longer relegated to the margins of the discipline but is a legitimate – some would say central – concern of linguists" (Rice & Newman, 2010). These are the primary aspects of the Cognitive approach that inform the analysis of [bdX] in Canadian English presented in this thesis. Using this as background, in the following chapters I outline the creation of the corpus using WebCorp (Chapter 3), describe patterns in the data that was gathered (Chapter 4), and provide a full analysis that reflects the actual usage of the construction in Chapter 5.

3.   Corpus and methodology

Gathering the data to investigate [bdX] and related variants [bfX] and [bdwX] in AE and CE proved challenging. I searched the two large corpora of Canadian English: The Bank of Canadian English (BCE)[15] and ICE-Canada (the Canadian portion of the International Corpus of English (ICE).[16] The BCE contained three instances of [bdX], and ICE-Canada contained none. Similarly, to investigate whether there were attested American instances of [bdX], and to explore the American English variant [bdwX], I undertook a search of the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)[17]. The search for [bdX] in COCA yielded two results: one of these was in a clearly Canadian context, and the other was ambiguous as to the dialect of the speaker. I believe the scarcity of results in traditional corpora was due largely to the colloquial, informal register in which this construction generally is used, and to the fact that as a result it is largely spoken. The BCE is 2.4 million words, of which 100 citations were transcribed from spoken language, and the remainder is from books, periodicals such as newspapers, magazines, and journals, and websites, online data and flier texts. The ICE-Canada corpus contains 500 texts of approximately 2,000 words each for a total of approximately one million words. Of the 500 texts, 300 are spoken (phone calls, face to face conversations, classroom teaching, broadcast news, broadcast discussions,

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[15] The BCE is a database project that aims to provide a complete, representative record of Canadian English for linguistic research. Access is currently restricted to individuals for the purpose of research. I'd like to express my appreciation to Dr. Stefan Dollinger (UBC) for granting me research access to the BCE.

[16] ICE-Canada, part of the International Corpus of English (ICE), is hosted at the University of Alberta. Access is available under license by contacting Professor John Newman in the Linguistics Department of the University of Alberta. I am grateful for Dr. Newman's assistance in accessing the corpus.

[17] COCA is hosted by Brigham Young University and can be accessed at http://corpus.byu.edu/coca

parliamentary debates, etc.) and the remaining 200 are written (e.g. student writing, exam scripts, academic writing, popular writing). Despite the higher number of texts from spoken data in ICE, [bdX] still did not appear. As we see in Chapters 4 and 5, [bdX] is largely restricted to exchanges regarding domestic routines or work-related tasks. This type of topic is not discussed in newscasts, for example. Initially I had thought that the telephone conversations in ICE-Canada would be a good match. However, it could be that that portion of the ICE-Canada corpus was simply too small to capture any instances, or that the subject matter and register of the calls did not lend themselves to colloquial usage about domestic routines, for example.

Faced with these difficulties in using traditional corpora I turned to the World Wide Web. WebCorp (http://www.webcorp.org.uk) is a web-based interface to search engines that was used in this project to execute searches using of language instances on the World Wide Web. In this chapter I give a description of the methodology for developing the corpus using WebCorp, including the difficulties that were encountered in working with data on the Web, and a detailed sketch of the searches that were conducted. This sets the stage for Chapter 4 in which I describe the patterns in the data.

3.1. WebCorp

WebCorp interfaces with web search engines Google and Bing, giving the user the opportunity to specify a query in several important ways. The query itself is not limited to words, but can also include wildcards and regular expressions. The user can also restrict the search to a particular application programming interface (API), for example, deciding whether WebCorp should search using the Google search engine or the Bing search engine. Even more options are available to restrict searches, such as to only search Google News, Bing News or Google Blogs. Once the user has input the search term, defined the API, and the language of the search, WebCorp returns up to 60 hits per search, then organizes the search results in a manner similar to standard concordancers, by highlighting the keyword in context. It also returns metadata including the last update date and the URL of the source web page. This is important for replicating results, and accessing the full context of utterances that WebCorp returns. A

schematic of the WebCorp architecture is presented in Figure 2 below, showing the search and analysis routine:
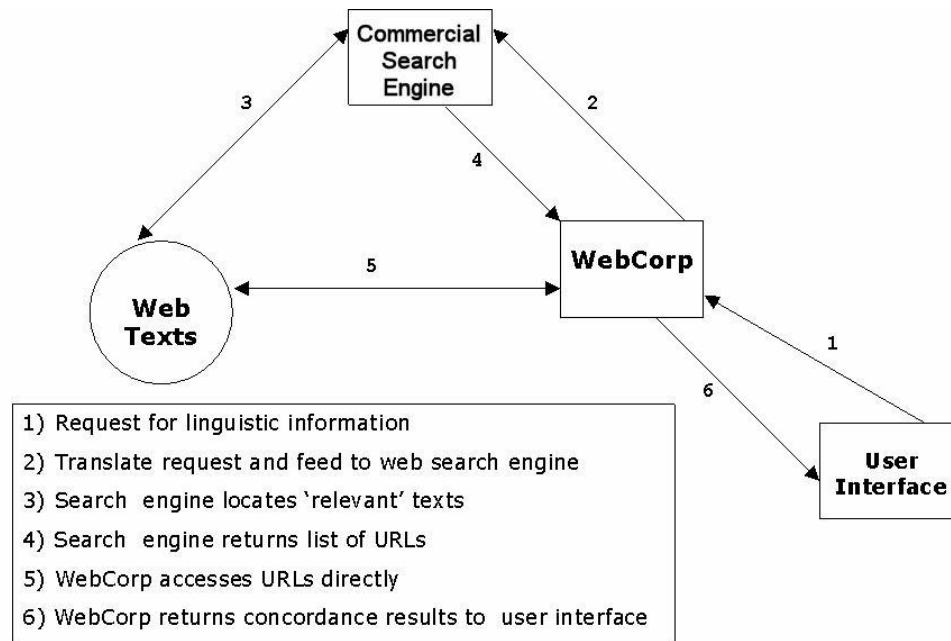
Figure 2.   *WebCorp system architecture*
(Renouf et al., 2007: 48)

However, since WebCorp accesses the web pages through the API of a particular search engine, it is limited to restrictions imposed by that search engine. For example, Google ranks the strength of the 'hits' based on its own mechanisms. While it would be more useful for linguists if WebCorp returned a random sample of results, instead the results are ordered according to Google's priorities, which are to return the pages that rank highest in popularity or topical relevance. This is not relevant to a search with a purpose of linguistic study. A second limitation is that the search is restricted at a maximum of 200 web pages (the user can set this at 10, 25, 50, 100 or 200 pages) for reasons of ensuring manageable search times. The number of returns is also capped by the Google Blogs API at 60 per search, which in the [bdX] searches proved very limiting – a point I return to in more detail below. Lastly, since part of speech is not tagged on the web, WebCorp cannot interpret part of speech tagging, for example, which is a very important feature in fixed corpora that renders the data more searchable.

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The stability of a corpus developed from web data is also a challenge. Search companies are constantly updating their algorithms for search results, their databases and their interfaces. Thus experiments using tools such as WebCorp can never truly be replicated, as the control really rests with the search engine provider. To address this shortcoming, the Birmingham corpus group (the team behind WebCorp), has built its own corpus directly from the web: Linguists Search Engine (LSE). This corpus is built on web data, but is not 'live'. Since it is a static corpus, any search results from LSE are replicable. While addressing the charge of stability, the disadvantage is that in becoming a static corpus, one of the main advantages of the web – as a source of up-to-the-minute language usage data – is lost. The LSE was unfortunately not useful for the current experiment, as the corpus is not yet able to differentiate the sources of data, meaning that it was not possible to restrict the search to data that originated on Canadian web blogs.

Despite the fact that the results are not replicable, using WebCorp was the best option to gather the data set required for this project. Having seen the main pitfalls of using the web, and WebCorp, to acquire data, I now turn to the factors that made this project possible (recall that none of the established corpora contained instances of this construction at all).

The primary advantage provided by WebCorp for the current study was the ability to restrict searches to a certain genre, namely to the Google Blogs API, and to further restrict by domain name – that is to *.ca* for the CE searches – as seen in the screen capture in Figure 3 below. In the advanced settings I restricted the search to the *.ca* domain for the Canadian searches, and for American searches, changed the settings to include American blogs and newspapers.

Figure 3. ***WebCorp screenshot***

http://www.webcorp.uk.org

In addition to restricting domains, the pattern matching capabilities of WebCorp are more fully developed than searching Google directly. Both WebCorp and Google itself process wildcard searches. This is when the wildcard (*) stands for any word in a phrase – e.g. 'the * sank' will match *the boat sank, the ship sank*, and *the ferry sank*. By searching with the wildcard ('I'm * done the'), I could search for modification, such *as I'm almost done the, I'm really done the, I'm half done the.* However, WebCorp also offers pattern matching where groups of characters are enclosed in square brackets and separated by the pipe (|) character. For example, while 'the * sank' will match any three word phrase beginning with *the* and ending with *sank*, the pattern 'the [ship | boat] sank'

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will only match *the ship sank* or *the boat sank*. I used these to group searches together, as in '[am|are|is] done the'.

The primary downfall was that the Google Blogs API limits WebCorp to returning 60 hits per search. Thus a truly robust quantitative study based on comparing the number of hits of one construction with the frequency of a second construction, was rendered impossible. If there were more than 60 hits per search, only 60 would show, with no indication of whether this was 60 of 61, or 60 of 250, for example. This limit on search items returned proved the most frustrating and limiting feature of gathering data using WebCorp, and had significant repercussions on the data gathered. This was complicated by the fact that, because the internet is not parsed for part of speech, there were many search returns that contained uses of *done* that were not part of [bdX] or [bdwX]. In order to receive as many instances of the relevant construction as possible, I therefore had to control the search terms more than I would have liked. I had to search for full phrases 'I am done my' and 'I'm done my', rather than 'done my'. For example, a search query for 'done my' returned instances of the more popular phrase *have done my*, and did not return any instances of the [bdX] constructions within those crucial first 60 results.

3.2. The searches

Having reviewed the advantages and downfalls of using the web, we now turn to the data that was collected. Data sets were built for each of the three variants for both CE and AE, resulting in a total of six separate data sets, as shown in Table 2.

Canadian English	American English
be done X [bdX]	be done X [bdX]
be finished X [bfX]	be finished X [bfX]
be done with X [bdwX]	be done with X [bdwX]

Table 2.   Data sets included in this study

The same searches were conducted on each data set. The search term for each of these six constructions was composed of 3 parts: 1. the form of the copula *be*

(present and past in all persons); 2. *done* or *finished*; and 3. the determiner head of the noun phrase. I modeled my search grid on Longman's description of co-occurrence patterns of major classes of determiners and nouns in the Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (LGSWE) (1999:259), which lists the following major determiner types: definite and indefinite articles, personal pronouns, demonstratives and the 6 most frequent quantifiers in English, which, according to LGSWE *are all, both, each, every, many* and *some*. All of these searches were then performed a second time inserting a wildcard (*) before *done* to capture all instances of modification (*really done, half done, not done,* etc.). An abbreviated table of the search combinations is shown in Table 3. The full table of search terms can be found in Appendix A.

Type of determiner		Initial search	Wildcard search
Article	the	am/are/is done the	am/are/is * done the
	a	am/are/is done a	am/are/is * done a
Demonstrative	that	am/are/is done that	am/are/is * done that
	this	am/are/is done this	am/are/is * done this
	those	am/are/is done those	am/are/is * done those
possessive	my	am done my	am* done my
	your	are done your	are * done your
	her/his	is done her/his	is * done her/his
	its	is done its	is * done its
	our	are done our	are * done our
	their	are done their	are * done their
quantifier	all	am/are/is done all	am/are/is * done all
	each	am/are/is done each	am/are/is * done each
	every	am/are/is done every	am/are/is * done every
	both	am/are/is done both	am/are/is * done both
	some	am/are/is done some	am/are/is * done some
	many	am/are/is done many	am/are/is * done many

Table 3.   Search items per construction

In addition to the searches listed above, searches for contracted verb forms were also performed, e.g. *I'm/we're/you're/they're done* + determiner. Again these could have

been collapsed into two searches: *'m done/'re done* + determiner type if it weren't for the Google Blogs API return limit of 60 instances. Of note here is the difficulty with the third person contractions *he's* and *she's*. These were not included as it was impossible to tell whether the contracted form was *has*, as in *She has done her homework* (present perfect construction) or the [bdX] form with the *be* copula, as in *She is done her homework*.

Lastly, it must be noted that question forms were not included in the search terms listed above to limit the scope of searches. A cursory search was conducted, however, and results will be noted in Chapter 4.

The few attested instances of [bdX] in the BCE noted above contained a bare noun as X. Given the restrictions of using WebCorp described above, I note here that these bare nouns could only be queried on a one-off basis by entering the noun itself, for example 'am done dinner' or 'is done homework'. Because the web is not parsed, it was not possible to query bare nouns in a manner that would return all of the instances of [bdX] where X is a bare noun, and bare nouns are therefore not accounted for in this project.

A further restriction of WebCorp related to its lack of parsing is that it doesn't differentiate between items in a search that are at the end of one sentence and items in the same search that begin the next sentence. Thus, for example, a search for 'am done the' returned *am done. The guys*, which is clearly not a desired result for this construction. This again muddied the data given the limit of 60 returns. Where there were many cases of this type, it was hard to get a clear picture of how frequent the desired search result was. The same applied for searches with the indefinite article, for example, that would return *It's done a year in advance*, for the search 'is done a', where this is not an example of the [bdX] construction, but rather an instance the normal use of *I'm done* with a temporal adverbial phrase.

