

# The introduction of object symmetry in passives

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This paper investigates the introduction of promoting the indirect object to subject in passives during the second half of the 19th century. An analysis is proposed where the indirect object occupies a position with inherent case throughout the history of Swedish. Before the change, a passive ditransitive verb had no structural case to assign. Thus, the direct object had to move to the subject position, whereas the indirect object remained in its case position. The change involved the capacity to assign one structural case. If the direct object received this case, the indirect object could escape its case position and be promoted to subject. It is also shown that this change was preceded by shifting preferences in the argument ordering in the passive voice.

Keywords: passive, double objects, promotion to subject

## 1. Introduction

In present-day Swedish, either of the two objects in a ditransitive construction may be promoted to subject in the passive voice:<sup>1</sup>

- (1) a. *Han*     *erbjöds*            *en lägenhet*  
He.SBJ offer.PST.PASS an apartment  
‘He was offered an apartment’  
b. *En lägenhet*     *erbjöds*            *honom*  
an apartment offer.PST.PASS him.OBJ  
‘He was offered an apartment’

This possibility of variation is often referred to as object symmetry in the passive voice (e.g. Anagnostopoulou 2003). Earlier stages of Swedish did not show object symmetry. Instead, only the direct object could passivize. In the older Swedish passives given in (2), either case morphology or placement shows that the indirect object is not the subject. In (2a–b), the indirect objects have object case morphology, and in (2c–d), the indirect objects lack overt case

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<sup>1</sup> In what follows, I shall refer to the two verb complements as “indirect object” and “direct object”, no matter its superficial function as subject or object in the passive voice. By “passivized indirect object” I mean an indirect object in the nominative case or, if case is not visible, in the subject position in the passive voice.

morphology but show up in the object position, after the finite verb in an embedded clause (2c), or after the infinite verb in a main clause (2d; indirect objects in bold):<sup>2</sup>

- (2) a. *rettferdighet hwilken mig skenckes*  
 justice which me.OBJ give.PRS.PASS  
 'justice that is given to me' (1709; SAOB *skänka*)
- b. *honom måtte tillåtas een lägenhetuthi Götha rijkes hofrett.*  
 him.OBJ shall.PST allow.INF.PASS a prospect in Göta land.POSS court  
 'he should be guaranteed prospects at the court of appeal in Götaland' (1646; SAOB *tillåta*)
- c. ... *at frachten först biwdes borgare*  
 that cargo.DEF first offer.PRS.SG.PASS burghers  
 '... that the cargo is first offered to burgers' (1529; SAOB *bjuda*)
- d. *Ett afskräckande exempel måste gifvas verlden*  
 a warning example must give.INF.PASS world.DEF  
 'The world must be given a warning example' (1841; spf)

In this paper, I investigate the emergence of object symmetry, as shown in (1).

In a small investigation of the change, Falk shows that passivized indirect objects were very uncommon before 1850 (1997:167). The main focus in this article is therefore the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but comparisons will be made to earlier periods. Data in my investigation concern only the morphological passive in Swedish, formed with the suffix *-s*.<sup>3</sup> Some background is given in section 2, where I show that the case of the indirect object has some atypical properties, both before and after the change, including what appears to be a curious mix of lexical and structural case. In section 3, I present data from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier periods, and show that the introduction of object symmetry was preceded by changes in the order of the arguments. In section 4, I provide an analysis of the case of the indirect object before and after the change. I suggest that the base position of the indirect object is an inherent case position, and hence, that the indirect object is licensed *in situ* both before and after the change. However, the change affected the case assigning properties of ditransitive verbs, making it possible for the indirect object to escape its base position and move to the subject position. The proposal gives a formal

<sup>2</sup> A third possibility to identify a passivized object is through verbal agreement: a passivized object always triggered agreement in number on the finite verb. Verb agreement in number was morphologically marked in written Swedish until mid-20<sup>th</sup> century in some verb classes. Below, I gloss verb agreement on the finite verb only if it is overt. In none of the found examples verb agreement has been the only indication, though.

<sup>3</sup> Swedish also has a periphrastic passive, like present-day English. I have chosen to investigate only *s*-passives, since former investigations on passivized ditransitive verbs have concerned *s*-passives (cf above). Another reason is that further investigations on participles are needed before we can draw safe conclusions on the status of the objects; it concerns both verbal vs. adjectival participles and word order possibilities. Finally, *s*-passives gained ground during the 19<sup>th</sup> century at the expense of the periphrastic passive, as shown by Kirri (1975). However, as shown by Holm (1952), a substantial number of *s*-passives are already found in Early Old Swedish, making comparisons with earlier stages possible.

account of the mixed properties presented in section 2, some of which have not been accounted for in previous analyses. In section 5, I discuss the different developments up until 1900 and some remaining questions. Section 6 is a summary.

## 2. Background

### 2.1. Research on present-day Swedish

Investigations of passivization of ditransitive verbs in present-day Swedish often observe that not all types of ditransitive verbs passivize equally easily. Selectional as well as morphological properties of the verb have been invoked to explain this phenomenon. Anward (1989) notes that verbs for which double objects are the only alternative passivize easily, whereas the passive of verbs with the PP-alternative is less accepted (if not totally prohibited; cf Teleman et al. 1999/4:368, 2c). Holmberg & Platzack (1995) instead take the verb-internal structure to be decisive: bimorphemic ditransitive verbs like *till-dela* ‘award’, *er-bjuda* ‘offer’ passivize easily, whereas passive monomorphemic ditransitive verbs are “marginal” (1995:219–220). These generalizations are basically based on their intuitions. Haddican & Holmberg (2018) report on a larger grammaticality judgement test, and the results indeed show that the informants preferred passivized bimorphemic verbs over monomorphemic. I know of no investigation of the actual use of bimorphemic versus monomorphemic ditransitive *s*-passives.

These observations concern to what degree passivization is at all acceptable. Haddican & Holmberg (2018) also investigated judgements on choice of subject, and the results showed that the informants preferred passivized indirect objects over passivized direct objects. Similarly, Lundquist (2004) found that passivized indirect objects seem to be the unmarked alternative in actual use, in the sense that direct objects passivize only if they are relativized or questioned, or if they are highly topical and the indirect object supplies new information.

The main focus in this article is the introduction of object symmetry in the passive voice, i.e. the possibility of passivizing the indirect object during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As will become clear as we proceed, both mono- and bimorphemic ditransitive verbs could passivize both before and after the change. I will also discuss the choice of subject and argument order as I compare 19<sup>th</sup> Swedish with older stages of the language.

The object symmetry illustrated in (1) has been analyzed in e.g. Holmberg & Platzack (1995), Platzack (2005, 2006) and Haddican & Holmberg (2018). I will return to these

proposals in section 3.5, and briefly compare them to my own analysis. To the extent that older stages in Swedish are mentioned by these authors, the situation is compared with Modern Icelandic and Modern German, where the lexical case of the indirect object is preserved under passivization. In a similar vein Falk (1995, 1997) proposes that the change reflects the final loss of lexical case in Swedish. However, the case of the indirect object before the change had some properties not normally associated with lexical case, and after the change the indirect object showed some atypical properties for structural case. This is the topic of the next section.

## ***2.2. The case of the indirect object before and after the change: some superficial properties***

Preserved morphological case in the passive voice is often seen as a property of lexical case: it is a lexical property of the verb to assign a certain case, and this is preserved under passivization. (3) shows that dative case in Old Swedish occurred in active ((3a)) and passive ((3b)) examples alike. Verb complements without a lexical case, on the other hand, turned up in the structural case nominative in the passive voice, as shown with *jak*, ‘I.NOM’ in (4b); cf. the active example in (4a), where the corresponding argument (*hona*) has an accusative ending.

- (3) a. *þu*                      *böte*                      *siukom* (Leg Bu 78)  
           you.SG.NOM    cure.PST.SG    ill.PL.DAT  
           ‘You cured ill people’  
       b. *bötes*                      *mangom* (Leg Bu 417)  
           cure.PST.SG.PASS many.DAT  
           ‘Many people were cured’
- (4) a. ... *huru guz*                      *ængla lyptu*                      *hona gen himnum* (Leg Bil 272)  
           how God.POSS angels lift.PST.PL her.ACC towards heaven.DAT  
           ‘... how God’s angels lifted her towards heaven’  
       b. *swa lyptis*                      *jak vij sinnum hwar dagh a. xxx arum aff*  
           so lift.PST.SG.PASS I.NOM seventimes each day in 30 years by  
           *guz ænglum*  
           God.POSS angels.DAT  
           ‘I was lifted seven times each day for 30 years by God’s angels’ (Leg Bil 273)

In this respect, the case of the indirect object looks like a lexical case before the change.

The indirect object did not block movement of the direct object to the subject position, and this could also be seen as an effect of the lexical case, a lexical property that does not interfere in relations established in the syntax. However, in other respects the case of the indirect object had some atypical properties. Firstly, after the loss of the Old Swedish case system, the indirect object had no morphologically distinct form. In other languages with lexical case, like Icelandic,

German or Old Swedish, lexical cases typically have a distinctive form, like dative or genitive. The case of the indirect object in (2a) was not distinct from the structural case of objects (direct or indirect), however.

Secondly, lexical case is often thought of as a verb-idiosyncratic property (see e.g. Thráinsson 2007:182). A small number of verbs had this property earlier: the Experiencer of verbs like *lika* ‘like’, *angra* ‘regret’ in Old Swedish received an oblique case, and this did not follow from any other property. These verbs lost lexical case during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, leading to the change illustrated in (5) (Lindqvist 1912, Falk 1997):

- (5) a. *hanum angrar thz* (OS)  
       him.DAT regret.PRS.SG it  
       ‘He regrets this’  
       b. *He ångrar det* (PDS)  
       he.SBJ regret.PRS it

After this loss, ditransitive verbs were the only verbs with a case resembling lexical case. But this actually follows from another property of ditransitives, namely the very fact that they are ditransitive: in other words, the case of indirect objects was a verb-**type** idiosyncratic property. In this respect, it resembled a structural case, in the sense of a “case associated with a certain syntactic function” – with the fundamental difference that the indirect object was in a way “trapped” in this function, since it could not be promoted to subject in passives.

Turning to the supposed structural case of the indirect object in Modern Swedish, it also has some unexpected properties.

