PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY OLOMOUC
FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES

Passive Structures in English and Slovak

Master's Thesis

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Olomouc 2024

Podklad pro zadání DIPLOMOVÉ práce studenta

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Téma práce:	Passive Structures in English and Slovak
Téma práce anglicky:	Passive Structures in English and Slovak
Jazyk práce:	Angličtina

Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Michaela Čakányová, Ph.D.
	Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Zásady pro vypracování:

This thesis focuses on the structure of passives in English and Slovak, and describes the differences based on the distinct language typologies. It is concerned with the frequency of passives in the given language, passivization of phrasal verbs, verbo-nominal structures, and indirect objects. As a source for example sentences, corpora will be used, namely the Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies) and the Slovak National Corpus.

Seznam doporučené literatury:

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Stav schvalování: Studentem dopracován podklad VŠKP

Podpis studenta: *Šipková*

Datum: 6. 6. 2023

Podpis vedoucího práce:

Datum: 7.6.2023

Prehlasujem, že som diplomovú prácu na tému "Passive Structures in English and Slovak" vypracovala samostatne a že som uviedla úplny zoznam citovanej a použitej literatúry.

V Olomouci dňa   27.6.2024   Podpis

Annotation

Author: Veronika Šipková

Title: Passive Structures in English and Slovak

Title in Czech: Pasívne štruktúry v angličtine a slovenčine

Department: Department of English and American Studies

Study Program: English Philology, German Philology

Supervisor: Mgr. Michaela Čakányová PhD.

Pages: 73

Standard pages of text (/1800): 68

Characters: 123 900

Abstract:

The aim of this diploma thesis is to analyse thoroughly the process of passivization in the English language and then apply the most crucial features to the Slovak language. When an active sentence becomes a passive one, many crucial things are happening. Among the most important is the promotion of the object of the active clause to the subject of the passive clause. When this happens, naturally a movement occurs, which can be called the passive movement. In English, we can distinguish between passives with the verb *get* and passives with the verb *be*. Other types of passives are analysed as well, such as the prepositional passive or the passivization of complex verbs. The end of the English section is devoted to mediopassive constructions, lying somewhere on the border between active and passive clauses. In the Slovak section of the thesis, the two main passives in this language are outlined. These are the participle passive and the reflexive passive. Subsequently, the main similarities and differences between the English passive and the Slovak passive are examined.

Key words:

passivization, movement, the verb *get*, the verb *be*, prepositions, mediopassive, reflexive passive, constraints

Abstrakt:

Cieľom tejto diplomovej práce je dôkladne analyzovať proces pasivizácie v anglickom jazyku a následne aplikovať najdôležitejšie črty na slovenský jazyk. Keď sa aktívna veta stane pasívnou, deje sa veľa zásadných vecí. Medzi najdôležitejšie patrí povýšenie predmetu činnej vety na predmet pasívnej vety. Keď k tomu dôjde, prirodzene dôjde k pohybu, ktorý možno nazvať pasívnym pohybom. V angličtine môžeme rozlišovať pasíva so slovesom *get* a pasíva so slovesom *byť*. Analyzované sú aj iné druhy pasív, ako je predložkové pasívum alebo pasivizácia zložitých slovies. Záver anglickej časti je venovaný mediopasívnym konštrukciám, ležiacim niekde na hranici medzi aktívnymi a pasívnymi vetnými členmi. V slovenskej časti práce sú načrtnuté dva hlavné pasíva v tomto jazyku. Ide o pasív s príčastím minulým a zvratné pasívum. Následne sa skúmajú hlavné podobnosti a rozdiely medzi anglickým pasívom a slovenským pasívom.

Kľúčové slová:

pasivizácia, pohyb, sloveso *get*, sloveso *byť*, predložky, mediopasívum, reflexívne pasívum, obmedzenia

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1 Introduction

The passive voice is an engaging research topic. It can be compared to the active voice and the changes which the sentence undergoes during the passivization process can be followed. There are more ways of how the passive sentence can be formed and the formations differ across various languages as well. Since English is the language I am studying and Slovak is my mother tongue, comparing these two languages made the most sense.

In this thesis, the passive voice will be thoroughly analysed in English and then the most interesting features will be compared with the Slovak language. This brings us to the outline of the thesis. It will be divided into two main parts. In the first part, the English passive will be examined. We will start with the basics and explain how an active sentence can become a passive one and what types of movements and changes are involved in this process. Then we will focus on the two main types of passives in English, which are passives with the verb *be* and passives the verb *get*. In the next section, different types of passives will be analysed, such as prepositional and adjectival passives. Since it is not always possible to passivize a sentence, we will also discuss some constraints which do not allow a sentence to be passivized. Another challenging part of the passivization process can be the passivization of complex verbs, i.e., verbs that consist of other elements beside the lexical verb. Because of the key position of verbs during the passivization, some of the subchapters will be dedicated to them. Finally, the mediopassive voice will be examined. The mediopassive voice cannot be classified as a passive voice from the syntactic point of view, however, from the semantical point of view, it conveys the same meaning as the active voice.

The second main part of this thesis will be dealing with the Slovak passive voice. Similarly, as in English, there are two main types of passives. One is called the participle passive and corresponds with the English passive with the verb *be*. The other is called the reflexive passive and differs significantly from the English passive voice, regarding its formation. After the distinction between the main types of Slovak passives is made, we will focus on the similarities and the differences between the English and the Slovak passive voice.

To illustrate each explained topic better, many examples will be used.

The passive tends to have a negative connotation within the society and among language learners. But hopefully, by understanding the mechanisms in which the passive works, we can see it for what it really is – just a grammatical structure, which is neither good or bad, and which can actually be very useful.

2 The English Passive

This chapter introduces the topic of the English passive. At first, we will take a look at how a sentence transforms from an active to a passive one and what exactly happens during this process. Next, the verbs with which the passive can be formed will be discussed. After that, different types of passive structures will be shown. Lastly, we will analyse the various types of constraints on the passive clause.

2.1 The Active and the Passive Voice

When we are describing a sentence, one of the grammatical categories is the voice of the sentence, i.e., whether the sentence is written in the active or the passive voice. The system of voice is also related to syntactic functions and semantic roles (Huddleston and Pullum 2005, 240). To better illustrate what is meant by that, we can look at the two sentences in example (1).

(1)

     a) The cat is chasing the mouse.
     b) The mouse is being chased by the cat.

In (1a), the cat is the agent of the sentence, while the mouse is the patient. That means that the agent is someone or something which performs the action, and the patient is someone or something which is affected by the action. There are more semantic roles that can change, according to what type of sentence we have, but this is the prototypical sentence in the active voice. In the typical sentence in the active voice, the agent is the subject, and the patient is the object of the sentence. These are the syntactic functions.

However, the situation is very different in the passive voice, which we can see in (1b). Here, the mouse is the is the subject and the cat is the optional by-phrase adjunct. What has not change though, are the semantic roles of these two words, which are the same as in the active sentence.

Another change that happened when the sentence in (1a) was put in the passive voice, is the change of the verb. It is, in fact, the change of the verb that is the most important when forming a passive sentence. Usually, we need a form of the auxiliary verb be and the past participate of the main verb (Quirk et al. 1985, 159). There are also other verbs that can form passives, but more on that later.

Even though the active sentence can seem very different from the passive one, their meaning remains the same. We can say that they have the same truth conditions.

2.2　The Passive Sentence and its Structure

In this subchapter, we will look in more detail at the structure of passive sentences. According to Tallerman, these are the signs of a passive clause:

a) The subject of the passive sentence is demoted to a by-phrase or completely omitted.
b) The object of the active sentence is promoted to the subject of the passive sentence.
c) The passive sentence contains the auxiliary *be* and the past participle of the main verb.
d) Transitive verbs in an active sentence become intransitive verbs in a passive sentence.

 (Tallerman 2011, 212–13)

In example , the exact movement of the subject and the object is shown, when the sentence is transformed from an active to a passive one. The structure is loosely adapted from Quirk (Quirk et al. 1985, 160).

(2)

| *Emily* | *waters* | *the flowers.* |
| Subject | Verb | Object |

| *The flowers* | *are watered* | *by Emily.* |
| Subject | Verb | Optional by-phrase |
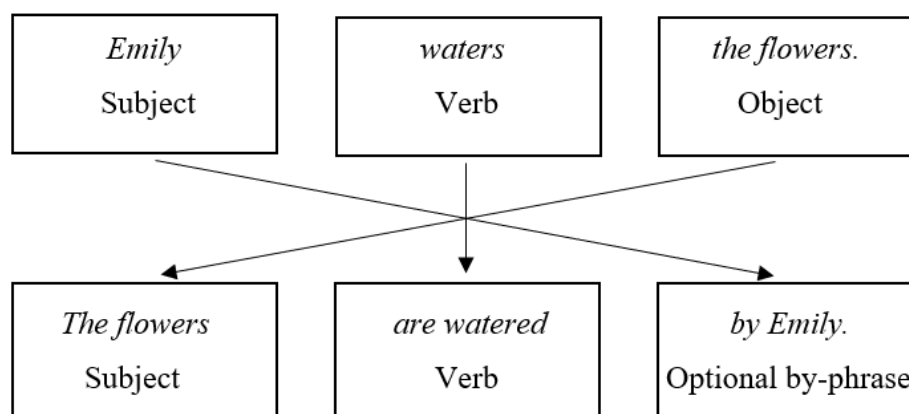
As we can see from example (2), *the flowers* became the subject of the passive clause, but it is still the patient of the sentence, something is happening to the flowers, and they are not the ones causing any action. So, how can we tell for sure that *the flowers* are the subject of the passive sentence? According to Tallerman, the subject of the passive clause triggers the subject/verb agreement (Tallerman 2011, 212). We can also see this in example (2). In the active sentence, the verb is in the third person singular, which corresponds to the subject of the sentence, which is *Emily*. However, in the passive sentence, the form of the auxiliary verb *be*, which is in its plural form, corresponds with the subject of the sentence, *the flowers*, which is also in plural.

Tallerman mentions another test for subjects, which is the fact that first and third person pronouns are in the nominative case, when they are subjects (Tallerman 2011, 212). This is shown in example (3) below.

(3)

      a) **I** *read the newspaper every day.*
          The newspaper is read by **me** *every day.*
      b) **She** *drives the children to school.*
          The children are driven to school by **her**.

In (3a), *I* is the subject of the active sentence and it is in the nominative case. The same is true for *her* in (3b). In the passive clauses, these pronouns are replaced by me and her, which indicates that these pronouns are no longer the subjects of the sentences. The subjects are then *the newspaper* and *the children*. In (3b), the subject/verb agreement is also present, as the auxiliary verb *be* is in the plural form to agree with the plural subject.

Another important point mentioned by Tallerman is the fact that there is no specific verb form that would be passive. One of the main signs of passives is the verb *be* and the past participle of the main verb. But for a sentence to be passive, both of those criteria have to be true. In example (4) there are two sentences. The first one has the verb be and the second one a past participle of a verb, but none of these sentences are in the passive voice, since only one of the criterium mentions above has been met.

(4)

> *They are running home.*
>
> *He has cooked dinner.*

2.3 The Passive Movement

As we have already seen, when an active clause becomes a passive one, a lot of changes take place. Probably the most obvious change is the promotion of the object in the active sentence to the subject of the passive sentence. This promotion is also a movement, as we can see from example (5).

(5)

> a) *William has drunk **all the coffee**.*
>
> b) ***All the coffee** has been drunk by William.*

Even though the subject of the active sentence is demoted, and the object is promoted, the thematic roles of the phrases do not change. To explain the thematic affinities between the active and passive sentences, Aarts, among other linguists, suggested that a movement is taking place in the process of passivization. Therefore, the subject of the passive sentence derives from the position right after the main verb in the active sentence. Since the movement concerns nouns, we call it an NP movement, also known as the argument movement (A-movement) (2001, 164–65).

However, if we were to draw a syntactic tree, the question of the position of the optional by phrase may arise. This also involves a movement, in this case a verb movement. In Aarts the question is whether the by phrase is positioned within the VP or outside of it. In his explanation, he analyses negative passive sentences with modal auxiliaries (2001, 167). In the example (6) we can see such a sentence.
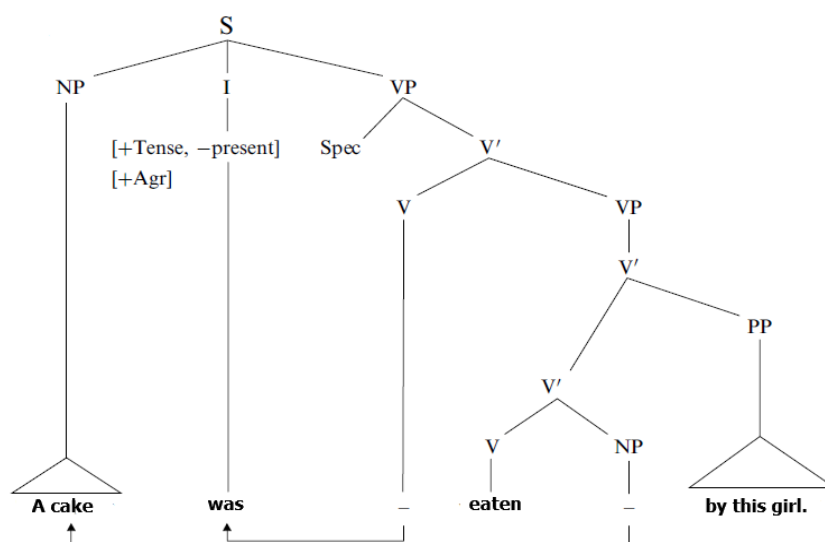
(6)

> *These painting should not be touched by the visitors.*

According to Aarts, the negative element *not* has its location on the leftmost position of the VP. This means that anything on the left side of *not*, in this case also the modal *should*, is

outside of the VP. On the other hand, we can conclude that the by phrase is located inside of the VP, since it is on the right side of *not* (2001, 167).

