

Anglocentric View and its Influence on Linguistics: a case of the passive voice*

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I think, rather, that every age writes history anew, reviewing deeds and texts of other ages from its own vantage point. Our history, the history we read in school and refer to in later life, was largely written by Protestant Englishmen and Anglo-Saxon Protestant Americans. Just as certain contemporary historians have been discovering that such redactors are not always reliable when it comes to the contributions of, say, women or African Americans, we should not be surprised to find that such storytellers have overlooked a tremendous contribution the distant past that was both Celtic and Catholic, a contribution without which European civilization would have been impossible. (Thomas Cahill, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, 5).

1. INTRODUCTION

Every academic discipline is subject to historic change. For instance, evolutionary biology is immensely influenced by Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* (1859), which was also affected by non-biologists such as theologians or philosophers. As for linguistics, approaches of the early 20th century or before were mainly concerned with philology or historical linguistics, but the late 20th century saw the domination of generative grammar. It is clear even from these examples that there are different trends in academic disciplines. There are various external causes effecting change, some of which contribute to the progress of the academic subject more than others, but it should not be forgotten that some have negative effects on progress as well. For example, Dixon (1994: 189) notes the following:

Towards the end of the last century, linguists like Schuchardt (1896) leant of ergative marking in Caucasian languages and decided that it must be a kind of passive ... This is a classic case of reinterpreting novel data to fit an accepted theory (rather than revising the theory to account for the data).

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This particular trend in linguistics is what we examine in this paper. More specifically, we investigate a case of *Anglocentric view* on the linguistic studies. By this, we mean a certain amount of influence from the analysis in so-called ‘English linguistics’, if such a discipline ever exists. There are numerous cases where what we call *Anglocentric view* can be observed, but we specifically study a case of the passive voice and investigate how much negative influence the structure of English has created on the description and understanding of other languages.

The paper is organised as follows: firstly, we provide an account of historical changes in medical studies in order to demonstrate a clear case of influence preventing the progress of academic study. Secondly, we introduce some cases of *Anglocentric view* on grammatical approaches in general. Then finally, we analyse in detail how the *Anglocentric view* affects the description of the passive voice throughout languages, focusing on various aspects of constructions such as the tense-aspect system, the voice continuum, the characteristics of actor marker, etc.

1.1. History of science: Christian influence

The impact of philosophy and religion on the development of science cannot be underestimated. “Science must admit the psychological validity of religious experience. The mystical and direct apprehension of God is clearly to some men as real as their consciousness of personality or their perception of the external world” (Cohen 1966: 495). For example, we can benefit from advanced medical technology nowadays, but its historical development was not a steady one. The major step towards the current state of medicine only began a century or so ago. It does not mean that there were no medical studies earlier: medicine is in fact one of the oldest subjects studied, along with theology and astrology. Medical study was influenced by Christian philosophy. So for example, during the Renaissance, “[s]cience [wa]s a search of God in His creation, and medicine [wa]s God’s gift to man” (Cohen 1966: 115).

Claudius Galen (c. AD 129-216) was the first most influential doctor in history. His theory about how bodies work and principles and practice of treatment of patients were closely followed in medical schools and hospitals until the Renaissance. He established himself as a surgeon by studying animal’s bodies such as pigs, monkeys and goats and applied what he saw in the bodies of animals to the human body. At this time, the Church strictly prohibited the dissection of the human body and using animals was the only way to analyse the internal structure of the body. In spite of criticisms, his theory remained unchallenged during the Middle Ages. This was because his idea was protected by the Church: his theory fitted with the teachings of the Church, which nobody dared to challenge. It took more than a millennium until some change was enacted. For example, Theophrast von Hohenheim (c. 1490-1541) distanced himself from the teachings of Galen and depended on his own observation and

experience, since he believed that physicians had to use what could be seen by the eyes and felt by the hands.

Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564) published *de Humani Corporis Fabrica* 'the Fabric of the Human Body' in 1543. This book was revolutionary. After a millennium, Vesalius publicly challenged Galen's theory and proved that some aspects of it, such as the length of bones in arms or the number of ribs, were wrong, because Galen had not actually analysed the human body. He believed that the dissection of the human body was necessary in order to discover the mechanics. Dissection was still banned by the Church at this time. So Vesalius had to study human bodies in secrecy, often stealing the body from graves or gallows. When Vesalius published his book, some people refused to believe that Galen's theory was wrong. The influence of the Church in Renaissance Europe was immense. Therefore, the Church's support for Galen's theory created a situation where people blindly followed what the Church believed. Medical history would have been different if the attitude of the Church towards medical study had been more liberal.

1.2. Influence on modern grammatical approaches

Panini's Sanskrit grammar is arguably the oldest grammar book known to us today. This book is believed to have been written around 600 BC and 300 BC (Robins 1990: 152). However, the practice of describing the grammar of languages was not so common several centuries ago and the number of languages described was restricted. The best documented language is Latin: because of the influence of the Church, this language was considered as the lingua franca among Christians, especially the clergy.