Firstly, the possibility of passivizing the direct object has not been lost, see (1). Obviously, this contrasts with a minimality constraint on DP-movement, but somehow the indirect object does not intervene in the chain between the subject position and the direct object position. Compare the situation in English, an object asymmetric language, where only the underlying indirect object may passivize:

- (6) a. *He was given the book*  
       b.\* *The book was given him*

Secondly, definiteness effects in existential constructions are commonly analyzed as a consequence of interpreting the VP-internal DP as a VP-internal subject (associate subject). Definiteness effects are found only on the underlying direct object in the passive voice. Hence,

(7a), with a definite indirect object and an indefinite direct object as the associate subject is grammatical, whereas a definite direct object leads to ungrammaticality even if the indirect object is indefinite, as in (7b).

- (7) a. *Det erbjöds Karolina en lägenhet*  
       it offer.PST.PASS Karolina an apartment  
       ‘Karolina was offered an apartment’  
    b. *\*Det erbjöds en släkting lägenheten*  
       it offer.PST.PASS a relative apartment.DEF

Again, this suggests that the indirect object is somehow invisible when establishing a relation between the subject position and the direct object position.

### 3. Data

In this section, I first give an overview how data are collected and analyzed (3.1.–3.2.). Then, patterns from earlier stages, including the earliest examples of passivized indirect objects are presented (3.3.–3.4.), but the main focus is the 19<sup>th</sup> century (3.5.–3.7.). A final subsection is concerned with changes in argument order before and after 1800 (3.8).

#### 3.1. Data sources

The main focus in my investigation is the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the period during which object symmetry first emerged. Data from the 19<sup>th</sup> century are taken from two different sources. The spf-corpus of Swedish prose fiction 1800–1900 (available in Korp, Borin et al. 2012) is a corpus of novels from 1800 to 1901.<sup>4</sup> The other source is recommendations from normative grammarians, represented by the first editions of the Swedish Academy word-list (SAOL).<sup>5</sup>

In addition, data from Early Old Swedish have been collected from the rich sample of examples in Holm’s investigation (1952) on the *s*-passive. I have also manually excerpted an Early Old Swedish collection of legends (Leg Bu and Leg Bil). Late Old Swedish is represented by passivized ditransitive verbs in Söderwall’s dictionary of Old Swedish (Sdw); this includes a total of 24 verbs. For later periods, I have manually excerpted 19 texts (see Falk 1993:335–

<sup>4</sup> <https://spraakbanken.gu.se/korp/>

<sup>5</sup> SAOL is a word-list with contemporary vocabulary, with information about morphology and sometimes information/recommendation on style, usage, etc. SAOL is regularly renewed with new editions since 1874. Earlier editions are available at <http://spraakdata.gu.se/saolhist/>

338, authors born 1571–1735, for details). To complete the picture, I have collected examples of ditransitive verbs from before 1800 in the Swedish Academy dictionary (SAOB).<sup>6</sup> SAOB is a historical dictionary, covering the Swedish vocabulary from 1526.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.2. Identifying passivized indirect objects

As illustrated in (2), I have used both morphological and word order criteria to identify which object is passivized. The four-case system of Old Swedish was lost in Late Old Swedish, and the only nominal category that preserved a distinction between subject and object case was personal pronouns. In the majority of examples, the indirect object is pronominal, and its case reveals which object is passivized. For other nominal categories, word order can sometimes tell which object is passivized, but there are also ambiguous examples.

Due to the V2 property of Swedish, it is not possible to tell which object is passivized if the word order is DP + finite verb + DP in main clauses and embedded clauses that allow V2-order. Compare (8a–b). (8a) shows a fronted indirect object with object case, and this is a possible analysis of (8b) as well, where case is ambiguous. Therefore, I have not analyzed word orders like (8b) as examples of passivized indirect objects. In (8c), the word order is the same as in (8a–b), but here the use of the reflexive pronoun *sin* reveals that the indirect object is passivized:<sup>8</sup>

- (8) a. *Honom räcket en riktig kardinalsup*  
 him.OBJ hand.PRS.PASS a real cardinal.glass.of.spirit  
 ‘A very big (?) glass of spirit is handed to him.’ (1900; spf)  
 b. *denna [armén] till-fogades ett nederlag*  
 this [the army] to-add.PST.PASS a defeat  
 ‘the army was defeated’ (1900; spf)<sup>9</sup>  
 c. *en och annan beröfvades sitt gevär*  
 one and another deprive.PST.PASS his.REFL gun  
 ‘some men were deprived of their guns’ (1900; spf)

<sup>6</sup> Available at <https://www.saob.se/>

<sup>7</sup> The main focus in SAOB is on semantics, and less attention is paid to syntax. Of course, this makes SAOB a less suitable source for my purpose.

<sup>8</sup> The reflexive possessive must be bound within a binding domain. In the active voice, the indirect object can – according to some speakers only marginally – bind a reflexive direct object:

(i) *Jag gav honom sin docka*  
 I give.PST him his.REFL doll  
 ‘I gave him his doll’

This possibility is probably not available in the passive voice, i.e. it is less probable that the indirect object could retain its status as an indirect object in the passive as antecedent of a reflexive pronoun. The direct object would then be analyzed as an associate VP-internal subject, but definite.

<sup>9</sup> On compound verbs like *till-foga* ‘to-add; inflict on’, see further footnote 14 below.

If the direct object occurs after an infinite verb, the indirect object is analyzed as passivized in examples like the following:

- (9) *de i trångmål stadda grupperna måste lämnas allt möjligt bistånd*  
 the in trouble being groups.DEF must render.INF.PASS all possible help  
 ‘the groups in trouble must be given all possible help’ (1900; spf)

When both objects occur postverbally, the word order direct object + indirect object shows a passivized direct object:

- (10) [Genom Hansestädernas tullfrihet] *från-drogos ... betydande*  
 [Since the Hansa-towns were exempted from duty] from-draw.PST.PL.PASS important  
*inkomster svenska kronan*  
 incomes Swedish crown.DEF  
 ‘Since the Hansa-towns were exempted from duty, the Swedish crown was deprived of important incomes’ (1911; SAOB *fråndraga*)

The opposite order does not, however, unambiguously involve a passivized indirect object. An indefinite DP could be left in situ as an associate subject. In present-day Swedish, only the direct object may be construed as an associate subject in a passive ditransitive (cf (7) above). In (11a) the presence of the expletive subject *det* ‘there’ shows the direct object as an associate subject and preserved object status of the preposed indirect object. An expletive subject *det* is normally obligatory. Earlier – and to some extent still – *det* could be absent if a locative was topicalized or if a locative adverb (*där* ‘there’, *här* ‘here’) occupied the subject position immediately following the finite verb. Thus, clauses like (11b) are not taken to be an instance of a passivized indirect object:

- (11) a. *Mången af oss fattige syndare förunnas det icke en så lång*  
 many of us poor sinners grant.PRS.PASS it not a such long  
*betänketid som han fått*  
 time.for.consideration that he got.SUP<sup>10</sup>  
 ‘For many of us, poor sinners, there is not such a long time for consideration granted’ (1880; spf)  
 b. *I en not tilldelas der Sara Widebeck en örfil*  
 in a note to-share.PRS.PASS there Sara Widebeck a box.on.the.ear  
 ‘In a note, Sara Widebeck is given a box on the ear’ (1840; spf)

<sup>10</sup> In embedded clauses the temporal auxiliary *ha* ‘have’ may be deleted. Supine is the active past particle in Swedish, used to form anterior tenses. Supine may be passivized, cf example (12c) below.



In embedded clauses that do not allow main clause word order, I have analyzed the DP in front of the finite verb as the subject, see (12a–b). In the relative clauses in (12c–d), the postverbal DP shows its status as an object, direct object in (12c), indirect object in (12d):

- (12) a. ... *i samma stund mamsell Hagman der lemnades inträde*  
           in same moment miss Hagman there leave.PST.PASS entry  
           ‘... just as Miss Hagman was given permission to enter there’ (1841; spf)
- b. *det mått af bildning och kunskaper, våra barn kunde*  
    the amount of education and knowledge our children can.PST  
    *bibringas*  
    impart.INF.PASS  
    ‘the amount of education and knowledge that could be imparted to our children’  
    (1886; spf)
- c. *Dessa orolige varelser som gifwits talande tungor*  
    these anxious creatures that give.SUP.PASS speaking tongues  
    ‘These anxious creatures that have been given speaking tongues’ (1900; spf)
- d. *Glad öfver det bifall som skänktes detta hennes försök*  
    delighted over the applause that give.PST.PASS this her try  
    ‘Delighted at the applause that was given to this try of hers ...’ (1840; spf)

A final criterion to identify passivized indirect objects is when it is left out in coordinations (see (13a)) or remains implicit in control infinitivals (as in (13b)):

- (13) a. *Hon var ganska lydig och snäll, men nekades just heller*  
           she be.PST quite obedient and kind, but deny.PST.PASS really neither  
           *ingenting* (1898; spf)  
           nothing  
           ‘She was quite obedient and kind, on the other hand, she was never denied anything’
- b. *jag [var] utsedd att på en gång beröfvas allt hvad för mit hjerta*  
    I [was] destined to at one time deprive.INF.PASS all what for my heart  
    *utgjort sällhet och fröjd*  
    constituted.SUP happiness and joy  
    ‘I was destined to be deprived at the same time of everything that had been happiness and joy for me’ (1840; spf)

In the following subsections, I will present data from Old Swedish (3.3), from the period 1526–1899 (3.4), and from the 19<sup>th</sup> century as represented in the spf-corpus (3.5), in addition to the recommendations in SAOL (3.6). Section 3.7 discusses the first occurrences of a passivized indirect object, and section 3.8 contains comparisons between the data from the spf-corpus and the earlier periods.

