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Passivization

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0. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide a definition of passivization in languages that have marked (or derived) passive constructions. These constructions will be discussed not from a perspective of linguistic universals, but from a perspective of linguistic differentials. It will be concluded that although passivization is widespread among languages of the world it is not a universal rule, operation, or process in any sense of the term "universal". In other words, passivization is neither a statistical universal, nor a formal universal, nor a substantive universal. It is also claimed that the passive verb morphology is far more significant than previously recognized or admitted. Thus passive will be defined in terms of the passive verb morphology. A different terminology will be proposed and a language typology with respect to passives will be suggested.

1. Passive Constructions

In order to derive transformationally full passives, like for example He was beaten by her, from their active counterparts, like for example She beat him, the following seven distinct operations have to take place:

1. (i) Object preposing
- (ii) Subject postposing
- (iii) Object nominativization, i.e. Him ---> He
- (iv) Insertion of the agentive preposition by
- (v) Subject obliquing
- (vi) Insertion of the passive auxiliary be
- (vii) Affixation of en to the verb, i.e. Beat ---> Beaten

An agentless passive like He was beaten is usually derived, in transformational grammar, from a full passive like He was beaten by someone by a rule called:

- (viii) Agent deletion or truncation

In contemporary linguistics (contemporary linguistics means here linguistics since Chomsky 1957) standard treatments of passivization have concentrated on only the first two of these eight operations: object preposing and subject postposing. Agent deletion

has been considered a rule that derives passives from passives and therefore has nothing to do with the "real" process of passivization; the controversy about passivization was, and still is to my knowledge, centered around the noun phrases that co-occur with the verb. Thus it is an optional inversion rule (e.g. Chomsky 1957), an obligatory inversion rule (e.g. Katz and Postal 1964, Chomsky 1965, and Bach 1974), a two step operation (e.g. Chomsky 1970 and Jackendoff 1977), a two rule operation (e.g. Culicover 1976), a "universal" direct object promotion rule a consequence of which is the demotion of the subject into "chomage"¹ (e.g. Perlmutter and Postal 1974), a "universal" subject demotion rule a consequence of which is the promotion of an NP² (e.g. Keenan 1975). Some "rebels" proposed that the passive auxiliary *be* be a "higher" verb, but the fact remains that the sentential object (Hasegawa 1968) or the sentential subject (Lakoff 1971 and Langacker and Munro 1975) is an active sentence, which means that at some point in the derivation of passives the movement of at least one of the two noun phrases has to take place. For one linguist (Givon 1975) passivization is basically neither a property of passive verbs nor a property of sentences; it is a property of noun phrases: in addition to using the term "promoted" in reference to the promotion of a direct object to subject position, he also uses the term "passivized".

Having ignored the passive verb morphology these standard treatments have failed to provide an appropriate definition for passivization in English or in any other language that has passivization.

Many other languages are similar to English with respect to having both full and agentless passives. Examples are French, Spanish, Italian, German, and Dutch. Kurylowicz (1960) notes that "there is no language with a passive transformation which does not then permit agent deletion (Dixon 1979)". Put differently this means that there is no language that has full passives but does not have agentless passives. The opposite, however, is not true: many languages that have agentless passives do not have full passives. Lyons (1968) says "English is in fact rather unusual, among languages that have a passive voice, in that the agentive adjunct occurs quite freely (p. 378)". Examples of languages that have agentless passives but that do not have full passives are Biblical Hebrew, Arabic, Irish, Turkish, and Persian. It is possible in languages like these to add to a passive sentence a phrase which might be translated into English, under certain circumstances and with certain verbs, as agentive. However such a phrase would not be equivalent to the agentive English by-phrase or the agentive French par-phrase for example. Thus while the Arabic sentence (2a) below is grammatical, (2b) is ungrammatical.