In example (7) below, we can see a syntactic tree demonstrating the two types of movement during the passivization process, namely the noun phrase movement and the verb phrase movement. The optional by phrase is positioned inside of the VP in a prepositional phrase.

(7)

```
                              S
              ┌───────────────┼───────────────┐
            NP                I                VP
             │        [+Tense, −present]   ┌───┴───┐
             │        [+Agr]             Spec      V′
             │                                  ┌───┴───┐
             │                                  V       VP
             │                                  │        │
             │                                  │        V′
             │                                  │     ┌───┴───┐
             │                                  │    V′       PP
             │                                  │  ┌──┴──┐     │
             │                                  │  V    NP     │
           △                                  │  │     │    △
         A cake              was              __  eaten   __  by this girl.
```

2.4 Long-distance Passivization

The passive movement described above involved movement within a clause. However, according to Radford, there appears to be another type of movement that is not clause restricted. We can call it a long-distance passivization (2004, 136). To illustrate what exactly is meant by this term, we can look at the two sentences in (8).

(8)

      *a) There are believed to exist **over 17,000 species of butterflies**.*

      b) ***Over 17,000 species of butterflies*** *are believed to exist.*

According to Radford, the expressions in bold are the thematic complements of the verbs, in this case of the verb *exist*. In (8a), the complement remains in-situ. This means that it is positioned after the verb, and it does not move outside of the clause. However, in (8b), the verb complement moves out of the lower semi-clause into the matrix position and becomes

the subject of the auxiliary *are*. The subject of the clause in (8a) can be also called an existential subject.

In both of the sentences in (8), the verb *are* requires to have a meaningful subject. In the syntactic terminology, this requirement of verbs is called an Extended Projection Principle or the EPP feature. In the sentence (8a), the subject is there. But the EPP feature of the verbs can be also satisfied in another way. The closest nominal phrase to the verb is *over 17,000 species of butterflies* and this NP can undergo movement and move from a lower clause into the spec-TP position of a higher clause. That is why this kind of movement is also called long-distance movement (Radford 2004, 136).

Another interesting subject that Radford mentions is the passivization of some idiomatic expressions, which can also undergo long-distance passivization (2004, 137). To examine this more closely, we can look at the idiomatic expressions in (9) and their passivization.

(9)

      a) *Break the ice –* **The ice** *was thought to be* **broken**.

      b) *All hell broke loose –* **All hell** *was said to have* **broken loose**. (Radford 2004, 137)

Normally, the expression *the ice* in (9a) is the complement to the verb *break*. In (9b), *all hell* is the subject of the verb phrase *break loose*. However, in the passive examples, the expressions *the ice* and *all hell* became the subjects of the whole clause. This is possible due to the long-distance movement. To better illustrate what moves where, we can look at the internal structure of the sentence in (9b). This is shown in (10) below.

(10)

      [TP All hell [T was] [VP[V said] [TP [to] have [VP all hell] [T broken] loose]]]

We can see from the structure in (10) the movement during the passivisation. According to Radford, the movement is aligned with the Attract Closest Principle. The auxiliary verb *was* requires a subject, in accordance to the EPP feature. In our case, the closest noun phrase is the noun phrase *all hell*, where the Attract Closest Principle is relevant. The NP *all hell* then moves at the beginning of the clause and becomes the subject of the whole clause, as we can see in (10), shown with the arrow (2004, 137).

2.5 Passive with the verb *be*

There is not only one way of how to form a passive sentence. That is why it is a good idea to show the most common ways of how a passive sentence is constructed. The most used and familiar type of passive clauses are passives with the verb *be*. To revise the passivization process, an active and a passive sentence are shown in example (11).

(11)

      a) Frank wrote seven children's books.

      b) *Seven children's books **were written** by Frank.*

The sentence in (11b) shows the passive with the verb *be*. In this case, the form of the verb *be* is the verb *were*. Following this verb is the past participle of the main verb, which is the verb used in the active sentence in (11a), in this case the verb *write*.

As noted in Pullum, the two sentences in (11) are two ways of expressing the fact that a man named Frank wrote seven books which are intended for children. This is also called a proposoition of a sentence, that is the underlying meaning. Another way of looking at the two sentences is to look for their truth conditions. This means that if one sentence is true, the other is true as well. However, if one is false, the other is also false (2014, 3).

2.6 Short *be* Passive

As we have already seen, in the process of passivization the subject of the active sentence is demoted. The subject can still occur in the passive sentence, introduces by the by-phase. However, this by-phrase is omissible, as we can see in the example (12).

(12)

      a) Steps in the right direction were taken by the government.

      b) Steps in the right direction were taken.

The main difference between the two sentences in (12) is that, while in (12a), we can easily create the active counterpart of the passive sentence, in (12b), such a thing is not possible. Sentences such as the one in (12b) can be called short *be* passives (Pullum 2014, 3–4).

2.7 Passive with the verb *get*

The most straightforward way to form a passive is to use the appropriate form of the verb *be* and past participle of the main verb. This is also the most common way. But as we will see from this subchapter, it is also possible to use the verb *get* instead of the verb *be*. It is important to notice that while *be* is an auxiliary verb, *get* is not. This changes how these two verbs behave. If a verb is not an auxiliary, it needs the dummy auxiliary *do* in order to form questions and negatives. This is also true for *get*. We can illustrate the differences in example (13).

(13)

  a) *Jenny was bitten by a dog.*

  b) *Jenny got bitten by a dog.*

While in these indicative sentences the difference is only in the choice of verbs, if we look at the interrogative and the negative counterparts of these sentences, the difference becomes clearer. This is illustrated in (14).

(14)

  a) *Was Jenny bitten by a dog?*

  b) *Jenny was not bitten by a dog.*

  c) *Did Jenny get bitten by a dog?*

  d) *Jenny did not get bitten by a dog.*

From the sentences is (14) we can see that because of the auxiliary status of *be*, there is a difference between how *be* and *get* behave. Another difference occurs if we were to add the dummy auxiliary *do* for emphasis to the sentences in (13). This is shown in (15).

(15)

  a) *Jenny did got bitten by a dog.*

  b) **Jenny did was bitten by a dog.*

It is possible to add do for emphasis to the *get* passive, as we can see in (15a). However, if we try to do the same in the sentence with the *do* passive as in (15b), the result is an ungrammatical structure.

Quirk describes another subclass of the *get* passives, namely *get* passives in which the verb *get* functions as a copula. We can call them copula get passives. These passives are the most commonly used *get* passives. They involve structures which are, to some extent, conventionalized in the language. Examples include *get tired*, *get old*, *get lost, get dressed* or *get excited* (1985, 161). In (16) a few examples of such sentences are listed.

(16)

     a) *You need to get dressed quickly.*

     b) *My legs were getting tired after the long hike.*

     c) *This car is getting old.*

However, upon closer inspection we can notice that the sentences in (16) are not the same as the sentence in (13b). In (13b), the structure of the passive sentence is normal, that is we can see the verb *get* and the past participle following it. But when we look at the sentences in (16), they have a different structure. According to Quirk, the structure of these sentences can be represented as SVC sentences. That means that the verb is followed by a copula and not by a past participle as in a passive sentence. So, in (16a), *you* is the subject, *need to* is the verb and *get dressed* is the copula. These sentences may be also called pseudo-passives (1985, 161).

2.8 Different Types of Passives

So far, we have been dealing with two types of passives, based on which verbs they used, i.e., *be* or *get*. Bud passives can also vary in different aspects, so we can say there are different types of passives. Therefore, it is worth analysing some of the types and examine their characteristics.

2.8.1 Prepositional Passives

Prepositional passives occur when we passivize a verb that is followed by a preposition. The basic types of the prepositional passives are the long and the short passive, as illustrated in Pullum (2014, 4). The examples in (17) show this distinction.

(17)

        a) Her co-workers agreed with her.

        b) She was agreed with by her co-workers.

        c) She was agreed with.

This means that when we use the by-phrase, we can talk about a long prepositional passive and when the by-phrase is omitted, the prepositional passive is called a short one.
Another way of classifying prepositional passives, as suggested in Huddleston and Pullum, is to divide the prepositions into specified and unspecified. Yet another distinction is that the prepositions in the passive may or may not be stranded (2005, 244). This is illustrated in the sentences in (18).

(18)

        *a) John looked after **our dog**. – **Our dog** was looked **after**.*

        *b) He took advantage **of them**. – **They** were taken advantage **of**.*

        c) *Eleanor put **the book on** the table. – **The book** was put **on** the table.*

At the first glance we can see the difference in the prepositions in the passive sentences in (18). While in (18a) and (18b), the preposition is stranded, i.e., their object is following them. On the other hand, we have a different situation in (18c), where the preposition if followed by an NP.
Let us now turn to the less obvious difference, which is the specified and unspecified preposition. According to Huddleston and Pullum, a specified preposition is a preposition that is specified by the verb which precedes it. This means that there are lexical restrictions on the choice of the prepositions. The examples used in (18a) and (18b) allow passives, but some other verbs or verbal idioms do not (2005, 244–45). In (18a), we have the PP *look after*. The meaning of this PP to take care of someone or something. If we were to use anther preposition, this meaning would be lost. Similarly, in (18b), the PP is *take advantage of*,

meaning to profit of something or someone. Again, the meaning would be lost if used with another preposition.

Unspecified prepositions, according to Huddleston and Pullum, can be replaced by other prepositions and the verb has its ordinary meaning, contrary to our example in (18a), where *look* has not is ordinary meaning. The sentence in (18c) has an unspecified preposition, since the PP *put on* could be replaced by *put under* and the sentence would still make sense (2005, 245).

2.8.2 Bare Passives

As we have seen from the previous chapters, passive structures need to have a certain structure in order to be called passives. That is the verbs *be* or *get* and the past participle of a verb. So how can we explain a structure as in (19)[1]?

(19)

> *Seven other people **injured** in the shooting had been hospitalized.* (NEWS: OCRegister, 2016)

As we can see, the sentence in (19) resembles a passive in the way it is used, but it is missing the verbs *be* or *get*. According to Pullum, these kinds of passives are referred to as bare passives. The structure of bare passives involves only the subject and the past participle of the verb. They have no tensed verb and therefore cannot stand alone as a sentence and are usually a part of something else (2014, 4).

Bare passives can be a of either complements or modifiers, as noted in Huddleston and Pullum (2005, 245).

When they occur as complements, they are a part of complex catenatives. Catenatives, or catenative verbs, are verbs that can be followed by another verb in the same clause. Verbs followed by gerunds or infinitives are the most common ones. In the case of bare passives, the verbs that precede the past participle can be *have*, *get* (different use from the get-passives) and some sense verbs, such as *see* (Huddleston and Pullum 2005, 246). In (20), we can see some examples of these bare passives. In (20a), the past participle *done* is preceded by the verb

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[1] This example is taken from the Corpus of Contemporary American English. The source and the year is stated behind it. This will be also true for the other examples taken from the corpus. If nothing stands behind the example, it is mine.

have, in (20b), the past participle *vaccinated* in preceded by the verb *get*, and in (20c), *driven* is preceded by the sense verb *see*.

(20)

    a) *He commemorated the proposal with this tattoo he **had done by** an artist in Alberta.* (http://tattoosday.blogspot.com/2012/11/seans-rubber-ducky-down-to-bones.html, 2012)

    b) *We **got** ourselves **vaccinated** before our holiday.*

    c) *He **saw** his father **driven** away by the police.*

When bare passives occur as modifiers, they modify a noun phrase. Such examples can be seen in (21) below. In (21a), the past participle built modifies the noun *castle*, and in (21b), the past participle written modifies the noun *book*.

(21)

    a) *We visited a castle **built** before the 13ᵗʰ century.*

    b) *The book **written** by the famous author is selling fast.*

As noted in Huddleston and Pullum, the sentences in (21) could be rewritten as relative clauses (2005, 246). These clauses are the standard passives and not bare passives, since they already have the full passive structure: be and past participle, as we can see from the sentences in (22).

(22)

    a) *We visited a castle which was built before the 13ᵗʰ century.*

    b) *The book, which was written by the famous author, is selling fast.*

However, there is one context in which the bare passive clauses can stand by themselves and in fact, do so very often. This is the context of newspaper headlines (Pullum 2014, 4). In (23) we can see such examples.

(23)

    a) *Indian **accused** of plotting to murder Sikh leader extradited to US.* (https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3ggy5ypj68o, 2024)

b) *Four dead, over 20 **injured** in Czech train crash.*

(https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/four-dead-over-20-injured-in-czech-train-crash-197132, 2024)

c) *Pupils **mocked** and **put** in headlocks by school staff.*

(https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp6643jd8nwo, 2024)

2.8.3 Embedded Passives

The embedded passive stands for a passive which is a part of another clause. These kinds of structures are noted in Pullum (2014, 5), but they seem to be the same as what Huddleston and Pullum call bare passives occurring with complements, i.e, past participles preceded by the verbs be, get or see. Examples are listed in (20).

