

Adversative, Benefactive and Neutral Readings in *BE*- and *GET*-Passive Constructions: A Minimalist Analysis

AHMAD SYAFIQ AMIR ABDULLAH ZAWAWI *

*Asian Languages and Cultures Department,
National Institute of Education,
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
ahmad.zawawi@nie.edu.sg*

FAZAL MOHAMED MOHAMED SULTAN

*Center for Research in Language and Linguistics,
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities,
The National University of Malaysia, Malaysia*

ABSTRACT

Passive constructions are typically analysed in terms of agent suppression, whereby the passive is defined as a structure that does not realise the Agent as an external argument. While this assumption underlies most structural accounts of passivisation, it becomes theoretically problematic in distinguishing BE-passives from GET-passives, which are often assumed to share an identical passive Voice configuration. Previous analyses generally derive both constructions from a uniform syntactic structure, with be and get treated as elements occupying the light v position. Through a qualitative analysis of 80 hand-selected passive clauses (comprising 20 instances of adversative, 30 of benefactive, and 30 of neutral types) extracted from three popular novels in the Allnovel.net database, this study explores the GET/BE alternation and analyses it within the layered verb phrase (vP shell) framework of the Minimalist Program (Chomsky, 2015). The analysis shows that in BE-passives, be functions as a copular element realised at the Tense node, encoding tense and agreement, while passive Voice remains an abstract head without additional affectedness features. In contrast, in GET-passives, get is not base-generated in the light v node, but is realised at the Voice node, where it carries a [+Affectedness] feature that licenses adversative and benefactive readings. These findings demonstrate that the BE/GET contrast reflects a genuine structural asymmetry rather than mere lexical variation, necessitating a feature-based differentiation of passive realisation within a layered verb phrase architecture.

Keywords: adversative; benefactive; neutral; Minimalist; affectedness features

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary generative syntax, passive constructions are no longer viewed as structures that merely suppress the Agent; rather, they involve a reconfiguration of the mapping between thematic roles (θ -roles) and structural positions within the clause (Bruening, 2013; Ferreira, 2003; Oshita, 2000; Pullum, 2014). From a structural perspective, passive clauses typically begin with a nominal assigned the Experiencer/Patient θ -role, followed by inflectional BE as a linking element and a verb bearing passive morphology (Adger, 2003; Fleisher, 2006; Matthews, 2007). Accordingly, passivisation entails not simply Agent omission, but a systematic restructuring of argument–position relations within the construction (Carnie, 2006; Crystal, 2008). In addition to the well-documented neutral and adversative types, this study extends the analysis to include benefactive readings of the passive, providing a more comprehensive account of how the subject is affected by the event in GET-passive constructions.

In discussions of English passive morphology, Kibort (2005), Pullum (2014), Thompson (2012), and Crystal (2008) maintain that the suffix *-en* is generally regarded as the basic morpheme marking the formation of the passive participle from an active verb. In this context, Carnie (2006) argues that English verbs are divided into regular verbs and irregular verbs. According to Hundt et al. (2024), Safarova (2023) and Haegeman (1994), regular verbs are those that systematically form the past tense and past participle through the addition of the suffix *-ed* to the base form. This is illustrated in (1).

- (1) a. Marie was **photographed** by a journalist. (Pullum, 2014 p.6)
b. The door was **opened** by itself. (Kibort, 2005 p.41)
c. They were **arrested** by the police yesterday. (Thompson, 2012 p.19)
d. She was **chased** by the dog. (Crystal, 2008 p.353)

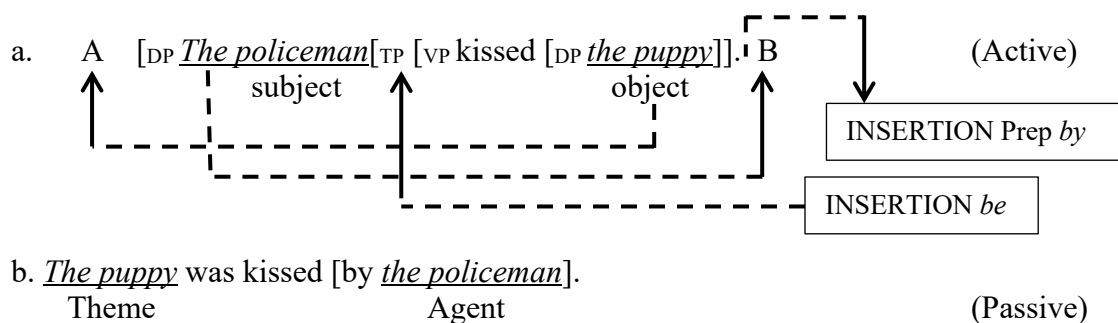
In contrast, irregular verbs do not consistently follow the *-ed* suffix but undergo various form changes, including the *-en* suffix, internal vowel changes, or unique forms, as illustrated in (2).

- (2) a. The window was **broken** by the boys. (Kibort, 2005 p.27)
b. The letter was **written** by the manager. (Hundt et al., 2024 p.92)
c. The roof was **broken** during the storm. (Safarova, 2023 p.86)
d. Belgium were **beaten** in the semi-finals. (Haegeman, 1994 p.181)

In passive structures, both types of verbs use the past participle form. However, from a generative morphological perspective, the *-en* form is considered the basic passive morpheme, whereas *-ed* is viewed as an allomorph realised in specific phonological environments. Although *-ed* also marks past tense in active clauses, in passive constructions it functions as a marker of the passive participle occurring with the auxiliary *BE*. Therefore, the distinction between *-en* and *-ed* is not a difference in grammatical function, but a difference in morphological form that depends on the lexical properties of a verb within a given clause construction.

In the syntactic realisation of structures from a traditional perspective, Matthews (2007), Haegeman (1994) and Leonard (2009) have discussed the arrangement of clauses in active and passive structures. Traditional arguments claiming that passive sentences are derived from active sentences have been shown to be inaccurate, as such claims rely solely on the assumption of the structural movement of the subject and object from point A to point B, but cannot be substantiated theoretically. This is illustrated in (3).

- (3) Syntactic realisation of structures from a traditional perspective:



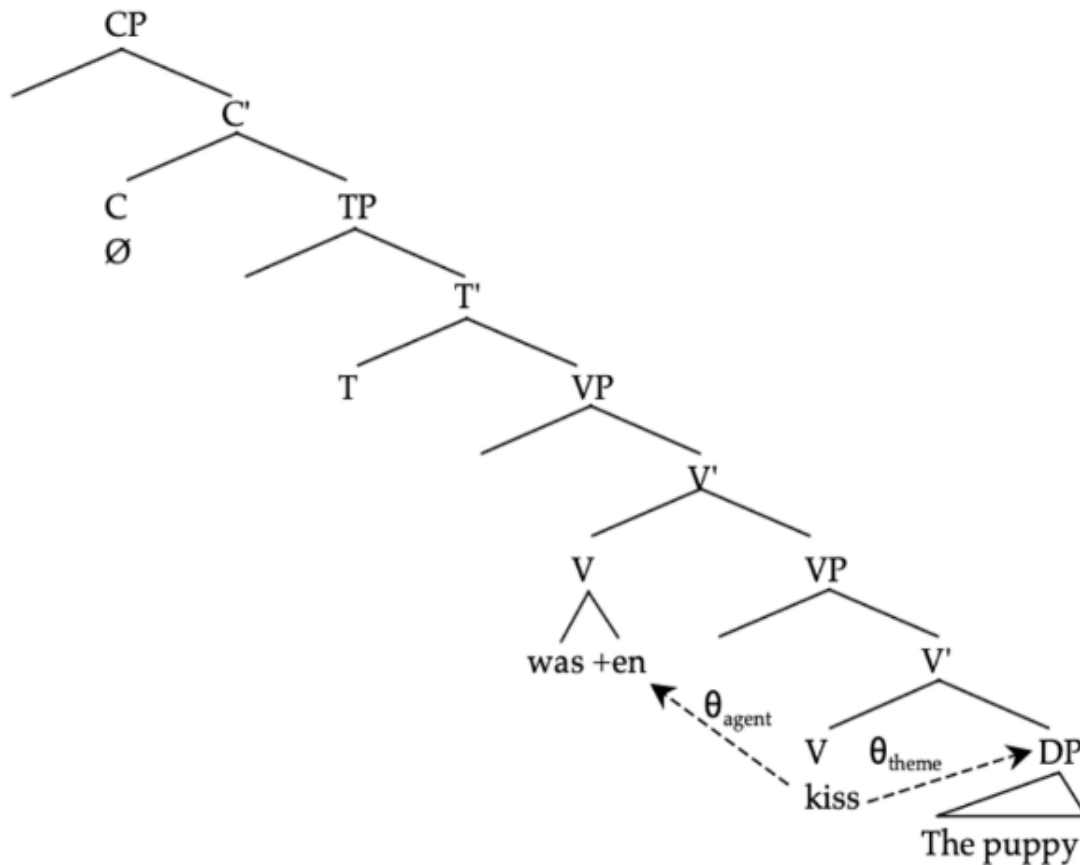
Based on the structure presented in (3), traditional analyses claim that the passive sentence (3b) is the result of a derivation occurring in (3a). Traditional scholars argue that the DP subject '*The policeman*', originally positioned at the beginning of the sentence as the Agent subject, is moved to the sentence-final position through an insertion process with the preposition '*by*'. The object DP '*the puppy*' is then moved to the subject position to assume a new role as the subject of the passive sentence (3b). The resulting derivation in (3b) renders the PrepP '*by the policeman*' no longer a required argument of the verb '*kissed*', but instead changes its role to an optional adjunct. This argument has been used by traditional syntacticians who maintain that passive sentences arise from a derivational process in which the subject moves to the adjunct position and the object moves to the subject position. However, the analysis in (3) is solely a structural, traditional analysis and has not been demonstrated within a theoretical syntactic framework.