In this chapter I have outlined the methodology of creating the corpus, including the advantages and pitfalls of using the web, and WebCorp. Working within the restrictions of WebCorp and the Google Blogs API definitely affected the data that could be collected. The results shown here, therefore, present a representative sample of the

usage of [bdX] and other patterns, but cannot be in any way considered statistically reliable. However, the results do represent a sampling of [bdX] and related constructions in the natural usage of colloquial English, and can be considered robust, if not entirely representative in a statistical sense. Having shown how the data was collected, I turn to a description of the data set in Chapter 4.

4.   Description of corpus data

In this chapter I present an in-depth description of the data. For the six data sets that were gathered, the breakdown of number of tokens is shown in Table 4.

Construction	CE: # of tokens	AE: # of tokens
[bdX]	764	7
[bfX]	358	8
[bdwX]	1385	833
TOTAL	2507	848

Table 4.   Tokens per data set

The few instances (7 and 8 respectively) of [bdX] and [bfX] on AE blogs were all from the *.edu* web domain. This is the domain for educational institutions in the USA, so it is likely that these instances were posted by Canadian students studying in the United States. While the results for the first two variants listed, [bdX] and [bfX] were predicted, the high number of [bdwX] in CE over AE was unexpected. Naturally these numbers are not necessarily indicative of overall frequency of usage in CE and AE, i.e., it can't be claimed from this corpus result that Canadians use [bdwX] more than Americans. The corpus results do, however, beg the question as to why there were 50% more instances in CE than AE. This may be due to shortcomings addressed earlier regarding the restrictions of gathering the data. However, the question also arises as to whether Canadians are more 'done' in general, than Americans, that is do they use the 'done' constructions more than alternative ways of expressing completion in the past tense. Possible directions for enquiry include: Is [bdwX] a more frequent usage in CE due to the entrenchment of other 'done' constructions such as [bdX]? Does AE use the present perfect [hdX] more often? These questions lie beyond the scope of this thesis but a more detailed study, especially contrasting [bdwX] and [hdX] in AE would certainly yield interesting comparisons.

In this chapter I present the three factors that were examined across each variant: the distribution of NPs in the subject slot (section 4.1), determiner distribution (4.2) and the distribution of direct object noun phrase (4.3). In the presentation of the results, I compare the frequencies for [bdX] and [bfX], which pattern together for the most part, and [bdwX], across CE and AE. A full table of the distributions can be found in Appendix B (determiner distribution), Appendix C (semantic field distribution), and Appendix D (noun distribution).

4.1. Subject

Tables 5 and 6 show the distribution of the type of subject that occurs with each variant of the pattern. All four variants share a similar pattern: the first person subject *I* is most common (~38%-47%), second person pronoun *you* is next most common (~17-29%), and the first person plural *we* is third most common). Notable is the low frequency of third person singular subjects, which is even lower than third person plural. As noted earlier, it was not possible to search for the third person contractions *he's* and *she's.* It was thought that this might explain the low frequency of instances with the third person pronouns, as all other searches included contractions and therefore yielded more returns. However, in examining the data it can be seen that for all the other persons (*I, you, we, they*) the instances of [bdX] with contractions make up between 15% and 25% of the total instances for that person[18]. However, even adding this percentage on to the count for *s/he* would yield only 50 instances, still lower than instance with *they*, and far lower in comparison to first and second person. Table 5 shows the data for [bdX/bfX], and Table 6 presents the distribution for [bdwX] in CE and AE.

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[18] I'm/I am: 70/350 (20%); you're/you are: 33/132 (25%); we're/we are: 15/98 (15.31%); they're/they are: 12/56 (21.42%)

	[bdX] - CE		[bfX] - CE	
Pronoun	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**
I	350	45.81%	137	38.27%
you	132	17.28%	98	27.37%
s/he	41	5.37%	12	3.35%
we	98	12.83%	44	12.29%
they	56	7.33%	34	9.50%
Other (personal names and other NPs)	87	11.39%	33	9.22%
TOTAL	764		358	

Table 5.   ***Distribution of subject pronouns in [bdX] and [bfX]***

	[bdwX] -CE		[bdwX] -AE	
	Count	**%**	**Count**	**%**
I	547	39.49%	391	46.94%
you	402	29.03%	211	25.33%
s/he	79	5.70%	35	4.20%
we	220	15.88%	122	14.65%
they	77	5.56%	42	5.04%
Other	60	4.33%	32	3.84%
TOTAL	1385		833	

Table 6.   ***Distribution of subject pronouns in [bdwX] in CE and AE***

The high rate of first person usage is expected in a corpus of blogs, which as a genre are generally narrations in the first person; however, I believe this also relates to particular semantics of the construction, for example viewpoint, which will be discussed in the analysis in Chapter 5.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, an informal search for question forms of the [bdX] patterns was conducted to investigate whether this would yield more instances of second person. The search for 'are you done the' yielded no returns, and 'are you done your' yielded six. In three of the six, the noun phrase was *Christmas shopping*, to give

Are you done your Christmas shopping (yet)?. There was one instance of 'are we done our' (*Are we done our walk now?*). Because the blog genre does not lend itself to dialogue or question forms, the results of these cursory searches are not unexpected.

4.2. Determiner

In this section, we'll examine the six most frequent determiners.[19] I chose the first six, as this encompasses 73%-83% of the data for each construction. The seventh most frequent determiner had in all cases less than 7% frequency, with most of the remaining determiners occurring less than 1% of the time.

The distribution of determiners for the CE variants [bdX] and [bfX] is shown in Table 7.

[bdX] – CE			[bfX] – CE		
Determiner	#	%	Determiner	#	%
the	146	19.06%	the	102	28.49%
my	140	18.28%	my	67	18.72%
his/her	94	12.27%	your	52	14.53%
their	67	8.75%	their	37	10.34%
your	59	7.70%	his/her	21	5.87%
this	50	6.92%	this	17	4.75%
TOTAL	556	72.77%		296	82.68%

Table 7.   *Determiner distribution in [bdX] and [bfX]*

In both variants, *the* and *my* were the most frequent determiners, with [bdX] showing an almost even division between the *the* and *my*, at ~18-19%. For [bfX], the definite article

[19] A table of the complete determiner distribution for each construction can be found in Appendix B.

was notably more frequent than for [bdX], at 28.49%, while the first person possessive in [bfX] approximately matched the frequency in [bdX], with 18.72% and 18.28% of tokens headed by *my* respectively. A second notable difference between the two variants is the frequency of third person singular *his/her* versus second person singular/plural possessive *your*. In [bdX], *his/her* occurs 12.27% versus 5.87% in [bfX]; the results are reversed for *your:* 'be done your X' occurs 7.7%, and 'be finished your X' much more frequently (14.53%). The proximal demonstrative *this* is the 6th most frequent determiner in both variants.[20]

Table 8 shows the distribution of determiner types comparing [bdwX] in CE and AE.

[bdwX] – CE			[bdwX] – AE		
Determiner	#	%	Determiner	#	%
the	499	36.03%	the	247	29.65%
this	161	11.62%	my	136	16.33%
my	131	9.46%	this	118	14.17%
your	111	8.01%	his/her	78	9.36%
that (BARE)	100	7.22%	our	62	7.44%
his/her	69	4.98%	all	44	5.28%
TOTAL	1071	77.32%		685	82.23%

Table 8.   Determiner distribution: [bdwX] in CE and AE

The definite determiner is the most frequent determiner in this construction by a margin of almost 25% over the next most frequent for CE, and of over 13% for AE. The proximal demonstrative determiner *this* is the next most frequent by a small margin over the first person possessive *my* for CE, whereas for AE the first person possessive has a small margin over the proximal demonstrative. In sum, these first three most frequent tokens account for around 60% of determiners with this construction: for the CE variant 57.11%

[20] Where more than one type of determiner was contained within the determiner phrase, for example a quantifier and a possessive *all my*, it was counted as a quantifier determiner type.

and the AE variant 60.15%. The third person possessive *his/her* accounts in both variants for the fourth most frequent determiner, followed by *all* and *your*, and *our* and *all*, respectively for CE and AE, in 5th and 6th place. Table 9 shows the top three determiner collocations for each of the variants:

Pattern	Top three determiners
[bdX] – CE	the X, my X, his/her X
[bfX] – CE	the X, my X, your X
[bdwX] – CE	the X, this X, my X
[bdwX] – AE	the X, my X, this X

Table 9.   Most common determiner patterns per construction

This table clearly demonstrates that *the* is dominant in all cases, while *my* is second most common in three of the four patterns. [bdX] and [bfX] prefer *his/her* and *your*, respectively, while both variants of [bdwX] prefer *my*.

While the definite determiner and first person possessive determiner are the most frequently occurring determiner types across all constructions and variants, the remaining possessive determiners occur much more frequently with the [bdX/[bfX] construction than with the [bdwX] construction. In Table 10, below, I compare the distribution for each pattern according to the determiner classes: article (definite/indefinite), personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and quantifiers.

Determiner Groupings	[bdX] – CE		[bfX] – CE		[bdwX] – CE		[bdwX] - AE	
All personal pronouns (*my,your,his/her,our,their*)	404	52.88%	194	54.19%	381	27.51%	271	32.53%
Definite/Indef. determiner (*the,a*)	168	21.99%	114	31.84%	550	39.71%	273	32.77%
Demonstrative determiner (*this X, that X, those X*)	77	10.08%	27	7.54%	227	16.39%	146	17.53%
Demonstrative pronoun (*this,that,those*)	58	7.59%	6	1.68%	149	10.76%	69	8.28%
Quantifier (*all,both,each,every, most,some*)	55	7.20%	17	4.75%	61	4.40%	69	8.28%

Table 10.   *Determiner distribution by determiner class for all variants*

Here one can see that the most frequent determiner type for [bdX] and [bfX] is the personal pronoun, with ~52-54% of tokens containing this pattern. While one could suggest that this is due to the first person bias of a blog corpus, a look at the distribution for [bdwX] in the CE and AE quickly demonstrates that this is not the reason. [bdwX] contains a personal pronoun in the determiner position much less frequently (close to 30% for both of them). Where the two constructions vary most considerably is shown in Table 11, which presents the average values for [bdX] and the CE and AE [bdwX] variants.

Determiner Type	[bdX]/[bfX] - CE	[bdwX] - CE and AE
All personal pronouns (my,your,his/her,our,their)	53.53%	30.02%
Definite/Indef determiner (the,a)	26.92%	36.24%
Demonstrative determiner (this X, that X, those X)	8.81%	16.96%
Demonstrative pronoun (this,that,those)	4.63%	9.52%
Quantifier (all,both,each,every,most,some)	5.97%	6.34%

Table 11. ***Determiner distribution by determiner class for primary constructions***

Here one can see the primary differences between determiner classes used most frequently with the [bdX]/[bfX] construction, and the [bdwX] construction, independent of whether it is the Canadian or American version of [bdwX]. Where [bdX] prefers the personal pronoun, [bdwX] prefers the definite article. [bdwX] also occurs more frequently with demonstrative pronouns (of which *this* is the most frequent). Both constructions occur approximately 6% of the time with quantifiers (of which *all* is the most frequent)[21]. The bare demonstrative type (as in *I'm done that / I'm done with that)* occurs more than twice as frequently with the [bdwX] variant.

We will return to these distributions in the discussion of the findings in Chapter 5, where I argue that [bdX] contains a strong viewpoint element as a result of these determiner patterns. For now I turn to the distribution of the direct object.

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[21] The LGSWE reports that the quantifier *all* is the most common quantifier in corpora, generally speaking (LGSWE: 259)

4.3. Direct object

In order to determine distributional patterns for the noun phrase occurring in the direct object slot of [bdX] and [bfX], and the object of the preposition slot in the [bdwX] constructions, I annotated the corpora according to semantic field, shown in Table 12 in alphabetical order.

Semantic Field	Example NP
activity	fishing, photographing, partying
chores	laundry, Christmas shopping
domestic routine	naptime, dinner
education	class, course, homework, essay, exam, degree
event	pep rally
exercise	workout, run
food	bottle, cereal, cake
health	cleanse, course of antibiotics, makeup
job	contract, job, career
leisure	book, chapter, tv series, game
projects	knitting project, renovations
time	2 year period, my 6th summer at camp, his term as mayor, my first year[22]
work related task	blog post, call, interview
other	n/a

Table 12.   Semantic field annotation categories

I initially used Yerastov's (2010b) annotation schema, which annotated for the following seven semantic fields: *clothes-making, health, sports, work, food, chores,* and *education*.

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[22] Several instances that were categorized in the 'time' semantic field had to do with education as well, as in 'my first year' referring to one's first year of college. However, since these instances did not directly refer to the field of education, in the noun collocate, but did refer to a span of time, they were categorized under *time*.

However, when that classification was used it left over 1/3 of the data classified as o*ther*. In an attempt to categorize more of the data, I expanded the seven fields to the fourteen shown in Table 12. In the next few subsections I describe the results of the semantic field annotations. For each of the four construction variants under scrutiny. I will first describe the distribution of semantic fields, and then present the most common nouns that collocate with each variant. [23]

4.3.1. Semantic field of direct object in [bdX/bfX]

Table 13 shows the distribution of semantic field for [bdX]. (Note that the data is ordered by most frequently occurring semantic field for [bdX], so the column for [bfX] is not in descending order of frequency.)

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[23] The complete data for semantic field annotations for each construction are in Appendix C. The full table for noun collocates is in Appendix D.