However, Pullum does mention another form of embedded passive that has not been analysed here before, which is the use of the subject less passive in clauses with modal auxiliaries. It is based on the assumption that English auxiliaries are complement taking verbs (2014, 5). Such sentences are illustrated in (24) below.

(24)

    a) *The painting must have been stolen.*

    b) *The incident could have been recorded by an eyewitness.*

    c) *The president will be elected tomorrow.*

2.8.4 Adjectival Passives

If we were to recall the basic structure of passive clauses, which is *be* and part participle, we could, in some cases, be faced with an ambiguity between the past participle and an adjective. This is because, sometimes, an adjective can be formed from the past participle of the verb, as noted in Huddleston and Pullum (2005, 246). For the ambiguity to become clearer, we can analyse the examples in (25).

(25)

    a) *The window was shut.*

    b) *Our friends were married.*

These sentences can be read as common passive sentences. This means that in (25a), *the window was shut by someone*. In (25b), we could say that o*ur friends were married in a church by a priest*.

The adjectival reading can be seen in this sentence for (25a): *The window appeared to be shut*. Therefore, shut here is not a past participle, but an adjective; it describes the state of the window. Similarly, in (25b), married is the description of the friends in the adjectival reading, Therefore, we could say a sentence like this: *Our friends were still married*. In these sentences, the ambiguity is lost and the only reading is the adjectival passive (Huddleston and Pullum 2005, 246).

2.9   Constraints on the Passive Clause

So far, we have been dealing with sentences, that could either be active or passive. We have looked at how an active sentence becomes a passive one and what changes the sentence undergoes. Nevertheless, in the chapter on Prepositional Passives, we encountered some idiomatic structures which could not be passivized. This can also go in the other direction, namely that there is only a passive way of saying something and not an active one. In this chapter, we will look at such examples and examine what causes these constraints.

2.9.1 Verb Constraints

Whether or not an active clause can become a passive clause often depends on the verb. According to Quirk, there are verbs which can occur only in the active voice, and also verbs which we are used only in the passive voice (Quirk et al. 1985, 162). First, we will look at the active verb constraint and then at the passive one.

2.9.1.1 Active only verbs

As noted in Quirk, there are three groups of verbs that only allow the active voice. These are copular verbs, intransitive verbs, and some transitive verbs called middle verbs (Quirk et al. 1985, 162).

Copula verbs are verbs which link subjects to the subject complements. The name is derived from Latin and means *link*, that is why these verbs are also sometimes called linking verbs. The most common copula is the verb *be*. Others include *become, appear, seem, look, taste* or

smell. According to Veselovská, there are some characteristics which are typical for copulas. These include the fact that a copula does not denote any action, only identifies or describes, and that if a noun follows a copula, the noun is not an object, since "copulas do not assign Object or Accusative case to nouns" (Veselovská 2019, 147). From these facts we can conclude that a copula cannot be passivized since there is no object in a clause containing a copula.

In Veselovská, copulas are divided into three groups. *Be, seem, appear, stay, remain* and *act* are classified as copulas. Some verbs of change and perception are classified as semi-copulas. These include *become, get, grow, turn*; and *look, feel, taste, smell, sound* respectively (Veselovská 2019, 148).

In (26), we can see examples of sentences with a copula in (26a) and (26b), as opposed to sentences without a copula in (26c) and (26d).

(26)

a) *Lisa is a girl.*
b) *Marcus stayed a student.*

c) *Lisa met a girl.*
d) *Marcus saw a student.*

In (26a), the copula verb *is* identifies the subject *Lisa*. Similarly, in (26b), the copula verb *stayed* gives us more information about the subject itself, in this case about *Marcus*. However, in (26c), *girl* is the object of the clause and does not identify *Lisa*. The same is true for (26d), where *student* refers to another student, not to the subject *Marcus*.

As we can see from the sentences in (26a) and (26b), after the copula, there is no object and therefore there is nothing to passivize which would give us the subject of the passive clause. We can see this in (27), where trying to passivize the clauses with copula verbs result in very questionable and ungrammatical structures, whereas the clauses without a copula can be passivized unproblematically.

(27)

a) **A girl is by Lisa.*
b) **A student was stayed by Marcus.*

c) *A girl was met.*
d) *A student was seen.*

The second class of verbs that do not passivize are called **intransitive verbs**. Intransitive verbs do not take arguments. As noted in Veselovská, verbs can be divided into transitive and intransitive verbs based on whether they semantically select, or S-select, their arguments.

Intransitive verbs select no arguments, transitive verbs select one or more arguments (2019, 157). Some examples of such verbs include *run, sneeze, yawn, go,* or *return*. Examples are listed in (28) below.

(28)

    a) *The cat yawned.*

    b) *He sneezed loudly.*

    c) *My sister has returned.*

As we can see from the sentences in (28), there is no object that we could passivize. However, it is possible for a verb to be transitive in one context and intransitive in the other. Let us consider the sentences in (29).

(29)

    a) *Sabrina is **singing**.*

    b) *Sabrina is **singing** a song.*

    c) *The car **turned** left.*

    d) *The chauffeur **turned** the car left.*

    e) *Julie was **reading**.*

    f) *Julie was **reading** an interesting book.*

These kinds of verbs can be called ambitransitive verbs, as they can be both transitive and intransitive. Therefore, the sentences in (29a), (29c), and (29e) cannot be passivized, but the sentences in (29b), (29d), and (29f) can be written in the passive voice. This is demonstrated in (30).

(30)

    a) *A song was being sung by Sabrina.*

    b) *The car was turned left by the chauffeur.*

    c) *An interesting book was being read by Julie.*

The third class of verbs, which Quirk calls **middle verbs**, are **state verbs**, or verbs of "being and having". Some of the verbs which are mentioned by Quirk include *lack, resemble, hold,* and *suit*. On the other hand, the verb *want*, which also is a stative verbs, is mentioned as an

example that break this rule (Quirk et al. 1985, 162). In (31), example sentences with these verbs are listed.

(31)

    a) *Harry resembles his mother. - *His mother is resembled by Harry.*

    b) *The theatre holds over 2000 people. – *Over 2000 people are held by the theatre.*

    c) *The dress suits you. - *You are suited by the dress.*

    d) *The government wants this man. – This man is wanted by the government.*

From the examples in (31) we can observe that only the verb want makes an acceptable passive clause. Nevertheless, some irregularities can be observed here as well. Let us consider the sentences in (32).

(32)

    a) *She wants a chinchilla and a rabbit. – ?? A chinchilla and a rabbit are wanted by her.*

    b) *They held a meeting on Thursday. – A meeting was held on Thursday.*

It seems that the verb *want* can be passivized only when the underlying meaning of the verb is *to search*, e.g., *a man wanted by the police*. But when it is used with the meaning of desiring something, the passivized clause seems very strange. Similarly, the verb hold was not able to form a passive in the clause in (31b), where its meaning was *to seat 2000 people*. But in (32b), where its meaning is *to have a meeting*, the passive clause is grammatical.

2.9.1.2 Passive only verbs

On the other hand, there are verbs which enable only the passive voice. This group of verbs is a much smaller group than the group of those verbs which are used only in the active voice. Nevertheless, there are a few of them, so let us take a look at them.

Quirk mentions the verbs *said, reputed, born* and *drowned* (Quirk et al. 1985, 162). In (33), some such sentences can be seen.

(33)

    a) *He was born in London. – ?? His mother bore him in London.*

b) *She was said to be a passionate journalist. – *They said her to be a passionate journalist.*

c) *He was drowned in the ocean. – ?? Someone drowned him in the ocean.*

The passive sentences in (33) are completely natural, but the active ones are questionable at best, or just ungrammatical.

2.9.2 Object constraints

Objects are the ones that become subjects during the passivization process. Therefore, we can conclude that they are an important part of the debate about passive clauses. Usually, objects are phrases, the noun phrase being the most common. But, according to Quirk, the object of the sentence can also be another clause. This clause is then not as straightforward to passivize as a noun phrase. Clauses can be finite or non-finite and below, we will examine this in more detail (Quirk et al. 1985, 163–64).

We say that a verb is finite, when the verb shows absolute tense. Finite clauses are then clauses containing such a verb. An example of a clause, where a finite clause functions as an object is shown in (34).

(34)

    Mary thought that Ben was handsome.

In the clause in (34), *Mary* is the subject, *thought* is the verbal part of the predicate, and the whole subordinate clause *that Ben was handsome* is the object. As we know, when we want to passivize a sentence, the object becomes the subject. In this case, the whole clause has to become the subject, which does not work very well, as we can see in (35). This is because the subject is too heave and because new information usually comes last.

(35)

    ? That Ben was handsome was thought by her.

Non-finite verbs are verbs that do not show tense. They can occur in three forms, which are gerunds, infinitives, and participles. So, if we were to take the verbs *cook*, the gerund form is

cooking, the infinitive is *to cook*, and the participle is *cooked*. Examples of non-finite clauses can be seen in (36).

(36)

    a) Ben enjoyed meeting her.

    b) Ben managed to cook dinner.

The choice between the gerund and the infinitive depends on the preceding verb. In the clauses in (36), the preceding verbs are the predicates and *meeting her* in (36a) and *to cook dinner* in (36b) are the objects. We can again try to turn the sentences into the passive voice.

(37)

    a) ? Meeting her was enjoyed by Ben.

    b) ? To cook dinner was managed by Ben.

However, according to Quirk, there are ways how to make the passive clause acceptable. But this usually only works if the object is a finite clause. One way is to start the passive sentence with the anticipatory pronoun *it* (Quirk et al. 1985, 164). We can try to rewrite the sentence in (35) in this way.

(38)

    It was thought that Ben was attractive.

The sentence in (38) is acceptable, as opposed to the one in (35). Another way how to make the passive clause acceptable is to make the subject of the object clause, the subject of the passive clause (Quirk et al. 1985, 164). So, in our case, the finite object clause is *Ben was handsome*. The subject of the object clause is Ben, which will become the subject of the passive clause. The result is shown in (39).

(39)

    Ben was thought to be attractive.

Another aspect that can block the acceptability of a passive clause is if the object contains a reflexive, reciprocal or possessive pronoun (Quirk et al. 1985, 164). In (40), we can observe

sentences with these types of pronouns, as opposed to other types of pronouns, and then the attempt to passivize them, which results in ungrammatical structures.

(40)

    a) *Maxine drove **herself** to the airport. vs Maxine drove him to the airport.*
       *__Herself__ was driven to the airport. vs He was driven to the airport.

    b) *We could not hear **each other**. vs We could not hear them.*
       *__Each other__ could not be heard. vs They could not be heard.

    c) *The woman$_i$ took **her hat$_i$** off. vs The woman took my hat off.*
       *__Her hat$_i$__ was taken off by the woman$_i$. vs My hat was taken off by the woman.

2.9.3 Agent Constraints

In passive sentences, the agent, or the doer of the action, is expressed with the optional by-phrase. The optionality of the by-phrase results in the fact that passive sentences are often without an agent. As noted in Quirk, four out of five passive clauses in English have no expressed agent (Quirk et al. 1985, 165).

Agents can be left out if they are not relevant or they are not known. In the following examples in (41), examples from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) are listed, which have no expressed agent.

(41)

    a) *He **is sentenced** to an additional five years after his conviction on fraud and conspiracy.*
       (THE NATION: Battles Over the Years - The New York Times, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/1988/07/03/weekinreview/the-nation-battles-over-the-years-the-feds-vs-the-teamsters.html)

    b) *Most Americans believe independence **was declared** on July 4th.*
       (In the Matter of Todd Akin at Steven Landsburg | The Big Questions, 2012, http://www.thebigquestions.com/2012/08/21/in-the-matter-of-todd-akin/)

    c) *Her body **was found** 500 metres away.*

(Would Real Wolves Act Like the Wolves of 'The Grey'? – News Watch, 2012, http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2012/02/03/would-real-wolves-act-like-the-wolves-of-the-grey/)

    d) *Nowadays there is a lot of much more interesting architecture and the central boulevard **was made** inaccessible for cars.*
(Cycling from the University to the Center of Utrecht « BicycleDutch, 2012, http://bicycledutch.wordpress.com/2012/10/18/cycling-from-the-university-to-the-center-of-utrecht/)

If we wanted to reconstruct the active sentence from the examples in (41), it would not be possible. For example, the active sentence in (41a) could look like this: *The court / the jury / the judge sentenced him to an additional five years*. But we have no way of knowing for sure after the by-phrase is omitted from the passive sentence.

In addition to being not known or relevant, Quirk mentions that agents can be left out when they are redundant (Quirk et al. 1985, 165). For this, we can consider the sentence in (42).

(42)

    Fortunately, the team managed to correct the problem and at least that one is taken care of.
(The Explainer: A gift recommendation and problems with a dead, 2012, http://redkiteprayer.com/2012/11/the-explainer-a-gift-recommendation-and-problems-with-a-dead-beat-team/)

If we assume that the team has taken care of the problem, it would be redundant to mention the team again in a by-phrase.

One interesting verb which is mentioned by Quirk is the verb *follow*. It is mentioned in connection with the fact that, sometimes, the by-phrase can be obligatory for the sentence to make sense (Quirk et al. 1985, 165). What exactly is meant by that is shown in (43).

(43)

    a) *The dinner was followed by a delicious dessert.*

    b) **The dinner was followed.*

    c) *We are being followed.*

As we can see from (43a) and (43b,), the clause in (43a) would not make sense without the by-phrase. However, it does not depend on the verb, since in (43c), the sentence is fully acceptable even without the by-phrase. So, it seems to depend on the context of the sentence and the information contained in it. We just simply need more information for a sentence like (43b) to be meaningful.