However, from the perspective of modern syntactic analysis, Chomsky (1995), Radford (2009, p.365), Carnie (2006, p.291), Crystal (2008, p.353), and Matthews (2007, p.289) argue that active and passive structures are not related to one another. In other words, passive structures are not generated from active structures. According to Carnie (2006, p.291), passive sentences possess a syntactic structure distinct from that of active sentences. In passive structures, the subject position, known as [Spec, TP], is occupied by a DP constituent that is base-generated in the complement position and raised due to the requirement to check the Nominative case on the Tense head (Tense). More specifically, modern syntacticians analysing passive structures refer to constructions that do not introduce an External Argument in [Spec,vP], either because the v head does not carry an Agent feature or because the feature is not activated in the derivation. As a result, there is no Agent available to raise to the subject position at [Spec, TP] to satisfy the EPP and receive Nominative case marking. Instead, the Internal Argument, originally assigned a thematic role as Theme or Patient in the complement position of the verb (V), undergoes head-to-head movement to [Spec, TP]. This movement allows it to check the Nominative feature and satisfy the requirements for clause formation. This is illustrated by Carnie (2006, pp.291–292) as shown in (4a).

- (4) a. The puppy was kissed (by the policeman). (Carnie, 2006 p.290)

The syntactic structure of the sentence in (4a) can be represented as in (4b). The dotted arrows in (4b) do not indicate movement; rather, they represent the assignment of θ -roles. Since the passive morpheme *-en* absorbs or takes over the Agent role, there is only one DP in the sentence, namely the element receiving the Theme role (*the puppy*). Although a PrepP such as '*by the policeman*' exists, this phrase does not receive a θ -role directly from the verb. Instead, it functions as an adjunct, and adjuncts are not licensed in the θ -grid. Because the Theme is an internal argument (i.e., not listed in the θ -grid), it does not appear in the specifier position of VP, but is realised as the complement of the verb, as is typical of other internal argument positions, as illustrated in (4b).

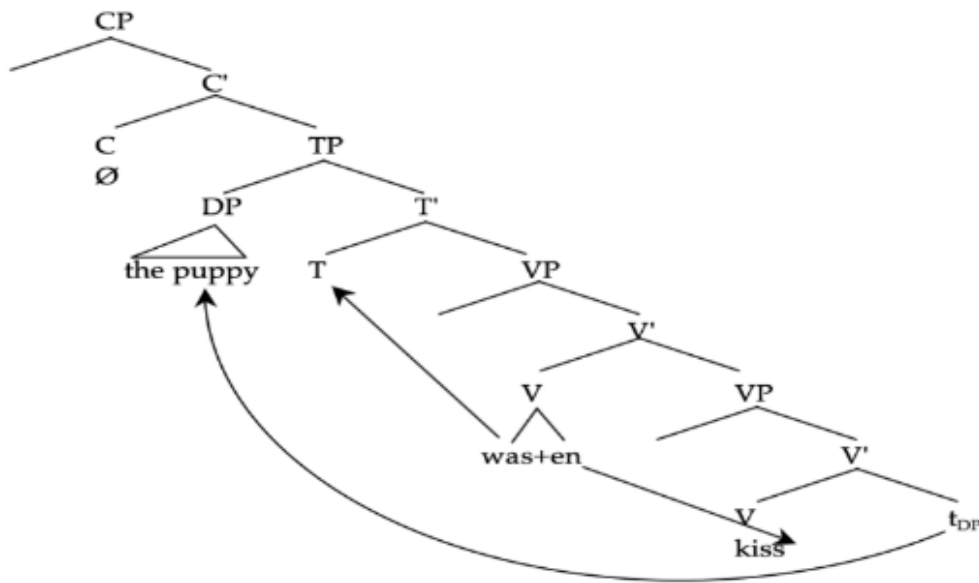
b.



(Carnie, 2006, p.291; Radford, 2009, p.365)

In the analysis of passive structures by Radford (2009, p.365) and Carnie (2006, p.291), the DP '*the puppy*', which originally receives the Theme θ -role and is assigned Accusative case by the verb *kiss*, undergoes a change. The presence of the passive marker *-en* on the *v* head causes the absorption of the Accusative case from the DP '*the puppy*'. This results in the DP '*the puppy*' losing its case and being marked as case-less. At the same time, the Tense head (T) still carries a Nominative case that must be assigned. Because structure (4b) contains only one DP, the T node attracts the DP '*the puppy*' from the verb complement position to raise it to [Spec, TP], allowing it to be assigned Nominative case, as illustrated in (4c).

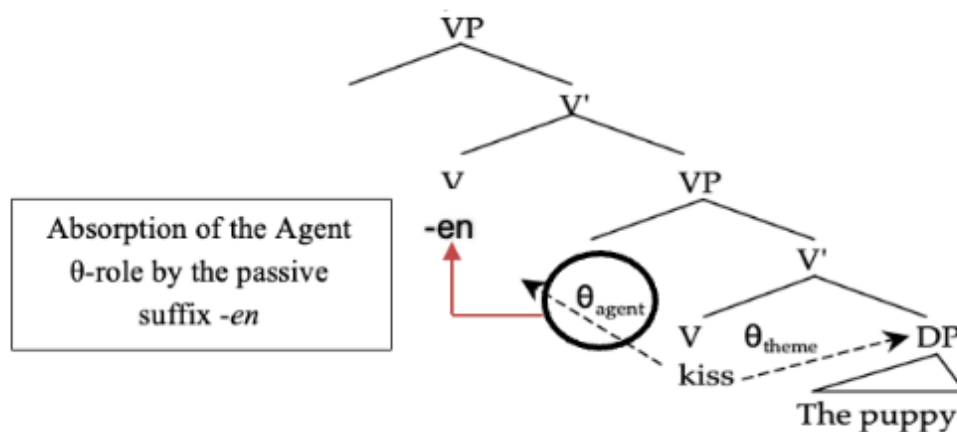
c.



(Carnie, 2006, p.292; Radford, 2009, p.365)

The claims of Carnie (2006, pp.291–292), Radford (2009, pp.365–367), Matthews (2007, p.289), and Crystal (2008, p.353) defining passive structures as structures that suppress the Agent are based on the diagram presented in (4c). This is argued because the passive suffix *-en*, located on the little *v* node in the passive structure, absorbs the Agent θ -role due to the requirements of syntactic numeration at that position. Consequently, contemporary modern syntactic analyses hypothesise that no Agent θ -role can be realised within the passive structure. This is illustrated in (4d).

d.



(Carnie, 2006 p.292)

Accordingly, based on the analysis of passives from the perspective of modern syntactic theory presented in (4a) to (4d), passive structures can be described as syntactic configurations involving the raising of the Internal Argument to grammatical subject status, thereby reflecting a restructuring of the relationships between case marking, θ -role assignment, and functional features within the syntactic structure.

However, scholars such as Villalibre (2015), González (2021), Fleisher (2006), Halmøy (2019), Hundt (2001), Phoocharoensil (2020), Mitkovska and Bužarovska (2012), Ravid and Vered (2016), and Thompson et al. (2013) argue that passive structures can be divided into two categories from the perspective of the direct impact of the action expressed by the verb. These two types of passives are referred to as adversative passive and neutral passive. In linguistic studies, adversative and neutral passives are distinguished based on the presence or absence of an element of misfortune (adversity) experienced by the sentence subject. Adversative passives refer to passive constructions that convey a negative or disadvantageous connotation for the subject, whereby the subject is depicted as receiving the harmful effect of the action expressed by the verb. Such constructions highlight that the event described has a negative impact on the subject, whether physically, emotionally, or socially. An example of an adversative passive is illustrated in (5).

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------------|
| (5) | a. Henry <i>got beaten</i> last night. | (Crystal, 2008 p.353) |
| | b. He <i>got caught</i> by the police. | (Matthews, 2007 p.289) |
| | c. Jane's bike <i>got stolen</i> . | (Villalibre, 2015 p.17) |

The sentences presented in (5a) to (5c) are examples of adversative passives because they clearly convey a negative connotation and depict the subject as receiving the harmful effects of an action, in line with the definitions proposed by Villalibre (2015) and Liu (2011). In the first sentence, the DP '*Henry*' directly experiences physical harm through the action of being beaten, whereas in the second sentence, the DP '*He*' faces negative social and legal implications as a result of being arrested by the police. In the third sentence, although the subject is an inanimate DP '*Jane's bike*', it still carries an adversative element because the theft results in the loss of property, which negatively affects its owner. All three situations highlight the element of misfortune (adversity) that is the defining feature of the adversative passive, in which the sentence subject experiences hardship either directly or indirectly as a consequence of the event described.

In contrast, according to Darmasetiyawan and Ambridge (2022), Haegeman (1994), Leonard (2009), Payne (2006), Adger (2003), Yokoyama et al. (2006), Huang et al. (2013), Bruening (2013), and Blevins (2003), neutral passives refer to passive constructions that do not convey any significant positive or negative connotation, but rather serve to state an event or condition objectively without highlighting beneficial or harmful effects on the subject. In neutral passive constructions, the sentence subject still receives the action, but the action itself is not evaluated as advantageous or detrimental. This is illustrated in example (6).

