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REGULATIONS ON USE**Stephen C. Levinson and Asifa Majid**

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Background

The field manuals were originally intended as working documents for internal use only. They were supplemented by verbal instructions and additional guidelines in many cases. If you have questions about using the materials, or comments on the viability in various field situations, feel free to get in touch with the authors.

Contact

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Fieldworker's guide for

THE CIRCLE OF DIRT



**Sonja Eisenbeiss and Bill McGregor;
Illustrations by Claudia Maria Schmidt**

Story book stimulus for the elicitation of external possessor constructions and dative constructions (“The circle of dirt”)

Compilers: Sonja Eisenbeiss and Bill McGregor; Artist: Claudia Maria Schmidt

This sequence of thirty drawings has been designed primarily for the elicitation of external possessor constructions or EPCs — previously generally referred to as “possessor raising” or “possessor ascension” constructions — and secondarily for related constructions such as two place predicates with datives. (See below for a brief description of the main construction types being sought with this stimulus.) The data gathered will be primarily relevant to the Argument Structure Project.

Two copies of the “story” are provided: one intended to be used with the consultants, and one as a guide to the fieldworker. Marked on each page of the fieldworker’s guide are the main utterance types that it is hoped will be elicited from the depicted scene.

Structure of the booklets

The drawings were not intended to make a good narrative, though we aimed as far as possible to give it some story line, and there is an obvious temporal sequence throughout, from the first to the last drawing.

- Except for the first two drawings, the remaining twenty-eight drawings fall into obvious pairs, between which there are contrasts that can be highlighted in the elicitation session. For this reason the book is laid out as it is, so that when open the two pages are contrasting pairs.
- The investigator’s version (i.e. the fieldworker’s guide) has each contrasting pair reproduced on a single page, with an indication of the major salient points of contrast. This will be helpful because in some cases the difference between the drawings is not immediately obvious (except for experts in “spot the difference” puzzles).
- Coding in the fieldworker’s guide:
 - ◆ a thick unbroken border surrounds EPC sentences;
 - ◆ a thick broken border surrounds three place predicates;
 - ◆ continuous grey fill indicates locative constructions;
 - ◆ grey dot fill indicates two place predicates with datives.

In addition to this coding, explicit mention is redundantly made in the header for each box of the relevant type. Of course, the qualification “candidate” or “potential” is always to be understood.

Usage: possible elicitation tasks

The drawings are quite rich in detail, and can be put to a variety of uses. There are five main ways in which the materials can be used. They are rank-ordered below. The first, being the most important, has been bolded; we hope that everyone will collect this information.

- 1. Go through the book page by page with a consultant or consultants, ensuring that the major utterances indicated in the Investigator's version of the story have been elicited. The utterances have also been prioritised: thick black borders indicate the highest priority, grey fills, lower priority.**
2. Let the consultant look through the entire booklet, from beginning to end, and request that they retell the story from memory. Make it clear that they can ask any question about the drawings to clarify what is represented.
3. Request that the consultant go through the book from beginning to end, with the book open in front of them, relating what is going on in each drawing. Draw their attention to the contrasting pairs of drawings.
4. Go through the book page by page with the consultant, pointing to every aspect of the drawing, and attempting to get as complete as possible a description of each. Use the book as a tool for elicitation!
5. Make copies of each drawing on separate suitably sized sheets, and use in a matching game in the same way as the "Men and trees" stimulus.

Brief description of the four construction types

1. EXTERNAL POSSESSOR CONSTRUCTIONS: The following definition is extracted from the beginning of Doris Payne's and Immanuel Barshi's Introduction to *External possession* (Payne and Barshi, in press):

We take core instances of external possession (EP) to be constructions in which a semantic possessor-possessum relation is expressed by coding the possessor (PR) as a core grammatical relation of the verb and in a constituent separate from that which contains the possessum (PM). In some languages, the PR can simultaneously be expressed by a pronoun or pronominal affix internal to the NP containing the PM, as in a Genitive-NP construction; but this Genitive-NP-internal coding cannot be the only expression of the PR. As a core grammatical relation, the PR may be expressed as subject, direct object, indirect object or dative, or as ergative or absolutive depending on the language type — but not, for example, as an oblique. That is, the PR is expressed like a direct, governed, argument of one of the three universally attested basic predicate types (intransitive, transitive, or ditransitive). The possessor-possessum relationship cannot reside in a possessive lexical predicate such as *have*, *own* or *be*

located at and the lexical verb root does not in any other way have a PR within its core argument frame.

We mention three main types for the reader's guidance (obviously we are not aiming at completeness):

- (a) *possessum-locative type constructions*, in which the possessum occurs in a locative-marked phrase, as in English, e.g.:

Mary kissed John on the cheek (cf. *Mary kissed John on the train*)

Mary shot John in the foot (cf. *Mary shot John in the theatre*)

Note that it is not universally agreed that this is an EPC — Payne and Barshi in press do not regard it as such, for reasons that we fail to comprehend.

- (b) *dative EPCs*, such as are found in many Indo-European languages, e.g.:

la tête lui tourne French
 the head 3sg:DAT turns
 'S/he is dizzy.' (Lit: 'the head turns on/to her.')

Ich wasche mir die Hände German
 I wash 1sg:DAT the:ACC:PL hands
 'I wash my hands.'

Likewise, not everyone agrees that the dative represents a distinct construction type — e.g. Shibatani 1994.

- (c) *Identically Marked Constructions*, in which the possessor and possessum NPs are marked identically, but they serve distinct grammatical relations: the possessor an argument role, the possessum a non-argument role. Included here are the so-called double subject constructions of Chinese and Japanese, and comparable double object and double subject constructions in many Australian Aboriginal languages (e.g. Hale 1981,). Examples are the following from Nyulnyulan languages of Kimberley, Western Australia, where both NPs are identically marked, but the possessor (single underline), not the possessum (double underline), is cross-referenced in the verb (bolded):

ngaji juyu marru nyily mi-nyjun Yawuru
 INTER you head headache 2minNOM-say
 'Do you have a headache?' (More literally, 'Do you ache head?')

kinya -na kirwa ø-namana-ngayu, kanyjingana -na, Warrwa
 this -ERG bad 3minNOM -put-1minACC lightning -ERG

nimidi ngajanu.

leg my

'I got a shock from the lightning, in my leg.' (More literally, 'The lightning made me bad my leg.')

ngayi -ni malbulu nga-nkulalmany-ø nimarrangka -ni

I -ERG coolamon 1minNOM-made-3minACC hand -ERG

'I made the coolamon with my hands.' (Stokes 1982:126) Nyikina

Some significant questions in relation to EPCs include:

Do the EPCs represent a distinct construction type in the language?

What, if any, restrictions exist on the grammatical roles that can be borne by the possessor NP?

► What range of possessa may enter into EPCs?

How do EPCs contrast semantically with comparable non-EPCs (e.g. *Mary kissed John on the cheek* vs. *Mary kissed John's cheek*)

Many of the scenes in the "Circle of dirt" booklet are geared to answer just these questions. For instance, many of the examples listed as potential EPCs show body parts as apparent semantic instruments. (The Nyulnyulan examples indicate that it is possible to have EPCs with the possessor as transitive subject (thus semantic instrument), intransitive subject, and transitive object.)

2. THREEPLACE PREDICATES: By these we refer to ditransitive constructions prototypically involving the verb 'give'. These have been included because in some languages they are structurally similar (or identical) with dative EPCs. Examples are:

The woman gave the girl a piece of chicken

Die Frau gibt dem Mädchen ein Stück Kuchen
the:NOM:FEM:sg woman gives the:DAT:NEUT:sg girl a:ACC:NEUT:sg
piece cake

'The woman gives the girl a piece of cake.'

3. TWOPLACE PREDICATES WITH DATIVES: Here we refer primarily to bivalent clause types in which one argument is in the dative. Such constructions are found in many languages, including Indo-European and Australian:

Das Mädchen hilft seiner Mutter nicht gerne
 the:NOM:NEUT:sg girl help 3:DAT:FEM:sg mother not happily
 'The girl does not willingly help her mother.'

nganyi -ngga jiginya -yoo moow-la-nhi Gooniyandi
 I -ERG child -DAT seek-1sgNOM+A-3sgOBL
 'I looked for the child.'

4. LOCATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS: There are obviously numerous locational relations depicted in the drawings. Those marked in the investigator's booklet are the ones that are most relevant to EPCs, and which might potentially be represented in a language by EPCs or similar constructions. These are the ones that involve location with respect to parts of persons and things, rather than locations as such. For instance, in Nyulnyulan languages we find examples such as:

yaalu ø-jarra-jina nyinka -n, ninja -n jina.
 stand 3minNOM-stood-3sgOBL this -LOC back -LOC his
 '(The snake) stood up behind his back.' Warrwa

Here we find both the possessor and the possessum represented in the locative, but the possessor only cross-referenced in the verb.

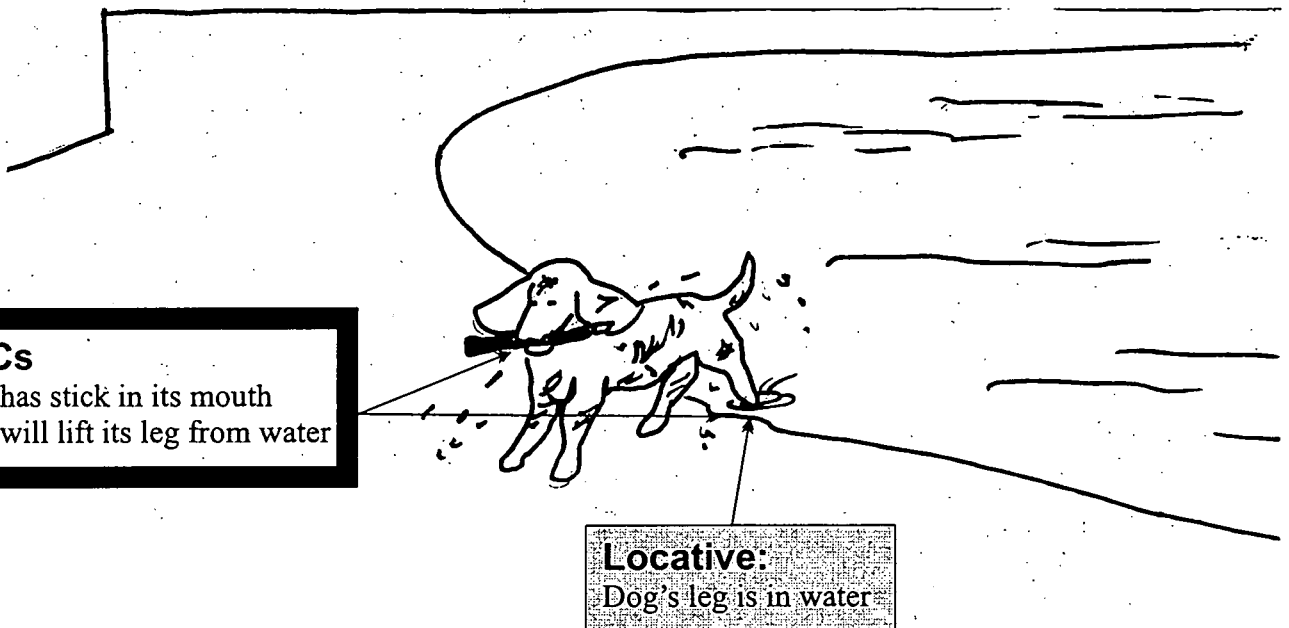
FINAL REMARKS

We encourage you to use this booklet creatively in the field: there are many visual representations that we expect might help elicit utterances that would prove difficult to elicit out of context.

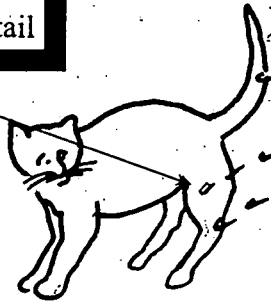
Please pass on your experiences to us so we can produce an improved version next year.

References

- Hale, Ken. 1981. Preliminary remarks on the grammar of part-whole relations in Warlpiri. In J. Hollyman and A. Pauley (eds.), *Studies in Pacific linguistics in honor of Bruce Biggs*. Auckland, Linguistic Society of New Zealand. 333-344.
- McGregor, William. 1985. Body parts in Kuniyanti clause grammar. *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 5. 209-232.
- McGregor, William. In press. External possession constructions in Nyulnyulan languages. In D. Payne and I. Barshi (eds.), 429-448.
- Payne, Doris and Barshi, Immanuel (eds.) In press. *External possession*. (Typological Studies in Language, 39.) Amsterdam, John Benjamins.
- Shibatani, Masayoshi. 1994. An integrational approach to possessor raising, ethical datives, and adversative passives. *Berkeley Linguistic Society* 20. 461-486.



EPC:
dog shakes water and
mud onto cat's leg/tail



EPC:
dog shakes body
(cf. reflexive
dog shakes itself?)

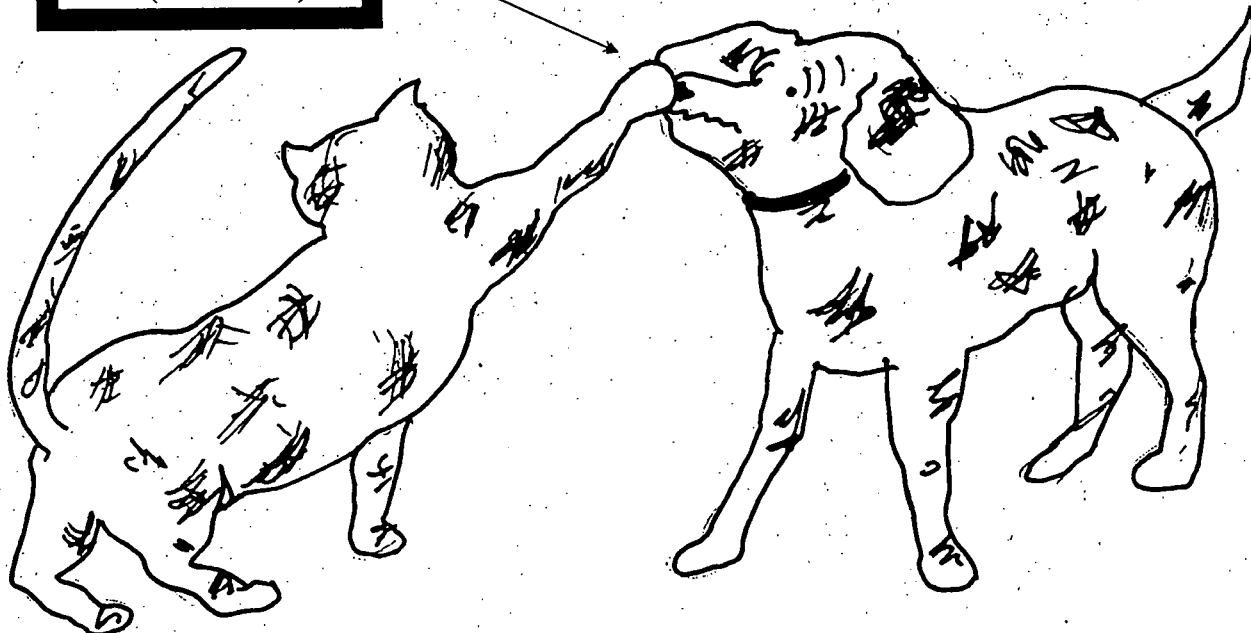
Contrast

EPC:
dog shakes water and
mud on cat's back
water/mud lands on
cat's back



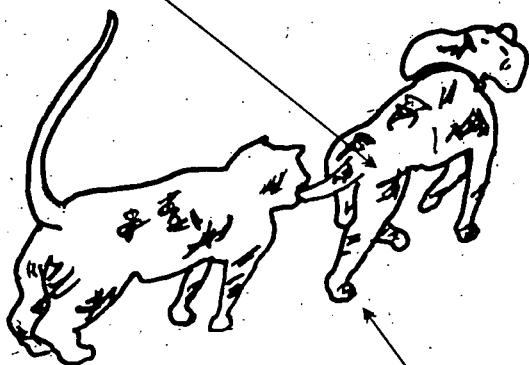
Locative:
mud and water is on
cat's back
cat has mud and water
on its back

EPC:
cat scratches dog on
nose (with claws)



