

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

In this chapter, I shall review some previous studies of 'go' and 'come', and their equivalents in different languages in order to extract the relevant concepts of these two verbs. Then, those relevant concepts on which this analysis is mainly based will be discussed.

Previous Analyses of 'Go' and 'Come' (or Their Equivalents)

This section will review some past studies of 'go' and 'come' and their equivalents in various languages. Many studies have claimed that these two words denote a meaning related to space and time. This will be elaborated on in section 1 and 2 respectively.

1. Space

In English studies, Fillmore's analysis (1971 cited in Miller and Johnson-Laird 1976: 539) of 'go' and 'come' is the most frequently cited. The verb 'come' indicates motion toward the location of either the speaker or the addressee at the time of utterance. It can also indicate motion toward the home base of either the speaker or the addressee at the reference time¹. The verb 'go' indicates motion toward a location that is distinct from

the speaker's location at the time of utterance.

Levinson (1983: 83-84) has illustrated the above statements as follows:

1) Example of 'come' in which it indicates motion toward the location of the speaker at the time of utterance.

(1) He's coming.

2) Example of 'come' indicating motion toward the location of the addressee at the time of utterance.

(2) I'm coming.

3) Example of 'come' indicating motion toward the speaker's location at the time of reference.

(3) When I'm in the office, you can come to see me.

4) Example of 'come' indicating motion toward the addressee's home-base at the time of reference.

(4) I came over several times to visit you, but you were never there.

5) Example of 'go' indicating motion away from the location of the speaker at the time of utterance.

(5) He's going.

¹Reference time is the time the speaker refers to in the sentence, for example, in a sentence He left the house at noon, the reference time is at noon.

Tanz (1980: 142) also adds that there is a constraint for the choice of 'go' or 'come' in English in an imperative sentence. The speaker must invariably use 'go' when the reference location is distinct from his location as in,

(6) Go over there.

He must invariably use 'come' when the reference location is his location as in,

(7) Come here.

This is because the imperative imposes the constraint that the moving party is to be the addressee himself. (Tanz 1980: 142)

2. Time

'Go' and 'come' are used to express motion relative to the speaker's location. Also, it has been found that in many languages they can be used to denote some temporal categories.

Givon (1973) has pointed out that 'go' and 'come' suggest the tense-aspect system. In many languages 'go' chiefly suggests future time as shown in (8) while 'come' represents a past tense marker as shown in (9). (Examples from Givon 1973: 918.)

(8) English: I'm going to see him tomorrow.

French: Il va partir demain

'He'll leave tomorrow.'

Spanish: Yo voy a visitarla mañana

'I'm going to visit her tomorrow.'

Hebrew: ani holex laasot et ze maxar

'I'll do it tomorrow.'

(9) French: Il vient de partir

'He has just left.'

Swahili: ha-wa-ja-enda

'They did not go.'

Traugott (1978) states that many studies in various languages have shown that items comparable to 'go' and 'come' denote some temporal notions. For example, Igbo ga 'go' denotes future tense (with stative verbs only: citing Welmers 1973: 354). The equivalents of 'come' in Swahili ja (Ashton 1947:273) and Luganda jja (Welmers 1973: 353-355) denote future time. French has a symmetric system in which venir de 'come' denotes immediate past while aller 'go' denotes immediate future (Traugott 1978: 376-377).

According to Givon, 'go' tends to denote some future time reference while 'come' tends to denote some past time reference. In a spatial sense 'go' denotes motion away from the speaker while 'come' denotes motion toward the speaker. In a temporal sense 'go' and 'come' connote progress-in-time. The past is time moving toward the speaker's time, while the future is time moving away from the speaker's time. Thus 'go' gives rise to the future and 'come' gives rise to the past (Givon 1973: 918).

To sum up, 'go' denotes motion of a thing away from the speaker's point of reference; 'come' denotes motion of a thing toward the speaker's point of reference.

Such a motion is conceptualized in terms of both space and time. Therefore, to characterize the meaning of such verbs as 'go' and 'come' we have to introduce the following five concepts--thing, motion, space, time and deixis.