Semantic Field	[bdX] - CE		[bfX] – CE	
	#	%	#	%
education	159	20.81%	87	24.30%
projects	95	12.43%	40	11.17%
work related task	87	11.39%	63	17.60%
chores	56	7.33%	10	2.79%
leisure	50	6.54%	36	10.06%
job	45	5.89%	11	3.07%
exercise	39	5.10%	23	6.42%
food	32	4.19%	9	2.51%
health	23	3.01%	17	4.75%
domestic routine	18	2.36%	10	2.79%
time – duration	16	2.09%	7	1.96%
event	13	1.70%	0	0.00%
activity	11	1.44%	0	0.00%
other	120	15.71%	45	12.57%
TOTAL	764	100.00%	358	100.00%

Table 13.   Semantic field distributions for direct object in [bdX/bfX]

Results show that while *education* was the most common semantic field for both variants (20.81 and 24.3% respectively), for [bfX] the second most common semantic field was *work related task* (17.6%). For [bdX] the second most frequent was *projects* (12.43%), though this was very close to evenly ranked with the *work related task* field. Noun phrases of the semantic field *chores* were much more frequent collocates for [bdX] (7.33%) than for [bfX] (2.79%). *Leisure,* on the other hand, was more frequent for [bfX] than [bdX].

An examination of the most common noun phrases provides further insight into the common collocates of these two variants. As the results do not coincide greatly between variants, I present these in separate tables. Table 14 shows the most common collocate nouns for [bdX], and Table 15 below shows corresponding data for [bfX].

Noun	[bdX]	
	#	%
shopping	21	2.75%
year	19	2.49%
work	17*	2.23%*
class/classes	15	1.96%
exam/exams	15	1.96%
book/books	14	1.83%
degree	14	1.83%
project	12	1.57%
post(e.g. blog post)	11	1.44%
homework	10	1.31%
TOTAL	148	19.37%

Table 14. ***Noun collocate frequency for direct object in [bdX]***

For [bdX] the most common content for the noun in X is *shopping*, as in Example (77).

Of the 21 instances, 7 were *Christmas shopping,* as in (77) and (78)

(77)   After we were done our shopping, we would go out for a bite to eat.
(78)   … and then I'll finish some shopping. I'm all done the Christmas shopping that I do for myself.

The instances of *year* refer predominantly to a year in a certain educational program.

Four of the instances were *my first year at (institution)* as in (79) and (80). However,

there were also instances of *year* with no reference to 'years of what', as shown in (81).

(79)   I cannot believe I am done my first year of seminary! It has been a great go
(80)   the year is coming to a close and I am almost done my first year at Queen's Law
(81)   we're going to be so far in debt by the time Steve is done his 4 years, we may never get out.

The 17 instances of *work* included sentences such as (82). Interestingly, all but two

instances collocate with a personal pronoun (the remaining two instances are *the* and

this).

(82)   At times, even when I was done my work, I would have to stick around just because.

Furthermore, if the frequency count includes modified NPs containing *work*, or compound nouns such as *farmwork*, *paperwork*, *homework*, as in (83) , the total instances rose to 48, or 6.28%, which is three times more frequent than any other noun phrase in this pattern.

(83)   …turn on the radio at the end of the day when he was done all the farmwork

Turning to the noun collocates for the variant [bfX], we see a different pattern of collocations. In Table 14 we saw that [bdX] prefers, in descending order: *shopping, year, work, classes, exams, books* and *degree*. However, as shown in Table 15, [bfX] prefers *degree, book, school, work, course* and *shopping*. Note that of these, four of the top six semantic fields coincide, but they have different relative frequencies.

Noun	[bfX]	
	#	%
degree	15	4.19%
book/books	14	3.91%
school/schooling	10	2.79%
work	9	2.51%
course	8	2.23%
shopping	6	1.68%
project	6	1.68%
set	6	1.68%
year	5	1.40%
program	5	1.40%
project	5	1.40%
TOTAL	84	23.46%

Table 15.   Noun collocate frequency for [bfX]

Degree is the most common collocate of *be finished*. The total of 15 (4.19%) does not include related instances such as *finished my BA*, but does include instances that overtly mention *degree*, as in sentences such as (84).

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(84)   Dietetic Internship Program (MPP) has now started accepting applicants before they are finished their nutrition degree and those students can complete the research component

Book or *books*, which occurred in 1.8% of instances with [bdX] occurs 3.91% as a collocate noun with *finished*. *School*, the third most common collocate at 2.79% with *finished*, does not occur more than 1% with *done*. *Work* is the most consistent collocational noun, occurring in 2.51% of the instances of *finished* and in 2.23% of instances with *done*. Of notice here is that while the occurrences for [bdX] rose considerably for *work* when compound nouns were included, this was much less the case with [bfX]. There were an additional 2 instances (1 of *homework* and one of *math work*), increasing the total percentage frequency only slightly to 3.08%, which only moves it up above *school/schooling* in the rankings.

In sum, an examination of both semantic field and exact noun collocate demonstrates that the distributional pattern seems to vary more widely when examining exact noun phrases than in semantic field, which are generally fairly uniform when comparing [bdX] and [bfX]. We will return to this in Chapter 5. Let us now turn our attention to the distributional properties of the noun phrases that occur with [bdwX] in Canadian and American English.

4.3.2. Semantic field of direct object in [bdwX] in CE and AE

Upon examination of the collected data for [bdwX] in CE and AE, there were immediately qualitatively notable differences in the character of the noun phrase. One might expect to find similar relative frequency of the most frequently occurring noun phrases as noted in the previous section for [bdX]/[bfX]. However, this is not borne out in the data. Instead, the semantic field proved too difficult to annotate in the CE data, as there was too much variation in the direct object. The variation in noun collocate for the Canadian variant of [bdwX] is shown in Table 16, with the nouns shown in the order of descending frequency that was found in [bfX] for comparison.

Noun	[bdwX] - CE	
	#	%
project	21	1.52%
book/books	19	1.37%
shopping (xmas shopping 5)	16	1.16%
work (doesn't include homework or workouts)	11	0.79%
post(blog)	8	0.58%
job	8	0.58%
program	8	0.58%
exam/exams	7	0.51%
meal	7	0.51%
course	7	0.51%
class/classes	6	0.43%
degree (master's degree, bachelors degree, degree)	6	0.43%
year (9 with year as primary noun: my year)	5	0.36%
homework	5	0.36%
contract	4	0.29%
reno/renovations	3	0.22%
semester	3	0.22%
set	3	0.22%
term	1	0.07%
lunch	1	0.07%
school/schooling	0	0.00%
laundry	0	0.00%
TOTAL	149/1385	10.76%

Table 16.   Noun collocate frequency in [bdwX] in CE

Instead of the nearly 10% of nouns that were one of the educational-related nouns *class, exam, degree, homework, school* and *semester* in the [bdX/bfX] variant, the relative frequency of those same six nouns in this variant was 1.94% (27 instances total). This pattern repeated itself across all direct noun matches – the relative frequency was very

low in comparison. The only three nouns that occurred more than 1% of the data instances were *book/books, project* and *shopping*. Whereas for [bdX/bfX] the nouns accounted for 27.36% and 30.45% of the database respectively, for [bdwX] they accounted for only 10.76% of the database. This rudimentary quantitative comparison provides support for the qualitative difference noted as well in the attempt to annotate semantic fields. I therefore conclude that [bdwX] is much more productive, taking a wide variety of nouns and semantic fields in the direct object slot. We will revisit the data and implications in Chapter 5.

To complete the picture, Table 17 shows the noun collocation pattern for the American [bdwX] variant. This table shows a pattern different from the [bdwX] in CE. As there were for [bdX] and [bfX], there are nouns that show relatively strong collocational patterns, and these are within the semantic field of *education*, with *class/classes*, *semester*, and *project* having frequencies of 3.60%, 3%, and 2.88% respectively, making them the three most frequent collocational nouns. In fact, for [bdwX] in American English, 10 of the top 12 collocational nouns are in the education domain, with *year, course, school, program* and *degree* rounding out the list.

Noun	[bdwX] - AE	
	#	%
class/classes	30	3.60%
semester	25	3.00%
project	24	2.88%
year	18	2.16%
book/books	15	1.80%
course	14	1.68%
school/schooling	13	1.56%
program	13	1.56%
work	12	1.44%
degree	9	1.08%
exam/exams	6	0.72%
meal	4	0.48%
job	3	0.36%
homework	2	0.24%
term	1	0.12%
lunch	1	0.12%
set	1	0.12%
shopping	0	0.00%
post(blog)	0	0.00%
reno/renovations	0	0.00%
contract	0	0.00%
laundry	0	0.00%
TOTAL	191	22.93%

Table 17.   Noun collocate frequency in [bdwX] in AE

There are marked differences, however, in comparing the AE [bdwX] to [bdX/bfX]. These can be seen in the semantic field analysis, which with this variant was possible, due to the lower level of variation in the noun phrases. The semantic field distribution for [bdwX] in AE can be seen in Table 18.

Semantic Field	[bdwX] - AE	
	#	%
education	260	31.21%
work related task	81	9.72%
leisure	48	5.76%
exercise	19	2.28%
food	11	1.32%
health	11	1.32%
politics	15	1.80%
sports (pro sports team)	16	1.92%
domestic routine	8	0.96%
projects	5	0.60%
job	4	0.48%
time	4	0.48%
renos	1	0.12%
chores	0	0.00%
other	350	42.02%
TOTAL	833	100.00%

Table 18.   Semantic field frequency in [bdwX] in AE

As we saw in the direct noun collocates, *education* is by far the most common semantic field, with over 30% of noun phrases relating to that field. Due to this strong result, I examined the URLs indicating where the web data were taken from: of the 833 lines of data, 596 are from *.edu* websites, the domain of educational post-secondary institutions in the United States. Thus the corpus is heavily biased towards student blogs, which it seems has affected the most common semantic fields. There is no equivalent web domain in Canada.

As compared to the semantic fields noted for the Canadian constructions, there are, notably, very few instances that are related to domestic routines in the American data. There are only 5 results for *projects* (which in the annotation scheme included such topics as *house renovations* and *crafts*), though this could again be a reflection of bias in the data source, given the overwhelming presence of posts from *.edu* blogs. Another

notable difference between the [bdX] and [bfX] construction and the AE [bdwX] is that there are 0 results for *chores*, a strong field in the Canadian construction.

There are other differences in the types of nouns occurring with the American [bdwX]. There are more abstract nouns, such as *thoughts, concepts, ideas,* and *issues,* which are not found with the [bdX/bfX] construction. I also created two new semantic fields to account for areas with numerous instances that were not required in the annotation schema as the other data did not require them, namely *politics* and *sports.* For *politics,* there were 11 instances making reference to politicians (as in (85) from the NY Times blog), political parties or political processes such as debates. There were also many references to sports teams, coaches and other terms related to the professional sports scene in the US, as in (86).

(85)   Act ethically and vote your conscience. We are done with the Bush/Clinton conniving ways
(86)   …boring to watch like the Dodgers. I'm done with that crap franchise

Finally, in a similar fashion to the [bdwX] in the Canadian corpus, there were far more instances that could not be labelled – a total of 372 or almost 45%. These included (87), for example.

(87)   Sure glad I'm done with the marriage and child raising shtick

In conclusion, then, in this chapter I have given an overview of the data that was gathered. I have described in detail the distribution of two main factors in the variability of the constructions under analysis, namely the distribution of determiners, and the patterns within semantic field and noun collocates in the direct object slot. Results for determiner distribution showed that the definite determiner and first person possessive determiner are the most frequently occurring determiner types across all constructions and variants. While [bdX] prefers personal pronouns, [bdwX] prefers the definite article in CE and AE.

With regards to semantic field, it was found that the semantic fields of [bdX] and [bfX] patterned similarly, in that four of the top five semantic fields were the same (with *education, projects, work related tasks, chores,* and *leisure).* However collocational patterns differ when one looks at exact nouns. While [bdX] prefers *shopping, year, work, class/classes,* and *exam/exams,* [bfX] prefers *degree, book/books, school/schooling,*

work and *course,* in that order. In comparing these results with the data for [bdwX] in Canadian and American English, results indicate these latter variants are more productive. They have a wider variation in semantic field, with the Canadian construction being more varied in its direct object than its American relative. The American [bdwX] variant showed very high correlation with the *education* semantic field, though this is likely skewed somewhat due to the source of data from American .*edu* blogs. It is also interesting to note that a possible reason for the very productive nature of [bdwX] in CE, and the paucity of instances of [bdwX] in the semantic fields of *education* and others that were very frequent for [bdX], is that Canadians use [bdX/bfX] in these scenarios, thus eliminating the use of [bdwX] for these frames. By contrast, American speakers do not have the option of [bdX], and thus the AE [bdwX] is used to express fields such as education as well. This would explain the difference in the [bdwX] data in AE and CE.

This data analysis forms the basis for the analysis of syntactic, semantic, discourse and overall constructional properties presented in Chapter 5.

5. [bdX]: A construction analysis

Thus far in this thesis I have identified the pattern of [bdX] and its distribution across North America (Chapter 1), reviewed research in cognitive linguistics as it pertains to the issues at hand (Chapter 2), described how the data was collected from the internet and challenges in using the World Wide Web (Chapter 3), and examined the data set (Chapter 4). In this chapter I tie these strands together as we turn to the analysis. Here I present an examination of the properties of [bdX] as evidenced in the data, followed by a discussion on the conclusions to be drawn from these properties in how they fit together.

I begin with a systematic examination of the formal syntactic properties of the construction (5.1), examine semantic properties in 5.2 and discourse properties in 5.3, before turning in section 5.4 to the information conveyed by the construction that is not rooted in one particular element. I show how a constructionist approach can account for all of these properties in a unified way, thus motivating the construction account. For, as Goldberg attests: "other things being equal, a grammar that accounts for all the facts […] is preferable to one that does not" (Goldberg, 2006: 65). I show here that accounts of language constructions need to be expanded to account for *all* the facts, including those related to viewpoint.

