

# Prepositional Case, Incorporation and Nominative Recipient Passives

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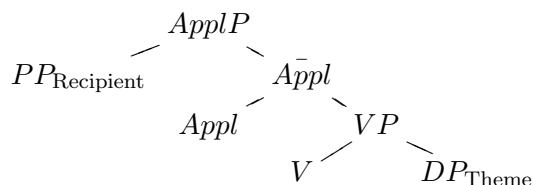
## 1 Outline

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

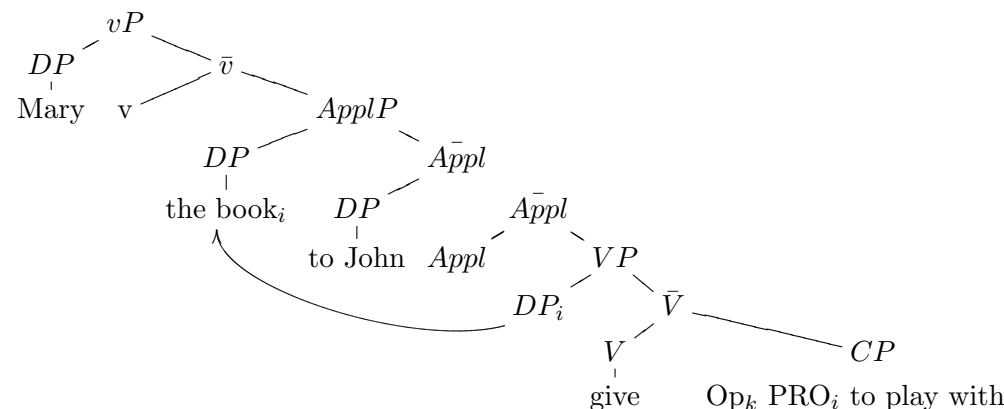
## 2 Background and Theory

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):

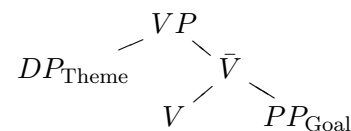


Theme-recipient orders (e.g., “I gave the books to John”) are created by scrambling the theme into a higher specifier of the applicative (McGinnis 1998)



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).<sup>1</sup>

**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)

<sup>1</sup>I 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.

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  $\rightarrow$  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
- a. Evidence of nominative passivisation in Dutch and German
  - b. Pseudopassivisation and nominative recipient passivisation in history of English
  - c. 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:
- a. Ich glaube, dass **den** **Kindern**  
I believe that **the.DAT.PL children**  
das Fahrrad geschenkt worden ist.  
the.NOM bicycle granted become be.3sg  
‘I believe that the children were granted the bicycle.’
  - b. \*Ich glaube, dass **die** **Kindern**  
I believe that **the.NOM.PL children**  
das Fahrrad geschenkt worden sind.  
the.ACC bicycle granted become be.3pl

‘I believe that the children were granted the bicycle.’

- (5) Dutch:
- a. De boeken **werden** haar aangeboden.  
the books **became.PL** her given  
‘The books were given to her.’ (Broekhuis and Cornips 1994:ex. 5b)
  - 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  
that the.NOM father **the.DAT daughter** a.ACC  
Buch geschenkt hat  
book sent has  
‘that the father sent the daughter a book.’
  - b. dass **die** **Tochter** von dem Vater ein  
that **the.NOM daughter** by the father a.ACC  
Buch geschenkt bekommen hat  
book sent got 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 unprefixd 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:

- 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???)