2.9.4 Meaning constraints

It is often assumed that an active sentence and its passive counterpart have the same meaning. While this is the case most of the time, there are exceptions to this rule. However, the meaning difference is relatively subtle and can often be only determined by proficient speakers of English by their language intuition. One example mentioned by Quirk are clauses containing modal verbs (Quirk et al. 1985, 165). We can look at the sentences in (44) for more detail.

(44)

    a) Anna cannot solve the problem.

    b) The problem cannot be solved (by Anna).

While in the sentence (44a), the usual understanding is that Anna has not the ability to solve the problem, in (44a), the usual understanding is that it is not possible to solve the problem. Therefore, the modal verb can expresses ability in (44a), but in (44b), it expresses epistemic modality (Quirk et al. 1985, 165).

We can look at another example to see if this theory still holds.

(45)

    a) Tim cannot climb the mountain.

    b) The mountain cannot be climbed (by Tim).

In (45a), we would understand the sentence as Tim is not able to climb the mountain, but clearly in (45b), the sentences expresses the impossibility of climbing the mountain, especially if we were to omit the by-phrase.

2.9.5 Frequency Constraints

The last constraint mentioned by Quirk is the frequency constraint (Quirk et al. 1985, 166). This constraint is different from the ones which were discussed above. The ones we already examined were linguistic constraints and were concerned with the structure of the passive clause. However, we can also look at where and how the passive clauses are used.

As one might expect, active clauses are, in general, used more frequently. Nevertheless, it depends on the style of the text. In fictional texts, the active style is the one that is preferred, but in non-fictional texts, e.g., objective scientific works or news articles, the passive sentences are used more frequently.

Another aspect mentioned by Quirk is the complexity of sentences (Quirk et al. 1985, 166–67). The reason why he mentions it, is that less complex sentences are easier to passivize than complex sentences. We can demonstrate this by the examples shown in (46).

(46)
     a) *The previous owners renovated the house.*
         The house has been renovated.
     b) *The previous owners have been renovating the house.*
         The house has been being renovated.

The sentence in (46a) can be passivized without any problems. However, the sentence in (46b) is a more complex sentence with the auxiliary verbs *have* and also *be*. This means that in the passive sentence, we need to have two forms of the verb *be* following each other, which results in a rather strange clause. Technically speaking, it is a grammatical structure, but most people would opt for the active sentence.

2.9.6 Information-Structure Constraints

When structuring a passive sentence, or any sentence for that matter, we are conveying some information. This information usually has a structure and there are preferences on which information to say where in a sentence. Information can be either new or old, or as noted in Huddleston and Pullum, familiar and unfamiliar (2005, 242). We can demonstrate this with an example in (47).

(47)

    *a) I talked to **my teacher** about **the essay** today, and **she** said **it** needs to be handed in*
        by next week.

    *b) My neighbour told me that **my package has not arrived yet**, but I do not think **that***
        is true.

In (47a), the speaker treats the words *my teacher* and *the essay* as new information. But when it is mentioned again, it is already treated as old information and therefore can be referred to only in pronouns. The hearer already knows, what the speaker is talking about and there is no need to repeat it as a whole.

In (47b), the information about the speakers package not arriving is new information. This can be later substituted with just the pronoun *that*.

However, as already mentioned, there is a preference on which information, the familiar or unfamiliar one, to mention first. According to Huddleston and Pullum, in English, there is a preference to pack information in the way that subjects represent old information. It should not be regarded as a rule, but the preference can be seen in the acceptability of active or passive clauses (2005, 242). We can see this by looking at the sentences in (48).

(48)

    a) A bear chased me in the woods.
        I was chased by a bear in the woods.

    b) I saw a hot air balloon.
        A hot air balloon was seen by me.

In (48a), the second, passive clause is more acceptable. The bear who chased represents a new information and since the preference is for subjects to represent old information, the passive sentence follows that preference. Therefore, it sounds better.

In (48b), the new information is the hot air balloon. When we follow the preference of subjects carrying old information, the first, active, sentence is a better choice in English. From this we can conclude that there is also a constraint on the by-phrase in a passive sentence regarding the information structure. As noted in Pullum, the by-phrase in a passive clause must denote something which is at least as new as the subject. However, this rule is relative, meaning that the information in the by-phrase can be old, but it cannot be older than the subject (2014, 8). We can examine this through the clauses in (49).

33

(49)

    a)   *Have you heard the good news about the puppy? It was adopted by my friend.*

    b)   *Have you heard the good news about my friend? # The puppy was adopted by her.*

In (49a), *the puppy* is mentioned in the first sentence and therefore is regarded as old information in the second, passive, clause. The by-phrase *by my friend* is then new information, it is newer than *the puppy*, which makes the passive clause felicitous.
In (49b), *the friend* is new information in the first sentence, and again, regarded as old information in the passive clause, where it is replaced by the pronoun *her*. However, the subject of the passive clause is *the puppy*, which is newer information than *by her*. This makes the sentence infelicitous.

2.9.6.1 Affected and Unaffected Objects

The last constraint which will be discussed here is concerned with affected and unaffected objects. To understand what this means, we need to first recall Prepositional Passives. As we have seen in the chapter on prepositional passives, there are two main types of them. There are specified prepositional passives, where the verb and the preposition are lexicalized. This means that the preposition cannot be replaced by another preposition, without a change in the meaning. Examples of specified verbs and prepositions are l*ook after, look forward to, be aware of*, or *take advantage of*. The second group are unspecified prepositional passives, where the preposition can be replaced by another preposition without the meaning being completely lost. The original meaning of the verb and the preposition is kept, as opposed to the specified prepositional passive. Examples include *look at, look under, put on*, or *sit on*. According to Pullum, the affected and unaffected objects are a matter of the unspecified prepositional passive (2014, 7–8). To understand what is behind this, we can look at the sentences in (50).

(50)

    a)   *The Achilleion Palace was once inhabited by Sissi, the Empress of Austria.*

    b)   *# The Greek Island Rhodes was once walked on by Sissi, the Empress of Austria.*

How can we explain the felicitousness of the sentence in (50a), but the infectiousness of the sentence in (50b)? The answer goes back to the affected and unaffected objects. The object[2] in the clause in (50a) is the Achilleion Palace. We can say that being inhabited by Sissi, affected the palace, therefore a passive is possible. However, the object in the clause in (50b), which is the island Rhodes, cannot be said to be affected by Sissi walking through it. Therefore, the sentence seems to be infelicitous.

Another example is shown in (51), inspired by Pullum (2014, 8).

(51)

      a)   *The bed has been slept in.* (Pullum 2014, 8)

      b)   *# The house has been slept in.*

Again, we can see the difference in the acceptability of the two passive clauses in (51). The bed is directly affected by the action of someone sleeping in it. But the house in not directly affected, there it is unaffected, which results in the infelicitous passive clause in (51b).

2.10 Passivization of Complex Verbs

Before we can deal with how complex verbs can be passivized, we need to understand what complex verbs are and how we can divide them. The next sub-chapters will deal with the different types of complex verbs and subsequently with their passivization. Complex verbs can be categorized into phrasal verbs, prepositional verbs, and phrasal-prepositional verbs. Let us first define the broader term, which is the complex verb. A complex verb is composed of a verb and some other element, usually a particle or a preposition. The important part is that this unit of verb plus particle or preposition behaves as a single unit. This does not always mean that the particle or the preposition has to immediately follow the verb, but there is a certain cohesion between them. In Quirk, we can find a similar structure like the one in (52). It is reasonable to assume that the structure in (52a) is the correct one, as opposed to the one in (52b) (Quirk et al. 1985, 1150).

(52)

      She took off her shoes.

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[2] By the word object here, I do not mean the linguistic object of a sentence, but a real world object.

a) *[She] [took off][her shoes].*
b) *[She][took][off her shoes].*

2.10.1 Phrasal Verbs and their Passivization

Phrasal verbs can be defined as verbs with an adverb particle. Their main characteristics are that they can be transitive or intransitive and that the verb usually can be divided by something else from the adverb particle. We can also say that they are informal and can be often replaced by another more formal verb (Quirk et al. 1985, 1152–54). Let us look at these characteristics in more detail, using the sentences in (53).

(53)

    a) *Liza **looked up** the definition.*
    b) *Liza **looked** the definition **up**.*
    c) *On the weekends, Liza likes to **get away**.*

In the sentences (53a) and (53b), the phrasal verb is transitive, as we can see from the direct object it takes, in this case, *the definition*. The direct object can be placed after the whole phrasal verb, or also in between the verb and the particle. In (53c), there is no direct object after the phrasal verb, so we can call this verb an intransitive one.
We can now examine the informality of the phrasal verbs and try to replace them with another verb. This is done in (54).

(54)

    a) *He **gave up** his position at the firm.*
       *He **resigned** his position at the firm.*
    b) *She **gets by** on her savings.*
       *She **survives** on her savings.*
    c) *The plane has already **taken off**.*
       *The plane has already **departed**.*

It is not always possible to replace the phrasal verb with another more formal verb, but from the sentences in (54) we can conclude that, in general, phrasal verbs are informal.

We can now move on to the passivization of phrasal verbs. As already mentioned, there are two types of phrasal verbs. There are transitive phrasal verbs, which take a direct object and intransitive phrasal verbs with no direct object. Since an object is needed to form a passive, only transitive phrasal verbs can be passivized. Some examples of phrasal verbs used in a passive sentence can be found in (55).

(55)

   a) *The documents were **thrown away** by mistake.*
   b) *The article was **handed in** on Tuesday.*
   c) *The letter was **sent to** the wrong person.*
   d) *The meeting was **called off**.*
   e) *The project was **carried out** by a few employees.*

2.10.2 Prepositional Verbs Compared to Phrasal Verbs

Prepositional verbs consist of a verb and a preposition. Before we get to the main characteristics of prepositional verbs, let us look at some examples and compare them with phrasal verbs.

(56)

   a) *I am **waiting for** the bus.*
   b) *The student **agreed with** the teacher.*
   c) *The visitors are **looking at** the paintings.*
   d) *We were **listening to** the radio throughout the whole trip.*

As we can see from the sentences in (56), they look very similar to phrasal verbs and it is not alwys possible to tell whether the word following the verb is a particle or a preposition. So how can we tell the difference? According to Aarts, the main difference is that, in prepositional verbs, the noun phrase cannot occur before the preposition (2001, 177). In other words, prepositional verbs cannot be separated from their preposition, while phrasal verbs can be separated from their particle by a noun phrase. We can see this from the sentences below.

(57)

   a) *We were listening to the radio.*

We were listening the radio to.

b) *He gave up his position.*

   He gave his position up.

From (57) we can see that we cannot separate the prepositional verb *listen to* with an NP, but we can separate the phrasal verb *give up*.

Now we can discuss the issue of whether prepositional verbs are transitive or intransitive. In Aarts, prepositional verbs are said to be only transitive, as they are followed by a noun phrase (Aarts 2001, 180). However, in Quirk, the situation looks different. He distinguishes between a prepositional object and a direct object. Therefore he calls prepositional verbs with a prepositional object intransitive and only prepositional verbs with a direct and a prepositional object transitive (Quirk et al. 1985, 1155–58). Let us look at this difference in more detail through the examples in (58).

(58)

a) *Sally's parents did not **approve of** her decisions.*

b) *Sunglasses **protect** your eyes **from** the sun.*

In (58a), the prepositional verbs *approve of* has only a prepositional object, in this case, *her decisions*. On the other hand, in (58b), the prepositional verb *protect from* has two objects. A direct object, *your eyes*, and a prepositional object, *the sun*.

This contrasts to what was said earlier, namely that prepositional verbs cannot be separated by a noun phrase. As we just seen from (58b), some of them clearly can be. So how do we then distinguish phrasal verbs from transitive prepositional verbs, or prepositional verbs with a direct object? According to Quirk, phrasal verbs have (or can have) a direct object, that is why they can be separated by a noun phrase. Prepositional verbs can either have only a prepositional object, or they can have a direct object, plus a prepositional object. To summarize, phrasal verbs have a direct object while prepositional verbs always have a prepositional object and may have a direct object as well (Quirk et al. 1985, 1161).

The distinction between phrasal verbs and the two types of prepositional verbs can be confusing. That is why we can also find some other solutions to the problem of differentiating between phrasal and prepositional verbs. In Aarts, we can find the opinion that the distinction between phrasal and prepositional verbs is unnecessary. As already mentioned, it is often not possible to say whether the element following the verb is a particle or a preposition. Aarts

suggests that we should call all of these elements prepositions, since they all look like prepositions. Then we can divide these prepositions into transitive and intransitive. According to this division, transitive verb-preposition constructions are, in the traditional view, only transitive phrasal verbs. Intransitive verb-preposition constructions are then, in the traditional view, intransitive phrasal verbs and prepositional verbs (Aarts 2001, 178–81). We can briefly illustrate the distinction in the example (59) below.

(59)

    a) *Tim switched on the computer.*
       She sent the parcel back.

    b) *The car broke down.*
       We rely on technology.

The sentences in (59a) represent the transitive prepositions, while the sentences in (59b) represent the intransitive prepositions. However, in this distinction, the prepositional verbs with a prepositional object as well as a direct object are not mentioned, e.g., *protect someone/something from someone/something, thank someone for something*. The passivization of these types of prepositional verbs will be discussed in the next chapter, therefore I shall use the traditional distinction.