5.1. Syntax: *be* copula

The most salient syntactic feature of the construction is the use of the *be* copula as the auxiliary of the present perfect with *done* (and *finished*). In standard English the present perfect is generally formed by the present tense of the auxiliary *have* plus the past participle (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 139), or in a construction representation [have V–ed] (where *V–ed* is used to signify past participle, although irregular verbs do not share the '-ed' morphology). As we saw in the comparison of [bdX] with the regular present

perfect in Chapter 1, the *be*-auxiliary feature cannot be portended to be a legitimate alternative to the [have V–ed] construction, as [bdX] is not productive. While CE speakers can say *I am done,* and *I am finished,* and even in some dialects *I am started,* they cannot also say by extension *I am washed the potatoes*, i.e., they cannot combine it with just any participle. The transitive *be* perfect in CE is limited to *done, finished* and *started.*

Yerastov (2010a) attributes the distinctive *be* transitive perfect to Scottish influence on CE. He notes that the places where the construction [bdX] is found correspond to places that were heavily influenced by Scottish immigration. Leyburn (1962) writes that North Carolina and Philadelphia are known to have been home to Scots and Ulster Scots, as has Vermont (Shields 1996), and Canada in general (Yerastov, 2010a: 24). Scottish migration to Philadelphia is well documented, as is the fact that the United Empire Loyalists moved to Canada from New England, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey (Dollinger, 2008: 64-76). Yerastov concludes based on the other studies listed here that [bdX] was "a feature of the dialect substratum that the United Empire Loyalists brought to Canada" and that "subsequent Scottish and Irish migration to the Maritimes, to Quebec and Vermont in the 19th century is likely to have reinforced [be done NP]" (2010b: 78)

Support for this hypothesis stems from linguistic evidence of a *Scottish founder effect* that goes beyond [bdX]. The Scottish founder effect refers to an effect of strong historical Scottish influence that has left distinguishing patterns on various elements of a dialect, the use of [bdX] being one such element. In areas that still have a high Scottish influence on their English, including phonetic differences such as the pronunciation of vowels in the Maritime region of Canada, the use of [bdX] is more productive. Beyond the use of [bdX] and phonetic differences in the regions in general, Yerastov found that speakers of Scottish ancestry in these regions retained the least common form of [bdX], namely *be started X*. Speakers in the same regions who were of non-Scottish descent only accepted the more established sub-schemas [bdX] and [bfX].

Yerastov (2010b) suggests that the data in Canada resembles the transitive *be* perfect in the Shetland/Orkney dialects of Scotland, where the *be* copula is productive in active perfective constructions with all types of verbs, as in (88):

(88)   I am sorted the potatoes.

(Yerastov, 2010b: 25)

While the Shetland and Orkney dialects have a productive *be* perfect, the question remains as to why CE [bdX] is only found in three verb lexemes: *done, finished* and *started.* Yerastov conducted acceptability judgement testing and notes that "with the notable exception of one speaker, none of the native speakers of Canadian or Vermont English that I have interviewed use the transitive *be* perfect productively" as evidenced by the fact that the sentences in (89) and (90) are ungrammatical for them:

(89)   *I am read the book.
(90)   *I am heard it.

Another dialect with a somewhat productive *be* perfect is found in Lumbee, in North Carolina, which is also an area attested for influence by Highland Scots (Wolfram, 1996). In Lumbee, there are lexicalized tokens of the transitive *be* perfect with *got* and *been*, as in Examples (91)-(93):

(91)   I'm been nothing but an Indian.
(92)   If I'm got a dollar
(93)   I am not got the horse tied upset the hotel

(Yerastov 2010:41)

However, the restriction of the transitive *be* perfect to *done, finished* and *started* in CE is a challenge. If it is related to the transitive *be* perfect of the Shetland and Orkney dialects, what do *done, finished* and *started* share that only these three lexemes have been adopted? It is interesting to note that that these three verb lexemes have to do with temporal ends of activities. Yerastov postulates that the survival of a few lexemes with transitive *be* is due to the high frequency of other constructions that feature *be done.* With patterning also coming from other variants of *done* constructions, as in the stative *Im done*, and *Im finished*, it meant that when the [bdX] and [bfX] exemplars entered the larger speech communities, they encountered favorable conditions to be reinforced. There is no intransitive equivalent for *started* with the *be* copula (* *I am started*). Thus the *be started X* variant present in the Scottish dialects would not have received the same level of reinforcement as [bdX] and [bfX], leading to the loss in mainstream

dialects of [be started X]. This is one theory; however, more extensive research is required to attest to its accuracy.

In this section we have seen that the transitive *be* marking of [bdX] is a complex phenomenon. The transitive *be* is restricted in English to *be done X, be finished X* and, in some dialects with a stronger Scottish heritage effect, *be started X*. It is not clear why these three lexemes have maintained the transitive *be* perfect that is common to Scottish dialects. However, the argument that the form does indeed find its root in Scottish English is supported in the facts of other Scottish founder effects found in the same dialects that have [bdX], and also in the fact that areas of stronger Scottish history have a more productive transitive *be* perfect, where it extends to *started*. While the history of the syntax of the construction is not fully conclusive, semantic and discourse properties shed light on unique properties of the construction to leave no doubt that [bdX] is not synonymous with the regular perfect transitive formed with *have*. It is to the semantic properties that I now turn.

5.2. Semantic properties

As we have seen, the [bdX] construction exhibits tendencies towards schematicity in its form, while maintaining a degree of variability. Supported by the data presented in Chapter 4, in this section we examine the semantics of individual elements of the construction. Firstly, as will be outlined in Section 5.2.1, there is a strong preference for animate subjects. Secondly, there are significant preferences for the contents of the noun phrase, as shown in 5.2.2, where we see that the direct object is the focal point of very rich frame semantics associated with the construction. An analysis of the noun collocates, and the semantic fields to which these nouns belong, shows that the construction most frequently occurs in reference to culturally salient routines. Concluding this section on the semantics of [bdX], in 5.2.3 we examine the semantics of exhaustivity associated with the construction.

5.2.1. Constraints on subject

In the 764 instances of [bdX] collected from web blogs, the subject slot predominantly favoured a personal pronoun (*I, you, he/she, we, they*). As shown in

Section 4.1.1, only 87 of 764 of subjects were *not* pronouns. 34 of these cases were personal names such as *Dave, Steve, Dad*, and 47 were noun phrases referring to people: *the photographer, the instructors, a couple of the kids, mechanic dudes, the athletes, my roommates, the MP* (Member of Parliament), *57* (referring to a player's jersey number in a sports context). Examples are shown in (94) to (96):

(94)   be so far in debt by the time Steve is done his 4 years, we may never get out
(95)   So a couple of the kids are done their books while some kids are only half way done.
(96)   and when the mechanic dudes were done their breaks ours was the first car to be looked at.

There were six subjects altogether that did not refer directly to people. In Example (97) the subject is a dog, and in (98), the subject is at first glance a city, but here is used inferentially to refer to *workers/colleagues in Munich* as is made clear by the beginning of the second sentence in that instance:

(97)   …from diving into the other bowl. When the other dog is done her food, immediately request a sit from her and then
(98)   …just installing GNU/Linux. By my estimate Munich is 80% done the migration. They have all the end users up to speed.

In addition to these two non-person subjects, there were four instances of [bdX] with an inanimate object, all shown in Examples (99) to (102).

(99)   My source tells me the CP TEC train will be coming through New Brunswick to Saint John TOMORROW (Saturday) after it is done its work on the MM&A.
(100)   just leave it alone. It will power off when it is done its work. Windows updates also will install during
(101)   When Unetbootin [software program] is done its work, it'll prompt you to restart the computer.
(102)   But what happens to that blog when your film is done its run?

I considered whether the high proportion of pronoun subjects was a result of the genre (blogs tend to be written in the first person), or the search algorithms chosen (that is, with a strong preference to correlate subject and determiner, such as 'am done my'). However, the paucity of returns for inanimate subjects corresponds with Yerastov's research to support my claim. Yerastov (2010b: 67) conducted acceptability judgement tasks to test for an animacy constraint on the subject slot. In his sample of Canadian English speakers, he found that "the construction generally allows variation in the subject slot; however, animate and inanimate subject referents affect the acceptability of

the construction differently. When tokens (a), (b), and (c) [with personal pronoun subject] are compared with tokens (d), (e), and (f) [inanimate object subjects], there arises a distinct preference for the animacy of the subject referent" (Yerastov 2010b: 67). I include Yerastov's table in Figure 4 below as a reference.

Table 5-12. Acceptability of [be done NP]
with variation in subject slot: Canadian sample.

Answer Options/ Stimuli	Not Acc.	Barely	Some-what	Acc.	Total
(a) We're done dinner. (b) They were finished lunch by then. (c) You should be done your assignment by midnight. N=3	16	23	28	68	135
(d) Is the computer done the task? (e) Is the dishwasher done the dishes? (f) Is Microsoft Word done the spell check? N=3	34	21	42	37	134

Figure 4.   *Acceptability judgements of variation in subject slot for [bdX]*
(Yerastov, 2010b: 67)

It must be noted here, however, that Yerastov's examples here use pronouns for the animate subjects in (a)-(c), whereas the inanimate subjects in (d)-(f) are full noun phrases. As we have seen in the corpus data, production highly favours pronouns in subject position. So it is possible that the lower acceptability of (d)-(f) is due to the presence of the full NPs rather than the animacy constraint. Despite this weakness in Yerastov's comparison, the paucity of attested instances of inanimate subjects in the corpus data collected for this project supports Yerastov's observation that inanimate subjects are much less acceptable than animate ones. This exceptionally strong preference (759 of 764 instances were animate) suggests that in addition to a preference for personal pronouns, the construction has a constraint on, or at the very least a strong preference for, animacy in the subject, in addition to a preference for pronoun subjects.

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5.2.2. Semantic field of direct object

The direct object frequencies presented in Chapter 4 showed that in 600 of the 764 instances of [bdX], the direct object is related to education, home-based chores and projects, and cultural routines such as exercising and eating. The semantic field data for [bdX], including [bfX], is reproduced here (from Table 13) for reference.

Semantic Field	[bdX] - CE		[bfX] - CE	
	#	%	#	%
education	159	20.81%	87	24.30%
projects	95	12.43%	40	11.17%
work related task	87	11.39%	63	17.60%
chores	56	7.33%	10	2.79%
leisure	50	6.54%	36	10.06%
job	45	5.89%	11	3.07%
exercise	39	5.10%	23	6.42%
food	32	4.19%	9	2.51%
health	23	3.01%	17	4.75%
domestic routine	18	2.36%	10	2.79%
time – duration	16	2.09%	7	1.96%
event	13	1.70%	0	0.00%
activity	11	1.44%	0	0.00%
other	120	15.71%	45	12.57%
TOTAL	764	100.00%	358	100.00%

Table 19.   **Semantic field distributions for direct object in [bdX/bfX]**

In the *other* category, with 120 of 764 instances, 58 instances were bare demonstratives, of the type shown in (103) and (104):

(103)   Once I was done that, I talked to my sister and girlfriend for a while
(104)   We were practicing with the instructor, so when we were done that we were pulled up the hill by the "tow rope.

In (103), the usage doesn't give enough information to code the semantic field of the referent of *that*. In (104) the context is sporting, although out of context the *that* could refer to something else that was being *done* in the situation (e.g. eating a chocolate bar

in the ski line up). Given the assumptions that would have to be made to determine the semantic field of the bare demonstratives, it was decided to leave them un-coded.

The remaining 62 instances that were categorized as *other* consisted of nouns that had a referent outside the instance in the corpus, such as *bit, part, section, first round.* These nouns share a quality with the collocates of the type *my first year* (where the assumption is that it is a first year of university or similar) that were annotated as *time* rather than *education,* since they refer to the duration of an entity that is not directly referred to in the discourse (i.e., I could not be certain that the referent was educative in nature). The 'bit' and 'section' noun collocates were left un-annotated for the same reason.

Within the semantic fields that were coded, however, the variability of the noun phrase was high. That is, it seems that any noun relating to work, home, or chores, including newer terms such as *blog post*, is acceptable in the direct object slot of [bdX]: providing that the constraint on semantic field is met, the exact noun collocate is free to be highly variable

I argue that these semantic fields are a representation of the frames (in the sense of Fillmore introduced in Chapter 2) that are most evoked by this construction. A frame semantics interpretation of [bdX] offers a way to account for what, on the surface, is a high degree of variability in the direct object, while at the same time being constrained to very specific domains. The key restraint on semantic fields seems to be that it be related to work, education, or cultural routines. These categories would encompass projects, house renovations, chores, eating, health routines (from having cancer treatment to applying makeup, for example – the key being that it is a routinized domestic event), and leisure activities such as knitting and reading.

Returning to the specific noun collocates, recall from Chapter 4 that the most common collocate nouns for [bdX] are*: shopping, year, work, class/classes, exam/exams, book/books, degree, project, post(e.g. blog post),* and *homework*. Within the direct object noun phrases containing these predominant nouns, there is significant variation within determiners, adjectival and other types of modification. We have seen, for example, that the NP can be headed by different determiners. It can also be modified

extensively with other nouns as in (105) and (106), adverbs as in (107), and adjectives as in (108).

(105)   So that's that, and then I'm done my Industrial Design studio class for first year.
(106)   Provided they wait until Raj is done his hip hop aerobics class and Howard's done celebrating
(107)   Well, as of Monday I was done all my classes for the semester! YEAH!
(108)   tives. Calling a friend or family member when you are done a late class to say, "I'm leaving campus"

Compound nouns are another way we see variability in the noun phrase. An examination of the collocate *work* shows that compounds such as *paperwork, homework, graduate work, farmwork*, when taken together, account for over 6% of the data (47/764 instances). Again, there is high variability with an underlying schematicity. This is shown in Examples (109) to (111). The schematicity is shown in the availability of the compounds, while the restriction of the contents of the direct object remain in place, in that *work* fits the constraint on the semantic field.