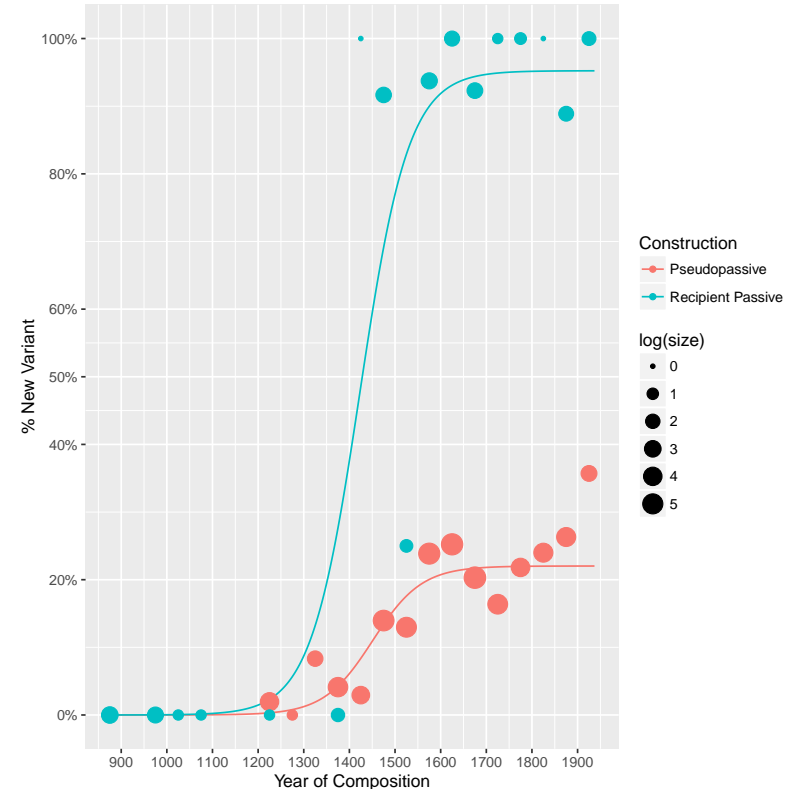
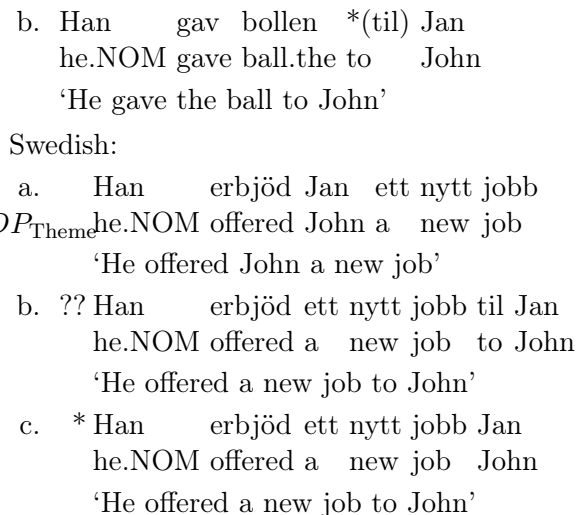


Figure 1: Logistic regression curves showing rates of nominative recipient passivisation and pseudopassivisation in English

**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)



### 5.0.1 Relevant Citations

### 5.0.3 Passive Data

### 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'

(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  
 job.DEF offered.PASS man.DEF with the long black  
 kappan.  
 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  
 man.DEF who offered.PASS **job.DEF** had  
 redan tackat ja till ett annat jobb.  
 already thanked yes to a other job  
 ‘The man, who was offered the job, had already  
 accepted another job (Lundquist 2004:ex. 51).’  
 b. ?? Mannen som **jobbet** erbjöds hade  
 man.DEF who **job.DEF** offered.PASS had  
 redan tackat ja till ett annat jobb.  
 already thanked yes to a other job
- (21) Swedish:  
 a. Jobbet som erbjöds **mannen** var  
 job.DEF which offered.PASS **man.DEF** was  
 mycket slitsamt.  
 very tiring  
 ‘The job, which was offered to the man, was very  
 tiring (Lundquist 2004:ex. 49).’  
 b. Jobbet som erbjöds **mannen** var  
 job.DEF which **man.DEF** offered.PASS was  
 mycket slitsamt.  
 very tiring  
 ‘The job, which the man was offered, was very  
 tiring (Lundquist 2004:ex. 50).’

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