During, or even prior to the Middle Ages,¹ the Church gained enormous power: "[i]n the disturbance of the times and the collapse of pagan authority and standards, the Church grew in prestige as a refuge and as a patron of learning and education, possessing, in the Papacy and bishoprics, centres of secular power. The most formative literature of the period was Christian literature of various types, and with the closure of the philosophical schools of Athens by Justinian in 529, such learning as continued in both east and west was under clerical toleration or patronage and was often clerically inspired" (Robins 1990: 77). Thus, the influence of the Church on academia is quite visible: the doctrine commonly taught at this period was that God was the creator of all, everything He created was meticulously calculated

¹ We are not concerned with the precise period here, since "[t]he Middle Ages' is a term used to designate and characterize the period of European history between the breakdown of the Roman empire as a unitary area of civilization and administration, and the sequence of events and cultural changes known as the Renaissance and generally taken as the opening phase of the modern world. Periodization of this sort is a descriptive convenience for the historian rather than a precise record of the facts; ... Any date taken symbolically as the start or as the finish of the Middle Ages must be arbitrary, and if taken at all literary, misleading" (Robins 1990: 75).

and was flawless. According to the teaching of church, “God created ‘*ex nihilo*’ [from nothing] earth, water, fire, light, angels and the human soul”² (Vineis and Maieru 1994: 273) and language was one of His creations. Judging from the Book of Genesis in the Bible, we can interpret the language in two different ways: one is origin, i.e. God names things (cf. *Gen.* 1.3-31): “at the moment of creation, God called things into being, and named them; the universe of things and the universe of names both originate from divine initiative” (Vineis and Maieru 1994: 273), and the other, differentiation of language, i.e. the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues as divine punishment and the consequent scattering of the people of the world (*Gen.* 2.20) (cf. Vineis and Maieru 1994: 272).

At this period, the academics were mainly concerned with theology, but the definition of theology was not as narrow then as now: needless to say it involved the study of the Bible, but in order to read it well, the study of Latin was given special importance in theology. This led to the linguistic analysis of Latin, i.e. “[g]rammar was thus the foundation of medieval scholarship, both as a liberal art itself and as a necessity for reading and writing Latin correctly. All these studies were subordinate to theology, the study of the Christian faith and Christian doctrine” (Robins 1990: 78). Latin was given a high status and considered the language of learning and its authority was even further increased by the fact that it was commonly used in the administration of the Church.

As in the case of medicine, as we have seen above, there are some cases where the presence of Christianity influenced features of grammar and linguistic analysis. When grammar books became common, they were mainly produced by missionaries. So in effect one of the first ‘linguists’ was probably a missionary, who needed to analyse a local language and keep its record so that they could translate the bible, preach in the local tongue and convert people more effectively. For example, what is known as Cyrillic alphabet is one such instance: “the alphabet in use today for Russian and some other Slavic languages is the descendant of one devised in the ninth century by two Byzantine evangelists St Cyril and St Methodius of the Eastern Church and Empire, who adapted the Greek alphabet for the use of Christianized Slavs.” (Robins 1990: 80). This is only the tip of the iceberg: there was a religious prejudice that all modern languages descended from Hebrew, since it was the language in which Old Testament was originally written and therefore, it was the ‘holy’ language (see also Ruhlen 1991: 38-39 for similar evidence). Such earlier trends can be summarised as follows (taken from Bammesberger 1992: 26).³

² Apart from linguistic study, another famous case where religious belief that God created everything interfered with the development of scientific understanding is evolutionary biology: Sir Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* (1859), as mentioned in section 1, received sever criticism from Christian community as well as philosophers, since his theory does not assume the presence of the God as the Creator of all.

³ Similarly to Sir Jones’s analysis, Sir Charles Darwin (1871: 40), although he is an evolutionary biologist, points out a peculiar similarity in development of animal and language, noting that “the

Greek philosophers were aware of the fact that human languages are subject to change in the course of time. But only from the nineteenth century onwards did scholars develop a truly scientific approach to language change and its description. During the Middle Ages, various suggestions had been put forward with regard to language development, but religious prejudices frequently stood in the way of a correct understanding of historical process; thus one widespread view was that all languages somehow descended from Hebrew. Then in his justly famous Anniversary discourse of 2 February 1786 (published in *Asiatick Researches* 1.415-431 (1788)) Sir William Jones brought basic features of Sanskrit to the attention of western scholars. He contended that Sanskrit, Greek and Latin stem a 'common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists' and surmised that Germanic and Celtic derive from the same source 'though blended with a very different idiom'. The first quarter of the nineteenth century then saw the development of a reliable methodology in generic linguistics.

When one assumes that the religious influence ceased to exist in linguistic studies after the nineteenth century, it is a mistake. There are some other recent evidences where the Christian influence can be observed: a change in kinship term in Miskitu (a Sumu language spoken in Nicaragua)⁴ is one such example. In Asang dialect, kinship terms *waika(t)* 'same sex male cross cousin', *klua* 'opposite sex female cross cousin' and *kauhka* 'same sex female cross cousin' came to be replaced by *muihni* 'same sex sibling/parallel cousin' and *lakra* 'opposite sex sibling/parallel cousin', which were previously used exclusively for parallel-cousins and uterine siblings about a century ago.⁵ This is because *muihni* 'same sex sibling/parallel cousin' and *lakra* 'opposite sex sibling/parallel cousin' are terms used by Moravian missionaries, when they refer to each other.⁶ These missionaries were so influential that the local Miskitu speakers in Asang gradually adopted the terms. The use of these terms is often used as a barometer for judging the degree of Christian settlement in a society.