- 2 . a. qutila zayd-un ĩalā yad-ay bakr-in
 killed (Pass) -Nom on hand-Gen(dual) -Gen
 'Zayd was killed at the hands of Bakr'
- b. *šuhida zayd-un ĩalā yad-ay bakr-in
 saw (Pass) -Nom on hand-Gen (dual) -Gen
 'Zayd was seen at the hands of Bakr'

(For further discussion of the passive in Arabic, see Saad (1975). The derivation of passives in such languages from "deep structure" full passives is unmotivated and unjustifiable.

2. Passives Redefined

The agentive phrase in a language that has full passives is an oblique prepositional phrase (PP) like any other oblique PP. An oblique PP is an optional PP that does not have a primary relation with the verb. The agentive phrase in (3a) below and the goal phrase in (3b) are oblique PPs.

3. a. Tom was neglected by Susan.
- b. Tom left for Chicago.

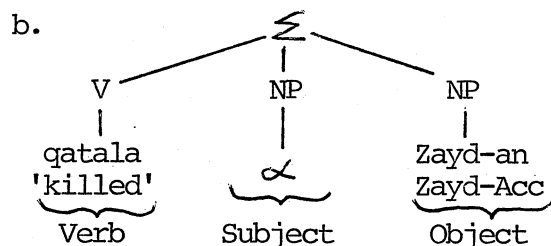
An unspecified agent which is NOT semantically empty is implicit in every passive verb. This unspecified agent is marked on the verb morphologically. This morphological marking is expressed by the passive auxiliary be plus the passive participle in languages like English and French, the passive auxiliary become plus the passive participle in languages like Persian and Dutch, the passive participle alone in languages like Russian, vowel modification (and/or affixation) in languages like Arabic and Hebrew, etc.

The following is a definition of passivization in languages that have marked (or derived) passive constructions and unmarked (basic or non-derived) active constructions.

4. $V_{\text{passive}} = \alpha V_{\text{active}}$
 where " α " means "unspecified agent" and "=" means "signifies the incorporation of"

This definition of passivization is to be read as follows: the passive verb signifies the incorporation of a meaningful unspecified agent into the active verb. To illustrate this definition the structure (5b) below is presented as a definitional structure of the Arabic passive sentence (5a).

5. a. qutila zayd-un
 killed (Pass) -Nom
 'Zayd was killed'



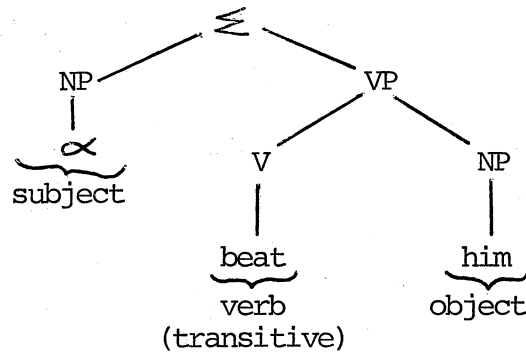
Both the subject and the object have a primary relation with the verb in (5b). The incorporation of α into the active verb in

(5b) will leave the sentence "subjectless". There are no subjectless sentences in Arabic. Thus as a necessary consequence of passivization the accusative object zayd-an is nominativized and subjectivized. Hence the active verb qatala of (5b) "becomes" the passive verb qutila in (5a), and the accusative object zayd-an of (5b) becomes the nominative subject zayd-un in (5a). Notice that no movement of the object NP zayd-an has to take place as a result of passivization. The difference between the two structures, with respect to the positions of the NPs in relation to the verb, is that whereas the verb and the NP zayd are separated by α in (5b), they are not separated by anything in (5a).

The structure (6b) below is the definitional structure of the English "agentless" passive sentence (6a), and the structure (7b) is the definitional structure of the English "full" passive sentence (7a).

