

Prepositional Case, Incorporation and Nominative Recipient Passives

Hezekiah Akiva Bacovcin

August 26, 2016

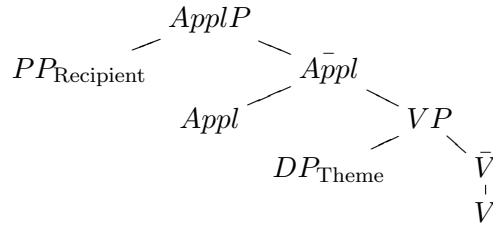
1 Outline

1. Background and Theory
2. Evidence from History of English
3. Evidence from Swedish

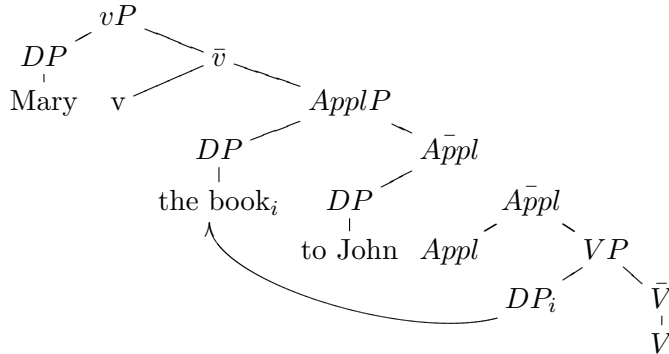
2 Background and Theory

Main claim of dissertation: **All recipients are base generated as prepositional dative phrases in the specifier of an applicative phrase** (Dative PP + applicative analysis):

- (1) Applicative Analysis (with dative PP):

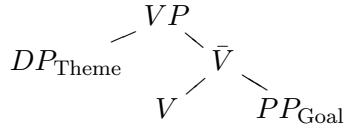


Theme–recipient orders (e.g., “I gave the books to John”) are created by scrambling the theme into a higher specifier of the applicative (McGinnis 1998)



Following Bayer et al. (2001) and Asbury (2005, 2007), inherent case is represented syntactically as a preposition heading a prepositional phrase (dative PP). Other prepositional phrases (e.g., goals) are distinguished by both featural content in the head of the preposition and position within the clause (applicative vs. object of the verb).

- (2) Prepositional Object Construction:



Structural case (e.g., nominative and accusative) are properties of DPs and crucially not PPs (Bayer et al. 2001).¹

Problem: How do we get nominative recipient passives (e.g., “He was given the book.”)?

Proposed Solution: P-incorporation! (Alexiadou et al. 2014)

Assumption 1: P-incorporation (or more properly P-excorporation) moves the P-head out of the PP (details discussed with motivating data below).

Assumption 2: Phrases rely on the presence of their head (removal the head → removal of phrase)

Conclusion: Recipients whose dative P head has excorporated become bare DPs (and thus available for receiving nominative case, e.g., nominative recipient passives)

- (3) **Forshadowing:** Should see evidence of P-incorporation elsewhere
- Evidence of nominative passivisation in Dutch and German
 - Pseudopassivisation and nominative recipient passivisation in history of English
 - Swedish prefix verbs

3 Evidence from German and Dutch

Alexiadou et al. (2014) motivate their P-incorporation analysis with data from German and Dutch.

With the normal passive auxiliary (*werden* ‘become’) only theme passives are possible:

- (4) High German:
- Ich glaube, dass **den** **Kindern** das Fahrrad geschenkt
I believe that **the.DAT.PL children** the.NOM bicycle granted
worden ist.
become be.3sg
‘I believe that the children were granted the bicycle.’
 - *Ich glaube, dass **die** **Kindern** das Fahrrad geschenkt
I believe that **the.NOM.PL children** the.ACC bicycle granted
worden sind.
become be.3pl
‘I believe that the children were granted the bicycle.’
- (5) Dutch:
- De boeken **worden** haar aangeboden.
the books **became.PL** her given
‘The books were given to her.’ (Broekhuis and Cornips 1994:ex. 5b)

¹I am deliberately being agnostic between a dependent case and classical case theory as to how nominative and accusative case are assigned. As far as I can tell, all of my claims are compatible with both frameworks.