2.10.3 Passivization of Prepositional Verbs

At first, we can examine the passives of prepositional verbs with only the prepositional object. Even though they can be classified as intransitive, the prepositional object can become the subject of the passive sentence. This can be seen in the sentences in (60).

(60)

    a) *We have not decided on **a travel destination** yet.*
       ***The travel destination** has not been decided on yet.*

    b) *My neighbour looked after **my plants**.*
       ***My plants** were looked after by my neighbour.*

    c) *Visitors looked at **the photographs**.*
       ***The photographs** were looked at by the visitors.*

d) *I rely on* **ideas of rationality, irrationality, and reasonableness** *in the subsequent chapters.*

Ideas of rationality, irrationality, and reasonableness *are relied on in subsequent chapters.* (What We Owe to Each Other, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/books/first/s/scanlon-owe.html)

Quirk mentions a somewhat stylistic awkwardness of the passive clauses with prepositional verbs (1985, 1156). Because of this, most native speakers would probably, in most contexts, choose the active clause over the passive clause in (60). But the passive clauses are nonetheless grammatical.

Now we can turn to prepositional verbs with a prepositional object and a direct object. In Quirk, three types of these prepositional verbs are mentioned. All of these three types form the passive slightly different, that is why it is worth examining all three types (Quirk et al. 1985, 1158).

Examples of the first type and the subsequent passivization can be seen in (61) below.

(61)

     a) *The teacher reminded* **the students** *of the deadline.*
         The students *were reminded of the deadline.*
     b) *The volunteers provided* **the abandoned dogs** *with food and water.*
         The abandoned dogs *were provided with food and water.*
     c) *The thief robbed* **her** *of her purse.*
         She *was robbed of her purse.*

In (61) we can see that the subject of the passive clause became the direct object of the active clause, as opposed to the first group of prepositional verbs, where the prepositional object became the subject. If were to passivize the prepositional object in the sentences in (61), it would lead to an ungrammatical structure.

However, the situation is different in the second type of prepositional verbs with two objects. The second type consists not only of the verb and its preposition, but of a verb, a noun phrase, and the preposition. According to Quirk, this structure is an idiom, but it can be modified by an adjective or a determiner before the NP. As an example, the prepositional verb *pay (close) attention to* can be mentioned. The verb is *pay*, the NP is *attention,* and the preposition is *to*. We can also modify the NP attention and add the adjective *good*.

An important difference between the first and the second type of prepositional verbs is that, in the second type, also the prepositional object can be made the subject of the passive clause. Nevertheless, the direct object is still the preferred choice (Quirk et al. 1985, 1158–60). Let us look at it in more detail in (62).

(62)

    a) *My neighbour **took good care of** my plants.*
       Good care was taken of my plants.
       My plants were taken good care of.

    b) *He **took advantage of** her good nature.*
       Advantage was taken of her good nature.
       Her good nature was taken advantage of.

    c) *The other children **made fun of** him.*
       Fun was made of him.
       He was made fun of.

    d) *My roommate **made a terrible mess of** the kitchen.*
       A terrible mess was made of the kitchen.
       The kitchen was made a terrible mess of.

In (62), we have three sentences in each of the a) to d) examples. The first sentence is the active one, the second sentence is the passive sentence in which the subject is the direct object of the active sentence, and the third sentence is the passive sentence in which the subject is the prepositional object of the active sentence. In (62a) and (62d), the noun phrase is also modified by an adjective.

The third type of prepositional verbs with two objects is similar to the second type. It also consists of a verb, a noun phrase and a preposition. However, it differs in the fact that it is even more idiomatic. According to Quirk, "*the direct object is more firmly welded in its idiomatic position*" (Quirk et al. 1985, 1160). This subsequently results in the fact that the noun phrase cannot be modified and the subject in the passive sentence cannot be made from the direct object, but only from the prepositional object. This is shown by the clauses in (63).

(63)

    a) *Valeria has **lost touch with** her childhood friends.*
       Her childhood friends were lost touch with.

> *Touch was lost with her childhood friends.

    b)   *For a moment, I **lost sight of** my dog.*

         For a moment, my dog was lost sight of.

         *For a moment, sight was lost of my dog.

    c)   *She could not **keep pace with** the other runners.*

         The other runners could not be kept pace with.

         *Pace could not be kept with the other runners.

    d)   *The frequent thunderstorms have **given rise to** the many flooded areas.*

         The many flooded areas were given rise to by the frequent thunderstorms.

         *Rise was given to the many flooded areas by the frequent thunderstorms.

As we can see from the examples in (63), there is a strong affinity between the verb, the NP, and the preposition. They require to be kept together and therefore, using the direct object as the subject of the passive sentence results in ungrammaticality.

2.10.4 Passivization of Phrasal-Prepositional Verbs

The third subclass of complex verb, which will be discussed here, are phrasal-prepositional verbs. In Quirk, they are defined as complex verbs, which are made of a lexical verb, an adverb, and a preposition. They are mostly used in informal English and often can be replaced with one verb, which is more formal (Quirk et al. 1985, 1160). Phrasal-prepositional verbs can be further divided into those which do not need a direct object and those who do. When they do not have a direct object, the prepositional object becomes the subject of the passive clause. On the other hand, when the phrasal-prepositional verb has a direct object, the direct object becomes the subject of the passive clause. Let us now look at some examples of these verbs. In (64), we can see active sentences with phrasal-prepositional verbs that do not have a direct object and their passive counterparts.

(64)

    a)   *A lot of people **look forward to** summer.*

         Summer is looked forward to by a lot of people.

    b)   *She usually **gets away with** everything.*

         Everything is gotten away with by her.

    c)   *I can no longer **put up with** his bad behaviour.*

His bad behaviour cannot be longer put up with.

d)   *You must **face up to** what you have caused.*

What you have caused must be faced up to.

In the sentences in (64), the only object was the prepositional object and therefore, the choice was to take this object as the subject of the passive clause.

In the second type of phrasal-prepositional verbs, we will have two objects, the direct and the prepositional one. But again, we only have one choice, which is to use the direct object as the subject of the passive clause. Using the prepositional object would cause ungrammaticality. Some examples are listed in (65).

(65)

a)   *We should not **let** our anger **out on** other people.*

Our anger should not be let out on other people.

b)   *His parents **put** his failures **down to** his laziness.*

His failures were put down to his laziness by his parents.

c)   *The company **put** the new software **up to** test.*

The new software was put up to test.

d)   *My friend **let** me **in on** a big secret.*

I was let in on a big secret.

As is illustrated by the examples in (65), these phrasal-prepositional verbs have a direct object after the lexical verb. This object is then used as the subject of the passive sentence.

2.11 The *Get*-Passive Revisited

We have been already dealing with the *get*-passive, in the chapter 2.5. There, we have seen how this type of passive differs from the "standard" passive, which is the passive formed with the verb *be*. The main differences discussed were that *get*, as opposed to *be*, is not an auxiliary verb and therefore behaves differently in various types of clauses, and that get is often followed by a copula, as opposed to a past participle.

In the following subchapters, we will be looking at the possible understandings or reading of the *get*-passive. These are the adversative and benefactive readings of *get*-passives. To obtain a better understanding of these two readings, we will look at some languages which have

lexical or morphological means to differentiate between the two understandings of a passive clause.

Another aspect we will be dealing with is how the *get*-passive can be divided into different types.

2.11.1 The Adversative and Benefactive Reading of Passives

Oftentimes, when we use the get-passive, the subject of the clause is the experiencer of some action, either positive or negative. We can call the positive influence on the experiencer benefactive, and the negative influence adversative, as it is done in Toyota (2008, 144–45). To illustrate this distinction better, we can look at the sentences in (66).

(66)
        a) *She got married to the love of her life.*
        b) *John got beaten up yesterday.*

We can assume that in the sentence in (66a), the subject, namely *she*, benefited from the action described in the sentence, therefore the reading is benefactive. Contrary to the sentence in (66b), where the subject, *John*, did not benefit from the action described in the clause. This distinction between adversative and benefactive reading can be even applied to inanimate objects, especially in some languages. As Toyota mentions, some languages in east and south-east Asia have this adversative or benefactive reading in the passive sentence shown not only semantically, but also syntactically. That means that these languages have some lexical or morphological elements to show these two readings. Examples of these languages include Chinese, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Japanese or Korean (2008, 144).

We can look closer at Vietnamese, which uses lexical means to show the adversative or benefactive reading. According to Toyota, the word *bi* means to suffer in Vietnamese. So, when it is used in a passive clause, the adversative reading can be assumed. On the other hand, the word *duoc* means to enjoy. In this case, the reading of the passive sentence is benefactive. The second method of showing the distinction between the two reading, namely the morphological one, can be found, for example, in Indonesian (2008, 144–45).

As mentioned above, also inanimate subjects can be affected adversatively or benefactively. An example mentioned by Toyota is a Chinese sentence, that can be translated into English as: "The bottle of wine was finished by him". In the Chinese sentence, in addition to the verb finish, there is the verb *bei*, which means to suffer. This means that the word for word

translation would be something in the sense of the wine bottle suffering due to the fact that a person finished drinking out of it (2008, 144).

2.11.2 The Different Types of the English *Get*-Passive

In this subchapter, we will analyse how the adversative and benefactive reading, which we have seen being used throughout various languages in the previous subchapter, can be applied to English.

Toyota mentions that, in the *get*-passive clauses, there is always an outer cause and that this cause has some effect on the subject of the clause. She then differentiates three types of the *get*-passive (2008, 148). We can demonstrate these three types through the sentences in (67).

(67)

   a) *Emma got vaccinated before leaving for Africa.*
   b) *My cousin got elected mayor.*
   c) *Bill got accused of robbery.*

The sentence in (67a) represents the first type of the *get*-passive. According to Toyota, the first type is the only type where the subject has control over the action. She proves this by adding adverbs which express willingness, such as *on purpose* or *willingly* (2008, 148). We can try this with the sentences from (67).

(68)

   a) *Emma got willingly/on purpose/deliberately vaccinated before leaving for Africa.*
   b) **My cousin got willingly elected major.*
   c) **Bill got deliberately accused of robbery.*

As we can observe from (68), only the sentence in (68a) makes sense when we added these types of adverbs. This suggests that the subject is in control over the actions expressed by the sentence.

The second type presented in Toyota is represented by the sentence in (67a). This type is in contrast with the first type in the sense that the subject has not control over the action. However, the got-passive is still used to show the subjects responsibility (2008, 148–49). We can then understand the sentence in (67b) as the cousin, on one hand, having no control over

the results of the election, but on the other hand still being responsible, since he probably had a good political campaign and is skilled in politics.

The third type mentioned by Toyota is represented by the sentence in (67c). In this type, the adversative or benefactive reading comes into play, but the responsibility of the subject still remains, i.e., Bill has probably done something wrong to be accused of the robbery. From the sentence in (67c), it is relatively clear that the reading of this sentence is an adversative one. But to demonstrate the adversative reading, we can add the phrase *adversely affected* (2008, 149). This is shown in (69) below.

(69)

      Bill got adversely affected by accusation of robbery.

We can also try the benefactive reading on another sentence, to which we could add the phrase *benefactively affected*. For this, we can use the sentence from (66). Thus is then illustrated in (70).

(70)

      a) *She got married to the love of her life.*

      b) *She was benefactively affected by marrying the love of her life.*

2.11.3 Animacy and the Presence of an Agent in Get-Passives

In this subchapter, two important differences between passives with *be* and passives with *get* will be discussed.

Let us first look at the subject of animacy. In the prototypical passives with *be*, the object of the active clause becomes the subject of the passive clause. This object is often inanimate. We can look at some common passive clauses for this, which are shown in (71).

(71)

      a) *I baked a cake.*

         The cake was baked.

      b) *The student wrote a paper.*

         The paper was written.

Subjects of the be passives can also be animate, of course, but the inanimate subjects form a considerate portion of the passive sentences. However, this does not seem to be the case in the *get* passives. In Toyota, we can find that about 86% of the *get*-passives have an animate subject (2008, 153). This can be also observed by the examples mentioned in the previous subchapters. Alle the sentences in (66) to (70) have an animate subject. According to Toyota, the reason behind the subject animacy in the get-passives might be explained by the lower degree of grammaticalization of the verb *get*, compared to the auxiliary verb *be* (2008, 153). The second difference lies in the presence, or in the case of the *get*-passives in the absence, of an agent. In passives with *be*, subjects of the corresponding active sentence are often represented in the passive clause with by-phrases. However, in clauses with the *get*-passive, this is very rare. To be precise, according to Toyota, only 1.4% of *get*-passives have the agent expressed with a by-phrase. This fact strengthens the assumptions made above, namely that, in the *get*-passives, the subject has no control over the event (Toyota 2008, 154).

2.12 The Mediopassive Voice

We can start this chapter with an example.

(72)

> *In this house, the doors and the windows open easily.*

The sentence in (72) might seem quite uninteresting and normal at the first glance, but in fact, is far from straightforward. Is it an active sentence? If so, where is the agent opening the doors and the windows? Do they open by themselves? If they do, why would we then say they do so easily. So, is it a passive sentence then? Maybe, but where is the verb *be* or *get* and the past participle of the main verb?

In the next subchapter, we will try to answer these questions by looking at similar constructions as the one (72), which are called mediopassives. We will define what them, then compare them to the similar looking ergative verbs, and lastly, try to compare them with the passives with *be* and *get* discussed so far.