Theoretical Concepts Related To the Analysis of 'Go' and 'Come'

In this section, those theoretical concepts related to the analyses of 'go' and 'come' will be reviewed. In the above section, we can see that 'go' and 'come' involve motion of a thing toward or away from some place with some relevance to the speaker's place. It is also found that, besides the involvement with space, they are used in many languages to denote some temporal information. Consequently, the concepts of thing, motion, space, time and deixis are to be reviewed.

1. Thing

In a physical world there are a lot of discrete three dimensional entities which can be generally called things. According to their major characteristic of mobility, things can be classified as self-moving, moveable or immobile.

Self-moving things are such entities as human beings and animals. Moveable things are such items as pens, boxes and bags. Immobile things are such objects as mountains, buildings and trees.

2. Motion

It is obvious that 'go', 'come', and their equivalents are motion verbs so the concept of motion is certainly relevant in some way.

Motion can be classified into three types according to Johansson's (1976: 83) perception experiment.

2.1 Translation

Translation is concerned with the displacement of things which we can perceive changing their locations.

2.2 Rotation

Rotation is concerned with changes of orientation. That is things do not change their locations but change their orientation, as in the situation of turning.

2.3 Deformation

Deformation is concerned with changes of shape or size of things. An example of this kind of motion is the inflating of a balloon.

In language, we represent these types of events mostly through the category of motion verbs such as the examples below for English.

Translation: walk, rise, jump, etc.

Rotation: turn, point, face, etc.

Deformation: extend, bend, inflate, etc.

3. Space

The term "space" can be explained in terms of its relations to things. Things occupy space, and there is space between things. And when we talk about the place of a thing, we are referring to the relation between one thing and another thing. This kind of relation is called spatial relations. To illustrate, we represent spatial relations by means of such spatial expressions as 'in the house', 'at the table', 'on the plate', 'at the hotel', 'in the school', and 'under the road'.

Place refers to the relation between a thing and another thing. For example, 'the house' is one kind of thing but when the house is related to another thing in some way, it will be called a place. Therefore, 'a chair in the house' denotes that the thing

'a chair' is related to another thing 'the house' by the relation of 'in'. We say that 'the house' is the place of 'a chair'.

In static relations, we relate one thing with respect to the dimensionality of the place. For example, A is in B when A is enclosed in the place of a two-dimensional or three-dimensional B; A is on B when A is contiguous with the place of a one-dimensional or two-dimensional B; A is at B when A is contiguous with the place of B without any relevance to dimensionality. The relation in which a thing is related to one place is called static relations, and the place itself can be called a static spatial location.

In addition to static relations there is another type of spatial relations called dynamic relations. As mentioned earlier, static relations refer to the relation between a thing and a place. Dynamic relations are perceived when one thing is moving through successive locations (places). When a thing moves through many places, we may indicate one place as an original point (or source), another as a terminal point (or goal) and another as an intermediate point. All these points together are called a path and any points in the path can be called dynamic locations. For example, 'from the house to the school' denotes the relation between one place 'the house' to another place 'the school' in the way that 'the house' is an original place (point) and 'the school' is a terminal place. Viewing two places that are related to each other by the distance between them means that we view all the places together as one, which is often called a path.

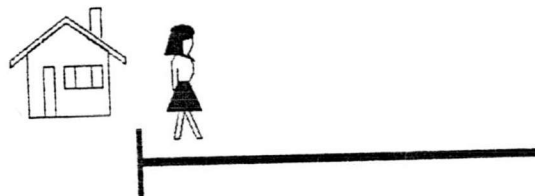
Path has been divided into three classes: bounded paths, directions, and routes, (Jackendoff 1983) according to points referred to in the path itself.

1) Bounded path

In this class, the reference place is an endpoint of the path, that is, one or both boundaries of the path can be located. If the reference place is the original endpoint, it is called the source of the path; if the reference place is the terminal endpoint, it is called the goal of the path. Linguistically, when the speaker refers to bounded paths by using spatial expressions like 'from' (for a source of the path) and/or 'to' (for a goal of the path), he intends to have the audience see either one or both endpoints. Examples of bounded paths are:

- (10) Mary walked from the house.
- (11) Mary walked to the school.
- (12) Mary walked from the house to the school.