### 3.3. Old Swedish

In Old Swedish, the most common case pattern with ditransitive verbs was: indirect object in the dative; direct object in the accusative. In the passive voice, the dative was preserved, while the underlying direct object turned up in the nominative. The dative often preceded the nominative in the linear order. (14) shows this pattern in main clauses:<sup>11</sup>

- (14) a. *Mik laghdos tue andra costa*  
 me.DAT lay.PST.PL.PASS two other choice.PL.NOM  
 ‘Two different choices were proposed to me’ (Leg Bu 143)
- b. *Vitiz manni skoghæ brennæ*  
 accuse.PRS.SG.PASS man.DAT forest.PL.GEN fire.NOM  
 ‘Someone is accused of causing a forest fire’ (legal text, early 13th century; Holm 1952:200)

In (14a), the dative is topicalized. In (14b) both nominals are postverbal, with the dative preceding the nominative. However, the nominative could also be topicalized (see (15a)). It was also possible to have nominative + dative, but this was less common (cf. (15b)):

- (15) a. *Þiuf skal a þingi frændum byuþæs*  
 thief.NOM shall.PRS.SG at thing.DAT relative.PL.DAT offer.INF.PASS  
 ‘The thief shall be offered to the relatives at court (to free him by paying his fine)’  
 (legal text, early 14<sup>th</sup> century; Holm 1952:252)
- b. *Þa giwis gotz hans fore siäl hans, kirkium*  
 then give.PRS.SG.PASS property.NOM his for soul his church.PL.DAT  
*ok klostrum*  
 and monastery.PL.DAT  
 ‘Then his property is given to churches and monasteries for his soul’ (legal text, early 14<sup>th</sup> century; Holm 1952:249)

(16) shows the two possibilities in embedded clauses:

- (16) a. ... *at them skulle witas thiwffnadher*  
 that them.DAT shall.PST.SG accuse.INF.PASS theft.SG.NOM  
 ‘... in order to accuse them of the theft’ (Bible paraphrase, 1330’s;  
 Holm 1952:345)
- b. ... *för æn altara giordus sancto sebastiano*  
 before than altar.PL.NOM make.PST.PL.PASS saint.DAT Sebastian.DAT  
*j papia lombardie stadh*  
 in Pavia Lombardic town

<sup>11</sup> The data presented on Old Swedish do not depend on the status of the dative as an object or as an oblique subject. I use the neutral terms nominative and dative. I use the glosses NOM and DAT also when the case is not unambiguous morphologically, but shares a pattern with unambiguous cases.

‘... before altars were made in honour of Saint Sebastian in Pavia, a Lombardic town’ (Leg Bil 481)

Possibly, the relative weight of the two arguments was of importance; pronouns (often the dative) tended to precede nouns and full noun phrases (often nominative).

In the sample of 112 ditransitive *s*-passives in Old Swedish, the dative precedes the nominative in 65 clauses (58%).<sup>12</sup> Thus, we see a small preference for dative + nominative.

### 3.4. 1526–1799

In Early Modern Swedish, a preserved morphological dative is found only occasionally. Instead of talking about dative and nominative, I will therefore use the labels indirect and direct object, referring to the functions of the constituents in the active voice. In the data collected from the period 1526–1799, no clear preference is found: indirect objects precede the direct object in 82 of a total of 162 clauses in the *s*-passive (=51%).

Ten of the 162 clauses show passivized indirect objects (6%). Four of them are identified through word order, with the indirect object preceding the finite verb in an embedded clause (see (17a)), the others by other means: a personal pronoun (as in (17b)), a reflexive possessive pronoun *sin* in the direct object ((17c)) or deletion in coordination ((17d)):

- (17) a. ... *där Ryssen presenteras en sådan tractat ... Och där*  
           if Russian.DEF propose.PRS.PASS a such agreement and if  
           *Sverige anmodes en tractat ...*  
           Sweden propose.PRS.SG.PASS an agreement  
           ‘... if such an agreement is proposed to the Russians ... and if an agreement is  
           proposed to Sweden ...’ (1633; SAOB *anmoda*)
- b. *Jag ville icke nu resa samma [resa till Lappland] om jag*  
    I want.PST not now travel.INF same [trip to Lapponia] if I.SBJ  
    *bödes 1000 plåtar*  
    offer.PST.SBJV.PASS 1000 crowns  
    ‘I would not want to travel on the same trip, even if I were offered 1000 crowns.’  
    (1732; SAOB *bjuda*)
- c. *När et träd skall af-klädas sin bark ...*  
    when a tree shall.PRS off-dress.INF.PASS its.REFL bark ...  
    ‘When a tree shall be barked ...’ (1779; SAOB *afkläda*)

<sup>12</sup> A relativized object is counted as preceding the object in situ, including when it does not correspond to an overt nominal:

- (i) *Hin sum sakin gifs*  
     he that cause.NOM.DEF give.PRS.PASS  
     ‘The person who is prosecuted’ (legal text, 1280’s; Holm 1952:211)
- (ii) *all pön mall presti kunnu witas*  
     all the causes priest.DAT can.PRS.PL accuse.INF.PASS  
     ‘all the causes that a priest can be accused of’ (legal text, 1327; Holm 1952:241)

- d. *Hwadh orätt och swårigheeter som och omkostningar iag af denna*  
 what wrong and troubles as also costs I.SBJ by this  
*Människian lider och på-kastas.*  
 person.DEF suffer.PRS.SG and on-throw.PRS.PASS  
 ‘Such troubles as well as costs that I suffer and that are thrown on  
 me’ (1704; SAOB *påkasta*)

I have taken the word order in (17a) as an indication that the indirect object is passivized (cf. (12a–b) above). Certainly, in present-day Swedish this order indicates that the indirect object is passivized. It is less clear here, though. Compare the following contemporary example with a preverbal dative indirect object in a periphrastic passive:

- (18) *När människiom är något aff-stulit ....*  
 when human.beings.DAT be.PRS.SG something from-steal.PTCP  
 ‘When something is stolen from human beings ...’ (1629; SAOB, *avstjåla*)

A word order like that in (18) is probably a remnant of a more frequent pattern in Old Swedish, Stylistic Fronting, and the same could be the case in clauses like (17a).<sup>13</sup>

### 3.5. Passivized indirect objects 1800–1900

I have investigated passivized ditransitive verbs in 19<sup>th</sup> century texts, using the spf-corpus. I have divided the corpus into three parts, and investigated 30 ditransitive verbs in total,<sup>14</sup> all attested in the corpus in the *s*-passive (see Appendix 1). However, not all 30 verbs are attested in all three parts of the corpus, as shown in table 1:

Table 1 Size and attested ditransitive passive *s*-verbs in three parts of the spf-corpus

years	size, tokens	attested verbs
1800–1843	2 203 451	26
1860–1880	4 231 554	25
1898–1901	9 837 169	30

<sup>13</sup> Stylistic Fronting is a construction in which any type of constituent could occupy the position in front of the finite verb in embedded clauses without an overt subject. Stylistic Fronting also appears when a subject/nominative (indefinite) is left in situ in the verb phrase, as is the case in (17a), (18). See Falk 1993:326 for statistics on the diachronic development.

<sup>14</sup> A productive way to form ditransitive verbs was compounding with a prepositional prefix. I have chosen six different prepositional affixes and counted them as only one verb each; see Appendix 1 for chosen verbs.

As is evident, the corpus includes considerably more texts from later periods, which makes direct comparisons difficult: an unusual construction type like a passivized ditransitive verb is more likely to turn up in a larger corpus. With this in mind, a tendency of growing possibilities to passivize the indirect object can still be detected.

I used two different means to measure the change. First, I counted all instances of passivized indirect objects per million words; second, I counted how many of the attested verbs have a passivized indirect object.

Table 2 Passivized io/million words and number of verbs with passivized io

years	total pass. io	pass. io / million words	verb with pass.io/ attested passive verbs	
1800–1843	13	5.9	7/26	c. 1 of 4
1860–1880	20	4.7	12/25	c. 5 of 10
1898–1901	69	7.0	19/30	c. 6 of 10

pass. io = passivized indirect object

The number of verbs that occur with a passivized indirect object grows over time. However, the number of passivized indirect objects per million words is lower in the mid-period, probably because the corpus is too small to reveal the full picture. It is clear, though, that a more general possibility to passivize the indirect object is found towards the end of the century.

### 3.6. *Passivized indirect objects and normative grammar*

The use of passivized indirect objects may have been influenced by statements or recommendations from normative grammarians. In the first edition of the influential *Riktig svenska* ('Proper/Appropriate Swedish'), Wellander (1939) advises against passivized indirect objects. However, he recognizes that it sometimes could be a flexible ("smidig") construction, for instance in coordinations (1939:291; cf example (13a) above). In the 4<sup>th</sup> and last edition, he accepts the construction: "Den ökade friheten i konstruktionen gör otvivelaktigt språket smidigare, lätthanterligare" ('Without doubt, the greater freedom in the construction makes the language more flexible, easier to handle'; 1973:148–149).

At the same time, recommendations like this show that a certain amount of variation is found in language use; otherwise a recommendation would not be necessary. And already in the first

edition, Wellander gives more than three pages of examples with passivized indirect objects with a variety of different verbs (1939:297–301).

The recommendations provided in SAOL are also illustrative. In the first edition (1874), passivized indirect objects are sometimes called incorrect (“*origtigt*”, “*orätt*”, “*felaktigt*”). This judgement is given in connection to 13 of our 30 investigated verbs (see Appendix 1).<sup>15</sup> Statements of this kind show that passivized direct objects were found at this time – no statements on “incorrectness” are necessary for non-existing alternatives. “Incorrect” was replaced with a recommendation to passivize the direct object rather than (“*hellre än*”) the indirect object in SAOL 7 (1900). In still later editions, *även* ‘also’ indicates the passivized indirect object as a marked alternative. The two alternatives are not given as equals for *tilldela* ‘award’, indicated by *eller* ‘or’, until SAOL 11 (1986); for *erbjuda* ‘offer’, no comments on choice of subject are given in SAOL 11.<sup>16</sup>

The resistance from normative grammarians may have influenced the use of passivized indirect objects in the written language. However, the situation in the written language shows that passivized indirect objects were not completely avoided: of the 12 verbs for which SAOL 1 (1874) judged passivized indirect object as “incorrect”, seven are attested in the spf-corpus with a passivized indirect object. As for the five verbs not attested, the judgements in SAOL reveal that they were used to some extent, even though not found in the spf-corpus.

In the spoken language, passive ditransitive verbs have probably always been quite uncommon. Whether they belong only to the written language or not, language users today have intuitions about them (cf. the investigation in Haddican & Holmberg in section 2.1 above). It is simply impossible to detect the intuitions of earlier generations – we are left with the fact that a more general possibility of passivizing indirect objects can be detected to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, possibly the later part.

### ***3.7. The first instances of passivized indirect objects***

In this section, the focus is on the first instances of a passivized indirect object with the individual verbs. The question is whether the verb types that are attested early with a passivized indirect object can tell us something about the change. To complete the picture of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, I have used SAOB to search for older examples than those found in the spf-corpus. I

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<sup>15</sup> I find it less likely that the editors accepted passivized indirect objects for all of the other 17 verbs, as e.g. *gifva* ‘give’, *skänka* ‘give’, but perhaps they fully accepted it with the verb *beröva* ‘deprive of’.