2.12.1 The Main Characteristics of Mediopassive Constructions

To begin with the important characteristics of the mediopassive voice and the constructions in it, we can look at a prototypical example of a mediopassive clause in (73).

(73)

    The book reads well.

Firstly, we can look at the subject and the predicate, which is *the book reads*. It already seems strange, because we know from our encyclopaedic knowledge that only an animate and a human agent can perform the action of reading. And *book* is clearly an inanimate subject, incapable of reading well. Therefore, the sentence cannot be understood as a classic active sentence, even though, syntactically speaking, it is. Syntax does not differentiate between the two sentences in (74).

(74)

    a) *The boy reads well.*
    b) *The book reads well.*

But from the semantic viewpoint, (74a) is an active sentence in which a boy has a good ability of reading, whereas (74b) is understood as a passive sentence in which the book is good and easy to read.

This brings us to the first characteristic of mediopassive constructions, which is, as noted in Hundt, that these constructions are "*morphologically active, but semantically passive-like*" (2007, 7). We cannot say that they are passive constructions, since the verb is in an active voice.

Another main characteristic mentioned by Hundt is that the verb is typically modified by either a manner adverb or a modal verb. In the examples in (72) and (73) we have seen the modification through the adverbs *easily* and *well*. Let us now look at some examples modified by a modal verb.

(75)

    a) *Otherwise, their aromas may combine in a way that's not necessarily pleasant.*
       (3 TIPS FOR FRAGRANT GARDENS, 2014, Mag. Horticulutre)

b) *A good example is the " opening account balance " that a company may assign to each older employee during the conversion.*
(Personal Business; It May Be Time to Plumb Your Pension's Depths, 2002, New York Times)

c) *A total solar eclipse will not repeat for another couple hundred years.*

Another modification mentioned by Hundt are other kinds of adverbs, such as the adverb always (2007, 9). It is claimed by Dixon, that a mediopassive can occur without a manner adverb, when used with the adverb always (2005, 450) However, this claim does not hold with all mediopassive constructions, as we can see from (76).

(76)

    a) *Summer dresses always sell.*

    b) *I think that summer dresses sell.*

    c) *? The book always reads.*

    d) *? The book always reads well.*

    e) *These books always read well.*

The statement mentioned by Dixon holds in the sentence in (76a). However, as mentioned by Hundt (2007, 9), *sell* is a verb which is possible to use in the mediopassive voice without any modifiers at all, as we can see from the acceptability of the sentence in (76b). But when we try to use the adverb always without any other modifier in the sentence in (76c), the result is not an in not an acceptable sentence. The same is true for (76d), where the adverb *well* was added, but the sentence is still not acceptable. Finally, the sentence in (76e) is acceptable. Why is that? Hundt mentions that *always* can modify only a group of objects, not a single one (2007, 9). So *summer dresses* and *these books* were acceptable, but not a single book.

As we have seen, in English, the mediopassive constructions use a verb in the active voice, in the present tense and the verb need to be modified by an adverb or a modal verb. We can now compare the English mediopassives with German and Slovak ones, to see what differences there are. This is done in (77).

(77)

    a) *The door closes well.*

    b) *Die Tür lässt sich leicht schließen. / Die Tür kann man liecht schließen.*

> *c) Dvere sa ľahko zatvárajú.*

In (77), we have the German counterpart of the English sentence in (77a). In German, there are actually two options of how to say this sentence. The first is with the reflexive pronoun such as is the case also in many other languages. The second option is with the indefinite pronoun *man*. This pronoun could be roughly translated by the non-referential pronoun *you* in English, as in: *You are required to buy a ticket before entering the train*. In (77c), we have the Slovak version of the sentence. This will be discussed in more detail later on, but we can say that Slovak also makes use of the reflexive pronoun *sa*.

The question now is if we could use a reflexive pronoun instead mediopassive constructions in English as well. According to Hundt, there are some sentences which are grammatical when we use them with a reflexive pronoun as well as in the mediopassive voice (2007, 10–11). Such an examples is shown in (78). The examples are inspired by the ones in Hundt.

(78)

> *a) The lifejacket inflates itself.*
> *b) The lifejacket inflates within seconds.*

From (78) we can see that also in English, the reflexive pronoun can be used to construct a clause similar to the mediopassive one. But this is not always possible and often, sentences can be used only with the reflexive pronoun or only with the mediopassive voice (Hundt 2007, 11).

2.12.2 The Mediopassive Voice Compared to Ergative Verbs

We have already defined the mediopassive voice, now we need to define what ergative verbs are. The definition from Collins dictionary says that ergative verbs are verbs that be both transitive and intransitive. We can look at at such a verb used transitively and intransitively in (79).

(79)

> *a) Michael opened the window.*
> *b) The window was opened.*

In (79a), we have an active sentence with the verb open used transitively. In (79b), the verb open is used intransitively. Other such verb which can be used in this manner are for example *open, freaz, break*, or *drown* (Hundt 2007, 11). We can look at some more examples of sentences with ergative verbs to be able to differentiate between these verb and the mediopassive voice. This is done in (80).

(80)

    a) The plate broke.

    b) The river had frozen.

    c) All doors opened.

    d) *The man was drowning.*

The first visible difference of the sentences in (80) to the mediopassive constructions we have dealt with so far, is the use of tensed verbs. Typically, the mediopassive voice does not use tensed verbs. Why is this the case? The answer, according to Hundt, is that mediopassive sentences give us information about the subject of the sentence, or in other words, some inherent properties of the subject. This then means that a mediopassive construction does not, normally, refer to any specific time, since its main function is to describe the NP in the subject (2007, 13). Nevertheless, this is not a rule, and when we see a mediopassive construction with a tensed verb, it does not automatically mean that the sentence is not in the mediopassive voice. We can look at some examples of these kinds of mediopassive constructions in (81). They are inspired by the ones used in Hundt.

(81)

    a) The dresses are selling well every day.

    b) This old wine is still drinking very well these days.

    c) His car took the curves fast. (Hundt 2007, 14–15)

The sentences in (81a-c) are interesting due to the fact that we have the progressive tense combined with adverbials that show some habit. In Hundt, the verbs sell and drink are listed as exceptions, since usually, we cannot combine the progressive tense with expressions that signal some kind of repetition, e.g., every day, these days. In (81c) , an example of the past tense in a mediopassive construction is shown. We could find such a sentence in narrative style, for example in fiction books (Hundt 2007, 15).

The second difference between ergative verbs and the mediopassive voice can be also seen from the sentences in (80). In these sentences, no modifying adverbials or modals are used. As we have discussed earlier, the mediopassive constructions are characteristic for these modifications, such as *very well* or *easily*. But even though the modifying adverbials are an important characteristic, they are not necessary and mediopassive constructions without them exist as well (Hundt 2007, 12). Such examples are shown in Hundt and similar sentences are illustrated in (82) below.

(82)

    a) *Glass recycles endlessly.*

    b) *The chair adjusts to several positions.* (Hundt 2007, 12)

The third difference between ergative and the mediopassive voice is the notion of implicit agent, i.e., the doer of the action. As mentioned in Hundt, in sentences with ergative verbs, the agent is no implicit agent, since we can add the phrase "*all by itself*" to these constructions, e.g., *The door opened all by itself*. Therefore, there is no one who makes the action happen. On the other hand, in the mediopassive voice, we cannot add the phrase "*all by itself*" (Hundt 2007, 17–16). In (83), the discussed notion of the implicit agent is shown on prototypical examples of a clause in the mediopassive voice and a clause with an ergative verb.

(83)

    a) *The window broke all by itself.*

    b) *The window opens easily.*

    c) *? The window opens easily all by itself.*

In (83a), we can see a prototypical clause with an ergative verb, which can by modified by the phrase "*all by itself*", therefore implying that there is no agent. In (83b), the sentence is a prototypical sentence in the mediopassive voice, as the verb is not tensed and is followed by a modifying adverb. The implicit agent can be seen by the fact that someone has to open the window in order for him or her to be able to utter such a sentence. In (83c), we can see that the sentence in (83b) does not combine with the phrase "*all by itself*", again implying that there is an implicit agent.

2.12.3 Comparison of the Mediopassive Voice with Other Types of Passives

We can compare the mediopassive voice with the *be*-passive and the *get*-passive in terms of the responsibility of the subject and the control over the action. These two topics have been already discussed in the chapter The *Get-Passive* Revisited and its subchapters. To summarize, in the sentences with get-passive, the subject can have control over the actions described by the sentence, but often has no control. However, the subject is responsible for the action described. *Get*-passives appear with a by-phrase only rarely, again suggesting the subject's responsibility.

In Hundt, this responsibility is viewed as a gradient, whose shift we can observe. In the *be*-passives, the subjects responsibility seems to be the lowest, while in the mediopassive constructions the highest. In the *get*-passives, it is then somewhere in between (2007, 69). Let us look at some examples in (84) to better understand this phenomenon.

(84)

       a) *The door was not closed.*

       b) *The door did not get closed.*

       c) *The door would not close.*

We can now look at the notion of responsibility and control in these clauses. According to Hundt (2007, 69), the clause in (84a) represents a clause where an external agent is the most entailed. This also means that we could easily add a by-phrase to the sentence. In the clause in (84b) a shift to the responsibility of the subject rather than the unexpressed agent can be felt. Lastly, in (84c), the responsibility is felt to be entirely on the subject and not the agent, e.g., it is the door's fault that it does not close, not mine. We can also illustrate this division by trying to add a by-phrase to the sentences in (84). This is done in (85) and as we can see, the sentence with the be-passive in (85a) can take a by-phrase without any limitations, the sentence with the get-passive in (85b) sounds slightly strange, but is still grammatical, and the clause in the mediopassive voice in (85c) cannot take a by-phrase and the results in ungrammaticality.

(85)

       a) *The door was not closed by the man.*

b) *? The door did not get closed by the man.*

c) **The door would not close by the man.*

3 The Slovak Passive

In the next subchapters, the focus will be on the passivation process in the Slovak language. Firstly, we will focus on how the passive is formed in Slovak and then discuss the similarities and differences with the English passive. Lastly, we will focus on the reflexive passive in Slovak and compare it to the English mediopassive.

3.1 The Formation of the Passive Clause

In Slovak, there are two ways of how to turn an active sentence into a passive one. According to Popovičová, we can differentiate between the passive formed with the auxiliary verb *be* (*byť*) and the part participle of the main verb and the passive formed with the help of a reflexive pronoun (2021, 52). The first option corresponds with the English *be*-passive, while the second option does not have a corresponding passive structure in English. These two options are illustrated in (86) below.

(86)

　　a) *Anna pečie koláč.*
　　　 Anna bakes cake
　　　 "Anna is baking a cake."

　　b) *Koláč je pečený.*
　　　 Cake is baked
　　　 "The cake is being baked."

　　c) *Koláč sa pečie.*
　　　 Cake ref. pro. bake
　　　 "The cake is being baked."

In (86a), we can see a sentence in the active voice, with a subject, a transitive verb and an object. In (86b), the active sentence in (86a) was passivized. The object of the active clause became the subject of the passive clause, and the verb was combined with the appropriate form of the verb be and the suffix *-ný* was added to the main verb to form the past participle. In (86c), the cake is again the subject of the passive clause, but this time, the main verb stayed

the same as in the active clause. However, between the subject and the verb, the reflexive pronoun *sa* was added. In Slovak, the progressive tense does not exist, but in this context, the English counterparts sound most natural in the present continuous tense. In the sentence in (86), both passivization processes could be used, but this is not always the case. Therefore, we will discuss the two passivization styles in more details in the following subchapters and focus on their formation and usage in different contexts.

3.1.1 The Participle Passive

To start, we can look in more detail at the formation of the participle passive. The first thing Slovak speakers need to do is to conjugate the verb *be*. Since the form is different in different persons, which is in contrast with English, where the verb changes only in the third person singular, we can look at this conjugation in the present tense. This is shown in (87).

(87)

Singular	*Plural*
1. Ja som	*1. My sme*
2. Ty si	*2. Vy ste*
3. On, ona, ono je	*3. Oni sú*

As can be seen from (87), the verb *be* is distinct in every person, in singular and in plural as well. It again changes in other tense forms, such as in the past and future tense. But for the purposes of this thesis, it will be enough to show just the verb in the present tense, to illustrate the changes verbs in Slovak undergo during conjugation.

Assuming we want to passivize a sentence in the present tense, the next step is to put the main verb into the past participle. This happens by adding the suffix -ný to the verb stem. Some examples of this are shown in (88).

(88)

    a) *Vidieť – videný*

        To see – seen

    b) *Staviať – stavaný*

        To build – built

    c) *Oparaviť – opravený*

To repair – repaired

   d) *Spraviť – spravený*

      Make – made

   e) *Zakázať – zakázaný*

      Ban – banned

   f) *Namalovať – namalovaný*

      To paint – painted

   g) *Piecť – pečený*

      Bake – baked

We can see from the examples in (88) that the formation of the past participle in Slovak is not always straightforward and there are certain changes happening to the verbs. In (88a), there is a diphthong in the second syllable of the word, namely -*ie*. However, this diphthong disappears in the past participle and only the second letter of the diphthong stays in the past participle form. The same is true for (88b), where the diphthong -*ia* disappears, leaving only the second letter of the diphthong, -*a*, in the past participle. In the examples in (88c-d), the infinitive of the verb ends with the suffix -*iť*. This suffix is then removed and the suffix -*ený* is added, not just -*ný*. A similar thing is happening in the verbs in (88e-f), with the difference that these verbs have the infinitive suffix -*ať*, which then disappears and is substituted with -*aný* in the past participle form. Yet, a different change undergoes the verb in (88g), where the diphthong disappears, the *e* from the diphthong is kept in the suffix -*ený*, and the consonant *c* undergoes a change in pronunciation. The *c* is pronounced as the palatal plosive [c] and *č* pronounced as the palatal affricate [tʃ].