These examples can be represented in Figure 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

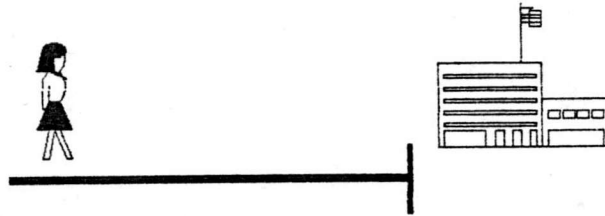


Mary walked from the house.

Figure 1

Source of the path

Figure 1 represents sentence (10). 'Mary' (a moving thing) moves 'from the house' (the reference path). 'The house' here is an original endpoint of the path while a terminal endpoint is not specified in the sentence.

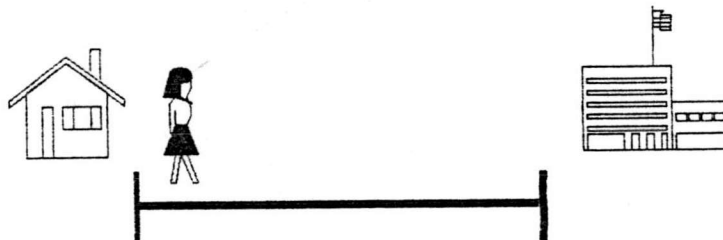


Mary walked to the school.

Figure 2

Goal of the path

Figure 2 represents sentence (11). 'Mary' (a moving thing) moves 'to the school' (the reference path). 'The school' here is a terminal endpoint of the path while an original endpoint is not specified in this sentence.



Mary walked from the house to the school.

Figure 3

Source and goal of the path

Figure 3 represents sentence (12). It shows that 'Mary' (a moving thing) moves 'from the house to the school' (the reference path). Here 'the house' is the original endpoint and 'the school' is the terminal endpoint of the path.

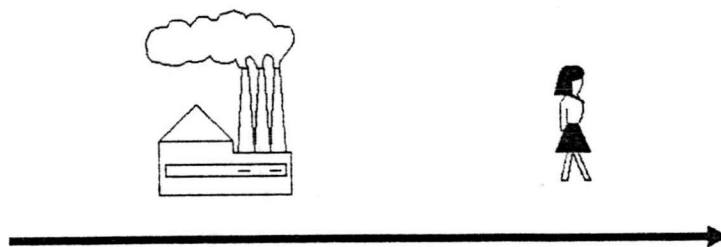
2) Direction

In this class, endpoints of the path are not referred to but the path itself is extended between the unspecified endpoints. The path indicates the extension relative to the reference place. The reference place is not necessarily an endpoint. Linguistically, when the speaker refers to the direction of a path by using such expressions as 'toward' and 'away from', he intends to have the audience see the reference place relative to an unspecified endpoint. For example,

(13) Mary walked away from the factory.

(14) Mary walked toward the hotel.

These examples can be represented in Figure 4 and 5 respectively.

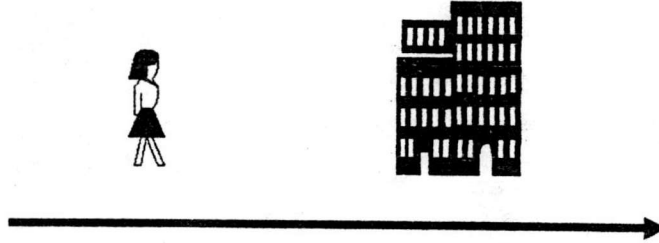


Mary walked away from the factory.

Figure 4

A place relative to a source of the path

Figure 4 represents sentence (13). It shows that 'Mary' (a moving thing) moves 'away from the factory' (the reference place). Here 'the factory' is not an endpoint but it is only one place relative to an unspecified original endpoint.



Mary walked toward the hotel.