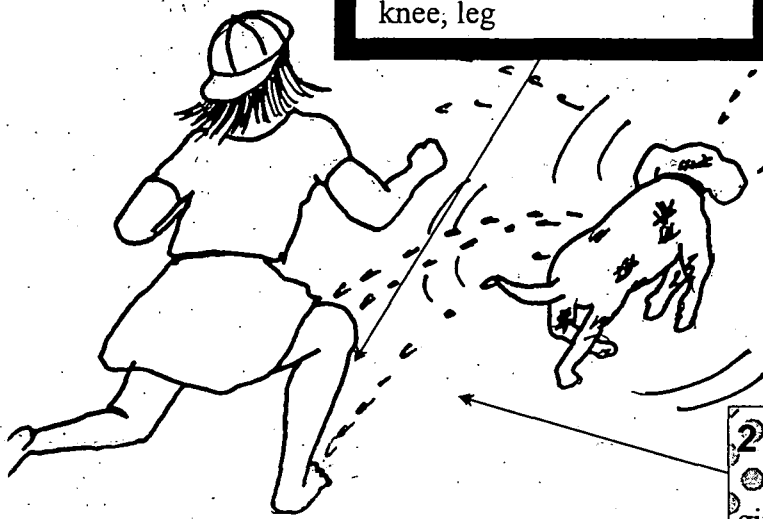
Contrast

EPC:
cat bites dog on
tail (with teeth)



2 place predicate with dative:
cat follows (after) dog

EPCs:
dog sprays mud and water on
girl's knee, leg
mud and water land on girl's
knee, leg



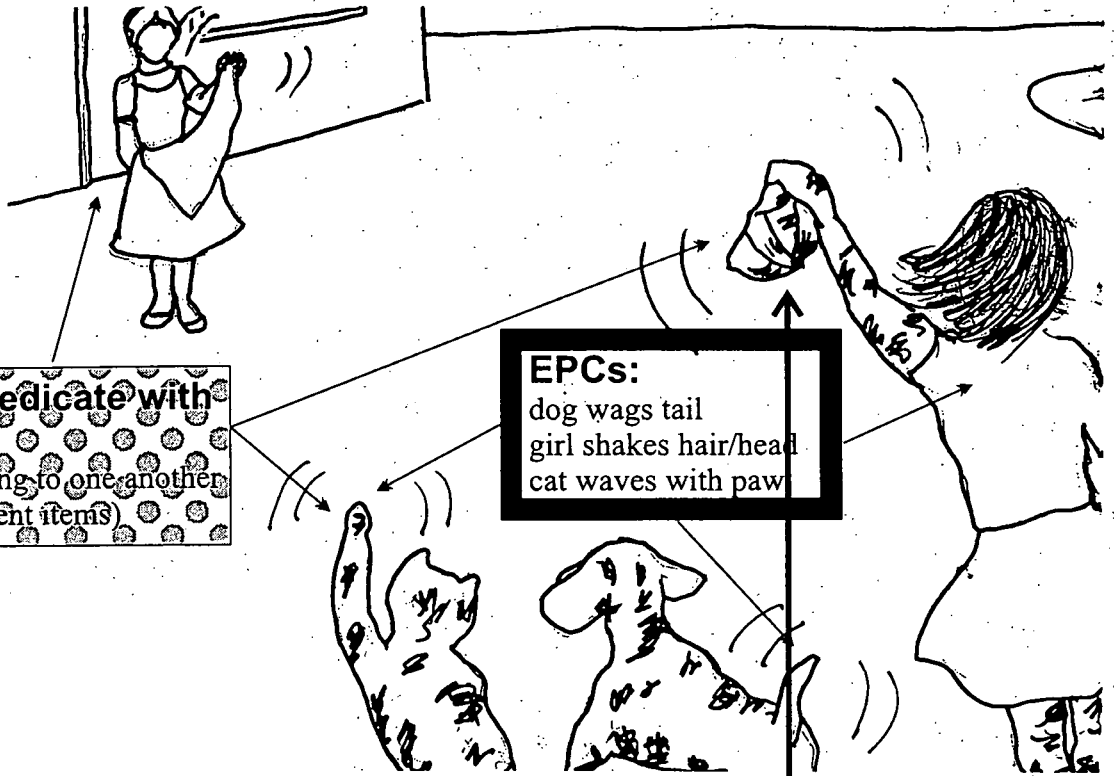
**2 place predicate with
dative:**
girl chases dog

Contrast

EPC:
dog shakes mud and water on
girl's head and arms
mud and water land on girl's
head and arms

EPC:
girl grabs dog by collar
(neck) (with hands)

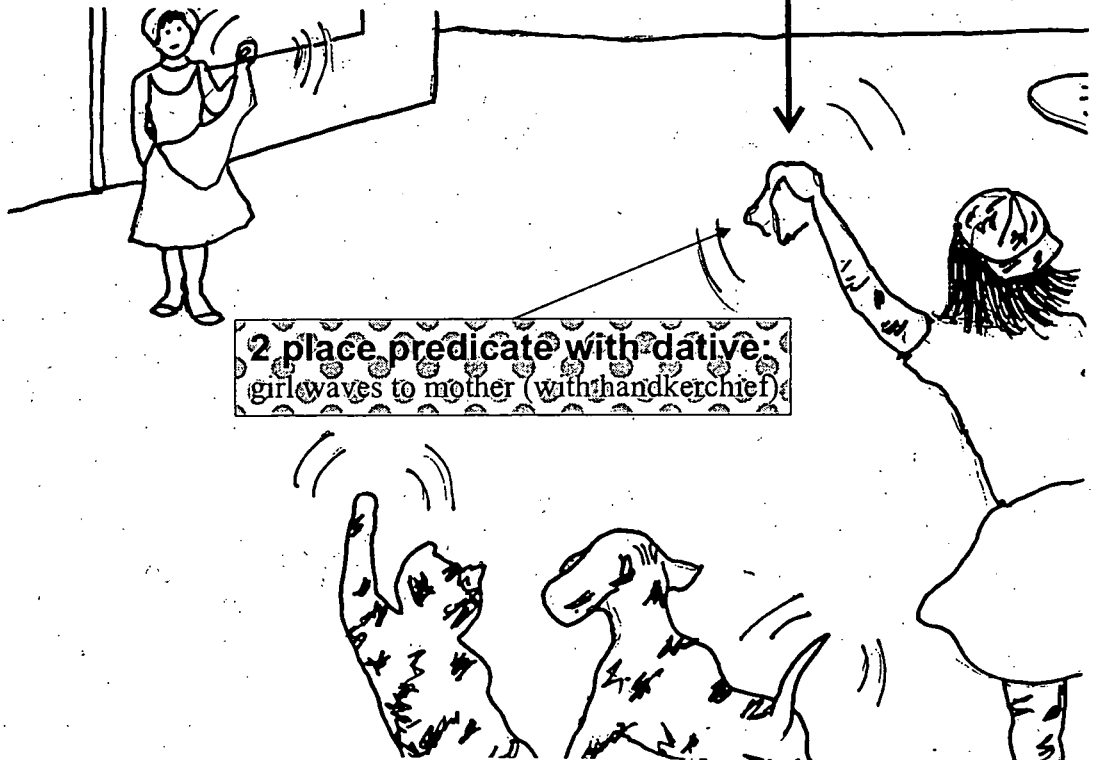




2 place predicate with dative:
 they are waving to one another
 (with different items)