To summarize, we can say that there is no one single rule of how the past participle is formed in Slovak and it depends on the suffix of the verb we are working with.

In (89), some passive sentences are shown, with the verbs from (88).

(89)

   a) *Oni boli videní v meste.*

      They were seen in city

      "They were seen in the city."

   b) *Fajčenie je zakázané.*

      Smoking is banned

      "Smoking is prohibited."

c) *Počítač bol rýchlo opravený.*

   Computer was fast repaired

   "The computer was repaired fast."

3.1.2 The Reflexive Passive

The second form of the Slovak passive is the reflexive passive. Here, the main verb does not change to another form, but a reflexive pronoun is added in front of the verb. The reflexive pronoun has the form -sa in all persons and tenses. The tense is marked in the main verb of the reflexive passive construction. Some examples can be seen in (90).

(90)

   a) *Tieto šaty **sa vyrábajú** v Nemecku.*

   These dresses ref. pro. made in Germany

   "These dresses are made in Germany."

   b) *Stará budova **sa rekonštruje**.*

   Old building ref. pro. renovate

   "The old building is being renovated."

   c) *Riad **sa umýva** v kuchyni.*

   Dishes ref. pro. wash in kitchen

   "The dishes are being washed in the kitchen."

As we can observe from the sentences in (90), the main verb in the reflexive passive constructions is changing according to the person or number of the subject NP, but the reflexive pronoun before the main verb stays the same.

However, as opposed to the participle passive, the reflexive passive does have some constraints. According to Popovičová, the reflexive passive is normally used only with the third person singular and the subject of the reflexive passive is inanimate. The reason for the inanimate subject is, according to Popovičová, an ambiguity that could result from the reflexive passive and verbs used inherently with a reflexive pronoun (2021, 52). This calls for a more detailed explanation. In Slovak, there are verbs which are used only in a reflexive way. Sentences with such verbs are illustrated in (91).

(91)

    a) *Eleanor **sa** na nás **usmiala**.*

       Eleanor ref.pro. at us smiled

       "Eleanor smiled at us."

    b) *Potrebujem **sa napiť** vody.*

       Need ref.pro. drink water

       "I need to drink water."

    c) *Bill **sa prechádza**.*

       Bill ref.pro. walk

       "Bill is walking."

As we can see from the examples in (91), these sentences are in the active voice, but their structure is similar to those in the reflexive passive voice in (90). However, the verbs in (91) are used with the reflexive pronoun and it would be ungrammatical to omit it. From the structure of the sentence, it is usually clear whether the sentence is in the reflexive passive voice or whether the verb is a reflexive one. But, sometimes, as noted in Popovičová, one the same sentence used with a reflexive pronoun and a verb can have two readings: either as an active sentence with a reflexive verb or a passive sentence with the reflexive passive. We can such a clause in (92).

(92)

    Žiaci sa podporovali.

    Pupils ref.pro. supported

    "The pupils were supported" or "The pupils supported each other."

As already mentioned, the reflexive passive does not, usually, combine with animate subjects. Therefore, the usual reading of the sentence in (92) would be the active one with the reflexive verb, i.e., the second translation. If we wanted to express that someone else is supporting the pupils, we would use the participle passive, as in (93) below.

(93)

    Žiaci boli podporovaní.

    Pupils were supported

    "The pupils were supported."

3.1.3 The (Un)expressed Agent

So far, we only had examples of the Slovak passive without an expressed agent, that is the passive corresponding to the English short passives. As we have discussed earlier, in English, the agent can be either unexpressed or expressed with a by-phrase. This is more typical for the *be*-passives than for the *get*-passives. In Slovak passives, the agent is optional as well, but, according to Popovičová, the agent is usually not expressed in the reflexive passive, only in the participle passive (2021, 52). We can use the sentences from (86) and try to add the expressed agent. This is done in (94).

(94)

    a)   *Koláč je pečený mnou.*
         Cake is baked me (INSl)
         (The cake is baked by me.)

    b)   **Koláč sa pečie mnou.*

In (94), the sentence is in the participle passive and the agent is expresses with the pronoun *mnou*. This is the pronoun *me*, but it is declined in the instrumental case. In Slovak, this case is telling us how the subject accomplished the described action. In English, the preposition *by* is used to express the way of the accomplished action, while in Slovak, it is the declined NP. In (94), we have a sentence in the reflexive passive. As already mentioned, the reflexive passive does not combine with expressed agents and the structure is ungrammatical. For me, as a native speaker of Slovak, the reflexive *sa* indicates that the cake is being baked all by itself and it would defeat the purpose of the reflexive passive by adding the agent.

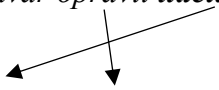## 3.2 The Similarities and the Differences between the English and the Slovak Passive

We have already discussed how the Slovak passive can be formed and while doing so, some differences between the English and the Slovak passive have been pointed out. In the following subchapters, the most important features of the English passive, which have been discussed earlier, will be compared to the Slovak passive constructions in more detail.

3.2.1 The Passive Movement

In the chapter called The Passive Movement, the promotion of the object of the active sentence to the subject of the passive sentence was discussed, as well as the demotion of the active subject to the optional by-phrase. The same holds for the Slovak active and passive sentences. We can illustrate this in (95).

(95)

    a) ***Opravár*** *opravil **tlačiareň**. "The mechanic fixed the printer."*

    Tlačiareň *bola opravená (**opravárom**). "The printer was fixed (by the mechanic)."*

    b) *Opravár opravil **tlačiareň**. "The mechanic fixed the printer."*

    Tlačiareň *sa opravila. "The printer was fixed."*

In (95a), the participle passive is shown. There, the agent can be expressed, therefore we can clearly see the movements of the subject and the object and the change of the verb into the past participle form. In (95b), the sentence is in the reflexive passive, where, as we said, the expressed agent is ungrammatical, therefore only the promotion of the object to the passive subject is seen. In front of the verb, the reflexive pronoun *sa* is placed and the main verb is in the present tense. Here, the verb has the suffix *-a*. This is due to the fact that the verb *tlačiareň* has the female grammatical gender.

Another interesting question concerning the passive movement is mentioned in Repka and Bojo (2022, 172). In English, it is relatively common for a clause to start with the phrase *there is/there are* and the question has been raised, whether such structures would be possible in Slovak as well. Such structures are shown in Radford and one of the examples is illustrated in (96) below.

(96)

    a) *No evidence of any corruption was found.*

    b) *There was found no evidence for any corruption.* (Radford 2004, 134)

In Radford, the double nature of these sentences is explained by the EPP feature of the verb *was*. The EPP feature requires the verb to have a meaningful subject. This feature can be satisfied in two ways. In (96a), it is satisfied by the common passive movement, where the object becomes the subject of the passive sentence. In (96b), however, the subject of the verb became *there* and object from the active sentence stays the object in this sentence as well (Radford 2004, 134).

We can now return to our original question of whether such structures as in (96b) can exist in Slovak too. According to Repka and Bojo, such structures with existential predicates do not exist in Slovak (2022, 173). I agree that Slovak has not a direct counterpart for the phrases *there is/there are*, but I would not be so quick to dismiss it completely. We can try to translate the sentences from (96). This is done in (97).

(97)

      a) Žiadne dôkazy korupcie neboli nájdené.

      b) Tam neboli nájdené žiadne dôkazy korupcie.

      c) Neboli nájdené žiadne dôkazy korupcie.

The sentence in (97a) is a direct translation of the sentence in (96a). The passive subject occupies the first position and is followed by the verb be and the past participle. One difference is in the verb *was* in the English sentence and the verb *neboli* in the Slovak one. English does not allow more than one negation in a sentence, and since one negation is expresses by the word *no*, the verb *was* is not negated. In Slovak, more than one negation can occur in a sentence (it would actually be ungrammatical to not use multiple negations), therefore the verb *byť* in the past tense has also the prefix *-ne*, resulting in *neboli*. Moving on to the sentence in (97b), it is also a word-by-word translation, since there means *tam* in Slovak. However, in Slovak, the construction *tam je* does not have the same meaning as the English *there is*. In English, the phrase *there is* could be replaced with *there exists*. Therefore, it is semantically empty and only serves as the subject, or in other word, it satisfies the EPP feature of the predicate. The situation is different with the Slovak *tam je*. The adverb *tam* is in Slovak only used to describe a place that is relatively distant from the speaker, as in the English sentence: *Go there and get it for me*. This means that in the sentence in (97b), the adverb *tam* refers to some distant place and does not have the existential meaning as it does in English. However, if we wanted to translate the sentence in (97a) to most accurately describe

what is meant by it, we could opt for the option in (97c). In Slovak, the passive sentence can start with the verb be and the past participle and the subject can be expressed after. The reason for that is the fact that Slovak is a pro-drop language.

3.2.2 The *Get*-Passive Compared with the Reflexive Passive

In Slovak, as well as in English, we can distinguish two main types of passives. In English, it is the *be*-passive and the *get*-passive and in Slovak the participle passive and the reflexive passive. As we have seen from the description of the Slovak participle passive, it directly corresponds with the English *be*-passive. The question we can now ask is whether the *get*-passive corresponds with the reflexive passive.

In the chapter Passive with the verb *get*, we have discussed how the get-passive differs from the be-passive. In the second part of the chapter, pseudo-passive structures were mentioned. These concern conventionalized phrases, e.g., *get dressed, get lost, get married*. In these phrases, the verb after *get* is not a past participle, but rather a copula. We can now try to translate some of these pseudo-passive constructions into Slovak, as seen in (98).

(98)

    a) *Musíš **sa** rýchlo **obliecť**.*
       Need ref.pro. fast get dressed
       *"You need to **get dressed** fast."*

    b) *Turisti **sa stratili** vo veľkom meste.*
       Tourists ref.pro. lost in big city
       *"The tourists **got lost** in the big city."*

    c) *Sally **sa** budúci týždeň **vydáva**.*
       Sally ref.pro. next week married
       *"Sally **is getting married** next week."*

    d) *Dom **starne**.*
       House get old
       *"The house **is getting old**."*

The examples in (98) might suggest that we can, in fact, say that the get-passive corresponds to the reflexive passive. However, it has been mentioned earlier that reflexive passives look the same as verbs which are used in a reflexive way. And, as a matter of fact, all of the verbs

in (98) are reflexive verbs in Slovak. This means that the sentences in (98) are not in a passive voice because English sentences with a copula verb after the verb get, i.e., pseudo-passives, are not translated as passive sentences into Slovak. This is demonstrated with the sentence in (98), where we have the Slovak counterpart of the English *get old*. The verb *starnut'* is not used with a reflexive pronoun and therefore is translated just as a subject and a verb in the active voice.

We can now try to translate sentences with a get-passive that which does not include a copula, such as *get arrested, get elected* or *get accused*. We can see this in (99).

(99)

    a) *Tim **bol zatknutý za** krádeš.*
       Tim was arrested for robbery
       *"Tim **was arrested for** robbery."*

    b) *Ona **bola zvolená za** prezidentku.*
       She was elected for prezident
       *"She **was elected for** presindent."*

    c) *Študent **bol obvinený** z podvádzania.*
       Student was accused of cheating
       *"The student **got accused of** cheating."*

In the sentences in (99), we can see that the English *get*-passives which do not include a copula are translated into Slovak as the participle passives. In the chapter on Animacy and the Presence of an Agent in Get-Passives, it was mentioned that, most of the time, the subject of a get-passive is animate. We have also mentioned earlier the fact that reflexive passives do not combine with animate subjects. These contradictory facts make it clear that we cannot say that the English *get*-passives are the counterparts of the Slovak reflexive passives.

3.2.3 Prepositional Passives

In the chapter concerned with the English Prepositional Passives, we have seen that the preposition in the English passives can be stranded and that there are specified and unspecified prepositions. Here, we are going to look at how we can passivize Slovak verbs with their prepositions. Some examples are shown in (100).

(100)

    a)   *Jej kolegovia súhlasili s nápadom.*

        Her co-workers agreed with idea

        "Her co-workers agreed with the idea."

    b)   *S nápadom sa súhlasilo.*

        With idea ref.pro. agree

        "The idea was agreed with."

    c)   *Suseda sa starala o naše rastliny.*

        Neighbour took care of our plants

        "Our neighbout took care of our plants."

    d)   *O naše rastliny bolo postarané.*

        Of our plants were taken care

        "Our plants were taken care of."

    e)   *Eleanor položila knihu na stôl.*

        Eleanor put book on table

        "Eleanor put the book on the table."

    f)   *Kniha bola položená na stôl.*

        Book was put on table

        "The book was put on the table."

    g)   *Pes posunul loptu pod postel.*

        Dog moved ball under table

        "The dog moved the ball under the bed.

    h)   *Lopta bola posunutá pod posteľ.*

        Ball was moved under bed

        "The ball was moved under the bed."

When looking at the examples in (100), we can notice that in (100a-d), the preposition in the passive clause in positioned at the beginning of the sentence, or before the passive subject. On the other hand, in (100e-h), the preposition is positioned after the verb, or before the passive object. There clearly is a pattern concerning the specified and unspecified prepositions. The sentences in (100a-d) have a specified preposition, while the sentences in (100e-h) have an unspecified preposition. I am not sure if this is a rule and there is not enough space here to examine more examples, but it looks like an interesting topic for further studies.