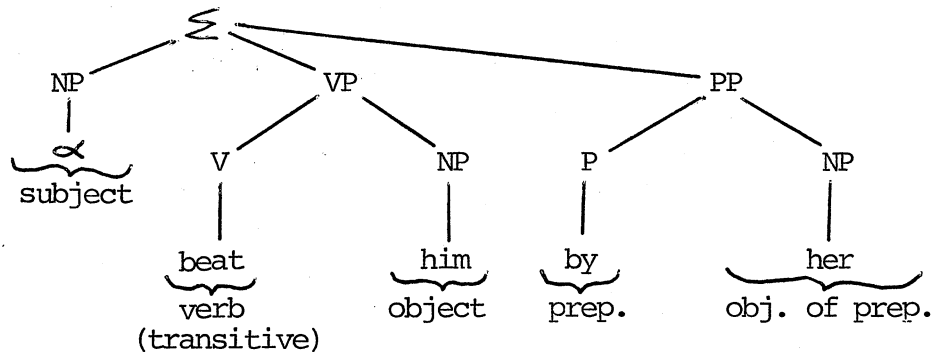
6. a. He was beaten.

b.



7. a. He was beaten by her.

b.



Except for the PP in (7b) structures (6b) and (7b) are identical. In both structures the subject and the object have primary relations with the verb. In (7b) the PP is optional and it has an oblique,

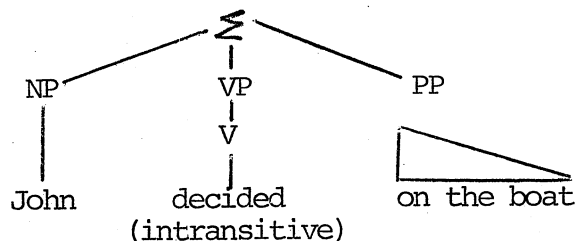
not a primary, relation with the verb. This PP has nothing to do with passivization. In languages like Persian and Arabic structures like (7b) are not permissible. In languages like English and Spanish an oblique agent like her in (7b) signifies a further specification of the unspecified agent α . The agentive by-phrase in (7b) is comparable to the instrumental with-phrase in a sentence like John stabbed Bill with a dagger; an unspecified "pointed" instrument is semantically implicit in the verb stab. The object of the preposition with (i.e. a dagger) signifies a further specification of the unspecified instrument.

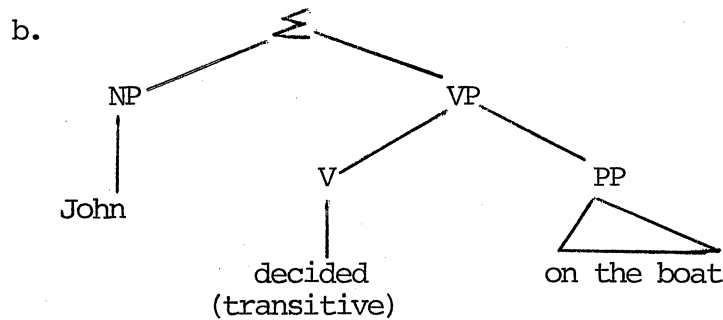
The incorporation of α in the verb leaves sentences (6b) and (7b) "subjectless". English sentences cannot be subjectless. Hence as a necessary consequence of passivization the accusative object him is nominativized (i.e. him \rightarrow he) and subjectivized (i.e. moved to the position vacated by the incorporation of α into the verb). We do not know which precedes which: nominativization or subjectivization. For NPs that are nouns, not pronouns, both nominativization and subjectivization are "taken care of" by the movement of the nominal accusative object, to subject position. Thus nominativization and subjectivization (or direct object "preposing", "promotion", or "topic-alization") are NOT part of passivization; they are NECESSARY CONSEQUENCES of passivization. Hence there is no "subject obliquing" in the sense of (1(v)) above, "demotion" in the sense of Keenan, "chômage" in the sense of Perlmutter and Postal, or "agent-postposing" in the sense of Chomsky, Jackendoff, etc. I have shown above that in languages like Biblical Hebrew, even what might be termed "oblique chômage" is not permissible. There is no reason to believe that ANY rule, universal or house-keeping, should be able to change a primary relation into an oblique relation (i.e. demote a nominative subject or an accusative object into "chômage"), but I will not pursue this point here.