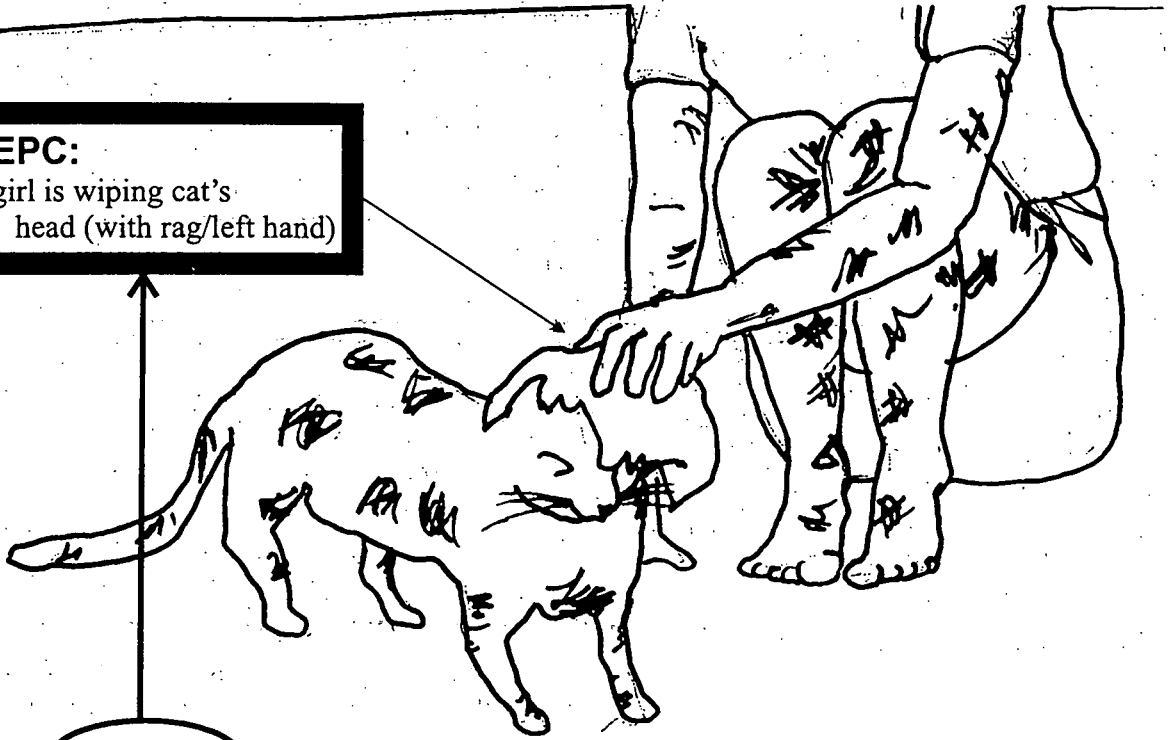
EPCs:
 dog wags tail
 girl shakes hair/head
 cat waves with paw

Contrast



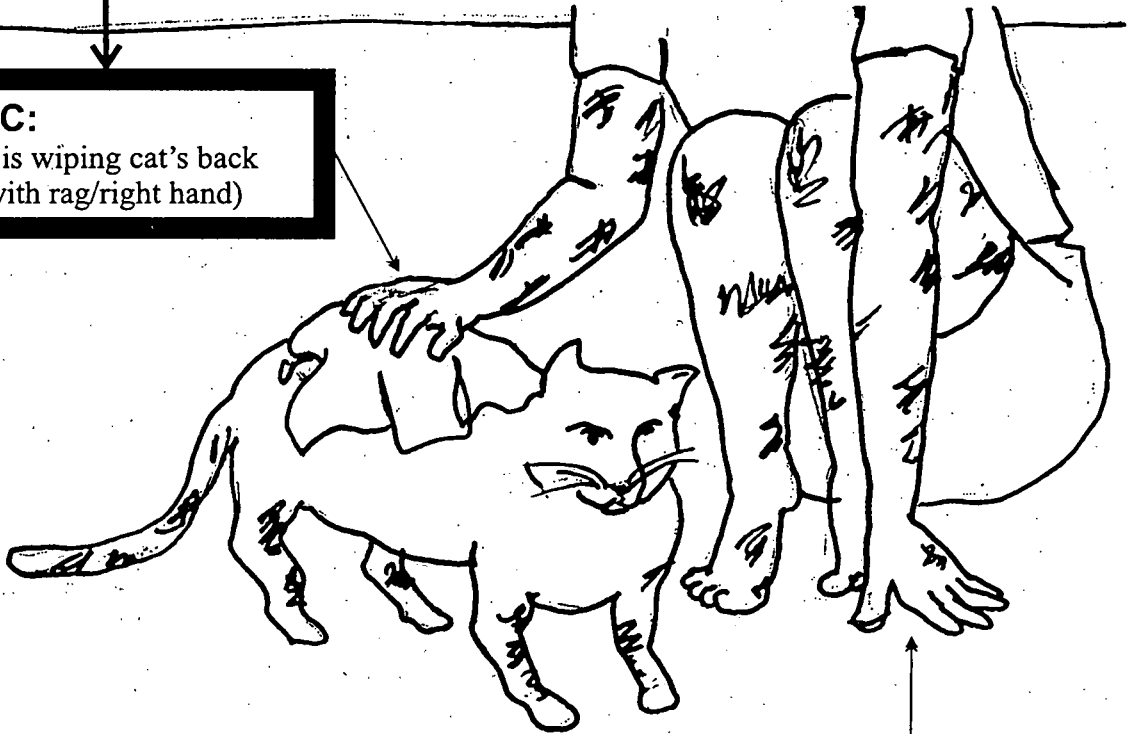
2 place predicate with dative:
 girl waves to mother (with handkerchief)

EPC:
girl is wiping cat's
head (with rag/left hand)

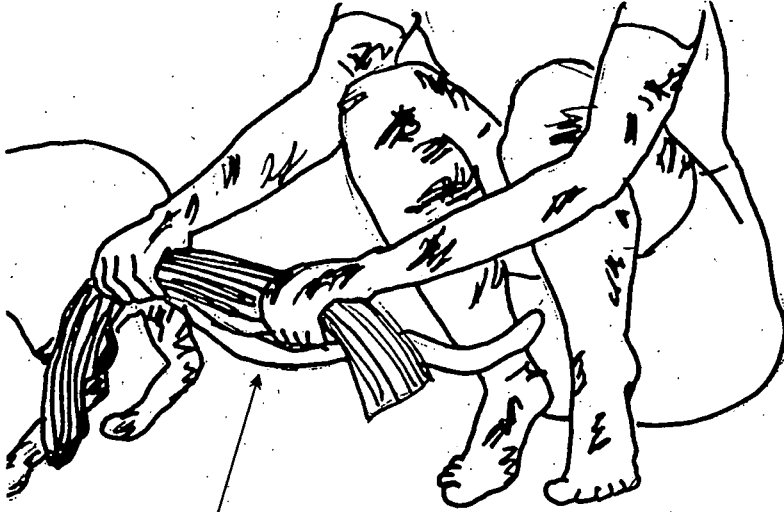


Contrast

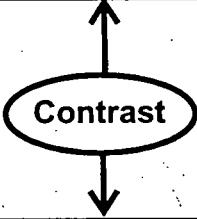
EPC:
girl is wiping cat's back
(with rag/right hand)



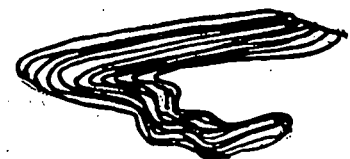
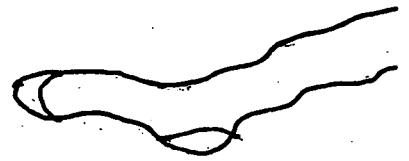
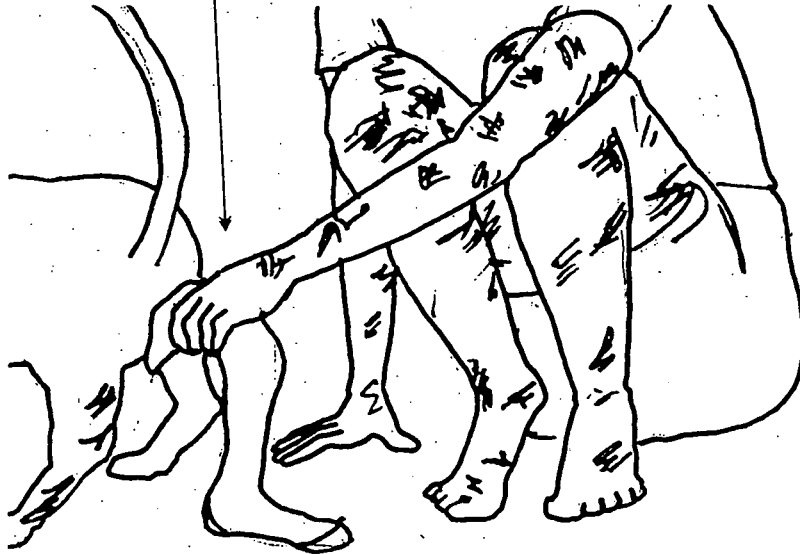
Locative:
girl's hand is on ground
girl has hand on ground