(109)   my grandad would only turn on the radio at the end of the day when he was done all the farmwork, and then he would listen for a couple of hours
(110)   Once I'm done my graduate work - which will be soon, thank goodness
(111)   By the time you're done all the paperwork…

A second element of the frames-based analysis is profiling. We saw in Chapter 2 that all of a frame is evoked when a single element of that frame is evoked. For example, we saw that the verb *buy* evokes the whole Commercial Transaction Frame, and so does the verb *sell*. Thus the same frame is evoked by different lexical items, and different *parts* of the frame are profiled as a result of this lexical choice. In the Commercial Transaction Frame, *buy* profiles the buyer and the goods, whereas *sell* profiles primarily the seller and the goods.

The [bdX] construction relies heavily on profiling. Take for example the following sentence from my corpus:

(112)   After you're done **the kayak portion**, you'll be pretty pooped and it may…

Here the noun phrase *kayak portion* is the linguistic cue that evokes the Frame of a sporting event, a kayak race, and given cultural knowledge of North American recreational sport in combination with the noun *portion*, it is most likely a multi-stage race such as a triathlon. This fits the first constraint on the [bdX] construction, as it is part of a

culturally salient Sporting Event Frame, which would have racers, a mode of racing (running, kayaking), spectators and so on. Importantly, the sentence could also evoke the same sporting event Frame if the noun phrase were *the paddle*, as in (113):

(113)   After you're done **the paddle**, you'll be pretty pooped and it may…

Thus the Frame evocation is dependent not on the exact noun phrase, but rather on the profiled element. Here the profiled element is a section of the race, whether expressed with *the kayak portion* or *the paddle*, or any number of other possible noun phrases. It is not the case that *the paddle* is frequent, but rather that the *paddle* and *kayak portion* both evoke the same element of the frame. I believe in this way, profiling can explain the variability within the noun phrase, while the restriction is actually on the frame as a whole – with frames limited to cultural and domestic routines, or highly salient frames.

In a construction analysis, the meaning of the construction that stems from the entrenched varieties is carried onto the lower frequency items. Thus whereas Yerastov's data, which he gathered from acceptability judgement tasks where speakers ranked uses of [bdX] with a variety of different noun phrases, suggest that an example such as *I'm done the barn* would tend towards unacceptable (recall that he is asking for acceptability judgements), I would argue that in context, this usage is felicitous and would be considered acceptable. In *I'm done the barn*, where 'the barn' is profiled by virtue of a salient frame, is as felicitous as *I'm done the laundry*. For example, if there is a general cleaning of all the buildings going on, this could be used to express that the barn is clean. If the activity is painting, it would mean the barn is now completely painted, and if it were building, it would mean that the building is complete. Context is required to understand what exactly *done* means for the barn, i.e., the frame provides the information for whether the barn is now a) clean, b) painted, c) built or d) demolished or any number of other possibilities all captured in the collocation of *barn* with the [bdX] construction. *Christmas shopping* and *laundry*, on the other hand, are already salient in the domestic frames that are normally featured with this construction, and no further elicitation or contextual information is assumed – meaning that *Im done my Christmas shopping and Im done my laundry for the week* require no special activation prior to felicitous use. We will return to issues of salience and focus in Section 5.3 when we discuss discourse properties of the construction.

In comparison to the noun phrase collocates in the [bdwX] construction, [bdX] is much more restricted. Recall that the 20 most common noun collocates accounted for 27.36% in [bdX], but only 10.76% in [bdwX], and that the semantic fields accounted for 84.29% in [bdX] , but couldn't be annotated for in [bdwX] due to the incredibly wide variety in noun phrase collocates. In fact, I suggest that [bdwX] has such a high variability in the object slot of the prepositional phrase that it is similar to the present perfect and other more general verbal constructions. For example, in the present perfect sentence *I have finished with my X for the year*, X is highly schematic to the point that it is largely unconstrained.

Adopting a frames approach can account for the seemingly wide variety of noun phrase collocates discussed earlier. In a usage approach, the entrenchment of a pattern is due to specific frames that are highly salient. The pattern is then extended from those highly salient frames to other frames. Thus while *I'm done the Christmas shopping* and *I'm done my homework* are more frequent, the schematicity allows for other noun phrase collocates. The frames-based analysis presented here accounts for constraints on semantic fields, or frames evoked with [bdX], and the highly variable nature of the frame elements (noun phrases), that are used to evoke those frames. I suggest that this accounts for the seeming contradiction of high variability in noun phrase and low variability in semantic field.

5.2.3. Exhaustivity

The final semantic element of the construction, and perhaps the most unusual, is that the profiled element of the frame – the entity in the direct object slot – must be able to be exhausted. Consider the following context: a group has just finished a meeting and everyone is leaving the room together to vacate it for another group who need it, and are waiting outside the door. In this scenario, perhaps in response to the question: *is the room free*, (114) and (116) are acceptable utterances, whereas (115) is not:

(114)   We're done the meeting
(115)   **We're done the room
(116)   We're done with the room

Since the meeting is *done,* i.e., *meeting* is an entity that can reach a final stage of completion, (114) is felicitous. However, *the room* is not done – there is nothing that has

been completed about the room itself, making (115) unacceptable. However, the speakers – those who have concluded the meeting and are vacating the room – are done *with the room*, which is why (116) is felicitous. (114) expresses the *exhaustivity* reading inherent in the [bdX] construction. (116) expresses the *satiety* reading of the [bdwX] construction, where *satiety* refers to the subject having used as much of the direct object as is desired for the present moment, i.e., the subject is sated. This does not entail that the noun has been used up (which the *exhaustivity* reading does entail). Example (115) fails because the exhaustivity reading of the [bdX] construction cannot attain with *the room,* which is not an exhaustible entity. I argue that, in addition to a frames-based constraint on the noun in the direct object in terms of domestic/routine cultural content, there is a requirement that the direct object be 'complete-able', or exhaustible; this is what I call the *exhaustivity constraint.*

Evidence for this distinction is borne out in the corpus data. Example (117) clearly shows the exhaustivity reading of [bdX]:

(117)   Ever have that sick feeling when **you're done your lip balm** and *you have to throw away the container*? No worries – the mother-daughter team behind Sweet Leaf Bath Co. has you covered. The Fair Trade-certified beauty line recently released Canada's first lip balm housed in a 100% compostable eco tube.

Here the exhaustivity reading is highlighted by the next clause 'and you have to throw away the container'. It is clear that there is no more lip balm and the container is empty. Contrast this with the [bdwX] variant in (118):

(118)   Are you done with your lip balm? Can I have some?

Here there is clearly lip balm left, and the speaker is asking for some of it once the owner/user has finished applying it, i.e., has had as much as s/he wants. This is the key semantics behind the satiety reading. There may or may not be any lip balm left, but the key is that the user has had enough.

Note here, though, that [bdwX] can often be ambiguous, in that it can hold either the exhaustivity reading or the satiety reading depending on context. [bdX], on the other hand, only expresses the exhaustivity reading. Thus for speakers of Canadian English, using [bdX] is the only way (choosing between these two constructions) to unambiguously state that the frame element expressed in the direct object is exhausted.

An example from my corpus that explicates both the role of the profiled element and the exhaustivity constraint is given in (119) and (120), both of which evoke a domestic frame of Make-up Application.

(119)   Another great alternative without the Hydroquinone is from La Roche Possay. Very Good Line from Europe. I received some samples but not enough to give it a go for 8 weeks. I will purchase it though when **I am done my Clinique**.

(120)   Once **I'm done the lids**, I tackle any darkness directly under the eyes (again, usually with fingers), and then use my concealer brush to paint the inner and outer corners.

In (119), the noun phrase 'my Clinique' refers to a container of makeup product. In (120), 'the lids' is a body part to which the woman is applying makeup. These noun phrases, while belonging to the same general frame, profile different elements: the make-up product and the make-up target. The frame element profiled in the direct object slot is the one that is complete. In the first it is the container that will be finished, and in the second it is the body part 'the lids' to which makeup will be applied that is finished.

In trying to understand the *exhaustivity* vs. *satiety* distinction, a speaker of American English asked if I could say *I'm done the photocopier* to indicate that a photocopy machine is free for another colleague to use. The answer is no. Since a photocopier is not an exhaustible element, this is not a felicitous direct object in the [bdX] construction. Rather, to express that one has finished one's photocopying, the expressions in (121) could be used:

(121)   I'm done my photocopies/photocopying.
(122)   *I'm done the photocopier.

While the frame element evokes the same frame, 'the photocopier' in (122) does not satisfy the exhaustibility constraint. However, here, an appropriate alternative is the sentence that an American English speaker would use, with the satiety reading of [bdwX] as in (123):

(123)   I'm done with the photocopier.

In this section I have shown that a frames-based analysis can account for three primary semantic features of this construction: [bdX] is largely constrained to salient cultural routines such as domestic routines, education and work; however, noun phrases are highly variable. This can be accounted for in viewing different frame elements as

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evoking one of the frames within the constraints of the construction. It is the frame that is evoked by the noun phrase that is restricted, not the noun phrase itself. Any variety of lexical items can be used to evoke a frame that is restricted to cultural salience. The constraint on the lexical item itself, rather, is that it must be 'exhaustible' – able to be completed. We will return to this discussion again with respect to aspect and viewpoint in Section 5.4.

5.3. Discourse properties

Having examined the unique syntactic and semantic properties of [bdX], I now turn to the discourse properties of the construction. I first present the information structure characteristics of the construction (5.3.1). Secondly, I examine the characteristics of [bdX] with regard to the information status of the two noun phrases in the construction for givenness/newness (5.3.2). The section concludes with an examination of the behaviour of the construction with regards to its frequent co-occurrence with clause level adverbials such as *once, since* and *when* (5.3.3).

There are two closely related phenomena that are important to discussions of discourse level information packaging: *information structure*, and *information status*. Information structure refers to the structure of sentences whereby propositions, as conceptual representations of states of affairs, are structured to reflect the pragmatics of the situation that is being construed, including the assumptions of the speaker as to what the hearer knows. Information structure is generally divided into the referent and what is said about the referent and thus refers to the structuring of the information in the sentence according to where the focus of new information. While *information status* also has to do with assumptions of the speaker with regard to the hearer, it is related to the referring status of the entity, to whether the speaker believes an entity has been 'lit up' in the hearer's mind by virtue of either mention in the discourse or prior knowledge. The two terms are clearly related, as information structure relies on a state of affairs where one piece of information is known and the other new.

There are many approaches to information status and information structure in the literature on discourse. For the most part these approaches differ in their details but are

united by the idea that certain formal properties of a sentence cannot be fully understood without looking at linguistic and extra-linguistic elements of the context in which the sentence is uttered. In this thesis I use Lambrecht's (1996; 2000) definition of information structure, which he bases on the term as introduced by Halliday in 1967. Without going into the details of how the different schools' notions differ, with regards to information structure, I adopt Lambrecht's approach as it is cohesive in its approach with the other tenets of the cognitive approach to language addressed here. Lambrecht shares his linguistic heritage with Charles Fillmore, who was his dissertation supervisor at UC Berkeley. In the preface to his 2000 volume, Lambrecht addresses his heritage in a constructionist approach:

> I was often led to an alternative, non-generative, approach to grammatical analysis, in which the function of a given lexicogrammatical structure is not interpreted compositionally, in terms of the meanings of its parts, but globally, in terms of the formal contrast between the entire structure and semantically equivalent alternative structures provided by the grammar. In terms of de Saussure's fundamental dichotomy, the study of information structure requires an analysis not only of SYNTAGMATIC relations between the elements of a sentence, but also, and importantly, of the ASSOCIATIVE relations between different sentence structures as they are stored in the memory of speakers and hearers.

(Lambrecht, 1996: xiv)

5.3.1. Information structure

Information structure is usually captured as a pairing of terms, including subject-predicate, logical/psychological subject-predicate, topic-comment, theme-rheme, background- focus, given-new, among others. In the present discussion of information structure, I use the terms as developed in Lambrecht (2000), in which topic is considered to be what the sentence is about, and importantly for our purposes here, focus is defined as:

> that element of a pragmatically structured proposition whose occurrence makes it possible for the sentence to express a 'pragmatic assertion', i.e., to convey new information to an addressee. Somewhat more technically, the focus is that element whereby the presupposition and the assertion differ from each other. A focus denotatum is by definition a communicatively unpredictable element of a

proposition […] and focus is the element of a proposition that conveys new information about the topic to an addressee.

<div align="right">(Lambrecht, 2000: 612)</div>

Lambrecht further introduces the notion of Focus Categories, distinguishing three major focus categories: 1) PF – in the literature commonly referred to as the subject-predicate' or 'topic-comment' type – where the predicate is in focus and an argument (typically the subject) is within the presupposition and is the topic. 2) the AF category – also referred to as the 'focus-presupposition' or 'contrastive' type – where an argument is in focus and the predicate is the topic; and 3) the SF category – also referred to as the 'all-new', or 'thetic' type – where both the predicate and the subject are in focus, "i.e., the proposition lacks a focus-presupposition articulation" (Lambrecht, 2000: 612).

Returning to the construction at hand, let us examine the focus structure of [bdX] with these terms in mind. Question/answer pairs are a known test for establishing a focus element in a contextual relationship. As shown in the question/answer pair in (124), the noun phrase of the direct object resists being the focus element in this construction. Not only is the response to the question not a valid response, but the formulation of the question as is also not a felicitous use of this construction (at least without heavy prosody).

(124)   *What are you done?
          *My homework / *I'm done my homework[24]

Contrast, however, the present perfect, which does allow the direct object to be focussed, as in the pair in (125):

[24] Acceptability ratings here are mine.

(125)   What have you finished?
         My homework / I've finished my homework.

A comparison of the present perfect in [bdX] with regards to fronting yields the same
distinction. The present perfect in (126) allows the object to be focussed by fronting, and
in [bdX] in (127) the object cannot be focussed.

(126)   My homework, I've done. My housework, on the other hand, I haven't started.
(127)   *My homework, I'm done.