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------------------|
| (6) | a. This story was believed by the villagers. | (Haegeman, 1994 p.181) |
| | b. The book was donated to the hospital. | (Adger, 2003 p.198) |
| | c. The door is opened by the owner. | (Leonard, 2009 p.30) |
| | d. The gate was closed by Fezzik. | (Payne, 2006 p.247) |
| | e. Mary was praised by John. | (Yokoyama et al., 2006 p.571) |

The sentences presented in (6a) to (6e) are examples of neutral passives because they

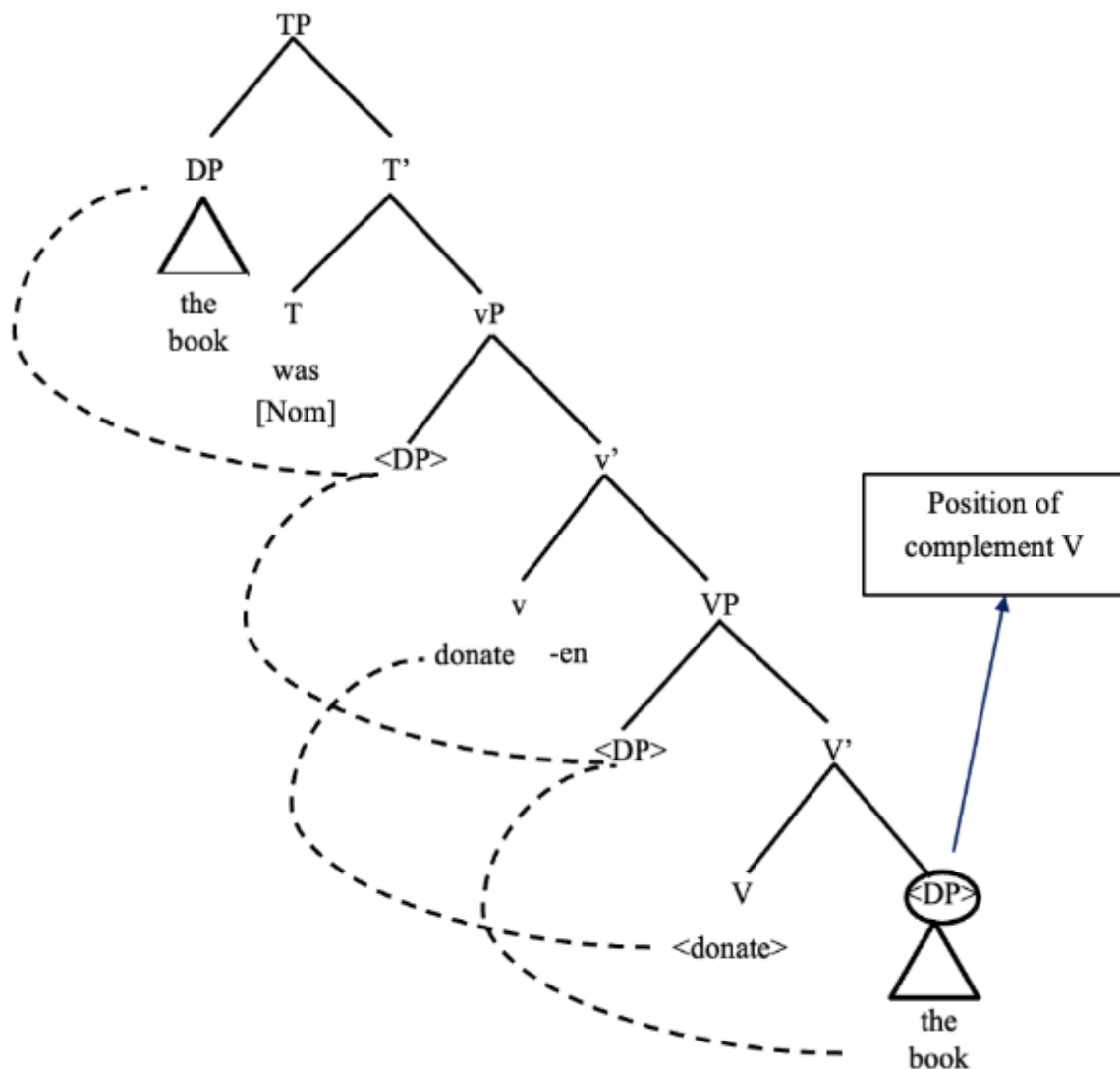
function solely to report an event or condition objectively, without conveying any positive or negative connotation experienced by the sentence subject. In each of these sentences, the subject DPs '*This story*', '*The book*', '*The door*', '*The gate*', and '*Mary*' merely receive the action without highlighting any element of misfortune (adversity). '*The story*' does not experience being believed, '*The book*' does not experience being donated, '*The door*' and '*The gate*' do not undergo any adversative effect when opened or closed because they are inanimate objects, and '*Mary*' is not emphasised in terms of emotional impact despite being praised, even though the action of praising is positive. According to Haegeman (1994), Leonard (2009), Payne (2006), Adger (2003), and Yokoyama et al. (2006), the element of misfortune, which is the defining feature of adversative passives, is entirely absent in these sentences, placing them in the category of neutral passives that merely state facts without considering the positive or negative impact on the subject.

In conclusion, previous studies by contemporary syntacticians on passive constructions indicate that these structures comprise more than one type, in contrast to traditional analyses which focus on a single passive construction. However, due to the heterogeneous and varied nature of passive constructions, this study will focus on syntactic issues that remain unaddressed, particularly those related to *GET*-passive and *BE*-passive structures. Both of these structures will be discussed in greater detail in the subsequent sections.

SYNTACTIC ISSUES IN PASSIVE STRUCTURES

Carnie (2006, p.292) claims that there is only one universal passive structure in natural languages, whereby the logical subject DP in a passive sentence is base-generated in the complement position of V before it raises to [Spec, TP]. This is illustrated by Carnie (2006) in (8).

- (8) a. The book was donated.
 b. The syntactic structure for the passive sentence in (8a)



Carnie (2006 p.292)

The structure proposed by Carnie (2006), as presented in (8), only illustrates the neutral passive structure (BE-passive), which is the common passive in English. This claim raises the issue of lacking theoretical explanation because language users not only employ the BE-passive structure, but there also exists the GET-passive structure, which is used regularly. This is supported by Villalibre (2015), González (2021), Fleisher (2006), Halmøy (2019), Hundt (2001), Phoocharoensil (2020), Mitkovska and Bužarovska (2012), Ravid and Vered (2016), and Thompson et al. (2013), who argue that GET-passive constructions are also structures that should not be ignored in passivisation studies.

Carnie's (2006) view regarding a single passive structure is seen as insufficient in explaining the formation of *GET*-passive structures. Questions arise regarding the syntactic generation of *get*, namely whether this lexical item is licensed to occupy the light verb (little *v*) position, as a Tense marker (Tense), or whether *get* may occupy the main verb (V) position in the

syntactic construction. However, there is still no comprehensive explanation or detailed account of this issue in previous studies. Examples of *GET*-passive sentences discussed by linguists are reproduced in (9).

- | | | |
|-----|---|-------------------------------|
| (9) | a. Henry <u>got</u> beaten last night. | (Negative effect connotation) |
| | b. He <u>got</u> caught by the police. | (Negative effect connotation) |
| | c. Jane's bike <u>got</u> stolen . | (Negative effect connotation) |
| | d. The customer <u>got</u> cheated . | (Negative effect connotation) |

Theoretically, Carnie's (2006) analysis of passive structures is also not entirely sufficient to determine the syntactic position of the lexical item 'got' in adversative passive sentences (9). This is because Carnie (2006) does not provide any discussion regarding the syntactic function of *get/got* in adversative passive structures. At the same time, this study also seeks to highlight that the typological division of passives proposed by Villalibre (2015), González (2021), Fleisher (2006), Halmøy (2019), Hundt (2001), Phoocharoensil (2020), Mitkovska and Bužarovska (2012), Ravid and Vered (2016), and Thompson et al. (2013) raises a syntactic question: whether adversative and neutral passives share the same syntactic structure or differ. This is particularly relevant since adversative passives are claimed to convey the negative effect and misfortune (adversity) expressed by the verb, whereas neutral passives are said to merely report an event or condition objectively, without highlighting positive or negative effects on the subject.

Following from these claims, another issue arises regarding passive structures: whether all *GET*-passive structures always convey a negative effect and misfortune. This question emerges because previous scholars have distinguished adversative and neutral passives based on the effects expressed by the lexical item *get/got*. However, a survey of corpus data in this study reveals the opposite, showing that some passive structures marked with *got* also convey positive effects and fortune. This is illustrated in example (10).

- | | | |
|------|--|-------------------------------|
| (10) | a. He <u>got</u> promoted last month. | (Positive effect connotation) |
| | b. She <u>got</u> accepted into Oxford. | (Positive effect connotation) |
| | c. They <u>got</u> selected for the international conference. | (Positive effect connotation) |
| | d. He <u>got</u> awarded a research grant. | (Positive effect connotation) |

Based on sentences (10a) to (10d), these sentences are verb phrases marked with the passive indicator *get/got*. The phrases '*got promoted*', '*got accepted into Oxford*', '*got selected for the international conference*', and '*got awarded a research grant*' cannot be categorised as conveying negative effects or misfortune. Instead, the verbs occurring with the passive marker 'got' in sentences (10a) to (10d) indicate that these sentences convey positive connotations, fortune, and highly positive effects. Therefore, previous studies have not discussed the distinction between the positive and negative connotations carried by the passive marker '*get/got*', particularly from a theoretical perspective. While previous research has predominantly focused on the adversative nature of the *GET*-passive, the gap lies not in a total oversight of other meanings, but in the lack of a systematic theoretical integration of the benefactive category within a formal Minimalist framework. Therefore, this issue needs to be re-examined to provide a more nuanced analysis of the syntactic features that license positive connotations.