Figure 5

A place relative to a goal of the path

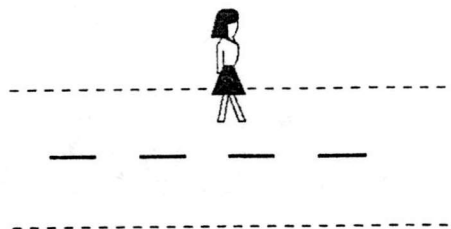
Figure 5 represents sentence (14). It shows that 'Mary' (a moving thing) moves 'toward the hotel' (the reference place). Here 'the hotel' is not an endpoint but it is only one place relative to an unspecified terminal endpoint.

3) Route

In this class, endpoints are not relevant at all but the intermediate point is. The reference place is, thus, located at some point along the path. Linguistically, when the speaker refers to the route of the path by using, for example, 'through' or 'along', he intends the audience to see only the intermediate spatial locations between the unspecified endpoints (which are not relevant at all). Examples are:

(15) Mary walked along the road.

This example can be represented in Figure 6.



Mary walked along the road.

Figure 6

Route of the path

Figure 6 represents sentence (15). It shows that 'Mary' (a moving thing) moves 'along the road' (the reference place). Here 'the road' is not an endpoint but an intermediate point between unspecified endpoints.

In short, we can describe the spatial relations between things as static relations or dynamic relations. In the case of static relations, we are able to relate a thing to a place by using relator words (in, on, at, under, etc.). In the case of dynamic relations we relate a thing to a series of places (called a path), by using other types of relator words (to, from, away, toward, along, etc.).

4. Time

To talk about time may include two main kinds of time--linguistic and non-linguistic time. Non-linguistic time includes 1) physical time, a thermodynamic principle of entropy

2) psychic time, the time that we perceive, 3) calendrical time--measurement according to seconds, minutes. Linguistic time is that which locates events and situations with regard to reference-points². The temporal mechanisms for representing linguistic time are tense, aspect and sequencing. (Traugott 1978: 371)

The concept of time can be classified in another way, as two types--absolute and relative. Absolute time concerns units of measurement while relative time conceives of time as the ordinal relation of, at least, two moments or intervals of time.

Language provides many categories through which one can represent time. In English, for example, the following lexical items are used to express time: (Miller and Johnson-Laird 1976: 411)

Verbs: end, postpone, precede, recur

Nouns: day, month, precedent, tomorrow

Adjectives: former, later, present, successive

Adverbs: eventually, often, shortly, subsequently

Prepositions: at, during, in, on

Conjunctions: as soon as, before, until, when

²More detail about time will be reviewed in Chapter 4:
Temporal Relations.

5. Deixis

Deixis, according to Fillmore (1966), is the name given to those aspects of language whose interpretation is relative to one of the following items: the occasion of utterance, the time of utterance, to the location of speaker at the time of utterance, the identity of the speaker or the identity of the intended audience (Fillmore 1966: 220).

There are three deictic categories: person, place and time.

5.1 Person deixis

Person deixis involves the shifting pattern of personal pronouns in speech acts in that the participants will share the role of being the speaker. The interpretation of 'I' in the examples below needs an identification of who is speaking in that utterance.

Q: Have you finished?

A: Yes, I have.

or

A: No, I haven't

5.2 Place deixis

Place deixis involves the distance relative to the speaker at the time of speaking. In English, for example, there is a distinction between proximal (near the speaker, as in "here" and "this") and distal (away from the speaker at the time of speaking, as in "there" and "that"). The interpretation of these lexical items depends on the speaker's place at the time of speaking.

5.3 Time deixis

Time deixis involves referring to the situation relative to the time of speaking. This category can be found in the tense system and other time adverbs (such as "now" and "ago") in English. The interpretation of these temporal expressions corresponds to the time at which the speaker makes an utterance.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have found that 'go' and 'come' (and their equivalents in other languages) express spatial and/or temporal information in addition to their usual meanings. We also summarized some basic concepts of things, motion, space, time and deixis which are interrelated in the notion of spatial and temporal relations. These theoretical concepts are relevant to 'go' and 'come' which form the basis for the following analysis. Using these concepts, Chapters 3 and 4 examine in more detail the spatial and temporal relations denoted by the subsidiary verbs pay1 and maa1 when occurring with different kinds of main verbs.