Similarly, in [bdX], the subject cannot be focussed. Consider the question-answer pair in
(128) as compared to the acceptable response in the pair in (129):

(128)   Who is done their homework?
         *I'm done my homework / *Jo is done his homework.
(129)   Who has done their homework?
         I have done my homework. Jo has done his homework.

     The direct object of [bdX] also resists clefting, which is another way of focussing
an element. This is shown in the contrast between the pairs below, with [bdX] in (130)
where clefting is not acceptable, and the present perfect in (131), in which an element
can be fronted to achieve focus:

(130)   *What did you say you are done?
         *My homework / ***It's my homework** that I'm done.
(131)   What did you say you have done?
         My homework / It's my homework that I have done, not my…

Here, the present perfect example demonstrates contrastive focus. This contrastive
focus is not possible with the [bdX] construction.

     Lastly, I have noted above that [bdX] is not felicitous with the use of the pronoun
it in direct object (recall that *I'm done it* does not occur in the corpus at all). Again this
contrasts with the present perfect, which does accept *it* as a direct object.

     Yerastov argues that topical information is contained in the direct object slot in
the [bdX] construction (2010b: 44). He draws his conclusion based on the preference of
the construction for definiteness in the direct object determiner, as well as the
occurrence of high frequency bare singular mass nouns (*dinner, school*). He suggests
that, since these nouns carry socio-cultural significance, they carry discourse
prominence. Given the data presented above that show that contrastive focus is

unavailable, I believe the information structure of [bdX] is more accurately captured in Lambrecht's notion sentence focus, where there is an absence of topic-comment relation between subject and predicate (Lambrecht, 2000) leaving the whole proposition focussed.

Sentence focus characterizes utterances such as the response to a question like *What happened?* To this an addressee could felicitously respond: *The bus exploded.* In this case, the bus is not given previously in the discourse; the proposition does not have a topic-comment structure where one element is already given in the discourse and there is new information predicated about it. Rather, the whole proposition is new, and focussed. I suggest this is what happens for [bdX]. For example, one could respond to a question such as *How's your thesis coming*, by using the [bdX] construction to *say Im almost done the third chapter.* In this response, *third chapter* is not given previously in the discourse. Rather, the addressee responds with a description of a scenario in which both subject and object are discourse-new, rather than subscribing to the standard topic-comment structure. In the same way, as we saw in section 5.2.3 in response to the question *Is the room free*, the response *Yes, were done our meeting* is felicitous. It is a sentence-focus response to the question.

I believe an analysis of information structure using sentence focus also accounts for the facts Yerastov addresses that the pronoun *it* cannot be used as a pronoun to replace the direct object phrase. That is, the phrase *I'm done it* is unavailable. I believe that this is the case because the pronoun *it* entails givenness. A referent must be discourse old and hearer old to be referred to as *it*; the hearer must know what the *it* refers to. Analysing the information structure of [bdX] as sentence focus, where neither element is focussed individually, accounts for the unavailability of a fully-focussed direct object.

In examining the information structure of the [bdX] construction, we have seen in this section that it resists clefting, fronting and direct questions that focus one element. Furthermore, the unavailability of the pronoun *it* as direct object supports this analysis. Lambrecht's notion of focus categories allows an analysis of the construction as a sentence focus construction, in which the subject and predicate do not stand in a topic-focus relationship, but rather together present focussed and new information.

In the next section we go into further detail on the information status characteristics of [bdX] mentioned here, namely the distinction between given and new information.

5.3.2. Information status

In Prince's seminal paper (1981) on information status, in which she discusses the informational asymmetry of the information conveyed, she uses the terms 'given' and 'new' to describe "information packaging in natural language [that] reflects the sender's hypotheses about the receiver's assumptions and beliefs and strategies" (1981: 224). 'Given' information is information that conveys 'older' information, already known in the discourse, whereas 'new' information is not presumed to be known or familiar to the addressee.[25] However, Prince (1992) notes that information can be 'given' or 'old' in a variety of ways. Though the focus of her paper is to explore the relevance of information-status to subjecthood and definiteness, the delineations she explicates are important for the discussion here. She differentiates three distinct notions of 'old/new' information as follows: 1. Focus-presupposition constructions, which structure the information they convey into two parts. The first part is an open proposition such as 'I like X', and the second is an instantiation of the variable of the form X=John, to create the proposition 'I like John'. 2. Old/new in the hearer's head. This is the status of the information with respect to the 'speaker's beliefs about the hearer's beliefs'. The information status according to the hearer's beliefs is described as 'hearer old/hearer new'. 3. Old/new in the discourse model. In this notion, the information status of an entity is considered from the point of view of the discourse model being constructed, rather than from the hearer's head. An NP, for example, may refer to an entity that has already been evoked in the

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[25] As Prince states, the general notion of given versus new has been much discussed in the linguistics literature under the distinctions *old-new, known-new, presupposition-focus*, etc. Here I rely on Prince's characterizations as described above.

prior discourse-stretch, or it may evoke an entity which has not previously occurred in the prior discourse-stretch, termed discourse-old and discourse-new respectively.[26]

It is the discourse old/new and hearer old/new that we will focus on as we examine the information status properties of [bdX]. We saw in the previous section (5.2) and in the earlier description of the data in Chapter 4 that there are strong preferences for the subject and object frame. The subject tends overwhelmingly to be first person pronouns, with just over 11% that are not. Most of these remaining are definite noun phrases of the type *the mechanics/the instructor*. There is generally speaking a restriction on subjects that they are 'old' (Prince 1992), but personal pronouns are also an indication that the information is hearer old, either because it has been mentioned in the discourse and is thus discourse-old, or because the person referenced is known to the hearer outside the discourse. So I conclude for my analysis that the subject in [bdX] must be hearer old, and can be discourse-old or new.

We also have seen that the semantic field of the direct object is a culturally salient frame. Thus, even though the frame element, or the noun, of the direct object may be discourse new, the culturally salient frame requirement means that the direct object must be hearer old. This frame restriction accounts for why the direct object noun can be infrequent, yet still be considered hearer old, as is the case in Examples (132) and (133).

(132)   How's your thesis coming? Well, I'm almost done my **third chapter.**
(133)   …rave about the city snow clearing. They're already done our **alley** and were doing our road this morning.

In the first example, common knowledge of the noun referenced in the question (*thesis*), places *third chapter* into the old status for the hearer. Similarly in (133), the evocation of snow clearing means that *alley*, and the fact that we know many houses in North America are situated with a back alley behind the property, means that although *alley* has not been specifically referenced, it is also hearer-old. This fits into what Prince

[26] See Prince (1992) for a fuller discussion of these terms and examples.

describes as inferable, that is "when a speaker evokes some entity in the discourse, it is often the case that s/he assumes that the hearer can infer the (discourse)-existence of certain other entities, based on the speaker's beliefs about the hearer's beliefs and reasoning ability" (Prince, 1992: 296). Prince gives the examples in (134) and (135).

(134)   He passed by the door of the Bastille and the door was painted purple.
(135)   He passed by the Bastille and the door was painted purple.

In (135) the hearer is not assumed to already have any mental representation of the door in question, hence it is not Discourse-old. However, this door is treated as thought it were already known to the hearer … hence it is not quite Discourse-new. I suggest that the information status of the frame element / direct object in [bdX] functions in a similar way. Namely, that although the frame is discourse old by virtue of its cultural salience, the frame element is 'inferable', thus not discourse old but 'not quite discourse new' to use Prince's words.

The notion that is described here in terms of a frames knowledge structure, with a frame element as the metonymic referent to a process, has been captured previously in the literature under the term bridging (Clark, 1977). According to Clark, *bridging* is an obligatory part of the process of comprehension and involves resolving referring expressions that, purely on the basis of string matching cannot be resolved and thus require the reader to 'bridge the gap' using common inferences. Bridging is the construction of implicatures, where the listener takes as necessary that s/he is able to identify the intended referents for all referring expressions. In most contexts, it is necessary for the listener to construct certain implicatures, or bridge, in order to successfully interpret an utterance. The listener assumes that the implicatures are intrinsic to the intended message and thus creates a construal that satisfies two requirements (as outlined by Clark): firstly, "that the speaker could plausibly have expected him/her to construct"; and secondly, "that the speaker could plausibly have intended" (1977: 413). In the context of [bdX], I simply note that frame metonymy requires bridging in the sense of Clark (1977), where the listener 'bridges the gap' between the frame element and the frame.

Also helpful to the current analysis of given-new information status is the notion of weak definites. I use Poesio's (1994) description of weak definites as a "productive,

systematic class of definite descriptions whose use does not appear to require either familiarity or uniqueness". These include sentences such as those in (136) and (137).

    (136)   I read the paper this morning.
    (137)   *I read the book this morning.

These sentences show that in some cases definite determiners can be used in a given sense to refer to entities that have *not previously been mentioned in the discourse*, but are nevertheless familiar to the hearer. In (136) the referent is discourse-new, but the cultural knowledge that in the Western world a newspaper is delivered one's doorstep in the early morning, and that a common breakfast activity is to read the paper, allows the use of the definite determiner. In (137) this usage does not fit, because the hearer has no way of accessing a frame that would include the information as to which book is meant.

    I suggest that a similar treatment of the use of determiners (both definite and possessives) in [bdX] accounts for instances in the corpus such (138) or (139).

    (138)   Not waiting until she is **done her groceries** then going over…
    (139)   or throw in the the laundry. They are **done their solids**…

Here, despite the frame element not having been mentioned previously in the discourse (and thus being discourse new), the frame is culturally salient, rendering *She did her laundry* to be interpretable by inference, bridging, or frame metonymy, in the same way that *I read the paper* is. While I am not suggesting that these *are* weak definites, as the sentences clearly are referring to one particular set of laundry or one event of grocery shopping, the literature on weak definites gives us another instance in language where cultural salience and bridging play a role in constraining semantics (see Carlson et al. (2006) for further discussion on uniqueness and bridging).

    I suggest that the information status of NPs in the subject and object slots of [bdX] can be summarized as shown in Table 20:

Subject	Object
Hearer-old	Hearer-old
Discourse-new or discourse-old	Discourse-inferable

Table 20.   Information status of subject and object

These results arise from the data described in the previous sections, and show that the semantic field restrictions on the object are reflected in the discourse properties relating to information structure and status. The cultural salience requirement on the semantic field has impacts on the discourse properties, where the direct object is hearer-old by virtue of this cultural salience, and therefore also discourse inferable. In the next and last section examining discourse properties, we examine clause level behaviour that further supports this frames-based analysis.

5.3.3. Clause-level behaviour

In my corpus data there is an overwhelming occurrence of the construction in subordinate clauses introduced by adverbials like *once, since* and *when*. Table 21 presents the distribution of adverbials, from highest to lowest frequency. As the table shows, over 61% of instances in the corpus are contained in subordinate clauses.

Adverbial	Token	Percentage
when	196	25.65%
once	104	13.61%
after	83	10.86%
until	31	4.06%
by the time	27	3.53%
as soon as	17	2.23%
before	8	1.05%
since	6	0.79%
TOTAL	472	61.78%

Table 21.   [bdX] distribution in subordinate clauses

Subordinate clauses are used to give background information to a main clause proposition. I suggest that the high frequency of subordinate clause instances of [bdX]

suggests a tendency of this construction to provide backgrounded information. This fits with the conclusions drawn thus far regarding the high saliency of this construction in routine tasks.

In this section we have examined the discourse features of [bdX]. It was found that the direct object resists being the focus element of the phrase, and that the subject equally resists focalization. Lambrecht's notion of Sentence-Focus can be used to describe the all-focus nature of the construction. Furthermore, we reviewed the information status and found that due primarily to high frame salience, the direct object is hearer old but discourse-'inferable'. Lastly, the predominance of subordinate clauses in the corpus data suggests a strong tendency towards using [bdX] to provide background information. In the final section of this chapter, I turn to the elements of the constructional meaning that evolve from the combination of these properties and cannot be reduced to just one element.

5.4. What is 'done' doing in Canadian English?

Having seen the properties of syntax, semantics and discourse that the individual elements of the construction convey, we turn now to aspects of the construction's meaning that are not anchored in any one particular building block. So what is [bdX] doing? I posit that non-compositional semantic meaning is conveyed by the construction in the same way that, for example, in the *way*-construction (e.g. in *She danced her way into the room,* the semantics conveyed involve a manner of motion that is inherent to the construction as a whole rather than to one or more of its discrete elements (Israel, 1996). This non-compositional meaning includes elements of viewpoint and aspect. We saw earlier in this chapter that [bdX] conveys exhaustivity or completion with regards to the direct object. Here I further suggest that this is tightly tied to the strong metonymic component to the construction, whereby the element that evokes the frame, the direct object, stands for a process that is reaching completion. This is one of the factors that facilitate the aspectual element of the construction. I suggest that this aspectual element is furthermore related to viewpoint, in that aspect is construed from the point of view of the subject. In sum, I argue in this section that through its frame metonymy [bdX] creates

a viewpointed frame with a completed aspect. I conclude this chapter with thoughts on theoretical implications this has for constructional approaches.

5.4.1. Frame metonymy

In the previous sections we have seen the strong elements of frame evocation, and the variability in the frame element that is used to evoke the frame, that are characteristic of [bdX]. It is clear upon examination of the noun phrase, that the direct object noun is highly metonymic for a process. For example, in each of the following examples, the direct object evokes a process. In (140) the process that is evoked by the noun phrase *the lids* is *applying makeup to the lids*; similarly in (141), the process evoked is that of *clearing our alley of snow*.

(140) Once I'm done the lids, I tackle any darkness directly under the eyes.
(141) They're already done our alley once (possibly twice) and were doing our road next

What is conveyed is not only that the activity is complete, but that this results in the finishing of the frame element (*lids, alley*). The construal conveyed by the construction includes the completion of the process and the completion of the frame element within that process. Thus in the sentence referenced above from Yerastov (2010b), *I'm done the barn* the event that is construed is one of doing something to the barn (painting, cleaning or similar), and the barn is metonymic for that process; furthermore the barn is 'complete' in that regard.