<sup>16</sup> A complete investigation on comments on use in the editions of SAOL remains to be done. *Tilldela* (with the two alternatives given as equally possible) and *erbjuda* (without comment) from SAOL 11 are presumably representative.

have also used a corpus of Swedish novels written 1830–1942 (*Äldre svenska romaner*),<sup>17</sup> but without finding any relevant examples (i.e. older examples of passivized indirect objects).

It is possible to distinguish different groups of verbs based on formal properties. As was shown in section 2.1, native speaker intuitions about passivized ditransitive verbs reveal that the formal properties of the verb are relevant in present-day Swedish: verbs with a PP as an alternative to the indirect object are less acceptable in the passive voice (e.g. Anward 1989); monomorphemic verbs are also less acceptable than bimorphemic verbs in the passive voice (Holmberg & Platzack 1995, Haddican & Holmberg 2018).

A division can also be made based on semantic properties. We can distinguish between ditransitive verbs denoting some kind of transfer **to** or transfer **from** the referent denoted by the indirect object (‘to’-verbs, as e.g. *giva* ‘give’, and ‘from’-verbs, as e.g. *beröva* ‘deprive of’).<sup>18</sup> As a third type, I distinguish a **hindered to**-transfer (‘hindered to’-verbs, as e.g. *bespara* ‘spare’; Valdeson, in prep.). ‘To’-verbs are the typical class of ditransitive verbs, while the two others are less typical, with only a few members in present-day Swedish.<sup>19</sup>

The first instances of passivized indirect objects are given in Appendix 2, together with the source and an analysis of formal and semantic properties. Four verbs are not at all attested with a passivized indirect object in the investigated material (*förlåta* ‘forgive’, *förmena* ‘deny’, *servera* ‘serve with’, *visa* ‘show’). Complementary searches in *Äldre svenska romaner* yielded no examples, while novel corpora from the 20<sup>th</sup> century show that it is indeed possible to passivize the indirect object (at least later on).<sup>20</sup>

Looking first at the semantics, only a few of the investigated verbs, four in total, are ‘from’-verbs, denoting that something is taken from somebody (or something). Five verbs denote hindered transfer, i.e. the subject referent hinders a transfer to somebody. The rest are ‘to’-verbs, i.e. denoting a successful or offered transfer to somebody.

Three of the four ‘from’-verbs are attested with a passivized indirect object already in 1850 or before, including three different *av*-verbs (‘off’) that are found before 1800. But also ‘to’-verbs are found among the early examples, showing that typical ditransitive semantics was compatible with a passivized indirect object early on. See examples (12a) and (13b) above.

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<sup>17</sup> *Äldre svenska romaner* is available at <https://spraakbanken.gu.se/korp/>. The corpus is smaller than the spf-corpus (4.2 million words vs. 16.3 million words) and provides hardly any examples of passivized indirect objects.

<sup>18</sup> “Transfer” should be understood in a wide sense: transfer of a gift, an offer, an experience, a right, etc. Cf. Teleman et al. 1999/3:315–318, Valdeson (in prep) for a more fine-grained semantic analysis.

<sup>19</sup> All verbs investigated by Haddican & Holmberg are *to*-verbs. – Teleman et al. (1999) exemplifies *from*-verbs and hindered *to*-verbs together (“berövas eller förvägras” ‘be deprived of’, ‘be refused’; Teleman et al. 1999/3:316).

<sup>20</sup> *Bonniersromaner I*, novels edited at the publishing house Bonniers 1977–1978, available at <https://spraakbanken.gu.se/korp/>

Only one of the semantically atypical verbs of ‘hindered to’-transfer, *bespara* ‘spare’, is represented among the earliest examples:

- (19) *Lycklig därför den ... som besparades den svåra kampen* (1840; spf)  
 happy therefore any that spare.PST.PASS the difficult struggle.DEF  
 ‘Therefore, anyone who was spared the difficult struggle ought to be happy’

As for the formal properties of the verbs in question, six verbs represent the word formation pattern with a prepositional prefix. Of the rest, 13 are bimorphemic with another kind of prefix and 11 are monomorphemic. Of the six verb types formed by a prefixed preposition, three are attested early with a passivized indirect object, two of them (*av*- ‘off’ and *på*- ‘on’) even before 1800. Both mono- and bimorphemic verbs have early examples of passivized indirect objects. It can be noted, though, that almost all of the verbs for which SAOL 1 (1874) explicitly rejects passivized indirect objects are bimorphemic; the notion “first attested 1874” is somewhat misleading here, since these remarks in SAOL reflect an earlier use.

To sum up, my material on first occurrences does not show any clear patterns so far. I will return to the different verb types in section 4 below.

### 3.8. Choice of subject and argument order before and after 1800

We have seen that object symmetry, in the sense that both objects may passivize, became a possibility during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, passivized direct objects were more common than passivized indirect objects in the investigated period. In this section, I present data on the choice of subject, before and after 1800.

Table 3 shows the tokens of passivized ditransitive verbs for each period in the spf-corpus:

Table 3 Tokens of ditransitive passive verbs in the spf-corpus

years	pass. io	pass. do	amb.	Σ	% pass io	% pass do	% amb.
1800–1843	13	82	9	104	13%	79%	9%
1860–1880	20	129	6	155	13%	83%	4%
1899–1901	69	239	13	321	21%	74%	4%
Σ	102	450	28	580	18%	78%	5%

The table shows a growing tendency to choose the indirect object as the subject towards the end of the century, but the passivized direct object is still the preferred alternative in the youngest



period. Statistical data of the individual verbs are given in Appendix 3 (but not divided into different periods since the numbers are low). With two verbs, passivized indirect objects are preferred over passivized direct objects, *beröva* ‘deprive of’ and *bibringa* ‘impart to’, but the latter is not very common. Even or close to even preferences are found with the less common verbs *anförtro* ‘entrust to’, *lova* ‘promise’, *unna* ‘grant’, and compound verbs with *å-* ‘on-’. However, with the majority of verbs, passivized direct objects are clearly preferred.

The figures in table 3 differ sharply from the situation in present-day Swedish, where we find a clear preference for passivized indirect objects (cf. section 2.1). For this reason, it is of interest to investigate word-order patterns in clauses with passivized direct objects during the 19<sup>th</sup> century further. I will return to present-day Swedish in section 5.3 below. Here, I will focus on the development from Old Swedish to the end of the 19th century.

Recall that the dative tended to precede the nominative in Old Swedish (section 3.3), while no clear preferences were found in 1526–1799 (section 3.4). The choice of subject as given in table 3 does not fully correspond to the linear order of the arguments, though, as will be discussed further below. To get a full compatibility between the different stages of Swedish, I have analyzed data from the spf-corpus according to the same principles as in earlier stages, that is, considering the ordering of the arguments. In table 4 the arguments are labelled according to their syntactic function in the active voice, that is as indirect object (io) and direct object (do). To give a more detailed picture, I have subdivided the periods further. Old Swedish is divided into three groups, two covering Early Old Swedish (EOS), the provincial laws representing the most archaic language, and one covering Late Old Swedish (LOS). Turning to Early and Late Modern Swedish, the period 1526–1799 is divided into two, with 1526–1699 grouped together, since this is the period during which Swedish lost lexical case and non-referential subjects were introduced (Falk 1993).

Table 4 Argument order 1225–1901, *s*-passives

	<b>io + do</b>	<b>do + io</b>	<b>Σ</b>	<b>% io + do</b>
Provincial laws	18	7	25	72%
Other EOS sources	27	16	43	63%
LOS	20	24	44	45%
1526–1699	45	40	85	53%
1700–1799	37	40	77	48%
1800–1844	39	65	104	38%
1860–1880	36	119	155	23%

As seen in table 4, a decrease in the order *io + do* is found already in Old Swedish, although the absolute figures are small. In Late Old Swedish this ordering is actually less common than during the periods 1526–1799. For some reason, topicalized direct objects are more common during this period than in any other of the investigated periods, giving the low percentage for the order *io + do*. The percentage for *io + do* drops further during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to increase again towards the end of the century; this increase is an effect of the more common pattern to passivize the indirect object, often leading to the order *io + do*.

The decreasing preference for *io + do* is not an effect of the form of the indirect object. Over time, pronominal indirect objects become more common, from about one-third in the laws, via about half in other Old Swedish, to about two-thirds during 1526–1799. In the oldest *spf*-sample, pronominal indirect objects are somewhat less common (c. 60%), while the rest of the century shows a high proportion (c. 75%). Thus, despite the pronominal form, indirect objects show an increasing tendency to occur after direct objects.

The decreasing preference for *io + do* could, on the other hand, be an effect of the clause type, for which two factors are of relevance: how common a certain clause type is, and what the preference is in the different clause types.<sup>21</sup> A full account of these two factors would lead us too far, but I will point out some general tendencies.

Clauses with **topicalized or relativized direct objects** will always have the order *do + io*. See examples (15a) and footnote 12 above. As already mentioned, Late Old Swedish has a comparatively high proportion of topicalized direct objects (12 of 44 clauses). Setting Late Old Swedish aside, topicalized direct objects are quite rare up until 1699 (6–7%, *N* = 153), after that somewhat more common (13–15%, *N* = 657), leading to a decrease for the order *io + do*. As for clauses with relativized direct objects, they tend generally to become more common over time, from c. 11% in Old Swedish (*N* = 112) to 33% on average during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (*N* = 580). This leads to a further decrease for *io + do*.

Clauses with **topicalized or relativized indirect objects** will naturally count as cases of *io + do* order. See examples (14a) and footnote 12 above. Topicalized indirect objects are not found in the medieval laws, probably because fronted objects are generally rare. In the rest of the Old Swedish sample, topicalized indirect objects constitute approx. 18% (*N* = 87), with no big difference between Early and Late Old Swedish. In later periods, the percentage drops to

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<sup>21</sup> As to clause types, it remains to be investigated if the tendencies found in my sample of ditransitive passive verbs are generally true, e.g. if relative clauses generally became more common over time.

5–10% (N = 742) with some variation, but without any clear trends between 1526 and 1901. Clauses with relativized indirect objects are generally very rare, and do not have any great impact on the general picture.