The ambiguity of an English sentence like John decided on the boat which has the meanings (i) and (ii) shown in (8) below, can be adequately explained in terms of the definitional structures (9a) and (9b) respectively.

8. John decided on the boat.
 (i) 'John made his decision while on the boat.'
 (ii) John chose the boat.

9. a.





Structure (9a) means (8(i)), and structure (9b) means (8(ii)). The PP is optional and has an oblique relation with the verb in (9a), obligatory and has a primary accusative relation with the verb in (9b). The verb is intransitive in (9a), transitive in (9b). Thus the PP in (9b) has the same primary accusative relation with the verb decide, as the NP him in (6b) and (7b) above has with the verb kill: the verb kill is semantically, relationally, and formally transitive in (6b) and (7b); the verb decide is semantically and relationally, but not formally, transitive in (9b). Formal transitivity is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for passivization in English. Semantic, relational transitivity is a necessary and sufficient condition for passivization in this language and in languages that have equivalent characteristics with respect to transitivity and passivization.

Verbs like resemble, weigh (in one sense), fit (in one sense), cost, contain, etc. are formally, but not semantically and relationally, transitive. Such verbs do not passivize for the same reason that the verb be does not passivize. They are EQUATIVE verbs: a sentence like The box weighs five kilograms, for example, may be paraphrased as The weight of the box IS five kilograms or The box IS five kilograms as far as weight is concerned. The reason that such verbs seem very different from the verb be is that while the predicate of these verbs is accusative in standard English, the predicate of the verb be is nominative. The predicate of the verb be, like the predicate of the verb resemble, for example, is accusative in many dialects of English and in Arabic for instance. The English sentences in (10) below and the Arabic sentences in (11) illustrate this point.

- 10 . a. This is I (Standard English)
 b. This is me (Some other dialect)
 c. John resembles him (Both dialects)
- 11 . a. $\bar{k}ana$ $zayd$ - $\bar{u}n$ $wazir$ - $\bar{a}n$
 was -Nom a minister-Acc
 'Zayd was a minister'

- b. yuṣbiḥu zayd-un bakr-an
 resembles -Nom -Acc
 'Zayd resembles Bakr'

The English verb marry (in one sense, like equative verbs, is formally, but not semantically and relationally transitive. I do not know all the semantic properties of this verb, but it may be analyzed as a reflexive/comitative verb, equivalent to the French verb marier in a sentence like Robert s'est marié avec Denise 'Robert got married with Denise', or as a reflexive/causative verb like the Arabic verb tazawwaja in a sentence like tazawwaja zaydun hindan 'Zayd-Nom got married hind-Acc, i.e. Zayd got married to Hind'.

It is important to note at this point that although transitivity as described above (i.e. semantic, relational transitivity) is a necessary and sufficient condition for passivization in English and comparable languages, it is not so in many other languages. In Arabic, for example, not only transitive verbs but also intransitive verbs, that take oblique PPs, are passivizable. The sentences in (12) illustrate this point.

12. a. jalasa zayd-un fī al-dār -i
 sat -Nom in the-house-Gen
 'Zayd sat in the house.'
- b. julisa fī al- dār -i
 sat (Pass,3ms) in the-house -Gen
 'It was sat in the house'

In Dutch even intransitive one-place verbs may be passivized as shown in (13) below (the data is from Kirsner 1976).

13. a. De jongens fluiten
 The boys whistle
 'The boys whistle'
- b. Er wordt gefloten
 it/there becomes whistled
 'It is whistled'

Passives like (12b) are known as "impersonal passives", and passives like (13b) are known as "pseudo-passives" in the linguistic literature.

Although intransitive as well as transitive verbs are passivizable in Arabic, equative verbs like the ones mentioned earlier are not. I suspect that such verbs are not passivizable in Dutch either. Thus for languages like Arabic, passivizability rather than transitivity is the prerequisite for passivization. In languages like English, passivizability IS transitivity.

In English and comparable languages passivization, as defined in this paper, necessarily brings about the nominativization and the subjectivization of the object of a preposition if the PP has a primary relation with the verb. As a result the preposition is left "stranded". A comparison of the English structures (14a) and (14b) below illustrates the point.

