Passives

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The Passive ‘Construction’ in GB

Passives and Case Theory: de-Casing of [NP,V]; de-thematization of Spec(IP)

De-Casing distribution of NPs vs. CPs.

(1) a. Mary anticipates her victory
    b. Mary anticipates that she will win

(2) a. Her victory is certain
    b. That she will win is certain

(3) a. Mary is certain *(of) her victory
    b. Mary is certain that she will win

(4) a. The certainty *(of) Mary’s victory
    b. The certainty that Mary will win

(5) a. They widely anticipated Mary’s victory
    b. They widely anticipated that Mary would win

(6) a. * It is widely anticipated Mary’s victory
    b. It is widely anticipated that Mary will win

(7) Mary’s victory is widely anticipated

(8) a. It appears that Mary has won
    b. * It appears Mary to have won
    c. Mary appears to have won

(9) Passivization as “De-Casing”: * ... [V' V-en DP]‘-Case’] at Surface Structure???

(10) En la fiesta fue presentada María por su padre (Spanish)
In the part was presented(+FEM) Mary by her father

“Subjects” in [NP,V]? English vs. Spanish

(11) a. Llegó Juan
    Arrived John
b. *Vimos a Juan
   we-saw CASE John

(12) a. Le gustan las manzanas a Juan
   to-him please+3PL the+PL apples CASE John
   ‘The apples please John

b. *Le gusta las manzanas a Juan
   to-him please+3SG the+PL apples CASE John

Obligatory de-Casing? English vs. Dutch/German

(13) In de zomer wordt er hier vaak gezwommen
   ‘In the Summer it is swum here frequently’

(14) Movement in (7) and in (8c) for (abstract) Case?

(15) Visibility Condition:

a. Each argument A appears in a CHAIN containing a unique visible θ-position.

b. Each θ-position is “visible” in a CHAIN containing a unique argument.

A position P is visible in a CHAIN if the CHAIN contains a Case-marked position

(16) a. They sank the ships

b. They (the ships) were sunk

c. They appear to have been sunk

d. They are likely to appear to have been sunk

e. I believe them to have been sunk

f. I ask for them to be sunk

(17) a. John, is believed [IF t_i to be likely [IF t_i to win ]]

b. [PP Under the rug] seems to be [IF t_i the only place I haven’t searched ]

The GB treatment

(18) a. … [v sunk NP ]

b. NP_i … [v sunk t_i ]

(19) a. Why does the ship move in (16b) (16f) (cf. (18b))? 

b. Case? Why would passive participles not assign Case?
c. What about the $\theta$-criterion?

\textbf{$\theta$-criterion:}

1. Each CHAIN is assigned exactly one $\theta$-role.
2. Each $\theta$-role is assigned to exactly one CHAIN.

De-thematization of Spec(IP)?

\begin{align*}
\text{(20) a. Feature decomposition of lexical categories:} \\
\begin{array}{c|c|c|}
  & +N & -N \\
\hline
+V & A & V \\
-V & N & P \\
\end{array}
\end{align*}

b. $-N$ items (verbs and prepositions) are Case assigners.

\begin{align*}
\text{(21) a. } & -\text{EN is } [+V,(0N)] \text{ and heads the passive participle} \\
& \text{“We assume that affix hopping applies prior to surface structure and that} \\
& \text{it assigns } V+\text{en the category } [+V] \text{ deleting } [-N] \text{ from the verbal form} \\
& [+V,\neg-N] \text{” (Rouveret & Vergnaud 1980:121)}
\end{align*}

Passive participles are ‘near’ adjectival …

\begin{align*}
\text{(22) a. } & \text{My arm was broken by John} \\
& \text{b. My broken arm} \\
& \text{… but not quite adjectival}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{(23) a. } & \text{The bed was unmade vs. Headway was (*un)made} \\
& \text{b. John was unknown vs. John was (*un)known to be the murderer}
\end{align*}

Problems with above account

\begin{align*}
\text{(24) a. } & \text{*John was seemed to be smart} \\
& \text{b. *It was danced by everyone} \\
& \text{c. *The book was been given}
\end{align*}

\textbf{An optimal (?) derivation of the passive all in the syntax (BJR 1989)}

\begin{align*}
\text{(25) a. } & \text{The sailors sank the ship deliberately/intentionally/willingly} \\
& \text{b. The ship was sunk deliberately/intentionally/willingly} \\
& \text{c. * The ship sank deliberately/intentionally/willingly}
\end{align*}
Passive in (25b) vs. unaccusative in (25c)

Two differences:

a. Morphology: -en morpheme in (25b)

b. (Implicit?) Presence of an argument (non-)licensing of agent-oriented adverbs (Jackendoff 1972)

BJR’s account collapses these two differences.

- en is “deep” syntactic clitic inserted as an argument in INFL (NB: -en is phonologically an affix).