- b. *Zij **werd** de boeken aangeboden.
 she.NOM **became.SG** the books given
 ‘She was given the books.’ (Broekhuis and Cornips 1994:ex. 5c)

However, when a different auxiliary is used, (the equivalent of the GET-passive) nominative recipients are possible:

(6) High German:

- a. dass der Vater **der** **Tochter** ein Buch geschenkt hat
 that the.NOM father **the.DAT** **daughter** a.ACC book sent has
 ‘that the father sent the daughter a book.’
 b. dass **die** **Tochter** von dem Vater ein Buch geschenkt bekommen
 that **the.NOM** **daughter** by the father a.ACC book sent got
 hat
 has
 ‘that the daughter got sent a book by her father (Draye 1996:183).’

(7) Dutch:

- Zij** kreeg de boeken (van mij) aangeboden.
she.NOM got the books (by me) given

‘She was given the books (by me).’ (Broekhuis and Cornips 1994:ex. 7)

According to Alexiadou et al. (2014), the different auxiliary reflects contextual allomorphy in the passive auxiliary based on the presence or absence of the dative P.

4 Evidence from History of English

Pseudopassivisation (e.g., “The bed was slept in”) has also been proposed to be derived via P-incorporation (Herslund 1984)

In English, pseudopassivisation and nominative recipient passivisation enter the language at the same time and show a Constant Rate Effect (only suggestive due to small data on recipient passivisation).

5 Evidence from Swedish

Swedish has two different classes of ditransitive verbs that behave differently in both active and passive contexts. The prefixed verbs can be derived via P-incorporation of the dative P into the verbal stem. Thus, these “words” always require P-incorporation to occur (Holmberg and Platzack 1995).

(8) Crucial data points (data below):

- a. Only unprefixed verbs can occur in theme–recipient order in active
 b. Only prefixed verbs can have recipient passives, which are nominative recipient passives

(9) Theoretical Conclusions:

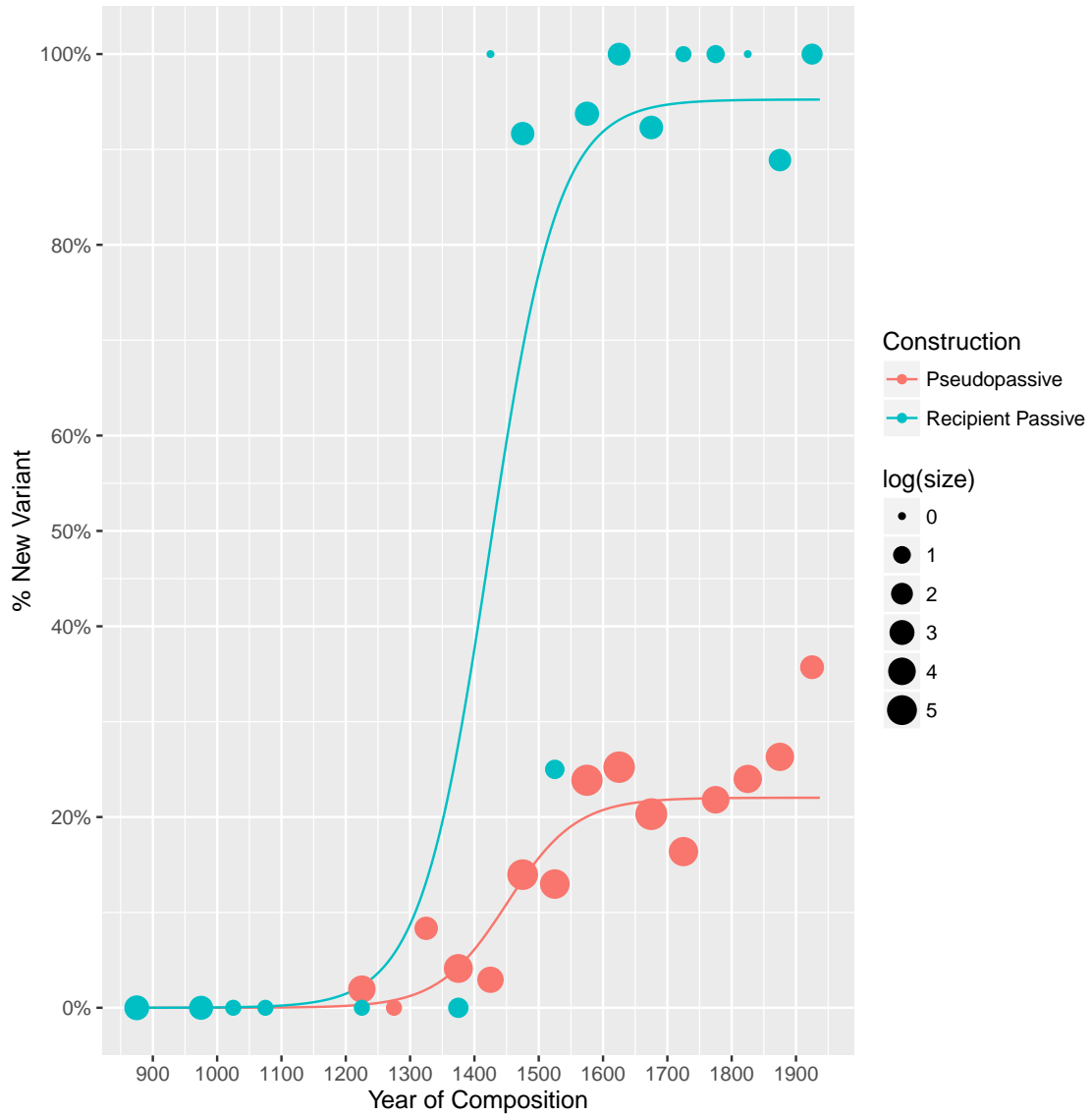


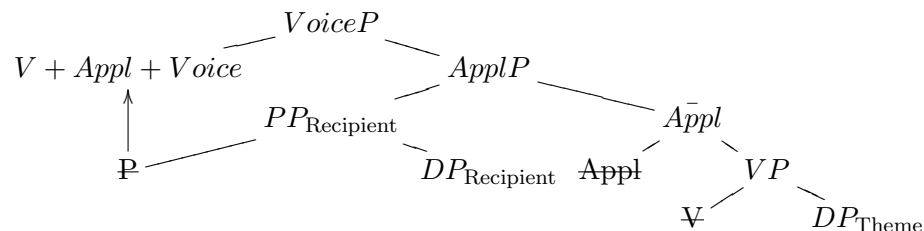
Figure 1: Logistic regression curves showing rates of nominative recipient passivisation and pseudopassivisation in English

- a. P-incorporation blocks the theme from scrambling (would be intervener between recipient and main verb for P-incorporation)
- b. Again, P-incorporation licenses nominative recipient passivisation (but also maybe bare theme passivisation???)

Structural definition of P-incorporation: P-incorporation moves the P-head from the specifier of the recipient – itself in the specifier of the applicative phrase – and adjoins it to the head of the nearest C-commanding phrase.

Here is an example tree:

(10) P-incorporation (VO Word Order)



The relevant Swedish data for discussion:

5.0.1 Relevant Citations

Haugen (1982), Falk (1990, 1993), Holmberg and Platzack (1995), Falk (1997), Anward (1989), Holmberg (2002), Lundquist (2004), Platzack (2005), Lundquist (2006), Barðdal (2007), Lundquist (2013b,a), Haddican et al. (2014), Haddican and Holmberg (2015)

5.0.2 Active Data

(11) Swedish:

Jag gav Johan en bok.
I gave John a book.

‘I gave John a book (Holmberg and Platzack 1995).’

(12) Swedish:

Jag gav en bok *(til) Johan.
I gave a book to John.

‘I gave a book to John (Holmberg and Platzack 1995).’

(13) Swedish:

- a. Han gav Jan bollen
he.NOM gave John ball.the
‘He gave John the ball’
- b. Han gav bollen *(til) Jan
he.NOM gave ball.the to John
‘He gave the ball to John’

(14) Swedish:

- a. Han erbjöd Jan ett nytt jobb
he.NOM offered John a new job
‘He offered John a new job’
- b. ?? Han erbjöd ett nytt jobb til Jan
he.NOM offered a new job to John
‘He offered a new job to John’
- c. * Han erbjöd ett nytt jobb Jan
he.NOM offered a new job John
‘He offered a new job to John’

5.0.3 Passive Data

(15) Swedish:

a. Particle Verb:

Han erbjöds ett nytt jobb
he.NOM offered.PASS a new job

‘He was offered a new job (Anward 1989, Lundquist 2006).’

b. *Non-Particle Verb:

Pelle gavs ett äpple
Pelle gave.PASS a apple

‘Pelle was given an apple (Anward 1989, Lundquist 2006).’

(16) Swedish (verbs without particles):

*Ett äpple gavs Pelle.
An apple gave.PASS Pelle.

‘An apple was given to Pelle (Anward 1989, Lundquist 2006).’

(17) Swedish:

Ett nytt jobb erbjöds=honom.
A new job offered.PASS=him.OBL.

‘A new job was offered to him (Anward 1989, Falk 1990, Lundquist 2006).’

(18) Swedish:

*Ett äpple gavs honom.
An apple gave.PASS him.

‘An apple was given to him (Anward 1989, Lundquist 2006).’