In clause types, in which neither of the objects is topicalized or relativized, the ordering is “free”, in the sense that both orders are possible. In main clauses, **both arguments follow the finite verb**. Here, the order io + do is strongly preferred. See examples (14b, 15b) above. Such examples are very common in the laws (14 of 25), leading to a high overall proportion of io + do. Over time, the preferences remain the same, but the type becomes less common, down to 13% at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (N = 321). To some extent then, the order io + do became less common as a consequence of clauses with no topicalization of objects, in which the io + do order was preferred, became less common.

In **embedded clauses without a relativized object** either object may occur preverbally. See examples (16) above. The proportion of the clause type varies over time without any clear tendency, but we find changes in the argument order. Up until 1699, io + do dominates (63%, N = 57). After that, we find variation, but generally with a preference for do + io (c. 20–40%; N = 161).

To summarize, the decreased percentage of io + do is partly an effect of changes in the relative frequency of different clause types: clauses with a relativized direct object (always do + io) become more common, while clauses with a topicalized indirect object (always io + do) and clauses in which both arguments follow the finite verb (strongly preferring io + do) become less common. However, there is also a growing preference for do + io in other types of embedded clauses and in object initial main clauses.

Recall that the argument orders shown in table 4 do not correspond to the syntactic function (passivized io or do), only to their underlying status as indirect or direct object. Comparing with table 3 above, we see that passivized indirect objects during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (18%) are less common than the order io + do (29%). This is due to the argument order io + do sometimes occurring in clauses with passivized direct objects. This is the case in clauses in which both arguments follow the finite verb and in clauses with topicalized indirect objects. In what follows the choice of subject in the spf-corpus in these two clause types will be presented further.

The patterns found when **both arguments follow the finite verb** are illustrated in (20):

- (20) a. *I en not tilldelas der Sara Widebeck en örfil*  
           in a note to.share.PRS.PASS there Sara Widebeck a box.on.the.ear  
           ‘In a note, Sara Widebeck is given a box on the ear’ (1840; spf)

- b. *Efter danske konungen Kristian IV:s nederlag frändömdes*  
 after Danish king.DEF Kristian IV.POSS defeat from-sentence.PST.PASS  
*hans son Fredrik biskopsdömet i Halberstadt*  
 his son Fredrik bishopric.DEF in Halberstadt  
 ‘After the Danish king Kristian IV’s defeat, his son Fredrik was sentenced to forfeit the bishopric in Halberstadt’ (1900; spf)
- c. *Det erböds dem mat ur kungliga köket*  
 it offer.PST.SG.PASS them.OBJ food from royal kitchen.DEF  
 ‘They were offered food from the royal kitchen’ (1841; spf)
- d. *snart räcktes honom wärdens hand till ett redligt handslag*  
 soon hand.PST.PASS him.OBJ host.DEF.POSS hand to an honest handshake  
 ‘Soon the host’s hand was held out to him for an honest handshake’ (1816; spf)
- e. *Skulle der borta någon förmånlig anställning erbjudas dig*  
 shall.PST there over some advantageous position offer.INF.PASS you.OBJ,  
*så är du naturligtvis fri*  
 so be.PRS you of.course free  
 ‘If you should be offered some advantageous position over there, you are of course free’ (1900; spf)
- f. *Först bjuds vi i prästgår’n kaffe och dopp*  
 first offer.PRS.SG.PASS we.SBJ in parsonage.DEF coffee and buns  
 ‘First, we are offered coffee and buns in the parsonage.’ (1900; spf)<sup>22</sup>

(20a) and (20b) differ minimally in the definiteness of the direct object. An indefinite direct object could be construed as an associate subject, a possible analysis of (20a) (cf. the discussion around (11b) above). In (20b), on the other hand, the definite direct object points out the indirect object as the promoted subject. (20c) shows the direct object construed as an associate subject in situ. (20d) shows a pronominal indirect object in front of a passivized direct object, that is, an instance of so-called Long Object Shift. This shift is possible only in clauses with a finite main verb; a passivized direct object in clauses with an infinite main verb will involve unambiguous post-verbal indirect object, as exemplified in (20e).<sup>23</sup> The patterns in (20c–d) reflect a discrepancy between argument order (io + do) and subject choice (direct object). In the latest period, though, another pattern is also found, in which the subject form of the pronoun reveals that the indirect object is passivized ((20f)). In summary, the preferred order remains the same, but in the youngest period investigated, 1898–1901, the preferred order will give passivized indirect objects to a certain extent.

<sup>22</sup> The singular form of the verb to a plural subject, as well as the form *går’n* (cf. standard written *gården*) – perhaps also the passivized indirect object – indicate vernacular language.

<sup>23</sup> Io + do seems to be almost obligatory when possible, i.e. after a finite main verb. Only one example shows do + io after a finite main verb:

(i) *Då han sedan blef frisk och begärde äfven den tredje dagen vägrades*  
 when he then get.PST well and demand.PST also the third day.DEF refuse.PST.PASS  
*detta honom*  
 this him.OBJ  
 ‘When he later on got well and asked for the third day also, he was refused this.’ (1900; spf)

In clauses with a **topicalized indirect object**, it is often impossible to tell which object is passivized (cf. (8b) above). In (21a), the case of the indirect object reveals that the direct object is passivized. Again, we find a discrepancy between linear order (io + do) and choice of subject. However, this pattern is not very common, there are 11 examples in total. Somewhat more common is the alternative in (21b), with a passivized indirect object (19 examples).

- (21) a. *Broder, dig gifves bilderna som en hälsning* (spf; 1900)  
 brother, you.OBJ give.SG.PRS.PASS pictures.DEF as a greeting  
 ‘Brother, you are given the pictures as a greeting’  
 b. *jag ålägges böter för underlåten bevakning* (spf; 1880)  
 I.NOM on-lay.SG.PRS.PASS penalty for withheld guard  
 ‘Penalty is laid upon me because of withheld guard’

A final clause type to discuss is clauses with a **relativized underlying direct object**. There is a strong tendency that the direct object is also promoted to subject – thus, the underlying order do + io will correspond to a passivized direct object. As opposed to clauses in which both arguments follow the finite verb, passivized indirect objects did not become more common in this clause type, but remained very low even in the youngest part of the spf-corpus. In one respect there is difference, though: whereas (pronominal) indirect objects tended to precede the finite verb in earlier periods (as in (22a–b) below), such an order is more or less obsolete in the spf-corpus, even though some examples can be found (9 of 190), cf. (21c–d).

- (22) a. *altthz ... som hanum giordhis for gudz sculd*  
 all that ... that him.DAT do.PST.SG.PASS for God.GEN sake  
 ‘everything ... that was done to him in the name of God’ (Leg Bil 119)  
 b. *rettferdighet ... hwilken mig skenkes*  
 justice ... which me.OBJ give.PRS.SG.PASS  
 ‘justice that I am given’ (1709; SAOB *skänka*)  
 c. *... den arm, som erbjudes er*  
 the arm that offer.PRS.SG.PASS you.OBJ  
 ‘... the arm that you are offered’ (1849; spf)  
 d. *... att ersätta den fattige bonden all den skada honom*  
 to compensate.INF the poor peasant all the damage him.OBJ  
*till-fogats*  
 to-add.SUP.PASS  
 ‘... to compensate the poor peasant for all the damage that had been inflicted upon him’ (1880; spf)

In the Old Swedish example in (22a), the preposed dative is most likely an example of Stylistic Fronting, or alternatively it is an oblique subject. Stylistic Fronting became very unusual during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (see statistics in Falk 1993:326). Therefore, word orders like

(22b) more probably involve a verb final embedded clause, which was quite a common word order during the 17<sup>th</sup> century for some authors, and occurring now and then with authors born after 1700 (Platzack 1983); this word order is not unusual among the relative clauses in 1526–1799. In present-day Swedish, word orders like (22d) are no longer possible, whereas a postverbal indirect object as in (22c) is a grammatical alternative to a preverbal passivized indirect object (see (24) below).<sup>24</sup>

The changes presented in this section will be discussed further in section 4 below. First, I will present my analysis of the difference between the asymmetry in older stages in Swedish and the symmetry that emerged during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 4. Analysis

In the analysis that follows, the core idea is that the middle argument position is an inherent case position, both in an asymmetrical object language like Old Swedish and in a symmetrical object language like present-day Swedish. What has changed is the case-assigning properties of ditransitive verbs. Before this analysis is presented, I will go through some basic assumptions (section 4.1).

### 4.1. Basic assumptions

In a ditransitive verb phrase, three argument positions are found, positions for a (verb phrase internal) subject, an indirect object, and a direct object. I will take the structure to be a projection of the verb, creating a complement position of V (direct object), a SpecVP position (indirect object) and a SpecvP position (subject).<sup>25</sup> Following standard assumptions, I assume that the external argument is suppressed in the passive voice.

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<sup>24</sup> An anonymous reviewer gives an example from 1920, probably collected from *Äldre svenska romaner*. One other example is found in *Äldre svenska romaner*, from the same novel (Bergman, *Herr von Hancken*):

- (i) *det lilla, som honom anförtrotts ...*  
the small.DEF that him.OBJ entrust.to.SUP.PASS  
'the small things that had been entrusted to him'
- (ii) ... *alla devärdigheter som mig rätteligen tillkommer men som mig förmenats*  
all the honours that me.OBJ rightly belong.to.PRS but that me.OBJ deny.SUP.PASS  
'... all the honours that belong to me by right but I have been denied'

The construction is obviously used for stylistic reasons. Both the storyteller (1 p) and Herr von Hancken are quite precious and ridiculous people.

<sup>25</sup> Alternative analyses of ditransitive constructions are that *v* governs a small clause of some kind, projected by an abstract head. Different approaches take this abstract head to be PHAVE, giving a reading 'cause somebody to have something' (e.g. Harley & Jung 2015) or an applicative head Appl (e.g. Pytkänen 2008).