The reason why it is important to state that the preposition is either before the passive subject or before the passive object is the fact that, in Slovak, the subject and the object can exchange places. This leads to a rather unusual clause, but it is still grammatical, e.g., *Pod posteľ bola posunutá lopta*.

3.2.4 Constraints on the Passive Clause

In the English section of this thesis, we have discussed some constraints which can cause that a sentence cannot be passivized. Here, we are going to look at some of the constraints which apply to the Slovak passive sentences.

3.2.4.1 Active and Passive only Verbs

Firstly, we can focus on verbs which only allow the active voice. In English, we have seen that copula and semi-copula verbs do not allow passivization, since the NP after the copula verb is not an object but gives us more information about the subject. Does this hold in Slovak as well? We can look at some examples in (101), where copula verbs and lexical verbs are compared.

(101)

a) *Adam je študent.*
   Adam is student
   "Adam is a student."

b) *Adam sa stal študentom.*
   Adam became student
   "Adam became a student."

c) *Adam videl študenta.*
   Adam saw student
   "Adam saw a student."

d) *? Študent bol Adamom.*
   „?Student was by Adam."

e) *? Študent bol staný Adamom.*
   „?Student became by Adam."

f) *Študent bol videný Adamom.*
   „A student was seen by Adam."

The sentences in (101a-b) are active sentences with a copula verb. As we can see from the attempt to try to passivize them in (101d-e) and the resulting ungrammaticality, copula verbs do not passivize in Slovak, just as they do not passivize in English. In (101c), we have a verb

which is not a copula, namely see. This sentence can be passivized, since here, student is an object and refers to some other entity and not to the subject itself.

Another class of verbs mentioned were transitive and intransitive verbs. It is clear that we cannot passivize a sentence with an intransitive verb, since there is no object. But there are verbs which can be intransitive in one sentence and transitive in another. We can now examine of such verbs exist in Slovak as well. This is done in (102).

(102)

> a) *Liza číta.*
>   *Liza read*
>   *"Liza reads."*
> b) *Liza číta knihu.*
>   *Liza read book*
>   *"Liza reads a book."*
> c) *Kniha je čítaná Lizou.*
>   *Book is read Liza*
>   *"The book is read by Liza."*

We can observe from the sentences in (102) that the verb čítať can be used as a transitive and also as an intransitive verb. When used transitively, the passive is possible.

Turning now to the passive only structures. In English, there are a few verbs which occur only in the passive voice. These are, for example, *born* and *drown*. In (103), Slovak sentences with these verbs are illustrated.

(103)

> a) *On bol narodený v Londýne.*
>   *He was born in London*
>   *"He was born in London."*
> b) *On sa narodil v Londýne.*
>   *He ref.pro. born in London*
>   *"He was born in London."*
> c) *Jeho mama ho porodila v Londýne.*
>   *His mother him bore in Lodnon*
>   *"?His mother bore him in Lodon."*

> d) *Ona bola utopená.*
>   *She was drowned*
>   *"She was drowned."*
> e) *Ona sa utopila.*
>   *She ref.pro. drowned*
>   *"She was drowned."*
> f) *Žralok ju utopil.*
>   *Shark she drowned*
>   *"?A shark drowned her."*

As we can see from the sentences in (103), these verbs can be used with the participle passive, reflexive passive and in the active voice as well. In (103a-b), the sentences have the same meaning, but in (103d-e) , these is a slight change in the meaning. In (103d), we can assume that there was someone or something lese that drowned her. In (103e), it is implied that she drowned herself. We can therefore conclude that the verbs which are used in English in the passive voice only, can be used in Slovak in the active voice as well. This does not mean that there are no verbs in Slovak, which are used only in the passive voice, but I have not come across such verbs.

3.2.4.2 Object Constraints

We have seen from the chapter about English Object constraints that there are some types of objects that hinder the passivization process. Among these were finite clauses used as objects, non-finite verbs as objects, and reflexive and reciprocal pronouns used as objects. All of these cannot be used as the subject of the passive clause in English. How does the situation look in Slovak? We can examine this by using examples and start with finite clauses used as objects. Such a sentence is shown in (104) below.

(104)

    a) *Mary si myslela, že Ben je atraktívny.*
       Mary ref.pro. thought that Ben is attractive
       "Mary thought that Ben was attractive."

    b) **Že Ben je atraktívny bolo myslené Mary.*
       That Ben is attractive was thought by Mary
       "*That Ben is attractive was thought by Mary."

We can see from the sentences in (104) that in Slovak, the passivization of a finite clause used as an object is also not possible.

Turning now to non-finite verbs, it is firstly important to state that where English uses non-finite verbs, Slovak generally uses the infinitive of the verb. The passivization of a sentence with a non-finite verb as an object is shown in (105).

(105)

    a) Bill zvládol uvariť večeru.

        Bill managed cook dinner

        "Bill managed to cook dinner."

    b) ? Uvariť večeru bolo zvládnuté Billom.

        Cook dinner was managed by Bill

        "? To cook dinner was managed by Bill."

Here, I am not entirely sure whether the sentence in (105b) is ungrammatical or not. But it sounds strange and the sentence in (105a) would definitely be preferred.

Lastly, we can examine the status of reflexive and reciprocal pronouns. This is done in (106).

(106)

    a) Maxine zaviezla samú seba na letisko.

        Maxine drove herself to airport

        "Maxine drove herself to the airport."

    b) Sama sebou bola Maxine zavezená na letisko.

        Herself was Maxine driven to airport

        *"*Herself drove Maxine to the airport."*

    c) Nemohli sme sa navzájom počuť.

        Could not we ref.pro. each other hear

        "We could not hear each other."

    *d) *Navzájom sme neboli počutí.*

        Each other we were not heard

        *"*Each other we could not hear."*

In (106b), we can see that the passive sentence with the reflexive pronoun is grammatical in Slovak. However, the pronoun was declined to fit into the passive sentence better. Nevertheless, it still needs to be said that the active sentence is the preferred one. In (106d), the passive sentence with the reciprocal pronoun is not grammatical.

3.2.4.3 Direct and Indirect Objects

In English, as well as in Slovak, a verb can be ditransitive and therefore require two objects. In the process of passivization the question rises, which object should be passivized. According to Repka and Bojo, in English both, the direct and the indirect object can be passivized. However, in Slovak, only the direct object can become the subject of the passive clause (2022, 173–74). We can examine this further with the example sentences in (107).

(107)

    a) *Fredrik poslal **list** jeho kamarátovi.*
        Fredrik sent letter his friend
        "Fredrik sent a letter to his friend."

    b) ***List** bol poslaný jeho kamarátovi.*
        Letter was sent his friend
        "A letter was sent to his friend."

    c) **Jeho kamarát bol poslaný list.*
        His friend was sent letter
        "His friend was sent a letter."

    d) *Lilly povedala jej mame **novinky**.*
        Lilly told her mother news
        "Lilly told her mother the news."

    e) ***Novinky** boli povedané jej mame.*
        News was told her mother
        "The news was told to her mother."

    f) **Jej mama bola povedaná novinky.*
        Her mother was told news
        "Her mother was told the news."

From the sentences in (107), we can see that while in English, it is acceptable to passivize both objects, in Slovak only the direct object can be passivized. Passivizing the indirect object results in an ungrammatical structure.

3.2.5 The English Mediopassive Voice in Slovak

In the chapter on the English The Mediopassive **Voice**, we have discussed constructions which had a passive meaning, but where syntactically active, such as: *the window opens easily, the book reads well*. Here, we will look at how we can translate these constructions into Slovak. Firstly, we can look at some typical mediopassive constructions shown in (108).

(108)

       a) *Táto kniha sa číta dobre.*
             This book ref.pro. read well
             "This book reads well."

       b) *Okno sa dobre otvára.*
             Window ref.pro. well open
             "The window opens well."

       c) *Sklo sa recykluje donekonečna.*
             Glass ref.pro. recycle forever
             "Glass recycles forever."

From the sentences in (108), we can clearly see that the mediopassive constructions are expressed by the reflexive passive in Slovak. However, there is also another way how we can express the mediopassive voice in Slovak. This is especially true for sentences resembling the ones in (108b-c), in which we are physically able to do something with the subject. This is shown in (109).

(109)

       a) *Okno sa dá dobre otvoriť.*
             Window ref.pro. is able to well open
             "The window opens well."

       b) *Sklo sa dá recyklovať donekonečna.*
             Glass ref.pro. is able to recycle forever
             "Glass recycles forever."

The sentences in (109a-b) have the same meaning as the ones in (108b-c), but the verb *dať* is added. This verb can be translated as *can* or *be able to*. It is a modal verb, therefore the lexical

verb is at the end of the sentence in the infinitive form. The sentence in (109) sounds actually more natural than the one in (108b-c). Nevertheless, both are grammatical.

4 Conclusion

The main aim of this thesis was to outline the most important aspects of the process of passivization in great detail and to subsequently compare the crucial features of the passive clauses between the two languages, namely English and Slovak.

The thesis started with the description of the English passive, where the passive movements were analysed. We then focused on the main types of passive and the constraints on the passive clause. The mediopassive voice was analysed at the end of the English section of the thesis. This voice lies somewhere on the border between the passive and the active voice and was therefore especially interesting to analyse.

In the second part of the thesis, the main characteristics of the Slovak passive voice was discussed. We have come to the conclusion that the participle passive corresponds to the English *be*-passive. Then we asked ourselves the question whether there are any similarities between the second type of the English passive and the second type of the Slovak passive, namely between the *get*-passive and the reflexive passive. But, as we found out, this was not the case. Actually, in some respect, the get-passive and the reflexive passive behave as opposites. One such opposite feature is the fact that the get-passive almost always has an animate subject, whereas the reflexive passive does not normally combine with animate subjects.

One of the other main differences was the use prepositional passive. In English, it is normal that the preposition becomes stranded in the passive clause, but this is never the case in Slovak. However, we have discovered that the Slovak prepositional passive does not always behave in the same way. Sometimes, the preposition in the passive clause is located before the passive subject and other times, it is located after the passive object. We have found a connection between these two occurrences regarding the specified and unspecified prepositions, but no conclusion has been made, since the sample of the used examples was not big enough to be representative.

The mediopassive constructions exist in Slovak as well. However, there is no such ambiguity as in English, where the syntactic structures suggests that the clause is not a passive and the semantic understanding is a passive one. In Slovak, the mediopassive constructions are expressed by the reflexive passive, therefore they count as a regular passive sentence.

To conclude, the passive constructions in English and in Slovak are similar in some respects, but they are also very different in others. This fact made the comparison captivating and thought-provoking.

5 Resumé

Hlavným cieľom tejto práce bolo detailne vykresliť najdôležitejšie aspekty procesu pasivizácie a následne porovnať hlavné vlastnosti pasívnych viet medzi angličtinou a slovenčinou.

Práca začala opisom anglického pasíva, kde bol analyzované zmeny, ktoré nastanú pri pasivizácií. Následne sme sa sústredili na hlavné druhy pasív a obmedzenia, ktoré môžu zamedziť proces pasivizácie. Médiopasív bol analyzovaný na konci anglickej časti práce. Médiopasív leží na niekde na hranici činného a trpného rodu a tým pádom bol obzvlášť zaujímavý na preskúmanie.

V druhej časti práce, hlavné vlastnosti slovenského pasíva boli diskutované. Prišli sme k záveru, že pasív s príčastím minulým korešponduje s anglickým *be*-pasívom. Potom sme sa spýtali otázku, či existujú podobnosti medzi druhým typom anglického pasíva a druhým typom slovenského pasíva, čiže medzi anglickým *be*-pasívom a slovenským reflexným pasívom. Avšak prišli sme na to, že spojenie medzi týmito dvoma druhmi pasíva neexistuje. Dokonca sme zistili, že tieto dva druhy trpného rodu sa v niektorých ohľadoch správajú opačne. Jedna z týchto protichodných vlastností je tá, že anglické get-pasívum má skoro vždy životný subjekt, zatiaľ čo reflexné pasívum máva neživotný subjekt.

Jeden z hlavných rozdielov bolo použitie predložkového pasíva. V angličtine je bežné, že predložka zostane na konci vety sama, čo sa však nikdy nestáva v slovenčine. Ďalej sme zistili, že sa predložky v slovenskom pasíve nechovajú vždy rovnako. Predložka je totiž niekedy umiestnená pred pasívnym subjektom a inokedy pred pasívnym objektom. Našli sme spojenie medzi týmto umiestnením a špecifikovanými a nešpecifikovanými predložkami. Avšak nemohli sme vytvoriť žiadny záver z tohto pozorovania, keďže príklady, s ktorými sme pracovali, neboli dostačujúco veľká vzorka na vytvorenie takýchto záverov.

Médiopasívne konštrukcie existujú aj v slovenčine. Avšak v slovenčine neexistuje dvojtvárnosť týchto viet. V angličtine syntaktická štruktúra napovedá, že sa nejedná o pasív, avšak sémantická štruktúra hovorí opak. V slovenčine sú médiopasívne štruktúry vyjadrené pomocou reflexného pasíva, takže sú považované za bežné vety v trpnom rode.

Na záver sa dá povedať, že anglické a slovenské pasíva sú v určitých ohľadoch podobné, avšak v iných ohľadoch sú rozdielne. Tento fakt napomohol k tomu, že porovnanie bolo zaujímavé a podmanivé.

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