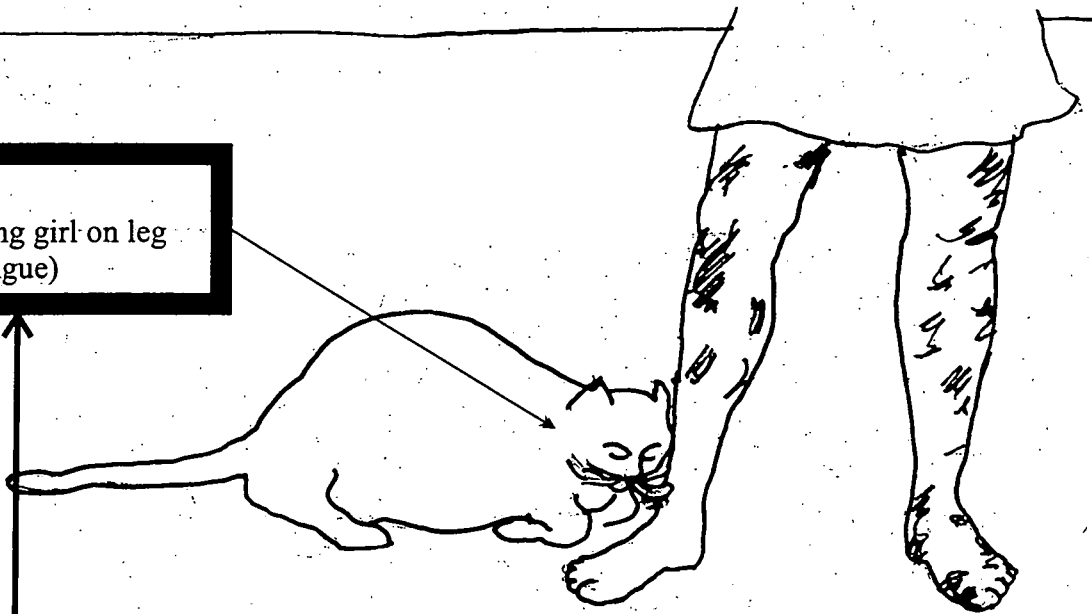
EPC:
 girl is wiping cat's tail
 (with rag/both hands)



EPC:
 girl is wiping cat's tail
 (with sock/left hand)



EPC:
cat is licking girl on leg
(with tongue)



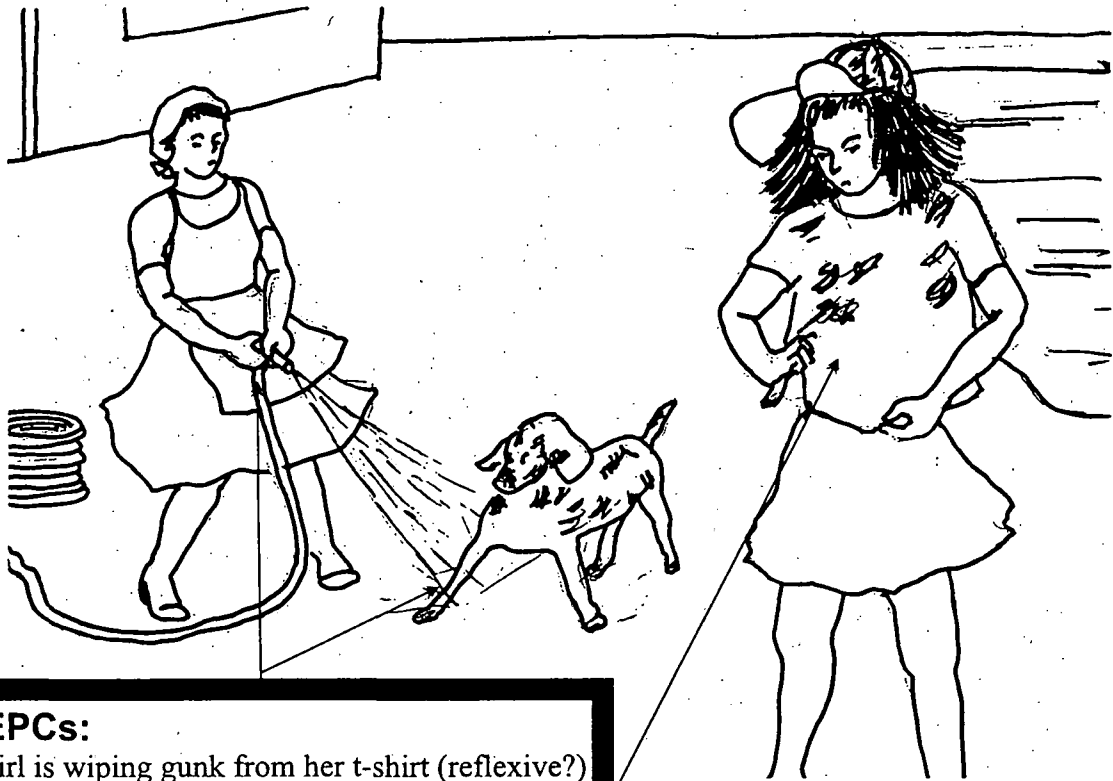
Contrast

EPCs:
dog is licking girl on face
(with tongue)
dog is leaning on girl's
shoulders (with front
legs)



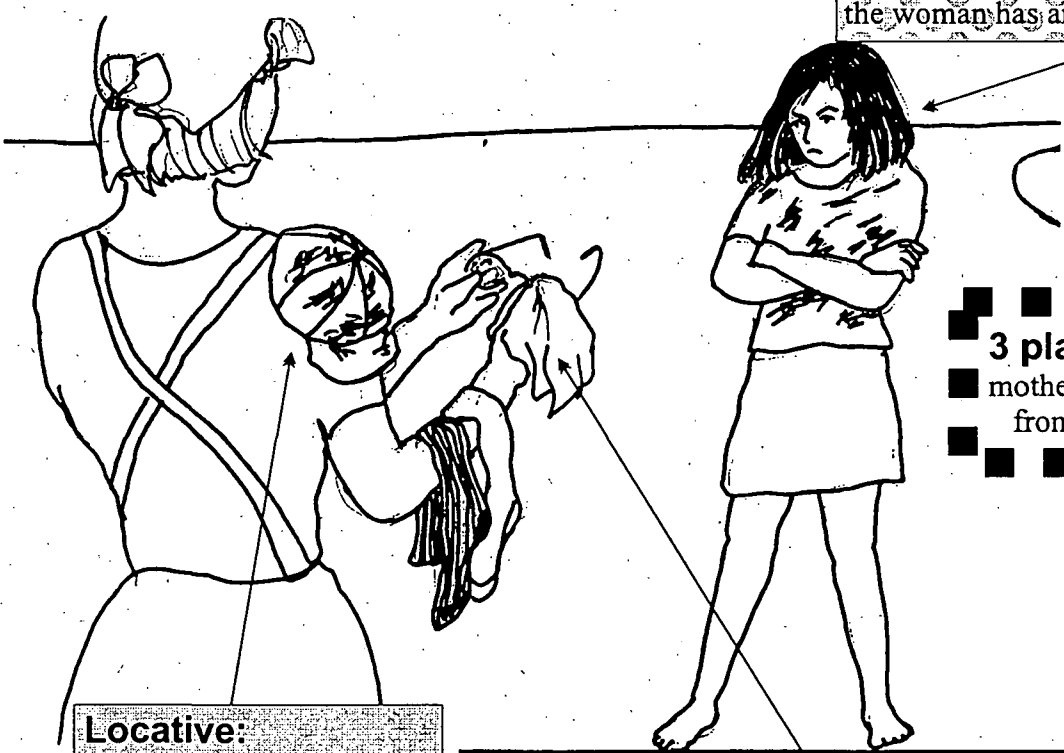
Locative:
dogs' legs are on
girl's shoulders





EPCs:
 girl is wiping gunk from her t-shirt (reflexive?)
 woman is holding hose with hands
 woman sprays dog on leg with hose
 dog made the t-shirt dirty on the girl