Interestingly, Yerastov notes *that Im done the hay* is much less acceptable than *Im done the barn (*Yerastov 2010b). In considering why this is the case, I suggest that it is more difficult to construe a process in which a process involving hay is *done* or complete. Generally hay grows, which cannot be construed with an agentive subject. This sentence would be felicitous in which one were, for example, construing a scenario in which one were bundling different grains, say barley, hay and corn. In this case, *hay* would stand metonymically for the process of bundling, rendering the proposition *I'm done the hay* acceptable. The context in which the utterance is delivered is paramount because the noun stands for a process that requires frame-knowledge to interpret. It cannot be interpreted if the hearer does not know which frame s/he should access.

5.4.2. Aspect

We have seen that the direct object in [bdX] is heavily metonymic for a process. I believe that this relates to what I termed *exhaustivity* in Section 5.2. More precisely I suggest that the facts that we saw in the previous section showing that both the process is completed, and the noun itself is 'used up' is indicative of a construal that involves the *final stage of a staged process.* That is, inherent in [bdX] is a construal of the final stage of a multi-staged process being complete. From this distinction what follows is a more precise way to delineate the semantics of [bdX] and [bdwX], building on the terms *exhaustivity* and *satiety* introduced earlier. We can say that where [bdX] evokes the *last* stage of the process of a given frame, [bdwX] evokes *any* stage of the process of a given frame. (It is important to note here that this difference in aspect accounts for the ambiguity of [bdwX], where [bdwX] can evoke the final stage of the frame, though must not necessarily.) This is exemplified in (142) and (143), where (142) is from a blog about environmentally responsible ways to dispose of makeup and clearly refers to the lip balm being 'used up', or, in the process of applying lip balm, it has been applied for the final time. Example (143), on the other hand, has the reading that the speaker has used as much of the lip balm *for now* as s/he wants to. It is possible, but not necessary, that this is the final use of the lip balm:

(142)   Ever have that sick feeling when you're done your lip balm and you have to throw away the container?
(143)   I'm done with my lip balm.

This delineation between [bdX] and [bdwX] brings us to the linguistic term *aspect,* the part of meaning that has to do with the temporal construal of an event. "Aspect is the semantic domain of the temporal structure of situations and their presentations" (Smith, 1991). Linguistic aspect is generally seen as having two components: situation type (such as event versus state), and viewpoint aspect (such as imperfective or perfective). Situation type provides the basic temporal structure such as the presence or lack of temporal endpoints, and viewpoint aspect focuses on some part of that structure. Together these two elements convey information about the temporal elements of a situation, including beginning, end, change of state and duration. Their interaction determines the aspectual meaning that is conveyed by the sentence. For example, consider the aspectual information conveyed in the following sentences:

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<div style="padding-left: 2em;">

(144)   Mary walked to school.
(145)   Mary was walking to school.
(146)   Mary walked in the park.

</div>

In (144) the information that is conveyed is that the event has an end goal, and the end goal has been reached. (145) represents the same event with the same end goal, but does not include information that the goal was reached. (146) presents an event that does not involve a goal, and additionally conveys that the event is no longer continuing. The linguistic form of a sentence varies to convey this information, with aspect in English being marked on the verb phrase. Situation type is conveyed by the verb constellation (main verb and arguments) and viewpoint aspect is conveyed by a grammatical morpheme, such as the *–ing* to convey imperfective aspect.[27]

In the context of this thesis, I use the generally accepted notion of aspect outlined above, which posits that aspect is marked on the verb phrase. We have seen that [bdX] conveys a completion of a process, including the 'using up' of the noun that is metonymic for the process, thus conveying the completion of the final stage of the process. [bdwX], however, conveys a different aspect while using the same verb phrase. Thus it cannot be the case that aspect here is clearly marked by the verb phrase. I therefore suggest that in [bdX] the aspect is conveyed by the construction as a whole. Recognizing that aspectual meaning can be conveyed by the construction as a whole, rather than by its compositional parts, is crucial in providing a full analysis of the construction, and is new insofar as constructionist approaches to date have not suggested this possibility.

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[27] For a more complete introduction to aspect, see Smith (1991).

5.4.3. Viewpoint

The constructional meaning inherent in [bdX] extends beyond frame metonymy and aspectual information to encode the cognitive phenomena of viewpoint as well.[28] In this section I show that [bdX] is a highly viewpointed construction. Most immediately, what is conveyed by [bdX] is that it is from the point of view of the speaker that the X is done. In the prototypical sentence *I'm done my homework*, it is key that it is *my* completion, *my* having completed *my* homework that is profiled. In this section I present several characteristics of the [bdX] construction that contribute to the construction's viewpoint. I begin with a brief discussion of the literature on viewpoint before analyzing elements of [bdX] in this regard.

Language is naturally viewpointed. In the introduction to Dancygier and Sweetser's *Viewpoint* volume, Sweetser describes mental space analysis, where "linguistic forms are prompts for mental space building, and […] the process of space building involves mental simulation of the situations and events referred to" (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2012: 17) (cf. also Barsalou (1999) and Fauconnier and Turner (2002) on mental spaces). As Sweetser points out, even sentences as simple as *Joe walked into the café*, where the sentence in itself is neutral as to whether the event is described from within or outside the café, "the *simulations* prompted in listeners or readers are not equally neutral" (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2012: 17). Thus the listener in this case would have to construe the sentence from either inside or outside the café as s/he were processing it.

The fact that viewpoint is inherent in human cognition and communication affects linguistic structure at various levels. Viewpoint work has included thorough treatment of specific expressions such as conditionals (Sweetser & Dancygier, 2005) and genitive constructions (Dabrowska, 1997; Dancygier, 2008), and more recently included more

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[28] *Viewpoint* in cognitive linguistics is a different use of the term than in Smith's *viewpoint aspect* discussed in 5.4.2. Viewpoint in a CL framework involves the subjectivity evoked by the speaker in communicating a certain construal of a situation (Dancygier 2011: 219; see also (Verhagen, 2005) on intersubjectivity)

wide-ranging and multi-modal investigations (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2012). In this section I will first introduce in more detail the existing work on viewpoint of genitive structures, and then discuss how the elements of the [bdX] construction discussed in this chapter contribute to the viewpointed structure of the expression. My goal is to show that [bdX] has, in its constructional meaning, an inherent viewpoint. The question is then, do we have a Construction Grammar that can incorporate the complexity of meaning that includes a viewpointed construal within its formalism.

In their 2012 volume on viewpoint, Dancygier and Sweetser include as linguistic markers associated with viewpoint "all the different ways that content is linguistically presented and construed differently depending on […] the following range of factors noted by linguists" (2012: 4). The list includes markers of spacial relationship such as *here, there, this, that, next door*; grammatical tenses and linguistic usages such as *now, then, tomorrow,* that show *when* the speaker is assumed to be; and what the speaker and addresses are assumed to know, think, presuppose and be able to calculate mentally about the mental spaces involved, including determiner choice, pronouns and address forms, connectives and evidential markers.

There has been much work on the concept of viewpoint in relation to case. Dabrowska (1997) offers an explanation of the array of uses of the dative case in Polish through the concept of the experiential sphere. She shows that the decision to use a particular case "hinges on how the speaker chooses to construe a particular situation for expressive purposes, which in turn depends on a host of semantic as well as pragmatic factors" (1997: 2). Similarly Dancygier (2008; 2011b) has argued that the role of genitive in English is a viewpoint marker. In her examination of the GEN-XYZ construction (2008: 171), she demonstrates that the use of the genitive results in "the profiling of a person whose experiential viewpoint is accepted in the framing of the new situation."

Returning to [bdX], I suggest that there are four elements of the construction that together create a highly viewpointed event construal. Firstly, there is a strong subject viewpoint. *I'm done my homework* is not semantically similar to *My homework is done*; that is, the information conveyed is more than simply the completion of the event, as we saw in the previous subsection on aspect. Rather, there is a strong viewpointed element contributed by the close relationship between the subject, usually a pronoun, and the

object. What is conveyed is the completion of X by the subject – both of those elements are focussed. As we saw in Section 5.2 in the discussion of the information structure of [bdX], the proposition is 'new' (in the given-new dichotomy) in its content as a whole. What is key here is that this contribution to the construction's viewpoint is not conveyed by one particular element, but rather is related to discourse level structure.

As we have seen, there is also the high frequency of possessive pronouns in the direct object noun. Dancygier (2008; 2011b) has shown that the genitive construction (in [bdX] the use of the possessive pronoun) is a viewpoint marker, and that the genitive construction makes a unique contribution to the meaning, namely to the viewpointed construal of the phrase in which it occurs. In [bdX] the high frequency of possessive pronouns, a genitive construction, supports this analysis of the genitive as a viewpoint marker.

Thirdly there is a strong tie between subject and object pronoun, as in the prototypical *I'm done my homework/He's done his homework,* etc. The viewpoint is not marked in isolation by the genitive on the object, but rather as a result of the cross mapping with the subject. This renders viewpoint a feature of the construction as a whole. There are no instances of the prototypical instance of [bdX] (*I'm done my homework)* with a definite (or indefinite) determiner, i.e., without the genitive marker, which would be *I'm done **the** homework.*[29] Most importantly, there are no instances where the genitive is marked but is not cross-mapped with the subject, as in **He is done **my** homework.* Compare though, that this is felicitous in the present perfect*: He has done my homework.* I believe that the cross-mapping of subject and object pronouns is neither found in the corpus, nor accepted in native speaker judgements, because it does not convey the viewpoint that [bdX] conveys as a construction.

This argument for a strong viewpoint element to the construction finds support in the relative frequency of personal determiners in the corpus data in contrast to the

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[29] This could also be a result of the weak definite not applying in this case. See the discussion on weak definites in Section 5.3.2.

related construction [bdwX]. Recall that [bdX] had 52.88% of instances that were personal pronouns cross-mapped with the subject, whereas in the [bdwX] constructions in American and Canadian English, the frequencies were less than 1/3, at 32.53% and 27.51% respectively. Compare, for example, two sentences with the same semantic field – knitting, as in (147) and (148):

(147)   Knitty Roundtable sound fabulous! Have fun! And **I'm not done my sweater** either, but I totally have sweater envy

(148)   Ooooo, I can tell it's just gorgeous. As soon as **I'm done with my current lace project,** this is going on the needle

Both sentences have the same first person determiner *my* and the same semantic field. Note that the [bdX] construction conveys a meaning whereby the speaker is creating the sweater. Even out of context, this is the only reading that could attain. With [bdwX], on the other hand, *I'm done with my sweater* is compositional. The action of the determiner in these sentences is not identical. The determiner is a key element in [bdX] in construing the viewpoint that tightly relates subject and object. In the [bdwX] sentence, the meaning is compositional, where the genitive marking belongs to the noun phrase, and does not have the sense that it is bound to the subject.

An examination of [bdwX] shows that the viewpointed nature of [bdX] is indeed unique. [bdwX] does not contain the strong viewpoint between the subject and object. The subject is topical, as is normally the case, and the predicate offers new information regarding the subject (focus). These sentences are more directly compositional, and the topic/focus distinction is much clearer.

(149)   is every day of her life a worthy news event? I'm done with *your* paper.

(150)   and revising policies. And that only skims the surface! Exec is almost done with our proposed policy revisions, were just tying up the loose ends)

(151)   out there someone actually does care about me So I'm done with all *your* shit.

Because of the constructional meaning of the majority of cases of this construction being cross-mapped between subject and object, I posit that this viewpoint meaning is part of the constructional meaning. Thus for instances of [bdX] that are not cross-mapped with personal pronouns, but rather with definite determiners and demonstratives, the constructional meaning is maintained and the cross-mapping, though weaker, is still present. For example, in Example (152) from the corpus:

(152)   I'm done this shawl

I suggest that there is a meaning attained in which the viewpoint of the subject continues to include the object more strongly than is the case with the present perfect construction.

And lastly, the choice of frame element also demonstrates the viewpointed nature of the construction. What is chosen by the speaker is the important element of the frame they wish to evoke; it is the element that most accurately shows their valuing of what is finished. For example, in the example given above *they're done the alley*, the speaker is not concerned so much with whether the activity of snow clearing is complete; simply that their alley is done (in this case resulting in the alley being clear of snow and thus available for them to use, presumably). From the point of view of the speaker this is the important result.

The viewpoint analysis presented here can account for the animacy constraint that has been noted. Viewpoint is inherently human. To our knowledge no animal species other than hominids has a Theory of Mind, an awareness of others. As Sweetser puts it in her introduction to *Viewpoint in Language*, "we never have experience of the world except as a viewpoint-equipped, embodied self among other viewpointed, embodied selves" (2012: 1). Given the viewpointed meaning that is inherent in the meaning of the construction through the ties between subject and direct object, only beings capable of viewpoint can be used in the subject slot. This is supported nicely through the example given earlier from the corpus, *When the other dog is done her food…* Dogs have been cited as the only animals that have viewpoint (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2012: 13).

In this section I have argued that [bdX] is heavily viewpointed in the construal it evokes. Using studies on genitive constructions as a basis, I suggest that frequency of possessive pronouns as a marker of the construction, and the strong link between subject and possessive pronoun determiner in the object phrase, create a strong constructional meaning that exceeds the simple compositionality of the elements. I have shown that the strong viewpoint element of this construction can shed light on the varied semantic and discourse characteristics of the construction: the animacy constraint and exhaustivity constraint suggested in Section 5.2, and the information structure introduced in 5.3. In the final section, I bring together the role of information structure

properties, frame metonymy, aspect, and viewpoint to provide a functional motivation for the [bdX] construction.

