



A Note on the Spray Paint Cases

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conjoined. But note that in (4) there are two [+special] verbs which are acceptably conjoined.

(4) John presents² and absents himself periodically.

It seems clear that (1) and (3) above are impossible sentences in English because there is no semantic congruity between the two verbs. Thus we could not possibly have

(5) *John bestirs and prides himself.

or

(6) *John perjures and absents himself.

But the fact that there is some semantic congruity in the verbs of (7) and (8), but not in (9), seems to indicate clearly that the blocking of conjunction reduction is based on semantic and not on syntactic criteria.

(7) John washed and dried himself.

(8) John kicked and bit himself.

(9) *John feared and kissed himself.

That the factor determining nonacceptability is not the stative-nonstative distinction can be seen in (10)–(12):

(10) *John watched and threw himself.
(two nonstatives)

(11) *John suspected and saw himself.
(two statives)

(12) *John hated and helped himself.
(one stative, one nonstative)

Thus Lees and Klima's restriction on [+special] verbs usually holds, but for reasons of semantics, not syntax.

Is it possible to formalize and label the conditions which allow reflexive conjunctions to take place?

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A NOTE ON THE *Spray Paint* CASES

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The following is an attempt to shed some light on the relationship between sentence pairs such as

- (1) The man sprayed paint on the wall.
The man sprayed the wall with (?the) paint.

² *Present* here in the sense "to bring oneself into the presence of someone".

He loaded the goods onto the wagon.
 He loaded the wagon with (?the) goods.
 She stuffed the clothes into the suitcase.
 She stuffed the suitcase with the clothes.
 The workers planted the trees in the garden.
 The workers planted the garden with (*the) trees.

I will refer to the first sentence in each pair in (1) as a *locational sentence* and the second as a *device sentence*. List (2) contains some representative examples of preposition pairs and verbs which cooccur in the way illustrated in (1). For example, "He cleaned the fat *out of* the pan" and "He cleaned the pan *of* the fat." The first verb in the parentheses in (2) following the prepositions occurs only with the first preposition, the second verb only with the second preposition. Thus, *take* does not occur with *of* as in *"I took him of his money" and *deplete* does not occur with *out of* as in *"He depleted the money out of the till."

- (2) *out of* — *of* (take – deplete)
 clean, clear, drain, empty
off of — *of* (take – strip)
 clean, clear, trim, prune
from — *of* (take – deprive)
 con, rob
in — *with* (leave – impregnate)
 abound, plant, sow, swarm
into — *with* (put – fill)
 cram, load, pack, stock, stuff, wad
on — *with* (scratch – imprint)
 emboss, embroider, engrave, etch, imprint, inflict, inscribe, letter, mark, saddle, stamp
onto — *with* (put – fill)
 flood, hang, heap, load, pack, pile, shower, spatter, splash, splatter, spray, sprinkle, stack
to — *with* (give – acquaint)
 credit, furnish, pay, present, provide, serve, supply, trust
on — *for* (palm off – honor)
 blame

These two sentence types pattern much the same syntactically: both have a verb-noun phrase-prepositional phrase sequence which is analyzed as part of the verb phrase; both permit two passive sentence forms; and both permit either of the noun phrases to be questioned. The two sentence types differ, however, in the following ways:

1. When a substantive nominal is possible, the only possible following object is the one corresponding to the object in a locational sentence, not a device object.

- (3) the robbery of (the) jewels
- *the robbery of the woman
- the inscription of the motto
- *the inscription of the wall
- the load of goods
- *the load of the wagon
- the stock of cans
- *the stock of the pantry
- the wad of paper
- *the wad of the suitcase

For event nominals, such as *robbery* and *inscription*, a following prepositional object is possible, e.g. *the robbery of the jewels from the woman*. For result nominals, such as *load*, *stock*, and *wad*, a following prepositional object may not occur as part of the nominalization. For example, *on the wagon in the load of goods on the wagon* is not connected with the verb *load* but probably derived from a relative clause (*which are on the wagon*) modifying *goods*.

2. The cooccurrence restrictions of these pairs of sentences are not identical. Notice that the device sentences in (4) become unacceptable because of a change in the *with*-noun phrase (e.g. *a pencil* versus *the pencils*), though the locational sentences are acceptable with either noun phrase.

- (4) He crammed (stuffed, wadded) a pencil into the suitcase.
- *He crammed (stuffed, wadded) the suitcase with a pencil.
- He crammed (stuffed, wadded) the suitcase with pencils.
- They loaded a box onto the truck.
- *They loaded the truck with a box.
- They loaded the truck with (?the) boxes.
- The girl planted a tree in the garden.
- *The girl planted the garden with a tree.
- The girl planted the garden with (?the) trees.
- The team credited their success to John's undying efforts.
- *The team credited John's undying efforts to their success.
- The team credited John with the victory.
- We blamed their failure on nothing at all.
- *We blamed nothing at all for their failure.
- We blamed the man for their failure.

3. Certain adverbials occur with one sentence type but not the other:

- (5) They planted the garden full of oak trees.
 *They planted full of oak trees in the garden.
 He packed the suitcase full of clothes.
 *He packed the clothes full into the suitcase.
 The boy loaded the boards one by one onto the wagon.
 *The boy loaded the wagon with the boards one by one.

4. Particles are limited to verbs occurring in device sentences. Moreover, only the completive particle *up* cooccurs, not any of the others such as *in*, *out*, *on*, *over*, *off*, etc.

- (6) He loaded up the wagon with the goods.
 *He loaded up the goods onto the wagon.
 They splattered up the floor with water.
 *They splattered up water on the floor.
 She marked up the tree trunk with her name.
 *She marked up her name on the tree trunk.

5. The prefix *over* combines with verbs only in device sentences:

- (7) They oversupplied the Indians with rifles.
 *They oversupplied rifles to the Indians.
 Harry overloaded the wagon with hay.
 *Harry overloaded hay onto the wagon.
 She overplanted the garden with corn.
 *She overplanted the corn in the garden.

6. The prepositional phrase is usually required in locative sentences but seldom required in device sentences.

- (8) He crammed the jar.
 *He crammed toothpicks.
 She stuffed the bookcase.
 *She stuffed another book.
 They showered the people.
 *They showered the water.
 John inscribed the bracelet.
 ?John inscribed his name.
 The man stamped the passport.
 ?The man stamped an X.