14. a. ~~α~~ shot at him.
b. He was shot at.

In (14b) the preposition at is left stranded.

In languages like Arabic and German stranding prepositions is not permissible. This can be seen from the Arabic sentences in (15) and the German sentences in (16).

15. a. nāmat al-bint-u fī al-sarīr-i
slept (3fs) the-girl-Nom in the-bed -Gen
'The girl slept in the bed'.

- b. nīma fī al-sarīr-i
slept (Pass, 3ms) in the-bed -Gen
'It was slept in the bed'.

- c. *al -sarīr-u nīma fī
the -bed -Nom slept (Pass, 3ms) in
'The bed was slept in'.

16. a. Ich dachte an ihn
I thought of him
'I thought of him'.
- b. Es wurde an ihn gedacht
it became of him thought
'It was thought of him'.
- c. An ihn wurde gedacht
of him became thought
'It was thought of him'.
- d. Gedacht wurde an ihn
thought became of him
'It was thought of him'.
- e. *Er wurde an gedacht
he became of thought
'He was thought of'.

In (15b) the verb is marked for an impersonal third masculine singular subject. In (16b) the subject Es is an impersonal pronoun or deictic equivalent to the English expletive it or there. Sentences

(16c) and (16d) are simply subjectless. In (15c) and (15e), where the objects of the prepositions are nominativized and subjectivized, the respective sentences are ungrammatical. The ungrammaticalness of these sentences is not due particularly to passivization but rather to a general constraint, in languages like Arabic and German, that forbids the stranding of prepositions. Thus any syntactic operation a result of which is the stranding of prepositions would yield ungrammatical sentences. Question-formation, for example, requires that the whole PP be moved; otherwise the results are ungrammatical as can be seen from the Arabic sentences in (17) and the German sentences in (18).

17. a. \dot{d} ahab-tu ma \dot{f} a zayd-in
 went -I with -Gen
 'I went with Zayd'.
 b. ma \dot{f} a man \dot{d} ahab-ta?
 with who went -you?
 'With whom did you go?'
 c. *man \dot{d} ahab-ta ma \dot{f} a?
 who went -you with?
 'Who did you go with?'
18. a. Ich bin mit ihm gegangen
 I am with him gone
 'I went with him'
 b. Mit wem bist du gegangen?
 With whom are you gone?
 'With whom did you go?'
 c. *Wem bist du mit gegangen?
 Whom are you with gone?
 'Who did you go with?'

The Arabic and German sentences in (15) and (16) respectively, and the Dutch sentences in (13), clearly show that nominativization and subjectivization, NP preposing, or promotion is not, necessarily, a necessary consequence of passivization across languages or across structures in one and the same language. The "creation" of the impersonal subject in sentences like (15b), or the filler or placeholder in sentences like (16b), is not equivalent to subjectivization, whether subjectivization is a reordering syntactic operation (e.g. English) or a case remarking syntactic operation (e.g. Arabic).

We have also shown earlier that there is no subject preposing, agent postposing, obliquing, *chômeage*, or demotion neither as a

necessary consequence, nor as a possible consequence of passivization.

Therefore subject postposing and/or NP preposing, whatever names one may wish to give them, are not even steps or parts of passivization let alone their being passivization itself. Hence passivization is definable only in terms of the passive verb morphology as we have shown earlier.

Chung (1976) claims that Indonesian has two passives: a "canonical" passive and an "object preposing" passive. The sentences in (19) illustrate the canonical passive.