Furthermore, I will assume that “structural case” is a licensing structural relation between a head probing the closest available DP with matching features in its c-command domain. Mono-transitive verbs probe a DP in its complement position, and T probes the closest DP. I will take the relevant features to be  $\phi$ -features and case features. The head probes a DP with  $\phi$ -features and the unspecified case feature of the DP gets a value (subject or object case) from the head.<sup>26</sup> I will further assume that EPP-features require that the licensing relation is established in an overt spec-head configuration. The  $\phi$ -features of T have an EPP-feature in present-day Swedish, thus triggering movement of an DP to SpecTP. Alternatively, an inserted expletive subject may satisfy the EPP-feature, if entering an agreement relation with a DP in situ (the “associate subject”).<sup>27</sup>

Lexical case, as found in Old Swedish, is a verb-idiosyncratic property.<sup>28</sup>

The core idea in the analysis to follow is that a DP in SpecVP does not depend on a case-licensing head. Instead, I will develop the idea that SpecVP is a position with inherent case. Being a VP-internal case, it is compatible with the case feature of V (an object case), rather than the case features of T (subject/nominative case). The exact nature of this inherent case will be explored further below. I will argue that this property of SpecVP has not changed in the history of Swedish. What did change, however, was the feature setup of a ditransitive verb: before the change, ditransitive verbs had one set of unspecified  $\phi$ -features; after the change, they had two sets of unspecified  $\phi$ -features. Passive verbs have one set of unspecified  $\phi$ -features less, both before and after the change.<sup>29</sup>

## 4.2. *The case of indirect objects before the change: analysis*

Recall that, after the loss of morphological case, the indirect object had some properties that are atypical for an argument with lexical case: it had no distinctive morphological form and was a verb-**type** case rather than a case of individual verbs (cf. the dative in examples (3) and (5)

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<sup>26</sup> The label of the features is of minor importance in this connection. Rather, the mutual dependency between the relevant head (T or V) and the DP is important: T/V “needs” something from a DP, formalized as unspecified  $\phi$ -features in T/V probing for specified  $\phi$ -features in DP, and the DP “needs” something from T/V, formalized as an unspecified case feature getting a specified value from T/V once the agreement relation of  $\phi$ -features is established. I assume that the  $\phi$ -features and the case features always occur in combination.

<sup>27</sup> I have no account of the definiteness effect, but take it as an indication of the status as associate subject. Compare (7) above.

<sup>28</sup> Different labels and characterizations of non-structural case have been proposed, see e.g. Thráinsson 2001:181–182. “Lexical case” should be understood here as a verb idiosyncratic case. It could probably be realised both in a Spec-head and Head-sister configuration, but I make no more specific assumptions here about lexical case. “Inherent case” is used here only as the specific property of an object case in SpecVP, see further below.

<sup>29</sup> This corresponds to the idea that passive morphology “absorbs” structural case.

above). These properties follow straightforwardly if SpecVP is a position with an inherent object case, as follows.

Before the change, the only option was that the direct object passivized, in the sense of changing case from accusative to nominative. In this section, I will show that this fact follows from an analysis in which SpecVP was a position with inherent case, and a ditransitive verb had one set of unspecified  $\phi$ -features, probing a DP with  $\phi$ -features. An active verb probes the direct object, and the indirect object is licensed by virtue of the inherent case property of SpecVP.

A passive ditransitive verb had no unspecified  $\phi$ -features before the change. The only unspecified  $\phi$ -features in such a structure is found in T. When T probes a DP in its c-commanding domain for  $\phi$ -features, the closest DP is in SpecVP. This DP is case-licensed but, crucially, by virtue of its position. As will be outlined in more detail below, it would in principle be possible to escape this position if the indirect object DP is probed by an EPP-feature. However, such a structure is ruled out, since the direct object is not case-licensed. The effect will be that the indirect object is trapped, so to speak, in SpecVP.

Its status as a position with an inherent case will make SpecVP invisible when T probes in its c-command domain. Thus, T may probe the direct object further down. An EPP-feature in T will trigger movement of the direct object to Spec TP, the subject position.

The proposal accounts for the properties of the indirect object before the change, as presented in section 2.2 above, properties that are not normally found with lexical case. The “lexical” property of the indirect object is not its morphological case (dative or genitive), but instead the argument structure of the verb, i.e. the very property of being a ditransitive verb, which is a verb-type property rather than a verb-idiosyncratic property. The verb type will project a SpecVP position, by assumption a position with an inherent object case. With respect to minimality conditions on forming a relation between T and a DP further down, the inherent case will have the same effect as a lexical case: it does not block such a relation.

#### ***4.3. The case of indirect objects after the change: analysis***

Recall that the case of the indirect object in an object-symmetrical language like present-day Swedish also has some atypical properties: the indirect object may passivize, showing that it does not have a lexical case. However, at the same time, it may not be construed as an associate subject in situ in the verb phrase, and it does not block the direct object from moving to the



subject position, nor from being construed as an associate subject in situ. In these respects, its case resembles a lexical case. These facts will be accounted for as follows.

I propose that ditransitive verbs in present-day Swedish have two sets of unspecified  $\phi$ -features in the active voice, and one in the passive voice. I also further explore the properties of SpecVP, showing that the facts will follow if SpecVP is still an inherent case position. Thus, the DP generated in this position will be case licensed by its position rather than through agreement with a case licensing head.

In the active voice, the verb in V probes the direct object in the complement position, and from v, it probes the indirect object in SpecVP. The verb finds matching  $\phi$ -features, and its case feature will be compatible with the inherent case of SpecVP, both being object cases.

From the proposed analysis, the two possibilities in the passive voice will follow. A passive ditransitive verb has one set of unspecified  $\phi$ -features. First, consider the possibility that the verb probes the closest DP downwards from its base position in V, i.e. the direct object. Both VP-internal objects are now case-licensed – the direct object by the relation to the verb in V, the indirect object by its position. But since both objects are case licensed, T will find no DP with matching features: the case feature of T carries subject case (nominative), whereas the inherent case of SpecVP is an object case. In other words, the indirect object cannot be construed as an associate subject, due to the feature mismatch. Instead, the indirect object may be attracted by the EPP-feature on the  $\phi$ -features of T. In other words, it may escape its case position, ending up as a passivized indirect object.

Next, consider the alternative in which the direct object is passivized. In this case, the verb probes the closest DP from v. As in the active voice, a relation can be established between the verb and the indirect object. Next, T probes a DP with matching features. Just as before the change, due to its inherent case property, SpecVP will not intervene, and T may establish the licensing relation with the direct object. The EPP-feature in T will trigger movement of the direct object to SpecTP, or the direct object may stay in situ as an associate subject.

As outlined above, the case of indirect objects in the passive voice has what at first glance seems to be a curious mix of structural and lexical case properties. It is “structural” in the sense that it can passivize, it is “lexical” in the sense that it does not block movement of the direct object. This mix follows from the proposal that SpecVP is an inherent case position.

#### 4.4. More on the notion of “inherent case position”

The proposed analysis relies on three crucial properties of SpecVP of ditransitive verbs: it has inherent case, a DP in this position may remain in SpecVP if probed by a head with compatible case features, and it can escape case if probed by an EPP-feature. Together, these properties will account for the passivization possibilities.

It is difficult to find any independent evidence for a notion like “inherent case position”. There is, however, a possible parallel: an inherent semantic role of SpecVP. As we have seen, the indirect object of a ditransitive verb can have different semantics. Many monotransitive verbs may be construed with an optional indirect object, and this optional object will always be interpreted as a (potential) receiver/beneficiary. This is well known with production verbs like *bygga* ‘build’, *baka* ‘bake’, etc., but an optional indirect object may also show up with verbs like *köpa* ‘buy’, *skaffa* ‘procure’. To the extent that we can add an indirect object to a verb like *stjåla* ‘steal’, it will be interpreted as the receiver: to *stjåla någon en cykel* ‘steal someone a bike’ means that the person **receives** a bike, not that the bike is stolen **from** the person.

Also crucial in the analysis is the assumption that the indirect object can escape SpecVP if attracted by an EPP-feature. Since case is associated with the position, not the DP, the DP is free to move. Its “lost” case will be compensated for in SpecTP by the case features of T. Again, a comparison with optional indirect objects is illustrative. In principle, such an optional indirect object could also move to SpecTP, triggered by the EPP-feature. But then it would lose its interpretation, and this could not be compensated for in SpecTP. Hence, optional indirect objects could not be passivized, cf:

- (23) a. *Pappa stickade/köpte/stal mig en tröja*  
Daddy knit.PST/buy.PST/steal.PST me.OBJ a sweater  
‘Daddy knitted/bought/stole a sweater for me.’  
b. \* *Jag stickades/köptes/stals en tröja*  
I.SUBJ knit.PST.PASS/ buy.PST.PASS/steal.PST.PASS a sweater

Thus, somewhat indirectly we find support for the idea that at least SpecVP could be connected with position-inherent properties.

#### 4.5. Accounting for object symmetry

In this section, I will compare the proposed analysis with other accounts of passive ditransitive verbs in present-day Swedish. The analyses differ in several respects, including basic assumptions about the structure of double object construction, as well as the mechanisms and

restrictions on licensing. A full account of these differences would lead too far afield – here, I will just point out some similarities and the main differences between the different accounts. The primary focus is on how the analyses account for the object symmetry in the passive voice, i.e. why both objects may passivize.

In the analysis by Haddican & Holmberg (2019), a double object construction includes a verb-governed phrase,  $PP_{HAVE}$ , with the indirect object as the specifier and the direct object as the complement. The point of departure for the analysis of present-day Swedish is the observation that bimorphemic ditransitive verbs passivize more easily than monomorphemic ditransitive verbs (cf. section 2.1 above). In the passive voice, the verb is not a case assigner – but the prefix of a bimorphemic verb is. The prefix may assign case to the closest DP, the indirect object. In this way, the indirect object is “deactivated” (in the terminology of Haddican & Holmberg), making the direct object accessible from T. A passivized direct object will follow. The prefix can also transmit its case-assigning capacity downwards to  $P_{HAVE}$ .  $P_{HAVE}$  will then case-license the direct object, and T will probe the indirect object, leading to a passivized indirect object.

In Norwegian, verb class is not significant, and Haddican & Holmberg (2019) propose another analysis to account for this. Since passive monomorphemic ditransitive verbs are not totally prohibited in Swedish, this alternative will be available (marginally) in Swedish as well. In this proposal, the relevant case-assigning head is not a verbal prefix, but instead the abstract head  $P_{HAVE}$ .  $P_{HAVE}$  can assign case either to its spec position, the indirect object, or to its complement position, the direct object. The object left without a case will be probed by T, i.e. turn up as the subject.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, in both structures, there is a vP-internal case assigner in the passive voice: either the prefix or the abstract head  $P_{HAVE}$ . Object symmetry is obtained through different possibilities for this case assigner.