The examples presented in (10a) to (10d) reinforce the view that the passive marker ‘get/got’ can systematically carry positive effect marking. While existing literature acknowledges semantic variation, a detailed account of how these positive (benefactive) readings are derived through functional Voice features remains underdeveloped. This study addresses this gap by offering a feature-based explanation for the positive connotations conveyed by *GET*-passive structures. Therefore, discussions of passive structures should not be limited solely to the aspect of Agent suppression. In the context of modern generative syntactic analysis, passive structures need to be examined more thoroughly, particularly from the perspective of structure, constraints, and syntactic operations, with balanced descriptive explanations and arguments.

The core problem identified in existing literature is the reliance on a binary distinction between adversative and neutral passives, which fails to account for the systematic occurrence of benefactive readings in *GET*-passive constructions. As existing accounts predominantly assume that *GET*-passives are inherently adversative, the discovery of benefactive instances in the corpus data necessitates a re-evaluation of the universal passive structure. This study argues that these semantic distinctions are not merely pragmatic but are rooted in specific syntactic features within the functional hierarchy, a dimension that remains theoretically underexplored in current Minimalist scholarship.

In line with the gaps identified above, this study addresses the following research questions: (i) What is the precise syntactic position of ‘get’ within the functional hierarchy of the passive construction? (ii) Do adversative and benefactive *GET*-passives share a uniform structural configuration or are they syntactically distinct? (iii) How does the *GET*-passive structurally differ from the neutral *BE*-passive within a Minimalist vP-shell architecture? To address these research questions, the following section outlines the corpus-informed methodology and the theoretical framework of the Minimalist Program employed to investigate the syntactic and interpretive properties of the passive constructions in this study.

METHOD

Ma and Mei (2021), Zawawi et al. (2022), and De Sutter and Lefer (2020) argue that linguistic practice serves as an index of speakers’ cognitive frameworks, perspectives, socio-professional positioning, and underlying power dynamics. This indicates that the linguistic patterns adopted by a speech community are deeply shaped by the surrounding socio-cultural environment (Lailiyah et al., 2026). Within the scope of the present study, the analysis of the structures of neutral, adversative and benefactive passive functions as a window into speakers’ grammatical competence and their awareness of how this lexical element operates in discourse. This position is further corroborated by Lusta et al. (2023), Altameemi (2024), and Al-Hamzi et al. (2020), who maintain that language practices within social collectives are inherently universal, given that they emerge and are instantiated across diverse cultural contexts.

A novel is a form of fictional prose written in cultivated language that frequently reflects the social realities and lived experiences of its native-speaking authors. It demonstrates the use of linguistically accessible structures while maintaining a stylistic mode appropriate to authentic communicative contexts. For this study, data were compiled from *Allnovel.net* based on readership frequency, selecting the three most-read works: *A Ruthless Proposition* by Natasha Anders (2,193,269 readers), *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before* by Jenny Han (1,739,954 readers), and *Married by Morning* by Lisa Kleypas (1,344,677 readers).

The selection of popular fiction from *Allnovel.net* is justified as it provides a rich source of authentic, experiential language where affect is frequently encoded. However, it is acknowledged that the focus on these specific genres, predominantly romance and young adult fiction, may result in a higher frequency of emotional or benefactive readings compared to more formal registers. This 'genre skew' is explicitly considered within the qualitative scope of this analysis, which prioritises the exploration of grammatical competence over statistical representativeness.

The extracted texts were compiled as raw data in plain text (.txt) format and subsequently processed using WordSmith Tools 8.0. The lexical item *got* was used as the search keyword, with concordance spans limited to ten lexical items on both the left and right, enabling systematic retrieval of *BE*-passive and *GET*-passive constructions across the corpus. While *got* served as the primary search term, additional targeted searches were conducted for the auxiliary verbs *be*'(including *is, are, was, were*) and the present-tense marker 'gets' to ensure a balanced extraction of both *BE*- and *GET*-passive variants for comparative analysis.

The retrieved instances were then subjected to a data-cleaning stage, whereby only structurally relevant arguments were retained to facilitate systematic analysis. The finalised dataset was subsequently examined within the theoretical framework of the Minimalist Program (Figure 1).

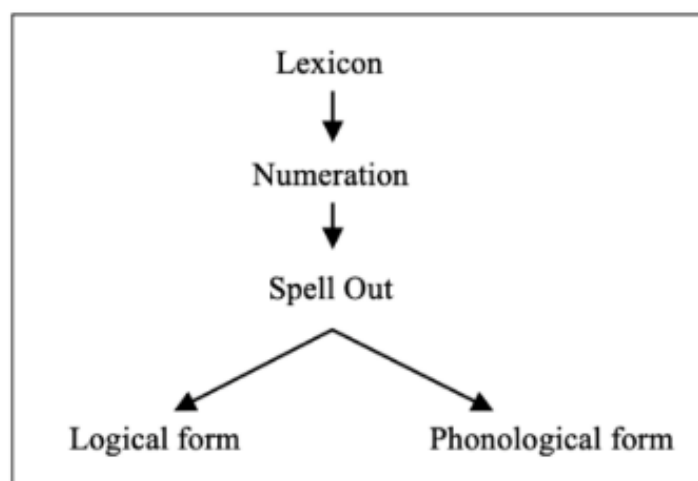


FIGURE 1. Minimalist Program Framework (Chomsky, 2015)

According to Chomsky (2015), the core architecture of the Minimalist Program, as illustrated in Figure 1, comprises several representational levels: the lexicon, numeration, spell-out, and the interface components linking Logical Form (LF) and Phonological Form (PF). Scholars such as Adger (2003), Carnie (2006), Sultan et al. (2011), Taha et al. (2017), Zawawi and Sultan (2023) and Sultan et al. (2023) maintain that native speakers possess an inherent mental grammar embedded within their lexical system. This inborn grammatical blueprint enables speakers to naturally acquire and internalise their first language. Such internalised knowledge is commonly referred to as native speaker intuition. Within this perspective, the Minimalist framework provides a systematic model for explaining how meaning and grammatical well-formedness are incrementally derived through cognitive operations rooted in human linguistic intuition (Sultan & Suhaimi, 2012; Zawawi et al., 2023, 2026).

Within the Minimalist architecture, the lexicon constitutes an innate mental repository in which lexical and functional categories are stored in a non-linear configuration, each specified with morphosyntactic properties encompassing syntactic, semantic, and phonological features (Radzi et al., 2012; Sultan, 2009). Lexical categories encode substantive meaning (e.g., nouns, verbs, adjectives), whereas functional categories comprise grammatical elements such as determiners and auxiliaries. These features are distinguished as interpretable [X] and uninterpretable [uX], a distinction central to syntactic computation. Derivation proceeds at the numeration stage, where selected items are combined via recursive Merge to form increasingly complex structures. However, Merge is constrained by feature-checking requirements under the Feature Deletion Principle at spell-out, whereby uninterpretable features must be valued and deleted through checking relations, typically within a sisterhood configuration before transfer. Structures containing unchecked uninterpretable features result in derivational crash (Zawawi et al., 2024). Once all such features are successfully eliminated, the derivation is transferred to the interface levels of Logical Form and Phonological Form for semantic interpretation and phonological realisation as a well-formed utterance.

In light of this theoretical perspective, the selection of the Minimalist framework (Chomsky, 2015) for examining passive constructions is methodologically justified, particularly for investigating the internal mechanics of Merge as they operate within passive structures. This framework enables the present study to critically evaluate prior claims that *get*-passives exclusively encode adverse or negative connotations. Furthermore, the analysis aims to determine the precise syntactic function contributed by the passive marker *get/got*, and to differentiate it from the suffix *-en* associated with neutral passive constructions.

In this study, the features [+eventive] and [+inchoative] are bundled onto the Voice^o head (realised by 'get') rather than the predicate because 'get' itself functions as a dynamic operator that triggers the eventive interpretation of the passive construction. This structural choice follows the Minimalist assumption that functional heads, such as Voice, are the locus of interpretable features that determine the overall event structure of the clause. Thus, the Minimalist Program is uniquely suited for this research because its vP-shell architecture and feature-checking mechanism allow for a precise mapping of how semantic nuances (adversative vs benefactive) are licensed by formal syntactic heads (Voice^o). Unlike traditional models, MP provides the theoretical apparatus to derive these readings from structural asymmetries rather than just lexical variation.

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF THREE PASSIVE STRUCTURES

This section specifically presents a theoretical analysis of passive structures regularly used by native speakers. The data analysed and presented in this section are derived from corpus generation of three selected novels from the online novel database (*Allnovel.net*). Based on the concordance sets generated from five sub-corpora of the selected novels, the study found at least three passive sentence structures in use: adversative passive, benefactive passive, and neutral passive. These three passive structures are analysed in the following subsections.

ANALYSIS OF ADVERSATIVE PASSIVE STRUCTURES

Adversative passive constructions are passive structures in which the subject is construed as experiencing a detrimental effect resulting from the event. Rather than functioning solely as the grammatical recipient of an action, the subject is interpreted as genuinely affected—through loss,

distress, disruption, punishment, or an undesired change of state. In this sense, adversative passives foreground the experiential dimension of the subject, shifting the focus from the action itself to the impact of the event on the subject's condition. Semantically, the adversative reading emerges from the interaction between passive morphology and predicates that encode negative value, yielding a systematic interpretation whenever the event produces harmful consequences for the subject DP. This connotation is therefore not merely pragmatic, but structurally grounded in the predicate's semantic properties. Such constructions typically favour a dynamic, eventive interpretation that highlights change of state, with the subject's adverse experience forming the core of meaning, as illustrated by the concordance data in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Adversative Passive Sentence

Num.	Data
1	[DP She [VoiceP got [VP-en expelled [PrepP from [DP school]]]]].
2	He got rejected by the family.
3	We got caught by the police.
4	Her husband got divorced.
5	I got locked out of my house.
6	We got caught in the rain.
7	They almost got captured by the Nazis.
8	She got shipped off to a different exec.
9	I got fired from my previous position yesterday.
10	He got robbed on his way home.
11	I got locked out of my apartment.
12	They got scammed by an online seller.
13	He got stuck in traffic for hours.
14	I got drenched in the sudden rain.
15	A certain document got gummed.
16	His white T-shirt immediately got drenched
17	The baby got hurt.
18	The car got damaged in the storm.
19	She got bitten by a dog.
20	They got fined for parking illegally.