19. a. Ali mem -batja buku itu
 Ali Trans-read book the
 'Ali read the book'
- b. Buku itu di-batja (oleh) Ali
 book the Pass-read by Ali
 'The book was read by Ali'

(19a) is an active sentence and (19b) is its passive counterpart. Indonesian is an SVO language in which functional distinctions are indicated by prepositions. Subjects and direct objects are not marked with prepositions or inflected for case. Thus the subject Ali and the object buku 'book' in (19a), and the subject buku 'book' in (19b) are unmarked. Furthermore the agentive preposition oleh 'by' is optional and hence the oblique agent in sentences like (19b) is not necessarily marked. Active transitive verbs and passive verbs are marked for voice: mem- is the active prefix and di- the passive prefix. The canonical passive cannot bring about the subjectivization of locatives or other objects of prepositions; furthermore the canonical passive must be stated so that it refers to direct objects rather than to the NP immediately following the verb (cf. Chung p. 59-61 and footnote 3, p. 93).

The sentences in (20) illustrate the "object preposing" passive.

20. a. saja mem-batja buku itu
 I Trans-read book the
 'I read the book'
- b. Buku itu saja batja
 book the I read
 'The book, I read, or I read the book'

(20a) is an active sentence and (20b) is its "non-canonical" passive counterpart. Chung's object preposing rule moves the underlying direct object to the beginning of its clause. The preposed direct object must be definite, anaphoric, or generic, a restriction that is not placed on the preposed direct objects of "canonical" passives. The underlying subject is neither "deleted", nor "demoted into *chomage*"; it may optionally cliticize to the main verb. The verb in sentences like (20b) is marked neither with the active prefix *mem-* nor with the passive prefix *di-*. Chung also says that sentences like (20b) have the meaning of a topicalization, are semantically active, and are identified by native speakers as equivalent to active sentences or object topicalizations in English. She shows, however, that such constructions are not, syntactically, merely topicalizations, because there are topicalizations in Indonesian which do not "lose" their transitive active marker *mem-* as shown in (21) below.

21. Anak itu, dia mem-beli sepatu
 child the he Trans-buy shoe
 'The child, he bought shoes'

Chung, like many other linguists (e.g. Perlmutter and Postal 1974) characterizes or defines passivization primarily as an object preposing rule. Hence she devotes a good part of her paper to proving that noun phrases like *Buku itu* 'the book' in sentences like (20b) are not only topics but also subjects. She discovers that object preposing behaves syntactically like a "canonical" passive rule in the sense that both rules prepose direct objects, but she also notes the many differences between sentences like (20b) and sentences like (19b). Hence she posits two passive rules for Indonesian: a "canonical" passive rule and a "non-canonical" passive object preposing rule.

I do not intend to assess or evaluate Chung's theoretical claims here. The reader is able to tell at this point that Chung's object preposing rule cannot be a passive rule in accordance with the definition of passivization presented in this paper. What I am interested in is Chung's data and her object preposing rule NOT as a passive rule but as an independent syntactic operation or process. Chung's data and conclusions are directly relevant to some of the claims made in this paper.

It is important to notice that both active and passive verbs are morphologically marked in Indonesian. Regardless of the etymological origins of the active and the passive morphemes, and regardless of the diachronic development of passivization in Indonesian, at this point in the history of this language there are two "voices" in Indonesian, active and passive, that stand in contradistinction to each other. Thus the traditional term "voice" is not applicable to a language like English or Arabic where the active is unmarked

and the passive is marked, but is applicable to a language like Indonesian where both active verbs and passive verbs are "equally" marked. Hence, in Indonesian, both active sentences and passive sentences are equally basic. If so, there is no passivization in Indonesian because passivization relates basic or unmarked active sentences to non-basic or marked passive sentences (or derives passive sentences from active sentences if one wishes to use transformational grammar terminology). Therefore not only doesn't Indonesian have two passive rules but also it doesn't have any passivization at all (i.e. it does not have any passive rules). In Saad (forthcoming) I have shown that Japanese does not have, as Kuno (1976) and others claim, two passives, a "pure" passive and an "adversity" passive, but has only one passive, the "pure" or ordinary passive which is a relatively recent development in Japanese. It is high time at this point to make the following claim:

22. NO LANGUAGE CAN HAVE MORE THAN ONE PASSIVIZATION OPERATION ³

If Chung's object preposing rule is an independent syntactic operation in Indonesian, and I believe it is, then this rule not Chomsky's "independently motivated" NP preposing rule (see Chomsky 1970) is independently motivated (cf. Chomsky 1970 and Saad forthcoming). This means that object preposing does not occur only as a necessary consequence of passivization across languages of the world, but also as a syntactic operation that exists independently of passivization in some languages (e.g. Indonesian). The implication is that object preposing does not have anything to do with the actual basic process of passivization. In other words, a necessary consequence of some process, rule, or operation is not PART of that process, rule, or operation.

