

Aspects on Passives

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1 Collins' (2004) smuggling approach

Collins (2004): the external argument in passive constructions¹ is still an argument of the verb (see also Belletti 2003) – evidence from binding, depictives and purpose-clauses:

- (1) a. *Such privileges should be kept to oneself.*
 b. *Damaging testimony is always given about oneself in secret trials.*
 c. *The book was written drunk.*
 d. *The book was written on purpose.*

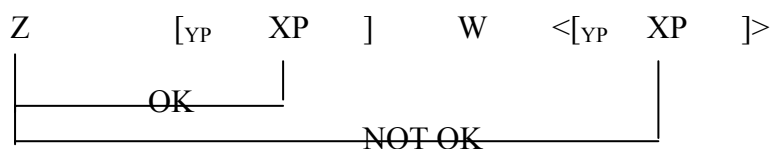
contra Baker (1988), Jaeggli (1986), Roberts (1987), Afsarli (1989), among others:

- passive morphology does not absorb external theta role or accusative case.
- external theta role is assigned in Spec vP (in line with UTAH)
- accusative case is checked by the by-phrase in Voice^o directly above vP

problem: locality

Collins' solution: 'Smuggling' of the VP over the vP makes the internal argument the closest to Spec TP allowing for its 'promotion' to subjecthood without any violation of Relativized Minimality or its derivational counterpart.

- (2) **Smuggling:**
 Suppose a constituent YP contains XP. Furthermore, XP is inaccessible to Z because of the presence of W, some kind of intervener that blocks any syntactic relation between Z and XP. If YP moves to a position c-commanding W, we say that YP smuggles XP past W.



1.1 three possibilities to derive the word order in passives

1. specifier of vP to the right

- violates generalization that specifiers always precede heads (Spec-Head-Compl)
- makes the wrong predictions about c-command tests:

- (3) a. **The book was given to **any** student by **no** professor.*
The book was given **to the other by **each** professor.*
 b. *The book was given by **no** professor to **any** student.*
*The book was given **by each** professor **to the other**.*

2. by-phrase moves to the right of the participle by extraposition

- makes the wrong predictions about c-command tests

3. particle moves to the left of the by-phrase.

¹ This holds for eventive passives; stative passives behave differently cross-linguistically where German, for instance, does not allow an external argument whereas Greek does (see Anagnostopoulou 2003, Kratzer 2000).

1.2 head movement or XP movement?

- (4) a. *The argument was summed **up** by the coach.*
 The argument was summed by the coach **up.*
 b. *John was spoken **to** by Mary.*
 John was by Mary spoken **to.*
- (5) *The coach summed **up** the argument.*
 *The coach summed the argument **up**.*
- more than just Part^o moves in passive constructions

1.3 improving Collins' approach

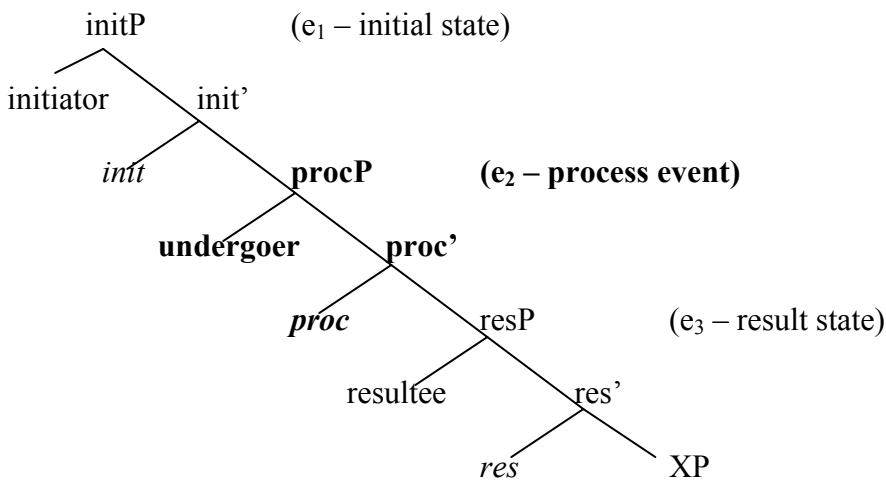
problem: no trigger for this first movement operation

our proposal: promoting the result state as fundamental ingredient of (eventive) passives

- result state of the event (res(ult)P in Ramchand 2005) moves to a position above init(iator)P (vP in other approaches)
- this position is independently needed to form a basis for the event time that subsequently serves as the internal argument of Asp^o (Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2000)
- in passives: event time falls within the result state subevent

2 decomposing the event

(6) **The syntax / semantics of the first phase** (Ramchand 2005a)



all dynamic verbs identify at least a **procP**, the dynamic part of every event

not all verbs can identify causing (**initP**) and result state subevent (**resP**)

Starke (2001): lexical items do not necessarily insert under a single terminal node; elements can merge and project and then remerge at a later stage of the derivation.