(19) Swedish:

Jobbet erbjöds mannen med den långa svarta kappan.
job.DEF offered.PASS man.DEF with the long black coat

‘The job was offered to the man with the long black coat (Lundquist 2004:ex 26).’

(20) Swedish:

a. Mannen som erbjöds **jobbet** hade redan tackat ja till ett
man.DEF who offered.PASS **job.DEF** had already thanked yes to a
annat jobb.
other job

‘The man, who was offered the job, had already accepted another job (Lundquist 2004:ex. 51).’

b. ?? Mannen som **jobbet** erbjöds hade redan tackat ja till ett
man.DEF who **job.DEF** offered.PASS had already thanked yes to a
annat jobb.
other job

‘The man, to whom the job was offered, had already accepted another job (Lundquist 2004:ex. 52).’

- (21) Swedish:
- a. Jobbet som erbjöds **mannen** var mycket slitsamt.
 job.DEF which offered.PASS **man.DEF** was very tiring
 ‘The job, which was offered to the man, was very tiring (Lundquist 2004:ex. 49).’
 - b. Jobbet som erbjöds **mannen** var mycket slitsamt.
 job.DEF which **man.DEF** offered.PASS was very tiring
 ‘The job, which the man was offered, was very tiring (Lundquist 2004:ex. 50).’

References

- Alexiadou, Artemis, Elena Anagnostopoulou, and Christina Sevdali. 2014. Opaque and transparent datives, and how they behave in passives. *The Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 17(1):1–34.
- Anward, Jan. 1989. Constraints on Passives in Swedish and in English. *Working papers in Scandinavian syntax* 44:15–29.
- Asbury, Anna. 2005. Adpositions as case realisations: Structures and consequences. *Leiden Papers in Linguistics* 2(3):69–92.
- . 2007. Towards a typology of morphological case. *Nordlyd* 33(1).
- Barðdal, Jóhanna. 2007. The semantic and lexical range of the ditransitive construction in the history of (North) Germanic. *Functions of Language* 14(1):9–30.
- Bayer, Josef, Markus Bader, and Michael Meng. 2001. Morphological underspecification meets oblique case: Syntactic and processing effects in German. *Lingua* 111(4-7):465–514.
- Broekhuis, Hans, and Leonie Cornips. 1994. Undative constructions. *Linguistics* 32(2):173–190.
- Draye, Luk. 1996. The German dative. In *The Dative: Volume 1: Descriptive studies*, ed. William van Belle and Willy van Langendonck. John Benjamins Publishing.
- Falk, Cecilia. 1990. On double object constructions. *Working papers in Scandinavian syntax* 46:53–100.
- . 1993. Non-referential subjects and agreement in the history of Swedish. *Lingua* 89(2-3):143–180.
- . 1997. *Fornsvenska upplevarverb*, vol. A 49 of *Lundastudier i Nordisk Språkvetenskap*. Lund: Lund University Press.
- Haddican, William, and Anders Holmberg. 2015. Two constraints on theme passivisation in Swedish.
- Haddican, William, Anders Holmberg, and Nanna Haug Hilton. 2014. Stay in shape!
- Haugen, Einar. 1982. *Scandinavian language structures: a comparative historical survey*. University of Minnesota Press Minneapolis.

- Herslund, Michael. 1984. Particles, prefixes and preposition stranding. *NyS, Nydanske Sprogstudier* 14(14):34–71.
- Holmberg, Anders. 2002. Expletives and Agreement in Scandinavian Passives. *Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 4(2):85–128.
- Holmberg, Anders, and Christer Platzack. 1995. *The Role of Inflection in Scandinavian Syntax*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lundquist, Björn. 2004. Subjektsval vid passivering av bitransitiva verb. Ph.D. thesis, University of Lund.
- . 2006. Ditransitives in Swedish.
- . 2013a. Double object constructions: active verbs. In *The Nordic Atlas of Language Structures Online (NALS)*, ed. Janne Bondi Johannessen and Øystein Alexander Vangsnes.
- . 2013b. Double object constructions: passive verbs. In *The Nordic Atlas of Language Structures Online (NALS)*, ed. Janne Bondi Johannessen and Øystein Alexander Vangsnes.
- McGinnis, Martha. 1998. Locality in A-movement. Ph.D. thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Platzack, Christer. 2005. Cross-Germanic promotion to subject in ditransitive passives—A feature-driven account. In *Grammar and beyond: essays in honour of Lars Hellan*, ed. Mila Vulchanova and Lars Hellan. Novus Press.