Analysis of the 20 adversative *GET*-passive sentences in Table 1 reveals consistent structural patterns, notably a full VoiceP configuration exemplified by *She got expelled from school*. In such constructions, the affected DP occupies [Spec, TP], while *get* realises Voice^o [passive], and the V-en form (e.g., *expelled*) heads the passive VP, optionally followed by complements such as a prepositional phrase providing contextual detail. Crucially, the structure does not obligatorily introduce an Agent, but instead encodes a change of state experienced by the subject, accounting for its dynamic and inherently adversative interpretation, typically associated with harmful or undesirable effects. Although a *by*-phrase may optionally appear to specify an agent, the adversative reading persists even in its absence, underscoring that the negative connotation derives from the affectedness and eventive properties of the construction rather than from overt agent expression.

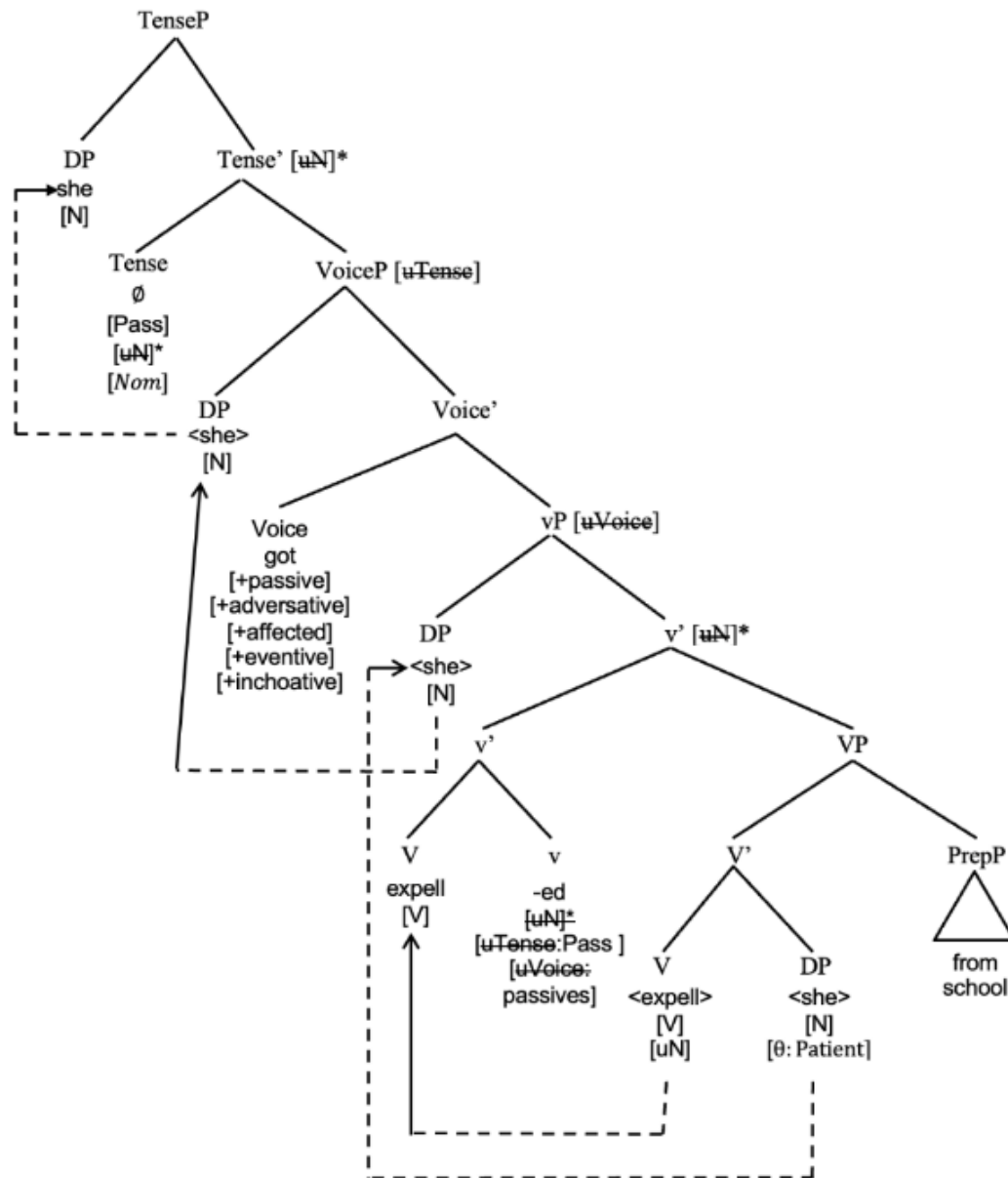
This study also finds that some *GET*-passive structures use a *by*-Phrase to indicate an explicit Agent, as in the sentence '*He got rejected by the family*'. The presence of the *by*-Phrase here emphasises the source of the negative effect on the subject and makes the adversative reading more salient. However, there are also adversative *GET*-passive sentences without a *by*-Phrase, such as '*I got locked out of my house*'. In these examples, PrepPs indicating location, medium, or condition replace the Agent. Even though the Agent is not expressed, the adversative connotation remains clear because the subject is negatively affected by the event.

Another category involves subjects that become affected through physical change or damage, as in the sentences ‘*The car got damaged in the storm*’, ‘*His white T-shirt immediately got drenched*’, and ‘*The baby got hurt*’. Here, an eventive reading emerges through the change of state or negative impact on the subject, even though a *by-Phrase* is absent. In the context of these sentences, the adversative connotation arises semantically from the predicate itself.

Based on observations of the overall adversative passive data presented in (11b), several syntactic features can be summarised. First, the subject in adversative GET-passive structures is typically a DP or pronoun, such as ‘*She, He, I, We, They*’. Second, the lexical item ‘*get*’ realises Voice° [passive] with additional features [+affected], [+eventive], and [+inchoative], while the verb in the participle form (V-en), such as *hurt, expelled, captured, robbed, and drenched*, forms the passive VP. Additionally, the PrepP element in the sentence usually includes information about location, medium, or Agent, such as ‘*from school*’, ‘*in the rain*’, and ‘*by the police*’, whereas the *by-Phrase* is optional and appears if the Agent is expressed. Thus, it is clear that the semantic themes of these sentences encompass interpersonal conflict, injury, property damage, and negative emotions.

Overall, the sentences in Table 1 predominantly encode negative change of state affecting the subject, with an adversative reading emerging even in the absence of a *by-phrase*, since the V-en form and event context sufficiently convey harmful impact. In GET-passive constructions, the affected Theme in subject position plays a more decisive role than the Agent in shaping this interpretation, underscoring that adversativity is anchored in the subject’s experience of the event. This analysis gains theoretical significance when *get* is treated as the realisation of Voice°[passive], functioning not merely as a passive marker but as a Voice head bearing features such as [+affected], [+eventive], and [+inchoative], thereby systematically encoding change of state and subject involvement within a layered verb phrase structure.

- (11) a. [DP She [VoiceP got [vP-en expelled [PrepP from [DP school]]]]].
b. The syntactic structure for the sentence in (11a)



ANALYSIS OF BENEFACTIVE PASSIVE STRUCTURES

Benefactive passive structures are passive constructions that indicate that the subject experiences positive effects as a result of an event occurring to it. In these constructions, the subject is not merely the grammatical recipient of the action, but is interpreted as an individual who gains benefit, advantage, recognition, or a favourable change of state. In other words, benefactive passives highlight the dimension of the subject's experience, where the focus is not solely on the action itself, but on the outcome of the event that provides positive value to the subject.

Interpretatively, the benefactive meaning arises from the combination of the passive form with the semantic properties of the predicate, which carry positive value. Therefore, the benefactive connotation is not merely a pragmatic implication, but a systematic interpretation when the event described brings benefit to the subject. These constructions also tend to convey a dynamic and eventive reading, emphasising a change of state that enhances the subject's position or condition, rather than merely providing a neutral description.