One last point before concluding this section. Passivization is a detransitivization process: it reduces the number of arguments that occur with the active verb by one (i.e. by the unspecified subject that gets incorporated into the verb: $n > n-1$). Consequently as Sibawayhi⁴ points out, a passive verb can be intransitive, transitive, or even ditransitive depending on whether, for example, its active counterpart occurs with one, two, or three accusatives. The English sentences (23a) and (23b) below, and the Arabic sentence (23c) (from Sibawayhi p. 43) illustrate these points.

23. a. John was hit.
 b. John was given a book.
 c. ?urā ʾabda allāhi ʾabā fulānin
 show (I, Pass) Abdullah-Acc the father of X-Acc
 'I am shown Abdullah (as) the father of someone'

(23a) is intransitive, (23b) transitive, and (23c) ditransitive.

3. A Different Terminology for a Different Analysis

In what follows I propose a terminology that is compatible with the analysis of passives given in section (2) above.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Real passives
Ordinary passives
True passives
Pure passives
Canonical passives | Renamed "Passives" |
| 2. Pseudo-passives
Medio-passives
Semi-passives | Renamed "Passives" |
| 3. Impersonal passives | Renamed "Passives" |
| 4. Agentless passives
Truncated passives | Renamed "Passives" |
| 5. Full passives | Renamed "Oblique Passives" |
| 6. Agents in passive sentences | Renamed "Oblique Agents" |
| 7. Passive voice in languages
like English | Renamed "Passivization" |
| 8. i. Passive morphology in
languages like Indonesian | Named "Passive voice" |
| ii. Active morphology in
languages like Indonesian | Named "Active voice" |
| 9. Transitivity as a prerequisite
for passivization | Renamed "Passivizability" |
| 10. Verbs like <u>be</u> , <u>become</u> , <u>equal</u> ,
<u>weigh</u> , <u>fit</u> , <u>contain</u> , etc. | Renamed "Equative verbs" |
| 11. Passives like <u>be killed</u> | Named "Intransitive passive
verbs" (Sibawayhi) |
| 12. Passive verbs like <u>be given</u> | Named "Transitive passive
verbs" (Sibawayhi) |
| 13. Passive verbs like Arabic
ʔuriya 'Be shown s.th. or s.o.
as s.th. or s.o.' | Named "Ditransitive passive
verbs (Sibawayhi) |
| 14. Subjectivization, NP-prepos-
ing, Object preposing, Promo-
tion | Named "Subjectivization" |

3. Conclusion: On the "Universality" of Passives

At the beginning of this paper it was claimed that passivization is not a universal process, or operation in any sense of the term universal. Passivization is not statistically a universal rule or operation simply because there are many languages that do not have passivization (e.g. most of the Arabic languages (except for some Saudi dialects) and Lakhota, Tunica, Choctaw, etc.).

A substantively universal rule is usually identified in the linguistic literature as a rule that does not have to exist in every language but that is available for every language. Such a rule is usually characterized as a member of a fixed set of rules known as major transformations or rules. Langacker and Munro (1975) assume that passivization is a universal phenomenon in the substantive sense.

As we have seen above Indonesian marks both actives and passives. Since both active and passive sentences are "equally" basic in this language, then Indonesian would "reject" a substantive universal passive rule that is available to it. If we do not add the stipulation that a language should be able to incorporate the substantive universal rule available to it, then such a rule would be meaningless because any "housekeeping" rule is available to every language, but not every language is "willing" and/or "able" to accept such a rule.