Christianity is one of the most influential factors on the development of science and in the effect on Miskitu kinship terms its influence is only the tip of the iceberg, although Christian influence on linguistics is not often detectable. When it comes to linguistics, Christianity is to the study of medicine as the Anglocentric view is to grammatical study. We demonstrate this by using a case of pronoun clustering.

formation of different languages and of distinct species, and the proofs that both have been developed through a gradual process, are curiously parallel." Such a viewpoint later influenced various scholars of linguistics and relevant fields, who applied various theories in evolutionary biology to linguistic studies, including Lamendella (1976), Givón (1979), Bickerton (1981), etc. on recapitulationist hypothesis (the development of foetus repeats the evolution of phylum/species, the theory first proposed by a German biologist Ernst Haeckel in 1874).

⁴ The first descriptive grammar book of Miskitu was written by Henderson (1864), who was not a missionary. However, the most influential grammar book was written by Heath (1927). Heath was a missionary who worked in Cocobila, Honduras. He spoke fluent Miskitu (p.c. Mark Jamieson).

⁵ I would like to thank Dr Mark Jamieson for providing me with these examples and drawing my attention to Helms (1971).

⁶ Christianity was introduced in Asang region of Nicaragua around 1910 (Helms 1971: 217).

One clear example can be found in Romance languages, where the fronting of the pronoun regularly occurs. Thus, the position of the pronoun is different from that of the direct or indirect object, as demonstrated in the following French examples:

French

- (1) a. *Elle donne un cadeau à Paul*
 she give a present to Paul
 'She gives a present to Paul.'
- b. *Elle me le donne*
 she to.me it give
 'She gives it to me.'

The position of the pronoun is firmly fixed and the cluster of verb and pronoun cannot be broken even when adverbs or negation markers are inserted, as demonstrated below:

Adverbs

- (2) a. *Elle me le toujours donne*
 she to.me it always give
 'She always gives it to me.'
- b. **Elle me toujours le donne*
 she to.me always it give
 'She always gives it to me.'

Negation

- (3) a. *Elle ne me le donne pas*
 she NEG to.me it give NEG
 'She does not give it to me.'
- b. **Elle me ne le donne pas*
 she to.me NEG it give NEG
 'She does not give it to me.'

The pronoun used as direct or indirect object in English does not alter the syntactic position and does not form a pronoun cluster. Various formal approaches, such as Government and Binding (GB) theory or Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar (HPSG), have been developed based on the structure of English. This affected the development of formal approaches without the influence of other language characteristics. As a consequence, these theories, once applied to languages apart from English, lead to a somewhat ill-formed analysis. Several linguists have raised this point, as early as Seuren (1976). So when these formal approaches are applied to various languages, there are constructions that cannot be neatly accommodated in some approaches, causing a lot of problems in analysis. After the surge of awareness of universal grammar, a number of linguists have tried to apply English-based analyses to various languages in the world and this formed a branch in linguistic study during 80s and early 90s.

The above example is what we consider as a case of ‘negative’ influence on linguistic analysis. ‘Negative’ here means too much dependence on the English language. English is not the only language in the world. It is true that some language may have to be used as a starting point, but the typological comparison, such as works carried out by Greenberg (1966), and more recently Croft (2001), are also another way of analysis. These analyses stay away from a certain-language biased view on approaches and concentrate more on what is common in languages. It may be more appropriate to conduct the typological comparison first and then create formal theories. At least, we can be more aware of differences among languages and avoid problems such as the pronoun clustering. Nevertheless, there are also cases of negative influences at different level of analysis. Languages have been described in various ways, and the Anglocentric view sometimes interferes with traditional descriptive grammar. This is what we investigate in the reminder of this work, using the passive voice as an example.

2. THE PASSIVE

2.1. Passive: typological view

A large number of previous publications are dedicated to issues of the grammatical voice per se, e.g. Siewierska (1984) and Kleiman (1991) on the passive, Kemmer (1993) on the middle, Geniušienė (1991) on the reflexive, just to name some, or to the interrelationship among the voice system, sometime known as the voice continuum (e.g. Croft 1994, 2001: 283-319; Givón 1990: 563-644; Palmer 1994: 142-175; Shibatani 1985, 1998), which reveals that the active, passive and middle voice are somehow related to each other and there are certain relationship patterns among them. The voice system has long been in grammar books of numerous languages. It is almost always mentioned in some way. However, what is treated as the passive may vary from book to book. This means that actual languages are described according to a scholar’s own discipline, belief, intuition, etc. Thus, there is a danger of misinterpreting the data.

Constructions and their property vary from language to language. What matters is the morphosyntactic and morphosemantic prototype of each construction and variations are best considered in the gradience. So passive in one language is different from that in another language and even in a single language, there may be several variations of passive or passive-like constructions. This, for example, caused various problems to learners of foreign languages (see, for example, Fredriksson 2001 for Swedish and English passive construction) and also in the area of translation (Filipović 2002 lists some cases of different interpretation in Serbo-Croatian and English motion verbs). These are problems at synchronic level and when the analysis is extended to the diachronic work, each period may have a slightly different relationship between the prototype and other similar constructions in gradience and the voice

continuum may look different. In face of this, we need to define what the prototype for the passive is.