Overall, benefactive passives can be understood as passive structures that foreground the positive experience of the subject as the centre of interpretation, where the element of benefit or advantage becomes a core component in the formation of meaning. Through this study, there is another structure in GET-passives that can be categorised as a benefactive passive construction, as presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Benefactive Passive Sentence

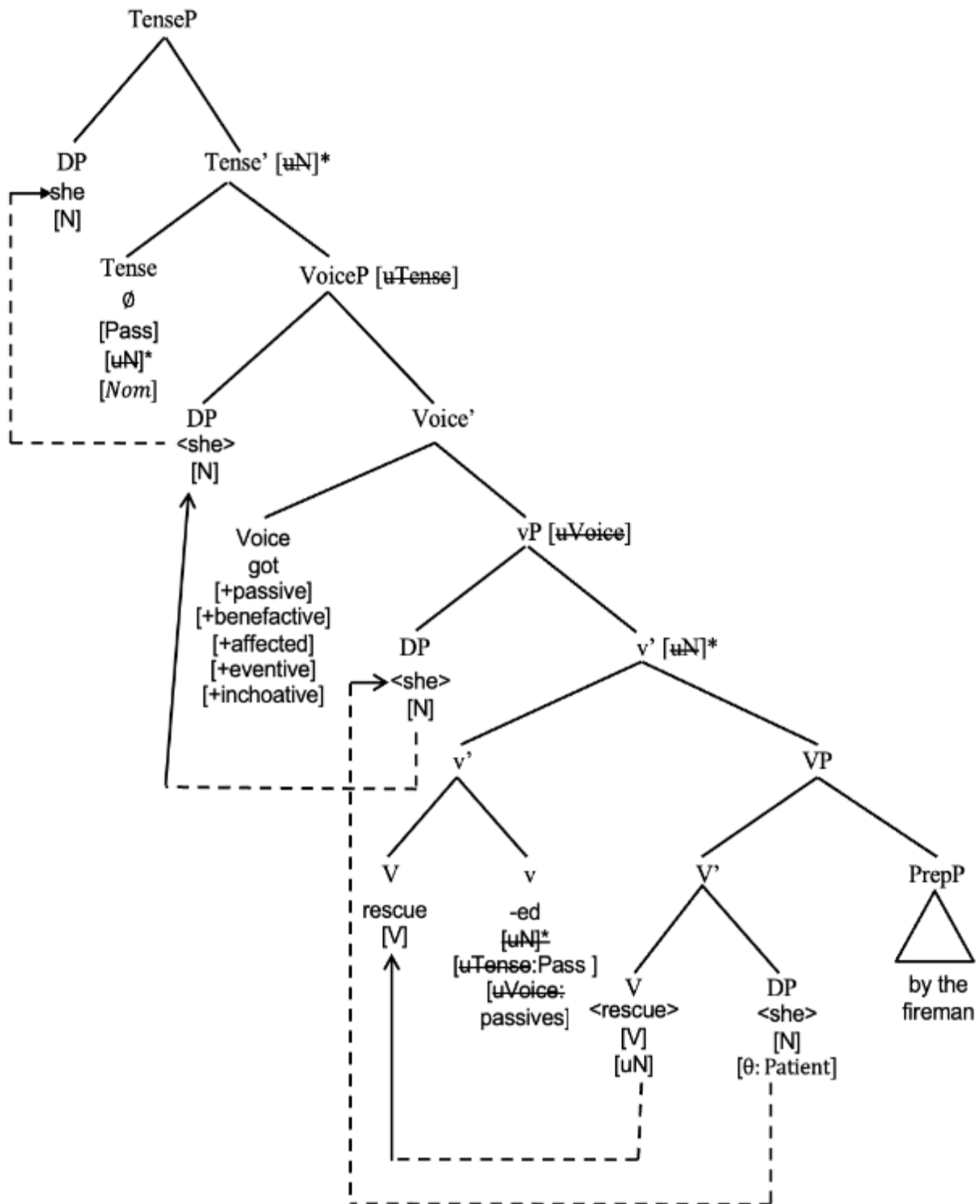
Num.	Data
1	She got rescued by the fireman.
2	He got healed by her patience.
3	She got chosen by a man.
4	He got inspired by her father.
5	She got protected by the warmth of his steady embrace.
6	He got forgiven by the woman he once hurt so deeply.
7	She got surprised by a heartfelt proposal.
8	He got encouraged by his friends.
9	She got supported by a circle of friends.
10	He got celebrated by his teammates.
11	She was defended by her best friend.
12	He got motivated by his mentor.
13	She got uplifted by laughter.
14	She was welcomed with open arms.
15	He got guided by his father's example.
16	She got blessed by her mother.
17	She got transformed by the strangers.
18	He got comforted by his sister's smile.
19	She got protected by her grandparents.
20	He got reminded of his worth by his family.
21	He got surrounded by good people.
22	She got recognised by her manager.
23	He got rewarded with peace after years of struggle.
24	She got reassured by his soft whispers.
25	He was surprised by a letter.
26	He got reminded by the smile.
27	He was trusted by his teammates.
28	She got admired by everyone in her office.
29	He got rewarded by fate.
30	She got treasured by someone.

Based on the benefactive passive data in Table 2, the syntactic configuration mirrors that of adversative passives: the subject DP occupies [Spec, TP], while *get* realises Voice° bearing the feature [+affected]. Within this analysis, *get* is not a mere passive marker but encodes affectedness, signalling that the subject undergoes an effect or change. The distinction between benefactive and adversative GET-passives thus lies not in structure, but in predicate semantics. In benefactive contexts, verbs such as *promoted*, *rewarded*, or *forgiven* inherently convey positive value, yielding a beneficial interpretation through the interaction between Voice° [+affected], the event semantics of the verb, and supportive pragmatic context.

A clearer contrast emerges when comparing benefactive GET-passives with positive BE-passives (e.g., *She was promoted* vs. *She got promoted*). Although both denote favourable change, the BE-passive tends to be descriptive and neutral, whereas the GET-passive foregrounds the subject's experiential involvement. The latter is more dynamic and eventive, emphasising that the subject directly undergoes the change, thereby highlighting positive affectedness rather than merely reporting a resultant state.

From a theoretical standpoint, these findings indicate that GET-passives are not inherently adversative; their core meaning is affectedness. Adversative or benefactive readings arise from the semantic value of the verb and its pragmatic context, not from the passive structure itself. The features [+affected], [+eventive], and [+inchoative] associated with *get* therefore render benefactive GET-passives more vivid and process-oriented than neutral BE-passives, enriching the interpretation by foregrounding the subject's direct experience of the event.

- (12) a. She got rescued by the fireman.
b. The syntactic structure for the sentence in (12a)



Based on the syntactic structure presented in (12b), in summary, this study finds that there are two types of pragmatic expression for *GET*-passive structures in English, namely adversative and benefactive structures. A comparison of the syntactic aspects between adversative and benefactive structures is summarised in Table 3.

TABLE 3. Comparison of Adversative and Benefactive Passives from a Syntactic Perspective

Aspect	<i>GET</i> -passive Adversative	<i>GET</i> -passive Benefactive
Syntactic structure	[TP DP T [VoiceP DP [Voice° get [vP V-en]]]]	[TP DP T [VoiceP DP [Voice° get [vP V-en]]]]
Realisation of the lexical morphosyntactic feature <i>get</i>	Voice°[passive] carries morphosyntactic features [+affected], [+eventive], [+inchoative]	Voice°[passive] carries morphosyntactic features [+affected], [+eventive], [+inchoative]
Type of predicate (V-en)	Verbs expressing negative change or undesired effect, e.g., <i>hurt, expelled, captured, robbed, damaged</i>	Verbs expressing positive change or beneficial experience, e.g., <i>promoted, rewarded, chosen, forgiven, welcomed</i>
Presence of <i>by-Phrase</i>	Optional; appears if Agent is explicit or abstract, but adversative reading occurs even without a <i>by-Phrase</i>	Optional; <i>by-Phrase</i> usually indicates the source of benefit, but benefactive reading occurs even without a <i>by-Phrase</i>
Affectedness (Voice°)	Subject is negatively affected by the event	Subject is positively affected by the event
Eventive reading	Event is dynamic and has a negative/undesired effect on the subject	Event is dynamic and has a positive/beneficial effect on the subject
Inchoative	Indicates change of state or effect on the subject	Indicates change of state or effect on the subject
Semantic/pragmatic context	Interpersonal conflict, injury, property damage, negative emotions	Promotion, recognition, reward, support, comfort, positive surprise
Connotation/interpretation	Negative, harmful, undesired	Positive, beneficial, desired
Difference from <i>BE</i> -passive	<i>BE</i> -passive can also be used with negative predicates, but the subject's affectedness is less emphasised.	Positive <i>BE</i> -passives also exist, but <i>GET</i> -passives emphasise the subject's experience of positive change (more eventive & dynamic)

Based on Table 3, it can be concluded that adversative *GET*-passives and benefactive *GET*-passives share the same underlying syntactic structure, involving *get* with a past participle (V-en) in a passive configuration, and realise morphosyntactic features such as [+affected], [+eventive], and [+inchoative]. This indicates that they are not formally two different structures, but interpretative variations operating within a uniform syntactic framework. The main difference between the two lies in the semantic properties of the predicate and the evaluative effect on the subject: in adversative passives, the predicate typically conveys a negative change, marking the subject as negatively affected, whereas in benefactive passives, the predicate conveys a positive change that benefits the subject. The presence of a *by-Phrase* is optional in both types and does not determine the main reading, since the adversative or benefactive value appears even when the Agent is not explicitly stated. Furthermore, compared to *BE*-passives, which are more neutral and less emphasise the subject's experiential dimension, *GET*-passives consistently display a more dynamic, eventive reading that is oriented toward a change of state.

ANALYSIS OF NEUTRAL PASSIVE STRUCTURES

Neutral passive is a passive construction that presents an event without associating the subject with a positive or negative evaluation of its effect. In this construction, the subject functions as an internal argument raised to the grammatical subject position, but is not interpreted as an individual evaluatively affected by the event. The main focus of this structure is on the rearrangement of

syntactic roles and the demotion or omission of the agent, rather than on the subject's experience or psychological state.

Interpretatively, the neutral passive yields a descriptive and non-evaluative reading, in which the event is presented as a fact or state without implying benefit or harm. The interpretation of meaning in this construction depends primarily on the propositional content of the sentence and the discourse context, rather than on additional semantic features linking the subject to a specific affectedness. Therefore, neutral passives generally display a more formal, objective, and stative reading compared to passive variations that highlight the subject's experience.

Overall, neutral passives can be understood as a passive structure that functions structurally to rearrange arguments and suppress the agent's role, without constructing an evaluative dimension for the subject, thereby maintaining a descriptive and informative character in event representation. As evidence, the sentences presented in Table 4 represent some neutral passive structures obtained from the concordance generation.