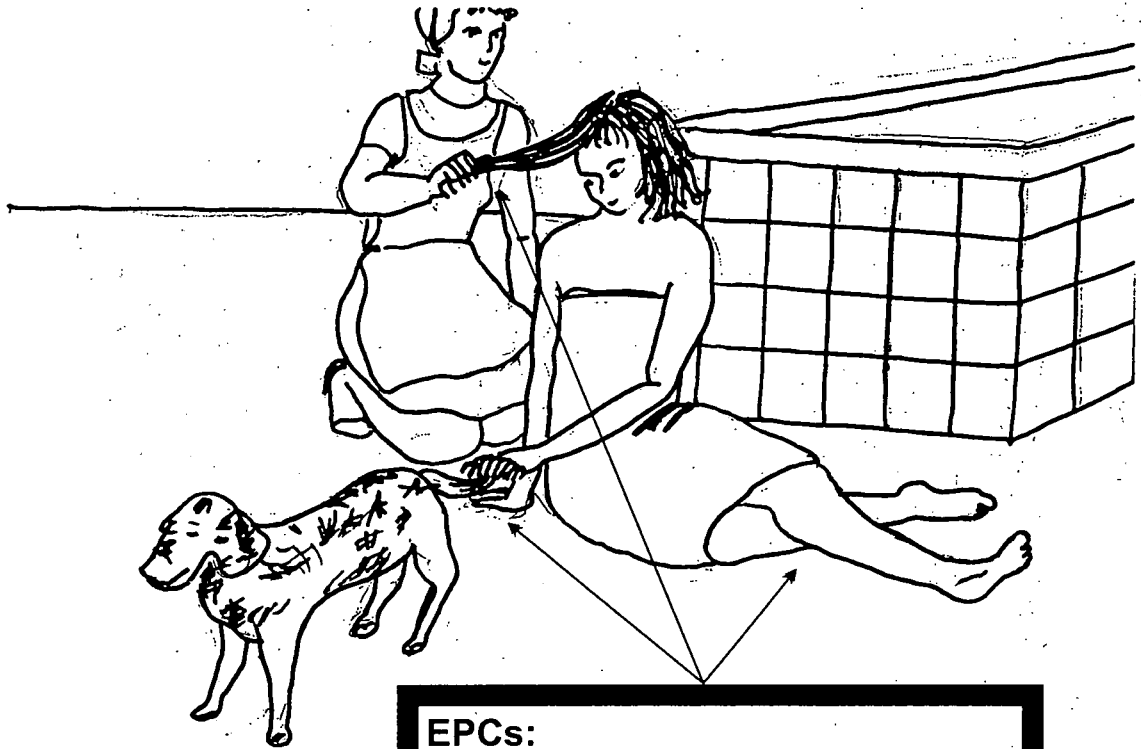
2 place predicate with dative
 that her mother has taken her glasses away
 does not please the girl
 the woman has annoyed/displeased the girl



Locative:
 hat is on woman's shoulder

3 place predicate
 mother has taken the glasses
 from the girl

EPC:
 woman is wiping girl's glasses (with hands/rag)

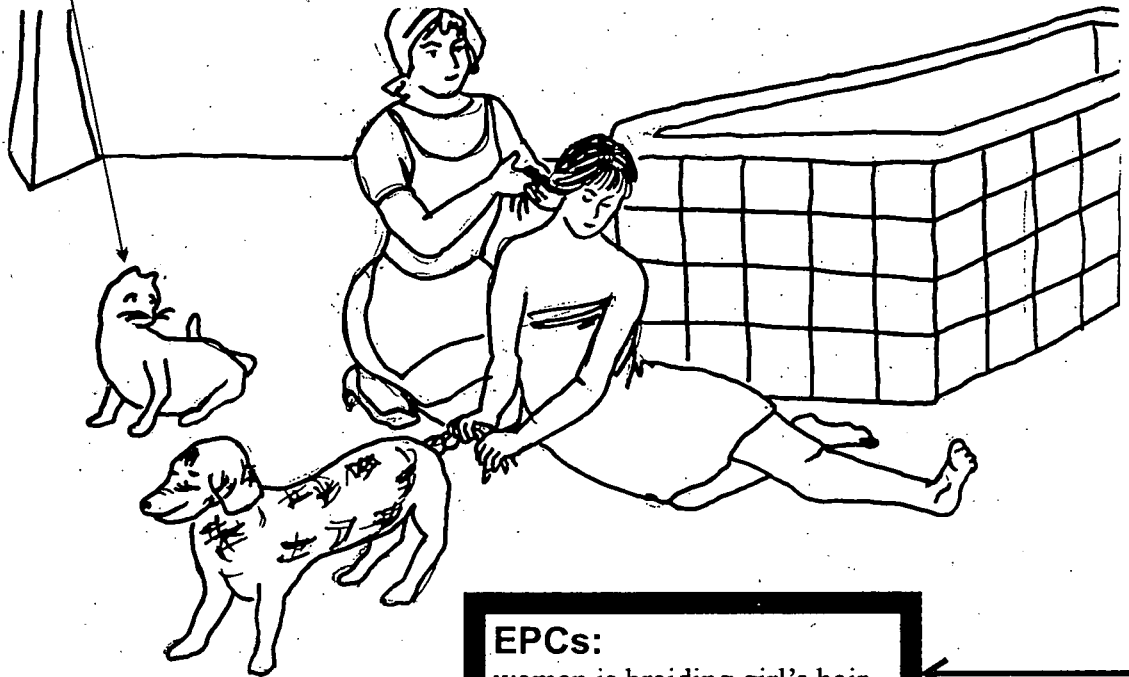


EPCs:

girl is sitting with legs stretched out/crossed
 woman is combing girl's hair
 girl is combing dog's tail

2 place predicate with dative

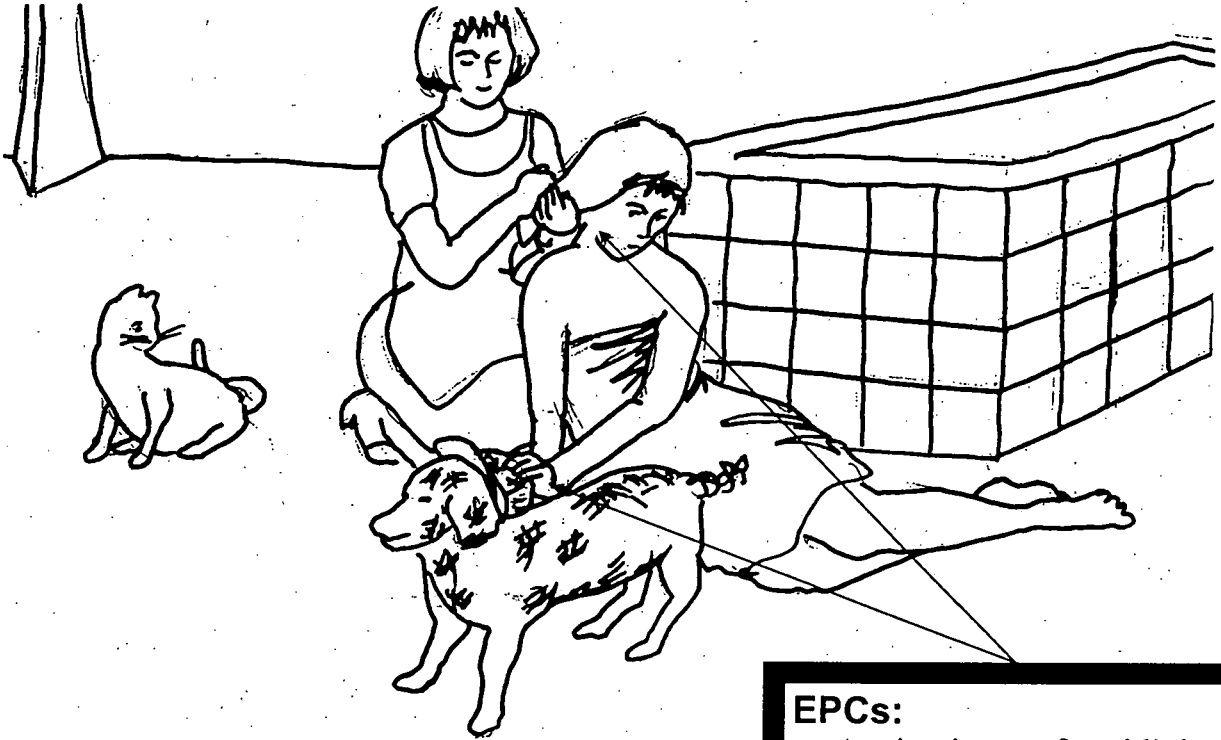
cat is unhappy with/jealous of the dog
 cat is watching girl/dog