2.2. Definition of the passive

There are two different morphosyntactic constructions of the passive, the periphrastic one (with auxiliary verb) and the morphological one (with passive affix). Historically, the periphrastic passive is generally derived from the tense-aspect construction (i.e. the one which expresses perfect tense or resultative aspect), and the grammaticalisation from the tense-aspect marker to the passive is still not complete. The auxiliary verb itself is considered an intermediate grammatical entity between a full lexical verb and a clitic. The morphological passive, on the other hand, has a passive morpheme, which is often derived from a full lexical verb. For example, a passive morpheme in Japanese, *-(r)are* is derived from a verb *aru* 'exist' or in a number of Bantu languages the passive morpheme *-wa* is derived from a verb *wa* 'fall'. However, this does not mean that the source of the passive morpheme is restricted to the full lexical verb. In another case, the middle/reflexive marker can sometimes turn into the passive morpheme. North Germanic languages such as Swedish (cf. (19)), for example, have a suffix *-s*, which is derived from Old Scandinavian reflexive marker *-sk*.

In terms of morphosemantic characteristics, the passive, in our view, involves orientation. By orientation, we mean that the active voice is actor-oriented, while the passive is undergoer-oriented. This can be applied to both periphrastic and morphological passive. However, as we have seen, the tense-aspect is a source of construction in the periphrastic passive. Therefore, the stative/dynamic distinction is often useful in the periphrastic passive. These two characteristics are combined; we can assume three different types of the passive. In this present work, we call them adjectival passive, resultative and verbal passive. Adjectival passive is a construction where there is a passive-like morphosyntactic form, but it is stative and there is no entity that is oriented. Resultative is stative, but it is undergoer-oriented. Verbal passive is dynamic and undergoer-oriented. These three constructions are usefully schematised below:

- a. Verbal passive, e.g. *The house was ransacked by gang members.*



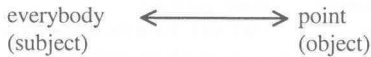
- b. Resultative passive, e.g. *He was surprised at the noise.*



- c. Adjectival passive, e.g. *The house is surrounded by the forest.*



- d. Active voice (stative), e.g. *Everybody understands the point.*



- e. Active voice (dynamic), e.g. *Gang members ransacked the house.*



Figure 1. Orientation of the periphrastic passive and related constructions in English

This three-way distinction is not necessary in the morphological passive, since the resultative does not happen. When the stative reading is gained from the passive, there is a stativising morpheme or phrase, which is historically derived separately from the passive morpheme. A case of morphological passive is illustrated below:

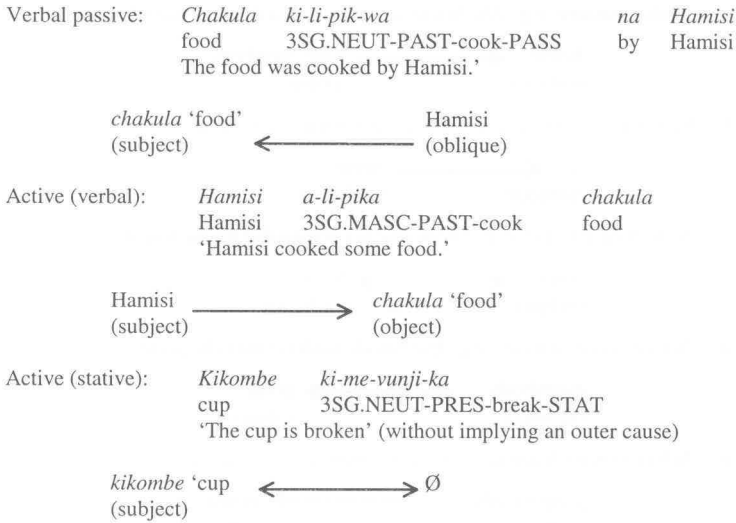


Figure 2. Orientation of the morphological passive and related constructions in Swahili

Based on the cross-linguistic analysis, we propose that the passive needs the distinction based on the two characteristics, i.e. orientation and stative-dynamic distinction.

2.3. Traditional view on the English passive

The passive voice in English is traditionally divided into two types, passive and adjectival passive. The former may be called verbal passive in contrast to the latter. One of the basic distinctions is based on the stative/dynamic distinction; i.e. verbal passive is dynamic and adjectival one, stative. This distinction is based on the quality of participle; i.e. the verbal passive has a more verb-like participle, while the adjectival passive is formed with a more adjectival participle. There are numerous tests to identify these, such as applicability of comparative, use of intensifier, especially *very*, etc. See Toyota (2003a: Appendix I) for detail. Typical examples for each type are shown below:

- (4) Verbal passive
The vase was broken by the cat.
The ticket was issued by the organisation.
- (5) Adjectival passive
He was surprised at the noise.
I am interested in biology.

Additionally, it is often believed that the use of prepositions can indicate the difference: as shown in (4) and (5), the agent is indicated by the preposition *by* in verbal passive, while adjectival passive requires other prepositions such as *at*, *in*, *with*, etc.

3. ANGLOCENTRIC VIEW ON THE PASSIVE

Linguistic terms can sometimes be misleading. For example, a term ‘obligatory passive’ in Algonquian languages may sound as if it is related to the passive. However, it has in fact nothing to do with the passive. There are languages, which have a so-called inverse voice system. Navaho, for example, possesses this voice system as exemplified in (6) below. However, Algonquian languages are in general sensitive to various hierarchies such as animacy or case (cf. Anderson 1997). Thus, (7a) is ungrammatical because of the violation of animacy hierarchy and the more animate entity has to occupy the left-most position in a clause. This type of construction requires the insertion of inverse morpheme, as shown in (7b) and the inverse voice is often called the obligatory passive, although these languages have a separate canonical passive voice.