TABLE 4. Neutral Passive Sentence

Num.	Data
1	The love story was told in the magazine.
2	Their love was celebrated by their friends.
3	A heartfelt letter was written by him to her.
4	Her feelings were ignored by him.
5	The engagement was announced at the party.
6	His proposal was accepted with tears of joy.
7	Her secret admirer was revealed during the school dance.
8	Their wedding was planned by their families.
9	His apology was forgiven by her.
10	Their relationship was tested by long-distance.
11	The love note was discovered in her bag.
12	Her birthday surprise was prepared by him.
13	His secret was revealed at the dinner.
14	The romantic poem was written for her.
15	Their first dance was remembered by everyone.
16	Her favourite song was played at the proposal.
17	The heartfelt message was read aloud.
18	His love confession was ignored by her.
19	The romantic gesture was appreciated by her.
20	Their anniversary was celebrated privately.
21	The love story was adapted into a movie.
22	Her favourite flowers were gifted by him.
23	The love letter was kept in a drawer for years.
24	Their relationship was strengthened after the argument.
25	The secret date was organised by him.
26	Her heartfelt confession was misunderstood.
27	Their story was shared on social media.
28	The romantic message was written in a diary.
29	His love was reciprocated by her.
30	Their first kiss was remembered forever.

The *BE*-passive data in Table 4 display the canonical properties of a stative and descriptive passive construction. In this structure, Voice^o [passive] suppresses the external argument, allowing the internal argument to raise to [Spec, TP] as subject, which functions merely as the recipient of the event rather than as an experiencer of change. The auxiliary *be*(was) is realised at T^o, marking tense and agreement without contributing affectedness or eventive meaning, while the passive participle (*-en*) reflects the spell-out of the interaction between Voice^o and V. Thus, Voice^o

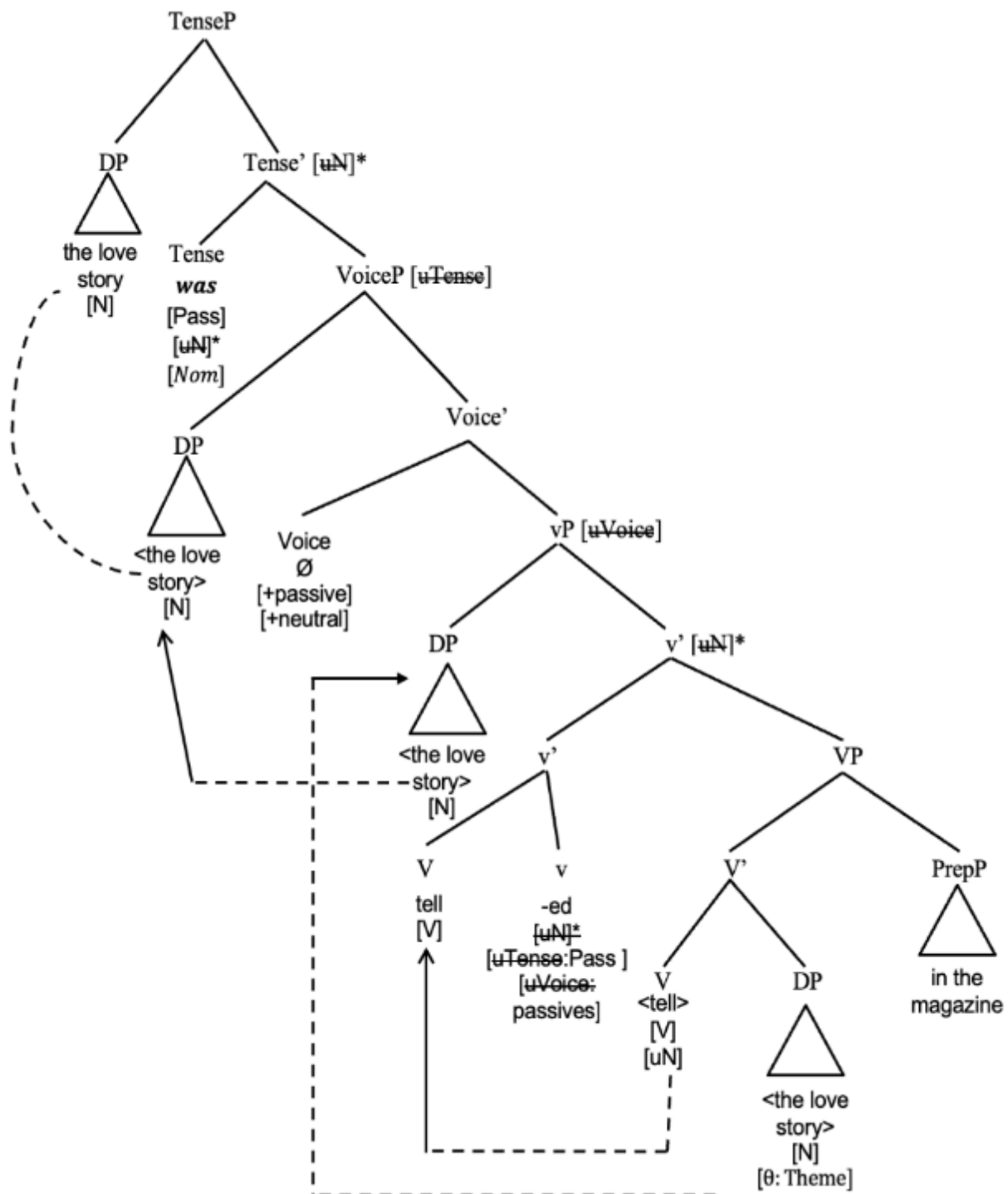
encodes the syntactic passive function, whereas *be* operates as a morphological copula, yielding a neutral and formal interpretation.

For the BE-passive, the Voice^o head is analysed as carrying a null affectedness feature ([+affected] = Ø). This signifies the total absence of affectedness rather than a valued-zero feature, which accounts for the purely descriptive and stative nature of BE-passives, where the subject does not 'experience' the event as a change of state.

A defining property of the *BE*-passive is the optional by-phrase, which introduces an explicit agent, whether concrete or abstract. Although this element specifies the source of the event, it does not alter the neutral reading, since Voice^o lacks features such as [+affected] or [+eventive]. Consequently, the *BE*-passive foregrounds the description of a state or fact rather than the subject's experiential involvement, contrasting sharply with the *GET*-passive, where *get* as Voice^o carries [+affected], [+eventive], and [+inchoative], highlighting change of state and direct impact (e.g., *She was fired* vs *She got fired*).

Theoretically, prevailing accounts treat *be* as a morphological realisation at T^o, with passive interpretation deriving from Voice^o. Alternative proposals analyse the BE-passive as participial, with *be* functioning purely as a copula linking the subject to an adjectival participle. However, such approaches face challenges in explaining agentive by-phrases, argument structure, and compatibility with eventive adverbs. Accordingly, a layered verb phrase analysis is proposed to adequately capture the structural and interpretive properties of neutral passive constructions, as stated in (13a) and (13b).

- (13) a. The love story was told in the magazine.
b. The syntactic structure for the sentence in (13a)



Therefore, based on the analysis of the three types of passive structures discussed in this section, the comparison among the three types of passive can be summarised in Table 5.

TABLE 5. Comparison of the Syntax of Adversative, Benefactive, and Neutral Passives

Feature / Component	GET-passive Adversative	GET-passive Benefactive	BE-passive Neutral
Syntactic Structure	[TP DP _T [VoiceP DP [Voice° get [vP V-en]]]]	[TP DP _T [VoiceP DP [Voice° get [vP V-en]]]]	[TP DP _T [be] [VoiceP Voice°[pass] [vP V-en]]]
Voice Head	get [+affected]	get [+affected]	Voice°[pass] abstrak, [+affected] = 0
Tense / Aux	Past tense → got / Present → gets	Past tense → got / Present → gets	BE (was/were/is/are)
Semantic Focus	Negative change of state for subject	Positive change of state for subject	Neutral passive/stative description
Meaning / Connotation	Subject affected, loss, stress, hardship	Subject affected, gains, success, recognition	Neutral, no positive or negative implication
Example Sentence	<i>She got fired from her job.</i>	<i>She got promoted by the committee.</i>	<i>She was promoted by the committee.</i>
Affectedness	+ (subject experiences effect)	+ (subject experiences effect)	0 / neutral (subject does not “experience” change)
Pragmatic Implication	Negative effect, adversative, dramatic	Positive effect, benefactive, favourable	No evaluative implication, descriptive
by-phrase / Agent	Optional	Optional	Optional

Based on Table 5, the overall comparison shows that the interpretation of the passive in English depends not only on the syntactic structure but also on the interaction between Voice°, predicate semantics, and pragmatic context. The *GET*-passive emphasises the subject's experience more dynamically and eventively, whether adversative or benefactive, whereas the *BE*-passive maintains a formal, neutral, and descriptive reading, focusing on facts or states without highlighting the subject's experienced changes or effects.

To resolve the apparent theoretical tension between the lexical source of affectedness and its functional locus, this study argues that while the specific valence (adversative vs benefactive) is grounded in the semantic properties of the predicate, Voice° serves as the formal syntactic host for the [+affected] feature. Within the Minimalist framework, this is interpreted as a selectional relation where the Voice° head must be compatible with the semantic features of its complement (vP). This mechanism ensures that the experiential dimension of the subject is structurally anchored within the vP-shell architecture, allowing semantic nuances to be licensed through formal syntactic operations.