EPCs:

woman is braiding girl's hair
 girl is braiding dog's tail

Contrast

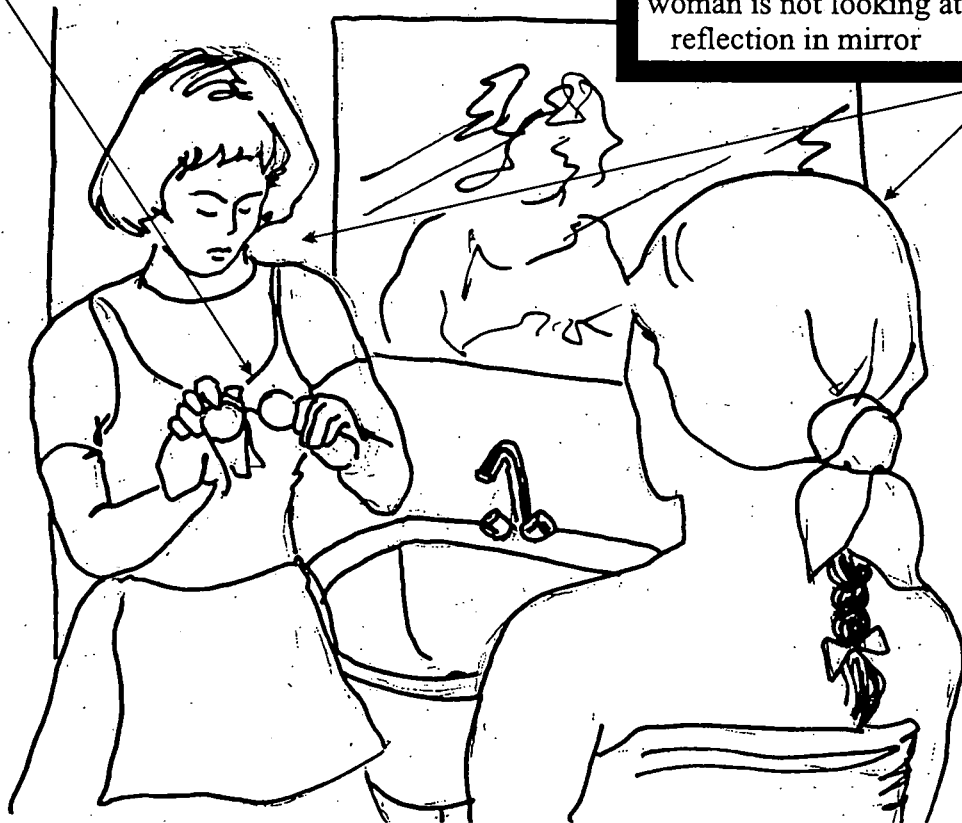


EPCs:

woman is tying scarf to girl's head
girl is putting cap on dog's head

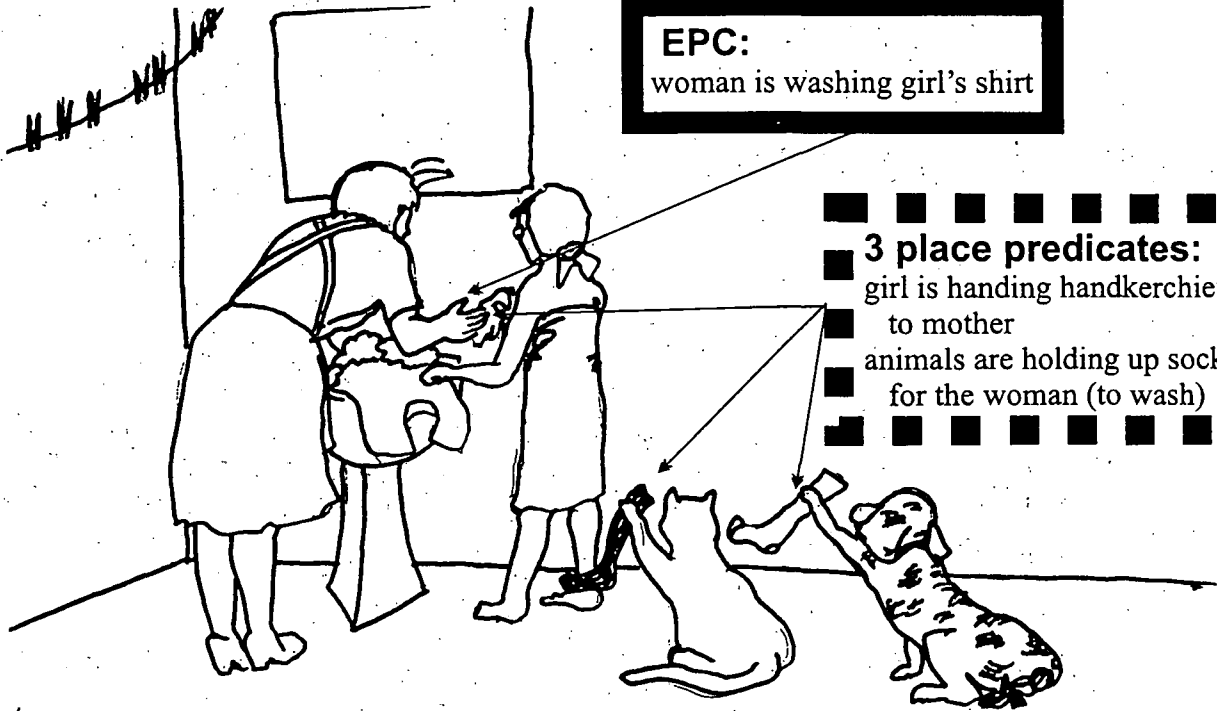
EPC:

woman is cleaning girl's glasses



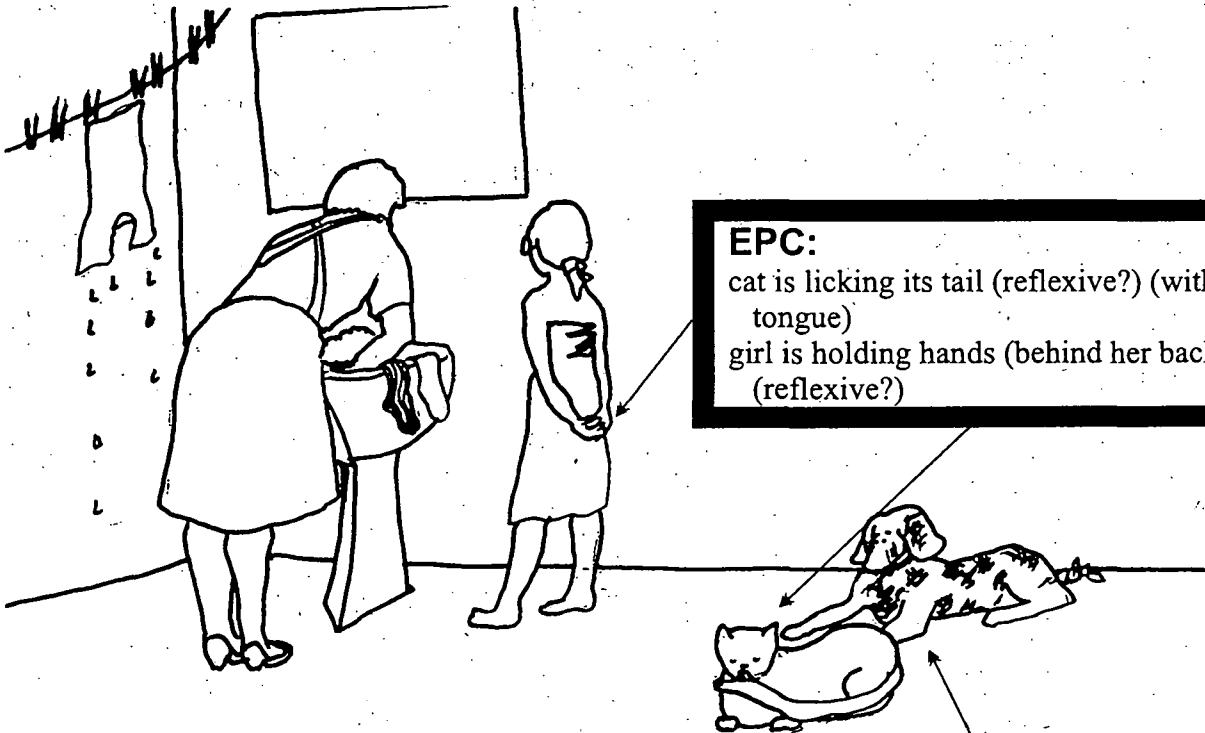
EPCs:

girl is looking at mother's reflection
in the mirror.
woman is not looking at her (own
reflection in mirror)