Inverse voice (Navaho, Trask 1993: 147)

- (6) a. *'ashkii 'a'teed yiyi-iltsa*
boy girl DIRECT-saw
'The boy saw the girl.'
- b. *'a'teed 'ashkii bi-iltsa*
girl boy INVERSE-saw
'The girl saw the boy.'

Obligatory passive (Navaho, Trask 1993: 147)

- (7) a. **to debi 'ayi-il'eel*
water sheep DIRECT-swept.off
'The water swept the sheep off.'
- b. *debi to 'abi-il'eel*
sheep water INVERSE-swept.off
'The water swept the sheep off.'

What unites the passive with the inverse voice is the topicality change; i.e. an entity with high topicality is placed in a marked slot in both the passive and inverse voice. However, the passive may involve the impersonalisation, i.e. defocusing of the actor (cf. Shibatani 1985). The inverse voice is thus slightly different from the passive, both at the morphosyntactic level (presence of separate morpheme) and at the morphosemantic level (presence of impersonalisation in the passive). Trask (1993: 147) rightly notes that “[i]nverse constructions have often been described as ‘pas-

sives', but in most cases there is little or no evidence for any similarity to the passive constructions of European languages".

This is a case of misuse of the terminology, but there certainly was, and still is to a certain degree, a strong trend of Anglocentric view on the description of grammar. Grammar of various languages was described based on constructions in English. It is when a language has an outrageously non-matching structure to the English one that the structure was first "linguistically carefully" analysed. For such cases, passive can be a good example. In some languages, the periphrastic construction, based on its surface structure, is blindly named passive. If there is no matching construction, some grammar books may note that 'the passive meaning is rendered by a construction X and Y'. The English structure has involuntarily influenced the description of other languages. It is quite dangerous to consider a construction from a single point of view. However, we may gladly note, what we call Anglocentric view on grammar has much improved recently, due to a large amount of typological work.

In what follows, we demonstrate various cases of Anglocentric view on the linguistic description, using the passive as an example. We cover both synchronic and diachronic issues. Since the passive construction in English is periphrastic, we also include tense-aspect related issues, although it may not have a significant impact on the morphological passive.

3.1. Split ergativity

Some nominative-accusative alignment languages exhibit partial ergativity, known as split ergativity. This system involves various conditions. See Dixon (1994: 70-110) for details. Some of the ergativity involve change of orientation and it may superficially look like a passive construction. Historically, ergativity in some languages is believed to be derived from the earlier passive construction (Dixon 1994: 187-192) and there certainly is a link between these two constructions. However, due to its linkage and surface similarity, some split ergative constructions are described as passive. Let us see a case in Irish. The passive in Irish is formed morphologically (known as autonomous form in Irish grammar) and this is a type of impersonal passive, especially a type 'no subject with verbal morphology' (cf. Khrakovsky 1973: 67-71; Siewierska 1984: 93-125). Also historically, passive morphology is derived from third person agreement marker (Greenberg 2000: 110-114), which is a common source for the impersonal passive morpheme cross-linguistically (Toyota 2003a: § 3.3.1, in prep. a).

Morphological passive

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------------|----------------------|
| (8) | <i>Labhairtear</i>
speak.PASS.PRES
'Irish is spoken here.' | <i>Gaeilge</i>
Irish | <i>anseo</i>
here |
|-----|--|-------------------------|----------------------|

There is also a periphrastic construction ‘copula + verbal noun or verbal adjective’, which is often considered as the passive. This periphrastic construction has no consistent form and according to tense or aspect, the verbal phrase slightly differs. Thus, (9) involves a prepositional phrase, while (10) is a construction similar to the one of English, i.e. ‘copula + past participle’.

Progressive

- (9) *Bhí* *Seán á bhualadh* (*ag Liam*)
 COPULA.PAST John to.his hitting (at William)
 ‘John was being hit (by William).’

Resultative

- (10) *Tá* *mo t-obair na bhaile críochnaigh*
 COPULA.PRES my work the home finish.PAST PART
 ‘My home work is finished.’

This type of periphrastic construction cannot express, for example, present tense and the passive in the present tense can be expressed only morphologically. This type of restriction does not happen in the morphological passive. The periphrastic ‘passive’ as shown in (9) and (10) above are often described as the passive, since they show similar orientation to change as the canonical passive and the construction may appear to be similar at first sight to the one in English. However, this construction is better considered a split ergative, especially the one based on tense-aspect, since it can only occur under certain restrictions, as argued in Orr (1984), Toyota (in prep. a). Interestingly, some grammar books note that there is no passive in Irish: when this periphrastic form is not considered the passive, then the morphological form is not given a status of passive either. As we have mentioned, the morphological passive in Irish is a typical case of impersonal passive. This happens because those who describe grammar base their argument on English grammar. Therefore, typologically speaking, Irish does have the passive, but it is a morphological one. The periphrastic one is not in fact the passive per se, but it is similar in construction and known as split ergative.