(7) **Event Composition Rule** (Ramchand 2005a, p. 37)

$e = e_1 \rightarrow e_2$: e consists of two subevents, e_1 , e_2 such that e_1 causally implicates e_2 .

state embedded under a process: result state

state embedding a process: initial state

elements that can supply the result state subevent:

- verbs that can identify resP in and by themselves such as *find*, *kill*, among others
- (resultative) particles (8)
- (resultative) adjectives (9)

(8) *He ate **up** the chocolate.*

(9) *He hammered the metal **flat**.*

events are structurally complex and involve more than just one subevent
event structure itself is crucially atemporal in nature

- no times associated with any of the subevents
- no immediate link between (atemporal) event and temporal domain of the clause

3 (Eventive) passives involve resultativity

(10) a. *The argument was summed **up** by the coach.* (= (4), Collins 2004)
The argument was summed **by the coach up.*

b. *John was spoken **to** by Mary.*
John was **by Mary spoken **to**.*

- resP moves taking along particle in verb-particle constructions / *to*-phrase in ditransitives
- particle is generated in prtP as the direct complement of resP (cf. Ramchand 2005, Ramchand & Svenonius 2002) and there is no way to move the whole resP over initP without moving the particle along with it

(11) a. *The table was wiped **clean** by John.* (from Postal 2001)
*??The table was wiped **by John clean**.*

b. *The metal was hammered **flat** by John.*
*??The metal was hammered **by John flat**.*

3.1 not all transitive verbs can form passives (cf. e.g. Postal 2001)

transitive verbs involving telic predicates can (12), those involving atelic ones cannot (13):

(12) a. *The lion **killed** the antelope.*
***The antelope was killed** (by the lion).*
b. *He **put** the card on the table.*
***The card was put** on the table (by him).*

(13) a. *This laptop **weighed** two kilos.*
****Two kilos were weighed** (by this laptop).*
b. *This chair **cost** 50 euro.*
****50 euro were costed** (by this chair).*

- such transitive verbs never have a resultative reading and can never be part of an event structure containing a result state

3.2 problem: a number of atelic predicates (not containing resPs) can still form passives

Rizzi & Belletti (1988): two kinds of psych-verbs – *worry* (*preoccupare*) vs. *appeal* (*piacere*)

worry-verbs can undergo passivisation, *appeal*-verbs cannot (examples from Reinhart 2002):

(14) a. *The news **worried** / **surprised** / **excited** Max.*
b. *Max was **worried** / **surprised** / **excited** (by the news).*

- (15) a. *The solution **appeals** to me / **escapes** me.*
 b. **I am **appealed** / **escaped** (by the solution).*

- *worry*-verbs can have an inchoative meaning of the state denoted by the psych verb (e.g. *Max got into a worrying state*)
- *appeal*-verbs cannot (e.g. **I got into an escaping state*)
- *worry*-verbs allow secondary predication where the state denoted by the verb is a kind of result state predicated over the internal argument
- passive formation is possible if it involves promoting this kind of result state
- *appeal*-type verbs cannot involve such a secondary predication and cannot form passives

Similarly, *love* is able to form passives:

- (16) a. *Mary **loved** Max.*
 b. *Max was **loved** (by Mary).*

3.3 ditransitives

- (17) a. *John **sold** a radio **to** Mary.*
*John **sold** Mary a radio.*
 b. *John **bought** a radio **for** Mary.*
*John **bought** Mary a radio.*

- (18) a. *A radio was **sold** **to** Mary.* (Postal 2001, citing Fillmore 1965)
*Mary was **sold** a radio.*
 b. *A radio was **bought** **for** Mary.*
Mary was **bought a radio.*

assumption: only goals are part of the resP, benefactives are not (but see Tungseth 2006 for a different treatment)

3.4 floating quantifiers

floating Qs banned from post-verbal position in passives (unexpected under previous approaches):

- (19) a. *John gave the boys **both** a good talking to.*
*John gave **both** the boys a good talking to.*
 b. *The boys were **both** given a good talking to.*
The boys were given **both a good talking to.*

- floating Qs move together with internal argument and the resP to; remain stranded there after movement of internal argument to [Spec TP]