5.4.4. Functional motivation

I believe that taken together, the analysis of sentence focus presented in Section 5.3.1 and the recent discussion on viewpoint provide a possible functional motivation for [bdX]. Consider again that in the prototypical sentence of [bdX],

(153)   I am DONE my HOMEWORK

the prosodic accent generally lies on the bolded elements. The resultative in (154) is a related construction

(154)   My homework is DONE.

However, this statement is a predicate focus construction, where the subject is topical. In (153), as we have seen, the whole proposition is focussed. This conveyance of the whole proposition as focussed (sentence-focus) gives a functional motivation to place the accented object in post-verbal position, rather than before the verb as in (154) (which renders the 'homework' as the topic, and the focus element as the predicate 'is done'). In (153), the subject pronoun is not necessary to the compositional semantics, in that it duplicates the possession indicated in the direct object determiner. What is essential in terms of argument structure is the object with the theme theta-role, and the transitive verb. This could be expressed in the agentless passive as in (154), however, this would mark the theme as topic, which does not work because it is not a topic, so speakers use [bdX] to avoid marking the theme as a topic. The syntactic subject, while not required given the possessive pronoun in the direct object therefore represents the viewpointed element. This analysis would account for the lack of occurrences of cross-mapped subject and object. The sentence doesn't concern the agency of the action, but rather that the action is complete. Thus the subject is not required for conveying the agent, but is required to convey viewpoint.

While this interpretation of the facts needs to be explored in much greater detail, it is an interesting beginning to uncovering a possible functional motivation behind [bdX]. At any rate, the strongest functional motivation is the tie between aspect and viewpoint

in [bdX]. I end this section with a question: has Canadian English developed as a means to express the viewpointed aspect described in this chapter, and to differentiate it from non-viewpointed and non-completive constructions such as the present perfect and [bdwX] respectively? I would suggest that this requires more robust corpus and experimental work, but is highly possible.

In Chapter 5 we examined the syntactic, semantic and discourse properties of the [bdX] construction in Canadian English. I argued that the *be* auxiliary, rather than being an alternative auxiliary for the fully schematic present perfect construction, is related closely to the Scottish transitive *be* perfect, which in the Shetland and Orkney dialects is still productive. With regards to semantic properties, I argued that the animacy constraint on the subject, in addition to restraints on the semantic field (and to some degree lexical noun collocate), and the meaning of exhaustivity that is conveyed through the construction motivate the view of [bdX] as a construction. Properties at the discourse level support a constructional account as well. We have seen that the construction tends towards high levels of referential givenness, that information structure properties are murky at best, and that there is a strong preference of the construction to convey backgrounded information in subordinate clauses. Finally, in the last section of Chapter 5, we examined the full construal involved in [bdX] that cannot be reduced to meaning conveyed to one element of the construction, but rather is conveyed by the construction as a whole. As a construction, [bdX] conveys detailed aspectual information that is not limited to being marked on the verb, and it conveys a highly viewpointed construal that is a result of the pattern of distribution of subject and object pronouns and their cross-mapping.

In Chapter 6 I offer a conclusion of the research presented here, and propose theoretical implications as well as areas for future research.

6. Conclusion

This thesis has evaluated the construction 'be done X' ([bdX]) in Canadian English (e.g. *I'm done my thesis*). With corpus data collected from weblogs using the WebCorp processor (www.webcorp.co.uk), the usage of Canadian [bdX] was compared to that of the similar construction 'be done with X' ([bdwX]) in both Canadian and American English. The study is placed within the framework of cognitive linguistics, which views language as an entity whose purpose is the construction and construal of meaning, and shows both *what meaning* is conveyed by [bdX], and *how* this is achieved. The [bdX] construction is of particular interest due to the emphasis in cognitive linguistics on one-to-one form-meaning mapping. I argue that [bdX] and [bdwX] in Canadian English have distinct constructional profiles, especially in their semantics, where [bdX] conveys exhaustivity, i.e., the end stage of a process, and [bdwX] conveys the completion of a stage in a process.

A quantitative investigation of [bdX] and [bdwX] in CE and AE provides a rich data set on which to base my analysis. Breaking the construction into a subject, verb phrase and direct object slot, the following entities were examined: constraints on the entity in the subject position; the syntactic profile of the verb phrase, especially in comparison to other constructions; and in the direct object slot, the nature of the determiner, and the semantic field and noun element of the noun phrase. It was found that first person subject accounted for almost half (350/764, 45.81%) instances of [bdX], and between 40% and 47% of [bdwX] for CE and AE respectively. It was also shown that of the 87 instances that were not pronoun subjects, only 4 were inanimate. I have suggested, therefore, that the subject of [bdX] carries a constraint on, or at the very least a strong preference for, animacy in the subject, in addition to a preference for pronoun subjects. It was also found that the most common determiner across all constructions was the definite determiner *the*, followed closely for [bdX] with *my*. In fact the only construction that did not have *my* as the second most common determiner was [bdwX] – one of many indications that [bdwX] in CE patterns differently than [bdX]. However,

combining all personal pronouns showed significant differences between the constructions. [bdX] and [bfX] had over 50% personal pronouns, whereas personal pronouns in [bdwX] in CE and AE occurred 27-33% of the time. Again, these findings support the argument that [bdX] contains a strong viewpoint element conveyed in part through the genitive construction highlighted in these results.

The semantic field and noun element of the direct object phrase provide important insights into the nature of the [bdX] construction. The corpus was annotated for semantic field and it was shown that the most common semantic fields for [bdX] are related to education, home-based chores and projects, and cultural routines such as exercising and eating. However, the exact noun contained in the NP was variable. I argued that this is a result of the semantic field being a representation of the frames that are most frequently evoked by the construction, and that the NP is the entity which evokes that frame and is thus less restricted. For example, both *paddle* and *kayak portion* could equally well evoke a Triathlon Race Frame, and both are therefore acceptable within the direct object slot. Adopting a frames approach can account for the variety of noun phrase collocates seen with [bdX], while at the same time providing a way of reflecting the semantic field constraints that are clearly evident.

In addition to the properties that are tied to distinct elements of the construction, I presented relevant discourse level properties. I demonstrated that over 60% of [bdX] instances were in subordinate clauses; that the construction is best analyzed as having sentence-focus (it was shown that neither the subject nor object can be focussed); and that the requirement for cultural salience on the semantic field is seen in the information status, namely that the subject is discourse new or old, but that the object must be hearer-old.

Lastly, it was shown that the construction as a whole conveys aspectual and viewpointed meaning. Not only is the variation in the noun phrase highly metonymic for a process, but the construal conveyed by the construction conveys the completion of the process, and also of the frame element within that process (as in *I'm done the barn* as a way of expressing that the activity that the barn represents, be it cleaning, painting etc, is over, and the barn is 'complete' in that regard (completely painted, completely clean, etc). The semantics of [bdwX], on the contrary, indicate only a stage in the process,

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thus, *I'm done with my homework* does not entail that the homework is complete, only that the homework-doing is complete (for now). I suggest crucially here that the aspectual meaning is conveyed by the construction as a whole, rather than by the verb phrase, since the grammatical aspect expressed in the verb phrase of [bdX] and [bdwX] is identical.

Also inherent to the construction as a whole, and resulting from more than simply the combination of the semantics of individual elements within the construction, is viewpoint. Taken together, the genitive construction in the direct object, the strong link between subject and possessive pronoun; the preference for animacy in the subject slot, and the information structure profile create a strongly viewpointed constructional meaning that exceeds the compositionality of the elements themselves.

The characteristics of [bdX] demand an exploration of the many layers of meaning that are conveyed in constructions. [bdX] shows that there are very particular characteristics of meaning construal that need to be accounted for in language, and this thesis shows that a full construction analysis needs to unify the elements of mental construal such as viewpoint and aspect in addition to the syntactic, semantic and discourse level. To date, construction grammar has included syntactic, semantic, discourse and even pragmatic features in its analyses. In other well-known construction analyses, the construction has conveyed additional meaning such as manner of motion (Israel 1996). However, as I've shown here, accounts need to examine the entirety of the meaning conveyed, including the role of knowledge structures such as frames in our interpretation of meaning, as well as aspectual and viewpointed meaning. These elements of meaning are not attached to one particular element of the construction, but rather are shown here to be conveyed by the construction as a whole.

In this examination of [bdX] in Canadian English I have demonstrated that construction analyses must be able to account for the full breadth and depth of constructional meaning. This must include meaning that is inherent to the construction as a whole, but not traceable to an individual element, as in the analysis of viewpoint outlined here. Thus the conclusion of this thesis is to suggest the need for a constructional approach that can encompass all these aspects of meaning. This line of research is at the forefront of cognitive linguistics' current work in gesture, for example.

Multi-modal work pushes the notion of construction beyond even that presented in this thesis. To conclude here, this language-specific constructional study has shown that a rigorous and expansive approach to the study of language must include accounting for the full meaning of what is conveyed by utterances in context.

Appendices

Appendix A.   Search terms for corpus creation

For [bdX], [bfX], and [bdwX] in CE and AE, each of the determiners in column B was searched in combination with the *auxiliary + done* combination in column A.

Auxiliary + done	Determiner
am done	the
am * done	a
I'm done	this
I'm * done	that
you are done	those
you are * done	every
you're done	each
you're * done	all
is done	both
is * done	some
we are done	many
we are * done	my
we're done	his
we're * done	her
they are done	our
they are * done	your
they're done	their
they're * done	
was done	
was * done	
were done	
were * done	

Appendix B.   Determiner distribution

Determiner	[bdX] – CE #	%	[bfX] – CE #	%	[bdwX] – CE #	%	[bdwX] – AE #	%
the	146	19.06	102	28.49	499	36.03	247	29.65
my	140	18.28	67	18.72	131	9.46	136	16.33
his/her	94	12.27	52	14.53	69	4.98	17	2.04
their	67	8.75	37	10.34	43	3.10	17	2.04
your	59	7.70	21	5.87	111	8.01	78	9.36
this	50	6.92	17	4.75	161	11.62	118	14.17
all	48	6.28	15	4.19	52	3.75	62	7.44
that (BARE)	46	6.02	3	0.84	100	7.22	44	5.28
our	44	5.76	17	4.75	27	1.95	23	2.76
that	22	2.88	9	2.51	61	4.40	22	2.64
a	22	2.88	12	3.35	51	3.68	26	3.12
this (BARE)	10	1.31	2	0.56	46	3.32	23	2.76
those	5	0.65	1	0.28	5	0.36	6	0.72
each	3	0.39	0	0.00	1	0.07	1	0.12
both	2	0.26	2	0.56	3	0.22	4	0.48
most	2	0.26	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
those (BARE	2	0.26	1	0.28	3	0.22	2	0.24
both (BARE)	1	0.13	0	0.00	3	0.22	1	0.12
bare noun	1	0.13	0	0.00	2	0.14	2	0.24
every	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.12
her (BARE)	0	0.00	0	0.00	11	0.79	2	0.24
one	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.07	0	0.00
some	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	0.36	1	0.12
TOTAL	**764**	**100%**	**358**	**100%**	**1385**	**100%**	**833**	**100%**

Appendix C.   Semantic field distribution

Semantic Field	[bdX] - CE		[bfX] - CE		[bdwX] - AE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
activity	11	1.44	0	0.00	0	0.00
chores	56	7.33	10	2.79	0	0.00
domestic routine	18	2.36	10	2.79	8	0.96
education	159	20.81	87	24.30	260	31.21
event	13	1.70	0	0.00	0	0.00
exercise	39	5.10	23	6.42	19	2.28
food	32	4.19	9	2.51	11	1.32
health	23	3.01	17	4.75	11	1.32
job	45	5.89	11	3.07	4	0.48
leisure	50	6.54	36	10.06	48	5.76
other	120	15.71	45	12.57	350	42.02
projects	95	12.43	40	11.17	5	0.60
time - duration	16	2.09	7	1.96	4	0.48
work related task	87	11.39	63	17.60	81	9.72
politics	0	0.00	0	0.00	15	1.80
renos	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.12
sports (pro sports team)	0	0.00	0	0.00	16	1.92
TOTAL	764	100.00	358	100.00	833	100.00

Appendix D.   Noun distribution

Noun collocate	[bdX] - CE		[bfX] - CE		[bdwX] - CE		[bdwX] - AE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
book/books	14	1.83	14	3.91	18	1.25	15	1.80
class/classes	15	1.96	3	0.84	7	0.48	30	3.60
contract	7	0.92	0	0.00	4	0.28	0	0.00
course	0	0.00	8	2.23	7	0.48	14	1.68
degree	14	1.83	15	4.19	6	0.42	9	1.08
exam/exams	15	1.96	3	0.84	7	0.48	6	0.72
homework	10	1.31	1	0.28	5	0.35	2	0.24
job	8	1.05	4	1.12	8	0.55	3	0.36
laundry	4	0.52	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
lunch	3	0.39	0	0.00	1	0.07	1	0.12
meal	6	0.79	0	0.00	7	0.48	4	0.48
post(blog)	11	1.44	2	0.56	9	0.62	0	0.00
program	0	0.00	5	1.40	8	0.55	13	1.56
project	12	1.57	6	1.68	21	1.45	24	2.88
rap	7	0.92	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
reno/renovations	8	1.05	2	0.56	3	0.21	0	0.00
school/schooling	7	0.92	10	2.79	0	0.00	13	1.56
semester	5	0.65	1	0.28	3	0.21	25	3.00
set	0	0.00	6	1.68	3	0.21	1	0.12
shopping	21	2.75	6	1.68	11	0.76	0	0.00
term	6	0.79	1	0.28	1	0.07	1	0.12
work	17	2.23	9	2.51	10	0.69	12	1.44
year	19	2.49	5	1.40	5	0.35	18	2.16
TOTAL	209	27.36	101	28.22	144	9.97	191	22.93

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