3.2. Use of *by* as a marker of actor

When actor is introduced in the passive, although it is rarely overtly expressed or its expression is prohibited in some languages like Lithuanian, there are a couple of ways to mention it, i.e. use of preposition or use of oblique or instrument case. The passive in modern languages involves force-dynamic alternation, where the under-goer-orientation becomes a crucial characteristic as shown in figure 1 and 2. This is related to the general organisation of the language. Language at the time of its genesis was based in its organisation on stativity, but when the dynamicity became involved, the force-dynamic relationship replaced the stativity-based organisation. There was, therefore, a reanalysis of the basic organisation of languages and the force-dynamic

alternation became one of the core grammatical organisations. This caused a difference in orientation in the passive. As demonstrated in figure 1 and 2, the passive is undergoer-oriented and the outer cause is considered as SOURCE of cause, in a sense of SOURCE-GOAL relationship, which is often schematised as follows:



Figure 3. Schematic representation of SOURCE-GOAL relationship

SOURCE is the most common conceptual domain to which the actor belongs. This is often expressed by the use of prepositions such as ‘from’ or ‘of’ in various languages and if these prepositions are not used, case marking such as instrument or oblique cases is used. Some odd languages which use GOAL as conceptual domain for actor marker include Turkic languages such as Even, Altaic such as Japanese, Mongolian, Korean, etc.⁷ Some examples using these two different ways to indicate actor are illustrated below:

SOURCE

Serbo-Croatian

- (11) *knjiga Salome je bila napisana od Oscar Wilda*
 book Salomé was written **from** Oscar Wilde
 ‘Salomé was written by Oscar Wilde.’

Faroese (Lockwood 1955: 134)

- (12) *Teir vóru sviknir av øllum*
 they were deceived **of** all
 ‘They were deceived by all.’

Instrument or oblique case

Tiwa (Tanoan, Allen and Frantz 1978: 11-12)

- (13) *Liorade-ø ø-mu-che-ban seuanide-ba*
 lady-NOM 3SG-see-PASS-PAST man-INST
 ‘The lady was seen by the man.’

Yup’ik (Eskimo-Aleut, Payne 1997: 207)

- (14) *tuntuva-k nere-sciu-llru-u-q (carayag-mun)*
 moose-ABS eat-PASS-PAST-INTRNS-3SG bear-OBL
 ‘The moose was eaten (by a bear).’

⁷ It is worth mentioning that these languages often have a structurally-marked adversative passive construction. Some languages have several choices for the actor markers, but the semantic domain of GOAL is always used in the adversative passive. The meaning of adversity in the passive may influence the choice of actor marker.

GOAL

Even (Tungus, Malchukov 1993b: 3, 6)

- (15) *Etiken-ø nugde-du ma-v-ra-n*
old.man-NOM bear-DAT kill-AD-NONFUT-3SG
'The old man was killed by the bear.'

Japanese

- (16) *Kono-kabin-ga neko-ni kowas-are-ta*
this-vase-TOP cat-DAT break-PASS-PAST
'This vase was broken by a cat.'

Mongolian (Binnick 1979: 103-104)

- (17) *Deeremč cagdaa-d buuda-gda-v*
bandit police-DAT shoot-PASS-PAST
'The bandit was shot by the police.'

The preposition *by* is used in English to indicate the actor. Where does this preposition belong to the conceptual domain shown in figure 3? *By* itself does not express the common domain SOURCE, but rather, it expresses GOAL or PATH. The use of English *by* as actor marker is very unique cross-linguistically. Its ability to express GOAL or PATH is not a trait of Indo-European languages, i.e. genetically and geographically, this is quite unique. Historically, *of* was the most popular choice until the 16th century (cf. Peitsara 1992; Toyota 2003b). This indicates that the actor marker in earlier English was typologically more natural, but it later changed somehow.⁸

When examples of various languages except English are given word-to-word gloss, the actor marker is translated as *by*, not *of* or *from*. This is not because of the meaning, but because of the fact that *by* is used in English as actor marker. By doing this, the sense of SOURCE or instrument is lost. One of the consequences is that we can be misled when the actor marker does not have to be sensitive to the force-dynamic alternation. When the preposition is used to indicate the actor, the most common choice is 'of' or 'from' in various languages as in (11) and (12), with some rare examples that use GOAL as their semantic domain as in (15) to (17). The popularity of SOURCE as its semantic domain is self-evident by now and the use of *by* does not really follow this characteristic.

⁸ Toyota (2003b, in prep. b) argues that this change has something to do with the tense-aspectual change of the language. There are some pieces of evidence that English used to be an active language (cf. Toyota 2003a: § 2.2.2) and the stative/dynamic distinction was more significant earlier. *Of* by nature tends to express more stative characteristics than dynamic one (s.v. OED *of* XV. 52), whereas *by* can express the egressive aspect (s.v. OED *by* III. 21), which is one of the definite signs of dynamicity. Therefore, the more stative choice *of* was more useful earlier but due to the change in the language organisation in general made the stativity less suitable. This made *of* obsolete and it yields the function of actor marker to *by*.

The choice of preposition as actor marker itself may be an issue to review within a linguistic theory, since it has been hardly given any attention. However, it does not mean that the usage in English dominates the description of other languages. Therefore, when the actor is described, the conceptual domain of SOURCE is better taken into consideration, unless in some cases like (15) to (17), where the domain of GOAL is used.