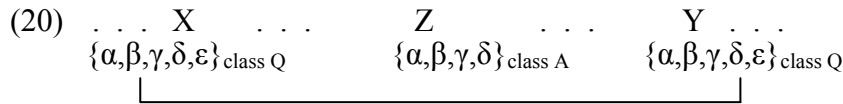
4 Comprehension patterns in agrammatic Broca's aphasics

Grillo (2004): selective deficitarian comprehension in agrammatic Broca's aphasia as a consequence of minimality effects (arise when a dependency has to be built over an intervening element which shares part of its featural make up with the goal)

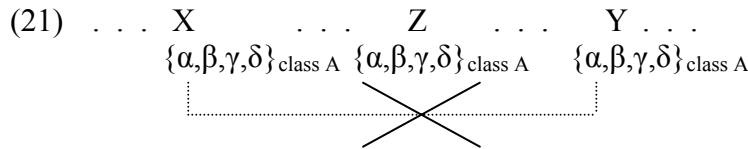
- limitation of computational resources can affect the possibility to move resP over vP

predictions:

- comprehensions of passives with and without *by*-phrase should be equally problematic whereas unaccusatives and adjectival are not (see Grodzinsky 1999, Piñango 1999)
- there should be difficulties in computing dependencies that cross potentially similar elements

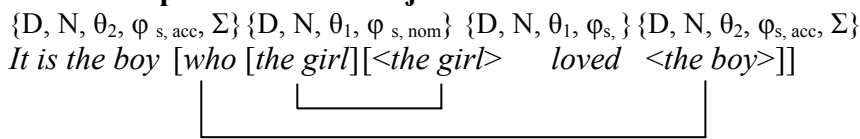


- every node is associated with particular set of morphosyntactic features
- RM should permit the formation of a relation Σ between X and Y: the presence of the element ε suffices for RM to see the difference between X and Z and therefore to authorize the movement of Y over Z.



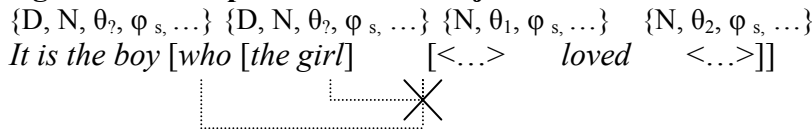
➤ with this feature configuration RM disallows a relation between X and Y

(22) **Normal Representation of object cleft**



- Σ defines <who> as a member of the Operator's class and distinct from the Argumental class to which <the girl> belongs.

(23) **Agrammatic Representation of object cleft**



- extreme impoverishment of features leads to RM blocking chain formation: it is impossible to assign the correct theta role to each argument
- different with subject relatives (are correctly interpreted by agrammatic patients): no NP intervenes between moved constituent and trace, hence no RM effects

(24) *It is the boy [who [<the boy> loved the girl]]*

(25) **Agrammatic aphasia comprehension patterns** (see also Grodzinsky 2004)

Above Chance Performance	Chance Performance
Subject relatives	Object relatives
Subject Clefts	Object Clefts
Actives	Passives
Adjectival Passives	Verbal Passives
Unaccusatives	Passives
SVO Hebrew Actives	OSV/OVS Hebrew Actives
Object Control	Subject Control
Unscrambled Object	Scrambled Object
...	...

- (26) a. *There was a man killed.*
 b. **There was killed a man.*

- movement of the resP drags along internal argument

5 creating the link between the atemporal event and the temporal domain

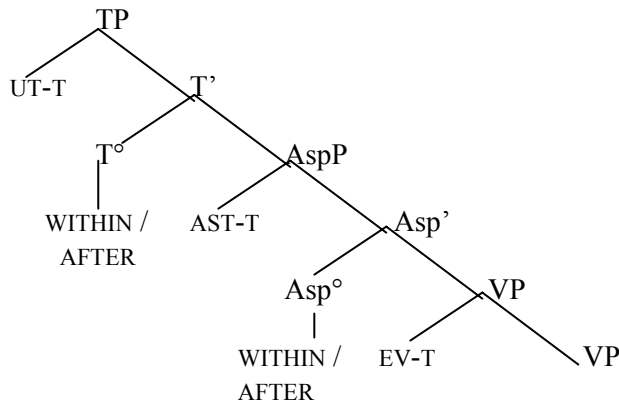
syntax and semantics of tense and aspect involve reference to points/intervals in time (Partee 1984, Zagana 1990, Stowell 1996, Giorgi & Pianesi 1997, Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2000)