A formal universal is usually defined as the statement of the abstract properties displayed by all human languages. Passivization is not formally universal either, because it is not an abstract property displayed by Indonesian, Tagalog, Dyirbal, and many other languages. Henceforth I will not distinguish between formal and substantive universals.

Tagalog is a language that does not have passivization. The sentence in this language consists of a verb followed by one or more noun phrases one of which is morphologically marked as topic. The semantic role of this topic is morphologically marked on the verb. The non-topic noun phrases that occur in the sentence are also morphologically marked for their semantic roles. Thus there are no unmarked noun phrases vis-a-vis the topic. In other words, the non-topic NPs are morphologically marked for semantic roles like agent, patient, source, beneficiary, etc., and the topic NP is morphologically marked for topic and its semantic role is morphologically marked on the verb. Thus the verb never occurs in its unmarked form: it is always morphologically marked for the semantic role of one NP or the other. (For further

detail see Schachter 1976, Van Valin 1977, and Saad forthcoming.)

In this language one cannot speak of a passive derived from an active or of traditional-style voices. Thus it is not possible to designate certain NPs as marked and others as unmarked or to designate the verb as marked in passive sentences, unmarked in active sentences. The verb is marked for agent sentences, patient sentences, source sentences, beneficiary sentences, etc. In other words, all verbs are "equally" marked for the semantic role of the topic.

The situation being so it is impossible for Tagalog to incorporate in its grammar a passivization rule, or operation. Therefore a substantive or formal passive rule, though it may be available for Tagalog, this language cannot accept it.

Dyirbal does not have passivization either. In this language the passive is unmarked (or basic) and the active is marked (or derived). Antipassivization, in this language, is the antithesis of passivization. Therefore it is impossible for Dyirbal to incorporate passivization into its syntax. (For further detail, see Saad, forthcoming).

Therefore passivization is not a universal rule in any sense of the term "universal".

Passivization has been discussed in this paper from a perspective of linguistic differentials. It is important to note that studying linguistic differentials does not preclude studying linguistic universals and vice-versa: differences between languages are as interesting as similarities between them and while looking for the differences one might discover the similarities.

In conclusion, I propose the following language typology with respect to passivization and passives:

1. There are languages that have passive voice but that do not have passivization (e.g. Indonesian).
2. There are languages that have voice but that do not have passivization, or the passive voice in contradistinction to active voice (e.g. Tagalog).
3. There are languages that do not have passivization but that have the antithesis of passivization (e.g. Dyirbal).
4. There are languages that have passivization but that do not have the passive voice (e.g. English).
5. There are languages that have neither passivization nor the passive voice (e.g. Levantine Arabic).

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Footnotes

¹Chômage "idleness" is a French term that grammatically signifies a nonbasic oblique relation for a noun phrase with the verb.

²Relational grammarians do not account for passivization solely in terms of "movement" of NPs. The fact remains, however, that they account for passivization solely in terms of "what happens" to the NPs be that via reordering or case remarking of NPs. The passive verb morphology is considered as "language-specific side effects" by relational grammarians (cf. Perlmutter and Postal 1974, and Keenan 1975).

³Swedish has two mechanisms to mark passive verbs morphologically: (i) by affixation (e.g. like Arabic and Hebrew and (ii) by the passive auxiliary become plus the past participle (e.g. like German and Persian). The two "passives" however can be used interchangeably, although the one may be more acceptable for some verbs than the other. In accordance with the definition of passivization presented in this paper both mechanisms in Swedish involve the incorporation of the unspecified agent into the verb. Hence Swedish does not have two passivization operations but two mechanisms for performing one and the same operation. Etymologically the two passive markers have two different origins but that is beside the point. (The information is due to Jim Cathey and Elisabet Engdahl. They are not, however, responsible for this characterization of passivization in Swedish: if this characterization is wrong, the responsibility is solely mine).

⁴Sibawayhi is the earliest Muslim Arab grammarian. He lived in the second century A.H./eighth century A.D. His grammar book entitled The Book is at the basis of all traditional Arabic and Hebrew grammars.

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