3.3. Periphrastic passive construction and tense-aspect marker

The periphrastic passive construction is most commonly found in Indo-European languages (Dryer 1982: 55; Haspelmath 1990: 29). Historically, Proto-Indo-European did not have a rigid passive voice. Instead, it had a distinction between the active and the middle. A construction similar to what we call the passive in Present-day English, i.e. 'auxiliary + past participle form of main verb' was once used to create either perfect tense or resultative aspect at the time of its establishment. This indicates that the periphrastic passive is often historically related to the tense-aspect system, i.e. it used to function as stative-adjectival construction (cf. Givón 1990: 600-602). As hinted in Toyota (2003a: §§ 2.6, 3.3), these periphrastic constructions became passive due to the change in the organisation of the language, i.e. from active language to nominative-accusative language. The proto-Indo-European is believed to have been an active language and at this period, periphrastic constructions were used for the purpose of tense-aspect, not of the grammatical voice. Resultative constructions like *My life has been ruined* were earlier expressed as *My life is ruined*, without the use of perfect tense auxiliary *have*. This also indicates that this periphrastic construction is related to the use of the tense-aspect construction.

This is often neglected even within the study of English and has influenced the understanding of other constructions. The English periphrastic passive often makes passive-like periphrastic constructions of other languages considered as the passive. We have seen one such case in Irish earlier. This may alter details of the description of the language in question. The periphrastic passive is less grammaticalised in comparison with the morphological one. This is because when a certain lexical word is fully grammaticalised, it is believed to become a clitic (cf. Givón 1984: 270-271; Heine 1993; Hopper and Traugott 1991: 108-112). Thus, the periphrastic passive can be located at any stage to become a morphological passive. English passive is often expressed in the gradient (Huddleston 1986; Quirk et al. 1985; Toyota 2003a). Since a periphrastic construction can vary in the degree of grammaticalisation, a construction in one language does not apply comfortably to the other. Thus, the English-based view on certain constructions does not necessarily represent a different stage of grammaticalisation in other languages.

As we have demonstrated earlier in 2.2, the range of the prototypical passive slightly differs between the periphrastic one and the morphological one. Since English has only the periphrastic construction, the involvement of the tense-aspect has not

been an object for a study of the passive (except for works by Beedham 1982, 1987). Languages such as Russian have both periphrastic and morphological constructions, where the influence of the English construction seems to be small. This is because the situation in these languages seems to be different from the one of English with the result that scholars analyse the voice continuum in these languages thoroughly. This affected the synchronic state of the grammatical voice, but more importantly, the historical development of the construction has significance.

3.4. Voice continuum with middle and reflexive

The voice continuum is the idea that the three different voice systems are somehow related to each other and they are better considered in terms of continuum or gradient. In some languages, the middle or the reflexive constructions expanded to express the passive meaning once the subject lost the control over the event (cf. Croft, Shyldkrot, Kemmer 1987). This change can be observed across languages, beyond the boundary of Indo-European languages as demonstrated below, where (18b) expresses more than the middle voice and it is invading the domain of the passive voice:

Fula (Niger-Congo, Arnott 1956: 137)

- (18) a. *Mi moor-ii mo*
I braid hair-PAST.ACT him/her
'I dressed his/her hair.'
- b. *Mi moor-ake*
I braid.hair-PAST. MID
'I got my hair dressed.'

When it comes to Indo-European languages, with which English is closely related historically, some languages like Swedish show a high degree of grammaticalisation with regard to the middle or reflexive construction. Swedish has a suffix *-s* as shown in (19a) below, which is derived from Older Scandinavian reflexive marker *-sk*.⁹ A new reflexive pronoun *sig* is used in Modern Swedish, as shown in (19b).

Swedish

- (19) a. *Té servera-s inte på rummen*
tea serves-REF in the room
'Tea is not served in the room.'
- b. *Han kallar sig Olaf*
he call himself Olaf
'He calls himself Olaf.'

⁹ The reflexive marker *-sk* is believed to have rarely expressed reflexiveness (Steblin-Kamenskij 1953: 239, cited in Geniušienė 1987: 245), and judging from this, the change seems to have already started in Old Scandinavian.

Spanish seems to indicate some intermediate stage from the middle to the passive. Therefore, in the following example, the reading can be either passive or middle/reflexive.

Spanish (Givón 1990: 604)

- (20) *Se-cur-aron los brujos*
 REF-cure-PAST.3PL the sorcerers
 'The sorcerers cured themselves.' (Reflexive)
 'The sorcerers got well.' (Middle-intransitive)
 'The sorcerers were cured.' (Passive)

An example where the high-degree of grammaticalisation can be observed is Serbo-Croatian. The actor phrase, which is a typical characteristic of the passive, can be expressed as in (21) below. The reflexive in this case lost its original function and became a type of passive.¹⁰

Serbo-Croatian

- (21) *On se probudio (od hladnoće)*
 he REFL woke-up (from cold)
 'He was waken up by cold.' (lit. he woke up from cold)

These examples are not likely to be considered passive, due to their construction. The reflexive or middle constructions in English have not developed as much as they have in other Germanic languages. This makes the description of constructions like (18) to (21) simply as 'rendering the passive meaning'. However, as typically exemplified in (18) to (21), there is a varying degree of grammaticalisation in the middle construction and in some cases, they are more passive than the middle or reflexive. English happens not to have the highly developed middle or reflexive construction, but it is not rare to have a voice continuum cross-linguistically.