CONCLUDING REMARK

This analysis demonstrates that English passive variation, namely adversative and benefactive *GET*-passives alongside neutral *BE*-passives, cannot be reduced to a simple lexical contrast between *get* and *be*, but must be explained through the interaction of syntactic configuration, predicate semantics, and interpretive context. Both *GET*-passive types share an identical underlying structure, with differences in adversative versus benefactive readings arising from the semantic value of the predicate and the pragmatic evaluation of its effect on the subject, thereby confirming that *GET*-passives fundamentally encode affectedness and eventive dynamism, while positive or negative interpretations emerge from lexical and contextual interaction. In contrast, the

BE-passive remains structurally passive yet semantically neutral and descriptive, primarily suppressing the external argument without introducing experiential or change-of-state meaning, thus reinforcing that interpretive distinctions among passive types operate at the semantic–pragmatic interface rather than at the level of core syntactic structure.

While these findings clarify the structural backbone of the *BE/GET* contrast, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The qualitative scope and the specific genre of the corpus (romance and young adult fiction) may influence the frequency and interpretation of the observed affectedness features. Consequently, future research should utilise larger, balanced corpora and quantitative methods to provide broader validation of these patterns. Additionally, further inquiry is needed to investigate the cross-linguistic universality of the [+affected] Voice head and whether this functional configuration represents a universal syntactic principle or is specific to the English passive architecture.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study was funded by the Geran Ganjaran Penerbitan (registered as GP-K016256) and the Tabung Agihan Penyelidikan (registered as TAP-K016256).

REFERENCES

- Adger, D. (2003). *Core Syntax: A Minimalist Approach*. United Kingdom: University of London.
- Al-Hamzi, A. M. S., Gougui, A., Amalia, Y. S., & Suhardijanto, T. (2020). Corpus linguistics and corpus-based research and its implications in applied linguistics: A systematic review. *Parole: Journal of Linguistics and Education*, 10(2), 176-181.
- Altameemi, Y. M. (2024). State-of-the-Art Review of the Corpus Linguistics Field From the Beginning Until the Development of ChatGPT. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 14(2), 423-431.
- Blevins, J. P. (2003). Passives and impersonals. *Journal of Linguistics*, 39(3), 473-520.
- Bruening, B. (2013). By phrases in passives and nominals. *Syntax*, 16(1), 1-41.
- Carnie, A. (2006). *Syntax: A Generative Introduction*. United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing.
- Crystal, D. (2008). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing.
- Darmasetyawan, I. M. S., & Ambridge, B. (2022). Syntactic representations contain semantic information: Evidence from Balinese passives. *Collabra: Psychology*, 8(1), 33133.
- De Sutter, G., & Lefer, M. A. (2020). On the need for a new research agenda for corpus-based translation studies: A multi-methodological, multifactorial and interdisciplinary approach. *Perspectives*, 28(1), 1-23.
- Ferreira, F. (2003). The misinterpretation of noncanonical sentences. *Cognitive Psychology*, 47(2), 164-203.
- Fleisher, N. (2006). The origin of passive get. *English Language and Linguistics*, 10, 225 - 252.
- González, R. L. (2021). I hope they don't get forgotten. A descriptive corpus-based approach to get-passives with verbs of cognition in English. *Philologica Canariensis*, 65-94.
- Haegeman, L. (1994). *Introduction to Government and Binding Theory*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Halmøy, M. (2019). Actants and aktionsart: The Norwegian verb *få* as the dynamic counterpart to *ha* / Actants et mode d'action : le verbe norvégien *få* comme contrepartie dynamique de *ha*. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics/Revue canadienne de linguistique*, 64, 216 - 280.
- Huang, Y. T., Zheng, X., Meng, X., & Snedeker, J. (2013). Children's assignment of grammatical roles in the online processing of Mandarin passive sentences. *Journal of memory and language*, 69(4), 589-606.
- Hundt, M. (2001). What corpora tell us about the grammaticalisation of voice in get-constructions. *Studies in Language*, 25, 49-88.
- Hundt, M., Dallas, B., & Nakanishi, S. (2024). The be-versus get-passive alternation in world Englishes. *World Englishes*, 43(1), 86-108.

- Kibort, A. (2005). *Passive and passive-like constructions in English and Polish* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge).
- Lailiyah, N., Syamsi, K., & Zawawi, A. S. A. A. (2026). "I didn't say that": Discursive evasion and responsibility management in political crisis communication (A forensic linguistic multiple-case study). *NOTION: Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Culture*, 8(1), 158-175. <https://doi.org/10.12928/notion.v8i1.15144>
- Leonard, H. B. (2009). *The Syntax of Arguments Structures*. New Jersey: Cambridge University Press.
- Liu, F. H. (2011). The bei passive and its discourse motivations. *Chinese Language and Discourse*, 2(2), 198-231.
- Lusta, A., Demirel, Ö., & Mohammadzadeh, B. (2023). Language corpus and data driven learning (DDL) in language classrooms: A systematic review. *Heliyon*, 9(12).
- Ma, Q., & Mei, F. (2021). Review of corpus tools for vocabulary teaching and learning. *Journal of China Computer-Assisted Language Learning*, 1(1), 177-190
- Matthews, P. H. (2007). *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mitkovska, L., & Bužarovska, E. (2012). An Alternative Analysis of the English Get-Past Participle Constructions. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 40, 196 - 215.
- Oshita, H. (2000). What is happened may not be what appears to be happening: a corpus study of 'passive'unaccusatives in L2 English. *Second Language Research*, 16(4), 293-324.
- Payne, T. E. (2006). *Exploring Language Structure A Student's Guide*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Phoocharoensil, S. (2020). English Get-Passives: Reassessing the Frequencies across Genres. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 20, 123-135.
- Pullum, G. K. (2014). Fear and loathing of the English passive. *Language & Communication*, 37, 60-74.
- Radford, A. (2009). *Analysing English Sentences: A Minimalist Approach*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press.
- Radzi, H., Sultan, F. M. M., Jalaluddin, N. H., & Ahmad, Z. (2012). Analisis Bahasa Komunikasi Bangsa Minoriti Negrto Menerusi Pengimbuhan Dan Peminjaman Kata. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies* 12(3): 885-901.
- Ravid, D., & Vered, L. (2016). Hebrew verbal passives in Later Language Development: the interface of register and verb morphology*. *Journal of Child Language*, 44, 1309 - 1336.
- Safarova, L. (2023). The dynamics of active and passive voice in English grammar. *Norwegian Journal of development of the International Science No*, 121, 85.
- Sultan, F. M. M. (2009). Struktur sintaksis frasa nama bahasa Bateq. *GEMA Online™ Journal of Language Studies* 9(1):47-61.
- Sultan, F. M. M., Ahmad, Z., Jalaluddin, N. H., & Radzi, H. (2011). Kata Soal Bila Dalam Dialek Kedah Melayu Baling: Satu Analisis Sintaksis. *GEMA Online™ Journal of Language Studies*. 11(1): 69-80.
- Sultan, F. M. M., & Suhaimi, N. (2012). Kata Soal Dalam Dialek Kedah. *GEMA Online™ Journal of Language Studies*. 12(2): 475 - 493.
- Sultan, F. M. M., Zawawi, A. S. A. A., & Razak, R. A. (2023). The structures of Malay language existential sentences. Research Result. *Theoretical and Applied Linguistics*, 9(4), 112-141. <http://doi.org/10.18413/2313-8912-2023-9-4-0-6>
- Taha, M., Sultan, F. M., & Yasin, S. M. (2017). The morphosyntax of causative construction in Sudanese Arabic. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*. 24(4): 1611-1626.
- Thompson, D. (2012). *Getting at the passive: Functions of passive-types in English* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Glasgow).
- Thompson, D., Ling, S., Myachykov, A., Ferreira, F., & Scheepers, C. (2013). Patient-related constraints on get- and be-passive uses in English: evidence from paraphrasing. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4.
- Villalibre, E. C. (2015). Is the get-passive really that adversative? *Miscelánea: A Journal of English and American Studies*, 51, 13-26.
- Yokoyama, S., Okamoto, H., Miyamoto, T., Yoshimoto, K., Kim, J., Iwata, K., & Kawashima, R. (2006). Cortical activation in the processing of passive sentences in L1 and L2: An fMRI study. *Neuroimage*, 30(2), 570-579.
- Zawawi, A. S. A. A., & Sultan, F. M. M. (2023). Analisis ada sebagai kata kerja dwikomplemen: suatu pendekatan minimalis [An Analysis Of ada As A Dicomplement Verb: A Minimalist Approach]. *GEMA Online® Journal of Language Studies*, 23(2), 119-143. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17576/gema-2023-2302-07>

- Zawawi, A. S. A. A., Sultan, F. M. M., & Jaludin, A. (2022). Subjek nul pro bahasa Melayu: suatu penilaian semula berpandukan kerangka minimalis [Null Subject pro In Malay: A Re-Evaluation Based On Minimalist Framework]. *Issues in Language Studies*, 11(1), 109-128. <https://doi.org/10.33736/ils.4122.2022>
- Zawawi, A. S. A. A., Sultan, F. M. M., & Jaludin, A. (2023). Expletive there structures: A minimalist approach. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature® The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 29(3), 125-147. <http://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2023-2903-10>
- Zawawi, A. S. A. A., Sultan, F. M. M., & Jaludin, A. (2024). Kata kerja ambitransitif dalam bahasa Melayu: Suatu analisis Minimalis. *KEMANUSIAAN the Asian Journal of Humanities*, 31(2), 163–191. <https://doi.org/10.21315/kajh2024.31.2.9>
- Zawawi, A. S. A. A., Sultan, F. M. M., & Jubilado, R. (2026). Syntactic Analysis of Motion Verb Structures in Malay: A Minimalist Approach. *GEMA Online® Journal of Language Studies*, 26(2), 335-359. <http://doi.org/10.17576/gema-2026-2602-05>