In my proposal, different possibilities for the case assigner are also crucial: a case assigner (a head with unspecified  $\phi$ -features) can assign case (successfully probe a DP with matching features) from different positions. The verb can either probe the direct object in its base position, or the indirect object from the v-position. But there is an advantage that only one assignment mechanism is available: assignment (agreement) under c-command, without alternative case-assignment mechanisms. Furthermore, given that passivization of monomorphemic verbs like

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<sup>30</sup> In Holmberg et al (2018), the abstract head is labelled Appl. The options – case assignment to the specifier position or the complement position – are the same.

*giva* ‘give’ is marginally possible also in Swedish, it is not clear in Haddican & Holmberg’s analysis why optional passivized indirect objects as in (23b) are sharply ungrammatical.

Another advantage with my proposal concerns the definiteness effect: it follows from my analysis that the indirect object cannot be construed as an associate subject in situ, since there will be a case clash. As far as I can see, nothing prevents this in Haddican & Holmberg’s analysis: the prefix can transmit its case-assignment capacity to  $P_{HAVE}$ , and it would be possible for T to form a chain with either object as long as it adheres to the definiteness restriction.

Platzack (2005, 2006) proposes a different source for the object symmetry in the passive voice, namely the properties of the indirect object DP. In his analysis, DPs in the indirect object position can either have or lack  $\phi$ -features. In the former case, unspecified  $\phi$ -features of T get a value from the indirect object, which ends up as the subject. If the indirect object lacks  $\phi$ -features, T probes further down, finding the necessary  $\phi$ -features on the direct object instead, the result being a passivized direct object. Note that DPs can lack  $\phi$ -features in Platzack’s account only in the indirect object position. Similarities with my proposal are obvious – DPs in the indirect object position do not enter into a relation with T. But instead of locating relevant properties to the DP, I have located them to the position, the inherent case status of SpecVP. No optional features are needed, and licensing is throughout a mutual dependency relation between a head and a DP. Furthermore, as in the analysis of Haddican & Holmberg, I cannot see how indirect objects as associate subjects are ruled out.

## **5. The changes: discussion and residual questions**

The main focus for my investigation has been to trace the change in Swedish from an asymmetrical language, in which only direct objects could passivize, i.e. change case from object to subject case, to a symmetrical language, in which both objects can passivize. I have presented this as a change in the grammar in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: from a grammar in which passive ditransitive verbs did not have any unspecified  $\phi$ -features with accompanying case features, to a grammar in which passivized ditransitive verbs have one set of unspecified  $\phi$ -features, and therefore have the capacity to case-license an object. A first question to discuss is the impelling force behind this change.

My investigations of argument order in earlier stages of Swedish have shown developments prior to the grammatical change: over time the (underlying) indirect object more and more often

follows rather than precedes the (underlying) direct object. A second question is why the word order preference changed.

The preferred subject of passive ditransitives in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century is still the direct object. Therefore, a final question concerns the situation in present-day Swedish: why is the passivized indirect object the default choice today?

I discuss these questions in chronological order, starting with the second one.

### ***5.1. Changes before 1800***

Old Swedish showed a weak preference for indirect objects (io) to precede direct objects (do) in passive. To a certain extent, genre plays a role: in the medieval laws, clauses in which both arguments follow the finite verb were very common, and in this clause type the order io + do has always been preferred, perhaps reflecting the unmarked underlying order. It is less clear why topicalized direct objects are so common in my Late Old Swedish sample. It remains to be investigated if this is really the case more generally during this period, or if my collection of data is not fully representative; recall that examples were taken only from a dictionary, not directly from the historical sources. With this in mind, we still see a clear change of preferences over time (in table 4 above). As shown in section 3.8, this is partly due to the frequency of different clause types: clauses with a relativized direct object tend to become more common, resulting in do + io order, and clauses with both arguments following the finite verb tend to become less common. Clauses with topicalized indirect objects also tend to become less common. But we can also note that do + io became more common in other types of embedded clauses, and that topicalized direct objects became more common (ignoring the somewhat exceptional figures from Late Old Swedish). In both these cases there is a clear difference between the periods before and after 1700: the period 1526–1699 resembles Early Old Swedish, whereas the 18<sup>th</sup> century resembles the 19<sup>th</sup> century (section 3.8). This coincides with two other changes in Swedish: the loss of lexical case and the introduction of non-referential subjects. The loss of lexical case for verbs like *lika* ‘like’, *ångra* ‘regret’, meant that the object/dative case was replaced with subject/nominative case. The introduction of non-referential subjects was an effect of stricter conditions on licensing the subject position (Falk 1993). Both these changes are possibly part of the answer to why the order do + io gained ground; it would be odd if an infrequent construction like a ditransitive passive would change all by itself. Both the loss of lexical case and the introduction of non-referential subjects led to a requirement of a

nominative noun phrase outside the verb phrase. In clauses with passivized ditransitive verbs, this in turn led to a greater preference for *do* + *io*.

## 5.2. *Changes detected in the spf-corpus (1800–1901)*

The question of the introduction of object symmetry during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be divided into two: a ‘how’-question and a ‘why’-question.

The **how**-question concerns promoting factors behind the change. We can imagine that the reinterpretation was closer at hand for some verbs, and that these verbs paved the way for a general reinterpretation of the feature setup of ditransitive verbs. Obvious candidates for this “leading role” in the change are verbs with a prepositional prefix: prepositions select DPs – in the analysis assumed here, they have unspecified  $\phi$ -features together with a case feature. This feature setup could be reinterpreted also as a feature setup when the preposition is part of the verb. From here, a next step could be that other prefixes were also reinterpreted as probes with unspecified  $\phi$ -features. A more general possibility to passivize the indirect object would then come later. However, as was shown in section 3.7, this assumed pattern is only partly detectable in the collected number of first instances of each individual verb.

In a preliminary investigation of passivized indirect objects, Falk (1995, 1997) concluded that indirect objects with an atypical semantic role were attested earlier as subjects in the passive voice. However, just like with respect to the formal properties of the verb, the influence of semantic properties are only visible in the collected material to a minor extent (cf. section 3.7). It remains to be investigated whether a more fine-grained semantic analysis would reveal a clearer pattern; that would require a larger collection of data than the 30 investigated verbs in the spf-corpus.

Another factor of the how-question concerns clause type. As shown in section 3.8, clauses with a relativized underlying direct object shows a continued preference for also passivizing the direct object. In this clause type, passivized indirect objects occur comparatively late:

- (24) *Den plats, ni härmed erbjudes på vårt kontor ...*  
the employment you.SBJ hereby offer.PRS.SG.PASS at our office  
‘The employment at our office that you are offered hereby ...’ (1880; spf)

In clauses where both arguments follow the finite verb, the preference for the order *io* + *do* instead remained, in some cases leading to passivized indirect objects:

- (25) *Om fadren bevislingen vore rubbad till sina sinnen så*

if father.DEF obviously be.PST.SBJV deranged at his.REFL senses so  
*skulle folket sedermera lätt kunna bibringas farhågan, att*  
 would people.DEF later easily can.INF impart.INF.PASS fear.DEF that  
*galenskap blefve sonens arfvedel*  
 madness become.PST.SUBJV son.DEF.POSS heritage  
 ‘If it would be proved that the father was mentally deranged, fear that madness would  
 become the son’s heritage would possibly be imparted to the people’ (1844; spf)

Passivized direct objects still dominate in this clause type at the end of the century, but passivized indirect objects are more common than they are overall (1898–1901: 13 of 42 examples (almost one-third), compared to 21% (see table 3)).

Another clause type in which passivized indirect objects are more common than they are overall is clauses with topicalized indirect objects. Examples in the oldest subpart of the spf-corpus are rare (2 of 8 examples). In the subsequent periods, almost half of the topicalized indirect objects are passivized (17 of 36 examples).

This leads to the question of **why** the change took place. To a certain extent, clauses with topicalized indirect objects probably played a role: to construe the fronted object also as the subject is in line with the general pattern in Swedish, where subjects are often fronted. Thus, a topicalized indirect object may be seen not only as a favourable context for reinterpretation, but also a cause of the change.

Another part of the answer is probably to be found in the changed argument preferences we have observed during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Often, the growing number of topicalized direct objects and do + io in embedded clauses resulted in word orders that were not optimal for information structure, as in the following examples:

- (26) a. *Små pillor och bekymmer gifwas mig wäl*  
 small peddling.things and trouble give.PRS.PL.PASS me.OBJ certainly  
*ibland*  
 sometimes  
 ‘Certainly, I sometimes get troubles and small things to peddle at’ (1732, Dahlin)
- b. ... *tå then hedern igenom Felt-marskalken Gr. Dücher*  
 when this honour.DEF through field-marshal.DEF count Dücher  
*böds mig*  
 offer.PST.SG.PASS me.OBJ  
 ‘... when I was offered this mark of honour thanks to field marshal count Dücher’  
 (1730–40, Reuterholm)

To choose the indirect object as the subject instead will often give a more natural information structure.

Finally, even if coordination is quite uncommon in the collected material (with a total of 13 examples), they are still worth mentioning. Recall that a normative grammarian like Wellander found passivized indirect objects “smooth” in coordination (cf. example (17d) above).

### 5.3. *Changes after 1901*

In present-day Swedish the default is to passivize the indirect object, and bimorphemic verbs passivize more easily than monomorphemic ditransitive verbs (Holmberg & Platzack 1995, Lundquist 2004, Haddican & Holmberg 2018). As shown by Lundquist (2004), a direct object is passivized if it is relativized or questioned, or if it is highly topical and the indirect object supplies new information (i.e. is rhematic).<sup>31</sup> In addition, a passivized direct object is grammatical when both arguments follow a finite main verb in contexts like (20c–d) above.

Lundquist has also argued that it is impossible to topicalize or relativize an indirect object across a passivized direct object (judgements from Lundquist 2004):

- (27) a.\*? *Den mannen har jobbet erbjudits*  
           that man.DEF have.PRS job.DEF offer.SUP.PASS  
       b.\*? *Mannen som jobbet har erbjudits*  
           man.DEF that job.DEF have.PRS offer.SUP.PASS

Holmberg et al. (2018) and Platzack (2006) give formal/structural explanations of this restriction. Compare also Lundqvist (2015).

In other words: the language has changed since 1901, when the default was passivized direct objects, and indirect objects could be topicalized across a passivized direct object, and monomorphemic passive verbs were found alongside bimorphemic ones.