4. INFLUENCE OF TYPOLOGICAL WORKS

Some languages cause difficulties in description due to their particular grammatical structure. For example, some languages use the nominative-accusative system as the basic organisation, while others use ergative system. Some languages are still considered as having active alignment systems, where the intransitive verb is distinguished in terms of stativity. English has so-called labile verbs, such as *melt* as in *The ice melts* (intransitive) and *The sun melts the ice* (transitive). They are sometimes considered as a type of ergative. Typologically, ergativity can only be distinguished when there is a special morphological marking present. Without this markedness, English labile verbs are doubtful in considering them as ergative, but they indeed

¹⁰ We may note that the high volitionality is preferably avoided in (21) and the addition of agent may result in unnaturalness. Therefore, it is not agent but other theta roles, like effector that can be attached to the clause.

show the similar organisation of argument structure to the ergative language. These labile verbs in English may be a case where descriptions are sensitive to more typological characteristics.

The English language has a number of typologically unique constructions, but at the same time, it lacks a number of constructions, which exist in other languages. In general, what is missing in English does not provide a desirable affect on language description. It is natural that one tends to analyse constructions in question from the most familiar point of view and this unawareness of various constructions in other languages is what we have been discussing so far. Ideally various constructions have to be considered after a comprehensive comparison of many languages.

One may argue that the difficulty lies in the lack of firm definition of the particular construction in question, the passive. Thus, it is difficult to find a way to treat what may appear as the passive morphosyntactically (i.e. form) or morphosemantically (i.e. functions) convincingly. For example, the causative-related construction can be a source of the passive. One such language is Indonesian. Indonesian has at least two types of the passive, i.e. with prefix *di-* and with circumfix *ke-...-an*. The former is used for verbal passive, as in (22), the latter normally for the adversative passive, as in (23).

Indonesian (Sneddon 1996: 247-248)

- (22) a. *Dia menjemput saya*
he met I
'He met me.'
- b. *Saya di-jemput oleh dia*
I PASS-meet by him
'I was met by him.' (verbal passive)

Indonesian (Kana 1986: 184)

- (23) *Orang itu ke-curian sepeda*
person that AD-steal bicycle
'The bicycle was stolen to the detriment of that person.' (adversative passive)

In the adversative passive, the latter part of the circumfix *-an* is considered to have derived from a causative marker *-kan*. The suffix *-kan* is polysemous and often expresses a sense of directionality, as well as causative. The directionality is a crucial factor in Indonesian causative, since the preposition meaning 'to', i.e. *kepada* or *pada*, is used to indicate the causer, as in (24) below (Sneddon 1996: 74):

- (24) *Saya meminjam-kan buku saya kepada Ali*
I borrow-CAUS book I to Ali
'I lent my book to Ali.' (lit. Ali caused me to lend him a book')

This directionality is carried over to the adversative passive, in the sense that this directionality indicates the sufferer. Thus, the Indonesian adversative passive may

well be historically related to its causative. In this case, can we treat the adversative passive as a type of passive or should it be considered as the causative? The adversative passive exists in several languages, but they all seem to be a sort of hybrid between the passive and the causative. With the proper definition, we can accommodate this type of construction more comfortably.

As for the definition of the passive, another important argument is the lack of consideration of historical development. This directly affected the definition, since the periphrastic passive is, or at least was at some stage, related to the tense-aspect system and this is often neglected even in the analysis of the English passive, except for some works such as Beedham (1982, 1987). Ancient languages, such as Proto-Indo-European or Sanskrit, did not have the overtly marked passive voice and the distinction in the grammatical voice system was between the active and the middle. We can argue that the newly appeared passive voice seems to perform a bridging function between the active and the middle. This fact also supports the idea that the passive is better considered in terms of the gradience (cf. Toyota 2003a). Apart from the continuum of the voice (i.e. the passive related to the middle), there are at least two sources of the passive, i.e. stative-adjectival construction and impersonalisation. The former is related to the tense-aspect system of the language, and the second, topicality change. This difference also indicates that the passive is only the end product and the process and its internal development is totally different. This makes the definition much harder to make.

5. CONCLUSION

Language description is indeed difficult and finding a coherent way to do so across all the languages in the world is a much harder task. A number of attempts have been made to capture the internal structure of a particular language, but as we have seen, some of them are influenced too much by the structure of English. This fact has hindered the progress of development of linguistic description. We have just seen the case of the passive voice, but we can still identify some problems.

The first obvious point is that typological comparison is one of the indispensable steps to produce a comprehensive theory or formal approach. The pronoun clustering we have seen in section 3 is one such example. A number of theories have been produced based on the various characteristics of English, mainly because English is the researchers' native language. We have to start working on a theory with some language, but we need to bear in mind that English is just one of about 6000 world languages.

Another important point is the lack of historical evidence in the analysis. This is particularly evident in the passive. There are two different constructions, i.e. the periphrastic one and the morphological one. The periphrastic construction is historically related to the tense-aspect system and this has to be incorporated in the treat-

ment of such construction. In this way, the English passive itself is related to the tense-aspect, especially the perfect tense or resultative aspect, but it cannot be directly applied to other languages' passive, since even when the passive is formed periphrastically in a particular language, a thorough analysis of tense-aspect in that language is required. As we have seen in 3.1, Irish has what appears to be the equivalent of the English passive, but this construction is better considered a case of split ergative. This reveals that the direct mapping is not appropriate.

Where the historical development of language is concerned, it becomes more obvious why certain characteristics exist wholly or partially in one language. This can indicate that the various morphosyntactic or morphosemantic characteristics of languages are not fixed firmly and there are various intermediate stages. One of the best ways to treat such illusive characteristics is the use of prototype and gradience, where we can assume the core characteristics and some marginal ones. This allows us to accommodate various linguistic characteristics more easily.

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