- en is inserted in the syntax and derives the morphological and syntactic structure in tandem in a single component of the grammar.

As an argument in INFL, -en receives the external \( \theta \)-role, which is assigned by the entire VP

A baseball was thrown by Fernando

Support was thrown behind the candidate by the CIA

The match was thrown by the prizefighter

The party was thrown by the department

Since -en receives a theta-role, the Visibility Condition (in (15)) says it needs Case.

Where does it get Case from? The verb.

As a result, the object of the verb does not get Case.

If object is NP, it needs to do something to get Case; thus the movements in (16b) (16f).

The next-higher subject position does not receive any external \( \theta \)-role (which is taken up by -en), hence, movement into it is possible.

Consequences for Binding Theory

John was shaven (\( \neq \) by himself, interpretively, as well as overtly)

John is admired (\( \neq \) by himself, interpretively, as well as overtly)

CHAIN Condition: * \( X_i Y_i t_i \) (Rizzi 1986)

*John\(_i\) was shav-en\(_i\) \( t_i \) (by himself\(_i\))

They were seen by each other

[They each]\(_k\) were see+en\(_j\) \( t_k \) by [\( t_{each\ other}\)\(_j\)\(_j\) ]
Consequences for Control Theory

(34) \( \text{PRO}_{\text{arb}} \) as the referential value for \(-en\) in absence of a \(by\)-phrase (BJR 1989:228f)

(35) a. \( \text{PRO}_{\text{arb}} \) to try it is \( \text{PRO}_{\text{arb}} \) to like it
   b. \( \text{PRO}_{\text{arb}} \) to shave oneself can be fun

(36) a. \(^*\) This privilege was kept to themselves
   b. Such privileges should be kept to oneself

(37) The ship was sunk

(38) \(^*\) If you’re right, then such privileges must have been kept to oneself

(39) a. \(^*\) The article was published \( [\text{PRO}_{\text{arb}} \to \text{exonerate oneself}] \)
   b. \(^*\) This bureaucrat was bribed \( [\text{PRO}_{\text{arb}} \to \text{avoid paying one’s taxes}] \)

Predictions? (Cf. (24))

(40) a. \(^*\) John was seemed to be smart
   b. \(^*\) It was danced by everyone
   c. \(^*\) The book was been given

Passives of unaccusatives in Lithuanian?

(41) Ar būta tenai langinių? (Lithuanian)
    And be/pass+n/sg there window+gen
    'Were there really windows there?'
    (Literally ‘And there had been existed by windows’)

(42) a. In Lithuanian, \(-en\) is an N(P).
   b. It can be generated in \([\text{NP},V]\) (as well as in \text{Spec(IP)}).
   c. Hence it can also get the internal \(\theta\)-role (passive of unaccusative).
   d. From its VP-internal position, \(-en\) NP-moves to the subject position, then it incorporates into INFL, from where it cliticizes on the verb.

How to rule out \(-en\) in object position of transitive verbs in Lithuanian?

(43) \(^*\) John beat-\(en\) (by Bill)
Double passives in Lithuanian?

(44)  
\[
\text{To lapelio būto vėjo mūpėsto}
\]
That leaf+gen be/pass wind+gen blow/pass
‘By that leaf there was being blown down by the wind’

(45)  Two -en morphemes: one inside VP, one outside VP.

Dutch and German? (Cf. (13).)

(46)  
\[
\text{In de zomer wordt er hier vaak gezwommen}
\]
‘In the Summer it is swum here frequently’

(47)  **Parameter (amendment to (15)):**

Visibility can be satisfied either by Case or by Incorporation (i.e., merging the head of the argument with an appropriate X⁰, e.g., V⁰).

Unresolved issues:

(48) a.  **Syncretism:** *They have broken the vase / The vase was broken*

Accidental homophony?

b.  **-en incorporation paths** (in, e.g., (42a) (44)) can seem ad hoc. For example, why can’t the passive morpheme in [NP,V] incorporate directly into V (cf. (44))? Compare with incorporation data in Baker 1988 where incorporation into V takes place from object positions, not from subject positions.

“Incorporation of a subject violates the ECP while Incorporation of an object does not. In this way, the [subject-object asymmetry re Incorporation] is explained in terms of a known principle of grammar.” (Baker 1988:83)

More on movement in passives and in unaccusatives (in French):

(49)  
\[
\text{Les portes ont été repeintes par les ouvriers}
\]
The doors(FEM/PL) have been repainted(FEM/PL) by the workers

(50) a.  **Les ouvrières sont parties**
The workers(FEM/PL) are left(FEM/PL)
‘The female workers have left’

b.  **Les ouvrières ont ri(*es)**
The workers(FEM/PL) have laughed(*FEM/PL)
‘The female workers have laughed’