Reichenbach (1947): event time (E), speech time (S), reference time (R)

- English simple tenses: E before R (past), E simultaneous to R (present), E after R (future)
- English complex tenses: E before R (perfect), E simultaneous to R (progressive)

Klein (1994): intervals event time (EV-T), assertion time (AST-T), utterance time (UTT-T)

(27) **The syntax of Tense and Aspect in Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria (2000)**



Tense and Aspect are predicates that take temporal arguments (following Zagana 1990)

aspect head: event time as internal argument, assertion time as external argument

- imperfective aspect: assertion time lies within the event time (WITHIN)
- perfective aspect: assertion time lies after the event time (AFTER)

tense head: assertion time as internal argument, utterance time as external argument

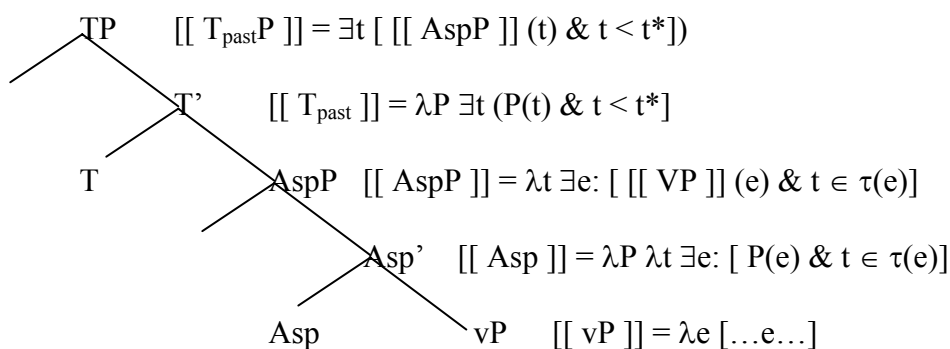
- present tense: utterance time WITHIN assertion time
- past tense: utterance time AFTER assertion time
- (Demirdache 2005:) future tense: utterance time BEFORE assertion time

Ramchand (2004): “crucial phase boundary between vP and the temporal phrase structural domain requires the establishment of a relation between the extended event topology which makes no direct reference to times, and the actual time variable which is only introduced at Asp”

➤ **there is no event time since vP is crucially atemporal in nature**

- aspect introduces a time variable [\sim assertion time in Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2000] that is in some way related to the event structure
- minimal denotation of Asp (in Russian, $\tau(e)$ is Krifka’s (1998) temporal trace function):
 $[[\text{Asp}]] = \lambda P \lambda t \exists e: [P(e) \ \& \ t \in \tau(e)]$

(28) **The syntax / semantics of Aspect and Tense in Russian (Ramchand 2004)**



- utterance time and assertion time in Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria (2000) ~ Ramchand's (2004) t* and t, respectively
- crucial difference: event time is not existent in Ramchand's approach but is more or less replaced by Krifka's (1998) temporal trace function

problems: - AspP provides both the temporal trace function as well as the event time
- still not clear in which part of the event the event time is located

➤ **split Krifka's temporal trace function and introduction of the assertion time**

necessary ingredients:

- syntactic reflex of Krifka's temporal trace function: extra projection
- additional landing site for the part of the event structure that the event time is related to (some kind of focus projection, cf. Belletti 2000)
- Aspect and Tense heads come with an argument structure with the relevant arguments utterance time², assertion time, event time (Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2000)
- events are complex and consist of atemporal subevents (Ramchand 2004, 2005a,b)

see also: Borer's (2005) quantificational phrase QP, quantification over events
Arsenijević (2006): verbal predicates have some functional projection that basically picks out that part of the complex event structure that something is asserted about

- whatever is asserted about the event has to move up – in that sense it could also be the case that it is used to focalize some particular subevent

6 summary & outlook

we provided further evidence for Collins' proposal
improvement on this proposal: 'smuggling' is not really smuggling – semantic trigger for movement of result state subevent
new predictions wrt impoverished syntactic representation that turned out to be correct

future research:

- **Is the participle in perfect tenses the same as in passives?**

both are morphologically identical in many languages
both constructions involve some resultative semantics

but: external argument in perfect tense constructions / internal argument in passive constructions promoted to subject position

- **What makes progressive of a passive grammatical in Spanish but not in Italian?**

still: *Juan está siendo pegado.* vs. **Juan es estando pegado.*
John is (SLP) being (ILP) hit John is (ILP) being (SLP) hit

- **What happens to accusative case?**

² Or in any case, some reference time which in many cases is the utterance time. See Stowell (1996) for this point.

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