EPC:
woman is washing girl's shirt

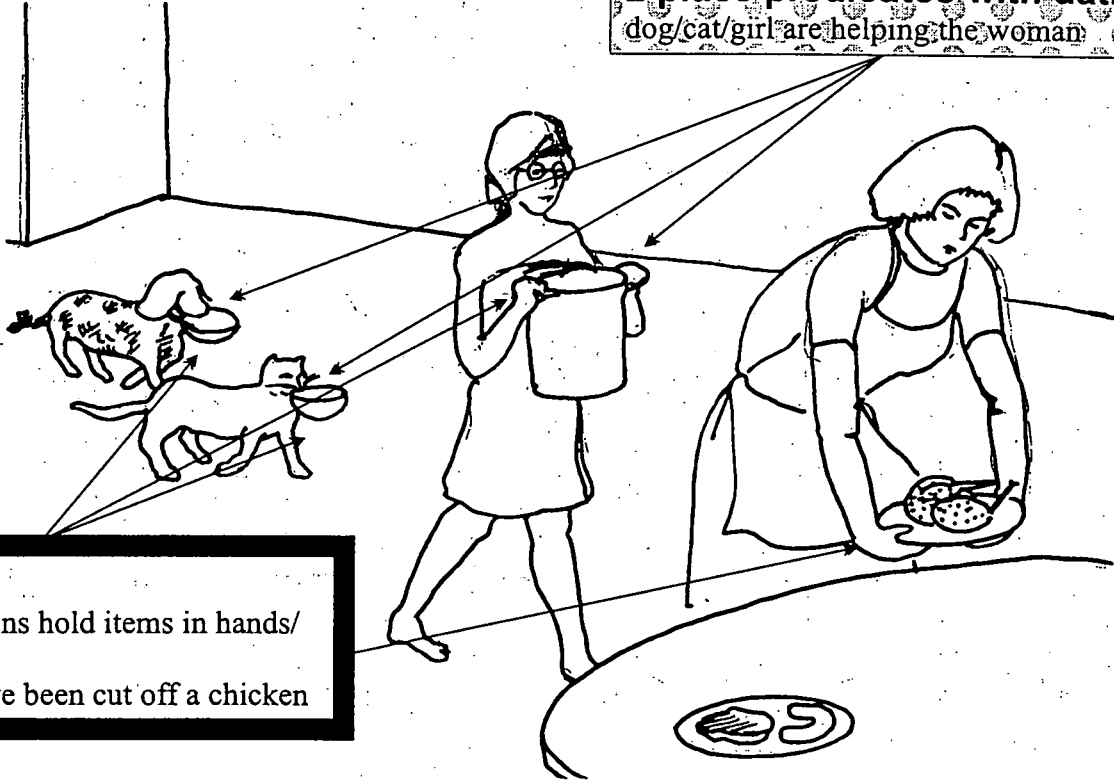
3 place predicates:
girl is handing handkerchief
to mother
animals are holding up socks
for the woman (to wash)



EPC:
cat is licking its tail (reflexive?) (with its
tongue)
girl is holding hands (behind her back)
(reflexive?)

2 place predicate with dative:
dog is watching cat

2 place predicates with dative
dog/cat/girl are helping the woman

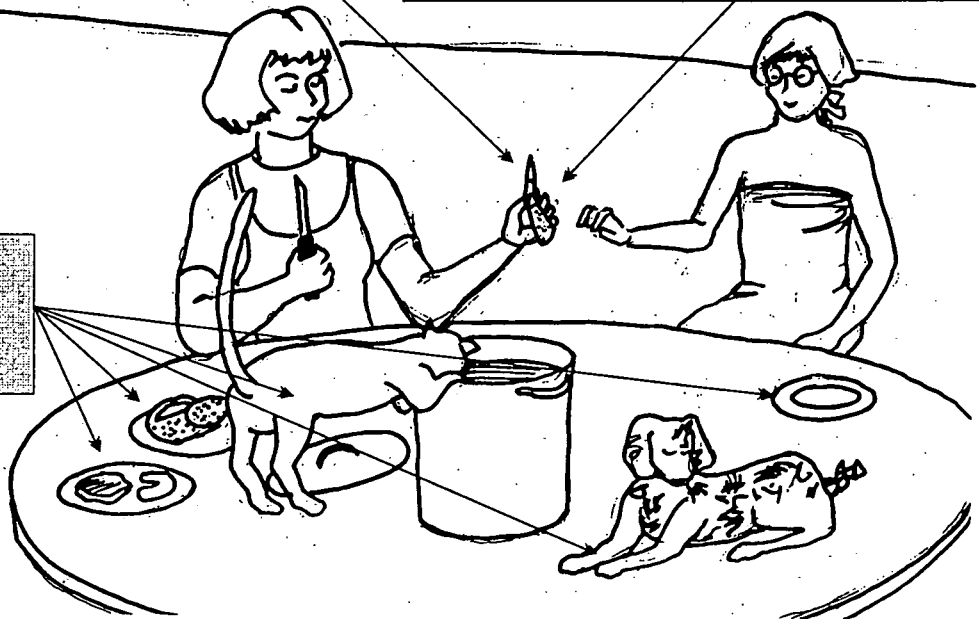


EPCs:
animals/persons hold items in hands/
mouths
the wings have been cut off a chicken

3 place predicate
mother is giving the girl the piece of
chicken

EPCs:
woman cut the piece from the chicken's wing
cat has put its paws on the rim of the pot

Locatives:
cat/dog are on table
cat's paws are on pot
dishes are on table



EPCs:

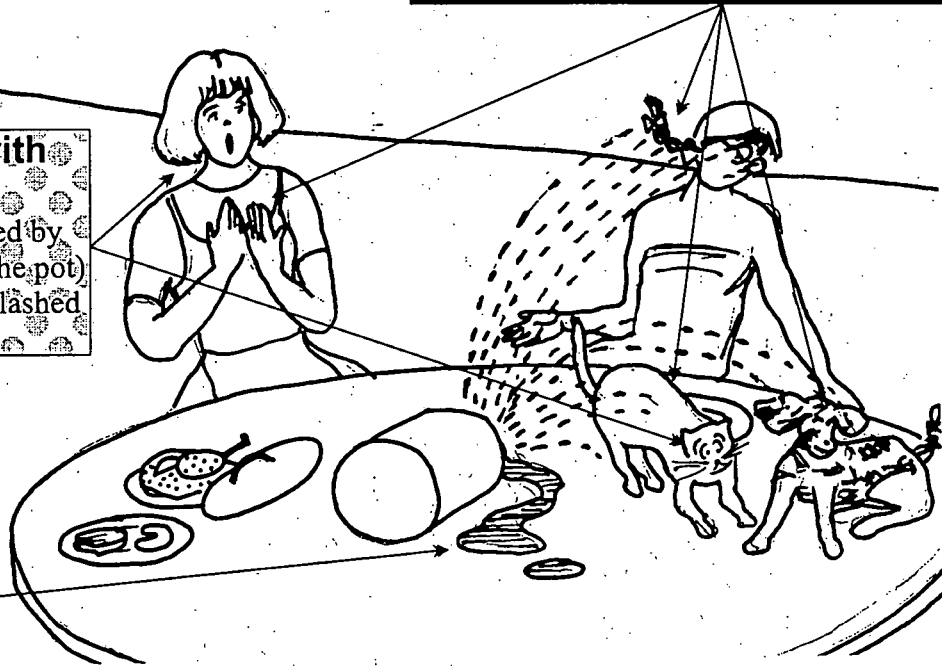
water sprays onto girl's face and hair
water sprays onto cat's back/dog's head
water sprays onto table's top
woman holds hands to chest

2 place predicate with dative:

woman is surprised/shocked by the cat (knocking over the pot)
cat is surprised at being splashed with water

Locative:

liquid is on table's top



EPCs:

woman wipes gunk from girl's hair (with hands)
girl wipes gunk from cat's back
cat licks dog's head (with tongue)