I have not investigated how common the corresponding active ditransitive verbs are in the spf-corpus, and can say nothing about different passivization possibilities (cf Haddican & Holmberg 2018). But already in the spf-corpus, the usage patterns of present-day Swedish are actually detectable. Firstly, if we look at the choice of subject in individual tokens of the investigated verbs (cf. Appendix 3), we see that monomorphemic verbs are about as common as bimorphemic verbs (283 vs. 297), but also that indirect objects passivize more easily with bimorphemic verbs (23%) than with monomorphemic verbs (12%). At least the latter fact points out the direction of the development. Secondly, as already noticed, the indirect object is hardly

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<sup>31</sup> This generalization is built on 40 clauses with passivized indirect objects and 40 clauses with passivized direct objects in newspapers from 1965–1998. Four verbs, *erbjuda* ‘offer’, *tilldela* ‘award’, *frånta* ‘deprive of’ and *tillägna* ‘dedicate to’ were investigated.



ever passivized in clauses with relativized direct objects in the spf-corpus. This corresponds to one of the conditions for passivizing the direct object in Lundquist's investigation (2004). As for the other condition, a highly topical direct object in combination with a rhematic indirect object, we can take this to be a further development of what I have seen as one of the reasons for the change of grammar in the first place: the preference for topical elements to precede new information. Possibly, this is also the reason why clauses like (27) are highly marked or even ungrammatical: elements are placed in the first position of the clause, either because they are topical or because they have contrastive focus. Since direct objects are passivized if the indirect object provides new information, it makes sense that indirect objects are not topicalized across the subject. This would make the restriction pragmatic rather than grammatical. What then about a fronted indirect object with contrastive focus? Fronting is hardly better in a context like the following:

- (28) *Vad hände egentligen med jobbet du sökte?*  
 what happened actually to job.DEF you.SG sought  
 ?? *Äsch, den där slöföcken PELLE kommer det erbjudas*  
 ugh, the that dullard.DEF Pelle will it offer.INF-PASS  
 'What about the job you applied for?  
 Ugh, it was offered to that dullard Pelle'

I conclude that the changes from around 1900 and up until today still awaits a full account.<sup>32</sup>

## 6. Summary

The main results from this investigation are that a major grammatical change took place in the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: it became possible to passivize indirect objects. I have proposed an analysis of the grammar before and after this change, based on new case-licensing possibilities of the verb in combination with a preserved property of SpecVP as a position with inherent object case. I have also argued that this change is at least partly due to a previous change in the preferred argument order, a change which in turn is caused by the introduction of an overtly realized nominative in the subject position. Moreover, I have suggested that further

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<sup>32</sup> Possibly, the restriction on fronting the indirect object across a passivized direct object follows from a general "immobility effect" – the indirect object must not leave SpecVP, unless attracted from SpecTP. However, recall that topicalized indirect objects were possible during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (cf. 22a above), and in the active voice an indirect object may still be fronted in present-day Swedish. Maybe an answer is to be found in different chain-formation possibilities in the active and passive voices, but I will not pursue this question here.

developments after 1900 are caused primarily by pragmatic factors, but this requires further investigation.

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## Appendix 1

### *Investigated ditransitive s-verbs in the spf-corpus*

\* = not attested with passivized indirect object in the spf-corpus

”SAOL” = passivized indirect object judged as incorrect in SAOL 1 (1874)

<i>anförtro</i> ‘entrust to’	SAOL
<i>av-</i> ‘off-’:	SAOL ( <i>avfordra</i> )
	<i>avfordra</i> ‘off-demand; demand from’
	* <i>avkräva</i> ‘off-demand; demand from’
	* <i>avtaga</i> ‘off-take; take from’
<i>beröva</i> ‘deprive of’	
<i>bespara</i> ‘spare’	
<i>bevilja</i> ‘grant’	SAOL
<i>bibringa</i> ‘impart to’	
<i>bjuda</i> ‘offer’	
* <i>delgiva</i> ‘inform of’	SAOL
<i>erbjuda</i> ‘offer’	SAOL
<i>från-</i> ‘from-’:	SAOL ( <i>fråndöma</i> , <i>fråntaga</i> )
	<i>fråndöma</i> ‘from-judge; deprive of by sentence’
	<i>fråntaga</i> ‘from-take; deprive of’
* <i>före-</i> ‘before-’:	SAOL ( <i>förelägga</i> )
	<i>förelägga</i> ‘before-put’; set (a task) to’
	<i>föreslå</i> ‘propose’
	<i>förevisa</i> ‘before-show; show’
* <i>förlåta</i> ‘forgive for’	
* <i>förmena</i> ‘deny’	
<i>förunna</i> ‘grant’	
* <i>förvägra</i> ‘refuse’	SAOL
* <i>förära</i> ‘present with’	SAOL
<i>giva</i> ‘give’	
<i>lova</i> ‘promise’	

*lämna* ‘leave to’

\**meddela* ‘inform of’

SAOL

*neka* ‘deny’

*på-* ‘on-’:

*påtruga* ‘on-press; press upon’

\**påtvunga* ‘on-force; force on’

\**pålura* ‘on-dupe; trick into’

\**räcka* ‘hand to’

\**servera* ‘serve with’

*skänka* ‘give’

*till-* (to-):

SAOL (*tilldela*, *tillfoga*)

*tilldela* ‘to-share; award’

*tillfoga* ‘to-add; inflict on’

\**tillskicka* ‘to-send; send to’,

*unna* ‘grant’

\**visa* ‘show’

\**vägra* ‘refuse’

SAOL

*å-* ‘on-’:

SAOL (*ådöma*, *ålägga*)

*ådöma* ‘on-judge; sentence to’

*ålägga* ‘on-put; impose on’

## Appendix 2

### *First occurrences with passivized indirect object*

Formal properties: prep = prepositional affix (see footnote 14); mono = monomorphemic; bi = other bimorphemic)

Semantic properties: from = transfer from somebody, to = transfer to somebody; hindered to = hindered transfer to somebody

		source	formal	semantics
1606	<i>betala</i> ‘pay, compensate for’	SAOB	bi	to
1647	<i>av-</i> (‘off-’)	SAOB	prep	from
	<i>avskära</i> ‘separate from’			
	1669: <i>avbörda</i> ‘relieve of’			

1779: *avkläda* ‘strip of’

1704	<i>på-</i> ‘on-’		prep	to
	<i>påkasta</i> ‘throw on’	SAOB		
1732	<i>bjuda</i> ‘offer’	SAOB	mono	to
1819	<i>beröva</i> ‘deprive of’	SAOB	bi	from
1840	<i>bespara</i> ‘spare’	Spf	bi	hindered to
1840	<i>lova</i> ‘promise’	Spf	mono	to
1841	<i>lämna</i> ‘leave’	Spf	mono	to
1844	<i>bibringa</i> ‘impart to’	Spf	bi	to
1850	<i>från-</i> ‘from-’		prep	from
	<i>fråntaga</i> ‘deprive of’	SAOB		
1860	<i>erbjuda</i> ‘offer’	Spf	bi	to
1860	<i>giva</i> ‘give’	Spf	mono	to
1874	<i>anförtro</i> ‘entrust to’	SAOL	bi	to
1874	<i>bevilja</i> ‘grant’	SAOL	bi	to
1874	<i>delgiva</i> ‘inform of’	SAOL	bi	to
1874	<i>före-</i> ‘before’		prep	to
	<i>förelägga</i> ‘set (a task) to’	SAOL		
1874	<i>förvägra</i> ‘refuse’	SAOL	bi	hindered to
1874	<i>förära</i> ‘present with’	SAOL	bi	to
1874	<i>meddela</i> ‘inform of’	SAOL	bi	to
1874	<i>till-</i> ‘to-’		prep	to
	<i>tilldela</i> ‘award’	SAOL		
1874	<i>vägra</i> ‘refuse’	SAOL	mono	hindered to
1874	<i>å-</i> ‘on-’	SAOL	prep	to
	<i>ålägga</i> ‘impose on’			
1880	<i>förunna</i> ‘grant’	Spf	bi	to
1880	<i>neka</i> ‘deny’	Spf	mono	hindered to
1899	<i>unna</i> ‘grant’	Spf	mono	to
1900	<i>räcka</i> ‘hand to’	Spf	mono	to
1900	<i>skänka</i> ‘give’	Spf	mono	to
1978-79	<i>förlåta</i> ‘forgive’	Bonniers	bi	from
1978-79	<i>förmena</i> ‘deny’	Bonniers	bi	hindered to
1978-79	<i>servera</i> ‘serve with’	Bonniers	mono	to

## Appendix 3

### *Tokens of the 30 investigated verbs in the spf-corpus*

	pass.io	pass.do	ambiguous
<i>anförtro</i> ‘entrust to’	2	3	1
<i>av-</i> ‘off-’	2	6	0
<i>beröva</i> ‘deprive of’	23	9	1
<i>bespara</i> ‘spare’	4	14	1
<i>bevilja</i> ‘grant’	1	13	1
<i>bibringa</i> ‘impart to’	7	3	0
<i>bjuda</i> ‘offer’	3	37	2
<i>delgiva</i> ‘inform of’	0	3	1
<i>erbjuda</i> ‘offer’	12	41	0
<i>från-</i> ‘from-’	2	10	1
<i>före-</i> ‘before-’	0	10	0
<i>förlåta</i> ‘forgive for’	0	6	0
<i>förmena</i> ‘deny’	0	1	0
<i>förunna</i> ‘grant’	3	25	0
<i>förvägra</i> ‘refuse’	0	2	2
<i>förära</i> ‘present with’	0	3	0
<i>giva</i> ‘give’	7	49	2
<i>lova</i> ‘promise’	3	4	0
<i>lämna</i> ‘leave to’	10	39	3
<i>meddela</i> ‘inform of’	0	17	1
<i>neka</i> ‘deny’	6	11	0
<i>på-</i> ‘on-’	1	3	0
<i>räcka</i> ‘hand to’	1	25	0
<i>servera</i> ‘serve with’	1	15	1
<i>skänka</i> ‘give’	1	26	1



<i>till-</i> ‘to-’	7	38	5
<i>unna</i> ‘grant’	1	3	1
<i>visa</i> ‘show’	0	24	1
<i>vägra</i> ‘refuse’	0	5	1
<i>å-</i> ‘on-’	5	5	2
Total	102	450	28